

OWC

E •

Tomorrow



Contrary to the traditional concept of being a missionary, engaging in the Church's Mission does not have to involve working in a far-flung place, moving into a new culture, or even speaking a different language. Any one of us may be equipped to become a missionary!

Take Divine Word College alumnus Fr. Roger Kyaw Thu, SVD, for example. He came to Epworth from Myanmar 10 years ago to realize his aspirations for serving in the Lord's vineyard. Now he is getting ready to return to his native land as an SVD following his priestly ordination in May.

Joining him in an exciting new phase of their missionary journeys are 22 students who graduated from Divine Word College this spring. By taking part in academic, ministry, and formation programs during their studies, they've learned valuable skills they'll need to face the challenges ahead.

Supporting the training of missionaries is another way to answer the call to Jesus' mission. For years, a couple from Dubuque has been supporting Divine Word Missionaries worldwide. The missionaries' presence in various places is greatly owed to these Partners-in-the-Mission, without whom the Church's presence in many places would be greatly diminished. O'Crucifixion

“Home” is a word that can have many meanings. It can be a place, a state of mind, a feeling of comfort and a sense of security. For Fr. Roger Kyaw Thu, SVD, Myanmar is home. Given the tumultuous civil unrest in the country formerly known as Burma, it may be hard to understand why someone would choose to return there, but that’s exactly what Fr. Roger intends to do.

After spending the past 10 years in formation with the Chicago Province of the Society of the Divine Word, Fr. Roger was ordained in May. Now he’s set to embark on his

Long after leaving the classrooms of Epworth, Divine Word College students continue to answer the call to missionary service for the Church. Whether they pursue religious vocations or serve as laypeople, they are united by their generosity of time and talent. Their dedication to making a positive impact on the world continues to be a testament to the values instilled during their time at the college. Their efforts not only enrich the communities they serve but also inspire others to contribute to the common good. From small acts of kindness to significant societal contributions, the spirit of service that began at Divine Word College continues to thrive, creating ripples of positive

Tim Maorm
DWC Class of 1974
Executive Director of Journey House

Tim started his studies with the Divine Word Missionaries as a high school student at the Brother's candidate minor seminary at Techny, Illinois. He continued at novitiate programs in New York and Mississippi before enrolling at Divine Word College in Epworth.

After graduating from DWC in 1974, Tim earned a master's degree in Religious Education from Loyola University in Chicago. He was assigned to a parish in Los Angeles and found great joy in his work. During his time there, he also served as a chaplain at juvenile detention facilities.

In 1979, Tim joined the De La Salle Christian Brothers and transitioned into teaching high school. By 1983, Tim felt called to engage more deeply with probation youth. With community support, he opened Journey House, a six-bed group home in Pasadena, California. After more than 30 years of vowed religious life, Tim left the Christian Brothers to work full time at Journey House. Today, he and his staff work with more than 300 emancipated male and female foster youth who are over the age of 18 and pursuing higher education. Tim has served as the Executive Director of Journey House for four decades.

"I loved my years with the SVDs," Tim said. "It instilled in me the call to be a missionary to the underserved and underprivileged. Today, I continue that missionary call to serve in an underserved and underprivileged community of former probation and foster youth."

Paul Danen
DWC Class of 1987
Volunteer with Catholic Charities

In his junior year at Divine Word College, Paul relocated to further his studies at Divine Word University of Tacloban in the Philippines. "Some of my favorite memories while studying with the SVD include my friendships with the amazing and gifted people that are part of the SVD family," he said. After completing his sociology degree at DWC, he joined the novitiate and later discerned out of the formation program.

He went on to get married and have two daughters. With a career spanning over 30 years, Paul dedicated himself to working with children and adults coping with serious mental illness and those involved in the legal system.

He's been an active volunteer at Catholic Charities of Northern Nevada, St. Vincent's Program, assisting with food packaging and distribution. Additionally, he serves in various capacities at Holy Cross Church in Sparks, Nevada.

