Loyd Whitley, Honorary Oblate: 1922-2014
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Oblate School of Theology, founded and sponsored by the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, is a Catholic graduate and professional school which provides education for the church’s mission and ministry in the world.

The institution prepares persons for pastoral ministry through academic study and supervised practice. Through degree and certificate programs the School strives to educate and form candidates for priestly ministry as well as lay ministries. The School offers opportunities for professional continuing education and personal spiritual renewal to those serving in church and society.

Oblate School of Theology models and fosters collaboration in ministry. It accomplishes its mission in cooperation with formation communities and other ecclesial and societal institutions.

The pastoral orientation of the School requires practical and reflective engagement with the multi-cultural, global reality of church and society. Drawing upon Oblate School of Theology’s location and historical dedication to the Mexican-American presence in the Southwest, the learning, teaching, and research of the School pay particular attention to the diverse and rich Hispanic reality of the Americas.

Cover photo: Loyd Whitley, HOMI, recently deceased
Ecumenism – Our Neglected Mandate

While saying farewell the night before he died, Jesus told those with him that he “had other sheep that are not of this fold” and that those with him at that particular moment were not his only followers. He also shared that he longed for unity with those others just as urgently and deeply as he longed for unity with those in the room with him.

Among other things, this means that no matter what our particular Christian denomination, we are not Christ’s only followers and that we have no more right to his love than those millions of others who are not of our own kind. Moreover, to be a disciple of Jesus means that we, like him, also have to hunger and pray for unity with those who are separated from us. Indeed, the divisions among us as Christians – the fact that we are divided into many separate denominations and the fact that, within these denominations, we are further bitterly divided by ideologies and live in distrust of each other – constitute perhaps the biggest of all scandals that Christianity has given and continues to give to the world.

Also, for the most part, we still are not praying for each other and reaching out to each other with any real heart. The relationship between Christian denominations today, and often inside of those denominations themselves, is characterized more by re-entrenchment than by openness, distrust than by trust, and lack of charity than by graciousness. Sadly, too, more so than by any ecumenical hunger and openness, our churches are still characterized too much by a self-sufficiency and smugness that says, “We have the truth. We have no need of you!”

But who are our real brothers and sisters as Christians? Jesus, I believe, challenges our simplistic answers: Several times during his ministry, someone approached him and told him that his mother and his family were outside the circle of this particular group, wanting to talk to him. Jesus’ reply is far-reaching: In each case, he responded with a question: “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers and sisters?” He answers his own question by saying, “Those who hear and keep the word of God are mother, and brother, and sister to me.”

In a society where blood relationship meant everything, this statement is stunning. Blood may be thicker than water but, Jesus asserts, that faith is thicker than blood. Faith is the real basis for family, trumping biology. Also, for Jesus, faith also trumps denomination. Who is your real brother or sister as a Christian? Your fellow Roman Catholic? Your fellow Presbyterian? Your fellow Lutheran? Your fellow Baptist? Your fellow Evangelical? Your fellow Methodist? Your fellow Anglican or Episcopalian? Clearly, for Jesus, it is the person who most deeply hears the word of God and keeps it, irrespective of denomination. True Christian family is defined more by the heart than by a denominational membership.

This makes for a non-negotiable mandate for all Christians: We need to radiate Jesus’ hunger for intimacy with all people of sincere faith and, to that end, our actions towards those outside our own denomination or ecclesiology must always be marked by respect, graciousness, and charity – and a genuine hunger for unity with them. That can be predicated only on a humility that believes that our own church, whatever our denomination, does not have the whole truth, that we are not free of error, that we are not free of sin, and that we are not fully faithful to the gospel. All of us – all Christian churches – are journeying towards fullness, towards a fuller understanding of the truth, and towards a more radical fidelity to what Jesus asks of us. None of us has arrived; we are all still journeying towards where we are called.

