

Students react to housing statement

ALISON O'NEIL
Staff Writer

Town hall meeting addresses concerns regarding recent housing announcement

The Office of the President released an un unexpected announcement at midnight on Wednesday, September 13, stating that next year the university will begin to require students to live on campus for six semesters. The announcement, which was sent out in the form of an email, also alerted students to a town hall meeting held less than 24 hours after the email's release. Wednesday evening, dozens of students filed into 101 DeBartolo to ask questions, air their grievances, and get more information. University President Reverend John

Jenkins, CSC, opened the gathering with a brief speech regarding Notre Dame's values of the "education of the mind and heart" and a "sense of community," which he said would be enhanced by the new six-semester policy. "As I think about it, you certainly learn a lot in your biology classes, your math classes, philosophy classes, whatever," said Fr. Jenkins, "but you learn a lot by just dealing with one another, by being part of a community, being supported and supporting others. I think that's a part of what you learn at Notre Dame. And we think the residence halls are a critical part of that."

After Fr. Jenkins's speech, Erin Hoffmann Harding, Vice President of Student Affairs, took the stage to describe the planning behind the new policy and to field questions. Hoffmann Harding cited statistics on the ethnic



makeup and socioeconomic backgrounds of on- and off-campus students. She stated that wealth was the most reliable predictor of students' choice to remain on-campus. Scholarship students, Hoffmann Harding said, were more

likely to live on campus than to move away. In terms of other demographics, men were more likely to move off-campus than women, and minority students were more likely to remain on-campus. Speaking about age

statistics, Hoffmann Harding also stated that in the past, 2-3% of sophomores have chosen off-campus living, compared with 11-15% of juniors and over 60% of seniors. Factors controlling students' choice to "opt

out of the community," as Hoffmann Harding put it, included the presence of off-campus friends, a desire to explore the community, and complaints about campus food.

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"Do you consider yourself an orthodox Catholic?"

KEVIN ANGELL
Managing Editor

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Executive Editor

Senators question Notre Dame Law professor

Senate Judiciary Committee Democrats questioned the relationship that the Catholic faith of nominee Amy Coney Barrett would have on her impartiality

as a federal judge during her confirmation hearing on September 6, 2017.

In May, President Donald Trump nominated her for a position on the United States Court of Appeals for the seventh Circuit. Barrett is a constitutional law professor at Notre Dame Law School, where she has worked since 2002. She has prior judicial experience clerking for US Supreme Court Associate Justice Antonin Scalia and Judge Laurence H. Silberman of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit.

Prior to the hearing, Professor Barrett's colleagues at Notre Dame's law school expressed unreserved confidence that she was qualified and apt to serve as a federal judge. The law school's entire faculty signed a letter endorsing her nomination, writing that "they have a wide

range of political views, as well as commitments to different approaches and judicial methodology and judicial craft" but nonetheless unanimously agree that Barrett will "be an exceptional federal judge."

As Senator Todd Young detailed in his introduction of Barrett, she was appointed by United State Supreme Court Chief Justice Roberts to the federal judiciary's advisory committee on appellate rules, selected by peers to chair the federal courts section of the American Association of Law Schools, was rated "well qualified" by the American Bar Association, and "unanimously endorsed" by her fellow Supreme Court law clerks.

Despite her extensive qualifications, Senator

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A grave time for "graven" images

ZOSSIMA PROJECT

A Catholic theology of statues

Recently, statues have been a flashpoint in American public life. In Charlottesville and in many other cities around the country, statues of public figures have been the center of debates about how our history is remembered, preserved, and honored. The Church's history has not been exempt from these discussions; there have been multiple incidents in the past few months where prominent statues of Catholic saints have been vandalized or broken. Given this uptick of religious iconoclasm, it is worth revisiting the rich tradition of sacred images in the Catholic Church.

Iconoclasts throughout Christian history have pointed towards the Ten Commandments for

justification, particularly Exodus 20:4:

"You shall not make for yourself a graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth."

However, the Scriptural view of sacred images is not so clear-cut. In the book of Numbers, God commands Moses to make a serpent out of bronze, and those that look upon the serpent are healed. Additionally, in Exodus and 1 Kings, Moses and Solomon create statues of various angels, animals, and other objects for the Ark of the Covenant and the Temple furnishings. So the commandment to not make any graven images is nuanced. God Himself seems to command the Jews to violate one of His commandments. However, these images in the Temple and on the Ark are not *idols*. They are not sacred into of themselves, nor are they

intended to be the object of worship, unlike, for example, the Golden Calf.

In the early Church, attitudes towards statues and other sacred images were largely shaped by the revolutionary nature of the Incarnation. As St. John Damascene writes in *On Holy Images*, "Previously God ... absolutely could not be represented by an image. But now that He has made Himself visible in the flesh and has lived with men, I can make an image of what I have seen of God."

At first, Christian art and imagery was only present in the hidden catacombs of the martyrs. However, as the Roman persecutions ceased and the Church could be more open, her sacred art became more prominent and widespread. Nowhere is this more notable than the altar cross: at first, most churches placed an image of a lamb above their altars.

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“Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire.”
-St. Catherine of Siena

Not just for nerds

EVAN HOLGUIN
Executive Editor



The educative benefits of tabletop gaming

This year, as the first year students experienced the crowds and chaos of Welcome Weekend, I also experienced some crowds and chaos of my own. I was at the sold out Indianapolis Convention Center (and Lucas Oil Stadium!) for GenCon 50. If you don't know what GenCon is, I don't blame you. I hadn't heard of it before last May, when one of my friends asked if I wanted to join him on the premier convention for tabletop gaming. GenCon, short for Geneva Convention (in honor of its founding location, Geneva, Wisconsin), is an annual convention where tabletop gamers, creators, and enthusiasts gather to play, purchase, meet, and more. In short, it is fun. Yet, I find myself often afraid or embarrassed to talk about my experiences at North America's largest tabletop gaming convention. It is my experience that many people look upon tabletop gaming (role playing games and indie board games) with a kind of "other" focus, meaning that it is a hobby enjoyed by some distant group unconnected with one's own interests. There is, I think, something subversive in this mentality; it can at times be demeaning to those who participate in the hobby,

and it writes off a whole cultural phenomenon without recognizing its beneficial implications.

I am not under the impression that everyone needs to enjoy gaming. After all, tabletop gaming is a type of play, and people of course enjoy different kinds of play. What is of concern is the tendency to write-off tabletop gaming as mere nerdy escapism, and as a result miss out on the many benefits of the hobby. I would like, however, to focus on the educational benefits of tabletop gaming.

The first example of tabletop gaming as an educational tool is a fairly standard one: it is a device that can be used to encourage learning engagement in a K through 12 system.

Consider the example of the quintessential role-playing game, *Dungeons & Dragons*. This system is designed to utilize basic mathematics and reading comprehension. The whole host of actions in *Dungeons & Dragons* are based around a system of roles and added bonuses. Each action can be equated an algebraic function, where x is the dice roll. By couching a lesson in algebraic functions in the guise of a game, a teacher can encourage learning through play and also answer the age-old mantra of grumpy math students, "When am I ever going to use this anyway?"

In a related way, roleplaying games encourage reading comprehension because they offer students a text to read and understand that they enjoy. Most RPGs have corresponding rulebooks, and in order to play the game one must both read and understand the text of the rulebook. And, because there are so many different genres of games, it is easy to find a student a game he or she is interested in playing, and by connection a book he or she is interested in reading.

In addition to encouraging

engagement in the standard education system, tabletop gaming offers for players of all-ages experience and practice with an important workforce skill: improvisation.

Improvisation is a skill that most everyone needs sometime in their career. It appears, at face value, a fairly simple skill: it is merely the ability to act, unprepared, according to some set of knowledge or stimuli. But, as many people who have been interrupted during a presentation or report can attest, it is an art easier defined than enacted.

Though tricky at times, improvisation is a skill like any other, meaning that one needs merely to practice it in order to improve. There are a few ways to practice: you could make it your habit to be interrupted during presentations frequently; you can take an (often expensive) improvisational comedy class; or, you could get into the hobby of tabletop gaming.

Consider what a tabletop game is: you are given a list of information—character qualities, skill statistics, in-game knowledge, etc.—and asked to act accordingly. Of course, there is strategy involved, but as in life, strategy only takes you so far. It is easy to hit a series of bad roles in any type of game, leaving you far from the position to act out your plan. What results is the need to connect the information provided to you in a new way.

Sound familiar? Of course it does, because this is the same method and practice used whether you are answering questions at a press conference, or the guest star on *Whose Line is it Anyway?*. What tabletop gaming offers is nothing different than the skill showed in these examples; it just comes in a different (and, in my opinion, more enjoyable) package.

I conclude with my favorite educative function of tabletop gaming: social education.

Many board games and most role-playing games require the players to appropriately read and act off of the social cues of their companions. In fact, there is a growing number of games which focus heavily on personal reactions.

Take, for example, the role-playing game *Masks*, which is a teenage superhero game which focuses gameplay just as much on the interpersonal relationships between the characters as it does on beating the supervillain.

A game and a system such as this can be an invaluable resource for players on the Autism spectrum, because it gives them a venue which to practice their understanding of typical social interaction. This venue even has stakes attached—negative behavior can lead to negative reactions. In this way, role-playing games offer an analogous model to everyday life in a safe environment.

Even better, the educative powers of tabletop gaming does not extend merely to those who have trouble with typical social behaviors. A well-moderated game filled with a variety of players also enables socially typical players to learn how to best include and incorporate those who struggle with social cues.

As with all education, I will wrap up with a bit of homework. I encourage my reader to go and check out a tabletop game, whether it be an indie board game like *Settlers of Catan* or a roleplaying game like *D&D* or *Masks*. Read the rules. Play it if you want. But take the time and consider the many ways it could be used to enhance one's education. And, of course, have some fun!

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Fr. Martin's bridge: welcome, but in need of repair

PROF. DANIEL PHILPOTT
Faculty Contributor

Fr. James Martin, S.J., a winsome and widely read writer about all things Catholic and Jesuit, proposes to build a bridge between LGBT Catholics and the leadership of the Church. He published a book this past summer, *Building a Bridge: How the Catholic Church and the LGBT Community Can Enter Into A Relationship of Respect, Compassion and Sensitivity*, which received much attention in the Catholic press. Critics, including a reviewer in the left-leaning *Commonweal*, question why Fr. Martin scarcely incorporated the Church's teachings about sexuality and marriage into his proposal. I will also raise this question. But not just yet. Building a bridge is a very Christian thing to do.

The Christian life assuredly involves obedience to the moral law but also much more: laboring to repair what is broken. Bringing together people and groups who are at odds, healing wounds, repentance, and forgiveness are all, in the theology of the Church, the work of reconciliation, of which the Apostle Paul exhorts the Church in Corinth – and us – to be ambassadors. The Letter to the Ephesians describes Christ as the one who preached peace by “destroying the dividing wall of hostility” and reconciling estranged communities through His death on the cross. To work for repair is to live out the Eucharist, as Pope Benedict XVI explained in his apostolic exhortation of 2007, *Sacramentum Caritatis*. It is to heed the Beatitude, blessed are the peacemakers. And it is to practice mercy, the virtue that Pope St. John Paul made the

theme of his pontificate and that Pope Francis has placed at the center of his own.

