

online videos help **SPREAD THE WORD**

To watch the
“Theologate
Talks” series,
go to:

[Youtube.com/
DWTchicago](https://www.youtube.com/DWTchicago)



Deacon Minh Anh Dinh, SVD
(left) talks with Frt. Brian
Junkes, SVD (right) in a video
for the YouTube series
“Theologate Talks.”



Communication was a key contributor to the early success of the Society of the Divine Word and continues to be a focus for the congregation today. Founder St. Arnold Janssen published a mission magazine that helped expand the reach and support of the group in its early days. Throughout its 145-year history, members have used a variety of mediums to share their messages, but since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, online videos have emerged as a safe, affordable and effective means of reaching a wide audience.

A group of SVD candidates studying at the Theologate in Chicago started a video series on YouTube called “Theologate Talks.” Most of the men involved are former DWC students. They use a two-person interview format to give viewers a glimpse into the lives of men who are in formation with Divine Word Missionaries. Candidates share about their experiences in the congregation’s Cross-Cultural Training Program, interview formation leaders and discuss their personal insights about discernment. Another former DWC student, Frt. Giresse-Mecene Etung, SVD, is also

contributing to a unique form of communication. Originally from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Frt. Giresse moved from Epworth to Chicago at the beginning of 2020 to serve at St. Anselm Parish. Just a few months later, churches closed to protect people from the virus. Giresse started using his phone to capture video of the services to post online.

“The Mass is the center of Christian life. To see many faithful people were only able to participate via video made me think of an initiative which would allow them to participate fully and get the graces needed,” he said. With the help of new video equipment, Frt. Giresse continues to stream services on YouTube and the church’s Facebook page.

“Bringing the Mass to these faithful people is my contribution to building the Kingdom of Heaven, which we are all called to do,” he said. From the “Theologate Talks” video series to livestreaming Mass, SVDs are continuing the legacy of using a variety of mediums to promote the mission and share the Word of God.

You are amazing!

St. Arnold Janssen, founder of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), was well-known for his ability to “think outside the box.” When he decided to start a new religious order in 1875, he was forced to leave his native Germany because of strong anti-Catholicism feelings in the country at that time.



Mark Singsank,
Development
Office

So what did he do, he found a beautiful spot across the border in The Netherlands. St. Arnold was able to adapt and move forward with strength and conviction inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Everyone at Divine Word College has also had to “think outside the box” and adapt in a year unlike most of us have ever seen. In the Development Office, we can no longer travel to visit you or hold events for you to visit us. Fortunately, we are able to make phone calls and send letters. It’s not quite the same as visiting in person, but it works.

Even with the pandemic and other issues we have had in 2020, your generosity last year was amazing! Thank you so much for your donations and prayers to help our students as they prepare for life as Catholic missionaries. Without your help, they would not be here. The pandemic has

also caused a few changes in the tax laws for 2020 and 2021 for you to consider. Keep in mind that you can use the \$300 universal, above-the-line, charitable deduction for non-itemizers through 2021; joint filers may deduct up to \$600. This deduction only applies to cash gifts. And, even though required minimum distributions from your IRA are not required this year, they are always welcome as donations to the college, as are gifts of appreciated stock and gifts from Donor Advised Funds.

Thank you again for your financial help and prayers. Know that you are remembered in the daily prayers of the Divine Word College community.