



ST. MARY'S
SEMINARY & UNIVERSITY

Annual Report 2019

Faith. Courage. Renewal.

FROM EASTER TO PENTECOST

Moving from 2019 to 2020 marked the beginning of a new era for St. Mary's. Construction is underway on our 16 million-dollar renovation of seminarian living and common spaces, transforming St. Mary's 100-year-old dormitory-style seminary into a twenty-first century residence, education, and formation center for men in formation for the priesthood of today. St. Mary's is moving beyond its past and into the future, retaining the sound values and traditions of Sulpician formation that undergird our formation of holy, healthy, happy, mature and effective priests for service in the United States. St. Mary's has been at this continuously for 229 years, continuing to learn how to do better what we do every step of the way. We have especially learned a lot in the past few years by reflecting seriously on how we can do things even better. St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute has also established exciting new programs, including a new Doctor of Ministry, focusing on the future, and continues to encourage and welcome its students. This Annual Report, as always, is our opportunity to thank all our donors in a special way — your confidence and generosity enable us to move forward boldly and with great faith. We cannot succeed in our mission without your support!

Adding to \$16 million from our own resources and a very generous contribution from the U.S. Province of the Society of St. Sulpice to renovate our building, an additional \$9 million in philanthropic support will enable us to establish innovative new programs incorporating new insights into how to form solid, virtuous and effective

priests and pastors. We are over half-way to our private philanthropy goal, and 85% to our overall \$25 million goal. We are extremely grateful to our campaign leadership and those who have already made a commitment.

Our plans are bold and hopeful, but will involve challenges, not least of which is moving beyond the scandals of recent years to a renewed priesthood and Church. Our mission is too important to wait for others to lead. We're motivated, we know where we're going, and we have faith in the future. We welcome whoever wants to join us in our efforts to renew the priesthood and the Church.

While gaining momentum, we could not have anticipated a worldwide pandemic. In early March we had to ask our seminarians to return home and staff to work from home. It's strange not having the seminarians here, but also an opportunity to slow down and reflect more deeply on our normal activity and what we are all about. After the seminarians left, I began

writing weekly letters, *Letters from the Park*, which we are sending to the seminarians and posting on our website (<http://www.stmarys.edu>) with reflections on the current situation.

The semester has not yet ended. We continue with online classes and formation activities so our seminarians can finish their courses and the basics of formation. We look forward to being together again in the fall, when we will have a postponed graduation ceremony at the end of Alumni Days, an important milestone in the lives of our



seminarians (then priests!—the goal of our seminary program).

Our campaign theme is: Faith-Courage-Renewal. We didn't have to look far for this theme; we looked to our seminarians and their commitment to becoming priests in a challenging and unusual time. Three of them, Jonathan Kuhar, Scranton, Student Body President, Matt Hawkins, Pittsburgh, and Evan Ponton, Baltimore, all graduating, wrote essays on the theme you will find in this report.

Some ask if this is really a good time for such bold initiatives. A co-chair of our campaign responds, "If not now, when? If not us, who?" There could be no more important time to have faith, to be courageous, for efforts to renew St. Mary's, the priesthood and the Church. Faith is required: faith that it can be done; faith that it's worth doing; faith that we will succeed, most importantly through God's grace. Faith gives us courage to make the decisions that have to be made, to commit ourselves to the task, to summon up steely determination to persevere and succeed. Full renewal lies ahead, but we know we are on the right path. God has already blessed us with success in our efforts. The attitude of our chairs has inspired us and reflects what faith is really all about: The Paschal Mystery we celebrated from Good Friday to Easter, that finds full meaning in the Resurrection we celebrate from now until Pentecost.

