The Human Mind Plans the Way, but the Lord Directs the Steps
ON JUNE, 28, 1963, PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY ENTERED DÁIL ÉIREANN (IRISH PARLIAMENT) TO ADDRESS BOTH HOUSES OF THE OIREACHTAS (HOUSE AND SENATE).

In his speech, President Kennedy challenged the Irish representatives and people to look to and cherish their past, and to set their vision and course definitively toward the future. The President said: ‘George Bernard Shaw, speaking as an Irishman, summed up an approach to life: ‘other people,’ he said, ‘see things and say why, but I dream things that never were and say why not.”

The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West is 185 years old. We are the third oldest seminary in the United States after St. Mary’s Seminary in Baltimore and Mount St. Mary’s in Emmitsburg. The Athenaeum has seen many changes, renewals, and reforms; but its mission always remains exceptional: to educate and form men and women for the needs of the Church. High-school; undergraduate and graduate colleges; teacher training; pastoral counseling; priestly, diaconate and Lay Pastoral Ministry Program formation and education, all have been supported at the Athenaeum. For this grand institution, creating unparalleled change has never been problematic.

And now, just as President Kennedy encouraged the Irish, the Athenaeum is turning its attention to our present and future. While the needs are great and the challenges considerable, our focus is fixed on fostering the Church, local and universal. Our mission, our reason for being, is to prepare people for the priesthood, ministry, leadership, and service to the Church, today and tomorrow.

We are a unique institution in this area as our whole mission is to continue the work of Jesus Himself in proclaiming the Gospel of God’s love. Moreover, we are ready to “dream dreams” and “say why not.” The Athenaeum is the center for Catholic formation and education for clergy and laity for the Cincinnati archdiocese and beyond. It is a resource with a storied history and, we believe, an even greater future. It exists for the necessities of the Church, is provided by the Church, and is faithful and committed to the Church.

The Athenaeum is prepared to move forward with conviction, energy, and vision to provide for the present and future needs of the Catholic Church.
THE NEW MISSION STATEMENT RECOGNIZES THAT THE BAPTIZED ARE CALLED TO FOLLOW CHRIST AND PARTICIPATE IN HIS MISSION AS PART OF THEIR PERSONAL VOCATION. The Athenaeum is at the service of all these vocations, the entire people of God, and will seek to provide formation and education for the sake of the mission and evangelization. This of course includes, priests, deacons, and lay ministers. The primary function of the seminary remains, and will always remain, the formation of men for the priesthood. The Athenaeum is also commissioned to prepare men for the permanent diaconate and men and women for Lay Ecclesial Ministry. These ministries carry on the core work we do, but it is not, and will not be, our only work.

In addition, the Athenaeum will continue and grow offering Master’s programs in theology and biblical studies, liturgical music and sacred liturgies, continuing education classes, and lecture series on topics of importance to the faith. In the next few years, we will expand continuing education programs by providing greater opportunities for priests, deacons, lay ministers, parish staff, teachers, and youth ministers. Additionally, we plan to respond to the requests of families, youth, and faithful Catholics, who desire to know more about their faith and deepen their spiritual life.

Our new mission and vision statements acknowledge all Godly vocations as a fundamental and dynamic part of the Body of Christ, all called in their particular ways to proclaim the Gospel and build the Kingdom of God. This is our vision for the Athenaeum: a place of formation, education, spiritual refreshment, and ministerial renewal for the Cincinnati archdiocese and beyond.

We are not sitting contently by our firesides because the Church, the Archdiocese, and the people of God require our help. It is our hope and desire to take on the responsibilities and serve the present and future needs of the children of God as ...

The Human Mind Plans the Way, but the Lord Directs the Steps.
“No one sets out on a journey without first knowing how to get there. The Athenaeum of Ohio’s Long-Range Strategic Plan is a detailed roadmap that will get the institution and our programs where we want them to be in five years. I am pleased with the vision presented in this plan, and with the strategies to achieve it. The end result will be a center for ecclesial formation that is even stronger than it already is today.”

– MOST REV. DENNIS M. SCHNURR, Archbishop of Cincinnati

In 2013, The Athenaeum of Ohio Board of Trustees approved a process of self-study and long-range planning. Over the past year the leadership, board members, faculty, students, seminarians and other partners participated in the process. By involving as many stakeholders as possible an exciting vision has been created for the future of the Athenaeum.

The following pages represent a synopsis of those recommendations. Through these efforts, the members of the Strategic Planning Committee have proposed what The Athenaeum of Ohio / Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West must do to remain faithful to its mission and continue to “proficere sapientia, aetate, et gratia”... advance in wisdom, age and grace.

This document reflects the completion of the long range planning process. However, this plan must be viewed as a starting point. The challenge now is to continue to improve the institution on many fronts -- to look ahead and find better ways of serving the faithful who will one day be the leaders of the Catholic Church in southwest Ohio and beyond.

Everyone connected to the Athenaeum has a stake so please take some time to discover The Athenaeum Long Range Plan. Then, after reading the recommendations, take a moment to ask yourself what you think. There is always room for more ideas: that’s how great institutions thrive.
THE ATHENAEUM OF OHIO MISSION
The Athenaeum of Ohio, the center for ecclesial formation sponsored by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati forms men and women to faithfully follow Christ and serve His mission by fulfilling their vocation in the Church.

THE ATHENAEUM OF OHIO VISION
The Athenaeum of Ohio / Mount St. Mary’s Seminary is committed to being a regional resource and catalyst for the promotion and revitalization of Catholic life in all its dimensions. The commitment entails pursuing excellence in all areas of its academic and formation programs and seeking to be recognized across the nation as one of the premier institutions for the formation and training of priests, deacons and lay ecclesial ministers and the faithful. The formation and education provided here are directed toward inspiring the individual person to sanctity, the Catholic faithful to fidelity, and the various vocations within the Church to prophetic engagement with the culture for the transformation of society toward becoming a true communion of persons and faith.

