

"We endeavor always to be loving towards others because of the love of the Holy Spirit towards us. He is the God of love, the love of the Father and the Son.

- Saint Arnold Janssen

# the DWWC *World*

Educating Tomorrow's Missionaries

Spring 2019



## Did You Know?

Divine Word College lives up to its role helping young men discover God's call to religious missionary life.

Among the Class of '19—you can see the graduates on pages 2-3—are four young men who will move on to the SVD Novitiate at Techny, along with an associate student with a previous degree.

They follow in the footsteps of three former students—Fathers Charles Moat, SVD; Bau Nguyen, SVD; and Victorin Oussoi, SVD—who were ordained on May 25.

Congratulations to all!



## Lessons in Letters Home

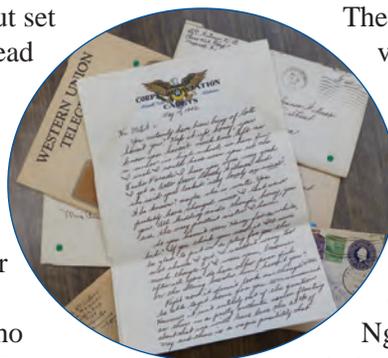
They were bundled in a dresser drawer for decades—letters home from two sons who joined the U.S. Army Air Corps around the time of Pearl Harbor. In 1985, that drawer's jumbled contents was purchased at auction by Dr. Marilyn Taylor, associate professor of writing. The letters were saved but set aside, so though they were first read in the early 1940s, the words on each page were not seen again ... until this semester.

The letters formed the basis of a unique educational experience for Taylor's freshman writing class, thirteen international students, who pulled together these pieces of a family's personal history during a time of war. Each student received specific letters, one at a time and in chronological order, to read and understand. They had to do interviews, look up terms, learn about the war... and be curious.

"Those are the skills they need to do research," Taylor said. "What do you want to know? Where do you look for it?"

Partnering with a seasoned SVD, each student would open an assigned letter, read it aloud,

discuss it, ask questions and later transcribe it. From dated terms and family relationships, to military life, censorship and the war—all raised questions. Then they would write papers about what they learned.



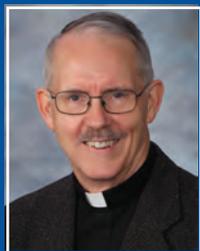
The students also interviewed local veterans, like U.S. Navy Chief Petty Officer Bill Mausser, Retired (pictured above in uniform), who spoke to the class about his military experiences in the reserves. Epworth veteran Neal McDermott sat down with seminarian Lam Nguyen and Sr. Phuong Phan, FMV.

Both their families are rooted in Da Nang where McDermott was stationed during the Vietnam War.

"What are the odds of that happening?" McDermott said. "They asked some good questions and I was more than happy to be here."

Perhaps the strength of the project was the reality of the letters. They are personal and authentic. "I knew this was going to be interesting," Taylor said, "but it went far beyond my expectations."

## A Word from the President:



Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

You've probably heard of Christmas in July...how about Thanksgiving in May?

Words of congratulations abound in May as the school year ends and our graduates take center stage. However there is one detail I always find inspiring.

During the commencement exercises, the students walk in behind the department banners. Then the faculty enter. With their many-colored academic gowns honoring their scholarship and the universities where they studied, their entrance reminds me of the wide experience they bring to Divine Word College. They share it with us as a gift. Unlike the graduates, their academic finery does not provoke in me an expression of congratulations. What I feel is tremendous gratitude.

The DWC faculty is simply extraordinary. I am grateful for their solidarity and mutual respect for one another. I am even more thankful that the faculty genuinely love the students. They consistently show care and friendship that is far above expectations at other schools. This allows our students to thrive and to achieve far beyond their own expectations.

I say, "Thank You – Merci – Gracias – Cảm ơn."

That is my Thanksgiving in May.

Fr. Tom

## Congratulations



**Marc Declama**  
Haiti

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



**Sr. Bich Hong Nguyen, LHC**  
Vietnam

- BA Theology & Religious Studies
- Future Plan: Continue studies in pastoral ministry



**Kodjo Emon**  
Togo

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



**Ha Van Nguyen**  
Vietnam

- BA Philosophy
- Future Plan: Study for the priesthood



**Sr. Cecilia Foleng, SST**  
Cameroon

- BA Theology & Religious Studies
- Future Plan: Pursue master's degree



**Huy Nguyen**  
Vietnam/U.S.

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



**Sr. Florence Wairimu Muturi, LSOSF**  
Kenya

- BA Theology & Religious Studies
- Future Plan: In discussion with superiors



**Thinh Nguyen**  
Vietnam

- AA Interdisciplinary Studies
- Future Plan: Lay ministry

# ns Class of '19



**Sr. Trang Nguyen, CDM**

Vietnam

- BA Philosophy
- Future Plan: Ministry in the U.S.



