



Letter from the Director: Redemption Today

For some, my love of music prompts them to ask what instrument I play. I respond that the one music-related thing I'm really good at is...listening.

And I like all kinds of music. In part as a result of the relationship with our students in Nigeria, I've learned a little about music there and have enjoyed listening to the Afrobeat sounds of Fela Kuti (check out the Wikipedia article "Zombie (Album)" about his politically charged album of that name, the military's backlash against it, and his response with the songs "Coffin for Head of State" and "Unknown Soldier.")



"Spiritualism is the understanding of the universe so that it can be a better place to live in." Fela Kuti (1938-1997)

I also very much like Bob Marley, the late convert to Orthodox Christianity and the reggae star whose music was influenced by the rhythms broadcast across the Caribbean late at night by New Orleans radio stations.

Continue reading →

Inside this issue

- Peace-making in Real Time ...2
- Anonymous Donors Gift LIM .3
- Open House on Campus3
- Summer Classes3
- News and Announcements ..4-5
 - Webinars4
 - Commencement4
 - Baton Rouge Information Session5
 - LIM at NCL5
 - Milestones5
- Letter from the Director, continued6
- Upcoming Events7

Summer Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership

Consider joining us on-campus at the Summer Institute. This year's theme is: "Spiritual Leadership: 'How to...' Forming One Body in Christ."

- [Flyer](#)
- [Presenters](#)
- [Registration](#)
- [Location](#)
- [Cost](#)
- [Program](#)
- [Goals](#)

The Summer Institute takes place on the main campus of Loyola June 6-8, 2016.

This ninth year of the institute gathers leaders from schools and parishes to better understand Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and Pope Francis' vision of education. We will look at the implications of these in our increasingly diverse world and develop practical applications for our ministries.

Peace-Making in Real-Time: Current Research of Michael Cowan, Ph.D.



The prophet Jeremiah tells us, “Seek the well being of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its well being you will find your well being” (NSRV, 29:7). But how do leaders living in communities facing intractable conflict create and maintain peace? This is a question that LIM Professor Michael A. Cowan explores in his community leadership and research.

Dr. Cowan’s latest project is a study of barrier-crossing leaders in local communities who have been able to break the “social traps” they face. Social traps are “situation[s] where individuals, groups, or organizations are unable to cooperate owing to mutual distrust and lack of social capital, even where cooperation would benefit all,”¹ and include conflicts related to race, ethnicity,

religion, nationality, and class such as those in the Middle East. In the US, the Black Lives Matter movement illustrates the tensions between African Americans and local law enforcement. By studying how bridge-building leaders in such conflicts are able to shared leadership across barriers, Dr. Cowan hopes to create new understanding of who these leaders are, what they think, and how they act that will serve as the basis for a a toolkit on barrier-crossing leadership that civil society, business, and government leaders can use to help resolve social traps in their communities.

Initially, a survey created in cooperation with the Institute of Cognitive and Evolutionary Biology in the University of Oxford will be given to barrier-crossing leaders in New Orleans and St. Paul, Minnesota, cities at two ends of the Mississippi River, both of which have leaders who have sought to resolve social traps. Eventually, the surveys will be given to barrier-crossing leaders in other major US cities, as well as to international leaders in places like Belfast, Dublin, London, Seoul, Singapore, Paris, Berlin, Cairo and other locations in Latin America and the Philippines.

While the motivation for the research is practical, it evinces a biblical perspective. Cowan says, “I’m heavily influenced by the Hebrew Scriptures, particularly the prophetic texts demanding that people cooperate with God to create peace. Such cooperation is what being in covenant means. Peace comes when God and humans jointly bring justice or mercy when needed; conflicts are caused by the lack of mercy and justice.” The logic behind Cowan’s approach for overcoming conflict and restoring mercy and justice is for one party to realize that members of the “other” group have similar aspirations and that working together can allow both to advance shared interests they can’t achieve alone.

