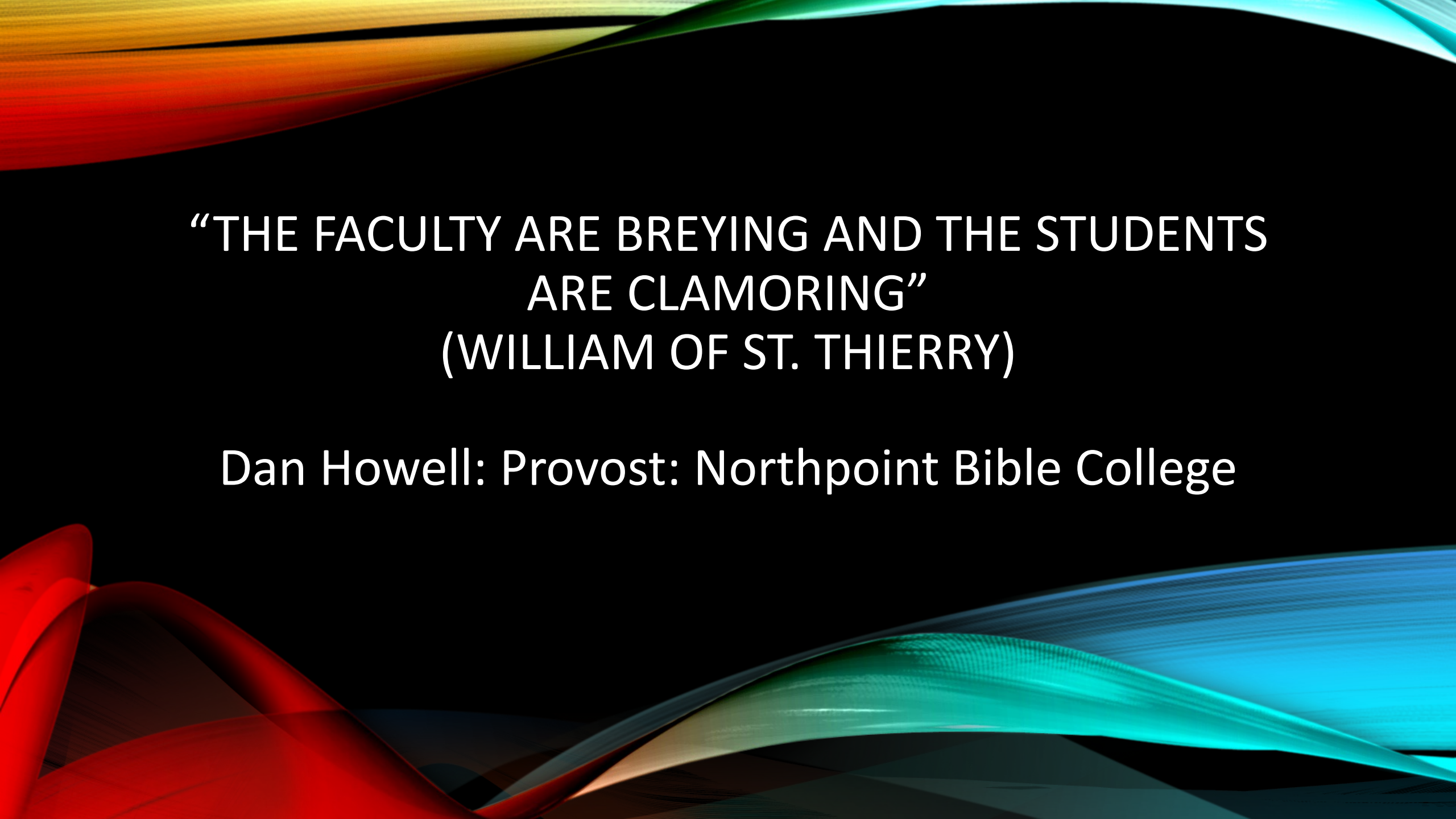




“THE FACULTY ARE BREYING AND THE STUDENTS
ARE CLAMORING”
(WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY)

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A. WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 1. Born of noble parents at Liege between about 1070 (1075-1080?)
- 2. Educated at Liege and Rheims
- 3. Became a monk at Saint Nicaise at Rheims



A. WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 4. Became abbot of St. Thierry c 1119 or 1120
 - a. he is profoundly affected by Augustine



A. WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 4b. William is a profound thinker, draws inspiration from Greek thinkers, is thought and writing is original, yet he is extremely orthodox. His writings are laced with Scripture. (Jacques Hourlier)



A. WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 4c. Hourlier writes that Williams “mind is exacting and deeply religious, inclining him toward complete solitude.” (4)



A. WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 5. Met Bernard - became his friend, a disciple of, mentor.
 - a. involved in reform
 - b. initiated the controversy with Abelard.
(About 1140)



A. WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 5c. if you remember your Church history, this controversy was about how theology should be learned or taught – the way of monastic theology or the way of scholastic theology; some have called it the way of "theology of the heart" and "theology of reason". Eventually, the way of the theology of reason won with the scholasticism of Aquinas.



A. WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 6. Leaves St. Thierry and joins the Cistercian's at Signy in 1135.
- 7. Remained at Signy until his death on 8 Sept. 1148.



A. WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 8. Until the 1700's the writings of William were included in Bernard's collected works.
 - a. *On Contemplating God* is probably his first work written in 1119 or 1120, just after he gets to St. Thierry



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 1. The treatise, *On Contemplating God*, is made up of 13 sections with the final section, 13 being a prayer. His last line of section 12 is this powerful quote. “But now the ass is braying again, and the lads are clamoring.”



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 1a. William has been writing this treatise, *On Contemplating God*. He is writing about contemplating God and simultaneously attempting the contemplation God. He is writing out of his own experience.



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 1b. for William seeing the face of God is a goal in life. Many of his writings speak of this. This is not some mystical experience, but rather it is rooted in Scripture.



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 1c. Psalms 27.8, “When you said, “seek My face,” my heart said to You, “Your face, O LORD, I shall seek.” In verse 9 the Psalm writer then pleads, “do not hide your face from me.”



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 2. Even his own writing is a juxtaposition of his life and perhaps our lives as well. He ends his writing on contemplation with this sigh, “But now the ass is braying again, and the lads are clamoring.”



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 2a. William begins his treatise *On Contemplating God* with this Scripture. Isaiah 2.3, And many peoples will come and say, “Come let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of Jacob; that he may teach us concerning His ways and that we walk in His paths.” And the law will go forth from Zion and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 2b. there is this juxtaposition of desire to know God, seek God but the realities of life pull and tug and maybe scream and those realities seem to win over the still small voice.



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 2c. Hourlier writes in a footnote, “This consciousness that his responsibilities as abbot towards his community impeded his freedom in divine contemplation runs throughout the writings of William of St. Thierry.” (36)



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 3. When I first read William in 2000, this book struck a chord in me. In fact, it struck a chord for my entire cohort at Fuller. Dr. Adams told me that everyone in the cohort chose to write one of their reflections on William. There were 16 of us.



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- 4. I wrote this in my reflection of William, “Of all the books I have read for these two courses, of all the things for me to be able to recall to memory, is his quote from his treatise *On Contemplation* in section 12, “But now the ass is braying again, and the lads are clamoring!” Why remember this? It is a microcosmic statement of all who search for the face of God to find solitude, rest, relationship. The reality of life takes us eventually away from the true reality of the spiritual.”



B. THE CALL OF WILLIAM

- “life gets in the way of Life”



C. THE CALL OF SCRIPTURE

- 1. Psalms 27.8, “When you said, “seek My face,” my heart said to You, “Your face, O LORD, I shall seek.”



C. THE CALL OF SCRIPTURE

- 2. Psalm 73.28, “But as for me, the nearness of God is my good; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, That I may tell of all Your works.”



C. THE CALL OF SCRIPTURE

- 3.Psalm 145.18, “The LORD is near to all who call upon Him, to all who call upon Him in truth.”



C. THE CALL OF SCRIPTURE

- 4. James 4.8, “Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.”



C. THE CALL OF SCRIPTURE

- 5. Rev. 3.20, "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him and will dine with him, and he with Me."



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 1. “The pastor [CAO/Provost] is the guide to the spiritual life. No better definition for the work of ministry exists than this: to put one’s own search for God at the disposal of others.” (*The Pastor as Spiritual Guide*, Howard Rice)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 2. “But the principal tool of pastors [CAO/Provost] is not a particular skill or technique; it is our being. The principal tool for the work of pastoral ministry is one’s own faith.” (*The Pastor as Spiritual Guide*, Howard Rice)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 3. “.....a minister {CAO/Provost} will never be able to be a minister if it is not his or her own most personal faith and insight into life that forms the core of pastoral work.” (*The Pastor as Spiritual Guide*, Howard Rice)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 4. “Ministry means the ongoing attempt to put one’s own search for God with all the moments of pain and joy, despair and hope, at the disposal of those who want to join the search but do not know how.” (*The Pastor as Spiritual Guide*, Howard Rice)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 5. “I am simply suggesting that this training will bear more fruit when it occurs in the context of a spirituality, a way of life in which we are primarily concerned, not to be with people but to be with God, not to walk in the presence of anyone who asks for attention but to walk in the presence of God—a spirituality in short, which helps us to distinguish service from our need to be liked, praised, or respected.” (*The Living Reminder*, Henri Nouwen)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 6. “Then we (when we are no longer walking in the presence of the Lord) are no longer the way to experience of God, but rather in the way of the experience of God.” (*The Living Reminder*, Henri Nouwen)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 7. “Therefore, a sustaining ministry requires the art of creative withdrawal so that in memory God’s Spirit can manifest itself and lead to the full truth.” (*The Living Reminder*, Henri Nouwen)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 8. “It is obvious that Jesus does not maintain his relationship with the Father as a means of fulfilling his ministry. On the contrary, his relationship with the Father is the core of his ministry.” (The Living Reminder, Henri Nouwen)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 9. “As a leader we need to be mystics. A person imbedded in the love of God, imbedded in the presence of God in God’s word, in His voice, in beauty, so we may taste of God's goodness and lead others to it!” (Henri Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus*, 1)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 10. “They (all these other things demanding our attention) lead us so far from home that we eventually forget our true address, that is the place where we can be addressed.” (Nouwen, *Making all Things New*, 37)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 11. “We have indeed to fashion our own desert where we can withdraw every day, shake off our compulsions, and dwell in the gentle healing presence of our Lord. Without such a desert we will lose our own souls while preaching the gospel to others. But with a spiritual abode, we will become increasingly conformed to him in whose Name we minister.” (Henri Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart*, 30,31)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 12. “Mother Teresa affirmed again the truth that ministry can be fruitful only if it grows out of a direct and intimate encounter with our Lord.” (Henri Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart*, 31)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

