



CATHOLIC DISTANCE UNIVERSITY

ANNUAL REPORT

2022



THE MISSION OF
Catholic Distance University

is to communicate the mind and heart
of the Church in a digital world.

Using distance education, the
university educates teachers and
learners worldwide in Catholic
theology, the liberal arts, and faith
development for the growth of faith,
ecclesial service, and leadership for the
New Evangelization.



Message From the President

Dr. Marianne Evans Mount

Two major milestones marked 2022: the first was the award of full, initial 10-year accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission, the largest regional institutional accreditor in the US, based in Chicago, Illinois. HLC has oversight of over 1,000 schools, including the University of Chicago and Notre Dame University. That achievement followed the initial accreditation in 2020 of CDU's Graduate School of Theology by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) for a term of seven years. Most Catholic seminaries, and now CDU as well, are accredited by ATS. CDU is the first fully and exclusively online school accredited by ATS.

The second major milestone was the award of a significant grant from the Lilly Endowment for development of a new curriculum in Catholic Social Teaching (CST) through two new academic programs, one at the Associate's degree level and the other at the graduate level. Both programs will serve Hispanic Catholics who historically are underserved in the world of higher education in the US, the traditional gateway to economic success and social advancement. There is great need to educate Hispanic/Latino Catholic students for leadership roles in the Church. Only 3% of Catholic priests in the nation are Hispanic. The AA Degree program initially will be offered in Spanish, and the Graduate Certificate initially will be offered in English. However, the programs ultimately will be offered in both languages for wide accessibility.

In the words of CDU's Board Chair, Mr. Stephen Pryor, "The mission of CDU will now reflect a new curriculum of the heart of the Church." The new programs will educate ordained and lay ecclesial ministers and prepare them to develop ministries of charity that engage the life of the parish, strengthen outreach to local communities, and attract younger disaffected Catholics. Research indicates that parishes with active ministries of charity have stronger community engagement and more vibrant participation. CDU's contribution as a university will be to provide a deeper understanding of the Church's 2000-year history of Catholic social thought, frequently called "The Church's best-kept secret."





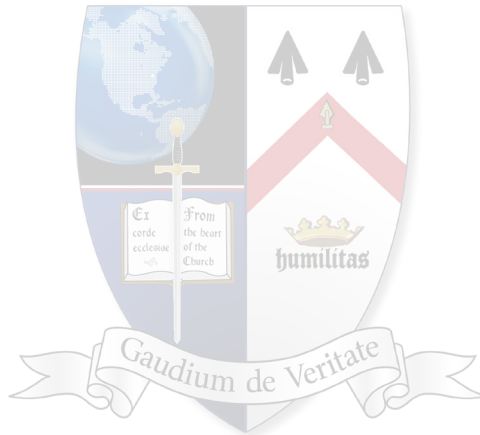
The programs will be interdisciplinary and practical. A practicum requirement in the AA Degree program will offer opportunities for students to work with Catholic Charities and Catholic Relief Services. The Graduate Certificate will include an optional transformative trip to Rome for nine days to explore the Vatican’s global initiatives in CST and the historical context of the Church’s social thought from the contributions of St. Benedict to the social encyclicals of recent popes.

CDU’s traditional theological curriculum has expanded, with a full Bachelor’s degree in Theology now available with optional minors in History, Philosophy, and Sacred Scripture. New certificates are being developed for students seeking shorter, stackable credentials that can be transferred to a degree program in the future. Early

college courses for high school students and revised and expanded prison ministry programs are also underway.

With the expertise of an instructional designer schooled in serving the adult learner, templates have been designed for our existing courses, and a new template has been designed for the AA courses in Spanish that will feature weekly recorded in-person sessions using Zoom to reflect the cultural preferences of Hispanic students.

The year has launched a new chapter in CDU’s mission-based history as the only online Catholic university in the U.S. With full accreditation, we are just beginning to imagine the breadth of a global vision for the future.





Higher Learning Commission Grants Accreditation to CDU

ON JUNE 23, 2022, THE HIGHER LEARNING Commission (HLC) granted initial accreditation to Catholic Distance University for its undergraduate and graduate degree and certificate programs for a period of ten years. As with the initial accreditation of any HLC school, a comprehensive visit will be scheduled in four years. Accreditation by the HLC provides assurance that an institution meets high standards in all aspects of educational quality, institutional capabilities, and governance, with a commitment to continuous improvement.

HLC is the largest of six historically regional accreditors in the United States recognized by the Department of Education to accredit the nation’s institutions of higher education. In response to new regulations from the Department of Education, several of the historically regional accreditors have recently eliminated their geographic boundaries, expanding their accreditation service area to the entire United States.

President Dr. Marianne Evans Mount, who has served as president since 2008, lauded the landmark accomplishment. “Catholic Distance University celebrates with joy our welcome as an accredited member of the Higher Learning Commission and the broader higher education community of accredited schools. The hard work and adherence to high academic accrediting standards and practices have strengthened CDU and given further assurance to our students and graduates of the value of their educational credentials. We look forward to the

witness of their service to the Catholic Church and the world, as they strive to serve the common good and especially the underserved.”

“CDU is now recognized with the same accreditation as many of the most prestigious brick and mortar universities in the U.S.”

said Board Chairman Steve Pryor. “This major milestone marks the beginning of the next stage of CDU’s mission: to communicate the mind and heart of the Church to a wider audience. As trustee Sr. Mary Brendon Zajac, SND, observed, this should be viewed ‘...as a Commencement rather than a Graduation...the real work is just beginning.’”

Achievement of ATS and HLC accreditation would not have been possible without the diligent efforts of Sisters of Notre Dame Mary Brendon Zajac and Mary Margaret Ann Schlather.

Students will benefit in newfound ways from HLC accreditation, which ensures a quality of education that the general public has the right to expect and that the educational community recognizes widely.





