



INSTITUTE FOR  
CATHOLIC LIBERAL  
EDUCATION

# 2024 NATIONAL CONFERENCE

*Behold the Beauty of the Lord*



## BREAKOUT SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES

JULY 9-12, 2024 | BENEDICTINE COLLEGE | ATCHISON, KS

### **Dr. Gwen Adams**

*Visiting Assistant Professor of Theology, Augustine Institute*

Gwen Adams is a writer and playwright and teaches in the Catholic Education MA program at the Augustine Institute (Denver, CO). She has worked in parish, diocesan, middle-school, high-school, undergraduate, and graduate settings, teaching history and literature and directing plays including *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Winter's Tale*, *Uncle Vanya*, and *Life Is a Dream*. Dr. Adams is the author of *By an Unexpected Way: Stories of the New Evangelization* (Augustine Institute, 2019) and the founder of Bardstreet.com, offering new plays and youth and young adult theater.

### **Dr. Alyssan Barnes**

*Senior Faculty, Institute for Catholic Liberal Education*

Dr. Alyssan Barnes is delighted to bring her passion for liberal education together with her Catholic faith in the role of Senior Faculty at the Institute for Catholic Liberal Education. Dr. Barnes has taught various subjects at both the secondary and college level. She is the author of two high school textbooks on rhetoric, and she serves as an Alcuin Fellow for the Texas chapter of the Society for Classical Learning.

### **Killian Beeler**

*Founder, Faithful Catholic Fundraising*

Killian Beeler is the founder of Faithful Catholic Fundraising, a guest lecturer for the Bush School of Business's Church Management program at CUA, and a champion of Catholic liberal education. For nearly a decade, Killian has served parishes, dioceses, schools and other ministries, combining a love for the Church with expertise in relationship management, organizational development, executive coaching, and community engagement. He and his wife are both proud alumni of the University of Dallas, the Catholic University for Independent Thinkers. They, along with their four young children, love livin' in the City of Silos, the Metropolis of Magnolia...Wacky Waco, Texas!

### **Dr. Benjamin Beier**

*Chair and Associate Professor of Education, Hillsdale College*

Benjamin V. Beier, Ph. D. is an Associate Professor and the Chair of Education at Hillsdale College. He received his Ph.D. from the University of Wisconsin at Madison and has published articles on Shakespeare, Thomas More, and related topics. He is currently co-authoring a book on Aristotelian logic. He resides with his wife Emily and four children in Hillsdale.

### **David Bonagura**

*Latin Teacher / Adjunct Professor of Theology, Regis High School / St. Joseph's Seminary / Catholic Distance University*

David G. Bonagura, Jr. teaches at Regis High School in New York City. He is also an adjunct professor of classical languages at St. Joseph's Seminary, New York, and an adjunct professor of theology at Catholic Distance University. He is the 2023-24 Cardinal Newman Society Fellow for Eucharistic Education, author of three books, and contributing writer for *The Catholic Thing* and *Catholic World Report* websites.

### **Jay Boren**

*Headmaster, St. Benedict Classical Academy*

Jay Boren has been the Headmaster of St. Benedict Classical Academy in Natick, MA for nine years. Before moving to Massachusetts he served as a high school theology teacher, coach, and assistant athletic director at McGill-Toolen Catholic High School in Mobile, Alabama for eleven years. He lives in Millis, Massachusetts with his wife, Katie, and their four daughters.

### **John Brahier**

*Associate Superintendent for Culture Culture / Founder, Archdiocese of Detroit / The Fides Et Ratio Project*

John Brahier is the Associate Superintendent for Catholic Culture in the Archdiocese of Detroit and the founder of The Fides Et Ratio Project, which partners with educators to provide resources and formation so that they are equipped to bring the Catholic faith to life for their students. Previously, he served as a teacher (in the disciplines of mathematics and theology) and as Director of Campus Ministry. He lives near Detroit, MI with his wife (Annie) and three children (Stephen, Matthew, and Mary).

