



THE BEACON

NEWSLETTER OF THE LUMEN CHRISTI INSTITUTE FOR CATHOLIC THOUGHT WINTER 2018



Cubs Co-Owner Expounds Ignatian Spirituality

Joe Ricketts is perhaps best known in the Chicagoland area as a co-owner of the 2016 World Series champion Chicago Cubs. Many know him as a successful leader and entrepreneur with decades of business experience. Perhaps fewer know the story of his relationship to silent retreats in the tradition of Saint Ignatius of Loyola or his philanthropic efforts to popularize them.

Lumen Christi opened its autumn quarter with a Cultural Forum event featuring Ricketts at a luncheon hosted at the Chicago Club on September 19. In his introductory remarks, LCI executive director Thomas Levergood specially thanked the Hon. J. Peter Ricketts—Governor of Nebraska and alumnus of the University of Chicago—for helping to arrange for his father, Joe, to speak. Peter Ricketts has served on the Institute’s Board of Directors since 2013.

In his talk, which he titled “Building an Ignatian Retreat,” Joe Ricketts related how his faith was renewed and his life transformed by attending a silent retreat in the Ignatian tradition, a practice of which he has made an annual habit since the late 1990s. He also discussed his project of building The Cloisters on the Platte, a 931-acre center for spiritual retreats near Omaha, Nebraska scheduled to open in summer 2018.

Continued on Page 5.

IN THIS ISSUE:

PAGE 2:
MASTER CLASSES

PAGE 4:
REGIONAL FACULTY
COLLOQUIUM

PAGE 6:
GRADUATE STUDENT
READING GROUP

PAGE 7:
STUDENTS VISIT
THE ART INSTITUTE

PAGE 8:
SUMMER SEMINARS

PAGE 10:
STUDENT PROFILE

PAGE 11:
DONOR PROFILE

In Christ All Things Hold Together

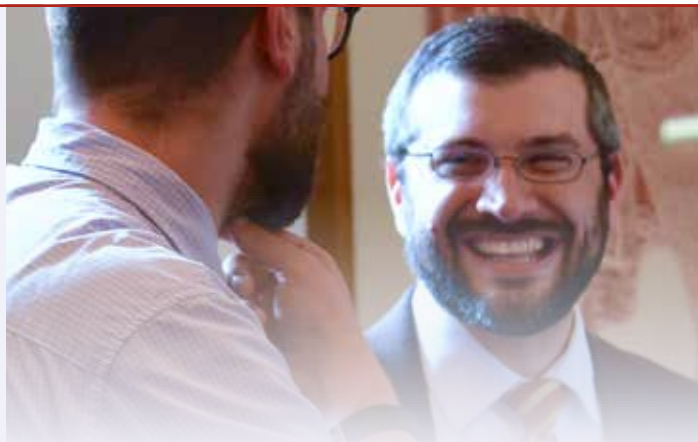
UChicago Alumnus Praises Great Books Education

Jared Ortiz matriculated to the University of Chicago in 1996 as a self-described “functional atheist.”

Four years later Ortiz graduated from the College as a practicing Catholic who would go on to earn a doctorate on Augustine’s theology from a Catholic university.

What accounted for this transformation? Ortiz, Professor of Religion at Hope College, told that story and offered a balanced assessment of great books education and its relationship to the Catholic intellectual tradition in his lecture “All Things Hold Together: A Great Books Education and the Catholic Tradition,” delivered on May 17 before three dozen students and faculty at the university.

For Ortiz, the opportunity to lecture at Lumen Christi’s invitation was a homecoming of sorts. As a student he had participated in the Institute’s programs and activities. Since



[ABOVE] Ortiz shares a laugh with Lumen Christi Institute graduate student associate Austin Walker.

then, Lumen Christi executive director Thomas Levergood has assisted Ortiz in founding the Saint Benedict Institute for Catholic Thought, Culture, and Evangelization at Hope College.

Ortiz began his lecture with the questions, “What is education? What is its purpose, and when do we know when we have achieved it?” These are the same questions that Ortiz devoted his studies to exploring in college. “These questions are questions that every person needs to ask if they are to live full and flourishing lives,” he argued.

Continued on page 3.





Master Classes Explore Evil, Beauty, & Love

Lumen Christi hosted three master classes this autumn, giving fifty regional students the chance to learn from and converse with leading scholars in a small, personal environment.

Master classes are an important dimension of Lumen Christi's University Program, which aims to enrich the Catholic faith formation of students and faculty at the University of Chicago and other regional institutions. Master classes are taught by scholars visiting the university or who otherwise are lecturing at Lumen Christi's invitation. For each class, participants arrive at Gavin House prepared for a three-hour discussion of important texts under the guidance of the senior scholar.

Father Stephen Brock—Ordinary Professor of Medieval Philosophy at the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross in Rome and, during 2017, a visiting scholar at the University of Chicago—led a course titled “**Aquinas’ Metaphysics of Evil**” on October 28. Students from the University of Chicago, Notre Dame, St. Francis College, and Kalamazoo College were in attendance. Readings focused on the question of whether and how Aquinas’ conceptualization of evil, namely, as a purely privation of being, is adequate to the human experience of evil in its various modalities and types.

Paul Mariani, University Professor of English Emeritus at Boston College and author of several influential biographies of important poets, led a course on November 3 on the poetry of **Gerard Manley Hopkins**, the nineteenth century English poet and Jesuit priest whose melancholic reflections on nature and religious faith have, since his death, catapulted him into prominence. Mariani had de-

livered a lecture the previous evening titled “A Final Seriousness: Wallace Stevens’ Late Poems Revisited.” He has written a best-selling biography of Hopkins, titled *Gerard Manley Hopkins: A Life*.

