

# THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2000

## — Building Dedicated to Church's Patron of Natural Science

### Cardinal Mahony Dedicates Science Building to St. Albert the Great

Below a Foucault pendulum suspended in a two-story sunlit atrium, Cardinal Roger Mahony presided over ceremonies dedicating a new science building on the campus of Thomas Aquinas College to the Church's patron of the sciences, St. Albert the Great, on Palm Sunday, April 16. Albertus Magnus Science Hall, the eighth permanent structure on the California campus, features five laboratories and four classrooms, and will permit students to reproduce some of the ground-breaking experiments of modern science.

President Thomas E. Dillon gave special recognition to three foundations and one couple whose gifts were chiefly responsible for funding construction of the 15,000 square foot mission-style building: The Fritz B. Burns Foundation, The Weingart Foundation, The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, and Dr. and Mrs. William W. Smith of Beverly Hills. Dr. Smith is Chairman of the Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors and of the Science Building Committee.

"All disciplines, sciences and teaching about the world and about human life that we pursue must have, as their final purpose, to bring us to a knowledge of the truth and to the worship of the true God," said Cardinal Mahony to a crowd of



Cardinal Roger Mahony, Dr. Thomas Dillon and Dr. William Smith in procession from Albertus Magnus Science Hall following blessing.

of Albertus Magnus Science Hall. Of special interest was the two-storied Foucault pendulum which swings an arc according to the rotation of the earth. Lining the halls are scientific display cases containing rare insects and butterflies and framed posters of classical experiments and scientists.

St. Albert was proclaimed a "Doctor of the Church" in 1931 and made universal patron of the natural sciences ten years later. His most famous pupil was Thomas Aquinas.

more than 500. "Today we ask God's blessing on this center of seeking. . . and ask that those entrusted with the education of young people in this institution may teach their students how to join the discoveries of human wisdom with the truth of the Gospel."

Also dedicated was a new courtyard with a tiled image of Our Lady of Guadalupe and a fountain. Landscaped terraces and an upper courtyard in front of the St. Joseph Commons were also part of the building project. (See Cardinal Mahony's homily, p. 2.)

A Palm Sunday Procession and Mass preceded the dedication in St. Bernardine Library. Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop Thomas J. Curry assisted in the dedication ceremonies.

Immediately following dedication of the building, guests enjoyed a buffet lunch and tours of Albertus Magnus Science Hall.

## Benefactors Hail Newest College Achievement

### The Fritz B. Burns Foundation



Mr. W. K. "Ken" Skinner, Executive Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer

The late real estate developer Fritz B. Burns established a foundation in 1955 to engage in a wide variety of philanthropic activity. During his life and after his death, the Foundation has made substantial gifts for education, hospitals, Catholic religious associations, social welfare agencies and many other worthy endeavors. The generosity of the Burns Foundation has made possible the existence of two other buildings on campus: Blessed Junipero Serra Hall and St. Bernard Hall.

Mr. W. K. "Ken" Skinner, who worked with Mr. Burns in the construction industry for more than 50 years, remarked that one of his favorite hobbies is to compare an artist's renderings of a building before a project with the actual building after the project. "I have found predominantly that the artist's renderings are quite embellished and the actual facility does not turn out. But this facility surpasses the artist's renderings" — one of only three times in more than 50 years he has found this to occur. "I am quite certain," he said, "that this building will last for many, many years and will produce many scholars in the future."

### The Weingart Foundation



Fred J. Ali, President and Chief Administrative Officer

Since 1973, the Weingart Foundation has made grants of more than \$440 million to a variety of community agencies serving the people of Southern California. In its last fiscal year, the Weingart Foundation continued its mission to build stronger, healthier communities with 585 grants that totaled nearly \$54 million dollars. Previously, the Foundation had made several generous gifts to the College's financial aid program so that financially needy students may attend here.

President Fred J. Ali, who formerly served as Executive Director of Covenant House California, stated: "This college is especially unique and is a college and a program that we are certainly honored to be a part of. Your commitment to educational excellence, a strong liberal arts education, is truly something to be admired. We are very pleased to be a part of this effort and we look forward to playing a continuing role as you continue to develop this fine campus. We congratulate you on your commitment and dedication to this wonderful mission and vision and your commitment to a continuation of educational excellence on this campus."

### Conrad N. Hilton Foundation



Mrs. Marge Brownstein, Senior Program Officer

The Hilton Foundation was founded in 1944 by the man whose name has become synonymous with hotels. Mr. Conrad Hilton died in 1979, leaving the bulk of his estate to the Foundation and a Fund, which have grown to include assets of \$1.7 billion and annual gifts for charitable projects of \$30 million per year. The Foundation has endeavored to alleviate the suffering of the world's most disadvantaged, with a special emphasis on children and support for the work of Roman Catholic Sisters.

The Hilton Foundation, through its generosity over the years, has made possible not only the construction of this building, but also St. Augustine Classroom Building and St. Bernardine Library. Mrs. Marge Brownstein, Senior Program Officer, said that "were Conrad Hilton alive today, I know he would be pleased to see that your college nurtures not only intellectual growth but spiritual growth as well. In his last will, he said that charity is the virtue which unites men and inspires their noblest efforts. Our Foundation takes pride in being part of the noble effort known as Albertus Magnus Science Hall."

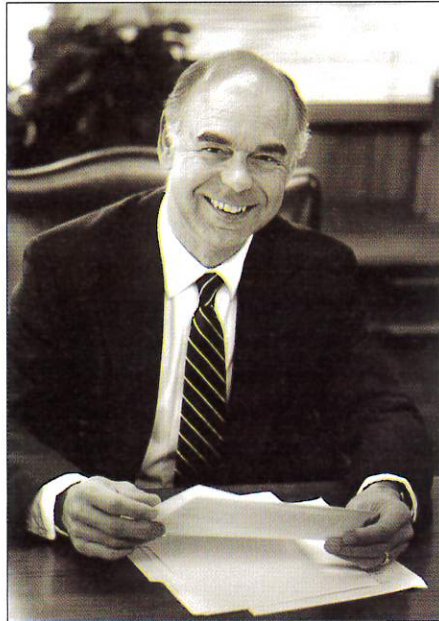
### Dr. & Mrs. William Weber Smith



Dr. Smith, Chairman of the Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors

Dr. Smith distinguished himself in the field of medicine for more than fifty years. He helped establish the Beverly Hills Clinic, where he was the personal physician to some of the most important people in the entertainment and financial industry. Before retiring from active medical practice in 1992, Dr. Smith was associated with St. John's Hospital in Santa Monica, as both a member of the staff and of the board of trustees. He has been a member of the Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors since 1989, and Chairman since 1991. (See profile on page 6.)

Dr. Smith was proud to see the College pay tribute to St. Albert the Great, one who led "an amazingly active life, as teacher, administrator and bishop." St. Albert, he noted, was so infused with sound theology and scientific and philosophical learning that he was called the "wonder" of his age. Thanks to St. Albert, he said, the Western world became convinced of the value and need for scientific pursuits. And thanks to our donors, he continued, this new building will "help our students as they struggle with the complex challenges posed by today's scientific advances."



**President Thomas E. Dillon**

On Palm Sunday, April 16, we gathered on campus to dedicate the eighth permanent building on campus, Albertus Magnus Science Hall, a facility which will allow us to reproduce and discuss the great scientific experiments of Western Civilization – experiments which, in allowing us to look back at the fundamentals of the development of natural science, will also allow us to look forward with discernment and understanding.

We dedicated this building to St. Albert the Great, and, as I explain more about him, you will see why. Born around the year 1200 in Bavaria, St. Albert was the eldest son of a powerful and wealthy German lord of military rank. In 1223, over the fierce opposition of his family, he entered the novitiate of the relatively new Domini-

can order and became an instructor of theology. In 1240, he was sent to the University of Paris to obtain advanced degrees in theology. And there he ended up teaching as a master to a handful of young students, one of whom was known as Thomas from Aquino.

For seven years, Thomas Aquinas was the pupil and assistant of Albert, thus forming one of the greatest ‘teacher-student’ unions in history. During their studies together, some of Albert’s other very bright students complained to Albert that their quiet classmate seemed dull-witted, like a big dumb ox. Albert replied, with remarkable insight, “You call him a Dumb Ox – I tell you this Dumb Ox shall bellow so loud that his bellowings will fill the world.”

Albert was later sent to Cologne, and in 1260 was consecrated bishop of Ratisbonne. He retired two years later back to Cologne to resume a life of writing and teaching. His literary production spanned some 40 years, making him the most prolific writer and teacher of the century. He was called “great” even in his own time.

The Dictionary of Scientific Biography, a secular reference tool, refers to St. Albert as “one of the most famous precursors of modern science in the High Middle Ages,” proficient in all branches of science. St. Albert had compiled a monumental summary of all the known works of Aristotle and Aristotle’s Arabic interpreters, which came to be recognized as one of the marvels of his age. He was an assiduous observer of nature, grounding his evidence in sense perception and in repeated experimentation. He insisted that science consisted not in simply believing what one is told but in inquiring into the *causes* of things.

