

For family, friends, & alumni of Cistercian Preparatory School

CISTERCIAN IRVING TEXASONTINUUM

Fall 2020

CO♥ID
CARE
WITH
HEART

**Medical Alums
Rise to Meet
the Challenge**

**Advancing
by Degrees...**

Inspired by learning,
faculty and staff pursue
advanced degrees

Annual Report
2019–2020 School Year

IN MEMORIAM
Fr. Bede Lackner

December 19, 1927 – November 10, 2020

Jeff Zavaleta '93

Remembering Cistercian with a Planned Gift



Paul DeCleva

Our father gave a final gift to Cistercian as a way of honoring his original Hungarian traditions and Hungarian education. He believed that the Cistercian education of today will continue to incorporate those traditions for present students and graduates in the future.

The Family of Paul DeCleva

MEMORARE
SOCIETY

To remember Cistercian with a planned gift, contact Erin Hart.
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CONTINUUM

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Published each spring and fall
by Cistercian Preparatory School

3660 Cistercian Road
Irving, TX 75039

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Cistercian Preparatory School was founded with the aim of preparing talented boys for the colleges of their choice by challenging their minds with excellent academic programs, molding their character through the values of Catholic education, and offering them guidance with both understanding and discipline. Cistercian Preparatory School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission and education policies, financial aid programs, athletic programs, and other activities.

Letter from the Headmaster

And, the greatest of these is love.

"Love never fails. Prophecies will cease; tongues will be silent; knowledge will pass away. For our knowledge is imperfect and prophesying is imperfect. In the end there are three things that remain: faith, hope and love. And, the greatest of these is love." (1 Cor. 13: 8-9, 13)

In these uncertain times of COVID-19, the School embraced the wisdom of St. Paul as our theme for the year. So much



Fr. Paul McCormick

of our knowledge and prophesying these past several months, by even the best of experts, has ultimately proven imperfect. But, as is always the case, God's Love has remained again and again the great certainty upon which we rely. The constancy of His Love, for example, shines forth brilliantly in this issue's moving cover story highlighting medical alumni who are giving their all on the front lines of this pandemic to care for even the most intimate personal needs of those they encounter. We could not be more proud of and grateful for their unflagging

dedication to serving Him by so lovingly and selflessly serving others.

In our second feature, the certainty of God's Love remains the guiding star for those Cistercian faculty continuing their education through advanced degrees and ongoing professional development. In the spirit of *Ardere et Lucere*, their hard work to acquire greater mastery in their respective fields, on top of an already heavy teaching load, is a model for all of us as we continue striving to supplement our imperfect knowledge and prophesying through a sincere pursuit of Truth Itself. Yet, quite insightfully and with his characteristic wit, Smokey Brigg's '84 reminds us that a life well lived is one "filled with postgraduate work of many sorts, diplomas optional."

Speaking of "lives well lived," a very special treat in this issue is an open letter from Fr. Roch to his former students on the occasion of his 60th anniversary of ordination! Along with the obituary of Fr. Bede (found on page 58), we are reminded that both their lives and ministries are powerful witnesses to the dependability and lasting fruitfulness of God's Love for generations of Hawks.

In this issue

Volume 47, Number 2



COVID CARE WITH HEART

Medical Alums Rise to Meet the Challenge

Andrew Kahn, M.D. '95

8



Success by Degrees

Inspired by learning, faculty and staff pursue advanced degrees

Bob Greenfield

42



In Memoriam

Fr. Bede Lackner

December 19, 1927 – November 10, 2020

58



Departments

News & Notes	4
Annual Report of Giving	15
Class Notes	50
Afterthoughts	59
<i>A Letter to my Students</i> by Fr. Roch Kereszty	60

Cover photo by Jim Reisch

News & Notes

New and familiar faces on campus

With the installation of new audio/video equipment in all classrooms and the training necessary for both teachers and students in Microsoft Teams software, one of the recommendations from the technology committee to Greg Graham, director of technology, was that he get some help. "There was so much to do to get ready for hybrid instruction that it would have been impossible by myself," he said. Luckily, **Joseph Nied '16**, who graduated from UT Dallas in May, turned down an offer with another school to help out at his alma mater this fall. "Returning to the School as a staff member allows me to see the dedication Cistercian's faculty have to their students from a new perspective," he said. "I'm proud that my knowledge of technology and troubleshooting skills have been able to help Cistercian succeed in persevering through this pandemic!" Gary Nied has enjoyed seeing his son back on campus and was amused when a student asked him if he has a brother on campus.



Joseph Nied '16



Aaron West

Aaron West was completing his master's degree and teaching undergraduates at UT Arlington when he received a call from Dr. Martina Kroll, head of the science department, about teaching Form VII chemistry. Her husband worked with Aaron, and they both thought that he would be a good fit at Cistercian. "Teaching was, for me, the most enjoyable and rewarding aspect of being a graduate student," Aaron

observed. "I'm deeply thankful for this opportunity to teach at the best school in Texas."

Further additions to the science department include Madhuri Inupakutika who is teaching senior biology after completing her graduate work at UNT and working as an adjunct instructor at TWU. Lourdes Baker has returned to teach Form II life science after a brief hiatus. "Cistercian has been blessed by the ability to attract and retain highly qualified faculty. The science department is no exception to this as we welcome two new additions and one returning faculty member to our team," said Dr. Kroll.

Eric Lewis is thrilled to be a part of the Cistercian faculty, teaching music to Forms I and II, Latin to Form III, and music appreciation to Form IV. After completing his master's in sacred music from the Catholic University of America, Eric spent a sojourn in Washington, D.C. where he served as music director for the National Shrine of Saint John Paul II,



Madhuri Inupakutika

as assistant conductor of the Catholic University Chamber Choir, and as a professional singer for the National Basilica, the Washington Master Chorale, the Early Music Ensemble Chantry, the Cathedral of Saint Matthew, and Saint Bernadette Parish. On the weekends, he serves as music minister for the Chapel of the Incarnation at the University of Dallas.

A longtime friend of Dr. Richard Newcomb, Dr. Grant Mindle, had been teaching at Greenhill for 19 years before coming to Cistercian to teach math to Forms II and IV. "Dr. Mindle is an excellent, enthusiastic, and dedicated teacher of mathematics," Dr. Newcomb said. "He is a wonderful addition to our math faculty." Dr. Mindle is also well acquainted with Fr. Gregory and



Dr. Grant Mindle

Fr. Augustine through quiz bowl and has already begun coaching middle school math and quiz bowl competitions and practices. Dr. Mindle said, "For many, many years, I have dreamed of working alongside Dr. Newcomb and Frs. Gregory and Augustine. I am overjoyed to be here, and I am grateful for the opportunity to be part of this noble institution. We have already qualified two middle school teams for quiz bowl nationals, and I look forward

to much success for both our math and quiz bowl clubs."

School nurse Kathy Nevitt has been instrumental in creating and overseeing a set of protocols to help us navigate through the COVID-19 pandemic. She is getting a helping hand from Theresa Lobmeyer, her sister and the mother of **Christopher Lobmeyer '23**. The two, along with their husbands, helped administer COVID-19 tests to the monks last spring. "Theresa is an incredibly skilled and capable nurse. Her concern for others and kindness to those in need are just two of her finest qualities. I am blessed and honored to work with my sister and forever friend," said Mrs. Nevitt. Theresa is the school nurse on Fridays.



Theresa Lobmeyer

Fr. Roch's diamond jubilee

Fr. Roch celebrated the 60th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood on October 2. Unfortunately, the pandemic has forced Cistercian to postpone his Anniversary Mass until Reunions Weekend next June. Readers will find Fr. Roch's reflections on his priestly ministry in a letter he penned to his former students and friends on the back cover of this *Continuum*.



Fr. Roch's First Mass

Peter Saliga wins the Work of Heart Award—again!

The Catholic Foundation honored Peter Saliga with its Work of Heart Award this fall, an honor he also received in 2009.

“Honestly, when Fr. Paul came by my office to inform me I’d won, I thought I was in trouble for something I’d said or done in the classroom. I was simply relieved that I wasn’t getting chewed out.” When presenting Mr. Saliga with the award, Bill Kula, The Catholic Foundation’s representative, mentioned that alumni wrote glowingly about how he had introduced them to classical music or encouraged them to take their spiritual lives more seriously on retreat. “I took some time to think back to specific moments shared with students in the pursuit of truth, beauty and goodness,” Mr. Saliga reflected. “As I got to laughing and wagging my head in joyful disbelief at the scenes before me, I was filled with immense gratitude for the life I live at Cistercian.”



