Randy Boyagoda is a Canadian writer, critic and scholar whose innovative thinking and compassionate thought leadership offer a hopeful direction for all of us who seek to make sense of our turbulent world.

Dr. Boyagoda was born in Oshawa, Ontario, the son of Sri Lankan immigrants. He studied English at the University of Toronto, Boston University and University of Notre Dame, eventually returning to Canada to teach at Ryerson University. There, he became the founding director of Zone Learning, the university’s much-lauded entrepreneurship and innovation program built to prepare students for the 21st century workplace.

Today, Dr. Boyagoda teaches English at the University of Toronto and serves as Principal and Vice-President of the University of St. Michael’s College, where he encourages students to live out the mission of the university beyond the classroom through the integration of forward-thinking liberal arts studies with global perspectives and experiences.

Throughout his academic career, Dr. Boyagoda has simultaneously distinguished himself as an acclaimed novelist, critic and essayist. He regularly contributes essays and reviews to public life in Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom on subjects ranging from race and family life to faith and fiction, literary politics, and the ethics of technology. With wit, wisdom and ample spoonfuls of satire, Dr. Boyagoda explores the perils and possibilities of human dignity, and raises questions and proposes answers about how we can flourish in an age of conflict and confusion, as individuals and as communities.

He has authored three novels set in locales ranging from Sri Lanka to the Middle East, the Ottawa Valley to suburban Wisconsin, including Original Prin, which is the first in a trilogy. His books—exploring issues and ideas related to immigration, identity, culture, ambition and faith—have been nominated for the Scotiabank Giller Prize and the IMPAC Dublin Literary Prize, and have twice been named a New York Times Book Review Editor’s Choice, as well as a Globe and Mail Best Book of the Year.

For helping to drive positive change both in and out of the classroom, and for making us laugh even as we confront challenging truths, Randy Boyagoda is conferred a degree Doctor of Letters, honoris causa.