



THE BEACON

NEWSLETTER OF THE LUMEN CHRISTI INSTITUTE FOR CATHOLIC THOUGHT

SUMMER 2011



Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, Archbishop of Paris (1981-2005)

Philosopher Jean-Luc Marion on the Legacy of Friend Cardinal Lustiger

"It is difficult to speak about a great man," Jean-Luc Marion confessed in his opening remarks on Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger (Archbishop of Paris, 1981-2005) from his lecture, "Cardinal Lustiger and the New Springtime of the Church in Paris," given at the Alliance Française de Chicago on April 13. Marion described Lustiger as the most important French bishop since Cardinal Richelieu in the seventeenth-century, but also as a prelate who shepherded his Church like one of the Early Church Fathers.

Marion, Professor in the Divinity School, the Department of Philosophy, and the Committee on Social Thought at the University of Chicago and also Professor of Philosophy at Université Paris-Sorbonne, was a close friend of Lustiger. They shared a love of learning that would earn them the highest honor bestowed on French intellectuals; a seat at the Académie Française, the Hall of Fame of French thinkers (founded by Cardinal Richelieu in 1635). Members of the Académie have included Alexandre Dumas, Victor Hugo, and Alexis de Tocqueville. Marion now occupies the seat previously held by Lustiger.

Marion explained that Lustiger's potential wasn't immediately recognized by the French ecclesia. When John Paul II named Lustiger Archbishop of Paris in 1981, it was a complete surprise given his outspoken reputation. "He was not on track to be a bishop," said Marion. "He was known as a powerful priest but not mainstream," Marion elaborated, describing him as intrepid and unafraid to speak the truth—traits that kept him on the periphery.

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Gilles Emery, OP, University of Friborg

Swiss Dominican Reflects on the Intellectual Life Within the Christian Vocation

At a university where students are often driven by intellectual passion, Gilles Emery, OP, a Dominican friar, Swiss theologian, and one of the leading experts in the theology of St. Thomas Aquinas, considered the role of study within a Christian vocation, saying that ultimately its purpose does not rest with the accumulation of knowledge but with the love of God.

As a Visiting Scholar during the spring quarter, Emery gave two public lectures in April at the University of Chicago: the first on "The Dignity of Being a Substance" on April 27 and the second on "A Carnal Love of Concepts or a Work of Mercy?: The Intellectual Life and the Dominican Vocation" on April 28. Emery also met with faculty and graduate students to discuss Aquinas's Trinitarian theology. His most popular lecture, however, was on "A Carnal Love of Concepts or a Work of Mercy?" drawing a large audience of students and faculty to hear about the relationship between study and contemplation, particularly within the context of the life of a Dominican preacher.

Emery made it clear that though study can be a part of one's vocation, the Christian life in its entirety is like a school in which a person draws closer to God.

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Chicago Attorney, Economist, and Former CEO Draw Lessons from Lehman Collapse

The collapse of New York-based investment bank Lehman Brothers Holdings Inc. in September of 2008 shook the financial system, sending shockwaves throughout the world and sparking a global economic crisis whose consequences are still felt today. On March 3, The Lumen Christi Institute and The Catholic Lawyers Guild addressed this crisis through a panel event on "Decision-Making in the Pressure Cooker: Lessons Learned from the Collapse of Lehman Brothers," concluding that in a world of quick decision-making and the enticement of profit, business leaders may overlook the need for ethical deliberation.

Panelists included Harry Kraemer, a former Fortune 500 CEO, Anton Valukas, the Lehman Brothers Bankruptcy Examiner and chairman of Jenner & Block, Luigi Zingales, co-author of *Saving Capitalism from the Capitalists*, Robert C. McCormack Professor of Entrepreneurship and Finance at the University of Chicago's Booth School of Business, and event moderator, Daniel Murray, senior partner at Jenner & Block.

Valukas, also the former United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois, explained that Lehman's mistake was betting that the crisis in the sub-prime market would not spread to the rest of the real estate market. Considered some of the top financiers in the world, the firm's business leaders had heavily invested in the company and didn't make this assessment lightly.