Fr. Paul and Peter Saliga with Bill Kula of The Catholic Foundation

Beautiful tapestry adorns Founders’ Hall

Current Cistercian parents Tammy and Marshall Kath donated a stunning tapestry to the School. A seventeenth-century Flemish work, the tapestry depicts the memorable biblical scene of Joseph interpreting Pharaoh’s dream. “Joseph’s confidence can be seen in his posture and in his face, while Pharaoh, ensconced in splendor, is left looking vexed by what has just transpired,” said Mr. Kath. A private collector, he purchased the piece in New York City, and it is on display for all to enjoy right above the piano in Founders’ Hall.



Fr. Paul, Erin Hart, Abbot Peter '73, Tammy Kath, Henry Kath '23, and Marshall Kath with tapestry in Founders’ Hall

Pandemic forces changes to the admissions process

This year’s admissions process looks like no other in the School’s history as many of the typical admissions events have been adjusted to accommodate new safety protocols. Rather than the customary fall Open House, Fr. Anthony Bigney, director of admissions, hosted a Virtual Open House. Prospective families were invited to hear from faculty, students, administration, and current parents about their experiences with Cistercian. Guests were also invited to send questions via a chat which were answered live. The faculty and student panels from this day can be viewed on our admissions website. Limited, individual tours are available so that prospective students and their parents can visit the outside areas of campus and hear about the School’s philosophy and student experience. For the first time,



prospective students will take the ISEE test this year instead of testing on campus. “Because we’ve had fewer face-to-face events where we’ve gotten to know our applicants, we are even more reliant on families of current students and alumni to share their experiences at Cistercian with families of young men who might fit in well here,” said Fr. Anthony. The deadline for applications for the 2021-2022 school year is January 15.

Halliburton speaks with parents and students about mental health

Last year, the Halliburton Foundation presented to the entire faculty about identifying adolescent stress and responding effectively to it. This fall, they returned to offer a Zoom presentation for parents.

Fr. Paul stressed the importance of the Foundation’s work at Cistercian when he said,



GRANT HALLIBURTON
FOUNDATION

It's about help. It's about hope. It's about power. It's about love.

“In terms of maintaining vigilance as we support the emotional and social development of our students, the Halliburton Foundation’s livestream presentation for current Cistercian parents seems to have been very well received. *SAFE! Issues Facing Today’s Youth and How You Can Help* provided basic, but useful, information to help all of us better monitor, identify, and respond effectively to adolescent stress, mental health, and other issues facing youth today.” They also spoke to Forms VIII and IV about mental health issues.

OUR MISSION



**Cistercian Preparatory School
is rooted in the life and spirit
of Catholic monasticism.**

**It offers talented and motivated young men
challenging programs within a supportive community,
allowing them to develop their strengths
and face their weaknesses
in preparation for college and life beyond,
all for the good of the whole person
in service to God and neighbor.**

Last spring, the School refined its mission statement to communicate more precisely the mission that has motivated our faculty and staff from the beginning. The new formulation of the mission statement took shape over years of prayerful reflection and discussions among Form Masters and other administrators. In fact, a fair portion of the second sentence of the statement traces its roots back to a paragraph in the Parent/Student Handbook written by Mrs. Christine Medaille over six years ago.

Our mission statement begins by recognizing the connection between the School and the Monastery. The school community draws upon the same Spirit that enlivens the Monastery. Cistercian Preparatory School is authentically Cistercian, not merely in name, but in its values, its vision, and its personnel. Just as a healthy balance of *ora et labora* (prayer and work) shape the schedule and lives of the monks, meaningful prayer and work permeate every classroom. Just as the Monastery, following the Rule of St. Benedict, forms a “school for the Lord’s service,” so also the School forms a community of persons united in a pursuit of the Good, the Beautiful, and the True, in the light of Christ. After months of craziness, it is refreshing to reflect on this and to observe that infectious diseases and videoconferencing are not mentioned once in the mission statement. Our School, shaped by God’s charity and grace, is able to navigate the crises of the present while maintaining an eye on the ultimate goal of our existence.

While the first sentence of the mission statement speaks to the values that motivate our mission, the second sentence

describes the work of the School. The Cistercian experience is not a passive one. Each student plays an active role in his own formation. Over his eight years at the School, each student will develop his strengths through the challenges he encounters and will be supported as he confronts his weaknesses. Yes, the acknowledgement that we have weaknesses is part of the School’s mission. Each young man’s recognition of his weaknesses is an important step in his personal maturation, allowing for the growth of humility and an understanding of man’s need of both God’s grace and the help of others on his journey through life. The School’s plan of formation prepares its students for life after graduation, a life, we pray, that will strive to fulfill the two greatest commandments: love for God and for neighbor.

Taken together, these two sentences make clear that Cistercian is a monastic school. The presence of monks on campus gives witness to the importance of an everyday fidelity to Christ. Demanding assignments teach the boys that their work and efforts matter. The smiling faces of faculty and staff teach them that they are loved. Day in and day out, the students build study habits, friendships, and virtues as their actions shape them into the men they will be. The decisions they make and the bonds they forge here will endure beyond graduation. And when they return, even decades later, they will find that the monks, faculty, and staff are still here, happy to receive them and to form the next generation in the Cistercian spirit.

Fr. Lawrence Brophy '01

College Matriculations

Class of 2020 chooses colleges in quarantine

The 38 members of the Class of 2020 are attending 30 different schools this fall, meaning that only 20 percent will attend college with a classmate.

This is down from 29 percent the year before, and the five-year average of 36 percent. “I love mentioning this statistic to families and college reps,” said

Chris Blackwell, Director of College Counseling, “because it is a testament to how well the School develops in these young men an understanding of who they are and what they want to study, such that they feel comfortable choosing the college that’s right for them, independent of where their friends will be attending.”

Fifty-six percent of the class chose to attend schools out of state, although many of those students started their first semester virtually from home. Others who traveled to their campuses have a mix of virtual and in-person courses. Overall, 40 percent are attending public colleges or universities with 60 percent going to private schools.

Just over one quarter of the students are attending seven different Catholic universities. From the Class of 2020, five students are attending Texas A&M University for a variety of majors, and three chose the University of Texas at Austin for selective programs such as the Canfield Business Honors Program and Plan II.

Two students ventured to college destinations where no Cistercian graduate has ever attended: **Paul Miller** to study politics at Hillsdale College in Michigan and

Reefe Harrison to play

soccer and study communications at Ithaca College in upstate New York. Only two miles down the road in Ithaca, **Tophier Luzarraga** was invited to join the men’s rowing team as a coxswain at Cornell University. Additionally,

Matt Donohoe was recruited to play football at Pomona College and **Evan Anderson** to play soccer at Rhodes College, rounding out four members of the class to participate in collegiate athletics.

Consistent with previous years, over 75 percent of the class are pursuing a major in business or the STEM fields:

30

Number of colleges attended by 38 students in the class

75%

Planning to major in STEM or business-related fields

4

Number of athletes playing for their school’s team

32 percent in engineering and another 16 percent in the natural sciences, 30 percent in business or economics; other majors include philosophy and classics (2), political science (2), psychology (2), communications, and animation.

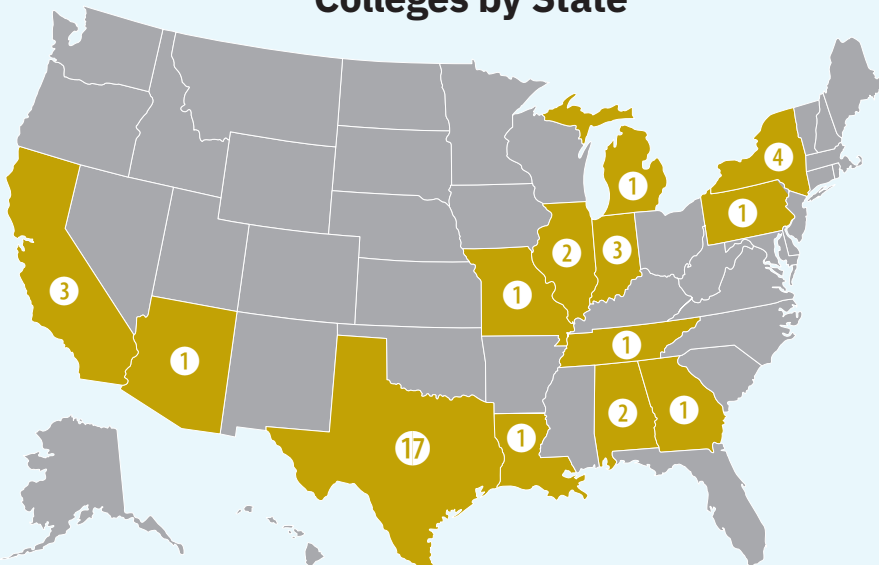
Strong test scores and accomplishments earned four different students full-tuition or full-ride scholarships of which two were accepted: **Anthony Peterman** received the Craig and Galen Brown Scholarship to Texas A&M University, and **Jack Schieferdecker** received the NROTC Scholarship to the University of San Diego.

