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THE BEACON

NEWSLETTER OF THE LUMEN CHRISTI INSTITUTE FOR CATHOLIC THOUGHT

SPRING 2010

LUMEN CHRISTI INSTITUTE

SPRING 2010

WINTER AND SPRING 2010: PREVIOUS LECTURES AND EVENTS

January 7-March 4

Thursday Evening Non-Credit Course: "Philosophers, Theologians, and Mystics of the Middle Ages"

January 9

"Shakespeare's Jewish Question"
David Nirenberg (University of Chicago)

February 21

A Symposium on Gary Anderson's *Sin: A History*
Gary Anderson (University of Notre Dame)
Cyril O'Regan (University of Notre Dame)
Jeffrey Stackert (University of Chicago)

March 2

"The Authority of Law in Recent Catholic Political Philosophy"
Mark C. Murphy (Georgetown University)

April 8-May 20

Thursday Evening Non-Credit Course: "An Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching: Texts and Concepts"

April 28

A Symposium on Pope Benedict XVI's *Caritas in Veritate*
David Nirenberg (University of Chicago)
Patrick J. Deneen (Georgetown University)
William Cavanaugh (University of St. Thomas)

May 12

"From Curiosity to Studiousness: Catechizing the Appetite for Knowledge"
Paul Griffiths (Duke University)

May 14

Sacred Music Concert
"West Meets East: Fifteenth Century French Sacred Music from Cyprus"
Schola Antiqua of Chicago
Michael Alan Anderson, Director

May 25

"The Apocalypse in Origen and the Origenian Tradition"
Ilaria Ramelli
(Catholic University of the Sacred Heart Milan)

June 2

"Catholics in Political Life"
Ross Douthat (*New York Times*)
Melinda Henneberger (*Politics Daily*)
Mark Stricherz (*True/Slant*)



Founded by
Catholic scholars
at the
University of Chicago
in 1997,
The Lumen Christi
Institute
sponsors programs
that share the riches
of the Catholic
intellectual tradition
with students, faculty
and the general public.

BAVARIAN ARCHBISHOP VISITS CHICAGO



Reinhard Marx,
Archbishop of Munich
and Freising

Reinhard Marx, Archbishop of Munich and Freising—Pope Benedict XVI's former diocese—paid a visit to Chicago in April while on a broader American tour that included Washington, D.C., New York City, and the University of Notre Dame where Marx presented the 2009-10 Terrence R. Keeley Vatican Lecture entitled "The Social Message of the Church in the Context of Contemporary Challenges." Marx is a respected social theorist and has recently written an analysis of global capitalism entitled *Das Kapital*, alluding to the famous work of that title by Karl Marx, to whom the forward of the Archbishop's book is addressed. Critical of both capitalism and communism, Marx has gained a reputation for trying to draw attention to how Catholic social thought can provide ways of approaching the current global economic crisis. Communism was disastrous, but "capitalism without humanity, solidarity, and justice has no morals and no future," Marx writes.

Joseph Kaboski, Assistant Professor at the Ohio State University Department of Economics, assisted in organizing a luncheon for Marx in which he was able to meet faculty at the University of Chicago, including Roger Lucas, John Dewey Distinguished Service Professor of Economics, Roger Myerson, Glen A. Lloyd Distinguished Service

Professor in Economics and member of the National Academy of Sciences, and David Nirenberg, Deborah R. and Edgar D. Jannotta Professor of Medieval History and Social Thought. During his time in Chicago, Archbishop Marx concelebrated Mass with Francis Cardinal George at the Chicago Archbishop's Residence on the Near North Side. Cardinal George afterward hosted Marx and those traveling with him to breakfast.

CONFERENCE CONSIDERS GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISIS IN LIGHT OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT



Andrew Abela, Catholic University of America

Economists, political theorists, bishops, and moral theologians gathered at Mundelein Seminary on March 25-26, 2010 to participate in the Lumen Christi Institute's second annual

conference on "Economics and Catholic Social Thought," which sought to analyze the global financial crisis from the perspective of Catholic social teaching.

The group included economists and ethicists from the University of Chicago, Ohio State University, Harvard, UCLA, Cornell, Princeton, Georgetown, and Notre Dame, including Nobel Prize winner Robert Fogel from the University of Chicago. The conference was chaired by Ohio State economist Joseph Kaboski, a graduate of the University of Chicago, who recently accepted an appointment at the University of Notre Dame. The bishops attending the meeting including Archbishop Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I. (Chicago), Archbishop John Nienstedt (St. Paul, MN) and Bishop Robert Morlino (Madison, WI).