Innovative Catholic Social Teaching Programs to Launch in 2023

Given our desire to educate the Catholic leaders of tomorrow, development of an innovative curriculum in Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is well underway. A new AA degree program in Theology with a concentration in Catholic Social Teaching designed especially for Hispanic Catholics, who will make up the majority of the U.S. Catholic population by 2030, will begin enrolling students in Fall 2023. There is great need in the Hispanic community to develop well-educated leaders for the Church of the 21st century.





All courses in the affordable online AA degree program will be taught in Spanish initially to ensure wider access to higher education for underserved students who may not be fluent in English or who prefer to study the faith in their native language. They will benefit from student success coaching, and upon earning the degree will be prepared to serve as lay ecclesial ministers in Catholic parishes, pursue further academic study, and potentially enter seminaries.



A graduate certificate program in CST, taught in English, will also launch in 2023. The curriculum is being developed by Rev. Avelino Gonzalez-Ferrer, a priest in the Archdiocese of Washington, and is targeted to priests, deacons, and lay ecclesial ministers who seek to deepen their understanding of CST to better serve their faith communities. Many Catholic pastoral leaders feel insufficiently knowledgeable when faced with addressing challenges such as immigration, racism, poverty, and family breakdown. The curriculum will draw upon the Church's broad and deep teaching to provide the wisdom and insights needed to address these issues within local parish-

es. A key course in the program, *CST 500 Foundations of Catholic Social Thought*, will be offered May 22 through August 11th and taught by Father Avelino. In 2024 there are also plans to develop a 9-day hybrid travel experience to Rome led by Father Avelino that can be taken for credit in conjunction with the certificate.



The first one-credit pop-up course in the graduate certificate program, *CST 630 Respect for Life, Sex, Marriage, and Parenting: An Integrated Catholic Approach*, was offered in February for 4 weeks, taught by noted law professor, writer, and speaker Helen Alvaré.

These innovative programs, supported by a significant grant from Lilly Endowment Inc., will also foster greater collaboration with Catholic dioceses.

CDU Encourages Lifelong Learning by Lowering Non-Credit Tuition

IN FEBRUARY, OUR NEW, mobile-friendly continuing education platform launched, featuring nearly 60 online faith formation courses in English and Spanish and eight certificate programs. By realizing cost savings from the new platform, we were able to cut course tuition by nearly 50% to better compete with similar programs and encourage lifelong learning.

Catholic school teachers and catechists especially appreciate the rich catalog of convenient courses for their ongoing formation. Topics include apologetics, catechesis, Church history, morality and ethics, the theology of Mary, prayer and spirituality, Sacred Scripture, and Vatican II documents.

Teacher Joan Forgione says, “I live far away from the school that I teach in, and as much as I’d like to go to after-school workshops, I find that after a whole day of teaching, all I want to do is go home. It is wonderful to be able to take courses this way. I am so thankful for CDU.”

Consider taking a course! An online seminar, *How Are We Saved? The Catholic View of Salvation*, will be offered June 12–July 3, 2023. Browse the Lifelong Learning site at <https://www.pathlms.com/cdu>, and be sure to bookmark the page for easy access.





Bioethics Course Offers High School Students a Catholic Perspective on Human Dignity

THROUGH A JOINT VENTURE BETWEEN CDU and the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia, the university offered a course in Catholic bioethics to juniors and seniors at Cardinal O’Hara High School in the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for college credit. CDU has dubbed this our Early College Program.

Students learned to formulate appropriate, Catholic-based responses to ethical challenges they will face in their personal lives and/or future work in healthcare. The course covered foundational issues in Catholic moral theology,

including the relationship between reason and divine Revelation, the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, and moral theories that impact healthcare decision-making.

This was the first course offered in the new Early College Program (ECP), which will be expanded to give qualified high school students the opportunity to enroll at CDU and receive college credit for a variety of undergraduate courses. The course will open to current students in the Summer I 2023 term.





Catholic Distance University to Appoint New President

THE HONORABLE MARIA SOPHIA AGUIRRE, PH.D., a distinguished Ordinary Professor of Economics and researcher in the field of finance, family, and economic development, will be appointed the third President of Catholic Distance University on July 1, 2023. The university's Board of Trustees unanimously elected Dr. Aguirre following a

national search launched after longtime President, Dr. Marianne Evans Mount, announced her wish to retire at the end of the 2022–2023 academic year.

A tenured faculty member at The Catholic University of America, Dr. Aguirre has 30 years of teaching and research experience, while holding leadership positions at the academic program level, department and school levels, as well as the university at large. She was a Fulbright scholar in 2012–2013.

After completing Accounting and Business Administration degrees in Argentina, Dr. Aguirre worked in accounting and commodities trading in Chicago for several years before earning an M.A. and then a Ph.D. in Economics from the University of Notre Dame with concentrations in monetary and fiscal policies and international financial markets. She has represented countries, including the Holy See, in international organizations, and served the U.S. President and Secretary of State as a presidential appointee confirmed by Congress in the capacity of Commissioner and Adviser for two presidential terms. Dr. Aguirre has testified before Congress in the U.S. and in several other countries, and has lectured and published extensively both domestically and internationally.





Since leaving government, Dr. Aguirre has worked to develop and implement Integral Economic Development (IED), an interdisciplinary approach to economic analysis that recognizes the role of social relationships—first manifested by the family—as key drivers of economic activity. Dr. Aguirre’s research, and the two master’s degree programs in Integral Economic Development she founded, have led to successful collaboration with a variety of business leaders, academicians, technologists, and policy makers on six continents, improving the lives of millions of people in the developing world. She is currently on leave at the University of St. Thomas in Houston conducting research on the application of IED to artificial intelligence and virtual reality.

“In searching for a successor to our great President, Dr. Marianne Mount, CDU struck gold in recruiting Dr. Aguirre,” said CDU’s Board Chair, Stephen Pryor. “Sophia Aguirre is a visionary academic leader with a track record of successful academic innovation, as well as pioneering economic research that is Catholic Social Teaching (CST) in action. As CDU implements its new CST curriculum in the U.S. and Latin America, her international experience, fluency in Spanish, and research background will be game changers,” Mr. Pryor said.

