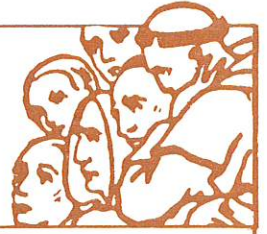




Thomas Aquinas College NEWSLETTER

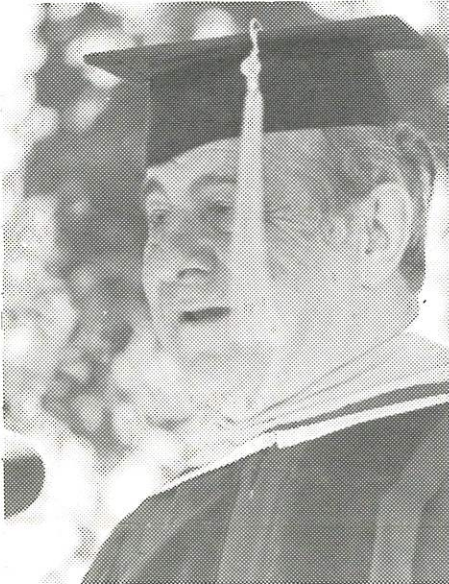
Summer, 1985

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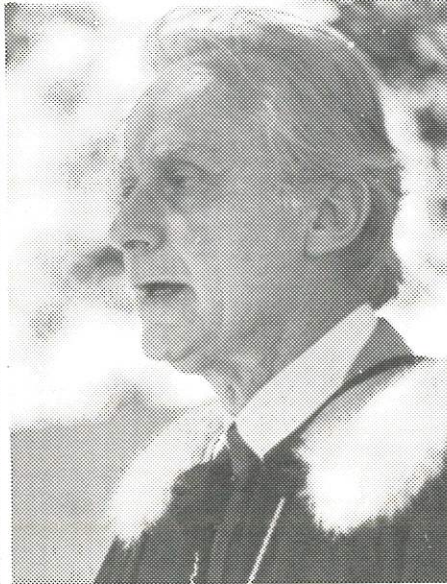


Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion Recipients

CARL KARCHER, RALPH McINERNEY HONORED AT 11th COMMENCEMENT



Carl N. Karcher



Photos courtesy of The Santa Paula Daily Chronicle
Ralph M. McInerney

Carl N. Karcher, chairman of the board, chief executive officer, and founder, Carl Karcher Enterprises, Anaheim, Calif., and Ralph M. McInerney, Michael P. Grace Professor of Medieval Philosophy and director of the Jacques Maritain Center, The University of Notre Dame, received the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion during the Commencement ceremonies on June 8, 1985. The College Board of Governors awarded the medallion to Mr. Karcher to honor him for his service to the Church, higher education, and family life. Presentation of the medallion to Dr. McInerney recognized "his having devoted his life to making the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas and the truth of the Catholic Church accessible to the mind of the modern thinker". Mr. Thomas P. Sullivan, chairman of the Board of Governors, made the medallion presentations. Unable to attend last year's Commencement ceremonies, Mr. Karcher received the medallion for 1984; Dr. McInerney was the recipient for 1985.

SCHOLARSHIP FUND ESTABLISHED AS MEMORIAL FOR FR. McGOVERN

The memory of Rev. Thomas Aquinas McGovern, S.J., tutor at Thomas Aquinas College who died on February 19, 1985, will be kept in the hearts of all associated with the College. It will be preserved also through the Fr. Thomas A. McGovern Memorial Scholarship Fund established at the College. In June, the New York Province of the Society of Jesus contributed \$25,000 to the memorial fund and several other contributions have been received. Fr. McGovern was a member of the Jesuits' New York Province.



Fr. McGovern

Fr. McGovern died in February when he suffered a heart attack after playing racquetball. Fr.

McGovern, who joined the Thomas Aquinas faculty in 1972 shortly after the school was founded, was also a member of the College's Board of Governors.

Born in 1921 in Bronx, N.Y., Fr. McGovern was ordained in 1951. He received his doctorate from Laval University, Canada, in 1951 and was associate professor of philosophy at Canisius College, New York, from 1956 to 1972.

Recitation of the Rosary for the repose of Fr. McGovern's soul was led by Most Rev. Donald W. Montrose, auxiliary bishop of Los Angeles and vicar for Ventura County, in the College chapel on February 21. The Mass of Christian Burial was offered at the College on February 22. A funeral Mass was offered at Fordham University, New York City, on February 23. Fr. McGovern was buried at the Jesuit Shrine of the North American Martyrs in Auriesville, N.Y.

LARGEST GRADUATING CLASS RECEIVES DEGREES ON JUNE 8

The 28 members of the Class of 1985 — the largest graduating class in the history of Thomas Aquinas College — received the Bachelor of Arts degree in the College's 11th annual Commencement on Saturday, June 8, 1985.

