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THE PRESIDENT

Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

What is Prophetic Dialogue?

A recent survey of the faculty shows that the phrase "*prophetic dialogue*" is rather mysterious for many of us. Very likely, the same is true for staff members, for students, and even for many SVDs. Over the next several weeks, I will explore this idea, sketching out its essential points and offering a few some concrete illustrations.

The Origin of the Phrase. Prophetic Dialogue is a phrase coined by the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) in the year 2000 to describe our distinctive approach to missionary service. A worldwide gathering of SVD delegates, affirmed:

"There are several ways of articulating this **specific call to mission**. We believe that the deepest and best understanding of this call is expressed in the term "Dialogue," or more specifically, "Prophetic Dialogue." (*SVD General Chapter 2000, #53.*)

What Do We Mean by Dialogue? Dialogue is the fundamental attitude of the Catholic Church toward both external and internal audiences. The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) gathered the bishops from all over the world. As the council was drawing to a close, they proposed a renewed vision that has become a seed for a new era in its mission:

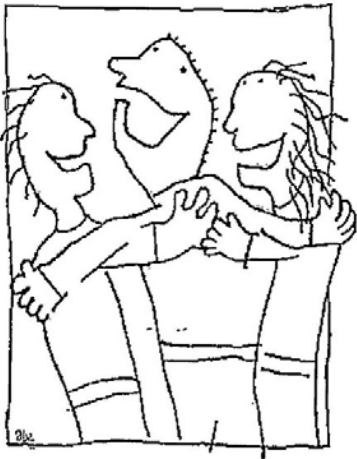
"...giving witness and voice to the faith of the whole people of God gathered together by Christ, this council can provide no more eloquent proof of its *solidarity* with, as well as its *respect* and *love* for the entire human family with which it is bound up, than by engaging with it in conversation about (humanity's) various problems." (*Gaudium et Spes* paragraph 3).



Building on this vision, SVDs have recognized that "dialogue" is more than a strategy.

"In all its richness, (dialogue) is used in a wider meaning to describe our proper attitude toward and relationship with all people. **Dialogue is an attitude of "solidarity, respect, and love" that is to permeate all of our activities.** Limited as we are by our personal and cultural viewpoints, none of us has attained the whole truth contained in God and revealed fully in Christ. In dialogue, we search together for this truth. (SVD General Chapter 2000, #53.)

An authentic attitude of dialogue balances an approach to mission that can sometimes overemphasize preaching, teaching, or proclaiming—or worse, turn it into sermonizing, haranguing, or pontificating.



1992 Newspaper Cartoon

Listening Before Speaking. In 1992, a simple cartoon was published in a Catholic newspaper to illustrate the importance of ecumenical dialogue.

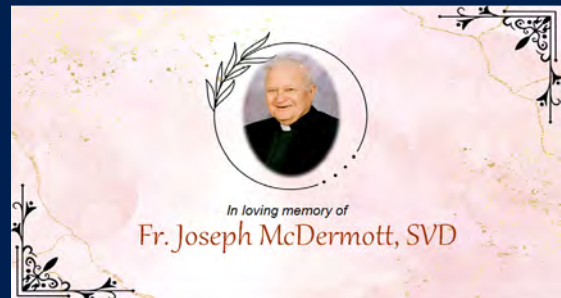
Unfortunately, it missed the point completely. Do you see the mistake? In the drawing, everyone is talking at once—but no one has ears!

Many evenings, when I look back over the day, I turn to a well-turned phrase attributed to a Stoic Philosopher, Epictetus (1st century) that apparently goes back four centuries earlier to some writings of Zeno of Citium. "God gave us two ears and one mouth so that we would listen twice as much as we speak." Honestly, I rarely conclude that I listened too much. Zeno and Epictetus would be very disappointed! **Where Do You Experience Dialogue at DWC?** In our teaching and learning, and in our life together, are we courageous and patient enough to listen? As a college here in Epworth and in the surrounding area, are we living out mission in an attitude of dialogue? Do we spend enough time and effort listening for what people might have to share with us? Do we share with

them the wisdom that we have gathered?

Judging from comments I have heard, our celebration of Mission Sunday was a wonderful experience of dialogue for us and for our guests. Dialogue is an attitude of solidarity, respect and love. Where have you encountered those experiences over the past week?

Next week I'll share some thoughts about why we call it **Prophetic** Dialogue.



All Souls Day Presentation

Reminder: You are invited to submit a photo of a loved one who has passed since November 2024. The photo, and your loved one's name will be included in a slide presentation on All Souls Day, Sunday, November 2, 2025.