It has been more than ten years since Cistercian has sent a graduate to USD, as well as the Jesuit schools of Loyola University Chicago (2003) and Loyola Marymount University (2009). **Sasha**

Birukoff continued the trend of sending one student per decade to Lehigh University, where the last student attended in 2010 and before him, the future Form Master of the Class of 2020, **Fr. Philip Lastimosa ’00**.

“I’m very proud of all my guys for the years of effort they put into this place, especially in the last few months with the pandemic,” said Fr. Philip. “It certainly didn’t end the way we wanted it to, but I’m confident that they will thrive in college.” •

Class of 2020 Colleges by State



Colleges

Arizona State University-Tempe
Auburn University
Austin College
Columbia University
Cornell University
Emory University
Fordham University
Hillsdale College
Ithaca College
Lehigh University
Louisiana State University
Loyola Marymount University
Loyola University Chicago
Pomona College
Purdue University
Rhodes College
Rice University
Saint Louis University
Southern Methodist University
Texas A&M University (5)
Texas Christian University
Texas Tech University
The University of Texas at Dallas
The University of Texas, Austin (3)
Marion Military Institute
University of Chicago
University of Dallas (3)
University of Notre Dame (2)
University of San Diego

COVID CARE WITH HEART

**Medical Alums
Rise to Meet
the Challenge**

Andrew Kahn, M.D. '95

Garrett Hoard '15

Jim Reisch



“Honestly, I was scared.”

— Richard Newcomb '08

These are the words of a Cistercian alumnus who worked on the COVID surge unit of a major hospital in one of the first U.S. cities to be hit by the pandemic. But before we get into that, let me provide some context, and let's start with March 11, 2020, the last day, for me, of the old normal. That evening, along with friends, family and 19,000 soccer fans, I attended the SheBelieves Cup match at Toyota Stadium in Frisco between the U.S. Women's National Team and Japan. To be fair, my wife and I had reservations about going to the soccer match. By then, COVID had dominated global news, and the virus was very much on our minds. But the thing was, all the COVID-ravaged places on the news were distant and as yet there were no reported cases in Dallas County and we already had the tickets and we really wanted to go and, naïvely, we still thought of the virus as a possibility, not a reality. Later that night, after we put the kids to bed, I sat on my couch and turned on the TV to check the score of the Mavericks game. Effective immediately, I learned, the NBA had postponed its season because a player had tested positive for COVID. I'm almost ashamed to admit it now, but that was my tipping point, the moment it finally hit home. COVID was here, and while I could not predict the changes our country was about to undergo, I understood then they would be significant.

Now let's revisit that opening sentence, staying within the month of March but switching locations from Dallas to Boston, home of Harvard University's teaching hospital, Massachusetts General. It didn't really surprise me to learn the son of a Cistercian math teacher went on to complete his internal medicine residency at this prestigious institution. Nevertheless, this is exactly what **Richard Newcomb '08** was doing last March when COVID struck. As the senior resident on service that month,

he led the resident component of the hospital's "COVID Floor Surge Team." That title alone should tell you what this article is about: the fulminant arrival of a novel and virulent pathogen, the mad scramble of a hospital to respond to an unprecedented challenge, the human element of health-care workers learning, adapting and improvising ways to take care of very sick people. And while Richard is an important figure in this story, he is not the only one. Across the country, Cistercian

alumni—some in health care, others not—have confronted this virus's challenges. They've done so selflessly, demonstrating compassion and humanism at their most fundamental levels, yet they balk at being called heroes. They've experienced firsthand the fear and fatigue of combatting COVID,

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yet they've continued to do their jobs. At a moment when COVID has taken the lives of hundreds of thousands of Americans, including our own Fr. Denis (and if you're too young to have been taught by Fr. Denis, don't worry, you have; if you've ever been part of the Cistercian community, you've received his tutelage), and at a moment when millions more have contracted the disease and everyone has suffered to some extent from

the pandemic, it's paramount to remind each other of Christ's love, to see and hear and feel the stories of those who, by opening themselves to Christ's Passion, perpetuate opportunities for us to receive God's grace. This is the story of Cistercian graduates, especially those in the health-care field, who have confronted COVID and its carnage by getting up each morning to do their jobs, by tending to their patients, and by sharing—in dark moments when people really, really need to feel it—Christ's undying love.

I spoke with Richard in late July. His story absolutely leveled me. I'm a Cistercian graduate, Class of '95, and a private-practice anesthesiologist here in Dallas. When Dallas County postponed elective surgeries for about six weeks last March and April,

I temporarily lost about 90% of my work. I subsequently sheltered in place with my family and helped my children with distance learning. Like many others, I learned to use Zoom, and because my son was a First Former at Cistercian, I brushed up on my Latin. (For example, I can now tell you if the servant is in the courtyard or the kitchen.) Richard Newcomb's experience was very different. One of the first things he noticed was how quickly the hospital filled up with COVID patients. He was also astounded by how rapidly some of these patients deteriorated. Within hours, a person could go from needing

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low-flow oxygen via nasal cannula to requiring a breathing tube and ventilator. Mass General soon exhausted its ICU capacity. The surgical ICU, the burn unit, the preop area, the PACU and even the pediatric ICU were converted to adult COVID units to accommodate the surge. Richard also noticed something else: the socioeconomic disparity in these patients. While Mass General typically caters to an affluent, white demographic, most of those hospitalized were minorities, especially Hispanics, people who literally could

not afford to shelter in place and who had to use public transportation. "I conducted more interviews in Spanish in eight weeks caring for patients with COVID than the prior three years of residency," he said. He and his coworkers soon learned a humbling lesson. Namely, "we did not have very many tools or medicines against the virus." There was some real-time data coming from Europe, especially Italy, but not enough. They had yet to learn of the benefits of drugs like remdesivir and dexamethasone for certain patients; meanwhile, the hydroxychloroquine they used "did not have a meaningful clinical impact in terms of saving lives or reducing duration of illness." All in all, he concluded, the experience was the best example in his training of "how humbling medicine is." And, as I quoted at the outset of this article, he was scared.

The beginning of the COVID crisis, which now seems long ago, was rife with fear and panic. Most of this anxiety stemmed from uncertainty. How contagious and deadly would the virus prove to

be? Do I need to wear a mask in public? Should I wipe down my groceries before I stow them away? How can I get more Clorox wipes and toilet paper? Among the health-care workers with whom I've corresponded, overwhelmingly, the single greatest fear was bringing the virus home to their families. **Jeff Zavaleta '93** is a pediatric anesthesiologist in Fort Worth and close family friend (we literally grew up across the street from each other). Bringing the virus home from work was his biggest fear. And there are plenty of stories of health care workers who lived apart from their families for weeks to avoid exposing them to COVID. In those early days last spring, I worked about one day a week. (Again, Dallas did not experience a surge like New York and Boston where they desperately needed health-care workers.) As an anesthesiologist, though, I sometimes transported surgical patients from the COVID units to the COVID-designated ORs, which were on different floors in different wings of the hospital. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was scarce and closely rationed. N95 masks, from a health-care worker's perspective, became the most valuable things in the hospital, so sought after that administrators kept them in their offices and dispensed them judiciously, logging who received them and how often. Once upon a time, back in the old normal, administrators mandated that we surgical staff change our face masks between each surgery. Now they gave us one N95 mask per week. The point is, we didn't know what we were up against, and almost everywhere in the country, health-care workers were fighting the pandemic with limited resources. Even so, as Newcomb said, "the last thing you want is to bring this virus home to your wife and child."

Let's talk more about PPE. Some of the craziest things, in my opinion, to emerge from those early days of the pandemic were the YouTube videos nurses and doctors made showing their colleagues how to properly don and doff protective gear. Let's just say it's very difficult to follow each step without contaminating yourself, especially when the process involves double-gloving, double-gowning, double-masking and "foaming in and out" between each step. ("Foaming" refers to rubbing alcohol-based sanitizer on your hands, and in some videos, on your first layer of gloves.) I don't mean to make light of the situation, but the truth is PPE was scarce then, and

in the back of my mind, always, was the persistent fear of not having the gear I'd need to do my job safely. Jumping through this donning/doffing hoop was just another aspect of the overall surrealism.



Tommy Heyne '02 suited up

PPE is also incredibly dehumanizing.

