

Loyola Institute Newsletter

Spring 2021



“Studying at Trinity, with its world renowned reputation for scholarship, intellectual rigour, and the opportunity to tap into the rich spiritual and theological traditions of Christian theology has provided me with possibilities to grow intellectually as a reflective thinker, engaging with questions of faith in a critical, reasoned way.”

Shannon Campbell,
MPhil student 20-21

Postgraduate Opportunities



Michael Kirwan SJ with Nick Spencer of UK based Think-tank Theos at Loyola Institute Conference on Religious Literacy, Jan 2020

Despite the challenges of 2020-21, The Loyola Institute has continued to flourish as a centre of theology within the Catholic tradition. It provides an exciting space for learning, scholarship, and conversation, as the enthusiastic words of our students make clear. The postgraduate programmes in Christian theology are offered within the School of Religion. They happen on one or two evenings per week, over one or two years. Students for the Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma, and for the MPhil in Christian Theology, engage with key topics such as ‘Jesus of Nazareth: Son, Christ, Word’; ‘Violence and Grace in the Human Narrative’; ‘Political Theology’; ‘Christianity in the Celtic World’, and others. It is a chance to reflect upon God in the light of ancient traditions of wisdom and thought, while addressing the concerns and challenges of the present day. It is also possible to study at advanced research level, for M.Litt and PhD qualifications. A variety of scholarships are available. Please visit the Loyola webpage for further details.

There will be an open evening at which you will have a chance to learn more about these programme, on Wednesday 12th May, from 7.30 to 9.00 (this event will be online).

Dr. Michael Kirwan SJ,
Interim Director, the Loyola Institute

Reflection on Faith Seeking Understanding



The advent of the ‘age of Zoom’ has for many of us led to an unwelcome increase in our screen time! We are all now used to some degree of Zoom fatigue at the end of each day or week and we actively try and cut down on our virtual commitments. So what was it then that led over 180 people to all log on

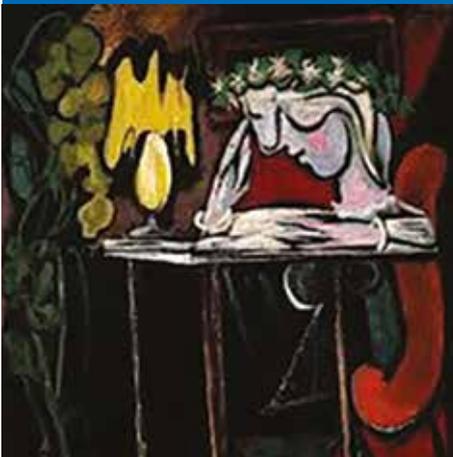
to *Faith Seeking Understanding* for four evenings in January and February? Perhaps Prof. Peter Tyler captured the answer best at the start of his talk when he said that the interest in the series demonstrated the ‘hunger for serious theological conversation’ that exists within people. The development of the series was an attempt to feed this hunger, particularly for those teaching in Catholic schools, as well as for the wider audience.

Having the privilege to explore the topic of the Trinity under the stewardship of the speakers that the Loyola Institute assembled for the series was a real and rewarding gift. On a personal level the series challenged me to more deeply reflect on my relationship with, and understanding of, the person of Jesus Christ and the role of the Holy Spirit in my life. Over the course of the first three lectures I came to an awareness of how much my own spirituality was connected to God the ‘Father’, and was less connected to the wholeness of the Trinity. While academically thought-provoking the series went beyond simply connecting with the head, and invited me into a deeper connection with the heart also.

The role of the Loyola Institute in creating a space for people to be nourished with serious theological conversation that enriches both head and heart was, I am sure, appreciated by all who participated in the Faith Seeking Understanding series. Upon completion of such a rewarding series one is invariably left the question, what’s next? Our faith is not a static grace, the journey continues!

Jonathan Tiernan, Director of Jesuit Education

The Power of the Word Conference



The *Power of the Word* conference, due to be hosted by the Loyola Institute in Dublin last summer, was postponed to this year. It will now take place as a virtual online conference. Entitled ‘The Call of Literature’, this is the sixth such conference, in which literature, especially poetry, is brought into conversation with theology, philosophy, and spirituality. The event will take place between 28th June and 2nd July, 2021. Further details <https://www.powerofthewordproject.com/poweroftheword6>



Congratulations to Linda Doyle on Being Elected Provost of Trinity College Dublin

We are delighted to welcome Professor Linda Doyle as new Provost, the first woman to ever hold this role in the University’s 429-year history. She was one of three excellent candidates who stood for election as Provost.

