

# THE Bridge

*A Publication of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake / Mount St. Mary's Seminary*

WINTER 2025





## Dear Friends,

It brings me great joy to present the Winter 2025 edition of The Bridge, a publication that highlights the vibrant community and activities of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake / Mundelein Seminary. As you read, you will discover an array of stories showcasing the formation, faith, and mission of our institution.

In this issue, we celebrate new beginnings, such as welcoming esteemed faculty members like Dr. Harold Horell, who brings a wealth of expertise to the School of Parish Leadership and Evangelization and revisiting the impactful ministry of Rev. Emery de Gaál, a leading theologian in our seminary community.

You will find inspiring reflections, including Br. Mateusz Szymanski's journey through the spiritual space of our St. John Paul II Chapel and the Eucharistic Procession's reminder of the beauty and significance of our faith in the real presence of Christ.

Through personal stories like Kim Anderson's testament to a faith-centered career and Thérèse McCall's embrace of her vocation post-retirement, we celebrate lay leadership and its profound impact. Alumni stories continue this thread of encouragement and transformation, illustrating the fruits of formation at USML.

Our rich history comes to life through a feature on the Carry Collection—a rare compilation of books housed within the McEssy Theological Resource Center—underscoring our commitment to scholarship and Catholic heritage. Additionally, articles such as the ordination of Bishop Dennis Walsh emphasize our contribution to the broader Church, forming leaders who serve across dioceses and communities.

These highlights represent just a glimpse into the pages that follow. I hope you are inspired by the stories of our seminarians,

faculty, staff, and supporters who faithfully carry forward the mission of forming compassionate and faith-filled leaders for the Church.

Thank you for your support, prayers, and engagement in our mission. May this season bring peace and abundant blessings to you and your loved ones.

With gratitude in Christ,



Rev. John Kartje  
Rector and President  
University of Saint Mary of the Lake



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# Meet Harold Daly Horell,

Meet Dr. Harold Daly Horell, the Margaret and Chester Paluch Chair of Theology at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake (USML). He has a Ph.D. from Boston College's Institute of Religious Education and Pastoral Ministry, an M.T.S. from Harvard Divinity School, and an M.A. and B.A. from the University of Dayton.

**H**orell is one of the newest faculty members at the School of Pastoral Leadership and Evangelization and teaches three courses: Christian Anthropology, Leadership in an American Religious Context, and Self-Leadership.

Born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Horell grew up in Altoona, Pennsylvania, a town tucked away in the middle of the Appalachian Mountains. Even though it's a reasonably large town, it has a small-town feel, where he and his nine brothers and sisters went to Catholic school. His graduating class had 187 students, a fairly small class then.

*What challenges did you have to overcome to get where you are?*

My dad did not finish high school. He earned his GED diploma in the Navy. My mom finished high school. In high school, she was on what they called the secretarial track. So, I had no idea what to expect when I went to college. I had classmates in college whose parents were college graduates and were steering them or guiding them. I did not have any of that. I had to figure out my way--on my own.

*How has your Catholic faith formed you into who you are today?*

My Catholic faith has just been a part of who I am from the beginning. My father is from a very strong Austrian Catholic family, and my mother is from a very strong Irish Catholic family. Two Catholic traditions came together in my family.

I have nine brothers and sisters, and we went to a Catholic grade school and a Catholic high school. Then, I intentionally chose a Catholic College.

I don't think I really had a sense of how deeply my Catholic faith was a part of my life until I got into college and studied philosophy. I did a master's in philosophy because it was interesting to me. At one

time, I was thinking of doing PhD work in philosophy. I had a wonderful mentor, and he sat me down one day and said, "I want to give you some friendly advice." He said, "If you go on to do PhD work in philosophy, you'll find that many places you would want to study will tell you that you ask too many theological questions."

So, I needed a more secular philosophical focus to do PhD work. I was too theological. It was one of those eye-opening experiences. That's when I decided, instead of doing a PhD in philosophy, to do another master's in theology. Because I was interested in teaching and had been teaching for three years when I did my master's in theology, I gravitated toward religious education. That is really where I found a home.

*Why did you decide to teach?*

While doing a master's degree in philosophy at the University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio, I was invited to teach Introduction to Philosophy. That's when I really developed a passion for teaching.

When initially offered the opportunity to teach, I said, "I don't know anything about teaching." The response was, "Well, you're a good student; you'll be a good teacher." That first semester in the classroom, I realized that wasn't necessarily the case.

I taught Introduction to Philosophy classes at the University of Dayton for three years. During my first semester in the classroom, I had 33 students. About half were freshman football players because my afternoon class fit conveniently between the football team's morning and afternoon practices.

One day, I entered the class, and one of the freshman football players was sitting there, blowing on his book. I asked, "What are you doing?" And he said, "This stuff is so dry that there is sand in my book."

On another day, we looked at Augustine's commentary in the passage

in the inscription where God says, "I am who I am." A couple of the freshmen football players were laughing in the back. I asked, "Could you share this with the rest of the class?" They thought of the cartoon character Popeye the Sailor Man. One of his taglines is, "I am what I am, and that is all I am."

I said, "That is a great place to begin."

I went up to the board and put God on one side and Popeye on the other, and we compared Popeye and God. That was the only class all semester in which I had everyone engaged.

That class was Baptism by Fire. I learned that I sparked an interest in teaching. It was not just, "Here is how you present something;" It was, "How do you engage these young people where they are at?"

*What impact do you want to have on your students?*

I don't tend to think of my impact on the students because my teaching is not about me. It's about them. They're the subjects. I want them to come to know themselves better and think about issues from a face perspective more clearly and deeply. They will see more clearly how they're called to live out their faith in their everyday lives. So, it's about them naming their call for themselves and developing a clear sense of how they can live out that call.

*What made you want to come to USML?*

USML offered me a new opportunity to come and teach as a service to the church. I would be here at a university, at a school that's just taken four institutes and put them together and is really trying to build up programs that prepare for the church's ministry. I would have the opportunity to work with people preparing for lay ministry and possibly teach seminarians. I saw it as a new opportunity to use whatever background I have to be of service to the church.





# Meet Rev. Emery de Gaál, Ph.D., Professor of Dogmatic Theology

Father de Gaál's received a V.D., Dipl. Theol. at University of Munich; and a Ph.D. in Systematic Theology, at Duquesne University. Gaál, an associate pastor, instructor, and a member of the Catholic-Protestant Ecumenical Dialogue in Nuremberg, Germany, authored *The Art of Equanimity: A Study on the Theological Hermeneutics of Saint Anselm of Canterbury and The Theology of Pope Benedict XVI – The*

*Christocentric Shift*. He contributes to articles and book reviews in several academic journals. He is a member of the American Academy of Religion, American Benedictine Academy, Catholic Theological Society of America, Medieval Academy of America, Société Internationale des Médiévistes, and Pontificia Academia Marianum Internationalis.

Gaál is part of the Pontifical Faculty of Theology at the University of Saint Mary of Lake. He teaches courses for the Master of Divinity degree, Sacred Theology Baccalaureate, Sacred Theology Licentiate, and Sacred Theology Doctorate, which mainly encompass seminarians and clergy.

#### *Where are you from?*

My parents are political refugees from Hungary. I was born in Chicago-Saint Clements and St. Vincent DePaul parishes in Lincoln Park.

At age nine, we returned to Hungary. That country was still communist, so we continued to Austria and finally settled in Munich, Germany. There, I attended secondary school. I studied philosophy and theology independently at Munich University and the Jesuit School of Philosophy. I studied not only Catholic theology in Munich but also Orthodox and Protestant theology—there are three departments—separately and distinct.

I was ordained at Eichstatt in Bavaria, Germany. I served in five different parishes and taught theology in a college. When that place was about to close, I looked for a different place to teach, and one of the openings was at Mundelein Seminary.

#### *Why did you decide to teach at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary?*

In 2002, it was under Cardinal Francis George and Monsignor John Canary. At that time, three of our faculty members were members of the International Theological Commission in Rome, advising the Holy Father. So, there were 30 members in this commission, of which 10% came from this one location, Mundelein Seminary.

#### *What motivated you to become a priest?*

Well, I had a total of at least nine priests in my family. Six relatives are considered, in Hungary, martyrs of our faith.

Rugged individualism, as Teddy Roosevelt preached, is quite unusual in cultural history. The vast majority of people have loyalty to their parents, grandparents, and families. As long as you do not travel much or relocate,

you become part of that history and identity, which means our family—at least for the last 800 years, if not earlier, was Catholic. So it would be quite unusual for Hungarians, not only for Hungarians, not to be stable in their religious allegiance.