Despite the different fields of expertise, what united all of the participants was the end goal of developing an authentically Catholic vision of human flourishing within the context of modern economic life. Topics discussed included "Economics and True Well-Being of Man," "The Role of Markets," and "The Financial Crisis and Bailout Through the Lens Of Justice."

GARY ANDERSON ON JUDAISM'S CONTRIBUTION TO HIS SCHOLARSHIP AND FAITH

"It is difficult to understand the narrative of culture, our culpability in the eyes of God, without knowing the native language. My advantage is being able to see the metaphors within the development of the Hebrew language."

The study of ancient Judaism has not only led Gary Anderson to make a remarkable scholarly discovery—how a Jewish revolution in thought led to an understanding of sin as debt in Christianity—but has also been integral to his conversion story.

"Some people become Catholic because of a charismatic congregation or priest," Anderson says, contrasting this to his own conversion. For Anderson who was raised as a United Methodist, it was the study of Judaism that brought him to the Catholic Church.

Anderson, currently Professor of Old Testament/Hebrew Bible at the University of Notre Dame, didn't expect any of this to happen. As a first year Divinity student at Duke University, he took a class on the Old Testament, interested in learning more about Scripture since his Protestant upbringing had infused him with the belief that "anything profound had to be grounded in the Bible."

Exposed to the rich history of the Near Eastern world, Anderson was hungry for more. He developed a desire to find, as he says, "the pulse of Scripture."

Anderson says he can't put his finger on what led him to study Judaism. He attributes his eventual academic course to the influence of his mentors and

continued on page 4

MISSION

The Lumen Christi Institute advocates, supports, and nurtures intellectual work done in intimate and explicit relation to the Light of Christ, the Catholic Christian tradition, and the teaching authority of the Church.

GOALS

To accomplish this mission, the Lumen Christi Institute sets as its goals:

the strengthening of contemporary Catholic intellectual culture and the renewal of the Catholic presence in higher education.

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Alicia Bushman

GRADUATE REFLECTS ON SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC TRANSITIONS

Alicia Bushman, a fourth year who just graduated with a degree in philosophy, came to Hyde Park having never been in a traditional classroom. Before starting at the University of Chicago, her teachers were Mom and Dad and the occasional tutor. Her classmates were her six other siblings.

Her parents took education seriously—to the point of having their “school” officially accredited by the state of Wisconsin as “Aquinas Academy” in honor of her father’s training as a Thomist. Bushman says their both having advanced degrees probably helped. Her father, Douglas Bushman, developed programs of faith formation for adults, catechists, and permanent deacons at the University of Dallas. He is also an expert on Vatican II and John Paul II, and was one of the first lay theologians in the United States. Her mother, JoAnn, has a PhD in toxicology. She recalls them sitting around the kitchen table planning the curriculum and discussing their teaching responsibilities. “My mother agreed to teach us until high school, and our father would take over at the ‘age of reason’ when he said he could bear working with us,” Bushman laughs.

Though Bushman had a well-rounded classical education that included reading *The Metamorphosis* and the *Aeneid* when she was twelve, and creating her own course on Utopian literature when she was in high school, she wasn’t prepared for what she found freshman year at Chicago. Academic pressure was intense. Bushman was accustomed to a course load that included time for leisure and socialization. This might mean she would take sewing and horseback riding lessons along with Ecclesiastical Latin. But this wasn’t the norm at the University of Chicago.

In her philosophy classes, Bushman found a significant number of students who exceeded expectations and read beyond even what was recommended on the secondary reading list. To her dismay, she discovered that both in the dorm and in the classroom her friends were “not doing much else except the academic life.” “It’s hard to have a relationship with a book or Thomas Aquinas,” she says. Over the past four years, Bushman has had to find her place—socially and academically—at a university known for its ultra bookish, off-beat students. With the end of her undergraduate experience in sight, Bushman admits to having learned many important lessons, one of which has transformed her approach to the learning process itself.

