

December 2017



## From the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The third Sunday in the season of Advent--Gaudete Sunday-- always moves me to think of one of my favorite Christmas carols titled, not surprisingly, *Gaudete*. There are many excellent versions of this late medieval piece, but I think my favorite is the one recorded by the English folk band, Steeleye Span. My guess is that this version best approximates the original setting and you can listen to it [here](#) to see what you think.

The text of the carol is one part prayer, one part theological lesson:

Gaudete, gaudete, Christus est natus  
Ex Maria virgine, gaudete  
Gaudete, gaudete, Christus est natus  
Ex Maria virgine, gaudete

"Rejoice, rejoice" the prayer goes, for "Christ is born of the Virgin Mary." This is the central reason for the season, the central prayer of the Church. The core theological mystery of Christianity is communicated in the exhortation and becomes for us an intellectual premise on which to meditate. "Christ is born of the Virgin Mary"--we say it so automatically and reflexively. But, lest we forget, this divine moment disrupts all logic and

demands vigilant contemplation and engagement--"incessant prayer," as St. Paul has it, in this Sunday's second reading. For the Incarnation of God celebrated in the carol is no quotidian event; it is, rather, the axial miracle upon which the great world spins. It depends upon a young woman from Nazareth to bring it to fruition. It critiques a social reality, with all of its complications, in its account of the historical experience of Holy Family struggling to stay together in dangerous times. It enflashes the intimacy of the divine and the articulates the depth of God's love. So unique is the shape and meaning of Christ's Nativity. So inexhaustible the mystery of God's Incarnation. Gaudete.

Joy, too, is a disruptive event. It is more than a feeling, more than a biochemical process. It is, rather, a species of God's grace breaking through to meet us and giving us a nourishing glimpse and taste of what Hopkins would call "the dearest freshness deep down things." Perhaps this is why St. Paul locates the center of Christian life as a call to three practices that would engender the increase of joy, that would open our hearts and minds to God: "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks."

It is delightful to note that this year's Gaudete Sunday happens to coincide with the 81st birthday of Pope Francis. One never wants to squeeze false meaning out of happenstances such as this, but in this case, there is good reason to celebrate the coincidence. For Pope Francis is, above all things, a living practitioner and a paragon of Christian Joy. It colors his writing ("*Evangeli Gaudium*" and *Amoris Laetitia*) and it is the main refrain of his homilies. Even as he indicts the hard realities of the neglected poor, the shunned refugee, and the hardening of 21st century hearts, joy in Christ is the consistent message that Pope Francis conveys to the world--in disposition, word, and action.

CCIH will be marking the fifth anniversary of Pope Francis's election to the papacy later in the spring semester with a keynote provided by Dr. Massimo Faggioli of Villanova University and reflections by special guests. We will table details about this commemoration until our next newsletter. February and early March are packed enough with excellent programming and we are hoping you will attend our events and/or share the calendar with your students, families, and friends. Four top tier programs kick off the spring semester, including a visit from the great George Saunders on March 1st. Please see below for details--and for recommended reading-- and we hope to see soon. Until then,

A Peaceful Advent and Blessed Christmas to all.

Gaudete!

Dr. Michael P. Murphy

LOOKING AHEAD  
SPRING 2018 EVENTS

Cardinal Newman Lecture



From Javert to Jesus: An  
Atheist's Conversion

Presenter: [Leah Libresco](#)

Thursday, February 8th  
7:00 PM

Sr. Jean Dolores Schmidt,  
BVM Multi-Purpose Room  
Damen Student Center  
Loyola University Chicago  
Lake Shore Campus

970 W. Sheridan Rd.  
Chicago, IL 60660

*This Event is Free and Open  
to the Public.*

**Colloquium:  
Faith & Neuroscience**



Perspectives on Personhood:  
Resources in Science,  
Philosophy, and Theology

Keynote: [William Jaworski](#),  
Fordham University

**Tuesday, February 20th**  
1:00 - 6:00 PM

**Klarcheck Information  
Commons**

Loyola University Chicago  
Lake Shore Campus  
1032 W. Sheridan Rd.  
Chicago, IL 60660

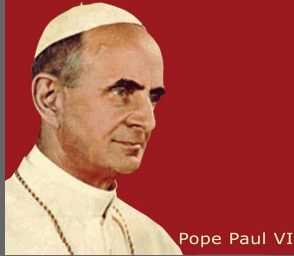
*This Event is Free and Open  
to the Public.*



**PIERRE TEILHARD DE CHARDIN, S.J., LECTURE**  
**Ecclesiology of the Church in Annangland: Personal Portraits of Grace**

