

Loyola Institute Newsletter

Summer 2021

Ten years in the Loyola Institute: Reflections

by Dr Cornelius J. Casey C.Ss.R., Founding Director



Con Casey with Loyola Institute student Edith O'Nuallain, on the day she was conferred with her MPhil in Christian Theology.

On November 12th, 2012 there was a launch event for the Loyola Institute in the Long Room Hub at Trinity College Dublin. Among others, I spoke at this event, saying:

The hallmark of the Loyola Institute will be that it will pursue its teaching and research with the academic rigour, breadth of subject-matter, critical methodology, and academic freedom that is at the heart of the life of the university.

The Loyola Institute came into existence a year earlier by the formal approval of the Board of College. It was preceded by two years of detailed discussions between representatives of the College and representatives of (what would be) the Loyola Trust and Company. The Loyola Trust and Company was a confederation of eight religious congregations. Their vision was that both the contemporary Irish Church and contemporary Irish society would benefit if theology in the

Catholic traditions found a new academic location in the context of a prestigious Irish university such as Trinity. The chief concerns of the College officials were that high academic standards would be maintained with academic freedom, and appropriate economic security. A particular concern of the Company representatives was that there be appropriate autonomy for the Institute to pursue its academic mission (teaching and research in the traditions of Catholic

theology). It is important to note that for reasons of Church law the project needed the approval of local Church authority, in this case the Archbishop of Dublin.

By agreement of both College and Trust, I was appointed Director, the founding Director. At this stage I was the sole academic officer. There were formidable challenges. A strategic plan was imperative. As a first step it was decided to offer a single-honours BA in Catholic Theology, to be followed by joint honours BA, with other subjects. It should be noted that the joint honours programme quickly ran into difficulties because of a radical and protracted reorganisation of Trinity's undergraduate programmes. A further strategic step envisaged a taught post-graduate course, to be in place by 2014-2015. A single honours degree curriculum passed through the scrutiny of various academic committees and entered the CAO handbook of 2012. In this way the academic mission of the Loyola Institute commenced.

Some ten years in I ask, 'how did we do?' 'Had we the best strategy?' It is easy enough to answer these questions on paper. It is quite another matter to have certainty as to how alternative strategies would have worked in practice, because nothing was easy.



Con Casey, and other members of the Loyola Institute team with MPhil students on a field trip to Glendalough.

Nothing was easy

In a sense the strategy we adopted was 'all haste'. Would it have been wiser to build up more slowly? Would it have been better to find a way to make a post-graduate offering, as a beginning? Would it have been wiser, instead of developing our own BA, to have sought to become a partner and participant in the existing BA offered in the College? Would that have been possible? It is important to recall the complicated

institutional framework in which the work was commencing. Academic work in Trinity is mostly managed through a system of Schools which typically bring together neighbouring academic disciplines that previously had their own distinct management. These often work well, given good will and openness on the part of participating academics. The Loyola Institute, The Department of Religion and Theology, and the Irish School of Ecumenics were organised



Con (right) with Prof. Graham Ward (Regius Professor of Divinity, University of Oxford), Dr. Fáinche Ryan, and Prof. Corinna Salvadori Lonergeran (Professor Emerita, Italian Department), at the launch of *The Church in Pluralist Society: Social and Political Roles*, edited by Dr. Cornelius Casey and Dr. Fáinche Ryan (University of Notre Dame Press).



Con speaking with keynote speaker Dr Terry Eagleton at the 2016 Loyola Institute International conference entitled *The Role of Church in a Pluralist Society: Good Riddance or Good Influence?*

as a Confederal School, deploying neighbouring but distinct methodologies. It was not at all difficult to see the possibilities of synergies to everyone's advantage. However, academics can be truculent. Nothing would be easy.

(I used to recall inwardly a story of Henry Kissinger, former American Foreign Secretary. He joined the Board of one of the great American Universities. Coming from a meeting he said to an aide, 'Oh for the simplicities of the Middle East!')

How well did we do?

Given all of this, how did we do? Actually, quite well, I think. The BA programme was taught for seven years, recruiting students though not anything like enough. In 2016 the Institute developed a taught post-graduate degree, the MPhil in Christian Theology. It recruited well. There are inquirers from several walks of life, including journalism, law, medicine, and people of faith seeking serious intellectual engagement. At Doctorate level four Institute students have graduated, and currently there are six or seven in the doctorate programme. In 2019 the undergraduate programme was reorganised. Currently the School offers one undergraduate programme, with strands from different methodologies in the School. It remains to be seen how successful this will be.