Paul says his spirit of service was ignited during his time with the SVD. "My first volunteer experience started with Divine Word College where I volunteered at a local nursing home, hospital, soup kitchen and thrift store. I can't say it was easy, but it gave me the start or willingness to volunteer today," he said.

MAY 2024



Buôn Ma Thuot City, Vietnam

B.A. Theology & Mission

- Plans after graduation After graduation, I will go back to Vietnam to spend some time with my family before returning to my congregation

and waiting for my assignment.

- How has your experience at DWC impacted your faith?

In 2012, his family relocated from Vietnam to the United States, and the following year, he started his studies at Divine Word College Seminary in Epworth, Iowa. It was only after joining the formation program with the Society of the Divine Word that he began contemplating becoming a religious brother.

Discover

“When I sat down with my vocation recruiter, he asked me if I wanted to be a priesthood or brotherhood candidate, and I chose the priesthood candidate because I thought it was my vocation,” he said. “It was also because I didn’t have any idea about the brother vocation.”

“The reason why I changed to the brother vocation was because I felt that I couldn’t handle philosophy courses,” he said. “Besides, people told me that if I became a brother candidate, I would be allowed to apply for a university that had the subject that I was interested in. But things didn’t happen the way I expected. When I applied for the brother vocation, I was told that the program had been changed, and I would have to take

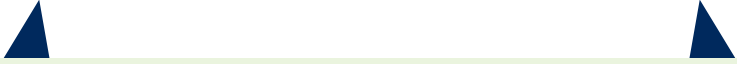
Where in the World are Divine Word Missionaries?

In 1875, a trailblazer named St. Arnold Janssen kickstarted an international missionary order called the Society of the Divine Word (SVD), to spread the Word of God across the globe. Fast forward to today, and 5,965 Divine Word Missionary Priests and Brothers are out there spreading love and hope in 80 countries, giving a helping hand to those in need. The heart of this mission beats at Divine Word College, drawing in students from around 20 countries each year. Through thick and thin, the SVD and Divine Word College keep the faith alive, all thanks to extraordinary people like you.

The Society of the Divine Word was founded 149 years ago. Today, it is the sixth largest Catholic men's religious congregation in the world.

Mozambique

Myanmar



Hi I When I was about 10 years old, I went to fetch some bottles of 7-Up. (It was long ago – there were glass bottles!) I had been thinking about pistons, who knows why. So as I walked along, the bottle in one hand would go down and the bottle in the other hand would go up. When those “pistons” really got moving, the bottles suddenly exploded! That must be why we call it soda POP.

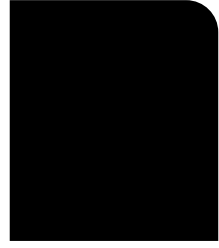
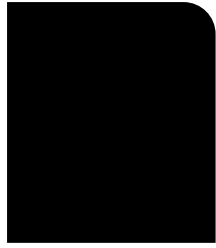
I I I am an uncle many times over. I used to tease my youngest sister that I planned to sugar up her kids and then send them home! Now imagine something much more frustrating... give a six-year-old nephew plenty of chocolate, sour candies, and some apple juice. Then tell him that he has to sit quietly on a chair and do absolutely nothing. What a torture!

Hi I You are invited to a club meeting. As the group gathers, you are instructed to sit quietly, not talk, having no responsibility at all. Unless they give you something to do, I doubt you would visit that club very often.

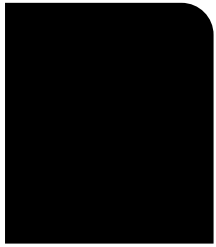
These images help us focus on what happens at Mass. Jesus fills us with an “explosive” mixture of His Word, His Body and His Blood. Unfortunately, we can get the impression we are supposed to do nothing, sit in silence, and then leave in silence. So sad! That’s not the way it is supposed to go.

