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THE PRESIDENT

Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

Missionary Spirituality – Invitation and Welcome

Not long ago, a graduate of the College was asked about the spirituality promoted here. Her response was, “I don’t think there is one!” Perhaps she was uncertain about what constitutes a “spirituality.” Certainly, it is more than the typical prayers that are shared in the chapel. When we speak about the “charism” of a religious congregation, we get closer to an adequate expression of what spirituality is.

The Society of the Divine Word and the Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters share a long history together as members of the Arnoldus family. We were born together in the late 1800’s. We also share many elements of missionary spirituality – it is our spiritual DNA! The core experience of God that guides SVDs, SSpS, (and most other missionary congregations) can be condensed into two words: **Universality and Diversity**. Those are fancy-sounding words, but the experience they describe is concrete, and for me, very exciting.



Fr. John Musinsky, SVD

The first word, *universality*, can be fleshed out by a question that a former SVD superior general used to ask me. Fr. John Musinsky, SVD, was superior general in the years after the Second Vatican Council. I met him frequently in Nemi, near Rome, in the late 1990’s and the first years of the 2000’s. By then he was mostly retired, already in his 80s. He continued to serve as a sought-after spiritual director for SVD missionaries on sabbatical. Often, Fr. John would invite me for a walk after pranzo, the midday meal. Almost always, John would raise the question: *Can everyone be saved?* He wanted to know what theologians and missiologists had to say about it. How would you respond?

My answer usually went as follows: First, God desires that all people be saved (1 Timothy 2:4). Second, though we don't know exactly how things will work out at the end of time, we can certainly pray that no one be lost. (See *Catechism of the Catholic Church* no. 1058.) When I would mention to Fr. John that we had spoken of this many times before, he would smile and say, "My head doesn't remember as well as it used to, but I like talking about it now!"



From our conversations I learned that John passionately desired that no one be lost. That wish animated him in the final years of his life, and I loved him for that passion. Every SVD and SSPS, indeed all missionaries, find that urgent desire dwelling in them. It fuels our prayers, our service,

and our lives. We know God opposes exclusion of every kind. So, we find ourselves constantly reaching out to newcomers and to people on the margins of Church and society. Missionary spirituality takes form around an invitation: "Come, let us share life together." That is what animated St. Paul to reach out to people all over the Roman Empire; the Holy Spirit urged him to invite everyone to faith in Jesus.

The second word, *diversity*, goes hand-in-hand with universality, stressing that many different peoples are called together. Frequently at Vespers we come to a line from the Book of Revelations that never fails to spark my soul: "I had a vision of a great multitude, which no one could count, *from every nation, race, people, and tongue...*" (Rev 7:9). I get excited thinking: people are different, really different – and that is good. That is how things should be.

Fr. Jon Kirby SVD, the Provincial of the Western Province stressed this idea at last week's Forum on Mission. He said the great challenge for missionaries, and for all the People of God, is to learn to love someone who is different – and to love them precisely for their differences. It is easier to ignore people's

differences, or tolerate them, or try to make others like ourselves. However, a mature missionary spirituality seeks to love others precisely in and through their differences.

At Divine Word College we often comment that among the roughly 200 people who study, live and work here, there are many nations, languages, races and ways of life represented. Just counting nationalities, there are usually 25 different nations present. I especially celebrate that part of my own missionary spirituality when I see the many flags flying in front of the College. They were there in 1966 when I first visited the College as a sixth grader. I like to tell people: we are a **Little United Nations on Highway 20**. I also celebrate when I go into the dining room and notice people from around the world sharing a meal and conversation. That is a real **sacrament of the diversity** – the proof that no one is excluded.



DWC meals throughout the years.

For all followers of Jesus, spirituality is focused on God’s Kingdom. We pray many times, Our Father, your kingdom come. Some may focus on the Reign of God through community living, or Eucharistic adoration, or education, or health care, or being faithful in marriage or raising a family. That is their calling, their specific vocation.