The Paschal Mystery is about the events that brought about our salvation and their meaning: the suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus. Unique historical events paradigmatic of human existence itself: suffering, a feature at some time in everyone's life, and in every era; death, an inescapable feature of human experience; and resurrection, restoration of life on many levels following suffering and death. Most importantly for believers is the restoration, or rather continuation of life after suffering and death, that Jesus reveals in the Resurrection and its important message that life is stronger than death, love stronger than suffering and death, which leads not only to life restored but life richer and fuller than before, richer and fuller than we could ask or imagine. And so we say, "If



*Rev. Phillip J. Brown, P.S.S.
President Rector*

not now, when? If not us, who?" It is in the midst of the very worst that life has to offer, betrayal and scandal, overwhelming natural calamities, that we are given the opportunity to become the best of who we are, to leave the worst behind, and to learn how to live in hope even when the outcome seems uncertain. Through perseverance and faith, determination and good will, suffering and death are conquered; scandal dissipates; faith and life are renewed, stronger, more potent and more positive than ever before. That is what propels us in this moment. We have been given a vision of the future, the light of which transcends the darkness of the present moment or the past. It is the vision our seminarians reveal through their courage by stepping up to serve the Church and the people of God in these times, and through their positive attitude; a vision the Ecumenical Institute radiates; a vision that instills hope and bolsters our determination to lead in bringing about the renewal of St. Mary's, the priesthood and the Church, to foster unity and understanding among all Christians thus building up the larger Church, fueled by the grace of God. My deepest gratitude to you who support St. Mary's in so many ways.

Fr. Phillip J. Brown, P.S.S.

Faith

Rev. Mr. Jonathan Kuhar, Diocese of Scranton



Rev. Mr. Jonathan Kuhar baptizes a new member of the faith community at his pastoral assignment, The Cathedral of Mary Our Queen, February 2020.



As I begin to shift my gaze away from the seminary and toward ordination to the priesthood, I know that only faith will sustain me and my brothers as we begin this new relationship with God and his people. It is only through the grace of faith that we will receive the courage needed to persevere in His work and the inspiration to bring about renewal in the Church and the world. In some ways, the seminary provides a bit of respite from the world, a unique place which allows each man in community the ability to connect with God and the Church in a deep and transformative way. But eventually we all leave, and upon emerging from the nurturing warmth of the seminary we need to

be steeled in our faith, prepared for ministry in a world which looks very much different from only a few years ago, let alone from generations past. The pace of change is rapidly increasing and we need a resilient faith that can maintain us on the path of discipleship and that can respond to the needs of the people we will encounter as we all work our way through a troubling world.

At this moment in history we ever more intensely need a faith that sustains us. We need a faith which tells us that, although we might be exiting a period of history which has been largely characterized by comfort and safety, we need “not fear the terror of the night” because Christ the Good Shepherd guards and guides our path. We also need a faith that forms a bulwark against those fleeting but intense moments of doubt: doubts about God, doubts about the Church, doubts about people. We need a faith strong enough to combat the ever-present temptation to despair which lurks around so many corners.

We need faith in the Church. Although some members of the Church have turned away from God and performed nearly unforgivable acts, the Church remains holy and dedicated to God’s work; although there are growing divisions in the Church, the Church remains united and her doors remain open to all; although the world is changing quickly and the Church continues to develop her teachings in response, the Church will always remain faithful to Christ’s teachings because she is guided and protected by the Holy Spirit.

We each need faith in ourselves and in each other: a faith that gives the strength to wade into the dark and broken parts of people’s lives; a faith that enables us to avoid the allure of the simple but vacuous answer; a faith that gives us the courage to be truly introspective, to recognize both our own brokenness as well as the truth that we are all created good and holy; a faith that enables us to patiently await the often slow work of God’s transforming grace; a faith that opens the door to our becoming instruments of God’s charity in the world, and which opens our mouths to say “speak Lord for your servant is listening;” a faith that knows that God can come close to us, which inspires the courage to call upon God to enter our lives and transform our hearts.

Above all, we need a very real and tangible faith in the Resurrection, a faith that goes beyond a theoretical and merely cognitive mental awareness, but one that penetrates deep into our being and initiates and sustains an affective transformation. Without this transformation, the scales remain on our eyes, scales which prevent us from seeing beyond death, scales which cause us to see death as a permanent end and an insurmountable barrier. Once those scales have fallen away we can truly see that through death comes life eternal, and this impacts how we view all of creation. We need a faith in genuine hope that will buoy us through the dark valleys of life because we have our eyes set firmly on our Lord, the bringer of life.