### **Nicolas Charbonneau**

*Principal, Harrison Design*

Nicolas Leo Charbonneau is a principal of Harrison Design's Washington D.C. office, where he directs the Sacred Architecture Studio responsible for St. Benedict's Classical Academy of Natick, MA, and the renovation of Thomas Aquinas College's Northfield, MA chapel, among other projects. Since graduating from Notre Dame School of Architecture in 2009 Nic has been dedicated to the 21st century renaissance of classical and traditional architecture, and has been happy to serve the Catholic Church at all levels including parishes, private and parochial schools, private chapels and shrines, cathedrals, seminaries, and monasteries.

### **Michele Chronister**

*Middle School Theology / Philosophy , The Saint Austin School*

Michele Chronister teaches Theology and Philosophy to middle school students at the St. Austin School in St. Louis, Missouri. She received her Masters in Theology through the University of Notre Dame's ECHO program, which focuses on formation in Catechetical Leadership. In addition to teaching, she has also worked extensively with the National Catholic Partnership on Disability, developing courses and resources for catechists of those with disabilities, and has also worked as a freelance Catholic writer and author. In her spare time, she and her three daughters enjoy supporting the formation of the seminarians her husband teaches at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary.

### **Monica Clarke**

*Faculty, Institute for Catholic Liberal Education*

Monica grew up in Louisville, KY. She attended Christendom College, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Philosophy, and holds a Master of Arts in Theology from St. Charles Borromeo School of Theological Studies in Philadelphia. Monica has worked in Catholic education for 13 years, teaching a variety of grade levels and subjects, including math, Latin, religion, and music. She has served both as a Master Teacher and Upper School Dean of Regina Coeli Academy in Abington, PA, during which time she mentored and conducted professional development for a portion of the faculty in addition to her regular teaching duties. She is a classically trained musician. Her passion for authentic Catholic and classical education stems from ever-growing gratitude for her own formation, and she hopes to work towards making the same formation possible for many future generations of students.

### **Peter Crawford**

*Academic Dean, Institute for Catholic Liberal Education*

Peter Crawford was the founding headmaster of the St. Jerome Institute, a private liberal arts high school in the Catholic intellectual tradition. A graduate of Ave Maria University, he received his Master's and MPhil degrees in philosophy from the University of Leuven. He taught ancient, medieval, and modern European history and humane letters at Glendale Preparatory Academy, a classical charter school in Phoenix, Arizona, from 2009-2013. In 2013, he founded two Great Hearts Academies in San Antonio, Texas. He grew both the lower school (K-5) and the upper school (6-12) enrollment to serve 700 students of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Peter and his beautiful wife have seven children.

### **Veronica Cruz Burchard**

*Chief Operating Officer, Sophia Institute for Teachers*

Veronica Cruz Burchard is the Chief Operating Officer at Sophia Institute. Before stepping into the COO role, Veronica helped found Sophia Institute for Teachers in 2013. For the last decade, she has played a key role in the shaping of Sophia's professional development Workshops for teachers and catechists, as well as the production of Sophia's religion series including Spirit of Truth, A Family of Faith, and Walking with Jesus.

### **David Denton**

*Managing Consultant, Arcadia Education*

David Denton is a managing consultant with Arcadia Education. Prior to joining Arcadia, David was a leader within Great Hearts Academies from 2010 to 2023, helping to build it into the largest provider of classical education in the country. He served as Executive Director over academies and Superintendent of Great Hearts Arizona between 2016 to 2023. He founded a Great Hearts academy in 2012 and led it to become one of the top-performing schools in the state of Arizona over the course of four years. David began his career in education as a high school math teacher in 2001. David holds degrees in engineering and mathematics from the University of Virginia and the University of Texas at Dallas, respectively. He and his wife Edi have been married for seventeen years and have six children.

### **Sarah Dickerson**

*Interim Board Co-Chair / 4th Grade Homeroom Teacher, Regina Coeli Academy*

Sarah Dickerson and her husband, Adam, parents of seven, helped to co-found Martin Saints Classical High School in the suburbs of Philadelphia after experiencing the fruitfulness of their family's partnership with the Regina Academies at the grade school level. An adult convert to the Faith, Sarah considers coming into full communion with the Catholic Church the decisive step of her life. No stranger to the absurdities of life, she is an adult child of divorce marked by grit, humor, and grace. Sarah is stunned by the sacramental imagination in action within her own children and students as a result of their immersion in the Catholic intellectual and moral tradition from their earliest days, and she longs to extend those possibilities to other schools and families.

