



## From the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Welcome back to another year at the Hank Center. Our work here continues to grow in both our integration of the wide-ranging fruits of the Catholic intellectual heritage and in our engagement with contemporary culture. For better and worse, there is no dearth of topics with which to engage; and it is becoming quite clear that the convulsions we are experiencing at the dawn of the 21st century-- in technology, culture, politics, and religion--bear a striking resemblance to another most convulsive age: the dawn of the 16th century and the world the Jesuits found themselves in as pioneers of the modern age.

Now, as then, we are called to realize our lives in God as *mysterion*--as "mystery"--a reasoned understanding that corrects and transcends the myopia of closed intellectual systems--of both ancient gnosticism and modern rationalism--to cite two examples. Both the early Christians and pilgrims of the 16th century, the first Jesuits, understood this. They knew, in their own particular ways, that we are personal and historical actors in a great drama and what we do matters. In this sense--- and in a sense that is quite literally "synodal"-- we are called today to continue to think with the Church in a shared posture of *semper reformanda* so that, in the prayerful spirit that Gerard Manley Hopkins counsels, we may keep grace, might keep all of "our goings graces."

It is in this spirit that I reflect back on all the graces of a most active summer at the Hank Center. From hosting and facilitating our first [Common Home Corps](#) (a grant-

bearing initiative that was hatched directly from our first [Building Bridges event with Pope Francis](#) in 2022) to hosting over 50 readers from across the nation for our first [Reading the Catholic Imagination](#) summer reading groups to working with our excellent thirteen (13) Hank [Fellows of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition](#) to hosting a most nourishing conference on Jesuit Scholarship in Secular Age last month. All of this and supporting our ten (10) person delegation of Loyola undergraduates as they journeyed to Lisbon, Portugal, to gather with their colleagues—and the Holy Father—for World Youth Day. Read more about each of these beautiful, substantive experiences below.

Speaking of Building Bridges, the public side of our fall programming **gets going on September 26th**—our third stop with Pope Francis as he Zooms around the world and converses with students from every corner of the marvelous globe. [Please join us on the 8AM livestream](#) and learn how our friends in South Asia think about being church in the context of their lives as students and as young people. We follow up on October 12 with a compelling event on the notion of [“Cathonomics” with Tony Annett](#). Registration is limited and there but a few spots left. We also look forward to a visit from Dr. Marco Impagliazzo of the Sant’Egidio community on October 19 and then conclude October with a major conference/workshop for poets (and those for whom the Catholic-Christian Imagination is a cherished habit of being) on October 27 and 28: [The Poets of Presence: Faith, Form, and Forging Community](#). The conference features a keynote and reading with the great Christian Wiman. All are welcome-- but note please that registration (and a nominal fee) are required.

Finally, it is a true delight to welcome the newest member of our Hank Center Community: Dr. Joe Vukov. Joe has been a friend of the Center for many years—and one of its most frequent collaborators. From co-convening several Hank events and initiatives to serving on the faculty of our Faculty Seminar and serving on our affiliated Catholic Studies faculty, Joe has been moving in the Hank direction for many moons and we are delighted that he has accepted our invitation to serve as Associate Director. Welcome, Joe!

Dear friends, we very much appreciate your engagement with the Hank Center and our work. Here's to another year of engaging, interrogating, and celebrating Roman Catholic thought and culture at Loyola University Chicago-- and beyond. Prayers for healthy October dialogues in Rome, and,

Warmest Regards,

Dr. Michael P. Murphy

## Hank Center Highlights

### Fall 2023 Event Calendar

## Building Bridges with Pope Francis in South Asia

### The Conversation Continues on 9/26





The Hank Center has exciting programs lined up for the rest of the calendar year. You will not want to miss these thought provoking events. A full calendar of our Fall event offerings can be found on our website by clicking the link below.

[Visit our Website](#)

**Nexus Volume 2  
Robots and Rituals:  
Reflections on Faith  
in the Era of Science  
and AI**



The second volume of *Nexus, Robots and Rituals: Reflections on Faith in the Era of Science and AI*, is now available! The issue transports us into the exciting and complicated present where faith, science, digital culture, and AI collide. As ever, the Catholic Intellectual Tradition is a key resource and intervention in these conversations. Read on and let us know what you think!



