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First issued in November 2009, [Faculty & Administration News \(FAN\)](#) is a quarterly publication of [Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology \(ICSST\)](#). This newsletter highlights the most recent professional accomplishments and service activities of ICSST's faculty and administrators.

Click the hyperlinks to explore the work of our faculty and administrators.

Awards, Recognitions, and Grants

- ❖ According to a report published by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), [The Center for Diaconal Formation at ICSST was ranked first for enrollment](#) in permanent diaconate formation programs nationwide for the 2023-2024 academic year. The report provides a statistical overview of permanent diaconate formation programs in the United States and is based on annual studies conducted by CARA – a national, nonprofit, Georgetown University affiliated research center that conducts social scientific studies about the Catholic Church – each academic year since 1996-1997. According to the report, of the 1,245 candidates for permanent diaconate formation across the United States documented in 2023-2024, ICSST's Center for Diaconal Formation, under the leadership of **Deacon Andrew E. Saunders, M.A. '08**, enrolled the highest number of candidates (77) among 139 confirmed formation programs in the country. This marks the first time ICSST has held this top position. In recent years, the Center has seen an upward trend and increase in

enrollment numbers, with 93 candidates enrolled in the Fall 2024 semester. This is a new record for the Center, which has seen enrollment numbers more than double since its inception in 2010.

- ❖ Three ICSST faculty members were recognized at Seton Hall University's Faculty Convocation, on September 20, 2024. **Justin M. Anderson, Ph.D.**, Professor and Chair of Moral Theology, was honored by Seton Hall University for exceptional teaching, scholarship, and service in AY 2023-2024, earning a faculty merit award. **Jamie Boulding, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, was welcomed to the faculty. Dr. Boulding comes to ICSST with a background in Theology and Science. He holds a Ph.D. in the field from the University of Cambridge (Corpus Christi College, 2019), having written on "The Multiverse and Participatory Metaphysics," bringing Plato, St. Thomas Aquinas and Nicholas of Cusa into dialogue with modern cosmology. He subsequently published this work as a book. **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Chair of Systematic Theology, was recognized for having been promoted to the rank of Associate Professor, effective as of the beginning of the Fall 2024 semester.

- ❖ **Patrick R. Manning, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology, and Director of the Seton Hall University Center for Catholic Studies, with three Seton Hall colleagues (**David Opperbeck, Ph.D.**, **Brian Murray, J.D.**, and **Rabbi Alan Brill, Ph.D.**), has received from Seton Hall University's Office of the Provost \$30,000, to be spent over the next two fiscal years to found an Academy for Faith, Values, and the Rule of Law.

- ❖ **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology, as previously reported, with two colleagues from SHU's College of Arts & Sciences (**Jose Lopez, Ph.D.**, and **Sulie Chang, Ph.D.**), in AY 2022-2023, received from the Office of the Provost \$70,500, to be spent through FY 2025 to found an [Academy for Nature and Nurture: Interdisciplinary Approaches to Resilience](#). In October 2024, the Academy was awarded a two-year extension grant of \$24,000, to be spent through FY 2027 to continue efforts in interdisciplinary teaching, research, and service. Father Laracy, Dr. Lopez, and Dr. Chang are collaborating with **Mary Landriau, M.S.W., L.C.S.W.** (College of Arts & Sciences), on the work of this extension grant.

- ❖ As part of Seton Hall University's Mission Partners Program for academic year 2024-2025, **Ellen R. Scully, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Undergraduate Theology, is collaborating with **Erin Zoutendam, Ph.D.** (University CORE), to design and run a CORE III course titled *Contemplative Service*, which will be cross listed with THEO and possibly RELS and/or CAST. The course will include both experiential and service learning and will:
 - Enable students to see that the Catholic Intellectual Tradition includes a long history of thought about both contemplation and service and to understand the interrelationship and connection between the two.
 - Engage with social scientific research on the psychological benefits and/or dangers of varieties of contemplative practices and service activities.
 - Provide students with several different experiential and/or service options embedded in the course, each of which will provide a lived experience of one of the Catholic ways of connecting contemplation and service.

