Two Nights to Remember
Campus Celebration and Beverly Hills Gala Mark 35th Anniversary

September 16, 2006, students, faculty, and staff gathered in St. Joseph’s Square next to the Commons to commemorate the 35th Anniversary of Thomas Aquinas College. The first of two special events to mark this milestone in the College’s history, the campus celebration consisted of a Mass of Thanksgiving followed by a banquet under a spacious canopy where even an ominous orange glow in the sky and falling ash from a nearby major California brush fire could not dampen the enthusiasm.

The College is deeply grateful to His Excellency the Most Reverend Fabian Bruskewitz, Bishop of Lincoln, Nebraska, who presided over the day’s events as the principal celebrant and homilist at the Mass and keynote speaker at the dinner later on that evening. He began his dinner talk with a ringing endorsement of Thomas Aquinas College, saying, “It is no flattery, but a fact, to point out that for many Catholics...” He then went on to discuss the relationship between faith and reason in Catholic higher education, referring to the University of Regensburg lecture that Pope Benedict XVI had given just days before.

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The six permanent residence halls called for in the College’s Master Plan (three for men and three for women) have now been completed. Due to the long and narrow shape of the buildings onto which private dorm rooms opened. Thus situated, the “common rooms” proved to be effective locations for promoting friendship among the students; even the shyest students came into daily contact with fellow students of all classes. The seven permanent residence halls, called for by the College’s Master Plan (three for men and three for women) have now been completed. Com-
From the Desk of the President

Some Reflections on our 35th Anniversary

Over a century ago, John Henry Cardinal Newman opened the School of Philosophy and Letters at his newly founded Catholic University of Ireland with a lecture addressed to its faculty and students. In this lecture, Cardinal Newman explained that a common civilization has developed in the West which, though nurtured in various soils, is most strongly rooted in Ancient Greece and Palestine. Especially noteworthy is the fact that the Word of God became incarnate within this civilization which, in consequence, has been further cultivated and formed by Christianity. According to Newman, this civilization is based upon common principles, views, teachings, and especially books: indeed, the classics and the liberal studies to which they give rise have always been, he said, what the civilized world has adopted as the instruments of education.

Sustaining Civilization

Cardinal Newman’s purpose in his opening lecture was to invest the inauguration of the School of Philosophy and Letters with a solemnity and moment of a peculiar kind. Those who were embarking upon the endeavor were, in his words, “but re-creating an old tradition in carrying on those august methods of enlarging the mind, cultivating the intellect, and refining the feelings in which the process of civilization ever consisted.”

As we celebrate Thomas Aquinas College’s 35th anniversary, I am mindful of Newman’s lecture for two reasons: first, we at the College are doing the same kind of thing that Newman so vigorously espoused. For 35 years, our students have engaged in those venerable studies which shape the intelligence and lead to a knowledge of the highest truths. It is right to say that such studies serve to perpetuate what is best in our civilization. Indeed, if Newman is right, such studies make civilization possible.

Holding Firm

Secondly, within his lecture Newman exhorted his listeners to hold firm in the face of what he understood to be a movement day against the classics. He saw clearly that practical exigencies are one thing, the cultivation of the intellect quite another, and he resolutely upheld the importance of liberal education. For 35 years, Thomas Aquinas College has withstood similar movements, and this milestone year in our history is an occasion to recommit ourselves to our noble work.

While a consideration of the seven liberal arts and the studies to which they lead reveals their intrinsic superiority both for forming the mind and for fostering true wisdom, no school exists in the abstract. Thomas Aquinas College exists at a particular time and in a particular educational climate. In our own day we are witnessing a sustained and vigorous attack against the classics and against the whole of liberal learning. We are being urged from every quarter to abandon what is perennial and worthwhile in itself in favor of what is said to be practically or politically advantageous.

This is, of course, shortsighted at best. For, as Newman rightly pointed out, if our civilization is to survive, we cannot ignore those studies which have nourished and sustained it. No matter how glorious the bloom of civilization may seem, it is cut off from its roots, it can only wither and die. At Thomas Aquinas College, we are conducting our studies at a time when there are pressures from all sides to cast away what is seen as old and out-dated and to reject the substantial in favor of the expedient. These pressures can be powerful, but we continue to stand firm against them and wholeheartedly embrace our program of liberal studies. The Road to Wisdom

Socrates tells us that the unexamined life is not worth living. In their four years here, our students live the examined life. They consider nature, the human soul, and God. They wonder about quantity, about motion, and about the heavens. Plato helps them to see what they do not know and quickens their desire to seek the true and the good. Aristotle distinguishes and makes more accessible to them the things that can be naturally known. Augustine brings them face to face with Christ, and Aquinas introduces them to the sublime mysteries of the Trinity. Through our program, they wonder about the most important questions facing any person in any age. By nurturing their sense of wonder and taking their studies seriously, these young people make a firm beginning on the road to wisdom.

Our intelligence is our greatest gift from God, and our minds are meant to know. In undertaking the program of liberal studies offered here, our students have an opportunity to engage in the highest kind of activity and the most worthwhile in itself. By putting away for a while the transient, the inconsequential, and the mundane, they reach for the enduring, the noble, and the divine.

The Light of Faith

We are heirs of a precious intellectual patrimony. The Catholic tradition of liberal learning is the greatest the world has seen. For not only does it respect the deepest thinkers through the ages, it finally rests on the Word of God Himself. Our Catholic faith is a sure guide in our intellectual endeavors, and as it elevates our studies, it invests them with a wisdom that is divine in its origin and therefore sure in its direction and resplendent in its end.

On the recent feast of our patron, St. Thomas Aquinas, Pope Benedict XVI reflected on the relationship of faith and reason, saying, “It is urgent...to render to human rationality open to the light of the divine Logos and to its perfect revelation that is Jesus Christ, Son of God made man.” “Faith implies reason and perfects it,” the Holy Father continued, “and reason, illuminated by faith, finds the strength to rise to knowledge of God and of spiritual realities...”

This is the work in which we engage at Thomas Aquinas College. We are dedicated to helping form well the minds and souls of our young people so that throughout their lives they will seek and uphold the truth as it is illuminated by the twin beacons of faith and reason.

