Stanley Jean and Karldy Isidor went home this summer. For most college students that would mean time with family and friends and the comforts of home. For them, it was to see firsthand how their family and friends were surviving.

On January 12, the two young men from Port au Prince, Haiti had just begun their second semester at DWC when a magnitude 7.0 earthquake rocked their homeland, leveled entire areas of the city and killed thousands. Five days passed before Karldy learned his family had survived. It took two weeks before Stanley could feel the same sense of relief.

Thanks to some inhouse fundraising, they were able to return home, arriving in Port au Prince on May 17—four months after the disaster.

“I wanted to get back home, but I can say, I was happy and I was sad also,” Stanley said. “I see a lot of people, a lot of handicapped people, hurt in the body, with injured leg, injured hand. I visit some people in the hospital.”

The devastation is rampant. Homes and familiar landmarks that help a person navigate the city of Port au Prince are gone.

“When I was there, it was difficult for me to find places I already know,” he said. “My parent’s house was destroyed. A lot of people in Haiti are living in a difficult situation now.”

Like Stanley, Karldy was glad to return, but the devastation also hit close to home. Though not rich, his family before the disaster could eat every day and they had work. But his mother literally lost everything in the devastation.

“She lost her house that she just built, maybe two or three years ago,” he said. The house also contained a boutique she owned and operated. The loans to build her home/business are still outstanding. “Her business, everything, is gone in the earthquake.”

Both young men hold hope for the future. Fall elections in their country will mean the formation of a new government. Both are grateful for the fundraising among students, employees and those who attend daily Mass.

“Because without their effort,” Karldy said, “we would not go home to see our families after the catastrophe.”
Dear Alumni and Friends,

The celebration of Mission Sunday is a long-standing tradition here at Divine Word College.

By worldly measure, our celebration is a minor event, scarcely noticed by those outside our circle of friends and supporters. NFL Sunday will draw a lot more attention. But for the discerning Christian, Mission Sunday is significant.

This issue of DWC World portrays that significance through descriptions of the multi-cultural Eucharist, the international festival, the special features of Mission Sunday here at Divine Word College.

At the heart of Mission Sunday is a strong appreciation for the communion of all believers, for the solidarity of all the churches, in their living and proclaiming the Good News of Jesus. We recall that by our baptism, our profession of the Creed, and our sharing in the Eucharist, we form spiritual bonds with followers of Jesus throughout the world. Bonds more fundamental than those of race or nationality or political affiliation. We recall that our Church is a communion of saints, we are connected to the faith, we are connected to the Eucharist, we form spiritual bonds with followers of Jesus throughout the world. Bonds more fundamental than those of race or nationality or political affiliation. We recall that our Church is a communion of saints.

DWC World

The celebration of Mission Sunday is a long-standing tradition here at Divine Word College.

At Divine Word College we enjoy the blessings of a rich cultural diversity. Our students come from 17 different countries and many cultural backgrounds. Through our daily prayer, study, and community living, we experience tangibly, as in a microcosm, what Mission Sunday signifies. This is a privilege we do not take for granted. We consider it an optimal environment for educating missionaries, Christian leaders, whose lives will express the big values and broad vision of Mission Sunday. Mission Sunday is for us a time to think about, pray about, and rejoice in our missionary identity, to give thanks for the bonds we share with believers around the world.

We thank you, as always, for sharing in our missionary vocation. Your prayers, words of encouragement, and financial support are immensely important to us. I hope you can recognize your importance as you reflect on the meaning of Mission Sunday. You are our good partners, and we thank you.

Sincerely,

Fr. Mike Hutchins, SVD

in which a student can learn to interact and learn to live with other people from different cultural backgrounds. Third, we have the presence of the religious sisters, who would help them come to a better sense of clarity in their discernment.

Two other areas that underscore the positive direction that the college has taken are in recruitment and retention.

The results of student visits to campus—also known as “Come-And-See” visits—have been impressive, according to Uhal, who said about 50 percent of the young men who come to check out the campus return as students. A few years ago, it was only about 20 percent. The college has taken a different approach to these visits. Previously, they were scheduled twice a year, which resulted in two large groups of perhaps 50 or 60 young men to entertain over the course of a weekend.

“We were bringing in a lot of people. Some guys would come that really weren’t all that serious,” Uhal said.

In recent years, the Come-And-See visits are set up through a dedicated group of SVD recruiters— Fr. Joseph Nguyen, Fr. Tony Romo, Fr. quy Dang and Fr. Trung Mai—who screen potential candidates. When they identify four or five young men who are seriously considering religious life, they arrange one of the special visits.

(continued top of page 3)
This summer I joined the staff of Divine Word College as vice president for development. I am very grateful, and excited, to be here. This is an extraordinary place with a bright future – especially due to the diligent, thoughtful work of the board of trustees, faculty and staff, in developing and implementing the college’s expanded mission. Everyone I have met has been exceptionally kind and helpful to me, not because they have to be, but simply because that’s the sort of people they are, and because that’s the Divine Word way.

