About the Doyle Engaging Difference Program

The Doyle Engaging Difference Program is a campus-wide collaboration between the Berkley Center and the Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship (CNDLS) to strengthen Georgetown University’s core commitment to tolerance and diversity and to enhance global awareness of the challenges and opportunities of an era of increasing interconnectedness. Doyle faculty fellowships support the redesign of lower-level courses to incorporate themes of cultural, religious, and other forms of difference, while Doyle Seminars facilitate in-depth explorations of similar themes in smaller, upper-level courses. In addition to curricular innovation, the Doyle Program supports the Junior Year Abroad Network, through which Hoyas blog about their encounters with diverse host societies, and Doyle student fellows, who engage intercultural and interreligious dialogue on campus. The program is made possible through the generosity of William Doyle (C’72), a member of the Georgetown University Board of Directors.

The Doyle Seminars

The Doyle Seminars foster deepened student learning about diversity and difference through enhanced research opportunities, interaction with thought leaders, and dialogue with the Georgetown community and beyond. Eligible seminars address questions of national, social, cultural, religious, moral, and other forms of difference. Faculty receive activity funds for their course, implement a rigorous research paper requirement, and arrange for one or more guest experts to provide feedback on student research. A final report documents the research projects completed by each student. Previous seminars have addressed topics ranging from globalization and foreign policy to same-sex marriage and interfaith dialogue.
ABOUT THE COURSE

THEOLOGY - 091
JESUS CHRIST IN A PLURALISTIC AGE

Christians today interpret the significance of Jesus Christ in many different cultures and social settings and in dialogue with other religions. Interpreting these differences is one of the most important challenges in contemporary Christian theology. This course explored understandings of Jesus Christ in African and Asian cultures and in relation to a variety of religious traditions. The course examined the place of Jesus in dialogues of Christians with Jews, Muslims, Hindus, Taoists, and Buddhists. It also explored the development of recent interpretations of Jesus in relation to the cultures of Africa and Asia.

TRANSFORMING THE COURSE FOR THE DOYLE SEMINAR PROGRAM

As a seminar in the Doyle Engaging Difference Program, students engaged in critical research leading to a major essay analyzing the significance of social, cultural, religious, and moral difference in Christian theological interpretations of Jesus Christ. The course discussed methodological issues involved in theological research involving such differences.

With the funds available for this course, I invited two outside resource persons to speak to the students: Rabbi Dr. Joshua Haberman, who is rabbi emeritus of Washington Hebrew Congregation and the author of four books, and Rev. Dr. Caleb Oladipo, who is the Duke K. McCall Professor of World Christianity at the Baptist Theological Seminary Richmond. Rabbi Haberman spoke about Jewish perspectives on Jesus, including his own personal engagement with Christians and Christian theology. Professor Oladipo spoke about contemporary developments in sub-Saharan African Christianity, and the place of Jesus Christ in African culture today. Students were very moved by both speakers.

Because this was a Doyle seminar, I scheduled time for student research presentations. Professor Oladipo returned on another class day to hear student research reports on Christianity in Africa, and he offered them helpful comments and recommendations for further research and reflection.

I sent personal feedback to each student after his or her class presentation, and I met individually with every student who wished to do so. I also offered to read a first draft of the research projects, or a detailed outline or whatever other material a student wished to present. I offered feedback on these materials and met with students who wished to discuss the issues in person. As a result, I believe the overall quality of the student research projects was higher than usual.

ABOUT THE PROFESSOR

Dr. Leo Lefebure is the Matteo Ricci, SJ, Professor of Theology at Georgetown University and a Roman Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Chicago. He previously taught at Fordham University. He is the author of five books, including *The Buddha and the Christ* (1993) and *Revelation, the Religions, and Violence* (2000), and co-author with Peter Feldmeier of *The Path of Wisdom: A Christian Commentary on the Dhammapada* (2011), which received the Frederick J. Streng Book of the Year Award from the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies. He is a member of the Frederick J. Streng Book of the Year Award from the Society for Buddhist-Christian Studies. He is a member of the board of trustees of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions; Lefebure is a former member of the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic Dialogues of Catholics and Muslims. He is also an editor-at-large for *The Christian Century*. 
SANTERIA THROUGH PENTECOSTAL EYES
EDIANA THEN (C’15)

