



“Female He Created Them”

Friday, November 11, 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | ROOM 202 | Chair: Stacey Noem (University of Notre Dame)

K.T. Brizek (University of Illinois Chicago)

God’s original plan included women as full partners with men in the great work of ruling creation. This paper will investigate women as *imago dei*. The standard, contemporary account is that women image the Church and men image Christ. However, as taught by Vatican II, Christ gives many images for each divine reality because no one image exhausts the mystery it expresses. It is a tenet of the faith that women are made in God’s image and for his glory. This paper will argue that women image God in a particular way, drawing upon Scripture, as well as the thought of Thomas Aquinas and John Paul II.

Bio: K.T. Brizek is a doctoral student in history at the University of Illinois, Chicago. Last academic year she was a Postgraduate Fellow with the de Nicola Center. She also has served as the Manager for Special Projects and Advancement at the Thomistic Institute, where she designed and executed intellectual formation events for undergraduate and graduate students. Brizek holds a BA in History from Christendom College and an MA in Theology from the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. Her research focuses on the intellectual history of the Catholic Church, the modernization of American Catholicism and the philosophy and theology of women and the laity.

Monica Burke Jeffery (Catholic University of America)

Following Aristotle, Aquinas understands women to be deformed (i.e., less actualized) men. This view is based not only on flawed biology but flawed metaphysics. If we understand the sexes as a pair of contraries, as Aquinas does, then one sex must be the perfection and the other the privation thereof. This model poses serious problems for the equality of the sexes and for teleology. Edith Stein proposes a solution, that is, to understand the sexes as essentially distinct. However, this view implies that men and women are different species and tends to “essentialize” stereotypes. This paper will propose a third way of understanding sexual difference which takes the female as normative.



Bio: Monica Jeffery is an adjunct professor at Christendom College and a PhD candidate in Philosophy at the Catholic University of America. She holds a BA in Philosophy from Christendom College, where she received the Outstanding Philosophy Major Award. Her research focuses on political and economic philosophy.

Philip Jeffery (Newsweek)

This paper discusses feminist historians' exploration of the early modern association of women with nature, and how the Cartesian turn toward a mechanistic universe licensed the subordination of, and violence toward, women. Different camps within contemporary feminism disagree over what to do with this association—whether to embrace, reject, or transcend the reason-nature dichotomy. The response developed by Popes John Paul II and Francis, but present in the Catholic tradition for centuries, is that men, too, are answerable to nature. This holistic response, like that of radical feminists, addresses the connections between gender, capitalism, and ecology."

Bio: Philip Jeffery is a Deputy Opinion Editor at *Newsweek*. He holds a BA in History from Columbia University, where he received the Albert Marion Ellsburth Prize in Modern History. He is published at *First Things*, *The Lamp*, *National Affairs*, *Public Discourse*, *Newsweek*, and elsewhere.

**“Sed Contra”**

**Friday, November 11, 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | ROOM 205 | Chair: Randall B. Smith
(University of St. Thomas)**

“An Answer to the Question ‘Why the World?’: Putting Predestination in its Place”

Margaret McCarthy (The John Paul II Institute)

The doctrine of predestination is well-known among theologians (not the laity). It concerns a limited number of souls led infallibly to salvation. Some say we must hold together principles which “appear” to be irreconcilable and wait until the eschaton for the resolution. But the mystery of predestination has been revealed. Predestination is the “mystery” establishing a good creation, and a good (not inevitable) destiny for all men.”

Bio: Margaret Harper McCarthy is Associate Professor of Theological Anthropology at the John Paul II Institute at The Catholic University of America, and editor of its journal, *Humanum*.

“Out of Order: Assessing Aquinas’ and His Order of Charity as a Resource for Male-Female Equality”

Gabriella Berman El-Hallal (University of Notre Dame)

Aquinas’ notion of the inequality of women and men clashes with developed Christian teaching that women and men are equally good, both naturally and supernaturally. An honest assessment of his work might result in discounting him as a resource for the theological anthropology of woman. Is it possible to recognize errors in Aquinas’s thought regarding the inequality of men and women while utilizing him as a resource for Catholic theological anthropology? If so, how? This paper addresses and responds to these questions through an analysis of the more tenuous aspects of Aquinas’ order of charity, Q. 26 of ST II-II.

