OST NEWS
OBLATE SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
SUMMER 2015 Volume 19 No. 2

OST honors two Church leaders from Latin America
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.
We disagree a lot and are perennially frustrated with each other. That’s true of all families, communities and churches. In this world, there’s no togetherness without some shadow.

Inside of our churches, we have more than enough things about which to disagree: God, Jesus, church, morality, worship, spirituality, justice and discipleship.

It has never been different: We see major divisions already within Scripture itself. The Bible does not give us one clear understanding of God, Jesus, Church, Eucharist, morality and discipleship. It gives us a series of understandings, some of which almost seem to contradict each other and some of which had the apostles at odds with each other. Peter and Paul disagreed on a number of things, quite heatedly it seems, and John’s theology of the Church and the Eucharist is very different than that of Matthew, Mark, Luke or Paul. In Scripture, we already see many of the tensions and divisions that divide us today.

But this doesn’t mean that we’re doing something wrong, or that sin and infidelity are the problem. Sometimes they are, but not always. Even the great saints didn’t see eye to eye on everything. There can be legitimate reasons to see things differently. There’s no principle that says that truth, as it is held in the hearts of sincere people, should fit together without tension. And there are reasons for this.

God, by definition is ineffable, beyond grasp, beyond imagination. Thus it is a given, a truth beyond dispute, that our understanding of God (and of all the deep mysteries within life) necessarily will have a variety of expressions, none of them adequate to the reality. All the religious expression in the world will never give adequate expression to God and to Christ, just as all the psychological and aesthetic expressions in the world will never give adequate expression to the mystery of the love that grounds our lives.

That principle, that all our language and concepts are inadequate, is in fact enshrined in church dogma, but it has rarely been respected. If we really accepted that our concepts and language are inadequate, we’d more easily accept, too, the differences, tensions, and disagreements that are inherent in family, church and community.

But none of us likes to live in tension, and neither do our church communities. Tension is painful, so the temptation is always to try to resolve it; yet this often leads to a resolution that is premature, simplistic and too much dictated by liberal or conservative ideology.

Thus, if I’m a conservative, my sense will be that things are clear, but get confused because some false freedom sets itself against truth and community. My itch will be to resolve tension and differences by appealing to authority, dogma, tradition, law and rubrics, but without an equal appeal to the complexity of life and individual freedom.

Conversely, if I’m a liberal, my approach will be to start from life’s complexity rather than from its clarity. My worry will be that complexity and private conscience are not being sufficiently respected, and my itch will be to resolve issues without an equal appeal to tradition, dogma, authority and law.

Who’s right here? Neither and both.

The conservatives are right to appeal to tradition, authority, dogma and law. Freedom and sincerity alone are not enough. We need to be reminded of the lessons learned from history, of mistakes already made, of moral imperatives that we’re not free to accept or reject on our own terms, and of the dangers of naive freedom and the unchecked ego.

However, the liberals are right, too, in keeping us aware that human authority, even of the ecclesial kind, is not God and is always inadequate to the task of representing God’s parental hand. There’s a place where everyone stands in conscience, alone, before God, and nobody, not even the Church, gets to judge what goes on there.

Thus, we need to carry both the conservative and the liberal understanding of things. There’s an important place both for authority and conscience, for dogma, for truth’s incapacity to be captured in any one formula, and for the demands of Church and the demands of individual freedom. The secret is to respect both, refuse to betray either, and then accept the tension that ensues.

This isn’t easy. We hate tension. But we must try to carry it because life and truth need both sides of the equation. To quote Karl Rahner: “You must try to bring about the miracle of this double identity over and over again. The sum will never work out. But try for it, over and over again. One of the two on its own is not enough. Only the two together are sufficiently crucifying.”

Ronald Rolheiser OMI
Oblate School of Theology celebrated two distinguished Latin American church leaders as honorary doctoral degree candidates May 7 with a special dinner attended by about 60 OST trustees, administrators, faculty and guests in the Whitley Theological Center.