[Continued on Page 3](#)

Visit of Pulitzer Prize-winning Novelist Marilynne Robinson



Marilynne Robinson with students at luncheon

In February, The Lumen Christi Institute welcomed Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Marilynne Robinson to the University of Chicago campus. Robinson is the author of three highly acclaimed novels: *Housekeeping*, *Gilead*, and *Home*. *Housekeeping* was included in *The New York Times Books of the Century* and is listed as one of the 100 greatest novels of all time by the *UK Guardian Observer*. *Gilead* was awarded the 2005 Pulitzer Prize for Fiction, and *Home* received the 2009 Orange Prize for Fiction. She is also the author of *The Death of Adam: Essays on Modern Thought* and *Absence of Mind: The Dispelling of Inwardness from the Modern Myth of the Self*. She has written for *Harper's*, *The Paris Review*, and *The New York Times Book Review*. The Institute collaborated with the Committee on Creative Writing, the Committee on Social Thought, and the Department of English, to organize her visit.

Students had the opportunity to relate to Robinson more personally during a luncheon discussion on her non-fiction book *Absence of Mind*, a collection of essays and reflections drawn from her 2009 Terry lectures at Yale on the relationship between science and religion. Kate Soto, coordinator at the Committee on Creative Writing at the University of Chicago, appreciated the intimacy of the luncheon setting where she found it easier for students to approach Robinson with probing questions: "At a public lecture, questions can be more performative than informational," Soto said. She found that the discussion gave her a better sense of how Robinson's creative work is informed by her thoughts on religion.

Robinson also gave a lecture in Max Palevsky Cinema on "The Freedom of a Christian" on February 16. Close to 200 students and faculty attended the event.

U of C Alumnus Shares Monastic Wisdom with Students

Christopher Dadabo, a rising fourth-year in Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations, and Lisa Pawlowicz, soon also to be a fourth-year in Physics at the University of Chicago, had never been to a monastery and imagined they had to travel far to find one. For college students like Dadabo and Pawlowicz who were raised Catholic but never had the occasion to visit a monastic community, this kind of opportunity can encourage an appreciation for an aspect of Catholicism in which the prayer life of the Church is fully lived.

Fr. Peter Funk, OSB, Prior at the Monastery of the Holy Cross, presented talks on "Contemplation and Meditation" (February 26) and "Meditation and *Lectio Divina*" (April 16). Pawlowicz particularly appreciated Fr. Peter's insights about contemplative prayer. "[Fr. Peter] made a strong case for how contemplative prayer regulates a religious life so that it stays focused on God. The talk certainly shifted my perspective on the value and purpose of prayer."

Pawlowicz was struck by the warmth of monastic hospitality and friendliness. "I was really surprised by how joyful the monks seemed," Pawlowicz remarked. "Their devotion and love for God simply radiated from them. Everyone that I interacted with seemed genuinely pleased to welcome me into their home and lives. I remember that the brother sitting across from me during dinner was smiling literally the entire time. It was very rewarding to meet a group of people who truly imbibed their faith into every aspect of their lives, and to see how happy that kind of life had made them."

Dadabo, who visited in April, wasn't expecting to find a monastery in a former parish church in Chicago's historic Bridgeport neighborhood, home to former Mayor Richard M. Daley. Dadabo said that many of his peers imagine monastic life as antiquated, belonging to a bygone era. "[The visit] made me better appreciate how monastic life fits into the Church in modern times," said Dadabo.

Fr. Peter admitted that he could understand how college students may have never encountered the life of a monastery from inside its walls. He himself was once an undergraduate at the University of Chicago, graduating with a BA in music in 1992.

For students like Dadabo and Pawlowicz, the visit provided an opportunity to learn more about prayer life within the Catholic tradition but was also a reminder that the peace and serenity of a life steeped in prayer can be experienced in the heart of the city.



Christopher Dadabo

"It was very rewarding to meet a group of people who truly imbibed their faith into every aspect of their lives, and to see how happy that kind of life had made them." Lisa Pawlowicz, fourth-year at the University of Chicago



Lisa Pawlowicz

Dominican from page 1

Although all Christians enter “the school of life,” study is not optional for Dominicans. Because their vocation is apostolic in nature, the relationship between study and preaching is essential. “Before all else our study should aim at this,” Emery explained, “that we may be useful toward our neighbors.” Dominicans nurture souls by guiding them to the truth. This kind of service is rooted in one of the basic human inclinations—i.e., the inclination to know the truth (the other three inclinations being the preservation of life, the transmission of life, and to live in society). “Studying for the sake of transmitting truth is a spiritual work of mercy,” Emery said. “Human beings need not only food and clothing but truth that blossoms into love.” Students, however, in their zeal to master their subject can quite easily become so absorbed in learning that they forget why it is important. The virtue of studiousness as defined by Aquinas, Emery said, regulates the application of the mind, avoiding immoderate study which devolves into a “carnal love of concepts” and preventing the study of things that are beyond human understanding.

