

# THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

## SUMMER 2005

### Theologian-Cardinal Presides at Commencement

**Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., Awarded Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion**

On Saturday, May 14, 2005, under sunny skies and surrounded by the foothills of the Topa Topas — still emerald green from the record winter rains — 63 seniors from around the country raised their voices in the customary Thomas Aquinas College commencement hymn, *Non Nobis*: “Not to us, Lord, but to your name give the glory.”

As President Dillon had noted in his Farewell Address to the graduates a few nights before (see page 2), there was much for which these young men and women could be proud and grateful, having successfully completed a rigorous course of studies over four years in all the major arts and sciences.

Presiding over this year’s Commencement exercises was His Eminence Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., who noted in his Commencement Address the strong intellectual, moral and spiritual formation these graduates had received at the College. He told them that “The Church counts on you to make a mature and responsible contribution as Christians in the Church and in the public square....You can be leaders of your generation in shaping the future of the Church and of the nation.” (See page 3 for the full text of Cardinal Dulles’ remarks.)

Cardinal Dulles holds the Laurence J. McGinley Chair of Religion and Society at Fordham University. During Commencement, Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors, James Barrett, awarded the cardinal the College’s highest honor, the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion, for his “exemplary



Benjamin Susanka, Oak View, California receives his diploma from Cardinal Dulles, presiding prelate at the May commencement.

loyalty and devotion to the Holy Father and the *Magisterium* of the Church” and his tireless efforts “to proclaim, support, and defend the teachings of

*Continued p. 5*

**The Church in our nation is bustling with activity. It is vibrant but tossed about by many winds of doctrine. Those of you who are graduating from Thomas Aquinas College today can be a stabilizing influence. You have been exposed to a long tradition of wisdom, much of it inspired by divine revelation. Your minds have been honed by assiduous study of the arts and sciences. The Church counts on you to make a mature and responsible contribution as Christians in the Church and in the public square. When so many others are spreading cynicism and advocating unwise reforms, you will see more deeply into the real issues that are at stake. You can be leaders of your generation in shaping the future of the Church and of the nation. May God inspire, bless, and prosper your ways!**

**Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.  
Commencement Address  
May 14, 2005**

### “Habemus Papam!”

**Students Rejoice at Election of Pope Benedict XVI**

With only three ballots having been taken, few were prepared for the sight of white smoke and the sound of bells ringing out across St. Peter’s Square. Yet, the news spread like wildfire across the campus. Students, faculty and staff made their way quickly to Loyola Hall, the chaplain’s home, where the sole satellite dish on campus is located, to await the news.

The room was still, despite the scores of people gathered there. Then came the dramatic announcement: Josef Cardinal.....Ratzinger! Instantly, there was a roar of joy and deafening applause for the new successor to Peter, such a dear friend of the late and much beloved Pope John Paul II.

Two nights later, students gathered for a candlelit procession to St. Peter and Paul Residence Hall where a vigil Mass was offered in the courtyard (fondly called “St. Peter’s Square”) for the new Holy Father.

The following Tuesday, as Masses throughout the Archdiocese of Los Angeles were offered for Pope Benedict XVI, students faculty and staff gathered in St. Bernardine of Siena Library to celebrate the inauguration of his pontificate.

Recalling his meeting with the new Pope in Rome in the fall of 1997, President Tom Dillon said, “William A. Wilson, a member of our Board of Governors and the first U.S. Ambassador to the Holy See, kindly introduced my wife and me



In 1997, President Tom Dillon was introduced to Cardinal Ratzinger by William A. Wilson, a Governor of the College and the first U. S. Ambassador to the Holy See. President Dillon and Cardinal Ratzinger have corresponded in the years since.

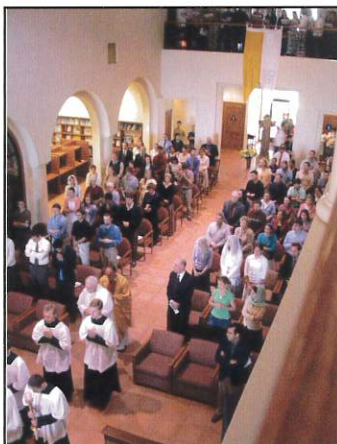
to the Holy Father, who visited with us for about 45 minutes. As we conversed, I was particularly impressed by his intelligence, his kindness, and his receptivity. On hearing about Thomas Aquinas College, he agreed with our understanding of Catholic education and was pleased to learn of the number of religious vocations from the College.”

The two have corresponded in the years since. When Dr. Dillon sent him a formal

account of the College and its unique curriculum, our new Holy Father responded by saying that he found it to be “eloquent and compelling.”



A Mass in Celebration of the Inauguration of the Pontificate of Benedict XVI was held in St. Bernardine of Siena Library on April 26, 2005.

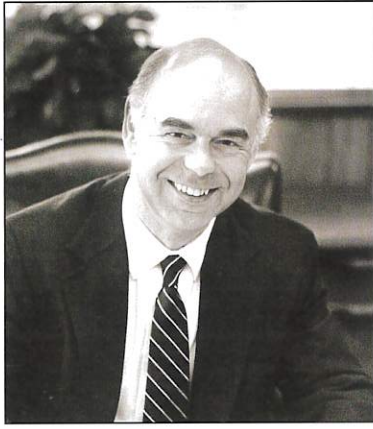


“When we met,” recalls Dr. Dillon, “then-Cardinal Ratzinger indicated that he would like to visit our campus. But with his elevation to the See of Peter, such a visit seems less likely now. However, ‘with God all things are possible,’ so we will hope!”

