Gerard Whelan was born in 1959. He grew up in Dublin, Ireland, and attended schools with the De La Salle brothers and the Jesuits. He attended Trinity College Dublin and was awarded an M.A. in Economics in 1982 and
then entered the Society of Jesus. After completing two years of philosophical studies, he proceeded to a two-year pastoral experience in Zambia. Next he completed a Bachelors degree in theology at Hekima College, the Jesuit School of Theology in Nairobi, a constituent college of the Catholic University of East Africa. He was ordained priest in June 1992. He proceeded to graduate studies first in Boston and then in Toronto. In 1996 he was awarded a PhD in systematic theology from St. Michael’s College, the Toronto School of Theology for a dissertation: “The Development of Bernard Lonergan’s Notion of the Dialectic of History: A Study of his Writings 1938-1953.” (http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk3/ftp04/nq25211.pdf [checked November 2015]). In the period 1996-1999 Gerard returned to Nairobi as a lecturer in practical and systematic theology in Hekima College. In 2000-2006 he worked as pastor of St. Joseph the Worker Parish in a poor area of Nairobi. During these years he continued to teach practical theology at Hekima College, served as a member of the Commission on Ecumenism for the Kenyan Episcopal Conference, and functioned as an advisor to the Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya in representing the Holy See to activities of the United Nations centred at Nairobi.