



Center for the Study of Spirituality

Annual Report

2023-2024



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CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SPIRITUALITY SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE

For nearly four decades, the Center for the Study of Spirituality (CFSS) has been a leading institution in bridging the lived experience of faith with the academic study of spirituality and theology. We have been busy this past academic year building on and contributing to this legacy of scholarly excellence at the service of Saint Mary's College and beyond.

Some of the highlights from the 2023-2024 academic year include hosting the International Thomas Merton Society biennial conference, which brought more than 200 people to campus; launching a new annual lecture in the fall semester focused on spirituality; announcing an exciting collaboration with the Discerning Deacons organization to create a professional certificate program for preaching designed for Catholic women; and hosting one of the world's foremost experts on trauma for an interdisciplinary study group and conversation. In addition to these great programs and events, the CFSS sponsored dozens of events, which you can read about in this report.

We remain committed to our mission as a Center that prioritizes the voices, experiences, and wisdom of women in the church, society, and the academy. From the world-renowned annual Madeleva Lecture to the newly established Women Shaping Theology Workshop, the programs and events of the CFSS have uplifted generations of women scholars, students, and community members and continues to do so today. We are proud to announce that we received a generous financial gift this year that will allow the CFSS to establish a new program to support women doctoral candidates and bring them to campus for the annual Madeleva Lecture beginning in 2025.

In addition to all of this great programming, the staff of the CFSS continues to make important contributions to the fields of theology, philosophy, and spirituality. Both Dr. Julia Feder, CFSS assistant director, and I had new books published this year. You can read in this report about the numerous articles published, lectures delivered, and interviews given by the two of us during the past year. The staff of the CFSS takes academic excellence seriously, and the ongoing and significant contributions we make to our scholarly fields not only promotes the CFSS, but also raises the academic profile of Saint Mary's College more broadly.

The good work that the CFSS does could not happen without the generous support of our friends and donors. It is my hope that this review of the exciting and meaningful work we accomplished together in 2023-2024 might inspire you in the coming year to join us for an event in person or via our livestream. As great as the 2023-2024 academic year was for the CFSS, we are especially thrilled to be marking the 40th Anniversary of its founding in the 2024-2025 academic year. We look forward to celebrating this milestone with you!

Peace and good,

Daniel P. Horan, OFM, PhD
Director of the Center for the Study of Spirituality
Professor of Philosophy, Religious Studies and Theology

Founded in 1984 by Dr. Keith Egan with matching financial support from the Sisters of the Holy Cross and Saint Mary's College, the Center for the Study of Spirituality offers programs that promote the engagement between faith and reason and the connection between mind, body, and spirit. This vision was inspired by the legacy of Saint Mary's College President Sister Madeleva Wolff, CSC's establishment of the School of Sacred Theology, which was the first Catholic institution in the United States to grant doctoral degrees in theology to women and ran from 1943-1969.

As an academic center, we are a hub for scholarly and public engagement. This draws on intellectual resources in the Catholic and broader Christian tradition as well as how individuals practice faith in their daily lives to develop critical conversations around contemporary religious issues, especially as they relate to women's experiences in society, the academy, and the church. Among our flagship events are the annual Madeleva Lecture in the Spring semester, which for more than 40 years has brought a renowned woman scholar of religion to campus to deliver a public lecture

that is later published as a book, and the annual Thomas Merton Lecture in Spirituality, which takes place in the Fall semester.

In addition to the dozens of public lectures and other events it hosts each academic year, the Center for the Study of Spirituality also supports ongoing research initiatives and academic formation programs for women in the fields of theology and spirituality. The Women Shaping Theology monthly seminar virtually brings together invited women scholars from across the world once a month to share research, network, and engage in professional development. The Madeleva Fellowship program supports multiple advanced graduate students each year to engage in professional development and attend the Madeleva Lecture in person as well as participate in seminars with that year's distinguished lecturer. The Center also hosts a range of national conferences on topics in spirituality and theology and will soon launch an innovative professional certificate program in compelling preaching for women in the Catholic Church, co-sponsored with the Discerning Deacons project and funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc.

2023-2024 CFSS STAFF



Daniel P. Horan,
OFM, PhD

Director of the Center for
the Study of Spirituality
Professor of Philosophy,
Religious Studies
and Theology



Rebecca Holm '26

Student Worker at the
Center for the
Study of Spirituality



Julia Feder, PhD

Assistant Director of
the Center for the
Study of Spirituality
Associate Professor of
Religious Studies
and Theology