Under the great, old oaks on the upper campus, the graduates and the faculty, their families, guests, and friends, heard Dr. Ralph M. McInerney, the Commencement speaker, advise the Class of 1985 to "be true to the dreams of your youth". Dr. McInerney, who is Michael P. Grace Professor of Medieval Philosophy and Director of the Jacques Maritain Center at the University of Notre Dame, praised the education the graduates received at Thomas Aquinas College, saying: "One of the great contrasts between you who graduate today from Thomas Aquinas College and many graduates of other places, is that there are things you have learned, things that you know, truths you can vouch for...You have been put in possession of your cultural and religious patrimony."

Dr. McInerney said that at this college "one finds a *collegium*. . . engaged in the pursuit of truth. And that pursuit is embedded here in a wider moral and religious context."

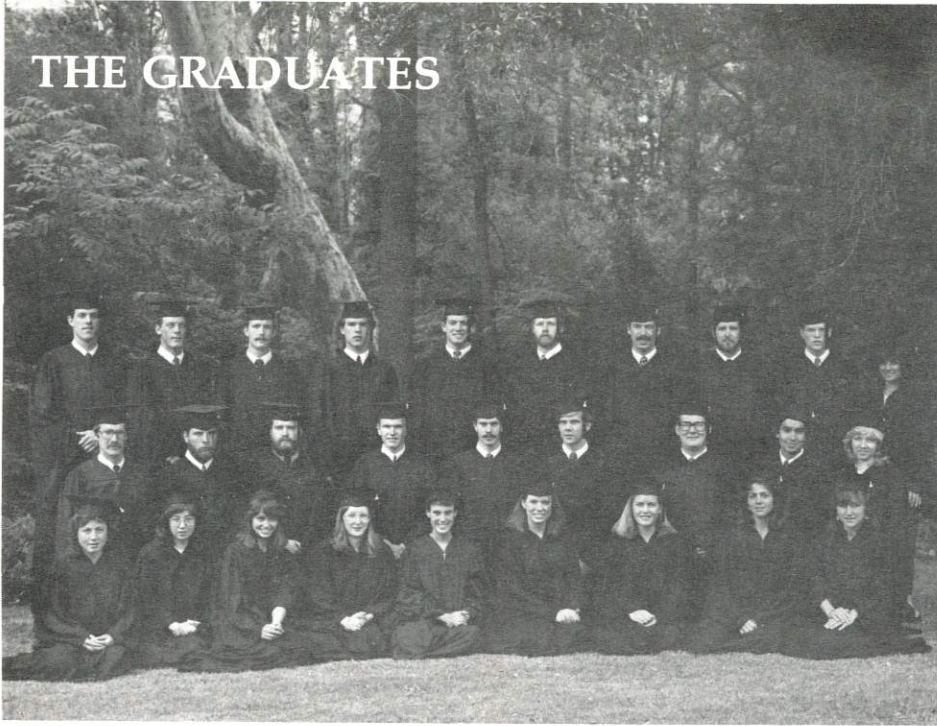
Dr. McInerney emphasized the importance of what we do and what happens to us as we write the book of our lives. In stressing that the graduates maintain a sense of God's presence in their lives, he pointed out that "we are not the sole authors of the story of our lives."

At the Baccalaureate Mass on June 8, Rev. Paul N. Zammit, O.P., spoke to the Class of 1985 of the importance of the Holy Spirit in their lives and in the life of the Church. Fr. Zammit, now professor emeritus of theology at St. Albert's College, Oakland, Calif., is a former teacher of Pope John Paul II. He taught the Holy Father from 1946 to 1948 while the Pope was a student at the Angelicum in Rome.

His excellency Most Rev. John J. Ward, Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, was the principal celebrant of the Baccalaureate Mass and presided for His Eminence Timothy Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Los Angeles, at the Commencement ceremonies. Bishop Ward brought greetings from the Cardinal and reflected on the meaning of Commencement. He told the assembly: "This is the beginning of much greater and more wonderful things in the graduates' lives because Christ has taken possession of them. . . Christ has sent His spirit into them."

In his moving Senior Address, Thomas Cavanaugh — on behalf of the Class of 1985 — assessed the significance of the graduates' education at Thomas Aquinas College and paid tribute to Dr. Norman DeSilva and the late Fr. Thomas A. McGovern, S.J., members of the faculty. In this tribute, he expressed the sentiments of all in the College community.

THE GRADUATES



First row, left to right: Mary Quinn, Katherine Ellis, Angela Grimm, Leannder McArthur, Susanne Smillie, Jessica Ivers, Joan Schaeffer, Martha Michael, Jennifer Ellis. Second row, left to right: Brendan Kelly; F. J. Milligan; Clark Tulberg; Lester Syren; Paul Blewett; John Loesch; David McClamrock; Christopher DeHerrera; Martha Jacobs. Third row, left to right: Peter Lemmon; David Koch; John Collins; Thomas Cavanaugh; Matthew Zepeda; Daniel Flynn; Thomas Zepeda; Kenneth Colombini; John Langley; Isabelle Cammarota.

