



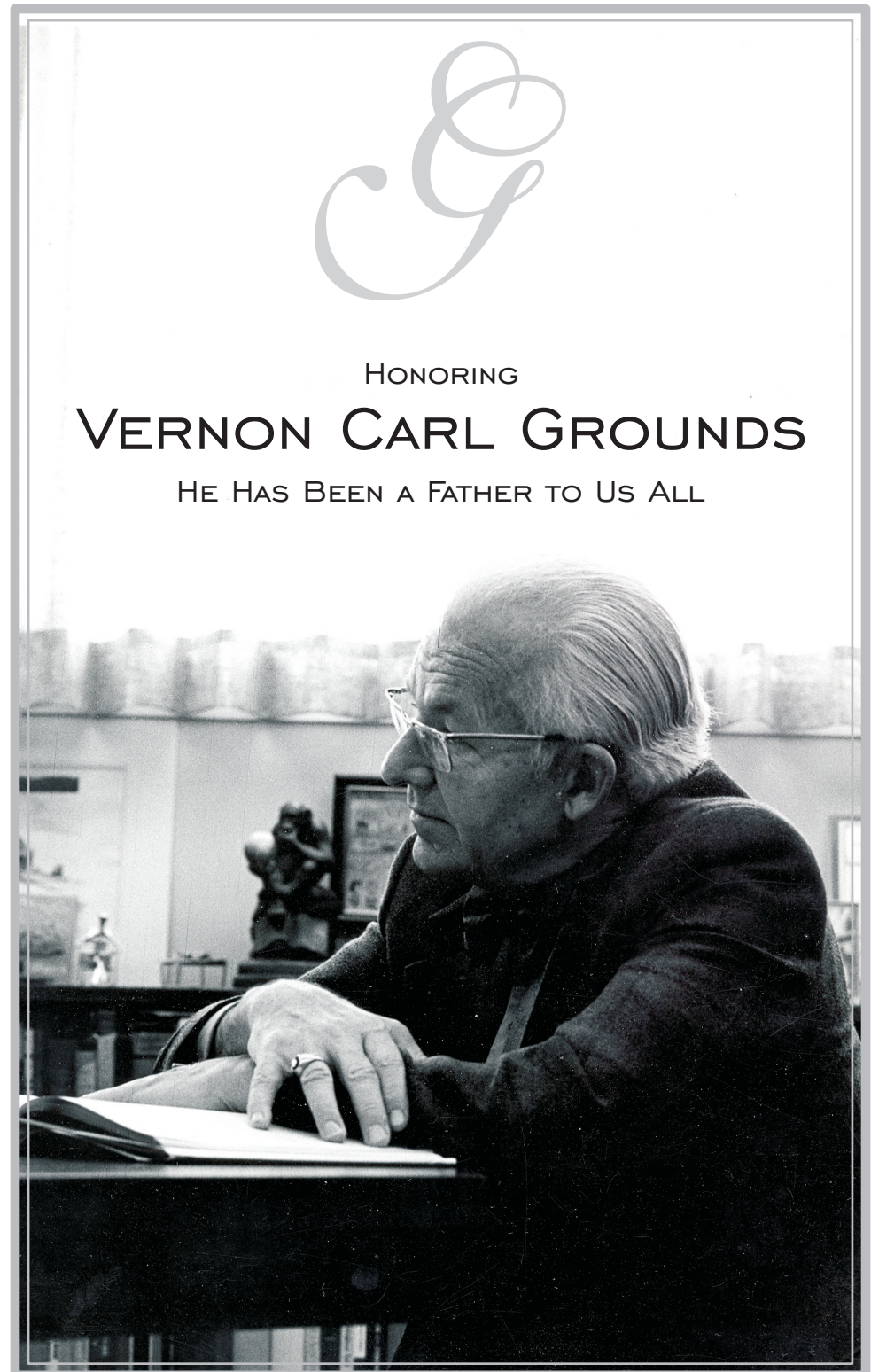
The Artist: Francisco Delissalde, sculptor

