

# THE BRIDGE

Spring/Summer 2017

PUBLICATION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF SAINT MARY OF THE LAKE/MUNDELEIN SEMINARY



## MUNDELEIN HALL OPENS, WELCOMING ALL TO CAMPUS

### **Feature Story**

*On retreat in the Holy Land:  
Seeking Christ in the parking lot*

### **Feature Story**

*'The purpose is unity:'  
Mundelein alumni are a major  
part of the ecumenical dialogue  
between two churches*

### **On Campus**

*School of the Good Shepherd teaches  
real-world skills before internship*



## OPENING WIDE THE DOORS

BY FATHER JOHN KARTJE

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**“Do not be afraid. Open wide the doors for Christ.”** So spoke St. John Paul II in 1978 in his first homily as pope. The image of a door opening to Christ serves as a powerful metaphor for receiving his love deep into our hearts. But sometimes the image is more than a metaphor.

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This semester, we opened our new Welcome Center on campus. In just a few short months, the center has become a focal point for visitors to the seminary — a place for family and friends of seminarians to gather, as well as a portal for the many new guests we welcome every day.

When Cardinal Mundelein first established the beautiful grounds of the campus, he envisioned preparing men for a different experience of Church than we know today. The aim was to construct a sacred space for prayer and study, set far apart from the city of Chicago, in which so many of the newly ordained priests would serve. It was intended to be a well-protected oasis with tight restrictions on when family could visit or when seminarians could leave the grounds. There would be time enough for a new priest to encounter the “outside world” during the many years he would serve as an associate pastor.

Such a model for diocesan seminary formation is hardly adequate for the Church of today. Nor is it an accurate representation of the Church one encounters in the Acts of the Apostles. To be sure, Mundelein must always preserve

its identity as a sacred space for prayer and study, but it would be wrong to assume that a greater interaction between the seminary community and the people we serve is antithetical to that identity.

The Welcome Center, comprising both a bookstore/gift shop and Mundelein Hall (in which the seminary’s rich history and expansive art collection will be featured), is but a small part of the process of “opening wide the doors” of the seminary to the people of the many dioceses we serve. Nevertheless, it affords an important opportunity for our community to further interact with God’s people, on the very grounds where priestly formation is paramount. Such interactions enrich that formation in myriad and subtle ways. Something as simple as a conversation in the bookstore with a visiting parishioner from Wichita or Seattle might spark questions or reflections that could later reverberate within a Christology class or a spiritual direction session.

Several new developments at the seminary that you’ll read about in this issue of *The Bridge* further highlight ways that our students are preparing to engage those who pass through the doors of Mundelein

today, and those to whom they will reach out to bring through the doors of their future parishes. For example, our third-year men made their deaconate retreat in Israel this year on the Mount of the Beatitudes in Galilee. As you’ll see, they found Christ walking through their open doors in a most unexpected way. Two of our seminarian Canary Research Grant recipients traveled to Mexico to research the rich history of the Diocese of El Paso. While poring over texts in a dusty archive, they discovered that St. Pedro de Jesús Maldonado, a Mexican martyr, once passed through the gates of Mundelein to attend the 1926 International Eucharistic Congress. And our pre-theologians attended a new course designed to prepare them to welcome questions from those who are wrestling with supposed conflicts between faith and science.

**FATHER JOHN KARTJE**  
is the rector and president of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake/Mundelein Seminary.

Good seminary formation should always be opening the door to our Church. A well-formed parish priest knows how to accompany his people and lead them to — and through — that door. ■



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THE BRIDGE

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Spring/Summer 2017

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**Correction:** Due to an editing error, Cardinal Blase Cupich was incorrectly identified in the Fall 2016/Winter 2017 issue as the sixth archbishop of Chicago to be named a cardinal. He is, in fact, Chicago's seventh cardinal, following Cardinal George Mundelein (who served as archbishop of Chicago 1915–1939), Cardinal Samuel Stritch (1939–1958), Cardinal Albert Meyer (1958–1965), Cardinal John Cody (1965–1982), Cardinal Joseph Bernardin (1982–1996), and Cardinal Francis George (1997–2014). We sincerely regret the error.

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*The new Mundelein Hall. On the cover: Seminarians, faculty and staff gather in front of the new building in February during a preview event.*

# MUNDELEIN HALL OPENS, WELCOMING ALL TO CAMPUS

BY MATTHEW OCKINGA | PT1, DIOCESE OF YAKIMA

**Welcome!** That is the warm message Mundelein Seminary is sending to students, priests and especially visitors with the completion of the sparkling new Mundelein Hall, Welcome Center and bookstore that celebrated its grand opening on May 7. Construction workers completed the 6,500-square-foot addition to the seminary's existing dining hall in February.

Father John Kartje, rector/president of Mundelein Seminary, said he hopes the new building will be a welcoming beacon for all members of the public. "Many visitors to our picturesque campus often find themselves a bit lost amidst the beauty of our buildings and our grounds, not knowing their bearings or where to begin," he said. "The Welcome Center aims to change that, offering visitors a grand central starting point to their time at the seminary."

"It's going to be the first place people come to if they need a map, or a tour, or if they need any information," said Kim O'Neill, manager of the Welcome Center. "That is key. It's not just a bookstore and gift shop, it's truly a center for welcoming."

In addition to the bookstore, new features of the multispace facility include spacious, state-of-the-art restrooms; an inviting Alumni Room; and convenient walkways leading to the building.

The facility was designed and built to match the rest of the seminary's American Colonial architecture. With an already gorgeous campus, Mundelein Hall adds that one key component that was missing, O'Neill said.

"The campus has all the elements. It just was missing that connecting point to get people here, and then to get them to where they need to be," she said. "Visitors will remember their experience and they will tell others, 'Wow, Mundelein Seminary is a place that's inviting, welcoming, comfortable, and a beautiful environment.' It's very exciting, and they did a wonderful job making it look like the rest of campus. It's gorgeous." ■



**MATTHEW OCKINGA**

*is a first-year pre-theologian studying for the Diocese of Yakima, Wash.*

## WELCOME CENTER FEATURES

**MUNDELEIN HALL:** This spacious hall will be the first view visitors receive after walking through the doors. The university seal is engraved in the hall's floor. A large gallery wall will feature rotating art that will highlight the seminary's history.

**BOOKSTORE:** The new bookstore replaces the previous location in the basement of Mundelein's theology residence. Small benches give patrons a chance to peruse the selection of books. The store also sells more unique Mundelein merchandise, including hats, coffee mugs and handmade rosaries. Catholic books, religious gifts and greeting cards are among the many other items for sale. The store also doubles as the Welcome Center where guests can receive information about the seminary before exploring the campus.

**ALUMNI ROOM:** The Alumni Room offers a special meeting place for priests and other Mundelein graduates. Alumni will be able to take advantage of plush furniture, a fireplace and a kitchenette.

**BATHROOMS:** Spacious and elegant, the new restrooms help guests and students feel more welcome.

**COAT ROOM:** The new coat room will give students and guests an organized place to store their outerwear before enjoying a meal in the refectory.



*Members of the Board of Advisors, administration, and deacon class cut the ribbon on the new Mundelein Hall in April.*

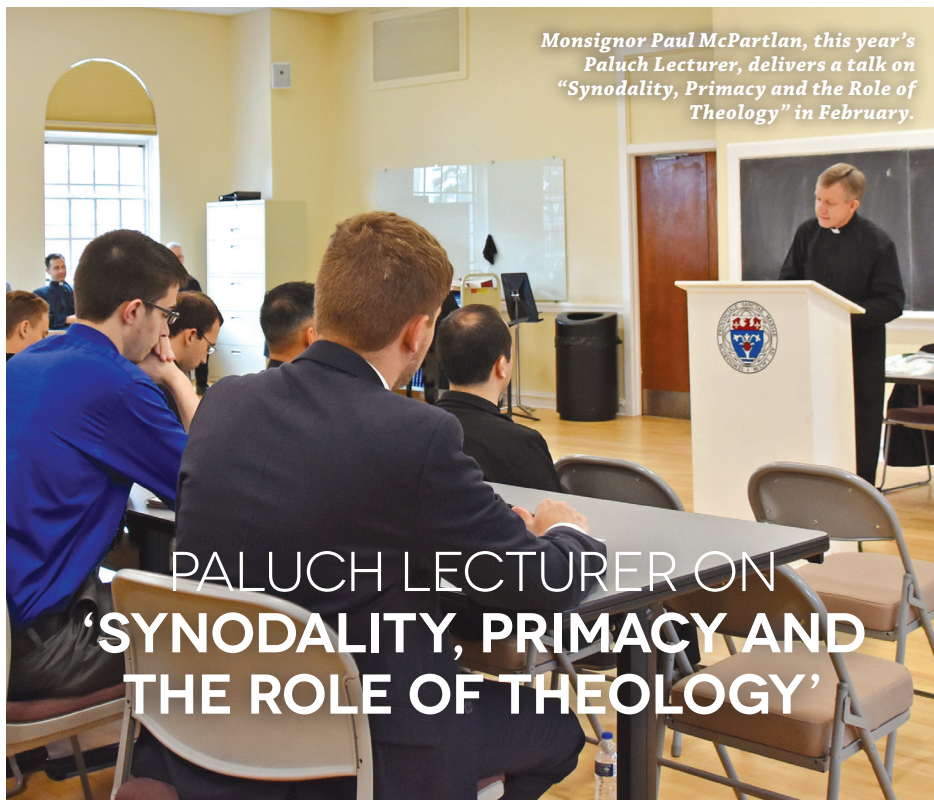
LOUIS CUNNINGHAM, 3T/SEATTLE



*Patrons peruse the selection of books, clothing and gifts in the new Bookstore and Welcome Center.*



*Students — Father Valery Akoh, Cristian Garcia and Francisco Pagan — display some of the clothing items for sale in the new Bookstore.*



Monsignor Paul McPartlan, this year's Paluch Lecturer, delivers a talk on "Synodality, Primacy and the Role of Theology" in February.

## PALUCH LECTURER ON 'SYNODALITY, PRIMACY AND THE ROLE OF THEOLOGY'

BY MATTHEW OCKINGA | PT1, DIOCESE OF YAKIMA

**After delivering a thorough and informative lecture** in the fall on the continuing reception of Vatican II, Monsignor Paul McPartlan returned to Mundelein Seminary early this spring for the next of his three talks as this year's Paluch Lecturer. His second lecture was entitled "Synodality, Primacy and the Role of Theology."

A professor of systematic theology and ecumenism at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., and a priest of the Archdiocese of Westminster in England, Monsignor McPartlan also served two terms on the International Theological Commission.

