

The Crossroads

The Alumni Magazine for Theological College • Spring 2019



Media Evangelization • Guest Speakers • Pastoral Ministry Reflection

Theological College | The National Seminary of The Catholic University of America



Contents

A Letter from the Rector	1
Community News	
USCCB Bishops Breakfast	3
Latinos and Catholic Education	4
Saint John Vianney Relic Tour.....	5
Master’s in Ecclesial Administration and Management	6
Canonization: Archbishop Oscar Romero	7
Feature: A Unique Media Formation Initiative	8
Seminarian Life	
Breakfast Bible Study	10
TC Annual Workshop.....	10
On Silence	11
Theological Reflection in Pastoral Ministry	12
SGA House Speakers	13
Celebrating the Lunar New Year at Theological College.....	14
March for Life 2019.....	15
TC Parlor Update.....	15
Update: Rev. John C. Selner Endowed Chair Campaign.....	16
Healthy Living for Priests	17
Alumni	
Distinguished Alumnus Profile:	
Bishop Robert J. McManus	18
Class Notes	19
<i>In Memoriam</i>	20

Cover Image:

Deacon Cassidy Stinson (Richmond), co-founder of The Alberione Project, blesses the equipment to be used for *The Big Tree* podcast, a media evangelization apostolate (see story, p. 8).

“Why Theological College?”

The American poet, Mary Oliver, in her poem, “The Journey,” wrote:

“One day you finally knew what you had to do, and began, though the voices around you kept shouting their bad advice.”



Rev. Gerald McBrearity, P.S.S., left, with Very Rev. John Kemper, P.S.S., and His Excellency, The Most Reverend Charles Kasonde, Bishop of Solwezi, Africa. The bishop presided over the Institution of Ministries at Theological College on February 4, for 10 lectors and 17 acolytes.

At Theological College, new seminarians arrive knowing what they have to do, and they begin, even though the world around them keeps shouting its “bad advice.” The current generation of priesthood candidates who are discerning their vocations at Theological College are courageous, deeply spiritual, intellectually gifted, and passionate in their desire to incarnate in their lives what is highlighted in the famous statement made by the Jewish writer, Abraham Heschel: “God is hiding in the world: Our task is to let the divine emerge from our deeds.” These candidates are committed to letting the divine emerge from their deeds every day and all the time. I believe that Theological College — in cooperation with the Schools of Theology and Religious Studies, Canon Law, and Philosophy at The Catholic University of America — offers them a unique context in which to become the kind of priests and pastors who are so desperately needed at this time in our Church’s history.

However, as was evident in a recent survey by the Busch School of Business at Catholic University, Theological College is not well known across the United States as the national seminary of Catholic University, a seminary whose mission is to serve the needs of dioceses from across the country. One might ask, “Why should a diocese consider sending priesthood candidates to TC for their formation for priestly life and ministry?”



First: Faithful accompaniment

As a Sulpician seminary, the mission of TC is to assist each seminarian to fully engage the human and spiritual dimensions of preparation for diocesan priesthood. This means that seminarians meet with their spiritual directors and formation advisors twice each month. These relationships and their frequency assist the seminarian to

grow in affective and psychosexual maturity, to name his strengths and limitations, to internalize a prayer practice, and to evidence devotion to the Word of God, the Eucharist, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and the witness of Mary, the first disciple. Days of recollection and retreats encourage seminarians to integrate adequate periods of silence and solitude into their busy weekly schedules. TC does not accept more than 80 seminarians to ensure the sending dioceses that the seminary’s formation faculty knows each seminarian personally, in order to make informed recommendations for continuation in the seminary and for ordination.



Second: Intellectual rigor

As a university seminary, Theological College collaborates with Catholic University’s Schools of Theology and Religious Studies, Philosophy, and Canon Law. These schools offer each seminarian degree programs that are rigorous and demanding, introducing seminarians to the history of ideas as they cultivate the intellectual gifts and skills needed for effective and inspiring leadership in a parish setting. There are multiple degrees available: for Basselin Scholars, the PH. L.; for theologians, the M. Div., the S.T.B. and, more recently, the S.T.L. and J.C.L for those returning after ordination for a fifth year to complete these degrees. For priests returning for this fifth-year option, TC now offers accommodations in a separate, newly renovated residence.



Third: Pastoral immersion

Theological College has established, over the past 47 years, one of this country’s foremost pastoral formation programs. Every seminarian, regardless of his formation year, takes on a ministry placement that will impact

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Rector

Rev. Gerald D. McBrearity, P.S.S. ('73)

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Theological College participates in the mission and responsibility of the bishops to provide for the people of God wise and holy priests close to the heart of Christ and consumed in his work of salvation. In affiliation with The Catholic University of America, Theological College assists seminarians in the task of vocational discernment and in the preparation for priestly life and ministry at the diocesan level, particularly as experienced in the United States.

his discernment to the diocesan priesthood, while developing a range of parish ministry skills. Pastoral formation includes direct service to the poor, religious education, campus ministry, hospital ministry, parish placements, preaching, and liturgical leadership. Through these placements, the seminarian becomes realistic and informed about the life and challenges of parish priesthood so that he is not shocked or surprised at what is expected of him after ordination.

Fourth: Multicultural awareness

Theological College is committed to preparing seminarians to cultivate a multicultural sensitivity so needed in dioceses across the country, particularly for Latino populations, 35% of the Church in America today. This effort is promoted by our dynamic Hispanic Affairs Committee, twice-monthly celebration of the Eucharist in Spanish, twice-monthly Evening Prayer in Spanish, weekly Night Prayer in Spanish, and peer tutoring in Spanish. In addition to Spanish, other languages spoken by TC seminarians

include French, Italian, Portuguese, German, Vietnamese, and Chinese. The close fraternity of the house allows for the sharing of these cultures and mutual enrichment. For those who are not native English speakers, TC's diction and language consultant, who has been with TC for 13 years, BettyAnn Leeseberg-Lange, is available for accent adjustment sessions. The seminary is very aware of its responsibility to prepare future priests who possess skills needed for ministry in parishes with a variety of cultural and language backgrounds.

Fifth: Healthy and wholesome community life

Theological College welcomes seminarians from a wide range of dioceses, with varied challenges and needs, and celebrates a diversity of backgrounds, priorities, family narratives, and previous careers. TC encourages and guides a community of conversation and dialogue, respect for diverse opinions, fraternity, and mutual understanding. The house is known for its hospitality, its sense of humor, its civility, and its preparation of future leaders who will be men of communion in a culture that is marked by division and intolerance.

Our promise

Centuries ago, Father Jean Jacques Olier, founder of the Sulpicians, spoke of the importance of inspiring, in future priests, an "apostolic spirit," an interior restlessness to serve God's people, to be sacraments of God's mercy, compassion, and loving availability. Put differently, in the words of Pope Francis, "A pastoral presence means walking with the People of God, walking in front of them, showing them the way, showing them the path; walking in their midst, to strengthen them in unity; walking behind them, to make sure no one gets left behind, but especially never to lose the scent of the People of God in order to find new roads." At the heart of the mission of Theological College is the cultivation within each seminarian of an "apostolic spirit" so that he will be able to sustain, throughout his priestly ministry, energy, discipline, theological precision, and spiritual wisdom and holiness. This abiding disposition will be experienced as a "pastoral presence," a sacrament of God's mercy, compassion, and loving availability.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Reverend Gerald McBrearity, P.S.S. ('73)
Rector



**"Why TC?"
A Seminarian's Experience**

By Brian Ashmankas

Second Theology,
Diocese of Worcester

My bishop allowed me to transfer to TC for theology and my two years here have been a joyful and growth-filled experience. I have been an active participant in my own formation. I was given the opportunity to select, through prayerful discernment, my formation advisor and spiritual director. They have been valuable partners and guides on what is my own journey (rather than trying to fit me into a particular mold). In the midst of last summer's scandal, these and other faculty members helped the seminarians to grapple with and discuss our grief and to better understand and integrate our sexuality. Further, the atmosphere made such challenging endeavors possible, whereas a more imposing formation culture may have encouraged repression of both grief and sexuality.

Another reason for my excellent experience at TC is that classes take place across the street at The Catholic University of America where we are able to interact with and learn from a variety of religious and laypeople.

Finally, I would be negligent if I did not also mention that the Sulpician faculty supports seminarian initiatives. Many ministries and activities that have become part of the vibrant culture were started by seminarians with the encouragement and cooperation of faculty and staff.

USCCB Bishops Breakfast

TC's annual breakfast for bishops attending the USCCB's Fall General Assembly in November of 2018 provided a fraternal respite for the prelates during a time of great trial for the Church. The day before, rather than beginning their meetings, the Assembly decided to dedicate the day to



Deacon Anthony Federico, SGA president, addresses attendees at the USCCB Bishops Breakfast event.

prayer and reparation. TC's Tuesday breakfast preceded the opening meetings and was attended by almost 40 bishops and two dozen seminarians, who traveled by bus to join them in Baltimore at the Marriott Waterfront Hotel. While this moment in history poses some serious challenges to Church leaders, the next generation of priests offers courageous and hope-filled support in looking toward the future.