Two of my uncles, not part of the nine priests, brought communion and what was called extreme unction or sacrament for the sick and dying people during World War II. One uncle was shot by communists claiming that he looked similar to an SS soldier, but that was fiction because he was the only unarmed person and wore a Cassock. Now, at that location where he bled to death is a cross and two pine trees.

The other one was a Jesuit, and I met him. He was inspiring and helped me towards the priesthood, as were my parents, brother, and sister.

Amid all the unfortunate things that developed with consumerism and communism, you see the only thing that really inspires people and that they're willing to make a lifelong commitment - that arises from religion.

#### *How was your Catholic faith formed into the person that you are today? How has it shaped you?*

The Hungarian, American, and German masses shaped it. My concert masses were by Schubert, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Bach, so they were very liturgically beautiful. The parishioners brought their violins and flutes to mass and performed.

This was a most inspiring experience! You had the beautiful art of the Bavarian churches. You had martyrs in my family. Amid all the unfortunate things that developed with consumerism and communism, you see the only thing that really inspires people and that they're willing to make a lifelong commitment—that arises from religion. It arises from a living encounter with our Lord. So, there's no alternative really to being Catholic.

Happiness comes from living in communion with our Lord, Mary,

and the Saints. There are good people who want to be good, but they are not given the proper vision and definition of happiness. Ideology deceives people, and perhaps 30 percent, or more, of the GDP of the Atlantic community—of Europe and North America—is being generated for things that are entirely pointless. This misguided happiness supports, or buttresses, our economy, so it is a luxury to live from the essences of our life that are from God, the sacraments, and the Eucharist. It is something Wall Street cannot afford.

#### *What are your hobbies?*

I like to sail and hike in the mountains and am interested in airplanes. I sometimes visit Mount Athos, a Monastic Republic in Greece with 20 monasteries, several hermitages, and around 2000 monks.

I go there about every third year, it

depends. I stay from five days to two weeks. The monks really have very little technology. They use wax candles or petroleum for lights. There is no heating, except in the church. This, of course, is a Mediterranean location. However, everyone is surprised by how cold nights can be, and the windows are poorly made. It's really a beautiful experience because it exposes one to the essence of existence. It allows one to focus. You hike from one monastery to the next. You must arrive at the next monastery before sunset; otherwise, you must spend the night outside.

Around three a.m., a monk bangs a semantron and calls to prayer. Then, you march down the wooden or marble stairs with a torch and a lantern burning and go into the church to pray—to praise the Lord. This has been the praxis of monasticism for almost 1800 years, and little has changed.





# The 2024 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage:

## *A Journey to the Heart of the Church*

By Fr. Robert Ryan .....

The Eucharist does not need a revival, but we do. What began as a grassroots movement among the lay faithful of the Catholic Church in the United States became a movement inspired and guided by the Holy Spirit to bear witness that Jesus Christ is alive and desires to be near us – particularly in the Most Holy Eucharist. At a time when Christendom is fading, and a new Apostolic Age is on the horizon, a bold expression of faith is necessary to catch the attention of our hearts, which are so easily distracted.

In June of 2024, the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage drew thousands of Catholics from across the archdiocese and the state of Illinois to Mundelein Seminary, a sacred ground steeped in history and tradition. This pilgrimage, centered around the Holy Eucharist, sought to renew the faithful’s understanding of and devotion to the Real Presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament – body, blood, soul, and divinity. As the faithful gathered in prayer, adoration, and celebration, one could not help but reflect on the profound ecclesial significance of this event, especially in light of *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church promulgated by the Second Vatican Council.

***The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Christian Life***

The Eucharist’s centrality in the Church’s life cannot be overstated. In its landmark document, *Lumen Gentium*, Vatican II describes the Eucharist as “the source and summit of the Christian life” (LG, 11). It is through the Eucharist that the Church is continually built up and strengthened. Every time the faithful receive Holy Communion, they are united more closely with Christ and, through Him, with the entire Church.

The National Eucharistic Pilgrimage of 2024 embodied this truth. Pilgrims journeyed to Mundelein Seminary, symbolically making the Church present in all its diversity. Families, young people, religious, and clergy walked together, praying, singing, and sharing in the deep communion that only the Eucharist can give. This pilgrimage served as a powerful reminder that the Eucharist is not merely a ritual to be observed but a living encounter with Christ that draws us into the very heart of the Church.

As *Lumen Gentium* teaches, “The Church, in Christ, is in the nature of sacrament—a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all men” (LG, 1).



The Eucharist, which the pilgrims celebrated with such fervor, is a foretaste of that eternal banquet where Christ will be all in all.

The Eucharist, as the sacrament par excellence, both signifies and affects this communion. It is here that we are most fully united with Christ, and in Christ, with one another. The pilgrimage highlighted this unity tangibly as people of different ages, ethnicities, and vocations all came together around our Eucharistic Lord.

***The Laity and the Eucharist: A Call to Holiness***

*Lumen Gentium*, Chapter 4, emphasizes the laity’s vocation within the Church – a vocation deeply rooted in the Eucharist. The document stresses that the laity “are by baptism made one body with Christ and constituted among the People of God; they are in their own way made sharers in the priestly, prophetic, and kingly functions of Christ” (LG, 31). This shared identity calls all the baptized, regardless of their state in life, to a life of holiness and mission.

At the 2024 pilgrimage, this call to holiness was palpable. In their participation in the Eucharistic celebration, the laity played an essential role in the Church’s mission. Whether as parents guiding their children in faith, young adults discerning their vocation,

or professionals seeking to live their faith in the workplace, each pilgrim brought their unique contribution to the Body of Christ. The pilgrimage was not just a journey to Mundelein; it was a spiritual journey, one that reminded the faithful of their role in making Christ’s presence known in the world.

In *Lumen Gentium*, the Council Fathers stress that all the laity are called to sanctify the world, especially by “engaging in temporal affairs and by ordering them according to the plan of God” (LG, 31). This vocation flows directly from their participation in the Eucharist, sending them forth to be Christ’s witnesses. The Eucharist transforms not only individuals but also society as the faithful go out from the Mass to bring Christ’s love and truth into their daily lives. The pilgrims who gathered at Mundelein Seminary were reminded of this missionary dimension of the Eucharist as they returned to their homes, workplaces, and communities with renewed zeal to live out their faith.

***The Communal Nature of the Pilgrimage: A Reflection of the Church***

The 2024 National Eucharistic Pilgrimage also reflected the communal

nature of the Church, as described in *Lumen Gentium*. The Church is not an isolated collection of individuals but the People of God, a communion of believers united in Christ. The pilgrimage beautifully illustrated this aspect of the Church, as approximately 1500 pilgrims celebrated Mass together, walked together, prayed together, and were united by Jesus in the Eucharist together.

In Chapter 4 of *Lumen Gentium*, the Council emphasizes that “all the faithful, scattered though they be throughout the world, are in communion with each other in the Holy Spirit, so that he who dwells in Rome knows those who are in the most distant part of the earth as members of the same body” (LG, 13). This universal communion was made visible at the pilgrimage, where participants from across the state came together, representing the rich diversity of the Church in the United States. They were united by one faith, one Lord, and one Eucharist, a powerful testimony to the reality that the Church is truly catholic, embracing all peoples and cultures.

Moreover, the pilgrimage offered a glimpse of the Church’s eschatological reality. Just as the faithful journeyed to Mundelein, so too does the Church journey toward her ultimate destination: the heavenly banquet, where the fullness of communion with God and one another will be realized. The Eucharist, which the pilgrims celebrated with such fervor, is a foretaste of that eternal banquet where Christ will be all in all. ✚





# “Because God *truly does* answer prayers.

By Stephane Belcher

It is not a mere coincidence that I found myself jobless over a decade ago. It set the stage for my journey of perseverance and faith. The lay ministry program I participated in 15 years ago at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake (USML) laid the groundwork for my employment at USML's refectory. It took over 40 years in the workforce to find a job I love getting up for in the morning.

I am Kim Anderson, and this is my story.

Anderson's journey at USML began in September 2009 when she enrolled in the lay ministry program. This program, along with the guidance of each class, teacher, and formation day, significantly shaped her understanding of her Catholic faith and herself. It was a transformative experience that deepened her connection with faith and inspired a new hope and understanding.

As Anderson deepened this understanding, she wanted more of it—she craved it.

“I needed the nourishment it provided my mind, body, and soul. Having been a fallen-away Catholic for most of my life, I could now clearly see what I had been missing all those darkened years without Jesus by my side and without making Him the center of my life,” Anderson said.

Upon graduating from the lay ministry program in 2011, Anderson found that she had learned more about healing in those two years than she did in her entire 12 years at Catholic school. She became more grounded in faith, open, and closer to God. This transformation, fueled by faith, was a powerful and uplifting experience.