Finally, University of Notre Dame Professor of Philosophy and Classics David O’Connor, who the previous evening had delivered an engaging lecture titled “Plato’s Bedroom: Desire, Union, and Procreation,” led a class titled “**Plato’s Leaky Myths: How the Erotic Dialogues Use Plato’s Literary Predecessors**” on November 17. O’Connor’s lecture and theme for the class were inspired by his recently published book *Plato’s Bedroom: Ancient Wisdom and Modern Love*, which itself grew out of a perennially popular course O’Connor teaches at Notre Dame.

Participants have cited the master classes as unparalleled opportunities they would not otherwise have to read and discuss important texts from the Catholic tradition with senior scholars.

While Lumen Christi’s winter and spring quarter master classes are still taking shape, students can mark their calendars for a master class on February 9 with Wojciech Giertych, OP. Father Giertych has served as Theologian of the Pontifical Household to Popes Benedict XVI and Francis, advising them on theological issues and checking magisterial documents for theological clarity. He will deliver a public lecture at the University of Chicago the previous day, February 8.

[ABOVE] Students discuss Gerard Manley Hopkins with poet Paul Mariani. [BELOW] David O’Connor leads a master class on Plato and ancient Greek poetry.



He explained that the word “education” derives from the Latin word meaning “to lead out”: one is led out of intellectual adolescence and into a mature engagement with the ultimate sources of meaning and value. That engagement is fostered by a liberal arts education, and in turn fosters the skills and habits of mind, heart, and body that facilitate the full flowering of the rational animal as she navigates life in search of her ultimate end—which Ortiz argued is communion with God seen face to face.

Taking shape in classical Greece and Rome, the liberal arts eventually were studied in two successive sets of related disciplines. The first set, the *trivium*, comprising grammar, logic, and rhetoric—the three “language studies,” as Ortiz called them—was taught by means of great literature and prepared students to formulate thought, argue on its behalf, and express it well to others.

These three studies were preparatory for the *quadrivium*, comprising arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music.

Together these seven liberal arts—called “liberal” in distinction from the practical arts whereby the material necessities of life are fashioned and used—in turn were preparation for the study of philosophy: the comprehensive pursuit of a wisdom capable of ordering each of the domains of knowledge plumbed in a liberal arts education.

When Christian thinkers appropriated this tradition, they also crowned it. The cultivation of the human person in all his varied capacities was a noble goal, said Ortiz, but according to Christian thinkers it was too immanent. Rather, as Augustine expressed memorably at the outset of his *Confessions*, only communion with the transcendent God could be the genuine horizon for a truly liberating education. And this divine-human communion is made concrete and available in the form of the incarnate *Logos*, the creative principle of the cosmos who also, in Mary’s womb, became the center of history.

The *logoi*, or principles of intelligibility and reasonableness, whose existence and meaning one discerns through a liberal arts education, all participate in and refer to this archetypal *Logos*. The Christian tradition complemented Greek and Roman education with the testimony that this *Logos* had become human in Jesus Christ. For this reason, Ortiz said, “only in Christ do the universe and human person make sense.” Only in Christ can the convergence of the *logoi* constitutive of various disciplines illuminate the whole of reality.

On this view, Ortiz contended, a liberal arts education trains one not only to understand the principles and methods intrinsic to a particular discipline but also to penetrate through to the coherence of the cosmos as God’s loving act, and as a book in which one can read his glorious handiwork. In perceiving creation this way, the human person is on her way to being restored to the divine likeness in which she was created.

Ortiz lamented that this vision of the liberal arts and the Christian tradition is largely lost on his students, who “are, frankly, clueless about who they



Emily Austin, Assistant Professor of Classics and the College, asks a question during Q&A.

are as Americans and who they are as Westerners and as Christians.” He diagnosed this amnesia as the fruit of a particular degradation of the full grandeur of human reasoning, a reasoning capable of grasping empirical, moral, and metaphysical truth, each true and yet each susceptible to discovery by means of different methods of inquiry and argumentation. The reduction of human reasoning to empiricism—on which the only truths are those demonstrable by scientific experimentation—or emotivism—on which truth claims are nothing but expressions of taste and thus are relative to individuals and communities—shackles the human spirit. A liberal arts education works to loosen these bonds. Theology, the study of revealed truth, crowns this education and relates what can be known by human reason independently of revelation to God’s will for the human family as revealed in the Gospel.

That “loosening” happened for Ortiz when he took a Core Curriculum class with professor Amy Kass called “Human Being and Citizen,” a great books course in which he encountered the works of Plato, sacred scripture, Aristotle’s *Ethics*, *The Brothers Karamazov*, and other classics. He confessed himself struck by the beauty of these texts and the truth of their insistence upon prioritizing the cultivation of a good soul. He was hooked. “Mrs. Kass reoriented my whole life,” he told his audience, “and I knew then that I wanted to spend the rest of my life doing for others what she did for me.”

Still, it wasn’t for another two years that Ortiz returned to the Church. On the recommendation of Amy and her husband and fellow UChicago professor Leon Kass, Ortiz complemented his coursework and private reading with an independent study with Paul Griffiths, then-Professor of Theology at the Divinity School and a co-founder of the Lumen Christi Institute. Griffiths was generous with his time and attention, and he had a lasting effect. “I never knew any educated Catholics, anyone who lived a serious Catholic life, until I met Griffiths,” Ortiz confessed. Griffiths imploded Ortiz’s cramped understanding of the Catholic Church.