After addressing the Mundelein community in February, Monsignor McPartlan answered some further questions for *The Bridge* regarding primacy and synodality.

**What is the biggest challenge the Catholic Church faces in achieving synodality and primacy?** I think we have a tendency to regard our leaders as self-contained figures and to forget all of the bonds of communion that unite them

with their brothers and sisters in Christ. In the debates at Vatican II, some bishops opposed the idea of episcopal collegiality because they thought that it detracted from papal primacy. In fact, however, these two go together, because St. Peter was not an isolated leader of the Church. He was chosen as one of the Twelve Apostles and then became their head. We need to remember that the leaders of the Church at local, regional and universal levels are all baptized members of the body of Christ. They have particular gifts and responsibilities, but within the communion of the body in which there are many gifts that are meant for the good of all. Each member needs all the others, and the health of the body is the responsibility of all.

**In your lecture, you mentioned how "Christ is unthinkable without his body," the Church. What role do seminaries play in the body of the Church?**

We need to speak of the body of Christ rather than the body of the Church, and to remember that the Holy Spirit gives countless gifts to the members of the body of Christ. Gifts need careful discernment and nurturing. Like the name suggests, seminaries exist to help the Church and the individuals concerned to discern and nurture the vocation to ordained ministry that the Spirit has planted, like seeds, in the hearts of certain members of the body. Sometimes, men who wondered if they might have that calling discern that their calling is different, and that too is part of seminaries doing their job. All discernment is valuable, and those who are ultimately ordained as priests have the important responsibility of helping others to discern their own gifts.

**What did Pope Francis mean when he said, "Do not settle for a desktop theology?"** I think Pope Francis was emphasizing that theology which is useful for the Church is done with an awareness of the needs of the Church, and with a desire to contribute to the Church's mission of bringing the peace, grace and healing of Christ to a wounded world. Theology is rational reflection on the faith we have as members of the Church, called to love God and our neighbors as ourselves. Properly understood, it is a service carried out in the Church and for the Church, as the International Theological Commission's document, *Theology Today* (2012), makes clear.



**MATTHEW OCKINGA** is a first-year pre-theologian studying for the Diocese of Yakima, Wash.

In its mission to bring Christ to the people of today, all kinds of questions arise in the face of new issues, new cultures, new technology, etc. That is why Pope Francis wants theology to be at the "frontier" with its skill and its expertise, to help the Church to discern the promptings of the Holy Spirit and to proclaim the good news most effectively. ■

# NEW COURSE EXPLORES CONNECTIONS BETWEEN FAITH AND SCIENCE

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS | 2T, DIOCESE OF EL PASO



***The relationship between faith and science*** has long been explored by Catholic theologians and scientists. But it's also a topic that many parish priests are asked about every Sunday, and a new class aims to equip seminarians with the tools to speak confidently about them.

"Fundamentals of Science at the Foundations of Faith" is a new course for second-year pre-theology students that was created as a result of a \$10,000 grant awarded to Father John Kartje, Mundelein's rector/president, by the John Templeton Foundation in 2015. With a doctorate in astrophysics as well as a doctorate in Biblical studies, Kartje was uniquely qualified to design and teach the course.

"This grant was specifically to support the development of courses and curriculums in seminaries that would look at questions regarding faith and science," Kartje said. "What is unique at Mundelein is that we created an entire course that is focused on these questions, whereas other seminaries integrated pieces of the faith-science dialogue into pre-existing courses."

Kartje said that his goal wasn't to turn every seminarian into a practicing scientist, but rather to instill in each a foundational scientific understanding that goes beyond commonly held beliefs.

"The way modern science looks at matter, time and space is radically different than the common perception of the natural world," he said. "I very explicitly didn't want it to be an apologetics course, nor was it an attempt to use science to prove the existence of

God. I really wanted to show how the way scientists view the world — the scientists' epistemology — can really contribute a lot to the way theologians talk about God."

"The class is primarily how the natural sciences can enrich our view of the faith," said Benjamin Thomsen, a second-year pre-theologian studying for the Archdiocese of Atlanta.

"We're learning what that word 'science' really means, so that you can have an intelligent conversation about it and cut through a lot of misperceptions," said Jacob Epstein, a second-year pre-theologian studying for the Diocese of Des Moines, Iowa.

Such misperceptions put priests at an inherent disadvantage, Kartje said, because many outside the Church — and even some within it — think the Catholic Church is somehow antithetical to science.

"The 'science and religion are at war' story has been told for so long that it's hard for people to imagine that someone who was an engineer, like me, could ever join a church that they say 'makes you shut off your brain,'" Epstein said. "We all know that's not true, but this class helps me have the language to have an intelligent conversation about *why* it's not true."

Kartje said that he hopes the class will

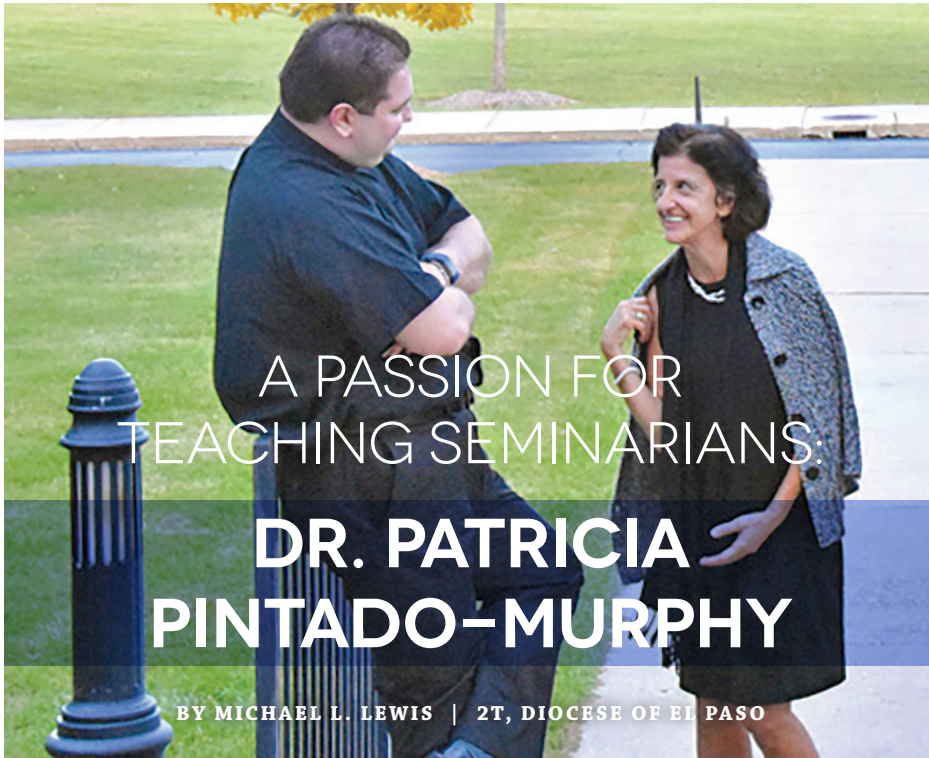
give his students the ability to address questions and doubts from parishioners who often have had more science training than the typical seminarian.

"One of the things Father Kartje always reminds us of is that, when we are in the parish, there will be people who understand topics like genetics or evolution," said Noah Thelen, a second-year pre-theologian studying for the Diocese of Grand Rapids, Mich. "We will be 'on' to talk about how these topics relate to our faith. We cannot simply be ignorant about them because our main area of study is theology."

"If all a priest can do is give feel-good emotional responses to questions posed by parishioners, it will be an empty thing to those who hunger for objective and rational truth," Thomsen said.

Though the grant is only for one year, Kartje said the course will become a permanent part of Mundelein's pre-theology curriculum. Yet he also hopes that the faith-science connections will be explored by seminarians throughout their theology studies.

"I'm always saying that good science should help a theologian hone the questions he asks, and better shape the way he understands the answers he comes across," Kartje said. ■



A PASSION FOR  
TEACHING SEMINARIANS:

DR. PATRICIA  
PINTADO-MURPHY

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS | 2T, DIOCESE OF EL PASO

*It's not very often* that one sees a philosophy professor sitting alongside seminarians in their theology classes. But for Dr. Patricia Pintado-Murphy, assistant professor of philosophy, it's a natural part of the job.

Pintado, who joined Mundelein's full-time faculty in August after teaching as an adjunct instructor in 2015, regularly sits in on her colleagues' theology classes to better make connections for her philosophy students and profit from the knowledge imparted by a very gifted faculty, she says. To further her exploration of the many connections between philosophy and theology, she recently began taking courses towards earning a licentiate in sacred theology (S.T.L.) degree.

"As Benedict XVI reminded us while reflecting on Augustine, God is not remote. He is close to every human being, close to our hearts and to our reason. Therefore, philosophy done well leads you to the door of faith," she said. "I'm not doing it to earn another title. I'm looking at it from the perspective of my students, to have a more holistic view of the entire intellectual pillar of the seminary."

To Pintado, her students' philosophy

studies impact all the four pillars of formation, not just the intellectual one.

"Philosophy is vitally important to one's spiritual life, because learning about human nature and about yourself shapes the way you relate to God in prayer and the way you relate to others," she said. "Regarding human formation, knowledge of Christ's humanity and of one's self helps you acquire the necessary virtues needed to be a person of character and to be transformed by grace. And, St. John Paul II called us to become experts in humanity, to think about who we are and the meaning of life. This nourishes our awareness of and care for others, which is crucial for pastoral formation."

Hailing originally from Spain's Canary Islands, Pintado has long maintained healthy friendships with priests, which partly explains her focus on teaching in seminaries. Before coming to Mundelein, she taught for six years at the Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio, and later at the

Athenaeum of Ohio in Cincinnati.

"All my life, I've been very blessed to have known many kind and wise priests. They've been father figures to me, brothers, friends," she said. "One of the ways that I show my gratitude to God for those friendships is by contributing to the holistic formation of future priests."

Within her field, her main interest is in modern and contemporary philosophy, a focus she believes can help one evangelize in an increasingly secular world.

"Looking at the world around us, a seminarian needs to understand the philosophies and ideologies shaping the secular world," she said. "Our seminarians will be communicating the Good News of the Gospel to an audience that may think that religion has little to say about the fulfillment of their lives. As Pope Francis likes to insist, we need to learn to discern how to communicate the faith with conviction, accompanying all in charity. Ideally, the seminarians will learn this, building upon the rich intellectual tradition of the Church and the encounter with Christ that constantly changes our lives."

Herself a Spanish-speaking immigrant, Pintado also serves as an important mentor and friend to Hispanic seminarians at Mundelein, especially those from outside the United States.

