In February I had the great pleasure of presiding at Mass at Notre Dame de la Baie Academy as it celebrated Catholic Schools Week. I told the students at this Green Bay high school that I was most proud of my 23 years of Catholic education across the spectrum. I had the thrill of teaching in Catholic schools for more than 20 years — and there is a difference to be found there. Academics and Christian values can be great partners.

At Notre Dame Academy, St. Norbert College and other Catholic schools across the nation, students are challenged to take what they learn and encapsulate it, to wrap it in Jesus’ teaching of love. Students are encouraged to take all their talents and share them everywhere and with everyone they encounter. With the gentleness and mercy Jesus taught in the Beatitudes, they can reach out to others and not solely focus on themselves. By striving for peace, students help heal this world, which is so hurting. When they hunger and thirst for justice, they help free individuals from situations that deny them happiness.

I know Catholic education makes a difference because of the many students I have encountered years after they graduate. They have invested themselves in their families and local communities. Some are prominent leaders in their parishes and communities. Many others quietly give of themselves, sharing their blessedness and happiness with others. Many make teaching their profession and return to Catholic schools to share their experiences.

Teaching has always been an important focus for St. Norbert Abbey. It came in the blood of our founding Dutch confreres. The Norbertine Constitutions support such ministry:

_By constantly uniting reflection on the Gospel with their ministry, all brethren should share with others the Word of God, which they have contemplated, through the testimony of a life which is truly Christian and religious; the confreres should do this through the preaching of conversion, through education and Christian formation ... (No. 54)_

Jesus instructed the disciples to go teach, a mantle we all share. The Catholic school has been and continues to be very important in the faith formation of our communities. We pray that those who teach may find their teaching always rooted in Jesus Christ, and thus experience that deep happiness Jesus desired for us when he taught on the hillside.

_Gary Muehl, O. Praem._
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Among the young people crowding into my St. Norbert College theology classroom this semester, two are Muslim, one is Buddhist and several have had no religious upbringing at all. There is a core group of practicing Catholics as well as a sizeable number of folks who were “raised Catholic” — implying a distance from the family’s faith. There are a number of people from other Christian groups and a few who identify themselves as agnostics or atheists.

Growing student diversity is the greatest change I’ve seen in my 40-year ministry as an educator. But rather than change my approach to teaching, the challenge of diversity has reaffirmed my early understanding of education as an act of hospitality.

A learning situation marked by hospitality makes room for the student and invites persons into a community of discovery. This provides a safe space for all sorts and conditions of persons in which everyone is free to express personal beliefs, ask questions, explore ideas and grow as persons. As Henri Nouwen wrote, “Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place.”

This philosophy of education that continues to guide me was shaped in part by Fr. Larry Mayer, O.Praem., a creative, caring teacher and an excellent mentor for my first teaching assignment in 1971. During this experimental time in education, we felt strongly about a student-centered approach to teaching. We did not see our role as one of indoctrination, but rather of facilitation.

A teacher shares information — and I emphasize shares. An effective teacher does not impose. Instead, that teacher facilitates learning by providing resources, readings and references; by asking questions; by lecturing; and by offering information with conviction, clarity and humility.

The humility factor is crucial, especially in a setting characterized by diversity and the energy of naturally questioning minds. While a sense of conviction and commitment to Truth is important, it must respect the integrity of others in a way that invites dialogue. The role of the teacher is central because the teacher models integrity, conviction, respect, openness and trust.

All this is an ideal, of course. Do I live up to it? Sometimes yes, sometimes no. I know that my classes are full and that there are students who, after taking one class with me, choose to take another. Who knows their motivation? I can only hope they return because they feel welcome and safe, even though I am still learning to welcome them well.
Educación como Invitación

Por Padre John Bostwick, O.Praem.
Traducido por Hno. Terrence Lauerman, O.Praem.

Entre los jóvenes que se juntan este semestre en mi salón de clase de teología en el Colegio de San Norberto, hay dos musulmanes, un budista, y varios que no tienen ninguna fundación religiosa. Hay un núcleo de católicos que practican su fe como también un grupo numeroso de gente de la tradición católica sin practicar. También hay un número de gente de otras tradiciones cristianas y un número reducido que se identifica como agnóstico o ateo.