A successful series of evening lectures, three in the autumn term, and three in the spring, were organised annually. In addition, a programme of lectures called 'Faith Seeking Understanding' offering non-degree engagement with theology in the Catholic traditions was established. It has been well subscribed.

In June 2017 the Institute organised an international conference on 'The Church in Pluralist Society'. The Conference, opened by the Provost, heard papers from top-ranking international presenters (including Cardinal Reinhard Marx of Munich). It led to a significant publication by Notre Dame University Press, Indiana, USA.

'Religious literacy in contemporary European societies' was the theme studied by an international conference in January 2020,



At the formal announcement of the creation of the Loyola Institute in November 2012: Dr. Patrick Prendergast (Provost of TCD), Fr. Thomas Layden SJ (Provincial of the Irish Jesuit Province and Chair of the Loyola Institute Trust), and Dr. Cornelius Casey (Director of the Loyola Institute)

addressed by speakers from Italy, Sweden, UK, and Ireland. In its aftermath a research network is being established with academics from Italy, Sweden, German, the Netherlands, and Ireland.

These have been some of the accomplishments.

In July I leave my formal contract with the project. I wish to express deep appreciation, first to the commitment and vision of the Loyola Company, and then, next, to colleagues with whom I worked most closely. None of it was easy, and I doubt if it will be in the future; but it was all worthwhile. To my mind the strength of the Loyola Institute is its clear academic mission – teaching and research in theology in the Catholic traditions, and, from this perspective, an openness and indeed an appetite to work with other academic methodologies. Most theology practitioners in public universities today are familiar with the temptation towards mission drift, given the obvious hegemony of purely secular disciplines in contemporary cultures. Confidence and clarity of our distinctive academic mission is precisely what such cultures need most.

Dr Cornelius J. Casey

Founding Director,
Loyola Institute,
School of Religion, TCD.

Celebrating Con's Contribution

As Dr Con Casey has indicated, his formal involvement with the Loyola Institute will come to an end in July 2021, though he will continue to be involved in its activities and in its scholarship. The Loyola Institute 'adventure' is symbolic of many such initiatives in the worldwide Church in the post-Vatican II period, all aimed at consolidating the rich traditions of Catholic

theology in secular university settings. Not at all an easy task! We owe Con a huge debt of gratitude for his role in founding this highly important work, and we wish him well.

Con Casey's contribution to the Loyola Institute project will be celebrated in early 2022 (Covid restrictions allowing).

We envisage:

- A symposium, probably on the theme of Theology and The Universities
- A keynote lecture, followed by a reception, to celebrate 10 years of Loyola Institute and in particular the contribution of Dr Con Casey.

Dr Fáinche Ryan Speaks at Aquinas Institute Oxford seminar series



'Pathways towards the rediscovery of *prudentia* (*phronesis*) for good human living' was the title of the paper given at the Aquinas Institute Oxford seminar series.

The paper focused on four thinkers - Elizabeth Anscombe (1919-2001), Philippa Foot (1920-2010), Thomas Deman (1899-1954) and Herbert McCabe (1926-2001).

Foot's words set the tone: "It was significant that when I came back to Oxford in 1945, that was the time when the news of the concentration camps was coming out. This news was shattering in a fashion that no one now can easily understand. We had thought that something like this could not happen."

The Second World War caused tremendous devastation. The understanding of what it is to be human was shattered. Radical rethinking of theories of moral science, in the light of horrific accounts of what humans had done, led some to ask again: what is it to be a good human being? How can we live well in a complex world? How do we enact good decision-making for our own lives and for our society?

The paper argued that what clarified for each of these thinkers in their work is the centrality of good intelligent decision-making - Aristotle's *phronesis*, Aquinas' *prudentia* - from within a larger argument advocating a recovery of virtue theory in an account of good human living.

