



2022 Annual Report

FIRST THINGS

“FIRST THINGS provides a home base and great companionship for those like me who hunger after righteousness.”

Retreat Participant

NEW YORK CITY



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FIRST THINGS

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What follows serves as the 2022 Annual Report for The Institute on Religion and Public Life, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and the publisher of FIRST THINGS.

LETTER FROM THE Editor



Dear FIRST THINGS Readers,

“It was the best of times,” writes Charles Dickens to open *A Tale of Two Cities*, “it was the worst of times.” Our times are quite different, but the chiaroscuro, the startling contrast between light and darkness, applies to us as well.

The reasons for gloom are evident. Transgender ideology continues to wage war on God’s creation. As I write this, the Minnesota legislature is ratifying an extreme abortion bill that makes a mockery of the West’s humanistic tradition of honoring human dignity. Accusations of racism and fascism are hurled at anyone who deviates from progressive dogmas.

The sour results of the progressive crusade are plain to see. Rates of loneliness and suicide are up. Whole swaths of our society are given over to

self-destructive behavior that manifests itself most visibly in homeless encampments and overdose deaths. One rightly mourns that it is the worst of times.

Yet the darkness, paradoxically, has a clarifying effect on many people, especially the young. In this third decade of the third millennium, we can see what is at stake. And so it’s the best of times. In the Gospels, Jesus asks, “Who do you say that I am?” His presence among us creates a crisis, which in ancient Greek means judgment, a decision. Are we with Him, or against Him?

The primary purpose of FIRST THINGS is not evangelical or apologetic in nature. Yet we would be remiss to downplay the role that thoughtful, religiously informed consideration of our contemporary anomie and its antidote can play in

religious revival. Journalists harp on the rise of religious non-affiliation in the younger generation, the “nones.” That’s true. But what we also see is a rise in the intensity of religious commitment in the same generation. Light in the darkness will attract those who seek truth. It already is.

As I travel, I see evidence that our tribe is growing. In the Catholic Church, those who have no basis for nostalgia are attracted to the traditional Latin Mass. Traditional religious orders overflow with new vocations. Protestant churches that cleave to the Word of God win converts. The most rigorous forms of Judaism are flourishing. In an age of light and dark, there is little benefit to pitching one’s tent in an area of gray.

It is no surprise, then, that FIRST THINGS is growing in influence and readership.



Rusty Reno’s most recent book, *The End of Interpretation: Reclaiming the Priority of Ecclesial Exegesis*, was published in October 2022.

Board OF DIRECTORS

Subscriptions are on the rise. Articles by writers like Carl Trueman, Gary Saul Morson, and Kevin DeYoung are widely shared (see pages 10–11), expanding our influence to readers who may not be sure what they believe, but who sense that they need to make a decision. This is a good time to stand for something solid, noble, and true. And what could be more reliable, ennobling, and true than God’s revelation?

In the worst of times, FIRST THINGS writers, readers, and supporters are blessed with the best of times. Thank you for making this vital project possible through your generous support.

Sincerely,



R. R. Reno
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Associate Editor Justin Lee at an event in New York City.

FIRST THINGS Masthead

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A WORD FROM OUR Editors

“It’s simply the best publication on the intersection of religion and public life available anywhere.”

FRANCIS X. MAIER

Dan Hitchens

Of all the books published in a year—275,232 is the most recent figure for the US—how do you decide which ones to cover? That is one question keeping this Reviews section editor up at night. But there are a few principles which can help narrow it down.

The main principle, of course, is to put the most important subjects first. Rowan Williams’ review of Fr. Thomas Joseph White’s *The Trinity* gave readers an overview of the current state of theological discussion; Alastair Roberts, responding to a book on the Old Testament,

offered a helpful study of some of the more difficult passages in Scripture. I hope that articles like these can help readers better understand the realities at the center of our lives, which are so little spoken of in the public square.

