

# EDITH STEIN CONFERENCE 2024

*Co-Authoring Identity: Little Pencils in God's Hand*



**FEBRUARY 9TH AND 10TH, 2024**

University of Notre Dame,  
South Bend, Indiana

**PRESENTED BY *THE IDENTITY PROJECT OF NOTRE DAME* WITH**



**DE NICOLA CENTER**  
*for* ETHICS AND CULTURE

# EDITH STEIN PROJECT CONFERENCE 2024

## ABOUT

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The Edith Stein Conference was founded 19 years ago by a group of students as a response to the arrival of *The Vagina Monologues* on campus at the University of Notre Dame and out of the desire to foster a more productive conversation regarding women, men, and society rooted faithfully in Catholic anthropology. Since then, our conference has grown to become the largest entirely student-run academic conference at Notre Dame. Each year, we host a weekend conference centered on a particular theme with the goal of continuing the conversation of what it means to be human, man and woman, in pursuit of God's will. We take our name and inspiration from our patroness St Edith Stein, who was a profound icon of Christ's love for truth, empathy, and intersectional dialogue in the modern day. Each conference sees international paper proposals and keynote speakers, and we are so grateful to be continuing to grow our mission post-COVID.

# EDITH STEIN PROJECT CONFERENCE 2024

**DAY 1**

*Friday, February 9th, 2024*

3:00-3:45 p.m.  
*McKenna Hall*

## **REGISTRATION**

4:00 p.m.  
*215-16 McKenna Hall*

## **WELCOMING REMARKS**

*Caroline Rossini, 2023-24 President, Edith Stein Conference*

4:15-5:00 p.m.  
*215-6 McKenna Hall*

## **KEYNOTE SPEAKER 1**

*Co-Authoring Adoption*

*Suzy Younger and Leigh Snead, University of Notre Dame*

5:15 p.m.  
*Basilica of the  
Sacred Heart*

## **MASS**

*Fr. Karl Romkema, C.S.C.*

6:00 p.m.  
*Salon A, Smith  
Ballroom*

## **DINNER**

7:30-8:30 p.m.  
*215-6 McKenna Hall*

## **KEYNOTE SPEAKER 2**

*Saints: A Family Story*

*John Cavadini, Katie Cavadini, and Anastasia Cassidy, University of  
Notre Dame*

8:45-10:00 p.m.  
*Law School Chapel*

## **ADORATION AND ICE CREAM SOCIAL**

*Fr. Gabriel Griggs, C.S.C.*

9:15-10:15 a.m.  
215-6 McKenna Hall

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER 3

*Vocation to Heal*

Jennifer Bauer, *St. Mary's College*

10:30-11:30 a.m.  
205 McKenna Hall

### PAPER PRESENTATIONS

*Panel A*

**"The Hand Behind the Masterpiece: Edith Stein's Anthropological Insights Applied to Genetic Engineering Ethics"** Mariele Courtois

**"Pharmaceuticals and Providence: Restoring Creation through Chemical Discovery"** Katherine O'Connell

206 McKenna Hall

*Panel B*

**"The 'Creaturely Metaphysics' of Edith Stein and Erich Przywara: A Metaphysical Foundation for Co-Authoring Identity"** Fr. Christian Ivandic