VIRGIL BROOKS RETIRED IN JUNE

Another commencement took place in June when Virgil M. Brooks, of the Buildings and Grounds Department, retired after 14 years service to the College. Mr. Brooks, known to students, alumni, staff, and faculty as Virgil, began his work for the College in 1971 when the school was founded. He is devoted to the students and to the College and through the years no Commencement Week President's Dinner has been complete without his humor and comments.

Virgil's retirement was marked on June 27, 1985, with an on-campus barbecue attended by Mrs. Brooks and members of the College staff and faculty and their families. Among the gifts Virgil received at the barbecue was an engraved wrist watch presented by President Ronald P. McArthur on behalf of the College.

COMMENCEMENT AUDIO TAPES AVAILABLE

Audio tape cassettes of the 1985 Baccalaureate Mass and Commencement may be ordered in the following formats: Cassette # 1, the Baccalaureate Mass (including the homily by Rev. Paul N. Zammit, O.P.); Cassette # 2, the Commencement ceremonies (including the Commencement address by Dr. Ralph M. McNerny and the Senior Address). A donation of \$5.00 is requested for each of these cassettes. To order: please write to the Director of Public Affairs, Thomas Aquinas College, making your check payable to Thomas Aquinas College.

The Class of 1985 with titles of the Senior theses

Paul Fox Blewett
Santa Paula, California
*On the Compatibility of Magnanimity
with Christian Humility*

Mary Ann Isabelle Cammarota
Sacramento, California
*On Censorship: A Comparison between
John Stuart Mill and Saint Augustine*

Thomas Anthony Philip Cavanaugh
Erie, Pennsylvania
*The Sacramental Presence of Christ, the Son
of the Living God, in the Most Holy Name of Jesus*

John Francis Collins II
San Jose, California
*How the Characters of War and Peace
Bear Out Tolstoy's View of History*

Kenneth Egidio Colombini
Santa Rosa, California
*The Position of the State in a
Catholic Society*

Christopher Carmen DeHerrera
Aurora, Colorado
"Full of Grace"

Jennifer Anne Ellis
Oakland, California
*A Defense and Nuclear Application
of the Just War Theory*

Katherine Scholastica Ellis
Lancaster, California
*The Kiss of Christ: An Explanation of
Suffering According to Divine Mercy
and Justice*

Daniel Richard Flynn
East Northport, New York
*In Defense of Capitalism: A Refutation of
the Position That Capitalism Is
Inherently Immoral*

Angela Frances Grimm
Pasadena, California
The Certitude of Christian Hope

Jessica Mary Ivers
La Cañada-Flintridge, California
*On the Order of Investigating the Unity
and the Subject of a Science*

Martha Marie Jacobs
Sheridan, Illinois
*On the Proper Roles of the
State and Religion in Education*

Brendan Roch Joseph Kelly
Elmhurst, Illinois
*Can the Existence of a Prime Mover
Be Proved If Motion Is a State?*

David Allmers Koch
Denver, Colorado
A Critique of Dante's Ordering of Hell

John Michael Langley
Sterling Junction, Massachusetts
*The Location of the First Principle
of Human Knowledge*

Peter Dunn Lemmon
Sacramento, California
*Against Abortion: A Development of
Lincoln's Position on Slavery*

John Andrew Loesch
Joplin, Missouri
*An Examination of the Scriptural Methods
of Saint Augustine and Spinoza*

Leannder Jane McArthur
Surrey, British Columbia
*A Matter of Validity not Lawfulness: The Question of
the Admission of Women to the Priesthood*

David Henry McClamrock
Seattle, Washington
Rights in the Natural Law

Martha Mary Michael
Livermore, California
*The Death Penalty:
A Theoretical Justification*

Francis Joseph Milligan III
Glenview, Illinois
Sacrifice: A Fitting Redemption

Mary Carol Quinn
Frederick, Maryland
Newton Approaches the Ultimate

Joan Marie Schaeffer
San Francisco, California
*To Delight and To Teach:
The Purpose of Poetry*

Susanne Marie Smillie
Surrey, British Columbia
Queen of Peace: A Theological Explanation

Lester Karl Syren
Anchorage, Alaska
Protestantism and Atheism

Clark Richards Tulberg
Santa Paula, California
*The Justice and Mercy of God According to
Saint Anselm and Saint Thomas*

Matthew John Zepeda
Forks, Washington
*The United States Constitution:
Whether It Is Based on the
Declaration of Independence*

Thomas Henry Zepeda
Forks, Washington
Modern Biology: What Is the Matter?

"BE TRUE TO THE DREAMS OF YOUR YOUTH"

The Commencement Address of Ralph M. McInerny, Ph.D.,
Michael P. Grace Professor of Medieval Philosophy and Director
of the Jacques Maritain Center, The University of Notre Dame,
to the Class of 1985, Thomas Aquinas College,
June 8, 1985

In these days, when the very notion of a college education — of higher education — has become equivocal, it is a special delight to be here at Thomas Aquinas College and to speak to this graduating class.

In recent weeks, across the land, young men and women have rented robes and funny hats and in steamy auditoriums, on malls, in stadiums and the like, have been declared en masse bachelors of something or another.