Santeria is a religion with multiple faces. This frightens other religions—especially ones with such a strong sense of right—like Pentecostalism. My paper examines the role of Jesus in Santeria, as well as how Pentecostals view Santeria as a religion. I found that Pentecostals do not consider Santeria a religion at all, and in fact, refuse to call it as such, only referring to it as pagan. I also conclude that no peaceful talks can be made between these two religions because of how opposite their beliefs are. Pentecostals will never agree with how Santeros belittle Jesus, and Santeros will never stop worshiping more than one deity. The most important of my findings is how to differentiate between Santeria and voodoo; they are not one in the same. All these findings helped me to formulate a belief of my own: Santeria is not like other religions, and therefore, should be given its own realm. Santeria is a growing religion, and this only means that more theologians should take the time to research and expand their knowledge on its form.

BRIDGING BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE THROUGH THE IMAGE OF CHRIST AS A BODHISATTVA
ALISON KU (C’15)

My paper explores how the image of Christ as a bodhisattva in Mahayana Buddhism may serve as a bridge for Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Firstly, the paper aims to remove the image of Jesus from its traditional Western context in order to understand it from a new perspective, particularly an East Asian context. It accomplishes this by exploring the similarities between the figures of Christ and the bodhisattva, the sources of their love and compassion, and the functions that each figure plays in its respective religion. Additionally, the paper further explores how Buddhists and Christians can respond to the view of Jesus as a bodhisattva and how this new perspective to the images of Jesus and the bodhisattva might impact the way in which they live out their faith. Lastly, it examines the similarities between Jesus Christ and Kuan-yin and the impact these similarities might have in Christology.

ASIAN-AMERICAN CHRISTOLOGY: JESUS AS THE MARGINAL PERSON PAR EXCELLENCE: MOTHER, WOMAN, AND SHAMAN; RECONCILER OF CULTURES
ELIZABETH OH (SFS’15)

With the understanding that our experiences shape our theology, this paper seeks to explore various Christologies that arose from common immigrant experiences of the Asian-American community. These experiences are rooted in the immigrant story and the subsequent feelings of marginalization that cause Asian-Americans to rely on Christ and the church community. With these contexts, this paper examines Christ as the marginal person par excellence; Christ as mother, priestess, and shaman; and Christ as the reconciler of cultures.

JESUS CHRIST: HINDU AVATAR OR CHRISTIAN INCARNATE
KATE HALE (C’14)

The content of this research paper encompasses a variety of differences and similarities between Jesus Christ as an avatar in Hinduism, and an incarnate in Christianity. More specifically, Jesus is later compared and contrasted with Krishna, the eighth avatar of Vishnu.
and the leading avatar of the religion; many Hindus believe Jesus was or is an avatar of Krishna as opposed to Christians who believe Jesus was the only incarnate of God. While Hinduism and Christianity uniquely agree that God sent his physical surrogate onto Earth, many sectors of Hinduism believe that God was in flesh, as opposed to Christianity’s belief that God became flesh. This difference leads to extensive interreligious dialogue related to Jesus’ life after death and suffering—because Hindus do not believe in suffering—and textual comparisons between the Bhagavad Gita and many books of the Bible. Overall, the differences in relation to Jesus Christ are additional factors that keep these two religions separate. Nevertheless, the overlapping similarities are interesting and produce stimulating discussion as to the origins of the beliefs and the futures of each religion.

A COCA-COLA ON ME: A DIALOGUE WITH PAUL AND HIS JESUS
SARAH LINKE (C’13)

If asked to describe Paul of Tarsus four months ago, I would have described a cartoon character. It would have gone something like this: he was an unsatisfied Pharisee searching for a Messiah; he was a harsh persecutor of Christians; he was a Jew who left behind all his Judaism to convert to Christianity; and as a new Christian he proposed a complete theological vision of Jesus Christ the Messiah. All of these, I have found, are to a large degree misconceptions.

Paul, who considered himself ‘blameless’, desired nothing apart from the law, which he happily followed. The image of Paul jailing and torturing Christians simply could not have been historically accurate. The story of Paul’s “conversion” is elaborated in Acts, written about the apostle, not by him. The story Paul himself tells is one of a personal encounter with Jesus that altered his mission in life, not what we today call his “religion”. And most importantly to the person of Paul, his encounter with Jesus did not impart perfect knowledge of the Messiah onto him. Evidenced in his letters is a man attempting to identify his God for himself and his congregants. Based on these altered misconceptions, this paper attempts to argue for a reinterpretation of this figure of Paul. Rather than limiting Paul to black and white and stuffing him full of stereotypes and exaggerations, we should think of Paul as a man who throughout his entire life desired to follow God. He, like all of us, was constantly struggling to grasp at this figure, to get closer and know more. That never changed. An honest discussion of a man and his search, a search we all must partake in, can help to break down misconceptions that divide Jewish-Christian dialogues. We are all in a way Paul, we are all searching.

