

FOR THE FUTURE OF OUR FAITH

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St. Lawrence Seminary High School Mount Calvary, WI

AMY E. REWOLINSKI | CATHOLIC HERALD STAFF

For parents, choosing a high school for their children is a big decision. While there are 13 Catholic high schools within southeastern Wisconsin from which to choose, some parents of young sons choose a more extensive option: the residential St. Lawrence Seminary High School, Mount Calvary.

Founded in 1860 by Capuchin Franciscans, St. Lawrence Seminary is a community and institution that exists to promote, foster and live principles proclaimed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ and articulated in the Roman Catholic Church.

While the school is what was traditionally termed a "minor" seminary — meaning that its mission is to provide an opportunity for young Catholic men in high school to lay a foundation on which they can build a life of ministry in the Catholic Church — not all of the men who attend become priests or brothers. Many choose other ways of serving within the church as lay people.

Andy Sprosty, a retired accountant who belongs to Holy Spirit Parish, Kimberly, in the Green Bay Diocese, is the father of eight grown children and 21 grandchildren, and was introduced to the school when his son Tim was in grade school. One of the priests serving in the school visited Tim's 8th grade Sheboygan classroom during the early 1970s, and made an impression on Tim and his family when he visited them later that day.

"He came to the house and invited us to go over to look (at St. Lawrence), and so we did," he explained. "We got to know the Capuchins, and the rest, they say, is history." After visiting the campus and meeting teachers, his son Tim was more than excited to attend the school for his freshman year. While Tim was convinced it was a good choice, Sprosty and his wife, Avis, weren't as convinced.

"He said, 'I have a paper route, I'm going to pay half.'"

Sprosty laughed about his son's eagerness to attend the school. While they were hesitant to send their son to school away from home, "We felt that we were very fortunate in that it was only 32 miles from Sheboygan. At least it wasn't something on the other side of the country."

While they missed Tim, they also understood how formative those years would be for him, so they made it a point not to take him home every Sunday as the school generally allows. This allowed him to blaze his own trail at the school academically and socially, Sprosty explained.

"Before his first semester was out, we decided that it was a very good choice," he said. "That there were a very fine bunch of educators out there, and we always maintained that

Those guys really kept the boys' whole lives at heart."

The experience was so good to both son and parents that Tim's younger brother Mark followed in his footsteps eight years later. "We see them grow from little boys — eighth graders — to young men at the school," Sprosty said when asked the ways in which his sons matured during that time. "With all of them, we were very pleased with their social development and the way that, to this day, it's amazing" how well they all get along together, he said.

Sam Lucero is the news and information manager at The Compass, the official newspaper of the Diocese of Green Bay, as well as the father of three children, two of whom graduated from St. Lawrence, in 2001 and 2009. For him, it was easy to send his two sons there for high school because of the school's rich history and tradition. Lucero is the son-in-law of Sprosty, and was familiar with life at St. Lawrence from the stories he heard from his wife's family.

Although the high cost of attending the school can be a deterrent for some families, Lucero and his wife, Laurie, knew that it would be worth it.

"When you consider the room and board, (and) all those other expenses that people who attend day school don't incur, the benefactors help pay a lot for the extra costs," he explained about the many scholarships and financial aid available for students. "It's comparable to attending a Catholic high school."

The long distances between parent and child can also be a factor for those who attend St. Lawrence. According to Lucero, however, new technology has helped lessen the distance gap.

"With Dominic, we were able to e-mail him," he explained about his second son. "They still have you contact the switchboard first, and then they page the student."

His older son, Joe, was a little harder to get a hold of during his years there, but they still managed to see him often, even though the family was living in Superior when he was a student at St. Lawrence.

"They have parent/teacher conferences, and for sporting activities families are encouraged to attend the sporting events, whether they be basketball or track or baseball," he explained.