**"Searching for Something: Taylor and Pieper on Meaning in the Secular Age"** Lauren Revay

11:45a.m.-12:45 p.m.  
215-6 McKenna Hall

### KEYNOTE SPEAKER 4

*An Invitation to Christ-Centered Wellness*

Jackie Mulligan and Dr. Bridget Vander Woude, *Reform Wellness*

1:00-1:45 p.m.  
Salon A, Smith  
Ballroom

### LUNCH

2:00–3:00 p.m.  
205 McKenna Hall

## PAPER PRESENTATIONS

*Panel C*

**“Co-Authoring Vocation: The Either/Or of Simone Weil and Edith Stein”** Annemarie Krall

**“Science and the Assurance of Things Hoped For”**

Suzanne Bohlsen

206 McKenna Hall

*Panel D*

**“Building for the Future: Architectural Beauty in Father Latour’s Cathedral”** Mary Freund

**“Condemned to Create Ourselves? Finding a Marian Counterpart to the Existentialism of Jean Genet’s Les Bonnes”**

Anne Marie Bollman

3:15–4:15 p.m.  
215–6 McKenna Hall

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER 5

*One in Eight Billion: The Art of Humility in a Proud World*

Fr. Pete McCormick, C.S.C., University of Notre Dame

5:00 p.m.  
Basilica of the  
Sacred Heart

## MASS

6:15–8:00 p.m.  
Salon A, Smith  
Ballroom

## CLOSING BANQUET

# EDITH STEIN PROJECT CONFERENCE 2024

## THEME

The theme of our Conference is "Co-Authoring Identity: Little Pencils in God's Hand". In a 1989 interview with Time Magazine, Saint Teresa of Calcutta famously likened herself to "a little pencil" in God's hand:

"[God] does the thinking. He does the writing. The pencil has nothing to do with it. The pencil has only to be allowed to be used."

Mother Teresa, in her characteristic humility, recognizes not only her success but her very identity as the result of God's goodness and her readiness to surrender her will to God. Yet, from the perspective of a culture of busyness that defines surrender as unproductive non-action, Mother Teresa's metaphor would seem to conflict with the example of her own life. Between maintaining correspondence with the Missionaries of Charity's international network of shelters and aid centers, giving lectures and interviews, and meeting the daily demands of community life, it would seem she had no time in her schedule for surrender.

This perceived tension between work and surrender is keenly felt on American college campuses, where we more often appraise education for its purely utilitarian value as measured in terms of job placement rates and graduates' median starting salaries. It is little wonder that many students fall prey to the belief that their grades, extracurricular activities, and friend groups define them when their education is oriented towards the top of the corporate ladder rather than Jacob's ladder. We need to cultivate a deeper appreciation for Catholic anthropology and the individual's role in cooperating with grace to discover her identity in Christ.

Surrender is not inimical to productivity but, when met with God's grace, is revealed to be the disposition through which the individual comes to an understanding of herself and her own capacity for creativity. Through self-sacrificial work and prayer, man and woman participate in the redemptive work of Christ and find, in the words of Mother Teresa, that God has been "sending a love letter to the world" through them.

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## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



### **REV. PETER M. MCCORMICK, C.S.C.**

*University of Notre Dame*

Rev. Peter McCormick, C.S.C., serves as the Assistant Vice President of Campus Ministry at the University of Notre Dame. In this role, within the Division of Student Affairs, Father McCormick oversees a staff of some 40 clerical, religious and lay ministers tending to the spiritual needs of all Notre Dame students. A native of Grand Rapids, Michigan, Father McCormick entered Moreau Seminary following his graduation from Grand Valley State University in 2000. He earned a Masters of Divinity from the University of Notre Dame in 2006 and was ordained a Holy Cross priest the following year. From 2007 to 2013 Father McCormick served as rector of Notre Dame's Keough Hall. Following his time as rector, Father McCormick pursued his Executive M.B.A. from Notre Dame's Mendoza College of Business, completing the degree in 2015. In addition to his current role in Campus Ministry, Father McCormick serves as chaplain to the Notre Dame Men's Basketball team.



### **JACKIE MULLIGAN**

*Chief Executive Officer, Reform Wellness*

Reform Wellness was founded and started by Jackie. After years of tireless striving, stress, and compromised health as a result of her lifestyle, Jackie found her identity, healing, and wholeness in God. As a holistic nutritionist, wellness practitioner and experienced educator, Jackie has paired her personal experience with her professional knowledge to create a program that innovatively merges faith and functional health. The information and tools she shares grows from her life experiences and education: Master of Business Administration, Master of Secondary Education, Bachelor of Art in Languages, Functional Diagnostic Nutrition Practitioner, Holistic Nutritionist, Certified Nutritionist Consultant, former NYS Certified Spanish teacher.