Professor Cowan knows about the challenges and fruits of such collaborative efforts first-hand. He founded the organization of religious and civic leaders called Common Good, which worked with city council members to create deep, structural ethics reform in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina. That effort resulted in the establishment of three independent organizations responsible for the elimination of waste, fraud, and abuse of power by local public institutions: The Ethics Review Board, the Office of Inspector General, and the Independent Police Monitor. Dr. Cowan currently serves as chair of the Ethics Review Board of the City of New Orleans.

Working as a community leader, Dr. Cowan understands the very real challenges faced by those working to broker peace in seemingly intractable situations, and he recognizes that LIM constituents who are engaged in community outreach can expect to experience the challenge of fostering barrier-crossing leadership. For them, his work will have direct implications, as the toolkit he plans to create may assist them in their efforts. Cowan acknowledges that the “Year of Mercy’ has reinforced the importance of mercy in the process of social change,” and also encourages those working in community outreach “to realize works of mercy are more than works of kindness; they are also works of peace.”



¹ Bo Rothstein, *Social Traps and the Problem of Trust* (Cambridge UP, 2005).

Anonymous Donors Gift LIM with \$10,000

The Institute gratefully acknowledges the many generous gifts from its graduates and friends. This semester, a student bundled together three anonymous donations totalling \$10,000. They and all our donors have shown their generosity to LIM, but also their support of the Institute's mission 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 Institute empowers learners to develop their leadership capacity in order to meet the needs of the Church and world today and grounds our students in the best of the Christian biblical and theological tradition.

LIM's mission to serve students in areas that do not have benefit of nearby resources for graduate-level education has driven our pursuit of extension and online programs, even as we seek to serve students in the New Orleans and surrounding areas, including inmates at the Louisiana State Penitentiary in Angola, LA. The support of donors allows us to give students the education and spiritual enrichment that transforms lives and seeks the realization of God's kingdom.

Along with grants—such as the one LIM received to educate Catholic nuns online in the U.S., Africa, and Asia—donations help us to keep our tuition affordable and accessible. Most of our students are motivated by love of God and neighbor and recognize that a career in ministry cannot support repayment of big student loans. So gifts help us keep our tuition low, which makes it easier for our graduates to commit themselves to ministry.

The Institute thanks our generous donors who have sacrificed to support the work of the Institute and its students. If you would like to support the studies of ministry students trying to make a difference in the world, please consider making a tax-deductible donation to the Loyola Institute for Ministry.

[DONATE NOW](#)

On-Campus Open House in May

If you know someone who may be interested in the LIM on-campus or online programs, please encourage them to attend our open house. LIM graduate Alice Hughes, MRE, Director of the Office of Religious Education for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, will share how her degree has shaped her ministry.

Those interested can learn about our online and on-campus programs, which are Ignatian, practical, transformative, and affordable. Free parking available; guests may park in any space that is not otherwise reserved. Guests with handicapped permits or license plates may park in handicapped spaces.

- May 12th, Thursday
- 7-8 p.m. Central
- Monroe Hall, room 251 [Campus Map»](#)

To RSVP, please email Recruitment Coordinator Diane Dougherty at dmdoughe@loyno.edu.

Summer Classes Set

Enjoy the flexibility of an online class as you continue your studies over the summer. Students are able to register now on LORA.

[Introduction to Practical Theology](#) (LIM G703-W01)

[History of Christian Spirituality](#) (LIM G828-W01)

[The Emergent Universe: Our Sacred Story](#) (LIM G814-W01)

[Foundations of Youth Ministry](#) (LIM G870-W01)

[Religious Education Across the Curriculum](#) (LIM G839-W01)

[Spirituality and the Theology of Work](#) (LIM G819-W01)

News and Announcements

Webinars

All webinars are free and open to the public, but attendance is limited to 100 participants and available on a first-come, first-served basis. To attend a webinar, go to <http://loyno.adobeconnect.com/webinar/>, select "Enter as a Guest," type in your name, and click "Enter Room." If you log-in before the starting time, you will need to wait until the start time before being invited in.