IMPACTS OF LIBERATION THEOLOGY IN LATIN AMERICA
SARAH HOWELL (C’15)

In recent decades, liberation theology has developed into a major force for political and social change in Latin America. This theology focuses on an end to the oppression and marginalization of the impoverished in Latin America and has led to several revolutions in Latin American countries. Because of liberation theology’s portrayal of Jesus as a political activist and its institutionalization of sin, it has received much criticism from the Vatican, especially from Pope John Paul II. In recent years, liberation theology has moved away from broad political movements and focused on ending oppression and spreading the gospel in local communities through grassroots organizations called Christian Base Communities.

CHRIST AS GIVER
KEE EN CHONG (SFS’16)

Within the rise of Christianity amidst the predominantly Chinese population of Singapore, the megachurch occupies a special nexus. In spite of the putative differences between the charismatic-Pentecostalism leanings of the megachurch, and the amalgamation of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism in the Singaporean Chinese cultural milieu, Christ need not be seen as a divisive figure. This essay seeks to understand Singaporean megachurches’ unique interpretations of Christ, as situated within a Singaporean East-Asian religious context. In particular, it draws attention to the rhetoric of the megachurch that, in depicting Christ, segues into the traditional Chinese images of Son, Father, Jun Zi, and Giver.

MAHAYANA AND TIBETAN BUDDHIST INTERPRETATIONS OF THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS
JEFFREY WELDON (C’15)

My initial intent with this project was to find out more
about how, and why, Buddhists in general are able to accept the teachings of Jesus, while maintaining that Buddhism is a nontheistic religion. I chose to focus my efforts on the interpretations of the teachings of Jesus, specifically by Tibetan and Mahayana Buddhists mainly because of the fact that in my research I noticed that the two are very popular forms of Buddhism. What I ended up discovering was that these two schools of Buddhism draw on their interpretations of the Buddha in order to relate to the teachings and the life of Jesus as a prominent religious figure as opposed to a divine being. Previously, I was not aware of the differences between Mahayana and Tibetan Buddhism; however, upon the completion of my research project it became clear that the two sects have very different methods to interpreting the same teachings. I was able to ultimately apply this newfound understanding of how religious understanding in one faith can be transmitted to religious understanding in another faith, to Christian scholars and their interpretation of the Buddha as he relates to Christ.

THE IMAGE AND INTERPRETATIONS OF JESUS IN LATIN AMERICA

JOSE MARIA OCAMPO (C’15)

According to El Tiempo, the most important newspaper in Colombia, Tiberio’s dedication for serving his community was born out of his personal belief that Jesus’ image was portrayed in the poor of Trujillo (El Tiempo). Tiberio believed that his duty as a Catholic priest was not only to help the poor by organizing them into cooperatives of work, but also by professing how the image of Christ portrayed in the gospels was present in each and every member of his community. Although Tiberio’s notion of the new image of Christ is not explained further, I strongly believe that just as Monseñor Romero did in El Salvador, Tiberio saw in the poor the hope of someday reaching equality in Colombia. It is important to remember that what Tiberio was doing in Trujillo was exactly what Sobrino proposed in most of his work on liberation Christology. By studying the person of Jesus through the gospels, Tiberio saw in the poor the image of the “new man” which Sobrino talks about throughout his works.
WHOSE CROSS, WHOSE REDEMPTION? ISLAMIC INTERPRETATIONS OF THE CRUCIFIXION OF CHRIST AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE FOR DIALOGUE
ELIZABETH FINK (C'15)