13. “The goal of our life is not people, it is God.” (Henri Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart*, 40)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 14. “Our first and foremost task is faithful care of the inward fire so that when it is really needed it can offer warmth and light to the lost travelers.” (Henri Nouwen, *The Way of the Heart*, 55)



D. THE CALL OF MENTORS

- 15. “Grounded in a daily silent presence to God, one can allow oneself to be loved and affirmed at the deepest level.”
(Hands and Fehr, *Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy*)



E. THE CALL OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS

1. A book(s) of spiritual growth that has fed you repeatedly, that holds great meaning for you.
- 2. Do you have a life verse?
- 3. Do you have a spiritual discipline that you have put a twist to?



E. THE CALL OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS

- 4. Do you have a favorite quote that helps keep you grounded or has deep meaning for you?
- 5. Do you have a favorite author or authors whose books help you grow in your spirituality?



E. THE CALL OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS

- 6. In your office, do you have a picture or object that you can look at that draws you back to a sense of the presence of God?
- 7. What spiritual disciplines besides Scripture and prayer do you regularly engage?



E. THE CALL OF CHIEF ACADEMIC OFFICERS

- 8. Do you have a favorite quote about Scripture engagement or prayer that brought new meaning to these foundational spiritual disciplines?
- 9. Do you use prayers written by others as a part of your spiritual life? If so, would you mind sharing that/those prayer(s) with us?



F. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS





F. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

- 1. When like William you feel that frustration, of being drawn out of a spiritual discipline, and you hear the ass breying, and the lads clamoring, **you know you have been in a good place**, a place of the presence of God, a place strength, a place of peace, a place of being ministered to, a place where you belong, a place you need before going back to your place of ministry.



THE WORKS OF WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 1. *On Contemplating God* in 1121–1124.
- 2. *On the Nature and Dignity of Love* around the same time as *On Contemplating God*
- 3. *Prayer of William* in 1120s
- 4. *Letter to Rupert of Deutz*
- 5. *On the Sacrament of the Altar* which is the earliest Cistercian text on sacramental theology and written in 1122–2
- 6. *Preface to Sac Alt* to Bernard.
- 7. *Brief Comments on the Song of Songs*, his first exposition of this biblical text in mid-1120s, written shortly after his time of convalescence with Bernard at Clairvaux



THE WORKS OF WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 8. *Commentary on the Song of Songs* from the Writings of St. Ambrose, around 1128.
- 9. *Excerpts from the Books of St. Gregory [the Great] over the Song of Songs*, around the same year.
- 10. Response of the Abbots from the General Chapter of Benedictine abbots in the diocese of Reims in 1132
- 11. *Meditations on Prayer*, written c. 1128-35
- 12. *Exposition of the Letter to the Romans*, written c. 1137
- 13. *On the Nature of the Body and the Soul*, written c. 1138.
- 14. *Exposition over the Song of Songs* his longer commentary on the Song of Songs, written c. 1138



THE WORKS OF WILLIAM OF ST. THIERRY

- 15. *Disputation against Peter Abelard* as a letter to Bernard in 1139.
- 16. Preface to Disputation
- 17. Letter on the Errors of William of Conches also addressed to Bernard in 1141
- 18. *Thoughts on Faith* in 1142 (now lost)
- 19. *Mirror of Faith* around 1142–1144
- 20. *Enigma of Faith*, written c1142-44
- 21. Letter to the Brothers of Mont-Dieu, more often called The Golden Epistle in 1144–1145.
- 22. *First Life of Bernard* in 1147 which was later expanded by other authors after Bernard's death in 1153.