

Minutes of the Annual Alumni Association Meeting

Thursday, March 3, 2011

The meeting began at 10:00 a.m. with Fr. Michael Deering saying the opening prayer.

The minutes of the meeting of February 11, 2012 were accepted and approved.

Fr. Lavastida then introduced the fourth year graduates.

Student Association Report

Mr. Daniel Green, the Student Association President, welcomed the Alumni and thanked them for the opportunity to give his report.

Mr. Green reported that the Student Association wanted to focus on the seminary as a community of disciples and said that this is being done through days of reflection, class conferences, daily prayer and class retreats. He reported that the semester began with the March for Life which took place in January and in February the seminary celebrated Black History month. During Black History month several guest celebrants joined the seminary community at Mass and to speak about their culture and history. Also in February the seminary celebrated TET with members of the St. Ben's community. The evening began with Mass in the chapel, a fireworks display and concluded with a Vietnamese dinner. Mr. Green also noted that another highlight during the month was having Fr. Stanley Klores celebrate the Byzantine Mass for the community. The Legatus Group hosted a dinner at the seminary at which the seminarians also attended, and after the dinner Fr. Lavastida gave a presentation on the needs of Notre Dame Seminary.

Mr. Green reported that some schedule changes have taken place which includes having Saturdays free after morning prayer and Mass. This gives the seminarians time to study, work on papers, read and run errands. Another change is that most classes take place in the morning which allows more time for school work.

Before concluding his report, Mr. Green asked the Alumni Association for a donation of \$3000 to the Student Association to purchase printers to put in the halls near the students' rooms to make printing more convenient for them. He then thanked them for their inspiration and for helping to shape the seminarians to be good and holy men, disciples for the Lord.

Rector's Report

Fr. Jose Lavastida began his report by welcoming the Alumni and thanking them for being here today. Fr. Lavastida then reported that at this time there are 86 seminarians and 63 lay students

at Notre Dame Seminary. He noted that the MA program continues to grow and that we are getting ready to start up three satellite programs in the Fall.

Fr. Lavastida mentioned some new personnel which include Fr. Minh Phan as interim dean, while Dr. David Liberto is on sabbatical, Br. Stephen Synan as the seminary counselor who is also teaching pastoral counseling, Fr. Jeff Harvey who will teach homiletics, Dr. Nathan Eubank will be teaching Old Testament in the Spring, and we have hired Mrs. Yvette Lacour as our development director. Fr. Lavastida stated that there are still some faculty positions that need to be filled, which include MA Program Support, and an Institutional Effectiveness Director.

Fr. Lavastida then reported on some events that took place at the seminary, one of which was the annual TET celebration. Abbot Justin and Fr. Gregory along with the seminarians from St. Ben's joined together with Notre Dame for this celebration. Fr. Lavastida reported that we began the year with class retreats, monthly days of reflection, Ash Wednesday day of reflection, and noted that at this time there is a three day Spiritual Direction Workshop taking place. Every morning from 6:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. there is Eucharistic Adoration in the chapel, and also on Tuesday evenings. During Lent we will have the Stations of the Cross every Friday. Also, the MA program is continuing to expand with Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord which will be implemented in the Fall.

Fr. Lavastida stated that concerning accreditation, all issues have to be resolved by the end of the year and the faculty are working diligently to be in compliance with the SACS requirements.

Fr. Lavastida noted that as part of the Human Formation Program we are continuing to improve our wellness program by working with seminarians in different ways regarding fitness, diet, etc. There are several workshops scheduled for the spring to help the seminarians prepare for their various summer ministries.

He also mentioned that the Development Office is overseeing fundraisers and is continuing to develop our donor data base. Fr. Lavastida noted that a newsletter from the seminary will be mailed out next week and will continue to be sent out every semester. The annual Golf Tournament fundraiser is scheduled for Easter Monday in Baton Rouge.

Fr. Lavastida concluded his report by stating that we continue to make changes and updates to the physical plant. He then thanked the Alumni Association again for their prayers and support.

Finance Report

Fr. Jason Palermo then gave the Alumni Association Financial Report. He mentioned that the report is based on 13 months which is from January 1, 2010 - January 31, 2011. At last year's meeting it was decided that the report would be a 13 month report to show the activity through the current Alumni Day. Fr. Palermo thanked everyone for attending Alumni Day and paying their dues.

Fr. Deering then asked for the Alumni to vote on the request by the SA President for a donation of \$3000. The Alumni voted in favor of this request.

New Business

Fr. Mark Ledoux updated the Alumni on Fr. Verbis LaFleur an alumnus of NDS who died while trying to save fellow soldiers during World War II. Fr. Ledoux thought that it would be of interest that a Notre Dame Seminary alumnus will most likely receive the Medal of Honor.

In regard to the Alumni celebration, a comment was made by Fr. Wilmer Todd that although the speaker was interesting, that he didn't feel that the reception was the place for this, stating that the alumni wanted to spend that time in a relaxing setting catching up with fellow priests. A suggestion was made that maybe having a speaker prior to the reception would work out better. Fr. Lavastida mentioned that the idea was to bring in professors to speak who were no longer at the seminary in order for their former students to be able to visit with them. The alumni officers noted that they would discuss this.

There being no further new business, the election of new officers took place. The Alumni Association voted unanimously for the nominated officers. The new officers are as follows:

Fr. Walter Austin - President
Fr. Jason Palermo - Vice President
Fr. Michael Mitchell - Secretary
Fr. John Arnone - Treasurer

It was also noted that the distinguished Alumnus of 2011 is Archbishop Gregory M. Aymond.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 am.