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## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



### **BRIDGET VANDER WOUDE**

*Chief Wellness Officer, Reform Wellness*

Dr. Bridget is Reform's Chief Wellness Officer. As a Doctor of Naturopathic Medicine with an undergraduate degree in philosophy, Dr. Bridget educates Reformers on holistic health and the true integration of body and soul through online courses, webinars, and seminars. Bridget was drawn to natural medicine by her desire to honor the glory of God's creation and the wonder of the human body. Dr. Bridget was trained in an integrative primary care setting with a focus on the management of pediatric and women's health concerns.



### **JENNIFER BAUER**

*Assistant Professor, St. Mary's College; Nurse Practitioner*

Jennifer is an Assistant Professor of Nursing Science at St. Mary's College in Notre Dame, Indiana. She has over 20 years of experience as a Nurse Practitioner and 13 years of experience as a Lecturer and Professor at Ball State University, Indiana University South Bend, and St. Mary's College. She has conducted research in the use of stress reducing techniques in nursing education. Jennifer credits her family's encounter with the Divine Physician's intervention with healing her daughter Mary Elizabeth, who was born with Down Syndrome and several heart defects, and she and her family continue to testify to the miracle of Mary Elizabeth, especially as she educates more future nurses in their vocation.



# EDITH STEIN PROJECT CONFERENCE 2024

## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



### JOHN CAVADINI

*Professor of Theology and Director of the McGrath Institute for Church Life, University of Notre Dame*

John C. Cavadini is a Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame, having served as Chair from 1997–2010. Since 2000 he has served as the Director of the McGrath Institute for Church Life at Notre Dame. A member of the Notre Dame faculty since 1990, Cavadini teaches, studies, and publishes in patristic and early medieval theology, the theology of Augustine, and the history of biblical and patristic exegesis. He has served a five-year term on the International Theological Commission (appointed by Pope Benedict XVI) and in 2018 received the Monika K. Hellwig Award from the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities for Outstanding Contributions to Catholic Intellectual Life. As Director of the McGrath Institute for Church Life, he inaugurated the Echo program in catechetical leadership, the Notre Dame Vision program for high school students and is responsible for the continued growth and outreach of the McGrath Institute, which partners with Catholic dioceses, parishes and schools to address pastoral challenges with theological depth and rigor.

### CATHERINE “KATIE” CAVADINI

*Assistant Chair, Director of Master of Arts in Theology, University of Notre Dame*

Katie Cavadini received her Ph.D. in the History of Christianity: Medieval, Patristic, and Liturgical Studies from the University of Notre Dame. Her primary field of study is the History of Christianity and her research interests include the history of biblical interpretation, especially medieval interpretation of the Song of Songs. Katie teaches courses within the undergraduate and MA curriculum as well as directing the MA Program. is the assistant chair of the University of Notre Dame’s Department of Theology and director of its master’s program in theology.



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## KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



### **ANASTASSIA "TESS" CASSADY**

*Artist and Illustrator*

Tess Cassady studied Art and Art History at the University of Michigan (Go blue!) and Indiana University. She resides in South Bend with her husband, Bob, and three children: Genevieve, Ivanka, and Dmitri. She has spent the last ten years teaching high school advanced art and art history at Trinity School at Greenlawn. She is also a professional freelance artist and has taken on many commissions including church murals, altarpiece paintings, paschal candles, byzantine icons, gilding a baldacchino, book covers, and private oil paintings (her favorite!). Tess swam collegiately at the University of Michigan, while Katie Pagliarini swam at Notre Dame. Despite all of this, they still remain friends. In her free time, if not painting, you can usually find Tess cooking Ukrainian food, making pysanky (Ukrainian Easter eggs), playing ice hockey, or cuddling with her three massive Maine Coons.

### **LEIGH SNEAD**

*Independent Writer, Editor, and Speaker*



Leigh Fitzpatrick Snead is a Fellow for The Catholic Association and co-host of the nationally syndicated radio show *Conversations with Consequences*. She is a writer, editor, speaker, and mother of four whose work engages questions of popular culture, motherhood, family, and the Church. Her writing has been featured in various media outlets including the *National Catholic Register*, *Washington Times*, *Aleteia*, and *Theology of Home*. She has been an invited speaker on topics such as adoption, family, and modern Catholic courtship at the University of Notre Dame's Vita Institute, the Napa Institute, and the Catholic Women's Forum. She undertook doctoral studies as a John Quasten Fellow at The Catholic University of America and received her B.A. from St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland. She serves on the Executive Board of Human Life Action, a project of the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment. Leigh lives with her husband and four sons in Granger, Indiana.