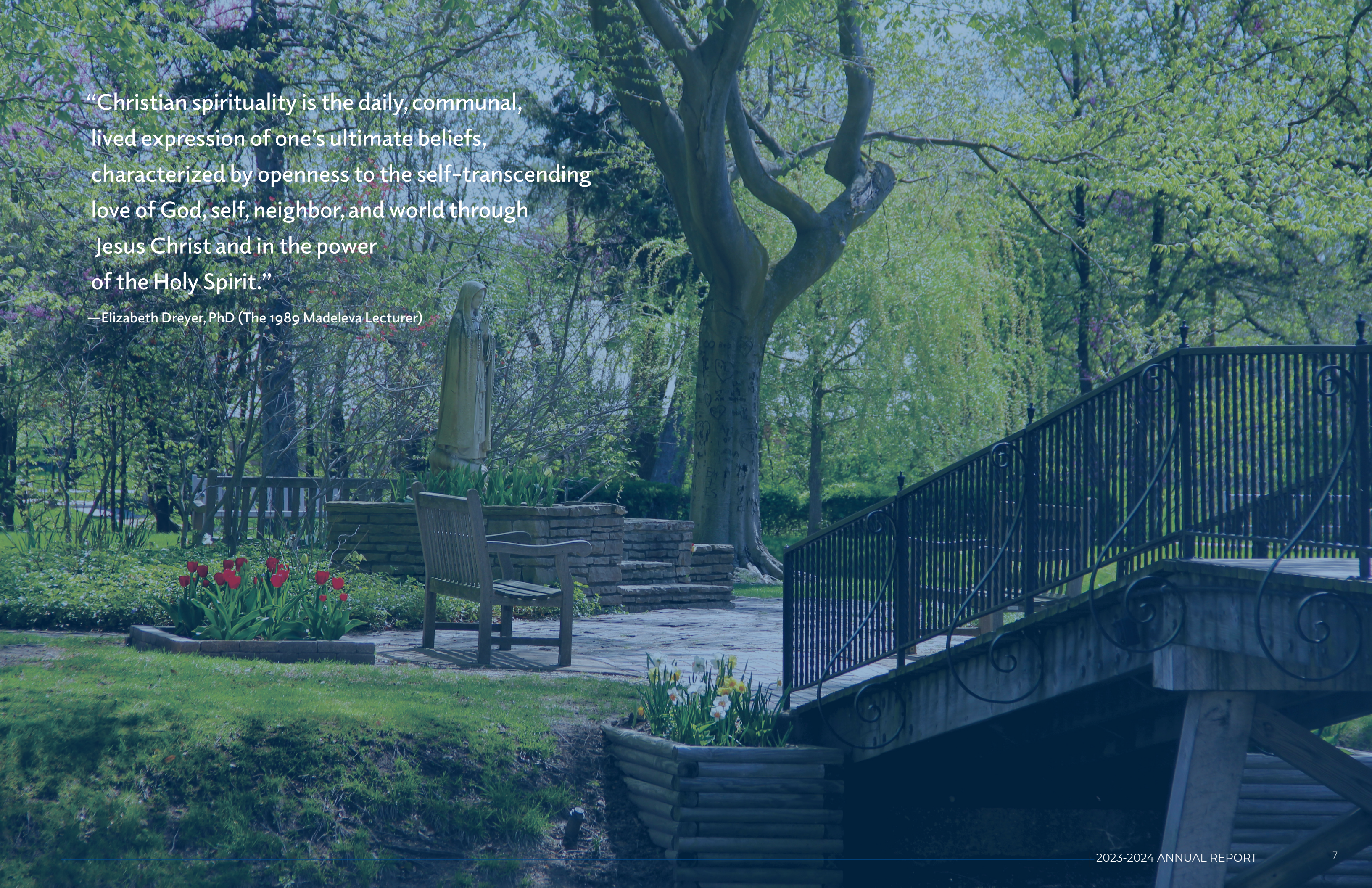


Mara Dach '26

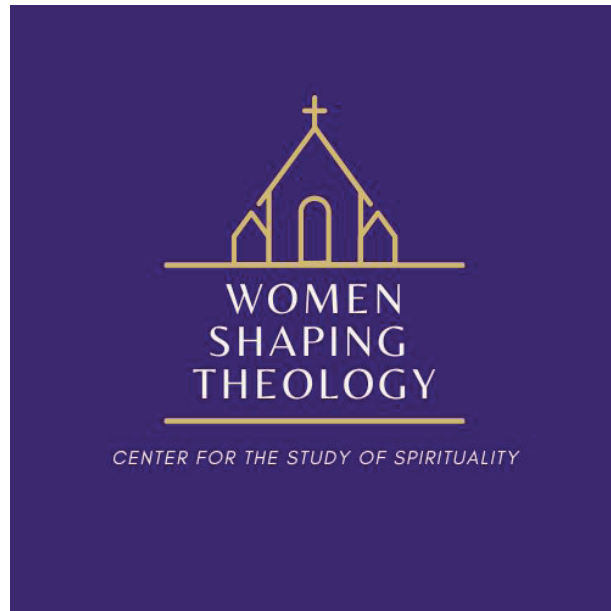
Student Worker at the
Center for the
Study of Spirituality

“Christian spirituality is the daily, communal, lived expression of one’s ultimate beliefs, characterized by openness to the self-transcending love of God, self, neighbor, and world through Jesus Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit.”

—Elizabeth Dreyer, PhD (The 1989 Madeleva Lecturer)



THE WOMEN SHAPING THEOLOGY WORKSHOP



Named after Sister Mary Ann Hinsdale's 2004 Madeleva Lecture on the history of women in Catholic theology, the Women Shaping Theology Workshop is a monthly online gathering of invited women theologians and scholars of religion to share and receive feedback on research in progress, engage in professional development, and network among colleagues. The workshop began in Fall 2021 as a collaboration between Dr. Jessica Coblentz, associate professor of Religious Studies and Theology, and the CFSS.

Today the workshop is facilitated by CFSS Assistant Director Dr. Julia Feder with collaboration from a steering committee. This year's steering committee members are Dr. Tracy Tiemeier, professor and chair of the Department of Theological Studies at Loyola Marymount University and Dr. Kathryn Lilla Cox, research associate in the Department of Theology and Religious Studies at the University of San Diego.

Workshop participants read submitted writings that are circulated ahead of the workshop and dedicate the workshop meeting to offering constructive feedback to their peers. All participants commit to the guiding values and agreements of the group: encouragement (rather than assessment), community (rather than isolation), collegiality, flexibility, generosity (rather than competition), academic integrity, respect for the vulnerability of the space, trust, and cultural humility.

The workshop meets a number of pressing needs in the theological academy: there is a long-standing—and arguably increasing—need to support the scholarship of women theologians. Major US Catholic theology journals (e.g., *Theological Studies*, *Horizons*) report that women continue to submit to their journals far less than their male colleagues. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed how the “double-shift” that many women negotiate between work and home presents additional obstacles to publishing scholarship. What's more, it is well known that women, especially women of color, shoulder more service responsibilities in the academy; it can be hard to dedicate time to scholarship amid these other obligations. On top of these challenges, the reality of the waning job market means that more women theologians are working outside traditional academic appointments and without the institutional infrastructure that once supported research.

