

In This Issue:

Special Pastoral Message	2
Merit and Vocation	4
Student News	5
NCYC Conference	6
External Affairs News	7
Library News	8
Tech Tip Tuesdays	9

Birthday Corner:

NOVEMBER

19	Mr. Joseph Vu
23	Dr. Evelyn Dias



THE PRESIDENT

Fr. Tom Ascherman, SVD

Thank God for Immigrants

Our celebration of Queen of the Americas last Saturday was a beautiful, song-filled, prayerful, tasty and *boisterous* event. We shared many stories as we gathered to give thanks to God for Immigrants.

Guadalupe & Thanksgiving: Two Stories of Welcome

The feast days of Our Lady of Guadalupe and U.S. Thanksgiving seem to echo one another. Both feasts recall Native Americans receiving European immigrants—once in the South and once in the North—across the 16th and 17th centuries.

The story of **Guadalupe** is about mutual welcome, a welcome that transformed both St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin, a Chichimecan layman, and the Spanish Bishop Juan Zumárraga, during Mary's miraculous appearances in 1529 at Tepeyac and Tenochtitlan (now part of Mexico City). It was a time of collapse for the Aztec empire: smallpox and war were pushing the culture toward ruin. The newly arrived Spaniards, along with allies from other indigenous peoples, had conquered the empire just ten years earlier. After many frustrated attempts by Juan Diego to deliver Mary's message, the Franciscan bishop was finally able to open his heart and his house when Juan Diego opened his cloak to reveal the Guadalupean image that appeared there. The bishop laid a small feast to welcome the image of Mary and her humble indigenous messenger.

The story of **Thanksgiving** also tells of a welcome—one that ripened into deep friendship between Tisquantum and William Bradford. Many thanksgiving feasts were held by newly arrived immigrants in Massachusetts, Virginia, Texas and Florida in the



late 16th century and early 17th century. But the feast we most remember was held in the fall of 1621, after a terrible first winter of starvation, to give thanks for a good harvest and for the survival of 53 English pilgrims of the original 102. Their survival was only possible through the help of Native Americans, especially Wampanoag Chief Massasoit, Patuxet ambassador Tisquantum, and Abenaki interpreter Samoset.

Both stories point us toward the banquet of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Our Time of Confusion

The politics and economics of our times are deeply confused—both here in the United States and in many nations around the world. As globalization increases, economies intertwine, and communication becomes nearly instantaneous, we struggle to understand how to relate to the “otherness” of so many people. In the U.S., some loud voices call out to “close the borders! They are murderers, thieves and rapists! They are killing our pets and eating them.” Some respond by building walls and fortifying the borders; others reach out with cautious welcome.

There is a third story, one that Jesus told, that provides guidance in this time conflict. He told of a King who says, “Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me... Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers (or sisters) of mine, you did for me” (Mt 25:34-40).

If we cannot learn to welcome strangers, migrants, refugees, and those who differ from us, we will find it difficult to live in the kingdom God is preparing. Can we welcome differences? Can we learn to delight in them? God is infinitely different from us, so will we struggle to accept God’s welcome so to live in God’s house?

Gratitude for Immigrants

Immigrants invite us to grow beyond our narrowness and to give thanks. I give thanks to God for immigrants.

- **Thank God for immigrants:** I am the offspring of German and Irish immigrants.

- **Thank God for immigrants:** I have been welcomed in Mexico and Italy, adopted into families there.
- **Thank God for immigrants:** I now live in my “home territory” at DWC, with “family” gathered from all over the world.



Thanks to those born here and those more recently arrived, we are all slowly being prepared to be part of that “great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue” (Rev. 7:9). We look forward to the day when all of us will stand before the throne of the Lamb, giving thanks and praise to God.

A Foretaste of the Banquet

Thank God, then, for all of us—immigrants and children of immigrants. (One of Fr. Sam’s many T-shirts comes to mind: American Raised – with – Immigrant Roots.) We are the reason for feasting both in this season and for the end of time. If I were in charge of the menu for that great heavenly banquet, I would ask for tamales and turkeys. Perhaps a first course of spaghetti and some rhubarb pie for desert would also honor a feast for the Queen of the Americas.