His Excellency Bishop Heinz Wilhelm (Guillermo) Steckling, OMI, former Superior General of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate from 1998-2010 and current Bishop of Ciudad del Este, Paraguay, received an honorary Doctor of Pastoral Leadership degree. Father Gustavo Gutierrez, OP, PhD, STL, the John Cardinal O’Hara Professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame, known internationally as the “Father of Liberation Theology,” received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters degree. Both degrees were conferred May 8 during OST’s Commencement exercise in the Immaculate Conception Memorial Chapel.

Introducing Bishop Steckling, Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI, President of OST, said the German-born bishop had spent 18 years in missionary activity in Paraguay, then another 18 in major leadership positions for the Oblates in Rome before returning in 2010 to Paraguay, which he calls “my second home.” Pope Francis appointed him to his present post in November 2014. In each capacity, Father Rolheiser said, the honoree consistently modeled servant leadership and deep concern for the poor.

During his 12 years as Superior General of the Oblates, Father Steckling managed the difficult task of consolidating and strengthening the global congregation at a time when its resources were somewhat overstretched, yet still established two new missions in the poorest countries in the world, the OST President observed, noting, “For Guillermo, the needs of the poor trumped our own needs. He helped our congregation to remain in touch with our charism of serving the poor.”

From his own experience in Rome while Father Steckling was Superior General, Father Rolheiser remembered him as a good listener. “At congregational leadership meetings, he always spoke last, and he always spoke with wisdom. No matter how bad a situation was, Guillermo always approached people with gentleness and patience. By the time he finished speaking, there was calm and order.”

He said that OST was honoring the bishop for his leadership of the Oblate congregation, but especially “for his dedication and service to the poor, to whom he has given his life for more than 50 years, both in poor barrios in Latin America and in Roman offices.” He said Father Steckling solidified the congregation at every level institutionally and personally. “Guillermo solidified us internally with the stress on prayer and on being in community together; he made us more prayerful and hospitable as a congregation, and he continued to help our outreach to the poor. During his years in Rome, he always made sure that our general council was seeing through the prism of the poor. He happily returned to Paraguay, but this didn’t last long, because Pope Francis made him a bishop. Like St. Paul, he could live in the barrios with the poor, or he could live in an office in Rome; but he did each for the same reason: Like St. Paul, he did it for the poor.”

Bishop Steckling explained that his diocese is near the point where the borders of Paraguay, Brazil, and Argentina meet, with “a mix of cultures and a dynamic, pioneering spirit,” but also is plagued by land grabs, a soybean monoculture, smuggling and drug cartels. He said he has tried to live out three steps in faith sharing in this cross-cultural situation: the effort to be enculturated, the growth in awareness of identity and differentiation, and the understanding of mission as border-crossing.

Arriving in Paraguay as a newly ordained priest in 1974, the prelate recalled, he found that “many missionaries made every effort to become one with the local culture,” but added that some church members “questioned and even ridiculed the cultural expressions of the ordinary people, especially the indigenous minority.” They lived under a dictatorship in Paraguay, he explained, and many Oblates felt that “we needed not only to accompany the poor but do it with great respect for them. The people needed to be affirmed in their identity, as opposed to the regime’s disregard for them.”

After the Alfredo Stroessner dictatorship ended in 1989, it became easier to value more the different cultural identities in Paraguay, he said. “Christians could state their positions openly, and the awareness of distinct identities led the Church to search for what could lead everyone to be more open to others.” Bishop Steckling recalled that many new ecclesial communities took root and grew. “People were looking for something that would provide bonding...
The world-famous theologian pointed out that Romero was not the first bishop to be assassinated in Latin America. The first was Bishop Enrique Angelelli in 1979; another after Romero was Juan Gerardi in Guatemala in 1998. “This continent was a Christian continent – with a majority of Catholics, and yet they killed even bishops, because their main responsibility and their place in our society was so important; they also killed priests, nuns and others – hundreds of persons. There are many painful cases. At the same time, it is classic to say, ‘The blood of martyrs is the seed of faith.’ There were martyrs in the 20th century, and also in our day. Today, the notion of martyrdom is extended not only to those killed out of hatred of the Christian faith; in these times, the reason for the killings was the victims’ commitment to the poor of our continent. Almost all the persons killed in that decade were working with the poor,” he explained.