Please submit your photo and the name exactly as you would like it displayed by noon on Thursday, October 30. Email the information to: develop@dwci.edu.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Dr. Joshua Young

Academic Conference Season: VPAA to attend CIC Conference

Many on campus will notice that some faculty have been gone for conferences or are attending conferences over the next few weeks. This seems to be the academic conferencing season! This week, I will be attending the annual Council of Independent Colleges Chief Academic Officer Conference in Indianapolis, IN. The conference is a time for VPAA's from other private colleges and universities to talk about common challenges and to celebrate successes. This year's theme focuses on how Academics and Student Life can work together to promote student success. Luckily, DWC has already been addressing this in our work exploring vocation and aligning academic and formation program assessments.

As part of my time at the conference, I will present on our NetVUE grant progress. The presentation will focus on how vocation programs can be mission-focused, innovative, and support student success. In addition, the presentation will feature information

on how we are using survey and assessment data to improve vocational supports across programs, including a new vocation support toolkit being developed. More information will be shared soon.

Student Field Trip

Thanks to the generosity of Mary Pat Kerper and UMB Bank, last Saturday, 14 students, Dr. Young and teachers Sharon Sinton and Larry Udry (and spouses) watched the Dubuque Fighting Saints take on the Madison Capitols. The students learned all about hockey— the graceful beauty, the precise passes and the brutality. The hospitality in the UMB suite was extensive: pizzas and bread sticks. Camaraderie and joviality were the order of the day. This was only outmatched by the outcome of the game (a 6-3 Saints win).



ASSESSMENT LOOP

Ms. Kimberly Burnett-Hackbarth

Last Chance: Complete the Community Questionnaire by Friday, Oct. 31!

Your input is crucial to our ongoing institutional effectiveness and continuous improvement efforts.

Please take a moment to complete the community questionnaire by Friday, October 31. Your voice directly shapes the future of Divine Word College! <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PGMXY6J>





VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION/DEAN OF STUDENTS

Fr. Tuan Hoang, SVD

Retreat – St. Teresa of the Child Jesus

This weekend, St. Teresa of the Child Jesus formation group (on campus and off campus sisters in temporary vows) will have their retreat at Prairiewood Spirituality Center in Cedar Rapids from Friday, October 31, 2025 to Sunday, November 2, 2025. Please keep them in their prayers as they continue to journey with God and follow where the Holy Spirit leads them.

Halloween

This Friday, October 31, 2025, we will celebrate Halloween. Some of the Halloween traditions consist of carving pumpkins, trick-or-treating, and wearing funny and scary costumes, and many others. The Student Senate will host a pumpkin carving contest to the community where each group will have a chance to show off their artistic skills. On Friday, October 31, 2025, please put the carved pumpkin in the dining room before lunch. At lunchtime, all the pumpkins will be displayed and the judges will determine who has the best pumpkin. Prizes will be given to the winners. May the best pumpkin win!



Also, if you want to put on a costume for Halloween and do not have one, Ms. Emily Shedek has costumes to lend to you for the day. You can stop by her office in room 224 to see if there is a costume that you would like to put on.

All Souls Day

This Sunday, November 2, 2025, we join the Universal Church celebrating All Souls Day to remember our relatives, friends, and acquaintances who are deceased. This Sunday, our friends and benefactors will join us for mass to pray for their loved ones and also for our benefactors who passed away this year. Mass will be at 10:00 am, and a brunch will follow. It is required for all students, who do not have special obligations that day, to join the community and join our benefactors for the brunch afterwards. Please come dressed in semi-formal or religious attire.

Since there will be many visitors joining us for mass and reception, the development office asks for your help. The development office will post a sign-up sheet asking for volunteers to help in various ways, and I ask you to sign up as soon as you can.



Daylight Savings

This Sunday, November 3, 2025, daylight savings time will end. Please turn your clocks back one hour and enjoy an extra hour of sleep.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMISSIONS

Len Uhal

National Vocation Awareness Week



November 2-8 is [National Vocation Awareness Week](#). You can click on the link to learn more about the celebration, but it is a week dedicated to promoting priestly and religious vocations. The Vocation Office will celebrate the week in a variety of ways. Stay-tuned next week for fun facts about religious vocations, visual signs, sweet treats and prizes!

