

## ***THE ADVANCED SEMINAR ON MISSION: PRAXIS PROGRAM***

During the spring semester of 2013 fifteen faculty members at Seton Hall University were part of the Praxis Program of the Advanced Seminar on Mission sponsored by the Center for Vocation and Servant Leadership and co-sponsored by the Center for Catholic Studies. In the course of the program these faculty worked through Brian Cronin's *Foundations of Philosophy: Lonergan's Cognitive Theory and Epistemology* (Langata, Nairobi: Consolata Institute of Philosophy, 2006). The group, called "GEM FELLOWS" after Bernard Lonergan's Generalized Empirical Method, were from various schools and departments of the university. The schools and departments represented were Health and Medical Sciences, Nursing, Law, physics, chemistry, biology, sociology and English. The group also included administrators from the School of Business, University Advancement and Housing and Residence Life. Richard Liddy was the facilitator of the group, giving presentations on the key aspects of Cronin's book, while three collaborators from the sponsoring centers developed the program. In the midst of the program two healthcare professionals from the Lonergan healthcare group at Boston College visited Seton Hall and shared the relevance of the generalized empirical method to their own work in healthcare.

The point of the generalized empirical method is to highlight the general method of the human spirit as it gives rise to the specialized methods of the sciences and scholarly disciplines as well as opens out to questions of meaning, community, progress and decline in history, religion and revelation. Such a method acknowledges the proper autonomy of the sciences and scholarly disciplines, but it is also able to "sublate" them within the higher viewpoint of faith.

To put the point in other words, one may note that particular sciences are specializations, that interdisciplinary studies build bridges between specializations to give us physical chemistry, biophysics, biochemistry, psychologies of the unconscious and social psychologies, that the ultimate ground of all interdisciplinary work is the basic and total science that results from understanding, both in their similarities and in their differences, the several methods of the particular sciences and, as well, the procedures of common sense. (Bernard Lonergan, "Questionnaire on Philosophy," *Philosophical and Theological Papers 1965-1985*, CWB, vol. 17: Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 359)

An example of the applicability of generalized empirical method to the various sciences and scholarly disciplines can be found in the Spring 2009 volume of *The Lonergan Review* – published by the Bernard Lonergan Institute at Seton Hall. That volume contains the proceedings of a seminar on the generalized empirical method held at Piacenza, Italy, in September 2008 by the school of education of the *Università del Sacro Cuore*. Among the disciplines represented were education, mathematics, biology, economics, art, philosophy and theology. (Pages 3-4 of this document give the table of contents of that volume.)

As the Seton Hall group worked through Cronin's book, each participant undertook to write an "ATM," that is, a plan "Articulating the Model" in relation to their own specialization: that is, how Lonergan's cognitive theory might relate to their own area of physical therapy, physics, etc. Several are writing analyses of their own sciences and a number in "mentoring" areas, for example, physical therapy, are hoping to relate Lonergan's norms of consciousness to their mentoring of fellow faculty members and students. Below is a list of the ATMs that the faculty are presently working on.

## GEM FELLOWS PROJECTS – ATMs (2013-2014)

Kate Asselin, University Advancement: “The Application of Generalized Empirical Method to Administration.”

Theresa Bartollota, Speech Therapy, SHMS: “Generalized Empirical Method and the Profession of Speech-Language Pathology.”

Josephine DeVito, School of Nursing: “Generalized Empirical Method Applied to Maternal Child Nursing Theory and Clinical NUTC 3914.”

Nancy Enright, Department of English: “The Application of Generalized Empirical Method in English Literature and Writing.”

Robert Faraci, Occupational Therapy, SHMS: “Generalized Empirical Method in Occupational Therapy”

Marion Glenn, Department of Biology: “Generalized Empirical Method Applied to the Study of the Natural Sciences.”

Tara Hart, Director, Housing and Residence Life: “Generalized Empirical Method in Training Student Life Professionals.”

Anthony Haynor, Department of Sociology: “Mapping the Social Matrix in Introductory Sociology.”

Jose Lopez, Physics Department: “Answers Instead of Questions: The Dangers of Unchallenged Authority in Science.”

Joseph Maloy, Department of Chemistry: Article as part of course on “*Science and the Church*.” “In Search of Authenticity in Scientific Methodology.” A critique of positivist science and inauthenticity in scientific methodology.

Brian Sheppard, Seton Hall Law School: “Seeking the Higher Viewpoint: Legal Education and Generalized Empirical Method.”

Lisa-Rose Wiles, University Libraries: “Applying Generalized Empirical Method to Library Instruction”

Genevieve Pinto Zipp, Graduate Programs in Health Sciences: “Mentoring the Mentors: Generalized Empirical Method in Doctoral Health Education”

*The*  
**LONERGAN**  
*Review*

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*Generalized Empirical Method:  
Perspectives from Bernard Lonergan*



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SETON HALL UNIVERSITY

*Generalized Empirical Method  
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