Athenaeum Courses Appeal to Many:

Three Winter Courses of General Interest to All Catholics

Often times, people discover the Athenaeum by taking a class of specific interest to them. They may enroll for credit or to audit the course.

People involved in parish worship commissions or other ministries; those who teach religion, RCIA coordinators, parish staff members, and many others discover Athenaeum courses provide them with knowledge to be better in their ministries in service to their parish and the Church. Other active Catholics take courses simply to broaden their knowledge.

Taking a course or two often results in a desire to continue on to a degree or the two-year certificate program offered by the Lay Pastoral Ministry Program (LPMP).

Athenaeum parish ambassadors are urged to encourage parishioners to take a class at the Athenaeum this winter and are challenged to find at least one parishioner to enroll in an Athenaeum class.

The winter session, which begins November 28, offers several courses of general interest to Catholics active in their faith lives and in their parishes. Father Earl Fernandes, Athenaeum dean, noted three courses that would be of general appeal to many Catholics this coming term. They are:

**Church History: Key Issues and Eras.** The Rev. Theodore C. Ross, a nationally recognized Church historian and long-time member of the Athenaeum's faculty, teaches the course focusing on the development of the Church from 70 A.D. to the 20th Century. Particular attention is paid to the distinguishing characteristics of the Church in each of the major eras of its history; from its theological self-understanding to its institutional expression. The unifying focus of the course centers on the history of the Church's self-understanding and the formation and development of structures to fulfill that mission.

**Introduction to the Old Testament.** Athenaeum biblical scholar Eric Wolf provides an overall introduction to the sacred history of the people of Israel, and the literary record of their experience. Key themes of revelation, election, covenant, exodus, law, sin and salvation are studied. Among topics discussed are the composition of the books of the Old Testament, biblical inspiration, canonicity, and interpretation of scripture.

**The Theology of Martyrdom.** Throughout the centuries, the Church has taken great care to record the acts of martyrdom -- the spilling of blood for Christ -- which became the seeds of future Christians. Even in our own day it is thought that more Christians have died as martyrs during the 20th Century than during all the previous 19 centuries combined. Indeed, Pope John Paul II taught that in our own time, “the Church has become the Church of martyrs.” The Rev. Paul Jerome Keller, O.P., S.T.D., will explore the lives of the martyrs through the centuries in order to better understand the meaning of dying as a martyr and its importance in the life of the Church.

For information about Athenaeum courses or for general information, please call 231-2223; to enroll, ask for the registrar's office.
To All Parish Ambassadors:

I thank our ambassadors for the important work they do on our behalf, and for their constant support and commitment to the Athenaeum and Mount St. Mary’s of the West Seminary.

From the beginning, Christianity has been a Gospel message. That is, a religious faith characterized by evangelization. The initiative of evangelization marked the ministry of the Lord Jesus, Himself, and it was the commission He gave to His apostles and all those who have followed in His footsteps.

Evangelization is as necessary today as it was at the beginning. Every age is in need of Christ, but how can they come to know Him if they do not hear, and how can they hear if no one is sent; if no one carries the message to them? This is our day and we are the new evangelizers.

I want to make you aware that over the next year we will be looking to develop classes, seminars, and conferences directed toward catechesis, evangelization, and faith formation that will be directed toward parents, teachers, religious program directors (RCIA and CCD), as well as Catholic professionals working in the fields of health, law, business, civil and government agencies. These programs and initiatives will be directed to those who are intimately involved in the Church’s mission providing further training, formation and education. They also will be directed to those who work in the community but who want to make Christ present through their own ethical and professional witness and example by creating just structures and living a moral life.

In all these programs, we hope to engage the participants as evangelizers themselves by bringing the non-committed and fallen away into the same process. It will be an important and exciting initiative and we want you to be part of our team.

As an indication of our serious commitment to this new evangelization and catechesis program, Archbishop Schnurr has supported the creation of a new institute for catechesis and evangelization. A director has been appointed by the archbishop to work under the supervision of the Athenaeum dean and the direction of the president of the Athenaeum and rector of the seminary. The foundation for this institute began under Father Ed Smith and the project and director’s salary is funded by a grant from donors.

This person will oversee the development of the program, provide opportunities for catechesis for parents, teachers, ministers, and priests; and will provide programs for Catholics involved in the work of everyday life. As the program develops, please consider participating yourself, encourage your parish ministers and fellow parishioners to participate and get the word out.

Thank you again for all you do for us and for the Church.

Father Benedict O’Cinnsealaigh
President and Rector
Savor the Blessings the Athenaeum Provides

We plan. We plan ahead. We plan for retirement. We plan for our children’s education. We plan for a rainy day.