From Certainty to Faith: A Modern Catholic Journey • 11 April • 8 p.m. Central



Tom Roberts, editor-at-large for the *National Catholic Reporter*, will explore the struggle that has existed between the idea of faith as a tick list of beliefs within a community tightly defined by clear borders and a more pastoral notion of a community on the move, a community in which faith is less dependent on adherence to rules in all their details than on the relational aspects. He will consider how Pope Francis is a robust example of the latter, urging the community to encounter the other, especially those on the margins, and not to be afraid of making mistakes.

A Practical Spirituality of Civic Life • 16 May • 8 p.m. Central



Michael A. Cowan, Ph.D., faculty at the Loyola Institute for Ministry and director of the Common Good, a network of civil society organizations he founded after Hurricane Katrina to seek consensus as a basis for collective action to rebuild the city and to create deep, structural ethics reform. That effort resulted in the establishment of three independent organizations with responsibility for the elimination of waste, fraud, and abuse of power by local public institutions including the Ethics Review Board, the Office of Inspector General, and the Independent Police Monitor. Dr. Cowan currently serves as chair of the Ethics Review Board of the City of New Orleans. He will speak about a spirituality for civic engagement.

**Access past webinars at the
Webinar Archive**

[GO»](#)

Commencement 2016

The 2016 spring commencement activities will be held the weekend of May 21, 2016. University Commencement for degree candidates is on Saturday, May 21st, at 9:45 a.m. in the Mercedes Benz Superdome. The LIM liturgy and reception follows that afternoon at 4:30 p.m. All certificate and degree candidates are invited to participate with their guests. Further information is posted on the [institute's commencement page](#) and the [university's commencement page](#). If you will be attending the LIM liturgy and reception, please be sure to submit your RSVP. [GO»](#)



LIM Hosts Information Session in Baton Rouge This May

LIM will host a session for those in the Baton Rouge area who are interested in studying theology and spirituality in the LIMFlex program. Attendees can learn about master's degrees and continuing education certificates that combine local face-to-face study with online learning. [Learn more»](#)

- Thursday, May 5, 2016
- 7 PM to 8 PM
- The Tracy Center, 1800 South Acadian Thruway, Baton Rouge, LA 70808

For more information, contact Diane Dougherty dmdoughe@loyno.edu or 504-865-3727

LIM at NCCL Conference in Jacksonville This May

LIM will attend the NCCL's 80th annual conference being held in Jacksonville, Florida. This year's theme is "Dynamic Discipleship: dare. lead. innovate." Keynote speakers include, among others, Fr. Dave Dwyer, CSP, Executive Director of Busted Halo, the Paulist Fathers' ministry and media outreach to Catholics in their twenties and thirties; Joan Rosenhauer, Catholic Relief Services; and Rev. Ricky Manalo, CSP, Ph.D., a Paulist priest and a liturgical composer. [Learn more»](#)

- May 22-26, 2016
- Hyatt Regency Riverfront
- Booth 107

Please stop by our booth to say hello!



Milestones



Allison Dreher (MRE 2009) has been busy as Education Coordinator for the St. Augustine Foundation's website and will soon appear on At Home with Jim & Joy, a program on EWTN hosted by Jim & Joy Pinto, to discuss it. At press time, the air date was not available, but you can check the show's website to find it. [GO»](#)

Please share your milestone with the larger LIM community by emailing limmiles@loyno.edu. Include your degree, (expected) year of graduation, and program (online, on-campus, or LIMEX). If you wish to include a photo of yourself or the milestone event in your life, please add it as an attachment to your email. Your milestone may be featured in a future issue of the LIM Express or in the Successes spotlight on the LIM homepage.

Letter from the Director Continued

Returning from a trip to visit our students in Benin City, I was finishing a Nigerian meal before clearing passport control and heading toward my gate at the Lagos airport when the restaurant's soundtrack began playing Bob Marley's "Redemption Song," the last track on the last album that Marley released in his lifetime. Both diners and staff seemed to freeze at the tune's first notes; then some joined in singing.