Jesus has a different menu in mind: He offers bread and wine as his body and blood. Together with Mary and Joseph, he was a refugee migrant to Egypt, and he knows how to make us welcome.

Special Pastoral Message on Immigration

On November 12, when the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) gathered for the Fall Plenary Assembly in Baltimore, the bishops issued a message addressing their concern for the evolving situation impacting immigrants in the United States. It was the first time in twelve years the USCCB invoked this particularly urgent way of speaking as a body of bishops to the entire country. In a vote of 216 votes in favor, 5 votes against, and 3 abstentions, the bishops overwhelmingly approved the message, with sustained applause of the body following the vote. The full text

of the bishops' Special Pastoral Message follows: "As pastors, we the bishops of the United States are bound to our people by ties of communion and compassion in Our Lord Jesus Christ. We are disturbed when we see among our people a climate of fear and anxiety around questions of profiling and immigration enforcement. We are saddened by the state of contemporary debate and the vilification of immigrants. We are concerned about the conditions in detention centers and the lack of access to pastoral care. We lament that some immigrants in the United States have arbitrarily lost their legal status. We are troubled by threats against the sanctity of houses of worship and the special nature of hospitals and schools. We are grieved when we meet parents who fear being detained when taking their children to school and when we try to console family members who have already been separated from their loved ones.

"Despite obstacles and prejudices, generations of immigrants have made enormous contributions to the well-being of our nation. We as Catholic bishops love our country and pray for its peace and prosperity. For this very reason, we feel compelled now in this environment to raise our voices in defense of God-given human dignity.

"**Catholic teaching** exhorts nations to recognize the fundamental dignity of all persons, including immigrants. We bishops advocate for a meaningful reform of our nation's immigration laws and procedures. Human dignity and national security are not in conflict. Both are possible if people of good will work together.

"We recognize that nations have a responsibility to regulate their borders and establish a just and orderly immigration system for the sake of the common good. Without such processes, immigrants face the risk of trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Safe and legal pathways serve as an antidote to such risks.

"The Church's teaching rests on the foundational concern for the human person, as created in the image and likeness of God (*Genesis 1:27*). As pastors, we look to Sacred Scripture and the example of the Lord Himself, where we find the wisdom of God's compassion. The priority of the Lord, as the Prophets remind us, is for those who are most vulnerable: the widow, the orphan, the poor, and the stranger (*Zechariah 7:10*). In the Lord Jesus, we see the One

who became poor for our sake (*2 Corinthians 8:9*), we see the Good Samaritan who lifts us from the dust (*Luke 10:30–37*), and we see the One who is found in the least of these (*Matthew 25*). The Church's concern for neighbor and our concern here for immigrants is a response to the Lord's command to love as He has loved us (*John 13:34*).

"To our immigrant brothers and sisters, we stand with you in your suffering, since, when one member suffers, all suffer (*cf. 1 Corinthians 12:26*). You are not alone!

"We note with gratitude that so many of our clergy, consecrated religious, and lay faithful already **accompany and assist immigrants** in meeting their basic human needs. We urge all people of good will to continue and expand such efforts.

"We oppose the indiscriminate mass deportation of people. We pray for an end to dehumanizing rhetoric and violence, whether directed at immigrants or at law enforcement. We pray that the Lord may guide the leaders of our nation, and we are grateful for past and present opportunities to dialogue with public and elected officials. In this dialogue, we will continue to advocate for meaningful immigration reform.

*"As disciples of the Lord,
we remain **men and women of hope**,
and hope does not disappoint! (cf. Romans 5:5)*

*"May the mantle of Our Lady of Guadalupe
enfold us all
in her maternal and loving care
and draw us ever closer to the heart of Christ."*



A video version of the message is available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsMQ8V4pNCI>



VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Dr. Joshua Young

Merit and Vocation: Does one Deserve what they Get?

There's been significant discussion in higher education about the need to better align education with employment skills. This has been the direction of higher education since the 1980's, but the discussion is a little more pointed. Today, the criticism that colleges and universities are not aligned to meet the employment needs of students argues that too many of our institutions are too woke; they focus on criticizing normative culture, creating division, and leaving students without the skills to contribute to the market. Critics argue that students deserve better.