Some of them know more now than they did four years ago. And some of what they now know may have come about as the result of being in college. A good portion of them will have acquired technical knowledge of a high degree of competency. They will know how to do something and may be capable of doing that something very well.

But those whose degrees are not in science or engineering or commerce may be very difficult to describe. They do not have any know-how of a distinctive sort. They have listened to lectures, they have read books, they have talked with others about what they heard and what they read and now they go out into the world where memories of how they spent the past four years will swiftly recede, grow dim, and disappear. What does it all mean?

You Have Not Reached the End

By contrast, this graduating class has devoted four years to a well thought out program, one that combines the new and the old, one that has structure, a hierarchical structure, since it rightly views all knowledge as directly or indirectly knowledge of God.

René Descartes, who is called the father of modern philosophy — a serious accusation — having finished his education and being in winter quarters had the temerity to ask himself: "What do I know? What do I really know? Not what information do I have, but what truths do I hold that I can really vouch for?" He decided that he knew nothing for sure and that he stood in need of a method which would enable him to arrive at certifiable knowledge in the future.

Many centuries before, Socrates, having been told by the sibyl that he was the wisest of men, set out to exonerate himself by finding someone wiser than himself. After a long quest, he realized that the sibyl had been telling a kind of joke. It was not that Socrates knew something that others did not. Rather, like them, he knew nothing but with the saving difference that he knew he knew nothing.

While it seems reasonable enough that we should start out knowing nothing, it is a little odd to find people like Descartes and Socrates — grown up, been to school — insisting that they know nothing.

One of the great contrasts between you who graduate today from Thomas Aquinas College

and many graduates of other places, is that there are things you have learned, things that you know, truths you can vouch for.

These four years have given you furniture for your mind. You have been put in possession of your cultural and religious patrimony.

In one of his essays, T. S. Eliot imagines someone objecting to his interest in the thinkers and artists who had gone before him. And he imagines the objector saying: "But we know so much more than they did." And Eliot replies, "Yes, and they are what we know."

Better to say: We know what they know.

St. Augustine said it. We do not send our children to school to find out what the teacher knows.

The path you have been on has not, then, led you to the recognition of your own ignorance. Of course, there is an enormous number of things you do not yet know. But there are other things that you do know.

But you have not reached the end.

What Is Really Real

In the Seventh Book of the *Republic*, Plato — through the character, Socrates — provides an image which has served to symbolize, not only education, taken as a partial perfection of persons, i.e., the perfection of their minds, but an image which symbolizes the good life in all its amplitude.

You remember the story. Imagine a cave, Socrates suggests, and deep within it prisoners so chained that their gaze is fastened on the back wall of the cave. Behind them, halfway to the mouth of the cave, a wall cuts across shoulder high and between it and the mouth of the cave a fire burns. Slaves walk behind that wall holding up images of things whose shadows are cast on the back wall of the cave. The prisoners, seeing the shadows of the images, as well as their own shadows, learn to speak with reference to them and to think of the shadows of the images as of things that really are.

Now, Socrates continues, if the prisoners were unchained and persuaded to turn toward the mouth of the cave, their eyes would at first be pained by the light of the fire, but soon they would make out the images being held up from behind the intervening wall. Immediately their ontological allegiance, so to speak, would switch to the images. It is the images and not their shadows, they would now conclude, that really are.

Well, the journey of the unchained prisoners, once begun, continues — out of the cave, into the world, under the sun, where the things of which the images are images are found. Again the freed prisoners alter their notion of what is really real.

This is a strange story, Socrates' interlocutor says, and these are strange prisoners.

Like ourselves, Socrates replies, like ourselves.

Contemplate the Really Real

You know that there is a good deal more implied in this story than prisoners changing their minds about what is really real. With Plato, the conception of philosophy, of learning, as changing one's life in order to be able to change one's mind gets firmly embedded in the Western tradition. This is why Plato was so attractive to Fathers of the Church. Life as a trial, the life of the mind as influenced by the moral life.

Plato held that the things of this world, because they are changing and evanescent — here today and gone tomorrow — can be neither fixed objects of our attention nor fitting objects of our deepest desire. We must turn away, then, from sense objects, from perceived objects, and contemplate the really real, which is unchanging, divine, beyond.

Of course, it is not simply a matter of turning our attention from one set of objects to another. We are appetitively enmeshed in the objects of sense; our desires attach us to them; it is difficult and painful to let them go. In order for the transition — call it a conversion — to take place, moral virtue is required.

What is the abiding message of the Platonic parable of the cave? *That the life of the mind cannot be divorced from the moral life.*

Here One Finds a Collegium

The California littoral is strewn with Franciscan missions which metamorphosed into towns whose current citizens, I suppose, seldom wonder who Santa Barbara, San Juan Capistrano, San Ysidro, or San Diego were. Coming up that coast is like traveling through a Litany of the Saints. Saints who are all but forgotten. One need only think of the antics which go on in the city named after the chaste St. Francis.