Thus, our ecumenical task, no matter our denomination, is not that of trying to win over converts or convince others that we are more right than they are. Our primary task is inner conversion within our own denomination. Our primary task is to try, as individuals and as churches, to be more faithful to the gospel. If we do that, we eventually will come together, as one church under Christ, because as we all journey deeper into the mystery of Christ and grow more deeply in our own intimacy with Jesus, we will (in the beautiful phrase of Avery Dulles) “progressively converge,” eventually meeting around one center and one person, Jesus Christ.

Kenneth Cragg, after spending years as a Christian missionary dialoguing with Islam, suggested that it will take all the churches and all the religions to eventually give full expression to the full Christ. Clearly all of us still need to stretch our hearts.
Loyd George Whitley, HOMI, a member of the Oblate School of Theology Board of Trustees for 17 years before his death June 11, made a huge difference in enhancing OST’s future and its stature as a vital resource for San Antonio’s religious education far into the future.

Mr. Whitley, 92, had been reared in a Methodist family, but he married a staunch Catholic, Louise Rumely, in 1948 and later became a Catholic shortly before one of their two sons, Rufus Whitley, was ordained a priest for the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1976.

Through his wife, Mr. Whitley met the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in Midland and became very supportive of the Oblates. During their son’s years of formation for the priesthood, Mr. and Mrs. Whitley began supporting the Oblate College of the Southwest, as today’s Oblate School of Theology was known then.

In 1994, the Whitleys visited and were captivated by the Oblate mission in Zambia, then about 10 years old. Father Rufus recalled that his parents’ strong interest in providing scholarships for foreign students grew out of that trip. Mrs. Whitley died in 1997 before she could visit the mission a second time.

For their extraordinary dedication to the charism of the Oblates, and to the Oblates’ work at OST, in Zambia and in Midland, Louise and Loyd were declared Honorary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1997 around the time of Mrs. Whitley’s death.

Mr. Whitley was appointed that year to Oblate School of Theology’s Board of Trustees, and served until his death. The School awarded him an honorary doctorate in 2013, a sign of his impact on the School’s growth and development. At a dinner in connection with the degree, Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI, president of the School, explained how crucial Mr. Whitley’s leadership was to the then-110-year-old institution.

Noting that a strong institution requires both vision and resources, the President said that Mr. Whitley invested generously in OST, both financially and with his acute perception of what the School could be in the future. “Loyd’s contributions, in terms of both vision and resources for the school, were simply huge. This building (now known as the Whitley Theological Center, dedicated in 2012) wouldn’t be here without him; but moreover, Oblate School of Theology would be a very different and much weaker entity had we not had Loyd’s vision and resources all these years,” the OST president declared.

Mr. Whitley was gifted with wisdom in his financial investments. Father Rolheiser noted, “Loyd was known for his watchful eye in scrutinizing the budget and financial accounting. The School was well and deeply served by his confidence and his vigilance in terms of our finances and the administrative running of the School,” he added. Throughout Father Rolheiser’s first eight years at the School’s helm, he said, Mr. Whitley regularly greeted him by asking, “What do you need? What can I do?”

With the architects’ designs for the new theological center underway in 2010, huge bills were pouring in despite the impact of the economic climate on OST’s income. “We were committed to doing this at a time when we didn’t have the finances and resources to do it,” Father Rolheiser recalled. “Loyd said, ‘Let’s do this. It needs to be done, and if you run into trouble, you can rely on me,’” the school president recalled, adding: “We were graced by God, and eventually, all the finances came through; but it was Loyd’s confidence and his commitment ultimately to underwrite this that made this building possible.”

The state-of-the-art facility has brought new life to the campus, giving the School a large, comfortable space in which to conduct its continuing education and other programs, making the learning process more...
enjoyable and making OST’s courses accessible to anyone any place in the world with Internet connectivity. Many outside entities have praised it as a comfortable and welcoming venue for their events.

