



TILLING THE SOIL FOR OUR BRIGHT FUTURE

Reflecting on Past Accomplishments, IACS Prepares for Exciting Year Ahead



Friends,

John Keats famously refers to the fall as “season of mellow fruitfulness” — using “mellow” in its original meaning of “ripe, mature” rather than “laid-back.” We have many reasons to be very content indeed with the fruitfulness of

the work of the Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies at USC. As we approach the seasons of Thanksgiving, Advent and Christmas, there is in fact much success to savor and be grateful for — a success that is the work of many hands, including the Institute’s generous supporters.

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When I took up the IACS helm some 15 months ago, I was — and remain — convinced that the Institute’s work in promoting and deepening Catholic thinking about important topics was phenomenal. Since then, three books have been published under the aegis of the Institute and two new book projects have started, both of which feature a fascinating range of Catholic authors from different parts of the world, different generations and different academic fields. It’s a great joy to see the fourth cohort of the Fr. James L. Heft, SM Generations in Dialogue program moving toward completion: the support and mentorship given to the young sociologists of religion

in this cohort invests not only in their personal scholarship but in the generations of undergraduates whom they will teach over many years to come, and the universities where they are citizens. The fact that we receive regular inquiries about future cohorts shows that this is a vital, needed support for emerging scholars working in the Catholic intellectual tradition.

I also believe passionately that widening both the circle of Institute friends and supporters, as well as the range of topics the Institute covers, is a priority. We especially need to reach younger audiences and scholars. The Institute’s adventures on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and our website — iacs.usc.edu — have sparked new awareness of our mission and work among younger generations for whom social media is the marketplace of ideas. As we emerge from COVID, video conferencing platforms like Zoom make it possible to continue programming that features a broad range of scholars and reaches audiences around the world.

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At the same time, as the calendar and liturgical years both wind down, we are also looking forward to new growth, including hopefully a return to face-to-face lectures and events. A small glimpse of our future:

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TRUSTEE SPOTLIGHT

ELLEN M. HANCOCK



A visionary leader in the tech industry and business world, Ellen M. Hancock is a generous philanthropist, active volunteer and longtime supporter of the Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies at USC. Ellen was the first chair of the Institute's Board of Trustees, and currently serves as an active member. Her leadership

has been pivotal in the development and growth of IACS.

We spoke with Ellen about the Institute and its future.

1. How did you first become involved with IACS?

I joined the Institute early on. I was impressed with its mission to further Catholic thought, strengthen the Catholic intellectual tradition and create dialogue with different religions and faith groups. I believe it's important to have an independent Catholic institute that can foster Catholic thought and publish material exploring important topics.

2. What IACS project are you most proud of?

A project that resonated quickly has been the True Wealth of Nations. It's an example of the important role our Institute serves – producing research in areas of wide interest. Catholicism teaches us to love our neighbor and care for others — this is evident in the Catholic Church's important role in areas like health care, education and business. One of my goals has been to make sure the Institute doesn't simply focus on esoteric things — although they may be interesting, we can create wider appeal and interest in our Institute and Catholicism by examining our faith's role in everyday topics people care about.

DONATE TODAY

As a non-profit, IACS relies on your generosity to fund research, programs, events and projects.

Online: <http://iacs.usc.edu/support>

Mail: Make check payable to "Institute for Advanced Catholic Studies at USC" and send to:

USC Advancement Gift Services
1150 South Olive Street, 25th Floor
Los Angeles, CA 90015

3. What makes IACS different from other Catholic institutes?

There are many religious institutes, but IACS is unique — there are very few independent Catholic institutes doing the type of work we are doing.

4. How has the Institute been successful?

Our work with scholars has resulted in very successful books that have been published by top academic publishing houses and met with positive peer reviews. We've also had discussions with USC on different areas and put topics into religious context, like religious analogies in film. It's things like that where the Institute has made an impact. Our Institute may not yet be everything we've envisioned — but we're still working at it and moving forward.

5. Why is supporting the Institute important?

The Institute needs a strong financial support structure and people on the Board of Trustees who are committed to our mission. We've been fortunate to have dedicated, knowledgeable trustees along with tremendous support from across USC. All of that support is necessary for the long-term success of our organization — which is still very young. It also builds a foundation that will enable the Institute to fulfill its mission far into the future. In today's world, that mission is more important than ever. †

SUPPORTING IACS

In 2020, as the magnitude of the COVID-19 Pandemic became obvious, the Institute invited our supporters to contribute to organizations that were working to serve neighbors most critically in need. Thank you for responding in so many ways to that unprecedented situation.

Like so many other nonprofits, however, the Institute has seen financial giving decrease over the last eighteen months.

As life begins to return — somewhat — to normal, we now ask for your support for the Institute.

IACS is growing — with new projects, like *Guadalupe at the Break of Dawn* and new opportunities, like Fr. Llywelyn's pieces in *The Conversation*.

We hope you will partner with us to fund these and other new ventures that further Catholic thought, imagination and experience.



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WELCOME

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- January sees the first meeting of our scholars working on Rethinking Justice, a major book project that re-examines what justice means in Catholic teaching.
- We are currently planning several fascinating public events in the Spring. And in fall 2022, we will bring together the scholars working on the volume *Guadalupe — At the Break of Dawn* to share their research and work towards this multidisciplinary landmark in Guadalupan studies.
- Plans are already underway for the next generation of mentors for the Institute's Generations in Dialogue program.
- A major new development for 2022-23 will be realizing a long-held dream and appointing the Institute's first academic fellows.

The Institute fosters our age-old Catholic tradition of thinking and imagination. The Catholic mind draws

from the labor and wisdom of previous generations, which is always being harvested. At the same time, it is always tilling the soil for new growth: planting, watering and tending the work of the mind and imagination, meaning that they will flourish through new generations who apply their intelligence as well as their faith to things that we cannot yet imagine. We are always in a season of fruitfulness as we both look back at the wisdom of the past and forward to harvests yet to come.

Thank you for your part in furthering this great tradition.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Dorian Llywelyn, S.J.
 President

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