He speculated on the cause of heat, studying in detail how light from the sun produces thermal effects. He knew of the refraction of solar rays and also of the laws of refraction of light. He prepared the way for the first correct theoretical analysis of the rainbow. He speculated that the Milky Way is composed of stars and attributed the dark spots on the moon to configurations on its surface. He correlated the occurrence of tides with the motion of the moon. He experimented with alchemy and is said to have been the first to isolate the element arsenic. He compiled a list of over one hundred minerals, giving the properties of each. He was acquainted with fossils and made accurate observations of animal impressions. He suggested the possibility of the transmutation of metals.

**It is, therefore, especially fitting that we dedicated this magnificent new building for science to the man who is the greatest saint of science: St. Albert the Great.**

In fact, his powers of observation and skill at classification earned for him an unparalleled reputation. His work on plants and vegetables, again from the Scientific Dictionary, “is a masterpiece for its independence of treatment, its accuracy and range of detailed description, its freedom from myth, and its innovation in systematic classification.” He was the first to have mentioned *spinach* in Western Literature, the first to note the influence of light and heat on the growth of trees, and the first to establish that sap is tasteless in the root and becomes flavored as it ascends.

He proposed that plant life was mutable and that new species could be produced by grafting. He studied embryology and was acquainted with the development of fish and mammals and understood aspects of fetal nutrition. His work on anthropology has been regarded as a foreshadowing of methods used in experimental psychology. He also made significant contributions to veterinary and medical science, dentistry, and anatomy, and was so much reported to have cures for all manner of diseases that he was regarded as something of a magician.

But above all, St. Albert lived a life of profound humility and sanctity, and for that reason he entered God’s heavenly kingdom not as just a great scientist, but as an exemplary holy man. Pope Pius XI declared him a universal saint of the Church in 1931 and conferred on him that rare title, “Doctor of the Church.” Ten years later, Pope Pius XII declared him the heavenly patron of all who cultivate the natural sciences.

It is, therefore, especially fitting that we dedicated this magnificent new building for science to the man who is the greatest saint of science. As Catholics, we know that our faith goes hand-in-hand with the progress of science in explaining and discovering the mysteries of God’s creation. Our Holy Father has reminded us of this profound truth in his monumental work, *Fides et Ratio*, (“Faith and Reason”) which he addresses, in part, to scientists, urging them to press on to acquire an ever-greater knowledge of our universe and its rich array of component parts, because,

as he says, “the search for truth, even when it concerns a finite reality of the world or of man, is never-ending, but always points beyond to something higher than the immediate object of study, to the questions which give access to mystery.”

St. Albert the Great is, indeed, a fitting patron of our new building as we remind ourselves of these same timeless truths. Our College is named after a student he helped to form. When we think of the legacy of St. Thomas, whom Pope John Paul II calls a “master of thought” and “an authentic model for all who seek the truth,” we cannot help but think of St. Albert, who left his imprint on him.

And, as much as we aim to recognize St. Albert, we also aim to give thanks to those benefactors who made this building possible. This magnificent structure would not exist without the prayers and gifts of so many, and in particular, the three foundations and one couple whose gifts were extraordinary: The Fritz B. Burns Foundation, The Weingart Foundation, The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and Dr. and Mrs. William Weber Smith. We are also profoundly thankful to those whose hard work brought these plans to life: Scott Boydston of Rasmussen & Associates, the architect; David Hight, president of HMH Contractors, and his project foreman, Bob Powell.

Albertus Magnus Science Hall will exist for many years. Please join us in giving praise to God for this achievement and pray that we will remain true to His calling.



**St. Albert the Great**

### Cardinal Mahony’s Palm Sunday Homily



**Left: Cardinal Mahony invokes blessing on Albertus Magnus Science Hall.**

As we once again enter into the holiest of all weeks, this great week of grace, we are reminded constantly that this is the week of the great Paschal mystery of Jesus: that Paschal mystery which entails His humbly handing Himself over to suffering, death and then to be raised up by the Father on Easter Day. And so that cycle of the Paschal mystery is something that we need to reflect upon in our own lives, because it is suffering, death and resurrection that brought about the forgiveness of the sins of the world, the opening of the gates of Heaven and salvation and redemption for the human family.

But it is also part of our own journey as well. We, as disciples of Jesus, also have those cycles of the Paschal mystery. In some share, we also participate in suffering, and at times in death to self, and we also have those wonderful glimpses of glory in the Resurrection, until that final moment when we ourselves enter fully into the fruitfulness of the Paschal mystery through our own death and entrance into eternal life.

So the Church always encourages us to see this cycle as something that occurs in our own lives, in a different way – that we too, many times, face sufferings, disappointments, maybe illness, all kinds of reversals, and they are part of the human story and human life. All of us will find those sufferings in our journey.

And so the Church encourages us, when we have those days and those moments and those weeks, to unite ourselves more fully with Jesus Christ, who has first and more fully entered into suffering and death for us. We are to unite then, our own sufferings, our own difficulties, our own burdens and our own obstacles with those of Jesus.

And those other moments – those wonderful glimpses of the glory of God’s presence in our world, in our life – when those come, those too are a sharing in the life, in the fruitfulness of Jesus Christ and His Paschal mystery. Today, for example, we gather for the great and wonderful dedication of the new building, Albertus Magnus Science Hall. This is a wonderful day of joy and rejoicing. It is a glimpse of the glory of God and the goodness of God in our lives and in our midst and in the history of Thomas Aquinas College. So this too is a sharing, then, in the grace and the glory of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

For so many centuries, the Fathers of the Church have encouraged us to see in the great Paschal mystery of Jesus, our own reflected journeys and life, and to find the fruitfulness therein from our recollecting that reality and our willingness to enter in humbly to that same cycle with our Lord Jesus, inviting Him, asking Him – His presence, His power, His grace – to sustain us, as we make that journey ourselves.

Let us therefore reflect upon the great Paschal mystery of Jesus, and let us thank Almighty God for the gift of salvation through Jesus, which we experience again this week. And let us ask the Lord to help us find in our own lives that living out, in gradual and in frequent ways, our own partial share in the full Paschal mystery of Our Lord Jesus.

# Science Tutors Help Design Building

A plan for a science building existed from the beginning of the College. But in the early 1990s, when prospects for such a building were realized, a group of tutors formed a committee and began to discuss how they would like that building to be.

Dr. Thomas Kaiser, chairman of the committee, along with Drs. Ronald Richard and Carol Day, proposed that a building plan be designed to provide for laboratories next to seminar rooms, adequate storage and display space, and facilities suitable for reproducing classical experiments in chemistry, biology, physics, electromagnetism, and optics. "And wouldn't it be great to include a Foucault Pendulum!" Dr. Richard later added. For these tutors especially, Albertus Magnus Science Hall has been a long-awaited dream.

## 'A Kaiser In His Castle'

Chiefly responsible for the program of the building was Dr. Kaiser, the College's first graduate to obtain an advanced degree in the sciences. As a student here, Kaiser was most interested in philosophy and theology, especially the philosophy of nature. "I was struck by how important the study of nature was for doing theology," he said. "That nature acts for an end is most evident in living things. This teleological framework, of course, points to God. I find now even as a tutor that principles we face in the lab are often brought to bear in theology."

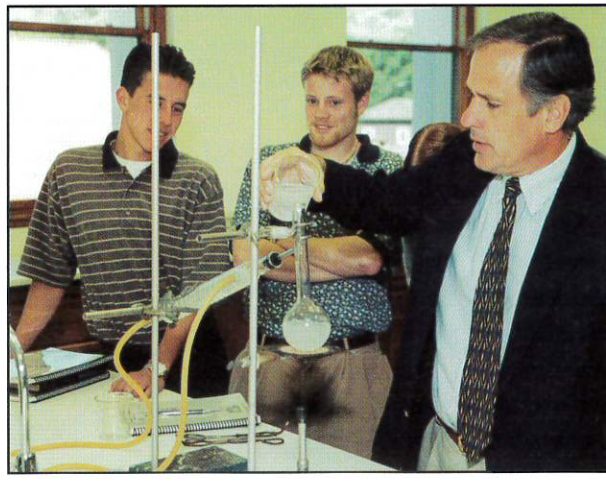
Kaiser was interested in nature growing up in Bakersfield, California. When he wasn't out playing sports, he would be found checking out the habitats of birds and mammals along the banks and open country of the Kern River near his home. He got interested in falconry when he was thirteen and maintains that interest today. "I hated biology in high school," he said. "We never saw a single living organism. We were always pulling one out of formaldehyde."

He was so enamored of his experience at the College that, after he graduated in 1975, he thought he might like to come back and teach. After a misspent semester studying philosophy in the East, he began taking some undergraduate courses in biology at Cal-State Bakersfield and worked at a cotton research station run by UC Davis. He also spoke with College founders, Drs. Ron McArthur and Marc Berquist, and discussed getting a doctorate in biology and returning to the College to teach. None of the tutors as yet had any expertise in that area.

On their encouragement, Kaiser then applied for and was accepted into UCLA's doctoral program in biology. He completed his course work in 1982, and obtained his doctorate in 1986. His dissertation on the "Behavior and Energetics of Prairie Falcons Breeding in the Western Mojave Desert," was a ground-breaking study in energetic efficiency that confirmed a hypothesis of why certain female falcons are larger than males.

