

The General Theological Seminary

I am pleased to report that as a result of the generous and increasing support of congregations and individuals throughout the Church, the General Theological Seminary finds itself on a solid financial footing with a consistent enrollment drawn from a broad range of applicants. Since our report to the General Convention of 1985, however, a number of changes have taken place which we believe have contributed to the seminary's well-being.

After carefully exploring our options and the costs involved in restoring our landmark campus in the heart of New York City, the Board of Trustees authorized the preparation of a Master Plan for the renovation of Chelsea Square. A year ago, a major campaign to raise 21 million dollars (18 for buildings; 3 for endowment and scholarships) was set into motion. The campaign, known as the Chelsea Challenge, has already been sufficiently successful to allow us to begin work on our plan of restoration. We have established what we are calling the Chelsea Conservancy to interest the support of persons (and churches) in the New York area who are interested in preserving Chelsea Square as a historic and architectural gem in the midst of the city. At this Convention we expect to formally inaugurate the Chelsea Challenge with the announcement of a major challenge grant that we have received which makes the accomplishment of our goal a realistic possibility.

Over the past three years we have seen several changes on our faculty. Dr. Elisabeth Koenig is with us as Assistant Professor of Ascetical Theology, Dr. Deirdre Good as Assistant Professor of New Testament, and the Rev. William Doubleday as Director of Field Education and Assistant Professor of Pastoral Theology. The GTS faculty was honored with a large grant from the Lilly Endowment aimed at strengthening faculty scholarship. I noted in last year's address to our alumni that in the previous three years the General Seminary faculty had published 14 books both on scholarly subjects and in areas of general interest to the Church at large. Members of the faculty have also participated in the very successful videotape series, "Hear Thy Servants," aimed at engaging congregations in the exploration of their Anglican heritage. To date, over 500 of these video cassettes have been sold.

To implement our stated goal of greater inclusiveness and inter-cultural exchange we have entered into several significant arrangements with other institutions which we believe complement the present seminary program. The Instituto Pastoral Hispano has moved to our campus and has linked up with GTS and the New York Theological Seminary in strengthening its program for the training of Hispanic students for the ordained ministry. We are working with the Instituto to develop ways in which we use this connection for greater cooperative effort and joint student-faculty participation. We have formalized our arrangement with the New York Theological Seminary (an ecumenical seminary with a large black and Hispanic constituency) for joint use of our library and classrooms as well as a number of joint course offerings within our curriculum.

This past year marked the inauguration of the Center for Jewish-Christian Studies and Relations. Under the leadership of Dr. James Carpenter, the Center is committed to promoting inter-faith scholarship, dialogue, and programs that will bring Christians and Jews together in a common quest for better understanding. This Center joins with the Center for Christian Spirituality in offering programs and specialized study for the

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Church at large. During this past triennium we were pleased to award our first S.T.M. degree in Spiritual Direction.

As we look toward the future we continue to be concerned about rising costs and student indebtedness and are working to revise our Financial Aid Policy to respond better to current conditions. Our Board of Trustees has made this an item of high priority.

The entire seminary community was saddened in the summer of 1986 by the sudden death of the Rt. Rev. Robert Rusack, the chairman of our Board. We also note with sadness the death of the Very Rev. Lawrence Rose, Dean Emeritus of the seminary, who died this past fall.

The past triennium at the General Seminary has seen a major effort given to strategic planning and the strengthening of our Board of Trustees. We would be remiss, however, if we did not mention our profound appreciation for the cooperative spirit which exists in the Church and among the seminaries with regard to the shared task of theological education. We are particularly appreciative of the work of the Board for Theological Education and its Director, the Rev. Preston Kelsey. We look forward to participating in discussion related to the Strategic Plan for Theological Education that will be presented to General Convention and are committed to seeing its recommendations implemented.

Respectfully submitted,

James C. Fenhagen
Dean