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Introduction

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Introduction

Jonathan Rothchild, Ph.D.

“Say Something Theological,” the Theological Studies Graduate Student conference, has been an annual event since 2007. Professor Charlotte Radler and I originally conceived of the idea for the conference as a venue for graduate students to share their research in progress, engage in dialogue with one another and with THST faculty, and to think deeply about the theological dimensions and pastoral implications of their work. Building on conversations from the classrooms and the hallways, the conference invites students to articulate their theological voices and to engage in professional practices of reading papers and offering critical and constructive feedback. Each year, a call for proposals is posted, and a faculty conference steering committee carefully reviews the submissions and selects the five papers. The steering committee—which has included over time Professors Susan Abraham, Cecilia Gonzalez Andrieu, Anna Harrison, Charlotte Radler, David Sanchez, Tracy Sayuki Tiemeier, and myself—has had to make difficult decisions given that typically there have been 15 submissions per year.

At each annual conference, five students present their original research that emerges out of an assignment from a course, an ongoing capstone project (i.e., the thesis for the MA in Theology students and the Pastoral Synthesis Project for the MA in Pastoral Theology students), or a working idea. The papers have represented a range of theological and pastoral methodologies, themes, and thinkers, including: biblical theology; comparative theology; historical theology; pastoral theology; philosophical theology; practical theology; religious education; religious studies; systematic theology; theological aesthetics; and theological ethics. A graduate student respondent offers comments as part of a formal response to each presentation, followed by conversation with the community of students, staff, faculty, and guests.

Say Something Theological Journal, Volume 1, Issue 2, consists of the papers selected for presentation at Say Something Theological XI in the spring of 2017. The papers address challenging theological and pastoral questions about suffering, sin, iconography, Biblical witness, and accompaniment in the face of injustice. We hope that you find these papers to be thoughtful and carefully-argued theological and pastoral reflections.