### **Dr. Caitlin Dillon**

*Literacy Instructor / Teacher-Trainer / Consultant, Mark Trinity, LLC / Institute for Catholic Liberal Education*

Dr. Caitlin Dillon's mission is bring God's mercy more fully into the world for educators and students, specifically through helping teachers have clear thinking about reading instruction so that they are able to maximize their students' reading (and writing and spelling) skills. God's guidance led Caitlin to learn about the English language in depth by earning a Ph.D. in Linguistics and to learn about literacy development as a reading researcher at Yale. Finally, as a classroom teacher, tutor, and reading specialist, Caitlin has learned how to apply her knowledge to teach hundreds of students to read well, including students with dyslexia and English language learners from age 5 to adult.

### **David Gockowski**

*Faculty, Institute for Catholic Liberal Education*

David Gockowski is a faculty member with ICLE. He has worked for several years at great Catholic liberal arts schools, as an elementary lead teacher. He, his wife Bernadette, and their five convivial children live in the Twin Cities, MN.

### **John Haigh**

*Chair of the Architecture Program, Benedictine College*

John Haigh, M.Arch (University of Notre Dame), is the chair of the Benedictine College Architecture program. Haigh has worked under the esteemed Arthur Ross Award-winning architect Thomas Gordon Smith, who was a leader in the contemporary developments of the resurgence of both teaching and practicing classical architecture. Under Smith, Haigh was acting manager from 2005-11 for an array of projects: the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Classical Galleries in the American Wing; Our Lady of Clear Creek Abbey, Oklahoma; Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary Chapel, Nebraska; the Alliance for Catholic Education at the University of Notre Dame; and many others.

### **Dr. Arthur Hippler**

*Chairman, Religion Dept., Providence Academy*

Arthur Hippler is chairman of the religion department of the Upper School of Providence Academy in Minnesota. He has served as an adjunct professor for the Institute of Pastoral Theology of Ave Maria University and the St. Paul School of Divinity of the University of St. Thomas. He received a BA in Liberal Arts from Thomas Aquinas College, and a PhD in Philosophy from Boston College.

### **Brad Jolly**

*Math Enrichment Volunteer*

During his four-decade global career in technology, Brad has studied how different countries approach math. He has conducted hundreds of math education sessions for Catholic school students and teachers from kindergarten through college levels, always with the goal of helping persons see God and beauty in math. He is a mathematical inventor, including games, puzzles, and even a method of doing algebra without any of the standard symbols. Brad is a Catholic convert, a married father of four Catholic school graduates, a fourth degree Knight of Columbus, and a graduate of the the University of Michigan and the Denver Catholic Biblical School.

### **Christy Karako**

*Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Angelus Academy*

Christy Karako holds a B.A. in History from the University of Dallas and a Master's of Library Science from the Catholic University of America. She has taught at the elementary and middle school levels and currently teaches introductory Latin. As the Director of Curriculum and Instruction and librarian at Angelus Academy in Springfield, Virginia, she leads professional development sessions and regularly presents to the Virginia Association of School Librarians on the benefits of reading aloud.

### **Marie Kelly**

*Faculty, Institute for Catholic Liberal Education*

Marie was born and raised in Cleveland, Ohio, before receiving her B.A. in elementary education from St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana. She has experience teaching in a variety of PK-12 classroom settings but found her passion in teaching early elementary students. Marie was first introduced to the rich tradition of a Catholic liberal arts education when she began to teach at St. Thomas the Apostle in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where she helped the school make the transition to a classical curriculum. After a number of years teaching first and second grade, Marie and her husband moved to Boston, Massachusetts, where they currently reside. Marie was blessed to continue teaching second grade at St. Benedict Classical Academy, where she continued to help her students grow in the classical intellectual tradition of the Catholic Church. Marie is excited to be joining the ICLE team in helping inspire and renew Catholic educators in the rich tradition of the Catholic Church. Together, may we provide students with an authentic encounter with the transcendental Good, True, and Beautiful in a joyful and faithful Catholic environment.