A native of Keller, near Fort Worth, Mr. Whitley graduated from Texas Christian University in Fort Worth in 1938. He and his wife met at TCU, where she was a student and worked in a bookstore.

Commissioned in the U.S. Army during World War II, Loyd Whitley served in the intelligence corps of Lt. Gen. George S. Patton’s Third Army as it moved through Europe after the Allied invasion of Normandy. Patton dispatched him to study advanced cartography at the Sorbonne in Paris. After the war, Mr. Whitley returned home and passed his certified public accountant examinations.

The Whitleys arrived in Midland shortly before the oil boom. Initially, Loyd Whitley was a partner in a certified public accounting firm, Newkirk and Whitley; later, he became chief financial officer for an independent oil exploration firm, Adobe Oil and Gas.

Father Rufus said his father’s word was his bond. “If he agreed to something, he was not going to go back on his word, even if it turned out unfavorably for him.” He added, “My father knew everybody in Midland; he was friendly with everyone, from the hotel porters to the oil millionaires.” The priest noted that his father had helped a great many people, sometimes financially and sometimes with advice.

“Dad helped some get into school; many people he helped didn’t even know he’d helped them.” He was a longtime supporter of the Junior Achievement Awards, St. Ann’s Parish, the Diocese of San Angelo and the Oblates, his son said.

In 2001, Mr. Whitley married Betty Sue Davis and moved to Tulsa, Okla. After her death in 2005, he moved to San Antonio.

Besides Father Rufus, survivors include another son Dr. Loyd Whitley Jr. and his wife, Kristi; grandchildren Katie Whitley, Margaret Whitley, and Steven Whitley and his wife, Rebecca; great-grandson Jackson Whitley; one nephew and two great-nieces; and his caregiver, Cora Brewer.

Study to research impact of various stress factors in priestly ministry

The Raskob Foundation recently awarded a three-year, $75,000 grant to Oblate School of Theology to conduct research on issues that negatively impact priestly ministry and to develop educational responses to address those issues, said Father Bryan Silva, OMI, who proposed the project and will conduct the research.

While a psychologist at St. Luke Institute in Silver Spring, Md., Father Silva became aware of a wide variety of factors that lead to clergy engaging in self-destructive behaviors and ultimately having difficulties in relationships, sexual issues, addictions and other issues that compromise their ministry.

Such factors include both external and internal issues for which priests have not been prepared adequately, Father Silva explained. External issues are social issues, such as skepticism about priests among laity in the wake of the international sexual abuse crisis, living chastity in a post-sexual-revolution social context, use or misuse of social media, growing demands of time and energy placed on clergy, working alone where several priests formerly worked together, intergenerational conflict between priests, geographic isolation, parish considerations, management of employees and parish financial issues. Internal issues include loneliness, lack of social supports, management of affective needs within the discipline of celibacy, struggles with their family-of-origin history, depression, lack of assertiveness and mental illness.

In the grant’s first year, Father Silva said, the survey will be conducted among diocesan bishops, vicars general (or vicars for religious) and religious provincials, using inexpensive, readily available means. A follow-up can be done with a representative number of administrators. The research will identify the issues and develop curricula to help clergy avoid those pitfalls, or to alleviate them when they occur. An internet survey tool will be
used that can allow anonymity for respondents and may be completed easily by diocesan or religious congregation administrators.

During the grant's second year, Father Silva will craft the educational responses necessary to remediate the issues reflected in the research data.

“If we can gain access to administrators of dioceses and religious congregations, research can be done on the burgeoning problematic issues,” he explained. “Then, discussion of strategies for education and remediation can begin. With such data gathering, we can help priests remain healthy and possibly influence the training of future clergy in an attempt to avoid such pitfalls in the future.”

The final stage will be to offer conferences to educate clergy about the pitfalls identified in the research and to offer strategies for avoiding them in ministry. Father Silva said he hopes that with this research, “We can better prepare seminarians for future ministry by intervening in relevant areas during their formation.”