Naveen Pattisapu

'07 is an orthopedic resident in Memphis. In general, much of orthopedic residency involves taking care of trauma patients, people, for example, who have been in car crashes or fallen off ladders. Many of these patients require emergent surgery or treatment—i.e., before the results of their COVID tests return—and they

must therefore be assumed to have COVID until their tests come back. Even if you wear protective gear while treating a patient with unknown COVID status, there's always a moment of panic when you later learn the patient tested positive. Every cough and snuffle you have becomes magnified until you get your own test back. This happened twice to Naveen. (Fortunately, he tested negative after each interaction.) Nevertheless, he lamented the fact that health-care workers "become somewhat anonymous in this face shield, face mask, yellow gown and green gloves." This is a real concern. Naveen, as he put it, worried what his patients might think seeing his six-foot, four-inch figure looming over them in his "Darth Vader style" suit. Thankfully, people like Naveen care about humanizing these interactions.

Understandably, but also unfortunately, one way hospitals attempted to curtail COVID's spread was to limit traffic within their facilities. This was a heartbreaking reality for patients and their families, as it often meant no visitors were allowed. My brother **James Kahn '01** is a hospitalist in Austin. He cared for two such patients, a woman with COVID who then had a stroke and a man with metastatic cancer who then contracted COVID. Neither was allowed visitors until just before the end of their

lives. The woman's husband was allowed to see her in the ICU just before she died, and the man recovered sufficiently from COVID to be transferred home for hospice care. **Garrett Hoard '15** is a registered nurse who has been on the front lines in multiple ICUs, both in Tuscaloosa, where he lived until June, and at Baylor University Medical Center here in Dallas, since his return to Texas. Garrett has literally battled COVID in two states. In Tuscaloosa he worked as the charge nurse in the Cardiac ICU; in Dallas he currently works in the Cardiothoracic and Transplant ICU. You get those jobs by being really good at what you do. Like Newcomb, Garrett participated in transforming his Cardiac ICU to a COVID unit. They modified rooms to become negative-pressure suites that prevented air from being blown through cracks in the doorway into the hallway. They also streamlined therapies in the

... AS KNOWLEDGE OF THE DISEASE PROCESS GREW, THEIR TREATMENT STRATEGIES EVOLVED.

unit, and as knowledge of the disease process grew, their treatment strategies evolved. Nevertheless, it was stressful for Garrett that visitors were not allowed in the hospital. It became common practice for ICU nurses to "FaceTime with family members so

that they could see their loved ones and comprehend the severity of the situation." Garrett's conclusion? "It was heartbreaking to watch."

Other alumni participated in end-of-life care.

Mukund Ramkumar '03 was an ICU fellow in the COVID unit during the pandemic. One patient in particular impacted him. The patient, an elderly man, had multiple comorbidities, so he was unhealthy to begin with. In the ICU his lungs failed and he had to be intubated. Soon his kidneys and circulatory system faltered. For ten days he deteriorated. Despite their efforts, it was clear the patient would die, that there was no hope he would recover. Since no visitors were allowed in the hospital, Mukund spoke daily with the patient's daughter. She understood her father's situation, and after she had time to process it, she agreed that withdrawing her father's care while providing him with palliative sedation was the most humane decision. During their conversations, Mukund learned that his patient had been a firefighter, that he was used to "dire situations," and as his patient's daughter's fill-in, Mukund stayed in the

COVID CARE WITH HEART

man's room as he died. He held his patient's hand, he told him he'd raised a wonderful daughter, and he prayed. Mukund relied on his faith as he witnessed his patient's final minutes of life, keenly aware that "families were supposed to do this part."

COVID patients and their families weren't the only ones strained by visitation restrictions. One patient Richard Newcomb treated turned out not to have COVID; he was sick and dying from a malignant bowel obstruction. His intestine perforated and infection quickly spread throughout his body. Given his advanced state of cancer, the patient was unlikely to benefit from surgery. In normal times, doctors and hospital ethicists would meet with the patient and family to discuss transitioning to hospice care, but these were not normal times. Richard held these discussions with family by phone. Fortunately, before the patient died, Richard and his crew succeeded in getting the patient's mother and sister into the hospital to see him a final time. Devastatingly, Richard had to hold a phone so his patient could say goodbye to his teenage children via FaceTime. This is truly harrowing. It was also the norm.

COVID has even disrupted our alumni who work internationally. **Mark Shrimme '92** is a rock star in the field of medicine, in my opinion. An ear, nose and throat specialist, he was recently named the O'Brien Chair of Global Surgery at the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland... oh, and he rose to this position by way of Harvard Medical School. Before the pandemic, Mark worked regularly throughout Africa, operating on patients who literally had no one else to treat their conditions. When COVID struck, he was in Senegal, preparing to operate on a "ship full of elective surgical patients." Nevertheless, he and his coworkers had a difficult decision to make. On the one hand, there were patients they had already treated and patients they had



Tommy Heyne '02 gives a haircut to a fellow doctor since Boston barbershops were closed.



Stephen Raeside '89 receives a check for the Tarrant Area Food Bank from Bishop Olson.

promised to treat. On the other hand, a global pandemic. As Mark said, “we made the very difficult decision to stop surgeries early and to sail the ship out of Senegal... I personally left Senegal on the second-to-last flight out of Dakar before the country closed the airport to commercial flights.” Needless to say, this was quite different from the Netflix-watching, Instagram-scrolling, shelter-in-place experience many of us had.

The Harvard connection seems to be a recurring theme for Cistercian alumni. **Tommy Heyne '02** also worked at Mass General during the COVID surge. Having trained in internal medicine and pediatrics, he typically treated COVID patients on the front end, in urgent care facilities and ERs, often doing the nasal swabs himself. One clinic in which he worked was in the suburb of Chelsea, a major COVID hot spot with a large Hispanic population. Tommy also attempted to advance our COVID knowledge by conducting research to see if handheld ultrasound machines might help diagnose early lung disease. In his spare time, after the barbershops closed down during Boston’s quarantine, he actually gave haircuts to his fellow doctors in the hospital. While I don’t know if the haircuts were any good, I do know they wore their masks.

Other alumni have participated in the good fight. **Stephen Raeside '89** has led fundraising efforts for the Tarrant Area Food Bank in Fort Worth to feed the hungry during the pandemic. **Galen Hu '16** not only pre-matched into NYU’s Ophthalmology residency (a ridiculously impressive feat given that he had yet to begin medical school), but he also began volunteering in March for GetUsPPE.org, an organization that does exactly what it sounds like, with an aim to provide PPE to underserved, vulnerable, high-risk communities like homeless shelters and Native-American clinics. Even current Cistercian students got into the mix, as last spring

the robotics team built protective face shields for health-care workers and designed stands on which to disinfect N95 masks. **Marty White '82** is the Director of Nutrition for UT Southwestern. Marty noticed a fascinating paradox during COVID. Even as the hospital understandably limited person-to-person contact, including interaction between

patients and those who delivered their meals, the hospital’s third-party guest scores increased. “People seem thankful for what we do,” he noted.

What about the psychological impact of the disease? **Michael Greenfield '99** is a clinical psychologist at the Washington DC Veterans Affairs Medical Center. His patients, military veterans, are mostly African-American, a population disproportionately affected by the disease. The isolation brought on by social distancing was trying for one particular patient who, having recently become a widower, had begun to look forward to his daily visits to the senior center just before COVID struck and the facility had to close down. Another patient was hospitalized for COVID along with his wife; while he survived, his wife did not. Other patients either lost their jobs with the economic slowdown or else worried incessantly about losing them. One woman suffered from PTSD, a classic symptom of which is hypervigilance of one’s

surroundings. Already stressed by social distancing and the ubiquitous threat of COVID, her PTSD was triggered in a supermarket when another shopper approached quickly from behind and reached into the same freezer into which she was leaning. For Michael, COVID has brought about professional challenges too. Whereas before he enjoyed being part of a multidisciplinary team at a teaching hospital, he now works from home via telephone and video therapy sessions. While the monotony and social isolation have fatigued him, he’s leaned on



Marty White '82 observed that patients have a new level of appreciation for hospital staff.

his “coping repertoire of meditation, social support seeking, pleasant activities and regular exercise.” He also states he’s “lucky to have a family to stave off loneliness,” something his single colleagues lack. And while Michael has noticed the fault lines COVID has exposed in our society, particularly with regard to racial disparities and access to health care, he is

“...COVID HAS FORCED US TO PAUSE AND TAKE STOCK OF OURSELVES, AND I HOPE WE GROW STRONGER FOR IT.”

hopeful something good will come of this pandemic. “In a way,” he said, “COVID has forced us to pause and take stock of ourselves, and I hope we grow stronger for it.”

Other alumni have also tried to look past COVID to anticipate any benefits on the horizon.

Alejandro Torres ’08 recently finished his pediatrics residency in Atlanta. While he deals daily with the anxieties of his patients’ parents, particularly

with respect to the safety of attending school or participating in recreational sports, he’s also seen plenty of things that have given him hope. In his delightful words, “my neighborhood here in Atlanta has been transformed into a Norman Rockwell painting of families riding their bicycles, dads carrying kids on their shoulders, and the dogs—so many dogs!” Furthermore, he’s noticed that his patients and their families are “more intentional about spending time with people they truly care about (whether virtual or in person), and this empathy will hopefully bring us to a better tomorrow, once the dust settles.”