MARIANNE MOUNT LAUDED FOR LEADERSHIP

President Dr. Marianne Evans Mount has served CDU for 40 years. Under her leadership, CDU has grown from a catechetical institute with a staff of two to the world’s only exclusively online Catholic university, with accreditation from the Higher Learning Commission and The Association of Theological Schools. Dr. Mount served as Education Director from 1983 to 1985, Executive Director from 1985 to 1996, Executive Vice President from 1997 to 2008, and as President since 2008 after earning her Ph.D. at Virginia Tech.

Under Dr. Mount’s leadership, CDU is implementing an innovative new curriculum in Catholic Social Teaching, enabled by the largest grant received in the university’s history, as well as new academic partnerships that will foster enrollment growth and offer students an expanded range of academic programs.

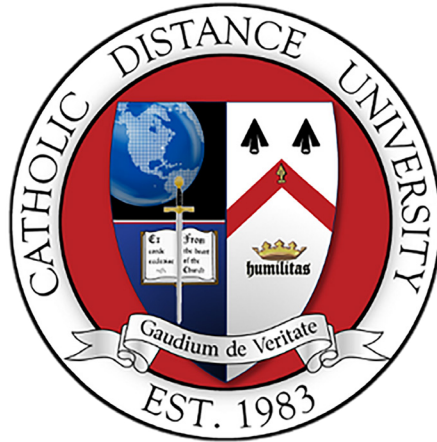
In reflecting on the contributions of President Mount, Mr. Pryor noted that “Marianne Mount has been a remarkable servant leader who has devoted her entire professional career to advancing the mission of CDU. Under her leadership, CDU has built a reputation as a pioneer in online theological education that is completely faithful to the teachings of the Church. Dr. Mount was recently appointed as a consultant to the Vatican’s Dicastery for Culture and Education in recognition of her many contributions to the innovative realm of Catholic distance education. As





she hands over the reins to Dr. Aguirre, the CDU community looks forward to an exciting future as a global trendsetter in online Catholic education.”

Dr. Aguirre’s vision for CDU builds on the foundation laid by her predecessor. “Under the leadership of Dr. Mount, the university has forged an impressive path and is now positioned for growth that will include curriculum development in mission-related fields, a larger global footprint, and a new agenda of institutional research through CDU’s proven online pedagogy. I am honored, grateful, and humbled by this opportunity to lead CDU on the next stage of its journey,” she said.



President Receives Vatican Appointment and Distinguished Service Award



DR. MARIANNE EVANS MOUNT was appointed as a consultant to the Vatican’s Dicastery for Culture and Education. This 5-year assignment recognizes her many years of service in the innovative realm of Catholic distance education.

Christendom College honored Dr. Marianne Evans Mount with its St. Catherine of Siena Award for distinguished service to the Church and Catholic education at its 45th anniversary convocation on September 17, 2022.





Digital Library Expands and Student Engagement Increases

THE ONLINE LIBRARY CONTINUES TO expand its offerings. Student engagement and library use are on the rise. Librarian Stephanie Garrett is growing the digital collection and finding new ways to engage and educate students in information literacy and effective research strategies, which recent studies show has a direct impact on student success and retention.

To create a more personal connection, she developed videos to answer students' questions and walk them through how to effectively use library resources and search strategies. Students can now interact with her through the Canvas learning management system, email, Google Meet, and Pronto, a social media app used by the university. They can

easily schedule appointments for one-on-one help sessions as well.

During regularly held Student Life Center office hours, the librarian has taught students note-taking, mind mapping, and storyboarding techniques to help improve their research, organization, and paper writing skills. Students are also participating in course-integrated library instruction that supports their need to accomplish a particular assignment, such as a term paper.

In our quest for excellence and continuous improvement, student interactions with the library are logged, rated, and assessed to determine future needs. Ultimately, CDU will offer a state-of-the-art online library.





Partnership Gives Incarcerated Students Hope for a Brighter Future

THE ORDER OF MALTA FEDERAL ASSOCIATION digital prison ministry partnership with Catholic Distance University continues to bear fruit. More than 1,250,000 free courses have been taken, with a successful completion rate of 87%. An average of 1,500 of our incarcerated brothers and sisters benefit daily from this educational partnership.

Through the Edovo tablet, incarcerated students can now access 73 faith-based CDU courses, 55 in English and 18 in Spanish, and six certificate programs, in addition to the popular Gatekeepers Business of Living Program, which was developed to reduce recidivism and prepare the incarcerated for successful reentry after completing their prison term. Since its launch on March 18, incarcerated students have successfully completed 1,830 lessons in the Gatekeepers program.

One woman who completed the Gatekeepers program commented, “I can honestly say doing that course changed the way I look at my re-entry. You all have given me hope for a brighter future.” The Gatekeepers Business of Living Program has been reformatted as a PowerPoint presentation with videos and is now being trans-

lated into Spanish. It should be available in 400 U.S. prisons by the end of 2023.

Other multimedia resources on the Edovo tablets offered by CDU in partnership with the Order of Malta Federal Association include the *Stations of the Cross Prayer Service – Walking with Jesus on the Way to Salvation, the Stronger than Walls* series, and an *Advent* series.

In Fall 2022, Gilbert G., recipient of the Order of Malta prison ministry MA in Theology scholarship, gratefully started his coursework and is busy, but delighted. He is learning and sharing his faith with others at a prison in Texas.

As we have done since 1984, each year CDU also sends hundreds of continuing education correspondence courses to incarcerated students for a \$10 fee that covers the cost of mailing the materials. Some incarcerated students “pay it forward” by making small donations to help others pay the fees to take the courses. A CDU scholarship

fund was recently set up to serve those in need of the \$10 fee by *The Prison Oblates Ministry* of St. Benedict’s Abbey in Atchison, Kansas, in honor of Father Boniface von Nell, OSB.