Early education in recognized areas, as well as exposure to emerging themes, might improve the readiness of the newly ordained for ministry and reduce the negative impact of these issues on laity, as well as dioceses and religious communities who suffer significant losses as a result of clerical attrition, illness and treatment, the priest continued.

**Sankofa speakers to discuss Black Church issues**

The Sankofa Institute for African American Pastoral Leadership kicked off the second year of its Sankofa Lecture Series Sept. 27, with Dr. Allan Aubrey Boesak, a leading activist against apartheid in his native South Africa, speaking on “African Connections.”

The series will continue Nov. 8 with Msgr. Edward Branch, DMin, addressing “Black Catholic Connections”; and Feb. 14, 2015, with the Rev. Dr. J. Alfred Smith Sr., and U.S. Rep. Barbara Lee (D-California) speaking on “The Black Church and the Public Square.” Father Bryan Massingale will speak, April 18, 2015, on “Ethical Choices in the Black Church.” Admission for an individual lecture is $40; $120 for all four lectures. All the presentations will be in the Whitley Theological Center.

In addition to the lecture series, the Sankofa Institute will offer two conferences – a “Come Taste and See” introduction to Black Church Studies at OST Jan. 23-24, 2015, and a Women’s Spirituality and Healing Conference March 21, 2015.

Registration for the “Come Taste and See” conference is $150 before Dec. 1 and $210 after Dec. 1. For the Women’s Conference, registration is $65 before March 1, 2015, and $75 after March 1. Presenters for “Come Taste and See” will include the Rev. Dr. J. Alfred Smith, Dr. Diana Hayes, the Rev. Dr. Dwight Hopkins, the Rev. Dr. Cheryl Kirk-Duggan, the Rev. Dr. James A. Noel and the Rev. Dr. Stephen B. Reid.

Dr. Smith is pastor emeritus of Allen Temple Baptist Church in Oakland, Calif., and chair of the Sankofa Institute’s Council of Elders; Dr. Hayes is professor emerita of theology at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C.; Dr. Hopkins is professor of theology and director of M.A. studies at the University of Chicago; Dr. Kirk-Duggan is professor of religion at Shaw Divinity School in Raleigh, N.C.; Dr. Noel is professor of theology at San Francisco Theological Seminary; Dr. Reid is a professor of Old Testament Studies at Baylor University’s Truett Theological Seminary in Waco.

The Institute will present its second Excellence in Education in the Black Community Award Jan. 31, 2015, in OST’s Immaculate Conception Memorial Chapel.

The Sankofa Institute was launched in September 2013 to prepare Christian men and women of all races, cultures and denominational affiliations, for ministry among African Americans.
Oblate School of Theology received an important windfall in July through the generosity of an OST alumnus. A bequest of $822,000 from the Col. Lawrence W. Scheffner and Sophie G. Scheffner Trusts surprised school officials when they learned of it. Col. Scheffner earned a Master of Theological Studies degree from OST in 1989. The bequest made possible an endowment fund in their names to provide scholarships, with preference to seminarians in the MDiv Program.

“We want to express our deepest thanks for the generosity of the Scheffners, which will make it easier for more seminarians to pursue their preparation for ordained ministry in the Church,” said Father Art Flores, OMI. As area superior for the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate and vice chairman of the School’s Board of Trustees, Father Flores accepted the gift July 15 on behalf of the School.

School President Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI, said the unexpected gift not only creates a wonderful opportunity for students but also will have a positive impact on the Catholic Church for the future. “We are all indebted to Col. and Mrs. Scheffner for this gift, which will help to fill a very important need. With so many dioceses and religious orders strapped for funds for formation, this is a very welcome windfall, not only for the seminarians themselves but for the Catholic community nationally, which depends on our priests. We are deeply grateful for the wonderful opportunity this gift will provide for students and the impact it will have on the church for the future,” he said.

