

Titles/Abstracts/Bios

Peter Casarella

Title: Wholes and Parts: Ecumenism and Inter-religious Encounters in the Pope Francis's *Teología del Pueblo*.

Abstract: In reading Romano Guardini's *Der Gegensatz* (1925) through a Latin American lens, Jorge Mario Bergoglio developed an original insight into a form of encounter that accentuated rather than diminished the need to face and overcome inequalities. Paul VI's *Ecclesiam Suam* (1964) likewise had mentioned a dialogue of salvation that was both vertical and horizontal. When Pope Francis then spoke about the differences between spheres and polyhedra in *Evangelii Gaudium* (Nov. 23, 2013, #236), the ground had already been laid for a new theology of dialogue that aims for unity in diversity. He repeats this formula in an ecumenical context in a meeting in Caserta with the Pentecostal Pastor Giovanni Traettino (July 28, 2014). He also speaks about polyhedral thinking as an antidote to the homogenization of economic globalization (Meeting with the Council of Europe of Nov. 25, 2014 and speech in front of Independence Hall in Philadelphia in Sept. 26, 2015). This essay will explore the polyhedral model of dialogue as it applies *mutatis mutandis* to ecumenical and inter-religious encounters in the pre-pontifical and pontifical thought of Bergoglio/Pope Francis.

Bio: Prof. Casarella teaches in World Religions World Church at Notre Dame and has published almost fifty essays in scholarly journals on a variety of topics—e.g., medieval Christian Neoplatonism, contemporary theological aesthetics, and the Hispanic/Latino presence in the U.S. Catholic Church.

John Cavadini

Title: The Lives of the Saints as a Subject of Inter-religious Study

Abstract: In his great encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*, Saint John Paul II takes up the issue of heroic “witness to the absoluteness of the moral good.” He notes that, with regard to this witness, “*Christians are not alone* [emphasis original]: they are supported by the moral sense present in peoples and by the great religious and sapiential traditions of East and West, from which the interior and mysterious workings of God’s Spirit are not absent” (VS 94). This opens up an interesting modality for inter-religious conversation and study. It means that, because of a shared human nature, made in the image and likeness of God, heroic goodness can be recognized across cultural and religious boundaries. Admiration is not limited by the constraints that cultural expectations and religious sensibility that sometimes are in today’s world made into absolute barriers. John Paul II may have been echoing Gabriel Marcel, who over 50 years ago (in *Belonging and Disposability*) wrote that admiration was an act “whose enormous spiritual and even metaphysical significance is still not recognized.” Perhaps we could, very roughly speaking, speak of a kind of cross-cultural admiration for holiness, if by holiness we mean heroic defense of absolute moral norms by a religious person who cites his or her religious identity as the inspiration for his or her action. Could we find in the study of saints that are admired across religious boundaries (St. Francis of Assisi, for example) a fruitful subject for inter-religious study? Would we find, in the words of Benedict XVI, that “God’s kenosis is the place where the religions can meet without claims of sovereignty” and that, therefore, “poverty is the truly divine manifestation of truth [which] ... can demand obedience without involving alienation?” (*Many Religions – One Covenant*, 109). Or something equally interesting?

Bio: John Cavadini is a professor of theology and director of the Institute for Church Life at the University of Notre Dame.

Francis X Clooney, SJ

Paper Title: Ecumenism, Global Christianity, and Interreligious Dialogue in Tension: Three Jesuit Examples in India.

Abstract: It is natural for us to hope that the best insights and experiences arising in Christian ecumenical exchange, the encounters among different churches and Christian cultures across the global stage, and interreligious dialogue will confirm one another, and so it is: openness in any of these encounters encourages similar openness in the others as well. In particular, the developing field of receptive ecumenism offers a model of learning that in many of its virtues is like the best of interreligious learning. But this harmony is easy to upset. Ecumenism, or global Christianity, or interreligious learning, may accidentally or by design be developed at the expense of the other two. Thus, Christian ecumenism as a Western phenomenon may reach a consensus that inadvertently thwarts dialogue with Christians from non-Western cultures, while seeking to impose itself on those forms of Christianity; a Christian openness to other religions may provoke severe criticisms by other Christians; positive views toward other faiths may heighten tensions with Christian minorities in large non-Christian cultures, and expose deep differences among Christians about how far openness dare extend; affirmations of global Christian community may foster the illusion of a Christian world immune to wider cultural influences and free from the requirement of dialogue; Christian disputes may play out in arguments about dialogue. Etc. Against this background, my paper highlights three examples of Jesuits in whose lives ecumenism, Christianity outside the West, and interreligious learning suffered imbalance: Constantine Beschi (1680-1742), SJ, whose gracious and beautiful Tamil poetic compositions stood side by side with his fierce criticisms of Protestants in south India; William Wallace, SJ (1863-1922), the Evangelical Anglican who became a Catholic and Jesuit in part due to his disillusionment with the Anglican mission in Bengal; and Ignatius Hirudayam, SJ (1910-1995), whose lifelong work in interreligious learning and the deepening of Tamil Catholicism foundered due to disputes among Catholics and Jesuits on whether Christianity should stand in harmony with or over against Hindu culture.

Bio: Francis Clooney, SJ is Parkman Professor of Divinity and Professor of Comparative Theology at Harvard University, and was from 2010 to 2017 Director of the Center for the Study of World Religions at Harvard. His primary areas of scholarship are theological commentarial writings in the Sanskrit and Tamil traditions of Hindu India, and the field of comparative theology. He is the author of numerous articles and books, including most recently *Comparative Theology: Deep Learning across Religious Borders* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), *His Hiding Place Is Darkness: Toward a Hindu-Catholic Theopoetics* (Stanford, 2013), and *The Future of Hindu-Christian Studies: A Theological Inquiry* (Routledge, 2017).

Gavin D'Costa

Title: Towards a tentative Catholic Zionism: the trajectory after Nostra Aetate?