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## THE TEAM



### SUZY YOUNGER

*Certified FertilityCare™ Practitioner, Coordinator of Marriage Preparation, University of Notre Dame*

Suzy Younger is a Certified FertilityCare™ Practitioner in a hospital-based program. Professionally, she supports couples in practicing Natural Family Planning and teaches women of all ages how to be active participants in monitoring, preserving, and/or restoring their own gynecologic and procreative health. She serves at the University of Notre Dame as Coordinator of Marriage Preparation and is active within the deNicola Center for Ethics and Culture both as faculty for the Vita Institute and in leading Vocation to Love, a weekly women's discussion group exploring questions of identity in light of our Christian faith and contemporary pro-life feminism. At home, she strives to keep her sanity and sense of humor amidst the many demands of marriage, motherhood, and homeschooling and looks for ways to sanctify the daily grind so that she and her family may live each day with greater faith, joy, and holiness. She and her husband, Dave are blessed to be the parents of three beautiful children gifted to them by God through adoption.

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ST. MARGARET'S HOUSE



St. Margaret's House in South Bend, IN improves the lives of women and children by providing individual attention to their immediate needs, breaking the bonds of isolation, and helping them to take their next best step. We believe that each woman is talented and gifted and deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.

The mission of St. Margaret's House is based on the core values of hospitality based on these words. "For when I was hungry, you fed me. When I was thirsty, you gave me a drink. When I was a stranger, you welcomed me. I was naked, you clothed me. When I was sick, you took care of me." Matthew 25: 35-36.

Half of this year's registration fees will be donated to St. Margaret's House. More information about the mission and ministry of St. Margaret's House can be found at <https://stmargarethouse.org>.

# EDITH STEIN PROJECT CONFERENCE 2024

## THE TEAM



### CAROLINE ROSSINI

*President*

Caroline is a Junior Psychology and Pre-Health major with a minor in the Glynn Family Honors Program. She is a proud Texan from Irving, Texas and aspiring physician. Caroline has been involved with the Conference since her freshman year. Her favorite saint is Saint Joseph.



### HANNAH SMITH

*Senior Advisor, President Emerita*

Hannah is a senior Program of Liberal Studies and Theology major with a minor in Chinese. She is originally from Parker, Colorado, and has been involved with the Conference since her freshman year. Her favorite saint is Mother Teresa of Calcutta.



### MARIA KANGAPADAN

*Marketing and Design Director*

Maria is a junior Theology major with a minor in Catholic Social Tradition. She is from Bengaluru, India, and spent her childhood in Detroit, Michigan. She has been involved with the Conference since the end of last semester. Her favorite saint is Santa Maria Mediatrix.



### SR. ANN ASTELL

*Faculty Advisor*

Ann W. Astell is a Schoenstatt Sister of Mary and Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame. She is the author of six books and editor of eight collections of essays and is now completing a monograph on hagiography and the Bible. She has been the recipient of an N.E.H. fellowship, a John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Fellowship, is a Past President of the Society for the Study of Christian Spirituality and also of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion. Sr. Ann graciously serves as our Conference Faculty Advisor.

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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We would like to thank the deNicola Center for Ethics and Culture for their continued sponsorship and support of the mission of our Conference. We would also like to thank our advising team: Sr. Ann Astell, Faculty Advisor; Suzy Younger, Conference Godmother; and Margaret Cabaniss, Assistant Director of the deNicola Center for Ethics and Culture; as well as Amber at Events at ND and Shane at the Student Shop.

We would also like to thank, in a special way, graduating Senior Hannah Smith. You have given so much of your time and talent to the mission of this Conference and so much of your friendship to our planning team. We will miss you next year as you leave Notre Dame and dazzle the world with your brilliance and wit!