Research Seminar
Institute for Ethics & Society

Dr Dan Fleming
New Insights About, and Challenges for, Conscience Formation

Speaker

Dr Dan Fleming is Dean of Studies and Lecturer in Theology and Ethics at The Broken Bay Institute. He is also a conjoint lecturer for the School of Humanities and Social Sciences at the University of Newcastle, and an adjunct lecturer in the School of Education at the University of Tasmania. Dan holds a PhD in moral philosophy and theology, and he is the author of 17 publications in the areas of moral theology, social ethics, religious education, moral education and theology. His most recent publication is forthcoming in the international journal Teaching Religion and Theology and is focused on the philosophy and experience of theological education.

Abstract

In this presentation I will focus in on some of the implications of the vision of conscience developed in the Second Vatican Council’s Gaudium et spes: that radical, and universal, call to personal moral responsibility which all people must answer through seeking to understand what constitutes moral goodness, and committing themselves to dispositions and actions – indeed to whole lives – which respond adequately to this call. This, combined with the emphasis on the historical and developmental nature of human persons found in the Conciliar documents and reflections in moral theology since, lends itself to an emphasis on the formation of conscience, a phenomenon that has been well studied in the field of moral education. With attention to this field, I will present recent challenges to the Catholic understanding of conscience, including new forms of determinism arising in some of the sciences. I will provide a defense of the Catholic understanding of conscience and at the same time renew my call for attention to conscience formation within the field of moral theology, highlighting some important learnings from the field of moral education in so doing.

Date: Wednesday 23rd March, 2016 (Semester 1, Week 5)
Time: Sydney: 12.30 – 1.30 pm
Venue: Sydney: NDS5-402 Pioneer House Director’s Boardroom