

BOISI CENTER REPORT



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FROM THE DIRECTOR



It's been a busy and quite rewarding spring semester, with a great deal going on.

Our two-day conference in Chicago, on March 25th and 26th sped by, but

took seven months—and almost weekly Zoom meetings during those seven months—to plan. In cooperation with Fordham University's Center on Religion and Culture and Loyola University Chicago's Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage, Boisi invited 35 cardinals, archbishops, and bishops to a meeting in downtown Chicago entitled "Pope Francis, Vatican II, and the Way Forward." To our surprise and delight, they all came (two didn't make it in person, although one joined us via Zoom). Our hope (which was quite happily met by the events of the two days) was to cash the check that the Second Vatican Council wrote over 50 years ago: to gather a working group of bishops, theologians, and Catholic intellectuals from the "center" of the American Church to talk about ways in which we might go about healing the divisions that have riven U.S. Catholicism over the past few decades.

Speakers at the Chicago event included Massimo Faggioli from Villanova University, Cardinal Joseph Tobin, C.Ss.R. of Newark, New Jersey, and M. Therese Lysaught from Loyola, and the panels (which generated much discussion and a fruitful exchange of views) were entitled "Distorted Receptions of Vatican

II" (which I was part of), "The Money, Media, and Networks that Oppose Pope Francis," and "How Opposition to [Pope] Francis Connects with Other Socio-Political Currents in American Life." Team Boisi had planned well, and the vast majority of bishops (including the Apostolic Delegate—the "pope's man" in Washington, D.C., who was also present) asked to be invited back for the next meeting. It took a great deal of time, talent, and treasure (the latter generously supplied by BC's President, Fr. William P. Leahy, S.J.) to make it all work, and it worked amazingly well. Kudos to the folks who work here—Susan Richard, Zac Karanovich, and Ann McClenahan—who made the various sessions run so smoothly, and even elegantly.

While we were preparing for that epochal meeting in Chicago, we continued our regular round of webinars and podcasts headquartered here at Boisi. One of the most interesting occurred early in the spring semester: on February 3rd, Susannah Heschel (Dartmouth College) moderated a panel on "Race and the Religious Right: White Evangelicals, White Supremacy, and Their Consequences." Participants included Randall Balmer (Dartmouth College), Anthea Butler (University of Pennsylvania) and Adrienne Jones (Morehouse College). Likewise compelling was a webinar conversation I moderated on "How Secularization Impacts Religion" on April 5th, with two of the most respected sociologists of religion in the United States: Nancy Ammerman and José Casanova. This generated considerable praise from viewers, one writing in that "I feel like I just took part

in one of the smartest conversations of my life." Our own redoubtable Ann McClenahan served as moderator for a webinar on March 1st on "Islam in the United States: Issues of Race and Diversity," with Abdullah bin Hamid Ali (Zaytuna College), Sahar Aziz (Rutgers University), and Omid Safi (Duke University).

Our energetic and creative grad assistant, Zac Karanovich, put together and ran an impressive online graduate student conference on February 26th: "Religious Activism and Political Change; Political Activism and Religious Change." That event generated numerous paper submissions from graduate students at universities around the country, and respondents included myself, Jeannine Hill Fletcher of Fordham University, Dan McKanan of Harvard Divinity School, Erick Berralleza, S.J., of Santa Clara University, and BC's Ken Himes, O.F.M.

And Boisi's newest initiative, "The Religion and American Life Podcast," is up and running. We've been releasing an episode each month. And I've had the pleasure of interviewing interesting thinkers on fascinating topics, including a recent discussion comparing the Catholic and Episcopal churches' histories and hopes as it relates to sexuality and gender with Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas (Union Theological Seminary and Episcopal Divinity School) and James Martin, S.J. (*America Magazine*). All of these podcasts, webinars, and online seminars can be streamed on the Boisi Center's website.

(Continued on page 8)

MUSTAFA AKYOL

A lunch conversation explored Islam, Christianity, and liberty.



As part of its minor in Religion and Public Life, the Boisi Center offers occasional events to undergraduate students to enrich their experience in the program. On March 16th, the Boisi Center hosted author and journalist, Mustafa Akyol, for a lunchtime conversation on his work.

