



Mount St. Mary's Seminary

I Give You the Keys to the *Kingdom*



FOR MANY OF THE SEMINARIANS AT MOUNT ST. MARY'S, THE CHURCH HAS ALWAYS BEEN LED BY THE POWERFUL AND LOVING EXAMPLE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II. IN FACT, HIS GREAT DEVOTION TO TRUTH—EMBODIED IN THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST—INFLUENCED MANY OF THOSE MEN TO CONSIDER THE PRIESTHOOD AS A POSSIBILITY IN THEIR LIVES.



By Thomas J. Doyle, Jr., First Theology, Diocese of Rockford

Sadly, on April 2, the soul of Christ's Chief Shepherd departed the world, leaving behind an unmatched legacy of love and hope for a world confused in its priorities and hungering for true fulfillment.

Regardless of the early hour (around 4 a.m.), most seminarians sacrificed the comfort of their beds to join a billion people worldwide in marveling at the joy, splendor and simplicity that surrounded the life of John Paul II.

Several commented on the ecumenical aspect of the funeral and how the Spirit of Christ brings people together. Kris Meiergerd (Wichita, '10) says, "John Paul really touched people beyond the Catholic world. I was amazed by all the news programs and papers that made an effort to respond positively, to show how he made an impact on many people's lives."

(I Give You the Keys to the Kingdom continued inside front cover)



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(I Give You the Keys to the Kingdom continued from cover)

While many of the men have their own personal memory of the funeral Mass, Meiergerd recalls his: “The image that touched me was when the pallbearers took the casket at the end and, before exiting, turned to the people and presented it to the congregation. It gave the people their last view of him, their last chance to pay their respects.”

Jim Livingston (Savannah, '08) noted, “It is a tremendous blessing to have been alive during (John Paul II’s) pontificate. We have so much to be thankful for in the life of John Paul II. He’s one of the greatest popes ever and one of the most important figures of the century. He truly changed the world, bringing the light of Christ to every corner of the globe.”

So the world, as well as the seminary, awaited the announcement of the man who would lead them boldly and faithfully into the Third Millennium. The seminary as a community respectfully observed the official mourning period for the Holy Father (the Novendiales) and also prayed a novena for the ensuing conclave. Most TVs in the house were tuned to cable news channels, all closely observing the chimney of the Sistine Chapel.

The world did not have to wait long, for April 19 white smoke appeared. Seminarians rushed to the nearest television or to the house rec room to watch as history was made. Meiergerd fondly recalls, “Seeing on the TV all those Romans running to the piazza, how the bells brought them running, reminds me of children running to greet their father when he comes home at night.” The energy level was high, as about 50-75 seminarians, faculty and guests gathered for the announcement, “Habemus papam!”

Then, with a hushed nervousness, everyone strained to hear the name of the new pope: Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger. Loud cheers erupted through the room, and even more came when the pope’s name, Benedict XVI, was announced. Pope Benedict emerged on the loggia of St. Peter’s Basilica to a standing ovation, both in Rome and at the Mount, and began what looks to be a tenure filled with hope, unity and truth. For many people around the world, the sight of Pope Benedict emerging on the balcony will be forever seared into their memories as the first new pope in their lifetime.

The community did not need a long time to begin reflecting on the impact Pope Benedict will have on seminary life. Two days after the election, Deacon James de Anda (Omaha, '05) beautifully weaved into his homily the first words of Benedict XVI: “Let us remember that we have been called by Christ to serve with charity. . . . We are all humble workers in the vineyard of the Lord.”

Jim Livingston reflected, “It is the perfect choice. I want to read all of his works and better acquaint myself with our new Holy Father. I’m very excited to see where the Holy Spirit will lead him and Christ’s Church. Undoubtedly, he will preserve the legacy of John Paul II.”

So, as the Holy Father begins his task of shepherding God’s flock, many here at the Mount continue to rejoice in God’s loving providence and pray for His blessings on Benedict XVI. Viva il Papa!

Hispanic Ministry Program Thrives at the Mount

By Bryan W. Jerabek, *First Theology, Diocese of Birmingham in Alabama*

Over the past several years, Mount St. Mary's Seminary has developed a first-rate Hispanic ministry program and has added a number of Hispanic seminarians to its student body—largely under the leadership of former rector, Bishop Kevin C. Rhoades.

These seminarians, originally hailing from Mexico and several other Latin American countries but studying for American dioceses, enhance the diversity of the seminary household and enable a mutual exchange of cultures among the men of the seminary community. As the Hispanic population in the United States continues to grow at a rapid pace, the Hispanic ministry program and the presence of Hispanic seminarians enable the Mount to prepare men who will serve the needs of the church in America well.

The 2005-06 academic year brings a significant demographic enhancement to the seminary student body. For the first time ever, two Hispanic men were enrolled who are studying for their native diocese. At the invitation of the seminary, **SAÚL FONSECA-MARTÍNEZ** and **JOSÉ MERA-VALLEJOS** came to the Mount from the Diocese of Cajamarca in Peru.