What I’ve learned in my short time here, is that Divine Word College is a place where people have serious discussions about matters of discernment, formation, vocation and mission on a daily basis. These are not armchair philosophical dialogs. Our students are preparing to dedicate their entire lives to serving God through the Catholic Church. They already have an abundance of faith and enthusiasm. What they need, and what the college provides, is skilled people and programs to help them discern their calling, to help them hear that quiet voice that guides them to their vocation.

Over my career, I have been privileged to work for Catholic institutions of higher learning, but this is the first time that I have worked for a seminary. Every day, I learn more about the important work that goes on here. I have also found that the mission of the college is aided greatly by people like you, who have discerned that part of your own vocation is to support Divine Word College through your philanthropy.

Some people say that giving comes from the heart. I believe that’s true, but I also believe that giving comes from the mind and spirit. Your support is not accidental; I believe you give because this college holds a special place in your heart, mind and spirit.

Thanksgiving is fast approaching, and in the spirit of the season, I thank you on behalf of the Divine Word College community for your thoughtful, generous support. Our faculty, staff, students and volunteers are greatly encouraged and empowered through your help. May God bless you, your family and friends throughout the holiday season.

Memorial and honor gifts offer an opportunity to honor a relative, friend or business associate for any special occasion: birthday, anniversary, promotion or a particular accomplishment. The memorial gift also provides a thoughtful and appropriate way to express timely sympathy and future remembrance. You may send memorial gifts to Divine Word College, P.O. Box 380, Epworth, Iowa, 52045-0380.

Memorials have recently been received for:

Glennice Ascheman
Paul Bisanz
Brian Bisenius
Donald Burns
David J. Decker
Richard J. Dolphin
Carol Gudenkoaf
Amy Klein
Gladys Kress
Louis Marchesiani
Catherine McDonough
Madonna Redmond
Marie Schmidt
Harold Schuster
Helen Steffensmeier
Jack & Faith Taylor
In Honor of Wilhelm & Elizabeth Eck
In Honor of Allan & Ruth Heiar

Have you remembered Divine Word College in your estate plans? All bequests to Divine Word College help with scholarship support for our seminarians. If you would like more information about making a planned gift to Divine Word College, please contact Mark Singsank at 563-876-3353 or singsank@dwci.edu
When Mass is said at Divine Word College on World Mission Sunday—this year it was October 24—it is truly a celebration. Students walk up carrying candles, representing our cultural diversity. Readings are read and songs are sung in various languages. Those in attendance are invited to join in a feast that offers a host of ethnic dishes. Everything reveals a glimpse of the global embrace of the Catholic Church.

Those in the pews of the Main Chapel on that day enjoy an intimate connection to the legacy of missionary support exemplified by this special Mass that can be traced back nearly two centuries.

It's hard to imagine this country as “mission territory.” That’s what it was in the early 1800s, when Pauline Jaricot started gathering small groups in her family’s mill in Lyon, France to offer daily prayers and sacrificial giving of a penny a week—a great amount at that time—to support missionary work in North America and China. Her effort steadily grew to become the Society of the Propagation of the Faith, which continues to educate people on the global mission of the Church and asks for prayers and financial support for the missions.

A century later in the early 1920s, the US was no longer a primary focus of missionary efforts. But there was concern that Catholics here lacked an understanding of the Church’s global outreach and the work of missionaries.

“Most didn’t see the Church as worldwide,” said Fr. Bill Shea, SVD. “They were more concerned about their parish or their diocese. It was very parochial.”

In 1926, Church leaders decided a way to combat this narrower view of the faith was to designate the second-to-the-last Sunday of October as World Mission Sunday. “Every parish was asked to have a special Mass and collection for the missions, and that would go to the Society of the Propagation of the Faith,” Fr. Shea said. “The other part of it was the education of the people through homilies and literature to let them know what mission was all about.”

In the 1960s, Vatican Council II—echoing the missionary credo found in the words of Mathew 28:18—emphasized that the Church is actually missionary by nature, and every baptized Catholic should be involved in missionary work through good works and setting a good example.

“The new understanding of ‘mission’ is more in the spirit of Jesus. The core of his teaching is the Kingdom of God. St. Paul tells us that the Kingdom of God is justice, peace, joy and the spirit,” said Fr. Oliver Quilab, SVD, who presided at World Mission Sunday Mass this fall at DWC. “If I understand ‘mission’ as this spreading of the Kingdom of God, I work for justice, peace, joy and the spirit of human development.”

Today, the Society for the Propagation of the Faith supports this work. It collects contributions from Catholics around the world—through efforts like World Mission Sunday—to support the Church’s worldwide mission in more than 1,150 missionary dioceses. Many of our DWC students are destined to work in those missions.

With a faculty, staff and student body representing 23 countries from around the globe, the education and multi-cultural experience students receive here will help prepare them for their future ministry.

“We’re already doing mission here, the way we adjust to each other, we live in community, that’s already ‘mission’ at Divine Word,” Fr. Oliver said. “We cross bridges. We learn foreign languages and we try to understand each other. We try to live equally. The positive experience here flows.”

“Jesus came forward and addressed them in these words, ‘Full authority has been given to me, both in Heaven and on Earth. ‘Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations. Baptize them in name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. ‘Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you and know that I am with you always until the end of the world.”

Mathew 28:18