

Campus Watch



Duties of Catholic Poles
AVE MARIA LAW SCHOOL. Aug. 21 — The school and the Our Sunday Visitor Foundation will sponsor a conference on the duties of Catholic politicians with respect to the Church's teaching on life issues on Sept. 16 at the National Press Club in Washington, D.C.
 Speakers will include Robert George, a professor of jurisprudence at Princeton University; *Newsweek* religion editor Kenneth Woodward; *First Things* editor Father Richard John Neuhaus; and Gerard Bradley of the University of Notre Dame School of Law.
 While the conference — called "Public Witness/Public Scandal: Faith, Politics and Life Issues" — is free and open to the public, call (734) 827-8073 or write to mpcastro@avemariaweb.org by Sept. 10 to reserve a space.

Free Ride Less Free
NEW YORK POST. Aug. 10 — The average cost of attending a Catholic or other private college is up 97% since 1990 and stands at a national average of \$29,000 for tuition, room and board. The equivalent cost of attending a public four-year college — just under \$10,000 — is up 87% over the same period.
 "For public colleges, in particular, the increase ... has been dramatic," said consumer advocate Miriam Kramer, who acknowledged that students in state colleges are not accustomed to bearing so much of the cost of their education.
 She reported that tuition increases this fall at the State University of New York will range to as high as 23% more than last year.

Freedom for Fliers
THE BLADE. Aug. 13 — Reversing a lower court decision in favor of the American Civil Liberties Union, a federal appeals court has ruled that an Ohio school district may include religious material among community fliers that it distributes to students, reported the Toledo daily.
 The unanimous three-judge panel concluded that the school district does not endorse religion by distributing fliers advertising religious activities along with those from the Red Cross, 4-H Club and sports leagues.
 The decision noted that other federal courts have reached a similar conclusion.

Religious Objection
THE HERALD SUN. Aug. 12 — The University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill has declined to officially recognize and fund Alpha Iota Omega, a Christian fraternity, because the group refused to sign a nondiscrimination policy that would open its membership to non-Christians, reported the North Carolina daily.
 In a similar case last year, the university recognized and funded the InterVarsity Christian Fellowship after originally balking at the idea. The university switched course, distinguishing between InterVarsity's leadership, which is restricted to Christians only, and its membership, which remains open to all UNC students.

Catholic-Franciscan Ethos
ST. BONAVENTURE UNIVERSITY. Aug. 16 — The university announced that it is developing a new program to provide information, resources and support to enhance care at the end of life through interdisciplinary scholarship and research, teaching and public outreach.
 Known as the GRACE project — which refers to gerontology research, academic preparation and community enrichment — the university said the project will be distinguished by its location "within the distinctive Catholic-Franciscan ethos of St. Bonaventure."

Derry Connolly is convinced that one way to shape the next generation of innovators, leaders and entrepreneurs is to help them understand, and fearlessly proclaim, the Catholic faith.
 He also believes there's no better way to do that than in the college classroom. This outlook explains Connolly's plan to open a new Catholic university in the San Diego area by this time next year — a school whose unofficial tagline is "Uncompromising Catholicity."
 "Right now in the Church, we absolutely need our leaders to be proud that they're Catholic," said Connolly, formerly an associate dean at the University of Cali-

fornia-San Diego. He has taught entrepreneurship and business innovation there and is currently working part-time as the university's director of the Center for the Commercialization of Advanced Technology.
 If students of the new school allow the spiritual, moral and social teachings of the Church to guide their career decisions, Connolly said, vast changes in society will result.
 One of Connolly's volunteer advisors is Stan Williams, a Catholic filmmaker who is designing the school's film curriculum. He made the point more bluntly.
 "Christians ought not to be abdicating the culture to pagans. They ought to be leading the culture," said Williams, founder of Stan Williams Communications.
 The temporary name of the school Connolly and several businessmen are forming is New Catholic University, a name that will change once a major benefactor donates. He said the university should open its doors, pending state approval, at a temporary, rented site during September 2005.
 The college will offer degrees in business, technology and mass-