For members of the Arnoldus family, we are passionate about including everyone and delighting in the different gifts they bring to God’s table. The tell-tale sign is when we say, “Come and join us,” and then, once they arrive, “You are welcome here.” *Invitation and welcome* are always the first two fundamental steps in a missionary spirituality.



DWC Trustees Meeting

The Board of Trustees met on Friday and Saturday, May 1 and 2, and we were happy to welcome them to the campus. Many subcommittee meetings were held either by Zoom earlier in April, or on Friday evening, before Saturday’s general meeting.

Some of the major decisions at the 124th meeting of the Trustees were:

- Elected Ms. Kate Zanger and Dr. Ann Sweeney as new trustees. Both were recommended by Sr. Kate Hendel BVM.
- Approved the graduates for 2026.
- Approved the promotion of Dr. Joshua Young to the rank of Associate Professor. Congratulations!

- Reviewed and applauded the progress on the DWC Strategic Plan for FY2014-FY2017.
- Endorsed the College budget for the new fiscal year beginning on July 1.
- Viewed the short videos on the Society of the Divine Word and Formation for SVD candidates.
- Established a preliminary search committee to identify SVD candidates for DWC president in 2030.

The College is most grateful for the Trustees’ continuing advice, support, friendship and prayers.

Retirement Party for Bro. Tony Kreinus

On **Wednesday, May 6th**, the college will be hosting a retirement party for Bro. Tony Kreinus, SVD. We ask that you join us in celebrating Tony and his time here in the **Pour House from 4:00 to 6:00 PM**.

Come share stories, laughter, and perhaps a few “footnotes” of appreciation as we mark this special occasion. Whether you’ve worked alongside him closely or simply benefited from his presence in our community, your attendance will help make this a memorable celebration.





VICE PRESIDENT FOR ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Dr. Joshua Young

Resources for Navigating AI Use

As many of you know, Artificial Intelligence (AI) is greatly impacting the way we teach and learn. Sometimes, the technology is adapting so fast, we hardly have time to take what we have just learned about AI before we have to learn a new set of AI skills. Research shows that AI has created tensions between students and teachers. Teachers become suspicious of students and students become resentful of being accused of cheating. AI is not going away and even missionaries will need these tech skills.



There is a need for dialogue and for greater understanding. Throughout this semester, I have tried to make faculty aware of professional development opportunities.

These include the Auburn University [Teaching with AI](#) course, which is a self-directed eight week online course that teaches instructors how Large Language Models are used to develop AI models and then offers opportunities to talk through issues in the classroom and ask questions of fellow course participants.

Another important opportunity for AI training for instructors is the American Association of Colleges and Universities' (AAC&U's) [Teaching with AI](#) course, which is a four week online course that is facilitated by Jose Antonio Bowen and C. Edward Watson, authors of [Teaching with AI: A Practical Guide to a New Era of Human Learning](#). Some faculty may even be interested in attending the online or in-person AAC&U [Conference on AI and Higher Education](#), being held at the end of October, 2026.

Further research shows that some students, like international students and students with disabilities, are less likely to use AI because they feel they are more likely to be accused of cheating. While some instructors may laud this, fear of AI puts graduates at a disadvantage and further reinforces the way technology marginalizes people. However, there are resources

available for students. One important resource is the AAC&U's [Student Guide to AI](#). Other resources can be found on other colleges websites such as the [University of Iowa](#) and the [University of Chicago](#).

One thing is for certain, AI is changing higher education and deeply impacting the relationship between students and teachers. A better, more productive dialogue must begin in order for colleges and universities to meet the needs of their graduates and to contribute to the common good. Teaching about and with AI is necessary for that.