A Turkish Muslim, Akyol has written for *Hurriyet Daily News*, *Al-Monitor.com*, and *The New York Times*. He is the author of a number of books, including *Islam without Extremes: A Muslim*

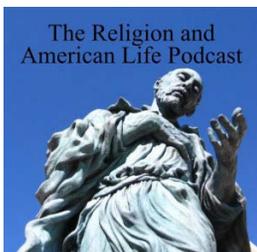
Case for Liberty (Norton, 2011), *The Islamic Jesus: How the King of the Jews Became a Prophet of Muslims* (St. Martin's, 2017), and, most recently, *Reopening Muslim Minds: A Return to Reason, Freedom, and Tolerance* (St. Martin's, 2021).

In January 2017, Akyol joined The Freedom Project at Wellesley College as a senior visiting fellow. In June 2018, he joined the Cato Institute as a senior fellow at the Center for Global Liberty and Prosperity.

During his lunch conversation, Akyol described his views on the “moderation” of Islam as rooted in his own spiritual development. He described the resistance he has received when presenting these views as well as the inroads he is making for younger, more moderate Muslims, especially in western Europe and the U.S., where religious freedom is considered among the nation’s values.

THE RELIGION AND AMERICAN LIFE PODCAST

Subscribe to the Boisi Center's must-hear podcast!



The Boisi Center’s newest initiative, “The Religion and American Life Podcast,” is now live! Featuring long-form interviews with interesting people who work at the intersection of religion and American public life, the Center will publish a new episode of the podcast each month.

Recent episodes include a March conversation with Boston College historian, Charles Gallagher, S.J., whose recently published book, *Nazis of Copley Square*, tells the story of the

Christian Front, a Catholic organization of men crusading to cleanse the U.S. from the perceived influence of Communism. The conversation covers this dark chapter in U.S. Catholic history as well as its lessons for our contemporary political moment.

The April episode is a conversation with Rev. Dr. Kelly Brown Douglas, dean of the Episcopal Divinity School at Union Theological Seminary, and James Martin, S.J., author and editor at *America*. In a profound conversation, they explore the history, goals, ongoing challenges of, and hopes for the LGBTQ faithful in the Episcopal and Roman Catholic churches, respectively.

In May, Massa was joined by M. Cathleen Kaveny, professor of law and theology at BC, to discuss Justice Samuel Alito’s leaked draft opinion that would overturn the holding in *Roe v. Wade*. The conversation explored the leak’s impact and the consequences of the opinion, if final, on American society, women, Catholics, and the Supreme Court.

Given the quality of the conversations to date, the Boisi Center is excited about the podcast’s future. Please consider subscribing—it is available anywhere you listen to podcasts.

THE BOISI CENTER FOR RELIGION AND AMERICAN PUBLIC LIFE

24 Quincy Road
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

TEL: 617-552-1860

FAX: 617-552-1863

EMAIL: boisi.center@bc.edu

www.bc.edu/boisi

BOISI CENTER STAFF

MARK MASSA, S.J.
DIRECTOR

SUSAN RICHARD
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

R. ZACHARY KARANOVICH
GRADUATE RESEARCH ASSISTANT

KARINA KAVANAGH
EMILY O’NEIL
UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWS

ANN MCCLENAHAN
SPECIAL VOLUNTEER ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR

MASSIMILIANO PROIETTI
RACHELLE REINHART
THOMAS SANTA MARIA
VISITING SCHOLARS

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For complete information and resources on all of our events, including audio and video recordings, transcripts, photos, videos, bibliographies, and more, visit our website: www.bc.edu/boisi.

RACE AND THE RELIGIOUS RIGHT

An interesting and insightful conversation among religion and legal scholars explored white Evangelicalism, white supremacy, and their consequences.

On February 3rd, the Boisi Center hosted a webinar entitled, “Race and the Religious Right: White Evangelicals, White Supremacy, and Their Consequences.” Organized in an effort to explore the origin and motivations of the Religious Right, the event was centered around recent scholarship that argues that the Evangelical movement was founded and currently stands for the perpetuation of white supremacy. The panel featured Randall Balmer of Dartmouth College, Anthea Butler of the University of Pennsylvania, and Adrienne Jones of Morehouse College. Susannah Heschel of Dartmouth College served as the moderator.

