



**Belmont Abbey**  
COLLEGE

*That in all things God  
may be glorified*

**For Immediate Release**

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## **Belmont Abbey College to Host Symposium on the Establishment of Catholicism in the American South**

**Belmont, N.C. (September 10, 2024)** – Belmont Abbey College announces The Haid Symposium on Catholicism in the American South in commemoration of the hundredth anniversary of Abbot Leo Haid's death. This symposium, taking place from October 11th to 12th, 2024, aims to foster scholarly engagement and promote collaboration among academics from esteemed colleges and universities across the nation as they consider the formation and flourishing of Catholicism in the South.

Abbot Leo Haid, the founding Abbot of Belmont Abbey College and vicar apostolic of North Carolina until his passing in 1924, played a pivotal role in nurturing a burgeoning Catholic presence that not only transformed the religious landscape of the American South but also left an indelible mark on its socio-political, literary, and cultural history.

The Haid Symposium will delve into the rich tapestry of the past century, shedding light on this remarkable legacy and celebrating a significant yet often overlooked aspect of Southern and American Catholic history. By exploring the intervening years, the symposium aims to deepen the understanding of the profound impact of Catholicism in the region.

Distinguished scholars and experts from various disciplines will converge at Belmont Abbey College to engage in a series of thought-provoking discussions and presentations. The symposium will feature panels such as "Benedictine Contributions to Southern Catholicism," "Southern Catholicism during the Civil Rights Movement," and "Southern Catholicism and the Literary Imagination: Flannery O'Connor." These sessions will provide a platform for intellectual exchange, fostering new insights and collaborations that will shape the future of Catholic scholarship in the American South.

"We are overjoyed to host The Haid Symposium on Catholicism in the American South," said Dr. Bill Thierfelder, President of Belmont Abbey College. "This symposium not only builds upon Abbot Leo Haid's rich legacy of leadership in, and fidelity to, the Catholic Church but also highlights the profound contribution of the Belmont Abbey monastic community and their ongoing commitment to faithfully living the 1,500-year-old Rule of St. Benedict."

Dr. Farrell O'Gorman, Chair and Professor of English at Belmont Abbey College, expressed his enthusiasm for the upcoming event, stating, "The Haid Symposium provides a valuable opportunity for scholars to come together and explore the historical significance of Catholicism in the American South. Through a closer look at Abbot Leo Haid's legacy, we will uncover vital aspects of the region's religious and cultural development."

For more information about The Haid Symposium on Catholicism in the American South, including registration details and a schedule of events, please visit [www.belmontabbeycollege.edu/haid\\_symposium/](http://www.belmontabbeycollege.edu/haid_symposium/).

**About Belmont Abbey College:** Founded in 1876, Belmont Abbey College is a private, Catholic baccalaureate and liberal arts institution. Our mission is to educate students in the liberal arts and sciences so that in all things God may be glorified. Guided by the Catholic intellectual tradition and the Benedictine spirit of prayer and learning, we welcome a diverse body of students and provide them with an education that will enable them to lead lives of integrity, to succeed professionally, to become responsible citizens, and to be a blessing to themselves and to others. Our beautiful and historic campus is conveniently located just 10 miles west of Charlotte, N.C., and is currently home to more than 1500 students. For more information, visit <https://belmontabbeycollege.edu/>.