



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SEMINARY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

Faculty & Administration News (FAN)

Volume XVII, Issue 4

August 2026

First issued in November 2009, [*Faculty & Administration News \(FAN\)*](#) is a quarterly publication of [Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology \(ICSST\)](#). This newsletter highlights the most recent professional accomplishments and service activities of ICSST's faculty and administrators. Click the hyperlinks to explore the work of our faculty and administrators.

New Administrative Staff Role

- ❖ Upon returning from his sabbatical year on July 1, 2026, **Reverend Robert K. Suszko, M.B.A., M.Div.**, resumed service as a member of the Formation Faculty and as Business Manager and assumed responsibilities as Director of Pastoral Formation of Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology.

Appointments

- ❖ **Reverend Charles Pinyan, M.Div., M.A.**, Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Theology, was appointed Pastor of St. Mary Parish, Rutherford, NJ, for a six-year term, effective July 1, 2026.

- ❖ **Reverend Paweł Tomczyk, Ph.D.**, Adjunct Professor of Moral Theology, was appointed Episcopal Vicar for Evangelization for the Diocese of Paterson, with residence at St. Paul Inside the Walls Evangelization Center, Madison, NJ, effective July 1, 2026.

Awards and Nominations

- ❖ **Ellen R. Scully, Ph.D.**, Professor of Undergraduate Theology, as previously reported, published a book titled [*Human Salvation in Early Christianity: Exploring the Theology of Physicalist Soteriology*](#) (Cambridge University Press, 2025). This book recently won two book awards and was nominated for book awards.
 - [Catholic Media Association Book Awards](#) won:
 - Second Place in the category “History of Theology, Church Fathers and Mothers.”
 - Honorable Mention in the category “Jesus – Christology.”
 - Additional book award nominations:
 - [American Academy of Religion Book Award](#): Nominated in the category “Best Work in Textual or Historical Studies.”
 - [Catholic Media Association Book Award](#): Nominated in the category “Theological Studies.”
- ❖ **Reverend Robert K. Suszko, M.B.A., M.Div.**, Business Manager, Director of Pastoral Formation, and Formation Faculty Member, was honored with the Breslin Service Award, in recognition of his dedicated service as Vice Rector of Immaculate Conception Seminary from 2010 to 2025. This award was bestowed at the Honorable Judge Roger W. Breslin, Sr. Awards Banquet, sponsored by Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology, and held at Nanina’s in the Park, Belleville, NJ, on June 22, 2026.

Publications

- ❖ **Reverend Dominic G. Ciriaco, D.Min.**, Director of the Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program and Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology, published a book: [*The Painted Pulpit: Corita Kent, Visual Theology and the Practice of Preaching*](#). St. Louis, MO: En Route Books and Media, July 20, 2026.
- ❖ **Justin M. Anderson, Ph.D.**, Professor and Chair of Moral Theology, published a book, co-edited with Matthew Levering and Aaron Pidel: [*Aquinas's Summa and Jesuit Ethics: A Call for Ressourcement*](#). Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, June 2026.
 - Dr. Anderson wrote the following chapter of this book: “Parvity of Matter in Sexual Sins: Contemporary Misgivings, Aquinas, & the Early Modern Jesuit Moral Tradition,” 224-265.
- ❖ **Patrick R. Manning, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Director of the Seton Hall University Center for Catholic Studies, published a book chapter: “Renewal in the Desert.” In [*A Shared Praxis: Renewing Religious Education*](#), edited by Hosffman Ospino and Colleen Griffith, 127-130, Crossroad Publishing, April 2026.
- ❖ **Dianne M. Traflet, J.D. '88, S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Administration and Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology, published a book chapter: “St. Titus Brandsma: Bearer of Truth.” In [*Telling the Truth: Titus Brandsma Among the Carmelite Martyrs of World War II*](#), edited by Paul Chandler, O.Carm., with an introduction by Steven Payne, O.C.D., 92-100, The Catholic University of America Press, June 2026.

- ❖ **Ellen R. Scully, Ph.D.**, Professor of Undergraduate Theology, published the following:
 - “Newman and the Problem of Methodological Retrospection.” In [*Newman and Nicaea*](#), edited by Lewis Ayres and Andrew J. Sommerson, 126-137, Cascade Books, July 17, 2026.
 - Book review of *Seeing, Knowing, Becoming: Sense Perception as Metaphor in Augustine*, by Amanda C. Knight. *Augustinian Studies* 57, no. 1 (2026): 117-120.