Bio: Gabriella is a current PhD Student in Moral Theology/Christian Ethics at the University of Notre Dame and graduated with her MTS from the University of Notre Dame in 2019 after having completed an Honors Bachelor of Arts at Villanova University in 2017 where she studied Humanities and Theology. Some interests include Christian/Catholic feminism, moral and theological



conceptions of the female body in African (Nigerian) thought, the formation of the moral imagination through engagement with literature, and ritual and ethnographic study of women and children in liturgical space. Gabriella currently resides in South Bend, IN with her husband (also a PhD student in Theology at Notre Dame) and three children.

“Animal Suffering, Fallen Natures, and the Goodness of Creation”

Ben Conroy (University of Chicago)

For many believers, animal suffering raises questions about the goodness of creation. This paper argues that a strand of Christian thought which holds that the natural world is damaged or fallen is best placed to answer them. I discuss and reject arguments from Thomas Aquinas and Herbert McCabe which hold that animal suffering contributes to the goodness of creation or is an unavoidable consequence of things that do. I defend the ‘fallen natural world’ view from the claim that it amounts to an outright rejection of creation’s goodness, and discuss some of the view’s ethical and theological implications.

Bio: Ben Conroy is a Philosophy PhD student at the University of Chicago. He is interested in neo-Aristotelian ethics, equality and moral status, and philosophy of action. Originally from Dublin, he writes the “Everyday Philosophy” column for *The Irish Catholic* newspaper.

**“The Creation of Politics”**

**Friday, November 11, 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | ROOM 206/207 | Chair: Gladden Pappin
(University of Dallas)**

“Politics in the Image of God: Plato, Augustine and the Order of the Passions”

Chad Pecknold (Catholic University of America)

Augustinians have appealed to Augustine’s authority to argue both that government is a consequence of the Fall and that it follows naturally from our creation as social and political animals. Thus a recovery of the unity of Augustine’s anti-Manichaean and anti-Pelagian treatises must be brought to bear on those passages which deal with divine, angelic and human governance. In *De civitate Dei* 11–14, Augustine treats the origins of order through a commentary on Genesis that touches upon angelic and human governance before and after the Fall, and culminates in his profound reflections—later advanced by Thomas Aquinas—on the importance of the passions as central to questions of order and law. I will argue that this focus upon the passions provides a crucial interpretive bulwark against liberal Augustinian hermeneutics, and the key to demonstrating his fundamental unity with Aquinas on our weakened but nevertheless intact capacity for a just order after the Fall.

Bio: Dr. Chad Pecknold received his PhD from the University of Cambridge (UK) in 2005 and since 2008 he has been a Professor of Historical & Systematic Theology in the School of Theology at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC. Pecknold has authored or edited five books, each relating the thought of St. Augustine to modern philosophical and theological reasoning, including, *Transforming Postliberal Theology* (2005), *The Promise of Scriptural Reasoning* (2006), *Time, Liturgy, and the Politics of Redemption* (2008), *Christianity and Politics* (2010) and the *T&T Clark Companion to Augustine and Modern Theology* (2014). He teaches in the areas of fundamental theology, Christian anthropology, and political theology. Pecknold serves on the Editorial Board of The Catholic University of America Press, and also co-edits with Fr. Thomas Joseph White, O.P., their celebrated *Sacra Doctrina* series. He serves as an Associate Editor for the English Edition of the international Thomistic journal of theology, *Nova et Vetera*. He serves as Chairman of the Academy of Catholic Theology, and has the honor of serving as a Fellow of the Institute for Human Ecology at Catholic University. Dr Pecknold is currently writing a book on a Catholic understanding of Augustine’s *City of God*.

“The Birth of Society: Naturalism or Contractualism?”

**Guillaume de Thieulloy (Senat de France)**

It is commonplace that the Revolution of 1789 has its roots in Rousseau's theory of the “social contract” and that most of the opponents to the Revolution refused this “contractualist” theory to consider political society as natural to the human being. Many counterrevolutionaries spoke of “the pact of Reims” as the origin of ancien régime France. And a lot of revolutionaries spoke about the social body in terms of nature—considering the society as an organic body in which every citizen is an organ, unable to exist by himself. Of course, the very notions of “contract” or “nature” are not the same in these opposing forms of political thought. This paper aims to study these opposing views of political order and to think along with them about how political order was created.

Bio: Guillaume de Thieulloy has a PhD in political science from Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales in Paris. Author of several books about the relationship between spiritual and temporal powers, he works as a staffer in the French Senate and runs a group of media outlets.