Building Bridges Across South Asia brings together students from across South Asia for small group dialogue, reflections, and shared discernment around their shared social concerns. Student representatives from each group will dialogue with **Pope Francis via Zoom on September 26, 2023 at 3 p.m.** (Rome). The livestream of the encounter hosted on YouTube will be accessible in three languages: English, Spanish, and Hindi.

Inspired by the call of Pope Francis to synodality, Loyola University Chicago launched the Building Bridges Initiative (BBI), a student-centered and university-organized series of events. The initial event in February 2022, Building Bridges North-South, emerged organically from a collaboration between the Hank Center, IPS, and the Department of Philosophy at LUC-- and the Pontifical Commission for Latin America. This collaboration continues in support of successive events in the curricular, co-curricular, and ecclesial life of students.

To learn more about this upcoming event, you can download the [Building-Bridges-Across-South-Asia-2023-Info-Sheet.pdf](#).

We hope to see you on Tuesday, 9/26. **All are welcome.**

**Highlights from Summer, 2023**

**Common Home Corps**



**What is Common Home Corps?  
by Diana Marin,  
Climate Catholic  
Covenant**

Common Home Corps is a year-long leadership and spiritual formation program for young adults across the U.S.



## Honorary Doctorate Recipient Dr. Emilce Cuda Luncheon



The Hank Center was pleased to welcome Dr. Emilce Cuda who received an honorary doctorate from Loyola University Chicago last week. Our celebratory luncheon, co-hosted by The Department of Mission Integration, the Gannon Center, The Institute for Pastoral Studies, and the Provost's Office, was a true delight. University President, Dr. Mark Reed welcomed luncheon guests, Sr. Jean prepared a beautiful prayer, and Sr. Barbara Reid, OP, President of Catholic Theological Union, and Dra. Maria Vidal de Haymes, Professor in School of Social Work, and Director, Center for Immigrant & Refugee Accompaniment at LUC, offered compelling reflections on leadership and life in the Church and the experience of immigrants. A robust conversation followed. Dra. Cuda is the Secretary of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, a Member of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences and a Member of the Pontifical Academy for Life. She was awarded the degree of Doctor of

Catholic Church. This program is led by Catholic Climate Covenant in collaboration with Loyola University Chicago and Creighton University. Common Home Corps empowers young adults to catalyze climate action in their diocese by building Pope Francis's "culture of encounter." The program trains young leaders (ages 19-37) in select U.S. dioceses to organize local Catholics, meet with their bishop and other leaders, and advocate for climate action that lives the Church's mission: enacting the Vatican's *Laudato Si'* Action Platform with a focus on net zero.

What brought these Common Home Corps leaders together is a shared sense of mission: of caring for our common home from a faith-based perspective. These young adults could engage in climate action outside of the Church, but they have chosen to root their action within their faith. That says a lot. They are involved in Common Home Corps as an expression of their faith and are looking to not only educate about and organize for solutions to the climate crisis, but also to strengthen their community of peers and influence the Church with their leadership.

The training at Loyola University Chicago earlier this summer provided them with theological, missiological, and climate science-backed guidance to be leaders in the Church. They'll be going back to their diocese ready to learn from folks who have been doing this work on the ground, and to urge their diocesan leadership for increased sustainability efforts. The young adult voice is clear: they know it will take all of us working together to address the climate crisis, and they want the US Catholic Church to lead the way by example: committing to the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform and planning for the diocese to become net-zero carbon.

### Common Home Corps Leader Reflections



**Emma Mitchell**  
**Loyola Graduate 2022**

When I graduated, I was certain of the work I wanted to do. Loyola gave me an interdisciplinary education which opened my eyes to how interconnected our world is, and I learned that while injustice is found in every corner, so are people doing joyful and hope-giving work against these

injustices. And my minor in Catholic Studies, through the Hank Center, called me to work in my own faith community with those who are responding to the cries of the most vulnerable.

While I was certain about *what* I felt called to do, I was uncertain about *where* I could find space for this work, for an interdisciplinary approach to injustice which is rooted in joy, and

Humane Letters, *Honoris Causa* at this spring's graduate ceremony.

