

# Collegium News

Volume 2/Issue 2

## Member Institutions

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## *Building on Collegium: The International Lasallian University Leadership Program*

By John Wilcox, Vice President for Mission, Manhattan College

[editor's note: John Wilcox has been a keen supporter Collegium in a wide variety of ways since its founding: as participant, mentor, liaison, and board member. He is currently working to develop a new International Lasallian Leadership Program, to be launched in June 2007 at Casa La Salle in Rome. Fifty participants have registered to attend. The article which follows explains that program and its connection to Collegium.]

The International Lasallian University Leadership Program is a two-week educational program for faculty from universities founded by the Brothers of the Christian Schools. [In the United States, these De La Salle Christian Brothers schools include Christian Brothers University (TN), the College of Santa Fe (NM), La Salle University (PA) Lewis University (IL), Manhattan College (NY), Saint Mary's College of California and Saint Mary's University of Minnesota.] The program will take place in Rome at the De La Salle Generalate in mid-June. Faculty members from many of the 57 Lasallian colleges and universities around the world, 41 of which are in "developing areas" of the world, will participate and will return to their home institutions to implement collegially designed strategies with the support of a network of fellow faculty members from around the globe.

Conference sessions will be facilitated by a leadership team of the Brothers of the Christian Schools and lay partners from a cross-section of universities. The brothers as well as lay partners will provide the theoretical background and the instruction on Lasallian spirituality and the Catholic intellectual tradition. Program elements will include plenary content sessions with small group discussions, disciplinary meetings where participants will group by academic discipline, as well as prayer, worship, and retreat times.

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## *An Easy Way to Support Collegium When You Buy from Amazon*

Whenever you make a purchase on Amazon.com, please consider accessing their site through the link on the Collegium "Support" webpage <http://web.accunet.org/collegium/support.htm> Every time you start your purchase from that link, Amazon will donate up to 5% of purchases (books, music, computer, whatever!) to Collegium. The cost to you for items purchased from Amazon is the same whether you go through this link or through Amazon.com. The support is anonymous (we won't know who bought what) but it has already helped us to make a dent in the cost of our summer colloquy books. Please bookmark the link for easy access! You must begin every purchase from that link for us to get the commission.

## Adaptation of Collegium

Modeled on the Collegium approach, the conference is a formation or immersion program in the Catholic intellectual tradition and an invitation to a personal commitment by lay faculty. The program applies it to the heritage of St. John Baptist de La Salle and to a new embodiment of the Lasallian charism to give a human and Christian education to the young, especially the poor. We know that Collegium has responded to many changes in the religious, spiritual, intellectual, and personal sense of self among the many hundreds of graduate students and faculty who have gone through the program. The evolution of Collegium has taken place in a larger context of change within Catholic and secular higher education, religious institutions, the United States, and the global community.

## The Present Situation

The International Lasallian University Leadership Program is a response to rapid change and growth in Lasallian higher education institutions worldwide. Of the approximately 900,000 students in the 900 Lasallian ministries in over 80 countries, 500,000 are in Lasallian tertiary education, the fastest growing sector in the Lasallian world. Across the world, 57 institutions of higher education carry out the distinctively Lasallian mission of educating students who are poor or the children of the working poor and may be the first generation in their family to attend college or university. These institutions, inspired by Saint John Baptist de La Salle, have long been staffed by a mix of lay educators (partners) and Christian Brothers. The number of vowed brothers is decreasing and the number of partners has been rapidly increasing. If present trends continue, lay faculty will form the bulk of those staffing Lasallian universities by the year 2020.

The Brothers of the Christian Schools have themselves taken serious initiatives in order to acquaint partners in the secondary schools, child-care agencies, and, to a lesser extent, in the universities with the distinctively Lasallian mission, and to engage these lay people to carry out the essential calling of the founder. These initiatives are necessary because the lay faculty is critical to developing a robust group of institutions that are distinctively Lasallian and Catholic, where, as one writer put it, “the person is at the center of our inquiry in a community where we love one another.” The significant challenge addressed here is to develop a program that meets the particular and unique needs of the universities.

Without a cadre of lay faculty who understand and commit themselves to a Lasallian-Catholic perspective on education, the ability of these universities to maintain and develop a culture and curriculum faithful to that perspective is in grave danger of disappearing. The disappearance will not occur suddenly but over a period of many retirements and new hires. On the positive side, there are already La-

sallian communities of partners on a number of university campuses.