A Noble Task

As we celebrate our 35th Anniversary, I invite you to join us in our noble task by renewing your commitment to genuine Catholic liberal education. First and foremost, I ask that you support Thomas Aquinas College and our students with your prayers, because only by the grace of God shall we succeed in our task.

Second, I ask that you help the College financially to the extent you are able. Elsewhere in the pages of this newsletter you will read about two building projects taking place on our campus—our faculty center and the crown jewel of the campus, Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. We have received to date nearly $20 million in funding for these projects, and I am deeply grateful to the many generous friends and alumni who have stepped forward to help. To complete these buildings, however, an additional $5 million is needed. Moreover, an additional $3.7 million for financial aid and operational costs is needed this year.

As you can see, the challenge is great. Yet, not only will your generosity directly influence the lives of our students, it will be far-reaching in its effects as these young people take the formation they receive at the College into the world.

Many of our graduates are already in positions of leadership. They are having a profound influence for good as teachers in colleges, universities, and seminaries both in the United States and abroad. One is the president of her Dominican Order’s college in Nashville; another is the Superior General of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter, in charge of over 300 priests and seminarians worldwide; still another (story on page 11) has responsibility for the deans, department heads, and faculty for 10,000 students at six of the colleges of the Pontifical University of Puerto Rico.

Some of our alumni are praying for the world from within their cloisters, while others are teaching in seminaries, helping to form scores of young men preparing for the priesthood. Even more alumni are teaching in classrooms from kindergarten to graduate school across the country, and still more are faithful Catholic parents raising children to be similarly faithful. Those who have come into law, business, military or public service, journalism, and medicine are having an influence for good in their workplaces.

Your generosity accomplishes great good here on our campus, in our country, and in the Church. Please help us as we seek to more firmly establish Thomas Aquinas College so that future generations of young people will have the opportunity to be well-formed intellectually, morally, and spiritually through our program of genuine Catholic liberal education.

Millions of Dollars

Donors of Endowed Scholarships

$69.05 M Benefactor Endowments

$27.33 M Capital Foundation Grants

$10.0 M Dan Murphy Foundation Grant

$7.4 M Board of Governors Cash Pledge

As of January 22, 2007
Chapel Columns Installed

The Botticino marble columns that line the nave of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel have posed an interesting, and in some ways, unique set of challenges for Mr. Randy Fulton of Stegman & Kastner, Inc., the company managing the construction of the Chapel (see story above), and the whole construction team.

In most cases with which Mr. Fulton is familiar, marble columns are made from segments that can be installed with relative ease. However, desiring the integrity and strength that whole columns provide and wishing to avoid unsightly seams between segments, the College decided instead to have whole columns fabricated from solid blocks of marble, they would then be bored and placed over steel shafts.

"The procurement of marble can be a tricky thing structurally-suitable marble and aesthetically pleasing marble may have competing requirements," explains Randy. "Marble's natural beauty is frequently related to the veining found in it," he continues, "but that veining is also where it is often most structurally unsound. To try to create the correct aesthetic of the marble while maintaining materials that are suitable for supporting solid, one-piece columns is a real challenge." Having some experience in this area, he accompanied Dr. Dillon to Italy to help select appropriate marble.

In the fall, the 14-foot polished columns were delivered to the campus. Installing them required the finely-tuned coordination of various subcontractors on the project, orchestrated by Mr. Rick Littman, the construction superintendent for HMH Construction. Even before the columns arrived on campus, the cores bored from both ends through the centers of the columns by fabricators in Italy had to match precisely with the steel support shafts made by contractors thousands of miles away. Once the marble columns were on site, careful planning took place among the workmen who would actually put them in place. Never having been called upon for work of this nature, they pooled their many years of construction experience and came up with a procedure to help ensure that the columns would reach their destinations safely.

Over a period of days, as students and faculty looked on in wonder, each of the 20 columns was hoisted more than 50 feet into the air, slowly passed over the walls of the Chapel, and carefully guided into place over the steel shafts already in place (see photos). The marble columns have now been covered with protective, steel-reinforced wooden cases that will remain in place until interior work begins.

Mr. Fulton’s firm chose to work on the Chapel project in part because of its unique architecture. As Randy explains, "Though it may be an oxymoron to say that Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity’s traditional Romanesque architecture is unique, it is certainly the case that to do something like this today is unique. It’s a wonderful thing to see this architecture coming back for this facility." In addition, the structural systems chosen for the Chapel were of special interest to Randy and his firm. "This sort of masonry shear wall construction for the perimeter and the steel and wood support systems for the interior, including the roof and the dome, are unusual for a building of this type," he says. "It’s a very cost-effective, permanent type of construction. Frequently, on this scale, there is a desire to go to other materials that might be cheaper, but only in the short run. When you look at the life-cycle/cost-analysis of a structure like this that is intended to be permanent, you have to balance durability of systems, looking 50 years down the road, with cost. In my opinion, you have a very permanent building here."

Mr. Fulton was also attracted to the project because it incorporates liturgical architecture rarely seen today such as the baldacchino over the altar and the cruciform shape. "Like every other project with which Randy has been associated, there have been some unexpected costs. As he explains, "It was impossible to predict three years ago what would transpire in the global economy in terms of costs of materials as well as local influences that have affected the availability of labor, but with 75% of the Chapel’s outer construction complete, the risk of unexpected costs is significantly diminished."

Soon the east façade of the Chapel will be adorned with Indiana limestone, and the color choices made in the planning stages will be manifest. Contrasting hues will be found in the marble statues of the Blessed Mother, St. Thomas Aquinas, and St. Augustine that will be placed in prominent locations on the façade.

The College is grateful to Mr. Fulton for his expertise and his good management of this singular project and looks forward to working with him to bring it to completion.
The Virtue of Thankfulness

Dean Delivers Thanksgiving Address

Each year on the Sunday prior to Thanksgiving, students, faculty, and staff gather to give thanks at a formal dinner. This year Dean Michael McLean addressed the College community.

