

Catholic Distance University

2018

ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION

The mission of Catholic Distance University is to communicate the mind and heart of the Church in a digital world. Using distance education, the university educates teachers and learners worldwide in Catholic theology, the liberal arts, and faith development for the growth of faith, ecclesial service, and leadership for the New Evangelization.





FROM THE PRESIDENT

With recent stories of falling enrollments and struggles for sustainability, 2018 and our thirty-fifth anniversary has been a year of enrollment growth and accreditation milestones for the Church's only fully and exclusively online Catholic university.

Marianne Evans Mount, Ph.D.

A TRAJECTORY OF GROWTH

Enrollment growth has been strongest in the graduate degree programs, the MA in Theology and the MA in Theology and Educational Ministry. Record numbers of students applied to these programs in 2018. Increasing numbers of students are applying to the undergraduate programs as well. Overall, university enrollments in Fall 2018 were up 9% over Fall 2017, and Winter 2019 enrollments were up nearly 20% over Winter 2018.

To help ensure students' success, CDU provides persistence coaching. Director of Student Life and Retention, Kathy Vestermark, a CDU MA graduate herself, supports our students as they achieve their educational goals. Her work has contributed to a record number of graduates in 2018 and strong degree completion statistics in comparison to those of other online programs.

Our students are increasingly using CDU's online library as a valuable academic resource. Librarian Sister Rebecca Abel reports that the library had 56,841 page views in 2018, our *New Catholic Encyclopedia* e-books usage has tripled, and statistics show a 33% annual usage increase for our EBSCO Host Databases in 2018.



Kathy Vestermark, Director of Student Life and Retention



Sr. Rebecca Abel, Librarian

MODELS OF COLLABORATION

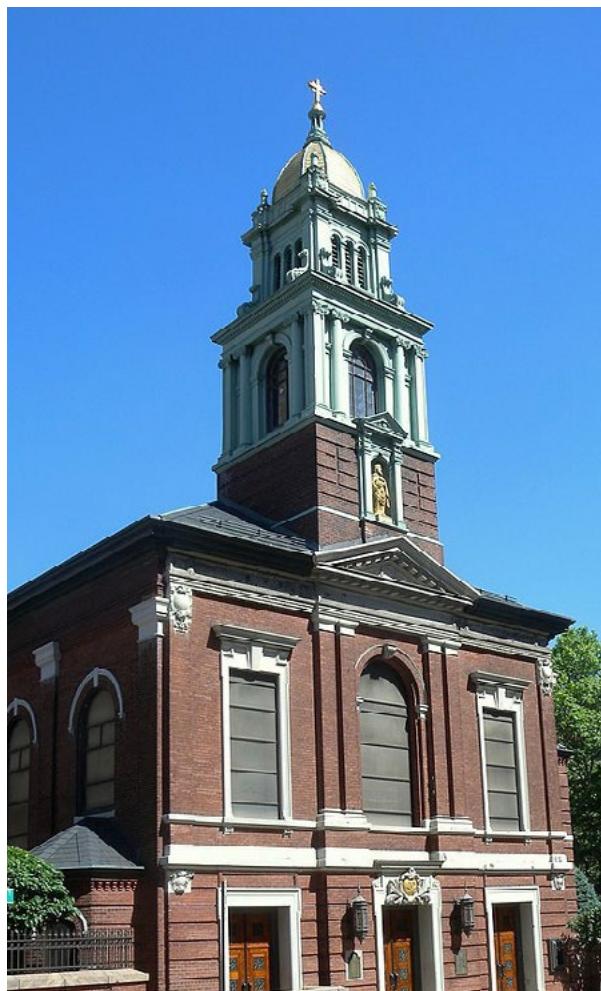
Collaboration is a strategy and hallmark of our mission-driven approach to serving Catholic higher education. Integral to the Church's identity as communion, collaboration invites us to work with other innovative programs and institutions.

One great example is our partnership with the **Diocese of Brooklyn**, which serves Brooklyn and Queens. What began many years ago as a diocesan partnership for continuing education has flowered into a full educational partnership that includes our academic degree and certificate programs. Theodore Musco, Secretary of the Secretariat for Evangelization and Catechesis in Brooklyn, established the Holy Spirit Institute for Service and Leadership in 2017 and chose CDU as its educational partner. Bishop DiMarzio is not only committed to the professional development of those who serve his diverse diocese, but he was an early and strong proponent of online education.