Linda Doyle is Professor of Engineering and the Arts at Trinity. She has held the role of Dean of Research at Trinity and was the founder Director of CONNECT, the Science Foundation Ireland national research centre for Future Networks and Communications.

Why Joe Biden Keeps Quoting Seamus Heaney on when ‘hope and history rhyme’



We were delighted that Loyola Institute MPhil graduate Paul Corcoran was invited to write for the prestigious ‘*America Magazine*’ about the back ground to Joe Biden’s love of Seamus Heaney.

Paul is currently doing a doctorate under the guidance of Dr Fáinche Ryan with the working title of ‘Towards a modern theology of wonder.’

<https://tinyurl.com/4pz7p3uy>

The Challenges of Sabbaticals!

As a theologian it is interesting to note that the term sabbatical comes from the Latin *sabbaticus*, the Greek *sabbatikos*, meaning 'of, or pertaining to, the Sabbath'. The sabbatical year relates to the Mosaic law, when the land was to be left fallow in the seventh year, debts and slaves released (Lev.25). We academics have a lot to give thanks to God for!

Little did I expect that my first ever sabbatical would coincide with a pandemic, meaning no possibility of travel, nor of meeting colleagues to converse about work.

Thus, the year has been more static than expected, but no less interesting. My research is on the question of truth-telling. In the background is current talk of post-truth and alternative facts which I contend has nothing to do with telling the truth or telling lies. It is much more insidious, amounting to a denial of the existence of truth itself. Devastating consequences for humanity result.

On the other hand, the exploration of truth-telling leads to a very interesting study in theological anthropology. The pathway of readings have been fascinating. I began with Aquinas, who identifies truth-telling as a virtue, then Augustine and Jerome



Prof Graham Ward, Regius Professor of Divinity, University of Oxford, gave the keynote address at the launch of 'The Church in Pluralist Society: Social and Political Roles,' edited by Loyola Institute's Dr Cornelius Casey and Dr Fáinche Ryan in January 2020.

who argue over the gospel and lies, to Hannah Arendt, who speaks of universities as, perhaps, the last 'refuges of truth', and Michel Foucault who wrote on *parrhesia*, courageous truth-telling. Thought-provoking reading, as you can imagine. Dietrich Bonhoeffer chose to address the complexity of truth-telling, writing just before his execution. His work led me to consider how do we know the correct, the just, thing to say or do in a particular

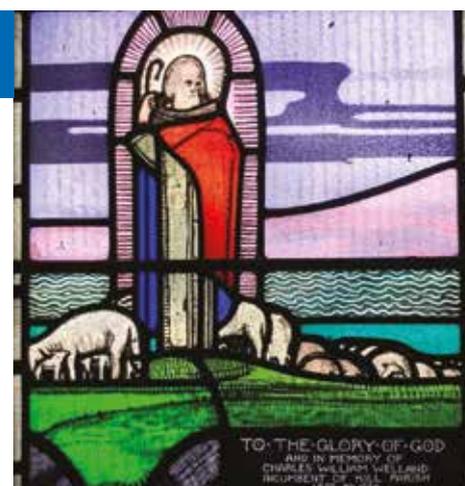
situation – and so back to Aquinas and the virtue of *prudencia*, intelligent decision-making, right practical action ... and to two amazing women, Elizabeth Anscombe and Philippa Foot, both of whom, in the aftermath of the Second World War, asked afresh, how does a good human being act, what is it to live well humanly. All I need now is another sabbatical next year, to put all this on paper!