Things are, of course, different in Santa Paula. The hacienda on this campus, set in a fold of hills, the new buildings, temporary and permanent, on the upper campus, are presided over by hills which to the Midwestern eye look very impressive. Here one finds a *collegium*, a society of persons, of scholars, senior and junior, engaged in the pursuit of truth. And that pursuit is embedded here in a wider moral and religious context.

As opposed to what? The seals of our great universities bear slogans which, like the saints who gave their names to Father Serra's missions, are no longer thought of. It is not simply because they are generally in Latin — *Dominus illuminatio mea; Vita, dulcedo, spes; Deo favente, haud pluribus impar* — that they are no longer understood. Nowadays, on the official stationery of universities, one often finds another slogan, expressed in a snarled syntax: The University of Old X, or New Y, is an equal opportunity employer.

The university as employer. To such disfavor we have come. Does one think of Thomas Aquinas College as an employer? Does one hire out as a pursuer of the truth? I do not mean, of course, to suggest that even Thomas Aquinas College can survive on air any more than young couples can live on love alone. But it is a matter of where the emphasis lies.

The Catholic Character of This Place

It might be thought, of course, that a disinterested pursuit of truth is a luxury we cannot afford in these parlous times. Are there not more demanding tasks? Even in Academe there seems to be a kind of shame felt about having a vocation

(Continued on p.4)

"BE TRUE TO THE DREAMS OF YOUR YOUTH" (Continued)

to the intellectual life. From the pulpit of Sacred Heart Church on the campus of the University of Notre Dame, I regularly hear sermons whose appropriate addressees would be social workers, those who serve in soup kitchens, social activists. Yet all around me in the pews sit students and some professors developing pangs of guilt for absenting themselves from infelicity awhile.

C. S. Lewis, in his essay, *Learning in War Time*, responds to the objection that the life of the mind must be put off until peace is secured by noting that we always live under the threat of death.

But isn't the world in such a condition today that practical tasks should take priority? Is Thomas Aquinas College, or any college that makes knowledge its primary concern, dispensing an opiate? The Catholic character of this place, with its emphasis on a destiny beyond this life, may seem to make it a clear instance of promising pie in the sky.

It is an old charge that religious belief makes one indifferent to the injustices of this world. The truth, it turns out, is precisely the opposite.

Only under the influence of religious faith, or at the very least of philosophical theism, does concern for earthly life, concern with each and every human life, flourish. A striking sign of this is the fact that it is only in Athens and Jerusalem and in Christianity that fiction flourishes.

Life As a Journey, a Story

J. F. Powers set down as the motto of his wonderful novel, *Morte D'Urban*, these words: *Life is a book in which we set out to write one story and end by writing another*. Plato, we have just recalled, thought of life as a journey, as being led out of the cave — an education — from darkness into light. The common Christian description of our status in this world is that we are "on the way", *in via*, towards being *in patria*, or in the fatherland.

Those of you graduating today are not yet so far along the path of life as Dante was when he began the *Divine Comedy*, *nel mezzo del cammin or*, in Dorothy Sayers' translation, "midway this way of life we're bound upon". Some of us are long past the midway point. But none of us knows which chapter of his life he is living now.

Let us reflect for a moment on this notion of life as a journey and life as a story. The day is fitting for it. You are doubtless in a mood to be a little philosophical.

Job was blessed with sons and sheep and cattle and was devoted to the Lord. Satan, going up and down in the world, noticed this and, in conversation with the Lord, suggested that Job's piety was a function of his good luck. "Let me but smite him", he bragged, "and you will see that he no longer praises you." The Lord gives His permission and the drama begins. Job is wiped out in a series of disasters: His sheep and cattle are stolen, his sons are killed. The messengers of disaster come hard upon one another's heels. "I alone have escaped to tell you." Why does God permit such awful things to happen to a good and just man?

St. Thomas Aquinas, in commenting on the Book of Job, gives this as its main point: to enable us to distinguish the goods and evils of fortune, of luck, from good and evil character. The wicked sometimes prosper and the just sometimes suffer. But then sometimes the wicked suffer and the just prosper. The goods and evils that *befall* us are not to be confused with moral good and evil. There is

no lawlike connection between them.

Life: What We Do, What Happens to Us

There are two very different ways to understand the notion of life as a story. One is to explain life in terms only of what *happens* to us, as if our choices were effects of causes other than our knowledge and will. Giving an account of a life so understood is to tell of events that could not not have happened. Fortunes are made convincing people that their troubles are the inevitable effects of antecedents over which they have no control, and for which they cannot be held responsible, and about which they should not feel guilty.

The subconscious. Upbringing. Genes. But these are only recent versions of the theory. Augustine tells us he was attracted to Manicheism because it enabled him to blame his faults on an evil principle. Lord Jim explained his abandoning of the ship by saying his feet jumped.

There is another way of understanding human life, opposed to such determinism, which is captured best in Henley's poem: *I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul*. One takes responsibility for everything.

These are two extreme views and they are both wrong.

