

conversatio

SUMMER/FALL 2010



New Orleans Archbishop Gregory Aymond
A Leading Voice For Lay Ecclesial Ministry



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Victor Klimoski

Contributors

Dr. William Cahoy

Abbot John Klassen, OSB

Bernard Evans

Charles Bobertz

Photography

Rosemary Washington

CSBSJU Communications

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Comments, questions,
corrections, story ideas?

Victor Klimoski

vklimoski@csbsju.edu

(320)363-3560

ON THE COVER

Archbishop Aymond attended this summer's planning meeting for the National Symposium on Lay Ecclesial Ministry to be held in Collegeville in August, 2011. He represented the USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth that oversees matters related to lay ministry. Archbishop Aymond was a capstone speaker at the first national symposium in 2007.

Contents

- 4 **Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord:**
Lay Ministry Comes of Age
- 6 **From the Dean**
*The Gulf Oil Spill, Clergy Sexual Abuse and
Theological Education*
- 7 **From the Abbot**
- 8 **Theology Day:**
Examining Issues and Ideas of Our Times
- 10 **Building A Community of Learning
Student by Student**
- 11 **New Blog Energizes Conversations On Liturgy**
- 12 **The Monastic Institute:**
Exploring an Ancient Tradition for Twenty-Five Years
- 14 **Forming Scholars for the Church**
- 15 **Rector's Report**
- 16 **Safe Food: A Matter of Faith**
- 17 **Spring/Summer 2010 School of Theology-Seminary Graduates**
- 18 **Faculty/Staff Notes**
- 22 **From the Director of Development**
- 23 **Milestones**

Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord:

Lay Ministry Comes of Age



(L-R) Bishop Michael Hoeppner, Lynda Robitaille, Zeni Fox, Charles Bobertz, William Cahoy, Edward Hahnenberg, Archbishop Aymond, Graziano Marcheschi, Susan Wood, SCL, Bishop Blaise Cupich, and Hosffman Ospino

When the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued its pastoral letter on lay ministry in 2005, it was big news. *Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord* is an historically significant effort to describe the place of lay ministry in the leadership structures of the church. The letter drew on the experience of the past fifty years as dramatic numbers of women and men joined priests and deacons in professional service as pastoral ministers. The danger with pastoral letters, however, is that as time passes, daily demands overwhelm even the best of ideas. Recognizing that potential danger, the School of Theology-Seminary decided to become a catalyst for making *Co-Workers* a vital resource for local dioceses, colleges and universities, seminaries, and other Catholic organizations as they prepare, support, and encourage lay ecclesial ministers.

This is more than a theoretical task. While the services of lay ministers are integral to how the church in the United States ministers, bishops, clergy, and the laity still lack clarity about how the lay professional minister fits into church structures. As *Co-Workers* was being debated at the USCCB annual conference, for instance, several bishops expressed their fears about how a focus on lay ministry might detract from the ordained. That sentiment did not win out, but lay ministers often feel they are seen simply as the clergy's helpers in a time of a priest shortage or as people for whom church work is a temporary source of employment on the way to secular jobs. Studies of those who identify themselves as lay ministers report consistently that they believe they have a call from God to direct their gifts toward the

church's proclamation of the Good News. *Co-Workers* recognizes that reality and offers a framework for exploring the vocational stature and importance of lay ministry.

Three years ago, Saint John's convened a national symposium of pastors, lay ecclesial ministers, and representatives from eighteen Catholic colleges and organizations to study *Co-Workers* as the bishops had requested when they first issued their pastoral letter. At the end of the 2007 Symposium that drew over 200 people from across the country, each participating organization or college identified a specific, concrete action it would take to advance lay ecclesial ministry. Saint John's committed to host a second symposium in 2011 and to prepare for it by convening the Collegeville Seminar made up of seven theologians and three bishops: Archbishop Gregory Aymond of New Orleans, Bishop Blaise Cupich of Spokane, and Bishop Michael Hoeppner of Crookston. The seven essays that emerged from the Seminar addressed three major themes: the vocational nature of lay ecclesial ministry, formal authorization by the church of its ministries, and the theological and structural importance of ritualizing authorization.

In early August, representatives from the thirty-nine co-sponsoring Catholic organizations and two USCCB collaborating committees (Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth and Cultural Diversity) met in Collegeville to discuss the research and to generate questions that will guide the 2011 Symposium. Based on work at the planning confer-

ence, the essays will be revised and published next summer as part of the Symposium.

The Vocation to Lay Ecclesial Ministry

Professors Edward P. Hahnenberg of Xavier University in Cincinnati, Hosffman Ospino of Boston College, and Charles Bobertz of the SOT•Sem have all examined aspects of lay ministry as vocation. In his essay, Hahnenberg reiterates the fact that for centuries within Roman Catholicism, vocation generally meant the call to be a priest or a nun in a permanent, ecclesiastically-approved state of life. “Lay ecclesial ministry does not seem to fit neatly within such a definition,” he writes. “It is not a state of life. It does not entail the same degree of permanence or totality that has been historically associated with clerical or religious vocations. Still, these elements are not entirely absent. Lay ecclesial ministers do make a significant commitment to ministry, and they enact that commitment in concrete ways (by pursuing education on their own and at their own expense, by moving a family to take a new position, by planning programs or projects that extend into the future, and so on).” Hahnenberg favors moving away from a static notion of vocation as an individual experience toward a more dynamic and relational notion of God’s call coming in and through the whole church community. “It avoids reducing authorization to the institutional recognition of an individual charism, locating both the institution and the individual within the deeper theological context of church communion and mission.”

In an effort to strengthen the biblical basis for lay ecclesial ministry – something he claims has not been done sufficiently to this point – Charles Bobertz explores the insights gained from a close study of First Corinthians. In the familiar chapter on the body of Christ and the diversity of gifts (I Cor 12), Bobertz identifies a three-fold emphasis: the one Spirit, articulated in different ecclesial roles, to serve the common good. “Lay ecclesial ministry in the Catholic Church is the contemporary and continual exercise of spiritual gifts first experienced in the earliest Christian churches. Paul’s writings, especially in First Corinthians, provide timeless teaching about how those gifts are to be exercised in a church that claims to be, and is in fact, the body of Christ animated by the one cruciform Spirit.” Bobertz goes on to note that what we learn from the church at Corinth is that status does not pertain to any particular role or spiritual function but to their selfless exercise on behalf of the church and the whole of creation. The emphasis on the common good means that at any particular time in history certain spiritual gifts might diminish while others increase

in importance according to the needs of the community. What does not – must not – change, according to Bobertz, is the cruciform attitude with which any roles are performed and any gifts exercised. He points to the hymn on love that opens I Cor. 13 as capturing the essence of that attitude.

To this discussion of vocation, Hosffman Ospino adds the experience of directors of religious education (DRE) who for the past forty years have been sorting out their role in the educational ministry of the church. Four factors shaped the development of the Catholic DRE as a professional/minister. First, the Second Vatican Council provided a new language to talk about the role of the laity in the life of the Church. Second, lay women and men joined former nuns, priests, and seminarians working in parishes and other ecclesial institutions as DREs. They soon realized that there was an urgent need for language to talk about ministry uncoupled from the experience of priests and vowed religious. Third, Catholic universities developed graduate programs of religious education that attracted hundreds of students. Fourth, by the middle of the twentieth century the two major efforts through which the Church advanced its educational mission in the United States –

continued on page 20

Looking back over the years, I recognize how God has blessed me with abundant gifts and formed me for liturgical ministry since I was a child – from playing Mass with my grandfather to serving as organist starting in fourth grade. Over the years I’ve been privileged to worship with faithful Catholics around the world from Indiana to Ireland. It is hardly surprising, then, that I discerned that I was called to serve God as a liturgical minister. My call is a continual learning to grow in love for God and for the people whom I’m serving. There is a great deal of fear, pain, and confusion in the Church and in the world today, causing profound questioning about where God is amidst the hurting. Rooted in baptism, I am called to grow more deeply in love with God so that I can share God’s love with joy and hope. I trust that God will work through me so that all who gather for liturgy may recognize and encounter God’s love in the Word, the Eucharist, and one another.

Paul Radkowski,
MA Liturgical Studies, 2007

Frederick Buechner once wrote, “The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.” I firmly believe with Buechner that God calls us to a life of richness and joy. What brings me deep gladness? What am I most passionate about? Where are my strengths? More than anything, I love being with and talking to people... about their joys, their sorrows, about what makes them thrive. I also deeply like writing and speaking. They are powerful ways to share with others and to call them to consider new ways of being in and seeing the world. Finally, I am passionate about my faith, about looking for the divine in all people and all things and calling others to do the same. Where do these areas of my deep gladness intersect with the world’s deep hunger? I think people are hungry for meaningful relationships. More than that, I think people are hungry for a deeper Truth, for a way of existence that is life-giving for them. I am blessed to help people find meaning in their lives and perhaps even discover their own calling.

Nikki Streit, MA,
Pastoral Ministry, 2007
Senior High Ministry Coordinator,
St. Therese Parish, Deephaven MN



From the Dean

The Gulf Oil Spill, Clergy Sexual Abuse and Theological Education

“The gunk just keeps coming!” say the residents of the Gulf Coast about the oil fouling their waters and washing up on shore. It expresses as well the way many of us feel about the continuing world-wide scandal of sexual abuse by priests.

As I write this, the well in the Gulf is capped and finally contained. From the start we knew we could not just skim the gunk off the surface or sop it up when it came ashore. We needed to probe beneath the surface to identify the cause. But capping the well is not the end. The toxic effects on the ecosystem of the Gulf and on the lives of those who depend on it will be with us for years, if not decades. We need to persist in the less dramatic but no less significant work of understanding why this happened to minimize the chances of it happening again.