So who are the real heroes of the COVID saga? If you ask the doctors and nurses, they aren’t the doctors and nurses. While the pandemic severely tested Garrett Hoard and his coworkers, he is “nevertheless proud of all the effort” they put forward. Richard Newcomb similarly appreciated the team effort it takes to run a hospital. “I think the real heroes of this pandemic,” he said, “are janitorial staff, patient transport staff, phlebotomists, respiratory therapists, physical therapists and nurses.” He’s absolutely right. All of the above face COVID risks doing their jobs. Jeff Zavaleta and I, during a recent phone call, took it a step further; it turns out we’d had the same thought. Namely, during those first, fearful days of lockdown, when

our nation’s panic skyrocketed to its peak, Jeff and I were grateful for the supermarket workers who stocked the shelves with food; for the cashiers who, before businesses had time to construct plexiglass barriers, stood less than six feet away from the hundreds of customers who needed groceries; and for the delivery drivers who literally brought food and goods to our doorsteps. These essential workers braved the virus and took care of us too.

One final thing. Please wear masks in public, practice social distancing and clean your hands regularly. But don’t listen to me. Listen to Garrett Hoard, who asks that you wear your masks for the immunocompromised and high-risk populations. And listen to Tommy Heyne, who, in a politically neutral Facebook post, outlined the evidence-based rationale for wearing masks and socially distancing. His summation? “Just wear a mask—this shouldn’t be a Right vs. Left issue. Just wear a mask.” I could not agree more. It’s a minor sacrifice to make to save thousands of lives.

These are just a few glimpses into the lives of alumni committed to combatting COVID and all its collateral damage. While thousands of beautiful people have lost their lives to this pandemic, and millions more have suffered and grieved, it’s comforting to hear the stories of those who simply want to help their fellow human beings, to facilitate healing when they can and to comfort the dying

“THIS WAS ONE OF THOSE MOMENTS WHEN WORK SEEMED VOCATIONAL.”

when they can’t. While I don’t know how the global COVID story will end, I do know plenty of good people are working tirelessly to shape its narrative, many of whom I’m proud to call my Cistercian brothers. I’ll leave you now with a quote from one of them, Richard Newcomb, the same young

man who was scared when he first confronted this unknown virus. At some point during his shuffle and toil, he realized something, namely, “this was one of those moments when work seemed vocational.” What a blessed understanding, what a moment of grace, to know one’s job involves the propagation of Christ’s love. May we all be so fortunate in our careers. •

Advancing by Degrees...

Bob Greenfield
Photos: Jim Reisch

**Inspired by learning,
faculty and staff pursue
advanced degrees**

The motto of Cistercian Preparatory School is *Ardere et Lucere*, “to enkindle and enlighten.” The phrase comes from a sermon of St. Bernard of Clairvaux about John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus. St. Bernard said of John that he was a “lamp, enkindled and shining.”

The faculty at CPS are much the same. In the classroom, they strive to enkindle in their students that flame that burns in each of them, their love of learning. And yet, by enlightening their students, they themselves are enkindled – enkindled to become better teachers and enkindled to continue their lifelong learning. As one teacher working on a master’s degree outside of his subject area put it, “All the great teachers here have compelled me to do more and be better, to become the best teacher I can be.”

But lifelong learning is not limited to advanced degrees. In addition to the faculty’s independent studies relating to the subjects they teach, many frequently attend seminars, conferences or continuing education classes. For example, Greg Graham, Martina Kroll, Fr. Ambrose and Fr. John recently completed a class at the University of Dallas on faith and science. Fr. Gregory took a sabbatical year to study art history at New York University. Fr. Anthony’s interest in photography found an outlet in a continuing education class. And Lisa Hernandez received a Catholic School Leadership certificate from Creighton University in 2018. Of course, there are others too numerous to mention.

Since 2018, twelve faculty members have completed or are in the midst of completing advanced degrees. The subjects vary from the liberal arts to the sciences, from theology, philosophy and English to mathematics, history and Spanish; from a doctorate in education to a license in canon law thrown in for good measure.

Bob Greenfield is the father of Rob (’92) and Michael (’99),
and husband of Jaclyn, retired Cistercian teacher of 24 years.



Jim Taylor
MA History

Cistercian doesn't just form its students, according to Jim Taylor, science teacher, assistant director of admissions, and assistant coach in both football and baseball. It also forms its teachers. "The model that Cistercian has created has led me to be the teacher and the person I've become," Jim said. "Without the encouragement and support of the leadership and faculty – and the students – we as teachers wouldn't have the same passion and drive."

Jim was hired prior to the 1998-1999 school year by Fr. Peter, then Headmaster, to teach Form I Earth Science and coach. The much-beloved and legendary Tom Hillary was head football coach and athletic director at the time. He personally delivered Jim's first Cistercian contract to him.

"I was working on the trading floor at Fidelity Investments, and out of the corner of my eye, I saw this hulking figure walking towards me. He's in coaching garb, shorts and a white T-shirt," Jim recalled. "'Coach,' he said to me, 'here's your contract.' At the time, I thought I knew a lot, but he taught me so much: how to prepare, how to coach kids."

Soon after, Jim embarked on his first advanced degree, a master of liberal arts from SMU, which he completed in 2005. Now he's beginning his second, a master's in history from Sam Houston State University.

"I've always loved history, and I've actually taught electives on World War II, the American Civil War, and the History of the Native American," he said. "But I realized I wanted to know more. I wanted to be able to put more of the pieces together. I do have some anxiety, though, as a 45-year-old going back to school, but all the support that we have here just compels us to keep going, keep getting better."



Jacquelyn Dudasko
EdD
(Doctorate in Education)

Getting her doctorate in education wasn't as much about gaining additional knowledge for Jacquelyn Dudasko, Director of Library Services, as it was about applying an Ignatian pedagogy and serving others.

"Creighton University, where I got my EdD, offers a top-ranked education in the Jesuit tradition," she explained. "For the EdD with a focus on leadership, you have to identify a problem and propose a solution." Following her application to enter the program, Creighton awarded her a Presidential Scholarship.

The problem she studied, and her subsequent research, brought together library and information science and social justice. She considered the obstacles faced by homeless pregnant women seeking information for health and safety. Her doctoral research involved spending a summer with homeless pregnant women, interviewing them, and analyzing the data gathered from those interviews. And the solutions she developed are embodied in professional development programs for agencies serving the homeless including pro-life organizations, homeless shelters, and other social service agencies.

This wasn't her first step on the Ignatian way though. Five years ago, she trained to become a spiritual director for Ignatian retreats, a program developed by Fr. Joseph Tetlow, S.J. at the Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House on Lake Dallas.

"I was searching for a doctoral program, and I found Creighton. Applying to Creighton was a continuation of my Ignatian journey. I knew that I would incorporate the Ignatian principles I learned as a spiritual director. When I submitted my proposal and they gave me a scholarship, I thought, God had opened a door for me, and I'd better go through it." Now she's modifying her dissertation for publication in educational journals. Later, training modules for social service agencies are on the horizon.

When she entered the EdD program, Jacquelyn already had a master of library science degree, which had been funded by Cistercian's Professional Development Fund. She became Director of Library Services in 2011.

"I wanted to take the skills I had learned from my MLS and apply them in my work on the EdD. I've come to understand that each new step I take in learning is a broadening of myself so that I can better serve others."





Fr. Lawrence Brophy '01
PhD Math

While he was working on his doctoral dissertation in mathematics, Fr. Lawrence ran into something he'd never encountered before, not even as a student at Cistercian: doubt.

"I'd been taking difficult math classes ever since middle school. Trying to complete the dissertation was the first time I had come up against an intellectual task that I wasn't sure I could complete. Nine years into it, I had to accept that I might not finish," he said.

But he did, and now, besides teaching upper school math and electives, he's a Form Master and Head of the Middle School.

That dissertation that was such an uphill climb had an intimidating title: *"Prophet Inequalities for Multivariate Random Variables with Cost Observations."* Daunting indeed.

Mathematical modeling – not to be confused with runway modeling, he says – was his favorite math class as an undergraduate at Texas A&M. After earning bachelor's and master's degrees in math, he embarked on his priestly training, earning a master's in theology from the University of Dallas and an STB in theology from the Pontificio Ateneo Sant'Anselmo in Rome. Then, on to University of North Texas for his PhD in math.

"I've always liked studying and doing the homework and taking tests, but researching for the dissertation was completely new," he said. "First you have to find an interesting question and then you have to answer it. Most PhD candidates spend time looking for research opportunities, but I was spending my time studying for the priesthood."

In the end, he defended his dissertation and was 'hooded' with a newly minted PhD. All of the ups and downs have made him a better teacher.

