

Dr. Michael J. Healy, Ph.D.

Professor of Philosophy, Franciscan University of Steubenville

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B.A., Loyola University of Los Angeles, now Loyola Marymount University, (1972)

Majors: Philosophy and Psychology

M.A. (1975) and Ph.D. (1978), University of Dallas.

Major: Philosophy. Sub-Major: Literature. His dissertation was a defense of the traditional understanding of substance, spiritual substance, and personal identity in dialogue with the empirical reductionism of David Hume.

History and Background

Dr. Michael J. Healy served as Dean of the Faculty (chief academic officer) under Fr. Michael Scanlan, TOR (President) at Franciscan University of Steubenville from 1986-2000. In those 15 years, the faculty increased from 44 members to 110 and the student body went from under 700 to over 2000. During the 2002-2003 academic year, he served as interim President of Ave Maria College while on leave of absence from Franciscan University. He then returned to Franciscan to resume his position as full professor of philosophy and served as Chair of the philosophy department for 5 years (2012-2016).

He specializes in philosophy of the human person, ethics, existentialism, and philosophy of religion. He has a special love for Kierkegaard, Marcel, Buber, von Hildebrand, and Wojtyla interpreted in light of and in dialogue with the *philosophia perennis*. The philosopher who opened his eyes to the field was Dietrich von Hildebrand. His favorite author in the Thomistic tradition is Josef Pieper. His favorite course is The Nature of Love, wherein he uses the works of all of the authors above. He regularly teaches courses in Person, Metaphysics, Ethics, Religion, Community, Love, Existentialism, and Texts' Courses for Wojtyla, Marcel, and Kierkegaard.

He has been professor and/or administrator at the following institutions:

Seminary College of St. Pius X, Erlanger, KY (1979-1982),

Cardinal Newman College, St. Louis, MO (1982-83),

International Academy of Philosophy, Irving, TX (1983-85) [now in Liechtenstein, Europe]

where he also served as *M.A. Director* and *Administrative Assistant (including fundraising)*,

at the University of Dallas, Irving, TX (1985-86), where he also served as interim *Dean of Students*, and as interim *President* of Ave Maria College (2002-03) during its transition to the Florida campus.

He has served as vice president of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars (1998-2002) and was on the FCS Board of Directors from 1988 to 2002. He served as president of the Christus Magister Foundation promoting Catholic higher education and as a Board member of Sophia Institute Press. He has been a Board of Trustees member of St. Mary's College of Ave Maria University (Chairman of Board, 2001-2003), of Ave Maria College of Michigan (1998-2003) and of Ave Maria University of Florida (2002-2003). He has been a regular consultant for the Ave Maria University-Latin American Campus in Nicaragua. He served also as Board Member and

Chairman of the Board of the Personalist Institute, near Philadelphia, PA, in the early 2000's. He served on the Board of Sophia Institute Press from the mid-80's throughout the 1990's. He was Associate Editor of *Aletheia, an International Journal of Philosophy*, from 1983-85. In this capacity, he oversaw the production of three volumes for publication: Vol. III *Philosophy of Law* (1984), Vol. IV *Epistemology* (1985), and Vol. V *Epistemology and Logic* (1986).

Administration and Service: Franciscan University of Steubenville

As Dean at Franciscan University, he provided the initiative for the establishment of the Philosophy Department, the M.A. in Philosophy, the Honors Program in the Great Books of Western Civilization, majors in Humanities and Catholic Culture, Classics, and Social Work, and minors in Music, German, World Literature, Human Life Issues, and Catechetics. He also presided over the launch of Master's programs in Philosophy, Counseling (with Christian Counseling certificate), Nursing, Education and Educational Administration.

Dr. Healy served as Chair of the Philosophy Department from 2012-2016, spearheading evaluation techniques for the core courses (person, metaphysics, ethics). He has served on the (elected) Faculty Welfare Committee for most of the past 20 years, as well as on a number of other committees over that time. He served on the first (elected) Faculty Council when that entity was established. He has become known as a vocal advocate for the faculty.

