Divine Word College

THE LOG

A Bulletin for the Divine Word College Community | Vol. 46 No. 14 - November 24, 2026

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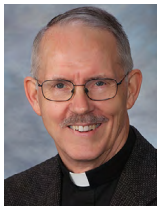

THE PRESIDENT

Fr. Tom Ascheman, SVD

Mission Is Preparing for the Feast

The story of **Guadalupe** is a story about how Mary extended her welcome and motherly help to both St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin and through him, to Bp. Juan Zumárraga.

The story of **Thanksgiving** tells of a cautious welcome for newly arrived English settlers by the by local Native Americans. That early struggle for survival allowed for the growth of a somewhat complicated friendship between a Native American, Tisquantum (Squanto) and the leader of the settlers, William Bradford.

At Divine Word College, we often celebrate these two occasions together under title of Mary, Queen of the Americas. The two feasts seem to echo one another, and together they point us toward the banquet of the Kingdom of Heaven.

The politics and economics of our times are in a state of confusion. This is true in the United States, and in many, many places around the world. In the USA, some loud and even unhinged voices are shouting, "Close the borders! They are murderers, thieves and rapists. They are killing our pets and eating them."



As the world becomes more global, economies become more interconnected, and communications become almost instantaneous, we are increasingly challenged to know how to deal with the "otherness" of so many people. Some put up walls and fortify borders. Others try to reach out in cautious welcome.

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Two stories quickly come to mind – stories that have long been celebrated, one from near Mexico City, and another from near Boston.

Guadalupe. We recall with joy a series of apparitions of Mary in 1531 at Tepeyac and Tenochtitlan (now part of Mexico City). That was a time of great upheaval. The Aztec empire had fallen to the Spanish and their indigenous allies ten years earlier. Disease, including smallpox, and the consequences of war were devastating indigenous communities and pushing their cultures toward collapse.

We especially remember the Aztec layman, St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin and the Spanish bishop, Juan de Zumárraga. Mary sent a message through Juan Diego that she wanted a church built at Tepeyac, on the outskirts of the city, where she could show her aid and protection “for all the various people who live together in this land as one people.” After many frustrating efforts by Juan Diego to carry Mary's message, the Franciscan bishop finally opened his heart when he saw the miraculous image appear on the messenger’s cloak/tilma. He welcomed Juan Diego, the image, and Mary’s message into his house and into his life. Through a message sent from the periphery to the center of power, trust was established and a friendship could grow between these two ”Juans.“ Together they could turn to Mary and say, “Thank you, Mother!”

Thanksgiving. We also remember and give thanks for various thanksgiving celebrations held by newly arrived immigrants in Massachusetts, Virginia, Texas and Florida in the late 16th century and early 17th century. Of these thanksgiving feasts, we especially remember the one held in the fall of 1621 to give thanks for a good harvest and the survival of some of the English settlers after a terrible first winter of hunger and hardship in North America. Their survival would not have been possible without the help of Native Americans, especially the Wampanoag leader Massasoit, the Patuxet man and interpreter Tisquantum, and the Abenaki interpreter Samoset. As with the encounter a century earlier in Mexico, disease brought by the European newcomers and violent conflict among the native peoples created a desperate context for this moment of Thanksgiving. The relationship between the Wampanoag and the English settlers was complicated, but their encounter also demonstrated the possibilities of cooperation and mutual assistance.



Christ the King. There is also a third story that Jesus told. He spoke of a King who said, "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 (and sisters) of mine, you did for me."

We hear this story every year as we celebrate the Feast of Christ the King on the final Sunday of the liturgical year. What message can we take from our “triple feast” at Divine Word College?

If we cannot learn to welcome strangers, immigrants, and people who are different from us, we will find it very difficult to live in the Kingdom that God is preparing. While we are made in God’s image, it is also true that God is so very different from us. Can we welcome difference? Can we learn to delight in it?

Immigrants give us an opportunity to grow and to give thanks. One of Fr. Sam's many T-shirts comes to mind: “Thank God for immigrants!”

Here is my take on the slogan:

- 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, and adopted into families there.
- Thank you, God, for immigrants: I now live in my "home territory" in the town of my mother’s birth. I am surrounded by a DWC family from all around the world.

Thanks to all of you at DWC – I am slowly being prepared to become part of that "great multitude, which no one could count, from every nation, race, people, and tongue. They stood before the throne and before the Lamb." I look forward to the day when all people will be gathered for the great feast of the Kingdom of Heaven.

