

## Bernardin Lecture 2013

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### Guest Speaker: Dr. Massimo Faggioli

**Assistant Professor of History of Modern Christianity  
University of St. Thomas Department of Theology.**

Dr. Massimo Faggioli received his Ph.D. from the University of Turin in 2002, and his extended undergraduate Laurea degree, cum laude, from the University of Bologna in 1994. His research interests include: the history of Christianity, Second Vatican Council, and Religion and Politics.

Faggioli's current research includes: *Vatican II: The Battle for Meaning* (Paulist, 2012), and *True Reform. Liturgy and Ecclesiology in Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Liturgical, 2012). He was a researcher and member of the research staff for the John XXIII Foundation for Religious Studies in Bologna

between 1996-2007. Following that he taught at universities in Europe before taking his current position at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Richard R. Gaillardetz, McCarthy Professor of Systematic Theology, Boston College says, "Massimo Faggioli has emerged as one of the most insightful and energetic young scholars in Catholic theology today."

John F. Baldovin, SJ, Professor of Historical and Liturgical Theology, Boston College says of Faggioli's "True Reform" that "This is a valuable, even groundbreaking, study for the interpretation of Vatican II . . . It should be required reading for ecclesialogists and historians of the contemporary Church as well as for students of the liturgy--perhaps even for members of the Roman Curia."

### Monday, October 7, 2013

**Lecture: 6:00 pm, USC Law School Auditorium**

**Topic: "Bernardin's Common Ground Initiative: Can it Survive Current Political Cultures?"**

*An edited version of the talk appeared in the February 2014 issue of America Magazine at:  
<http://www.americamagazine.org/issue/view-abroad>*

**Symposium: 3:30pm-4:45pm, Currell 203**

**Topic: "A Model for Dialogue: Reflecting on Cardinal Bernardin's Common Ground Initiative"**

#### Panelists

Massimo Faggioli, Guest Speaker  
Brad Warthen, Journalist  
Steve Millies, Professor, Political Science, USC Aiken  
Jeff Kirby, Catholic Diocese of Charleston

**From various perspectives, the panel discussed the ways in which the Common Ground Initiative provides a model for dialogue useful for overcoming divisions and building the consensus on which social and political life depend. The willingness to find common ground is essential not only in a religious community, but in all communities. In these ways, Cardinal Bernardin**

continues to offer inspiration that goes far beyond the world of the Catholic Church.

## Evening Lecture



Dr. Mitchem, Chair of Religious Studies and of the Bernardin Committee, opened the lecture after which Dean Mary Anne Fitzpatrick welcomed everyone on behalf of the university and the College of Arts and Sciences. Steve Millies, Professor, USC Aiken, Department of History, Political Science, and Philosophy, and Bernardin Committee member, introduced the speaker, Dr. Massimo Faggioli



In his lecture on "Bernardin's Common Ground Initiative: Can it Survive Current Political Cultures?" Dr Massimo Faggioli discussed the wide range of responses to Cardinal Bernardin's Common Ground Initiative, and to the changes introduced by Vatican II which formed the foundation for the Cardinal's vision, work, and legacy.



He brought out the ways in which peculiarly American political attitudes have influenced the American Catholic Church, shaping American Catholicism differently from the Catholic Church in Europe and elsewhere in the world. He noted that the democratic ethos of American politics has become part of the



culture of the Catholic Church in the United States. American politics is dominated by two parties who compete for control of the government, while other democracies around the world are multi-party systems which require compromise and consensus among different parties to reach a governing majority.

The two party competitive American political culture has given rise in recent decades to something very close to dual "parties" in the American Catholic Church. This has created a sense of competition rather than consensus among the different constituencies in the church: between hierarchy and laity, between theologians and universities, between bishops and parish priests. Many Bishops from the outset rejected Cardinal Bernardin's Common Ground Initiative.

The American political polarization of Republican and Democrat,



conservative and liberal, has further polarized the divisions in the Catholic Church in America. Support for Vatican II is interpreted as "liberal" while support of church hierarchy is associated with "conservative" Catholicism.

Faggioli explored the many challenges to Cardinal Bernardin's legacy of a common ground of respect between those of differing views, of care for the poor, the homeless, the disenfranchised. He looked at the possible ways in which this legacy could be reinvigorated and the obstacles it must overcome.

The full text of the talk will be published in "America Magazine" sometime in February, 2014. A link will be posted on this website to the published talk when it comes out.