St. Lawrence Seminary did experience a turbulent time. In 1992 the Milwaukee Journal (now the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel) published

a series of articles alleging the sexual abuse of students by members of the Capuchin Order. The worst abuse was reported to have been committed by Fr. Gale Leifeld, rector of St. Lawrence from 1977 until 1982.

While Lucero was concerned about the scandal that had taken place years before his sons were enrolled, a number of factors contributed to their

ultimate decision to enroll.

"We were comfortable with the way the school handled the situation," he explained. "We knew that my wife's (brothers) never had any problems at

St. Lawrence. Of course, parents are always concerned about things happening, but we were very comfortable that our boys were in good hands at St. Lawrence."

"One of the things they really encourage for boys entering St. Lawrence is to act like a young Christian

"We did not 'send' our sons to St. Lawrence. Rather, we allowed them to choose to go. Each son had his own reasons for wanting to attend." Nora Brannan

man," he said. "They have a class for freshmen where they remind them how to be a young Christian man, and that includes showing manners to elders, just simple things that young people nowadays forget to do."

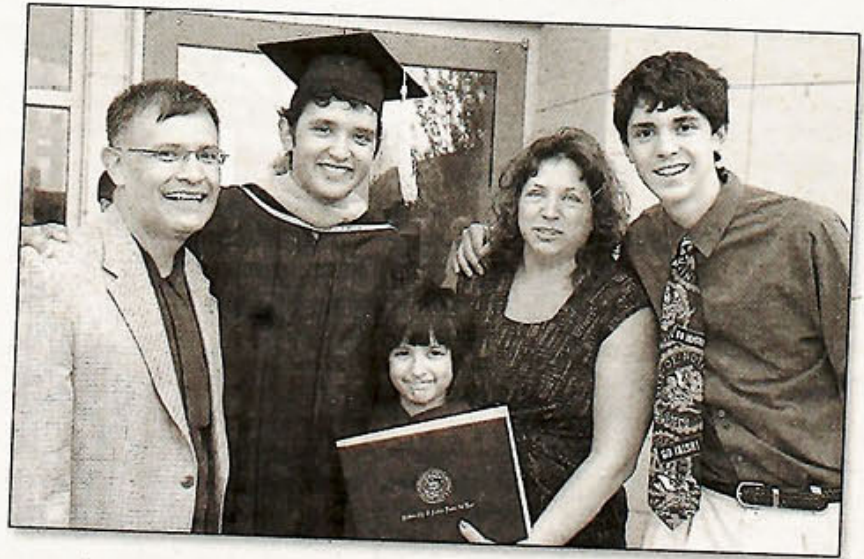
These simple acts include assisting the elderly, holding doors and helping their parents at home when they come home on designated weekends.

"There are subtle things that you pick up when your son returns home for breaks," he said. "You notice the little things that they're doing to help out around the house ... they really instill service to community at St. Lawrence."

Both Lucero boys attended the University of Notre Dame following graduation from St. Lawrence. Joe completed his bachelor's degree in 2005 and earned his master's in education degree from Notre Dame in 2007 and Dominic is finishing his freshman year.

Joyce and James Sundstrom belong to St. Mark Parish, Kenosha, and their son Andrew is a junior at St. Lawrence. Ever since he was born, they

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ABOVE: Joseph, second from left, and Dominic Lucero, right, are both graduates of St. Lawrence Seminary High School, Mount Calvary. The Lucero family, including dad, Sam, daughter, Samantha, and mom, Laurie is pictured above at Joe's 2007 graduation from the University of Notre Dame, when he received his master's of education degree. (Submitted photo courtesy the Lucero family)



LEFT: Joyce Sundstrom poses on the St. Lawrence Seminary High School campus, with her son, Andrew, a junior. Joyce and her husband, James, members of St. Mark Parish, Kenosha, are strong supporters of St. Lawrence. (Submitted photo courtesy the Sundstrom family.)

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wanted to give him a Catholic education, she said.