### In This Issue

- ◆ Cardinal Dulles at Commencement..... 1
- ◆ Campus Celebrates Benedict XVI ..... 1
- ◆ Farewell to the Graduates..... 2
- ◆ “Rome Is the Center of Unity” .....3-4
- ◆ A Modern-Day Jonah ..... 4
- ◆ “You Are Works in Progress” ..... 5
- ◆ Meet the Class of 2005 .....6-8
- ◆ “Learning in Wartime” ..... 9-10
- ◆ Thomas Aquinas College at Sherwood .... 10
- ◆ Campaign Update ..... 10
- ◆ In Memoriam ..... 10
- ◆ An Interview with America’s ..... 11  
Only Theologian-Cardinal
- ◆ Campus Life..... 12





## Farewell Address to the Graduates

*Each year, following the last senior exam, the College president hosts a reception and formal dinner in honor of the graduating seniors. The event is attended by the members of the senior class, and faculty members and their*

*spouses, and is marked by merriment and toasting, as well as serious reflection. Following are the remarks of President Thomas E. Dillon to the Class of 2005 at the President's Dinner on May 11, 2005.*

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the entire faculty and staff, to congratulate you, the class of 2005, for having formally completed the course of your education at Thomas Aquinas College. You can be proud of your accomplishment. Our curriculum is by no means easy — you have undertaken to study through these four years the most challenging works in the breadth of the disciplines. High aspirations cannot be realized without dedication and hard work, and you are to be commended for your diligence in completing our academic program.

### The Importance of St. Thomas

Just recently I returned from a conference of presidents of thirty colleges and universities from six continents who understand the importance of St. Thomas' thought in Catholic higher education. The conference was held at the University of Abat Oliba in Barcelona, and as representing Thomas Aquinas College, I was welcomed as a kind of hero. The grand chancellor, the president, and the deans of the host university already knew about Thomas Aquinas College and deeply admired us for doing what they think is the purest and best things in Catholic higher education. They are convinced that it is crucial to educate the Spanish young in the thought of St. Thomas in order to help preserve Catholic Spain against the onslaught of materialism and moral relativism. They particularly think it is important that the young have their minds and imaginations formed by St. Thomas' realism, by his logic, and by his objective morality, and they would like our institution's help in reviewing their curriculum. Again and again I heard high praise for what we are doing here.

In returning to campus and having my own seminars as well as visiting some other classes, I was once again struck by how blessed we are and how good we all have it at Thomas Aquinas College, both tutors and students alike. Naturally, we are a human institution with human failings, but the soundness and effectiveness of this educational endeavor is evident. This will become even clearer to you, I am confident, as the years go by and the intellectual habits that have here taken root in your souls blossom and bear abundant fruit.

### We Must Sacrifice our Comfort

In thinking about what I might say to you tonight, I turned first to your class quote, taken from St. Paul's epistle to the Galatians [2:20]: "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me." This is indeed a powerful indication of what is at the heart of our Faith, and a fitting reminder of how you, counted among the baptized, are to look at your lives as you go forth into the larger world.

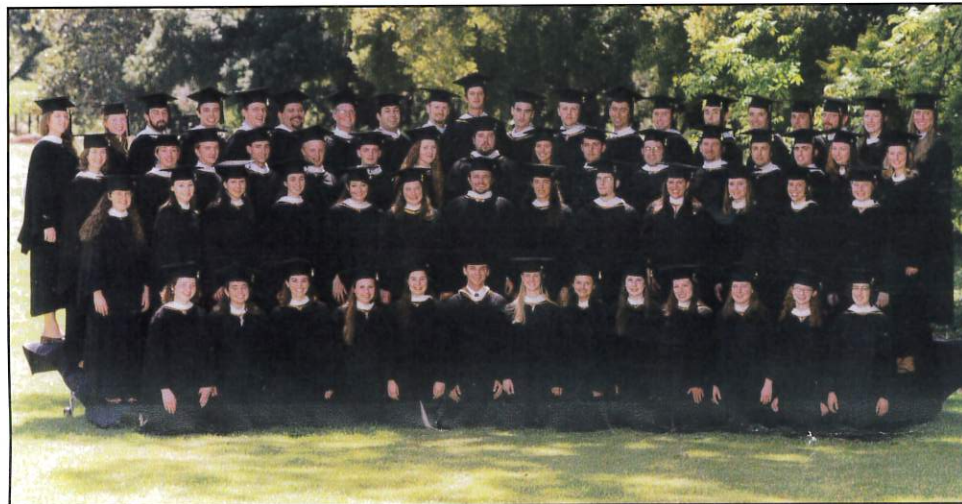
You should keep in mind, however, the words which immediately precede your class quote, which are: "I have been crucified with Christ." All of us must remember that Christ's triumph came after His crucifixion, and we must unite ourselves with Christ on the cross if we are ultimately to triumph with Him.

Now the taking up of the cross, as you are well aware, runs contrary to everything in our culture, which seems to present the highest good of man to be comfort and pleasure. Nevertheless, in order to have Christ live within us, we must be willing to sacrifice our comfort as Christ sacrificed His for the love of us, even unto death on a cross.

