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The Challenge of Pope Francis

By Thomas Ryan, Ph.D.

Any who have entered my office know it to be a mess—a constrained mess, but a mess nonetheless. I have tried to make the best of it by framing its condition in terms of ministry. I know I have succeeded when I hear visitors murmuring, “And I thought *my* office was messy.”

Pope Francis’s journeys and words in Brazil for World Youth Day reminded me of my office. He recognized mess, in a manner of speaking, and found something redeeming in it.

This came to me most powerfully in his addresses to the leadership of the Latin American Episcopal Conferences

and to the Brazilian bishops.

In remarks to the Latin American bishops, Pope Francis spoke of the Church in terms of *mysterium lunae*, the mystery of the moon. Cardinal Bergoglio explained this just prior to his election as pope by quoting St. Ambrose, “the Church shines not with its own light, but with that of Christ.”



Pope Francis Greeting the Crowds at World Youth Day 2013 Source: au.ibtimes.com

This is a striking image since the moon itself sustains no life. Pope Francis to the Latin American bishops:

The Church is an institution, but when she makes herself a “center,” ... [she] then claims to have a light of her own and she stops being that “*mysterium lunae*” of which the [early Church theologians] spoke. She becomes increasingly self-referential and loses her need to be missionary.... [The Latin American Bishops’ meeting

[continue](#) →

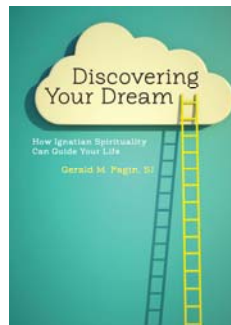
Book Release and Celebration of *Discovering Your Dream*

Event Set for 25 September

Join us for a celebration of the posthumous publication of Father Fagin’s *Discovering Your Dream: How Ignatian Spirituality Can Guide your Life*, a book that uses St. Ignatius’s principles of the Spiritual Exercises, coupled with an Ignatian approach to decision making, to guide us through a discernment process that truly satisfies our deepest desires and brings us closer to God.

We will sell copies of the book with proceeds benefitting the Fagin Memorial Scholarship. You are invited to make additional contribution to the scholarship

honoring Fr. Fagin. The Fagin Memorial Scholarship will assist LIM students in need of financial assistance in pursuing their mas-



Cover of Rev. Jerry Fagin’s *Discovering Your Dream*

degree with the Loyola Institute for Ministry

The celebration will take place Wednesday, September 25 at 7 pm in the St. Charles Room of the Danna Student Center on Loyola’s campus. The Reverend Mark Thibodaux, S.J., will be with us to say a few words about Fr. Fagin and his new book. We will have light refreshments and the event is free and open to the public.

Learn more about the book [GO](#)

God of life, we pray in thanksgiving for the gifts of Betty and Bernard's presence in this world. Please welcome them into your eternal embrace of love. May all who mourn their passing know peace and comfort during this difficult time.

In Memoriam

Betty Montgomery, Ph.D.

(1948-2013)

It is with great sadness that we ask for prayers for Betty Montgomery, and for her family, colleagues, and friends. Betty, a Loyola LIMEX facilitator in the Diocese of Jackson, died suddenly from injuries sustained in a car accident.

Dr. Betty Montgomery earned a Certificate in Religious Education from the Loyola Institute for Ministry in 2008 and was currently facilitating a Loyola learning group in Tupelo, Mississippi, hosted by the Diocese of Jackson/Glenmary Home Missions. Betty also shared her gifts with the wider Loyola community. She presented a workshop on Flannery O'Connor and the Communion of Saints at this past summer's alumni college, and she participated in the January 2013 Faculty/Staff Ignatian Retreat and went on the June 2013



Spiritual Journey to Spain trip, both hosted by Loyola's Office of Mission and Ministry.

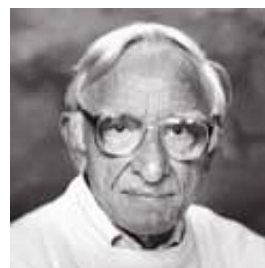
Betty and her husband Charles (Chas) Montgomery, M.D., have been generous benefactors to Loyola and the Loyola Institute for Ministry.

View Dr. Montgomery's Official Obituary [GO»](#)

Bernard Cooke, Th.D.

(1922-2013)

The LIM faculty and staff remember with gratitude and celebrate the life of Dr. Bernard J. Cooke who was born into eternal life on 31 May 2013. Dr. Cooke, an internationally renowned theologian, author, and lecturer, was born 31 May 1922 in Norway, Michigan, and passed away on his ninety-first birthday at the Village at Incarnate Word in San Antonio, Texas.