Title: bust of mounsieur Vernon C. Grounds

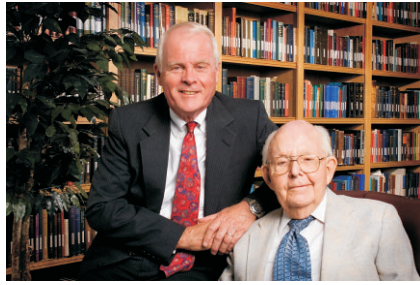
Bust, bronze, cire perdue cast, on separate bronze round-base
and bronze square-counterbase

Height: 18 inches (without base); Width: 11 inches; Depth: 10.5 inches

Inscribed on the truncation of the back: Delissalde--MMVIII



HONORING
VERNON CARL GROUNDS
HE HAS BEEN A FATHER TO US ALL



GORDON MACDONALD AND VERNON GROUNDS, 2008

Wherever people speak of Vernon Carl Grounds, one is likely to hear one or more of the following themes:

His genuine, compassionate love for all people, especially those who are weak, who feel unloved or who find themselves in deep trouble;

His extraordinary listening skills that make each person feel that he or she is the absolute center of his unhurried and patient attention;

His unique sense of humor and his exquisite use of words to express the content of his heart;

His affectionate ways that convey to people warmth, acceptance and personal concern;

His ability to marry Scripture to the complex issues of our day;

His attraction to fresh ideas and innovations that promise to advance the interests of the Kingdom of God;

His love of books and his generosity in giving them away to people in search of answers to great questions;

His keen memory of Christian hymns, poetry and quotations from even the most obscure of saints and faithful people;

His unforgettable, one-of-a-kind, even “quirky,” classroom manner in which students have been encouraged to dialogue, to think “out of the box,” and to grow in their visions to serve in the name of Jesus;

His gracious attitude toward those who, at one time or another, have been his critics;

His commitment to justice, creation-care, peace and the welfare of the poor.

Vernon Grounds, the second president of Denver Seminary, has been a scholar unafraid to engage with thinking far beyond the pale of traditional Christian theology. He has been an inspirational leader, trusted by students, faculty and

Seminary supporters because of his integrity and Christian character. He has been a pastor, a counselor, a mentor and a professor. But none of these roles or titles should eclipse his role of being a remarkable friend to many.

Throughout the years, Vernon Grounds has been a man of unusual Christian grace: consistently cheerful and optimistic, ever assuring others of the faithfulness of God. No one has ever seen him strive for position or power, seek notoriety or clamor for material wealth. He has fulfilled the spirit of the words which Jesus once spoke to Simon Peter in that restorative conversation on the shore of Galilee, “you must follow me.”

Vernon Grounds was born July 19, 1914, in Jersey City, New Jersey. He committed himself to faith in Jesus Christ in the summer of 1929. He gained his Bachelor of Arts degree at Rutgers University, his Bachelor of Divinity degree at Faith Seminary and his Doctorate of Philosophy degree in Psychology at Drew University.

Dr. Grounds married Ann Barton on June 17, 1939. She has been his patient and faithful partner throughout all of these years of strenuous service, and the Seminary will never be able to express enough appreciation to her for the sacrifices she has made in encouraging her husband’s work. Dr. and Mrs. Grounds have one daughter, Barbara, who is married to Robert Owen.

Vernon Grounds came to Denver Seminary in 1951 as its first dean. When President Dr. Carey S. Thomas died in 1955, Dr. Grounds was asked to serve as the Seminary’s second president. He remained in that position for 24 years, stepping down in 1979. Since then he has been the Seminary’s Chancellor usually arriving at his office early in the morning so that he can visit and counsel with anyone wishing to draw from his wisdom.

One word seems to characterize the 57 years that Vernon C. Grounds has served God at Denver Seminary. It is the word *father*. In truth, he has been a father to us all, for we have found in him all that one seeks in a father: encouragement, wisdom and guidance, grace, affection, thoughtfulness, and Godliness.

In an expression of our never-ending gratitude to Vernon Grounds, the Denver Seminary family affectionately and gratefully dedicates this bust in bronze to his honor. We do it with the hope it will inspire all who pass by this place and who pause to fix upon this replica of his beautiful face. Perhaps in that reflective moment they will perceive the greatness of his legacy: to love people without conditions and, like a father, to point them in the direction of Jesus.

Gordon MacDonald
Interim President, Denver Seminary
6 March 2009