Dear Friends,

Greetings during this holy and expectant season! As I pause to reflect on the mysteries we will soon gather together to celebrate, I am struck once again by the quietness of the Incarnation. A child born far from home, in the early hours of the morning, tucked away in a stable. Who could conceive of an entrance less calculated for fame and glory? The angels announce the birth of Christ, but we like the shepherds and the magi must go looking for him in unexpected places.

These past few months at Seton Hall we have been celebrating the 700th anniversary of the great Catholic poet Dante Alighieri and his masterpiece, The Divine Comedy. In a letter to mark the anniversary, Pope Francis tells us that Dante, “transformed his personal experience, making it a paradigm of the human condition, viewed as a journey—spiritual and physical.” At the beginning of Dante's poetic journey, God draws close to him in an unsuspected place: his confusion. We meet the pilgrim lost in a wood midway through the journey of life. In his disorientation, Dante has forgotten that Divine Love is not something he can lose, that it remains faithful amidst the sea changes of human fortune.
Dante first attempts to heal himself alone and fails. So he must be led by others through the sad regions of hell and the purifying terraces of mount purgatory in order to let go of the pride that prevents him from understanding the mystery of God’s love. As we draw close to that same mystery this Christmas season, we might do well to ask with Dante, what prevents me from experiencing more deeply the mystery of Divine Love in my life?

In the final part of the poem, the Paradiso, that Love is described as ever increasing light and joy. Dante is guided through the nine celestial realms of intensifying beauty until he reaches a heavenly rose populated with the Communion of Saints and Mary of Nazareth seated at its center. Here, seated as the Queen of Heaven, she does for Dante exactly what she did in that inconspicuous stable: she points him toward her Son. Dante follows her gesture and in silent ecstasy contemplates the Trinity. To his delightful surprise what he discovers at the heart of the Trinity is a human face. Our human form taken on by Christ, the Center of Divine Love.

During the Advent and Christmas season may we, with Dante, the “prophet of hope,” come to see the face of Divine Love in the unsuspected places of our lives.

A blessed Christmas and Happy New Year to all,

Gregory P. Floyd, PhD
Director, Center for Catholic Studies

DIRECTOR’S REPORT

2021 has been a year of promising growth for the Center of Catholic Studies. I happy to announce publicly for the first time here that we have been awarded a large multi-year grant from the Porticus Foundation to continue our work preserving, communicating, and strengthening the Catholic identity of Seton Hall. The grant will not only support current programming in faculty formation, but also greatly increase our capacity to share our resources with others by building important relationships in faculty development, Catholic Studies, and with the local church, community, and partners in mission across the country.

This fall, we have taken seriously Pope Francis’s exhortation, “...to make Dante’s work better known and appreciated, accessible and attractive.” Through a series of lectures, recitations, and art, we have explored the literary, theological, and psychological depths of Dante’s great threefold poem engaging with students, Seton Hall faculty, external experts, and our own Core courses. One highlight was the lecture delivered by Seton Hall Alumnus, Fr. Chase Pepper who livestreamed in from Cambridge University, UK where he is completing his PhD!

Other highlights from 2021 include the formation of the first consortium of Catholic Studies Programs and Centers with more than fifteen other colleges and universities across the country; the continued success of our Toth-Lonergan professorship; a successful summer workshop on the continued relevance of Thomas Aquinas for us today; new scholarly publications from both our Chesterton and Lonergan Institutes as well as our regular schedule of lectures, webinars, and other events.

Last month, we gathered together to recognize our founder and friend, Msgr. Dick Liddy, with a special reception to honor his goodness and many contributions to Seton Hall. We presented him with a surprise “Festschrift,” a book to honor his scholarly work and career whose chapters were written by academic friends and colleagues about ideas dear to him, COR AD COR: Modern Culture and the Catholic University.

