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## The Edward B. Brueggeman Center for Dialogue

“Working collaboratively to promote understanding and to advance the common good in Cincinnati, Ohio and beyond.”

### Fall 2025 Newsletter

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[A Word from the Director](#)

Dear Friends,

As we begin another academic year at Xavier University, I wanted to draw your attention to some events and initiatives we are working on at the Brueggeman Center.

The first of these is [Scriptural Reasoning](#). This is a model for doing interfaith dialogue that originated at Cambridge University in the United Kingdom. Participants meet monthly to discuss sacred texts across religious traditions. The goal is not only to enrich understanding of the sacred texts of others, but to build community and friendship. This initiative gets started in September.

We are partnering this fall with Xavier's Theology department to look at the impact of the Second Vatican Council, which closed 60 years ago in 1965. Check under ["Events"](#) on the Center's website for information about upcoming lectures in the series.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic and the wide adoption of remote work and remote learning, it has been harder to attract people to large lecture events. This fall we are experimenting with reviving the classic concept of the intellectual salon. I will be hosting a series of salon-style events in the Brueggeman Center this fall and next spring. Our first salon will focus on the impact of AI on the university. Later this semester, we will host a salon conversation about the overlap of Catholic and Buddhist practice. For now, participation in the salons is by invitation only, but this may change as we gain experience with the model.

This fall we launched a new dialogue initiative in association with the Sustained Dialogue Institute based in Washington, D.C. Sustained Dialogue is an approach to bringing people together over an extended period of time to discuss issues that are deeply divisive. Our first dialogue is underway, and we are working to get more people trained as moderators so that we can ramp this up in the coming months.

I also would like to give a shout-out to this year's Brueggeman Fellows. Working with these students is one of the things I like best about this job. On a side note, the Brueggeman Fellowship will be getting a makeover in 2026. I'll say more in a future newsletter. Stay tuned.

Finally, I would like to encourage everyone to attend the screening of the documentary *Quest for Beauty* on September 25<sup>th</sup>. This is a beautiful film about the life and vision of Cincinnati artist William Schickel.

Cordially,

John J. O'Keefe, Ph.D.  
Director, Edward B. Brueggeman Center  
for Dialogue



[Contact me](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)



## Quest for Beauty

September 25, 6:00 pm, Kennedy  
Auditorium at Xavier University

[\*Quest for Beauty\*](#) is a film documentary on the life and prolific art career of William Schickel who was a prominent 20th century Catholic artist. Schickel had a very prolific art career spanning sixty-plus years; he produced a large body of mostly commissioned work in painting, sculpture, stained glass, and architectural design. He is most well-known for his renovation of the Abbey of Gethsemani in Kentucky, where he worked personally with Thomas Merton. His works can be found in numerous private collections and museums, including the Vatican Museum. The film explores his Quest for Beauty and the challenges he faced, and his vision for the Church and his heart for unity in the Body of Christ.

William Schickel designed the renovation of Bellarmine Chapel at Xavier University in 1999. He received an honorary doctorate from the university in 2005.

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**2025 - 2026 Winter-Cohen Brueggeman Fellows:**



Winter - Cohen Family  
**BRUEGGEMAN FELLOWS**

2025 -2026





**XAVIER UNIVERSITY**  
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