IN SUPPORT OF THIS MISSION & VISION,
THE ATHENAEUM HAS ORGANIZED ITS GOALS AND OBJECTIVES AROUND FIVE PILLARS:

PILLAR I
Called for Mission & Ministry

The Athenaeum of Ohio will live out its mission in meeting the needs of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and partner dioceses—their parishes, schools, hospitals and ministries—for priests, lay ministers and deacons.

In recent years the number of seminarians at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the Athenaeum has shown significant growth. In 1998 there were 28 seminarians; in 2003, 40; in 2008, 41; and this year, 51. Next year’s projection is 62 to 65. Presently, housing exists for 68 seminarians. This growth is a sign of vitality and life in the Church.

Seminary recruitment has two target groups. The first is seminarians to serve the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. This recruitment drive is operated by the vocations office. Today the Archdiocese of Cincinnati has 46 seminarians in college and major seminaries.
The second area is recruitment from supporting dioceses as well as new dioceses and religious congregations around the country. Throughout its history, Mount St. Mary’s has accepted seminarians from other dioceses. There are good reasons for this: It creates a more dynamic culture within the community allowing men to meet people from different parts of the county and so expand their own vision and experience, building friendships and developing a great sense of the Church as universal; it allows sharing of an outstanding spiritual, human, educational and pastoral formation program with others; it helps maintain the financial security of the seminary.

The rector is the chief recruiter in this drive and in the past three years he, along with members of the staff and faculty, have visited about 20 bishops to outline the program, the benefits, and the merits of choosing Mount St. Mary’s as a place of dynamic priestly formation.

"While the trend today is for younger, college age men, to enter seminary, the truth is that seminarians come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences," said the Rev. Benedict O’Cinnsealaigh, president of the Athenaeum and rector of Mount St. Mary’s Seminary. "They have been lawyers, doctors, police officers, military servicemen. We have had teachers, engineers, computer programmers, as well as young men who have come directly from college."

They have been lawyers, doctors, police officers, military servicemen. We have had teachers, engineers, computer programmers, as well as young men who have come directly from college." – REV. BENEDICT O’CINNSEALAIGH

Today in the Church, in the Athenaeum, men studying for the priesthood are joined by men studying to be permanent deacons and by men and women studying to be lay ministers or completing a Master’s degree in theology. All are working to build the same Kingdom of God; all are called, formed, and sent. Presently, there are 200 students in a variety of programs. The mission of building the Kingdom is a mission and ministry given to all the baptized. The Athenaeum’s job is to teach, form, and send out.

“Recent research found that 80 percent of seminarians responded to the call of vocational discernment because they were asked to consider priesthood by their parish priest. Yet only 15 percent of priests ask young men to consider a call to the priesthood. If the Athenaeum is close to capacity with only 15 percent of priests asking, imagine what would be expected if more invitations were extended.” said Father O’Cinnsealaigh. “The Athenaeum needs to build a partnership with priests, parish staff, and alumni in promoting and recruiting priests, lay ministers and deacons. Athenaeum graduates need to extend the invitation to all men, women, young and old; asking them to serve, to proclaim, to become a minister for Christ in the Church and in the world.”
PILLAR I OBJECTIVES

The Athenaeum has experienced four consecutive years of growth. Continued growth is projected and reaching the present capacity of 68 seminarians within the term of this five year plan is envisioned. The Athenaeum will meet the needs of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and partner dioceses — their parishes, schools, hospitals and ministries — for priests, lay ministers and deacons whose formation and leadership are critical.

OBJECTIVE 1: Increase seminarian enrollment to meet the needs of our dioceses.
- Goal of four new students from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati college seminaries annually.
- Recruit two new seminarians from Archdiocese of Cincinnati into Pre-Theology I and one seminarian into Theology I annually.
- Recruit six new seminarians into Pre-Theology I and five new seminarians into Theology I from partner dioceses.
- Develop plan to limit attrition to < 10 percent per year.
- Establish an on-going process to project enrollment to facilitate financial and material planning.

OBJECTIVE 2: Recruit & maintain 110-120 Lay Pastoral Ministry Program students.
- Recruit 18-25 new two-year certificate students and 10-15 new Master’s students per year.
- Limit attrition of certificate students to < 33 percent and Master’s students to < 20 percent.

OBJECTIVE 3: Maintain an enrollment of 30-35 permanent deacons.
- Form a committee of deacons to collaborate in articulating characteristics and criteria for candidates, as well as preparing material and retreats preparation.
- Encourage current deacons to establish men’s groups in their parishes.
- Deacons should identify potential candidates and assist in recruitment.

PILLAR II
Excellence in Academics & Formation

The Athenaeum of Ohio will live out its mission of delivering excellence in education and formation for effective ministerial and intellectual activity that meets the needs of the Church, the community and growing enrollment. The faculty and administration of the Athenaeum must have expertise and training in a wide range of subjects and skills.
The Athenaeum desires to continue delivering high quality education and formation to meet the needs of the Church today. The Athenaeum prides itself on the high teacher-student ratio, which allows for highly personalized education and formation. As enrollment grows, the Athenaeum faces the challenge of maintaining the level of quality instruction and formation. This means developing and maintaining an outstanding corps of faculty and staff.

"To that end," said the Rev. Earl Fernandes, dean of the Athenaeum and Mount St. Mary’s Seminary, "this pillar of the long range plan envisions the president/rector working with the Archbishop and partner dioceses to identify potential new faculty members in an era when priests with advanced degrees are becoming increasingly scarce. Recruiting new faculty is important to replace those faculty members who, after many years of service, are approaching retirement. Developing a concrete succession plan, which looks at retirements, teaching and formational needs, and even faculty office space, will be integral to strengthening this pillar of the Athenaeum’s plan." he said.