Fr. Martin opens his book with the shootings at a gay nightclub in Orlando, Florida, in June 2016 and thus draws our attention to violence against gays and, by extension, to mockery, marginalization, and other forms of mistreatment over many centuries. Not long after the shootings, Pope Francis called on Catholics and other Christian communities to apologize to gays whom “[the Christian community] has offended.” He thus extended a practice of *mea culpa* that Pope St. John Paul II performed with respect to over 21 people groups and historical episodes. This is authentic Catholic repair work.

Fr. Martin also rightly reminds us that reconciliation begins with the initiative of God, who “demonstrated his own love for us . . . while we were still sinners,” as Paul wrote to the Church in Rome. Calling upon the Church to imitate this initiative, Fr. Martin draws our attention to the story of Zacchaeus in the Gospel of Luke, in which this corrupt tax collector climbs a fig tree to see Jesus above the crowd. Jesus gazes upon Zacchaeus and says, “I must stay at your home today,” leading Zacchaeus to turn his life to justice. In like manner, Pope Francis has extended his hand to people estranged from the Church through dramatic gestures like telephoning them. This, too, is the work of repair.

Fr. Martin has built numerous friendships with LGBT Catholics (to use his term), describing how, over three decades, he has “listened to their joys and hopes, their griefs and anxieties, sometimes accompanied by tears, sometimes by laughter.” His commitment to repair is personal and pastoral. He is not only the designer of a bridge

but also a construction worker, offering his own loving labor to span a chasm that troubles him.

It is out of sympathy for Fr. Martin's bridge that I see in it the need for some critical repairs. Reconciliation means the restoration of right relationship – people overcoming obstacles to right relationship with one another and to God. Healing the wounds of the past is essential. So are the Church's moral teachings, through, which define the content and contours of right relationship. In a YouTube video that Fr. Martin taped in response to his critics, he defends his scant reference to the Church's teachings by explaining that everyone already knows them and that the depth of disagreement over them inhibits his construction project. Better to begin with what we agree upon, he says.

But can such a bridge succeed in spanning this chasm? The inhabitant of one side of the chasm, which Fr. Martin calls the “institutional church,” meaning “the Vatican, the hierarchy, church leaders, the clergy, and all who work in an official capacity in the church,” does not propose these teachings as arbitrary rules or atavistic obstacles to harmony but rather as the very pathway to happiness, flourishing, and salvation that Jesus Christ sets forth. The Second Vatican Council both emphasized this connection between moral norms and intrinsic human fulfillment and called upon moral theologians to reflect upon it further. Essential, not incidental, to this fulfillment is the complementarity of male and female in marriage and the generative character of sexuality. Through this complementary and generativity, the Bible depicts God's very creation and redemption of the world, as when Hosea describes God's

espousing Israel to Himself or when Ephesians analogizes the relationship between husband and wife with Christ's love for His bride, the Church. Reason may discern the truth of the norms as well, the Church teaches. The church, then, cannot omit chastity – for gays, for lesbians, for all of us, each in our own condition – even silently or tacitly from the work of repair.

Omitting the truth of the Church's teachings about mercy and sexuality places strain on one of the pivotal selling points that Fr. Martin offers for his bridge: mercy. Mercy is compassion for the suffering of others that is realized through restorative acts. Unstructured by clear moral norms, however, restoration will lack meaning: What requires restoration? Restoration to what? Were past wrongs and unjust exclusions the results of the Church's norms themselves? Or of a failure to accompany their truth with compassion and outreach? Lacking an end or standard, mercy will suffer confusion and even a deepening of wounds when bridge crossers discover that inhabitants of the other side did not mean what they had thought or hoped.

Fr. Martin's silence about norms also confuses another point upon which he insists, that the Church call the LGBT community by its chosen name (or by a variant like LGBTQ, etc.). To omit this name, he says, is to disrespect the people who claim it. Has Fr. Martin considered the Church's reasons for reluctance, however, or has he dismissed them out of hand? Over the past half-century, LGBT activists have campaigned not simply for compassion and respect, which they rightly deserve, but also for a wholesale revision in norms of sexuality and marriage that the Church

has taught over the entire course of its history and that virtually every known civilization has upheld. They have striven to reinvent homosexuality as not just an inclination but also an identity, one whose expression in sexual acts then would be cruel to deny. Hence, they are LGBT (or a variant) and members of the LGBT community. And they have won no less than a Supreme Court decision in favor of the right to marry persons of the same sex.

This claim to identity, though, does not square easily with the Church's firm and constant teachings. The *Catechism* speaks respectfully of homosexuals, and Pope Francis of gays, which can be understood to mean persons of deep seated and enduring inclinations. Some Christians have argued that these inclinations can be expressed as gifts that can be channeled towards affectionate yet chaste friendship between members of the same sex. Understandably, some may want to take another step and render the inclination itself as an identity, perhaps expressing the giftedness of the whole person. Yet many in the Church worry that to make this move is to accept the wholesale reinvention of human sexuality and marriage and to negate the Church's teaching. Pope Francis, with whom Fr. Martin is keen to align himself, has spoken often and directly against “gender ideology,” which holds that the complementarity between male and female has no basis in nature and is entirely culturally constructed. Francis has also spoken against definitions of marriage as other than between man and woman. The nomenclature that respect requires, then, is not as clear as Fr. Martin makes it out to be.

Though Fr. Martin wisely installs two lanes on his bridge,

calling LGBT Catholics to respect the hierarchy of the church and not merely the reverse, his lane running to the Church omits consideration of another issue that greatly worries the Church: religious liberty. Over the past decade, merchants, employees, colleges and universities, and religious institutions have been threatened with the loss of jobs and livelihoods for refusing to accept a wholesale reinvention of human sexuality and adhering to traditional norms of marriage and sexuality. Differences over religious liberty widen the chasm that Fr. Martin wishes to ford and cannot be ignored if his bridge is to have two credible lanes.

Let us fix, not nix, Fr. Martin's bridge. It is worth saving because overcoming enmity, building trust, and exercising mercy are the stuff of the Church's ministry of reconciliation. Unless the bridge is fastened and girded by the truth of marriage and sexuality, though, it will not stand. A restructured bridge would reflect the holistic, both/and character of Catholic teachings, involving repentance, inclusion, forgiveness, and the rejection of all unjust discrimination, structured by the church's firm and constant teachings, and cemented together by religious freedom.

Fr. Martin might reply that such a bridge would see little traffic. As I think he would agree, though, reconciliation occurs step by step. It may have to begin with partial crossings and meetings in the middle. This, too, though, counts as traffic.

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Tolkien and the Catholic imagination

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Editor-in-Chief Emeritus

Editor's Note: This essay is adapted from a paper—"Tolkien, Chesterton, and the Catholic Imagination"—that the author delivered at the Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture's 2016 Fall Conference.

The imagination is a funny thing. It comes and goes. Unlike the ability to ride a bike, for instance, the ability to imagine does not remain with one for life. The gift of imagination must be cultivated lest it be lost.

At one point in the recent past, I worried that my generation was losing its ability to imagine—but that was before I began law school. There, I discovered that law students, at least, have no trouble imagining seemingly infinite inane hypothetical scenarios for purposes of determining the contours of, say, contract law—an impoverished form of imagination, but it counts for something. Here, however, I wish to focus on a more fruitful exercise of the imagination, one that, if cultivated correctly, can contribute to the transformation of vision that living a Christian life demands.

If the imagination is our ability to perceive things not present to the senses, then a central feature of the *Catholic* imagination must be that it allows us to perceive God's hand at work everywhere and in all aspects of life. Reading Christian novels is one fruitful way in which we can cultivate an imagination that allows us to achieve this transformation of vision.

Flannery O'Connor writes that the Christian novel is not a novel *about* Christianity but one "in which the truth as Christians know it has been used as a light to see the world by." This is why J.R.R. Tolkien, author of *The Lord of the Rings* and a vast array of related works set in his Middle-Earth, can affirm that his is a fundamentally Catholic work of art despite its complete lack of overt reference to religion. In his work, the truth as Catholics know it is the light that illuminates and gives meaning to

an otherwise unfamiliar world.

Tolkien saw man as a sub-creator, through whom the light "is splintered from a single White to many hues, endlessly combined in living shapes that move from mind to mind." The artist as sub-creator mediates, in a way, between God and man, refracting the light of the Gospel into different hues that reach men where they are. Tolkien aimed to enrich God's creation through his myth-making via "the elucidation of truth, and the encouragement of good morals in this real world, by the ancient device of exemplifying them in unfamiliar embodiments, that may tend to 'bring them home.'"

One thematic illustration from *The Lord of the Rings* may reinforce the value of elucidating truths by "exemplifying them in unfamiliar embodiments."

One aspect of the Catholic imagination underlying Tolkien's work is the ideal of sainthood and heroic virtue. That we are all capable of heroic virtue and are called to holiness—to sanctity—is a basic truth of the Catholic faith. The Fathers of the Second Vatican Council described this universal call to holiness in *Lumen Gentium* when they wrote that "all the faithful, whatever their condition or state, are called by the Lord, each in his own way, to that perfect holiness whereby the Father Himself is perfect." The reader of Tolkien's story will come to see that many of Tolkien's heroes are not superheroes. They are ordinary people who were called upon to do extraordinary things—not unlike Jesus' Apostles—and they exemplify the humility and obedience that we all strive to embody in our quest to become saints. The ennoblement of the humble is a major theme of both salvation history and Tolkien's mythology.

Two of the main heroes in *The Lord of the Rings* are Frodo and Sam, the hobbits whose task it is to carry the Ring into the heart of enemy territory and destroy it. Tolkien explains, "The Hobbits are ... really meant to be a branch of the specifically *human* race ... They are made *small* ... mostly to show up, in creatures of very small physical power,



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the amazing and unexpected heroism of ordinary men 'at a pinch'." He writes that the story contained in *The Lord of the Rings* is told through the eyes of the hobbits because it is meant to exemplify a recurrent theme: "The place in 'world politics' of the unforeseen and unforeseeable acts of will, and deeds of virtue of the apparently small, ungreat, [and] forgotten in the places of the Wise and Great."

This theme is illustrated in the story itself when one of the characters admits that the seemingly foolhardy quest to destroy the Ring "may be attempted by the weak with as much hope as the strong." He then adds, "Yet such is oft the course of deeds that move the wheels of the world: small hands do them because they must, while the eyes of the great are elsewhere."

When Frodo volunteers for the task of carrying the Ring, it is clear that he is almost surprised to find himself doing so. He is described as speaking "as if some other will was using his small voice." Despite his wish to remain in Rivendell and enjoy some well-earned peace and quiet, Frodo is depicted instead as finally aligning his will with some will other than his own in choosing to accept the quest, which comes to be seen as Frodo's personal vocation—

that is, as his unique calling to contribute something to the building up of the good, the true, and the beautiful that *no one else* is called upon to or, possibly, can contribute. Despite his reluctance to play the hero, his ultimate obedience to the call makes Frodo a type of the Christian saint—a kind of crypto-Christian in a pre-Christian world—who is faithful, obedient, humble, and prepared to potentially sacrifice himself for the sake of the quest.

Readers who care to flip to the back of the book to look at Tolkien's carefully worked out chronology of events will find that Frodo and the rest of the Fellowship set out from Rivendell on their quest on December 25th, the same day that the Church celebrates the nativity of Jesus. Rest assured that this was not merely coincidence.

