



THE LOG

Divine Word College

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A Bulletin for the Divine Word College Community

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In This Issue:

IELI Accreditation	2
New Office Hours	3
Mission Experience Jamaica	4
Hot off the Press!	5
Coming Events	6

Birthday Corner

January

- 22 Fr. Joao Pinda Neto, SVD
- 22 Fr. Kornelius Nika, SVD
- 22 Sr. Thuong Thi Phan, FMV
- 23 Sr. Kim Cuc Thi Tran, LHC
- 26 Mark Varghese
- 27 Sr. An Thi Thuy Ngo, LHC
- 27 Tuan Hoang-Minh Nguyen

THE PRESIDENT *Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD*

Extraordinary Hospitality

St. Paul suffered many setbacks during his missionary journeys. He didn't just get stranded in an airport overnight, or get lost in a large city not knowing the local language. He endured much more:

Five times... I received forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I passed a night and a day on the deep... (2Cor 11:24-25).

Of all his hardships, the one that really scares me is – shipwreck. The Acts of the Apostles tells the story. One time Paul was caught in a hurricane for nearly two weeks. In the end, the ship ran aground, but all of the 200 plus passengers survived! The people on shore went to help them, they started a fire to warm the newcomers; and their welcome was even warmer. Paul reports:

Once we had reached safety, we learned that the island was called Malta. The natives showed us extraordinary hospitality; they lit a fire and welcomed all of us because it had begun to rain and was cold (Acts 28:1-2).

Extraordinary hospitality is the theme of the week of Prayer for Christian Unity for 2020. (In some Bible translations, the term is extraordinary kindness.) As missionaries, we may have also been blessed with unexpected and extraordinary hospitality like that which the people



of Malta gave to Paul. For some exceptional people, neither language nor unfamiliarity are barriers to hospitality. They invite, they welcome, and they make newcomers feel at home. We can all imitate the hospitality of the people of Malta. Our invitation and welcome become extraordinary hospitality when they are not limited only to people of our church, of our faith, of our culture, language, race or way of life. Jesus welcomes all



continued next page

human beings as his brothers and sisters, so they are our brothers and sisters too.

We especially have a chance to be like the people of Malta when we accompany migrants and refugees today. When we open our hearts and lives to them, our communities become stronger.

We need not go far away to find people in need of welcome. Eighteen new students, a new faculty member and a new staff member have joined us in this new semester. We are also expecting another ten students in March. We can be a place of extraordinary hospitality as we pray for unity of all Christians.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS *Fr. John Szukalski, SVD*

Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA): Eligibility Application Approved

In accord with Action Step 3.4 of the Divine Word College 2018-2021 Strategic Plan, the Intensive English Language Institute [IELI] has begun the process for pursuing specialized accreditation of the ESL program with the Commission on English Language Program Accreditation [CEA]. The CEA provides a systematic approach by which post-secondary intensive English Language programs can demonstrate their compliance with accepted standards, pursue continuous improvement, and be recognized for so doing. (www.cea-accredit.org) Potential specialized accreditation by CEA would be in addition to DWC's accreditation through the Higher Learning Commission (HLC).

Dr. Mark Garton, Associate Professor of ESL, has been designated as our CEA Accreditation Coordinator. Dr. Garton submitted our application for eligibility on 3 December 2019, and such was approved on 14 January 2020. The fact that our application was approved on the very first attempt is a testament to the professional quality of our existing program! The next step in the process is participation in a CEA workshop that initiates the institutional self-study. The following colleagues will attend the next CEA Workshop held in Denver, Colorado on 30-31 March 2020:

Dr. Mark Garton – CEA accreditation coordinator
Dr. Seo Hyun Park – IELI Director
Fr. John A. Szukalski, SVD, Ph.D. – VP for Academic Affairs

Correction:

Mr. Marc Anderson Vaval was inadvertently left off the Academic Dean's List for ESL Fall 2019 Term B. Apologies... and congratulations!

VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION DEAN OF STUDENTS

Fr. Bang Tran, SVD

Cultural Dinner

Many thanks to the formation group of Ephessians, SSpS, and special students for the wonderful and delicious cultural dinner.

Lunar New Year Celebration

Scheduled for Saturday, January 25th, beginning with a solemn Eucharist at 3:00 pm in the main chapel, followed immediately by a banquet and cultural activities. Please wear formal attire. All students are required to attend.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMISSIONS *Mr. Len Uhal*

New Office Hours

Ms. Carolyn Waechter is both the International Student Advisor and the Financial Aid Coordinator. In an effort to give her an adequate amount of uninterrupted time to get her work completed, the Admissions Office will implement new “office hours” starting next week, Monday, January 27. Students can meet with Carolyn at any time on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursday. No appointment is needed, just drop by the office and she will help you any way she can. However, on Mondays and Fridays, the office will be closed to walk-in student services. In an emergency, students may visit with Carolyn on Mondays and Fridays, but ordinarily, these days will be reserved for paper work that must be completed in a timely manner. Thank you for observing these new office hours. They will continue for the remainder of this academic school year and will be re-evaluated over the summer.

