



Relevant Biographies Speakers / Performers Mercy Centre

George Weigel

Tuesday July 26 | 12-1 pm | Kraków City of Saints Panel Reflection

Wednesday July 27 | 3:45-5 pm | Religious Freedom Panel



Catholic theologian George Weigel has authored and edited more than twenty books, including the best-selling biography of Pope John Paul II. As a Senior Vatican Analyst for NBC News, he can be seen and heard on television and radio, with his essays, op-ed columns and reviews appearing in major opinion journals and newspapers across the United States. His weekly column, "The Catholic Difference," is syndicated to sixty newspapers.

Considered by many to be one of America's leading public intellectuals, Mr. Weigel currently serves as the Distinguished Senior Fellow of the Ethics and Public Policy Center.

Fr. Thomas Rosica, CSB

Tuesday July 26 | 12-1 pm | Kraków City of Saints Panel Reflection

Fr. Thomas Rosica is a priest of the Congregation of St. Basil. He holds advanced degrees in Theology and Sacred Scripture from Regis College in the Toronto School of Theology, the Pontifical Biblical Institute in Rome and the École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem. From 1994-2000 he served as Executive Director of the Newman Centre Catholic Chaplaincy at the University of Toronto. He was appointed by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops as the Chief Executive Officer and National Director of the World Youth Day and Papal Visit of Pope John Paul II, that took place in Toronto during July, 2002.



In 2003, Fr. Rosica became the founding CEO of Salt and Light Television, Canada's first national Catholic Television Network. At the end of the Papal transition in April 2013, the Vatican asked him to serve as English language assistant to the Holy See Press Office. He continues to relate on a daily basis with English language media around the world.

Mother Agnes Mary Donovan, SV

Tuesday July 26 | 12-1 pm | Kraków City of Saints Panel Reflection

Mother Agnes Mary Donovan is the first superior general of the Sisters of Life, a community founded by John Cardinal O'Connor in 1991. After earning her PhD in Psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1985, she served as a faculty member and professor of psychology at Columbia University in New York and The College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. As an academic, and later in her



career as a practicing psychologist, she focused on child development and family issues. She then entered the Sisters of Life, a then brand-new community developing its unique charism of protecting and enhancing human life.

Chris Stefanick, Real Life Catholic

Wednesday July 27 - Friday July 29 | 9 - 12:30pm | Catechesis Emcee

Chris Stefanick is an internationally acclaimed author and speaker who has devoted his life to inspiring people to live a bold, contagious faith. Chris's live seminars reach more than 85,000 people per year. His videos and radio spots reach more than 1,000,000 people per month, every month. And his educational initiatives are turning-the-tide in the Church. He authored what is being welcomed as the best Confirmation program in the English language: Chosen. Chris is also the founder of Real Life Catholic, a Denver-based non-profit which



operates as the headquarters for his various initiatives. Above all, Chris is proud to be the husband to his wife Natalie and father to their six children. To receive Chris's free videos and sign up for the newsletter please visit: **RealLifeCatholic.com**



Sr. Bethany Madonna, S.V.

Wednesday July 27 | 9 - 12:30pm | Catechesis Session

Sister Bethany Madonna entered the Sisters of Life in 2007. While attending the University of Central Florida, she had a profound encounter with the Lord, which drew her heart toward the vulnerable unborn and their mothers. After her graduation in 2006, she worked for the Respect Life Office for the Diocese of Orlando before joining her religious community. She made her



final vows in 2015, and currently lives at the community's Motherhouse serving her sisters in the Novitiate Formation Program. She is passionate about sharing the message of life and love.

Jason and Crystalina Evert

Wednesday July 27 | 9 - 12:30pm | Catechesis Session



Jason and Crystalina Evert are the authors of more than ten books, including *How to Find Your Soulmate without Losing Your Soul* and *Theology of the Body for Teens*. Jason earned a master's degree in Theology after completing undergraduate degrees in Counseling, Theology and Philosophy from the Franciscan University of Steubenville. He frequently appears on radio

throughout the United States and has been a guest on television programs airing on Fox News, MSNBC, the BBC and EWTN.