## Program Design

Alongside Collegium, another program, the Buttimer Institute of Lasallian Studies, begun in 1985, had a strong influence on the Lasallian design.

The Collegium program is deeply Catholic in orientation but not specifically Lasallian. Its first Colloquy took place in 1993. What differentiates Collegium from an academic conference is the Catholic spiritual grounding of the program, a grounding that is similar to that of the Buttimer Institute. Morning and evening prayer, periods for meditation and reflection, daily Eucharist, and a daylong retreat make Collegium unique in higher education. The retreat is a turning point in the lives of a number of participants, a time during which they see more clearly the relationship between teaching and personal spiritual development. While many of the participants are Catholic, a significant proportion is of other religious traditions or of no tradition. Nevertheless, the level of enthusiasm and positive feedback has been consistently high over the last thirteen years.

The Buttimer Institute takes place over a three-year summer cycle for two weeks. The participants are mainly secondary faculty and administrators but do include some college faculty. The program’s interweaving of prayer and study is similar to that of Collegium, but with a decided focus on the life of De La Salle, his pedagogy, spirituality, and the founding of the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools. However, there is a challenge in recruiting college faculty, especially younger ones, because the time commitment over three summers competes with research work and the responsibilities of family life.

The new program incorporates elements of both predecessors, and works to respond to a pressing need: the continuance and growth of Lasallian/Catholic universities. It is designed specifically for college faculty, to address the Catholic intellectual tradition and spirituality and to foster and incorporate Lasallian Studies and spirituality. Over a two-week period at the Generalate of the Christian Brothers and at the center of Catholicism in Rome, faculty will be immersed in a culture that is the foundation of the Lasallian educational mission. An invitation has been extended to a broad ecumenical and inter-religious cadre of faculty. While it is imperative to develop a core group of Catholics, the program must be such that it embraces other committed Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus, practicing adherents of other faiths, and secular humanists. Individuals will be selected who are capable of and motivated to maintain a cordial and open relationship both with the Lasallian mission and with the Church that is its spiritual home. Moreover, the invitees will represent all 57 Lasallian colleges and universities, a much needed development in a “world that is flat.”

# Alumni/ae News

**Laurie Cassidy** (G '00) is now Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Marywood University, Scranton, PA.

**Scott Cleary** (G'05) is now Assistant Professor of English at Iona College, New Rochelle, NY.

**Karen Eifler** (F '01, M '04, '05, '06, and Board member) has been named Oregon Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching and the Council for the Advancement and Support of Education

The award highlights Eifler's leadership, including her strong support for the Bridge Builders program, through which more than a thousand young African-American men from Portland have prepared for college and life with mentoring from University faculty and students (more than 97 percent have gone on to college).

Eifler teaches educational psychology, literacy, classroom assessment and management and supervises dozens of new teachers conducting their first field work. She coordinates a mentoring program with the Bridge Builders, using the talents of University of Portland students preparing to become teachers. And she is co-founder of the University's Faith and Intellectual Life Group, a creative faculty and staff seminar for spiritual and spirited debate.

"Teaching is the chance to help change lives forever," says Eifler, who came to the University in 1998. "I cherish my work. It's what keeps me going. To be part of a student's awakening is an incomparable gift."

**Angela Harkins** (F'04) moved to Fairfield University this fall, where she is an Assistant Professor, teaching Scripture.

**Cassandra and Robert Henry** (G'04) announce the birth of their son Matthew Robert, January 6, 2006.

This spring Catholic University of America Press will publish a new book by **Paul V. Murphy** (F'99 and Speaker '06), titled *Ruling Peacefully: Cardinal Ercole Gonzaga and Patrician Reform in Sixteenth Century Italy*.

**Michael James** (G'94) left the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities (ACCU) in June 2006 to become the first director of the Center for Research on Catholic Education at Boston College. Michael will also be teaching in the Lynch School's department of Higher Education.

**David Nantais** (G'94) is now Campus Minister at St. Mary Student Parish, University of Michigan.

**Sara Olack** (G'05) is now a Greenwall Fellow in bioethics and health policy at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health in Baltimore, MD.

**Thomas Rzeknik** (G'06) is Assistant Professor of History at Seton Hall University, South Orange, N.J.

**Richard Sinacola** (F'96) is currently teaching in the Department of Psychology at Chapman University, Orange, CA.

**Myroslaw Tataryn** (F'97) is Acting President of Saint Jerome's University in the University of Waterloo, Ontario.

**Sam Thomas** (G'05) is Assistant Professor at California Lutheran University, where he teaches Scripture.

**Daniel S. Thompson** (G'95, F'00), Associate Professor of Theology and Department Chair, is now the Graduate Program Director for Saint Mary's University, San Antonio, TX.