"I knew that I couldn't afford the one here in Kenosha, and Andrew wasn't so crazy about the school (either), so we were going to settle on a public school," Joyce explained. All that changed when a recruiter from St. Lawrence visited Andrew's eighth grade class at St. Mary School, and they attended a parents' weekend for prospective students.

"We got out of the car at St. Lawrence for our parents' weekend, and I don't think we were there a half-hour, and my husband looks at me and says, 'This is where my son needs to be.'"

While being away from him is hard, Joyce is adamant that it is more than worth it.

"People look at you really funny when you say you send your son to boarding school, and they always ask 'What did he do? Was he naughty or

bad?' and I think they just don't realize the opportunity.

"It's so peaceful, and everybody is so nice," she described the campus. "The boys — and I'm sure they don't all behave like that at home or all the time — but they know how to behave, which is something so different. It's values, it's respect and it's a sense of community that you don't get all the time. I wouldn't have it any other way."

"I call him every day and I know he doesn't like it," she laughed. "It's a much different life than I had at that age, because he's on Facebook. I know everything he does before he does it," she joked. "It's really not so hard. You

don't know the everyday things like what color socks he's wearing today. You miss some of the stuff, but I think you're there for the important stuff."

Rodger and Nora Brannan live in Duluth, Minn., and their son Michael is a junior at St. Lawrence, and another son, Stephen, graduated from the school in 2007. While it was difficult to send both of them to

a residential school that takes seven hours to reach by car, Nora is certain that it was the best choice.

"We did not 'send' our sons to St. Lawrence," she wrote through e-mail with the Milwaukee Catholic Herald. "Rather, we allowed them to choose to go. Each son had his own reasons for

wanting to attend."

"Distance magnifies the general concerns and fears parents have for their teens," she added. "Will my son be physically and morally safe? Will he be bullied by other boys? How will his interests and behavior be influenced by his peers? Will the shadow of the sex abuse scandal in the church touch him in any way?"

While they admit that allowing their first son to enroll there was a "giant leap of faith," the school's administration was the ultimate factor in keeping him there.

"(St. Lawrence Seminary) earned our trust throughout the first year. They have a very realistic understanding of boys in the high school years and address their needs in healthy, age-appropriate ways," she wrote. "All of the years following (Stephen) have been filled with thanksgiving for the wonderful opportunities and experiences our sons have had at (St. Lawrence Seminary)."

"While I may not be able to leave a better world for my children, I can at least leave better children for this world."

A SLS Parent

A day in the life of senior William Mattes

TRACY RUSCH | CATHOLIC HERALD STAFF

Editors note: William Mattes graduated from St. Lawrence Seminary in the spring of 2010.

Feet scurry into the chapel hallway. Schoolbags line the walls, sitting on the floor below coats hanging from hooks. The boys exchange "Good mornings" as they file into the chapel before Friday morning Mass at 7:25. Many St. Lawrence Seminary High School students wipe sleep from their eyes as yawns escape their mouths, but the tenor and baritone sounds of 200 male voices joining in prayer and song seem to tell a different story.

While William Mattes, (a 2010 graduate), said he's not a morning person, Friday morning Mass is one of the reasons he wanted to attend the high school after he came for a weekend visit in eighth grade.

"It's Friday morning so we're all a little tired, but for the most part it's 200 guys singing, I mean, how often do you hear that period?" Mattes said in an interview with the Milwaukee Catholic Herald, describing the difference he sees in the liveliness of the many voices compared to a single person singing at Sunday Mass.

Besides the Masses, Mattes said the diversity, academic challenge and the atmosphere drew him to the school. "It's hard to describe — I don't know if you felt it maybe, but it's just a different atmosphere and I really liked the atmosphere — (I) felt like I could thrive off the atmosphere," he said.

The atmosphere of the residential school where Mattes spent the last four years is different from Ashland, his home city on the shore of Lake Superior in northern Wisconsin, where one of his best friends, who's half-Native American, said there's noticeable tension between the Native American and Caucasian students in the high school.