The morning following their first study session together, Ortiz attended 6:30am Mass. He was pleasantly surprised to see Griffiths there also.

Now Ortiz views the liturgy as an arena for intellectual as well as spiritual growth. Citing the Dominican A.G. Sertillanges’ book *The Intellectual Life*, he argued that “study is a prayer to truth” and defended the need for what twentieth century Swiss Catholic theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar

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Regional Faculty Colloquium Generates Discussion and Builds Relationships

Providing regional faculty and advanced doctoral students the occasion to convene for academic discussion of Catholic thought and for fellowship is a key aim of the Lumen Christi Institute's Catholic Scholars program.

As the spring quarter wound down and faculty and students prepared for final papers and exams, Lumen Christi gathered three dozen scholars together on May 5 at the University of Chicago Divinity School for a lively discussion of Jean-Luc Marion's 2016 publication *Givenness and Revelation*. Translated into English by Chicago alumnus Stephen Lewis, who now chairs Franciscan University at Steubenville's English Department and who was in attendance, *Givenness and Revelation* was the title given by Marion, the Divinity School's Andrew Thomas Greeley and Grace McNichols Greeley Professor of Catholic Studies and a longtime friend of Lumen Christi, to remarks he delivered as the 2014 Gifford Lectures. The Gifford Lectures are a set of annual lectures in natural theology hosted by several Scottish universities, and are widely considered the most prestigious lecture invitation a scholar working in religion and religious studies can receive.

The colloquium consisted of two 100-minute sessions, each opening with an engagement by an eminent scholar before allowing Marion a response. It concluded with a brief discussion among all participants. In the first session, Cyril O'Regan, Huisking Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame, praised *Givenness and Revelation's* depth, accessibility, and "blinding clarity." Said O'Regan of the book's style, "everywhere its economy is illustrative of a kind of finesse sure of when to elaborate, when to be silent, when to suggest and tease and allow the reader to complete."

O'Regan first traced Marion's efforts at identifying and resolving conceptual impediments that inhibit Christians' understanding and appreciation of the Trinity. He lauded Marion's desire to

make the Trinity meaningful again to believers—to clear away distinctions that make the Godhead seem either bland or totally inaccessible to one's spirituality and life of faith.

O'Regan then ventured some remarks on the relationship between Marion's assessment of treatments by the Church Fathers, East and West, of the Trinity and of the Holy Spirit in particular, with that of Hans Urs von Balthasar, a Swiss Catholic theologian and one of the giants of twentieth century theology.

Following a brief interlude, theologian David Bentley Hart, now the Director's Fellow at Notre Dame's Institute for Advanced Study, launched a more critical analysis of *Givenness and Revelation*.

A short but lively discussion followed this second session. Colloquium participants enjoyed a cheese and wine reception afterward and then departed for home.

Christopher Rios, a doctoral student in systematic theology at Notre Dame who attended the event, said that it was "on all accounts a remarkable gathering."

"It is difficult to imagine," he continued, "an event of such intellectual magnitude taking place in the Midwest without recognizing the important role the Lumen Christi Institute plays as the organizer and facilitator of such colloquia and other such ventures."

In addition to his endowed professorship in the Divinity School and his frequent participation in Lumen Christi programs, Marion holds the Dominique Dubarle chair at the Institut Catholique de Paris and is a member of the Académie Française. According to the Oxford University Press description of *Givenness and Revelation*, "it represents both the unity and the deep continuity of Jean-Luc Marion's thinking over many decades" and "brings us to the very heart and soul of [his] theology." Lumen Christi is proud to count among its Catholic Scholars programming this effort to stimulate scholarly engagement with so renowned a Catholic thinker and so important a text.

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Ricketts explained to a packed room of 120 professionals and Lumen Christi affiliates that although he practiced his Catholic faith as an adult, he felt uninspired and incomplete for many years in so doing. That all changed when he attended a silent retreat at a center in Minnesota. In that experience of prayer, Ricketts found the spiritual elements of meditation and contemplation whose absence had been troubling his faith life. He began making annual retreats at that same center, and convinced several of his children to make them as well.

Reflecting on his experience at the retreats and the large number of Christians in the United States who would benefit from them much as he did, Ricketts decided to purchase nearly 1,000 acres of land in his home state's Platte River Valley, a beautiful wooded plot southwest of Omaha. There he started to plan a retreat center that would service not only Catholics but all persons of faith interested in making retreats in the Ignatian tradition and growing closer to God through Christ.

From architectural designs for the chapel to marketing strategies, Ricketts recounted various aspects of the center and unfolded his thinking concerning how it would take shape and operate. He also described his hand-selected team of consultants and project planners who assist him in his executive decision-making.

The highlight of Ricketts' talk was a four-minute video documenting one of the several remarkable architectural and artistic dimensions of the retreat center: a Stations of the Cross display featuring seven-foot, realistic sculptures and accompanying audio reflections. Ricketts said that he had searched the country and globe for a Stations display that he could purchase for The Cloisters. Nothing was adequate to his vision. So, he assembled his own team of nationally renowned artists to undertake this project.

The members of this elite team who were interviewed for the video spoke movingly about how meaningful the project was to them. Several said that working on these Stations was their life's masterpiece artistic endeavor. One sculptor likened the display's scope and meaning to Michelangelo's labor of love in the Sistine Chapel, saying that Ricketts' project could be "one of the most profound representations of the Stations of the Cross in the world." Ricketts himself teared up as he shared that other workers, artists, and planners involved in The Cloisters project had confided in him that they viewed their participation in its creation as their life's purpose.