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## Anticipated Results

Following the Rome program, participants will create a network so that they can communicate and collaborate with one another during and after implementation strategies have been put into place. We hope that on-line resources for building community and for initiating formation programs will help faculty participants in their work. To this end, the program will develop a website, to which alumni participants can refer faculty on their home campuses and on which faculty can find relevant articles on the Catholic intellectual tradition, on the Lasallian Heritage, and on the linkages of the two with the work of higher education.

The Leadership Program will strengthen Lasallian communities of brothers and partners on the home campuses,

including the development of ongoing programs of formation and enrichment at the home institution. Continuity of Lasallian higher education will depend on an identifiable group that commits itself to regular meetings, shared prayer, and continuing formation, as well as outreach to the rest of the community.

As a result of this initiative, we hope that a network of "Lasallian professors without borders" will develop. Collaborative research projects of concern to Lasallian higher education as well as to the wider Lasallian world will result from this networking. Thus, from the outset it should be clear that this program is in service to the international Lasallian education mission and will not proceed at the expense of other formation programs that have developed in various districts and regions around the world. ■

# *How Religious Are America's College and University Professors?*

A recent paper by sociologists Neil Gross (Harvard University) and Solon Simmons (George Mason University) outlines some of the conclusions of the "Politics of the American Professoriate" study, conducted in the spring of 2006.

Among the findings:

Although when asked to specify their current religious preference 31.2 percent of the professors we surveyed said "none," responses to a question taken from the GSS [General Social Survey, a reliable nationwide survey conducted at the University of Chicago] suggest that more professors are believers than is usually recognized. Respondents were asked to select the statement that comes closest to expressing their views about God. Only 10.0 percent chose the statement, "I don't believe in God," while 13.4 percent chose the statement, "I don't know whether there is a God, and I don't believe there is any way to find out." About 23.4 percent of respondents to our survey, in other words, are either atheists or agnostics. This figure is much higher than for the U.S. population as a whole. The same question was last asked on the GSS in 2000. At that time, only 2.8 percent of respondents said they didn't believe in God, while 4.1 percent said they didn't know if God existed and believed there was no way to find out. The figures for the college educated population – a more reasonable comparison group for professors – show greater religious skepticism, with about 11.2 percent of those with four years of college or more falling into the ranks of atheists and agnostics, but the differences with professors are still pronounced.

The report also makes some attempt at measuring qualitative aspects of belief. For example, 28 percent of respondents say they consider themselves religious moderates, 25.5 percent progressives, and 12.6 percent traditionalists. Other variables that yielded notable differences are by institutional classification, academic discipline, and institutional religious affiliation. The authors make only broad assertions about differences between secular and religious schools, but the differences are interesting:

Whereas about 50 percent of professors in non-religiously affiliated schools say either that they believe in God despite their doubts or that they have no doubts about God's existence, this is true of 68.9 percent of professors in religiously-affiliated schools.

The paper is available online at <http://www.wjh.harvard.edu/soc/faculty/gross/religions.pdf>

## *Ideas Online*

Joe Kelley, (F'93) now Provost at Merrimack College, published "Theology for Citizenship: How a Catholic College in the Augustinian Tradition Prepares Citizens to Transform Society" in the Oxford Round Table Online Forum. His presentation "uses Vatican and papal documents to reflect on the distinctive mission of Catholic colleges and universities in light of their responsibility to prepare students for virtuous citizenship in a religiously and ethnically pluralistic society. Shows how one Catholic college understands its academic community in light of such a mission."

The talk is available at <http://www.forumonpublicpolicy.com/archive06/kelley.pdf>

## *Summer Seminars on Catholic Intellectual Life*

The Catholic Education Institute, a not-for-profit organized by Fr. John Piderit, SJ, and Melanie Morey, is offering some interesting seminars on Catholic intellectual life for faculty. The seminars will be held at Marist College June 10-15, 2007.

Topics and presenters include:

**English Literature:** Robert Kiely, Harvard University; Greg Wolfe (Seattle Pacific University, editor of *Image*)

**Politics:** Jeanne Heffernan-Schindler: Villanova University, Political Theory; Rev. J Bryan Hehir, Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government and President, Catholic Charities, Archdiocese of Boston.