2022 Gala

University Honors Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, Champion for Human Dignity

Catholic Distance University honored Archbishop Cordileone of the Archdiocese of San Francisco with the Founders Award, its highest honor, for his “fearless pastoral leadership in upholding the truths of the Catholic Church” at its annual gala on November 17th. The event was held at the St. John Paul II National Shrine in Washington, D.C., and offered the CDU community an opportunity to celebrate the university’s 39th year and look toward its future. The Very Reverend Joseph R. Gibino, Pastor, and Vicar for Evangelization and Catechesis of the Diocese of Brooklyn, served as the Master of Ceremonies.



Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of the Archdiocese of San Francisco is honored with the Founders Award. Pictured, from left to right: Chairman Stephen Pryor, President Dr. Marianne Evans Mount, Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone, and Chancellor Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA.



Archbishop Cordileone Delivers Remarks upon Receiving the Founders Award

CDU CHANCELLOR AND USCCB PRESIDENT

Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, presented the Founders Award to Archbishop Cordileone. He lauded him as “a champion for human dignity, an outspoken advocate for the unborn, mothers in crisis, the rights of migrants and immigrants, and the homeless, and a staunch defender of the Catholic faith” whose mission aligns closely with that of CDU.

Archbishop Cordileone thanked attendees for all they do to support CDU. “Education is such an important part of rebuilding civilization,” he said, “and our civilization is being attacked on so many fronts.” “We live in an age that contests what is good,” he said, decrying attacks on innocent human life.

Truth, Beauty, and Goodness

He reflected on the enduring power of truth, beauty, and goodness as doorways to God for all in an age of secularism and cancel culture, giving the destruction of Notre Dame Cathedral as an example. “The entire world mourned the loss,” he said. “The timelessness of sacred beauty gives it the power to lift us out of the world of time and gives us a glimpse of that which transcends time....ultimately, the reality of God.”

Cancel Culture Targets Western Civilization and Ultimately the Church

Archbishop Cordileone spoke about the long history of cancel culture and its painful legacy. “We are living in an age of cancel culture. Was not our Lord ejected from influence because he posed a threat to the worldly power of the governing authorities and the leaders of his own people? Were not the people quick to judge without thinking things through?”

“What do the cancellers really want to cancel out?” he asked. “It is far more than those who disagree with them. The real activists are seeking to discredit the great protagonists of western civilization—both in the history of our country and in the Church.”

“By trying to cancel out western civilization, what the cancellers are really trying to cancel out is the Church,” he continued, explaining that “Mass encapsulates all of western civilization and brings together truth, beauty, and goodness all in one place.”

“We need to gaze upon Christ on the cross and truly behold our king, the one who truly gave all for us though He had no need to receive anything from us. Jesus Himself is the blueprint for a civilization of truth and love, a civilization imbued





with a Christian ethos. The drive to cancel this out, then, is a drive to cancel out the founder of the Church, our Lord and savior Jesus Christ.”

Jesus Came to Cancel Out Sin

But, he reminded the crowd, “There is one cancel-culture our Lord did come to establish: canceling out sin. He has done that on the cross, canceling out the debt we owed to God but could not pay ourselves.”

“That is the good news, and the pattern for how the human person lives in accordance with the original human dignity that God gave us. But someone needs to tell this to the world. To open deaf ears and break through the cacophony of postmodern cancel-culture so the message can get out, penetrate hearts, and take root there,” Archbishop Cordileone said.

He thanked the CDU community for using modern technology to educate and evangelize.

Academic Convocation Mass and Graduation Held for Recent Graduates

The evening of the gala began with an Academic Convocation Mass for the class of 2021-2022, which included a graduation ceremony for the graduates present. They hailed from throughout the USA and Canada.

Chancellor Archbishop Timothy Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, served as the principal celebrant. The Mass

was concelebrated by Archbishop Salvatore Cordileone of the Archdiocese of San Francisco; Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of the Diocese of Arlington; Bishop Mark E. Brennan of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston; Bishop Emeritus Paul S. Loverde of the Diocese of Arlington; Auxiliary Bishop Emeritus Octavio Cisneros of the Diocese of Brooklyn; and 15 priests and deacons.



Stories about Graduates

CDU's IT Director Earns MA Degree to Deepen His Faith

Dan Soares (MA in Theology and Educational Ministry, 2022) graduated *summa cum laude* while working full-time at CDU as the Director of Information Technology. Born in Bombay (now Mumbai), India, Dan was raised Catholic and was an active participant in the life of the Church, serving as an altar boy, a reader at Mass, and as a choir master and youth leader.



With a mathematical mind and a strong interest in science, Dan earned his undergraduate degree in Physics at the University of Mumbai. Like many other young Catholics, he fell away from the Church, leaving at the age of 23 to join a Pentecostal church in Bombay.

In 1987, he immigrated to New York with his siblings and parents, who wanted their children to have better opportunities. Adjusting to life in the U.S. was not especially difficult for Dan, who turned 26 the year he arrived. He easily found work in the IT field and continued to move ahead in his career.

While always a faithful Christian, after much soul searching and study, he returned to the Catholic Church during Easter in 2013. "In the

30+ years that I was away, Jesus' prayer for unity (John 17:20–23) was a constant thorn in my flesh," Dan says. "I could not reconcile that with the numerous denominations around me."

Dan joined the staff of CDU on a part-time basis in 2016 while working full-time at another organization. He began taking classes in 2017, utilizing the tuition assistance program for

employees who take classes at the university. About three years ago, he joined CDU exclusively as full-time IT Director.

Dan plans to be involved in Faith Formation at his parish now that he has earned his degree. "The knowledge I have acquired is not for my own sake, but rather to be shared with others," he says. "I look for opportunities to share my faith with others, to pray with them, to meet them wherever they may be in their journey, and accompany them."

"Receiving a well-rounded education in Theology in an online setting where I could study at my own pace" is what Dan enjoyed the most about CDU. "This is a fantastic program with a great curriculum that is faithful to Church teaching, and amazing professors who love the Catholic faith and are gifted teachers," he says.