- ❖ **Reverend Paweł Tomczyk, Ph.D.**, Adjunct Professor of Moral Theology, published a journal article: [“Theology of the Body and the Role of Diversity of Sexes in the Catholic Notion of Diversity.”](#) *The Person and the Challenges* 15, no. 2 (December 31, 2025): 135-152.

- ❖ **Reverend Monsignor C. Anthony Ziccardi, S.S.L, S.T.D.**, ICSST’s Coordinator of Undergraduate Admissions and Retention and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, published an article in an online magazine: [“Getting Bible Translations Right: A Case Study from 1 and 2 Timothy.”](#) *The Catholic World Report* (June 28, 2026).

- ❖ **Reverend Monsignor Thomas G. Guarino, K.H.S., S.T.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology, published the following:
 - An article on the website of the journal *First Things*: [“Will the Dallas Charter Update Finally Give Priests Due Process?”](#) (June 8, 2026).
 - An article on *The Catholic Thing* website: [“The SSPX and the French Revolution”](#) (July 8, 2026).

Reviews of Book Published by ICSST Faculty Member

❖ **Ellen R. Scully, Ph.D.**, Professor of Undergraduate Theology, as previously reported, published a book titled [*Human Salvation in Early Christianity: Exploring the Theology of Physicalist Soteriology*](#) (Cambridge University Press, 2025). This book recently received positive scholarly reviews:

- Reviewed by Brad Boswell in the [*Ancient Jew Review*](#) (August 2025).
- Reviewed by Alex Fogleman in the *Scottish Journal of Theology* (October 2025). The *Scottish Journal of Theology* is a top-tier journal ranked as IJ1 (global reputation, rigorous peer review, authors and editors of various nationalities, considered top in the field) by LITaRS, the Louvain Index of Theology and Religious Studies for Journals and Series.
- Reviewed by Reverend Andrew J. Summerson in *The New Ressourcement* 3.1 (2026).

Media Contributions

❖ **Patrick R. Manning, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Director of the Seton Hall University Center for Catholic Studies, was interviewed on the topic of his newest book, [*Be Still and Know: Contemplative Practices for Christian Schools and Educators*](#) (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2025), for the following:

- [*Catholic School Matters*](#) podcast, hosted by Tim Uhl, Ph.D., Principal of Notre Dame High School, Salinas, CA. This episode aired on January 13, 2026. In this interview, Dr. Manning and Dr. Uhl discuss the value of contemplative practices for current K-12 school environments and the tremendous richness and practical applications of contemplative practices.

- *ClassicalU* podcast, episode 38: [“Be Still and Know: Reclaiming Attention, Time, and Wonder in Christian Education.”](#) This episode, hosted by Jesse Hake, aired on March 2, 2026. Drawing from the deep wells of the Christian contemplative tradition—from the Desert Fathers and Mothers to Benedictine, Ignatian, and Dominican spirituality—Dr. Manning argues that contemplation is not foreign to Christian education but central to it. He explores how reframing time, cultivating attention, and building intentional rhythms of silence and prayer can transform classrooms into “attention sanctuaries” in an age dominated by distraction. The conversation addresses pressing concerns such as student mental health, shrinking attention spans, and the pressures of productivity culture, offering both theological grounding and practical strategies for school leaders and teachers.
- *Faith in Teaching* podcast, [episode 57](#). In this podcast, David I. Smith, Director of Calvin University’s Kuyers Institute, talks with researchers and educators who are working to understand how Christian faith affects teaching, learning, and educational practices. Dr. Manning’s interview aired in March 2026.

❖ **Dianne M. Traflet, J.D. ’88, S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Administration and Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology:

- As part of communication efforts related to Seton Hall University’s Strategic Plan, [Inspiring Great Minds to Greater Purpose](#), represented Seton Hall’s core values of Faith and Hope, in a *Guiding Values* video. [Dr. Traflet’s interview](#) was recorded at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, on March 10, 2026. Additional information about Dr. Traflet’s interview can be found [here](#).
- With **Jon Radwan, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Communication in Seton Hall’s College of Human Development, Culture, and Media, and Director of the Institute for

Communication and Religion, was interviewed for the [Courageous Catholic Communicators podcast](#) hosted by **Colette Liddy, M.A.**, Adjunct Instructor in the Department of Communication, Media, and Arts. Dr. Traflet discussed Servant of God Dorothy Day and St. Titus Brandsma, while Dr. Radwan discussed St. Oscar Romero and Venerable Fulton Sheen. This interview was recorded at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, on June 24, 2026.

