The language of reconciliation and forgiveness fails in the context of atrocities, such as the Holocaust, genocide, and the history of slavery. Apologies cannot magically bring about racial reconciliation or forgiveness. This conference explores the significance and effects of the language of guilt and penance in the context of systemic evils, such as racism and antisemitism. Traditional Jewish and Christian teachings on penance, teshuvah, and atonement propose models for perpetrator-centered practices of change that may be newly relevant in contemporary conflicts over historical legacies of contempt.

Sunday March 29, 2020

2:00-3:45 PM  “Liturgies of Repentance”
Moderator: Michael Zank (Boston University)
Ruth Langer (Boston College)
Jewish Liturgies of Atonement
James Bernauer, S.J. (Boston College)
Jesuits on Repentance

3:45-4:00 PM  Coffee break

4:00-5:45 PM  Keynote Address
Mary C. Boys, SNJM (Union Theological Seminary)
A Confiteor for Holy Week

6:00 PM  Reception, open to all

6:30 PM  Dinner for invited guests
Monday March 30, 2020

9:00-10:45 AM  “Race and Religion in Hate Movements”
Moderator: Joan Martin (Episcopal Divinity School, emerita)
Rabbi David Fox Sandmel (Anti-Defamation League)
Old-New Hate: The Faces of Anti-Semitism Today
Jonathan Karp (Binghamton University)
Blacks and Jews in the American Experience
Victoria Barnett (United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, retired)
The Interfaith Movement Confronts Racism and Anti-Semitism

10:45-11:00 AM Coffee break

11:00 AM-12:45 PM  “Theologies of Repentance”
Moderator: Mary Rose D’Angelo (University of Notre Dame, emerita)
Beverly Eileen Mitchell (Wesley Theological Seminary)
Toward a Theology of Repentance
Barbara Meyer (Tel Aviv University)
Repentance in Post-Shoah Christology

12:45-2:00 PM Lunch, open to all

2:00-4:00 PM  “Guilt as Theologically Productive Force”
Moderator: Stephen Pope (Boston College)
Katharina von Kellenbach (Boston College)
Guilt in Jewish-Christian Relations
Emma O’Donnell Polyakov (Merrimack College)
Collective Guilt as Spiritual Inspiration: Case Studies of Catholic Religious in Israel

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