As her faith grew, she desired to participate in ministry work within her parish. She found joy in various ministries, including the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, Respect Life, the music ministry, the parish's bi-annual retreat, and the intercessory prayer ministries. Her role as a prayer warrior with the 'Sword of the Spirit' intercessory prayer ministry deepened her understanding of faith and perseverance.

In the following years, Anderson witnessed gross mismanagement and, thus, the deterioration of the company she worked at for more than 30 years. She said it was heartbreaking to sit back and watch a previously family-owned business torn apart by corporate greed, one day at a time, one co-worker at a time.

As she struggled with these changes, she worried about the company's future and, in turn, her own future.

So, with these questions plaguing her mind, she turned to prayer, and she prayed like she had never prayed

*I felt accepted and truly welcomed — a feeling I experience every time I walk through those doors leading to USML's refectory.”*

before. She no longer felt like she belonged in the “retail” world—a world filled with a negative, gossipy, “me-centered” environment.

“I prayed endlessly, day after day, week after week, that, through the grace of God, I would possibly find a job within a faith-centered atmosphere,” she said.

Then, two and a half years after completing the lay ministry program, the company that had employed her for 37 years announced it would permanently close its doors. Yes, it was quite a shock, but simultaneously, she envisioned this life-changing event as an opportunity for a new beginning. She was somehow at peace and looked forward to the prospect of a new beginning.

“I was a bit overwhelmed by the challenges of finding that new job,” said Anderson. “I knew God was beside me, helping and encouraging me throughout the process. Although I was faced with the possibility of either losing my home or having to relocate to a more affordable one, I was okay because I trusted God.”

Anderson placed her worries and anxieties associated with her new journey at the foot of the cross, in Jesus' hands. He instilled a sense of peace that surpassed all understanding, an assurance that this job loss was a blessing in disguise, and an answer to years of prayers that she might someday find a way into a job centered around her faith.

Her heart wasn't set on finding another job in retail during the first six months of her job search, even though she'd worked in retail for over forty years. She had an epiphany when a friend in the lay ecclesial program at USML asked her, “If you are seeking a job in a faith-filled environment, why are you wasting time applying for retail jobs?”

“Ouch! That brick over my head really hurt, but it allowed me to finally open my mind and heart and listen to the

prompting of the Holy Spirit, speaking to me through my friend,” she exclaimed.

One day she walked into Mundelein Hall and asked if they had any job openings.

From the start of her first conversation with her current supervisor, she could feel that this was where God needed her to be, where the peace that surpasses understanding thrives.

“I felt accepted and truly welcomed — a feeling I experience every time I walk through those doors leading to USML's refectory,” she added.

Today she is filled with joy and pride as she reflects on her ten years of service. Working in a ‘faith-filled’ environment and on sacred grounds is a privilege — a stark contrast to the negative, gossipy, ‘it is not my job’ surroundings she was accustomed to most of her life.

“It's like a taste of heaven here,” she said. “Where I get paid to be nourished in mind, body, and soul, and this sense of fulfillment and contentment is something I wish everyone to experience.”

As a member of the Legacy Society, she invested in Mundelein Seminary's future by including it in her estate plans, making a meaningful contribution, and investing in Mundelein Seminary in ways that will allow her to provide the most support possible, even after she has gone.

“I finally listened to the Holy Spirit; I made a choice,” she added. “I said yes to the invitation to learn and work in a place where God reigns, where humility, encouragement, and love overflow, where I witness, day after day, the many genuine individuals at the hands and feet of Christ! What a blessing, indeed!”





# Meet Father Bobby Krueger, the pastor of St. Leonard Parish in Berwyn, Illinois.

Fr. Krueger was born in Hoffman Estates and grew up in Long Grove, Illinois. He attended the University of Saint Mary of the Lake (USML) Mundelein Seminary and was ordained in 2012.

*Tell us about yourself.*

Right before I went to college, I had a profound experience of my faith, God, and the Eucharist, which reoriented my life. I had experienced the Eucharist as I never had before.

So, when I got to college (University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign), I was just hungry for it and started going to Mass every day. I was involved in student ministries there and in some of the retreat ministries that they had. That was kind of where I grew, was led by faith, and deepened my understanding of things.

By my junior year of college, I discerned that I was supposed to be a priest - calling me to the priesthood. So, I reached out to the vocational director, and I began the process of getting to Mundelein.

My first parish assignment was at St. Bede on the south side of Chicago, and in 2017, I was asked to take on as the pastor here in Berwyn.

In 2022, St Leonard and St Pius X Parishes united as part of renewing my Church. I've been the pastor of the new parish since then, but it's still the same community.

*What initiatives have you undertaken as a priest?*

I don't know that I have a good answer necessarily. I mean, I try to serve God – I try to stay faithful, creative, and energetic in parish ministries.

It's not like I've founded something or created a new program. I do a lot of work in youth and young adult ministries and evangelization, and I have done so since I was newly ordained. I get involved in groups, both parish-based and beyond.

I do a lot of one-on-one discipleship and mentoring. At my first parish, I created a little vocations group of high school young men who were at least open to the idea of priesthood.

At my current parish, I've got a few groups of people, like a small community of young adults, who have gathered to do adoration once a week, day and night, together. We also have dinner together.

Right now, our parish has really focused on faith formation. We've done a lot of work building up our religious education programs and trying to offer quality experiences.

Of course, the Archdiocese has many of our parishes doing Alpha right now, and we've got a robust Alpha program, both in English and Spanish.

*What is Alpha?*

Alpha is an experience that we're just implementing. It's not something we created, but it's creating an open space for dialogue and exploring questions about God. So, it's kind of a non-threatening space where people come and share a meal together and watch a short video presentation. We've been really blessed to implement it with solid success. The Archdiocese is the one that kind of encouraged us to do it. The program was designed and developed by a church in London, and it's on its own international ministry that we're just implementing in our parish.

We coupled Alpha with religious education so that when parents drop their kids off for catechism classes, they usually stay for Alpha, and that's really increased their sense of participation in the Church and in the sacraments.

It's been cool because, in the last few years since we started seeing our religious education parents in Alpha, they have come out of that and want more. And so this Christian foundations class, which is officially the Right of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA), is now almost 100 people strong.

*Could you share some of the formidable challenges you've had to overcome in carrying out God's work since you became a priest?*

I guess it's just a matter of reminding people day in and day out how important they are to God and how essential God is to their lives.

You know, there are a lot of distractions in the world, a lot of distractions in society, and even a lot of distractions in this Church. The challenges we face are not just external but also internal. It is to recenter people on Jesus with Jesus' love and its absolutely transforming effects in their lives. I think it has been an essential piece, and it breaks through the noise so people can hear it. I think it is the great challenge of our day.

It's not just new technology but everything about our lives. Many people are just coping and don't realize their sense of purpose, and helping them rediscover that is literally the most important thing that they'll ever do. But for a lot of people, it's just easier to cope.

*If you could say something to the seminarians currently at Mundelein, what would it be?*

I would say root yourself and surround yourself in your encounter with God every single day through prayer – through prayer in the Eucharist. And never give up on people because God never does.

*How do you bridge the laity in the Church with God's calling to you?*

I believe the true charism of the laity is their role in bringing the Gospel to every part of society, being the yeast that permeates every part of the dough.

They will always be the first encounter people have with the Gospel. That's certainly been true at our parish with things like Alpha and religious education, the ministry of our catechist, or the work of just helping people rediscover their faith. However, the most significant aspect is young adult evangelization.

A person set on fire with the Gospel will be infinitely more effective in bringing their friends into Christ than any other parish program.

It's about getting out into the world and finding ways to express and speak intelligently and articulately about the faith. One of the reasons I teach weekly is to allow my lay leaders to speak intelligently about God. Hopefully, they will be more credible witnesses to their spirits, cultures, and friends. So, I really rely on that because it doesn't grow without people going out.

I think every vocation depends upon the other. And if we don't understand that in the Church, then we're not actually with Christ's vision.

We all have a specific part to play in God's Kingdom and must be able to do that well; the most important thing is the fullness of the Body of Christ.

The Church's sacramental life certainly depends upon priests, but it is meant to nourish people in holiness, and that growth in holiness depends upon all of us picking up our part in the mission and doing what God calls us to do.







# A Legacy of Generosity: Honoring Bill McEssy

On May 5, the University of Saint Mary of the Lake (USML) celebrated a double occasion: a special Mass and May Crowning to commemorate the Blessed Virgin Mary — Queen of Angels, Queen of May, followed by a heartfelt tribute to Mr. Bill McEssy. His unwavering support and philanthropy have left an indelible mark on the institution, a mark that resonates with the spiritual essence of the occasion and USML's community.