### **Dr. Jeffrey Lehman**

*Chairman, Religion Dept., Providence Academy*

Jeffrey Lehman is Professor of Philosophy and Theology and Director of the M. A. in Catholic Education program at the Augustine Institute's Graduate School of Theology. In addition to serving formerly on the teaching faculty of Biola University, Thomas Aquinas College, Hillsdale College, and the University of Dallas, he also developed curriculum for the undergraduate Classical Education Program at Hillsdale College and for the graduate Classical Education Program at the University of Dallas, both of which programs grew substantially under his guidance and influence. Dr. Lehman has published essays and books on a wide array of authors and texts, including two monographs: *Augustine: Rejoicing in the Truth* and *Socratic Conversation: Bringing the Dialogues of Plato and the Socratic Tradition into Today's Classroom*. He is currently co-authoring books on (St. Severinus) Boethius and St. Thomas Aquinas with fellow Senior Fellows of the Boethius Institute.

### **John Mays**

*Director of Science Curriculum, Classical Academic Press / Novare Science*

John D. Mays spent 14 years in industry in engineering and engineering management in the areas of electrical, controls, and telecommunications systems. John acquired an MEd in Secondary Education from the University of Houston in 1989, completed 36 hours of graduate study in Physics at Texas A&M, and acquired an MLA at St. Edward's University. John served as the Math-Science Department Chair at Regents School of Austin from 2001 until 2009 when he became Director of the Laser Optics Lab at Regents. He founded Novare Science in 2009 and is the author and editor of numerous student science texts and teacher resources. In 2019, Novare Science became part of Classical Academic Press, where John is now Director of Science Curriculum overseeing continued development of the Novare Science curriculum.

### **Alexander McCune**

*Director of Sacred Music, Christ the King Parish School*

Alexander is a director, singer, organist and teacher specializing in choral and sacred music, Gregorian chant, and children's voices. He believes every Catholic deserves to experience the rich treasury of music and art the Church has produced. Alexander has been leading and teaching children and adults in Catholic music since 2008, and he currently directs the sacred music program at Christ the King Parish & School in Milwaukie, OR.

### **Mallory McKee**

*Library Manager, Teacher, Saint Paul Catholic Classical School*

Mallory McKee is currently the library manager as well as the middle school theology and seventh grade homeroom teacher at Saint Paul Catholic Classical School in Richardson, Texas. She received her Bachelor of Science in biology from the University of Texas at Austin and is currently working on her Master of Humanities with a concentration in classical education at the University of Dallas.

### **Dr. Michael Naughton**

*Director, Center for Catholic Studies, University of St. Thomas*

A teacher for over 40 years, Michael Naughton is the director of the Center for Catholic Studies at the University of St. Thomas (Minnesota). Author, co-author and co-editor of 12 books and monographs and over 60 articles, his most recent book is called *What We Hold in Trust: Rediscovering the Purpose of Catholic Higher Education* (coauthors Don Briel and Ken Goodpaster). Dr. Naughton serves on several boards including the University of Mary, St. Agnes School's Headmaster's Advisory Board and Catholic Eldercare.

### **Dr. Pamela Patnode**

*Director, Institute for Catholic School Leadership*

Dr. Pamela Patnode is a Benedictine oblate, author, speaker, and educator. Patnode holds a Master of Arts degree in Theology, a Doctorate in Education, and has served as a consultant to the USCCB. She currently serves as the director of the Institute for Catholic School Leadership at The Saint Paul Seminary School of Divinity in St. Paul, MN.

### **Ralph Pesce**

*Humanities Teacher, Dean of Faculty, Bishop Machebeuf High School*

Ralph Pesce holds an M.A. in Theology from the Augustine Institute and teaches Integrated Humanities at Bishop Machebeuf High School in Denver, CO, where he is also the Dean of Faculty. He also teaches courses in the Catechism and in Philosophy at St. John Vianney Seminary: Lay Division in the Archdiocese of Denver.