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**2023 Annual Cardinal Bernardin Common Cause Lecture - Bishop John Stowe, O.F.M. CONV. Reflection**



The Cardinal Bernardin Common Cause lecture series provides Catholic prelates a platform to engage people of good will in common cause with the Church on important issues facing us today. The Hank Center welcomed our 2023 Bernardin Lecturer-- the Most Rev. John Stowe, O.F.M. Conv., Bishop of Lexington, Kentucky, on April 11, 2023.

Rev. Stowe's talk, "The Common Good and Synodality: The Vision of Pope Francis," was followed by a Q&A session. As always, Commonweal cosponsored the Bernardin Lecture and Bishop Stowe's remark will be published in a summer issue.

Watch the  
Lecture

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**Major Conference:**

accessible to young people. For my Catholic Studies Capstone, I reflected on ideas of belonging, and I wondered about where I would find, or form, communities of belonging after leaving Loyola.

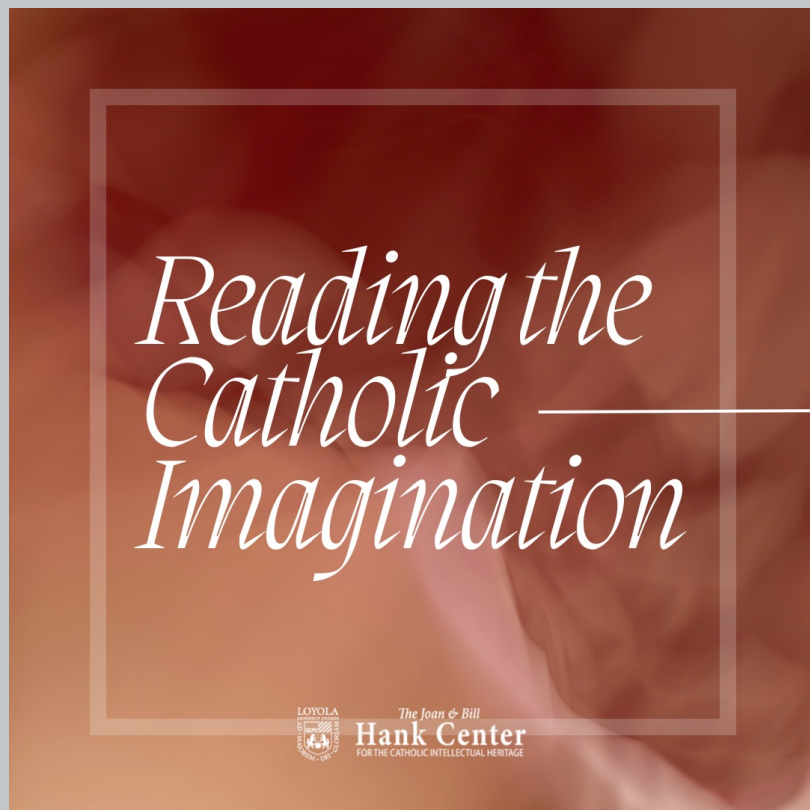
When I heard about Common Home Corps, I was certain that this was where I wanted to be. Here was a group who's work explicitly ties in scientific understanding, policy and organizing, religious communities, and personal faith all in one project: to call the Catholic Church to take up its responsibility and respond to climate crisis. And rather than my youth being a disadvantage, Common Home Corps aims to empower young people to claim their place in the Church and participate in the future of their faith community.

To return to Loyola's campus for Common Home Corps training, one year after my graduation, was incredibly life-giving for me. At training we heard not only dreams, but concrete plans and admirable work already being done by so many others before us *and* alongside us.

Now, I look forward not only to the next year of the Common Home Corps program, but also to the future of the Church. And I am grateful that I have found the space of support and belonging that I have been looking for.

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**Reading the Catholic Imagination**



**Reading the Catholic Imagination** is an online summer reading and discussion series for readers and writers to explore together the Catholic literary imagination in its myriad forms: in new work by self-professed Catholic writers; in the crossings and convergences of old and new work, religious and secular; and in our own habits of reading. This series is hosted by the Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage of Loyola University Chicago and was led last summer by three excellent

## "The Way Forward: Pope Francis, Vatican II, and Synodality"



A major conference at Boston College in March, co-hosted by the Boisi Center for Religion and American Public Life, is believed to be the largest gathering of Catholic leadership at a college campus in the nation's history.