Cardinal Blase Cupich presided over the Mass in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, marking a transformative morning and setting the spiritual tone. The May Crowning, a traditional Marian devotion, was held in the Cardinal's Garden, a sunny and peaceful setting that mirrored the occasion's serenity and reverence.

The event's highlight was the recognition of Bill McEssy, a benefactor whose transformative generosity has reshaped USML. His financial contributions, exceeding \$8 million, have funded a multitude of initiatives, including capital projects, campus beautification, and student scholarships, leaving an awe-inspiring mark on the institution and setting a powerful example for future philanthropy.

His support was memorialized in the McEssy Theological Resource Center. He also contributed to Mundelein Hall (containing the Welcome Center and Bookstore), the Belvedere renovations, the reconstructed Bridge One, which you cross as you approach the seminary buildings and the beautifully landscaped sign that greets you on the other side, the Cardinal's Villa renovations, a Chair in Biblical Studies, and the McEssy Seminarian Scholarships, to name

but a few. These contributions have significantly enhanced the learning environment, facilitated academic pursuits, and provided financial assistance to many students.

Father John Kartje, Rector and President of USML, expressed his deep gratitude for McEssy's unwavering support, "Over the past nine years, I have continually been humbled and amazed by the passion and fervor with which Bill has supported the mission of the seminary—to form parish priests—and he has been doing it since long before I arrived."

Bill's personal connection and deep commitment to the seminary's mission have inspired many at USML. His wisdom and guidance, particularly during his tenure as the USML Board of Advisors chair, have shaped the institution in countless ways. McEssy's contributions extend far beyond financial support. His involvement has been instrumental in guiding the university's strategic direction and ensuring its continued success.

The celebration featured a lunch reception, music by the City Lights Orchestra, and a self-guided campus tour. Attendees explored the grounds and learned more about the impact of McEssy's generosity.

As USML continues to grow and evolve, it is grateful for Bill McEssy's legacy and is profoundly aware of its ongoing impact. His unwavering support and dedication have helped create and continue to nurture a vibrant community of faith and learning. With his legacy in mind, we aspire to further expand our programs and facilities, continuing to provide a transformative education to our students.



## Where She's Meant to Be

After an accomplished, three-decade pharmaceutical career, Thérèse McCall follows her heart to a new chapter through the School of Parish Leadership and Evangelization at USML.

By Ann Marie Scheidler

No one ever told Thérèse McCall how hard it was to retire.

"Who knew that stepping away from a career would be almost as challenging as the career itself?" McCall laughs.

McCall, a native of Ireland, spent more than three decades working for several of the nation's top pharmaceutical companies, where her primary roles specialized in bringing new drugs to physicians and patients.

"I have my PhD in medicine," she says. "I invested a lot of time and resources in my career. My whole identity has been tied to the pharmaceutical ethos for so many years. It didn't feel right to walk away. But I was at a point in my life where I started to wonder if this was all there was. Was I meant to do more? Was I meant to do something else? But I quickly realized it takes a lot to pull yourself out of what you have spent your whole life doing."

With her two boys nearly launching into adulthood, McCall was ready for a change. As she transitioned out of full-time work, she dabbled in consulting, only to realize this wasn't the change she sought. She decided to reach out to her friend, Deacon John Lucas, the former director of the Joseph and Mary Retreat House.

"John had suggested on more than one occasion to check out USML [University of Saint Mary of the Lake]," she says. "He would always tell me that they have some interesting things going on for lay people."

McCall met with the School of Parish Leadership and Evangelization and

enrolled in a Masters degree designed to form the laity for ministry work within the Catholic tradition. This program is intended for people wanting to grow in their faith and spirituality, engage in deep, systematic study of the Church and its teachings, and develop confidence and practical skills for participating in the life of the Church.

"I had no idea where this was all going, but it just felt right," she says.

An overachiever by nature and intrigued by all USML had to offer, McCall found herself on the track to graduate as a Pastoral Associate with a Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies (MAPS). She also did a companion certification in adult faith formation.

"I had the time," she says, "and I'm a learner."

For the first time, McCall dove into religious teachings and reading sacred documents in a way she had never before. She enjoyed the lively conversations around theological and pastoral topics that could only be possible in a room filled with people from different walks of life, contrasting perspectives on faith, and guided by lay and religious professors deeply grounded in the Catholic tradition.

"This really filled my soul in a way I didn't expect," she says.

McCall graduated from her program in May 2023 with a MAPS degree and was commissioned as a Pastoral Associate and Lay Ecclesial Minister for the Archdiocese of Chicago.

"Our graduation day was such a beautiful one, just breathtaking on the grounds of the seminary," she says. "It was interesting to notice how many people asked me what I was going to do with

all of this education. They wanted to know what was next for me. At that time, I didn't have a clear answer to the question." Sadly, Deacon John, who was with McCall at the beginning of her journey at USML, was not at graduation to celebrate with her, as he had passed to his eternal reward after a long battle with cancer.

Although McCall was confident in her notion that deepening her spirituality and faith was part of God's plan for her and enough to justify her continued education, she did take a liturgy role at a nearby parish.

"This job allowed me to really look under the hood of parish life," she explains. "It ended up being a mostly administrative job and was not a good match for my strengths. But there were some things I really liked. I wrote the Prayers of the Faithful, and I oversaw the funeral ministry. I loved working with families to plan the liturgies for their loved ones."

Additionally, McCall is working to establish her gifts as a spiritual speaker and retreat leader. She also feels called to a ministry of spiritual direction and accompaniment. She now understands that her learning is not yet finished. Today, she is currently working on her Masters in Divinity at Loyola University.

"It's a really interesting time culturally and politically to be studying spirituality, within the context of the Catholic faith, and where it fits in today's world," she says. "I love that USML started me on this path to explore my faith and its teachings and how I might share it with others. I enrolled in the program not knowing where all of this was going—and I still don't. But I'm open to and excited about where it's leading me."



# My Spiritual Journey through the JP2 Chapel

By Br. Mateusz Szymanski, SJC | Discipleship 2

When I moved to Mundelein Seminary to begin my studies for the priesthood as a member of the Canons Regular of St. John Cantius, I was immediately struck by the beauty of the campus. Well-maintained gardens and paths, various shrines hidden in the woods, nature all around, and an actual lake! Wow, this is where a guy from Warsaw (me) would be studying for the priesthood for the next few years.



Yet, at first, I didn't realize that amid this magnificent campus, with many architecturally and historically significant buildings, a small house chapel would become the center of my spiritual life. Shortly before the summer of 2023, I noticed that the 10th anniversary of the dedication of the St. John Paul II (JP2) Chapel falls on October 19, 2024. I thought this would provide a great opportunity for me, a native Pole, to write about the unique role of this sacred space in the life of seminarians—especially since a similar article was written ten years ago to report on the renovation of this chapel initiated by Father (now Archbishop) Robert Barron when he was rector of the seminary.

*Do not be afraid...Open wide the doors for Christ!*

Inspired by these famous words of the Polish Pope, Fr. Barron wanted to create a chapel with “signs of heavenly reality” that would “foster spirit of evangelization among seminarians and faculty.” Today, formed in Tradition and trained in compassion, seminarians learn how to build a bridge between God and man at the chapel, thus promoting New Evangelization. To be a bridge, one must be firmly rooted in the Truth about God and man and willing and able to promote fruitful dialogue between them – not leaning to either side lest the dialogue breaks down.

The intentional design of the JP2 chapel is conducive to this dialogue, allowing us to communicate with God while remaining aware of a communitarian aspect of Christian life. The main doors to the chapel, which are filled with transparent glass and remain unlocked all day, provide a clear vision of what is going on inside and gently invite seminarians to come in for a period of prayer.

A rather narrow vestibule leads you to the main nave, somehow allowing for personal recollection before we enter. In the middle of the vestibule, we stop next to the Divine Mercy window and dip our hand into the holy water font while looking at the same time at the merciful Jesus, who penetrates our innermost being by the streams of his sacred blood and water gushing forth from his heart.

As we bless ourselves with the sign of the cross, we recall our baptism, profess our faith in the Most Holy Trinity, and acknowledge the cross of Jesus Christ as the mystery of our redemption. We also ask the Lord to cleanse our minds from any distracting evil thoughts and allow us to pray with the attention and devotion the chapel demands. During summer days, this ceremony is both refreshing and charming as the colorful rays of filtered light coming from the stained-glass window visibly surround us – the image of Jesus is reproduced in you!