**Theology:** Pat McCormick, Gonzaga University; Rev. Robert Imbelli, Boston College.

More information is available at [www.marist.edu/connections/sc](http://www.marist.edu/connections/sc)

## *Conferences*

### **“Shaping American Catholicism”**

**an exploration of major themes in the life and work of David J. O’Brien**

**April 13-14, 2007**

**College of the Holy Cross**

O’Brien, church historian and Loyola Professor of Roman Catholic Studies at College of the Holy Cross was a member of the first group of consultants brought in when we were first developing Collegium. He served three times as a mentor, and twice as a speaker at Collegium. His many books include *From the Heart of the American Church: Catholic Higher Education and American Culture* (Orbis, 1994). Speakers include Jim McCartin (G’98, F’05), Leslie Tentler (R’97, M’99), and Kathleen Sprows Cummings (G’99).

Information is available at <http://www.holycross.edu/departments/crec/website/obriencelebr.htm>

### **Friendship**

The Institute for Faith and Learning at Baylor University announces a call for papers for the inaugural Baylor Symposium on Faith and Culture this coming October 25-27, 2007. **Friendship: Quests for Character, Community, and Truth** aims to gather a diverse group of scholars from across the disciplines and from a variety of institutions to engage the topic of friendship and its transformative possibilities—personal, civic, and spiritual.

Featured speakers will include: C. Stephen Evans (Baylor University), Paul Griffiths (University of Illinois at Chicago), Thomas Hibbs (Baylor University), Alan Jacobs (Wheaton College), Dominic Manganiello (University of Ottawa), Mary Nichols (Baylor University), Charles Pinches (University of Scranton), Robert Putnam (Harvard University), Robert C. Roberts (Baylor University), Nancy Sherman (Georgetown University), Paul Wadell (St. Norbert College), and Carolinne White (University of Oxford).

The call for papers is available on at the IFL web site: <http://www.baylor.edu/ifl/friendship>.

### **Creating Balance in an Unjust World: Math Education and Social Justice**

**April 27 - 29, 2007**

**Brooklyn, NY**

Join educators, parents, students, activists, and community members from around the country for a 3-day conference to explore the connections between math education and social justice. How has math literacy been a gatekeeper to future educational and financial success? How can math educators ensure equity in the classroom? How can issues of social, political, and economic justice be integrated into math curriculum? What is Ethnomathematics and how is it related to our work with students? These are a few of the many issues participants will have the opportunity to explore throughout conference.

<http://www.radicalmath.org/conference/main.htm>

# *Help Shape Collegium News!*

Do you have any ideas about contributions you'd like to make to Collegium News? Are you willing to help with Book Reviews?

Please let us know if there are articles you would be interested in contributing, or subject areas where you could review books relevant to Collegium's readership and mission.

We are interested in finding qualified reviewers for any of the following books:

- Appleby, R. Scott, Byrne, Patricia, Portier, William, editors, *Creative Fidelity: American Catholic Intellectual Traditions*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004. 319 pp.
- Barr-Ebest, Sally and Ebest, Ron, editors, *Reconciling Catholicism and Feminism?: Personal Reflections on Tradition and Change*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003. 284 pp.
- Duffy, Michael, *The Skeptical Passionate Christian: Tools for Living Faithfully in an Uncertain World*, Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006. 175 pp.
- Garber, Steven, *The Fabric of Faithfulness: Weaving Together Belief and Behavior*, Downers Grove, IN: Intervarsity Press, 2007 (revised). 214 pp.
- Groenhout, Ruth and Bower, Marya, editors, *Philosophy, Feminism and Faith*, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2003. 295 pp.
- Hanson, Eric, *Religion and Politics in the International System Today*, New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006. 329 pp.
- Keenan, James F., S.J., *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts From the Catholic Tradition*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2004. 190 pp.
- Ker, Ian, ed., *The Catholic Revival in English Literature, 1845-1961*, Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003. 205 pp.
- Yamane, David, *The Catholic Church in State Politics*, Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005. 189 pp.

email Tom or Joyce at [collegium@holycross.edu](mailto:collegium@holycross.edu) if you can help.

Many thanks!

# Book Reviews

Mary R. Reichardt (F'99, M'06)

## Exploring Catholic Literature: A Companion and Resource Guide.

(Lanham, MD: Sheed & Ward, 2003).