**Francis Wambua**

Kenya

- BA Philosophy
- Future Plan: Study for the priesthood



**Tuan Van Nguyen**

Vietnam

- BA Philosophy
- Future Plan: Study for the priesthood



**Fr. Wilfrid Valiance**

Indonesia

- AA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Pursue PhD



**Thong Tran**

United States

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



**Frt. Andrew Wang, SVD**

China

- AA Intercultural Studies
- Future Plan: Continue studies for SVD priesthood

## Students, Faculty and Staff Honored

At the annual Awards and Recognition Luncheon, on Thursday, May 2, President Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD, and Academic Dean Fr. John Szukalski, SVD, honored students, faculty and staff.

### *Student scholarships:*

- Mark Varghese and Phuc Truong** – Fr. Chester Nowicki, SVD, Scholarships  
**Michelet Boncoeur** – Mr. Alfred Hughes Scholarship  
**Joubert Felix** – Fr. Francis Kamp, SVD, Scholarship  
**Sam Lollar and Sr. Tram Tran, IHM** – Presidential Scholarships

*Two new scholarships, endowed by SVD alum  
 Dr. Richard Mani, were awarded for the first time.*

- Baruch Zinsou and Tung Vu** –  
 Fr. Edmund Francis Morman, SVD, Scholarships  
**Wisvel Joseph and Friday Onoja** – Mr. Amedeo Cacciamani Scholarships

### *Other Student Honors:*

- Ms. Ngan Vu** – Saint Arnold Janssen, SVD, Award for Oral Presentation  
**Huy Nguyen, Kodjo Emon, and Sr. Trang Nguyen, CDM** –  
 Liturgical Music Awards



### Faculty and Staff Awards:

- Dr. Yasmin Rioux**  
*Professional Presentation Award*  
**Dr. Marilyn Taylor**  
*Rev. Malin Excellence in Teaching Award*  
**Dr. Mathew Kanjirathinkal and  
 Len Uhal**  
*Fr. Michael Hutchins, SVD, Excellence in  
 Leadership Awards*  
**Rob Kundert**  
*Donna Puccio Distinguished Service Award*

# Taylor, Hartel Retire After Decades of Teaching at DWC

Combined, Dr. Marilyn Taylor and Dr. Joe Hartel have educated students at Divine Word College for nearly 60 years. Honored at the Awards and Recognition Luncheon on May 2, they retired at the end of the academic year.

## Dr. Marilyn Taylor



Dr. Marilyn Taylor, associate professor of writing and literature, is retiring after 30 years at DWC.

Dr. Marilyn Taylor is a focused listener. In her classes, when a student presents an idea, the idea is heard. Her gaze intense, she processes their words, then asks questions to clarify the message and help refine its meaning. “I have an obsession with listening, so when students talk or when they write something, I’m paying attention,” she said. “I’m expecting them to mean something.”

Over her three decades at DWC requiring her literature and writing students to explore their own ideas, she was awarded the Rev. Malin Excellence in Teaching Award four times — more than any other DWC educator. She believes in empowering students to think critically, to have faith in the value of their questions. “Curiosity and questioning is pretty darned important for our students,” she said. “When they go into the world, they have to negotiate differences, face conflict, solve unfamiliar problems. They have to figure it out.”

Born and raised in Indiana, Taylor earned her undergrad and master’s degrees at Ball State University. After marrying her husband Jack, she earned a PhD in Creative Writing from the University of Denver in 1980 and landed a teaching job in Ladysmith, Wisconsin. In 1986, she came to Dubuque to teach at Loras College. In 1989, a job opened at DWC. “There was such a gentle quality about the students. They were so hospitable and respectful,” she said. “It’s been so much better here because I could know these students and have long-term relationships with them.”

Nearly a dozen SVDs on the faculty and staff currently at DWC were her students. One of her newest students, freshman seminarian Justin Ballengee put a fine point to his thoughts on Facebook. “Dr. Taylor you are the very best teacher I ever had,” he said. “You never give up on any one and you are very caring and loving in your teaching. May God bless you in your retirement.”

## Dr. Joe Hartel



Dr. Joe Hartel, associate professor of philosophy, is retiring after 28 years at DWC.

In the life of Dr. Joe Hartel, his first love was card magic. Its subtle techniques captivated him from his younger years into college. Not a fan of school, he was trudging toward a liberal arts degree at Lewis University in Chicago when one day he walked into the wrong classroom.

“I thought it was a political science class, but it was one in philosophy,” he said. “It turned out to be the right class because I fell in love with philosophy.” After earning a master’s degree from Marquette University, he was awarded a PhD from the Gregorian University in Rome. In 1991, he accepted a job at DWC.