Bushman was overly ambitious when she arrived on campus as a freshman, thinking that after a few years of college she would find answers to all the big questions. She has learned since then that philosophy consists of “small steps.” During her high school years, her mother or father would assign her short papers. But to properly defend and present an argument, one might have to write a fifty-page rather than a five-page paper. She has just completed her thirty-seven page BA thesis entitled “Moral Imagination: Imagining Morality with Teleology” using texts from Cora Diamond, an American philosopher at the University of Virginia, and the British novelist and philosopher Iris Murdoch.

While Bushman has learned to properly channel her desire for knowledge, she still hasn’t lost her love for social engagement. She has exercised leadership roles as captain of the varsity swim team, president of the Catholic Students Association, and member of several honorary councils at the University. Her leadership in the Catholic community isn’t surprising. Since her father worked at the University of Dallas when she was child, she was used to being surrounded by large Catholic families and dinner parties where her father’s friends talked about ethics, right to life issues, and seminarian formation—topics that Bushman later learned were not typical dinner table conversation.

The sense of community and meaningful conversation on faith and culture was something that Bushman was pleased to find in attending Lumen Christi lectures. She credits the Institute with being a “great source of community.” Bushman says the greatest strength of the Institute, apart from its programs, is that it connects people that otherwise would never meet. “This kind of community would be hard to find here on campus if it weren’t for Lumen Christi.”



Dan Ioppolo

STUDENT SEEKS CHALLENGE TO THE FAITH AT THE SECULAR ACADEMY

“I specifically wanted to go to a secular university where the faith could be challenged and discussed in the most rigorous terms.”

Dan Ioppolo, a third year philosophy major, came to the University of Chicago ready for a change. “The University of Chicago has been my first secular educational institution,” he admits. Having attended Catholic schools from preschool until his graduation from St. Ignatius Prep, an exclusive Jesuit preparatory school on the North Side, he was actually ready to meet people who questioned salvation and the existence of God.

When applying to college, Ioppolo was looking for a place where people wouldn’t superficially question his beliefs. “I specifically wanted to go to a secular university where the faith could be challenged and discussed in the most rigorous terms,” Ioppolo explains. Ioppolo has thrived at the University of Chicago. Though he prefers the challenge of spending time with people who do not share his beliefs, he appreciates the presence of a strong Catholic intellectual community. He is delighted to find the same academic rigor in his philosophy classes as at a lecture on Francis of Assisi. “Here at the University of Chicago the Catholic community is much more focused on the intellectual heritage of the religion and Lumen Christi has been very helpful in fostering that atmosphere.”

Though Ioppolo appreciates the contribution of an institution like Lumen Christi, he nonetheless enjoys the stimulation of a secular environment. He credits an ethics class at St. Ignatius for igniting his passion for philosophy, and finds that learning about the great non-Christian thinkers of the past has given him a better appreciation for the faith. He particularly enjoys ancient philosophy and the thought of Aristotle, which he says, “has definitely helped me understand the content and history of Church teaching better.” Looking ahead to life after senior year, Ioppolo hopes to continue studying philosophy in graduate school. He finds that philosophy is immensely beneficial to theology—both in the sense of understanding the development of Church dogma and learning how philosophy can contribute to conceptual expansion, “The subject is very relevant to my faith both because it gives me a chance to study Catholic thinkers (i.e. Augustine and Aquinas) and because I think contemporary discourse has something to offer Catholicism.”



William Cavanaugh, David Nirenberg and Patrick Deneen participate in a symposium on Pope Benedict XVI's *Caritas in Veritate*



Thomas Pavel, University of Chicago, asks a question during a symposium on Pope Benedict XVI's *Caritas in Veritate*



Students enjoy a lecture in the “Philosophers, Theologians and Mystics” series during the Winter Quarter



“Philosophers, Theologians and Mystics” Winter Quarter



Students socialize before Paul Griffiths's lecture “From Curiosity to Studiosness”



“West Meets East” at Rockefeller Memorial Chapel



Michael Alan Anderson directs Schola Antiqua at Rockefeller Chapel



Paul Griffiths, Duke University



Griffiths talks with a student after his lecture “From Curiosity to Studiosness”



David Nirenberg, University of Chicago, gives a lecture on “Shakespeare's Jewish Questions”



Schola Antiqua begins performance of “West Meets East”

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IN MEMORIAM

gained popular recognition for his Father Dowling detective novels, which were turned into a television mystery series. Thomas Hibbs, in an obituary article in the journal *First Things*, described how McNerny admired and drew inspiration from the French Catholic philosopher, Jacques Maritain. Hibbs wrote, “what he said of Jacques Maritain is equally true of Ralph. Teacher of teachers, he was a ‘model of the Christian philosopher, of the Thomist, both by what he taught and what he was.’”



