



APRIL 2010 RESEARCH REPORTER



NEH Seminar Invitation/Award for Ed Mazza, Ph.D.



Edmund Mazza, Ph.D., Associate Professor in the Department of History and Political Science, has been invited to participate in a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Seminar, "Aristotle on Truth and Meaning." The seminar is being held at San Diego State University in San Diego, California, from June 21 until July 16, 2010. The stipend for seminar participants is \$3,300. Dr. Mazza is one of fourteen participants who have been selected from a competitive applicant pool to take part in this seminar "devoted to the study of Aristotle's semantic conception of truth and falsehood, both in light of his account of how human language and thought represent the world and in relation to other conceptions of truth and falsehood from those of his predecessors to those of leading contemporary philosophers." The seminar is being led by Dr. Mark Wheeler, Associate Professor of Philosophy at San Diego State University, and Dr. Deborah Modrack, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Rochester, New York. Both are published scholars, emphasizing Aristotle's theories of language and meaning, and his theory of truth and metaphysical theory of universals. Dr. Mazza's current

research interests on the relationship between the metaphysical truth of the human person and his or her inherent dignity align with the seminar's objectives. During the seminar, each participant will be responsible for leading the seminar on one occasion and for responding to another participant's presentation on a second occasion. Participants will choose the topics of their presentations; having chosen a topic, a participant will then meet with the co-directors who will suggest readings from the extensive secondary literature on Aristotle's theories and the large body of related contemporary research. Participants will also be encouraged throughout the period of the seminar to participate in an on-line discussion of the formal lectures, presentations, and related readings. When asked how it feels to receive this grant, Dr. Mazza states: "I feel very blessed. In recent decades modern analytic philosophers have begun to re-discover the importance of the metaphysics of Aristotle and the Medieval Scholastics, something the Church has cherished for centuries. It's important for today's undergrads to know there's a reasoned foundation to their Christian beliefs on God and



neighbor, one strong enough to overcome society's prevailing skepticism and relativism. There is no love without Truth." Congratulations to Dr. Mazza on this well deserved and esteemed invitation.

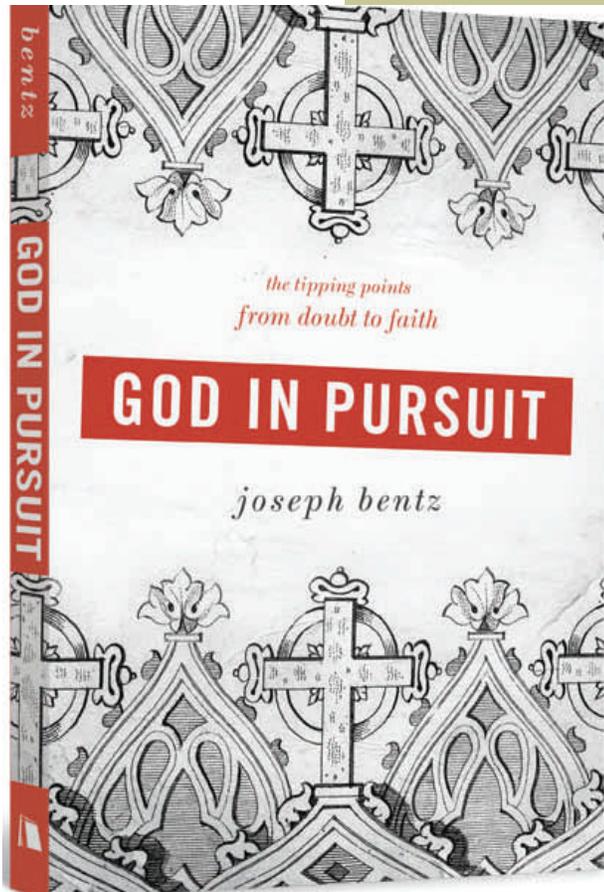
—Abbylin Sellers





***God in Pursuit: The Tipping Points from Doubt to Faith* by Joseph Bentz, Ph.D.**

Joseph Bentz, Ph.D., Professor of English, in *God in Pursuit: The Tipping Points from Doubt to Faith* (Beacon Hill Press, 2010), writes to



encourage those who themselves are pursuing God: (1) potential new converts to Jesus Christ, (2) those supporting and encouraging new believers, and (3) believers discouraged by no longer *feeling* the Holy Spirit active in their lives after many years of walking with God. Bentz anecdotally narrates conversion stories from famous, infamous, and even relatively

obscure Christians such as Anne Lamott, C. S. Lewis, Francis Collins, Charles Spurgeon, Charles G. Finney, John Wesley, the Apostle Paul, E. Stanley Jones, Augustine, Charles Colson, “Big Jim” Vaus, Mary Kay Beard, and Thomas Allbaugh. He notes that “[b]elievers aren’t people who have answered every question about Jesus. They are people who have met Him.” The effect of reading about these unique conversions is that the Christian reader recalls his or her own individualized journey to Christ, a recollection of grace and glory especially welcome during hard times.

