

“To proclaim the Good News is the first and greatest act of love of neighbor.”

-St. Arnold Janssen SVD

# the DWWC

World

Educating Tomorrow's Missionaries

Spring 2018



## Did You Know?

Pope Francis will have the opportunity to meet three members of the Divine Word College community this summer during the SVD General Chapter near Rome.

Father John Szukalski, SVD, VP-Academic Affairs, will once again serve as secretary for the worldwide conference held every six years. Mr. Len Uhal, VP-Admissions, along with Bro. Mike Decker, SVD, representing SVD Brothers in North and South America, will also attend.

The Pontiff will actually meet with all the SVDs in attendance on June 22.

## Missionary Ministry of Music

Jill Heitzman is going to miss them. The Class of '18 was rich in talent. The director of liturgical music counted on half of them as her core group of singers and musicians to perform at DWC's Masses.

“Music liturgy really is a ministry and so much a part of formation,” Heitzman said. “They share their gifts and talents with the community and in that way help the community celebrate the Mass.”

Some students come to the college aware of their musical talent. Others discover it after they arrive. All, at one time or another experience this special ministry of music. At the beginning of each school year, Heitzman begins identifying a pool of perhaps 15 students to rotate among the daily and special Masses. Sometimes she comes across truly exceptional talent, as in the case of Dung Nguyen, who studied piano and violin before coming to DWC. He has since become an even more accomplished musician, developing his skills as an accompanist. He also served as Heitzman's work-study student, assisting her by preparing for each Mass and conducting rehearsals.



“For me music ministry is a gift that God gives to me,” said Dung, who is going on to the SVD Novitiate at Techny. “I can develop it and use it to serve God's people and to let people also see this gift from God in me.”

Music is truly a universal language. For a missionary, it offers an invaluable way to connect with people in other cultures. Fr. Long Phi Nguyen, SVD, loved to play guitar and sing when he was a student at DWC.

Before returning to the college as assistant dean of students, he was on mission in Chile.

“I remember my first year or so, my Spanish was not so good, but I could play music, so the people sang and I played,” he said. “It brought us together without speaking the language.”

Luckily for Heitzman, the Good Lord seems to look out for her by introducing new students to step in when others move on. Earlier this year, a visiting student joined in one of her Easter Triduum rehearsals.

“Before he left, he said, ‘Hopefully I'll see you in the fall,’” Heitzman recalled. “I just said, ‘Yes!’ ... He has a beautiful voice.”

## A Word from the President:



Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

This year's graduates are impressive. Among them are talented musicians, fine thinkers, excellent organizers, and in general, people full of goodness and kindness who possess a strong sense of purpose. At commencement, we celebrated the next stage in their lives as they respond to the call of Jesus to share their God-given gifts with people across the globe.

Watching them, I couldn't help but feel like a parent who suffers an empty nest. I'm glad to see them take their next step, but my heart frets a little, questioning whether we should hold on to them for a little while longer. I wonder how Jesus felt when he sent out his disciples. He had prepared them for mission, spending time teaching and praying with them, and offering encouragement. That is what we try to do at Divine Word College.

There is some sadness watching such talented people leave but it will be followed in a few months with joy as our new and returning students reveal their goodness, kindness and God-given gifts, to share with us and later the world. So, life goes on at Divine Word College.

Fr. Tan



### **Samuel Cherilus**

Haiti

- AA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Pursue further studies



### **Cruz Enrique Colunga**

Liberty, TX

- BA Philosophy
- Future Plan: Attend the SVD Novitiate at Techny



### **Amarainy Espinosa**

St. Maarten, Dutch West Indies

- BA Theology & Religious Studies  
BA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Continue education or return to Dutch West Indies



### **Wilken Fevrier**

Port-au-Prince, Haiti

- BA Philosophy
- Future Plan: Attend the SVD Novitiate at Techny



### **Youmarcks Jacques**

Cerca-La-Source, Haiti

- AA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Pursue religious life

## Congratulations



### **Brian Junkes**

West Palm Beach, FL

- BA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Attend the SVD Novitiate at Techny



### **Roger Kyaw Thu**

Kyun Taw, Myanmar

- AA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Attend the SVD Novitiate at Techny



### **Sr. Wanxia Paula Li, SSps**

Gansu, China

- BA Philosophy,  
BA Theology & Religious Studies
- Future Plan: Serve my community



### **Manuel Murillo**

Riverside, California

- BA Philosophy
- Future Plan: Apply the values I have learned at DWC

# ns Class of '18



**Dung Nguyen**

Santa Ana, California

- BA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Attend the SVD Novitiate at Techny



**Boromeo Shwe Pyi Soe**

Dou Ngan Kha, Myanmar

- AA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Attend the SVD Novitiate at Techny



