TRUST SYCAMORE

ANNUAL BREAKFAST

PRESENTED BY

FRIENDS OF BILL DEMPSEY

Catholic Mission at Notre Dame

"The State of Play"

O. CARTER SNEAD

O. Carter Snead is the Charles E. Rice Professor of Law and Concurrent Professor of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame. A leading scholar in bioethics, human dignity, and public policy, he previously served as General Counsel to the President's Council on Bioethics and has advised policymakers, testified before Congress, and contributed to national debates on abortion, assisted suicide, and embryo research. He is the author of *What It Means to Be Human: The Case for the Body in Public Bioethics*, a widely acclaimed defense of human flourishing rooted in solidarity and the inherent dignity of every person. At Notre Dame, he has been a strong advocate for the University's Catholic mission and the sanctity of human life.

JOHN J. RAPHAEL

Rev. John J. Raphael is a priest of the Diocese of Nashville, Pastor of Christ the King Catholic Church in Nashville, Tennessee, and a member of the Board of Sycamore Trust where he leads the organization's prayer apostolate. Ordained a Josephite priest in 1995, he has served as Principal and President of St. Augustine High School in New Orleans and chaplain at Saint Thomas West Hospital in Nashville. He is the chaplain of the Nashville Guild of the Catholic Medical Association. Father Raphael holds degrees from the University of Notre Dame, DeSales School of Theology, and the University of San Francisco. Through his pastoral leadership, preaching, and commitment to Catholic education and pro-life ministry, he helps others deepen their faith and live the Gospel with conviction.

LUCY SPENCE

Lucy Spence is a member of the University of Notre Dame's Class of 2027, studying Piano Performance and the Program of Liberal Studies with a minor in Philosophy. As Editor-in-Chief of The Irish Rover, she has become a leading student voice in defense of the University's Catholic mission. This year, she received Sycamore Trust's Student Award for Exceptional Contribution to Notre Dame's Catholic Identity in recognition of her leadership, journalism, and commitment to the truth of the Catholic faith. She is also a Sorin Fellow, Tocqueville Fellow, member of Notre Dame Right to Life, and a contributor to Bishop Barron's Word on Fire.

WILLIAM DEMPSEY

Bill Dempsey, '52, is the chairman and founding president of Sycamore Trust. He graduated from Notre Dame as class valedictorian, received his law degree from Yale University, served as chief law clerk to Chief Justice Earl Warren, and practiced law in Washington when not serving as President of the Association of American Railroads and Chairman of the National Railway Labor Conference. Following Father Jenkins's reversal of his tentative decision to bar the student on-campus performance of *The Vagina Monologues*, he established Sycamore Trust as a self-perpetuating charitable organization with a mission to protect Notre Dame's Catholic identity.

XVIII **06.06.2026** XVIII

SATURDAY, 8 - 9:30 AM

Alumni and friends protecting Notre Dame's Catholic identity.

Sycamore Trust

BREAKFAST

Ralph McInerny (1929-2010)
Internationally acclaimed scholar and
storied Notre Dame teacher

> Sycamore Trust is a model of calm and reasonable yet unrelenting friendly questioning of recent events on the South Bend campus.

Our first speaker event was held as a panel discussion in the spring of 2007 with presentations focused on the decision of Notre Dame's new president, Father John I. Jenkins, C.S.C., to allow *The Vagina Monologues* to be produced on campus. The program drew an audience that filled a large lecture hall. So did our 2008 and 2009 events—especially the latter, which dealt with the University's honoring of President Obama, an action that was harshly criticized by 83 cardinals, archbishops, and bishops. To accommodate increasingly larger audiences, in 2011 we moved the event to a large conference room at Notre Dame's Morris Inn and added a complimentary breakfast to the program format.

We now offer a livestream of the event for those who are unable to attend in person, host a Founders' Dinner for organizers, hold various satellite activities for friends, and offer sponsorship opportunities for individuals and organizations that are working to defend traditional values in America and to promote Catholic identity in higher education.

SYCAMORE

Sycamore Trust provides a source of information, a vehicle for the exchange of views, and a collective voice to Notre Dame alumni and others who are concerned about preserving the Catholic identity of the University. By reporting on signs of secularization and developing resources to support student leaders and their campus initiatives, the organization seeks to protect and preserve the University's religious mission.

TRUSTEES

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WHAT WOULD YOU FIGHT FOR?

> "The Catholic culture on campus is improving, and I have no doubt that the leadership of the Sycamore Trust has been instrumental in this change. Knowing that there are alumni who support and pray for us gives us strength and courage."

Michael J. Bender, '24
Grand Knight
Knights of Columbus Council 1477

Efforts by alumni of other schools to confront the slow march of secularization have repeatedly failed in the past. But not so with Sycamore Trust! Since 2007, alumni, family, and friends of Notre Dame who are committed to preserving the school's Catholic identity have helped to build our organization into what is by far the most consequential of its kind—while inspiring and enabling us to support new efforts at other schools in their fight for the heart and soul of their alma maters.

SUBSCRIBE

We would be honored for you to join with us in the fight for Notre Dame's Catholic identity.

LEARN MORE AT SYCAMORETRUST.ORG

DONATE

PS If you would like to learn more about initiating a local Sycamore Trust community, organizing Sycamore Trust activities, or hosting a Sycamore Trust event, please let us know. We would like to help!