"I know what it is like to have a foot in both worlds," she said. "We share a language and an experience of trying to adjust to a new culture. We also have similar sensibilities in how we pray, how we sing, how we enjoy friendships."

Married to William F. Murphy, a professor of moral theology at the Josephinum, Pintado-Murphy said they work hard to see each other regularly during the semester.

"It's a sacrifice worth offering to serve the church," she said. "We know what we're doing, for whom we're doing it, and why. It's about sharing the love for philosophy and theology with those who will serve the people of God." ■



**MICHAEL L. LEWIS**

is a second-year theologian studying for the Diocese of El Paso, Texas.



# LEADING SEMINARIANS TO ‘FURTHER DISCIPLESHIP’ THROUGH LITURGY: FATHER BRADLEY ZAMORA

BY DEACON RADLEY ALCANTARA | 4T, ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO



*Having been ordained* for only a little over a year, Father Bradley Zamora never imagined he would be asked to join the faculty of Mundelein Seminary. While humbled with the opportunity to serve the seminary, shock overwhelmed him since having a newly ordained priest join the faculty is quite rare.

Father John Kartje, rector/president of Mundelein Seminary, said he initially asked Zamora, who was serving as an associate pastor and director of liturgy at Chicago’s Holy Name Cathedral, to serve as Mundelein’s interim director of liturgy, hoping to establish a deeper link between how liturgy is done at the cathedral and how it is done at the seminary. “The praxis at both locations — where Chicago goes to pray and where future priests are formed — should not be separated, since these two places ought to complement one another,” Kartje said.

It became very obvious to Zamora during his interim work at the seminary that he was in love with his ministry at Mundelein. In March 2016, Kartje asked Zamora if he would consider dropping the “interim” designation and become the seminary’s full-time director of liturgy. With Cardinal Blase Cupich’s blessing, and with the request that he simultaneously serve at Holy Name Cathedral until this summer, Zamora was appointed to the full-time faculty of

the University of Saint Mary of the Lake.

Joining a new environment, especially a seminary, always takes adjusting, and Zamora said his experience has reflected that.

“One of my biggest adjustments has been coming to grips with the fact that I am a faculty member from an institution I graduated from three years ago,” he said. “As a faculty member, there are still seminarians whom I was in seminary with, with relationships and friendships already established.”

It has since set in for Zamora that he is no longer “Brad the Seminarian” or “Brad the Deacon,” but “Father Brad.” But amidst the unfamiliar is the constant that is his love for liturgy.

“Liturgy is the most intimate place I find where we encounter God,” Zamora said. “Not only in the obvious of ways — the Eucharist at Mass and in the Word proclaimed — but in the assembly that gathers.”

“Liturgy is, regardless of personal agendas or ideas of what ‘church’ should be, the

most beautifully lived experience of what Christ desired when we pray, that we may be one,” he said. “How can you not be inspired and drawn to it? Not only is it to be experienced, but also to live as Christ calls us: to further discipleship.”

And what about the discipleship Zamora is living through his new role at Mundelein?

“I can’t help but be the person that God created me to be, who my family taught me to be, who the priests and shepherds of this archdiocese formed,” he said. “This is who people are going to encounter — a priest living authentically.”

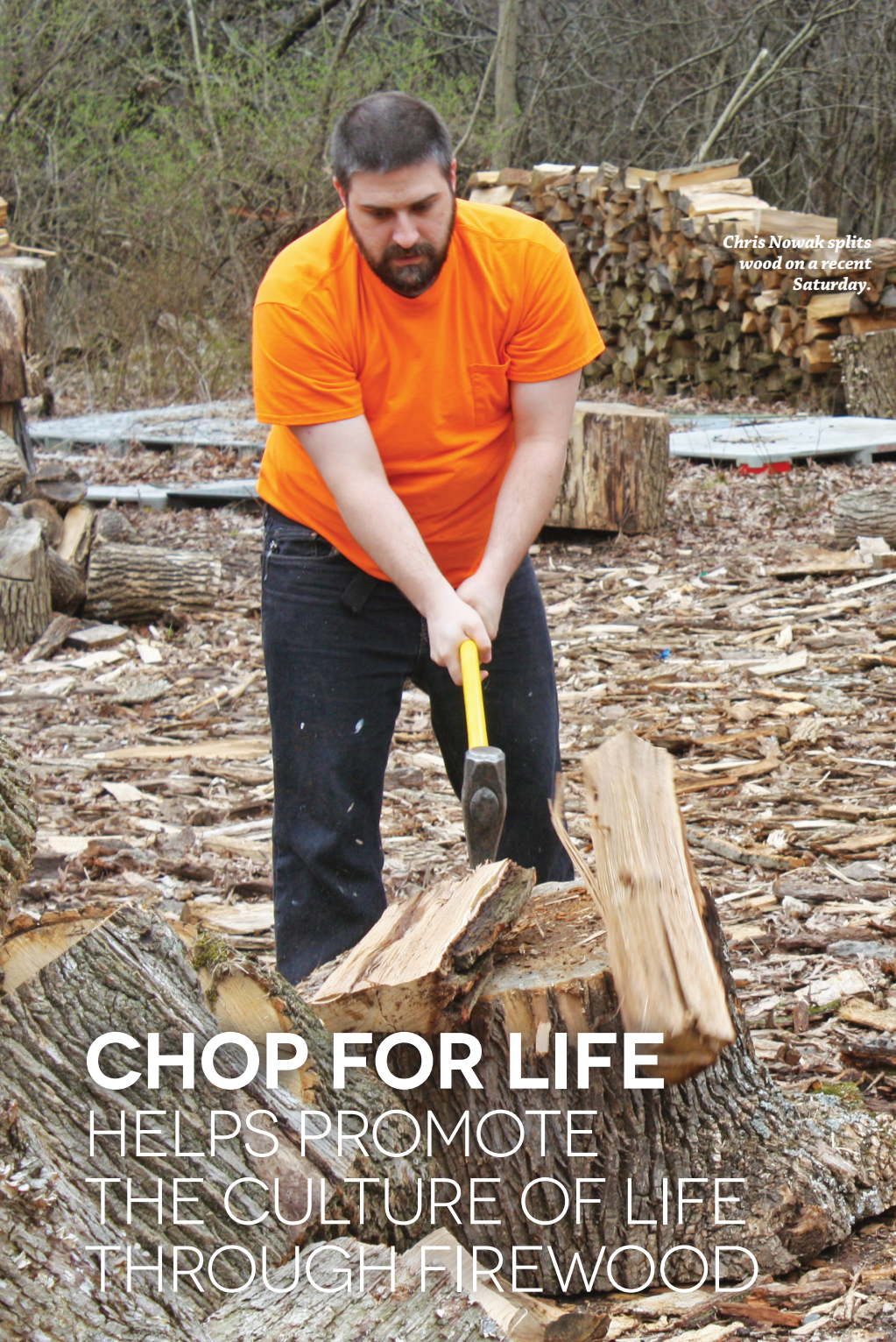
Zamora said he seeks to encounter people in the messiness of life. He said he hopes that people will see in him someone who Pope Francis wants for the Church, someone who is willing to accompany them through the ups and downs and highs and lows of seminary formation.

“All formation I received as a seminarian very much gives insights and guidance in how I engage our men who are here at Mundelein Seminary today,” he said. “I was blessed to have priest mentors who have inspired me to be the best I can be as a priest. An open door, an open ear, and always leading with love is crucial to the ministry that I am called to share here at Mundelein. ■



**DEACON  
RADLEY  
ALCANTARA**

*is a fourth-year theologian studying for the Archdiocese of Chicago.*



Chris Nowak splits wood on a recent Saturday.

# CHOP FOR LIFE HELPS PROMOTE THE CULTURE OF LIFE THROUGH FIREWOOD

BY HANK LYON | 1T, ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO  
PHOTOS BY BEN JOHNSON | 1T, DIOCESE OF GREEN BAY

**Pope Francis in his encyclical, *Laudato Si***, encourages us to be good stewards of the earth and to use the fruits of the earth in a manner that builds up a culture of life. For the participants of Chop for Life, their unique ministry on campus brings this stewardship close to home.

Mundelein seminarians actively promote the culture of life in their activities throughout the year — by attending the local and national March for Life each January, by working with the poorest of the poor on mission trips throughout the hemisphere, and through their ministry in parishes and hospitals. But through Chop for Life, seminarians directly help the women and children of The Women’s Center, a crisis pregnancy center with locations in the Chicago area, by chopping firewood gathered from the campus grounds and selling it to customers in the Mundelein area.

Chop for Life is led this year by Tom Quirk, a third-year theologian studying for the Diocese of Tucson, Ariz.; Dan Weger, a second-year theologian studying for the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kan.; and Gino Wilcox, a second-year theologian studying for the Diocese of Las Cruces, N.M. “But seminarians started this long before we got here,” Quirk said.

“We like to go out as a group on Saturdays, because many hands make light work,” he said. “Typically we go out after Father Boyle’s 6:30 a.m. Mass and a quick breakfast.”

The seminarian volunteers take wood that’s been selected by the seminary’s grounds crew and then chop it down to a standard size for delivery.

“The grounds crew, they’re integral,” Quirk said. “What they do is look for trees that are not flourishing, in the wrong place, or have fallen over. They pick certain trees to cut down every season, and they cut them into 16-inch ‘biscuits’ — chunks of wood. And we take those biscuits and split them so they can be used for firewood.”

The wood is then stacked and stored, or seasoned, on campus, though some wood is ready to be delivered immediately.

“The best firewood we have is oak, which needs seasoning for six months to a year, roughly,” Quirk said. “We split it so it can season more completely. And then we have ash, which you can burn right away. They’re both good firewoods.

But ash is a little easier to chop; it splits more easily.”

“We use heavy mauls that are half sledgehammer, half axe,” he said. “It’s a great workout — shoulders, back, fore-arms. But for the really twisted trunk pieces, we use a wood splitter — 7 horsepower, gas-powered. You can get a lot done with that thing; it’s pretty efficient.”

Their ministry is more than just chopping wood, however. The seminarians also deliver to families in the surrounding area.

“Our special service is that we don’t just dump your wood on your driveway,” Quirk said. “We will stack it however and wherever you want it on your property. Even through the snow — we’ve had to do that before. We ask for a donation of \$150 for a ‘face cord,’ which is one-third of a full cord,” which is a stack 4 feet high by 4 feet deep by 8 feet wide, Quirk said. “Those are split logs packed together, about 16 inches long, which will fit just about any wood-burning stove or fireplace.”

The program has raised between \$2,600 and \$4,000 in the last few years, Quirk said, which is sent directly to The Women’s Center. “People are pretty generous. It’s for charity, after all,” he said.

