

WWW.IRISHROVER.NET

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 11

APRIL 23, 2025 • ST. GEORGE, MARTYR

Notre Dame Reacts to Pope Francis' Death

Professors, students reflect on controversial papacy

LYDIA POE
Religion Editor

In the early morning of Easter Monday, in the quiet of Casa Santa Marta, Pope Francis passed away at the age of 88. The result of stroke and irreversible heart failure, his death reverberated deeply across the global Catholic community. Here at the University of Notre Dame, scholars, clergy, and students alike paused to reflect on the complex legacy left behind.

In an April 21 press release, university president Father Robert Dowd, C.S.C., praised Pope Francis' "heroic and prophetic ministry," saying that his "life and witness call us to awaken from indifference to the suffering of others, to embrace our responsibilities to one another and to be agents of faith, hope and love for a world in need."

During his time as pontiff, Pope Francis specifically urged Notre Dame to stay true and close to the Church.

In a 2014 papal audience, Pope Francis addressed Notre Dame president emeritus, Fr. John Jenkins, C.S.C., and the Board of Trustees: "It is my hope that the University of Notre Dame will continue to offer unambiguous testimony to this aspect of its



Image from Wikimedia Commons

foundational Catholic identity, especially in the face of efforts, from whatever quarter, to dilute that indispensable witness. And this is important: its identity, as it was intended from the beginning. To defend it, to preserve it and to advance it!"

In his February 2024 audience with Notre Dame's officers, Pope Francis thanked Fr. Dowd and the Board of Trustees, entrusting the "entire Notre Dame community and all who support its mission to the intercession of Our Lady."

He said, "I invoke upon you and your families the Lord's gifts of wisdom, joy and peace, and I cordially impart my blessing." He concluded the audience, saying, "And I ask you, please, to remember to pray for me."

Pope Francis' death created varied reactions among the faculty and student body, especially in regards to his legacy on the Catholic Church and the world.

John Cavadini, professor of theology and Director of the McGrath Institute for Church

Life, stated, "For me, Pope Francis' legacy could be summed up in a phrase that I found particularly attractive. He called for a 'revolution of tenderness.'"

He continued, "In his contemplation of the mystery of Mary, Mother of the Church, her maternal tenderness towards the scorned of history and the suffering of the world stood out."

"Above anything else, I would say that Pope Francis' pontificate emphasized the personal, he would say the 'real,' because

ultimately it is the personal, not the abstract; the person, not the aggregate; the vulnerable, not the self-styled self-sufficient; that will constitute the Kingdom of Heaven. To which, as Pope, he felt called to be the first and most public witness."

Father Wilson Miscamble, C.S.C. called for prayers for Pope Francis following the pontiff's death, commending his emphasis on mercy and evangelization. "His efforts to make the Church a 'field hospital' for the wounded of our time are to be treasured," he told the *Rover*.

Fr. Miscamble reflected on Pope Francis' papal legacy, saying, "Regrettably, much of the initial promise of the Francis papacy either remained unfulfilled or proved disappointing."

He continued, "Francis spoke out against ridding the Church of clergy sexual abuse, but proved quite inconsistent in implementing measures to counter this blight which has done such damage to the Church. Furthermore, Pope Francis' promotion of 'synodality' was rather confusing and at seeming odds with his own expressed desire to make the Church less 'self-referential' and internally

continued on pg. 6

The Holy Cross Congregation and Notre Dame

Does Notre Dame retain its religious ties?

ABBY STRELOW
Staff Writer

In 1842, Father Edward Sorin and fellow priests of the Congregation of Holy Cross (C.S.C.) arrived in Indiana with a vision: to found the University of Notre Dame as a force for good in the world. Now, 183 years later, Notre Dame has grown to be a premier Catholic research university, with over 13,000 graduate and undergraduate students from around the world.

Despite its growth, the university has faithfully maintained its relationship with Holy Cross. It is precisely this connection, many note, which has significantly contributed to Notre Dame's comparative orthodoxy when placed beside other Catholic

universities.

The Congregation of Holy Cross was founded in 1837 by Blessed Basil Moreau in Sainte-Croix, France. The community of priests and brothers has since expanded to include three independent congregations of Holy Cross sisters, as well as missions and schools throughout the globe, including the University of Notre Dame.

The Notre Dame Holy Cross website describes its mission, saying, "We want to pass along the traditions of faith and reason that we cherish as the Congregation of Holy Cross. We hope to do this by serving the Notre Dame family as fellow teachers and learners, as spiritual brothers to the young and old, as lifetime friends joining in the earthly journey, as stewards of

a treasured heritage."

The university's website says of its relationship with Holy Cross, "From the Congregation's founding, Holy Cross priests and brothers have always lived side by side with students, demonstrating the rewards of living a faith-filled life."

The website continues, "Whether it's lending a listening ear after an evening residence hall Mass, instructing a course, or serving in other roles for the university, the priests and brothers of Holy Cross are living out Fr. Moreau's vision today, more than 175 years later, 'making God known, loved, and served' with apostolic zeal, bringing hope to the entire Notre Dame community and beyond!"

continued on pg. 5

GRC Hosts Conference on "Queer (un)Belonging"

Grad students present on queer spiritualities

CLARE DIFRANCO
Campus Editor

The Department of Gender Studies hosted a "Queer (un)Belonging" Symposium on April 11 with the Notre Dame Graduate School. The symposium included presentations given by Notre Dame graduate students and finished with a keynote lecture by guest speaker Kris Trujillo.

The conference was first announced by the Gender Studies Department on January 27, though the page has since been moved to the "We Are All Notre Dame" site, itself a recent replacement of the university's "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" page. The announcement called

for papers from graduate students that explored the theme of "Queer (un)Belonging," which was described as a topic requiring "grave urgency amidst increasing attempts to map out the terrain of queerness through fixed identities and classifications."

The conference borrowed the concept of "queer belonging" from Elizabeth Freeman, an 18th-century freed slave from Massachusetts, who described the term as "the desire to belong [and] to offer oneself beyond one's time." The announcement stated, "Whereas queer belonging centers on the longing for legibility and community building, we find radical sociability in the act of

continued on pg. 4

INSIDE

The Fool's Religion
Editorial – Page 2

Notre Dame Awards
Laetare Medal
Campus – Page 4

USCCB Terminates
Contracts with Federal
Government
Politics – Page 7



THE *IRISH ROVER*

WWW.IRISHROVER.NET

STAFF

Editor-in-Chief Michael Canady

Publisher Eddie Giuntini
Executive Editor Bridgette Rodgers
Managing Editor Lucy Spence
Layout Manager Kateri Castillo
Websmasters William White
 Harrison Barkley
Social Media Coordinator Sofia Fair

Campus Editors Clare DiFranco
 Caleb Vaughan
Culture Editor Elizabeth Mitchell
Politics Editor Sam Marchand
Religion Editor Lydia Poe
Humor Editor James Whitaker

FACULTY ADVISORS

John Cavadini,
Professor of Theology
 Margot Cleveland,
Adjunct Instructor of Accounting
 Martijn Cremers,
Dean of the Mendoza College of Business
 Kirk Doran,
Associate Professor of Economics
 Father Terry Ehrman, C.S.C.,
Professor of Theology
 Sherif Girgis,
Associate Professor of Law
 Laura Hollis,
Professor of Accounting
 Father Bill Miscamble C.S.C.,
Professor of History
 Vincent Muñoz,
Professor of Political Science
 Walter Nicgorski,
Professor Emeritus, Program of Liberal Studies
 Dave O'Connor,
Professor of Philosophy
 Daniel Philpott,
Professor of Political Science
 Nicholas Teh,
Professor of Philosophy

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Mary Frances Devlin, ND '22
 Sophia Martinson, ND '18
 Tim Bradley, ND '16
 Claire Cousino, ND '12
 Alexandra DeSanctis Marr, ND '16
 Gabby Girgis, ND '12
 Mary Daly Korson, ND '10
 Jonathan Liedl, ND '11
 Joe Lindsley, ND '05
 Michael Logue, ND '16
 Zef Crnkovich, ND '22

The Irish Rover is a 501(c)(3) organization.

THE FINE PRINT

Founded in 2003, the *Irish Rover* is an independent, Catholic newspaper published fortnightly by students of the University of Notre Dame du Lac, and, as such, it receives no funding or official recognition from the University. Indeed, the ideas presented herein are not necessarily those of the University, although they probably should be.

The *Rover* was established by Notre Dame students who desired a strong and organized conservative voice on campus with the primary purpose of keeping the University true to its founding mission as a Roman Catholic institution. The *Rover* seeks to facilitate part of what the University's mission statement desires in its community: "a forum where through free inquiry and open discussion the various lines of Catholic thought may intersect with all the forms of knowledge found in the arts, sciences, professions, and every other area of human scholarship and creativity." To provide this forum, the *Rover* offers a distinctive kind of coverage that includes campus news, religion, politics, culture, history, and humor.

Out of civility, the *Rover* will not critically mention names of students, professors, or administrators, unless the person is either a well-known member of the community, or he or she has openly sought publicity. Unsigned editorials represent the majority opinion of the *Rover's* Editorial Board, while content in individual columns represents the views of each respective author and should not be construed as representing the views of the entire staff. All comments and questions regarding the *Rover's* policies and editorial content, as well as Letters to the Editor, may be directed to the Editor-in-Chief, Michael Canady, at NDIrishRover@gmail.com or PO Box 46 Notre Dame IN 46556. These letters may be printed anonymously, upon request. Also, please visit our website www.irishrover.net, where you can peruse archives and subscribe to the paper.

"All men are fools, even the pious ones." —Erasmus



Image by Matt Cashore

The Fool's Religion

LUCY SPENCE
 Managing Editor



Last week, an alumnus visiting campus asked me what my favorite read of the semester was. As a PLS major, there were of course many titles to choose from, but without hesitation, I replied, "Erasmus!" We laughed, and I was slightly embarrassed as I realized how nerdy my response sounded. A week later, though, I stick to my answer. For those who haven't indulged in this read, *The Praise of Folly* should make it on to your summer reading list before you finish perusing this issue. Apart from the fact that Erasmus dedicated the work to his best friend Thomas More—making it an imperative for every Catholic—*The Praise of Folly* offers wonderful insights, even now, into the life of a Christian living in the middle of the world.

As Catholics living in a secularized culture, it can be difficult not to take ourselves too seriously. We see ourselves as modern Horatios, facing the hostile tides of every '-ism' with gritted teeth. Though I, too, am gravely concerned about the state of our culture, I've realized that the tendency to throw up my hands in horror and disgust at the fools of society can be misguided. All too often, I end up forgetting who the real fool is.

Christians around the world

recently celebrated the sacred Passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a solemn week commemorating what St. Paul describes as the "foolishness of God." I have spent both of my Easters on campus, and each time I have been incredibly impressed by the reverence and care shown to every liturgy. On Good Friday, as I sat in the empty basilica, the natural light streamed in through the windows, refracting the colors of the stained glass onto the pews. The cross at the front of the church was covered—an obsolete shape swathed in dark purple. The phrase, "the folly of the cross," kept running through my mind as I stared at it.