Special Events and Initiatives

- ❖ As previously reported, in 2023, ICSST received a \$1.25 million grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc., to support the establishment of the Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program. This five-year, multifaceted effort seeks to form preachers who will grow in self-confidence as they prayerfully encounter God in Scripture and experience the power of Christian hospitality through inviting, welcoming, and sharing the Word of God. The Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program team is comprised of: **Reverend Dominic G. Ciriaco, D.Min.**, Director; **Alyssa V. Carolan, M.A. '20**, Administrative Assistant; **Michael J. Morano, B.A. '23**, Web Editor and Writer; and **Angelica K. Bullock, M.A., Ph.D. (Cand.)**, Digital Biographer. Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program events and initiatives this quarter have included the following:
 - The wide-reaching [Wisdom Figures of Preaching](#) series is a digital resource consisting of interviews with priests and deacons who share their wisdom to form seminarians, diaconal students, and religious and lay ICSST graduate students of theology to be compelling preachers who will offer hospitality of the heart as they break open the Word of God. The video interviews will be used and shared in preaching courses and other formation programs. They are preserved on the Preaching as Hospitality [playlist](#) on Seton Hall's

YouTube channel and on ICSST's website. From mid-May through early August 2026, the Preaching as Hospitality team interviewed the following priests and deacons for the series:

- **Deacon Peter A. Cistaro, M.B.A.**, Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Theology, on May 12, 2026.
- **Reverend Monsignor C. Anthony Ziccardi, S.S.L., S.T.D.**, Coordinator for Undergraduate Admissions and Retention and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, on May 26, 2026.
- **Reverend Mariusz Eugene R. Koch, C.F.R., M.Div., M.A.**, Spiritual Director, on May 26, 2026.
- **Revered Gabriel B. Costa, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Mathematics, on July 20, 2026.
- **Reverend Christopher M. Ciccarino, K.C.H.S., S.S.L. S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Seminary and Academic Studies, Interim Director of the Seminary Library, and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, on July 27, 2026.
- Panel consisting of **Deacon Brian Beyerl, M.D.**, and **Deacon Peter A. Cistaro, M.B.A.**, Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Theology, both of the Diocese of Paterson, and **Deacon Michael D. York, M.E.**, and **Deacon John J. McKenna, K.H.S.**, both of the Archdiocese of Newark.

Additional information about these interviews will be released in the coming weeks. Additional interviews will be scheduled for Summer 2026 and beyond.

- The Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program concluded its *Many Faces of Hospitality* series with a morning of reflection, *The Art of Welcome: Visio Divina and St. Paul*, held at Immaculate Conception Seminary, on June 20, 2026. Participants used *visio divina* and *lectio*

- divina* to pray with the epistles and learn about hospitality in the early Church, and they spent time in group discussions as well as in individual silence. The day included morning Mass, breakfast, and a presentation and reflections by **Reverend Dominic G. Ciriaco, D.Min.**, Director of the Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program and Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology. Thirty-two people attended. Recordings of this event can be found on the Preaching as Hospitality YouTube [playlist](#).
- A new initiative, [Pauline Preaching Clinics](#), will begin in Fall 2026. This series will be designed to train preachers to learn from and model St. Paul's preaching style in their ministries and to share St. Paul's evangelizing zeal in their communities. The clinics will include four workshops each semester, addressing topics that focus on hospitable preaching in the context of Liturgy and retreats.
 - The Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program offered a new set of reflections for Summer 2026. The series, titled [A Midsummer's Reflection](#), featured meditations written by **Jeffrey L. Morrow, Ph.D.**, Professor of Theology at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Director of the St. Paul Studies Center at the St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology, and former Professor of Theology at ICSST. Dr. Morrow's meditations were paired with *visio divina* with artwork by Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890). Reflections were distributed from May 31 through June 30 via email to an audience of 460 subscribers.
- ❖ With \$5,000 from the Seton Hall University Provost's strategic funds, the *4:12 Pathway for Pastoral Leadership* initiative, through the leadership of **Deacon Andrew E. Saunders, M.A. '08**, Co-Director, *4:12 Pathway for Pastoral Leadership* Grant, organized an *Ethics Summit for Deacons*, held on June 8, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology. Often parishioners seek out deacons for advice and guidance

on the “hot-button” ethical issues of our current times. The purpose of this summit was to listen and to engage deacons on the front lines regarding the ethical questions people ask of them as they exercise their leadership responsibilities in the parish, community, and marketplace. The summit included a deacon panel and presentations on some of the current burning issues. The panel and attending deacons explored questions such as:

- What are the ethical issues that tend to arise in your ministry? What are the questions parishioners tend to ask? Even questions at the proverbial water cooler at work?
- What are the questions that tend to give you pause—the kind that require further research or discussion with experts in the field?
- What are the specific issues in your ministry (to young adults or patients, for example) on which you would like clarification or further pastoral explanation?
- Are the burning issues primarily in a certain area such as bioethics, social justice, war and peace, marriage and the family, or human life issues?