Representing this next generation at the breakfast, Deacon Anthony Federico, Student Government Association president, offered welcomed words of gratitude and hope: "Theological College recently hosted the annual Vianney Cup Soccer Tournament in which four Mid-Atlantic seminaries gather for a day of competition and fellowship. During dinner that evening, I had the chance to meet my counterpart, the president of the student government at one of the other seminaries. At the end of our conversation he asked me, 'Is it true you had 50 guys come to a Pep Rally last night?' I said it was and, at his insistence, I described the festivities. He said, 'That's incredible; we can't get our guys to do stuff like that.'



Liam Gallagher (2-B), connects with his bishop, His Excellency Robert Deeley of Portland, Maine.

"I think his comment gets at the heart of what makes Theological College such a unique house of formation. We have a culture, a brotherhood, an *esprit de corps*, that is very special. Our seminary is a place where the men in formation take care of each other and look out for each other and hold each other accountable. My sister visited TC for the first time last year and she said she wished she could bottle up the atmosphere of the seminary and bring it back with her. My brother visited for the first time and I asked him how his experience was different from his expectations and he said he didn't expect there to be that much laughter.

"I am grateful for being sent by my archbishop to such a healthy place. I have been at TC for six years and while it is not perfect and neither am I, I can say that it is the ideal place for mature men who are self-starters, men who are willing to take ownership of their formation. The fruit of the Sulpician formation program in my life can be summarized in one word – freedom: the freedom to know myself and accept myself and, in love, offer Jesus a resounding 'yes' to his invitation to follow him into the priesthood. Today, as I approach ordination, I enjoy an authentic inner freedom – the freedom to be who I am and become the priest the Lord is calling me to be. For this, I am grateful to Theological College."



TC's Father McBrearity and Father Leo Gajardo share a joke with Bishop Stephen Berg of Pueblo, Colorado.

Latinos and Catholic Education Addressed at Town Hall

By Katie Bahr

“As a Latino, I am proud of Theological College and The Catholic University of America for encouraging seminarians to approach our Hispanic brothers and sisters without fear and prejudice, to build a Church of communion.”

— Deacon R.J. Regalado, TC Hispanic Affairs Chairman

How can Catholic schools better serve the growing numbers of Hispanic and Latin American Catholics? That was the question at the heart of a “town hall” on Latinos and Catholic education, which was co-hosted by The Catholic University of America and America Media during the fall semester, and was attended by TC seminarians and faculty.

The discussion’s panelists included Bishop Oscar Cantú, coadjutor bishop of San Jose, Calif.; Veronica Alonzo, associate superintendent of Dallas Catholic Schools; Thomas Burnford, president of the National Catholic Educational Association; and Monsignor Michael Clay, director of Pastoral Ministry Programs in Catholic University’s School of Theology and Religious Studies.

The event was moderated by Hosffman Ospino, associate professor of Hispanic ministry and religious education at Boston College, who shared statistics about the changing demographics of Hispanics in the Church. Today, 43% of all Catholics in the United States are Hispanic. And while more than 60% of Catholics under the age of 18 are Hispanic, they make up only 17% of the Catholic school population.

“The present and the future of Catholicism in the United States of America will be defined by the Hispanic presence,” Ospino said. “One of the questions we need to ask ourselves is what kind of future do we want to have for Catholicism? How are we forming these young women and men who will be the next generation of priests, sisters, lay leaders, parents, and all those people who will bring the Catholic faith into the public square? What are we doing today?”



Thomas Burnford, president and CEO of the National Catholic Educational Association, discusses the state of Latinos and Catholic education in the United States October 30 at The Catholic University of America. At right, Bishop Oscar Cantú, Veronica Alonzo, and Monsignor Michael Clay. (Photo reprinted with permission from CNS / Tyler Orsburn.)

During his comments, Bishop Cantú explained how his years of Catholic schooling shaped his life. He also shared a concern that Catholic education is becoming “a privilege for the privileged” because of tuition costs that are prohibitive for low-income families. He suggested that educators work with the government to establish viable voucher or tax credit programs supporting Catholic schools. “We’ve got to do it as a matter of justice, as a matter of communion of the Church,” he said. Bishop Cantú also described a need for Catholic schools that are truly aligned with the Catholic faith. “We have to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ whether students are Catholic or not, to show them and teach them the marvels of the Catholic worldview,” he said. “If we’re not doing that right, then we have no business being open.”

Alonzo said she sees Catholic schools as an important tool for teaching students how to live out their values and “see the humanness in others.” In order to improve the system, she said Hispanic and Latin American Catholics need to have “a seat at the table” as teachers, principals, and school superintendents. She also said that schools need to explore different teaching models, including bilingual or Cristo Rey work-study programs, to provide greater educational options for families. “If we truly want to evangelize, we have to invest in our future,” she said, adding that schools can be valuable tools for faith formation in young people. “What better way can we inform these citizens to vote in a way that supports our Catholic values and virtues?”

Monsignor Clay, associate dean for graduate and ministerial studies and pastoral studies area director at Catholic University, worked in Hispanic ministry for more than 20 years as part of the Diocese of Raleigh, N.C. A “lifelong learner of the graces and gifts the Latin American community brings to the Church,” he has always tried to promote integration and welcoming atmospheres for Hispanic Catholics. As he works with seminarians, he said he tries to prepare them to approach their work with empathy and cultural awareness for Hispanic Catholics.

President John Garvey spoke of the responsibility he feels the University has to educate and serve Hispanic and Latin American students, as well as the many gifts the Hispanic population has shared with the rest of the Church. Pointing toward the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Garvey reflected on the 2015 Mass at the University in which Pope Francis canonized St. Junípero Serra, a Spanish missionary who helped to bring the Catholic faith to the Americas hundreds of years before the Founding Fathers. Garvey also spoke about Los Angeles Archbishop Jose Gomez, who addressed the University community during the 2018 Commencement Ceremony. “When The Catholic University of America looks at the Church in America, she sees remarkable stories of saints standing on our doorstep,” Garvey said. “Those stories enrich our education about what it means to be Catholic, and make the American Catholic Church better in immeasurable ways.”

Theological College’s Hispanic Affairs committee promoted the event, which helped to further the discussion on the future growth and sustainability of the Catholic Church in the United States, with a particular focus on Hispanic Catholics. Deacon R.J. Regalado (Corpus Christi), Chairman of the Hispanic Affairs Committee, commented that the event was of great importance on a pastoral level as well: “It is important, as future pastors and priests who may be working with educators in our dioceses, to know the dynamics that may deter a family from sending their child(ren) to our Catholic schools, and even more importantly to know what tools we can use to help families and our school systems to create integrated and welcoming environments for one and all. As Dr. Alonzo said, we must be willing to encourage Hispanic and Latin American Catholics to ‘come to the table’ with their own gifts and strengths to promote the value of ‘seeing the humanness in others.’”

St. John Vianney Relic Tour

“Without the Eucharist, there would be no happiness in this world.” — Curé of Ars



Charles Silvas bearing the reliquary to the altar at the opening Mass honoring the arrival of the heart of St. John Vianney.

December 9–12, 2018, the incorrupt heart of St. John Vianney was venerated at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The Shrine of Ars, France, entrusted to the Knights of Columbus this major relic for a national tour in the U.S., from November 2018 through early June 2019. The “Heart of a Priest” tour was launched in wake of the clergy sexual abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. Carl Anderson, the Supreme

Knight of the Knights of Columbus, said in a statement that St. John Vianney offers an example to help the Church heal and rebuild.

On December 9, more than a half-dozen Theological College seminarians helped to serve the Relic Pilgrimage Mass at the Shrine, with the rector, Father Gerald McBrearity, P.S.S., concelebrating with the major celebrant and homilist, Archbishop Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States, who is a native of France. Directing his words to the seminarians present, the archbishop reminded them that

“God uses instruments, his priests. We are instruments of God’s grace and mercy. This is why we exist; otherwise, we are useless.”

A frequent server at the shrine, Charles Silvas (2-T, Corpus Christi) was selected by the shrine leadership and Father Michael Weston, director of liturgy, to carry the reliquary to the altar for this Mass introducing the veneration. Charles marveled at his “once in a lifetime experience,” which moved him to awe and gratitude. During the procession to the altar, Charles’s mind and heart were focused on the priests and friends who have been instrumental during his discernment. “I remember thinking of and praying for the priests who have been a very important up to this point in my life, such as Father Pete Elizardo, Father Ken Davis, and Bishop Emeritus Edmond Carmody. I also prayed for my brother seminarians, especially since final exams were right around the corner,” he said.