The liturgies of Holy Week remind us in striking ways that we are not the main character: The priest washes the feet of twelve people on Holy Thursday, prostrates himself before the altar on Good Friday, and we bend to kiss the feet of Jesus ourselves during the veneration of the cross. Erasmus, through the voice of Folly, also teaches this lesson. He compares the life of man to an actor on a stage, under the direction of a stage manager. Just as each actor wears a mask—the ugly hides beneath the beautiful, the foolish beneath the learned—so, too, is every man the bearer of two faces. The analogy is a lesson in humility. For Erasmus, the most foolish man of all is the one who forgets who he is. He is surprised by his own propensity to sin, ignoring the stage director—God—who constantly guides him.

Our late Pope Francis, who passed away early Easter Monday morning, gave the world a beautiful witness of this Christian humility. Embracing the severely disabled and the outcast, his papacy emphasized a radical approach of love to the weak

and suffering, the rejected of the world. Countless pictures appear of him kissing the disfigured, the mentally handicapped, and the infirm with striking tenderness. His example of Christian charity was that of a man who saw himself as no better than anyone else. Yet, at a remove, even this charity is folly. Why should the strong embrace the weak, the well the infirm?

The essence of Christianity is a radical foolishness: a God-man hanging on a tree, turning a torturous image of utter shame and humiliation into a symbol of triumphant, self-sacrificial love. Erasmus puts it better: "The entire Christian religion seems to bear a certain natural affinity to folly, and to relate far less clearly to wisdom." The curious madness required to believe the story of salvation is worth reflecting on when we, in turn, look at the actions of others.

The reader of the *Rover* is used to the paper's criticism of those things which we take to be reprehensible enough to demand a coordinated response. But we should not forget that the Catholicism that the *Rover* stakes as an alternative is a foolish thing. It—the Gospel—is also the 'good news', and its folly bears the promise of the redemption of the entire human race. But it is a foolish good news, and neither its folly nor its goodness should be understated. How else might Christ have commanded us to "rejoice and be glad" in the face of persecution?

This is not to say that we should not, when prudent, condemn the depravity around us. Our identity as "fools for Christ's sake" does not do away with the reality of sin. But Erasmus teaches instead a refined sensibility to our state as fellow sinners, a lighthearted recognition of our finite condition

and our role as players on the stage. The Christian in the middle of the world who is a "wise fool" joins in with the rest of mortals, not scorning his fellow man, but "casting in his lot" with the rest in good-natured and charitable nobility. And so, to the Christian in the world, Erasmus finishes with the following sage advice: "Clap your hands, live well, and drink deep."

This Eastertide we are called with renewed vigor not only to drink deeply—as many who have fasted will doubtless gladly read—but to re-engage with Erasmus' radically Christian vision as well. Our Holy Father has died, and already murmurings about the conclave and the political consequences of the coming pontiff have begun. Outside even of these discussions, the perennial and increasingly toxic banalities of the 'culture war' rage on. For some, perhaps, these are responsibilities that must be taken on. But for the common Christian—the common fool—the time has once again come to rejoice in the inexhaustible and radiant and *true* folly of the risen Lord. Offer your Easter drink to your neighbor, rejoice in the day the Lord has made, and remember that those things which tangle us in worldly polemic are a far worse folly indeed.

Lucy Spence is a sophomore majoring in the Program of Liberal Studies and piano performance, with a minor in philosophy. Unfortunately, she has not yet completed her twenty-first trip around the sun, so she could not follow Erasmus' advice as literally as she would have liked. You can reach her at lspace@nd.edu.



A Prayer for the Conclave

“The world has hated them because they are not of the world”

JAMES WHITAKER
Section Editor

For the first time in twelve years, the Roman Catholic Church is facing a conclave. Thanks to Berger’s recent film, the concept of the conclave is fresh on the mind in popular culture. But the Catholic reception of the film proves one point very clearly: The Church and the world do not, and should not, have the same hope for the conclave’s outcome.

In the world’s view—and here I mean “the world” as St. Paul uses it—the pope ought to be the marriage between the world’s wisdom and the Catholics who still find comfort in religious sentiment. It would ask for a pope who sympathizes with its own causes and can help to reform the Church, keeping it modern and with the times. In the world’s mind, the best thing to hope for is a pope who will help coax one’s stubbornly religious grandmother to be a little more open-minded. The world’s pope has no more function than the peanut butter hiding a pill for a dog—to gently teach the behind-the-times religious what the rest of the world has already learned.

But the world’s wisdom, apart from Christ, is worthless. St. Augustine says that the thinkers

of the world “held down the truth in iniquity” because they philosophized without the Mediator, the man Christ.” And as Chesterton said, the teachings of the world apart from the Church can only be “half-truths,” which “will only harden into heresy.”

On the one hand, it is incumbent upon the pope as the earthly head of the Church to do this kind of theological synthesis. If the world is preaching messages of mercy, acceptance, love, peace, or environmental stewardship, then it falls to him to sift through what the world is saying, find what is good, and situate it properly.

But the world’s doctrines are too simple on their own, crumbling into nonsense before long. There is an irreconcilable chasm between the Church’s environmentalism (man’s God-given obligation to steward the Creator’s creation) and the world’s (the life of a dog or a tree is of equal dignity to a human being); between the Church’s message of acceptance (count yourself as the first among sinners and know that God alone knows the hearts of men) and the world’s (no one can condemn another’s deeds without hating the other); between the Church’s love (that man should love with

Christ’s own love, to the point of death) and the world’s (any sexual relationship is licit).

Theological mediation is assuredly part of the pope’s ministry. Good evangelization means actual engagement with the world. If one wants to administer medicine, he must diagnose the illness. And someone will reject medicine from a doctor he doesn’t trust—the good evangelist endears himself to his audience to the best of his ability.

But this mediating synthesis is not the pope’s only, or even primary, task. Neither is direct evangelization. More properly, his job is to govern and teach and form those doing evangelization on the ground. Your work-friend is far more likely to attend Mass because of a holy and orthodox co-worker than because of an especially nice statement from the Vatican.

As the faithful anticipate the coming conclave, what should we be praying for? What does the Catholic Church need from her earthly head, especially today?

We might speak flippantly about the Catholic “both-and,” but it is essential to theology. The Trinity is three *and* one, Christ is God *and* man. So if the world is preaching mercy, then who will preach justice? If the world is

telling us not to judge rashly, who will tell us how to judge well? If the world is championing free-will, who will remind us that free-will is only given to us so that we might freely give ourselves back to the one who made free-will?

The world’s half-truths need to be balanced, and this is one of the Church’s main tasks. She has been given the very Word of God and millennia of tradition—there is no good principle or teaching that the world offers which the Church does not already have. Her job is to speak up for the principles, dogmas, and truths which the world is overlooking at any given moment. The whole truth needs to be represented. The Church is called not to echo the world, but to correct it.

This may—even should—make one unpopular. Especially given the public-facing nature of the pope’s office, any given statement of his is bound to displease someone, even on a good day. It is then essential that the pope have the fortitude to speak the truth with no heed for the world’s loud yet fleeting opinions. Christ is the truth, and the truth needs to be known in full.

With that said, the Catholic “both-and” returns. The whole Church, and the pope especially, must strive to defend truth while

preserving unity; to stand firm against the enemy while making every possible concession that charity and prudence allow; to seek the world’s friendship but to accept its rejection with peace of mind. “Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.”

But as I do not expect members of the conclave to be reading this piece, it suffices to tell the faithful: Pray for the repose of the soul Pope Francis, pray for the conclave, and no matter the outcome, rest in the hope which Christ gave his Church, that even “the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.”

James Whitaker is a graduate student in the theology department. He is a convert from Anglicanism, and it is thanks to good papal ecclesiology that he swam the Tiber. He can be reached at jwhitak5@nd.edu.



Visit us online at
irishrover.net
for archived articles.

A Farewell to Our Seniors

Brenston barks goodbye

BRENSTON THE DOG
Rover Mascot

William White - Webmaster



Image from the Irish Rover

Will “Blanco” White is the current longest serving member of the masthead, having started

his (in)famous career under the DeReuil regime. Having been given his current pseudonym by “Slurp” Thompson of the Tamara Kay controversy, he has continually served as webmaster through the DeReuil, Schmitz, and Canady years. He has always strived to help his more loquacious Arts and Letters colleagues defend the Catholic character of the university by putting in the late nights year after year. He is thankful for all the amazing friendships he has made as part of this great paper. He still misses the friends who have moved on and wishes the ones who remain the best of luck keeping Notre Dame true to her namesake. After graduation, he will commission as a second lieutenant and report to The Basic School in Quantico, Virginia to begin his next adventure leading Marines.

Kateri Castillo - Layout Manager



Image from the Irish Rover

Kateri’s *Rover* career began when she became co-webmaster with Blanco when he went to Rome. She loved it so much

that she tried to take over the role of webmaster after his return. When that did not work, Kateri decided to become the unofficial boss of publishing night by stepping into the role of layout manager. Despite her failed coup attempts, Kateri is so thankful to the *Rover* for the opportunity to have been on an amazing team and for the non-dining hall dinners. She will miss the laughter and friendships made, but not necessarily the lack of sleep. After graduation, Kateri will be returning to the Mid-Atlantic region as an engineer at Clark Construction, using the delegation and teamwork skills she’s tuned during publishing night.

Brenston is a dog who has now decided that his matchmaking skills might not be on point but his team building skills should be highly desired. This is his yearly article and the shortest Brenston farewell he’s done. Ciao, seniors.



GRC Conference *continued from front*

‘unbelonging’ to withdraw as well as to extend in our shared experience of not belonging.”

Though it was originally advertised as a two-day event, the conference lasted one day. A total of 51 members signed up, though actual participants numbered in the thirties. The symposium began in a Hesburgh Library classroom with student-led presentations, which were categorized into four panels by topic, beginning with a series of lectures delivered under the topic, “Queer Utopias.”

The second panel, “Intersections of (un)Belonging: Class, Gender, and Race,” included a talk from psychology department PhD candidate Alijah Chalas titled, “The Protective Role of Family: Intersectional Minority Stress and Self-Esteem in Latiné Gender Non-Conforming Students.” In his presentation, Chalas outlined the plan for his survey research project, which aims to prove that there exists a high correlation between feelings of “intersectional minority stress” and “high levels of family connectedness” among Latino gender non-conforming

college students.

Chalas defined intersectional minority stress as “the ways in which multiple minority identities interact and influence each other to create unique stressor for individuals.” He described “family connectedness” as the level of attachment one might have to cultural family values and the “traditional gender roles that maintain an imbalance of power through breach of gender differences.”

Describing his sample, Chalas stated, “This sample represents one of the most at-risk populations in our country. ... And, as I’m sure we’re all aware, these populations represent two of this administration’s biggest targets.”

