

## Dr. Nicholas Wolterstorff to Receive Honorary Doctorate at ICS 40th Anniversary Convocation by SOPHIE VANDENBERG

**A**s ICS prepares to celebrate its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary convocation, it's hard to imagine a more fitting recipient for an honorary doctorate than Dr. Nicholas Wolterstorff, who has been its longtime supporter, promoter, and friend.

ICS president John Suk says that Wolterstorff's willingness to support and encourage the Institute's mission in its early years was nothing short of critical to its success. ICS Board member Kathy Vandergrift also attests to Wolterstorff's place in the Institute's story. "The spirit of what Dr. Wolterstorff stands for is very closely aligned with ICS," she said, citing his book *Until Justice and Peace Embrace* as an example. "A good portion of that book is a very thoughtful analysis of the movement that ICS represents."

Vandergrift also expresses deep appreciation for Wolterstorff's gift of developing reformational thinking. "He's got a logical mind and works through philosophical ideas, incisively cutting to the core," she said. "His scholarship is remarkable for its breadth and depth," says Suk.

Vandergrift credits Wolterstorff with gaining an audience for the Institute in the USA. "He raised the status and profile of ICS there and helped gain respect," said Vandergrift, observing that Wolterstorff has an ability to communicate with a broad audience, not just graduate-level academics. "He can work simply and logically through why a Christian ought to be concerned about rights, for example, in a way that any person in the pew can follow," she said. "Within the church he is a leavening influence, demonstrating the engaged scholar rather than the ivory tower academic."

Wolterstorff exhibits a profound faithfulness to Scripture. "This comes through in his book *Lament for a Son*. There he really struggles with

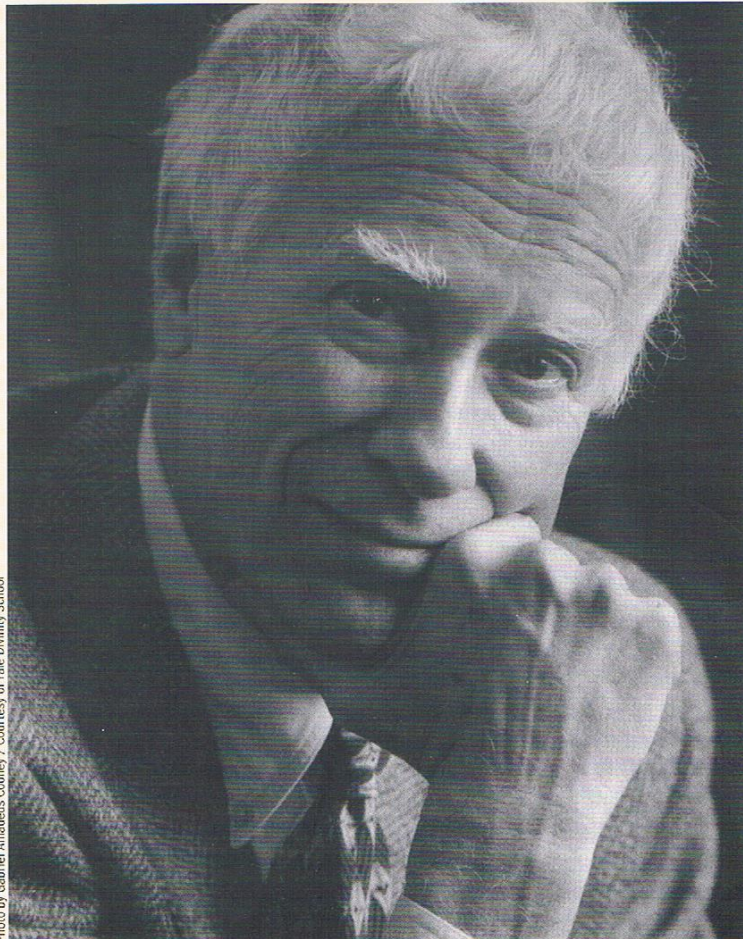


Photo by Gabriel Amadeus Conroy / Courtesy of Yale Divinity School

Dr. Nicholas Wolterstorff

God," said Vandergrift, referring to the book in which Wolterstorff gave voice to his grief at the death of his son. It was published in the hope that it might be of help to others who find themselves in the company of mourners. Through the years this has indeed proven to be the case. "People can find themselves in it," she said.

Vandergrift also recalls the practical help that Wolterstorff generously offered the Institute along the way. He participated in a number of ICS conferences over the years, and as a Senator contributed many years of service which Suk calls invaluable. "He always saw something in this movement in Canada and was will-

ing to give it time and space," said Vandergrift.

Wolterstorff has written important works in philosophical theology and epistemology. "All of his works bear the stamp of both his Christian conviction and his ability to address central issues in today's academy," Suk stated.

Wolterstorff taught philosophy at Calvin College and Yale University, where, until his retirement, he held the Noah Porter Chair of Philosophical Theology.

The honorary doctorate will be awarded at ICS's 2008 Convocation, on Friday, May 9. Dr. Wolterstorff will also deliver the Convocation address. ●