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Michael Hurley Delivers Drummond Lecture in Christ Chapel at Hillsdale College

Hurley's lecture addressed the relationship between faith and the life of the mind.

HILLSDALE, Mich. — Michael Hurley, professor of literature and theology at Trinity College, Cambridge, presented the fourth talk in the “Drummond Lectures in Christ Chapel” series for the 2024-25 academic year on March 25. His lecture, titled “A Corpse Would Seem to Me More Credible: Faith and the Life of the Mind,” addressed the tendency to separate questions of scholarship from questions of faith and the need to consider them together.

According to Hurley, considering ideas in an unexpected context can help us to look at them in a new way.

“If we really want to think adequately about the most important questions of life, which is to say, metaphysical questions, we have first to see that they are not discreet questions or issues at all, but that they infuse everything,” Hurley said.

Hurley said that to give a lecture in a chapel was not an attempt to “smuggle scholarship into the house of God,” as the questions of faith and the questions of scholarship are inherently intertwined.

“The supposedly divided houses of Athens and Jerusalem are de facto already united under one roof for it turns out that, as metonyms for the twin intellectual traditions of Western civilization, Athens and Jerusalem are only rather loosely and somewhat unhelpfully parsed as reason versus revelation or faith,” Hurley said “The intellectual legacy of the ancient world was, after all, itself also profoundly metaphysical, as the religious tradition that comes down to us through the Christian faith is itself profoundly committed to reason.”

Human reason can only take man so far, Hurley argued, before faith must take over, just as in the “Divine Comedy,” Dante can only finally reach the beatific vision with a mystic saint for his guide.

“Love may spur and sustain us,” Hurley said. “Reason may take us a long way, but ultimately love and reason must be gathered up and must find their full and perfect fusion in faith. That alone yields spiritual revelation.”

Michael D. Hurley is a professor of literature and theology and a fellow and director of studies at Trinity College, Cambridge. Educated at the Universities of Cambridge (Ph.D.) and St Andrews (M.A.), he has taught at Cambridge since 2005. He has also been a visiting scholar at Harvard, a visiting fellow at All Souls College, Oxford, and a visiting professor at the Sorbonne. Professor Hurley is co-editor of *The Hopkins Quarterly*, subject editor for the *Journal of Inklings Studies* (G. K. Chesterton), and honorary professor of the International Institute for Hermeneutics at Warsaw University, Poland. His work often explores matters of form and style, and how qualities of “literariness” can enable writers to say, think, or do things that could not otherwise be accomplished.

The “Drummond Lectures in Christ Chapel” series presents faculty, staff, and students with lectures on faith, learning, and related issues of the day. Previous speakers include Bishop Robert Barron, Heritage Foundation president Kevin Roberts, Grove City College Professor Carl Trueman, University of Findlay President Katherine Fell, and Tikvah Fund Executive Director Eric Cohen.

For photos of Christ Chapel at Hillsdale College, click [here](#). For photos of Hillsdale College, click [here](#). For a high-resolution copy of the Hillsdale College clocktower logo, click [here](#).

About Hillsdale College

Hillsdale College is an independent, nonsectarian, Christian liberal arts college located in southern Michigan. Founded in 1844, the College has built a national reputation through its classical liberal arts core curriculum and its principled refusal to accept federal or state taxpayer subsidies, even indirectly in the form of student grants or loans. It also conducts an outreach effort promoting civil and religious liberty, including a free monthly speech digest, *Imprimis*, with a circulation of more than 6.8 million. For more information, visit hillsdale.edu.

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