Crystalina is the author of *Pure Womanhood*, and runs the website *Women Made New* (womenmadenew.com), which encourages, supports and empowers women to become what God created them to be. Like Jason, she is a frequent guest on radio programs throughout the country, and her television appearances include MSNBC, the BBC, Donahue, WGN-TV news, and EWTN.

The two married in 2003 and now have six children. Together, they have spoken about the virtue of chastity to more than one million people at various events throughout the world, including World Youth Days in Sydney and Madrid, and they run the ministry ChastityProject.com.

Archbishop William Lori

Wednesday July 27 | 3:45-5 pm | Religious Freedom Panel



Archbishop William E. Lori was ordained to the priesthood by Cardinal William Baum on May 14, 1977. In 1995, after doing parish work and serving in a number of official chancery positions, he was ordained as auxiliary bishop of Washington.

Archbishop Lori was elected supreme chaplain of the Knights of Columbus in April 2005. As supreme chaplain, he has the responsibility of overseeing the spiritual welfare of the Order's 1.9 million members and their families.

Archbishop Lori has been a member of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities and the Committee on Doctrine of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) since 2001. Since 2011 he has served as the chair of the formed Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty, which works to address the freedom of religion — which the archbishop calls our “First Freedom.” During the time that the archbishop has headed up the committee, it has spoken against health coverage mandates that would coerce employers to pay for services for which they have moral objections and has urged the U.S House of Representatives to support the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which defines marriage as between one man and one woman. On May 16, 2012, he was installed as the 16th Archbishop of Baltimore.

Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda

Wednesday July 27 | 3:45-5 pm | Religious Freedom Panel

Archbishop Bashar Matti Warda is a Chaldean Catholic cleric and the current Archbishop of Erbil, Iraq. He was ordained a priest in 1993 and in 1995 joined the Redemptorist order of Flanders in Belgium. After receiving his masters at the Catholic University of Louvain in 1999 he returned to Iraq. In 2009, the Synod of Bishops of the Chaldean Catholic Church elected him Archbishop of the Archeparchy of Erbil.





Since the rise of the Islamic State, violence in Iraq and neighboring countries has resulted in targeted killings and the expulsion of hundreds of thousands of Christians. Displaced Iraqi Chaldeans have been seeking refuge in Dohuk and Erbil in northern Iraq where Archbishop Warda, with support from various charities including the Knights of Columbus, is leading Church efforts to assist displaced families and raise international awareness of the plight of Christians in the Middle East. Charitable efforts in Erbil have been focused on providing shelter, health care, jobs, educational opportunities and pastoral care for all Christian refugees.

Jacqueline Isaac

Wednesday July 27 | 3:45-5 pm | Religious Freedom Panel



Jacqueline Isaac is a California lawyer and vice president of Roads of Success (ROS), a humanitarian NGO. As an American of Egyptian descent with a passion for international affairs, she lived in Egypt during her teenage years. She has spent over a decade supporting those escaping crisis and advocating for the rights of minorities and women across the Middle East. Her focus has been on issues such as the refugee crisis, sex trafficking, female genital mutilation and HIV/AIDs.

Isaac recently testified before the UK Parliament and U.S. Congress as to her experiences in the war-torn parts of Iraq, supporting resolutions declaring that ISIS committed genocide against Christians, Yazidis and other minorities. Isaac also served as an advisor to Rev. Dr. Safwat El-Baiady of the Evangelical Churches of Egypt, who was delegate of the Constitutional Assembly appointed as a drafter of the most recent Egyptian Constitution. She has been featured on BBC, NBC, FOX, ABC, the Guardian, Channel 4, Huffington Post, Rome Reports, Corriere Del Serra and other international media outlets.



