

SAINT SUSANNA ADULT FAITH FORMATION SCHEDULE FOR 2017-2018 SEASON

Unless otherwise specified, all events will be held on Monday evenings, from 7:00 to 9:00 PM, at Saint Susanna Parish Hall, 262 Needham Street, Dedham.

There will be a refreshments break. There are no fees, there is no charge for refreshments, and there is no pre-registration requirement.

Free Will offerings are gratefully accepted to cover our costs.

October 16, 2017 – Roland Merullo/Religion and Current Politics.

We live in a country divided by partisan politics, in a world torn apart by hatred and war. What if Jesus, alarmed at how the U.S. has lost its compassion for the poor and the immigrants, dismayed at how his teachings have been distorted and used by politicians and religious



zealots to turn love into hatred and faith into a call for arms, returns and announces he is running for President? The notion of Jesus coming to earth and running for President was at the heart of one of

Roland Merullo's novels, "**American Savior**", but it grew out of an idea he's wrestled with in many of his books: "How is one to behave in this imperfect world?" and "As Christians, what should our response be to the divisiveness and anger in America now?". Roland will discuss these

questions in his presentation, and very much looks forward to give-and-take during the question and answer period.

A bit about Roland Merullo - Roland 's most recent book is the “**Delight of Being Ordinary: A Road Trip with the Pope and [the] Dalai Lama**” His books range from suspense novels (Fidel's Last Days, A Russian Requiem, Revere Beach Boulevard, The Return) to love stories (A Little Love Story, The Talk-Funny Girl, Leaving Losapas) to golf and travel books (Golfing with God, Passion for Golf, The Italian Summer, Taking the Kids to Italy) to humorous spiritual road trips (Breakfast with Buddha, Lunch with Buddha, Dinner with Buddha, Golfing with God, American Savior).

October 30, 2017 - Native American Spirituality: Cultivating the 3Rs: Respect, Reciprocity, Responsibility as Indigenous Practices.



Professor Joyce Rain Anderson will be our speaker. Last season Brayton Shanley, in speaking with us about Standing Rock, mentioned how awed he was by the spirituality displayed at that event. In this presentation our

speaker will address that topic directly. Joyce Rain Anderson traces her heritage to Algonquin, Wampanoag, English, and Irish ancestors. She received her BA and MA from the University of Massachusetts Boston and her Ph.D. in 2005 from the University of New Hampshire. She is Associate Professor of English at Bridgewater State University; there she teaches first year writing, upper-level courses, and graduate courses, and is currently developing Global Indigenous Literatures and Writing.

Currently, she is the Faculty Associate for the Pine Ridge Partnership where she works with Red Cloud Indian School in Pine Ridge South Dakota. Her co-edited collection, *Survivance, Sovereignty, and Story: Teaching Indigenous Rhetorics* was released in November 2015 from Utah State University Press, and has received an honorable mention for the 2017 Outstanding Book Award from CCCC.

In this talk Professor Anderson will demonstrate how the culture, history and spirituality of indigenous peoples are intertwined: *“Prominently situated in front of the dorms on a broad walkway through the Bridgewater State University campus, our two sustainable, organic garden beds mirror each other. In the middle of each, the three sisters are planted in the tradition of our ancestors. In the process of preparing, planting, and harvesting we can listen to their stories. These plants are our relatives. The plants become the teachers and we must listen to their stories. In doing so, we bring their teachings into our lives and learn to live in relationship with one another.”*

November 6, 2017 – The Many Meanings of Worship (Ibadah) in Islam –Our speaker will be **Shaykh AbdurRahman Hashim Ahmad** of the Islamic Center of New England in Sharon, to explore the broad meaning of the term Worship (*Ibadah*) in Islam and what it entails. In English, the word “worship” normally indicates some specific acts or rituals meant exclusively to show one’s reverence to a deity i.e. God. However, the word Worship (*Ibadah*) in Islām is not restricted to such acts or rituals, but rather, embodies any act done in submission to God’s commands to seek His pleasure. Consequently, many acts which seem to be mundane in nature are included in the word worship, "Ibadah," like earning one’s livelihood through Ḥalal (permissible) means and in order

to fulfill one's obligations towards his dependents etc. Our speaker will address the repercussions of this definition.