Holy Spirit Institute is a hybrid program offered both in Spanish and English that requires all students to take half of their program online with CDU. A growing cohort of Brooklyn deacons, teachers, and other diocesan leaders are working on academic certificate programs at CDU, and some will eventually earn BA and MA degrees. Father Joseph Gibino serves as the Program Coordinator and works closely with CDU to shepherd Brooklyn students to academic success.

The **University of St. Thomas** (UST) in Houston, Texas, has entered into an articulation agreement with CDU to accept the transfer of all AA degree credits from CDU into a variety of majors at UST to earn a Bachelor's degree. CDU has a similar agreement with **Belmont Abbey College** in North Carolina and **Mount St. Mary's University** in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Catholic high school graduates can now complete CDU's AA degree online and transfer to one of these outstanding Catholic campuses to pursue a variety of majors, save significant tuition, and experience traditional campus life in the last two years of college.

As our commitment to the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston grows, we have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with **American Public/American Military University** to recognize credits from graduates of both our schools. American Public/American Military University, our next door neighbor in Charles Town, is a fully accredited online university offering more than 120 degree programs. A high percentage of those who serve in the military are Catholic. This Memorandum of Understanding will facilitate collaboration among programs and greatly benefit our students. We are completing a similar agreement with **Shepherd University**, a well-respected state university in West Virginia that is a 20-minute drive from CDU.



AN INVESTMENT IN ACCREDITATION

While accreditation has pushed us to work more thoughtfully and invest in longer work hours, the reward has been a remarkable blessing to the CDU Community. In November 2018, following an onsite visit at CDU with five evaluators and a follow-up trip to Chicago to meet with an additional committee of reviewers, CDU was awarded Candidacy by the Board of the **Higher Learning Commission (HLC)**. Our comprehensive visit for full accreditation will take place April 27-28, 2020.

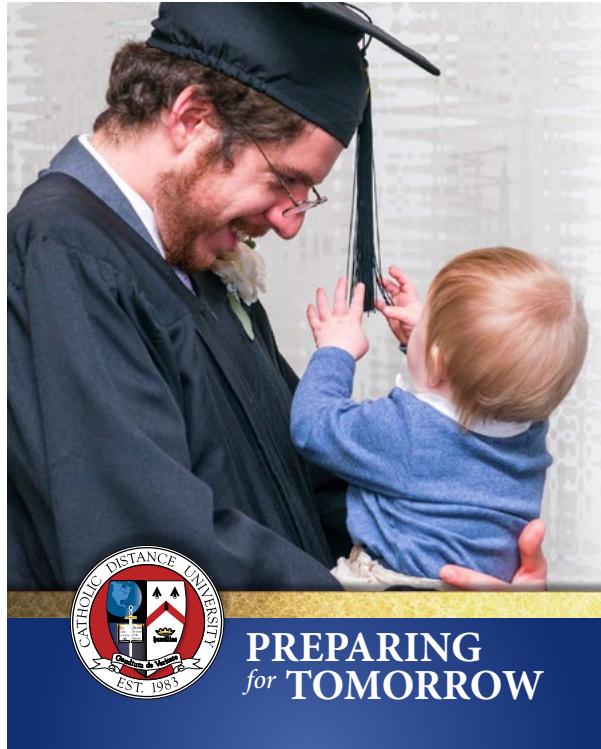
In June 2018, the full membership of the **Association of Theological Schools (ATS)** voted unanimously to welcome CDU as an Associate Member, the first step in seeking full accreditation. February 8, 2019, the Board of Commissioners of ATS awarded Candidacy to CDU and approved a comprehensive visit for full accreditation March 16-19, 2020. Our staff is diligently preparing self-study reports for both accreditors under the careful direction of Sister Mary Margaret Ann, SND, our staff liaison to the accreditors, and Sister Mary Brendon, SND, a CDU Trustee and accreditation expert.