Menu. If I could plan the menu for that great banquet, I would like to see tamales and turkeys. And maybe some rhubarb pie for dessert.
Jesus has a different menu in mind: He offers his Body and Blood under the signs of bread and wine. He and his family knew what it meant to flee their homeland and seek refuge in another country. And he knows how to make us welcome.



National Religious Vocations Conference – 2026 Outstanding Recognition Award

Congratulations to both Mr. Len Uhal, and Fr. Adam MacDonald SVD for the recognition they have won for their tireless promotion of religious vocations and missionary service. The award was presented at the recent national convocation in Orlando, Florida. Len's son, Mr. John Uhal, wrote about the important moment for the Uhals and the SVD!

> "Kate (Len's daughter) and I (John, Len's son) had the privilege of joining my Dad, Len, as he received the 2026 Outstanding Recognition Award from the National Religious Vocations Conference's biannual convocation. He has dedicated almost 25 years with the Divine Word Missionaries not only helping men discern their vocation to the religious priesthood and brotherhood but also sharing his knowledge, wisdom, and experience with others. I don't often get teary eyed, but I did tonight! We are so proud of you, Dad, and we love you! This is indeed a well-deserved honor. Congratulations to you, Fr. Adam who also received the award, and the other awardees tonight!"



All of those pictured (except for Kate) did some studies at Divine Word College. L-R Fr. Brian Junkes SVD, Fr. Baruch Zinsou SVD, Mr. John Uhal, Ms. Kate Uhal, Mr. Len Uhal and Fr. Adam MacDonald SVD. The Outstanding Recognition Award honors individual NRVC members who have made exceptional contributions to vocation ministry for at least three years. Recipients exemplify the following award criteria:

- Demonstrates leadership across the many facets of vocation ministry while promoting a culture of vocations in the Church and society.
- Collaborates with organizations that foster the development of a culture of vocation.
- Initiates or develops vocation programs that have a broad impact on vocation ministry.
- Develops innovative and creative approaches to vocation ministry.



REGISTRAR & DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

Kimberly Burnett-Hackbarth

Updated Rubrics

During the fall semester, the Department of Theology & Philosophy and the Department of Intercultural Studies have been busy revising several assessment rubrics for the following program learning outcomes:

Core 2 Communication Effectiveness

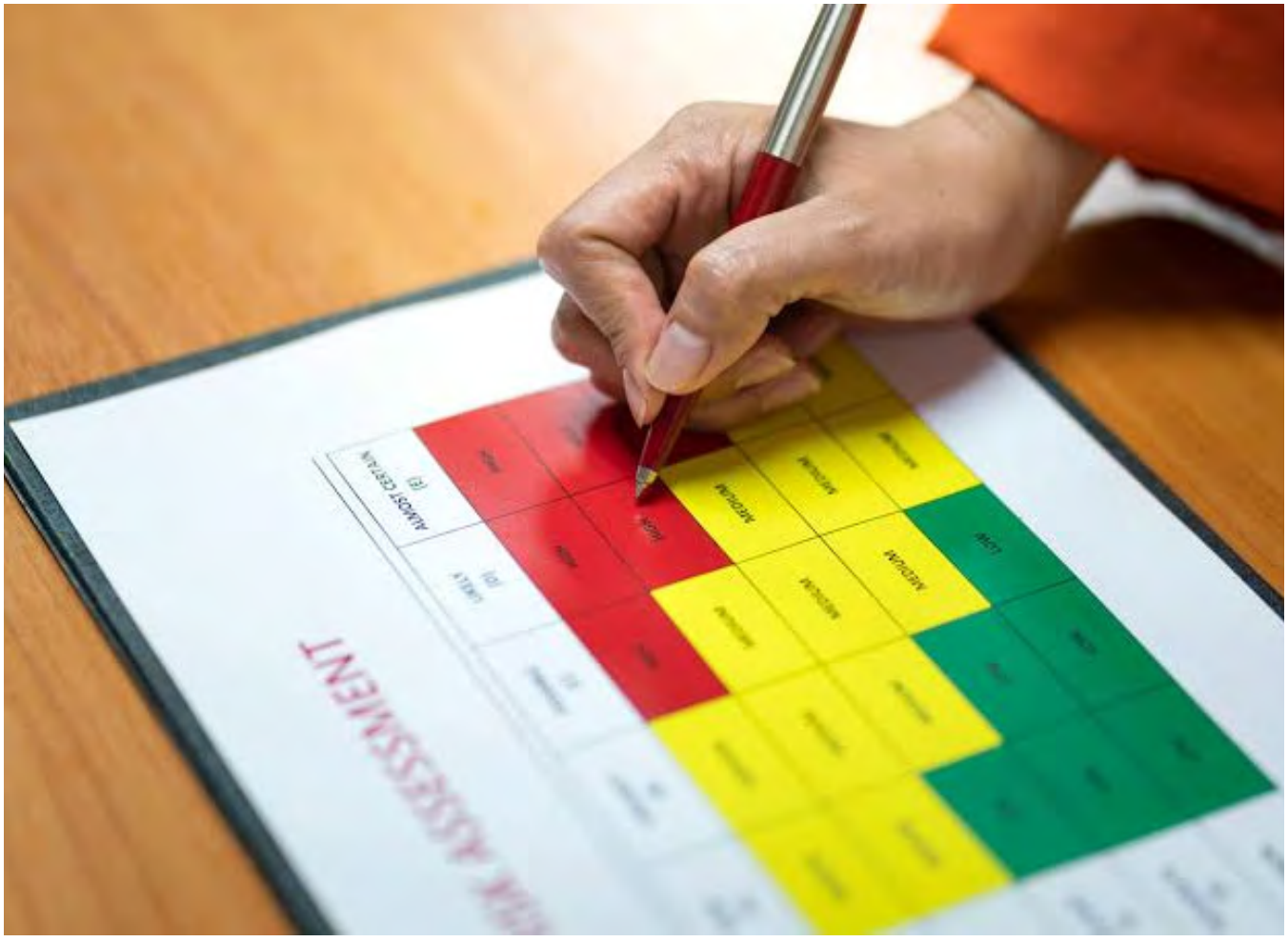
- Writing (A)
- Oral (B)

