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Message from the Director: Christmas Grace

By Thomas Ryan, Ph.D.

If you'll indulge me, I want to share with you one storyline from one of my favorite films that I recently learned is also one of Pope Francis's favorites. For me, it captures Catholicism in its particularity and universality, in its commitment to materiality and spirituality.

Babette's Feast is based on a short story, the source of the quotes below, by Danish author Karen Blixen (pen name Isak Dinesen) who also wrote *Out of Africa*, both of which were turned into Academy Award winning films.

Babette's Feast portrays a great 19th-century chef exiled from Paris to rural Denmark who works for a pair of single sisters—Martine and Philippa. Without pay, Babette

cooks and cleans for the sisters and serves the local poor. She also purchases a lottery ticket from France annually. Twelve years after her arrival in Jutland, she wins the lottery and proposes spending the



proceeds on a feast in honor of the two women's father who had founded the austere, dwindling,

and increasingly elderly faith community that the sisters maintain in his memory.

By chance the eldest invitee was hosting a visitor, her nephew—a great general—who is also invited to attend. As a young and profligate officer, he had been banished thirty years earlier to his aunt's in Jutland "where he would have time to meditate and better his ways." A dashing and superior figure, he was smitten by Martine and, in order to court her, began to attend her father's church. Her father disapproved of marriage; she spurned its offer, and so he left and resolved "to cut a brilliant figure in a brilliant world."

continue →



FAITH IN THE FUTURE

THE CAMPAIGN FOR LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS

Loyola Kicked off its Faith in the Future Capital Campaign on 9 October. View a [video of the kick-off](#) and one of [LIM graduate Ansel Augustine](#). Make sure to designate the Loyola Institute for Ministry as recipient of your Faith in the Future Donations! [Learn more»](#) | [Give »](#)

Spring Courses Open to All

On-campus classes are:

- Church, Sacraments, and Liturgy taught by Daniella Zsupan-Jerome, Ph.D.
- Christian Origins taught by Gilberto A. Ruiz, Ph.D.

Online classes include:

- Introduction to Practical Theology taught by Evelyn Thibeaux, Ph.D.

- Jewish Roots of Christian Faith taught by George Rodriguez, D.Min.

- Christian Origins taught by Gilberto A. Ruiz, Ph.D.

- Church, Sacraments, and Liturgy taught by Thomas Ryan, Ph.D.

- Spirituality, Morality, and Ethics taught by Marion Danforth, Ed.D.

- Introduction to Pastoral Care, taught by Michael Cowan, Ph.D.

- Religious Communication taught by Daniella Zsupan-Jerome, Ph.D.

- Pastoral and Educational Praxis taught by Michael A. Cowan, Ph.D.

Sign up for classes on LORA [GO»](#)

News Notes

2015 Commencement

The 2015 spring commencement activities will be held the weekend of 9 May 2015. The LIM liturgy and reception is on Saturday afternoon, 9 May, at 4:30 p.m. All certificate and degree candidates are invited to participate with their guests. University Commencement for degree candidates for May, August, and December 2015 is on Saturday, 9 May at 9:45 a.m. in the Mercedes Benz Louisiana Superdome. Students who apply for graduation in 2015 are sent by email information from Diane Blair dblair@loyno.edu on the liturgy and reception and the other university commencement activities. Information is also posted on the university [commencement page](#).



All 2015 degree and certificate graduates (students who have successfully completed 27 hours or 9 courses) need to [apply online](#) for graduation. The university's reply to your online application will be sent to your loyno.edu email address. You may find your Loyola email address

on LORA if you do not remember it.

LIM Office Closure for Christmas

The university and LIM offices will close for the Christmas holiday from Monday, 23 December through Wednesday, 1 January. The last day for LIM Extension students to submit a paper to the Consulting Service is Friday, 12 December.

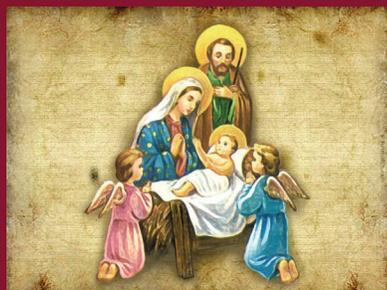
LIM at Gulf Coast Faith Formation Conference

The Gulf Coast Faith Formation Conference (formerly the Johannes Hofinger Conference) takes place on 8th-10th January at the Ponchartrain Center in Kenner, LA. If you are able to attend the conference, please stop by our booth (#108) for a visit.

