

AMERICAN PRIEST

THE AMBITIOUS LIFE AND CONFLICTED LEGACY
OF NOTRE DAME'S FATHER TED HESBURGH

WILSON D. MISCAMBLE, C.S.C.

Wilson Miscamble, C.S.C., '77
William Dempsey, '52
Robert Schmiede, '63
Mackenzie Kraker, '19
James Martinson, '19

June 1, 2019
McKenna Hall
University of Notre Dame

(888) 844-1390

www.sycamoretrust.org

SYCAMORE TRUST | ANNUAL BREAKFAST

Alumni & Friends Protecting Notre Dame's Catholic Identity

SYCAMORE TRUST ANNUAL BREAKFAST 2019

A BRIEF HISTORY

Our first panel discussion was held in the spring of 2007 with presentations focused on Father Jenkins's approval of *The Vagina Monologues*. The event that year drew an audience that filled a large lecture hall. So did our 2008 and 2009 events — especially the latter, which dealt with Father Jenkins's decision to honor President Obama, a decision that was harshly criticized by 83 cardinals, archbishops, and bishops.



To accommodate increasingly larger audiences, in 2011 we moved to a Morris Inn meeting room and added a breakfast to the format.

As it turned out, we underestimated the program's draw. Although alumni attending Reunion Weekend were not told of it through the official calendar of events, word got out and the room was filled beyond capacity. So we moved the following year to the Conference Center and, with the exception of 2013, when we met in the Hilton Inn because the Morris Inn was closed for renovations, we have been there ever since. We began streaming the program speakers on the Internet in 2013 and now reach hundreds of alumni with informed discussions of issues that bear importantly on the Catholic identity of Notre Dame.

2019 PROGRAM AGENDA

7:15 AM EDT	COMPLIMENTARY BREAKFAST
8:00 AM EDT	PROGRAM
Welcome	Bill Dempsey
Invocation	Rev. Wilson Miscamble, C.S.C.
Introduction	Bill Dempsey
The Ambitious Life and Conflicted Legacy	Rev. Wilson Miscamble, C.S.C.
Introduction	Bob Schmiede
Student Awards	Mackenzie Kraker and Jim Martinson
Questions & Answers	Bill Dempsey
9:30 AM EDT	CLOSING PRAYER



THE AMBITIOUS LIFE AND CONFLICTED LEGACY

2019 SPEAKERS

A discussion of Notre Dame's Catholic identity in light of the new biography by Father Wilson Miscamble, C.S.C., "American Priest: The Ambitious Life and Conflicted Legacy of Notre Dame's Father Ted Hesburgh."

Rev. Wilson Miscamble, C.S.C., '77



A member of the University of Notre Dame's permanent faculty since 1988, Father Miscamble was educated at the University of Queensland, where he received his Bachelor's and Master's Degrees, and the University of Notre Dame, where

he received a second Master's and his Doctoral Degrees. He was ordained as a Catholic priest with the Congregation of Holy Cross in 1988. At Notre Dame, he has served as the Chair of the History Department and Rector and Superior of Moreau Seminary. An award-winning historian, his primary research interests are American foreign policy since World War II and the role of Catholics in 20th century U.S. foreign relations.

Father Miscamble has been engaged for decades in discussions about Notre Dame's Catholic identity and has recounted the history of these debates in his book "For Notre Dame: Battling For the Heart and Soul of a Catholic University." He is also the organizer and past President of the Notre Dame Chapter of Faculty for Life and an advisor for the Irish Rover.

William Dempsey, '52



Bill Dempsey, the Chairman of Sycamore Trust, is its founding President. He graduated from Notre Dame in 1952 as class valedictorian; received his law degree from Yale University; served as chief law clerk to Chief Justice Earl Warren; and practiced law in Washington when not serving as President of the Association of American Railroads and Chairman of the National Railway Labor Conference.

Robert Schmiede, '63



Bob Schmiede, a "Double Domer" (A.B. '63, J.D. '66), capped his railroad industry career as Chairman, President and CEO of the Chicago & North Western Railway. He has served on the Law School's Advisory Council, as board member of a number of Chicago area civic and service associations, and as chairman of two Catholic high schools.

Mackenzie Kraker, '19



Molly, who has just graduated, was the president of the ND chapter of the Militia of the Immaculata this past year and a Sorin Fellow of the Center for Ethics and Culture. The daughter of two ND graduates from Columbus, Ohio, Molly will enter the Echo graduate theology program of the Institute for Church Life in the fall.