The discussions and listening learnings will assist in designing and offering future workshops that delve deeper into the “hot-button” ethical issues and will be shared with ICSST’s ethics professors for inclusion in the classroom.

The events of the day included:

- Morning Prayer;
- Continental breakfast;
- Panel of six deacons from ICSST’s sending dioceses speaking about ethical and moral issues they have encountered in their diaconal ministry;
- Presentation by **Reverend Paweł Tomczyk, Ph.D.**, Adjunct Professor of Moral Theology, on the topic “A Pastoral Approach to Engaging in Ethical Issues”;
- Mass;

- Lunch;
- Presentation by **Timothy P. Fortin, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Philosophical Theology, on topics related to Gender Issues; and
- Presentation by **Deacon Michael Giuliano, M.D., M.A. '16**, Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology alumnus (2016) and founding Associate Dean for Faculty, Resident, and Student Development at the Hackensack Meridian School of Medicine in Nutley, NJ. Dr. Giuliano discussed “End-of-Life Medical Ethical Issues.”

The event was well attended by deacon candidates, deacon alumni, and other deacons from our four sending dioceses: the Archdiocese of Newark and the Dioceses of Paterson, Metuchen, and Trenton. Total attendance with staff, presenters, and participants was 43. The results of the post-event survey were very positive, with all respondents indicating that they were “Very Satisfied.” Participants were appreciative of the opportunity to network with fellow deacons, sharing with them and hearing how their fellow deacons handled real-life situations. They noted that the *Ethics Summit* equipped them more keenly to recognize Christ in everyone’s lives, helping the deacons to be more mindful, compassionate, and patient when ministering to others and bringing Christ to them.

- ❖ With the offer of \$10,000 from the Provost’s strategic funds, the Seminary organized and hosted a *Spiritual Direction Training Initiative Workshop* on June 30, 2026. Prominent among the approximately 60 attendees were deacons and deacon candidates from the dioceses with which the Seminary works. Collaboration with the Archdiocesan Director of Continuing Formation of Priests was firmly established, and we can expect Newark priests to be a part of the continuing initiative. Extending from 10:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., the event proceeded with a period of gathering, Daytime Prayer, a presentation on “Spiritual Direction: Gift to the

Church,” lunch, a session on interactive Case Studies, two extended sessions of Role Plays, and a presentation titled “Discerning God’s Will” before a brief conclusion. The presenters, **Reverend Monsignor Gerard H. McCarren, S.T.D.**, Rector/Dean and Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, **Reverend Monsignor Joseph R. Chapel, S.T.D.**, Associate Spiritual Director, and **Reverend Vincent Fortunato, O.F.M. Cap., M.Div., M.A.**, Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Theology, conducted the sessions together.

- ❖ Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology and The Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas, Rome, Italy, in collaboration with St. Paul Inside the Walls Evangelization Center, Madison, NJ, sponsored *Hospitality and Evangelization: The Witness of Pope Leo XIV*. **Elise Ann Allen**, Senior Correspondent for *Crux* in Rome, Italy, and author of [*Pope Leo XIV: The Biography*](#), served as featured speaker. **Filipe Domingues, Ph.D.**, Director of The Lay Centre at Foyer Unitas, Lecturer at The Pontifical Gregorian University, and Brazilian journalist, offered a reflection. Approximately 65 people attended the event, which was held in Bethany Hall on Seton Hall University’s South Orange campus, on August 3, 2026.