The Book of Job reminds us that our lives are a mixture of what we *do* and of what *happens* to us. When Job is wiped out, his goods and children gone, these are things that happen to him. His interlocutors try to get him to agree that he is somehow responsible for those things happening. And Job cannot agree.

The Deeds We Do

Stories in the usual sense tell us of human action. They present us characters facing a dilemma, a difficult choice, and we see how human persons act under pressure. A lot of things have happened to Hamlet: What now will he do? The promise of a crown lures Macbeth and we follow his progress with dread. We watch Prince Andre and Pierre caught between war and peace. We read of Ahab's pursuit of the white whale and our emotions and imagination are engaged.

Strange characters these.

Yes, Socrates might say. Like ourselves.

Why are we fascinated by accounts of imaginary actions by fictive characters? Because their actions mimic our own. We follow their choices because we accept the truth that it is by such choices, choices which might have been otherwise, made in circumstances that might not have obtained, that such choices determine what a person is. Morally is.

It is the deeds we do that will settle our lot eternally. I said earlier that stories in this sense presuppose a view of human nature, of the importance of human action. If the deterministic view of man should prevail, it would be the death of literature.

In the greatest literature, we watch human beings deciding between heaven and hell. Dante moves right on past the grim boundary and shows us people after they have decided their eternal condition. But Shakespeare and Balzac and Trollope do the same. If the actions of persons were not important, the imitation of them in art would have no meaning.

The Thread of Responsibility

Flannery O'Connor, one of the great Catholic writers of this country, spoke of the anagogical

imagination. For her, it was a mark of literature that the story suggested the ultimately religious significance of action. Heaven and hell hinge on what we do. I think only one of her stories, *Temples of the Holy Ghost*, is explicitly Catholic. For the most part, she wrote of simple, even illiterate, Southerners. To the suggestion that she write about people who were not grotesque, she replied: "But we are all grotesques." Meaning, we are all sinners, people working out their salvation in a Vale of Tears.

This sense of the eternal import of human choice does not mean that we are in total control of our lives. Our choices are often made in circumstances that simply happen, or befall us, through no fault or merit of our own. The real story of our lives would show the thread of responsibility twisting through a fabric we did not weave.

Thornton Wilder ends his greatest novel, *The Eighth Day*, with a reference to history as a tapestry and he may sound skeptical as to whether or not it has a design at all. But his is, I think, a Christian reluctance to presume that one sees human action, or the concatenation of human actions, as God does.

Life is a book in which we set out to write one story and end by writing another. Because we are not the sole authors of the story of our lives.

A Sense of God's Presence

When Boethius, unjustly condemned to death, sought consolation in philosophy, he like Job recognized the limits of his own control over his life. That is what lies behind the story of human action, a sense of the presence of God. That is what Flannery O'Connor meant by the anagogical imagination.

At home, I have a calendar given me by a bookseller in Rome. It features apt quotations, mostly scriptural, but there is one by Boris Pasternak that caught and held my attention. It is in Italian. *L'arte nasce dallo stupore de fronte alla sacralita della vita*: Art arises out of awe at the sacredness of life.

The mystery of human life. Its sacredness.

Not a bad thing to be reminded of now as you set out to write major chapters of your own lives. These are, of course, the worst of times. They are also the best of times. They are the only times we will ever have.

There are those who think they know where human history now is, what chapter of the Apocalypse we are now living. Perhaps, but I doubt it.

Such speculation is vain. We are not called to be mere spectators. Paul Claudel said: Youth is not made for pleasure, but for sacrifice.

The Graduates of This College

I know from experience that graduates of this college are singularly well-equipped to act and act well.

As director of the Medieval Institute at the University of Notre Dame, I have had the pleasure of admitting to the program several graduates of this college. Not as many as I would have liked to. They are among the best trained, and the best informed, and the best motivated students there. I find it wonderful that, coming from a school that resolutely follows its own line, scarcely the usual one today, that their GRE scores are the highest.

But they are not disembodied intellects. They see the life of study vocationally, as embedded in the spiritual life. This is something they learned

(Continued on p.6)

AN END AND A BEGINNING

Thomas Cavanaugh, Class of 1985, was chosen by the members of the graduating class to give the Senior Address at Commencement on June 8. The text of Mr. Cavanaugh's address follows.

"Shout with joy to God, all the earth, sing a psalm to His name. . . Come and hear, and I will tell you, all you that fear God, what great things the Lord has done for my soul." (Psalm 65)

We, the graduating class of 1985, this day embrace with joy the sacred task set before us of declaring to you our parents, families, tutors, friends, and benefactors, the great things which the Lord has done for us in these past four wonder-filled years here at Thomas Aquinas College. And since, as Socrates says, "the unreflected life is not worth living", we do well in this day now given to us for reflection, to reflect upon the mercies of our common past, and to declare our cherished hopes of future mercies and our determined promises to perfect those already bestowed upon us.

As we reflect upon this present moment, we realize that it acts as both an end and a beginning. The words of the psalmist are applicable to this day as he says: "They that go down to the sea in ships, doing business in the great waters, these have seen the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep."