Kaiser returned to the College to teach in 1982 and began to help overhaul the laboratory and science curriculum for the freshmen and sophomore years. He introduced a more complete program of biology, still starting with J. Henri Fabre and asking "Where is the proper place to begin the study of biology?" He recommended expanding readings in Harvey and Galen (to discuss anatomy and physiology, the motion of the heart and blood, and animal generation), Linnaeus (to discuss the naming and classification of organisms), Dreisch (to discuss embryology and vitalistic theories), Goethe (to discuss the metamorphosis of plants), and Aristotle (to discuss the principles and methods of science). He also recommended field trips to examine and collect insects, class dissection of a sheep heart, and lab exercises in embryology and plant anatomy. The faculty adopted his recommendations.

"Our students get exposed to the most important questions raised in the study of biology," he says. "Basically, there are two competing views of biology today:



Dr. Thomas Kaiser in one of the new chemistry labs

Kaiser married his wife and they have raised 11 children. He graduated from the College with a doctorate in philosophy in three years. If you visit his homestead in Upper California, you will find at any given time fawns, quail, ducks, chukars, and various other reptiles. They all revolve around him.

## Dr. Richard, 'The Philosopher'

It never hurts to have a doctorate in the development of your mind. Dr. Richard has been a tutor at the College that was his background in philosophy for *sophia* ("wisdom")

Richard was a research engineer at Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California, working with the space program. He was involved in preliminary trajectories for launches to the moon and was interested in the theoretical design of space computers. It was interesting, but not always satisfying.

Meanwhile, he was working on his doctorate in philosophy. He was in love with teaching. He wanted more of it. He wanted a career change.

"One day, my wife and I came out of the supermarket and I found a tin board for the 'Great Books of the Western World' program. I filled it out and sent it in. A salesman then called me and I ordered for the books. When they came, I tried to read them. I tried reading Aristotle and Newton but got no interest."

His second experience came when he was looking for a book on speed-reading. He found instead "How to Read A Book," by Mortimer Adler, one of the 'Great Books' of the Western World. "There it was again," he thought, "a reference to the 'Great Books' of the Western World. I found that he was interested in something other than just reading. That he would like to teach at a small Catholic college. He combined physics and astronomy. (He holds one doctorate in philosophy. He completed the coursework equivalent to a doctorate in philosophy.)"

He sent out forty inquiry letters and got one reply from Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas. He accepted the job. At the faculty picnic before classes started, he met the chairman of the Philosophy Department, Dr. I. Scholz, and decided to audit some of his courses.

He became fast friends with Dr. Scholz and in the early 1970s confided that he would really like to teach, if it were to exist, at a "Catholic St. John's College," (referring to the esteemed Great Books program initiated at St. John's). Scholz referred him to his friend, Marc Berquist, who in fact, was founding such a college.

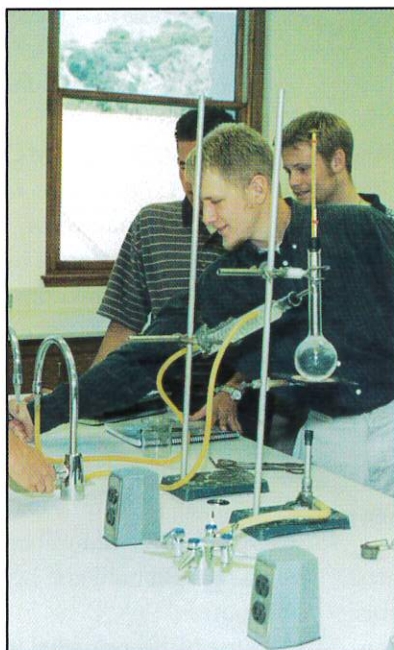
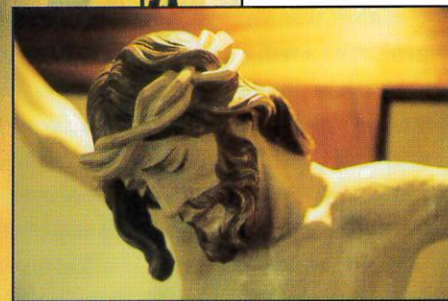
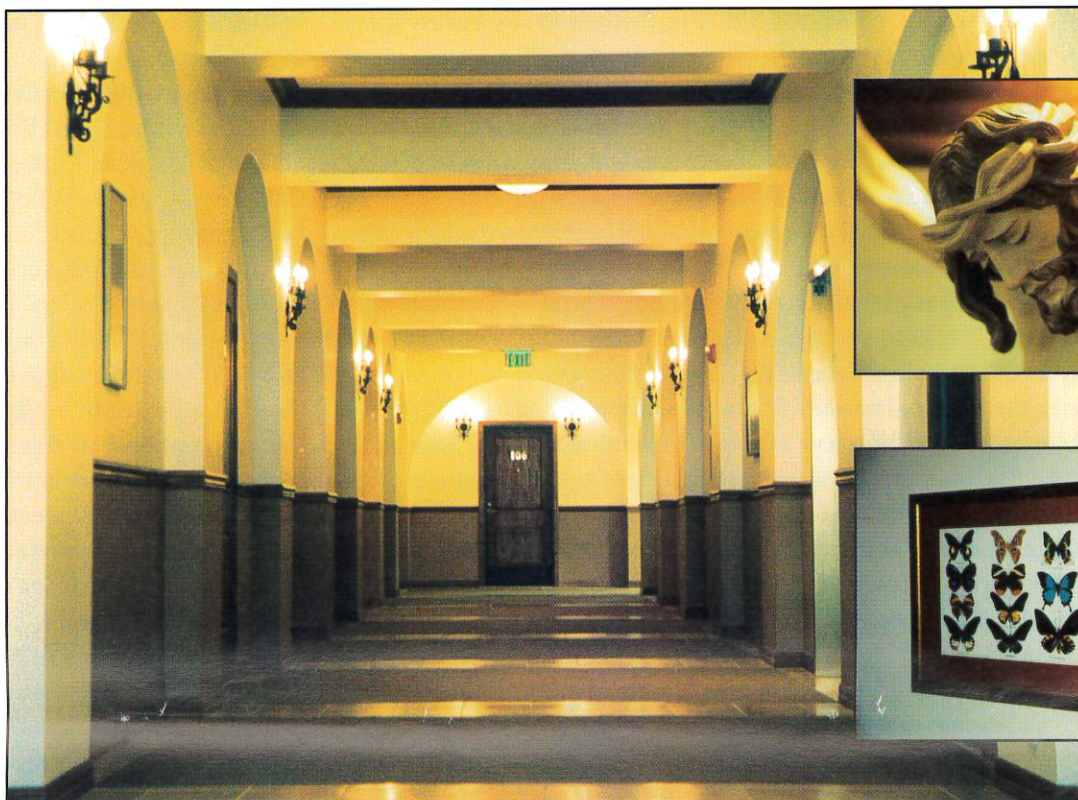
Thus, in 1972, in the College's second year, he traveled to California to meet the faculty and to give a lecture on the nature of "time." Over the next few years, Richard's interest in philosophy under Scholz and Dr. McArthur about coming to the college. "The junior and senior science programs going," says Richard, "since he could get involved in the philosophy and