I pray that the Lord grants me and all of us all this kind of faith.



Most Rev. Ronald W. Gainer, Bishop of Harrisburg, presided at the Rite of Candidacy in November 2019. (L-R, Deacons Evan Ponton (Baltimore) and Tom Lanza (Metuchen) and Acolyte Dennis Walker (Syracuse))

Courage

Rev. Mr. C. Matthew Hawkins, Diocese of Pittsburgh



Most Rev. David Zubik (SMSU 1975), Auxiliary Bishop William Waltersheid, Rev. Mr. Michael Faix and Rev. Mr. Matthew Hawkins radiate with joy as they acknowledge the guests after Rev. Mr. Hawkins' Diaconate ordination.



I am not a cradle Catholic, for the first twenty years of my life, I was a member of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. I entered full communion with the Catholic Church forty years ago, longer than most of my brothers in seminary have been alive. My calling to the priesthood came later in life than is typical, it came after four decades of working in the field of community economic development and teaching in higher education. The household and neighborhoods I grew up in are not typical for the average seminarian; I spent most of my life crossing back-and-forth between African American working-class neighborhoods and institutions that were somewhat removed from the life of my community. It is within this context that I bring a unique perspective and appreciation for the importance of the seminary life at St. Mary's. Life in the seminary is essential for the formation of holy priests who will serve God and meet the challenges of today's world.

The priests of tomorrow must have faith and courage to participate in God's work of renewing the Church. God works in subtle ways as the Holy Spirit prepares seminarians to reveal the face of Jesus Christ to a world that is searching for its true identity. St. Mary's contributes to the formation of men to be configured to the heart of Christ, regardless of the stage of life they are in, or their prior experiences and background. St. Mary's has provided me with opportunities to develop a depth of theological understanding within a supportive community of other men who are making this journey. During every

class, we not only strengthen our intellectual grasp of the sacraments, sacred scripture, theology, and the history of the church, we also develop our pastoral understanding. We are taught to think about how we will apply what we know in a parish setting. Bishops and the people of God, in general, will need good priests. The entire experience at St. Mary's has led me to spiritual growth and a deeper life of prayer.

St. Mary's is located amid universities and prep schools on the outskirts of Baltimore, a great American city abounding in Catholic history. This means that seminarians are not too far removed from the hopes and anxieties, the complexity and spiritual challenges of the people we will serve in our parishes. St. Mary's is also surrounded by fields and trees, setting it off from the hustle and bustle of the city. This provides seminarians with an opportunity for quiet reflection and prayer.

As a person who was not born within the formal structure of the Catholic Church, I found that theological studies at St. Mary's have given me a fuller understanding and appreciation for the liturgical and sacramental life of the Church. This will be essential when, as a priest, I invite parishioners to receive Christ, who dwells among us, so that they will not take their life-in-Christ for granted or treat worship, prayer, and devotions as something where they are simply going through the motions. Renewal within the Church means that all of us must be open to allow the Holy Spirit to bring about a conversion of our hearts and our minds. This authentic encounter with the risen Lord is what all of humanity is longing to experience.

There is no doubt that the work ahead will be in God's hands. God will continue to be at work in our lives and in the Church. But there is also no doubt that men of courage and faith are called to respond to the gifts that God has given to us and to share the things he has blessed us with. We have been blessed to have the experience of seminary formation so that we will have the strength and the wisdom, as priests, to go out and live the Gospel in the world. We each have a part to play in all of this; the sacrifices that we make -- however large or small -- will become the font of many blessings in a world that is hungry for God. My five years at St. Mary's have been indispensable in preparing me for that journey.



Matt Hawkins accepts the gifts at during a special Mass celebrating the Feast of St. Anthony of Padua in Pittsburgh.



Rev. Mr. Kevin Holland (Erie) distributed ashes on Ash Wednesday, February 26, 2020.

