

Illuminations

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ST. PETER'S
SEMINARY



LONDON
ONTARIO

Opening Doors, Opening Hearts

In early October, St. Peter's Seminary opened its doors to the community as a featured site in London's **Doors Open 2003** heritage tour. More than 800 visitors ventured eagerly through the seminary's doors to discover the beauty of its architecture, to learn more about its rich history, and to meet some of the people who celebrate their faith together within its walls.

One of the greatest attractions on the Doors Open tour was the magnificent stained-glass windows in St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel. Even on an overcast day, the autumn light streamed through the windows, illuminating their beautiful artistry and intense colours. The windows, and the light which brings them gloriously to life, serve as a striking reminder of our true source of illumination which is God, working through all of us and through the seminary.

More than ever before, the seminary's doors are open to our community, welcoming people, sharing resources, and providing a place where people can meet, learn, and grow together in faith.



Seminarian Ryan Holly offers a friendly face to newcomers to the seminary at Doors Open 2003

On October 24, St. Peter's Seminary celebrated Fall Convocation. This year's Master of Divinity graduates represent people of various ages and walks of life. The deacons among them will, with the grace of God, be ordained to the priesthood, joining more than 1,000 SPS alumni serving in more than fifty dioceses and religious communities in Canada, the US and abroad. The lay graduates will go on to serve the Church in a variety of capacities. As well, the seminary shares in the success of two graduates



Father Bill McGrattan



< The graduating class of MDiv'03, flanked by Father John Comiskey (far left) and Dr. John Dool (far right). (Left to right): Wilbert Chin Jon, Keith Morrison, Gabriella Catolino, Daniel Bombardier, Neil Osiowy and James Hagel, (Graduate Brian Wetmore was unable to attend the ceremonies).



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from the BA program, and two graduates in the CultureWorks ESL program. The latter two are among 16 international students studying theology at the seminary.

The new graduates demonstrate the way in which the seminary continues to develop and grow, with new curriculum, new programs and new faces.

In the 91 years since its founding in 1912, St. Peter's Seminary has accumulated the collective memory of thousands of moments of faith. This newsletter, *Illuminations*, aims to be a window onto our seminary, casting light upon the many individuals – seminarians, students, alumni, volunteers and donors – whose work and ministry help to shine the light of God to our world today. ✨

From the Rector's Desk

Living the Spirit of Advent

Advent is a time of preparation as we experience a heightened expectation for the coming of the Lord, much like the incredible expectation experienced by the first chosen people. Ultimately at Christmas, the expectation is replaced with joy, realizing that the Saviour has come and is truly among us.

In many ways, I have been living this spirit of Advent as Rector of St. Peter's Seminary for the past six years. It has been a time of training, learning and laying a foundation as we continue to prepare strong, vibrant leaders to serve the Church.

Advent too is a time to reflect on the deeper meaning of our life and faith: the *fiat* of Mary, the birth of the Messiah, the gift of human life, God's embrace of humanity, our yes to God, and our share in this divine love for the salvation of the world. All of these have several things in common: gratitude and the desire to renew our lives in love and service to others. St. Peter's Seminary has a committed history of formation but it has not been without challenges. In order to "renew" our commitment to service, we have revitalized our formation program and the theological curriculum in the academic MDiv and MTS programs. This renewal is also reflected in the new Permanent Diaconate

formation program, certificate offerings in theology, and ongoing formation and retreat offerings for all of the communities we serve, particularly for the laity.

Advent always invites us to consider the ways God acts in our lives despite, and often in contradiction to, our plans. Mark's gospel asserts that Christmas is the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ. God gives us his Son in a radical, shocking, and unanticipated way, as a baby. This notion of God doing the new and the unexpected is not really surprising.

Our new publication, *Illuminations*, shares the spirit of renewal that is happening at St. Peter's Seminary. We hope that you will see the many ways that we are working, perhaps in radically unexpected ways, toward the building up of the Kingdom of God, by preparing servant-leaders to be living examples in the Church and the world today. ✨

Rev. William T. McGrattan
Rector, St. Peter's Seminary

Editor's Welcome

An Era of New Beginnings

In a word, my experience of SPS's recent pilgrimage to Italy – the first trip in our new *In the Footsteps of Faith* Travel Program – was 'moving.' The beauty, art, culture, sights and sounds captivated my every sense, and my heart was touched by the community of faith quickly formed by our travellers. The trip marked an auspicious beginning to what promises to become a much sought-after experience. For more details see the special article in this issue.