American higher education is imbued with the Puritan Work Ethic that believes one must merit inclusion within the classroom; a student must deserve their spot. It is my argument that colleges and universities, especially those mission-based within the Catholic tradition, must resist the ways the political and economic situation try to make us sort and exclude students. I presented on this at the

Campus Reads program in October and followed up on the discussion those present had and would offer the following resource.

For those interested in learning more, I suggest Michael Sandel's [*The Tyranny of Merit*](#) which critiques the modern ideal of meritocracy, arguing that the belief that success is solely earned through talent and hard work leads to dangerous social division.

Our current system creates hubris among the "winners" who believe they deserve all their rewards, and fosters humiliation and resentment among the "losers," fueling populist backlash. Sandel ultimately calls for a renewed focus on the dignity of all work and a greater sense of civic solidarity to heal a fractured public life.



ASSESSMENT LOOP

Ms. Kimberly Burnett-Hackbarth

Thank You!

Divine Word College sincerely thanks all faculty, staff, and students for the strong engagement in the recent Missionary Discipleship survey. Your high response rate provided us with robust, representative data essential for our institutional effectiveness. We will immediately use this invaluable input to inform strategic planning and strengthen our shared mission to cultivate missionary disciples. Thank you for helping Divine Word College fulfill its unique educational and spiritual purpose!





VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION/DEAN OF STUDENTS

Fr. Tuan Hoang, SVD

Mass for Vocation

Next **Tuesday, November 25, 2025**, the Br. Wendelin Meyer formation group will organize the monthly vocation mass. In this mass, Khang Quang Tran will share his vocation story, and how he became attracted to join formation with the Society of the Divine Word. Please join us for this vocation mass and show your support to Khang and our SVD candidates in the Br. Wendelin Meyer formation group.

Thanks and Appreciation to AAHA

I want to thank the members of the Asian American Hispanic Association (AAHA) for organizing a wonderful celebration last weekend – *The Queen of the Americas*. Your hard work and effort brought joy to the Divine Word College community. I also thank Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD for presiding and sharing an inspirational homily reminding us about the history of Queen of the Americas and Thanksgiving. Everything went well, and the community enjoyed the celebration. We continue to pray to the Queen of the Americas to inspire us in our faith and our vocation.

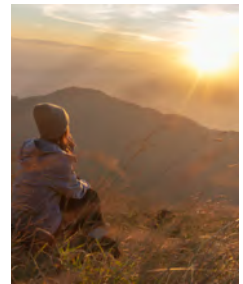


View the collection of photos - [click here](#).

Theological Reflection

By this time of the semester, ministry practicum has ended for most of you. I want to thank you for your willingness and effort in serving the people, and I hope that your experience was fruitful. From **November 17, 2025 to November 23, 2025**, all students doing ministry will gather in your ministry groups for theological reflection sharing.

Your faculty supervisor will organize a day and time for your group sharing. I encourage you to take this time and seriously reflect on your experience. Please submit your theological reflections to your supervisors at the end of your sharing.



Christmas Travels

I want to remind you that if you have bought your tickets and need a ride to the airport for your Christmas vacation, please submit the travel form to Fr. Akizou Kamina, SVD by Wednesday, November 26, 2025. Please follow the travel policy, especially take note of buying the airfare tickets. If you have any questions or concerns, Fr. Akizou and I are here to help.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMISSIONS

Len Uhal

Upcoming National Catholic Youth Conference

NCYC is a 3-day conference for Catholic high school youth and their adult chaperones from all over the United States. In the past, the largest delegation was from the Archdiocese of Dubuque! The conference features dynamic speakers, workshops, music, prayer, and community-building activities designed to help young people deepen their faith. The SVD Vocation Team will be present in the interactive exhibit hall inviting youth to write and meet missionaries and to consider a religious vocation.

A highlight of the event this year is a live discussion with Pope Leo via video conference, the first time a pontiff has blessed the conference with his presence in “real time.” Please pray for the youth attending the conference as well as for our vocation team. Learn more about NCYC by clicking [here](#).



Video Filming Coming to DWC!

The Vocation Office is excited to announce the production of two new vocation videos designed to introduce candidates to life with the Divine Word Missionaries and the formation program here at Divine Word College.

Phase One of filming will take place on **Tuesday, November 25**, when a professional film producer will be on campus capturing interviews and gathering background footage. Throughout the day, you may notice a camera in various settings—at Mass, in classrooms, in the dining room, or even in the hallways.