In many ways, living a Christian life beyond this campus will be more difficult than it has been here because you will most likely not find yourselves in such a supportive community, and the world will offer many temptations to soften and weaken your fervor and resolve — perhaps, at first, just to help you get a little more comfortable. As you attempt to truly live out your Faith and bring it in friendship to others, you will probably be called upon to make many difficult sacrifices, but in doing so, you will be all the more united with our Lord.

### "The Real World"

Notice, by the way, that earlier I spoke about going forth into the larger world — I purposely avoided saying the "real world." Why? After all, thousands of graduates across the country will be exhorted in the next few weeks to do good things as they move out of colleges and into what is said to be the "real world." But in your time here at Thomas



CLASS OF 2005

Aquinas College you have aspired to understand the true, to love the good, and to take delight in the beautiful. And the fact is, the true, the good, and the beautiful have much greater reality than do the false, the evil, and the ugly, which latter are too often idolized in the larger world. So I urge you to bring reality to that world — to take whatever you have grasped here of the true, good, and beautiful out into that larger world, so much in need of what is real rather than what is illusory.

What I am saying fits, in a way, with the words of our Lord Himself in the Gospel read at today's Mass. Here is what He says:

*"I gave them your word, and the world hated them, because they do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. I do not ask that you take them out of the world but that you keep them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth. Your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, so I sent them into the world. And I consecrate myself for them, so that they also may be consecrated in truth."* [John 17:14-19]

So insofar as you have been consecrated in the truth, your most noble task is to follow the mission Christ has set for us, and that is to bring the truth of Christ to the world, to go forth and evangelize.

### Extraordinary Times

In the homily of his Holiness, Benedict XVI, at the Roman basilica of St. Paul Outside-the-Walls just the day after his installation, our new pope preached that "The Church is by nature missionary; her urgent duty is to evangelize." He went on to say this: "At the beginning of the third millennium, the Church feels with renewed intensity that Christ's missionary mandate is more timely than ever. The great Jubilee of the year 2000 led her to 'set out anew from Christ,' contemplated in prayer, so that the light of His truth might shine on all men and women, primarily through the witness of holiness."

It seems to me, in reflecting on these words, that in many ways we live in extraordinary times. On the one hand, we are seeing a conspicuous regression from high civilization to a new kind of barbarism, as the West increasingly squanders its Christian patrimony. Western Europeans, by and large, both are failing to reproduce themselves and are explicitly repudiating their Christian roots, even as Islam is ascending throughout Europe. In this country, respect for virtue and civility are waning, as we continue to feed our unfettered appetites and deny fundamental truths about human nature in order to perpetuate a fantasy world of egoism and self-indulgence.

On the other hand, with the death and funeral of Pope John Paul II and the new pontificate of Benedict XVI, and because of the modern means of mass communication, especially television, the eyes of the world are on the Catholic Church now as perhaps never before in history. Millions upon millions of souls have witnessed a suffering pope uphold the dignity of all human beings as Sons of God destined for an eternal life beyond this world.

Millions again have observed the humble yet resolute beginning of a new pontificate, with a new pope obediently laying himself down as a bridge between Christ and the world and showing from the very beginning of his Petrine ministry the same fidelity to the message of our Lord as did his predecessor.

And even while there exist in our times those who hate the Church and fight for everything that is antithetical to it, there are yet others who perceive the bankruptcy of secular materialism, moral relativism, and neo-paganism, and who are ready for the message of the Gospels — who are ready for the truth.

### Development of the Virtues

The gifts you have received here are primarily intellectual. You have had the opportunity to cultivate intellectual virtue, and you are well prepared to be of service to the truth. Remember, however, the hope

expressed by Pope Benedict that I quoted earlier, "that the light of Christ's truth, contemplated in prayer, might shine on all men and women primarily through the witness of holiness." This suggests that as members of the Church, it is especially fitting for us to strive for personal holiness in order to better witness to the truth.

Let me read again for you a passage from St. Augustine's *Confessions*, which you studied in your sophomore year. It concerns St. Augustine's first encounter with St. Ambrose and is expressed as follows:

*"Unknown to me, it was you who led me to him, so that I might knowingly be led by him to you. This man of God received me like a father and, as bishop, told me how glad he was that I had come. My heart warmed to him, not at first as a teacher of the truth, which I had quite despaired of finding in your Church, but simply as a man who showed me kindness."*

As we can see, it was not Ambrose's preaching which at first disposed St. Augustine to the truth of the Church, but rather his personal charity. Charity is an ally to the truth as are all the other virtues. Consider, for example, St. Thomas's prayer of thanksgiving for after Holy Communion: *May this sacrament perfect me in charity and patience, in humility and obedience, and in all the other virtues.* Each of these virtues — charity, humility, obedience, and patience — better dispose all of us and those with whom we inquire to be more receptive to the truth.

So in this year of the Eucharist, let me exhort you, following both John Paul II and Benedict XVI, to a greater devotion to the Eucharist in your spiritual lives, and also to a greater development of the virtues of charity, humility, obedience, and patience in your moral lives, and lastly to a greater dedication to the service of truth in your intellectual lives, so that your whole lives may be firmly united to Him who is the way, the truth, and the life.



# “Rome Is the Center and Touchstone of Unity”

## Commencement Address of His Eminence Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.

For some years I have admired Thomas Aquinas College from afar, and therefore I feel particularly pleased to come here for this graduation. I sincerely thank your president and the members of the Board of Governors for having voted to give me the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion, which I shall treasure as a remembrance of these happy days.