Imam Ahmad was born in 1977 in Lackawanna, New York. At the age of 2, he moved with his parents and two brothers to the city of Makkah in Saudi Arabia and spent 6 years there. He began memorizing the Qur'an in the Masjid Al-Haram while his father was studying at Umm Al-Quraa University in Makkah. At the age of 8 his family moved again, but this time to Karachi, Pakistan, where his father took up a post as professor of Arabic. At the age of 9, Shaykh AbdurRahman completed memorizing the Holy Qur'an, and has been leading *tarawih* prayers since 1991. He then began his `Alimiyyah studies where he rigorously studied the sciences of Arabic, `Aqidah, Tafseer, Hadeeth, Fiqh, and other sciences, under highly respected Islamic scholars graduating in 2000 with a full *ijazah* to teach these Islamic sciences. Upon graduating he continued his quest of gaining knowledge by enrolling in a specialized study of the Hadeeth sciences for an additional 2 years. In 2002 he started teaching the sacred Islamic sciences such as Arabic, Hadeeth, Fiqhand other subjects in Karachi. In 2008 he took up a post as the Imam of Masjid as-Saaffaat in Trenton, NJ until August of 2015. Also, in 2013, he and his wife, Ustadhah Nadia Salma, founded the Nakhlah Institute as a means for disseminating the sacred Islamic sciences to dedicated students on an advanced and rigorous level. Currently he is the new Imam and resident scholar at the ICNE in Sharon, MA.

November 13 - Cosmic Spirituality and Deep Incarnation are hot topics stemming back to Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin and beyond, and constantly referenced by Father Richard Rohr and theologian

Elizabeth Johnson, but how much do we really know about



those subjects?

Brother John

Dornbos, who holds advanced degrees in this area, will be with us to explore these topics. Brother John has even prepared take-home materials for the

evening of the event.

November 20 – Icons. Father Cory Sticha of the Melkite Eparchy Cathedral staff will visit us to explain the meaning and mystery of the



Icon.

Considered quite different from the statuary and paintings of the Roman Church,

icons hold a special place in the practice the Faith among the Eastern Rite Catholics and other eastern branches of Christianity. What can we learn and gain from them?

December 4 and 11 - The Role of Saint Paul, with Professor Nathaniel DesRosiers. A two-week presentation.

Professor Nathaniel DesRosiers will walk with us the path of Saint Paul at the very beginnings of Christianity, even before the Gospels were

written. As with his previous presentations here at Saint Susanna, there will be audience participation and interaction. He is well known to Saint



Susanna Adult Formation, and extremely well-liked. He is Associate Professor in Religious Studies at Stonehill College in Easton, where he teaches courses in Classics, New Testament, and Early Christianity, and Visiting Professor at Brown University. He received a Master's degree from Harvard University in 1998 and a Ph.D. from Brown University in 2007. His research focuses on the issues of conflict and competition in the ancient world and the social

and intellectual developments that helped to create and shape the religious movements and texts of antiquity.

January 8 – Reserved for a Joint Presentation with Saint Susanna Pax Christi Committee, Pat Ferrone, Chair. Details to be announced when available.

January 15 - Women in the Diaconate: Prophetic Voices. Susan

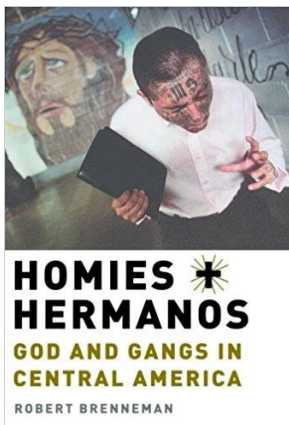


Collamati, a Religion Teacher at Bishop Feehan High School with thirty years' experience, and her spouse, Professor Ernest Collamati of the Theology Department at Regis College, will speak on this compelling topic. Is the Roman

Catholic Church actually considering the ordination of women? What else is in store for the women of our ever-changing Church? They will address the issue of women in the Church, past, present and future. Individually and as a couple, Ernie and Susie have themselves been prophetic voices of laypeople in the Church, and have given hundreds of talks at parishes and dioceses throughout the United States.

January 29 – Reserved for a Joint Presentation with Saint Susanna Pax Christi Committee, Pat Ferrone, Chair. Details to be announced when available.

February 5 - Violence and Its Impact on Humanity. Professor



Robert Brenneman of St. Michael's College in Winooski, Vermont, and author of Homies and Hermanos: God and Gangs in Central America, will come to speak with us on violence and its impact on humanity, in light of his years of study, discussing the way that, in Guatemala, the violence of an earlier era (civil war, and state terror) has morphed into street

crime, narco-conflict, and organized crime, while fueling demand for weapons and private security, and what this means for all of us worldwide.