Renewal

Rev. Mr. Evan Ponton, Archdiocese of Baltimore



Fr. Brown and Rev. Mr. Jonathan Kuhar welcomed all the new seminarians and faculty members at the Covenant liturgy to begin the new academic year, August 2019.



Driving in and out of Baltimore on I-95, you can't miss the big red letters, "WHAT IS AND WHAT CAN BE." The words are painted across the sprawling warehouse of Second Chance Inc., a local nonprofit that restores and sells salvaged and repurposed building materials and home furnishings. Their mission is to "Retrain, Reclaim, Renew." Whenever I pass these words, I think of our Church. What is and what can be, I wonder. A lot in recent years has made me think hard about what "is." My experience at St. Mary's has helped me to imagine what can be.

I know renewal is possible because I've experienced steady transformation

within myself and the fruit of my own faith journey. Now, on the cusp of ordination to the presbyterate, I pray for courage to take the next step along this path called discipleship. Words cannot express my gratitude to the friends, family, and formators who first saw the seed of a vocation, who dared to take a chance on me, and challenge me to become the man God knows I can be. Glory to God, “who is able to accomplish far more than all we ask or imagine” (Eph 3:20).

When I began seminary, I could not have imagined the challenges facing ministry today. However, I better recognize now how priests of each new generation must have felt! The hope for renewal in every age is a sign the Spirit has not given up on the Church.

In our frenzied rush for diagnoses and prescriptions for the latest problems, I sometimes wonder if what ails us is not a lack of time, talent, the right resources, or even motivation, but a lack of *imagination*, what Eugene Peterson described as “the capacity to make connections between the visible and the invisible, between heaven and earth, between present and past, between present and future.” In seminary training, we aspire to fluency in the Church’s language of sacrament and mystery, which shapes our thoughts and sensitivities to become better attuned to the *image* of God in others, more patient to perceive “seeds of the Word” (*logoi spermatikoi*) buried in the rubble of sin and disappointment. It helps to remember the word “seminary” literally means “seedbed.” Seminary formation provides the wisdom and attention to help that seed grow. Imagination allows us to see what is and what can be.

As I see it, true and lasting renewal requires developing a priestly and prophetic imagination—a “transformed” and “renewed” mind (Rom 12:2)—that risks taking creative chances to faithfully proclaim the *Kerygma* in emerging pastoral circumstances. Gospel-centered renewal reveals Christ shining forth in a Church who is, in St. Augustine’s phrase, “ever ancient, ever new.” Faith is the “evidence of things not seen” (Heb 11:1), a supernatural vision that sees the world through the eyes of Christ. That means a readiness to seek the lost, notice the forgotten, discover joy in the ordinary, reverence for the living and dying of Jesus happening in one another.

Looking at the Church today, some see a scrap pile of rusted, irrelevant institutions. I see a second chance. The renewal of the Church means equipping and sending forth ministers of renewal. The seminary is an integral part of that process. I love being part of a community who sees its mission as providing parishes the kind of pastors they deserve. What will it take? *Faith to retrain* our ministers for vocational excellence and pastoral integrity. *Courage to reclaim* our priestly character and charism. *Imagination to renew* the priestly people of God for the work of the kingdom. What is and what can be!



Rev. Mr. Ponton with Fr. Michael Rubeling in front of the Leprosy Centre at Titagarh, Calcutta, Summer 2019.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

REVENUES FROM CURRENT OPERATIONS

Student Tuition and Fees	\$2,057,246
Gifts, Grants, Bequests and Donations (not including restricted gifts to other than current operations)	659,728
Contributed Services	181,395
Investment Income	3,873,461
Other Revenues	209,372
Auxiliary Enterprises	957,046
<i>Total Revenues from Current Operations</i>	<i>\$7,938,248</i>

EXPENDITURES

Instructional	\$2,524,604
Student Services	599,401
Library	304,967
Associated Archives	150,796
General Institutional	562,206
Administrative	1,254,877
Operation and Maintenance of Physical Plant	800,272
Student Aid and Scholarships	942,862
Auxiliary Enterprises	230,037
<i>Total Expenditures for Current Operations</i>	<i>\$7,370,022</i>
Transfer to Plant and Endowment Funds	\$568,226