El número creciente de estudiantes diversos es el cambio más notable que he visto durante mis 40 años de ministerio como educador. Pero en vez de cambiar mi modo de enseñar, la dificultad de la diversidad ha reafirmado mi entendimiento original de la educación como un acto de la hospitalidad en general.

Una situación de aprendizaje caracterizada por la hospitalidad abre puertas a los estudiantes e invita a las personas para que entren en un mundo de descubrimiento. Esto provee un lugar seguro para todo tipo de condiciones personales en que todo el mundo está libre para expresar sus creencias personales, hacer preguntas, explorar ideas, y crecer como personas. Como Henri Nouwen escribió, "La hospitalidad no es para cambiar a la gente, sino para ofrecer espacio donde el cambio se puede realizar."

Mi filosofía de la educación en general que sigue guiándome fue desarrollado en parte por Padre Larry Mayer, O.Praem., un profesor creativo y amistoso que era un mentor excelente para mi primer año de enseñanza en 1971. Durante este tiempo experimental de mi educación, estábamos muy convencidos de la utilidad de un método de enseñanza enfocado en los estudiantes mismos. No veíamos que nuestro papel era uno de indocinar sino de facilitar.

Un profesor comparte información—e infatizo "comparte". Un profesor exitoso no impone. En contraste tal profesor facilita el aprendizaje por dar recursos, lecturas, y referencias; por hacer preguntas; por dar discursos; y por ofrecer información con creencia, claridad, y humildad.

El factor de la humildad es esencial, especialmente en un ambiente caracterizado por la diversidad y por la energía de las mentes curiosas. Mientras un sentido de convicción y adherencia a la Verdad es importante, tal sentido tiene que respetar la integridad en una manera que invita el proceso de diálogo. El papel del profesor está central porque el profesor es el modelo de la integridad, convicción, respeto, candor, y confianza.

Claro, todo esto es un ideal. ¿Lo modelo en mi vida profesional? A veces sí, a veces no. Sé que mis clases están llenas y que hay estudiantes que, después de una clase conmigo, escogen otra. ¿Quién sabe su motivación? Sólo puedo esperar que regresen porque se sienten bienvenidos y seguros, aunque sigo aprendiendo darles una bienvenida buena.
When Fr. Bernard Pennings, O.Praem., came to Wisconsin from Holland to stomp out “Old Catholic” heresy in the late 19th century, little did he know he would found several schools. But in the course of his ministry, Pennings recognized a need in the Diocese of Green Bay to educate seminarians and form holy priests. In 1898, he accepted his first student, Francis Van Dyke. Thus began St. Norbert College in De Pere.

Many other schools in the Green Bay area followed: St. Norbert High School, Catholic Central High School, Abbot Pennings High School, Premontre High School and, later, Notre Dame de la Baie Academy, which still educates more than 700 students in the Norbertine tradition each year. The Norbertines taught in these schools with great zeal during their years of formation, and many continued their teaching careers after ordination.

This strong Norbertine presence led students to embrace values that have been a part of the Norbertine ideal since Christmas 1121, when the Order of Premontré was founded. In describing their experiences of Norbertine education, alumni point out three areas of profound impact: faith, justice and community.

The Rule of St. Augustine, the foundation for Norbertine life, calls all to love God before anything else. Former students of Norbertines recognized this in their teachers and in the hallways of their schools.
When I first got to St. Norbert College, it rained almost every day. I was far away from home and I felt like a fish out of water. Somehow, I stumbled upon the 4 p.m. Mass that Fr. Joel Garner would say in Sensenbrenner Hall. He was there every day, and it got me through some very hard times in my life. It was this little community that was so important for me.

John Schneider recalls Fr. Gery Meehan, O.Praem., then principal of Abbot Pennings High School, stopping students in the halls to tell them how important they were and to relax and concentrate on God more in their lives. Schneider writes, "The Norbertines made it such a strong family community, and they tried to make every student know how special they were."

While Mass and prayer were monumental in the faith life of Victoria Weiss while she was at St. Norbert College, she says the classroom also was important. Weiss, a 1971 graduate of the college, particularly remembers the teaching of English professor Fr. Patrick Butler, O.Praem.

