



From the Director

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

At the Hank Center, February is always not only a reminder of the luminaries of Black Catholic culture, but also of the historical role that Catholic institutions and, specifically, the Jesuit order, played in the legacy of slavery in the United States. Five years ago Georgetown University, one such institution, embarked on a program called "[The Working Group on Slavery, Memory, and Reconciliation](#),"-- a rigorous "examination of conscience" of their early participation in the trade of enslaved people.

For our part at CCIH, we continue the conversation-- and, we hope, reconciliation and remedy--that can come from required acts of intellectual reflection and social justice. Last year, in collaboration with The Center for Textual Studies and Digital Humanities, CCIH hosted special guest speaker Sharon Leon of Michigan State University, who talked about her work on [the Jesuit Plantation Project](#); this fall, panelists of the "[Dreaming the Black Catholic Imagination](#)" session that took place at Third Biennial Catholic Imagination Conference discussed the many ways that Morrison's virtuoso literary art was also a venue of her activism in peace and justice. Morrison, raised in an African Methodist Episcopal church, converted to the Catholic faith at the age of 12. In her her words she was "birthed out of her own religious experience of converting to Catholicism"-- taking the confirmation name St. Anthony-- and the church was a source of life, insight, and complication for her all through her days. All of these initiatives and events, in their own way, recognize and respond to the painful legacy of slavery-- a legacy that lives today.

Our first event of the semester is also a response to this dark legacy-- albeit from a different point of entry. *J.E.S.U.S.A.* is an in-depth exploration of the relationship between Christianity and American

nationalism and the violence that emerges from it. Far from a new phenomenon, this documentary traces the co-opting of Christianity by both the state and American subcultures "all the way back to when the Christian faith became the official religion of the Roman Empire." The film's objective is to restore long-held Christian beliefs regarding nonviolence, social, and racial justice-- inspiring Christians to become purveyors of peace rather than enablers of conflict and violence.

Please read on to see what else we are up to these next six weeks: an excellent *Q&A* with our Catholic Studies Community and Br. Mark Mackey, SJ; a lecture by Robert Alter, one of the world's most gifted translators and accomplished scholars; a talk about Stephen Colbert as a Public Catholic; and, in late March, our major St. John Henry Newman Lecture -- a personal narrative of a scholar's conversion -- with Jennifer Frey. We hope you will be our guest for as many events as you wish to attend!

Warmest Regards,

Dr. Michael P. Murphy

**Catholic Q&A:
Brother Mark
Mackey, S.J.**



Catholic Q&A offers students an opportunity to dialogue with Jesuits in an intimate and personal setting. Br. Mackey will lead discussion on "Responsible Hope in the Midst of Environmental Crisis."

February 20, 2020
6:00 - 7:00 PM
Damen Den
[Lakeshore Campus](#)

Students Only. All students welcome.

**VIDEOS: Catholic
Imagination
Conference**

Faith in Focus Film Series: J.E.S.U.S.A.



Film Trailer

J.E.S.U.S.A. (2020) is a compelling documentary that explores the relationship between Christianity, American nationalism, and violence. Post-film discussion with Suzanne Ross of the Raven Foundation.

February 18, 2020
7:00 PM
Damen Cinema
[Lake Shore Campus](#)

This event is free and open to the public. Please register [here](#).

44TH ANNUAL EDWARD L. SURTZ, S.J. LECTURE IN THE HUMANITIES

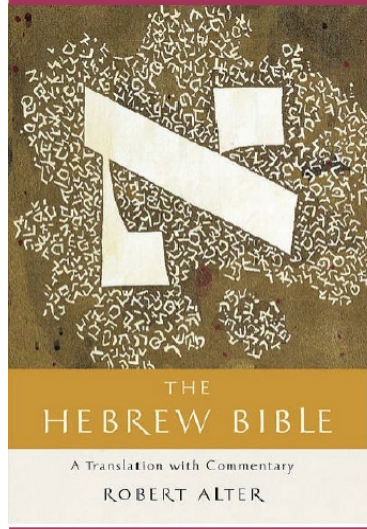
Robert Alter: The Challenge of Translating the Bible



Retrospective on the Third Biennial Catholic Imagination Conference

Visit the Hank Center's [YouTube channel](#) for a conference retrospective as well as recordings of conference plenaries and breakout sessions.