Tiffany Barron, a Lumen Christi graduate student associate studying international relations at the University of Chicago, sat at the head table with Ricketts during lunch. Calling him "warm and personable," she noted that what struck her most about his remarks was "the impact that the



Lumen Christi graduate student associate Tiffany Barron (left) converses with event attendees.

Ignatian retreat center has already had on the artists, construction workers, and other collaborators involved in its creation."

Kathryn Thompson, another LCI graduate student associate who studies at the Pritzker School of Medicine, agreed. "Perhaps the most delightful thing about Mr. Ricketts' talk was the way in which such a drastic project impacted the diverse workers and teams in small and beautiful ways," she reflected.

Although The Cloisters is not scheduled to open until late summer 2018, it already is brimming with group reservations. Ricketts said that the local Catholic ordinary, Archbishop George Lucas of the Archdiocese of Omaha, supports the project and is kept abreast of its progress.

Luke Waggoner, a young professional working downtown, was impressed that such a successful entrepreneur continued to prioritize his faith.

"It was uplifting to hear Mr. Ricketts' story of how Ignatian retreats changed his life," Waggoner said. "Here is a man who reached the pinnacle of business success and, through it all, remained true to his Catholic faith. What an excellent example for me and other young Catholics of the transformative power of faithful witness to Christ."

Barron gleaned from Ricketts' talk the helpful lesson that "skills developed in other sectors of life can be used for the good of the Church." Thompson was moved to see that "such a large and seemingly dramatic project was creating space for simple and small encounters with Christ even in the process of its being built."

Continued on page 7.

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A rendering of The Cloisters on the Platte, expected to open in 2018.

Engaging the Whole Intellectual Tradition:

Lumen Christi Sponsors Graduate Student Reading Group

After working at a Mississippi high school for four years as a teacher and administrator, Austin Walker felt that he was missing something. “My experiences in public school education and administration led me to realize that while I wanted to be able to reflect on the nature of education and the nature of my experience, I wasn’t nearly well educated enough to do so,” he recalls.

So Walker applied to the University of Chicago’s prestigious Committee on Social Thought, an interdisciplinary program in which students take the reins of their formation and craft their own course of studies. Now he studies politics, education, and liberty, and is wrapping up a dissertation on the political philosophy of John Henry Newman. (*The Beacon* featured Walker in its spring 2015 student profile.)

Even after matriculating to Chicago and immersing himself in studies, Walker perceived a gap in his education. Out of that gap was born the Graduate Student Reading Group that Lumen Christi has sponsored each of the last two years.

“I offered to lead the group after some of the other Lumen Christi associates and I realized we were largely ignorant of the wider Catholic intellectual tradition,” Walker explains. While having read some of the most popular thinkers in the tradition, “we had never seriously studied the fathers, the mystics, or the scholastics, and in fact we shared the prejudice of the age that considered them not worth studying.”

“Our tradition is more than a few big names,” he continued. “It is patristic and mystical and liturgical and sapiential as well. Insofar as our graduate programs are necessarily focused on a specialized field, we aren’t able to make up our deficit through our formal programs of study.”

These associates set out to remedy that ignorance.

The group’s listserv contains twenty doctoral and master’s students from different fields, about a third of whom attend each weekly meeting at Gavin House, where they discuss a pre-distributed text over drinks. Lumen Christi provides the assigned readings at a discount price.

A few non-students also join. All attendees enjoy the learning and camaraderie that the group’s meetings engender.

Sandra Ham, senior statistician at the university’s Pritzker School of Medicine, has been a regular attendee. “The group is a valuable addition to my educational resources on campus,” she says. For her it has been “an enjoyable way to read some classic Christian literature,” and she is “glad to have been able to cultivate friendships with others in the reading group.”

Even to a student in the Committee on Social Thought, these meetings are refreshingly diverse.

Joseph Simmons, a classmate of Walker’s who focuses on literature, philosophy, and theology, says of the group that it “provides an invaluable service.”

“It’s given me a chance to know and learn from students in different disciplines with whom I would otherwise rarely interact, and we’ve come together reading major works in the Catholic tradition that I might otherwise never have had a chance to read,” he says. The plurality of disciplines represented also forestalls getting lost in the weeds or in the clouds. “The discussions are intellectually rigorous without being narrowly technical,” says Simmons. “They deal with questions any would-be Catholic academic should think about.”

The theme for the 2016 academic year was “Love and Knowledge in the Christian Tradition.” “We began with two questions,” Walker, who chose the theme, says: “what does it mean, as St. Augustine says, to ‘believe so that you may understand’? And how are the acts of loving God and knowing God related?” The syllabus for that cycle could headline a promising great books course: Augustine’s *On Christian Teaching* and *On the Teacher*; Bernard of Clairvaux’s *On Loving God*; Dionysius the Areopagite’s *Mystical Theology* and *Divine Names*; a selection of Shakespeare’s sonnets; Walker Percy’s *Lost in the Cosmos*; Benedict XVI’s *Deus caritas est*; Jean-Luc Marion’s *Givenness and Revelation*; and Plato’s *Symposium*.

This year Walker and company are reading slowly and carefully through the Books of Genesis and Exodus, with exegetical help provided by Leon Kass’ *The Beginning of Wisdom* and additional commentary by Joseph Ratzinger and the Church Fathers. Lumen Christi scholar-in-residence Father Paul Mankowski, SJ, who for many years taught at the Pontifical Biblical Institute (the “Biblicum”) in Rome, is also attending and lending his scholarly expertise to the group.