### **Sr. John Dominic Rasmussen**

*Executive Director, Openlight Media*

Sr. John Dominic Rasmussen, O.P. is a Dominican Sister of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist in Ann Arbor, Michigan, and has been in religious life for 40 years. She received her degree in education at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee, and a Masters of Theology from Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio. She has over 35 years of experience in Catholic education as both a teacher and administrator. From her experience, she has developed *Disciple of Christ | Education in Virtue* and currently serves as the Executive Director of Openlight Media which publishes print and digital resources for the school, parish, and home.

### **Colleen Richards**

*Faculty, Institute for Catholic Liberal Education*

After 17 years of classroom teaching in a variety of Catholic elementary and high schools, Colleen Richards spent eight years as the second headmaster of St. John Bosco Schools in East Rochester, New York. She served as ICLE's Director of School Services, leading teacher training and school advising efforts around the country, and continues to serve Catholic teachers around the country in the role of faculty member.

### **Dr. Brett Salkeld**

*Archdiocesan Theologian, Archdiocese of Regina*

Brett Salkeld is Archdiocesan Theologian for the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Regina and the author of *Educating for Eternity: A Teacher's Companion for Making Every Class Catholic*. He lives in Regina with his wife, Flannery, and their seven children. He is a podcaster, columnist, and singer in the Catholic cover band Sed Contra.

### **Krystyn Schmerbeck**

*Director, Graduate Programs in Classical Education, Benedictine College*

Krystyn Schmerbeck serves as the director of graduate programs in classical education at Benedictine College. Her passion for the renewal of Catholic education derives from her experiences in teaching, leading and coaching educators in both diocesan and classical schools for the past twelve years. Krystyn is working toward her doctorate in educational leadership at the University of St. Thomas in Houston and holds graduate degrees in public policy and Catholic school leadership.

### **Nicole Scofield**

*Tutor / Drama Teacher, Regina Caeli Academy / Chesterton Academy of Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati*

Calling herself an artist and jack-of-all-trades, Nicole Scofield teaches Latin, history, and religion at the hybrid homeschool program Regina Caeli Academy and serves as the drama teacher at the Chesterton Academy of Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati. She earned a B.A. in drama from Franciscan University of Steubenville and an M.S. in psychology from Divine Mercy University. Now she continues her study on the human person and the Trinity to enhance her work of teaching and her ministry of spiritual accompaniment and healing prayer.

### **Harold A. Siegel, III**

*Principal, Bishop Machebeuf High School*

A teacher of over 25 years of experience in Catholic liberal education (Ancient and Medieval History, Latin, Literature, and Humanities) with graduate degrees from the Catholic University of America (Medieval and Byzantine Studies) and the University of Notre Dame (Medieval Studies). Having taught at Hillsdale College and several classical high schools, now the principal at Bishop Machebeuf in the midst of its renewal through an Integrated Humanities Program.

### **Dr. DeAnn Stuart**

*Associate Director of Credential Program, Institute for Catholic Liberal Education*

DeAnn Stuart received her B.A. and Master of Humanities from the University of Dallas and her Ph.D. from Baylor University. Over the years, she has received multiple awards for excellence in teaching at the middle school, high school, and university levels. Currently, she works as Associate Director of ICLE's Catholic Educator Formation and Credential program.

### **John Paul Thureau**

*Director of Catholic School Partnerships, Classic Learning Test*

As Director of Catholic School Partnerships at Classic Learning Test, JP is passionate about spreading the renewal of Catholic education on the crucial front of student assessments. He was formerly a member of ICLE's school services team, and he has years of experience as a school administrator and teacher. JP has taught a wide variety of subjects—including geometry, government, economics, history, literature, Latin, music theory, physics, and rhetoric—in addition to coaching varsity baseball and football. He received a B.A. in classical Liberal Arts from Thomas Aquinas College and an M.A. in Humanities/Classical Education from the University of Dallas.

### **Rosemary Vander Weele**

*Faculty / President, ICLE / Our Lady of Lourdes*

Rosemary was born and raised in Denver, Colorado. She earned an undergraduate degree from Franciscan University of Steubenville and graduate degrees in Catholic Leadership from the Augustine Institute and Education Administration from Regis University. In 2011, after teaching middle school English and history for seven years, Rosemary was appointed principal of Our Lady of Lourdes, which at the time had less than 100 students and was identified for closure the following year. At the encouragement of then-Auxiliary Bishop James Conley, she led the school through a renewal in the Catholic liberal arts that resulted in a return to maximum enrollment within seven years and the addition of a second campus in the fall of 2018. Rosemary now serves as President of Our Lady of Lourdes, overseeing the continued development of both campuses, and as Faculty for ICLE.