Mary R. Reichardt's book *Exploring Catholic Literature* is subtitled "A Companion and Resource Guide," and this tells us exactly what her book is—and is not. In twelve chapters and an introduction, Reichardt discusses twelve works written by Catholic literary artists from a number of eras and cultures, people as varied as Augustine, Julian of Norwich, Graham Greene, and Denise Levertov. In only a little over two-hundred pages, Reichardt does not aspire to accomplish a comprehensive, in-depth critical analysis of these works. Rather, she is providing a "resource guide," a sort of handbook for teachers and readers who wish to encounter these works within the framework of specifically Catholic study. On its own terms, Reichardt's book is quite successful—and especially impressive considering the range of the writers it inspects.

This is not primarily a theoretical work; the introduction, however, does briefly lay out a theoretical framework, perhaps even exposing Reichardt's biases. Reichardt feels, for instance, that the need for a Catholic Studies approach to these major literary works is "particularly acute" at this time:

For more than a generation now, literary studies in both secular and private institutions have been dominated by post-modern critical theories that, with their emphasis on deconstructing literature and thoroughly polarizing its content, are largely antithetical, if not downright hostile, to Christian thought. In depleting texts of meaning or reducing them to the mere sociological study of power differentials, such theories, in their purest form, negate even the possibility of the supernatural and thus have no use for the transformation of reality by grace. From a Christian point of view, such deterministic thought saps literature of its ability to do what great literature does so well: evoke the spiritual and thereby expand the spirit. (2)

I can agree with Reichardt here to some extent; certainly a religious or spiritual approach to literature goes against the grain of a great deal of current literary criticism. However, I believe that postmodern theory can—and occasionally does—liberate religious approaches to literary studies by "deconstructing" overly rational, didactic readings of

literature and opening up the space of mystery and undecidability. Considering that "God" is a metaphor pointing toward such humanly undecidable mystery, postmodern theory can help curb a Christian critic's impulse to dogmatize, to use literature as an instrument for catechizing.

Reichardt herself makes something like this point. She states that her book looks at works of "good" literature, by which she means "those works of art that present the human situation in complex ways and on various levels that can be pondered, analyzed, and discussed." And she says that such literature "never lends itself to black-and-white thinking but rather concentrates on exploring the gray areas of paradox, ambiguity, and moral dilemma" (4). She claims that the works she will study in this book examine "profound Catholic issues through the expansive freedom of the imagination, pushing boundaries, crossing boundaries, penetrating mysteries." Yet she adds a qualification that perhaps explains her own rather orthodox, doctrinal approach: she claims that all the works "are grounded in a deep and accurate understanding of the faith" (4, emphasis added). This is a telling qualification: there is a strong doctrinal element to the analyses in Reichardt's book.

This is certainly a valid way to examine literature within a Catholic framework, but it is not the *only* way; thinkers as various as Andrew Greeley and theologian Michael Himes would likely suggest that poetic imagination—metaphors for the mysterious reality that the word "God" inadequately points to—precedes doctrine, and that hence using doctrine to support a religious reading of literature is not absolutely necessary. But Reichardt's stance is, as I've noted, entirely valid, and it is helpful that Reichardt has explained that this is in fact her orientation.

There are two aspects of Catholic teaching that Reichardt highlights in her introduction as "hallmark[s] of the Catholic faith," which she will stress frequently throughout her analyses of literary texts: *incarnationalism* and *sacramentality*. Catholicism is distinctively incarnational, she says, because of its central doctrine about salvation: "Because Jesus chose to save humanity by becoming a person and going through life in this world, from birth to death, he sanctified all aspects of our existence on earth" (5). And Reichardt describes Catholicism's sacramentality in this way: "If all things that exist do so because God has created them, loves them, and sustains them, all things are not only good to at least some degree in and of themselves but also have the ability to communicate the power and goodness of God" (6). She says that the Catholic sacrament of the Eucharist, making "the complete God-Man" present "in his body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity," especially conveys this vision (6). Again, it is useful to notice that Reichardt grounds her literary interest in incarnational and