The relic returned to the TC neighborhood for two stops on the tour at the Saint John Paul II Shrine — January 17–20 and February 14–18 — when more members of the TC community were able to take the opportunity to pray for the powerful intercession of this extraordinary patron of priests. In addition, on January 18, just after their return from the March for Life, all TC seminarians and priests were invited to an exclusive talk by Very Rev. Patrice Chocholski at the St. John Paul II Shrine. Father Chocholski is the Rector of the Saint Jean Marie Vianney Shrine in Ars and Saint John Mary Vianney’s successor as the parish priest of Ars since 2014. An experienced international preacher, he offered his insight and encouragement to all present, and many remained for a light dinner and veneration of the relics in the Luminous Mysteries Chapel.

Master's in Ecclesial Administration and Management



Mario Enzler, left, takes a lunch break at TC with the bishops enrolled in his first summer M.E.A.M. course in August 2018.

Throughout their years of formation, most seminarians receive only a brief overview of financial, managerial, and administrative training to take with them into ministry. Not long after ordination, they could find themselves responsible for a parish with a significant debt, managing a capital campaign, or simply unsure and ill-equipped as to how to best manage day-to-day operations and financial decisions. The skill set they receive in seminary cannot begin to cover the variety of situations that may arise.

Aware of this need, Mario Enzler, former Swiss guard and current professor in The Catholic University of America Busch School of Business, sought a way to put his vast knowledge and experience of the business world at the service of the Church. He developed a way for priests to remain active in their ministry while, at the same time, receiving an invaluable education that would help them to become more confident and efficient in their ministerial roles.

Now in its second academic year, the Master of Science in Ecclesial Administration and Management (M.E.A.M.) offers clergy the opportunity to learn from some of the best Catholic minds in the business world. After one week in August of intense introduction and course work at Catholic University, with hospitality offered by Theological College, the priests return to their respective locations and active ministry for the remainder of the year. Having the course work online allows clergy to learn relevant business principles and best managerial practices, while implementing them in whatever area of ministry they may be serving.

The courses cover topics not limited to budgeting, strategy, human resources, and fundraising. Priests who have completed the degree speak not only of the array of relevant knowledge they received, but also the relationships that form among them during the introductory week and throughout the year. They are grateful to have others to consult with and for the fraternity and friendships that have developed while here at TC and Catholic University.

The Master's in Ecclesial Administration and Management has inspired other opportunities to form Church leaders in management skills. The Busch School of Business has launched several workshops and seminars offered throughout the year. In late summer 2018, for instance, Enzler led the first five-day boot-camp for young bishops, providing them with information particularly relevant to their new role of service. This program was sponsored by the School of Business in collaboration with the Schools of Theology and Religious Studies and Canon Law. This year, several tailor-made workshops will be offered to bishops, vicar generals, religious sisters, seminarians, and permanent deacons.

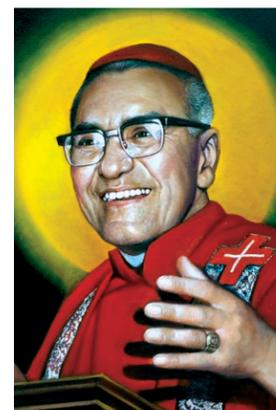
Clergy who are interested in learning more or pursuing the master's degree can find information on the Catholic University website (www.catholic.edu). The 30-credit online program can be completed in one year and requires the approval of the bishop.



Canonization: Archbishop Oscar Romero

By Manuel Blanco

First Theologian, Diocese of Rockville Centre



Portrait of Saint Oscar Romero by Rev. Peter Wm. Gray, P.S.S., who made a pilgrimage to his tomb in El Salvador.

This past October, I had the privilege of attending the canonization of seven saints to the Catholic Church in Rome. Among the seven new saints, one of them is very dear to my heart: Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was martyred while celebrating Mass in a hospital chapel on March 24, 1980. I can proudly say that witnessing such a grace-filled event brought not only tears of joy to my eyes but was also an unforgettable experience, which I will vividly remember for the rest of my life.

Among the 80,000 pilgrims who gathered in Saint Peter's Square, many were Salvadorans who were personally impacted by Saint Romero's life. Saint Romero stood up against the social injustice that occurred during the Salvadoran Civil War (1980-1992) by speaking out against the killing of innocents and the torturing of the poor. Just 10 days before his assassination, in his sermon at the Cathedral of San Salvador, he said, "The peasants you kill are your own brothers and sisters. ... In the name of God, and in the name of this suffering people ... I beg you, I beseech you, I order you, in the name of God: Stop the repression." These words highlight the tension of a war that resulted in the death of 75,000 people, many of whom were brutally killed.

One of the most powerful moments during the canonization ceremony was when Pope Francis declared the seven new saints: "We declare [these] Blessed ... to be Saints and we enroll them among the Saints decreeing that they are to be venerated as such by the whole Church." After the proclamation of those words, there was ecstatic joy among the crowd. As I looked around, many were cheering; one mother embraced and kissed her child, others wiped their tears of joy, and others, like myself, were completely in awe trying to comprehend this mystical moment.

Saint Oscar Romero is certainly an example for me. Throughout his life, he stood in solidarity with the poor, walking and listening to them. He did so because of his belief in the Church's social teaching, which emphasizes the respect and dignity of the human person. The canonization of Saint Romero challenges me to embrace holiness in the midst of the chaos and disbelief of the modern world. Furthermore, he calls me to an inner conversion, and inspires me to give myself completely to God and to his people. During his homily, Pope Francis said words that continue to inspire me to serve Jesus fully: "We cannot respond to him, who made himself our servant even going to the cross for us, only by observing some of the commandments. We cannot give him, who offers us eternal life, some odd moment of time. Jesus is not content with a 'percentage of love': we cannot love him twenty or fifty or sixty percent. It is either all or nothing."

May Saint Oscar Romero, and the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Church, intercede for us as the Church and the world continue our journey of healing and sanctification.



Manuel Blanco (right) with other Rockville Centre Salvadoran seminarians and Cardinal Gregorio Rosa Chavez, before the canonization.



ALBERIONE PROJECT

A Unique Media Formation Initiative

By Anthony Ferguson
Third Theology, Diocese of Richmond

Theological College is poised to become a pioneer in the formation of seminarians in the use of contemporary media technologies. The Alberione Project is a formation initiative dedicated to empowering a new generation of priests to evangelize through the modern media.

In a recent article titled, “Getting Out of the Sacristy: A Look at Our Pastoral Priorities,” Bishop Robert Barron (Basselini Class of 1982) exhorted bishops, priests, and seminarians to avoid the temptation to wait for the “un-evangelized” to come to them, appealing to Pope Francis’ now famous call to “get

out of the sacristies and into the streets” — including even the furthest reaches of Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube! At one point, however, Barron proposes something revolutionary:

My humble suggestion is that a serious investment in social media and the formation of an army of young priests specifically educated and equipped to evangelize the culture through these means would be a desideratum.

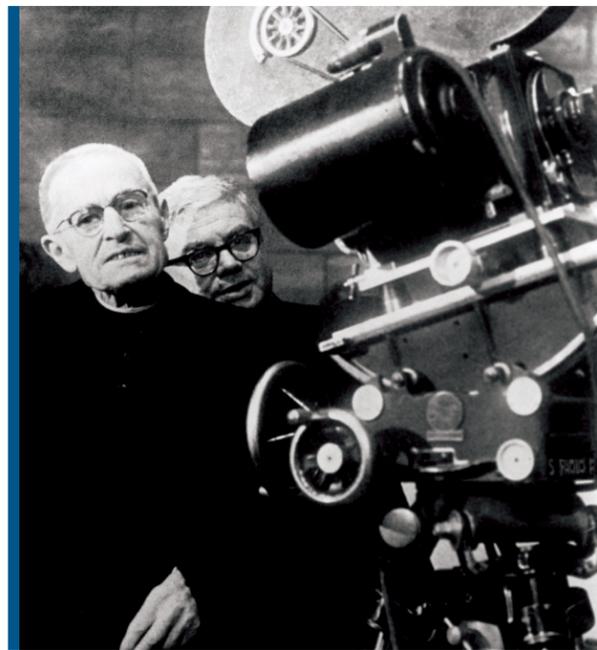
These words left a profound impact on a small group of seminarians studying at Theological College. In many circles, social media is practically synonymous with distraction and communications liability — and yet Bishop Robert Barron was calling for seminaries to invest seriously in this area as a valuable field for fruitful evangelization.

And Barron’s exhortation is not as “revolutionary” as it first seems. In fact, the Second Vatican Council laid the groundwork for precisely what he is asking for in its Decree on the Media of Social Communications, *Inter Mirifica*:

All the children of the Church should join, without delay and with the greatest effort, in a common work to make effective use of the media of social communication in various apostolic endeavors, as circumstances and conditions demand. (Inter Mirifica, 13)

The Council goes on to say that “pastors should hasten to fulfill their duty in this respect, one which is intimately linked with their ordinary preaching responsibility.”