Dr Fáinche Ryan, Loyola Institute

The Mysterious Shepherd

In my ongoing research on stained glass in Irish churches in the 19th and 20th centuries, it is not entirely uncommon to come across a window depicting a shepherd. In some cases, the shepherd in question turns out to be none other than St. Patrick, as in the small predella window in the Church of the Assumption in Tullamore, designed and executed by Harry Clarke. Other windows clearly depict the Good Shepherd (Jn 10) or the Shepherd of the Parable of the Lost Sheep (Matt 18; Lk 15). One of the latter is to be found in a window designed by Hubert McGoldrick of the famed Dublin glass studio, An Tur Gloine, and installed in

1931 in the Church of Ireland parish of Kill O' the Grange, near Monkstown. However, below McGoldrick's Good Shepherd in the predella window, is another shepherd who is rather more mysterious. Given the 'still waters' by which this shepherd leads his sheep (contrasted with the waves beyond), the 'green pastures' in which he makes them lie down and perhaps even a hint of the 'valley of the shadow of death/deep darkness' to the lower left, I have suggested that the Shepherd here is none other than the one found in Psalm 23. If so, McGoldrick's window is remarkable not only for its beauty but also its temerity, in depicting not only



Good Shepherd window designed by Hubert McGoldrick, Church of Ireland, Kill O' the Grange.

the Good Shepherd, but much more daringly, the LORD as my Shepherd.

Dr David Shepherd, Loyola Institute

What Our Students Say



After a brief and enjoyable encounter with theology during my undergraduate course, I remained interested in deepening my understanding within this subject of personal and professional relevance. The diversity in the presented

approaches to the questions that echo throughout history allows for accessible entry into dense discourse. The course has encouraged resonant engagement and cultivated fertile conversation with material that considers both theory and practice and their relation in theology.

Robert Black, MPhil student 20-21



“When I chose to pursue a postgraduate degree in Christian theology, it was important for me to find a programme that would allow me, a person with no previous theological degree, to embark on a programme that would provide a clear and

attainable path. The certificate programme required me to do three modules and I have found all three modules fascinating. However, if there is one module that perhaps stands out from the rest due to its significance it has to be the christological material concerning the soteriology of Jesus Christ, which examines the doctrine of salvation. The reading material, though challenging, pulls you in and wrestles with your mind.

Richard Ferro, Certificate in Christian Theology student 20-21



Much of my research in the last year has put the Irish poetic tradition in conversation with theology. Patrick Kavanagh has been the primary focus of my attention, but in many ways, Seamus Heaney is cut from the same cloth. The work of both

great Irish poets moves effortlessly from the ephemeral to the eternal. Their work, influenced to varying degrees by their Catholic upbringing, can operate in tandem with traditional theological perspectives to say something new about what it means to be a person of faith today.

Paul Corcoran, 2019-20 MPhil Graduate; now enrolled as PhD research student



When the Loyola Institute began to offer the MPhil in Christian Theology in the Catholic tradition, it became a question of ‘when’ not ‘if’ I would apply. I was attracted by the variety of modules on offer, and the manageable evening lecture schedule

which facilitated the integration of study with existing work and family commitments.

Caren Collins, MPhil student 20-21

Fr Enda McDonagh

When Pope Benedict retired, Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland, recalled Enda saying ‘around our



kitchen table’, that he had studied with both Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict) and Hans Kung: ‘I preferred the theology of Kung but the company of Ratzinger’. Enda himself excelled at both, scholarship and good company. His scholarship and his companionship were ecumenical, international, and life-long. Following his death, media tributes referred to him as one of Ireland’s most progressive and liberal theologians. Enda, in his gracious way,

would probably have received these compliments kindly though he would not have thought of himself in those terms. He was not much interested in ecclesial culture wars. Traditional Catholic concern that the mystery of the Incarnation would find the best expression possible in his writings on a whole range of topics, as well as in all his undertakings; this was his calling.

Dr Cornelius Casey,
Founding Director Loyola Institute



We are delighted to welcome Dr Alexander O'Hara to the Loyola Institute as a Research Fellow. Alex will primarily be focused on the Loyola Institute research project on theology and the early Irish Church, which is being led by Dr Fáinche Ryan. Dr O'Hara is an expert in early medieval Ireland and Europe. A graduate of the University of St Andrews and Oxford University, his current research project *Savage/Saint Island: Imagining Ireland and the Irish from Classical Antiquity to*

the Anglo-Norman Conquest explores the development of Irish ethnic identity and the changing cultural perception of Ireland and the Irish. He is author of *Jonas of Bobbio and the Legacy of Columbanus* and editor of *Columbanus and the Peoples of Post-Roman Europe*, both published by Oxford University Press in 2018.