The song, a ballad for voice and guitar with some hints of reggae, invites attention and then action. Its plucked opening rouses the listener. Its strumming and solo voice then suggest accompaniment. The lyrics then make the invitation explicit, "Won't you help to sing these songs of freedom?...In every way, in every day." They then become a kind of argument about Marley's legacy by framing his life in terms of liberation. Looking back, he wants to see his oeuvre as comprised of songs of freedom. "Cause all I ever have [is] redemption songs."

Redemption, of course, is an Easter theme. Jesus' work of salvation is often spoken of in terms of this word that stems from Latin meaning "to buy back." Jesus has redeemed us. The tradition advances many theories about how Jesus worked this redemption—for example, his death functioned as a ransom for humans enslaved to Satan and sin, it is a sacrifice that makes satisfaction for humanity's sinfulness, and so forth.

Most of these theories remained fairly abstract for me until I heard this song in that Nigerian restaurant that is so close to the 18th- and 19th-century ports that shipped to the Americas (including to the Port of New Orleans) as cargo humans whose labor has so enriched our country.

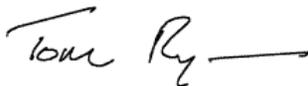
That slavery, its legacy of racism, and the modern-day slavery of human trafficking are all consequences of sin. And there are other slaveries consequent to sin—slavery to poverty, illness, injustice, war, anxiety, addiction, marginalization, hunger, imprisonment, environmental degradation.

In a sense, Bob Marley is simply following in the footsteps of the four evangelists whose narratives of good news resemble songs of freedom from sin and its consequences.

Marley renews the gospel challenge for our own day with his reminder that sin and redemption are not abstractions played out in the past on some cosmic stage. Enslavement exists in very physical and emotional ways now and, therefore, so does the need for liberation, so does the need for Easter resurrections in lives today.

Marley's invitation stands. Will we accept? Can we see what we do as lending our voices to songs of freedom? At the end, will we be able to look back and pick out the ways our lives have contributed to redemption songs?

Wishing you joy,



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



"People are people. Black, blue, pink, green — God make no rules about color; only society make rules where my people suffer, and that [is] why we must have redemption and redemption now." Robert Nesta "Bob" Marley (1945-1981)



The Loyola Institute for Ministry
Loyola University New Orleans
6363 St. Charles Avenue
Campus Box 67
New Orleans, LA 70118

Phone: 504-865-3728
Fax: 504-865-2066
E-mail: lim@loyno.edu

The Loyola Institute for Ministry

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, alums, current liaisons, facilitators, faculty, and friends.

The content of the newsletter is collected, edited, and prepared for the web by Jennifer Shimek.



Upcoming Events

APRIL

11th • Tom Roberts, editor-at-large for the *National Catholic Reporter*, offers a presentation "From Certainty to Faith: A Modern Catholic Journey" • Webinar • 8 p.m. Central • [GO»](#)

MAY

5th • Baton Rouge Information Session • 7:00-8:00 p.m. Central • The Tracy Center, 1800 South Acadian Thruway • [GO»](#)

12th • On-Campus Open House • 7:00-8:00 p.m. Central • Monroe Hall, room 251 • [GO»](#)

16th • Michael A. Cowan, faculty at the Loyola Institute for Ministry, discusses "A Practical Spirituality of Civic Life" • Webinar • 8 p.m. Central • [GO»](#)

21st • Loyola Commencement at the Mercedes-Benz Superdome • 8 a.m. ; LIM Liturgy and Reception at Ignatius Chapel on Loyola's campus • 4:30 pm Central • [GO»](#)

22nd–26th • LIM at NCCL Conference in Jacksonville, Florida, at the Hyatt Regency Riverfront • Booth 107 • [GO»](#)

JUNE

4-6th • Summer Institute for Catholic Educational Leadership • Loyola University, Main Campus • [GO»](#)