We are so grateful to our many benefactors who enable this work. Your support alongside our new grant will enable us to continue to deepen the Catholic mission and identity of Seton Hall for our students, faculty, and staff. The program support from Porticus frees us to focus our resources on securing the enduring legacy of our beloved Msgr. Liddy and our dearly departed friend, Deacon Bill Toth through the Toth-Lonergan Endowed Chair. Due to your generosity last year, we are less than $100,000 from our $2million threshold. We hope to cross that by the end of the year. The goodness from our wider Catholic community does not go unnoticed and we do not take it for granted. We will continue to work to make sure it yields a harvest of thirty, sixty, and one hundred-fold in the life of Seton Hall.
Despite the pandemic, which has shattered so many of our traditional ways of working, the G.K. Chesterton Institute for Faith & Culture enjoyed a busy and fruitful year in 2021. In addition to publishing *The Chesterton Review*, we continued our extensive program of academic conferences and online events, attracting audiences from all over the world, thanks to us, now know Seton Hall and each other a little better. Our sponsorship of a monthly Spanish-language Mass helped to foster a sense of community among Spanish-speakers on campus. We hosted visits to our offices of university president Joseph Nyre and university provost Katia Passerini. The Editor of *The Chesterton Review*, a member of a doctoral defense committee at Tilburg University in the Netherlands in June. The following month, he was interviewed by Father Lawrence Frizzell on WSOU on Chesterton’s philosophy of science. Thanks to the hard work and organizational efficiency of Mrs. Gloria Garafulich Grabois, the Institute’s director, we hosted a full program of events during the Fall semester. COVID-19 may have changed our ways of working but the work itself continues at an excellent pace.

Producing *The Chesterton Review* twice a year remains the primary work of the Institute. Now approaching its fiftieth birthday and going from strength to strength, the Review has long been recognized as the world’s leading journal in the field of Chesterton studies, bringing together the best of contemporary historical, literary, and theological scholarship in a readable and generally accessible way. Volume 47, Nos. 1 & 2, of the Review appeared in June. Volume 47, Nos. 3 & 4, will appear at the end of the year. The Spring-Summer volume carried articles on Rome, Ireland, Distributism, and other Chesterton-related subjects. The Fall-Winter volume, due in December 2021, will be a special issue devoted to Stanley Jaki OSB. Like Chesterton himself, the journal that bears his name is notable for its liveliness and intellectual versatility. The 2021 issues maintain that tradition.

Our 2021 conference season kicked off with a well-attended symposium in February devoted to Chesterton and Dickens. Chesterton much admired Dickens, hailing him at the beginning of the twentieth century as a champion of ordinary people when fashionable opinion had begun to turn its back on him. Dr. Quinn gave a paper on Chesterton, Professor John Drew of the University of Buckingham (U.K.) followed with a paper on Dickens. The audience included participants from Argentina, Canada, England, and Poland, as well as the United States.

In March, we co-sponsored (with the Department of Catholic Studies) a major conference of philosophers, scientists, theologians, and historians to consider the significance of Father Stanley Jaki as a Catholic scientist. Father Jaki, a long-time Seton Hall faculty member and winner of the Templeton Prize, considered Chesterton as a “seer of science.”

On a lighter note, the Institute hosted a conference in September called “Chesterton goes to the movies,” the idea being to explore the Chestertonian themes of wonder, gratitude, and sacramentality in contemporary and historical cinema. I gave a talk, as did Professor Jorge Iglesias of Lone Star University in Texas, film critic of *The Chesterton Review*.

Illustrating the Institute’s geographical as well as intellectual range, our October conference featured a conversation with the Norwegian scientist Geir Hasnes, who has recently completed a mammoth Chesterton bibliography.

The 2021 season is due to end in November with another event co-sponsored with the Department of Catholic Studies. Under the direction of Professor James McGlone, the Celtic Theater Company will give a dramatic reading of the *Book of Job*, followed by commentary and audience discussion.

To watch the video recordings of our online events please visit: [www.shu.edu/chesterton](http://www.shu.edu/chesterton)

The Chesterton Institute is, in every sense, a communitarian enterprise. We work best when we work together. That was the Chesterton ideal, and it remains, we hope, our current practice. We are grateful for the support and generosity of many donors and subscribers over the years. They make all things possible. We are thankful, too, for the continued support of the Office of the President, the Office of the Provost, and the Center for Catholic Studies for our work. Their help is a blessing to us. Finally, we wish to acknowledge with deep gratitude the wonderful work done this and every other year by the Institute’s director, Gloria Garafulich-Grabois.