James Martinson, '19



Jim, whose home is in Basking Ridge, New Jersey, is also a member of the class of 2019. An Economics major, Jim was a Sorin Fellow of the Center for Ethics and Culture and last year's president of Students for Child-Oriented Policy (SCOP), the post from which he led a nationally prominent anti-pornography campaign.

Mackenzie and Jim are co-recipient of this year's Sycamore Trust Student Award.



SYCAMORE TRUST ANNUAL BREAKFAST 2019

EXTRACTS FROM NOTRE DAME'S MISSION STATEMENT

1

The University of Notre Dame is a Catholic academic community of higher learning....

As a Catholic university, one of its distinctive goals is to provide a forum where, through free inquiry and open discussion, the various lines of Catholic thought may intersect with all the forms of knowledge found in the arts, sciences, professions, and every other area of human scholarship and creativity.... The Catholic identity of the University depends upon, and is nurtured by, the continuing presence of a predominant number of Catholic intellectuals....The University encourages a way of living consonant with a Christian community and manifest in prayer, liturgy and service. Residential life endeavors to develop that sense of community and of responsibility that prepares students for subsequent leadership in building a society that is at once more human and more divine.

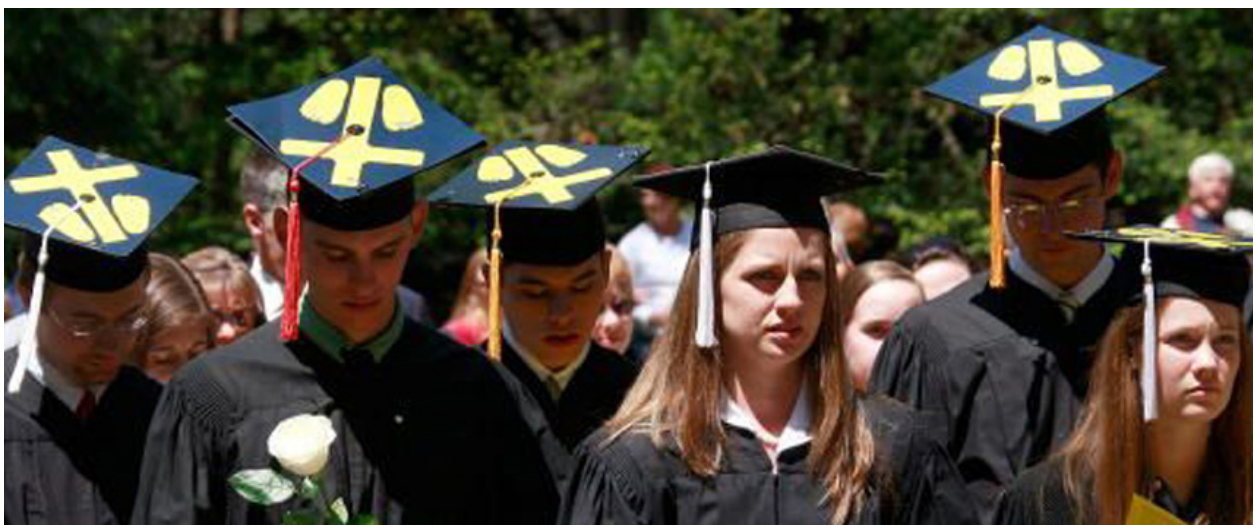
2

Notre Dame's character as a Catholic academic community presupposes that no genuine search for the truth in the human or the cosmic order is alien to the life of faith.

The University welcomes all areas of scholarly activity as consonant with its mission, subject to appropriate critical refinement. There is, however, a special obligation and opportunity, specifically as a Catholic university, to pursue the religious dimensions of all human learning. Only thus can Catholic intellectual life in all disciplines be animated and fostered and a proper community of scholarly religious discourse be established.

3

In all dimensions of the University, Notre Dame pursues its objectives through the formation of an authentic human community graced by the Spirit of Christ.



OUR ORIGIN AND HISTORY



Sycamore Trust is a model of calm and reasonable yet unrelenting friendly questioning of recent events on the South Bend campus.

Ralph McInerney
1929-2010

Sycamore Trust was established in 2005 to provide a source of information, a means of communication, and a collective voice to Notre Dame alumni and others in the Notre Dame family concerned about preserving the Catholic identity of the University.

The flashpoint for the founders of Sycamore was Father Jenkins's authorization of the student on-campus performance of *The Vagina Monologues* and the continuation of *The Queer Film Festival*, albeit under a less revealing name. We soon discovered, however, that the problem was not simply a few errant administration decisions but something much more fundamental: the radical deterioration of the Catholic identity of the faculty over the past several decades.

