Leo Hugh Madden Selected for 2022 Kathleen Connolly-Weinert Leadership Award

The National Board of Theta Alpha Kappa is pleased to announce that Leo Hugh Madden is the 2022 recipient of the Kathleen Connolly-Weinert Leadership Award, to be presented at the society’s Annual Business Meeting and Reception in Denver, Colorado, on November 20.

Dr. Madden is Associate Professor of Theology at Ohio Dominican University in Columbus, Ohio, where he has taught undergraduate and graduate courses in the humanities and biblical theology since 1992 and was honored in 1995 as the university’s Outstanding Teacher of the Year. He has served as chair of the Department of Theology since 2009 and also directs the department’s M.A. program. A graduate of Georgetown University, the Pontifical Biblical Institute, and the Pontifical Gregorian University, Madden especially enjoys teaching a first-year seminar course called “The Tragic Vision,” which explores texts including the Epic of Gilgamesh, Greek plays, and the Gospel of Mark. During his career at ODU he has frequently addressed matters of biblical theology and Catholic life and thought in local media interviews and talks for fellow faculty and staff members.

Madden initiated ODU’s TAK chapter (Alpha Epsilon Zeta) in 2001 and has served as its chapter representative for over two decades. He especially appreciates that inductees of the chapter are vitally engaged in Catholic parishes and schools throughout the Midwest. Shortly after founding the local chapter, Madden became involved with TAK on the national level when he volunteered as a judge for the society’s Albert Clark Awards essay competition. Soon he was invited by Dr. Anthony Tambasco, the founding editor of Journal of Theta Alpha Kappa, to succeed him in that role. “Tony asked me if I would consider this position. My wife and my university gave me enormous support. I found a local printer that educated me on their procedures, and the whole experience turned out to be a real joy.”

Madden took the reins of JTAK in 2006 and served until 2017, building on Tambasco’s foundational work and expanding the profile and stability of the journal in numerous ways. He worked assiduously with students in the revisions process to help them write clearly and accurately. Key administrative contributions included expanding and standardizing the number of student-authored articles per issue, establishing procedures to ensure and validate the academic integrity of the articles published, and affiliating the journal with the indices and databases of the American Theological Library Association (now Atla). Madden took special delight in the excited reactions of students when informed that their work would be published in the journal: “I could hear and feel their happiness and deep sense of accomplishment even via email!”

Dr. David C. Grant, who served as TAK board president during most of Madden’s editorial tenure, speaks warmly of his former society colleague—and the Buckeye peanut butter fudge candies he would bring to each board meeting. “Leo was a wonderful addition to the board. I always valued his opinions. He took the journal to a new level. In addition to his many other attributes, Leo is a kind and gentle person. I think Leo is an excellent choice for the KCW Leadership Award.”

Cameron Clutter, a senior Theology major at Ohio Dominican University, is the 2022 recipient of the KCW Student Award. This honor (formerly called the Moderator’s Award) is presented annually to a student selected by the winner of the Kathleen Connolly-Weinert Leadership Award. When notified of his selection, he replied, “I am both humbled and honored to be receiving this award from TAK.”

Cameron is especially interested in sacramental theology and practical issues of Christian discipleship. Madden notes that “his academic interests and talents in Theology courses have been impressive and multifaceted.” He will complete his undergraduate degree in December 2022 and plans to pursue graduate studies in the future. Presently he is employed as the Evangelization Program Coordinator at St. Joan of Arc parish in Powell, Ohio, with special focus on youth ministry. He is also an experienced audio engineer.