"I kind of wanted to come to a place where everyone kind of gets along, even though they're different races," he said.

The boys, wearing collared shirts and khakis or dress pants, stood in front of perfectly aligned wooden chairs, and exchanged hugs instead of handshakes as a sign of peace during one of three weekly Masses they attend. Wednesday is the St. Lawrence community Mass, or what Mattes called the "brothers' Mass." The Friday Mass is for students, staff and benefactors and Sunday is when families can attend Mass with the young men.

After Mass, the students leave the chapel built to imitate the story of how St. Francis entered the cave as a boy and came out with a different view of the world, said Mattes. The arches and the structure of the chapel building are supposed to model that "because we're just a bunch of boys coming in and then, hopefully, when (we leave) we see the world differently," he said, able to share the history of each building on the St. Lawrence grounds, part of the school's curriculum.

They say "hi" when they're passing each other on the sidewalk in between the buildings that make up the campus. They open doors for each other. Teachers and students alike greet each other by name, accomplished with the help of the freshmen "name quiz" that students take within the first weeks of each school year where they write the first and last names of the freshmen next to their pictures.

According to Mattes, Capuchin Fr. Dennis Druggan, rector of St. Lawrence Seminary, instituted indoctrination in social skills — things like how to greet others, introduce themselves, eat properly and respectfully disagree with a teacher.

Mattes also explained that students are divided into fraternities or groups of about 12, three boys from each grade level. Senior students are paired with freshman students, with whom they sit at breakfast and dinners, to help welcome them to life at St. Lawrence.

Mattes plays that role for 15-year-

old freshman Jose Uriel Diaz de Leon, who said Mattes guided him through algebra problems when he didn't understand, and offered him guidance when he had to take five tests.

"He told me just take them one by one and I ended up getting good scores," the freshman said.

De Leon said Mattes is a good person with one of the best personalities in the school. "You could describe him as a hero," he said.

When the bell sounded throughout the Laurentianum, the four-story building where most classes are held, David Bartel, Mattes' calculus teacher, asked a student to begin class in the basement with a prayer, with all reciting the Glory Be together afterward.

Bartel asked the student to work through three questions with him on the board before allowing questions and laughter to lighten up the dense subject matter. Mattes answered questions aloud along with the other seven students in his class, stopping once to quietly explain an equation to a student seated nearby.

After class, Mattes and others hiked up the staircase to the fourth floor for biology with Dennis Holm, where one student begins class by reading a passage from "Men of the Bible." Like calculus, the class is quiet when the bell rings and Holm has the floor. Mattes craned his neck to see the board over the student in front of him, and took notes on respiration, before he and classmates headed to



William Mattes, a St. Lawrence Seminary High School senior, listens to calculus instructor David Bartel, not pictured, during a class March 26, 2010. (Catholic Herald photo by Allen Fredrickson)

the lab down the hall to conduct an experiment. Lunchtime followed with a meal prayer.

Between classes, Mattes didn't text friends or talk on a cell phone, because they're not allowed. Instead, he talked to other students, which helps with friendship building on campus, as he made his way to his class on social problems with Capuchin Fr. Gary Wegner.

Music played in the background as Mattes walked into Fr. Wegner's classroom. Mattes talked with students until the bell rang and the usual silence followed so class could begin. After reciting the Prayer of St. Francis, Mattes and his classmates pushed their desks into small groups and discussed the books they were reading that covered topics on social issues.

Fr. Wegner, in his 18th year of teaching at St. Lawrence, said several things kept him at a school where he thought he would stay to finish his one-year commitment in 1992.

"The longer I was here, the more I've come to believe in what we're trying to

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accomplish ... in a parish ministry you can touch lots of people in good ways — here we're, I think, more intensely touching a smaller group but I'm hoping positively and more profoundly in terms of the future," he said.

When he first came to the school, after serving as associate pastor in a Latino community in Chicago, Fr. Wegner thought his world was going to get smaller, but in some ways it got larger due to the international student body.