We kindly ask everyone to go about their day as usual—and please don’t shy away from the camera. Authentic glimpses of daily life at DWC are essential in helping prospective candidates understand our vibrant community.



If you have any questions, feel free to contact **Len Uhal** or **Sandy Wilgenbusch**.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS

Steve Winger

Reminder: Submit Vacation Requests Before Year-End

As we approach the end of the year, please remember to submit your vacation requests to your supervisor. Per Section **13.20.02** of the Policy Handbook:

- Vacation must be taken within one year after it is granted.

- Any unused vacation hours will be forfeited on December 31st.
- Vacation hours are granted on January 1st each year, based on years of service.

Vacation may be taken with your supervisor’s approval. Please schedule desired vacation time in advance to ensure adequate staffing for College operations.

From the DWC Handbook 13.19 - Holidays

For the convenience of employees, the College's observance of the Christmas holiday will differ from year to year according to the day of the week on which Christmas falls.

When Christmas falls on . . . Paid holidays are:

Sunday	Monday and Tuesday
Monday	Monday and Tuesday
Tuesday	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
Wednesday	Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday
Thursday	Wednesday, Thursday, Friday
Friday	Thursday and Friday
Saturday	Friday and Monday



external affairs

Display Updates Coming Soon

In the weeks ahead, the PR Department will begin refreshing the Core Competency displays on the first floor. Each display will be updated one at a time and will feature new, engaging elements designed to help viewers better understand the meaning and importance of each competency.



We appreciate your patience as these improvements take place—and we look forward to sharing the enhanced displays with you soon!

Epworth Country Christmas

The annual Epworth Country Christmas celebration will take place on **Wednesday, December 3**, and Divine Word College is excited to participate once again at Local's. This year, we are hosting **A Birthday Party for Jesus!**

Mark your calendars and plan to join us for this joyful community event. It's a wonderful opportunity to connect with our neighbors and celebrate the birth of our Savior together. The party will run from **5:00 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.** and will include games, crafts, and plenty of festive fun.

Interested in helping with the celebration? Contact [Emily Shedek](#) to sign up.



 Matthew Jacoby Library

opac.dwci.edu

Discover Koha: Your Gateway to Library Resources

Did you know the Matthew Jacoby Library uses **Koha**, a powerful open-source system, to manage our collection? Through the **Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)** at <https://opac.dwci.edu>, you can easily search for books, journals, and other resources anytime, anywhere.

Here are a few tips to make the most of OPAC:

Search Smarter: Use the **Advanced Search** option to filter by author, title, subject, or format. This is especially helpful for theology, philosophy, and intercultural studies topics.