Abstract: After the Council the Catholic magisterium has repeated the view, following Romans 11.29, that the covenant God made with Israel (the Jewish people) is irrevocable. At the same time, it has repeated the view that the covenant is also fulfilled in Jesus Christ. I explore the implication of these teachings in regard to the intrinsic relation of the Land (Eretz) to the covenant - and the particular founding of the State of Israel (Medinat). I argue that there are grounds for a tentative Catholic Zionism, which affirms that there may be theological significance in Medinat Yisrael. This certainly does not ignore the just claims by Palestinians for a state or in any way support any particular Israeli government policies or decisions. I argue that there have been tentative moves in this direction in Vatican documents and local Bishops conferences and that there are grounds for this in the Old and New Testament. However, while this may be a very positive response to many Jewish requests to attend to this question, it also raises the more problematic question of the church of the circumcision that has been eradicated within the ecclesia. Restoring this ecclesial vision will require both dialogue with Messianic Jewish groups and a restoration of Jewish practices within the church for Hebrew Catholics.

Bio: Gavin D'Costa is Professor of Catholic Theology, University of Bristol (UK). He is author of *Vatican II. Catholic Doctrines on Jews and Muslims* (Oxford University Press) and is currently completing a book: *After Vatican II: Catholics doctrines and Jews*.

Brian E. Daley

Title: “Breathing with both Lungs”: A Half-Century of Orthodox-Catholic Dialogue

Abstract: Since the autumn of 1964, theologians representing the Eastern Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches have been meeting regularly – first in North America, then, since the late 1970s, also internationally - to study and to formulate statements of agreement on questions of faith and pastoral practice that have historically kept our Churches apart. Many of these agreed statements represent a common position on issues that had long been thought irreconcilable. Yet in the past few years, our dialogue and several others have come to sense that the time may have come for Christian Churches to look beyond simply seeking intellectual solutions, formulated by theologians, to divisive issues, and to seek reconciliation also in whatever forms of common action and common prayer are now possible for us. The challenge is to see each other, with all the distinctive differences of faith and worship that we recognize and treasure, as nevertheless one in the essentials of faith. Where this will lead the Christian ecumenical movement remains uncertain, but the possibilities are intriguing.

Bio: Brian E. Daley, SJ, is a Jesuit priest, and a member of the Department of Theology at Notre Dame, where he teaches early Christian theology. He has been as member of the North American Orthodox-Catholic Consultation since 1981, and currently serves as its Catholic executive secretary.

Martino Diez

Title: In them ye have benefits for a term appointed” (Q. 22:33). A Girardian perspective on the origin of Islam

Abstract: René Girard famously formulated a comprehensive theory about the genesis of human religions. In spite of some theological limitations, this theory greatly enhances our understanding of the anthropological mechanisms related to the creation, preservation and consummation of the sacred.

The purpose of this paper is to examine some possible applications of this theory to the theological appreciation of Islam from a Christian point of view. In particular, in the first part of the paper I will argue that 7th century Arabia and the Levant at large were invested by what Girard calls “a sacrificial crisis” and that Islam can be seen as a reaction to this crisis through the *reinstatement of a sacrificial order*. I will discuss in particular three features of the Qur’anic message, namely (1) the Pilgrimage and its sacrificial rituals, especially in ‘Arafat (“the Hajj is ‘Arafa”, as a famous tradition states); (2) the institute of Jihad as a means to canalize violence; (3) the restoration of the halal-haram pair, with a special attention to the polysemy of haram (both ‘illicit’ and ‘sacred’).

In the second part I shall tentatively elaborate (a) on the role that Islam could play in relation to the Paschal mystery which, in Girard’s view, brings about the destruction of the archaic sacred and (b) the possible theological meaning of the present outbreak of a nomadic jihadism.

Bio: Martino Diez is scientific director of the Oasis International Foundation and researcher in Arabic Language and Literature at the Catholic University of Milan. After graduating in Oriental Languages and Civilizations from Ca' Foscari University of Venice, he earned his PhD in Oriental Studies from the same university. In 2007-2008 he was post-doctoral researcher at Ca' Foscari University and from 2008 to 2016 he was lecturer in Arabic Language at the Catholic University of Milan.

Bishara Ebeid

Title: Dialogue and Orthodox Theology: The Importance of Inter-Christian and Interreligious Dialogue According to Ignatius IV

Abstract: Antioch, a divided Christianity in the milieu of Islam, has much to contribute regarding dialogue among Christian Churches and between Christianity and Islam. It can be described as the witness to the cross of division that awaits the resurrection of unity. The Greek Orthodox patriarch of Antioch, Ignatius IV Hazim (†2012), is one of the most important theologians of Orthodoxy during the last century. He was characterized as “a man of dialogue”. He believed that dialogue is the instrument to achieve Christian unity and peaceful coexistence with Muslims. He aimed principally to re-establish Antiochian unity, having as a basis the concept of “plurality in unity”. He was worried as well for the situation of the Christian world at large and for this reason was an active figure in the ecumenical movement. Finally, he tried to develop a dialogue with Muslims through the common spiritual concept of man as “image of God” for Christians and “vicar of God” for Muslims.

In my paper I would like to highlight the vision of dialogue according to Ignatius IV. In analyzing his thought, I seek to answer the following questions: How can Orthodoxy give its answers to the crisis and challenges of the modern world and especially the Middle East? What are the Orthodox bases of dialogue with other Christian Churches and with Islam? And, what are the challenges of this dialogue and its finality?

Bio: Bishara Ebeid is an invited professor of Eastern Patristic Theology and History at the Pontifical Oriental Institute and of Arabic Language at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic Language and Islamic Studies- Rome. He is the author of *Le tuniche di al-Masih: La Cristologia delle grandi confessioni dell'Oriente*, to be published with the Pontifical Oriental Institute in 2018.