[Uwem Akpan](#), award-winning Nigerian author and Hank Center's Fall 2017 Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J., Fellow in Catholic Studies, offered this year's much anticipated Teilhard lecture. Sharing both personal stories and historical background, Akpan described with fascinating nuance realities of the missionary culture of the Catholic Church. Akpan's expertise in the craft of story-telling was on full display as he led his audience to the terrain of the Anaangland of his youth (in southeastern Nigeria) and sketched a series of both graceful encounter and cultural complication. Akpan's sustained meditation not only traced back through several generations of his own family history and native culture, but also addressed the current multicultural situation of the American Church. Akpan's stitching together of a cosmopolitan view of Catholic life and practice was both provocative and nourishing. The Hank Center thanks Mr. Akpan for his warm presence and excellence in teaching. We wish well as he moves his next major work, a novel about New York, to press.

*Humanae  
Vitae*



Pope Paul VI

The Legacy of *Humanae Vitae* and What it Means to be 'Pro-Life'

Wednesday, March 21st  
4:30 - 6:00 PM

Bean Hall  
Loyola University Chicago  
Water Tower Campus  
111 E Pearson St.  
Chicago, IL 60611

Co-sponsored by the [Institute of Pastoral Studies](#).

*This Event is Free and Open to the Public.*



**CATHOLIC Q&A**  
**Catholicism: Called to Tradition or Revolution?**

Guest Columnist: CS Minor, Sylvester Francis Alonz, Class of 2020

Catholic Q&A offers a unique space in which students can gather to discuss faith and to explore how to become fully "alive" in Ignatian spirituality. On November 29th, I was humbled with the opportunity to emcee this semester's Catholic Q&A, entitled "Catholicism: Called to Tradition or Revolution?" As the discussion facilitator, Michael A. Martinez, SJ, a Jesuit scholastic, philosopher, and contemplative rapper engaged participants in an insightful conversation about Catholicism and seeking to love God in all ways.

Mike's presentation set the framework for how to think of Catholicism today: unique, varied, and diverse but ultimately one unified Church. He framed his discussion about being Catholic in the U.S. today, where the Church is undergoing a revolution, around a central question: Was this a revolution of tradition or traditional revolution? Even though being Catholic was different for everyone, people attentively participated with sincere curiosity. Mike also performed his latest "Psalm" rap, titled "Mask Off", in which he demonstrated traditional revolution, which uses a constantly evolving tradition to redefine our revolutionary faith.

I am an international student from the Republic of Palau (on the Micronesian side of the world), but I am also a Catholic and I identified personally and spiritually with Mike's approach to finding God in all things, specifically in the rich traditions of Catholicism and the work of the Spirit in hip-hop culture. On behalf of the over 70 students who attended the event, I thank Mike for his work and celebrate the way he is integrating serious theology with the means of cultural and artistic expression.

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# CALL FOR PAPERS

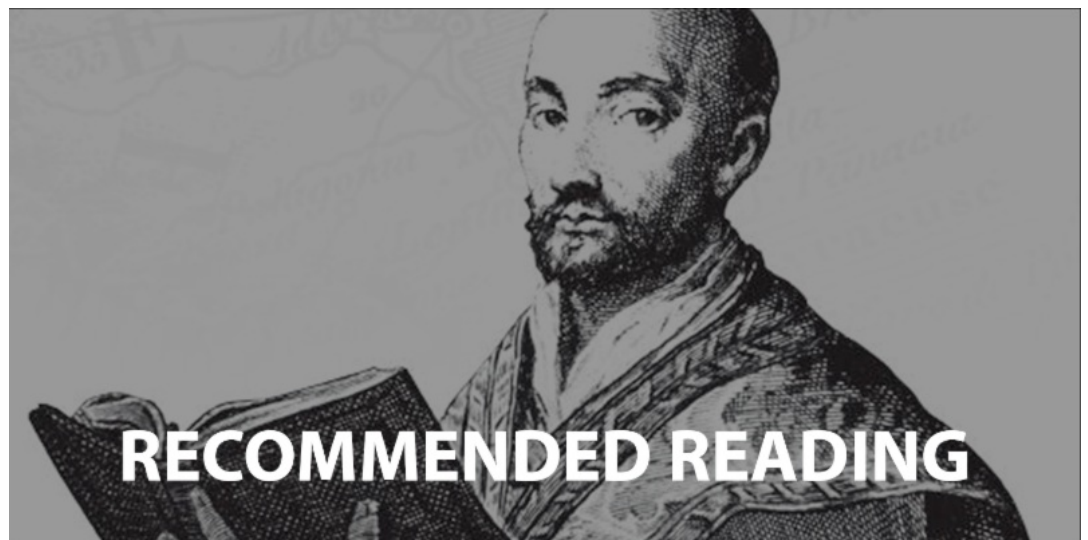
GOOD GOD, BUT LIFE COULD BE LESS THAN EASY:  
GEORGE SAUNDERS AND THE FICTION OF  
RADICAL HUMANISM



