Arriving back to North America was a bit of a shock for me. I was anticipating the "normal" adjustments back to North American culture, but I also needed to adjust to the reality of COVID, which was far different here in North America than it was in Tanzania. I arrived in Washington, D.C. on August 1st and our school year was set to begin on August 15th. I had just enough time to quarantine for 14 days before school started. But I also had to unpack, go through a year's mail, check in with a few people, try to reconnect different services that I had suspended while away, and prepare my classes. In addition—and this caused me the most stress—I had to learn how the new classroom technology works for our return to teaching.

Like many schools, Mount St. Mary's University sent students home in March, 2020. But for the fall semester, the Mount decided to go to a hybrid model of inclass and online classes. The composition of students included three groups: students in residence, students who decided to stay home and learn in a completely remote setting, and commuter students. Students in residence and commuter students were divided into two groups for each class, so that we would have slightly less than half capacity for each classroom on a given day. Students were required to wear masks and to be socially distanced from each other.

We have new technology to assist us in teaching and learning, but it has quite the learning curve for "veterans" like me! Learning how to set up a ZOOM meeting for each class is relatively easy, but learning how to manipulate the classroom technology is a bigger challenge. As you can see below, I am giving it my best shot, while trying to inject some "personality" into the situation!
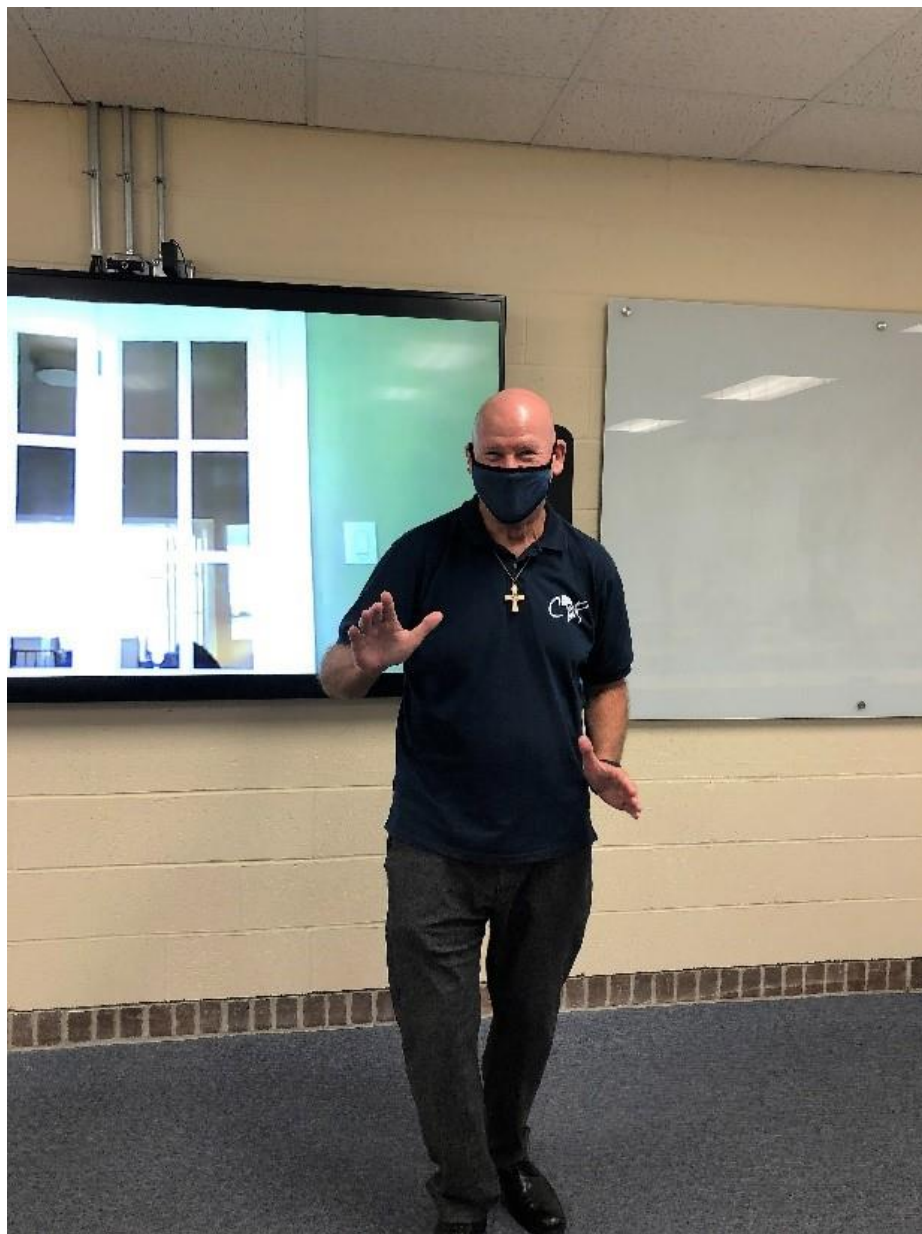
With some practice and assistance from other teachers, I was able to learn how to adjust cameras and sound, how to share documents, organize chats, and create virtual breakout rooms.