**Sr. Ly Nguyen, LHC-TL**

Saigon, Vietnam

- BA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Uncertain (may return to Vietnam, may stay to study further)



**Bro. (Benedict) Vuong Tran, O.Cist**

Nam Dinh, Vietnam

- BA Philosophy
- Future Plan: Pursue studies for the priesthood



**Aquilino Perez**

Austin, TX

- BA Philosophy
- Future Plan: Pursue further studies



**Sr. Phuc Vu, LHC**

Saigon, Vietnam

- BA Theology & Religious Studies
- Future Plan: Return to her community in Vietnam

## Students Honored



*Dung Nguyen*

At the annual Recognition and Awards Luncheon on April 26, two members of the Class of '18 were honored for going "beyond the call of duty" during their time at Divine Word College. President Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD, in consultation with the board of administration, presented Dung Nguyen and Brian Junkes with the **Brother Leonard Bauer Service Award** for their loyal and selfless service to DWC.



*Brian Junkes*

Meanwhile, a number of returning students were awarded scholarships during the ceremony.

**Hoang Duy Khanh Do** and **Truong An Duc Nguyen** received Fr. Robert J. Flinn, SVD, Scholarships.

**Truong An Duc Nguyen, Phong Minh Le** and **Lam Quang Nguyen** received Bishop Curtis Guillory, SVD, Scholarships.

**Tuan Hoang Nguyen** received a Fr. Francis Kamp, SVD, Scholarship.

Each scholarship offers an annual award of \$2,300, renewable each year the recipient meets its established guidelines.

# Faculty Staff Awards 2018

Emily Embree walked up to the podium wearing a smile that didn't leave her face for a long time. At the Recognition and Awards Luncheon on April 26, college president Fr. Tom Ascheman presented her with the first **DWC Career in Excellence Award**. Embree is leaving DWC after 20 years as an assistant professor of ESL. Besides teaching at all levels of the ESL program, she has done research and, for a year, was the interim director of the Intensive English Language Institute (IELI), which coordinates the ESL program at Divine Word. Fr. Tom read from the plaque that she received marking her contributions.

"Your caring attitude and patient demeanor toward colleagues and students," he read, "have all earned you the respect and gratitude of the entire Divine Word College Community."



Dr. Cathi Cleary

Dr. Cathi Cleary, assistant professor of math and science, was awarded the **Charles Malin Award for Excellence in Teaching**, nominated by the students and approved by the college board of administration. Among the comments from students who nominated her, one said she could not only explain scientific concepts, but made her classes enjoyable.

"She is friendly and easy to talk to outside of class," the student wrote. "She truly cares about her students' success."



Peggy Kass

Peggy Kass, member of the DWC kitchen staff, received the **Donna Puccio Distinguished Service Award for Outstanding Service**. Co-workers Sandra Mueller and Marlene Koopmann nominated her for the honor, which goes to an employee who provides outstanding service, strives for improvements, is a problem solver and demonstrates a willingness to go beyond the call of duty.

"Peggy is always the first to ask anyone in the college if they need help," Koopmann wrote in her nomination. "She is compassionate and willing to serve."

## A Young Man's Search for Answers

When my family and friends found out that I was attending a seminary college, they bombarded me with tough questions. "Why do you want to be a priest?" "Do you know you can be a missionary without having to be a priest?" "What about marriage?" These were good questions, but I didn't have any good answers.

Then one day in the high school library, I came across a book by Joseph Ratzinger, "Jesus of Nazareth." I finished it in two days. I fell in love with its coherent and rational account of Jesus, who he was and who he is. It led me to another book, "Mere Christianity," by C.S. Lewis. Now I could give a rational account for my faith. But my search wasn't over. After I entered Divine Word College,

I became acquainted with several other authors—Brant Pitre, Scott Hahn, Ravi Zacharias, and Stephen B. Clark. They led me to believe that Christianity, specifically Catholicism, held the highest truth.

How could people not have faith when you have guys like this writing so powerfully yet so beautifully? I wanted to go out and show people why my faith is the right faith. I even thought about becoming a theologian. But that changed after my first year of studies.

My coursework in philosophy, psychology, and sociology broadened my perspective. They caused me to take a more objective view of my beliefs. I started to realize why people

sometimes struggled with Christianity, especially after the way humanity has abused it throughout its history.

At this point—and yes, I am young and prone to change—I have come to a conclusion about religion. That is, if you genuinely seek to love and be loved, you are capable of healing others. If you have an open mind and an open heart, you are capable of changing the world.

With these things in common, we can also accept each other and strive for peace.



Tomerot Lambert

## Friendship Fostering SVD

As the lives of SVDs weave in and out, around the world and over the years, they intersect at places like Divine Word College. In wonderful ways, these intersections reveal the respect and friendship fostered by their religious order.