The analogies of this disaster to that of sexual abuse by priests and religious are illuminating. Abuse is a toxic mess fouling the entire ecosystem of the Catholic Church and its place in society. Indications are that we have significantly reduced the number of new cases, particularly by repeat offenders. This is good news – hard won and not to be overlooked. As with capping the well, however, it does not mean we’re done. The toxic effects of abuse and the subsequent handling of it will continue for decades or more in the lives of those abused and their families and, secondarily, in the life of the church. It has deepened distrust of the institution and weakened the credibility and moral authority of the church and its leadership. Many, particularly the young, are simply walking away.

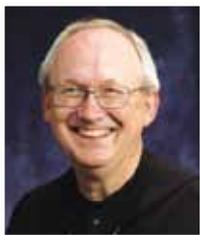
What does this mean for us as a theological school? It’s easy in circumstances like these to think of what everyone else should do. The greater challenge is what we ourselves can actually do. The School of Theology•Seminary, as part of the wider Saint John’s community, must begin and end with transparency about the abuse committed by members of our community. We must be vigilant in our responsibility to those we have hurt and to the church and society. Specifically as a school, we need to provide quality preparation of priests and others for ministry with explicit attention to issues of boundaries, psycho-sexual development, and reporting expectations.

But that is not all. As with the blowout in the Gulf, we need to look beneath the surface to understand the root causes of the problem and act to minimize its reoccurrence. Educational institutions like ours do that by asking why. The answers are many but I would like to highlight one: power. People who study sexual abuse tell us that it is more about power than about sex: the power to make another submit to one’s desires. The handling of abuse by those in authority is also about power and how it is exercised.

This is not to suggest that power is something evil. Here good theology is critically important. God is a God of power and that is good. Not only that, but God invites us to share in this power as the people of God. But we need to learn from God the true nature of power. We assume power is power over – the power to make nature, other people, and perhaps even God do what we want. While this may be how the world understands power – and may be the kind of power we want – it is not how God exercises power, particularly in Christ. God’s power is more power with. God’s power is not competitive, not a zero sum game in which the more you have the less I have. God does not hoard power but shares it. The kingdom to which God calls us and for which God equips us with the power of the Spirit is a kingdom of empowerment – empowerment of the people of God to share in the work of God in the world. This is the kingdom of which the church is to be the sacrament.

If sexual abuse by clergy is at least in part about a misuse of power, the antidote must include a proper understanding, practice and institutionalization of the theology of power. This is something theological schools can and must contribute to the life of the church. It is something Saint John’s and the School of Theology•Seminary have been working at for almost a century. After all, what is the theological core of our work in liturgical renewal but empowerment? It is about empowering the baptized to move from being passive observers of the work of others (the priest) in the liturgy to active participants with the priest. Likewise, our admission of women to graduate theological study in 1958 – one of the first Catholic theologates to do so—is about empowerment. The power inherent in education and ministry is to be shared, not hoarded. From this grew our commitment to educating women and men, ordained and lay together, in mutual respect and support as preparation for serving together for the good of the church. This spirit of empowerment and collaboration continues today in our work to help advance the church’s theology and understanding of lay ecclesial ministry described in this issue.

Our conviction is that the church will be more truly and faithfully the church if we exercise the power entrusted to us as service rather than privilege, as strengthened by being shared rather than hoarded. Seen in this light, our work on lay ecclesial ministry is not only about the functions and offices of ministry in the church, it is about building a culture of mutual empowerment and accountability in Christ’s church. If the gunk of clergy sexual abuse and our official responses to it are rooted in an abuse of power, fostering this culture of empowerment will help us all resist that ancient, deep temptation and help stop the gunk at its source.



From the Abbot

Reflections on Matthew 14.13-21

From the homily at the opening Mass of the planning conference for the 2011 Symposium on Lay Ecclesial Ministry

Because it is so understated, it is easy to miss the significance for Jesus of the brutal murder of John the Baptist. John is a cousin to Jesus but more than that. He is clearly a mentor to him. The murder of John committed on a whim by Herod reminds Jesus of how much danger he is in. So with his disciples he goes into the desert, a quiet place to gather himself. But there is not rest even there. The crowds follow him looking for leadership, for healing, and for spiritual nourishment.

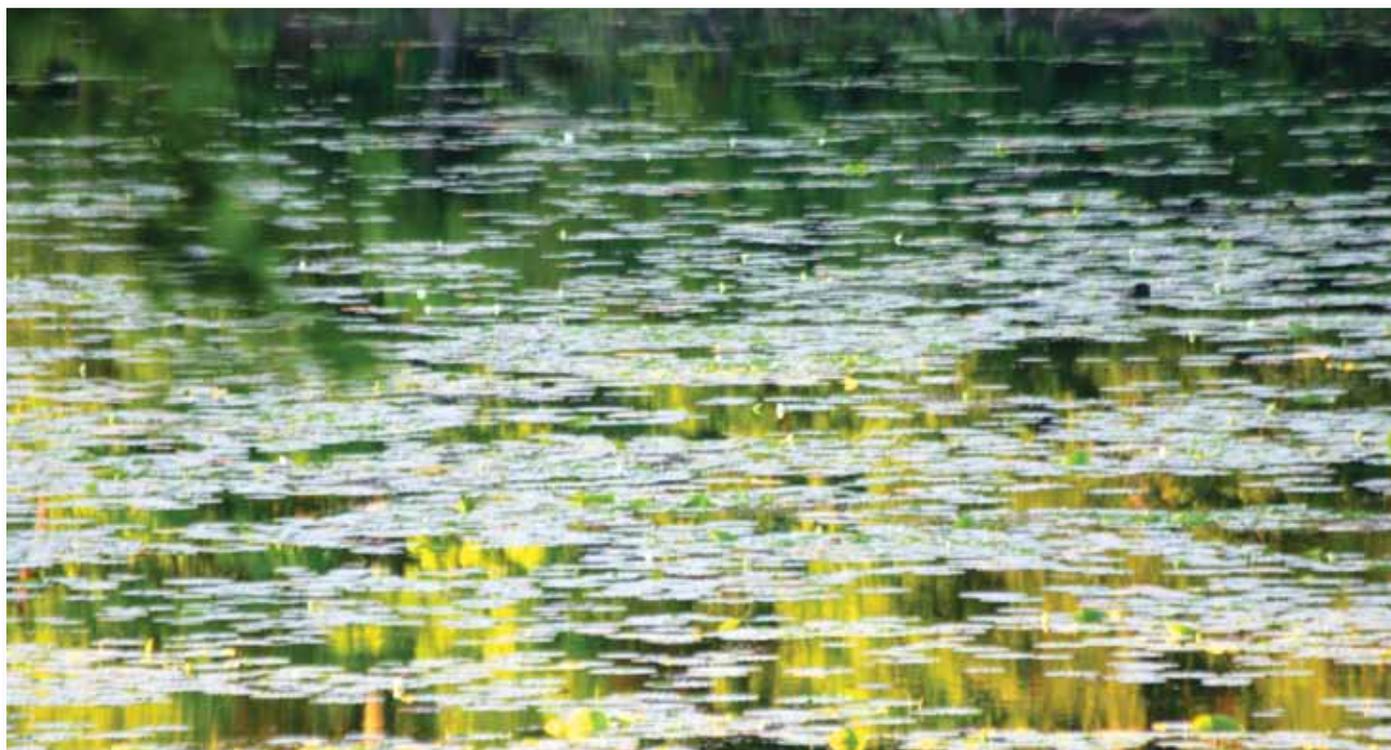
The juxtaposition of Herod's banquet and Jesus' banquet is instructive. At Herod's banquet there is sumptuous feasting, pride and arrogance, scheming, and ultimately murder. It takes place in a royal court. At Jesus' banquet there is bread and fish, healing, trust, and sharing. It takes place in a deserted place, similar to the wilderness in which Israel was once nourished with manna. Any Christian in Matthew's community would recognize the Eucharistic overtones: taking, blessing, breaking, and giving.

In 2007 Saint John's sponsored a conference entitled "The Art of Creating Community." One of the speakers argued that an important principle for creating community emerges as a community faces a problem: Don't immediately go looking for outside resources to deal with it. Rather, the community needs to identify the resources and

gifts that are already present and get the entire community engaged in responding. In this scripture story, when the disciples see the crisis of hunger coming, they want Jesus to deal with it by sending the people to the surrounding villages for food. Jesus will have none of it: "Give them something to eat yourselves." He challenges the disciples to have confidence in themselves and to show initiative.

In many ways, the recognition of lay ecclesial ministry is taking Jesus' command seriously. The Church is recognizing the incredible, diverse, and vibrant gifts of the Holy Spirit that are present in the Body of Christ and calling on lay ministers to teach, to heal, to nourish, and to encourage as they walk side by side with bishops and priests in caring for the Body of Christ. As a Church we did not instantaneously recognize the role of lay ministry, but rather over time and with great effort are building consensus that this is the work of the Spirit.

At this Eucharist, Jesus again sacramentally takes, blesses, breaks, and gives his very life to us for our nourishment and strength. It is what sustains us in our lives as disciples. It is what unites us across our differences. And it is what grounds us as we continue to understand the call of lay men and women to serve the church as pastoral leaders.



Morning Reflections, Lake Sagataga

Photo: Rosemary Washington



Theology Day:

Examining Issues and Ideas of Our Times

For the past eight years the School of Theology•Seminary has been offering a program of theological enrichment called “Theology Days.” Each year members of the faculty and staff probe theological issues and pastoral challenges in presentations demonstrating the deep connection between the study of theology and the concerns of Christian life. Theology Day began as a way to communicate to alums, donors, and friends the rich engagement with ideas and issues that is at the heart of what Saint John’s does. Grace Ellens, director of institutional advancement for the SOT•Sem, coordinates the program and says that Theology Day draws enthusiastic responses from those who attend. “People are looking for serious, thoughtful treatment of issues in which they have an interest because they bear on what it means to be a Christian and an informed Catholic. While encouraging support for our work, Theology Day introduces hundreds of people to the SOT•Sem and strengthens relationships with those who believe in our mission.”

