

Catholic Theological Union Receives Lilly Grant to Establish Living Learning Community

New program seeks to inspire the next generation of Catholic ministers

CHICAGO, December 7, 2021 – Catholic Theological Union (CTU) has received a \$997,000 grant from the Lilly Endowment Inc. to launch *A Pathway for Tomorrow: Co-creating the Church of Tomorrow at CTU*. The central mandate of CTU's program is to increase the number of young adult ministers inspired to serve as leaders in the Catholic Church.

The grant was awarded through a competitive “phase-two” of Lilly Endowment’s *Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative*, a three-phase initiative designed to help theological schools across the United States and Canada as they prioritize and respond to the most pressing challenges they face as they prepare pastoral leaders for Christian congregations both now and into the future. CTU is one of 84 theological schools in the U.S. and Canada receiving grants through this phase of the initiative.

“As the face of the Church changes, CTU continually responds to new realities and emerging needs in the Church,” said Sr. Barbara Reid, OP, President of Catholic Theological Union. “This grant from Lilly Endowment will provide the support for CTU to embark on an innovative pathway of co-creating the Church of tomorrow by building a living and learning community of students who are young adults from Latinx, African American, Asian American/Pacific Islander, and LGBTQ+ communities. As the student experience is transformed, so too is the face of the Church as these missionary disciples go out to minister in more than sixty countries around the world.”

“Theological schools have long played a pivotal role in preparing pastoral leaders for churches,” said Christopher L. Coble, Lilly Endowment’s vice president for religion. “Today, these schools find themselves in a period of rapid and profound change. Through the Pathways initiative, theological schools will take deliberate steps to address the challenges they have identified in ways that make the most sense to them. We believe that their efforts are critical to ensuring that Christian congregations continue to have a steady stream of pastoral leaders who are well-prepared to lead the churches of tomorrow.”

Grounded in current research that focused on young adults and faith, CTU will build the living and learning community to become an agent of institutional change, bringing to the foreground the contextual awareness of changing ecclesial and cultural dimensions of the Church of tomorrow. CTU's initiative also includes expanding institutional partnerships and engaging in intentional and ongoing curricular, administrative, and faculty development efforts to ensure that formation, coursework, and community life integrate around a preparation for inclusive ministry.

About Catholic Theological Union

Catholic Theological Union is a Roman Catholic graduate school of theology and ministry located in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Chicago; CTU shares alliances with DePaul University, Dominican University and the University of Chicago. Its mission is to prepare effective leaders for the Church, ready to witness to Christ's good news of justice, love, and peace. More than 4,500 CTU alumni, vowed religious and lay women and men, have gone on to minister in sixty countries worldwide.

About Lilly Endowment Inc.

Lilly Endowment Inc. is a private philanthropic foundation created in 1937 by J.K. Lilly Sr. and his sons Eli and J.K. Jr. through gifts of stock in their pharmaceutical business, Eli Lilly and Company. While those gifts remain the financial bedrock of the Endowment, the Endowment is a separate entity from the company, with a distinct governing board, staff and location. In keeping with the founders' wishes, the Endowment supports the causes of community development, education and religion and maintains a special commitment to its hometown, Indianapolis, and home state, Indiana. The principal aim of the Endowment's religion grantmaking is to deepen and enrich the lives of American Christians, primarily by seeking out and supporting efforts that enhance the vitality of congregations and strengthen the pastoral and lay leadership of Christian communities. The Endowment also seeks to improve public understanding of diverse religious traditions by supporting fair and accurate portrayals of the role religion plays in the United States and across the globe.

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