Dillon regrets not being with us this evening. He is attending an important conference of Church leaders in Italy on the subject of The University and the Social Doctrine of the Church. He has asked me to stand in for him and to make a few remarks appropriate to Thanksgiving.

When looking for something to say to the students, faculty, and staff of the College, it is not a bad idea to look to St. Thomas himself for inspiration and guidance. I did that, and it came as no surprise that, reflecting on the words of St. Thomas, “in all things give thanks,” I thought I would share a few of his observations with you on this occasion in the hope that you will find them as edifying and instructive as I did.

To Whom Gratitude is Owed

St. Thomas begins his discussion of gratitude by noting that our greatest thanks are due to God, for he is the first principle of all goods, second to none are due to our parents, for they are the proximate principles of our being and upholding, thirdly, to our country, from which general favors proceed, and finally, to our benefactors, from whom we have received particular and private favors. The gratitude due God (which St. Thomas calls excelling gratitude) is an act of the virtue of religion; the gratitude due our parents is an act of the virtue of piety, the gratitude due our country is an act of the virtue of observance; but the gratitude due our benefactors is a special virtue, distinct from the other virtues. My comments this evening are drawn from St. Thomas’ discussion of this latter virtue, but they apply, I think, to all acts of gratitude, even when those acts of gratitude are acts of the other virtues I have mentioned.

The Degree of Our Gratitude

The degree of thankfulness in the recipient should correspond to the degree of favor in the giver—when there is greater favor on the part of the giver, greater thanks are due on the part of the recipient. On the part of the giver, St. Thomas says the favor may be greater on two counts: first, owing to the quantity of the thing given, and second, owing to its being given more gratuitously—i.e., without claim or merit on the part of the recipient.

By way of illustration, St. Thomas says an innocent man owes greater thanks than a god to God for the quantity of the grace he has received, while the penitent owes greater thanks because he is deserving of punishment but has instead received forgiveness and grace. Now this latter virtue, the innocent is, absolutely speaking, greater; yet the gift bestowed on the penitent is greater in relation to him, just as a small gift bestowed on a poor man is greater to him than a great gift is to a rich man.

We should proportion our gratitude, then, not only to the magnitude, absolutely speaking, of the gift we have received but to the magnitude of the gift relative to our own condition of neediness and incapacity.

St. Thomas says we ought to consider the gift in relation to the giver as well. He quotes Seneca who says, “We are sometimes under a greater obligation to those who have granted us a small favor, who has not granted us a great favor, and has bestowed a small favor, yet willingly.”

This is clear from the Gospels as well: “Truly, I say to you, this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living.”

Repayment of Generosity

Just as in judging the magnitude of a favor two things are essential: the affection of the heart and the gift itself, so also must these things be considered in repaying the favor. As regards the affection of the heart, repayment should be made at once: “Do you wish to repay a favor?” asks Seneca. “Then receive it graciously, he who receives a favor gratefully, has already begun to pay it back.” St. Thomas does not say much about the gift which should be given, except that one ought to wait for a time that will be convenient to the benefactor. Again quoting Seneca, “He that wishes to repay too soon is an unwilling debtor, and an unwilling debtor is ungrateful.”

Favors should be conferred at a time convenient to the one in need and should not be delayed if the need arises; the same is true when it comes to the repayment of the favor bestowed.

“A kindly action consists not in deed or gift, but in the disposition of the giver or doer,” says St. Thomas.

Common Spaces Encourage Unity of Purpose

Continued from page 1

relic of a glorious past, students, faculty, and friends of the College meet for public events such as choir recitals, Schubertiades, and even, on occasion, the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

The Burns Atrium situated at the entrance to Albertus Magnus Science Hall is another common area on campus that both welcomes visitors and encourages conversation among students and faculty in the course of the school day. Named in honor of a major contributor to the science hall, the Fritz B. Burns Foundation of Los Angeles, this bright, two-story space houses a Foucault pendulum that swings in a plane which appears to rotate continuously due to the daily rotation of the earth. A graceful, curved staircase rises from it to the second floor, alongside of which, in a spotlighted alcove, stands a band of carved corks from Oberammergau, Germany. These two symbols, so closely displayed to one another—one of religion and the other of natural science—speak to all who enter of the complementarity of faith and reason, and foundation on which the curriculum of Thomas Aquinas College has been built.

Now with its very design uniting under one roof the administration and the faculty of the College, the faculty center will reinforce a sense of common purpose between what are too often disparate elements in institutions of higher learning. It will also greatly reduce the amount of time spent each day by faculty and staff in going between temporary buildings and other office spaces spread across the campus throughout the day. As President Dillon says, “The faculty center’s design will not only foster unity on our campus, it will greatly improve our efficiency.”

The Foucault pendulum in Albertus Magnus Science Hall

The Foucault pendulum in Albertus Magnus Science Hall

A computer-generated rendering of the Rotunda

A computer-generated rendering of the Rotunda in the faculty center

The Foucault pendulum in Albertus Magnus Science Hall

The Foucault pendulum in Albertus Magnus Science Hall

The Rotunda in the faculty center

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California Club Hosts Appreciation Dinner
A Salute to Generous Benefactors

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The Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors, Mrs. Maria Grant, and her husband, Richard, the California Club, an historic and stately downtown Los Angeles landmark, was once again made available to the College as the venue for this year’s event.

After a cocktail reception under the stars and a full moon on the Club’s third-floor terrace, Mr. John Q. Masteller, Vice President for Development and Master of Ceremonies for the evening, invited guests into the wood-paneled dining room where they were welcomed by Mrs. Grant. Monsignor Francis J. Weber, Archivist for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles and Director of the San Fernando Mission, delivered the invocation and blessing before dinner. During the meal, local musician Carol Robbins delighted guests with the soft strains of her harp.

As in years past, a member of the Board of Governors, this year Vice Chairman James Barrett, read aloud the story of the very first Christmas according to St. Luke. A musical interlude followed featuring an original composition entitled For Eve, Violin Sonata in One Movement in F# Major, composed by College alumnus David Isaac (Hong) ('05), who was on hand for the performance. The evening concluded with a final blessing bestowed by College chaplain, Rev. Cornelius Buckley, S.J.