Dr. Scully and Dr. Zoutendam were awarded \$2,000 each for this project. Their proposal was approved for funding on October 17, 2024.

- ❖ Seton Hall University's Office of the Provost, in continuing its Idea Hall Initiative, which was created with the purpose of cross-divisional idea generation, announced in October 2024 its support of the 2024-2025 Idea Hall projects. Among these four projects, which not only demonstrate interdisciplinary collaboration but also hold the potential for significant impact on Seton Hall, its students, and its faculty, is The Seton Hall ICSST and SLP American-English Pronunciation Training Program. The Speech-Language Pathology Program in the School of Health and Medical Sciences received a two-year grant of \$30,000 to continue and enhance its work in ICSST's ESL/SSL Program. **Caryn Grabowski, M.S., CCC-SLP, BCS-S**, Chair and Program Director, and **Kathleen Nagle, Ph.D., CCC-SLP**, Associate Professor, both of the Speech-Language Pathology Department in the School of Health and Medical Sciences, are leading this project in collaboration with **Chandler S. Cohen**, Seminary's ESL/SSL Services Coordinator, and **Reverend Christopher M. Ciccarino, K.C.H.S., S.S.L. S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Seminary and Academic Studies, Interim Director of the Seminary Library, and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies.

Appointments

In addition to welcoming **Jamie Boulding, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, who began teaching for ICSST in the Fall 2024 semester and who is featured above in the "Awards, Recognitions, and Grants" section, from July through October 2024, ICSST has welcomed six administrative staff members to the team:

❖ **Reverend Monsignor Joseph R. Chapel, S.T.D.**, returned in Summer 2024 to ICSST. He had served at ICSST from 1998 until 2014, including time as Associate Professor of Moral Theology, mentor, spiritual director, confessor, Associate Dean, Co-Director of the Institute for Christian Spirituality, and Director of the Center for Diaconal Formation, all the while serving SHU in various capacities. Between 2014 and 2024, Monsignor Chapel had ministered as a spiritual director at the North American College in Rome, and then held two pastorates in the Archdiocese of Newark, first at Our Lady of Mercy Parish in Park Ridge, and then at St. Andrew Parish in Westwood. During his second pastorate, Monsignor Chapel took on the responsibility of directing the formation of permanent deacons in the Archdiocese of Newark, itself equivalent to another full-time task. Monsignor Chapel therefore retired from his pastorate on July 1, 2024, in order to administer our archdiocesan permanent diaconate formation program and returned to Immaculate Conception Seminary for residence, where he is also a part-time member of the Formation Faculty, serving as Associate Spiritual Director.

❖ **Reverend Dominic Ciriaco, D.Min.**, was appointed Director of ICSST's Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program. On September 3, 2024, Father Ciriaco began his work in this role, which allows ICSST to implement the \$1.25 million grant awarded to ICSST by the Lilly Endowment in Fall 2023 in connection with the Endowment's *Compelling Preaching* initiative, through the indispensable work of **Dianne M. Traflet, J.D. '88, S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Administration, and Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology. Father Ciriaco, who resides at Our Lady of Sorrows Parish in South Orange, NJ, holds a Doctor of Ministry degree in Preaching from the Aquinas Institute of Theology in St. Louis, MO. His dissertation focused on the interconnectedness between the

visual arts and preaching. Earning an M.Div. and an M.A. from ICSST and ordained for the Archdiocese of Newark in 1999, he served in archdiocesan parishes, joined the Oblates of Saint Francis de Sales for some years, and then returned to the Archdiocese. Joining the Sulpicians, he ministered in their U.S. seminaries, most recently as Rector of Theological College at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC (2020-2023), and in the teaching of Preaching and in formation during this past year at St. Mary's Seminary and University in Baltimore, MD.