At the same time, FIRST THINGS does address the questions which agitate our time. It’s no accident that two of our most-read reviews over the last twelve months have been of widely-read books which each present a distinctive vision of the contemporary world. Amia Srinivasan’s *The Right to Sex* tried to construct

a non-conservative sexual ethic; Audrey Pollnow’s review unpacked the book’s reasoning and defended a traditional view of the subject. Meanwhile, Theodore Dalrymple engaged with Michel Houellebecq’s bleak satire of the modern West.

Finally, I like the Reviews section to cover a variety of subjects—and so we have published pieces not only on religion, politics, and history, but also on wolves, Shakespeare, dinosaurs, and alcohol. I hope to keep the range broad without losing the magazine’s essential focus. As always, please let us know if we’re succeeding!

Justin Lee

In August, FIRST THINGS welcomed Justin Lee as associate editor. Lee is a former editor of Arc Digital and has written for publications as varied as *VICE*, *The Spectator*, *The Independent*, *ZYZZYVA*, *New York Post*, *Religion and Ethics*, and *American Mind*.

“A literary and artistic renaissance is brewing on the American right. New talent is emerging and networking. New institutions are being built. There’s a growing sense that the country’s imagination

can be restored through fresh storytelling. One of my goals as an editor is to position FIRST THINGS as a shepherd to this nascent movement, directing its unruly energy towards the true, the good, and the beautiful. To that end, I’m holding regular film screenings at our New York office which draw in young writers and filmmakers and prompt them to analyze films in the journal’s nuanced idiom.

Since joining FIRST THINGS, one of my primary tasks has been to increase our footprint among evangelical readers.

I’ve been commissioning pieces aimed at doing just that, including work on the ongoing identity crisis of America’s Christian colleges and universities; the theological purblindness of feminist hermeneutics; the facile, fear-mongering critics of ‘Christian nationalism’; and reviews of books by prominent evangelical authors. Being myself an evangelical, I know how much my tradition needs the intellectual leaven FIRST THINGS can provide, and I’m honored to facilitate that leavening.”

Francis X. Maier

In December, FIRST THINGS added Francis X. Maier as consulting editor. Currently a senior fellow in the Catholic Studies Program at the Ethics and Public Policy Center, Maier served for twenty-three years as senior adviser and special assistant to Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap. He previously served as editor in chief of the *National Catholic Register* and as a story analyst and screenwriter based in Los Angeles. He is a cofounding board member of the University of Pennsylvania’s Collegium Institute for Catholic Thought and Culture and a board member of the Napa Institute.

His bylined work has appeared in *National Review*, *The American Spectator*, *Crisis*, *This World*, *America*, *Commonweal*, *The New York Times Sunday* magazine, *Christian Science Monitor*, and other outlets.

“I knew and admired Richard Neuhaus, and I’ve followed FIRST THINGS since its founding; first as a religious news editor, then as senior aide to an archbishop, and now as an EPPC scholar. It’s simply the best publication on the intersection of religion and public life available anywhere. Nothing compares to it in my career. So my work with FIRST

THINGS—providing counsel and general assistance to the editor and deputy editor—is not really ‘work.’ It’s the pleasure of being reminded again and again of so many reasons for hope. The world is a complicated, conflictive place. But it has no shortage of faithful, articulate, and intellectually robust religious believers; many of them, happily, younger than I am. FIRST THINGS gives them a platform for their talent and the means to move the needle of our culture in a healthier, saner direction. In doing that so well, FIRST THINGS provides a service that cannot be replicated.”

THE THREE WORLDS OF Evangelicalism

*The below is a small excerpt from our most popular essay of 2022:
Aaron Renn's "The Three Worlds of Evangelicalism."
Visit firstthings.com to read Renn's full essay!*

American evangelicalism is deeply divided. Some evangelicals have embraced the secular turn toward social justice activism. Others charge evangelical elites with going “woke” and having failed their flocks. Some elites are denounced for abandoning historic Christian teachings on sexuality. Where once there was a culture war between Christianity and secular society, today there is a culture war within evangelicalism itself.