“The First Patriarchy: Dominion, Paternal Authority and the Kingship of Adam”**Evelyn Boyden (Harvard University)**

Among early modern scholastics, the origin of political authority can be traced back to the creation of Adam and the nature of man as he is found in the state of innocence. Perhaps the most extended meditation on the political dominion which might have existed in the state of innocence can be found in the Jesuit Francisco Suárez's *De opere sex dierum*. This particular line of scholastic reasoning about how political authority arises out of the creation of Adam but not out of his paternal authority becomes a primary target of seventeenth-century English patriarchalism, exemplified and popularized by Sir Robert Filmer. This paper compares Suárez and Filmer's analyses of the origin of political dominion in creation and examines the English royalists' rejection of Jesuit scholastic accounts of Adamic rule. It argues that a comparison between both schools of thought reveals a fundamental difference not in how each perceives the natural equality or inequality of men, nor in whether political authority is absolute, but rather in how particular authorities are established in the order of creation.

Bio: Evelyn Boyden is a PhD candidate in Government specializing in Political Theory. Her primary research interests concern the development of the concept of sovereignty, theories of political resistance and its justification, and conflicts between political and ecclesiastical authority. Her dissertation tracks these themes in early modern political thought through the episode of James I's Oath of Allegiance and the Jesuit response it evoked. Her other research areas include theories of citizenship and civil liberties,



the rise of technocracy, and the early modern roots of liberalism. Evelyn holds an AB in Government and Theology from Georgetown University.

“Leviathan Ex Nihilo: Instrumental Power, Artificiality and the Creation of the Modern State”

Amy Chandran (Harvard University)

That Artificial man, the modern state known as Leviathan, was famously held by Hobbes to “resemble that Fiat, or the Let us make man, pronounced by God in the Creation.” The polemical force of Hobbes’s intervention has usually led scholars to highlight features of his political philosophy that place his account at odds with sacred history. In this paper I argue that the deeper polemic of Hobbes’s endeavor was his claim that the Commonwealth by Institution was directly patterned on sacred history. Tracing the clear opening that Hobbes left for a second Moses, a prophet of scientific orientation, to emerge from the state of nature, this paper offers an account of the artificiality at the heart of the Hobbesian project. The resulting “farrago of Christian Atheism” produced by Hobbes continues to provide critical insights into the nature of modern states, and the debt owed to the Christian culture from which it emerged.

Bio: Amy Chandran is a political theorist and intellectual historian in Harvard University’s Government Department. Her research focuses on the early modern period, and in particular, on the writings of Thomas Hobbes. Her dissertation examines Hobbes’s contributions to key political concepts such as equality, representation, obligation and democratic ideals. It suggests a novel approach for understanding the uniqueness of the Commonwealth by Institution. More broadly, Chandran is interested in understanding the psychological dynamics that mediate individual experiences of obedience and agency, as well as the importance of history and legitimacy in different political contexts. Prior to undertaking her doctorate, Chandran worked in the Australian Government, and earned a Bachelor of Laws (Hons I) and a Master in Public Policy at the Harvard Kennedy School.

“Medicine and Teleology”

**Friday, November 11, 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | ROOM 215 | Chair: Thomas P. Hogan
(University of Scranton)**

“Medicine & Creation: the Normal and the Pathological”

Dr. Jose Bufill (Bur Oak Foundation)

This paper will review ways of understanding the “normal” and the “pathological” in medical practice, and how recent insights into genetics in general, and cancer genetics in particular, illuminate these concepts. Based on current knowledge of the role of genetics in human development, considerations on the nature of human life and the perfectibility of human nature will be offered.

Bio: Dr. Jose Bufill is a physician who has been caring for patients with cancer in the Michiana area for 30 years. He has written opinion articles on bioethics for national and international media outlets. He is currently leading the Bur Oak Foundation, a scholarly initiative at the University of Michigan which explores what it means to be human through interdisciplinary dialogue.