Col. Scheffner was a retired Army male nurse and the first to attain the rank of colonel. He retired from the Army in 1981, moved with his wife to San Antonio and died March 31, 1997, said Dr. Pat Hanavan, a longtime friend of the Scheffners who handled the Scheffners’ estate. Mrs. Scheffner died Jan. 30, 2014, said Dr. Hanavan’s wife, Alicia, who was with Mrs. Scheffner at the time of death.

They established trusts in 1985 encompassing all the assets of their estate. Other bequests they made were to aid students receiving Jesuit seminary education; to provide support of home missions; and to provide funds for students in the Marquette University College of Nursing.

Col. Scheffner was born September 9, 1919, in Milwaukee. In 1940, he entered the Alexian Brothers School of Nursing in St. Louis, Mo., where he was president of the Class of 1943. He was appointed a Red Cross Nurse Jan. 6, 1944. Entering the U.S. Army as a surgical technician April 30, 1945, Sheffner served in Europe until his release from the Army Oct. 25, 1946.

After earning a Bachelor of Science degree from Marquette University, he earned his Master of Science in Nursing Education from the Marquette University College of Nursing in 1953.

Sophie G. Zanio was born March 5, 1920, in Kenosha, Wis. She graduated from high school in Kenosha in 1940. At the time of their marriage in October 1953, Mr. Scheffner was an assistant director of nurses, and Mrs. Scheffner was a comptometer operator.


After his death in 1997, Mrs. Scheffner moved to the Army Residence Community in San Antonio. She continued to live there until her death.
Oblate School of Theology is to receive the 2014 Cushing Medal from the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) for its contribution to the advancement of Church research through its activities.

The award is to be presented Oct. 27 at the Georgetown Visitation Prep School in Washington, D.C., during CARA’s 50th anniversary celebration. OST conducted extensive research in a joint research project with CARA on the International Priest experience in the United States on both the individual and systemic levels. The research identified what has gone well in the International Priest experience and what aspects need to be improved. Father John Staak, OMI, also conducted research assessing the feasibility of OST founding at some future date an institute of missiology that could address in an ongoing way the needs of international missionary priests.

OST’s International Priest Internship program trains 15-20 foreign-born priests on the School campus each year, giving them an overview of various aspects of the reality of the Catholic Church in the United States and the culture and society in which it operates. The program’s first five years were financed by a grant from the Lilly Endowment. Since 2008, Oblate School of Theology has completely supported the internship.

The priests, who come as missionaries from Central and South America, Africa, Europe and Asia, are coached in American pronunciation of English and how to preach effectively to American faith communities. They learn about tensions in the U.S. church and receive advice on means to navigate amid these tensions. They also learn basics of parish financial management and other aspects of U.S. parish life.

A second five-year grant from the Lilly Endowment enabled a joint OST/CARA research project on the international priest phenomenon in the United States Church. This project resulted in a book, Bridging the Gap, published by Our Sunday Visitor this year. The needs of international priests for accompaniment by coaches, mentors and spiritual directors, and the possibility of establishing an institute of missiology, were also studied as part of the second Lilly grant.

As part of their acculturation program, participants in the joint study are introduced to a model of value discernment that helps each priest identify and name the priorities on which he focuses his energies. Father Ron Carignan, OMI, director of the International Priest Development program, and Father Vincent Louwagie, OMI, director of the International Priest Internship program, worked with the Rev. Dr. Brian Hall, founder of the Center for Exploration of Values and Meaning at Santa Clara University.

Father Carignan said the challenge the Church faces in meeting the needs of international priests is extensive. “We only touch the surface of what they need to deal with,” he observed. “It’s very difficult for international priests to find the spiritual accompaniment they need in their U.S. assignments,” he explained. “Some are lucky even to find a confessor. In some instances, the presence of international priests is seen as a problem, although, by and large, they are seen in a positive light by the parishioners they serve.”