At the end of Mass, after the blessing, the priest or the deacon announces the dismissal. Sometimes it is: “Go forth, the Mass is ended.” That is a direct translation of the centuries-old Latin formula, *Ite, missaest*. In 2007, Pope Benedict XVI wrote a long letter to all the members of the Church about the celebration of Mass. It was entitled, *Sacramentum Caritatis* (The Sacrament of Charity). At one point he noted that over the centuries, the word *missa*, which originally had the simple meaning of dismissal, has come to mean mission. Pope Benedict stressed that the Mass (*missa*) doesn’t end with a dismissal. Instead, Mass is just getting started as we carry the good news into all the other parts of our life. This is mission ANIMATION.

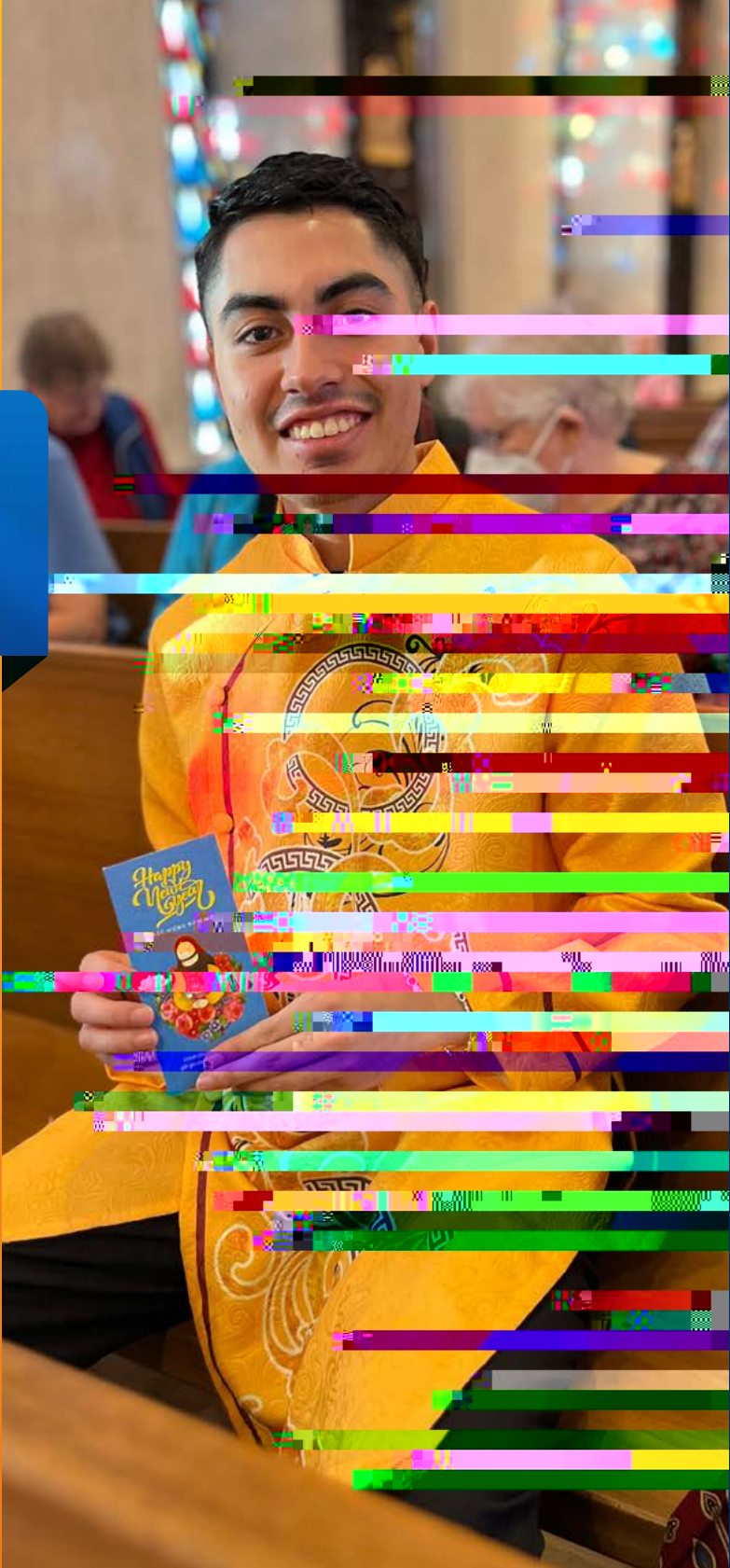
The Pope endorsed some newer mission animation forms for the dismissal: “Go in peace;” or, “Go and announce the Gospel of the Lord.” At Divine Word College, no matter the formula we use, I imagine the dismissal to be a mission-sending: The Mass is ended, now you’ve got a job to do! Or, the Mass is ended, say hello to somebody! Or, following Jesus’ words at the multiplication