Not only the opportunity to pore over these thinkers and texts, but the way in which the group does so, sets it apart from the formal education that members are receiving in their studies.

“A group like this gives us the opportunity to discuss these texts *as if they were true* and as if what they have to say matters for the state of our souls,” Walker explains. “Even though we are sometimes given the opportunity in a formal setting to discuss a Christian text, rarely do we have the chance to discuss it *as a Christian* text.”

Simmons concurred, underscoring how important the group is as a locus of Catholic intellectual community.

“The reading group is always a pleasure to attend,” he said. “It helps make the loose assemblage of Catholic graduate students at Chicago feel like a community.”

“THE READING GROUP IS ALWAYS A PLEASURE TO ATTEND ... IT HELPS MAKE THE LOOSE ASSEMBLAGE OF CATHOLIC GRADUATE STUDENTS AT CHICAGO FEEL LIKE A COMMUNITY.”

called a “kneeling theology.” Both dictums express the same thought. One’s studies and one’s relationship with God need to be integrated—made and sustained as whole—in order for one’s studies to be not just an intellectual endeavor, but also a form of prayer that deepens one’s harmony with the creative love that shapes the cosmos. Since the incarnate Word in whom all things hold together is uniquely present at Mass for those who receive him in the sacrament, the Mass is the site for the coherence of all creation, just as Jesus himself is. This is why the sacred liturgy is a “core curriculum” in the fullest sense: in it one encounters and integrates oneself around the “core”—from the Latin *cor*, meaning “heart”—of history and the cosmos.

That cosmos is held together by him in whom all things cohere. Though not without its deficiencies and pitfalls, a great books education, especially when coupled together with reception of the Eucharist and rendered in its light, leads one toward this life-giving message. That is as liberating a truth as one could look for from any education.

UChicago Students Visit Art Institute’s “Doctrine and Devotion” Exhibit

Lumen Christi’s University Program fosters a deeper engagement by students and faculty not only with the Catholic Church’s intellectual and spiritual traditions, but with its artistic and aesthetic traditions as well.

On October 5, executive director Thomas Levergood led a group of ten students to the Art Institute of Chicago for an evening visit. The trip was co-sponsored by the University of Chicago’s Hildegard of Bingen Society, a non-sectarian student group that facilitates study of Christian thought, history, and culture.

The purpose of the trip was to enjoy one particular visiting exhibit at the Art Institute: “Doctrine and Devotion: Art of the Religious Orders of the Spanish Andes.”

Presenting thirteen paintings by South American artists from the seventeenth through nineteenth centuries, “Doctrine and Devotion” introduces visitors to images promoted by several Catholic orders at work in the Spanish Andes—the Dominicans, Franciscans, Mercedarians, and Jesuits—and examines the politics of the distinct iconographies each group developed as it vied for devotees and prominence.

Students were encouraged to remain in that exhibit and to dwell at length upon the paintings. Then, in accord with a custom observed during Lumen Christi visits to the Art Institute, Levergood led the group in chanting the *Salve Regina* in front of a painting of the Virgin Mary. “It’s fitting that before leaving the exhibit, we say goodnight to our Mother,” he said before chanting the opening notes.

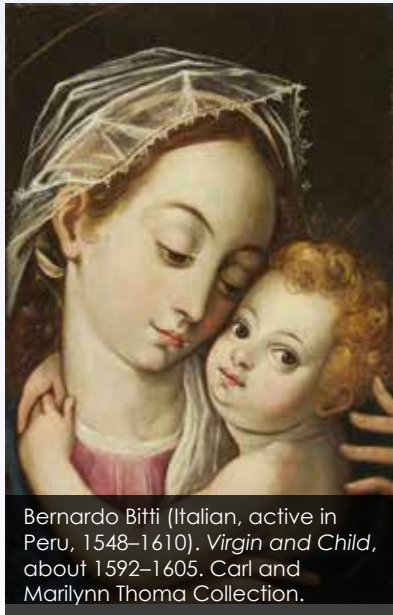
Trevor von Boeck, a philosophy major, was grateful for the highly concentrated purpose of the visit.

“I enjoyed having the opportunity to spend time focusing in close detail on a few paintings. In particular,” he said, “I was struck by the representations of the mendicant orders and the fervent devotion to Mary

Ricketts boasts a stellar entrepreneurial résumé. Upon graduating from Creighton University (a Jesuit institution) in 1968 with a degree in economics, Ricketts began his career as an investment advisor. Several successful professional stints later he co-founded First Omaha Securities, a retail securities brokerage firm in Omaha. That company grew quickly and in 1983 evolved into TD Ameritrade, which now manages over \$600 billion in client assets.

In the past ten years Ricketts has stewarded his resources through a variety of philanthropic endeavors in addition to The Cloisters on the Platte, including the Opportunity Education Foundation, The Ricketts Art Foundation, The Ricketts Conservation Foundation, and Ending Spending, Inc.

He now lives in Little Jackson Hole, Wyoming, with his wife of more than fifty years, Marlene, whom he credits with helping to keep him strong in his Catholic faith. They have four children and thirteen grandchildren.



Bernardo Bitti (Italian, active in Peru, 1548–1610). *Virgin and Child*, about 1592–1605. Carl and Marilyn Thoma Collection.

that sprung forth from most of the paintings.”

Afterward the group enjoyed dinner at the Art Institute’s famous rooftop terrace restaurant, Terzo Piano, before returning to Hyde Park.