The travel program is not the only new initiative being offered by St. Peter's Seminary Foundation. This January, the Foundation launches a 10-week lecture series entitled *Inspiration for the 21st Century*. The speakers – faculty and expert guest lecturers from our community – will cover a broad range of topics examining important issues of the day.

In addition, the seminary has revamped its website. It is a 'work in progress', ever evolving, and it is important that it meets your needs. Visit www.stpetersseminary.ca and let us know what you think. Your contributions will make it a vital information-sharing vehicle.

Another way in which we will share our good news stories is through this newsletter, *Illuminations*. Again, we hope you will assist us in making this an anticipated publication, by sharing your opinions with us and with our community. This is an era of new beginnings and I am proud to be part of the work that is being done to build upon a long and strong tradition of service provided by St. Peter's Seminary.

Illuminations is made possible through the generosity of **Allan Avis Architect, Canada Steel Service Centre Inc., The Maas Family, Pym Electric, and Wharnclyffe Chrysler**. St. Peter's Seminary Foundation thanks them for the support they offer you, our readers, through their sponsorship of this new publication.

We would also like to thank our Editorial Board, Mary Cahalan (MDiv'96), Wilbert Chin Jon (MDiv'03), Father John Comiskey (MDiv'81), Suzanne Edmondson, Father Bill McGrattan (MDiv'87), Father Michael Prieur (BTh'65), Francis Theilade and Sally Van Paemel, for taking on this new challenge. ✨

Gabriella Catolino, Executive Director,
St. Peter's Seminary Foundation



Our Mission

"I will give you shepherds according to my own heart" (Jeremiah 3:15)

Inspired by the love of the Trinity, urged by the self-emptying of Christ, and in prayerful communion with the Church, we seek to be and to form servant-leaders: priests and lay persons who are self-giving and life-giving. Empowered by the Holy Spirit and sharing in the mission of Christ who reconciles all people to God and to one another in the communion of God's kingdom, we strive to call forth others to join us in this loving service of evangelization.

St. Peter's Seminary has prepared over 1,000 priests and 100 lay people for active ministry in the Church. This constitutes a group of dedicated alumni, across the diocese, nation and indeed in many parts of the world.



Father Frank O'Connor, Seminary Spiritual Director and Assistant Professor of Pastoral, Moral and Spiritual Theology, returned to SPS this fall following a year's sabbatical. We asked him to share a bit about his travels and discoveries.

You began your sabbatical with a visit to Peru where you had worked in pastoral ministry in the '70s and early '80s. Did you find Peru a different place upon your return?

Yes and no. Materially, many of the people were in as poor, or poorer, situations. But I saw a new responsibility that the Peruvian leadership is taking in the church community, a maturity that was edifying and extremely encouraging.

For instance, in Cajamarca I met an organization of peasants who ran a rural library program. They deliver books through the mountains, read the books communally and discuss them. They compile their own books, gathering together the oral traditions of the people so they can read some of their own stories. Remarkable!

How has your experience of pastoral ministry in Latin America changed you?

I rarely go a day without thinking of my experience in Latin America. One of my deep convictions is God's privileged presence in the midst of the poor –



Faculty Profile

A Journey of Faith

discovering in that experience that the Gospel was revealed to us by the poor. We went to help the poor, to evangelize and preach the Gospel. But the greatest transformation was what happened to us. God's Spirit was present in a very special way, not just in spite of, but through their weaknesses.

That whole movement in Latin America is so hope-giving – the discovery of the preferential option of the poor, the movement towards integral liberation.

I see the gap growing between rich and poor, and at the same time I see a growing consciousness and organization among the poor. We're either going to wake up and begin to share what we have, or there will be, as we see now, tremendous violence. One of the great contributions that can happen between North and South America is that, through the exchange of gifts, maybe we can be saved. John Paul II has said this really strongly – if we can open our hearts and be truly concerned about our brothers and sisters, then God's grace will come through.

How did you spend the remainder of your sabbatical?

I spent five months in Italy, principally in Rome, where I audited courses and enjoyed the culture, the faith of the Church, and the architecture. And the pasta, the wine, the ice cream...

marvellous! I ended my sabbatical with a renewal program for priests at the Vatican II Institute near San Francisco. The speakers, the community life together, the opportunity for spiritual direction and retreats - it was excellent!

How did your sabbatical year affect your teaching upon your return?

