



UNIVERSITY OF  
**ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE**  
IN THE UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

**The University of St. Michael's College at the 2018 Parliament of the World's Religions:  
Sessions featuring students, faculty and fellows**

**Friday, Nov. 2, 2:15–3 p.m.**

601A

*Catholic Women on the Front Line: Evangelization, Care, and Outreach*

The Women's Track: The Dignity of Women Across the World's Wisdom Traditions

Description

There is an ongoing discussion in the Catholic Church and faiths worldwide about the critical contributions of women. This panel will feature three female Catholic leaders who are making a profound impact locally, nationally, and globally. Hear about their contributions and how women continue to use their gifts and talents to lead the church in new and creative ways. Speakers **Moira McQueen (Faculty – Theology; CCBI)**; Josephine Lombardi; Divinia Pedro; Emilie Callan

**Friday, Nov. 2, 2:15–3:45 p.m.**

602A

*Hindu Non-Dualism and Its Impact on Social Inclusion*

Justice: Advancing Concrete Change Toward a Just, Peaceful, and Sustainable World

Description

The Hindu tradition of Advaita Vedānta (non-dualism) offers a theology of oneness and interconnectedness of all things in the universe. Though Advaita like all traditions has a complex and contested history, panelists in this session will highlight its potential for advancing the cause of social inclusion in various arenas, in theory, and in lived practice. Themes for discussion include the equal dignity of women and men, the integration of family life, and progressive visions of social change. Panel participants include scholars and Advaita acharyas (teachers) of different lineages, and of different generations, active in the United States and Canada.

Speakers: Svatmavidyananda Saraswati; Veena Howard; Dev Singh; Gina Singh; **Reid Locklin (Faculty – College Programmes)**

**Friday, Nov. 2, 3:15–4 p.m.**

710

*Faith in the Public Square*

Interfaith Understanding

Description

In a world more attuned to secular than sacred concerns, how and where do we find faith in the public square? In this workshop, writer and professor Randy Boyagoda will lead a discussion about how the Catholic intellectual tradition affords an active, globally-minded set of convictions and sensibilities that are today crucial for religiously serious people keen to engage productively in political discussion, influence public policy, social action and engagement, and form people for lives of excellence through education and culture.

Speaker: **Randy Boyagoda (Faculty – College Programmes; Principal & Vice-President)**

**Sunday, Nov. 4, 6–7 p.m.**

711

*Sanctuary for Refugees: Civil Initiative or Civil Disobedience?*

Justice: Advancing Concrete Change Toward a Just, Peaceful, and Sustainable World

Description

With great personal and communal effort, religious communities are providing shelter to refugees who are fleeing homeland horrors. At the international level, multi-faith leaders have been working on the International Sanctuary Statement. No matter how far from the borders, people of faith have an active role to play in the largest refugee crisis since World War II. This program will take participants from the practical realities of offering sanctuary as localized acts of civil initiative, to the growing international interfaith movement proclaiming the rights of individuals to seek asylum and be protected from removal to danger.

Speaker: Alexa Gilmour; **Mary Jo Leddy (Honorary Fellow)**

**Sunday, Nov. 4, 6–7 p.m. \*\* SUBJECT TO REVISION \*\***

201C

*Contemporary Issues in Comparative Theology and Interreligious Dialogue - Part II*

Interfaith Understanding

Description

Mara Brecht will explore the claim that interreligious encounter forces theological self-understanding to be risked and re-shaped. In her paper, "A Widened Promise for Interreligious Engagement," she investigates possibilities for how deep encounter across religious boundaries can re-shape other forms of self-understanding — especially racial self-understanding. Tom Reynolds notes ambiguity in traditions of hospitality as a means for engaging religious differences, which risk distortion in paternalistic and assimilative gestures, while at the same time containing fruitful openings into modes of mutual relation that resist and transform such