Trustees Approve Certificate Academic Honors

On May 2, 2026, the Board of Trustees approved the awarding of those graduating with Level 8 certificates of completion or those completing a Certificate in Pre-Theology with academic honors. These honors are similar to those graduating with Associates and Bachelor's Degrees; Cum Laude, Magna Cum Laude, and Summa Cum Laude.

Previously, there was no recognition of those that performed excellent in academics graduating with a certificate. The new honors are different from the traditional Latin honors. Those graduating with a certificate will receive honors as follows: graduating with a 3.5 is graduating with honors; a 3.7 is graduating with distinction; and with a 3.9 is graduating with high distinction. The awarding of honors for those receiving certificates is a recognition of their academic excellence and will help graduates be more competitive in future academic admissions.



VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION/DEAN OF STUDENTS

Fr. Tuan Hoang, SVD

Student Senate Cabinet 2026–2027

Congratulations to the newly elected Student Senate Cabinet for the 2026–2027 academic year:

- **President:** Mr. Chinh Cong Pham
- **Vice-President:** Mr. Alejandro Cruz Gonzalez
- **Secretary:** Sr. Charity Rabson, HLMC
- **Treasurer:** Sr. Nguyet Nguyen, OCist

Thank you for your willingness to serve the student body at Divine Word College. Blessings to each of you in the year ahead!

We also extend our heartfelt appreciation to the outgoing Student Senate Cabinet and Senators for your hard work and service this year. Your efforts have inspired and enriched the life of our student community. Thank you for all that you have contributed.

PRESIDENT



Mr. Chinh Cong Pham

VICE-PRESIDENT



Mr. Alejandro Cruz Gonzalez

SECRETARY



Sr. Charity Rabson, HLMC

TREASURER



Sr. Nguyet Nguyen, OCist

Finals Week

Finals will take place next week, and the regular schedule will not apply. The finals week schedule will be posted on the bulletin board.

Please note that there will be **two Masses each day** from Monday, May 11, through Thursday, May 14, at 8:00 AM and 8:00 PM.

The Student Senate will also be sponsoring **free donuts and juice** in the dining room starting at 9:00 AM each day. Take a break and enjoy a treat!

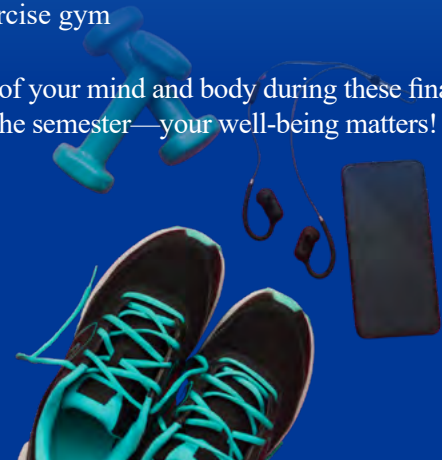
Relieve Stress with Exercise

With finals just a week away, many of you are busy studying and completing papers. This can be a stressful time, and it's easy to lose sleep and focus.

Research shows that **regular exercise can increase self-confidence, improve mood, help you relax, and reduce symptoms of mild depression and anxiety** (www.mayoclinic.org). The Sports Department encourages everyone to take time to exercise.

- Play badminton or volleyball in the gym
- Lift weights or run on the treadmill in the exercise gym

Take care of your mind and body during these final weeks of the semester—your well-being matters!





VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS

Steve Winger

Divine Word College Integrated Employment: Transition, Hiring, Onboarding, Development, and Separation

Overview and Context: Transitions, Stewardship, and Continuity

At Divine Word College, hiring most often begins because of **transition**—retirements following long service, voluntary separations, internal movement, or changes in institutional needs. Each personnel transition is approached intentionally, with attention to continuity of operations, preservation of institutional knowledge, and respect for the contributions of departing employees.