"The Way Forward: Pope Francis, Vatican II, and Synodality," which took place March 3-4, brought together 80 participants—including cardinals, bishops, and other Catholic Church leaders, as well as theologians, historians, and journalists—to discuss synodality, the call by Pope Francis for the universal Church to "walk together," to continue the reception of Vatican II, and to embrace the ecclesiological challenges facing the Church.

The event—co-sponsored by the Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage at Loyola University Chicago (LUC) and the Fordham University Center on Religion and Culture—was a follow-up to the inaugural "Way Forward" conference last spring at Loyola University Chicago. Next year's conference will take

emerging scholars of the Catholic literary tradition.

This year's sessions included:

- Reading Like a (Catholic) Writer with William Gonch
- Crossing Boundaries in the Catholic Imagination with Jessica Schnepf
- Reading With a Catholic Imagination with Lyle Enright

We will convene again next summer. Look for more information (about workshops and applying) in April and May, 2024.

## World Youth Day



*Reflection from Mary Countryman (above, front row second from left),  
Hank Center Undergraduate Student Assistant*

On July 20th, I flew to Lisbon, Portugal and embarked on my first pilgrimage. My experience in Lisbon was two parts- the first, a meeting the Jesuits organized called MAGIS. The second, of course, was World Youth Day. In the first week, we were missioned out to embark upon experiences all over Portugal and Spain. I was blessed to spend it with the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart with 30 Magis participants from 14 different countries.

Praying together and living in community, I grew closer to these 30 men and women in a week than I had with anyone else in such a short time. I cooked dinner with Ndiri from South Sudan, I walked to a volunteer site with Amanda from Zimbabwe, I sang hymns with Fr. Ivan from India, cleaned the dinner table with Rekha from Hungary, and realized that the far off places I heard about were not so different from my life in Chicago. Our humanity is more than enough for complete strangers to become family.

Despite having bi-monthly meetings for an entire semester leading up to Lisbon, I could never have been prepared for World Youth Day itself. Among religious sisters passing out from heat exhaustion and police officers shouting to keep people in line, I felt like cattle being herded, like a sardine

place at the University of San Diego with Fordham to follow in Spring 2025.

Opening keynote speaker Rafael Luciani, an associate professor of the practice in the BC School of Theology and Ministry, and author of *Synodality: A New Way of Proceeding in the Church*, described synodality—a process of fraternal collaboration and discernment—as expressing “a new way of being and proceeding in the Church that has as its point of departure but also its point of arrival in the people of God.”

Concluding the event was Bishop Daniel Flores, Diocese of Brownsville, Tex., and chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Doctrine Committee, who focused on “Collegiality, Synodality, and the Pastoral Vision of Pope Francis.”

The convening was made possible by generous gifts from the Owsley Brown II Foundation, and the GHR Foundation, as well as the sponsoring academic centers.

[Read More About the Conference](#)

**8-Week Catholic Storytelling Workshop with Nick Ripatrazone**

squished in with too many others in a tin.

But in the crowded metro stations, people were singing Christ’s praises. We had fruitful discussions in the 100° heat, and I was able to see Papa Francis only 5 feet away from me! Seeing millions of people gathered in one city just to pray was beautiful, but for me, it seemed more fruitful to just go quietly to mass or adoration, sparing the crowds, heat, and expense. But, as Solomon says, “There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.” I learned that prayer can look like many different things, and I don’t have to be in a silent adoration chapel for God to be able to transform my heart.

This pilgrimage made my heart grow, challenged me, and taught me what I couldn’t have learned anywhere else. It’s okay that prayer, that God, isn’t put in a box. That He is bigger than the tabernacle, that He is grander than wrote prayers or silence, and He is everywhere, not only in the beautiful, reverent, but narrow Catholicism that I have practiced up until now.



*Loyola Students at World Youth Day 2023 - Lisbon, Portugal*

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### **Meet Joe Vukov - The New Associate Director of the Hank Center!**





As part of our commitment to cultivating the Catholic Imagination, the Hank Center is proud to support this exciting workshop--led by Nick Ripatrazone and convened by the Jesuit Conference.

In this course, you will learn how to effectively engage with Catholic storytelling as readers, thinkers and writers; to observe how close reading and attention are spiritual actions. We will read poetry, short nonfiction, and fiction and view film excerpts. We will engage in creative analysis and reflection and write both critically and creatively. Your writing will be shared with our group through workshop; you will receive peer response and instructor feedback.