❖ **Antonio Rios** began his role as Coordinator of Daily Operations of ICSST's Center for Diaconal Formation on September 3, 2024. He holds a bachelor's degree in business administration from Bayamon Central University, Puerto Rico. His work over 18 years, especially in the area of administering financial aid, has given him broad experience in Student Services. Antonio most recently worked at Caldwell University in Caldwell, NJ, and comes to ICSST with the highest recommendations. Since his arrival at ICSST, Antonio has been assisting our deacon candidates on their journey. He is fluent in English and Spanish, which is a great gift in the Church today, and this also brings the best service to ICSST's diaconate students of both the English and Spanish cohorts.

❖ **Katherine N. Lizzo, M.A.**, began on September 9, 2024, as ICSST's Coordinator of Student and Administration Support Services. She holds an M.A. from Fordham University in Religious Education with a concentration in Youth and Young Adult Ministry. Her last position having been at St. John Bosco Parish in Branford, CT, Katherine brings ministerial experience to her work at ICSST. She assists students with navigating course registration processes and other aspects of ICSST academic affairs, aiding ICSST's intellectual formation.

Katherine also provides administrative support for formation, including ICSST's spiritual direction program, and she assists ICSST administration broadly. In addition to her work in ICSST's administration wing, Katherine serves as ICSST's point person in the ministry of hospitality through her service at ICSST's reception desk.

❖ **Michael A. Santiago, M.A.**, joined the ICSST community on September 23, 2024, as Graduate Admissions Coordinator. Michael brings a strong background in Student Services and academic departments from the City University of New York's College of Staten Island, as also from other educational institutions. He holds an M.A. in English, with a concentration in Rhetoric Composition, from CUNY College of Staten Island. Michael has worked in various areas of secondary and post-secondary education since 2013. Whether it has been teaching and engaging students in the classroom or assisting in student services, Michael has held a steadfast commitment to making academic advancement more approachable to every student he encounters. Michael also shares with ICSST his gift of proficiency in Spanish. His presence enables ICSST to move forward in key areas, including enrollment.

❖ **Deacon Richard Ferreira, M.A., M.S.W.**, began his role as Director of ICSST's Center for Diaconal Formation on October 14, 2024. Ordained to the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Metuchen in 2022, Deacon Ferreira studied with the Metuchen Spanish-language cohort through ICSST's Center for Diaconal Formation. He is assigned to ministry as a deacon at St. Matthew the Apostle Church in Edison, NJ. Deacon Ferreira brings the gift of being bilingual to his ministry at ICSST. The principal work of this Metuchen deacon, however, was ministry in the Diocese of Trenton, where, for the past decade, he served as

program director, leading a staff of 11, with Catholic Charities in Burlington and Mercer counties for the benefit of homeless men and women. The impact of the mission is impressive: in 2023, for example, 36,000 children were fed, and 3,400 families received emergency shelter. Prior to that, since 1998, he served the poor in New York City through Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Helping Hands Unlimited, and other organizations. Deacon Ferreira served on the formation board for the most recent Metuchen diaconate candidate cohort. In addition to his Master of Arts in Theology from ICSST, he holds a Master of Science in Social Work from Columbia University.

Profound thanks are due to **Dianne M. Traflet, J.D. '88, S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Administration, and Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology, who supervised and led the hiring process through the Summer and into the Fall. This was an enormously time-consuming task, requiring painstaking attention to detail on the one hand and far-reaching vision on the other. Dr. Traflet did this even as she contributed immensely to the preparation for ICSST's recent reaccreditation visit of the Association of Theological Schools, among other important things. She also labored very hard with Deacon Andrew Saunders since last Winter on preparing for the transition in ICSST's Center for Diaconal Formation.