“Doctrine and Devotion” is on loan to the Art Institute from the Carl and Marilyn Thoma Art Foundation, whose patrons are friends of Lumen Christi. According to its website, the Foundation “recognizes the power of the arts to challenge and shift perceptions, spark creativity and connect people across cultures.”

The Thoma Art Foundation has loaned exhibits to the Art Institute in the past as well. From late 2014 to early last year, it co-sponsored the exhibit “A Voyage to South America: Andean Art in the Spanish Empire”—the Art Institute’s first exhibition of Latin American art of the viceregal period (roughly 1521 to 1821)—which was hosted in the same rooms as

“Doctrine and Devotion,” Galleries 212 and 212A. In 2015 Lumen Christi sent a group of students to admire that display.

Jack Sexton, a doctoral student in the John U. Nef Committee on Social Thought with interests in American political thought and the history of philosophy, was moved by the piety expressed in the images.

“As someone who was neither raised Catholic nor has much feeling for visual art, I found the exhibit surprisingly moving,” Sexton recounted. “The circumstances of the South American missions could not be further removed from those of people in ‘advanced’ countries today, and yet the piety expressed in these extraordinary works of art, simple but in no way naïve in the pejorative sense, still really strikes home.”

Daniel Ortiz, a fourth-year Fundamentals major, said of this year’s visit, “it was a delightful opportunity to see an exhibit that might not have otherwise been on my radar. The art was all exceptionally beautiful, but my favorite was the depiction of the Virgin Mary as *La Divina Pastora* (the Divine Shepherdess).”

“And, of course,” he added, “hearing Thomas intone the *Salve Regina* in the middle of the Art Institute only heightened the aesthetic experience.”



2017 Summer Seminars Train Tomorrow's Catholic Scholars

The Lumen Christi Institute's 2017 Summer Seminars in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, now in their ninth consecutive year, afforded sixty doctoral students and junior faculty the valuable opportunity to study, build community, and benefit from the guidance and mentorship of senior figures in their fields. These occasions provide the scholars and teachers of tomorrow's academy with professional and personal formation that will serve the Catholic intellectual tradition well for decades to come.

This past summer Lumen Christi hosted four seminars. From May 22 through May 27, an international team of five distinguished economists, moral theologians, and ethicists—organized by Joseph Kaboski and Martijn Cremers, professors at the University of Notre Dame—led fifteen doctoral students and junior faculty in economics and finance in an “**Economics and Catholic Social Thought: A Primer**” course for the second consecutive year. Held in Rome, seminar sessions took place at the Pontificia Università della Santa Croce (Holy Cross) and the University of Notre Dame's Rome Global Gateway.

The Primer introduced participants to foundational principles of Catholic social thought such as the human person, dignity, freedom, subsidiarity, solidarity, and the common good, and discussed applications of these principles to conceptual understandings and ethical considerations involving economic topics such as utility theory, firm and business ethics, wages, markets, globalization, poverty, and development.

Truly a collaborative enterprise, the seminar was generously cosponsored by several other organizations. Joining Kaboski and Cremers on the team of senior scholars were Mary Hirschfeld of Villanova University and Father Robert Gahl and Monsignor Martin Schlag, both of Santa Croce. This diversity of leadership enabled students to study Catholic social thought's relationship to a variety of disciplines.

The Eternal City was the site for a second seminar as well. From June 22 through June 28, professors Mark Clark and Timothy Noone of the Catholic University of America led a seminar on medieval thought titled “**Is God Knowable by Natural Reason? Philosophy, Theology, and Trinitarian Thought in the Middle Ages.**” Clark and Noone guided sixteen doctoral students through an intensive survey of twelfth and thirteenth century theological and philosophical debates about the natural knowledge of God.

Beginning with two key texts by Saint Augustine, the syllabus explored the thought of twelfth century thinkers like Peter Abelard and Hugh of St. Victor by way of providing historical context for thirteenth century trinitarian thought from William of Auxerre through to Saints Albert, Bonaventure, and Thomas Aquinas. Students also were allotted ample time to socialize, explore Rome's many beautiful sites and churches, and pray together.

Father Ian Ker of the University of Oxford led his fifth consecutive seminar on “**The Thought of John Henry Newman**” from July 9 through 15 at Merton College, Oxford. Newman is regarded as among the finest theologians and philosophers of the last two centuries, and Ker's seminar has become the premier forum for rising Catholic scholars to study his thought. Ker is uniquely equipped to guide it, having written or edited more than twenty books on Newman.

As an Anglican priest, Newman was a leader of a group of thinkers and churchmen who in the 1830s pushed for the Church of England to embrace various Catholic practices and beliefs that it had gradually discarded—a sustained argument known as the “Oxford Movement.” Increasingly drawn toward the Catholic Church, Newman converted in 1845 and resigned his fellowship at Oriel, since Oxford did not allow Catholics to hold teaching posts. He studied for the Catholic priesthood and after receiving Holy Orders served



the Church in many capacities until his death in 1890. Pope Benedict XVI beatified him in 2010.

In addition to their working sessions, participants were treated to a visit to the site where Newman converted to Catholicism and made his first Confession and communion: The College at Littlemore, a small village a few miles south-east of Oxford where Newman practiced a monastic lifestyle for several years in the mid 1840s.

Finally, Russell Hittinger of the University of Tulsa, who has led a Summer Seminar annually since 2011, continued his direction of the popular “**Catholic Social Thought: A Critical Investigation**,” which this year met from July 30 through August 5 at the University of California, Santa Barbara. It gave fifteen participants the opportunity to read, analyze, and discern continuities and discontinuities in Catholic social teaching from the late nineteenth century to the present.

