**PRESIDENTIAL REFLECTIONS**

*Monsignor C. Michael Padazinski, JCD*

The CLSA Annual Convention was held on October 12 – 14, 2020, not in St. Louis, MO as originally planned but for the first time ever, virtually. It certainly proved to be one for the books, and it will live in memory for years to come! Our successful, first-ever virtual convention attracted 292 registered attendees! (For the first time in many years, our Annual Convention actually turned a profit of roughly $40,000.) The support of the membership with this unique endeavor helped to show once again the commitment and value our members place on our Society. I want to thank especially the Board of Governors (BOG), who met no fewer than five times over the summer months to offer their time and invaluable wisdom to help to ensure the success of the convention. Along with the BOG; the CLSA support staff; the professional input from Nix and Associates, our event-management partner; and our convention chair, Monsignor Victor Finelli, we can all feel very proud of what was accomplished.

Overall, the seminars offered at the convention were very well received. The business meeting along with the voting for new leadership within the Society plus four resolutions from the membership, all went off without a hitch. The evaluations submitted by the attendees were very positive, and I found it interesting to note that one consistent theme that was brought up over and over in the evaluations of the convention itself was that the many members missed gathering in person. Meeting in person annually has always been a hallmark and highlight of past conventions. It made me realize that while dealing with the current pandemic, a virtual convention was less than ideal and certainly not the way of the future.

There is great value in personally enjoying one another’s company at our conventions. I know that I and many others look forward to reconnecting at our next convention, in person (God willing), next October in Albuquerque, NM.

Speaking of the business meeting at our last convention, I want to congratulate the newly elected members of the Society: Dr. Lynda Robitaille, Vice President/President-elect; Father Gregory Luyet, Secretary; Father Luke Millette; and Dr. Siobhan Verbeek, Consultants. These newly elected members of the BOG will join me and the returning governors to serve our Society for the ensuing year. I am grateful for their willingness to serve in this way, and I look forward to a great year ahead as we move forward with new and exciting endeavors, all for the benefit of the people of God.

As was announced at the convention, Megan Boland, our general secretary, accepted a new position in Steubenville, OH. Upon receiving word of her resignation, then-President Jay Konzemi, then-Past President Zabrina Decker and I began a search for a qualified person to fill this vital position within our Society. We interviewed several well-qualified people; I am happy to announce that we were able to hire Kathleen Butler, who comes to us with a wealth of experience in office management, marketing and a great commitment to the church. I can tell you that she has hit the ground running, and things in the CLSA office are running as smoothly as ever. She is a delight to work with, and I invite you to learn more about her.

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Annual Convention Marks Election of New Board Members

The Canon Law Society of America convened virtually in October, and at the Annual Business Meeting elected four new officers to the Board of Governors. Please join the Society in extending sincere congratulations to the following Board Members as they begin their ministry:

**Dr. Lynda Robitaille**, a Canonical Consultant and Dean of Theology at St. Mark’s College in Vancouver, was elected to the Office of Vice-President/President-Elect.

**Rev. Gregory Luyet**, a priest and Judicial Vicar of the Diocese of Little Rock, was elected to the Office of Secretary.

**Very Rev. Lucien “Luke” Millette**, a priest and Judicial Vicar of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, was elected as a Consultor.

**Dr. Siobhan Verbeek**, the Director of Canonical Services for the USCCB in Washington, DC, was elected as a Consultor.

They join returning members of the Board of Governors: Rev. Msgr. C. Michael Padazinski, President; Fr. Kevin Niehoff, OP, Treasurer; and Consultors Barbara Bettwy, Rev. Msgr. Victor Finelli, Very Rev. Joseph Newton, Mary Santi, and Jay Conzemius, Past President.

I am also happy to announce that our administrative assistant, Micaela Advent, and her husband, Matthew are expecting their first child any day. We celebrate with them this gift from God and offer them our sincere congratulations on this most happy occasion.

Since the convention, the office has been busy planning for the year ahead. All committee appointments for this year have been made, and I am very grateful to those who have agreed to serve on the various committees within our Society. Please familiarize yourself with the committees and their members and please remember to thank them for their work and effort on your behalf.

