

Notre Dame Implements Optional Pornography Filter

Campus Ministry launch follows years of student efforts

HENRY OMANGA
Staff Writer

The University of Notre Dame introduced an optional online filter on campus Wi-Fi for pornography and explicit content on Tuesday, April 14. In an email to students, Father Peter McCormick, C.S.C., Assistant Vice President for Campus Ministry, highlighted the importance of honoring the dignity of the human person, recognizing the “devastating reality” of the pornography industry’s connections to trafficking and exploitation.

In the letter, Fr. McCormick addressed the significant and growing prevalence of pornography on campus. He urged students to honor the dignity of others and to live chastely through personal discipline before giving a message of hope for students, offering the support of Campus Ministry—especially the option of a Wi-Fi pornography filter for students.

Students have led several unsuccessful campaigns for an explicit content filter in recent years. In 2018, Students for Child-Oriented Policy (SCOP) petitioned for a mandatory Wi-Fi filter, receiving over 2,400 signatures, more than 1,000 of which were from students. Though he declined this solution, then-president Father

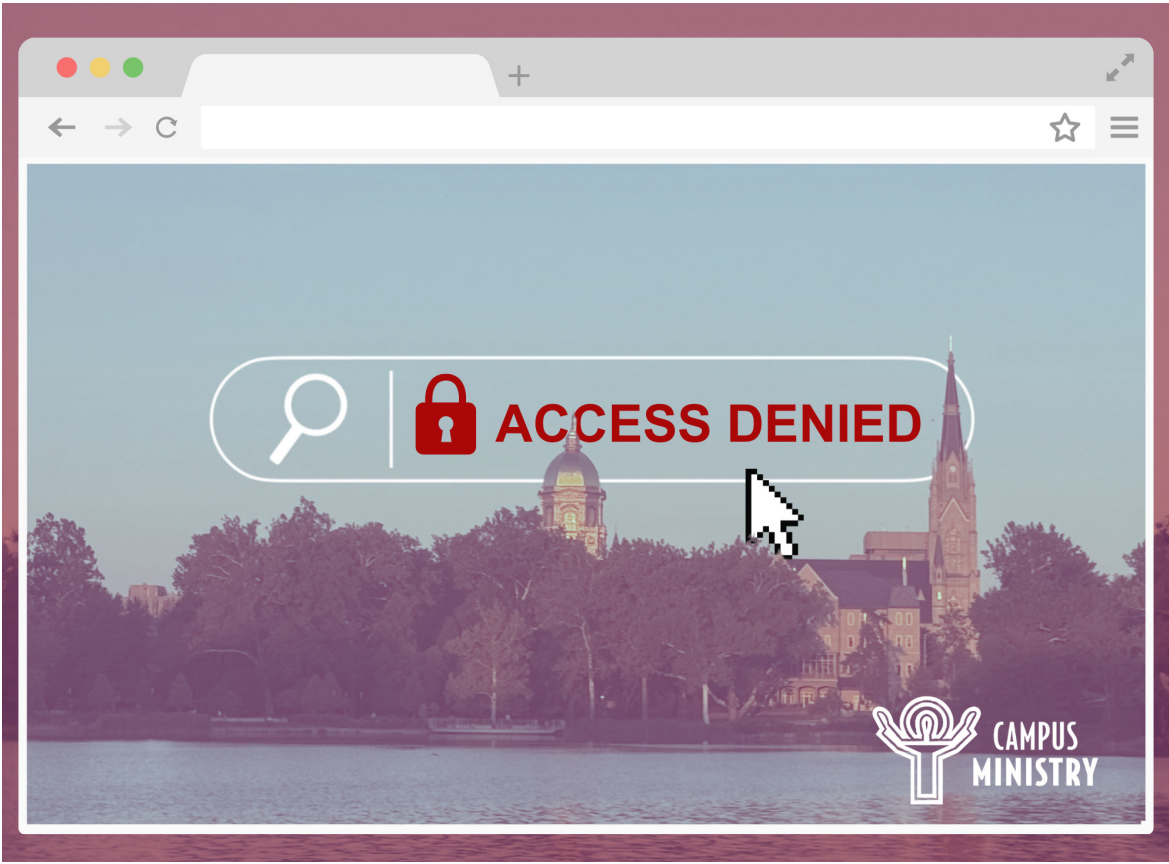


Image by Irish Rover

John Jenkins, C.S.C. explained that he would work towards implementing an “opt-in” system instead, allowing students to voluntarily sign up to have their campus Wi-Fi filtered.

In 2023, four hall senators, Ayden Ellis, John Soza, Bobby Spence, and Caroline Potts, proposed a resolution in the student senate with the purpose of “adding pornography sites to

a list of banned websites on all campus Wi-Fi networks.” During the senate meetings, students opposed to the resolution argued that the filter would limit student freedom and would “give the University more power to take things away from the Student Body.” One senator asserted that “there is value in the free will to choose not to watch porn instead of having someone else choose for you.”

Some students argued that banning Wi-Fi access to pornography would discriminate against students with limited data plans. Others objected to the precedent of “tying [justification for the bill] to the Catechism.” After extensive debate, the motion failed to pass in an 11-24 anonymous vote.

In 2025, SCOP created a new student petition for a ban after Fr. Robert A. Dowd, C.S.C. began his presidency. The petition garnered over 600 student signatures. Following the petition, conversations began between students and administrators that eventually led to the implementation of the opt-

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McGrath Institute Releases Gender Accompaniment Project

Abigail Favale emphasizes clarity and compassion in new podcast

ABBY STRELOW
Executive Editor

When ‘Honorata’ converted to the Catholic faith, she had been living as a transgender man for nearly a decade. Yet even after stopping her masculinizing medical treatments post-conversion, she retained the appearance of being male—and was left with no way to explain her biological sex to her fellow Christians without making herself the target of incorrect judgments.

The story of Honorata, who goes by a pseudonym to protect her identity, is one of many being shared through the Gender Accompaniment Project (GAP), a new podcast designed to shed

a light of truth and love on the complex issues surrounding gender in today’s culture.

Developed by McGrath Institute for Church Life (MICL) professor Abigail Favale, Ph.D., the ten-part documentary-style series highlights the stories of faithful Christians who experience a sense of disconnection with their biological sex. According to a MICL news release, the podcast attempts to approach the issue of “gender discordance” from a Catholic perspective, integrating psychology and theology in a pastoral approach that resists the “fear-driven polarization and rhetoric” surrounding gender issues today.

Each episode seeks to guide listeners toward a deeper

understanding of the Catholic vision for gender and sexuality through personal testimonies, accompanied by commentary from experts in theology, psychology, and medicine.

A bestselling author, Notre Dame professor, and mother of four, Favale has an extensive background writing and teaching about gender, feminism, and sexual difference through the lens of her Catholic faith and her work in theology and literature. She told the *Rover* that the idea of creating a podcast came from the rich conversations she experienced after organizing a symposium of Catholic educators in 2023.

Favale described how the mode

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Pope Leo XIV Appoints ND VP to Vatican Dicastery

Groody one of four Americans to join Francis-established council

LUCY SPENCE
Editor-in-Chief

Pope Leo XIV recently appointed Reverend Daniel Groody, C.S.C. as a member of the Vatican’s Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development. Fr. Groody, a theology and global affairs professor, serves as Vice President and Assistant Provost for Undergraduate Education at Notre Dame. He is also a fellow and trustee of the university.

Members of the Dicastery of the Roman Curia are chosen from cardinals, bishops, religious, and lay men and women around the world. During their five-year term, the members “provide support for exploring and

addressing specific issues within the purview of the individual Dicasteries,” according to the Vatican’s news release.

In addition to Fr. Groody, the pope appointed three other Americans to the Dicastery, including Hope Border Institute Executive Director Dylan Corbett; St. John’s University theology professor Meghan J. Clark; and Léocadie Wabo Lushombo, i.t., of the Jesuit School of Theology of Santa Clara University.

Recognized as an international expert on immigration and refugee ethics, Fr. Groody’s research focuses on the intersection of migration and theology,

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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.

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“For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth.”
 – John 18:37

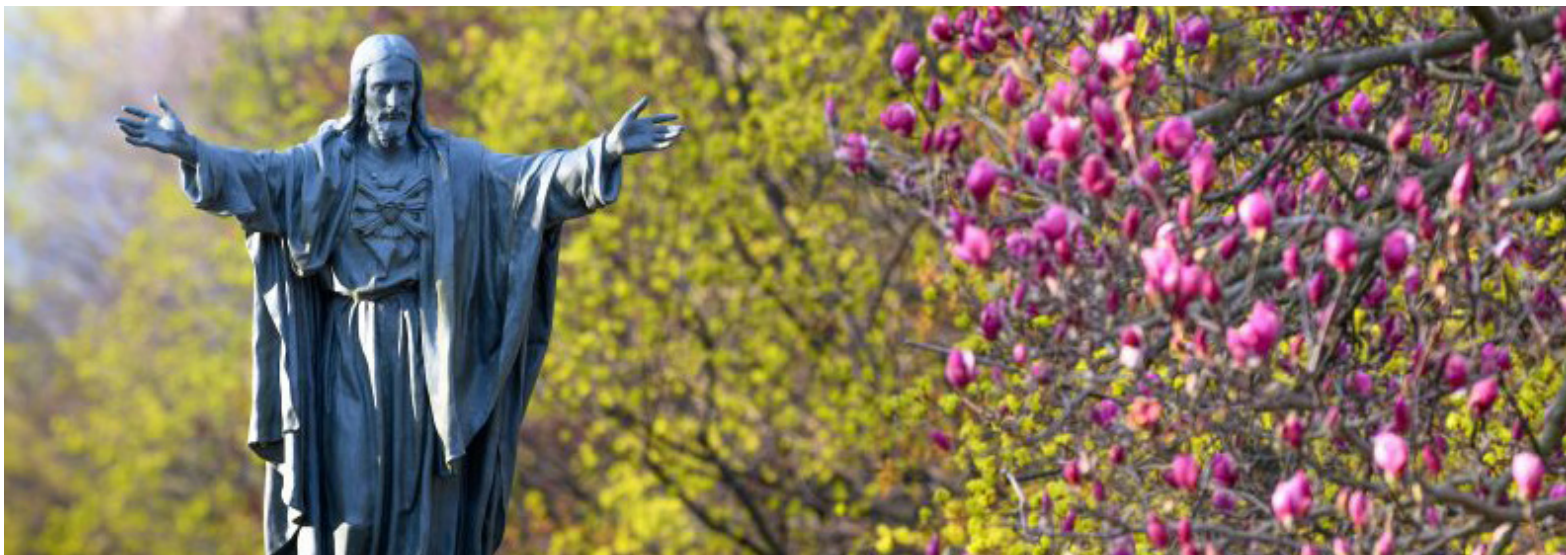


Image by University of Notre Dame LinkedIn

Provost McGreevy's Mission Is Not Notre Dame's

STAFF

Seven in ten Americans believe that U.S. higher education is headed in the wrong direction. When it comes to financial aid, career preparation, and the development of critical thinking skills, the plummeting approval ratings of colleges across the country show a decided decline. In every category—pragmatic and academic alike—universities are facing a crisis in public confidence.

Notre Dame is the only university positioned to lead the renewal that higher education needs. Guided by her mission statement, she can offer what secular universities cannot: an education founded on the fruitful pursuit of truth.

Our mission statement reads, “The University is dedicated to the pursuit and sharing of truth for its own sake.” Among every other institution inhabiting a comparable sphere of academic excellence, Notre Dame is unique in this claim. No other university shares this same pursuit today, nor can they even answer the question, “Why should we pursue truth?”

Why is this? The context for our mission statement gives the answer: “A Catholic university draws its basic inspiration from Jesus Christ as the source of wisdom and from the conviction that in him all things can be brought to their completion.”

Our secular peers ride a wave of relativism that informs—dangerously and self-destructively—their educational pursuits. Without Christ, the author of all, truth is nonexistent. Any claim to the truth, or attempt to pursue knowledge, is counterfeit without an understanding of the truth's source.

Notre Dame still recognizes and adheres to this source in her mission, taking inspiration from her faith. Any renewal in higher education, then, must find its

source in our mission. And no one bears a greater responsibility to this mission than our provost, the chief academic officer at this university.

The provost is responsible for establishing academic and research priorities; setting hiring priorities and approving all faculty hires; overseeing the university's academic budget, including determining which departments and institutions receive funding; and deciding how the university defines ‘success.’

However, Provost John McGreevy seems to have a different mission in mind. The Office of the Provost's website reformulates Notre Dame's mission as the following: “The University of Notre Dame must be the leading global Catholic research university, on par with but distinct from the world's best private research universities.”

As McGreevy himself has said, “The world doesn't need another Harvard, Yale, Stanford, Northwestern, Chicago. The world needs the best, most distinctive, most authentic Notre Dame.” Notre Dame's *difference* is clearly something McGreevy understands. Yet our provost repeatedly fails to offer his deans, faculty, and students a coherent account of the university's mission, an account that identifies a tangible difference in action between a university that is guided by its Catholic faith and one that is not.

One of the clearest insights into McGreevy's thoughts can be found in the university's “2033: A Strategic Framework” (ND2033), for whose production he was primarily responsible. The document, published in 2023, lays out McGreevy's priorities and goals for Notre Dame throughout the ten years following its promulgation. Its primary conclusion is the provost's mission, already stated above: “Notre Dame must be the leading global Catholic research university, on par with

but distinct from the world's best private universities.”