Students of various disciplines combed through magisterial sources such as Leo XIII’s epochal *Rerum novarum*, Benedict XVI’s *Caritas in veritate*, and Pope Francis’ *Evangelii gaudium* and *Laudato si’*. Topics coming in for special treatment included church-state relations, the role and place of marriage and family in society and culture, voluntary associations, and moral principles governing economic systems. Students also had the chance to attend Mass in the Santa Barbara Mission, a landmark 1786 Spanish church.

The Summer Seminars draw a diverse pool of applicants—this year representing six continents—whose varying research specialities and disciplinary backgrounds, from healthcare ethics to literature to economics and political theory, make for a more prismatic exploration of seminar themes. The acceptance rate across the four seminars is around forty percent. Lumen Christi offers travel stipends to all attendees.

Each seminar has a twofold goal: to educate doctoral students and junior faculty in some aspect of the Catholic intellectual tradition relevant to their research interests, and to foster a sense of community among that same demographic. By doing this Lumen Christi hopes both to provide the formation in faith that Catholic students at secular schools receive and to complement the formation that students at Catholic institutions receive.

Comments from participants reflect the Institute’s success in achieving this goal. Anna Lou Abatayo, a postdoctoral researcher in economics at the University of Copenhagen, said of the Economics and CST Primer, “as a participant working at a secular campus, the knowledge I gained from the seminar helps me navigate not just everyday life but also the direction of my research.” Another seminar participant studying in Europe lamented that “in German or Belgian academia, there is almost no opportunity” for students to engage Newman’s thought. “In this respect,” he said, “the Newman seminar was really exceptional for me.” A third attendee, hailing from a Catholic institution, judged that the formation he received under Hittinger’s tutelage in Santa Barbara outstripped his own university’s offerings. “Even attending a Catholic research institution, these are not texts I would ever have gotten the chance to study in that kind of a formal setting, or at least not easily,” he explained.

Another student summed up well what the Lumen Christi Institute hopes will continue to draw applicants to these programs. “I think it was the intermingling of several things that are good on their own but when brought together are terrific,” he replied when asked about his favorite dimension of his seminar: “visiting holy sites, attending Mass, praying with other Catholics, and discussing important philosophical and theological issues.”



[Facing page]Participants at the Newman Seminar in Oxford. [Top to bottom] Rome seminar participants discuss theology over dinner. Econ & CST seminar participants enjoy Rome’s historic sites. Russell Hittinger leads the CST seminar in Santa Barbara. Participants enjoy a meal in the hall at Merton College, Oxford.

THE BEACON PROFILE

Theresa Smart

PhD candidate in Political Science, University of Notre Dame



What is your area of study and what is the focus of your current research?

Broadly speaking, I enjoy learning about the history of political thought and the interplay among ethics, politics, and religion. While many theorists today eschew the question, I think it's really important to inquire into the relationship between a community's ethico-political principles and its understanding of what it means to be human: *Quid est homo?* Currently, I am in the process of completing a dissertation on the ethics of citizenship in the writings of Saint Thomas Aquinas. Specifically, I focus on the virtue of political prudence and its function in integrating a person's commitments to a concrete political community and to a more comprehensive understanding of human flourishing—a function particularly fraught in situations where those commitments come into conflict.

How did you first hear about LCI? Which event did you first attend, and why?

The Lumen Christi Institute was recommended to me in 2013 by some friends at Notre Dame who had attended the summer seminars for graduate students. Glancing through the website, at the time I was most interested in the seminar on Catholic social thought taught by Russell Hittinger. Having just dipped my toe into the themes of CST during a course with Rick Garnett at the Notre Dame Law School, I wanted to learn more. And I wasn't disappointed! The seminar, attended by Catholics and non-Catholics alike, was really excellent.

How has your participation in Lumen Christi lectures, conferences, and seminars contributed to your intellectual growth?

Sometimes I jokingly refer to LCI events as a "guilty pleasure," since they offer prime excuses to set my laptop aside for a day (or a week!) and indulge my love for theology and the Catholic intellectual tradition. I've learned so much that a political theory class could never offer; one of my favorite experiences, for instance, was Rémi Brague's beautiful master class on Hans Urs von Balthasar's little book *Love Alone is Credible*. It afforded me the opportunity not only to study a twentieth century theologian who had intrigued me since college, but also to study him under the guidance of one of the kindest and most erudite scholars in the world today.

In reality, though, the pleasure is anything but guilt-inducing. In the midst of highly isolating dissertation work, I find the collegiality of LCI events invaluable in reminding me why I loved learning in the first place. The Institute also offers a refreshingly free forum for discussion: Questions are not limited by the boundaries of particular disciplines or methodologies, and appeals to both faith and reason can seamlessly intermingle.

Is there a particular Lumen Christi event (or encounter with a scholar) that has directly impacted the development of your academic work?

Two of the summer seminars I've attended have directly impacted my academic work. The LC summer seminar on Catholic social thought inspired the chronological structure of my own undergraduate course on CST that I teach at Notre Dame, since I found Professor Hittinger's sensitivity to historical and political context important in understanding the development of papal social encyclicals over time. Father Stephen Brock's summer seminar entitled "St. Thomas Aquinas on Free Choice" significantly influenced my dissertation. That was my first in-depth study of Aquinas' theory of human action and decision-making, and my subsequent work has drawn heavily on what I learned there about the complex relationship between the intellect and the will.

What do you plan to do after you have completed your degree from Notre Dame?

