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Abraham Lincoln expert to speak at SFTS

San Anselmo, Calif., March 17 – Best-selling author Ronald C. White Jr. will return to San Francisco Theological Seminary May 7-8 for lectures on the public and private faith of Abraham Lincoln.

White, former professor of American Religious History at SFTS, is considered one of the foremost authorities on the 16th president of the United States. His most recent book — *A. Lincoln: A Biography* — was published earlier this year as a tribute to the bicentennial birthday of the former president.

In a recent book review, the *Washington Post* writes: “How daunting it must be for any biographer to take on Lincoln’s life in this crowded literary marketplace! But this thoroughly researched book belongs on the A-list of major biographies of the tall Illinoisan; it’s a worthy companion for all who admire Lincoln’s prose and his ability to see into, and explain, America’s greatest crisis.”

The lectures entitled “Abraham Lincoln’s Journey of Faith” will take place on consecutive evenings starting at 7:30 p.m. and are open to the public. On Thursday, May 7, White’s topic will be “Lincoln’s Public Faith: The Second Inaugural Address.” The focus of his lecture on Friday, May 8, will be “Lincoln’s Private Faith: A Meditation on the Divine Will.”

White is also the author of *Lincoln’s Greatest Speech: The Second Inaugural*, a *Washington Post* and *San Francisco Chronicle* best seller, and a *New York Times Notable Book of the Year*, and *The Eloquent President: A Portrait of Lincoln Through His Words*, a *Los Angeles Times* best seller, and a Book-of-the-Month Club and a History Book Club selection.

These days, all eyes seem to be fixed on another president who hails from Illinois: Barack Obama. Comparisons between Obama and Lincoln were addressed by White in an essay that appeared in *Newsweek* magazine’s commemorative Inaugural issue earlier this year.

In his *Newsweek* essay, White calls attention to the fact that Lincoln culled his presidential skills with on-the-job training.

“At the risk of disabusing the messianic comparisons of the qualities that Lincoln and Obama brought full-blown to the presidency, what is being missed is how much Lincoln taught himself to be president on the job ... Lincoln came to the presidency, as does Obama, with a lack of executive familiarity ... The jury is about to be seated that will hear

the evidence about lawyer and legislator Obama as administrator and commander in chief. He knows more than anyone else there is much yet to learn from Lincoln.”

White earned his Ph.D. at Princeton University and has taught at UCLA, San Francisco Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, Whitworth University and Colorado College. The author and editor of eight books is a Fellow at the Huntington Library and visiting history professor at UCLA.

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