Ralph McNerny

One of the towering figures of twentieth century Catholic philosophy, Ralph McNerny was Professor of Philosophy, Director of the Jacques Maritain Center, and Michael P. Grace Professor of Medieval Studies at the University of Notre Dame. An expert on Thomas Aquinas, the thirteenth century Catholic theologian and philosopher, he was also a fiction writer and commentator on goings-on in the Church and academy. He

Émile Perreau-Saussine

Émile Perreau-Saussine, a promising political philosopher at Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge, died suddenly from a heart attack in February at the age of thirty-seven. During the 1990's, Perreau-Saussine was a visiting student in the University of Chicago's Committee on Social Thought as he finished his dissertation on the thought of the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre. During this time, he participated in programs of the Lumen Christi Institute



and maintained a friendship with the Institute and its work. Recognized as a promising younger scholar on the relationship between religion and democracy in the modern age, he was working with the Lumen Christi Institute to plan efforts a conference on secularism in Paris, June 24-26. The conference—featuring scholars such as Charles Taylor, Remi Brague, Hans Joas, Jean-Luc Marion and Robert Spaemann—will be held in his memory.

TURIN MANUSCRIPT OFFERS GLIMPSE INTO MUSIC WORLD OF FIFTEENTH CENTURY

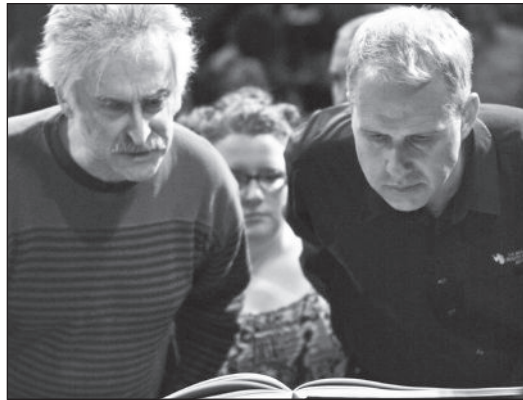
In the Alpine Italian city of Turin (Torino), where tourists flock to see the famous Shroud, is a library that holds a manuscript of value only to those with an appreciation for fifteenth-century music. Michael Alan Anderson, Director of the Schola Antiqua of Chicago and Assistant Professor of Musicology at the Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester, encountered the manuscript in his doctoral studies at the University of Chicago and continues to return to this source for its musical fruit.

The music of the Torino manuscript originated on the island of Cyprus within the court of King Janus I from the ruling French Lusignan family. The Lusignan dynasty—originally from Poitou in western France—settled in Cyprus and ruled there for three centuries, beginning in the late twelfth century after the Third Crusade. The manuscript was almost certainly part of the dowry when Anne, the daughter of King Janus I, married the Duke Louis of Savoy in 1434. This partially explains how it may have eventually arrived in Torino.

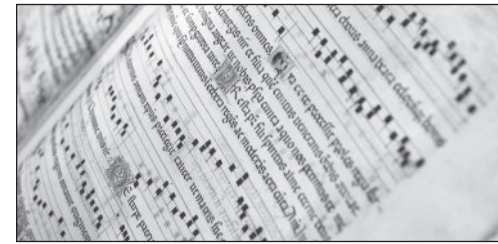
The manuscript of more than 300 pages contains music for courtly occasions, from sacred music for the ducal chapel to vernacular pieces for entertainment. Anderson used the manuscript to develop the program for a concert this spring entitled “West Meets East: Fifteenth-Century French Sacred Music from Cyprus.” Co-sponsored by the Lumen Christi Institute and the France Chicago Center, Schola Antiqua performed the concert in two venues—Rockefeller Memorial Chapel in Hyde Park and St. Benedict Church on Chicago’s north side. The ensemble performed a mixture of plainchant and polyphonic music from the first half of the manuscript.

Thanks to a stunningly beautiful color facsimile of the manuscript from the Regenstein Library, Anderson arranged for concert-goers to view the book up close and ask questions about its contents, visual peculiarities, and wider cultural meaning. While the impetus for compiling the source is unknown and no composer can be definitively associated with the music, the Torino manuscript remains, as Anderson put it, “a rare window into the sound world of the fifteenth century.”