Study for Dominicans—and for all Christians—should be a community effort. “A community without study tends to split into separate groups based on different interests or rooted in ideas detached from the community,” Emery argued. Whether it takes place in a university setting or in a priory, “Christian study is not an individual enterprise,” he said. He stressed the need for Christians to study with the intent of serving others, whether this service takes the form of preaching or counseling or teaching at a university.

Emery also stressed the need for study to take on meaning in one’s personal life. “Personal assimilation is essential for my ministry as a teacher,” he said, explaining that only then is he capable of passing it on to others. Making the knowledge of the Christian tradition one’s own is important, he added, since transmitting what we have received has “never been as urgent as it is today.”

Emery concluded the lecture by saying that of all subjects worth learning, the study of philosophy is indispensable for theologians—and those whose vocation involves the transmission of faith—since most theological issues depend on philosophical premises. “Whether they know it or not, all theologians are philosophers,” said Emery.

“Studying for the sake of transmitting truth is a spiritual work of mercy. Human beings need not only food and clothing but truth that blossoms into love.” Gilles Emery, OP

Lehman from page 1

Further, their view on the containment of the sub-prime market crisis was shared by leading economists, including the Chairman of the Federal Reserve, Ben Bernanke.

Murray wondered whether Lehman may have had a “perverse incentive” in taking such a risk in the sub prime market, given that a company of such magnitude seemed indestructible. “There was a lack of negative feedback,” Zingales agreed, citing Mexico’s economic crisis in 1994 and the internet bubble as examples of government intervention during economic failure. “[Financial companies believed that] if you take a lot of risk, the government will rescue you,” said Zingales.

Panelists suggested the concerns that Lehman did have were misplaced. Worried whether their gamble was legal, they didn’t ask themselves whether it was ethical. Kraemer, who as a former CEO of Baxter International understands the pressures of such an environment, said that inattention to values and questions of right and wrong can be disastrous.

“My problem with a lot of these individuals is that if you as a CEO, if you look at things and say, ‘what’s legal and what’s illegal? Is this something that I can find some lawyer telling me that that’s okay to do?’ If you look at the world that way, I think you end up in a lot of ethical value errors,” Kraemer said. He added, “you get a lot of bright people and you can rationalize everything.”

Business leaders, according to Kraemer, shouldn’t deliberate about ethics and values on their own. They should surround

themselves with principled, values-driven people who can help them figure out the right thing to do.

The panel event drew over 160 attendees and was part of the Law and Culture Forum, an ongoing series of lectures and seminars aimed at fostering dialogue between the Church and civil society as inspired by John Paul II’s call for a renewal of culture.

Marion from page 1

As Archbishop of Paris, Lustiger’s passion would bear much fruit as he worked tirelessly to rebuild the Church. Born into a Polish Jewish family that fled to France because of the Bolshevik Revolution, he was dedicated to strengthening relations between Christians and Jews. He also established new parishes, founded the “École Cathédrale,” created a media network of free Catholic radio and television, organized pilgrimages, created a center for Catholic culture in a 13th-century monastery building on the Left Bank, and published best-selling books, among them *Dare to Believe*.

Though he published more than twenty books, he never wrote a line. Like an Early Church Father, he shared his theological insights through his teaching ministry and homilies. Marion said that only now has it become possible to understand the extent of Lustiger’s legacy: “Now that he has passed away, we start to understand how great this man was. He will become a central figure not only for the French Church but for the French understanding of the nation of France.”