— Dermot Quinn, Editor, *The Chesterton Review*

For more information about our work please visit: [www.shu.edu/chesterton](http://www.shu.edu/chesterton) or contact us by email: chestertoninstitute@shu.edu
Michael Ambrosio | Founding Donor, Toth-Lonergan Endowed Professorship

Professor Michael Ambrosio grew up in Lyndhurst, N.J., a small town in New Jersey ten miles from New York City. He attended Lyndhurst public schools, Montclair State University and Catholic University Law School. In 1970 Professor Ambrosio joined the faculty of Seton Hall University Law School and has taught there ever since. He has been active in the NJ Bar and the NJ Supreme Court Professional Responsibility Committees and has appeared in more than 400 cases as a lawyer, legal expert or ethical consultant to lawyers and law firms. In the late 1990s and early 2000s he joined Professor William Toth from Immaculate Conception Seminary in teaching joint courses to both students of the Law and Catholic seminarians on the Law and Religion. He has been very involved in faculty development programs focused on the Catholic mission of the University. He is a recipient of the University’s McQuaid Medal and numerous other University and Law School awards over his fifty-one years of teaching. He has been one of the most committed supporters of the Center for Catholic Studies at the University.

John F. Swift | Founding Donor, Center for Catholic Studies Endowment

John F. Swift is the retired CEO of Omnicom Health and Medical Communications and retired chairman of Lyons, Lavey, Nickel and Swift, an international health care marketing firm. An entrepreneur, for many years John was active in a very successful pharmaceutical marketing firm. He earned his BSB in Management from Seton Hall University in 1960, where his favorite undergraduate course was logic! John was a member of the Board of Governors for Cathedral Health Care System and is the co-founder of the Biomedical Marketing Association. John is currently a member of the Seton Hall University Board of Regents, the Advisory Council (UAC) and formerly a member of the Alumni Association’s Board of Directors. He is also a member of the Hazard Zet Forward Loyalty Society. John resides in Green Village, NJ and has a seasonal residence in Boca Raton, FL. Besides being an avid supporter of Seton Hall basketball, he has been a valued supporter of the Center for Catholic Studies at Seton Hall and has joined several faculty trips to Europe.

M. Therese Liddy | Founding Donor, Center for Catholic Studies Endowment; Joseph and Veronica Liddy Fund; General Support

Therese Liddy is a Human Resource executive with a lifetime of experience in business, industry and education. As founder of Mainstream Access, Inc., later Spherion International, she and her partners led large sale initiatives in corporate re-engineering and restructuring. In her work as a professional development and team alignment consultant she coached C-level executives from many of the Fortune 500 companies. Her work in business was supported by a background in ministry and education, including Campus Ministry, and in teaching the classics at LaSalle and Temple Universities. Besides supporting Monsignor Liddy in establishing the Center for Catholic Studies, Therese partnered with Dr. Bill Toth in developing the Micah Institute for Business and Economics and continued, after his death, to teach the Micah Leadership Seminars to graduates and undergraduates at SHU’s Stillman School of Business. She notes: “Catholic Studies encompasses all that is universally ‘catholic’ in global learning, the Arts, the Sciences and the Sacred Sciences. It unites the silos of learning in the Catholic university to its primary mission, the pursuit of truth through the Catholic intellectual tradition.”

Katherine Toth | TOTH-LONERGAN ENDOWED PROFESSORSHIP

“I am happy to contribute to the Toth-Lonergan Professorship in Interdisciplinary Studies at Seton Hall University because Bill was so dedicated to bringing the wisdom of Catholic social teaching to all aspects of life: intellectual as well as social. His heart would sing when he was involved in his capacity as a teacher of theology in the college, in the law school, the business school, the nursing school as well as social and parochial groups. He knew that Catholic tradition could contribute to all those fields.”