The biggest challenge in the fall semester was that many students on ZOOM did not turn their cameras on while attending remotely. The result was endless frustration when I asked a question of a student who did not turn on his/her camera: "I am sorry, where are we now?" or "I am sorry, could you repeat that please?" or "What number are we on now?" Indeed, people often did not join a breakout room or continued to be "present" when the class was over. It seems that all of us suffer from the temptation of doing "something else" while we are on ZOOM! We quickly learned that as a tool for learning, ZOOM needs personal discipline to be engaged in the learning process. Consequently, in the spring semester, all students are required to have their cameras on in order to be part of the class. If technical problems exist, we deal with them on an individual basis, but having the camera on is the default position for classroom learning now.

For the fall semester I taught a first-year symposium class that all our first-year students are required to take. The focus of the course is to explore the question of what it is to be human. I also taught several sections of our second core theology course to students who are in their third year. The course is entitled "Encountering Christ." For this course, I used Gerhard Lohfink's *Jesus of Nazareth: What He*

Wanted, Who He Was (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2012) and Brendan Bryne's *The Hospitality of God: A Reading of Luke's Gospel*, revised edition (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2015).

"What would Jesus Christ look like?" (National Catholic Reporter contest, 2000) In the spring semester I am teaching several sections of our first core theology course to second-year students. This course is called "Foundations of Theology: Faith and Revelation." The course provides an introduction to understanding the Bible, including concepts such as inspiration, inerrancy, interpretation, revelation, and

faith. But, the main part of the course is about salvation history as it is revealed through the Old Testament's key stories of creation, the fall, the covenant, the exodus, the kingship, and the exile. Besides the Bible, the main texts that I use are Gerhard Lohfink's *Does God Need the Church? Toward a Theology of the People of God* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1999) and Sr. Mary Kate Birge's "Genesis" in *Genesis: Evolution and the Search for a Reasoned Faith* (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2011).
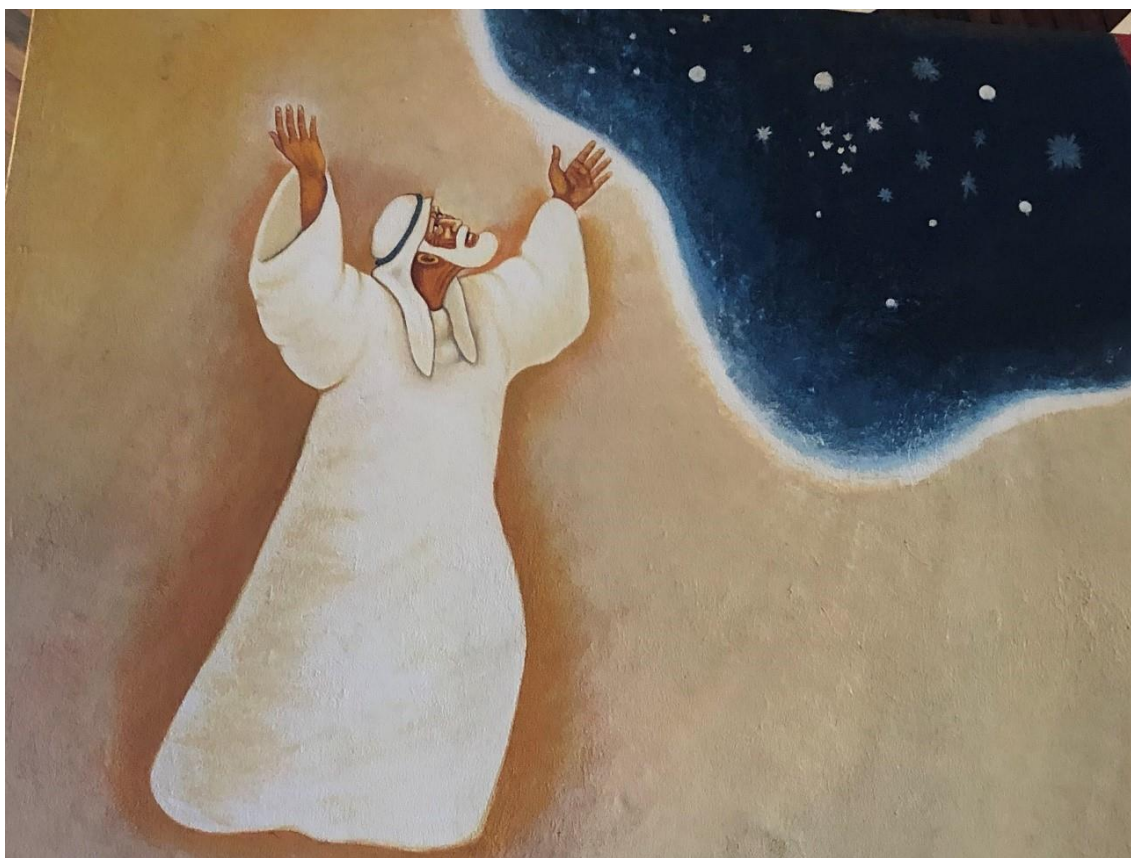
The covenant with Abraham (depicted in the sanctuary of Jordan University College chapel in Morogoro, Tanzania).

As you can see from these photos, my time in Tanzania has provided me with a new perspective in teaching these courses. My horizons were broadened in Tanzania, and my hope is that I will convey some of these new and challenging perspectives to my students—even in the midst of a pandemic!