Dubuque Area Vocation Association

The Dubuque Area Vocation Association (DAVA) is sponsoring two upcoming events:

- Faith on Fire
- Mass Pilgrimage

There is information about both of these events on the SVD and student bulletin boards. The **Faith on Fire** program is next week at Clarke University on Wednesday, January 29 at 6:45 PM. All are welcome to attend and hear Katie Prejean McGrady share a message of building faith in Jesus through active participation in the life of the Church. The **Mass Pilgrimages** goes from February 2 to March 29 and is hosted each Sunday by different religious congregations in the area. Divine Word College will host the pilgrimage on March 1, 2020. Please see the bulletin boards for a schedule of the pilgrimage.

All New Students

All new students need to visit the Admissions Office to see both Ms. Carolyn Waechter and Ms. Patti McDermott. Carolyn will assist all new international students with visa information. She needs to make sure all your immigration documents are in order and make copies for our records. Carolyn will also assist all new domestic students with financial aid questions and paperwork. Patti will work with all new students to make sure we have original copies of your educational documents and baptismal and confirmation certificates (for SVD candidates).

ALL NEW STUDENTS, PLEASE VISIT THE ADMISSIONS OFFICE BEFORE THE END OF JANUARY!

Divine Word College Presidential Scholarship

Students at colleges all over the world look for scholarships to help them cover expenses related to their education—even at seminaries! Students at Divine Word College are no different. Here is a scholarship opportunity that is available to all Divine Word College students who meet the criteria.

Divine Word College first awarded the Presidential Scholarship in 1979. This scholarship is an award to applicants who show superior academic achievement. The Presidential Scholarship is an annual award of \$3,000; it is renewable each year provided the recipient continues to meet the established guidelines. Generally, this award is limited to two (2) each year—there is one scholarship still available for the current academic year.



Criteria for Selection:

New students admitted to the College Program (undergraduate program) at Divine Word College are eligible to apply provided they meet the following criteria:

- Applicants from high school must have a cumulative GPA of 3.50 or above.
- College transfer applicants must have a cumulative college GPA of 3.50 or above.
- Applicants who completed secondary school or college/university studies abroad must have an acceptable equivalent cumulative GPA.
- After the first semester at Divine Word College in the undergraduate program, students who are on the Dean's list may apply.
- Applicants from the DWC English Language Institute may apply when they transition to the undergraduate program. They must have a 3.50 high school GPA (or equivalent) or a college GPA of 3.50. A letter of recommendation is required from the Director of the DWC Intensive English Language Institute.

If you believe you qualify for the DWC Presidential Scholarship, please complete the application form by January 31, which you can obtain from Ms. Carolyn Waechter, the Financial Aid Coordinator. Carolyn can also answer any of your questions.

Mission Experience in Jamaica

The Vocation Office is sponsoring its annual mission experience trip to Jamaica. Anyone interested in more information about the trip can [click here](#) and contact Len Uhal. This trip is open to all members of the DWC community and the general public. The Vocation Office will soon send advertising to all SVD parishes in the USA and Canada to recruit participants. Space is limited; therefore, if you are interested, please contact Len soon for more information. Please note that this trip is not free, but partial scholarships are available for those who qualify.



Where are they now?

Fr. Emilio returned to California this past weekend and arrived safely in Riverside where he will spend the week contacting some of his candidates. Fr. Adam began his week at an NRVC meeting in Cincinnati and will be in Ocala, Florida, this weekend visiting a parish and school promoting vocations. Fr. Francis, Fr. Anthony, Bro. Duylinh and Len are on campus this week and will be here this weekend to celebrate Lunar New Year.

VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS

Mr. Steve Winger

Sustainability Committee, Chair

Question: What should I do with old batteries and CFL light bulbs?

Answer: You can recycle used batteries and bulbs by putting them in the box(s) in the Copier Room

The drop off box, bags and information are in the **Copier/Printer** Room, next to the **Business Office**. Attached is the same information as the poster that is on the wall.

For more in-depth information on the Call2Recycle Program, go to:
<https://www.call2recycle.org/>



The small box to the left in the photo is for CFL light bulbs. Please put them in plastic bags for safety. We'll take them to the Batteries +Blubs store in Dubuque, near the intersection of the Northwest Arterial and Dodge Street, or feel free to drop them there yourself. It is an AWESOME Store!