This past year, for example, Dr. Kathy Lilla Cox, assistant professor of moral theology, explored the role of emotions in the various methods of moral decision-making. The neglect of emotions has more to do with how people perceive moral theology’s content than how they generally live their moral lives. According to Cox, “Moral theology is frequently reduced to actions or behaviors to avoid and rules to follow. This creates an incomplete understanding because moral theology includes thinking about how we want to live and whom we wish to become as members of the baptized community of believers. In other words, if Jesus Christ is calling us to be disciples today, what are we called to do and how do we respond to this call? Simply put, the Gospel asks us to do something.” Dr. Cox observes that most people find it difficult to think about the moral life as a lived public response to God. Once a person moves away from a checklist of behaviors to avoid, she or he needs to decide between actions or choices that are equally good. Both thoughts and emotions can help with these types of decisions or choices.

“In my reading and teaching I have discovered that awareness of our

emotions is not the same as paying attention to how our emotions reveal what we value or what we ought to decide to do. This is often because we’ve been taught to see our emotions as irrational, untrustworthy and too subjective. It is my belief that our emotions can be a form of knowing and can inform the reflection that is part of our decision making process.” Dr. Cox goes on to note that Ignatius Loyola thought that there were discernable patterns or movements in our emotional or affective lives that are sources for understanding how God speaks to us. Additionally, the Benedictines have a deep tradition of attending to people’s richly varied emotional lives through praying the scriptures in the Liturgy of the Hours. This argues, she believes, for a strong emotional vocabulary if we are to honor the fullness of who we are as creatures created by God. We cannot ignore the affective or emotive aspects of our being or treat them with suspicion.

Dr. Cox’s research on emotions and moral decision-making follows two lines of inquiry: how an individual’s emotional life impacts living as a disciple of Christ and whether communities themselves develop a sort of emotional geography. The communal question emerges from the fact that we are shaped by communal prayers, common worship, and shared narratives. Formed in such a common framework for perceiving the world, the likelihood of a community developing its particular emotional geography seems highly probable. The practical result of this idea is the light it might shed on recurring moral issues. Are evil actions due to moral turpitude or do they have roots in communal emotions that are largely ignored or unexamined? Paying attention to the emotional geography of an individual or community can foster alternative choices that respond to God’s call to break the bonds of sin and respond to Jesus’ declaration “to go and do likewise” – bring about healing and hope.

Dr. Cox’s full presentation on this topic is available on our website: www.csbsju.edu/sot). A new Theology Days series begins September 17. Each topic is repeated four times in Collegetown, the Twin Cities, and Alexandria. See page 9 for details.

Join us for this year's **Theology Days!**



Call and Response: Young Adults and the Church

Laura Kelly Fanucci, M.Div. '09
Research Associate, Collegeville Institute Seminars
The Collegeville Institute for Ecumenical and Cultural Research

Dates: Sept. 17, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (Emmaus Hall, Saint John's University)
Sept. 21, 6-9 p.m. (Emmaus Hall, Saint John's University)
Oct. 21, 6-9 p.m. (Basilica of Saint Mary, Minneapolis)
Oct. 28, 6:30-9 p.m. (Church of Saint Mary, Alexandria)



Health Care and Immigration Reform: In Search of the Common Good

Bernie Evans
Virgil Michel Ecumenical Chair in Rural Social Ministries and Associate Professor of Theology
Saint John's School of Theology-Seminary, College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University

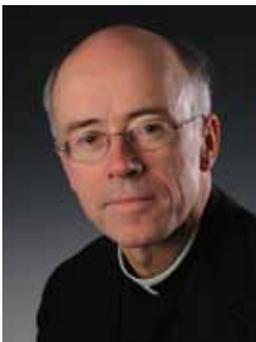
Dates: Sept. 25, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (Assisi Heights Spirituality Center, Rochester)
Nov. 5, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (Emmaus Hall, Saint John's University)
Nov. 19, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (Emmaus Hall, Saint John's University)
Dec. 9, 6-9 p.m. (Basilica of Saint Mary, Minneapolis)
Dec. 16, 6:30-9 p.m. (Church of Saint Mary, Alexandria)



What's Happening to the Mass? The New Translation Explained

Fr. Anthony Ruff, OSB
Associate Professor of Theology
Saint John's School of Theology-Seminary,
College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University

Dates: Jan. 21, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (Emmaus Hall, Saint John's University)
Jan. 27, 6:30-9 p.m. (Church of Saint Mary, Alexandria)
Feb. 11, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (Emmaus Hall, Saint John's University)
Feb. 24, 6-9 p.m. (Basilica of Saint Mary, Minneapolis)



Hope: A Vital Christian Virtue for Our Time

Fr. Dale Launderville, OSB
Professor of Theology
Saint John's School of Theology-Seminary,
College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University

Dates: April 1, 8:30 a.m.-1 p.m. (Emmaus Hall, Saint John's University)
April 28, 6:30-9 p.m. (Church of Saint Mary, Alexandria)
May 12, 6-9 p.m. (Basilica of Saint Mary, Minneapolis)
May 26, 6-9 p.m. (Emmaus Hall, Saint John's University)

*Learn more and register online
at www.csbsju.edu/sot*

Questions? Contact Grace Ellens:
320-363-2551 or gellens@csbsju.edu



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Building A Community of Learning Student by Student

The recruitment function in a school seems fairly practical. The short formula might run like this: prospective student makes inquiry, recruitment officer responds, prospect has questions, recruitment officer answers, prospect decides to enroll – or not. Contrast that with the reality of Natalie Perl Regan’s first year as Director of Admission. “On average,” she notes, “it can easily take eighteen months from the first contact with a prospective student to their actual enrollment. For some it is longer. During this time we will talk by phone frequently, communicate twenty or so times through email, and have several face to face conversations when possible.”

The length of the process is due in large measure to the consequences of a decision to enroll in a graduate theological program. “What I am learning,” she says, “is that I am engaged with people in a process of discernment: ‘Is this the right decision now? Am I foolish for considering selling my home and quitting my job? Is Saint John’s the right place? Can I afford it? Am I supposed to be doing this?’ These are not questions easily answered by a brochure or in a form letter. They require attentive listening and entering into a relationship where practical questions entwine with questions of life purpose and vocational call.”

Natalie earned her own M.Div degree in 2009 from Washington Theological Union (WTU). Her husband Jeff was accepted into Saint John’s M.A. in Theology with a concentration in Liturgy program a year earlier so Natalie arranged with WTU to complete her remaining requirements in Collegeville. Natalie is a native of San Diego and holds a B.A. in English from the University of San Diego. She lived in Washington for eight years and worked in RCIA, campus ministry, liturgy and retreat ministry. Before starting graduate school, she had two years of admissions experience.

Over the past year, Natalie has met very interesting people with equally interesting reasons why they are considering Saint John’s for graduate study. “I hear people frequently refer to the school’s Benedictine character, the monastic rhythm of life, and the sense of stability. While some find us a bit too isolated, it is the peace and quiet that intrigues many others as they consider investing resources and time to earn a degree in theology or ministry.”



Natalie Perl Regan, Director of Admission

Natalie does not define success in her work solely in quantitative terms. Mindful that in the end she is charged with growing annual enrollment, she understands her role is more than that. “I get to know applicants very well and have a responsibility to help faculty to understand the individual gifts and needs each new student brings. Recruitment does affect our enrollment stats, but its fundamental purpose is to incorporate new members into a vibrant, challenging, and supportive community of theological learning.”

While she did not necessarily imagine several years ago that a Master of Divinity degree would lead to a position in recruitment and admission, Natalie appreciates how her own formation has positioned her for her current leadership role. “We are a unique place with a brilliant heritage that understands theology and ministry as integral partners in service to church and society. Getting that story in front of people, helping them think through their questions and overcome obstacles, and then facilitating their transition from prospect to member of the School of Theology community is the way I live out my own ministerial call at this point in my life. I am not ‘selling’ Saint John’s but engaging in a conversation with people that touches their deepest values, ideals, and aspirations. Even when someone determines to go elsewhere, I want them to recall our concern that they make the best vocational choice possible.”

When classes began in August, there were approximately 115 students enrolled in the various graduate programs of the school. This includes six people in the newly approved Master of Theology (Th.M.) degree. Given the competition for graduate students and the costs of a graduate education, it is an encouraging sign to be able to maintain enrollment figures compared to last year. Natalie’s direct role in the recruitment-admissions process comes to an end when newly admitted students begin classes, but she continues to be a resource to them as they settle into the school. “We all accompany students in some way,” she says. “I open a doorway to the school to new students and then faculty, staff, and current students help them find how best to use and deepen their gifts. It is something we do together to tap into the riches of Saint John’s, to strive to be community with one another, and to provide for new generations of pastoral leaders and scholars.”

New Blog Energizes Conversations On Liturgy



A visit to the blogosphere reveals quickly that blogs tend to be wild places with few rules. Ideals like mutual learning, seeing an issue from multiple perspectives, asking questions, and listening closely to what someone is saying all fall victim to ranting, personal attack, sarcasm, and trivialization. Some people seem to thrive in the chaos and grandstanding. Others seeking insight or understanding look elsewhere.

Blogs are nonetheless very much part of contemporary media. Luddites can argue that they coarsen civil discourse and provide cover for the worst instincts in people, but the fact remains that blogs are fixtures in the new public square. Because of this latter reality, Fr. Anthony Ruff, OSB decided that it was time for Saint John's to figure out how to use this medium in service of its longstanding commitment to the liturgy. As he was working on the bishops' statement on music, Fr. Anthony decided to see what was being said on the Internet about liturgy and music. "I was quite surprised at the tone of most of what I read and by the fact that there tended to be an over-representation of one point of view far more conservative than I think the broader church is. I felt that if we were going to launch a blog around a topic like liturgy, we needed to take steps that would create a more moderate space where people on both sides of an issue could talk to one another without shouting."