"I can genuinely empathize with all my students now. And I can empathize to a greater degree with the guys that face the daily struggle of getting through it. It's legitimate for them to be frustrated and confused, because we're doing difficult mathematics. But we're going to get through this. I've been there with them. This is tough, but we'll keep after it."



Fr. Stephen Gregg '01
PhD English

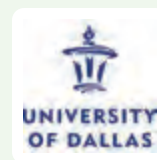
One would think that a person's sanity should not depend on studying for advanced academic degrees, but for Fr. Stephen, who has been a student for some 35 years, it's something to ponder. "Father Denis once told me," Fr. Stephen said, "that any monk who doesn't submit to serious study rapidly becomes either a heretic or goes crazy."

Studying, Fr. Denis believed and Fr. Stephen would agree, keeps one well grounded. "As a teacher, you can fall prey to thinking of yourself as an authority on important things, and this can overwhelm your persona. You fall for it. But being in graduate school, or always studying, forces you to remain on the right human wavelength. The further you go, the more clearly you realize you'll never finish."

That said, Fr. Stephen's doctorate in English is within sight. He hopes to wrap up his dissertation on the late poetry of Edmund Spenser soon and receive his PhD from the University of Dallas in 2021. This degree comes on top of his double BAs in Latin and Medieval Studies (along with a minor in Ancient Greek) from The University of the South in Sewanee and a further bachelor of theology from the University of St. Anselm, as well as a graduate license in patristics from the Augustinianum, both in Rome.

Fr. Stephen has known since he was a young boy that being in class was something he enjoyed. Now he's found that advanced studies have made him a better teacher, and, in turn, he's become a better student. "If you're only always learning, your head might explode. But by teaching, you can see what you're learning. Teaching is like a rapid response to learning."

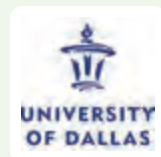
He sees what he has learned and what he is learning in the eyes of his students at the Prep School. "I can bring out an idea to my English students, and I can see how they react. The students give my thoughts a forum, and they help me correlate my thoughts better. I have to bring what I've studied down to earth. Left to myself, my thoughts make perfect sense. But in real dialogue, the truth comes out."





Br. Christopher Kalan
MA Theology

After completing degrees in physics and mechanical engineering, and while preparing to enter the monastery, a friend asked Br. Christopher why he was turning his back on math and science to pursue a master's in theology at the University of Dallas. He hadn't, he said; rather, they are complimentary to each other, because truth is contained in one harmonious body of knowledge. There is nothing in the study of physics and engineering that is opposed to philosophy and theology. Studying all of them helps him become a well-rounded person.



"I went to UD as a science major while recognizing that anyone who goes to UD is also going to be engaged deeply with the humanities and philosophy," he said. "Because of the curriculum at UD, I was immersed in my science studies, but I also came to understand the value of other types of knowledge. I was forced out of my comfort zone, sort of, and it opened my eyes to thinking about things like society and the human person in a whole new way. This increased breadth of knowledge caused me to think about math and science in a new way too."

While studying for his master's in mechanical engineering at Texas A&M, Br. Christopher got his first exposure to teaching as a teaching assistant. He admits it's been quite a shift, transitioning from teaching graduate-level students to 10- and 11-year-old boys in a Form I computer class.

"I love teaching the boys, interacting with them, and sharing my knowledge with them. That's fun! Being a disciplinarian and managing a classroom with younger kids is a challenge and a major learning experience for me."

His background in the sciences has enkindled an interest in bioethics. He took an advanced course while working on his master's in theology, and a modified version of his paper for the class has been published in the *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*. "Bioethics is a very relevant and complicated topic, especially right now with the COVID-19 pandemic."

Ultimately, Br. Christopher sees himself first and foremost as becoming a priest. "That's my goal in life," he said. "I just hope that these advanced degrees in diverse fields of knowledge will help make me a resource so that I can help people work through some of the challenges we all face."



Tara Kennedy
MA Spanish

"Getting my master's was the hardest thing I've ever done," Tara Kennedy said. "Going back to school and becoming a student again was very humbling. And humility makes you a better teacher."



Prior to teaching Spanish in the upper school for the last nine years, Tara had 17 years of teaching in coed high schools in Illinois and Dallas. But her sights weren't always set on being a Spanish teacher. First, there was the oboe.

"I really was going to be a band director, and the oboe is what paid for my college education," she said. "Band was my thing: percussion in the marching band, saxophone in the jazz band. For a long time, I thought all I wanted to do was teach music. Then in college, I couldn't see myself teaching oboe to fifth graders." She ended up with a double major in Spanish and secondary education with a minor in music.

Before Cistercian, Tara often thought about returning to school, but the harsh realities of a very heavy teaching load and a limited personal budget were major obstacles. In 2011, she found herself with half the students and the possibility of financial assistance through Cistercian's Professional Development Fund. She enrolled in the master's program at the University of North Texas in 2014 and earned her MA in 2018.

"It was tough to go back to school. I had been away for 20 years!" she said. "But it really helped me become a better teacher, because it made me more compassionate with the boys since I was experiencing again what they were going through. Teaching has changed so much since I began 26 years ago. The kids just learn differently these days. They are much more visual, probably because of YouTube. Going back to school lets me meet them where they are. After all, if we're not changing for the better, we're not serving the boys the way we should."



Patrick Spence '08
MA English

When Patrick Spence occasionally brings his vintage 1920s typewriter into Form V English, he's not trying to turn back the clock on technology; he's teaching a valuable lesson about writing.

"I tell them, even if you're a perfectionist, you can't backspace on a typewriter. When you're writing a paper on your computer, you might write a sentence and then rewrite it and revise it over and over again. Sometimes it's better to just keep going; get it all down, and then come back and revise and rearrange later," he said.

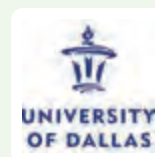
He'll also show them the drafts – sometimes as many as 20 – of his English papers as a graduate student at the University of Dallas and point out all of the red ink for the revisions he made. "They realize that I put more red on my own papers than I do on theirs."

Patrick graduated from Cistercian in 2008 and earned his BA in classical studies from Harvard. Now he's working on his master's in English at the University of Dallas.

"I spent a year working in a cancer research lab at UT Southwestern. I had been premed at one point at Harvard, but I always enjoyed editing our lab's papers more than dosing our mice. Working in the lab helped clarify for me the direction I should take."

After teaching in a small Catholic school outside of Washington D.C. for three years, Patrick knew he wanted to return to Cistercian.

"The monastery and the stability of this place are unique. Other schools might have long-standing traditions, but the monastery takes that to another level. When I came back, the English Department had the same teachers as when I graduated. That much had not changed. When I was a student, they taught me that one glib sentence after another wasn't enough. I had to work on the structure of my essays and papers. And now the same teachers are advising me on my master's work and improving my teaching."



Br. Francis Gruber '01
PhD Philosophy

By his own admission, Br. Francis wasn't the most studious of students at Cistercian, but the light did come on, so to speak, in his philosophy classes at Texas A&M University. "I believe that simply by virtue of being a student at Cistercian, I was able to receive an intellectual passion – even if by osmosis, as it were. That passion only fully ignited in me on the next level in college."

Now the flame burns brightly as he pursues a doctorate in philosophy at the Gregorian University in Rome. But it's been a circuitous route. Following his graduation from A&M, he took several paths, including two years in the Teach For America program, volunteering at Casa Juan Diego, a Catholic worker house in Houston, as well as other pursuits. In 2013, he earned a master of humanities from the University of Chicago. Along the way, he began discerning a calling or two.

"Somewhere in my mid-20s, I suppose, I had the stark realization that I might be avoiding a calling to either academia or the religious life, or both," he said. "God has been very good to me as he led me to a place in my life where I feel a new surge of energy regarding not only the legitimacy but even the urgency of philosophical studies."

Before leaving for Rome, Br. Francis was able to enkindle some of the upper school students with his passion for learning when he led an elective studying World War II novels.

"Up until now, that elective has been the course that has lived up most fully to my ideal of what teaching should be like that was inspired by the professors I had in college. It was the course where I felt able to most uninhibitedly jump into the material to guide the students through the texts."

With the completion of his doctorate, he'll be doing more of that back in the Prep School.





Br. Matthew Hegemann
MA Theology

While the coursework for his master's in theology is certainly adding to his store of knowledge, Br. Matthew admits that some of his students' questions in Form II religion often force him to plumb the depths of his faith in very different ways.

"It's really a blessing to have non-Catholics in religion class," he says. "Here at Cistercian, we have Muslims, Hindus and all denominations of Protestants. Often, the non-Catholic boys bring up deeper questions, and many times, they want to probe further than the others might. We cradle Catholics have been brought up in the faith. We've accepted it a long time ago; for the non-Catholics, it's all new."