Particularly relevant to the conversation were the recent publications by Balmer and Butler of their books, *Bad Faith: Race and the Rise of the Religious Right* and *White Evangelical Racism: The Politics of Morality in America*, respectively. Further, Jones’s expertise in the Voting Rights Act and issues surrounding politics, race, and the law contributed to the important contextualization of our current political climate, characterized by an increase in legislation passed that raises the barriers to political participation among marginalized groups in the United States.

Balmer began the discussion asking whether or not there is presently a moral core to the Religious Right, answering that he is not sure there is one. He marks the genesis of the movement as the defense of segregation and racism in the mid-20th century, tracing it through to the 2016 election in which 81% of white Evangelicals supported Donald Trump in the 2016 presidential election. Butler took a harder stance on the Evangelical movement, noting that authoritarianism is embedded within it. There is a focus within the movement on power structures, patriarchy, and politics, she argued. Balmer also noted that historically, the use of the Bible was to engender



(L-R) Randall Balmer, Anthea Butler, and Adrienne Jones engaged in a lively discussion moderated by Susannah Heschel (R).

a certain way of thinking among Evangelicals. Because Evangelicalism is so decentralized, he said, certain individuals at the center of the movement become the predominant arbiters of certain morals and beliefs. Additionally, Evangelicals tend to gravitate toward more authoritarian texts, such as those attributed to Saint Paul.

Jones added that white Evangelicalism can be compared to white supremacy in that it contains certain cultish elements. Because of the connection she sees between the two, Jones noted that she must often remind herself that she is not merely a post-Civil Rights thinker, and that there is always work that still must be done due to historical white backlash against the progression of Civil Rights.

Balmer also commented on the way Evangelicals are especially proficient in the language of victimization, which Donald Trump has made use of. They cite their own values and religiosity as being under attack within a multicultural environment. Butler responded to this by saying that Donald Trump was similar to a televangelist in the way he rallied support among his followers.

Ironically, despite the heavily biblical themes white Evangelicals claim to embody, the panel agreed that there seems to be intense theological cruelty from them, especially in the conversations

surrounding abortion. Victim-blaming and punitive language from Evangelical pastors is evident, but why? Heschel cited the examples of Evangelical pastors blaming women for choosing not to carry their rapist’s child or expressing that the victims of Hurricane Katrina deserved what they got for practicing voodoo. Butler said that this cruelty is a show of power and a means of creating fear and control. Balmer and Jones agreed, threading this back to the topic of authoritarianism and moral codes.

The final thirty minutes of the webinar featured questions from the audience. When asked how decentralization and authoritarianism are connected, Jones answered that white supremacy is a perfect example of how decentralized systematic racism allows for authoritarian power and control over Black individuals. She cited historical forms of non-governmental voting intimidation, which worked to remove the full extent of citizenship from Black Americans. Another question addressed the overlap between white Evangelicals and right-wing bishops in the Catholic Church. Butler cited numerous points of comparison, particularly in the way that certain bishops have criticized and disregarded Black Lives Matter. Balmer responded by asking, “In what moral universe do the bishops praise Donald Trump and deny Joe Biden Holy Communion?”

SECULARISM AND RELIGION TODAY

The Boisi Center hosted a conversation with two expert sociologists of religion: Nancy Ammerman and José Casanova.



Nancy Ammerman

On April 4th, the Boisi Center's director, Mark Massa, S.J. hosted a conversation between Nancy Ammerman and José Casanova, two distinguished social scientists of religion and longtime colleagues, on the impact of secularization on religion. Ammerman is professor emerita of sociology of religion at Boston University, and her career interests have included conservative religious movements, American religious organizations and their networks of social provision, and most recently, the study of lived religion. Casanova is professor emeritus of sociology and theology and religious studies at Georgetown University where he remains a senior fellow at the Berkley Center. Over the course of his career, he has explored religion and globalization, migration and religious pluralism, transnational religions, and sociological theory.

When asked how she understands the process of secularization, Ammerman described it as a “weasel” word that implies a uniform global direction when in fact it is a process that depends on legal and religio-cultural contexts within different societies. Casanova agreed, observing that secularization has many different meanings and is both a “hopeless” concept and one that cannot be done without. For sociologists to take religion seriously, he argued that they must abandon the idea of a secular Enlighten-

ment dividing history into two periods. Instead, religion has more or less presence and influence depending on time and place.

