



Λόγος

LOGOS



VOLUME 5, NUMBER 1 • Fall 2010

A MEDITATION: *Days of Awe*



When I was a sophomore in college I lived in an eight-man suite. We hailed from several states, and counted among us several aspiring writers and lawyers, a folk singer and entrepreneur, and a future diplomat. Half of us were Catholic and half of us Jewish.

The day we moved in was unseasonably hot. We trudged up and down the stairs lugging books, clothes, and stereos, and as the day wore on and sweat trickled down our backs and beaded on our brows, our initial enthusiasm gave way to fatigue. It took Mr. Friedman, the father of my roommate Zeev and a man of seemingly boundless energy, to urge us on: "Come, boys, just a little more and we're done!"

At one point I was helping Mr. Friedman store Zeev's empty boxes on the top shelf of a closet. We stood side by side, balanced on our toes with arms upstretched and fingers splayed wide, cuing one

another: "a little to the left", "up", "watch that one", "that's it, good." It was then that I noticed the bluish-black numbers on his left forearm.

I knew what they were. A history major, I knew that the Nazis tattooed Jewish prisoners in the concentration camps with serial numbers. These were used to identify them and to demean them, reducing them, as it were, to chattel. But although I knew, I said nothing. I told myself that I didn't want to draw attention to them and embarrass him, or remind him of the horror of what he had been through. But in fact my silence was meant to protect me. I felt awkward and unsure, embarrassed by my innocence and the privileged, protected life I had lived. I also felt very young and not a little in awe of the man.

Others had more courage than I did.

On Sunday, July 26, 1942, the Dutch bishops published a pastoral letter condemning the Nazis' persecution of the Jews and calling for an end to their internment and deportation. The letter was



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read from every Catholic pulpit in the occupied Netherlands, and similar letters were read in Protestant churches. It was an undeniably courageous act but one fraught with peril. Indeed, it would prove especially perilous for those it was meant to defend.

One week later the Nazis retaliated. They arrested hundreds of Catholic Jews and interned them at Westerbork, a transit camp in the northeastern part of the country. Several days later, more than a hundred of them were herded into railway cars and transported to Auschwitz. Others would follow. On arrival most were selected for extermination and sent immediately to the gas chambers. Since the crematoria were not yet fully operative, their bodies were either buried in unmarked mass graves or burned in an open pit.

The oldest victim was 60, the youngest an infant, and in some instances whole families perished. Most were converts to the Christian faith, although some were children of converts and others were lifelong Catholics of Jewish ancestry. One victim, the philosopher and Carmelite nun Edith Stein, was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1998.

Dominicans played only a minor role in these fateful events but it was not a role without significance. For among the many imprisoned at Westerbork were two Dominicans, Sr. Judith Mendes Da Costa, O.P. and Dr. Lisamaria Meirowsky, a member of the Third Order. Their letters from Westerbork give us a glimpse of life in the camp and, more importantly, of the inner life of the prisoners.

Sr. Judith was a member of the Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine of Siena of Voorschoten and the descendent of Portuguese Jews who had settled in Amsterdam. In her letters and a journal, she notes that there were several other religious among the prisoners and that two of them, the Lob brothers, were priests. Although they were forbidden to say Mass or to preach, the two brothers would slowly walk about the camp hearing the confessions of anyone who approached them. For their part, Sr. Judith

and the other sisters tried to maintain a semblance of religious life and busied themselves caring for their fellow prisoners.

Dr. Meirowsky was a convert and a pediatrician. Denied employment in Germany under the anti-Jewish laws, she left first for Rome, where she was received into the Order, and then for Utrecht to work with Jewish refugees. Forced into hiding by the German invasion of the Netherlands, she took refuge in a Cistercian monastery where she remained until her arrest.

In her last letter to her Dominican confessor, Lisamaria describes her plight from the perspective of grace: “Rejoice with me: I go with courage, confidence and joy—as do the religious who go with me. We are permitted to bear witness to Jesus, and with our bishops we are allowed to bear witness to the truth.” Further on, she writes in a more personal vein: “In case I do not survive, would you be so kind as to write my beloved parents and brothers later and tell them that the sacrifice of my life was for them?”

Like Edith Stein, Lisamaria Meirowsky had a deep sense that although she had become a Catholic she remained a Jew. Her suffering, united as it was to that of Christ, was also the suffering of a Jew on behalf of the Jews. Her language in this regard is telling: “I accept in advance everything that may still come by way of suffering, and ... I offer it as a holocaust of love to the Most Holy Trinity.”¹ A holocaust within the Holocaust; unmerited suffering become meritorious; and a Jew’s self-offering to the Christian Trinity on behalf of her Jewish family.