As an end, this day completes the preparation for our journey. The journey into the deepest of waters. The journey of our eternal souls back home, back to God. And it is right to speak of this, our pursuit of wisdom, as a journey back to God, for as Solomon says, "in kinship with wisdom there is immortality".

In these past four years, we have been readying ourselves and one another for this journey into eternity. And we have asked the eternal questions concerning the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, and the freedom of the will.

All of these questions have been pursued in their fullness under the light and guidance of the Catholic Church, her sacraments and her perennial wisdom as found in the Fathers such as Saint Athanasius, Saint John Damascene, and Saint Augustine, as well as in the theologian who always places himself at the feet of the Fathers and the doors of the Church, Saint Thomas Aquinas, our patron and guide. Nor have we neglected others who have spoken of these questions for, as Saint Ambrose says, "All truth, by whomsoever spoken, is from the Holy Spirit." So we have devoted ourselves to Plato and Aristotle as they have treated these questions with particular excellence as well as to others of the Western heritage. Thus, this day is the end of our preparation.

Yet, this day is also the beginning of our journey, and so we set sail trusting in the Wind Who has thus far guided our paths to provide also the grace to move us to greater works. And as we ready to leave this calm valley in which we are surrounded by beloved friends, we look out on the vast sea upon which we shall be sailing with great hope and no small fear, for "to whom much has been given, much shall be expected". The words of Pope Paul VI express the demands made upon us due to the gifts which we have received for, as he says, the Catholic graduate must "comprehend the dignity and needs of culture. . . never tire of learning and reflecting [and never be] doubtful of possessing the connecting thread of vital truths."

So we pledge to you, who have truly devoted

your "lives, fortunes, and sacred honor" to the Church, her worship, her wisdom, and her work of salvation, to grasp the golden chain woven by our Lord throughout the life of His love. We promise to defend, strengthen, and wear with joy this most sacred of chains: the heritage of wisdom, natural and supernatural, which is the inheritance of every Catholic. As we are called, so shall we answer to minister, to pray, to wed, to teach, to defend.

If we ask why this day of end and beginning is good, we remember that the whole purpose of our existence and that in which we find the inexpressible joy of our existence is the glorification of God. We realize that when we, His creatures, look upon creation, and Him through creation, with wonder, we give Him glory as Doer of such wonderful works. And this worship of God attains perfection with wisdom, as wonder passes into awe of God. Further, when we come to know, the cosmos is perfected since, as Saint Thomas Aquinas says with knowledge, "it is possible that in one thing the perfection of the whole universe exists." With this insight we see one meaning of the psalm, "Bless the Lord, O my soul and all that is within me, bless His holy name." So, as the soul may be all things through knowledge, all things may be perfected in the worship of God through the worship which man gives to God. Thus the whole cosmos — the trees, the ocean, the stars, and the living animals — bows before Christ as men genuflect before Him in the tabernacle.

Now, lest we forget that the Holy Spirit is wisdom and the source of all wisdom as well as love and the source of all love, let us remember the words of Saint Augustine as he says that, "Love itself, which binds men together in the bond of unity would have no means of pouring soul into soul, and, as it were, mingling them one with another, if men never learnt anything from their fellow-men."

So we see that the Lord of Love chooses to bring us to a deeper love of Himself and of our fellow-men by teaching us through our fellow-men that we may come to love them through whom we have come to know.

We now remember two men, Father Thomas Aquinas McGovern, S.J., and Norman DeSilva,

whom we have grown to love as they have shown us the fullness of knowledge which is not simply held by the intellect, but is perfected by love.

Father McGovern was an exemplary priest in sacrifice, Jesuit in obedience, tutor in humility, and friend in loyalty. As we remember him and the mercy of having known him, both his child-like face of wonder and his daily exhortations to courage and perseverance come to mind. We ask, in confidence of his intercession, the grace of perseverance which we saw exemplified in his life.

Of Norman DeSilva, we know that the statement of Saint Augustine truly applies to him. For as Saint Augustine says, the cross is "the chair of the Teacher teaching". Norman is on the cross with the Teacher and he is truly teaching us, not Latin, nor Euclid, nor any knowledge of this sort, which though it is good and true and beautiful does not suffice for life. Rather, Norman is teaching us the doctrine of love, in all its depth, in all its seeming foolishness. He is teaching us the wisdom of God. We can cry, we can thank God for such a blessing as the presence of Norman in our midst, but what we would best do would be to pray that we might, if so asked, mount the cross of our Lord with the joy, not understandable in the eyes of this world, and the love, of which we are not worthy, with which Norman has embraced his cross. With this joy and with this love, he has continuously offered this burden up for us. We thank him from the depth of our souls.

And as we look for words to thank you, our parents, families, tutors, friends and relatives, and benefactors, we realize, that though we have devoted ourselves to the study of words, we have yet to find, nor do we think that we shall ever find words of great enough strength and meaning to express our gratitude. We do not know how to thank you for life nor for things worthy of our lives, and even more importantly worthy of our deaths, but we do know the words of prayers and we commend you to our God through our prayers. And before Him, from Whom every good and perfect gift comes, we proclaim, "not to us, O Lord, but to You be the glory".

