



2022 Catholic Studies Newsletter

May 12, 2022

Sacred Heart University

Message from the Chair



I am so delighted to resume our Department of Catholic Studies Newsletter, and many thanks to Drs. Brent Little and Jillian Plummer for preparing the Newsletter.

Despite the challenges of the Pandemic, our Department continues to grow, develop, and thrive. We are now preparing to offer a national conference: Vatican II and Catholic Higher Education: Leading Forward. Funded in part by a grant from the Lilly Fellows Program and sponsored by the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, the Conference features nationally and internationally recognized keynote speakers: Massimo Faggioli (Villanova University), Grant Kaplan (St. Louis University), Susan Reynolds (Emory University), and Patricia McGuire (Trinity Washington University). This Conference, which will be held in October, will be celebrating the 60th Anniversaries of both Vatican II and of Sacred Heart University whose founding was inspired by the spirit of Vatican II.

This past Spring semester the Department's Center for Catholic Studies sponsored lectures by nationally recognized speakers: Michael O'Loughlin, Phyllis Zagano, Kate McElwee and Heidi Schlumpf, and Phil Klay. The lecture featuring Kate McElwee and Heidi Schlumpf was featured in an article¹ in the National Catholic Reporter.

¹<https://www.ncronline.org/news/opinion/ncr-connections/womens-ordination-synodality-and-hope-future>

The Department is proud to acknowledge our 30 students who are completing the Minor in Catholic Studies, 11 of whom will graduate this year. Our students have organized a very vibrant and active student organization where they have gone bowling, watched films, gone skating and just gathered to meet and discuss hefty topics and enjoy camaraderie.

A big warm welcome to our newest faculty: Drs. Jewelle Bickel, Tim Dulle, Marguerite Mullee, and Michael LoPiano. And coming in the Fall, we want to welcome Dr. Callie Tabor who is currently Associate Director of the Aquinas Center of Theology at Emory University.

Born and raised in Oregon, Callie received an MA (Hons) in English Literature from the University of St. Andrews, and an MA in Christian Theology (Catholic Studies) from Durham University. Callie completed her PhD in Theological Studies in the Graduate Division of Religion at Emory University. Her dissertation is entitled, "Seeing Beauty: A Poetic Theology."

Also, Drs. Loris, Rober, and Gillespie have presented Pioneer Journey: A Transformative Education at both Faculty Institutes. Pioneer Journey reflects our University's Mission which aims—through intentional reflection and courageous civic discourse--- to educate the whole student--intellectually, socially, and spiritually, and emerging from our Core Values which promote respect for the inviolable dignity of every human being and the importance to work towards the common good. You will be hearing more about Pioneer Journey in the upcoming year.

---Michelle Loris

Student Profiles



Katherine Barry

I will admit, when I came to Sacred Heart in 2020, I did not know that we had a Catholic Studies minor. It wasn't until I was in Dr. Gillespie's class, 'God on Broadway' this past Fall Semester that I was sold on declaring a Catholic Studies minor. The conversations we had in that class alone were unlike anything I had ever experienced in my years in Catholic School. I know I will use the skills learned in my Catholic Studies classes to think about the world more critically and ask important questions about our changing world. Especially going into the healthcare field where there is a lot of work to be done regarding social issues. I also plan on using this minor to one day become a catechist to teach and help to answer the questions of the future generations of the Catholic Church. The class was also very different from many of my lectures for my major, which was very exciting. Everyone had an equal chance to speak their mind on each topic and even expand the conversation with more questions. I have enjoyed every minute of being a Catholic Studies minor. Not only because I have met amazing professors who I consider my mentors, but also I have made incredible friendships that I know are going to last beyond college. I am very excited for the future of the Catholic Studies minor here at Sacred Heart and the questions that we will continue to discuss with each other!

Matthew Carrara

I became a Catholic Studies minor because of what my CIT classes did for me. Very early on in taking CIT-201, I realized that I was changing as a student. I was always very quiet in school, even at Sacred Heart. I was always afraid to raise my hand and speak up. Something changed in me while taking CIT. The voice that was trapped inside for so long had finally broken free. The discussions in class were too thought provoking and the only possible thing I could do was engage with them. I could no longer keep my ideas inside and I had to share them. This continued throughout the rest of the year into CIT-202 and I knew I couldn't let that be the last of it. I was hungry to be a part of something bigger than myself. With the encouragement of faculty members, I declared the Catholic Studies minor and it has only helped me become even more involved and engaged in the realm of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition.

