2015 Mormon Studies Conference

Mormons and Catholics
From the Margins to the Mainstream

In nineteenth-century America, Catholics and Mormons were beleaguered and besieged minorities. Both were attacked as enemies of morality, culture, and democracy. Fueled by sensationalistic publications, both suffered prejudice, cruelty, and violence. Since this time, both traditions have gained influence and respectability in American public life. During the 2012 presidential election, Mormon Mitt Romney chose Paul Ryan, a devout Catholic, as his running mate. This was the first time in American history that a major party ticket was without a Protestant.

Historical difficulties notwithstanding, Latter-day Saints and Catholics have worked together in recent years on humanitarian aid, immigration reform, religious freedom, and issues related to marriage. This conference will explore the history of Mormon-Catholic relations, investigate theological distinctions, and explore the future of these traditions in the twenty-first century.

Monday April 13, 2015

8:45 a.m.  Introduction

9:00 - 10:00  Historical Dimensions of Mormon-Catholic Relations
“A Sometimes Uneasy Accommodation: Mormon-Catholic Relations in Utah, 1866-1966.”
Gary Topping, Archivist, Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City

“Nineteenth-Century Mormon and Catholic Mutual Perceptions”
Matthew Grow, Director of Publications, LDS Church History Department

10:00 - 11:00  ‘Into a Foreign Land:’ A Catholic among Mormons and a Mormon among Catholics
Polly Aird, Independent Scholar, author of Mormon Convert, Mormon Defector
Zina Nibley Petersen, Associate Professor of English, Brigham Young University

11:00 - 12:00  Panel discussion
Gary Topping, Matthew Grow, Zina Nibley Petersen, Polly Aird

12:00 - 1:00  Lunch

1:00 - 2:00  Comparative Dimensions: Theology and Church Practice
“Catholic and Mormon Models of ‘the Church’”
Mauro Properzi, Assistant Professor of Church History and Doctrine, Brigham Young University

“all that God has revealed’: Revelation and Authority in LDS and Catholic Contexts”
Brian D. Birch, Director, Religious Studies Program, Utah Valley University
2:00 - 3:00  **Latter-day Saint & Catholic Dialogue**

“Abundant Grace: The Humanness of Catholics and Latter-day Saints as a Basis for Friendship and Collaboration”
Daniel Dwyer O.F.M., Associate Professor of History, Siena College

“Mormon/Catholic Dialogue: Thinking About Ways Forward”
Matthew N. Schmalz, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, College of the Holy Cross

3:00 - 4:00  **Panel discussion**
Mauro Properzi, Brian Birch, Daniel Dwyer, and Matthew Schmalz

4:30 p.m.  **Reception for His Excellency Archbishop Bernardito Auza**
*(hosted by the Orem LDS Institute of Religion)*

7:00 p.m.  **Keynote Address**
“Religious Freedom in the Twenty-First Century: Common Cause Among Catholics & Latter-day Saints”
His Excellency Archbishop Bernardito Auza
Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations
*(in partnership with the Center for Constitutional Studies and the Office of International Affairs & Diplomacy)*

*for more information, contact Boyd Petersen (boyd.petersen@uvu.edu) or Brian Birch (brian.birch@uvu.edu)*
Participants

Polly Aird is the author of the Mormon Convert, Mormon Defector: A Scottish Immigrant in the American West, 1848-1861 (2009 University of Oklahoma Press), which won the best biography award from the Mormon History Association in 2010. She is the coauthor (with historians Will Bagley and Jeff Nichols) of Playing with Shadows: Voices of Dissent in the Mormon West (2011), which was awarded the best documentary book by the Utah State Historical Society in 2012. Polly served on the editorial board of the Journal of Mormon History for ten years (2000-2011) and more recently on the executive board of the Mormon History Association (2011-2014).

Bernardito C. Auza is the Titular Archbishop of Suací and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations. He was born in Talibon, Republic of the Philippines and ordained a priest for the Diocese of Tagbilaran in 1985. He enrolled at the University of Santo Tomas, Manila, where he obtained his Licentiate in Philosophy, Licentiate in Theology, and Masters in Education. The Archbishop then pursued his education at Pontificia University of St. Thomas (Angelicum) in Rome, where he obtained a Licentiate in Canon Law in 1989 and a Doctorate in Sacred Theology in 1990. He then finished his diplomatic and linguistic studies at the Vatican Diplomatic School (Pontificia Accademia Ecclesiastica). Prior to his appointment as Permanent Observer, he served in the Secretariat of State in the Vatican.