Before any search is initiated, the College focuses on what is required to **transition responsibly from one employee to the next**. This includes clarifying ongoing responsibilities, planning interim coverage when necessary, facilitating knowledge transfer to the extent possible, and evaluating whether the position, as previously structured, continues to meet current institutional needs. In this way, hiring is not treated as simple replacement, but as an act of stewardship over roles, resources, and mission.

These transitions and searches are **highly time-intensive** and require sustained attention over an extended period. Planning for continuity, reviewing roles, coordinating searches, conducting interviews, and supporting onboarding all occur alongside normal operational responsibilities. Divine Word College deeply appreciates the significant time, care, and discernment contributed by supervisors, administrators, and members of hiring committees who serve the institution in this way.

1. Position Review, Approval, and Search Initiation

The hiring process typically begins when a department director notifies the Vice President for Operations

(VPO) of an anticipated vacancy or staffing need. The VPO, in collaboration with the College President, confirms the necessity of the position.

As part of this confirmation, **the job description and compensation level are reviewed prior to posting**. This review considers institutional priorities, role scope, reporting relationships, internal equity, budget capacity, and long-term sustainability. When appropriate, job responsibilities and pay rates are adjusted before the position is advertised, ensuring clarity for candidates and alignment with current institutional realities rather than assumptions tied to a previous employee.

If substantive changes to a job description are required, those updates must be approved by the Board of Administration, reinforcing shared governance. Positions are posted internally for five days in accordance with the Employee Handbook and may be advertised externally concurrently. When appropriate, the College President appoints a hiring or search committee to guide the process.

2. Application Review and Interview Process

Generally, applications are directed centrally to the VPO, who collaborates with the hiring committee to review materials and identify viable candidates. Interviews are conducted by the VPO and/or members of the hiring committee.

For certain positions—particularly leadership, mission critical, or campus wide roles—a **second round of interviews may be conducted**. When appropriate, this may include **members of the Board of Trustees**, reflecting Divine Word College’s collaborative culture and commitment to shared responsibility in significant hiring decisions.

3. Reference & Background Checks, and Selection

Reference checks are conducted as part of the candidate evaluation process. Once a preferred candidate is identified, the VPO and hiring committee make a selection and salary recommendation to the College President. A formal background check is required as a condition of employment.

If the background check is successful, the process proceeds. If it is unsuccessful, the hiring committee is informed and the search continues. Background check documentation and all application materials are retained in accordance with Divine Word College's record retention policies.

4. Offer, Acceptance, and Pre Onboarding

Upon approval by the President, the Vice President for Operations (or, for faculty positions, the Vice President for Academic Affairs) extends a formal Offer of Employment to the selected candidate. Executive appointments are issued under a formal employment contract.

Once an offer is accepted, the VPO notifies relevant offices to initiate coordinated onboarding preparation, including the Business Office, Registrar, Information Systems, Public Relations, Housekeeping, and other appropriate departments. This ensures that logistical, technological, and administrative elements are prepared in advance of the employee's first day.

5. Structured Onboarding and Orientation

Divine Word College uses a **multi-departmental, structured onboarding process** designed to integrate new employees into both operational systems and institutional culture.

Key onboarding components include:

- Completion of employment eligibility, payroll, and benefits documentation
- Orientation with the Human Resource Coordinator covering benefits, policies, safety procedures, and employee expectations
- Meetings with Information Systems for technology access and training
- Activation of campus notification systems by the Registrar
- Issuance of an ID badge and directory photograph
- A guided campus tour and introductions to key personnel and senior leadership
- A welcoming conversation with the President reinforcing **mission** and community expectations

This coordinated approach reflects the College's commitment to clarity, hospitality, and mission based integration.

6. Mentorship and Early Stage Support

When appropriate, new employees are paired with a mentor to support early success, professional integration, and relationship building within the community. Mentorship may include regular informal check-ins, collaborative observation or resource sharing (as applicable), and end of term feedback to strengthen the program. This emphasis on mentorship reflects Divine Word College's values of accompaniment, collegiality, and shared responsibility for employee success.