distortions. His paper, “Whose Home? Whose Welcome? Hospitality and Interreligious Engagement,” builds on this ambiguity to explore how hospitality can be a generative interreligious hermeneutic. Nevin Reda argues for reconceptualising Islam as “wholeness making, peacemaking, wellbeing making, and safety making” in the institutional setting of theological schools. Using the lens of translation studies, she demonstrates how this translation is linguistically more accurate and contextually better suited, meeting the needs of students who venture into the workplace. Her paper is entitled “What is Islam: The Importance of Being Islamic in Theological Schools.” Darren Dias’s paper, “Loving Neighbor in a Changing Neighborhood,” examines the responses to growing cultural and religious diversity in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Toronto and in the Toronto School of Theology in the period 1965-1985.

Speaker: **Darren Dias (Faculty – Theology); Mara Brecht (Visiting Faculty – Theology);** Tom Reynolds; Nevin Reda; Abraham Khan

## **Tuesday, Nov. 6, 12:15–1 p.m.**

Room 706

*Faster, Higher, More Moral?: Human Enhancement and Christianity*

Justice: Advancing Concrete Change Toward a Just, Peaceful, and Sustainable World

### Description

There is a growing intersection between new issues raised by human enhancement technologies and established questions of religion, such as what it means to be a good, happy, or ‘perfect’ human being. Indeed, as well as encouraging methods to make our bodies stronger, smarter, and more attractive, enhancement advocates suggest that the use of artificial intelligence, genetic technologies, and pharmaceuticals could bring human behaviour to a higher affective, moral, and spiritual level. In this panel, we will discuss points of contact and contrast between these proposals and Christianity, especially Christian anthropological and ethical ideals.

Speakers: Michael Buttrey; **Moira McQueen (Faculty – Theology; CCBI);** Tracy Trothen

## **Tuesday, Nov. 6, 2:15–3 p.m.**

704

*Including Exclusivists: How to Successfully Engage Evangelicals in Interfaith*

Interfaith Understanding

### Description

Protestant Evangelical Christians are one of the largest Christian movement in the US and Canada, and one of the fastest growing worldwide—yet it is difficult to interest them in interfaith partnerships, dialogue, or cooperation. While this is a formidable challenge for interfaith efforts, it is not one that cannot be overcome. This session will provide proven tools and strategies for engaging Evangelicals in interfaith and overcoming the group’s

characteristically exclusive posture toward other faiths. The presenter will share success stories from Neighborly Faith—a first of its kind network for advocating interfaith among Evangelicals—and discuss best practices for this, all too often, difficult task.

Speaker: **Chris Stackaruk (Student – Theology)**

**Tuesday, Nov. 6, 4:15–5:45 p.m.**

718A

*Welcome the Stranger*

Interfaith Understanding

Description

Cardinal Thomas Collins will reflect on the origins of the Archdiocese of Toronto and its long-standing history of welcoming those in our midst. From the first bishop of Toronto, Michael Power, who died of typhus caring for Irish immigrants to sponsorship of the Vietnamese “Boat People” in the 1980’s, the Catholic community in the Greater Toronto Area has been known for its hospitality and outreach. Most recently, the Archdiocese of Toronto has served as one of the largest private sponsors of refugees in Canada, bringing not only Christians but people of all faiths to Canada from the Middle East and other areas of conflict worldwide.

Speaker: **Thomas Collins (Chancellor)**

**Tuesday, Nov. 6, 6–7 p.m.**

604

*Welcoming the Stranger: Bittersweet Stories of Starting Over in Canada*

Canada

Description

A refugee whose family restarted their chocolate factory in Canada after it was bombed in Syria and they were forced to flee - their success eventually celebrated by Prime Minister Trudeau. An immigrant and philanthropist who built an 80+ Restaurant empire that makes a point of hiring refugees. A former Catholic Sister who turned into one of the country’s strongest Refugee advocates. These are the stories of Tareq Hadhad, Mohamad Fakih, and Mary Jo Leddy.

Speakers: **Mary Jo Leddy (Honorary Fellow)**; Mohamed Fakih; Tareq Hadhad; Pamela Divinsky