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WITH
CATHOLIC
LIBRARY
ASSOCIATION
MEMBERS

920
CLA

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Open Education Librarian, St. John's University, Queens, New York

Describe your career as a librarian and where you work.

I work at St. John's University where my job has evolved from Instruction Librarian, to Emerging Technologies Librarian, to—currently—Open Education Librarian. I am very excited about this new role, as it brings together all the aspects of librarianship that I value.

Share something about yourself not related to librarianship.

I love the beauty of calligraphy, manifest in written traditions around the world. When I see a calligraphic work, I imagine the planning, process, and patience of the artist. When I can understand the words, I also marvel at how the calligrapher captures some special element of the text through layout, through the movement of line, or through illumination. I am an amateur and practice calligraphy as a type of meditation.

How does your faith inspire or fit in with your work?

I see a connection between librarianship and Catholic social thought. As librarians, part of our vocation is to help break down barriers to information, and in keeping with Catholic social thought, access to information is a necessary, if insufficient, condition for full, integral human development. An open ecology of information helps break down not only some of the obvious economic barriers to information, but also some of the lesser-recognized technological, legal, information literacy, and cultural/geopolitical barriers. The last are of special concern when we witness that existing structures and systems of information creation, preservation, access, and dissemination have privileged wealthier and more powerful actors/regions over others, with attending consequences that less-powerful and less-wealthy people have much less influence on—and a higher barriers to entry to—the information ecosystem.

How has being involved with the CLA been important to your professional development?

It has been a joy to be a part of this small but vibrant community of professionals. I joined over a decade ago as a "newbie" librarian, and found the CLA members from all sections and roundtables to be warm, welcoming, and encouraging. CLA has a variety of members, and the professional discussions, whether in-person or via the e-mail lists and webinars, cross many traditional boundaries. The gifts and talents of CLA members are many, and the leadership is very responsive to members who have questions and suggestions, and very supportive of anyone wishing to take an active role.

What do you hope for the future of the CLA?

We are approaching the one hundred year mark! I hope to see it retain the best of CLA, and grow to embrace the next one hundred years of Catholic librarianship. ■

Do you know a remarkable CLA member who we should learn about?
To nominate a CLA member to be featured in CLA 920, e-mail the editor at sigridkelsey@gmail.com.