Whether it was the south-side or north-side venue, audiences were privileged to hear music that hadn’t been performed in nearly six centuries. And even when it was originally performed, Anderson says that only a few people would have heard it. “Probably only members of the court—if they weren’t present, then God.”



During intermission at Rockefeller Chapel, concert-goers get a closer look at the manuscript



Copy of Turin Manuscript on display at Rockefeller Memorial Chapel



Members of Schola Antiqua of Chicago performing “West Meets East: Fifteenth Century French Sacred Music from Cyprus”

Marion, a member of the Lumen Christi Institute’s academic committee and a frequent participant in its programs, is not the only faculty member at the University of Chicago to have received such an honor. Marc Fumaroli, a current “Immortal,” was once a professor in Romance Languages and Literatures and the Committee on Social Thought, and the late François Furet, one of the world’s leading authorities on the French Revolution, was also formerly a faculty member at Chicago.

Catholics in Political Life

There is an inevitable tension expressed most famously in Augustine’s *City of God* when it comes to reconciling religious beliefs and political persuasion. Catholics often doubt whether they can be true to their faith, while at the same time aligning themselves with one of the two dominant political parties in the United States. In a panel co-hosted by the Lumen Christi Institute and Loyola University Chicago School of Law that took place on June 2, three leading journalists in the secular press discussed the challenges facing the Catholic who wants to be a thoughtful and active participant in American political life. Analyzing the political process from their perspective as journalists, Ross Douthat, *New York Times* columnist, Mark Stricherz, blogger at *True/Slant*, and Melinda Henneberger, editor-in-chief at *Politics Daily*, addressed an audience eager to hear how to integrate Catholic principles in the voting booth and in civic affairs more broadly.



Ross Douthat,
New York Times



Melinda Henneberger,
Politics Daily



Mark Stricherz,
True/Slant

BERNARD MCGINN ON MYSTICISM AND MAKING WHOLE THE CHRISTIAN

Most people have heard of the great mystics like St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila. Based on vague notions of what mysticism means—visions, stigmata, levitations—a typical Catholic might say, “not for me.”

Bernard McGinn, the preeminent historian and interpreter of the Christian mystical tradition and a leading authority on the theology of the fourteenth century mystic Meister Eckhart, has helped to change that. A prolific scholar, he has written and edited over 50 books and volumes on mysticism and spirituality during his academic career.

He has also been the managing editor of the 121 volume *Classics of Western Spirituality* published by Paulist Press.

McGinn received an STL from Gregorian University and a PhD from Brandeis University. After teaching theology for a year at The Catholic University of America, he came to the University of Chicago in 1969. He joined the Divinity School as an instructor in theology and the history of Christianity and was one of the first two Catholic faculty at the school—the other being David Tracy.

McGinn doesn’t pretend to be a spiritual guide. He considers himself first and foremost a scholar whose job it is to make the tradition available in a critical academic form. However, his writing and editing helps instruct people, since McGinn says that in the Christian tradition to follow Christ means that “every person is called to be a mystic.”

Though he devotes his time to writing and editing books, McGinn admits that reading is just an instrument. “God’s grace is really essential,” he says. “A lot of people can read books on mysticism purely as an intellectual exercise. [It is important to remember] that asceticism can be practiced for thirty, forty years and nothing can happen. [All this is] helpful training for what is God’s initiative.”

As a scholar, McGinn has a broad perspective on the development of mysticism, which wasn’t called such until the nineteenth century. In the early Church, the search for a deeper experience of the presence of God was intrinsic to the Christian life. The twelfth century Cistercian abbot, St. Bernard of Clairvaux, epitomized a faith that was vigorous in thought, prayer, and practice.

Mysticism suffered a severe loss of credibility in the late seventeenth century, at the dawn of the Enlightenment, especially in debates about Quietism in France and Spain where people with visions and claims of contact with God were suspected of heresy. McGinn agrees that not all mystical teaching is correct or helpful.