### **Thomas Varacalli**

*Assistant Professor of Great Books, Honors College, Belmont Abbey College*

Thomas Varacalli is Assistant Professor of Great Books at the Honors College of Belmont Abbey College. He is the co-editor of *The Future of the Catholic Church in the American Political Order* (Franciscan, 2023). He received his Ph.D. in political science from Louisiana State University.

### **Margaret Walsh**

*Founder / Learning Specialist, Secret Garden Educational Pathways / Bishop Machebeuf High School*

Margaret Walsh holds a B.A. in Liberal Arts from Thomas Aquinas College and a M.S. in Education from University of North Dakota with a focus in Special Education and remediation. She founded her own business in 2015 and has been working to provide intervention to students and consulting to parents, teachers and schools. Much of her remediation approach aligns with Thomistic philosophy, an important component in Catholic education.

### **Sr. Peter Joseph Wardlaw, O.P.**

*Theology Teacher & Choir Director, Marin Catholic High School / Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist*

Sr. Peter Joseph Wardlaw, OP, is originally from California, and completed her degree in medieval theology and literature at Baylor University before entering the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, in 2010. As a Sister, she has gone on to complete graduate studies in theology as well as music education. She has taught at high schools around the country, and has built theology, history, and choir curriculum at the high school and middle school levels. Sr. Peter Joseph has also published on Catholic music education in the Catholic Music Association of America's journal *Sacred Music*.

### **John Parker Wilmeth**

*Associate, Harrison Design*

John Parker first desired to build churches while sitting in the gardens of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel at Thomas Aquinas College, his Alma Mater.

While earning his Master of Architecture from the University of Notre Dame, he enjoyed designing churches in a variety of styles as a means to more fully understanding the deep symbolic meaning and rich history of sacred spaces of the Church. An additional year, earning him a Master of Urban Design, led to a richer understanding of the entirety of the human environment and its interaction with creation as a whole.

At Harrison Design, he has assisted with all stages of design for Our Mother of Perpetual Help Chapel Renovation in Northfield, MA; and St. Ambrose Catholic Church of Annandale, VA. He has played a crucial role in master planning and schematic design for several projects still in the design phase, including Marigold Village in Globe, AZ, St. Catherine of Siena parish school in Wake Forest, NC, and St. Edward's Ordinariate Parish in Phoenix, AZ.

In addition to his work in the office, John Parker is an accomplished musician, having at various times conducted several choirs, taught voice lessons, and performed as a soloist and in chorus. He is the father of three children and enjoys gardening in his precious little free time.

### **Dr. James Matthew Wilson**

*Cullen Foundation Chair of English, Director MFA Program in Creative Writing, University of Saint Thomas, Houston*

James Matthew Wilson is the Cullen Foundation Chair in English and the Director of the MFA program in creative writing at the University of Saint Thomas, Houston. Wilson is the author of fourteen books, including four full-length collections of poetry, including "Saint Thomas and the Forbidden Birds" (Word on Fire, 2024). He serves as the Poet-in-Residence of the Benedict XVI Institute, Scholar-in-Residence at Aquinas College, Editor of Colosseum Books, and Poetry Editor of Modern Age Magazine.

### **Amy Zuberbueler**

*Director, International Center for Ward Method Studies*

Amy Guettler Zuberbueler has successfully integrated the Ward Method of Music Instruction for Catholic Schools in classroom and parish settings for over twenty years. Following this unique musical pedagogy, originally conceived to promote the active participation of young people in the worship of the Catholic Church, Mrs. Zuberbueler has helped children discover beauty through music. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Theology from Christendom College in Front Royal, Virginia, and a Masters in Music Education from Shenandoah University in Winchester, Virginia. Director of The International Center for Ward Method Studies at the B. T. Rome School of Music, Drama and Art, at The Catholic University of America since 2020, she is a frequent lecturer at music and education conferences nationally and internationally.