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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.

Grant

- As part of Seton Hall University's Mission Partners Program for academic year 2026-2027, **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology, is mentoring **Michael Buckley, M.S.**, Assistant Professor of Communication, Media, and the Arts, on a project titled *Grounding Ethical Interface Design in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition*. The project examines how the CIT can provide a philosophical and ethical foundation for interface design in the age of artificial intelligence. Drawing particularly upon St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas, as well as contemporary Catholic thought on AI, the project will:
  - Develop a Catholic framework for evaluating how digital and AI interfaces shape human attention, agency, habits, and decision-making, with particular attention to human dignity, virtue, natural law, and the common good.
  - Bring Catholic ethical principles into dialogue with human-computer interaction, value-sensitive design, technology ethics, and contemporary AI ethics.

- Translate these principles into practical design education through case studies, critiques, redesign exercises, and other instructional materials that help students evaluate the ethical implications of design choices and AI-generated work.

Father Laracy and Professor Buckley were awarded $1,000 each for this project.

Publications

- **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology, with **Thomas J. Marlowe, Ph.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Mathematics and Computer Science, published a journal article: "The Persistence of Aristotelian Natural Philosophy in the Early Modern Era." *Theology and Science* (September 4, 2026).

- **Julie V. Burkey, D.Min.**, Adjunct Professor of Pastoral Theology, published a magazine article: "Work as a Pilgrimage to Faith: The Sanctifying Work-Life Journey of St. Edith Stein." *Crisis Magazine* (September 7, 2026).

- **Reverend Monsignor Thomas G. Guarino, K.H.S., S.T.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology, published an article on the website of the journal *First Things*: "Vatican II Didn't Kneel to Modernity" (October 1, 2026).

Media Contributions

- **Reverend Dominic G. Ciriaco, D.Min.**, Director of the Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program and Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology, was interviewed on the topic of his newly published book, *The Painted Pulpit: Corita Kent, Visual Theology and the Practice of Preaching*

(En Route Books and Media, 2026), for episode 308 of *The Catholic Bookworm* podcast, hosted by Kiki Latimer. This episode aired on WCAT Radio on August 18, 2026.

- **Reverend Monsignor Thomas G. Guarino, K.H.S., S.T.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology, was interviewed by Pat Oedy-Murray of Annunciation Radio (based in Toledo, OH), on October 13, 2026. The interview was based on Monsignor Guarino's article "Vatican II Didn't Kneel to Modernity," which appeared on the website of the journal *First Things* on October 1, 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 includes **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 featuring 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-August through early November 2026, the Preaching as Hospitality team interviewed the following priests for the series:

- **Reverend James A. Hamel, M.A. '99**, University Alumni Chaplain, on August 24, 2026.
- **Reverend Charles Pinyan, M.Div., M.A.**, Pastor of St. Mary Parish, Rutherford, NJ, on September 9, 2026.
- **Reverend Gabriel B. Costa, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Mathematics, on September 10, 2026.
- **Reverend Nicholas G. Figurelli, M.Div., M.A. '82**, Associate Director of Campus Ministry, on September 15, 2026.

The interviews will be released in the coming weeks. Additional interviews are scheduled for Fall 2026 and beyond.

- Fall 2026 marks the beginning of Preaching as Hospitality's *Pauline Preaching Clinics*. This series is designed to train preachers to learn and model St. Paul's preaching style in their ministries and to share St. Paul's evangelizing zeal in their communities. The clinics include four workshops each semester that address topics on hospitable preaching in the context of Liturgy and retreats. Each workshop includes Morning Prayer, breakfast, a talk by a guest speaker, and time for attendees to develop and practice their preaching skills.
  - The first session, on September 26, 2026, featured **Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, S.T.D., S.S.L., D.D.**, Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Paterson, NJ, who spoke on the topic "Who is St. Paul? His Life and Preaching." Forty-three clergy attended.

- The second session, on October 17, 2026, featured **Reverend Monsignor C. Anthony Ziccardi, S.S.L., S.T.D.**, Coordinator for Undergraduate Admissions and Retention and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, who spoke on the topic "What is Pauline Preaching? Prayerful Preparation from the Heart." Thirty clergy attended.