Frt. Quoc Nguyen, SVD Mr. Tan Duy Trinh Nguyen Bro. Vincent Nguyen, SVD Deacon John Ko Nkum, SVD Fr. Friday Onoja, SVD



Seminarian Discovers Happiness in Religious Formation



There are many ways to be involved with the mission of Divine Word College and to help our students. For Diana and Don Bagby from Dubuque, Iowa, their first exposure to Divine Word College was through friends.

“The opportunity to become part of Divine Word College’s mission was introduced to us by Paula and Terry Friedman, friends of ours from the Church of the Resurrection community. We felt called to get involved and wanted

to sponsor the students. It was a great way for us to give back and to help further the students’ educational, spiritual and social experiences,” said Diana.

The Bagbys became part of the Divine Word College FAN Club (Friends Across Nations) and were matched

with two students, Matthew and Santino. They were part of the Lost Boys, a group of refugees fleeing the civil war in Sudan. One of their first outings was taking them to dinner at a local restaurant. The students were excited about the experience, one of them asking the waitress if she had made the straw placemats at the table as they reminded him of home.

That experience made the Bagbys reflect on what so many people take for granted in the U.S. and was a heartwarming moment. They attended various events together at Divine Word College including picnics, game nights and most vividly the celebration of the Lunar New Year.

Not only was the FAN Club experience a learning moment for Diana and Don, their son also enjoyed the

GO OUT

To all the World

In 1935, Bro. Larry Kieffer, SVD was born in a quiet little town in eastern Iowa. Growing up on a farm, that young boy from Bellevue could never have imagined the things that life would have in store for him.

Now at age 88, Bro. Larry lives at Divine Word College in Epworth. He's not far from where he was raised, but a big piece of his heart will always be in Papua New Guinea, where he served for 46 years as a Divine Word Missionary.

Earl Life

Bro. Larry's parents both died when he was in his early twenties. In 1958, at the age of 23, he was drafted into the U.S. Army. He trained in Colorado and Georgia before being sent to Germany for a year and a half. It was his first time on an airplane. "It helped me get away from home and see the wider world," he recalls.

During his service abroad, Bro. Larry spent some time in the Army chapel. That's where he found Catholic magazines that caught his interest. "In one magazine, I saw 'Become a missionary with the Society of the Divine Word - priest or brother.' I checked 'brother' and within two weeks I got information from a vocational director."

After his discharge in 1960, Bro. Larry waited patiently for September 12, the date that he could join the next

class of young men at the SVD major seminary in Techny, Illinois. During his formation, priests and brothers from the missions regularly gave talks to the novices about their experiences. At first, Bro. Larry wasn't interested in that lifestyle. Then, during the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church announced plans to send more religious men to the missions.

"I decided that I didn't want to be left alone in Techny, so I applied for the mission in Papua New Guinea," he said. "My approval came quickly."

By then, Divine Word Missionaries had already been working in the island nation for more than 70 years. They were instrumental in the development of the country, helping to build roads, open schools, start health centers and establish parishes since the end of the 1800s.

Bro. Larry professed Final Vows in 1969 and the following year he received his first assignment.