After this there is only silence: no word from Auschwitz, no record of their arrival, no hint of their final thoughts and prayers. There is only the knowledge of the fate they shared with millions of others.

Little of Westerbork remains. But a monument erected in its place is striking. It consists of a single length of rail track, evocative of the trains that took tens of thousands east to their death. One end of the track is bent, broken and twisted—as if by a struggle to wrest it from its appointed



NEWS AND UPDATES

destination. It rises above the earth, arcs, and points to the sky. Or is it to heaven?

This year the Catholic feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross falls in the midst of the Jewish High Holy Days, or Days of Awe: Rosh HaShanah, and Yom Kippur.² Two great faiths, sharing an unblinking recognition of the human capacity for sin and evil, and yet affirming—year after year, down through the centuries—that God does not abandon, does not desert or betray or withhold his mercy, but rather redeems, restores and makes all things new.

As we raise our eyes from earth to heaven, and our hearts and voices in prayer, we lift up those whose memory we hold sacred. Those like Mr. Friedman who urge us on when our spirits flag and there is work yet to be done: God's work—the work of justice and mercy, compassion for the living and comfort for the dying, the proclamation of the truth, and yes, the forgiveness of our enemies.

Fr. Joseph J. Guido, O.P.
Vice President for Mission and Ministry

¹ Hamans, P. (2010). *Edith Stein and Companions on the Way to Auschwitz*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, p.188-189.

² The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is celebrated on September 14, Rosh HaShanah the evening of September 8 to September 10, and Yom Kippur the evening of September 17 to September 18.

An Expanded LOGOS

As you will note with this issue, *LOGOS* now includes two reflective essays in addition to news and updates about people and activities on campus. These are intended to provide a thoughtful perspective on issues affecting the spiritual life of the College and broader community, and to explore in rather more depth the reasons we are undertaking a given initiative. In this issue, Fr. Gabriel Pivarnik, O.P., the new Director of the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies, reflects on the Catholic notion of the common good and how it will guide the programs offered by the Center this year. Fr. James Cuddy, O.P., Chaplain and Director of Campus Ministry, explores both the concept of evangelization and the pressing need to provide an outreach to students at every level of commitment to faith. In the future we hope to provide the text for selected lectures given under the auspices of the Center and Campus Ministry.

Fr. Philip A. Smith, O.P. Student Fellowships

Thanks to the generosity of Katherine Tellier Murray '83G and her husband Thomas Murray of Salem, Mass., and the financial wizardry of Fr. Kevin D. Robb, O.P., Associate Vice President, five students received Fr. Philip A. Smith, O.P. Student Fellowships for summer 2010.

Patricia Carroll '11 of Merrick, N.Y., and Julia Tully '12, of Ardmore, PA, both spent almost five weeks with the Dominican Friars in Kisumu, Kenya, at St. Martin de Porres Dominican Community. While experiencing Dominican life with the Friars, they spent the greater portion of their time assisting at Our Lady of Grace School, founded by the late Rev. Thomas R. Heath, O.P. and staffed by Dominican Sisters from the Philippines. The school serves needy and sometimes disabled orphans.

Francesca Genova '11, of Honeoye, NY, spent eight weeks with the English Dominicans at Blackfriars' Hall in Oxford, England, where she continued her research into the "new atheism" now pervasive in Europe and North America.



Francesca delved into the matter through interviews with leading English thinkers and directed readings, under the watchful eye of Francis Davis, a Fellow of Blackfriars' Hall, Director of its Las Casas Institute on Ethics, Human Rights, and Social Justice, and the faith advisor to the Communities Secretary of Her Majesty's Government.

Hollis Dunlop '12 of Marion, Mass., spent eight weeks at the Cultural Center of Batahola Norte on the western side of Managua, Nicaragua. This center, founded by a Dominican Friar and Sister, serves as a school and community center for the local population. Hollis was welcomed into the heart of a local family, taught English as a second language, and worked with younger students in the Story Hour program.

Elizabeth (Lia) Santilli '11 of Cranston, R.I., spent six weeks in Sydney, Australia, living with a local family on the city's outskirts. She participated in the Sydney Conference on Embracing the New Evangelization (SCENE), sponsored by the local archdiocese, and engaged in a variety of activities through the University of Sydney's Catholic Chaplaincy (staffed by Dominican Friars and Sisters) and at the Sydney campus of the University of Notre Dame - Australia.