❖ On September 24, 2026, Venerable Bishop Fulton J. Sheen was beatified, a milestone long anticipated by the Church in America, and one that invites us to reflect anew on his extraordinary life, witness, and enduring relevance. Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology and Seton Hall University's Institute for Communication and Religion co-sponsored a five-week series titled *Lunches with Sheen*. Each session featured a 20-minute reflection followed by a 20-minute facilitated discussion on Sheen's story, legacy, and continued relevance. These talks took place in the Monsignor James C. Turro Seminary Library at 1:15 p.m. on Thursdays, beginning on the very day of the beatification and running weekly through October 22, 2026. Approximately 20 to 30 people attended each session.

- "Sheen and Preaching," presented by **Reverend Dominic G. Ciriaco, D.Min.**, Director of the Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program and Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology, on September 24, 2026. As a homilist and director of ICSST's Lilly Endowment-funded Preaching as Hospitality grant, Father Ciriaco is a natural voice to reflect on Sheen's preaching, its craft, theological depth, and continuing power to form and inspire. A recording of Father Ciriaco's presentation is available here.
- "Fulton Sheen the Communicator," presented by **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, on October 1, 2026. Dr. Radwan illuminated what made Sheen such a singularly effective and innovative

communicator on radio, on television, and in the public square. Dr. Radwan described Sheen as an ideal Christian communicator who devoted himself fully to God and neighbor, giving millions of Americans spiritual direction and inspiration to face 20th-century challenges together. A slide deck from Dr. Radwan's presentation is available here, and a recording of Dr. Radwan's presentation is available here.

- "Sheen and the Sacraments," presented by **Reverend Monsignor Gerard H. McCarren, S.T.D.**, Rector/Dean, and Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, on October 8, 2026. Monsignor McCarren discussed the important role the Sacraments played in the ministry of Fulton Sheen. A recording of Monsignor McCarren's presentation is available here.
- "Fulton Sheen and Modernity," presented by **Joseph P. Rice, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Philosophical Theology, on October 15, 2026. As a philosopher specializing in the personalism of John Paul II, Dr. Rice is well positioned to engage Sheen's engagement with the modern world, his diagnosis of its spiritual crisis, and his vision of the human person as the antidote. A recording of Dr. Rice's presentation is available here.
- "Sheen and Scripture," presented by **Gregory Y. Glazov, D.Phil. (Oxon.)**, Professor and Chair of Biblical Studies, on October 22, 2026. Scripture scholar Dr. Glazov closed the series by exploring the biblical roots of Sheen's thought and preaching and what it means to read Sheen's work through the lens of Sacred Scripture, and vice versa. A recording of Dr. Glazov's presentation is available here.

  Following Dr. Glazov's talk, **Seamus J. Logue**, a 10-year-old homeschooled student who had attended the entire series with great interest and was inspired to do his own research, shared a short presentation on the influence of Sheen's childhood and Irish heritage on his ministry and legacy. A recording of Seamus's presentation is available here.

- The Seton Hall University CORE, Center for Catholic Studies, Catholic Studies Program, the Department of Religion, and Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology are co-sponsoring a *Scholars' Forum in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition*, conducted online via Microsoft Teams. Approximately ten people attend each session. As part of this forum:
  - **Reverend Dominic G. Ciriaco, D.Min.**, Director of the Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program and Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology, delivered a talk on his book, *The Painted Pulpit: Corita Kent, Visual Theology and the Practice of Preaching* (En Route Books and Media, 2026), on September 22, 2026.
  - **Dermot A. Quinn, D.Phil.**, Professor of History and editor of *The Chesterton Review*, spoke about his recent book, *An Earthly Story with a Heavenly Meaning: Essays on G.K. Chesterton* (CLUNY, 2025), on October 20, 2026. Dr. Quinn edited the essays in this volume. The essays are by the late Father Ian Boyd, who taught for many years at Seton Hall and began the Chesterton Institute, which still carries on, under director Gloria Garafulich-Grabois.

  Additional information about Fall 2026 *Scholars' Forum* events can be found here.