The Power of The Word VI (28th June – July 2nd)

A conference which was to be held in Trinity College in summer of 2020 will now take place online (June 28th-July 2nd). Jointly hosted by the Power of the Word Project and the Loyola Institute, 'The Call of Literature' is the sixth international conference organised by The Power of the Word, bringing theology, philosophy and literature into conversation. This event explores aspects of the 'call of literature', for authors and audiences alike. What does it mean to speak of a 'vocation' to write, and what have theologians and philosophers got to say on the matter? In what sense can we speak of readers being 'called to literature'? And is the spirit of literature necessarily an 'angel of light', or does the call of literature sometimes prove to be a siren song? Reading is 'dangerous', wrote Marcel Proust, when 'rather than waking us to the inner life of our soul, it tends to take its place' (*Sur la lecture*, 1906).

The conference aims to explore the 'call of literature', and the problems of discernment for literary authors and their



readers, and for philosophers, theologians and critics. The programme includes keynote addresses from David Jasper and Declan Kilberd, and poetry readings from Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin and Micheal O'Siadhail. There will also be a showing and discussion of *Flannery*, a new documentary film about Flannery O'Connor (last, and very much least, Michael Kirwan SJ, of the Loyola Institute, will give a paper on Goethe's Italian Journey).

Further information about 'The Call of Literature' can be found at: <https://www.powerofthewordproject.com/poweroftheword6>



Declan Kiberd,
University of Notre
Dame, Indiana, USA
and Dublin, Ireland



Eiléan Ní Chuilleanáin,
Fellow and Professor
of English (Emerita) at
Trinity College Dublin



David Jasper,
Professor Emeritus
of Literature and
Theology at the
University of Glasgow

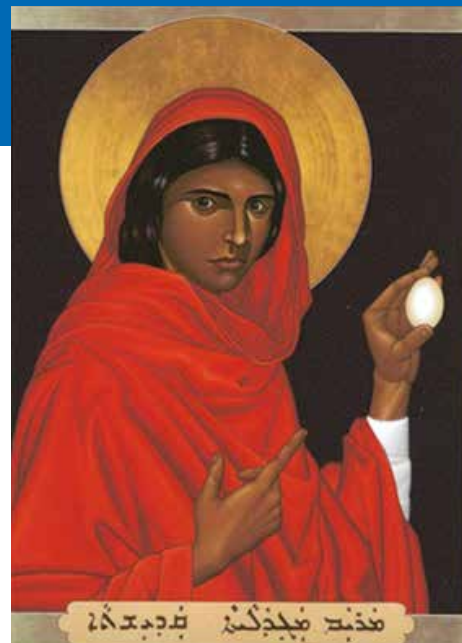
Prof. Garrigan and Tallaght Arts Reclaim Mary Magdalen

Professor Siobhán Garrigan is currently working with the South Dublin Arts Centre, Tallaght, on a project about Saint Mary Magdalene. The project has commissioned five of Ireland's leading artists – Alice Maher, Rachel Fallon, Amanda Coogan, Grace Dyas and Jesse Jones – to reflect on the figure of Mary Magdalen and devotions to her, taking particular account of recent exposés of what went on in the asylums/laundries that bore her name.

Prof. Garrigan's input brings to light relevant theological themes, including the notion of "the Penitent", the sacrament of reconciliation down the years, and the binary thought-structures

that have often been fundamental to Christian teaching (good/bad, male/female, holy mother/sinner whore). Much of Garrigan's contribution will focus on the work of feminist liturgy groups in reclaiming devotion to the Saint, examining in particular their use of symbolism associated with her -- such as the red egg, jar of ointment, hair-covered body – as well as their revival of pilgrimages to the sites of her relics.

The Apostle to the Apostles will be rediscovered through a sequence of exhibitions, interventions, performances and events, all accessible to the public for free, running from June 2021 for a year in Tallaght.



See more here

<http://www.ruared.ie/gallery/exhibition/magdalone-series>

Columcille in Context: Theologians and Historians in Conversation to Commemorate the 15th Centenary of the Birth of Saint Columba of Iona (521/ 2021)

2021 marks 1,500 years since the birth of Saint Columba/ Columcille of Iona (521-597), one of the co-patron saints of Ireland. Born in Co. Donegal, Columba left Ireland in 563 to establish a monastery on the island of Iona in the Scottish Hebrides which became one of the most famous monasteries in Ireland and Britain. He preached the Gospel to the Picts of northern Britain and the later mission from Iona to northern England played a key role in the conversion of England in the seventh century. The Book of Kells is associated with Saint Columba and the Columban communities of Iona and Kells.