With Gratitude



October 2019, St. Mary's Seminary Board of Trustees gathered for a special Mass and dinner to celebrate and thank Mr. David Kinkopf for 17 years of service to the Board, serving as Vice Chair for the last ten years on the Board. Mass was celebrated by Most Rev. William E. Lori, Archbishop of Baltimore, Most Rev. W. Francis Malooly, Bishop of Wilmington, and Fr. Phillip J. Brown, P.S.S. Dave was joined by his wife Kristen, his mother Marianne, daughter Catherine and son John.

Key July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019

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(l-r) Pattie & Mike Batza, Peggy & Charlie Obrecht and Sr. Helen Amos, RSM at a special reception honoring Cardinal O'Brien, November 2019.



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Alumni Day 2019 – (l-r) Fr. James Mazzone (SMSU 1999), Fr. Gladstone Stevens, P.S.S., Dean of the School of Theology, and Fr. Chuck Talar (SMSU 1974) in the Knott Library.





St. Mary's community and guests enjoy the annual Lessons & Carols Service, December 2019.

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Seminarians representing various Knights of Columbus councils are pictured with a bust of Fr. Michael J. McGivney in Laubacher Hall. Fr. McGivney was educated at St. Mary's Seminary & University in Baltimore, 1873-1877. From left to right, Nicholas Mwai (Baltimore), Michael Boris (Scranton), Brendan Foley, seated (Syracuse), James Gebhart (Wilmington), and Javier Fuentes (Baltimore). Photo by Brion McCarthy, courtesy of Columbia/Knights of Columbus.

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Youth Theological Studies students celebrate the completion of their program with Fr. Brown, Fr. Stevens and Mrs. Pat LeNoir, Director of the Program, December, 2019.

YOUTH THEOLOGICAL STUDIES AT ST. MARY'S

In 1999, thanks to a generous grant from the Lilly Endowment, St. Mary's Seminary established its Youth Theological Studies Program. The program enables high school juniors to study college-level theology for 15 weeks in the fall and earn three college credits transferable into any university program. The program was permanently endowed through the generosity of the late Mrs. Anne M. Pinkard and renamed The Pinkard Scholars Program in her honor in 2005. Rev. Gladstone Stevens, P.S.S., Dean of the School of Theology, teaches the course on Wednesday evenings. This innovative program is directed by Mrs. Patricia LeNoir. In December 2019 the following students completed the program:

Vasili Antoniadis	The Gilman School
Marianne Discher	The Catholic High School
Grace Gellerman	Institute of Notre Dame
Rosie Genzola	Mercy High School
Emma Gilbert	Maryvale Preparatory School
Tucker Hebert	The Gilman School
Emma Lynch	Maryvale Preparatory School
Carlene Phillander	Institute of Notre Dame
Lauren Ronald	Maryvale Preparatory School
Megan Triplett	The Catholic High School
Natalie Vancura	Mercy High School
Ella White	Maryvale Preparatory School
Josh Yang	The Gilman School

St. Mary's was one of a select number of seminaries awarded a supplemental grant for the Youth Theological Studies Program from the Lilly Endowment. This grant helps to sustain outstanding programs originally funded by the Lilly Endowment.



Seminarians at the Youth Rally and Mass for Life at the Verizon Center, January 2020. Pictured are (front row) Michael Boris (Scranton), Thiago Ibiapina (Worcester), Adam Feisthamel (Albany), David Wang (Zhaoxian), Paul Kongnyuy (Baltimore); (middle row) Brooks Jensen (Wilmington), Cleber DePaula, (Worcester), Khoa Tran (Baltimore), Andrew Kappenhagen (Harrisburg); (back row) Brian Norris (Altoona-Johnstown) Michael Misulia (Baltimore), David Ray (Baltimore), and Julio Bonilla (Worcester).