The choice of a college is a very important decision in the life of any student. To this day I remain profoundly indebted to my own *alma mater*, completely different though it was from yours. I went to Harvard College from 1936 to 1940, where the curriculum, instead of being uniform, as it is here, was, one might say, wildly elective. But for that very reason I was able to choose tutors and courses that gave me a good grounding in the Western tradition of philosophy, theology, culture and politics. I studied Plato and Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas, Luther and Calvin, and as a result I became a Christian believer and a Catholic, the best decision I have ever made. My entire adult life has been molded by what I learned in my college days, and I hope that you who are graduating today will be able to say the same sixty-five years from now.

### A Moment of Grace

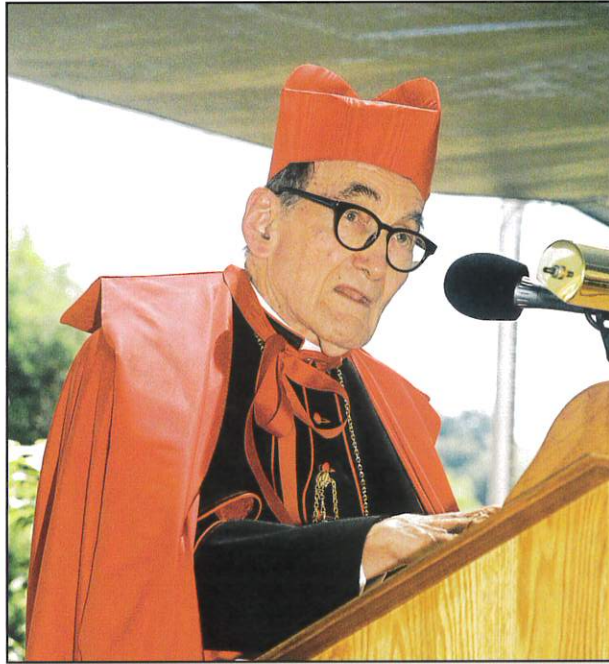
We live in a remarkable time. The forces of secularism and unbelief have never raged so furiously, but the Catholic Church is experiencing a special moment of grace. The eyes of the world have been turned for the past month on the city of Rome, which has lost one outstanding pastor and acquired another. All of you, I suspect, have followed these events: the unprecedented crowds of young people, the gathering of heads of state and chiefs of government, representatives of other churches and religions, and the omnipresence of journalists and television cameras. I personally was privileged to arrive in Rome before the burial of Pope John Paul II and to remain there through the installation of Benedict XVI. I shall never cease to cherish the memory of those historic days.

Both John Paul II and Benedict XVI exemplify the value of education. They are men in whom faith and reason have met and carried the human spirit to lofty heights. John Paul II was a philosopher who had earned a doctorate in theology; Benedict is a theologian thoroughly versed in philosophy. Both of them have assimilated the intellectual history of the West in its manifold expressions. Both have been university professors; each has authored at least a dozen books. The election of these two great intellectuals to the office of Peter shows the extreme importance that the Catholic Church today attaches to the life of the mind.

We live in a time of conflicting cross currents. Many of our contemporaries are rejecting the great intellectual heritage on which the civilization of Europe was built. Some no longer believe that the world owes its existence to a beneficent Creator, that there are any objective standards of right and wrong, or that human beings are made for eternal life. Every doctrine of Christian and Catholic faith is being subjected to relentless attack, and for this reason it is essential to have in the Church leaders who can persuasively articulate the grounds of faith. Not every priest or bishop is able to do so, but we are fortunate to have at the helm of the universal Church leaders equal to this task.

### The Church in America

The Church in the United States has always had, and continues to have, an exceptionally close relationship to Rome. Our bishops constantly rely on directives from the Holy See to solve questions disputed here at home. Our country is extremely vast. The Catholic Church is multiethnic, multiracial, multicultural, and multilingual. We have 169 dioceses and any number of religious orders and societies of consecrated life. For all these reasons there is no one who can speak or make

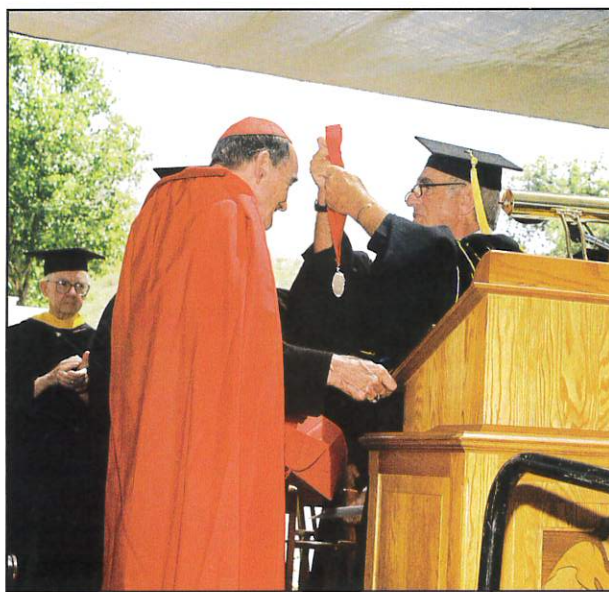


Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., Commencement Speaker, 2005

decisions for the Church in the United States. The Conference of Catholic Bishops is a useful organ for consultation, but it has practically no authority over the member bishops. When the bishops cannot reach a consensus, they regularly turn to Rome for help. Even the appointment of bishops comes not from the United States but from Rome. On issues of doctrine and discipline, the supervision of the Holy

**“We surely have to be on guard against a false spirit of liberty..... It is all too easy for American Catholics to imagine that our church ought to be independent of any higher authority.”**

See is indispensable. Without that supervision, the Catholic Church in our country would be much more divided than it is.