To commemorate the 15th centenary I am organising a series of evening online lectures starting on the Feast of Columcille, 9th June at 7.30 pm. The lecture series seeks to combine

scholarship and engagement from the fields of theology and medieval history in presenting Columcille in context. The first lecture will be delivered by Professor Thomas O'Loughlin, Professor Emeritus of Historical Theology, University of Nottingham. Please register on the links below for the first two lectures:

The first lecture is on 9th June:

https://tcd-ie.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_-KcSd1zHQdedOEFrYPrfA

The second lecture is on 29th June:

https://tcd-ie.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_6sa32RWTQL-WwEOxgm_6Bw

Dr Alexander O'Hara

Research Fellow, Loyola Institute



Answering some of your Questions about Postgraduate Opportunities at Loyola Institute

Who studies on these programmes, and why?

Students come from a wide range of backgrounds with different motivations. Often, these are people who want to nurture their faith- theology is 'faith seeking understanding', and may feel they have not had a chance in their lives to think about religion in a deep and organised way. Sometimes, the study of theology may be directly relevant to their work or ministry: for example, as teachers, chaplains, or catechists. And in a few cases, there are students who wish to study Theology at a higher research level; the programmes at Loyola help provide the academic foundation they need.

Do I need to have studied Theology previously?

Most of our students are new to Theology, and we take this into account in our programmes. You would normally need to have a suitable qualification at undergraduate level, but we would also take into account your life experience and formation. If you have questions about whether postgraduate study at Loyola would be right for you, don't hesitate to contact the programmes director, Dr Michael Kirwan SJ, for guidance.

Are there scholarships available?

We are delighted to be in a position to offer a range of postgraduate scholarships including:

Sean O'Riordan Scholarship

Two scholarships of €5,000 each.

Thanks to the generous support of the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer.

The Dominic Barberi Studentship

One scholarship to the value of €8,000.

Thanks to the generous support of the Passionist Provinces of Britain and Ireland (St Joseph's Province and St Patrick's Province)

Sisters Angèle-Marie Littlejohn and Bibiane Leclercq Scholarship (African Women)

Fees Scholarship

Thanks to the generous support of the Missionary Sisters of Our Lady of Apostles.

Loyola Trust Scholarship for Teachers

One Scholarship to the value of €9,000.

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Loyola Trust (funded by the Augustinians, Carmelites (O.Carm.), Columbans, Jesuits, Loreto Sisters, Marists, Oblates, Society of African Missions).

Loyola Trust Scholarships for MPhil and Postgraduate Certificate

Three scholarships to the value of €3,000 each for MPhil students

Four scholarships to the value of €1,000 for Postgraduate Certificate students.

Thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Loyola Trust (funded by the Augustinians, Carmelites (O.Carm.), Columbans, Jesuits, Loreto Sisters, Marists, Oblates, Society of African Missions).

For further details and how to apply please see

<https://www.tcd.ie/loyola-institute/scholarships/>

Closing date for applications 31st July 2021



The Loyola Trust sponsor a scholarship specifically to encourage religious education teachers to study theology. Rionach Donlon of the Loyola Trust with the 2017/18 winner Eoin Walshe. Eoin is RE teacher in Le Chéile Secondary School – Secondary School in Tyrrelstown



Leslie Flores who won the Dominic Barberi Studentship. Scholarship funded by Passionist Provinces of Britain and Ireland (St Joseph's Province and St Patrick's Province) for academic year 2017/18 with Fr James Sweeney CP



If you have any questions about any aspect of the postgraduate studies offered by Loyola Institute contact the programmes director Dr Michael Kirwan SJ kirwanm6@tcd.ie

Our Thanks to the Provost of Trinity College Dublin Dr Patrick Prendergast

As the Provost's term of office comes to completion in July, it is appropriate to say words of gratitude for his service to College and, in particular, for his continued interest and encouragement for the work of the Loyola Institute within College during the ten years of his Provostship. Our best wishes go with him into the future.

