



CONTACT: Donald Lehr – The Nolan/Lehr Group
+1 (212) 967-8200 / mob +1 (917) 304-4058
dblehr@cs.com / www.templetonprize.org

Remarks by Philip J. Hanlon at the 2019 Templeton Prize Ceremony

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, May 29, 2019

Good evening. What a thrill to be part of this celebration in honor of my colleague and a distinguished member of our faculty – Marcelo Gleiser, the Appleton Professor of Natural Philosophy and Professor of Physics and Astronomy at Dartmouth.

Heather Templeton Dill invited me to say a few brief words tonight about Marcelo, his work, and what his Templeton Prize honor means to our campus community.

Let me cut to the chase: it means *everything*.

I couldn't be prouder that Marcelo is the first Dartmouth faculty member to receive this prestigious honor and the first Latin American to win the Templeton Prize, joining an eminent roster of past Templeton Prize Laureates that includes Mother Teresa, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the Dalai Lama, among others. That's some truly extraordinary company.

But I am most proud that Marcelo has chosen to teach and conduct his research at Dartmouth.

Marcelo has dedicated his life to exploring the deepest and most perplexing questions facing humankind: the very question of our existence and the origins of the universe.

He is certainly not the *first* to explore these questions. But never have I seen an individual so committed to doing so in a pluralistic way.

Those of you who are familiar with Marcelo's work know that he is never one to pit science against religion. To the contrary, it is his belief that complementary and multi-disciplinary approaches are needed to make sense of our existence that has led to his breakthrough discoveries. And I believe it is among the reasons he is being honored with the Templeton Prize tonight.

Marcelo is a scientist. That's a fact. But he also understands the limitations of science. He advocates for a more complementary approach to knowledge, arguing that science alone cannot lead to ultimate truths about the nature of reality.

This is neither a deterrent nor a defeatist attitude. As Marcelo notes in the prologue to his most recent book, *The Island of Knowledge*, "Limits should not be seen as insurmountable obstacles but as challenges."

"What could be more inspiring," he wrote, "than knowing there will always be something new to discover in the natural world?"

On an even deeper level, Marcelo recognizes that any scientific attempts to answer the fundamental questions of existence lead to deeper questions about what it means to be human.

Marcelo pioneered the Institute for Cross-Disciplinary Engagement at Dartmouth, which has received generous support from the Templeton Foundation. This institute brings together humanists and scientists to explore deep questions that lie at the interface of science and the human experience. And he regularly welcomes the public into the discussion.

For the past decade, he has also helped place science in a broader context, as an expression of our very human need to make sense of the world and our place in it, through his 13.7 Cosmos & Culture blog on National Public Radio.

When we were meeting in my office last week, Marcelo recalled a quote from Albert Einstein, who said: "The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious."

Marcelo believes that to his core.

So tonight, I simply want to thank him for showing us that science is but one way for us to engage in the mystery of who we are.

Marcelo, you have brought tremendous pride to Dartmouth and to your native Brazil.

On behalf of all of us at Dartmouth, thank you for your contributions to your field, to our community and to our scientific and spiritual understanding of our universe and ourselves. And congratulations on this exceptional and well-deserved honor.

#