



Shine, Bloom, and Grow at GMU!

Master of Divinity for Pastoral Care Professionals to Be Offered



GMU is in the process of developing an M.Div for Pastoral Care Professionals. This degree program prepares students for the professional practice of chaplaincy in the fields of healthcare, community-based ministries, social and environmental justice advocacy and pastoral caregiving. We have had a significant number of inquiries about the preparation and certification for chaplaincy but have not had the capacity to assist prospects in achieving this goal in the past.

John Jeffery, who is an Associate Dean on our staff, is a fully credentialed CPE Supervisor with the Center for Spiritual Care and Pastoral Formation (CSCPF) and has been a clinical supervisor of chaplains, spiritual directors and pastor counselors for the past ten years. The GMU Master of Divinity in Pastoral Care, a degree completion program that requires 72 credits, is deeply rooted in the recognition that our rapidly changing and evolving global society requires pastoral care professionals to embody new understandings of how individuals comprehend their relationships to the Divine and interpret the meaning of their human experience. This much desired M.Div. program will be available in the near future.

GMU Graduate Spearheads the Building of a Center of Hope



GMU has many awesome students who come to GMU to receive the preparation they need to achieve their ministerial goals. Todd Lipa is one of those students. He enrolled in our Celebrant Training Program to earn a Funerals Certificate when he became involved in conducting funeral services.

Here is what has developed since he earned his Funerals Certificate:

I am proud to share that since receiving my Celebrants Certification I have been able to support many families at a time they need support. I have learned so much by sitting with families and help them to celebrate their loved one. I know I only was a small part of GMU but it gave me the start to an opportunity I am very thankful for.

We purchased a former Catholic Church on 10.5 acres in Farmington Hills Michigan. We are building a Center of Hope and we have a food pantry, clothing closet and many partners on our property serving families and individuals in need. You can find out more by going to our website at www.caresfh.org.

Through the families we serve at CARES [Community.Action.Resources.Empowerment.Services], I have learned that life can throw us a curveball at any point. The true gift is knowing that kindness and support is a very easy gift to give to someone. The beautiful part is the only time we should look down on another person is when we are willing to help them up.

Todd states above that he was only a small part of GMU for which he is very thankful. Likewise, GMU is very proud to be a small part of his blossoming ministry. Check out their web site for more details related to this amazing project.

President's Message



This past March 21 my wife, Marita and I attended a conference on "Dual Belongings" at the World Mission Institute held at the Lutheran Theological Seminary in Chicago. The seminar was co-chaired by the Catholic Theological Union with the support of the leading figure in missiology at the CTU, Professor Roger Schroeder, SVC. The seminar raised the possibility of

dual or multiple religious or spiritual identities as we enter a new era of shifting understanding about this question. In the past it was quite clear about the nature of religious identity – usually people in the USA were defined as Catholic, Protestant or Jewish but now we also have a growing number of Muslims in the USA and many who claim no religious affiliation or claim to be agnostic or atheists. Since I have been working on a new book with Doctor John Raymaker on the nature of Christian mission in the era of Pope Francis, this conference provided an opportunity to meet with Doctor Schroeder and members of the Maryknoll community studying or teaching at the Catholic Theological Union. Since the publication of *Nostra Aetate*, the decree on non-Christian religions by the Vatican Council II, in 1965, the growth of interfaith dialogue has continued to advance with many new platforms in which it can take place. The lines of demarcation among the world religions have continued to shift and become more porous. Beginning with the writings of Teilhard de Chardin the question of religious identity has now merged with the nature of cosmic evolution and not just the sociology of religious belief or belonging. The globalization of cultures and the pressure of major global issues such as climate change, migration and economic inequality must be addressed within the context of an emerging ethical mandate for all religious bodies and all believers and non-believers as well. We can now view our human community within the much larger body of the whole earthly community of humans, other living species, and protection of the earth itself from further harm to our ecological systems. Religion must be at the service of the earth and not vice-versa for the human community to live and thrive in future generations to come. Tribalism in religion or politics will no longer be able to hold the center of gravity in our interdependent world. At the most profound level of reality, we are one people living on one earth seeking the common good of all who inhabit this beautiful but fragile planet. The challenge of mission today is to see how our local situation is intimately tied to the global context (glocalization) and find our prophetic role in care for our common home.

GMU Launches Mentorship Program



Our Staff is committed to assisting GMU students in having the most rewarding experience possible and we are continually looking for ways to achieve this goal. In an effort to provide as much

support as is needed, we intend to assign a mentor to each of our new students. The purpose of the mentor will not be to monitor the student's performance, rather, the mentor's role will entail being a peer who will have an informal one-on-one relationship with a student, be available to answer questions, and provide assistance when needed. All of our mentors will be GMU graduates who have volunteered to take on this role for the sole purpose of supporting the University. They are graduates who had a very good experience while working through their program and would like to assist our current students in doing the same.

Graduation Ceremony Conducted Online



The first Global Ministries University graduation ceremony via a video conference will take place on Thursday, June 6th, at 5 p.m. PDT and enthusiasm is heightening as we come closer to the

date. This is a new age of technology, when we can join together without the travel and expense. Would it be more desirable to be together face to face? Perhaps... but just as we are now being educated via the internet, many schools and other organizations are taking advantage of opportunities for events that would otherwise be far less possible without this new technology. The video conference will give all graduates the opportunity to receive the recognition they deserve and to speak at their graduation ceremony. Please email us at info@globalministriesuniversity.org if you have any questions or input related to this event.