James Barrett, Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors, awards Cardinal Dulles the College's highest honor, the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion.

Rome also keeps the Church in the United States in union with the Catholic Church in other countries. Universality or catholicity is one of the greatest blessings we have. It is almost unique to our communion. The Orthodox Church of America is only tenuously linked to the patriarchates of Constantinople and the autocephalous churches of Eastern Europe. The American Episcopal Church is almost totally independent of Canterbury. The Lutheran and Calvinist Churches are unable to look to Geneva or any seat of authority that can speak for their denominations as a whole. The indigenous churches of America are all too much at home in our culture. They find it difficult to maintain continuity with the Fathers and Doctors of the past and meaningful union with Christians of other lands. They are deficient in the apostolicity and catholicity that are they still confess in the creed as properties of the Church.

Some would want the Catholic Church in our

country to become more autonomous. But if their wishes were followed, we would be in great danger of isolation from fellow believers elsewhere. We Catholics attach great importance to solidarity in faith and sacramental life with our coreligionists of all centuries and all nations. Rome is the center and touchstone of unity.

Time after time, down through the centuries, Rome has restrained Catholics from forming national schismatic bodies, as the Gallicans tried to do in France, and similar groups in other nations. The national churches that were formed in past centuries are break-off groups that no longer have a future. They are like branches cut off from the true vine.

### The Popes and “Americanism”

For two centuries and more, the Popes have been like fathers to us American Catholics. They have encouraged and supported us, sent missionaries to our shores, nourished us with sound doctrine, and occasionally intervened to save us from ourselves.

We Americans do not like to be criticized or corrected from abroad, but sometimes we need such treatment. A paramount instance was the letter of Pope Leo XIII, *Testem Benevolentiae*, issued in 1899. The letter condemned a tendency known as “Americanism,” which was affecting some of the faithful in this country. These Catholics were maintaining that the Church in America ought to be different than it was in the rest of the world. They were calling upon Church authorities to relax their teachings, to accommodate to the spirit of the age, and make concessions to new opinions. In particular, they recommended that individual Catholics should be left free to follow their own judgment, to embrace whatever opinions they pleased, and to promote any ideas that appealed to them. Men and women of our time, according to this view, have come of age and should not bow down to any external authority. Instead of cultivating passive virtues such as humility and obedience, they should actively assert themselves. The religious life, with its vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, was particularly called into question.

### The Pope’s Ministry of Unity

Catholics in this country protested that Americanism was only a “phantom heresy.” Indeed, it was not a full-blown heresy, but it might have become such had the Pope not intervened. We should be grateful that he does exercise a fatherly oversight over the Church in this country, as in others. That is an essential aspect of his ministry of unity.

I am not certain that we need such supervision more than other countries. But we surely have to be on guard against a false spirit of liberty. Because our nation was founded upon a Declaration of Independence, it is all too easy for American Catholics to imagine that our church ought to be independent of any higher authority, especially in Europe. But to call for autonomy is often the first step in a process of dissolution. Unshackled from Rome, the Catholic Church in this country would be more easily manipulated to conform to the spirit of the age. The dominant culture is hostile to many Christian values. It is predicated on the pursuit of wealth, pleasure, and success, all understood in highly individualistic terms.

### From John Paul II to Benedict XVI

John Paul II pointed out these dangers and shortcomings, especially in his critique of consumerism. His death will not lead to a shift in doctrine. As Prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith, Cardinal Ratzinger was closely associated with all the doctrinal pronouncements of Pope John Paul.

Inevitably, the death of so great a Pope leaves a vacuum. He was in a sense the moral leader of the

*Continued, p. 4*



## Commencement Address

Continued from p. 3

world. No other figure, I believe, was so generally admired and loved. We all have to adjust to the absence of his genial smile and playful humor and the cessation of his firm and creative pastoral initiatives. Perhaps those of us who are of my generation will find the adjustment easier than you, who have known no other Pope. In my lifetime there have been eight Popes: from Benedict XV to Benedict XVI — and I expect to be still around for a few more papal elections. My paradigm for the papal ministry was set by Pius XII, who was Pope for the first eighteen years of my life as a Catholic. He did much to prepare for the renewal of Vatican II, to engage the Church in the defense of human rights, and to protect Jews and others in the tragic days of the Holocaust.

What will the new Pope do and be? I cannot imagine that he will try to imitate the style of John Paul, who was inimitable. He will have to be himself. But in his new office he will not act simply as a prefect of doctrine. He will perhaps put on a new persona as the universal pastor of Christ's flock. From his initial homilies and speeches it appears that he will continue the policies of his predecessor. He will carry through the Year of the Eucharist,



Avery Cardinal Dulles was the principal celebrant of the Baccalaureate Mass.

including the World Youth Day of August and the assembly of the Synod of Bishops in October, both of which will have a Eucharistic focus. He will maintain the new evangelization, ecumenism, and interreligious dialogue as high priorities. He will uphold the culture of life. And like John Paul II, he will champion reason as an indispensable friend of faith. Opposing what he calls the dictatorship of relativism, he will confidently proclaim the universal lordship of Jesus Christ.