These divisions do not only represent theological differences. They also result from particular strategies of public engagement that developed over the last few decades, as the standing of Christianity has gradually eroded. Within the story of American secularization, there have been three distinct stages:

Positive World / PRE-1994
Society at large retains a mostly positive view of Christianity. To be known as a good, churchgoing man remains part of being an upstanding citizen.

Publicly being a Christian is a status-enhancer. Christian moral norms are the basic moral norms of society and violating them can bring negative consequences.

Neutral World / 1994-2014
Society takes a neutral stance toward Christianity. Christianity no longer has privileged status but is not disfavored. Being publicly known as a Christian has neither a positive nor a negative impact on one's social status. Christianity is a valid option within a pluralistic public square. Christian moral norms retain some residual effect.

Negative World / 2014-PRESENT
Society has come to have a negative view of Christianity. Being known as a Christian is a social negative, particularly in the elite domains of society. Christian morality is expressly repudiated and seen as a threat to the public good and the new public moral order. Subscribing to Christian moral views or violating the secular moral order brings negative consequences.

For the most part, evangelicals responded to the positive and neutral worlds with identifiable ministry strategies. In the positive world, these strategies were the culture war and seeker sensitivity. In the neutral world, the strategy was cultural engagement.

The *culture war* strategy, also known as the “religious right,” is the best-known movement of the positive-world era. The very name of its leading organization, Moral Majority, speaks to a world in which it was at least plausible to claim that Christians still represented the majority. The religious right culture warriors took a highly combative stance toward the emerging secular culture.

A second strategy of the positive-world movement was *seeker sensitivity*. This strategy was in a sense a prototype of the neutral-world movement to come. But the very term “seeker sensitive” shows that it was predicated on an underlying friendliness to Christianity. Seeker-sensitive churches



Christians may indeed be a declining and unpopular moral minority, but that is no reason to assume that evangelicalism's day is done. Having adapted so many times before, evangelicals can do it yet again to thrive in the negative world.

downplayed or eliminated denominational affiliations, distinctives, and traditions.

In the neutral world, the characteristic evangelical strategy was *cultural engagement*. Cultural engagers were in many ways the opposite of the culture warriors: Rather than fighting against the culture, they were explicitly positive toward it. They did not denounce secular culture, but confidently engaged that culture on its own terms in a pluralistic public square.

The main strategy advocated for in the negative world is Rod Dreher's Benedict Option. Dreher is not an evangelical; he is Eastern Orthodox, and openly admits his limited understanding of the evangelical world. Tellingly, evangelicals have not developed an evangelical-friendly version of or alternative to it. Despite ample evidence that America has now entered

the negative world, American evangelicals are still largely living in the lost positive and neutral worlds. They were, and to a great extent still are, unwilling to accept that they now live in the negative world.

This transition has had major consequences for evangelicalism, putting different types and degrees of pressure on different groups. Evangelicalism is in flux, and its future as a coherent movement is in doubt. In part, this crisis has resulted from the failure of evangelicalism to develop strategies designed for the negative world in which Christians are a moral minority and secular society is actively hostile to the faith. The previous strategies are not adequate to today's realities and are being deformed under the pressures of the negative world.

Rather than extend existing strategies forward into the

future, evangelicals could, and should, grapple seriously with what it means for them to live in the negative world. Unlike previous eras, the negative world necessitates a variety of approaches to match the diversity of situations in which American Christians find themselves. Finding a path forward will probably require trial and error and a new set of leaders with different skills and sensibilities.

Adaptability is part of evangelical history. Each of the three models I highlighted is evidence of how evangelicalism has adapted to changing times. Christians may indeed be a declining and unpopular moral minority, but that is no reason to assume that evangelicalism's day is done. Having adapted so many times before, evangelicals can do it yet again to thrive in the negative world.