"There is a moment in Dante's 'Paradiso' where for a millisecond he has this glimpse of God. I will never forget the day we read that with Fr. Butler. He didn't only teach that, he lived it. It is what animated him. It was very powerful, and it definitely rubbed off on me," says Weiss, English professor and department chair at Oglethorpe University, Atlanta.

"Fr. Rock" — a nickname for Fr. Xavier Calivechio, O.Praem. — and his revolutionary ideas about justice. "Long before environmentalism was popular," she says, "Fr. Rock would talk about the dictum in Genesis to take care of the world around us. He was getting us to think about these issues that God had assigned to us."

Like Weiss, Pauly admires Norbertines who have had a major impact on their students' understanding of Catholic Social Teaching, which calls the faithful to help all those in need. Pauly speaks specifically of Fr. Jack McCarthy, O.Praem., a medical doctor who has spent the last 25 years in Peru serving the people of the jungle who would otherwise have no access to medical care.

At Abbot Pennings High School, "everyone was challenged to be involved in some form of community service," Bill Schneider says. He remembers volunteering at a local school for the mentally and physically challenged, playing games with and befriending the students there. Schneider now pushes his children to work for justice in the world. His son took part in a mission trip to El Salvador in summer 2010.
A Learned Tradition

By the time he was in middle school, Dane Radecki knew that when he grew up, he wanted to be one of two things: a priest or a teacher. His devout Catholic upbringing may explain the former. As a boy, he helped his father count their parish’s collection each week and remembers their priest regularly visiting their home to retrieve it.

Meanwhile, his personality pulled him toward education. “I just liked learning,” says Fr. Radecki, O.Praem. “I suppose that drew me to think about teaching.”

When he arrived at Premontre High School in the mid 1960s, he made a happy discovery: He didn’t have to choose. Norbertine priests and brothers comprised a significant number of the faculty there. “Seeing priests who were teachers was of benefit to what was stirring in me,” he says. “Because the Order was a teaching order, I was drawn to it.”

Many students and even some faculty members at Norbertine schools had similar experiences. Attracted to the Order by what they saw in their instructors or colleagues, they carried on the tradition of teaching that was at one time central to Abbey life and that still offers opportunities for Norbertines today.

Hearing the Call

Like Fr. Radecki, a young Pete Renard also felt called to both the priesthood and education, in part through the influence of his mother, a teacher. “I was impressed by a number of things she did,” says Fr. Renard, O.Praem.

He had the advantage of familiarity with the Norbertines, who provided pastoral assistance at his childhood church, Annunciation Parish in Green Bay. Even as a boy, Fr. Renard was struck by the quality of their preaching, which he attributed to their weekday work as educators.

“In teaching, you’re spending a lot of time in front of people speaking,” Fr. Renard says.

He, too, attended Premontre. “I enjoyed the classroom experience as a student. The Norbertines were friendly, helpful and well-trained,” he says.

That perception was shared by Premontre faculty members like Tim Shillcox. In 1977, a year out of college, he accepted a position as an art teacher at the school, becoming one of about 30 lay faculty members.

His Norbertine colleagues occasionally invited him to join them for burgers after sporting events or for card games at their residence. “The younger guys sort of took me under their wing. I got to learn firsthand how beautiful their community life was,” says Fr. Shillcox, O.Praem.

Little did they know he had a secret when he took that first teaching role: “I was thinking of priesthood, but not Norbertine priesthood. That wasn’t on my radar.”

That changed with time, and his students seemed to pick up on it. One Friday afternoon as a group left his classroom, he recalls, “one of them said, ‘Have a good weekend, Fr. Shillcox.’”

Since Abbot Bernard Pennings founded the Norbertines in the U.S. in 1893, generations of his confreres have served as teachers, some...
A Learned Tradition

Around that time, Fr. David Komatz, O.Praem., broached the subject of religious vocation with him. “He sort of sheepishly asked me if I’d ever considered the priesthood,” Fr. Shillcox says.

Eventually, he resigned from teaching to begin his formation within the Order. “I really see that as God’s pointed action in my life, the way it unfolded,” he says.

