Recognizing the Generosity of Our Benefactors

Robert A. Sullivan, president of Fifth Third Bank, Cincinnati with Heidi B. Jark, vice president and manager of the Fifth Third Foundation, recently presented the Rev. Edward P. Smith, president/rector of the Athenaeum with a leadership gift to the institution’s capital campaign: “Investing in Our Future – Preserving Our Legacy.”

The six-figure donation will be used for building and technology needs of the Athenaeum. Fifth Third has been a steadfast supporter of the Athenaeum. During an earlier fund raising effort, the foundation provided $500,000 to help renovate the Eugene H. Maly Memorial Library.

The most recent gift followed a request from Cincinnati Archbishop Emeritus Daniel E. Pilarczyk. Father Smith, Dennis Eagan, Athenaeum vice president for finance and administration, and Jim Jackson, Athenaeum advancement director.

The generosity of the Fifth Third Foundation is but one of many examples of leadership donations received from all areas of the archdiocese. Other leadership gifts as of May 6 total 110.

A generous gift bolsters capital campaign

Alfred A. “Al” Schoenstein, a long time Athenaeum benefactor who died August 8, left a significant gift to the Athenaeum’s capital campaign and another to his parish, Guardian Angels, in Mount Washington.

Mr. Schoenstein, who was 89, worked as an engineer at Cincinnati Milacron for more than 40 years. He was a graduate of the University of Cincinnati.

“This is a very generous, six-figure gift. It will help us with our campaign initiatives, one of them being our endowment,” said Jim Jackson, Athenaeum advancement director. The gift is unrestricted, meaning the money can be used to advance the Athenaeum’s mission in whatever way the institution’s administration feels is most beneficial.

The Rev. Thomas King, pastor of Guardian Angels, noted Mr. Schoenstein, a regular at daily Mass, was a past Grand Knight of the Moeller Council, Knights of Columbus. “He loved to go to Coney Island to go swimming and owned two automobiles — one for long distances, mostly to Florida for the summer. He was devoted to his...”
Believing in the Cause; Defying the Trends

On May 21, 2010, as excitement abounded at the Bishop Fenwick Society Archbishop’s Dinner, there was a renewed and regenerated spirit of conviction as we kicked off the Athenaeum’s comprehensive campaign.

The strong leadership from our campaign co-chairs Greg/Gloria Ionna and Mike/Nancy Conaton with honorary chairs Bob/Ruth Conway was evident as they presented our case, plans and goals.

The question was asked: How will this vision become reality? Paulette V. Machare, president and CEO for the Association of Fundraising Professionals has said: “The giving figures today represent a low mark in fundraising over the past 10 years and quite possibly since the 1980’s.” It seems people may believe they can only give when things are going well.

Yet, early results from the “quiet phase” of our campaign indicate the Athenaeum will escape this trend. What is happening here that is challenging these national giving indicators? Our Catholic Community is voting not only with its prayers and service, but its wallet, too. Hope in the future is superseding the national giving statistics.

The faith of men like Al Schoenstein, the hope of Greg and Gloria Ionna coupled with the charity led by the members of our Bishop Fenwick Society are creating a surprising reality. By giving wholeheartedly and with good intentions, we have set a powerful force in motion. The Athenaeum is resoundingly defying the national trends.

A voice of hope has been cast; there is a strong belief in the mission, vision and leadership of the Athenaeum. We will keep the message of Jesus Christ alive with our faith, hope, and charity by Investing In Our Future… Preserving Our Legacy.

— James W. Jackson

In brief

Easter Season Brings Blessings

During the first week of May, we are in the middle of the Easter season. Ordinations have begun, the end of the academic year is fast approaching, and summer is on the way. Once again, I am reminded of how many blessings God gives us here at the Athenaeum. We are privileged to be a community of faith, working together to prepare men and women to serve the people of God. You are a major part of this effort, and for your support, generosity and affection for this Athenaeum and seminary, I am very grateful.

This little newsletter is one way to let you know how important you are to all of us. It is meant to keep you, our special benefactors, informed of all that is going on at this wonderful place. May the Lord take good care of all of you and your families. You are in the daily prayers of the faculty and seminarians. May God bless you always.