THE STRATEGIC BRIDGE INITIATIVE

It is impossible to speak about our accreditation success without speaking about investments that CDU has made to enhance the infrastructure, library, faculty, marketing, and staffing to meet the standards of regional and programmatic accreditors. Much of the cost of this investment has so far been carried generously by the Board of Trustees, which has launched a Strategic Bridge Initiative to raise \$1.5 million dollars over three years (2018, 2019, and 2020) to fund CDU's investments for full regional and programmatic accreditation. The Board is fully committed to the mission of CDU and the importance of regional and programmatic recognition of its educational programs. The credentials awarded to students and graduates of the first fully online Catholic university in service to the Church's mission of the New Evangelization and in service to the underserved will be recognized as second to none as distance education reaches the peripheries.

The goal to raise \$1.5 million over three years is a University-wide challenge that must engage our entire CDU Community, including our loyal donors, our alumni, students, staff, and friends. The CDU Board of Trustees has generously met 49.3% of the \$1.5 million goal already through contributions and pledges. We are inviting each member of our community to sacrifice for



the future so that every student and graduate will earn credentials that represent the highest academic quality and fidelity to the teachings of the Church. CDU's expertise in the pedagogy of distance education to form missionary disciples to "proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and the Church to the ends of the earth" is unique in its form and delivery, but nonetheless faithful to Our Lord's dictum to "make disciples of all nations".

Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has called us to "break down walls and to build bridges." When you receive the invitation to give to the Strategic Bridge Initiative, please think of your gift as helping to build a new bridge that offers all members of the Church a door into the depth of the richness of the Catholic Church's 2,000-year intellectual and spiritual tradition. CDU's pioneering vision now offers education to the world through smartphones, tablets, laptops, and will engage new technologies yet to be discovered in the new millennium. As Pope Benedict reminded us in 2009, "These technologies are truly a gift to humanity and we must endeavor to ensure that the benefits they offer are put at the service of all human individuals and communities, especially those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable" (World Communications Day Message, 2009).

A MODEL OF LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

UNIVERSITY CHANCELLOR: MOST REVEREND TIMOTHY P. BROGLIO, JCD, ARCHBISHOP FOR THE MILITARY SERVICES, USA

Archbishop Broglio was elected chancellor of CDU and vice chairman of the Board of Trustees in October 2017. As chancellor, he serves as the principal ecclesiastical authority of the University on matters relating to Catholic identity. As vice chairman, he also serves on the Board's Executive Committee.

Archbishop Broglio has served on CDU's Board of Trustees since 2008, continuing his archdiocese's long history of service to the Board of Trustees. For over 30 years, CDU has educated service members, veterans, and military families, delivering theological education to military students around the world while on active duty or deployed abroad. While many universities offer degree programs for the military, CDU addresses the intellectual and spiritual hunger of students as they come together to form a learning community united in the pursuit of knowledge, truth, and the love of God.

Archbishop Broglio was ordained to the priesthood (for the Diocese of Cleveland) on May 19, 1977, in the Chapel of the Immaculate Conception of the North American College, Rome. In February 2001, the Archbishop was named Apostolic Nuncio to the Dominican Republic and Apostolic Delegate to Puerto Rico. The Archbishop was



ordained as an Archbishop by His Holiness Pope John Paul II on March 19, 2001.

On November 19, 2007, Archbishop Broglio was named the fourth Archbishop of the Military Services, USA, and installed on January 25, 2008, the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul.

He served as a Member of the Board of Directors of CRS from 2009 to 2011 and again from 2018 to the present, and has served as chairman of the USCCB Committee for Canonical Affairs and Church Governance and as a member of the Subcommittee for the Defense of Marriage. Archbishop Broglio also chaired the Task Force charged with planning the 2013 Special Assembly of the Conference and was a member of the Subcommittee for Health Care. He is currently Chairman of the Committee for International Justice and Peace and a member of the Committee on Religious Freedom.

Thank you for your continuing prayers for CDU and our expanding learning community, as we pray for you daily, and for your sacrificial gifts that continue to advance our mission to make Jesus Christ present in a digital world.

Marianne Evans Mount, Ph.D.

NEW BOARD APPOINTMENTS



TREASURER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:

Harry Wilkins, CPA, MPA

CDU welcomes the return of Harry Wilkins, CPA, MPA, to the Board of Trustees. He has graciously accepted the position of Treasurer. A graduate of Loyola University, Harry has held executive positions at the American Public University System, Hondros College, and Strayer University and brings years of accounting, higher education leadership, and university development experience to the team.