# St. Albert the Great, Patron of Natural Science,

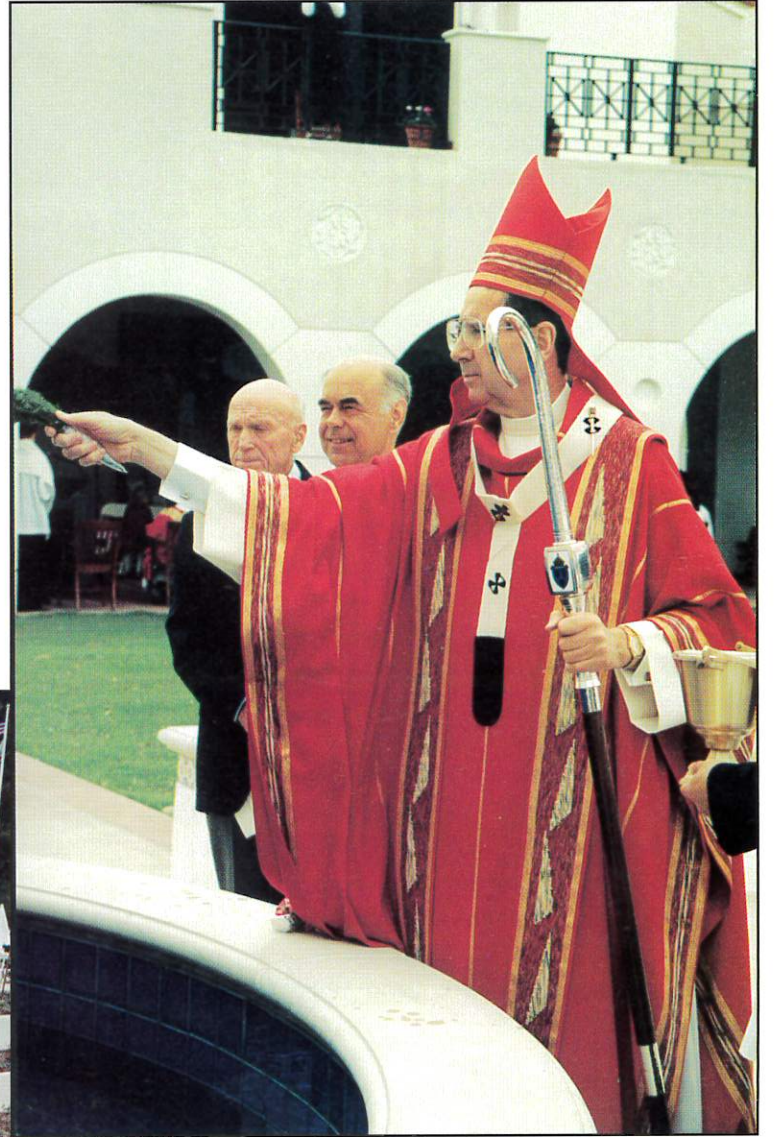
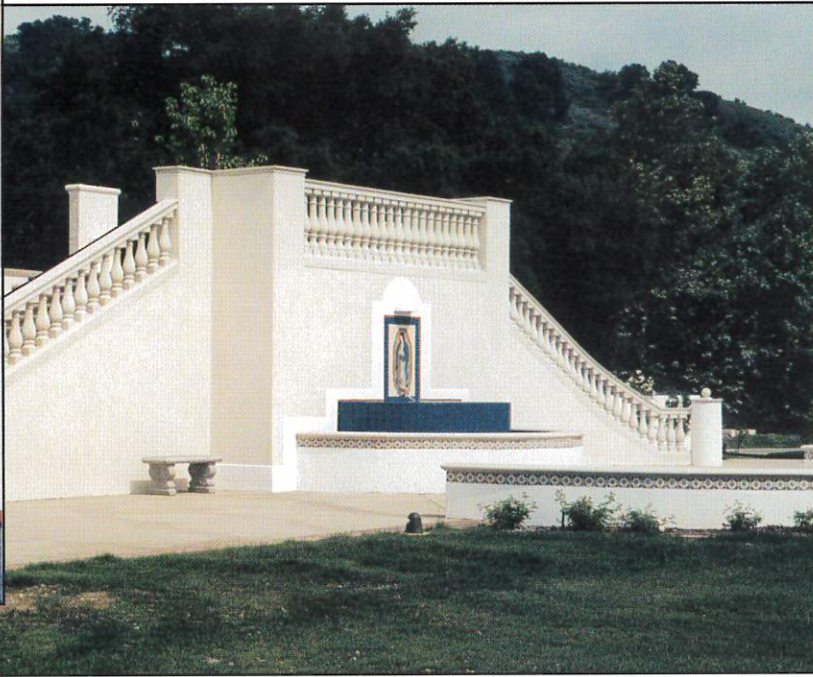


The Thomas Aquinas College community asks God to bless the individuals and foundations whose gifts have made the construction of Albertus Magnus Science Hall possible:

- The Fritz B. Burns Foundation
- The Weingart Foundation
- The Arthur Vining Davis Foundation
- Dr. & Mrs. William W. Smith
- The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation
- Mrs. Ray Hommes
- Mr. Richard Seaver
- Mrs. J. Peter Grace, Jr.
- Mrs. Margaret P. Sibert
- Mrs. Mariana Herman
- Dr. & Mrs. Henry J. Zeiter
- Mrs. James Knight
- Mr. Ray Stark
- The Grace Foundation
- Mr. & Mrs. Richard R. Heimann
- Mr. & Mrs. Daniel L. Duggan
- Mr. Oliver E. Martin
- Mr. & Mrs. Richard T. Walsh
- Hon. & Mrs. Richard Anderson
- Mr. & Mrs. Ronald E. Lantz
- Mr. & Mrs. Michael Jacobson
- Mr. & Mrs. William J. Quinn
- Mr. & Mrs. Jeremy McNeil
- Mr. & Mrs. Andrew W. Harvey



# Teacher of St. Thomas Aquinas: Pray for Us!



## ***From the Blessing of Albertus Magnus Science Hall by Cardinal Mahony***

The all-knowing God, who is Lord, moves us in many ways to deepen that knowledge of Him which He revealed completely, when, for our sake, the Word was made flesh. All disciplines, sciences, and teaching about the world and about human life that we pursue must, as their final purpose, bring us to a knowledge of the truth and to the worship of the true God.

Today we ask God's blessing on this center of seeking – learning and teaching what is true. We ask that those entrusted with the education of young people in this institution may teach their students how to join the discoveries of human wisdom with the truth of the Gospel, so that they will be able to keep the true faith and to live up to it in their lives.

We also ask the Lord that the students will find in their teachers the image of Christ, so that, enriched with both human and divine learning, they will, in turn, be able and ready to enlighten and assist others.

Lord God Almighty, in your kindness hear our prayers. We dedicate this building to the education of youth, to the progress of the sciences, and to learning. May it become a center where students and teachers, imbued with the words of truth, will search for the wisdom that guides the Christian life and strive wholeheartedly to stand by Christ as their teacher, who lives and reigns for ever and ever.

May the all-knowing God, who is Lord, show us His ways.

May Christ, eternal wisdom, teach us the words of truth.

May the Holy Spirit, the blessed light, always enlighten our minds, so that we may learn what is right and good, and in our actions, carry out what we have learned. Amen.

## The College Board of Governors, Member in Profile:

### William W. Smith, M.D.

Bouncing on the bench-seat of a Model T Ford, young Bill Smith spent his summers on the dirt roads of rural Kansas making calls from farm to farm with his grandfather, one of the only doctors in the area. "I wanted to be like him," Smith said of his 6'2" red-haired Irish granddad.

Bill Smith became a country doctor of sorts, but in a setting far from the cornfields and hay barns – smack dab in the heart and soul of the *glitterati* and as personal physician to some of the most famous individuals in the entertainment industry and financial world: Beverly Hills, California. It was his country manner and common-sense approach to medicine that led such luminaries as Jimmy Stewart, Fred Astaire, Sam Goldwyn, Howard Hughes, and others to beat a path to his office door. "I guess it was just the circumstances of the time that led me to be there rather than somewhere else," Smith shrugs. Some circumstances.

Like his grandfather, Smith went on to distinguish himself in medical school. He stayed in his native California, having spent time in San Diego and Los Angeles, where his father was a pharmacist and a rancher. On graduating from high school, he was admitted to Stanford University, where he obtained his bachelor's and medical degrees. He returned to Los Angeles for his internship and residency and began practicing medicine in 1941.

He found that he liked teaching medicine as much as practicing it, and thus took teaching appointments at the University of Southern California and at the Good Hope Clinic of the Hospital of the Good Samaritan. The need for him to be near an urban area thus precluded his assuming the life of a country doctor.

That's when "circumstances" hit him. Because of his need to repay student loans, he searched for some work on the side. A friend told him that MGM Studios was looking for a medical consultant for a television show it was planning to run, "Dr. Kildare." Dr. Smith applied for the job and got it.

"It was a lot of fun," says Dr. Smith, who then



Dr. William Weber Smith and wife, Gerry

spent his time advising actors how to behave like doctors and nurses and other medical personnel. He also reviewed the set and scripts and ensured that terminology was correct. "I got to meet a lot of very interesting people and see the film industry close up. I also got to play a lot of gin rummy with the work crews during all the down time!" he laughs.

But he also won the respect of many in the entertainment industry who saw in him that spirit of the country doctor, always reachable, always with sound advice. He became the physician for the Motion Picture Health and Welfare Group, which led to many referrals. His practice grew and by 1955, he helped establish the Beverly Hills Medical Clinic where he spent "many busy but rewarding years" as a family doctor. He retired in 1991.

In addition to his work in private practice, Dr. Smith also devoted many years of his life at two of Los Angeles' most renowned hospitals: Good Samaritan and St. John's. For many years, he served on the staff of St. John's Hospital, becoming Chairman of the Board of Trustees in 1987. Throughout this time, he also served as a volunteer teacher at UCLA's emergency center, as an officer for the Los Angeles Public Health Service, and as an examiner for the Federal Aviation Administration, certifying pilots and airline industry person-

nel. He served for two years in World War II as a member of the Admiral's staff in the Navy, having been turned down by the Army due to injuries he had received in a motorcycle accident.

Among his many professional honors, he is a Fellow of the American College of Physicians, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Health of England, and a Diplomate of the American Board of Internal Medicine. He is also a member of the California Medical Association, the Los Angeles County Medical Association, the Los Angeles Academy of Medicine, the American, California, and Los Angeles Heart Associations, and the American Science Film Association.

Step by step with Dr. Smith through all his accomplishments has been his wife, Gerry. They celebrate their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary next year. They met while on a double date, when Bill took more of an interest in his friend's companion than in his own. "He asked me out the next night," Gerry said, "and then he asked me out a lot. I was quite smitten."

Raised in Los Angeles, Gerry attended Marymount and Marlborough before studying at Westover, a girl's boarding school in Connecticut. At 19, she spent a summer touring Europe with a group of friends just before the War broke out.