In addition, the Athenaeum seeks to provide its faculty and staff with opportunities for professional development in the form of sabbaticals, providing funding for professional seminars, workshops, and conferences, and applying for grants that will allow for greater faculty research and publication. The expertise of the faculty must be made known more widely.

"For many years, the Athenaeum has been able to make its quality education available, not only to those in the seminary division, but also to interested members of the laity, including Catholic educators," Father Fernandes said. More than 15 years ago, the seminary established its pre-theology program to meet the philosophical pre-requisites for studying theology. Over the years, the Athenaeum has been able to build a highly qualified philosophy faculty and is now able to offer these courses for graduate credit. Beginning this year, the Athenaeum will begin making a graduate degree – a Master’s of Arts in Catholic studies (with a concentration in philosophy) – available to seminarians in the pre-theology program and to interested laity who daily deal with the consequences of philosophical errors and who desire to evangelize the culture.

While new faculty and a new degree program contribute to the strengthening of this pillar, new technology may serve the next generation of students. Already, classrooms are equipped with SmartBoards and technology assessment tools are being developed to identify student and faculty needs. Mindful of the formational dimensions of the education the Athenaeum provides, some exploration of online learning may be useful, widening the net of potential students.
While technological investment is useful, personal investment is more important. The Athenaeum faces a critical need in acquiring dedicated faculty who are invested in the students and in the mission of the Church, Father Fernandes said. “Recruiting and hiring such faculty to support the increased enrollment will demand financial investment on the part of the institution and its benefactors,” he said.

PILLAR II OBJECTIVES
The Athenaeum will deliver excellence in education and formation for effective ministerial and intellectual activity that meets the needs of the Church, the community and growing enrollment.

OBJECTIVE 1: Identify, recruit and retain faculty and staff who meet the needs of the Athenaeum.
- President/rector in collaboration with the archbishop and partner dioceses will identify and maintain a list of potential faculty members.
- Invite visiting scholars and post-doctoral candidates to engage in scholarly activity as they assist in meeting teaching needs.
- Develop a concrete succession plan.

OBJECTIVE 2: Foster professional opportunities for full-time faculty and staff.
- Review sabbatical policy and encourage eligible faculty to apply.
- Encourage participation and use of professional development funds to participate in seminars, societies, workshops and conferences.
- Make materials available for grant applications to facilitate faculty research and publication.

OBJECTIVE 3: Establish a Master of Arts in Catholic Studies Degree Program.
- Inaugurate a Master of Arts in Catholic studies based on the core of the seminary pre-theology/philosophy program.
- Promote the degree program to bishops and vocation directors.
- Market degree program to the lay faithful, especially Catholic educators.

OBJECTIVE 4: Assess new human and technological resource investments needed to support the long range plan.
- Determine the number of additional faculty members required to support increased enrollment.
- Raise funds for endowed chairs in disciplines or departments and for IT needs.
- Assess current institutional technology effectiveness and develop plan for improvement.
- Develop a comprehensive Eugene H. Maly Library plan.

OBJECTIVE 5: Assess student learning and modify programs in conversion to semesters.

OBJECTIVE 6: Explore potential and effectiveness of online learning.
The Athenaeum of Ohio will expand its mission by becoming the center of initial training, renewal and spiritual growth for the promotion of Catholic life among all the faithful.

For many years, the Athenaeum has made its resources available to priests, deacons, and laity. Typically, men and women pursued master's degrees, received ministerial training, or sought non-degreed certificates. While the Athenaeum is happy to provide this educational and ministerial training, this pillar seeks to promote the idea of life-long learning for priests, deacons, and lay ecclesial ministers.

"A person's study at the Athenaeum should not be limited to three to five years. The Athenaeum is meant to be a resource for an entire lifetime of service to the Church." said the Rev. Earl Fernandes, dean of the Athenaeum and Mount St. Mary's Seminary. "Institutionally, the Athenaeum hopes to provide courses and lectures that are relevant to ministering in an increasingly secularized culture. The ongoing education and formation offered will help Athenaeum alumni maintain professional standards, hone skills, and develop even greater expertise," he said.

The new pillar envisions the Athenaeum developing closer ties with Archdiocesan offices, including the Office of Priestly Formation and the Permanent Diaconate Office. The Athenaeum hopes to provide continuing education for ministers of the Church but also to provide days of recollection, spiritual renewal, and retreat opportunities for clergy.

"The laity also will be a focus of this dimension of the plan," Father Fernandes said. "Members of the lay faithful will continue to have the opportunity to take classes in pursuit of a degree, certificate, or for faith enrichment. Additionally, new training, not in the form of degree programs, will be offered."

In addition to educating those who work for the Church in faith and service, the Athenaeum seeks to expand its mission beyond the walls of the Church to the world, where the laity are called to be a leaven in the world. Over the course of the next year, planning will occur to assess the needs of the lay faithful and to develop outreach to support efforts for the new evangelization. This represents a starting point for new initiatives in critical professions – law, medicine, business, and the like.
PILLAR III OBJECTIVES

The Athenaeum has been an outstanding resource for many years primarily focused on the formation and education of seminarians, deacons, and lay pastoral ministry students. Yet, it has the potential to serve an even greater number of people. The Athenaeum strives to create and sustain a comprehensive and welcoming environment of programs and facilities. The Athenaeum will expand its mission by becoming the center of initial training, renewal and spiritual growth for the promotion of Catholic life among all the faithful becoming the premier learning institution in the Midwest for all Catholics.

OBJECTIVE 1: Expand & intensify already existing outreach & formational programs.

- Expand interaction with director of continuing formation for priests to include programs and facilities for newly ordained, days of renewal and education for clergy.
- Expand interaction with the director of permanent deacons to offer retreats, programs on preaching, seminars on the diaconate and diaconate life.
- Increase programs for Catholic school principals, business managers, musicians and other ecclesial ministers.