Mission and Service

- ❖ Six faculty members of Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology continue service as assessors and examiners for former Anglican/Episcopalian clergymen who apply for ordination as Roman Catholic priests through the Pastoral Provision. One candidate was examined and certified during the period July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2026. This service was rendered at Immaculate Conception Seminary, South Orange, NJ, by the following ICSST faculty members:

- **Justin M. Anderson, Ph.D.**, Professor and Chair of Moral Theology.
 - **Reverend Monsignor Gerard H. McCarren, S.T.D.**, Rector/Dean and Associate Professor of Systematic Theology.
 - **Reverend Roberto Ortiz, S.T.L., S.T.D. (Cand.)**, Vice Rector, Director of Liturgy, and Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology.
 - **Dianne M. Traflet, J.D. '88, S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Administration and Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology.
 - **Reverend Monsignor Robert J. Wister, Hist.Eccl.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Church History.
 - **Reverend Monsignor C. Anthony Ziccardi, S.S.L, S.T.D.**, ICSST's Coordinator of Undergraduate Admissions and Retention and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies.
- ❖ **Reverend Christopher M. Ciccarino, K.C.H.S., S.S.L. S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Seminary and Academic Studies, Interim Director of the Seminary Library, and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies:
- Continued service as Vice Chair and Treasurer of the Board of Commissioners of the [Association of Theological Schools \(ATS\)](#), with *ex officio* membership on the Audit Committee, through June 2026. In this role, Father Ciccarino participated in an online Board of Commissioners meeting in November 2025 and in two in-person Board meetings in Pittsburgh, PA, from February 1 to 4, 2026, and from May 31 to June 3, 2026.
 - At the ATS biennial meeting held in Chicago, IL, from June 22 to 25, 2026, Father Ciccarino was elected Chair of the Board of Commissioners, for a two-year term.

- Presented “Transitioning to Major Seminary: Academic Life,” a one-hour presentation delivered to the senior class of the College Seminary of the Immaculate Conception at St. Andrew’s Hall, SHU, South Orange, NJ, on February 25, 2026.
- Presented “Eucharistic Adoration,” a lecture for parents of First Communion children, at St. Teresa of Avila Church, Summit, NJ, on April 23, 2026. Approximately 50 people attended.
- Presented *The Blessed Virgin Mary*, a five-part series, at St. Teresa of Avila Church, Summit, NJ. Approximately 50 people attended each lecture:
 - “The Annunciation: Our Lady at Nazareth,” on April 24, 2026.
 - “The Visitation: Our Lady at Ein Kerem,” on May 1, 2026.
 - “The Nativity: Our Lady at Bethlehem,” on May 8, 2026.
 - “The Presentation & the Finding: Our Lady at Pentecost,” on May 15, 2026.
 - “Pentecost & Assumption: Our Lady at Jerusalem,” on May 22, 2026.
- As *Censor Librorum* for the Archdiocese of Newark, reviewed *What We Lose When We Trade the Sacred for Sentiment and How We Can Come Back Home*, by G.M. Zannetti. Westwood, NJ: Three Hearts Books, 2026.

❖ **Patrick R. Manning, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Director of the Seton Hall University Center for Catholic Studies:

- From August 2025 through June 2026, served on the Ignatian Future of Faith Task Force, an advisory council for the regional office of Jesuit educational institutions.
- Is serving on the Seton Hall University Strategic Plan Implementation Committee on Priority 2: Embracing Community, Catholic Mission, and Culture / Objective 1: Living

Out Our Catholic Mission. Dr. Manning was appointed co-chair of this committee in October 2025.

❖ **Reverend Roberto Ortiz, S.T.L., S.T.D. (Cand.)**, Vice Rector, Director of Liturgy, and Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology:

- Is serving on the Seton Hall University Strategic Plan Implementation Committee on Priority 5: Sustainable Resources / Objective 2: Efficiencies and Revenue Sources. Father Ortiz was appointed to this committee in the Fall 2025 semester.
- As *Censor Librorum* for the Archdiocese of Newark, reviewed the following:
 - *Return to Joy*, by Meredith Dean Augustin (RENEW International).
 - The Paulist Press *Ordo* in Spanish for the New Jersey dioceses.
- Was appointed to serve on the Archdiocese of Newark's Advisory Board for the Ongoing Formation of Clergy, effective August 1, 2026.

❖ **Reverend Renato J. Bautista, M.Div., M.A.**, Director of Formation, and Director of Seminary Records, delivered three presentations for seminarians of the College Seminary of the Immaculate Conception at St. Andrew's Hall, SHU, South Orange, NJ:

- "Benchmarks on the Spiritual Dimension in the Discipleship Stage: Growing Transparency with Jesus Christ," for all seminarians, on November 4, 2025.
- "Human Formation in the Configuration Stage," for the senior class, on April 14, 2026.
- "Benchmarks on the Pastoral Dimension in the Discipleship Stage: Pastoral Skills in Relations," for all seminarians, on April 14, 2026.