Gerry returned to Los Angeles to work briefly in a law office and volunteered with the Junior League. Soon after she and Bill met, they were engaged and later married at St. Paul the Apostle in Westwood. Bill was a Lutheran at the time. He converted to Catholicism ten years later when one of his daughters was preparing for her First Communion. Bill and Gerry raised six children. They have nine grandchildren. Gerry helps with their car-pooling and says she and Bill are grateful to be able to spend so much time with them.

Bill and Gerry are avid gardeners, travelers and book readers. Bill used to hunt game and still loves to fly-fish when he can. Nearly every day, he and Gerry work out in their pool, and lately, Bill has taken up watercolor painting with enthusiasm. And until his retirement, he still made house calls. You can take the doctor out of the country, but you can't take the country out of this doctor.

### An Interview with Dr. Smith

Q. You were the personal physician to many illustrious persons over the years. Who were some of the most memorable?

Jimmy Stewart, I was very close with. He was an absolutely wonderful human being. Fred Astaire, too. In his later years, all that dancing he had done had given him a lack of equilibrium. He had to be helped around by his friends. It was very sad to see, but he bore it with great grace and dignity. Walter Pidgeon was another great gentleman. And Ava Gardner, whom I had known from her very beginning until her death, she was a marvelous woman. Others, too, like Y. Frank Freeman, the head of Paramount for many years, and Sam Goldwyn, too, are quite memorable. Howard Hughes was an enigma for my wife. She could never understand why he needed help only at 3:00 a.m.

Also, some members of Saudi Arabia's ruling families had become loyal patients of mine. They would fly all the way over for appointments and then, according to their custom, leave me with a watch or a clock after their visits. I had more watches and clocks than I knew what to do with! I also attended to the Shah of Iran, his sister, and their mother, the Queen, over a period of time.

The first call I ever made on the Queen, I had no idea what I was getting into. It was during the uprising in the 1970s, and I went up to see her at her place near Beverly Hills. When I got there, there were demonstrators throwing fire torches at the house. I finally got past the line and in to see her. She used to keep 12 poodles who were all dyed a different color. A man would blow a whistle and they'd all fall into line.

Q. Medical practice has changed quite a bit since your grandfather's days. How have you come to see that change over the years?

I was fortunate to be practicing during the "golden years" of medicine. It was a great time to be a doctor.

We got to see amazing progress in the field of medicine, wonderful advancements to help the human race. And we enjoyed the best aspects of the physician-patient relationship, where a doctor was considered a part of one's family, was looked up to like a reverend or a pastor. You were always there when they needed you. I enjoyed that greatly. Things started changing, though, when managed care was introduced in the early 1990s. Patients started getting bounced around from one doctor to another and we lost something very valuable in that system. But I'm optimistic that things will change back to the way they were, that patients will get to have that sort of intimacy with their physicians that they used to have.

Q. How did a medical man like you come to be interested in a small classic liberal arts college?

I was fortunate enough to be on the board of several organizations, and was chairman of the board of trustees at St. John's Hospital when one day, Gerry said to me, "Bill, you're raising all this money for the hospital, but I just found out about this wonderful school and maybe you can do something for it." Gerry had been a good friend of Margaret Browne who was an early and generous benefactor of Thomas Aquinas College and was serving on its board of governors. [Mrs. Browne has since died in 1990, but her son, Dr. Harry Browne, has since taken her place on the board. – ed.]

So one day, Gerry and I went up to the College and attended one of [President] Tom Dillon's classes. We toured around. I was deeply impressed. I could see that these young people were actually being taught to think. They could form their own ideas and opinions. I had never seen a school like that. I had gone to Stanford and I had been associated with other colleges, but I had never seen any other college do with its students what Thomas Aquinas College was doing. Gerry and I went home after that visit and I wrote what was for me a good-size check for the College. After that, I

was asked to join the board, which I gratefully agreed to do.

Q. Unlike the average pre-med student, our graduates have to complete an extra year of pre-med courses before they can be admitted to medical school. Do you think it's worth it for a student interested in medicine to still come here?

I certainly do. Pre-med training is a wonderful thing and you can't get enough of it. But getting an education in the classics enhances one's whole life. To add a year of schooling so that you can have this experience is, really, a small price to pay.

Q. Would you recommend the practice of medicine to young people today?

Certainly. In spite of all the changes that have been occurring, it still is most satisfying. Helping people with diseases and suffering is one of the noblest pursuits in life. I don't think there's any profession that can compare.

Q. What about the sheer time demands for the practitioner today? Can someone do that and still have a family?

Yes, but I must say that you have to have an understanding wife. It takes a great deal of time that others would be spending at home.

Q. How has your faith affected your medical practice over the years?

That's a hard question to answer. My faith was certainly unchanged, although I certainly feel closer to God now than I did in my younger days. You just learn to do things according to your faith when you are a doctor. Of course, that cuts out doing a number of things, like abortion, and artificial birth control, but most of my career I was practicing in Catholic hospitals where that wasn't an issue. I really value having been in that circumstance. I never really encountered situations where my faith put me in conflict with my work, although I can certainly see how other doctors might be put in those situations today.



## Alumni Profiles

"I'm exploring the use of high-fidelity computerized simulation as an alternative to physical prototypes — 'virtual prototyping,' it's called." Say what? "Basically, I'm trying to figure out how to design products using a virtual environment on a computer system instead of having to make physical models," says Joe De Kroon, Class of 1991.

De Kroon is a research engineer, having completed his master's degree, and is now working toward his doctorate at Georgia Institute of Technology, one of the top engineering schools in the nation (ranked up with MIT, Stanford, and others). Very few labs do what his graduate research lab does: "Metadesign."

"It's pretty abstract," he confesses. "But we're essentially changing the way products are designed. A lot of labs are focused on designing highly specific products, like microchips — designing better chips, faster chips. What we do is focus more on the design process itself — is there a better way to be designing products? Because we look at problem-solving in general, we can look at anything, not just microchips."

De Kroon's research is currently funded by Lucent Technologies, one of the largest and fastest-growing telecommunications companies. He is working on a project with Lucent's Wireless Networks Group, which supplies base stations for the cellular phone industry. The base stations are those refrigerator-sized metal boxes you might see on the side of the road that are used as switching stations for cellular networks. As the wireless industry continues to grow, more and more advanced wireless technology is being demanded. The speed of designing these metallic mazes of wiring is all-important for the commercially-sensitive market.

De Kroon's work is to see whether new base stations can be designed faster, more efficiently. The conventional method of verifying and analyzing a new model design is to actually build it. De Kroon, however, is exploring ways to save time and money by verifying and analyzing designs all on a computer. The model isn't real, but it is so close that it is *virtually real*.

To do this, De Kroon is at the cutting edge of research involving "virtual reality" (which allows a user to interact with a stereoscopic image of a product),



**Joseph P. De Kroon ('91)**  
at the controls of the hi-fidelity space shuttle trainer at Johnson Space Center, Houston, Texas.

and "haptic interfaces" (which are force-feedback devices allowing a user to "feel" a virtual object). To De Kroon's knowledge, while the automotive and aerospace industry has been using this kind of technology for the past five to seven years — for the purpose of designing vehicles without having to make mockups — his virtual prototyping research is the first being done in the telecommunications industry.

De Kroon is glad to be on this end of applied science, which is more theoretical and more inquiring into the causes of things than in most other areas of applied science. It was his education at the College that gave him this satisfaction. "I really hated engineering courses at first," he said. "I'm sure I irritated all my teachers; I kept asking 'Where does that come from?' 'How do we know that?' I was just supposed to accept all the scientific premises on faith. But TAC had prompted me to keep looking at the causes of things."

Was it worth going to Thomas Aquinas College before getting his engineering degrees? "Absolutely. So many times, in applied science, the causes seem mystical — you don't understand all the foundational physics behind, say, microwaves ovens; you're just glad you can apply the engineering formulas to make them. But when you're allowed to learn the causes, you can

see that science progresses step-by-step, and you can take confidence in knowing that the particular focus of your research is, in fact, properly focused. To me, that way of thinking as a researcher is invaluable."

Dr. Burt Bras, Director of Systems Realization Laboratory where De Kroon works, says De Kroon is able to combine his "enormous interest in computer simulation/animation with a very practical knowledge of engineering." Dr. Bras praises De Kroon for his independence and initiative, noting that his work in creating two different immersive virtual reality set-ups is so new that the equipment vendors have not even written drivers for them yet.

De Kroon began this research after having worked as a NASA contractor on the International Space Station Program in Houston, Texas. He was a member of a team that aimed at integrating the many different functional aspects of the station. "These were great experiences, but aerospace is not the place for engineers to be these days," he says, alluding to dense government oversight and funding issues.

De Kroon expects to complete his Ph.D. in mechanical engineering in 2002. He obtained his B.S. at Arizona State University. Before that, he obtained certificates in motorcycle mechanics at one of only two such institutes in the country. It had followed his love for motorcycles that he acquired at the College while riding in nearby hills. In deference to the risks of his hobby, he never goes anywhere without taping a Miraculous Medal to the gas tank. What little free time he has he spends composing music for the piano and guitar and in weightlifting.