BA/AA ICS 1, AA IDS 3
BA PHI 4
BA THM 4
CF PHI 4

These updated rubrics are nearly finalized and ready for submission to the Institutional Assessment Committee (IAC) to begin collaborative review and alignment.

Thank you for your hard work faculty!







UPCOMING EVENTS:

11/25/2026.....7:30 PM.....Formation Group Meeting
11/26/2026.....Thanksgiving Day - No Classes
11/26/2026.....11:00 AM.....Mass
11/26/2026.....12:00 PM.....Thanksgiving Lunch
11/27/2026.....Offices Closed/No Classes
11/29/2026.....10:00 AM.....First Sunday of Advent
11/29/2026.....7:30 PM.....Vespers
11/30/2026.....Theological Submission Due
11/30/2026.....7:30 PM.....Advent Reconciliation Service
12/1/2026.....12:45 PM.....Liturgy Committee Meeting
12/2/2026.....5:00-7:00 PM.....Epworth Country Christmas
12/2/2026.....7:30 PM.....Formation Group Meeting
12/3/2026.....9:30 AM.....Board of Admin. Meeting
12/3/2026.....12:45 PM.....FSLC & IELI Meetings
12/3/2026.....3:00-5:00 PM.....New Alumni Gathering
12/4/2026.....8:00 AM.....Mass for December Graduates
12/4/2026.....Classes End, UG Term O Classes End
12/4/2026.....11:50 AM-1:00 PM...Advent Luncheon
12/7 - 12/10/2026.....UG Term O Final Exams
12/8/2026.....8:00 AM.....Mass
12/8/2026.....Immaculate Conception of the BVM
12/8/2026.....SSpS & SSpSAP Foundation Day
12/9/2026.....ESL Term B Classes End
12/10/2026.....ESL Term B End of Term Testing
12/10/2026.....3:00 PM.....SVD/SSpS/Employee Christmas Social
12/11/2026.....No Classes
12/11/2026.....Registration - Returning ESL Students



VICE PRESIDENT FOR FORMATION/DEAN OF STUDENTS

Fr. Tuan Hoang, SVD

Thanksgiving Break

The Formation Team wishes all of you a blessed and Happy Thanksgiving. During this season of gratitude, we give thanks to God for the many blessings and graces He has bestowed upon us. We are also grateful for each of you, for your hard work and dedication, for the many ways you contribute to the Divine Word College community, and for your generous response to God's call in your vocation.

As a friendly reminder, those traveling for Thanksgiving Break are expected to return to campus by **Sunday, November 29, 2026.** For those remaining on campus, please use this time to fulfill your assigned community service responsibilities. The schedule for dishwashing duties will also be posted this week. In addition, please follow the holiday schedule posted on the student bulletin board.