“All the money we raise goes to The Women’s Center, which is an agency that’s grown from one clinic to three in Chicagoland,” Quirk said. “They’ve saved an estimated 30,000 babies from their inception in 1985. They’re such a worthy cause, and our customers know. They know where the money is going when they write their check, because the check goes directly to them. You’re helping women and children when your buying our firewood. It’s a win-win.”

Quirk said the ministry is open to all seminarians, even those who’ve never picked up an axe before.

“I was pretty new to chopping wood. I didn’t even know what a maul was,” he said. “But, we love to train guys. We’re happy to have brand-new guys who also have never picked up a maul before. You’re going to make mistakes — you’re going to chip off a piece off the



*Seminarians Kevin Ripley, Tom Quirk and Garrett Burns chop wood as part of the Chop for Life ministry.*

top, you’re going to try to chop too big a piece and it won’t split, sometimes you miss the piece of wood entirely. But you learn by doing. There’s nothing quite like the feeling when you get a good hit on a tough piece of wood. It almost sounds like a bowling pin, or a bat hitting a baseball. It’s a very satisfying sound.”

The ministry even spawned its own intramural competition this year, Quirk explained, with the first-ever Mundelein Lumber Games. About a dozen seminarians



**HANK LYON**

*is a first-year theologian studying for the Archdiocese of Chicago.*

competed in events such as throwing wood, a hauling race, and a chopping contest.

“It’s a great ministry,” he said. “We get exercise and build camaraderie. And our customers warm their house with wood from our sacred grounds. But the ultimate goal is to help the women and their children, which this really does.” ■



Professor Michael Brinda, center, taught the “Parish Management and Operations” course to the second-year theology class during this year’s inaugural School of the Good Shepherd program.

## SCHOOL OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD TEACHES REAL-WORLD SKILLS BEFORE INTERNSHIP

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS | 2T, DIOCESE OF EL PASO

**Second-year theologians at Mundelein** have long attended a mini-semester of courses before their parish internships begin each February. But this year, the slate of classes was revamped to give seminarians a concentrated dose of highly applicable tools that would be particularly useful in their parish assignments.

The five-week intensive School of the Good Shepherd program was designed to help students better understand budgets, facilities, human resources and partnerships with the laity, which are all critical to seminarians’ future work as

pastors, said Father John Kartje, Mundelein’s rector/president.

“Past generations of priests were often able to serve for many years before becoming pastors,” Kartje said. “They had time to observe how budgets are

developed, how to raise money to make repairs to church buildings, or how to collaborate effectively with a parish staff and volunteers. Now, a newly ordained priest might serve less than two years before becoming a pastor. In developing this program, we asked ourselves how we could help our seminarians learn to lead a parish with such a quick rise of responsibility after they leave Mundelein.”

The centerpiece of the program, which also included homiletics and liturgy courses, was the new “Parish Management and Operations” course developed by Michael Brinda, a visiting professor

who lives in Irvine, Calif. Brinda, who launched the successful New Horizons Computer Learning Centers chain before selling the company to a public firm in 1994, has since focused his business acumen on helping parishes, seminaries and the Church at large.

The Mundelein course is a version of the class Brinda originally taught at Holy Apostles College and Seminary in Cromwell, Conn. The course content combines his decades of experience in the private sector as well as his years of work at a large parish in Costa Mesa, Calif.

“That line item from my background is easy to read past, but in conjunction with the rest of my background, it explains where I gained many insights and experiences in parish management and operations,” Brinda said.

Among Brinda’s goals for students in the course were learning to apply business concepts, principles and vocabulary to parish management and operations (PMO); understanding the crucial role organizational culture plays in the parish; creating and executing a strategic plan; and the “art and science” of hiring and firing personnel.

“Many priests ignore developing PMO knowledge and skills because they don’t like this stuff in the first place,” Brinda said. “However, the priest must proactively manage paid and volunteer staff. Parish management and operations is not, so to speak, a ‘fire and forget’ proposition. There are many ways to fail in PMO, and the priest who does not respect it enough to give it the attention it not only deserves but demands, will discover every PMO pitfall that exists.”

Brinda said part of the course was dispelling the notion that parish management and operations is only focused on facilities.

“PMO is stereotyped as the area responsible for fixing the potholes in the parking lot, or fixing the broken heater, and nothing more,” he said. “But it’s also within the realm of PMO to engage lapsed Catholics and lost souls through social media, retreats, guest speakers and other methods, too.”

With a thorough knowledge and

implementation of parish management and operations, Brinda said, pastors won’t be overwhelmed by the everyday business-related minutiae that is omnipresent in every parish.

“Once you properly setup PMO, you will have more time every day to do the things you were ordained to do,” he said.

Students in the class praised its usefulness during their parish internship assignments.

“It offered an insight to the business side of running a parish,” said Mark McGeary, a second-year theologian studying for the Diocese of Des Moines, Iowa, who had a successful business career before entering the seminary. “I have come to realize just how much time our pastors spend on business matters, so the course was helpful. I have used several ideas from it already in the first several weeks of my internship.”

Others found that the course filled gaps in their real-world knowledge of parish operations.

“I was especially interested in the parts of a parish priest's life that we do not study much in our usual courses — things like organizational culture, personnel issues, running productive meetings, how to be the boss *and* a father,” said Rob Mulderink, a second-year theologian studying for the Diocese of Grand Rapids, Mich. “The class was full of real-life examples and practice conversations which were a great way to get our feet wet before internship. I learned a lot before being in the parish where my words and actions (and honest mistakes) have greater consequences.”

The course also helped some students become more comfortable with the non-spiritual matters that impact parish life.

“I often heard from students that it was very helpful in easing their anxiety over the business side of the vocation,” McGeary said.

“It was interesting to see how a priest could be drawn into administrative works and ignore his main vocation,” said Ton Thai Nguyen, a second-year theologian studying for the Archdiocese of Chicago. “The class was good in terms of the administration part. It taught how

“I was especially interested in the parts of a parish priest's life that we do not study much in our usual courses — things like organizational culture, personnel issues, running productive meetings, how to be the boss *and* a father.”

—Rob Mulderink/2T, Diocese of Grand Rapids

to run the parish, delegate to other people — in short, things that the business world is already doing well.”

Ultimately, the course’s efficacy would only be realized during the students’ 10-week internship, Brinda said.

“It is likely and understandable that as interns most of the time they will be more observers than practitioners during their assignment,” he said. “But you learn so much more when you know what you are looking at, looking for, and what questions to ask. This is the value of the course in general, and specifically, the wisdom of immediately following the course with the internship.”

“It gives them an opportunity to test some of the lessons they learned in class out in the ‘real world,’” Kartje said. “This new program will give them practical tools for future management of God’s

assets in our parishes. We will all need them for spiritual guidance, for the Sacraments, for leading us to a deeper relationship with Christ. But they also must be good stewards of the resources of each local church, just like the disciples who went out after Christ had risen, to spread His message to the ends of the earth.” ■



**MICHAEL L. LEWIS** is a second-year theologian studying for the Diocese of El Paso, Texas.

*The sun rises over the Sea of Galilee near the Mount of the Beatitudes where the Mandelstein pilgrims spent their canonical retreat.*

# ON RETREAT IN THE HOLY LAND: SEEKING CHRIST IN THE PARKING LOT

***Editor's Note:*** This year, for the first time, third-year seminarians on pilgrimage in the Holy Land had the opportunity to prepare for their pending ordination to the diaconate while experiencing their canonical retreat together at the Mount of the Beatitudes. What follows is a reflection of that special time from one of its participants.

BY JACOB ROUSE | 3T, ARCHDIOCESE OF DUBUQUE

LOUIS CUNNINGHAM, 3T/SEATTLE

“Just look at the parking lot!”

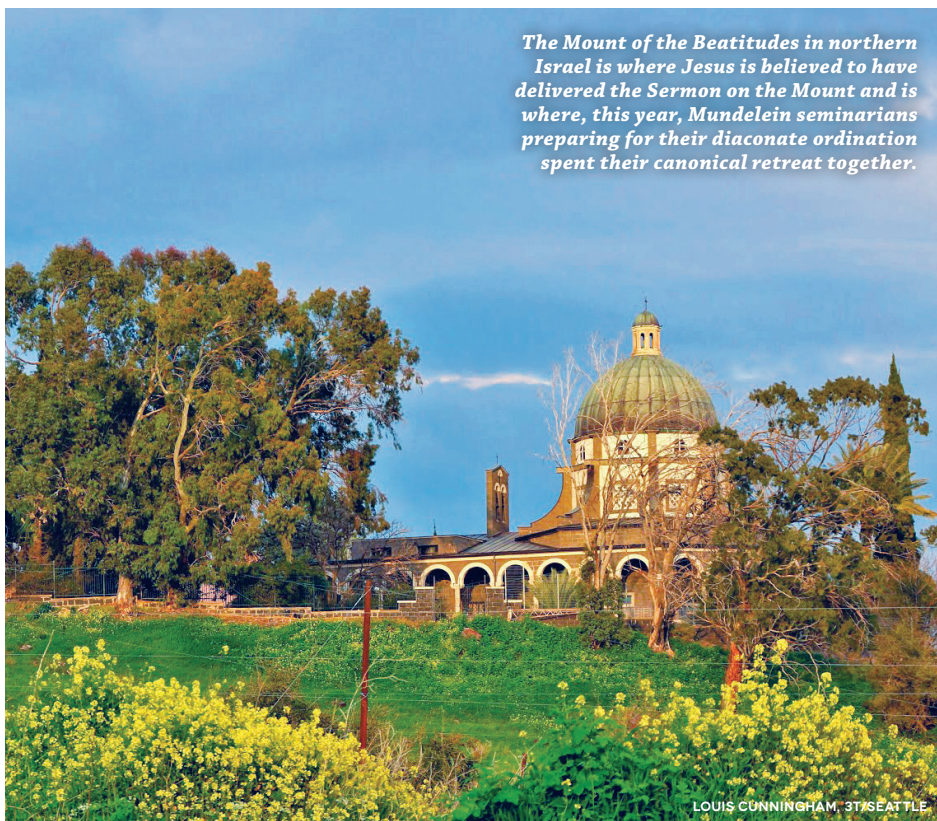
These are the words that permeated my canonical retreat on the Mount of Beatitudes in March.

This story is not so much about the highly appreciated and required time of prayer before an ordination, but about expectations. Expectations about life, of God, and ourselves.

I was greatly looking forward to this unique prayer experience. We were the first class at Mundelein in the history of the seminary’s Holy Land pilgrimage to spend so much time at this holy site. And we had with us Abbott Vincent Bataille, a Benedictine monk who has long been a member of the spiritual faculty at Mundelein Seminary. What an incredible opportunity to spend a week in silent contemplation on these eight statements of Christ!

