



Can People of Different Religions Pray to the Same God?

Friday, February 16

Room HA309

2 - 3 pm (Question period to follow)



Dr. Jason West, Ph.D.
President & Vice-Chancellor
Newman Theological College

Dr. West examines whether it is philosophically coherent to say that people of different religions pray to the same God. Recently, Michael Rea has argued that since the great monotheistic religions hold that there is only one God, they must also hold that any prayer whatsoever is in fact made to the same God, since that is the only God there is.

He argues that this view is too simplistic and contrast it with the thought of philosopher Peter Geach and Thomas Aquinas who both emphasize that the philosophical and theological characterization of God people adopt cannot be ignored in determining to whom (or to what) they are praying. In view of problems with this view, He will try to rearticulate the role of intention in prayer to show that irrespective of their differences the adherents of the monotheistic religions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam can coherently be said to pray to the same God, while those of other religions generally cannot.