

From the Editor

The report released in June 2015 by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees documents the unprecedented number of people around the globe being forced from their homes by a variety of conflicts.¹ As I write, Christians around the world are observing the season of Lent, and the bitterly contentious American presidential primary season continues to highlight, in the most callous of ways, the plight of our displaced brothers and sisters. Is there a better time for Christian theologians to contemplate their task as interpreters of the tradition or to consider again and again the meaning of the praxis of discipleship than Lent during this Year of Mercy? In *Misericordiae Vultus*, Pope Francis offers this witness: “We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it....Mercy [is] the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life.”² As theologians we labor to understand the mystery and the gift of divine mercy and to discern how to make the law of mercy real for our sisters and brothers struggling to survive in a broken and suffering world. The articles and symposia of this issue tend to focus in one way or another on the issues of identity and relationships; whether personal, intrapersonal, or institutional, our identities and relationships thrive when we look at each other in reconciliation (Gen 33:10) and from the place of mercy that Pope Francis calls us to contemplate as the deep Christian source of joy, serenity, and peace. I thank our authors for sharing their scholarship with our readers.

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It is with a great deal of gratitude and respect for the work of Professor Anthony J. Godzieba that I begin the work of editor. I thank Professor Godzieba, the Board of the College Theology Society, Villanova University, and Cambridge University Press for trusting me to continue the high standards of *Horizons*. As a public expression of our collective thanks to Professor Godzieba for his many years of visionary leadership at the helm of this journal, Professor William Portier, president of CTS, and I have invited two colleagues, with whom Professor Godzieba has collaborated

¹ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, “World at War: UNHCR Global Trends, Forced Displacement in 2014,” <http://www.unhcr.org/556725e69.html>.

² Pope Francis, Bull of Indiction of the Extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy (*Misericordiae Vultus*), April 11, 2015, §2, https://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_letters/documents/papa-francesco_bolla_20150411_misericordiae-vultus.html.

closely, to write about the significance of his tenure as editor. Our thanks are due to Professor Francis Schüssler Fiorenza (Harvard) and Professor Lieven Boeve (KU Leuven).

I

I have been asked to write about Professor Anthony Godzieba's contribution to *Horizons: The Journal of the College Theology Society*. I am delighted to do so because of the significant contribution that he has made to the journal. Moreover, it seems to me that editors of journals often do not get the praise they deserve. Their work, even in comparison to editors of books, is more hidden than visible. They often do not get the explicit credit that the editor of a volume receives. Like the divine hand of Providence, they work in and through many actors in order to bring the journal to fruition, to give it a profile, and to increase its renown and contribution.

Over the years I often have been impressed and even astonished by the amount of work that Tony put into editing *Horizons*. It seemed to me that he was working on editing the journal at all times of the day and night and on every day of the month. Whenever I called him, it was rare that he would not mention that he was working on a submitted article, either a final draft or a submission in need of significant revisions. Sometimes he would call and ask: "Who do you think would have the expertise to give a competent assessment of an article on the following topic?" If I would mention someone in Australia, Germany, or Rome, Tony would immediately recognize the person and attempt to get that person even if she or he were not a member of the College Theology Society and might not even know about the journal. And almost invariably, he was always able to convince her or him to accept the assignment. Tony took personal pride in the journal. It was his job to produce the best possible journal, and he did everything possible to achieve that goal.

Other times I would call him up and he would be very busy editing an article that was great but needed to be strengthened in its argument, style, and conclusion. I have found when I submitted a small piece for an editorial roundtable, it would come back heavily edited. I have always appreciated his painstaking editorial work on manuscripts, work that extended across all stages of the process, from initial submission to final edition.

But Tony's editorial work went beyond the details of editing—he wanted to make *Horizons* into the best possible journal and into a highly acknowledged journal. He sought to have *Horizons* much more internationally respected and *read*. His engagement with Cambridge University Press was one part of this endeavor. It had the effect that the journal became much

more than a journal of the College Theology Society and Villanova University. It became part of the Cambridge University Press's package to libraries and universities across the world. Tony's expansion of the editorial board and his rotation of editors contributed to the growing international standing of the journal. Going hand in hand with this type of expansion was his attempt to give younger scholars an opportunity to publish and to become established through their publication.

