

# THE FAITHFUL LEADER

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*from the heart of the Church*

SPRING 2015

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## Nativity Sculpture Installed on Alumni Hall

By Jackie Crone, Executive Administrative Assistant, Office of Marketing Communications



The much-anticipated nativity scene brick sculpture is now installed on the exterior of Alumni Hall. Students, faculty and staff, alumni, the Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana, Bishop Simon Brutè College seminarians, and project donors gathered for its official unveiling and blessing on March 25, 2015.

A Nebraska connection, a love of religious art, a desire to inspire, and eight tons of brick and mortar are behind the newest addition to Marian University. While new construction on campus has become commonplace, there is nothing common about the installation of the 16' by 16' nativity scene brick mural which now adorns the exterior of Alumni Hall. Visible at the Cold Spring Road entrance, this sculpture boldly and proudly announces Marian University's Catholic and Franciscan identity.

In 1989, President Daniel J. Elsener met Images in Brick founder Jay Tschetter through a mutual friend in his home state of Nebraska where Tschetter was sculpting bricks in a garage. Twenty years later, while planning the interior design of the Michael A. Evans Center for Health Sciences, Marian University commissioned Tschetter for the 14' by 22' St. Francis and the Leper mural—and discussions about a future exterior brick sculpture of the nativity scene began.

Designed by Sue Horn and sculpted by Sten Eisentrager and Tschetter, the nativity scene brick mural is now a majestic reality. This sculpture is 48 courses tall. A course is a straight row of 16 foot-long bricks. That's 768 bricks, which had to be disassembled, one by one, and numbered for drying and firing before being loaded onto special pallets, layered with protective cardboard, and then placed into custom-built crates for the 700-mile commute to Indianapolis.

## Nativity Sculpture, continued



Jay Tschetter, Susan Horn, and Sten Eisentrager proudly pose in front of the sculpture in the Images in Brick Nebraska studio before it was disassembled for transport to Marian University. Photo by Taura Horn.

In the cold and rain of early March, Tschetter reassembled the mural, brick by brick—precisely, yet quickly—to stay ahead of the rapidly drying mortar. “This sculpture is 16 inches deep in places, so the challenge is to tool the joints flush with the changing contours—a delicate and laborious task,” explained the veteran mason, who admits being deeply affected by this awe-inspiring image, which can be attributed to St. Francis of Assisi.

In 1223, a deacon named Francis got the idea of recreating the scene of Jesus’ birth to help reveal the humble beginnings of Christ. With the permission of the sovereign pontiff, in a niche in a rock in mountainous Greccio, Italy, he prepared a manger and brought in hay and animals for Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. And the rest is history, particularly the history behind Marian University founders, the Sisters St. Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana.

The Holy Family serves as the perfect visual representation of the values that are the foundation of Marian University, according to President Elsener who explained, “We are more like a family of community learners, focused on faith and service, and Alumni Hall—our campus family room—is a great place for reflection on how each of us can best answer God’s call.”

“We couldn’t help but be affected spiritually as we worked and as we noticed the impact it had on all who saw it. It made us think every day,” said Tschetter, who is pleased with the depth, richness of color, and outdoor location. “Being able to view this from a distance, with the right lighting, will provide a dramatic and powerful perspective,” Tschetter explained.

The official unveiling and blessing took place on March 25, 2015, fittingly coinciding with the Feast of the Annunciation.

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## Pursuing the Vision: Preparing Transformative Leaders for Service to the World

By Daniel J. Elsener, President of Marian University



If there is one lesson Marian University has learned from the Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana and their “courage to venture,” it is to pursue our vision, be steadfast in faith and values, and be strategic in action.

Here is our vision: **To provide an education distinguished in its ability to prepare transformative leaders for service to the world.**

Fundamental to this vision is the belief that scientists, artists, business people, health care, and other professionals can be positive, transformational leaders in their chosen fields and in all walks of life. This focus influences the nature and substance of all our academic and co-curricular programs, university policies, and marketing and recruitment communications to potential students and collaborators in our vision.