Ironically, the framework is conspicuously similar to those published by the secular universities McGreevy aspires to be distinct from. Like Stanford, ND2033 emphasizes mental health and “belonging” as the goals for student life on campus. Like Northwestern, ND2033 seeks to expand the school's reach as a “global” university through international research. Perhaps most shockingly, ND2033's language regarding faculty hiring is indistinguishable from that of most private schools, prioritizing “diversity and inclusion” with no mention of Catholic representation in faculty hires.

Even what McGreevy offers as distinctly Catholic ideals are not unique to Notre Dame. We may choose to nominally ground our poverty initiatives, research funding, and global outreach in Catholic tradition, but what top-tier university does not claim to be global? What prestigious secular school does not fund research that aids the poor?

If these are the only ways that we are ‘distinctively Catholic,’ then we are not distinct at all. Nor are we particularly Catholic.

Moreover, rather than remaining faithful to the shepherding of the Church, McGreevy has consistently chosen to resist all ecclesial authority, adopting instead the paradigm of a secular university that bears no accountability to anyone.

Recent PR scandals at the university under McGreevy's watch have all sent a clear message to the public: Notre Dame will not be held accountable by an institution like the Church. The Ostermann scandal, the controversy over staff values, the lack of transparency about ratios of Catholic faculty, the contentious hiring email sent last year, and the campus drag show are all examples of a continuous attitude of resistance

to the Church's guidance. This message is not “distinct,” but makes Notre Dame just one of many universities that shirk their responsibility to the truth in favor of reputational gains.

Instead, let Notre Dame's distinctiveness come in her relentless pursuit of truth. A belief in objective Truth, grounded in the Eternal God, was once the cornerstone of the American university. Today, Notre Dame stands alone among her academic peers in including ‘pursuit of truth’ in her mission statement. At a time when trust in the great institutions is eroding, Notre Dame has the opportunity to lead the renewal of the American university.

“Such renewal requires a clear awareness that, by its Catholic character, a University is made more capable of conducting an impartial search for truth, a search that is neither subordinated to nor conditioned by particular interests of any kind” writes Saint Pope John Paul II in his encyclical on Catholic universities, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.

In Notre Dame's case, it could not be more obvious that a ‘particular interest’ in academic rankings has imperiled and subordinated the impartial search for truth.

We sincerely hope that Provost McGreevy will rededicate himself and the university to what makes us truly unique: a relentless pursuit of truth for its own sake, rooted firmly in a belief in Christ.

In so doing, Notre Dame should not be surprised if she finds herself ascending the rankings. A rigorous pursuit of the Truth, informed by the *Logos*, naturally finds expression in academic excellence and plays out through top-tier research. If Provost McGreevy really wants Notre Dame to have global, lasting influence, he must be anchored in what is universal and eternal: Christ, His Church, and His Truth.



How to Avoid Another Blowup at Notre Dame

“If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love.” - John 10:15

DAN PHILPOTT

Faculty Advisor

Another blowup. The recent eruption at Notre Dame over the appointment of an abortion rights advocate to the directorship of the Liu Institute is the latest in a succession of public controversies that span my twenty-five years on the faculty. They arrive as often as the fall football season. The Dome puts forth a policy, bestows an honor or makes an appointment, or a professor pursues a panel, performance or some other activity, almost always dealing with sex, gender, marriage or life, that detonates outrage. Professors, staff, students, alumni, the President, the Provost, the Bishop, priests, prelates, pundits, journalists, and the university’s official spokesman variously tweet, post, text, march, pray, pen letters to the editor, place articles on the internet, organize petitions, appear on television, send hundreds of emails to the Dome and issue mollifying bureaucratic statements, all to denounce or defend the policy or the panel or to decry the suppression of academic freedom.

Each blowup leaves wounds—people angry, friendships frayed, colleagues factionalized, alumni disillusioned, the university disunited and the Dome’s moral authority compromised. Can the blowups be avoided?

Yes, they can, through clarity about the principles that govern the university, resolve to abide by these principles on the part of university leaders and, acceptance of these principles by everyone. These principles emanate from Notre Dame’s unambiguous profession to be a Catholic university. Entailed in ‘Catholic’ is truth, a word that will seem anodyne to some and imposing to others but that it is inseparable from the meaning of Catholic. Truth is what Catholics assert when they recite the Nicene Creed and from which flow the Church’s moral teachings. Truth is the telos of the university as health is the telos of Memorial Hospital and winning football that of the Pittsburgh Steelers. Everyone in the organization is asked to respect it and some will promote it avidly. Truth is what may guide Notre Dame through its disagreements and help to diffuse its blowups.

Two principles are paramount. The first is simply that all aspects of life at the university ought to be governed consistently with Catholic teachings: residential life, the bestowal of honors, the appointment of leaders, the work of campus ministry, health and benefits policies, student organizations, codes of conduct and also, crucially, the shaping of teaching, learning, and research. The second is that the freedom of inquiry ought to be protected in teaching and scholarship,



Image by Matt Cashore

including conferences, invited speakers, and public engagement—what may be called in the sphere of inquiry. The second principle, like the first principle, is grounded in the Catholic mission and its attendant truth.

Each principle poses demands on parties to our blowups. Administrators have a duty to maintain them. All have a duty to respect them. No-one has grounds for demanding that the Dome abandon Catholic policies, and all have a right and even a duty to protest loudly when it does. Likewise, all have a duty to respect the expression of inquiry even when it contradicts Catholic principles. When it does, adherents to these principles ought to speak up, argue, and engage, but not cancel, fire, or sanction. Respect for both of these principles, each grounded in truth, would do much to avoid the blowups and their wounds.

The first principle follows simply and readily from Notre Dame’s profession to be a Catholic university. To be Catholic is to hold that God has established a moral order consisting of immutable principles. This is the natural law, whose meaning and obligatoriness reason can grasp. The magisterium of the Church confirms the truth of these principles through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The principles, though, are not true because they Church teaches them but rather the Church teaches them because they are true.

Notre Dame commits the university to the truth of these principles at the outset of its mission statement, where it says that all of its activities image Jesus Christ, his Gospel and his Spirit. To live in friendship and grow in union with Jesus Christ is to abide by his commandments; the Gospel entails moral teachings; and the Spirit guides and empowers our fidelity to them. If a university holds these principles

and their sources to be true, then it ought to govern and conduct all of its activities accordingly.

The principles that usually feature in the blowups are firm, clear, and constant, without a shadow of turning, in the teaching of the Church. The prohibition of abortion is a straightforward application of the Fifth Commandment, thou shall not kill, to human beings living in the mother’s womb. Correlative to the Sixth Commandment, all sexual acts are to be ordered to the begetting of human life and to the union of a man and woman in marriage. Complementing these principles is compassion, mercy, and friendship for everyone who encounters hardship in them. The entirety of moral principles—taught by Jesus, found in the Bible, confirmed by the Church, known by reason—guide a Catholic university in all of its activities.

These principles include every principle of justice. “God’s grace prompts human activity to assist the world in creating justice grounded in love,” the mission statement avers. Axial to justice is the dignity—or infinite value, or preciousness—of the human person, created in the image of God. Notre Dame promotes this dignity in advocating for migrants, the poor, peace, human rights, racial justice, the security of countries, the integrity of the natural environment and many other causes, through its many programs and organizations, and its faculty, staff, and students.

Appointments of leaders of centers and institutes readily fall under these principles, this truth. The Dome stated this clearly amidst the recent blowup: “Those who serve in leadership positions at Notre Dame do so with the clear understanding that their decision-making as leaders must be guided by and consistent with the University’s Catholic mission. Notre Dame’s commitment to

upholding the inherent dignity of the human person and the sanctity of life at every stage is unwavering.” The principles most obviously pertain to organizations overtly dedicated to justice:—the Kellogg, Kroc, and Klau Institutes; the Institute for Social Concerns; the university’s initiatives on democracy, ethics and poverty; as well as the Liu Institute, whose website declares its justice commitment. All organizations in the university, though, whether they pursue high-energy physics, the visual arts, or social science data collection, fall under its principles. Heads of these units speak and act for the university and pursue ends on which the university bestows its moral authority in establishing and endowing the units—some of them at tens of millions of dollars. A public advocate for the contrariety of the university’s principles, then, is unsuited for a directorship, and appointment of such as person begets a blowup.

The same goes for hiring faculty. If the purpose of teaching and scholarship is the pursuit of truth—here again, Notre Dame’s mission statement concurs—then a candidate who publicly opposes the principles (and stands by his position at the point of hiring) ought not to be hired. That scholar is destined to shape the minds and souls of students, society’s stock of knowledge, and the university’s public witness while here at Notre Dame. Probably few candidates who come to Notre Dame stand publicly at odds with its principles. Most pursue the truth about God’s universe through the standards of the natural sciences, social sciences, the humanities, and the arts. The idea is simply that a scholar’s opposition to the university’s mission is relevant to hiring that scholar to the university.

The same goes, too, for bestowing honorary degrees,

appointing people to advisory and leadership councils, and everything else a university does. Critics may cry censorship and if they have a headache might invoke ghouls of the Catholic past—the Index, the Inquisition. But is conducting the life of a university according to moral principles any different from what Jewish, Mormon, Muslim, and for that matter, secular universities do? Secular universities indeed have been the most morally fervent in recent years in their speech codes and their cancellation of speakers, yet even apart from their excesses apply criteria of justice in hiring and promoting faculty, appointing leaders and sundry other matters. Any crier of censorship, and everyone at any university, ought to ask: Can I imagine a moral view X such that were a person to espouse X, he or she ought not to be a director, dean, recipient of honors or hiree? The only university where this question is answered ‘Nno’ is one that proclaims no moral purpose. I know of none.

Alas, Notre Dame’s principles have been violated more than a few times in the past several years, sparking more than a few blowups. A good indicator is the public statements of the Bishop of Fort Wayne-South Bend. He is not a busybody and does not want to run Notre Dame, but rather is the shepherd of souls in the diocese and issues a statement only when a public contravention of the moral law takes place. Bishops have spoken against: the performance of the Vagina Monologues (2006-2008); the bestowal of an honorary degree on President Barack Obama (2009); Notre Dame’s extension of marriage benefits to same-sex partners (2014); awarding the Laetare Medal to President Joe Biden (2016); coverage of contraception (2018); a “reproductive justice” lecture series (2023); and the recent



Philpott Editorial

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Liu Institute directorship appointment. Like misdeeds are the Dome's communication of many messages implying endorsement of same-sex partnerships; an unauthorized group distributing contraceptives on campus; a professor's support for this activity; and others.

Wounds result. In Catholic teaching, moral principles not only define wrongs but also are contours of happiness and portals to friendship with God. "If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love," Jesus teaches (John 10:15). Wrongs wound most the souls of their doers. Educators compound the wound by teaching wrongs as right, not least to the body of students. "Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do so will be called least in the kingdom of heaven," Jesus also teaches (Matt 5:19). Finally, these wrongs compromise the credibility of the Catholic mission. To flout a firm moral teaching is to disclaim its Source. Once that is done, what is the point of the mission? If the principles are not true, does not the mission become arbitrary and exclusive? And if the university will abide only by norms of morality and justice that conform to dominant secular mores, why would anyone take seriously its profession to be Catholic? Its insistence on hiring for mission? Its single-sex dorms? And all else.

What, then, of the second principle, academic freedom? Does a thorough pursuit of truth in the academy leave room for it? In fact, academic freedom is a precious principle that is

to be preserved—and is itself grounded in truth. Again, Notre Dame's mission statement: "The University insists upon academic freedom that makes open discussion and inquiry possible."

At Notre Dame, as at most universities, every professor and student is granted freedom in the sphere of inquiry—teaching, scholarship, public advocacy. Academic freedom means that a student or professor may express a view without suffering a material penalty: a lower grade, censorship, a loss of job or position, the denial of tenure or advancement to an academic rank, or any other sort of sanction. The purpose of this freedom is to protect the sphere of inquiry and its defining activity - the pursuit of truth. As I wrote earlier in the *Irish Rover*, "[w]e grasp truth—about biology, theology, politics, literature—through acts of the intellect that entail judgments, ones that we arrive at through investigating, arguing, considering, listening, persuading, challenging, interrogating, experimenting with hypotheses, assessing evidence and thinking matters through, alone and together with others. This work of reasoning, leading to acts of the will through which we give our assent to what we judge to be true, is, by its nature, only genuine when it is performed freely." This inquiry, activating the person's capacity for and interest in truth, is characteristically human and manifests human dignity. It merits protection just as the Church taught that inquiry into religious truth manifests dignity and merits protection in its landmark declaration of the Second Vatican Council, *Dignitatis Humanae*.

Academic freedom does not

aim to establish a neutral sphere of knowledge, a zone sequestered from the Catholic mission, or a pact of reciprocity by which opponents agree to tolerate one another's offenses. True, an implication of academic freedom is that it protects speech—writings, lectures, dramatic productions, and other activities belonging to the sphere of inquiry—that contests Catholic truth. This use of freedom does not call for indifference on the part of adherents to the Catholic mission. No, they ought to exercise their own freedom by engaging such speech through dialogue in faithfulness to the pursuit of truth.

What does engagement look like?