"I was very excited from the beginning to be able to host two seminarians from Peru. One of the things I sought was a way to express our support and communion and solidarity with the church in Latin America," said Bishop Rhoades, when asked about his motives as rector for expanding the seminary's enrollment to men from a foreign diocese.

The bishop of the Diocese of Cajamarca, José Carmelo Martínez-Lázaro, was overwhelmed with the financial burden of educating his seminarians. Looking for help abroad, he was attracted to the solid formation programs that many American seminaries offer, and explored the possibility of sending Saúl and José to a number of them, including Mount St. Mary's. Many factors contributed to his decision

ultimately to send his men to the Mount, including its solid reputation for being committed to the teachings of the church, strong English as a Second Language (ESL) program, and deep priestly spirituality centered on the Holy Eucharist and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In addition, Bishop Rhoades was able to offer a full tuition scholarship to both men, and with further generous support from individuals and the Knights of Columbus, Saúl and José are now able to study in the United States without financially burdening their diocese.

"Their presence is an enrichment of our seminary that allows our own student body to understand the church in Latin America."

—Rev. J. Daniel Mindling, *academic dean*

Coming to the United States marked a major change in their lives. Both men come from small rural communities in areas surrounding Cajamarca, a city located in the mountainous northern region of Peru. In addition, neither one had ever studied English. "We both come from farms," José said, referring to the trade of his and Saúl's families. Their parents and several of their siblings work on their family farms. "This was the first time we have traveled from our country," Saúl said

They began ESL studies at the Mount as soon as they arrived in the United States in March of 2004. After only six months of preparation, they enrolled in English-language classes with other First Theology students in Fall 2004. In addition to the demanding schedule of ESL and theology classes, Saúl and José have been active in many seminary activities, including the Hispanic Schola and assisting with house social events.

Not only have Saúl and José shared their rich culture with the seminary community, they have also set a sterling example, diligently working to succeed in classes and

the other areas of formation while simultaneously learning the language and culture of the United States. "Their presence is an enrichment of our seminary that allows our own student body to understand the church in Latin America," said the Rev. J. Daniel Mindling, academic dean.

It has not been an easy task, but they are meeting the challenge heroically and, God willing, will return to Peru in four years with the benefit of a solid Mount formation to serve their people well.



Seminarians Saúl Fonseca-Martínez and José Mera-Vallejos from the Diocese of Cajamarca in Peru

ASSOCIATION OF THEOLOGICAL SCHOOLS REVISITS SEMINARY CAMPUS

By the Rev. J. Daniel Mindling,
Seminary Academic Dean

In April, the Association of Theological Schools and the Middle States Association visited the Mount. This was the first time these two accrediting agencies had conducted a concurrent accrediting visit of the seminary.

Earlier, in 2003, the ATS granted the seminary a 10-year re-accreditation. The ATS returned, at the invitation of the seminary administration, in order to allow the Middle Atlantic States regional visit of the university as a whole to take place at the same time as the national accrediting of the seminary.

Accreditation guarantees recognition throughout the country of the quality of the seminary's two master's degrees: the Master of Divinity (M.Div.) and the Master of Arts (theology). In an on-site visit, professional peers review the goals, programs and outcomes of the seminary against a set of regional and national standards.

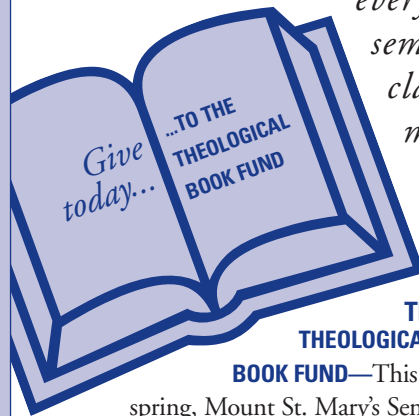
The team particularly studied the library's theology collection and the recently inaugurated portfolio component of the M.A. research requirement. Writing the special design self-study in preparation for this visit allowed the seminary faculty and administration to chart the goals and strategies of the next decade. The visiting team's final report serves as a valuable peer evaluation and point of reference and accountability. The visit was a great success!

Seminary Annual Fund Reaches New Record!

By S. Renee Miller, Seminary Development Administrative Assistant

At the beginning of this fiscal year, the seminary had a mission to reach an ambitious annual fund goal of \$200,000 by June 30. On April 20, we met that goal and are still counting! Every gift—no matter how large or small—means a great deal and is extremely treasured.

Contributions to the seminary annual fund help meet the everyday expenses of running the seminary, including supporting classroom technology, supplies, maintaining buildings and grounds, utilities and general support purchases.



