



THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA

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Catholic University Receives \$7.1 Million Lilly Grant

The Catholic University of America's School of Theology and Religious Studies has received a grant of over \$7.1 million from Lilly Endowment Inc. to institute a new program that will strengthen practical leadership skills of current and new priests, seminarians, and other pastoral leaders.

The program also will include a continuing formation institute for bishops, and collaboration with six U.S. seminaries, the Conference of Major Superiors of Men, and the Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle.

The Catholic Project, at Catholic University, will serve as a leadership partner for the initiative.

New Wineskins is being funded through Lilly Endowment's Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative. This initiative is 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.

The grant to Catholic University is one of 45 approved in this competitive round of funding to support theological schools as they lead large-scale collaborations with other seminaries, colleges and universities, and other church-related organizations.

The Needs Met By This Study

The 2022 National Study of Catholic Priests, published by The Catholic Project, found young priests reported elevated burnout. The study also raised concern about the rate at which young men are leaving ministry within the first five years.

Seminary programs are designed to prioritize teaching philosophy and theology, with less emphasis on the practical demands of running a parish, yet the reality is Catholic parishes need pastors with not only solid intellectual formation but also well-rounded human and pastoral formation.

In addition, men's religious communities programs have reported a need to prepare their younger members to take on administrative roles within their communities.

The project includes

- A pastoral laboratory for seminarians at collaborating seminaries
- Leadership formation for religious communities with the Conference of Major Superiors of Men
- Tools for pastors and other pastoral leaders to address polarization within their congregations and the Church

- The Gregory the Great Bishops' Institute to address continuing education for bishops who often become bishops in a very different context than when they entered the priesthood.

"This initiative allows us to address some of the most pressing issues in leadership for seminarians, men's religious communities, bishops, and pastoral leaders. This is an opportunity to build on the School of Theology's 130-year foundation of preparing leaders for service to the Church," said Susan Timoney, the principal investigator for New Wineskins.

Timoney is an associate professor of practice, associate dean for graduate ministerial studies and director of the certificate in pastoral ministry. Stephen White, executive director of The Catholic Project, will lead the project with her.

Lilly Endowment launched the Pathways for Tomorrow Initiative in 2021. Since then, it has provided grants totaling more than \$700 million to support 163 theological schools in efforts to strengthen their own educational and financial capacities and to assist 61 schools in developing large-scale collaborative endeavors.

Collaborating seminaries include Theological College, Washington, D.C.; Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, St. Louis; Mount St. Mary's Seminary, Emmitsburg, Md.; St. Vincent College, Latrobe, Pa.; University of St. Mary of the Lake, Mundelein, Ill.; and St. Patrick's Seminary and University, Menlo Park, Calif.

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About The Catholic University of America: [The Catholic University of America](https://www.cua.edu/) in Washington, D.C., is the national university of the Catholic Church and the only higher education institution founded by the U.S. bishops. Established in 1887 as a papally chartered graduate and research center, the University has an R1 research designation, comprises 12 schools and colleges, and 31 research facilities, and is home to more than 5,500 undergraduate and graduate students.

About Lilly Endowment Inc.: [Lilly Endowment Inc.](https://www.lillyendowment.org/) is a private 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, it 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. A principal aim of the Endowment's religion grantmaking is to deepen and enrich the lives of Christians in the United States, 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 about religion and lift up in fair, accurate and balanced ways the roles that people of all faiths and various religious communities play in the United State and around the globe traditions in the United States and across the globe.