Foundations and Trusts

The following foundations and trusts have provided significant support to the Center, including the Center for Catholic Studies Endowment, Toth-Lonergan Endowed Chair in Interdisciplinary Studies, the Micah project at Seton Hall, and other program support:

Porticus North America Foundation; Cushman Foundation; Bessemer Trust; Sandy Hill Foundation; Raskob Foundation; Community Foundation of New Jersey

Friends of Msgr. Liddy

A special group of supporters are close friends of Msgr. Richard Liddy and have been the lifeline of constant support over the years. These special friends include:

Rose and Colin Nadeau; David and Barbara Gocke; James Penders; James O’Brien; Don and Mary McLaughlin; Bernard and Marian Langan; Frank (1933-2013) and Virginia Leskauskas; Msgr. Thomas Ivory (1938-2020); Msgr. Edward Ciuba; Frank Tinari; Pat Tarallo; Msgr. Gerard McCarren; Carol Tobin; Joseph Maloy; Henry Senger; Walter Kennedy; Robert Baldwin; Frank and Mimi Walsh; Fr. Lawrence Frizzell; Beverly O’Hearn; AND of course, the entire Liddy clan and several anonymous donors to kind to be mentioned!

Foundations and Trusts

Porticus North America Foundation; Cushman Foundation; Bessemer Trust; Sandy Hill Foundation; Raskob Foundation; Community Foundation of New Jersey
As I write this column honoring our friends and supporters, I am thinking of a Gospel last month which is about Jesus watching many people donating money to the Temple treasury and in their midst noticing a poor widow putting in two small coins worth only a few cents. He is sitting there watching her. She doesn’t notice him, nor does she know that he is God incarnate only a few feet away. And he says to his disciples, and to us: “this poor widow put in more than all the others; for they have contributed from their surplus, but she from her poverty, has contributed all that she had, her whole livelihood.”

And so, the question occurs to me: Does Jesus watch me as I write out checks for this cause or that? I think of the recent news story of starving mothers and children in drought-ridden Mozambique. Should I write out a check $100?— or should it be $200? Or more? The face of a woman with the child comes to me—and the face of the poor widow. She gave of her substance, her livelihood. Does God watch us as we spend our money? Is he inspiring something in us? Perhaps even a small change: from $100 to 200? Our very souls are in the balance.

So, as we honor our donors this season and specifically remember so many friends and family members who have helped us to get the Center for Catholic Studies at Seton Hall University off the ground, I also think of the poor widow whose two small coins are— in Jesus’ eyes— “worth more than all the others.” And we remember 1) that Jesus does indeed watch us as he watches over us; 2) and he is encouraging us to take care of the widows and the children in our midst— indeed, all who need; 3) and he would enlighten “the eyes of our hearts”— so that we can truly see, and take care of his Body throughout the world.
J. Michael Stebbins, PhD, was reappointed as the Toth-Lonergan Endowed Visiting Professor for the 2021-2022 academic year for a third term, continuing numerous teachings and scholarly activities throughout the university. According to Gregory Floyd, PhD, the Director of the Center for Catholic Studies and the Bernard Lonergan Institute, "The Toth-Lonergan Chair was inaugurated to enhance the intellectual, spiritual, and interdisciplinary integration of Seton Hall faculty, staff, and students in line with our mission as a Catholic University. Few people have served those ends as well as Dr. Stebbins. Mike embodies the Seton Hall charism of servant leadership and is a gift to our students, faculty, and staff." The purpose of the Toth-Lonergan Professorship is to enhance the connections between the university’s Catholic mission and all areas of the university. In addition to teaching, Dr. Stebbins has been the visiting scholar in university faculty development programs, specifically those which link Bernard Lonergan’s generalized empirical method (“GEM”) with the various disciplines, such as the Praxis Program of the Advanced Seminar on Mission, sponsored by the Center for Vocation and Servant Leadership, and co-sponsored by the Center for Catholic Studies. This academic year, he is teaching "The Philosophy and Theology of Bernard Lonergan" (a Catholic Studies/Core III course), and also co-teaching "Law and Morality" at the Seton Hall Law School with long time professor Michael Ambrosio. In Spring 2022, he will be teaching an MBA course in the Stillman Business School called "Effective Thinking and Decision Making for Managers." He has given numerous guest lectures in courses this semester throughout the university, as well as weekly meetings with special study groups for Honors students.