Mr. Grimm commented on the choir’s work saying, “Here at the College we aim to form good tastes as well as clear thinking. That is done, not, in music as in other aspects of education, by focusing on the great works which are universally acknowledged as masterpieces. It just so happens,” he continued, “that the music of the Renaissance and Baroque periods is also ideally suited for young singers. Their bright, clear, young voices sound wonderful in this literature.”

More fine music was heard inside St. Bernardine of Siena Library on December 6th when students presented an informal recital—a Schubertiade—for the Advent season. The first part of this year’s program consisted of vocal and instrumental pieces by composers such as Handel and Praeludius. It concluded with freshman Paula Matthews on flute and junior Thomas Duffy on piano, performing the first movement of Poulenc’s Sonata for Flute and Piano. During the second half of the Schubertiade, a new vocal ensemble, Chrysostomos, under the direction of junior John Pakaluk, delighted the audience with familiar Christmas songs ranging from traditional American works such as I Wonder as I Wander, to Tomas Luis de Victoria’s O Magnum Mysterium.

Musicians and vocalists alike were grateful for the use of both St. Joseph Commons and St. Bernardine of Siena Library during the Advent Season. As student musical programs, professional recitals, and formal lectures continue to draw more visitors to the campus, the College community looks forward to having an auditorium—complete with proper acoustics—to give these important cultural and academic events a more fitting home.

The Thomas Aquinas College Choir performed its annual Advent Concert on December 1st. Those assembled in St. Joseph Commons were treated to a festive offering of sacred music by two of the great masters of composition, Johann Sebastian Bach and Antonio Vivaldi. “I wondered, for a second or two, if we were doing too much sacred music for our concerts,” Mr. Grimm reflected. “Yet, we are always supposed to be praising God, whatever we do, and these days the more explicit, the better to counteract so much apathy and blasphemy. Too often, Church music sounds like secularity secular music. So why not, in at least one place, have concerts of first-rate sacred music?”

To set the tone for the evening, the choir began by chanting the Introit of the third Mass of Christmas Day, Puer Natus Est Nobis (A Child is Born to Us). A rendition of Bach’s Cantata No. 142, Unser Kindes Geburt, followed, featuring solo performances by sophomores Simon Noster (bass) and David Kaiser (tenor) and freshman Jacob Mason (baritone). In addition to showcasing choir and soloists, the Cantata is scored for two flutes, two oboes, strings, and bass continuo. For this performance, the continuo was played by cello, string bass, and a harpsichord graciously loaned to the College by The Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara and played by sophomore Joel Morehouse. The concert concluded featuring an original composition entitled Feasting on Herod’s Feast, with solos by sopranos Thérèse Grimm (’04), soprano Rosalind Grimm, and senior Bailey Fator, and alto Maria Forshaw, a senior.

Students who comprise the College’s chamber orchestra that accompanies the choir were joined by several local musicians, including an oboist who teaches at the California Institute of the Arts, a violist who directs the Ojai Youth Symphony, and a trumpeter who supervises the music program at Nordhoff High School in Ojai.

Musicians perform an original composition by Thomas Aquinas College graduate David Isaac (Hong) ('05).
“Under-Promise, and Over-Deliver”

An Interview with Chairman of the Board of Regents, James N. Scanlon

A her graduating from Loyola Marymount University with a B.A. in history in 1963, James N. Scanlon entered the insurance business, taking over as manager at James C. Scanlon Company and successfully guiding this family business after the death of his father. He is now Chairman of Scanlon, Guerra, Jacobsen & Burke Insurance Brokers in Woodland Hills, California, a firm he founded in 1985 to undertake comprehensive risk management and insurance consulting.

Jim and his wife Maureen have eleven children, 8 daughters and 3 sons. Their oldest, Brenna graduated from Thomas Aquinas College in 2006. The Scanlons are also members of Legatus, an organization of Catholic business leaders. Established in 2004, the Thomas Aquinas College Board of Regents was created to both enable business leaders to take an active part in the College’s financial development, and to help raise awareness about the College’s unique program of Catholic liberal education. Having joined the Board of Regents in its inaugural year, Jim Scanlon now serves as its Chairman.

Q. How did you become involved with Thomas Aquinas College?

A. A classmate of mine from high school, Matt Gehken (’81), went to the College, so I knew a little bit about it from him. Then I met Tom and Terri Dillon through Matt and really get to know the College better. My daughter Brenna had a great experience there, and we hope many more of the Scanlon children will attend Thomas Aquinas College.

Q. Brenna wasn’t always so keen on attending the College was she?

A. In the summer between her junior and senior years of high school, Brenna had a great experience there, and we hope many more of the Scanlon children will attend Thomas Aquinas College.

Q. Do you participate in that program?

A. Yes. And I’ll tell you why: The single biggest problem we have today is finding qualified employees who can think. So, not only do I participate in the Thomas Aquinas College intern program, I encourage other businesses in the area to do likewise. Business owners, if they’re good leaders of their firms, need to be looking over the horizon for the next good employee. I now have two Thomas Aquinas College graduates working for me full time, and I would like to hire more because they are really outstanding.

Q. How do you envision the Board of Regents in the future?

A. I hope we can continue to make bigger contributions in our fundraising activities, in promoting awareness of the College, and in whatever tasks the Board of Governors and the President may ask us to carry out. Our unofficial motto is “under-promise, and over-deliver.” We are trying to stick to that, move steadily forward, and build a strong foundation for the Regents so we in turn can really contribute to the College.

The Teagle Foundation Wants to Know

L ast year, the Teagle Foundation, a New York-based philanthropic organization that supports leadership in liberal education in America, recognized Thomas Aquinas College as one of its “Baker’s Dozen” of “over-achieving” academic institutions. Inclusion on this list was based on the College’s exceptionally high graduation rates, its high percentage of students who go on to earn doctoral degrees, and its having accomplished all of this through the efficient use of limited resources. Endowments at these 13 “over-achieving” institutions range from Thomas Aquinas College’s approximately $9.5 million to $34.0 million.

