

The Religious Studies Department of GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

Presents

The 35th Annual Flannery Lecture

March 17, 2011, 7:30 PM • Globe Room of Cataldo Hall

Featuring Guest Speaker

Mary Catherine Hilkert, O.P.

"The Hint Half-Guessed: Human Life as Sacrament"

The Catholic sacramental imagination emphasizes that all of creation reflects the glory of God and, in a particular way; human persons are created in the image of God. These convictions have led to diverse theological reflections in the area of Christian anthropology, including a variety of ways of speaking about a "theology of the body." Yet any theological reading of human life requires a faith perspective--"eyes to see." When Emily, the main character Emily in Thornton Wilder's play *Our Town*, queries "Do any human beings ever realize life while they live it?" the stage manager replies: "No. Saints and poets, maybe they do some." This lecture will draw on that insight by using the work of poets and saints to explore what it means to speak of human life as sacramental.

Mary Catherine Hilkert, O.P. is Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame where she



specializes in contemporary systematic theology with particular interest in theological anthropology, feminist theologies, and fundamental theology, including theologies of preaching. She is the author of: *Naming Grace: Preaching and the Sacramental Imagination*, and *Speaking with Authority: Catherine of Siena and the Voices of Women Today*, and co-editor of *The Praxis of the Reign of God: An Introduction to the Theology of Edward Schillebeeckx*. Her numerous articles on theology, preaching, and spirituality have appeared in both scholarly and pastoral journals. Presently Dr. Hilkert is working on two books: *Words of Spirit and Life: Theology, Preaching and Spirituality* (the 2010 Lyman Beecher Lectures), and *Grace Enfleshed: A Sacramental Anthropology*. A past president of the Catholic Theological Society of America, Hilkert was awarded an honorary doctorate from Providence College in 2002 and was the Madeleva lecturer in Spirituality at St. Mary's College in 2001. A member of the Order of Preachers (Dominican Sisters of Peace), she was the first recipient of Washington Theological Union's Sophia Award for Theological Excellence in Service to Ministry (1997).

The **FLANNERY CHAIR OF ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY** is an endowed Chair gift of the late Maud and Milo Flannery of Spokane, to further excellence of theological study and teaching at Gonzaga University. The Flannery Lecture is delivered each year by the outstanding theologian who holds the Chair and is prepared and presented to benefit as wide an audience as possible.

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