Dr. Cooke for over 30 years had been a visiting professor at the Institute for Ministry. He most recently taught at Loyola in the 2009 summer semester. He authored the course text used in the LIM Extension course Church, Sacraments, and

Ministry. He was a beloved teacher and friend to LIM students, faculty, and staff. He is survived by his wife, Dr. Pauline Turner, and daughter, Kelly Turner-Cooke, his brothers David Cooke (wife Leann) of Elk Grove, CA, Tom Cooke (wife Margaret) of Oakland, CA, as well as many nieces and nephews.

View Dr. Cooke's Official Obituary [GO»](#)

In Gratitude: LIM Thanks Evelyn Thibeaux, Ph.D.

As Dr. Evelyn Thibeaux, Ph.D., retires from her full-time position at LIM, the faculty and staff of the institute wish to thank her for the generosity, excellence, collegiality, and precision which she brought to her work.

Dr. Thibeaux joined the institute in 2006, guiding revisions of the Scripture courses to reflect recent developments in the field. During her years at Loyola, she taught both undergraduate and graduate students, and at a gathering on 18 June to celebrate her, many of them shared how her presence to them had

been transformative in their studies and their personal lives.



Dr. Evelyn Thibeaux, Ph.D.

We are blessed that Dr. Thibeaux, though retiring from her full-time position, will continue to teach Scripture classes in the online program.

As Dr. Thibeaux and her husband Nick move to Alexandria, Louisiana, where she grew up, we wish them well.

LIM Welcomes Gilberto A. Ruiz, Ph.D.

Please join us in welcoming Dr. Gilberto A. Ruiz who joins the Loyola Institute for Ministry as Assistant Professor of Scripture!

Dr. Ruiz grew up in Miami. He majored in theology and English at Boston College and earned a Master's of Theological Studies with a concentration in Scripture and Interpretation from Harvard Divinity School. His doctoral dissertation at Emory University was entitled "Temple Commerce and John 2:13-22." His secondary area of study at Emory was history of religion in Latin America. He is active

with the Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) and the Association of Catholic Hispanic Theologians of the United States (ACHTUS).



Dr. Gilberto A. Ruiz

As an assistant professor of Scripture, Dr. Ruiz teaches courses in Scripture (*Jewish Roots of Christian Faith* and *Christian Origins*). He is also the Instructor of Record for these courses in the LIM Extension Program; as such, he updates all course materials and works with students to facilitate their understanding of the course content and completion of their assigned papers.

We are excited to have Dr. Ruiz join our faculty and wish him success in this new job.

Listen to an interview with Dr. Ruiz that was conducted just before he started.

[GO »](#)

The Letter to the Romans (Eerdmans, 2013): New Book by LIM Faculty Member Thomas Ryan, Ph.D.

We celebrate the publication of Thomas Ryan's book *The Letter to the Romans* by William B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Thomas Ryan, Ian Levy, and Philip Krey's *Letter to the Romans* presents the history of early and medieval interpretations of Romans and gives substantial translations of select medieval commentaries. Written by eight representative medieval interpreters between the ninth and fourteenth centuries, these commentaries have never

been translated into English before.

This is the second volume of *The Bible in Medieval Tradition* (BMT), a series that aims to reconnect the church with part of its rich history of biblical interpretation.

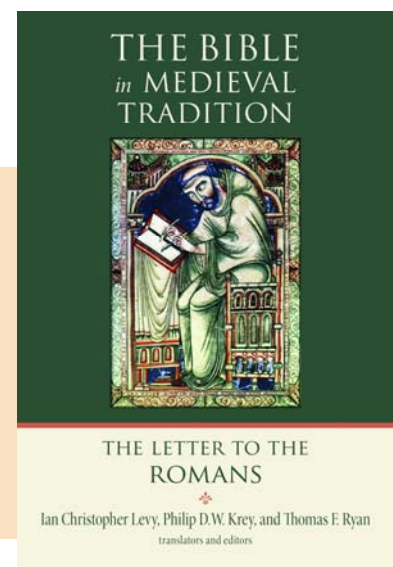
Praise for *The Letter to the Romans*

"This intelligently presented volume is a model not only in its choice of texts but also for its readable (and learned) introductions and notes. The keen interest in Romans over the centuries explains why Paul's letter is a classic: it provides a surplus of meaning both in the past and in the present day."

— Lawrence S. Cunningham
University of Notre Dame



Dr. Thomas Ryan, Ph.D.



For more information, visit William B. Eerdmans [GO »](#)

Announcements

Unique Course Offerings for Fall 2013: *Religion, Crime, and Justice & Preaching*

There's still time to register for classes in the Fall 2013 semester. LIM is excited to offer two special topics courses.