I had been anticipating this retreat for months, and was ready to receive all that God had in store for me. I had the next four days carefully planned out — my hours and times of silent prayer, the books I was going to read, and how much I was going to grow in my relationship with the Lord.

When we arrived at the guest center midmorning we were greeted by cheerful Franciscan sisters. They helped us find our rooms and showed us around the property. The main gate is a large iron structure that closes and opens for guests. I felt safe and secure. The grounds are expertly maintained and welcoming. This can be seen in the hundreds of feet of rose bushes and in the freshly clipped hedges. Engraved stones along the path display the Beatitudes in different languages and designs. The fountain in the main plaza shoots six feet in the air and provides the reflective and pleasant sound of running water. Standing on the highest part of the property, one can see the peak of Mount Arbel, the mountain where Jesus gave the Great Commission (Matthew 28:16–20). Looking to the left yields a panoramic view of the Sea of Galilee, and the surrounding countryside and fields. The stage was set for my “perfect” ordination-preparation retreat!



*The Mount of the Beatitudes in northern Israel is where Jesus is believed to have delivered the Sermon on the Mount and is where, this year, Mundelein seminarians preparing for their diaconate ordination spent their canonical retreat together.*

LOUIS CUNNINGHAM, ST/SEATTLE

And then it actually started.

Lunch, our first meal there, was served family style. Each course was served in intervals with plenty of time in between, which meant I had to talk to my brothers at the table with me — Strike One. The main entrée was St. Peter’s fish — Strike Two. This fish is served whole, as if it was just caught. You can look up a picture if you want, but just know that your meal is staring right at you from the plate. All the while, buses and buses full of tourists trickled in through the main gate. They were filled with large noisy groups of travelers from all over the world coming to see the Mount.

When we got to our first conference, in which Abbott Vincent shared a prepared Scripture reflection, he told us that the silence on this retreat would be optional — Strike Three. He not only encouraged us to spend time in prayer, but also encouraged conversation with each other during our free time in the afternoons. There would also be a film shown each night.

“Optional silence? Conversation? Mov-

ies?” I thought to myself. “What kind of ordination prep retreat is this? How am I going to receive the graces God has in store for me with all these distractions?”

Day Two arrived, during which I spent a few hours of disgruntled prayer and self-imposed silence. Later, Abbott Vincent spoke in his conference about the messiness of the life of the Christian disciple. He directed our attention out the window down the hill. “Just look at the parking lot! People crawling all over each other with their cameras and sunscreen, talking loudly and walking all over the Mount of the Beatitudes. It can be disruptive. It can be frustrating. But the important thing is that they are *looking for something*.” He told us about the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, which we had yet to visit. This church was built over the sites of Jesus’ crucifixion, burial, resurrection and garden appearance. “It’s one of the loudest, busiest and active places of prayer I have ever been to,” Abbot Vincent told us. “But I think that’s what Jesus wants at the place where he died



and rose. ... Everyone there is looking for something. They are looking for Jesus.”

He had a point. But I still wasn’t happy with the environment I was presented with. What I thought was going to be a mountaintop experience of peace and freedom was turning into one of distracting cacophony. Even the beautiful rose hedges started to feel constricting, and the once-comforting stones of the Beatitudes turned into taunts: “Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are the peacemakers. Blessed are the merciful.” I was trying my hardest to be a merciful, poor peacemaker, but all those tourists were testing my patience!

Halfway through the retreat, I decided to talk privately with Abbott Vincent. He graciously agreed and listened patiently as I told him what I was feeling and thinking. He nodded knowingly as I expressed my desire for quiet and peace so I could meet Jesus in prayer and prepare to be ordained as a deacon. I told him that I had been looking for the gifts and graces

that I believed God was going to give me, but it seemed he was hiding from me. Either that, or I just couldn’t hear.

“We are the last to know what will bring us satisfaction and happiness,” he said. Then, after a moment of silence, he told me, “Let go. Don’t try to control what you find. And when you do find it, accept it. That’s faith. The things you are seeking are good, but they are not what God wants for you now. It would be a shame if you missed what God has for you on this pilgrimage.” And then, he stood up, walked to the window and directed my eyes outside. “I mean ... just *look* at the parking lot!”

And I did. I continued to look at that parking lot, even after I had left the overlooking window and gone to the chapel. I continued to look at the parking lot in my mind — that parking lot full of people, my *brothers and sisters in Christ* who came to that mountain, just as I had done, seeking Christ.

I sought the face of Jesus in silence, on

a mountaintop, in Galilee. But he showed himself in the faces of others — my brothers and sisters accompanying me on the journey. I was changed after that realization. I finished the retreat with joy and gratitude. I spent time in encouraging conversation, walking to the sea with friends, and even enjoying the nightly films and discussions that followed.

God is not like us, and we are not like him. His ways are so far beyond our understanding. But one thing I know for sure is that he loves us deeply and will always provide for us. Whether you seek the peace in silent prayer early in the morning just as Jesus did (Mark 1:35), or in a strong wind or earthquake like Isaiah (1 Kings 19:9–12), I encourage you to continue to trust in our God of Surprises and to never forget to “look at the parking lot!” ■



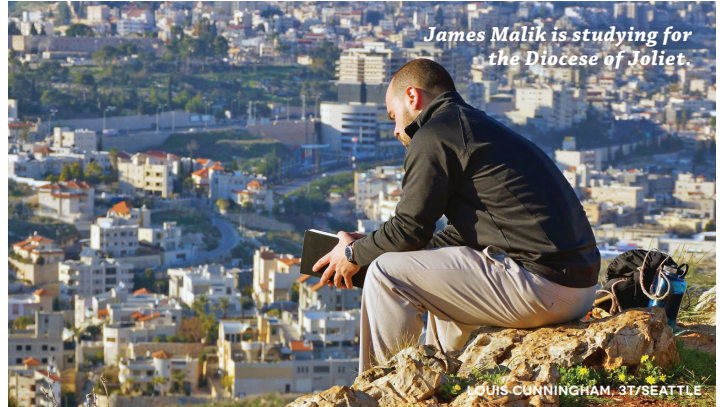
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*Michael Metz is studying for the Archdiocese of Atlanta.*

VIET NGUYEN, 3T/KANSAS CITY



*James Malik is studying for the Diocese of Joliet.*

LOUIS CUNNINGHAM, 3T/SEATTLE



*Isaac Coulter is studying for the Diocese of Wichita, Kan.*

LOUIS CUNNINGHAM, 3T/SEATTLE



*John Horan is studying for the Diocese of Joliet.*

VIET NGUYEN, 3T/KANSAS CITY



Pope Francis greets Patriarch Gewargis III at the start of the meeting Nov. 17 between their respective churches.

## ‘THE PURPOSE IS UNITY’

MUNDELEIN ALUMNI ARE MAJOR PARTICIPANTS IN THE ONGOING DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE ASSYRIAN CHURCH OF THE EAST, WITH THE GOAL OF FULL COMMUNION IN SIGHT

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS | 2T, DIOCESE OF EL PASO  
PHOTOS COURTESY OF L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO

**Last November**, when Archbishop Blase Cupich was in Rome to receive from Pope Francis the “red hat” of a cardinal, several Mundelein Seminary graduates were among those on hand in the Eternal City to celebrate. But other Mundelein alumni were, at the same time, also in Rome to meet with the pope, but for an altogether different reason — continuing the decades-long dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East.

The Assyrian Church — a Christian community historically centered in northern Iraq, northeastern Syria, southeastern Turkey, and northwestern Iran — numbers about 500,000 members worldwide and is among the Eastern Churches that are not currently in full communion with Rome, having split nearly 1,500 years ago. But in 1994, the church began a process of formal dialogue with the Catholic Church toward the eventual goal of full communion. As part of that process, in the late 1990s, the Assyrian Church began sending seminarians to Catholic universities for advanced studies — including Mundelein.

At the Vatican meeting in November, three of those Mundelein graduates, who each earned a baccalaureate in sacred theology (S.T.B.) degree at Mundelein in 1999, were part of the Assyrian Church delegation — Mar Afram Athneil, bishop of Syria; Mar Awa (David) Royel, bishop of California; and Father William Toma, a theology professor at Benedictine University in Lisle, Ill. A fourth Mundelein grad, Father Thomas Baima, who earned his first Mundelein degree in 1980 and currently serves as Mundelein’s vice rector for academic affairs and the Archdiocese of Chicago’s vicar for interreligious and ecumenical affairs, was part of the Catholic Church delegation.

### FROM THE HALLS OF THE VATICAN TO THE CLASSROOMS OF MUNDELEIN

The dialogue between the two churches has its genesis in the warm relationship between two of their respective leaders, Pope John Paul II and Patriarch Dinkha IV, who began discussing the possibility of full communion in 1984. Ten years later, the two signed the “Common Christological Declaration between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East” in which both churches confessed the same doctrine concerning Christ’s divinity and humanity, as well as respect for each other’s formulation of that doctrine. “We both recognize the legitimacy

and rightness of these expressions of the same faith, and we both respect the preference of each Church in her liturgical life and piety,” the document says.

With this common theological foundation, and because the Assyrian Church had not yet founded institutes of higher learning of its own, Dinkha requested that his priests be allowed to study at Catholic universities, Toma said.

“He knew we needed to have educated priests who had advanced degrees,” Toma said. “So, he asked St. John Paul II if the Catholic Church would support the Assyrian students being trained in Catholic universities and seminaries so that they would be able to obtain higher degrees in theology.”

“Mar Dinkha encouraged the clergy to go and study at Catholic seminaries, because he didn’t want our priests’ education to fall behind,” said Father George Toma, a co-bishop in the Assyrian Church and parish priest of St. Andrew Assyrian Church of the East in Glenview, Ill. “We should not ever forget the cooperation and the support of the Catholic Church in this field.”

That Assyrian priests came to study at Mundelein came about thanks to a fortunate nearness borne out of unfortunate circumstances, Baima explained.

“In 1994, Mar Dinkha, the patriarch of the Assyrian Church, was living in exile in the northern suburbs of Chicago, largely because Saddam Hussein was trying to kill him,” Baima said. “So the senior prelate of their church was local to us, and the Archdiocese of Chicago always had a very cordial relationship with the patriarch.”

### ‘A DIALOGUE OF LOVE, A DIALOGUE OF UNDERSTANDING’

Since then, delegations of theologians from both churches have met regularly, with the overarching goal being full communion. That path comprises three main stages — concerning matters of faith, the sacraments and ecclesiology — William Toma said.