All of the converts had others to support and encourage them, as might be expected, but also many who tried to negate their spiritual experience or even derail them from their path toward growth in Christ. Bentz poignantly describes the opposition Albert Schweitzer faced after having announced to his family and friends his call to become a missionary doctor in Africa: “his calling at first brought mockery and resistance from many of the Christians closest to him.” Stories like these remind the reader to help new believers, not create complications in their fragile, evolving spiritual lives.

Bentz’s book concludes with honest acknowledgement that

many believers, including altruistic saintly witnesses to Christ like Mother Teresa, can go for very long times—even years—without feeling the manifestation of the Holy Spirit that was initially so intense within them. He sincerely acknowledges his own struggles with “complaints” until he understood that his focus needed to shift from the deaths and disintegrations on earth to what is most important—the *eternal*: “I’m a temporary resident, preparing for eternity, and no catastrophe can shake me from God’s plan. I’m His child, so I can enjoy one of the greatest benefits of childhood—I can let someone else be in control.” Obviously there is both wisdom and spiritual solace in this sincere little book. —Carole J. Lambert

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“Reflection of an Uncommon Journey” by Kate Scorgie, Ph.D. and Lorraine Wilgosh, Ph.D.

Kate Scorgie, Ph.D., Professor of Advanced Studies in the Department of Education, and **Lorraine Wilgosh, Ph.D.**, Professor of Developmental Psychology from the University of Alberta, conduct a follow-up study examining the life management strategies of parents of children with disabilities in their article “Reflection of an Uncommon Journey: A Follow-up Study of Life Management of Six Mothers of Children with Diverse Disabilities” (*International Journal of Special Education*, 23.1 [2008]: 103-114). Scorgie and Wilgosh’s original study was conducted in the mid-1990s with fourteen Canadian families whose children “represented a wide range of disability characteristics and age ranges.” Disability characteristics included, but were not limited to, autism, Down syndrome, and rare genetic diseases. Due to the call for more longitudinal research on examining how parents of children with disabilities manage life across time and life stages, the follow-up study was conducted. Six mothers from the original study agreed to participate in extensive telephone interviews, utilizing the same protocol as the original interviews and focusing on three of the theme areas: positive personal reframing, maintaining a workable balance with respect to personal roles and responsi-

bilities, and the ability to meet personal, child, and family needs by locating and utilizing resources effectively. The focus of the analysis of follow-up data was “to compare the original parent themes with effective life management strategies used by parents as their children grew and progressed through life-cycle changes.” Some examples of the findings prove that, over time, parents became more accepting or more at peace with the diagnosis. Parent determination to secure quality services for their children became more tempered across time. Mothers expressed their need to develop strategies to maintain and guard their physical and emotional health, and collaborating and networking with professionals continued to receive strong support. Connecting with other parents and support groups was not considered as essential in the follow-up as in the original study, but some of the mothers had now become leaders for other parents. Based on the data analysis, the authors are able to confirm that parent life management themes did hold constant across time for the six mothers that were re-interviewed. Though the study was limited by the number of participants, it implies a number of important findings. The authors acknowledge that “further study is warranted to test

the suggestion that early experiences set parents on a trajectory for later life management outcomes.” This means that it is critical to prioritize intervention services following a diagnosis. It is also important for parents to take time for themselves with “self-care” activities without feeling guilt. Support is necessary, both professional and encouragement from loved ones, in order to help their children transition from a structured school environment to a more flexible adult program or vocation. To relieve the full burden of long-term care on aging parents and siblings, the authors suggest that it is important for society to act and provide other avenues of support. Scorgie and Wilgosh’s follow-up study provides significant insight for parents raising a child with a disability and can undoubtedly help parents prioritize and strategize attainable long-range goals in the best interest of their children.—Abbylin Sellers



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