Fr. Wegner said the community at St. Lawrence, formed around the vision of service, is what makes the school unique, as well as being one of the rare residential schools in the Midwest, fully Catholic and having a full liturgical life with students like Mattes who are interested in learning. From a teaching standpoint, Fr. Wegner said Mattes achieved good grades, but as a byproduct of his learning and curiosity — a curiosity that is fundamental to being a good student. Mattes is what Fr. Wegner said he wants in a student.

Mattes took his turn discussing the book he'd been reading, "Courtroom 302: A Year Behind the Scenes in an American Criminal Courthouse," with three other boys in his group's cluster of desks at the front of Fr. Wegner's room, and interjected comments about his classmates' books. Each student's homework sheet had been filled out for class, something that Bartel said was also common for the students in his classes.

"The students actually do the homework. I mean it's expected of them and we work hard freshman year and sophomore year to get them to learn how to do homework," Bartel said, explaining that by the time junior and senior years come, there's no longer a concern.

Bartel also said teachers from other schools who observed his class years ago commented on the way the students participate, respond, ask questions and get involved, evident during

Fr. Wegner's class with the in-depth small group discussions that lasted the duration of the time that Fr. Wegner gave for group discussion. Mattes and his classmates listened to each other intently, took notes and never let the conversation wander to weekend plans or upcoming sporting events.

At the bell, Mattes made his way to religion class with Capuchin Br. Doug Bode, where he sat in the front row. A crucifix hung on the wall, the same as in the calculus, biology and English classrooms. They reviewed church history and discussed the upcoming test. When the boys' talking reached a low hum in the classroom, Br. Bode would say "gentlemen," and silence immediately followed. After the class watched a video on modern-day Trappists, Mattes headed to his English class, the last of the day, with Lou Wappel, where he would be taking a test.

"From talking with other English teachers it seems like we are able to give them a whole lot of content that they just don't have time for in other schools," Wappel said, explaining that they have reading clubs and sign-up sheets to talk to him about the books they're reading, and the students actually use them.

Wappel said the reason he likes teaching at St. Lawrence Seminary is because he gets 45 minutes of teaching, without having to waste time on roll call and other things that might happen at other schools.

"When that bell rang, you saw, we turned off the video and we prayed and we're going to go, we're going to go for 45 minutes and so I think the



fact that I can teach, really teach and not worry about other stuff, I like that," Wappel said of Mattes' class and the classroom culture.

"It's not that I did anything; it's just that's the way it's done, and that's nice that it's the culture ... the culture is to try your best with sports, try your best with the academics, try your best with the music, and most of the kids support each other," he said, explaining that he could walk out of the classroom while they were taking their tests with the confidence that they would be truthful and behave.

Mattes finished his test with plenty of time to begin double-checking his answers, unsure of only a few. After class, Mattes' day, much like other students who attend St. Lawrence, wasn't over — track practice would follow. He also plays soccer and basketball during their respective seasons.

On a typical Friday night, Mattes may begin working on a paper, spend time with friends or head to the gym. Some Fridays, Mattes gives witness talks where a senior student sits with potential students participating in the same weekend visit he made years ago; he does the same for the parents of those boys, but on a panel with one person from each grade level.

"(On Saturday) I usually get up around 8:30 a.m. and then I do Breakfast Club that's part of the National Honor Society, so I help tutor people, various people in the Breakfast Club that are having some academic difficulties," said Mattes, who then heads to lunch before work crew begins, the twice-a-week, two hour "job" when he works in the information office. Each student is assigned to a specific task such as cleaning or helping in the sacristy at Mass.

Even though Mattes said he didn't go to a "normal" high school, he wouldn't trade his experiences at St. Lawrence. At the school where water from a squirt gun may wake someone up who sleeps in after the morning bell, Mattes feels prepared to move on to the College of Saint Benedict and Saint John's University in Collegeville, Minn., after graduation.

