

## Oxford University names ACU academic as the inaugural Monsignor Professor Denis Edwards Visiting Scholar

Dr Emmanuel Nathan from the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy at Australian Catholic University (ACU) has been appointed as the inaugural Monsignor Professor Denis Edwards Visiting Scholar at the Laudato Si' Research Institute (LSRI), Campion Hall, Oxford, England.

This highly prestigious program was established in memory of the late Monsignor Professor Denis Edwards OAM and is designed to support academic researchers in the areas of theology, science, and ecology, relevant to Professor Edwards' scholarship.

While at LSRI Dr Nathan's research will address comparative analyses of Christian and Jewish theologies of land, the ecological crises urgently affecting Australia and the Pacific Islands, and a deep, intentional, learning from Australian Indigenous engagement with their lands and waterways. Such work will also draw on Professor Edwards' last work on *Deep Incarnation* (2019) and his indebtedness to the theology of Karl Rahner.

A Professor in theology at the Adelaide campus of ACU, the late Monsignor Edwards was a founding member of the International Society for Science and Religion. He wrote 14 books on the dialogue between science and faith and was a sought-after speaker around the globe, particularly in the area of ecological theology and Pope Francis' encyclical, *Laudato Si': On Care for our Common Home*.

Inspired by the Pope's encyclical, the LSRI was established to conduct multidisciplinary research that will drive change and address some of the most pressing environmental issues of our day. Since its inception, and under the leadership of Professor Celia Deane-Drummond, LSRI has made significant headway in establishing its core research focus areas. Work is now underway to develop the Laudato Si' Research Network - a global academic network designed to encourage research exchange and collaboration.

Executive Dean of the ACU Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, Professor Dermot Nestor noted the significance of an ACU academic being named as the inaugural Monsignor Professor Denis Edwards Visiting Scholar.

"Dr Nathan's selection as the inaugural Denis Edwards Visiting Scholar is testament to the breadth of his internationally-acclaimed research expertise and his personal commitment to the legacy of Professor Edward's scholarship."

Dr Emmanuel Nathan said he was honoured to be the recipient of the prestigious award.

"I look forward to building research capacity in eco-theology within our faculty that will not just benefit my own learning but, more importantly, continue Denis' theological legacy within the faculty that he loved."

*As Australia's pre-eminent Catholic University, the appointment of Dr Nathan reflects ACU's international reputation for excellence in theology, divinity and religious studies, and which is evidenced across its curriculum. At ACU students benefit from engagement with internationally acclaimed researchers and, on issues that are of central concern to the contemporary world and our place within it.*