Frodo and Sam's only nourishment as they struggle to reach the end of their journey is a kind of Eucharistic bread given to them by the Elves, which "fed the will, gave strength to endure, and to master sinew and limb beyond the measure of mortal kind." And after the ring is destroyed, Frodo and Sam are rescued by eagles in a scene evocative of the biblical verse: "They that hope in the Lord will renew their strength, they will soar on eagles' wings" (Isaiah

40:31). Again, those who check the chronology at the end of the book will find that the Ring is destroyed on March 25th, the very day on which some early Christians believed Christ to have been crucified. Thus the quest begins on the day of Christ's birth, and succeeds on the day of Christ's death.

Frodo is a type of the Christian saint because of his humility, his obedience, and his self-sacrificial love. He gave up his own life to save the lives of his fellow hobbits, and while he cannot enjoy life in his homeland after the completion of the quest, he is granted the gift of a passage across the waters to what Tolkien describes as the Blessed Realm. As Frodo's ship passes into the West, he smells a sweet fragrance on the air and hears music coming over the soft rain. Then, Tolkien writes, "the grey rain-curtain turned all to silver glass and was rolled back, and [Frodo] beheld white shores and beyond them a far green country under a swift sunrise."

After all that he has been through, Frodo passes into paradise and will no longer be wounded, but whole. Tolkien's readers will come away from the tale with transformed vision, by which the most ordinary of people can be called to do the most extraordinary things, not by their own strength but

with the help of something or someone greater than themselves.

The Catholic imagination allows us to see that God lifts up the lowly. It allows us to see that the foolish things of the world shame the wise, and that the weak shame the strong. It allows us to see the purpose and beauty of self-sacrificial love. Tolkien's story offers a vision of reality that captures these truths, which are lost on the "wise" both in Tolkien's story and in our world of today.

A story is, for many, a more effective teacher than philosophy—in one sense, God communicated Himself to man through story, in what Tolkien called the true myth. Being made in God's image, man participates in God's story-telling by making myths of his own, through which he refracts God's Light into different hues, suited to reach men where they are and bring them closer to the truth. Myths animated by the Catholic imagination, such as Tolkien's, can contribute immensely to the work of offering to the world a much-needed vision of truth, goodness, and beauty that can help to lead people to faith.

Tim Bradley is a J.D. candidate at Notre Dame Law School. He is not under a contractual obligation to promote Tolkien's work.

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Striving for sainthood

Emily Hirshorn
Staff Writer

When I was young, I thought that becoming a saint was like becoming a celebrity – pretty cool if it happened, but highly unlikely. Perhaps, then, when my school's wax museum came around in second grade, my "celebrity" of choice was Saint Bernadette. While my friends chose more mainstream famous people like Florence Nightingale or Walt Disney, I instead donned a simple brown skirt and covered my hair with a white folded shawl, and got to be a saint for the afternoon. Sure, I had the look of a saint, but could I ever really become one? Here are some of the myths about sainthood that I would like to debunk:

Only some people can become saints

Becoming a saint is not like becoming a celebrity because anyone can strive for it (and by the grace of God, the odds are better). I was made aware of this possibility after I went on my first teen retreat my junior year of high school called Camp Veritas. The camp director asked us if we knew the objective of our lives. He told us that it is heaven, and if it is not, we are wasting our time. If heaven is our objective, then the call to sainthood is indeed universal.

You have to be part of religious life to be a saint

I had a very particular idea about what a saint looked like. Either they would be a religious sister in a habit or a priest dressed in vestments. But, saints come from all sorts of backgrounds. I am particularly inspired by St. Gianna Beretta Molla, a mother and a physician, who carried her fourth baby to term at the expense of her own life.

Saints have no fun

Again, back to the idea of a saint who was part of religious life. I thought saints led a solemn, prayerful existence devoid of fun. But I was quite wrong. Perhaps the best example if this is Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati. He epitomizes the concept of a cute, cool, Catholic who led others to Christ through fellowship. He lived a life of service, prayer, and most especially adventure.

Sainthood is only about an individual quest for God

I used to believe that saints had a special, individual, connection with God, and that sainthood was a solitary journey. But, I have come to discover sainthood is all about living in an authentic Christian community. Becoming a Music Mentor for Notre Dame Vision after my freshman year particularly convinced me of this idea. Not only were we inspired and encouraged by the "witness to holiness" saints we were matched with, but also the Vision community itself came to more fully realize the heavenly mission here on earth by the way that

we journeyed alongside one another and discovered a deeper capacity to love and be loved by God. I still joke I have "Vision withdrawal" because of the beautiful way that I experienced Christian community that summer.

You have to be really smart to be a saint

The patron saint for the Identity Club is Edith Stein (St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross), and she is the inspiration for our yearly Edith Stein Conference in the spring. Let's just say that she is one smart cookie. She wrote extensively about the human identity and the human person, most especially concerning the vocation of women. A lot of her work is highly philosophical and sometimes a little hard to comprehend. But, we definitely do not need to be as smart as Edith Stein in order to pursue sainthood. Take St. Andre Bessette for example, who is the first saint from the Congregation of the Holy Cross. He was not the smartest member of the Holy Cross, but he knew how to love. He lived the line "love is an open door" by the hospitality that he showed to the pilgrims coming to The Oratory in Montreal.

But, the question remains: how do we actually become saints? The most tangible way forward that I see involves living a life of virtue. Sarah Swafford in her book *Emotional Virtue* goes into detail about what this looks like. She highlights the need to come together with groups of people who encourage us to become the best versions of ourselves. One such group on campus is called the Identity Project. This fall, we will sharing about saints that have touched our lives. Meetings are every other Monday at 6pm and future weeks include discussions about Pier Giorgio Frassati, Imelda Lambertini, and Teresa of Calcutta, just to name a few. If you'd like to join the conversation, feel free to email me.

Ultimately, striving for sainthood is not about figuring out the big questions of life all at once. Vocational discernment is important, but should not be a constant source of worry. Rather, we should consider how we can love Christ more in any given day and circumstance. We do not have to look far to find someone who is need of God's love. And who knows, by the grace of God, we might just become saints one day.

Emily Hirshorn is Breen-Phillips Hall junior majoring in Arabic and minoring in Collaborative Innovation and Theology. Serendipity is her favorite word and her favorite thing. Reach out to her at hirshorn.1@nd.edu. Or if you want to reach her freshman brother, try hirshorn.2.

Reflecting on the right to life

Grace Enright
Staff Writer

I'm new to the whole poetry thing and a total novice at appreciating the power of words. When constructing my sentences and forming my texts, I often settle for the phrase at hand, pushing off a vague concern about their lack of efficacy, potency, and virtue just to get 'er done. I give little enough thought to spelling, let alone structure, or substance, or syntax. My friends have attested to this fact by frequently responding to messages with a "What does <insert very spellable word that no one should misspell but that I very clearly butchered here> mean?" And I (promptly, of course) respond with poorly veiled embarrassment that when I sent "foinf in," I actually meant to type "going in."

But my struggle with words goes beyond mere rush-induced misspellings. I often find myself failing to successfully communicate internal truths that feel, taste, and seem so immediate. Yet, when they rush scattered from that mysterious interior place from which they have come (commonly referred to as the brain), to my hand as I write, or from my mouth as I speak, they become distant and foreign and oftentimes, plain, dull, and ineffective.

Recently, I have considered my deficiency may stem not only from practice and exposure, (which I am attempting to resolve with a nose dive into poetry), but also from a lack of respect for the authority of words. The flippancy with which I throw around words in my daily communications indicates a lack of understanding of their impact, their effect on the people around me. This consideration of the influence of words stemmed from my encounter this summer with the Eighth Amendment to the Constitution of the Republic of Ireland, signed into law on October 7, 1983.

In its entirety, this Amendment reads:

The State acknowledges the right to life of the unborn and, with due regard to the equal right to life of the mother, guarantees in its laws to respect, and, as far as practicable, by its laws to defend and vindicate that right.

Forty-three words.

That's it.

The inherent power of those forty three words lies less in their syntax and particularity, although these elements were likely heavily debated when the

Amendment was formed and continues to be debated today. It doesn't even lie solely in the context in which they were written or the level of clarity with which they were interpreted. Rather, the simple measure of these forty-three words lies in the fact that 100,000 people are alive in Ireland today because they were written.

100,000 people. Words once again limit my ability to describe the inherent value and dignity of these 100,000 people. So instead, I will try to describe who they are.

They are people who were born between 1994 and 2014. Millennials and Generation Z-ers. They are young professionals, university students, fourth graders, and toddlers. They are Starbucks Baristas, young mothers and crabby pre-teens. Preschoolers just starting their education and college seniors waiting to finish it. They have friends, siblings, parents, teachers, coworkers, neighbors, and acquaintances. They enjoy their hobbies, waste time watching TV, and like updating their Instagram. Their lives have dignity and deserve respect, not because of their age, background, income, or race, but because of the mere fact that they exist. To disagree would be to dismiss one's own inherent dignity and respect.

They are alive today because of the Eighth Amendment. Forty-three simple words have helped preserve a population of people just like you and me. Equal in size to the population of South Bend, immeasurable in impact to the people who know, love, and care for them.

Ireland is considering revising these forty-three words, perhaps riddling the constitution of them altogether. I spent three weeks of my summer defending these words. My words are nothing compared to those ones. The impact of my words is small. Yet, they still have power, and history has taught that silence in such moments merely lends their power to another. So I write, and speak, and defend these forty-three words and the 100,000 lives they have saved even with a complete awareness of my deficient abilities. Who's with me?

Grace Enright is an economics major living in Cavanaugh Hall. She can hold her breath for 30 whole seconds. Contact her at genright@nd.edu.

Who's Who: Meg Mirshak



twitter.com

TIERNEY VRDOLYAK
Staff Writer

She has graced the southern coast and the St. Joe; London and Paris (but not Tokyo); ever-ancient Waddicks and ever-renewed Walsh. What lady is this who has traveled far but now lies near in Geddes Hall? Why, Meg Mirshak, of course.

A graduate of the Notre Dame Class of 2010, Meg is the Communications Specialist at the McGrath Institute for Church Life. She was born in Augusta, Georgia, surrounded by her four older siblings and extended Catholic family. Her family line is so woven into the land that she attended the same grade school established by the Sisters of St. Joseph as her grandmother.

Being rather unaccustomed to many things (for example, the South), I asked Meg about the southern culture she grew up in as it related to the religious climate. She reflected on her childhood educational experience, "When I was little, Georgia was less than 2% Catholic. Hispanic immigrants have since contributed to the Catholic identity. My area in Augusta was predominantly Catholic, since the majority of Catholic families lived in together right outside our parish church."

Living within two parallel communities, that of her immediate and parish family, contributed to her desire to weave family and faith more deeply into her vocation story. As a young adult, Meg volunteered with the Interfaith Hospitality Network, a non-profit organization designed to make the transition from temporary to permanent

housing, employment, and independent living possible for homeless in the Augusta area.

Two figures within her parish community were especially formative, Meg recounts. "Missy and Michael were a young married couple who served as the parish's youth ministers. They led such a vibrant life, and encouraged me to lead others in little ways as I moved on from grade school to high school."

Meg's leadership took the form of hosting bible study groups in her living room. "We all spread out on couches and the floor, discussed the week's readings, and by God's grace became good friends."

Years later, two of these couch-chilling friends would enter the Church.

When asked about her favorite subject, Meg told the *Rover*, "English, definitely. My English teachers affirmed my knack for writing. I remember a 7th grade teacher was the first to notice that storytelling spark in me. My 10th grade English teacher who had been a journalist really became a reflection of what I wanted to be...I thought I should be a newspaper columnist, and I already loved reading the *Augusta Chronicle*."

