

Installation of Paul D. Murray as one of the new Ecumenical Canons for Durham Cathedral



The Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral have recently had the opportunity to revise the Cathedral's Constitution and Statutes following a new Cathedrals Measure being passed by the General Synod and then Parliament, making it possible for up to six Ecumenical Canons to be appointed.

Paul Murray was installed as one of the first three such Ecumenical Canons on Sunday 14 January at a service in Durham Cathedral.

The role of the Ecumenical Canons is for the Bishop of Durham and the Dean and Chapter of Durham Cathedral to recognise significant ecumenical friends and thereby celebrate the place of all the churches across the region in Christian witness, ministry, and mission.

With that, it is also for the canons to offer guidance from the perspective of their own traditions on the place and role of the Cathedral as a herald of the good news of Jesus Christ and as a place of welcome, worship, witness, and prayer, for all Christians and other interested people of the region and well beyond.

The invitation from Bishop Paul Butler, the Bishop of Durham, came in recognition of all Paul has given to the life of the Catholic Church, and to the wider life of God's church in this region, and beyond as Professor of Systematic Theology and founding Director of the Centre for the Catholic Studies. Particular mention was made of the contribution he has made to the ecumenical life of the church across the traditions through his pioneering work in Receptive Ecumenism.

Paul says, 'It was with very great surprise and immense joy that I received the invitation inviting me to become one of the new Ecumenical Canons for Durham Cathedral, and I was delighted to accept. The Cathedral occupies a treasured place in my life and affections, and I am deeply moved and profoundly appreciative of this honour.'

You can find out more about Paul's work on Receptive Ecumenism at:

<http://tinyurl.com/ccs-publications>

<http://tinyurl.com/receptive-ecumenism-TEL>

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Watch a video about the course with Karen Kilby and Anna Rowlands talking about the programme's scope, modules and who the programme is intended for at shorturl.at/uHMR9, and find full details of the programme at shorturl.at/jvLW7.

Any questions? Please contact Theresa Phillips, the CCS Senior Administrator: theresa.phillips@durham.ac.uk.

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Defiant Minds, Unruly Bodies: Disability Theology During and After the Holocaust - a new publication from Victoria Briggs

Inspired by some chance discoveries in a Yiddish-language archive in New York, and then in a Rwandan town that was made regionally famous by reported apparitions of Mary, my original postdoctoral project would have examined the popular theologies and devotional practices that emerge in the aftermath of genocide.

The Covid-19 pandemic forced me to pause that plan. Instead, I found myself thinking about the creative theologies of disability that seemed to glimmer in the few stories I knew of victims of Aktion-T4 (the Nazi mass murder of disabled people), and about the light these theologies might cast on the ethical and political questions raised by what historians have termed “the century of genocide”.

This new focus was partly nurtured by the pandemic, when debates around human precarity, vulnerability, and the worth of disabled lives were the stuff of daily news; but mostly by my own experience of disabled community, where ‘McGyvering’ is a commonly used verb and people regularly have to adapt and tweak their plans with seemingly boundless creativity. I was also assisted by the curiosity of students in my class on post-Holocaust theology in an age of decolonisation, who asked a lot of thought-provoking questions that shaped the project.

The result was a book with three main strands. Post-Holocaust theology is chiefly preoccupied with theodicy, and central to that is the extent and nature of divine power. Drawing on testimonies from deaf and blind victims, the first strand looks at how attentiveness to different sensory experiences might foster a more nuanced discussion that no longer has power as its lodestone.



The second explores the significant role of art and music in disabled people to Aktion-T4, and the theological dimensions of the interrelationship between creativity and care.

The final strand addresses the ethical challenge of writing history without memory. Its focus is on the people with profound intellectual disabilities, many of whom will have been unable to write or speak, and who left no physical traces behind them beyond the cold clinical records labelled with the euphemistic “Transferred to another hospital”. How do we respond to that haunting absence, and might it hold within it the possibility of new theologies of justice and reconciliation?

This has been a fascinating but challenging book to write, especially in the way it required me to engage meaningfully with both Jewish and Christian theologies without falling into syncretism or papering over antisemitism in the churches. I am very grateful to the La Retraite sisters for funding my work and for their prayerful support, and to the Centre for Catholic Studies and the wider department for providing such a welcoming intellectual home.

Dr Victoria Briggs - *La Retraite Fellow in Lived Theology, Trauma, and Reconciliation*

Editor’s note: Details of the book will be circulated by the CCS when it is published.

