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All events are free of charge and open to the public. For more information call Public Relations at 563-876-3353. Brighten the month of November by sharing in the unique cultural events at Divine Word College!
Dear Alumni and Friends,

In mid-October several SVD and DWC alumni gathered at the College for a weekend of renewal and fun. Folks arrived in the Dubuque area on Friday evening, toured the campus on Saturday afternoon, and joined in the Eucharist and a special dinner on Saturday evening. Some were able to stay over for the annual DWC Mission Sunday celebration. Like alumni gatherings held throughout the year at other SVD locations, this one was a reminder of the strong bonds we continue to share with many former SVD members and candidates. Those bonds now extend to their spouses and family members.

At a surface level, the face of our alumni reunions is that of a person we once were. It is an Anglo and African American face. It represents those generations of German, Polish, Irish, and Italian ethnics so readily attracted by the ideals of religious missionary life and priesthood. It represents those generations of African Americans so determined to take their full place in the life of the Church and its ministries. It is a face that, in its enthusiasm for the universal mission of the Church, reflects the vision of St. Arnold Janssen and the courage of St. Joseph Frimandameret.

Our more recent alumni bring a new face, an Asian face. They are the generation who began arriving in the mid-1970s. They are the generation that in many ways has transformed the SVD here in the U.S. We might even say they are the generation that gave the SVD a new “lease on life” here in the U.S. Vietnamese alumni have helped the SVD to sustain numerical strength. More importantly, they have opened the SVD to new values, spirituality, and community lifestyle. Like the face of our earlier generations of alumni, this new Asian face also radiates a love for the SVD missionary ideal and an eagerness to serve in some of our most challenging missions.

We thank God for enriching our SVD community across the generations and through a diversity of cultures. We continue to believe that God has entrusted an important mission to all of us, members, alumni and friends, all who share in the desire to witness to God’s love in a troubled world. We pray for openness to God’s transforming grace, a readiness to embrace the necessary changes that offer new life.

God bless.

And just who is the student and who is the teacher in this diverse learning environment?

Larry Udry, Assistant Professor in the ESL Institute, finds this multicultural classroom setting both enriching and stimulating. “In one combined Level 4 / Level 5 ESL class,” says Udry, “I have five Sisters from two different religious orders, one SVD priest and seminarians from a variety of ethnic groups. With such diversity, I can step back and let the class become less ‘teacher-oriented’ – enabling the students to express themselves.” Udry adds that lively disagreements between students provide enlightened interaction and surprising insights. “In this expressive environment, I can be challenged,” says Udry, “and that can be both thought-provoking and rewarding.”

Sr. Graciella Castro, SSVP, and Sr. Carolina Giay, SSVP, both from Argentina, are students in Udry’s class. Castro is excited about this semester’s unique diversity. “So many cultures and languages enrich our classes in as many different ways,” she says. A self-described perfectionist, Castro explains, “I expect a lot from myself. Because speaking English is harder for me than writing it, the new students are role models for me! Their confidence helps me not to be afraid when I speak.” When asked whether she is a role model for others, Castro is humble. “I was new here once,” she offers, “and maybe I can help those who are new now, and encourage them.”

“The differences here at DWC are challenges in communication with one another,” says Giay. Enthusiastic about her studies, she adds, “The variety of accents and the various levels of learning give me the opportunity to listen carefully and be ready to help others too. This is wonderful!” Giay feels that efforts are as important as results. “I appreciate each small effort of my classmates in order to improve our skills in learning English. I value each step we take, no matter how small it is.” Her studies at Divine Word College play an important role in her vocation. “Not only does diversity enrich my learning process,” Giay says, “but also my own vocational process as a missionary. We are following Jesus, and like Him, growing in faith and passing over beyond the cultural boundaries.”

Vinh Quoc Nguyen, an ESL student from Vietnam, is also in Udry’s class. “Many of the ESL students are Fraters, Sisters, Brothers and priests, so I’ve learned a lot from their experiences, which will be useful to me in my future life as a missionary. Therefore, I haven’t missed any classes and I am glad to have them as my classmates.” Nguyen feels that the Sisters are especially good role models for him. “Time management and study schedules are not easy for me,” he admits, “but the Sisters are good at this stuff. They’ve influenced me to work seriously on my studies.”