A native of San Francisco, De Kroon followed his sister, Maria (nee De Kroon) Lenzen, ('89), to the College. His brother Paul hopes to attend this fall. He is fond of his days at the College both personally and professionally. "I loved the dorm life, too. I had four years of living with some of the best friends I'll ever have. And the school gave me an appreciation for the true purpose of study. Sure, in applied science you learn how to build some interesting things. But at TAC, you learn to be a better person and there's no substitute for that."

"There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars," says St. Paul, "for star differs from star in glory." (1 Cor. 15:41). As a former seminarian, Ed Wassell (Class of '91) once meditated on how one star might differ from another in glory. Now, through an abrupt career turn, he is preparing to explain scientifically that very difference — working on cameras to be included on the Hubble Space Telescope to chart data on star formation.

Wassell is a research engineer for Raytheon Corporation's "Wide-Field Camera Three Project," at the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland. The federal government has extended the life of the Hubble Space Telescope, currently circling the earth in space, by allowing it to be updated with better technology and instrumentation. The technological improvement he is working on will allow the Hubble to acquire better information on how stars are formed.

"The cameras on the telescope have certain detectors that pick up light," Wassell explains. "The light is then translated into an electronic signal that is processed digitally so that an image can be reconstructed. The problem is that the detectors pick up certain background noise and characteristics that have to be excluded if we want to interpret the data correctly. What we're doing is looking at those detectors and seeing how we might better identify those characteristics so scientists can focus instead on the relevant data." To do this, Wassell works in the laboratory conducting tests and interpreting data filtered by the detectors.

If such a job is an unlikely place for a former seminarian, it at least followed naturally upon his education at the College. After graduation, Wassell spent two years testing his vocation to the priesthood with one of the newer religious orders, Opus Angelorum. After discerning his vocation to the lay life, he began teaching high school at the Legionaries of Christ seminary schools in New Hampshire and Connecticut.

For two years on the side, he and a fellow teacher (Steve Cain, who became a tutor at the College in 1998) would travel 100 miles each week to the home of Dr. Duane Berquist, a philosophy professor at Assumption



**Ed Wassell ('91)**  
with wife Jeanette and son James  
who awaits a sibling shortly.

College whose brother is a College founder, Marc Berquist. There, he and Cain had private tutoring in Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, a work that Wassell was introduced to in his senior year at the College.

These further studies in philosophy, plus three years of teaching high school, inclined him toward graduate school for teaching at a higher level. But his new bride, Jeanette, made him think hard about his subsequent employability and financial security.

Wassell then met Dr. Charles Montrose, Chairman of the Physics Department at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., who encouraged him to consider graduate school in physics, and showed him it would be economically feasible to do so. Wassell was sufficiently interested in physics. Dr. Berquist had fascinated him in showing that the positions of early-20th century physicists like Einstein, Planck, Bohr, Schroedinger and Heisenberg, could be harmonized with those of Aristotle.

Wassell jumped at the opportunity and in two years completed his master's of science degree in physics — all without having to take the usual regimen of undergrad course work in engineering. He anticipates getting his doctorate in 2002.

"When considering an applicant for our graduate physics program, our main concern is not how much physics the candidate *knows*, but rather how much the candidate can *learn*," said Dr. Montrose. "The broad

scope of Ed's classical education has developed in him the intellectual habit of synthesizing knowledge gained in localized areas to develop broader principles. He's a brilliant young guy who is genuinely interested in understanding the physical universe — what the world is made of and how it works. His intellectual habits will prove (and have proven) invaluable to him as he seeks to understand the general theories that describe the physical laws of the universe."

Wassell came to Thomas Aquinas College after a two-year detour at Claremont's Harvey Mudd College left him fretting over the moral hazards to which he was continually exposed. One of his public high school chums, Art Hipler ('89) from Anchorage, Alaska, had landed at the College and Wassell decided to join him there, starting over as a freshman. "I never had realized what my faith was until I came to TAC," said Wassell. "It was there that I developed a prayer life and realized my responsibilities as a Christian."

Before joining Raytheon, Wassell worked as a laboratory researcher for Vitreous Laboratories, exploring ways to convert liquid nuclear waste into hard glass so that it could be buried safely under the earth without risk of leakage and subsequent radioactive contamination. The research is being used in connection with the on-going clean-up of the Hanford Nuclear Power Plant site along the Columbia River in Washington. "It was a great experience," he says. "I learned how to use a scanning electron microscope and to design my own glass substances."

"Physics is a logical science. Many people just memorize the principles of physics, but they don't attempt to understand those principles. At TAC, I was taught to think through an issue and to really try to understand the principles. In the realm of physics, then, I try to look not simply to the application of a principle, but to the principle itself. That, in turn, helps me apply the principle to new applications."

Wassell's wife, Jeanette, is a 1991 graduate of Christendom College. They have one son, James, and are expecting another child this summer. For the Wassells, this is star formation of yet another order.

# Friday Night Lecture Series

## Dr. Andrew Seeley: “What is Wisdom?”

Dr. Andrew Seeley graduated from the College in 1987, and did his post-graduate work at the University of Toronto, where he received a Master's in Medieval Studies (1988), a Licentiate in Medieval Theology, through its Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies (1992), and a Doctorate in Medieval Theology (1995). While at Toronto he was an Instructor in Philosophy at the Oratory Philosophy Programme from 1989-91. He returned to the College in 1992 to teach. He is co-author of an up-coming book on the Declaration of Independence and its role in American politics.

When we consider the great doctors of the Church, something immediately appears to be common to them: They are all saints. “Of course, they are saints,” you might say; “what did you expect them to be?” But why should we expect them to be saints? Christians are canonized because they have loved, not because they have thought. The Church holds up St. Thomas Aquinas to us as the greatest of her teachers, no doubt in part because of his extraordinary mind. But why should it also happen that he should possess the overflowing heart of St. Francis? Put another way: Why are the wise also saintly? Holy Scripture provides us a guide for the answer.

### Wisdom in the Wisdom Books

Five books of the Old Testament are generally considered the “Wisdom Books”: *Ecclesiastes*, *Job*, *Proverbs*, *Sirach*, and *The Wisdom of Solomon*.

*Ecclesiastes* raises the ultimate question facing the wise man: *What does man gain by all the toil at which he toils under the sun?* (1:3). The Preacher, there, never finds a real answer to this question, as he foreshadows in his despairing cry: *Vanity of vanities! All is vanity!* (1:2). All the pleasures that men desire fail to give meaning to man's existence (1:12, 2:1 ff.). Even his own wisdom he judges finally to be *but a striving after wind*. (1:17).

The tragedy of man's life, which the wise man discovers and faces, is death. No matter what goods he may enjoy now, death will rob him of them all: *How the wise man dies just like the fool!* (2:16-17). Because of death, faith seeking understanding fails; all that is left is faith: *The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God, and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man.* (12:13). The wise man knows he must resign himself to God, accepting what comes from Him even though he has no hope of finding satisfaction in it.

Job is in anguish for much the same reason as the Preacher is tempted to despair: What good is man's life? The difficulty Job faces in answering that question is not the fact of death, but the fact of suffering. Why does the good man suffer? For seven days he sat silent in the ashes pondering that question in the agony of his soul and proclaiming his failure in a heart-wrenching cry: *Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night which said, 'A man-child is conceived.'* (3:3).

The wisdom Job seeks is to understand the plan of God in the suffering of the innocent, and conversely, in the success of the wicked. But like the Preacher, he knows he is doomed to failure. The wise man would be the one who understands the plan of God in allowing, even bringing about, the suffering of the innocent. He must be content with faith: *Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.* (28:28).

### Wisdom in Proverbs and Sirach

If human wisdom is fearing God and keeping His commandments, a part of it must be knowing how to keep His commandments. God therefore offers us the books of *Proverbs* and *Sirach*, which offer hope: “To fear the Lord is the beginning of Wisdom.” *Sirach* (1:14).

Wisdom is not unattainable. *Proverbs* and *Sirach* present wisdom to us under the figure of a woman who entreats us to seek her and promises she will come when we turn away from the earthly city and pursue her: *If you cry out for insight and raise your voice for understanding . . . then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom . . . he stores up sound wisdom for the upright.* (*Prov.* 2:3-6; *Sir.* 4:16-18; 6:19-22).

Both books present wisdom as one present from the foundation of the earth: *When he established the*



*heavens, I was there . . . when he marked out the foundation of the earth, then I was beside him, like a master workman.* (*Prov.* 8:27-31). *Alone I have made the circuit of the vault of heaven and have walked in the depths of the abyss.* (*Sirach* 24:5).

Wisdom was with God in creating, but what is it? Both *Proverbs* and *Sirach* clearly state that wisdom is not God, but a creature. *The Lord created me at the beginning of his work, the first of his acts of old.* (*Prov.* 8:22). *From eternity, in the beginning, he created me, and for eternity I shall not cease to exist.* (*Sirach* 24:9).

The portrayal of wisdom in these books is indeed wonderful, and yet strange. How can wisdom be eternal and yet a creature? If it is not God, how could God create through a creature? Didn't He create all things from nothing?