- ICSST hosted a lecture and book-signing by **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology, in celebration of the recent publication of his book co-edited with **Reverend Paul Haffner, S.T.D.**: *Stanley Jaki Foundation International Congress 2024* (Gracewing, April 30, 2026). The volume explores foundational questions concerning metaphysics, creation, and the intelligibility of nature, as well as historical debates over the emergence of modern science within the Catholic Intellectual Tradition. At the event, Father Laracy presented the volume and discussed how the Congress's scholarly contributions carry forward the conviction of Father Stanley L. Jaki, O.S.B., S.T.D., Ph.D., that Christian faith and scientific inquiry can participate in a fruitful and intellectually rigorous dialogue. A

light reception in the Seminary Refectory followed Father Laracy's lecture, and copies of his book were available for purchase. Approximately 60 people attended the lecture, which was held in the Seminary's Chapel of Christ the Good Shepherd, on October 1, 2026. Additional information about the book publication can be found here, and a recording of Father Laracy's lecture is available here.

- ICSST hosted a lecture and book-signing by **Reverend Dominic G. Ciriaco, D.Min.**, Director of the Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program and Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology, in celebration of the recent publication of his book, *The Painted Pulpit: Corita Kent, Visual Theology and the Practice of Preaching* (En Route Books and Media, 2026). Father Ciriaco's book explores the intersection of art, theology, and preaching through the life and work of Corita Kent, the celebrated "Pop Art Nun." Drawing on Scripture, the theology of beauty and contemporary homiletics, Father Ciriaco demonstrates how Kent's creative techniques can enrich the preacher's imagination and transform proclamation into a vivid encounter with the Gospel. Blending theological reflection with practical guidance, this work invites preachers, teachers, and artists to rediscover visual theology as a powerful means of communicating the Word of God. A light reception in the Seminary Refectory followed Father Ciriaco's lecture, and copies of his book were available for purchase. Thirty-four people attended the lecture, which was held in the Seminary's Chapel of Christ the Good Shepherd, on October 15, 2026. A recording of Father Ciriaco's lecture is available here.

- The Archdiocese of Newark Deacon Council, in collaboration with Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology's Center for Diaconal Formation, developed the 2026 Diaconal Convocation, held on Seton Hall University's South Orange campus, on October 24, 2026.

The theme of the gathering was *Icon: Christ the Servant*. Attendees numbered more than 216, including deacons, deacon candidates, and aspirants, and the wives of these men, as well as ICSST administrators, and clergy of the Archdiocese of Newark. The event began with a Mass celebrated by **Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, C.Ss.R., D.D.**, Archbishop of Newark, and **Reverend Monsignor Joseph R. Reilly, S.T.L., Ph.D.**, President of Seton Hall University, with **Reverend Monsignor Gerard H. McCarren, S.T.D.**, Rector/Dean, and Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, delivering the homily. Following Mass, Cardinal Tobin offered remarks encouraging all deacons to serve with humility and to make themselves available to people in need. **Dianne M. Traflet, J.D. '88, S.T.D.**, Assistant Professor and Chair of Pastoral Theology, and Co-Director, *4:12 Pathway for Pastoral Leadership* Grant, delivered a keynote speech, "Building the Body of Christ through Dachau." Dr. Traflet's presentation highlighted the resilience of Catholic clergy imprisoned in concentration camps during World War II and their continued devotion to Christ in their ministry of service, love, and hope during the most perilous of times. It emphasized especially the great influence of their discussions in Dachau about the advantages of a restored permanent diaconate on the deliberations 20 years later of the Second Vatican Council that led the Council to restore this ordained ministry to the Church. **Deacon Richard Ferreira, M.A. '22, M.S.W.**, Director of the Center for Diaconal Formation, moderated a panel discussion of selected deacons of the Archdiocese of Newark on current trends, synodal roles, and the challenges they face as servants of Christ in their communities. **Deacon Andrew E. Saunders, M.A. '08**, Co-Director, *4:12 Pathway for Pastoral Leadership* Grant, served as one of five panelists. The Archdiocese and ICSST have been edified to receive feedback demonstrating deep gratitude for this event.

- The Office of Evangelization at St. Paul Inside the Walls, Madison, NJ, in collaboration with ICSST, sponsored "Wired for Happiness: The Catholic Vision of the Good Life," a lecture presented at St. Paul Inside the Walls, by **Reverend Paweł Tomczyk, Ph.D.**, Episcopal Vicar for Evangelization for the Diocese of Paterson, and Adjunct Professor of Moral Theology for ICSST, on October 31, 2026. This lecture was the first in the 12-part *The Moral Series*, which aims to help participants foster a deeper commitment to living the Gospel and growing in holiness. Father Tomczyk's lecture explored the Church's moral teaching to help participants better understand the purpose of moral theology and the limitations of modern-day relativism. Further, the lecture demonstrated why the Catholic tradition has consistently proclaimed that lasting happiness is found only in Communion with God. Approximately 40 people attended.