So said a number of concerned faculty members, and our examination of many studies of the secularization of religious schools confirmed that it always results from the loss by the faculty of its anchor in the founding faith. The episodes that have clashed with Catholic identity during Father Jenkins's tenure — including the 2009 honoring of President Obama, the Church's most formidable adversary on abortion — have been symptoms of this phenomenon.

Those symptoms have certainly been pronounced enough to alert observers that something about the university has changed. We have described them in many bulletins over the years. Besides the *Vagina Monologues*, the *Queer Film Festival*, and the honoring of President Obama, they have included the award of the Laetare Medal to Vice President Biden, a pro-choice advocate of same-sex marriage, the recognition of same-sex marriages of employees for spousal benefits; the provision to students and employees of abortion-inducing contraceptives through University health insurance programs; and the denial of a student petition for a filter to check the torrent of Internet pornography funneled to students by the University.

In the course of these episodes, the University has four times publicly rejected the strong objections

of its bishop, been rebuked by 84 cardinals, archbishops and bishops (in the Obama affair), and repudiated the representations it made to the federal courts that it could not in conscience provide contraceptives to its students and employees.

As to the faculty, Catholic representation has plunged so far that the school no longer meets its own Mission Statement test of Catholic identity, "a predominant number of Catholics" on the faculty. The author, then-President Rev. Edward Malloy, C.S.C., said this "means more than a mere majority," and Father Jenkins, the current President, speaks of "Catholic faculty" as "those who have been spiritually formed in that tradition and who embrace it." Provost Thomas Burish declared that the Mission Statement requires "a majority of faculty who are Catholic, who understand the nature of the religion, who can be role models."

Notre Dame does not come close. The proportion of those who check the "Catholic box" on a form has plummeted from 85% in the 1970's to between 54% and 55% today, and this indisputably includes a large, if indeterminate, number of merely nominal and dissenting Catholics. Plainly, there is no longer close to a majority of committed Catholics. Best estimate: 20-30%.

Professor Emeritus Dr. Walter J. Nicgoriski, one of Notre Dame's most respected and longest serving professors, took note of this phenomenon and its consequences during one of our panel discussions:

Along with the steady and steep decline of the percentage of faculty who are Catholics to about 50 per cent, there is the widely shared recognition that a large number of those who



SYCAMORE TRUST ANNUAL BREAKFAST 2019

OUR ORIGIN AND HISTORY

32,859

bulletin
subscribers

list themselves as Catholics are not inclined to be involved in any concerns about the religious character of this university.... So it is increasingly the case today that a young person going through the critical and questioning formative years of an education at Notre Dame might not encounter a practicing Catholic informed and engaged by the Catholic intellectual tradition.... One might say that beneath the large symbols of the University as a Catholic institution, there is reason for concern that the day-to-day struggles for learning and intellectual and professional development are not notably impacted by the Catholic tradition.

The attitude of the dominant forces on the faculty toward the loss of Catholic identity was plainly displayed in a resolution of the Faculty Senate several years ago based on a survey of the faculty:

The University should not compromise its academic aspirations in its efforts to maintain its Catholic identity.

At a school in which Catholic scholars predominated, this statement would, of course, be exactly reversed.

The insidious aspect of this transformation of the faculty and accordingly of what is taught — the heart of the university — is that it takes hold gradually and out of sight. The outward signs of Catholicism remain much the same, and accordingly alumni and others believe the university is just as Catholic as it has always been. And most, probably, do not really want to think otherwise.

Professor Emeritus Dr. Alfred J. Freddoso, a long-time distinguished philosophy professor, captured these dual characteristics of the University in his illuminating introduction to the late Dr. Charles E. Rice's book "What Happened to Notre Dame." Memorably describing Notre Dame as "something like a public school in a Catholic neighborhood," Dr. Freddoso continued:

This might sound appalling to some, but it is, I submit, what the vast majority of present-day

administrators, faculty members, students and alumni mean when they sincerely, though mistakenly, claim that Notre Dame is a Catholic university. For they assume without much thought that the Catholic character of the university is borne almost entirely by the 'neighborhood,' i.e., by the university's sacramental life and associated activities such as retreats, bible study groups, sacramental preparation courses, etc.; by various good works and service projects on and off campus; by a set of faith-inspired rules governing campus life;... and by the sheer number of 'outdoor' and 'indoor' manifestations of Catholicism such as the statue of Our Lady atop the Golden Dome, Sacred Heart Basilica, the Grotto, and scores of statutes found all over the 'neighborhood.' It is here that virtually all of a student's moral and spiritual formation, if any, will take place.... The classroom or laboratory, by contrast, is a wholly different venue.... This is where 'reason' resides on campus and where 'the mind is educated'; and it has little or nothing to do with Catholicism.