*Saints to the left of us, Saints to the right of us, Saints all around us*

Upon entering the main nave, our attention is drawn to the sanctuary where the altar, tabernacle, and crucifix are centered. Statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph are symmetrically on both sides of the sanctuary. The central message of the chapel is conveyed by the favorite Latin exhortation of St. John Paul II: *Nollite Timere* (“Don’t be afraid”) as well as *Duc in Altum* (“Cast into the deep”). These are inscribed separately on the wall above the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph respectively. The great Polish Pope (did I mention that he is 100% Polish?)





used these words in his preaching, signifying that we should not be afraid to let Christ into our lives, let Him take over our hearts, and even risk for Him who called us to make a great catch (not of a fly ball but of souls).

I love how this message is divided between these two saints because it looks to me as if Mary is saying, “Don’t be afraid,” while St. Joseph is advising, “Cast into the deep.” Indeed, it is the Blessed Virgin Mary who heard these words first spoken to her during the Annunciation, and now, in turn, she can teach us how to trust in the Lord completely, accept God’s Will, and bear fruit in Christ Jesus.

Similarly, St. Joseph (to whom, however, these exact words are not attributed by the Scriptures) yet surely must have used them when he prayerfully and successfully faced the unexpected but miraculous pregnancy of Mary and, shortly after Jesus’ birth, the crisis of an urgent emigration to Egypt to protect his family from King Herod. Without questioning the life demanded of Joseph, he reached the ultimate honor of his spiritual life by fulfilling his unique role as the foster father of Jesus. This is why St. Joseph is the patron saint of the Universal Church (as well as Italy and many Italian American communities), a pillar of families, and a role model for husbands and fathers. His example teaches us to be generous and courageous for the Lord, care for women and children, and develop the deep inner life of our souls.

These two exceptional saints are not the only ones that accompany us, however, since the JP2 chapel is beautifully decorated with nineteen stained glass windows representing twenty saints from all walks of life. As intended by then Father Barron, these saints “surround seminarians like a cloud of witnesses,” protecting, strengthening, and

inspiring us at the same time. This specific community of Saints includes religious, priests, bishops, and lay men and women who generously dedicated their lives to the service of God and the world in various ways.

The windows powerfully express the “universal call to holiness” emphasized by the Second Vatican Council. We seminarians experience this truth when we pray together in the seminary chapel with the staff and faculty members as a micro-Church consisting of various vocations yet all striving for a truly Christian life. Moreover, each window’s design exceptionally captures the figure of a saint and an important event from his life.

For example, St. Katherine Drexel is depicted in the main part with the children she taught, but the bottom part illustrates her meeting with the pope who entrusted her with the mission. Interestingly, all the saints in our chapel are related to St. John Paul II since he either personally beautified them or was influenced by their writings.

On sunny days, when the rays of filtered light come through stained glass windows, the interior of the chapel is gorgeously illuminated in various colors streaming from each saint as they convey a particular message to the Church today and inspire all of us to follow in their footsteps by fulfilling God’s will in our individual lives. These saints always remind us of new ways of loving God and contributing to the common good of the Church as we seek to evangelize the wounded world, bring Christ’s light to dark places, and restore that which is broken.

Saints don’t take anything away from Jesus but rather add splendor to his glory, whose majesty is not diminished by the presence of his children but enriched! I am particularly

fascinated by how providential it was to place St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Paul on both sides of the altar with their faces looking toward it. I like to think they were chosen to emphasize the special role each of them plays in our priestly formation: Thomistic philosophy constitutes a solid foundation of our intellectual formation, while the Holy Scriptures remain the main source of our theological reflection. It is meaningful to see our ordained deacons proclaiming the Gospel in the chapel, having the Apostle of the Nations literally behind them since the ambo lines up with St. Paul, almost as if they were preaching on his behalf and with his support.

### *A Powerhouse of Evangelization*

The JP2 chapel is a museum of sacred art and a vivid space for liturgical celebrations. You would be surprised to learn how many times a day it is used. At 7:00 am, seminarians and faculty members gather for morning prayer each morning, followed by a celebration of the Eucharist. We seminarians are on a continual rotation to engage in various ministries such as sacristans, acolytes, lectors, and cantors. Depending on our skills and level of formation, we serve the entire community in a spirit of common responsibility for the liturgy. The Sacrifice of the Mass is celebrated according to the progression of solemnity. For feasts, we employ more liturgical actions, like incense and the singing of extra hymns, to express the festive character of the day. The JP2 chapel is also a sacred place for our deacons to practice their first blessings and homilies in the context of live liturgy.

After the morning Mass, we proceed to our daily classes. First, we grab coffee and breakfast at the refectory (we are still human, after all). Our chapel remains open all day, inviting seminarians for personal prayer as the Eucharist is reserved in the Tabernacle. Since the chapel is air-conditioned, it is particularly “cool” to stay with the Lord, especially on hot summer days!

Every day after lunch, a group of seminarians, led by members of Militia Immaculata, gathers in the JP2 chapel for communal recitation of the Rosary. We pray for lots of different things, bathing our campus with prayer. A little later, our chapel is swept by gracious “Marias and Marthas,” as we call our cleaning ladies, who generously maintain our chapel.

Every evening, between 4:10-5:10 pm, all seminarians get to silently adore our Lord’s Eucharistic Presence during Exposition and Benediction. This is followed by evening prayer at 5:15 pm in English, while those who wish to pray in foreign languages (including eight different tongues) can join proper groups in separate rooms. The JP2 chapel also remains available for personal use throughout the entire night. Many other seminarians and I like to close our day by saying “Goodbye” to Jesus before we retire (sharing a house with God is such a blessing!). In addition, every Sunday evening between 8-9 pm, the praise and worship group gathers at the

JP2 chapel for communal Eucharistic adoration accompanied by music. It is a chance for seminarians returning from parish assignments after a weekend of service to renew their spirits.

Besides these liturgies and prayers, the JP2 chapel serves as retreat center during days of spiritual renewal; provides a sacred space for occasional blessings of the seminarians (such as missionaries going to Peru, pilgrims going to the Holy Land, students leaving for an internship); and gathers us for celebration of the Stations of the Cross in Lent.

As I conclude this article, I am heading to pray in the chapel, where a new generation of priests is formed under its spiritual influence. When I pass through the “gates of Divine Mercy” in the vestibule, I will mentally entrust all the readers of this article to God.

St. John Paul II (and all our chapel saints), pray for us! Or, as I say it in my native Polish, Santo Padre Juan Pablo II, ora pro nobis!

## Devotions to the JP2 Chapel

“On October 16, 2002, Pope Saint John Paul II wrote in his apostolic letter Rosarium Virginis Mariae that ‘[n]o one has ever devoted himself to the contemplation of the face of Christ as faithfully as Mary’ because ‘[i]n a unique way the face of the Son belongs to Mary.’”

“Twenty-two years later, seminarians here at Mundelein Seminary, led by members of the Militia Immaculatae, gather daily in our house chapel named after that same good and Marian Pope to contemplate the Face of the Son through the eyes of His Mother.”

~ Deacon Ian Ordonez, from the Diocese of Rockford

“As an acolyte here at Mundelein, I have the opportunity to lead the Eucharistic Exposition in the JP2 Chapel for my brother seminarians. Jesus desires intimacy with every single person, and this intimacy is expressed in the Eucharist, which is the Sacrament of Unity that keeps our community together.”

“I often hold the Eucharist against my heart for the brief time it takes me to travel between the tabernacle and the monstrance. One of the stained-glass windows in JP2 is of St. John Henry Newman, who said, “Heart speaks to heart.” In Eucharistic Exposition, Jesus’ Heart speaks to our hearts, and we come to the JP2 Chapel for that intimate communion.”

~ Seminarian Jonathan Pucket, an acolyte from the Diocese of Peoria



# The Carry Collection

By Samantha Seay

In the lower level of the McEssy Theological Resource Center among the stacks of books, patrons often pass a nondescript door. The door is easily overlooked having no sign or markings other than “Staff Only,” and is kept locked. One might be forgiven for thinking that it is simply a storage room for paper supplies or perhaps an unused office.

Once inside, you are immediately aware of an aroma of leather and vanilla. You have discovered the University’s Rare Book Room, and what you smell is the perfume of old books. Six floor-to-ceiling shelves full of them. As you turn to your left, you will notice shelf after shelf of Irish literature and history. This is the Carry Collection.

The Carry Collection is a love letter to Ireland. From poetry, music, and literature to more practical pieces such as agricultural bulletins and business records on the distilling

trade, Edward Francis Carry carried his Irish heart on his bookshelves. The Carry Collection is not only a labor of love — it is a labor of comprehensive effort. While the collection was originally cataloged for use, the fragility and importance of the collection now dictates its careful preservation in the Rare Book Room. Here, Yeats poetry and Irish folk music lie alongside other books from antiquity.

Much like Carry himself, his collection of books has many facets. Books on the Irish Rebellion rub elbows with



collections of Irish cartoons. Loftier topics such as philosophy companionably share shelves with romantic novels. Books so old they have no copyright date sit with books from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Librarians often say that they wish books could actually speak with us, and one can only imagine what these books chat about after the door closes and the librarian leaves.