LIM faculty will participate in breakout sessions during the conference on the 9th. LIM Director Tom Ryan, Ph.D., gives a presentation "Good News Adoration" (#107) from 11 a.m. to 12 p.m. Later that afternoon, from 1:30-2:30 p.m., faculty member Daniella Zsupan-Jerome, Ph.D., gives a presentation "Christ the Perfect Communicator: Being Christ-Centered Communicators in the Digital Age" (#208).

"For me Christmas has always been about this: contemplating the visit of God to his people."

- Pope Francis



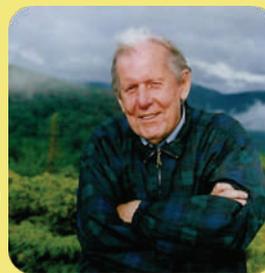
May you have a blessed Christmas and a joy-filled New Year!

Sincerely,

The LIM Faculty and Staff

Celebrating the 100th Anniversary of Thomas Berry's Birth

The Loyola Institute for Ministry joins in honoring Thomas Berry's 100th birthday. Thomas Berry, C.P. (November 9, 1914 – June 1, 2009) was a Catholic priest of the Passionist order, cosmologist, and geologist. A cultural historian, Berry believed that the stories which try to explain the origin of the universe are contained in the Cosmos Story and that none of them is at odds with it. He proposed that a deep understanding of the history and functioning of the evolving universe is a necessary inspiration and guide for our own effective functioning as individuals and as a species. He was awarded eight honorary doctorate degrees in his lifetime and recog-



Thomas Berry, C.P.

nized all over the world for bringing into consciousness a new vision of the human-earth relationship. A prolific author, he inspired the creation of over 100 organizations in the United States and beyond.

The LIM program in both its curriculum and methodology honors Berry's understanding that the "universe is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects." To read LIM emerita faculty member Kathleen O'Gorman's reflections about Berry's leg-

acy and to learn more about Berry's ideas, please visit our web page commemorating this anniversary. [GO»](#)

Book Celebration a Pleasant Evening

On Tuesday, 2 December, friends of LIM gathered with current students, graduates, faculty, staff, liaisons, and facilitators to celebrate the publication of Dr. Daniella Zsupan-Jerome's book, *Connected toward Communion: The Church and Social Communication in the Digital Age* (Liturgical Press,

2014). Guests attended both in person and online.

Dr. Zsupan-Jerome gave a brief presentation related to the book's subject, the Church's thought on social communication and ministry in the digital age. Afterward, she signed copies of her book and visited with those in attendance.

You can view Dr. Zsupan-Jerome's remarks by clicking on the video link found on the LIM webinars page. [GO»](#)

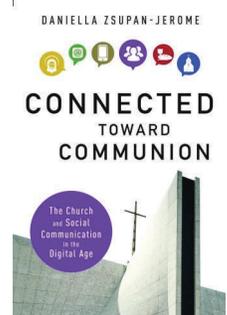
The event raised money for the [Gerald Fagin, S.J., Memorial Scholarship Fund](#).



Guests gather in the Whitney Presentation Room in Thomas Hall for a talk by Daniella Zsupan-Jerome, Ph.D., author of *Connected toward Communion*.

Buy a Copy Today!

LIM has a limited number of signed copies of Dr. Zsupan-Jerome's recently published book, *Connected toward Communion*, available for purchase. The cost is \$25 per book, including handling and shipping. Email lim@loyno.edu to place your order.



First Groups Begin the Revised LIMEX Program, LIM-Flex

In the spring, LIM announced as one of the fruits of its strategic planning a new LIMEX curriculum and new ways of accessing it, called LIM-Flex. These new options deliver the same quality, transformative education within an adult learning community that engages in contextual and transformative theological reflection and action with a Loyola-certified facilitator. Our first groups began the new program this fall.

The new options increase the number of electives for the master's by eliminating Course 7, *Faith and Culture*, and Course 8, *Faith Development and Spiritu-*

ality, as required. The contexts that these courses address, as well as our model of theological reflection, will be integrated more intentionally into core theological courses, focus courses, and electives. The new options also allow for groups to choose taking between 1 and 6 courses in the LIMEX format and completing the rest online. Students who want to take one course at a time can still do so, but those who want to finish more quickly could take online courses concurrently with LIMEX courses and complete a degree in two years.