When Father Sam Cunningham, SVD, arrived last fall to join the faculty and do formation work, he reconnected with several men he knew as seminarians at the Theologate in Chicago nearly two decades ago. In fact, two were members of a formation group he led. Today, Fr. Thang Hoang, SVD, is rector of the college SVD community, and Fr. Nick Hien Nguyen, SVD, is the college coordinator of spiritual life.

“This is fun because we’re colleagues,” Fr. Sam said.

As rector, Fr. Thang is the authority figure among the SVDs.

“Fr. Sam didn’t come here and say, ‘Oh, you were my student, you better behave,’” the rector said with his usual grin. “This is what SVDs are all about, not so much as ‘superior’ and ‘members,’

but as brothers who take turns stepping into leadership of the community.”

In the 1980s, Fr. Sam worked as a vocation director and actually recruited Fr. Nick to enter the SVD minor seminary at East Troy, Wisconsin. They reunited in Chicago 15 years later.



*Fr. Nick Hien Nguyen, SVD, (l) and Fr. Thang Hoang, SVD, (r) bracket their former formator, Fr. Sam Cunningham, SVD.*

“The formation program at the Theologate is very good, there’s no rank, everybody is the same,” Fr. Nick said. “Even the rector and dean of students, they are one of us. I rarely saw them as someone above me, so when Fr. Sam was there, I just saw him as another SVD, and I considered myself to be SVD even then.”

For Fr. Sam, there is a point of pride in seeing the young men he knew grow so much and do so well.

“It’s fascinating to watch the development of people,” he said. “The closest would be that if your son or daughter had children, watching them taking on the role of parent.”

## Divine Providence, Ministries and Methodists

The Good Lord works in mysterious ways.

Fr. Long Phi Nguyen, SVD, assistant dean of students, coordinates the ministry outreach program for students at DWC. Last fall, while searching for new ministry opportunities, he walked into the Epworth United Methodist Church and met Shelly Rollins, who operates its after-school program for children age 2 through 6th grade.

“Shelly said, ‘You wouldn’t believe it Father, I was about to call Divine Word College to see if there was any possibility of sending students here to help us,’” Fr. Long Phi recalled. “I believe that is the Will of God right there that brought us together.”

On Wednesdays this past semester, students helped with the program, which offered children an afternoon snack, times to pray and play, and wrapped up with an evening meal.

“They help with homework, too,” Fr. Long said. “They also help with the set up and the cleanup, prepare meals, eat with the children, and have fun with them.” That led to DWC students also assisting the church with a community meal it hosts on Fridays, which attracts residents from

Epworth and surrounding communities. Any time from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., students help prepare the meal, serve it and clean up afterward. Students also work with area elderly and mentally disabled, help at parishes in Cedar Rapids, Waterloo, Davenport and Rock Island, and serve at food pantries at the First Congregation United Church of Christ and Hope House in Dubuque.



*Fr. Long Phi Nguyen, SVD*

The variety of ministry experiences are an important part of the missionary education students receive at Divine Word College. Students learn how to meet, interact with and serve people of different ages and economic conditions. What made the new connection with the Epworth United Methodist Church so special is the way it all happened.

“It really was a blessing that brought us together,” Fr. Long Phi said. “They are very friendly, they welcome us and they’re very happy to have our students there to help out. I am very happy too.”

# DWC Photo Gallery

Dr. Marilyn Taylor, associate professor of writing and literature, offers suggestions during the Academic Resume Fair, organized by ESL instructors Sharon Sinton and Michelle Vargo, on January 15. The joint-class session stemmed from a unit that explored how students could present their educational, work, and life experiences should they pursue further education. It gave students a practical opportunity to apply concepts they learned in class. DWC president, Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD, and Jolene Zimmerman, college registrar, also shared their observations with the ESL students.



DWC senior Wilken Fevrier talks of his call to religious life during a session at the annual 6th Grade Vocation Day at Divine Word College, March 13. More than 250 students from area Catholic elementary schools attended the event sponsored by the Dubuque Area Vocation Association (DAVA). Members of nine religious communities of men and women, a diocesan priest and a deacon met with groups of students to talk about religious life. Wilken, who grew up in Haiti, is among this year's DWC graduates.

6 DWC Health Director Brother Mike Decker, SVD, was pleased with the turnout for the college blood drive organized by the Mississippi Valley Regional Blood Center, on March 27. Fifteen members of the college community stepped up, twice as many compared to the recent past. This was the first time to donate blood for two-thirds of the donors. A person needs to have been in this country for three years in order to give blood, a limiting factor in light of our large international student population.



...And Jesus fell... On Good Friday, March 30, the Divine Word College community gathered for a re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross, organized and performed by students. Freshman Christian Andresen offered a moving portrayal of Our Lord Jesus as he struggled to carry the burden of his cross in a procession that worked its way around campus. The Stations of the Cross is an emotionally gripping part of the Easter Triduum at DWC.