Although the books in the collection are not contemporary, a modern person of the 21<sup>st</sup> century might be surprised to see novels of a “modern” theme. For example, *The D’altos of Crag* is a story which could easily end up as a “Father Brown” mystery, in which a working-class man is framed for the murder of a member of the gentry, in truth perpetrated by a kinsman of the murdered man.

In case the reader of this collection might wish to read one of the many works written in Irish Gaelic, there is a handy *Foclóir gaeðhilde agus béarla*, a dictionary and thesaurus of the Irish language and idioms, with explanations for those words given in English.

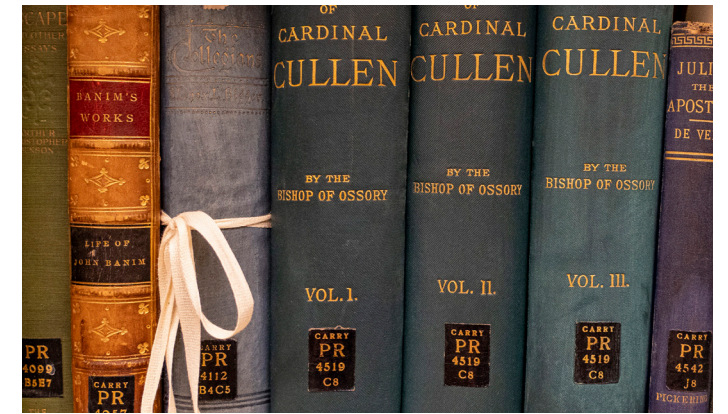
## *Carry’s Life, Ties to Mundelein*

Born on May 16, 1867, in Indiana, to Irish Catholic immigrants, Edward Francis Carry was intensely interested in his heritage and had a strong desire to succeed. His intelligence and the work ethic that often accompanies immigrants to a new country saw his sure and steady rise in the burgeoning Chicago business world as he proved his trustworthiness and competence.

Carry became a prominent and successful Chicago businessman during a rapidly changing period in American history. After 1820, the United States saw an influx of Irish immigrants, with more than 6 million arriving to try their hands at a new life. The flood of Irish to large cities such as Boston and New York prompted anger as they competed with those already living in the areas for jobs. They began to travel west to escape the discrimination, many settling in farm country.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Irish were still subject to intense prejudice but were beginning to enjoy success as new Americans. Carry began his business career





as a stenographer who then worked his way up the ranks to assume the presidency of the Haskell & Barker Car Company in 1916. Pullman then acquired Haskell & Barker in 1922, and Carry assumed the presidency of the new company, employing over 30,000 workers in its Chicago home.

According to author and historian James A. Gutowski in the Records of the American Catholic Historical Society of Philadelphia, Cardinal Mundelein and Carry became friendly due to Carry's generosity toward Catholic charities and their mutual interest in autograph collection. In 1924, the Cardinal conferred upon Carry the rank of Knight Commander of the Order of Saint Gregory the Great.

The connection between Carry and Cardinal Mundelein continued as Carry's company built a train designed to run between New York and Chicago carrying nine Cardinals and the Papal Legate to the XXVIII<sup>th</sup> International Eucharistic Congress. At an estimated \$1 million, the cost was a gift from Carry to the Eucharistic Congress. Although the train was to make only one run, it was carefully constructed and designed to reflect the pomp and solemnity of both the passengers and the occasion. On the final day of the Congress, a Mass was held at the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, and the Eucharistic Congress concluded with a procession around Saint Mary of the Lake.

According to Carry's obituary, he could converse equally with people from all socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. He was "devoted alike to the welfare of patrons, employes (sic) and owners, he had gained reputé as a notable type of the modern business chief who gives full recognition to the human element." Carry was a devout Catholic, a generous philanthropist, and a humble man. It is fitting, then, that this magnificent collection should find a home at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake. The University and Seminary aim to emulate the character and strength of Edward Francis Carry as they mold individuals for a life of serving God. ■

Carry was a devout Catholic, a generous philanthropist, and a humble man. It is fitting, then, that this magnificent collection should find a home at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake.



# *Habemus episcopum!* We have a bishop!

After nearly a year's wait, the Diocese of Davenport, Iowa, has its tenth bishop, Bishop Dennis Walsh.

By Blake Riffel, C2 Seminarian | Diocese of Davenport

As a seminarian studying for the Diocese of Davenport, this was a long-anticipated day. I grew up within the Davenport diocese, but my engineering career brought me to Des Moines, where I eventually discerned a vocation to the priesthood. Eventually, I realized that the seeds of my priestly vocation were rooted and nurtured back in the Diocese of Davenport, so after completing my pre-theology formation with the Diocese of Des Moines, I returned home to the Diocese of Davenport. Within two months of this homecoming transition, then-Bishop of Davenport Thomas Zinkula was appointed Archbishop of Dubuque—and we in the Diocese of Davenport were (temporarily) without a shepherd.

I had fond memories of Bishop Zinkula, so this was a bittersweet time of transition. One particularly fond memory was witnessing him, two years after his episcopal ordination, complete one of the last long and grueling days of RAGBRAI (a late July, week-long bike ride across the state of Iowa) into my hometown of Burlington, ride his bike to the front steps of St. Paul's parish, and celebrate Mass for hometown parishioners alongside cyclists from across the country.

The day of Davenport's long-awaited episcopal appointment finally came earlier this summer (2024). Alfonso Pizano, a fellow Davenport seminarian, and I were at our Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) assignment, and we immediately met up to share the joy of this unexpected announcement. It had been nearly eleven months since then-Bishop Zinkula was appointed Archbishop of Dubuque, and bishop-elect Walsh's announcement provided our diocese with clarity, direction, excitement, and anticipation.

Three months later, once back at Mundelein over a diocesan night refectory dinner shared with the Dubuque seminarians,

we spotted a man who resembled bishop-elect Walsh—a man whom I had previously seen in only a handful of pictures. Arising from the dinner table, we approached, and Fr. Anthony Muraya confirmed that we were standing in the presence of bishop-elect Walsh himself. After wrapping up his assignment in Ohio, Bishop Walsh visited Mundelein to complete his canonical retreat before continuing his trip to Davenport. Inviting us to join his table, I was struck by his humility, how he took the time and attention amid his busy schedule to get to know us—and how he was more than glad to let us get to know him, too.

In the days leading up to Bishop Walsh's ordination, we Davenport seminarians traveled back to the diocesan chancery to help with final preparations. Thursday morning, after hearing stories from some of the retired diocesan presbyterate over breakfast, William Keating and I arranged boxes of liturgical pamphlets to be taken to Sacred Heart Cathedral. From down the hallway, bishop-elect Walsh and an older married couple approached us. After a warm introduction, we learned the husband was the maintenance supervisor at bishop-elect Walsh's last parish assignment in the Diocese of Toledo, Ohio. He warmly informed us that bishop-elect Walsh was cut from the same blue-collar cloth as himself, adding that while they were sad to lose him, we were "lucky to get a good one." That was all the endorsement we needed to hear.

Finally, the day of ordination was upon us. The cathedral was abuzz with excitement and anticipation for the long-awaited liturgy. While we gathered in procession at the cathedral narthex, I was struck by how many people had traveled to offer their prayerful support for and appreciation of bishop-elect Walsh. In addition to the Davenport presbyterate and diaconate, eighteen bishops of both Eastern and Western

rites, and numerous Ohio priests and religious joined the procession, which wrapped around the side of the cathedral as it trailed off beyond the walls of the cathedral rectory.

Before the ordination rite commenced, Bishop Walsh received the papal mandate from Cardinal Christophe Pierre and then processed throughout the cathedral, sharing the letter of his episcopal appointment with the congregation. His smile was met with a warm reception from the congregation, with many craning to capture his picture as he passed by. I was once again deeply moved by his requisite humility in accepting this appointment, both when he prostrated himself for the Litany of the Saints and again when he knelt at the foot of the altar while the Book of the Gospels was suspended over his head. After the completion of the ordination rite, Archbishop Thomas Zinkula shared his joy at leading Bishop Dennis Walsh to the cathedra, the seat reserved for the bishop in the cathedral's sanctuary – a seat that had remained vacant for nearly a year since Archbishop Zinkula's appointment. As Bishop Walsh turned around to face the congregation from the cathedra, he was met with a thunderous round of applause.