Advent Reconciliation

Soon we will enter the Season of Advent, a time of preparation and expectation as we await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. To begin this season, an Advent Reconciliation Service will be held on **Monday, November 30, 2026, at 7:30 p.m.** in the Main Chapel.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation offers us an opportunity to seek God's mercy and forgiveness, renew our relationship with Him, and prepare our hearts to welcome Christ more fully. I encourage everyone to take advantage of this grace-filled opportunity as we begin our Advent journey together.

Exercise and Stress Relief During Finals

With final examinations only two weeks away, many of you are busy completing papers, preparing presentations, and studying for exams. This time of the semester can be stressful and demanding, often affecting our sleep, energy, and overall well-being.

Research shows that regular exercise can be an effective way to reduce stress. According to the Mayo Clinic, "Regular exercise can increase self-confidence, improve your mood, help you relax, and lower symptoms of mild depression and anxiety."

The Sports Department encourages everyone to make time for physical activity during these final weeks of the semester. Whether you enjoy playing badminton or pickleball in the gym, lifting weights, or running on the treadmill, regular exercise can help you stay healthy, focused, and balanced as you prepare for finals.

Let us take care of both our minds and bodies as we finish the semester strong. **Wishing you a safe, restful, and blessed Thanksgiving Break!**



VICE PRESIDENT FOR ADMISSIONS

Len Uhal

Coffee with Len

As we begin the process of drafting a new Strategic Plan, I invite the entire community—Students, SVDs, Faculty, Staff and Administrators—to meet with me and have an informal discussion about Vocations and Admissions to Divine Word College.

I will have very little to say by way of a "presentation." I am more interested in hearing your ideas of what we can do to continue to find more students to come to Divine Word College. I am happy to answer questions, but I hope to walk away with some creative ideas for our new Strategic Plan. Please join me for "Coffee with Len" on the following dates and the following times:

- **Monday, November 30 at 2:30 PM**
- **Tuesday, December 1 at 9:30 AM**
- **Tuesday, December 1 at 3:30 PM**
- **Wednesday, December 2 at 9:30 AM**





All meetings will be held in Room 143. Please bring your own coffee or drink from the dining room and I'll provide donuts or cookies. You are welcome to come to one of the sessions or all four! If you cannot stay for the whole hour, please come for part of it. Bring your ideas and your questions and let's chat about the possibilities. I look forward to seeing everyone at one of the sessions!

If you're unable to attend, PLEASE, always feel welcome to stop by my office, catch me in the hallway or at lunch and share your ideas—I'm all ears (as my mom would say!)



VICE PRESIDENT FOR OPERATIONS

Steve Winger

Water Quality and Safety at DWC

The tap water at Divine Word College is safe to drink, prepare food with, and use for normal daily purposes. DWC receives its water from the City of Epworth municipal water system. Epworth's water comes from groundwater and is routinely tested under drinking-water standards established by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and administered in Iowa by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources.

The City of Epworth publishes an annual Consumer Confidence Report containing its water-quality testing results. The 2025 report identifies the substances tested, the results, applicable safety limits, and whether any violations occurred. The report lists no violations for the regulated contaminants reported. These results show that Epworth's municipal water meets applicable drinking-water standards and is safe to drink.

Some people may notice a white residue on pans or inside humidifiers, kettles, or other containers after water has boiled or evaporated. This is normal for our area because Epworth has hard water.





"Hard water" means that the water naturally contains dissolved minerals, primarily calcium and magnesium. Groundwater collects these minerals as it moves through soil and rock. When the water boils or evaporates, the water disappears, but some minerals remain as a white residue commonly called mineral scale or limescale. Hard water is not considered a health concern, and the presence of this residue does not mean the water is contaminated or unsafe.

In humidifiers, hard-water minerals may appear as a fine white powder. Using distilled or other low-mineral water can reduce this residue. Follow the manufacturer's directions.

Water-quality testing results and additional safety information are available from these official sources:

- City of Epworth 2025 Water Quality Report
- City of Epworth Consumer Confidence Water Report page
- Iowa Department of Natural Resources Drinking Water Program
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Drinking Water Data and Tools
- EPA guidance on the use and care of humidifiers

On View in the Gallery

Art News

Happy Thanksgiving! During this week of gratitude, our hearts are overflowing with thanksgiving for everyone who supported exhibits in The Weyland Art gallery this year, as well as campus art programming and the art ministry. The momentum continues to build!