### The Book of Wisdom

The book of *Wisdom*, written in the person of Solomon, summarizes many points we have seen so far. But on the question, What is wisdom?, he takes a different approach. He says it is, above all, knowledge of the goodness of God and of his power: *But thou, our God, art kind and true, patient, and ruling all things in mercy . . . To know thee is complete righteousness, and to know thy power is the root of immortality.* (15:1-3).

But wisdom is more than the wise man's knowledge of God; it is also the very Providence of God at

**What a wonder – that the great and mighty wisdom of God should be found in two words: “Christ crucified.”**

work since the fall of man to save all men from ultimate disaster. Wisdom is that which God gives to men so that they might know His plan for them. Finally, wisdom dwells with God – it is something of or intimately from God Himself: *For she is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty . . . She is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness.* (7:25-26). Wisdom is then some sort of procession (a “breath,” an “emanation”) and a reflection (a “mirror,” an “image”). She comes forth from the power of God and images His goodness.

To summarize what we know about wisdom in the Old Testament, we know this much: All the works agree in presenting wisdom as an understanding of the providential plan of God in creation. This is what Job and *Ecclesiastes* seek but cannot find, while it is what *Proverbs*, *Sirach* and *Wisdom* promise will be given to those who seek. Moreover, we see that wisdom is variously presented as with God from eternity, as at work in the creation of the world and the salvation of man, and as dwelling in individuals as a gift from God. The book of *Wisdom* goes further and identifies wisdom with the knowledge of God's power and goodness, so that we see His plan for creation as a manifestation of His own divine attributes.

### Wisdom in the New Testament

St. Paul speaks of wisdom more than any other New Testament author. Under the New Testament, God has now revealed his plan for creation and he has chosen Paul to bring all men to understand it. For this reason, Paul sees that the conversion of his hearers is only the beginning of his labor. He cannot rest until he has brought his newborn sons into the full under-

standing of the mystery that Jesus has revealed to him: *And so, from the day we heard of [your faith], we have not ceased to pray for you, asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding . . . increasing in the knowledge of God.* (1:9-10).

A little later in the letter, Paul speaks of his great labor in bringing them to Christian adulthood: *[Christ] we proclaim, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man mature in Christ. For this I toil, striving with all the energy which he mightily inspires within me.* (1:28).

So it is natural for the Christian to become wise; spiritual maturity is closely connected to growth in wisdom. Christians are essentially contemplatives. The mystery of God's plan has been revealed to us and, if we have a living heart, we long with the angels to gaze upon it.

But what are we to contemplate? *[W]e preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.* (1 Cor. 1:23-24). What a wonder – that the great and mighty wisdom of God should be found in two words: “Christ crucified.”

Paul tells the Colossians that Christ is the beginning and the end of creation: *In him all things were created, in heaven and on earth . . . all things were created through him and for him . . . He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent.* (Col. 1:16-18).

So “Christ crucified” epitomizes the plan of God for creation. The idea of “Christ crucified” existed with the Father from all eternity and was the driving force behind the creation of the world. Moreover, “Christ crucified” comes to dwell in the hearts of men so that they might understand the wisdom of God: *To [His saints] God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* (Col. 1:27).

Paul says we must strive to become wise. Thus, we must strive to understand “Christ crucified”: *Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.* (1 Cor. 1:20-21). The wisdom of God is this: That He would make Himself fully known through His act of saving those who believe in the folly of Christ crucified.

How then do we become wise? Paul refers us to the one person who, like wisdom in the Old Testament, can say “I was there” at the Creation: The Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 2:9-12). Since we have received this same Spirit, we too can come to understand the love that God has bestowed on us. The Spirit gives us a share in the resurrected life that Christ now enjoys. (Rom. 8:9-11). If we allow Him, He will continue to develop that life in us, transforming our sinful natures so that we become images and likenesses of God. (Eph. 4:22-24).

The essential element in our transformation into the likeness of God is found in love: *God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.* (Rom. 5:5). As the Holy Spirit transforms us according to that love, we can begin to comprehend the love that God has revealed through the cross of Christ: *I bow my knees before the Father that . . . he may grant you to be strengthened with might through his Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fulness of God.* (Eph. 3:14-19).

We can now see why the wise man must be saintly. Christian wisdom is above all the understanding of the plan of God to reveal His merciful love through the death of Christ. But His love surpasses all possibility of human understanding. Only through the transformation of our hearts by the love poured into them by the Holy Spirit can we begin to comprehend its unsearchable riches. As we grow in love, or rather as love grows in us, extending its roots into the deepest, darkest corners of our hearts, we become other Christs, and can taste and see the goodness of the Lord.





## Dr. Paul Rahe: “How Radical was the American Revolution?”

Paul Rahe, Ph.D., is the Jay P. Walker Professor of American History at the University of Tulsa. Dr. Rahe is internationally recognized and honored for his work in the history of the American government. He is the author of more than 50 scholarly articles, book reviews, and other publications, including the four-volume *Republics Ancient and Modern*. Dr. Rahe came to the College as part of the E.L. Wiegand Distinguished Visiting Lecturer Program, which was established to bring distinguished speakers to Thomas Aquinas College and St. John's College. Following is our abridged version of his Presidents' Day lecture he gave at the College on February 25, 1999.



My subject is the American Revolution. The question I pose is: How *radical* was that Revolution?

Through much of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, the British colonial system was managed by men such as John Locke, who saw the potential for economic and technological development. In part, as a consequence of their efforts to encourage immigration, the American population grew at far too fast a rate to be compatible with the maintenance of traditional, comparatively uniform communities. In practice, subsistence farming was quite common and perhaps even predominant in the Northeast, but the same cannot be said for the South. Well before the Revolution, the colonies had become, in spirit and in fact, mostly what they were meant to be from the start: Dynamic, commercial societies, intimately tied by trade to the mother country.

Like their cousins on the other side of the Atlantic, especially the dissenters and Low-Church Anglicans, educated Americans tended to be familiar with the writings of John Locke. And those works confirmed their inclination towards an independence of mind in matters religious, moral, and political. No political work was to be found in more colonial libraries than Locke's two treatises on government. In the sermons, pamphlets, and newspapers published in America during the decisive period stretching from 1760 to 1776, none was as often cited, quoted, paraphrased, plagiarized, and applied to the crisis that arose. Locke's sly exploitation of religious rhetoric enabled unsuspecting clergymen throughout the colonies to present his novel political doctrine to their parishioners as the teachings of St. Paul.

If self-respect and a sense of their own dignity as Englishmen gave the colonists a powerful motive for resenting Parliament's attempts to tax them without expressly securing their consent, the Lockean first principle, so visible in the political books they read, provided them with a theoretical framework justifying, by an appeal to nature and nature's God, their conviction that the self-government and effective autonomy accorded them in the past were theirs – not by custom, charter, or royal grace – but simply and solely by right. In reading these works, the Americans also came across the schemes of political architecture pioneered during England's Great Rebellion, by figures such as James Harrington, adapted under the restoration by Locke and his fellow Whigs, and further elaborated after the Glorious Revolution of 1687 and 1688 as a critique of the machinations of England's court party by the radical Whigs and their successors.

John Adams discerned what was at stake from the outset. In 1765, right at the beginning, he demonstrated the American tendency to augur misgovernment at a distance and to sniff the approach of tyranny in every tainted breeze, when he sought to set the struggle with Parliament in the context of world history. Already at this point the Americans were thinking of themselves as transforming the world. Behind Parliament's imposition of the Stamp Act, he discerned a direct, informal design to enslave all America.

He readily conceded that the Reformation, the Great Rebellion and the Glorious Revolution had left the alliance between designing clerics and the ambitious kings in Great Britain greatly mutilated. But he nonetheless contended that in this island kingdom, this wicked confederacy was not yet destroyed. To the forebears of his fellows colonists, Adams attributed an utter contempt of all that dark ribaldry of hereditary,

indefeasible right, the Lord's anointed and the divine, miraculous original of government, with which the priesthood had enveloped the feudal monarch in clouds and mystery and from whence they had deduced the most mischievous of all doctrines, that of passive obedience and nonresistance.

To his contemporaries, he addressed an appeal calling on them to abandon that timidity which made them afraid to think. “Let it be known,” he wrote, “that British liberties are not the grants of princes or parliaments, but original rights, conditions of original contracts, co-equal with prerogative and with government, that many of our rights are inherent and essential, agreed upon as maxims and established as preliminaries even before a Parliament existed.” And he called on his fellow colonists to search out the foundation of British laws and government in the frame of human nature, in the constitution of the intellectual and moral world. In short, Adams demanded that the colonists abandon respect for prescription and put asunder what the court Whigs and Edmund Burke had worked so hard to bring together. In effect he asked them to embrace one England and repudiate the other England – which, whether he then confessed it or not in 1765, was to call for a revolution.

**When Americans selected a design for the great seal of the United States of America, which is inscribed on the back of the dollar bill, they made its principal theme the assertion that 1776 marked the beginning of a “new order of the ages.”**

Few, if any, among Adams' contemporaries relished the prospect of the colonies severing their ties with the mother country. And they recognized the need for what they termed “a super intending power.” And so, while reasserting the radical Whig principles that establish popular self-government as a matter of right rather than revokable privilege, they grounded this right in nature as well as in the particular history of the English constitution and sought some expedient by which to reconcile their assertion of this right with an allegiance to Great Britain.