See more about Alex's most recent work *St Sunniva: Irish Queen, Norwegian Patron Saint* below.

St Sunniva: Irish Queen, Norwegian Patron Saint

(Bergen: Alvheim og Eide Akademisk Forlag, 2021)

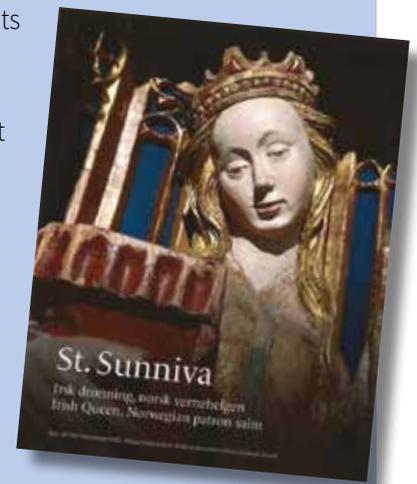
The reputed Irish queen and martyr, Sunniva, and her Irish followers were among the most revered saints in medieval Norway. She is the patron saint of Bergen and Western Norway. Her legend describes how she and her Irish companions sailed across the ocean from Ireland to the western coast of Norway and how they suffered martyrdom in a cave on the island of Selja in the tenth century. In 1170, the relics of St Sunniva were brought from Selja to Bergen, where this Irish saint played an important role as a saintly patron of the town, the diocese, and the kingdom for centuries until the Reformation in the 1530s.

This collected volume commemorates the 850th celebrations in 2020 of the translation of Sunniva's relics to Bergen. It provides new knowledge about the shaping of the legend and the image of St Sunniva, and how this Irish saint left her mark on Norwegian history, literature, and art from the Middle Ages until today. The legend continues to be retold and reinterpreted in contemporary Norway as pilgrims once again set out along the western coast of Norway as they did almost a millennium ago.

The bi-lingual collected volume published in Norwegian and English by Alvheim og Eide Akademisk Forlag in Bergen is edited by Alf Tore Hommedal, Associate Professor in Medieval Archaeology, University of Bergen, Åslaug Ommundsen, Professor in Medieval Latin Philology, University of Bergen, and Alexander O'Hara, Research Fellow, Loyola Institute, Trinity College Dublin.

To order: <http://www.alvheimeide.net/shop>

Dr Alexander O'Hara, Loyola Institute



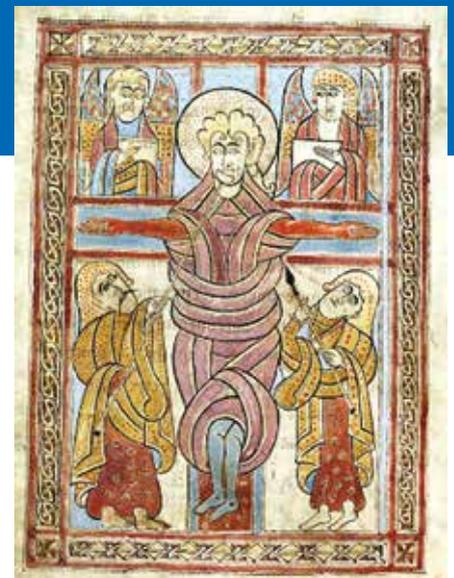
PhD Scholarship in Theology and the early Irish Church

The Loyola Institute is pleased to announce a doctoral scholarship in theology and the early Irish Church. Proposals which focus on the Irish influence in Europe, Irish monastic networks in Europe, and the influence of the Gospel of St John on the Irish Church and diaspora will be particularly welcome. The scholarship will cover academic fees and offer a stipend of €13,000 per annum for four

years. Applications are welcome from all appropriately qualified applicants. See our website for details.

This scholarship is a part of The Loyola Institute research project on theology and the early Irish Church, which is being led by Dr Fáinche Ryan.

This scholarship is made available thanks to generous philanthropic funding.