Reverend Christopher M. Ciccarino, K.C.H.S., S.S.L. S.T.D., Associate Dean for Seminary and Academic Studies, Interim Director of the Seminary Library, and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, and **Andrew M. Brenycz '99, M.L.I.S.**, Academic Resource Specialist, also are to be thanked for their very hard work behind the scenes with the transition. They performed numerous thankless tasks. Father Ciccarino, in the gap between Directors, enlisted professors and scheduled

classes, mostly off campus, across multiple diaconal cohorts. Both Father Ciccarino and Andrew also contributed significantly to our ATS Self-Study and visit.

Many contributed to the hospitality we strive to extend to the new members of our administrative staff. Among these ministers of hospitality are **Deborah A. Kurus**, Assistant to the Rector/Dean and Vice Rector; **Maria McIlvaine**, Coordinator of Events and Facilities Management; **Ewa Bracko, M.B.A.**, Administrator of Budgets and Financial Operations; **Michael F. Burt**, Senior Director of Seminary Advancement; and **Eilish R. Harrington '08**, Institutional Planning and Communications Analyst.

Publications

- ❖ **Reverend Monsignor C. Anthony Ziccardi, S.S.L, S.T.D.**, ICSST's Coordinator of Undergraduate Admissions and Retention, and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, published the following:
 - A book translation: [*A Little Guide to Spiritual Accompaniment: For Whom? For What?*](#) Totowa, NJ: Catholic Book Publishing Corporation, 2024. Translation from French into English of a book by Sr. Luisa Curreli, *Petit guide de l'accompagnement spirituel: Pour qui? Pour quoi?* Paris, France: Mame, 2020.
 - A book review of *La mediazione di Cristo per la salvezza: Modelli argomentativi Rm 10, 1-13*, by Fabrizio Jermini. *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 86, no. 4 (October 2024): 845-46.

Media Contribution

- ❖ **Reverend Monsignor Thomas G. Guarino, K.H.S., S.T.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology, was interviewed by Bill Kassel for episode 124 of the Michigan-based Catholic radio show *Free Expression*. [The interview](#), on the topic of the ecumenical initiative Evangelicals and Catholics Together, appeared on August 11, 2024.

Teaching Outside Seton Hall

- ❖ **Gregory Y. Glazov, D.Phil. (Oxon.)**, Professor and Chair of Biblical Studies, presented a two-part *Spotlight on the Scriptures* catechetical formation course for catechists and religion teachers of the Archdiocese of Newark: “Introduction to the Old Testament,” conducted online on October 21 and 24, 2024. Approximately 20 people participated in each session.

Special Event

- ❖ The Seton Hall University Core, Catholic Studies Program and Center, and Immaculate Conception Seminary School of Theology are co-sponsoring a *Scholars’ Forum in the Catholic Intellectual Tradition*, conducted online via Microsoft Teams. As part of this forum, **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology, discussed “The Witness of Perpetua and Felicity: Fundamental Theological Perspectives,” his contribution to the recently published book [The Passion Narratives of Saints Perpetua, Felicity, and Their Fellow Martyrs](#), edited by Nancy Enright (Professor of English and Director of the University CORE, Seton Hall University) and Francis J. Hunter (Latin and Classics teacher, Academy of the Holy Angels, Demarest, NJ). Approximately 15 people attended the

presentation on October 9, 2024. Additional information about the event can be found [here](#).

Mission and Service

- ❖ **Jamie Boulding, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, served as leader for the Summer seminar *Work, Meaning, and the Good Life*, for the Agathon Institute, Rochester, NY, in June 2024. Sixteen students participated in the seminar.

