



From the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

The season of Lent is upon us, a time when Christian communities around the world commit themselves to reflection, repentance, almsgiving, and self-denial. The English word “Lent” comes from the Old English “lencten,” which means “lengthen.” The days begin to last a little longer and the sun begins to shine a little brighter as spring returns again to renew the land and our winter-worn (and our Covid-worn) spirits.

The season always reminds me that we are ever and always on a journey, or in Ignatian language, that we are pilgrims together on the Camino. Yesterday’s Gospel (and Mark’s account of the Transfiguration of Jesus) put me again in this frame of mind as I reflected on the journey of Jesus as he makes his way to Jerusalem and the violent death that awaits him. It is a most significant moment in the Gospel and things truly pivot from it. I was struck yesterday that the Transfiguration is more about the Apostles than anything else, even if it distills so much, in an efficient narrative space, about our lives together in God. We who have read the story know who Jesus is; but it is the Apostles who are confronted with the mystery of Jesus’s divinity for the first time. This is a convulsive moment in their journey, to be sure.

As moved as I am by the mystery of the Transfiguration, I always think of the central event that immediately precedes it whenever I hear or read the story: Peter as obstacle to the pilgrim, salvific journey of Jesus. Matthew’s Gospel describes the stakes of this more pointedly than Mark’s, I think. Jesus’s famous reprimand to Peter to “Get behind me, Satan!” when Peter suggests that Jesus make a course-correction to his pilgrimage is rendered in no uncertain terms. But it is what comes next that occupies my attention and which orients us to a way of thinking about Lent: “You are an obstacle to me,” says Jesus to Peter, “You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do.” This is the call of Lent: to slow down and to question our thinking, to name the *skandalon*-- the “obstacle impediments”-- in our pilgrim paths. Whether we retreat to the unreflective zones of our “autopilot” ruts or to the default responses we murmur reflexively at complex problems, we are called to uproot habits of mind and action that impede the renewing creativity of God in our lives. To think about this in terms of Ignatian spirituality, we are called to “act against” (from the tradition of “agere contra” outlined in the Spiritual Exercises)-- to act directly against personal behaviors and patterns of thought that fail

to give life or that leave us with a false sense of consolation.

Had Jesus imitated Peter's ambition, the two would have likely begun competing for the leadership of some politicized "Jesus movement," as René Girard has so consistently shown. Sensing danger, Jesus vehemently interrupts Peter: "Get behind me, Satan, you are a *skandalon* to me"; and we should sense this danger as well as we move through this most rare Lent unfolding as it is in pandemical times. This is to say that we need the innovation of new solutions; and that we need the wisdom of older ones too.

As the quartet descends the mountain, and Jesus instructs Peter, James, and John to "tell no one", we know (as the Apostles do not) that the violent, unprecedented events of the coming months have been set into motion. It is almost impossible to conceive, that such horror could paradoxically reveal the true God, as Girard reminds us: "Since the time of the Gospels, humankind as a whole has always failed to comprehend this mystery, and it does so still-- despite the fact that present-day circumstances combine to make the revelation ever more plain."

The Center's events this month are as much about *skandalon* and the stumbling blocks that impede true communion as they are about making things plain. Our guests will name-- each in their own way-- various obstacles that impede paths to peace, justice, health, and holiness. From tomorrow's event on just labor practices, to our March 11th foray into war, peace, and the Catholic imagination, to March 23rd and our dialogue about entrenched power structures in Catholic higher education, to our March 25th lecture on how God aides us in the removal of impediments and draws us nearer through the precious gift of the intellect, we will be treated to an edifying series of conversations that will, with a good ear, surely transfigure. We hope to see you for these important dialogues.