These last words struck a chord with me and my fellow seminarian Deacon Cassidy Stinson (4-T, Diocese of Richmond) — we saw this as a summons to action. The Council had called for the direct use of social communications — i.e., press, television, radio, and, more recently, the Internet — as part of the priest’s ordinary preaching responsibility. This is a bold statement and, in our opinion, one that still has not been fully implemented in seminary formation programs.



“Media apostle” Blessed Father James Alberione firmly believed that the Catholic Church should not only use the media, but lead the charge in the newest, most powerful technologies.

As we researched the topic further, it became apparent that the Church has desired something like this for quite some time. The latest *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* reiterates this: “The Church, in virtue of the mandate received from Christ, looks confidently at the possibilities offered by the digital world for evangelization,” and that seminarians should “learn, from the time of their formation, how to use these technologies in a competent and appropriate way, shaped by sound theological insights and reflecting a strong priestly spirituality grounded in constant dialogue with the Lord.”

Filled with newfound zeal and what appeared to be an ecclesial commission, the two of us set out to answer this central question: What role could the new media play in the formation of seminarians studying at Theological College?

After praying and discerning the Lord’s will, we got to know Blessed James Alberione (1884-1971). Father Alberione was a priest from Alba, Italy, who became a legendary pioneer in the use of mass media, eventually establishing the Pauline family, which includes 10 religious institutes, each with the goal of sanctifying the modern means of communication in some way or another. In his own words: “All the new means must be the new pulpit, capable of making the voice of Christ the Master heard in every environment!” At his beatification, Pope Saint John Paul II called him “The First Apostle of the New Evangelization.”

What we loved the most about Father Alberione’s story, however, was that he rooted all his media evangelization efforts in a profound interior life nourished by Scripture and the Eucharist. In every Pauline chapel, the words on the wall behind the tabernacle read: “Fear not, I am with you. From here, I will enlighten.” This truth continues to inform

the Alberione Project, and, as those who are involved will quickly point out, this is not about building up seminarians’ egos or cultivating unhealthy online personalities.

At its core, the Alberione Project is about helping people to become holy. We are called to be saints. We are called to love God and put him first, and that should spill out into everything we do — including the media, which is a part of our life, whether we like it or not. It’s here, and it’s here to stay. As future priests, we need to learn how to use it.

With Alberione as our patron and the Church’s documents guiding our efforts, we have stirred up a veritable whirlwind of activity surrounding the “new media” within the TC community. From inviting the Daughters of St. Paul to the house for a presentation on the life and charism of Blessed James Alberione, to blessing podcast equipment during Morning Prayer, to the launch of an exciting new podcast titled *The Big Tree* (a pun on the meaning of “Alberione” in Italian), the Alberione Project is off to a dynamic start, providing seminarians unique opportunities to engage with the media in a prayerful, strategic, and intentional way.

“We need to be more than just relevant, we need to be good at it!” said Cassidy Stinson on the debut episode of *The Big Tree* podcast. “We need to be using the media to its fullest — it’s a powerful, powerful tool. I’d like to think, just as we’ve been great in the media of centuries past — beautiful art, beautiful literature — that the Church can also bring beautiful things into the world with the new media.”

We are convinced that priests can play an integral role in this endeavor. Please pray for the success of the Alberione Project. You can follow the project on Twitter and Instagram, as well as subscribe to the podcast, *The Big Tree*.



Meg Hunter-Kilmer, “hobo missionary,” talks about her ministry with the Alberione Project’s Gabe Bouck (2-T, Memphis), right, and project co-founder, Deacon Cassidy Stinson (4-T, Richmond).

Breakfast Bible Study

By Justin Damask
First Basselin, Diocese of Charleston

As the grandson of two southern Protestant preachers, I have always been impressed by those who have a deep understanding of the Bible, but for many people, myself included, the prospect of tackling the Word of God by myself is daunting. Thankfully, nobody has to do this alone. During freshman year of college, I joined my first Bible study group at my university's Newman Center. We focused primarily on spending time growing in familiarity with the Lord through meditating and reflecting on his Word, and the fraternity of the group enabled me to feel comfortable and encouraged to grow in all dimensions of my faith life. This spiritual growth played a large part in my discernment to enter seminary. I have participated in several Bible studies since then and, while each group was different, I found them all to be great opportunities to cultivate an increasing appreciation for the relevance of the Bible in my daily life. These positive experiences led me to catalyze a new Bible study group at Theological College with several brother seminarians.

We began with the idea that the group would offer to the house another opportunity to sit at the feet of our Lord and listen to his Word in a comfortable setting, supplementing our

encounters with the Word in the Mass. The gathering serves as a platform for men to share their thoughts on something they encountered in Scripture that amazed them and to tackle those passages that they are having a hard time unpacking. This community is drawn together first by a common love for our Lord and second by a desire to share with others our encounters with the Word and all the insights that flow from it.

Currently, there are 10 of us that meet weekly after Mass, eating, reading, and reflecting on Bible passages. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and while we nourish ourselves physically we also feed our immortal souls with God's Word. The meetings are both fun and meaningful; a great way to start the day!



Justin Damask, center, leads the first breakfast Bible study gathering.

TC Annual Workshop

Awakening Faith and Making Church Matter

By Deacon Ed McCormack, Ph.D.
Coordinator of Human and Spiritual Formation



Father Michael White.

“Awakening Faith and Making Church Matter” was the topic for the annual community workshop at Theological College held on January 26 and 27, 2019. The workshop was led by Father Michael White and Thomas Corcoran, authors of the award-winning best-seller *Rebuilt*. Father White is the pastor of the Church of the Nativity in Timonium, Md., and Tom is associate to the pastor. Their book describes Nativity's origins as a sleepy

place where people took a consumer approach to the faith, coming to receive sacraments but not participating as mem-

bers of a parish family with a mission – for themselves and for the community at large. The parish was dynamically transformed into a place where people are committed to becoming disciples of Christ, who are sent to serve and make new disciples. Regular surveys show that for every one person who enters the Church through the RCIA process, four people leave. The challenge future priests and pastors face is how to awaken faith and make Church matter to those in the pews and those who never enter a church.

Drawing on their experience of transforming the Church of the Nativity into a parish that forms committed disciples, Father White and Tom Corcoran sought to feed the pastoral imaginations of the seminarians and to encourage them to think about how to make disciples. To overcome the consumer approach to faith, Nativity adopted Jesus' command to make disciples of all nations. This shifted the priority of the parish from meeting the demands of consumer Catholics to creating a “weekend experience” that would be welcoming and meaningful to “Timonium Tim.” Timonium Tim is the symbol of the person within the parish boundary who was not coming to church on Sunday. “Tim” is a hard-working, stressed-out family man who struggles to juggle work, family life, and his personal life. He is more likely to be watching football or playing golf on Sunday than coming to Mass. To reach Tim, the parish focused on forming disciples who desired to serve Christ and share their experience of Christ

with others. These disciples got out of the pew to invest in Tim and eventually invite him to the parish.

Making church welcoming and meaningful to Tim means that the weekend experience is the focus of the parish life. Three features make the weekend experience attractive and powerful: good music, powerful preaching, and service. Good music begins with skilled musicians who believe what they are expressing with the music. It involves offering music that will be attractive to Tim. Powerful preaching focuses on one message per weekend, usually as part of a series that aims to connect the Gospel to the lives of the people. Some form of service is an essential part of living one's discipleship. Service opportunities abound in the parish, from a one-time experience to mission work to catechesis.

On Silence

By Peter Bui
Second Pre-Theology, Diocese of Worcester



Last year, I had a chance to watch Bishop Barron's review of the movie *A Quiet Place* by John Krasinski. Upon seeing his review, I was inspired to do this brief reflection on the theme of silence, which is central also to seminary formation. Krasinski's movie follows a very courageous family who is forced to live in silence in a post-apocalyptic world

because any noise made by the family, or anyone for that matter, would lead to an ambush by murderous monsters. In the movie, we see that there is a clash between the nature of silence and noise; a parallel that can also be made about our current culture. For us Christians, it is the noise of the culture that can lead to death — more specifically, death of the soul.

Although the noise of our culture does not bring with it voracious flesh-eating monsters, what the noise does devour is the silence and time we have for God. Silence invites us into a continuous prayer, a dialogue with God without words or, put another way, a harmonious dance with our Lord. However, for this intimate interaction with God to take place, we would need to take a step back from our noise-filled culture, which constantly conditions us to embrace distractions.

Saint Francis of Assisi says that prayer is the movement of the heart towards God. It is in silence that we hear God most clearly. The place where I experience God's presence most fully is in a chapel or church. It is a place where I know God dwells — body, soul, and divinity — as he resides in the tabernacle. I once heard a story of a chapel that caught on fire;

The process of forming disciples is the purpose of parish life. The path to discipleship offered must be easy for parishioners to adopt. Tom Corcoran named that path STEPS: Serve in ministries or missions, Tithe and give, Engage in small groups, Practice prayer and sacraments, Share your faith.