Committed to doing its part to help strengthen liberal education in our country, the Teagle Foundation, through its president Mr. Robert Connor, often consults academic leaders for their insights into the challenges faced by small colleges that offer the liberal arts. Intrigued by an article in The Wall Street Journal which described how a controversy at Harvard University caused disaffected donors to withhold $390 million in pledges, Mr. Connor queried the leaders of the Teagle Foundation’s “Baker’s Dozen” about what these institutions might do with $30 million, representing each of the 13 institution’s imaginary share of that $390 million Harvard failed to collect. He then posted his query and their responses on the Teagle Foundation’s website: www.teaglefoundation.org.

Thomas Aquinas College President, Dr. Thomas E. Dillon, responded to Mr. Connor that a hypothetical windfall of $30 million would immediately secure the College’s financial foundation. As he explained, “$15 million would go toward ending student financial aid, which would be especially helpful since the College has a need-blind admissions policy.” Another $12 million would go toward ending the College’s faculty development program. “Thomas Aquinas College,” President Dillon explained, “does not present the standard academic fare, with a multiplicity of departments and programs, but offers only one required curriculum in the Great Books, spanning the principal disciplines. Therefore, if we are to help our students see the integration and order among the academic disciplines, it is essential the College develop each faculty member in the breadth of the disciplines.”

In the four years of the College’s astronomy sequence, for example, students read and work through the original texts of Ptolemy, Copernicus, Tyco, Brahe, Kepler, Galileo, Newton, and Einstein. “Over time,” Dr. Dillon continued, “we expect our entire faculty to be able to conduct tutorials in which they lead students through a first, but rigorous reading of these texts.” Endowing the six-week summer faculty development program, therefore, would ensure the continual strengthening of the faculty.

Lastly, Dr. Dillon would allocate the remaining $5 million to assist with faculty housing in the Southern California real estate market that commands prices well over $500,000 for barely adequate housing. “It is one thing for the College to require that its faculty have the ability to teach in the breadth of the disciplines and be able to skillfully lead Socratic seminars and tutorials,” Dr. Dillon said, “but it is asking too much to require—in effect—that faculty also be independently wealthy.”

Harvard University’s endowment of over $42 billion—minus $390 million, of course—is remarkable. Yet, by the grace of God and the generosity of its friends, Thomas Aquinas College continues to flourish, uphold its principles of Catholic liberal education, and produce graduates who become leaders in education, law, medicine, the priesthood, and many other walks of life.
Great Books, Great Discussions, Great Fun!

High School Great Books Summer Program

F rom July 22 to August 4, rising seniors from across the country and beyond will participate in the eleventh High School Summer Program at Thomas Aquinas College. For two weeks, 120 high school students will stay in student housing, have their meals in St. Joseph Commons, and live, study, and recreate in much the same way as students of the College do during the regular academic year.

Director of Admissions Mr. Jon Daly ('99) is once again supervising the program and expects the 120 slots to be filled with 60 male and 60 female high school students by early spring. Last year 40% of the students originated from California with the rest coming from various parts of the United States, and one from France. Similar demographics are expected for this year’s program, the primary goal of which is to expose young people to the academic, spiritual, and social life of the College. For many, this introduction leads to greater things: in past years 35% - 45% of summer program attendees have enrolled in the regular academic year.

During the program, young people who will have completed their junior year in high school, will attend seminars twice a day about works by thinkers such as Plato, Boethius, Socrates, Euclid, Pascal, and St. Thomas Aquinas. Guided by members of the teaching faculty using the Socratic Method, groups of no more than 16 students will engage in discussions about topics such as the relationship of faith and reason, order in nature, and political and religious authority.

Mr. Daly reminds potential participants that although there will be serious in-depth discussions in class, there will also be plenty of opportunities to enjoy the many outdoor activities that summer in Southern California offers. “Students can take full advantage of the recreational activities we offer here on campus, in the nearby Los Padres National Forest, at our wonderful beaches, and on field trips.” Daily Mass, confession, and other devotions are also available to participants provided by the program’s full-time chaplain.

Typically, more high school students apply for the summer program than there is room to accommodate. Mr. Daly, therefore, strongly encourages those interested in exploring some of the great texts of Western Civilization, to contact the Admission Office now to secure a spot in this year’s High School Summer Great Books Program.

For more information about the High School Summer Great Books Program, please contact the Admission Office at 1 800-634-9797 or admission@thomasaquinas.edu.

An Inside Look at Assessment

F reshmen at Thomas Aquinas College are known to tremble at the thought of their first “Don Rags.” When they experience this unusual form of assessment though, most agree that rather than a fearsome encounter with faculty, the Don Rag is a useful appraisal of progress.

According to Dean of the College Dr. Michael McLean, Don Rags are part of the Oxford model of education whereby professors, known as Dons, would review the academic progress of their students, or “rag” on their lack thereof. At Thomas Aquinas College, the Don Rag is likewise a forum for members of the teaching faculty (“tutors”) to review student work. The focus, however, is on giving constructive criticism so as to encourage better performance in the classroom.

Members of each class at the College are divided into “sections” of between 15 and 18 students who take classes together throughout the year. Rather quickly, each section develops its own characteristics, reflecting those of its members. Explains Dean McLean, “Since our classes depend on the dynamic of a section, good student participation is essential. Yet, that doesn’t necessarily come naturally. There are ways in which tutors can help students participate better, and the Don Rag is a great forum for doing that.”

Twice a year, freshmen, sophomores, and juniors take part in Don Rags. A student and his or her tutors meet together in a classroom where tutors discuss among themselves the student’s performance. “What is unusual and may be daunting in the beginning,” says Dr. McLean, “is that the conversation proceeds as though the student were not present in the room; all comments are made in the third-person.” During the course of the 10-20 minute meeting, tutors converse about a student’s performance. Says Dr. McLean, “It really works very well to have the tutors assembled together. They can work off one another’s comments, and they sometimes amend their reports to reflect what a colleague has said; not infrequently, one tutor’s comment may trigger something in the mind of another.” When the tutors have completed their remarks, the student is then asked if he or she has any comments or suggestions, and a short discussion may ensue.