In June, we published our first-ever video essay to the FIRST THINGS YouTube channel. In it, then-associate editor James Wood elaborates on his much-discussed essay, “How I Evolved on Tim Keller” (May 6, 2022, *firstthings.com*). We released four more video essays in 2022:

AARON RENN

“The Three Worlds of Evangelicalism”

CARL R. TRUEMAN

“The New Public Liturgy”

SHADI HAMID

“How Modernity Swallowed Islamism”

AARON KHERIATY

“The Rise of the Biomedical Security State”

This video essay series, which will be expanded in 2023, represents one part of our commitment to growing our digital presence, all while preserving and even improving the preeminent quality that has always defined FIRST THINGS.

If you haven't already, check out these wonderful video essays and subscribe to our YouTube channel to stay up-to-date on our 2023 content!



Shadi Hamid discussing “How Modernity Swallowed Islamism.”

OUR TEN MOST POPULAR

Web Exclusives

- 1 “How I Evolved on Tim Keller,” by James R. Wood
- 2 “Pope Francis Does Not Understand the American Church,” by Jayd Henricks
- 3 “Why Bros Failed at the Box Office,” by Carl R. Trueman
- 4 “Our Sexy Life,” by Peter J. Leithart
- 5 “David French and the Future of Orthodox Protestantism,” by Carl R. Trueman
- 6 “The Cancellation of Russian Culture,” by Gary Saul Morson
- 7 “Another Assault on John Paul II,” by George Weigel
- 8 “Finding Refuge at the University of Dallas,” by Joshua T. Katz
- 9 “When Evil Is Called Good,” by Carl R. Trueman
- 10 “The Strange Fate of Hamilton and Harry Potter,” by Carl R. Trueman

OUR TEN MOST POPULAR

Print Articles

- 1 “The Three Worlds of Evangelicalism,”
by Aaron M. Renn
- 2 “What Sex Really Is,” by Audrey Pollnow
- 3 “The Case for Kids,” by Kevin DeYoung
- 4 “Christianity and Poetry,” by Dana Gioia
- 5 “A Gentler Christendom,”
by Ross Douthat
- 6 “The Work of Mourning,”
by Roger Scruton
- 7 “Houellebecq’s Omelette,”
by Theodore Dalrymple
- 8 “The Case for Black Patriotism,”
by Glenn C. Loury
- 9 “Tradismatic Trentecostalism,”
by Clement J. Harrold
- 10 “The Truth About Bill Gates,”
by Sam Kriss

OUR TEN MOST POPULAR

Podcasts

- 1 Common Questions about the Bible
Conversations with Mark Bauerlein
- 2 A Children’s Book for Our Time
Conversations with Mark Bauerlein
- 3 How Journalism Became Elite Employment
Conversations with Mark Bauerlein
- 4 Brian Anderson on Ivan Illich
The Editor’s Desk
- 5 Mary, Queen of Philosophy
Conversations with Mark Bauerlein
- 6 A Protestant Theology of the Body
Conversations with Mark Bauerlein
- 7 The Identity Crisis of Modern Adolescents
Conversations with Mark Bauerlein
- 8 A Detective’s Case for Christ
Conversations with Mark Bauerlein
- 9 Ross Douthat on Living with Lyme
Conversations with Mark Bauerlein
- 10 Aaron Renn on the Three Worlds of
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The Editor’s Desk



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PUBLIC Lectures

THE FIFTH ANNUAL FIRST THINGS LECTURE IN Washington, D.C.

On March 8, more than two hundred FIRST THINGS readers gathered inside The Catholic University of America's Heritage Hall for Georgetown University professor Joshua Mitchell's lecture "By the Sweat of Your Brow You Shall Labor," an expansion of his argument in *American Awakening* that identity politics is a religion of guilt without redemption. He proposes instead a politics of competence.

"It was such a pleasure to meet like-minded people who are interested in becoming 'human beings fully alive,' as St. Irenaeus says."

FIRST THINGS LECTURE IN Kansas City

On April 28, editor R. R. Reno delivered a lecture on "What's Wrong with America and How the Faithful Can Fix It" to a packed audience in Kansas City, Missouri. In it, he implicated his fellow Boomers in the decline of American prosperity while outlining a few ways that America's Christians can work to bring about a new era of flourishing of nation and church.