## Our Free Assent and Willing Cooperation

However brilliant and eloquent a pope may be, however sound his initiatives, he cannot renew the Church by his own unaided efforts. His authority is pastoral, not coercive. He can only call for free assent and willing cooperation. But if we love the Church, we shall deliver that response. Instead of setting ourselves above the Vicar of Christ as if we were his judges, we shall allow him to teach and correct us. A church that taught only what we already believed would be of no use whatever. As G. K. Chesterton wrote, we need a Church that is right not only when we are right but especially when we are wrong.

The Church in our nation is bustling with activity. It is vibrant but tossed about by many winds of doctrine. Those of you who are graduating from Thomas Aquinas College today can be a stabilizing influence. You have been exposed to a long tradition of wisdom, much of it inspired by divine revelation. Your minds have been honed by assiduous study of the arts and sciences. The Church counts on you to make a mature and responsible contribution as Christians in the Church and in the public square. When so many others are spreading cynicism and advocating unwise reforms, you will see more deeply into the real issues that are at stake. You can be leaders of your generation in shaping the future of the Church and of the nation. May God inspire, bless, and prosper your ways!

## College's 39th Alumnus Ordained to Priesthood

### Rev. Brendan Kelly ('85): A Modern-Day Jonah

On Saturday, May 28, 2005, Brendan Kelly, a graduate of Thomas Aquinas College's class of 1985, was ordained to the priesthood for the Diocese of Lincoln by the Most Reverend Fabian Bruskwitz. Fr. Kelly is the 39th priest to be ordained from among the College's alumni. There in Lincoln, he joins fellow Thomas Aquinas College graduates, Rev. Ramon Decaen ('96), and Sr. Mary of the Sacred Heart (Sara Kaiser '02), who recently entered the Carmelite Monastery of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.

One of 14 children, Brendan benefited greatly from his parents' example as they faithfully lived their vocation of marriage, consecrating their family to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and attending daily Mass. As Brendan recalls, the question never was "Are we going to Mass today?" but "Where are we going to Mass today? In our family life, we learned that God is not something distant and hard to reach; we were dealing with Him, and Our Lady, and the saints all the time."

After high school, with a scholarship to MIT in hand, Brendan made the decision in 1981 to attend instead a young and little-known school in California called Thomas Aquinas College. He excelled in the College's program and immersed himself in the school's rich sacramental and liturgical life. He was deeply impressed that the College dedicated time each day to a mid-day Mass, during which nothing else was scheduled — a sign that Mass was not an extra, but an essential (though voluntary) part of the program. Brendan participated also in the daily recitation of the rosary, adoration, and Compline, the night prayer of the Church, chanted in Latin. It was during his years at the College that he heard the first murmur of a vocation.

Brendan believes, however, that he eluded God's call for many years. "I was like the reluctant prophet, Jonah, 'fleeing from the presence of the Lord.' (Jonah: 13) It seemed He wanted something from me, so I would try to do good things; but it turns out He wanted ME, myself."

After graduating from



Four of Fr. Kelly's fellow graduate-priests joined him (2nd from left, front row) for his ordination: (l to r) Rev. Gary Selin ('89) of the Archdiocese of Denver, Rev. Michael Goyette ('94) of the Diocese of Camden, Rev. Joseph O'Hara ('92) of the Diocese of La Crosse, and Rev. Ramon Decaen ('96) of the Diocese of Lincoln. Also traveling to Lincoln for the joyful event were President (left) and Mrs. Tom Dillon and founding president of the College, Dr. Ronald P. McArthur.

the College, Brendan went on to earn a Ph.D. in philosophy from the University of Notre Dame. In the early 1990s, he began teaching at the University of San Francisco's St. Ignatius Institute. In the summer of 1993, he went to Denver, for World Youth Day. He recalls now that when Pope John Paul II was leaving the platform, he suddenly turned around, came back to the microphone, and said: "I have been telling you these things, but now it is for you to put them into practice!" Even at the time Brendan thought, "It was as though he was talking directly to me!"

Nevertheless, Brendan returned that fall to the Institute and continued teaching. But he spent his extra time doing as much as he could for his students, holding Shakespeare readings, hosting study sessions, and ultimately, listening to their problems and hearing about the bad lives some of them were leading. He remembers thinking, "I love these kids, and I want to help them. But, finally, I don't have what they need; I can't give them absolution."

That's when he decided to heed the quiet, persistent voice in his heart, calling him to the priesthood. In the summer of 1994, he made a vocations retreat with the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter; in the fall, he entered their seminary just outside Scranton, Pennsylvania. But he was not

certain he belonged with this society of apostolic life.

Over the next few years, therefore, he tested his vocation, first with one order and then another, only to return again to the Fraternity. He became deeply involved in building the Fraternity's new seminary in Lincoln, Nebraska, which put him in contact with numerous people in and around that diocese. At the end of the year, with the help of his rector, he discerned a call to the diocesan priesthood.

As Fr. Kelly explains, "A member of a religious community commits himself to a rule, but a diocesan priest commits himself to a place." Having gotten to know the diocese of Lincoln fairly well by now, and finding that a wonderful *esprit de corps* existed there, Brendan thought he might indeed be able to make that

commitment.

He went on to complete his studies for the priesthood at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary in Pennsylvania where he found that his education at Thomas Aquinas College had prepared him well. In fact, he says, "I received a better preparation at the College than I could have at any seminary at the time. A priest has to converse with anybody, and everybody, about anything, on their grounds. He must be able to analyze a position, and both lead and follow in a discussion. These are the skills I learned and honed at Thomas Aquinas College."