OBJECTIVE 2: Create new programming to constituencies not yet served by the Athenaeum.

- Create programming for young Catholics in leadership skills, evangelization and social issues.
- Formation of parish based groups for evangelization.
- Partner with parishes to provide a venue where post-college adults can gather for formation and socialization.
- Create group – specific social media outreach to young Catholics.
- Explore establishing trade guilds for various professions and trades.

PILLAR IV

Engaging the Community in Our Mission

The Athenaeum of Ohio’s mission will be sustained by establishing a strong base of support and executing strong consistent marketing plans to attract, inform and retain more seminarians, deacons, ministerial students, and benefactors. The Athenaeum must develop a collaborative and comprehensive marketing plan to renew and increase financial investments critical to support the growing costs associated with an expanding enrollment, operating inflation and necessary facility maintenance.
This pillar is the result of a process, which has relied heavily on the collective wisdom of many who are not only interested in, but also dedicated to, the future of the Athenaeum. Such dedication has resulted in an honest appraisal of the present condition of this institution as well as a hope-filled stance toward its future. This marketing plan provides an important starting point to look to the future while taking up the essential task of responsible planning for future growth and development.

The Athenaeum /Mount St. Mary’s Seminary, like most private institutions, faces special challenges: rising costs, an increased reliance on reserve funds, a limited pool of available students and an increasing reliance on annual fundraising. “While the Athenaeum’s main purpose is not financial in nature, like any other institution we recognize the importance of prudent business practices. Through a comprehensive marketing plan, the Athenaeum needs to increase annual endowment and scholarship funds, improve efforts to increase and retain enrollment, and plan for excellence in all academic endeavors,” said Jim Rice, vice president of advancement.

Facing these challenges, the advancement department is optimistic and reminds each benefactor of the continued importance of input, insights and support. All have been beneficiaries in one way or another of the Athenaeum’s heritage and tradition. Continuing dialogue empowers supporters with their rightful role in assuring the continuation of the mission and vision of the Athenaeum.

PILLAR IV OBJECTIVES

The Athenaeum of Ohio’s mission will be sustained by establishing a strong base of support and executing strong and consistent marketing plans in order to attract, inform and retain more seminarians, deacons, ministerial students, and benefactors. The Athenaeum must develop a collaborative and comprehensive marketing plan to renew and increase financial investments critical to support the growing costs associated with an expanding enrollment, operating inflation and necessary facility maintenance.

OBJECTIVE 1: Develop a strategic marketing and communications plan which focuses on establishing brand identity to increase awareness and delivers defined and measurable outcomes.

- Identify and hire a director of marketing.
- Draft and adopt a comprehensive marketing plan for the entire institution.
- Implement plan with full support of advisory council and board of trustees.

OBJECTIVE 2: Identify and expand our target audiences and segment by common needs so that individualized marketing campaigns can be developed.
• Identify primary and secondary audiences.
• Segment targets based on marketing objectives.
• Identify the most effective ways to reach and communicate to each segment.

OBJECTIVE 3: Marketing plan must support the advancement department goals and objectives.
• Develop a fund raising and marketing strategy to increase annual fund and Bishop Fenwick Society membership.
• Seek funding sources in support of all departments.
• Develop a stewardship/donor strategy.
• Position the Athenaeum properly for potential capital or major gift initiative.

The Athenaeum of Ohio will continue to live out its mission through prudent management and good stewardship of all its resources.

The vision statement, the basis of the Athenaeum’s strategic plan, notes that The Athenaeum/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary is committed to being a regional resource and catalyst for the promotion and revitalization of Catholic life in all its dimensions. For that to happen, the four pillars that precede this lay the framework and set the priorities for what resources are needed to bring the vision to reality.

The Athenaeum/ Mount St. Mary’s Seminary is a living and evolving organization. To prosper and flourish, it must be able to change and adapt to the changing needs of our church. “We must have adequate facilities and financial resources to carry on the mission of this venerable institution which began 185 years ago,” said Dennis Eagan, vice president for finance and administration.

“During this planning process, we have assessed the facility needs in conjunction with growth in numbers of seminarians, lay and permanent diaconate students, as well as an increase in programs and outreach,” Mr. Eagan said. “We also have assessed the possible need for additional faculty and staff to meet the demands of a growing institution. Finally, we examined our finances to see how to overcome the challenges presented in this strategic plan, and to secure the financial resources to be fiscally stable and secure for the foreseeable future. We have our work cut out for us. St. Augustine said: ‘Pray as though everything depended on God. Work as though everything depended on you.’"
PILLAR V OBJECTIVES

The Athenaeum must not only address strategic priorities but must also ensure development of financial plans to ensure the sustainability of the institution. This plan must include key financial and facilities needs to be maintained or improved. The Athenaeum will continue to live out its mission through prudent management and good stewardship of all its resources.

OBJECTIVE 1: To be a fiscally stable and secure institution.
- Ensure financial stability through increased levels of operating revenue.
- Increase annual fund levels by five percent annually.
- Provide a sufficient endowment to ensure long-term financial stability.
- Two percent annual growth in endowment through new contributions and market returns.
- Actively participate in the archdiocesan capital campaign.

OBJECTIVE 2: To provide a facility that meets the needs of the mission of the Athenaeum.
- Create a campus environment which facilitates and enhances our mission and vision.
- Respond with fiscal responsibility to current and future building and facility needs as identified in the long range plan:
  - Clean, tuck and waterproof the main building.
  - Air-condition the main chapel and remaining classrooms.
  - Complete renovation of all restrooms.
  - Complete classroom technology plan.
  - Plan for expanding the current number of rooms from 70 to 78 as needed.