Several years ago, I introduced a new course in Missiology, about the mission of the Church. At the time, it was a course I really felt we needed, and I am much more confirmed in that now. Mission means 'to be sent' in Latin. Jesus chose the apostles and sent them out. The Church must recover that sense of mission.

What gifts do your students at SPS give to you?

Their goodness, above all. And their questions. And discovering how the Holy Spirit is working through people in different ways.

You have taught at St. Peter's Seminary since 1989. It is said that you are a true steward of the seminary. What is your prayer for SPS?

I love Jesus Christ and the Church. That has been my underlying conviction through my whole life. The Church needs leaders, lay people and priests who are alive with the Gospel, the love of Jesus Christ and the Church, so that the faith which God has given us is handed on and encouraged. That is everything. 🙏



Inaugural group of travellers in front of Rome's Coliseum

Educational Travel Program

Mille Grazie! An Italian Pilgrimage

The best training and education occurs when the learner is fully engaged with the learning experience. Experiential learning was just one of the goals for the SPS Foundation in establishing its new travel program, *In the Footsteps of Faith*. What better way to learn about the history of the Catholic Church than by travelling to its heart, beginning in Rome and the Vatican and proceeding to other historically, architecturally, artistically and culturally rich areas of Italy.

SPS's first group of 38 travellers recently returned from our inaugural Italian pilgrimage. Accompanied (and entertained along the way) by Father John Comiskey, a strong faith-filled community formed amongst the travellers from the outset, something that was unexpected but welcome. Over the ten days, the travellers connected deeply to the roots of our faith, strengthening an ancestral memory developed over the years through traditional Catholic catechesis.

St. Peter's Seminary Foundation recognizes the valuable benefits that the seminary can offer to our travellers: guest lecturers who provide historical context and spiritual enrichment, the opportunity to build a strong faith community, and the safety and convenience of group travel, where all arrangements are expertly organized on the travellers' behalf.

Based on the testimonials we received, the first trip proved us right!

"I have never travelled before and now I don't think I will stop...Dad and I had a very nice time. We will never forget our memories" - Mary Bechberger

"This trip was a masterpiece, inspirational in every way...Mille Grazie!" - Bob and Pam Baksi

"To travel with other faith-filled people helped to increase the joy and fun... thanks for a beautiful experience!" - John and Debbie (MDiv99) Craven

"Good value, good friendship and spirit-filled" - Connie and Vic Coté

UPCOMING: In the Footsteps of St. Paul - Travels to Greece and Turkey, May 4 - 15, 2004. Guest lecturer: Father Vincent Van Zutphen, BA, BTh, MTh, ThD, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies at St. Peter's Seminary. This tour package has been specially designed for you, alumni and friends of SPS, and includes both land and cruise components. For more information, contact: **Gabriella Catolino**, Executive Director, St. Peter's Seminary Foundation (519) 432-1824 ext. 222. 🙏

Inspiration for the 21st Century

Join us at St. Peter's Seminary for our inaugural lecture series, SPS Auditorium.

Ten Thursday mornings, January 8 to March 18, 9 - 10 am (doors open at 8:30 am)

Complimentary coffee/juice. Free parking.

Series membership: \$50 per person (guests may attend up to two sessions at \$7 per lecture)

To register, call (519) 432-1824 ext. 240.

Thursday, January 8, 2004

From Gethsemane to Mel Gibson: Taking a Second Look at Christ's Passion
Speaker: Father Murray Watson

Thursday, January 15, 2004

The Ecumenical Movement: Achievements and Challenges
Speaker: Dr. Susan Brown

Thursday, January 22, 2004

What is the Common Good?
Speaker: Father Michael Smith

Thursday, January 29, 2004

Songs of Hope and Promise
Speaker: Sister Loretta Manzara, CSJ

Thursday, February 5, 2004

The Spirituality of John of the Cross: Light for Life Today
Speaker: Father Steve Wlusek

Thursday, February 12, 2004

Christ in Art: Timeless Meditations with Hope for All
Speaker: Dr. Dante Lenardon

Thursday, February 19, 2004

A Vision for our Future: The Pastoral Plan for the Diocese of London
Speaker: Bishop Ronald Fabbro CSB, DD

Thursday, March 4, 2004

Catholic Bioethics for the 21st Century: A Dinosaur or an Eagle?
Speaker: Father Michael Prieur

Thursday, March 11, 2004

Catholic Education in the 21st Century - Partnerships
Speaker: Mr. Joseph Rapai

Thursday, March 18, 2004

Hierarchy and Charism: The Movement of the Spirit
Speaker: Father John Comiskey

For full details, please visit www.stpetersseminary.ca.