media communications. The senior faculty will be required to have 15 to 20 years of experience in leadership, innovation and entrepreneurship and will have already formed their own companies, Connolly said.
 A student's senior thesis will be the result of forming teams with fellow students who will help the student conceive, plan and implement business plans during a two-year, team-based and faculty-guided planning exercise. Connolly hopes that, after graduation, about 50% of the students form profitable businesses based on their senior theses.
 "If it's not profitable, you won't accomplish anything that will benefit society," he said. "*The Passion of the Christ* is an example of something that is profitable and has huge value to society and the Church."
 Connolly also hopes students will take away from the university a conviction that they must actively promote their values in the business world. He points to statistics showing that about 50% of the workforce is disengaged from its work.
 If a businessman treats his employees with the kind of respect Christ talked about and demonstrated, that employer will get 100% commitment from his employees, Connolly said.
 The courses students will be required to take reflect how Connolly hopes to pass on the Catholic faith to students. Each quarter, every student will be required to take a faith-based class, such as "Getting to Know Jesus: Scripture I," "Moral Theology and Ethics" and "Courtship, Marriage and Family." Students will also be encouraged to participate in

mission work in the poor areas of the United States or in third-world countries.
 "If we can't bring kids closer to Christ," Connolly said, "there's no reason for us to exist."
Catholic to the Core
 The idea to start the university came to Connolly after he visited Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, several times over the past few years. Two of his children were interested in attending; one is about to enter her junior year there in the fall. He recalls how impressed he was by the large number of students who attended Mass and spent free time in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
 After a September 2003 visit, Connolly said, he felt God was calling him to start a new Catholic university. He talked with several friends — all Catholic entrepreneurs — and they decided some could help teach and some would be benefactors.
 The founders also talked to Auxiliary Bishop Salvatore Cordileone, from the Diocese of San Diego, whose bishop, Robert Brom, consented to allow the word "Catholic" in the name of the university.
 No one was concerned about competition with another prominent Catholic college already well established in the county, the University of San Diego. In fact, university spokeswoman Pamela Gray Payton told the *San Diego Union-Tribune* that the 65-year-old school would welcome another Catholic university into the region. "There is an enormous need out there," she said in the July 30 edition of the newspaper.
 Connolly said all faculty members will be required to take an oath of fidelity, pledging their faithfulness and obedience to the magisterium, consistent to Pope John Paul II's apostolic constitution on Catholic higher education, *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (On Catholic Universities).

Although the university remains independent of the diocese, Bishop Cordileone knows some of the founders well and thinks highly of the proposed school. "I think it's an excellent idea because they're trying to seize, to put it into business terms, a corner of the market that hasn't been developed yet," he said. "I think it's a good idea to prepare people with these kind of values to go out into the world."
Challenges Ahead
 Barbara Nicolosi, the founder of Act One, a training program for Christian screenwriters, encourages the creation of a university that will offer training to future Catholic film artists and writers. However, she cautions that it's extremely expensive to create a competitive film school, suggesting instead that the university concentrate on just screenwriting. She also says there are not many "solid" Catholics with film credits who could teach classes.
 "The reality is the Church is so far behind in the arts we don't have any masters to teach the

Information
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'Uncompromising Catholicity'

New Catholic University pledges fidelity and effectiveness



Founder Derry Connolly hopes students will take away from the university a conviction that they must actively promote Catholic values in the business world.