Austin Lecture

On September 19, contributing editor Carl R. Trueman gave a lecture to nearly four hundred readers on "The Sentimental Death of a Culture," in which he reflected on the roles that aesthetics and technology have played in bringing about our current anti-culture.



Board member Jim Perry addressed the crowd in Chicago.

FIRST THINGS CONVERSATION IN Chicago

On October 3, R. R. Reno sat down with *New York Times* columnist Ross Douthat to discuss "Christian Faith and Political Power" before entertaining questions from some of the two hundred in attendance. We look forward to inaugurating an annual Chicago conversation in November 2023.

Erasmus Lecture

Last but certainly not least, on October 24 Archbishop Anthony Fisher of Sydney, Australia, delivered the 35th Annual Erasmus Lecture on “The West: Post-Christian or Pre-Christian?” to nearly four hundred people in the Lincoln Ballroom of the Union League Club of New York. In it, Archbishop Fisher argued that we are in a real sense always a pre-Christian, Christian, and post-Christian society, in which sociological trends can bring one or another to the fore even as the theological DNA of the West remains intact.



As is Erasmus tradition, we also hosted a poetry reading at the FIRST THINGS office the evening prior, a post-Lecture dinner to celebrate members of the FIRST THINGS Editor’s Circle in the Union League Club library, and a scholarly colloquium to discuss Archbishop Fisher’s lecture the following day. Our 2022 Erasmus poet was David Middleton of Nicholls State University.



ROFTers

“I found the reader summit informative, challenging, enjoyable. I would certainly attend again.”

Readers of FIRST THINGS. In our technological age, merely being a reader is enough to set one apart. To read a monthly journal of religion and public life—to devote one’s limited time to the pursuit of faith seeking understanding—renders one more distinctive still. As our growing network of Reader of FIRST THINGS (ROFTers) discussion groups affirms, distinctiveness begets community. Each month, thousands of readers convene across the country and the world to learn, reflect, and fellowship together. Far from an indication of some extraordinary marketing or organizational savvy on the part of FIRST THINGS, our ROFTers success can be attributed to the tireless work of our group leaders and dedicated participants.

In 2022, we began to consider ways to support our ROFTers network and invite more readers to participate. We undertake this effort judiciously, careful not to impinge upon the invaluable, grassroots nature of these groups. Any support we provide will supplement, rather than reshape, the character of this readers community.

Toward this end, in October we partnered with Belmont Abbey College to host our first-ever regional readers summit. Eighty devoted readers joined editor R. R. Reno and instructors from the College for a Friday lecture and Saturday morning seminars on the topic of “Friendship in an Age of Polarization.” Buoyed by positive reader feedback, we look forward to expanding our reader summits in 2023.

“The Reader Summit was both intellectually stimulating and spiritually invigorating! Speaking of things as they are (as opposed to equivocating ‘proximal goods’ or half-truths) was such a breath of fresh air and an all-around edifying experience. I cannot wait until the next FIRST THINGS event!”

“For those who want to think deeply with others about Christian faith and witness in our divided society, I can think of no better opportunity than our FIRST THINGS reader summit at Belmont Abbey.”



Junior FELLOWS

Claire Giuntini is our 2022–23 junior fellow. She holds a B.A. in Classics from the University of Dallas.

Graduation from college felt a little more like exile than accomplishment. Though, one cannot remain an undergraduate forever! So, when I received a positive response to a querulous email sent to FIRST THINGS, it seemed too good to be true. I discovered the magazine while in college, and it had thereafter been labeled

“friend.” Here were people who likewise cared about the future of Western civilization.

Six months later, I have come to appreciate more than the intellectual companionship this community has to offer. FIRST THINGS challenges its readers, and does so in a dignified way. Where else can you find such thorough, thoughtful contributions to societal questions? Where else do faith and reason work together so contentedly?

