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## THE PRESIDENT

Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

### The Goodness and Kindness of God Visible

The news of the death of Pope Francis spread quickly through our community early on Easter Monday morning. Of course, we offered the morning Mass in his memory. Fr. Akizou Kamina SVD, the celebrant, shared a favorite line from the SVD constitutions. In the Prologue to the Constitutions, the quote reads: “We propose to make the goodness and kindness of God visible in our life and service.”



Akizou noted that the same line is printed on the memorial cards for many SVDs who have died in the Chicago Province. There are a few minor edits made for the cards, which read:

*“He made the goodness and kindness of God visible in his life and service **to all.**”*

As we look back on the twelve years of Pope Francis’ pontificate, we can happily see the visible goodness and kindness of God shining through. So many of the fundamental themes of his papacy rhyme very well with the vision and hopes of Divine Word Missionaries over the past 150 years. The short list would surely include:

**Dialogue is the essential way forward:** “Dialogue is born from an attitude of respect for the other person, from a conviction that the other person has something good to say. It assumes that there is room in the heart for the person’s point of view, opinion, and proposal. To dialogue entails a cordial reception, not a prior condemnation. In order to dialogue, it is necessary to know how to lower the defenses, open the doors of the house, and offer human warmth.” *On Heaven and Earth*, Sudamericana, 2011.

**The urgency of care for our common home:** “The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human



family together to seek a sustainable and integral development, for we know that things can change. The Creator does not abandon us; he never forsakes his loving plan or repents of having created us.” *Laudato Si*, Vatican, 2015.

***Need for a humble and synodal church guided by the Spirit:*** “Journeying together with everyone - everyone, everyone together, is a process in which the Church, submitting to the action of the Holy Spirit, and sensitive enough to capture the signs of the times, continually renews herself and perfects her sacramental nature, in order to be a credible witness of the mission to which she is called, to unite all peoples into the one people awaited at the end, when God Himself will ask us to be seated at the banquet prepared by Him” (cf. Is 25,6-10). *Opening of Second Synodal Session*, Vatican, 2024.

***Care for refugees and immigrants:*** “Migrants are not a threat to be feared; they are brothers and sisters to be welcomed”(2015). “The refugee is not a number, he is a man, he is a woman, he is a child, a family, a people who are suffering” (2016).

Pope Francis was also fond of using down-to-earth wisdom and humorous lines to make his point:

- *To priests:* “I wish you to be shepherds with ‘the smell of the sheep’.” (2013)
- *On joyful evangelization:* “An evangelizer must never look like someone who has just come back from a funeral! Let us recover and deepen our enthusiasm, that delightful and comforting joy of evangelizing, even when it is in tears that we must sow...” (2013)
- *On being a Christian:* “A person who thinks only about building walls, wherever they may be, and not building bridges is not Christian...” (2016)
- *On needed medicine for a sore knee:* To some Mexican seminarians he joked: “You know what I need for my knee? ...Some tequila!” (2022)

The Arnoldus family will certainly remember Francis for recently naming two SVDs as cardinals of the Church. For only the second time will a Divine Word Missionary participate in the selection of the next Holy Father. The first time was when Cardinal Thomas Tien SVD of Beijing helped to elect St. John XXIII in 1958. Our prayers



of support go to Cardinal Ladislav Nemet SVD of Belgrade and Cardinal Isao Kikuchi SVD of Tokyo as they prepare for the upcoming conclave. (Cardinal Kikuchi studied English at Epworth in 1983.)

As we remember Francis in our prayers, we will also remember that one day each of us will pass into eternity. What a delight if people can remark about our lives: they made the goodness and kindness of God visible in their life and service to all.



**VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**  
**Dr. Joshua Young**

**Pilgrims of Hope: A Reflection on Pope Francis**

I join my prayers with our campus community and with those around the world praying for the eternal rest of our Holy Father Francis and for the strength of the Church in transition. Pope Francis proclaimed the Jubilee of Year of Hope with the theme, Pilgrims of Hope. As a rhetorician, I’ve been picking apart the meanings behind the theme, and I want to share my thoughts in celebration of our departed shepherd.

Hope can be tricky to define, especially within an intercultural context. I like Terry Eagleton’s explanation that makes an important distinction between hope and optimism. Optimism, he claims, involves a judgment of odds; is the outcome one desires more likely than another one doesn’t desire? Hope is something we hold even when we are as sheep amongst the wolves. Hope is faith in the light when we do not see. Our hope rests in the Divine Word.



Pilgrim comes from the Latin for foreigner walking through a field. Citizenship was an important element of Roman life and defined one’s power and privilege. Foreigners had little legal rights within the empire but were often seen traveling to it. These people became known as pilgrims. With these two definitions, we see Pilgrims of Hope is deeply instructive and inspirational. In these turbulent times, Pope Francis reminds us we are to be foreigners in the darkest places in our communities. We are not to be privileged citizens of oppressive societies; we are foreigners bringing hope for those that no longer see its light.