In recent years, a colleague and I developed a course, *Why the Church?*, that examines the case for the Catholic Church with respect to the reasons why young people have departed from it in recent years. The course was based on the method of *disputatio*, where students were assigned readings on both sides of several issues—science, sexuality and marriage, history, the veracity of the Resurrection—and encouraged to argue for or against the teaching of the Church. I and my co-teacher also made clear that our purpose was apologetics, a defense of the teaching. I recall a day that I taught a discussion section of the course and argued about marriage and sexuality for 50 minutes with the students, some three quarters of whom questioned the Church's teachings. I did not downgrade them; they did not seek for me to be fired; and the Church's teachings were taught.

Another example. In 2022,

the Center for Citizenship and Constitutional Government sponsored a public debate on abortion between Notre Dame alumna Alexandra De Sanctis and journalist Jill Filipovic. The two disagreed ardently and shared dinner together. It was a rare example of this issue being discussed publicly and civilly at Notre Dame.

One more. In 2006, when Fr. John Jenkins memorably decided to allow the performance of the *Vagina Monologues* at Notre Dame, he required that contra-Catholic views be accompanied by a presentation of the Church's teaching. Although his policy has been honored in the breach, it reflects an approach to engagement that might work if tried.

Engagement becomes more Catholic still when it is conducted with collegiality, respect, love, friendship and forgiveness. Let us go to dinner afterwards. Soundly pursued, academic inquiry at Notre Dame might be a model for other universities in its openness, its diversity of views, and its manner of engagement.

Gray areas, fuzzy lines, and hard cases attend academic freedom, as they do any principle. Like free speech and freedom of religion in a democracy, academic freedom is bounded by what is defamatory, violent, obscene, illegal, and threatening. Pornography, for instance, is not usually viewed with a purpose of inquiry and so is in principle restricted (with exceptions for genuine research). Artistic portrayals of immorality make hard cases. Usually they advance a point of view, sometimes within a curricular setting, and so bid for the sphere of inquiry, yet may also contain

what is illegal or obscene. The *Vagina Monologues* celebrated a sexual relationship between an adult and a minor and was plausibly pornographic, thus meriting restriction. Debatable is a drag show staged at Notre Dame in 2023 in a Film, Television, and Theater (FTT) course. I would protest and criticize this show as well as departments' decisions to co-sponsor it but not call for its prohibition. It is worth repeating that protecting the sphere of inquiry in no way contradicts the duty of university leaders to shape the sphere of inquiry according to Catholic truth—creating (and dismantling) departments, prescribing the curriculum, hiring professors, and the like. It is entirely fitting to ask how FTT came to be a department that stages drag shows rather than, say, Karol Wojtyła's *The Jeweler's Shop*.

The two principles, then, are that the Catholic mission governs all aspects of life at the university and that academic freedom be respected. They are consistent and each grounded in Catholic truth. Protection of inquiry does not negate the duty to hire, appoint, and govern according to the mission, and vice versa. Were the members of the university to respect and abide by these principles, each restraining their temptation to subvert them, another blowup can be avoided.

Daniel Philpott is a professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. He can be reached at philpott.1@nd.edu.

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Letter to the Editor: The Ethos of EthosND

What We Stand for in Our Fight Against Pornography

KEVIN SADLER

Staff Writer

In rural Portugal, over a century ago, nearly 100,000 onlookers witnessed what has become known as the “Miracle of the Sun.” At the instruction of three young shepherd children who claimed to have been visited by a woman from Heaven, devout believers and skeptics alike looked upward on October 13, 1917 and observed the sun dancing in the sky, moving in winding motions and emitting bright lights. It is even said to have plunged toward the Earth, causing many to fear the world was ending, only to return to its normal position. As Catholics believe, this miracle confirms the authenticity of Our Lady of Fatima, who delivered messages of prayer, conversion, and penance for a world steeped in sin.

Perhaps most alarming was Our Lady’s warning in her apparition to the children earlier that year. According to St. Lucia—the eldest of the three children—the Virgin showed them a vision of a sea of fire filled with souls shrieking and groaning in despair. Our Lady is reported to have said more souls will end up in hell for sins against the flesh than any other type of sin. In other words, lust, or sexual sins, will be the most damning. Unnerving as this may be, it is not particularly shocking.

Over 100 years later, we find ourselves immersed in a culture of personal indulgence, which is perhaps most obvious among young men. Today, the vast majority of men are no strangers to hardcore pornography. According to the Journal of Sex Research, 91 percent of men between the ages of 18 and 73 have let pornography become a regular habit in their lives. With a quick Google search, any teenage boy with an iPhone can view more sex in an hour than any of the most powerful, socially elite men living prior to the internet could have experienced in a lifetime.

Before the explosion of the internet, yet decades following the Miracles of the Sun, St. Lucia remarked, “The final battle between the Lord and the Kingdom of Satan will be over marriage and the family.” Even if you think the story of Our Lady of Fatima—and perhaps even Christianity more broadly—is all nonsense, you likely feel there is

*Image by Ethos*

“Christian ethos is characterized by a transformation of the human person’s conscience and attitudes ... such as to express and realize the value of the body and sex according to the Creator’s original plan”

Theology of the Body 45:3

something eerie about the culture of rampant pornography we have adopted. Given this state of degeneracy, I would not blame you for thinking the Lord has lost the battle for marriage and family. However, I wouldn’t be writing this article if all hope were lost. So, how can we move the needle in this so-called final battle?

Well, if you’re a Notre Dame student, there is a good chance you’ve seen a representative from EthosND deliver a post-Mass announcement informing everyone of our organization for men struggling with lust. As you may have heard, Ethos is a small-group based band of young men who meet regularly to discuss and overcome sexual sin. Based on conversations I’ve had, there’s a good chance you thought it sounded interesting but also a little odd.

As vice president of this compelling but “odd” organization, I am preparing to pass on the reins after graduation and have been reflecting on what we stand for in our fight against licentiousness. Ethos, if done well, does not merely seek to help guys avoid specific vices. Rather, through brotherhood, we strive to forge a positive vision of proper sexual integration, helping young men order their desires toward

something genuinely healthy.

Sadly, popular culture has lost the language to speak about sex in a way that reveals the full dignity of the human person. Rather than asking, ‘Is this activity loving?’, we frequently just ask, ‘Is it legal?’

Unfortunately, instead of positing an attractive alternative, Christian circles usually describe sexual morality merely as a list of what not to do. Rarely is it discussed how beautiful the fact is that we, through our bodies, can serve as co-creators of new life alongside God. Contrary to animals, who act purely on instinct, we humans can freely choose to make this gift of ourselves. With no real understanding of why Christians teach what they do regarding sex, many people reflexively dismiss their notions as antiquated, prudish, or anti-fun.

Nevertheless, most guys continue to feel a deep, nagging shame for their actions. Even if they can’t articulate the reason for their guilt, they conceal their habits from family and friends. Oddly, even though most wrestle with lust, we are often afraid of being exposed, outwardly presenting as put-together when in private, we struggle greatly. Tragically, most men dare not seek help, and over time, their hope of

one day quitting slips away. In the darkness of this shame, Ethos strives to bring light.

We firmly believe most young men ought not hide their shortcomings out of fear of being seen. The ethos of Ethos is not to further shame people for their actions nor is it to just help them avoid sin. Rather, we seek to foster a culture of confession and affirmation, one in which we see the dignity of all. St. Pope John Paul II described chastity this way, labeling it a quickness to affirm the dignity of another person.

Most of us college men are not yet husbands or fathers, but this does not preclude us from purity appropriate to our stage in life. Through non-romantic, brotherly love, we can choose to offer ourselves as a gift. The routine functions of Ethos members, if done with heart and intentionality, can serve as this offering. Through daily phone calls and weekly group discussions, members choose to see one another for who they really are: fellow human beings undergoing real, difficult struggles but clinging to hope nonetheless. In building virtue communally, rather than individually, we can rise together when we fall.

As Mother Teresa said

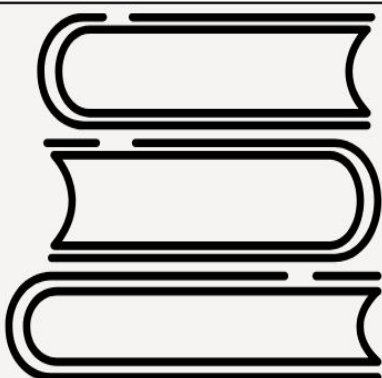
beautifully, “We can do no great things, only small things with great love.” If we expect to eliminate lust—or even pornography—from the face of the Earth, we might as well give up. However, just because we cannot accomplish this great task does not mean we should not strive, with great love, to benefit each soul who joins our humble organization. In the end, if—after thousands of phone calls, conversations, readings and reflections, recruitment efforts, events, and even awkward public announcements—just one young man manages to find freedom for genuine, chaste love, the entire fight will have been worth it. After all, there are few things more liberating than recognizing the dignity of the human body.

Beyond personal growth, the most rewarding part of my Ethos journey over the last two years has been seeing close friends accept God’s dignified plan for sexuality, stumble along the way, receive the support they need, and continue to strive for greater virtue.

Winning the “final battle” for marriage and family begins one uncomfortable conversation at a time. By introducing people to the alternative to lust and accompanying them as they uncover the love for which they are made, we can play a small yet incredibly powerful role quelling shame and bringing hope. Though the battle for chastity is uphill, I have faith that with enthusiastic and disciplined leadership, Ethos can help prevent souls from falling into the hell Our Lady of Fatima warned. More importantly than avoiding damnation—which alone can feel somewhat bleak—we aim to create a culture in which all people are free to live according to our dignified human nature. As is evident by our bodies, we are called to love and receive love from others, viewing ourselves and those around us as gifts made in the image and likeness of God.

Thank you for reading. Please pray for us. We will pray for you as well.

Kevin Sadler is the vice president of EthosND. He majors in Accounting with minors in Finance, Theology and Business and the Common Good. He can be reached at ksadler@nd.edu.



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for archived articles.



Groody Appointment *continued from front*

studying faith's role in addressing challenges of displacement and immigration. His most recent book, "A Theology of Migration: The Bodies of Refugees and the Body of Christ," included an introduction by Pope Francis and received first-place recognition from the Catholic Press Association.

As associate provost for undergraduate education, Groody oversees initiatives on curriculum development, academic integrity, advising, academic support, and scholarly engagement. Working closely with the Provost's office, he supervises, among other things, the Advisory Committee on the Academic Code and Policy, the Moreau First Year Experience course, and the Core Curriculum Committee. He also chairs the University Committee on the Honor Code and the Valedictorian and Salutatorian Selection Committee.

In 2025, Pope Francis



Image by University of Notre Dame

appointed Fr. Groody to serve on the General Council of the *Laudato Si'* Higher Education Center in Castel Gandolfo.

The Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development was created in 2016 by Pope

Francis with the unification of four Pontifical Councils. According to its website, the Dicastery works to "express the Church's solicitude in the fields of justice, peace, the safeguarding of all of Creation, as well as in those

that concern health and works of charity."

The phrase "integral human development" was first widely circulated by Pope Paul VI in his 1967 encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, in which he stressed

the importance of a holistic understanding of development, one moving beyond mere economic gain.

University President Fr. Robert A. Dowd, C.S.C. described the appointment in the Notre Dame news release as a "testament to Father Groody's deep commitment to leadership in service of the most vulnerable among us," and an "affirmation of Notre Dame's ongoing contributions to Catholic social thought, to integral ecology and to forming leaders dedicated to the common good."

Lucy Spence is a junior from McLean, Virginia majoring in the Program of Liberal Studies and piano performance, with a minor in philosophy. She can be reached at lspace@nd.edu.

ND Pornography Filter *continued from front*

in filter.

Holy Cross College applied a pornography filter to their Wi-Fi in 2009, one of the first schools in the country to do so.

The university's concern for sexually explicit content on campus is not new. The most recent iteration of the Responsible Use of Data & Information Technology Resources Policy from 2016 states, "When using Notre Dame's information technology resources, users must ... never use University resources to post, view, print, store, or send obscene, pornographic, sexually explicit, or offensive material, except for officially approved, legitimate academic or University purposes."

Following the 2018 petition, Paul Browne, former Vice President of Public Affairs and Communications, issued a statement via email to *Cruz*, saying that the university "condemns and abhors" pornography as "an exploitative menace."

"Our Office of Information Technology has the capacity to assist students in electing for filters on individual computers or phones," the statement reads. "Notre Dame is happy to assist in that regard. However, we expect our students and others not to patronize pornographic sites in the first place."

The university's more active stance will engage several campus resources, including Campus Ministry, Residential Life, and

Student Health and Wellness.

Fr. McCormick's email began by recognizing the difficulties of chastity. He continued, "Addressing this struggle can sometimes be even more difficult than reforming the habit itself, which is why conversations about this topic must be grounded in hope."

Fr. McCormick noted that the prevalence of explicit content in the digital age calls for greater pastoral support. "Unlike previous generations, you and your peers are no longer in deliberate pursuit of this content, which now enjoys greater prevalence, perceived anonymity, and a potent visual pull." He continued, "For many of you, accessing pornography has turned into a habit that is particularly hard to break in an environment where the material is only just a few clicks away."

He tied chastity into the Christian faith, invoking ascetic practices: "In the Christian tradition, we are invited to maintain a personal discipline in our embodiment of faith. Practices like fasting, prayer, and almsgiving serve to strengthen devotion, establish habits that are consistent with our goals, and aid in our identification of the greater purpose for our lives."