The subsequent panels, “Home, Family, and Space” and “Alternative Kinships/Belonging” included the presentation topics “(un)belonging Theologies: The Queer Spiritualities of Julian of Norwich and Simone Weil,” and “Queer Poly Homemaking: An exercise in Queer Counterfactual Fanfic Poetry,” among others.

Twenty-five audience members filed into the Bond Hall auditorium for the final symposium event. In his keynote presentation titled “Brown

Jubilation,” Professor Kris Trujillo drew a connection between queer theory and melismatic elements in medieval liturgical music.

Trujillo is an Assistant Professor in Comparative Literature at the Divinity School at the University of Chicago. His current works include, *Ecstasy: The Queerness of Being beside Oneself* and *Jubilation of the Heart: How Monastic Song Became Mystical Poetics*. At UChicago, he teaches classes titled “Queer Theology and Queer of Color Critique,” “Racial Melancholia,” and “Gender and Sexuality in World Civilizations,” among other courses.

Trujillo centered his lecture on the acts of the 12th century mystic, Christina the Astonishing. After describing a story of Christina, who subjected herself to torturous acts of self-mortification prior to praising and kissing her own body, Trujillo said, “The astonishing *jubilus* that Christina performs during the last year of her life combines both contorted bodily violence and self-pleasure, which together signal, like the song of the sirens, a particularly horrifying kind of jubilation.”

Using this story as a bodily comparison to the notation of

final notes of the “Alleluia” in a piece of Gregorian chant, Trujillo stated, “Jubilee ... provides an aesthetic reflection of a theological truth: that to be a medieval Christian who desires and yearns for God is to experience an overwhelming admixture of pain, pleasure, agony, and ecstasy.”

Trujillo also described the disjunction between the sung syllable and notes that exists in melismatic liturgical music in comparison to Gian Lorenzo Bernini’s *Ecstasy of Saint Teresa*. Citing author José Esteban Muñoz, Trujillo said, “Ecstasy is having a sense of a timeliness in motion, comprehending a temporal unity, which includes the past having been the future, and the not yet present, making the present.” He continued, “This temporally calibrated idea of ecstasy contains the potential to help us encounter a queer temporality.”

To close the keynote, Trujillo played Whitney Houston’s “I Will Always Love You” as a contemporary demonstration of the “jubilant climax” of melismatic music.

A sophomore in Pasquerilla West who attended the conference told the *Rover*, “I was honestly

unimpressed by the academic caliber of the presentations. Rigorous and serious research was replaced with an over-readiness to deliver politically correct findings.”

She continued, “There was a lot of hypocrisy in the presenters’ express wishes not to generalize or ‘place people in boxes’ and their simultaneous categorization of people as ‘white,’ ‘black,’ ‘gender non-conforming,’ ‘non-binary,’ and the like. It was incredibly disheartening to see a conference that promoted such a confused understanding of the human person held at Notre Dame.”

Trujillo and the Department of Gender Studies did not respond to the *Rover*’s requests for comment.

Clare DiFranco is a sophomore studying accounting and Italian. Find her at O’Rourke’s karaoke on Tuesday night as she pours her heart out in a jaw-dropping, melismatic performance of “I Will Always Love You.” Send fan mail or noise complaints to cdifranco@nd.edu.

Notre Dame Awards Laetare Medal *President of Catholic Charities of America recognized*

JACK KRIEGER

Staff Writer

During this year’s May 18 commencement ceremony, Notre Dame will award Kerry Alys Robinson its prestigious Laetare Medal. Robinson, chief executive officer and president of Catholic Charities of America (CCUSA), will be recognized for her servant leadership and ministry in the Catholic Church in the U.S.

Each year, the Laetare Medal is announced on Laetare Sunday, the fourth Sunday of Lent. The gold medal bears the inscription, “*Magna est veritas et praevalerebit*”: “Truth is mighty, and it shall prevail.” The award was established as the American counterpart to the Golden Rose—a papal award blessed on Laetare Sunday, dating before the eleventh century—in 1883 by university president Father Edward Sorin C.S.C. Since then, it has been awarded annually to an American Catholic “whose genius has ennobled the arts and sciences, illustrated the ideals of the Church and enriched the heritage of humanity.”

Last year, the nominating window for the award opened August 30 and closed September 10. A committee reviews the nominations, and the recipient is then chosen by the president of the university.

Notable past recipients include President John F. Kennedy (1961) and President Joe Biden (2016), as well as various others: Justice William J. Brennan Jr. (1969), former university president Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh, C.S.C. (1987), and Sister Helen Prejean

(1996). The list of recipients includes authors, politicians, cardinals, attorneys, and more.

Since the award’s inception, there has only been one person to reject the award. In 2009, Mary Ann Glendon—former U.S. ambassador to the Vatican and Harvard law professor—was initially thrilled to receive the award, but later changed her mind in protest of President Obama’s presence at the ceremony as the commencement speaker. She explained her decision in a published letter to then-president, Father John Jenkins, C.S.C.

Glendon wrote, “First, as a longtime consultant to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, I could not help but be dismayed by the news that Notre Dame also planned to award the president an honorary degree. This, as you must know, was in disregard of the U.S. bishops’ express request of 2004 that Catholic institutions ‘should not honor those who act in defiance of our fundamental moral principles’ and that such persons ‘should not be given awards, honors or platforms which would suggest support for their actions.’ That request ... seems to me so reasonable that I am at a loss to understand why a Catholic university should disrespect it.”

She explained further that she did not wish to cause an “unfortunate ripple effect” of Catholic institutions disregarding the bishop’s guidelines. No one was awarded the medal in her stead.

However, in 2018, Glendon received the Evangelium Vitae

Medal—the nation’s most prestigious award for advocates of the pro-life movement—from the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture. She is the only person to have been selected for both awards.

Other pro-life recipients of the Laetare Medal include John T. Noonan Jr., a Reagan-appointed judge of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and author of *A Private Choice: Abortion in America in the Seventies*, a moral, philosophical, and legal critique of *Roe v. Wade*. Noonan was awarded the Laetare Medal in 1984 and gave a 2009 commencement speech “in the spirit of the award” in lieu of Glendon.

Cardinal Joseph Bernardin (1995) was awarded the medal for being a “prominent expositor of the Catholic Church’s ‘seamless garment’ teaching on life, linking issues such as abortion, embryo experimentation, euthanasia, capital punishment, and warfare.” The next year, Sister Helen Prejean (1996) was awarded the medal for her work opposing the death penalty in America. Additionally, award-winning actor Martin Sheen received the medal in 2008. Sheen used his celebrity status to draw attention to abortion and other human-rights issues.

Though there are instances of pro-life recipients, few have been awarded the Laetare Medal explicitly for their work as pro-life advocates.

This year’s recipient, Robinson, became president and CEO of CCUSA in August of 2023, succeeding Sister Donna Markham, O.P. and becoming



Image from NDWorks

the second layperson and the second woman in the position. Prior to that, Robinson served as the founding executive director and later as executive partner of Leadership Roundtable, a group of clergy, religious, and laity working together to promote best practices in the Catholic Church in the U.S. She remains the executive director of the Opus Prize Foundation, which annually awards one million dollars recognizing “individuals for faith-filled change.” She is also the author of the 2014 book *Imagining Abundance: Fundraising, Philanthropy, and a Spiritual Call to Service*.

Notre Dame president Rev. Robert A. Dowd, C.S.C. said in a university press release, “Kerry Alys Robinson has dedicated her career to serving the Church, standing in solidarity with those on the margins so that they may experience the abundant love of God.” Fr. Dowd continued, “In

awarding her the Laetare Medal, the university celebrates her boundless compassion, visionary leadership and inspiring example of faith-filled service. By her example, Kerry inspires us all to dedicate our lives more fully to answering the Gospel call.”

In addition to the bestowal of the Laetare Medal, there will be seven honorary degrees awarded at this year’s commencement: two doctors of science, one doctor of letters, and three doctors of law. The seventh honorary degree will be awarded to Admiral Christopher Grady, who will deliver the commencement address this spring.

Jack Krieger is a freshman residing in Morrissey Manor. He hopes to receive an un-honorary degree in three years. He can be reached at jkrieger@nd.edu.



Holy Cross

continued from front

Notre Dame observes several official relationships between the university and Holy Cross priests and brothers. All 18 university presidents have been Holy Cross priests, and the brothers and priests of the Congregation continue to live, work, and teach on campus.

Members of the Congregation also help comprise the Fellows of the University, a “self-perpetuating body” of 12 members who act as “successors and associates” of the original founders. According to the university website, the tasks of the Fellows are to determine the power delegated to the Board of Trustees, to elect the Trustees, to adopt and amend university bylaws, to approve the sale of university property, and to ensure that the university maintains its Catholic character.

The Fellows of the University must always consist of six members of the Congregation of Holy Cross, United States Province of Priests and Brothers, and six laypeople. In addition, the Board of Trustees, which holds the “general governance of the University,” consists of members of the Congregation of Holy Cross as well as lay men and women. Though there is no specified number of members who must belong to the Congregation, seven out of the total 39 are currently Holy Cross priests or brothers.

Many have remarked how these guidelines, put in place by former university president Fr. Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C., have enabled Notre Dame to maintain its Catholicity more than many of its academic contemporaries. Fr. Gregory Haake, C.S.C., the Religious Superior for the



Image from Holy Cross USA website

Holy Cross Community and Associate Professor of French and Francophone Studies, commented on the formal relationship: “These things matter, and they have mattered since 1967. This was mostly Fr. Hesburgh’s design, and I credit him with having the foresight to know what was necessary for Notre Dame to remain a Catholic and Holy Cross institution.”

The two-tiered board of lay and religious trustees and fellows was formed in 1967, when Fr. Hesburgh decided to change the university structure in order to allow for more lay governance. Until that point, the university had been solely owned by the Congregation since receiving its 1844 Charter from the state of Indiana. Fr. Hesburgh’s new arrangement transferred ownership and governance of the university to the shared administration of both Holy Cross members and laypeople.

This change came in the same year as the Land O’Lakes statement, which, led by Fr. Hesburgh and co-signed by many of America’s Catholic universities, attempted to give Catholic universities academic and institutional freedom from the authority of Rome.

According to some, however,

the bylaws that maintain the continuous involvement of the Congregation have nevertheless enabled the university to keep its connection with Rome more strongly than many of its peers.

Fr. Wilson Miscamble, C.S.C., a professor emeritus of the history department, commented on the consistent role of the Congregation despite its governing changes, saying, “From the time of Sorin, through many decades, up through Hesburgh and beyond, while the manner of the involvement might have changed, the depth of the commitment has not. ... Holy Cross is still integrally involved in the basic governing structure of the university.”

Fr. Haake remarked, “Our presence in the administration, in the faculty, in the residence halls, in campus ministry, and of course, our ongoing involvement in the governance of the university, have all been essential to maintaining Notre Dame’s Catholic identity and mission.”