In the modern context of conflict and misunderstanding between many Christian and Muslim societies, governments, and cultures, contemporary dialogue between these faiths often finds footing in discussion of the person of Jesus Christ—whose life is significant to the theological traditions of both religions. In terms of engaging difference, one of the most productive places for Christological discussion can be found at the end of Jesus’ life: the various Islamic interpretations of the crucifixion carry many implications for theological differences on a doctrinal level and also for cultural differences in a broader context. What does the Qur’an reveal about the crucifixion event? How has this text been interpreted throughout history, and of what significance are the variations in these analyses? In order to approach the ultimate question of the crucifixion’s place in interreligious dialogue, this study utilizes the primary sources of the Bible and the Qur’an, as well as analytical writings from both Muslim and Christian scholars. After providing context for the exegetical study of the Qur’anic crucifixion through brief examinations of Islamic Christology and translation, I present the majority Muslim interpretation of the crucifixion event (substitution), as well as other minority viewpoints. I then discuss the historical and theological implications of these various interpretations with special focus on interactions within Islam and between Muslim and Christian exegetes. Through my research and analysis, I hope to highlight the complexity and importance of the crucifixion as a topic in Muslim-Christian dialogue.

JESUS CHRIST, SUPERSESSIONISM, AND THE JEWISH-CHRISTIAN BOND
LUKE CASASSA (C'15)

My paper explores the dangers associated with the idea that Christianity supersedes Judaism, for a multitude of reasons. Namely, that Jesus himself was a devout Jew, that Christianity is firmly rooted in Judaism, and that there will be an inevitable barrier to the progress of Jewish-Christian relations as long as supersessionism remains intact. Nostra Aetate, a Vatican II document published in 1965, is a focal point in the discussion for its substantial importance in this pursuit and its inseparable role in the dialogue. I also examine the Pontifical Biblical Commission’s insights on the crucifixion event as it pertains to removing widespread Jewish culpability for Jesus’ death. A central question that I pursue is: how do Christians both affirm Israel’s covenantal life with God and the faith claim that Jesus Christ is the savior of all humanity? The overall tenor of my research emphasizes the importance of seeking solidarity among the two “brother” monotheistic traditions: Pope John Paul II is frequently referenced as a role model for his leadership in this realm.”

CHRISTOLOGY AND INCULTURATION IN AFRICA TODAY
JOSEPH LINDSAY (C'15)

Despite the ever-increasing number of Christians in Africa, little focus is placed on how they view Jesus. Christianity in Africa has taken a long journey from its roots in colonization toward developing its own distinct variety of Christianity and views on Christ. By researching and analyzing various theologians’ perspectives on the process of inculturation, this research shows how African Christians have made Christ uniquely theirs using images from traditional African spirituality, such as the ancestor, the brother, and the healer, to the betterment of both cultures.

GENUINE THEOLOGY OR VEILED MARXISM? JOHAN METZ, JESUS AND THE POLITICAL RHETORIC OF LATIN AMERICAN LIBERATION THEOLOGY
MARCUS STROMEYER (SFS'15)

This study examines the political rhetoric within Latin American liberation theology. It works to rebut criticisms of this transformative theology through a two-tiered argument. It begins by examining how the work of Johan Metz on deprivatization and dangerous memories gives Latin America the authority, if not the responsibility, to conceive such a political theology. It then examines how liberation theology’s political message is
shaped by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ within the Latin American context. Special focus is placed on the themes of development, dependence, and poverty in Latin America. In doing so, the goal of this study is to promote discourse on liberation theology and to engage difference among the world’s diverse theologies.

**FRANCOIS KABELESE LUMBALA’S AFRICAN CHRISTOLOGY**

**JOSEPH LINDSAY (C’15)**

My research project consists of a study of Lumbala’s unique theories of African Christianity and its development. This consists largely of an exploration of his approach of applying traditional and cultural aspects to Christ so as to better understand Christianity’s adoption in Africa. My project also briefly investigates Lumbala’s approach’s strengths and weaknesses, but finishes with stating the ways in which I believe his approach is the most effective.

**INCULTURATION IN AFRICA: INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE OF JESUS CHRIST**

**MORGAN WILLIAMS (SFS’15)**

Interreligious dialogue is a profound facet of theological studies in society today. It is an important subject to explore not only for theologians, but for people of all faiths and religious or non-religious backgrounds. In my essay, I delve into analytical research on inculturation within Africa. Inculturation is a relatively new term in theology and even more recent to African Christianity. It is important to investigate a variety of interpretations, so I focused my research on three notable authors: Agbonkhianmeghe Orobator’s *Theology Brewed in An African Pot*, Rosino Gibellini’s *Paths of African Theology*, and Aylward Shorter’s *Toward a Theology of Inculturation*. Among these readings I have found that inculturation is a fundamental process in evangelization and is characterized by various approaches. More importantly, in this field of study is the African response and integration of Jesus Christ to their present-day circumstances and worldviews. Although inculturation has positive means of spreading the word of God it also presents angst and controversy among some theologians. Therefore, I provide both perspectives that will offer a well-rounded idea of the true meaning and significance of inculturation throughout the African cultures, communities, and traditions.