In addition to its use as a practical tool for cultivating virtue, Fr. McCormick emphasized that the filter provides every student with an opportunity for self-reflection, writing, "I encourage you to consider why it might be a useful tool in your formation as you continue to grow into the person

you hope to become both on and offline. Ask yourself: Where do I want to focus my attention? How do I want my desires to be shaped? And, perhaps most importantly, how can I honor the dignity of others even in the unseen spaces of the internet?"

The email recommended several counseling services and support groups like EthosND for students struggling with chastity and pornography, available through Campus Ministry and the University Counseling Center.

EthosND is a student-run organization dedicated to helping men grow in chastity. It offers fraternal support and accompaniment through small groups to "build a culture of strength, accountability, and spiritual resilience, empowering each man to live in alignment with his values and faith." Although similar support groups have existed in the past for women through Magdala Ministries, no active women's group currently exists on campus.

The email to students concluded, "I invite you to receive this message in the spirit it was intended: as a call for us to be our best selves, to honor the dignity of all, and to work together to create a more just and loving world."

In an interview with the *Rover*, President Emeritus and current Vice President of SCOP, Theo Austin, whom Campus Ministry consulted for the letter, provided clarification for the purpose of the filter.

Though SCOP originally rejected the idea of an opt-in filter when it was first proposed, Austin explained the reason behind its later acceptance. He underscored the need to choose to honor the dignity of others, assisted by the university.

"The idea is that a mandate is only effective if the organization mandating it has total control, but because everyone has their own data provider, and you can just switch off the Wi-Fi, you can't be helped unless you want to be helped. [This solution] is less concerned about a statement and more concerned about getting something that's helpful to the students who would want it or choose it," Austin said.

However, Austin also pointed out that the journey should not be made alone, and other tools used in conjunction with the filter would be most effective. He highlighted EthosND in particular, saying, "I hope that [the filter] can be a gateway to Ethos. I do think that Ethos is the more effective method of [growing in chastity] because every filter is only so good, and if you're really looking for [porn], you're gonna find it."

Austin emphasized that Tuesday's email is not the end of the journey towards honoring the dignity of others, both for individual students and the university's support: "How do we get [the resources] brought up at the beginning of every year, so that every new set of students on campus hears about it, so that it's not just some link buried

somewhere? We're going to try and put it on as many websites as possible, and then make its existence known every year." He also mentioned the possibility of including the resources in RA training to spread awareness.

Austin also highlighted the opportunities already available at Notre Dame, saying, "You have guys who are willing to journey with you. You have priests accessible. You have confession four times a day. I think there's a tendency, particularly with our generation, to put it off. But ... especially with pornography, there's an urgency to get out of this prison in college. Do it now."

Freshman Aaron Stadelman expressed support for the filter in a comment to the *Rover*, saying, "It'll guard you from temptation. You making an active choice of using [the filter] is a step forward in and of itself." Stadelman also noted his appreciation for the filter being optional, saying, "You wouldn't want the administration to encroach on your free will."

Instructions to install the filter are available through a link in the email as well as on the EthosND website. The Office of Information and Technology will maintain and regulate the filter.

Henry Omanga is a freshman from Houston, Texas majoring in philosophy and psychology. You can reach him at homanga@nd.edu.



It behooves a watchdog to bark. Good, Rover.



DPAC's Film Approval Process Suggests Little Oversight

Rover investigates questionable campus screenings

LYDIA POE
Staff Writer

Following the *Irish Rover's* February 2025 report that the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center's (DPAC) Browning Cinema screened several films containing sexually explicit content and themes critical of the Catholic Church, including *Babygirl*, *Conclave*, and *The Apprentice*, the *Rover* has endeavored to clarify the approval processes behind the screenings.

While questions remain about how films are selected and approved at Notre Dame's premier performing arts venue, conversations with long-standing partners suggest the process is informal and dictated by a single individual.

DPAC leadership declined to clarify how its film approval process operates or who is responsible for final decisions. While the center's website outlines procedures for reserving space and hosting events in DPAC, with approval pending event estimate, agreement, and planning meetings, it provides no information about content standards, approval criteria, or oversight for film programming.

The only listed requirements relate to eligibility: applicants must be a university department or a DPAC arts partner, and submissions must be made at least 45 days in advance. Events also require an academic partnership or co-sponsorship, meaning student organizations cannot independently host events without such collaboration.

Since February 2025, DPAC has continued to screen sexually explicit films, including *The Substance* (2024), *Rumours* (2024), and *The Devil's Bath* (2024), as part of its ongoing cinema programming.

DPAC Executive Director Ted Barron told the *Rover* in 2025, "For our cinema program, we select a mix of recent critically acclaimed films and classic films" packaged for their "Learning Beyond the Classics" series.

When contacted again this spring about the approval process and specific film criteria, Barron declined to elaborate further. "We have no comment for this inquiry," Barron wrote, directing the *Rover* to the DPAC website, which "includes a timeline of the center's history for reference."

The *Rover* contacted Ricky Herbst, DPAC Cinema Program Director, whom multiple sources identified as the primary contact for scheduling and approving Browning Cinema events. Herbst did not respond to multiple requests for comment, including on whether he is the sole decision-maker on film selections, whether others are involved in the approval process, and how Notre Dame's Catholic mission factors into those decisions.

After DPAC leadership did not provide answers, the *Rover* contacted several departments and community partners that had scheduled events at the Browning Cinema. The interviews suggest an informal system in which event approval goes through a single point of contact; however, it remains unclear whether Herbst is the sole decision-maker.

The Nanovic Institute for European Studies is a ten-year Browning Cinema partner on a signature European film series with Herbst. Morgan Munsen, Nanovic Institute Senior Research and Partnerships Program Manager, told the *Rover*, "We have a strong working relationship with Mr. Herbst and a streamlined process of coordinating film selection and cinema access each semester, which involves brainstorming themes and selecting a film series curator well ahead of time."

"[Herbst] is truly the lynchpin, though, as it is his expert work suggesting films and securing rights that allows things to move so smoothly and with such great results."

The only logistical challenge, Munsen wrote, is "coordinating the timing of the screening, because there are so many interested users (FTT Department, other academic departments, the Browning itself, etc.). However, reaching out early and having an established relationship with [Herbst] help us to navigate this 'challenge' without issue."

Chloe Misner, Artistic Director of New Industry Dance and primary producer of the annual FIELDWORKS Dance Festival at DPAC, told the *Rover* that her initial entry point to Browning Cinema was simply emailing Herbst with a proposal. "I don't know if there's more of a formal process," she said. Misner continued, "For me, it was definitely just reaching out with an idea and him being open to that," adding that the collaboration

"started organically."

When asked if there was any consultation with others before approving events, Misner said, "I don't know if there's somebody else that [Herbst] runs things through."

Per Misner, following initial approval, event coordination is typically handled by DPAC Cinema Production Manager Kevin Krizmanich, who manages event logistics such as staging, equipment, and post-screening discussions.

William Donaruma, Head of Production and Professor of Film, Television, and Theater, who taught the Moreau College Initiative film class culminating in a student showcase at Browning Cinema, described a similar experience to Misner. "There really isn't much to say," he wrote to the *Rover*. "I taught the MCI class that made the films and we just scheduled the event with Ricky Herbst."

The *Rover's* previous investigation found that *Babygirl*, a film featuring explicit sexual content, was screened in partnership with the Department of Gender Studies, which also sponsored a post-screening panel discussion. Such a co-sponsorship suggests departments are aware of standards, yet DPAC has not explained what, if any, content review occurs prior to approval.

DPAC describes itself as "essential to the University's vision and commitment to become a leader in arts research and creative practice," welcoming over 100,000 patrons annually.

University film programming is often curator-driven, with

either directors or small teams selecting films based on artistic and academic considerations rather than fixed content guidelines. However, at a Catholic institution like the University of Notre Dame, the absence of clearly articulated standards raises additional questions about how or whether the University's mission informs those decisions, especially as it screens films that directly challenge Catholic teaching.

Long-standing partners who describe the process as smooth also describe it as informal, relationship-driven, and dependent on a single individual, rather than a transparent institutional framework.

Munsen added, "We have nothing but positive things to say about the staff at DPAC—from Ricky and Kevin in the Cinema making our film series a reality, to the ticket office helping us keep track of attendance, to the kind and courteous ushers that help direct audience members."

To find more information about the 2025–2026 scheduled season of performances and films, visit the DPAC website.

Lydia Poe is a graduating senior from Kansas City. Three Italian cinema classes later, she can now predict the fight scene, doomed romance, and inevitable tragic end within minutes. If you have Dallas, Nashville or DC recs, she's your girl, well, until lpoe01@saintmarys.edu officially expires.

Gender as 'Trauma': Gender Studies Hosts Symposium

Graduate program's keynote calls for abolition of gender

BRIDGETTE RODGERS
Events/Photography Director

Notre Dame's Gender Studies Program hosted the 2026 Queer Studies Symposium titled, "(Dis)appearance," sponsored by the Franco Family Institute for Liberal Arts and the Public Good. Meant for graduate students, the symposium ran from March 26–28. Programming included a tour of the Raclin Murphy Museum and a printmaking workshop, four different panels consisting of graduate students, and a keynote lecture from Professor Marquis Bey of Northwestern University.

Established in 1988, the Gender Studies Program encompasses more than 100 students and 60 faculty members. Though there is no graduate degree offered in Gender Studies, graduate students may pursue a minor concentration in addition to their primary degree.

The "(Dis)appearance" symposium is the second annual event of its kind, following a 2025

graduate students symposium on "Queer (Un)belonging."

Bey is a professor of Black Studies at Northwestern University and holds joint appointments in Gender and Sexuality Studies, English, and Critical Theory. He is the author of "Black Trans Feminism" and "Cistem Failure: Essays on Blackness and Cisgender," both published by Duke University Press. His new book, "Nonbinary Life: An Autotheory," is set to be released on April 15.

Bey introduced himself using 'they/them' pronouns, saying, "The preference for 'they/them' pronouns to describe myself is an attempt to mark my irreverence toward the gender binary and to mark my tentative and always-in-process relationship to gender non-binaryness."

The keynote lecture for the symposium, titled, "Nonbinary Life and Living: An Offering," argued for the abolition of gender—a proposition that Bey recognized "makes people bristle." Bey proposed the question: "What if the categories we cling

to—categories that are, at base, non-consensual and often violent, colonial impositions—are not the grounds of liberation, but the architecture of confinement?"

"I mean non-binary as in abolish gender," Bey stated. "I mean non-binary as a wager that the demand to be a gender at all is part of the problem, an inherited protocol we keep mistaking for freedom."

Arguing that gender limits human freedom, Bey decried the "trauma" one incurs when approached by someone who assumes their gender. He called, instead, for a "more ethical relationship to one another, such that others are not non-consensually sorted and presumed before they even arrive onto the scene of the interaction."

In addition to his university position, Bey has been teaching in prisons for the past eight years. During his second year, he taught a class titled, "Queer Theory." According to Bey, "Queer theory was just the name of the course, a heading under which we were permitted to read certain authors

and engage certain ideas. What we were doing in each week, slowly but methodically, was creating, cultivating, practicing non-binary and non-gendered life, a way to do life, to commit to justice without having to commit to gender in order to do so."

Gender, Bey argued, is a state construct. "What needs gender first and foremost is the state," he said. "It invents and enforces it. ... The state makes its work easier by placing us into these bins, these fixed identities that we must carry, as though they were natural to us, whether through the assignment of sex at birth or the bureaucratic rituals of identification marking 'M' or 'F' on a driver's license, passport or birth certificate, the state demands gender, not as a reflection of who we are, but as an excellent way to exercise power over us."

"The abolition of gender then," Bey continued, "is a refusal to relinquish our ambiguity, our boundless possibility, to the systems that benefit from our containment."

"The work of abolition is ...

to create the condition where no one needs to survive anymore; if some need gender to feel held, affirmed, or safe, we honor that, for now, because the ultimate horizon of abolition is to move beyond even that," he said.

"So maybe the question is not whether gender works for now, but why it exists at all," Bey concluded.

During Q&A following the lecture, Bey responded to a question saying, "So for me, non-binary is ... an attempt to create another kind of world for us that does not have to rely on gender."

The Gender Studies Program declined to comment to the *Rover's* requests for information regarding the history of the conference and its planning process.

Bridgette Rodgers is a senior studying political science and theology. She is considering breaking the gender binary. Join zer in ze revolucion at brodger4@nd.edu.

NOVO Like a Champion Today

Spring 2026 course recommendations

The following courses are recommended on the basis of the professor’s demonstrated commitment to Catholic education and the positive experiences of the *Rover* staff. This is by no means a complete list of every excellent class offered in the upcoming spring semester, but we hope that this will provide readers with a starting point as they prepare to register for classes.