7. Ongoing Employment and Compliance

Throughout employment, faculty and staff participate in required trainings, benefits administration, and ongoing feedback processes. Personnel documentation is maintained centrally in compliance with legal, diocesan, and institutional requirements. This ensures consistency, accountability, and regulatory compliance while supporting long term institutional stability.

8. Off Boarding, Retirement, and Separation

When an employee separates from the College—whether through resignation, retirement, or role transition—Divine Word College follows a structured off-boarding process, including an opportunity for feedback through the Employee Separation and Exit Feedback Form. This includes formal notice, coordination of payroll and benefits, recovery of institutional property and system access, and knowledge transfer when feasible. Retirements are handled with particular care, recognizing the service rendered and assisting employees with benefit transitions while ensuring continuity for the institution.

Summary

Taken together, Divine Word College's employment practices represent a **deliberate, collaborative, and time intensive lifecycle process**. From transition planning and role review, through shared hiring and rigorous onboarding, to mentorship, development, and respectful separation, the process engages many individuals across the institution.

This rigor is sustained through the professionalism, goodwill, and commitment of those who serve on hiring committees and support transitions. It reflects the College's dedication to stewardship, shared governance, and building systems that support both the mission today and the institution's long term sustainability.

external affairs

Stars, Stripes & Supper: Share the Fourth with Our International Students

Looking for a meaningful way to celebrate Independence Day this year? Divine Word College is inviting members of the community to take part in a special opportunity that brings together hospitality, culture, and connection.

On **Friday, July 3, 2026**, the ESL program is seeking hosts for *Stars, Stripes & Supper*—an initiative that pairs international students with local families for an authentic Fourth of July experience.

For many of our students, this will be their very first Independence Day in the United States—and their first time celebrating in an American home. What may feel like a simple invitation—sharing a meal, watching fireworks, or spending time together—can become a lasting and meaningful memory.

Hosts are encouraged to:

- Share a meal with students
- Introduce favorite Independence Day traditions
- Enjoy local celebrations and fireworks together

This is more than just a holiday gathering—it's a chance to build friendships, offer a warm welcome, and give students a firsthand experience of American culture and hospitality.

Do you have a favorite Fourth of July tradition? Whether it's grilling out, attending a parade, or watching fireworks under the summer sky, consider opening your celebration to one (or more) of our ESL students. Your invitation could make all the difference.

To get involved or learn more, please contact **Dr. Seo Hyun Park** at spark@dwci.edu or 563-876-3353 x394.

Let's come together as a community to make this Independence Day one to remember—for everyone.



RAGBRAI is Coming to DWC— Let’s Show Them Who We Are!

This summer, Divine Word College has an incredible opportunity to welcome **more than 12,000 riders** as RAGBRAI rolls through our community on Saturday, July 25. It’s not every day that thousands of visitors arrive on our doorstep—and this is our moment to offer a warm DWC welcome and share the spirit of our mission.

But an event of this size doesn’t happen on its own. It takes planning, energy, and a strong team effort—and that’s where you come in.

We are forming volunteer committees to help bring this experience to life:

- **Set-Up Committee** – Transport tables and other necessary items to the booth location
- **Food Committee** – Coordinate the food offerings – we plan to offer items from different cultures
- **Signage Committee** – Make sure guests know who we are and what we’re about
- **Info-Sharing Committee** – Share the story of Divine Word College and our mission
- **Extras Committee** – Plan the fun! This group will organize photo ops, decorations, and creative touches that make our space memorable

Work is already underway, and **help is needed now** to put plans in place. Together, we can create an experience that reflects the hospitality, intercultural spirit, and joy that define Divine Word College.

This is more than an event—it’s a chance to welcome thousands of guests, build connections, and proudly show what DWC is all about.

Ready to be part of it?

Contact **Sandy Wilgenbusch** to sign up **TODAY** and join the team!