In his research, Father Staak identified key people involved in the study of mission and engaged them in dialogue as part of his research. “We need to hear how people interpreted the signs of the times and how they see the Church responding to those signs,” he said. He explored elements that eventually could contribute to establishing an institute of missiology.

“I can’t think of any place more fitting than Oblate School of Theology for an institute of missiology,” Father Carignan stated.
Father Staak and his associate, Julia Hinojosa, surveyed available mission studies programs of many Christian denominational colleges and universities and discovered that few Catholic institutions offer degree or certificate programs in missiology.

According to Father Staak, “the purpose of an institute of missiology would be to facilitate the development of a culture of encounter at the service of the Gospel and of the Church in the world. This includes developing the necessary skills as missionary disciples to listen and respond to the cry of the poor and abandoned, and to proclaim the mystery of Christ.”

This purpose presents major challenges, he explained. The institute would not simply offer lectured courses but also would offer the possibility of experiences to engage in various encounters.

Father Carignan commented, “The need exists for such an institute; it’s an opportunity waiting to happen. The interest of the whole Church has been stimulated by Pope Francis’ pastoral leadership and his missionary vision. People are looking for a place to engage in their rediscovered missionary zeal and to learn more about the culture of encounter. Sponsored by an international missionary religious congregation and situated in an intercultural setting, OST would offer the Church an ideal host for an institute of missiology.”

OST Community News

FACULTY

Victor Carmona, who joined the OST faculty in July 2012, successfully defended his dissertation August 29 at the University of Notre Dame. His topic was “A Critique of U.S. Immigration Policy in Light of the Work of David Hollenbach, Gustavo Gutierrez and Thomas Aquinas.” The degree will be awarded in January 2015. Carmona formerly worked with Oblates in Mexicali, Mexico and with Gustavo Gutierrez, Father Virgilio Elizondo and Timothy Matovina at Notre Dame. At OST, he has taught Foundations of Moral Theology, Catholic Social Thought, Christian Immigration Ethics and Theology, and Introduction to Hispanic/Latino(a) Theology.

Father John Staak, OMI, completed his feasibility study of the possibility of establishing an institute of missiology at OST. He has accepted a faculty position teaching Sacraments and Christian Doctrine of God at Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora, N.Y., the seminary for the Diocese of Buffalo.

Dr. Sally Gomez-Jung, Assistant Director of Pastoral Studies, and Father Wayne Cavalier co-developed a proposal for a summer Supervised Practice of Ministry program in the Hispanic Community through OST in collaboration with the Congar Institute.

Dr. John Chitakure joined the OST adjunct faculty this fall and is teaching the Synoptic Gospels. He has taught a variety of courses on religion, Old and New Testament, African independent churches and African religions, just to name a few. A native of Zimbabwe, Dr. Chitakure is married and received a Bachelor of Arts with honors and a Master of Arts in Religious Studies, both from the University of Zimbabwe; and a Doctor of Ministry degree from the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago in 2008. He has taught in a variety of college-level venues, including the University of the Incarnate Word and the Mexican American Catholic College in San Antonio, as well as several others in Zimbabwe.

Also new on the adjunct faculty is Father Ramón González, OP. Father González is teaching Introduction to Preaching this fall. He has bachelor’s and master’s degrees in music from the University of Texas at Austin, a Master of Divinity from the Dominican School of Philosophy and Theology at the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley, Calif.,
and a Master of Theology from St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary in Yonkers, N.Y. Most recently, he has been a chaplain at the University of the Incarnate Word, St. Anastasia the Great Martyr Byzantine Catholic Community and the Office of Campus Ministry and Young Adult Ministry of the Archdiocese of San Antonio.

Father Roger Keeler, OMI, Assistant Professor of Canon Law at OST since July 2012, has accepted the position of Executive Director of the Canon Law Society of America. He will continue teaching canon law at OST as an adjunct professor, commuting from Washington, D.C., to San Antonio to teach several days each month.