“I didn’t go into philosophy to get work, I went into it because I loved it,” Hartel said. “Here, I tried to get people to love philosophy, too.” Growing up in New Orleans, he didn’t like school. In truth, the reason for attending Lewis University was so he could also take card-magic classes in Chicago. Then he walked into that “wrong” classroom and everything changed. A few years after coming to DWC, he married the love his life, Jean, and together they welcomed three daughters into the world. Then in 2003, he discovered his next great love—yoga—and soon realized its value in the classroom.

“I try to emphasize philosophies that are practical for life, and yoga does that,” he said. “Yoga integrates philosophy with life. It’s a spiritual practice.” For more than a decade, Hartel has offered yoga classes to the college community, but it is in the classroom where he uses it to foster love of philosophy among his students. For junior seminarian Wisvel Joseph, he has succeeded.

“Dr. Hartel is an excellent, fun, awesome, competent, and knowledgeable professor,” Joseph said. “He has helped me along my journey to become an authentic missionary for the service of the world.”

# A Message from Fr. Thang

The reorganization of the Divine Word Alumni Association has gone well since we began in January. In six months, we have created a new structure made up of six regions and are actively recruiting two or three coordinators for each region. We are using social media to reach out to all former students of SVD educational institutions, and we held our first regional gathering in May. Not a bad start!

The most exciting thing is what we can accomplish as an alumni association. We are asking our alumni to remember their school days and what it meant to live for a time with the SVD and be missionary to others. The Divine Word Alumni Association can help rekindle that missionary spirit in three ways.

**Participate in the mission of the SVD**, by promoting vocations, sponsoring missionary experiences, helping to promote and live the Catholic faith with an intercultural

perspective and by praying for and supporting missionaries around the world.

**Reach out in fellowship to all alumni of SVD schools**, by sponsoring regional gatherings, golf outings, fundraisers, etc.

**Offer opportunities for spiritual renewal**, by conducting recollections, workshops, conferences and retreats.

The reorganization will not affect any local reunions or other events, but it is hoped the goals will be included in all alumni events. What we hope to do is to enhance them and rekindle in all our hearts God’s call for us to be missionary. As SVDs are also alumni, lay alumni are also missionaries.



Fr. Thang Hoang, SVD, Director - Divine Word Alumni Association

# First Regional Alumni Event

It was more than a reunion of classmates. It was a glimpse at the future of the Divine Word Alumni Association.

On May 4, approximately twenty-five former students of SVD schools in the upper Midwest met at Divine Word College for the first gathering of the Midwest Region, one of six regions in the association’s new structure. For a few hours, they gathered in faith, learned about the association’s new direction, honored its past director and heard missionary experiences of two alumni—an SVD and a layman.

“For our first effort, things went well,” said Fr. Thang Hoang, SVD, director of

the Divine Word Alumni Association. “It was wonderful to come together in this way and, for a few hours, rekindle the sense of being missionary.”

The event began at 4 pm as Fr. Thang explained the association’s goals and regional reorganization. Then it was on to a special Mass, presided by Fr. Thang with another alum, Deacon Bill Mauss of Dubuque, providing the homily. Dinner in the dining room featured three presentations.

Former alumni association director Mike Cousins, along with his wife Kathy, received a beautiful statuette of the Holy Family in honor of their

work leading the alumni association for eleven years. Father Long Phi Nguyen, SVD, assistant dean of students at DWC, recounted his six years on mission in Chile. Another alum, Art Roche—recipient of the DWC Matthew 25 Award—shared his charitable work among the Marshallese in Dubuque.

The dinner wrapped up by introducing the latest members of the Divine Word Alumni Association—the graduates in the DWC Class of 2019.

“It is a beginning. Now I look forward to similar gatherings in the other regions,” Fr. Thang said. “May God bless the missionary spirit in all of us.”



# DWC Photo Gallery

Divine Word College seminarians (l-r) Truong An Nguyen, Nam Nguyen, and Hien Van Nguyen do some heavy lifting at St. Patrick parish in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The three were part of the 2019 Spring Ministry Trip. Eighteen seminarians used their spring break to fan out in groups to help at SVD parishes in Chicago, Fort Wayne, Memphis, St. Louis and Gassaway, West Virginia.



Assistant Professor of Music Dr. Evelyn Dias (back center) performs at the piano as Bro. Brian McLaughlin, SVD, turns the pages during the chamber concert she organized for the Divine Word College community on March 26. Joined on violin by Dr. Amanda Wilton of Creighton University and University of Iowa tenor Mason Montuoro, they presented works of César Franck, Vaughan Williams, Arvo Pärt, and Tigran Mansurian.