Call or email Dr. Cleary if you have any questions.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC RELATIONS

Sandy Wilgenbusch

Hot off the Press!

Back in September 2018, Divine Word College welcomed writer, Christina Brunner and photographer Jorg Bothling to campus. The pair were visiting from Germany and in the United States to learn about Divine Word Missionary ministry sites and gather information for articles in Stadt Gottes, a magazine produced by the SVD in Germany.

An article about Divine Word College - Epworth, will appear in the February, 2020 edition of the magazine. The original article will be printed in German. But we are lucky enough to have people on campus who can translate! An English version is attached to this issue of *The LOG*.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend at Divine Word College

February 29 – March 1, 2020

Worldwide Marriage Encounter is an opportunity for *married couples* to deepen their relationship – to focus on each other and their relationship.

It is also an opportunity for *religious men and women and seminarians*--those whose vocation involves close caring communication with others--to learn more about themselves and how they can build strong relationships with those to whom they minister.



All members of the DWC Community are invited to participate in the weekend experience. *There is no cost for any student, SVD, faculty or staff member to participate.* Spouses are also free of charge. Contact Jeff and Janet Francois to register – 563-608-3305 or jljwwme08@gmail.com



- January 25 Lunar New Year Celebration** Mass 3:00 pm followed by Banquet
- January 29 St. Joseph Freinademetz Feast Day**
- February 8 St. Josephine Bakhita Celebration** Mass 3:00 pm followed by Banquet
- February 29 - March 1 World Wide Marriage Encounter Weekend**
- March 22 Donaghey Award & Donor Appreciation Event**
- March 28 Loras College Antioch Retreat Service** 6 - 9 pm Held in Main Chapel
- June 15-17 Dubuque Archdiocesan Priest Convocation**



Missionaries of tomorrow

At Divine Word College in Epworth, young people all over the world are studying. Many of them would like to work in the Church in the future.



DIVINE WORD COLLEGE

Currently 117 students are registered, 46 are SVD candidates. They come from 24 countries. 35 Sisters come from Vietnam, 4 from other countries and two others are SSpS sisters.

More than 1500 students have up to now graduated from Epworth, 190 live as SVDs in 24 nations on the earth. The SVD community in Epworth consists of 44 missionaries, from which only 17 are employees of the College

Fotos: Jörg Böhmling

Big Plans

Marc DeClama came to the United States from Haiti to become a priest. At Divine Word College, he learns not only English but also gets to know American culture.



Difficult Learning Father Sam Cunningham teaches psychology and takes care that his lesson is not really painful at all [for students].

A On the syllabus of the prospective missionary now stands "Diversity in Human Sexuality".

Marc DeClama smiles embarrassingly a little bit as he settles himself down in the lecture hall. "Psychology interests me," says the 25-year-old brave man. "I take everything that is offered in this field of study." The topic is not easy for a young man from Haiti, who wants to become a Styler Missionary [Divine Word Missionary] and who must first learn English. And the talk about personal things.

His professor knows that. Sam Cunningham is himself a psychologist, a white [Caucasin/Anglo] American and a Divine Word Missionary. His topic is difficult, he knows that. But important. "At our college, it is not only about formation. The students should develop their personality. For many, not only those from Asian countries, it is difficult to talk about sexuality. Against the background of the abuse scandals, which we have suffered badly in the USA, it is all the more important to come open about that topic!"

Whoever wants to talk about feelings must know what it is. The students quickly argue: Is being hungry a feeling? Or a bodily condition? And being sad? "Discuss with your neighbor [the one sitting next to you]: Are men more emotionally impoverished [less emotionally expressive] than women?" the professor instructs.

Groups of students look irritated [confused]. They don't know the English word "impoverished". Fr. Sam is a keen observer. He sees immediately what is going on. He writes that word on the board. A sigh of relief goes through the rows. "Ah!". Nobody should blame himself or herself and must admit what he or she does not know. Cultural differences are the everyday thing at Divine Word College in Epworth. And Divine Word Missionaries know how to go about with it.

LEARNING TO TALK ABOUT FEELINGS Marc talks with his fellow classmate, a nun from Vietnam, about men, sadness, and tears. "For us, young men must be strong. Ladies are allowed to cry at burial, men would be disliked for that." Both are amazed as they present that result and all others nod to that. Regardless if it is in Kenya, India, Haiti, or Vietnam, no one would want to see men crying. All of the sudden the world becomes very small. "A missionary, who wants to work in other cultures, should learn to enter into dialogue about traditions. And to reexamine his own," Fr. Sam says energetically.

Since 1964 Divine Word Missionaries at Divine Word College in Epworth have trained missionaries for tomorrow. At first it was only for college seminarians, who were on their way to be prepared for priestly life. Then came the Franciscans, the Benedictines, the Trappists, and the laity, those who would want to study theology, along with whom are the religious sisters since 2008.