CORE REQUIREMENTS

- College Seminar: Image and Truth, Therese Cory (CSEM 23101)
- USEM: Boxing in America, Patrick Griffin (HIST 13184)
- USEM: Catholicism and the Disciplines, James Otteson (BES 13188)
- USEM: Cities and Suburbs in Postwar America, Fr. Stephen Koeth (HIST 13184)
- USEM: Perils and Promise of Liberal Democracy, Susan Collins (POLS 13181)
- USEM: Rights, Theory, Practice, Debates, Christina Bambrick (POLS 13181)

MOREAU INSTRUCTORS

- Anthony Pagliarini
- Bill Mattison
- Brian Mulholland
- Dan Philpott
- Forrest Spence
- John Sikorski
- Katie Cavadini
- Matthew Capdevielle
- Mike Seelinger
- Nicholas Teh

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND LETTERS

- Anthropology**
Experience of Conquest, Felipe Fernandez-Armesto (ANTH 30910)
- Art**
Painting I, Fr. Martin Lam Nguyen (ARST 20301)
Watercolor I, Fr. Martin Nguyen (ARST 20303)

- Constitutional studies**
American Political & Constitutional Thought, Vincent Muñoz (CNST 50002)
Jurisprudence and the US Constitution, Fr. Bill Dailey, C.S.C. (CNST 30446)

- Economics**
Introduction to Economics and Catholic Thought, Joseph Kaboski (ECON 33150)
Principles of Microeconomics, Kirk Doran (ECON 10010)
Principles of Microeconomics, Forrest Spence (ECON 10010)
Calculus Applications, Forrest Spence (ECON 10250)
Economics Proseminar, Forrest Spence (ECON 10000)
Financial Decision Making, Forrest Spence (ECON 30000)

- History**
The Priest and Nun in American Culture, Fr. Stephen Koeth (HIST 30638)

- Irish Studies**
Beginning Irish (Gaelic) I, Tara MacLeod (IRLL 10101)

- Philosophy**
Augustine’s Confessions, David Cory (PHIL 20206)
Aquinas on God, John O’Callaghan (PHIL 43806)
Introduction to Philosophy, David Cory (PHIL 10101)
Philosophy Gateway Seminar, Nicholas Teh (PHIL 30304)

- Political Science**
Junior Writing Seminar: Justice in Socratic Pol. Phil., Susan Collins (POLS 43001)
Liberalism and Conservatism, Patrick Deneen (CNST 30615 and POLS 30664)
Philanthropy & the Common Good, Jon Hannah (CNST 30423 and

- Program of Liberal Studies**
Great Books Seminar III, Jenny Martin and Tom Stapleford (PLS 33101)
Ethics, Felicitas Munzel (PLS 30301)

- Theology**
An Introduction to Christian Spirituality, John Betz (THEO 40861)
Biomedical Ethics, Paul Scherz (HESB 20637, STV 20637, and THEO 20637)
Catholicism and Politics, Dan Philpott (CNST 30215 and THEO 40627)
Catholicism and the Sexes, Abigail Favale (THEO 30821)
Devotional Lyric, Susannah Monta (THEO 30403)
Foundations of Theology: Biblical/Historical, Chris Howard (THEO 10001)
Foundations of Theology: Biblical/Historical, Fr. Kevin Grove (THEO 10001)
Foundations of Theology: Biblical/Historical, James Whitaker (THEO 10001)
Foundations of Theology: Biblical/Historical, Jay Martin (THEO 10002)
Honors Foundations of Theology: Biblical and Historical, Joshua Lim (THEO 13002)
Honors Foundations of Theology: Biblical and Historical, Joshua McManaway (THEO 13002)
Johannine Literature, Anthony Pagliarini (THEO 40132)
'Lost in the Cosmos': What Is 'Our Common Home'?, Ian Gerdon (THEO 20208)
Revelation and Reading Well, Joshua McManaway (THEO 30101)
Saints and the Theology of Warfare, Sr. Ann Astell (THEO 20264)
Science, Theology, and Creation, Fr. Terrence Ehrman, C.S.C. (THEO 20888)

- Theology (continued)**
Theology and Ecology, Fr. Terrence Ehrman, C.S.C. (THEO 20626)
Theology of Marriage, Fr. Paulinus Odozor (THEO 20606)
The Christian Theological Tradition I, Joshua Lim (THEO 40201)
The Christian Theological Tradition I, Katie Cavadini (THEO 40201)
The Dignity & Vocation of Men, John Cavadini (THEO 30233)
The Lay Vocation, Joshua McManaway (THEO 43002)
The Mysteries of Christianity, Anthony Pagliarini (THEO 20819)
The Mystery of Death: Theological & Philosophical Perspectives, Jay Martin (THEO 20848)
Theology of Technology, Paul Scherz (THEO 40602)

MENDOZA COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

- Business Honors Program Colloquium I, James Otteson (BES 23000)
- Business Honors Program Colloquium III, James Otteson (BES 23002)
- Business Law Concepts, Laura Hollis (BALW 30100)
- Business Law: Property and Negotiable Instruments, Jamie O’Brien (ACCT 40710)
- Corporate Governance and Catholic Social Teaching, Martijn Cremers & John Sikorski (BES 40470)
- Federal Taxation, Jamie O’Brien (ACCT 40610)
- God and Business? (Honors), John Sikorski (BES 20687)

- Business (continued)**
God and Business? Mary Hirschfeld (BES 20702 and THEO 20677)
Principles of Microeconomics, Forrest Spence (ECON 10010)
Why Business? - The Role of Business in a Just and Humane Society, James Otteson & John Sikorski (BES 30795)
Work and the Interior Life, Jeffrey Burks (BES 33100)

COLLEGE OF SCIENCE

- Science, Theology, and Creation, Fr. Terry Ehrman (STV 20888)
- Theology and Ecology, Fr. Terry Ehrman (STV 20626)

COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

- Aerospace Dynamics, Paul Rumbach (AME 40451)
- Design of Machine Elements, Timothy Ovaert (AME 30363)
- Engineering Design, Bryan Paulsen (EG10117)
- Engineering Design, Andrew Bartolini, Christine Maziar (EG 10117)
- Introduction to Design Thinking in Engineering, Mike Seelinger (AME 20210)



A Farewell to Our Seniors

Brenstina Barks Goodbye



James Whitaker - Humor Editor



Michael Canady - Editor-in-Chief Emeritus, Opinion Editor

Hailing from “outside of D.C.,” James “Unc” Whitaker is a doctoral student in the theology department. None of us were born when he started writing for the *Rover*, but we are sure glad he did! As the longest-serving member of the Masthead (ever), James has been a source of insight into the wisdom of the ancients. James will be missed for his ability to make jokes *Summa* style, karaoke prowess, and, most of all, for his house. Following this year, he plans to marry another *Rover* alum and finally finish his studies—unless he decides to get a “quick MBA.”

Michael “Minority Hire” Canady is another longtime staple of the Masthead, having served under the DeRuil, Schmitz, and Spence regimes. We are especially thankful for Michael’s noble fight against the PLS-ification of the *Rover* these past two years. Michael will be remembered for his similarity to a certain beloved animated character, performances of “La Bamba,” and editorial wit (seriously, this guy can write!). After graduation, we wish Michael luck as he continues teaching and, we hope, showing up to publishing nights at 10 p.m.



Haley Garecht - Managing Editor, Campus Editor Emeritus



Bridgette Rodgers - Events/Photography Director, Executive Editor Emeritus

After years of hearing her stories about Philadelphia, we are glad to send Haley “Liberal” Garecht back where she belongs. Although her time with us spanned only three semesters, her articles will be hard to forget, hard as we may try. Haley will be remembered for her “punchy” headlines, love of commas, and frightening GroupMe presence. After graduation, she will be getting married to a *Rover* alum (see above) and working in fundraising before heading to law school.

Bridgette “GCal Master” Rodgers is wrapping up an official degree in theology and political science, as well as an unofficial degree in Canva. We are particularly grateful for Bridgette’s ability to make us laugh at all times of the day, including many a 2 a.m. publishing night. Although we are sad to see her go, we are excited to see what she does with her many, many talents in the future—including singing, acting, writing, designing, organizing, party planning, and what the photo suggests.



BRENTINA IS BRENTON’S LITTLE-KNOWN FEMALE COUNTERPART WHO WILL LIKELY NEVER WRITE AGAIN. SHE WILL MISS OUR SENIORS GREATLY AND HOPES THEY DON’T HATE HER FOR THE PHOTOS SHE PICKED. THEN AGAIN, SHE IS JUST A FICTIONAL DOG. WOOF!



Campus Ministry Hosts Engaged, Married Couples Retreat

Engaged students reflect on resources for marriage preparation at ND

MADLINE PAGE

Staff Writer

Engraved on the Holy Family statue outside Coleman-Morse are the words of Pope St. John Paul II: “As the family goes, so goes the nation, and so goes the whole world in which we live.” This year’s fourth annual Engaged and Married Couples Retreat, organized by Marriage Preparation Coordinator Suzy Younger and Notre Dame Campus Ministry, aimed to provide engaged students with the tools to develop a holy marriage in line with this proclamation.

The retreat, which took place on Saturday, March 28, ministered to 19 couples and focused on the question, “What makes love last?”

Notre Dame’s Campus Ministry website states that “Marriage Preparation at the University of Notre Dame is meant to help prospective spouses reflect on the nature of the sacrament of Marriage as a life-long sacramental and vocational commitment.” According to the website, at least six months prior to their wedding date or graduation, couples can begin meeting with Younger for formational sessions. Topics such as the sacramentality of marriage, the theology of the body, fertility awareness, finances, and family boundaries are covered.

Younger oversees these individualized preparation sessions for engaged couples, as well as meetings with individuals and couples who are discerning marriage but are not yet engaged. Campus Ministry also provides assistance with completion of the Pre-Nuptial Investigation paperwork and works in partnership with the



Image by Irish Rover

Family Resource Center and the Married and Parenting Students Club.

When asked about the experience of being engaged while studying at Notre Dame, seniors Jackie Nguyen and Josh Weimer commented in a joint email to the *Rover*, “[It] has been really incredible. The amount of support both through Campus Ministry and other couples who are our beloved friends entering into engagement and marriage soon has been monumental.”

Younger elaborated on the retreat’s central question, “What makes love last?” She told the *Rover*, “We seek to explore that question in light of Dr. John Gottman’s psychological research on the seven principles that make marriage work and the Catholic Christian theology of the Sacrament of Marriage.”

She continued, “Through the integration of psychology, biology, philosophy and theology, we hope to draw each participant into a deeper friendship with God, with their very self, and with their (future) spouse so that they may have the healthiest, holiest, most joy-filled marriage possible.”

Throughout the day, couples participated in a series of

formation sessions led by Younger and Adam Smith, a Catholic marriage and family counselor from the local Smith Counseling Services. During the retreat, couples were introduced to practical strategies for cultivating a holy marriage and had one-on-one conversations designed to strengthen their relationship. Couples also had the opportunity to enjoy fellowship with other engaged students.

Senior Brian Buttner, who attended the retreat with his fiancée, Notre Dame alumna Jennifer Tennant, told the *Rover* that “the retreat ultimately is a method for educating young couples on productive ways to handle inevitable quarrels. ... An important distinction for marriage prep is that the sessions are not tests we pass or fail, but rather tools for us to better evaluate our relationship and sincerely use engagement to grow together rather than simply checking boxes.”

“In an age of relational ambiguity, especially between men and women, Catholic marriage establishes a joyous and stable communion which models that of the Trinity,” Tennant told the *Rover*. “It can

withstand all storms because of its sacramental graces and sculpts great saints if the couple enters into the sacrament well.”

She continued, “Retreats such as this ... provide spaces for couples to thoroughly prepare themselves to validly give and receive this sacrament and build a robust foundation for their lives together.”

The retreat concluded with a reflection on marriage offered by Father Bill Dailey, C.S.C. and a time of Eucharistic Adoration and Confession. Participants left the retreat with a personalized 100-page binder, containing activities and date-night prompts to further nourish their relationship.

“I believe that the most fruitful part of the retreat for students is to have practical skills to nurture their fondness and admiration, manage conflict, and build a shared mission and vision for their life,” Younger noted.

Since the retreat’s inception in fall 2023, it has aided in the formation of 95 undergraduate, graduate, and law school student couples. Although the retreat is primarily oriented toward Notre Dame students, participants from St. Mary’s and Holy Cross are welcomed as space is available.

Younger compared the retreat to the formation seminarians receive before entering the priesthood, saying, “When we look at the incredible formation our priests are receiving to prepare for their vocation to the priesthood and to receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders, it is equally important that we give a similarly robust and integrated formation for couples preparing for their vocation to marriage and to receive the Sacrament of Matrimony.”

Campus Ministry also

supplies resources to students who are single or dating. Younger hosts a semesterly “Dating Under the Dome” talk, exploring what discerning a vocation to marriage looks like in the college setting. Last semester’s topic was “In the Waiting” and discussed ways to redeem the time spent waiting for clarity on vocation. This semester, Younger hosted a talk titled “Red Flag? Or No Big Deal?” on April 14.

Nguyen and Weimer emphasized the significance of Campus Ministry’s support during their engagement: “[We] decided to begin meeting with Suzy prior to getting engaged to receive as much counsel during our dating discernment process as we could, and it was one of the best decisions we made.” They continued, “Inviting the Lord into our dating relationship through Suzy helped prepare us to receive the gift of engagement—and marriage—with utmost readiness (or as much readiness as we could have). The retreat was a great way to learn practical ways of managing conflict, interacting with one another, and building our shared unity.”

“We are the domestic Church, and the strength of society and of the Church depends upon the strength of the family,” Younger affirmed. “This ... begins with creating [a] strong and lasting, faithful marriage.”