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In the twelve chapters that comprise the body of her book, Reichardt discusses twelve works by major Catholic writers, four from the early Christian and medieval eras and eight modern and contemporary writers. These literary works are: Augustine’s *Confessions*, *The Cloud of Unknowing*, Julian of Norwich’s *Revelations of Divine Love*, Dante’s *Divine Comedy*, Gerard Manley Hopkins’ poetic works, Sigrid Undset’s *Kristin Lavransdatter*, Graham Greene’s *The Power and the Glory*, Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited*, Flannery O’Connor’s *Everything That Rises Must Converge*, Annie Dillard’s *Holy the Firm*, Shusaku Endo’s *Deep River*, and Denise Levertov’s *The Stream and the Sapphire*. Each chapter begins with a biographical sketch describing the writer, followed by an analysis of the work from within Reichardt’s Catholic Studies framework, and ending with discussion questions and suggestions for further reading. The chapters are brief and accessible enough for the non-scholar (whether a college student, an advanced high-school student, or a general reader), but they also provide information that would be helpful for an instructor who wishes to use these texts in a Catholic Literature, Catholic Studies, or Religious Studies class.

Throughout her analyses of these works, Reichardt’s concentration on orthodox doctrine seems to have led her to make choices that, while valid, are not—as I’ve already suggested—inevitable; that is, there are other possible Catholic approaches to a study of literature, and it is helpful to know in advance a bit about Reichardt’s slant. For instance, Reichardt writes a solid analysis of Evelyn Waugh’s *Brideshead Revisited*, and she does acknowledge Waugh’s portrayal of some “less savory aspects” of Catholicism. She shows her hand, however, in a final suggestion that the Catholic church is a lone bastion standing against secular decay: Waugh’s novel, she says, “clearly confirms that in the futility of the modern pagan wasteland and the sordidness of a world at war, the Catholic Church offers the only sure hope, a ‘light in the darkness’ that alone makes sense of the chaos of existence” (142). This is a very strong claim, one that sets the church against a morally bankrupt secular world, and it is a position that Reichardt frequently takes. Perhaps this explains why Reichardt glosses over the fact that Waugh’s protagonist’s religious awakening is largely catalyzed by a relationship that is at least latently (and some would say blatantly) homosexual. A different approach to this novel might have suggested

that Waugh’s Catholic imagination presents homosexuality itself as potentially sacramental—doctrinally unorthodox but poetically defensible, I think.

Reichardt seems most comfortable with those writers who are passionately faithful to orthodox Catholicism; her discussion of Flannery O’Connor (who famously proclaimed, “I see from the standpoint of Christian orthodoxy”) is especially compelling. But writers from the Catholic tradition, with deeply Catholic sensibilities, have sometimes been seriously and even radically critical of the institutional church, and Reichardt’s presentation mostly skirts this fact. Indeed, the absence of any mention of James Joyce—perhaps the greatest of all modern writers, who vigorously rejected institutional Catholicism and yet retained a profoundly Catholic, sacramental imagination—indicates that Reichardt’s pantheon of Catholic writers does not include Catholic dissenters.

This is not to say that Reichardt’s analyses throughout the book are rigidly catechetical. Reichardt is too accomplished a literary critic to be so utilitarian. And, considering my own preferences (which have probably been apparent in this review), I find her most compelling when she is least doctrinally specific. Reichardt’s discussion of twentieth-century American poet Denise Levertov’s blend of romanticism and modernism, her “poetry of the immediate,” is particularly fine: “To Levertov,” says Reichardt, “the act of writing poetry necessitated a heightened appreciation for life and an extraordinary attention to the things of the world. . . . In fact, the poet’s enhanced sense of attentiveness and wonder renders all aspects of life, even the most mundane, relevant. No element of everyday life is beyond the poet’s domain” (198). Reichardt’s discussion of Levertov’s sacramental imagination then emerges organically, from this examination of the poet’s imaginative stance, rather than seeming to have been imposed by doctrinal mandate: “Given her aims in poetry,” Reichardt says, “it’s easy to see how Levertov’s work has been consistently open to the metaphysical. With its strong sense of the sacramental—of matter and experience as signs of the spirit—Levertov’s poetry perhaps naturally moved toward explicitly religious themes in the last decades of her career” (199). Here we have imagination preceding doctrine rather than the other way around.

Again, I am not saying that the reverse approach—doctrine first, literary/imaginative illustrations second—is bad or inappropriate. My contention is that a more vigorous discussion of critical and even dissenting Catholic voices (e.g. James Joyce) and ideas would also be appropriate for a study of Catholic literature. But Reichardt’s more orthodox approach is surely valid in its own right, and her book is an impressive and useful piece of scholarship. I am happy to recommend it.

John Neary

St. Norbert College

## **Conflicting Allegiances: The Church-Based University in a Liberal Democratic Society**

(Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2004) 272 pp.