Bishop Robert Barron

Wednesday July 27 | 7 - 9:30 pm | Night of Mercy



Bishop Robert Barron is the founder of Word on Fire Catholic Ministries and Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. He is also the host of CATHOLICISM, a groundbreaking, award-winning documentary about the Catholic Faith.

A bestselling author, Bishop Barron has published numerous books, essays, and articles on theology and the spiritual life.

He has also appeared on several media outlets including NBC, PBS, FOX News, CNN, and EWTN. He has spoken at many conferences and events all over the world, including the 2015 World Meeting of Families which marked Pope Francis' historic visit to the United States.

Bishop Barron's website, WordOnFire.org, reaches millions of people each year, and is considered to be one of the most-followed Catholics in the world of social media. Bishop Barron's pioneering work in evangelizing through the media led Francis Cardinal George to describe him as "one of the Church's best messengers."

Bishop Barron's latest film and study program, on God and atheism, is titled The Mystery of God: Who God Is and Why He Matters. His next major film series, CATHOLICISM: The Pivotal Players, is scheduled to debut in Fall 2016.

Joel Stepanek

Wednesday July 27 | 7 - 9:30 pm | Night of Mercy

Joel Stepanek has been actively and passionately involved in ministry for over ten years. What began as a simple internship in a parish youth ministry office evolved into an incredible adventure that led him on numerous middle school lock-ins, high school retreats, parish missions, and ultimately to meet his wife, Colleen. Joel is the Director of Resource Development for Life Teen International where he creates engaging youth ministry resources



for middle and high school students. Joel is a sought after speaker who has traveled across the world speaking to teenagers and young adults.



Joel is the author of two books, “True North: A Roadmap for Discernment” and “The Greatest Job on Earth: The Seven Virtues of an Awesome Youth Minister.” He received his Master’s degree in religious education with an emphasis in youth and young adult ministry from Fordham University in New York City. Joel lives with his wife and two children in Mesa, Arizona. is to write fragrant, prayerful music that leads to encountering Jesus Christ, even in the silence of the heart.

Curtis Martin

Thursday July 28 | 9 - 12:30pm | Catechesis Session

Curtis Martin is the founder and chief executive officer of FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, which he established in January 1998, at Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. Beginning with just two staff members and 24 students, FOCUS missionaries are now present at approximately 100 campuses, served by 550 missionaries and supporting staff.



An award-winning and dynamic speaker, Curtis is often seen on college campuses, television programs, conferences, or at priest convocations. He authored the best-selling book *Made for More*, co-authored *The Real Story: Understanding the Big Picture of the Bible* with Dr. Edward Sri and *Boys to Men: The Transforming Power of Virtue* with Dr. Tim Gray. He also co-hosts EWTN’s groundbreaking show “Crossing the Goal.”

Curtis Martin holds a Master’s degree in Theology. He serves as a Consulter to the Pontifical Council of the New Evangelization.

Together with his wife, Michaelann, Curtis hosts the EWTN television series “Family Matters.” Curtis and Michaelann live in Westminster, Colorado, with five of their nine children.

Jeff and Emily Runyan

Thursday July 29 | 9 - 12:30pm | Catechesis Session



Jeff Runyan is an eleven-year veteran with FOCUS, where he serves as director of FOCUS Missions. Jeff earned degrees in political science and Spanish from Colorado State University, studied international relations at the Pontifical Catholic University in Santiago, Chile and was a Rotary World Peace Fellow in Bangkok, Thailand, obtaining a certification in international peace and conflict resolution. He has a passion for international cultures and for promoting a “Culture of Encounter” through FOCUS Missions. Last summer on mission, while sailing the Brazilian Amazon, Jeff asked his girlfriend, Emily, to “go on mission with him for a lifetime.” She said yes and became his wife on April 2, 2011

After growing up on a farm in Nebraska, Emily graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln with a degree in advertising and public relations. She recognized her call to serve Christ and His Church while on mission in the Dominican Republic, which is also where she met her husband, Jeff Runyan. She served as a FOCUS missionary in Arizona, a FOCUS team director in California and now she serves on the FOCUS Recruitment team in Denver, Colorado. Emily loves seeking truth, goodness and beauty in the world we live in and sharing it with others through art. Her artwork is an expression of her love for Christ, and it is her hope that it will open the eyes, minds and hearts of others to something beyond the ordinary.