Mission Scholarship Helps DRE in Alaska Grow in Knowledge and Serve Her Diocese



Mission scholar Heather Pariera Kimmerling (MA in Theology, 2021), the Director of Religious Education at St. Nicholas Catholic Church in North Pole, Alaska, graduated *summa cum laude* and has joined the staff as Director of the Student Life Center.

ceses. The Diocese of Fairbanks, where Heather serves, covers nearly 410,000 square miles and is one of the poorest in the United States.

As a graduate of CDU, Heather is well prepared to lead the Student Life Center, which serves as an online hub for community engagement, academic advising, and access to academic resources. Her ability to communicate in both English and Spanish also makes her a great addition to the team. Heather has yearned for a degree in Theology since she began working in ministry. “I would have pursued a Theology degree sooner, but I am still paying off my other student loans,” she says. “The Mission scholarship was the turning point that made this dream a reality. My studies at CDU have allowed me to understand and explain the Faith at a deeper level.”

CDU’s mission scholars program provides full scholarships to students in under-resourced dioceses that often have no Catholic university or college within their borders. The bishops select the scholarship recipients, as they depend on ecclesial ministers who are well-formed in the faith to serve within their large, under-resourced dio-

Inspired by Son, Double Alumna Perseveres and Furthers Her Education



Renee Alarcon (AA in Liberal Arts, 2019; BA in Theology, 2021) works as a director of children’s faith formation and middle school youth ministry for Most Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church in Arlington, Texas, where she and

her husband have been parishioners for 26 years. She is now working towards a Master of Legal Studies degree at Texas A&M University. Renee and her husband have three sons. Their youngest, Luke, was diagnosed with chronic leukemia a month before her graduation in Fall 2019 but was healthy enough to travel to Washington, D.C., to attend. “He is the real reason why I continued to work toward my degrees,” she says. “He has blood cancer that will never go into true remission and faces lifelong treatment; thankfully, the leukemia cells are undetected at this time, and he lives life to the fullest, never shedding a tear or complaining about his medical care.”

her husband have been parishioners for 26 years. She is now working towards a Master of Legal Studies degree at Texas A&M University.

She looks forward to using her knowledge of Theology and Legal Studies in a career with the Church or with a foundation like those that have helped with Luke’s journey, such as the Make a Wish Foundation and the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.





Deacon Reflects on Spiritual Insight Gained during Graduate Study

Deacon Fernando Enrique Luces (MA in Theology, 2021) is a permanent deacon at St. Rita's Church in Long Island City, New York. He works as a director of religious education at Our Lady of Light Parish in the St. Albans neighborhood of Queens.

"My studies have helped me feel more confident with my theological knowledge in general and in facing the challenges I have found in my work as a DRE," Deacon Luces says. "As a deacon, I have developed a profound spiritual insight that I apply in the catechesis with the students."

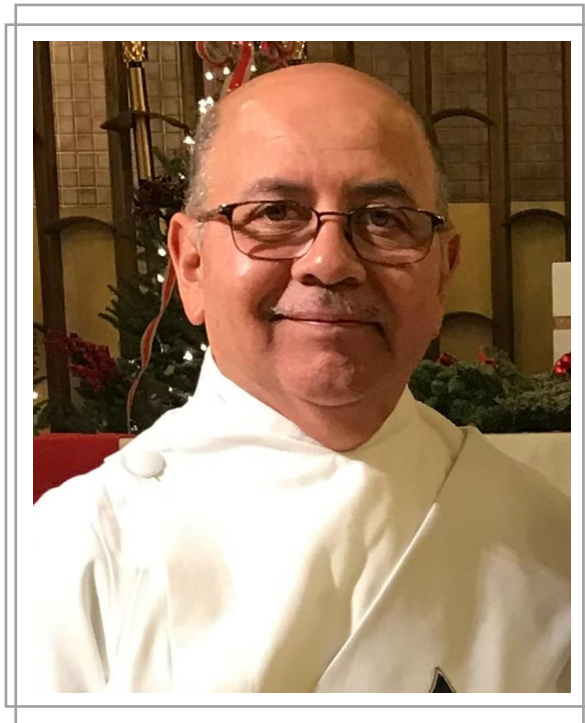
"The flexible time to study, the classmates of various cultures, and the excellent faculty and staff made it possible for me to achieve my goals," he adds.

Deacon Luces most enjoys working in the house of the Lord. "It is

a blessing for me, because I have the opportunity to pray daily with God in the tabernacle and ask His advice to work out any difficulties I might have," he says. "Being grateful for the blessings and gift of God is essential and illuminates my service as a DRE and a deacon."

Deacon Luces is grateful to his wife, Roxana, for helping him with his diaconate and for her support as he completed his theological studies. He comments that his undergraduate education was secular and not as challenging as his graduate theological education. "My educational experience at CDU is incomparable," he says. "I experienced the

presence of God who guided me spiritually all along the way, through constant prayer in my studies."



New Trustees



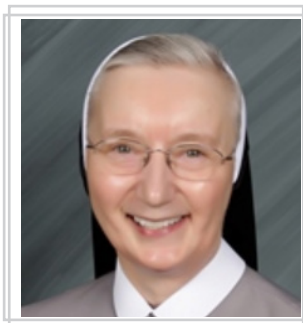
MRS. KELLY S. MCGINN was appointed to the Board of Trustees in June. Her passion for promoting Catholic Social Teaching, particularly the right to life and centrality of the family,

led her to run for office in 2019 as the Republican Nominee for the 13th District seat in the Virginia House of Delegates.

A 1991 *summa cum laude* graduate of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, where she was salutatorian and a Rhodes Scholar finalist, and the University of Virginia School of Law in 1996, she practiced international trade and communications law in Washington, D.C. During her years in private practice, Mrs.