While I plan to remain in the world of higher education, I am not yet sure what form that will take. I will apply for tenure-track teaching positions, but I am also open to other kinds of academic jobs. I would enjoy curriculum development or management of educational programming, either for a center/institute internal to a university or for an independent non-profit.

What role do you think the Institute plays for students at schools other than the University of Chicago?

I'm grateful for Lumen Christi's hospitality, because it's been a joy to meet students from a variety of backgrounds and different academic milieus. Also, the programming offered by LCI is pretty unique in combining the highest intellectual rigor with an explicit, holistic Catholic worldview. Notre Dame is a wonderful place, but it doesn't have an organization that fills quite the same niche for doctoral students who

are already well-grounded in the fundamentals of theology and philosophy.

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Serving the Academy, Serving the Church

Valerie Ramey shares her faith journey to Catholicism and how Lumen Christi connected her to life-changing people and opportunities.



As an undergraduate, Valerie Ramey had no intentions of becoming an economist, let alone a Catholic research economist who would organize conferences on Catholic social teaching and advise American bishops on its economic aspects.

Before becoming a political science major at the University of Arizona, Ramey had been baptized by full immersion at age eleven in what she describes as a fundamentalist church in the Panama Canal Zone. When she met her eventual husband—a Catholic—at Arizona, she began attending Mass with him. “I fell in love with the Catholic Church,” Ramey says of that time. She went through RCIA and was confirmed a few months before her wedding.

That same boyfriend convinced Ramey to switch majors from political science to economics, since, he said, economics was a good major for law, and Ramey was intending to become a lawyer. But when some older friends told her that they hated being lawyers, she decided to forego law school and pursue a doctorate in economics at Stanford instead.

That proved to be a wise decision. Ramey is now Professor of Economics at the University of California, San Diego, researching a wide array of subjects at the intersection of economic theory and social issues. Her work has been featured in many journals for economics and political economy, including articles in the “Top 5” publications *American Economics Review*, *Journal of Political Economy*, and *Quarterly Journal of Economics*. In 1999 she became the first female co-editor in the history of *American Economics Review*. Another leading journal, *American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics*, has honored her for having published the best annual paper on macroeconomics.

In recent years Ramey has been collaborating with other Catholic economists to place their expertise at the service of the American Church and her bishops. That involvement traces back to Ramey’s connection with Lumen Christi.

Ramey first heard about Lumen Christi when Notre Dame’s Joe Kaboski, an alumnus of the University of Chicago’s Department of Economics, invited her to attend one of LCI’s annual conferences in Economics and Catholic Social Thought, a program Kaboski co-founded. “I was hooked after the first one I attended,” Ramey recalls, and she has attended every conference since 2012.

“I had never heard about Catholic social teaching” before that first conference, she said, and she “wanted to learn more.” Before long she herself was organizing conferences, playing a leading role in carrying off the 2015 and 2016 iterations, on “The Family in the Changing Economy” and “Caring for Our Common Home: Economics,

Environment, and Catholic Social Thought,” respectively. She also participated on a major panel discussion as part of the 2014 and 2015 conferences.

“These conferences are a highlight for me,” she says. “Just as the Eucharist is my spiritual sustenance for everyday life, these conferences are the spiritual sustenance for my intellectual/professional life.”

A year after attending her first Lumen Christi conference, Ramey found herself in discussion with Kaboski and other Catholic economists about what she described as a “lack of a Catholic community among research economists.” To remedy this situation, Kaboski, within a week, founded the Catholic Research Economists Discussion Organization, or CREDO.

CREDO “is a wonderful organization that serves multiple purposes,” Ramey explains. It gathers Catholic economists to discuss their research and faith, advises the US bishops on economic aspects of Catholic social teaching, and raises the profile of Catholics working in the field.

Lumen Christi was and remains instrumental in Ramey’s formation.

“Lumen Christi is a great institution because it facilitates the link between our spiritual beliefs and our intellectual, academic endeavors,” she says. “That’s particularly important for people like me who work in a secular university,” where there is little overlap between one’s work and faith. “Being involved in CREDO and Lumen Christi allows me to make that connection.”

Given what she describes as her fundamentalist background, Ramey was “leery” about “all the Mary stuff” in Catholic doctrine and devotion when she first began the RCIA process. Gradually, she learned more about Marian devotion, prayer to the saints, and icons and statues. After observing one of the Marian statues that had reportedly wept, and thinking that there was “something really otherworldly about it,” she “started reading about miracles and became fascinated.” Many years after her conversion, while attending a conference in Portugal, she prayed at the shrine of Fatima, where Mary appeared 100 years ago to three children.

“I still have an abiding love for scripture, based on reading the Bible so many times as a child,” Ramey says. “But I have now wholeheartedly embraced the other elements of the Catholic faith.”

Both the Church and her peer economists are the better for that.

“LUMEN CHRISTI IS A GREAT INSTITUTION BECAUSE IT FACILITATES THE LINK BETWEEN OUR SPIRITUAL BELIEFS AND OUR INTELLECTUAL, ACADEMIC ENDEAVORS ... THAT’S PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR PEOPLE LIKE ME WHO WORK IN A SECULAR UNIVERSITY, WHERE THERE IS LITTLE OVERLAP BETWEEN MY WORK AND MY FAITH.”



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-LCI Summer Seminar Participant



SAVE THE DATE

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New York Times Columnist
January 17 & 18

KARIN ÖBERG

Harvard Astronomer
January 20

WOJCIECH GIERTYCH, OP

Papal Theologian
February 8

Notre Dame Professor of Philosophy and Classics David O'Connor speaks on his book *Plato's Bedroom: Ancient Wisdom and Modern Love* on November 16.

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