Madeline Page is a sophomore studying biology. One of the many reasons she is grateful to be a human is that courting behaviors do not include the ripping off of heads, as with praying mantises. To discuss more humane methods of dating, email mpage4@nd.edu.

Gender Project

continued from front

of a podcast facilitates authentic storytelling, saying, “One of the weaknesses of our culture in talking about gender is that it offers a very simplistic framework for what are often very complex ways that people are wrestling with something. ... And so I thought [of] using this kind of modality, rather than just a book or an open-ended interview, [of] something like a series that presents both theological and philosophical formation but also allows the listener to really encounter someone who’s living this out in a way that is really trying to be faithful, that is really trying to walk toward Christ, especially in this part of their life.”

Three of ten episodes have been released so far, titled “Us & Them,” “Gender & Generativity,” and “Body & Story.” These episodes include conversations with a religious sister, philosophers and

theologians, and Christians who share their stories of discipleship amid their struggles with gender.

A senior living in Pasquerilla East Hall praised the project to the *Rover*, saying, “As Christians, we are called by Jesus to love one another. I think Favale’s work opens a door to dialogue on gender that fosters the communion we are called to.”

Favale emphasized that care and compassion for the individual in no way precludes speaking the truth with clarity; in fact, both are necessary in a pastoral approach to complex issues. She told the *Rover*, “A lot of the narratives about gender in our culture either really focus on truth, or they really focus on love. And so what I’m really trying to do in this podcast is both, is to really weave those together, because in the Christian understanding of reality, those are one. There really is no separation between truth and love.”

Hearing and sharing stories like Honorata’s demonstrates

that reality rarely fits into “the simplistic narratives we tell” to promote our own ideologies, according to Favale. She described her experience interviewing Honorata, saying, “Her story has really stuck with me, just because I think it’s so important for us to hear so that we’re ready to receive people in whatever way they come into the Church, and also to realize that detransition is really also very complicated. And it’s not easy, and not everything can be undone. And so I think sometimes we expect things to be kind of neat and tidy in a way that is not realistic.”

She continued, “[Honorata] just has such a beautiful heart, and her story ... [is] a really important one for people to hear who are in the Church, just to be able to receive people in their complexity.”

A sophomore living in Lewis Hall echoed Favale’s sentiments, telling the *Rover*, “If we want to convince people and have a shared understanding of values,

then relationships come first. And I think a lot of people have a tendency to want to see ideologies and positions on the political spectrum first, without seeing a person.”

She continued, “It’s easier to dialogue with a person than dialoguing with a position on the political spectrum. So I think that it’s important to foster relationships ... and then to bear witness by the way that you’re acting.”

Favale emphasized that sharing the stories of those who struggle with their biological sex does not only help others who are experiencing gender discordance, but also provides valuable lessons about discipleship for every Christian.

She concluded, “I really wanted to tell stories about faithful Christians who are wrestling with this because I think there’s also an assumption sometimes from people in the Church that people who struggle with questions

around gender are kind of out there in the culture and not in the Church, when in fact, they are in the Church. And we have, I think, something to learn from that kind of faithful wrestling that we see in these stories.”

The first three episodes of GAP can be accessed on major podcast platforms, including Spotify and YouTube, while the remaining seven episodes will be released biweekly until the end of June.

Abby Strelow is a sophomore studying the Program of Liberal Studies, theology, and Italian. After two years of suffering from the eternal winters and mountainless landscape of Indiana, she is escaping the Midwest to spend the next semester in Rome. You can send her (digital) postcards from South Bend at astrelow@nd.edu.



McGrath Institute Releases Short Film on Mary

“Mary, Icon of the Church” film spotlights Mary’s essential role for the Church today

LUKE FISHER
Staff Writer

On this year’s Feast of the Annunciation, the McGrath Institute for Church Life (MICL) released a new short film titled “Mary, Icon of the Church.” Featuring Professor John Cavadini, the film dives into major Marian Dogmas and their relevance to Catholic devotion and life today.

“We really wanted to create a film that both in content and form led someone into devotion to Mary,” Corynne Staresinic, a research fellow at the MICL’s Sullivan Family Saints Initiative and the primary researcher behind the film, told the *Rover*. “The conversation started last spring; then, in the summer, we started to draft a plan for the film and began working with [Professor] John [Cavadini].”

The film is divided into three acts, each focused on a different Marian Dogma. “Act One, we focus on Mary as the Mother of God with her title Theotokos; Act Two, on the Immaculate Conception; and Act Three on Icon of the Church, where we get into the Assumption or Dormition of Mary,” Staresinic



Image by Wikimedia Commons

explained.

She continued, “We wanted to take the three doctrines of Mary that are often misunderstood or kept at a distance and bring them fully into focus, so that people can have a deeper understanding of what they mean. These three titles capture who Mary is in the life of the Faith.”

“I thought it was an absolutely beautiful film,” remarked Isabelle Glunz, a freshman who saw the film at a dinner hosted by the MICL. Glunz told the *Rover*, “It very well portrayed the Catholic Church’s love for our Mother, and it showed the universality of this devotion to her and honored her role in salvation history.”

The film prominently features depictions of Mary from across campus, including medieval artwork in the Raclin Murphy Museum of Art, stained glass and sacred paintings in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, and the Marian statue at the Grotto of our Lady of Lourdes. In addition, three off-campus icons of Our Lady of Vladimir, Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, and the Dormition of Mary appear throughout the film.

The film draws on pre-existing theological concepts to explain Mary’s role as the Icon of the Church. “A lot of the thinking and research on Mary was grounded in a text called ‘Mary: the Church at the Source’ by Hans Urs von Balthasar and Joseph Ratzinger,” Staresinic explained.

She continued, “It [gets at] the deeper thesis, which is that in order to understand the Church, Mary is the embodiment and archetype of the Church. When each of us belong in the Body of Christ, we’re called to live just like Mary did, to receive God into our whole lives [and] being just as she did. [Mary] teaches and shows us what it means to be the Church, and this is where

the devotional aspect comes in.”

Gabriel Wollak, a freshman studying philosophy, told the *Rover* that he was drawn to the film’s emphasis on devotion to Mary. “I think what Cavadini wanted to convey to those watching is to grow in devotion to Mary, and that requires the Dogmas. The Dogmas are all oriented towards how we should devote ourselves to her—how we should understand her. She’s the God-Bearer, and having that understanding and then growing in devotion to Mary is so fundamental to living a deeply spiritual and fruitful life.”

Luke Fisher is a freshman from Detroit living in Siegfried Hall. He is majoring in theology and also struggling his way through the Program of Liberal Studies. If he’s not trying to get his classes to move outdoors or calling philosophers “cuckoo for cocoa puffs,” you can usually find him doing the chapel crawl around campus. To join in (or chat), reach out at lfisher8@nd.edu.

Inside Campus Ministry’s Abide Series

Faith-based community night tackles challenging topics

BETSY WEBER
Staff Writer

Every Wednesday night in the Coleman-Morse Lounge, students gather for Abide, a night of praise and worship, small group discussions, and a guest speaker talk. This weekly event, sponsored by Campus Ministry and run by students with the help of Sister M. Paula Van Thienen, S.S.M., aims to welcome students into a community that will aid them in their faith journeys.

Bethany Berlage, a senior at St. Mary’s College, serves on the Core Team for Abide, a group of six students who help with the planning and logistical aspects. Reflecting on what makes Abide unique, Berlage told the *Rover* that new students show up each week, often by themselves: “You get to share ... things with people you don’t know. It’s a welcoming space where community is created even among people who are theoretically strangers.”

Core Team members begin the night by leading the attendees in a group icebreaker and introduce upcoming news in Campus Ministry. Then comes an opening prayer and a time of praise and worship. A guest speaker is invited to offer a twenty-minute talk on a



Image by Bethany Berlage

particular topic.

“We first choose the topic, then the people,” Berlage explained. Each topic typically follows a semesterly theme. During the fall semester, the theme was “Hot Topics: Cold Cereal,” in an attempt to engage hard and controversial topics through a Catholic perspective. Session topics included talks such as “The Death Penalty is a Pro-Life Issue.”

One freshman attended a session titled, “Is it Safe to Come Out to Jesus?” with a talk given by Raquel Storey, who struggled with same-sex attraction and has worked with Eden Invitation. He characterized Storey’s message to the *Rover* as: “Because I love God, I’m going to trust in His plan for me and figure it out, or

wait for and find out eventually what He’s calling me to.” The student continued, “After all these struggles, the Lord came through for her ... and she did a really good job of balancing the sensitivities of the topic with the truth.”

More recently, Abide finished a Lenten series titled “From Darkness to Light: Journeying in Hope.”

Collin Noon, a member of the Core Team and a senior studying electrical engineering, reflected on the completion of the Lenten series. He told the *Rover* that he was better able to “see the glory of God through this time of struggle ... especially through the speakers we lined up.”

One of those speakers was Fr. Pete McCormick, C.S.C., who

gave a talk about a Chicagoan who, after falling away from the Faith, had a transformative encounter with a broken statue of Mary near a dumpster. Noon commented, “It was just this beautiful story ... God created us as whole, as beautiful, but even though we’re broken, we’re beautiful in our brokenness, and we can all go back to God no matter what situation we’ve been in.”

Another speaker during Lent was Nick Ramirez, a first-year Ph.D. student in moral theology at Notre Dame who gave a talk on building a healthy relationship with alcohol.

Ramirez told the *Rover* that his focus was “giving some ideas and principles about how to engage virtuously with alcohol as a Christian.” Ramirez mentioned that Abide is on a mission to “invite people to speak about different topics that the students thought were relevant to their lives.”

Students are encouraged to engage with the speakers’ messages in small groups led by members of the Core Team with guiding questions given by the guest speakers. Noon commented on the community built by the small group discussions, “It’s the social interaction that still keeps you coming back.”

Afterwards, snacks are provided with time for

socializing. Ramirez, when asked if he would be open to coming back as a participant, answered, “I definitely would ... it’s open to all students, both graduates and undergrads.”

Noon explained that Abide doesn’t have a specific series lined up for the last few weeks after their Lenten Series, but that “we’re trying to ... go along with a similar theme ... of how do we still put God as number one despite going through everything that we go through in college?”

When asked about what sets Abide apart from other Campus Ministry events, Noon told the *Rover* that at other events, “You get praise and worship, or you get a speaker that comes in, or you get small groups discussing different topics, but you don’t really get it all combined in one. And I feel like that’s what I love about it and what’s kept me going this whole time.”

Betsy Weber is a freshman studying theology and physics. When she’s not putting her flag up in the math help room, you can find her out running in South Bend, soaking up sun in the Lewis courtyard, or dreaming about her next Target run. If you’re interested in any of the above, feel free to reach her at jweber23@nd.edu.



Meta, YouTube Found Liable for Creating Addictive Platforms

Social media companies forced to pay millions in damages

RAY WEBBER

Staff Writer

Jurors of a Los Angeles County court recently found Meta and YouTube liable for the negligent creation of addictive online platforms. The case, *K.G.M v. Meta et al.*, pertains to a young woman—referred to as KGM—who sued Meta and YouTube for creating addictive products that fostered her childhood depression and anxiety. On March 25, jurors decided that Meta and YouTube should pay a combined six million dollars in damages.

Some Notre Dame students supported the ruling, suggesting it was a justified way of penalizing addictive platforms that they agreed were dangerous. However, most students interviewed by the *Rover* argued instead that it is the role of households, with the help of federal legislation, to restrict social media use among children—not the platforms themselves.

Many prominent sources have described *K.G.M v. Meta et al.* as a landmark case in social media legality, as this case marks the first time Silicon Valley has been found responsible for social media addictions. Some attribute this success to the jury's focus on the algorithmic design of social media platforms rather than on the content they allow—a focus which puts *K.G.M v. Meta et al.* in contrast to many other Silicon Valley lawsuits.

Meta responded to the jury's decision by claiming that “teen mental health is profoundly complex and cannot be linked to a single app.” On behalf of YouTube, Google spokesman



Image by Nicholas Marr

José Castañeda stated that the “case misunderstands YouTube, which is a responsibly built streaming platform, not a social media site.”

Several anti-social media advocates have voiced their support for the ruling and its future implications on social media restrictions. Tennessee senator and co-sponsor of the Kids Online Safety Act, Marsha Blackburn, said in response to the ruling, “Big Tech has done everything in its power to blame parents and children instead of taking responsibility for designing their products to addict and harm children.”

Connecticut Senator Richard Blumenthal said in a public statement, “This verdict is the beginning of real justice for parents across the country that have suffered and faced heartbreaking loss from Big Tech's greed.”

However, other prominent figures opposed the ruling, raising legal concerns over corporate liability and free speech. Eric Goldman, a professor at Santa Clara University, criticized the legal legitimacy of trauma by

stating, “KGM's life was full of trauma. ... It is highly likely that most or all of the other plaintiffs in the social media addiction cases have sources of trauma in their lives that might negate the responsibility of social media.”

Leaders of Fight for the Future, an advocacy group for digital rights and online privacy, supported the decision but expressed concern for the precedent it sets, stating, “It's good that people are suing these companies and winning in court to reduce their power and force them to change their policies, but we are concerned how the verdict in KGM's case will be used to advocate for laws that could threaten free speech online.”

Free-speech advocate Ethan Zuckerman sued Meta in 2024 over concerns similar to those contained in *K.G.M v. Meta et al.* Explaining the reason for his lawsuit, he said, “I'm suing Facebook to make it better. We're bringing this lawsuit to give people more control over their social media experience and data and to expand knowledge about how platforms shape public

discourse.”