Fr. Anthony took his idea to the administration of the School of Theology•Seminary and the Liturgical Press. Everyone thought it was a very timely proposal. The LitPress helped design the blog so that it would be visually attractive and inviting. Fr. Anthony set rules so that it could be a forum where people could engage in conversation even when they deeply disagree with each other. People need to provide their names and email addresses in order to post a comment to a discussion, and Fr. Anthony reads each initial posting by a participant for tone. "If it lacks civility and only seems aimed at inflaming a topic, it won't appear in the blog. If someone is a regular participant in the blog and tries to slip in something that demeans or trivializes what someone else has said, that comment goes into a spam vault and the author is unable

to post again until we've agreed on honoring the rules of discourse." Serving as a gatekeeper for the blog can be time-consuming, and Fr. Anthony's purpose is not to serve as censor. On the contrary, he welcomes spirited discussions in which people are clear about their differences. What he wants to avoid is one more site where the goal seems to inflict a wound rather than test a point of view or explore a question.

Twenty-five experts in liturgy have agreed to contribute to the blog, posting a brief article on a topic of concern to him or her and then participating in the discussion it generates. "The site gets up to 6,000 hits a day from 2,000 visitors, meaning a visitor typically clicks on three links." Fr. Anthony says, "and there are somewhere around 50–75 comments to the various discussions. Our audience tends to be younger people for whom this mode of communication is familiar. And we hear from people from around the globe. While our intention remains to attract an ecumenical audience, the discussions are now heavily Catholic partly because of the topics contributors are exploring. We hope to broaden the range of topics in the months ahead."

Fr. Anthony is finding that a central theme in the discussions tends to be about relating to contemporary culture: Is liturgy to be holy and sacred apart from culture or does its power of formation come from enculturation? "There is a voice in these blogged conversations that insists that being Catholic is timeless and unchanging; culture is incidental. I am not convinced this is true liturgically," says Ruff, "nor do I think it is a complete understanding of Catholic liturgy." Another topic dominating the blog these days is the controversy around the new English translation of the missal.

PrayTell is a welcome forum for people concerned about liturgical development in the Church. "It is a place where real dialogue and real listening can take place among diverse positions. That can only contribute to mutual learning." Readers can join the conversation by logging on to www.PrayTellBlog.com.

The Monastic Institute:

Exploring An Ancient Tradition for Twenty-five Years

Dale Launderville OSB

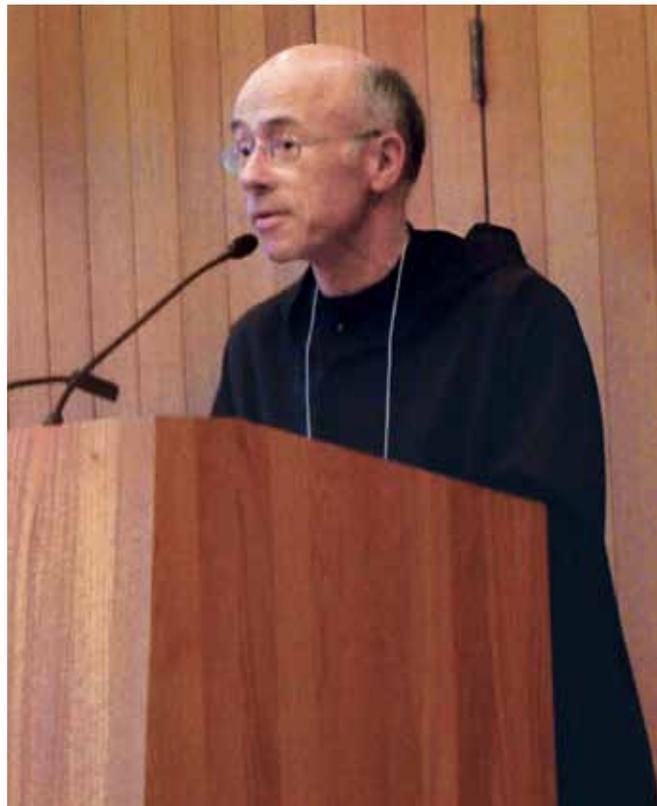
The Monastic Institute, held June 27 to July 1, 2010, marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of this initiative by the School of Theology•Seminary. More than 160 participants attended this year's Institute on Benedictine spirituality. Benedictine women, who continue to be the sustaining audience for the Institute, were joined by many lay women and men along with Benedictine men.

The schedule of the Institute follows a rhythm of presentations and discussions around the central theme. Integral to the dynamics of the five-day gathering are participation in the Liturgy of the Hours and Eucharist, opportunities to take advantage of the resources of the campus, and time to converse with thoughtful, reflective colleagues from across the country.

Kathleen Norris, best-selling author of works including *Cloister Walk* and *Acedia and Me*, gave the opening talk on Sunday evening on "Monastic Spirituality for Our Times." Shaping her remarks with frequent readings of excerpts from her poetry and books, Ms. Norris emphasized the uniqueness and importance of the monastic witness for contemporary society. She noted that as a guest in Benedictine communities she can say things about the monastic way of life that escapes those who are immersed in it.

S. Irene Nowell, OSB, well-known author and lecturer, identified Psalm 139 as "her psalm" and then explained how specific psalms had been important to her at the beginning, middle, and advanced stages of her monastic life. She invited the participants to identify the psalm that has been traveling with them on their monastic journey. Fr. Raymond Studzinski, OSB, building upon his recent publication, *Reading to Live: The Evolving Practice of Lectio Divina*, explained aspects of the art of doing lectio divina and how it has been done through the ages in monasticism.

Professor David Brakke, addressing the topic of "Spiritual Combat in the Desert: Wisdom for our Times," brought to life the ascetic challenge of the desert monastics, including Antony, Ammonas, Shenoute, Melania, and Syncretica. Guided by the Old Testament models of Jacob and Job, these desert monastics wrestled and persevered in the quest to find God both in solitude and in community. Fr. John Mossi, SJ, explained how Ignatius Loyola was influenced by the Benedictines of Montserrat as he prepared for his mission in the world. Ignatius's retreat that gave birth to the *Spiritual Exercises* had its origin in a monastic setting of Montserrat, but this intensive spiritual experience was to be a point of transition for him and not a place within which



Father Dale welcomes Institute guests.

to remain and carry out the search for God as Benedictines do within community life. In the panel discussion that followed Fr. Mossi, S. Kathryn Casper, OSB, described how she and her colleagues at the Spirituality Center at Saint Benedict's Monastery in Saint Joseph have been shaping a model of spiritual companionship that draws upon the riches of the Benedictine tradition. Dr. Jana Preble noted that in her work as a spiritual director with monastics, she aims to walk with them and assist them in persevering in their search for God. Abbot Timothy Kelly, OSB, described his vision of the life of the monk as a liturgy such that all the activities of the day are directed and shaped by the worship of God.

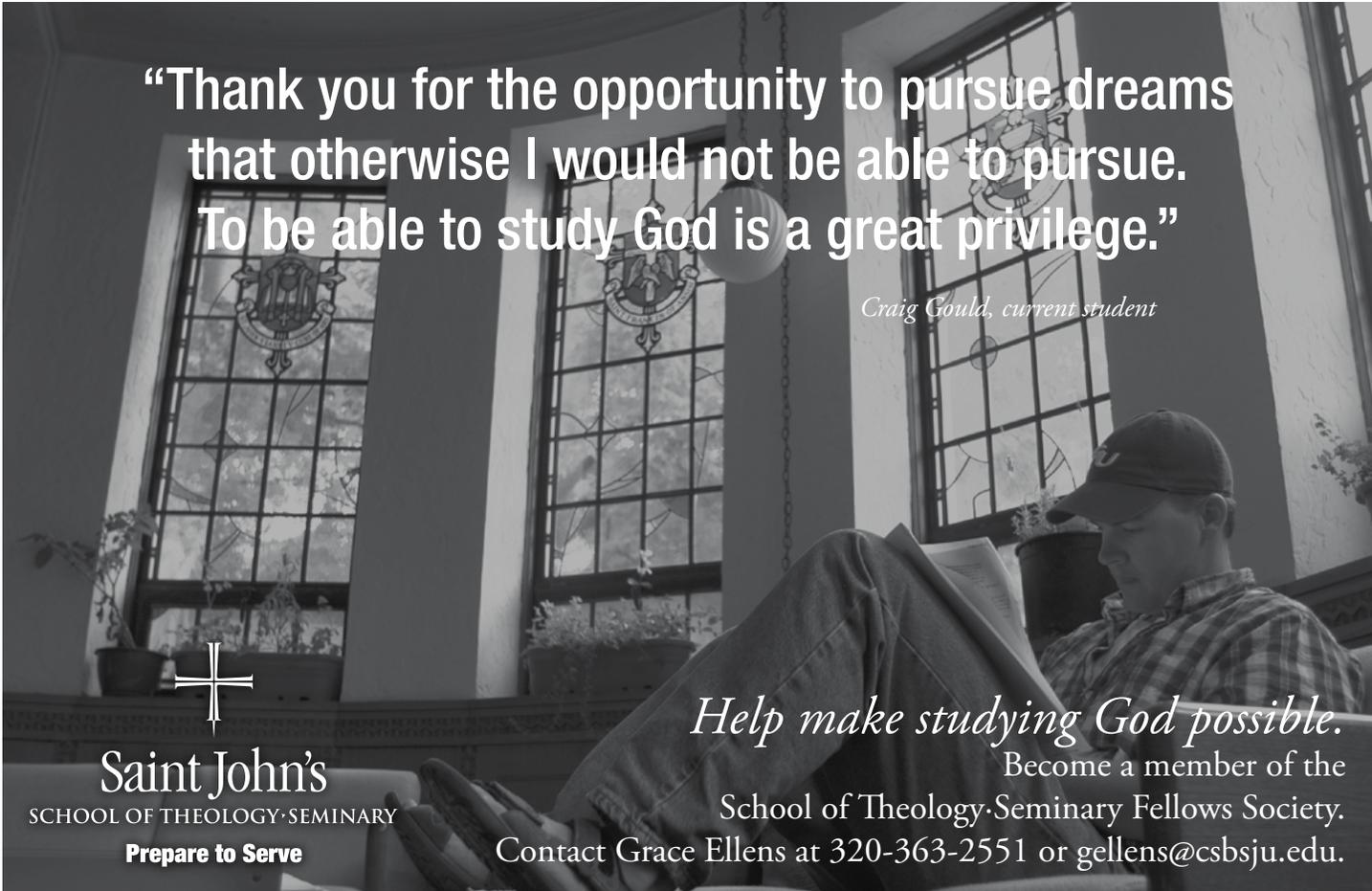
In her session on "Spirituality of the Family and the Monastic Community: Continuities and Discontinuities," S. Mara Faulkner, OSB emphasized the concrete, embodied ways that we journey to God. Drawing upon her own experience in a large family of modest means in which daily prayer was a staple, she noted how her transition to a monastic community was smooth; there were many points of continuity between the two types of community. She noted how monastics

can have a profound influence on young people who are searching for “something more.” Professor Charles Bobertz, reflecting on the importance in Catholic tradition of reading scripture, noted how a critical approach to Scripture has confused many Catholics and has made a more literal interpretation of the texts appealing. Yet the movement toward a literalistic way of reading Scripture distorts the long-standing practice of the Church. Dr. Bobertz emphasized the need to move away from a “me-centered” to a “we-centered” spirituality.