THESE FIVE PILLARS, OF THE ATHENAEUM OF OHIO LONG RANGE PLAN, embody the priorities for the next three to five years. While this report provides a “blueprint” for the continued enhancement of the Athenaeum’s tradition of excellence, it also serves as a reminder of how well the institution has fulfilled its mission since 1829.

This plan will provide a guide for the work ahead, management of resources, and a foundation for accountability. By daring to study, critique, and dream, this document has presented a comprehensive strategy to enhance the ability of The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary to continue to fulfill its mission to the Catholic Church.
“It is time we stop managing the decline of the Church and begin managing its growth.”

— MOST REV. DENNIS M. SCHNURR, ARCHBISHOP OF CINCINNATI.

This statement was expressed during a meeting with the archbishop in early 2013 in preparation for the development of a new long range plan for The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary Seminary of the West. Supported by an engaged and dedicated group of priests, laity, faculty and trustees, the work began on a strategic long range plan with a five year horizon. After nine months of thoughtful input, lengthy discussions and debate, along with the approval from Archbishop Schnurr and the Athenaeum Board of Trustees, the Athenaeum’s new long range plan is now in place and being implemented. The plan’s five “pillars” are discussed in this publication.

This bold, forward thinking long range plan represents the courage and vision of an outstanding leadership team headed by the Rev. Benedict O’Cinnsealaigh, Athenaeum president and rector of Mount St. Mary’s, as well as a talented and dedicated faculty and staff. With its implementation, the Athenaeum enhances its commitment to deliver the highest quality education and the proper formation of future priests, deacons and lay ministers. This level of quality is recognized by bishops throughout the United States and the world as an increasing number of seminarians are being sent and admitted for an Athenaeum degree. Following the guidance of the Holy Father to foster evangelization and education, this long range plan also expands the Athenaeum’s vision to engage new challenges that will make it a place of service and continuing education for the whole diocese. It welcomes parish priests, church ministers, the laity and our youth to a place to meet, learn and share God’s blessings.

The Archdiocese is very fortunate to have such an outstanding institution that provides a sense of hope and joy for the future of the Church. It is a true treasure, but it needs our ongoing involvement and support. As the long range plan moves forward, I encourage all the people of the archdiocese to remember in your prayers the Athenaeum, its students, faculty and staff. Much of the Church’s future is dependent on what the Athenaeum delivers. The Athenaeum is committed to delivering the best.

When asked to be a part of this planning process, I wasn’t sure what to expect. It didn’t take long to appreciate that The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West is dynamic and alive. It is an institution that holds true to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church and is not afraid to teach it and preach it; an institution that fortunately ignores the trend of managing the Church’s decline, but instead is setting a course to manage its growth. Praise God!”
Mount St. Mary’s Seminary Alum Elected Administrator of Diocese of Toledo

Following the transfer of Archbishop Leonard P. Blair, who was installed as Archbishop of Hartford, Conn., on Monday, December 16, 2013, the College of Consultors of the Diocese of Toledo elected the Reverend Charles F. Ritter to serve as Diocesan Administrator.

The College of Consultors of the Diocese of Toledo has a long-standing relationship with The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West, sending many seminarians to study and be formed at the Cincinnati seminary. Father Ritter completed his studies for the priesthood at Mount St. Mary’s in 1967.

According to canon law, the College of Consultors is required to elect the administrator within eight days of the vacancy of the see—the day on which Archbishop Blair was installed in Hartford. Father Ritter began serving as administrator immediately.

According to Father Monte Hoyles, chancellor of the diocese:

“The role of the administrator is to essentially maintain the operations of the diocese—to keep the status quo—and provide for the needs of the faithful until the next bishop is named by the Holy Father.”

Father Ritter, 71, recently served as associate pastor of Saint Joseph Parish, Sylvania. He has previously served as pastor of Saint Patrick Parish, Bryan (1994-2009) and Saint Mary Parish, Leipsic (1975-1979); he also has served as an associate pastor at various parishes throughout the Diocese of Toledo. In addition to his parochial assignments, Father Ritter served as director of the diocesan social justice office (1979-1989).

Born and raised in Toledo, Ohio, Father Ritter holds a Master of Arts degree from Mount Saint Mary’s Seminary of the West; and a Masters of Arts degree in Christian spirituality from Creighton University. He is also a 1959 graduate of Toledo Central Catholic High School.

In addition to electing the administrator when a diocese is sede vacante, that is, without a bishop, the diocesan College of Consultants advises the bishop—and currently the administrator—in more important matters of diocesan administration, according to canon 502 of the Code of Canon Law.

ALUMNI REUNION SCHEDULED FOR FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

The Athenaeum of Ohio Alumni Association will hold an alumni reunion the evening of Friday, September 26 at the Athenaeum. While plans are being finalized, the reunion will include tours, entertainment, food and drink. It will be centered in the Marian courtyard.

On Saturday March 22, the association conducted a parish ambassador day. More than 100 parishes in the archdiocese are now represented by an ambassador.

Ambassadors promote vocations to the priesthood, diaconate and lay ministry and promote other opportunities the Athenaeum provides to people throughout the archdiocese including Athenaeum tours, faculty speakers and one of the Midwest’s best theological libraries.

Documentary Film Project: Share Your Memories

ALUMNI: Share your memories and stories from your days at St. Gregory Seminary or Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West. A graduate student, Anne Herbert, is conducting interviews and searching for pictures to use in a documentary film on the history of the seminaries. All pictures will be copied and returned if you would like them back. To participate, email the Advancement Office at: advancement@athenaeum.edu.
When I was a young high school basketball coach, my mother thoughtfully gave me an article about the head basketball coach of St. Joseph’s University, Phil Martelli. The article was in The St. Anthony Messenger and was a story about how his faith informed his coaching style. The article finished with this quote from him:

“As a player at LaSalle High School and then returning as a coach, I learned that a sports program relies on tradition in order for it to grow and create a culture that breeds an attitude of hard work, sacrifice, discipline, and the desire to play the game correctly as a team, and not as a group of individuals. The importance of this tradition is to show subsequent teams that success has been achieved before, and they are now tasked to continue the strong tradition of competition. This is instilled by teaching the players what they play for. The players understand they do not play the game for themselves, but for every other person in the locker room as well as every player who wore a Lancer uniform before them, and for those who would wear the Lancer uniform after them.