Subscribe to our [Mailing List](#)



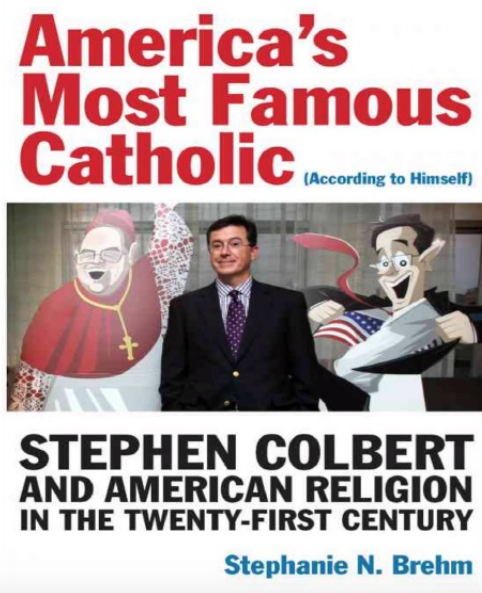
Robert Alter is the Class of 1937 Professor of Hebrew and Comparative Literature at the University of California at Berkeley. Professor Alter is the author of more than 20 books of criticism, translation, and commentary, most recently *The Art of Bible Translation* (2019). His complete translation of the Hebrew Bible, a work 24 years in the making, was published by W.W. Norton in 2018 and has been acclaimed as stylistically faithful to the Hebrew while inventively artful in English.

Co-sponsored by the Department of English, the John Cardinal Cody Endowed Chair in Theology, and the Hank Center.

February 26, 2020
4:00 PM
Information Commons 4th Floor
[Lake Shore Campus](#)

This event is free and open to the public.

Stephen Colbert and Being Catholic in the Public Square



Stephanie N. Brehm of Northwestern University will discuss her new book: *America's Most Famous Catholic (According to Himself): Stephen Colbert and American Religion in the Twenty-First Century*. This event is free and open to the public.

Welcome to the Hank Center



Frances Rafferty

Frances Rafferty joins the Hank Center as the newest Undergraduate Research Assistant, working on media strategy and the Catholic Studies program. Frances is a junior Environmental Policy major and Catholic Studies minor.

Cathy O'Sullivan joins the Hank Center as temporary Administrative Assistant. Cathy is recently retired after working for many years at Loyola in the Institute of Pastoral Studies and in Campus Ministry. She will be filling in for Center Manager Meghan Toomey, who is on maternity leave.

The Graduate Summer Institute on the Catholic Imagination

The Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage Presents its Inaugural



**Graduate Summer Institute
on the Catholic Imagination**

★ ★ ★ ★

Loyola University Chicago | July 8-18th, 2020

The Hank Center is pleased to announce the creation of the inaugural [Graduate Summer Institute on the Catholic Imagination](#).

The Graduate Summer Institute (GSI) provides an opportunity for current graduate students to broaden and deepen their engagement with the Catholic imagination, specifically in the spheres of theology, poetry, literature, and film. This ten day program combines master classes and seminars with scholarly research, relaxed time for community collaboration and reflection, and a series of interesting excursions--all in the setting of one of the country's most bustling campuses and cities.

The seminar is designed for a broad and diverse range of graduate students in the areas of

(but not limited to): theology, literary studies, creative writing, fine & performing arts, philosophy, digital humanities, and more. All graduate students are encouraged to apply, particularly those with interdisciplinary interests and objectives. See our [website](#) for details, faculty, applications, and more.

July 8-18, 2020
[Applications Due March 15, 2020](#)

Upcoming Events

Some more highlights from our Spring 2020 Event Calendar:



**The Cardinal Bernardin Lecture:
Cardinal Joseph Tobin, C.Ss.R.,
Archbishop of Newark**

**Synodality and the Long Game of Pope
Francis**

**Tuesday, April 14, 2020
4:30 - 6:00 PM
Information Commons 4th Floor**

This event is free and open to the public.



**The Saint John Henry Newman Lecture:
Jennifer Frey**

**From the Rust Belt to Rome: The
Conversion of a Working-Class Atheist**

**Thursday, March 26, 2020
4:00 PM
Information Commons 4th Floor**

This event is free and open to the public.



RECOMMENDED READING

In the spirit of cultivating the Catholic intellectual and artistic tradition, CCIH recommends new and notable books several times a year that integrate, interrogate, and celebrate Catholicism in dialogue with the world.

Song of Solomon (1977)

By Toni Morrison

Milkman Dead was born shortly after a neighborhood eccentric hurled himself off a rooftop in a vain attempt at flight. For the rest of his life he, too, will be trying to fly. With this brilliantly imagined novel, Toni Morrison transfigures the coming-of-age story as audaciously as Saul Bellow or Gabriel García Márquez. As she follows Milkman from his rustbelt city to the place of his family's origins, Morrison introduces an entire cast of strivers and seeresses, liars and assassins, the inhabitants of a fully realized black world.

