

Editor's Note

M. Therese Lysaught

A YEAR AGO, JASON KING HANDED ME THE BATON of Editor of the *Journal of Moral Theology* handed to him by David McCarthy, and I have been running ever since. In 2022, we continued our now-established practice of publishing two open and two special issues. Over the year, in addition to fourteen unsolicited, original essays and twenty book reviews, the *Journal* featured a focus on “Artificial Intelligence” guest edited by Matthew J. Gaudet and Brian Patrick Green in March; a symposium on “Teaching Catholic Social Thought” guest-edited by Jon Kara Shields in July; and further explorations from New Wine, New Wineskins gathered into the October issue on “Vocation, Friendship, and the Catholic Moral Tradition” by guest editors Alessandro Rovati and Matthew Philipp Whelan.

When he turned over the Editor's baton, I had promised to keep Jason busy as Editor Emeritus, and indeed we have. Jason oversaw the production of the second volume in our collaborative book series with Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church, *The Rising Global Cancer Pandemic: Health, Ethics, and Social Justice*, edited by Andrea Vicini, Philip Landrigan, and Kurt Straif, published in October 2022. As I write, he is finalizing the galley proofs for the third volume in the series, *Doing Theology and Theological Ethics in the Face of the Abuse Crisis*, edited by Daniel J. Fleming, James F. Keenan, SJ, and Hans Zollner, SJ, and has begun the production process for the fourth volume, *A Prophet to the Peoples: Paul Farmer's Witness and Theological Ethics*, edited by Jennie Weiss Block, Alexandre A. Martins, and myself. These volumes will be published in early 2023.

In short, it was a very busy year. We could not have done all of this without our extraordinary editorial team: William Collinge, Mary Doyle Roche, Jean-Pierre Fortin, Alexandre Martins, Chris McMahon, Mari Rapela Heidt, and Kate Ward, who were joined in July by Aaron Weisel, our new Editorial Assistant, when Kathy Criasia, our long-time Managing Editor, retired. In addition to their sleeves-rolled-up effort to produce all these volumes, I have deeply appreciated their counsel on a variety of editorial questions and initiatives.

Two of those initiatives appear in our January 2023 volume. In addition to Levi Checketts' essay "Outing Gay Priests: Toward a Theological Ethics of Privacy in the Digital Era" and twelve book reviews, this issue features two symposia exploring challenging issues for both moral theology and the church. The first—"From Rome to Canada: Pope Francis's Apology to the Indigenous Peoples"—offers a critical appraisal of Pope Francis's 2022 visit and apologies to the Indigenous Peoples of Canada. The articles bring to the fore the painful truths of the church's complicity in the cultural genocide of native peoples in North America and elsewhere, as well as the possibilities for grace and healing embedded in ecclesial practices of reconciliation and accompaniment. Four hundred years of harm cannot be redressed in forty days; but amidst missteps and mistakes, Pope Francis has opened a path forward. We are grateful to guest-editors Jane Barter and Doris Kieser, who chaired the panel session at the May 2022 meeting of the Canadian Theological Society where these papers were first presented, for partnering with the *Journal of Moral Theology* in bringing this important conversation to print.

The second symposium—"Dialogue after *Dobbs*: Toward Reasoned Dialogue and Constructive Conversation on Abortion"—attends to an equally fraught issue. In light of the momentous June 2022 Supreme Court decision in *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health*, eleven Catholic scholars offer recommendations for changing the deeply polarized, often counterproductive, and largely theologically and theoretically inadequate parameters surrounding discussions of abortion in Catholic contexts. As a recent *New York Times* article noted: "Heading into the new legislative sessions next year, supporters and opponents of abortion rights are girding for fresh combat, with new ground rules, new opponents, and new battlefronts."¹ It is critically important for the Catholic community to take stock of the ways our own rhetoric and witness have been—and remain—formed by presumptions of combat, battlefronts, and (culture) wars. What might it mean, not only for the question of abortion but also the witness and integrity of the church, if Catholic rhetoric and practice on this question were transformed by the Christocentric convictions of our tradition—into ones of truth, lament, reconciliation, accompaniment, hospitality, and more as Pope Francis witnessed in Canada?

In other words, I think it fortuitous that these two symposia appear side by side. For although they speak to issues which might *prima facie* appear asymmetric with regard to the church-law-life nexus, in reading them together, the essays on the Papal Apology provide an

¹ Kate Zemike, "The New Landscape of the Abortion Fight," *New York Times* (December 10, 2022), www.nytimes.com/2022/12/10/us/abortion-roe-wade.html.

evocative framework for rethinking Catholic approaches to the question of abortion. This serendipitous intertextuality applies not only within this current volume but equally between these symposia and our forthcoming 2023 special issues: “Intersectional Methods and Moral Theology,” guest-edited by Meghan Clark, Anna Kasafi Perkins, and Emily Reimer-Barry (April), and “Guns in America,” guest edited by Michael Grigoni and Cory Mitchell (October). For these interconnected life issues—the historic and ongoing treatment of Indigenous peoples across the globe, abortion, and gun violence—make vividly clear the importance of intersectional methods as one component of a robust post-Conciliar moral theology. And they lean into the central question captured in our open July issue which will feature, alongside our usual collection of unsolicited essays, a symposium entitled “Catholic Peacebuilding in Times of Crisis: Challenges for Theology and Ethics,” guest edited by Caesar Monteverchio and Maria Power. For issues of life are, at root, issues of peace, the ontological and theological heart of our tradition.