

It is a unique pleasure today, with the approval of Newman Theological College's Academic senate to officially confer the rank of Professor Emeritus upon Fr. Don MacDonald, OFM.

As our faculty handbook explains, "Professor Emeritus is an honorary title which may be bestowed upon academic or administrative faculty who have contributed distinguished service to the College through teaching, professional development, administration and service to the community." I can scarcely imagine anyone in the history of the College more deserving of this honor.

Fr. Don retired from active teaching last year after over 50 years of service at Newman Theological College. He has served an unprecedented 3 separate terms as President 1973-75, 1976-78 and 1991-1993.

The College's relation with the Franciscan community has been, and remains, a vital part of our identity. Without taking anything away from our namesake, St. John Henry Newman, in many ways the heart of the College, and through it the Church in Western Canada, has been formed by the spirit of St. Francis. For decades the teaching and leadership that Fr. Don gave to the College have been an instrumental in shaping this identity, and each of us, especially myself is deeply grateful for this gift.

For many generations of students, for virtually every priest in Western Canada, Fr. Don has been the model of what a theologian ought to be. He has been learned, thoughtful, critical, and creative. Passionately in love with the Church and the College, without being blind to our challenges, ever ready to call us to come closer to Christ. The key to all of his teaching, as he has often said, is that theology must be prayed and lived out in the dynamism of pastoral ministry. Thanks to this commitment of his the College continues to teach in a way that avoids all artificial separation of the intellectual life from prayer and ministry.

For these and all the ways your work, sacrifice, and prayer has sustained our community Newman Theological College thanks you and confers on you the rank of Professor Emeritus with a profound sense of gratitude for you and your countless contributions to our success.