The workshop generated rich discussions in the seminary community. Seminarians started asking themselves who “Tim” is in their dioceses and parishes. How would these principles and insights translate into their own settings? For some, this approach was new and challenging. To think about how a parish can awaken faith and make church matter in an age when many dismiss it as irrelevant is a very important question for future priests and pastors to begin to contemplate.

fortunately, no one was hurt. Upon extinguishing the flames, the sisters of the convent who looked after the chapel asked that the firefighters retrieve the tabernacle. Once the firefighters did so, the sisters noticed that the door of the tabernacle had been melted shut by the heat of the flames. One holy and strong-willed sister desperately fiddled with the lock and key, to no avail until she closed her eyes, said a prayer, and tried once more — and the tabernacle door opened. I recognize that while previously my heart was closed off to answering God's call to the vocation of the priesthood, much like how the door of the tabernacle was melted shut, I now have the opportunity to allow God to work in me because the door to my heart has finally been opened. This only came about after years of being hard-of-heart and it was not the noise of the culture that transformed me, but the silent presence of God.

My relationship with God is comparable in many ways to my human relationships. We have all experienced “wasting time” with someone whom we care about. I use the term “wasting time” to mean that there are joyful moments where we find ourselves simply sitting around doing absolutely nothing with someone such as our best friend. We do not actually have to be “doing” anything for our hearts are filled with joy, simply because of this person's presence. So it is with my time with God — I can imagine God asking me, as a friend and loving father, “Sit, stay awhile,” as I enter into his place of worship.

Although sitting in silence with God is not always comfortable, I view this discomfort as God's way of inviting me personally to spend time with him. As I grow in my spiritual journey and seminary formation, I am able to experience more intimately that God truly speaks to the ears of the heart. And, like the internal beating of the heart which is best heard in silence, so too it is with God's voice.

Peter Bui is one of the first to join TC's newly formed student editorial board for The Crossroads.

Theological Reflection in Pastoral Ministry

By Rev. Chris Arockiaraj, P.S.S.
Director of Pastoral Formation

As a Sulpician seminary, Theological College creates numerous opportunities for seminarians to develop mindful and reflective practices to cultivate an authentic interior life of holiness following the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who “kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart” (Lk. 2:19). This year, the TC pastoral ministry program incorporated a “theological reflection” component, which every seminarian participated in, to share, understand, and go deeper into his assigned ministry placement.

This past fall, one of our deacons led a committal service at his pastoral ministry placement for a young man who had committed suicide. Reflecting on his own pastoral experience and his ministry toward the grieving family and the deceased, he wrote in his theological reflection, “When we were graveside together, I tried to let each word fall with equal parts definition and grace. It was an unenviable privilege, but a privilege all the same. When I did get time to reflect on the experience, the first thing that dawned on me was how ‘real’ it all was — so much more so than ecclesial scandal and in-fighting. It was clearer and more straightforward than whatever else was competing for my attention and pity at the time. Honoring Mr. X meant letting go of that over which I have no control. Here was something very helpless, even senseless, but somehow more real than surrounding events. It came with hope, and out of that hope, an unfamiliar gratitude. The words of the funeral liturgy rang in my ears: ‘Life is changed, not ended.’ This reminder comes with its own, built-in Scripture reference, the Gospel from his Mass of Burial: ‘Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me’ (Mt. 11.28-29). Burdens brought by life on life’s terms are too heavy for me if I attempt to carry them on my own. Jesus wants me to take up the one he has in mind — the one to which he is already yoked himself. All these thoughts have shifted my center of gravity back on Jesus.”

In his apostolic exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, Saint John Paul II wrote, “Like all other branches of formation, pastoral formation develops by means of mature reflection and practical application, and it is rooted in a spirit, which is the hinge of all and the force which stimulates it and makes it develop” (57). At TC, the act of theological reflection is fostered in seminarians through their daily personal prayer, examen prayer, examination of conscience, and more. Theological reflection is expressed in writing and sharing in small groups once per semester, to enable participants to learn from each other. Seminarians are provided with guidelines to reflect upon and theologize their pastoral ministerial experiences. The following guidelines are one of the methods

(Experience-Reflection-Response) of theologizing about one’s ministerial encounters:

- 1) **Experience:** What was the setting and context? What aspect of the faith were you communicating? How did you go about catechizing/ ministering? How did the person respond?
- 2) **Reflection:** What did you do well? Is there something you wish you did differently? Is this person/ experience still a part of your life? How did the encounter/ experience impact your relationship? Would you do it again or do you wish that it hadn’t happened?
- 3) **Response:** What have you learned about yourself from this encounter/ experience? How has this edification and the encounter itself impacted your sense of vocation? How could this reflection help in your current pastoral ministry? Choose a passage from Scripture or tradition to connect to this experience/ encounter. As you anticipate your future pastoral ministry, what gifts has God blessed you with to minister in your diocese or elsewhere? How do these pastoral experiences/ encounters contribute to your “toolbox” for pastoral ministry?

During and after the theological reflection and sharing in small groups, many seminarians have witnessed to the very positive impact of this communal reflective practice in their priestly formation and vocational discernment. One of the deacons wrote, “I believe that God has graced me with the ability to listen attentively and console others through affective and empathetic presence and words. I’m often struck by the words that I say or the actions I find myself doing (e.g., placing my hand on the hand of the person who is sick, sorrowing, etc.). These tender words and actions are guided by the Holy Spirit. I often think, afterwards, ‘Where did that come from?’ or, ‘How did I come up with those words or that prayer?’ It’s a blessing to recognize those moments when I was able to get out of the Spirit’s way and allow him to work through me in order to minister to others.”



Father Chris Arockiaraj, right, working with Zack Sullivan (1-T, Worcester) on his pastoral ministry theological reflection.

SGA House Speakers: Enhancing Pastoral Ministry Formation

Supplementing the formation talks delivered at the rector’s conferences, the evenings and mornings of recollection, and the Sulpician meditations, the Student Government Association invites “house speakers” for the edification of all who are able to attend. Some of this year’s SGA house speakers’ presentations are highlighted below.



Dr. Kim Santoro, left, with Dr. Caley Arzamarski in Viéban Hall.

Responding in Difficult Pastoral Situations

The Theological College Student Government Association hosted psychologists Caley Arzamarski, Ph.D., and Kim Santoro, Ph.D., for a workshop titled, “What to Say: How to Respond in Difficult Pastoral Situations.” The presentation was attended by over 30 seminarians, many of whom stayed well after the one-hour allotted time to receive practical advice for responding to parishioners dealing with issues like depression, anxiety, infidelity, addiction, self-harming behavior, or suicidal thoughts. The feedback from the session was animated, enthusiastic, and universally positive. Many of the men who attended felt a sense of relief in accepting the fact they are not expected to “fix” those who suffer but were now better equipped to enter into their pain with some of the understanding and language of a psychologist. For their part, Arzamarski and Santoro were moved by their brief visit to Theological College. In a follow up email, they noted that they “did not anticipate how engaged and participatory the group was. We are so grateful for the meaningful opportunity to share about a topic we are so passionate about. We left feeling inspired by your genuine interest and thought-provoking questions.”

Restorative Justice: A First Hand Account

Theological College’s Social Justice Committee hosted a lunch-hour talk with the parents of Ann Grosmaire, a 19-year-old who died after being shot by her fiancé, Conor. Ann’s mother

Kate, author of the book, *Forgiving Our Daughter’s Killer*, with her husband, Deacon Andy, were accompanied by Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy, M.T.S., executive director of Catholic Mobilizing Network (C.M.N.), which seeks to end the death penalty and promote restorative justice in the U.S.

The incredible account of the couple’s immediate forgiveness of Conor and their work to establish a “restorative justice circle” to advocate for his life attest to the fruit of their Spirit-guided mercy. They allowed God’s love to work in them from the beginning, when Deacon Andy sent an important message to the prison – “Tell him I love and forgive him.” A few years later, during his 20-year sentence, Conor was baptized, and he continues his faith journey evangelizing and spreading hope among inmates. Working to share this hope in the healing power of God in all their lives, the Grosmaires have been traveling around the country to share their profound message, explained in a word by Andy: “We are not angry or bitter. We beg people, ‘Forgive!’ There is so much freedom and joy in this.” Through their hard times of deep sadness, this light of forgiveness remains.

The talk illuminated an alternative to revenge and punitive measures of retribution called restorative justice, with which many seminarians were unfamiliar. Implementing it requires advocacy, such as with the C.M.N., and cooperation among the accused, the victims, lawyers, and judges, especially in the pre-court process. One of the seminarians asked, “How does restorative justice have a pastoral place?” Deacon Andy, himself an active minister to the people, insisted that the main tenant of restorative justice – listening – is key in a life of formation and in pastoral ministry. In instances of harm and injustice, even in daily life, it is important to talk about what happened and how it can be repaired. Krisanne Vaillancourt Murphy spoke for the entire room when she thanked the speakers, with deep gratitude, for the “evangelizing energy you are sharing.” TC’s rector, Father McBrearity, hopes to invite the couple back to TC so that more men can benefit from their witness of love.