Following the Norbertine Path

During the Abbey’s midlife in the 1950s, ’60s and ’70s, priestly vocations were plentiful, and so were the numbers of Catholic school students. Thus, the Order’s ministry at that time centered on education.

This was clear to Fr. Renard as he graduated from Premontre in 1963 with his dual vocational interests still intact. He immediately entered the Order, along with four of his classmates. “We were pretty much destined for schools. That was the understanding,” he says.

To prepare, they spent a year as novices taking classes at the Abbey. From there, they completed their undergraduate studies at St. Norbert College. Generally, the men pursued degrees in philosophy, taking several education classes along with courses in the subjects they wished to teach. For Fr. Renard, that was math and economics.

Then, before beginning four years of graduate-level theology studies in preparation for ordination, Norbertines typically spent a year student-teaching at one of the area’s Catholic high schools. For Fr. Gery Meehan, O.Praem., this first teaching experience came suddenly when one of his teacher confreres fell ill.

As a college senior, Fr. Meehan found himself thrust before an English class of 37 young men at St. Norbert High School. Despite his love of the subject and desire to teach, he says, “I was petrified.”

Fortunately, he had a good example in Fr. Bernard Quigley, O.Praem., an English teacher at Meehan’s Norbertine alma mater, Southeast Catholic High School in Philadelphia. “It seemed as though I came to life in his classroom,” Fr. Meehan says.

Meehan went on to teach for 40 years. “I loved it, and sometimes I was a good teacher,” he jokes.

Coming Full Circle

Fr. Radecki’s first teaching position in 1972 was at Premontre, the same school he had attended as a teen. Many of his Norbertine teachers became his colleagues.

“I would tend to call them Father, and they would tell me not to call them that,” he says.

The strong connections that often formed between Norbertines and their students might explain Fr. Radecki’s slip. “There was a different

“I enjoyed the classroom experience as a student.
The Norbertines were friendly, helpful and well-trained.”

Fr. Peter Renard, O.Praem.

continued on page 8
Frater Brad Vanden Branden, O.Praem., with Fr. Tim Shillcox, O.Praem.

(continued from page 7)

sense of teaching, a closeness I observed between Norbertine teachers, students and their families,” Fr. Shillcox says.

That was certainly true for Fr. Shillcox and Fr. Radecki, who both were Confirmation sponsors for several students. In fact, one year Fr. Radecki filled that role for five youth at St. Agnes Parish in Green Bay, where he now is a pastor.

At one time, connections like these fostered many priestly vocations among students. Says Fr. Meehan: “Oh, it was always surprising. All of a sudden they would announce these students were coming (to the Order) from Pennings or from Premontre. All of us were excited about it. It was a wonderful thing.”

Though the number of Norbertine teachers has diminished in proportion to the Order’s size, the opportunity to teach still draws young men to the Community. Frater Brad Vanden Branden, O.Praem., who aspires to teach music,

encountered Norbertines in two educational settings: at his Catholic elementary school and at St. Norbert College, where he took theology and art classes with, respectively, Fr. John Bostwick, O.Praem., and Fr. Jim Neillson, O.Praem.

“As I prepare to serve my students, I, too, hold the vision of Abbot Pennings and the men who have followed in his footsteps to ‘be prepared for every good work’ in the context of serving our schools,” Frater Vanden Branden says.

“St. Norbert Abbey has a very serious commitment to serve both St. Norbert College and Notre Dame Academy. It is in this way that we can really establish a long-lasting relationship with our students and their families, and encourage them to succeed in a small school environment while at the same time having multiple opportunities to succeed in the world. And hopefully through our example, a few will join us as well.”

Protecting the Vulnerable

In today’s Church, one cannot consider education without also addressing the abuse scandals that have taken a toll on Catholics worldwide. Consistent with our Gospel values, Norbertines are committed to the protection of children and young people. We are deeply moved by the stories of abuse victims and their families and share in the anguish of our fellow Catholics.

As a Church, protecting the defenseless is among our highest priorities. U.S. bishops have mandated education and continuing training for all who work with children and vulnerable adults, so that we can attempt to reach out with compassion, sensitivity and healing.