It is time now to say good-bye to you whom we love and through whom we have come to a deeper love. We await, with you, the blessed moment, the sounding of Gabriel's trumpet, when "the wolf shall dwell with the lamb". And there and then we will greet one another with a holy kiss.

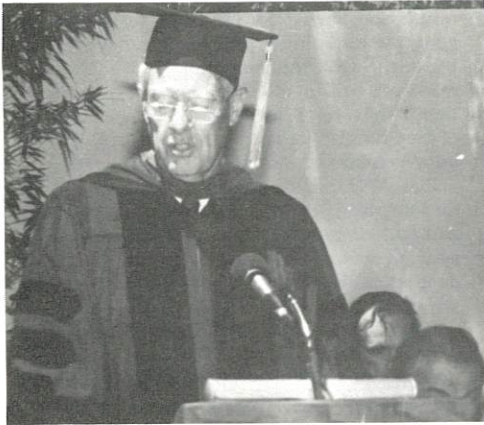
As you have helped to lead us to that day and as we have benefitted from your love, we thank you, we love you, we pray for you.

May Christ Jesus, the Son of the Living God, bless you and be always with you.

Commencement Day begins with the procession to the Baccalaureate Mass.



COMMENCEMENT DAY, 1985



"You must strive in your lives to live for God alone. . ." Dr. Ronald P. McArthur, president of the College, gives the charge to the Class of 1985.



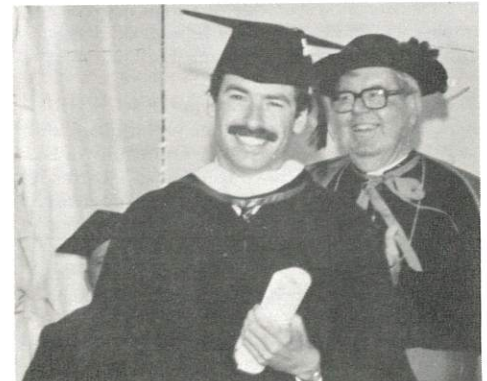
His Excellency Most Rev. John J. Ward, Auxiliary Bishop and Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, was the principal celebrant of the Baccalaureate Mass. Rev. Msgr. John F. Gallagher, chaplain of the College, and Rev. Gerard G. Steckler, S.J., assistant chaplain, were among the concelebrants.



Rev. Paul N. Zammit, O.P., of St. Albert's College, Oakland, Calif., reads the Gospel before delivering the homily at the Baccalaureate Mass.



As Katherine Ellis and Thomas Zepeda attest, smiles light every face on Commencement Day. Miss Ellis and Mr. Zepeda are seen here after receiving their diplomas and hoods. Bishop Ward, who presided at the Commencement ceremonies for the Cardinal-Archbishop of Los Angeles, radiates the good feeling.



"BE TRUE TO THE DREAMS OF YOUR YOUTH" (Continued)

here. This is something we can all learn from the saint after whom this college is named.

A Golden Period of Catholicism.

I wrote these words within sight of a photograph of Charles DeKoninck, a man under whom both Dr. McArthur and I and several others here studied at Laval University a few years ago. DeKoninck was one of the stars of the revival of interest in St. Thomas Aquinas. He holds a special place for many of us, but it is only fair to say that in those old days there were many stars in the Catholic cultural firmament.

One of the libels against the Church as it was prior to Vatican II is that it was asleep, the laity inert in the pews, and the clergy droning uninterestingly in the sanctuary.

It is clear to some of us that the 20s, 30s, 40s, and 50s of this century were a golden period of Catholicism. Besides our mentor, DeKoninck, there was Jacques Maritain, Etienne Gilson, Christopher Dawson. There was Chesterton, Belloc, Greene, and Waugh. There was Thomas Merton, Flannery O'Connor, Dorothy Day, on and on and on. *Bliss was it in that day to be alive and very heaven to be young.*

Thomas Aquinas College

But let me tell you something. When the history of the 70s and 80s is written, the name of Thomas Aquinas College will loom large in the history of the Church. The name of Ronald McArthur will loom even larger than it does today.

In turbulent times, here is a place that kept the

faith, kept its head, and confounded Neo-Modernists not with mere words but by creating a college whose impact is already beginning to be felt far and wide.

Herman Melville had tacked up on the wall over his desk some words I want to leave with you. They were words that sustained him through a career that had early ups and then many downs. They are words that have a special aptness for graduates of Thomas Aquinas College: *Be true to the dreams of your youth.*

I think of a grizzled Melville, seated at his desk, taking up his pen once more, and against all the odds, continuing his craft. Be true to the dreams of your youth.

The words of the prayer at the foot of the altar in the Mass as it was capture the same thought:

Introibo ad altare Dei.

Ad Deum qui laetificat iuventutem meam.

Be true to the dreams of your youth.