Warmest Regards,

Dr. Michael P. Murphy

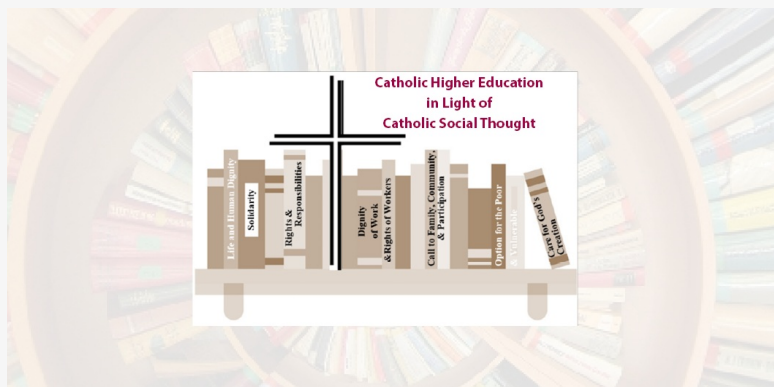
Conversations on the Catholic Imagination



A public voices archive featuring writers, poets, playwrights, and more. Recorded at the 2019 Catholic Imagination Conference.

Hank Fellowships in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition for Graduate Students

Ongoing Series: Catholic Higher Education in Light of Catholic Social Thought



Upcoming Zoom events:

March 2, 7:00 PM CST | [Register](#)

Help Wanted: Labor Policies, Problems, and Opportunities

Featuring Joseph A. McCartin (Georgetown University) with a response from Daniel P. Rhodes (Loyola University Chicago)

March 23, 7:00 PM CDT | [Register](#)

Beyond Patriarchy: Women and Lay Leadership

Featuring Catherine Punsalan-Manlimos (University of Detroit Mercy) with a response from Kathleen Maas Weigert (Loyola University Chicago)



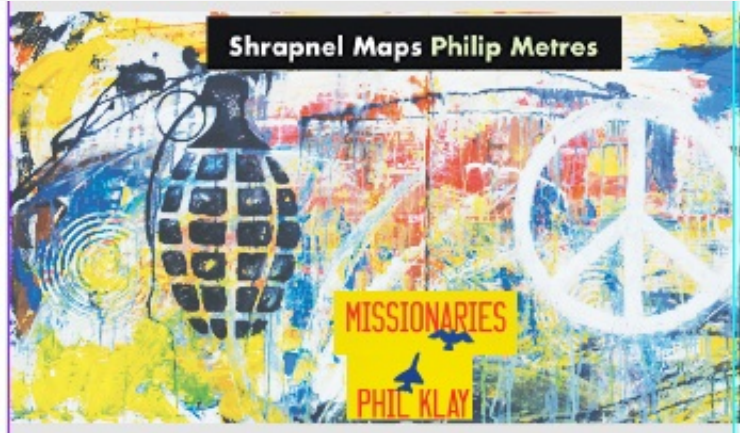
Funded by a generous grant from Loyola University Chicago's Jesuit Community, the Hank Fellowships in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition support graduate students who have demonstrated superior academic achievement and offer promise as scholars, teachers, and authors who will contribute to the dynamic life of the Catholic intellectual tradition. The Hank Center selects the fellowship recipients and administers the awards.

Applications are due by March 29th, 2021 for the award term of July 2021 to May 2022.

These events are free and open to the public. Registration required.

Videos of Past Events in this Series

War, Peace, and the Catholic Imagination



Featuring national book award winning novelist Phil Klay and multiple award winning poet Philip Metres discussing how violence, warfare, and oppression are mediated through an imagination that knows the profound failure of such human endeavors. Part of our series of Conversations on the Catholic Imagination.

March 11
4:00 PM CST
Zoom Forum

This event is free and open to the public. [Registration required.](#)

2021 Saint John Henry Newman Lecture: Jennifer Frey



Jennifer Frey, Associate Professor of Philosophy at the University of South Carolina, offers this year's Newman Lecture,

which invites scholars to recount their own discovery of the Catholic intellectual tradition in light of their ongoing research and thought. Dr. Frey's talk is titled "From the Rust Belt to Rome: The Conversion of a Working-Class Atheist." All are welcome!