The questions I ask in my Catholic Studies courses connect to how I understand the contemporary world in profound ways. For example, in talking about social justice issues I've been able to have an understanding of the struggles of certain groups of people. While I can never truly experience what they have, I can mentally put myself in their shoes and think about how I'd feel if I was experiencing the same hardships. Through this, I've come to truly see that there are those who need and want my help and as a Catholic, I have a duty to help those who want to be helped. While at the same time, there are those who don't want my help. So, I can simply be there for them and stand proudly in solidarity with them. The kinds of questions we ask in Catholic Studies courses are unlike anything I've discussed in my life. These questions truly make you see the world in a new light and they have opened my mind in ways I never thought possible.



1 - CS Bowling Night!

Emma Drzewiecki

I decided to pursue a Catholic Studies minor because of the welcome and belonging that I discovered within it. At its heart, the Catholic Studies minor is a community of professors and students alike, navigating life's greatest questions on God, community, and purpose. These valuable discussions have not only had a profound impact on how I view the world around me, but how I view myself. CIT courses have offered me a safe space to both voice my own thoughts as well as learn from those of others. As such, I have gained the confidence to be vulnerable and share my own thoughts with the world, as well as the humility to perceive the diverse thoughts of the world.

The Catholic Studies minor has informed my education here at SHU as it relates to my major as well. As someone going into the healthcare field, I am often told of the importance of being culturally aware and seeking social justice. CIT courses have provided me with the opportunity to engage in the difficult discussions necessary for uncovering exactly what it means to be culturally aware. Discussions on community and culture have opened my eyes to the sure complexity and diversity of society and the individualistic needs in which we all possess. By questioning our individual and collective roles in

dismantling the social injustices present in our everyday lives, I am better able to formulate a sense of solidarity and trust with all those that I encounter. With such knowledge, I will be able to better suit the unique needs of my future patients and adopt a more holistic approach to my care.

Jenna Lee

One of the best decisions I made during my past three years at Sacred Heart was becoming a Catholic Studies minor. It was a minor I did not intend on declaring, as for one I did not know it existed, but also, I wasn't sure if it was for me. Although after taking the CIT class God on Broadway (following CIT 201 and 202), I knew it was something I had to do. The class opened so many windows of thinking but also opened doors to some of the best people I now know on campus. The thing about being a Catholic Studies minor is that it is more than religion, it is about social change, informing the minority, and taking a concept that may seem linear and making it the complete opposite. This in and of itself has also aided in my other classes here at SHU by allowing me to think more critically. Thinking more critically for me was especially important, but also helpful being that I am also biology major! Lastly, I think that the questions asked in these CIT courses are ones that can almost always have more than one answer or just when you think you've got the answer, you can take it a step further as Dr Gillespie would say. Now, that may seem frustrating at first but in reality, it just makes us learn more and really use our minds to their fullest capabilities. That is what being a Catholic Studies Major is all about, answering the questions that sometimes seem impossible to answer, but in reality, we adjust our thinking to a completely different angle; making the impossible, quite possible.



2 - Congratulations to our graduating CS minors!

Faculty Profile



Although originally from Albuquerque, New Mexico, Dr. Jewelle Bickel loves exploring the four seasons of Connecticut, especially with her diva pug, Valkyrie (Val for short). In addition to hanging out with her dog, she enjoys binge watching the latest “it” show and attempting to garden. Dr. Bickel completed her Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Oklahoma where she focused her dissertation on disagreeing well by utilizing intellectual virtues. In general Dr. Bickel is interested in questions relating to how we deal with self-doubt when we think we know something. Few things make Dr. Bickel happier than discussions about life’s “Big Questions.” As a trained philosopher, practicing asking questions is what she does. Dr. Bickel is in her first year teaching at Sacred Heart University, and loves the role that CIT plays in the school’s overall mission. CIT seminars give students the opportunity to reflect on questions which bear readily on everyday life, and as a result, students take ownership of class conversations and materials.