For many of the country’s dioceses, this takes the form of VIRTUS training for all priests, deacons, teachers, staff and volunteers who have contact with children and vulnerable adults. For religious communities like ours, that function is filled by Praesidium, a leader in helping to assure the safety of the vulnerable in ministry.

The Norbertines were accredited by Praesidium in 2007. This accreditation acknowledges the Order’s thorough training and evaluation. This winter, Praesidium reaffirmed that accreditation.

Regular training, evaluation and accreditation seek to guarantee an awareness of appropriate boundaries and conduct. They also sensitize members of religious orders to recognize signs of abuse and provide strategies for confronting and reporting.

These efforts have one intent: to renew optimism and faith among Catholics as we look to a better life for all in the Church.

Fr. James Herring, O.Praem.
Prior, St. Norbert Abbey

For more information, visit: www.praesidiuminc.com

Fr. Gery Meehan, O.Praem.

Frater Brad Vanden Branden, O.Praem.
A Legacy of Learning

The Norbertines’ educational impact expanded far beyond its humble beginnings at the kitchen table of De Pere’s St. Joseph Parish, where Fr. Bernard Penning, O.Praem., taught young Francis Van Dyke his first Latin lessons. During the Order’s nearly 120-year history in the U.S., its members have established or served schools in several cities.

1. **ST. NORBERT COLLEGE** De Pere, Wis.
   This first Norbertine educational institution was founded in 1898, primarily to prepare men for the priesthood. Now a liberal arts college, its co-ed student body totals about 2,000.

2. **ST. NORBERT HIGH SCHOOL** De Pere, Wis.
   Opened in concert with St. Norbert College, this school at one time offered boarding for its male students.

3. **ARCHMERE ACADEMY** Claymont, Del.
   This college preparatory school was founded by the Norbertines in 1932. In its first year, 22 boys enrolled. Today, the co-ed student body numbers nearly 400.

   Opened in 1934, this school was once a source of many vocations for the Abbey. It is now Saints Neumann-Goretti Catholic High School.

5. **CATHOLIC CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL** Green Bay, Wis.
   Opened in 1941 in the former WBAY-TV and Columbus Club buildings, this boys’ school operated for 14 years.

6. **ABBOT PENNINGS HIGH SCHOOL** De Pere, Wis.
   This boys’ school opened in 1959, relocating St. Norbert High School under a new name. Upon its closure in 1990, St. Norbert College acquired the building and named it the Pennings Activity Center.

7. **OUR LADY OF PREMONTRE HIGH SCHOOL** Green Bay, Wis.
   When Catholic Central High School outgrew its facilities in 1955, it relocated to a newly constructed building under this new name. In 1988, Premontre became the area’s first co-ed Catholic high school.

8. **NOTRE DAME DE LA BAIE ACADEMY** Green Bay, Wis.
   Formed in 1990, this high school unified St. Joseph Academy, a girls’ school, with Abbot Penning’s High School and Premontre High School on the former Premontre campus. It enrolls some 700 students each year.
MORNING OF SPIRITUAL RENEWAL FOR MEN
This new mini-retreat for men drew 110 participants when it was held in October. Nine sessions were offered with topics including male role models in Scripture; surrendering; Thomas Merton; Henri Nouwen; and spiritual responses to male temptations. As one participant shared, “This is just what I’ve been looking for, and it needs to be repeated. The morning fed my soul.” Given the positive response to the event, the Morning for Men again will be offered on Oct. 29.

NEW SPRING PROGRAMS
On May 19, “The Joy of Being Human” will examine human nature using humor, modern-day perspectives, Scripture and spiritual writings. Presenters Fr. Conrad Kratz, O.Praem., and Judy Turba will share how even weak or sinful moments in life can be viewed as magnets for God’s magnificent love.

On May 24, “An Evening in the Abbey Gardens” will welcome participants to the cloister gardens of St. Norbert Abbey to encounter the hope-filled season of spring. Attendees will view the hundreds of species of blossoming plants on the Abbey grounds and enjoy live flute music.

TWO-DAY SUMMER RETREAT
University of Notre Dame assistant director of spirituality Tami Schmitz will facilitate the retreat “Discerning God’s Role in our Lives” on June 10 and 11. Participants will learn techniques of discernment and prayer used for centuries to help people deepen their relationship with Christ.