Budde and Wright gathered a group of scholars unified in their dissatisfaction with the reformist approach apparent in much of the literature on Christianity and higher education. They “believe that the issues and challenges facing Christian higher education are so deep and radical that the entire basis of Christian higher education needs to be recast and rethought” (9). The impetus for that belief derives from their own more radical ecclesiology – their sense of what the church is necessarily called to be, and their sense of the difficulty (impossibility?) for Christian believers or institutions to serve the capitalist and nationalist masters who co-opt higher education.

Wright, in his introduction, makes a forceful case that the structures of liberal democracies limit and co-opt the university to a subservient role. Religion is welcomed to the extent that it serves state power, or is otherwise relegated to the private realm.

Theirs is not the agenda of the religious right, though it would connect church and university much more closely than most faculty I know would find acceptable. How it would do it is what’s interesting. The essayists’ radical approach emphasizes education for discipleship as the core purpose of institutions that are church related. Budde’s church-based university would regard “Christian formation [as] an intrinsic part of the educational process” (268). It would teach pacifism and non-violence, foster “trans-racial Christian unity, solidarity and reconciliation,” (269) and resist state efforts to impose nationalist or consumerist values in place of “the priorities and practices of Jesus Christ” (256).

The essays will no doubt arouse strong responses, and are of mixed quality. William Cavanaugh critiques the American academy’s notion of academic freedom as too individualist and ineffective, failing to prevent stifling orthodoxies. While I would support altering our concept of freedom to include a some recognition that we have been given freedom by God not only so that we can “do what we want unhindered,” but moreover so that we can work for the benefit of those who have less (what some summarize as “freedom for” rather than simply “freedom from”), I

also recognize too many reasons to preserve the freedom “from” that tenure provides.

M. Therese Lysaught (F’ 96) writes clearly and compellingly about her perspective that the life sciences, as currently configured, “are embedded within a context of violence,” framed for political reasons as a “war” against disease, disability and death (111). She proposes a “non-violent” approach that is more respectful of Christian perspectives on death, which treat illness and death not simply as adversaries to be fought at all costs, but also as part of life.

Michael Cartwright questions the limited roles our weberian approaches to the professoriate often entail: “Christian formation of students is more about apprenticeship than it is about knowledge acquisition, more about craft than technique, and more about cultivating wisdom than about career-training” (192). He rejects models for church-related colleges who respond to pluralism by treating students (including non-Christian students) as “unencumbered selves’ devoid of religious convictions, beliefs, desires and practices” and asks that faculty regard themselves as persons who do (or yearn to) “embody beliefs, desires, and practices” (193). To pretend that we come across other than as models to our students is illusory, so we might as well ask what kind of models we want to be, whether models of divided, isolated selves, or whole persons of conviction.

Many readers will be more annoyed than inspired by comments about the “hegemony of the natural sciences” (257) or the allegedly problematic role of professional education, or any number of claims in the book. I found myself often reacting against ideas in the book, but on reflection was glad overall for the general (and numerous particular) challenges it posed. I would readily count myself and Collegium among the reformists whom the book critiques, given in particular my belief in working with people where they are, and bringing them as far as they are called to go, given their own talents and beliefs. But it’s refreshing to have some radical prophets around, who would push us further. This book helps us do that.

- tml

## Christ at Work: Orthodox Christian Perspectives on Vocation.

(Brookline: Holy Cross Orthodox Press, 2006.)

This most recent in a spate of books on vocation allows us to look at the question of vocation through an alternate yet important Christian lens, provided by the Eastern, or Orthodox churches. Bezzerides and her colleagues question whether “vocation” has a place within the Orthodox tradition at all.

She accepts that the notion of vocation as we know it is primarily a modern, Western product of the Protestant Reformation. “While there are Orthodox texts that speak of vocation, a reader is hard-pressed to find any direct, developed treatment of vocation as such, unless one includes texts on the priesthood, monasticism, and celibacy” (2). To the extent Orthodox Christians are called to discern vocations at all, “for Orthodox Christians, the matrix of discernment is found in prayer and fasting, repentance and confession, seeking wisdom from the rhythm of the liturgical year, and from a spiritual father”(1).