This Fall, Dr. Stebbins recorded a podcast, titled "Reducing the Mismatch: Some Thoughts on How We Figure Out the World," available on the Institute for Communication and Religion website. A second edition of his book, The Divine Initiative: Grace, World Order, and Human Freedom in the Early Writings of Bernard Lonergan, will be available soon (The Lonergan Institute, Boston College). Mike holds a BA in philosophy from Gonzaga University, a BS in nursing from the University of Washington, and a PhD in systematic theology from Boston College. Previously, Dr. Stebbins served as the Executive Vice President of Mission at Avera Health, a four-state Catholic health care system headquartered in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

Seton Hall has been blessed with Mike's time and contributions at Seton Hall, where together with his wife Mary Kay, a spiritual director, they have been a bright presence among us, even through the pandemic’s darkest periods. Mike and Mary Kay have five children across the United States, and have recently welcomed their first grandchild, Parker Mae.
CATHOLIC STUDIES PROGRAM (CAST)
2021 HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY 28, Sixth Annual Msgr. Cafone Lecture Series— "Piazzas, Popes, Pasta: Notes from a Rome Sojourn," speaker Dr. Luanne Zurlo. Her heartfelt and vivid descriptions put one in Rome as she admired the art, music, and sights such as St. Peter’s Basilica.

MARCH 10, “Fr. Stanley Jaki, Science, and Chesterton”— Online Conference. Speakers: Fr. Paul Haffner, Rev. Joseph Laracy, Dr. Stacy Trasancos and Dr. Dermot Quinn. The panelists shared their own areas of expertise, and discussed the interdisciplinary nature of the work of Fr. Jaki and Chesterton and applications of their thought to challenges we face today.


MARCH 11, “Living Life Fully Alive— Living and Working in Uganda.” Speaker Clare Byrne, a Seton Hall alumna, focused on questions of faith lived out in the workplace and how a faithful person is recognized in the working world.


MARCH 20, “Grace and Healing— The Role of the Church in the Opioid Crisis.” Speaker Ms. Keaton Douglas, ICSTT alumna and Executive Director of the iTHIRST Initiative of the Missionary Servants of the Most Holy Trinity, discussed how the Church became a resource for those suffering from addictions and their families.

APRIL 7, “A Very Significant Step Forward— The Official Catholic Response to the New Faith & Order,” speaker Dr. William Henn, OFM. CAP. This lecture explored how Vatican II, the Catholic Church and other churches and communities have engaged in dialogue to resolve serious differences in this area to promote and restore the unity that was broken over the centuries.

MARCH 20, “Catholic Healthcare: Where Science Meets Religion”, a lecture by Sister Patricia Mennor, SC, Vice President of Mission for St. Joseph’s Health, illustrated how an urban safety net hospital integrates Catholic principles and how these teachings influence the way in which care is provided.

OCTOBER 18, The Department of Catholic Studies, in cooperation with the Commission on Christian Unity of the Archdiocese of Newark, presented “The Centro Pro Unione: Promoting the Modern Ecumenical Movement Since Vatican II”, by Dr. James F. Puglisi, SA, Director of the Centro Pro Unione in Rome. He spoke of the Centro’s efforts to promote the ecumenical movement in terms of formation, dialogue, and spirituality.

NOVEMBER 3, "Catholic Healthcare: Where Science Meets Religion", a lecture by Sister Patricia Menno, SC, Vice President of Mission for St. Joseph’s Health, illustrated how an urban safety net hospital integrates Catholic principles and how these teachings influence the way in which care is provided.

NOVEMBER 17, The Department of Catholic Studies, Campus Ministry, and the G. K. Chesterton Institute for Faith & Culture hosted the Life in Literature Series with Dr. James McGlone—a dramatic reading of the Book of Job, followed by commentary by Dr. Dermot Quinn. The plot traces the life and sufferings of a righteous Gentile from prosperity through calamity to depression and a final resolution. Considered a masterpiece of world literature, the Book of Job remains one of the most popular and widely read books in the Old Testament.