Ann and Deacon Andy Grosmaire.

The Witness of a Saint

By Kyle Vance

First Theologian, Archdiocese of Washington

This past fall semester, the Prayer & Worship Committee invited Mario Enzler, Ph.D., of The Catholic University of America's Busch School of Business, to speak at Theological College. Dr. Enzler's Italian background was not lost on his audience, as his loud and captivating voice resounded through Viéban Hall. He led us through his journey from a formerly apathetic Catholic to his dramatic time as a Swiss Guard under Saint John Paul II, whose witness to deep unitive prayer and manliness, as well as his personal exhortations to holiness

and encounters with Enzler, transformed the guard into the faithful Catholic man and leader that he is today, as finance professor and director of the University's Master of Science in Ecclesial Administration and Management (M.E.A.M.) program for clergy. Through his entertaining and inspiring episodes, Enzler similarly challenged us to be strong men in the Lord with the courage to do what is needed, and to be men of deep prayer. In fact, as he was sure to emphasize, it is the Lord who, through this deep prayer, makes us into the courageous men of God we are called to be.

Last summer, Theological College hosted dozens of bishops and priests enrolled in Enzler's week-long M.E.A.M. program (see p. 6), and this summer will do the same.

Celebrating the Lunar New Year at Theological College

By Peter Bui

Second Pre-Theology, Diocese of Worcester



The Chinese priests and Deacon Mingwei Li leading a Mass hymn for seminarians and Vietnamese and Chinese guests.

This year, the Lunar New Year started on February 5, 2019, and marks the beginning of the Year of the Pig which, by my knowledge, tells me that it is all right to hit the snooze button at least once each morning for the entire year! All joking aside, our Theological College community embraced the Lunar New Year by celebrating the Mass in a variety of languages. Our vice-rector, Father Hy Nguyen, led the Mass as the main celebrant with over a dozen priests including our faculty members and guest priests as concelebrants. This year was particularly special because we had a group of 25 Vietnamese guests from Maryland who were at TC on retreat and desired to participate in the Eucharistic worship with us.

As our guests approached the doorway into the Lord's house, they were greeted by welcoming seminarians and colorful decorations around the doorposts that were expressive of the Lunar New Year. A particularly eye-catching piece was the yellow blossom tree that stood outside the chapel as a

dedication to Our Blessed Mother. The yellow blossom tree signifies beauty and anticipated success for the upcoming year. Hanging off the tree branches were red decorations reading "Chúc Mừng Năm Mới," meaning "Happy New Year" in Vietnamese.

As we were all gathering together in worship, the focus was on the beauty of God's creation and love for all peoples and ethnicities. This year's homily was given by Deacon Mingwei Li (Diocese of Pittsburgh) who spoke about the significance of the Lunar New Year for those who celebrate it. He shared with us that the celebration actually lasts for 15 days on the Chinese calendar! And he reminded us that the beauty recognized in the celebration of the Lunar New Year can only be appreciated through God, as the ultimate creator, because it was God who brought into existence all that is good and beautiful, such as the cosmos and the land of the earth — a truth that was grounded in our first reading for the Mass, *Genesis 1:1-19*.

We were also gifted with the beautiful voices of our guests who sang a traditional Vietnamese piece and six guest priests who sang a hymn in Chinese. Although the majority of our seminarians do not speak Vietnamese or Chinese, many cautiously tried their best to mouth the lyrics with the help of sheet music. Our cantor for the evening, Jonathan Pham, expressed that he was pleasantly surprised when the guests joined him in singing the traditional Vietnamese song. And another seminarian, Nicholas Waldron, commented that seeing the Chinese priests sing together for the community was especially memorable.

The Lunar New Year is a celebration of joy, thanksgiving, and hope for the future. It helps those participating to remember and reflect on their cultural heritage and to aspire to greater unity as a community. An important part of the celebration is time spent with family, and this year we were fortunate enough to spend it with our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ here at Theological College. In the new year ahead, we are all looking forward to witnessing how the grace of God continues to work in our lives.

March for Life 2019

On January 18, TC seminarians and their 95 overnight guests — including three bishops and dozens of seminarians from Saint Vincent's in Latrobe, Saint Paul's in Pittsburgh, and



Vice-rector, Father Hy Nguyen, with TC faculty and seminarians at the March for Life.

Our Lady of Providence in Providence, R.I. — joined hundreds of thousands of supporters of the 46th annual March for Life in the United States capital. The two-day gathering began on Thursday evening, January 17, with the Opening Mass of the National Prayer Vigil for Life at the Basilica of

the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, the Shrine's largest Mass of the year with a congregation of 10,000. The Mass was followed by an all-night Adoration Vigil in the Crypt Church (with TC and St. Vincent's leading in song and prayer during the 3–4 a.m. timeslot). TC seminarians embraced the opportunity to accompany diocesan brothers and others from their home parishes in this annual effort to be a "voice for the voiceless," the world's biggest annual human rights demonstration. This year's March for Life coordinator for TC, Charles Silvas, commented: "These two days have been a tremendous experience of hospitality and fraternity for us all, as we prayed and marched together in defense of the most vulnerable population in the world."

For the full story, go to TC's website, theologicalcollege.org.

TC Parlor Update

Theological College is an unpretentious place, smaller in size than most seminaries owing to its identity as a "two-roof" seminary whose academic formation takes place on the campus of The Catholic University of America. Great attention is given by facilities manager Tim Murphy and other stewards to ensure that all areas are cared for and employed to their greatest potential. Frequently used for welcoming visitors, holding small gatherings, and taping podcasts for the Alberione Project (see p. 8), the first-floor TC parlor was recently updated. The effort included replacing the partition wall with French doors set in a wooden archway design similar to that of the TC chapel entrance. Thanks to a charitable donation from Father Mel Blanchette, P.S.S., new furniture was installed. Father John Kemper, P.S.S., Sulpician Provincial and overseer of the renovation, contributed six historic sketches by Father Peter Wm. Gray, P.S.S. Father Gray explains his inspiration for the series, titled, "Scenes from a Mexican Village": "The images are from memories of my many visits to Mexico since 1965 that suddenly distilled in 1982, in my studio in Menlo Park, California." On long-term loan from the Society of St. Sulpice,



The newly refurbished TC parlor adjacent to Olier Hall.

the black-ink-on-white-paper works will greet (and challenge) seminarians, faculty, staff, and guests. Regarding the refurbishing of the parlor, TC rector, Father Gerald McBrearity, commented, "I am delighted that this hospitable room, which will serve our seminarians and welcome guests, now better reflects both the peaceful beauty as well as the dynamism of the life of this seminary."

Rev. John C. Selner, P.S.S., Endowed Chair for Sacred Music and Liturgy

Campaign Update

Sacred music is one of the most powerful means through which God lifts my soul to himself, places me in his presence, and begins a conversation from heart to heart. My prayer is that one day I can give that gift of “praying twice” through beautiful sacred music, having learned it and been formed by it myself, to those whom I am called to serve.

— Luke Kirk, First Basselin, Diocese of Lafayette (La.)

The transforming power of liturgical music has for generations drawn priesthood candidates into a deeper appreciation for God’s action in their lives and a deeper compassion for those who yearn for such a religious experience. As Theological College began its second century of service to the Catholic Church in our nation, the Board of Trustees established the Rev. John C. Selner, P.S.S., Endowed Chair for Sacred

Music and Liturgy campaign. The goal of this campaign is \$1.5 million. The funds raised will cover the costs associated with providing formation in sacred music and liturgy at Theological College for generations to come. Gifts and pledges for the campaign have reached \$839, 540.

To participate in this historic milestone in the enhancement of the formation program at Theological College, go to theologicalcollege.org website and click on “Support Us,” or contact Carleen Kramer at ckramer@sulpicians.org or 410 323-5070.



More on Music...



Deacon Chris Masla (Richmond), right, plays with the “Hillbilly Thomists” at Catholic University’s World Youth Day satellite event, “Panama in the Capital,” in solidarity with Pope Francis’s historic visit to Panama.



Gratitude as a Daily Practice

by Steven Alexander, Ph.D.



One may define gratitude as “the quality of being thankful.” Alternatively, we can think of it as an attitude, emotion, personal trait, or behavioral practice. However it is conceived, the quality of being grateful is a foundational component of daily social exchange and can carry deep meaning both on interpersonal and intrapersonal levels.

Perhaps not coincidentally, when learning a new language, “thanks” is often one of the first words taught and acquired. Expressing thanks is seen as a universal sign of acknowledgment, respect, and humility, and it transcends culture and time. The very act conveys caring for the other person in a connected relationship. When transacted genuinely, it solidifies meaning that something of value and worth has transpired. The act and reverberations leave both the person offering the gratitude and the person receiving it feeling better in general, as well as better about self and others. This concept of gratitude is a main tenet of the Catholic faith and even forms the elemental basis of saying grace before a meal.