Orthodoxy's Indebtedness to *The Brothers Karamazov*

In June of 1878, Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821-1881) made a pilgrimage to a Russian Orthodox monastery, Optina Pustyn, staying for only three days. Despite the brief visit, his greatest and final novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*, would bring Orthodox monasticism and asceticism to the attention of the literary public, both in Russia and around the world. The most influential representation of Orthodox monastic culture in literature, the novel's depiction of the interactions between monks — most notably the charismatic elder, Fr. Zosima — and outsiders to the monastery has had a lasting influence on how Orthodoxy has been perceived by subsequent generations.



Robert Bird, University of Chicago

Robert Bird, Associate Professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and the College, spoke on the role that Orthodoxy and monasticism played in Dostoevsky's life in a lecture entitled "Dostoevsky's Pilgrimage: Aesthetics and Ascesis in *The Brothers Karamazov*," given on May 17 to a large audience of students and faculty at the University of Chicago.

Dostoevsky's relationship to Orthodoxy was complicated. In some ways, the pilgrimage to Optina could be interpreted as "a return, of sorts, to the lost world of his own childhood," said Bird. He had given up his social status to become a writer but had hopes that he could regain it with the successful publication of *The Brothers Karamazov*. The visit was also made for emotional rather than spiritual reasons: he had lost his three-year-old son, Aleksey, a month before his pilgrimage. "The novel can be read in part as a therapeutic hymn to the memory of a lost son," Bird said. Alyosha, the hero of the novel, is in fact named after his son.

"[Dostoevsky] was whole-heartedly engaged with modernity which put his Christianity under intense pressure." Robert Bird, Associate Professor in the Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures and the College.

Despite the circumstances surrounding his pilgrimage, Dostoevsky had long been fascinated with Orthodoxy. At the same time, "he was whole-heartedly engaged with modernity, which put his Christianity under intense pressure," Bird explained.

It can be tempting for readers to associate his pilgrimage and the centrality of the monastery as proof that he acquired faith toward the end of his life (Dostoevsky died four months after the publication of *The Brothers Karamazov*). "To see this return as a simple act of faith would be a gross misunderstanding and misreading of the final novel," Bird said.

Dostoevsky, moreover, was far from an ascetic. He was an urban dweller and enjoyed its conveniences. He was profane, sensual, and wrote passionate letters to his second wife, Anna, in the midst of writing a section in the novel on Fr. Zosima, bearing "witness to the close proximity between the sacred and profane in his imagination," Bird said.

Nonetheless, he expressed his allegiance to traditional Orthodoxy, calling it a gift that Russia bore for the world, and even saw it as redemptive for a modern world that for Dostoevsky had lost its faith in Christ. Orthodoxy was a "light from the East," Bird said, quoting Dostoevsky in a letter to a friend.

Dostoevsky's Christianity was "idiosyncratic," according to Bird. He compared Homer to Christ, met with sooth-sayers, and tried to access the fourth dimension. It comes as a surprise, then, that Fr. Zosima, the charismatic elder, was a paragon of wisdom and reason, as well as a gentle soul, "chatting with the birds, and the other small creatures, patiently accepting all manner of humiliation." Since the novel sets the standard by which Orthodoxy is judged, it is difficult to say whether someone would encounter a monk like Fr. Zosima if they visited a Russian Orthodox monastery. Critics of Dostoevsky's depiction of Orthodoxy claim that the image of Zosima is "rosy Christianity" and foreign to ascetic rigor.

Dostoevsky from page 4

Whatever Dostoevsky's own religious convictions, Bird argued that in *The Brothers Karamazov* he refuses to present Orthodoxy as simplistic or a panacea to the ills of modern life. Though his depiction of Orthodoxy may be a distortion, Dostoevsky was pursuing a different kind of truth: "In art, if not in life, Dostoevsky found any doctrinal solutions—even the most sympathetic—to be dangerous oversimplifications capable of constraining the human ability to act freely and in a manner true to material life," said Bird.



Listening to Bird's lecture on Dostoevsky

Forthright Oxford Philosopher Anscombe Enjoys Renaissance

Gertrude Elizabeth Margaret Anscombe is considered one of the greatest philosophers of the latter half of the twentieth-century. In fact, according to a January 7, 2011 article in *The New York Times*, large international gatherings of philosophers have recently met in Chicago, Princeton, Rome, Uppsala, and Basel to advance their understanding of her work. Anscombe and her husband, Peter Geach, were also ardent defenders of Catholic teaching, and both played a role in shaping a philosophical movement that has since come to be known as *Analytic Thomism*.