GOOD THINGS COME IN THREES:
Three Siblings Join Catholic Studies Program

In Christianity, the number three represents divine perfection and completeness, which reflects the Latin phrase Omne Trium Perfectum: everything that is three is perfect. The Holy Trinity comes to mind, which is the summit of perfection. While the Universal Church continually celebrates the Trinity, the Catholic Studies Program has its own special trio to celebrate, as it welcomed three siblings to the program: James Michael B. Unciano, Jonathan Michael B. Unciano and John Michael Benedict B. Unciano. James is majoring in Pre-Science, Interdisciplinary, while Jonathan and John are majoring in Biology. The three brothers have the Catholic Studies minor in common.

“The brothers were happy to join the program and are looking forward to applying the Catholic intellectual tradition in science” said Dr. Ines A. Murzaku, Director of the Catholic Studies Program. The brothers have received scholarship support from the Reverence Richard Nardone Endowment, which supports students majoring or minoring in Catholic Studies at Seton Hall.

The opportunity for Seton Hall students to broaden their horizons with a Catholic Studies major or minor is now more inviting than ever. “With the bonus ninth semester Seton Hall is offering to freshmen, the possibilities to double major and add minors to students’ portfolios is greatly enhanced,” Dr. Murzaku explained. “A Catholic Studies degree is the perfect enhancement to any other degree. It is the degree which makes students stand apart.”

ABOUT THE CATHOLIC STUDIES PROGRAM

The Catholic Studies Program at Seton Hall University offers a Bachelor of Arts Degree, in an innovative, interdisciplinary curriculum for students of any creed who are interested in deepening their knowledge of Catholicism’s rich intellectual tradition and living heritage. For more information, please contact Dr. Ines Murzaku at Ines.Murzaku@shu.edu or Gloria Aroneo at Gloria.Aroneo@shu.edu.
The Praxis Program of the Advanced Seminar on Mission, sponsored by the Center for Vocation Leadership and co-sponsored by the Center for Catholic Studies, is alive and well in Year 9 despite the limitations of COVID-19. In the past academic year, the main topic has been Bernard Lonergan's principles of education for cosmopolis (a world that transcends factionalism for the public good). The goal is to help faculty integrate mission into their life and work at Seton Hall and to introduce their students to Bernard Lonergan's ideas of authenticity and self-conversion, such that they will apply his Transcendental Precepts (be attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible) to their understanding of how to contribute to the human good.

Throughout the academic year participants meet monthly to discuss assigned readings and address pedagogical challenges and issues, all the while informed by Lonergan's writings. The summer meeting synthesizes previous discussions and previews the ensuing year's themes. During the 2020-2021 academic year, Dr. Michael Stebbins, Toth-Lonergan Visiting Professor, has provided advice, support and lectures to help those in the Praxis program manifest Lonergan's principles in their classes. To our delight, he has returned for the 2021-2022 academic year as well.

Response from Praxis members (including those who have retired) has been overwhelmingly positive, as indicated in our annual assessment. Comments include "participation in the Praxis Program has been the single most impactful and influential activity I have done in the past 6 years." Praxis "provides space for reflection," "good to be in a community of diverse interests and collegiality," "We appropriate what Lonergan has to offer and then we bear witness to it in our personal and professional lives..." "It is very special, very significant."

Recent outcomes have brought to light the program's achievement. Seton Hall University has been nationally ranked for its Critical Proficiency, designed based on Lonergan's General Empirical Method (operationalizing Lonergan's transcendental precepts). Last month, Praxis publications had 18 full-text downloads, the most popular article by Dr. Lisa Rose-Wiles uses "Bernard Lonergan's generalized empirical method as a framework for critical thinking and information literacy." In addition, Praxis-modeled mission driven faculty development programs have been developed at Boston College and the University of San Francisco. This program's success is due to the efforts and dedication of all its members, most notably Linda Garofalo, Danute Nourse, and Dr. Stebbins.

For more information, visit: https://www.shu.edu/vocation-servant-leadership/praxis-program-of-advanced-seminar-on-mission.cfm

Thank You
Friends & Supporters

Our work over the past 24 years, as described in these pages, has grown and strengthened in large part due to your generosity, participation, and friendship. Please visit our website for more information and be sure that your support will not only help to continue our work to foster the Catholic mission of the university from a firm foundation but will also help to secure the promise of Catholic education.

To support our programs, please visit http://bit.ly/support-ccs