Father Gutierrez said he dedicated a book to a murdered priest who was an assistant to Archbishop Helder Camara in the Archdiocese of Recife, Brazil. “It was the beginning of a very sad moment… very sad and painful, because these people were working with the poor.” He said that in 1968, when the Latin American Bishops’ Conference at Medellin formally declared the Church’s preferential option for the poor, “it was very difficult for many to understand that the situation of the poor is a theological issue. This was repeated by Pope Francis. People in other times thought it was only political, social; it is human. The Bible speaks about the poor, not poverty. We have several words in the Bible to speak about the poor; about poverty, not so many.”

The theologian commented that today “there is a lot of talk that we are living in a ‘post-capitalist, post-socialist, post-industrial’ era. People today love to be ‘post,’ he joked, provoking laughter from the audience, but he added, “I say the poor are still there; they are not ‘post.’ This is not the moment of ‘post-poverty.’ Not yet.” The theologian said he believes that Archbishop Romero’s beatification “will be a contribution” toward this eventuality.

Father Gutierrez urged listeners not to forget that “the love of God is universal; nobody is outside the love of God. We do not have a contradiction between preference and universality; we have tensions, but many good things come from tensions. God does not love only the poor; at the same time, the preference and priority are for the more suffering people. We find this expressed in a beautiful manner every day by Pope Francis, and we can be thankful for this prophetic pope. Thank you, my friends.” The audience accorded Father Gutierrez a standing ovation.
Oblate School of Theology conferred one Doctor of Ministry, 16 Master of Divinity, three Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry, five Master of Arts (Theology), one Master of Arts (Spirituality) and two honorary doctoral degrees during its May 8 Commencement exercise.

Fifteen Certificates of Advanced Studies for Presbyteral Ministry also were awarded. Four seminarians completed requirements for the Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology, offered through an affiliation with Saint Paul University in Ottawa. They will be awarded at a later date.

His Excellency Heinz Wilhelm (Guillermo) Steckling, OMI, Bishop of Ciudad del Este, Paraguay, and former Superior General of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, was awarded an Honorary Doctor of Pastoral Leadership, and Father Gustavo Gutierrez, OP, PhD, STL, received an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters. Jaime Del Rosario, OMI, received the Doctor of Ministry with a concentration in Spiritual Formation. His dissertation title is *Christ's Shepherd Among the Disciples: Nourishing Growth in Discipleship for Vocation Discernment Among Oblates of Mary Immaculate College-Level Formands in the Philippines*.

Recipients of the Master of Divinity were Felix Basil Archibong, Jorge Campos-Covarrubias, Glenn Carpe, Terence Kasonde Chota, OMI, Andres Gallegos-Jimenez, OFM, Rusty Carl Gardiner, OMI, Bala Anthony Govindu, Jason Alan Martini, Ronaldo Mercado, Christopher C. Munoz, Ndung’u George, Nyang’au N.D. Darius, Antonio Padilla, Apolinar Samboni-Imbachi, Juan Carlos Morales Tejada and Michael Tembo, OMI. In addition, Archibong, Campos-Covarrubias, Carpe, Chota, Jimenez, Govindu, Martini, Mercado, Munoz, George, Darius, Padilla, Samboni-Imbachi, Tejada and Tembo also received the Certificate for Advanced Studies for Presbyteral Ministry.

The Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry was awarded to Patricia Falcón Fontes, Leticia Denise Huerta and Maria Lourdes Bautista Sison-Abinsay.

Mario Porter, OST’s Registrar, received the Master of Arts (Spirituality).

Receiving the Master of Arts (Theology) were Jorge Campos-Covarrubias, Praveen K. Lakisetti, Antonio Padilla, Lori Ann Benson Peery and Michael Tembo, OMI.

