In its almost five years of existence, the Generations Circle of the Bishop Fenwick Society has grown from a hand-full of people who began the effort to 117 members today.

The Generations Circle represents younger members of the society — the Athenaeum’s core group of benefactors — and has as its key task securing the future of the Athenaeum and its mission to provide priests, deacons and lay ministers for the local church.

While a leadership change in the Generations Circle occurred this year, the group’s leadership committee remains intact and plans to increase membership are even more encompassing.

Katie Hoelscher, the Generation Circle’s first chairperson and daughter of Athenaeum Advancement Director Jim Jackson, has handed the reins to Scott Puffer, who comes aboard with new ideas and the beginnings of a bold strategy to increase membership.

“There are two reasons I’m leaving the chair. Number one, I live in Columbus — some distance from the Athenaeum and, because of that, it is becoming more difficult to remain the chairperson.

“But, also I think with any leadership new ideas bring about new and great changes and I think Scott has so much potential to continue to grow this group and even provide it with more momentum and more energy. So, I’m passing on the leadership to someone who it is my hope and belief will continue to grow the Generations Circle even more,” Mrs. Hoelscher said.

“We need to continue to attract younger members — the younger generation. To do that, we need to get people to the Athenaeum and then you can implement goals. The place sells itself, but if we do not have an opportunity to speak with people, we’re lost.” Mr. Puffer said. “We have a very strong network of Catholic institutions in town. Every Catholic belongs to a congregation and building up relationships with those institutions, and those individual churches, is a way to get our word out. We have access to a big database.

“The young people we are aiming to bring in are active. They have families. They have jobs and probably they are already giving to a cause. They give to their churches. So we need to sell them all on another religious institution,” Mr. Puffer said.

“Also, today’s young generation is not the same as the older generation. We are battling technology and attention. That is challenging for an institution and rightfully so. The Athenaeum is rooted in tradition and heritage and history and we are trying to attract a generation that sees everything as new. We have to hold on to the tradition and remind the next generation that tradition is important too,” he said.

“There’s a lot of brainstorming going on. We are still a very young organization trying to find its way.”

Mrs. Hoelscher said initiating the Generations Circle and seeing it grow rapidly were among her most noteworthy
Passing the Promise of Faith

“Even when I am old and gray, do not forsake me, O God, till I declare your power to the next generation, your might to all who are to come.” Psalm 71:18

I have met so many inspiring men and women as I interact and continue my journey at The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West.

One man I will never forget is the late Bishop Carl Moeddel. He had a magnetic personality and his kindness was inviting and comforting. You could always count on him to greet you with genuine interest. I know many confirmands recall his generous “dousing” with holy oil during the reception of this sacrament. Everyone came prepared with handkerchiefs or tissues because word spread quickly and with fond anticipation.

Founding fathers Tom Westerfield and Jim Powers welcomed Bishop Moeddel to chair the Bishop Fenwick Society. He took this role with a committed awareness and dedicated energy. His simple, joyous walk of faith was contagious and endearing, making him an invaluable leader for the Bishop Fenwick Society.

Today, on the campus of the Athenaeum/seminary, we have young Catholics willing to support and build on the energies of those who came before us. Bishop Moeddel's niece, Lucy, and her husband, Craig, are “founding fathers” in the Generations Circle of the Bishop Fenwick Society. Lucy and Craig Miller currently serve as members of the Athenaeum Advisory Council committing generously to the mission of the seminary.

My wife, Mary, and I are proud of our daughter Katie and son in law, Jon, for their active involvement in the Generations Circle in support of the mission. Katie serves as the first chair for the Generations Circle and is a current member of the Athenaeum Advisory Council. With her three year term coming to a close, Scott Puffer, son-in-law of Deacon Max and Jeanne Schellman, with the support of his wife, Jill, will be assuming the chair of the Generations Circle and continue to serve on the advisory council. There are many more ties to the seminary within the 117 members of the Generations Circle.

How God provides…..Today, stalwart and steadfast co-chairs of the Bishop Fenwick Society, Mike and Nancy Conaton, faithfully carry the torch of Bishop Fenwick, Bishop Moeddel and many others since 1829 to lead and insure a robust and vibrant seminary.

Fortified with the passionate support from each of you as members of this society, coupled with the bright hopes for our future with our Generations Circle, our mission of preparing the future priests, deacons, and lay ministers of our Church has never shined brighter.