It is also an integral purpose of Mass and prayer in general. Indeed, “Eucharist” comes from the Greek word for “thanksgiving.” Priests and religious are steeped in the importance of gratitude and thankfulness, not only in personal and vocational formation, but also in daily practice.

The Key to Contentment

Practicing gratitude can be an integral part of knowing and maintaining real contentment. During tough times when we find life a struggle, being grateful for one’s whole circumstance and making a ritual out of gratitude may seem especially counterintuitive, yet it can provide an effective vehicle through those emotional or behavioral difficulties.

Despite this cognitive understanding of the conceptual importance of gratitude, practical offerings of gratitude can sometimes become more rote or a less genuinely felt part of our daily, lived experiences. When this happens, a crucial source of spiritual connection and personal happiness can be diminished.

Psychological research supports what we already know on a personal, institutional, and even national (e.g., Thanksgiving) level: Giving thanks is a vital way to connect to something larger than ourselves and enhances feelings of optimism and well-being in general. Stated differently, our mental health can actively be improved through purposeful practices of gratitude.

Gratitude’s Impact on Well-Being

Positive psychology approaches scientific theory and inquiry from the perspective of how best to help individuals experience greater fulfillment in life. Various studies have found correlations between intentionally practicing thankfulness and an increased sense of personal happiness, decreased anxiety and depression, more restful sleep, and beneficial changes in brain chemistry.

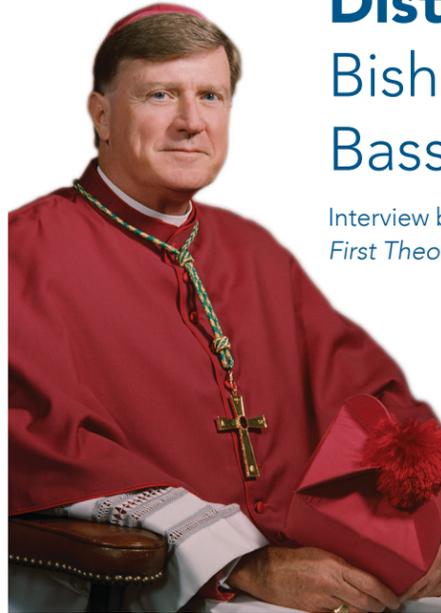
In “Counting Blessings Versus Burdens,” by Emmons and McCullough (*Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 2003), the researchers conducted three studies on whether practicing gratitude had an impact on well-being. Researchers randomly assigned participants to groups that were asked to either focus on gratitude or on neutral or distressing events. For all three studies, the gratitude-outlook groups were reported to exhibit heightened well-being across a significant number of outcome measures relative to comparison groups, with “positive affect” or happiness appearing to be the most robust effect. Researchers concluded such results suggest both emotional and interpersonal benefits accruing from a “conscious focus on blessings.”

More Necessary Now Than Ever

As extreme political strife and global uncertainty only add to an already stressful existence, it may be a particularly good time for a self-care challenge. Find simple ways of being, saying, and noticing what and for whom you are thankful. Be creative, but don’t forget to practice. Just like physical muscles, our gratitude muscles can atrophy when not stretched.

Perhaps just as importantly, remember also to notice and appreciate your own gifts. Realistic, positive self-appraisal helps bolster self-esteem, which in turn makes it that much easier to appreciate others.

Steven Alexander, Ph.D., is a therapist on the staff of Saint Luke Institute. Adapted from an article that first appeared in LukeNotes, a quarterly publication on psychological health by Saint Luke Institute (www.sli.org/lukenotes).



Distinguished Alumnus Profile: Bishop Robert J. McManus Basselin Class of 1974

Interview by Zachary Sullivan
First Theologian, Diocese of Worcester

Bishop McManus, do you have any favorite memories from your time as a Basselin at Theological College and The Catholic University of America?

During my three years as a Basselin at Theological College, I met some very bright and talented young men, some of whom are still very close friends of mine. Although the academics were rigorous, I count myself blessed to have received a first-class degree in philosophy, a discipline that I still study today. I also have fond memories of the many cultural opportunities available in the city of Washington.

What was the topic of your Ph.L. thesis?

The thesis was titled, "To Thine Own Self be True: A Study of the Epistemological and Ethical Dimensions of Kierkegaardian Subjective Truth."

How did formation here at Theological College influence your priesthood and now your episcopate?

I was at Theological College in 1971-1974, which were very difficult and tumultuous years in American seminaries. In such a context, I learned that, to a great extent, formation in both the spiritual and academic realms has to be self-directed. Self-discipline and a steady, daily routine of prayer, study, and relaxation are necessary in the life of a priest and bishop. I cultivated that formational insight while at Theological College.

And how did your academic work in the Basselin Scholars Program impact these ministries?

The academic program for us Basselins was second to none. The philosophical training taught me the necessity of clear, rigorous thinking and the need to make important distinctions when thinking about any matter or analyzing a particular situation that needs to be addressed. A priest and a bishop are regularly called upon to decide very complex matters in a very objective and non-prejudicial manner. I believe my years as a Basselin scholar helped me to acquire this ability (*habitus*).

What has been your biggest aspiration in your work for the People of God of Worcester?

My deepest hope and aspiration as the Bishop of Worcester is to help the people who have been committed to my pastoral care to come to know and fall in love with Jesus Christ by my preaching, teaching, and pastoral guidance, which, of course, are all dependent on the working of God's grace.

What do you believe to be the biggest challenges for those entering the priesthood in the 21st century?

I would say the biggest challenge for a priest in the 21st century is to make the Roman Catholic faith and its theological and moral tradition an intelligent and reasonable life-proposition for people living in a radically secular culture.

Do you have some advice or encouragement for the seminarians of Theological College and all those in the process of discernment?

My advice to the seminarians at Theological College is the same advice I repeatedly gave to the seminarians when I was the rector of Our Lady of Providence Seminary in Rhode Island: "You cannot give what you do not have." So use every day of your seminary discernment journey to cultivate a deeply rooted relationship with the person of Jesus Christ, the Eternal High Priest, and to cherish Holy Mass as the "pearl of great price" of the priesthood.

Class Notes

1960s

Congratulations to all alumni from the **Class of 1969** who are celebrating their 50th anniversary!

1990s

Congratulations to all alumni from the **Class of 1994** who are celebrating their 25th anniversary!

2000s



Diocese of Paterson alumni from the TC Class of 2009, Rev. David Pickens, right, and Rev. Paul Barboutz.

Rev. David Pickens, '09, of the Diocese of Paterson and pastor of Saint Ann Church in Parsippany, shared the following with *The Crossroads*: "After surviving five years together at Theological College and being ordained together for the Diocese of Paterson in 2009, **Rev. Paul Barboutz** and I finally celebrated a

Mass together. Yesterday, Father Paul, the Director of Pastoral Care at the Straight and Narrow addiction treatment center in Paterson, brought the Straight and Narrow Gospel Choir to sing at our 10:30 a.m. Mass here at Saint Ann Church in Parsippany, N.J. We hosted the choir in support of the Bishops Annual Appeal since Straight and Narrow is a Catholic Charities ministry. May God continue to bless Father Paul in the good work he does with those in need."

2010s

Rev. Ryan Lerner, '10, of the Archdiocese of Hartford, has been transferred from his ministry as chancellor and secretary to Archbishop Leonard P. Blair to serve as the chaplain at the Catholic Chapel and Center at Yale University, New Haven, Conn., effective March 1.

Rev. Matthew Fish, '11, of the Archdiocese of Washington, has been transferred from his ministry as parochial vicar at Holy Redeemer Church in College Park to serve as administrator of Holy Family Parish in Hillcrest Heights. On December 3, Father Fish joyfully announced to the school community that Holy Family School, which had been struggling financially and was slated to close next year, will remain open due to an anonymous \$200,000 donation. During a Mass of thanksgiving offered to God for this good news, Father Fish told the students, "Sometimes it happens in life that you have obstacles. You can get discouraged, you can give up, or you can say, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.'"

Rev. Andrew DeFusco, '14, of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, has been transferred from his ministry as associate pastor at the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen in Baltimore to serve as associate pastor at Saint John Catholic Church in Westminster.

Rev. Ken Marlovits, '14, of the Diocese of Pittsburgh, has been transferred from his ministry as administrator at Saint Maurice Parish in Pittsburgh to serve as senior parochial vicar at two parishes, Saint Kilian in Cranberry Township and Holy Sepulcher in Butler, and to serve as chaplain at two Catholic high schools, Vincentian Academy and North Catholic High School. Father Marlovits shared that prior to entering the seminary, he had worked for 14 years in secondary education, a ministry for which he felt God had graced him "with a special charism." He added, "It is a great joy to serve the people of Pittsburgh and most especially to walk the journey of faith with the students, faculty, and staff of two very fine and historic Catholic high schools within the diocese."

