

The Toronto Jesuit History Research Group (TJHRG) presents

## A Jesuit Approach to Catechesis: St. Peter Canisius and the Reform of Christian Doctrine

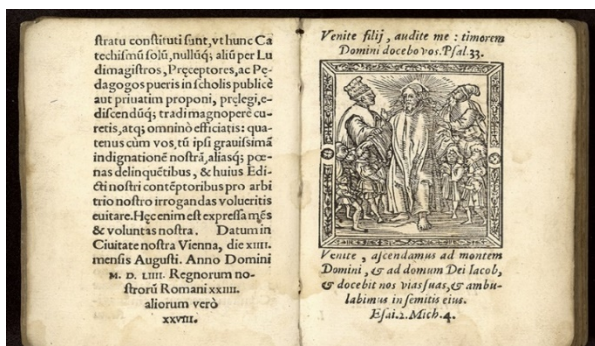
**Date:** October 29, 2021

**Time:** 2:30pm to 4:30pm EST

**Location:** Online Zoom Event | [Registration Required](#)

**Guest speaker:** Thomas Flowers, SJ | **Presenter:** Thomas Worcester, SJ

The stunning popularity of the catechisms of Peter Canisius, SJ in the sixteenth century is only rivaled by their pastoral content, so at odds with the defensive stance that pervaded Catholic pedagogy after the Protestant Reformation. Canisius published his first catechism in 1555; by his death in 1597, his catechisms had gone through well over three hundred editions and over a dozen translations. Rather than building up a defense against Protestant teachings, Canisius's catechisms presented Catholic teaching positively. The contrast between these catechisms and the papally-issued *Roman Catechism* and the entire approach to catechesis after the Council of Trent reveals itself most poignantly in Canisius's treatment of how to live a life of Christian Justice, where he utilized the spiritual approach he had learned from the *Spiritual Exercises* and his mentor Pierre Favre to propose not a list of moral prohibitions, but a method for moral decision making.



Petrus Canisius (1521–1597). *Summa Doctrinae Christianae*. Vienna: Michael Zimmermann, 1555. (BRB0687). [SMU Perkins School of Theology](#)

**Thomas Flowers, SJ**, teaches Jesuit history and spirituality throughout the Jesuit Conference of Canada and the United States. He has a PhD in history from the University of York (UK) with a doctoral dissertation on *The Reform of Christian Doctrine in the Catechisms of Peter Canisius*. His current research focuses on the transition between the “way of proceeding” of the first companions and their first recruits into the Society. He is also interested in the history of the practice of the *Spiritual Exercises*, and the history of the Jesuit General Congregations.

**Note:** After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.