

THE PROGRAM

AT CROSS PURPOSES

Life & Death *in the* Negative World

The 2024 Touchstone Conference

John Daniel Davidson **Aaron Renn**

Rod Dreher **Vesper Stamper**

Robert P. George **C. R. Wiley**

Carlo Lancellotti **R. V. Young**

September 26–28

Trinity International University—Bannockburn, Illinois

www.thetouchstoneconference.com

THURSDAY



Registration & talks will be held in the Arnold T. Olson Chapel

4:00 P.M.

Registration Begins

Visit Our Vendors: Act III; Eighth Day Books; Furrowed Brow Books; St. Basil Center for Orthodox Thought and Culture

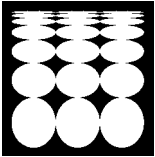


eighth day
BOOKS

7:00 P.M.

Welcome & Opening Remarks — J. Douglas Johnson

7:15 P.M.



Aaron Renn

Principles for Living in
the Negative World

8:00 P.M.



Carlo Lancellotti

Two Routes to the Negative World
*Secularization & Christian Renewal
in Europe & North America*

8:40 P.M.

Q & A with Aaron Renn & Carlo Lancellotti

9:00 P.M.

Reception

Speaker Bios

AARON RENN is a writer and consultant in Indianapolis and a Senior Fellow at American Reformer. He's the author of *Life in the Negative World: Confronting Challenges in an Anti-Christian Culture* (Zondervan Reflective, 2024). He was previously a Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute and Managing Director at Accenture.

CARLO LANCELOTTI is a Professor of Mathematics at the College of Staten Island of the City University of New York and a faculty member in the Physics Program at the CUNY Graduate Center. His scientific interests focus on the kinetic theory of plasmas and gravitating systems, but in recent years he has branched off into political philosophy by translating three volumes of works by the late Augusto Del Noce (1910–1989), a distinguished Italian philosopher and political thinker.

9:00 A.M.

**John Daniel Davidson****The Impossibility of an American Republic in a post-Christian Age**

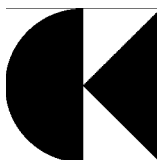
9:45 A.M.

Q & A with John Daniel Davidson

10:00 A.M.

Break/Refreshments

10:30 A.M.

**R. V. Young****“It’s Almost As If We’d Lost the War”
That Hideous Strength & *the Negative World***

11:15 A.M.

Q & A with John Daniel Davidson & R. V. Young

11:45 A.M.

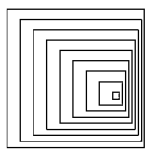
Lunch

Dr. Lancellotti has also published several articles on Del Noce and other topics.

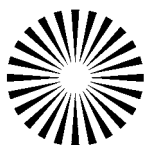
JOHN DANIEL DAVIDSON is a senior editor at *The Federalist*. Over a nearly twenty-year career in journalism, he has written widely for national publications including the *Wall Street Journal*, *National Review*, the *Guardian*, the *New York*

Post, *Claremont Review of Books*, and *First Things*. He is the author of *Pagan America: The Decline of Christianity and the Dark Age to Come* (Regnery, 2024). He has also been a regular guest on many podcasts and radio and television shows, including *Tucker Carlson Tonight*, *The Ingraham Angle*, *Fox and Friends*, NPR, the BBC, and the *Megyn Kelly Show*. A Texan for many years, he now lives with his family in Alaska.

2:00 P.M.

**Robert P. George****Does Social Conservatism
Have a Future?**

2:45 P.M.

C. R. Wiley**Antony of the Desert's Guide
to Your Best Life Now***(Making the Best of Dystopia)*

3:30 P.M.

Q & A with C. R. Wiley

3:40 P.M.

Break

5:00 P.M.

Dinner

R. V. YOUNG is a senior editor at *Touchstone*. He is Professor of English Emeritus at North Carolina State University, and a former editor of *Modern Age: A Quarterly Review*. His *Shakespeare & the Idea of Western Civilization* is forthcoming in January from Catholic University of America Press. He and his wife are parishioners at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Dunedin, Florida.

