



# The Good News

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## A Year of Stories

One of the new developments at CDU is an outreach to our graduates. In a recent survey of graduates of our MA (Theology) program, we learned that over 90% of our graduates are serving the Church in some capacity as a volunteer, a professional working for the Church, or in a professional career that highlights or enhances the work of the Church.

As the Board of Trustees prepares to begin a multi-year comprehensive development campaign that includes a significant fundraising goal of at least three million dollars, we want to engage the entire CDU community. We are beginning with a deeper engagement with our graduates and students who experience firsthand the value of our mission.

One project I have begun is a Year of Stories. I am reaching out to graduates to listen to their stories of how they found CDU, why they chose an online program, why they decided to study theology at CDU, and how their program has changed them.

Our students who earn online degrees in Theology are pioneers. Most tell us that without an online program their degree in Theology would have been impossible to attain. Our graduates are not traditional students who sit in classrooms on campuses. Many tell me they are not sure why they are completing an MA (Theology) online, but they sensed a call from God and are sure they will have an answer.

In the Year of Stories, I am also asking our graduates to try to quantify a CDU education through their own networks of influence including family, neighbors, parish, work, diocese, volunteer work, or professional work for the Church.

Admiral William McRaven's commencement address at the

University of Texas in 2014 began with a challenge to graduates: if each graduate changed the lives of just ten people, and each one of those ten folks changed the lives of another ten people—then in five generations (125 years)—the graduates will have changed the lives of 800 million people.

He used the example of soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan who daily made a decision to go left instead of right and saved the lives of their platoon members. Not only were they saved, but the yet unborn children of those platoon members, and their children's children were saved. One decision by one person saved generations.

How has God used our graduates to share the truth and joy of the teachings of the Church with others in a way that has transformed them and in turn, future generations? The answer to that question inspires us to share a Year of Stories about our graduates and the power of online education to form leaders for the new evangelization. Our Patron, St. Paul, reminds us in the *Letter to the Romans*, "Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind" (Rom: 12:2).



## No Pressure! Discover the Pleasure of Auditing a Course

Would you like to take a course to deepen your knowledge of the faith without having to worry about your grade? Any graduate of CDU's BA, MA, or Catechetical Diploma program now has the option to audit most of our academic courses. You can easily continue your lifelong learning experience in our online campus. Contact the registrar today to audit a course.

## Fast Track Your Way to an MA

CDU now offers qualified undergraduate students the opportunity to earn both their bachelor's and master's degrees in less time and at less cost than usual! Our new MA (Theology) Accelerated Track allows exceptional students who are willing to challenge themselves to count up to 9 credit hours toward both degrees. Current students in our BA completion program may apply through the Admissions Office if they meet several requirements.

# CDU's Library Is a Campus Destination!

You may envision a new wing on a Greek revival style building when you hear of a "library expansion," or worn carpeting being the result of increasing traffic. CDU's campus library is vastly different. It is state of the art, always open, continuously growing, offers fingertip accessibility, and the book you need is never missing, or damaged. CDU's library is digital just like our courses. Easy, instant access to religious e-books and Catholic resources from anywhere in the world is a digital reality on CDU's campus. The CDU library is booming in utility and traffic, rivaling many bricks and mortar university libraries. Student Lee Anna De la Cruz agrees, "I figure this comes from ours being an online university, but it seems like we have much more online library options here than did my last university."

The CDU Library serves 476 students and faculty members that visit thousands of times each year for free resource links, Catholic encyclopedias, and EBSCO e-books. The number of visits in the last 12 months has tripled over the previous year. Over the same period, EBSCO database usage doubled and Catholic Encyclopedia usage grew 674%. CDU's Librarian, Sister Rebecca Abel, O.S.B. is a resource in herself. Both students and alumni count on Sister's passion and expertise to direct them to new discoveries. Sister Rebecca claims "a new introduction on to how to use the library for research, accessible personal support, more awareness and partnerships to enhance ebook resources have made a big difference." She continues, "Digital resource opportunities are exploding and CDU is in a unique position to build a digital library that can fulfill our mission to "teach all nations."

Student Rachel Zamarron says, "I am really excited about all of the resources in the library...we have so much available to us." Alumni can also enjoy easy access to our online campus and library resources. Since the library has unlimited space and is as comfortable as your home, feel free to visit and browse. Contact Kathy at [kvestermark@cdu.edu](mailto:kvestermark@cdu.edu) for online campus support. CDU donations contribute directly to new Catholic e-books rather than building capital and physical expenses. Your contribution makes an immediate educational impact. To donate to our library fund, contact [ahager@cdu.edu](mailto:ahager@cdu.edu).



Sr. Rebecca Abel, OSB

## CDU Grapevine

**Davin Winger** is the new Dean of Business and Technology at Oklahoma Panhandle State University. Previously serving as a professor at the university, he was instrumental in the development of traditional and online courses. Winger will academically lead his departments and coordinate initiatives such as distance learning and grant development.