Scholarship—Books

His most recent work, a book on Karol Wojtyla's philosophy, published December 2021 by *En Route Books and Media*: **A PRIMER IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF JOHN PAUL II—IN HIS OWN WORDS: CLOSE-TO-THE-TEXT SUMMARY INTERPRETATIONS OF HIS THOUGHT ON PERSON, LOVE, AND SEXUALITY.**

Of this book, before he passed on, Dr. Kenneth D. Whitehead (formerly President of the Cardinal Newman Society) gave me permission via personal letter to use the following endorsement:

Professor Michael Healy has prepared a very accessible and usable introduction to the thought of Pope John Paul II which students and teachers alike--and even the interested general reader--will find to be a very good beginning in trying to understand and appreciate the author of one of the most profound and prolific teaching pontificates in the history of the Church. One would have to plow through many volumes to acquire what careful reading and study of this volume alone provides. Not least, the "primer" provides a clearer idea of what the student of John Paul II's thought should go on to acquire and study.

Dr. Rocco Buttiglione, author of a major work on Wojtyla's life and thought, [Karol Wojtyla: The Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II](#), and a major figure in European philosophy and politics, sent the following endorsement:

“I am very proud of you making use of my book in your Primer. I have thought of these few lines, if you think they are convenient:”

Karol Wojtyła was very gifted as a speaker but, alas, when he made philosophy he was extremely technical and rigorous. So much so that a familiar story in the milieu of Cracow was that all priests who in life had neglected their intellectual formation, before entering in Heaven, should have to pass an examination on The Acting Person (the philosophical masterpiece of Wojtyła). For some of them it might take even one hundred years.

Now their task has been enormously facilitated (and their penance correspondingly cut short) by this “primer” of Prof. Michael Healy Sr.. Prof Healy has assimilated the spirit of Wojtyła so much in depth that he succeeds in rendering it in a smooth, plain and easy expression. He is really the St. John the Baptist of Wojtyła: he prepares the way leading to our author and makes the paths straight. The book is good for the students who try to find a path leading into the complex conceptual construction of Wojtyła but is useful also to advanced scholars who want to better appreciate the particular and inimitable flavor of Wojtyła’s philosophy.

Buttiglione comments, about his own endorsement: “The tone is playful but it is seriously meant. If you think it is too humorous I can rewrite it in a more scholarly jargon.” This offer was politely refused!

Dr. Healy is also working on a second book, expanding on a double-length article published as a chapter in the book *The Love of Truth: Every Truth and in Every Thing*, pp. 181-208, published by the International Academy of Philosophy, 2010. His article was entitled “Hell: A Phenomenological Analysis.” The major two questions addressed, in critical dialogue with Hans Urs von Balthasar, are: how is eternal pain compatible with a God of perfect love and how could someone be happy in heaven if a beloved person ends in hell.

Scholarship—Articles and Addresses

Dr. Healy has published various articles and given numerous addresses over the past decades in the areas of metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics, philosophy of language, philosophy of the person, ethics, and philosophy of religion.

Beyond the two book-length efforts described above, his most relevant publications and addresses include:

--Peer reviewed Journal article “Interpreting Kierkegaard’s Notion that ‘Truth is Subjectivity,’” published in *Questiones Disputatae*, Special Issue on Christian Personalism: Explications, Implications, and Provocations, Issue Edited by William Tullius, Volume 9, No. 2, Spring 2019. Over the past decade, he has also published book chapters in volumes concerning ethics and the human person.

--“Rejecting Love: Motives for Evil and for Self-Injury,” paper presented and accepted for publication at International Congress on Realist Phenomenology, sponsored by Edith Stein Institute and International Academy of Philosophy, Sept. 18-21, 2015 in Granada, Spain. Reviewed by peer panel from sponsoring entities for acceptance as a talk and again for

publication, *published January 2016* in book-tribute to Dr. Josef Seifert by Nuevo Inicio Publishing House, editor Dr. Marcelo Lopez Cambronero, IAP-Edith Stein Institute.

--In Response to Alice von Hildebrand's article in *New Oxford Review* from Sept. 2013 ("Unity & Procreation: Which Has Ontological Priority?"), my article in reply ("How Do I Love Thee?"), *NOR*, Jan-Feb 2014. Dr. Von Hildebrand responded to me in *NOR*, June 2014, clarifying her position ("A Martyr of Polygamy: In Defense of Jacob"); then, I responded with another article ("A Divided Heart"), *NOR*, Sept. 2014, to which Dr. von Hildebrand added a further brief reply and that ended our dialogue on the topic.