## UPCOMING CONFERENCE CALL FOR PAPERS

### Good God But Life Could Be Less Than Easy: George Saunders and the Fiction of Radical Humanism

Loyola University Chicago is seeking abstract proposals for a day-long event featuring critically-acclaimed fiction author [George Saunders](#). On the occasion of the upcoming release of the softcover version of [Lincoln in the Bardo](#) (winner of the 2017 Man Booker Prize for Fiction) and the recent publication of [George Saunders: Critical Essays](#) (Palgrave, 2017), Loyola's Hank Center, in collaboration with other university communities, seeks to explore, interrogate, and celebrate Saunders's work. You can learn more about the conference and call for papers at the [event webpage](#). For those who are not able to participate in the symposium, fret not. We will be hosting a lively evening event with George in Mundelein Auditorium on March 1st from 8-9:30. Stay tuned for details!



## RECOMMENDED READING

Each month CCIH will recommend new and notable books that integrate, interrogate, and celebrate the Catholic intellectual and artistic tradition.

[Incarnadine: Poems](#) (2013)

By Mary Szybist

Leading her readers through an array of richly imagined encounters, Szybist creatively expresses poetic sentiment through diverse mediums, including a diagrammed sentence, an abecedarium, Annunciations, and lines of dialogue. Blending

conventional and innovative aesthetics, Szybist's poems boldly recasts the Blessed Mary, offering alternative visions through lyrical yearning. This restless and inventive collection of poems is perfect Christmas reading. *Incarnadine* was named to Best Book of the Year lists by NPR, Slate, Oregonian, Kansas City Star, Willamette Week, and Publishers Weekly, and named Amazon's Best Book of the Year in Poetry 2013.

**[Mr. Ives Christmas](#)** (2003)

By Oscar Hijuelos

Another solid read for the Christmas season is this gem from 2003. In no way a sentimental work, Hijuelos' novel presents the perennial issue of faith in the face of tragedy. Weaved into the narrative of Mr. Ives, whose life and faith in God and humanity is throw into question when a terrible tragedy befalls him at Christmas. Part love story and part meditation on how a person can find spiritual peace in the midst of crisis, Mr. Ives' Christmas is a compelling story of one man struggling to put his life in perspective. In the expert hands of Oscar Hijuelos, the novel speaks eloquently to the most basic and fulfilling aspects of human existence-- a Christmas story if there ever was one.

**[Building the Human City: William F. Lynch's Ignatian Spirituality for Public Life](#)** (2016)

By John F. Kane with a Foreword by Kevin F. Burke

Kane's text provides a first rate overview of the work of Jesuit philosopher William F. Lynch. Writing from the 1950s to the mid-1980s, Lynch was not only a literary theorist, but a pioneering "social critic," and one of the first to warn against the fierce cultural and political polarizations that are prevalent in our society today. In his diverse works, Lynch calls for transformation and encourages healing discernment through imagination, while also addressing critical ironies of an Ignatian (and Socratic) spirituality. Kane's presentation in this collection brings to the forefront, perhaps for the first time, Lynch's unified vision of transformation, which is arguably more necessary now than when it was first written. A masterly study of a great Jesuit and scholar who more readers should know.

**[The Intellectual Life: It's Spirit, Conditions, Methods](#)** (1946, 1992)

By A. G. Sertillanges, OP (translated by Mary Ryan) with a foreword by James V. Schall, SJ

A perfect stocking stuffer, A.G. Sertillanges's book is equal parts romantic evocation of the spiritual dignity of the life of scholarship and practical advice to the aspiring young intellectual. Do you want to do intellectual work? This is the central question to which Fr. Sertillanges, orients this book of timeless teachings. First published in 1920, *The Intellectual Life* has been acclaimed for both its scholarly and practical approaches to both scholarly habits of mind and vocation discernment. Providing generations of scholars with robust foundation in intellectual practices and sensibilities, this book is a must read for any young (or even not so young) scholar.

## Contact Us

Loyola University Chicago

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Chicago, IL 60660

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## About the Center

The Joan and Bill Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage exists to help faculty and students recognize and research Roman Catholic thought and its link to all academic disciplines in the university. It also seeks to convey that

thought to other audiences inside and outside Loyola University Chicago.