

James Edward Kelly

Assistant Professor of Theology and Core Fellow
The University of St. Thomas (Houston)
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Education

Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL

Ph.D., Systematic Theology, 2025

Minor Area: Moral Theology

Dissertation Title: “Sacred Doctrine and Christian Holiness: The Structure of the *Summa theologiae*”

Director: Romanus Cessario, O.P.

Readers: John Boyle, Ph.D., Michael Dauphinais, Ph.D., and Guy Mansini, O.S.B.

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

Th.M., Historical and Systematic Theology, 2020

Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA

M.T.S., Biblical Studies and Historical Theology, 2019

Thesis: “Faithful without Faith: Reconsidering Christ’s Obedience in the Epistle to the Hebrews”

Director: Franklin T. Harkins, Ph.D.

Reader: Angela Kim Harkins, Ph.D.

University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN

B.A., *cum laude*, Theology, 2015

Minor Areas: Irish Language and Literature, Business Economics

Research Assistant for Sean D. McGraw, Ph.D.

University Teaching Experience

2025-Present	Assistant Professor of Theology and Core Fellow, The University of St. Thomas (Houston)
2022-2025	Adjunct Instructor of Theology, Ave Maria University
2020-2022	Teaching Assistant, Ave Maria University

University Courses Taught

2026-Present	Directed Reading in Moral Theology	University of St. Thomas	Undergraduate Level
Spring 2026	Evangelical Legacy of Vatican II	University of St. Thomas	Graduate Level
Spring 2026	The Return to God	University of St. Thomas	Undergraduate Level
Spring 2026	Scripture and Salvation History	University of St. Thomas	Undergraduate Level
2025-2026	Faith, Reason, and Revelation	University of St. Thomas	Undergraduate Level
Fall 2025	Foundations of Liberal Learning	University of St. Thomas	Undergraduate Level

2023-2025	FSP Sophomore Reading Group	Ave Maria University	Undergraduate Level
2022-2025	Sacred Doctrine	Ave Maria University	Undergraduate Level
2024 (Fall)	Directed Study: Moral Theology	Ave Maria University	Undergraduate Level
2024 (Fall)	Living in Christ: Moral Theology	Ave Maria University	Undergraduate Level
2021-2022	Sacred Scripture	Ave Maria University	Undergraduate Level
2020 (Fall)	Fundamental Moral Theology	Ave Maria University	Graduate Level

Publications

“Divine Love and Human Suffering: Aquinas on the Two Wills of Christ” (forthcoming in *Nova et Vetera*).

“‘To Evangelize the Poor:’ The Gospel According to Luke, Isaiah, and Origen,” *Lumen Et Vita*, the Graduate Academic Journal of the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, Vol 9, No 2 (2018), pp. 21-28.

The Archdiocese of Dublin: A Digital Profile. Dublin: Keough Naughton Notre Dame Centre, 2014.

Conference Presentations and Academic Lectures

May 2026	“ <i>Scientia Scripturarum</i> : Aquinas and His Predecessors on <i>Sacra Doctrina</i> ,” at the 61 st International Congress on Medieval Studies, Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, MI.
February 2026	“Christian Satisfaction in Scripture: Towards a Thomistic Understanding,” at “Aquinas and Sin,” Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL.
June 2025	“The Meaning of <i>Sacra Doctrina</i> : A Scholastic <i>Ressourcement</i> ,” at “A Dialogue Renewed: Scholasticism and the <i>Ressourcement</i> Movement on the Nature of Catholic Theology,” Theological College, Washington, DC.
February 2025	“Liberal Learning and Christian Holiness: Thomas Aquinas on the Pursuit of Wisdom,” invited presentation to the Department of the Core, University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX.
February 2025	“What Aquinas Would Do: A Doctrinal Assessment of <i>ST I</i> , q. 1,” at “What Would Aquinas Do? The Crises of Our Age and the 800 th Anniversary of the Birth of Thomas Aquinas,” Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL.
September 2024	“Divine Love and Human Suffering: Aquinas on the Two Wills of Christ,” at “Aquinas at 800: ‘Ad multos annos,’” University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN.
February 2024	“Eucharistic Renewal in Luke 24: A Thomistic <i>Ressourcement</i> of Sacred Doctrine,” at “Thomas Aquinas and the Eucharist: Pathways to Revival,” Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL.
October 2023	“A Brief Catechesis on Goodness and Grace: Human Action in Aquinas, Trent, and <i>Veritatis Splendor</i> ,” at “Human Action and the Drama of Accompaniment: The 30 th Anniversary of <i>Veritatis Splendor</i> ,” St. Bernard’s School of Theology and Ministry, Rochester, NY.
June 2023	“Conduits of Conversion: Thomas Aquinas on the Liberal Arts’ Relation to the <i>Imago Dei</i> ,” at “The Soul in the Philosophy & Theology of St. Thomas,” Thomas Aquinas College, Santa Paula, CA.