Rev. Matthew Gworek, '16, of the Archdiocese of Hartford, has been transferred from his work as an intern at Salt + Light Ministries to serve as secretary to Archbishop Leonard P. Blair, effective March 1.

Rev. Francis Vivacqua, '16, of the Diocese of Albany, has been installed as the 10th pastor of Saint Mary's Church, Ballston Spa, on December 16, 2018, by Most Rev. Edward Scharfenberger, Bishop of Albany, after serving as parochial vicar there since his ordination in 2016. One of the ventures for the newly installed pastor will be to lead the parish on a special pilgrimage to Medjugorje from April 29 to May 9, 2019.

Rev. Jonathan Demma, '18, of the Diocese of Fort Worth, has been transferred from his ministry as parochial vicar at Saint John the Apostle Parish in North Richland Hills to serve as parochial administrator at Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls.



Father Robert Cro, P.S.S., TC formator in 2015-17, recently lunched at the NAC with Basselin alumni from the Class of 2018, **Aaron Kelly** (Diocese of Rochester), left, and **Jeison Cortes** (Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston).



In Memoriam

Most Rev. Frank J. Rodimer, J.C.D., D.D., '51, died on December 6, 2018, at the age of 91. Bishop Rodimer's dedicated ministry to the people of the Diocese of Paterson spanned six decades, beginning on May 19, 1951, when he was ordained to the priesthood in the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist. During his years as a priest before becoming a bishop, he served as parochial vicar of Saint Brendan Parish in Clifton, temporary administrator of Our Lady of the Lake, Sparta, and as pastor at Saint Paul Parish in Clifton, where he served for 10 years until his appointment as bishop in 1978. On a diocesan level as a priest, Bishop Rodimer served in many capacities, including assistant chancellor of the diocese and secretary of the tribunal, first diocesan director of Sacred Liturgy, and as secretary to Bishop James Navagh, with whom he attended the Second Vatican Council in June of 1963. On December 5, 1977, he was appointed the sixth Bishop of Paterson by Pope Paul VI, the first native-born bishop of the diocese. After his ordination on February 28, 1978, by Archbishop Peter A. Gerety, Bishop Rodimer served as the esteemed leader of his diocese for 26 years. One of the new bishop's first priorities was to strengthen the parishes of the diocese. In September 1978, he began a systematic visitation of all the

parishes, and over the next six years, he preached at every Sunday Mass in the diocese. During his ministry as bishop, he established 12 new parishes, ordained 91 priests and 179 permanent deacons, and confirmed more than 100,00 Catholics. Serving the Church on a national level, Bishop Rodimer was a member of the National Council of Catholic Bishops Committee on Liturgy as well as a member of the N.C.C.B. Administrative Committee. After his retirement from active ministry in 2004, Bishop Emeritus Rodimer resided in Green Pond, Rockaway Township, where he continued to assist in nearby parishes and to administer Confirmation as needed. "Every day I still pray for the people of the diocese and their intentions, and I always hope today to still encourage my brother priests in whatever way I can to continue this very important ministry," he said. In the fall of 2017, he moved to Saint Joseph's Home for the Elderly in Totowa, where he was lovingly cared for by the Little Sisters of the Poor until his passing on December 6. Most Reverend Arthur J. Serratelli, Bishop of Paterson, presided at the Mass for Christian Burial for Bishop Emeritus Rodimer at the Cathedral of Saint John the Baptist, with interment at Calvary Cemetery, Paterson.

Rev. Robert C. Landsberger, B '53, died on February 6, 2018, at the age of 87. Father Landsberger was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Saint Cloud on June 1, 1957, by Bishop Peter W. Bartholome at the Cathedral of Saint Mary in Saint Cloud. His dedicated priestly ministry, spanning almost five decades, included serving as associate pastor and later as pastor at eight churches throughout his diocese. His final assignment, from July 1994 to September 2003, was serving as pastor at Saint Michael's Church in Motley, before his retirement in the fall of 2003. Additionally, Father Landsberger taught classes at Cathedral High School from 1957 to 1959 and served on the marriage tribunal beginning in 1966 until 2007. During his retirement, Father Landsberger lived at the parish house in Saint Wendel from 2003 to 2013, where, each Wednesday evening, he would visit the classrooms of the students in religious education classes, showing great love for the children and answering all their questions. He was remembered as "a very special part of our program and an inspiration to the teachers." Most Reverend Donald Kettler presided at the Mass for Christian burial for Father Landsberger at the Cathedral of Saint Mary in Saint Cloud, with interment at Assumption Cemetery, Saint Cloud.

Rev. George R. Fleischmann, '56, died on May 28, 2018, at the age of 93. Father Fleischmann began his priestly formation in 1952 at Saint Francis de Sales Seminary, seven years after graduating from Marquette University with a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering. In the fall of 1954, he relocated to Washington, D.C., to complete his formation at Theological College. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by Archbishop Albert G. Meyer on May 26, 1956, at the Cathedral of Saint John the Evangelist in Milwaukee. Father Fleischmann's dedicated priestly service to God's people spanned 38 years of active ministry, including serving as an associate pastor at five parishes, and later as pastor at three parishes throughout the archdiocese. Additionally, during his ministry, he was appointed to the faculty at De Sales Preparatory Seminary where he taught from July 1963 until June 1973. His last assignment before retiring from active ministry on June 21, 1994, was serving as pastor for nine years at Holy Trinity Parish in Newburg. Most Reverend Jerome E. ListECKI, Archbishop of Milwaukee, presided at the Mass for Christian burial for Father Fleischmann at Saint Anthony Parish in Menomonee Falls, with interment at Saint Anthony Cemetery.

Rev. Emmett Meyer, '64, died on December 3, 2018, at the age of 80. Father Meyer was ordained to the priesthood on May 23, 1964, for the Archdiocese of Omaha. Throughout his dedicated priestly ministry, which spanned more than four decades, Father Meyer served in 13 parishes in the archdiocese, as well as two high schools, and as the director of the Archdiocese of Omaha Personal Renewal Office. Additionally, Father Meyer was active in the Cursillo Movement, the Movement for a Better World, and the Christians Encounter

Christ Movement. But he especially loved his work with the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. In his last assignment, Father Meyer served as pastor at Saint John the Evangelist Parish in Valley from 2001 until his retirement in 2008. He then moved to Sioux City, Iowa, where he had family, and lived there until his death. Many former parishioners remembered Father Meyer fondly: "We have great memories of Father Emmett and his polite ways in getting people involved in the church. My husband loved working with him on RCIA at Saint Philip Neri and I'm grateful to Father for being my sponsor for Christians Encounter Christ. We're still involved after 27 years because of him. He will be missed. May he rest in peace." Father Michael Grewe, pastor of Saint Cecilia Parish in Omaha, and longtime friend of Father Meyer, also noted: "He encouraged people to take their rightful place and use their gifts in the Church. He had a great impact on people and the archdiocese." Father Grewe was the homilist at the Mass for Christian Burial for Father Meyer at Blessed Sacrament Church in Sioux City. He is interred at Calvary Cemetery in Omaha.

Rev. James J. McGee, P.S.S., '85, died June 14, 2018, at the age of 63. Father McGee was ordained to the priesthood on August 31, 1985, for the Diocese of Scranton after obtaining his Master of Divinity degree from Theological College and The Catholic University of America. During his seminary studies, Father McGee co-founded the National Christian Theological Students Conference, a national ecumenical forum for graduate students of theology and seminary studies. After his ordination to the priesthood, for the next four years, he served as assistant pastor at two parishes in the Diocese of Scranton, and then, in 1989, with the blessing of Bishop James Timlin of Scranton, Father McGee entered the Society of Saint Sulpice in Baltimore, Maryland. While there, he pursued graduate studies in pastoral counseling from Loyola University. Additionally, with the Sulpicians, he taught courses on Christian spirituality and spiritual development for several years. In 1992, he pursued doctoral studies at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif., and later, after joining the Diocese of Oakland in 2002, spent two years as an associate pastor at Saint Bonaventure Church in Concord before being appointed as pastor of Saint John Vianney Parish in Walnut Creek in February 2005. In September 2014, Father McGee was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, and became pastor emeritus at Saint John Vianney, where he resided until February 2018. He was then transferred to Atria Park of Lafayette, an assisted living facility, where he remained until his death. Father William Rosario, pastor of Saint John Vianney, offered the Mass of Christian burial for Father McGee at Saint John Vianney Church in Walnut Creek, with interment at Queen of Heaven Cemetery, Lafayette. Memorial donations may be made to the donor's favorite charity or to a local Alzheimer disease support group.



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From the Class of 2019, Deacons Walter Genito (New York), Michael Russo (Washington), and Matthew Browne (Rockville Centre) will be TC's first group to return as priests to complete the program.



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Theological College, the national seminary of The Catholic University of America, inaugurates a 5th-year S.T.L. program. Newly ordained priests return for one additional year to complete an S.T.L. degree. These priests will have the support and privileges of the seminary community while living in a separate, newly renovated residence.

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