YET THERE IS MORE THAT NEEDS TO BE DONE:

THEOLOGICAL BOOK FUND—This

spring, Mount St. Mary's Seminary was visited by an accreditation team from the Association of Theological Schools. The team reviewed the seminary degree programs against nationally recognized standards of excellence. For the past year the seminary has made special efforts to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the theological holdings in the Phillips Library.

We have been blessed with the services of a graduate assistant who worked closely with the library staff to compare our holdings with peer institutions and with professionally accepted lists of books that should be in a seminary library. The ATS Commission will not issue its final report until June, but we recognize the need to increase our collection. *Gifts to this fund are important to ensure the seminarians have the books on the shelf to support their graduate-level study of Catholic theology.*

PRIESTS FOR THE THIRD MILLENNIUM—This

is an endowment fund used to increase the finances available for faculty enhancement, classes, seminars, retreats, salaries and conferences. This fund also makes finances available for seminary programs such as Pastoral Field Education, English as a Second Language, Hispanic Ministry and the summer language program in Mexico. *Donations to this fund assist the seminary in keeping the quality of faculty and programs at the very highest of standards and create a superior learning environment for seminarians to grow in faith and knowledge.*

Please consider a gift to our Theological Book Fund, Priests for the Third Millennium, or an additional gift to our seminary annual fund.

HOW YOU CAN GIVE:

- Online at WWW.MSMARY.EDU/SEMINARY. Click "Online giving form." Please note to which fund you would like your gift to be applied.
- Contact the Office of Seminary Development at 301-447-5017, or via email at rmiller@msmary.edu.

THANK YOU AND GOD BLESS!

Seminary Mourns the Death of the Rev. Curtis Delarm, S'89

BELOVED SON OF THE MOUNT SUCCEMBS TO EIGHT-YEAR STRUGGLE WITH ALS

By John Lavorgna, *Second Theology, Archdiocese of Hartford*

The seminary community remembers with fondness and gratitude the tremendous priestly example of the **REV. CURTIS DELARM**, an alumnus of Harrisburg, who passed away peacefully on April 9 in his rectory. He was 41 years old and had been diagnosed eight years earlier with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease.

The ability to embrace suffering with faith in God is the mark of a true Christian. People around the world witnessed Pope John Paul II manifest this grace during his final days on earth after years of physical deterioration. At the same time, but much closer to home, Father Delarm also demonstrated how to trust in our Lord even in the face of a terrible illness. The impression he made was just as deep and profound.

"So many people would look at Father Curtis and see how he carried such a debilitating disease with tremendous grace and peace. He knew God would take care of him." —Carol Houghton, Ph.D.

"Father Curtis lived a very heroic life," said Carol Houghton, Ph.D., diocesan chancellor and professor of canon law at the seminary, and a member of the parish in which Father Delarm resided since the time of his diagnosis. "So many people would look at Father Curtis and see how he carried such a debilitating disease with tremendous grace and peace. He knew God would take care of him." Houghton noted that more than 55 parishioners immediately volunteered to provide care and companionship to Father Delarm when news of his condition was made public.

In recent years, Father Delarm would return to the Mount for alumni reunion festivities and would concelebrate the Mass from his wheelchair, as he would normally do in the parish. His extraordinary efforts to live out



his priesthood were recognized by the seminary in 2001, when he received the John Cardinal McCloskey Award. It was a recognition that meant a great deal to Father Delarm.

The Rev. Robert Zylla, OSC, the longest serving member of the faculty, remembers well the seminary days of Father Delarm, and beautifully described his Christian spirit. "Father Curtis gave witness even while in the seminary of his character, so well suited to the priesthood. He can be described as calm and peaceful, regardless of the ups and downs of seminary life. It spoke of a profound trust in God and in His Providence. He lived and died that way, even in his lengthy illness. It was his God-given mission to evangelize first and foremost by his example. A wonderful priest!"

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INSIDE

I Give You *the Keys to the Kingdom*

Hispanic Ministry Program Thrives at the Mount

Seminary Mourns the Death of the *Rev. Curtis Delarm, S'89*

Association of Theological Schools Revisits Seminary Campus

Seminary Annual Fund *Reaches New Record!*

Seminary Newsletter photography by David Hasser, Second Theology, Diocese of Lafayette

EXPERIENCE A SUMMER LAY RETREAT AT THE MOUNT!

Healing and rebirth for body and soul



Enjoy a summer retreat at Mount St. Mary's Seminary. Give your body and soul time to relax from day-to-day life and enjoy the warm sun and refreshing air on the mountain named in honor of the mother of Christ!

UNION WITH GOD—REUNION WITH OTHERS: HEALING, FORGIVENESS AND HOLINESS IN TODAY'S WORLD

Conducted by the Rev. Jack Lombardi
July 8-10, 2005

This weekend will explore ways to achieve forgiveness and reconciliation with God and those in the world through silence, spiritual conferences, devotions and a healing service. Also discover why it is hard to forgive and the need for reconciling!

For more information and to register contact the Grotto Office at 301-447-5318 or email grotto@msmary.edu