“The matter of faith was realized in

1994 with the Christological Declaration,” he said. “Regarding the sacraments, really we are in the final stage of that; it’s almost done. Then, we’ll initiate the third phase on ecclesiology and the constitution of the church.”

The process is a long one. “However, we’ve been separated for almost 1,500 years,” Baima said. “So, in comparison, it’s all happening pretty quickly.”

But deadlines aren’t really a concern of the dialogue’s participants, William Toma said.

“Since the very beginning, it’s never been about pushing a timeline, or discussing conditions,” he said. “It’s always been a dialogue of love, a dialogue of understanding, a dialogue that focuses on what brings us together. The purpose is unity — we accept you as you are, and you accept us. Of course, there are things that require further study, especially in the third part of our dialogue. We will take our time, we will study, and then we will see where the Holy Spirit will lead us.”

Baima described the process as not one of give-and-take, but one based on identifying what the two churches once had in common and still do now.

“Basically, in this dialogue, we’re fol-

It’s always been a dialogue of love, a dialogue of understanding, a dialogue that focuses on what brings us together. The purpose is unity — we accept you as you are, and you accept us.”

lowing the principles laid out by a theologian who wrote, some years ago, that nothing is required to restore unity between the Catholic Church and an Eastern church — which clearly has preserved the faith and the fullness of the sacraments — because they have preserved the priesthood,” he said. “Because of the presence of both the apostolic faith and apostolic succession in the Eastern churches, this theologian argued, nothing more should be required for re-union beyond what was sufficient for communion prior to the break. If you play that out, it’s a very powerful principle.

“The theologian who articulated this principle was Joseph Ratzinger, who



Mar Awa (David) Royel, the Assyrian bishop of California (center), translates as Patriarch Gewargis III describes a gift for Pope Francis during the meeting Nov. 17. Father George Toma, the parish priest of an Assyrian church in Glenview, Ill., and Father William Toma look on (left) as does Father Thomas Baima (right).



*Delegations from the Assyrian Church of the East, left, and the Catholic Church, right, meet at the Apostolic Palace in Vatican City on Nov. 17 as part of the ongoing dialogue aimed at bringing about full communion between the two churches. Four Mundelein graduates are taking part in the dialogue: Father William Toma, second from left; Mar Awa (David) Royel, fourth from left; Mar Afram Athneil, fifth from left; and Father Thomas Baima, third from right.*

of course went on to be elected Pope Benedict XVI,” Baima said. “And Pope Francis has repeated that dictum several times in his papacy. So I can really say that three different popes have held that principle as the approach to follow: Nothing more is required for reunion than what was sufficient for communion prior to the break.”

Baima said that this is the entire basis of the dialogue — that both churches have the same faith.

“What this theological principle really says is that we profess the same faith, but because we have been separated, the way of speaking about it, of describing it, of understanding it, has happened in isolation from each other,” he said. “The dialogue is about understanding how our different expressions can either be harmonized or, at least, accepted in their own context and not judged as representing something different.”

A good example of different expressions of the same faith can be found in the sacraments, Baima said.

“We both have seven sacraments. But they’re not the same seven,” he said. “That’s because sacramental theology doesn’t really show up until a thousand years into the Christian period. We were already living separate lives by then. So, it’s not that, when they articulate their list of seven, they’re denying our list.

It just was a different understanding that developed naturally.”

William Toma explained the different perspectives the two churches have regarding the sacraments.

“For example, in Western sacramental theology, there’s more an emphasis on the cause and effects of the sacraments,” he said. “The Eastern mentality, it’s more about participating in the mystery, the Paschal Mystery.”

Nonetheless, the dialogue has uncovered that there are far more things

that unite the two churches than divide them, Baima said.

“The challenge in the sacramental agreement is to explain how the same faith is being expressed, but with different formulations,” he said. “Sure, there are differences. But do we see them as obstacles? Or do we see them as opportunities for a mutual sharing of gifts, a mutual enrichment that lets us look at these truths through somebody else’s eyes that might disclose something that we might have never seen before?”



*Father Thomas Baima greets Pope Francis following the ecumenical prayer service on Nov. 17.*



*Pope Francis and Patriarch Gewargis III co-preside during an ecumenical prayer service in his private Redemptoris Mater chapel Nov. 17.*

## ‘PRAYING TOGETHER AS ONE FAITH’

Though the dialogue process consists mostly of less formal meetings among theologians from each church, the Nov. 17 meeting in the Apostolic Palace in Vatican City was a chance for the respective heads of the two churches — Pope Francis and Patriarch Gewargis III — to come together. Such a high-level meeting was encouraging for both churches, William Toma said.

“Having the head of the church receiving us shows that we have his blessing in what we are doing,” he said.

The meeting began with addresses by both the pope and the patriarch, Baima explained.

“In the Vatican way of thinking, ceremonies are a different way of speaking,” he said. “At the ceremony, the patriarch of the Assyrian church addressed the pope, and then the Holy Father responded

to that address. That’s an intentional form of participation and dialogue with each other at a higher level above what the theologians are doing.”

In Pope Francis’ speech, he outlined the dire reasons ecumenical dialogue must be fostered. “We are called to work together in charity wherever possible, so that love may indicate the way of communion,” he said.

“What Pope Francis was really saying is that we have to move forward because the witness of Christianity is being compromised by our division,” Baima said. “The Assyrian church, of course, is in part of the world that is in a desperate situation. It just points out how our division — and these are my words, not Pope Francis’ — is irrational. When we look at the situation in the world, we have the greatest message to bring healing to the world, and yet we’re not doing it together.”

But perhaps the most impactful part of the meeting was the ecumenical prayer service held in the pope’s private Redemptoris Mater chapel with both the pope and the patriarch co-presiding.

“Praying together, really, was the most important thing,” George Toma said. “That was really impressive; it touched our hearts. We really appreciate that the Holy Father, Pope Francis, did that, because theological differences or dif-

ferences in expression can never stop us from praying together as one faith.”

Baima underscored the importance of praying together.

“The pope was saying that the communion between the two churches is such that, right now, even before we finish this process, the two presiding bishops of these churches can not just pray together, but stand next to each other and co-preside over a formal prayer. It’s painting a picture of where we’re going. We’re not there yet, but it’s creating an image, and that is very powerful.”

The prayer service focused on the suffering of Christians in the Middle East, of which Athneil, as bishop of Syria, has firsthand knowledge.

“The pope was not only praying for unity for the sake of the dialogue. He was really sharing his prayers and concerns about the Christians in the Middle East,” William Toma said. “Really, he was saying he is one of us. He was saying, ‘I am with you in your suffering, and I am praying for you that you will survive this.’”

That sense of unity is something William Toma said he has always felt, even when he was a student at Mundelein.

“When we were students here, we really felt at home,” he said. “They really showed love to us. The idea that we should be suspicious that they could be trying to Latinize us, or trying to convert us to their church, that has been abolished. They wanted us to be enriched by their tradition and yet also be proud of our own tradition. Why should we fear having a dialogue, fear showing a willingness to love each other for the sake of Christ?”

“We must keep that bond of love, that communion of love between us, and share that in preaching the Gospel of salvation,” George Toma said. “At the same time, we ask the Holy Spirit to lead us to full communion, to remove the obstacles that keep us separated from one another.” ■



**MICHAEL L. LEWIS**  
is a second-year theologian studying for the Diocese of El Paso, Texas.

■ ■ We must keep that bond of love, that communion of love between us, and share that in preaching the Gospel of salvation.”

**BECAUSE OF THIS FLAME**

BY JAMES OLOFSON | 3T, DIOCESE OF JOLIET

I walk in, and there isn't much to see,  
It's dark, but I know the space around me.

I'm here every day, and it generally looks the same,  
I come in, and hear You calling my name.

But even when I'm there, and no one can be found,  
I look to the front and see a little flame bouncing around.

It isn't just any fire, meant to give some light,  
No, it is so much more. By it, the blind regain their sight.

The candle stays lit, through the night and through the day,  
So that at any time, I can come in and pray.

And now, as I sit in silence, in this hallowed place,  
The light from this candle reveals Your Holy Face.

It is Your Face, O Lord, that I seek, Hide not Your Face,  
As I come into your presence, fill me with Your grace.

I see that little light, and my heart feels such peace,  
All the worries go away, all of my troubles cease.

Because of this flame, I am sure that I am known,  
Because of this flame, I am never alone.

*James Olofson is a third-year theologian studying for the Diocese of Joliet, Ill.*





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**1. Arbor Vitae Hypercubus** (colored pencil) By Jay Suero, 2T/Archdiocese of Atlanta.

**2. At the Site of the Baptism** (photograph) by Louis Cunningham, 3T/Archdiocese of Seattle.

**3. Roman Ruins at Cesarea Maritima** (photograph) by Louis Cunningham, 3T/Archdiocese of Seattle.

**4. The Transfiguration (The Words of Peter)** (photograph) by Louis Cunningham, 3T/Archdiocese of Seattle.

**5. At the Site of the Resurrection** (photograph) by Louis Cunningham, 3T/Archdiocese of Seattle.

**6. Studies of Crusader Crosses at the Manger** (photograph) by Louis Cunningham, 3T/Archdiocese of Seattle.

# BUILDING A FIRST-CLASS SEMINARY INSIDE AND OUT

The McEssy Theological Research Center, bottom left, was completed in 2004 and is named after donors Bill and Lois McEssy.

## WILLIAM H. MCESSY



BY HAYDEN CHARLES | 1T, DIOCESE OF WICHITA

**One of the things** I continue to notice about most, if not all, of the best priests I know is that they don't do what they do alone. Whether it is the secretary who works with my vocation director, the ladies at the front desk of my home parish, or the volunteers I have encountered at the parish I am assigned to here in the Archdiocese of Chicago, at all of these places there is a team with whom the priest works in order to best serve the community. Mundelein Seminary is no exception. Between the grounds crew keeping our campus beautiful, the security team keeping it safe, the librarians giving us many materials and a place for study, the kitchen staff preparing our meals, and many more examples, there are countless men and women working to keep Mundelein up and running day in and day out.

One of the most important groups of these people — whose behind-the-scenes work often goes unnoticed — is Mundelein's Board of Advisors, who work closely with the rector and his administration to help Mundelein grow and develop to serve the Church more perfectly. And for the last 10 years, this board has been faithfully chaired by a man who has influenced Mundelein in many ways — so many, in fact, that it is difficult to keep track of everything he has done.

This man is William H. McEssy, who, before stepping down late last year after 15 years in total as a member of the board, worked closely with four Mundelein rectors — Monsignor John Canary, Monsignor Dennis Lyle, Bishop Robert Barron and Father John Kartje. Trained





The Saint Mary of the Lake Garden stretches from the DIME Statue in front of the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception to the Belvedere overlooking the lake. It was made possible thanks to a donation from Bill and Lois McEssy.