One impact of his editorship is evident from the roundtable discussions that he planned. He sought to include not only academic debates, but also issues relevant to church life and practice. He did not shy away from theological and ecclesiastical interests that were controversial. Examples include Peter Hünermann's theological critique of Pope Benedict XVI's withdrawal of the penalty of excommunication for the leaders of the Fraternity of Pius X without taking into account the connection between the disciplinary and doctrinal moments, the roundtable on the American bishops' response to Elizabeth Johnson's book on God, and the roundtable on "deconversion" of US Catholics, that is, of Catholics who no longer consider themselves Catholic, and what such a transition entails for Catholicism and the consequent social, pastoral, and theological issues. He also continued discussion on teaching theology in the collegiate milieu, an important topic in a constantly changing setting.

I have mentioned only a few aspects of Tony's leadership. As a member of the College Theology Society, I wish to express my gratitude for his service and my admiration of what his eleven long years of editing has achieved. I have always admired Roger van Allen and Bernard Prusak for founding *Horizons* and Walter Conn for continuing after them. Tony Godzieba's leadership and contributions follow in a great tradition. He has greatly increased the value of the journal, giving it a profile that has won international recognition.

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II

I first encountered Dr. Anthony Godzieba in the spring of 1999 at a conference on religion and postmodernism, organized at Villanova, his home university. I was eager to meet him, because I had been informed that he would present a paper later that year at the second Louvain Encounters in Systematic Theology (LEST), which I co-organized. LEST II

was dedicated to the theme of sacramental presence in a postmodern context. At the Villanova conference, the heroes of the “postmodernity and religion” scene were in attendance, all too present, discussing absence, apophysis, abyss, *chora*, and the like. Tony and I were both at the beginning of our academic careers, during which our paths would cross many times: attending CTS, CTSA, AAR, LEST, and other conferences, organizing thematic conference sessions and expert seminars, participating in doctoral juries, offering guest lectures at each other’s institution, engaging in joint research projects, writing recommendations, guiding each other’s students, and discussing the future of Catholic theology. We also enjoyed Belgian beers; American burgers with bacon, red onions, and cheese; and many of the other goods provided by the Earth. Very soon we discovered a common aspiration: the construction of a truly “catholic” theology that is steeped in the best of the tradition and that lives up to the intellectual and academic standards of today. We have both attempted to craft a theology in dialogue with contemporary culture and society, and more particularly with significant input from phenomenology and hermeneutics. Apart from theological-epistemological and contextual-theological questions, the contribution of aesthetics to the theological imagination is especially important for Tony. He has always been inspired by the rich traditions of early modern and modern classical music, while engaging the incarnational dynamics of sacramental imagination. An understanding of the visual art of many of the major modern creative movements, and a deep appreciation for the Christian mystical tradition, make up another side of Tony’s personality and add great depth to his theology.

On many occasions, both formal and informal, I have profoundly appreciated Tony’s thoroughgoing scholarly excellence and expertise, as well as his humanity, his humor, and his collegiality. He is a true scholar and a gentleman. As a teacher he is highly praised by his (former) students for his ability to cut the most abstract concepts down to digestible size, even for first-year undergraduates. His work in Villanova’s honors program is legendary, in both its content and the ironic tone that he sets for the students. He can talk pop culture with students and then effortlessly relate the discussion to fundamental theology or nineteenth-century romanticism. He expects a great deal from his students, but he also brings a lot out of them.