Sr. Donald Corcoran, OSB Cam., wrapped up this year’s Institute by speaking about the “Benedictine Way of Wisdom” as a contemplative disposition rather than a method. She extolled the merits of Fr. Bruno Barnhardt’s work entitled *The Future of Wisdom*. She capsulated this integrating vision for the monastic life as one in which God is that reality whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.

She sees Benedictines as called to find their own center in God. The presence, power, sufficiency, and openness of the Center calls us to recognize the action of the Holy Spirit as that surprising newness that is always stirring within.

The Institute is a concrete expression of the Benedictine commitment to study. After 1500 years, one might conclude that there is little more to be learned about *The Rule of Saint Benedict* and the vision of community and discipleship it offers. Over the past twenty-five years, however, Benedictines and other students of Christian life continue to look deeply into questions and ideas whose insights exceed the latest fad and whose mysteries provide new wisdom to each generation. In 2011 the Monastic Institute theme will be “The Bible and Prayer.” It will be held June 26–30. The Institute welcomes anyone interested in learning more about this ancient spiritual tradition and vision of Christian life.



“Thank you for the opportunity to pursue dreams that otherwise I would not be able to pursue. To be able to study God is a great privilege.”

Craig Gould, current student



Saint John’s

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Forming Scholars for the Church

Charles A. Bobertz, Ph.D.

Saint John's School of Theology•Seminary has a clear and straight forward mission: to prepare people for ordained and lay ecclesial ministry in the church. Our graduates serve as parish pastors, missionaries, directors of religious education and formation, liturgists, chaplains, and a host of other ministries. Fundamental to their preparation is the study of theology for it is a primary resource in understanding the mission of the church, the message of the Gospel, and the life of discipleship. As a faculty, we don't treat the study of theology and the practices of ministry as separate worlds of inquiry for they are interrelated and interdependent. To preach the Gospel, one must study it rigorously. To convey church teaching, one must immerse oneself in the historical, dogmatic, and philosophical foundations upon which it rests. There is no other path to becoming an excellent minister.

That said, what may go unnoticed is our particular work in preparing men and women for the academic study of theology. Almost every year a few of our Master's degree graduates follow God's call to study for doctorates in theology and pursue careers as teachers and scholars in universities, colleges and schools of theology. Preparation of these candidates to teach and do theological research is as vital and integral a part of our mission as preparing the church's pastoral leaders. Why? First, theologians help the church actively to think. Quite often the teaching magisterium of the Church needs assistance in understanding the complexity of particular modern issues. For example, when the bishops were preparing a pastoral letter on the economy, theologians trained in the original biblical languages of Greek and Hebrew helped the bishops discern the original intention of biblical authors quoted in the letter while other theologians trained in both theology and economics (like Saint John's own Professor Dan Finn) helped them to understand both how a modern economy works and possible pastoral implications of their teaching.

Second, theologians can help the church to be honest. All institutions need within them intelligent and loyal adherents who are not afraid to question – responsibly and honestly – the ideas and practices of

the institution. Indeed, within the world of democratic government and institutions, we rely on such criticism to find better answers to problems and to move forward toward solutions. This is also true of God's church, which, though shepherded by God's Spirit, is also human and therefore subject to human limitations. Faithful theologians have a responsibility to examine this human dimension of the church's ideas and practices and, in so doing, help the church maintain its integrity as an institution.

Third, the new generation of theologians who begin their training here at the SOT•Sem are taught by theologians who constantly strive to put together their theological education and training with the life of faith. Our students, therefore, see the possibility of combining a life of faith with rigorous research and teaching in theology. In an academic world that is decidedly secular, even when it comes to the study of religion, the very idea of good thinking and faithfulness is often considered an oxymoron. My faculty colleagues

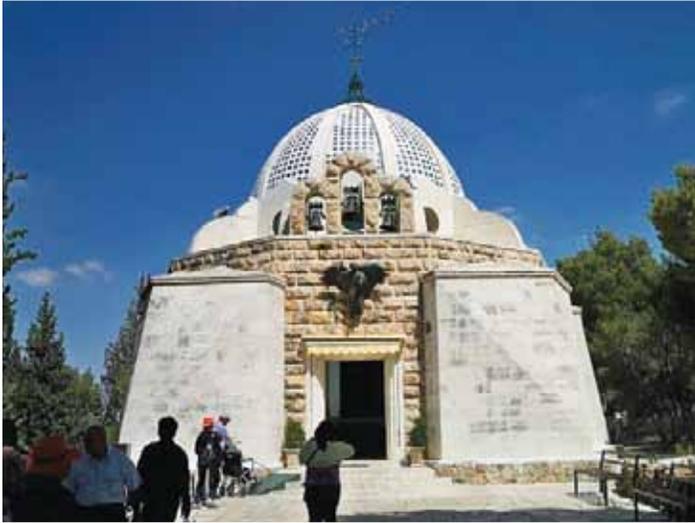
and I not only put faith and good thinking together, we actually enjoy the challenge and eagerly seek to pass this challenge on to our students. We hope they in turn will model this for the generations of students they will teach.

The Master in Theology (Th.M.) program in the SOT•Sem is a new initiative that increases our capacity to prepare students to pursue doctoral degrees in theology and related studies. An intense one year program for students who already hold an accredited master's degree in theology or divinity, the Th.M. focuses on three central aspects of all doctoral theological study: research and writing, language preparation, and mentorship by a faculty member. Students will conduct research with a faculty member, research and write their own master's level thesis and, when possible, participate in supervised classroom teaching. Our vision is that in an era of increasingly high admission standards for doctoral programs, we can give our students an edge at the best universities. Just as important, we hope to form them in a model of scholarship that embodies the dynamic relationship between faith and reason.



Rector's Report

Fr. Michael Patella OSB



Church at Shepherds' Field, Bethlehem

Among the unique offerings of the School of Theology•Seminary, none has had greater longevity than its annual study pilgrimage to the Holy Land, which was launched by Father Thomas Wahl in 1974. In May 2010, nine participants toured the land of the Bible and early Church, among whom was seminarian, Brother August Schaefer, OSB. Together with other theology students and sabbaticants, Brother August studied both Old and New Testament biblical sites as well as visited early monastic foundations in Israel, Palestine, Sinai, and Egypt. This itinerary reflects the seminary's programmatic emphasis on priesthood formation within a monastic context.

Monasticism's origins in Palestine and Egypt are indicative of the high respect the early monks held for the Christian holy places. In their lives and ministry, the desert monks drew on their proximity to Bethlehem, Jerusalem, and the Jordan River to nourish and feed their reading of Sacred Scripture. In so doing, they developed a manner of religious life that converted so much of the world to Christianity. Pilgrims came to the monasteries for penance, blessing, and hospitality. Taking back with them what they learned, the experience of the travelers helped shape the liturgy and devotional practices in both East and West.

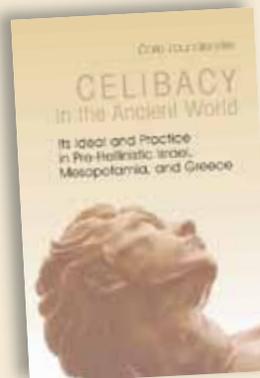
The Saint John's Holy Land program builds on this heritage in the spiritual formation of its seminarians and master's degree candidates. While in Jerusalem, the group resides at Dormition Abbey where they can pray and celebrate the Eucharist with the monks. There are day trips to the monasteries of Saint George Koziba, Quarantal, and the Mount of Olives in addition to sites such as the Holy Sepulcher and the Via Dolorosa. When in Bethlehem, students walk through Saint Jerome's monastery as they make their way to the Grotto of the Nativity. If conditions are good,

they ride through the desert to visit the monastery of Mar Saba.

The best example of the combination of biblical studies, monastic life, priestly vocation, and pilgrimage would have to be the monastery of the Burning Bush, or Saint Catherine's, in the Sinai in Egypt. One of the oldest, continuously inhabited monasteries in the world, seminarians and students stay in the monastery guesthouse, which allows them to climb Mount Sinai, mingle with the Greek monks, see the library, and meditate in the icon museum. From Sinai, the group continues their studies in Egypt at the desert monasteries of Saint Anthony and Saint Paul. Cairo then becomes the staging point for visits to the four Coptic monasteries of Wadi Natrun.

In terms of a monk's vocation to the priesthood, praying in the places where Christianity was formed and walking in the footsteps of those monks who helped form it ground one's calling in a sacramental landscape two-thousand years old. While the experience of studying abroad is a unique feature of the SOT•Sem priestly formation program, it roots candidates in an ancient understanding of how one builds one's relationship with God.