Remember, do not let the perfect be the enemy of the good for...*"If there were no sins, there wouldn't be art."*

— spoken by a priest to the great Andre Dubus

The Hank Center is delighted to welcome Dr. Joseph Vukov as Associate Director of the Center. Joe is an Associate Professor in the Philosophy Department at Loyola University Chicago. He is also Associate Director of the Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage at Loyola, and an Affiliate Faculty Member in Catholic Studies and Psychology. Nationally, Vukov also serves as the Vice President of Philosopher's in Jesuit Education. Vukov received his PhD from Fordham University, and also holds Certificates in Bioethics and Medical Humanities (Montefiore-Einstein), Health Care Ethics (Fordham), an MA in Humanities (University of Chicago), and BAs in Philosophy and English Literature and Writing (Bethel University).

Joe is at the forefront of conversations in science, religion, and technology—specifically as these dynamics integrate (or collide with) religious belief and unbelief. Along with biologist, Dr. Michael Burns, Joe teaches a very popular, team-taught course “Philosophy and Biology for the Future,” draws scores of students every year—students who are eager for more expansive and careful conversations about religion, science, philosophy—and much more. Joe's research lies at the nexus of intersection of ethics, neuroscience, and philosophy of mind, and at the intersection of science and religion and his most recent foray in this intersection was serving as guest editor of *Nexus*, the Hank Center's journal. In 2022, Joe published *Navigating Faith and Science*, and in 2023, he published *The Perils of Perfection*. In 2020, Joe was named a Sujack Master Teacher and in 2019, was awarded the Provost's Award for Excellence in Teaching Freshmen.

Excelsior, Joe, and Welcome Aboard!

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### Highlighting our Hank Center Graduate Student Fellows: Sanjay Adhikari



**Class begins  
October 18, 2023**

**Class size limited to  
12 students**

**Cost: \$250**

*Sponsored by the  
Jesuit Conference's  
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For More  
Workshop  
Information

Sanjay Adhikari is a Ph.D. candidate in Philosophy at the Center for Thomistic Studies in the University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX. He received his B.A. in Liberal Arts and Sciences from Thomas Aquinas College and an M.A. in Philosophy from the Center for Thomistic Studies. Mr. Adhikari is currently writing his dissertation titled "On the Relation between Immateriality and Intellectual Knowledge," focusing primarily on the Thomistic and Aristotelian philosophical traditions. His dissertation studies and intends to elucidate St. Thomas Aquinas's principle underlying the Thomistic account of knowledge: "Immateriality is the ratio that something is a knower and according to the mode of immateriality is the mode of knowing." In the dissertation, Mr. Adhikari examines why the human soul has a subsistent immaterial being given its intellectual operation and defends this Thomistic doctrine against prominent objections in the literature. He then considers why every intelligent being – and not only the human soul – is immaterial, according to Thomistic principles that matter contracts forms and hinders intellectual operation. Lastly, he studies why every subsistent immaterial being is also intelligent, in light of St. Thomas Aquinas's principles that every subsistent being has an operation proportionate to its being and form as such is the principle of understanding a thing.

### **Hank Center Graduate Student Fellow: Grant Gasse**



Grant Gasse is a Ph.D. candidate in the Theology Department at the University of Notre Dame, where he also received his M.T.S after studying Liberal Arts at Thomas Aquinas College. Grant's work concerns early Christian theology in general and the long second century in particular. His dissertation, titled "Myth as False Word: Irenaeus of Lyons and the Theology of Speech," argues that, for the "Doctor of Unity," the incarnation of the Word funds a capacious, symphonic conception of ecclesial discourse, while necessitating a correlative, incarnational conception of language itself. In so doing, the project offers a new framework for understanding Irenaeus' critical reflections on theological method, one which underscores the shared commitments of Irenaeus and his opponents, otherwise obscured by the harsh rhetoric of ancient heresiology.

## 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.

***Nonverts: The Making of Ex-Christian America* (2022)**

Author: Stephen Bullivant. Publisher: Oxford University Press.