Robert Gimello

Title: “CHALCEDONIAN BUDDHALOLOGY” Buddha Nature and Human Nature “Indivisibly” (*ἀδιαίρετως*) yet “Unconfusedly” (*ἀσυνγχύτως*) United: A Promising Topic for Buddhist-Christian Dialogue and a Possible Model for Its Mutually Respectful Conduct

Abstract: In its long, arduous, and still ongoing effort to define awakening (*bodhi*) and the nature of the awakened being (*buddha*) Buddhism has had to hew to a “middle path” not unlike that charted by the Fathers at Chalcedon as they sought to understand the identity of Christ. As the Fathers sought to craft a Christology that recognized both the full divinity and the full humanity of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, while trying to avoid the heretical underestimation of either, so Buddhist thinkers struggled to articulate a vision of Buddhahood that recognized both its utter transcendence, its complete and therefore completely ineffable liberation from suffering and ignorance, and its universal immanence, its proleptic yet already efficacious presence in the very sentience of every suffering and ignorant sentient being. Examining some of the technical concepts and arguments that Mahāyāna Buddhist thinkers employed in this effort, we will note their analogies with the conciliar discourse of the early Church while also highlighting the supervening differences between their respective conclusion. We hope, in this way, to show the promise of a strategy of dialogue that focuses not only on final doctrinal conclusions but also, and especially, on the aporia, the seeming impasses, at the heart of the two traditions — impasses that can be overcome (to the extent that they can ever finally be overcome) only by resort, in each case, to faith, by reliance, that is to say, on *πίστις* or on *śraddhā* (the differences between which will also be considered).

Bio:

Jennifer Hevelone-Harper

Title: Introducing Evangelical Millennials to the Global Church

Abstract: This fall marks the 500th anniversary of the beginning of the Protestant Reformation in Germany. Whether this is observed with celebration or resignation, the occasion does provide an appropriate junction for faculty at an evangelical Protestant liberal arts college to take stock of the ways in which we are educating our students to participate in ecumenical and interfaith conversations. There are clear challenges to this endeavor. Foremost is the awareness that we are less religiously diverse than many institutions of higher learning; faculty must sign a faith statement broadly protestant in tone. And while our student body, with its active Catholic and Orthodox student fellowships, may be more ecumenically diverse than the faculty, the majority of protestants in this millennial generation arrive at college with little grounding in any particular denominational identity.

How then, through our pedagogy, do we introduce students to an understanding of ecclesiology and the rich faith traditions of historic Christianity? How do we equip them to have substantive conversations with Jewish, Muslim, and Buddhist neighbors? How do we aid a Protestant student in seeing her Catholic roommate, not as a religious “other” but a “sister in Christ”? One starting point is to encourage students to explore their own faith tradition more deeply. When they better understand their own church background, we are then able to facilitate educational experiences that connect them people from other traditions. Through core curriculum classes in theology, Bible, and history; interaction with diverse neighboring religious communities; opportunities for experiential and service learning; and global education experiences we challenge our students to consider a wider understanding of the Christian community than their own past experience entailed. We strive to leverage our confessional institutional identity, “to graduate men and women distinguished by intellectual maturity and Christian character, committed to lives of service and prepared for leadership worldwide.” This mission requires we acknowledge our own limited vantage point and embark on a frank examination of both global Christianity and other world religions.

Bio: Jennifer Hevelone-Harper is professor of history at Gordon College, in Wenham, MA, where she teaches courses in Medieval, Byzantine, and late antique history. She received an MA from the University of Chicago and a PhD from Princeton University. She is the author of *Disciples of the Desert: Monks, Laity, and Spiritual Authority in Sixth-Century Gaza*, published by Johns Hopkins University Press.

Paul Kollman, CSC

Title: “The relationship between ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue: insights from the Catholic evangelization of eastern Africa”

Abstract: Formal theological questions—connected, for example, to topics like soteriology, ecclesiology, and Christology—naturally arise in considering the relationship between ecumenical and inter-religious relations. Important as such questions are, they do not come about in the abstract, nor do ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue take place in the abstract. Instead, both are practices enacted in time and space, shaped by particular circumstances.

Traditional missionary activity represents an important ecclesial practice in which both ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue have featured prominently, in eastern Africa as elsewhere. In addition, the operative Catholic missionary imagination—often both cartographic and historical as well as theological in its lineaments—has at times put other Christians and believers in other religions into the same category: that is, as targets of missionary evangelization. Missionaries usually did so with distinctions, yet in retrospect these were almost always theologically problematic.

The history of the Catholic Church in eastern Africa over the past century and a half presents a variety of missionary postures and practices vis-à-vis other Christians (Anglicans and Lutherans especially, and other groups more recently) as well as believers in other religions (notably Islam of various types, and so-called traditional African religions). In this paper I will identify some of the challenges arising within missionary engagement with both Christians and non-Christians, highlighting practical considerations at work due to inescapable historical and social contingencies. These included missionary proclivities, the historical geography of Islam in region, European colonialism and ensuing conflict, the structural capacities of traditional African religiosity, and distinctive cultural realities linked to particular people-groups.

Through historical examples that show the salience of these contingencies, I will argue that missionary evangelization represents a privileged historical locus for considering the relationship between ecumenism and interreligious dialogue.

Bio: Paul Kollman, CSC is associate professor of History of Christianity in the Department of Theology and Executive Director of the Center for Social Concerns at the University of Notre Dame. He is also current president of the International Association of Mission Studies. His coauthored book *Christianity in Eastern Africa* will be forthcoming with Fortress Press.

Matthew J. Kuiper

Title: Inter-Religious Relations: A Crucial Factor in the Emergence of Deobandi Reformism

Abstract: One of the most significant reform movements in modern Sunni Islam is that associated with the *madrasa* in Deoband, India. The *madrasa* itself was founded in 1867, ten years after the ‘Mutiny’ of 1857, an event which consolidated British imperial rule over South Asia. From that time, the Deobandi movement has spread around the world, through a network of affiliated *madrasas* numbering in the tens of thousands. Deobandism has also been globalized through the Tablīghī Jamā‘at, a widespread lay-oriented *da‘wa* (missionary) movement. Scholars have tended to explain the emergence of Deobandism primarily with reference to Muslim political decline and the rise of European colonialism over the course of the 19th century. When one studies the self-representations of Deoband, however, one sees that inter-religious issues and concerns were also prominent in the constitution of the movement. This paper seeks to recover the inter-religious as a crucial factor in the emergence of Deobandi reformism. After introducing the Deobandi movement, it will revisit the movement’s formative history, drawing attention to inter-religious factors as seen in a selection of the movement’s literature. The paper will conclude with comments on what this study suggests about the possibilities for inter-religious understanding among reform and missionary-minded believers across traditions.

Bio: Matthew Kuiper is an Assistant Professor of Religious Studies at Missouri State University. He is the author of *Da’wa and Other Religions: Indian Muslims and the Modern Resurgence of Global Islamic Activism* (Routledge, 2018).

