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THE PRESIDENT

Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

BUSY, BUSY, BUSY

St. Mark tells of the busy beginnings of Jesus' ministry in chapter 6 of his Gospel. Monday's reading concluded the chapter with Jesus and his disciples landing at Gennesaret. There, a crowd gathered quickly, bringing people in need of healing. I wonder how Jesus felt when he saw another big crowd gathering.

Chapter 6 begins with Jesus being rejected in his hometown of Nazareth. Then he sends his disciples out two by two on a mission of healing. Soon after, Jesus hears the terrible news that Herod has killed John the Baptist. When his disciples return from their mission, they report all the amazing healings that had taken place. But then, things become so busy, with people coming and going, that there isn't even time to eat! So, Jesus suggests they go away to find a deserted place to rest.

Leaving by boat they arrive at a place that is no longer "deserted". People have come on foot from all the surrounding towns. Jesus is moved with compassion. Even though it was meant to be time off, he begins to teach them and then feeds five thousand people with five loaves and two fish.



Afterwards, Jesus tells the disciples to take the boat to the other side of the lake, while he goes to the mountain to pray. A storm comes up, and the disciples see Jesus WALKING on the water. They call out and he gets into the boat, the wind dies down, and the Gospel says "they were completely astounded." (What an understatement....) They land at Gennesaret, a beautiful plain stretching down from the hills to the water. Once again, the people gather all around, needing healing and needing hope.

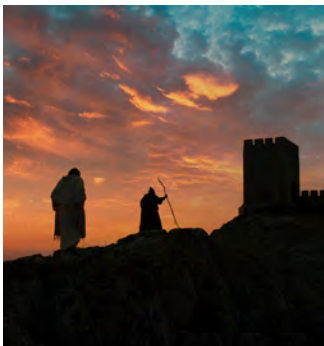
So, here is a brief summary of the itinerary of chapter 6: Nazareth rejects Jesus. Disciples sent out. Jesus mourns John's beheading. Disciples return, no time to eat. Departure for a deserted place, five thousand people need teaching and food. Disciples in the boat, need calm in a storm. Arrival at beautiful Gennesaret, gathered crowds need healing and hope. Clearly, Jesus' ministry and that of his disciples was often hectic and demanding. I feel exhausted by reading just this one chapter!

At times, life at DWC can also be hectic and demanding. Too many classes. Too many meetings. Too much homework. Late for ministry. Late for Mass. Late for lunch. More people to meet. More parties. More messes to clean up.



When life gets too full, I look around and notice the many people who keep things running smoothly. The guys in **Maintenance** are managing the cars, clearing snow, making sure there is heat, fixing leaks. **Housekeeping** is washing linens, cleaning floors, preparing guest rooms. The **Kitchen** is chopping, mixing, boiling, baking, and serving; then cleaning up and starting again. They remind me of the disciples who helped welcome the people, fretted about the food, rowed the boat, worried in the storm, and helped anoint the sick.

The truth is, everyone helps at DWC. We wash dishes, clean floors, carry food to the sick, run errands, set up for parties, and clear away afterward. Our custom of community service is truly remarkable. Many guests, and even the official visitors from the Higher Learning Commission, have commented, "Everything is so clean here! It's beautiful."



I wonder if Jesus ever felt overwhelmed by the demanding crowds. Of course, he had the power of God with him. Surely, he also looked around and saw his disciples helping as best they could. He would also have noticed

women and men in the crowd helping the sick, caring for children, reaching out to friends.

All of us are in the same boat with Jesus! We have the power of God with us. We are surrounded by helpers, even when we do not always notice. Sometimes, when my energy is low and I feel unenthusiastic about going back to the office, I imagine Jesus whispering to me: "I'm going to go to the office for a bit, do you want to come along?" How can I say, "no"?

Then, I notice so many of Jesus' busy disciples here, giving back what they can. Thanks.

Presidential Forum – Student Success

A week ago, faculty, staff, and administrators gathered together at the Presidential Forum to brainstorm possibilities for a **Student Success Quality Initiative**. Having received a ten-year full accreditation, the Higher Learning Commission encourages schools to use the Quality Initiatives "to take risks, innovate, take on a tough challenge, or pursue a yet unproven strategy or hypothesis."

As a first step in identifying an area for improvement over the next four years, we shared ideas in small groups that included members from the different



departments across the school. From the buzz in the room, it was clear that people were excited. I invited all those present to email me at least one idea from their brainstorming. Many generously shared their "two-cents."

