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From the Editor

Pope Francis's Jubilee of Hope is quickly drawing to a close, and I cannot help but think how wise it was for him to focus our attention on the theological virtue of hope. The many significant challenges facing our suffering world cry out for a hope that does not disappoint (Rom 5:5), as Pope Francis explicitly taught in his Bull of Indiction for the jubilee, *Spes non Confundit*. Pope Leo XIV, fulfilling a commitment made by Pope Francis, recently completed a journey to Turkey to meet with Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I to commemorate the 1,700th anniversary of the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea. Pope Leo's first papal trip abroad was as much a demonstration of hope as it was a concrete step toward forging unity among Christians. Following their meeting, Pope Leo and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew issued a joint declaration.[1] The declaration reaffirmed their commitment to work for unity: "We continue to walk with firm determination on the path of dialogue, in love and truth (cf. Eph 4:15), towards the hoped-for restoration of full communion between our sister Churches." Pope Leo and His Holiness Bartholomew encouraged the work of ecumenism as well as of interreligious dialogue as key components of working toward peace. They write:

> The goal of Christian unity includes the objective of contributing in a fundamental and life-giving manner to peace among all peoples. Together we fervently raise our voices in invoking God's gift of peace upon our world. Tragically, in many regions of our world, conflict and violence continue to destroy the lives of so many.... In particular, we reject any use of religion and the name of God to justify violence. We believe that authentic interreligious dialogue, far from being a cause of syncretism and confusion, is essential for the coexistence of peoples of different traditions and cultures.... While we are deeply alarmed by the current international situation, we do not lose hope. God will not abandon humanity.

In this issue, Johann Vento's 2025 Presidential Address to the College Theology Society reflects on the need for hope and communion in a fractured world, identifying hope and communion as themes for Popes Francis and Leo, respectively. She also describes the work of the CTS as embodying as well

[1] Leo XIV and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, "Joint Declaration" (November 29, 2025), https://www.vatican.va/content/leo-xiv/en/travels/2025/documents/20251129-dichiarazione-congiunta.html.

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as contributing to the creation of both hope and communion in this world. Similarly, as the journal of the CTS steeped in the tradition of faith seeking understanding and the Second Vatican Council spirit of *aggiornamento, Horizons* seeks to support a wide range of theological scholarship that interrogates sources of disunity and violence and identifies resources in the tradition that contribute to healing a world riven by pain.

The five articles and book review symposium in this issue traverse spirituality (Jamie Myrose on Saint Teresa of Avila, resiliency, and suffering; Austin Cruz on Guadalupan devotion and *Huei tlamahuiçoltica*; a symposium on Christopher Tirres's *Liberating Spiritualities*), ethics (William George on how we consider or fail to consider one another; Monica Marcelli-Chu on the common good and integral ecology), and theodicy, defenses, and their misunderstandings (Terrence Tilley). The articles offer a window onto the range of research explored within the pages of *Horizons*. The combination of Vento's address and the annual Report of the CTS expand our understanding of the important work that our College Theology Society colleagues pursue to contribute to forging hope, dialogue, peace, and a unity born of celebrating the great mosaic of human diversity that reflects back to us the divine image.

For seventeen years, it has been my great privilege to serve *Horizons* as assistant and then associate editor, and for the last ten of those seventeen years to serve as editor. Stability within organizations is important, but change at the right moment is equally important for institutions to continue to grow and thrive. It is time for *Horizons*, and it is time for me, to make a change. Christopher Denny (St. John's University, Queens, NY) will assume the role of editor of *Horizons*. I am so grateful to Professor Denny for the many years we have served together at *Horizons*. He has served as book review editor and associate editor. I have depended on his erudition and wise counsel for many years. Professor Denny's tenure at *Horizons*, his experience with other journals, and his expertise as a historical theologian with interests in theology and literature, comparative theology, and understanding sacrifice and hermeneutics position him well to guide the journal deftly through the considerable obstacles facing academic journal publishing in the second quarter of the twenty-first century, from skyrocketing costs to generative AI to the crisis of truth.