Student Profile

Viva Vida!

Several days a week since 1999, Vida Cuniffe has made the drive from Aylmer to London for courses in SPS's Master of Theological Studies program. A retired high school chemistry teacher, Vida's journey with SPS began with Father Tom Rosica's scripture presentations in 'Call to Discipleship'. A Bioethics course with Father Prieur followed, and "that was really the start – everything flowed from there."

Why now?

With my five children in university, and retirement approaching, I found I had the time.

How has the program changed you?

It made me more aware of the tradition of faith in the local church and the Church at large. It increased my understanding of how dynamic Catholicism is, relying on the guidance of the Holy Spirit. For example, our Patristics course examines how it took a half-century after Christ to develop the fundamental Christian doctrines.

Other rewards?

The friendship of the seminarians. My eyes were really opened to their sincerity and love for the Church. They made me feel welcome from my very first year.

Where might this program take you?

I wish I had taken these courses 20 years ago when I was in contact with students in high school – this would be a very helpful course for teachers. Down the road, I may pursue volunteer work in palliative care, or in leading Scripture study.

What does the seminary mean to you?

I am thankful for the opportunity to explore and reflect on what it means to be Christian, through Jesus Christ to be in relationship with God and with the rest of God's creation. What "the sem" means to a lay person like me is, most of all, the teachers and fellow students who guide and enrich my journey of faith, and, of course, the wonderful library. 🙌



Library News

Sharing a Rich Resource

The A. P. Mahoney Library at St. Peter's Seminary is known for its excellent theological collection. It has been carefully selected to meet, and often anticipate, the varied needs of the faculty and students. Today, as part of the University of Western Ontario's Shared Catalogue, these resources are available to the entire academic community served by the university and beyond. We have a superb resource and we invite you to come in and see for yourself. Visit www.stpetersseminary.ca.

Books donated by Bishops John Kidd, Michael Fallon and Monsignor Mahoney helped enhance the early collection. Seminarians originally ran the library, purchasing books, cataloguing records, and shelving materials. Following the hiring of professional librarian Lois Côté (MDiv'79) in 1968, a reference collection was established and a systematic approach to developing the collection began, in collaboration with the faculty. Books, periodicals, audio-visuals, CD-ROMs and electronic databases describe our current, rich collection. Our resources cover the fields of Philosophy, Scripture, Canon Law, Church History, Pastoral Care, Liturgy, Homiletics, Systematic Theology, Bioethics, Liberation and Feminist theologies.

The library has undergone many renovations, but has respected its architectural integrity by incorporating the outside walls with their beautiful stonework into the interior space of the library. In recognition of Monsignor Mahoney's long career as seminary rector and his substantial donation, the library was named in his honour.

The Library Director has always envisioned the collection as a valuable resource to the wider community beyond the seminary's walls. With the June 2003 implementation of the Shared Catalogue of the University of Western Ontario's Libraries and its affiliates, this vision has become a reality. 🙌

Book Review *By Father Murray Watson, MDiv'96, Lecturer in Biblical Studies*

James VanderKam and Peter Flint. *The Meaning of the Dead Sea Scrolls: Their Significance for Understanding the Bible, Judaism, Jesus, and Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2002. 403 pages, plus appendices (\$52.95 Cdn).

In the fifty-five years since the first discoveries near Qumran, the Dead Sea Scrolls have provoked both tremendous scholarly interest and the wildest tabloid-style speculation about their impact on "traditional Christianity." Since the release of the Scrolls in the fall of 1991, they are now all available for scholarly study, and can even be bought in paperback English translations. Undoubtedly the best single-volume overview of the Scrolls, their contents and their meaning is found in this recent volume by two of the world's most respected Qumran experts. In the course of five chapters, VanderKam and Flint explore the discoveries themselves, their importance in understanding the Hebrew Scriptures, the contents and relevance of the non-Biblical scrolls, their impact on New Testament studies, and the various controversies that have swirled around the Scrolls and their editorial teams. For anyone seeking a reliable, current and accessible guide to Qumran and its manuscript riches, this book will answer dozens of questions – and perhaps raise dozens more. 🙌



Guido Nicheri, detail of Holy Spirit window, SPS Sacristy

From the SPS Foundation

Illuminated Greetings: Christmas Card sales raise funds for SPS

The Catholic Women's League in the Diocese of London has embarked upon a Christmas fundraiser in partnership with St. Peter's Seminary. The seminary has created four Christmas card designs, to be sold in sets of twelve by the



Seminarians and staff pitch in

Catholic Women's League. Proceeds will support the education of priests through the creation of a Burse Fund in the name of the CWL.