After seven years of Mount St. Mary’s Seminary Minor Prophets basketball, I can also say that the Minor Prophets have a strong tradition of competition that stretches many years. For those who played before us, we thank the men who played, and hope we put our stamp on that tradition as well. The Minor Prophets have seen solid competition, thrilling victories, exciting games, the agony of defeat, and tournament championships over the years.

Most important, the Minor Prophets have also experienced fraternity with other men in formation for the priesthood. The tournaments at Mundelein in Chicago and the Josephinum in Columbus allow us to compete with other seminarians who are also growing in their discernment to the priesthood. We have been blessed to meet and interact with some of those who are also answering the call to priesthood.

The past six years have seen the Minor Prophets compete not only in the basketball tournaments at Mundelein and the Josephinum, but also run the floor at Ohio Catholic schools in order to promote vocations. The purpose is to encourage the students to deepen their relationship with God through prayer so they too may discern the vocation to which God is calling them. This past year the Minor Prophets visited Guardian Angels, St. Margaret of York, St. Lawrence, Cardinal Pacelli, and St. Albert the Great in Kettering. This increases the Minor Prophets visits to 27 schools in six years.

This year, Mount St Mary’s Seminary of the West also began a new tradition. A soccer team formed in order to participate in the tournament at St. Meinrad Seminary. They competed well, and were happy with their performance. We hope this can be a yearly tradition as well.

Overall, as a team, we enjoy playing basketball together and enjoy the friendships we have forged over the years. The time playing on the Minor Prophets basketball team has allowed us to be a part of this proud tradition of Mount St Mary’s Seminary. We are truly grateful for the opportunity. The hope is that this tradition continues to grow so more people can be a part of it, and hopefully they can leave it a little better than they found it.

“I want people around me to feel appreciated. It should always be about people, not awards or adulation. If I can make things a little better than I found them, then that is what it’s all about.”
Seminary Highlights: March for Life; Honduran Exchange Program  

A contingent of 48 from Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West journeyed from Cincinnati to Washington, DC, for the annual March for Life.

Five priests accompanied the 43 seminarians who joined with thousands of young people amid frigid temperatures and heavy snowfall to witness to the Gospel of Life. Many of the seminarians participated in the Vigil for Life on the night before the march. On January 22, the anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision, seminarians again attended Mass at the National Shrine before marching to the Supreme Court.

Four seminarians from the Archdiocese of Tegucigalpa, Honduras, joined those from Mount St. Mary’s at the March for Life. The seminarians from Honduras – Jose Abraham Monjaras, Javier Arturo Hernandez, Edwin Mauricio Perez, and Dorian Alberto Vigil – had been participating in an exchange program. This was the twelfth time seminarians and priests from Tegucigalpa visited Mount St. Mary’s Seminary. They worked with Mrs. Fran Holthaus to improve their English and to experience the life of the Church in the United States.

For Jose Abraham Monjaras, 27, his visit ended a misconception he had about the United States. “I was able to realize the United States is not paradise; but that you really have to work hard here. The impression I had before I came was not true,” he said.

“I feel as if I have been evangelized here. The seminarians here were a big factor – particularly their prayer, the way they dressed and the impression they gave other people at places like the airport,” Mr. Monjaras said.

The Honduran seminarians appreciated their visit, which included some fun like skiing at Perfect North Slopes in Indiana, but were equally happy to leave the snow behind. As for the snow, Mr. Hernandez noted: “When we got here, we saw the snow right away and we were impressed at first, but as time went on, we got used to it, and we like snow now.”

Mr. Perez was quick to add his reaction to snow skiing, which summed up his time in Cincinnati, as: “A marvelous and great experience.”

THE MALY LIBRARY: A RESOURCE FOR ALL

The Eugene H. Maly Memorial Library welcomes all those who live in the Archdiocese. Recently more than 60 RCIA and Confirmation candidates and their sponsors visited the library to hear a talk about the oldest Bibles in the collection.

More than 120 local high school students and homeschooling students got a taste of rare manuscripts and incunabula (books printed prior to 1501) in presentations given by the librarians. Archdiocesan parishes are using the Maly Library’s Scriptural resources to conduct Bible study groups. Local theology scholars use the library’s materials in their research and writing. Public library patrons borrow items through OhioLINK. Priests and deacons browse the “homily box” to prepare their weekly sermons.

The library staff is grateful to Athenaeum donors for their support in its mission to welcome and serve all who hunger and thirst for knowledge.
Assessing and planning for long term ministerial, financial and personnel needs is vital for institutions such as the Athenaeum and individuals involved in ministry. Learning and practicing these administrative skills is a long-standing component of the Lay Pastoral Ministry Program (LPMP). During the final year of their studies, each LPMP student plans and executes a comprehensive project in ministry that integrates theological and pastoral learning. For Master of Arts in pastoral ministry students, this capstone project takes the place of a thesis and requires a significant commitment to collaborative ministry, practical service and theological research and reflection.

The project begins with the selection of the ministry site. Many students undertake the project in their parish community at the request of their pastor. Other locations include field education placements such as hospitals, nursing homes and social service agencies as well as workplaces and neighborhoods. A needs assessment surfaces a variety of possible needs and the student, in consultation with leaders from the ministry site and the LPMP advisor, selects one of those needs to address via the project. Project stages include the assessment, proposal, action plan, and evaluation method. At each stage, the student collaborates with a project board – people at the ministry site, the target population, his or her mentor and the LPMP advisor. After implementation, all of the components are integrated into a comprehensive project report that includes the student’s final reflections and insights.