In addition to the typical monthly format during which participants workshop their research, some sessions included opportunities for professional development. For example, in January Donna Freitas, one of the group participants, offered a workshop on writing trade books. Additionally, workshop participants gathered at the American Academy of Religion in San Antonio, Texas in November for a brunch meeting sponsored by the CFSS.

The sense of community among group participants is very strong and, over time, has enabled members to share even earlier drafts, risking the potential embarrassment that can come with sharing unpolished ideas. This is a testament to the high level of trust that participants have been able to develop with each other. One participant shared: “I've really enjoyed the community that this group has created. There are a lot of unhealthy and destructive spaces in our scholarly communities. I really appreciate spaces like this that allow me to really engage in scholarly communities in ways that I've hoped for since I began my doctoral studies—where we can challenge and encourage one another in hopes of refining our thought all around.”

Another participant reports, “It has been life-giving to be in a group like this, that supports each other, offers constructive feedback in a collaborative manner, and whose members span a range of disciplines and life experiences.”



Participants report that the diversity of academic subfields within the group helps participants who share their research to write in more accessible ways. One participant explains, “It really helps me think about the broader scholarly community and their insights and contributions—it is very generative to have a community willing to read your work who are not the two or three scholars closest to what you do.”

Another participant, echoing the earlier theme of trust, comments, “This group of readers has begun to shape my imagination about writing for other audiences. Their encouragement has been amazingly helpful and I look forward to sharing work with this group and reading the group members' work. Sometimes when my work doesn't feel wholly aligned with Catholic/feminist theologies, it's still been useful to consider why it doesn't. I am growing [in] trust and admiration of the women in this group and that has been a huge change in my relationship to my own work, usually done in solitude and without significant feedback until done. The others' willingness, too, to share work at all stages has really helped me tolerate my own work's messiness and to think that maybe I can share it at earlier stages than I would have in the past.”

“It has been life-giving to be in a group like this, that supports each other, offers constructive feedback in a collaborative manner, and whose members span a range of disciplines and life experiences.”

2024 MADELEVA LECTURE

The Madeleva Lecture Series is named for Sister Madeleva Wolff, CSC, who served as president of the College from 1934–1961 and founded the School of Sacred Theology at Saint Mary’s in 1943, first Catholic institution to grant doctoral degrees in theology to women. Since 1985, the Madeleva Lecture has given voice to women’s contributions to theology by drawing a prominent woman theologian to Saint Mary’s campus to deliver a public lecture.

This year’s Madeleva Lecture was delivered on April 11, 2024 by Dr. Natalia Imperatori-Lee, PhD, who is professor and department chair of the Religious Studies Department at Manhattan College in Riverdale, New York. The title of her lecture was “Bearers of an ‘Idle Tale’: Women’s Authority in a Credibility Economy.” Imperatori-Lee delivered her lecture to more than 200 people who attended in person and online.

Before her lecture, the Center for the Study of Spirituality hosted two related events for invited guests. The first, a luncheon, welcomed women doctoral candidates in theology to have an opportunity to talk with Imperatori-Lee about the challenges facing women in academic theology. All attendees received a copy of the newly published 2023 Madeleva Lecture—*Finitude, Feminism, and Flourishing: On Being Mortal Like Everyone Else* by Professor Cristina L.H. Traina. Later that evening, the CFSS honored Imperatori-Lee at a dinner. Distinguished guests included members of Saint Mary’s executive leadership team, members of the Board of Trustees, and representatives of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, among others. Following the lecture, energized guests discussed the many engaging topics raised by Imperatori-Lee as they enjoyed a dessert reception outside Carroll Auditorium in Madeleva Hall.



Dr. Imperatori-Lee with CFSS Student Worker Maria Dach, ‘26 after the Lecture”

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SPIRITUALITY
SAINT MARY’S COLLEGE

2024 MADELEVA LECTURE
Natalia Imperatori-Lee, PhD
Bearers of an ‘Idle Tale’
Women’s Authority in a Credibility Economy

Thursday April 11
7:00 PM ET
In-Person & Live-Stream

Carroll Auditorium, Madeleva Hall

More information and live-stream registration available at: SaintMarys.edu/Spirituality

Prof. Natalia Imperatori-Lee, PhD is a professor and department chairperson of Religious Studies at Manhattan College in Riverdale, NY.

AN EVENING WITH JUDITH HERMAN

In March 2024, the Center hosted a live webinar with professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, Dr. Judith Herman about her new book, *Truth and Repair: How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice*. Truth and Repair is a long-awaited follow up to her 1992 text on traumatic violence, *Trauma and Recovery: The Aftermath of Political Violence—From Domestic Abuse to Political Terror*, which has since become a foundational text in contemporary conversations about trauma and theology.

To prepare for the webinar, the CFSS hosted an online, interdisciplinary reading group for scholars across the US to discuss the book over three virtual sessions in January and February. Thirty-one scholars from a broad range of academic disciplines participated in the group, which included philosophers, theologians, experts in women’s and gender studies, psychologists, and sociologists.

One participant remarked about the series, “I really enjoyed being a part of the reading group. I’m at a small university with a small budget, and I’ve found that I really miss the ways I was able to connect with other scholars back when I was a grad student. This was perfect because it was during the day, and I didn’t need extra childcare. And I didn’t need any funding to participate. If the Center for the Study of Spirituality hosts something like this again, I’d definitely be interested.”

In the last portion of the March webinar, participants had the opportunity to ask Herman their own questions, some of which were directly tied to small group conversations that had happened earlier in the semester.

One particularly memorable question from a participant recalled that theologians and other scholars have often appealed to Herman’s work throughout the 1990s through today to make a terminological distinction between “recovery” from trauma and “healing” from trauma. As these scholars argue, “recovery” is possible but “healing” is not because it implies that the traumatic event can be erased from one’s life story. After being asked about her use of the term “healing” in her new book, Herman responded that those terminological distinctions are not meaningfully significant to her. This was a surprise to many participants! The CFSS staff generated a transcript of the conversation, which may be published at a later date, to provide a resource for future interdisciplinary trauma research. Moving forward, scholars who wish to appeal to Herman as they make a distinction between “recovery” and “healing” may need to take account of this conversation.

CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SPIRITUALITY
SAINT MARY’S COLLEGE

Special Live Online Event
Truth and Repair:
How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice
Judith Herman, PhD

Friday March 8th
7:00 PM ET
Live-Stream

More information and live-stream registration available at: SaintMarys.edu/Spirituality

Judith Herman is a Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School who has focused on the understanding and treatment of incest and traumatic stress.



THE THOMAS MERTON LECTURE IN SPIRITUALITY

The inaugural Thomas Merton Lecture in Spirituality took place on Tuesday, November 14, 2023, and featured renowned theologian and scientist Dr. Ilia Delio, OSF, PhD, the Josephine C. Connelly Professor of Theology at Villanova University. The title of her lecture was, “Merton’s Christophany, Teilhard’s Challenge, and the Second Axial Monk.”

Enthusiasm for this lecture was extraordinary with nearly 500 people attending in person and online. Prior to the public lecture there was an invitation-only dinner in honor of Prof. Delio, which included the SMC President, representatives of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, and members of the Board of Trustees. A public reception followed the lecture and provided an opportunity for the conversation following Prof. Delio’s lecture to continue among guests.

While this first lecture in the new series was co-sponsored by the International Thomas Merton Society and co-branded as the “Fourth and Walnut Lecture,” the Center for the Study of Spirituality is delighted to be the permanent home for this prestigious annual academic event moving forward.

Named after the late Trappist monk, spiritual writer, and social critic Thomas Merton, this annual lecture will bring to campus a renowned scholar of spirituality or an allied field to campus each Fall semester. While the lecturer is invited to speak on a theme of their choosing on a topic generally related to the study or practice of spirituality, lecturers are encouraged to make connections to the life and work of Merton or address topics of his own interest and expertise, such as contemplation, prayer, the monastic tradition, literature, social concerns, antiracism, eco-spirituality, nonviolence and peacemaking.



NEW PREACHING CERTIFICATE

“Lilly Endowment funds new program with Center for the Study of Spirituality as institutional partner.”

A new program dedicated to supporting preaching by women in the Catholic Church is receiving a \$1.25 million grant from Lilly Endowment, Inc., through their Compelling Preaching Initiative. A collaboration between Discerning Deacons and Saint Mary’s College in Notre Dame, Indiana, the program will allow students to earn a Certificate in Catholic Preaching and Ministry of the Word.

“Now more than ever, communities across the country are ready to receive Catholic women’s gifts for preaching as a way to bring a fresh voice that shares Good News,” said Casey Stanton, co-director of Discerning Deacons. “With support from Lilly Endowment, Discerning Deacons can expand our formation work, and provide unprecedented access to resources and support systems for lay leaders to develop their vocational call to preach. We have heard time and time again in our work that people are looking for diverse, relatable, and inclusive Church leadership, and this grant will help us achieve just that.”

The Center for the Study of Spirituality at Saint Mary’s College, under the leadership of Daniel Horan, OFM, will be the primary institutional partner in this venture, Stanton said. “Fr. Horan and his team have offered their enthusiasm, resources, and organizational capacity in the hopes that this certificate program will take root within the Center and continue to grow alongside their own existing commitments to diverse course offerings and spiritually robust programming.”

“We know that women’s voices in the Catholic church are vital,” said Katie Conboy, Saint Mary’s College president. “The partnership between Discerning Deacons and our Center for the Study of Spirituality will contribute to the ongoing, global Catholic discernment surrounding the call of women to play a stronger role in the church.”

Lilly Endowment’s Compelling Preaching Initiative seeks to foster and support preaching that inspires,



encourages and guides people to come to know and love God and to live out their Christian faith more fully.

Discerning Deacons, through its fiscal sponsor St. Thomas More Catholic Community, is one of 81 organizations receiving grants through this competitive round of the Compelling Preaching Initiative. Reflecting the diversity of Christianity in the United States, the organizations are affiliated with mainline Protestant, evangelical, Catholic, Orthodox, Anabaptist and Pentecostal faith communities. Many of the organizations are rooted in the Black Church and in Hispanic and Asian American Christian traditions.

“Throughout history, preachers often have needed to adapt their preaching practices to engage new generations of hearers more effectively,” said Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment’s vice president for religion. “We are pleased that the organizations receiving grants in this initiative will help pastors and others in ministry engage in the kinds of preaching needed today to ensure that the gospel message is heard and accessible for all audiences.”

Lilly Endowment launched the Compelling Preaching Initiative in 2022 because of its interest in supporting projects that help to nurture the religious lives of individuals and families and foster the growth and vitality of Christian congregations in the United States.

This report originally appeared on the Saint Mary’s College website on October 12, 2023.