According to Casanova, a productive way to think about modernity is as a period in which religion becomes an option or decision for private citizens. Referencing Jürgen Habermas' thesis of the public square, Casanova argued that privacy is a requirement for public citizenship. Without the protection of private citizenship, there would be no public citizens. Without the privatization of religion, in contrast to times when religion was enforced from above, religion would not be able to enter the public sphere in a modern sense. The right to religious freedom opens up choices and existential options for how to live.

Ammerman furthered this point by contrasting some of the differences between religious development in Western Europe versus the U.S. In Western Europe, with its heritage of established churches, there remains a kind of religious presence, an interweaving between church and civil life that is reflected in the tradition of religious calendars, the continued use and maintenance of religious cemeteries, and other manifestations. In the U.S., where there is no heritage of an established church, religious presence had to be organized in the private sphere, outside of the state. There the separation of church and state did not preclude a connection between church and politics.

Ammerman remarked that the argument is often made that in post-Enlightenment modernity, religion no longer makes rational sense. However, she noted that that research in the U.S. indicates that people generally do not leave religious traditions because of beliefs or cognitive reasoning, but rather by virtue of social identification and a diminished sense of belonging to the structures and practices of religion and society.

The panelists were asked about religious

“Nones”, individuals who refuse to give themselves a traditional religious label, and how the growth of this category relates to privatization or secularization. Ammerman noted that research indicates that the majority of “Nones” still believe in God. She observed that organized religion has received a bad reputation over the past thirty years due in part to the rise of the Religious Right's political engagement.

Both scholars agree that there is also a more recent generational shift taking place. Since the 1990s in the U.S., many children have been raised with no religious tradition. They haven't turned away from religion as much as they never had it in the first place. With no religious upbringing, young people fall away, in effect becoming “Nones” by birth. This phenomenon is much older in Western Europe, where Casanova does not see the possibility of it being reversed. He agreed that family transmission is the key to religious practice and that “when women don't go to church, children don't go to church, and then it's over.”

Questions from the viewing audience covered the influence of pluralism on religious options, the validity of the secular paradigm, whether secularism is a kind of religion itself, and how the secular-religious relationship is different in the West than in the Muslim world.



José Casanova

THE BOISI CENTER'S CONVERSATION ON ISLAM CONTINUES

Three Islamic scholars discussed issues of race and diversity around the recently published, *The Racial Muslim*.

On March 1st, the Boisi Center hosted a webinar conversation between Abdullah bin Hamid Ali of Zaytuna College, Sahar Aziz of Rutgers University, and Omid Safi of Duke University, on the topic of "Islam in the United States: Issues of Race and Diversity" and centered around Aziz's recently published book, *The Racial Muslim: When Racism Quashes Religious Freedom*. The conversation was moderated by Ann McClenahan, the special volunteer assistant to the director at the Boisi Center.

Aziz began the conversation by explaining the genesis and structure of her book. The idea of American treatment of Islam as a race was inspired by the 2011 NYPD campaign of mass surveillance against Muslims, which, it was argued, could be considered a violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by targeting specific religious communities (a form of "discrimination") as a program that receives federal funds. To make that case, however, Islam had to be understood and treated as a race more than just a religion. While the exploration of this alleged violation was restricted because of the confidential nature of national security matters, at the very least, Aziz argued, the U.S. value of religious freedom seems, in light of this, to stop at the mosque's or masjid's door.

Ali responded to Aziz's book, noting that the book seems truer for the pre-Trump

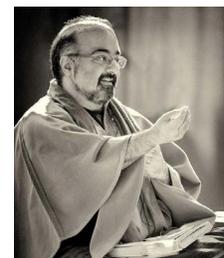
era in America as it does not adequately address changes in racial and religious tensions in recent years. He also noted that Aziz implies that the racialization of Muslims effectively began—or at least substantially increased—after 9/11, but there was significant historical racialization of Muslims before the 21st century. Aziz responded by suggesting the use of critical race theory as a foundation for bringing about a new perspective on the racialization of Muslims, particularly focusing in on intersectionality, but Ali found this suggestion potentially divisive and questioned if religious teachings might be a more effective framework.

Safi noted that he found the strengths of Aziz's argument in her exploration of the legal histories as well as her focus on the experiences of the Arab Muslim community. He expressed a desire to see conceptions of the 'Arab' and the 'Muslim' disentangled in the text, since a majority of the worldwide Muslim community is not from the Middle East. And he showed a brief video of Malcolm X speaking, re-

mind the audience of one of the most notable—and notably non-Arab—American Muslims.