Angell Foundation Grant for Faith in the City

Campus Ministry received a \$100,000, two-year grant from the David '69 and Lynn Angell Foundation for the multi-faceted *Faith in the City* program. The first two elements of the program are a Habitat for Humanity alternative spring break, which involves more than 150 students and some 12 sites annually, and the annual NOLA winter immersion trip to serve the needy of New Orleans.

The third element is the new Faith/Works immersion experience for 25 incoming freshmen, which will begin in August 2011. This several-day program will introduce participants to the City of Providence; the needs of its poor, hungry, unemployed, and homeless citizens; and to the charitable and social justice ministries sponsored by

the Diocese of Providence and Campus Ministry. We hope that veterans of the program will become a core group of student leaders within Campus Ministry, committed to service and to sharing their faith with other students.

Special thanks go to Jacqueline Nowell, director of corporate/foundation relations in the Office of Institutional Advancement, and Meghan Griffiths, campus minister for community service and social justice (2007-2010), who together developed the successful grant proposal.

Sacred Signs and Symbols: The Harkins Hall Renovations

This summer saw the completion of the first of three stages in the renovation of Harkins Hall. Under the guidance of Fr. Kevin D. Robb, O.P., Associate Vice President, and with the able assistance of Mark Rapoza, Assistant Vice President for Capital Projects and Facilities Planning, more than a hundred religious signs and symbols were placed throughout the building. These include hand carved crucifixes for offices and reception areas, the restoration and burnishing of historic paintings, sculpture and panels, and the placement of fine art reproductions of religious paintings and sculpture by Fra Angelico, Cimabue, Botticelli, Caravaggio, Raphael and others. In addition, we hung high-resolution reproductions of the stained glass windows in St. Dominic Chapel, which establishes an aesthetic and conceptual link between the work undertaken in Harkins and the faith and prayer represented by St. Dominic's. The entrance to the Oratory on the first floor of Harkins Hall has also been enhanced and set off as a distinctively sacred space.

Strategic Planning

We are in the process of revising the strategic plan for the division of Mission and Ministry, as our initial strategic plan, *Cor ad cor loquitor: Heart Speaking to Heart*, will expire in June 2011. In preparation for doing so, over the course of the next several months we will be canvassing a broad cross section of the College community to gain an understanding of how our efforts have been received to



date; what the religious needs and aspirations of the College community are moving forward; and the kinds of resources we will need to meet them. We will also be reviewing relevant scholarly research and best practices at peer institutions. If you have an opinion about what we are doing well or poorly, or the religious needs of the College community that we have yet to address, please feel free to contact Fr. Joseph J. Guido, O.P., Vice President, at 401-865-2687 or jguido@providence.edu.

Ave atque vale

Summer is traditionally a time of transition at the College and this summer was no exception. We are very happy to welcome Richard Lumley to the staff of Campus Ministry as a campus minister with primary responsibility for service, justice and immersion programs. A native of Kansas and a graduate of both Santa Clara University and the Jesuit School of Theology in Berkeley, Calif., Richard was most recently director of service immersion experiences at Santa Clara, where he organized both domestic and international service trips for students. He is married to Tessa, who is beginning a doctoral program in veterinary medicine at Tufts University.

We are also pleased that Emily Foster of the Class of 2013 has agreed to serve as the student representative on the Committee for Catholic and Dominican Mission of the Board of Trustees. A native of Wrentham, Mass., and a psychology major with a minor in Spanish, Emily is a member of the Liberal Arts Honors Program, a Pastoral Council member, and a member of numerous student organizations including Board of Programmers, Mock Trial, Admissions Ambassadors, and PC Pals.

As noted above, Fr. Gabriel Pivarnik, O.P. is the new Director of the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies. A graduate of the College of William and Mary, and a diocesan seminarian before entering the Dominicans, Fr. Pivarnik holds advanced degrees in theology from the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception and a doctorate in theology from the Catholic University of America. He is an assistant professor of

theology, a member of the Faculty Senate and its former parliamentarian, and both a popular teacher with students and a valued faculty colleague.