next generation who have their act together in every aspect," Nicolosi said.
 University officials are "going to have to be patient and be willing to breed the program up," she said, "and count on the alumni coming back, eventually having mastered the craft and taking their place."
 But Connolly said the university will start the film program by teaching screenwriting and — if funding is available — will begin teaching film directors starting in 2008. He also believes there are enough theologically sound Catholics who have the experience necessary to teach film directors.
 "This is one of several new or planned Catholic colleges across the country, so understandably there are concerns about competition for donors and the best faculty members," said Patrick Reilly, president of the Cardinal Newman Society. "But clearly the Holy Spirit is at work here, and we are certain they will have no problem attracting students."
 Mark Canales, founder of ChemTelligence Partners, a business-consulting firm in La Jolla, Calif., and one of Connolly's unpaid advisors, said business education usually doesn't include promoting specific codes of ethics — just broad bromides that can be synopsized: "Have a humble heart, have an open mind and be willing to share ideas."
 "I will contend that a business culture that has a basis in authentic Catholic teaching in all its richness is a very strong basis for running an organization where people matter," said Canales, who also teaches part-time at the University of California-San Diego. "You can build great teams like that. Great teams build great products. And great products build great companies."

Carlos Briceno writes from Seminole, Florida.

Weekly Book Pick

Here's One for Harry

LOOKING FOR GOD IN HARRY POTTER
 by John Granger
 Tyndale House, 2004
 202 pages, \$16.99
 Available in bookstores

Publisher's Weekly calls this book — subtitled *Is there Christian meaning hidden in the bestselling books?* — "easily the best examination to date of the spiritual legacy of 'the boy who lived.'" Given the number of books for or against Harry Potter's "spiritual legacy," that's saying something.
 John Granger's book, above all

by ROBERT TREXLER

the others, deserves to be taken seriously by serious Christians. As a Greek Orthodox Christian, he takes seriously the reality of Satan, demons, hell and the dangers of the occult. In fact, he read the first Potter book in order to tell his daughter why she couldn't read it. However, he not only approved the books, but they became required family reading.
 What did Granger see that many others have missed? He saw J.K. Rowling's adaptation and application of themes from great literature as influenced by Christian imagery, literary tropes and symbols. He noticed it because his education was similar to Rowling's, both holding honors degrees in classical languages (Greek and Latin) and classical literature. Granger also shares a love for many of the authors Rowling claims as primary influences: Jane Austen, Charles Dickens and C.S. Lewis.
 Whereas other pro-Potter books modestly claim that the Potter books are spiritually "neutral," Granger contends they actually help "baptize" our imaginations and inoculate us against anti-Christian worldviews. The spiritual messages are forged from the literary structures, themes and symbolism that Granger contends have developed during centuries of Christian artistry and literature.

This literary tradition is discussed in chapters such as "The Alchemy of Spiritual Growth." He writes: "Alchemy, whatever it might have been, no longer exists except as a synonym for 'magical transformation' and as a resource for artists and authors writing about personal change. Alchemical symbols are a large part of classic English literature."
 Each Harry Potter book receives a chapter: "The Purification of the Soul" (*Philosopher's Stone*), "Dangerous Books and Edifying Books" (*Chamber of Secrets*), "Despair and Delivery" (*Prisoner of Azkaban*) and so on. In "The Triumph of Love Over Death," Granger writes: "Rowling has us share in the spoils of a life spent in love and resistance to darkness by this cathartic death and resurrection — and it is the great joy, relief and lesson of each book. Death is not final. Death has been overcome by Love himself."
 The book has a modestly disarming style that makes it a pleasure to read. While too sophisticated for most young teens, it is profitable for interested older teens, though clearly geared toward adults. Parents especially will appreciate the final chapter on communicating biblical values and virtues to children through literature. Granger writes: "However individual families may differ in their approach and understanding, I commend these stories to you as you 'train up a child in the way he should go' (Proverbs 22:6). I believe the books are a providential help to parents in these end times to win the hearts of our children for Christ and to support us in our walk as individuals and as families."
 Offering a great deal of persuasion and not a hint of rancor, this book can — and should — be read by people on both sides of the Harry Potter debate.

Robert Trexler is editor of CSL: The Bulletin of the C.S. Lewis Society.

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