Mission and Service

- **Reverend Mariusz Eugene R. Koch, C.F.R., M.Div., M.A.**, Spiritual Director:
  - Helped to organize and attended an approximately 60-mile walking pilgrimage from Great Meadows, NJ, to the Shrine of Our Lady of Czestochowa in Doylestown, PA, from August 6 to 9, 2026. Father Koch was responsible for the English-speaking group. Each day, he concelebrated Mass and celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He preached at two of the Masses. Three thousand people attended the pilgrimage.
  - Under the auspices of the post-abortion healing ministry program *Entering Canaan: A Sacramental Journey to an Inheritance of Mercy*, led ten women in an online, international recitation of a *Penitents of Love* Rosary and delivered a reflection on Our Blessed Mother, on August 13, 2026.

- Served at a women's retreat sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal and held at Loyola Jesuit Center, Morristown, NJ, on September 4, 2026. At this retreat, Father Koch celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation for approximately 60 women.
- Preached at evening Mass at Our Lady of Czestochowa Church, Jersey City, NJ, on September 19, 2026. Father Koch's homily focused on the history of faith of the parish and devotion to Our Lady. Approximately 150 people attended.
- Concelebrated and preached at Sunday Mass for the feast of St. Francis of Assisi, on the occasion of the 800th anniversary of St. Francis's Transitus. The Mass was held at St. Patrick Cathedral, NYC, on October 4, 2026. **Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks, D.D.**, Archbishop of New York, served as the main celebrant. Approximately 2,000 people attended.
- Served at a men's day of prayer sponsored by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal and held at Blessed Sacrament Friary, Newark, NJ, on October 10, 2026. At this retreat, Father Koch celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Approximately 150 men attended.

❖ **Dianne M. Traflet, J.D. '88, S.T.D.**, Assistant Professor and Chair of Pastoral Theology, and Co-Director, *4:12 Pathway for Pastoral Leadership* Grant:

- Delivered three mornings of presentations to the four Carmelite novices in residence at Brandsma Priory, Middletown, NY, on August 25, 26, and 27, 2026. Dr. Traflet spoke on The Life and Spirituality of St. Edith Stein.
- Presented a Day of Recollection for the Women's Spirituality Group of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Three Bridges, NJ, on October 17, 2026. The theme was *The Hospitality of Priscilla and Lydia: Women of Courageous Faith and Inspiring Generosity*. Forty-five women attended.

- Led a three-day retreat for 28 women of St. Elizabeth of Hungary Parish, Wyckoff, NJ. The retreat was held at the Marian Shrine in Stony Point, NY, from October 23 to 25, 2026. Dr. Traflet collaborated with parishioners to organize and facilitate the retreat, and she delivered five presentations:
  - "Listening for Our Symphonies: The Sounds of Our Sacred Stories";
  - "The Songs of the Saints: Music That Mattered";
  - "Catholic Composers: Sounds from the Soul";
  - "'What's Love Got to Do with It?' The Love Songs of the Saints"; and
  - "Music That Has Touched Our Souls: The Creation of Our Symphony."

❖ **Gregory Y. Glazov, D.Phil. (Oxon.)**, Professor and Chair of Biblical Studies, presented a testimony for the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, New Jersey Advisory Committee on Antisemitism and Civil Rights, on September 1, 2026. Approximately 150 people listened to the testimony live online.

❖ **Reverend Juan Gabriel Rojas-Hernández, S.T.L.**, Vice Rector of The College Seminary of the Immaculate Conception at St. Andrew's Hall and Adjunct Professor of Biblical Studies:

- Presented two conferences as part of the Spanish-language retreat, *Contemplando la Magnífica Humanidad de Cristo* (*Magnifica Humanitas*), organized by the Archdiocese of Newark's Hispanic faith formation program. The conferences were held at Mary Help of Christians Academy, Haledon, NJ, on September 9 and 12, 2026, and explored the theological foundations of human dignity in Catholic social teaching and five pathways toward building a civilization of love. Total attendance was approximately 250 people.

