

## ***From the Editor***

As a way of jumpstarting my students' attention on a final exam, I will occasionally use Ecclesiastes 12:12 as an epigraph on the exam paper: *Of the making of many books there is no end, and in much study there is weariness for the flesh.* At the end of a long semester, the fourth such semester shaped by the rigors of living in the COVID-19 pandemic, there is no denying the “weariness of the flesh,” however much one might debate the irony of Qoheleth. Yet it remains our distinct privilege as article-writing, book-making theologians to attempt to make sense of our human condition, to search for and critique the sources of oppression that weary our flesh, and to dare to offer a word of solace and hope—the Advent hope of divine love incarnate.

In this issue, I draw your attention especially to Mary Doak's College Theology Society presidential address, “On Studying and Teaching Religion in Dark Times.” She deftly and sensitively explores “four religious contributions” that “might help to illuminate our dark times”: “sources of hope, emphases on unity, accounts of perennial human temptations and limitations, and attention to the importance of solitude and introspection.” In so doing, she inspires a recommitment to our theological vocation. A model teacher, Doak uses the latter part of her address to apply her analysis of the “contributions of religion to public life” to the Venerable Fr. Félix Varela y Morales (1788–1853). In their own particular ways, the authors of our six peer-reviewed articles demonstrate the truth of Doak's analysis as they explore the dynamics of faith and power across a diverse array of topics.

\*\*\*

I am nothing if not grateful for the many colleagues around the globe who contribute to *Horizons*. I welcome the new board members who have joined us across the two issues of volume 48 in 2021: Agnes Brazal, Maria Clara Lucchetti Bingemer, Radu Bordeianu, Dexter E. Callender Jr., Cecilia A. Moore, Stefanie Knauss, and Wilhelmus Valkenberg.

Over the past summer, managing editor Christine Bucher made the difficult decision to leave *Horizons* and accept a new challenge with a different publication. All the editors join me in thanking Christine for her invaluable contributions to the journal. Her considerable talents helped us to grow the

journal in new and exciting ways, and we remain most grateful. Christine, a true colleague's colleague, will be missed. We wish her well in her new endeavors.

Change provides new opportunities. I welcome and introduce to you our new managing editor, Dr. Mary Pappalardo. Mary comes to *Horizons* with a PhD in English literature from Louisiana State University. Her dissertation was titled "Novel Media: Global Contemporary Fiction in the Digital Age," and she brings her editorial experience from LSU Press and *The Offing* to our work at *Horizons*. Dr. Pappalardo can be contacted at [mary.pappalardo@villanova.edu](mailto:mary.pappalardo@villanova.edu).

As always, I thank our authors for sharing their scholarship with our readers, and I thank all of the members of the *Horizons* editorial team for their inspiring creativity, diligent work, and unwavering commitment to excellent scholarship.

ELENA PROCARIO-FOLEY