In Manus Tuas Domine. "Into Your Hands, Lord." This is the episcopal motto chosen by Bishop Dennis Walsh, the tenth bishop of the Diocese of Davenport. These words, taken from Psalm 31, are prayed each night as part of the Liturgy of the Hours; they are the last words Jesus spoke before dying upon the Cross (Luke 23:46). One of Bishop Walsh's seminary formators had once described him as a man who preferred to live "in the backyard of life," a phrase

One of Bishop Walsh's seminary formators had once described him as a man who preferred to live "in the backyard of life," a phrase which Bishop Walsh grew to embrace. However, Bishop Walsh has been thrust into the "front yard" office of the episcopacy as he continues to respond to God's will.





# 32<sup>ND</sup> CELEBRATION of MUNDELEIN

## An Evening of Tribute

Planning is underway for a memorable 32<sup>nd</sup> Celebration of Mundelein:  
An Evening of Tribute on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago.

By Ann Marie Scheidler

Some may be surprised that Mundelein Seminary knows how to throw a party. But they do. And they've successfully hosted their signature event—Celebration of Mundelein: An Evening of Tribute—for over three decades. This year's Celebration will be co-hosted by Archbishop Cardinal Blaise Cupich and the Very Rev. John Kartje, Rector of Mundelein Seminary, on Thursday, April 24, 2025, at the Four Seasons Hotel in Chicago.

The Celebration of Mundelein: An Evening of Tribute serves as a cornerstone in supporting Mundelein Seminary's future and nurturing the next generation of parish priests. Guests will enjoy an evening filled with entertainment by the seminary's musicians, excellent food, and an opportunity to join the Archdiocese of Chicago Catholic community in supporting the men following Christ's call to the priesthood. All support directly impacts the training and formation of the seminarians, empowering them to carry forth the light of faith and service.

This year, Mundelein Seminary is thrilled to recognize three outstanding individuals from Our Lady of Perpetual Help (OLPH) in Glenview whose dedication and contributions have profoundly impacted the community: **Fr. Jerry Boland, Sr. Paulanne Held, and Dr. Amy Mills.** Their unwavering commitment to faith, education, and service embodies the spirit of Mundelein Seminary.

**Fr. Jeremiah (Jerry) Boland, Pastor, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish**

"I am a member of the ordination class of 1981," Fr. Boland says. "Mundelein Seminary has always centered its academic and formational efforts on preparing the next generation of parish priests. I have been blessed with serving as a priest in a number of ministries but my most rewarding ministry has been in parish ministry. I was well prepared for this ministry because of Mundelein Seminary. To be recognized for my ministry particularly as a parish priest is very humbling."

Fr. Boland grew up in St. Gall's Parish at 55th and Kedzie. He is the oldest of five brothers, including Msgr. Michael Boland.

For the Archdiocese of Chicago, Fr. Boland has served as the Archbishop's Delegate for International Priests, overseeing the placement, immigration, and onboarding of priests worldwide. He also worked as the Executive Secretary for the diocesan priests' placement system.

Fr. Boland was appointed Pastor of OLPH in July 2014. OLPH serves over 10,000 parishioners, including 3,200 families, and a thriving school. OLPH's Religious Education has more than 400 students.

Fr. Boland oversaw a \$5 million capital campaign and implementation of the Parish Transformation initiative at the Renew My Church efforts. These have delivered important, tangible results, such as converting the convent into a Parish Center, building four STEM labs for the school, and many other investments.

"As a parish priest, you are in many ways on the front line of Church," he says. "I am constantly aware of the privilege to accompany my parishioners in their faith journeys. I don't know what other career path could be this rewarding and challenging. As Mundelein formed me as a priest, my parish, like every parish is forming the women and men who are transforming our world in light of the Gospel."

**Sr. Paulanne Held, Former Teacher, Our Lady of Perpetual Help**

"We must work to change our society, our government, and our communities," says Sr. Paulanne. "We need to build strong family values and respect for one another. We need to educate and motivate our children in a strong educational environment. Christ told us, 'what you do to the least of my people, you do to me.' This message inspires me to continue to work hard to change our society."

Fondly referred to by the members of the OLPH parish and the surrounding community as the "patron saint" of Glenview, Sr. Paulanne Held, OSF, has dedicated her life to inspiring your people in the classroom while serving those in need.

Raised on a farm outside of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Sr. Paulanne answered the call to serve early in life. Intrigued by the mission of the School Sisters of St. Francis of St. Joseph Convent—a community of Catholic sisters dedicated to building a more just and peaceful world—she entered the convent and trained to be a teacher.

Since that time, she spent more than half a century as a beloved teacher and role model, forming the hearts and minds of generations of young people at the primary and middle-school levels.

Teaching and nurturing the next generation of women and men for others are just two of Sister Paulanne's passions. For more than 30 years, she has also been on the front lines in the fight against poverty, helping families in crisis reclaim their hope and dignity

through the parish's Needy Family Fund.

"In my work with the poor, homelessness leaves a huge void in our society," Sr. Paulanne says. "Children suffer a great deal when they are homeless. They become isolated, angry, and live in fear. When I listen to their stories, I feel a great need to help in any way to change their lives."

**Dr. Amy Mills, Principal, Our Lady of Perpetual Help School**

"From a young age, I knew I was destined to be a teacher; it was a calling I felt deep within," Dr. Amy Mills says. "Becoming a principal, however, was a different journey altogether. I had little understanding of the role and its responsibilities. Now, 30 years later, I find myself as the principal of the very school where I began my teaching career. My passion for education and belief in our mission have only deepened over the years. I draw my inspiration from the incredible community I serve—parents, teachers, and students alike. I am in the unique position to make a meaningful impact, meeting people where they are and responding to their needs."

Amy Mills is the principal of OLPH, the largest Catholic elementary school in the Archdiocese of Chicago. She has guided the school and parish community as principal and a former teacher for over three decades." In 2021, she was named #SchoolHero by the Archdiocese of Chicago for her work and leadership of OLPH. Dr. Mills was previously on the board of the Mikva Challenge Grant Foundation, an organization that develops youth to be empowered, informed, and active citizens to promote a just and equitable society.

"Each day, I witness small miracles and transformations happening on our campus," she says. "I start each morning with prayer, grounding myself in stillness as God equips me for the challenges ahead. No two days are the same, and as a school leader, I strive to be ready for each one."



## Meet our New Board Member

**Todd Helfrich**, a dedicated member of the community, joined the USML Board of Advisors in 2024 and previously served as a member of the Rector's Classic Golf Committee (2023-2024). He takes pride in his family's legacy at USML, as his great-uncle, Reverend George Helfrich, graduated from the institution in the ordination class of 1954.

Todd Helfrich and his wife, Sarah Helfrich, have three daughters and reside in Lake Bluff, Illinois. Growing up at St. Norbert Parish in Northbrook, the Helfrich Family now are parishioners of the Church of St. Mary in Lake Forest, Illinois. In his professional life, Helfrich is a senior vice president with Merrill Lynch Private Wealth Management, having joined Merrill after eight years in a similar capacity advising ultra-high net worth families and leading charitable foundations at J.P. Morgan Private Bank. Before J.P. Morgan, Helfrich spent more than six years serving the United States in the national security arena. Helfrich began his career in the investment banking division of Deutsche Bank Securities.

Helfrich graduated cum laude from Princeton University with a Bachelor of Arts in politics, where he won three varsity letters in football, and later earned a Master of Business Administration with honors in finance from Georgetown University.

## 2025 Honorees

*Our Lady of Perpetual Help*



Sr. Paulanne Held



Fr. Jerry Boland



Dr. Amy Mills





# USML Alumni Reception

## A Celebration of Faith and Leadership Honoring Msgr. Wayne Prist

The University of Saint Mary of the Lake (USML) alums gathered on June 22, 2024, to celebrate the birthday of **Monsignor Wayne Prist**, a beloved figure within the university community. The event, held in the Prist Center — his namesake, was a joyous occasion filled with heartfelt fellowship, deep gratitude, and profound recognition of Prist's significant contributions to USML and the broader Catholic Church.

Prist was born in Chicago Heights and attended USML/ Mundelein Seminary. He was ordained a priest in 1967. He earned a doctorate in ministry from Mundelein and a master's degree in philosophy from Loyola University Chicago.

In addition to celebrating Msgr. Prist's birthday, the event also served as a reception for the **School of Parish Leadership and Evangelization's** alumni and current students. This gathering allowed fellow alums and doctoral and master's students to honor Prist. Attendees enjoyed appetizers and beverages while reminiscing about their time at USML.

Prist, a founding member of the Summer Scripture Seminary at USML, attended USML's **Mundelein Seminary** and earned a doctorate in ministry.

In 1983, **Cardinal Bernardin** appointed him Director of the Center for Pastoral Ministry, which moved to USML/Mundelein Seminary's campus in 1986. He oversaw the campus renovation and served as the Center for Pastoral Ministry and Center for Development in Ministry for over ten years, from 1983 to 1996, and as the associate pastor and resident from 1986 to 1996, leaving a profound and lasting impact on the university.