The first is Professor Michael Cowan's *Religion, Crime and Justice* course taught over 3 week-ends on-campus and online; it

can be taken for graduate or certificate credit. The class includes a lecture by Dr. Cowan as part of it and involves a range of guests who play important roles in the city. To learn more [GO»](#)

The second is a course on preaching taught by Deborah

Wilhelm, D.Min. This course runs from 9 September through 19 November. It requires students to attend two to three scheduled video meetings in real time with the entire class. Go online to learn more about this guest instructor and the class itself [GO»](#)

"For the Well-Being of the City: Crime, Justice and the Biblical Vision": Public Lecture and Webinar Set for 6 September at 7 p.m. CDT

Join faculty member Michael Cowan, Ph.D. at a public event exploring a Biblical vision to combat New Orleans' crime issues

Dr. Cowan, who has played an important role in the reform of

the city's government and its criminal justice system since Katrina, will explore through a religious lens how the city has improved on these fronts and describe work that still remains in a free, public lecture on 6

September at 7 p.m. CDT in Miller Hall, room 114. Learn more about this event [GO»](#)

For those who cannot attend in person, this lecture will be streamed as a webinar. Learn more [GO»](#)

Online Open Houses: 1 Oct. or 4 Nov. 2013

Please join us online for information about our all-online master degrees in Religious Education and Pastoral Studies. Further information about how to attend can be found online. [GO»](#)

Jobs in Ministry / Job Listings

To support our students and graduates, LIM maintains a Jobs in Ministry page on our website, listing resources both inside and outside Loyola that may assist you in your job search. Visit this page to learn more about the resources available [GO»](#)

For example, students have 24/7 access to EMPLOYOLA—an online recruiting tool for job postings, on-campus interviews, career fairs, and other services. This service is maintained by the Career Development Center at Loyola.

Current Job Listing

Associate Director for Youth & Young Adult Ministries, Catholic Diocese of Baton Rouge, LA
Application Deadline: 15 Sept.
Learn more about this position [GO»](#)

Application Deadline for Spring Admission

Apply by 1 November to join us for class in the Spring 2014 semester. [GO»](#)

Welcome (Back) Gathering on 20 September in N.O.

LIM Director Tom Ryan will host a back-to-school gathering at his home on Thursday, 20 September, at 6:30 p.m., for all students (on campus, online, and LIMEX), liaisons, facilitators, and adjunct faculty.

Although not many of out-of-towners will be unable to join the gathering, those who are in town for the event are encouraged to attend.

The gathering will celebrate the opening of the new school year

and welcome new faculty member Gilberto Ruiz and new students.

If you will be in town, please consider joining us. RSVP to Eileen Chapoton 504-865-2109 or [Email »](#)

Learn about our upcoming webinars and join us for an evening of interesting lecture and discussion [GO»](#)



Join us on Facebook and Google+ :
Loyola Institute for Ministry (LIM / LIMEX community)

The Challenge of Pope Francis continued

led by Cardinal Bergoglio in 2007 at] Aparecida wanted a Church that is ... more a facilitator of faith than an inspector of faith.

One other noteworthy characteristic of the moon (and this brings me back to my office)—not only does it not sustain life nor produce light, it is, with its pockmarked surface and bereft of an atmosphere, itself a mess. For Pope Francis messiness, in the sense of diversity and in other ways, can be redemptive.

In fact, he rejects homogeneity, “The Church is never uniformity, but diversities harmonized in unity.” He appreciates that most syncretistic of faith practices—“popular piety.” Six of the questions he poses to bishops about the state of the church today touch on that most diverse of groups—the laity. He asks whether they are sharers in the Church’s mission, whether they are habitually involved in pastoral discernment at the parish and diocesan levels, and whether Church leaders are conscious of and convinced about their mission and their need of freedom to discern it. He asks, “Do we support them and accompany them, overcoming the temptation to manipulate them or infantilize them? Are we constantly open to letting ourselves be challenged [by them]?”

In remarks to priests at this year’s Chrism mass at St. Peter’s, he uses the imagery of odor to gesture toward the messiness of involvement in people’s lives in the real world. Those priests

who do not go out of themselves, instead of being media-

tors, gradually become intermediaries, managers. ... [When a priest] doesn’t put his own skin and his own heart on the line, he never hears a warm, heartfelt word of thanks. This is precisely the reason for the dissatisfaction of some, who end up sad—sad priests—in some sense becoming collectors of antiques or novelties, instead of being shepherds living with “the odor of the sheep.” This I ask you: be shepherds, with the “odor of the sheep,” make it real, as shepherds among your flock.