Of course, groups are still able to take all 12 courses in the LIMEX format if they choose to do so.

For a more extensive discussion of changes, please see <http://lim.loyno.edu/lim-flex>. Please feel free to contact LIM director Tom Ryan at tryan@loyno.edu if you have questions or know of any current, former, or potential LIMEX sites that might benefit from these new options.

LIMFLEX includes "both the new and the old" (Matthew 13:52), new options along with the same quality education to transform participants.

Announcements

Share Your Milestones: A New LIM Express Feature

Have you recently experienced a milestone in your life that you would like to share with the larger LIM community? If so, please email it to limmiles@loyno.edu.

We may share your milestone in a future issue of the LIM Express or feature it on our



homepage in the Successes section. If you are a current student or graduate, please be sure to include in your email, your degree, (expected) year of graduation, and program (online, on-campus, or LIMEX).

The parish center of Jesuit Church, pictured below, is the site of the First Tuesdays Lecture Series.



First Tuesdays Lecture Series

Join us on the first Tuesday of the month, January through May, for food and fellowship centered around a talk from a local leader on the theme "Spirituality in the City."

All presentations begin at 12:30 in Lenes Hall, 130 Baronne Street, which is the parish center of Immaculate Conception Jesuit Church. All are invited to share a simple lunch that starts at 12:15.

Upcoming speakers include:

6 January • Don Frampton, senior pastor at St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church



3 February • Martha Orphe, pastor at First Street Peck Wesley United Methodist Church



3 March • Alexis Berk, rabbi at Touro Synagogue



Additional speakers are still being scheduled. To learn more about the First Tuesdays Lecture Series by [visiting the web-page](#).

Online Open Houses: 10 February and 19 March 2015

The Loyola Institute for Ministry will host an Online Open House on Tuesday, 10 February and Tuesday, 19 March, at 8 p.m. Central time for those interested in learning more about our programs. The web link for those interested in attending the

online open house is www.lim.loyno.edu/open-houses. Please share this information with those you feel may be interested. For more information contact Diane Blair at 504.865.2069 or dblair@loyno.edu.

Upcoming Webinars

Please join us for our upcoming webinars, which are free and open to the public. Bring a friend!

23 January • Fr. Eduardo Scarel, O.Carm., professor at Argentine Pontifical Catholic University, speaks on "My Friend the Pope and His Perspective on Creation" • 7 p.m. CST • If you are in New Orleans, you can attend this presentation in person in Miller Hall 114 and his workshop on Saturday 24 January in Miller Hall 112.



19 February • Diana Macalintal, Director of Worship for the Diocese of San Jose, speaks on "Prayer: Turning the Ordinary Into Extraordinary Moments of Grace" • 8 p.m. CST



5 March • Br. Elliott Maloney, O.S.B., professor at St. Vincent College, speaks on "Saint Paul: Master of the Spiritual Life 'In Christ'" • 8 p.m. CST



13 April • Walter Pousson, Jr., recording and performing artist, honorary member of the Louisiana Blues Hall of Fame, speaks on "Between the Bible and the Blues" • 8 p.m. CST



To access the webinars:

1. Go to: <http://loyno.adobeconnect.com/webinar/>
2. Select "Enter as a Guest"
3. 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.

Log on and join us for our webinars.



Message from the Director continued

Despite his success and prestige, he had always wondered, “What if...” And his return to Jutland would give him the opportunity to prove the correctness of his decision to leave.

He anticipated “the low rooms, the haddock, and the glass of water” and that he would dominate the dinner conversation among his simple hosts. What he got astonished him. The food and wine reminded him of the finest restaurant in Paris whose chef was “most surprisingly—a woman!” She turned meals “into a love affair ... in which one no longer distinguishes between bodily and spiritual appetite or satiety!”

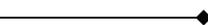
He was so moved by the food and drink that he stood and spoke as if spontaneously. Humans, he said, are

frail and foolish. We have all of us been told that grace is to be found in the universe. But in our human foolishness and short-sightedness we imagine divine grace to be finite. For this reason we tremble. ... We tremble before making our choice in life, and, after having made it, again tremble in fear of having chosen wrong. But the moment comes when our eyes are opened, and we see and realize that grace is infinite. Grace, my friends, demands nothing from us but that we shall await it with confidence and acknowledge it in gratitude. Grace ... makes no conditions and singles out none of us in particular; grace takes us all to its bosom and proclaims general amnesty. See!

that which we have chosen is given us, and that which we have refused is, also and at the same time, granted us. Ay, that which we have rejected is poured upon us abundantly. For mercy and truth have met together and righteousness and bliss have kissed one another!