Judith Bosco, a freshman in Pasquerilla West, expressed her appreciation for the community’s presence at Notre Dame, saying, “Coming here was my very first time encountering the Congregation. It’s really nice to see, because I haven’t been to

Catholic schools until now. It’s really cool to see priests walking around, going to class, or chatting with students.”

Fr. Miscamble continued, “The shared governance arrangement ... is a sign at the structural level of the commitment that Holy Cross continues to make to Notre Dame. But in addition to that sort of formal, almost legal area, what you see, if you look around, is a deep commitment to all aspects of Notre Dame. ... I see it as a sort of a three-legged stool that Holy Cross is involved in: academic, administrative and residential life.”

This trifold involvement in the University, according to Fr. Miscamble, has been an essential component in maintaining the Catholic character of the University.

Fr. Miscamble pointed out that many Catholic universities have received criticism for abandoning their mission, saying, “The last half-century in Catholic higher education in the United States has seen, in the case of many of the major universities, a decrease in their Catholic identity; they’re less faithful in mission. And this has occurred to some degree at Notre Dame, the desire for academic ‘excellence’ as measured by the secular academy. We want the approval of big name schools, the Ivy League and so on.”

He continued, “This leads to a certain challenge to Catholic identity and mission. But I think for the most part, Holy Cross has been a barrier to that secularizing process and pressure. There are real pressures involved, but the question is before us, whether Holy Cross will continue to stand strong for the Catholic mission. ... They have a special responsibility to secure and to enhance the Catholic identity and mission of

Notre Dame.”

Looking to the future, Fr. Miscamble also expressed the need for vocations as part of the Congregation’s mission at the university, saying, “If Holy Cross is to continue to play its crucial role at Notre Dame in maintaining the Catholicity of the university, I hope there will be young men who will come to join us and see that they may play some role in one of these areas.”

Given the growth of the university in the past 60 years, the proportion of Holy Cross religious to other faculty and staff has decreased. Fr. Haake commented on the change, saying, “Our presence on campus, while still quite visible, is numerically less significant. This reality has changed both the university’s and the Congregation’s approach to how Holy Cross religious live and work here.”

He continued, “What hasn’t changed is our love for the university and our desire that the university fulfill its mission and be the best that it can be, both as an institution of higher education and as an instrument of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Congregation and the university are constantly working together to ensure that Holy Cross continues to be an essential part of that.”

Abby Strelow is a freshman studying theology and PLS. She has two goals for the remainder of her time at Notre Dame: convince the administration to build a 24/7 Adoration chapel and to get a chicken tractor on South quad. To learn more about her grand plans for the university, you can email her at astrelow@nd.edu.

Notre Dame: The American Archive of Solzhenitsyn *dCEC publishes previously untranslated Solzhenitsyn titles*

CALEB VAUGHAN
Campus Editor

Notre Dame’s direct relationship with the Solzhenitsyn family began in 2017 when O. Carter Snead, then-director of the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture (dCEC), persuaded the family to make Notre Dame Press the publisher of Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn’s formerly untranslated volumes.

At the same time, Notre Dame established itself as the “American home for studying Solzhenitsyn” through a variety of academic pursuits including conferences, postdoctoral research fellowships, publication of his work, and extensive collections in the library archives relating to Solzhenitsyn’s life and work.

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, born into the Russian Revolution in 1918, grew up impoverished before being conscripted into the Red Army in the second World War. A private, anti-Stalin letter that Solzhenitsyn penned condemned him to eight years in the gulag; these years became foundational for the remainder of



Image from Picryl

his life’s work.

Following the war, Solzhenitsyn wrote fervently against communism and was exiled from Russia until 1994. Through poetry and prose, his prolific tomes won him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1970 and a number of other prestigious awards including an honorary degree from Notre Dame, which he politely declined in 1977. The following year, in 1978, Solzhenitsyn agreed to give the commencement address at Harvard University. In this now famous address, Solzhenitsyn criticized not only the communist totalitarianism of his native land, but also the materialism and moral corruption of the West.

Margaret McManaway, Senior Associate Director of the dCEC,

who managed the Solzhenitsyn series when it first began at Notre Dame, credits the Harvard address with leading to a “decline in interest in his thought” because it offended the “intellectual elites.” However, she said, “I think [Solzhenitsyn] remains as relevant as ever.”

McManaway described how the dCEC persuaded the Solzhenitsyn family to publish Solzhenitsyn’s writings through the dCEC and Notre Dame Press. She told the *Rover*, “Professor Snead pitched to the Solzhenitsyn family: Other presses will do a fine job with translating and publishing this work, but we actually believe what your father was talking about.” These shared beliefs include Solzhenitsyn’s ideas about the “crisis of materialism, a crisis of faith, lack of faith, the idea of fighting back against totalitarianism, [and] the breakdown of faith and culture in the West.”

McManaway continued, “When professor Snead said that to the Solzhenitsyn family, they were like, ‘Yes, where do we sign? This is where we want our father’s legacy to live.’”

In 2018, Snead commented on the partnership: “Because of the convergence between Solzhenitsyn’s deep solicitude for Christianity, the West, human flourishing, the best of the Russian tradition and the mission of the center, the Solzhenitsyn family selected Notre Dame as the publishing home of Solzhenitsyn’s unpublished and untranslated works.” Snead continued, “We aim to inspire a new generation with his legacy.”

The publications began in 2017 with the release of *The Red Wheel: March 1917*. This is the first book of the third installment of Solzhenitsyn’s magnum opus, a ten-volume narrative of the Russian Revolution. Marian Schwartz, an American translator of Russian literature, is in the process of translating the remainder of this work. The next edition, book one of node IV will become available in November.

The most recent Solzhenitsyn series release is a collection of Solzhenitsyn’s greatest speeches titled *We Have Ceased to See the Purpose*. The book was edited by Ignat Solzhenitsyn, son of

Aleksandr, with whom the university maintains a relationship.

The university has also amassed one of America’s most extensive collections of writings by and related to Solzhenitsyn, housed in the Hesburgh Library. In 2018, Hesburgh Library’s Rare Books and Special Collections displayed a special exhibit of Solzhenitsyn materials. Also in 2018, Solzhenitsyn’s thought played a major role in the dCEC’s Fall Conference, *Higher Powers*, where Ignat Solzhenitsyn delivered the keynote address.

Snead contended that, alongside figures of Solzhenitsyn’s own day such as Pope John Paul II, “Nobody lived a more powerful witness to the truth about the human person’s right to dignity, freedom, and human flourishing than this great writer.”

Caleb Vaughan is a sophomore chemical engineering student. If anyone is interested in translating his works into Russian, he can be reached at cvaugha2@nd.edu.



Catholic Singer-Songwriters Visit Notre Dame

Matt Maher and Sarah Kroger lead Lenten worship night

BRIDGETTE RODGERS

Executive Editor

As part of Campus Ministry's programming for Lent 2025, vocalists Matt Maher and Sarah Kroger led a Lenten Worship Night at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on Friday, April 11. Tickets were free for all students, and a few hundred students joined for a night of prayer and praise.

Maher is a nine-time Grammy nominee, winning the GMA Dove Award three times. Kroger has previously been nominated for the GMA Dove Award. Maher and Kroger often lead worship nights throughout the country, most recently on their Cathedrals Tour during the Advent season.

At the beginning of the evening, Maher emphasized an atmosphere of reverence to the audience. Stressing that all applause throughout the night should not be given to him and Kroger, he encouraged attendees to instead direct their praise and thanksgiving to the beauty of God.

The pair sang a mix of both familiar and less well-known pieces. Songs included "Your Grace Is Enough," "Alive & Breathing," "Belovedness," "Humbled Heart," and "Lord, I Need You"—all originals of Maher or Kroger.

Junior Thomas Mazzurana, Notre Dame Folk Choir member, commented to the

Rover, "I've been a Matt Maher fan for a long time. It was such a pleasant surprise when they played 'Garden,' which is my favorite song of his!" Mazzurana continued, "Huge win for Notre Dame to have so many people entering into prayer in such a special way."

Between sets, Kroger and Maher offered reflections on the songs' lyrics and delivered personal testimonies about the creation of their music.

Both artists developed their love of music from an early age. Maher grew up playing piano and was a member of different choirs throughout his childhood, but it was only during his college years that a connection between his passion for music and a deepening of his faith coincided. Maher joined a youth group with his cousin at his new Arizona parish and soon discovered how his musical talent could serve God and minister to the spiritual life of Christians.

Similar to Maher, Kroger did not find her own passion for leading worship until she became a young adult. Although her parents were involved with music ministry and Kroger herself sang in church choirs throughout her childhood, she didn't pursue music for years due to the impact of bullying and her battle with anxiety. Through a powerful experience with Christ at a youth conference, Kroger began



Image from Matt Cashore/University of Notre Dame

to see how the gift she needed to give back to God was her musical talent. This influenced the creation of many of her songs and inspired her to use her gift to bring others closer to the mercy and love of Christ.

Sofia Benigno, the leader of the on-campus worship group Totus Tuus, shared with the *Rover*, "It was beautiful to see the Basilica full of people with hearts ready to worship on a Friday night. For some, it was their first time; for others, like Totus Tuus—the praise and worship collective of Notre Dame, which I'm blessed to lead—this night was a dream."

Benigno continued, "Matt Maher and Sarah Kroger did an incredible job of not performing their music, but praying it; and what a beautiful way to join our hearts and voices in song as we prepared for Holy Week, just like the crowds rejoicing in Jerusalem."

Freshman Maggie Kuka told the *Rover*, "I really enjoyed the Lenten Praise and Worship night with Matt Maher and Sarah Kroger. I had done Praise and Worship before, but it was just so beautiful to hear music like that in the basilica, a place where I just didn't associate that music with.

It was a great way to enter into Holy Week and wrap up Lent and really just prayerfully reflect on Jesus' Passion."

Bridgette Rodgers is a junior from Santa Monica, California studying theology and political science. She recently discovered the goodness of queso, although she has been a harsh critic for most of the year. She credits this discovery to *Rover* webmaster Will White. Send new dip recommendations to brodger4@nd.edu.



It behooves a watchdog to bark. Good, *Rover*.

Pope Francis' Death

continued from front

focused."

Fr. Miscamble remarked, "No doubt there are some at Notre Dame who appreciated that Pope Francis gave enhanced emphasis to certain issues like the environment while reducing the attention his predecessors had given to the fundamental life issues that so set the Church apart from elite American opinion. For myself, I am grateful that Pope Francis at least spoke up forcefully for life whenever he did—even to likening having an abortion to hiring a 'hitman.'"

"Let us pray that the next pope will address some of these limitations of the Francis papacy while continuing his sincere efforts to bring Christ's message to the world," he concluded.

Junior Maddie Colbert commented to the *Rover*, "I

found Pope Francis' advocacy for promoting integral human development and his 'culture of encounter' to be deeply inspiring."

