

YALE DIVINITY SCHOOL News Release

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“Crumbs from the Table?” A Conference on Christian Responses to Poverty

NEW HAVEN, Ct.—What is the faithful response to dire poverty? Are there solutions to poverty that go beyond the cycle of desperate circumstances and appeals for generous donations? What would an approach look like that offered the poor more than "crumbs from the table" and instead helped them gain an equal place at the table?

One year after Hurricane Katrina ravaged the Gulf Coast and exposed the deep structural problems associated with poverty, these are among the questions that continue to be on the minds of many in the faith community. They are also among the themes that will be addressed at the third annual Sarah Smith Memorial Conference on Moral Leadership, to be held September 21-22 at Yale Divinity School in New Haven, CT. The title of the conference is “*Crumbs from the Table?*” *The Creation of Wealth and the Persistence of Poverty*.

The conference will feature international leaders from business, development, economics, politics and theology. While much Christian conversation has focused on providing direct aid, this interdisciplinary gathering will explore ways Christians can mount a more comprehensive attack on inequality and poverty by turning to entrepreneurial ventures.

A highlight of the conference will be a panel discussion entitled “*Beyond Crumbs?*” *Christian Approaches to Development: The Case of Microfinance*, moderated by Theodore R. Malloch, chairman and CEO of The Roosevelt Group, who has served with the World Economic Forum and The Aspen Institute. Others on the panel will include:

- Vinay K. Samuel, internationally recognized development economist and theologian and director of the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies.
- Collin R. Timms, founder and chairman of the Guardian Bank in Bangalore, India, which provides credit to poor and marginalized populations.
- Susy Cheston, senior vice president for policy at Opportunity International, which advocates for greater access to microfinance and AIDS programs to help the poor.
- Gary Moore, founder of The Financial Seminary and author of a number of books focused on integrating religion and spirituality with personal financial management.

- Dale Hanson Bourke, president of PDI, a marketing and strategy firm specializing in work with nonprofit organizations and author of a number of books, including the forthcoming *The Skeptic's Guide to Global Poverty*.

Individual talks will also be given by Samuel and Timms, and by Tony Hall, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Agencies for Food and Agriculture and a leading advocate for hunger relief and human rights programs around the world.

The Sarah Smith Memorial Conference on Moral Leadership, sponsored jointly by Yale Divinity School and the Yale Center for Faith & Culture, is dedicated to the life and ministry of Sarah Smith (1941–1999), a Yale Divinity School graduate who had a passion for moral leadership and was involved with talks, seminars, and retreats across the country. She was the author of the book *Mid-Life: Coming Home*.

For the Yale community, all aspects of the conference, including a reception and luncheon, are free with registration. Outside the Yale community, individual sessions of the conference are free and open to the public, but the cost of attending the entire conference, including the reception and luncheon, is \$150. Complete information about the conference is available on the web at <http://www.yale.edu/faith/ss/crumbs.htm>.

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