I also have been awed at the range of people who read and write for FIRST THINGS, and meeting several of them in person has been a marvelous privilege. In short, I think that FIRST THINGS serves as a model for the sort of conversations that can be happening all over the public square, and it is my great pleasure that as a junior fellow I get to assist in this endeavor.

Elizabeth Bachmann graduated from Hillsdale College with a B.A. in English and journalism. She previously interned for Encounter Books and the Catholic News Service.

“It’s a magazine of religion and public life.” I was trying to explain my new fellowship at FIRST THINGS to a secular family member. “Your faith, the basic way that you understand the world, ought to inform your politics, right?” Wrong. I was met with wary eyes and a discomfited “Hmm.” Faith is simply no longer welcome in

the public square—not in the form of prayer nor as the spine of thought.

But religion does belong in the public square because it belongs in the human heart. I knew this when I joined FIRST THINGS as a junior fellow in 2021, but my time here has deepened that understanding. In my various roles—copy editing, fact-checking, compiling our letters section for the print issue, and assigning and editing Briefly Noted reviews—I have encountered some of the great Christian minds of our time:

men and women who trace Christianity’s history, catalog the progression of its theology, reflect on its influence in art and literature, and grapple with its current altercations in the public square.

I have admired this magazine since I discovered a copy on a table in my college’s library. Working here, I have come to understand that FIRST THINGS is truly unique in its honesty, intellectual seriousness, joyful faith, and inconvenient rejoinders to a modern world poised to forget.

2022 INTELLECTUAL Retreats

PHOENIX ON “Freedom”

On March 25, seventy-five FIRST THINGS readers gathered in Phoenix to reflect—with the guidance of St. Paul, John Milton, Alexis de Tocqueville, and others—on the topic of freedom. After Friday’s dinner and lecture from editor R. R. Reno, the

group reconvened for a full day of seminar discussion led by tutors from Wyoming Catholic College. Seven years after the inaugural FIRST THINGS Intellectual Retreat on the same topic, participants left Phoenix enriched and refreshed, with some returning for our second Intellectual Retreat of 2022.



“I left with a sense of having participated in a very enjoyable and stimulating event. Thank you!”

“Thank you for your assistance in procuring a scholarship for me to attend the Intellectual Retreat in Phoenix. I wanted to share my appreciation for the gift and ask that you would please pass on my sentiment to others who might benefit from a word of encouragement. The content, interaction, and overall tenor of the event met and far exceeded my expectations. I am truly grateful to FIRST THINGS for such a great experience.”

CLASSICAL SCHOOL TEACHER



NEW YORK CITY ON “Death & Mourning”

FIRST THINGS hosted its second 2022 Intellectual Retreat in New York City on August 19–20 at the Penn Club of New York on “Death & Mourning.” Mark Bauerlein’s son Jack provided music for Friday’s reception, which was followed by dinner and a lecture by Williams College professor Michael J.

Lewis on representations of death and mourning in art. On Saturday, tutors from Magdalen College of the Liberal Arts guided participants through selections from the *Iliad*, Josef Pieper, C. S. Lewis, and other historical and philosophical treatments of death and mourning.

“The retreat was fantastic: a rare combination of deep intellectual engagement and honest vulnerability, rigorous dialogue and human connection.”

“FIRST THINGS Intellectual Retreats are for anyone who wants to think deeply about things that matter. The readings, the speakers, the subject matters, and the camaraderie are the best.”

FIRST THINGS

Editor's Circle

FIRST THINGS Editor's Circle celebrates readers who have contributed in meaningful ways to advance the mission of FIRST THINGS. Membership in the Editor's Circle begins with an annual giving level of \$1,000 or more and confers a number of benefits, all of which aim to invite members to

participate more intimately in the FIRST THINGS intellectual community of editors, writers, and scholars. To our more than four hundred members of the FIRST THINGS Editor's Circle: Thank you for amplifying thoughtful religious voices in the public square through your generous support for FIRST THINGS.