In the very first pamphlet, provoked by the Stamp Act crisis, James Otis of Boston took up the suggestion, advanced by Benjamin Franklin in 1754, that the Americans be given representation in Parliament, arguing that this body could then legitimately tax the colonists. Otis' proposal turned out to be unacceptable to both parties to the dispute. Many of the colonists entertained grave misgivings. It was common practice for a representative's constituents to give detailed instructions to the man whom they elected to the assembly. And it was recognized that, in an age in which it took three months to sail from the New World to the Old, it would be extremely difficult to hold accountable representatives who resided at so great distance. Otis' proposal was unacceptable to Parliament because it would have opened a can of worms. It would have undone the compromise worked out within Britain's political class in the first quarter-century following the Glorious Revolution. And it would have dispelled the illusion of historical continuity and the sense of tradition that even those within Parliament most sympathetic to the Americans thought it essential to sustain. In the midst of the spirited campaign for parliamentary reform and a re-apportionment of seats carried on by John Wilkes and his radicals, it would have been totally impossible for Parliament to extend

representation to the colonies overseas, while at the same time maintaining the rotten boroughs at home and denying representation to Manchester, Birmingham, Sheffield and other populous English localities which elected no members to Parliament.

The colonists ultimately judged the compromise suggested by Benjamin Franklin unworkable. As John Dickson would ultimately point out, the colonists could trust no one but their own duly-elected representatives. The money said to be taken from us for our defense, they said, may be employed for our injury. Finally in desperation, as colonial resistance provoked parliament to pass more coercive acts, figures such as Thomas Jefferson, John Adams, James Irondale and James Wilson sought another way out. They refused to acknowledge that Parliament had any right to legislate for the colonies at all. They asserted that the colonial assemblies were Parliament's equals. And they contended that the Empire was held together by a common executive, by the King.

No one in Parliament would have been willing to concede to the monarch the capacity to act contrary to the wishes of Parliament in any sphere at all. And George III knew better than to think that he could get away with the attempt. The only expedient that might have worked was the one suggested by Edmund Burke. Parliament might have continued to take for granted its own supremacy. The colonists, in their turn, might have continued in their presumption that an assembly, in no way accountable to them, could in no way pretend to speak for them or represent their interests. And the peace between them could nonetheless be maintained as it had been before 1763, but this would have been possible only if Parliament had practiced restraint.

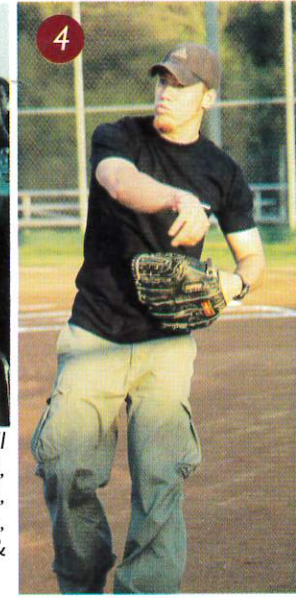
Americans grasped the nettle which the British had refused in 1688 and 1689 and they embarked on a journey. As they approached the fateful decision, Thomas Payne published his famous pamphlet, “Common Sense,” encouraging them with the thought that their cause was, in great measure, the cause of all mankind, that their struggle for independence marked the birthday of a new world and that it was in their power to begin the world all over again. This they came to believe. For when they selected a design for the great seal of the United States of America, which is inscribed on the back of the dollar bill, they made its principle theme the assertion that 1776 marked the beginning of a “new order of the ages.” And in the aftermath, they began to renumber the years, not from the birth of Christ, but from the American Revolution.

No one ever spoke more eloquently of the revolutionary implications of America's Declaration of Independence than the man who had drafted the pertinent document. Not long before the fiftieth anniversary of its adoption and signing, Thomas Jefferson received an invitation asking that he journey from Monticello to Washington, D.C., to join the festivities held to commemorate the event. Though weakened by disease, the statesman marshaled his meager physical resources and in his last surviving letter he described the choice made on the Fourth of July, 1776, in language echoing the words of the Whig martyr William Russell for the role he had played in the Rye House plot: “May it be to the world what I believe it will be, to some part sooner, to others later, but finally to all, the signal of arousing men to burst the chains under which monking ignorance and superstition had persuaded them to binding themselves and to assume the blessings and security of self-government. That form, which we have substituted, restores the free right to the unbounded exercise of reason and freedom whereby all eyes are opening or are opened to the rights of man. The general spread of the light of science had already laid open to every view the palpable truth that the mass of mankind has not been born with saddles on their back, nor a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them by the grace of God.”

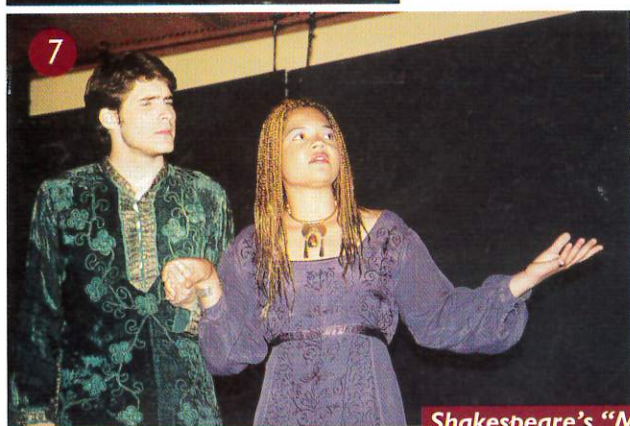
Thomas Paine had been correct when he asserted that America's cause was in great measure the cause of all mankind. By stepping in where their Anglo forebearers had feared to tread, the Americans set an example that would, they fully hoped and expected, set the world on fire. And it still does.



## Student Life in Review



1. Joe Lee and Brian Tittman in "Men in Kilts" skit at Mardi Gras party. 2. Barbershop quartet of Chris Okapal, Joe Dygert, Merrill Roberts, and Bill Grimm. 3. Mary Gisla, Jenny Martin (back, l. to r.), Annie Wright, Danielle Higdon & Brooke Davidson (front, l. to r.) at Board of Governors dinner. 4. Joe Burnham on softball team. 5. Tutors (l. to r.) Paul O'Reilly, Mike McLean, John Nieto, and Mike Letteney judging "Trivial and Quadrivial Pursuits" game. 6. Student spectators (l. to r.) Rob Gauvain, Mary Zivnuska, Erin Nicely. 7. Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice" with John Erickson & Zizi Searles. 8. Chris Trevilla. 9. Sean Fitzpatrick & David Hendershot. 10. Joe Bissex & Rachel Anderson.



Shakespeare's "Merchant of Venice"

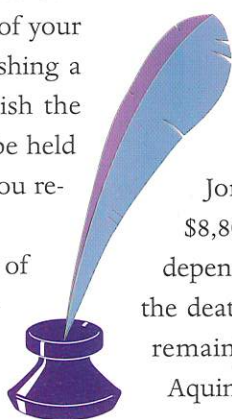
"Trivial and Quadrivial Pursuits"



### The Charitable Remainder Unitrust: How To Give And Still Receive

What if you could make a gift to Thomas Aquinas College and receive payments from your gift for the rest of your life? Sound appealing? You can do this by establishing a CHARITABLE REMAINDER UNITRUST. To establish the trust, you transfer money or appreciated assets to be held for the benefit of Thomas Aquinas College while you receive designated income during your life.

For example, suppose Mrs. Jones used \$100,000 of appreciated stock to fund an 8% Charitable Remainder Unitrust. Mrs. Jones receives an immediate charitable income tax deduction upon the creation of the trust. And, since the trust is funded with appreciated assets, there are no capital gains taxes on the appreciated property when it is transferred to the trust.



THE LEGACY SOCIETY

During Mrs. Jones's lifetime, the trustee pays her 8% of the fair-market value of the assets each year starting with \$8,000 the first year. If the value of the professionally-managed trust assets increases to \$110,000 during the second year, Mrs. Jones's annual income payments will increase to \$8,800. Thus, the annual income may go up (or down) depending on the annual value of the trust assets. After the death of Mrs. Jones, the trust will terminate and the remaining trust assets will be transferred to Thomas Aquinas College.

For more information on how you can establish a Charitable Remainder Unitrust to benefit Thomas Aquinas College, contact John Q. Masteller, Director of Development, at 805-525-4417.

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Thomas Aquinas  
College  
SANTA PAULA, CA 93060-9622

### Calendar of Events

Commencement .....	June 10
Summer Seminar I .....	July 14-16
Summer Seminar II .....	July 21-23
High School Great Books Program .....	July 30 - Aug 11
Convocation Day, Classes Begin .....	September 11

Please call to confirm these dates.

805 / 525-4417 • FAX 805 / 525-0620

[www.thomasaquinas.edu](http://www.thomasaquinas.edu)

THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE

10000 N. OJAI ROAD  
SANTA PAULA, CA 93060-9622

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