Pope Francis’s light has gone to God’s kingdom, where I have confidence the Holy Father will intercede for us. We must take his call to be missionary disciples seriously; the best way to honor Francis is to be a Pilgrim of Hope.

**Awards Luncheon: Celebrating the Academic Year**

This is a reminder that the Annual Awards Luncheon will take place on Wednesday, April 23, 2025 in the Dining Room. The Annual Awards Luncheon celebrates the accomplishments of community members of the last



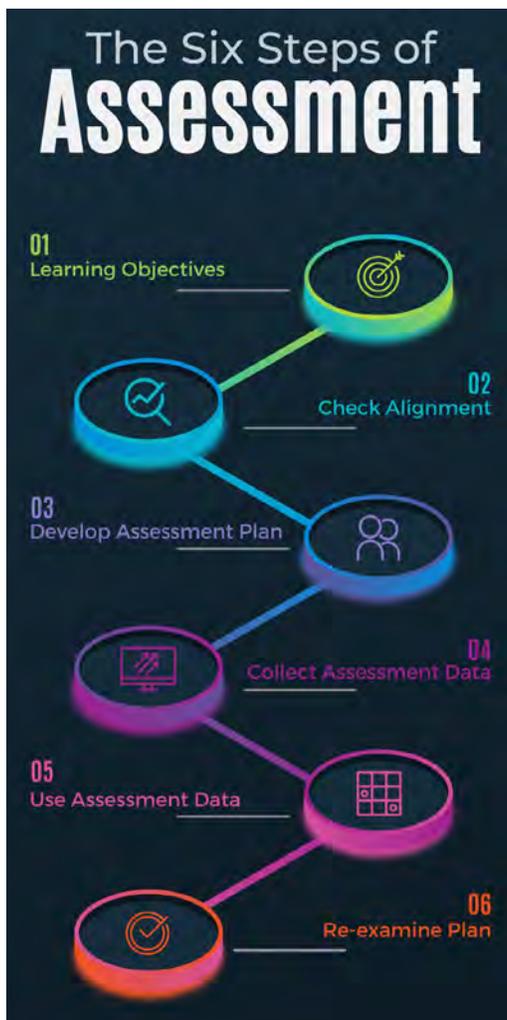
academic year. Of note, the Awards Luncheon will recognize faculty for their academic work. Many faculty will be presented with awards for professional presentations, academic publications, or creative works and performances. Two important faculty recognitions will also take place.

First, is the Br. Tony Kreinus Service Award being presented to an outstanding faculty member that has given exceptional service to the DWC and surrounding community. Second, is the Fr. Charles Malin, SVD, Excellence in Teaching Award for outstanding performance as an instructor at DWC. Both awards are considered of the highest recognition of DWC faculty. Winners for all awards will be announced at the luncheon.



Dr. Yasmin Rioux

# Assessment Bites



## 6 Steps of Assessment

As alluded to in a previous Assessment Bite, here are “The 6 Steps of Assessment” per Allen’s 2004, *Assessing Academic Programs in Higher Education*”.

**The six steps of assessment include:**

1. Creating learning objectives
2. Checking for and ensuring alignment between a curriculum and the established objectives
3. Developing an institutional assessment plan
4. Collecting assessment data via various methodologies
5. Use the given data results to improve a program
6. Frequently re-examine the assessment plan and process and adjust and improve where needed



**VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION/DEAN OF STUDENTS**  
Fr. Tuan Hoang, SVD



**Thanks and Gratitude**

Thanks and gratitude goes to all of you who spent endless hours preparing for the Holy Week and Easter Triduum. Special thanks goes to Fr. Sonny De Class, SVD and the sacristans for preparing the two chapels with beautiful decorations. In addition, I would like to thank Dr. Evelyn Dias and all the members of the choir who have prepared months ahead for the music. All of your efforts and hard work have made the Holy Week and the Easter Triduum possible. Thank you for your help and collaboration.



**SVD Junior Retreat**

This weekend, from Friday, April 25, 2025 to Sunday, April 27, 2025, our SVD Juniors will be making their retreat to one of our SVD communities in East Troy, Wisconsin to prepare themselves to renew their vows on May 15, 2025. We offer our prayers to them as they use this time to discern where God is leading them.



**Recognition and Awards Luncheon**

Once again, this Wednesday, April 23, 2025, we will have our end of the year Recognition and Award Luncheon held in the dining room. At the luncheon, we will recognize faculties, staff, and students for their dedicated service to Divine Word College, and also award students for their achievements. There will be a special schedule for the luncheon and I will post it on the bulletin board. All students are required to come to the luncheon, so please come dressed in semi-formal attire.



**Theological Reflection**

Those who participated in the ministry practicum program will have theological reflection this week. I ask that the ministry supervisors arrange a time and date with students. Please submit your theological reflection papers to your supervisors, as we will need them for assessment.