Celibacy in the Ancient World



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Its Ideal and Practice in Pre-Hellenistic Israel, Mesopotamia, and Greece

Dale Launderville, OSB

Regarding the human family and community as a whole, what is the significance, possibility, and socially constructive role of one who is committed to celibacy? In his study, Dale Launderville, OSB, focuses especially on literary witnesses and the enduring texts that have helped shape modern attitudes and can aid us in understanding the factors that may call forth the practice of celibacy in our own time.

"His insights and interpretations are compelling and often inspiring. Father Launderville writes well and helps the reader with frequent summaries and conclusions. A must-read book!"

Irene Nowell, OSB

Author of *Women in the Old Testament* (Liturgical Press)

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Safe Food: A Matter of Faith

Dr. Bernard Evans



Super weeds are here! Farm chemicals threaten endangered species! U.S. unable to ensure food safety! Headlines like these may seem exaggerated, even fictional, but they point to real stories in today's news. Minnesota Public Radio, for instance, recently reported that farmers in southwest Minnesota now must contend with weeds that have become resistant to a long-used herbicide. In other parts of the United States, environmental groups seek legal actions to limit the effects of agricultural pesticides, herbicides and fungicides on hundreds of species protected under the Endangered Species Act. In Washington, the U.S. Senate works to pass the Food Safety and Modernization Act designed to reform this nation's food safety regulatory practices. The Act responds to the increasing number of deaths caused by food-borne illnesses and inadequate checking of food entering the United States from other countries.

Such news reminds us that the food system in the United States – from fields to restaurants, supermarkets and home kitchens – is one that is ever changing and increasingly complex. It is also a system in which new approaches to farming and food processing sometimes come at a cost to food safety, nutrition, and environmental integrity.

The United States continues to lead the world in production of vast quantities of low cost food, and many point out that in a world with almost a billion hungry people, we must continue to develop new farming technologies for mass production. Yet the continued reliance upon chemical inputs and massive irrigation along with the steady adoption of genetic engineering and the shift towards large scale, corporate style farming all generate legitimate

concerns about the sustainability of American agriculture.

For many Americans, now generations removed from any farm connection, there is little awareness of how the food they eat is produced and processed. That lack of knowledge also means there is little public discussion about the changes taking place in U.S. agriculture. As Pope John Paul II has written, “. . . one cannot use with impunity the different categories of beings, whether living or inanimate – animals, plants, the natural elements – simply as one wishes, according to one's own economic needs” (On Social Concern, 34).

One group advancing the ethical questions and concerns surrounding the environment and related matters like food safety is the Northland Ministry Partnership (NMP). It is a program of the Minnesota Consortium of Theological Schools that strives to train and support pastoral leaders to be effective in their rural communities and includes representatives from each of Minnesota's five seminaries. NMP specifically launched its Food and Faith Project to promote public awareness and discussion about the sustainability of America's food system, underscoring the public role of theology in raising issues that bear upon the common good and reflect our understanding of Christian discipleship.

In April 2010, the NMP sponsored a Food and Faith Conference at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. The goals of the conference were to promote awareness of issues facing our nation's food system and to help people, especially those in faith communities, engage in ethical reflection around these issues.

The keynote speaker, Dr. Fred Kirschenmann, is an organic farmer, former college president and past director of the Aldo Leopold Institute for Sustainable Agriculture at Iowa State University. He discussed several points related to U.S. agriculture – an industrialized farming system dependent upon cheap energy, the ability to produce vast quantities of food and fiber at relatively cheap prices, the threats to soil and water resources from conventional agricultural practices, and the shift from moderate sized family farms to very large corporate style farming enterprises.

Kirschenmann, himself a theologian, also spoke about how we can prepare for the coming changes and challenges invoking a number of theological themes. He pointed out, for example, that our doctrine of the incarnation implies that all creation has been transformed in Christ. It is good. It is sacramental. This teaching calls us to rethink our relationship to the rest of creation and, especially, how we use the

Safe Food continued on page 22

Spring/Summer 2010 School of Theology•Seminary Graduates



Summer Graduate
Aaron Brown

Front row, L-R: Ben Caduff, Sebastian Gomes, Sr. Therese Ge, Adam Sohre, Betsy Cunneen, Anne Rayhawk, Row 2, L-R: Sherry Lego, Eric Christensen, Corein Brown, Brendan McInerney, Marge Wentland, Jessica Heinen, Back Row, L-R: Sean McNair, Jason Ziegler, Joel Cassidy, LuAnn Trutwin, Efrain Rosado, OSB

Each term the School of Theology•Seminary graduates people who complete their programs of study with interesting capstone projects. We share with readers examples of research completed by candidates for graduation in the spring and summer terms.

Ben Caduff

Master of Divinity
War Never Again? War and Peace Catechesis in Roman Catholic Parishes

Sr. Therese Ge

M.A., Pastoral Ministry
*Formed as Clay on the Potter's Wheel:
Jilin Sisters' Midlife Crisis and Opportunity*

Jessica Heinen

M.A., Pastoral Ministry
*Service-Learning Experiences:
Inspiring & Developing Faith-Filled Campus Ministry Leaders*

Sherri Lego

M.A., Pastoral Ministry
*We Are All One Body – We Are All Responsible:
Co-Responsibility Among Clustering Parishes*

Anne Rayhawk

Master of Divinity
Reverent and Relevant: Camp Chapel Services and Faith Development

Adam Sohre

Master of Divinity
*The Way Forward:
A Pedagogy on End of Life Catholic Health Care Ethics*

LuAnn Trutwin

Master of Divinity
*Waves of Grief:
Navigating Loss within the Faith Community*

Marge Wentland

Master of Divinity
*Saturday Sojourners:
A Case for Grief Ministry in Rural Parishes*

Corein Brown

Master of Divinity
*Moved with Compassion:
Does Baptism Call for Political Involvement?*

FACULTY-STAFF NOTES

Dr. Kimberly Belcher presented a paper entitled, “The Speech that Keeps Silent: Jean-Luc Marion and the Anaphora of John Chrysostom” at the North American Academy of Liturgy in January and continues her work on *Efficacious Engagement: Sacramental Participation in the Trinitarian Mystery*, a book that will be published by Liturgical Press.

Dr. Charles Bobertz recently published, “Ritual Eucharist Within Narrative: A Comparison of Didache 9-10 with Mark 6:31-44; 8:1-9,” in *Studia Patristica* 44 (2010) 93-99. He was a presenter at this year’s Monastic Institute (“Beyond the Liberal Conservative Impasse, A Liturgical Reading of Scripture”), led a workshop at the Notre Dame Institute on Liturgy (“The Lectionary: Reading Scripture with the Church”), and presented his commissioned research for the symposium on lay ecclesial ministry at Saint John’s (“The Biblical Basis for Understanding Lay Ecclesial Ministry: A Consideration of the Spiritual Gifts and the Body of Christ in 1 Corinthians 12-14”).

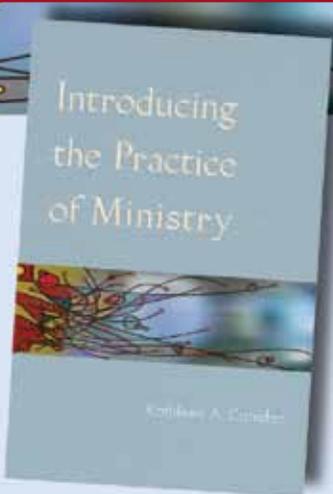
The School of Theology•Seminary is pleased to announce that Dr. Kathleen Cahalan’s book, *Introducing the Practice of Ministry* is now available from Liturgical Press. In addition, she has chapters in *Keep-*

ing Faith in Practice: Aspects of Catholic Pastoral Theology, eds. James Sweeney, Gemma Simmonds, and David Lonsdale (“Pastoral Theology or Practical Theology? Limits and Possibilities”) and in *Secularization Theories, Religious Identity and Practical Theology*, eds. Wilhelm Gräb and Lars Charbonnier (“Beyond Pastoral Theology: Why Catholics should Embrace Practical Theology”). In April she was a panel participant at the Association of Practical Theology in Boston addressing Roman Catholic contributions and challenges in practical theology. She has just completed directing the fourth annual Praying with Imagination Retreat sponsored by the School of Theology•Seminary and featuring the Saint John’s Bible and taught a course on the same topic for Holden Village. Dr. Cahalan began a three year term on the Board of Directors for the Louisville Institute.

Dr. Kathy Lilla Cox attended the Catholic Theological Society of America conference in June and moderated a panel on migration. She also participated this summer the Conference of Catholic Theological Ethicists in the World Church held in Trento, Italy, that drew over 500 participants from more than seventy countries (see <http://vimeo.com/13674689> for more information). At the conference, Dr. Cox presented a paper on “Affective-Rational Human Beings” and chaired a panel discussion titled, “Toward a Proper Understanding of the Person.”

Dr. Daniel Finn continued his contributions to scholarship on economics and ethics with an essay in “*Economic Justice in a Flat World: Christian Perspectives on Globalization*,” edited by Steven Rundle (“Moral Values and the Rules of International Trade”) and an article in The Tablet (“Benedict’s Third Way: Catholic Ethics in Public Life”). In June he gave a presentation on Catholic social thought on the economy as an empirical claim at the Catholic Theological Society of America annual meeting, providing a twenty-five year perspective on the bishops’ letter on the economy (*Economic Justice For All*). Recent presentations include a lecture on the origins of the modern market economy at Yale Divinity School, healing the dysfunctional conversation about justice and markets at Lumen Christi Institute, in Chicago, and institutional collaboration for sustainable societies at Duquesne University. This summer Dr. Finn gave a presentation at the conference on Catholic Theological Ethics and the World Church in Trento, Italy and the keynote address at the annual meeting of Socoetas Ethica in Frankfurt, Germany. The book he edited, *The True Wealth of Nations: Catholic Social Thought and Economic Life*, published by Oxford University Press, is now available.