❖ **Dianne M. Traflet, J.D. '88, S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Administration and Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology:

- Facilitated *Harvesters of Hope*, a three-day retreat for women of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, Wyckoff, NJ. The retreat was held at Don Bosco Retreat Center, Stony Point, NY, from November 7 to 9, 2025. Approximately 45 people attended.
- Delivered a presentation, “Marian Spirituality,” for Diocese of Paterson permanent diaconate aspirants and their wives, at St. Paul Inside the Walls Diocesan Center for New Evangelization, Madison, NJ, on February 26, 2026. Approximately 20 people attended.
- Delivered a presentation, “Pointing Us to Heaven: Reflections on the Priesthood for Transitional Deacons,” as part of the Canonical Retreat for Priesthood Ordination, for 13 men to be ordained priests. The retreat was held at Villa Pauline, Mallinckrodt Convent, Mendham, NJ, from May 17 to 22, 2026. Dr. Traflet delivered her presentation on May 22, 2026.

❖ **Deacon Andrew E. Saunders, M.A. '08**, Co-Director, *4:12 Pathway for Pastoral Leadership* Grant, in January 2026, was appointed as an advisor to the delegates of the [International Diaconate Centre](#). As an advisor, he will assist in the planning and collection of material, in collaboration with the [National Association of Diaconate Directors](#) and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops committee for Clergy, Consecrated Life, and Vocations, for the anticipated rewrite of the [Basic Norms for Formation of Permanent Deacons](#), dated 1998 by the Vatican. As a member of both organizations, Deacon Saunders is in a unique position to facilitate collaborations with and between national and international diaconate organizations.

❖ **Reverend Monsignor Joseph R. Chapel, S.T.D.**, Associate Spiritual Director:

- As Director of Permanent Diaconate Formation for the Archdiocese of Newark, organized and led information sessions at the Archdiocesan Pastoral Center in Newark on February 26 and 27 and April 5, 2026, and a Morning of Recollection at St. Mary's Abbey, Morristown, NJ, on June 6, 2026, for approximately 70 men (and their wives) who are discerning the diaconate. These men may apply to become candidates for the next cohorts forming in 2026-2027.
- Offered Masses at St. Joseph Regional High School, Montvale, NJ:
 - Mass for "Week of Service," on May 20, 2026.
 - Community Mass, on May 28, 2026.
- Assisted with Archdiocese of Newark *Quo Vadis* Youth Discernment Retreat, at Our Lady Help of Christians National Shrine, Stony Point, NY, from June 28 to July 1, 2026. Monsignor Chapel was available for Masses, Confessions, and spiritual direction. Thirty retreatants participated.

❖ **Reverend Mariusz Eugene R. Koch, C.F.R., M.Div., M.A.**, Spiritual Director:

- For the sixth annual "Ten Miles with Jesus" walk, on March 22, 2026, was instrumental in arranging for the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal novices to lead part of the pilgrimage. The day began at 10 a.m. at St. Theresa Church in Linden, NJ. The pilgrims traveled through Elizabeth, NJ, en route to the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart in Newark, NJ. Along the way, the group prayed the Stations of the Cross, the Rosary, and the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and joined together in song. The day ended with an evening Mass celebrated by **Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., D.D.**, Archbishop of Newark. More than 1,400 people attended.

- Facilitated the Canonical Pre-Priesthood Ordination Retreat for Lucas Folan of the Diocese of Paterson, from April 6 to 10, at the Malvern Retreat House, Malvern, PA. During the retreat, Father Koch delivered two conferences daily. Father Folan was ordained to the priesthood on June 13, 2026.
- Facilitated a retreat on the theme *The Year of St. Francis*, for the Sisters of Jesus Our Hope, in Clinton, NJ, from June 15 to 18, 2026. Each day, Father Koch delivered two conferences and celebrated Mass and the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Nine Sisters attended.
- Facilitated a retreat on the theme *The Year of St. Francis*, for the Poor Clare Sisters, at Our Lady of Solitude Monastery, Phoenix, AZ, from July 12 to 19, 2026. In addition to celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation, Father Koch celebrated daily Mass, offering a reflection at each Mass. Five Sisters attended the retreat.

❖ **Reverend Monsignor Gerard H. McCarren, S.T.D.**, Rector/Dean and Associate Professor of Systematic Theology:

- Offered a welcome message on a [personalized acceptance video](#) that Seton Hall University Admissions sends to incoming undergraduate students.
- Served as celebrant and homilist at a Divine Mercy Sunday regional celebration held at the Church of St. Philomena, Livingston, NJ, on April 12, 2026.
- Offered the invocation at the Stillman School of Business Graduate Commencement, on May 15, 2026.