FORMAL For the official photo, Sr. Trang put on her religious habit. Life between two cultures is not always easy for her.

“Since then it is much cleaner!”, Fr. Tom Ascheman, President of the College, laughs. Seriously he elaborates further: “And the services are better and the ambition grows with competition!” For two years now, the college is multi-religious. Muslim students from Saudi Arabia learn English here for their study in nearby Dubuque. Fr. Tom is convinced that this openness carries good fruit [has borne good results]. “We train our young vocations in a real-life environment. To this also includes [a requirement] that [they] must help out with dishes and cleaning. The prospective novices live together in a separate house, they cook, study, and pray together.

Marc came in 2015 from Haiti, the priest in his town had contacts in Epworth. “The first weeks were difficult,” he recalls. “I could not speak any English, and back in my hometown people speak Creole and French.” He knew nobody and had for the first time in his life make do without family. “Eating and silence – it was very boring!”

“It is a blessing to study here. I don't have to worry about the future.”



MORNING PRAYER Foremost for the Vietnamese Sisters the openness of the SVDs is important.

In the meantime, he has come around. He is now the President of the Student Body, he plays soccer and basketball, and would like to go to the SVD novitiate in Techny. Exactly just like his seven classmates. That so many from his College join the order, Fr. Tom is pleased, but he is also proud of many lay members that have studied theology and interculturality here: “Proud missionary parents and grandparents!”

LEARNING FROM SENIOR MEMBERS

The English as a Second Language Courses are a big opportunity at the College in rural Iowa. Marc knows: Without solid knowledge of the language he has no chance at learning theology in religious life. “English only!” as an admonitory rule hangs all over the place on the walls of the college campus. Already at breakfast tables, professors and senior members of the SVD community intermingle with students, over small coffee mugs broken English is spoken and corrected. “We understand it as missionary work,” Fr. Tom says. “How we live and how we go about with young people, with the laity, with



kitchen for the Poor Social engagement belongs to formation. Students help out on Fridays at the meal for the poor at a protestant Church.

Young Helper Future missionaries should help out with everything. So that they are made fit for their commitment.

religious from other orders, that sets the tone for the whole undertaking named mission.”

Only one time per week is the language-rule free day, then Marc is allowed to speak in his native tongue like a bird growing up. Students from the Caribbean dance together, meet each other at picnic and music rehearsal and celebrate the Mass in French.

Then many Vietnamese sisters also join heads together [many Vietnamese sisters also have to come together to support one other]. For them also, life in the colorful American society is not easy. At home they have to wear their habits, in Epworth they storm the sport halls in their sport outfits. As the photographer approaches, they quickly grab their veils – lest sending home wrong signals!

“When I came over here, I had this terrible anxiety!”, reports Sr. Trang, who belongs to the Vietnamese order of “the Daughters of Mary.” “But everyone warmly welcomed me and they are like my brothers and sisters. And the old SVDs are like my grandfathers!” When she traveled back to Vietnam for the first time after three years, she felt foreign.

“With Fr. President Tom, I can talk casually, in Vietnam that is impossible. I had forgotten how hierarchical the Church over there is.” The Sisters in the convent in her country regarded her as disrespectful and arrogant, she no longer appropriately belonged to that place. “I first must relearn that people are not allowed to constantly say ‘thank you’ and ‘hi’ like in the United States,” she laughs.

**IN THE TRAINING PROGRAM:
COMMITMENT TO THE POOR**

Sister Trang prefers to remain in the USA, her order has a small settlement [community] in New Orleans and cares for the Vietnamese Catholics there. For that, she also feels she has been prepared well in Epworth. Because that social engagement is also part of the training program at the College: Students play cards with old folks, study with school children or organize an evening musical event at the home for the handicapped. Every Friday Sister Trang drives to the Kitchen for the Poor in Dubuque with six other students, there volunteers serve food to all at a Protestant Church. Meat and rice, desert and cookies, on Christmas there is a small gift.

Old men, distraught/tired mothers with children, young people, who have been on the street for so long – all are grateful for the little smile of Sister Trang and a glass of juice, which they do not need to beg for. “On such days, I know once again, what a blessing it is that I can study here and do not have to worry about survival.”

Christina Brunner



Marc DeClama

Marc DeClama has in the mean time finished his study and is a novice of the SVDs in the Chicago province. “I have learnt not only English in Epworth”, he looks back. “I am now more open toward other cultures and have learned to treasure differences. That makes it easier for me to get along with people in the Novitiate and also with older confreres. And the beauty is this: Now I don’t have to sweat anymore. Now I have time to learn more about myself, about God and about the SVDs!”