Bernard McGinn, Professor Emeritus, University of Chicago

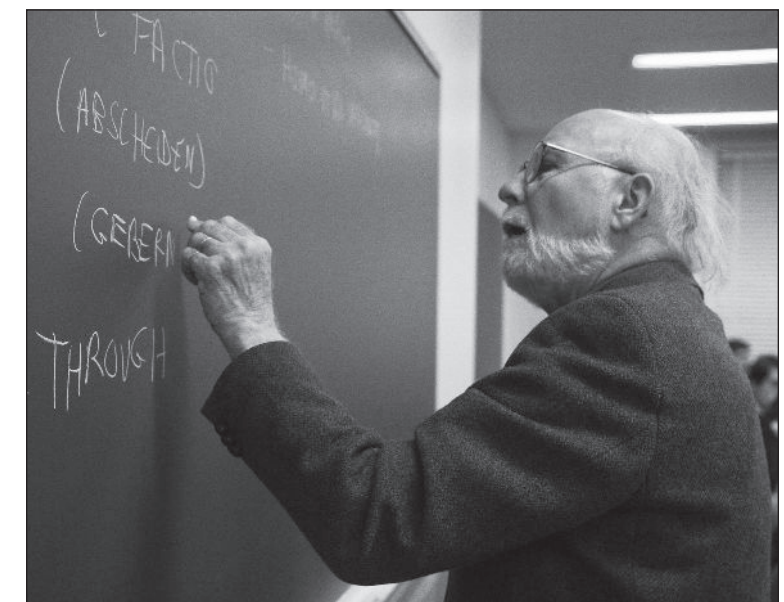
This separation between the mystical and intellectual, which started as early as the thirteenth century, deeply wounded the Church. McGinn, following Friedrich von Huelgel, categorizes three dimensions within a healthy Church: Petrine (leadership), Pauline (intellectual) and Johannine (mystical). The Enlightenment period considered the Pauline element the most essential. The Johannine dimension developed the reputation as an experience reserved for certain, select people—relegating it to the margins of Christian life.

“God’s grace is really essential. A lot of people can read books on mysticism purely as an intellectual exercise. It is important to remember that asceticism can be practiced for thirty, forty years and nothing can happen. All this is helpful training for what is God’s initiative.”

McGinn finds it telling that the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries had no great mystics, nothing that, he says, would nourish other people. Mysticism, though recovering, still suffers from an image of cloistered nuns or Cistercian monks experiencing levitations, visions, and stigmata in their secluded cells or on the stone cold floor of an empty church. Most people still consider it a bizarre phenomenon, though in the past thirty years McGinn sees a growing interest in mysticism—both inside and outside the university—that is encouraging.

Recent theologians like Karl Rahner, Hans Urs von Balthasar, and Bernard Lonergan have lamented this distorted vision of the life of the mystic that resulted from an Enlightenment mindset. Urgently expressing the need for making whole the Christian mentality, Rahner has said, “the Christian of the future will be a mystic or he will not exist at all.”

McGinn, though making it clear that the University must be dedicated to rigorous scholarship and not spiritual formation, has dedicated his life to reading, writing, and translating in the hopes that Christians will understand how integral mysticism is to their faith.



McGinn writes on the board during his lecture, “Theology and Mysticism in Meister Eckhart and the German Dominicans”

INSTITUTE NEWS



Jean-Luc Marion inducted as member of the prestigious Académie française

Jean-Luc Marion Takes His Place Among the Immortals

There is no place like France when it comes to recognizing intellectual achievement. On November 6, Jean-Luc Marion, Professor of the Philosophy of Religion and Theology in the Divinity School, joined a long line of distinguished thinkers—including Alexandre Dumas, Victor Hugo and Voltaire—when he succeeded the former Cardinal of Paris as a member of the Académie française, known in France as “Les Immortels.”

Founded in 1635 by Cardinal Richelieu, the Académie is France’s official authority on the French language and publishes the *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française*, making it clear that proper form calls for “courriel” not email. Matthew Arnold, a nineteenth century English poet, praised the Académie for its contribution to refining educated opinion in his essay on “The Literary Influence of the Academies.”

GARY ANDERSON from page 1

close friends at Duke—Eric and Carol Meyers, Professors of Religion that specialized in Hebrew Bible—who encouraged him to consider that path of study.

This interest would further develop at Harvard where his closest mentor, James Kugel, who holds chairs in the Jewish Bible and Modern and Classical Hebrew at Bar Ilan University and Harvard, reinforced the importance of the knowledge of Jewish history in order to be a more nuanced Biblical scholar.

Indeed, while many scholars of early Christianity study the Old Testament, there are few that can read post-Biblical Hebrew or understand Jewish culture. Anderson has developed a specialization that plants his feet firmly in both the Jewish and Christian worlds. He has even made a point of learning Modern Hebrew—which he says may be ideal for reading novels but not going to the market “since the moment you falter, someone speaks to you in English.” He believes that to know a language you have to love the people who speak it. “I love the Jewish people,” he says. “According to Scripture, they are the people God has chosen as his very own.”

