

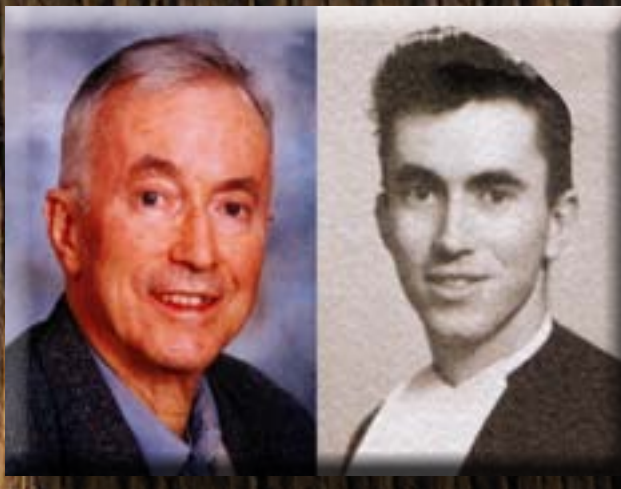
Dr. Geoffrey Kelly

What Students Don't Know

Written By:
Katelyn Joyce

Photos By:
John Vitalo, La Salle
Magazine, Sigma Phi
Lambda Brothers

Layout By:
John Vitalo



A lot of great men and women stand out in the La Salle University community, but there are also many amazing people who might go unnoticed and unappreciated every single day. One of those extraordinary people is Dr. Geoffrey Kelly.

A

Kelly, a two-time graduate of La Salle University, has been strongly connected to the community as a professor, director of the Ireland travel-study course, and an advisor to the Sigma Phi Lambda Fraternity.

After becoming a Christian Brother in 1950, Kelly got his undergraduate degree from La Salle in 1954 majoring in religion, English and modern languages and was the first student at La Salle University to graduate with a 4.0 grade-point average. He then received his master's degree from La Salle in 1955 in religious studies. Kelly continued to travel around Europe gaining another master's from the prestigious Lumen Vitae, an international institute of catechetical and pastoral studies in Brussels and a doctorate from Louvain, an outstanding religious school in Rome, graduating first in his class.

Even though by mid-life Kelly achieved more than most people achieve in a lifetime, he has stayed humble. "One time I decided to make a list of all the honors I have received over the years, and including my label as an international expert on Bonhoeffer, my honorary doctorate from North Park University, and my 12 book accreditations," Kelly said. "When I finished the list I had over 30 pages of awards and decided immediately to throw them away. Nothing can ruin a person more than making their head any bigger than it needs to be."

After returning to the United States, Kelly returned immediately to La Salle and while on a leave of absence from the Christian Brothers and their strict vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, fell in love with his future wife, who also happened to be his past student, Joan.

After the Collegian tried to run an article titled, "La Salle's Most Eligible Bachelor Taken" Kelly filed to the Vatican to be let go of his duties, with mixed reactions from the La Salle Brotherhood. Kelly decided to become public with his love and married his wife. They now have three beautiful children together, Susan, 26, Brendan, 25, and Michael, 23. Unfortunately, as a child Susan was diagnosed with a brain tumor and has struggled through life ever since.

Kelly takes pride in taking care of her. During this interview, when she came up, he went into his office and retrieved a photograph of a sleeping 4-year-old girl. He revealed to me that

Nothing can ruin a person more than making their head any bigger than it needs to be.



Dr. Kelly awarding Dr. Frank Lopinto with the Faculty Award at the Sigma Phi Lambda Formal, 2010.

She said her trip to Ireland was, "one of the most amazing experiences of my life. I was able to see so many places and learn about them along the way. It was by far my favorite experience in college."

Craig Razor graduated as a Sigma Phi Lambda alumnus. He calls Kelly one of the best advisers they could have asked for. Kelly has been advising the fraternity for over 15 years. Razor said, "He always looks out for the best interest of his students, whether we are brothers or not. He not only gets involved by checking on our grades and making sure our school work is done, but in our personal life as well. We consider him both a friend and a mentor." Razor's favorite night each year is hoagie night, which takes place at Kelly's home and is hosted by Kelly and his family.

Erin Warren not only took the travel-study course with Kelly, but has also had him for two of her honors courses. When asked how she feels about his teaching styles, Warren said, "I loved taking his classes. They are very student-friendly. He relies much on discussion from the students to help us learn the material. Even though discussion is important, he never makes you feel pressured to participate if you do not feel comfortable. He also tries to get a lot of visual material that relates to the topic and makes it easier for students to understand."

Warren summed up her relationship with Dr. Geoffrey Kelly by saying, "Dr. Kelly is so sweet and full of life that you can't help but love him."
(Note: Dr. Kelly retired from full-time teaching after the spring 2011 semester.)



Photo to left: Sigma Phi Lambda fraternity pictured with "Doc" and Susan.

Page 2: Susan with La Salle students at the annual Susan B. Kelly Volleyball Tournament.

Front Cover: Top Right: Dr. Kelly with fellow fraternity moderator, Brother Gerry Molyneaux. Bottom Left: Dr. Kelly in '10 and '54.

Kelly was the first student at La Salle University to graduate with a 4.0 grade-point average.