❖ **Eric M. Johnston, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Undergraduate Theology, served as a representative of the married life, on a vocations panel discussion sponsored by *Verso Christo*,

a network of parishes committed to building up community and discipleship for young adults. The panel discussion was held at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, South Orange, NJ, on April 18, 2026. Approximately 25 people attended.

❖ **Reverend Monsignor C. Anthony Ziccardi, S.S.L, S.T.D.**, ICSST's Coordinator of Undergraduate Admissions and Retention and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies:

- Delivered to Mass lectors "Discharging the Ministry of the Word, Human and Divine," a one-hour presentation concerning their ministry. This presentation was part of a lectors' workshop sponsored by the Office of Divine Worship of the Archdiocese of Newark and conducted at the Archdiocesan Center, Newark, NJ, on May 9, 2026. Twenty-five people attended.
- As Chair of the *Censores Librorum* for the Archdiocese of Newark, recently reviewed two books submitted to the Archbishop of Newark for his certification that they are free from Catholic theological error:
 - *Return to Joy: A Lenten Journal of Renewal – Cycle A, 2026* (RENEW International).
 - *Stay on the Boat: A Story About Trusting God and His Church* (Three Hearts Catholic Books).

❖ **Ellen R. Scully, Ph.D.**, Professor of Undergraduate Theology, as *Censor Librorum* for the Archdiocese of Newark, reviewed three books by Gina Zannetti:

- *I Won't Forget You: A Catholic Story About Helping the Souls in Purgatory.*
- *Poor Me: A Catholic Guide to Suffering Well.*
- *My Name is Amelia: A Soul's Plea from Purgatory.*

- ❖ **Reverend Charles Pinyan, M.Div., M.A.**, Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Theology, preached a retreat week on the theme *Encountering Jesus: Remembrance and Renewal*, at Maris Stella Retreat and Conference Center, Harvey Cedars, NJ, from June 22 to 28, 2026. The retreat included two daily conferences, daily Mass, an opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and ample quiet time for prayer and enjoying the surroundings at the shore. Nine retreatants attended.

New Courses Developed

- ❖ **Víctor Velarde-Mayol, M.D., Ph.D.**, Professor of Philosophical Theology, developed the course PLTL/THEO 3399: *ST: Angels and Demons*, which he taught for the first time in Spring 2026. Dr. Velarde-Mayol redeveloped the course for approval as a CORE III course. In May 2026, the University CORE Curriculum Committee approved this course for CORE III. This CORE III course will run in Spring 2027.

This is an interdisciplinary course in theology and philosophy on angelology, interconnected with both human psychology and culture. As a CORE III course, it is deeply infused in Catholicism in line with the Abrahamic tradition in both CORE I, where angels were depicted as the mediators between God and men in the Old Testament, and CORE II, where angels were created on the first day of creation according to St. Augustine's hermeneutical interpretation of the book of Genesis.

This course examines the role of angels across various cultures and religions, focusing primarily on the three monotheistic faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as their representation in contemporary Western culture. Students explore how angels are depicted in sacred scriptures and Catholic tradition, aiming for a philosophical and theological understanding of angels as pure spiritual beings, with significant reference to the works of St.

Thomas Aquinas. The course delves into the origins of demons, their role in religious texts, and the concept of evil in different belief systems. Students investigate the historical and theological perspectives on exorcisms, including their significance and development in religious traditions. Through this exploration, students will gain a comprehensive understanding of the diverse interpretations of angels and their implications in spiritual and cultural contexts, mainly in the Catholic Faith.

Conferences, Meetings, Panel Discussions, and Symposia

- ❖ **Timothy P. Fortin, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Philosophical Theology, and **Eric M. Johnston, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Undergraduate Theology, attended the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Catholic Theology, held at the Dominican House of Studies, Washington, DC, from May 19 to 21, 2026. The theme of this year's meeting was *The Person and the Machine*. The meeting included discussions of the impact of Artificial Intelligence and a session on pedagogy in light of AI.

- ❖ **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology, presented "*Persona et Machina: The Ontological Limits of Artificial Intelligence.*" Paper, at the Annual Meeting of the Academy of Catholic Theology, held at the Dominican House of Studies, Washington, DC, from May 19 to 21, 2026. Father Laracy delivered his presentation on May 20, 2026, to an audience of approximately 30 people.