Racial Justice and the Catholic Church (2010)

By Bryan N. Massingale

Confronting racism is difficult but essential work if we are to heal the brokenness in our society and our church. In the author's words, "We all are wounded by the sin of racism... How can we struggle together against an evil that harms us all?" *Racial Justice and the Catholic Church* examines the presence of racism in America from its early history through the Civil Rights Movement and the election of Barack Obama. It also explores how Catholic social teaching has been used--and not used--to promote reconciliation and justice.

Massingale writes from an abiding conviction that the Catholic faith and the black experience make essential contributions in the continuing struggle against racial injustice that is the work of all people. His book is essential reading for all those concerned with justice and healing in our world.

The Enchantments of Mammon: How Capitalism Became the Religion of Modernity (2019)

By Eugene McCarragher

If socialists and Wall Street bankers can agree on anything, it is the extreme rationalism of capital. At least since Max Weber, capitalism has been understood as part of the "disenchantment" of the world, stripping material objects and social relations of their mystery and sacredness. Ignoring the motive force of the spirit, capitalism rejects the awe-inspiring divine for the economics of supply and demand.

Eugene McCarragher challenges this conventional view. Capitalism, he argues, is full of sacrament, whether or not it is acknowledged. Capitalist enchantment first flowered in the fields and factories of England and was brought to America by Puritans and evangelicals whose doctrine made ample room for industry and profit. Later, the corporation was mystically animated with human personhood, to preside over the Fordist endeavor to build a heavenly city of mechanized production and communion. By the twenty-first century, capitalism has become thoroughly enchanted by the neoliberal deification of "the market."

Informed by cultural history and theology as well as economics, management theory, and marketing, *The Enchantments of Mammon* looks not to Marx and progressivism but to nineteenth-century Romantics for salvation. The Romantic imagination favors craft, the commons, and sensitivity to natural wonder. It promotes labor that, for the sake of the person, combines reason, creativity, and mutual aid. In this impassioned challenge, McCarragher makes the case that capitalism has hijacked and redirected our intrinsic longing for divinity--and urges us to break its hold on our souls.

America's Most Famous Catholic (According to Himself): Stephen Colbert and American Religion in the Twenty-First Century (2019)

By Stephanie N. Brehm

Religion and the foibles of religious institutions have served as rich fodder for scores of comedians over the years. What set Stephen Colbert's persona, "Colbert," apart on his Comedy Central show, *The Colbert Report*, was that his critical observations were made more powerful and harder to ignore because he approached religious material not from the predictable stance of the irreverent secular comedian but from his position as one of the faithful. He is a Catholic celebrity who can bridge critical outsider and participating insider, neither fully reverent nor fully irreverent.

Providing a digital media ethnography and rhetorical analysis of Stephen Colbert and his character from 2005 to 2014, author Stephanie N. Brehm examines the intersection between lived religion and mass media, moving from an exploration of how Catholicism shapes Colbert's life and world toward a conversation about how "Colbert" shapes Catholicism. Brehm provides historical context by discovering how "Colbert" compares to other Catholic figures, such as Don Novello, George Carlin, Louis C.K., and Jim Gaffigan, who have each presented their views of Catholicism to Americans through radio, film, and television. The last chapter provides a current glimpse of Colbert on *The Late Show*, where he continues to be a voice for Catholicism on late night, now to an even broader audience.

[Future Home of the Living God](#) (2017)

By Louise Erdrich

Louise Erdrich, the New York Times bestselling, National Book Award-winning author of *LaRose* and *The Round House*, paints a startling portrait of a young woman fighting for her life and her unborn child against oppressive forces that manifest in the wake of a cataclysmic event.

The world as we know it is ending. Evolution has reversed itself, affecting every living creature on earth. Science cannot stop the world from running backwards, as woman after woman gives birth to infants that appear to be primitive species of humans. Twenty-six-year-old Cedar Hawk Songmaker, adopted daughter of a pair of big-hearted, open-minded Minneapolis liberals, is as disturbed and uncertain as the rest of America around her. But for Cedar, this change is profound and deeply personal. She is four months pregnant.

Though she wants to tell the adoptive parents who raised her from infancy, Cedar first feels compelled to find her birth mother, Mary Potts, an Ojibwe living on the reservation, to understand both her and her baby's origins. As Cedar goes back to her own biological beginnings, society around her begins to disintegrate, fueled by a swelling panic about the end of humanity.

A chilling dystopian novel both provocative and prescient, *Future Home of the Living God* is a startlingly original work from one of our most acclaimed writers: a moving meditation on female agency, self-determination, biology, and natural rights that speaks to the troubling changes of our time.

Contact Us

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About the Center

The Joan and Bill Hank Center for the Catholic Intellectual Heritage exists to help faculty and students recognize and research Roman Catholic thought and its link to all academic disciplines in the university. It also seeks to convey that thought to other audiences inside and outside Loyola University Chicago.