March 25
4:00 PM CDT
Zoom Forum

This event is free and open to the public. [Registration required.](#)

Gema Kloppe-Santamaría Named a 2020 Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation Distinguished Scholar



Gema Kloppe-Santamaría, Assistant Professor of History and a past recipient of a Hank Center research grant, has been named a [2020 Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation Distinguished Scholar](#).

The Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation (HFG) awards yearly a Distinguished Scholar Award to a number of scholars working "to increase understanding of the causes, manifestations, and control of violence and aggression." The award is very competitive as citizens from any nationality and discipline can apply. Only 15 projects were selected this year.

Dr. Kloppe-Santamaría's project, "In the Name of Christ: Religious Violence and its Legitimacy in Mexico (1920-2020)," which took initial shape under a Hank Center grant, seeks to examine the contentious and complex relation between religion and violence in Mexico by identifying the theological, political, and cultural drivers that have served to legitimize or delegitimize Catholics' use of violence across different periods of time. In tune with the HFG's goals her research aims at contributing to broader conversations regarding the apparent rise of religious violence at a global scale and the ways in which faith-based communities can contribute to identify it, prevent it, and work towards more peaceful societies.

With this support, she will be able to continue carrying out archival work, interviews, and oral histories and begin writing a new book based on this research throughout this year.

The Hank Center is honored to support the research of Loyola faculty and we are thrilled by this news. Congratulations, Dr. Kloppe-Santamaría!

RECOMMENDED READING



In the spirit of cultivating the Catholic intellectual and artistic tradition, CCIH recommends new and notable books several times a year that integrate, interrogate, and celebrate Catholicism in dialogue with the world.

This month we are highlighting works by some of our upcoming speakers, a book to read in preparation for the [School of Environmental Sustainability's](#) upcoming Climate Change Conference, co-sponsored by the Hank Center, and more.

[*Missionaries*](#) (2020)
by Phil Klay

A group of Colombian soldiers prepares to raid a drug lord's safe house on the Venezuelan border. They're watching him with an American-made drone, about to strike using military tactics taught to them by U.S. soldiers who honed their skills to lethal perfection in Iraq. In *Missionaries*, Phil Klay examines the globalization of violence through the interlocking stories of four characters and the conflicts that define their lives.

Drawing on six years of research in America and Colombia into the effects of the modern way of war on regular people, Klay has written a novel of extraordinary suspense infused with geopolitical sophistication and storytelling instincts that are second to none. *Missionaries* is a window not only into modern war, but into the individual lives that go on long after the drones have left the skies.

[*Shrapnel Maps*](#) (2020)
by Philip Metres

Writing into the wounds and reverberations of the Israel/Palestine conflict, Philip Metres' fourth book of poems, *Shrapnel Maps*, is at once elegiac and activist, an exploratory surgery to extract the slivers of cartography through palimpsest and erasure. A wedding in Toura, a suicide bombing in Jerusalem, uneasy interactions between Arab and Jewish neighbors in University Heights, the expulsion of Palestinians in Jaffa, another bombing in Gaza: *Shrapnel Maps* traces the hurt and tender places, where political noise turns into the voices of Palestinians and Israelis. Working with documentary flyers, vintage postcards, travelogues, cartographic language, and first person testimonies, *Shrapnel Maps* ranges from monologue sonnets to prose vignettes, polyphonics to blackouts, indices to simultaneities, as Palestinians and Israelis long for justice and peace, for understanding and survival.

[*Self-Transcendence and Virtue: Perspectives from Philosophy, Psychology, and Theology*](#) (2020)
edited by Jennifer A. Frey and Candace Vogler

Recent research in the humanities and social sciences suggests that individuals who understand themselves as belonging to something greater than the self—a family, community, or religious or spiritual group—often feel happier, have a deeper sense of purpose or meaning in their lives, and have

overall better life outcomes than those who do not. Some positive and personality psychologists have labeled this location of the self within a broader perspective "self-transcendence." This book presents and integrates new, interdisciplinary research into virtue, happiness, and the meaning of life by re-orienting these discussions around the concept of self-transcendence.