In these circumstances, while Notre Dame is, we believe, the most Catholic of the major Catholic universities except for Catholic University, and while a committed and discriminating student can still obtain a splendid Catholic education, the situation is not so happy for the vast run of the students. heart of the problem.

The good news is that, after Sycamore Trust began publishing the incriminating faculty composition data and the administration took some remedial steps, the downward spiral was checked. But the bad news is that the administration has adopted a hiring policy that will permit the worsening of an already bleak situation. The new policy is the hiring of 50% "check the box" Catholics annually.

That is a reduction from 60% in the crucial College of Arts and Letters. If the faculty does no better than that, a truly Catholic Notre Dame will become but a memory.

Still, hope remains because of an outstanding and still substantial corps of Catholic scholars,



OUR ORIGIN AND HISTORY

48,414

website visitors
last year

a number of supportive non-Catholics, an 82% Catholic student body, the continuing, if diminished, presence of priests on the campus, and the "Catholic neighborhood" described by Dr. Freddoso.

We believe that Sycamore Trust can play a role in the realization of that hope. Sycamore can look to significant results over the last 14 years that can reasonably be attributed in some substantial measure to its efforts.

1. Most importantly, the decline in Catholic faculty has been arrested. In 2005, it seemed likely that Catholics would slip into even an arithmetical minority before long. Until Sycamore put the spotlight on this crucial problem, few outside the university knew anything about it and efforts within the university had been unavailing.
2. A board member who was a major contributor to a pro-abortion organization resigned.
3. Another board member who is an important promoter of embryonic stem cell research did not stand for re-election.
4. The Vagina Monologues quietly disappeared.
5. So, too, did the Queer Film Festival.
6. Father Jenkins left his position on the board of a prominent organization, Millennium Promise, that promotes abortion and contraception. (So, too, did a major Notre Dame donor.)
7. Our disclosure of the falsity of the University's asserted justification for the trespass prosecution of the pro-life demonstrators who protested the honoring of President Obama almost certainly played a role in the University's finally dismissing the charges. Father Jenkins had explained the University's policy was to have all trespassing demonstrators prosecuted. Wrong. On his watch the policy was "catch and release" for pro-gay and anti-military trespassers.
8. We marshaled substantial financial support for student organizations that are crucially important to Catholic identity. For example: NDResponse, the federation of student organizations opposed to the honoring of President Obama; The Irish Rover, the independent voice of Catholicism on campus;

the annual Edith Stein Conference; Notre Dame Right to Life; Millitia of the Immaculata; and SCOP, dedicated to questions implicating Catholic teaching on marriage and family, gender, and sexuality.

9. A contraceptive ad on The Observer Internet site was taken down immediately upon our complaint.
10. So, too, was a link to a porn site of uncertain provenance on a web site of a student organization.
11. The University eliminated its website recommendation of an unofficial women's faculty organization that promotes pro-abortion organizations.
12. Within 24 hours of Sycamore Trust's disclosure that the University planned to make abortions eligible for cost savings in its Flexible Savings Plan for employees, the University cancelled the plan.
13. The University has also ended the coverage of abortifacients in its Flexible Savings Plan.

Thus, there is good reason both to keep hope alive and to support our conviction that, with the help of alumni and others with a deep interest in Notre Dame and Catholic higher education, Sycamore Trust can play a significant role in the effort to restore the Catholic identity that is the defining heritage of this precious institution.



Alumni at other Catholic schools didn't realize that their schools were losing their Catholic hearts and minds until it was too late to stop it. That shouldn't happen at Notre Dame.

William H. Dempsey, '52
Sycamore Trust Founding President



Alumni & Friends Protecting Notre Dame's Catholic Identity

Like the ancient Sycamore tree standing watch over the Grotto, Sycamore Trust, with its broad base of supporters within the Notre Dame Family, seeks to protect the school's formative heritage — its Catholic identity and its sustaining relationship to the Church.

Established in 2005 as an alumni-only membership, Sycamore Trust has expanded steadily and now includes a broad representation of the Notre Dame family and a growing number of committed Christians troubled by the secularization of higher education in general. Our fight is against the forces of secularization that will continue to press on the University. To join us in this fight, please get in touch with us.



2028 E Ben White Blvd
STE 240-1842
Austin, TX 78741

(888) 844-1390
info@sycamoretrust.org

www.SycamoreTrust.org