David Marshall

Title: Scripture Speaking about Itself: The Self-Referentiality of the Qur'an and Christian-Muslim Dialogue

Abstract: This paper will explore the self-referential character of the Qur'an (the topic of some major recent studies, e.g. Madigan, Boisliveau) and some related features of the Islamic tradition. It will also consider this topic in the context of Christian-Muslim dialogue.

The paper will survey some representative Qur'anic passages which illustrate the Qur'an's self-referential character, notably passages located at the beginning of suras (e.g. 2, 3) where they make a particular impact. It will also be argued that this is not an incidental aspect of Qur'anic rhetoric but points to a fundamental feature of the Qur'an, which is to a significant extent a scripture that is about itself, because the revelation of scripture (*tanzil*) and the contrasting ways in which humans accept or reject it is at the centre of the drama of divine-human encounter that the Qur'an describes. The paper will also touch on related features of the Islamic tradition, including, for example, the Islamic sense of the perfection and closed character of the scriptural canon; Islamic belief in the untranslatability of the Qur'an; Islamic belief – in the majority tradition – in the uncreatedness of the Qur'an; Islamic practices around the Qur'an, including its handling, its memorization, its recitation etc.

The focus will then move to consideration of the Bible, looking at its (comparatively rare) moments of self-referentiality and indeed the difficulty involved in even addressing the question of the Bible's account of itself, given its provenance over many centuries and through many human authors. On all the points mentioned above concerning the place and understanding of the Qur'an in Islamic tradition, the contrasting situation of the Bible in the Christian tradition will be explored. Concluding reflections will comment on the significance of these observations for Christian-Muslim dialogue, noting their implications for Muslim views of the Bible and Christian perceptions of the Qur'an.

Bio: David Marshall studied Theology at the University of Oxford and Islamic Studies at the University of Birmingham. He has taught Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations at various seminaries and universities, including, most recently, Duke Divinity School and Georgetown University. He is a priest in the Church of England and served on the staff of the Archbishop of Canterbury, where he was involved in developing the Building Bridges Seminar, a process of theological dialogue between Muslim and Christian scholars.

Adnan Mokrani

Title: What Dialogue Offers to Theology: Doing Theology in an Interreligious Context

Abstract: When theologians, from different religions, encounter each other, what they might talk

about? Can they find a common language that everyone can understand? What are the fruits and challenges of doing theology in a dialogical context? My theologian friend of another faith is not ignorant or incoherent, but wise and intelligent; I can learn many things from his or her wisdom for my own theology and spirituality. This approach to theology promotes renewal, mutual enrichment, and cross-fertilization. It is a work of discernment, respect and love, and has nothing to do with polemics and apologetics.

The interreligious commitment of the theologian offers a wider vision of the world, allowing him/her to be universal and aware of the geography of ideas and the diversity among the interlocutors, who are no longer limited to his/her coreligionists. Theological provincialism is a serious barrier in our globalized world! If we pretend to belong to universal religions, we should liberate ourselves from the mental categories of our local cultures and see the world dialogically. It is a fundamental service that dialogue offers to theology, in order to prevent the cultural idolatry, i.e. the absolutization of one specific culture. The theology of religions is among the fruits of dialogue, and represents one of the most creative and promising theological disciplines of our time. Interdisciplinary scriptural studies are another field, where interreligious cooperation is needed and appreciated. We have new horizons of research to discover and explore together.

Bio: Adnane Mokrani, Muslim theologian, Tunisian, Associated Professor of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (Rome). Aggregate Professor at the Pontifical Gregorian University (Rome), PhD in Islamic Theology from al-Zaytuna University (Tunis 1997), PhD in Muslim-Christian Relations from the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (Rome 2005).

Ilaria Morali

Paper Title: Doctrinal Principles of conciliar Decree Ad Gentes (chap.I) and present theological trends. Questions and remarks.

Abstract: The Conciliar Decree Ad Gentes is the result of a complex process of redaction. Its Ch. I is of primary importance: in seven synthetic numbers, the conciliar Fathers pointed out the dogmatic principles of Church's mission. In the face of growing new trends in the Theology of mission and Theology of Religions they acknowledged the urgency of confirming the n. 17 of Dogmatic Constitution on the Church by explaining the content through a more articulate explication. Important theologians (among them Y.M. Congar, J. Ratzinger) contributed to the redaction of what would become the Decree's first chapter. Post-conciliar Magisterium's teaching continues on the pattern laid down by Vatican II.

In the last few decades, however, among the theologians, there have been those who propose to introduce new theological approaches and understandings of the other religions, as well of the Church's mission in the world. With emphasis on interreligious dialogue, they suggest also rethinking faith by dismantling some traditional Christian notions, which they consider outdated (among these, are mission, salvation, conversion). In their theories Religious Studies play often a peculiar role.

These purposes and trends raise many questions (should we consider Ch. I of AG outdated or is it reasonable to suppose the conciliar message has not been sufficiently understood? Need we consider reasons and argumentations with which great theologians supported the Conciliar discernment on mission and dialogue obsolete? What relationship between Religious Studies and Theology?). Hence the need for in-depth reflection and critical remarks.

Bio: Prof. Morali is Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University. She is the author of numerous articles and contributions on the theological implications of interreligious dialogue, the Vatican II conciliar teaching on religions and mission, and theological debate on the relationship between Christianity and other religious traditions. She is also co-author of *Catholic Engagement with World Religions* (Orbis, 2010). Prof. Morali served for five years (2011-15) as the Director of the Department of Missiology at the Gregorian and has served since March 2014 as a consultant for the Council on Interreligious Dialogue.

Vasudha Narayanan

Title: Idioms of Worship: Shared Cultures, Common Ground, and Contested Territories

Abstract: A theme that is popular since the twentieth century in the self-image of Hinduism is its openness to other faith traditions and its celebration of plurality. We certainly see this in practice in “lived” religion. In India, hundreds of thousands of Hindus make pilgrimages to the Shrine Basilica of Our Lady of Health at Vailankanni, near Nagapattinam, Tamilnadu, and to the Infant Jesus Shrine in Viveknagar, Bangalore, as well as to hundreds of Muslim *dargahs* (a place where one or more revered “saints” are buried). Here, in churches and *dargahs*, we see symbols and patterns of prayer that Hindus can recognize and with which they feel comfortable. While the use of familiar cultural symbols and patterns in worship and ritual seems natural to many worshipers, and presents the Catholic Church in local terms, critics argue that the deliberate co-opting of Hindu markers are primarily for purposes of conversion.