An entertaining and insightful exploration of the American ex-religious

The United States is in the midst of a religious revolution. Or, perhaps it is better to say a non-religious revolution. Around a quarter of US adults now say they have no religion. The great majority of these religious "nones" also say that they used to belong to a religion but no longer do. These are the nonverts: think "converts," but from having religion to having none. There are currently has about 59 million of them in the United States.

*Nonverts* explores who they are, and why they joined the rising tide of the ex-religious. One of world's leading experts on contemporary atheism and nonreligiosity, sociologist and theologian Stephen Bullivant draws on dozens of interviews, original analysis of high-quality survey data, and a wealth of cutting-edge studies, to present an entertaining and insightful exploration of America's ex-religious landscape. Bullivant criss-crosses the country, talking to everyone from ex-Mormons in Utah to ex-Catholics in Pennsylvania, from ex-Evangelicals in Georgia to ex-Muslims in California, showing not only what they have in common but also how the traditions they left behind continue to shape them.

While American religion is not going to die out any time soon, ex-Christian America is a growing presence in national life. America's religious revolution is not just a religious revolution--it is catalyzing a profound social, cultural, moral, and political impact. *Nonverts* will serve as an indispensable guide to this shifting landscape, as well as the future of American life.

***Postsecular Catholicism: Relevance and Renewal* (2018)**

Author: Michele Dillon. Publisher: Oxford University Press.

The Catholic Church faces the challenge of maintaining its relevance in an increasingly secularized society. On issues ranging from sexuality and gender equality to economic policy and social welfare, the church hierarchy is frequently out-of-step with Catholics and non-Catholics alike. In *Postsecular Catholicism*, Michele Dillon argues that the Church's relevance is increasingly contingent on its ability to incorporate secular experiences and expectations into the articulation of the Church's teachings.

Informed by the postsecular notion that religious and secular actors should recognize their mutual relevance in contemporary society, Dillon examines how secular realities and church doctrine intersect in American Catholicism. She shows that the Church's 21st-century commitment to institutional renewal has been amplified by Pope Francis's vision of public Catholicism and his accessible language and intellectual humility. Combining wide-ranging survey data with a rigorous examination of Francis's statements on economic inequality, climate change, LGBT rights, and women's ordination, the highly consequential Vatican

Synod on the Family, and the US Bishops' religious freedom campaign, Postsecular Catholicism assesses the initiatives and strategies impacting the Church's relevance in the contemporary world.

***The Secular Paradox: On the Religiosity of the Not Religious*** (2022)

Author: Joseph Blankholm. Publisher: New York University Press.

A radically new way of understanding secularism which explains why being secular can seem so strangely religious

For much of America's rapidly growing secular population, religion is an inescapable source of skepticism and discomfort. It shows up in politics and in holidays, but also in common events like weddings and funerals. In *The Secular Paradox*, Joseph Blankholm argues that, despite their desire to avoid religion, nonbelievers often seem religious because Christianity influences the culture around them so deeply. Relying on several years of ethnographic research among secular activists and organized nonbelievers in the United States, the volume explores how very secular people are ambivalent toward belief, community, ritual, conversion, and tradition. As they try to embrace what they share, secular people encounter, again and again, that they are becoming too religious. And as they reject religion, they feel they have lost too much. Trying to strike the right balance, secular people alternate between the two sides of their ambiguous condition: absolutely not religious and part of a religion-like secular tradition.

Blankholm relies heavily on the voices of women and people of color to understand what it means to live with the secular paradox. The struggles of secular misfits—the people who misfit normative secularism in the United States—show that becoming secular means rejecting parts of life that resemble Christianity and embracing a European tradition that emphasizes reason and avoids emotion. Women, people of color, and secular people who have left non-Christian religions work against the limits and contradictions of secularism to create new ways of being secular that are transforming the American religious landscape. They are pioneering the most interesting and important forms of secular “religiosity” in America today.

***Secularism: The Basics*** (2022)

Author: Jacques Berlinerblau. Publisher: Routledge.

*Secularism: The Basics* is a concise and engaging introduction to confusing and contradictory public discussions of secularism across the globe.