Aziz described the challenge of recognizing commonalities between African American Muslims and non-African American Muslims while also not ignoring the multitude of experiences that those communities do not share. She noted that African American Muslims are often racialized, or perceived, as Black instead of Muslim. Her book therefore attempts to focus on those who are perceived primarily as Muslim. And it is to this last point that Aziz also observed that she sees the turning point in which Islamophobia finally began to be considered a problem equal to racism in the Muslim travel ban under Trump.

Ali and Aziz concluded the conversation by discussing the challenges inherent in critical race theory. Safi added final thoughts on the concept of whiteness, as less of a phenotype than a problematic structure of power and the inverse of the conversation about blackness.



(L-R) Abdullah bin Hamid Ali, Sahar Aziz, and Omid Safi

FACULTY-GRADUATE STUDENT SEMINAR

THEOLOGY AS REQUIREMENT: THE CHALLENGES OF TEACHING THEOLOGY IN THE MODERN ACADEMY

The Boisi Center collaborated again with the Center for Christian-Jewish Learning in a series of seminars created for theology faculty and graduate students: "Theology as Requirement." Each session was led by a faculty member and a graduate student and explored three important tasks professors of theology are challenged with undertaking in a modern university classroom. Amey Victoria Adkins-Jones and Nathan D. Wood-House began with "Introducing Theology," addressing how to teach those with a different or no experience of religion. Jeffrey L. Cooley and Domenik Ack-

ermann followed with "Complicating Theology" and focused on students who do have some religious background, but one that might be more catechetical in nature. Meghan Sweeney and Katie Mylroie concluded the seminar with "Practicing Theology," discussing how to empower students to engage the discipline themselves through their own theological reflection or the use of theological skills in other aspects of their lives. Through these discussions, participants were equipped with helpful insights and new ideas about teaching Core theology courses.

2ND ANNUAL GRADUATE STUDENT CONFERENCE

Graduate students presented insightful papers on political and religious activism and change.

On February 26th, the Boisi Center hosted its 2nd Annual Graduate Student Conference, “Religious Activism and Political Change; Political Activism and Religious Change.”

At the heart of the conference was the relationship between religion and politics. While the relationship between the two has been intimate from the nation’s founding, daily that relationship can change from a peaceful coexistence to an acrimonious contention. At times, religious groups have blessed soldiers as they marched off to war, while at other times they have prophetically denounced our nation’s involvement in such violence. In return, the political groups have constricted religious practices to protect vulnerable populations, while they have also provided greater protection for corporations to claim religious exemptions from perceived government imposition. Throughout U.S. history, activism in the religious or political sphere has worked to shape and reshape the other—sometimes for better outcomes and sometimes for worse.

An interdisciplinary set of papers were presented on the role of religious and political activism and their influence on each sphere. Presenting students represented nine different institutions from

across the country.

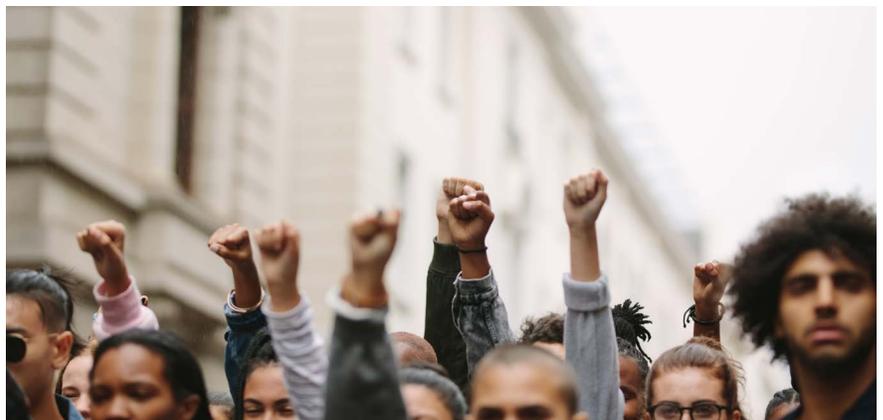
The papers explored a plethora of interesting topics: the conflict between American identity and Christian identity; the method for Christians to discern their political engagement, using the thought of René Girard, Bernard Lonergan, Thomas Aquinas, and John Lewis; the influence of Father Sergio Torres on North American liberation theologies; the role of the natural law in the Civil Rights Movement; the insights of liberation theology for Christian churches in areas with high homicide rates; and the theological underpinnings of clergy political activism.