**PORTRAYAL OF JESUS CHRIST IN KOREAN SOCIETY**

**MIN JEONG WOO (SFS’15)**

This essay starts with a simple question: why have Korean churches grown so rapidly? The question triggered me to research what aspects of Christianity attracted Korean people to the faith, and how Jesus Christ was portrayed in the Korean society. With a close look at the Dangun myth and anthropocentric attitude, I found that the traditional Korean worldview emphasized the yin-yang symbol and dualistic nature. These worldviews enabled Koreans to easily understand the concept of trinitarian God and each of their functions. However, there is one aspect with which the Protestant Church in Korea has conflict with the pre-existing Korean religions: the ancestor worship. The recent attempt to incorporate Protestant principles and shamanistic/confucianistic principles led to the liberation movement known as Minjung theology. Although Minjung theology may be seen as a revolutionary and positive sign toward change, the majority of Korean churches are still conservative.

**UNMASKING THE MYTH OF MODERN-DAY SANTERÍA**

**NAOMI FIERRO (C’15)**

“Santería’s main purpose is to assist the individual regardless of their religious background or affiliation, to live in harmony with their assigned destiny by ensuring they possess the necessary rituals to navigate life’s destiny” (De La Torre 4). In other words, Santería opens its arms to believers in all faiths. In fact, it is very common for believers of Santería to identify themselves with dual faith affiliations just like Miguel De La Torre, author of the book *Santería: The Beliefs and Rituals of a Growing Religion in America*. He is one of the first authors to write for an American audience from the standpoint of a believer, who identifies as apostolic Roman Catholic and a follower of Santería. Furthermore, as a growing cultural phenomenon in the United States, studying Santería and growing in our understanding of it helps us grow in empathy and compassion toward the diversity that makes up our homeland. Without a better understanding of a growing religion we may lack the consciousness
and knowledge to properly make our own judgments on people who believe in it. Jesus Christ in a pluralist age is just one example of the institutional importance that is rightfully placed on understanding and embracing diversity. Jesus has many faces around the world and signifies a multitude of things under different faiths. Thus, I delve deeper into a better understanding of a faith on the margins of society in light of a man on the margins, Jesus Christ.

STATE SHINTO IN THE MEIJI PERIOD: AN ANALYSIS OF THE WESTERN INFLUENCE ON THE SHINTŌ REFORMATION
BRIAN SULLIVAN (MSB’15)

This paper examines the perspective of state Shinto as a westernized Japanese religion that spread steadily during the Meiji period in Japan from 1868 to 1912. Theologians would later go as far as to say that this reformation of Japan's indigenous religion was “invented by early Meiji political leaders as an equivalent of Christianity in the Western context.” The Shinto religion existed prior to this in a non-doctrinal, experience-based form. The Meiji focused on reforming this tradition and spreading their version throughout Japan, thereby uniting the masses under their control. While the basics of the Meiji-promoted Shinto can be delineated from the religion's cultural roots, a number of western and specifically Christian elements are evident. This paper seeks to explain a number of these connections in the process of depicting how the image and teachings of Jesus were transferred during the Meiji era. It also addresses the implications of these in the formation of modern Japanese views of Christianity.

THE FIRST CHINESE CHRISTIANS
RYAN EAGAN (C’15)

Christianity’s journey to China was a long and difficult one. Attempts to establish a Christian Church in China may have come as early as the third century CE, but the first confirmed and certainly first major Christian mission to China came in the mid seventh century. This mission, organized by the Church of the East, came during a time of religious tolerance and Chinese openness to foreign ideas under the Tang Dynasty. The missionaries, led by Alopen, were able to build churches and gain a following in China that would last three centuries. Great texts such as the Jesus Sutras and artifacts such as the Nestorian Monument have been dated to this time in history. The Jesus Sutras took a new perspective on the stories of Jesus and on Christian teachings. They offer readers a nature infused approach that show us how Chinese people at the time related to Christianity and to Jesus. An anti-Buddhist movement in the mid-nineteenth century would weaken the Christian establishment in China and Chinese Christianity completely died out in the mid-twentieth century. These years left a lasting impact on Chinese history and offer historians a means to take a look at Chinese culture’s first thoughts of Christianity.