BRIAN CORBIN JOINS THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

CDU welcomes Brian Corbin, executive vice president of Member Services of Catholic Charities USA, to the Board of Trustees. He brings extensive leadership experience in Catholic social doctrine and in helping people and institutions live out the corporal works of mercy. A graduate of the Pontifical School of Philosophy of The Catholic University of America, he also holds a certification in Health Care Ethics from the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia and is currently completing his PhD at MIT.

ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWS



We are pleased to welcome Clarissa Hutcheson, MA (2016), as the new chairperson of the Alumni Association, which reaches out, engages, and partners with alumni to fulfill CDU's mission to communicate the mind and heart of the Church in a digital world. Lissa serves as the director of catechetical ministry at Mary, Star of the Sea Catholic Church in La Jolla, California; she is a master catechist and also teaches for the San Diego Diocesan Institute. Lissa works in concert with Alumni Association President Dr. Angelo Giardino and the dedicated alumni committee members.



THE WITNESS OF THOSE WE SERVE

BA GRAD FINDS THAT THEOLOGY INFORMS ALL

Student Spotlight

Aiko Foster-Sutherland, a wife and mother living in Okinawa, Japan, recently earned her BA degree in Theology. A convert to Catholicism in 2011, she began her studies at CDU because she wanted to learn the truth from a Catholic perspective. Aiko worked as a portrait photographer and ran a guest house until last year, when she took time off to raise her 2-year-old daughter.

Aiko enjoyed the opportunity to interact with people she might not have met otherwise. “One can be in a classroom with a member of the military, a stay-at-home



mom, a homeschooled teenager, and a brother who is on his way to priesthood! CDU is truly international and friendly to anyone who wants to deepen one’s faith,” Aiko says.

Far from being impractical, the study of theology helped Aiko integrate her faith with her work as a portrait photographer. “My main goal is to empower young women through photography to help them to know they are beautiful just as God made them, and they don’t need to be anyone else or try to fit into the standards of society.” I want them to understand, “You are precious in my eyes” (Isa 43.4). “Learning theology changed how I approached my clients,” Aiko adds.

Aiko has also handed on the faith to others. She was at a party mingling with prospective clients and began a conversation with a woman in her mid 20s. Their conversation led to friendship; Aiko shared her faith with her new friend and was able to answer questions she asked about Christianity. “A year later, she got baptized in the Catholic Church,” Aiko says. “Because I was studying theology, I was able to share not only my experiences of God but also theological answers to questions she had.”

DEACON ANTHONY, CDU GRADUATE, SHARES THE FAITH



MA in Theology alumnus Deacon Gerard-Marie Anthony is an author, apologist, and religion/bioethics teacher. He was ordained a deacon for the Diocese of Arlington in January 2017 and also serves as a member of the diocese's Black Catholic Ministries and Evangelization Board.

"I'm proud to be a CDU alumnus!" says Deacon Anthony, who earned his CDU degree in 2009. "My degree in theology has helped me tremendously both as a professional and as a deacon." Since then, Deacon Anthony has earned his Virginia Catholic Education Teaching Certification through George Mason University, taught religion and bioethics at John Paul the Great High School, and has served as a professor for Christ the Teacher College. He is now taking a break from teaching to pursue a counseling degree at Divine Mercy University.



The flexibility of CDU and the quality of classes are what Deacon Anthony enjoyed most about CDU. "I wanted a good quality program that would allow me to grow, challenge me to know more about God, and allow me the flexibility to study and work," he says.

"I use what I learned from my Master's programs to teach theology at my parish assignments," he says. "I have taught on topics ranging from Books of the Bible, the Mission of Jesus, to *Humanae Vitae* and the diaconate. The [CDU] class on the vocation of the laity helped me to see how to motivate the laity to take up their role of apostolate in the Church," he says. "And of course, my theology degree helps me tremendously with homilies."

Deacon Anthony has written many articles and books; he has worked with teens for over 15 years and frequently gives talks for people of all ages including teens at Confirmation retreats, adults seeking faith education, and young adults. "The thing that I enjoy the most about teaching is seeing how the knowledge that you impart can bring people closer to truth, thus improving their lives and helping the student to better him or herself," he says.