[Religion in the Anthropocene](#) (2017)

edited by Celia Deane-Drummond, Sigurd Bergmann, and Markus Vogt

This book charts a new direction in humanities scholarship through serious engagement with the geopolitical concept of the Anthropocene. Drawing on religious studies, theology, social science, history and philosophy, and can be broadly termed the environmental humanities, this collection represents a groundbreaking critical analysis of diverse narratives on the Anthropocene. The contributors to this volume recognize that the Anthropocene began as a geological concept, the age of the humans, but that its implications are much wider than this. Will the Anthropocene have good or bad ethical outcomes? Does the Anthropocene idea challenge the possibility of a sacred Nature, which shores up many religious approaches to environmental ethics? Or is the Anthropocene a secularized theological anthropology more properly dealt with through traditional concepts from Catholic social teaching on human ecology? Do theological traditions, such as Christology, reinforce negative aspects of the Anthropocene? Not all contributors in this volume agree with the answers to these different questions. Readers will be challenged, provoked, and stimulated by this book.

[Pedro Arrupe: Witness of the Twentieth Century, Prophet of the Twenty-First](#) (2020)

by Pedro Miguel Lamet

Pedro Miguel Lamet researched Arrupe's life for five years in Rome, Japan, and the Basque Country, and he had the privilege of spending many hours conversing with Arrupe after he had suffered a debilitating stroke. Drawing on a vast variety of sources, Lamet has written this entertaining and captivating biography, which has been revised several times and is already a classic, available now for the first time in English. Fr. Adolfo Nicolás, S.J., the 30th Superior General of the Society of Jesus states in the prologue, "this biography has the merit of being the very first to trace with fidelity [Pedro Arrupe's] human and spiritual profile and to make it available to a larger public."

[Latin American Theology: Roots and Branches](#) (2016)

by Maria Clara Bingemer

With the emergence of liberation theology in the 1970s, Latin American theology made a bold entrance on the world scene. The immediate roots of this theology were in the efforts of the Latin American bishops at the Medellin Conference in 1968 to reflect on the implications of the Second Vatican Council for a continent marked by poverty and social injustice. That conference charted a new "preferential option for the poor," and it also fostered a new method of theology, rooted in the experience and perspective of those on the margins.

Maria Clara Bingemer, a key protagonist in the development of Latin American theology, provides a succinct summary of this history and its distinctive elements. She goes on to show how this theology grew and adapted to new challenges, including the issues of gender, the role of indigenous voices, concern for ecology, and dialogue with other religious traditions.

[Via Negativa](#) (2020)

by Daniel Hornsby

Father Dan is homeless. Dismissed by his conservative diocese for eccentricity and insubordination, he's made his exile into a kind of pilgrimage, transforming his Toyota Camry into a mobile monk's cell. Like the ascetic religious philosophers he idolizes, he intends to spend his trip in peaceful contemplation. But then he sees a minivan sideswipe a coyote. Unable to suppress his Franciscan impulses, he takes the wild animal in, wrapping its broken leg with an old T-shirt and feeding it Spam with a plastic spoon.

With his unexpected canine companion in the backseat, Dan makes his way west, encountering other offbeat travelers and stopping to take in the occasional roadside novelty (MARTIN'S HOLE TO HELL, WORLD-FAMOUS BOTTOMLESS PIT NEXT EXIT!). But the coyote is far from the only oddity fate has delivered into this churchless priest's care: it has also given him a bone-handled pistol, a box of bullets, and a letter from his estranged friend Paul—a summons of sorts, pulling him forward.

By the time Dan gets to where he's going, he'll be forced to reckon once and for all with the great mistakes of his past, and he will have to decide: is penance better paid with revenge, or with redemption?

Contact Us

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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.