A second step is to take a few minutes to complete a survey on missionary education. In his email announcing the survey, Dr. Joshua Young wrote:

"As many of you know, we are currently studying what vocation means in the context of our educational and formation degrees. To that end, we're trying to get more information from all Catholic missionaries. Please consider taking the following survey to tell us about the future of missionary formation and higher education's role:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2D86N2W>

“Once you have completed the survey, please share it with other Catholic missionaries (lay, priest, religious, etc.). Our goal is to have a high number of participants, so encourage your friends to share the survey with others was well or feel free to post the link on your various social media accounts. Thank you for your support and participation.”

I invite everyone at DWC, students, faculty, staff, administrators, to participate. The many Friends of DWC who receive this newsletter are also encouraged to help. The survey results will surely help us develop a Quality Initiative to strengthen student success at DWC.

As we move forward, I look forward to opportunities to hear from the students about their ideas.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Dr. Joshua Young

Missionary Formation and Higher Education Survey

As part of the College’s efforts to understand vocation and missionary service, research is currently being conducted on missionary formation and higher education. The survey asks how successful Catholic colleges and universities are at forming missionaries and what improvements can be made. **The survey is for EVERYONE THAT CONSIDERS THEMSELVES MISSIONARIES!**



Please encourage your fellow missionaries to take the survey by sharing the link with them after you have completed the survey. Please help us reach over 1,000 missionaries! Here is the link- <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2D86N2W>

Faculty Award Review to Begin

Chair of the Faculty Promotions and Awards Committee, Dr. Cathleen Cleary, has begun gathering the names of faculty members eligible for the Rev. Charles Malin, SVD Excellence in Teaching Award. The award is named after Fr. Charles Malin, SVD



one of the longest serving Vice Presidents for Academic Affairs, and recognizes a faculty member that has demonstrated significant dedication to students and their own personal pedagogical development. Faculty members that are eligible are those that:

1. Have not received the award in the last 3 years (since Spring 2023);
2. Have completed the following requirements for teaching at DWC:
 - Full-time undergraduate faculty – completed 3 consecutive semesters of teaching;
 - Part-time undergraduate faculty – completed 5 consecutive semesters of teaching;
 - Full-time IELI faculty – completed 3 consecutive semesters (two 8-week sessions);
 - Part-time IELI faculty - completed 5 consecutive semesters (two 8-week sessions).

Faculty wishing to be taken out of consideration for this award should contact Dr. Cleary. Once a list of eligible faculty has been approved by the Chair, the Student Senate will nominate three faculty for further consideration. The Rev. Charles Malin, SVD Excellence in Teaching Award is presented at the annual awards luncheon.

Oral Presentation Award

Submissions for the St. Arnold Janssen Oral Presentation Award are now being accepted. Details are in the appendix of the LOG.



ASSESSMENT LOOP

Ms. Kimberly Burnett-Hackbarth

Rounds 3 of 4 : Faculty Evaluations of Fall 2025 Collection (Assessed Spring 2026)

A few simple reminders of some important assessment details as we begin **Round 3** of 4 this week!

ROUND 3 OF EVALUATIONS

Instructor	Assignment/ Class	Faculty Evaluator	Assessed PLOs
Mr. Mike Mason	THM 223 New Testament Final Paper	Round 2: S. Nguyen	CORE #5
Dr. Jason Reed	PHI 445 Metaphysics Final Paper	Round 2: R. Garrett	CF-PTH #3

1. Dates for Assessment Rounds:

Round 1: January 26 to January 30

Round 2: February 2 to February 6

Round 3: February 9 to February 13

Round 4: February 16 to February 20

2. Evaluation Periods:

Open from Monday 8:00 A.M. to the following Monday 8:00 A.M.

3. The login link for OAP is as follows: <https://www.watermarkinsights.com/client-resources/signon/>

3. Watermark Support Contacts:

support@watermarkinsights.com

Customer Service Hotline: **1-800-311-5656**

Please do not hesitate to call or email me if you have any questions or concerns **Ext. 274**.

Good luck to you all, and thank you so much for your continued efforts!



VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION/DEAN OF STUDENTS

Fr. Tuan Hoang, SVD

Lunar New Year Celebration – Year of the Horse

This Saturday, February 14, 2026, the Vietnamese Student Association (VSA) along with the students from China will organize the Lunar New Year Celebration. This year is the Year of the Horse. According to the Chinese Zodiac, the horse:

“experiences highs and lows in love, work, and health. Breakthroughs are possible through persistence, while balanced self-care and steady finances ensure long-term success.” – (<https://chinesenewyear.net/zodiac/horse>).