"The single greatest cause of atheism in the world today is Christians who acknowledge Jesus with their lips and then walk out the door and deny him by their lifestyles and that is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable," said Mattes, quoting the band DC Talk from memory. "In a lot of ways it's the message of this school — learn the Gospel, now live it every day."

Where are they now?

St. Lawrence alumni reflect on time on the hill

COMPILED BY KAREN MAHONEY



WILLIAM BURGE
Class of 1985
New Berlin

Married for 13 years to Kim and father to three children, Logan, 11, Wilson, 10, and Shelby, 6, Bill Burge looks forward to sending his boys to St. Lawrence when they reach high school age.

"I had such a positive experience at St. Lawrence and really

want my boys to experience the same great spiritual and learning environment as I did," he said. "I loved the school so much that even when we came home on breaks or for the summer, I couldn't wait to go back. It was like I had two homes and although I missed my family, I quickly got homesick for my friends, too."

In fact, his experience was so profound that when Burge was offered the opportunity to return to St. Lawrence as a recruiter

in 2005, he accepted it.

"I thought at first that maybe my perception was too idyllic and that once I returned as a staff member, that my feelings would change, but they didn't — it was the opposite," he said. "I saw what went on behind the scenes and the dedication of staff and the concern and genuine loyalty and doing what was best in the interest of the students. It gave me more appreciation and enhanced it even more that I saw what went on to make the school run so well."

Now a production manager for Beveco Engineering in Sussex, Burge remembers his spiritual director, Capuchin Fr. Bob Wheelock, as someone who instilled a sense of faith and guidance into his life.

"Fr. Wheelock and the Capuchins really helped me mature a lot in my faith and they helped make my jump from religion being something that is just talked about," he said. "I went from knowing about God and Christ to knowing God and know-

ing Christ. The environment helped me internalize my faith and brought it to a personal journey — and there were no external influences to pull me away."



CAPUCHIN BR. TOM NGUYEN
Province of St. Joseph
Class of 2004 Chicago

Learning to become a good leader and empower others to do good in the world was one of the lessons that Capuchin Fr. Keith Clark instilled in Capuchin Br. Tom Nguyen when he attended St. Lawrence and was a key reason he continued in religious life.

"It is hard to say that only one person inspired me the most, but one thing inspired me and that was the sense of the fraternity of all those at the hill," he said.

Following graduation, Br. Nguyen considered religious life while attending

college.

"I attended Loyola University Chicago under the College of St. Joseph college seminary," he said. "Now I am a student at Loyola and a Capuchin. Right now, I am doing campus ministry at the John Paul Newman Center in Chicago at the UIC campus. It is a ministry of presence, walking with others in their own journey, and I also help out with the liturgies."

Br. Nguyen said it's difficult to imagine life without the strong background of St. Lawrence Seminary High School because much of what he is today he credits to the formation he received in his daily life.

"SLS taught me the values, morality, the view to look at all people with dignity and to defend that dignity," he said. "SLS is also a place where I learned the value of relationships and how all relationships are a gift. I think that without SLS I would be very sad. I wouldn't be as happy as I am right now, filled with the joy of God's love."

St. Lawrence Seminary springs from humble beginnings

KAREN MAHONEY

It's affectionately known as the "Hill of Happiness." Whether students graduated from St. Lawrence Seminary High School in 1864 or will graduate in 2011, a common thread is woven through each of them — a strong devotion to Catholicism entwined with a solid education.

Two diocesan priests, Fr. Francis Haas and Fr. Bonaventure Frey, arrived from Switzerland to establish a Capuchin order in the United States in 1856. Two Swiss Capuchins joined them on Mount Calvary, and both joined the order after building a small friary atop the lush, wooded hill. Four years later, the Convent Latin School opened as an offshoot of the friary.

Initial enrollment was four students, each of whom paid \$10 to cover room, board and tuition. Fifteen students enrolled the following year and 20 more a year later.