The fact that analytic philosophers have recently returned to a serious study of Anscombe's writings should not come as a surprise. Anglo-American analytic philosophy is well known for its clarity and precision of argument, and for tackling contemporary philosophical problems in short, densely argued articles. Anscombe, who first studied St. Thomas at Blackfriars Hall, Oxford, was especially well suited to write in this fashion, given her study of the Medieval *Questio* format in which Aquinas wrote.

Anscombe first achieved international repute as the literary executor and pupil of the influential Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein, though she quickly became established as a leading philosopher in her own right. Her monograph on the nature of human action, *Intention*, has become a classic of twentieth-century analytic philosophy. Furthermore, the publication of her withering critique of modern philosophical ethics in 1958 is often taken to be a watershed event in moral theory. In that justly famous and influential piece, Anscombe suggested that philosophers ought to return their attention to the concept of the virtues—and in particular, the virtue of justice—as the necessary means to achieving a good human life. Many philosophers have since followed Anscombe's lead, and soon after its publication, the movement known as virtue ethics was set in motion, and it continues to attract many contemporary philosophers and theologians.



Anselm Müller, Professor Emeritus, University of Trier

A model for engagement with the issues of her age, Anscombe was no stranger to controversy. At a time when women barely had a toehold in the British academy, she was both a professor and mother of seven children. Though she was breaking new ground for women in the academy, Anscombe was hardly a conventional feminist; after all, she was ardently and publicly opposed to the practice of contraception as a violation of the virtue of chastity within marriage. In a series of prescient articles, she argued that acceptance of contraception would have two unintended and socially devastating consequences: (1) it would lead to the gradual acceptance of abortion, and (2) it would leave us with a distorted picture of the true nature of marriage, which is *essentially* a social institution oriented to the procreation of children and the establishment of the family.

Anscombe was also a very outspoken critic of British and American policy during the Second World War. In fact, while still an undergraduate she made international news by publicly protesting Oxford University's decision to award President Harry Truman an honorary degree; she was opposed to the award on the grounds that Truman had clearly committed the mass murder of innocent Japanese men, women, and children when he called for the use of atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Her arguments relied heavily on the Church's teachings on the nature of human action, and the moral teaching of St. Paul, that *we may never do evil that good may come*.

Professor Anselm Müller, a Visiting Scholar at the Lumen Christi Institute and Visiting Professor in the Department of Philosophy this past spring quarter, has played an important role in spreading interest in Anscombe's thought amongst contemporary philosophers. A student of Anscombe's in the early sixties, Müller's own work has developed key Anscombian themes on the nature of intentional action, practical reason, and the virtuous life. Like Anscombe and Aquinas, he has argued that one ought to act in certain ways and for certain reasons because those actions contribute to a good life, not because of some good consequences the action might be thought to bring about.

During his stay in Chicago, Müller fully participated in the life of the University of Chicago Department of Philosophy. He taught an advanced graduate seminar on Elizabeth Anscombe's writings on metaphysics, ethics, and the philosophy of mind. He also gave the keynote address in the conference on the Department of Philosophy hosted in his honor (in collaboration with Lumen Christi) titled "Virtue, Action, and Reason." On May 10, he gave a lecture for Lumen Christi on "The Importance of Elizabeth Anscombe." He also provided comments to a lecture that Candace Vogler gave for the Institute on May 24 called "Right Reason," which addressed Aquinas's theory of the virtues. Müller's time in Chicago has not only enriched his own research, but that of many University of Chicago faculty and graduate students as well.

Institute News

Schola Antiqua, LCI Artists-in-Residence, Premiere New Work of Sacred Music

While usually performing music composed prior to 1600, Schola Antiqua of Chicago teamed up with members of two Grammy award-winning ensembles, Eighth Blackbird and Pacifica Quartet, to perform a new work of sacred music, arranged by Chicago-based composer Jacob Bancks.

Bancks's "Litany of the Sacred Heart" received its premiere at Glanz Hall of Roosevelt University in a program of new works offered by Contempo, a new music initiative sponsored by the University of Chicago Presents series. The Lumen Christi Institute sponsored Schola Antiqua's presence at the event.