When we get married, we need to book a Church, and a priest or deacon, and a reception venue well-ahead. When we plan our vacation, we need to book a flight, hotel, car, early or we risk paying more. Businesses need to plan ahead – to set strategies, budgets, business plans. Needless to say we are conditioned to look ahead and plan for the future.

Just once in a while I find comfort and peace in another way of looking at life. I like to “savor the moment.” This time of year is ideal for being in the moment and just focusing on the here and now. Summer and its relaxation are behind us and winter and its cold and desolate beauty lie ahead.

We’re now in the season of the year that bursts with the rich colors of fall. This is the season that gets us back into the challenges of a new school year, a renewed business focus and a time we can bask in the glow of shortened days, students doing their homework, the new season for network TV, high school and college football and (for some lucky fans) the World Series. This is the season so full of activities and commitments that we are almost forced to be in the moment. We simply don’t have the capacity to look too far ahead because of the energy needed to get everything done.

At the Athenaeum, the seminarians have returned for another year, joined by 12 new seminarians; the Lay Pastoral Ministry Program (LPMP) and the Special Studies Division areas are underway; and the deacon formation class is back for its second of three years.

It is a time to savor the moment and give thanks for the blessings we enjoy because of the Athenaeum. We have priests, deacons and lay ministers throughout the Archdiocese who have been trained and formed at the Athenaeum and now are meeting the spiritual needs of God’s people. We have an institution that offers not only courses for those pursuing the priesthood, the diaconate, a certificate or a degree, but also for those seeking some enrichment in their lives. Thanks be to God!

We know you are busy, too. In addition to your other responsibilities, you have stepped forward and volunteered to be a parish ambassador. For that we also are most grateful. Thank you.

In your role as ambassador, you are challenged to get the word out in your parish about the Athenaeum and to serve as a clearinghouse for information. You are important to the Athenaeum. You can assist the pastor and others at your parish in helping to link those with questions or aspirations with the Athenaeum. You are not alone in these endeavors. There are resources. There is a list of resources you can rely upon. It is shown on the back page of every issue of Faith In Action. Please don’t hesitate to reach out to these resources, should you have a question, concern or just need information. In the future, we’ll again offer Ambassador Days and other opportunities to help you carry out your responsibilities.

We are still filling openings for ambassadors in some parishes, so if you know of someone in another parish who might make a good ambassador, please let us know.

As always, we are most grateful for your dedication and commitment to the Athenaeum and we ask for your prayers for all who are involved in the Athenaeum and support its work.

God’s blessings to you,

Deacon Max Schellman
Deacon Dave Wallace Bolsters Efforts to Complete Parish Ambassador Program

Deacon Dave Wallace, who serves at St. Philip the Apostle Parish in Morrow, has joined the Athenaeum Alumni Association’s Executive Committee, and, with long-time member William (Bill) Staun, will lead the drive to complete the Parish Ambassador Program this year.

The executive committee has earmarked completion of the ambassador program as the sole goal of the alumni association this year and as co-chairs of the association’s special projects subcommittee Deacon Wallace and Mr. Staun will spearhead the endeavor.

Deacon Wallace, ordained in 2010, said he was motivated to become involved in alumni association work because the “Athenaeum to me is a special place. I used to have all of my allegiance to Xavier University but then, when I came out here to the Athenaeum, I fell in love with the place. It is the center of Catholicism in Cincinnati.

“I originally found out about the Athenaeum when they gave a vocation talk at St. Philip about the diaconate program and the priesthood. I had long known there was a seminary on Beechmont Avenue but that was all. I did not know what else was there. When they mentioned the diaconate I thought, ‘Gee whiz, I can do that.’ I was past president of parish council and had held a number of committee chairs with the council. I really had no idea what I was getting into.”

To become a diaconate candidate requires completion of a two-year Certificate in Lay Ministry from the Athenaeum’s Lay Pastoral Ministry Program (LPMP).

Deacon Wallace discovered balancing a busy career with his goal of serving his Church, became an issue. He is a registered representative and insurance agent for Ohio National Life – operating his own agency in Blue Ash. He has been in the life insurance business for 45 years. The demand of his job extended his time in the certificate program from the normal two years to four with three additional years required for ordination to the permanent diaconate.

Deacon Wallace loves his vocation and the opportunities to serve his parish and the Athenaeum. He has discovered a special affinity to serving the terminally ill. “I go to visit these people. I’m with them when they are dying and probably one of the last people to see them before they meet the Lord. Then I do the committal at the cemetery. It is a special privilege,” he said. Because of the flexibility of his job, Deacon Wallace is able to attend parish meetings, help with baptisms and weddings and be on call for parish needs. “They consider me staff out there,” he said.

His boundless dedication will now become a blessing for the alumni association as it continues the quest to appoint an ambassador to represent the interests of the Athenaeum in each parish within the 19-county archdiocese.

