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### Birthday Corner

#### February

- 21 Fr. Thinh Quoc Cao, SVD
- 22 Frt Joao Manuel Pinda Neto, SVD
- 23 Nam Nhat Nguyen

## THE PRESIDENT *Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD*

### How Much is Six Feet?

The hallways at DWC are noisy again. It is a good noise that marks a return to in-person classes and opportunities to gather with others for prayer. Saturday felt like a liberation day for many of us when the general quarantine of the college was eased. Gathering for Mass, along with an option for virtual attendance, made our small celebrations of the Lunar New Year and Valentine’s Day especially joyful.

Now the question I pose for our community is: **How Much is Six Feet?**

Relaxing the quarantine does seem like being released from jail. That can be dangerous if we believe the danger of the virus has passed. It is true that the number of cases in Iowa and in Dubuque County has been dropping very rapidly over the past couple of weeks. However, we had an “explosion” here on campus. Now, it is as important as ever to wear facemasks and watch social distancing. So I ask:

**How Much is Six Feet?**  
**An adult bicycle is approximately six feet long!**

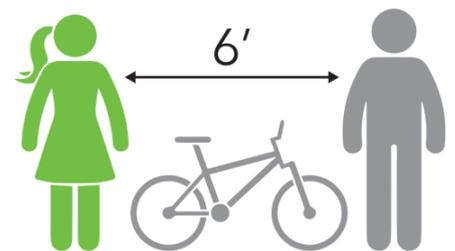
**Distance.** During quarantine or self-isolation, we lived separately from one another as the corona virus moved through the community.

We are VERY grateful that those who were infected had no symptoms or only mild ones. Their time in self-isolation allowed their bodies to fight off the virus, to



acquire some natural immunity, and to stop the contagion. We are also grateful to all who kept quarantine. By keeping our distance and avoiding large gatherings, we made it hard for the virus to move from one person to another.

#### Stay 6 feet from others



*continued next page*

## How Much is Six Feet?

**A car is approximately six feet wide!**

**Immunity.** In the past three weeks, 38 students, 2 SVDs, and 1 off-campus employee were infected. Last semester, 4 other students, 3 SVDs, and 10 off-campus employees tested positive. With their recovery, all of them have some level of natural immunity. The CDC tells us that this resistance is fairly significant for the first three months. Recent investigations show that natural immunity can last considerably longer, for eight months or more <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/371/6529/eabf4063>. Taken all together, approximately 45% of the students, and 20% of the SVD's and off-campus employees have some natural immunity.



Now we are beginning to track *acquired immunity* that comes from vaccinations. So far, 17 Sisters who live in Dubuque and 4 SVDs have received their first vaccination. Their second vaccinations are scheduled for the coming weeks. Within a week or two of the second dose, they will have a rather strong acquired immunity. As with natural immunity, scientists are only now able to measure the time that such immunity lasts. A caution to keep in mind is that we do not yet know whether a person with natural or acquired immunity can still carry the virus and share it with others! Hopeful results have recently been published indicating that the total viral load that immune persons can carry is considerably less than other persons.

## How Much is Six Feet? This one is for Iowa folk, like me:

**A cow is approximately six feet long!**

**Testing.** We are beginning another round of random testing. It will be easier this time, thanks to the generosity of the Sisters of Charity of the BVM in Dubuque. The Sisters sent us six hundred rapid test kits that we can administer here at the college. The results are available in 15 minutes! These tests are not quite as dependable as the “gold standard” PCR tests with the long swab going into the sinus cavity. OUCH! However, they can help detect whether the virus is still moving through the college. Anyone without symptoms who tests positive with these rapid tests would then need to be confirmed with a follow-up test at the TestIowa sites in Dubuque. Anyone with symptoms who tests negative should also have a follow-up test. Br. Mike Decker will provide more details about onsite-rapid-testing in the next few days.



## How Much is Six Feet? Ask Sister Norelly or Sr. Tho!

It is as important as ever to wash your hands, wear a facemask and watch your distance. After all, measuring six feet is much easier to do that returning to isolation or quarantine.