Prist's dedication to fostering spiritual growth and academic excellence has inspired countless students and colleagues.

As the evening drew to a close, it was clear that Msgr. Prist's legacy, a testament to his unwavering commitment to faith, education, and service, would continue to inspire and guide future generations of USML students. His legacy has left an indelible mark on the university and the Catholic Church, one that we all deeply respect and appreciate.

## Class Notes

### Quigley 1961 & University of Saint Mary of the Lake 1968 Reunion

Twenty graduates of the last 5th-year class at Quigley in 1961 and the University of Saint Mary of the Lake (USML) ordination in 1968 reunited at the Joseph and Mary Retreat House from August 20 to 22.

**Monsignor John Canary** and **Father Ben Heidenreich** delivered presentations on various aspects of aging with grace and purpose. A highlight of the reunion was a concelebrated Mass on Wednesday, August 21, where **Bishop George Rassas**,

the principal celebrant, was joined at the altar by classmates **Rev. Bob Beaven**, **Rev. Gus Belauskus**, **Rev. Len Dubi**, **Rev Mart Gabel**, and **Rev. Gerry Riva**.

The reunion was an opportunity to reconnect with many old friends and reflect on the collective lives and experiences of so many who were part of the Quigley and USML educational process. With the assistance of a small planning committee, **Pete Mazza** planned and orchestrated the event. Attendees are deeply grateful to an anonymous donor who graciously funded the reunion, a gesture embodying our community's spirit.



### The Class of 2004

The **Class of 2004** classmates went on a seven-day Alaskan Cruise with Royal Caribbean to celebrate their 20th Anniversary. The ship departed from Seattle on July 1, 2024.



Participants were:

**Father Zach Etienne** - Diocese of Evansville, IN

**Father Tony Neusch** - Diocese of Amarillo, TX

**Father Joe Kieffer** - Diocese of Salina, KS

**Father Joseph Totton** - Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, MO

**Father Steve Bauer** - Archdiocese of Chicago



### Itinerary

- Day 1 - Seattle, Washington
- Day 2 - Cruising - Day At Sea
- Day 3 - Sitka, Alaska
- Day 4 - Skagway, Alaska
- Day 5 - Endicott Arm & Dawes Glacier - Day At Sea
- Day 5 - Juneau, Alaska
- Day 6 - Day At Sea
- Day 7 - Victoria, British Columbia
- Day 8 - Seattle, Washington





# Newly Ordained Deacons

Twelve permanent were ordained on May 11 at Holy Name Cathedral. Cardinal Blase Cupich celebrated the ordination Mass. Diaconate formation for permanent deacons requires completing a comprehensive, four-year archdiocesan program offered in English and Spanish at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake in Mundelein. The Vatican and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops mandate the program.



## Deacon Eustolio Acosta

*St. Rita of Cascia Parish, Chicago*

Deacon Eustolio Acosta was born in Guanajuato, Mexico, and has been married to María de Lourdes for 42 years. The couple has a son, 27. Deacon Acosta has worked in industry, doing “a little bit of everything,” including managing a forklift. In his parish, he has been a reader and extraordinary minister of Communion, helped with baptismal preparation, was a Charismatic Renewal prayer group member, and hosted a radio program on the first Sunday of each month.



## Deacon Víctor de Avila

*St. Albert the Great, Burbank*

Deacon Victor de Avila, 61, was born in San Luis Potosí, Mexico. He and his wife, Blanca Estela de Avila, have two children, ages 35 and 22. Deacon de Avila has worked for the same company for 25 years, starting as a floor clerk and now as a driver. He has ministered as a reader and facilitator of pre-baptismal classes. He and his wife have been catechists in the RCIA program and extraordinary ministers of Communion. They are also part of the parish marriage group, the Guadalupano group, and the Nocturnal Adoration group.



## Deacon Juan Chávez

*Blessed Martyrs of Chimbote Parish, Summit*

Deacon Juan Chávez, 58, was born in Chihuahua, Mexico. He and his wife, Araceli Chávez, have two children, ages 29 and 21. Deacon Chávez has been a contractor in the construction industry for more than 35 years. At his parish, he has served as a catechist and reader. He also is a member of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the Emmaus movement.



## Deacon Mario Javier Delgado

*St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Chicago*

Deacon Mario Javier Delgado Villamizar, 62, was born in Venezuela. His wife, Graciela Delgado, was born in Oaxaca, Mexico. As lay missionaries of the Sacred Heart, they served in several countries. Deacon Delgado is a bilingual spiritual director and consultant for Hispanic ministry, social justice, vocations, and pastoral formation. He has also formatted the lay missionaries of the Sacred Heart. He has been director of the Hispanic justice and peace ministry in the dioceses of Madison, Wisconsin, and Grand Island, Nebraska, director and vocational promoter of the missionaries of the Sacred Heart province of the United States and the Claretian Missionaries province of the United States and Canada. The Delgados continue to be active in their spiritual healing ministry and in their parish in liturgical ministries, continuing formation, and religious education.



## Deacon Alfredo Cortés

*Our Lady of Mercy Parish, Chicago*

Deacon Alfredo Cortés, 45, was born in the state of Jalisco, Mexico, where he lived until he was 15. After graduating from high school, he immigrated to the United States. The youngest of four children, he worked for 16 years at a metal processing company in Schiller Park and took care of his mother for seven years. Leading up to his ordination, Cortés was a sacristan, Mass coordinator, and reader.



## Deacon Richard Duda

*Our Lady of the Woods Parish, Orland Park*

Deacon Richard Duda, 56, was born in Chicago. He and his wife, Kimberly Duda, have four children, ages 17 to 24. Deacon Duda, a lawyer, has served as a lector and extraordinary minister of Communion. He and his wife are involved in the parish's support of the San Blas Emergency Food Pantry. He also teaches in the religious education program and leads a Communion service on Thursday mornings. For the past few years, he has helped lead the youth ministry's annual mission trip to Harlan, Kentucky.



## Deacon Mario Henríquez

*Most Blessed Trinity Parish, Waukegan*

Deacon Mario Henríquez, 53, was born in El Salvador. He and his wife, Violeta Henríquez, have two children and a granddaughter. Deacon Henríquez drives a truck for a laboratory. He and his wife have served in various ministries at Most Blessed Trinity Parish for 25 years.



## Deacon Arnoldo Martínez

*Sts. Genevieve and Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr Parish, Chicago*

Deacon Arnoldo Martínez, 52, was born in Michoacán, Mexico. He and his wife, Blanca Godínez, have a 15-year-old son. Martínez has worked in religious formation and education in several parishes. After the COVID-19 pandemic, he became a heavy vehicle driver. Martínez and Godínez feel called to contribute to the church through liturgical singing, so they have dedicated themselves to evangelizing through the gift of music.



## Deacon Juan Ortiz

*Sts. Genevieve and Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr Parish, Chicago*

Deacon Juan Edgar Ortiz, 56, and his wife, Azucena Ortiz, are from Michoacán, Mexico. Deacon Ortiz came to Chicago at age 15 and has three children with his wife. Ortiz owns a carpentry business. In their parish, he and his wife are readers, extraordinary ministers of Communion, and have served in the ministry of renewal.



## Deacon Adolfo Ramírez

*Misión San Juan Diego, Arlington Heights*

Deacon Adolfo Ramírez Aparicio, 49, was born in Puebla, Mexico. He and his wife, Estela González Cuautle, have three daughters and a son, ages 13 to 28, and they own a wellness training business. Ramírez, his wife, and their children are all involved in the parish community. Ramírez serves in the marriage ministry, organizing retreats and giving talks to strengthen marriage.



## Deacon Iván Vargas

*Our Lady of the Snows Parish, Chicago*

Deacon Iván Vargas, 38, was born in Michoacán, Mexico. He and his wife, Eliboria Márquez-Vargas, have been married for 17 years. Deacon Vargas has worked in the construction industry for over 15 years, specializing in painting and remodeling. At his parish, he has served as a sacristan and reader and organized events such as dinners, dances, liturgy, and other activities with different apostolic movements.



## Deacon Rafael Yáñez

*Immaculate Conception and Five Holy Martyrs Parish, Chicago*

Deacon Rafael Yáñez Ibarra, 45, was born in Chicago and grew up in Michoacán, Mexico. He and his wife, Leticia Yáñez, have three children. Deacon Yáñez has been a Chicago police officer for more than 20 years. In his parish, he has been involved as a reader, catechist, and extraordinary minister of Communion, and he has visited the sick with his wife. The couple also started a sports and leadership organization to support young people and their families on the Southwest Side. Additionally, he supports police officers and their families when they suffer catastrophic events.





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