McGinn also sought out pro bono work focused on helping refugees seeking political asylum. She later served as Senior Counsel for International Human Rights to Senator Sam Brownback (R-KS), where she was the senator's principal advisor in his tireless work to protect people suffering persecution around the globe. Much of that work focused on promoting religious freedom.

Since 2003, Mrs. McGinn has been a full-time mother, volunteer in the community, and an engaged citizen, advocating for her neighbors on various public policy issues including pro-life, fair housing, and family friendly zoning. She is also a member of the Board of Directors of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington and Chair of their Advancement and Communications Committee.



SISTER MARY BRENDON ZAJAC returned to the Board of Trustees in June. A Sister of Notre Dame from the Chardon, Ohio, province, she holds a D.Min. from Saint Mary Seminary and Graduate School of

Theology, Cleveland, Ohio, where she has worked

since 2011 as assistant academic dean, registrar, professor of pastoral theology, and director of educational technology. A recipient of the *Croce Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* papal medal, she has graciously contributed her time and talents to CDU in many ways over the years, from teaching and mentoring incarcerated students to helping to shepherd the university through the accreditation process.



DR. PETER CASARELLA was appointed to the Board of Trustees in October. He has a background in Systematic Theology and Catholic

Studies and is a professor of Theology at Duke University's Divinity School, a Senior Fellow of the Kenan Institute of Ethics, and a member of the Graduate Program of Religion faculty. He previously served as an associate professor of Theology at the University of Notre Dame and as director of the Latin American North American Church Concerns (LANACC) project in the Kellogg Institute for International Studies. He also taught Catholic Studies at DePaul University, where he was the founding director of the Center for World Catholicism and Intercultural Theology.

In June, Dr. Casarella was honored with the Virgilio Elizondo Award, which recognizes distinguished achievement in Theology by the Academy of Catholic Hispanic Theologians of the United States. The academy is dedicated to promoting research and critical theological reflection within the context of the U.S. Hispanic experience. Dr. Casarella's counsel has been invaluable in helping to shape CDU's new Catholic Social Teaching academic programs, particularly the AA degree in Theology with a focus on CST offered in Spanish and designed especially for Hispanic students.

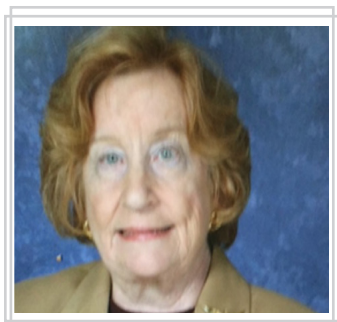
He holds a Bachelor's degree in Religious Studies and a Master's and PhD in Philosophy of Religion from Yale University and is also the author of *Word as Bread: Language and Theology in Nicholas of Cusa*.



Trustee Update



Effective February 1, **Brian Maher** was appointed Treasurer and Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee of the Board of Trustees. We are grateful to Trustee Harry Wilkins for his years of service as the Board Treasurer and his ongoing commitment to CDU.



In July, **The Honorable Susan R. Malone**, distinguished member of the CDU Board of Trustees, was honored at the FBI Academy in Quantico, Virginia, and then at FBI headquarters for being one of the first two female FBI agents. She was recognized on the 50th anniversary of her start date as an agent.



In November, **Paul Schott Stevens** was honored by the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Land in America for his dedicated commitment to the mission of the Custody of the Holy Land. He served on the board of the Franciscan Monastery for 14 years.

Staff News



Philosophy professor and Associate Dean for Accreditation **Dr. Elizabeth Shaw** has assumed the role of Interim Provost. She holds a PhD in Philosophy from The Catholic University of America, with a specialization in American Philosophy.



Cindy Stalcup, a 2020 honors graduate of CDU's MA in Theology and Educational Ministry program, is now serving as Director of Continuing Education and as an academic advisor for graduate students. She was previously Catechetical Subject Specialist and Student Life Coordinator.



Dr. Gerardo Salazar was hired to serve as Director of Spanish Programs. He holds a BA degree in Communication and Journalism, an MA in Theology and Ministry, and a Doctorate in Ministry with a concentration in Hispanic Ministry from the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas.

Heather Pariera Kimmerling, a 2021 honors graduate (featured on p. 17), has joined the staff as Director of Student Life.

Dr. Weena-Isabelle Gaulin was hired to design an academic advising program and serves as a lead advisor for graduate students. Academic advising is essential to student success, our expanded team of academic advisors, under the direction of Acting Provost Dr. Elizabeth Shaw, is helping students fulfill their personal, academic, and career goals.

Maria G. Valdes has joined our team as Student Success Coordinator for Spanish-speaking students. She studied Tourism Management as an undergraduate at the Instituto Politécnico Nacional, México, and is currently completing her MA in Pastoral Theology with an emphasis on Hispanic pastoral work.



New Chaplain is Welcomed

THE MOST REVEREND MARK BRENNAN, Bishop of the Diocese of Wheeling-Charleston, assigned **Rev. Aloysius Nkwain Boh** as CDU's new chaplain. A priest of the Diocese of Kumba, Cameroon, he came to the United States in May 2017 seeking medical attention following a motorcycle accident that occurred while he was carrying out pastoral work.

During his recovery in the United States, his home was bombed by government security

force helicopters. Because of the ongoing unrest and genocide in Cameroon, Bishop Agapitus E. Nfon recommended that he remain in the United States. Father Boh applied for U.S. political asylum in 2018.

Bishop Brennan welcomed Father Boh as an associate pastor at Saint Joseph the Worker Parish, Martinsburg, before transferring him to his current position as pastor of Saint Bernadette Parish, Hedgesville. We are grateful for his service to CDU.



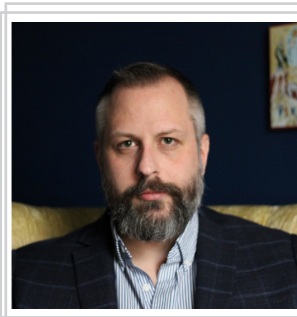
New Faculty



BRANDON HARVEY, who teaches *ENG 111 Introduction to Literature*, holds degrees in theology and is currently completing a doctorate in the Great Books of Western Civilization. He previously served as headmaster of a Chesterton Academy and has experience teaching children, teens, college students, and men in formation for the diaconate. He resides in the Archdiocese of Omaha and regularly serves as a theological/editorial consultant for authors, publishers, screenwriters, producers, and occasionally actors.