Other debates that have circulated through the media following *K.G.M v. Meta et al.* have emphasized the role of parents in preventing their young children from accessing the dangers of social media. Meta's legal defense argued throughout the case that Meta and YouTube already have strict guidelines concerning the age of their users and, beyond those guidelines, it is not their responsibility to dictate who has access to their products. However, the jury decided the very design of their products negligently creates addictions which are not made clear in their guidelines.

Many Notre Dame students shared stories of their own struggles with social media addictions.

A student in Alumni Hall told the *Rover*, “I gave up Instagram for Lent because of how much I was using it. The instant gratification, dopamine structure of the apps is dangerous, but the most concerning is the short-form content for me personally. I think the short-form content is what makes the apps so addictive.”

He added, “Even if social media websites created stricter guidelines for children, there's not much you can do if a kid gets a laptop in their hands. There's not a realistic, non-invasive way to truly prevent children from using social media. It should be a family matter.”

A student living in Keenan Hall held a similar view concerning who is responsible for social media addictions. He explained, “I find social media very similar to drug usage.

Parents should prevent their children from using cocaine, but they shouldn't be legally responsible if their kids end up using it. Just like drugs, we need both governmental and legal restrictions that prevent access to them, but parents should also help prevent these things from happening. Ultimately, we need parents, legislators, and individuals to take up collective responsibility for the addictions our society has.”

A senior from O'Neil Hall told the *Rover*, “It's crazy how these apps suck you in. Sometimes, I just want to take a one-minute scroll for a quick break, and then 15 minutes pass by and you don't even notice. The algorithm and even the motion of scrolling creates that addiction. ... Social media websites are the ones responsible for addictions because of how they create their products to be addictive.”

A student from Farley Hall focused her criticism on the algorithm itself, saying, “[S]ocial media apps purposely put stuff onto your feed that they know appeals to your interests and what you've liked before. The algorithm creates a time-suck because you are constantly being fed with stuff the app knows you are addicted to. I'll be on Instagram reels for an hour, but it will only feel like a couple of minutes.”

Raymond Webber is a sophomore philosophy major. His favorite hobby is listening to Bishop Fulton Sheen homilies on YouTube. Contact him at rwebber2@nd.edu.

Supreme Court Prepares to Change Mail-In Voting Rules

Fourteen states would have to change their election policies ahead of midterms

ZACHARY NICHOLSON

Staff Writer

The Supreme Court is about to issue one of the most impactful election law rulings ahead of the 2026 midterms. The justices' reactions to oral arguments in *Watson v. Republican National Committee* (RNC) indicated that they may strike down the state's law which allows mail-in ballots collected after election day to be counted.

Watson v. RNC concerns a Mississippi election law made during the pandemic. The law allows absentee ballots to be counted, provided they are postmarked by election day and arrive no later than five days after. Many conservatives have challenged the law, claiming that it conflicts with U.S. law mandating an official Election Day. RNC counsel Paul Clement argued the law could



Image by Michael Barera / Creative Commons 4.0

lead to “chaos and suspicions of impropriety,” should late ballots change election results.

The Court's decision in *Watson v. RNC* will have important implications for how an election is defined. Mississippi claims that voting is an action completed when the voter mails their ballot, while the RNC asserts this is incompatible with current federal law. During oral arguments, Clement pointed out that the federal understanding of Election Day reflects an older

view that ballots need to be cast and received on the same day.

President Trump has also pushed for restrictions and increased documentation for voting with the SAVE America Act, which would require photo identification for voters, along with other procedures.

Should SCOTUS rule against Mississippi, the decision would require fourteen states and four other U.S. jurisdictions to require voters to factor in postal delivery time, possibly lowering

overall turnout.

Senior Max Barton held a nuanced view, telling the *Rover*, “Some people, especially college students, can't get to their polling places and should have a way to vote. The problem is that if you accept mail-in ballots after the election day ... [i]t opens the door to some degree of dishonesty. Election Day is Election Day, but I think you should get an exception if you're attending university or [are] far away from your home polling center.”

Barton added, “I don't think anyone should [receive] an absentee ballot; there should be an application-based system where those who need that form of voting can receive [one]. In my view, there's something uniquely American about people going to their specific polling center, so I think it ought to be a federal matter.”

Junior J.C. Cruz opposed attempts to abrogate mail-in voting, stating, “A large portion of the voter base is young, college voters. The past campaigns of Biden and Harris were mainly composed of young, college-educated people. If you reduce the ability of college students to participate in an election, it could sway the voting outcomes in elections.”

Cruz added, “I think there should just be checks and balances on the system, but not its removal.”

The Supreme Court will likely release its decision in mid-June.

Zachary Nicholson is a first-year finance student. He can be reached at znichols@nd.edu.



Notre Dame Students React to Conversion Therapy Ruling

SCOTUS rules Colorado's ban unconstitutional

ANDREW BLAKE

Politics Editor

The Supreme Court ruled in favor of Colorado counselor Kaley Chiles' ability to practice conversion therapy—talk therapy which discourages gender transition or same-sex attraction—with clients under 18 years old. The decision, coming on March 31, 2026, overruled a Colorado law which prohibited counselors from using conversion therapy while allowing them to provide “assistance” in gender transitions.

The Colorado statute defines conversion therapy as “any practice or treatment by a licensee, registrant, or certificate holder that attempts or purports to change an individual's sexual orientation or gender identity, including efforts to change behaviors or gender expressions or to eliminate or reduce sexual or romantic attraction or feelings toward individuals of the same sex.” The law does not prohibit counselors from providing “acceptance” and “support” for “an individual's coping, social support, and identity exploration and development . . .”

In their 8-1 majority decision, the Court ruled that the law “regulates speech based on viewpoint.” In the Court's majority opinion, Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote, “... Colorado



Image by Kjetil Ree / Creative Commons 3.0

seeks to regulate the content of Ms. Chiles's speech. When it comes to issues of human sexuality, some of her clients 'are content with' their sexual identity and orientation and want help only 'with social issues [or] family relationships.' But other clients seek her counsel on how to 'reduce or eliminate unwanted sexual attractions, change sexual behaviors, or grow in the experience of harmony with [their] bod[ies].' And in those cases, Colorado regulates how Ms. Chiles may respond.”

The Court added, “The First Amendment stands as a bulwark against any effort to prescribe an orthodoxy of views, reflecting a belief that each American enjoys an inalienable right to speak his mind and a faith in the free marketplace of ideas as the best means for finding truth. Laws

like Colorado's, which suppress speech based on viewpoint, represent an egregious assault on both commitments.”

Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, the Court's sole dissenting voice, argued that “... First Amendment principles have far less salience when the speakers are medical professionals and their treatment-related speech is being restricted incidentally to the State's regulation of the provision of medical care.”

Jackson based her dissent in part on the “danger[s]” of conversion therapy, writing, “Ultimately, scientific evidence supports the conclusion that the anticipated harms from conversion therapy are twofold. First, conversion therapy stigmatizes the patient, telling them that their gender identity or sexual orientation is something to be fixed, rather

than accepted. ... Second, conversion therapy sets patients up to fail by giving them an unattainable goal. Some patients have described that experience of failure 'as a significant cause of emotional and spiritual distress and negative self-image.’”

“Even though these kinds of regulations are inherently viewpoint based, in the context of medical care, a State can certainly require the medical professionals it licenses to stand on one side of an issue. ... Though these proscriptions certainly promote a viewpoint, in this context, that alone does not suffice to establish a presumptive First Amendment violation,” Jackson added.

Justice Gorsuch countered Jackson's arguments that Chiles' speech is subject to medical regulation and therefore exempt from First Amendment protections. He wrote, “This argument echoes Colorado's claim that it seeks to regulate only conduct, and they falter for similar reasons. If a government could reclassify talk therapy as speech incident to conduct, it might just as easily do the same for speech incident to 'teaching or protesting.' ... Governments could easily wield all manner of laws regulating some conduct to silence speech they disfavor.”

Sophomore Noah Schoenfelder supported the ruling and emphasized the voluntary nature of conversion

therapy. Schoenfelder explained his opinion to the *Rover*, saying, “If [Ms. Chiles] ... had been forcing conversion therapy on someone it would be a different story, [b]ut because the counselor was going along with what her clients asked of her, there is no reason that the state of Colorado should limit what she says.”

Sophomore Kevin Bizily shared his thoughts with the *Rover*, explaining, “The Court's ruling reflects the First Amendment's prohibition against content and viewpoint discrimination. States may regulate how medical professionals practice, but they cannot bar one side of a debate from speaking.”

The Notre Dame College Republicans condemned the “acceptance” and “support” of gender transitions which Colorado's law allows, telling the *Rover*, “So called 'gender-affirming care'—an Orwellian euphemism for mutilation—is evil enough when performed on adults. When performed on children, it is horrifying beyond comprehension.”

The Notre Dame College Democrats declined to comment on the ruling.

Andrew Blake is a sophomore studying political science and PLS. He can be reached at ablake5@nd.edu.

In Defense of Public Schools

Public education as a training ground for encounter

MADLINE PAGE

Staff Writer

“Please introduce yourself with your name, grade, and pronouns,” my theater director said as he passed out the scripts for our first rehearsal of “Mamma Mia.” “Mamma Mia” is fun—classic music, great lines—but alas, it also includes pre-marital sex as a constant plot feature.

Uncomfortable situations like this were typical throughout my 12 years of public education. Stories like mine can push parents towards private Catholic schools; a religious education promises shelter from the moral storms that their children might otherwise face.

But to what extent *should* we be shielded? Catholic education can spare students from exposure to anti-Catholic beliefs—but can one learn to properly love those who hold them, as Christ commands, without such encounters?

My intent is not to defend the rigor of all public schools, but rather, through my own experiences, to argue for

their distinctive—and often underappreciated—value as a training ground for the world's spiritual battlefield.

My theater director was in an openly homosexual relationship—his partner helped with costuming. Over four years in the department, I became frustrated with my director, with the immoral content of the productions that he chose and his purposeful and repeated introduction of LGBT ideals.

And yet, I also saw the extent to which he cared for the LGBT students within the department, offering genuine love for students who were confused and hurting.

Separately, I saw how he gently mentored the special needs students, encouraging them to participate fully beside their peers, and ensuring that each got a chance to have a moment in the spotlight. In short, I saw him: a man who truly cares for his students, despite his distance from the truth.

I was presented with similar situations in the classroom. There was a girl in my AP Biology class who once attended my Catholic parish. Her family

had drifted from the faith, instead latching on to left-wing ideologies. She went by she/they pronouns, was involved in our town's Pride organizations, and staunchly supported abortion.

But as I got to know her, the once-blinding glare of her opposing worldview dimmed, teaching me to see her not as an opponent but as a student who shared my unusual fondness for insects and gleefully held our teacher's Madagascan hissing cockroaches with me (to the horror of some of our classmates). I saw my friend who cheered louder than anyone else when I announced to the class that I was going to Notre Dame. When I look at her, I see a girl whom the Lord loves—and whom I love, too.

It is this realization that ultimately showed me the value of public education. Yes, some views and lifestyles I encountered were contrary to Catholic teaching—but the people who held them were still His. Encountering others with markedly different views taught me to see them as such, to love them and let the Lord love them through me.

In the Gospels, Christ

consistently exhorts us to carry His light into *all* the dark places: to welcome the foreigner, eat with the tax collector, kiss the leper. Sharing His love is not a nicety, but a necessity.

“Go, and preach the Gospel to all nations,” Christ tells us (Matthew 28:19). How can we share His word if we don't know how to converse with unbelievers? How can we preach the Gospel to all nations if we don't encounter the world?

It is easy to be Catholic at a Catholic school. But it is also easy to forget that, beyond the shadow of Our Lady extending from the golden dome, living the faith is not nearly so simple. Public school is a microcosm of the real world, in which the majority of those one encounters do not live their lives in accordance with Catholic morality. Public education can prepare students for such encounters, teaching them to juggle the authentic expression of their faith with genuine love for the outsider. Unfortunately, I think that this distinctive value is often overlooked and undervalued, especially in Catholic circles.

I do not pretend that public

education is perfect—far from it. There are real benefits to a Catholic education, and real challenges with a public one. However, I maintain that there is a unique good that can come from public education: learning the art of loving encounter. I am aware that attending public school can be difficult, frustrating, and sometimes saddening. But so is life; so is true encounter with a broken world.

I am incredibly grateful to attend a Catholic university. Still, I firmly believe that 12 years in public school were integral to my faith formation. Through my experiences in the public school system, I began to see “the other” not as alien, but as someone who still bears the likeness of our Lord. I learned how to encounter them, and most importantly, how to love—and let Him love through me.

Madeline Page is a sophomore studying biology, theology, and journalism. She can be reached at mpage4@nd.edu.



Home, Work, and Motherhood

Meredith Thornburgh on the domestic economy

DARIUS COLANGELO

Culture Editor

“**M**eredith Thornburgh is a Ph.D. candidate in Economic History at Princeton. As a historian of the domestic economy, her research examines how social and technological changes over the twentieth century shaped the modern relationship between work and family. However, as a mother planning to stay at home to raise her kids, the domestic economy is more than a research fascination for Thornburgh. The following is adapted from an interview with the *Rover* on economics, motherhood, and why household labor is largely unrecognized as work.