Standing in the light,

Jim/James W. Jackson

In brief

God Provides Priests for His Church

As I sit to write these few words, I am aware that we have already ordained two seminarians for the Diocese of Toledo and two deacons for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. Four men for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati were ordained on May 19th, on the June 9, another of our seminarians will be ordained for the Diocese of Youngstown. It has been a long road for all these men and now they have reached a new stage in their journey with Christ. Many people have helped them along the way: bishops, priests, deacons, parents, family, friends, teachers, RCIA sponsors, and parish communities. All of this is a sign that God continues to work, certainly in mysterious ways, to ensure that the Church, His children, have priests. Priests help sustain them with the good word preached, the Food of Heaven consecrated, broken and eaten, and good compassionate shepherds to guide, protect, and search for the lost. Soon they will literally lay their lives down before the Altar and become the image of the servant of God – for us. May God bless them always: in all that they do, and through all whom they meet. And may God reward you for helping them come to this day, this ministry, this priesthood, through your generosity to Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West – a temple dedicated to the formation and training of priests.

— Father Benedict O’Cinnsealaigh, president/rector

Permanent Deacon Class Finishes Second Year; Vineyard Project Approved

The permanent deacon class of 2013 completed their second year of formation in May. The 30 candidates, 21 studying for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and nine for the Diocese of Covington, completed courses in moral theology, preaching, history of Christian spirituality, canon law, and the theology of the Eucharist and baptism. They also completed projects at their home parishes in preparation for the reception of the Ministry of Acolyte. In years past, those in preparation for the permanent diaconate have chosen or participated in some project that has benefited or made improvements to the grounds of Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West. The current deacon candidates have agreed to help plant a modest vineyard on the seminary grounds. Chambourcin are the vines that have been chosen and 90 plants will comprise the initial planting. It is hoped the vineyard adds to the beauty of the grounds as well as providing an opportunity for reflection on who is the vine and who are the branches for all of those who study at the Athenaeum.

— Father Anthony Brausch, vice rector and director of the permanent deacon program

Re-Accreditation Self Study Moves Forward

The Athenaeum’s self study to prepare for re-accreditation by the Association of Theological Schools of the United States and Canada (ATS) and the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools (HLC) is almost complete. During winter, spring and summer of last year, twelve working groups, each made up of faculty members as well as members of the board of trustees and/
Scott Puffer: New Chairman of the Generations Circle

Scott Puffer credits his father-in-law, Deacon Max Schellman, for his initial involvement with the Athenaeum.

“He has been very involved with the Athenaeum,” Mr. Puffer said. “He got his degree there; was ordained a deacon there; and, when my wife, Jill, and I moved back here from the Carolinas, Max invited us to a number of functions there. We met some people and enjoyed participating in those.

“Then, when you meet people like (Athenaeum Development Director) Jim Jackson, you know you are going to be doing something out there and, for us, it was a natural fit.”

Mr. Puffer, who recently took a new job for the New Jersey-based Michaels Organization where he specializes in urban and historic rehabilitation, has recently been named chairman of the Generations Circle Committee of the Athenaeum Advisory Council. He has been a Bishop Fenwick Society member for two years and belongs to Good Shepherd Parish, Montgomery. He lives in Montgomery with his wife, daughter, Caroline, 7, and son Benjamin, in a circa 1960s home he is restoring.

Mr. Puffer, an Aurora, Ohio native, is an engineering graduate of John Carroll University, Cleveland, where his wife, a native of Cincinnati, also graduated with a degree in early childhood education. She teaches pre-kindergarten at Summit Country Day Montessori School. Mr. Puffer went on to earn a masters degree in real estate development at Clemson University and, after that, worked as a development manager in student housing in South Carolina and in Charlotte, North Carolina, prior to moving to Cincinnati in 2010.

“I was already sold on the Athenaeum (prior to) becoming involved in a leadership advisory role. Everything we as a committee do is geared to getting more people involved and thanking current members. We have a great core group — Katie and Jon Hoelscher, Lucy and Craig Miller, Father Earl Fernandes, my wife; and with guidance from Jim Jackson.

“We all want to continue what has already been started — find more people, new blood for the Generations Circle — so the mission of the Athenaeum continues.”

Scott with wife, Jill and kids Caroline and Benjamin

or students, drafted sections of self study reports to the two organizations. These reports evaluate the Athenaeum in light of the ATS standards of accreditation and the HLC criteria for accreditation. They show that the Athenaeum meets the standards and criteria, identify areas for development, and in some cases propose ways to address the areas for development. The Executive Committee of the Athenaeum Senate has now revised the draft reports, and the faculty has further revised and approved them. After both reports have been approved by the Athenaeum Senate and Board of Trustees, they will be sent to ATS and HLC this summer. Teams representing each of these organizations will then visit the Athenaeum in October 2012.