Mission Life

In 1970, Bro. Larry flew to Papua New Guinea, just north of Australia. It took him a few months to learn the language. He spent the next 46 years managing plantations and producing coconut and cocoa for worldwide markets, the profits of which supported the missions and the local church. Over the years, his life was

enriched by kind people, healthy living and a lifestyle that was vastly different from the one he knew.

“It was a great experience, living in a different culture with very friendly people, seeing how they live, I always enjoyed their company,” he said. “Many of the workers came from villages in rural areas and the plantation was a way for them to earn money. I saw it as my vocation to help them. I supervised the entire operation, taking care of the workers, their pay and selling their produce at the local buying points. In general, I looked after all the activities of the plantation.”

In 1975, he witnessed the country gaining independence from Australia. There were parties to celebrate and a peacefulness that Bro. Larry appreciated. “Papua New Guinea is one of the few countries that never had a civil war when they gained their independence,” he said.

Eventually, he became the general manager of five plantations, all producing coconut and cocoa. The two crop species exist well together. The tall coconut palms create the shade in which cocoa plants thrive.

Rising early, his day began with Mass and breakfast and then it was off to the plantation to meet the workers at 6:30 a.m. They started at 7 a.m. and went until noon. After an hour lunch break, they worked another two to three hours in the afternoon. For some jobs, workers preferred a “work mark,” a line that showed what they needed to get done for the day and then they could go home.

The climate had a big impact on the workers. Located near the equator, Papua New Guinea is hot, humid and rainy year-round.

“It’s a tropical country and to work steady all the time is very difficult for them,” Bro. Larry said of his workers. “You have to learn to slow down a little bit, you can’t hurry up too much.”

The work was five days a week, with weekends off. That’s when he’d do odd jobs around the plantations and the workers could spend time in their own gardens. With fresh fruit like papaya, bananas and pineapple, it led to a simple but healthy diet.