Sr. Mary Forman, OSB led an assessment workshop for Theology 111 for the Department of Theology in May, was a major presenter



Introducing the Practice of Ministry
Kathleen A. Cahalan

Ministry is often examined in terms of who the minister is, not what the minister does. But the vocation to ministry must be understood as a call to identity as well as to practice, one that is rooted in Jesus’ life and ministry as well as the Spirit’s charisms. In *Introducing the Practice of Ministry* Kathleen A. Cahalan defines ministerial leadership as carried out through the practices of teaching, preaching, pastoral care, worship, social ministry, and administration for the sake of nurturing the life of discipleship in the community of believers.

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at the Benedictine Women's Novice and Director Institute ("Teaching Early Monastic Sources: Grounding our Monastic Call in the Great Teachers of the Tradition"), and taught a course on Benedict's Hymn of Love (RB 72) in the SOT•Sem summer school. In addition, she was the featured presenter at the twenty-first annual scripture institute in Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, Canada that focused on *lectio divina*. Sr. Mary is developing a new course on healing from trauma and abuse and continues her research on the eighth degree of Saint Benedict's steps of humility.

Dr. Jeff Kaster's article on evaluating adolescent catechesis has been accepted by *Religious Education* for publication in its February issue. His essay, "Vocation, gender, and youth ministry" was published this summer in *Engaging College Men: Discovering What Works and Why* edited by Gar Kellom and Michael Groth (Eds.). Dr. Kaster attended the National Association for Lay Ministry Conference in June and hosted the planning conference in Collegeville for the 2011 Symposium on Lay Ecclesial Ministry. He has been a major leader in Saint John's efforts to advance the role of lay ministry. He is a board member for Hands Across the World, a non-profit organization serving the needs of newly arrived immigrants to Central Minnesota.

In January Fr. Michael Patella OSB presented a paper, "Hermeneutical Principles of *The Saint John's Bible*," at University College, Birmingham, UK. In March he addressed the North American Region of Cistercian Houses on monastic education. He also participated in the Strategic Planning Committee for the Catholic Biblical Association at Yale Divinity School, chairing its meeting at the Association's annual conference in Los Angeles. Fr. Patella directed and taught in the Holy Land Program in May and toured with the Hill Museum and Manuscript Library through Turkey, Syria, and Lebanon. He continues his work on *Things Seen and Unseen: The Supernatural in the Christian Tradition* (to be published by Liturgical Press) and writes regularly for *The Bible Today*. He gave a series of lectures at the Institute of Sacred Scripture held at Misericordia College in Dallas, Pennsylvania, on "Sophia: The Holy Treasure of the Wisdom Books."

As part of her responsibilities as Associate Dean for Outreach, Dr. Barbara Sutton provides major coordination of the School of Theology's leadership in implementing *The Saint John's Bible* as a religious education and formation

resource. As part of that effort, she speaks frequently on *visio divina*. This included presentations at the *Fashion Me A People* Conference in Orlando in January, the National Association of Catholic Chaplains, the Benedictine Pedagogy Conference in LaTrobe, Pennsylvania, and the annual conference of the Association For Student Affairs at Catholic Colleges and Universities. In addition, Dr. Sutton led retreats for pastoral leaders and religious educators in the Diocese of Madison, Our Lady of the Hills Parish in Piedmont, S.D., and the diocesan staff of the Salt Lake City Diocese. In June, she gave two presentations at the Collegeville Conference for Music, Liturgy, and the Arts, and completed co-editing the second volume of *Illuminating Ministry*.



Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord, continued from page 5

namely CCD and the Catholic parochial school system – experienced signs of significant decline, making way for new initiatives.

“These four factors,” Ospino says, “had clear consequences: more participation of the laity in the Church’s educational mission as active pastoral agents, empowerment of women as ecclesial ministers, more dialogue with Protestants and their experience with leadership in religious education, the emergence of a new language to name the ministerial work of the laity in the Church, and a revision of the Church’s commitment to Christian education and the expansion of concerns in this area.” All this ferment surfaced some important questions: where did DREs stand vis-a-vis the clergy and the rest of the community? Did they have any autonomy and if so, did such autonomy derive from some form of ecclesial authorization or from their professional competencies? Were they responding to a particular calling as DREs or was their vocation the actualization of something much bigger? Ospino also explores the tension within the DRE experience between being a professional and being a minister, reflecting on whether they are inherently connected or distinct from each other.

Authorization of Lay Ecclesial Ministers

“Authorization is the act of giving someone a mission to perform a ministry in the name of the Church,” says Susan Wood, SCL of Marquette University and former professor of theology at the SOT•Sem. “The etymological root of the word is ‘author,’ indicating the source from which the mission arises. The word ‘mission’ means a ‘sending out.’ One never sends oneself; one is sent. Authorization is the source of that sending. To speak of authorization is to speak of the source of the authority of one who is sent.” Wood is an expert on the question of authorization. In her essay she explores whether lay ecclesial ministers receive their authorization from their sacramental reception of baptism and confirmation or whether their authorization by the bishop is juridically received as a participation in his ministry, which finds its authorization in his sacramental ordination. “The answer to this question, which is really whether the basis of authority is office or sacramentally derived charism, depends on the particular ministry. Authorization by a church authority in both instances, however, enables a lay ecclesial minister to serve in the name of the church rather than in his or her own name.”

What does formal authorization confer? Wood notes four outcomes of the process:

- the ability to minister “in the name of the church”
- a mandate for service in a particular place and for a particular

duration of time

- a relationship of communion with the bishop and local pastor and, through them, with the church
- accountability to church authority and the people served.

“Authorization creates a bond of communion between the authorizer and the minister and empowers the minister to actually engage in the ministry over which the authorizer exercises oversight. That is why the local church – not the formation program or school that educates the lay ecclesial minister – is the proper agent of authorization. Authorization is an ecclesial act distinct from preparation and certification.”

While issues around questions of vocation and authorization find their foundation in theological reflection, attention must eventually turn to church practice. This is the purpose of the essay by Lynda Robitaille, a canonist on the faculty of the University of St. Paul in Ottawa. “The time has come,” she writes, “for legislation (at the level of the universal Church, the episcopal conference, and the diocese) to ensure that there is consistency throughout the United States and elsewhere about what the expectations are for lay ecclesial ministers and their ministries. The key is their authorization – the relationship with the diocesan bishop. This authorization should include the lay ecclesial minister’s rights and duties, the expectations of the lay minister’s role, and the duration of the lay minister’s ministry.

What difference does authorization make? From Robitaille’s perspective, it clarifies to the person authorizing, to the person being authorized and to the community the bishop’s intention: recognition of the call by the church. The lay person may feel called to lay ecclesial ministry, but it is the community through the bishop who discerns whether and how to accept that call. The call is not to be exercised on the whim of the lay person. It is to be exercised in communion with those responsible for ministry in the Church, namely, the diocesan bishop and pastors. Nor should the accepting of that call be on a whim of the bishop or pastor. There should be some stability to the call and its exercise.

“If the lay ecclesial minister’s service depends on the whim of the diocesan bishop or the pastor, there is a problem. The point is that if lay ecclesial ministry is recognized as being important for the Church, then such ministry needs to be protected with canonical norms to promote its stability and to give confidence to the ministers and those who are served by them.” Needed norms could include what education and formation are necessary for such ministry, the kinds of pay scales for what roles, how long a lay ecclesial minister serves, and how

lay ecclesial ministers transfer parishes or dioceses. On another level, norms could also clarify how lay ecclesial ministers work and relate to the other ministers in the diocese, namely, the diocesan bishop, pastors, parochial vicars, religious, and other lay ecclesial ministers.

Rituals of Authorization and Their Pastoral and Theological Significance for Lay Ecclesial Ministry

Discussions about authorization of lay ecclesial ministry eventually lead to two important questions: how such authorization actually occurs and what real meaning it holds for those involved. Zeni Fox, who serves on the faculty of Immaculate Conception Seminary at Seton Hall and is a leading voice for lay ecclesial ministry, describes how lay people experience various forms of ritual recognition. She observes that because Catholic sensibilities are so attuned to how rituals accent the sacramental dimension of all of life, rituals around authorization were destined to evolve. This has not happened in as systematic a fashion as she first imagined it would. Her recent study of lay ministers confirms that “authorizing” rituals affirm individuals’ commitments, interpret for their communities the significance of those commitments for the life of the church, and create bonds between ministers as individuals and the ecclesial structures from which they draw their authority to act “in the name of the church.” Fox argues that rituals are not simply about making the minister feel good. In her study of literature on organizational leadership, she found that formal recognition of one’s leadership as part of organizational practice impacts the ability of an individual to act with authority and be received as one with authority.

Graziano Marcheschi, who directs the lay ministry formation program for the Archdiocese of Chicago, looks at formal authorizing rituals, drawing on the experience of his own Archdiocese and the Diocese of Trenton. He seeks to get at the deeper issue of what purpose the rituals serve. “Rites of authorization,” he says, “must make explicit that what constitutes lay ecclesial ministry is a relationship, not a set of functions. Such rites need to tell those who serve in dioceses and parishes that their ministry is exercised not only on their own initiative, but also as a publicly recognized and authorized action within the local ecclesial community. Because ‘rites’ speak of our convictions, the creation of a new rite is always significant. Because it may speak for generations to come, one must always ask of a new rite what it is saying—what assumptions are embedded in its words and signs, what understanding of the mystery being celebrated participants will take from the event.

These questions are of no small consequence for many perceptions and attitudes, one’s self-identity, and the understanding of the community flow from the liturgical actions we design and perform.”

Marcheschi emphasizes that baptism initiates us into a deep communion of relationship with God and others that creates the pattern for ministerial relationships. “This notion of communion grounds our understanding of lay ecclesial ministry and must guide our design of rites of authorization. In Catholic belief, the bishop is the center of our unity, and it is his responsibility to foster the ministries of the local church. A theology of communion recognizes that we are most fully church when all those empowered by the Spirit are given an opportunity to serve. As deacons and priests ministering alongside bishops manifest the fullness of priesthood, the participation of laity in ecclesial service manifests even further the rich ministerial mosaic with which God has blessed the church.”