Michael Alan Anderson, Artistic Director of the Schola Antiqua, was delighted by the audience's standing ovation following the 35-minute performance. "Schola Antiqua, as specialists in the treasury of traditional church music, was a natural choice to perform this work," said Anderson. Almost 300 people attended the presentation of three new compositions as part of the series "Tomorrow's Music Today." In light of the success of this event, Schola Antiqua and Jacob Bancks are making plans to collaborate in the future.

Lumen Christi Welcomes New Staff Members

The Lumen Christi Institute welcomes Bob Cummings, Executive Assistant and Office Manager, and Jennifer Frey, Senior Program Coordinator, to its staff. Bob comes to Lumen Christi after spending six years in Buenos Aires at the service of the Focolare Movement, one of the Church's ecclesial movements. He received a BS in Finance from the University of Illinois at Chicago. After completing a two-year work-study program in Europe, he worked in Mortgage Banking in Los Angeles and then in Catholic Publishing in New York. Bob enjoys studying languages, playing tennis, and running.

Jennifer received her BA in Philosophy and Medieval Studies at Indiana University, with a minor in Classics. She is currently a PhD candidate in Philosophy at the University of Pittsburgh. While finishing her dissertation on practical knowledge and human action, she is working part-time for the Institute. She lives in Hyde Park with her husband, Chris, and three young children, Sebastian, Gianna, and Thomas.



Bob Cummings



Jennifer Frey

WINTER QUARTER 2011: LECTURES AND EVENTS

January 13-February 17 - Non-Credit Course on *The Book of Genesis*, Paul Mankowski, SJ.

January 28 - Symposium: "Knowledge, Metaphysics, and the Information Explosion," Benedict Ashley, OP, and Herman Sinaiko.

February 8 - "Eriugena: The Medieval Irish Genius Between Augustine and Aquinas," Willemien Otten.

February 16 - "The Freedom of a Christian," Marilynne Robinson.

February 21 - "A Philosophical Reading of the Prodigal Son," Kevin Hart.

February 26 - Visit to Monastery of the Holy Cross, "Contemplation and Meditation," lecture by Fr. Peter Funk, OSB.

February 28 - "The Christian Mystic in a Post-Modern Culture," Maria C. Bingemer and Bernard McGinn.

March 3 - "Decision-Making in the Pressure Cooker: Lessons Learned from the Collapse of Lehman Brothers," Harry Kraemer, Anton Valukas, and Luigi Zingales.

Spring Quarter 2011: Lectures and Events

March 31-April 7 - Non-Credit Course on *The Book of Ruth*, Paul Mankowski, SJ.

April 2-3 - University of Chicago Philosophy Department hosts a conference entitled, "Virtue, Action, and Reason" in honor of the Spring 2011 Lumen Christi Visiting Scholar, Anselm Müller. Co-sponsored by the Lumen Christi Institute.

April 13 - "Cardinal Lustiger and the New Spring-time of the Church in Paris," Jean-Luc Marion.

April 16 - Visit to Monastery of the Holy Cross, "Meditation and *Lectio Divina*," lecture by Fr. Peter Funk, OSB.

April 27 - "The Dignity of Being a Substance," Gilles Emery, OP.

April 28 - "A Carnal Love of Concepts or a Work of Mercy?: The Intellectual Life and the Dominican Vocation," Gilles Emery, OP.

April 29 - Theology Colloquium on Aquinas's Trinitarian Theology with Gilles Emery, OP.

May 10 - "The Importance of Elizabeth Anscombe," Anselm Müller.

May 17 - "Dostoevsky's Pilgrimage: Aesthetics and Asceticism in *The Brothers Karamazov*," Robert Bird.

May 22 - "Tomorrow's Music Today," Pacifica Quartet, Eighth Blackbird, and Schola Antiqua.

May 24 - "Right Reason," Candace Vogler with a response by Anselm Müller.

June 1 - "From Natural Law to Human Rights in Jewish Thought," David Novak.