Expanding our academic program at Divine Word College fosters the formation of our seminarians, dynamic classroom participation, improved study habits and a welcoming environment of student interaction.

Fr. Orlando Abreu, SVD, feels very positive about his education in diversity. “This coexistence with students of other cultures helps me in my missionary vocation,” he says, “I say this because the missionary spirit is the ability to engage, participate and live with cultural diversity. Being here is a grace from God for me.” Abreu, who is from Brazil, believes his presence as a role model for the seminary students is important. “When they see us as SVDs doing work-study, participating in liturgy, ministry and community activities – they realize how much we are involved in SVD spirituality. I hope that my being here encourages others to continue their vocational journeys.”

“I learn much from the new students, even the younger ones – everyone has something unique to offer,” says Hai Dominic Vu. Originally from Vietnam, Vu is a junior and has been at DWC since 2005. He would like to become a priest and care for orphaned children in 3rd world countries. He shares his own unique spin on being a student in a multicultural environment: “Diversity can also result in misunderstandings and it is important to turn that negative into a positive. This forces me to be better, to try harder and to reach out to new students.” Vu is especially impressed with the example of the Sisters who are students at the college. “Their faith is strong,” he says, “and they are wise, with a deep understanding of God. They are role models for me, helping me to practice a better faith.”

Fr. Stanley Jawa, SVD, comes to DWC from Indonesia, and feels that diversity is “one of the very best gifts, emphasizing the SVD motto of One Heart, Many Faces. It gives me appreciation of other cultures and customs.” Jawa believes that a sense of responsibility is key in being a role model for seminarians. “As an SVD member, I should have extra time to be a brother for others.” He is eager to share another positive experience in diversity that he encountered. In December of 2004, after the huge earthquake and tsunami that took place in Indonesia, killing many people, Jawa was one of the Catholic volunteers offering aid. In a country that is predominantly Muslim, Jawa relates: “They welcomed me and I helped them in everything they needed. Appreciation for others is the most beautiful thing that we must have.”

Here at Divine Word College, our differences become our greatest strengths.

New and old friends gathered at Divine Word College on October 17-18 for the SVD Alumni Association’s annual reunion. The guest of honor was DWC President, Rev. Michael Hutchins, SVD.

Born in Maquoketa, Iowa, Fr. Hutchins graduated from Divine Word College in 1971. He joined the Society of the Divine Word in 1972 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1975. After education ministry in Los Angeles and the Philippines, he returned to his alma mater in 1993 as the seventh president of Divine Word College. As DWC’s longest-serving president, Hutchins continues to minister in this position and also is teaching a course this semester, Images of the Priest in Literature.

Reunion guests enjoyed a riverboat cruise and a visit to the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium on Saturday. The day ended with a tour of College followed by mass and a dinner honoring Hutchins. Mission Sunday activities completed the reunion agenda.
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(continued)

World comes together
Teachers, students, role models

(continued on page 3)

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(continued)

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(continued on page 3)
For the past nine years, the Divine Word College Annual Appeal has played an instrumental role in our seminary renovations. The library, classrooms, hallways, restrooms and several other areas now look new again, thanks to our many generous friends who have financially supported the Annual Appeal.

Since it began in 2000, DWC has raised more than $700,000 for projects undertaken each year. The current Annual Appeal will complete the replacement of old dorm room furniture and finish the construction of a handicap-accessible restroom located near the front entrance of the college.

Thank you to everyone who has sent gifts in support of our 2008 Annual Appeal. We greatly appreciate your belief in the mission of Divine Word College. If you have never been here, remember you are always welcome to stop in and visit!

Divine Word College has been honored as the recipient of two grants in the past six months. A grant of $2,500 was awarded by the Alliant Energy Foundation for the DWC Cultural Events Program, which offers a variety of art, lectures and entertainment for our students and all area residents.

The college has also been awarded a $5,000 grant from the Dubuque Racing Association, helping to complete the handicap-accessible restroom now open for use.

Divine Word College is privileged to be supported by the Alliant Energy Foundation and the Dubuque Racing Association. Their help greatly assists us in fulfilling our mission.

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

Memorial and tribute 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 in honor of:

- John Anich
- Helen Deckert
- Randy and Dennis Reynolds
- Eddie Schmidt
- Daryl Barklow
- Adele M. O’Brien
- Edmund Schmidt
- Jean E. Thines
- Regina Burr
- Frances O’Herron

If you haven’t visited our new website yet, check out www.dwci.edu and www.svdvocations.org to see what you’ve been missing!