Looking Toward the 2011 Symposium

During the recent planning conference, participants generated over 180 questions based on conversations around the essays. From this pool of questions, small groups each selected three questions they thought most needed attention at the Symposium. A planning committee will now work with those recommendations as it designs the program and process for next summer’s gathering. A full list of the questions can be found on the SOT•Sem website (www.csbsju.edu/sot)

My call to ministry actually became apparent several years after I had started working for the church. What for me at the time was a detour from my “real vocation” as a high school English teacher was in fact the Holy Spirit at work in my life. During my first few years as coordinator of faith formation and youth ministry, I was sure I would return to a traditional classroom. But after five years at my “temporary” church job, I began graduate study and that process of learning and formation helped me see that God was calling me to use gifts and talents to help form young people in Christian discipleship. Over the past 15-plus years, there have been days when my work has been frustrating, and I’ve wanted to quit. Whenever I have wavered, however, God presents a new opportunity in my ministry or someone tells me how I have impacted his or her life. At those moments I understand that the call is about staying steady, in good times and bad, knowing that it is God who will show the way forward

*Alice Duffy-Meyer,
MA, Pastoral Ministry 2004
Coordinator of Youth Ministry and RCIA,
Austin Catholic Community, Austin MN*



From the Director of Development

Grace Ellens

I have wonderful memories of growing up in St. Boniface Parish in Cold Spring, Minnesota. Life seemed to revolve around the parish where our two Benedictine priests were involved in running every aspect of the parish community. A few lay people performed some of the ministries like lecturing, but little else.

Today, lay ministers are taking on roles that were once performed exclusively by priests. The average parish will likely have one priest (no matter the size) who will now be collaborating with ten or more lay ministers doing everything from overseeing faith formation, planning liturgies, managing the budget and personnel, leading, and ministering to the sick and homebound. This is increasingly necessary in places like the Diocese of St. Cloud where almost every priest cares for two or more parishes. But the increase in lay ministers is more than responding to scarcity.

Dean Bill Cahoy often says that this increased role for lay ministers is intentional as the Holy Spirit moves in the church today, calling lay people to active roles of leadership in the Church. Saint John's School of Theology•Seminary provides these emerging pastoral leaders with the foundational training they need to serve effectively. At the School, lay ministers study alongside priests, monks, and nuns – each learning from the experiences of one other. Our student body represents dozens

of countries each year, preparing all students to serve in an increasingly global church. Our top-notch faculty members regularly bring pastoral concerns into each class, helping equip our students for ministry in a challenging world.

Your financial support means that the students Natalie Regan recruits can receive much needed assistance to meet the steep costs of a graduate education. Your support enables us to continue innovative programming like the Jerusalem Program, the Monastic Institute, Conversatio Lifelong Learning, and Youth In Theology and Ministry (YTM). It helps us build and maintain a strong faculty so that the work of people like Bernie Evans and Kathy Cox continues to demonstrate how theological scholarship informs everyday life. Your investment in this school and its mission pays off richly as you help equip women and men to serve the mission of the Gospel as pastoral leaders and as theological teachers.

As much as I enjoyed the parish of my youth, I would not trade it for the church of today. I am excited about the new forms of ministry and about the role Saint John's School of Theology•Seminary plays in supporting new and current ministers. It is part of the process of advancing the mission of Christ to which we are all called.

Safe Food: A Matter of Faith continued from page 16

earth's resources to provide our food. He urged faith communities to consider applications of this belief by joining the emerging food revolutions which include organic farming, community supported agriculture, farmers' markets, and the developing relationships between producers and restaurants or retailers. He stressed how appropriate it is for people of faith to lead in developing an ecological consciousness. "We are called to be people of hope and to do the right thing even when it carries uncertainties and costs."

Following Dr. Kirschenmann's presentation, a panel of representatives from each of the Consortium schools offered a response based on their own theological perspectives. In a related activity, students from each of the Consortium schools prepared statements on what their denomination's social teachings say about this issue. Anne Rayhawk, a third-year MDiv student represented Saint John's, writing on Life for the World: Catholic Social Teaching on Food & Faith.

Dr. Kirschenmann's entire address, as well as the panel response, is available through a video stream found on the web site of the Minnesota Consortium of Theological Schools (www.mncts.net). The Northland Ministry Partnership hopes to sponsor a second Food and Faith Conference in the Spring of 2012. Anyone interested in offering suggestions for this second event may contact Bernie Evans (bevans@csbsju.edu) who chairs the NMP.

Questions about super weeds, the environmental impact of farming practices, and the safety of our food are simply indicators that public scrutiny and ethical discourse around food and agriculture are long overdue. In promoting public discussion within our theological schools and, by extension, in our congregations, the NMP argues that issues like the long-term sustainability of our nation's food system is a matter of the common good. It would also argue that issues like this are matters of faith.

MILESTONES

George Allen and **Lino Rulli** completed their terms on the Board of Overseers this spring. We are deeply grateful for their service, wise counsel, and support for the work of the School of Theology•Seminary. We welcome new Board members: **Don and Rita Kainz**; **Rev. Robert Flannery**; **Abbot Placid Solar, OSB**; **Rev. James Dillenburg**; **Steven and Debra Koop**; **John Boyle**; and **Marilyn Scapanski**.

Stephen Arnold (MDiv, 2010) was ordained to the permanent diaconate for the Diocese of Saint Cloud on Saturday, June 5, 2010, at Saint Mary's Cathedral in Saint Cloud, Minnesota. Steve, his wife, Christy (MA in Pastoral Ministry, 2003) and their four children live in Melrose, Minnesota, where Steve works at Saint Mary's Parish. Congrats to Stephen and Christy!

Joel Cassady (MA candidate, Church History) and **Kathryn Janssen** (MA in Pastoral Ministry, 2009) were married July 17, 2010 in Collegeville, Minnesota.

Gregory Congote, OSB (2010) was ordained to transitional diaconate at Mount Michael Abbey, Elkhorn, NE on May 22, 2010.

S. Denise Mosier, OSB (Monastic Studies Certificate, 1989) died in a car accident on August 1, 2010 in Bristow, VA.

Jill Pawlowski (MDiv, 2009), Licensed Local Pastor, has been appointed by Bishop Sally Dyck, United Methodist Church, to Hewitt and Verndale, Minnesota (North Star District) effective August 1.

Paul Radkowski (MA in Liturgical Studies, 2007) and his wife, **Rose**, moved from St. Cloud, Minnesota, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in July so Rose can pursue a library science degree. Rose has served the SOT•Sem as the Director of Marketing and Communications and then as the Development Associate and Alumni/ae Association Coordinator.

Jeanne Marie Kohr (MA, Liturgical Studies, 2002) and Erick Blair Miles were married on June 19, 2010 in Kansas City, MO.

Michelle Kate Weber (MA in Liturgical Studies, 2008) and Michael Allen were married in San Francisco, March 20, 2010.

Fred Baumer and **Fr. William Skudlarek, OSB** are on the committee for the soon-to-be-released commentary and reprinting of *Fulfilled in Your Hearing* that will be published by Liturgical Press. Fr. William and Fred served on the original drafting committee for the USCCB that produced this landmark document on preaching in 1982. Fred and Patricia Hughes Baumer are SOT•Sem adjunct instructors for Homiletics and Fr. William Skudlarek is currently Secretary General, Monastic Interreligious Dialogue in Rome.

IN HOPE OF RESURRECTION:

Alumni

1945 Rev. Burton Bloms, OSB
1946 Rev. Edwin Stueber, OSB
1947 Rev. Paul Marx, OSB
1947 Rev. Stanley F. Roche, OSB
1950 Rev. Severin C. Schwieters
1957 Rev. Eugene K. Lemm
1960 Willard P. Prom
1963 S. Mary Jean Tuttle, OSB
1963 Rev. James C. Tuxbury, OFM

Relatives and Friends

Deacon Cecil Adams, Jr.
Ruth M. Anderson
Julia Benkowski
Josephine M. Burdick
Dorothy Colianni
Alex D. and Ann Didier
Rev. Raymond Donnay
Marcus Fink
Miranda Hemmesch
Deacon Mark Innocenti
Eileen C. Jonas
S. Grace Kowalski, OSB
Rev. Robert A. Kulas
Joan Lehner
Donald and Elaine Meier
Lillian J. Michels
S. Denise Mosier, OSB
Edna Mueller
Jay Nelson
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Saint John's School of Theology·Seminary UPCOMING EVENTS:

OCTOBER

- 17–22 Ministerial Renewal Retreat: What Makes Community?
- 21 Theology Day (Basilica of Saint Mary, Minneapolis)
"Call and Response: Young Adults and the Church"
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 27–28 24-Hour Seminar: Surviving Ministry
- 28 Theology Day (Church of Saint Mary, Alexandria, MN).
"Call and Response: Young Adults and the Church"
6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER

- 5 Theology Day (Collegeville)
"Health Care and Immigration Reform: In Search of the
Common Good"
8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- 7–12 Ministerial Renewal Retreat: *Conversatio* and the
Life of Ministry
- 8–9 24-Hour Seminar: Surviving Ministry
- 15–16 The Calling to Poetry: A Retreat For Pastoral Ministers
featuring Michael Dennis Browne
- 19 Theology Day (Collegeville)
"Health Care and Immigration Reform: In Search of the
Common Good"
8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

DECEMBER

- 9 Theology Day (Basilica of Saint Mary, Minneapolis)
"Health Care and Immigration Reform: In Search of the
Common Good"
6:00 – 9:00 p.m.
- 16 Theology Day (Church of Saint Mary, Alexandria, MN)
"Health Care and Immigration Reform: In Search of the
Common Good"
6:30 – 9:00 p.m.
- 16–17 24 Hour Seminar: Has Catechesis Failed?

JANUARY

- 21 Theology Day (Collegeville)
"What's Happening to the Mass?
The New Translation Explained"
8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
- 23–28 Ministerial Renewal Retreat
- 27 Theology Day (Church of Saint Mary, Alexandria, MN)
"What's Happening to the Mass?
The New Translation Explained"
6:30 – 9:00 p.m.

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