Father Joseph T. LaBelle, OMI, Assistant Professor of Spirituality at OST from 2007-2012, has published Truly Apostolic Men: Apostolic Life in the Early Ministry of St. Eugene de Mazenod, a look at elements of the tradition of “apostolic life” as perceived by the founder of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate during his early ministry. Father LaBelle will return to San Antonio to begin a sabbatical.

Sister Susan Pontz, SSCM, Director of Informational Technology, is on sabbatical this semester, taking the first phase of the Ignatian Training Program in Spiritual Direction and Retreat Ministry at the Ignatius Jesuit Centre, in Guelph, Ontario, Canada. She will return in January, 2015.

Dr. Philip Sheldrake, Professor of Spirituality, has published two new books, The Spiritual City: Theology, Spirituality & The Urban, Oxford/Malden, Mass.: Wiley-Blackwell; and Spirituality: A Guide for the Perplexed (London/New York: Bloomsbury). He also has published an article titled “Illumination without Knowledge: Michel de Certeau's 'The Mystic Fable’” in Religions (Doha International Center for Interfaith Dialogue), Issue 5, 2013, pp. 75-83.

Father Wayne Cavalier, OP, Director of the Congar Institute for Ministry Development, became an advisor to an organization bringing Dominican spirituality to Texas prisons. He was lead consultant on the Diocese of Salt Lake City’s pastoral planning process and was licensed to present the U.S. bishops’ program Building Intercultural Competencies for Ministers. He began discussions around launching a satellite DMin program in spirituality in Dublin, Ireland.

Dr. Gregory Zuschlag, Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, convened two sessions on theology, ecology and the natural sciences at the College Theology Society at St. Vincent’s College in Latrobe, Pa., in May; he also offered two introductory courses on philosophy and Scripture to the deacon candidates for the diocese of San Angelo in late spring and early summer and was appointed to serve on the Editorial Board of the Journal of Moral Theology for three years.

IN MEMORIAM

Father David N. Power, OMI, 81, a distinguished professor and chair of theology at Catholic University who lectured as a visiting professor at OST for some years, died June 19 in Washington, D.C. at the age of 81. Ordained in Rome in 1956, Father Power taught in his native Ireland at the Oblate seminary and Maynooth; and in Rome at the Oblate International Scholasticate, the Pontifical Gregorian and the Angelicum. He was president of the North American Academy of Religion at one point, received the Berakah Award of the North American Academy of Liturgy in 1992 and four years later the John Courtney Murray Award of the Catholic Theological Society of America for excellence in the field of theological scholarship.

Michael Lidell Banks, 72, husband of OST Trustee Dr. Dianna Burns-Banks, died July 11 in San Antonio. Mr. Banks graduated from Morehouse College in Atlanta at age 17 and earned a master’s degree in mathematics from Atlanta University at 19. Michael worked for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration developing simulators, satellites and spacecraft at Edwards Air Force Base, Calif. His work was integral to several space missions. Returning to Texas, he worked for IBM for more than 25 years in Houston and Austin. Retiring from IBM, Michael was a consultant, earned a real estate brokerage license and worked as a financial advisor.
Father William Carmona, a fourth-year theology student at Oblate School of Theology and Assumption Seminary, finally achieved his childhood dream of becoming a priest as he lay near death after a four-year battle against cancer.

Father Carmona, 51, one of 13 children, died Sept 10; however, Bishop David R. Choby of the Diocese of Nashville, Tenn., learning that the seminarian had been rushed to Christus Santa Rosa Hospital-Medical Center in grave condition, flew to San Antonio Sept. 7 and asked Carmona the canonical questions required for ordination while the seminarian was still able to respond. He responded affirmatively to each question, the bishop said.

The next morning, he ordained Carmona first to the transitional diaconate and then to the priesthood in a small first-floor auditorium before about 200 people.

