

knightwatch weekly



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MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE

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Compline Contemplations

You enter the dim chapel. Students meditate silently, and even the footsteps of those filing in around you seem muted. The opening piano notes reverberate through the chapel, and the cantor begins to sing.

It's Compline, a 10 pm service of prayer and reflection on Monday nights. Although deadlines loom and sleep is calling, students often remark that attending Compline never seems to set them behind.

"Compline is an opportunity to close the day in Christ and to join the Church in the prayer that her faithful have been singing for centuries," says **Caleb Strutz** (*Lakeside LHS / Resurrection-Verona WI*).

"It's a chance to take time out of the busy week and feel closer to our Savior," adds **Elena Thoma** (*Manitowoc / St. Peter-Sturgeon Bay WI*).

Compline invites students to cast their cares on Christ and receive his peace. Sometimes in a busy week, that's just what we need.



PROFile: Professor Paul Grubbs

Professor Paul Grubbs is known on campus as an exuberant, caffeine-loving literature professor. Trademark phrases like "Now that's a spicy meatball!" keep his class discussions lively. Prof. Grubbs' dedication to the ministry, however, is no joke.

"As a teenager, I attended West Lutheran High School in the Twin Cities," Prof. Grubbs says. "Two decades ago there were only about a half-dozen full-time teachers. As students, we worked with those Christian mentors over and over again for four years. I graduated with a clear sense that this group of hard-working adults knew me well and cared about my future, in this life and eternity. I went to MLC because I hoped to help replicate that environment in a WELS school someday."

After completing his studies in New Ulm, Prof. Grubbs started on that dream at FVL, teaching literature and composition classes. "As a school of 650," he says, "FVL was a distinctly different setting than West. However, it was obvious that the blessings of secondary Christian education weren't about the size of the student body or faculty. My colleagues at FVL gave students the same faith-based self-worth and eternal security that God had provided through my high school teachers."

In 2011 the phone rang. President Zarling notified Prof. Grubbs that he had received a call to MLC. "He was the first person I ever prayed with over the phone," Prof. Grubbs remembers, "and even from 350 miles away, his passion for ministry was clear."

Now established here on the hill, Prof. Grubbs continues to serve students. "He has mastered the art of constructive criticism," says **Libby Kassuelke** (*MVL / Peace-North Mankato MN*). "And beyond the normal aspects of being a good teacher, he could make watching paint dry interesting."

What's the secret? "When I'm reading, I try to imagine a conversation rather than a lecture," says Professor Grubbs. "If we treat reading as a monologue that we have to endure, the task will be tiresome. The author becomes an opponent and remaining awake is our only 'victory.'"

Instead he suggests students treat every point that conflicts with their understanding as a challenge. "If we respond to those contradictions, we can develop an imaginative discussion with the author," he says. "It's a mindset that has benefits for most contexts—certainly in personal study of the Bible."

