

Introduction to *Zeal* 4.1

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Curation of this issue of *Zeal: A Journal for the Liberal Arts* has given me hope. Fr. Thomas Looney, C.S.C., President of King's College, writes that the founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, Blessed Basil Moreau, understood zeal as a "burning desire"; and Fr. Looney continues: "The true educator is one whose 'burning desire' encompasses not only a passion for the truth, but a passion to impart that truth to others in such a way that it sparks excitement and passion in one's students."¹ The essays in this issue of *Zeal* demonstrate the passion of such educators to teach students with wisdom and humility, engage in scholarly dialogue and debate, and present worthwhile ideas to interested readers. It has been a pleasure and privilege to bring this issue of *Zeal* into being.

The two essays in Provocations & Occasions underscore the "burning desire" to honor the humanity of our students. In "Only That They Be Spineless: Centering Race and Racism in Philosophical Conversations about Justice," James M. Ambury recounts his response to racial injustice in the United States after the murder of George Floyd in 2020, emphasizing his own accountability as a white male professor to engage with race and justice in his philosophy classes. Ambury ends with the voices of several students relating their transformative experiences through honest and forthright dialogues. The second essay by David Buck, "Our Students' Humanity Is Worth Protecting: An Argument for GenAI Refusal," convincingly explains why students should eschew generative AI (such as ChatGPT) and instead engage in the difficult, frustrating, and rewarding practices of writing and thinking. Buck presents his classroom policy on AI and other practical strategies that offer "writing as a product of thinking, not as a transactional skill engineered by some computer algorithm." These Provocations & Occasions essays present tangible ways to spark "excitement and passion" for learning in our classrooms.

The fourth volume of *Zeal* inaugurates two forums: Reappraisals and Overheard in the Academy. The Reappraisals forum takes up a canonical text and analyzes it anew; here, Harry Frankfurt's essay "On Bullshit" is examined two decades after its best-selling book edition was released and nearly four decades after its initial publication in *Raritan*. Overheard in the Academy discusses an issue of importance in academia today; and this forum presents the perspectives of postcolonial literature professors, many of

whom teach at Catholic colleges, about Pope Francis's "Letter on the Role of Literature in Formation," a text noteworthy for its promotion of close reading as a tonic for the mind and soul.

Zeal has published several iterations of our other forums—Transformative Teaching, Ethics in Focus, and Author Meets Critics—as well as one forum on Liberal Arts Starts and Circuitous Routes, which traces the career and life paths of alumni of liberal arts institutions. Still to come in future issues are the forums Great Books and Beyond, dedicated to exploring classical texts that have shaped the intellectual and moral horizons of the world's cultures and to expanding the canon to include under-represented voices, and Powerful Expressions, wherein the arts engage social questions, give voice to the unheard, and foster understanding. Our readers are welcome to propose a topic for any of these forums.

I am grateful for the astute thinking, writing, and editing of our contributors, peer reviewers, and editorial and advisory board members. *Zeal* is an open access journal; submissions for the peer-reviewed Provocations & Occasions section may be sent to zeal@kings.edu. More information about submitting essays to *Zeal*, as well as the full descriptions of our forums, may be read at our website: <https://zeal.kings.edu/zeal/about>.

¹ Fr. Thomas, Looney, "The Holy Cross Charism of Education," King's College, <https://www.kings.edu/pdf/holy-cross-charism-of-education.pdf>.