— Father Edward P. Smith, president/rector

Sign Up for Summer Courses

During the summer of 2010 the Athenaeum will offer three courses. One is a pastoral counseling course that can serve as continuing education for licensed social workers, counselors and psychologists. PA 419 Play Therapy will be taught June 17-20 by Melonie Grosser. This course meets Thursday evening-noon Sunday. The other two summer opportunities are theology courses. B 311 An Introduction to the Deuteronomic History will be taught June 7-10 by the Rev. Ken Morman, instructor of theology at the Athenaeum. S 420 Mary in the Eastern Orthodox Tradition will be taught June 14-17 by Dr. Virginia M. Kimball. Both are three quarter credit graduate courses that can be taken for credit or audit. Each course meets 9:00 a.m.-noon and 1:00–4:00 p.m., Monday–Thursday. More information about these courses can be found on the Athenaeum’s web site (www.athenaeum.edu). To enroll in a class, call the registrar’s office, 231-2223 or e-mail: msweeney@athenaeum.edu

— Dr. Terrance D. Callan, dean of the Athenaeum

Exams, Lectures, and Installations Make for a Busy Spring

Spring Quarter began with the four men in Fifth Theology successfully completing the Master of Divinity Comprehensive Exam, the culmination of years of academic study. Archbishop Dennis M. Schnurr celebrated the liturgy for the installation of first and second-year theologians as Lectors and Acolytes on March 20, which was also “Parents’ Day” at the seminary. After assisting in their respective dioceses at Holy Week Liturgies, seminarians continued their celebrations with diocesan ordinations. Three Cincinnati men were ordained transitional deacons, along with the 33 permanent deacons, at Immaculate Conception Church in Dayton on April 24. One seminarian from Toledo was ordained to the diaconate on May 1 and a Youngstown seminarian was ordained to the diaconate June 12. Students had the opportunity to appreciate the rich history of their dioceses. Seminarians attended Dr. Denis McNamara’s lecture held at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Chains; the lecture dealt with the contributions of the architect Edward Schulte to church architecture in the greater Cincinnati area.

Toledo men journeyed with the Rev. Ken Mormon to their cathedral as the diocese celebrated its centenary. The year concluded with the ordination to the priesthood of men from Cincinnati, Toledo, and Covington.

— Father Earl Fernandes, academic dean

Rare Gifts from Archbishop Pilarczyk

Our retired archbishop continues to give to the people of the Archdiocese, most notably for us through his regular contribution of books to the Eugene H. Maly Memorial Library. This spring his gift was remarkable: a small collection of rare books that he has received as gifts. Among them were three facsimiles of items from the Vatican Library. Pope Paul VI was known to enjoy having these exact replicas produced to give as gifts to scholars and visitors. Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk received these copies through his friendship with Archbishop Paul Marcinkus, a close friend of the Pope and one-time governor of Vatican City. They include facsimiles of:

• The New Testament of the Codex Vaticanus, one of the oldest complete Bibles, dating from the 4th century;
• The Gelasian sacramentary, a gloriously illustrated copy of the second oldest known liturgical book.
• Bodmer papyrus 72, the earliest known copy of the epistles of St. Peter.

These treasures are currently on display in the Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk Rare Book Room. We greatly appreciate the continued generosity of the archbishop and his long-standing support of the Maly Library.

— Tracy Koenig, library director

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— Tracy Koenig, library director
**Forging a Catholic Family Tradition**

As we say goodbye to one class of permanent deacon candidates and congratulate them on their ordination, we welcome a new class. The new class will consist of candidates from the Archdiocese of Cincinnati and the Diocese of Covington and will begin with an opening family retreat at Maria Stein spiritual center August 7 and 8. The retreat will be given by the Rev. Mike Comer of the Diocese of Covington and will involve deacons and their wives from previous ordination classes. Please remember to pray for our new deacons, our new deacon candidates and their families. The faculty, staff, seminarians and students of The Athenaeum of Ohio/Mount St. Mary’s Seminary want to thank the deacon class of 2010 for their positive presence with us over the last three years of formation and for their generous gift of the restoration of the statue of St. Gregory the Great which Archbishop Schnurr called “a beautiful addition to the artistic patrimony of the seminary.”

— Father Benedict O’Cinnsealaigh, formation director

Continued on back page

**New Deacon Class Begins in August**

At about the same time Greg Ionna was becoming upset at hearing a local radio personality bark diatribes against former Cincinnati Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk, Jim Jackson was taking over the reins of the Athenaeum’s Advancement Department.

Mr. Ionna, long-time Xavier University booster, knew Mr. Jackson who served as past director of development at Xavier.

“I got a call from Jim who asked me to become involved with the Athenaeum. Not too long after that, I went over there to see Jim and I got to know the seminarians and I got to know the archbishop and I discovered a lot of the people (dishing out the criticism) don’t know them,” said Mr. Ionna, chief executive officer of the C.M. Paula Co.

C. M. Paula is a privately held holding company overseeing three separate subsidiary enterprises out of its Mason, Ohio headquarters – a specialty greeting card company, a sports licensing company specializing in gifts, and a children’s education company focusing on nature and geology. Mr. Ionna also is retired executive vice president of Gibson Greeting Cards.

“So my wife, Gloria, and I, both of us Cincinnati natives, got involved in the Athenaeum because the Good Lord wanted us involved,” Mr. Ionna said. “I was struggling with the problems of the priests just as many of us were. I’m not saying there are no problems. There are problems in my own office and I have to deal with them effectively. But, when a radio commentator is on the air ripping the archbishop, I thought it was unfair. You may be Catholic. You have disagreements; but there is no justification in ripping a person that way,” Mr. Ionna said.