Campus Visitors

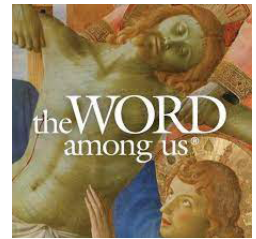
This Wednesday to Friday, Bishop William Medley from the Diocese of Owensboro (Kentucky) will be on campus with the vocation director from the diocese, Fr. Corey Bruns. Current student, Hoan



Sy Tran, is a seminarian for the Owensboro Diocese. Bishop and Fr. Corey are coming to visit Hoan and also enjoy our community's hospitality. Thank you in advance for welcoming them to Divine Word College.

The Word Among Us

Vocation Office staff will place the November issue of *The Word Among Us* in student mailboxes later this week. This booklet is a monthly publication that contains the daily liturgical readings with short reflections and a few other articles and is available to all students at seminaries in the USA as a gift from an anonymous donor. There are a few extra copies in the Vocation Office and we placed some issues in Spanish in the Queen of the America's Chapel on the lower level. Please remember to pray for the generous benefactor that makes this resource available to us.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS

Steve Winger

Health Insurance Open Enrollment Reminder

As a final reminder, the open enrollment period for employee health insurance ends this Friday, October 31. If you haven't already submitted your selections, please do so before the deadline to ensure coverage for 2026.

If you have questions or need assistance, feel free to reach out to the Business Office.



Around Divine Word College

Father John Dear: A Biography

Born on August 13, 1959, John Dear's path to peacemaking began with a searing vision that would define his life's work. While traveling through Israel in 1982, shortly before entering the Society of Jesus, he camped at the Sea of Galilee and visited the Chapel of the Beatitudes. There, he witnessed Israeli warplanes descend over those sacred waters and drop bombs near the Lebanon border. In that jarring juxtaposition of Christ's teachings and modern warfare, Dear made an irrevocable decision: to dedicate his life to peace, disarmament, and the living testimony of the Sermon on the Mount.



Fr. John Dear

After attending Duke University, Dear entered the Jesuits in August 1982 and immediately plunged into the peace movement. By 1985, he was living and working in a refugee camp in El Salvador during the civil war, serving under the Jesuit Refugee Service and the same Jesuits who would be assassinated in 1989. Over the following years, he ran a homeless shelter in Washington, D.C., taught at a Jesuit high school and Fordham University, and earned two Master's degrees in theology from the Graduate Theological Union in California. He was ordained to the priesthood in June 1993.

The 1990s saw Dear's activism expand in scope and impact. He arranged for Mother Teresa to address various governors about the death penalty, helping to prevent eight executions. He directed a large community center for African American women and children in Richmond, Virginia, and spent his Jesuit sabbatical year at a human rights center in Belfast, Northern Ireland. In 1998, he became executive director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the largest interfaith peace organization in the United States. From this position, he led Nobel laureates to Iraq, guided interfaith delegations to Israel

and Palestine, and organized the People's Campaign for Nonviolence in Washington, D.C., in 2000.

Dear's commitment to nonviolent civil disobedience has resulted in approximately eighty-five arrests. The most consequential came in December 1993, when he was arrested for hammering on an F-15 nuclear-capable fighter-bomber in Goldsboro, North Carolina, as part of a "Plowshares" disarmament action. Facing twenty years in prison, he spent nine months in jail and two years under house arrest.

After September 11, 2001, Dear served as Red Cross coordinator of chaplains at the Family Assistance Center, counseling thousands of grieving relatives and traumatized rescue workers at Ground Zero, while simultaneously organizing demonstrations in Times Square and elsewhere against the war in Afghanistan.

In 2002, Dear moved to New Mexico and became pastor of several churches in the impoverished high desert. There, he initiated an annual vigil for nuclear disarmament outside the Los Alamos National Laboratories, which continued every August for twenty years. His commitment to nuclear abolition had already manifested on August 6, 1995, when he organized the national commemoration of Hiroshima's 50th anniversary at the National Cathedral in Washington, D.C., drawing over two thousand participants. In 2013, Dear and actor Martin Sheen delivered the opening keynote address in Oslo, Norway, launching ICAN—the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons,



which won the 2017 Nobel Peace Prize. On August 6, 2020, he organized a national Zoom workshop commemorating the 75th anniversary of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings, featuring Archbishop Wester and Dr. Ira Helfand.