As we move into the end of the semester and exams, please remember the art classroom is open to everyone for a creative pause to reduce stress and boost brain health. If you'd like to learn more about the benefits of art making, check out this University of Arizona article:

> "The World Health Organization has recognized arts engagement as an important contributor to mental health promotion and illness prevention. Because creative activities are low-cost, adaptable and welcoming, they are especially powerful in community and university settings. They don't replace therapy, but they complement it by helping build resilience before stress becomes overwhelming."

https://healthsciences.arizona.edu/news/how-creative-arts-support-mental-health-daily-life

Come By the Gallery

The Weyland Art Gallery is open every day, and it's also a great place for to pause for a moment of contemplation. David LaBelle's ***Light of the World*** invites us to reflect on compassionate connection, and the exhibit will be with us through **January 8, 2027.**

David met with Art 275 students last week to explore memories prompted by his images. We're planning on a few more artist afternoon conversations over the next month, so stay tuned...





Matthew Jacoby Library

opac.dwci.edu

The Library's Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)

The library website at opac.dwci.edu is more than a catalog. It's the starting point for nearly everything the library offers. You can search the library's on-site collection of over 51,000 physical books, connect to subscription databases like JSTOR and the Digital Theological, which collectively offer over 1.4 million books and 61,000 journals, and find step-by-step guides in the Library Support center.



The website also hosts tailor-made, self-paced modules that build student research skills, along with resources for English language learners. Here's what is currently available:

Information Literacy Modules

- Using AI in Your Coursework: Learn how to use AI tools responsibly and within your instructor's expectations.
- Evaluating Sources Practice: Practice judging whether a source is reliable, scholarly, and relevant to your topic.
- Citation Practice: Practice formatting citations and reference lists correctly.
- ESL 062 Pro/Con Essays: Find and use sources to support both sides of an argument.
- ESL 086 Comparing Religions Presentation: Research support for the comparing religions presentation.
- FSS 101 Course Modules: 14 modules covering DWC academic programs, the five core competencies, and information literacy skills such as searching, spotting bias, using AI responsibly, and citing sources.

IELI Resources

- ESL Student Resources: Tools and links to support English language learners.
- Mometrix Test Prep: Online study guides and practice tests for standardized exams.

Faculty: You're welcome to link these modules on your course pages, or ask for a new module built around a specific course, assignment, or skill.

Questions? Stop by the library director's office or email Liz Winter at ewinter@dwci.edu.



external affairs

Help Bring Christmas Around the World to Epworth!



Faculty and staff are invited to volunteer at this year's Epworth Country Christmas celebration on **Wednesday, Dec. 2, from 5–7 p.m.** at Locals (107 Main St., Epworth).

This year, Divine Word College is sponsoring **"Christmas Around the World,"** an opportunity for local families to explore Christmas traditions and cultures represented at DWC. Guests can visit interactive country stations featuring Christmas crafts inspired by Zimbabwe, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea and Vietnam. An international Nativity display will also showcase sets from around the world.

Faculty and staff volunteers needed! We have enough greeters but could use a few more people to help children with crafts at the country stations and join Dr. Evelyn in singing Christmas songs. No special experience is needed, and we'll provide the information and supplies. Please sign up by **Wednesday, Nov. 25,** using the link below.

VOLUNTEER SIGN-UP LINK

Students are encouraged to attend, too! There will be no formation group meetings that evening, so students are welcome to come enjoy the festivities. It's a chance to experience some traditional American Christmas activities, interact with members of our local community and have fun! Students can join Dr. Evelyn in singing Christmas songs or lend a hand helping children with a craft if they'd like. With the event so close to finals, students are not expected to stay for the entire event. They are welcome to stop by whenever their schedules allow!

Let's make this a fun evening of cultural sharing, community connection and Christmas cheer!

Thanksgiving Break Schedule 2026

"Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is the will of God for you" (1 Thes 5:18)

THURSDAY, November 26, 2026 **HAPPY THANKSGIVING!**

6:30 AM	Breakfast
11:00 AM	Thanksgiving Eucharist
Noon	Thanksgiving Lunch
5:30 PM	Supper – Self-Serve Dinner

FRIDAY, November 27, 2026

6:30 AM	Breakfast
8:00 AM	Eucharist
Noon	Lunch
5:30 PM	Supper

SATURDAY, November 28, 2026

8:00 AM	Eucharist
8:30 AM	Breakfast
Noon	Lunch
5:30 PM	Supper

SUNDAY, November 29, 2026

8:00 AM	Breakfast
10:00 AM	Eucharist
11:00 AM	Brunch
05:30 PM	Supper

No Vespers