



## LEADERSHIP SOCIETY NOVEMBER UPDATE

You are receiving this letter because you are a member of Saint Mary's Leadership Society, a family of givers who generously contribute \$1,000 or more annually to the university.

Greetings!

Every day at Saint Mary's, I am blessed with an experience of gratitude. I have met new students who have found homes in our classes and on our campuses. Alumni have approached with stories of Christian Brothers who made a difference in their lives. I have often heard from students and alumni who celebrate their favorite professors. And frequently, I talk with faculty, proud of the achievements of their students. As senior vice president for university initiatives, it brings me joy to listen to these reflections and to share my own. At Saint Mary's, I have been a student, alumnus, faculty member, department chair, and administrator, so Saint Mary's has blessed me many times over.

In October, I joined dozens of Saint Mary's benefactors who gathered for our annual recognition of philanthropy. On the second floor of the Toner Student Center in Winona, we enjoyed good food, good company, and we recognized the generosity of friends like you who contribute to Saint Mary's in countless ways. Our president, Father James Burns, IVD, Ph.D., also honored two benefactors with the Heritage Award for Transformational Philanthropy – the Otto Bremer Trust and the Walter and Mary Ann Riebenack Family.

The Otto Bremer Trust was created in 1944 to invest in people, places, and opportunities in our region. Since 1981, the Otto Bremer Trust has generously given over \$1 million to support Saint Mary's students and faculty, programming in ethical leadership, and our Lasallian mission. Two endowed funds honor former Otto Bremer Trustees – the Lawrence A. Carr Endowed Chair in Business, which supports faculty in the School of Business and Technology, and the Robert J. Reardon Memorial Scholarship for undergraduates in Winona. Accepting the award were current Bremer Trustees Daniel C. Reardon, whose father and grandfather were honored in these endowments, and Francis M. Miley C'02, a past Saint Mary's parent and alumnus with a graduate certificate in education. The daughter of Robert J. Reardon is a Saint Mary's alumna, Catherine Reardon B'83.

The Riebenack Family – Walter, his late wife Mary Ann, and two daughters Kristen M'97 and Angela – created two scholarships for students in the Philanthropy and Development (P&D) masters program. When Kristen began attending Saint Mary's in the mid-'90s as a student in Philanthropy and Development, Walter and Mary Ann Riebenack began making contributions to the university. Kristen encouraged them to take things a step further, and they endowed the F. Walter and Mary Ann Riebenack Scholarship in 2003. Sadly, Kristen lost a battle with cancer in 2013. Walter and Mary Ann established a second scholarship, in her honor, in 2015 – the Kristen A. Riebenack Memorial Scholarship. The Heritage Award for Transformational Philanthropy was accepted on behalf of the family by Audrey P. Kintzi, executive director of the Philanthropy and Development program and vice president emerita, Advancement.

While Saint Mary's gathered to celebrate these two benefactors, the university prepared to accept a \$10 million gift toward innovation from the Slaggie Family Foundation, which is overseen by Stephen and Barbara Slaggie and supported by their four children, including Michael B'93. The family's deep ties with Saint Mary's date back to the 1950s. Steve Slaggie's two brothers, Tom and Michael Slaggie B'60, also attended Saint Mary's. Tom Slaggie was expected to be a member of the Class of '58, but received an appointment to the United States Military Academy in West Point, N.Y. Three generations of the Slaggie family have served on boards and advisory councils for Saint Mary's.

The Slaggie family gift is rooted in their gratitude for Saint Mary's. Steve and his son Michael B'93 both place this gift in a tradition of their family and of Catholic education. Steve recalled, "Knowing many, including our son and my siblings, who have attended Saint Mary's, we know the knowledge and strong leadership the university fosters in its students." Michael added, "Our family deeply believes in the importance of the Lasallian Catholic experience at this university, and we are inspired by the students we continue to meet – really, the future leaders of our country who will need strong character and virtue for the challenges they will encounter."

This generous gift will be allocated toward a \$100 million challenge set earlier this year by an anonymous alumnus benefactor. The benefactor and his family made a \$25 million commitment, the largest in Saint Mary's history, to inspire others to step forward to support the university and to position it for a strong and successful future. With this most recent gift, the university has raised approximately \$34 million toward the \$100 million goal.

In this season of thanksgiving, Saint Mary's has so much for which to be grateful. The support from alumni and friends like you is an affirmation of the future of Saint Mary's. You are a blessing to us — through your prayers, friendship, and financial support — which impacts the formation of our students in the love of God, as well as with the valuable blend of character education, real-world preparation, hands-on learning, and ethical leadership skills.

Live Jesus in our hearts, Forever!



Brother Robert Smith, FSC B'76, Ph.D.

Senior Vice President for University Initiatives and Special Advisor to the President  
Executive Director, Hendrickson Institute for Ethical Leadership

PS: For those who have not yet made an annual gift, I wanted to let you know we will be sending out our annual appeal letters soon. We hope you will consider Saint Mary's in your end-of-the-year giving plans. Please be on the lookout for that mailing, or get a head start at [connect.smumn.edu/leadership-society](https://connect.smumn.edu/leadership-society).