## DWC COVID-19 Dashboard

	Number of Tests	Tested Positive	Number Self-Isolated	Number Quarantined	Number Recovered
Before Sept. 15	~200	9	9	~15	9
Sept. 15 - Dec. 31	220	8	8	~80	8
Jan. 1 - 11	148	6	6	22	0
Jan. 12 - 18	31	2	8	29	6
Jan. 19 - 25	38	10	12	40	3
Jan. 26 - Feb. 1	32	11	27	37	7
Feb. 2 - 8	7	0	23	0	12
<b>Feb. 9 - 15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>

As of today, Feb 16, all on-campus residents had cleared isolation and quarantine. In-person classes resumed on Monday, Feb. 15. Please see the attached COVID-19 guidance bulletin.

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

### Strategic Planning:

#### Academic Goal, Objectives, and Action Steps (2021-2024) – Draft

At a Faculty Senate meeting last semester, President Ascherman kicked off the Divine Word College Strategic Planning process for the 2021-2024 triennium. He invited faculty to submit ideas for academic initiatives to the VP for Academic Affairs, and other more general initiatives to the VP for Operations. As previously noted, the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) identified assessment as an area of weakness during the HLC comprehensive review in 2016. The HLC visiting team again identified assessment as an area of weakness during the 2019 mid-cycle review. DWC is now required to submit an Interim Monitoring Report in November 2022 on assessment to address this continuing deficiency in a more deliberate and comprehensive manner. The Interim Monitoring Report must demonstrate:

“1/ that different degree levels (associate vs bachelors) have distinct sets of learning outcomes (3.A), and;

2/ assessment of student learning with regard to Core Competencies and the major program SLOs. For components, the institution should report what data has been collected, how it has been analyzed, and how data has been used to prompt changes to the curriculum (4.B).”

Therefore the academic goal for 2021-2024 centers on assessment, namely: **CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A COHERENT ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL TO MEASURE STUDENT LEARNING AND PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS**

Kindly review the draft version of the Academic Strategic Goal, Objectives, and Action Steps for 2021-2024 attached as an appendix to this edition of the LOG, and provide any suggestions for improvement to me by email ([jszukalski@dwci.edu](mailto:jszukalski@dwci.edu)) no later than Monday, February 22, 2021. I will present this document for review and endorsement by the Faculty Senate at its February 23, 2021 meeting.

## **VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION DEAN OF STUDENTS**

*Fr. Long Phi Nguyen, SVD*

### **Lunar New Year**

Though parties and other cultural activities were discouraged due to COVID-19 restrictions, our community still gathered together to celebrate and mark the beginning of the year of the ox with joy and happiness. Many thanks to the VSA, the kitchen staff, different committees, and all students who have contributed their time and creative skills to organize such a simple, and yet meaningful Lunar New Year Celebration. Special thanks to the main celebrant, Fr. Stephen Kha Nguyen, our college chaplain Fr. Sonny De Class, sacristans, musicians and cantors, acolytes, and all who made the beautiful celebration possible. Beautiful decorations, delicious food, and big fat red envelopes of the lucky money from our President, Fr. Tom Ascheman, really helped regain our energy and spirit after an exhausting period of quarantine and isolation. May God of Spring bless you all with good health.

### **Dean's Forum**

Just a reminder that the Dean's Forum is scheduled for Wednesday, February 17th at 7:30 pm in the main chapel. As a result, there will be no formation group meetings. Off-campus students will use this link (ID: 208 585 4389) to join the Dean's Forum. Please be prepared with your ideas and recommendations. Attendance is mandatory for all students.

### **COVID-19 Nasal Swab Test**

A million thanks to the BVM sisters for donating approximately 600 COVID-19 nasal swab tests. Those students who tested negative for COVID-19 since the beginning of the school year are scheduled to get tested this Thursday, February 18, from 12:30 pm until 2:00 pm, in room #143. Those who tested positive are more than welcome to sign up for COVID-19 testing if you wish. The sign-up list will be posted on the Student Board.

### **Lenten Season & Stations of the Cross**

The Lenten season begins this week with Ash Wednesday, February 17. Pope Francis reminds us that Lent is a time to revive the faith that comes from the living Christ, the hope inspired by the breath of the Holy Spirit and the love flowing from the merciful heart of the Father. The call to experience Lent as a journey of grace and conversion, the Student Senate will organize Stations of the Cross led by each formation group every Friday at 7:30 pm in the main chapel. Everyone is invited to join.



## VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMISSIONS

Mr. Len Uhal

### Discerning the Call to Mission

The SVD Vocation Office is debuting a new virtual program to encourage discussion among young men who are discerning a religious vocation. All Divine Word College seminary students are invited to join the four-part monthly conversation via Zoom for Catholic men ages 18-35 February through May. The first program begins on Thursday, February 25 at 8:00 PM and is entitled Discerning the Call to Mission – The Time Has Come. Join your hosts Fr. Adam and Fr. Francis for a discussion exploring how ongoing conversion is an integral part of the call to religious life. [Click here to register to attend!](#)



### The Word Among Us

The most recent issue of The Word Among Us is now available and is already in student mailboxes. The next issue begins tomorrow, on Ash Wednesday. Some extra copies are in the SVD lounge and you can visit the Admissions Office if you would like a copy in Spanish. Please continue to remember in your prayers the anonymous benefactor who makes this gift possible to all of us.

### Honor Scholarships

Next year 16 Honor Scholarships are available to all Divine Word College students who meet the selection criteria. What's the advantage of getting an Honor Scholarship? Here are a few:

- Each award is worth \$2,500.
- Domestic students may not have to take a government loan or may pay less out-of-pocket for their tuition, room and board expenses.
- Selected students get their name on plaque near the College President's Office.
- Selected students are announced and recognized by the college community.
- The donors who make these funds available know that individual students are benefiting from their donations and that students are preparing for missionary ministry.



All students received an email from Carolyn Waechter earlier this week with the scholarship application. You can also [click here](#) to access the application from the website. Please review the criteria and if you are eligible, please submit your application. If you have questions, please see Carolyn or Len Uhal in the Admissions Office.

### Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)

Domestic students who plan to return to Divine Word College next August, both citizens and lawful permanent residents (LPRs / "green card" holders), it is time to complete the FAFSA form to apply for federal financial aid for next year. Please contact Carolyn Waechter for assistance and if you have any questions. **Please start this process now.**

## VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS

Mr. Steve Winger

### Food Service Worker

Divine Word College says farewell and good luck to Joyce Schueller who recently stepped down from her Food Service Worker position. We wish Joyce the best in her new endeavors.

Divine Word College is now actively seeking a person to fill the Food Service Worker position. If you or someone you know is interested, please go to [www.dwci.edu/employment-food-service-worker](http://www.dwci.edu/employment-food-service-worker) to learn more about the position and application process.

## PUBLIC RELATIONS

### Lenten Project

As we prepare to begin the season of Lent, the PR team is looking for ways to inspire and encourage our social media followers. Most Catholics are familiar with the concepts of prayer and fasting, so we wanted to focus on the third pillar of Lent, Almsgiving.



The pandemic has a lot of people asking “What can I do for others when I can’t even be near them?” *We’re asking YOU to share your thoughts on ways people can give of themselves this year.* Send a short video of yourself explaining one way people can incorporate Almsgiving into their Lenten season. Selfie-style videos on your phone work great! The video should be 3 minutes or less.

Need a little inspiration? Try to answer ONE of these questions:

- What can I do to help the elderly?
- How can I be of service to people who are hungry? Lacking shelter? Out of work?
- How can I give of myself to benefit my local community while staying safe?
- How can I contribute to Catholic missions?

Email completed videos to Emily at [eshedek@dwci.edu](mailto:eshedek@dwci.edu) by March 19. If you’re unable to make a video, you could also email your response.

## JUSTICE, PEACE AND INTEGRITY OF CREATION COUNCIL

In honor of Black History Month, I would like to highlight the contributions of Black Catholics in building the US Church:

- Find resources for incorporating the work of Black Catholics into our educational institutions by going to [this link to the Black Catholic Syllabus](#) by Tia Noelle Pratt, Ph.D.
- Download [this resource packet](#) from the Archdiocese of Washington, DC’s Office of Black Catholics created for the observance of #BlackCatholicHistoryMonth.

 **Divine Word College**  
**COVID-19 Guidance (#31)**  
February 11, 2021

**COVID-19 test results.** The Board of Administration met yesterday to review the results of recent COVID-19 testing. This week one student and one staff member tested positive. In the past four weeks, nearly forty on-campus residents tested positive for the virus. Happily, very few suffered any significant symptoms. One silver lining is that nearly half of the student body has now acquired natural immunity from COVID19 for the next three months or more! Additionally, many of the Sisters living in Dubuque have started vaccination.