THE 2023 INTERNATIONAL THOMAS MERTON SOCIETY CONFERENCE

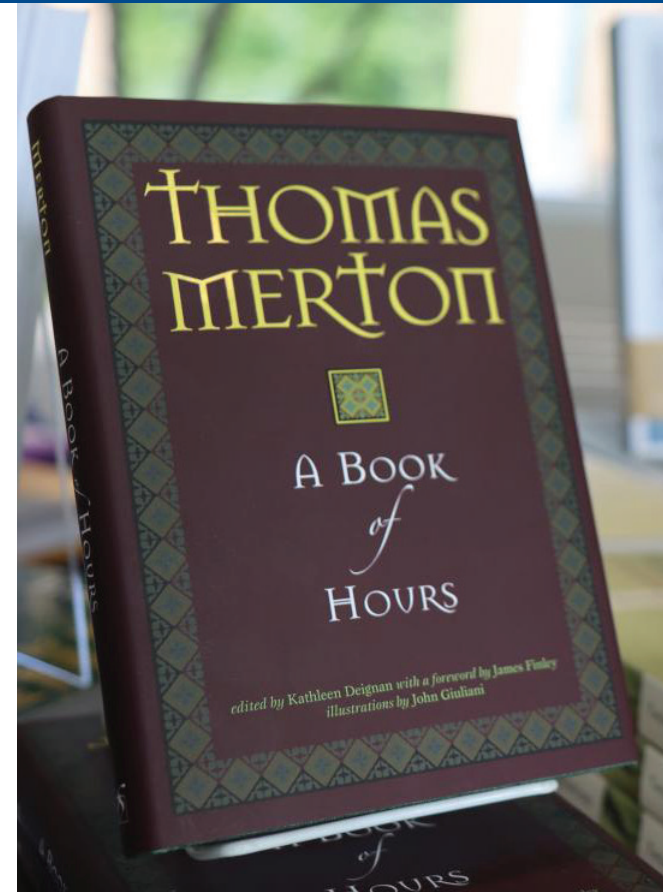
Saint Mary's welcomed over 200 people from around the world for the 18th International Thomas Merton Society (ITMS) biennial conference. Over the weekend of June 22-25, 2023 attendees had the opportunity to dive deeply into the life and work of Thomas Merton through research and reflection.

Merton, an American Trappist monk, was best known for his written work, authoring more than 60 scholarly books along with hundreds of poems and articles. In honor of Merton's substantial influence, the ITMS was founded in 1987 to promote a greater knowledge of his life and writings.

Former ITMS Board Member and the College's Director of the Center for the Study of Spirituality (CFSS) Dr. Daniel P. Horan served as the site coordinator for the conference. Horan notes that one of his earliest influences on his spiritual journey was Merton, and hasn't missed an ITMS conference since his first time presenting research at the event in 2009. As the site coordinator, Horan leads a team of other campus community members including Religious Studies and Theology faculty member Dr. Jessica Coblentz, and CFSS assistant director Dr. Julia Feder.

Attendees had a variety of engaging activities to choose from throughout the weekend, from scholarly presentations and participatory workshops, to prayer and meditation sessions. Outside of these offerings are the keynote addresses featuring four theology and Thomas Merton experts. Dr. Maria Clara Bingemere, world-renowned spirituality scholar and professor of theology at the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro; Sister Simone Campbell, religious leader, attorney, poet, and "Nuns on the Bus" founder, as well as former director of NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice; Dr. Sophia Park, author, and professor of Religious Studies at Holy Names University in Oakland, California; and Dr. Shannen Dee Williams, professor of history at the University of Dayton and a specialist in Black Catholic history.

All of the plenary speakers are women for the first time in ITMS history, something Horan says was a deliberate decision. This year's theme, "Sophia Comes Forth Reaching," focuses on Merton's own interest in feminine imagery for God and how he was shaped by the influential women in his life and society. The significance of the divine feminine in Merton's life and work also directly connects to Saint Mary's.



"When we were in the early stages of planning the theme for this year's conference, we wanted to draw from the connection that exists between the place of Saint Mary's, its history as a women's Catholic college, and Sister Madeleva," says Horan.

Featured frequently throughout the conference is Merton's rich history with Sister M. Madeleva Wolff, CSC, the third president of the College and beloved poet. The pair corresponded often through letters, one day leading a student of Sister Madeleva to write to Merton asking the complex question of "what is contemplation?" In response, Merton wrote a booklet titled that very question, and in 1948, Saint Mary's was the first to publish it.

Merton wasn't only connected to the College through his friendship with Sister Madeleva, but through its education, as well. In the fall of 1956, history professor Bruno Schlesinger founded the Program for Christian Culture, known today as the Humanistic Studies Department, receiving advice and support from Merton throughout.

"That's something that makes this conference so special: we're going to be at a place that has this deep

rooted history with Saint Mary's and its legacy and vice versa. Merton was shaped by people like Sister Madeleva," says Horan.

Horan emphasizes that the conference highly encourages young scholars to attend. Through the Daggy Scholarship Program, 22 college students from around the world were able to attend this year's conference free of charge. Scholarship recipients also receive a one-year membership to the ITMS. The impressive list of Daggy Scholars includes four Saint Mary's undergraduates, along with students from the University of Notre Dame, Yale University, University of Southern California, and Eberhard Karls University of Tübingen, Germany.

"The ITMS provides a real sense of community that's different from other conferences. While there's really important research that's being presented, and intellectually stimulating conversations taking place, it's all done within a spirit of support, of friendship, of hospitality," says Horan.

This report originally appeared on the Saint Mary's College website on June 23, 2023.



Julia Feder, PhD, Assistant Director

PUBLICATIONS

1. *Incarnating Grace: A Theology of Healing from Sexual Trauma*, Fordham University Press, 2024.
2. “Theological Themes,” *T&T Clark Reader in Edward Schillebeeckx*, edited Stephan van Erp and Daniel Minch (T&T Clark, 2023).
3. Co-authored with Heather Fryer and Rebecca Murray, “We Researched ‘Just One Jesuit’ Credibly Accused of Sex Abuse. Here’s What We Learned,” *National Catholic Reporter*. July 2023. <https://www.ncronline.org/opinion/guest-voices/we-researched-just-one-jesuit-credibly-accused-sex-abuse-heres-what-we-learned>
4. “Reclaiming the Virgin Martyrs from Purity Culture,” *U.S. Catholic*. February 2023. <https://uscatholic.org/articles/202302/reclaiming-the-virgin-martyrs-from-purity-culture/>
5. “Review: Concentrated Creation: Creation and Salvation in the Christology of Edward Schillebeeckx by Rhona Lewis.” *The Heythrop Journal*, vol. 65, no. 3 (2024) 335-336.