Center for Catholic Studies Spring Speaker Series



Sacred Heart University’s Center for Catholic Studies presented five speakers discussing timely and timeless issues this spring.

Featuring nationally and internationally renowned speakers, the series comprised three lectures at SHU's forum in the Frank and Marisa Martire Center for the Liberal Arts, as well as one virtual event. All talks were free and open to the public.

The lectures were part of the Center's Lecture Series which aims to bring together cutting-edge Catholic thinkers, writers and artists whose works and thought unite the Catholic intellectual tradition and contemporary culture.

Award-winning journalist **Michael O'Loughlin** delivered the first lecture, "Uncovering Hidden Mercy: A Catholic Journalist's Search for Stories of Compassion in the LGBTQ Community." A correspondent for America Media, O'Loughlin is the author of *Hidden Mercy: AIDS, Catholics and the Untold Stories of Compassion in the Face of Fear*². He also hosts the podcast *Plague: Untold Stories of AIDS and the Catholic Church*³.

Catholic scholar **Phyllis Zagano** delivered the virtual lecture, "Women in Ministry: What About the Diaconate?" on Feb. 23. Zagano, author of *Women: Icons of Christ*⁴, is senior research associate-in-residence at Hofstra University in Hempstead, NY.

On March 2, SHU presented The Endowed Edward & Jacqueline Musante Endowed Lecture, "Women's Ordination and the Synodal Church." This live talk featured **Heidi Schlumpf**, executive editor of the *National Catholic Reporter*⁵, and **Kate McElwee**, executive director of the Women's Ordination Conference⁶, discussing the work of women's ordination activists since Pope Francis called upon Catholics worldwide to consider what it means to "journey together" as people of God.

On April 6, author **Phil Klay**, a National Book Award winner delivered, "The Catholic Imagination in a Suffering World." This U.S. Marine Corps veteran is the author of the short story collection *Redeployment*⁷, and the novel *Missionaries*⁸, which *The Wall Street Journal* and former President Barack Obama listed among the top books of 2020.

For more information and links to virtual lectures, visit [sacredheart.edu/ccspeakerseries](http://www.sacredheart.edu/ccspeakerseries)⁹.

²<https://www.broadleafbooks.com/store/product/9781506467702/Hidden-Mercy>

³<https://www.americamagazine.org/plague>

⁴<https://www.paulistpress.com/Products/5500-2/women-icons-of-christ.aspx>

⁵<https://www.ncronline.org/>

⁶<https://www.womensordination.org/>

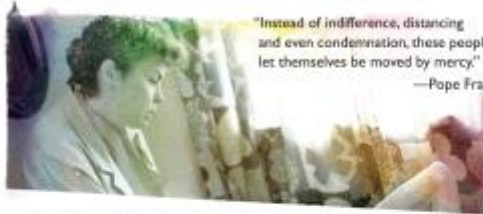
⁷<https://www.philklay.com/redeployment>

⁸<https://www.philklay.com/missionaries>

⁹<http://www.sacredheart.edu/ccspeakerseries>



MICHAEL J. O'LOUGHLIN



"Instead of indifference, distancing and even condemnation, these people let themselves be moved by mercy."