These talents first placed at the surface, Meg studied communications at Wake Forest University her freshman year of college. She transferred to Notre Dame, where she responded to John Paul II's call to "place your talents and enthusiasm at the service of life."

Meg said of her undergraduate approach, "I didn't choose my major first; I chose the moral formation. I wanted a holistic college experience,

which I believe Notre Dame provides. [Being an Arts and Letters student] did not hinder my journalism career... it actually let to its commencement, and drew me years later into writing for the Church."

After Meg's 4-year residency in Walsh Hall, she went on to report for the same newspaper she frequently read as a young girl, the *Augusta Chronicle*.

"Even though I went back to live in the same city that I had my whole life, I saw so much of the city that I hadn't ever seen before through this reporting - neighborhoods, major employers, and governmental leaders alike. I saw education, poverty, race relations, and yes, the annual Master's golf tournament, in whole new lights."

After almost five years at *Chronicle*, she made "one of the most difficult decisions of my life." Since there was not as promising a future as the days of her grandparents and parents in the journalism field, Meg chose to leave Augusta behind and look elsewhere to other worthwhile work.

"I took a job doing corporate communications for a software company for about a year. It was a real switch for me, from telling stories to local readers to marketing for a corporation."

It was during this time that Meg found out about the Institute for Church Life. Meg told the *Rover*, "My work at the Institute combines creative content within the context of the Church. I am so blessed to be here!"

Meg reentered Notre Dame during an exciting phase in the Institute's life. Since August 2016, the McGrath Institute for Church Life has been rebranding itself within the university setting and beyond, made possible by a generous donation by the McGrath family.

"It is significant that, throughout this process, we have made it our goal to nourish and sustain one message, and communicate it widely to our audience, whether an individual high school retreatant interested in Notre Dame Vision, catechist in ECHO, deacon, priest, or theologian in the Center for Liturgy, or entire family through the various events the Institute offers. Because the McGrath Institute is in its transition phase, we've had the opportunity to

write a renewed story about the same story, and deliver that to the Church."

Aside from this experience within the work environment, Meg's favorite thing to do is be an aunt.

"Being the youngest in my family, I didn't have the chance to change diapers, to see children interact and play with one another. Being the aunt of six nephews and one niece has made me more confident in my own calling. I feel more avowed that I will be a great mother."

When asked about her role model, Meg gave a telling answer: "I have had many role models depending on where I've been in life. Right now, it's my oldest sister, Anna, who lives in Atlanta with her husband and two children. She works full-time, but doesn't let that hinder her relationship with her husband, children (one is on the way, by the way!), and her two sisters. At one point, my role models were my parents; at another, my youth ministers; after college, my co-workers motivated me when they put their incredible talents to work...even now, my female friends in South Bend are incredible - they are so wise and supportive like my living room bible study crew - although this time they are more willing to knock some sense into you."

"Is there any one person whose message has knocked sense into you, or at least stuck with you?" I asked. I could tell Meg knew exactly who.

"Father Lou DelFra said Walsh dorm Mass on many Mondays. One time he said, 'Could today's yes be the beginning of your vocation story?' This question has pervaded my life, and allowed me to examine myself on a deeper level each day."

Tierney Vrdolyak is an off-campus senior studying PLS and Theology. She has dabbled in Business Economics. While on campus and aside from classes, she enjoys playing sand volleyball, running and biking of the non-Lime sort, singing in Liturgical Choir, attending BP dorm masses, and spending absurd amounts of time chatting in the Geddes Coffeehouse. If you'd care to swipe her in to your dining hall of choice using ND's updated Irish1Card policy, contact her at tvrdolya@nd.edu.

Dining hall debacles: new hours, new features, and a new layout

Exploring the new dining options at Notre Dame

MADELINE FOLEY
Staff Writer

This year's adjustments to Notre Dame's dining options have led to widespread social commentary from the student body. New features include a complete renovation of North Dining Hall (North), a new layout for South Dining Hall (South), and shorter hours for the popular restaurant, Reckers.

The first, and perhaps most widely publicized, change is the renovation and new layout of North dining hall. In August, the new North was unveiled, surprising visitors with its shining chrome and the new turnstile entry system. Alongside stylistic differences and upgraded technology, the new open floor plan and the dispersed buffet system takes a vastly different approach in North dining hall.

When asked for comment about the organizational differences between the two, freshman Ben Harris told the *Rover*, "I like the organization of [North] a bit better, whereas in South the food area is a choke point, because everything is in this one area and close together. North is stretched out, so even though you have to walk further, it's less crowded and easier to navigate."

Other students remarked that, in South, dining options are far easier to appraise and choose from than in North, which is so spread out that it makes choosing an item difficult.

New changes included additional flexibility in the "Grab and Go" quick meal feature. South Dining Hall's Grab and Go utilizes meal swipes according to a point system, allowing a student to take seven points worth of food or drink for a single meal swipe. This year, students can redeem an unlimited number of meals swipes per meal period. Previously, only one meal swipe could be used per meal period, preventing students from both eating in the dining room and redeeming a

"Grab and Go" meal or obtaining multiple "Grab and Go" meals. This new feature has been widely utilized, especially on Fridays before swipes restart Saturday morning. Students either save up their swipes intentionally or use leftover swipes to take home snacks in preparation for the weekend. This has, however, resulted in a very limited food selection Friday afternoon and evening.

While South's "Grab and Go" expanded, North Dining Hall's "Grab and Go" has been changed to be the "Marketplace." This system, similar to the Huddle in LaFortune Student Center, uses Flex Points instead of meal plan swipes, creating discontent among students who valued the opportunity to use meal swipes.

"There isn't a Grab and Go at North," freshman Bryce Dahnke told the *Rover*. "They changed it to that weird market thing that uses real money."

"I'm so mad about that," added another freshman, Enzo Ambrose, "Lack of Grab and Go at NDH is unacceptable."

Another change in the dining options are the new hours of the campus restaurant, Reckers. This popular dining option was previously a 24-hour establishment behind South Dining Hall, usually frequented specifically for its 24-hour status. The new hours are 11am to 11pm on weekdays and 11am to 3am on weekends.

When asked to comment on the shift in hours, sophomore Connor Reilly said "literally everybody, including me, is mad that Recker's isn't 24 hours." Upperclassmen report that, while Reckers used to be a happening place at the early hours of the morning, the limited hours have led to Taco Bell and Pizza Hut drawing a larger crowd.

Madeline Foley is a freshman Program of Liberal Studies major with two minors in theology and philosophy, politics, and economics. She enjoys sunny days and dark humor. She can be contacted at mfoley10@nd.edu.

Students lead charge against new video board

LACEY SILVESTRI
Humor Editor

The new video board in Notre Dame Stadium has been quite the hot button issue over the past few weeks, and no one was surprised that it stirred up plenty of vitriol amongst old, traditionalist Notre Dame Alumni. What no one expected, however, was for current Notre Dame students to also convey contempt for the newest addition to the football experience. Apparently, over the course of the past two home games, what started as a shiny new toy has devolved into a giant, pixelated nuisance.

"It's a conspiracy," one Notre Dame senior assured our reporters. "The administration and the stadium staff are in cahoots! The ushers look for flasks on the big screen, and then they come hunt us down in the student section. I got kicked out of both games!" When asked about how obviously belligerent he'd been prior

to his ejections from the stadium, the senior declined to comment.

Some have found that the screen instigates conflict. "My best friend and I are in a huge fight now because she hogged all the screen time when the cameraman came to our section," a sophomore divulged. "She wasn't even wearing her ND face tat! I was totally more prepared than she was to be the face of Fighting Irish football. I definitely blame Notre Dame for jeopardizing our friendship." We followed up with this source and found out that she and her friend have since reconciled and purchased matching sets of face tattoos. They plan to split screen time equally from here on out.

For others, the video board simply distracts from some of the time-honored traditions typically enjoyed by Notre Dame fans. "I just want to stand next to my crush and have an excuse to talk to him," one distressed student explained. "I can't say my usual 'What just

happened, I missed the play' because of this stupid instant replay. Now if I ask, he just points to the screen and ignores me. It's the worst." When asked if she had considered simply asking her crush out on a date, the young woman simply stared at the reporter, aghast.

One young Notre Dame freshman took issue with the quality of the technology. "There was this ugly red glare on the screen," he complained after the Georgia Bulldogs handed Notre Dame a heartbreaking loss. "It didn't go away for the entire game. So distracting!"

Rover reporters will continue to cover this controversy as it unfolds.

Lacey Silvestri is a senior English and history major who probably would have sold her Georgia ticket for \$1000, too. Chastise her at lsilvest@nd.edu.



gameday.nd.edu

Overheard at ND: college football edition

THERESE KONOPELSKI
Humor Specialist

Inconsiderate?
In Notre Dame season ticket holder seats:

A middle-aged couple wearing Georgia jerseys is waiting for the game to start

Woman (squinting): "What is that tunnel across the stadium?"

Man: "I think that's where the opposing team comes out of."

Woman (angrily): "We traveled this far to see UGA run out of that tiny thing?"

Man: "I know, you'd think they'd be more accommodating considering we did them the favor of buying out half their stadium."

Tacolosophy
Underclassmen females waiting for Taco Bell around 1 a.m. on a Saturday night:
"Have you seen Taylor Swift's new image?"
"Yeah, it's like she became a Crunch Wrap Supreme."
"How so?"
"Uh, y'know, more edge and stuff."

They're Learning

At the Student Town Hall on September 13th:

Freshmen are discussing the ethical implications of an abrupt housing policy change.

"Why did they tell us this meeting was happening the day of?"

Other savvy frosh (in wonderment): "It's almost like they did it on purpose!"

Therese Konopelski is a sophomore PLS major whose minors are too wordy to list in any bio, as per usual Notre Dame style. To commiserate or contribute, contact her at tkonopel@nd.edu.

Editor's Note:

It has always been the Rover's policy to "get with the times," and "be more funny." As a result, Cheers and Jeers will no longer be appearing in the Humor section. We apologize for the inconvenience - it will be mourned.

Housing

continued from front

According to Hoffmann Harding, international students wanted to move

off-campus so they could cook meals from their own cultures. Other students found offense with the cost of the campus meal plan, opting for cheaper food bought from stores

or restaurants and more control over meal preparation.

Student questions and comments covered a wide range of topics relating to the announcement. One student wondered how the new policy would affect admissions. Another asked about the implications of the new policy for transfer students, to which Hoffmann Harding replied that "details [were] still to be worked out." Another student cited parietals as a factor that drove students off campus. Fr. Jenkins responded, stating that Notre Dame's value system is an integral part of the community.

Students also asked questions related to dorm quality. Many students agreed that the disparity of comfort and quality between dorms—Duncan Hall versus Dillon Hall, for instance—rendered a universal room and board price unfair. One

student even complained of Carroll Hall's ongoing infestation problem, citing the dorm's "bat count." He pointed out that off-campus housing actually allowed him to live closer to his classroom buildings than did housing in Carroll, and for less money. Hoffmann Harding spoke to the bat problem among other issues, arguing that the university is working "really hard" to eliminate the flying vermin. She also stated that plans are in the works to renovate and remedy disciplinary disparities between the dorms.