Kjetil Kringlebotten: Liturgy, Theurgy, and Active Participation



Kjetil Kringlebotten was a CCS PhD student from 2018-2021. His recently published thesis, *Liturgy, Theurgy, and Active Participation: On Theurgic Participation in God*, explores the nature of liturgical participation, attempting to provide it with a metaphysical grounding.

The book argues that ‘active participation’ in the liturgy must be understood principally as our participation in God’s act, particularly in the act of Christ, and only secondarily as our ritual involvement.

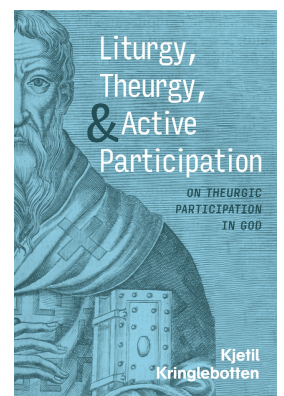
Utilising Neoplatonist philosophy, and engaging such diverse theologians as Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, Thomas Aquinas, Joseph Ratzinger, and Catherine Pickstock, Kringlebotten proposes that this should be understood in terms of theurgy, which is the human participation in divine action, manifesting for us particularly in the liturgy and finding its consummation in the incarnation of Christ.

Without the incarnation all acts will remain extrinsic and imposed but acts can become real and intrinsic precisely because the incarnation makes possible true union with the divine, a metaphysical union-in-distinction, without confusion, because this union is not extrinsic. Through union with Christ, as the one common focus of the divine-human relation, we can have true union with God and may offer true worship.

In order to make sense of active participation, then, we need to understand theology in theurgic terms, where theurgy is understood not as a mechanical ‘coercion’ of God but as a participation in His act, in creation and through Christ as the true theurgist, the ‘master theurgist’ whose work transforms our act and the liturgy.

This book should be interesting not only for students and scholars of philosophical theology or dogmatics but also for those engaging with practical theology, in particular liturgics.

Liturgy, Theurgy, and Active Participation: On Theurgic Participation in God is published by Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2023



New Post-doctoral Researcher in the History of Catholicism

The CCS is delighted to welcome Rev. Dr Benjamin Johnson as a new post-doctoral member of the History of Catholicism research cluster. Rev Dr Johnson is a member of the Capuchin Province of Australia and a Lecturer in Theology at Notre Dame University Australia.

The project will be a collaboration between the CCS and Br Ben's home university, with Dr James Kelly acting as Principal Investigator on the Durham side, and Dr Shaun Blanchard for Notre Dame University Australia.

The project is entitled 'The Theology and Spirituality of the Early Modern Capuchins', and will investigate the theological impulses of the early Capuchins. Founded in the sixteenth century, the Order of the Friars Minor Capuchin, after initial controversies, quickly became a vital part of the global Catholic Reformation.

It has become a general maxim of scholars to say that the Capuchins had a particular reverence for the teachings of St Bonaventure (especially his mystical theological writings), yet this appears to be an oft-repeated tradition rather than based on modern scholarly analysis.

A particular facet of this project will consider the early modern Capuchin relationship with the works of Bonaventure, investigating how and why they engaged with his works. Special attention will be paid to how this affected the sacramental theology of Capuchins in the Catholic Reformation.

As such, the project will break new ground, recovering the theological impulses behind one of the most significant new congregations of religious in the early modern period, potentially touching on areas as diverse as globalization, adaptation and inculturation within the Capuchin missions. It will also add to a recent scholarly trend to rediscover the innovation in early modern Catholic theology.

The project will result in a book-length study.

'The Franciscan Tradition: Retrieval And Innovation.'

The Second International Franciscan Studies Conference

The second international Franciscan studies conference organised by Durham University from the **12 - 14 March 2024** will focus on the theme of retrieval and innovation in the Franciscan tradition.

2023 marked two significant Franciscan anniversaries – the 800th anniversary of the inauguration of the Regula Bullata (the Rule of St Francis properly so-called) and the 150th anniversary of the foundation of the English Capuchin province – while 2024 will see several others, including the 800-year anniversaries of St Francis receiving the stigmata and the first Franciscans' arrival in England, and the 750th anniversary of the death of St Bonaventure.

The aim of this conference is to explore the riches and diversity of the Franciscan tradition in both theological and historical terms, and its significance for the world today.

The conference will look at Franciscan understandings and expressions of 'retrieval' as the recuperation of ideas that may have been lost throughout the centuries but that remain important, and 'innovation' in terms of drawing on aspects of the tradition to address changing contexts and the relationship between the two.

The conference also aims to highlight the distinctive nature of the Franciscan theological, philosophical, and spiritual tradition, and its contemporary significance in relation to a broad variety of themes.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION

Standard Conference Package, to include conference fee, 4 refreshments, 2 lunches, 1 dinner, and 1 conference dinner - £190 per person.

