

NEWS OF THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE

JULY 1973

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Thomas Aquinas College was incorporated five years ago by a handful of men with an idea and a hope - an idea about education and a hope that it could be forged into reality. Now that our second year of teaching is over, I think it appropriate to report on that reality, which the hand of Divine Providence has wrought from that small beginning. I address this report to you, the nearly 3,000 people on our mailing list, because we have received from you almost all the support which has made the College possible.

My report is most encouraging. Our first conception of the College has become a pale image of what has come to be, for we have established a genuine Christian community of scholars such as has not existed in our time. The possibilities of a future regeneration and renewal which are inherent in this small school are mostly hidden from us, but we can already see enough to know that the potential is great. Our students and faculty delve further and further into the fundamental questions about the nature of reality, and we do it in the light of the Catholic faith and with the guidance of the teaching Church. We study as disciples of the greatest philosophical and theological minds of Western Civilization, and we become constantly more excited by the treasures we uncover in the pursuit of the perennial wisdom.

In September, our up-coming junior class, having completed a firm foundation in the classical liberal arts, will proceed to the great theological works of St. Thomas Aquinas, while continuing their work in philosophy, literature, mathematics and science. It is impossible for me to convey to you the sense of wonder and excitement our students find in their studies; that can only be appreciated through a visit to the campus.

The teaching faculty of the College now consists of nine full-time tutors and three administrative officers who also teach. These men and women are as enthusiastic as the students, and they are constantly learning so as to better fulfill their teaching vocation.

The number of students who apply for admission to the College, though adequate and growing, is still not overwhelming. Qualitatively, however, they could hardly be better. The ninety students who will attend next year are intellectually able, having an average Scholastic Aptitude Test score exceeding 1100. No finer group of young people could be found, and it is their constant good will and charity which sustains us. These, and many like them, are the young people upon whom our hope for the future of Christianity and of our civilization rests.



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The tuition, board and room we charge covers only slightly more than half of our operating costs, and added to this is a substantial amount of student financial aid, made necessary because nearly half the students are unable to pay the full charge. Accordingly, a substantial sum must be raised each year from those who understand and believe in the work of the College. We have been very fortunate in these early years. The generosity and sacrifice of many have made it possible to meet our demands for operating funds. We have used the financial resources made available to the College as economically as we could, while providing an education of the highest quality. In the last fiscal year, for example, our spending was substantially less than we had provided for in our budget. Detailed financial reports are available from the College on request.

Now, our basic need for operating funds continues. Therefore, it is most important that those of you who have supported the College in previous years continue to do so, and, if possible, even increase the amount of your gift. It is also important that those of you who are not now contributors become members of this fraternity. While it is obvious that large gifts are very helpful, those for whom it is only possible to make a small gift should not feel reluctant to do so. Even small gifts, when they come in large numbers, or when they are made on a regular basis, can be of major importance to us.

The meeting of operational expenses is of course no solution to the long-range problem of financing the institution. A major investment of capital funds will be necessary for the permanent establishment of Thomas Aquinas College. But it would have been too much to expect to receive contributions for capital investment before the College was established. I believe, however, that we are now in a position to seek such funding, because I believe we have demonstrated that such funds could go to no worthier purpose.

We hope, then, to launch very soon a major ten year development program for Thomas Aquinas College. When fully implemented, this plan will insure that the College has all it needs to educate a student body of 350. In the meantime, the operational needs of the College for the coming year are of immediate importance, and we are currently seeking contributions and pledges toward this end.

Further, you can share the active work of informing the American Catholic community about the College and its potential. There are many who would support the College if they knew of it, and there are doubtless many young people who would benefit greatly from our program. There are still a few openings in the September freshman class, and I would urge anyone who might be interested in joining us as a student to contact our Admissions Office at the earliest opportunity. The Bulletin of the College and other literature are available upon request, and our Admissions staff will be on hand through the balance of the summer.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has supported the College by their gifts, by their work, and, most importantly, by their prayers.

Sincerely,

Ronald P. McArthur

Ronald P. McArthur, President