



## Grace and Gratitude

The work of the LRI is, for the most part, a quiet service to scholarship. Even so, there are few tasks as thankless and unheralded as translation. Its demands are easily overlooked, and its results readily criticized. For over 32 years, Fr Michael Shields has patiently labored as the principal translator of Lonerган's considerable body of Latin writings, including over 40 unpublished archival manuscripts,

and five published volumes (so far) in the *CWL*. By his own estimate, that's 1.2 million Latin words



rendered into 1.7 million English words! As Michael's longtime collaborator Danny Monsour points out, "All of us in the Lonerган community, and indeed everyone whose interest in Lonerган's thought has been initially aroused because they came across one of Michael's translations of a Lonerган text in a library or bookshop, owe him a great debt of gratitude for the work he has done over so many years."

This past summer, Fr Shields celebrated his golden jubilee as a priest in the Society of Jesus. In the autumn of 1980, he came to the then-Lonerган Centre to assist its founder, Frederick Crowe, as the Centre's Executive Director. In 1985, the Centre was reconstituted as the Lonerган Research Institute, with Fr Shields

as librarian and translator, a position he has held ever since. Upon the completion of 32 years' full-time service in October—the longest serving staff member in the initiative begun by Fr Crowe—Fr Shields quietly shifted to part-time work.

Fr Shields received the LRI's annual Service Award in 2008, in recognition of his erudite, dedicated, and patient labors—accolades renewed at a reception in his honor held November 28th at Regis College. In remarks, Michael Vertin lauded Fr Shields for his attention to detail, keen memory, and unflagging kindness—all qualities for which the novice Director is especially grateful!

## Winter Wonderland

Well into December, I was still referring to the term beginning in January as the "Spring term," which, in Houston, it is. Fr Rixon gently disabused me of my wishful thinking: in Toronto, he said, it is decidedly still winter! For winter, then, we are pleased to announce a wonderful lineup of Graduate Seminars.

David Boehmer of Trinity College presents "Hamann, Kant, and the Lutheran *finitum capax infiniti*," with a response by Matthew Thollander of Wycliffe College (January 11).

Reid Locklin of St Michael's College presents "One Nostra Aetate, or Two? Hermeneutics and Vatican II," with a response by Darren Dias of St Michael's College (February 15).

Finally, Jean-Pierre Fortin of St Michael's

College presents "Bonhoeffer and Delp: Prison and Christian Discipleship," with a response by Mary Ellen Sheehan of St Michael's College (March 22).

These events are free and open to the public. For details, please visit our website.

## Newness of Life

I have not yet seen the film version of *Les Misérables*, a story that turns on the transforming power of forgiveness, and the dehumanizing power of wrath. But last Sunday, I read an amazing real-life account of forgiveness. A young man in Florida, enraged and exhausted, shot and mortally wounded his fiancé. Horrified, he immediately turned himself in. The young woman's father, keeping an anguished vigil at her comatose side, sensed her pleading with him: "forgive him." It was, he thought, too much to ask. But the plea was insistent and, he came to believe, it was not only her voice but Christ's. The result is an amazing tale of how four devastated parents, one wrecked young man, and the criminal justice system made a costly way forward from the debris of despair.

Forgiveness, of course, is hardly a Christian monopoly, either as an ideal or as a practice. But it holds a central place in the Christian story. For Lonerган, the very essence of redemption is the "Law of the Cross": overcoming evil by self-displacing love. The Gospel proposes that this Law was given to us by a God who, as a man, first lived it himself.

Contributions are tax deductible in Canada and the United States.

If you no longer wish to receive the *Bulletin*, please send an email with the subject "unsubscribe" to [subscriber.services@lonerган-lri.ca](mailto:subscriber.services@lonerган-lri.ca)