From the Director

Space and Time for God

Several Lumen Christi events this year considered the challenge of integrating the life of the mind with an interior life of prayer and spirituality. Fr. Gilles Emery, OP, considered the topic in his talk on “A Carnal Love of Concepts or a Work of Mercy?: The Intellectual Life and the Dominican Vocation.” In his

lecture “Is There a Christian Philosophy?”, Jean-Luc Marion discussed how Church Fathers such as St. Justin Martyr set forth the Christian life with its spiritual practice as the “true philosophy.” A faculty panel—David Wray (Classics), Lisa Ruddick (English), and Bernard McGinn (Divinity)—opened

“[To] live the Christian intellectual tradition in its integrity, one needs to make time for an interior life and for God.”

the year by considering how important some measure of “spiritual practice” is to an authentic intellectual life, and yet how difficult it is to integrate such within an academic life today.

Monk and theologian at Yale Divinity School, Aidan Kavanagh, wrote of those who fail at this even while making a “Christian” career in the academy:

They remain in academe and are worn down by it...[I]t usually involves a transmutation of faith into one or more surrogates such as scholarship for its own sake, ideological distractions, or some form of involvement in activist causes ...One even encounters colleagues who ... rise, as it seems, above faith only to vanish into therapy, eastern religions, another marriage or some new ideology. Such folks, worn down by the unmanageable welter of modern academe, and dissimulating faith all the while in order to appear respectable, finally succumb to the lure of works which occupy but do not save. As Walker Percy says, they began by blowing their minds and end by blow-drying their hair.

Visiting the campus of many universities or liberal arts colleges, one often finds refreshment in the monastic spirit of the campus layout, whether with buildings of Gothic, Georgian, or Modern architecture. Yet if the architecture invites the soul to breathe, in speaking with colleagues one soon discovers that the “unmanageable welter of modern academe” has so occupied the soul’s love that it has little time to open itself to the transcendent, even when invited to do so by vistas of open space, beautiful buildings, and a soaring chapel steeple or tower.

And yet to live the Christian intellectual tradition in its integrity, one needs to make time for an interior life and for God. Just as he reminded fifteenth-century Europe that repentance lies at the heart of the Christian life, the Dominican St. Vincent Ferrer reminds us of this. His *Treatise on the Spiritual Life* offers guidance for the development of an intellectual life that is united with an interior life and prayer:

Let devotion accompany all your studies, and study less to make yourself learned than to become a saint. Consult God more than your books, and ask him, with humility, to make you understand what you read. Study fatigues and drains the mind and heart. Go from time to time to refresh them at the feet of Jesus Christ under his cross....Interrupt your application by short but fervent ... prayers; never begin or end your study but by prayer. Science is a gift of the Father of lights; do not therefore consider it as barely the work of your own mind or industry.

Such a goal lay at the heart of the concerns of the Catholic scholars at the University of Chicago who founded the Lumen Christi Institute in 1997—that we might better follow the guidance of St. Vincent and the example of St. Justin Martyr!




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Thomas Levergood

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Summer 2011

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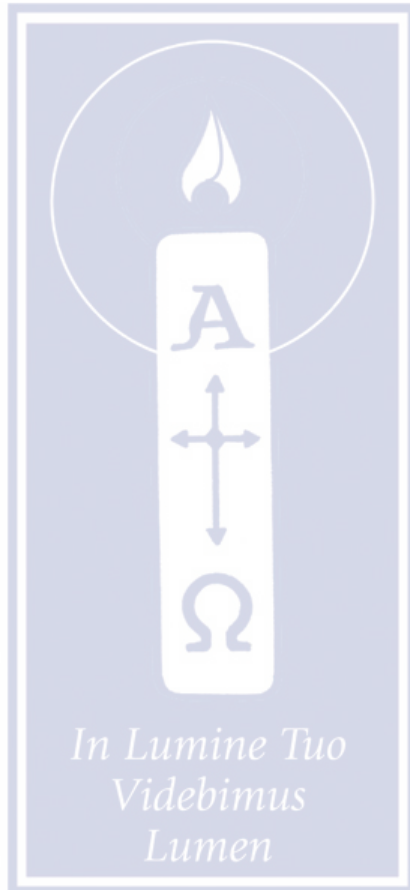
Jean-Luc Marion, David Tracy, and Gilles Emery, OP



Robert Bird answers questions after Dostoevsky lecture



Reception after Emery's lecture on "The Dignity of Being a Substance"



Fr. Brian Paulson, SJ, and Kevin E. White prior to Emery's lecture on "A Carnal Love of Concepts or a Work of Mercy?"