Thibodeau’s Thoughts

During Christmas vacation I read a book on gratitude in which the author committed himself to writing a thank you note a day for an entire year. He then goes on to describe the positive changes in his life that evolve and emerge through the discipline of gratitude. I thought this is a New Year’s resolution I could keep for a week. It is January 24th and I’ve written 25 notes. Each morning I wake up wondering who I need to write to with gratitude and appreciation for blessing me and the world with their goodness. The Roman philosopher Cicero writes, “Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues but the parent of all the others.” The habit of gratitude builds strength and affirmation in all our relationships. Gratitude gives witness to hope that contributes to our work as servant leaders and the growth and development of others. My youngest daughter Danielle went on a service trip to Haiti last August. In September, when I first saw her since the trip, I asked, “What has stayed with you?” She responded, “The children of Haiti have nothing and they smile all the time. We have everything and need to smile more. They are grateful for everything and we have a tendency to take our lives for granted.” This newsletter is a simple way to say thank you for all your goodness, service, and leadership. Your presence in the MASL community is a great gift to us at Viterbo and all the people you serve.

Peace and all good,

Tom

Tom Thibodeau
Director, MA in Servant Leadership Program, Distinguished Professor of Servant Leadership, Associate Professor, Religious Studies and Philosophy

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Tune into Tom on Wisconsin Public Radio

Tom Thibodeau was the invited guest on the Joy Cardin show, Wisconsin Public Radio (WPR.org), this January 8. You can listen to Tom’s conversation with Rob Ferrets on Civil Conversation, and Servant Leadership. www.viterbo.edu/msl

MASL course in Milwaukee this Summer

Exciting opportunity! SVLD 601, Servant Leadership Theory and Practice of is to be offered in the Milwaukee area starting July 15, 16, 17, 18. Tom Thibodeau and students will meet at the Viterbo Off-Campus Programs Office, address: 2323 S. 109th St., Suite 375, West Allis, WI 53227. Interested? Contact Maureen Cooney at 608 796 3082 or at mjcooney@viterbo.edu.

Campus Housing for Spring

Campus housing is available for MASL students during the Spring 2013 semester. Shared lodging in the Treacy House and Rose Terrace apartments is offered for $40.00 per night. This includes university parking, linens and a small galley kitchen. Contact Vickie Unferth, Director of Viterbo University Residence Life, to make your reservation. Limited availability, call now! Vickie can be reached at vluferth@viterbo.edu or at 608-796-3841.
Summer Semester 2013
Online registration begins February 15

Beginning in June:
SUMMER INSTITUTE, La Crosse campus, Noon - 8 PM
SVLD 601 Servant Leadership Theory and Practice, Tom Thibodeau, June 16, 17, 18, 19, (3 cr, Core Course)
SVLD 602 Theological and Philosophical Foundations of Servant Leadership, Matthew Bersagel Braley, June 16, 17, 18, 19, (3 cr, Core Course)
SVLD 610 Methods of Leadership Research, Barbara Gayle and Ray Preiss, June 25, 26, 27, 28, (3 cr, Core Course)
SVLD 655 Stewardship: Franciscan Theology of Environmental Stewardship, Rick Kyte, June 20, 21, and June 23, 24, (3 cr, Elective Course)
SVLD 605 Colloquium, Matthew Bersagel Braley, Ray Preiss, Glena Temple, June 22, Saturday, (1-2 cr, Core Course) Advisor permission required

Beginning in July:
Milwaukee, WI area campus
SVLD 601 Servant Leadership Theory and Practice, Tom Thibodeau, July 15, 16, 17, 18, (3 cr, Core Course)
La Crosse campus
ETHL 531 Interpersonal and Organizational Excellence I, Tom Thibodeau, July 8 -11, (3 cr, Elective Course)
ETHL 532 Interpersonal and Organizational Excellence II, Tom Thibodeau, July 22 - 25, (3 cr, Elective Course)
Course descriptions are available at www.viterbo.edu/ml

University housing is available. Contact Vickie Unferth, Director of Viterbo University Residence Life, at vlunferth@viterbo.edu.