She continued, "He exemplified what it means to love those on the margins and to see Christ in the poor. His focus on dialogue with others and listening as a form of love is so necessary to addressing challenges and division from a Catholic lens."

A graduating senior told the *Rover*, "Pope Francis' reign was met with mixed and often disappointed reactions from theologically orthodox and liturgically traditional Catholics." The same student expressed, "We were greatly discouraged by his lack of pastoral gentleness to faithful Catholics attached to the Traditional Latin Mass, questionable episcopal appointments, and his pension for confusing statements in need

of 'clarification.'"

Looking ahead, he continued, "If the sheer number of catechumens and converts are indicative of anything going forward, I think under the next pope the Church could be poised for a real renaissance—in everything from art and beautiful liturgy, to a re-evangelization fully integrated with our commitment to the poor and marginalized."

A campus-wide Division of Student Affairs email stated, "Together, Notre Dame students, faculty, and staff join the Catholic Church and the wider world to prayerfully mourn the passing of Pope Francis." Additionally, Campus Ministry hosted a rosary for students, faculty, staff to "pray for the repose of the soul of Pope Francis" at 8:00 p.m. on April 21 at the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Given that the Holy Father's death coincided with the Easter

Octave, many have raised questions regarding the balance between mourning the Pope's passing while also participating in the joy of the Paschal season. According to Father Brian Ching, rector of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, "The guidance we have received from the Diocesan Office of Worship is that the Masses for the Octave of Easter should remain."

He continued, "Beginning on Monday, April 28, a priest may use the Mass for a Deceased Pope at his discretion on weekdays. The nine days of mourning or *novendiales* begins on a date chosen by the College of Cardinals (which is usually the day of the Pope's funeral). We will certainly use the Mass for the Deceased Pope at the Basilica during that period and there will be an opportunity for the Notre Dame community to formally gather for a memorial Mass at

some point in the near future."

The conclave for the next pope usually begins within 15–20 days following the death of the previous pontiff, likely beginning sometime between May 6 and May 12. Pope Francis' funeral Mass must occur four to six days after his death, likely taking place between April 25 and April 27. For that reason, Blessed Carlo Acutis' canonization has been postponed until further notice.

Lydia Poe is a junior majoring in finance and management from Shawnee, Kansas. She can be reached at lpoe01@saintmarys.edu.



Cushwa Center Hosts “Catholic Modernity and the Americas”

Conference celebrates 50th anniversary

MADELINE PAGE

Staff Writer

The Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism presented their 50th anniversary conference, “Catholic Modernity and the Americas,” from April 10-12. Over 60 presentations addressed the historical and contemporary practice of Catholicism in the Western Hemisphere.

Founded in 1975, the Cushwa Center “strives to deepen the understanding of Catholics’ historical role and contemporary expressions of their religious tradition in the United States” through academic discussion and publication, as stated by the Center’s website.

David Lantigua, associate theology professor and the Cushwa Co-Director, told the *Rover* that the Center “wanted to think about this conference as an opportunity to both honor the important history of the Cushwa Center as well as begin to chart an exciting future.” Drawing inspiration from Charles Taylor’s 1996 lecture titled “*A Catholic Modernity*,” the conference focused on orienting Catholic practices within the contemporary, secular societies of North and South America.

The conference began with an opening Mass, offered for the repose of the soul of Jay Dolan, Cushwa Center founder. Father Bill Miscamble, C.S.C. presided. “[The conference] was an opportunity to reflect in very thoughtful ways on the challenges and accomplishments of our Catholic faith across the Western hemisphere,” he told the *Rover*. “It was clear that all the participants derived much intellectual stimulation from their involvement.”

Panel sessions covered an extensive range of topics, including “Catholicism, Gender, and Family”; “Progressivism and Catholic Education”; and “Migration and Church Bureaucracy.” Consistent with



Image from the Cushwa Center

the focus of the conference, presenters and scholars from Mexico City, Bogota, Buenos Aires, Canada, and across the United States were in attendance. Speakers from Dublin, Paris, and Rome were also present.

Andrea Aguilar, a freshman studying accounting and Spanish, found the panel on “Eugenics, Birth Control, and Medical Authority in Modern Mexico” to be especially intriguing. The research presented the prevalence of hormonal birth control in Mexico’s rural women as a result of conflicting cultural practices and lack of information.

“Topics like these are not typically covered in Notre Dame classrooms,” Aguilar explained. “These topics are important because they can prevent future conflicts between church and state over moral matters that the [Roman Catholic Church] has stances on. It is also helpful in examining why current attitudes in Latin America, mainly Mexico, are the way they are now.”

The conference also attracted students from beyond Notre Dame. Eliza Davis, a history and political science major at Notre Dame of Maryland, was moved by the specificity and depth of the topics covered.

“The sessions I attended were impactful because they

discussed prominent social issues and connected these themes to religion and history,” Davis told the *Rover*. “I felt that these presentations uncovered a lot of history that still impacts marginalized communities today and is largely not recognized by larger groups of people, which helped spark interesting discussion and enlightenment regarding forgotten history,” she said.

Lantigua emphasized the importance of investigating the impact of Western culture on modern Catholic practices. “The Catholic Church in the Americas is not a mere projection of European culture, but a unique forging of the faith constituted by the region’s specific histories, peoples, and geographies,” he explained. “It is not just the ideas and debates about what it means to be Catholic in a historically Protestant (and anti-Catholic) country that matter, but also the faith and practices of the people in the pews, women and children, who are adjusting to a rapidly changing, and sometimes very unwelcoming world.”

Dennis J. Wieboldt III, Notre Dame JD and PhD history student, gave a presentation titled “No Wall Between God and Child: Catholic Litigators Confront American

Constitutional Modernity.” The discussion centered around *Everson v. Board of Education*, a Supreme Court case that made the Religion Clauses of the First Amendment applicable against the states.

Wieboldt described to the *Rover* how this case surfaced tensions surrounding the role of individual families in their children’s religious formation versus that of the government, saying, “[My presentation] revealed that the Church’s public spokesmen increasingly framed debates about parochial school aid after *Everson* as implicating the constitutional rights of American parents to direct the religious upbringing of their children in order to undercut claims that government aid to parochial schools would perniciously enrich the [Roman] Catholic hierarchy.”

Another presentation, delivered by Notre Dame JD candidate Mintae Cha, was titled “Trouble with Tocqueville: Protestants Debate the Relationship Between Democracy and Catholicism,” focused on the compatibility of Roman Catholicism with modern democracy. Striving to deliver a nuanced account of the contemporary relationship between Catholicism and politics, he told the *Rover* how many conversations on this topic

become enmeshed in divisive language, saying, “This intra-debate about the compatibility between Catholicism and democracy became a site in which anti-Catholic tropes met with American partisan ideologies.”

“This conference’s topic on Catholic Modernity in the Americas was very capacious and covered an enormous range of topics on Catholicism in the Americas—both North and South,” Fr. Miscamble added. “It was an opportunity to reflect in very thoughtful ways on the challenges and accomplishments of our Catholic faith across the Western hemisphere.”

The Cushwa Center anticipates implementing another major conference focusing on Catholicism, authoritarianism, and democracy in America. “This theme is ripe for our political moment today, where Catholics are at odds about how to envision a society grappling with its modern liberal origins,” Lantigua told the *Rover*.

The Center will host their triennial “Conference on the History of Women Religious: Lives and Archives” this summer, and is organizing a symposium on land and labor in modern Catholic Social Teaching for the upcoming academic year.

Lantigua encourages undergraduate students to connect with the Cushwa Center, and hopes to integrate the Notre Dame undergraduate community into the Center’s events.

Madeline Page is a freshman studying biology, and a Catholic living in modernity. She enjoys contemplating transubstantiation and theology of the body, but struggles to interpret contemporary slang. To tutor her in how to be more sigma, email mpage4@nd.edu.

USCCB Terminates Contracts with Federal Government

Catholic bishops continue to clash with Trump’s immigration agenda

ELLA YATES

Staff Writer

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) announced they will not “renew the cooperative agreements with the federal government related to children’s services and refugee support,” in a statement on April 7, 2025.

The USCCB is an organization of American bishops who “exercise pastoral functions on behalf of the Christian faithful of the United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands.” Their website describes the body’s purpose under civil law, which includes the coordination of

Catholic activities and charitable work in the United States. The website specifically highlights the USCCB’s role in “aid[ing] in education” and “car[ing] for immigrants.”

In the statement explaining their choice not to renew federal contracts, the President of the USCCB, Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, cited recent actions from the federal government that have “forced the Conference to reconsider the best way to serve the needs of those seeking safe harbor from violence and persecution.”

President Donald Trump, at the start of his second term, signed a series of executive

orders concerning immigration and refugee services. Executive Order 14163, issued on January 20, 2025, suspended the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), citing the inability of the United States to take in the vast number of migrants entering the country. The order says the program will be suspended “until such time as the further entry into the United States of refugees aligns with the interests of the United States.”

The suspension of federal funding for refugee programs prompted the USCCB to sue the Trump administration. According to the text of the lawsuit, “[T]he Conference is one of ten resettlement agencies

receiving funding under [USRAP].” It went on to say that “the Conference runs the largest non-governmental resettlement program in the country, serving roughly 17 percent of resettling refugees.”

Archbishop Broglio, in his letter, referenced that in 1920, the entity that morphed into the USCCB “established a Bureau of Immigration to help displaced families find new opportunities in the United States.”

Further, he said, “Our efforts were acts of pastoral care and charity, generously supported by the people of God when funds received from the government did not cover the full cost.” He also called upon the faithful,

saying, “it offers every Catholic an opportunity to search our hearts for new ways to assist. The USCCB will continue advocating for policy reforms that provide orderly, secure immigration processes, ensuring the safety of everyone in our communities.”

This is not the first time the USCCB has clashed with conservative immigration policies. As previously reported by the *Rover*, “Vance stated that the USCCB has ‘not been a good partner in commonsense immigration enforcement that the American people voted for.’”

With immigration being a

continued on pg. 8



USCCB

continued from pg. 7

prominent political issue of the past few years, leaders like Pope Francis have addressed the relationship between Catholic Social Teaching, immigration, and the rule of law. Pope Francis made statements recognizing state sovereignty while stressing the need for compassion for all human persons. He also went on to say that “working to turn migrants away from the prospect

of peace and security in a new country is a grave sin.” Meanwhile, Bishop Michael Burbidge of the Diocese of Arlington released a statement reminding the faithful that “we must not presume a conflict between human dignity and the rule of law.”

A sophomore resident of Dillon Hall stressed how his faith serves as a guide for him on the topic of immigration, primarily focusing on how the dignity of the human person must be upheld. He said, “As a Catholic,

I believe sovereign nations have a right to protect their borders and have control over who enters their country, especially when it concerns violent criminals or drugs. However, if these policies dehumanize the person through any means, this violates the heart of Catholic social teaching, whether the person is in the right or wrong.”