The year ahead is filled with hope for our world, and with that hope comes a renewed sense of optimism for the CLSA. To continue growing our membership, there is an initiative underway to recruit new members for the Society by reaching out to dioceses that currently have little or no representation in the Society. In addition, I have responded to a request from Cardinal Sean O’Malley, President of the Pontifical Commission for the Protection of Minors, who has asked for information as to how our Society might be able to provide needed assistance with their vital work for the Church. We are still evaluating whether we will be able to offer the two-day Advocate Training Workshop in early March at the Bethany Center in Lutz, FL in light of current health recommendations and protocols. We will post complete information on our web site once we have made a final decision.

An update of the Clergy Procedural Handbook is underway, and the Church Finance Handbook should be next up to undergo a rewrite. We have launched a new commentary on the Code of Canon Law, which should be ready for publication within 18 months. Webinars and podcasts continue, and plans to finalize our 2021 Annual Convention in Albuquerque, NM next October are well underway. These and more opportunities await the new year, and I encourage you to frequent our website for the latest on these events and more.

It is an honor to serve as President of the CLSA, and I am very grateful for all the support I continue to receive from so many of you. We truly share in something very special—a ministry helping to build up the kingdom of God as canonists working for the salvation of souls.

May you and your families have a blessed Christmas, and may 2021 be one of our best years ever!
Society Honors Conn as Role of Law Award Recipient

The Canon Law Society of America is pleased to announce the 2020 recipient of the Role of Law Award, Rev. James J. Conn, SJ.

Fr. Conn was honored at the 82nd CLSA Annual Convention for his extensive contributions—professional, ministerial and academic—to the field of canon law and to the service of the Society.

During the virtual convention on Wednesday, October 14, 2020, then-President Jay Conzemius presented him with the prestigious award.

In accepting the Role of Law Award, Fr. Conn reflected on the many professors and colleagues whom he has encountered on his journey. “No canonist can work in isolation. We can all be enriched by the variety of traditions, faculties and professional experience that have formed us, provided that we engage one another with honesty, respect and friendship.”

“No canonist can work in isolation. We can all be enriched by the variety of traditions, faculties, and professional experience that have formed us, provided that we engage one another with honesty, respect and friendship.”

Rev. James J. Conn, SJ
2020 Role of Law Award Winner

Scenes from the Virtual Convention

Reverend Monsignor Paul McPartlan, STL, DPhil
Keynote: The Pastoral Magisterium of Pope Francis

“Doctrine is authentic within the pastoral context of love and dangerous outside of it. Speaking especially to priests at the Chrism Mass in 2018, Pope Francis warned about the danger of making ‘certain abstract truths’ into idols: ‘the truth-idol’ imitates,” he said, ‘it dresses itself up in the words of the Gospel, but does not let those words touch the heart. Much worse, it distances ordinary people from the healing closeness of the word and of the sacraments of Jesus.’”

Reverend Michael Joyce, CM, JCD
Missing in Action: Absent Member of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life

“Communis vita presented the preservation and promotion of the common life of religious institutes and societies of apostolic life as the motivation for the introduction of this new ground of ipso facto dismissal. I suspect that in the 21st century, there might be a further, unspoken motivation for introducing this new ground. Illegitimately absent members of institutes and societies remain members, acting somewhat like ‘free agents.’ The institute or society can still be civilly liable for their actions or inaction of whatever sort, financial, relational, legal without the dismissal of the member. Now the illegitimate absence for 12 continuous months frees the institute or society by the ipso facto dismissal of the member from whatever spurious action or noncompliance the absent member might commit.”

Dr. Diane Barr, JD, JCD, PhD
Data Driven Canon Law: Trends Since the Promulgation of the Code

“Being data-driven is about building tools, abilities, and, most crucially, a culture that acts on data. To be data driven there must be human interaction since humans are the ones who have to determine the right questions to ask so the data answers the exact questions posed about specific subjects. It is essential that those who are to use the data are part of the process of determining what questions to ask and who should be asked those questions.”
FROM THE DESK OF THE EXECUTIVE COORDINATOR

Donna Miller, JCL, JD

As 2020 heads into the final stretch, there can be little doubt that people all over the world are expressing similar sentiments of “good riddance.” Undoubtedly writers in years to come will wax eloquent about the meaning of the pandemic and its lasting effects on the way we live our lives. Needless to say, as is the case for all businesses, the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the operations of the CLSA administrative office. Still, a true blessing has befallen us in the midst of the turmoil of the last eight months; we have hired a competent, talented new General Secretary. Kathleen Butler joined our administrative office staff on Monday, October 19, the week after our virtual convention ended, and she quickly is making her presence known. Kathleen has stepped masterfully into a chaotic situation and already has impacted the operations of the administrative office in positive and constructive ways. Her knack for organizing physical materials and for developing procedures to accompany praxis is welcome and much needed.