Fall Semester 2013 Online registration begins April 8

Course listing tentative and subject to change
La Crosse campus, Fridays 5:30 - 10:00 P.M., Saturdays 8:00 A.M - 5: 00 P.M.
SVLD 601 Theory and Practice of Servant Leadership, Tom Thibodeau, November 1 - 2, November 15 - 16 December 6 - 7, (3 cr, Core Course)
SVLD 604 Ethical Decision Making for the Common Good, Rick Kyte, September 6 - 7, September 20 - 21, October 4 - 5, (3 cr, Core Course)
SVLD 546 Readings in Servant Leadership, Matthew Bersagel Braley, August 26 through October 18, Online, (3 cr, Elective Course).
SVLD 605 Colloquium, TBA, October 12, 26, November 9, (1 or 2 cr, Core Course)
SVLD 651 Peacemaking and Conflict Resolution, Matthew Bersagel Braley, October 12, October 26, November 9, Online and seminar, (3 cr, Elective Course)
Course descriptions are available at www.viterbo.edu/ml

Alumni Audit Option
As alumni you have the privilege of auditing any MASL course for $100 per credit hour
Contact Maureen Cooney for information. mjcooney@viterbo.edu

Taking a break for a semester? Register on VitNet as Not Enrolled /LOA to maintain your student status.
Coordinator's Corner

With the weight of the political campaigns bearing down on us all Fall, I found myself needing to reclaim the power of words—as fraught and fragile as they are—to sustain the human spirit—as restive and resilient as it is. The following prayer for courage draws inspiration from the writer Marilynne Robinson’s reminder of our obligations to the “precious lives that have been put into our hands.”

May we discover in the daily and daunting rhythms of the semester the courage to teach toward truth and in so doing recover the humility to “hear one another into speech” and know wisdom in one another’s diverse and deepening stories.

May we, as the poets remind us, accept the prevenient courage “to acknowledge that there is more beauty than our eyes can bear,” even as we bear witness with those same eyes to the pain we are capable of causing one another.

And as we stumble over fitting words and stumble on occasion into one another’s ill-fitting responses, may we also stumble upon the courage necessary to lean into the “posture of grace” as we live into and out of the persistent questions made new in the conversations, commitments, and community we create together in our practice of servant leadership.

Matthew

Matthew Bersagel Braley, Assistant Professor of Religious Studies and Philosophy
Research Fellow, D.B. Reinhart Institute for Ethics in Leadership
Coordinator, MA in Servant Leadership mtbersagelbraley@viterbo.edu

Rick Kyte authors An Ethical Life: A Practical Guide to Ethical Reasoning

Hot off the press is An Ethical Life: A Practical Guide to Ethical Reasoning, authored by Rick Kyte, Director of the D.B. Institute for Ethics in Leadership. Kyte, a faculty member of the MASL program, wrote the book over the course of two years. It is intended to be used as an introductory college textbook, but it is also written to be accessible to the general reader who just wants to learn more about ethics. “I had been dissatisfied for several years with the standard approaches to teaching ethics and over time had developed my own method and materials,” Kyte said of his decision to write a book. “So many textbooks emphasize technical concepts and theories that result in making ethical decision-making overly complex. I wanted to write something that students would enjoy reading and would also give them confidence in their native reasoning abilities.” Kyte writes a regular column for the La Crosse Tribune entitled “The Ethical Life.” He is a member of the La Crosse Tribune Editorial Board and the La Crosse County Ethics Board. Published by Anselm Academic, the book is expected to be popular because of its emphasis on taking a practical approach to looking at ethics which includes showing readers how it is possible to work out complex ethical problems in dialogue with others. “Why study ethics?” Kyte asks in the preface. “The obvious answer is to become a better person, that is, to become a better citizen, neighbor, parent, co-worker, leader, teacher, or friend.” The book is available for purchase at the Viterbo Bookstore, at www.anselmacademic.org, and at Amazon. A MASL book signing will be scheduled in the future.