“Secularism” must be the most confused and convoluted term in the entire global political lexicon. From New York to Paris, to Istanbul, to Addis Ababa, to New Delhi, to Montevideo, there are countless examples of politicians, religious leaders and journalists, invoking the sword in heated debates about public education, gender, sex, national symbols, and artistic freedom. In this lively and lucid book, Jacques Berlinerblau addresses why secularism is defined in so many ways and why it so ignites people's passions. In so doing, he explores the following important questions: What does secularism mean? Why should we care about this idea? What are the different types of secularism and what are their histories? What are the basic principles of political secularisms? Why are secularism and Atheism often confused? What is the relationship between secularism and LGBTQ rights? What opposition are secularisms up against? What does the future hold for a concept millennia in the making, but only really operationalized in the twentieth century?

With a glossary of key terms, case studies, informative tables, and suggestions for further reading throughout, the book considers key philosophical, religious, anti-religious, post-modern and post-colonial arguments around secularism. This book is an ideal starting point for anyone seeking a readable introduction to the often-conflicting interpretations of one of our era's most complex and controversial ideas.

***A Philosopher Looks at the Religious Life*** (2023)

Author: Zena Hitz. Publisher: Cambridge University Press.

What is happiness? Does life have a meaning? If so, is that meaning available in an ordinary life? The philosopher Zena Hitz confronted these questions head-on when she spent several years living in a Christian religious community. Religious life -- the communal life chosen by monks, nuns, friars, and hermits -- has been a part of global Christianity since earliest times,

but many of us struggle to understand what could drive a person to renounce wealth, sex, children, and ambition to live a life of prayer and sacrifice. Hitz's lively and accessible book explores questions about faith, sacrifice, asceticism and happiness through philosophy, stories, and examples from religious life. Drawing on personal experience as well as film, literature, history, biography, and theology, it demystifies an important element of contemporary culture, and provides a picture of human flourishing and happiness which challenges and enriches modern-day life.

**Four Quartets: A Poem** (2023)

Author: T. S. Eliot. Publisher: Ecco.

This month's poetry offering is one of the most monumental ever written. Considered by Eliot himself to be his finest work, *Four Quartets* is a rich composition that expands the spiritual vision introduced in "The Waste Land." Here, in four linked poems ("Burnt Norton," "East Coker," "The Dry Salvages," and "Little Gidding"), spiritual, philosophical, and personal themes emerge through symbolic allusions and literary and religious references from both Eastern and Western thought. It is the culminating achievement by a man considered the greatest poet of the twentieth century and one of the seminal figures in the evolution of modernism.

For those who want to go deeper with Eliot and "Four Quartets" you are in luck. Friend of the Center, James Matthew Wilson, will be presenting on "**The Triumph of T.S. Eliot's Four Quartets**" at the beautiful Athenaeum Center in Lakeview on October 14. You won't miss this-- or indeed all of the other superb programming at the Athenaeum either. **From Dante to Jeff Tweedy-- they have you covered.**

**Regret: A Theology** (2021)

Author: Paul J. Griffiths. Publisher: University of Notre Dame Press.

In this brilliant theological essay, Paul J. Griffiths takes the reader through all the stages of regret.

To various degrees, all human beings experience regret. In this concise theological grammar, Paul J. Griffiths analyzes this attitude toward the past and distinguishes its various kinds. He examines attitudes encapsulated in the phrase, "I would it were otherwise," including regret, contrition, remorse, compunction, lament, and repentance. By using literature (especially poetry) and Christian theology, Griffiths shows both what is good about regret and what can be destructive about it. Griffiths argues that on the one hand regret can take the form of remorse—an agony produced by obsessive and ceaseless examination of the errors, sins, and omissions of the past. This kind of regret accomplishes nothing and produces only pain. On the other hand, when regret is coupled with contrition and genuine sorrow for past errors, it has the capacity both to transfigure the past—which is never merely past—and to open the future. Moreover, in thinking about the phenomenon of regret in the context of Christian theology, Griffiths focuses especially on the notion of the LORD's regret. Is it even reasonable to claim that the LORD regrets? Griffiths shows not only that it is but also that the LORD's regret should structure how we regret as human beings.

Griffiths investigates the work of Henry James, Emily Dickinson, Tomas Tranströmer, Paul Celan, Jane Austen, George Herbert, and Robert Frost to show how regret is not a negative feature of human life but rather is essential for human flourishing and ultimately is to be patterned on the LORD's regret. *Regret: A Theology* will be of interest to scholars and students of philosophy, theology, and literature, as well as to literate readers who want to understand the phenomenon of regret more deeply.

**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.



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