Two of the cards are photo reproductions of stained-glass windows in the St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel: the Annunciation of Mary and the Birth of the Child.

The other two cards are original renditions of the Annunciation and Mother and Child by local artist Shawn Van Daele.

Hurry – was \$14/set of 12 cards – **Now On Sale – Only \$12/set!**

To purchase, contact the SPS Foundation Office at (519) 432-1824 ext. 222.

Thank you, Catholic Women's League!

Knights of Columbus / Seminarian Formation Burse Fund

Since its founding 125 years ago, the Knights of Columbus have stood in solidarity with our bishops and priests.

In 2002, St. Peter's Seminary in partnership with the Diocesan Association of the Knights of Columbus established the K. of C./Seminarian Formation Burse Fund to enhance funding for key formation program components. Monies raised through this Fund are directed towards formation fees for Diocese of London seminarians.

Our annual goal of \$60,000 will provide full assistance to all seminarians studying for our Diocese. We are grateful for the generosity and commitment of our diocesan Knights of Columbus, and look forward to continuing a long partnership with them. 🙌

The Importance of Theological Education

Preparing servant leaders for the Church requires a strong theological education, a deep and personal relationship with God, and well developed pastoral sensitivity. Today, such leaders need a clear understanding of the biblical, theological, and pastoral disciplines if they are to be true servants of God's word in the Church and in our world. In recent years, St. Peter's Seminary has revised the theological curriculum and formation program and has made its resources available to those preparing for ministry in our Church.

As a former educator, I am deeply impressed with our diocese and all that it can offer the Church in Canada as we seek to announce the good news of Jesus Christ in our contemporary culture. St. Peter's Seminary plays a vital role in this mission by developing leaders for the Church today. I wholeheartedly support its efforts, and I am pleased that this new publication, *Illuminations*, provides you with a close-up look into our seminary which more and more is becoming an essential resource in the community of London, our own diocese, and other dioceses in Canada. **Ronald P. Fabbro, CSB, DD, Bishop, Diocese of London** 🙌





Seminarians perform in the St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel at *Open Doors 2003*

Mark Your Calendar

Tuesday, December 2, 8 pm. Christmas at St. Peter's. Featuring UWO's Early Music Studio and Thames Scholars. Renaissance and Baroque Christmas music in the beautiful acoustics of the Seminary Chapel. \$10 (\$5 for students/ seniors). For tickets, call UWO Don Wright, Faculty of Music at (519) 661-3767.

Thursday, January 8, 2004. Donor Christmas Reception and Thank You. By invitation.

Sunday, January 18, 2004. Huron Night Students of St. Peter's Seminary and Huron University College gather for joint theological discussions. To register, call (519) 432-1824 ext. 292.

February 6 - 8, 2004. Come & See Weekend. A special time for men ages 18 and older to discover and deepen their sense of vocation. To register, call (519) 432-1824 ext. 292.

**February 23 - 29, 2004
Conference Week.**

Saturday, March 6, 2004. Day of Prayer for the Laity. Facilitator: Mary Taylor, Pastoral Minister at St. Michael's Parish. Contact Carole Murphy, Project Coordinator for Lay Formation at (519) 432-1824 ext. 292 or cmurph29@uwo.ca.

June 25 - 27, 2004. Spring Retreat for Lay People at SPS. Saints for our Times: Holiness in the 21st Century. Join us for fellowship, prayer, quiet time, voluntary sharing sessions, Holy Hour, celebration of Reconciliation, and talks by faculty, grads and adjunct professors. For details, call (519) 432-1824 ext. 292.

Inspiration for the 21st Century Speaker Series. Ten Thursday mornings, January 8 to March 18. For details, please refer to the article inside this issue.

Open Masses. All Sunday Masses are held at 11 am and are open to the public on the following dates: November 30, December 7, January 18, February 8 and 15, March 7 and 21, April 11 and 18.

Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, from 8:15 am - 4:30 pm on the following Fridays: November 28, December 5, January 9 and 16, February 6 and 13, March 5, 12 and 19, and April 2.

Please visit our website for updates and new additions to our events calendar.

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