February 12 – Reserved for a Joint Presentation with Saint Susanna Pax Christi Committee, Pat Ferrone, Chair. Details to be announced when available.

March 5, 2018 – Refugees. Those fleeing their countries due to war, famine, fear of death, and many other causes have become a crucial part of America’s conversation with itself, and a moral issue for those with religious beliefs of whatever persuasion. Joining us will be Professor Westy Egmont of the Graduate School of Social Work at Boston College, Director of the School's Immigrant Integration Lab, and a Consultant to NECN on immigration issues. At Matthew’s Gospel rendition of the Last Judgment it is written: “Then the King will say to those on His right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in...” What

does this mean in today's world?



March 12 - How Do We Talk About the Cross. Tim Sullivan, who last season impressed us all on the topic of Heresy, will this season speak on issues surrounding the question "**We Are Taught 'Christ Died for our Sins.' Does This Mean What I Think It Means?'**"

Over the last two thousand years or so there have been quite a few attempts to come to terms with why the Earthly life of Jesus ended on the Cross. Some concepts are confusing, some are horrible to contemplate and most are both.



In this talk, we will examine some of the most popular ideologies, but hopefully we can find within Scripture a non-violent way to interpret what Jesus accomplished on the Cross. Then we will discuss incorporating that non-violent interpretation into our lives and be left with an infinitely loving and merciful God. We will explore some often deeply held preconceptions and re-examine them with help from Victor Hugo and his story of Jean Valjean in *Les Miserables*.

March 19 - The Sacrament of Reconciliation, with Father Stephen Wilbricht, CSC, of Stonehill College. Professor Mary Joan Leith of Stonehill, one of Saint Susanna Adult Faith Formation's biggest fans,



who knows our people very well, and is highly regarded and respected here, couldn't speak highly enough about Father Wilbricht's presentation on the topic. The event will be in the

middle of Lent, and will be a continuation in our Series on Sacraments in the Twenty-first Century, which began with Father Folan's talk on the Eucharist last season. Father Wilbricht will be discussing what we have variously known as Confession, Penance, and Reconciliation, based on the latest thought.

April 9 – Reserved for a Joint Presentation with Saint Susanna Pax Christi Committee, Pat Ferrone, Chair. Details to be announced when available.

April 30 – The Myth of Closure – Our speaker is **Professor Melissa Kelly** of Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, whom many recall from her presentation here at Adult Faith Formation on the subject of Grief in March of 2015.

With grief and loss, there is no such thing as closure says family therapist Pauline Boss. She says that the idea of closure in fact leads us astray — it’s a myth we need to put aside, like the idea we’ve accepted that grief has five linear stages and we come out the other side done with it. She coined the term “ambiguous loss,” creating a new field in family therapy and psychology. We will explore these concepts with Professor Kelly.

Consider ambiguous loss situations. One type occurs when there is physical absence and psychological presence. These include situations when a loved one is physically missing or bodily gone. Catastrophic examples of such ambiguous losses include kidnapping and missing bodies in the context of war, terrorism ethnic cleansing, genocide, or natural disasters such as earthquake, flood, and tsunami. More common

examples of this type of ambiguous loss are situations of absent parents due to divorce, giving up a baby to adoption, and physical contact with parents and siblings due to immigration. In a second type, there is physical presence and psychological absence. In this type of ambiguous loss, the person you care about is psychologically absent-- that is, emotionally or cognitively missing. Such ambiguous loss can occur from



Alzheimer's disease and other dementias; traumatic brain injury; AIDS, autism, depression, addiction, or other chronic mental or physical illnesses that take a loved one's mind or memory away.

Melissa M. Kelley is associate professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling and the

faculty director of the Professional Ministry Practicum at the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry. Previously, she was on the faculty of Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, MA. She has many years of pastoral-clinical experience, including serving as a campus minister for 14 years at both Boston College and Emmanuel College in Boston. She holds a PhD from Boston University in pastoral psychology. Dr. Kelley is a fellow and nationally certified pastoral counselor through the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. She is also certified in Thanatology: Death, Dying and Bereavement through the Association for Death Education and Counseling, the primary organization in the country for all bereavement researchers, educators, and clinicians. From her prior appearance with us we know that she is extremely knowledgeable, has a great speaking voice, and has a very "up" attitude.

May 7, 14 and 21 – Father Steve’s Book Group. As usual, Father Steve Josoma, Pastor of Saint Susanna Parish, will select a current book for discussion over three sessions. A discussion group format is used, with small discussion groups. Father Steve will announce the book shortly prior to the program, to ensure that we have a book well worthy of engaging us.