Timing of Don Rags is crucial. They are held once a semester, but scheduled so they occur neither too early in the term, when faculty members do not yet have a clear picture of a student’s strengths and weaknesses, nor so late that the student does not have time to implement the suggestions for improvement.

The results, according to the Dean, are generally good. “After Don Rags,” he says, “tutors often report improvement in the overall dynamic of a section. They also see changes in the performance and behavior of individual students.” Dean McLean continues, “The practice of Don Rags has been very helpful to the College through the years. Because the student is asked to comment on his tutors’ evaluation, it is very much in the mode of the school as a community of learners and friends.”

F ramework In-depth discussions in class, there will also be plenty of opportunities

Theo33 Thomas Aquinas College Golf Classic at Sherwood Country Club

On May 21, 2007, you have an opportunity to help the College as the Board of Regents invites you to its Inaugural Thomas Aquinas College Golf Tournament at the prestigious Sherwood Country Club in Thousand Oaks, California. Designed by Jack Nicklaus and the site of Tiger Woods’ Target Challenge Golf Tournament, Sherwood has an international reputation as a challenging but “playable” golf course.

BE A PLAYER! $1,000 per golfer. BE A SPONSOR! Opportunities begin at $1,000.

For further information, contact Hope Martin at hmartin@sgjb.com or (818) 449-0276.
Mark Ryland Elected in October 2006

Mark Ryland is the Founder and President of the Institute for the Study of Nature, a think-tank in Washington, D.C., and has also served as a board member since the mid 1990s. He is a 10-year veteran of Microsoft Corporation where he served in a number of capacities which included his becoming Microsoft’s first Director of Standards Strategy. Before joining Microsoft in 1991, he was an attorney in private practice with the law firm of Labhan & Watkins in Washington, D.C. As such, he has been on the Board of Directors of various educational and philanthropic institutions including the International Theological Institute in Gaming, Austria. Mr. Ryland was elected to the Board of Governors in October of 2006.

Though born in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Mark spent most of his childhood in San Diego where he attended the University of San Diego. The family’s journey from the Great Plains to the West Coast was precipitated by a life-altering event in the lives of Mark’s parents: When he was three years old, they entered the Catholic Church. Making this event all the more profound was the fact Mark’s father was a priest in the Episcopal church. Needing to find a way to support the family, his father earned a doctorate in theology from Marquette University and entered a tenure-track teaching position at the University of San Diego. In 1983, some twenty years after entering the Church, Mark’s father was ordained a Catholic priest with a dispensation from the rule of celibacy under the “Pastoral Provision.”

Mark graduated magna cum laude with a B.A. in philosophy from the University of San Diego in 1983. He went on to obtain a law degree from Boalt Hall School of Law at the University of California at Berkeley in 1986, earning membership in the Order of the Coif, a national society for law school graduates. Its purpose is to encourage excellence in legal education by fostering a spirit of careful study, recognizing those who as law students attained a high level of scholarship.

While at the Discovery Institute, and after founding and directing its Washington, D.C., office, Mark became very interested in countering the prevailing winds of Darwinism and materialism. He gravitated toward the Intelligent Design argument, but found that, like Darwinism, it had its deficiencies. His continual scientific and philosophical inquiry at the Discovery Institute has led him to a spirit of careful study, recognizing those who as law students attained a high level of scholarship.

The Legacy Society

An Expression of Faith and Confidence

The Legacy Society is an honorary association of men and women whose planned gifts will sustain Thomas Aquinas College well into the future. As the College continues to prosper well into its fourth decade of existence, it is deeply grateful to all who have given so generously from their hearts and pocketbooks, especially those who have exhibited their support in the form of a legacy gift. The Legacy Society helps support the College in its mission and responsibility to help form well the minds and souls of young people so that they will uphold the truth, maintain and protect their Catholic heritage, and live lives of exemplary virtue. Evidence that the College is achieving its mission is abundant and gratifying: 42 alumni are priests, and 40 are studying for the priesthood; more than 20 alumni serve the Church as fully professed religious and 100 alumni are lay catechists. The College’s strong relationship with Catholic moral teaching. Our lay graduates are becoming leaders in a wide variety of fields including education, law, journalism, business, public service, and medicine.

The Legacy Society offers a variety of financial services that benefit both the College and the individual benefactor. It has benefited from an association that not only provides funding for the College, but also allows participants to express their faith and confidence in the graduates of Thomas Aquinas College, so many of whom go on to profoundly benefit the Church and our country. The principal motive for a legacy gift is a desire to support the College, there are also significant financial incentives and benefits for donors. Legacy gifts may provide federal and state charitable income tax deductions. They may reduce or eliminate capital gains and estate tax liability. They may pay income for life. Charitable Gift Annuities and Charitable Remainder Trusts can produce substantial income streams. The College offers several planned gift options through its Legacy Society that can be tailored to fit the individual financial and personal needs of participants.

The most frequent planned gift is a bequest made to the College through a will or family trust. A bequest may be for a specific amount, for a specific percentage, or for the remainder of a donor’s estate. The next most popular planned gift is the Charitable Gift Annuity which is, in essence, a contract between a donor and the College. It guarantees a fixed annual payment to the donor for his lifetime, for his and his spouse’s lifetimes, or for the lifetime of another beneficiary. When the last beneficiary passes away, the College receives a substantial portion of the initial donation. The Charitable Gift Annuity is backed by all the assets of the College and provides an immediate charitable tax deduction for the participant.

The Legacy Society Board of Governors Adds to its Ranks

Planned gifts may also be made through Charitable Remainder Trusts (CRT). Cash, appreciated securities, real property, and other resources can fund CRTs. Like a Charitable Gift Annuity, benefits of a CRT include tax relief for the donor and steady annual income for one or more beneficiaries. Depending on the needs and financial parameters of a given member of the Legacy Society, an “annuity trust” (CRAT) makes a pre-determined set payment. In a “unitrust” (CRUT), the annual payout is determined by the performance of the investment made of the trust’s funds.