“PATRIOTIC” JESUS: CHRISTOLOGY AND THE CHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY IN REFORM-ERA CHINA
KATHERINE M. SEYMOUR (C’13)

This paper examines the relationship between the Chinese Communist Party and different images of Christ in reform-era China. Current Chinese interpretations of Christ fall into three broad categories: those of official or “patriotic” churches that emphasize Jesus’ role as an ethical model and his universal love; those of house or “underground” churches that take a more fundamentalist viewpoint and emphasize Jesus’ lordship and second coming; and those of non-Christians and “Cultural Christians,” which draw from the Confucian tradition and see the human Jesus as a potentially useful tool for constructing a harmonious society. The Chinese Communist Party has attempted to establish an official Christology that promotes Jesus as a moral exemplar while diminishing his authority over Christians in China, with a some success within the official churches and frequently the opposite effect in popular underground churches.

PERSECUTED CHRISTIANS IN THE CHINESE CULTURAL REVOLUTION
SIDNEY CHIANG (C’15)

China has had a complicated history with religious activity, ranging from pluralism to atheism. One of the darkest moments in Chinese history for intercultural dialogue was the Cultural Revolution of 1966 to 1976. Christians and other religious practitioners were persecuted terribly, with many important books burned, innocent citizens defamed, and even religious leaders ex-
executed. Yet, through it all, many Christians still had faith through those traumatic times. For them, the Bible and the life of Jesus Christ served as inspirations to continue on through those dark days. Now that we have passed that age, I hope that we can learn some lessons and use them to further intercultural and interreligious dialogue in China and around the world.

**JESUS IN HINDUISM: AVATAR, GURU, BEHAVIORAL EXAMPLE**

**TALOR MARIE RUDOLPH (C’13)**

With the globalization of our society and the rise of India as power on the international scene, we need to be concerned with how the views of Christians and Hindus interplay and intermix. For that reason, I have chosen to answer the following research question: With Jesus as a divine figure in both Hinduism and Christianity, how does the Hindu understanding of Jesus and his example vary from or bear resemblance to that of Christians? To answer that question I draw on the works of four main authors, Michael Amaladoss, Geoffrey Parrinder, M. Thomas Thangaraj, and Ravi Ravindra. I focused on two of the most widely held conceptions of Jesus within the Hindu community, the concepts of Jesus as a guru and Jesus as an avatar. I then looked at how Hindus have used Jesus’ example in their own lives, often based on their understanding of him as a guru or avatar. I also compared these views with beliefs held by Christians with these concepts and the Hindu use of Jesus’ example. Through this work, I found that the Hindu understanding of Jesus and his example is very similar to that of Christians. The mutual use of Jesus’ example and teachings would imply that Christians and Hindus should be able to see eye to eye in matters concerning Jesus.

**CHRIST WITHIN BUDDHIST-CHRISTIAN MONASTIC DIALOGUE**

**KYLE HUNTER (C’15)**

Despite the institutional distinctions between Christian and Buddhist monasteries and the spectrum of practices within them, the transformative figure of Christ within Christianity is central to potential dialogue between western and eastern monks. Indeed, not only does Christ’s exemplary life relate to the teachings of the enlightened Buddha, but the nature of a Christian monastic’s focus also promulgates a similar interconnectedness and denial of self to that which found in Buddhist teachings. Self-knowledge, mindfulness, modesty, simplicity of life, and concern for neighbors are foundational to the disciplined, ascetic life. For instance, Benedictine monks argue that Christians do not only follow Christ but also participate in his life, as Christ himself claimed, “I have not come to my own will, but the will of Him who sent me” (John 6:38). Thus, by devoting his life to Christ through a monastic order, and also believing that Christ is wholly God, he himself is also part of God’s Trinitarian ubiquity, motivated not by a perceived necessity to assist God but rather by God’s transcendent love. Similarly, a Buddhist Bodhisattva hopes to save others from worldly distraction by realizing his own emptiness and, thus, providing an example for social engagement. Indeed, the qualities of Christ have profound implications within the Buddhist monastic context, particularly in the motifs it shares with Christian monasticism: sacrifice, scripture, development, prayer or meditation, and teaching. However, one must carefully distinguish between the various monastic sects to achieve a credible understanding.