

*“Open the Doors to Christ”* was Pope John Paul II’s great proclamation and challenge to all people for the Jubilee Year of Redemption. Openness to Christ, this is what we are about at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary of the West. Encountering Christ and having Christ enter into our lives, this is our mission, our purpose, our hope, our vision and it has been since 1829. Mount St. Mary’s of the West Seminary has an illustrious past, a long and distinguished history, filled with great promise for a vibrant future in service to Christ and His Church. Today we value and continue this tradition as we prepare priests for a challenging and exciting future looking forward to a new age of evangelization, ministry and priestly service.

*“Go into the whole world”* (Mk 16:15) said the Lord, commissioning his apostles to bring the Good News to the poor, to search for the lost, to bind the wounds, to clothe the naked, to proclaim liberation and forgiveness to captives, to restore God’s children to a faithful and loving Father. Yet, St. Paul says: “How can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent? (Rom. 10: 14-15). It is our experience here at Mount St. Mary’s of the West that men are still willing to believe, to be formed, and to be sent.

*“Put out into the deep”* (Luke 5:4) the Lord said to the apostles and after heeding his word they brought forth an abundant catch, a miraculous catch. Men are still willing to be challenged by this invitation of the Lord, they are ready to move beyond the safety and timidity of the shallows and to put out into the deep. They are ready to serve the Lord and experience the miraculous catch, the fullness of life He has in store for them. If they are willing to grow in their faith, if they have a desire in their hearts to love and serve others, if they want to be an instrument through whom God can touch and restore His children, then we believe that Mount St. Mary’s of the West is the place for them. Here they will be confirmed in their faith, be formed in the image of Christ the priest and good shepherd, and be sent as an apostle to teach, proclaim, heal and feed the People of God.

We believe that the future of the Church, in our Archdiocese and many other Dioceses in our Province and throughout the country, can be even more fruitful than the past and we invite you to have your seminarians prepare for that future at Mount St. Mary’s of the West. We have a vision for life, an eternal vision. We have values that are life giving and life sustaining for a priestly life and for all life. If you want your young men formed with a dynamic, pastoral, and evangelizing vision and values, then you should consider becoming part of our program and prepare for the mission Christ has in store for us all.

To all young men who enter here we say: Do not be afraid to put into the deep for it is in the depth that God awaits our love, service, learning and life. Pope Benedict XVI challenges us: *“I say to you, dear young people: Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away and he gives you everything. When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return. Yes, open, open wide the doors to Christ and you will find true life.”*