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# VOX SCHOLARIUM

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NEWSLETTER OF THE GUILD OF SCHOLARS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

*in tempore pestilentiae*



Tintoretto, *St. Roch Healing Victims of the Plague*, oil on canvas, 10' x 22', 1559, Church of San Rocco, Venice (Italy).

## Executive Committee Confronts Coronavirus

Everyone in the country, let alone across the globe, has been affected by the spread of the novel coronavirus and its resulting infection: the COVID-19 disease that has killed more Americans than were felled in the Vietnam War. In April the October dates set for the annual meeting of the Guild were distant enough that convening at Virginia Theological Seminary for the meeting seemed possible. However, when the pandemic did not abate, VTS determined that its guest facilities should remain closed this year. We will, however, be meeting at VTS next year on the weekend of October 22-24, 2021. Meanwhile, the Executive Committee has had to generate alternative plans for the 2020 meeting. The results of those deliberations are provided in this summer issue of the *Vox Scholarium*.

Please read this issue carefully about the organization of a virtual presentation of papers and a virtual business meeting, even a virtual coffee klatsch as well as a virtual worship service.

Please also enjoy some news items submitted by and on behalf of some of our members.

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**Information about the Virtual Meeting of the Guild in October 2020**

Although information remains a bit incomplete at this point, the following points should offer some clarity about what has already been decided by the Executive Committee and what you can expect to learn as more detailed plans can be presented.

- There will be a Virtual Meeting in October on the weekend originally scheduled for the in-person meeting: October 23-25, 2020.
- The Virtual Meeting will consist of several virtual events that will be broadcast through Zoom or another platform. Many of you will have already had experience with virtual meetings. You know that it is an effective and user-friendly way for members of groups to communicate with both sight and sound while remaining distant from one another physically. The required information about how to connect through your computer to the virtual events will be published well in advance of the meeting.
- The Virtual Annual Meeting will actually consist of several different virtual meetings. There will be (1) a virtual business meeting; and (2) two paper sessions, separated by a break, possibly a remote coffee klatsch. The first session will be a paper presented by Robert Pritchard who will speak on "Anglican Scholars in the Colonial and Early National Church". The second session will be a pair of linked presentations, also separated by a break: "Alexander McCall Smith, Isabel Dalhousie, and W. H. Auden: Triangulating Meaning" by Marsha Dutton and "Precious Ramotswe: Epitome of Anglican Principles" by David Burton.
- Traditionally scholars nominated for membership in the Guild have been invited to the Annual Meeting, so that, having read information on their scholarship, we can meet them before their membership is voted on at the Business Meeting. Rather than delay receiving new members, the EC has decided to invite nominees to the 2020 Virtual Meeting and will arrange a series of remote "meet and greets" so that nominees and members can become acquainted before the vote is taken at the Business Meeting. Nominees who cannot join the on-line meeting, like nominees in other years who could not attend the meeting, will be invited to attend the 2021 meeting and be voted on then.
- There may be some additional virtual interaction, including a virtual worship service: either an Evening Prayer service (perhaps on Friday) or a Liturgy of the Word or a service of Morning Prayer (perhaps on Saturday), yet to be determined.
- We hope that this information will ease your minds about how we will carry on during this extraordinary year. Every effort will be made to keep you informed and updated regularly.

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## News of Members

**Jameela Lares**, Professor of English and Charles W. Moorman Distinguished Professor (2017-2019) at the University of Southern Mississippi, was honored twice this past year at her home institution. The USM Graduate School named her Graduate Mentor of the Year and awarded her a \$1500 travel grant (that ironically—as she notes—she will have to wait to use). Greg Underwood, the former doctoral student who nominated her, made the following statement about her in an interview in May:

Without question, working with Dr. Lares has been the highlight of my USM experience. Her dedication to her profession has been an example to me and numerous other students with whom she has worked. In addition, she was instrumental in my onboarding process back into the program a few years ago. She was excited as I was about my research agenda, and helped in numerous ways to achieve my goals.

Among other things, Jameela supported Greg when he decided to give up the draft of a dissertation that he had lost interest in, to start afresh with a new subject, and take a year off to finish it. Greg made the following remarks about that:

As gently as I could, I let her know then that neither starting over nor finishing in a year was ever likely to happen. It wasn't the first time I've been wrong about something, and I'm sure it won't be the last.