According to Br. Matthew, this diversity of faith traditions has led to some lively discussions. The boys themselves are often their own best teachers. "I like to encourage discussion in class, and it really works best when one of the boys is able to answer a question that another boy has brought up. They listen better to one of their peers than they do to a monk or monk-in-training. I'm there to guide them and provide structure, but they are much more attentive when one of their own comes up with an answer."

Br. Matthew, who recently renewed his temporary vows, received his BA in history from the University of Dallas. And he's 'almost' fluent in German. "My father was born in Germany, and I spent five years there when I was growing up," he said.

If another advanced degree is in his future, he can see himself studying history, German or spiritual theology. With the last of these, he could counsel people as a spiritual director. "Helping people deal with underlying conditions like depression or anxieties, that would be very fulfilling. Young minds have a lot to endure these days."



Fr. Ignatius Peacher
JCL Canon Law

According to Fr. Ignatius, who teaches art to middle schoolers, he's been accused of being of two minds in his pursuit of another advanced degree. After earning a BA in art and MA in architecture and theology, he's now pursuing a graduate-level license in canon law (JCL). He admits the JCL was a bit unexpected.

"I didn't see it coming," he said. "It's been a discovery of a hidden interest for me. When I started the program during that first summer of classes, my reaction was: Yuk! It was a lot of details about the bureaucracy of the Church. But after getting acclimated to all the particulars, it was exciting to learn the ins and outs of church governance. Now I'm looking forward to sharing what I'm learning with the students and my confreres in the monastery."

His first brush with canon law was a class he took for his master's in theology in preparation for ordination. "I was introduced to canon law, but I put it aside. And then, my interest would spark up every so often over the next ten years or so. Eventually, Fr. Peter mentioned that someone with a JCL would be a good resource for the monastery. I decided to try it, and I found I liked it."

In another year, he'll complete his degree from Catholic University in Washington D.C., the only school in the U.S. to offer such a program. With degree in hand, Fr. Ignatius will be able to participate in diocesan tribunals, which review annulment petitions, as well as other matters. He'll also help ensure conformance of the monastery and school to canon law, and he could end up teaching classes to the junior monks (in temporary vows) or at the university level.

Over the course of his studies, Fr. Ignatius reached the last of the more than 1,700 canons, or laws, that make up that very thick tome that is the 1983 Code of Canon Law. "The last one reads: The purpose of Canon Law is the salvation of souls," he said. "That is the very best reason to study this."





Fr. Joseph Van House
SThD Theology

Tradition, in the Cistercian sense, stretches back centuries and reaches across oceans. When he chose the field of study for his doctorate in theology, Fr. Joseph Van House wanted to make sure he did his part to extend that tradition on American soil. He chose Cistercian studies.

"All of the Hungarian monks here have advanced degrees in Cistercian studies, but no American monk does," he said. "I had to ask how motivated I was to take the time to know where we come from and what it means to be a Cistercian in a global sense. I find it very exciting to study the relevance of the Cistercian tradition in our world today."

His doctoral dissertation examined the legacy of St. Bernard as applied to the interpretation of the Song of Songs in the Old Testament.

Prior to undertaking his doctoral work at Catholic University in Washington D.C., Fr. Joseph earned a BA in philosophy and MTh in theology from UD, and his STL degree from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Always the academic type, he felt the urge to continue his studies, but he was needed back at the Prep School. He returned and became the Form Master of the Class of 2017. Only after his class graduated did he complete his doctorate.

"Teaching in the Prep School has clearly been formative for me," he said. "It really deepened my thinking and teaching. I found out that teenagers could care less whether you've read St. Anselm. They have a way of making sure you see the forest for all the trees. The nuts and bolts weren't as important as what it all means for them."

Even though he was able to return to his studies full time for a few years, Fr. Joseph sees many ways that ongoing learning for Cistercian faculty isn't just about graduate degrees. "Full-time study opens doors, but after a certain point, the key is just freely striving to understand the things that pertain (or may pertain!) to your vocation, such as the time you make to read, the comrades you find, the projects you choose. On all these accounts, I love so much the culture of learning that exists among the CPS faculty."



Fr. John Bayer
SThD Theology

Imagine as a ten-year-old being asked what the nature of love is. That's what happened to Fr. John Bayer. And so began his lifelong journey along the philosophic way.

"I was riding with my Dad in the car, and he asked me what love was," Fr. John remembered. "I didn't have an answer, but the asking of the question is what really struck me at that moment. And now, even without a doctorate, I would still want to read and think and contemplate such questions. That's just fun for me."

After entering the monastery in 2007 with a bachelor's in philosophy from the University of Dallas, Fr. John returned for his master's and soon thereafter embarked on his doctoral studies at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome. Now he teaches religion, theology, Latin and English lab at the Prep School as well as undergraduate and graduate theology at UD.

"The longer I'm in formal education, the easier I think it is for me to be humble about my subject, because the more I learn, the more I find that there is to learn. I think a good PhD is someone who knows how to ask a good question and how to teach others to ask good questions."

Besides his love of learning, Fr. John loves teaching at Cistercian. "My greatest goal in teaching is to help the boys grow. Even in E-lab, I want to make it more than just studying and memorizing the rules of grammar. I hope I can inspire the boys not to be satisfied with simplistic answers to life's marvelous questions, and therefore to keep asking the deeper questions that could fill us all with wonder." Such as: what is the nature of love?



Fr. Bede Lackner

December 19, 1927 – November 10, 2020

Fr. Bede was born Károly (Karl) János Lackner in Vaskút, in southern Hungary, on December 19, 1927, to Stefan Lackner and Elisabeth Rutscher. He entered the Cistercian Order in 1947, at the age of 20, and persevered in monastic life for 73 years, until his death on November 10, 2020.

Fr. Bede knew the Cistercians early on: at the age of 12, he enrolled at the Cistercian school in the nearby city of Baja, and remained there through the Second World War, until 1946. He then went to the monastery of Zirc, where, just short of 20 years old, he commenced his novitiate on August 29, 1947, making his first vows a year later. He studied philosophy and theology in Zirc in the years immediately before its dissolution by the Communist regime. At that time a large group of monks was planning an illegal escape through the Iron Curtain into Austria, but Fr. Bede had a different, safer way out. His family was of German heritage and so they fell subject to the post-war population exchange program by which those of German ancestry were forced out of Hungary. Thus, after many complex preparations, material and spiritual, he left Hungary on November 17, 1950. He arrived with his parents and sister to Schweinfurt, in Bavaria, where his family took up permanent residence.

Fr. Bede, however, was destined for a further journey. A month later he left for Rome. He pursued his studies in theology there for just over two years, until January 1953, when he was called to join his monastic brothers in the United States. During his time in Rome, he was ordained to the priesthood in Feldkirch, in far western Austria.

Fr. Bede arrived in the United States on January 20, 1953, coming to the monastery of Spring Bank in Wisconsin not long before dramatic meetings after which many Hungarians chose to leave Wisconsin to join the new foundation in Dallas. Fr. Bede, along with a small part of the Hungarians, chose initially to remain in Spring Bank, perhaps in his case because he would be pursuing a master's degree in history at nearby Marquette University. Fr. Bede finished his M.A. in 1959. At that point, a complex dynamic developed between Fr. Bede's calling to more advanced study and the community's need for middle school teachers in the new Cistercian Preparatory School. When the School opened in 1962, Fr. Bede was the Form Master of Form I, teaching them also history, geography, and music. But the year before, in 1961, Fr. Bede had begun doctoral studies in history at Fordham University in New York, where he rejoiced to spend the whole day in various libraries, often skipping lunch. He had so impressed his professors that the dean wrote to Abbot Anselm urging him to free Fr. Bede for doctoral studies and



make him a college professor.

In the end, Fr. Melchior took over as Form Master from Fr. Bede, who finished his doctorate a few years later in 1968. This bore fruit in his 1972 book, *The Eleventh-Century Background of Cîteaux*.

Fr. Bede's academic career moved quickly. Along with lecturing at the University of Dallas in those years and assisting in some ways at the Prep School, in 1967 he began teaching Church History at Holy Trinity Seminary. He taught there for fifteen years, an admired teacher, spiritual director, confessor, and friend for many alumni. In 1969, he took a

position at the University of Texas at Arlington. He earned tenure in 1972, and taught there full time for 32 years until his retirement in 2001; then he was named an *emeritus* professor and continued to teach for almost a decade more, into his early 80s. He wrote, contributed to, or edited a dozen books, and produced a steady stream of essays, translations, book reviews, and conference papers.