“Realizing Our Own Potential as Co-Creators: The Right to Health and Our Role in Realizing It”

Maryssa Gabriel (ADF International)

The Constitution of the World Health Organization states that “governments have a responsibility for the health of their peoples which can be fulfilled only by the provision of adequate health and social measures.”¹ While it is true that the maintenance and improvement of health depend on a variety of factors, the human rights literature overlooks the primary role of the individual person seeking to maintain or improve their own health. In the words of Leon Kass, “to make my health someone else’s duty is not only unfair: it is to impose a duty impossible to fulfill.”² In the majority of cases, each person is the main protagonist in ensuring that they become and or remain healthy. If we leave the furthering of all aspects of health primarily to the state, we are bound to fail in improving and maintaining human health and we risk usurping the legitimate autonomy of individuals and communities to make their own decisions. This paper will explore the role of the individual agent in maintaining and improving their own health and how this can be reconciled with the concept of a human right to health.



Bio: Maryssa Gabriel earned her LL.B. from Trinity College, Dublin. She was awarded the Appleby Legal Scholarship after completing her LL.B. and went on to pursue a master's degree in Law and Anthropology at the London School of Economics. Her thesis focused on patent law, bioethics, and human rights. Before completing her LL.M., at Notre Dame, she trained and practiced as an attorney in London and Bermuda. Ms. Gabriel was awarded the Sir John W. Cox University Scholarship to pursue the J.S.D. at Notre Dame and was given the Faculty Award for Excellence in Gender Issues and International Law during her LL.M. studies. She was admitted as a solicitor of England and Wales in 2015 and is a licensed attorney admitted to the New York State Bar and the Bermuda Bar. Maryssa Gabriel completed a Doctorate of Juridical Science at the Notre Dame Law School in 2022 and is currently a legal consultant for ADF International.

**“Preserving the Endowed Goodness of Our Bodies against Competing Concepts of Health”
Lauris Kaldjian (University of Iowa)**

Different concepts of health reflect contrasting philosophical foundations and visions of human flourishing. Biostatistical concepts resonate with the Christian understanding that we are made objectively in God's image, male and female, with ensouled bodies whose goodness and dignity are inherent and independent of social or individual affirmation. Other concepts of health depend on values determined by society or the individual's subjective sense of wellbeing or goals. Clinicians increasingly encounter patients whose concepts of health subordinate bodily integrity. As a result, conscientious practice among healthcare professionals, and the need for a politics of multiple healthcare communities, becomes only more apparent.

Bio: Dr. Lauris Kaldjian is Director of the Program in Bioethics and Humanities at the University of Iowa Carver College of Medicine, where he is also a professor in the Department of Internal Medicine and holds the Richard M. Caplan Chair in Biomedical Ethics and Medical Humanities. He received his M.D. from the University of Michigan, an M.Div. and Ph.D. in Christian ethics from Yale University, and completed his residency and fellowship training at Yale University in internal medicine and infectious diseases. His research interests include ethics education, end of life decision making, goals of care, disclosure of medical errors, religious and philosophical beliefs in medical ethics, practical wisdom in medicine, and conscientious practice. His publications can be found in a variety of journals, and he has authored a book, *Practicing Medicine and Ethics: Integrating Wisdom, Conscience, and Goals of Care*. At the Carver College of Medicine, Dr. Kaldjian directs the Biomedical Ethics



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curriculum, and at the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics he serves on the Ethics Committee and Ethics Consult Service.

**“The Straightforward Pathway Has Been Lost: Suffering and Art”**

Friday, November 11, 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | ROOM 216 | Chair: Raul Rodriguez
(Michigan State University)

“God, the Plague, and Suffering: A Theological Analysis of Italian Plague Banners and the Isenheim Altarpiece”

John Rziha (Benedictine College)

A theological investigation of two different Renaissance artworks reveals two radically different understandings of God, suffering, and morality. Plague banners painted in and around Perugia, Italy show a wrathful God shooting arrows (the plague) at the people of the city as punishment for their sins. Located a few hundred miles to the north, the Isenheim altarpiece shows Christ hanging on the cross with the marks of the plague on his skin. A study of the theology underlying these different artworks can help us better understand God, hope, and morality during times of suffering, chaos, or fear.

Bio: Dr. John Rziha is professor of theology at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. He is the author of two books, *Perfecting Human Actions: St. Thomas Aquinas on Human Participation in Eternal Law* and *The Christian Moral Life: Directions for the Journey to Happiness*. He is currently writing a book on the history of morality. He has a lovely wife and nine children (of whom he is extremely proud) ranging in age from 25 to 9 years old.