Deacon Wallace, and his wife, Carol, live in the Landon area of Warren County. He holds a bachelor of business administration degree from Xavier University and is a U.S. Army veteran where he completed training as a Green Beret and served in the Special Forces. The Wallaces have five children and six grandchildren.

“I still have time to play golf with my retired friends on Mondays and in leagues on Wednesday and Friday nights,” he said. “But the weekends are reserved for the Church.”

“I originally found out about the Athenaeum when they gave a vocation talk at St. Philip about the diaconate program and the priesthood. I had long known there was a seminary on Beechmont Avenue but that was all. I did not know what else was there. When they mentioned the diaconate I thought, ‘Gee whiz, I can do that.’”

—Deacon Dave Wallace
The Bulletin Board

The bulletin board features brief items of general interest about the Athenaeum. Please encourage your parish bulletin editors/newsletter editors to use them. They're a snap to cut and paste from your website version using Adobe Acrobat, or email Walt Schaefer at wschaefer@athenaeum.edu.

Lay Ministry Certificate Classes in Three Locations

The Lay Pastoral Ministry Program is pleased to be offering non-degree Certificate classes at the main campus in Cincinnati, at Good Shepherd Parish in Montgomery and at the Pilarczyk Center in Dayton. Students will be enjoying courses in Scripture, discipleship, history, communications for ministry, doctrine and Christology. Students in the program are formed as faithful disciples and engaged in the mission of the Church in the world. If you would like to explore how these classes might fit into your busy schedule, call 513-231-1200 for more information.

Schedule an Athenaeum Speaker

Parish groups in need of speakers to discuss Catholic topics are encouraged to use the Athenaeum’s Speakers Bureau to fulfill their needs. Athenaeum faculty and staff members are available to speak on many topics of interest to parish groups from faith formation to RCIA to Bible study. To obtain a list of Athenaeum speakers or to schedule a speaker, please call Walt Schaefer, Athenaeum communications director at 233-6130, wschaefer@athenaeum.edu

Library Provides Special Benefits for Athenaeum Students

If you enroll for a class at the Athenaeum, you receive the extra bonus of expanded library privileges. Beyond the Maly Library collection, you will have access to the collections of almost all the academic libraries in Ohio. A delivery service drops off requested items at the Maly Library within a few days. Plus you can search for journal articles from your home computer. Be sure to stop by the library to get your card with student status. We will be happy to tell you how to use the catalog and databases to find good reading for your class … or just for your personal interests.

Perpetuate the Catholic Faith - Join the Saint Gregory Legacy Society

Consider a legacy gift of a bequest, charitable annuity or trust, life insurance policy or a gift of real estate to perpetuate the mission of The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary, to prepare people to serve the church effectively as priests, deacons and lay ministers. To learn more, contact Kathy Symons at (513) 233-6153 or leavealegacy@athenaeum.edu.

St. Gregory Legacy Society
Faith in Action

Names and Numbers
Below are the names, numbers and e-mail addresses of the people you or interested parishioners may need to call.

Parish ambassador program
Mr. Walt Schaefer, 513-233-6130
wschaefer@athenaeum.edu

Tours
Ms. Jan Hagedorn, 513-231-2223 ext 110
jhagedorn@athenaeum.edu

Eugene H. Maly Memorial Library
Mrs. Connie Song, director
513-231-2223 ext 136
csong@athenaeum.edu

Speakers’ Bureau
Mr. Walt Schaefer, 513-233-6130
wschaefer@athenaeum.edu

Athenaeum Chorale
Mr. Anthony DiCello, music director
tdicello@athenaeum.edu

Priest vocations
Rev. Kyle Schnippel, 513-421-3131
kschnippel@catholiccincinnati.org

Diaconate formation
Barry Mersmann, 513-421-3131
deaconoffice@catholiccincinnati.org

Special Studies Division
Pastoral counseling, masters programs)
Dr. Terrance D. Callan, 513-231-2223 ext 116
tcallan@athenaeum.edu

Lay Pastoral Ministry
Certificate and masters programs)
Dr. Susan McGurgan, 513-231-1200
smcgurgan@athenaeum.edu

School Registrar
Mr. Mike Sweeney, 513-231-2223 ext 118
msweeney@athenaeum.edu

Advancement office (annual fund,
giving opportunities)
Mr. Jim Jackson, director; 231-2223 ext 161
jjackson@athenaeum.edu

Communication office
Mr. Walt Schaefer, director, 513-233-6130,
wschaefer@athenaeum.edu

Faith in Action is published three times a year for Athenaeum Ambassadors who represent the institution and promote ordained and lay vocations in their home parishes. For information about the program, or for comment, please contact Walt Schaefer, Athenaeum communications director, at 233-6130 or wschaefer@athenaeum.edu.

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