The featured respondents who offered

feedback on each paper included Erick Berrelleza, S.J. (Santa Clara University), Jeannine Hill Fletcher (Fordham University), Ken Himes, O.F.M. (Boston College), Mark Massa, S.J. (Boston College), and Dan McKanan (Harvard Divinity School).

The award for the Best Student Paper, generously funded by the Dean’s Office of the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences at Boston College, was given to Danny Ballon-Garst of Emory University for his paper, “Ambiguous Affirmations: Que(e)rying Black Religious Responses to the AIDS Crisis.”

An all-around successful day, we look forward to our 3rd annual conference!



FACULTY SEMINAR

MODELS OF CAPITALISM: ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND THE CRISIS/OPPORTUNITY OF CAPITALISM TODAY

During the Spring 2022 semester, the Boisi Center continued hosting a monthly dinner seminar for faculty on the topic of “Capitalism.” Convened by Frank Garcia from BC’s Law School and Jim Henle from Harvard, the group included Sanjay Reedy from the New School in New York, Susan Sibley from MIT, and Alan Shapiro from the Boston law firm of Sandulli Grace. The seminar was lucky to have such talented BC faculty participants as Kim Garcia (English), Candace Hetzner (Political Science), Ken Himes, O.F.M. (Theology), Micah Lott (Philosophy), Chandini Sankaran (Economics), Laura Steinberg (director of the new Schiller Institute for Integrated Science and Society), Eve Spangler

(Sociology), Katharine Young (BC’s Law School), and Boisi Center director Mark Massa, S.J. The faculty members of the seminar continued its challenging reading in the spring semester meetings, tackling the likes of Thomas Piketty’s “Time for Socialism,” Hamid Yeganeh’s *Social Impacts of Large Multinational Corporations in the Age of Globalization*, and Sandra Waddock’s *Building a New Institutional Infrastructure for Corporate Responsibility*. The conversations generated by these texts were dense, focused, and (more often than not) fun. I think I can say that folks enjoyed the intellectual challenges as well as the “give and take” over wine and dinner on Thursday evenings.

POPE FRANCIS, VATICAN II, AND THE WAY FORWARD

The Boisi Center co-hosted a remarkable meeting of cardinals, bishops, theologians, and Catholic journalists who discussed current challenges and opportunities facing the U.S. Catholic Church.

On March 25th and 26th, the Boisi Center—with Fordham University’s Center on Religion and Culture and Loyola University Chicago’s Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage—brought together 70 cardinals, archbishops, bishops, theologians, and Catholic journalists for an event entitled “Pope Francis, Vatican II, and the Way Forward.” When Kathleen Sullivan (of Boston College’s *Chronicle*) asked what the meeting was all about shortly after the event, Mark Massa, S.J. answered that David Gibson at Fordham, Michael Murphy at Loyola, and he wanted “to start a conversation that’s ongoing, hopefully annually, to see if we can help the Church get over the hump of the culture wars that are being played out in the Catholic Church, as well as in the culture at large.” More particularly, the three wanted to figure out a “way forward” (and thus the conference’s name). They figured early on that some bishops would not buy into the idea, but there would be enough “centrist” bishops to hold a fruitful conversation. And that hunch proved to be correct. The *National Catholic Reporter*’s Michael Sean Winters first raised the idea in a phone conversation with Massa in August, 2021, and played a crucial role in attracting the bishops who did attend.

Held in downtown Chicago (a central location with an airport accessible to most places in the U.S.) the conference hosted four cardinals, four archbishops, 21 bishops, and 35 theologians from around the country. To encourage honest and forthright discussions, all three sessions operated under “Chatham House Rule”: everyone was free to use the information generated by the discussions, but no one was allowed to reveal who made particular comments or points. Unlike Cardinal Bernardin’s “Common Ground” initiative in the 1990s, the decision was made to keep the attendees to a manageable size (under 100), and that both the bishops and the theologians invited would be “centrists” in terms of theology and

church politics. Thus, the organizers sought to avoid the kind of unfruitful debates that have plagued previous attempts at such a discussion. And they largely succeeded.