The dichotomy between professional work and staying at home is a recent development. Thornburgh explained that “for most of [the nineteenth century], everyone was working towards the same productive enterprise in their different ways, men, women and children.”

During the twentieth century,

the domestic and productive arenas became increasingly divided. Thornburgh explained that the male breadwinner “was engaged in some industrial form of labor that furnishes a monetary wage, and then it’s primarily the work of the woman to take that paycheck and turn it into the stuff of life.” “Work” and “production” became increasingly a matter of what was done outside of the house.

Thornburgh argued that this distinction was formalized with the development of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)—a metric developed in the wake of the Great Depression to assess the economic health of a country.

GDP, Thornburgh noted, fails to account for domestic labor: “If you provide a service for someone in your household, it’s not considered productive. In fact, for housewives in particular, none of their work counts towards the GDP. They don’t count as employed in any of our labor force participation rates, [nor] any of the main statistics we use to understand

the country’s productive efforts towards the common good.”

However, the exclusion of domestic labor was practical rather than malicious. Thornburgh explained, “the [point] wasn’t [that domestic] work ... is not really valuable, so we’re not putting it in, or [that] it’s not real work.” The problem was the availability of data. She continued, “The formal economy ... produces receipts and contracts and things that we can ... collect and see, oh, this person was paid this much during this quarter for this service that they provided ... the home doesn’t generate any of that kind of record keeping, nor is there as clear a monetary basis for what we would award the value, even if we did have records of what people did.”

Thus, in a measure of economy that assesses only GDP, domestic labor falls through the cracks. Thornburgh continued, “It has remained a very sore spot over the course of the 20th century, that what women do, or what anyone who kind of works in the household sphere does, doesn’t

count towards what we now think of as the economy.”

Thornburgh argued that these trends contributed to the feminist movement of the 60s and 70s.

She said, “You have to look at what changed immediately before that to prompt that social change. The two changes that I talk about in my dissertation are the technological change in the modern home ... [and our] thinking about the economy and what counts as work.”

To Thornburgh, the devaluing of the home can portray professional life as the sole path to fulfillment for women. Reflecting on her own life, Thornburgh recalled, “The cultural messaging seemed to me that I would waste my potential by not doing something professionally.”

At the time, it seemed impossible that life at home “could be ambitious and challenging, and in such a manner that you are developing your human faculty and pursuing excellence in virtue. Not just virtue like being nice

or being patient, but even intellectual virtues.” Thornburgh continued, “It made me wonder whether I was even supposed to get married or have kids.”

“Around the time of the pandemic ... it just occurred to me, if I could realize my potential in some ... professional sphere, how would that potential go to waste in the home? It would be used in the home to some positive effect for myself or my family.” Settling on this idea, Thornburgh decided to commit herself to the work of a mother, and plans to stay at home to raise her growing family after she defends her Ph.D. thesis.

She concluded by urging appreciation for those who have dedicated themselves in the home: “Call your mom and thank her for everything she did.”

Darius Colangelo is a junior majoring in mathematics and the Program of Liberal Studies. He can be reached at dcolange@nd.edu.

Can Homer Save Healthcare?

How studying classical literature can revitalize human dignity in medicine

ARTUR KRUTUL

Staff Writer

“**T**he good physician treats the disease, the great physician treats the patient who has the disease.” —William Osler, founder of Johns Hopkins Hospital.

The almost universal dread of the doctor’s office is a well documented fact. From the sharp sting of needles to the clinical chill of foreign hands and the potential of bad news, a visit to the doctor is rarely an experience any sane person finds exciting. However, the discomfort often extends beyond physical pain; there is a growing sense that modern medicine has lost its human touch.

As the healthcare industry becomes increasingly commercialized, the patient-doctor relationship has devolved into something cold, transactional, and often detached. While systemic reform may be an answer, Dr. Tod Worner suggests a different solution—one found not in bureaucracy, but in the ‘Great Books.’

In a talk hosted by the Notre Dame Hippocratic Society titled “The Literary Physician: How Timeless Literature Can Revive the Vocation of Medicine,” Worner, an internal medicine physician and Editor-In-Chief of the *Journal of Evangelization and Culture*, addressed this dehumanization.

He began by identifying significant cracks in the



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foundation of modern medical training, noting that “the field of medicine is becoming increasingly focused on making you an extraordinary scientist [and] analyst.” In his view, the discipline has become “very materialistic and [has started] to bleed the soul out of the practice of medicine.”

Notre Dame senior George Xu, an incoming medical student at Indiana University, agreed: “the culture of modern medicine undervalues human elements of care like compassion and concern for a patient’s overall life.” He argued that, given the overwhelming “volume of patients,” it is nearly “impossible to care deeply about every individual ... without some source of external motivation stemming from faith or a philosophical belief in human dignity.”

Worner’s solution begins with reframing the healthcare profession. He warned that medical training can be

“deforming” if it prioritizes technical efficiency at the expense of the human spirit. Worner crafted a sharp distinction between a job and a vocation, defining the latter as “a sacred calling to accompany others.” For a physician to truly succeed, Worner emphasized, he must view the patient not as “a problem to be solved” but “a human being to be accompanied.”

Bethie Benz, a sophomore pre-med student, agreed that medicine values technicality over empathy. In a comment to the *Rover*, she said, “Modern medicine attempts to cover up the lack of care for patients by requiring students to speak to volunteer and clinical experience while more heavily focusing on student’s capacities for organic chemistry and performance on the MCAT. By introducing pre-med students to this standard at the beginning of their pursuit of medicine, it heavily reinforces an approach to care as something

scientific to be mastered, rather than a vocation to encounter the vulnerable—something Dr. Worner emphasized as vital to his approach to medicine.”

Worner proposed literature as a way to bridge the gap between technical skill and human accompaniment. Advocating for the study of classical literature and poetry, he compared literature to the “ballast”—a stabilizing element for a ship on high seas. Literature likewise supports physicians “when the wind starts blowing really hard” and “when things are going really wrong: health, loneliness, and most natural things.” Worner suggested that after reading great works, “you are left with little inner ballasts about the really important things.”

Literature, by painting a more realistic picture of the human condition than medical knowledge alone, allows for a physician to truly understand the human narrative. “The lessons on how to be a doctor don’t come solely from medical literature ... They also come from Dostoevsky, and Jane Austen, and Robert Frost, and Emily Dickinson, and Maya Angelou and William Shakespeare,” Worner said.

He continued, “When you read a novel, you put yourself in place of the hero or the heroine. You feel her difficulty within you, regret her bad choices and celebrate her good ones. Momentarily, they become your choices.”

In the low points during residency or when a doctor is

burned out, literature finds a physician at his place in his life’s story, reminding him to look beyond himself and live in the present moments with his patients. In the eyes of Worner, the fullness of life lies in “things that you say offhandedly, or the subtle moments you have with people that seem so small.”

Sadly, living in the present is difficult in the medical field. Sophomore Alex Moon noted to the *Rover* that “at a certain point, a doctor can get sort of used to human suffering, because they need to maintain a certain level of professionalism.” By engaging in the timeless narratives of other people, a physician can live their vocation without getting lost in the forest of desensitization.

Being a doctor is similar to the journey of Dante in the *Divine Comedy*. Midway upon the journey of each physician, he must ask the question: “Why keep going?” Literature emerges like Virgil, warning of the hardship that will befall the journey, but also giving hope and motivation to continue. A doctor has promises to keep, and miles to go before he can sleep, and miles to go before he can sleep.

Artur Krutul is a pre-med student and aspiring poet-doctor. When he’s not spitting bars, crashing cars, or puffin’ cigars, he can be reached at akrutul@nd.edu.

Poem: Easter (from The Temple, 1633)

Author: George Herbert

Rise heart; thy Lord is risen. Sing his praise
Without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand, that thou likewise
With him mayst rise:
That, as his death calcined thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold, and much more, just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part
With all thy art.
The crosse taught all wood to resound his name,
Who bore the same.
His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key
Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song
Pleasant and long:
Or, since all musick is but three parts vied
And multiplied,
O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part,
And make up our defects with his sweet art.
I got me flowers to straw thy way;

I got me boughs off many a tree:
But thou wast up by break of day,
And brought'st thy sweets along with thee.

The Sunne arising in the East,
Though he give light, & th' East perfume;
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising, they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many sunnes to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred, but we misse:
There is but one, and that one ever.

Pieces I Never Wrote

Humor Editor's swan song

JAMES WHITAKER
Humor Editor

After five years and 34 articles for the *Rover*, there's still quite a list of headlines and ideas I never got to publish:

- Astronomy Tenures "Flat-Earther," PLS Hires Illiterate "Scholar"
In the spirit of diverse "academic inquiry"
- Medieval Institute Tailgates Escalate, Desperate for Attention
Now features live executions and stretching on the rack
- ND Marketing Becomes "DepartmeND of BraNDing"
Running out of words with "nd" in them
- Irish for Reproductive Health Distribute Firearms on Campus
ND Administration still does nothing about it

Let Me Air My McGrievances
A critical view of ND's provost

Students Rally In Force for ICE Mass
Anti-immigrationists feel "disappointed and tricked"

Observer and Rover Conspiracy Revealed
Newspapers publish the exact same stories with different headlines, no one notices



Image by Wikimedia Creative Commons

Arts & Letters Starts New "Vice President" Major
Prepares students for one of ND's thousands of "VP of" jobs

Fr Greg Haake Named VP of "World Domination" by Barron
Children of Mary, Militia of the Immaculata gear up for crusade

Campus-Wide Ban on Pornography Fails Again
"Dome cites academic freedom for "legitimate academic research"

Provost McGreevy Asked to Define "Catholic Character"
"Uhhhhh... like Georgetown?"

New Catholic Administrators Hired by DEI Initiative
Catholics in ND administration considered "endangered minority"

StuGov Hosts Red, Yellow, Green Excellence Dinners
For students with sunburns, jaundice, and hangovers, respectively

Baraka Bouts Sued Over "Diverse" Male Participant
"Ouch, that hurt!" says top female competitor

James Whitaker is very grateful for his five years with the *Rover*, most of all because it was how he became friends with the love of his life. You can send them congratulations on their upcoming wedding at jwhitak5@nd.edu and hgarecht@nd.edu.



Holy Week 101

The desperate student's guide to getting a seat

HALEY GARECHT
Managing Editor

Holy Week 2026 has come to a close. This year saw an unprecedented number of attendees, many coming from far and wide to experience Mass at Notre Dame. As a first-timer, I was woefully unprepared for the chaos that was the Basilica from Palm Sunday to the Easter Vigil. After several Masses spent in the dreaded black chairs, I have compiled a list of suggestions for those hoping to land a coveted pew seat next year:

1. Hire a substitute

Pros: Easiest option
Cons: Most expensive

If you are not lucky enough to have a fiancé who will wait in line for 12 (!!!) hours on Holy Saturday, consider paying a friend to wait for you. Notre Dame's minimum wage per hour is \$15, and you should be prepared to provide snacks, a lawn chair, an umbrella, and some sort of video game system to keep your substitute entertained. I would

estimate the total cost at around \$2k, but it depends on the cost of the Nintendo Switch.

2. Basilica sleepover

Pros: Great memories
Cons: Uncomfortable (and illegal)

If you're looking to form some lasting memories and don't mind breaking a few rules, try sleeping in the Basilica before your Mass of choice. The church technically closes at 9 p.m., so you'll need to sneak in early. The pews are about as comfortable as the dorm mattresses, so your biggest problem is hiding from Fr. Brian until you can snuggle up in your row of choice.

3. Postpone Confirmation

Pros: Front-row seats
Cons: Morally dubious

For any precocious middle-schoolers already worried about their collegiate Holy Week experience. This could take a variety of forms, including intentionally failing your



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catechesis classes, sleeping through your Confirmation Mass, or pretending you can't decide which saint to choose (for, like, eight years). The wait will certainly be worth it, since incoming Catechumens have the best seats in the house. I recommend consulting a priest before you try this—any C.S.C. worth their cassock should understand.

4. Sneak into the choir loft

Pros: Beautiful view
Cons: Can ya sing?

I recommend this approach for anyone with a friend in the Liturgical Choir, a decent voice,

or an unused blue robe. You'll need to blend in, so if you know (or a family member has told you) you can't sing, work on your lip-syncing skills. Spend a few Tuesdays at O'Rourke's karaoke to sharpen your skills beforehand or you risk incurring the wrath of several burly baritones.

5. Be a reader

Pros: Center of attention
Cons: Requires literacy

This option is for the prima donnas who look at all the catechumens and think, "Why isn't more attention on me right now?" You'll have to apply and go through a rigorous audition

process, which may or may not include reading the Psalm upside down while members of Campus Ministry heckle you.

The few options remaining are a bit too difficult to recommend to our readers. You could sneak onto a high school sports team (they always seem to get four or five pews or some reason). Devout readers could even consider joining the C.S.C. Perhaps our best advice is to become a canonized saint with a relic in the basilica's reliquary—you'll always be bodily present for every single Mass without having to move a muscle. But if you want a seat at the vigil this side of heaven ... good luck.

Haley Garecht is a senior studying political science, Irish studies, and constitutional studies. She can't believe that her last published article in the *Rover* is a humor piece, since she is not particularly funny. To thank her for finally retiring from the humor section, please email hgarecht@nd.edu.



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