— Dr. Terrance D. Callan, dean of special studies

LPMP Launches Facebook Page

The Lay Pastoral Ministry program launched a Facebook page in March. We hope it provides a way for students, graduates, faculty, friends and benefactors to stay connected and informed. We post two or three times per week with departmental news, material for prayer and reflection and items of interest to people engaged in ministry and service.

We would love for you to come and visit, subscribe to the LPMP page, www.facebook.com/AthenaeumLPMP, and join in the conversation.

Social media, such as Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, provide vital ways for the Church to evangelize, catechize and connect. Social media isn’t a fad; it is a fundamental shift in the way people interact. In a message entitled “Truth, Proclamation and Authenticity of Life in the Digital Age,” Pope Benedict XVI noted the extraordinary potential of the new media and gave social networking his blessing. The proclamation, created for the Catholic Church’s World Day of Communications, noted, “I would like then, to invite Christians, confidently and with an informed and responsible creativity, to join the network of relationships which the digital era has made possible… because this network is an integral part of human life.” The LPMP looks forward to “friending” you!

— Dr. Susan McGurgan, director, LPMP

Academic Year Ends with Flurry of Liturgical Activity

The academic year at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West is coming to a successful conclusion. Two new seminarians began in the spring quarter — Alex Witt of Cincinnati and Joseph Scott of the Comboni Missionaries. The men in Fifth Theology successfully completed the Master of Divinity Comprehensive Exam and will be ordained to the priesthood. Seminarians also listened to Monsignor Eugene Morris as he gave the George Findley Lecture, discussing African-American vocations. Dr. Rick Fitzgibbons of the Institute for Marital Healing spoke to seminarians about the John Jay Report. Bishop Binzer presided over the liturgy for the installation of first and second-year theologians as lectors and acolytes on March 24, which was also parents’ day at the seminary. On March 31, Bishop Leonard Blair of Toledo ordained five men to the diaconate, including two men from Mount St. Mary’s — Jeremy Miller and Nathan Bockrath. The year will end with a flurry of liturgical activity, including the ordination of two men of the

(Continued on back cover)
In brief

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Archdiocese of Cincinnati to the transitional diaconate on April 28. Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr will ordain four men to the priesthood on May 19 and Bishop George V. Murry, SJ ordained Deacon Robert Lanterman to the priesthood on June 9 in Youngstown.

— Father Earl Fernandes, dean of the Athenaeum and Mount St. Mary’s Seminary

Scholar/Researchers Visit Maly Library

Recently, the Eugene H. Maly Memorial Library welcomed two visiting researchers. In February, a scholar from Indiana helped more precisely identify a 17th century Jesuit prayer book while also researching “privileges,” a medieval version of copyright. Privileges were used in various trades during the Renaissance to obtain temporary rights from the local governing body. In the book trade, privileges could be given to one publisher to print a particular text, to wholesalers to prevent others from importing the same text, and to booksellers to be the exclusive purveyor of a title. From the early years of printing in Italy, individual states and the Church used the system of privileges to control intellectual and commercial activity as well as to regulate the content of published works with regard to religious orthodoxy and morality.

In April, a researcher from Kentucky began her study of the history of the Athenaeum building and its art work by examining several titles in our collection and interviewing Athenaeum professors. A copy of her completed work will be donated to the Maly library. In addition to assisting students and faculty with research needs, the library welcomes scholars to visit and discover the treasures in the collection. Both researchers and supporters promote scholarship at The Athenaeum of Ohio.

— Connie Song, library director

Leadership Switch

(Continued from cover)

accomplishments. This means the word about the Generations Circle is getting out and members are joining us.

Mrs. Hoelscher said successful events – an annual Athenaeum night and a Xavier University basketball game and a Generations Circle Cincinnati Reds outing – started under her watch.

“When my father told me about this challenge, it was about the same time we were getting ready to start our own family and the responsibilities that come with that. I felt one of my goals was to become part of something bigger than myself. So, I decided the Catholic Church, with the seminary, were worthwhile things. It fits in with my values. I intend to continue to be involved in this group and remain on the Athenaeum Advisory Council and the Generations Circle Committee with Scott as chairman.”