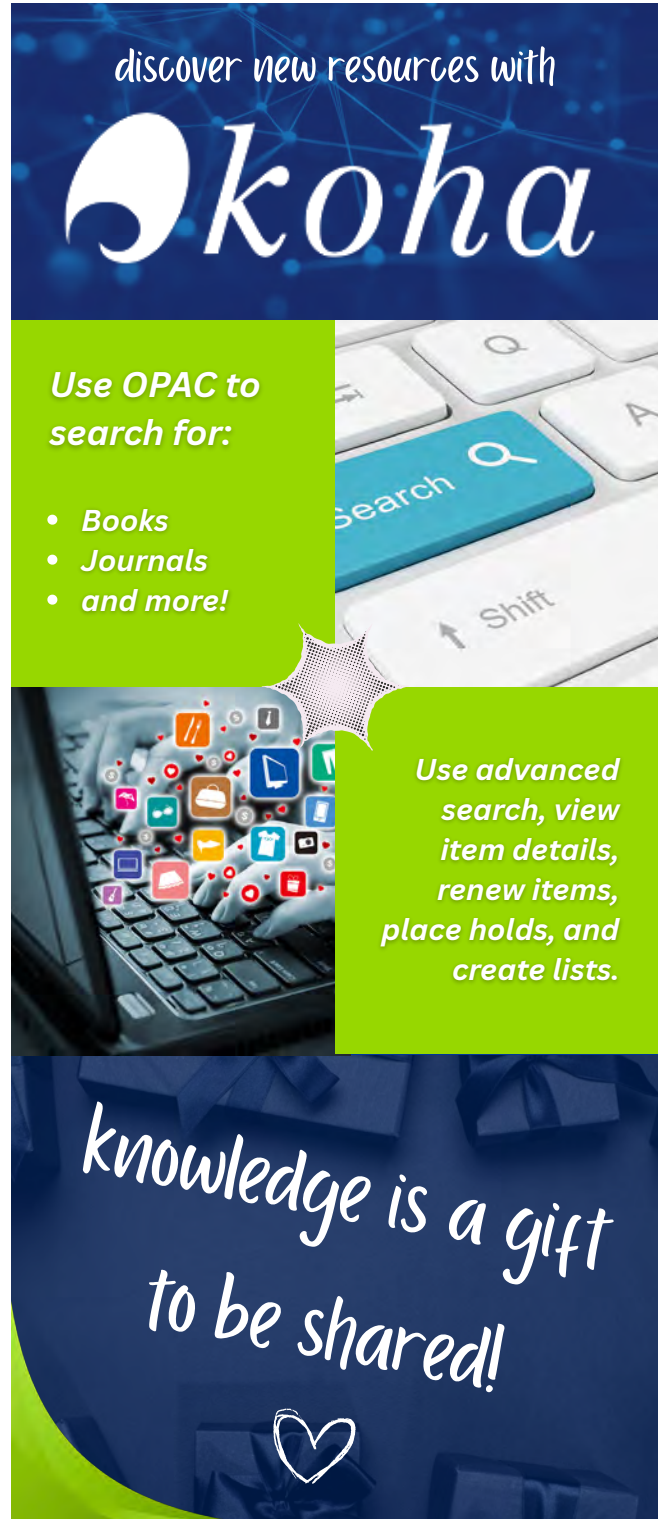
View Item Details: When you click on a record, check the **Location**, **Collection**, **Call Number**, and **Availability**. These details tell you exactly where to find the book on the shelf and if it is available to check out.

Log In for More Features: When you log in with your library credentials, you can **renew items**, **place holds**, and **create lists** for your research projects.

Explore the Support Page: Need help? The [Support](#) section on OPAC offers step-by-step guides for searching, renewing, and using digital resources. It's your one-stop resource for navigating the library system.

Did You Know?

Koha is used by thousands of libraries worldwide and is one of the most trusted open-source library systems. Its name comes from a Māori word meaning **“gift”**—a reminder that access to knowledge is a gift we share with our community!



discover new resources with

koha

Use OPAC to search for:

- Books
- Journals
- and more!

Use advanced search, view item details, renew items, place holds, and create lists.

knowledge is a gift to be shared!



TECH TIP TUESDAYS

MICROSOFT 365 SERIES
BY LIZ WINTER

What is OneDrive?

OneDrive is Microsoft's cloud storage service included with Microsoft 365. It lets you **store, access, and share files securely from any device**—your PC, phone, or the web.



Instead of saving files only on your computer, OneDrive keeps them backed up in the cloud, so you never lose work and can collaborate easily. Watch a video tutorial: [Intro to OneDrive](#).

Why Use OneDrive?

- **Automatic Backup:** Files saved to OneDrive are protected even if your computer crashes.
- **Access Anywhere:** Open your documents from any device by signing into your Microsoft account.
- **Collaboration:** Share links instead of email attachments so everyone works on the same version.
- **Version History:** Restore previous versions of files without losing your current edits.



Excel, or PowerPoint, choose **File > Save As > OneDrive** instead of your local drive.

- This ensures your files are backed up and accessible from any device.

Turn On AutoSave

- In the top-left corner of Word, Excel, or PowerPoint, toggle **AutoSave** to **On**.
- AutoSave only works when the file is stored in OneDrive or SharePoint.
- This prevents losing work if your computer crashes or you forget to hit **Save**.

KEEP AN EYE OPEN
FOR MORE **TECH TIPS**



COMING SOON!

3 Starter Tips

Sync OneDrive to Your PC for Offline Access

- Install the **OneDrive desktop app** and sign in with your Microsoft 365 account.
- This creates a OneDrive folder on your computer where files sync automatically.
- You can work offline, and changes will update when you reconnect to the internet.

Save Files Directly to OneDrive

- When creating a new document in Word,