Moving to MOODLE

Moodle will replace Blackboard this spring semester. The university has prepared tutorials to make your transition to Moodle seamless. Please take a moment to familiarize yourself with the Moodle site: www.viterbo.edu/moodle/
Kerry Brennan, ’11, had firsthand experience living through Hurricane Sandy. Kerry submitted the following: “If you believe, as I do, that life presents the most effective lessons, then Hurricane Sandy was a university for those of us in the New York/New Jersey area. October 29 (the day Sandy made landfall) was the end of “life as we know it,” but the beginning of servants emerging as leaders and leaders being served. That was the lesson I observed in watching the humility of those offering and accepting help. I live on Long Island in New York, but far enough inland to miss the floods from tidal surge. It was the wind and surf that caused the damage. And fire… A community of over 100 homes burned to the ground because firefighters were unable to gain access because of flooding with no power to douse the flames. In our neighborhood, we lost power and phone, but our homes were saved. Most of New York City, which is really comprised of islands, although large and populated, was flooded, with homes washed to the sea and ships washed on shore. There are so many stories of people helping people. Did you see the wonderful efforts of celebrities on the “12-12-12 concert”? That was for the Robin Hood fund which has raised and distributed close to $20 million. The Red Cross had set up feeding stations, warming stations and gone door to door to provide help. I’d like to share what the YAHOOs (Young Adults Helping Other Organizations) from our parish have been doing. This is a group of 20-somethings who decided it was time to pay back and offer service to others. In August they started organizing a “midnight run.” This is an event where people made peanut butter and jelly sandwiches to distribute to the homeless in NYC along with warm clothing, blankets, toiletries and loving comfort. Our parish responded with such generosity that there was enough for 2 runs. They had a date set in November and had started sorting everything they had received. Then came Sandy! These young people realized that they had enough to bring to people affected by this disaster and they found a place to do it. A parish in Long Beach — yes right at the beach — was suffering terribly. So our young people switched gears and brought what they had to serve this immediate need. They saw firsthand the destruction and desperation in the area. Their goal was to find the distribution site to deliver the warm clothes, blankets and food they had collected. They found much more. The residents had joined together to start to clean out and rebuild. Our young people returned several times to haul trash, serve soup, and listen to residents with hope. The parish church in that area needed a lot of repair, but the community had already started on that project. Our young adults learned to be flexible and change their plans to meet the needs right in front of them. Servant leaders walk with those they lead and, in this case, just see what’s needed and do it. They answered the question, “What can I do about it?” by altering their idea and learning more about the basic needs of others and finding more to be done right in the moment. Our parish is so proud of our young people and, by the way, they still made their “midnight run.” When we prayed them out of the church parking lot with loaded vans, they knew they were supported by their own community and also those who had already received their service. www.robinhood.org/rhsandy, www.redcross.org/hurricane-sandy, www.121212concert.org

Leland Froelke, ’10, and family are relocating to Madison, Wisconsin. Leland starts January 28 as a Property Assessment Specialist in the Madison Manufacturing Division with the Department of Revenue.

Lisa Schaeffer Kremer, ’09, writes “Through the past few years I’ve been working with Catholic Charities and St. Mary’s parish in Worthington, Minnesota, which has a very large Guatemalan immigrant population. Taking on the issue of immigration reform has become very important in my life. Read about the program: Abuelos y N nietos Juntos: Project aims to reconnect families . Contact me for more information, lisakremer@hotmail.com or visit our Facebook page - Abuelos y N nietos Juntos. www.facebook.com/#!/AbuelosYNi etosJuntos?fref=ts God bless!.

Share your Good Work!
We want to know how you are making a difference in our world.
Email your contribution to mjcooney@viterbo.edu

We’re on the web! www.viterbo.edu/msl