Looking back

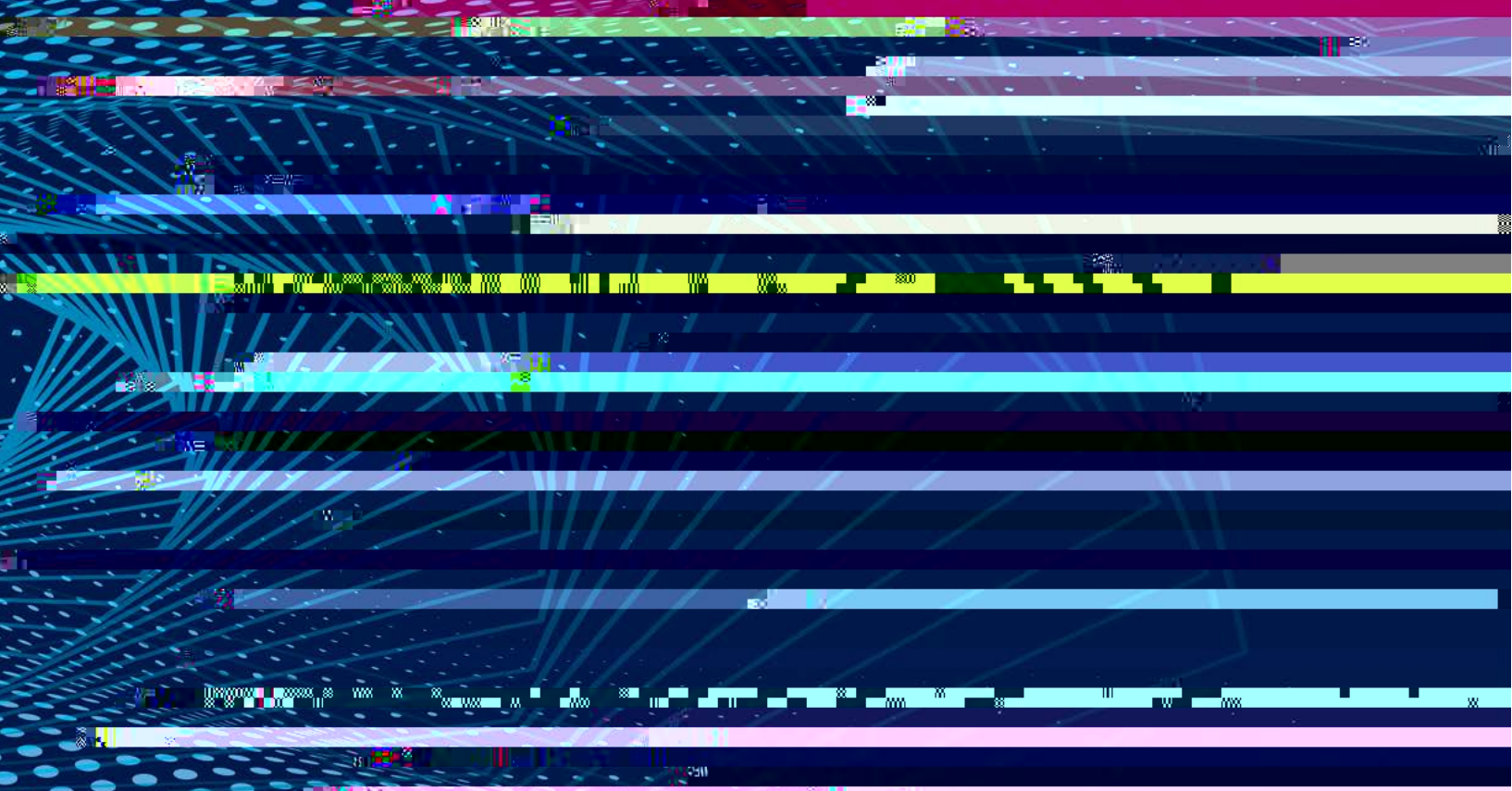
Six years ago, Bro. Larry decided to retire and move back to the United States. Living at Divine Word College in Epworth keeps him close to his hometown, where his nieces and nephews live. He helps out with the mail at the college and inspires students with his stories about the missions. He still misses the warm island climate, especially during the Iowa winters.

***“The time went so fast.
I guess when you like
everything, time goes faster.”***

During his time in Papua New Guinea, Bro. Larry says he learned what’s most important in life. Even though the people there were not rich, they were generous in spirit and would share anything they had. Friendship is a very important aspect of the culture.

“When you serve the needs of the people and live in a third-world country, you learn to prize life more than possessions,” he said. “I don’t collect many things.”

Having spent more than half of his life in Papua New Guinea, Bro. Larry can’t help but to grin when he talks about it. “It was wonderful,” he sighs. “The time went so fast. I guess when you like everything, time goes faster.”



Two Divine Word College students stepped outside their comfort zone in Epworth this spring to put their communications skills into practice at a professional

Campus
Connections

YOU WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Your gifts help our students with their educational expenses and help us pay the bills. A majority of our students don't have the financial means to pay for their education. That's why your gifts are so important.

- 1) D
- 2) B
- 3) A
- 4) A
- 5) A
- 6) D

If you would like more information about any of these opportunities, please contact Fr. Thang Hoang, [563-580-5764](tel:563-580-5764) or thoang@dwci.edu or go to www.dwci.edu

All proceeds support the Divine Word College Student Scholarship Fund

FRIDAY, JULY 6, 6-6
 Timberline Golf Course, Peosta, Iowa

10TH ANNUAL BENEFIT GOLF OUTING

\$ — É É É PRIZE FOR A HOLE-IN-ONE ON #

18 hole Four-person Best Shot - 1pm shotgun start
 \$80 per person – includes golf, cart, dinner and prizes
 \$25 for dinner-only guests

To register your foursome, sponsor our event or for more information, please contact Mark Singsank at Divine Word College: [563-876-0097](tel:563-876-0097) or singsank@dwci.edu