In the twenty years after he retired from full-time teaching, he rejoiced to witness the arrival of many young monks in the monastery of Dallas. His quaint mannerisms, quiet presence, simple life, his hidden attentiveness that would suddenly spark out in a curious question—by these means he left a subtle and beautiful impression on many monks. Although he thought early on that he did not have the practical, “vivacious,” extroverted spirit to teach children, in the monastery, as in his university work, his humble, reserved presence slowly formed many minds, molded many characters, and charmed many friends to whom he remained very devoted.

Fr. Bede remained engaged in his scholarly work and correspondence until the last year of his life. In the night of November 20, 2019, he suffered a sudden major stroke. Although he recovered remarkably and came home able both to walk and to converse, he remained largely confined to his room with very little energy, relying on the monks and two wonderful nurses to help him. Almost a year after the stroke, an infection led to kidney failure and sepsis. He died peacefully on November 10, 2020, after only a few days in the hospital. He is survived by his sister and her daughter in Germany and by his monastic brothers.

The rosary was held at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, November 13, in the Cistercian Abbey Church. The funeral was held at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, November 14, followed by burial in the Abbey's crypt. The services can be viewed on the CistercianDallas YouTube channel. Donations in Fr. Bede's memory may be made to the Monastic Fund at Our Lady of Dallas Cistercian Abbey, 3550 Cistercian Road, Irving, Texas 75039. •

Postgraduate work in Ancient Truckology

So, after a year of practicing law, I received an offer to publish a five-day-a-week-daily newspaper in Pecos, Texas.

For my lovely wife Lori and me, everything about the job was an improvement — the pay, the benefits, the location, and truthfully, the work. I really love the newspaper business.

My two postgraduate degrees (Communications and Law) both played a role in my landing the job.



Smokey Briggs '84

Interestingly, so did my pregraduate experience as a noncommissioned officer of Marines.

Interestingly (my word but I think Chaucer would approve), some entirely unrelated bits of postgraduate education tied our business plan together.

I was not really qualified to publish even a small daily newspaper in 1999.

I did have good reporting credentials, and I had edited *The National Oil and Lube News* (a monthly trade journal “serving the fast-lube industry nationwide”) through much of law school, but that was about it.

A few years post hiring, I asked Ned, who hired me, why he decided to take a shot on a guy who really wasn’t qualified for the job.

He was nice enough not to say that he was simply desperate, and instead, related that he figured that if I was smart enough, and had enough of a work ethic to get through a master’s degree and law school, could write and edit, and could lead a squad of Marines, maybe I could muddle my way through publishing a smallish newspaper.

I told him he had greatly overestimated the intelligence of most lawyers, but was glad he did.

It was also in 1999 that I bought my first Land Rover.

This was not a country-club variety Land Rover, but a 1964 model that was in the condition you would expect of a fifty-year-old work truck that has been worked — one that would have looked at home with a lioness lazing about on the roof rack.

The reason I bought the Rover was because I was not much of a mechanic, but wanted to be.

I had kept my ’46 Chevy pickup (I suspect there are still oil stains in the student parking lot near the creek) running all those years, but often just barely.

The Rover interested me because of the shop manual — which is so detailed, and the truck so simple, that a goat herder with an adjustable wrench and a Swiss Army knife could overhaul the thing in the middle of the Serengeti.

So began my postgraduate studies in Ancient Truckology, which I worked at fairly studiously, gradually rebuilding the old girl one worn out piece at a time.

All of my postgraduate study was put to the test in 2003 when the outfit I was working for offered to sell Lori and me *The*

Monahans News, a weekly newspaper 40 miles east of Pecos.

The News was a wreck of a weekly newspaper that made my Land Rover look like a show car. After a careful examination, we bundled up our entire savings account, pledged the rest of the few things we actually owned (including the Rover) to the bank, and bought it.

Six months into the gig, precariously close to the edge of bankruptcy, my pressman quit without notice.

I sat at my desk and stared into space for quite some time after I watched him walk out the door.

Newspapers are printed on presses, presses are run by pressmen, presses are not super simple, and pressmen do not hang out on street corners in small towns waiting for job offers.

As well, we had several customers whose newspapers we printed on our press, and this was important income.

Now, I had learned a little about presses at this point. I could make a newspaper happen, under the watchful eye of a real pressman.

But, most of what determines whether your press is going to make legible newspapers is not so much the immediate running, but the maintenance and adjustments done before press runs.

Presses are giant Rube Goldberg contraptions with dozens and dozens of rollers going round and round, and back and forth, and every roller/plate/cylinder/drum/brake/ink knife, and every other part that touches the paper (or doesn’t), has to be set to proper tolerances — with feeler gauges, wrenches, and sundry other methods specific to a printing press.

As a bonus, I discovered that before quitting, my pressman had “undone” most of the adjustments.

It was Friday. We go to press, along with all of our customers, on Wednesdays.

My press is a Goss Community installed in 1969, and she came with a fine manual, very similar to the detailed manual Land Rover supplied in 1964.

I did not sleep much over the next four days.

But on Wednesday morning, when my first customer showed up with the pasteups for that week’s edition, a very tired and inky Smokey printed a newspaper.

“But for,” as my Torts professor loved to say, the several years I had spent studiously studying Ancient Truckology — adjusting valves, setting points, rebuilding heads, replacing bearings, setting end-float, and so on — I would never have possessed the mechanical skills to get that press running in time, detailed manual or not.

Postgraduate degrees in Mass Communications and Law reopened the door to my newspaper career, but my postgraduate studies in Ancient Truckology kept me from having to file for bankruptcy that day.

Which brings me to my point: Formal postgraduate work is a fine thing, but truth be told, a life well lived is a life filled with postgraduate work of many sorts, diplomas optional. •



CISTERCIAN
PREPARATORY SCHOOL
3660 Cistercian Road
Irving, Texas 75039

A Letter to my Students

My dear friends (who at one point in time were my dear students),

Our ever-vigilant Erin Hart asked me to write this column on a topic related to the upcoming 60th anniversary of my ordination to the priesthood. So I



Fr. Roch Kereszty

take this happy occasion to address a letter to all of you in order to share some of my experiences, which may strike a chord in your heart or mind.

On October 2, 1960, the Feast Day of the Guardian Angels, I was ordained a priest of Jesus Christ in the private chapel of the Bishop of Sankt Pölten in Austria. Unable to go back to Budapest, my hometown, I celebrated my first Mass a week later on October 9 in Ummendorf, a small town in Germany, which also decided to become my adoptive hometown (Patengemeinde). They received me like a Roman Emperor with a Triumphbogen (triumphal arch) and a music band in fancy folk uniform with loud cymbals and roaring trumpets. As I entered—triumphant but embarrassed—a six-year-old Bräutlein (little bride) in a white wedding gown welcomed me and offered me a sparkling make-believe gold crown.

It was very playful and very beautiful: the children of God receiving with joy the new representative of Christ. Two and a half years later, on May 1, 1963, I arrived at Our Lady of Dallas, and from that point on, you are more or less acquainted with my story.

The first thing I want to share with you is my experience with Providence. It fulfilled my deepest and strongest desire to become a Cistercian priest and a teacher of theology—but not without detours, curves, and shattered expectations. Briefly, God took away *my* vocation project and then gave it back as *his* gift with overwhelming generosity, but first I had to realize the absurdity of acquiring the priesthood as one would acquire a business empire. His plan did indeed turn out to be very different from my expectations. Instead of going back to Hungary, I had to go to Irving, Texas, and instead of teaching full time at the University of Dallas, I had to teach and be Form Master at the Prep School. Little did I know then that form mastering would become one of the greatest blessings of my life.

You see now that it is on the basis of experiences such as these that I am full of hope for your lives. All you need is to allow God to inspire you so that your life may become one of happy service for your family and for others. Even disappointments, failures,

and sufferings will bring you immense benefits, provided that you keep in touch with God. They can deepen your self-knowledge and love, and clarify the ultimate purpose of your life—a tough and beautiful training for the real life.

You may ask, “What do you mean by letting God inspire my life? And how can I stay in touch with God?” Obviously, through prayer. Ready-made formulas may be good, but what I mean is personal prayer. Read the Word of God in Scripture, or think about his gentle or shocking interventions through events, friends, books or great examples. Then talk with Jesus about what attracted your attention. The crucial point is, talk with him as a real person and not as the target of your dutiful prayer. He has truly become human. Talk to him and trust that he listens to your sincere prayer and that he pays attention to you as if you were the only person to listen to in this universe. Pray especially when you dislike it. You are your will, not your emotions! If you persevere, the fruits will not fail to ripen. The greatest of all will be your attraction to the Eucharist!

As the saying goes: “When God closes a door, he opens a window.” Yes, but you must have the courage to jump through that window. If you jump and your intention is good, to serve your family and others, the new plan and the new work become a blessing. And not only the new work and the new plan, but the sufferings and pain as well. In this way you will see the gentle hand of Providence guiding your life as well. •