Certain students see the move as a cash grab; others view it as a logical extension of Notre Dame's community spirit. Still others worry about the legal and administrative complications the administration's mandate could introduce, especially in regards to Title IX policy. During the question-

and-answer, one student asked if exceptions to the six-semester rule could be made for survivors of sexual assault who felt threatened on-campus and wished to move off. After expressing sympathy for the sexual assault survivors the student mentioned, Hoffmann Harding stated that she had no "definitive answer" but would be open to discussing the topic in the future.

"The one thing that I'm really concerned about is that when they brought up the topic of sexual assault, survivors of sexual assault, Erin Hoffmann Harding wasn't able to give a recommendation for protecting them on campus," said sophomore Elizabeth Boyle. "So I'm nervous that the already existing issues of Title IX implementation on this campus will just continue to be perpetuated through this new housing requirement."

Some students, however, were not satisfied with the administration's responses. After the hour-long session, students lined up for the chance to discuss the decision with Fr. Jenkins and Hoffmann Harding after the talk had ended.

Although the six-semester rule will not directly affect current students, next year's incoming freshmen will be the first to feel the new policy's effects and to provide experienced feedback to the administration.

Alison O'Neil is a sophomore Biological Sciences major. She enjoys reading, running and feeding squirrels on the quad. A mutant squirrel bite has left her able to communicate with the animals, allowing her to work her way up the squirrel ranks and become Supreme Squirrel Overlord. Contact Alison at aoneil1@nd.edu.

If you are interested in joining the Irish Rover photography staff, please contact

ndirishrover@gmail.com



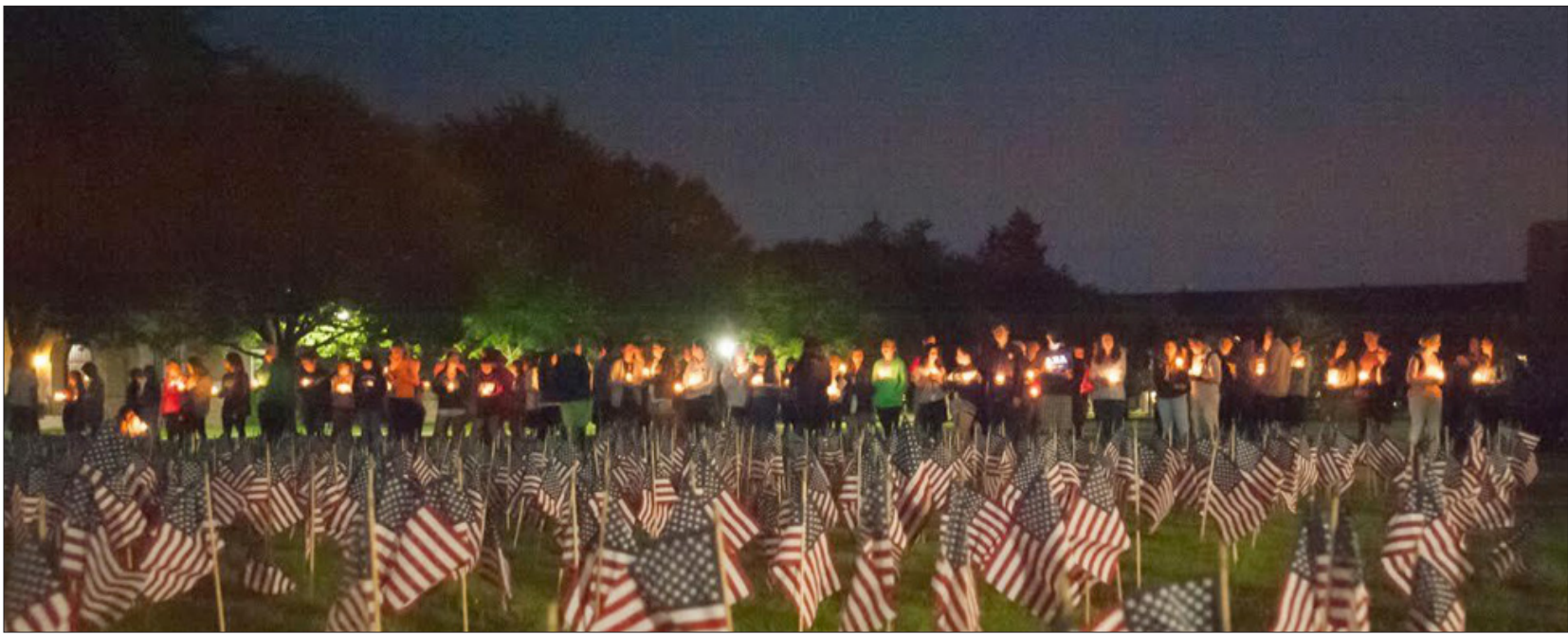


Photo by Chris Collins

Anonymous student protests 9/11 memorial

CAROLINE O'CALLAGHAN
Staff Writer

Young Americans for Freedom respond

Sixteen years ago, our country was stunned by a series of horrifying terrorist attacks. On the morning of September 11, 2001, two jetliners flew into the World Trade Center towers in Manhattan, another into the Pentagon, and a fourth was put down in a field in rural Pennsylvania by heroic passengers.

As in years past, the Notre Dame family united on this

anniversary in remembrance of the victims of the 9/11 terror attacks, honoring their memory with a memorial and an evening prayer service. However, unlike in years past, this year's memorial was met with hostility by an anonymous perpetrator.

In the early hours of last Monday morning Notre Dame's chapter of Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) set up 2,977 American flags underneath the South Quad flagpole. Each flag represented an American life lost in the attack.

YAF has held this memorial for the past four years as a visual display of loss and an opportunity for the

Notre Dame community to remember not only the victims of the attack, but also the heroes who sacrificed everything to save them.

With every passing year, Americans are more and more removed from the events of 9/11. The majority of this year's freshman class of 2021 was only two or three years old at the time of the attacks. The flag memorial is in part to remind those who might otherwise forget of the horrific significance of that day.

"It's a cause of concern for us that people aren't remembering the sacrifices that were made and what has been given up for the United States to maintain our freedoms,"

said YAF Chairwoman Clare McKinney.

In the past, YAF's 9/11 memorial has been embraced without issue by the Notre Dame community as an event for people of all backgrounds to come together in solidarity as Americans and remember the fallen.

This year, however, when Notre Dame's Young Americans for Freedom arrived in the morning to set up their memorial, they were met with the words "500,000 Iraqis murdered" scrawled in chalk on the sidewalk in front of the flagpole.

McKinney responded to what she saw as the lack of regard shown for those

personally affected by the terror attacks: "I wasn't personally affected by the attack, but there are people on campus who were, and that was very offensive to them that a memorial to their loved ones has been desecrated by bringing in a whole different controversial issue."

When asked what she would say to whomever left the writing at the memorial site, McKinney emphasized that Young Americans for Freedom welcome diverse opinions and debate, but that a memorial event is not the forum for such an argument. YAF also smudged out the writing.

"I know myself and all the other members of YAF are

very open to debate, and part of the purpose of our club is to bring together a diversity of ideas and viewpoints. People are more than welcome to talk about the Iraq War, and differences of opinion in U.S. foreign policy, but the memorial was not the time and place to do that. This was an event meant to bring together the community, not to divide us. It was just very sad to see that there was someone trying to make one of the most horrific days in U.S. history fit their own personal narrative," McKinney said.

Later that evening approximately 200 students and community members met alongside YAF's memorial under the flagpole. President Emeritus Reverend Edward Malloy, CSC, presided over a prayer service put on by the Faith & Service Department of Student Government, reminiscent of past 9/11 prayer services.

At this year's service, Fr. Malloy shared a reflection about the events of 9/11 and Notre Dame's response. The vigil concluded with a silent, candlelit procession to the Grotto where the band led the congregation in the Alma Mater.

Caroline O'Callaghan is a freshman living in Badin and majoring in studio art. Her long-term life goal is to live in a cabin by a beach with a multitude of dogs. Contact her at cocallag@nd.edu.

Debating religious liberty and discrimination

CLAIRE MAIRE KUHN
Staff Writer

Political science scholars spar over contentious subject

Dr. John Corvino and Ryan T. Anderson, co-authors of the newly published book *Debating Religious Liberty and Discrimination*, came to Notre Dame's campus on Thursday, September 7th to defend and discuss their respective sides in the hotly contested political debate on religious liberty.

The speakers gathered in the Nanovic Forum to hear the two academics perform a Lincoln-Douglas style debate, in which each scholar get time to present their argument and then deliver a rebuttal. The event was sponsored by the Constitutional Studies Program, the Tocqueville Program, BridgeND, and the Dean's Fellows of the College of Arts and Letters.

Based on their backgrounds, Corvino and Anderson are unlikely co-

authors. Anderson, William E. Simon Senior Research Fellow at the Heritage Foundation, is well-known for his defense of traditional marriage. Corvino, a professor and chair of the Philosophy Department at Wayne State University, is an outspoken advocate for gay marriage and anti-discrimination law.

Corvino began the debate on a lighthearted note, joking that many ask him, "How can you call Ryan Anderson a friend, as a gay rights activist and as a gay man?" He quipped, "I drink," and received a roar of laughter from the audience. Corvino continued to explain that the two men wrote the book together, and subsequently were here debating, due to a common belief that serious public issues deserve serious public dialogue.

Corvino's argument centered on three main points where he differed from Anderson in his understanding of religious liberty. He first stated, "generally speaking religious people should play by the same rules as everyone else"--that is, he is against

what he calls "religious privilege." He admitted that there are some exceptions to this, as he acknowledged that sometimes rules target and discriminate against religious people very directly.

However, Corvino stated concern about the precedent Supreme Court cases like the Hobby Lobby case set, stating that he was worried about the possibility that privilege will be granted to certain forms of religion over others, or that people will use the religious freedom exemption as an excuse to get out of laws they find unappealing.

The next point Corvino described was that just because the government can easily accommodate a person's conscience claim does not mean that it should. His third and final point of departure from Anderson's understanding of religious liberty was specifically on discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Alluding to the pending Supreme Court case, *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*, Corvino argued

that there is too much focus on wedding providers in the debate, and the reality is that the discrimination often revolves around housing, employment, and basic goods and services. He stated that there is a "slippery slope" we should be concerned about, and that religious liberty should focus on consistency in the kinds of characteristics enumerated in anti-discrimination law and in the way the notion of freedom is evoked.

Corvino ended his opening remarks by saying that the same people who endorsed anti-sodomy laws and the same people who opposed same-sex marriage say they are all about freedom. In his eyes, this instead sounds like religious privilege or "the right to discriminate without impunity."

Working from an Aristotelian explanation of ethics and politics, Anderson stated that politics is about the common good, which is pluralistic in its nature, meaning there are many ways to achieve the good life. In this view, the government's role is to create a structure where people can

pursue their vocation freely.

Anderson states that religious liberty is about the government giving people space to live their religious life so as to pursue these goods. Religious liberty is protected by outlawing direct intentional burdens on religion, and requiring that incidental burdens on religion deserve heightened scrutiny when examined by courts. It also is protected by special exemptions.

Clarifying his position, Anderson stated that this governmental protection is necessary due to religion being a "good of the conscience," which is fragile in nature, for it cannot be taken back once it is broken or lost. For example, a doctor forced to perform an abortion against their beliefs cannot be at peace with God even if they pray harder than usual. Their conscience has been harmed and no reparation from the government can fix that.

