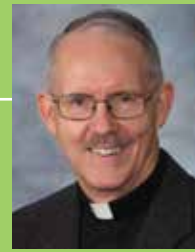


Time for prayer?

“Every one of us needs half an hour of prayer each day, except when we are busy—then we need an hour.” That advice is attributed to St. Francis de Sales, the bishop of Geneva at the beginning of the 1600’s. He himself was a very busy man, so doubtless he regularly spent an hour in prayer and meditation. Every spring, as Easter approaches, I watch for the first sprouts of crocus blossoms. I know other flowers will not be far behind. And I am reminded once again that we live on the threshold of eternity. In eternity we will no longer measure out minutes, hours, days and years. But now, in this life, days come to us as gifts from God; today is unfolding as you read this, tomorrow will follow, and the days after will all arrive on time. Such Easter musings lead me back to the realization that I am already alive forever, so what am I going to do today? Today there is enough time for prayer, for work and rest, for family, for friends and strangers.

I kind of like being busy, but I do need to keep in mind St. Francis’ advice to: “avoid scruples, hurry, and anxiety of mind, which above all things hinder a soul on the road to spiritual perfection.” Scruples, hurry and anxiety spoil the gift of time, but those unhappy states can all be transformed when brought to prayer. Scruples and doubts can become trusting faith, hurry can become generosity, and worry can turn into intercession and blessing. *Life at Divine Word College is busy!* Classes, meetings, studies, friendships, assignments, ministries, exercise and parties jostle with one another on our daily calendar. So, everyone here is well-advised to find an hour for prayer. Morning and evening prayers, daily Mass, bible-sharing, rosaries, Stations of the Cross, Eucharistic adoration and quiet meditation are just some of our ways of prayer. We take time to notice the river of God’s love that flows through us with his precious gifts of time. We pray for you, and are grateful that you pray for us.

Fr. Tan



Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

Welcoming new candidates

In January, two young men were officially accepted into the religious formation program at Divine Word College as SVD candidates. On behalf of the Formation Team, DWC Rector Fr. Simon Hoang, SVD, received and welcomed Andrew Thanh-Quang Nguyen and Tan “Martin” Duy Trinh Nguyen. Andrew is from Seattle and Tan is from Vietnam.

While most new students start in August, Divine Word College has welcomed new SVD candidates in January every year for the past 30 years with the exception of 2023 when the effects of the pandemic greatly impacted vocations.

“I am so proud of the formation program we have,” Fr. Simon said. “Its flexibility and welcoming nature make it possible for us to receive new candidates, even in the middle of the academic year. It certainly indicates the nature of the call, which does not depend on the time and season, but rather on the willingness of the heart that responds to God’s invitation.”

Since their arrival, Andrew and Tan have been busy with classes and getting acquainted with the college community. “Their presence has a great, positive impact on the group of SVD candidates, as well as the whole student body,” Fr. Simon said. “They too seem to immerse themselves well into the life of the college, making friends and participating in daily events at the college. We, as formators, may have to ‘look up’ to them because of their height, but surely, they may also ‘look up’ to us for companionship and guidance as they make their lives through formation programs as SVD candidates.”



(Left to right) Andrew Thanh-Quang Nguyen, DWC Rector Fr. Simon Hoang, SVD and Tan “Martin” Duy Trinh Nguyen



For more information about Divine Word College, call 563-876-3353, email info@dwci.edu, or visit: www.dwci.edu