The bishop told the Tennessee Register that the joy of ordaining a new priest is a high point in any bishop's life, but added, “To have the opportunity to celebrate the sacrament for one who is so much looking forward to ordination but faces the certainty of death made it the more poignant. The ordination of Father Carmona, which occurred in the face of the certainty of death, reflects the Paschal mystery. That is how our own lives are transformed in the death and Resurrection of Jesus,” the Nashville prelate commented.

San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller, 14 priests, virtually the entire student body of Assumption Seminary, faculty and administrators of Assumption and OST, and hospital officials – some 200 people in all – packed the auditorium. Seminarians formed the choir for the event.

The candidate lay still in his hospital bed with his eyes closed, unable to speak as fellow seminarians lovingly laid the alb, chasuble and stole over him. Then Bishop Choby anointed his hands with holy oil and led Archbishop Gustavo and the other clergy in laying hands on his head one after another. Priests said they detected signs of recognition and joy in Carmona as the ordination rite proceeded. Medical personnel watched monitors near his bedside throughout the Mass in case of an emergency, but the liturgy was concluded without incident and he was wheeled back to the intensive care unit, where his fellow Nashville seminarians kept an around-the-clock vigil by his bed. They said that until the bishop arrived, Carmona had asked anxiously, “Where is Bishop Choby? When will he get here? How many hours until he ordains me?”

Arriving at Assumption Seminary in 2009, Carmona was forced to delay his studies a year later when his cancer first occurred. He underwent surgery, followed by a lengthy rehabilitation. However, he was persistent, persevering through it, and until early this summer, he seemed to have beaten the cancer, said Father Jeff Pehl, rector of Assumption, whose own anniversary of ordination was Sept. 8.

Father Pehl said that when Carmona's new symptoms reappeared this summer, the seminarian remained determined to continue his studies and returned to Assumption Seminary for the fall semester. “I don't know if he just ignored it or didn't want to believe (the cancer) was coming back or what,” the rector said.

The oldest of eight seminarians from the Diocese of Nashville currently attending Oblate School of Theology and Assumption Seminary, Father Carmona was born Jan. 18, 1963, in Atioquia, Colombia. He worked in a grocery store and a clothing store, among other jobs, to pay his way through school. He earned a degree in philosophy at a seminary in his country before coming to the United States in 2000, Father Pehl said.

In the United States, Carmona first became affiliated with the Diocese of Sacramento, Calif., but his command of English was insufficient to continue, so he became a scholastic with the Society of the Divine Savior, known as the Salvatorians. He served at the congregation's provincial house in Milwaukee, Wis., for several years, then at St. Thomas Aquinas Parish in Cookeville, Tenn., a Salvatorian parish. In 2008, Carmona decided to become a seminarian for the Diocese of Nashville.

OST faculty remembered him as a gentle, gracious man. Dr. Rose Marden recalled that he often thanked her for teaching him at the end of class. “He was so appreciative of whatever he’d learned that day.” Dr. Scott Woodward recalled how solicitous Carmona was toward Sister Sarah Sharkey after she had suffered a fall. “He would offer to pick her up at home, he’d pick up her books and walk with her. He was tremendously gracious.”

Sister Linda Gibler remembered Carmona as having “a passion for getting things right and for being a good student; he really wanted to learn and be the best he could be. He had a good pastoral heart and would have been an excellent pastor,” she said.
Save these dates

**Oblate 285 Benefit**
Saturday, October 25, 2014
5:30 pm – Mass at Immaculate Conception Chapel
6:30 pm – Mardi Gras party at Whitley Theological Center

**Oblate Open golf tournament**
Monday, November 10, 2014
TPC San Antonio Canyons Course - 8 am tee-off

**Father Frank Montalbano Lecture by Dianne Bergant**
7 pm at Whitley Theological Center
Thursday, March 19, 2015

**Summer Institute – “Christian Sexuality: Friendship, Celibacy and Marriage”**
June 15-17, 2015 at Whitley Theological Center
Principal keynote: Richard Gaillardetz