Anderson argued that there are no absolutes when it comes to religious liberty, and that the government is not picking winners and losers. The worrisome idea

of "religious privilege" presented by Corvino will not arise unless certain Christians are hypocrites and do not, for example, defend Muslims when their mosques are blocked from being built.

As Anderson noticed he was running out of time, he concluded with a broader point, emphasizing that at Notre Dame, students are the future leaders of both the state and the church, and the continuation of this discussion rests on their shoulders.

Corvino rebutted with a similar emphasis on the importance and challenge of dialogue on religious liberty in today's political landscape: "We need something better than talking points and Twitter wars, because the devil is in the details."

Claire Marie Kuhn is a junior majoring in political science with minors in Peace Studies and Business Economics. She enjoys long afternoon naps and iced green tea lattes. To talk with her over one of those lattes, contact her at ckuhn1@nd.edu.



Lecture held on Muslim-Christian dialogue

JAMES RAHNER

Religion & Ethics
Editor

Lecture encourages inter-religious discussion and understanding

The Center for Social Concerns hosted the 9th Annual Rev. Bernie Clark, CSC, Lecture last Thursday night in the Andrews Auditorium. Entitled “The Challenge of Peace Pursued through Muslim-Christian Dialogue,” the lecture featured USCCB consultant and Islamic Studies professor Scott Alexander, as well as Imam Hassan Al-Quazwini, an advocate for interfaith dialogue and youth education.

Associate Director of the Center for Social Concerns Bill Purcell opened by recalling the lecturer’s namesake, Fr. Bernie Clark, and his emphasis

on one-on-one dialogue to serve as a model for the night’s discussion. He then handed the microphone over to Father Kevin Sandberg, CSC, the moderator for the evening.

Fr. Sandberg began the evening by asking the pointed question, “Should a Catholic pray in a mosque?” He then noted that, in fact, many popes have done so. He cited Pope Francis’s remark that “Christians and Muslims...are brothers and sisters,” and thus led into the opening remarks from the event’s speakers.

Imam Al-Quazwini began noting the necessity of dialogue, in all its forms, for human interaction. With a timely analogy, he compared the human person to an iPhone, saying that “the password for that iPhone...is dialogue.”

Narrowing this point to a specifically religious sphere, he described how important combating ignorance through dialogue is with reference to his

own religion: “Islam,” he said, “is the most misunderstood religion in the U.S.” He noted instances of people coming up to him after talks to tell him that they were previously unaware that, for examples, “Muslims love Jesus,” and other such examples of little-known facts about Islam.

After the Imam’s first remarks, Scott Alexander emphasized the same themes from a Catholic standpoint. Dialogue, Alexander noted, is so important that Blessed Pope Paul VI wrote of God and humanity as being engaged “in a dialogue of salvation” (which, by extension, we are called to take part in and bring to others).

Alexander also critiqued to some extent the notion of homogeneity that is sometimes found in today’s world—that is, the idea that we are fundamentally the same, and should ignore differences. In fact, contended Alexander, we have to *encounter* people in their

differences—our diversity is not something “to be eradicated.”

Responding to a question from Fr. Sandberg regarding overcoming the challenges facing such dialogue, Al-Quazwini emphasized that sincerity is a key aspect of fruitfulness in such things. He also added that one must “accept others as they wish to define themselves,” and not simply stick to descriptions of beliefs and people from secondhand and inimical sources. For objectivity to be maintained, he contended, people must be approached on their own terms.

Alexander added to this the importance of “holy envy”—the ability to see things in the faith of others that one desires for oneself.

Throughout the dialogue, the power of the potential unity between Christians and Muslims was emphasized. The Imam noted that Muslims and Christians combined constitute the majority of the

world’s population, and thus, it is crucial in dialogue to “talk about common goods.” The particular conversation at Notre Dame and elsewhere, he noted, is “just the beginning” of such a relationship.

Continuing on this theme, the two men described what they believe God asks from people of faith. Al-Quazwini described the importance of worship through service—without the commitment to kindness and others, we are “worshipping our own ego,” he said. Similarly, Alexander described the necessity of stepping outside one’s comfort zone to do God’s work.

In a discussion-based portion of the lecture, during which members of the audience were able to offer their own ideas, further themes were brought up. One person mentioned the fear of being proven wrong as an inhibitor of dialogue. Al-Quazwini noted the importance of not “confusing dialogue with

debate,” pointing out that if debate is emphasized, it will simply lead to unfruitful, drawn-out discussion: “I [alone] cannot change anybody,” he said.

Another attendee mentioned living during a violent time in Iraq, and described a soldier who was a great help in the community. It was not until later that he realized the man was a Jew—a member of a group the student had been taught to reject. He noted that sometimes even without dialogue, “small actions [can] build bridges.” In a later remark, Al-Quazwini echoed this statement: to effectively change perceptions, he said, one must “translate [one’s] faith into action.” Purely academic discussion, at the end of the day, can only go so far.

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Discerning your vocation

HANNAH WOZNIAK

Staff Writer

Father Neil Wack gives insight on his role as vocation director

Graduating from Purdue University with a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science, Father Neil Wack, CSC, moved down to Indianapolis for work before entering seminary with

the Congregation of Holy Cross. After his ordination in 2004, Fr. Wack served at his home parish, Christ the King Parish, here in South Bend for seven years. He then had the opportunity to work as the priest-in-residence in Keough Hall. As of 2015, Father Wack serves as the Vocation Director for the US Province of the Congregation of Holy Cross. He would enjoy leading the Notre Dame band out onto the field.

The Irish Rover: How did your process of discerning

towards the priesthood go? Did you always know or was it a process?

Father Wack: I grew up in a Holy Cross Parish, and I had great priests and brothers and sisters of Holy Cross that helped me along the way just to learn the basics, but also to learn about the Lord and to learn about the Church. I didn’t really seriously consider vocation until my brother Bill was ordained a Holy Cross priest. That was right when I was finishing up at Purdue University. [...] Bill was ordained in 1994 and

so then it just kind of hit me that there might be something there. I still needed to go out into the world, so I worked for four years in Indianapolis. Finally at the end of that, I realized that there [was] something that God [was] pulling me towards, this tug that I [couldn’t] deny so I [had] to go look into it.

Why did you choose to be a Holy Cross priest?

For me that was easy. I mean it was my brother, but it was also my great uncle who taught economics here for a long time—

Father Ed Keller, a Holy Cross priest. That was big to see him and his interaction here at the university, the parish, a Holy Cross parish. Even with that exposure, I needed that sense of family, and that is so big in Holy Cross, that idea with the brotherhood that we share—and then what Father Moreau really tried to instill in all of us—was the idea of the Holy Family. The priests, brothers, and sisters being Jesus, Mary, and Joseph. To really imitate and as much as possible really show that for others.

Can you tell us more about your role as Vocations Director here?

My main job is to help mostly young men, obviously, for [the] priesthood or religious brother, but also for women too, to really be able to listen to and know what God’s call is in their life. So to give them tools for prayer, tools for discernment—sometimes just a sounding board. It took me four years to go through this, so I never try to rush people along, and if people feel rushed or feel like, gee, this isn’t what I need, then great, we slow down and we figure it out. To give them the tools that they need to listen for God’s will, that’s really my main job description. Within that, of course, is to talk about Holy Cross, otherwise I’d be out of a job! So to tell them, alright, here’s the charism of Holy Cross, here’s our founder, here’s really what our apostolates are all about. It really does start with that. Give them the tools they need and sometimes point them in another direction and say, gee, it sounds like you’re more interested in monastic life so maybe you might want to consider one of those communities or, gee, it sounds like you really want to be in a parish and you want to stay near a home, that’s more like a diocesan sort of thing, so make sure you

contact them.

Would you encourage students to come see you and talk to you about their own vocation?

Absolutely. It’s a joy and a privilege for me. There are so many things you have to do in this job as far as administrative and emails and such, but the joy is to just be able to talk to folks. I think I’m on the list at Notre Dame for Campus Ministry Spiritual Directors. It doesn’t have to be for Holy Cross or religious vocation. We all need to discern God’s call in our lives and be open to what He says, but we have to know how to listen to that and that seems to be the real challenge. Take some time to listen. Go into a chapel and just listen. That seems to be what’s missing. There has to be time to listen, otherwise it’s not a real conversation.

What is your greatest advice for someone who is discerning?

It boils down to these things: make sure you’re praying every day; make sure you are availing yourself of the Sacrament, obviously at Sunday mass, but again on these campuses there are so many opportunities for a daily Mass here or there if possible; the sacrament of Confession, to do that often; to kind of dip your toe in the water ... whether it’s volunteer work or being a Eucharistic Minister, lector, or something at Mass, just something to start on the road. That’s kind of the initial building blocks. If someone is like, gee, I’ve been doing those things, what’s next? Well then, the next thing is get a spiritual director to kind of journey on that.

Hannah Wozniak is a junior at Saint Mary’s college. She’s really interested in photography, so if you’d like her to take pictures for you, please contact her at hwozniak@saintmarys.edu.

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John McGreevy and mediocrity at Notre Dame

WILSON D. MISCAMBLE, CSC
Faculty Advisor

Professor disputes claim that Notre Dame was mediocre before Land O'Lakes

I was unable to attend the recent symposium on the Land O'Lakes Legacy planned by the Office of the President and well-hosted by the Cushwa Center for the Study of American Catholicism. Subsequently, however, I watched the two sessions of the symposium. The panel of the five presidents was a rather shallow exercise with each participant singing from the same song sheet—so much for 'dialogue' at the contemporary Notre Dame. The first session featuring Dean John McGreevy was more interesting. McGreevy gave a typically adroit address in which he notably focused much more on the context of Land O'Lakes rather than its questionable content. Toward the end of his address McGreevy admitted some of the limitations of the Land O'Lakes statement, but cleverly skated by them in order to contend—without any supporting evidence whatsoever—that Notre Dame was stronger in its Catholic identity today than it was in 1967. Only the gullible will accept that contention, and I plan to address it at a later point.

But I must discuss a different matter here. Dean McGreevy argued with obvious approval that the "biggest obstacle" Father Hesburgh tackled through his efforts at Land O'Lakes was the "mediocrity" of Notre Dame. This assertion that Notre Dame was

'mediocre' prior to Land O'Lakes is now regularly bandied about by vapid administrators and the tribe of their public relations associates who constantly inform us of how "great" Notre Dame is today compared to how it was a half century ago. The charge of mediocrity is usually made without any serious qualification, and on its face, against all, or almost all, who taught and studied here in the 1960s and before. This capacious charge slanders some of the terrific faculty who helped build Notre Dame. They should not be labeled as mediocre in any way, shape, or form.

Let me illustrate the point by referencing the department to which both John McGreevy and I belong—namely the Department of History. In 1967 the History Department at Notre Dame had approximately 20 faculty members, compared to today's department of over 40 faculty. The faculty in the 1960s taught at least three courses per semester and had little of the research support that faculty enjoy today. One might expect that faculty in the contemporary Notre Dame, which so emphasizes research, would be dramatically superior to their forebears of a half century ago. However that may be, let me ask fair minded readers to judge whether members of the History Department in 1967 should be labeled as mediocre.