As I write my final "From the Editor," I am filled with gratitude for the many people who have supported me and collaborated with me throughout my *Horizons* journey. There are no adequate words of thanks for Anthony J. Godzieba, who encouraged me and opened doors for me early in my career. That he asked me to partner with him to become the first assistant editor of *Horizons*, and then invited me to take over from him as editor will remain the

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greatest professional gift. For his trust in me as a scholar and for our friendship, I am deeply grateful.

In addition to Christopher Denny, I have collaborated with associate editors Gerald Beyer (Villanova University), Timothy Brunk (Villanova University), and Cristina Lledo Gomez (Australian Institute of Theological Education). I have learned so much from all of them and have been challenged by their insights, buoyed by their good humor, and inspired by their dedication to the project of faith seeking understanding. To all of you, my ongoing gratitude for the team effort that is our journal.

Book review editors often work in the background, laboring away at many details in order to bring our readers a feast of knowledge that they can use in their classrooms or scholarship. It is much harder work than one might assume. For their expertise, steadfastness, curiosity, and faithfulness to the project of *Horizons*, I am completely indebted. My inadequate expression of thanks to the stellar book review editors with whom I have served: Mary Kate Birge, Colleen Carpenter, Christopher Denny, Mary Doak, Craig Ford, Christopher McMahon, and John Sheveland. Having served as a book review editor since 2018, Professor Birge concludes her service with this issue. I thank her for her many years at *Horizons*.

From inception, *Horizons* has profited from talented professionals filling the roles of editorial assistant, until 2016, and thereafter the expanded and indispensable role of managing editor, both positions have been made possible by Villanova University. I am grateful for the ongoing Villanova-*Horizons* collaboration. The editors depend on the people in these positions to take care of the daily volume of communication with authors, reviewers, publishers, and production managers, and so much more. I had the pleasure of working with editorial assistants Irene C. Noble and Sarah Glaser while I was assistant and associate editor.

My ten years as editor would not have been possible without the incredible work of managing editors Christine Bucher and Dr. Mary Pappalardo. The managing editors are equal partners in creating and bringing each issue to print. Christine Bucher's experience in commercial publishing brought new perspectives and energy to the work at *Horizons*; I depended on her experience when I became editor. Enough good cannot be said about current managing editor Dr. Mary Pappalardo. She came to *Horizons* at a time of transition for the journal and at a time of personal loss for two of us on the editorial staff. She stepped up immediately and utilized her experience both in academic university publishing and in literary journals to help us publish throughout COVID-19 (as the pandemic affected supply chains around the world, it also affected print publishing). Dr. Pappalardo's steady hand continues to guide us

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through many fast-paced changes in university publishing. I am most grateful for her insights, professionalism, expertise, and genuine partnership in producing the journal.

Editor Anthony Godzieba transformed *Horizons* when he entered contract negotiations with Cambridge University Press. I am grateful to everyone at Cambridge who continues to help us produce a world-class journal. There have been too many people in different positions to name, but I wish to thank the CUP editors/publishers who have been the primary point of contact for the journal: Martine Walsh, Amy Laurent, Emily Redican-Bradford, and Anna Wylie. And many, many expressions of thanks are due to CUP copyeditors Marian Rogers and Susan Gall, who have saved the editors and authors of *Horizons* from any number of errors and have helped us clarify our thinking.

I know that Pope Francis's spirt of dialogue and hope and Pope Leo's spirit of dialogue and communion imbue the highly talented and enthusiastic scholars who will now continue to lead *Horizons*. I look forward to the new directions Editor Denny and company will take our esteemed journal.

The Qoheleth teaches us that there is a season for everything (Eccl 3). And so, for the last time, 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.

It has been my great joy and deep privilege to learn with you for nearly two decades.

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