ROBERT P. GEORGE is a senior editor at *Touchstone* and McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence and Director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University. He has served as chairman of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, and before that on the President's Council on Bioethics and as a presidential appointee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights.

FRIDAY EVENING

SEPTEMBER 27

7:30 P.M.



Vesper Stamper
Only Falling in Love Will Save Us

8:15 P.M.

Q & A with Vesper Stamper

9:00 P.M.

Reception



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C. R. WILEY is a senior editor at *Touchstone*, a co-host of The Theology Pugcast (a podcast with listeners in 60 countries), and a Presbyterian pastor serving a church in the Pacific Northwest. Besides writing for magazines and publishing books, he has also been a college professor, a commercial real estate investor, a landlord, and a building contractor. Other publications he has written for include: *Modern Reformation*, *Sacred Architecture*, *World Magazine*, *Front Porch Republic*, *National Review*, and *First Things*. His most recent book is *In the House of Tom Bombadil* (2021).

VESPER STAMPER was born in Germany and raised in New York City. She writes and illustrates novels which tell,

through both words and pictures, stories of history's rhymes. Nominated for the National Book Award, Vesper also hosts the *Vesperisms* podcast, which aims to cultivate a rehumanized worldview through artistic thinking. She is married to filmmaker Ben Stamper, and teaches illustration at School of Visual Arts, NYC.

ROD DREHER is a contributing editor at *Touchstone*. He is a veteran of three decades of magazine and newspaper journalism and has written three *New York Times* bestsellers—*Live Not By Lies*, *The Benedict Option*, and *The Little Way of Ruthie Leming*—as well as *Crunchy Cons* and *How Dante Can Save Your Life*. He lives in Budapest, Hungary.

SATURDAY

SEPTEMBER 28

9:00 A.M.



Rod Dreher

The Urgency of Wonder

*Re-enchanted Christianity as a Negative World
Survival Skill*

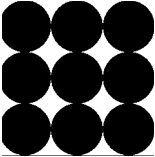
9:45 A.M.

Q & A with Rod Dreher

10:00 A.M.

Break/Refreshments

10:30 A.M.



Panel Discussion

*C. R. Wiley with Aaron Renn, Vesper Stamper
& Rod Dreher*

11:30 A.M.

Closing Remarks — J. Douglas Johnson

THANK YOU FOR JOINING US!

Conference videos will be posted as soon as they are ready.

Previous years' conference talks are available online!

www.touchstonemag.com/conferences

— PLEASE FILL OUT THE SURVEY —

Your feedback is invaluable to us in planning for next year's conference. **SAVE THE DATES: Sept. 25–27, 2025**



Touchstone
GUILD

The earliest-known English guilds were not craft guilds but Christian confraternities formed to guard town walls and protect guild members. The Touchstone Guild is a small group of private donors who, through financial contributions of \$1,000 or more each year, make up our elite guard protecting everyone at *Touchstone* and the Fellowship of St. James.



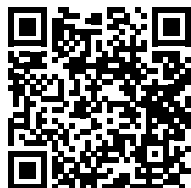
Scan to join!

GUILD MEMBERS receive:

- *A Thousand Words: Reflections on Art and Christianity*
- *Anno Domini: The St. James Calendar of the Christian Year*
- Invitation to an annual meeting with our executive director
- Invitation to special events
- Recognition in the March/April issue of *Touchstone*

Touchstone WATCHMEN

For those who would like to give more but do not have the resources for Guild membership, we have established the Touchstone Watchmen. The Watchmen are donors who give \$500–\$999 a year.



Scan to join!

WATCHMEN receive:

- *Creed & Culture II: A Touchstone Reader*
- Invitation to special events
- Recognition in the March/April issue of *Touchstone*