Working with Micaela Advent, our Administrative Assistant, Kathleen has risen to the challenge of preparing for Micaela’s absence while she is on maternity leave starting this month. We are very excited to welcome Micaela’s new addition, Benedict Ambrose to our CLSA family. Please keep Micaela, her husband Matthew, and Baby Ben in your prayers. Micaela’s tireless efforts in the weeks leading up to the virtual convention are to be commended. She carried through on countless tasks, helping to make our first virtual convention a tremendous success.

Before the Annual Convention, President Jay Conzemius, Vice-President Monsignor Michael Padazinski, and I met in Washington, DC for a few days to iron out last-minute details. We missed the camaraderie and networking that normally is a huge part of our convention, but the time that we spent before and during the convention was very special as we prepared for the transition of leadership following the election. We congratulate our new members of the Board of Governors, and we thank all of those who stood for election and were prepared to serve our society in those leadership positions. There is a role for everyone within the Society, and we certainly appreciate all of our members who share their time and talent for the betterment of the Society and the Church.

Shortly after our September eNewsletter was published, we went to print with the third printing of the Code of Canon Law. We were excited at the response when we began taking pre-orders in mid-September. To date, we have sold over half of the first run of copies that we had printed, which is over 750 copies. CLSA members enjoy a significant savings on the price: $45, compared to $75 for non-members. If you have not ordered your copy, visit our online store and make sure that you are logged in to receive the member discount.

We were happy to deliver this year’s edition of Roman Replies and CLSA Advisory Opinions 2020 to convention attendees as a PDF this year since we were unable to meet in person. We do, however, have softcover copies available for purchase through the CLSA website. Convention attendees have a unique opportunity to purchase one copy at a special reduced price of $7.50 (through December 15). All other CLSA members who did not attend the convention can purchase the softcover edition for $15 (non-member price $25). Shipping and handling are additional. Others should visit our online store and make sure that you are logged in to receive the member discount.

As you read this eNewsletter, we will be finished with Thanksgiving and immersed in the season of Advent. As we anticipate with great hope the birth of our Savior, many of us will also be anticipating the arrival of the new year. I join my prayers with yours in asking our Savior for the grace and fortitude to face whatever trials and tribulations the new year may hold. Maranatha!
2020-2021 COMMITTEES

CLSA President Monsignor C. Michael Padazinski, JCD, has appointed committee chairs and members to the Society’s 13 constitutional and standing committees. We appreciate everyone who indicated an interest in serving our organization. This year’s committees and chairs are:

CONSTITUTIONAL COMMITTEES
Committee on Nominations
Reverend Garry Giroux, chair, Brasher Falls, NY

Committee on Resolutions
Reverend Andrew Szymakowski, chair, Redmond, OR

Committee on Resource & Asset Management
Reverend Kevin Niehoff, OP, chair, Grand Rapids, MI

Committee on Professional Responsibility
Very Reverend Joseph Newton, chair, Indianapolis, IN

STANDING COMMITTEES
Committee on Clergy
Very Reverend Lucien "Luke" Millette, chair, Houston, TX

Committee on Convention Planning
Sister Nancy Bauer, OSB, chair, Washington, DC

Committee on Eastern Churches
Chorbishop John Faris, chair, Glen Allen, VA

Committee on Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life
Sister Therese Sullivan, SP, chair, Cuyahoga Falls, OH

Committee on Laity
Deacon Matthew Glover, chair, Little Rock, AR

Committee on Publications Advisory Board
Reverend Patrick Cooney, OSB, chair, Saint Meinrad, IN