Sister Gaudia Skass of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy

Friday July 29 | 9 - 12:30pm | Catechesis Session



Sister Gaudia is a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy, the same congregation to which St. Faustina Kowalska belonged. She joined the congregation after graduating from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw in 2005. Working for the Faustinum Association at the Shrine of Divine Mercy in Kraków, Sister Gaudia now frequently travels far from her native Poland, touring the world to speak about the message of the Divine Mercy given to St. Faustina. Sister

Gaudia is a key member of the planning committee for World Youth Day 2016.



Scott and Annie Powell

Friday July 29 | 9 - 12:30pm | Catechesis Session

Dr. Scott and Annie Powell are the founders and directors of Camp Wojtyla, a Catholic wilderness adventure camp in the Colorado Rockies. Annie is a professional outdoor educator with a Master's degree in Adventure Education and Outdoor Programming from Prescott College and has over 10 years of experience running Christian outdoor programs for youth. Scott is a seasoned Scripture professor who has been teaching the Bible to all ages for over a decade. He is the Director of the Aquinas Institute for Catholic Thought, an outreach to the University of Colorado, Boulder, and holds a Ph.D. in Catholic Studies from Liverpool Hope University in England.



Dr. Scott and Annie Powell met while serving as missionaries with FOCUS (Fellowship of Catholic University Students). Their combined expertise and experience in ministry and education allows them to direct a program which integrates the truths of the Catholic faith with exciting outdoor adventures and incredible wilderness expeditions. Scott and Annie have two children, Lily and Samuel, who live out this mission with them.

Shaun Garrison & Band



Shaun has been playing music for more than 20 years, and has been extensively involved with FOCUS and other ministries at various parishes and campuses across the U.S. His song writing is inspired by the hopes and struggles of life, by beauty and mystery, faith and worship. He is part of an initiative within FOCUS that is responding to the call of the New Evangelization by means of beauty, specifically through music. Listen to the new album "Origin (a beauty initiative within FOCUS)" on iTunes or visit www.focus.org/origin to hear more of the story. Shaun's debut album, "Exceeding", is also on iTunes. Learn more at www.shaungarrison.com. Originally from Pensacola, Florida, Shaun moved to Denver, Colorado, in 2001, where he now lives with his wife and five children.

Matt Maher

Since his 2008 major label debut, Matt Maher has become a staple in the artistic and songwriting community. An eight time-GRAMMY nominee, he has garnered multiple radio successes writing and recording songs like “Lord, I Need You,” “Hold Us Together,” “Christ Is Risen,” “All The People Said Amen” and “Your Grace Is Enough.” Maher has penned songs recorded by Chris Tomlin, Crowder, Third Day, Matt Redman, Hillsong, Casting Crowns, Jesus Culture and Bethel among others. Matt has written or co-written five No. 1 radio singles. In 2013, Maher had a career highlight performing in Rio in front of Pope Francis and a crowd of 3 million people, as well as performing in 2015 in downtown Philadelphia as part of the World Meeting of Families with The Fray, Aretha Franklin, Juanes, Jim Gaffigan, among others. In 2015, Maher was awarded his first RIAA Gold certification for his popular single "Lord, I Need You."



Audrey Assad



Audrey Assad is the daughter of a Syrian refugee, an author, speaker, producer, and critically lauded songwriter and musician. She releases music she calls “soundtracks for prayer” on the label Fortunate Fall Records, which she co-owns with her husband, and has also penned contemplative songs of worship for Matt Maher, Christy Nockels, Brett Younker, Sarah Hart, Meredith Andrews, and others —

Audrey’s passion is to write fragrant, prayerful music that leads to encountering Jesus Christ, even in the silence of the heart.