Recent years of the horse includes those who are born in 1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, and 2014. Mass will begin at 2:00 p.m. in the main chapel celebrated by Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD. Fr. Simon Thoi Hoang, SVD, the rector of the SVD Community and VSA’s Chaplain will be the homilist for the mass. The VSA and students

from China extend their invitation to the Divine Word College community to join them for the celebration.

In preparation for the liturgy this weekend, there will be liturgy preparation this Thursday, February 12, 2026 in the main chapel at 1:00 p.m. All students are required to attend. Please be there on time.

Spring Break Project

Thanks to all of those who have signed up for the Spring Break Project next month. I hope that you will enjoy your break and use this opportunity to learn the missions of the SVDs in the Chicago Province. I have finalized the list of those participating in the project and the list is posted on the student bulletin board.

Next Tuesday, February 17, 2026, I would like to meet with you to go over what is expected of you at the Spring Break Project. We will meet in room 204 at 1:00 p.m. Please be there on time.





VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS

Steve Winger

Spring Vector Training Courses

This is your notice that our Spring 2026 Vector Solutions training courses will begin next week. These trainings are an important part of Divine Word College's commitment to maintaining a safe, compliant, and mission centered campus environment.

Your participation ensures that we meet federal, professional, and institutional responsibilities in areas such as Title IX, confidentiality, ethical conduct, and student well being. All assigned courses must be completed by **May 31, 2026**.

Spring 2026 Training Assignments for Employees

- Conflicts of Interest
- HIPAA

Spring 2026 Training Assignments for Students

- Title IX Essentials for International Students
- RespectEdu – International Students

Vector Solutions will send weekly reminder emails until you have completed all of your assigned courses. These reminders are automated and will stop once your coursework is finished. If you experience any issues accessing your Vector account or logging in, please contact me directly and I will assist you.

Thank you for your cooperation and for supporting a safe and responsible campus community.



Business Office Transitions and Hiring Update

Divine Word College announces the upcoming retirements of two deeply valued members of the Business Office: **Mary Pat Kerper, Business Office Director and Controller**, and **Ann Maiers, Bookkeeper/Secretary**.

Their dedication, professionalism, and unwavering commitment to the College have shaped the Business Office for many years, and they will be greatly missed by colleagues, students, and all who have worked with them. Fr. Tom will share a formal announcement with the campus community soon.

Business Office Director & Bookkeeper/Secretary Searches

Divine Word College has begun the hiring processes to fill the two open positions in the Business Office.



Search Committee

The following members have been appointed to serve on the Hiring Committee for both positions:

- Steven Winger (Chair)
- Len Uhal
- Sandy Wilgenbusch
- Marlene Decker
- Beth McGrath – Chief Financial Officer, Clarke University; Member, DWC Board of Trustees
- Dan Kadolph – DWC Board of Trustees, Finance Committee

Hiring Process and Timeline

The College is following the approved January–April 2026 hiring timeline, which includes:

- January: Finalization and posting of position announcements
- February–March: Application review, candidate screening, and committee interviews
- Late March: Finalist selection and onsite visits (as needed)
- April: Final recommendation to the President and offer extended
- Target start date: April–May 2026, depending on candidate availability

As the searches progress, the committee remains committed to a collaborative process that reflects the mission and values of Divine Word College.



Pope Warns Diplomats of Rising Global Violence and the Erosion of Human Life

Addressing diplomats accredited to the Holy See, Pope Leo XIV warned that growing global violence and disregard for human life threaten the moral foundations of international relations.

He called for renewed commitment to diplomacy rooted in truth, justice, and the protection of the most vulnerable, including civilians caught in conflict.

The address reinforces the Church's insistence that peace cannot be separated from the defense of life and human rights at every stage. [Read more here.](#)

(Source: Conference of Major Superiors of Men)





Matthew Jacoby Library

opac.dwci.edu

Dubuque County Reads: DWC Book Discussions

Thursday, MARCH 5 at 1 PM in the Mathew Jacoby Library

Dubuque County Reads (DCR), a signature DALINC initiative, promotes literacy, fosters civic engagement, and encourages respectful dialogue on timely social issues. Each year, DCR selects a book and companion youth title to spark county-wide conversations. Core activities include distributing free books, hosting book discussions, and partnering with local organizations to offer events that reflect the book's themes.

In 2026, Dubuque County Reads programming will take place at 9 libraries and 5+ community partners in January through April 2026.

The book discussion at Divine Word College is on March 5 at 1 PM in the Library. Library Director Elizabeth Winter will lead the [discussion](#).