Finally, he urges his listeners to immerse themselves in that most unruly of dimensions—time, in particular, the present. “Every utopian (future-oriented) or restorationist (past-oriented) impulse is spiritually unhealthy. God is real and he shows himself in the ‘today.’ ... The ‘today’ is closest to eternity; even more, the ‘today’ is a flash of eternity. In the ‘today,’ eternal life is in play.”

For Francis, it seems clear that, like the moon, the Church is itself messy. Its members are diverse and their lives complicated; it finds itself confronted by the always-new present. And yet God chose to associate in time with such as these. Christ pitched his tent among the very same.

Instead of lamenting society’s downfall, he urges the Church on. By grace, the Church in its messiness nonetheless lives and reflects God’s bountiful and merciful love. By grace, it points to the “‘revolution of tenderness’ brought by the incarnation” and “make[s] room for God’s mystery... in such a way that it can entice people, attract them” today.

Pope Francis directs these challenges to audiences of the ordained.

Yet the same challenges apply to LIM, our students, graduates, faculty and staff, liaisons, facilitators, and friends. So, how will we respond?

Tom Ryan



**Dr. Tom Ryan, Director
Loyola Institute for Ministry**

REFERENCES

Pope Francis. “Address to the Leadership of the Episcopal Conferences of Latin America” 28 July 2013. <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/speeches/2013/july/documents/papa-francesco_20130728_gmg-celam-rio_en.html>

Pope Francis. “Chrism Mass Homily.” 28 March 2013. <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/homilies/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130328_messa-crismale_en.html>

Pope Francis. “Meeting with the Bishops of Brazil,” 28 July 2013. <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/speeches/2013/july/documents/papa-francesco_20130727_gmg-episcopato-brasile_en.html>.



The Loyola Institute for Ministry

Loyola University New Orleans
6363 St. Charles Avenue, Campus Box 67
New Orleans, LA 70118

Phone: 504-865-5555
Fax: 504-865-2066
E-mail: lim@loyno.edu

**Ministry education to make a
difference in the world.**

The mission of the Loyola Institute for Ministry (LIM) is to prepare women and men for religious education and ministerial leadership in Catholic and other Christian communities through professional graduate education and through professional continuing education. The Master of Religious Education and the Master of Pastoral Studies degrees are offered in the Institute. A number of continuing education options are also part of Institute programming.

This newsletter is designed for students in all the LIM programs, alumni, current liaisons, facilitators, and faculty.



Fall 2013 Calendar of Events

SEPTEMBER

6th, Friday • Dr. Michael Cowan, Ph.D., delivers a lecture entitled "For the Well Being of the City: Crime, Justice and the Biblical Vision" • 7 p.m., CDT • Miller Hall, Room 114 • The lecture is free and open to the public • [On Campus](#) • [GO»](#)

6th –7th, Friday & Saturday • National Catholic Bioethics Center presents a two-day seminar on medical ethics: Catholic Health Care Ethics: A Tradition of Compassion and Care for the Human Person • Danna Student Center • [On Campus](#) • [View More Information and Register](#) • [GO»](#)

20th, Friday • Tom Ryan, Ph. D., Director of LIM, hosts a gathering of students, faculty, and staff for a meal at his home • 6:30 p.m., CDT • [In New Orleans](#) • RSVP to Eileen Chapoton • 504-865-2109 or [Email»](#)

25th, Wednesday • Book Launch & Celebration of Fr. Jerry Fagin's *Discovering Your Dream* • Rev. Mark Thibodaux, S.J., will speak about Jerry and his book • 7 p.m.,

CDT • St. Charles Room, Danna Student Center • [On Campus](#) • [GO»](#)

OCTOBER

1st, Tuesday • Dr. Adil Khan, Loyola Religious Studies professor, gives a lecture on religion and the recent events in Egypt • 12:30 p.m., CDT • Jesuit Church of the Immaculate Conception • [In New Orleans](#) • [Learn more](#) [GO»](#)

3rd, Thursday • Charlotte McCorquodale, Ph.D., adjunct faculty at the Loyola Institute for Ministry, and Bob McCarty, D.Min., Executive Director of National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, present *Go and Make Disciples: Strategic Directions for Ministry with the Young Church* • 8 p.m. CDT • [Online Webinar](#) • [GO»](#)

9th, Wednesday • Online Open House 8 p.m. CDT • [Online Open House](#) • [GO»](#)

NOVEMBER

1st, Friday • Admission Application Deadline for Spring 2014 Semester • Apply online • [GO»](#)

4th, Monday • Online Open House 8 p.m. CDT • [Online Open House](#) • [GO»](#)