—Pope Francis

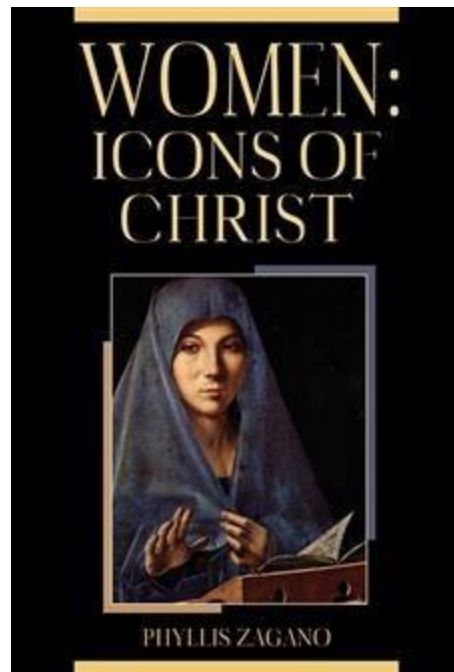
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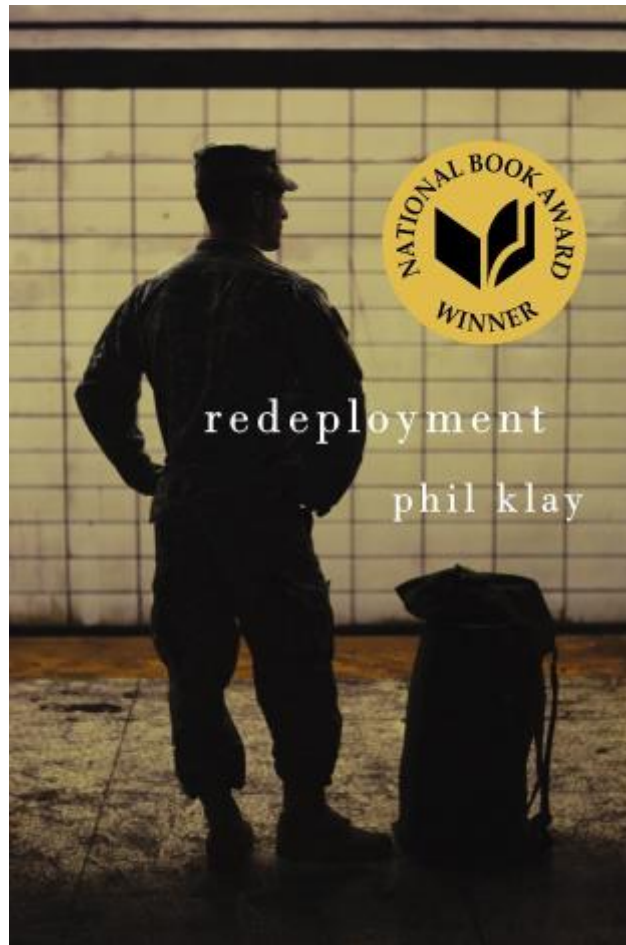
MERCY



AIDS, CATHOLICS, AND THE UNTOLD STORIES
OF COMPASSION IN THE FACE OF FEAR







Upcoming Fall 2022 Conference: Vatican II and Catholic Higher Education--Leading Forward



Sacred Heart University has received a Lilly Fellows Program grant to develop and host a three-day, regional conference next October on Vatican II and Catholic Higher Education which will be held on the 60th anniversary of the Second Vatican Council (Vatican II) and Sacred Heart University's founding.

Sacred Heart was founded in 1963 in the spirit of Vatican II as the first Catholic institution in the United States led by lay people. Next year's conference dates, Oct. 13-15, acknowledge that connection, as those were the days of Vatican II's first sessions.

The Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities is also supporting the conference, titled "Vatican II and Catholic Higher Education: Leading Forward." This event headlines several leading keynote speakers including Massimo Faggioli, a professor of theology and religious studies at Villanova University, and a prominent historian on the Church as well as a distinguished thinker and writer on Vatican II and Pope Francis. Faggioli's most recent book is *The Liminal Papacy of Pope Francis: Moving toward Global Catholicity*. Patricia McGuire, president of Trinity Washington University, Washington, D.C. writes and speaks on a wide variety of topics concerning higher education, women and Catholic education, and her articles have appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *The Washington Post*, *The Baltimore Sun*, *Current Issues in Catholic Higher Education*, and other publications. Grant Kaplan, a professor of theology in the department of theological studies at St. Louis University in St. Louis, MO, works in the areas of fundamental theology and modern theology as well as the Vatican. Susan Bigelow Reynolds, an assistant professor of Catholic studies at Emory University's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, GA, examines the intersection of ecclesiology and lived Catholicism in contexts of diversity, marginality, and suffering.

Visit the conference's webpage¹⁰ to learn more.



¹⁰<https://www.sacredheart.edu/academics/colleges--schools/college-of-arts--sciences/departments/catholic-studies/vatican-ii-and-catholic-higher-education-leading-forward-conference/>