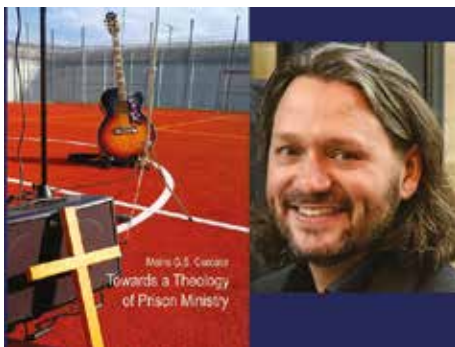


The Provost of Trinity College Dublin Dr Patrick Prendergast, (second from right) with Prof. William T. Cavanaugh (De Paul University, Chicago), Prof. Hans Joas (Humboldt-Universität, Berlin), and Dr Cornelius J. Casey at the first day of the Loyola International conference entitled *The Role of Church in a Pluralist Society: Good Riddance or Good Influence?*

Congratulations to Meins G.S. Coetsier on his Doctorate

Meins G.S. Coetsier, ordained deacon for the German Diocese of Fulda, recently completed his PhD in Catholic Theology at the Loyola Institute. He successfully defended his doctoral dissertation entitled: "Towards a Theology of Prison Ministry." Under the supervision of Dr. Fáinche Ryan, he did Part-Time research next to his work as a prison chaplain in two German prisons, flying over to Dublin regularly.

His study focuses on Karl Rahner's views on the prison pastorate as well as on the more complex needs and demands of prison ministry in the twenty first century.



Coetsier argues that a greater pastoral appreciation is necessary of the traumas, conflicts and suffering experienced by prisoners, prison pastors, prison staff and, indeed, in the wider world.

From his own personal encounters with inmates, he learned that prisoners search for meaning and fulfilment. Addressing the above-mentioned experiences, traumas and conflicts, he develops a theology that is based on empowerment. The study takes a creative and meaning-centred response to suffering, as illustrated by the lives of Viktor Frankl, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn and Etty Hillesum. Considered that no extensive Rahner-study has been done before in relation to his theology of the prison pastorate, Coetsier's research at Loyola Institute contributes significantly to scholarship today.

For the last few years the Loyola Institute has been part of the Kircher network:

<https://kirchernetwork.org/>

This is a network of higher education institutions linked to the Society of Jesus in Europe and the Near East (Beirut). The network is named after Athanasius Kircher (1602-1680), a German Jesuit scholar and polymath in the fields of comparative religion, geology and medicine. Fr. Kircher is described by scholars as 'the last Renaissance man ... a champion of

KIRCHER
Network
Jesuit Higher Education
in Europe and the Near East

wonder, a man of awe-inspiring erudition and inventiveness'.

The network includes big institutions, such as the Gregorian University in Rome and the Jesuit faculties in Paris, Madrid and Innsbruck; but also smaller projects,

in Uppsala (Sweden), in Moscow, and our own here in Dublin. These institutions seek to offer an integral formation of the individual based on the Jesuit Ignatian vision; one which is alert to the ways in which higher education can and should be at the service of justice and social transformation.

Though our meetings in 2020-21 have been on Zoom, there is hope of extensive collaboration in the coming years, including sharing of educational resources, student and staff mobility, and common research projects.

Our MPhil Graduates on Their Chosen Dissertations

A written dissertation (15,000 words) is a key part of the MPhil. This enables participants to engage in advanced study of a particular topic of interest in the field. In the process of writing, participants are offered one-to-one academic supervision.

We are delighted that five of our recent MPhil graduates agreed to present their dissertations so that they can be shared with a wider audience.

Click on the titles below to watch the presentations – or go to the Loyola Institute YouTube page where you can see these and other presentations.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCdnzub-BhNL40ldB945MMg>



Paul Corcoran

Christian wonder and the poetry of Patrick Kavanagh



Endika Martinez

Analogy: An Introduction to Hans Urs von Balthasar



Deidre Soffe

Why might Yves Congar have written I Believe in the Holy Spirit at the end of his career?



