

JE and Lillian Byrne Tipton Distinguished Visiting Professor in Catholic Studies

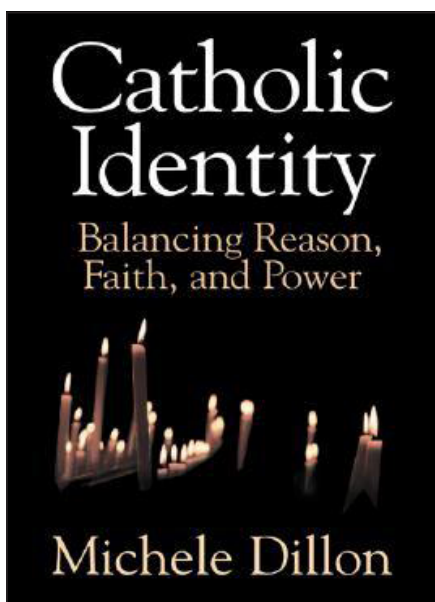
Michele Dillon

American Catholics in the Twenty-First Century



Thursday, January 19 / 8:00 p.m. /Free
First Presbyterian Church
21 East Constance Street

American Catholics blend personal autonomy, skepticism toward the church hierarchy's teaching authority, and commitment to the Catholic sacramental and communal tradition. Arguing that the Catholic Church is at a critical juncture as it confronts the decline in the number of ordained priests, demographic change, and the need to restore credibility in the wake of the priest sex abuse scandals, Dr. Dillon probes how Catholics envision institutional change and whether the increasing Hispanic presence in the Church is likely to alter the character of American Catholicism.



Michele Dillon, the J.E. and Lillian Byrne Tipton Distinguished Visiting Professor in Religious Studies at UC Santa Barbara for Winter Quarter 2012, is a sociologist whose research focuses on religion and culture, with a particular interest in authority, autonomy, and tradition in Catholicism. Her publications include *Catholic Identity: Balancing Reason, Faith, and Power*, *In the Course of a Lifetime: Tracing Religious Belief, Practice, and Change*, and *Debating Divorce: Moral Conflict in Ireland*. Dillon is one of several scholars who conducted a recent national survey entitled *Catholics in America: Persistence and Change in the Catholic Landscape*. She is Professor and Chair, Department of Sociology at the University of New Hampshire.

This event is presented by the Department of Religious Studies at UCSB, Virgil Cordano, OFM, Endowment in Catholic Studies in the Department of Religious Studies, UCSB, and the Walter H. Capps Center for the Study of Ethics, Religion, and Public Life at UCSB.

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