One of the major impulses driving Massa to have the Boisi Center co-sponsor the event was the sense that both the bishops and the theologians have, by and large, been talking to themselves in an echo chamber: theologians only talking with other theologians, and bishops with other bishops. The conference organizers felt that it was time to bring everyone together for honest conversations about difficult topics about which not everyone would agree, but conversations in which everyone could listen respectfully. And while the group as a whole agreed on some big topics—like support for Pope Francis and a commitment to his hopes for synodality—there were varying thoughts on the details. It was Massa’s sense that—like all human groups—the bishops disagreed on some things, but several said both during and after the meeting that they had better conversations at the Chicago meeting than they normally have when the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops meets.

The two days together were organized around three keynote addresses, followed by three panel discussions: Massimo Faggioli (Villanova) spoke on “Opposition to [Pope] Francis Rooted in Abandonment of Vatican II as a Source for Renewal,” M. Therese Lysaught (Loyola University Chicago) gave a talk entitled “War or Peace? Toward a Better Kind of (Bio)Politics.” And Archbishop Miguel Cabrejos (president of CELAM—the Latin American bishops’ council) arranged for



Pope Francis, Vatican II, and the Way Forward

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his address, “The Latino Experience of Synodality,” to be presented by Archbishop Roberto Gonzalez of Puerto Rico.

Other participants included Kathleen Sprows Cummings (director of Notre Dame’s Cushwa Center), Melinda Henneberger (editor of the *Kansas City Star*), Kim Daniels (co-director of Georgetown University’s “Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life”), Hosffman Ospino of BC, Vincent Rougeau (president of the College of the Holy Cross), Meghan Clark (St. John’s University), Heidi Schlumpf (*National Catholic Reporter*), Matthew Sitman (*Commonweal*), Christine Firer Hinze (Fordham University), Damon Silvers (AFL-CIO), and Michael O’Loughlin (*America Magazine*). One of the high points of the meeting was a eucharist in Chicago’s Holy Name Cathedral, presided over by Cardinal Blase Cupich (himself an attendee of the conference) on the second day, with all of the other attendees (bishops, archbishops, and cardinals included) as participants.

Massa said he believes “that we have started a conversation that is both timely and important, and a number of bishops who attended have already written to say that they would like to see the conversation continue, and they very much want to be part of it.”

(Continued from page 1)

The Center likewise continued its “in-house” seminars for BC faculty this spring: a three-part series of seminars on “Theology as Requirement: The Challenges of Teaching Theology in the Modern Academy,” which drew on the expertise of BC faculty and graduate students who have taught in the BC undergraduate theology core. We likewise continued from the fall our faculty din-

ner seminar on capitalism, generously supported by Professor Mary Crane of the Institute for the Liberal Arts, which drew faculty from philosophy, economics, theology, political science, and the law school. That buzz you heard on Thursday evenings continued to be generated from 24 Quincy Road.

Last, and by no means least, Boisi’s own RPL (“Religion and Public Life”) minor continued to grow this year, graduating

five seniors this May, sending our talented BC graduates off to Boston University’s School of Public Health, the University of Notre Dame’s Echo Program, and three talented seniors into the work force (to the delight of the national banks of mom and dad).

It was a delight to serve as director of a place sponsoring so many good things.

~ Mark Massa, S.J.

WHAT’S NEXT FOR THE BOISI CENTER’S 2021-22 UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH FELLOWS?

Karina Kavanagh graduated this spring from the Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences, double-majoring in International Studies and English with minors in French and Religion and Public Life through the Boisi Center. She will spend her summer in Costa Rica to complete her yoga teacher training, after which she will return to her hometown of Chicago to pursue opportunities as a writer.



Emily O’Neil graduated this spring having majored in English with minors in Biology, Medical Humanities, and Religion and Public Life. In the fall, she will pursue a Master of Public Health degree specializing in infectious disease from Boston University’s School of Public Health. She is still deciding between her interests in clinical medicine and public health law and policy.



FALL 2022 EVENTS

The Boisi Center is committed to creating opportunities where scholars, policy makers, media, religious leaders, and the community can connect in conversation and scholarly reflection around issues at the intersection of religion and American public life. We at the Boisi Center are hard at work planning a fantastic fall 2022 schedule of events.

Please keep in touch with us and look for an announcement about the schedule in late summer/early fall.