Committee on Research & Development
Dr. Diane Barr, chair, Baltimore, MD

Committee on Sacramental Law
Reverend Jamin David, chair, Morganza, LA

Ad Hoc Committee on a National Tribunal
Patricia Dugan, chair
Philadelphia, PA

REGIONAL MEETINGS

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<td>March 9-10</td>
<td>Texas Catholic Conference Department of Judicial Vicars San Antonio, TX</td>
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<td>April 20-22</td>
<td>Northwest Regional Meeting Powell Butte, OR</td>
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<td>May 3-5</td>
<td>Eastern Regional Conference of Canonists Portland, ME</td>
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<td>Aug. 2-4</td>
<td>Midwest Regional Canon Law Convention Chicago, IL</td>
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<td>TBD</td>
<td>Oklahoma City Province</td>
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<td>TBD</td>
<td>Western Regional Conference Las Vegas, NV</td>
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REMINDER

We are working on the 2020 Convention Proceedings book now. We will mail all active members a printed copy when it is ready. Be sure to check your mailing address in the CLSA database and update it if required.
Penal Law Webinar Series Concludes December 9

Our four-part Penal Law Webinar Series will be finalized on December 9, when our presenters join us for a live question-and-answer session at 11 a.m. EST.

Hundreds of practitioners and others with an interest in understanding situations involving penal law have benefitted from these informative sessions. Now, you have an opportunity to ask questions of our four presenters about their webinars. Joining us will be:

- **Msgr. Fred Easton**, Adjunct Judicial Vicar for the Diocese of Bloomington, IN, who presented Introduction to Penal Law and Penal Process;
- **Ms. Susan Mulheron**, Chancellor for Canonical Affairs for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, who presented on the Preliminary Investigation;
- **Msgr. Jason Gray**, pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Peoria Heights, IL, who also has duties in the Diocesan Tribunal, who presented the Penal Trial; and
- **Rev. John Paul Kimes**, a priest of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles and an Associate Professor of the Practice at Notre Dame Law School, who presented on The Extrajudicial Process.

Moderating the one-hour webinar will be Very Rev. Lucien “Luke” Millette, Chair the CLSA Committee on Clergy.

Registration is open until 10 a.m. EST on December 9. You can find full details and the registration link on our website’s Upcoming Webinars page.

It is not necessary to have attended the previous sessions, which are all available in the Webinar Archives, accessible to members. If you are unable to attend, the recorded session will be available soon in the Webinar archives.

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**WELCOME NEW CLSA MEMBERS!**

*Please join us in welcoming the following new members who have joined the Society between September and November 2020. If you wish to join the Society or know someone who would be interested in becoming a member, please apply on our website.*

| Rev. Bede Aboh | Rev. Germon (Francis) Galvan, OSA | Rev. Mr. Declan O’Keeffe | Mr. Declan O’Keeffe |
| Sr. Patricia Bolster, RSM | Mrs. Catherine Godfrey South Bend, IN | Rev. Terence Pereira Singapore | Tamp, FL |
| Dr. Reginald Cruz, CFX West Linn, OR | Rev. Msgr. Kevin McAuliffe Phoenix, AZ | Rev. Jose Perez-Martinez San Antonio, TX | |
| Rev. Nicholas Droll Bremen, OH | Sr. Lystra Loe, OP Curepe, West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago | Rev. Renil Poulouse Rome, Italy | |
| Mrs. Danielle Dunleavy Rockland, ON, Canada | Rev. Msgr. Kevin McAuliffe Phoenix, AZ | Rev. Stephen Rosario Rome, Italy | |
| Rev. Chidi Ekpendu Los Angeles, CA | Mr. Peter McNaughton Sydney, New South Wales, Australia | Rev. Jose Rueda Los Angeles, CA | |
| Dr. Geno Fernandez Wilmette, IL | Mr. Peter McNamara Sydney, New South Wales, Australia | Ms. Cheryl Sarkisian Fresno, CA | |
| Rev. Gerardo Galaviz Los Angeles, CA | Mr. Peter Monaghan Chatswood West, New South Wales, Australia | Rev. Michael Schuetz Washington, NC | |
| | | Rev. Michael Sedor Pittsburgh, PA | |
| | | Rev. Dr. Eduard Shestak Old Forge, PA | |
| | | Rev. Adam Sroka, SVD Madang, Papua New Guinea | |
| | | Rev. Mark Steffl New Ulm, MN | |
| | | Rev. Noboru Tanaka Tokyo, Nerima, Japan | |
| | | Rev. Anthony VanBerkum, OP Washington, DC | |
| | | Rev. Paul Velazquez Los Angeles, CA | |
| | | Ms. Sarah Wagner-Wassen Orvelte, Netherlands | |

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December 2020

CLSAA Newsletter