- ❖ **Ellen R. Scully, Ph.D.**, Professor of Undergraduate Theology, at the North American Patristics Society 2026 Annual Meeting, in Chicago, IL:
 - Presented “Gregory of Nyssa’s Mixture Christology: Transformation into Original Human Nature,” on May 23, 2026, to an audience of approximately 25 people.
 - Served as an invited panel speaker for the panel discussion on Samuel Fernández’s book *Nicaea 325: Reassessing the Contemporary Sources*, on May 23, 2026. Approximately 20 people attended the panel discussion.

- ❖ **Patrick R. Manning, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology and Director of the Seton Hall University Center for Catholic Studies, attended *Unity in the Spirit*, a national academic gathering focused on mission, faith-learning, and faculty formation in Christian higher education. The program was developed through a grant awarded to Providence College by the Lilly Network of Church-Related Colleges and Universities. The event convenes early- and mid-career faith-learning leaders from across Christian colleges and universities for ecumenical dialogue and shared approaches to faculty formation. The conference was held at Providence College, Providence, RI, from June 22 to 24, 2026.

- ❖ **Timothy P. Fortin, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Philosophical Theology, at the theological seminar *Christian Witness in the Age of AI*, held at Princeton Theological Seminary, Princeton, NJ, on July 17, 2026, served as a respondent to the afternoon lecture delivered by **Reverend Paul O’Callaghan, S.T.D.**, Professor of Theological Anthropology, Pontifical University of the Holy Cross, Rome, Italy. Designed for priests and all with an interest in theology, this event provided a unique opportunity for theological formation and thoughtful discussion on the Christian apostolate in today’s world. The seminar was sponsored by the Santa Croce

Institute (a program of the Nassau Foundation) in collaboration with the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross Foundation. A recording of the lecture and response is available [here](#).

❖ **Reverend Monsignor Gerard H. McCarren, S.T.D.**, Rector/Dean and Associate Professor of Systematic Theology:

- As a board member emeritus, participated online in the Board of Directors meeting of The Saint John Henry Newman Association, held at St. Thomas University, Miami, FL, on July 23, 2026.
- Participated online in sessions of the National Newman Conference, *Formation of a Philosophical Habit of Mind*, sponsored by The Saint John Henry Newman Association and held at St. Thomas University, Miami, FL, from July 23 to 25, 2026.

Other Scholarly and Professional Activity

❖ **Ellen R. Scully, Ph.D.**, Professor of Undergraduate Theology:

- Served as external reviewer for a promotion and tenure application for a faculty member at a North American R1 research institution, from September to November 2025.
- Served as an anonymous peer reviewer of a book manuscript for Baylor University Press in January 2026.
- Accepted an invitation to join the advisory board of the [*Journal of Early Christian Studies*](#), effective May 26, 2026. This journal is ranked as an international top-tier journal by the LITaRS (Louvain Index of Theology and Religious Studies for Journals and Series). Advisory board members are called on to review papers two or three times per year (though as often as four times, depending on the rate of submissions), sometimes on short notice. The expected turnaround time for normal reviews is six weeks. Advisory board

members also may be asked about the best reviewers for other papers. At times, advisory board members perform side tasks, such as serving on the North American Patristics Society Best First Article Prize jury.

❖ **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology:

- Served as invited guest co-editor for: Joseph R. Laracy, Lisa Rose-Wiles, Jacob Weger, and Robert Russell, eds., [*Theology and Science special issue on Ecology and Theology: Interdisciplinary Conversations 23, no. 4 \(2025\)*](#).
- Served as a peer reviewer for the following:
 - [*Human Arenas: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Psychology, Culture, and Meaning*](#), on May 7, 2026.
 - [*T&T Clark*](#), book proposal, on June 29, 2026.
 - [*Social Sciences*](#) (Springer Nature), on July 1, 2026.
 - [*Acta Psychologica*](#), on July 8, 2026.

❖ **Timothy P. Fortin, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Philosophical Theology, served as an anonymous peer reviewer of a book manuscript for Humanum Academic Press, from May to June 2026.

❖ **Reverend Monsignor Thomas G. Guarino, K.H.S., S.T.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology, participated in a meeting of the bilateral ecumenical initiative Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT), in New York City, NY, on June 8, 2026. The topic under discussion, ultimately leading to a joint statement, was “The Role of Natural Law Today.”

- ❖ **Jamie Boulding, Ph.D.**, Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology, taught a four-day seminar to approximately 25 high school students at the Agathon Institute, Rochester, NY, on the topic of friendship, from June 29 to July 2, 2026.