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More than 200 friends and benefactors of Divine Word College listen to a presentation by Fr. Adam MacDonald, SVD, during the 2019 Donor Appreciation Mass and Luncheon on April 7. The annual event is a way to thank our benefactors who support our students through their contributions. Every student at Divine Word receives some level of financial aid, which is funded in part by your donations.



Referee Bro. Larry Kieffer, SVD, 83, tosses the tip-off for seminarians Tomerot Lambert and Ryan Agbim at an intramural game in early April. A basketball player during his youth in nearby Bellevue, Iowa, he enjoyed coaching youth basketball during his nearly 50 years on mission in Papua New Guinea. Bro. Larry retired to Divine Word College, where he still likes to keep his hand in the game.

The Easter Bunny hopped in for a visit to the Jacoby Library over Easter weekend. Bracketed by seminarians Ryan Agbim (l) and Justin Ballengee along with Fr. Stephan Kha Nguyen, SVD (r), they posed for a photo before launching an all-out search for librarian Daniel Williams, who was nowhere to be found...or was he?



# To Witness God's Presence



Fr. Linh Pham, SVD,  
Development Director

As Divine Word Missionaries carry out their various tasks and responsibilities, Acts 1:8 inspires them to serve as witnesses of God's presence in everything they do. Divine Word Missionaries are active wherever God is. God's presence spells out the purpose and direction for the tasks undertaken by Divine Word Missionaries. As our SVD Constitutions state, "His Life is our life, His Mission is our mission."

As God's instruments, Divine Word Missionaries dedicate themselves to fulfilling God's path to salvation and mission for us on earth. This mission does not simply entail accomplishing specific religious duties and charitable responsibilities demanded of religious people on a daily basis. God's mission is truly about maintaining God's love in the hearts, minds and souls of people throughout the world. The success of this divine mission does not depend on the magnitude of a particular task or the complexity of a problem awaiting a solution. As long as God's love finds a true home in the hearts of people, as long as God's kindness accompanies our action, and as long as God's compassion motivates our lives, God's mission is alive.

Divine Word Missionaries have everything to do with keeping that mission alive. As members of a religious community committed to preserving God's love in the world, Divine Word Missionaries often find it moving to witness the presence of God's compassion in everyday people. How can one's heart not be moved when seeing an old widow with meager income offering what she could to help the suffering people in Cameroon? How can one's eyes not fill with tears when receiving generous gifts meant for street children in

Ecuador? How can one not bow in respect to those with limited means responding to the cries for help from lepers in the central highlands of Vietnam? How can one not feel joy when you so readily support missionaries being educated at Divine Word College? These experiences truly remind Divine Word Missionaries of the awesome privilege of serving as witnesses to God's mission among God's people everywhere.

Though God's mission takes place in the hearts and souls of God's people; Divine Word Missionaries are simply God's instruments. When witnessing such blessings, Divine Word Missionaries are enormously grateful to you and all our lay missionary partners for affirming, year after year, an important truth about God's mission of love. He is constantly at work in the world as long as God's children open their hearts to witness God's presence in their lives and in all creation.



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)



## DWC Honors Art Roche with Matthew 25 Award

At age 13, Art Roche moved from his home near Detroit to the SVD minor seminary at Perrysburg, Ohio. Graduating from Divine Word College in 1970, he chose a vocation as a family man, but the lessons he learned from the SVD would influence much of his life, which has focused on peace and justice and helping those in need.

“My time with the SVD gave me an appreciation for the people who live on the edges of society,” Roche said. For his decades of service to others, including 15 years on the DWC Board of Trustees, Roche was honored with the 2019 Matthew 25 Award, which was presented at a prayer service and banquet on March 20.

“Art has been influential in many areas in reaching out to the homeless, the abused, immigrants, those with housing needs and in particular the peace movement,” said Father Ken Anich, SVD, in his nomination. “When one reads the list of his involvements, it becomes obvious he has seriously integrated the principles of Matthew 25.”

Over the years, Roche has volunteered his time to more than two dozen non-profit organizations. Currently he supports the

Sisters of St. Francis in their Sister Water Project, which has brought clean water to a half million people in Tanzania and Honduras. He also helps local immigrants of the Marshall Islands, who left their homes because of the ongoing health problems associated with U.S. nuclear testing in the 1950s. Following the terrorist attack of September 11, 2001, he and his son Andy helped found Dubuque Peace and Justice, which continues to be active today.

During his senior year at DWC, Roche was an orderly at Mercy Hospital, a job he continued after graduation. As opportunities presented themselves, he moved from patient services to administration. He retired from the medical center as director of planning in 2016. That same year he retired from the college board of trustees, which he joined in 2001, working first in finance and then in strategic planning.



*Matthew 25 Award recipient Art Roche (l) with his former teacher, Fr. Bill Shea, SVD*