Scrolling pictures depict scenes of Divine Word College, with our seminarians and SVDs at work, study, prayer and play. You’ll also see Divine Word Missionaries ministering in different settings all around the world. Video interviews of our students will be available in various locations on our website, giving our visitors timely, personal insight into the lives of our students as they discern their vocations.

Browse the site to find out details about academic and seminary life at Divine Word College. Check out the events and news section for the latest updates. View the vocation site and read new stories each week about SVD priests, Brothers, theologate students, novices and seminarians – men in various stages of development in their journey as Divine Word Missionaries. Share in their hopes, dreams, lives and stories – all on our Divine Word College vocation website.
God’s missionaries have many different faces and backgrounds! As fall heralds the return of Divine Word College students, we have some new feminine faces in the classroom this year – three Sisters from Vietnam. Here as part of an academic extension program, Srs. Nga Kieu Le, Phuong Kim Thi Nguyen and Hong Quy Vuong Nguyen are members of the Catholic ICM Society of Apostolic Life. ICM stands for “Incarnation – Consecration – Mission.” These words represent the spirit of the Society and its fundamental doctrine founded on the mystery of the Incarnation: “The Word became flesh and dwelt among us” (John 1:14).

Composed of Sisters only, members of the ICM Society follow Jesus’ simple way of life, embracing love and service to others. Founded in 1949 in North Vietnam, the Society aims to combine spirituality (the Word) with apostolic ministry (the flesh) by serving the poor, uneducated and marginalized people in Vietnam. By 1969, the ICM Society had some 300 Sisters in missionary work. With the fall of Saigon in 1975, it lost nearly all its houses and members. But today, ICM Sisters have recreated their structure and apostolic service through 33 years of hard religious work, despite laboring under the confines of the Communist government. Continuing their mission of service to the poor, the ICM Sisters open kindergartens for children; maintain houses for the aged, poor and homeless; perform pastoral work in parishes; and promote human development in remote areas of their native country.

“Their presence here will make our school more dynamic and enhance the spirit of everybody,” says Fr. Khien Luu, SVD and Dean of Students at Divine Word College. “Their demonstrations of prayer, simple lifestyle and seriousness in studies will set good examples for the other students as they continue to discern their vocations in the religious life.”

Sr. Nga has already professed her perpetual vows. Srs. Phuong and Hong are currently in temporary vows. After learning English in our Intensive English Language Institute (ESL), these three Sisters would like to continue their studies at Divine Word College, earning their bachelor’s degrees in either Theology or Cross-Cultural Studies. “It would help them tremendously when they return to their native land,” says Luu. “The Sisters feel fortunate to be a part of the DWC community and are impressed with our hospitality and the service of the SVD members,” he adds.

Divine Word College is beginning to feel like an extended family, a home away from home, for our new ICM Sisters. They like the school environment, the quiet beauty of nature all around them here in Epworth and the spirit of everyone in the school.

Please join our college community in giving a warm Midwestern welcome to the ICM missionary Sisters studying at Divine Word College!

Brother Rodney Bowers graduated from Divine Word College in 1983. After professing his final vows in 1990, he was assigned to DWC, where he spent nearly twenty years teaching theology classes and working in the formation program. He also served as Associate Dean at the College for eleven years and completed two terms as Rector. In the summer of 2008, he was assigned to Techny as the new Director of Novices.

With Bro. Rodney around, Divine Word College was truly a “home away from home” for the students. “I wore a lot of hats during my time at DWC,” he laughs. From the smallest details to the largest, he helped to keep the college community humming along. On leaving the place that has been home to him for nearly 20 years, Bowers says, “It’s very hard to leave. Divine Word College will always have a special place in my heart.” Looking ahead to his new role at Techny, he adds, “I never thought I’d be selected. I am humbled, excited and looking forward to walking with the novices on their spiritual journeys.”

DWC President, Rev. Michael Hutchins, SVD, says, “On behalf of the whole College community, I wish to express a strong word of appreciation for all Bro. Rodney has contributed here at Divine Word College. He has served generously in multiple roles. He took on big and small challenges. He involved himself in any task that was for the good of the community and the College. We wish him God’s blessings as he begins his new assignment… All the best, Bro. Rodney!”
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