It was his complete immersion in Jewish history and culture that eventually made Catholicism attractive. His familiarity with the Jewish approach to the Bible, which draws on a long tradition of scholarly interpretation, enabled him to appreciate Catholicism, which approaches Scripture in a similar way. The closer he got to the Hebrew original, Anderson says, the more comfortable he became with the Jewish interpretative method. This made Anderson reflect on his own faith as a Christian and how he couldn't find such an approach anywhere but in Catholicism. “I didn't have the intellectual equipment to deal with this as a methodology in my theological orbit. Catholicism became increasingly attractive,” he says.

Judaism was shaping Anderson's personal life, while also impacting his academic vision. It was his expertise in Judaism that led him to make an important discovery in Biblical scholarship which he shared in his most recent book *Sin: A History*. His knowledge of the language and culture enabled him to see what Scripture scholars throughout Christian history couldn't—that if not for the influence of Aramaic, the Semitic language later spoken by Christ, on Hebrew language in the Second Temple period, there would not have been an introduction of economic language into the concept of sin. The Aramaic verb for “forgiven” means “forsake,” because to forgive a sin is to forgo the right to collect on a debt, or obligation.

The metaphor of debt impacted the way sin would be understood from the early Church to Luther—giving us an image of God as divine Creditor who at the same time does not account in human terms.

Anderson doesn't consider it unusual that he comes from a Protestant background and that his book tackles the very topic that would fracture the Christian community in the sixteenth century. Instead, he approached the research, not as a Protestant turned Catholic, but as a scholar trying to understand the historical implications of our understanding of sin.

Anderson's approach to his scholarship on sin is heavily indebted to the late Paul Ricoeur, a Protestant twentieth century French philosopher who taught at the University of Chicago Divinity School, and is best known for his book *The Symbolism of Evil*.

Anderson was convinced by Ricoeur's analysis of how metaphors of sin embedded in different languages shape our understanding of sin. Anderson realized, however, that Ricoeur was unable to tell the whole story because he did not know Hebrew. “It is difficult to understand the narrative of culture, our culpability in the eyes of God, without knowing the native language,” he argues. “My advantage is being able to see [the metaphors] within the development of the Hebrew language.”

Anderson is eager to share the insight he has acquired with the entire Christian community. “One of the things it may help Protestants see is that the Treasure House of Merits (the idea that the infinite merits of Christ and the saints are at the disposal of the Church) is in the Gospel. It may give them a desire to return to those themes with new eyes, maybe even consider looking at the notion of meritorious action.” In the sixteenth century, partly because there was no academic understanding of why Christ would have told parables using metaphors of debt and credit, it was understandable that the Reformation attitude would arise. “I don't think the deep financial debt imagery language was fully appreciated,” Anderson says, explaining that this had a great deal to do with the fact that they didn't have the sources. “Martin Luther wouldn't have understood the implications of construing sin as a debt.”

Anderson hopes his book does in some way contribute to Christian unification, even if only it enables Catholics and Protestants to look at formerly divisive texts with fresh eyes. The perspective of a Judaic scholar also provides a broader historical context for a concept like sin common to the Abrahamic faiths: “Many issues that become dividing to Christians were meaningful to Judaism,” Anderson says. “Jews argue for the importance of human works, and imagine good works as accumulating merit in heaven.”



from left: Jeffrey Stackert, Cyril O'Regan, and Gary Anderson at a symposium on Gary Anderson's *Sin: A History*



Cover of Gary Anderson's *Sin: A History*

MARK MURPHY LECTURES ON LAW AND CATHOLIC POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Many people, even most Catholics, are unfamiliar with the Church's long history of inquiry into the origin and justification of law. Where do laws come from, and why are they authoritative?

Mark C. Murphy, Fr. Joseph T. Durkin, S.J. Professor of Philosophy at Georgetown University, has written numerous books that explore many philosophical dimensions of legal theory, including *Philosophy of Law: the Fundamentals*, *Natural Law in Jurisprudence and Politics*, and *An Essay on Divine Authority*. On March 2, he gave a lecture for students and faculty at the University of Chicago entitled, “The Authority of Law in Recent Catholic Political Philosophy.”