Dr. Scott Woodward, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean, presented the candidates. Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI, President of OST, and Father William Antone, OMI, Chairman of the Board of Trustees, presented the diplomas. Academic hoods were presented by the directors of the various degree programs: Cliff Knighten, MDiv, MA, for the Master of Arts (Spirituality), Dr. Greg Zuschlag for the Master of Arts (Theology), Dr. Scott Woodward for the Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry, Father Robert Wright, PhD, for the Master of Divinity, and Father Wayne Cavalier, PhD, for the Doctor of Ministry.

Father Rolheiser introduced Father Gutierrez as Commencement speaker, noting that for more than 50 years, the Peruvian Dominican “has stood as the foremost international embodiment of concern for the poor; his very name pricks consciences. Just hearing his name, people are reminded in their consciences of the poor. Others have misunderstood him, but the poor recognize him as a kindred soul.”

Expressing his gratitude for the recognition, Father Gutierrez commented, “At this moment, the important ones are the graduating students, and I congratulate them.” Reflecting briefly on the dialogue between Jesus and Pontius Pilate about whether Jesus was a king, he said he believed that Jesus’ point when he said, “My kingdom is not of this world,” was that while earthly political power often is used to dominate others, Jesus’ kingdom is a kingdom of service to others and advocating for them, not for domination. It is also very much about the present world we live in, not some future, different world.

“Knowledge also is power – the power to change some things. My first wish to you is to understand that the message of Jesus is service to others, especially the least persons, the insignificant persons,” he said. Father Gutierrez further noted that while even in the Church, there is a temptation to use power to dominate, when one becomes immersed in the lives of the poor, the temptation to dominate and control is diminished.
Several members of Oblate School of Theology’s Class of 2015 want to pursue some unusual fields of further study and service, said Dr. Scott Woodward, Vice President of Academic Affairs and Dean.

When calling degree candidates forth to receive their diplomas at Commencement, Dr. Woodward typically reads a brief summary of each candidate’s background and postgraduate plans. This year’s class includes a medical doctor, two lawyers and a former FBI agent.

Leticia Denise Huerta, who was awarded the Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry, had prayed 14 years ago to have another child and left her medical practice to become a full-time mother, Dr. Woodward said. “Her prayers were answered when, at the age of 46, she gave birth to a son. “Gabriel definitely is the bearer of good news for them. The Lord has a sense of humor. He answered her prayers; he just didn’t say when it would happen,” he quipped. “Four years ago, Leticia began her journey through OST’s Lay Ministry Institute and transitioned a year later into the Sophia master’s program.” She plans to earn credits for certification in Clinical Pastoral Education and ultimately to integrate her medical training with hospice, geriatric medicine and end-of-life ethical issues, he added.

The first lawyer is Lori Ann Bennett Peery, a 1988 graduate of St. Mary’s University Law School, who was awarded the Master of Arts (Theology) degree. Dr. Woodward told the Commencement audience, “On her first visit to OST, Lori spoke with Associate Academic Dean Sister Linda Gibler, OP, about the theology program and her desire eventually to become a canon lawyer.” The Church needs canon lawyers, and particularly women, she was told. Sister Gibler’s encouragement helped Peery enter the master’s program and to persevere through it. Now, she has applied for admission to Saint Paul University in Ottawa, another Oblate institution of higher education, to study canon law. “If all goes as planned,” Dr. Woodward quipped, “you can call her for advice starting in 2017.”

A seminarian, Jason Alan Martini, is the other lawyer. He was awarded the Master of Divinity. Martini first became aware of his priestly calling when he was an altar boy at St. Anthony Catholic Church in Violet, between Robstown and Corpus Christi, but “he did his best to avoid this calling,” Dr. Woodward joked. “Jason graduated from St. Mary’s University Law School in 2002 and worked as an assistant district attorney in Bexar County for more than five years before finally surrendering to the calling. Finding peace in responding to God’s will, he now looks forward to serving the people of God as a priest in the Archdiocese of San Antonio.”

Patricia Falcón Fontes is the former FBI agent. Her husband, Arturo Fontes, also is retired from the FBI. “Patty was a member of the Sophia Program and was awarded the Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry. She is deeply interested in working with young adults, particularly young women,” Dr. Woodward said. “For her practicum, she worked in campus ministry at the University of the Incarnate Word.”