# external affairs



## Easter Triduum

Thank you for a wonderful Easter Triduum! Your hard work and dedication is appreciated. We are blessed to have multiple photographers covering the celebrations - a link to these amazing photos will be shared soon.

# Alleluia

Michelle Vargo received the sacrament of Confirmation and the Eucharist for the first at the Easter Vigil celebration



## Nature's Artist

Have you ever stood in front of a piece of art and felt like it was telling you a story? That's the kind of experience waiting for you at the Weyland Art Gallery's latest exhibit, *Nature's Artist*, featuring the whimsical, heartfelt carvings of the late Jack Becker.

**Plan to attend a special public reception on Thursday, April 24 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.** right here on campus. It's open to everyone, and yes—there will be refreshments. But more than that, it's a chance to connect with something truly special.

Jack Becker wasn't your typical artist. He grew up doodling cartoons, but his talent was shaped by an apprenticeship with a Russian master carver in the 1960s. That unique blend of playfulness and precision is what makes his work so captivating. You'll see it in the way he brings flowers and faces to life in wood—sometimes in the same piece. It's beautiful, it's clever, and it's deeply personal.

If you've ever visited a local church and admired a hand-carved biblical scene, there's a good chance it was Jack's work. His carvings have inspired prayer and reflection for decades—but until now, his full collection has never left his farm gallery. ***This exhibit is the first time these pieces are being shared with the wider community.***

This is more than an art show—it's an invitation to slow down, take a closer look, and appreciate the creativity that lives right here in our corner of Iowa. Whether you're drawn in by the craftsmanship, the faith-filled storytelling, or simply the joy of discovering something new, this exhibit will leave an impression.



# Justice and Peace Committee



## Earth Day

The JPIC Council wishes you a HAPPY EARTH DAY. In memory of Pope Francis, may we all do whatever we can to care for our *Common Home*. Together, we can make a difference.

 Matthew Jacoby Library

[opac.dwci.edu](http://opac.dwci.edu)

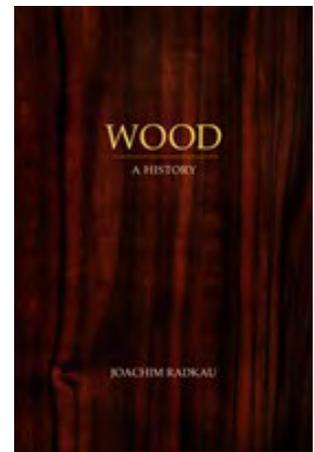
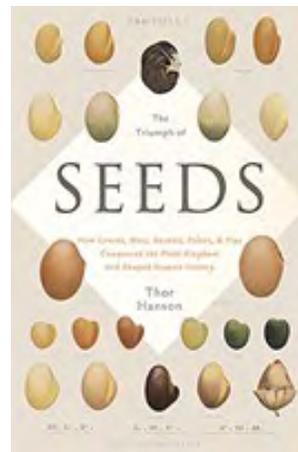
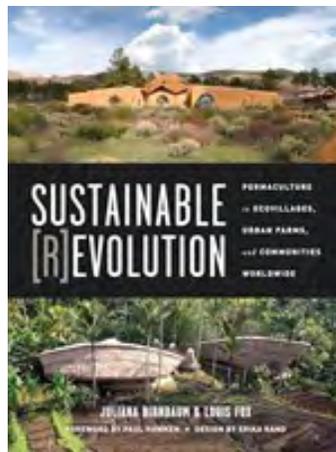
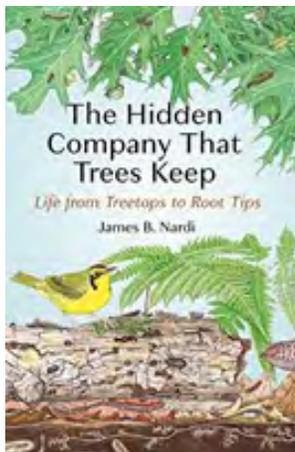
## Arbor Day Library Book Display

Did you know that there are 50 species of trees on DWC’s campus; that White Pines, Silver Maples, and Red Cedars are the most populous species; or that Iowa is home to approximately [68 native tree species?](#)

To celebrate [Earth Day \(4/22\)](#), [Arbor Day \(4/25\)](#), and DWC’s 3rd year as a designated [Tree Campus](#), check out a book about trees from the library! Learn about:



- Tree identification
- Trees native to Iowa
- Climate zones and habitats
- Sustainability and permaculture practices and principles
- History of wood and paper
- [And more! Check out the full Arbor Day Book Display List](#)



Don’t have time to visit the library? Read an Arbor Day Foundation bulletin such as:

- [10 Tree Myths to Think About](#)
- [Be a Citizen Naturalist](#)
- [Do Your Trees Pose a Risk?](#)

Find more tree resources at [arborday.org](http://arborday.org).