- Delivered a two-part presentation, "Priestly Fraternity as an Essential Dimension of Human Formation," for approximately 70 seminarians at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, MD, on September 22, 2026. Drawing on Pope Leo XIV's Apostolic Letter "A Fidelity That Generates the Future" (December 2025), the conferences explored priestly fraternity as both a gift of grace and a human responsibility, emphasizing its constitutive role in priestly identity and the formation of future priests.
- Delivered the first two presentations of a three-part biblical series on the Book of Revelation, titled *El Libro de la Esperanza* (*The Book of Hope*), at St. Patrick's Pro-Cathedral, Newark, NJ, on September 26 and October 24, 2026. Approximately 20 people attended each presentation. The third presentation is scheduled for November 21, 2026.
- Celebrated Mass in observance of Hispanic Heritage Month, at Seton Hall University's Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, South Orange, NJ, on October 4, 2026. The liturgy celebrated the cultural diversity of the Hispanic community and reflected on the theme of *mestizaje* as an expression of unity in diversity within the Church.
- Delivered a conference on priestly fraternity and human formation for 19 seminarians of The College Seminary of the Immaculate Conception at St. Andrew's Hall, Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, on October 6, 2026. The presentation explored practical ways of fostering fraternity in seminary community life, with particular attention to accompaniment, mutual care, and overcoming isolation.

❖ **Deacon Andrew E. Saunders, M.A. '08**, Co-Director, *4:12 Pathway for Pastoral Leadership* Grant:

- Represented Region 3 (New Jersey and Pennsylvania) at the National Association of Diaconate Directors Board meeting on September 9 and 10, 2026, in Tampa, FL.

- Participated in the 2026 Pathways Annual Gathering, sponsored by Lilly Endowment, Inc., and held in Indianapolis, IN, from September 22 to 24, 2026. As part of this gathering for Phase 2 grantees, Deacon Saunders:
  - Served as an exhibitioner in the Pathways Exposition to share with fellow grantees lessons learned, innovative approaches, and emerging insights into theological education. The purpose of the exposition was to exchange ideas, discover new collaborators, and learn from peers across the Pathways community. Deacon Saunders's presentation focused on the Diaconal Formation and Leadership Today blog and the best practices database, which garnered significant interest among Pathways grantees. Fifty schools participated in the exposition (25 schools on each of two days). The exposition was open to all 600 conference attendees, who represented 180 schools.
  - Participated as a panel member in a workshop titled *Planning for Sustainability: Project Director Reflection on Programming Beyond the Grant Cycle*. The purpose of the workshop was to assist project directors with practical experience from the workshop panelists by reflecting candidly on what it takes to sustain grant-funded initiatives, the successes, unexpected challenges, and pivots made along the way. Other panelists were: **Caran Ware Joseph, J.D.**, COO and Director of Congregational Connections Program, Iliff School of Theology, Denver, CO; **Rev. Dr. Stephanie Crumpton, Th.D.**, Director, Trauma Healing Initiative and Associate Professor of Practical Theology, McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago, IL; and **Seth Schoen, Ph.D.**, Assistant Grant Director, Methodist Theological School in Ohio, Delaware, OH. Fifty-five people attended the workshop.

- **Justin M. Anderson, Ph.D.**, Professor and Chair of Moral Theology, was among the Seton Hall University faculty and administrators who, at the University's Board of Regents retreat on September 10, 2026, addressed the opportunities and challenges presented by artificial intelligence, drawing on Pope Leo XIV's teachings on universities and *Magnifica Humanitas*. Dr. Anderson introduced critical insights from Catholic social teaching, the new encyclical, and the Mission and Identity of Seton Hall University and led a discussion among the Regents. Dr. Anderson's co-presenters were **Erik Lillquist, J.D.**, Interim Provost; **Paul E. Fisher, Jr., M.P.A. '98**, Executive Vice President and Chief of Staff; **Jamie Werbel, J.D.**, Assistant Provost for Faculty Affairs; and **Mary Ellen Roberts, D.N.P., R.N., A.P.N.C., FNAP, FAANP, FAAN**, Department Chair and Professor in the Graduate Nursing Department and Director of the D.N.P. and Acute Care Nurse Practitioner Program.