Winger says, "CDU is where I first learned about online learning as a student. CDU gave me the opportunity to grow and engage with other online learners and teachers. I gained confidence in myself as a student and later as a teacher because of CDU. He continues, "God opened the door for me to attend CDU. The education and experience I gained at CDU opened a door for me not only in the Catholic Church but in the secular world as well. I am thankful for CDU."

**Patsy R. Acree** has a ministry that provides baby clothes, teddy bears and dolls during the Christmas season to an anti-abortion organization in Ocala, Florida. Her CDU degree provided the opportunity to be the Spiritual Director for Christ Renews His Parish retreats. Now she is in Formation to the Lay Dominican Order. Patsy says, "The most valuable gift I received was my deepening relationship with the Father. God encouraged me to deepen my feelings for those in need and to share what He gave me through my CDU education."

**Father Ted Trinko, IVE** uses his CDU education. He was ordained by His Excellency Thomas Daly at Our Lady of Peace in Santa Cruz on May 8th. He celebrated his first Mass on May 9th. Fr. Trinko humbly asks for our prayers that he might help us through his ministry.

*Bible History Daily* has published an important article by CDU graduate **Jennifer Ristine** from the Magdalena Institute at Magdala, on the interpretation of the famous "Magdala Stone." [The Magdala Stone: The Jerusalem Temple Embodied.](#)

Working for the new historical site in the Holy Land, Jennifer has written many articles and blogs about important research being conducted there.

On July 9th, Pater Joachim Wernersbach was ordained to the priesthood in the monastic church of the Benedictine Abbey at Tholey, Germany, by Archbishop Jean Claude P  risset, retired Nuntius of the Vatican to Germany.



Prior to joining the monastery, Father Joachim studied theology at CDU of which he says: "Studying at CDU changed my life. CDU was instrumental in becoming fully reconciled with the course my life was taking. The joy of faith that CDU is using as a base for all teaching made me confident that the right decision had been made."

Father Joachim has duties as a Benedictine monk and in pastoral services for the monastery and surrounding communities.



## Your Religious Journey Can Include a Trip to Italy

While Christianity was born in the middle East, it was Italy that became, within a few decades after Christ's resurrection, the Crossroads of the Christian world. For two thousand years Christians from East and West, North and South, have come to Italy to serve Christ and His Church. In this course (*Theo 599*), Dr. Marcellino D'Ambrosio, (CDU professor and *New York Times* best-selling author) will examine the lives and work of many great Christians who spent part of their lives in central Italy. The apostles Peter and Paul, the native Italians Sts. Benedict, Clare, and Francis, the Spaniard St. Ignatius of Loyola, the Greek missionaries Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the great artists Michelangelo and Raphael, all these and more will be the subject of our study. Our learning will primarily take place on site for ten days in Rome, Assisi, Florence, and Orvieto. Prior to the trip, there will be some fascinating reading and online discussion which will be the basis for a term paper to be submitted after the trip. The goal of this interdisciplinary course will be to give the student an appreciation of the depth and breadth of the Catholic culture represented by the abundant monuments to faith found in central Italy. For graduate students, the course can count toward a concentration in Scripture, Theology/Philosophy, Ecclesial Service or Catholic Culture or toward the certificate program in Scripture or Church History, provided one completes a research assignment appropriate to one's area of study. Approval is required, contact the Registrar today.



## CDU Alumni Committee Is Going Strong

By Dr. Angelo Giardino

As the summer comes to a close and Fall '17 begins, it seems like it's a good time to update you on the newly forming Alumni Association Committee. Our committee members include: Catherine Branly, Daniel Cheely, Francis Henderson, Dr. Angelo Giardino, Clarissa Hutcheson, Dr. Araceli Lardizabal-Carnazzo, Adrian Marcellus, Dr. Marianne Mount, Daniel Nemethy, William Smith, Virginia Taylor, Kathryn Vestermark, Joseph Wetterling, and Davin Winger.



### Our mission statement:

The CDU alumni association works in partnership with the university to connect, support, and coordinate the global network of graduates to promote the mission of the university and the Church community.

### Membership Criteria:

CDU Alumni Association membership is inclusive and open to all CDU graduates of continuing education, certificate and degree programs throughout the world. We also welcome you to be members of the committee and join our quarterly planning calls. We are exploring regional events in locales that have a concentration of CDU alumni, an alumni program in conjunction with the annual CDU gala and graduation ceremony, and "virtual" events that would allow broader participation just like in our courses and degree programs. We would appreciate your thoughts or suggestions about what the CDU Alumni Association could offer that would be of value to your spiritual journey. Please send your comments and suggestions to [alumni@cdu.edu](mailto:alumni@cdu.edu).

We are enthusiastic about helping you stay connected with CDU, our former classmates, and the vast mission of the Church.