Scholarships Awarded for Christian Theology 2020-21

MPhil in Christian Theology

The Blessed Dominic Barberi Studentship

Karen Daly

*Thanks to Passionist Provinces of Britain and Ireland
St Joseph's Province and St Patrick's Province*

Sean O'Riordan Scholarships

Alan Dunne

Caren Collins

Thanks to Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer

Spiritual Mission Scholarship

Shannon Campbell

Thanks to Congregation of the Holy Spirit

Religious Education Teachers Scholarship

James Duffy

Thanks to the Loyola Trust

Constantia Maxwell Faculty Scholarship

Robert Black

Postgraduate Certificate in Christian Theology

Alexander O'Hara

Thanks to the Loyola Trust

PhD scholarships

Emmet O'Regan

Endika Martinez

Thanks to the Loyola Trust

For details of Christian Theology scholarships
available for academic year 21/22
please see <https://www.tcd.ie/loyola-institute/>

Loyola Enriched by Participation in European Networks

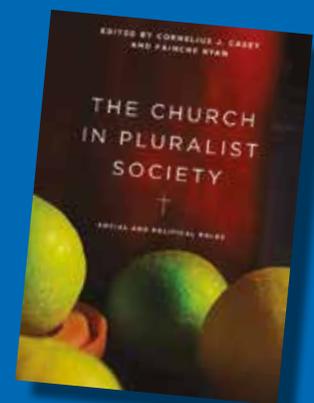


The Loyola Institute and its staff belong to a number of national and European networks of theology and religious studies. For the past year, sadly, most of our meetings have been virtual, but it is hoped that later in the summer we will have a chance to travel once again. The European Society of Catholic Theology (ESCT) is scheduled to meet in August in Osnabrück, Germany, looking at Creation

and Theology. This will be followed by a gathering of the European Academy of Religion (EuARE) in nearby Münster, where Loyola will be giving a panel. The Institute is a member of the Kirchner network, which connects Jesuit faculties of theology across Europe, from Granada to Moscow. These links are an important enrichment of our work in theology within the Catholic tradition; there will be a fuller report on these activities in our next newsletter.



MPhil graduates Ursula Hannigan, Deidre Softe and Emmett O'Regan at the launch of *The Church in Pluralist Society: Social and Political Roles*, edited by Cornelius J. Casey and Fáinche Ryan in January 2020.



Available on Amazon and all good book shops (approximately €25)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Theology Research Colloquium

Tuesday 27th April, 7.30-9.00 pm

You are warmly invited to join us,
details on website.

Loyola Institute

PostGrad Open Evening

Wednesday 12th May, 7.30 – 9pm

You are warmly invited to join us,
details on website

Power of The Word Conference

28th June and 2nd July

See article in newsletter for details.

**Lots more events are in the planning.
We look forward to telling you more
in the summer newsletter**

Thank You and All the Best



After a number of years' involvement with the Loyola Institute, Dr. Amanda Dillon has taken up a post as lecturer at Dublin City University. Amanda's specialism is scripture and the visual arts, and she coordinated

the Theology and the Arts module for the MPhil. Such is her enthusiasm that she led student groups to places of interest, notably Ravenna. We thank her for her work with us, and wish her every success at DCU.

The Loyola Institute is grateful for the generous support of the Loyola Trust (Augustinians, Carmelites (O.Carm.), Columbans, Jesuits, Loreto Sisters, Marists, Oblates, Society of African Missions).



Great to see the work of our first Loyola Institute PhD spreading out across the world.

Dr Mary Stefanazzi (with Trinity College Dublin Chancellor- and former Irish President- Mary Robinson at her conferring) did her doctoral research on Victor White OP: War and the Narrative of Human Flourishing.

The Czech Dominican Journal has translated an article by Mary into Czech.

If your Czech is up to it you can read the article -
<https://salve.op.cz/psychologie-a-teologie-3-20/3-2020-english-summary-victor-white-op>



The Loyola Institute

School of Religion

TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

is dedicated to education and research in theology in the Catholic Christian tradition and offers degrees at postgraduate level, both taught and by research.

Scholarships available.

Further information: www.tcd.ie/loyola-institute

Email: Loyola@tcd.ie

Phone +353 (0) 1 8964790



loyolaTCD



@LoyolaTCD



Trinity College Dublin

Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath

The University of Dublin