- ❖ **Reverend Mariusz Eugene R. Koch, C.F.R., M.Div., M.A.**, Spiritual Director:
 - Facilitated a retreat for women, sponsored by the Franciscan Sisters of the Renewal, at Loyola Retreat House, Morristown, NJ, on August 30, 2024. Father Koch celebrated Mass, delivered a talk on the Blessed Sacrament, and celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Seventy-two women attended.
 - Delivered a talk, “Doubt and Decision-Making,” for *Discerning God’s Voice in a Busy World*, a vocation discernment retreat sponsored by the Society of Divine Vocations, in Florham Park, NJ, on September 7, 2024. Father Koch also presided at a Holy Hour and Benediction and celebrated the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Approximately 30 people attended.
 - Served as confessor for a healing retreat at St. Francis Cathedral, Metuchen, NJ, on September 21, 2024.
 - Offered a reflection on “Redemptive Suffering,” online via Zoom, for a post-abortion healing Rosary group, on September 26, 2024.

- Preached a homily on “St. Theresa, Woman of Courage,” for the opening Mass of the celebration of the 100th anniversary of St. Theresa Parish, Linden, NJ. Approximately 300 people attended.

- ❖ **Dianne M. Traflet, J.D. '88, S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Graduate Studies and Administration, and Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology, delivered a talk, “Prayer and Listening to God,” for *Discerning God's Voice in a Busy World*, a vocation discernment retreat sponsored by the Society of Divine Vocations, in Florham Park, NJ, on September 7, 2024. Approximately 30 people attended.

- ❖ **Patrick R. Manning, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology, and Director of the Seton Hall University Center for Catholic Studies, at the Seton Hall University Board of Regents retreat, held at SHU, South Orange, NJ, on September 12, 2024, co-presented a talk with **Catherine O'Donnell, Ph.D.**, a religious history scholar at Arizona State University, and author of *St. Elizabeth Ann Seton: American Saint* (2018). The talk focused on how Mother Seton led with both magnanimity and humility, and on how she strove for great things and overcame selfishness to serve God and others. The Regents reflected on how she can assist the University by example and intercession to always be sustained in excellence and aligned in mission. She continues to demonstrate that, with faith and determination, each of us can overcome obstacles to achieve great things.

- ❖ **Reverend Jared J. Brogan, S.T.L.**, Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology, presented a lecture on “The ‘Great’ Eucharistic Prayer,” for the *Three Things Talks* Lecture Series at St. John's University, Queens, NY, on September 14, 2024. Members of the University

community, as well as the Sunday worship community at the University church, were present. Approximately 50 people attended.

❖ **John D. Nowik, M.M.**, Director of Music, Organist, and Adjunct Professor of Liturgy and Music, conducted two demonstration sessions, one for each section of the Seton Hall University Department of Music course MUHI 1102: *Music and Civilizations* taught by Dr. Dena Levine. The sessions were conducted in Immaculate Conception Seminary’s Chapel of Christ the Good Shepherd on September 24 and 25, 2024. Students in this course were studying Baroque music, specifically the structure of the fugue. Professor Nowik demonstrated for the students two pieces by Johann Sebastian Bach – the “Little” Fugue in G Minor and the famous Toccata and Fugue in D Minor. He provided an explanation of the basic concepts of how a pipe organ works and its history. He then explained the form of a fugue and what the students would listen for in the example played for the class. A total of approximately 70 students attended.

❖ **Reverend Douglas J. Milewski, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor of Undergraduate Theology, presented a series of five talks on the Conversion of St. Monica, to the Dominican Sisters of Our Lady of the Rosary Monastery, Summit, NJ, on October 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, 2024. Approximately 24 Sisters attended each talk.

❖ **Reverend Dominic Ciriaco, D.Min.**, Director of ICSST’s Preaching as Hospitality Formation Program:

- Delivered a presentation and facilitated a discussion on the topic “Preaching During a Presidential Election,” at the Archdiocesan Center, Newark, NJ, on October 22, 2024.

- This was part of the program for continuing formation of priests. Approximately 25 priests attended.
- Preached an invited homily on the newly beatified Carmelite, Anne of Jesus (Assistant to St. Teresa of Avila), at the cloistered Carmelite Monastery, Flemington, NJ, on October 29, 2024. **Most Reverend Manuel A. Cruz, D.D.**, Auxiliary Bishop of Newark, presided at the Mass. Sixteen people attended.