As of today on campus, no students are in quarantine, while four students are in the final days of their self-isolation. All students, whether on campus or elsewhere, will be free from isolation on Saturday, February 13.

Given these results, the Board has decided to **ease** the college-wide quarantine beginning on Saturday, Feb 13. **Happy Lunar New Year! Chúc Mừng Năm Mới!**

I ask everyone at DWC to observe the following practices beginning on Saturday:

1. Always wear a mask. **Maintain a social distance of at least six feet.**
2. **The dining room** is open for people to go through the food-line. We will be adjusting the number of seats at the tables. People who have already had COVID19 or have completed their COVID vaccinations are at little risk of contracting the virus again, so they may feel freer to eat meals with others in the dining room. Those who have not acquired some immunity to the disease are also welcome in the dining room, but be very careful to **keep your distance**. Please do not hold "unmasked" extended conversations in the dining room.
3. **All classes**, ESL and undergraduate, will be in person beginning Monday Feb 15. **Watch your distance!**
4. **For everyone**, try to limit face-to-face meetings. Please use ZOOM, email or phones.



**Employees** are asked to return to regular work hours. Please check with your supervisor. Faculty who have not had COVID19 are strongly encouraged to get tested, once again, between February 11 and February 17. Please report your results to Mr. Steve Winger, the VP for Operations. (All students, most of the SVD community, and a majority of the staff have already been tested at least twice since the beginning of this spring semester.)

For those who live on campus:

5. **The STAY-ON-CAMPUS policy** remains in place for another week. Students, please check with Fr. Long Phi Nguyen SVD, the Dean of Students, before leaving campus for doctor's appointments or other essential travel. SVDs, please check with the rector.
6. **Mass and other prayer times at DWC** will be open for in-person attendance beginning on Saturday, February 13. Celebrants will be assigned for both the upper chapel and the Mother of Asia chapel. Formation groups are also free to organize Mass and prayers for smaller groups. **Please watch your distance!** The Mass from the main chapel will still be broadcast on ZOOM for the coming week.
7. **The exercise room** can be used by TWO people at a time. *Facemasks must be used.* Clean the equipment after use. **Watch your distance!**
8. **The gym** can be used by up to EIGHT people at a time. Facemasks must be used. **Watch your distance!**

Fr. Tom Ascheman SVD  
President

## **GOAL A: ACADEMIC AFFAIRS**

### **CREATE AND IMPLEMENT A COHERENT ASSESSMENT PROTOCOL TO MEASURE STUDENT LEARNING AND PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS**

Rationale: DWC is committed to creating and implementing a professional protocol and institutional culture of assessment in the undergraduate and ESL programs to enhance student learning and program effectiveness.

#### **Objective 1: Participate in the Higher Learning Commission (HLC) Assessment Academy**

Rationale: DWC joined the HLC Assessment Academy as a member of the 2020-2024 cohort. This specialized academy provides a structured, mentor-facilitated program aimed at advancing and accelerating an institution's efforts to assess student learning and program effectiveness.

#### **Action Step 1.1: Implement Project Update #2 (September 2021) and Project Update #3 (March 2022) during the 2021-2022 academic year**

Responsible: VPAA & Assessment Academy Team

Target completion: April 2022

Budget: \$ 7,000 annual fee

#### **Action Step 1.2: Implement Project Update #4 (September 2022) and Project Update #5 (December 2022) during the 2022-2023 academic year**

Responsible: VPAA & Assessment Academy Team

Target completion: April 2023

Budget: \$ 7,000 annual fee; Midpoint Roundtable/Consultation \$ 2,500

#### **Action Step 1.3: Implement Project Update #6 (September 2023) and Project Update #7 (March 2024) during the 2023-2024 academic year**

Responsible: VPAA & Assessment Academy Team

Target completion: April 2024

Budget: \$ 7,000 annual fee

#### **Action Step 1.4: Evaluate Assessment Academy implementation in final Impact Report #1 (September 2024) and final Impact Report #2 (December 2024)**

Responsible: VPAA & Assessment Academy Team

Target completion: December 2024

Budget: Results Forum \$ 2,500

**Objective 2: Create and implement a coherent and integrated assessment protocol across the undergraduate program**

Rationale: DWC will create a new assessment protocol that represents a more coherent and integrated approach and that provides more efficient infrastructure for the collection, analysis, and reporting of assessment data across the undergraduate program.