All programming is free and open to the public.

Learn more about DCR 2026: dbqreads.org.

Campus Reads

Friday, FEBRUARY 20 at noon in the ARC

Our collective vocation journey continues! The next Campus Reads book discussion is February 20th, at noon in the Academic Resource Center.

Br. Brian McLauchlin, SVD, will be leading the discussion on Chapter 2: Beyond Deep Gladness in Erin Van Laningham's book *Called Beyond Ourselves: Rethinking Vocation*.

Free copies of *Called Beyond Ourselves* are still available in the library.

Join the Campus Reads Program at anytime!

Faculty Presentation

Tuesday, FEBRUARY 17 at 1:15 PM in the ARC

Dr. Wintress's book *Wisdom in Bonaventure's Hexaemeron: Philosophical Problems, Theological Solutions* was published in May 2025 by Catholic University of American Press, a highly regarded academic publisher specializing in theology, philosophy, church history, and medieval studies.

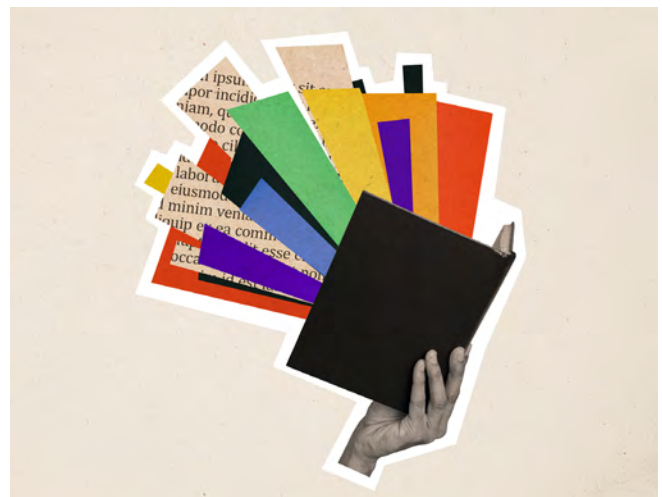


In his presentation to DWC students, faculty, and staff on Tuesday, February 17, Dr. Wintress invites readers into a moment when faith, philosophy, and science were in lively conversation rather than conflict. He shows how Saint

Bonaventure engaged Aristotele and medieval debates about knowledge with intellectual rigor, humility, and care for the common good. This talk will provide a basic overview of his research and answer any questions.

The Matthew Jacoby Library has a physical copy of the book (Call Number: 230.2092 W794w) or you can access it through Project Muse:

<https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/16/monograph/book/125433>



Please join us to celebrate

LUNAR NEW YEAR 2026

YEAR OF THE HORSE



FEB / 14 / 2PM

Mass at 2PM, followed by the banquet and games.

RSVP:

Br. Hien Nguyen – hiennguyen@dwci.edu

Frt. Xuekai Shi – xshi@dwci.edu

Donations will support the SVD Mission

Divine Word College

102 Jacoby Dr. SW Epworth IA – 52045

Submissions Open

The St. Arnold Janssen Oral Presentation Award

The Divine Word College Oral Presentation Award is bestowed upon the student that most eloquently and convincingly answers the question, “what does it mean to be a missionary disciple, today?”

The question poses the central concern of every missionary of the Church and must certainly have been on the mind of the founder of the Society of the Divine Word. It is a concern expressed by Pope Francis in *The Joy of the Gospel* and foundational to the great commission to go forth and preach the gospel.

Students will write and deliver an oral presentation answering the question. Students will be assessed on content and style. Students are encouraged to focus on the dimensions of prophetic dialogue in the context of missionary discipleship and to utilize concrete examples of Christian witness as promulgated by Pope Paul VI, 1) demonstrating a good Christian life; 2) proclaiming the gospel; 3) teaching the Catechism; and 4) participating in ecumenical dialogue.

Any full-time DWC student is eligible to enter. The top three entries will be recognized with a stylish medal and certificate. The top entry shall be recognized with the Arnold Janssen Oral Presentation Award having their name engraved on a plaque displayed within a place of prominence in the college. In the event of a tie, multiple students may be presented the Arnold Janssen Oral Presentation Award.

Submissions will be accepted in video form. Students are asked to record themselves delivering their presentation and then upload and share them via OneDrive. Presentations are strictly limited to 10 minutes. Videos are submitted/shared to Dr. Joshua Young at joyoung@dwci.edu.

Submissions are due by 11:59pm CDT, April 3, 2026. Winners are expected to be announced at the annual awards luncheon.