 - ❖ **Reverend Monsignor C. Anthony Ziccardi, S.S.L, S.T.D.**, ICSST's Coordinator of Undergraduate Admissions and Retention, and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, as *Censor Librorum*, in October 2024, reviewed and issued *nihil obstat* for *Padre Pio's Espresso Companion – Miracles* (Italian Feasts).

 - ❖ At Seton Hall University's Mass for the Solemnity of All Saints, on November 1, 2024, **Reverend Christopher M. Ciccarino, K.C.H.S., S.S.L. S.T.D.**, Associate Dean for Seminary and Academic Studies, Interim Director of the Seminary Library, and Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, served as principal celebrant, and **Reverend Paweł Tomczyk, Ph.D.**, Director of Pastoral Formation, and Assistant Professor of Moral Theology, served as homilist.

Conferences, Meetings, and Panel Discussions

❖ **Reverend Monsignor Gerard H. McCarren, S.T.D.**, Rector/Dean, and Associate

Professor of Systematic Theology:

- Participated online in sessions of the National Newman Conference, *Newman, Man of Letters: His Literary Power*, sponsored by The Saint John Henry Newman Association and held at The University of Dallas, Irving, TX, from July 25 to 27, 2024.
- As a board member emeritus, participated online in the Board of Directors meeting of The Saint John Henry Newman Association, held at The University of Dallas, Irving, TX, on July 25, 2024.
- Participated in the National Association of Catholic Theological Schools (NACTS) annual conference, in Schaumburg, IL, from October 3 to 5, 2024, including October 3 pre-conference conversations sponsored by the Association of Theological Schools. The theme of this year's conference was *Handling the Handoffs: Transitions through the Stages of Formation*. Approximately 60 rectors, vice-rectors, academic deans, and pastoral field education directors attended.

❖ **Jamie Boulding, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, served as moderator

of the panel *Are We Friends or Enemies?*, at the conference [*Beyond the Impasse: Theological Perspectives on DEI*](#), held at Princeton University, Princeton, NJ, from October 25 to 26, 2024. Approximately 100 people attended the panel discussion.

❖ **Timothy P. Fortin, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Philosophical Theology,

presented a paper, "Praise of the Glory of the Father: the Meaning of Masculinity in Reason and Revelation," at the conference [*Man and Woman in the Order of Creation*](#), sponsored by

Franciscan University of Steubenville's Office of the President and Department of Theology and The Ethics and Public Policy Center, Washington, DC. The conference was held at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Steubenville, OH, from October 24 to 26, 2024. Dr. Fortin presented his paper on October 26, 2024, to an audience of approximately 150 people who attended in person and more who attended via livestream.

Other Scholarly and Professional Activity

- ❖ **Reverend Monsignor Thomas G. Guarino, K.H.S., S.T.D.**, Professor Emeritus of Systematic Theology, co-chaired a meeting of the bilateral ecumenical initiative Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT), in New York City, on December 4, 2023. The topic under discussion was “The Nature of the Church.”

- ❖ **Reverend Paweł Tomczyk, Ph.D.**, Director of Pastoral Formation, and Assistant Professor of Moral Theology, completed a month-long stay in Summer 2024 in Salamanca, Spain, to prepare a course, *La Moral Fundamental*, for the Spanish-speaking candidates in ICSST's permanent diaconate program. The course is being held on Tuesday nights in the Fall 2024 semester.

- ❖ **Reverend Joseph R. Laracy, S.T.D.**, Associate Professor and Chair of Systematic Theology:
 - On September 12, 2024, began service as an editorial review board member for the journal [*Advances in Knowledge-Based Systems, Data Science, and Cybersecurity*](#).
 - Served as an external examiner for a Pontifex University Th.D. dissertation defense, on September 27, 2024.

- Peer reviewed a book submission to Word on Fire Academic, Bishop Barron's new scholarly press, on October 10, 2024.