At the same time we bid a sad farewell to Meghan Griffiths and Fr. Thomas McGonigle, O.P. For the last three years Meg has been an invaluable member of the Campus Ministry team and has greatly expanded both the range and the quality of the service, justice, and immersion programs that we have been able to offer students. She has worked hard and successfully to build bridges between Campus Ministry and various offices on campus and with agencies in the larger community, and has earned the respect and affection of all. We will miss her keen intelligence, her wit and integrity, and her many pastoral gifts. At the same time we are happy for her as she begins a graduate program in pastoral ministry at Boston College.

Fr. McGonigle served the College long and well as a member of the Department of History, as Academic Vice President, and as the founding Director of the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies. In the latter role he coordinated the various programs and lectures sponsored by the Center, and developed a four-year cycle of lectures on Dominican history and spirituality. A thoughtful, gentle, and generous man and priest, he gave of his time and wisdom to many students and faculty colleagues who sought his counsel. He was also a most generous donor to the Center, donating his personal library of more than a thousand volumes of theology, philosophy, history and art with a special emphasis on Dominican themes. We wish him Godspeed and every blessing as he returns to the Province of St. Albert the Great and to the service of his brother Dominicans.



REFLECTIONS

Providence College and the Common Good

Fr. Gabriel Pivarnik, O.P.

Director of the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies

Every year in the last semester of the Development of Western Civilization course, inevitably one question surfaces: what is the common good? The impetus for such a question can be as varied as the hundred or more students packed into the lecture hall in Moore. For some it may arise as students are forced to deal with their first papal encyclical, Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*. For others, it might stem from a reaction to a line in *Nietzsche's Beyond Good and Evil* when he refers to anything that is *common* as having little to no value. For still others, the identification of the *common* good might come from an analysis of the mad dash across Africa and Asia for natural resources, from the growing women's movement in Europe and in the States at the end of the nineteenth century, or from an intense inner reaction to the reality of war in the twentieth century. Yet whatever the impetus or the perspective brought to bear, a debate seems to emerge and the question always surfaces. What is the common good?

In some ways, the answer demands a careful Dominican distinction—not everyone means the same thing when they use the phrase, *the common good*. The temptation is to relegate the notion of the common good to a “least common denominator” scenario so that what is good for the greatest number of people becomes what is least in value. This is precisely Nietzsche's lament. If the common good is defined only by what can be held at this moment by the vast majority of peoples, then it has been consigned to nothing more than polling data. Or, in other circles, the concept can be construed as what is good for society as a whole—that what is good for the corporate entity is more significant than any individual concern. This approach fueled a communist regime's rise and eventual fall.

But when the Catholic understanding of the common good is brought to the table we realize that neither of these approaches suffices. For believers the common good is

marked by both its willingness to improve society and its determination to protect individual fulfillment in the process. Such a stance is predicated on the dignity, unity, and equality of all human persons. It is *common* because it recognizes that both its goal and its demands belong to all people, both collectively and individually. When a community or group seeks to fulfill the common good then they are at the service of humanity. In this sense, the common good is only a means to an end—the means by which and through which human persons are brought closer to their fulfillment in God.

While the promotion of the common good is certainly a proper end in any institution of higher learning, it is especially the case at Providence College. Rooted in our Catholic and Dominican tradition, we stand in a unique position to transform not only the lives of our individual students, but also the lives of our community as a whole. Moreover, on this campus we know that individual disciplines do not exist in a self-imposed sacral vessel of impenetrability. Rather, we are profoundly aware that we can sit in one classroom and ask probing questions on the interrelatedness of our knowledge and our lives that we may have learned in another classroom.

A senior biology student engages a debate in her seminar on Conservation Biology with Dr. Ewanchuk and begins to piece together the connectedness between limited resources and the needs of all people from information she garnered in Environmental Sociology. A freshman walks into his second semester of Western Civ and knows that the deeper questions surrounding what it means to be human are not alien to the discussions of his class on the Renaissance. A junior political science student can analyze the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights with Dr. Cesarini and have enough self-awareness to realize that such a declaration was written not only for the people of present day Somalia, Bosnia, and Kyrgyzstan, but also for the homeless who huddle together on the streets of downtown Providence, and even the men and women sitting across the table from him.



To be Catholic is to reach into all disciplines across the campus—to be Dominican is to seek out the truth in each of those disciplines individually, but also collectively. The promotion of the common good reminds us that higher education is not simply about the improvement of one individual life by a singular piece of parchment called a diploma—but that an institution of higher learning also calls us to engage the other in a lifelong process of learning and change. No one is left behind, no one is left out, and no one is deprived of the common good that is served by learning and education.