“Professor Harvey’s class, ENG 111, was perhaps one of the best college classes I have taken in my life. The reading selection was outstanding, and not only did it make me further appreciate some classics I already loved, his class introduced me to new and beautiful works. Professor Harvey set up the class in a way that bridged the distance between classmates and teachers. It’s because of great teachers like him and schools like this that I feel truly blessed.”

–Shawn Davila, BA in Theology



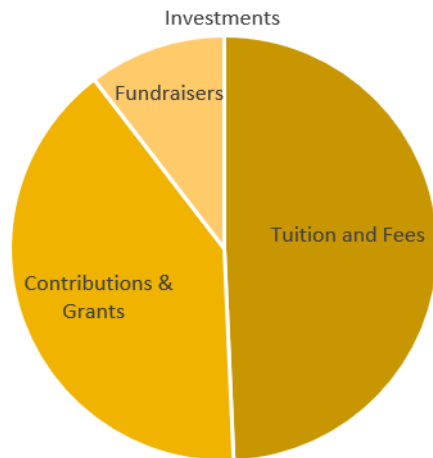
MIKE GRASINSKI joined the faculty and is teaching *PHIL 235 Philosophy of the Human Person*. President of Evangelization for the Ruah Woods Institute, he is a BA in Theology graduate of Catholic Distance University and earned his MA in Philosophy at Franciscan University of Steubenville. He is now working toward his Ph.D. in Philosophy at St. Patrick’s Pontifical College, Maynooth, Ireland. His areas of interest include Philosophy, Christian Anthropology, Phenomenology, and Metaphysics.



DR. TAMRA FROMM teaches *RELED 560 Principles of Catholic Education* and directs the MA in Theology and Educational Ministry practicum. She holds a doctorate from Maryvale Institute/Liverpool Hope University in the UK, where she lectures on catechesis and research methods and supervises deacons and lay students involved in parish research projects. She teaches Old Testament at the Catholic Biblical School of Michigan and previously taught for Sacred Heart Major Seminary in the Archdiocese of Detroit, where she served in seminary administration, diocesan marketing for Catholic schools, and young adult ministry. Dr. Fromm is the author of *Pre-Evangelization and Young Adult “Native Nones”: A New Paradigm for Reaching the Unchurched* (Pickwick Publications) and numerous journal and blog articles on John Henry Newman, evangelization, and Scripture.

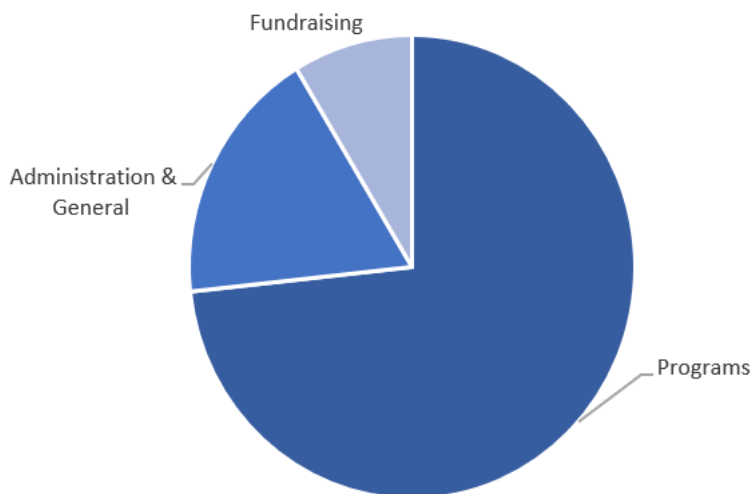
2022 Financial Report

IN THE FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2022, CDU's revenue totaled \$1,952,442 and expenses totaled \$2,023,005. The CDU investment portfolio did not contribute to revenues in 2022 due to the downturn in financial markets, resulting in a \$60,849 deficit compared to a gain of \$226,177 in 2021. Expenses include investments of \$464,482 that were made to enhance marketing efforts, invest in information technology, expand and update the online library, improve the student learning experience, and offer federal financial aid through Title IV.



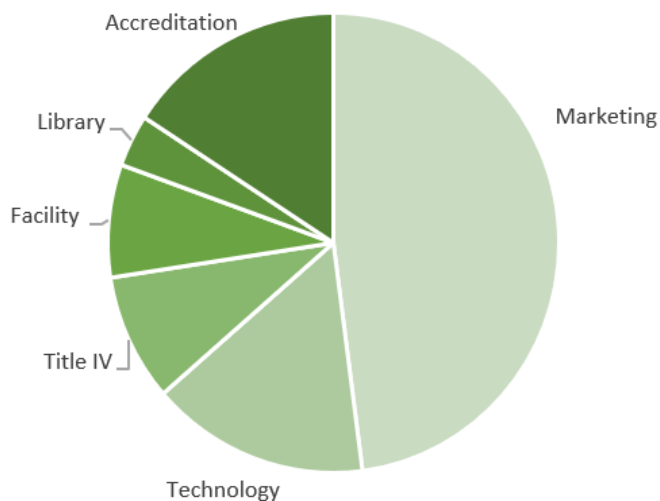
Revenue

Tuition and Fees	49%
Contributions & Grants	40%
Fundraiser	11%
Investments	0%
Total	\$1,952,442



Expenses

Programs	73%
Administration & General	18%
Fundraising	9%
Total	\$2,023,005



Incremental Investments

Marketing	48%
Technology	15%
Title IV	9%
Facility	8%
Library	4%
Accreditation	16%
Total	\$464,482