Maria Lourdes Bautista Sison-Abinsay, another recipient of the Master of Arts in Pastoral Ministry, is a graduate of OST’s Sophia Program, like Huerta and Fontes. Born and reared in the Philippines, she moved to San Antonio with her husband, Cesar, in 1997. At Holy Spirit Parish in San Antonio, she proclaims the Word as a lector and leads middle school retreats. Cesar and Maria were awarded Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller’s 2015 Lumen Gentium Award for their active participation in youth ministry. Maria hopes to expand her ministry in mission work either in the United States or abroad, Dr. Woodward said.

Seminarian Praveen Lakkisetti, a native of Hyderabad, India, was awarded the Master of Arts (Theology). He definitely has an unusual goal in mind, Dr. Woodward commented: To further Hindu-Christian dialogue. “He comes from a multi-religious city of 12 million people. His thesis for the Master of Arts (Theology) degree is on how Mahatma Gandhi’s synthesis of the Beatitudes and Hinduism can assist in Hindu-Christian dialogue. Praveen is interested in pursuing further studies in world religions and ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue.” Lakkisetti will continue his studies at OST for two more years to complete the MDiv degree and the Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology.

Another seminarian receiving the Master of Divinity degree was Bala Anthony Govindu, who has long aspired to become a missionary priest but has taken an unusual route to fulfill his dream. “Most young men who want to be missionaries join one of the religious congregations, but Bali didn’t. He looked for a diocese that was in need of priests and applied for the Diocese of San Angelo. He’s going to be a diocesan priest, but he understands that he’s a missionary. That was his dream,” Dr. Woodward said.

Seminarian Ronaldo Mercado, who grew up in the Philippines, came to the United States in 2002 and worked at the Wilbarger General Hospital in Vernon, northwest of Wichita Falls, as the lead medical laboratory technologist. “Through service to the sick and the elderly, he saw Christ in their midst and was inspired to search for a way to serve others,” Dr. Woodward explained. “He is to be ordained May 23 and to lead a medical mission to Patzun, Guatemala, June 20-27.”
Ndung’u George, a seminarian for the Diocese of Amarillo, also was awarded the Master of Divinity. He is from Kenya. His area of specialization is ministry among persons with special needs. He is fluent in American Sign Language and has worked in deaf ministry in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, the Diocese of Austin and the Diocese of Corpus Christi.

Brother Rusty Gardiner, OMI, a native of northern Canada, received the Master of Divinity and soon will begin his first assignment in Winnipeg, Manitoba, ministering in the prison system.

The one Doctor of Ministry recipient this year, Father Jaime del Rosario, OMI, also is a Filipino. He comes from a family of teachers and was a college philosophy professor in his native country. His doctoral project was on the Oblates’ college-level seminary formation in the Philippines. It enlightened him on multifaceted connections with youth and family life formation, as well as ongoing formation for consecrated, ordained and lay vocations.

“His three-year ministerial experience in Japan in his earlier years as an Oblate priest challenged him on understanding the local culture being addressed by Christian mission,” Dr. Woodward said. “Integrating spirituality and culture is one essential lesson he gained from OST which he plans to use in his missionary endeavors.”

Dr. Woodward said he was deeply impressed by the variety of people and backgrounds and the extraordinary types of ministry they want to do. “They’re not thinking only about the parishes as the place to minister; working in the deaf community, in prison ministry, hospice and end-of-life ethical issues are all urgent needs today, and I was very impressed with that.”

### IFP/PFI graduates 40, LMI 6

Oblate School of Theology graduated 40 men and women from its Instituto de Formación Pastoral/ Pastoral Formation Institute and six from its Lay Ministry Institute May 9, certifying them for parish lay ministry.

Graduates in the IFP/PFI program include Sergio Almaguer, Patricia R. Anderson, Abel Ascencio, Doris Barros, Cecilia A. Bernal, Elenida Brux, Betsy Castillo Caballero, Patsy Camarillo, Robert Camarillo, Petra Campos, Clemente Cantú Jr., Rosa I. Castro, Rigoberto Cruz, Timothy Decker, Elias Flores, Maribel Flores, Vianca Ibeth Flores, Sylvia T. Vera Garcia, Rachel M. Gomez and Sandra Gonzalez.