This year, the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies will initiate a campus wide discussion on the common good and its myriad relationships with the various disciplines of knowledge. A deeper investigation into this topic will yield profound results. As a campus community, we can look at the women of Haiti as they danced and sang in the streets in the aftermath of an earthquake and learn how that impacts our understanding of the common good. We can look at the increased globalization of the world and reevaluate how and why we purchase food, clothing, and energy when other peoples across the globe go without them. Hopefully such a campus wide discussion will lead us to a shared definition of the common good. With that, a simple, probing question will become part of everyday routine and vocabulary: here and now, for the wider community of Providence College, what is the common good?

Outreach and Evangelization at Providence College

Fr. James M. Cuddy, O. P.

Chaplain and Director of Campus Ministry

In the Gospel of St. Luke, Jesus begins his public ministry in the synagogue in Nazareth with the words of the prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord" (4:18-19). And from that day until his saving Passion, he did just

that. By day he preached and by night he prayed, that all might be saved.

This message of salvation was directed to everyone, and not just a chosen few. It went beyond the scribes and scholars of the law. It included them, to be sure, but extended even to those on the margins of society. In an unprecedented way, people from all walks of life were invited to share in the good news of Our Lord.

Just as Jesus used these words as a starting point for his own earthly ministry, it's crucial that any reflection on ministry at Providence College begins in the same way. The gospel is for every member of the college community. It's not simply for those who come to us from strong religious backgrounds and strive to let their faith inform every area of their lives. It is also for those who are seekers, those who are asking questions about the plausibility of the faith and all of its claims in a world that seems to have forgotten God. The invitation of the gospel is also for those who are disengaged from things of religion and who might not give much (if any) thought to the spiritual life. Simply put, if our attempts to serve the students are to be authentically Christian, they must be universal in their scope.

This universality of the gospel presents a particular challenge to those of us who work in Campus Ministry. Can our evangelization and outreach possibly extend to every corner of the campus? Again, our community—comprised of the devout, the seekers, and the disengaged—reflects a great diversity of religious experience. Further, beyond these broad categories, each individual student has been formed by particular experiences that have shaped his or her own relationship with God. No two students are the same. This being the case, can we realistically hope to appeal to each member of the campus community? Are we trying to cast too broad a net?

The answer to this problem requires that we temper our recognition of diversity among our students with thoughts of unity. No matter where our students may fall on the



spectrum of religious experience and the practice of the faith, there are elements and considerations common to each person. Everybody, at some level, is looking for meaning in his or her life. Students are confronted with life's biggest questions: *What is going to bring me happiness? What should I do with my life? What does it mean to love? Why is there suffering? What can I do to build a more just world?* Perhaps all of these questions can be rolled into one: *What does it mean to be fully alive?*

These questions, arising in the hearts of our students, do not proceed from a religious experience, but rather from the experience of being human. Made in the image and likeness of God and endowed with the inestimable gift of human dignity, each one of us was made to know, to love, and to serve both God and neighbor. All of these things reside deep within our souls, no matter who we are or what our relationship with God might happen to look like.

This being the case, evangelization and outreach at Providence College begins with recognizing that, at some fundamental level, *all of our students are seekers*. It's our goal, then, to help them to ask those momentous questions, to awaken the desire for God that is within each of them, and finally to propose a loving personal relationship with the Lord as the fulfillment of the deepest longings of their hearts.

As we look forward to this new semester, our Campus Ministry team will do everything it can to cooperate with God in the project of sharing the gospel with all of our students. We'll do our best to provide opportunities for members of the campus community—wherever they might be—to take a step closer to Christ. In these ways we hope that, like Jesus in the synagogue, we might proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.

CAMPUS MASSES & CONFESSIONS

St. Dominic Chapel (when school is in session):

Masses:

Monday thru Friday 11:35 A.M., 4:30 P.M.

Monday thru Thursday 9:00 P.M.

Saturday Vigil 4:30 P.M.

Sunday 4:30 P.M., 7:00 P.M., 10:30 P.M.

Confessions:

Wednesday 3:30 TO 4:30 P.M., 8:00 TO 9:00 P.M.

Saturday 3:30 TO 4:30 P.M.

St. Thomas Aquinas Priory (when school is in session):

Masses:

Monday thru Friday 7:25 A.M.

Saturday, with morning prayer 8:00 A.M.

Sunday 11:00 A.M.

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