Another Dillon Hall resident was concerned with the safety and needs of American citizens. In a comment to the *Rover*,

he said, “I support the Trump administration prioritizing the needs of American citizens and America in general. Recently, immigration in America has been completely unchecked.” He also focused on the need to uphold the rule of law for legal migrants, saying, “The move to control immigration will allow greater protection and streamlined support of legal migrants and refugees through proper channels.”

Ella Yates is a sophomore studying philosophy, political science, and theology from Western Springs, Illinois. In the last two years, she has been on the search for the best crab rangoon in South Bend. Her current favorite is ‘J.W. Chen’s,’ but anyone with a recommendation should feel free to email her at eyates4@nd.edu.

Former UN Ambassador Discusses Trump “Democracy Talks” panel addresses executive oversight, polarization

ANDREW BLAKE

Staff Writer

Former United Nations (UN) Ambassador for Management and Reform Chris Lu discussed the role of the United States as an exemplar of democracy with Keough School Dean Mary Gallagher in a panel discussion on April 16. Their discussion, titled “Why American Democracy Matters to the World,” focused on the perceived threats to American democracy created by the Trump administration’s recent actions against Harvard University, efforts to cut government spending, and erosion of checks and balances.

Lu served as White House Cabinet Secretary and Assistant to the President during the first Obama administration and later as U.S. Deputy Secretary of Labor. From 2022 to 2025, Lu represented the United States at the United Nations, leading UN budget negotiations.

This panel discussion and Q&A was a part of the “Democracy Talks” series sponsored by the Notre Dame Democracy Initiative. Approximately 50 people were in attendance.

Lu began the discussion by explaining how the power of the president has increased over time, attributing this in part to the growing importance of national security and foreign policy. He alluded to the Trump administration’s cuts to government spending, implementation of tariffs, and the increase in the president’s power over wars that occurred after



Image from Keough School of Global Affairs LinkedIn

9/11—examples of the executive branch exercising power that was intended, under Article One of the Constitution, to belong to Congress.

Actions such as these, Lu argued, have led to “a Congress that really ... has not been as engaged as they should be.” He added, “It’s more challenging for a Congress of the president’s party to be an effective check. So, we are now in the moment to see whether the judicial branch can really be that check.”

Lu additionally connected this issue to the discussion’s larger theme, adding, “Our Constitution really is the foundation for so many other countries’ constitutions. ... If we can’t make this work, it does call into question whether other less stable democracies can make it work.”

Gallagher then turned the conversation to the role of civil society in a democracy, asking Lu how to sustain it. Lu answered by pointing to the “informal set of checks and balances,” outside of those established by the

Constitution. Lu pointed to the free press, nonprofits, universities, and civil society as examples. “I think all of those things are under attack in this country,” Lu explained.

As one such example, Lu mentioned the Trump administration’s withholding of federal funding from Harvard University. Lu explained that the government has the power to place requirements on grant recipients, but argued that the administration’s investigation of professors, students, and programs violates academic freedom.

Notre Dame has also faced concerns over potential decreases in government funding and has begun working with the Association of American Universities to lobby against further cuts. Additionally, university departments have been instructed to plan budget decreases of 5 percent.

Returning to the discussion’s theme, Lu and Gallagher discussed the way political polarization influences foreign

perceptions of the United States. “It’s not just the polarization, but it’s the pretty radical pendulum swings we’ve seen in the last two shifts in administration,” Lu explained. He added, “The gridlock makes people wonder whether America’s democracy should be the model for other countries around the world.”

Lu touched on China’s growing influence in an interview with the *Rover*. Regarding China’s stake in the outcome of the war in Ukraine, Lu explained, “An appeasement of Putin, I think, is license for the Chinese to try something with Taiwan.” He continued, “Not resolving the Ukrainian situation in a way that, I think, protects Ukraine’s self determination and provides security guarantees, I think will simply open the door to China doing the same thing down the road.”

Lu additionally spoke about the democratic example of the United States, telling the *Rover*, “U.S. leadership in the post war era has been constant, and I think what underlies that is the strength of U.S. democracy.” He added, “We don’t always get it right, but we do live by a broader set of values that we try to follow here at home, and that makes it easier for us to project those values overseas.”

During the Q&A session, one attendee inquired about potential reforms that may take place after the Trump administration to rebuild American institutions and alliances. Lu suggested that similar reforms to those after

the Nixon administration may occur. He explained, “After Watergate, there were a series of reforms that were put in place that changed how we finance elections, that changed the power of the president ... reforms that sort of rebalanced the country, and I think rebalanced the system of government. I think that ... could certainly be a moment going forward.”

“I fear that our [allies] are moving on without us right now. ... I think those friends, those countries that we’ve been trying to curry favor with, are going to look for more reliable partners. And, frankly, at this point China is a more reliable partner than we are,” he added.

A global affairs student that attended the lecture shared her thoughts on the panel with the *Rover*, saying, “I appreciated Ambassador Lu’s clear-eyed comments on what will need to be done to repair the damage done to alliances, institutions, and democratic systems by the current Trump administration.”

The next “Democracy Talk,” titled “Prosecuting Power,” is scheduled for April 23 in the law school’s McCartan Courtroom.

Andrew Blake is a freshman studying political science and economics. He enjoys indulging in pleasures such as classical music and dino nuggies. He can be reached at ablake5@nd.edu.

Trump, Judges Feud Over Immigration Jurisdiction

Notre Dame reacts as deportations move forward

KEVIN ANDREWS

Staff Writer

During the 2024 election campaign, President Trump promised to heavily restrict illegal immigration and deport illegal aliens already in the U.S. In recent weeks, the president and his administration, under the leadership of Secretary of Homeland Security Kristi Noem and border czar Tom Homan, have delivered on that promise. The White House has made robust statements advocating for the deportation of illegal immigrants.

The reactions both across the

country and at Notre Dame have been varied. The Department of Homeland Security and Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents across the country have been increasing their efforts to meet the administration’s demands in what President Trump calls “the largest mass deportation in history.”

Most recently, Kilmar Abgreo Garcia, a Maryland resident alleged by the Trump administration to be a member of Salvadoran street gang MS-13, was mistakenly deported to El Salvador. Senator Chris Van Hollen visited El Salvador this past week in an attempt

to negotiate with Salvadoran officials for his release, which they have thus far refused. In a TruthSocial statement on Good Friday, the president called Van Hollen a “grandstander.”

The White House Instagram page posted an edited photo of a New York Times headline reestablishing their position surrounding the deported man. The administration stands by its statement of the man’s affiliation with the MS-13 gang, with President Trump showing a picture of Garcia’s knuckles bearing MS-13-linked tattoos.

President Trump met with Nayib Bukele, the President of

El Salvador, to speak further about deportation efforts and the administration’s commitment to cracking down on illegal immigration. The number of illegal border crossings has plummeted since Trump took office in January. According to a UMass poll, there is still significant support on the Republican side for Trump’s immigration policies, but some are split.

Duncan Hall resident and English major Owen Augustine told the *Rover*, “I am all for keeping our country safe and keeping dangerous people out. However, it needs to be done

justly and lawfully. Regardless of how dangerous or illegal someone is, the beauty of the Constitution is that everyone is given due process under the law. For instance, the legal proceedings for the people who orchestrated the 9/11 attacks are still ongoing. They are being given a fair and lawful trial.”

Augustine stressed the importance of due process saying, “Justice is not reserved for the popular or the innocent, but is a right for all, even the most vilified. This is not a sign of weakness; it’s a testament to the strength of our

continued on pg. 9



Immigration Jurisdiction *continued from pg. 8*

democratic ideals.”

Trump’s positions on immigration have also been tested by the courts. The Supreme Court is set to hear arguments regarding the automatic granting of birthright citizenship under the 14th amendment of the U.S. Constitution. The courts have taken direct action to Trump’s

deportation efforts as well. In a decision released to the public on April 19, the court decided in a 7–2 decision to temporarily pause deportations to Venezuela from Texas under the Alien Enemies Act of 1796 in a lawsuit brought by the ACLU. Justices Alito and Thomas dissented.

Keough Hall resident Jack Rankin criticized the policy action taken by the administration, telling the *Rover*, “As a Catholic,

the current deportation policy is inhumane and injects fear into a society where it is already abundant. It threatens the economic and social activity of vibrant American immigrant communities writ large and in this way is a detriment to all of us.”

Junior engineering student Ethan Stone told the *Rover*, “Donald Trump campaigned on the promise that he would

rectify the failures of the previous administration in their allowance of a massive increase in illegal immigration. However, resistance to this promise—stemming from legal injunctions, direct affronts to the First Amendment, and poor communication from the Trump Administration responding to accusations of mistakes in deportation—has hindered the fulfillment of this campaign promise.”

Kevin Andrews is a sophomore in Keough Hall majoring in political science and economics. When not covering international war, he can be found in Duncan Student Center, wasting his Flex points, probably on Chick-fil-A. He can be reached at kandrew6@nd.edu.

The Dark Truth of Tom Dooley

ND honors fraudulent author, CIA operative who launched Vietnam War disinformation

CATALINA SCHEIDER GALIÑANES
Staff Writer

A prominent statue at the grotto features a man with two small Lao children, and bears a plaque:

THOMAS A. DOOLEY, M.D. '48 / 1927-1961 / Who as a pre-medical student / cherished Our Lady's Grotto / and who as a physician served the afflicted people of Southeast Asia / with uncommon devotion and dedication / Gift of the / Notre Dame Club of St. Louis / and the sculptor / Rudolph E. Torrini '59 / Dedicated February 1, 1986.

Dooley's presence still looms large on campus. In addition to the grotto statue and plaque, which is featured in a FaithND Sacred Spaces Video, he is commemorated by an Alumni Association award, as well as a room in LaFortune student center.

A 1995 *Observer* article emphasized Dooley's public service and his identity as a homosexual man, describing him as a “doctor, humanitarian, officer, and favorite son of Notre Dame.” Yet, Dooley's medical skill and humanitarian aid were part of a fictional identity, carefully crafted as a Navy and CIA operative. Dooley helped the CIA smuggle arms through Indochina and worked as an informant in Laos, writing deceptive accounts of his work in Vietnam to grow his own reputation and promote the CIA's narrative.

Dooley was a naval officer in the Vietnam war, previously attending—but not graduating from—Notre Dame and dropping out twice. He stayed at the bottom of his class at St. Louis University Medical School, as reported by Diane Shaw for a 1991 article in the *Los Angeles Times*. He entered on a special waiver by dean and family friend, Melvin Casberg.

He was stationed in Vietnam and recognized by the Vietnamese government as well as by the Navy, receiving the Legion of Merit for his medical work. His engaging “situation reports” to his superiors gained attention, and William Lederer, a press officer for the Navy admiralty, requested that he author a book. More than a creative project, Dooley's work, *Deliver Us from Evil*, was a part of the larger disinformation campaign to encourage support for the war effort in Vietnam

and the United States. It was particularly directed towards deceiving Catholics.