FATHER STEPHEN HILL BEGINS DOCTORAL PROGRAM

To date, seven CDU graduates have entered the seminary or been ordained. Father Stephen Hill of Brisbane, Australia, began our MA in Theology program as an engineer and Episcopal priest. He earned his degree in 2011. Today he is the first Catholic priest in the Anglican Ordinariate for Australia and is beginning a doctoral program in Liturgy in Vienna, Austria. His dissertation will focus on Liturgical Language, specifically the style of language that is used in the Liturgy approved for use in the ordinariates.

BROOKLYN GRADUATE STUDENT SERVES DISABLED COMMUNITY

Graduate student Andrew Toscano of Brooklyn, NY, works for Quality Services for the Autism Community (QSAC), which serves New York City and Long Island. As a Family Support Services Coordinator, he helps families obtain eligibility and the necessary funding to access services from New York State's Office for People with Developmental Disabilities. "As everything I do in some way helps the individual and his/her family, the most rewarding part for me is helping all of the people I work with to become as independent as possible," Andrew says. Though he already held a JD degree from New York Law School, Andrew earned an M.S. in Special Education and Teaching from Mercy College in 2011. He attributes the change in career path to an eventful life and divine providence. "God allowed me to freely make decisions and brought me people who led me to my current position both professionally and personally," he explains.

"I decided that I wanted to help those in most need and chose a career working with the mentally and developmentally disabled," Andrew says. "My JD was useful for several years (and still is), but the MS in Special Education was the degree I felt would be most useful in a variety of positions."



Andrew and his wife, Margrett, both lector and teach RCIA at their parish in Williamsburg, Brooklyn. Both are pursuing graduate theology studies at CDU, which the Diocese of Brooklyn generously funds for those working in ministries in the diocese. Andrew says they are both grateful to the Diocese for making Catholic higher education possible through CDU for those who serve the diocese's parishes. The Diocese of Brooklyn is the nation's fifth most populous, serving 1.5 million Catholics and spanning a 179-square mile area.

"My wife and I both wish to become DREs and work full time with the Diocese, and this program so far is exceeding our expectations. The online aspect is the biggest asset for us as we both work full time and it allows us to obtain a quality education without affecting our employment and exhausting us with physical classes," he says.

"We are very happy to be with CDU," Andrew says. "In addition to the online aspect, the professionalism and enthusiasm of the CDU team is refreshing. We also feel comfortable because CDU seems to believe in authentic Catholic teaching without some of the abuses we have seen in other 'Catholic' colleges," he adds.



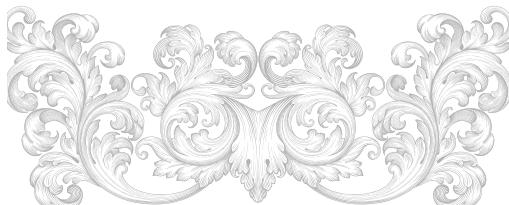


GALA 2018

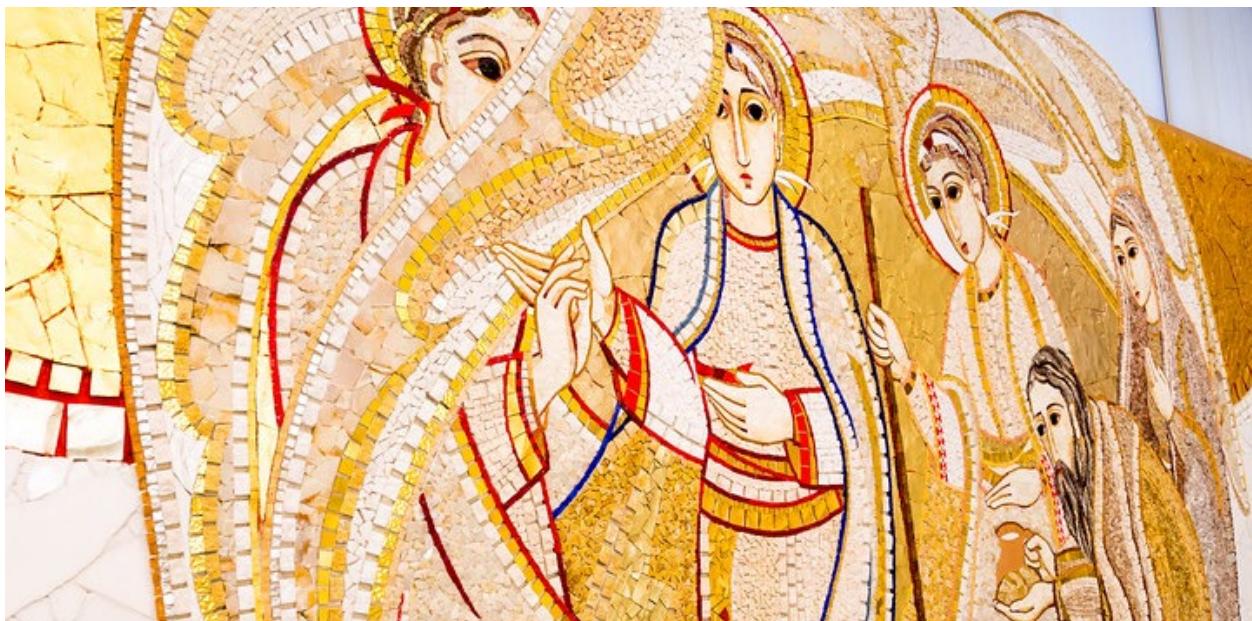
CELEBRATING 35 YEARS OF FAITHFUL CATHOLIC EDUCATION