The retreat is intended for those wondering, “Where is God calling me on my life’s journey?”

SUMMER DIRECTED RETREATS
Two flexible retreats at the Center will offer participants a time of prayer, silence and solitude. Each participant can choose a retreat of three to six days’ length during one of two windows of time: June 19 to 25, or July 26 to Aug. 1. Opportunities are available to meet daily with a spiritual director and attend prayer and Mass with the Norbertine Community.

THE ABBEY LECTURES
This fall, the Center will offer a new lecture series consisting of four individual presentations with a common theme. “Reimagining Christianity” is the topic for the 2011–12 series. Details will be available in the Center’s fall brochure and online.

The Center’s fall brochure, listing all programs and retreats, will be available in August.

For additional information, visit norbertines.org or call the Center at (920) 337-4315.
GRACE System reflects familiar Norbertine values

By Fr. Tim Shillcox, O.Praem.

This summer, the new Green Bay Area Catholic Education (GRACE) System will become fully operational. As it does, several Norbertines will help shape elementary-level Catholic education in the region.

Under the GRACE System, 23 parishes will offer affordable, accessible Catholic education at 10 campuses serving 2,800 children. Greater Green Bay is the last of its diocese’s urban areas to consolidate its schools in this way.

Among the parishes involved in the GRACE System are several with Norbertine pastors, including Holy Cross at Bay Settlement; Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Norbert College Parish in De Pere; and St. Agnes and St. Willibrord in Green Bay.

Previous attempts to integrate the area’s Catholic schools had stalled. But the GRACE project has moved forward with a strategic plan, a gradual timeline, diocesan support, episcopal encouragement and the connecting of parishes’ resources and people to ensure the future of Catholic schools. GRACE’s core values – collaboration, cooperation, subsidiarity and *communio* – are hallmarks of Norbertine life as well.

Dr. Carol Conway-Gerhardt, the system’s first president, describes its top priority: “What we especially like to stress is the integration of faith throughout the school day and throughout all the extra- and co-curricular activities. We do have that benefit of being able to talk about religion and God in our experience.”

Ownership and good communication within the system are fostered by widespread representation. All pastors, including Fr. Jim Baraniak, O.Praem., Fr. Ken DeGroot, O.Praem., Fr. Tom Hagendorf, O.Praem., Fr. Dane Radecki, O.Praem., and Fr. Tim Shillcox, O.Praem., serve on the board of directors, and representatives from each parish make up the board of trustees.

Kim Lasecki, the Our Lady of Lourdes trustee, sees progress toward that ownership: “GRACE is becoming a wonderful blend of balance between maintaining each school’s (and parish’s) identity and becoming stronger by collaborating so as to strengthen all participating within this unique community of students across 10 thriving schools.”

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The first purpose for which you have come together is to live in unity in the house and to be of one mind and one heart on the way to God.

- The Rule of St. Augustine

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De Pere, WI  St. Norbert Abbey  www.norbertines.org
Albuquerque, NM  Santa María de la Vid Priory  www.norbertinecommunity.org
Raymond, MS  St. Moses the Black Priory  www.stmosestheblackpriory.org

Contact Fr. John Tourangeau, O.Praem., Vocation Coordinator  vocations@norbertines.org • 920.337.4333

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Involvement in education takes many forms for Norbertines, including teaching others about issues of cultural reconciliation and social justice. To that end, Fr. Jeremy Tobin, O.Praem., of St. Moses the Black Priory in Raymond, Miss., recently participated in the planning of two related national conferences: one exploring Muslim cultural identity and influence, and one examining slavery.

“Islamic West Africa’s Legacy of Literacy and Music to America and the World” and “Slavery and its Legacy” were organized and hosted by the International Museum of Muslim Cultures, Jackson, Miss., and Tougaloo College, Tougaloo, Miss. The two organizations received a $218,000 Bridging Cultures grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to support the awareness-raising conferences.

In addition to his involvement in planning the conferences, which ran consecutively in February, Fr. Tobin took part in a conference panel on literacy and religion.