In the first part of my presentation, I will show the many ways in which inculturation takes place in RC institutions in India in vocabulary, dress, ritual, performing arts, and the use of what may be considered to be either “generic cultural” or Hindu symbols which are locally eloquent. Why do some theological texts tend to recommend exclusive devotion to one supreme deity but, in practice, people flock to multiple embodiments of power in many religions? What are the theological resources in the Hindu traditions which will help us understand and analyze the multiple registers of encounter with “other” traditions? Historically, have the Hindu traditions encouraged the full acceptance of the “other,” or are there caveats? My paper will examine the limited authority of text, on the one hand, and the importance of “custom” and “practice,” on the other, to answer some of these questions.

Bio:

Paulinus Odozor

Title: Disputed Moral Truths? Revisiting a neglected aspect of Christian Ecumenical dialogue.

Abstract: So much has been done (achieved ?) among the various ecumenical dialogues within and between various Christian groups especially in the areas of dogma. This presentation asks whether there has been a corresponding attempt in areas of moral discourse to arrive at a consensus on moral matters.

Gabriel Said Reynolds

Title: “The Best of Schemers: Divine Plotting in the Bible and the Qur’an”

Abstract: In recent years a number of scholars have discussed the importance of divine mercy to the Qur’an (the most recent issue of *Islamochristiana* includes several contributions on this topic). The importance of this theme is reflected in the invocation which opens all of the Qur’an’s Suras but one: *In the name of God the Merciful, the Benevolent*. Pope Francis himself has shown interest in the importance of mercy to Islamic theology in his papal bull announcing the Year of Mercy, *Misericordiae Vultus*. However, the Qur’an not only emphasizes the mercy of God to the penitent but also the antagonism of God to those who refuse to repent and believe. Indeed the Qur’an in several places speaks of God’s trickery (*makr*) or scheming against the unbelievers. In my presentation I will discuss how and why the Qur’an makes God the “Best of Schemers” (Q 3:54; cf. Q 7:99; 8:30; 13:42; 27:50). I will also explore the theme of divine trickery in the Qur’an’s Biblical subtext and examine the strategies employed by Muslim interpreters and theologians who seek to maintain that a God of trickery might also be a God of mercy.

Bio: Gabriel Said Reynolds is professor of Islamic Studies and Theology at the University of Notre Dame. He is the author of *The Qur'an and the Bible: Text and Commentary*, to be published with Yale University Press in 2018.

Diego Sarrió-Cucarella, MAfr

Title: Learning from History: The Legacy of Muslim-Christian Polemics

Abstract: Can Christians and Muslims understand one another? Can they see in the other a partner on the path to God, someone who has value not only as a fellow human but more so as a seeker of God? During the course of their shared history, most of what Christians and Muslims have written about one another has been polemical. There were rare instances when the religion of the other was depicted without prejudice, but the “default position” was one of suspicion and antagonism. Those who sought to overcome stereotypical characterizations of the other were exceptions on both sides. Polemics is the right word to describe this type of literature. It comes from *pólemos*, which means war in Greek. The history of Christian-Muslim writings has been for the most part a “war of words.” The writers saw themselves as participants in a larger battle that was being fought by rulers no less than scholars. They were simply unable to disassociate their writings about the other from the wider competition over political, cultural and economic hegemony. This essay hopes to offer a bit of perspective from history. This is not to say that we want to repeat the past, only to learn from it.

Bio: Diego Sarrió-Cucarella, MAfr, lectures at the Pontifical Institute for Arabic and Islamic Studies (PISAI), where he is also the Director of Studies. He received his PhD in 2014 from the Department of Theology at Georgetown University. His publications focus on the intellectual history of Muslim-Christian relations and the continuing reciprocal theological constructions that this history has bequeathed to Christians and Muslims today.

J. Jayakiran Sebastian

Title: Revitalizing the Fading of Ecumenical Memory and Reenergizing the Promise of our Ecumenical Future: Can Ecumenism be Taught?

Abstract: This paper will draw on personal awareness of and commitment to the Ecumenical movement, which - thanks to a fortuitous family connection began when I was a schoolboy - continues through my vocation as a theological educator in India and now the United States. I will offer and analyze examples emerging from my courses on ecumenism and the involvement of my students. I will revisit significant Ecumenical documents and point out how the recovery of Ecumenical memory and the invitation to explore the meaning and implications of such thinking can play a significant role in local congregations and faith communities as they reimagine an Ecumenical future.

Such a committed praxis has implications not just in inter- and intra-denominational conversations, but also impacts the wider realities of the universe of living faiths amidst the messiness of everyday life in our uncertain present.

I will return again and again to the question regarding the pedagogy of Ecumenism - what does "teaching Ecumenism" imply?

Bio: Rev Dr J. Jayakiran Sebastian is a Presbyterian of the Church of South India. He serves as the Dean and the H. George Anderson Professor of Mission and Cultures at the United Lutheran Seminary (Philadelphia and Gettysburg). He has served as Professor in the Department of Theology and Ethics at the United Theological College in Bangalore, India, where he was the Chairperson of the Department and Dean of Doctoral Studies. His research and writings span the contemporary relevance of the early teachers of faith, baptismal practices, religious conversion, village religion in India and Dalit theology, the ongoing significance of the Reformation, and challenges of ecumenism and public theology in the 21st century.

Mun'im Sirry

Title: Islamic Christology: A Starting-Point for Interreligious Dialogue?

Abstract: Most Muslims tend to understand the Other, including Christianity, through the lens of the Qur'an without realizing that the Muslim scripture develops its own Christology. From the word "Christ", Christology is a branch of Christian theology that deals with the person of Jesus, his divinity, nature and role in the salvation of humanity. My contention is that Muslims would never understand Christianity just by reading their own scripture. It is, therefore, important to read the Qur'an's statements about Christian beliefs in its own context. My talk will first focus on the nature of Qur'anic Christology and then I will discuss why the Muslim scripture develops a distinct Christology different from what Christians themselves believe in. I hope to shed some lights on the importance of reading the Qur'an, or any other scriptures for that matter, in its own context.