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Like Rusty Reno, I did not come into the Catholic faith until rather late in life. My parents were agnostic, though nominally Lutheran. They and I did not attend church, though my mother saw to it that I received a sound moral education. I gave God little thought while young. As an intern, one of my patients was a young man dying of Hodgkin's Disease. His family and his Baptist minister prayed many hours at his bedside throughout his last week of life, and I thought to myself, "They will

be angry their prayers were not answered." But to my surprise, when the young man died, they said, "God's will be done." A revelation of faith to me! I felt some envy at their strong faith.

Time (decades) passed. I no longer remember when I discovered FIRST THINGS, but in retrospect it was surely part of our Heavenly Father's opening the door to true faith for me. One day, already a FIRST THINGS reader, and becoming more and more theologically reflective, I drove by the sign fronting the Catholic Church which I now

faithfully attend. The sign read, "Want to learn more about Catholicism? RCIA begins date X." My car seemed to turn right into the church lot by itself! I signed up, leading to my Confirmation after a year with a most able RCIA teacher.

Lo! It turns out that I had moved for purely secular professional reasons to the most Catholic city in America. FIRST THINGS has been an instrument in my spiritual journey. I am glad I have been of some modest support to its mission. Thanks be to God.

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Father Neuhaus built FIRST THINGS to thrive in a world that is very different from that of its founding in 1990. Thanks to his foresight, our task is to build upon his foundation to prepare FIRST THINGS to thrive in a new generation that may be more different still. The intellectual legacy of Father Neuhaus is obvious to all who read, heard, or knew him.

Through the Richard John Neuhaus Society, we honor our founder's rich legacy and invite you to partner with us in advancing his vision in a new chapter of growth at FIRST THINGS. More than a decade after his death, Father Neuhaus' legacy continues to benefit FIRST THINGS. By making a planned gift to support FIRST THINGS, yours can too.

As a practical matter, planned gifts can confer significant tax benefits to you and your family, while facilitating a

To discuss your planned giving options or notify FIRST THINGS of a gift pledge, please contact Carter Skeel, Director of Development, at cskeel@firstthings.com or 212-627-1985.

transformative gift to advance the mission and voice of FIRST THINGS to a new generation. The variety of planned giving options can confuse and overwhelm. **In reality, pledging a planned gift to FIRST THINGS can be as simple as including the Institute on Religion and Public Life in your will.** In so doing, you can bequeath a fixed amount, an asset, or a percentage of your estate. Or, you can designate the Institute as a beneficiary of a revocable trust or a retirement plan. Other planned gifts also confer tax benefits while supporting FIRST THINGS during your lifetime. These include:

- Donating appreciated stock or other assets
- Making a gift from your IRA
- Establishing a charitable gift annuity

Pledging a planned gift of any form confers membership in the Richard John Neuhaus Society, if desired.

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YEAR IN Review

Thanks to the faithful generosity of FIRST THINGS readers like you, the Institute not only weathered an uncertain economic year, but actually grew its Editor's Circle and overall revenue. We look forward to another year of growth in 2023.

Financial Summary

	2022 Actual (Unaudited)	2023 Budget
Revenue		
Sales & Program Revenue	\$1,070,659	\$1,146,635
Individual Contributions	\$2,223,631	\$2,255,300
Foundation Grants	\$290,000	\$335,000
Total Revenue	\$3,584,289	\$3,736,935
Expenses		
Magazine Publication	\$2,734,783	\$2,606,487
Seminars & Events	\$316,948	\$302,079
Fundraising	\$609,541	\$580,946
Management & General	\$254,949	\$242,988
Total Expenses	\$3,916,221	\$3,732,500
Net Income	\$(331,932)	\$4,435



“The existence of values that cannot be modified by anyone is the true guarantee of our freedom and human greatness. In this fact, the Christian faith sees the mystery of the Creator and the condition of man, who was made in God’s image.”

“Europe and its Discontents”

POPE BENEDICT XVI, JANUARY 2006