On November 3, 2018, CDU graduates from across the United States traveled to the National Shrine of St. John Paul II in Washington, DC, to attend the annual Academic Convocation Mass, where all 2018 graduates were honored for their academic achievements. More than 60 students from throughout the United States as well as Japan, Scotland, Austria, and Canada earned academic degrees and certificates this year. Two of these graduates, former active duty military officers, have entered the seminary for the Diocese of Raleigh and the Archdiocese of Dubuque. University Chancellor Archbishop Timothy Broglio served as the principal celebrant, and trustee Bishop Emeritus and former board chair, Paul Loverde of Arlington, concelebrated.

Given the many reasons why students choose to study online, including cost, schedules, family responsibilities, work, and health, we are always delighted to meet those who are able to travel to the Washington, DC, area to participate in the Academic Convocation Mass. They represent their fellow graduates and enjoy the opportunity to meet each other, the faculty, and staff members who attend.



GALA 2018



THE FOLLOWING OUTSTANDING GRADUATES ATTENDED THE ACADEMIC CONVOCATION MASS IN 2018:



IRMA JUANITA ALVAREZ

MA (Theology)

Irma Juanita Alvarez enrolled in 2011 immediately after retiring as a teacher and administrator at Southwestern Community College in Chula Vista, CA. She felt the Lord's call to deepen her understanding of the Catholic Church and its theological roots so she could teach and evangelize others. "The fact that the CDU program was taught by an outstanding faculty and that it was taught online caught my interest," she says. "The CDU program has been both challenging and inspiring for me. I am very grateful for the education I have received from such distinguished professors, and I thank God for having allowed me this opportunity."



CIERRA ELIZABETH HOLT

BA Theology

After moving around the United States in her youth, Cierra and her family settled in Florida. Wishing to focus on the most important thing in life, relationship with God, Cierra chose to complete her undergraduate studies at CDU. Cierra uses the knowledge gained from her studies to teach others about the Faith, especially children in her parish's faith formation program. Cierra is grateful to CDU for offering her an orthodox Catholic education, to her parents for making her studies possible, and to the Holy Trinity for blessing her continually.



ALFREDO GARCIA LOPEZ

BA Theology

Alfredo Garcia Lopez, of Fresno, CA, was born in Guadalajara, Mexico, and emigrated to the United States in 1987. He is married with three children and is self-employed, working in the field of taxes and insurance since 1989. "Going back to the Church in 2005, I started to participate in Bible studies. I now participate in several ministries at Saint John's Cathedral," he says. "I was looking for a more in-depth understanding of my faith and providentially found Catholic Distance University. It has been a marvelous and awesome experience to have been introduced to the wonderful mysteries of our God. I'm deeply thankful to my teachers and all the people at CDU."



MARY MCKAY

MA (Theology)

Mary McKay is Liturgy Director at St Mary of Sorrows Catholic Church in Fairfax, Virginia. In a volunteer role she serves as a facilitator for some of the adult faith formation programs offered at St Mary's, which is a passion of hers. "In both my paid and volunteer capacities, I use what I learned at CDU nearly every day," Mary says. "I'm also particularly grateful to Father Bramwell who, early on, pushed us to be precise in our language when speaking about theology."