Father John Kartje, rector/president of Mundelein Seminary; Bill McEssy; Lois McEssy; and Cardinal Blase Cupich, archbishop of Chicago, pose after a dinner honoring Bill McEssy's service to the seminary Board of Advisors.

as a lawyer, Bill McEssy opened his first McDonald's franchise in 1980 and today operates more than 40 locations in Illinois and Wisconsin.

If his name sounds familiar, it may be because many places on Mundelein's campus bear his name, as well as that of his wife, Lois. Foremost, perhaps, is the McEssy Theological Resource Center, the addition to the Feehan Memorial Library completed in 2004. But that is certainly not the McEssys' only contribution. The monuments at each entrance that greet each visitor to Mundelein, the trees they see lining Principal Avenue on their way in, the Little Flower Garden between the library and the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, the stately Saint Mary of the Lake Gardens which adorn the Belvedere overlooking the lake, and the adjacent Our Lady of Lourdes Grotto are among the numerous projects with which the McEssys have been involved. The McEssys have also supported the academics of Mundelein, as well. The McEssy Distinguished Visiting Professor of Biblical Theology and the New Evangelization position was created under the tenure of then-rector Bishop Robert Barron, and it has been occupied since its inception by Dr. Scott Hahn. It is clear that in its work of forming future priests, Mundelein has had a huge asset in Bill McEssy.

McEssy was first introduced to the seminary by a friend after living in nearby Lake Forest, Ill., for about 15 years, and said he immediately fell in love with

the place. His involvement with the seminary and his support of priestly formation began in earnest after a tour from Monsignor Canary, who was serving as rector at the time.

"I've always been interested in producing not just good priests, but outstanding priests," he said. This interest motivated him to sit in on classes and, after being impressed with the faculty and seminarians at Mundelein, he decided to volunteer his time and contribute financially. His goal from the beginning? "To make Mundelein Seminary the most outstanding seminary in the country — which it is," he said.

Confident that, on the inside, Mundelein was first-class, McEssy said he wanted to make sure it appeared first-class on the outside as well, drawing people in from the moment they entered the campus. As evidenced by the one thing almost every person says upon visiting — "It's beautiful, isn't it?" — he appears to have succeeded.

For seminarians like me, McEssy's contributions serve as a great example in a number of ways. His commitment to make Mundelein the best it can be is a model that future pastors will strive to follow at their future parishes. And when we become discouraged, McEssy is a great example of perseverance, taking on project after project to showcase the Church's inner and outer beauty.

Despite recently stepping down as chairman of Mundelein's Board of Advi-

sors, McEssy said he doesn't intend to stop contributing in whatever ways he can. He is already working with Monsignor Canary, now director of the Cardinal Stritch Retreat House adjacent to the seminary campus, on plans to renovate the popular retreat center, and he said he intends to set up a trust fund through which campus projects could continue to be proposed and carried out in his name.

"My biggest hope is that this will be ongoing," McEssy said. "I don't ever intend to walk away from Mundelein Seminary, either during my lifetime or after."

And for that, Mundelein Seminary is very grateful, as his continued support allows many young men the opportunity to be formed in, as he said, the best seminary environment in the country. His legacy is felt not only throughout Mundelein's beautiful campus, but also across the country in the hundreds of Mundelein graduates who serve the Church in a great variety of places and parishes. It is every seminarian's desire to be formed as an outstanding priest, and the commitment of people like

Bill McEssy to help us on our way is essential in this process. He has touched many during his time serving Mundelein, and he will continue to do so thanks to his unfailing commitment to making Mundelein Seminary the best it can be — inside and out. ■



**HAYDEN CHARLES** is a first-year theologian studying for the Diocese of Wichita, Kan.



**One holy, Catholic Church. A global Church.** Those were some of the phrases that stuck with me as I made my way through the RCIA program nearly seven years ago this Easter. I was struck by the awareness that, when I became an active member of the Catholic Church, I was connected to people in so many ways around the world.

BY RYAN K. BUTTS | VICE PRESIDENT, OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL ADVANCEMENT

Either as parishioners or as those we all help and serve, we are a global community, together in Christ. And an important mission in our work together is forming the next generation of parish priests. Ensuring that these men have everything they need to be successful parish priests is vital.

What makes Mundelein unique is the diversity of our student body. We have seminarians from 35 dioceses from around the world whose bishops have entrusted the formation of their future parish priests to the staff and faculty of Mundelein Seminary.

But what about dioceses where the cost of Mundelein's formation would be prohibitively high? For mission dioceses in the United States — those 90 dioceses across the country identified as isolated, financially under-resourced, or both — Mundelein has long-partnered with the Catholic Extension Society to provide full scholarships for seminarians to pursue the advanced licentiate in sacred theology (S.T.L.) degree as part of their initial formation. Catholic Extension provides a \$25,000 scholarship, and Mundelein Seminary matches that scholarship, both through generous donor support.

Father Adam Droll, a priest of the

Diocese of San Angelo, Texas, who earned his S.T.L. last year thanks to the Catholic Extension scholarship, explains its impact: "In our diocesan budget, the largest line item is for seminarian education," he said. "We would hate to turn down any seminarians simply because we did not have the money for their formation, and these scholarships have allowed our diocese to do things we would otherwise be unable to do, including my own seminarian education at Mundelein. I can say, without a doubt, that if my diocese was not offered a scholarship, I would never have gone to Mundelein Seminary and met the extraordinary men there who are studying from around the globe for the priesthood."

Father Ryan Rojo, also a priest of the Diocese of San Angelo who likewise earned his S.T.L. last year added, "These scholarships enabled me to complete my S.T.L. in sacramental and liturgical theology. With this background, I have been able to assist our bishop in the planning and execution of diocesan liturgies and events. It was not only a gift to me, but a gift to the entire Church of West Texas. I am forever grateful."

This year, we are broadening the availability of scholarships to include any potential seminarians from mission dioceses,

not just those pursuing the S.T.L. degree. Mundelein Seminary has partnered with Catholic Extension once again to offer a new scholarship for men from mission dioceses to complete the master of divinity (M.Div.) degree, the typical degree earned by Mundelein seminarians during their initial formation here. Seminarians who receive this scholarship will have the unique opportunity to be formed for priestly ministry without putting additional financial strain on their dioceses, but also to share life with other seminarians from across the country and around the world.

Mundelein's new partnership with Catholic Extension covers \$10,000 per year for a seminarian from a mission diocese through his four years of theology studies, for a total scholarship of \$40,000 per seminarian. This scholarship

will cover almost 30% of the current tuition, room and board, and fees of the student's seminary education, providing the quality of Mundelein Seminary for a reduced cost for those dioceses. It is a way for us to serve the global Church through our mission of forming parish priests. ■



**RYAN K. BUTTS**  
is the vice president of the Office of Institutional Advancement.

# A SAINT ON CAMPUS

*Many holy people* have lived at and visited the beautiful campus of Mundelein Seminary throughout the years. But recent research has indicated that among these was one canonized saint, a martyr from Chihuahua, Mexico, with ties to El Paso, Texas.



*Flowers decorate a niche dedicated to San Pedro Maldonado at his shrine outside of Santa Isabel, Chihuahua.*



*The parish church where San Pedro Maldonado ministered before his martyrdom. His image is in stained glass above the door.*

BY IVÁN MONTELONGO | 2T, DIOCESE OF EL PASO

Pedro de Jesús Maldonado was born in 1892 in Chihuahua City, the state capital that sits about 200 miles south of the U.S. border. Upon entering the seminary there when he was 17 years old, he exhibited a great devotion to the Eucharist. But because of the religious persecution that broke out after the Mexican Revolution — which culminated in the Cristero War during which the government seized Church property, harassed clergy, and all but banned Catholic worship — Pedro was forced to leave seminary, though he was eventually able to complete his priestly studies.

Because his bishop was sick, Pedro had to travel to El Paso, Texas, to be ordained. It was in El Paso's just-completed Cathedral of St. Patrick where he was ordained a priest on January 25, 1918. He celebrated his first Mass in Chihuahua on February 11, 1918, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, to whom he had a great devotion. Then, he was sent to the small town of Santa Isabel, where he served during the most difficult years of the persecution.

Father Maldonado's devotion to the Eucharist was well known in Chihuahua, and he spoke often of his desire to receive the Eucharist before dying. Yet, even though

his life was constantly endangered, he did not fear death. Indeed, though his bishop sent him to El Paso at one point when the authorities were seeking him out to kill him, Father Maldonado insisted on not abandoning his people. So, he returned to Santa Isabel and continued in his ministry.

But El Paso was not the only place in the United States that Father Maldonado visited. In 1926, his love for the Eucharist brought him to the International Eucharistic Congress in Chicago, an event which culminated in an enormous outdoor Mass and Eucharistic procession on the Mundelein Seminary campus. His biographer Javier Contreras, in the book *El Mártir de Chihuahua*, writes that he even acquired an organ in Chicago, which he intended to take back to Santa Isabel, but only made it as far as El Paso. Though research continues to explicitly place him on Mundelein's campus, it is very likely that he was among the more than 500,000 people who celebrated the congress' final Mass here on June 24, 1926. He probably looked with amazement at the beautiful grounds of the campus before returning to Mexico.

Father Maldonado continued to serve the people of Santa Isabel, catechizing the youth of the area and travelling to serve

the indigenous Tarahumaras of the surrounding countryside, despite constant threats of violence and the martyrdom of many priests elsewhere in Mexico. But, on Ash Wednesday of 1937, the authorities in Santa Isabel felt emboldened, and they apprehended him. On their way to the town hall, Maldonado was savagely beaten, fracturing his skull and dislodging his left eye. When the pyx he was carrying fell to the ground, his attackers shoved the Eucharist into his mouth in a sign of mockery. Little did they know that they were fulfilling Maldonado's dying wish. He died of his injuries the next day, February 11, 1937, the 19th anniversary of his first Mass as

a priest and the feast day of his beloved Lady of Lourdes.