LECTURES AND PRESENTATIONS

1. “Interior Beauty: Spiritual Resources for Survivors,” Archdiocese of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, Office of Ministerial Standards and Safe Environment, April 2024.
2. “Heal-ing, not Cured: Christian Spirituality in the Wake of Sexual Trauma,” Center for Catholic Studies, Sacred Heart University, April 2024.
3. Moderator, “Peace Theology and Violence against Women,” Pastors and Leaders 2024, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, February 2024.
4. Co-authored with Heather Fryer and Rebecca Murray, “Seeing the Big Picture: What Survivors of Clergy Sexual Abuse Have Taught Us about Harm and Healing,” St. Pius X Parish Center, December 2023.
5. “Incarnating Grace: A Theology of Healing from Sexual Trauma,” Ex Libris Author Lecture Series, Center for the Study of Spirituality, Saint Mary’s College, November 2023.

OTHER MEDIA

1. “We Are Diamond Castles: Julia Feder” *Things Not Seen Podcast*, April 28, 2024.
2. “The Catholic tradition offers healing resources for survivors,” an interview with *U.S. Catholic Magazine*, January 16, 2024. <https://uscatholic.org/articles/202401/the-catholic-tradition-offers-healing-resources-for-survivors/>
3. “Five Questions with Julia Feder, Heather Fryer, and Rebecca Murray on Research Challenges,” an interview with the *Taking Responsibility Research Project* at Fordham University, January 2024. <https://takingresponsibility.ace.fordham.edu/five-questions-with-julia-feder-on-research-challenges/>
4. “Did Mary Experience Labor Pains?” *Glad You Asked* podcast, December 22, 2023. <https://uscatholic.org/articles/202312/glad-you-asked-did-mary-experience-labor-pains/>



Daniel P. Horan, OFM, PhD, Director

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- Fear and Faith: Hope and Wholeness in a Fractured World* (New York: Paulist Press, 2024).
- Engaging Thomas Merton: Spirituality, Justice, and Racism* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2023).
- “The Dialogical Formation of Spiritual Texts: An Approach to Studying the Spirituality of Correspondence,” in *Evolving Methodologies in the Study of Spirituality*, eds. Rossano Zs Friz de Col and Gilberto Cavazos-Gonzalez (Leuven: Peeters, 2023), 271-278.
- “Introduction,” in *The Future of Christian Spirituality—In Our Lives, In Our Churches, and In the Academy: Essays in Honor of Fr. Ronald Rolheiser*, ed. David Pocta and John J. Markey (New York: Crossroads Publishing, 2023), 1-20.
- “Spirituality in Our Lives, in Our Churches, and in the Academy: An Exploration of the Contribution of Ronald Rolheiser, OMI,” *Offerings: A Journal of Christian Spirituality and Practical Theology* 17 (2023): 3-19.
- (An additional 31 articles in publications including *National Catholic Reporter*, *Give Us This Day*, *Bondings 2.0*, *Outreach*, and *Conversations on Jesuit Higher Education*, among others; Book Reviews in *American Catholic Studies* and *The Merton Seasonal*).

PRESENTATIONS AT ACADEMIC CONFERENCES

- “The Cosmic Significance of the Incarnation: Karl Rahner’s Supralapsarian Christology as Social Salvation,” academic paper, the Catholic Theological Society of America annual conference, Baltimore, MD (13-16 June 2024).
- “Beyond the Specter of Theodicy: Shifting Focus from Philosophy of Evil to Theology of Fear,” academic paper, the European Academy of Religion annual conference, Palermo, Italy (20-23 May 2024)
- “The Humble God of Thomas Merton: Christ, *Kenosis*, and Salvation in the General Dance,” academic paper, the General Conference of the Thomas Merton Society of Great Britain and Ireland, Rydal Hall, Ambleside, UK (5-7 April 2024).

SELECTED LECTURES

- “Loving the Dust We Are: Creation, Interconnectedness, and Rethinking What it Means to be Human,” The Annual Abrahamic Lecture, Notre Dame College, South Euclid, OH (8 November 2023).
- “Justice and Spirituality: A Conversation,” invited lecture, Oblate School of Theology, San Antonio, Texas (25 June 2024).
- “Thomas Merton: Prophetic Faith in the Face of Fear,” invited lecture, Indianapolis Chapter of the Thomas Merton Society, All Saints Episcopal Church, Indianapolis, IN (17 April 2024).
- “Urban Food Waste: Environmental, Social, and Spiritual Dimensions,” invited panelist, Saint Mary’s College, Notre Dame, IN (9 April 2024).
- “Into the Mystics: Francis and Clare of Assisi,” invited panelist, The World Community for Christian Meditation Centre, London, UK (19 March 2024).
- “Trans and Non-Binary Visibility and Outreach: A Theological Reflection,” invited lecture, St. Louis University, St. Louis, MO (18 January 2024).
- “Loving the Dust We Are: Exploring Franciscan Ecospirituality,” invited lecture, The Franciscan Centre Ladywell, London, UK (10 December 2023).
- “Why Did God Become Human? Renewing Our Understanding of the ‘Reason for the Season,’” invited lecture, The World Community for Christian Meditation Centre, London, UK (9 December 2023).
- “Engaging Thomas Merton: Exploring his Continued Relevance,” invited lecture, the Houston Chapter of the International Thomas Merton Society, Houston, TX (4 December 2023).
- “Franciscan Assisi and Jesuit Rome,” retreat conferences, America Media, Assisi and Rome, Italy (18- 28 October 2023).
- “‘Laudato Si’ Part II: A Celebration of Pope Francis’ New Apostolic Exhortation,” invited panelist, The Laudato Si’ Movement, The Vatican, Rome, Italy (4 October 2023).

Continued

2023-2024 ACADEMIC YEAR ACTIVITIES

“Thomas Merton as Modern Mystic,” invited lecture, Sarum College, Salisbury, UK (18 September 2023).

“Who is My Neighbor? A Franciscan Approach to the Dignity and Value of the Human Person,” invited workshop, Board of Directors, The Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale, AZ (16 September 2023).

“From Assisi to America and Beyond: The Global Significance of Saint Francis for Today and Tomorrow,” invited lecture, The Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale, AZ (15 September 2023).