Abbot emeritus Fr. Tom DeWane, O.Praem., and others in the Community hosted 16 lay ecclesial ministers from the Diocese of Jackson for their annual retreat. It focused on deepening participants’ understanding of Scripture.

Catholicism has had a huge influence on New Mexican culture. But surprisingly, the U.S. state with the longest standing Catholic heritage has no strongly established Catholic institution of higher learning.

The Norbertines of Santa Maria de la Vid Priory in Albuquerque, N.M., help fill that educational gap in two ways. First, the priory houses the St. Norbert College master of theological studies program, the only graduate program in theology in the state. It serves to form professional lay ministers for service in New Mexican churches.

Second, the priory supports the Santa Fe archdiocese’s goal to endow a chair of Catholic studies at the University of New Mexico. Fr. Joel Garner, O.Praem., prior of the Community, serves on an ongoing search committee to fill the position. In the coming year, the committee will hire a permanent adjunct professor to the role. Eventually, pending growth of the supporting endowment, the position will become tenured.

Through the Norbertine Library, the Community of Santa Maria de la Vid Priory educates area adults with its yearly lecture series exploring a breadth of spiritual traditions. Lecturers in 2011 have included priest-iconographer the Rev. William Hart McNichols; Regis College/University of Toronto philosophy and theology professor John Dadosky; author and storyteller Megan McKenna; and author and presenter Sr. Paula Gallagher, IHM.

The series ends on May 1 with “A Blend of Sacred and Secular,” a concert by de Profundis, an a capella men’s ensemble directed by David Poole.
News, Honors and Distinctions

FR. MARK FALCONE, O.PRAEM., chaplain to the Military Officers Club of Northeastern Wisconsin, was featured in the club’s November newsletter. He offered a presentation at the club’s September dinner meeting and also received a certificate of appreciation.

FR. JOEL GARNER, O.PRAEM., was honored at the anniversary dinner of Albuquerque Interfaith, a community organizing effort, for his 17-year participation as a pastor and leader in community organizing.

FR. AL MCBRIDE, O.PRAEM., recently authored the book “Staying Faithful Today: To God, Ourselves, One Another” (St. Anthony Messenger Press, 2011). He addresses the “fidelity crisis” in our culture and writes of ways to remain faithful to God, family, marriage, priesthood and friendships.

FR. TIM SHILLCOX, O.PRAEM., addressed the Annual Clergy Congress of the Diocese of Green Bay on the topic of Norbertine spirituality. He also directed the annual Lenten retreat for Conception Seminary College in Missouri. He serves as pastor at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in De Pere.

THE NORBERTINE VOLUNTEER COMMUNITY (NVC) is assisting with the development of the Three Corners Neighborhood Garden, a community initiative accessible to those with disabilities. The NVC also welcomed two new members in January, Stephanie Birmingham and Kyle Cothern. For additional information, visit www.norbertines.org/volunteer_community.html.

News, Honors and Distinctions

In Memoriam

FR. CHRISTIAN (THOMAS) O’BRIEN, O.PRAEM., died on March 28, at age 75.

His Norbertine ministry included teaching at Abbot Pennings High School and St. Norbert College. He also served as pastor at several parishes: St. Joseph Parish, De Pere; St. Joseph Parish, New Franken, Wis.; St. Martin Parish (Tonet), St. Amand Mission (Walhain) and St. Odile Mission (Thiry Daems), Luxemburg, Wis.; Resurrection Parish, Green Bay; and Holy Rosary Parish, Albuquerque, N.M. In addition, Fr. O’Brien ministered as chaplain at the Veterans Medical Center and the Albuquerque Regional Medical Center in New Mexico.

Fr. O’Brien attended Catholic Central High School in Green Bay before earning his bachelor’s degree at Notre Dame University and his master’s degree at Marquette University. He was vested in the Order on Aug. 28, 1957, and was ordained to the priesthood on Sept. 12, 1962.

Military Retirements

In nearly 23 years’ active duty as a military chaplain for the U.S. Navy and Marines, FR. STEVEN VANDEN BOOGARD, O.PRAEM., says he has “been all over the world and done just about everything.” Originally from Kimberly, Wis., Fr. Vanden Boogard volunteered to join the military during the Vietnam Era in 1972, right out of high school. He has experienced hundreds of missions in countries including Kuwait, Iraq, Cuba and Haiti.