- **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, presented the following:
  - *The Parables of Jesus*, a three-part series, at St. Anne Church, Parsippany, NJ. Approximately 50 people attended each lecture:
    - "An Introduction to the Parables & 'Two Debtors,'" on September 15, 2026.
    - "The Sower, the Treasure, the Pearl," on September 22, 2026.
    - "The Parables of the Lost Sheep, Lost Coin, and Lost Sons," on September 29, 2026.
  - *Capernaum: The City of Jesus*, a two-part series, at St. John Church, Leonia, NJ. Approximately 25 people attended each lecture:
    - "The House of Peter and of Jesus," on September 21, 2026.
    - "Fishers of Fish and Fishers of Men," on October 26, 2026.

- **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, facilitated and instructed Seton Hall's *University Seminar on Mission*, sponsored by the Office of Mission and Ministry and the Center for Vocation and Servant Leadership, and conducted online via Microsoft Teams. In the Fall 2026 semester, the group met for two hours each week, over a six-week period, from September 25 to November 6, 2026. The seminar provides an opportunity for in-depth reflection on the University's Mission in light of its history, nature, and present circumstances. Participants discuss seminal texts and contemporary commentary on the mission of Catholic universities and the unique Mission of Seton Hall. Fifteen people from the faculty and administration of Seton Hall University participated.

- **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology:
  - As part of Hall Homecoming and Family Weekend, presented a mini lecture from his *Creation and Science* course, at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, on October 3, 2026.
  - Delivered a guest lecture on "Faith and Reason in the Mystery of Creation," for approximately 20 students in Dr. Anthony Carlino's class CAST 3031/CORE 3768: *Catholicism, Healthcare, and the Human Person*, at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, on October 14, 2026.

- **Reverend Monsignor Thomas G. Guarino, K.H.S., S.T.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology, delivered a talk, "The Four Pillars of the Catholic Intellectual Tradition," to the Catholic Studies faculty of Sacred Heart University in Fairfield, CT, on October 28, 2026. Approximately 40 people attended.

Conferences, Meetings, and Panel Discussions

- **Reverend W. Jerome Bracken, C.P., Ph.D.**, Associate Professor Emeritus of Moral Theology:
  - Delivered "Aquinas and the Son of God's Command in the Passion." Presentation, at the 2026 Conference of the *Sacra Doctrina* Project: *"My Father and Your Father" on Divine Filiation*, co-sponsored and hosted by The Augustine Institute Graduate School of Theology, in St. Louis, MO, from June 11 to 13, 2026. Father Bracken delivered his presentation on June 12, 2026, as part of a satellite session on Thomistic Soteriology.
  - Participated in the 48th Convention of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars: *Person and Word*, held at St. Mary's Seminary and University, Baltimore, MD, from September 25 to 27, 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, and **Reverend Monsignor Gerard H. McCarren, S.T.D.**, Rector/Dean, and Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, participated in the National Association of Catholic Theological Schools (NACTS) annual conference, in Schaumburg, IL, from October 2 to 3, 2026. The theme of this year's conference was *Forming the Faithful Shepherd*. Approximately 60 rectors, vice rectors, academic deans, and pastoral field education directors attended.

- The University CORE hosted a faculty panel on Pope Leo XIV's *Magnifica Humanitas*, at Seton Hall University, South Orange, NJ, on October 29, 2026. The panel of faculty experts explored how Pope Leo's encyclical speaks to the moral, ethical, and spiritual aspects of

artificial intelligence, particularly as it relates to human dignity. **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology, served as a panelist, together with **Jose L. Lopez, Ph.D.**, Professor of Physics and Director, Office of Grants and Research Services, and **Kelly A. Shea, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of English/Director of First-Year Writing. The event was open to all students, faculty, staff, and administrators. Approximately 85 people attended (most in-person, several via Microsoft Teams).

Other Scholarly and Professional Activity

- **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology:
  - Served as a peer reviewer for the following:
    - *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications* (Springer journal), on September 4, 2026.
    - *AI and Ethics* (Springer Nature), on September 5, 2026.
    - *Frontiers in Behavioral Economics*: Culture and Ethics section, on September 11, 2026.
    - *Journal of Pastoral Care & Counseling*, on September 15, 2026.
    - *AI and Ethics* (Springer Nature), on September 24, 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:
  - Served as chair of the Association of Theological Schools focused evaluation visit to University of St. Michael's College Faculty of Theology and Regis College, Toronto, ON, on October 8, 2026.

- Served as chair of the Association of Theological Schools comprehensive evaluation visit for reaffirmation of accreditation of Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans, LA, from October 19 to 22, 2026.