“Thomas Merton’s 20th Century Prophecy for a 21st Century World,” invited lecture, Indianapolis Chapter of the Thomas Merton Society, Indiana Interchurch Center, Indianapolis, IN (18 August 2023).

SERVICE TO THE ACADEMY (BEYOND SAINT MARY’S COLLEGE)

- Member and Secretary of the Board, Board of Trustees, St. Bonaventure University (New York).
- Member, Board of Directors, The Catholic Theological Society of America
- Senior Editor, *Franciscan Studies* (Journal)
- Member of Editorial Board, *Review for Religious* (Journal).
- Member of Editorial Board, *Classics in Western Spirituality* (Paulist Press).
- Site Coordinator, International Thomas Merton Society 2023 Conference.

AWARDS

Five Catholic Media Awards (2023–2024), including First Place for Best Regular Column for *National Catholic Reporter*; and First Place for Best Podcast in Topical News for *The Francis Effect*.



SEPTEMBER 7, 2023

James Martin, SJ, “Come Forth: The Promise of Jesus’s Greatest Miracle”

Ex Libris Author Lecture Series

Approximately 250 people gathered virtually for this book-launch event and discussion for Father James Martin, SJ’s latest publication, *Come Forth: The Promise of Jesus’s Greatest Miracle* (HarperCollins, 2023). Martin delivered a short presentation about the origin of the book, key themes in the text, and the significance of this biblical narrative for his own life and pastoral ministry. Dr. Daniel P. Horan, CFSS director, then interviewed him about the book before opening the space for questions and comments from the audience.

SEPTEMBER 12, 2023

Rachel Wheeler, PhD, “Ecospirituality: Introduction to Practices of Radical Kinship, Rewilding, and Ecotherapy”

Public Lecture

Dr. Rachel Wheeler, a faculty member at the University of Portland, delivered a public lecture on the foundations of “ecospirituality,” which was attended by almost 100 people in person and online. In her lecture, Wheeler outlined the origins of the concept within the Christian spiritual tradition, while also providing constructive and cutting-edge scholarship about where Christian ecospirituality is going both in her personal research and in the field more broadly.

OCTOBER 3, 2023

Sincere Cannon ’25; Sally Geislar, PhD; Matthew Insley, MDiv; and Julie Tourtillotte ’82, MFA, “Cultivating Sacred Ecology: More than Farm, More than Food, More than Faith.”

Panel Discussion

This invited panel discussion built on the theme of ecospirituality as presented by Dr. Rachel Wheeler in September, looking at the local context of Saint Mary’s College to frame reflections on the intersection of ecology, sustainability, and spirituality. **Sincere Cannon ’25**, a Saint Mary’s College student, reflected on her experiences at the Saint Mary’s Sustainable Farm and how that informs her own spiritual outlook. Dr. Sally Geislar, a faculty member in the Saint Mary’s environmental studies department, reflected on her own disciplinary context and worldview. Matthew Insley, the farmer at the Sustainable Farm, discussed the relationship between the process of farming and its connection to his own understanding and practice of spirituality. **Julie Tourtillotte ’82**, a professor of art at Saint Mary’s, offered her own perspective on the relationship between art and creation and a sense of the transcendent. Dr. Julia Feder, assistant director of the CFSS, moderated the panel and questions.

NOVEMBER 2, 2023

Mickey McGrath, OSFS, “Wise and Holy Women: Four Women Doctors of the Church and Their Timeless Relevance for Today”

Public Lecture

Renowned artist, spiritual writer, and retreat leader, Brother Mickey McGrath, a member of the Oblates of St. Francis DeSales, delivered an engaging lecture on the four women Doctors of the Church, using his own original artwork to illustrate his presentation. In addition to offering reflections on these four saints, he also connected the inspiration and insights of these historic women to contemporary contexts and figures of faith and justice. Those in attendance received a small print of his original work featuring all four women Doctors of the Church.

NOVEMBER 14, 2023

Ilia Delio, OSF, PhD, “Merton’s Christophany, Teilhard’s Challenge, and the Second Axial Monk”

The Annual Thomas Merton Lecture in Spirituality

Dr. Ilia Delio, OSF, of Villanova University, and a previous Madeleva Lecturer, delivered a captivating lecture for the inaugural annual Thomas Merton Lecture in Spirituality, which was co-sponsored by the International Thomas Merton Society and billed as the “Fourth and Walnut Lecture” this year. Delio wove together insights from Merton’s life and writings with the cosmic worldview of the Jesuit paleontologist Teilhard de Chardin for a combined in person and online audience that reached nearly 500 people. Prior to the evening public lecture, the CFSS hosted a dinner in Delio’s honor, which was attended by invited guests including the College president, members of the Board of Trustees, and Sisters of the Holy Cross. (For more information, see page 12.)

NOVEMBER 28, 2023

Julia Feder, PhD, “Incarnating Grace: A Theology of Healing from Sexual Trauma”

Ex Libris Author Lecture Series

Dr. Julia Feder, assistant director of the Center for the Study of Spirituality and associate professor of Religious Studies and Theology at Saint Mary’s College, delivered a presentation about the origin of the book, *Incarnating Grace: A Theology of Healing from Sexual Trauma* (Fordham Press, 2023), and highlighted key themes in the text. Next, Dr. Jessica Coblentz, associate professor of Religious Studies and Theology at Saint Mary’s College, interviewed Feder about her book before opening space for questions and comments from the audience.

FEBRUARY 7, 2024

Emily Reimer-Barry, PhD, “Structural Change for Reproductive Justice: Insights from Catholic Feminism”

Public Lecture

Dr. Emily Reimer-Barry, a faculty member at the University of San Diego, delivered a public lecture on the theme of reproductive justice through the lens of Catholic feminist thought. Reimer-Barry, a Catholic moral theologian, challenged the conventional binary discourse around conversations relating to reproductive justice and equality, inviting the audience to think in more complex ways rooted in the theological tradition, while also emphasizing social, ecclesial, and scientific factors not often engaged in the standard conversations about reproductive health and sexual and biomedical ethics. The research presented was taken in part from her forthcoming book, titled, *Reproductive Justice and the Catholic Church: Advancing Pragmatic Solidarity with Pregnant Women* (Sheed & Ward, 2024).