As he anticipated, the general did dominate conversation, but out of surprise and wonder, not superiority. In retrospect, his dining companions

realized that the infinite grace of which General Loewenheim had spoken had been allotted to them, and they did not even wonder at the fact, for it had been but the fulfillment of an ever-present hope. The vain illusions of this earth had dissolved before their eyes like smoke, and they had seen the universe as it really is. They had been given one hour of the millennium.



An Advent Prayer

May this season of sacred anticipation be one of growing awareness that we are all at every moment drenched in grace. May meals nourish not only physically but also spiritually and so prompt conversation, joy, and reconciliation. May they build community.

Yet not all have a place at the table. Therefore, may this season of fervent hope also be one of growing confidence that all humans, indeed, all creation share in God’s abundant grace. May meals also strengthen commitment to

solidarity with all creation.

May the simple meal prayer uttered at the beginning of Babette’s feast find some resonance in your lives:

May my food my body maintain,
May my body my soul sustain,
May my soul in deed and word,
Give thanks in all things to the Lord.

In thanksgiving to all students, graduates, facilitators, liaisons, faculty, staff, and friends of the Loyola Institute for Ministry for your ongoing prayers and encouragement, I wish you a blessed and happy new liturgical year, a holy season of Advent, and a joy-filled Christmas season!

Sincerely,

Tom Ryan



Dr. Tom Ryan, Director
Loyola Institute for Ministry
tfryan@loyno.edu

Arts and Faith for Advent 2014

Dr. Daniella Zsupan-Jerome continues her five-part online Advent reflection series for Loyola Press’ website this year by creating reflections for Cycle B. Users can watch a video commentary by Dr. Zsupan-Jerome about a work of art that is connected to the Sunday Scriptures for each Sunday of Advent and Christmas Day. [GO»](#)





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



Spring 2015 Calendar of Events

JANUARY

6th • Don Frampton, senior pastor at St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church, speaks at the First Tuesdays Lecture Series • Lunch, 12.15 pm, lecture 12.30 pm, Central • Lenex Hall, 130 Baronne St. • [GO»](#)

8th-10th • Gulf Coast Faith Formation Conference • Kenner, LA • [GO»](#)

- 9th • Tom Ryan, Ph.D., gives a presentation "Good News Adoration" (#107) • 11 a.m.-12 p.m. Central
- 9th • Daniella Zsupan-Jerome, Ph.D., gives a presentation "Christ the Perfect Communicator: Being Christ-Centered Communicators in the Digital Age" (#208) • 1:30-2:30 p.m. Central

23rd • Fr. Eduardo Scarel, O.Carm., offers a presentation "My Friend the Pope and His Perspective on Creation" • Webinar or, if you are in New Orleans, attend in person in

Miller Hall, Room 114 • 7 p.m. Central • [GO»](#)

24th • Fr. Eduardo Scarel, O.Carm., offers a workshop "My Friend the Pope and His Perspective on Creation" • Miller Hall, Room 112 • [GO»](#)

FEBRUARY

3rd • Martha Orphe, pastor at First Street Peck Wesley United Methodist Church, speaks at the First Tuesdays Lecture Series • Lunch, 12.15 pm, lecture 12.30 pm, Central • Lenex Hall, 130 Baronne St. • [GO»](#)

19th • Diana Macalintal offers a presentation "Prayer: Turning the Ordinary Into Extraordinary Moments of Grace" • Webinar • 8 p.m. Central • [GO»](#)

MARCH

3rd • Alexis Berk, rabbi at Touro Synagogue, speaks at the First Tuesdays Lecture Series • Lunch, 12.15 pm, lecture 12.30 pm, CDT • Lenex Hall, 130 Baronne

St. • [GO»](#)

5th • Br. Elliott Maloney, O.S.B., offers a presentation "Saint Paul: Master of the Spiritual Life 'In Christ'" • Webinar • 8 p.m. Central • [GO»](#)

APRIL

13th • Walter Pousson, Jr., offers a presentation "Between the Bible and the Blues" • Webinar • 8 p.m. Central • [GO»](#)

MAY

9th • 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»](#)

Visit the Loyola Calendar for a listing of all LIM and university events [GO»](#)