The project in ministry represents hundreds of hours of work on the part of the student and team members. There are currently more than a dozen students working with their advisors on the project phase. Some recent projects include: establishing a prison Bible study program, developing a confirmation

“The kind of work is not for everyone. I have seen more than a few people walk away from it because they didn’t have the patience.”

“Working with people who are illiterate, or those who cannot piece together their work history because their memory has been clouded by drug or alcohol use takes a significant amount of listening and empathy. This ministry is full of earthy images. I believe one of the reasons why people shy away from the earthiness of this ministry is because what is seen and heard is not always pretty. Then again, leprosy, prostitutes, the dying, demons and all the other things that Jesus confronted were not pretty either. The actions Jesus calls for in Matthew 25, the Judgment of Nations, do not have to be profound acts—they can be basic assistance: feeding, quenching thirst, clothing and being present. It has been the same in this project: I was simply present to people who are generally ignored.”

As you can imagine, the effect of these projects is profound and enduring—for the individual student, for the population they serve, and for the community at large. The process of assessment, planning, evaluation and collaboration—undertaken by the Athenaeum in our long range planning—are also vital skills for lay ecclesial ministers. As the Lay Pastoral Ministry Program plans for the future, we are grateful for the support of our founders, benefactors, alumni and friends whose vision, generosity and support enable us continue our mission of forming men and women for service to the Church.
The Most Rev. Roger Foys, bishop of Covington, installed 24 deacon candidates as lectors Sunday, February 16 at the Cathedral Basilica of the Assumption in Covington. Twenty of the men are in formation to become deacons for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and four are from the Diocese of Covington.

THE CINCINNATI DEACON CANDIDATES ARE:
Robert L. Brazier: St. Thomas More, Withamsville
Paul W. Feie: Guardian Angels, Cincinnati
Thomas M. Gaer: St. John Fisher, Newtown
David B. Gillespie: St. Patrick, Troy
John B. Homoelle: St. Ignatius, Monfort Heights
Thomas P. Jabs: St. Columban, Loveland
Phillip A. Kenzora: St. Teresa, Springfield
Jerold A. Kosey: Sacred Heart, New Carlisle
Mark J. Machuga: Our Lady of Victory, Delhi
Michael H. Meyer: St. Remy, Russia
Patrick M. Minnich: St. John the Baptist, Maria Stein
Michael J. Montgomery: Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception, Dayton
Charles W. Roemer, Jr.: Sts. Peter & Paul, Reading
Johannes Schade: St. Maximilian Kolbe, Liberty Township
John M. Schaefer: Our Lady of Sorrows, Monroe
John A. Schuler: St. Mary, Hyde Park
Thomas M. Sipniewski: Church of the Ascension, Kettering
Matthew R. Skinner: Our Lady of the Rosary, Greenhills
Paul L. Timmerman: St. Michael, Fort Loramie
Michael A. Trimpe: Cathedral of St. Peter in Chains, Location?

Pictured below is the Cincinnati diaconate class.

THE COVINGTON DEACON CANDIDATES ARE:
Antonio Roberto Lopez Escamilla: St. Cecilia Parish, Independence
Richard Joseph Dames: Mary, Queen of Heaven Parish, Erlanger
Peter John Freeman: St. Timothy Parish, Union
Scott Anthony Folz: St. Paul Parish, Florence

Pictured right is the Covington diaconate class.

EVENTS
CALENDAR
FRIDAY, May 2
Archbishop’s Dinner
Bishop Fenwick Society

HONORED GUEST:
Most Rev. Joseph E. Kurtz, archbishop of Louisville
President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

6:30 p.m.
Bishop Fenwick Society Reception
Hall of Mirrors, Hilton Netherland Plaza

7:30 p.m.
Bishop Fenwick Society Dinner Pavilion Caprice, Hilton Netherland Plaza

SATURDAY, May 17
11 a.m.
Cincinnati Priesthood Ordination
Cathedral of St. Peter in Chains
Most Rev. Dennis M. Schnurr, archbishop of Cincinnati

SATURDAY, May 31
11 a.m.
Toledo Priesthood Ordination
Most Rev. Dennis M. Schnurr, archbishop of Cincinnati
Rosary Cathedral

SATURDAY, June 21
10:30 a.m.
Youngstown Priesthood Ordination
Most Rev. George V. Murry, bishop of Youngstown
St. Columba Cathedral
FATHER BONIFACE-BLANCHARD TWAIBU ORDAINED IN U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

The Rev. Boniface-Blanchard Twaibu was ordained to the priesthood January 4 by the Most Reverend Herbert A. Bevard, bishop of the Diocese of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands, at the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul. The next day Father Twaibu offered a Mass of Thanksgiving at the cathedral, his parish. Father Benedict O’Cinnsealaigh, rector of Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West, and Father Earl Fernandes, seminary dean, concelebrated at both Masses.

Pictured right: Father Boniface-Blanchard Twaibu between Father Benedict O’Cinnsealaigh (left) rector of Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West and Father Earl Fernandes (right), after the ordination ceremony in the Virgin Islands.

St. James Project Appoints Director, Concentrates Mission, Launches New Blog & Facebook Page

The St. James Project has set up a webpage on the Athenaeum website and a starter Facebook page which features links and resources to help educate partners and friends. Newly appointed Assistant Professor of Systematic and Moral Theology at the Athenaeum, Dr. Tobias Nathe, now directs the project.

Bishop Binzer Institutes Seven Seminarians as Lectors

Most Rev. Joseph R. Binzer, auxiliary bishop of Cincinnati, instituted seven Mount St. Mary’s of the West seminarians as lectors on March 26 in the Chapel of St. Gregory the Great at The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West.