“A Heap of Broken Images”: the Human Desire for God amid Fragmentation”

Theresa Rice (University of Notre Dame)

How can the Scriptural affirmation of the goodness of creation be reconciled with intense experiences of human brokenness? Rather than abandoning either reality, art—particularly poetry—allows human finitude to become a place of redemption and Christological encounter. Drawing on theological insights from von Balthasar and Ratzinger, this paper examines how poetry can capacitate the human imagination to reckon with suffering and finitude. In particular, TS Eliot’s poem *The Waste Land* offers one model for the poetic and artistic act of creation that can transform human fragmentation into the very location where humanity recognizes the source and end of all creation.



Bio: Originally from South Bend, Indiana, Theresa Rice graduated from the University of Notre Dame in 2020 with an undergraduate degree in the Program of Liberal Studies and Theology. Having just completed the Master of Theological Studies at Notre Dame in 2022, she is delighted to remain at the University of Notre Dame for the PhD in Liturgical Studies (Theology). Her research interests center around the embodied human encounter with God; she is particularly fascinated by the liturgical arts and devotional practices relating to saints, relics, or pilgrimage..

“This Created Life: The Credibility of Goodness in Walker Percy’s ‘The Moviegoer’”

Helena Tomko (Villanova University)

No questions compelled Walker Percy more as he wrote *The Moviegoer* (1961) than the credibility of creaturely witness to the goodness of creation and its Creator. Why is it so hard for a man like Percy’s disaffiliating mid-century narrator, Binx Bolling, to see what was self-evident truth in earlier eras (Pieper), namely, that the world offers a “glimpse of the goodness and gratuitousness of created being” (Percy)? This paper traces how Percy’s ironic, laconic, intertextual novel defies existential anxiety to conclude with quiet, psalmic confidence that the heavens are, indeed, “telling the glory of God” (Ps 19).

Bio: Helena M. Tomko is associate professor of religion and literature in the Department of Humanities at Villanova University. While her main area of scholarship is German Catholic literature in the Weimar Republic and Third Reich, she is currently writing a book on sacramental humor in the classic Catholic novel.



“Creation in Theology”

Friday, November 11, 10:45 a.m.-12:00 p.m. | ROOM B01 | Chair: Jennie Grillo (University of Notre Dame)

“Thinking Theologically as a Christian About the Beginning”

Brett Bourbon (University of Dallas)

I will offer a logical description of God as Creator in contradistinction to those who imagine God as a first cause or as something like a physical force. This will provide a brief account of the difference between science and theology. In many ways, I will explicate the following comment made by Newman: “It is indeed a great question whether Atheism is not as philosophically consistent with the phenomena of the physical world, taken by themselves, as the doctrine of a creative and governing Power.” I will clarify Newman’s insight, however, relative to modern notions of physics and logic.

Bio: Brett Bourbon received his Ph.D. from Harvard, where he studied literature and philosophy. He was a professor at Stanford for ten years, and is now an Associate professor of English at the University of Dallas. He is the author of three books: *Jane Austen and the Ethics of Description* (Routledge, 2022), *Everyday Poetics: Ethics, Love, and Logic* (Bloomsbury Press, 2022), and *Finding a Replacement for the Soul: Meaning and Mind in Literature and Philosophy* (Harvard UP, 2004). He has published numerous essays on philosophy, literature, and art. He is also a poet and fiction writer.

“The Eucharist in John as the Completion of the Creator’s Gift of Life”

Michael Waldstein (Franciscan University)

Echoing Genesis, the Prologue to John highlights the goodness of creation by affirming about God’s own Logos, “all things came to be through him” (John 1:3). “In him was life and the life was the light” for all human beings (1:4). The root of this shining of life into human beings lies in the Trinity. “As the Father has life in himself, so he has given to the Son to have life in himself” (5:26). The Eucharist extends this communication to human beings. “As I live through the Father, so the one who eats me will live through me” (6:57). After the cleansing of the temple, the Jerusalem leaders ask Jesus, “What sign do you show us for doing this?” Jesus answers, “Tear down this temple and in three days I will build it up” (2:18–19). “He was speaking about the temple of his body” (2:21), that is, about his



passion, death, and resurrection. After the multiplication of loaves, some in the crowd ask, “What sign, then, do you do that we may see and believe you?” (6:30). Jesus answers by pointing to “the true bread” given by the Father, that is, to himself as the Eucharist (6:32). A striking confirmation that the Eucharist is the true and definitive sign to which all others point is the strictly parallel construction of Cana (2:1–11) and Golgotha (19:25–37). In this light one can see seven Johannine signs in a symmetrical arrangement focused on the Eucharist: wine – bread – blood and flesh WINE Healing BREAD Healing Raising BLOOD AND WATER FROM THE SIDE OF THE PASCHAL LAMB.