February 2023	“The History and Mystery of the Eucharist: Joseph Ratzinger and Thomas Aquinas on the Last Supper,” at “The Holiness of God and the Mystery of the Eucharist,” Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL.
June 2022	“Divine Love and Human Action: The Aristotelian and Augustinian Influences on Aquinas’s Analysis of the Moral Act,” at “Grace and Sanctification: Divine Causality, Human Action, and Supernatural Glory,” Thomas Aquinas College, Northfield, MA.
February 2022	“ <i>Exitus-Reditus</i> Revisited: Reconsidering the Structure of the <i>Summa theologiae</i> ,” at “St. Thomas Aquinas as Spiritual Teacher: Theology in a Culture of Grace,” Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL.
October 2021	“Learning by the Light and Love of God: Charity’s Relation to Acquired Knowledge in the Christology of Thomas Aquinas,” at Patristic, Medieval and Renaissance Conference (PMR), Villanova University, Villanova, PA.
September 2021	“‘Clinging to the Faithful Word’: How Aquinas Develops His Teaching on Biblical Interpretation,” at “Interpretation of Scripture and Ecclesial Exegesis: The Search for an Integrated Theology,” St. Bernard’s School of Theology and Ministry, Rochester, NY.
June 2021	“John Paul II on the Natural Knowledge of God: Reconsidering <i>Fides et Ratio</i> ,” at “Development of Doctrine: Revelation, Magisterium, and Human Reason,” St. Bernard’s School of Theology and Ministry, Rochester, NY.
February 2021	“To Hope as Jesus Hoped: A Christological Consideration,” at “Hope and Death: Christian Responses,” Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL.
February 2019	“‘To Evangelize the Poor’: The Gospel According to Luke, Isaiah, and Origen,” at “Preaching and Living the Gospel,” Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA.
November 2018	“Springing from Love: The Trinitarian Development of Four-Pillar Catechesis,” at “Theology and Ministry Today: Engaging Faith and Culture,” Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA.
February 2018	“Original Ecstasy: Prophecy and Prefiguration in Adam’s ‘Deep Sleep,’” at “Love and Ecstasy: Emptying the Self, Encountering the Other,” Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA.
July 2016	“Moral Development in Catholic Schools,” at ACE Teaching Fellows Conference, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN.

Lectures for a General Audience

March 2026	“Jesus Christ: What It Really Means to Be Human,” at the Theology of the Body General Meeting, The University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX.
January 2026	“Learning for a Purpose: How the Liberal Arts Help Us to Grow in Holiness,” at the 2026 Festival of St. Thomas, The University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX.
September 2025	“The Sacraments,” at Viri Dei, Houston, TX.

Honors, Grants, and Fellowships

2025	Pass with Distinction, Ave Maria University, for doctoral dissertation
2025	Membership, <i>Phi Kappa Phi</i> , for being in the top ten percent of students at Ave Maria University
2022	Pass with Distinction, Ave Maria University, for doctoral comprehensive examinations

2020-2025	Tuition Remission, Ave Maria University, full funding for studies
2019	Massachusetts Bible Award, Massachusetts Bible Society, for outstanding work in biblical studies
2017-2020	Tuition Remission, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, full funding for studies
2015-2016	AmeriCorps Education Award Program Grant, for service through teaching in Peoria, Illinois
2015-2016	ACE Teaching Fellowship, University of Notre Dame, for educational research in Peoria, Illinois
2014	Nanovic Dublin Internship Grant, University of Notre Dame, for research in Dublin, Ireland
2013	Summer Language Abroad Grant, University of Notre Dame, for study in Galway, Ireland

Languages

Ancient: Greek, Hebrew, Latin

Modern: French, German, Irish Gaelic, Spanish

University Service

2026-Present	<i>Faculty Mentor</i>, Freshman Symposium Program, The University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX. • Advises a small group of first-year undergraduate students. • Works with the assistance of a trained student mentor.
2025-Present	<i>Committee Member</i>, “St. Francis” Conference, The University of St. Thomas, Houston, TX. • Helps to organize an upcoming conference at The University of St. Thomas in Houston. • Meets with fellow committee members on a monthly basis.
2023-2025	<i>Team Facilitator</i>, Founder’s Scholarship Program, Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL. • Advised a small group of undergraduate students in the Founder’s Scholarship Program. • Met with the small group once per week for a meal at the University. • Led weekly discussions on the Catholic intellectual life during each meal.
2020-2025	<i>Research Assistant</i>, Ave Maria University, Ave Maria, FL. • Assisted theology professors with projects for publication.
2018	<i>Graduate Technology Consultant</i>, Boston College Information Technology Services, Chestnut Hill, MA. • Provided local computing and communications support to all users in a work unit. • Monitored the status of all problems reported. • Assisted with decision-making related to technology purchases in the work unit.
2017-2018	<i>Graduate Assistant</i>, Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, Brighton, MA • Updated webpages in HTML for the school website (including Canvas webpages). • Designed print and online advertising using Adobe software. • Provided technical support for customers via telephone and e-mail.
2015-2016	<i>ACE Teaching Fellow</i>, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN. • Service through teaching at Notre Dame High School, Peoria, IL. • Courses: Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Christology.

- 2014-2015 *Research Assistant*, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN.
- Assisted a political science professor in evaluating historical trends of Irish political parties.
 - Analyzed data using spreadsheet software and political research.
 - Discussed strategies for conducting further research with the professor.
- 2014-2015 *Peer Tutor*, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN.
- Assisted students in developing Irish language skills through practice conversations.
 - Submitted reports to the Irish language faculty on tutees' progress.
 - Regularly discussed tutoring strategies with fellow staff members.

Service to the Local Community

- 2017-2018 *Catechist for Confirmation*, Jesuit Parish of Saint Ignatius of Loyola, Chestnut Hill, MA.
- 2016-2017 *Participant*, Christian-Muslim Dialogues, Catholic Archdiocese of Boston, Boston, MA.
- 2016-2017 *Assistant to RCLA Catechist*, Saint Cecilia Parish, Boston, MA.

References

Gerald Boersma, Ph.D.

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 Professor of Theology
 Ave Maria University
 5251 Donahue Street
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Angela Kim Harkins, Ph.D.

Professor of New Testament
 Boston College Clough School of Theology and Ministry
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Franklin T. Harkins, Ph.D.

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Fr. Guy Mansini, S.T.D.

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