Vazha Vardidze

Title: Christian faith and multiplicity of religions. After the question of exclusivity, inclusivism and pluralism

Abstract: The question on coexistence of different confessions or religions is motivated not only by the possibility of defining and transferring the truth but also by the desire of achieving a peaceful coexistence. All this should appear in the dialogue that catches the common basis as well as different moments between different confessions and tries to put it in a common horizon. Here we refer to two prospects of an interreligious dialogue and determination of their attitude against each other and all this clarifies whether there is possibility of coexistence.

The first horizon is of rational character and represents a part of the cognition process. The other is a theological viewpoint, characterized for all religions. It is not established according to the first one but uses it as it wants to. In this report we will only emphasize only first, external (philosophic) prospect. It will enable us to determine the criteria according to which the acceptability of this or that religion and its truth can be evaluated.

But certain revision is always necessary to avoid being against the practical life while theoretical discussion. We also should not cause degradation of the discussed religion to the rationalist dimension. Here we do not mean to determine the truth. We try to provide a response on how to find a possibility to be open to other religions. Therefore, we do not ask where the final word of God is (that becomes the main point of the religious cognition and activity) but how it is expressed. Such an approach allows us the truth to be shown not separately but together with its dialogic origin and purpose.

By means of the transcendental philosophy we refer to the preconditions of implementation of belief in order all moments to be taken into account by all religions for the dialogue to emerge and common horizon to be also determined that will provide a possibility of a dialogue between different confessions.

Realization of a human being's own consciousness formation, recognition of freedom and understanding the necessity of ethical orientation as well as attempts to emphasize the objective side of the belief content represent the preconditions of the dialogue shown in the aforementioned first (philosophic) horizon analysis.

Their rejection means to be against a person's own reasoning and actions – the preconditions a human being uses for himself that may not obviously be recognized by him for a different person. But it is also noteworthy that the criteria do not envisage the specific nature of religious

understanding in terms of God. The criteria do not refer to the content of the relation but hint at the need of self-critical revision of own and other religions.

Bio: Prof. Dr. Vaja Vardidze is a rector of Sulkhani-Saba Orbeliani University and a professor of Fundamental Theology and Dogmatic at this University. He is the author of the following books: "Fundamental theology "(I vol (2011) and II vol (2014), "God's word, Dogma and Freedom"(2008), "Dogmatic theology"(2007). He is a visiting professor at John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin.

Graduate Student Panel

Alison Fitchett Climenhaga

Title: Critical Catholicity: Global and Local Horizons of Catholic Belonging in Uganda

Abstract: My paper compares the practices of two “movements of the Spirit” active in a rural Catholic parish in western Uganda, with particular attention to how the groups envision and enact Catholic belonging. The first group, the internationally-linked Catholic Charismatic Renewal, has been active in Uganda since 1973. Meanwhile, the Bakaiso (“witnesses” in the local language) movement originated in Uganda in the early 20th century as a group devoted to the Uganda Martyrs—Christians killed in the 1880s, and canonized as Catholic saints in 1964—and evolved into a movement practicing the gifts of the Holy Spirit in the 1980s.

Drawing on extended participant observation in the parish as well as interviews and archival research, I analyze the diverging discourses—and the practices in which those discourses are couched—among the Bakaiso and Charismatic Renewal concerning the appropriate scope of their Catholic belonging. I argue that while the Bakaiso envision “being Catholic” in terms of celebrating the richness of Ugandan Christian faith past and present, members of the Charismatic Renewal are developing a more international consciousness, where being appropriately Catholic involves participating in a global church that transcends the Ugandan ecclesial and national context. Charismatic Renewal members emphasize how belonging to an international movement brings them into fellowship with Catholics all around the world, and they criticize the Bakaiso for being “just local.” These different understandings of Catholic belonging fuel conflicts between the groups.

Analysis of these diverging understandings of Catholic belonging among the Charismatic Renewal and the Bakaiso yields ecclesiological insight: into the operative ecclesiologies that inform discrete styles of Catholic practice in western Uganda, and, more generally, into the relationship of unity and diversity in the global church.

Ryann Elizabeth Craig

Title: The Qur'ānic Cross and the Lost Substitute: Tracing the use of the qur'ānic crucifixion account and the substitution legend in early Muslim-Christian polemics

Abstract: Use of the Qur'ān as a proof-text became a feature of early Christian Arabic and Syriac engagement with Islam. Yet there has been no systematic study evaluating how and why authors utilized qur'ānic passages in some arguments or refrained from their use in others. The purpose of this study is to evaluate Christian and Muslim polemical texts which address a particular passage—the qur'ānic crucifixion account (Q 4:157ff.)—by examining its presence/absence and observing the presence/absence of the predominate Islamic narrative of a substitute killed instead of Christ. In particular, the study evaluates the use of qur'ānic proof-texts in multiple authors and across genres, observing the Qur'ān's reception and reworking in later traditions (both Muslim and non-Muslim).

My presentation will include preliminary observations on: if there are consistent patterns when authors include or exclude the qur'ānic crucifixion; how the qur'ānic proof-text is situated in an author's larger argument; and the nature of the relationship between the qur'ānic text and mention of a substitute. In addition, the dissertation will add to previous scholarship on the substitution narrative by examining its presence or lack thereof and impact outside of intra-Muslim texts. In its entirety, the project offers a new method for approaching qur'ānic text reception: careful analysis of the passage and understanding of its treatment in the *tafsīr*, followed by evaluation of its rhetorical placement and use in Muslim-Christian polemics. The approach itself will provide a model for further studies in Qur'ān reception and the medieval Islamic intellectual environment.