Co-authored by Lederer and Eugene Burdick, it was published in installments in *Reader's Digest* and Sunday Catholic Bulletins across the United States, in order to grow Catholic sympathy and support for the war. As Shaw describes, “The operation was a two-part attempt to bolster Diem. First, there was a psychological-warfare campaign organized by the CIA's Edward Lansdale, aimed at frightening northern Catholics into fleeing south.”

The CIA falsely attributed bombings to the Viet Minh, distributed pamphlets warning Catholics they would be tortured or killed by Ho Chi Minh's administration and created international coverage of the refugees' rush southward.

Shaw describes that “it would appear that the Catholics were leaving the North in spontaneous reaction to the ascendance of the Viet Minh.” This “black propaganda” included threats that the United States was poised to drop an atomic bomb on Vietnam.

The CIA campaign was faltering, but Dooley's writings revived the effort. He described shocking and horrific violence in Vietnam—particularly against Catholics—but his accounts were untruthful.

As Lederer told the *LA Times*, “Those things [that Dooley reported] never happened. The atrocities he described in his books either never took place or were committed by the French. I traveled all over the country and never saw anything like them.”

His graphic stories include the communist Vietnamese disemboweling over a thousand native women, sticking chopsticks through children's ears to prevent them from hearing the Gospel, hanging a priest to die by his legs, and driving nails through a priest's head as a “crown of thorns.” He claimed that the Vietnamese population “invariably” carried crucifixes, when, in reality, less than 10 percent of the citizenry was Catholic.

For *Vietnam Magazine*, Jim Troutman reported, “Later, a multitude of witnesses debunked Dooley's stories, asserting they had never seen any of the events he described,” citing reports from more than six U.S. Information Agency officials and a Navy corpsman.

Nevertheless, some Catholic schools deemed it required reading, and many parishes took up special collections for Dooley's organization, Medical International Corporation (MEDICO).

Dooley's misleading and distorted accounts promoted him to celebrity status. As Troutman noted, Dooley “stated that humanitarians in the modern world had to run their organizations like a business with ‘Madison Avenue, press relations, TV, radio.’ Dooley added, ‘Of course you get condemned for being a publicity seeker.’”

He was voted Gallup's 1959 seventh “most admired person in the world,” featured in a 10-page spread in Canada's Maclean's weekly magazine, and spoke on TV shows and radio stations. Dooley's fame, based on fictional heroics, led 50 civil servants to send a letter to his publisher, Farrar, Straus & Cudahy, to oppose *Deliver Us from Evil* and its deceptive accounts. Ann Miller, a Voice of America reporter in Vietnam, said “he exaggerated his role in the refugee camps at the expense of the people who were working with him, many of whom did just as much, if not more, than he did.”

While his falsified book brought him international and domestic fame, the Navy had discovered a deep secret: Dooley was a practicing homosexual. When uncovered, he was given a “less than honorable” discharge from the Navy in 1959.

Yet, when Edward Lansdale, the CIA's chief psychological warfare officer in Vietnam, heard of Dooley's discharge, he pressed him to undertake an “independent mission” to Laos. The International Rescue Committee set up a medical clinic in northern Laos, where Dooley dispatched “Letters from Laos” to the committee and situation reports to the Navy. For the CIA, he facilitated arms smuggling through the clinic to anti-Communist militias.

As Shaw reports, “Much of Dooley's Vientiane clinic project was a sham. Dooley's assistants were untrained and unqualified to give him the kind of help he would need to operate a legitimate clinic. His medicine chest was full of pills and elixirs that had been donated by Pfizer, a drug manufacturer, because they had expired and were no longer legal to sell in the United States.”



Image by Matt Cashore

An AP Report uncovered by a Freedom of Information Act Request to the CIA, reveals that Father Maynard Kegler, the main promoter of his cause for sainthood, discovered nearly 500 CIA documents in which Dooley reported on troop movements and current military happenings in Laos. All movements towards sainthood have since dissipated, mostly on account of his homosexual practices and lifestyle. Jim Winters of Notre Dame Magazine described his “ambiguous legacy” in the same document.

Dooley was more an actor than a medical doctor. Dennis Shepard, a volunteer in Laos, recalled to the *LA Times* that Dooley handled few cases and would bring in former patients to act as if they were ill in order to convince visitors and sponsors that the clinic was functioning and necessary. It was actually mostly empty and served as an arms outpost.

This technically neutral part of Indochina was militarized by Dooley's work with the CIA, hidden under the premise of medical work. He wrote two more best-selling books and died of cancer in New York City in 1961. On the day of his death, Dooley's clinic was overtaken by the Pathet Lao, a communist group in Laos.

Despite his fallacious writings, homosexual lifestyle, and manipulation of facts to promote war, Father Theodore Hesburgh, University President Emeritus, told the *Observer* in 1991, “If someone asked me if I thought [Tom Dooley] could be canonized, I would not hesitate to say that he could.” A letter Dooley wrote to Hesburgh in 1960 is both engraved at the Grotto and available digitally.

He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Freedom by President John F. Kennedy, and the Navy's records were later changed to reflect an “honorable” discharge. And today, the

University of Notre Dame has continued to honor Dooley.

When contacted for a comment, Dolly Duffy, Notre Dame Alumni Association executive director stated that, “Each year, the Alumni Association presents the Dr. Thomas A. Dooley Award to an alum, living or deceased, who has demonstrated outstanding service to humankind. These exemplary alumni, who have often made great sacrifices to serve those most in need across the globe, embody Tom Dooley's legacy of humanitarianism, as well as our calling as members of the Notre Dame family to be forces for good in the world.”

When asked about Dooley's CIA connections, the Alumni Association declined to comment and recommended the University Archives. The Archives referred to their mission statement, and archivist Joe Smith explained, “Dr. Thomas Dooley was a prominent American Catholic with a connection to Notre Dame.” Dooley received an honorary degree from Notre Dame in 1960.

In addition to the Notre Dame Archives, hundreds of documents relating to Dooley and his life are located in the State Historical Society of Missouri. Some documents regarding his biographer, Teresa Gallagher, and her involvement with Tom Dooley, remain inaccessible. They contain confidential information and are restricted for 50 years following the donation date. These records, concerning Dooley's correspondence and some medical missions, cannot be accessed until 2038.

Catalina Scheider Galiñanes is a senior double majoring in economics and political science with a minor in constitutional studies. She is from the Washington, D.C. metro area, and can be reached at cscheid2@nd.edu.



Magnificat Choir Performs Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater*

A reflection on Christ's Passion through His mother's eyes

ABIGAIL SMITH
Staff Writer

The Notre Dame Magnificat Choir performed Giovanni Battista Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart on Palm Sunday, April 13, 2025.

Composer Giovanni Battista Pergolesi penned this stunning composition to the classic 13th century hymn in 1736 on his deathbed. A hauntingly beautiful piece, this series of twelve movements follows a classic baroque style, giving an emotional account of Christ's Passion through the suffering of his mother, who stood at the foot of the cross.

Featuring classical soloists Elizabeth Scheicher and Eleni Taluzek, and accompanied by a 13-piece orchestra, the choir stayed true to the piece's baroque style—including instruments such as an organ, harpsichord, and even a theorbo, a large lute with a bass extension. By partnering dramatic dynamics with a pure and unified tone, the choir beautifully conveyed the grief Mary felt at the foot of the cross, while also calling for the audience to be united as a community in solidarity with



Image from Peter Ringenberg

the poor.

The performance was dedicated to the Catholic Worker Movement (CWM), an organization centered on helping those in need, which takes as their model the willing suffering of Christ and Mary. At the performance, the choir collected donations for Our Lady of the Road (OLR), a CWM establishment that provides food and shelter to the underserved in the South Bend community, with hopes to contribute tangibly to the Catholic Worker

spirit through both prayer and service.

Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* has been sung by women's choirs world-wide. Magnificat president and soprano Dana Mays said the piece "aligns with [the choir's] mission of uplifting women's voices in song, and it has the beautiful message of reflecting on the Passion through Mary's eyes. Our namesake is Mary's Magnificat, which is her accepting God's call for her."

Magnificat Choir Director Patrick Kronner reflected on

the opening phrase *Stabat Mater Dolorosa*: "The grieving mother stood," he translated. "Mary boldly stood at the foot of the cross and looked directly at her son's suffering and did not avert her eyes. By spending an hour with Mary at the foot of the cross, we pray that we might all be emboldened to embody her example and not turn away from the suffering and injustices around us today," Kronner said.

Along with the twelve movements of the *Stabat Mater*, the choir and soloists sang

each movement in tandem with reflections, sacred poetry, and prayers about each Station of the Cross. Students, current choir members, and Master of Fine Arts members (MFA) each gave a reflection to incorporate prayer in the experience. In addition to various poetic accounts from moments of the passion, many reflections were inspired by CWM founder Dorothy Day, who emphasized the obligations of fostering love in a community.

Sophomore Kali Stalboerger told the *Rover*, "The *Stabat Mater*

concert was a fantastic way to begin Holy Week! The music helped me to meditate on the Stations of the Cross by uniting myself with Mary and imagining her grief as she watched her only Son suffer and die. I was also very moved by the reflections, which offered concrete ways to put into practice our universal call to share in Christ's Passion."

At the conclusion of the concert, the choir asked the audience not to applaud but rather to sit in prayerful silence and reflection. Departing while singing a taizé hymn, the audience left in a somber and prayerful state for the start of Holy Week.

Abigail Smith is a sophomore Program of Liberal Studies, theology, and classical linguistics major. Having just entered the Church last year, she is excited to actively receive all the graces of Holy Week with her family. When she is not singing with the Liturgical Choir, Abby enjoys spending time with her friends and currently watching *Blue Bloods* with her brothers. Contact her at asmith78@nd.edu.

Notre Dame Involved in New Film on Carlo Acutis

McGrath Institute co-sponsors documentary on modern saint

MICHAEL CANADY
Editor-in-Chief

Notre Dame's McGrath Institute for Church Life (MICL) co-sponsored a new film on Carlo Acutis, produced by Castletown Media and Jim Wahlberg, in association with the National Eucharistic Congress. The movie, titled *Carlo Acutis: Roadmap to Reality*, will be released April 27–29 and explores the life of the teenage saint who will be canonized later this year.

Acutis died of leukemia in 2005, at the age of 15, in Monza, Italy. The first millennial to be canonized, he was known for his deep spiritual life and especially for his devotion to the Holy Eucharist. Known for his use of technology for the Faith, he created a comprehensive online catalogue of known Eucharistic miracles.

Pope Francis beatified Acutis on October 10, 2020, in Assisi, Italy, where he is now entombed. On May 23, 2024, the Vatican announced that a second miracle had been approved, clearing the path for Acutis' canonization.