--Solicited by and wrote featured editorial for *National Catholic Register* for pro-life, "The Sanctity of Life and World Religions," Jan. 22, 2014

--Article published in *Crisis Magazine*, May 27, 2014 ("Marrying Your Porn-Laden Computer?"), in defense of the marriage having a true essence that can be discerned by reason.

--The "Numinous," a Description and evaluation of how Rudolph Otto means this term, for the *New Catholic Encyclopedia Supplement: Ethics and Philosophy*, eds. Robert Fasitiggi and Joseph Koterski, S.J. (Farmington Hills: Gale, 2013). Appeared June, 2013—Peer reviewed.

--Book chapter on "Dietrich von Hildebrand on the "Mine" of Love and the Gift of Self in Love: Parallels to Wojtyła's Theology of the Gift" in *Ethical Personalism*, ed. by Gueye, Ontos Verlag, Frankfurt, (pub. Aug. 6, 2012). Also published on Von Hildebrand Legacy Project website, 2012.

--Article for *Crisis* on "On the Dangers of Reading the Bible as a Kid," October, 2012

--Book Review of *The Truth about the Good* by Adrian Reimers (on Wojtyła's philosophy) for *Review of Metaphysics*, Spring, 2012

--Wrote 3 "Personalist Profiles" (intellectual biographies) for the Personalist Project website, 2012, on Wojtyła, Kierkegaard, and Marcel (published without attribution on their Homepage, under the "About" tab).

--48 on-line articles published, with comments and replies, on Personalist project website, 2012.

--Invited talk (also published on-line at website) at Personalist Project in Philadelphia on "Von Hildebrand on Sexuality" with commentary and discussion by Christopher West, June 3, 2009, over 400 people in attendance.

--"Christopher West, A Von Hildebrandian's Perspective"—published on-line at Personalist Project, June 5, 2009. It is a defense of West against recent critics. This article was praised, quoted, and linked by *InsideCatholic.com* on June 5 and was also linked by *Bistro, News Catholics Need to Know*, a week later, with reference to myself Janet Smith, Michael Waldstein, and Cardinal Rigali as defenders of West.

--Article in Crisis Magazine/Inside Catholic.com “When Kung and Von Hildebrand Came to Loyola,” January, 2008.

--Refereed article “On the Virtue of Studiousness” in the Nicaraguan Academic Journal, Summer/Fall, 2001. Delivered originally as invited talk for Honors Convocation Jan. 01, Ave Maria University—Latin American Campus, Nicaragua. Also delivered as address at Franciscan University and included in FUS’ freshmen introductory materials.

--“Evangelization at Catholic Universities Today,” address, published in *Teaching the Catholic Faith: Central Questions for the 90’s*,” proceedings for Thirteenth Convention of the Fellowship of Catholic Scholars, Philadelphia, PA, 1990. St. John’s University Edition, N.Y.C., 1991.

--“The Heresy of Activism,” published in *The Troubadour*, Franciscan University of Steubenville, 1990. Endorsed overwhelmingly by FUS faculty at November faculty meeting and distributed to all students, faculty, and staff.

--“Man, a Unity of Body and Soul,” address at Bay Area Conference on the Ethics of Human Reproduction, Dominican College, San Rafael, CA, 1987. Published in *Faith and Reason*, as proceedings of the conference. Also published in *The Linacre Quarterly*, official journal of the National Federation of Catholic Physicians’ Guilds.

--“Max Scheler on the Relation between Religion and Culture,” address at Christian Culture Conference, Oct., 1986, Franciscan University of Steubenville.

--“The Two-fold Foundation of the ‘Analytic of the Beautiful’: Kant’s Architectonic and Human Experience,” published in *The Journal of Value Inquiry*, 20: 95-107, Summer, 1986, Martinus Nijhoff, Dordrecht, the Netherlands.

--“Picard’s *Man and Language*: an Interpretation,” 12 pp, published in *Auslegung, a Journal of Philosophy*, Spring, 1985.

--Discussant to Roderick Chisolm’s paper, “Phenomenology and Realism,” at symposium on “Is a Phenomenological Realism Possible?” at Fifty-Ninth Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, April, 1985, Milwaukee, WI, on the theme of *Realism*.