Regardless of what plan might be chosen, “planned givers” to Thomas Aquinas College can count on their investments being carefully monitored and augmented by financial experts. Resources that come to the College in the form of Charitable Gift Annuities and CRTs are diligently invested by the College’s investment strategy team of well-established and historically successful financial advisers. Mr. David Clark, Vice President of the Los Angeles-based investment counsel firm Everett Harris & Co., advises the College on what financial opportunities to pursue and helps the College monitor these choices, insuring that not a penny is placed in an investment that is in conflict with Catholic social or moral teaching. John Privitelli, a friend and benefactor of the College himself, is the College’s representative with Morgan Stanley Co. which manages nearly $700 billion in personal and institutional assets. Mr. Privitelli lends his financial expertise to the Legacy Society in the transactions phase of the investment process.

A legacy gift is an investment in the future of young men and women—our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren—who lives will be blessed by the wisdom and virtues Thomas Aquinas College will help them attain.

Mr. Tom Susanka, Director of Gift Planning for the College, would be happy to answer any questions you might have and supply you with information regarding the various options for investing in the future of Thomas Aquinas College. You may call or email him at 1-800-634-9797, ext. 350, tsusanka@thomasaquinas.edu.
Mrs. Margaret Brooks-Llamas

Margaret Brooks-Llamas was born in San Juan, Rizal, Philippines, and raised in that country's summer capital of Baguio City. A high achiever from an early age, she graduated from high school at the age of only 14. She then traveled the 250 kilometers from Baguio City to Manila to attend the University of Santo Tomas, the oldest university in Asia and, in terms of student population, the largest Catholic university in the world located on one campus.

Her mother had always stressed the importance of education, and fondly hoped Margaret might some day become a doctor. Thinking she wanted that too, Margaret took pre-med courses at the University of Santo Tomas. However, with her first year of studies completed, she realized her lack of interest in organic chemistry would be an obstacle to a medical degree. After some negotiation with her disappointed mother, Margaret switched her major to psychology and graduated from the University of Santo Tomas magna cum laude at the age of 19.

While in graduate school at Ateneo de Manila University, a job offer side-tracked Margaret’s completion of a clinical psychology degree. A local funeral home, which had sold cemetery plots hired her to apply her psychology training to their human resources department. Not long after taking this position, Margaret found herself in the middle of a serious labor dispute. A dire situation even for a veteran labor negotiator, it was especially challenging to Margaret who, fresh out of college, had no experience in arbitrating a volatile labor crisis. To make matters worse, the company she represented paid its workers poorly, had outdated labor practices, and the union representing the workers was headed by an avid Marxist. “Soon after the strike was called, Marcos declared martial law in the Philippines, and strikes were outlawed,” Margaret recalls. “So I guess I was saved by martial law in failing at my first labor negotiation job.”

Still only in her early twenties, Margaret was hired by Citibank in Manila to run its Human Resources Department. Not long after, her husband took a position with a London firm, and Margaret moved with him and their young son to the United Kingdom to attend the London Business School where she earned an MBA. Citibank in London then hired her as head of its management training center for Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. “That was one of my favorite jobs,” Margaret recalls. “It was like running a mini-university for bankers. We covered the whole range from credit to marketing to technology to management operations.”

What to have been a two-year stint in London turned into 14 years. During that time, Mrs. Brooks-Llamas held a variety of positions with Citicorp that took her back and forth from the United States to London, and into Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. She served as head of Citicorp’s university relations department, targeting business schools and liberal arts institutions to identify and mentor future banking and business executives. Then, after a short period as head of Human Resources for Citibank’s European Investment Bank, she ran Citicorp’s Human Resources for emerging markets in third world, developing, and former Soviet-bloc countries.

In the early 90s, Margaret served on one of ten task forces to help bring Citicorp back from the brink of failure. She worked closely with the chairman of the company to implement recommended changes to the corporate center and then stayed on to head executive resources. She was responsible for designing and supervising Citicorp’s leadership staffing and development processes, and the staffing of the top 300 positions in the corporation.

At this juncture, Mrs. Brooks-Llamas began to realize that though she liked her job, its costs were taking a toll on her—16-hour days and so much travel. “I realized it was time to readjust the balance equation of my life,” she explains. So, in 1996, Margaret took a 3-year leave of absence during which she thought and prayed about the direction her life should take.

Having made retreats and done the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius, it became clear to her that she could make the best contribution by doing the work she both loved and did well, but doing it in a different way. Instead of offering her services in an enormous corporate environment, Margaret decided she would do consulting work for individuals and organizations. This would give her an opportunity to do more in terms of giving back to others.

With this new goal in mind, Mrs. Brooks-Llamas retired from Citicorp and founded her own company, Veris International in New York. Her international consulting firm focuses on four areas of corporate human resources: strengthening the leadership team, developing a leadership pipeline, aligning organizational values and individual/team performance and development, and developing business-responsive human resources strategies and practices. Margaret now consults with a wide range of companies in a variety of fields, from hospitals to media companies, to non-profit organizations, while others have just a few dozen employees.

For some years Margaret had been aware of and impressed by Thomas Aquinas College through her friendship with College faculty member Mark Clark, who had taught her son at the Portsmouth Abbey School in Rhode Island. She was formally introduced to the College at a weekend seminar, similar to classes at the College, given by President Dillon at a Board member’s home in New York. When she experienced firsthand the simplicity and the rigor of the kind of discussions that take place at Thomas Aquinas College, Margaret felt a pang of envy and wished she had had that kind and quality of education for herself.

Margaret Brooks-Llamas was elected to the Board of Governors in November of 2004.

An Interview with Margaret Brooks-Llamas

Q. What attracted you to Thomas Aquinas College?

A. It’s a college that lives its faith. There’s a certain serenity about Thomas Aquinas College, and there’s a certain consistency between what they say and what they do. I had met Dr. Dillon and had attended his seminar in New York, which I truly loved. But it was when my younger son visited the College that I really began to consider it a place that needed my support. My son had visited the College that I really began to consider it a place that needed my support. My son had visited the College that I really began to consider it a place that needed my support. My son had visited the College that I really began to consider it a place that needed my support.

