



Karl F. Herzfeld, 1892-1978

Department of Physics  
The Catholic University of America



presents the 31<sup>st</sup>

**Karl Herzfeld Memorial Lecture**

## ***The Matter of Meteorites -- And Why It Matters***

**Dr. Guy J. Consolmagno, S.J.**

Vatican Observatory  
Castel Gandolfo, Rome, Italy

Meteorites are rocks fallen from space, most dating from the earliest ages of the solar system. Pioneering studies at the Vatican Observatory of meteorite density, porosity, magnetic susceptibility, thermal conductivity and heat capacity have turned out to be crucial to our understanding of asteroid structure and evolution, with implications for how the solar system was formed. But in fact, none of those



goals were in mind when the measurements began. Why was the role of the Vatican so crucial to these studies? What does this tell us about the bigger questions of how, and why, science is done?

**Thursday, April 12, 2012 at 4:00 PM**  
in the Karl Herzfeld Auditorium of Hannan Hall - Room 108

Reception immediately following lecture

*Parking and other information:* (202) 319-5315 or <http://physics.cua.edu>