Also graduating are Chrissy Grothues, Tina Guerra, Pedro Hernandez, Alma J. Jones, Alfonso Moreno, Gloria Moreno, Mario Moreno, Lindsey Morkovsky, Michael Morkovsky, Mary Oliva, Linda B. Ontiveros, Omar A. Ordoñez, Sharon Mary Patek, Juan F. Ramos, Dora Reveles, Josephine Rosas, Maria Guadalupe Saldaña, Hugo A. Sapien, Donna Marie Spahn and Doris F. Zambrano.

Graduates from the Lay Ministry Institute are Melissa Fernandez, Omar Garnica, Maribel Gonzalez, Edith Jackson, Marcelo Perez and Adelfa Torres.

Father Gustavo Gutierrez, OP, PhD, STL, was the graduation speaker.
Thank you to all who helped OST to surpass our goal of $5,000 on May 5!

OST received 59 online gifts ($5,400) and cash gifts ($1,240) for a total of $6,640!

Our generous donors helped raise $4,303,500.86 through 39,357 online gifts in 24 hours for the more than 800 South Central Texas nonprofits which participated this year!!

OST School of Theology will be one of eight sites from which the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate will conduct a worldwide webinar reflecting on the Oblates’ missionary charism, how it is being lived today in different parts of the world and what it calls members to in light of the challenges in today’s world.

OST administrators and faculty participating will include Fathers Ron Rolheiser, Joe LaBelle, Vincent Louwagie, Frank Santucci, Fernando Velazquez and Bob Wright; Dr. Scott Woodward, and Dr. Victor Carmona. Father Wright will speak on the Texas-Mexico border ministry, and Dr. Carmona, immigration. Father Santucci will moderate and Father Rolheiser will provide a daily synthesis of trends that emerge.

The San Antonio conference, lasting from June 29-July 3, will be at the Oblate Renewal Center and will draw about 40 Oblates from the United States and Canada. Participants from other continents will gather in Mexico City; Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo; Sadara, South Africa; Colombo, Sri Lanka; Manila, Philippines; Obra, Poland; and Rome.

Father Santucci said the Oblates conducted their first such conference in 1976, the first broad discussion of the how the charism was being lived in that time and what challenges Oblates faced in living it. “Now, 40 years later, we’re looking again at the lived expression of our charism in light of new challenges that weren’t there 40 years ago – justice ministry, immigration and many others. How is it being lived, and what does it challenge us to?”

Save these dates:

Monday, September 14
Alumni and Friends Gathering
Whitley Theological Center

Monday, September 21
29th Oblate Open
TPC San Antonio

Saturday, October 24
33rd 285 Benefit
Immaculate Conception Memorial Chapel
and Whitley Theological Center

Vatican Observatory official speaks at OST

The President of the Vatican Observatory Foundation, Brother Guy Consolmagno, SJ, conducted a lunchtime conversation with OST administrators, faculty members and invited guests May 15 in Morell Hall. He said that “knowing science is a way of knowing God,” whose fingerprints are everywhere in the universe. “It’s not just marked by God, but somehow, it all participates with God.” Later that day, he was keynote speaker at the re-dedication of San Antonio College’s Scobee Education Center Planetarium.
Sulpician Superior served at Assumption and OST

Former Oblate School of Theology and Assumption Seminary faculty member Father John Kemper, PSS, 57, has been named provincial superior of the Society of St. Sulpice, also known as the Sulpician Fathers, for the United States Province. He will take office July 1. The Sulpicians were founded solely for formation of future priests. The U.S. Province runs four seminaries of its own and helps with formation at certain diocesan seminaries around the nation, presently including OST’s sister institution, Assumption Seminary.

A Pennsylvanian by birth, Father Kemper is a priest of the Diocese of Harrisburg. He has a doctorate in Pastoral Ministry from the Pacific School of Religion in Berkeley, Calif., and has served on the faculties of St. Joseph College Seminary in Mt. View, Calif., SS. Cyril and Methodius Seminary in Orchard Lake, Mich., and Oblate School of Theology. Most recently, he was executive director of St. Mary’s Spiritual Center and Historic Site in Baltimore.