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Trustee and alumnus Msgr. Bruce Jarboe with Mr. and Mrs. Mal Pavik at the November reception.

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May 2019 - Fr. Robert Leavitt, P.S.S. signs his book for Fr. Fred Cwiekowski, P.S.S. at the reception celebrating the publication of his book, The Truth Will Make You Free: The New Evangelization for a Secular Age. Ms. Karen Garris, Rev. Mr. Tom Lanza (Metuchen), and Alexander Quach (Harrisburg) wait for Fr. Leavitt to inscribe their books.



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Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the gifts listed in the 2019 Annual Report. Please notify the Advancement Department at 410-864-4264 or ccarr@stmarys.edu if you notice any discrepancies or have any questions.



Cardinal O'Brien had special words of encouragement for the seminarians at the November event. (l-r – Rev. Mr. Kevin Holland (Erie), Ben Dagher (Erie), Rev. Mr. Evan Ponton (Baltimore), Kyle Gorenski (Albany), Cardinal O'Brien, Rev. Mr. Jonathan Kuhar (Scranton), Brian Norris (Altoona-Johnstown) and Carlos Ardila (Worcester))

Fr. Brown congratulates Mr. Rick Childs at a special luncheon in his honor as Rick retired from St. Mary's after 43 years of exemplary service as the Vice President of Finance, November 2019.



Renovation!



St. Mary's Seminary and the U.S. Sulpician Province are investing \$16,000,000 in the modernized environment of this historic building. Renovations of the Chapel were completed over the summer and allowed the seminarian community to enjoy an air-conditioned chapel with significantly improved lighting for the opening liturgy of the new academic year.

Renovation of the residence halls began in early fall. Third and fourth seminarians were historically assigned (2) adjacent rooms; one for sleeping and one for study. The renovated space will combine these two rooms to include bedroom, bathroom, and study space for all seminarians. The renovation will include meeting and laundry rooms as well as a small chapel on each floor.



The Campaign for St. Mary's Seminary & University

Inspired by faith we are creating a seminary for the future, not a former time, that will be recognized as preeminent among the best Catholic seminaries of today and tomorrow. The Church is entering a new era and St. Mary's is ready for it – for a Church in which trust and confidence have been dependently renewed.

Fr. Phillip J. Brown, P.S.S.

St. Mary's has also kicked off a \$9,000,000 campaign to endow four key priorities: Human Formation, Pastoral Formation, Ongoing Formation, and Scholarship Endowment. We would like to thank our honorary chairs, Cardinal Edwin O'Brien, Archbishop William Lori, Sr. Helen Amos, R.S.M., Mike Batza, Earl Linehan, Fr. Dan Moore, P.S.S.; our campaign chairs Clinton Daly and Dan Rizzo; and the following donors who have already made a commitment as of March 2020 to the Campaign.

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The entire community with Most Rev. William Lori after the Covenant Liturgy, August 2019.

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SEMINARY MISSION TO GUATEMALA



Fr. Ed Griswold and Seminarians (back row) Mike Misulia, Adam Feisthamel, Brian Norris, John Enemuo, Thomas Lanza, Peter Myers, Zachary Watson, Patrick Walsh, (front row) Benjamin Dagher, Kyle Gorenski, David Wang, Mark DeCelles, and Jonathan Kuhar traveled to Guatemala this year during the Christmas break to be among the people, serving and working alongside them, and also visiting the place of martyrdom of Blessed Fr. Stanley Rother, the first American priest to be beatified. This is the St. Mary's third annual trip to San Lucas Mission. These trips are sponsored by the St. Mary's Peace & Justice Committee. We are very grateful to the generous donors who supported the December 2019 trip listed on the next page.



One of the San Lucas Mission Coordinators gathers with Ben Dagher, John Enemyo, Fr. Ed Griswold, Patrick Walsh, and Adam Feisthamel at the site of the new Church that they were helping to build.



Hard working seminarian David Wang takes a much needed break in the shade from the Church construction project.