At our August meeting, we turned to a prayer used by Pope Francis for inspiration, and we share that with you now in hopes of offering some wonderful insights from the Holy Father using the simple imagery of one's hand:

1. The thumb is the closest finger to you. So start praying for those who are closest to you. They are the persons easiest to remember. To pray for our dear ones is a "sweet obligation."
2. The next finger is the index. Pray for those who teach you, instruct you and heal you. They need the support and wisdom to show direction to others. Always keep them in your prayers.
3. The following finger is the tallest. It reminds us of our leaders, the governors and those who have authority. They need God's guidance.
4. The fourth finger is the ring finger. Even though it may surprise you, it is our weakest finger. It should remind us to pray for the weakest, the sick or those plagued by problems. They need your prayers.
5. And finally, we have our smallest finger, the smallest of all. Your pinkie should remind you to pray for yourself.

When you are done praying for the other four groups, you will be able to see your own needs but in the proper perspective, and also you will be able to pray for your own needs in a better way.

# Graduates, Friends and Family Will Gather at the Gala To Honor Father Robert Spitzer

You are cordially invited to the 2017 CDU Gala on November 4, 2017 at The Westin Arlington Gateway Hotel. It will start at 5:00 with the Academic Convocation Mass, followed by a 6:30 Cocktail Reception with Silent Auction and Dinner & Awards at 7:30.

The celebration will recognize 2016-2017 graduates, honor Father Robert Spitzer with the CDU Founders Award, and acknowledge St. James the Greater Catholic Church and St. Veronica Catholic Church as our Bishop Thomas J. Welsh Parish Award recipients.

The gala is CDU's largest fundraising event for graduates, alumni, faculty, family and friends. Purchase your tickets today at [www.cdu.edu/gala](http://www.cdu.edu/gala), call 304-724-5000 X727 or email [gala@cdu.edu](mailto:gala@cdu.edu) and join in the fun. It will not be the same without you.



Robert J. Spitzer, S.J., Ph.D.

Gala Host Committee: The Archdiocese for the Military Services USA, The Archdiocese of Washington, The Diocese of Arlington, The Diocese of Brooklyn, The Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, Supreme Knight Carl & Mrs. Dorian Anderson, Dr. & Mrs. Joseph V. Braddock, Most Rev. Timothy P. Broglio, Mr. Daniel Curtin, EWTN Global Catholic Network, Inc., Dr. Angelo Giardino, Good Shepherd Catholic Church, Mrs. Geraldine Hall, Mrs. Jean Halle & Mr. Glenn Davis, Mrs. Carl Hertz, Sam & Ann Hinojosa, Mr. & Mrs. Peter D. Jones, Barbara Keebler & Mr. Terrence Giroux, Korte Realty, Dr. Araceli Lardizabal-Carnazzo, Mr. & Mrs. John McCabe, Dr. Margaret B. Melady, Mrs. Helena Metzger, Dr. Marianne Evans Mount, Mrs. Barbara P. Murphy, Mr. & Mrs. Roger Naill, Dr. & Mrs. Frederick Scheuren, Mr. & Mrs. Robert J. Smith, St. Agnes Church, St. Mary Catholic Church, St. Matthew Catholic Church, St. Theresa Catholic Church, Dr. & Mrs. Charles R. Wasaff, Mr. & Mrs. Harry T. Wilkins.

## New Certification Course in Catholic Healthcare Ethics

Is it ever appropriate to cease life support? What should a Catholic consider when writing a living will? What is the Catholic position on new reproductive technologies, genetics, and stem cell procedures? Stephen Bozza, author and instructor of CDU's new Catholic Healthcare Ethics course will answer these questions and more.

Learn how to practice, counsel and live in a way that is more respectful of the life, dignity and nature of the human person. Participants will be equipped with the knowledge to help families and individuals make serious healthcare decisions that are consistent with Catholic moral teaching.

This 16-hour, four-week, fully-online, certification course is offered with a focus on diaconal formation and continuing medical education for physicians. Steven Bozza, MA, PhD cand. (STD) is the Director of the Office of Life and Family for the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, an Adjunct Professor of Biomedical Ethics and Moral Theology, and the media contact for the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops Department of Pro Life Activities for issues related to Artificial Reproductive Technologies.

"This course is one of the few authentic, values-based, online continuing education seminars offered on faithful healthcare ethics," says Bozza. Each week there are readings, videos, questions for discussion and written assignments that apply lessons to real life situations. Instruction includes the language to articulate the Church's moral teaching as expressed in the Ethical and Religious Directives.

"Understanding and advancing the culture of life in accordance with The Faith is especially important in a time of social misinformation," says Bozza. By the end of the course, participants will be equipped to provide ethical information to those in need of expertise and guidance.

### *Thank You!*

Sharing your knowledge with others, introducing CDU to your friends, and supporting us with generous donations enables us to serve our greatest mission to "Teach all Nations" by communicating the mind and heart of the Church online across the globe. We could not do it without you!

### *Stay connected!*

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