MARCH 5, 2024

Brian Robinette, PhD, “The Difference Nothing Makes: Creation, Christ, Contemplation”

Ex Libris Author Lecture Series

Dr. Brian Robinette, a faculty member at Boston College, delivered a presentation about the origin and key themes of his book, *The Difference Nothing Makes: Creation, Christ, Contemplation* (Notre Dame Press, 2023). Dr. Daniel P. Horan, CFSS director, then interviewed him about the book before opening the space for questions and comments from the audience.

MARCH 8, 2024

Judith Herman, M.D., “Truth and Repair: How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice”

Public Lecture

The CFSS hosted a live webinar with Dr. Judith Herman, professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, about her new book, *Truth and Repair: How Trauma Survivors Envision Justice*. *Truth and Repair* is a long-awaited follow up to her 1992 text on traumatic violence, *Trauma and Recovery*, which has since become a foundational text in contemporary conversations about trauma and theology. Additionally, to prepare for the webinar, we hosted an online, interdisciplinary reading group for scholars to discuss the book over three Fridays in January and February. Thirty-one scholars from a broad diversity of disciplines participated—philosophers, theologians, experts in women’s and gender studies, psychologists, and sociologists. (For more information, see page 11.)

MARCH 20, 2024

Jason Steidl-Jack, PhD, “LGBTQ Catholic Ministry: Past and Present”

Ex Libris Author Lecture Series

Dr. Steidl-Jack, a faculty member at St. Joseph College in New York, delivered a presentation about the origin and key themes of his book, *LGBTQ Catholic Ministry: Past and Present* (Paulist Press, 2023). Dr. Daniel P. Horan, CFSS director, then interviewed him about the book before opening the space for questions and comments from the audience.

APRIL 11, 2024

Natalia Imperatori-Lee, PhD, “Bearers of an ‘Idle Tale’: Women’s Authority in a Credibility Economy”

The Annual Madeleva Lecture

Dr. Imperatori-Lee, a professor of religious studies and department chair at Manhattan College in New York, delivered the 2024 Madeleva Lecture titled “Bearers of an ‘Idle Tale’: Women’s Authority in a Credibility Economy.” The public event brought together more than 200 people in person and online who watched the event live. (For more information, see page 10.)

APRIL 25, 2024

Mark McDermott, Producer, “Wonderfully Made: LGBTQ+R(eligion)”

Documentary Screening

Mr. McDermott, the producer of the independent documentary “Wonderfully Made: LGBTQ+R(eligion),” came to the CFSS to screen the film and engage in a discussion with the audience after the viewing. More than 50 people, mostly undergraduate students from Saint Mary’s and the tri-campus community, attended this program and engaged McDermott in thoughtful conversation following the screening.



A PREVIEW OF 2024-25 EVENTS

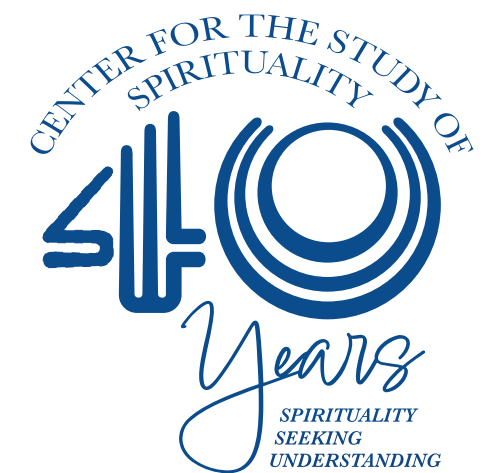
July 15-18, 2024 the Center will host a conference titled, **“Teresa of Avila and Peacemaking in a Nuclear Age: A Contemplative Conversation.”** This four-day seminar is an opportunity for participants to reflect on the work of Vilma Seelaus, O.C.D. who believed that Teresa of Avila’s spirituality could be a resource for peacemaking today. In addition to presentations from leading Teresian scholars, the seminar will feature communal lectio divina with Teresa’s writings and contemplative prayer. This event was co-sponsored by a number of partnering institutions, including Pax Christi USA, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, and the Catholic Peacebuilding Network, as well as the Medieval Institute, the Cushwa Center for the Study of America Catholicism, and the Center for Social Concerns at the University of Notre Dame.

October 3-5, 2024 the Center will host a conference titled, **“Mother, Mascot, Martyr? Exploring the Local and Lasting Legacy of Sr. Madeleva Wolff, CSC.”** This conference will explore the various roles Madeleva embodied, asking: What are the local and lasting legacies of Sister Madeleva? What do these legacies tell us about the communities that continue to commemorate her? And, what can Madeleva’s legacies teach us about navigating the realities of today’s world? With the help of invited presenters, we will consider perspectives from those already engaged in scholarship about her life and others who will apply their respective expertise to this new subject.

In honor of the 40th anniversary of the founding of the CFSS, Dr. Daniel P. Horan will deliver a public lecture on **October 9, 2024** titled **“What is Spirituality and How Do We Study It?”** In line with the mission of the Center at its founding, this will provide an opportunity to reflect on the academic study of spirituality, particularly as it has developed over the past four decades. There will also be a range of events commemorating the 40th anniversary year, more information to come.

Thanks to the generous support of donors, the Center will be launching a new initiative: the **Madeleva Fellowship Program**. This program will provide mentoring in teaching and writing to a competitively selected group of women doctoral candidates in theology or religious studies. Each fellow will receive full funding to attend the Madeleva Lecture in the spring and stay for an extra day for a set of in-person workshops

We will welcome our first group of fellows to campus Spring 2025.





CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SPIRITUALITY
SAINT MARY'S COLLEGE

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