The department at the time had recently been led by a terrific historian of Colonial America named Marshall Smelser. Smelser had studied at Harvard with Samuel Eliot Morrison, and he had established a national reputation for himself such that he was invited to write the New

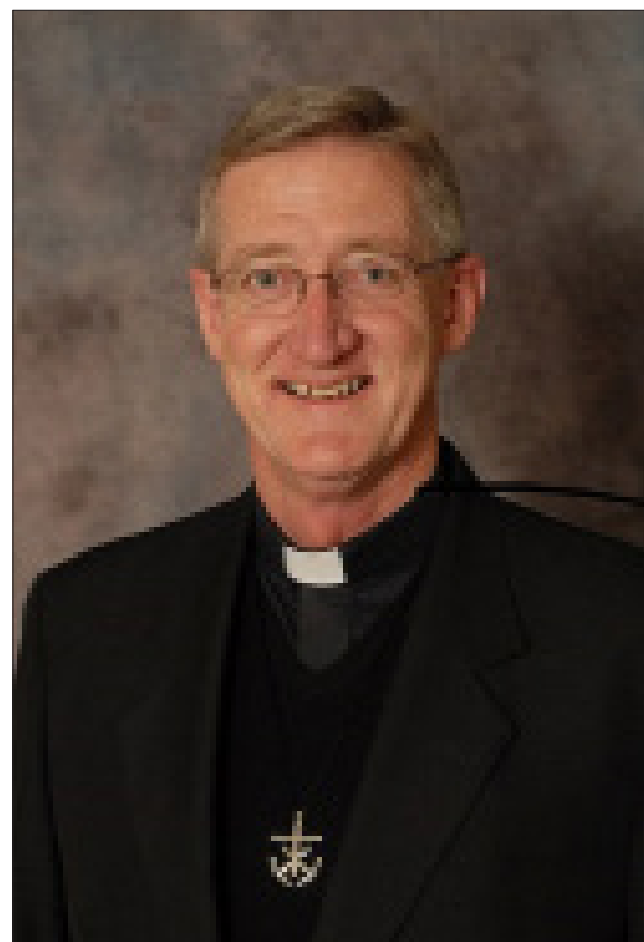
American Nation Series volume on the U.S. during the Jefferson and Madison administrations, *The Democratic Republic, 1801-1815*. Smelser was succeeded as Chair by Vincent DeSantis, my own mentor. DeSantis's 1959 book *Republicans Faced the Southern Question* had helped reorder how historians thought of American political developments during Reconstruction and the Gilded Age. His fine reputation led to his being enlisted to join a wonderful group of scholars like David Potter, Carl Degler, and Arthur Link in producing *The Democratic Experience*, a renowned textbook that went through five editions after its initial publication in 1963.

Among the rising young scholars in the department was Philip Gleason. Gleason is a giant in American religious, intellectual, and cultural history. He wrote and edited books that would have been part of John McGreevy's own intellectual formation. Anyone who thinks Philip Gleason is mediocre needs a deep reality check. Gleason had been taught at Notre Dame by the legendary Holy Cross priest Thomas T. McAvoy who was still teaching in the department in 1967 as well as serving as Director of the Archives. McAvoy helped shape the field of American Catholic history with his important books, including *The Great Crisis in American Catholic History, 1895-1900* (1957). Another notable teacher on the U.S. history side of the department was the great U.S. diplomatic historian Julius W. Pratt.

The History Department also had a noted Latin American historian in its ranks.

Frederick B. Pike already had written important books on both the history of Chile and Peru by 1967 and would go on to write and edit other major works including his opus *The United States and Latin America: Myths and Stereotypes of Civilization and Nature* (1995). If there is a Latin Americanist on campus at the moment who is as intellectually gifted as Fred Pike, I would request that John McGreevy identify him or her.

On the European side, Notre Dame benefited enormously from the presence of one of the most wise and learned scholars ever to grace this campus—Matthew A. Fitzsimons. Fitzsimons edited the *Review of Politics* and also produced important books on British foreign policy in the mid-20th century. I have benefited from these works in my own research and can testify to their quality. Notre Dame also had the great Church historian Msgr. Phillip Hughes teaching here at this time. Hughes trained talented historians like his successor, Fr. Marvin R. O'Connell, and additionally was a noted historian of the Reformation and indeed of Church history in general. McGreevy might complain about the popular nature of some of Hughes's writings, but he was actually a historian who connected with a broad public and deepened their appreciation for both history and for the Church. Would there were more like him today. In medieval history James Corbett had helped Notre Dame build up its distinctive record for excellence, and he warranted his own reputation as the capable editor of important medieval texts.



history.nd.edu

Sadly, men and women who contributed much to the growth and development of our university can be quickly forgotten upon either their departures or their deaths. This is especially the case at Notre Dame at the moment when the place is filled with inflated vanity and excessive self-regard. Individuals succumb to the temptation to congratulate themselves on their "impressive" present accomplishments. Yet we should acknowledge that we build upon the efforts of those who labored here before us. Surely we should not denigrate those who worked hard at Notre Dame, and did so without the substantial research support and many of the material benefits that faculty now enjoy.

Perhaps we might also recognize that while there was undoubtedly mediocrity as well as excellence at Notre Dame in 1967, there

remains much that is mediocre here today. This recognition is especially needed by those who bear responsibility for the recent curriculum changes that weakened the Catholic education offered to our fine undergraduates.

In any case, at least one might hope that especially historians, who should know something of the history of both their own department and the university, would speak of them with more respect. The incessant self-congratulations of the present moment should not be undertaken at the expense of the many able faculty and students who preceded us here. Their significant contributions, faithful service and deep love for Notre Dame should always be properly acknowledged.

Fr. Bill Miscamble, CSC, teaches in the Department of History and is a member of the Irish Rover's faculty advisory board.

Zossima

continued from front

Crucifixes began to be used no later than the Second Council of Tours (c. 567), and by the Synod of Trullo (c. 692) they were a required centerpiece. These primary images of Christ's Passion, and others like them, were not intended to be objects of worship. Instead, they helped the faithful to call to mind the very real Person

who suffered and died for them, truly made present again through the Mass.

The tradition of using statues to commemorate holy figures continued to develop throughout Church history. As early as 324, Eusebius writes how "the likenesses of His apostles Paul and Peter ... are preserved in paintings, the ancients being accustomed ... according to a habit of the Gentiles, to pay this kind

of honor indiscriminately to those regarded by them as deliverers."

By the 1400s, images and statues of saints had a firmly established place in the rituals and liturgy of the Church, and most notably the practice of Marian processions developed during this time. In addition, the late Middle Ages saw the rise of Protestantism and an accompanying resurgence of iconoclasm.

In response, the Council of Trent reaffirmed the Catholic tradition: "not that any divinity or power is thought to be in [statues] for the sake of which they may be worshipped ... but because the honor shown to them is referred to the prototypes [persons] which they represent."

The importance of statues and sacred imagery to the Catholic Church continues up to the present day. In particular, the altar crucifix

has served as a reference point for the "direction" of the Mass, for both priests and the laity. Pope Benedict XVI writes in his *Spirit of the Liturgy*, "the cross can serve as the interior 'east' of faith. It should stand in the middle of the altar and be the common point of focus for both priest and praying community." On Notre Dame's campus alone there are many images, most notably in the Basilica and at the Grotto, and for good

reason. These statues serve as a constant reminder of those who have gone before us in faith, whose example we are to follow, and who continue to intercede for us in Heaven above.

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Ed Sheeran: Live in Chicago

JACK FERGUSON
Culture & Thought
Editor

The pop singer draws on multicultural sounds in new album, but hasn't lost his roots

Ed Sheeran may no longer be the acoustic ballad writer he was five or six years ago, but he has not lost his special touch while expanding into other genres. In his newest album *Divide*, for which he is currently on tour, he blends his old strumming style with the guitar-rap style he coined during his early-and-middle albums *+* and *X* phase. He adds a new medley of Irish, European, and African folk sounds. This past weekend, many Notre Dame students,

including myself, streamed to the Allstate Arena just outside of Chicago to witness the pop star's brilliance live in concert.

When the young Ed Sheeran was starting out, he performed alone because no one would join a band with him. He used, and still uses today, a loop pedal, a device which allows the artist to recreate each part of a track live—the beat, the bass, the solo, the strum—and then step away as the machine continues to loop them over and over again. In this way, he is able to build a layered soundscape, just like a studio recording, but solo and live. As a result, he is now famous for performing alone with just his guitar and pedal—no band, drums, piano, or synth to back him up. As his opening act James Blunt (of the 2004 radio hit “You’re Beautiful”) quipped, “Now Ed doesn’t even have to pay a band. That’s a lot more money for him!”

Divide continues the personal exploration that Sheeran began in his previous albums, and opens his repertoire up to a variety of creative new sounds. There is certainly a sense of familiarity within the thematic material; the opening rap track “Eraser” contemplates his lifelong struggles with alcoholism, drug abuse, and dealing with the fame that leaves him feeling empty inside. All this recalls similarly dark tracks from his prior album *X* (“Bloodstream,” “Don’t”).

He includes a number of works dedicated to his family and childhood: “Castle on a Hill,” about his carefree youth, and “Supermarket Flowers,” a piano ballad about the passing of his grandmother with some of his most heartbreakingly beautiful lyrics. “Perfect,” which he told the audience was his favorite song ever to write, could be a wedding song and is perhaps most similar to Sheeran’s

older style—see songs such as “Thinking Out Loud.”

But *Divide* has a multicultural influence in it that renders it uniquely powerful. Perhaps the real signature flourish of the album is “Galway Girl,” the Irish-folk, ceili-influenced, upbeat story of a “perfect girl and a perfect night.” Sounding like something plucked straight out of Dublin nightlife, “Galway Girl” is the manifesto of Sheeran’s Irish pride. “Nancy Mulligan,” an ode to his Gaelic ancestry, is no less Celtic in sound or words. Sheeran’s song “Bibia Be Ye Ye” is an uplifting African folk tune about hope; he collaborated on it with native musicians while spending time in Ghana. He sings of dancing along the Catalan streets in the skippy “Barcelona.” Perhaps the most famous track of the album, played unceasingly on the radio, at parties, and at club scenes across the world, is “Shape of You.” “Shape of You”

is his unashamedly electro-pop hit that features the current Jamaican-Caribbean haunting synth trend in modern music (also heard famously in Sia’s “Cheap Thrills”).

Sheeran is as good a live performer as it gets. As mentioned before, he plays solo, recreating each track onstage using just his guitar and loop pedal. Dynamic, smiling, and wearing a t-shirt and beat-up jeans, he looks as if he were one of the crowd, surprised to find himself on stage. But that is his brand. He’s not flashy or glamorously made-up like Taylor Swift. He is not teen-heartthrob-good-looking like One Direction. He is the world’s favorite ginger, a friendly guy you’d want to go to a pub or a bar or a concert with. Playing to all fans in the crowd, new and old alike, he performed many of his older hits, from “Thinking Out Loud” to “I See Fire.” Donning a Chicago Bears jersey for the

final act, he played his heart out during a full ten-minute version of “You Need Me, I Don’t Need You,” continually ratcheting up the tension and driving fans into a higher and higher frenzy until he screeched his rap to a halt and bid the stadium goodnight to an earthquake of screaming.

Sheeran’s *Divide* is laden with his old soft guitar ballad style, but he has synthesized that with a new creative pop vision that explores and combines sounds from all over the world. He is just as masterful over the steel strings as any artist in the world, drawing from them a sound the ancients might have heard from the mythical Orpheus. If Jimi Hendrix and Eric Clapton were the kings of the rock ‘n’ roll electric guitar, Ed Sheeran is the god of the acoustic.

