

Evangelization & the Catholic Legal Professional

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Presentation

In a recent address to legal professionals, Pope Francis said, *“There is no doubt that, for those among you who are called to live the Christian vocation of your Baptism, this is a privileged and dynamic field of world evangelization. For all, even those who are not Christian, there is a need in every case for the assistance of God, who is the source of all reason and justice.”*¹

The call to evangelization is the vocation of all. By virtue of our Baptism, we are each called to be prophets to a world that – despite many appearances to the contrary! -- deeply yearns to know God. That call to be prophet and evangelizer is a call common to all and yet unique to each. Those of us whose lives are spent in the legal profession work in a world that, for many, seems unrelated to, or even at odds with, the call to evangelization. Yet, in a time when law and morality are, for better or worse, inextricably intertwined, we need lawyers willing to practice law informed by the demands of their faith, as joyful, hopeful witnesses to what is good, just, and, simply, right. We have no shortage of examples, as a remarkable number of saints have also been lawyers. There is, thus, great hope for us!

Biography

Professor Lucia A. Silecchia received her B.A. degree *summa cum laude* from Queens College (C.U.N.Y.) and her J.D. from Yale Law School, where she was a teaching fellow, a senior editor of THE YALE LAW JOURNAL, and current topics editor of THE YALE LAW & POLICY REVIEW. She was a litigation associate at Rogers & Wells in New York City before joining the faculty of Catholic University’s Columbus School of Law in 1991. She served as the law school’s Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in 2004 and 2005 and directs Catholic University’s [Summer Law Program in Rome](#). She teaches in Catholic University’s cooperative programs at Jagiellonian University in Cracow, Poland, lectured in Portugal through Catholic University’s U.S. - Portuguese Law Initiative at the University of Lisbon, and was a Visiting Scholar at Yale Law School in the fall of 2000.

Prof. Silecchia teaches and writes in the areas of environmental law and ethics, elder law, Catholic social thought, legal education, law and literature, and property. She hosted the 2008 – 2009 Conference on Catholic Legal Thought and in April 2007, she participated

¹ Pope Francis, *Address of Pope Francis to the Delegates of the International Association of Penal Law*, Oct. 23, 2014 (available at http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/october/documents/papa-francesco_20141023_associazione-internazionale-diritto-penale.html)

in a Vatican conference on Climate Change and Development, organized by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace. She has written for *The Wall St. Journal* and *National Review* (online) and has been a commentator on EWTN News Nightly. Her article, *Pope Francis and the Vocation of the Lawyer: Reflections on Responsibility and Service* will be published this summer in THE JOURNAL OF CATHOLIC LEGAL STUDIES. She was also a contributing author to the recently published book, AMERICAN LAW FROM A CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE: THROUGH A CLEARER LENS (Ronald J. Rychlak, ed., 2015).

Prof. Silecchia is a native of Queens, N.Y. and is admitted to the bars of New York, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, and the Supreme Court of the United States.