Let’s come together and make this a day to remember—for our guests and for our community.



**COMING TO
EPWORTH...**

WOOSH!

RAGBRAI

25 JULY 2026  MORE THAN 12,000 RIDERS

MAIN STREET
EPWORTH, IOWA

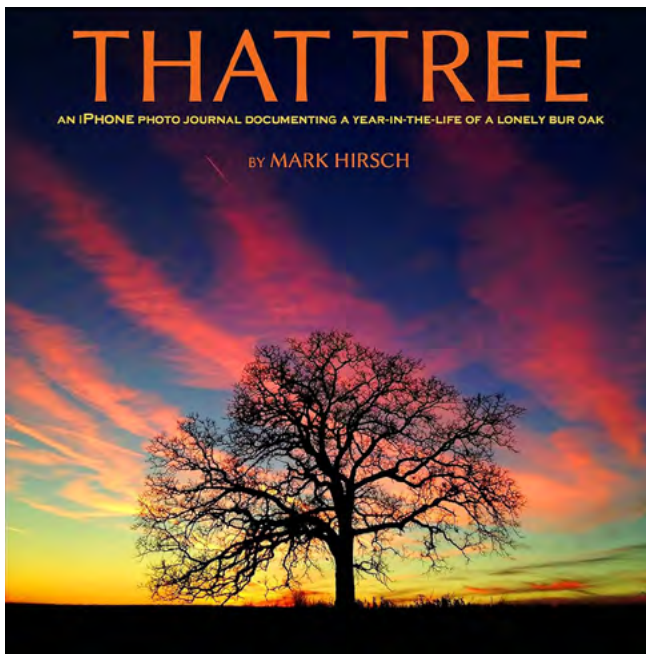
VOLUNTEER
& JOIN THE
FUN!

CONTACT WILGENBU@DWCI.EDU TO VOLUNTEER

On View in the Gallery

Thank You

We're a week late on expressing our appreciation for all who attended the "That Tree" opening reception. It was a fantastic turnout with the campus and outside communities merging for a moment in support of the arts. Mark Hirsch shared it was his favorite exhibit yet, especially since relatives and friends who had not attended past celebrations of his photographic artwork joined us for a magical Arbor Day. He was also impressed by DWC students, their curiosity and their many intelligent questions. If you've not yet visited "That Tree", **the exhibit will be with us through June 30**. Mark is hoping everyone will sign the copy of his book, also called "That Tree", on the page with your favorite photograph.



Ukrainian Exhibit

Take a break from your final projects and stop by the first floor hallway to learn more about Ukrainian libraries through "Words in Flame". Have you ever thought what happens to books, history, tradition and language during wartime? This exhibit is the perfect

example of a photographer using his skills make the world a better place by calling our awareness to a situation we may never otherwise encounter.

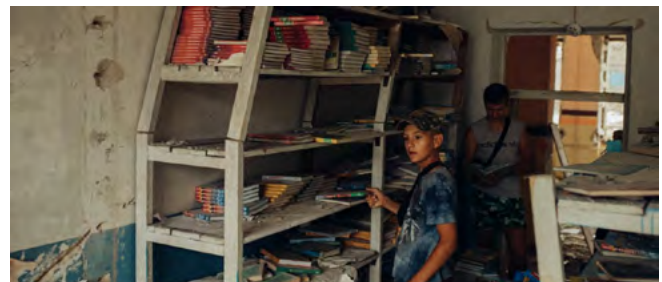
"The photographs capture destroyed, burned, or looted libraries across Ukraine—from frontline villages to major cities. These visuals document not only the physical devastation but also the attempt to erase cultural memory, language, knowledge, and the self-identity of Ukrainians.

According to official data, as of July 2025, 214 libraries have been destroyed, 904 damaged, 561 lost all equipment, and 492 lost their entire book collections. Despite these losses, 211 libraries have already partially resumed operations, thanks to the support of local communities, volunteers, and charitable initiatives.