Reduced Rate conference package (for students), to include reduced conference fee, 4 refreshments, 2 lunches, 1 dinner, and 1 conference dinner - £160 per person.

Please register for the conference at:
<http://tinyurl.com/ccs-franciscan-2024>

Registration closes on 18 February 2024.

If you have any queries about the conference please contact the Conference Secretary, Dr Brian Casey at brian.j.casey@durham.ac.uk.



Confirmed speakers include:

- Margaret Carney, OSF (St Bonaventure University)
- Johannes Freyer, OFM (University of San Diego)
- Mary Beth Ingham, CSJ (Loyola University Maryland)
- John McCafferty (University College Dublin)
- William Short, OFM (University of San Diego, and Collegium Sancti Bonaventurae, Rome)
- Giuseppe Buffon, OFM (Pontifical Antonianum University)

Sponsors:

- Capuchin Franciscans of Great Britain
- Capuchin Franciscans of Ireland
- Capuchin Franciscans of Australia
- Capuchin Province of St. Augustine
- The Community of St Francis
- The Franciscan Missionaries of the Divine Motherhood
- Society of St Francis

The programme is available to view at:
<http://tinyurl.com/ccs-franciscan-programme>

12 - 14 March 2024
Marriott Durham Royal County Hotel
and
St Cuthbert's Church, Old Elvet

Events: Epiphany Term 2024

Catholic Theology Research Seminars*

Thur 18 Jan 5pm GMT	Marc Roscoe Loustau (Managing Editor, Journal of Global Catholicism) <i>Studying Theology Ethnographically: Reflections on Fieldwork with Hungarian Catholic Intellectuals in Contemporary Romania</i>	Online
Thur 8 Feb 5pm GMT	Stefan Walser (Junior professor of fundamental theology and Christian identities, University of Bonn) <i>So what... Religious Indifference as a Fundamental Theological Challenge</i>	In-person, Sem Rm B, Abbey House
Thur 14 Mar 5pm GMT	Tina Beattie (Professor Emerita of Catholic Studies, University of Roehampton) <i>Language, desire and creation in the context of Laudato Si</i>	In-person, Sem Rm B, Abbey House and Online

International Scholars for the History of Women Religious Association*

Wed 31 Jan 12pm GMT	Annalaura Turiano (Université Gustave Eiffel, France) <i>Italian missionaries in Egypt and Syria (1890 – 1940): gender, education and the making of an informal empire</i>	Online
Wed 28 Feb 2pm GMT	James Kelly (Durham University) and John McCafferty (University College Dublin, Ireland) <i>Female religious in the Oxford History of British and Irish Catholicism, c. 1530 to the present day</i>	Online
Wed 13 Mar 12pm GMT	Giacomo Ghedini (Sciences Po Paris, France) <i>From slaves to nuns: stories of Afro-European women in the nineteenth century</i>	Online
Wed 3 Apr 2pm BST (GMT+1)	Kathleen Sprows Cummings (University of Notre Dame, USA) <i>Questing: vocation and the transnational migration of Catholic Sisters, (19th c.)</i>	Online
Wed 17 Apr 12pm BST (GMT+1)	Anne Jusseaume (Université d'Artois, France) <i>The care of the poor: female vocation in nineteenth-century Paris</i>	Online

Conferences

12 - 14 Mar 2024

The Franciscan Tradition: Retrieval and Innovation

The aim of this conference is to explore the riches and diversity of the Franciscan tradition in both theological and historical terms, and its significance for the world today. It will look at Franciscan understandings and expressions of 'retrieval' as the recuperation of ideas that may have been lost throughout the centuries but that remain important, and 'innovation' in terms of drawing on aspects of the tradition to address changing contexts and the relationship between the two. It also aims to highlight the distinctive nature of the Franciscan theological, philosophical, and spiritual tradition, and its contemporary significance in relation to a broad variety of themes.

15 - 16 Jul 2024

Early Career and Postgraduate Conference

This interdisciplinary conference will focus on:

- Catholic Theology and Catholic Studies (Day One)
- Theology & Religious Studies, the global and the local (Day Two)

The Call for Papers will be released soon, along with details about registration for this event. We will welcome submissions from postgraduate students and other early career scholars interested in theology and religion from multiple disciplines in the humanities and the social sciences.

* Registration for CTRS seminars, book launches, and ISHWRA seminars opens three weeks in advance at <https://centreforcatholicstudies.eventbrite.com>

To receive details of our events to your inbox, please register for the CCS mailing list at <https://tinyurl.com/ccsmailinglist>