It is this same dedication to scholarship, and the same virtues as a teacher and a friend, that characterize the way in which Tony, starting in the fall of 2004, took responsibility for *Horizons*. He began as coeditor with the previous editor, Walter Conn, but from 2007 on Tony continued as the editor in chief. Looking back on those years, it is only fair to say that he made an already respected but perhaps undervalued journal into an internationally recognized top publication in our field. With his uncompromising eye

for quality and relevance, he increased the profile of *Horizons*, which in turn also increased the burden on him as editor. In securing the future of the journal, he was bold enough to move it to Cambridge University Press—a move that elevated the journal’s status even further as a truly international publication, but also added further challenges. Throughout, he made sure that the journal’s solid reputation for excellence was upheld and that contributions were thoroughly vetted. As an editor, he proved to be the consummate professional, with one foot in the era of paper correspondence and all of the decorum, professionalism, and respect that goes with it, and the other foot in the contemporary world of technological innovation. On several occasions he used editorial notes to express his heartfelt gratitude for the work of the editorial assistants who had stood by him over the years, and for the contributions of the other members of the journal’s board.

In the meantime, *Horizons* has been celebrated for presenting different perspectives on church teaching and official documents of the church, including critique and interpretation. The content is always interdisciplinary, both within the field of theology and in the humanities in general. During Tony’s tenure, the content of the journal touched social ethics, liturgy, politics, and the economy in addition to systematic and fundamental theological topics. Certain themes remained staples of *Horizons*, especially the ongoing reception and legacy of Vatican II. The editorial approach taken by Tony and by the editorial board makes *Horizons* a unique place to go for discussion, and not just an echo chamber for one side of the ecclesial-political spectrum. It is a journal that can be trusted to deal with the traditions of the church critically and faithfully, and as such, it is part of the ongoing development and reception of the Catholic tradition.

Under Tony’s editorship, review symposia and discussions were frequently published. These generally included four or five perspectives and roundtable discussions among both well-established theologians and newcomers. Often, these took the form of reviews of important books by authors of international stature (e.g., Tomáš Halík, Peter Hünermann). This international focus helped *Horizons* to build an international profile. Although the journal represents a strong network within Catholic higher education in America, including both larger and smaller institutions (not just the “usual suspects”), it also provides a window into developments in Europe. Continental Europe likewise can look to *Horizons* as a window into the United States and as a major transatlantic link between the American and European academy.

Tony helped to sustain this serious connection with European theology through his contacts with KU Leuven, and his participation in SST and LEST conferences. As a result of this international focus, the dialogue that occurs in *Horizons* keeps it from falling into provincialism, which can so often occur

even in a globalized world. In order to keep this balance, new and different voices need to be included on a consistent basis. Although *Horizons* has maintained a certain core group of writers over the last two decades (Curran, Prusak, Masson, Gaillardetz, Doak, Schüssler Fiorenza, Hinsdale), it has also consistently reached out to young scholars, many of whom are now established names in international debates (e.g., Marianne Moyaert, Colby Dickinson, Brian Robinette, Erica Olson-Bang, Maureen Walsh, Katie Grimes). Through constructive feedback and active encouragement, Tony often presented young researchers with the opportunity to publish their first major article. The debates and perspectives in *Horizons* are never homogenous, whether we consider this from the viewpoint of gender, ecclesial-political affiliation, or the difference between established and up-and-coming scholars. In this respect, important events in academic theology such as the process between Elizabeth Johnson and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops have also received excellent and interesting coverage.

In June 2013, Tony explained the journal's transition to Cambridge University Press to his readership. The journal took on a new aesthetic and increased international presence. In his editorial in the first issue with Cambridge University Press, Tony expressed his hopes for the possibility of a less rigid and more dynamic and hope-filled Catholicism consequent with the election of Pope Francis. He asserted that the "paranoid-critical method" that had characterized Catholic theology in the previous decades must go. In his editorial in the second issue of *Horizons* that year, inspired partly by Pope Francis and partly by his experience at LEST IX in Leuven (on liturgy), he wrote that it was "time for a sea-change in theology," a return to the discipleship of Bartimaeus (Mark 10:52), which is a praxis of discipleship and Christocentrism. *Horizons* long anticipated this change, and has even become an instrument of it, as well as a forum for theological praxis. The vision and leadership of Tony Godzieba played a major role in making *Horizons* what it is today, and will be part of its legacy for years to come.

Tony knows of my personal appreciation for him, both as a scholar and as a gentleman. I am very happy that I can express the same appreciation now on behalf of the entire theological academic community. Thank you very much for more than a decade of *Horizons*, and all the best in the years to come!

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