An important part of the San Lucas Mission trips is to become familiar with the culture and everyday life of the Guatemalan people. Here the St. Mary's team learns how the villagers do laundry in a communal "laundromat" built by the San Lucas Mission.

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St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute

Seeking wisdom. Nourishing faith. Engaging community.

A YEAR OF INNOVATIVE FIDELITY

The Ecumenical Institute's 51st year brought both new opportunities and challenges for its mission of offering excellent, ecumenical, engaged theological education. The 2019-2020 academic year included a planned program launch, a surprise scholarly celebration, and a rapid response to pandemic.

The Doctor of Ministry degree returned to Baltimore as the Ecumenical Institute launched its newly accredited program. Designed for students in all ecclesial traditions and ministry settings, the EI's DMin is truly ecumenical, grounding ministry in God's mission. The inaugural DMin class surpassed enrollment projections, demonstrating that the program fills a substantial need in the region. A capacity-building grant from the Osprey Foundation is adding resilience in the DMin program's early stages.

Excellence in theological programming began with the fall Dunning lecture by Marianne Meye Thompson of Fuller Theological Seminary. Her lecture, "Interpreting the Gospel of John: Writing a Commentary in Good Company," reminded us that there is always more in any scriptural text than any one interpreter can fathom.

The focus on excellence continued in the spring, with a surprising twist. A publicized event, "Cross & Resurrection in Matthew, Peter, & Paul," was also the occasion for the revelation of a scholarly honor. Dr. Gorman, the Raymond E. Brown Professor of Biblical Studies & Theology, was surprised by colleagues, family, and friends with a *festschrift*, a book of essays honoring his contribution to biblical studies. The surprise was unveiled at a dinner preceding the public program. At the program which followed, attendees

were stunned to hear from not three, but seven notable exegetes, including the incomparable Richard Hays.

In mid-March, the EI's mission of engaging community migrated to virtual modalities almost overnight. As the coronavirus pandemic emerged, classes went online, staff began teleworking, and social distancing became the extraordinary ordinary. Need elicited innovation, and the EI initiated weekly town hall meetings to sustain community and communicate wisdom; reconvened participants in the CONNECT certificate program for support and dialogue; and offered an online retreat for spiritual reflection.

A year that began in careful planning, blossomed in surprising celebration, and culminated in emergency response has been, from beginning to end, a year of innovative fidelity, of faith seeking understanding ... understanding making a difference.



Dr. Michael Gorman, surrounded by friends and colleagues, expresses genuine surprise as he receives the manuscript for a book of essays honoring his contribution to biblical studies, scheduled to be published November 2020.

ST. MARY'S ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE

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Family, friends and colleagues gathered to surprise Dr. Michael Gorman prior to the Lenten event, "Cross and Resurrection in Matthew, Peter, and Paul." Pictured left to right: (1st row) Joleah Gorman, Brian Gorman, Michael Gorman, Nancy Gorman, Amy Caruso, and Mark Gorman. (2nd row) Dennis Edwards, Steve Fowl, Drew Strait, Pat Fosarelli, Andy Johnson, Chris Skinner, Ben Blackwell, Rebekah Eklund, Richard Hays, and Brent Laytham.

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These important friends have made a lasting commitment to St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute through their estate plans.

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Marianne Meye Thompson of Fuller Theological Seminary presented the 2019 Dunning lecture, "Interpreting the Gospel of John: Writing a Commentary in Good Company."

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Dr. Drew Strait, Assistant Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary and former EI professor, was one of the guest scholars presenting at "Cross and Resurrection in Matthew, Peter, and Paul."



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Dr. Dennis Edwards, Associate Professor of New Testament at North Park Theological Seminary, returned to the EI this year as a speaker at our Lenten event and as one of the newest members of our DMin faculty.

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The inaugural Doctor of Ministry class, taught by Dr. Michael Gorman, drew together men and women representing more than seven Christian traditions and working in a variety of ministry settings.





St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute Class of 2019, with the Dean, Dr. Brent Laytham, and the Associate Deans, Dr. Patricia Fosarelli and Dr. Rebecca Hancock.



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