MARIA MOORE-MICHELS

BA Theology

Maria Moore-Michels of Wrightwood, CA, first heard of CDU in 2007 from a former student. "My wishful thinking, written on a napkin, became reality in 2013." I thank my Lord for this unbelievable achievement in his honor, for directing me to follow him as an Oblate of St. Andrew's Abbey, for all the children I have been blessed to teach in RCIC, and for the tremendous joy of serving him as Eucharistic Minister, Reader, and Master of Ceremonies at Our Lady of the Snows Catholic Church."



NICHOLAS R. RADLOFF

MA (Theology)

Nicholas Radloff of Dyersville, Iowa, a former captain in the U.S. Air Force and now a civilian, studied aerospace engineering at Saint Louis University. After completing undergraduate studies in 2008, he began a career as a Combat Search and Rescue Navigator with the U.S. Air Force flying the HC-130 aircraft. While on active duty, Nicholas began his studies at CDU and is grateful for the opportunity to study theology while simultaneously being deployed to many parts of the world. His courses played a role in his discernment, and he left the Air Force to pursue the priesthood. Nicholas is currently a seminarian for the Archdiocese of Dubuque, studying at Mundelein Seminary in Illinois.



SUZANNE REINHARDT-JOHNSON

MA (Theology)

Suzanne Reinhardt-Johnson is married with four adult children and two grandchildren. She works part-time as a preschool teacher. After serving as a catechist for her children, Suzanne began her studies at CDU. "The convenient online classes and support of the instructors and discussion rooms made learning the curriculum and deepening one's faith an unsurpassed experience," she says. She makes use of both as a catechist in multiple ministries in her home parish.

OUR INCARCERATED BROTHERS AND SISTERS

REACH OF PRISON MINISTRY PROGRAM GROWS

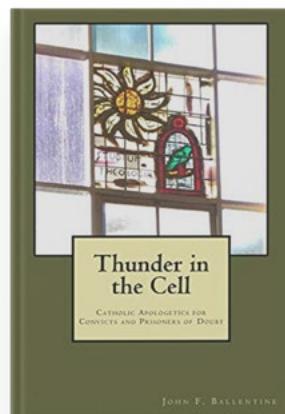
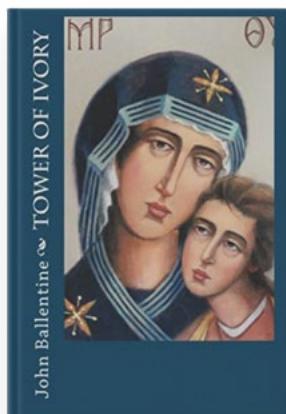
Since its launch in April 2018, CDU's Digital Prison Ministry Program has educated incarcerated students through more than 10,000 course enrollments on tablets approved for use in prisons. The tablets offer a variety of courses for incarcerated students, including GED preparation, life skills, and religious education courses for Christians, Buddhists, and Muslims. Thanks to generous funding from the Order of Malta Federal Association and CDU's course content, prisoners can now learn more about the Catholic faith through these innovative tablets. We will soon offer a number of courses in Spanish as well, enabling us to share the Word of God to a broader incarcerated community.

In 2018 our paper-based prison ministry education program grew to 156 correspondence course enrollments, a 50% increase over 2017.

INCARCERATED STUDENT PUBLISHES TWO BOOKS

John Ballentine, who has spent nearly thirty years in a state correctional facility, converted to Catholicism 12 years ago. He graduated from CDU's MA (Theology) program summa cum laude in 2013 and also earned a Graduate Catechetical Diploma. Known for passionately promoting the faith in prison and leading fellow inmates

to God, he recently published two books, which are available on Amazon. *Thunder in the Cell: Catholic Apologetics for Convicts and Prisoners of Doubt* tells the story of his faith journey. *Tower of Ivory: Mary, Mother of the Word – Model of Prayer* reflects on Mary as a model for the four stages of prayer.