In light of this, much of the book really amounts to ways that Orthodox theology *qualifies* the notion of vocation. Paul Nadim Tarazi claims that if we pay attention to the Old Testament, we see that “vocation is not a matter of choosing among our inner aptitudes or personal preferences, but of responding to God’s call to care for the weak and defenseless” (37). Similarly, New Testament scholar John Barnet suggests that when it comes to our particular work choices, “God doesn’t care...God only cares that you seek first his kingdom” (43). He even focuses attention on the Sermon on the Mount to suggest that even asking the question, What shall we do? “is born out of anxiety and is not compatible with a life of discipleship” (45). Discipleship, he suggests, entails less concern about job and more concern about justice, mercy, faith, loving your enemies and praying for those who persecute you, and seeking the mind of Christ.

Writing about the Church Fathers of the first centuries of the church, Khaled Anatolios is rather disparaging of contemporary notions of vocation. He derides contemporary “follow your passions” perspectives as “Hollywood piety,” “a value-free assertion of the self” which falls short of vocation because it fails to seek a call from beyond oneself (110, 112). On the contrary, he asserts, Orthodoxy, following the example of the Church Fathers, is necessarily ascetic. Anatolios’s argument is that the Christian who wishes to find his or her vocation must purge himself or herself of self-aggrandizing passions that are “distorted.” Vocation is less about finding one’s bliss than about “moral and spiritual exertion” (119).

In a meditation on vocation and the Virgin Mary, Deborah Malacky Belonick suggests that vocation “is more about being than doing” and fundamentally involves relationships: “being father, mother, wife, husband, sister, brother, not only to our blood relatives” (154, 167). Many of the authors seem less concerned with the particular kind of work one chooses, than about what qualities one brings to it. Demetrios Katos aims to focus attention not so much on career choice as on the “ultimate” vocation of Christians. Taken together, the essays challenge the notion that vocation means an individual, “individualized” call to a role or job, but rather entail a way of life God calls us to whatever our station.

- tml



# Book Notes

David L. Clough and Brian Stiltner (G'94)

## Faith and Force: A Christian Debate about War

(Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2007)

*“This book began in an argument between friends surprised to find themselves on opposite sides of the debate about whether the United States and the United Kingdom should invade Iraq in 2003. Situated on opposite sides of the Atlantic, in different churches, and on different sides of the just war/pacifist fence, we exchanged long emails that rehearsed on a small scale the great national and international debates that were taking place around us. We discovered the common ground we shared, as well as some predictable and some surprising points of difference. . . . When the initial hostilities ended, our conversation continued, and we felt the urgency of contributing to a wider Christian debate about whether and when war could be justified.”* —From the Preface

From the ancient battles between Greek city-states to the Crusades to the World Wars of the twentieth-century to the present-day wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the Middle East, aggressors and defenders alike have claimed the mantle of righteousness and termed their actions just. But can the carnage of war ever be morally grounded? And if so, how?

These are the questions that David L. Clough, a Methodist proponent of pacifism, and Brian Stiltner, a Catholic theologian and just war adherent, have vowed to answer—together. With one voice, Clough and Stiltner outline and clarify issues of humanitarian intervention, weapons proliferation, and preventative war against rogue states. Their writing is grounded in Christian tradition and provides a fresh and illuminating account of the complexities and nuances of the pacifist and just war positions.

(source: *Georgetown University Press*)

Laurie M. Cassidy (G'00) and Alex Mikulich (G'97), editors.

## Interrupting White Privilege: Catholic Theologians Break the Silence

(Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2007) 192 pp.

White Catholic theologians have remained relatively silent on the topic of racism since publication in 1979 of the U.S. bishops' statement against racism, *Brothers and Sisters to Us*. In this hard-hitting study, prominent Roman Catholic theologians address the issue of white privilege. They maintain that systems of white privilege are a significant

factor in shaping the evil of racism in our country and that most white theologians and ethicists remain ignorant of the part they play in maintaining racism. Laurie M. Cassidy (G'00) is an assistant professor of religion at Marywood University in Scranton, Pennsylvania. Alex Mikulich (G'97), is an assistant professor of religion at Saint Joseph College, in Hartford, Connecticut.

(source: *Orbis Press*)



# *Collegium 2007*

## UPCOMING DATES

University of Portland  
Portland, Oregon  
June 8-15, 2007

College of the Holy Cross  
Worcester, Massachusetts  
June 13-20, 2008

Saint John's University  
Collegeville, Minnesota  
June 12-19, 2009

# *Collegium* News

is published  
twice a year at  
College of the Holy Cross  
1 College Street  
Worcester, MA 01610

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*Editor*