Rufino Enno H. Dango, CP

Title: A Demythological Interpretation, Muḥammad Asad’s Rational Translation of the Qur’ān

Abstract: Born to an Orthodox Jewish family in Eastern Europe and raised in Austria, Muḥammad Asad (formerly Leopold Weiss - 1900-1992) published his translation and interpretation of the Arabic Qur’ān for the anglophones in 1980 under the title *The Message of the Qur’ān*. Seeking to extract the “message” from the Arabic source text, Asad employed a characteristically rational and contemporary interpretation. Inspired by some of the works of classical and modern Muslim rationalists, like Fakhr al- Dīn al-Rāzī and Muḥammad ‘Abduh, he believed unequivocally that the principle of rationality should determine a meaningful reading and interpretation of the Qur’ān. The Qur’ān is fundamentally a rational message intended for rational audience; hence, any translational enterprise on this holy writ should be properly circumscribed within the bounds of human reason: not speculative but one that is limited, controlled and informed by the Qur’ān itself, by the Sunna, and by human experience. It is within this qualified sphere of rationality that Asad demythologizes every tinge of transcendence--that is, apart from the imperceptible elements or attributes (*al-ghayb*) of the Divine realm--which occurs in the language of the Qur’ān. In so doing, Asad endeavors to render the “message” of the Quran accessible to human reason as a guidance of faith and morals for his target audience.

This presentation has three parts: first, a brief outline of Muḥammad Asad’s life and achievement leading up to the publication of his magnum opus *The Message of the Quran*; second, a few examples of his Qur’ānic rendition and translation that reflects the aforementioned method; third, some concluding remarks on the significance of Asad’s method of exegesis in the field of Qur’ānic scholarship, as well as in the area of interreligious relations.

John A. Lindblom

Title: The Value of John C. H. Wu's Bible Translation for Interreligious Dialogue and Evangelization

Abstract: In the 1940s President Chiang Kai-shek 蔣介石 of the Republic of China and well-known Chinese legal scholar and Catholic convert John C. H. Wu 吳經熊 (Wu Jingxiong, 1899–1886) collaborated on a new translation of the Psalms and New Testament into literary Chinese. Published in the late 1940s, around the time Wu was serving as China's representative to the Holy See, and accompanied by high praise from Pope Pius XII and Chinese Catholic leaders, it was widely regarded as the most beautiful and authentically Chinese-sounding Bible translation ever produced, and held great appeal for Chinese readers. This is largely because Wu, ahead of his time among translators, borrowed heavily from the language of the Chinese classics and ancient literature, including philosophical concepts, well-known idioms, and other familiar terms. It also stands as an early, pre-Vatican II example of serious dialogue between the language of the Bible and that of China's three great traditions: Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, since Wu adopted concepts and terminology from all three of these to render the Biblical text into Chinese, deliberately creating associations which invite deeper exploration. For example, Wu uses the Chinese (Daoist) term *Dao* 道, a term rich in meaning in many Chinese classics, to translate the Greek word *Logos* in the Prologue of the *Gospel of John*, and he uses the Confucian term *junzi* 君子 (“man of noble character”) to name the “righteous man” in the Psalms, and Christ the “true Lord” in the gospels. This talk will introduce Wu's translation, examining examples of his interreligious borrowing and their implications, and comment on the place of the Wu version among Chinese bible translations, and its value for interreligious dialogue and evangelization today.

Fr. David Eliaona Lyimo

Title: Emmanuel Katongole's Narrative Methodology as the Model for Contemporary Reimagination of African Theological/Christological Explorations.

Abstract: This topic is a section of my dissertation that provides the methodology to explore contemporary African Christology. My dissertation is an exploration of the two related gaps that I find in African Christology; a gap between what trained theologians articulate in their writings and what the majority of lay African Christians actually hold about Christ, and a related gap between what African believers claim about Christ and what they actually practice, especially when confronted by affliction, misfortune or suffering.

In his numerous works on the theology of lament, Emmanuel Katongole utilizes a narrative methodology to foster new social-political imaginations, and even constructions of a new Africa. This paper will explore two major works of Katongole, *The Sacrifice of Africa: A Political Theology for Africa* (2011), and *Born from Lament: The Theology and Politics of Hope in Africa* (2017). It is an attempt to deduce his approach to social-political situation in Africa through storytelling/narratives in order to foster social reimagination/reconstruction. This paper will ultimately acknowledge that, Katongole's approach is ideal, and suggest it (the approach) as a model for contemporary theological explorations in Africa.

Levi Nkwocha

Title: Muslim-Christian Dialogue of Life via Hospitality

Abstract: My research aims at addressing the global concern for a peaceful pluralistic society by calling attention to the responsibility of engaging diversities among Muslims and Christians. It is the position of this study to argue that mutual substitutive hospitality between Muslims and Christians (Nigeria in particular), at the ordinary level, will diminish age-old antagonisms. It will as well generate growth through improved openness for the respect of each other's otherness and deepen one's own particular faith commitments. With a primary focus on the ordinary adherents of both religions, who spontaneously interact with the religious other daily, this study aims at learning from their much-understudied elements of the dialogue of life. Above all, it seeks to articulate them into a theology of hospitality for the sustenance of peaceful coexistence. This academic work engages an interdisciplinary discourse by applying an aspect of Emmanuel Levinas' hospitality ethics into an interreligious dialogical pattern. Hospitality practice, though, not entirely absent in both Muslim and Christian traditions, lacks a theological systematization of its values for interreligious purposes. It is part of the goal of this research to fill that theological lack.

To attain its goal, this research sets out to awaken mutual hospitable awareness among Muslims and Christians through a three-step (chapters) approach. The Christian-Muslim mutual antagonistic past and their previous inadequate altruistic tenets will form the primary concern of chapter one. Chapter two will build on chapter one by introducing the possibility of dialogical embrace as a way forward, but with special concentration on the dialogue of life through hospitality. In chapter three, Levinas' substitutive responsibility will be harnessed into a theological model (the Abrahamic pilgrim model), through which, ordinary Muslims and Christians in Nigerian are challenged to demonstrate their respective faith by outdoing each other in good works.

Andrew J. O'Connor

Title: Only a Warner? The Prophetic Vocation in the Qur'an and Early Islam

Abstract: In sura 88, the Qur'an exhorts its Prophet with the plea: "So remind (them)! You are only a reminder [*mudhakkir*]. You have no control over them" (88:21-22). Elsewhere the Prophet is described as a "warner" or "herald of good news", who holds "no power for myself to benefit or harm [*lā naf'an wa-lā ḍarran*], except for whatever God pleases" (Q 7:188a). Such verses suggest that the Qur'an's Prophet's primary function was to warn and remind his audience of God's judgment, but he had no further authority or power over his interlocutors, whether they accepted or refused him. Such verses and similar passages (most of which are found in the so-called "Meccan" suras) suggest that the Qur'an's prophetology is primarily kerygmatic: the function of the Prophet is to communicate his eschatological message, while simultaneously laying claim to no authority other than the veracity of his claims. Only incumbent on the Prophet was the clear delivery (*al-balāgh*) of his divine message.