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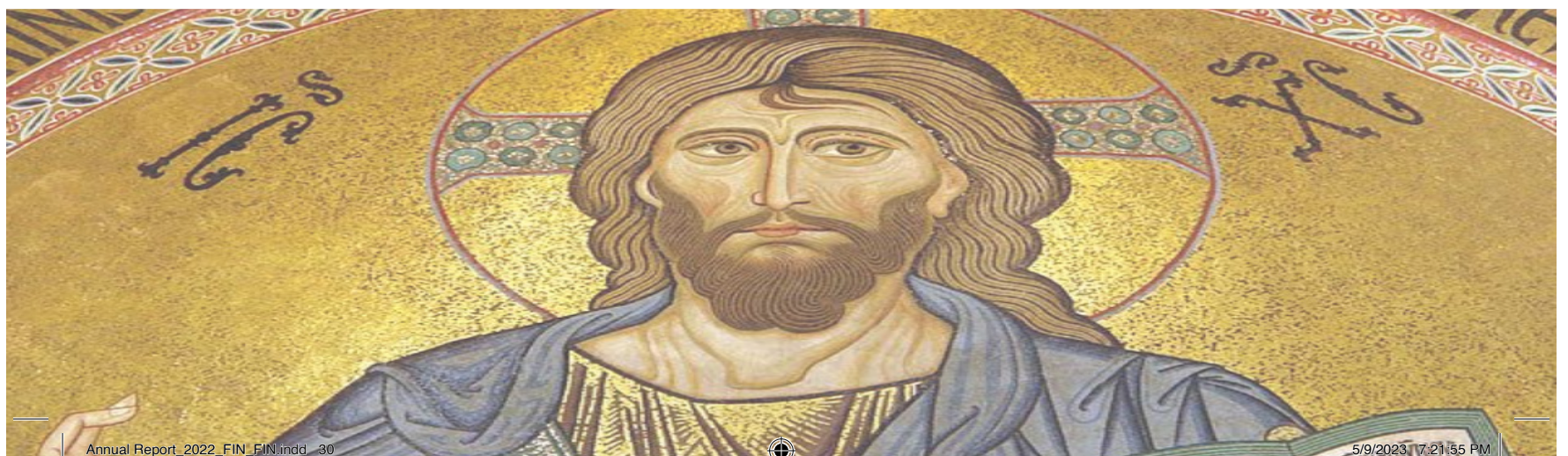
"I give to CDU because the education it provides is one way to make sure that light comes into our world... one of my highest priorities is to make sure that those who want to know more about their faith in Christ have responsible, credible sources from which to learn and grow, and CDU is one of those educational shining stars. The faculty and staff at CDU really care about the students and about sharing the truth."—Angelo Giardino, MD, MA in Theology, 2016 | "Catholic Distance University advances the message of the Gospels in unique ways, reaching those who might not otherwise access a degree program. Because our daughter was among the "homebound" students in the last days of her life, my husband and I realized how important it was to provide distance learning opportunities for others. I remain more convinced than ever that CDU deserves our faithful support."—Mary A.D. Petrino, DM | "I support CDU because of its steadfast mission to spread our Faith's principles in service to others throughout the world."—Bob Smith | "CDU has become a critical partner in the prison ministry efforts of the Order of Malta. CDU does an amazing job of bringing quality Catholic materials inside prison units, but it does much more. With CDU's help, we bring re-entry training and resources to those inside the walls for more successful outcomes when they leave prison. CDU facilitates productive encounters through support of our pen pal program, and its platform and model allow us a unique opportunity to expand the scale of our ministry."—Douglas A. Sandvig | "CDU was a transformational experience. I was questioning my faith, and now I am in love with it! I contribute to CDU so other busy working people have the same opportunity to learn that I did. Now, I work for the Church and I have the confidence in my faith to share it with others."—Christina Steele, MA in Theology, 2020

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- ◇ *Prepare directors of religious education, teachers, and catechists to teach, promote, and defend the Catholic faith.*
- ◇ *Bring the healing Word of God to prison inmates who take courses to deepen their faith and evangelize fellow inmates.*
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- ◇ *Our doors are always open regardless of location, time zone, or a challenging schedule.*





What Our Students Are Saying

The education I received at CDU gave me the tools I needed to share my faith with bold confidence and love.

—Gian Parham, BA in Theology, Benque Viejo Del Carmen, Belize

I feel blessed and utterly grateful for CDU's fully online programs. My studies have helped me grow not only in knowledge, but have also strengthened my faith.

—Maritza Mejia, MA in Theology, Port St. Lucie, Florida

The education that I received from CDU has opened doors for me. I have attended four Fides et Ratio Seminars that were very rewarding. I also teach Deacon formation classes in the Amarillo Diocese. I have been very blessed by my time at CDU and the people that I met there.

—Deacon Davin Winger, MA in Theology, Gruver, Texas

My education helped prepare me for my pastoral ministry of helping women heal from the trauma of domestic abuse and betrayal. Through the experience and knowledge gained at CDU, I'm able to help spiritually guide individuals to help them grow closer to God and regain their true selves.

—Jenny DuBay, BA in Theology, Clayton, North Carolina

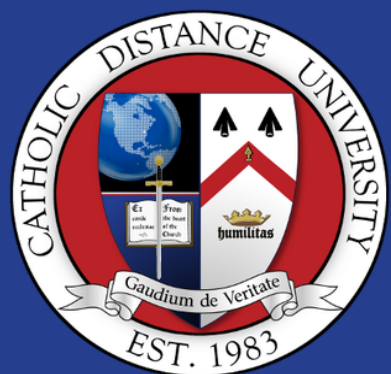
CDU has made all the difference. I was able to grow in my faith and knowledge while continuing to work in ministry. The faculty and staff were amazing, and the education was paramount.

—Todd Mesler, MA in Theology, St. Peters, Missouri



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Throughout the year, you helped us to reach, teach, and bring the Church to the isolated, underserved, and even our brothers and sisters next door. You are part of our story and our future, and we are grateful.



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