He came to San Antonio in 1997 as Spiritual Director at Assumption Seminary and director of the Doctor of Ministry program at OST. He also was Professor of Pastoral Theology, Director of the Pastoral Year Internship and director of the International Priest Internship. From 2000-2006, he continued to serve in those capacities and was appointed as Vice President for Administration. “I feel blessed to have been in San Antonio for 10 years. Experiencing the Church in the Southwest was a new way to see Church. It’s very different from the East or even California,” he said.

The Sulpicians’ collaboration with the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate extends to Zambia, Father Kemper said. “The Oblates arrived in Zambia in 1984, five years before the Sulpicians. Many Oblates who were at OST when I taught here are in ministry in Zambia today, so whenever I’m over there, I always visit the Oblate parish, which is on the same road as the Sulpician seminary,” he said.

The collaboration began when the Oblates’ Founder, Eugene de Mazenod, entered the Sulpician seminary in Paris in 1808.

DMin student August Higgins will present a paper Sept. 22 at a conference of the Ecclesiastical Historical Society at Oxford University in England. Theme of the conference is “Protestantism and the Holy Spirit.” Higgins’ paper examines the works of Jonathan Edwards and Josiah Royce, two important figures in early American Protestant intellectual history, and their views on the Holy Spirit, which reflected a distinctly American view that was counter to prevailing European views of that time.

DMin students Neil Arce and Gérman Pérez received scholarships to attend the national colloquium of the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians in the United States June 7-10 in Milwaukee.

Father Victor Valdez, MDiv ’14, has been named Parish Administrator at St. Ann Parish in San Antonio, effective, July 1.

OST Community News
STUDENTS AND ALUMNI

Capital Campaign Update

Goal: $30 Million
Achieved: $28,429,060
To go: $1,570,940
Fifteen members of the Oblate School of Theology community were honored at a Tuesday community lunch April 21 at the Oblate Renewal Center for reaching various five-year milestones in their service to the School.

Stella Treviño, Administrative Assistant to the Dean, was honored for 30 years of service and received a lead crystal candy jar; Juan Mendiola, a member of the maintenance team at the Oblate Renewal Center, received a crystal globe for 25 years; Father Leo Pérez, Assistant Professor in Moral Theology, was honored for his 20 years. Yolanda Garcia, Administrative Assistant for the Institutional Advancement Department and the International Priest Internship Program, received a bouquet of flowers and Anne Peters, Librarian, a crystal flame award for 15 years; and Rose Marden, Associate Dean for Continuing Education, and Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI, President, each received a crystal paperweight for 10 years of service.

Also honored were Yessica D. Bowen, Director of Rural Programs for the Instituto de Formación Pastoral; Renata Furst, Assistant Professor of Sacred Scripture; Maria Garza, housekeeper at the Oblate Renewal Center; Lea Kochanek, Vice President for Institutional Advancement; Father Vincent Louwagie, OMI, director of the Ministry to Ministers Sabbatical Program and the International Priest Internship Program; Father John Markey, OP, Assistant Professor of Theology and Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program; Brenda Reyna, Administrative Assistant to the Registrar and to the Continuing Education Department; and Sister Vera Ruane, SHSp, part-time receptionist, for five years’ service. Each received a mounted certificate of appreciation. Each employee observing a milestone service anniversary also received a monetary gift. Father Rolheiser thanked all School employees for the important work they do at OST and reminded them that they are warmly appreciated.

15 cited for service to OST

Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Maturity, by Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI, President of Oblate School of Theology, was named Book of the Year and the Best Book in the field of Prayer and Spirituality for 2015 by the Association of Catholic Publishers.
And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?

Romans 10:14

To make a gift through your will or estate plan, or to simplify your investment income through a Charitable Gift Annuity benefiting Oblate School of Theology...

Please contact Lea Kochanek, VP for Institutional Advancement at: 210-457-7731 or lkochanek@ost.edu.