Faculty appreciated Murphy's investigation into the way legal theories develop and the implications of various schools of thought. “Murphy's lecture provided a thought-provoking critique of some of the problems raised by theories that dominate jurisprudential analysis current in England and

America (e.g., Dworkin, Rawls, Raz),” said Richard H. Helmholz, Professor of Law at the University of Chicago Law School. “He also explored possible alternatives, basing his own analysis upon ideas found in the work of Thomas Aquinas and in several more recent papal pronouncements.”

Murphy welcomed the opportunity to receive critical feedback from an academic community known for its rigorous critique of ideas. “I had an outstanding visit,” writes Murphy in an email interview. “I received two very important sorts of feedback: from those in attendance thinking through these problems from a Catholic perspective, who were thus able to raise objections internal to that perspective, and from those in attendance who do not share that perspective but who accepted the Lumen Christi Institute's invitation to think through these problems of common concern together.”

By bringing speakers to present on topics like the law that are of concern to all, the Institute hopes to engage the campus in a vital conversation. Murphy praised the Institute's efforts: “As the Catholic intellectual tradition is not an insular tradition but addresses and invites debate and discussion with all inquirers of good will, it seems to me that Lumen Christi's model of situating itself within a wider university community is a faithful imaging of how the Catholic intellectual tradition aims to address the wider scholarly community.”



Ilaria Ramelli, Catholic University of Milan

ILARIA RAMELLI ON REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING

If one doesn't know Ilaria Ramelli, Assistant Professor of Ancient Philosophy at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart Milan, one would never guess how difficult it is for her to be a scholar.

Ramelli gives lectures with such cheerful enthusiasm that one can't help being infected by her love for ancient philosophy. But she has managed to conceal the effort it takes for her to do even the simplest of things, nevermind giving presentations that involve over four thousand miles of travel.

“I have a very severe scoliosis, which came in my adolescence, a severe hypotrophy in my left leg under my knee, as a result of an accident in my childhood, which also caused the scoliosis, and among other problems (heart, breathing etc.), a very severe immune deficiency that came later, in the last five years or so, as a result of continual strong pains and physical stress,” Ramelli says.

Suffering—whether physical or emotional—brings most people to the brink of despair, to questioning whether life is even worth living. However, Ramelli is a remarkable example of someone able to find meaning in suffering—of offering it for those souls that, as she explains, can't get to Paradise on their own.

Ramelli considers a life of scholarship to be one of service to the greater good. She admits that the past twenty years of academic work at the

university level have been extremely demanding. For the good of her health, she probably shouldn't be doing it. But she considers scholarship her mission, something not necessarily of her own choosing. “It is a mission; I did not choose it. I obviously should not be doing either this or any other work – and this is one of the less ‘physical’ works I can imagine... Almost nobody would probably work in these conditions, especially when I am in humid Padana (a region of northern Italy), with strong pains and high fever all time, but I do consider it to be a miracle, not a work, and not even a passion, but a mission.”

Ramelli indeed focuses not as much on her interests, but on what best serves the academic community. “Nothing to do with ‘I like,’ but with ‘it is too important.’ I am forced to choose so much and must really look to what is most important, as far as possible,” she says.

In her lecture on “The Apocalypse in Origen and the Origenian Tradition” given at the University of Chicago on May 25, she explained that redemptive suffering is like a purifying fire that destroys everything that keeps a soul away from God. But the suffering of the innocent still makes little sense, even to a philosopher. “I never killed anyone, why should I have to suffer like this?”

No one knows what awaits them in the afterlife. But Ramelli believes that her life is being lived for others, that she is using her natural philosophical inclination to further the academic enterprise. Ramelli has become the world's leading expert on Origen, a Christian Platonist theologian of the third century, translating Greek texts that students at places like the University of Chicago would otherwise never be able to access. She follows this path, not because she chose it, but because she was always on it. Philosophy has always been something more than a discipline in an academic curriculum, but a way of thinking and living, Ramelli explains. “It also naturally became an object of scholarly research.”

Apart from her research and writing, Ramelli has little time or energy for anything else. She used to paint. In her teens and twenties, she even sold a few of her paintings. But this is no longer the case. “I have absolutely no time left, and I must choose what is most important,” she says. “The most important thing I can contribute is my scholarship and prayer, which of course is even more important and would be certainly worthy of one's entire life.”