--Respondent to Dr. Miguel Garcia-Baro’s paper on “Husserl’s Concept of Essence in the *Logical Investigations*,” symposium *On Essential Necessity*, sponsored by The International Academy of Philosophy, Irving, TX, Fall, 1984.

--“Socrates’ Love of Truth as a Model for Philosophy Today,” address delivered at International Symposium on Erneuerung der Philosophie: Aufgabe des Christlichen Philosophen Heute, Schaan-Vaduz, Liechtenstein, Sept., 1984. Published in Proceedings of the Conference.

--“Kierkegaard’s Response to the Consequentialism Thesis,” address delivered at the Fifty-Eighth Annual Meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, April, 1984, Pittsburgh, PA, on the theme of *Practical Reasoning*.

--“Man’s Ordination to God: Some ‘Negative’ Evidence,” address at Symposium of Modern Thought and the Turn to Theism, sponsored by International Academy of Philosophy, Dallas, TX, March 1983. Published in Proceedings of the Conference, 3 vol, Summer, 1984.

--“Did the World Have a Beginning in Time? The Answers of Science and Philosophy,” joint presentation with Dr. Susan Benofy, associate professor of physics, Cardinal Newman College, St. Louis, Missouri, Fall 1982.

--“Teleologism in Contemporary Ethics,” address given at Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA, March, 1982.

--“G.E. Moore and Some Main Arguments for Consequentialism,” address given at Symposium on the Teleological Explanation of Morality: New Foundation or Destruction of Ethics? Sponsored by International Academy of Philosophy, Irving, TX, February, 1982.⁷⁹

--Respondent to Dr. Damian Fedoryka’s paper, “Philosophy and Subjectivity,” and discussant to Fr. Andrew Szostek’s paper, “The Concept of Freedom in Cardinal Karol Wojtyla’s Philosophical Anthropology,” Symposium on the Rehabilitation of Classical Philosophy and Phenomenology,” sponsored by International Academy of Philosophy, Irving, TX, Feb., 1981.

--“Human Knowledge and Divine Illumination: Comparing St. Thomas and St. Bonaventure,” accepted for address at First World Congress of Christian Philosophy, Cordoba-Embalse, Argentina, Oct., 1979. Unable to attend, but published in the Acts of the Conference. 20pp.

--“Substance and Spiritual Substance—a Criticism of David Hume,” published in *Aletheia: An International Journal of Philosophy*, Vol. I, 1; June, 1977. 26pp.

--“Some Interdisciplinary Remarks on Truth and Metaphor,” published in *The Roundtable*, the University of Dallas, Vol. I, No. 6, Fall, 1975.

Dr. Healy regularly does reviews of proposed articles for the American Catholic Philosophical Association journal. He participates actively in the Von Hildebrand Legacy Project and in the Society of Catholic Social Scientists. This participation includes addresses at their conferences and, for the VHLP, their week-long seminars and study sessions.

He has given talks and addresses in the areas of metaphysics, epistemology, aesthetics, philosophy of language, philosophy of the person, the body-soul unity (in contrast with Swinburne), philosophy of religion, ethics, Kierkegaard, Newman, Von Hildebrand, Marcel, Buber, Aquinas and Wojtyla.

Teaching

Dr. Healy’s first love is teaching philosophy. He regularly teaches overtime (sometimes more than one), primarily out of that love for teaching but also whenever the need arises. His student

evaluations have always been high between 4 and 5 (on a 5 point scale). His most recent evaluations came in at 4.6.

Dr. Healy's core courses (Person, Metaphysics, Ethics) are always near capacity of 40 students and he relishes the chance to turn these students on to philosophy, to university education and its importance, and to Franciscan University and its values. His upper division courses include philosophy of religion, the nature of love, the philosophy of community, existentialism, and text courses as noted below.

In the graduate philosophy program, Dr. Healy is a strong representative of the personalist approach that the MA is known for. He is the only professor who teaches text courses in Kierkegaard, Marcel, and Wojtyla. He also teaches a graduate course on the existentialist movement in modern philosophy. In the latter course, authors covered include the atheistic absurdists like Sartre and Camus, together with other very difficult authors like Nietzsche, Heidegger and Jaspers, as well as the Judeo-Christian existentialists like Marcel, Kierkegaard, and Buber.