Here are the three pillars on which a vision for transformational leadership must rest:

### Pillar One: Exceptional Academic Programs

To successfully prepare students to be transformational leaders, academic programs must be exceptional. Toward this end, we must:

1. Ensure every student’s education is rooted in a strong curriculum of liberal arts and a commitment to integral Marian University values;
2. Recruit and retain outstanding faculty who are highly educated, adroitly skilled, and dedicated to teaching; engaged in research related to being an exceptional professor; committed to the development of students; and,
3. Demonstrate innovative teaching that promotes engaged learning and use of the best practices and technology to advance the speed, depth, and enjoyment of learning.

### Pillar Two: Vibrant Campus Experience

A dynamic, culturally-engaged campus is essential to a university culture that promotes leadership. On this vibrant campus, co-curricular student life programs will be offered that include, but are not limited to: mentoring, internships, speakers, athletics, campus ministry, and performing arts. Dedication to the university’s values by the faculty and staff who help oversee these efforts will be key to pursuing this element of the vision with success.

### Pillar Three: Building Character

A process designed to build character, based on the Catholic Franciscan tradition and the sponsorship values on which Marian University was founded, should be intertwined with traditional academic courses and all programs. Other institutions can work to build character in various ways. But because of our strong faith tradition, Marian University ought to be truly distinct in its ability to prepare students as they become transformative leaders in the professions and communities in which they will serve.

Alumni will recall the official Marian University seal: *sedes sapientiae* (seat of wisdom). Staying true to our vision means being a seat of wisdom university dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary, our patroness. Please pray for us, the entire Marian University community, as we seek to educate leaders for service to the world!





## A Trustee's Perspective: "Mission-Rich Culture"

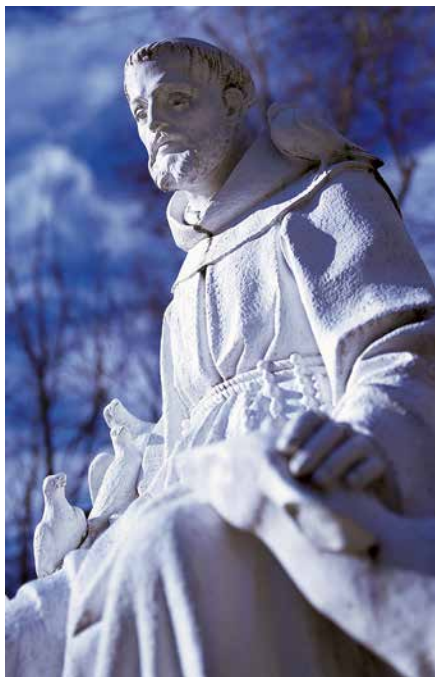
By David B. Haire '71, Marian University Trustee

Currently, 4,599 degree-granting institutions exist in the United States. These are made up of public, private, liberal arts, and community colleges. Four-year institutions number 2,870, while two-year schools make up the remaining 1,729. Of this number, only 200 are identified as "Catholic" institutions. These Catholic colleges and universities share a Christian vision, reflect in the light of faith, have fidelity of tradition, and have a commitment to service. These four characteristics set these institutions apart from the other 4,599. Of the 200 Catholic institutions, only 24 are said to be "Franciscan."

Although I have not visited the website of all degree-granting institutions, I believe that all say—in one way or another—that "quality education" is what you should expect by attending. Many will tout the possibility of a job and many others will speak about leadership, service, community involvement, character, opportunity, making a difference, and a variety of other noble attributes you should hope to gain by attending that particular school. Marian University is no different in that regard. But as we funnel down from 4,599 to 2,870 to 200 to 24, we begin to see the uniqueness of Marian University and what it offers. The fact that we are Franciscan is unique in and of itself, but the fact that we are the only higher education, degree-granting institution that was founded by and sponsored by the Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana makes us a one-of-a-kind institution.