Mr. Ionna and his wife listened to Mr. Jackson. They joined the Bishop Fenwick Society. They became leading Athenaeum benefactors and they took the time to learn about the institution. Most recently, Mr. Ionna has been serving as co-chair of the recently announced Athenaeum capital campaign: “Investing in Our Future – Preserving Our Legacy.”

“It is amazing to see these young men who are willing to give their lives for the Church – their whole lives to Our Lord. The Catholic Church in general gets so much bad press that the best thing we can do is put our seminarians out there” Mr. Ionna said.

The success to date of the Athenaeum’s capital campaign has been nothing short of amazing as well – testament to the love of the people of the archdiocese for their seminary and graduate school of theology.

“Doing this campaign is an adventure for me. It’s a different level of fundraising – the number of donations in the four, five, six, figure range and asking people for even seven figures. The generosity; the love for the Church, the love for the Athenaeum is genuine,” Mr. Ionna said. “We have two archbishops out there on the front line, generous with their time. They take the Athenaeum seriously.

“Archbishop (Dennis M.) Schnurr really cares. He made that very clear from day one – this is worth fighting for; this is worth putting time and effort into. Our Church needs good priests, deacons, lay ministers. If you don’t have them, where is your Church going to be?”

Taking on leadership in Catholic organizations – being active and giving – has long been part of the Ionna tradition.

Mr. Ionna, a newly appointed member of the Athenaeum’s Board of Trustees, serves on the board of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and on the advisory council at Xavier University. He and his wife are on the board of the Franciscan Daughters of Mary, a small group of sisters working with the poor in Covington, Ky. Mrs. Ionna is a committee chair for Birthright of Greater Cincinnati – the oldest pregnancy crisis center in Cincinnati. Her husband is a committee member. While they reside in Clermont County’s Miami Township, they belong to St. Francis Seraph Parish serving the poor in Over-the-Rhine.

Mrs. Ionna, a former records manager at Blue Cross/Blue Shield and an active pro-life advocate, launched two stores – Loveland and Mason – originally called Truly Blest – a resale enterprise specializing in donated clothing for infants, children, adults and expectant mothers. The Ioannas donated the Loveland store to Birthright of Cincinnati and its name was changed to Twice Blest. The Mason store has closed.

The Ioannas have four children: Nicole Watson of Rochester, Minn. and Angela Geier, Bethany Oden and Tony Ionna all of Greater Cincinnati. They have nine grandchildren.

“**Our Church needs good priests, deacons, lay ministers. If you don’t have them, where is your Church going to be?”**

— Greg Ionna
Louisville Archbishop Presents Program on Church & Marriage

In November of 2009, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) approved a new document entitled, “Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan”. This document strongly affirms the Church’s traditional teaching on marriage, while honoring marriage as the foundation of society and as a path to holiness.

On August 28 from 9:30 a.m. - 3 p.m., the Lay Pastoral Ministry Program (LPMP) will offer a day of education and formation centered on this document, led by the Most Reverend Joseph E. Kurtz, D. D., Archbishop of Louisville. Archbishop Kurtz is treasurer of the USCCB and chairman of the Committee on Budget and Finance. He also is chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee for the Defense of Marriage and Episcopal advisor to the Catholic Social Workers National Association. He played a key role in the development of this new document.

Archbishop Kurtz will present the keynote address entitled, “Fostering a Marriage Friendly Church”. After lunch, break-out sessions, led by diocesan experts, will offer practical ways parishes can support healthy marriages. The day will include a continental breakfast and lunch. We invite Bishop Fenwick Society members to join us for what will be an exciting and informative day. For information about registration please call our office at 513-231-1200.

— Dr. Susan McGurgan, director, LPMP

Generous Gift Bolsters Capital Campaign

(continued from cover)

late wife, Ruth. They had no children.” Father King said the gift to the parish will be used to pay down debt with some of it earmarked for a “rainy day” fund.

In a eulogy, close friend Sister Emerita McGann, development director of the Sisters of Divine Providence, wrote: “One of the most memorable moments in Al’s life was his marriage to his beloved wife, Ruth Gabriel. There are many love stories told these days and I believe that the bond of love shared by Al and Ruth was a precious gem, not only for their eyes, but in God’s eyes too. Every time I had a conversation with Al, and every time he sent a gift to the Sisters of Divine Providence, he would always ask me to pray for his dear wife. There was a void in his heart, a longing to be united once again – a longing that has now been fulfilled.”

Mr. Schoenstein had been an Athenaeum donor since 1993 and a Bishop Fenwick Society member since 2004. Funeral Mass was at Guardian Angels Church, Mount Washington.