Adding a college wing in 1864 offered the high school boys a stepping stone to study for the priesthood. Enrollment quickly grew and another college wing was added in 1867.

Optimistic, the 1868 school year began with 28 Capuchin friars and 42 students in the newly completed friary and college. The joy turned to disbelief as a Christmas fire in the sacristy gutted the entire complex, except for a portion of the church.

The rebuilt school, "The Little Seminary of Saint Lawrence of Brindisi," named after the founder of the Capuchin Order, reopened the following fall. Another college building, St. Joseph Hall, was erected in 1872, and the Laurentianum, the current main office building and classrooms, was built in 1881.

In 1895 Fr. Haas died after realizing his dream to found a Capuchin order in the United States, and with the knowledge that St. Lawrence was a renowned educational institution for young men interested in the religious life. Fr. Frey lived to see the 50th anniversary of the Capuchin foundation in Mount Calvary. He died in 1912, also leaving the legacy of the successful St. Lawrence Seminary High School. The school's name was formally changed from St. Lawrence College to St. Lawrence Seminary in 1953.

When he was a boy, Capuchin Fr. Werner Wolf, local minister (superior) of the Capuchin Friars at St. Lawrence Friary, followed his older brother Eugene around the campus while discerning his secondary education. Fr. Eugene attended St. Lawrence, joined the Capuchins and resides at Mount Calvary today.

Fr. Wolf attended St. Lawrence from 1946 to 1950, and went to the Capuchin novitiate in Huntington, Ind., after graduation. His first permanent assignment as a Capuchin out of formation was in 1960 at St. Lawrence Seminary, where he taught speech, religion and geometry.

For 18 years, Fr. Werner Wolf served as teacher, prefect, spiritual director, formation director and vice rector. In 1978, he served as provincial director of vocations and director of a residential pre-novitiate program, followed by



several years as an itinerant preacher. Several positions later, he was asked back to Mount Calvary to serve as local minister of the Capuchins.

"I thought it would be difficult for me to come back to (St. Lawrence Seminary) when asked in 2005 after so many years in vocation and formation ministry. First of all, I believe the present administration runs a tight ship, but a good one, outstanding formation morally, educationally, spiritually and socially," he said. "Upon returning, I found two items really standing out: one, the fraternity system of student living and life and two, morning and evening prayers each school day and three Eucharists each week."

The Friday Mass is a powerful experience, according to Fr. Wolf, who said the entire student body, the staff and faculty attend as one community. The prayer life and the fraternal life provide a close-knit family atmosphere that draws students together, he said.

While student dress, demographics, enrollment, technology and music changed since Fr. Wolf set foot on campus in the 1940s, the greatest change has been the focus on security and protecting the school's youth.

A sexual abuse scandal rocked the campus in the early 1990s after it was alleged that five Capuchin friars abused 14 former students from 1968 to 1986. The abusive friars are either deceased or left the order, and none was convicted of a crime.

Not one student dropped out when the scandal broke during the 1992-93 school year, and enrollment has remained constant at around 225 students. Parents and alumni maintained their loyalty to the school's mission, but significant changes were made to keep this tragedy from ever happening again, Fr. Wolf said.

"Security is an obvious change. Before, dorms were never locked, nor most areas," he said. "Now, no dorm, room, or activity area functions without supervision by an adult."

In learning from its mistakes, the school has continued to flourish despite a decrease in vocations and, according to Fr. Wolf, the continued existence of St. Lawrence Seminary High School is nothing short of a miracle.

"I come back to the hill that is literally 'out in nowhere' existing in this day and age — it is like Notre Dame," he said. "In many ways, as time has changed, it is a marvelous ministry training school and is going to continue to impact and imprint the local

and total world community in some manner or form."

When hundreds of seminaries closed in the 1960s due to a decrease in vocations, Fr. Keith Clark, president emeritus of St. Lawrence Seminary, saved the school from following the same path, according to Fr. Wolf.