Francis Wambua (foreground) and Wisvel Joseph (left) were among almost a dozen DWC students to perform during “Celebrate Africa” at the Heritage Center on the campus of the University of Dubuque, on April 24. The third annual event is a celebration of African culture, combining authentic food with traditional African music, dancing and fashion. There were exhibits, an educational presentation about Africa and a panel discussion.



# Thank You Legacy Society Members

Several years ago, we started the Divine Word College Legacy Society.

Its members are our friends who have told us they have remembered Divine Word College in their will or with another type of gift in their estate.

These gifts to Divine Word College take special thought and planning. For that reason, we are honored and humbled to receive them, and pleased to introduce our Legacy Society members who have allowed us to share their names. Thank you for remembering Divine Word!

All members of the Legacy Society receive a beautiful statue of the Holy Family for their home. If at any time you decide to include the college in your estate plans and you would like to let us know, please feel free to contact Mark Singsank, associate development director, at 563-876-0097 or [singsank@dwci.edu](mailto:singsank@dwci.edu).

Ms. Regina Aaron  
Ms. Barbara Aiello  
Mrs. Mary Ann Amelse  
Rev. Owen Augustin  
Tom & Joan Auterman  
Mr. Alfred Becker  
Mr. Michael Berger  
William & Robin Booth  
Ms. Cecilia Braam  
Mrs. Elizabeth Brownson  
Bob & Fran Brunkan  
Mr. & Mrs. Thomas Burds  
Gloria M. Cessna  
Mr. Loras Collins  
Patrick & Mary Sharon Curran  
Mr. James Czarkowski  
Mr. & Mrs. John Fettkether  
Mr. Cyril Friedman  
Mr. Larry Friedman  
Terry & Paula Friedman  
Mr. & Mrs. Roger Herting  
Mrs. Betty Hillary  
Mr. Gerald Hoeger  
Rev. Mr. & Mrs. Jim Kean

Mrs. Marina Klein  
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Mr. Aloysius Merges  
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Morrissey  
Edward & Joanne Peterson  
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Terry & Cindy Sykora  
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Mrs. Ruth Ann Volesky  
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Joe & Donna Zweibohmer

*Join us!*



*4th Annual Divine Word College*

## Benefit Golf Outing!

*Dedicated This Year in Memory of Bud McGovern*

**Friday, July 27**

Timberline Golf Course, Peosta, Iowa

*Help raise funds to support our students!*

- 18 hole, Four-Person Best Shot
- 1 p.m. Shotgun Start
- Silent Auction and Raffles
- \$80 per person, includes golf, cart and steak dinner

Sign up to play or sponsor,  
contact Mark Singsank at  
563-876-0097 or  
[singsank@dwci.edu](mailto:singsank@dwci.edu)



For more information about Divine Word College, call 563-876-3353, email [info@dwci.edu](mailto:info@dwci.edu), or visit: [www.dwci.edu](http://www.dwci.edu)

## The Sharecropper's Son



Bishop Curtis  
Guillory, SVD

Guillory was the eldest of seventeen children who helped work the farm and went to school when they could. They attended Mass every Sunday, prayed the rosary every night and helped their neighbors often.

“We were very poor, we were barely making it on the farm,” he recalled. “But we had strong religious values lived out in the family, on the farm and in the neighborhood.”

Religious life opened up to him by a vocation director from the SVD minor seminary in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi—home of the first Catholic seminary in the U.S. to educate and ordain African-American priests. Attracted by further education and the internationality of the SVD, he enrolled. Then, in 1964, he

Bishop Curtis Guillory, SVD, graduate of Divine Word College, knows poverty. He also knows the power of a good example, such as those set by his deeply religious parents who sharecropped property near a small farming community east-northeast of New Orleans.

rode a Greyhound bus north to Epworth, Iowa, to join the first class to enter DWC.

“It was really ‘living by faith and not by sight,’” he said, referring to a passage from Saint Paul’s Second Letter to the Corinthians. His faith sustained him as he went from his familiar, hot-and-humid, African-American rural south to the unknown, primarily Caucasian, hot-and-humid, cold-and-frigid, rural north.

Graduating four years later and ordained in 1972, he went on to study Christian Spirituality and Jungian psychology and do parish and formation work before being called by Rome in 1988 to be the auxiliary bishop of Archdiocese of Galveston/Houston and later Bishop of Beaumont, Texas, the first African-American to hold that position. He is hoping to retire after 30 years in those offices, where the example of the worldwide SVD has served him well.

“As missionaries, we’re all over so we get a better sense of the universality of the church and a better understanding of cultures,” he said. “I think the SVD confirms a sense of community.”