Brendan was ordained to the diaconate in the spring of 2004, and to the priesthood last May. His first assignment is at St. Mary's parish in Nebraska City, on the border with Iowa. In addition, the priests and sisters of the Diocese of Lincoln are responsible for all upper level religious education; Fr. Kelly's teaching assignment is at Our Lady of Lourdes High School.

To any other Jonahs who might themselves be evading God's call, Fr. Kelly would say, "What is there to be afraid of? God is calling you to do the very thing that will fulfill you the most. Who knows better than He?"



Fr. Kelly returned to campus shortly after his ordination and offered a Mass of Thanksgiving in the College chapel. Afterwards, he blessed all those present, including his brother, Brian (shown above), a graduate and tutor of the College.



The day following his ordination, Fr. Kelly offered his first Mass, assisted by a newly ordained deacon.



# “You Are Works in Progress”

## Baccalaureate Mass Homily of Rev. Msgr. George J. Parnassus

Long-time friend of the College, Rev. Msgr. George J. Parnassus, is the Pastor Emeritus of St. Victor's Church in West Hollywood, California, where he served as pastor for nearly 25 years. He has participated in many of the College's milestone events, such as the dedication of St. Therese residence hall for women and the College's 30th Anniversary celebration. He has also served as chaplain at the Summer Seminar Weekends for benefactors of the College.

Msgr. Parnassus has given wise counsel during his five years of service on the planning committee for Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. In addition, he has brought numerous friends to the campus to learn about the College's unique program of Catholic liberal education. Above all, Msgr. Parnassus has supported the College with his prayers and good will. It was an honor to have him give the Baccalaureate Mass homily at this year's Commencement.

Your Eminence, my brother priests, members of the faculty, and the friends of Thomas Aquinas College, students, and especially you graduates: I cannot tell you how delighted I am to be here.

I always come here and find a blessing for myself, and I can only imagine what it has been like for you to live here, to be here this long period of time in your life — a considerable period. It has been a blessing for you, I'm sure you realize, and you realize that it has been God's work — that He is the One Who has brought you here, and He wants you to experience this.

To experience what exactly? In the context of this Eucharist, let us consider the education that you have had, the moving along that path which leads, let us hope, to eternal life for all of us. I would say to you how important it has been that you have acquired all this knowledge that has been part of the classroom activity, and your studies, your reflections. But there is something else that I think I see here, and it is my own insight about what is special in this college, on this campus.



Due to a hip malady, Msgr. Parnassus remained seated to deliver a stirring Baccalaureate Mass homily.

### Making Friends with God

You know, we have to ask ourselves what it is that God wants the human race to do here on earth. The Gospel is quite clear; and I would remind you also of some words that were spoken at a Commencement here two years ago, I think, by Cardinal Schönborn.

In a very, very endearing way he said to the graduates that the most important part of the writing of St. Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologiae* was in the second part of the second part, where he takes up the virtue of charity. The Cardinal simply said that it was about making friends with God. And I thought, 'what a beautiful, simple way to say it — making friends with God.'

In the friendship that we make with God, God lifts us up from our fallen nature, from our status as creatures, and makes us His children. And there are certain kinds of rules that He sets down in regard to love, in regard to friendship, that He will observe, of which we must be aware.

### Friendship with Each Other

We have to then understand what it means to be God's friend. If you are God's friend, then what else? Then, certainly, He intends that you be friends with one another, that you build here a kind of anticipation of that wonderful community — communion — that we will have in the Kingdom of Christ when He comes again.

You know, it has happened in the world, in the past. I've seen it in a couple of places. I saw it a number of times in Lourdes. How beautiful the love for God and for neighbor that was expressed there. I saw it in Rome, too, not there present myself, but watching on television the scenes of the funeral of John Paul II. You know, there was a great expression — an outpouring — of love. Love for him. And what else? Love for each other. Love for the Church. And I see it in young people.

This is the hope that old men who dream dreams hope — that young people have this vision, and that they will keep it. It is in you: the love for God, the friendship, the joy to be Catholic, to be part of this Church, and to belong to one another in the faith — yes, even to sacrifice. 'Greater love than this no one has, to lay down one's life.'

When I meet you, I have always (in a way that I hope has not been an intrusion) asked what you want to do with your life. And invariably, there is a sense of commitment in you. Will it stay? Will it develop? Will it be something that carries you through? Or is this just a period of time? Well, you know, this is what you must pray for.

### The Feast of Pentecost

Tomorrow is the feast of Pentecost. If we have any kind of wisdom about us, about God, this relationship we have, we know that every day is the feast of Pentecost. Every day God — Father, Son, and Holy Spirit — is with us, and we are as a temple.

We are to cultivate in love an awareness and a response to the promptings of the Spirit within us. That must be a task that is not just for the liturgical feast of Pentecost, but it is a task for a lifetime, and it is wonderful. It is what will keep you always with a happiness possessed for life. And I think that though the body may grow old, your spirits will remain always young because there will be the future, and the future is ours. The future is ours, with God and with each other.

### The Holy Spirit, Guest and Host

In the great hymn that the Church sings to the Spirit on Pentecost there are these words: "O dulcis hospes animae." O sweet Guest of the soul. I think that expression refers to the kind of rules that God places on Himself. He will not come into us unless we welcome Him and truly tell Him that we want Him there.



Msgr. Parnassus explained how the Holy Spirit is both guest and host of the soul.