"His leadership brought Capuchins and lay staff together in a common trust and value system," he said. "Rector Fr. Dennis Druggan and others pick up on that and have placed it on solid footing for the spirit, life and culture of the 21st century."

As a student in the early 1950s, Capuchin Fr. Ron Smith remembers a completely Capuchin staff except for those working in the kitchen, housekeeping and maintenance, and a primarily white student body.

Showing the Calvary spirit by being Christ-like was the focus of spirituality at the time, as well as a strong devotional life through the rosary, communal meditations, the Mass and the sacraments — most of which remain constant today, said Fr. Smith.

"One important item that remains constant in the school is the importance of the individual," he said. "Faculty meetings attest to this. When I taught here in the 1960s and 1970s, meetings were long because time was taken for each individual. The growth, challenges, successes, failures, joys and sorrows of our students became part of faculty concern, care and prayers. Faculty meetings and other gatherings still reflect this central concern."

From 1966 to 1977, Fr. Smith taught English and served as a dorm supervisor in St. Mary's Hall from 1966 to 1970. He also served as coordinator of a group of minority students, which called itself the Coalition of Oppressed Peoples and was intended to be a support for minority vocations and a vehicle of instruction and information on race relations and stereotyping.

In addition to demographic changes, the course schedules are academically more challenging than they were.

"There are college credit courses being taught at the upper class level," he said. "I know more reading is required, including during break times. There are more electives available than there were in my previous times at (St. Lawrence Seminary)."

While the school has not had a separate college for more than 40 years, Fr. Smith finds it difficult to judge whether the change is positive.

"I believe that college age students had a great positive influence upon me as a student, especially those who went on to become ordained or entered religious life. The fidelity of these men, Capuchin and non-Capuchin, remains an inspiration in my life," he said.

The focus at St. Lawrence to live a deep spiritual life and develop a greater appreciation of the Catholic faith is one reason Fr. Smith felt drawn to the priesthood.

"I learned the practice of *lectio divina* (contemplative prayer) at (St. Lawrence Seminary) and it has been a part of my prayer life ever since," he said. "I have very good memories that go back to my days as a student in the early 1950s. Friendships formed during those years have lasted through the decades to the present time. Living so close together in the big dorms of those days, living very simply without many things, and in a tight schedule with few options or electives of any kind, our shared life gave us experiences of faith and inspiration."

As the provincial minister of the Province of St. Joseph of the Capuchin Order, Fr. John Celichowski began his education at St. Lawrence Seminary as a freshman in 1976. Although vocational discernment is still an integral part of St. Lawrence, graduates go on to a variety of professional careers, such as doctors, lawyers, members of the FBI, engineers and other noteworthy professions.

The Celichowski family is no exception. "All three boys in our family graduated from (St. Lawrence Seminary), my twin brother Chris and I in 1980 and Tim in 1982," he said. Chris has been married for 21 years, has four children and is a partner in a law firm in Edina, Minn. Tim has been married for 22 years, has two sons, and works for an environmental engineering firm in Milwaukee."

Fr. Celichowski joked that his class was on the cutting edge of technology when he learned to type on an IBM Selectric typewriter under the tutelage of Sr. Veronita. "Now, they have cell phones and social networking sites that were more the realm of science fiction when we were students," he said.

"In addition to the brotherhood, the dedication and example of so many of the friars who served there, the liturgies, learning how to take responsibility for my spiritual development, and trying and succeeding at running after I failed to make the basketball team were so important in my formation," he said. "High school sports taught me a lot of lessons about leadership, self discipline and teamwork."

"Parents can feel confident that by sending their sons to St. Lawrence, they will be exposed to quality Catholic education, become a whole person in body, mind and soul, and learn the central lesson of the Gospels," he said.

"That greatness is not so much in achievement and power, but in service, regardless of one's particular vocation" said Fr. Celichowski, quoting Mark 10:35-45, in which Jesus reminds his followers that to be great, they must be servants.