Large Crowd Hears Le Blond Lecture by Springfield, Ill., Bishop Thomas Paprocki

More than 400 people attended the Le Blond Lecture at the Athenaeum to hear the Most Rev. Thomas Paprocki, bishop of Springfield Ill. (pictured right), discuss the legal and moral implications of the attempts to redefine marriage – so-called same sex marriage – and defend the coherency of marriage between a man and a woman. The crowd overflowed the Bartlett Pastoral Center on the Athenaeum’s campus with many attendees going into classrooms to watch live video streaming of the address.
**Investment Tip from an Inside Trader**

**BY JIM RICE, VICE PRESIDENT OF ADVANCEMENT**

In today’s economy, investments have no guarantees. Still, I want to let you in on a great tip from an insider: an investment in the 2013-14 Athenaeum Annual Fund will reap great returns.

You will be investing in the premier institution for ecclesial formation sponsored by the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, which *forms men and women to faithfully follow Christ and serve His mission* by fulfilling their vocations in the Church.

How can you pass up this investment opportunity? Please put making a gift to the Athenaeum Annual Fund on your to do list today. I have conveniently enclosed a response envelope in this issue. May you be blessed as we have been blessed by your generosity.

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**Obituaries**

**James J. Gardner**, who, through James J. Gardner Charitable Trusts, has funded the James J. Gardner Chair in Moral Theology at the Athenaeum, died November 24 at his home. He was 80. The chair presently is held by the Rev. Michael Seger, professor of moral theology.

**Eleanor L. Schnurr**, of Hospers, Iowa, mother of Cincinnati Archbishop Most Reverend Dennis M. Schnurr, died December 16 at Sanford Senior Care in Sheldon, Iowa, where she resided since June, 2012. She was 93. Archbishop Schnurr serves as chairman of the Athenaeum Board of Trustees.

**James E. Powers**, a past member of The Athenaeum of Ohio Board of Trustees and a charter member of the Bishop Fenwick Society, the Athenaeum’s key group of benefactors, died January 31.

■ **The Rev. Dennis Teles**, a priest of the Diocese of Gary, Ind. who completed his formation for the priesthood at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West, died February 2 at Indiana University LaPorte Hospital in LaPorte, Ind. He was 74.

■ **The Rev. Raymond J. ‘Ray’ Horley**, senior priest-retired of the Diocese of Cleveland who completed his formation for the priesthood at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West and St. Gregory Seminary, died January 19. He was 82.

■ **The Rev. James J. Schmitt**, a priest of the Diocese of Lansing, Mich., who studied for the priesthood at St. Gregory and Mount St. Mary’s seminaries of the West, died January 22. He was 89.

Full obituaries of Mr. Gardner, Mrs. Schnurr, Mr. Powers, Father Teles, Father Horley, and Father Schmitt appear on the Athenaeum’s website www.athenaeum.edu

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**Rest in Peace**

**Dr. Robert Griffin**, father of Bill Griffin of the Athenaeum’s maintenance department, died November 13.

**Ardell Sullivan**, mother and mother-in-law of Amy and Gary Randolph, Athenaeum maintenance department, died Tuesday, December 2.

**Jennifer Rosemary Lee**, mother of the Rev. Matthew Lee, Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West alumnus, died December 31.

**Karen (Bertke) Everson**, sister of Bob Bertke, member of the Athenaeum Advisory Council and Bishop Fenwick Society, died January 5.


**Christine A. Latona**, sister of the Rev. Dan Hunt, parochial vicar at St. Lawrence, Rhine; Immaculate Conception, Botkins, and St. Joseph, Wapakoneta, and a Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West alumnus, died January 27.


**Mary Mahoney**, mother of the late Rev. Michael Mahoney, a Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West alumnus, died February 10.

**Jeannette Bruce**, sister of the Rev. Clarence Heis, a Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West alumnus, died February 12.
Do you want to share the gift of the Catholic faith? Do you want to make an impact beyond your life?

JOIN THE ST. GREGORY LEGACY SOCIETY

The St. Gregory Legacy Society honors individuals who, through their planned and estate gifts, have made a commitment to The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West to share the gift of the Catholic faith by endowing the education of priests, deacons and lay ministers to serve our Church.

Membership in this society helps secure the financial future of the Athenaeum. Success in the future rests completely upon our ability to increase our base of support – our endowment. The St. Gregory Legacy Society provides a way to recognize our special benefactors who have helped to secure our future by the thoughtful, meaningful inclusion of the Athenaeum in their financial planning. This also allows us to convey our heartfelt and everlasting gratitude to planned and deferred donors before the gift is actually realized. We are not only grateful to them for their vision in providing for the future needs of the Athenaeum, but also for their leadership.

The St. Gregory Legacy Society allows you to change the lives of the future generations of your family as well as the lives of people you may never meet, by providing the means in the future to educate men and women to serve our Church and to share our Catholic faith. Please prayerfully consider becoming a member of The St. Gregory Legacy Society by including the Athenaeum in your estate planning. Your gift will benefit countless generations to come.

For more information about the St. Gregory Legacy Society, please contact Kathy Kaelin Symons, director for estate and trust services, at 513-233-6153 or at leavealegacy@athenaeum.edu

“To keep a lamp burning we have to keep putting oil in it…”

- MOTHER TERESA

END OF LIFE ISSUES PROGRAM

“End of Life Issues,” a program being offered by The Athenaeum of Ohio’s St. Gregory Legacy Society, will be held 7 p.m., Monday, May 12, at Holy Angels Parish in Sidney, Ohio. The Rev. Earl Fernandes, dean of Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West and the Athenaeum and assistant professor of moral theology, will give a talk on “End of Life Issues” and answer questions. Please join us!