Jack Ferguson is a sophomore PLS major living in Fisher Hall. Contact jfergus8@nd.edu

The new movie musical

ALEX ARROYO
Staff Writer

America embraces a new form of cinematic musical

There was a time in America when the movie musical ruled Hollywood. For decades, movie musicals such as *The Wizard of Oz*, *Singing in the Rain*, or *The King and I* dominated both the academy awards and the box office. These films had mass family appeal, featured amazing soundtracks, and starred some of the most multifaceted performers ever to walk the stage. So where have movie musicals gone?

Some might argue that they never went anywhere, citing the recent success of *La La Land* or *Beauty and the Beast*. However, do these stack up

to the movie musicals of old? Not really. Ryan Gosling and Emma Stone talking their way through dreary piano plunking is not quite *Grease*. Similarly, Emma Watson’s robotic auto tune could never compete with Judy Garland’s passionate “Somewhere Over the Rainbow.” The truth is if these modern movie stars had lived anytime during the 30’s to the 60’s, when Hollywood was cranking out musicals, they would have been waiting tables. The reason that our modern musicals can’t hold a candle to their predecessors is because of sheer talent. Take Gene Kelly, for example, the star of the wildly popular 1952 musical *Singing in the Rain*. Kelly, a war veteran, could sing, act, and was regarded as one of the greatest dancers of his generation. Julie Andrews could belt out a ballad in musicals like *Mary Poppins* or *The Sound of Music* and have

no trouble carrying the scene. There are few performers left in Hollywood who can act successfully, let alone sing, dance, and serve in the military. A lack of multifaceted performers leads studios to cast actors who can’t carry a tune.

The second major reason for the change of the modern musical is the lack of Broadway composers. To have original musicals, you do need original music. Over the past few years, we’ve seen Hollywood remake every stage musical from *Les Misérables* to *Into the Woods*. Not that there’s anything wrong with these musicals, except for the fact that they’re not original. Movie studios are simply remaking established Broadway shows with actors who cannot sing. With the notable exception of *La La Land*’s bleak score, no one is composing original movie musicals. I’m certain that in a few years we’ll get a *Hamilton*

movie; I just hope they hire the original Broadway cast.

The death of the old movie musical has left a vacuum in American cinema. That vacuum is being filled by a new spin on the musical: the soundtrack film. The massive success of *Guardians of the Galaxy* and subsequently *Guardians of the Galaxy Vol. 2* has opened a new chapter in movie musicals. While not a traditional musical, both *Guardians* films used a classic rock soundtrack to punctuate the movie. My favorite example is the director’s decision to play Rupert Holmes’ “Escape” while the protagonists escape out of prison. This new species of movie musical is perfectly suited for our time. It does not require a Broadway composer and lyricist creating a score. Nor does it require incredibly talented performers singing and acting. The nostalgic soundtracks expose children to the music

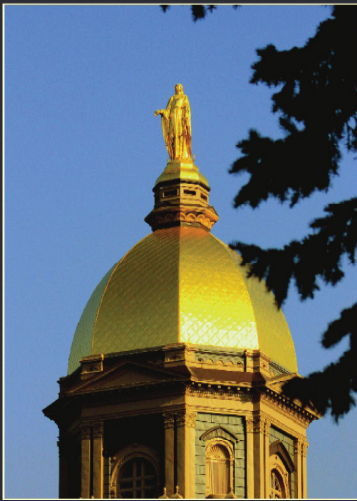
of their parents’ generation, bridging cultural gaps.

While the success of the soundtrack movie is groundbreaking, the idea of using music to tell a cinematic story is not new. Martin Scorsese’s *Goodfellas* incorporated songs like “Rags to Riches” and “Beyond the Sea” giving the movie atmosphere and flavor. But the modern use of the soundtrack in movies like Edgar Wright’s *Baby Driver* is much more than providing background noise. *Baby Driver* elevates the soundtrack musical to a new level. The film is about a young getaway driver named Baby who uses a retro playlist to drown out his tinnitus. The entire movie is built around this soundtrack. The car chases and shootouts are choreographed to the music, not the other way around. *Baby Driver* takes the use of the soundtrack one step further than *Guardians*

of the *Galaxy*. For one, *Baby Driver*’s album is more than double the length of *Guardians*. Deeper than that, *Baby Driver*’s soundtrack tells a story. And that’s the whole idea of a musical. If you listen to *Les Misérables* or *Hamilton*, you will hear the story through the music.

A far cry from the musicals of old, today’s musicals face the challenge of lacking high-quality original scores and a suffering from a shortage of performers capable of fulfilling musical and dancing roles. However, in the gaping hole left by musicals, the modern soundtrack musical has arisen, and while it may not have the trappings of a 1930’s Hollywood sing-along, it continues the legacy of the American musical.

R. Alexander Arroyo is a first-year Political Science major. He enjoys jazz, seafood, and sketching. Contact him at narroyo@nd.edu.



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O Blessed Virgin Mary,
Our Lady of Life,
O mother of all life
born and unborn,
I beseech thee to intercede
with thy Son Jesus
to grant me the grace
to defend all human life,
with all my strength,
and for all my days.
Amen.

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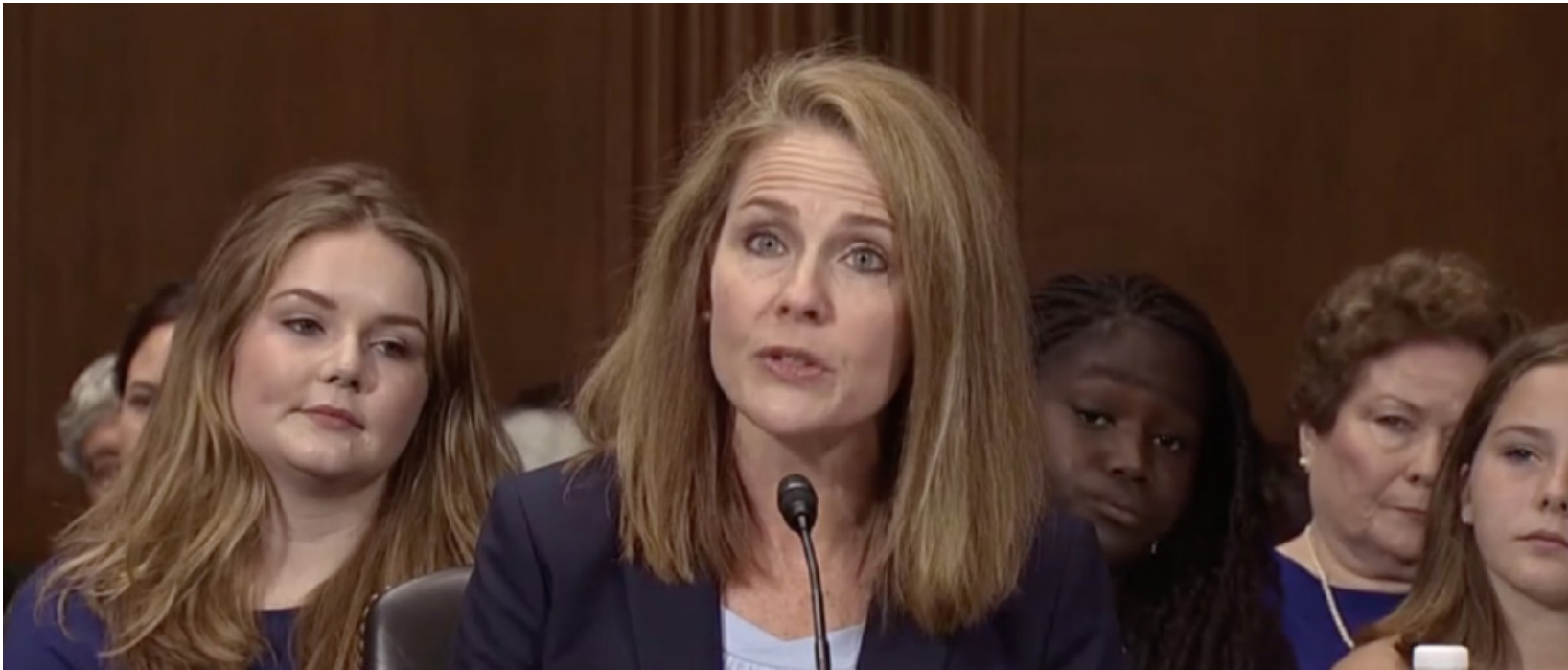
Barrett

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Dick Durbin (D-Illinois), Senator Dianne Feinstein (D-California), and other Democratic senators harshly criticized her, especially regarding her Catholic faith. Durbin, the senior senator from Illinois and the second highest ranking Senate Democrat as the Democratic Minority Whip, questioned Barrett's faith, asking "do you consider yourself an 'Orthodox Catholic?'"

Feinstein, the senior senator from California, persisted with the atypical line of questioning, stating "Dogma and law are two different things and I think whatever a religion is, it has its own dogma. The law is totally different. And I think in your case, professor, when you read your speeches, the conclusion one draws is that the dogma lives loudly within you, and that's of concern."

After Durbin and Feinstein's questioning, multiple senators, including Senators Jeff Flake (R-Arizona) and Ben Sasse (R-Nebraska) used their statements to highlight how applying a religious test and lines of questioning regarding faith are impermissible.



Senator Ben Sasse, a Republican from Nebraska, used his time to have Barrett explain "for non-experts what the religious test clause [of the US Constitution] is" and to state that "some of the questioning that [Barrett has been] subject to today seems to miss some of these fundamental constitutional protections."

After the hearing, Durbin and Feinstein stood by their questioning, releasing statements that claimed their questions were justified and did not violate the religious test clause of the Constitution. Feinstein

claimed "I have never and will never apply a religious litmus test to nominees," continuing to say that she pursued the line of questioning because [Barrett] has no judicial experience so senators have had to rely on her writings and public statements to determine the type of judge she would be."

In response to Senator Feinstein's comments, University President Reverend John Jenkins, CSC, released a letter defending Barrett and her Catholic faith. In his letter, Fr. Jenkins focused primarily on Senator's criticisms that "dogma lives loudly in [Professor

Barrett]."

"I am one in whose heart 'dogma lives loudly,' as it has for centuries in the lives of many Americans, some of whom have given their lives in service to this nation," wrote Fr. Jenkins, "Indeed, it lived loudly in the hearts of those who founded our nation as one where citizens could practice their faith freely and without apology."

Fr. Jenkins continued to express a fear over the implications of Barrett's hearing: "It is chilling to hear from a United States Senator that this [Catholic faith] might now disqualify someone from service as a federal

judge." In response, Fr. Jenkins asked that Senator Feinstein and her colleagues "respect those in whom 'dogma lives loudly'—which is a condition we call faith."

Fr. Jenkins was joined in his criticism of Senator Feinstein's comments by Princeton University President Christopher L. Eisgruber, who wrote that he "believe[s] ... that the questions directed to Professor Barrett about her faith were not consistent with the principle set forth in the Constitution's 'no religious test' clause."

Eisgruber concluded his letter by stating that Barrett "and other

nominees ought in any event to be evaluated on the basis of their professional ability and jurisprudential philosophy, not their religion," and that Barrett is a capable nominee "who would serve this country honorably and well."

Kevin Angell is a sophomore studying in economics and political science. Evan Holguin is a senior studying the Program of Liberal Studies. Both are residents of Duncan Hall, living in perhaps the most ecumenical wing on campus as it features an equal number of Catholic and Protestants.

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