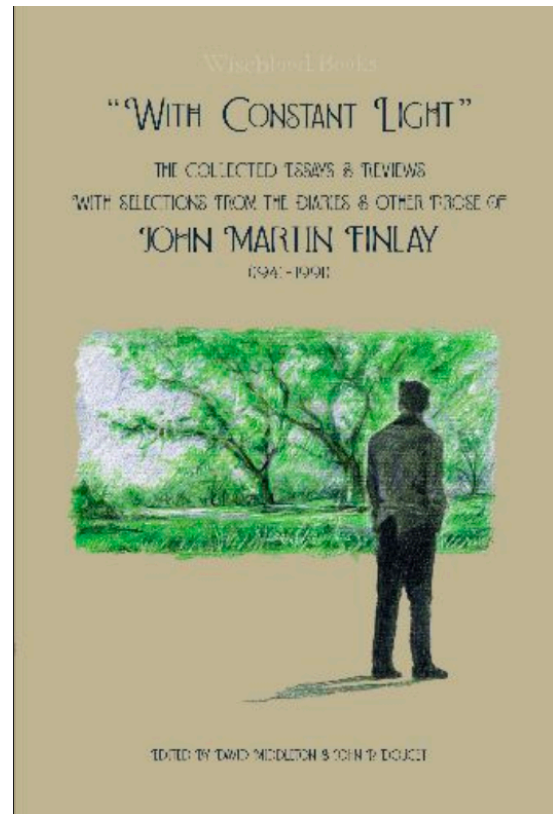
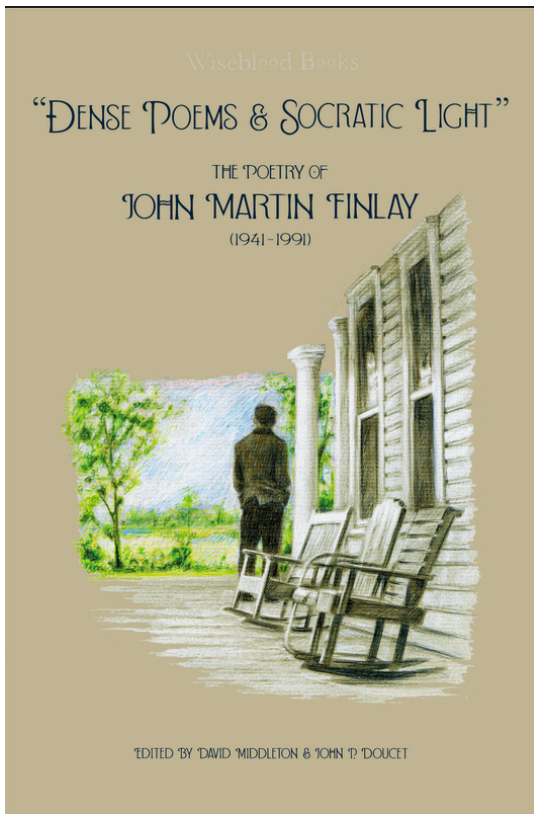


In addition to her teaching award, Jameela was also given the “Lifetime Research Award” by Gordon Cannon, Vice-President for Research whose office stated that they were “impressed by [her] commitment to research efforts.”

In addition to the honor of recognition for dedication and contributions to her field of research and academic community, Jameela was promised a reception later in the summer. She has yet to see that happen, of course, due to the pandemic.

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**David Middleton**, Professor of English at Nicholls State University in Thibodaux, LA has just had two books released by Wiseblood Press: *“Dense Poems & Socratic Light”*: *The Poetry of John Martin Finlay (1941-1991)* and *“With Constant Light”*: *The Collected Essays and Reviews, with Selections from the Diaries, Letters, and Other Prose of John Martin Finlay (1941-1991)*, both books edited by David Middleton and John P. Doucet.



This two-volume, annotated edition is, according to the publisher, the most comprehensive work on John Martin Finlay, a native of Alabama, and the holder of a doctorate in English from Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge. One of the lesser-known luminaries of the Catholic literary tradition, Finlay addressed such difficult subjects in his poetry as the origin of the mind, the relation of mind and matter, the mind and the irrational, and the mind and God (to name only a few); and in his later poems, family life in the South since the early nineteenth century, Indian life in the South, racial and cultural prejudices, and other issues of contemporary life.

Members of the Guild will remember that David Middleton presented his research on John Martin Finlay at several annual Guild meetings, including the 2019 meeting at Sewanee. His paper *“‘With Constant Light’: The Life and Works of Alabama Poet John Martin Finlay (1941-1991)”* introduced us to this imposing writer, just prior to the release of these books.

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**We continue to look for news of members** to publish in the *Vox Scholarium*. Since our members are productive scholars or artists, there must be much to publicize. Please forward any such information along with images (jpeg, gif, or png format) to the editor: Bob Benson, 6090 Contreras Road, Oxford OH 45056 or [bensonra@miamioh.edu](mailto:bensonra@miamioh.edu).

**Reminder:** We have reserved space for our next Annual Meeting on the weekend of **October 22-24, 2021 at Virginia Theological Seminary**, where we were originally planning to meet this year. Of course more information about that will be published in future issues of the *Vox*.

**St. Augustine's Spiritual Communion Prayer—especially important during the pandemic**

*My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament. I love you above all things and I desire to receive you in my soul. Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. I embrace you as if you were already there. And unite me wholly to you.*

*Never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.*

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Interpretation of a classical scholar as a scribe or an evangelist in the Ebbo Gospels (816-35).