The project aims to support cultural institutions in Ukraine through public recognition of the tragedy, international solidarity, and charitable donations."

And finally, check out the Vocation Portrait installation on the ground floor next to the art room. Thank you to all who participated in the Art 275 project last semester!

Thank you for supporting the arts on campus during 2025/2026! May you be blessed with opportunities to make art this summer.



"Words in flame" – a traveling exhibition about libraries and publishers in wartime

 Matthew Jacoby Library

opac.dwci.edu

Finals Week at the Library

Stop by the library during finals week! There will be snacks and drinks available to help you power through the last week of the academic year.

The mezzanine now has power! Head upstairs to relax on the bean bag chairs and charge your laptop or other devices while you work.

End of Semester Library Reminders

Students, staff, and faculty who will not be returning:

Please remember to return all library items by the end of the semester or your last day on campus.

Returning community members:

You may renew your items over the summer. If you need to renew an item until a specific date, please contact me directly via email or stop by my office.

How to Renew Items Online

1. Go to opac.dwci.edu
2. Sign in using your **library card number and PIN**
3. If you don't have a PIN set up or don't remember it, please use the "password reset" option to create a new one.
4. Select the items you would like to renew and click "**Renew Selected,**" or choose "**Renew All.**"

Loan Periods

Students:

- 1 month checkout
- Up to 3 one month renewals

Faculty, Staff, and SVDs:

- 2 month checkout
- Up to 3 two month renewals

THE
LIBRARY
IS HERE TO
HELP!



SNACKS AND DRINKS
AVAILABLE FOR FINALS WEEK

May 11-15, 2026

COME BY AND VISIT

Spring 2026 FINAL WEEK SCHEDULE

Monday, May 11 – Wednesday, May 13

6:30 AM	Breakfast
8:00 AM	Eucharist
9:00 AM	Free Donuts and Coffee (Dining room)
6:00 PM	Evening prayer
6:15 PM	Supper
8:00 PM	Eucharist

***Commencement Practice Wednesday, May 13, 2026 at 5:30 in Main Chapel**

Thursday, May 14

6:30 AM	Breakfast
8:00 AM	Eucharist
9:00 AM	Free Donuts and Coffee (Pour House)
5:30 PM	Cook out in the courtyard (w/ graduates, families & friends)
8:00 PM	Eucharist
8:30 PM – 9:30PM	First Room Inspection

Friday May 15

8:00 AM	Eucharistic Celebration (Chapel) Followed by coffee & donut (Dining Room)
9:30 AM	Graduates and faculty robe in caps & gowns (Room 107)
10:00 AM	Graduates group photo (Chapel)
10:15 AM	Graduates, faculty, marshals, trustees line up for procession (Corridor)
10:30 AM	Commencement Exercises (Chapel) Followed by lunch (Dining Room)
3:00 PM – 4:00 PM	Second Room Inspection —get your room and key deposits back from the Business Office when your room is inspected.
5:00 PM	SVD Renewal of Vows (Chapel)
5:30 PM	Supper

Saturday May 16 *(summer schedule begins)*

8:00 AM	Eucharistic Celebration
8:30 AM	Breakfast
Noon	Lunch
5:30 PM	Supper

Congratulations Class of 2026!
Have a Blessed Summer!



Divine Word College



BE A PART OF SOMETHING SPECIAL

STARS, STRIPES & SUPPER

HOST INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

JULY 3, 2026

A Simple Invitation with Lasting Impact

We're looking for local families to host international students at your family's 4th of July celebration for food, friendship, and fireworks.

For many students, this will be their first Independence Day and their first American home experience.

HAVE A MEAL | SHARE HOLIDAY TRADITIONS
WATCH FIREWORKS TOGETHER

CONTACT: DR. PARK

SPARK@DWCI.EDU | 563-876-3353 X394