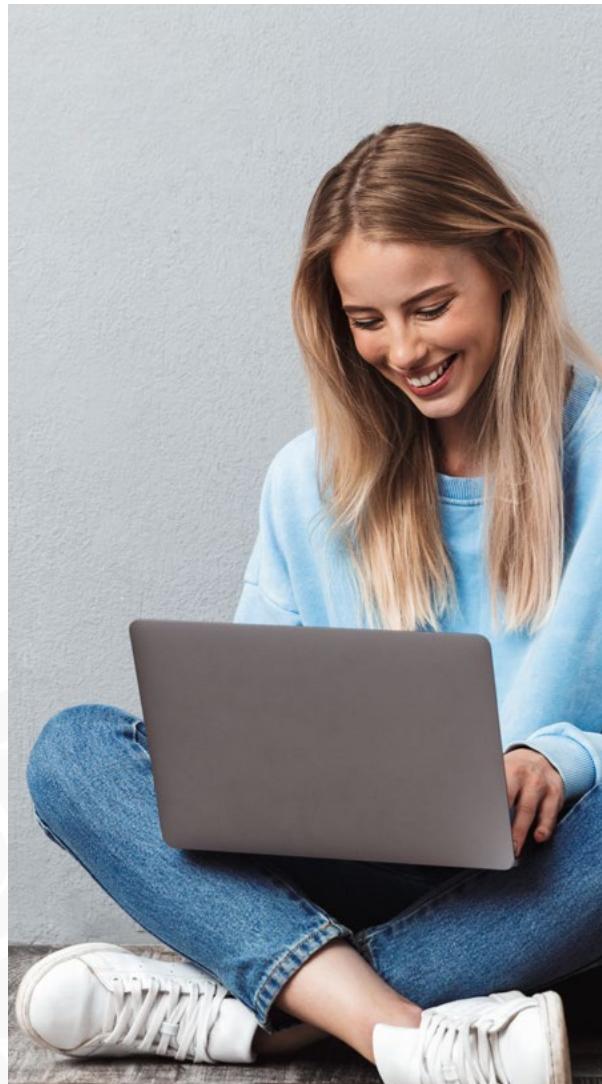
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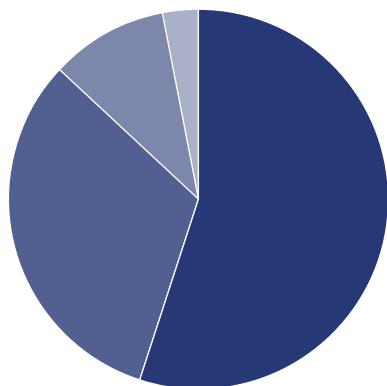
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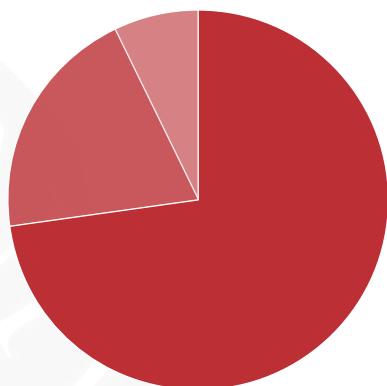
2018 FINANCIAL REPORT

In the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018, Catholic Distance University's revenue totaled \$1,856,387 and expenses totaled \$1,812,731. Incremental investments of \$373,892 were made to promote growth and sustainability, resulting in a surplus of \$43,656. Investments were made to enhance marketing efforts, invest in information technology, offer federal financial aid through Title IV programs, expand the online library, improve the student learning experience, and pursue full regional and programmatic accreditation.



Revenue

Tuition and Fees	55%
Contributions & Grants..	32%
Fundraisers	10%
Investments	3%
Total	\$1,856,387



Expenses

Programs	73%
Admin & General.....	20%
Fundraising	7%
Total	\$1,812,731



Incremental Investments

Marketing	\$187,066
Technology	\$59,552
Title IV.....	\$23,730
Facility	\$31,020
Library	\$23,528
Accreditation.....	\$48,996
Total	\$373,892



YOUR GIFT OF PRAYER AND SUPPORT

Thank you for your generosity in 2018. You made it possible for us to fulfill our mission of service and leadership to the Church in 2018 and multiply the impact of many more well-qualified and passionate catechists, teachers, lay leaders, permanent deacons, and seminarians. Your support continues to expand our mission and shepherd CDU into a future that assures the quality of our academic programs through regional and programmatic accreditation. Thank you for growing the dream of Bishop Welsh!

CATHOLIC DISTANCE UNIVERSITY

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