Maldonado was canonized by St. John Paul II in 2000 together with 24 other Mexican martyrs, who the church normally celebrates liturgically on May 21. May we seminarians at Mundelein become faithful and devoted priests just like our saintly visitor. San Pedro Maldonado, pray for us! ■



**IVÁN MONTELONGO**

*is a second-year theologian studying for the Diocese of El Paso, Texas.*

## Upcoming Events

**JUNE 12–JULY 21** Summer Term

**JUNE 25–30** Summer Scripture Seminar —  
“Revelation: A Book of Hope in Troubled Times”

**JULY 6** Alumni Golf Outing

**AUG. 13–18** Orientation

**AUG. 20–25** Beginning of Year Seminarian Retreat

**AUG. 28** Fall Semester Begins

**AUG. 30** Mass of the Holy Spirit, Declaration  
of Candidacy

**SEPT. 15–17** Family Weekend

**SEPT. 21** Rector’s Classic Golf Outing

**SEPT. 30–OCT. 8** Mid-Semester Break

**OCT. 11** Mass for the Newly Ordained

**OCT. 22** Rector’s Fall Mass

**OCT. 25** Installation of Acolytes

**NOV. 18–26** Thanksgiving Break

**DEC. 3** Donor Advent Retreat

**DEC. 3** Annual Christmas Concert

**DEC. 19** Fall Semester Ends

**JAN. 10, 2018** Spring Semester Begins

*For updates and more information about  
upcoming events, visit [www.usml.edu/events](http://www.usml.edu/events)*



*The Most Rev. R. Daniel Conlon, bishop of Joliet, Ill., installs Sam Schultz, a first-year theologian studying for the Diocese of Green Bay, Wis., to the ministry of lector Feb. 1.*

JOSHUA LINK/2T, DUBUQUE

### ■ INSTITUTION OF LECTOR

The Most Rev. R. Daniel Conlon, bishop of Joliet, Ill., and the Most Rev. Joseph Naumann, archbishop of Kansas City, Kan., presided at a Mass on Feb. 1 where 30 seminarians from 11 dioceses were installed as lectors. The significance of the ministry was explained to the candidates during the rite: “As readers and bearers of God’s word, you will assist [with the mission of preaching the Gospel to the whole world], and so take on a special office within the Christian community; you will be given a responsibility in the service of the faith.... You will proclaim that word in the liturgical assembly, instruct children and adults in the faith and prepare them to receive the sacraments worthily. You will bring the message of salvation to those who have not yet received it.”



*Dr. Christian Smith delivers a keynote address March 17 during this year’s Albert Meyer Lecture Series.*

### ■ MEYER LECTURE

Dr. Christian Smith, director of the Center for the Study of Religion and Society and the Center for Social Research at the University of Notre Dame, delivered two keynote lectures during this year’s Albert Cardinal Meyer Lecture Series held March 17–18. His first, “Why Scientists Playing Amateur Atheology Fail,” was responded to by Father John Kartje, Mundelein’s rector/president. Smith’s second lecture, “Just How Good Without God Are People Justified in Being?”, was responded to by Dr. Melanie Barrett, chairperson and assistant professor in the Department of Moral Theology.



*Dr. Matthew Levering (left) teaches an advanced elective course last fall.*

### ■ VERITAS MEDAL

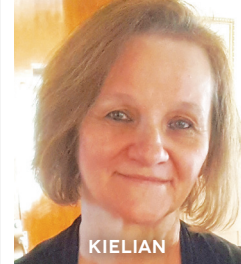
Dr. Matthew Levering, who holds the James N. and Mary D. Perry Jr. Chair of Theology at USML, received in January the Veritas Medal from the Aquinas Center for Theological Renewal at Ave Maria University in Florida. The award recognizes those who have instantiated, in their lives and work, the integration of faith and reason. Levering is the author of more than 20 books and, before coming to USML, taught at Ave Maria, the University of Notre Dame and the University of Dayton.



SANCHEZ



MADDOX



KIELIAN



FLETCHER

### ■ RETIREMENTS

The USML community bid farewell to four longtime employees recently, whose combined service at Mundelein totaled more than 86 years: Josephine Maddox, who worked in the finance office, retired after 31 years of service; Esther Sanchez, of the housekeeping department, after 23 years; Anna Kielian, of the Feehan Memorial Library, after 17 years; and Diana Fletcher, of the Office for Institutional Advancement, after 15 years. “We wish them all the best after so many dedicated years of service to our mission,” said Jim Heinen, USML’s chief operating officer.



*Father Elmer Romero, director of Hispanic Ministry at Mundelein, speaks with guests of the Segundo Encuentro Pastoral Hispano on April 1.*

### ■ ENCUESTRO

More than 300 visitors from around the Chicago area gathered on campus April 1 for the *Segundo Encuentro Pastoral Hispano: Encuentro con Nuestros Futuros Pastores* (2nd Hispanic Pastoral Encounter: Encountering Our Future Pastors) event, presented by Mundelein’s Hispanic Ministry. Blessed with beautiful weather, guests enjoyed seminarian-led tours of the campus, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception, vespers, and a banquet in the newly refurbished dining hall. The keynote speaker was Dr. Aaron Dominguez, dean of the School of Arts and Sciences at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., whose primary research is in using particle colliders to search for new physics. In his talk, he gave witness to the fact that faith and science do not contradict each other, but rather both serve humankind.

### ■ IN MEMORIAM



Deacon Jim Cozzo Jr., an administrative assistant in the Institute of Diaconal Studies, died Feb. 4 after a battle with liver cancer. He was 69

years old. Ordained a deacon in 2002, he served at St. Eugene’s Parish in Chicago. “Deacon Jim was many things — a model of faith, a brave soldier, a true friend — and he remained devoted to his calling to the last,” said Deacon Bob Puhala, director of IDS. “He witnessed selfless love, remained anchored in prayer, and encouraged others always. He lived a powerful life and fostered rich community, and he’ll be sorely missed.”

**DODGEBALL TOURNAMENT**

Seminarians got the chance to throw things at each other — and their professors! — in a morally permissible way during the second annual seminary Dodgeball Tournament on Dec. 2, sponsored by Cam 1-Center. Each cam, the Pre-Theology I class, and the fearsome faculty team, faced off in thrilling matches. In the end, Cam 2-North walked away with the coveted trophy.



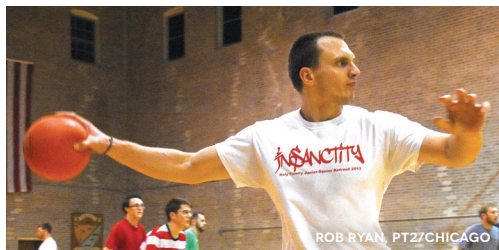
ROB RYAN, PT2/CHICAGO

Father Brian Welter, vice rector for formation, looks for a target against a team of seminarians while playing on the faculty team.



ROB RYAN, PT2/CHICAGO

Noah Thelan, a second-year pre-theologian studying for the Diocese of Grand Rapids, Mich., prepares to defend himself from a barrage from the other team.



ROB RYAN, PT2/CHICAGO

Michael Bremer, a third-year theologian studying for the Archdiocese of Atlanta, readies to fire a shot during the 2nd Annual Dodgeball Tournament on Dec. 2. Bremer's team, from Cam 2-North, won the championship.



Joe Wagner, a second-year pre-theologian studying for the Archdiocese of Atlanta, makes a move against St. Meinrad Seminary during the championship game of the Father Pat O'Malley Invitational on Feb. 5.

JOSHUA LINK/2T\_DUBUQUE

**O'MALLEY INVITATIONAL**

Fifteen seminaries from as far away as Oregon and Florida participated in the 17th Annual Father Pat O'Malley Invitational basketball tournament Feb. 3–5, sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. St. Meinrad Seminary in Indiana took first place; Mundelein Seminary took second; and Our Lady of Guadalupe Seminary in Denton, Neb., took third. Next year's tournament is scheduled for Jan. 26–28, 2018. Archived video and photos from the tournament can be found at [usml.edu/usmltournament](http://usml.edu/usmltournament).



**ALUMNI/SEMINARIAN GAME**

Ten graduates of Mundelein Seminary — including six priests, three Franciscans of the Eucharist sisters and associate academic dean Dr. Chris McAtee — battled 14 current seminarians during the 10th Annual Alumni Basketball Game on Jan. 20. Though the current students beat the alumni 50–37, the game was close throughout.

# LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF MI GENTE

BY MICHAEL L. LEWIS | 2T, DIOCESE OF EL PASO

*They have a name for people like me.* Here on the U.S.–Mexican border, Hispanics who can't speak Spanish are called *pochos*. And despite my attempts as a kid — moving to Germany as an Army brat didn't help — I just couldn't master the mother tongue of my *abuelita* tried to *ayudarme*.

Though I'd picked up enough to call myself “conversant,” I still didn't feel comfortable enough to truly carry on a conversation with a native speaker. The difference between *ser* and *estar*, *conocer* vs. *saber*, when a noun is masculine or feminine, and whatever the subjunctive is supposed to do always tripped me up and sapped me of any burgeoning confidence. In the parish internship I completed in El Paso, before starting at Mundelein, I managed to stumble through Scripture reflections and after-Mass greetings with a collection of memorized Spanish phrases.

But I was living up to my label. This *pochito seminarista* was friendly enough, but not someone you could really pour out your heart to *en español*.

And that's a liability for a seminarian in my diocese, where a recent census found that twice as many people attend Mass in Spanish than in English. That's why this semester, I've been in an alternative internship assignment — immersion — without leaving home. With tutors guiding me through grammar, vocabulary and syntax, and a warm Spanish-speaking parish community with which to pray,

teach and minister, I've been able to grow as both a Spanish-speaker and as a son of both the United States and Mexico. Along the way, I've discovered:

- Monolingual Spanish-speakers have a near-infinite amount of patience for *gringo*-looking seminarians attempting to speak their language. They know that you're trying, and they couldn't appreciate it more.
- An embarrassed seminarian is never *un seminarista embarazada*.
- The pedagogical value of Spanish-dubbed '90s sitcom reruns and episodes of the *telenovela* *La Rosa de Guadalupe* — all available on Netflix — is unmatched.
- There really aren't any borders here. Our parishioners come from Mexico, New Mexico, the other side of town and the other side of the tracks. The one thing everyone has in common is one faith, and one *Madre*.

Indeed, my whole language adventure achieved clarity of purpose during a visit to Mexico City during spring break. There, in between visits with family and with centuries-old manuscripts, I made a personal pilgrimage to see *La Virgencita*.

In her enormous basilica, underneath her miraculous image, I realized that Our Lady in 1531 was in a similar situation I am. The Spanish at the time hadn't had much luck evangelizing the native people, largely because most didn't want to minister in the native language. Only because *La Virgen* spoke the native tongue, Nahuatl, could she bring so many millions to know her son.

Following her example, I've redoubled my efforts to speak the first language of so many of our parishioners. If my goal is to bring people closer to Christ, I can only do that if I'm meeting the people where they are. And for many of them, the place where they are is actually *el lugar donde están*.

May *La Virgen* continue to guide us and our ministry. And may she help us translate God's love to the language of people's hearts. ■



**MICHAEL L. LEWIS**

is a second-year theologian studying for the Diocese of El Paso, Texas.



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