However, a rather different prophetology is suggested elsewhere in the text, typically found in "Medinan" material. Q 2:278-79 warns those who will not give up usury that they ought "be on notice of war from God and His Messenger," which grants the Prophet a role in arbitration and legal enforcement. Elsewhere the Prophet's authority and function are extended to legal disputes, military engagements, his domestic household, and other domains. Believers are frequently encouraged to *believe in* and *obey* the Prophet, whose authority approximates that of God, suggesting a prophetology that is more theocratic than kerygmatic.

It would seem, therefore, that there are tensions and ambiguities in the Qur'an's prophetology. The careful reader is presented two—or possibly more—distinct portraits of the authority, power, responsibilities, and functions of the Qur'an's Prophet. In this paper I begin exploring these tensions to more fully appreciate the development of the prophetic vocation in the Qur'an. A central claim of my argument will be that Qur'an's prophetology is not uniform in its concerns or vision; scholars ought not assume a continuity that is not really there. Like a similar survey of prophecy in the Hebrew Bible, we should not be surprised to find a diversity of opinions or perspectives which change over time.

Audrey Seah

Title: Postmodern Inculturation in Deaf Catholic Worship

Abstract: The realities of the postmodern condition in which globalization plays a large part, has complicated the task of liturgical inculturation. While modernity values determined structures and stability, postmodernity favors indeterminacy, multiplicity, and motion. Because the dominant model of inculturation based on the principle of dynamic equivalence relies on a structural approach to culture and the liturgy, its methodological limits come to the fore when faced with rapid change and radical plurality. As one response to this challenge, my dissertation aims to construct a model and theology of liturgical inculturation for postmodernity through a study of the worship of a cultural community with traits that cohere with postmodern notions of culture as dynamic, multiple, and deterritorialized—the worship of Deaf Catholics in the U.S., Korea, and Singapore, where Deaf culture shapes the liturgy. The research employs a dialogical approach between empirical data gathered through ethnography and interviews, social theory, and theology as a way of doing anthropologically engaged theology. This presentation will detail the multidisciplinary method used to conduct this research, some preliminary findings, and potential implications of this research for the Global church.

Mourad Takawi

Title: The Interreligious Project of Qur'ān Interpretation: Early Arabic Christian and Muslim Exegesis of the Qur'ān, 8th-10th Centuries CE

Abstract: Since the early Islamic period, both Christians and Muslims engaged both the Qur'ān and the Bible in their apologetic enterprises. In the process they employed a variety of rhetorical and exegetical approaches to undermine the rival claims of their opponents while defending their own faith claims—a process which inevitably hammered out and systematized their exegetical engagements with many parts of the biblical and qur'ānic texts. Focusing on the earliest systematic Arabic Christian treatises, this study sets out to explore the ways in which early Arabic Christian texts across the three major ecclesial communities at the time—the Chalcedonian, anti-Chalcedonian, as well as the Church of the East—engaged the Qur'ān. Accordingly, this study will present a systematic treatment of the early Christian Arabic usages of the Qur'ān in comparison with early Muslim exegetical approaches, both from early writings such as *al-Radd 'alā al-naṣārā* literature, as well as early Tafsīr.

This project aims at bringing to the fore the important role that Christians played in the formative Islamic period, both as interlocutors as well as critics of their contemporary Muslim thinkers, as well as shed light on an important witness and a potentially rich source of information of the formative period in Islamic history. On the one hand, Christian usages of the Qur'ān, while may not have directly informed early Islamic exegesis, applied certain pressure points that inevitably made their mark on the nascent Islamic exegetical project. On the other hand, Arabophone Christians, while approaching the Qur'ān in different ways corresponding to their own apologetic agendas, relied on Muslim “data” in their project—not only in interpreting the Qur'ān, but also in their approaches to Islamic theology and history. That is to say, many of the claims presented in Arabic Christian treatises, including those that may come across as outlandish or even polemical for a contemporary reader in fact reflect a well-informed and sophisticated engagement with contemporary Muslim debates.

Rui Zhang

Title: The Papal Legate and the Rites controversy in China

Abstract: Since the arrival of Father Matteo Ricci into China in the year of 1600, it has passed more than one century. The Jesuits gradually developed and adopted a policy of accommodation on the Evangelization in China. Their mission, based on the Portuguese Padroado controlled from Goa to Macau, was challenged by the entrance of mendicant orders. The Jesuits considered that the Chinese ceremony rites as civil and political rituals which were compatible with Christianity, within certain limits, should be tolerated. However, the Dominicans and Franciscans disagreed and reported this issue to Rome. The Chinese rites controversy was one of the main causes which led the end of christian mission in China in the early Qing dynasty and future suspension of Society of Jesus.

As a consequence of this controversy, Pope Clement XI needed to choose the right persone for such a difficult and complicated mission. Finally, his eyes fell at once on a very young man named Carlo Tommaso Maillard de Tournon (1668 - 1710) who was the younger son of the Marchese de Tournon, a member of the highest nobility of Savoia. Tournon was appointed as Legate a latere (ambassador envoy) to East Indies and China and he was consecrated as Patriarch of Antioch. When the Legate arrived in Beijing in 1705, he was received kindly by the Emperor, but lacking of Chinese culture and language knowledge made a very difficult situation for him. After several misunderstandings between him and Emperor on the use of rites, Tournon was expelled and imprisoned at Macao. Only in the last days of his truly evangelic life, he received the Cardinal's hat for his courage and loyalty to the Holy See which were highly appreciated by Clement XI. Tournon was a martyrdom of the political, cultural and religious clash between the Roman Curia and Imperial China. In my paper, I will show the current documents and personal letters, I will analyze the interrelations between the Patriarch and other government and religious leaders, I will give a general view of this significant historical moment in the history of the Catholic Church in China.