As we move into the next planning phase and we begin to shape Marian University 2025, one thing has stood out more than others. The planning committee has made sure that in all things Marian University, our Franciscan mission and identity are boldly on display. The four sponsorship values of dignity of the individual, peace and justice, reconciliation, and responsible stewardship are at the forefront of every document, in every priority, and in every initiative.

Not only does Marian University's vision see us graduating transformational leaders, but its mission must be that we educate our students in the Franciscan tradition. If we begin to see the graduates and future alumni with the same lens that people saw St. Francis, then we could see the future leaders as "...serene of mind, sweet of disposition, sober in spirit, raised up in contemplation, zealous in prayer, constant in purpose, stable in virtue, quick to pardon, slow to anger, tenacious of memory, understanding toward others, discreet in all things, and in all things simple," which is how author Thomas of Celano (c. 1200-c. 1265) described St. Francis of Assisi. What a legacy that would be. Marian University has taken a giant step toward becoming a "mission-rich culture." Our uniqueness is our biggest asset; it needs to be celebrated.



## Parents of Marian University Medical Student Live and Work in the Holy Land

By Daniel Conway, Senior Vice President for Mission, Identity, and Planning

In February of this year, I was privileged to join Indianapolis Archbishop Joseph W. Tobin and 50 others on a 12-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The powerful history and religious significance of the region were nearly overwhelming, but Archbishop Tobin's spiritual leadership, including his reflections during daily Mass, provided expert guidance on the scriptural meaning of the places we visited—from the mountains and lush valleys to the desert and the incredible bodies of water that are so important to the story of our Christian faith.

While on the trip, I discovered a surprising connection between the Holy Land and Marian University when I met fellow pilgrimage participants Daniel Rushing, MD, a professor at the Indiana University School of Medicine, and his wife, Katie. Dr. Rushing volunteers as a mentor for students at the Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine (MU-COM). One of the students who shadows in his clinic is Amjed Zidan, a first-year MU-COM student. Amjed's parents, both Purdue University graduates, live in Nazareth, Israel. Mr. Zidan is an engineer and Mrs. Zidan is a pharmacist. The Rushings arranged to meet Mr. and Mrs. Zidan and two of Amjed's younger siblings while on this trip.



From left to right: Mr. Zidan, Daniel Rushing, MD, Katie Rushing, and Mrs. Zidan.

According to Dr. Rushing, they were given a warm welcome to the family's home and made to feel like persons of honor. Mr. Zidan told him that in Nazareth it takes three generations to build a home. The first generation acquires the land, the second generation builds the house, and the third generation lives there. The Rushings were served a generous meal (guests were served before the hosts ate), given presents including a box of dates and some Islamic prayer beads, a lovely cashmere scarf, crystals, and a pen, and were surrounded by knitting Mrs. Zidan had personally done.

The Zidans hope to come to the United States soon to visit Amjed. Paul Evans, DO, vice president and dean of MU-COM, said that he is eager to welcome them to Marian University and show them the new College of Osteopathic Medicine.



To learn more about faith at Marian University, visit [www.marian.edu/epiphanies](http://www.marian.edu/epiphanies).

# From the Office of Campus Ministry

By Adam P. Setmeyer, Director of Campus Ministry

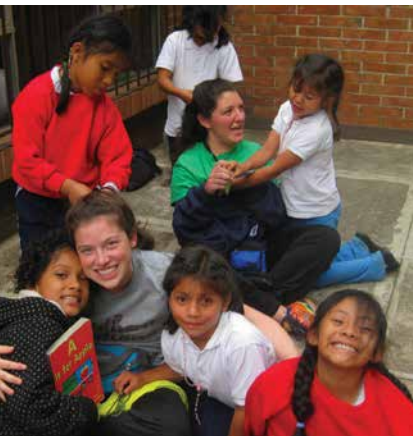
## Marian University Alternative Breaks

The Alternative Break program is rooted in the gospel mandate to “love your neighbor as yourself” and explores social concerns by engaging in direct service, reflection, and advocacy. The program seeks to integrate Catholic social teaching and Franciscan sponsorship values in an intensive week of service at various locations, domestically and internationally.

