

THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE

SAN RAFAEL, CALIFORNIA

94901

PROGRESS REPORT

It is our intention here to give a progress report to you who are already aware of our work of establishing an authentic Christian college and also to inform you who are not aware of this work of its purpose and nature, in the hope of attracting your interest.

Arrangements have been made to locate the college on a truly remarkable piece of land adjoining Dominican College, a Catholic women's college in San Rafael, California, fifteen miles north of San Francisco. It is to be a separate Catholic college for men, with an arrangement for women students enrolled in its program to matriculate at Dominican College where they would live and from which they would take their degrees. The two colleges will share in the use of certain existing facilities, such as the library, the dining hall, the lecture hall, and the auditorium; and they will add other buildings, such as a common chapel, in the future. Among other benefits to the two colleges, this arrangement substantially reduces the capital requirements of the new school. This association with the Dominicans has led us to name the new school Thomas Aquinas College--a most appropriate name, given its academic program. Our corporate name has now been officially changed from the Institute for Christian Education to Thomas Aquinas College.

Without exception, those who know and appreciate the nature and purpose of Thomas Aquinas College and who are also acquainted with the excellent name of Dominican College and the community of sisters who operate it, favor this association as ideal. Plans are already underway for the new campus; the target date for opening it is the Fall of 1972. At present we hope to begin classes in September 1970 with a group of freshmen. To this end Thomas Aquinas College would make temporary use of classroom and dormitory facilities of the Dominican College.

We can report, therefore, that the questions of location and name have been settled. We can also guarantee that Thomas Aquinas College has secured an excellent faculty who are ready to begin educating in this unique program that embodies in an authentic way the purpose and nature of Christian liberal education as taught by the magisterium of the Catholic Church. We have received from across the nation the most enthusiastic urging--from educators, parents, churchmen, Christians (including many non-Catholics), and, most importantly, from students--to bring

this school into existence. We are beginning to gain financial backing, and we are encouraged to believe that this will grow; but this is our chief problem.

The project did not start with an endowment but only with the idea of a Christian liberal education that is perennially genuine, combined with the idea of an education using the methodology and certain content adopted from the highly successful St. John's (Annapolis and Santa Fe) liberal arts program. The founders of the new school, having had considerable experience in Christian education and in the St. John's Great Books program as well, have come to the firm conviction that liberal education, even with all the advantages of the St. John's program, is not complete as education unless it has enlightened grounding in the perennial philosophy and unless it is ultimately elevated to theological study as its highest objective. This conviction is not original with the founders, but represents the educational philosophy that every one of the popes over the past hundred years and up to the present has urged upon us.

There is always a need for sound education as there is always a need for the truth; but that need is especially pronounced in times, such as ours, of wild and irresponsible educational experimentation that is in no way founded on the abiding understanding of reality. Therefore, with reason and sanity threatened on one hand (not to mention the frightening moral consequence of this educational anarchy), and with the wisdom of the Church and of our long tradition lying neglected on the other, we began this undertaking to start a new college.

We have made considerable headway, and we are optimistic about succeeding. We would like your assistance and that of all interested parties, in the hope of making the school known to those who would profit from it and in the hope of raising the necessary funds. Unless our records show that you already have a copy, you will find enclosed the doctrinal statement that explains the principles upon which Thomas Aquinas College is to be established. In the near future we expect to have a brochure on the college available. This will be sent to all who have expressed an interest in Thomas Aquinas College.

Ronald P. McArthur
President