**Action Step 2.1: Review degree descriptions and develop Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), Signature Assignments, and Rubrics for all undergraduate programs**

Responsible: VPAA, Assessment Coordinator, Departmental Faculty

Target completion: August 2021

Budget: \$ 1,000 expenses

**Action Step 2.2: Implement AQUA / Watermark assessment software for the collection, reporting, and analysis of assessment data**

Responsible: VPAA, Assessment Coordinator, Assessment Committee

Target completion: August 2021

Budget: Initial contract year \$10,000; thereafter \$9,000 annually

**Action Step 2.3: Realign PLOs and curricula during annual program reviews to identify mapping deficiencies, improve degree program coherence, and facilitate student achievement**

Responsible: Assessment Coordinator, Department Chairs, Departmental Faculty

Target completion: April 2022, April 2023, April 2024

Budget: \$ 1,000 annually

**Action Step 2.4: Submit an Interim Monitoring Report on Assessment to the Higher Learning Commission**

Responsible: VPAA, Interim Monitoring Report Committee

Target completion: November 2022

Budget: \$ 500 expenses

**Objective 3: Secure Commission on English Language Program Accreditation (CEA) specialized accreditation for the English as a Second Language (ESL) program**

Rationale: DWC will further professionalize the ESL program through adherence to external accreditation standards and improvements in program curricula and assessments. Attainment of specialized accreditation through CEA will provide for and document improvements in student learning and program effectiveness.

**Action Step 3.1: Submit the ESL Self-Study Document for initial CEA specialized accreditation**

Responsible: IELI Director & CEA Accreditation Coordinator

Target completion: November 2021

Budget: \$ 2,500 fees; \$ 2,500 expenses

**Action Step 3.2: Host the CEA visitation team for the DWC campus site visit**

Responsible: VPAA, IELI Director & CEA Accreditation Coordinator

Target completion: April 2022

Budget: \$ 7,500 fees; \$ 1,500 expenses

**Action Step 3.3: Implement CEA specialized accreditation report recommendations and action plans during the 2022-2023 academic year**

Responsible: IELI Director & CEA Accreditation Coordinator

Target completion: 2022-2023 academic year

Budget: TBD

ONLINE DISCUSSION SERIES

# DISCERNING the CALL to MISSION

Thursday Evenings 8 PM CST



Join in a discussion for one hour each month with men, like you, who are discerning a religious vocation. Facilitated by the Divine Word Missionaries Vocation Team, each gathering will allow you to reflect and discuss how God may be calling you to a life of missionary service.

## February 25 **Discerning the Call to Mission: The Time Has Come**

Lent is a season inviting us to personal conversion through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Come explore with us how ongoing conversion is an integral part of the call to religious life!

Hosts: Fr. Adam MacDonald, SVD and Fr. Francis Rayappan, SVD

## March 25 **Discerning the Call to Mission: Who Are My Brothers and Sisters?**

Lent is a season inviting us to be about the work of transforming society by the power of God's love. Come explore with us how our missionary ministries seek to create a more just and peaceful world!

Hosts: Fr. Anthony Nguyen, SVD and Fr. Thinh Ngo, SVD

## April 22 **Discerning the Call to Mission: It is Mercy I desire?**

Easter is a season inviting us to celebrate Jesus' resurrection and his mercy for us. Come and explore with us how God's mercy helps us live as Jesus' disciples as our lives unfold before us!

Hosts: Fr. Anthony Nguyen, SVD and Fr. Adam MacDonald, SVD

## May 27 **Discerning the Call to Mission: Come Holy Spirit**

Pentecost invites us to celebrate the Triune God's perpetual presence in our lives. Come and explore with us how the Holy Spirit dwells in our heart and soul and impels us to spread the Good News!

Hosts: Fr. Emilio Reyes, SVD and Mr. Len Uhal

Registration is required

Click [HERE](#) to register

*This program is designed for single,  
Catholic men (18 - 35)*

 **Divine  
Word  
Missionaries**  
svdvocations.org  
luhal@dwci.edu