Student leaders, chosen through an application process, spend an academic year preparing a team of their peers for the immersion experience. These leaders have a weekend of formation to reflect on the Christian roots of our program, learn the philosophy of alternative breaks and the practical skills in developing group dynamics and formation, and identify the motivating

factors leading them to invest time and energy preparing others for a transformational opportunity. These student leaders, two per trip, also comprise the alternative break board, which meets monthly for ongoing formation and mutual support, as well as bi-weekly with their campus ministry advisors.

After the teams are selected through application process, they meet monthly in preparation, which includes cultural and social issue identification, reflection,



Seniors Catie Copeland of Clayton, Indiana and Sylvia Denice of Fort Wayne, Indiana play with the Guatemalan orphans outside their dormitorio.

team formation, and a pre-trip prayer and service experience. We do not send these students to their destinations “cold turkey,” but seek to develop the team to move along the Active Citizen’s Continuum from unaware to more aware of how their behaviors, beliefs, and actions can impact the world for good and, at best, to become willing advocates for those who are oppressed and underserved.



The Alternative Break experience, which has recently expanded beyond Spring Break, now includes Fall Break and early summer opportunities, directly reaching approximately 40-50 students per year. Marian University staff and faculty are also impacted through the opportunity to serve as advisors—two per trip. Locations have included Chicago, New York, Indianapolis, Kentucky, New Mexico, Nicaragua, and Guatemala. Limiting factors include costs of trips which are prohibitive for many of our students.

Most importantly, Alternative Break programs ground our service orientation in faith and require many opportunities to reflect upon the reasons for service and need for social action. Anecdotally, many students have credited their Alternative Break experience with impacting their career perspective and informing their vocational call to transformational leadership.



Sophomore Kelsey McManus of Indianapolis embraces a child from the Valley of the Angels Orphanage in Guatemala during Alternative Break 2014.

## Peer Ministry

There is a short but powerful phrase tucked within Pope Francis’ exhortation *The Joy of the Gospel* that reads, “Missionary disciples accompany missionary disciples.” (#173) The Office of Campus Ministry has created a peer ministry program that is both prophetic about the Gospel message and engages in dialogue with students wherever he or she may be on the journey of faith. This is being accomplished by hiring four Marian University students (one for each residence hall) who are mature Christians, and equipping them to be missionary disciples through training and regular supervision, and then sending them forth to evangelize and equip others.

The strategic plan of Rebuild My Church challenges us to create a vibrant faith life on the Marian University campus, and peer ministry plays an integral role in accomplishing this goal. Peer ministers are a valuable asset to students as they invite individuals to grow in faith, provide a supportive presence during times of need, direct students to the appropriate campus resources, promote positive community practices, and challenge destructive behaviors which plague college students. Peer ministers are calling students to the fullness of life by sharing how Jesus Christ, the gospel message, and Christian faith have impacted their lives.

To do all of the above the peer ministers focus on three main responsibilities: 1) to practice the ministry of accompaniment; 2) create life groups in which the word of God is read, life stories are shared, and prayer is made; and 3) invite students to respond to the gift of faith by attending Mass and practicing the corporal works of mercy through Students Taking Active Reflective Roles (S.T.A.R.R.), a campus ministry program. I am happy to share our first piece of big news. In the just the first month of our program, 123 Marian University students signed up to join a life group. With that in mind, please remember the peer ministers and the life group members in your prayers.

This new residential peer ministry program was made possible through a grant from the Archdiocese of Indianapolis.

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