Q. What is the educational experience at the College different from other institutions with which you have dealt?

A. Very different. The students at the College are committed to their studies and committed to living good lives. It is so refreshing because in other settings I find people much more self-absorbed and keen about succeeding and measuring success in terms of who will be ahead.

Q. As a patron of the arts in New York, what are your thoughts about music at Thomas Aquinas College?

A. Though I have yet to be on campus for a Schubertiade, I have experienced many impromptu musical performances during my visits. There is certainly a lot of talent at the College. Sometimes when I come for Board meetings, I sit back and listen when they are having a musical performance. That’s what I like about the College. It seems to develop the whole person. It’s not just about academic achievement or achievement of the mind. It’s achievement of the spirit, of culture, and of the arts—a cultivation of all things beautiful.
Committed to the Craftsman’s Task

The year Maria Rangel (’99) entered the senior class at Thomas Aquinas College, her growing interest in art as a profession coincided with the publication of The Letter of His Holiness John Paul II to Artists. As she prepared her senior thesis concerning art and the adoration of churches, Maria contemplated how the love of truth and beauty that had been nurtured by her life and studies at the College would take shape in her post-graduate life. Especially touched by the Holy Father’s insight that “God called man into existence, committing him to the craftsman’s task,” she decided to dedicate herself to the pursuit of art that glorifies God.

After graduating from the College, Maria attended Laguna College of Art and Design in Laguna Beach, California. There, she majored in drawing and painting and obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree. Having already satisfied the school’s liberal studies requirement with her courses at the College, Maria was able to spend a semester abroad at the Angel Academy of Art in Florence. During those months, she concentrated on her craft and traveled throughout Italy, immersing herself in the great works of the Italian masters.

Since her return to California, Maria has been working as a professional muralist and is employed as an architectural illustration artist at Focus 360, an architectural communications company in Laguna Niguel. She has also established her own studio where she creates works ranging from plein air landscapes to narrative compositions with figures or still life.

Miss Rangel now has works displayed in a few Southern California galleries and has organized or participated in a number of exhibits in the region. She has also been commissioned to provide decorative work for the interiors of small chapels and private homes. In the future, she hopes to do more of this kind of work and to become involved, as well, in Catholic publishing, providing artwork for both books and magazines.

In his Letter to Artists, Pope John Paul II wrote, “Beauty is a key to the mystery and a call to transcendence. It is an invitation to savor life and dream of the future.” At Maria’s Website, www.Rangelstudios.com, one can see examples of how this emerging artist has accepted the invitation and is indeed glorifying God through her craft.

35th Anniversary Celebrated

Continued from page 1

celebrant, and Rev. Sebastian Walshe, O.Praem., a graduate of the College’s class of 1994, preached the sermon.

Following Mass, the doors to the Wintergarden Ballroom were opened, and guests began to celebrate in style with excellent food, warm camaraderie, and the music of the Johnny Crawford Dance Orchestra.

The evening was emceed by Mr. Jim Newman, a veteran business news reporter for both ABC7 and KTLA television, and Cardinal Roger Mahony, Archbishop of Los Angeles.

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IN MEMORIAM

Mrs. M. Frances Hilton - May 30, 2006
Benefactor, widow of Conrad N. Hilton

Mrs. Vivian Keber - November 2, 2006
Grandmother of Megan (’05) and Andrew Baird (’04)

Mr. John A. Macik - November 27, 2006
Benefactor and father of Luke Macik (’89)
and grandfather of Kathleen Duda (’05)

Mrs. Zelia White and Mrs. Lois Anderson - January 27, 2007
Mother and grandmother of Elijah (’06), Arielle (’08), and Maxwell White (’09)

Mr. John A. Macik - November 27, 2006
Benefactor and father of Luke Macik (’89)
and grandfather of Kathleen Duda (’05)

Mrs. Zelia White and Mrs. Lois Anderson - January 27, 2007
Mother and grandmother of Elijah (’06), Arielle (’08), and Maxwell White (’09)
A Puerto Rican Connection

I

n 1982, the College was singularly graced to have as its Commencement Speaker Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, M.C., who not long before had received the Nobel Peace Prize. In high demand that year for graduation ceremonies by colleges and universities around the country, she appeared nevertheless on only three American campuses—those of Harvard, Georgetown, and Thomas Aquinas College. Kathy Kraychy had come to the College from the Chicago area. Carl returned as a junior at the beginning of her sophomore year, and the two met. During Carl’s senior year, they were engaged to be married, but with Kathy having another year left, Carl recalls, the two decided to delay the wedding. “We didn’t want to have any regrets later on. We agreed that Kathy would complete the program, and we would marry the following year.”

By now, Carl had a deep love of learning and a desire to teach, so during that year, while taking science courses at nearby California State University at Northridge, he prepared for postgraduate work in philosophy at Université Laval in Quebec by immersing himself in the study of French.

Defending the University’s Catholic Character

In this capacity, recounts Carl, “I was able to defend the Catholicity of the University against the prevailing secularism and the various accrediting agencies that simply do not understand the nature of the pursuit of truth. I owe my ability to do this to my training at Thomas Aquinas College.”

For example, he explains, “the Council on Social Work considered that the University was discriminating by teaching that homosexual acts are wrong. I had to explain the Church’s teaching about loving the person while rejecting the sin, making distinctions along the way, in order to preserve our accreditation, to come to the fore again.”

Carl Sauder is now the Vice President for Academic Affairs, but only on the condition that he be allowed to teach one class. Though he now oversees the deans, the department directors, and the faculty of six colleges that make up the University’s three centers—the College of Arts and Humanities, the Law School, the Business School, the School of Education, the Science School, and the Graduate School—Carl makes time for his ethics course.

In fact, Carl has never strayed from teaching. “I’ve taught professional ethics to medical students as well as classes on the natural law. Thomas Aquinas College puts one in good standing to defend the natural law and the teachings of moral theology. It teaches both philosophy and theology, but it has a clear grasp of the distinction between matters of reason or the natural law and those that are purely of faith.”

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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<td>Presidents’ Day (no classes)</td>
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