In 2016, Dear left the Jesuits and joined the Diocese of Monterey, California, where he now resides. That year, he participated in the Vatican Conference on Nonviolence and was asked by Cardinal Turkson to draft Pope Francis's January 1, 2017, World Day of Peace message—the first statement on nonviolence in the history of the Catholic Church. He joined the staff of *Pace e Bene* and cofounded Campaign Nonviolence, a national week of action each September that has grown to include over four thousand actions across every U.S. state, addressing war, poverty, racism, nuclear weapons, and environmental destruction. He also founded and directed the Nonviolent Cities project. In 2020, he established The Beatitudes Center for the Nonviolent Jesus, offering Zoom workshops and free podcasts. In 2022, he helped draft Archbishop Wester's pastoral letter, which called for the abolition of nuclear weapons, marking the first such statement in U.S. Church history.



Throughout his life, Dear has worked alongside legendary peacemakers including Mother Teresa, Daniel and Philip Berrigan, Archbishop Desmond Tutu, Thich Nhat Hanh, Mairead Maguire, Joan Baez, Martin Sheen, Coretta Scott King, Reverend James Lawson, John Lewis, Dorothy Cotton, Cesar Chavez, Vincent Harding, Helen Prejean, Henri Nouwen, Kathy Kelly, Marie Dennis, Ignacio Ellacuria, Anne Lamott, Richard Rohr, Hildegard Goss-Mayr, and Dom Helder Camara.

He has been featured in *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *USA Today*, and *National Public*

Radio's "All Things Considered," as well as regularly on "Democracy Now!" For eight years, he wrote weekly columns for the *National Catholic Reporter* and *Huffington Post*. He is the subject of the documentary "The Narrow Path" and is profiled in "John Dear on Peace" by Patti Normile. Dear embodies the concepts of global responsibility and missionary discipleship.



Dear has authored hundreds of articles and over thirty-five books, including *The Beatitudes of Peace*, *They Will Inherit the Earth*, *Living Peace*, *The Nonviolent Life*, *Lazarus Come Forth*, *The God of Peace*, *Jesus the Rebel*, *Peace Behind Bars*, and his autobiography, *A Persistent Peace*. His works have been translated into ten languages. He has edited volumes on Daniel Berrigan, Mohandas Gandhi, Mairead Maguire, Henri Nouwen, Richard McSorley, and Horace McKenna. As literary executor of Daniel Berrigan, he chairs the Daniel Berrigan Literary Trust. He serves on the national advisory boards of Veterans for Peace and the Annual Selma March, and has received the *Pacem in Terris* Award and the *Courage of Conscience* Award, among other honors.





Matthew Jacoby Library

opac.dwci.edu

Professional Development: Reflections from MAC 2025

By Elizabeth Winter

Last week, I attended the Midwest Archives Conference 2025 Fall Symposium at the St. Louis Kaplan Feldman Holocaust Museum, which focused on *Trauma-Informed Practices in Museums and Archives*. The sessions highlighted the ethical and emotional complexities of collecting, preserving, and providing access to materials that document traumatic histories.

As someone whose family members were either forced to relocate or were murdered in the Holocaust, the symposium was deeply personal. It not only offered examples of best practices for processing and providing access to sensitive materials in my role as DWC Archivist, but also prompted me to confront my own feelings of grief, anger, and disgust about historical and contemporary ethnic discrimination and genocide. Ultimately, the Symposium was a somber, yet inspiring reminder that stewardship of memory is not only a technical responsibility but also a deeply human one and that the work that I do to preserve and provide access to the historical record is indispensable.

What do You Want to Learn About?

Please complete a short **two-question survey** by **November 30**. The survey asks what topics you would like to learn more about in the spring workshop series. Access the survey by visiting <https://bit.ly/ARCEVENTS>. It is also on the library's website: <https://opac.dwci.edu>.



Book Displays Update

The **Indigenous Peoples' Day** and **John Dear** book displays are still available for browsing. These featured books will be reintegrated into the main collection on Monday, November 3. Be sure to check them out before then!

ARCWORKSHOP

ARC Workshop Series: Digital Theological Library (DTL 2)

November 4 at 12:30 PM

The 3rd event in the fall 2025 ARC Workshop Series is *Finding Credible Sources using Digital Theological Library (DTL 2)*. This workshop will guide participants in effectively using the Digital Theological Library to locate reliable academic resources. Feel free to bring your lunch down to the ARC.*

Campus Reads: Read Chapter 9

Start or continue reading **Chapter 9** in *Called Beyond Ourselves*. Larry Udry will be leading a discussion about the chapter on November 7th in the ARC. Don't miss this opportunity to share your thoughts and engage with others!



CAMPUS READS
2025-2026

*ARC = Academic Resource Center