Brian D. Birch is Director of the Religious Studies Program and Center for the Study of Ethics at Utah Valley University. He received his Ph.D. in Philosophy of Religion and Theology at Claremont Graduate University and specializes in comparative theology and interreligious studies. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees for the Parliament of the World’s Religions and as Senior Research Fellow at the Foundation for Religious Diplomacy. He is author of “Turning the Devil Out of Doors: Mormonism and the Concept of Hell” in Hell and its Afterlife (Ashgate Publishing) and “Faith Seeking Understanding: Mormon Atheology and the Question of Fideism” in Mormonism at the Crossroads of Philosophy and Theology (Kofford Books). His current book projects include a collection of essays entitled Radical Pluralism, which explores the theoretical foundations of religious diversity and Mormonism Among Christian Theologies for Oxford University Press.

Daniel P. Dwyer, O.F.M. has been a member of the Order of Friars Minor (Franciscans) since 1982 and a Catholic priest since 1988. Fr. Dwyer received his Bachelor of Arts Degree in History from Siena College, Loudonville, New York. He also holds a Master of Arts Degree in History from the College of St. Rose, Albany, New York; and a Master of Arts Degree in Theology from the Washington Theological Union in Silver Spring, Maryland. He received his Ph.D. in History from Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana. Fr. Dwyer is a long time member of the Mormon History Association and a former trustee of St. Bonaventure University in Olean, New York. He is currently an Associate Professor of History at Siena College.

Matthew J. Grow is Director of Publications at the Church History Department of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and a general editor of the Joseph Smith Papers. Along with Terryl Givens, Grow is the author of Parley P. Pratt: The Apostle Paul of Mormonism (Oxford University Press, 2011), which received the Best Book Award in 2012 from the Mormon History Association. His earlier book, “Liberty to the Downtrodden”: Thomas L. Kane, Romantic Reformer (Yale University Press, 2009), also received the Best Book Award from the Mormon History Association as well as the Evans Biography Award from the Mountain West Center at Utah State University. He is a graduate of Brigham Young University and received his Ph.D. in American history from the University of Notre Dame.

Zina Petersen is Associate professor of English at Brigham Young University. She received her graduate degrees from The Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. where she studied medieval British literature. Her research interests include the literary history of Christianity, mysticism, women's religious and spiritual writings, Chaucer, Malory and King Arthur traditions. She also follows developments in popular Medievalism, which, as distinct from Medieval Studies, is the exploration of the uses and interpretation of the Middle Ages. She is the faculty advisor for the Quill and the Sword medieval clubs.

Mauro Popperzi is a native of Gorizia, Italy and Assistant Professor of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University where he teaches World Religions and Christianity. He received his B.S. in Social Work from BYU, a Master’s of Theological Studies from Harvard Divinity School, an M.Phil in Psychology and Religion from
Cambridge University, and a Ph.D. in Mormon Studies from Durham University. He also completed postdoctoral work in Interfaith Dialogue from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, Italy. He has published in the *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*, the *Journal of Mormon History*, *BYU Studies*, and in *Issues in Religion and Psychotherapy*. His monograph *Mormonism and the Emotions: An Analysis of LDS Scriptural Texts* is scheduled for publication in 2015 by Fairleigh Dickinson University Press.

**Mathew N. Schmalz** is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at the College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Massachusetts. After graduating from Amherst College he went to earn an M.A. in Religious Studies and a Ph.D. in the History of Religions from the University of Chicago. His teaching and research areas include global Catholicism and modern religious movements. He is editor of *Engaging South Asian Religions: Boundaries, Appropriations, and Resistances* (SUNY Press) and author of “Meet the Mormons: From the Margin to the Mainstream,” in *Commonweal: A Review of Religion, Politics, and Culture* and “Thinking with *Nostra Aetate*: From the New Pluralism to Comparative Theology” in *Revisiting Vatican II* (Dharmaram Publications). He also blogs regularly for On Faith, Crux, and the Huffington Post.

**Gary Topping** is a widely published scholar of Utah history. He is retired from Salt Lake Community College, and, since 2001, he has been Archivist of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Salt Lake City. He writes a monthly column on Utah Catholic history for the diocesan newspaper, *The Intermountain Catholic*. He is author of *The Story of the Cathedral of the Madeline* (Sagebrush Press), *Utah Historians and the Reconstruction of Western History* (University of Oklahoma Press), *Leonard J. Arrington: A Historian’s Life* (Arthur H. Clark Co.), and *Salt Lake City 1890-1930* (Arcadia Publishing).