During part of his chaplaincy, Fr. Vanden Boogard served as a hospital corpsman, nurturing the morale and spiritual needs of sick and wounded sailors and soldiers.

Retired since July 2010, Fr. Vanden Boogard is happy to be back home at the Abbey. A vast collection of photo albums serves as a reminder of his time in the military. “I just have to look at them and it all comes back,” he says. “I’m content just staying right here. I’ve done it all.”

From his enlistment in the U.S. Air Force in September 1987 until his retirement from it in March 2011, FR. MICHAEL WEBER, O.PRAEM., served in multiple capacities: as a Catholic Chaplain, a senior Catholic supervisor, a member of a Command Chaplain’s staff and a part of the Inspector Chaplain’s team.

He traveled along the Pacific Rim and was deployed into the heart of the Middle East. In Kabul, Weber worked with the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, helping to develop their religious support efforts. And in Bagram, Afghanistan, he experienced firsthand the frontline attack that made headlines on May 19, 2010.

Although Fr. Weber did not originally plan on becoming a priest, he says, “It all fits together.” A native of Minnesota, Fr. Weber honed his hospital skills as a clinical staff chaplain in both Denver and Arlington Heights, Ill. All told, Fr. Weber served his country for almost 24 years.

Anniversaries

Norbertines celebrating their priestly ordination anniversaries this year include FR. ROLAND DE PEAUX, O.PRAEM. (60 years); FR. GERALD KEMPEN, O.PRAEM. (60 years); FR. KEN DE GROOT, O.PRAEM. (50 years); and FR. JOHN TOURANGEAU, O.PRAEM. (25 years).
2011 Spring/Summer Calendar for St. Norbert Abbey

MAY
1 – Schola d’ Arezzo Concert, Abbey Church, 2:30 p.m.
3, 10, 17 – Splashes of Spirit (the Rev. Dr. Tricia Matthew), 6:30–8:30 p.m.
4 – Irish Legacy (Kathy Mallon, Cheryl Murphy), 6:30–8 p.m.
14 – Canon John Bruce Organ Concert Series (Joan Lippincott), Abbey Church, 2 p.m.
15 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
19 – The Joy of Being Human (Fr. Conrad Kratz, Judy Turba), 6:30–8 p.m.
24 – An Evening in the Gardens, 6:30–8 p.m.

JUNE
10, 11 – Discerning God’s Role in our Lives (Tami Schmitz), 4 p.m. Friday through 3 p.m. Saturday
19 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
19–25 – Summer Directed Retreat

JULY
17 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
26-Aug. 1 – Summer Directed Retreat

AUGUST
21 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.

SEPTEMBER
8, 15, 29 – Soup and the Soul: Old Testament Series (Fr. Conrad Kratz), 11:45 a.m.–12:45 a.m. or 6:30–8 p.m.
12, 19, 26, Oct. 3, 10, 17 – Deepening Freedom (Sr. Judy Miller), 10–11:50 a.m.
14 – Running on Empty (Jane Birr), 6:30–8 p.m.
18 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
27 – Shame and Guilt (the Rev. John Reed), 6:30–8 p.m.

OCTOBER
4 – Servant’s Heart: A Missionary’s Perspective (Fr. Rod Fenzl), 6:30–8 p.m.
5, 12, 19, 26 – Wednesdays for Women Series (Sr. Shawn Madigan, Sr. Judy Miller), 10–11:30 a.m. or 6:30–8 p.m.
13 – Abbey Lecture Series: Reimagining Christianity (Dr. Paul Wadell), 6:30–8 p.m.
15 – Canon John Bruce Organ Concert Series (Michael Hey), Abbey Church, 2 p.m.
18 – Brief History of the Mass (Fr. Al McBride), 10–11:30 a.m.
16 – Taizé Prayer, Abbey Church, 7 p.m.
29 – Men’s Morning of Spiritual Renewal, 8 a.m.–1 p.m.

The Norbertine Center for Spirituality fall brochure will be available in August, with a complete list of programs/retreats. Please visit www.norbertines.org/programs.html to view listings online or call (920) 337-4315 to receive a copy.