Bio: Professor Michael Waldstein holds his Doctorate of Philosophy from the University of Dallas, a Licentiate in Sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome, and his Doctorate of Theology from Harvard University in New Testament and Christian Origins. He is the Max Seckler Professor of Theology at Ave Maria University in Florida. Previously, he taught at the University of Notre Dame and the International Theological Institute in Garmisch, Austria. His published works include a critical edition of the four Coptic manuscripts of the Secret Book of John, a Gnostic text discovered in the Nag Hammadi codices. His articles have been published in *Nova et Vetera*, *Communio*, *Anthropotes*, and the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*.

“Reconciling God’s Necessity, Simplicity, and Creative Freedom”

Garrett Peters (Dominican House of Studies)

The Christian doctrine of divine creative freedom appears to conflict with classical claims of divine simplicity and necessity. If God, a necessary being, is identical to His act of creation, how can His act of creation be free? I defend the compatibility of divine creative freedom, simplicity, and necessity by developing Thomas Aquinas’s account of God’s willing creatures as means to His goodness. I show how Aquinas’s account provides room to affirm indeterminacy regarding the effects of the divine creative act (which is required for the contingency of creatures) while maintaining the necessity of the divine act as such.

Bio: Garrett Peters is studying for a Master of Arts in Theology at the Pontifical Faculty of the Immaculate Conception at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. He hopes to be ordained a Catholic priest for the Diocese of Pensacola-Tallahassee in his home state of Florida.

“Digital Temples of the Holy Ghost”

Friday, November 11, 10:45am.-12:00p.m. | ROOM B02 | Chair: Jay Martin (University of Notre Dame)

“Digital Temples of the Holy Ghost”

Bo Bonner (Mercy College) and Brett Robinson (University of Notre Dame)

Marshall McLuhan said that “we now live in a technologically prepared environment that blankets the earth itself. The humanly contrived environment of electric information and power has begun to take precedence over the old environment of “nature.” Nature, as it were, begins to be the content of our technology.” This panel, a philosopher and a media ecologist, looks at the way in which our experience of nature and Creation is heavily mediated through a second nature, digital technology. Inspired by the theme of this conference, “On Creation,” this presentation proposes an ecological view of the digital environment that addresses some of its negative social and psychological effects. The widespread adoption of digital technology has been accompanied by an anthropological shift. Pope Francis has warned that “the omnipresence of the digital world can stop people from learning how to live wisely, to think deeply and to love generously...Efforts need to be made to help these media become sources of new cultural progress for humanity and not a threat to our deepest riches. True wisdom, as the fruit of self-examination, dialogue and generous encounter between persons, is not acquired by a mere accumulation of data which eventually leads to overload and confusion, a sort of mental pollution. (*Laudato Si* 47) The image of “mental pollution” provides a valuable heuristic for how to respond to the information “ecology” crisis. Just as the industrial revolution led to a number of devastating effects in nature, the consequences of the information revolution pose a threat to human nature. Human flourishing depends on our ability to construct technological environments that do not exploit human nature and Creation but remember and revere them.

Bio: Bo Bonner has been involved in the Catholic teaching ministry (primarily Philosophy and Theology) since he converted in the midst of Protestant Seminary at Duke Divinity school in 2006. He is also a Benedictine Oblate at Our Lady of Clear Creek Monastery in Oklahoma. He has been married for over a decade to his wife Robyn, and so far has four children: Elias, Stella, Antonia, and Finnian.

Bio: Brett Robinson is director of communications and Catholic media studies at the McGrath Institute for Church Life. In his role, he oversees outreach efforts for the institute while conducting research at the intersection of religion, technology and culture.



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Brett studied marketing and English at the University of Notre Dame and received his Ph.D. in Mass Communication from the University of Georgia. He has taught media studies courses at Duquesne University, the University of Georgia, Saint Vincent College and Notre Dame. Brett is the author of *Appletopia: Media Technology and the Religious Imagination of Steve Jobs* and his essays and commentary on technology and culture have been featured in *Wired Magazine*, *CNN*, the *LA Times* and *Catholic News Service*.