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Michael W. Higgins has been named Distinguished Professor of Catholic Thought at Sacred Heart University. He previously served as vice president for Mission and Catholic Identity and professor of Religious Studies at the University.

He is a native of Toronto, an author, Vatican affairs specialist for the Globe and Mail and CTV Network, Catholic educator, CBC radio documentarian, scholar and administrator. He was professor of English and Religious Studies at St. Jerome’s University in the University of Waterloo and also served as chair, associate dean, vice president and president. He was also president and vice-chancellor of St. Thomas University in Fredericton.

He has edited and co-edited, authored and co-authored numerous books including: The Jesuit Mystique, Power and Peril: The Catholic Church at the Crossroads; Heretic Blood: The Spiritual Geography of Thomas Merton; The Muted Voice: Religion and the Media; Stalking the Holy: The Pursuit of Saint-Making; Suffer the Children Unto Me: An Open Inquiry into the Clerical Sex Abuse Scandal; and Genius Born of Anguish: the Life and Legacy of Henri Nouwen. Heretic Blood, Suffer the Children and Genius Born of Anguish are award-winning and Stalking the Holy, Genius Born of Anguish and Power and Peril are national bestsellers. Several of his books are translated into German, Italian and French. He is a regular contributor to Commonweal and the Literary Review of Canada and a columnist for The Irish Catholic.

He is the recipient of many awards, including two honorary doctorates, and he won the 2013 Gold Medal for International Radio Documentaries awarded by the New York Festivals. He is a Senior Fellow at Massey College, University of Toronto; an International Fellow of the Chester Ronning Centre for Religion and Public Life, University of Alberta; and an Affiliate Graduate Professor of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. He is married with four adult children.

In his new role, Higgins will focus on teaching, research, lecturing, mentoring and collaborating with faculty, staff and students on projects and programs. He will assist the Office of Mission and Catholic Identity with its lecture programs and the Presidential Seminar. He will also expand the subject matter of his weekly blog, “Pontifex Minimus.”

"I have been approached to work with some of the deans and with faculty to implement new strategies of instruction around the Catholic intellectual tradition for both faculty and students," Higgins says. "I am
looking forward to having the opportunity to focus on longer-term projects, in conjunction with the Office of Mission and Catholic Identity, and to influence the curriculum in a positive way.”


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