Emmett O'Regan

The Indefectibility of the Apostolic See: A Dogmatic Solution to the Problem of a Heretical Pope



Emma Rothwell

Conversational Virtue and Contemporary Identity Politics

Biblical Theology from D.C. to Dublin

This spring, students taking Prof David Shepherd's Biblical Module theology on the MPhil in Christian Theology were treated to a cameo appearance from Dr Robert Miller, Professor of Old Testament at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. In addition to his interests and publications on Early Israel, Prof Miller is a leading authority on Biblical Theology and the author of *Syriac and Antiochian Exegesis and Biblical Theology for the 3rd Millennium* (2008), *Covenant and Grace in the Old Testament: Assyrian*

Propaganda and Israelite Faith (2012), *Between Israelite Religion and Biblical Theology: Essays on Archaeology, History, and Hermeneutics* (2016), and *Many Roads Lead East: Overtures to Catholic Biblical Theology* (2016). Having looked with Prof Shepherd over the course of the term at biblical theology topics like atonement, covenant, mission, spirit and others, the students were richly blessed by the opportunity to benefit from Prof Miller's wisdom as he discussed the promise of a Catholic Biblical Theology.



Dr Robert Miller,
Professor of Old Testament at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C

Shakespeare and the Jesuits: No Collusion!

In a Political Theology Research seminar (presented at Goldsmith's, University of London), Michael Kirwan revisits the endlessly fascinating question of William Shakespeare's alleged Catholic sympathies and allegiance. Shakespeare literally dramatizes the violent tectonic political shifts of the early modern period. This period sees the translation of political legitimacy, from a divinely appointed and protected monarch, to a sovereignty invested in the will of the people. Shakespeare's drama holds up the mirror to our own concerns: who decides how we are to be ruled, by whom, and to what end? Most crucial of all: how should one act if a government or ruler is judged to be illegitimate or oppressive?

At the same time as Shakespeare, scholars within the newly emergent Society of Jesus (Jesuits) were caught up in the same fundamental political questions. The Shakespearean scholar Richard Wilson, writes of the agonizingly divided subject in Elizabethan and Jacobean England, whom we recognise both in the disguised Jesuit, moving clandestinely across England, and in William Shakespeare, whose personal life and commitments remain a mystery. Recent scholarship such as Wilson's has sparked new interest because of speculation connecting Shakespeare with two hot spots of Catholic recusancy: his birthplace in Warwickshire, and Lancashire, the alleged location of Shakespeare's 'lost years'



before he appears on the London scene.

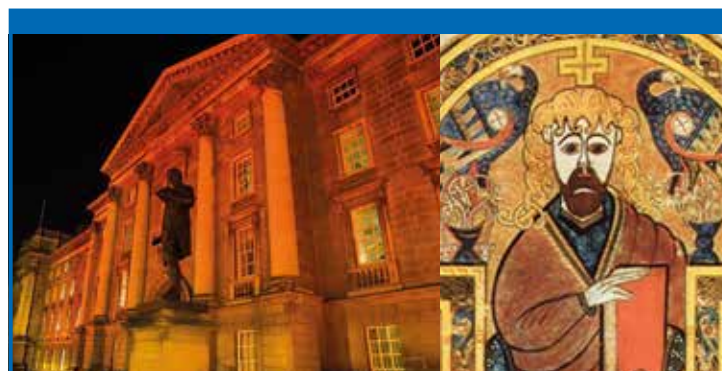
Wilson argues for Shakespeare's ambiguous relationship to Jesuits such as Edmund Campion and Robert Parsons, whom he would have encountered during their mission to England in 1581. Fascinating as these men were, Shakespeare ultimately refuses the 'fanatical' extremism of the Jesuit missionaries, in favour of a more tolerant brand of Christianity. He represents 'a resistance to the resistance'. Much of this is speculative; nevertheless, as Andrea Campana has put it, regarding Shakespeare and the Jesuits, 'there's something in the air'.

Reflections on Catholic Education

The need for good quality research into the nature and potential of Catholic education has never been greater. In October 2019, a conference was hosted at Dublin City University, which brought together researchers from Ireland and Britain. Its proceedings have been published as *Irish and British Reflections on Catholic Education: Foundations, Identity, Leadership Issues and Religious Education in Catholic Schools*, edited by Sean Whittle (Singapore: Springer Nature, 2021).

Michael Kirwan contributed a chapter entitled 'Catholic Faith Education: a Jesuit Theological Critique'. The volume 'provides a powerful antidote to the naïve reductionism that would boil Catholic education down to just one or two fundamental issues or principles. Contemporary Catholic education, perhaps globally but certainly in Ireland and Britain, is best depicted in terms of being a colourful kaleidoscope of differing perspectives'.

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).



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.

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