In addition to MICL's involvement, the film casts several Notre Dame professors as experts in the fields of technology and religion. Brett Robinson, Associate Director for Outreach and Associate Professor of the Practice for MICL, served as associate producer of the film, and he is featured in the



Image from Carlo Acutis Film Resources

movie for his knowledge on technology, culture, and the Church. Robinson told the *Rover*, "The project is extremely timely as more young people are feeling the effects of digital life—smartphone addiction and anxiety—and looking for an interior peace that only comes from the contemplative life. Carlo is a shining exemplar of how to achieve this in this cultural moment."

He continued, "Blessed Carlo said that we are all born as originals but many die as photocopies. To live well today requires a recognition that we are more than our digital profiles and that authentic relationship requires being truly present to one another."

Robinson concluded, "The film should be viewed with friends and family or in schools because it's a great conversation starter for talking about what ails us in the digital age and how a life of holiness is never out of reach if we are focused on the right things. It

might just be an occasion for a powerful conversion of heart and mind."

To accompany the film, MICL also created an "Official Discussion Guide," which "can help you take up certain contemplative or prayerful habits that allowed St. Carlo to experience the world as a gift of love from God."

The resource is divided into four topics—Technology, Creation, Eucharist, and Love Thy Neighbor—each paired with its own question for reflection: "What is my own relationship with various technological devices, and to what degree do these devices enable me to encounter the love of God or my neighbor?"; "How often do I spend time in the created world, looking at everything that God has made?"; "To what degree do I participate in the Eucharist as an act of remembering, devotion to Christ's presence, and communion with the Lord?"; and "How comfortable am I in

recognizing the presence of the hidden Christ in my neighbor?"

Professor of Theology Tim O'Malley is also featured in the film, prompted by his work on the Eucharistic Revival Executive Committee. He also gave a talk on Acutis in MICL's Fall 2024 series of Saturdays with the Saints.

O'Malley said, "Having watched the film, it's pretty clear to me that this is a movie that allows us to think about sanctity as an exercise of encountering the real. Get off your phones. Get into nature. Encounter the poor. Meet Christ in the Eucharist."

"One of the potential addictions of Notre Dame life, especially around religion, is to be tempted by fame. If the right cleric or consecrated religious comes to Notre Dame, then everyone will experience a conversion. It's the wrong way of thinking about sanctity."

"Carlo was normal. He was holy because he prayed before the Eucharist, gave attention to God in the created order, and fed and clothed the poor in Milan. He did so intentionally because he wanted to be a saint. I guess the key to a renewal of culture isn't something too crazy: it's the normal pursuit of holiness," O'Malley concluded.

Sofia Carozza, a postdoctoral researcher at Harvard University, also participated in the film, speaking from her perspective as a developmental neuroscientist.

A Notre Dame graduate, Carozza was the valedictorian of the class of 2019 and a Marshall Scholar.

In an article for MICL's Church-Life Journal titled, "This is Your Brain in a Digital Age," Carozza argues that "digital devices are exquisitely suited to capturing our attention, fragmenting it and redirecting it toward lower goods for the financial profit of tech developers." Nevertheless, far from dismissing these devices altogether, she explained that "this technology could be better ordered toward our growth in the life of Christ."

Describing the upcoming film, Carozza said, "This project demonstrates one powerful way that our technological advances can be ordered toward our growth in the life of Christ."

Although the canonization ceremony has been delayed following the passing of Pope Francis, the film is still set to be aired in select theaters beginning April 27. More information can be found on the film's website.

Michael Canady is a junior from Falls Church, Virginia. He is a big fan of young saints, including Carlo Acutis and his own confirmation saint, Jose Sanchez del Rio. He can be reached at mcanady2@nd.edu.



On-Campus Tiny Saints Trafficking Skyrockets

Seminarians blamed

KATIEBELLE THOMPSON
Staff Writer

Last month, to commemorate Holy Cross Heritage month, the Old College seminarians began selling special edition Tiny Saints. The lineup of newly minted miracle workers included campus figures such as St. André Bessette, Fr. Sorin, and Basil Moreau, as well as Holy Cross heroes Patrick Peyton, Columba O'Neill, and Jacques Dujarié. The Saints took campus by storm, sported on everything including backpacks, gym bags, rosaries, car keys, and charm bracelets.

But now that Holy Cross Heritage Month is over, students trying to purchase the kawaii curates are in a bind. The plastic clergymen were a temporary fundraising item, and cannot be bought outside of Old College.

Desperate to purchase the limited edition abbés, students have formed underground resale groups to complete their collections. The Saints can be flipped at prices as high as 15 dollars, or 60 dollars for the full set. These resellers are working outside of the Student Shop network, thus preventing



Image by Wikimedia Commons, modified by the Rover

the Student Activities Office (SAO) from cashing in on the merchandise. SAO's Campus Income Commissioner, Christine Commerce, had this to say: "We are working

tirelessly to prevent the sale of copyrighted Holy Cross figures on campus. These resellers are taking advantage of students and appropriating Notre Dame iconography for

personal gain. Any student caught reselling Tiny Saints will be apprehended and forced to attend a disciplinary hearing on the Saturday morning most inconvenient to them. We at SAO fully support legitimate on-campus businesses, such as the Hammes Bookstore, where you can purchase approved Tiny Saints for 20 dollars apiece, as well as secular meditation candles and witchcraft cookbooks."

The fervor around preventing T-Saint sales has led to a few wrong calls. One student, Katharine Mary Irish, says that her backpack was stripped of its Tiny Saint collection while she was working in Duncan Student Center. "They took my Fr. Sorin!" she lamented. "I bought that legally at Old College the first chance I could! Besides, everyone knows unboxed Tiny Saints fetch higher prices. Why would I shoot myself in the foot?"

One student reseller, who wished to remain nameless for his safety, had this to say: "I was picking up a shipment last week when I was the victim of an SAO raid. I have a seminarian who helps me acquire my merchandise, and we were standing by the St.

Joseph statue pretending to smoke stogies when a bunch of people in Notre Dame-branded ski masks and SAO quarter zips stormed Old College! Next thing we know, they're taking out boxes and searching them on the lawn. But I didn't see any Tiny Saints; I don't think they found it. I'm still financially hurt from my spring break trip to Punta Cana, so this little side hustle needs to keep paying."

The source then looked around furtively and whispered, "I've said too much," before deploying a smoke bomb and running off into the LaFortune basement. His current whereabouts are unknown.

Katiebelle Thompson is definitely not a rare Tiny Saints dealer from the backwoods of Virginia. She also doesn't sell her homemade beer, The Breviary Brew, in the alley behind Niewland Hall on alternate Fridays. Parties interested in either should definitely rethink their life choices, and not email cthomp23@nd.edu.

Bat in the Basilica

An Exercise in Exegesis

JAMES WHITAKER
Humor Editor

Tolkien insisted that he did not write allegorically, but rather wrote beautiful histories; I am inclined to say that this is how God writes as well.

Perhaps the bat in the basilica is old news. Its retelling seems to delight the storytellers more than their audiences at this point. That beautiful history is now well-known; now is the time for commentators and florilegia.

Origen recommends that we study the sacred *historia* at the literal level (for we are bodily), the moral level (for we are ensouled), and the allegorical level (for we are spiritual). Literally, there was a bat in the basilica during the Easter Vigil, circling throughout the homily and swooping at the baptisms, until finally he was slapped out of midair and wrangled outside. Never before has my fight-or-flight adrenaline been so awakened; and yet, as one under a hypnotist's spell, my mind was numbed as I watched the bat circle above me, and my body shivered. It was also an instance to prove that the priesthood does consist of truly manly men — with absolutely unphased (almost bored) calmness, Fr Brian baptized an army of reborn souls while a bat

swooped at his head. What a cool guy.

But now, let us consider a deeper level, neglected by most anecdote-tellers and journalists. What can this teach us of virtue? As I have already suggested, it is apparent that priests must shepherd the flock in imitation of the Good Shepherd. Should there be a bear in the basilica, it would be their priestly duty not only to continue hearing confessions, but also (if the bear is unwilling to confess his sins and repent) to wrestle him out of the church. It is also clear that the faithful are bound to remain in worship despite the danger; there is no quicker way to Paradise than martyrdom, even martyrdom by bat-attack. Let us imitate Mary the Mother of God or John the Evangelist by remaining with the Lord in his crucifixion, rather than the rest of the disciples, who fearfully fled the mob. For those of us who endured to see the bat slapped down possess the same joy of the women at the tomb who endured long enough to see that death itself had been slapped down.

More could be said with more space; but let us try to understand this at the most spiritual level. It seems to me that there is no better image for heresy than this. We accept that heresy shall persist in this life, but we hope that it will stay



Image by Wikimedia Commons, modified by the Rover

outside the Church. It is more grievous when it has found its way inside. The ugliness of heresy is made even more apparent when it is blatant in the Church—its vicious features and wild movements compared to the serene softness of our Lady and the gold of heaven. And when heresy flits around the Church, it may even lead some of the faithful to apostasy, fleeing from the Church into even darker, battier night. But

it is indeed the priestly office, in the face of heresy, not to abandon the liturgy, but to protect and preserve it. And, should he have the chance, it is also for the priest (or his MC) to grab the missalette of truth, leap with the shoes of righteousness, and slam-dunk the bat of heresy into the next century. More could be said; I digress.

[Originally published April 19, 2023]

James Whitaker is a graduate student in the Theology department, currently studying Patristic exegesis (monkey see, monkey do). If you would like to challenge him with a new topic or prompt for a humor piece, you can throw down the gauntlet at jwhitak5@nd.edu.

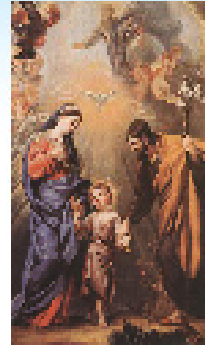
EVENTS HAPPENING ON CAMPUS:

Thursday, April 24:
Exalt Adoration
(Johnson Family Hall, 7:30 p.m.)

Friday, April 25:
“Russian Masterpieces”
Notre Dame Symphony Orchestra
(Leighton Concert Hall, 8:00 p.m.)

Wednesday, April 30:
U.S. Air Force Chamber Winds
(Leighton Concert Hall, 7:00 p.m.)

Sunday, May 18:
University Commencement Ceremony
(Notre Dame Stadium, 9:30 a.m.)



HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC ADOPTION AGENCY

Holy Family Catholic
Adoption Agency
is here to assist
the Notre Dame, St. Mary's
and Holy Cross Communities
in proclaiming a Gospel of Life
by sharing the loving message of adoption.

Non-profit organization

For more information call (574) 307-3585

SMILE!

You could be part of our
2025-2026

PHOTOGRAPHY TEAM



For inquiries about the
open position, please
contact Bridgette Rodgers
at brodger4@nd.edu

THE
IRISH ROVER

Hear Ye, Hear Ye!

The *Irish Rover* is proud
to announce that Lucy
Spence, who has served
as the Managing Editor
for Volume 22, will serve
as Editor-in-Chief for
Volume 23. She has been
approved by the *Rover's*
Board of Directors.

We congratulate her and
wish her the best of luck
in the *Rover's* twenty-
third year of publishing!