Every day, I urge you, say that to God. Tell Him of your need for His presence in your life.

The word "hospes" is an interesting word in Latin. I did not know this until recently: "hospes" means guest. But also it has a second meaning. It means host, the one who welcomes, the one who serves the needs of the guest. Everything in the Gospel tells us that that is what God intends to do with us. His love

for us is so great; there is nothing that He will not do for our good. But we must want it. We must ask it.

Rejoice now in what you have. This humility — a humility that I hope is a habit in you and a habit that will grow, with great reliance on the gifts of the Spirit because without that divine action in yourself, you cannot achieve any kind of good. Rely on the Spirit. Tell the Spirit of the poverty of your own self without Him, of your great need. Love Him, and you have everything you need.

### Works in Progress

What will you achieve when you leave here? There is a phrase that people use about themselves, which I think is pretty good (current use is sometimes accurate) about a person being a "work in progress." Well, that is what you are. You are works in progress. You are not finished, by any means. God is working on you, and you know what He is working to do in you. He is working to transform you into the likeness of His Son.

God help us all because we are all works in progress. He is not finished with me; I hope that still there is a measure of His holiness that I can achieve in this life. Yes, that is what we hope for ourselves and that is what we hope for each other, and in God's great mercy, that is what we will have.

## Cardinal Dulles at Commencement

Continued from p. 1

the Church, and to advance the mission of Christ on earth."

The day's events began with the Baccalaureate Mass of the Holy Spirit during which long-time friend of the College, Rev. Msgr. George Parnassus, pastor emeritus of St. Victor Church in West Hollywood, California, reminded the graduating seniors that they are "works in progress," and that it is the Holy Spirit who will transform them into the likeness of Christ. (See above for the full text of Msgr. Parnassus' homily.)

Senior Greg Pfundstein was chosen by his classmates to deliver the Senior Address. He reflected on the Class of 2005's experience at the College in a post-9/11 world, and exhorted the graduates to continue to pursue the good, the true and the beautiful throughout their lives. (See page 9 for the full text of Mr. Pfundstein's remarks.)

For an audio tape of highlights from Commencement 2005, please contact Christi Canchola at 800-634-9797 or at ccanchola@thomasquinas.edu.





## The Class of 2005 and Senior Theses



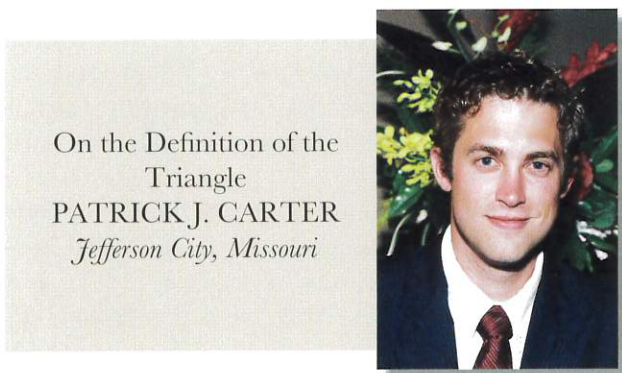
An Examination of the Account Given for the Final Cause of Natural Things  
**JOHNATHAN ALMEIDA**  
*Steubenville, Ohio*



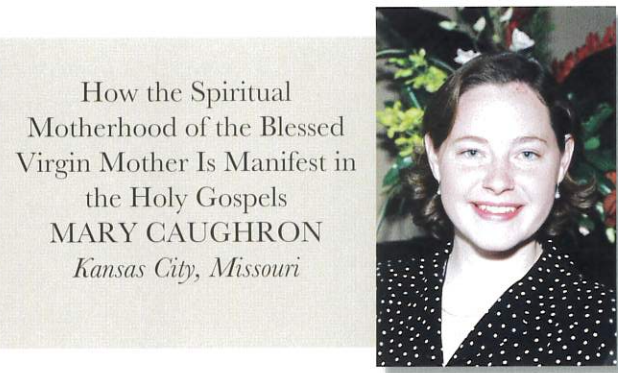
A Matter of Fact: Machiavelli, Tocqueville and Historical Attention  
**JOSHUA M. BERGEN**  
*Brighton, Tennessee*



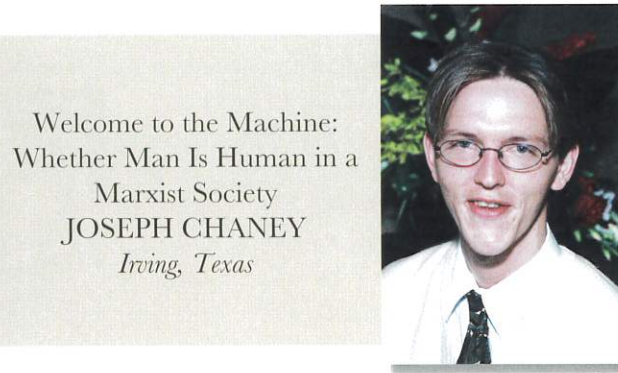
How Could Mankind's Greatest Glory Be His Greatest Sin?  
**PETER BULCHER**  
*Necedah, Wisconsin*



On the Definition of the Triangle  
**PATRICK J. CARTER**  
*Jefferson City, Missouri*



How the Spiritual Motherhood of the Blessed Virgin Mother Is Manifest in the Holy Gospels  
**MARY CAUGHRON**  
*Kansas City, Missouri*



Welcome to the Machine: Whether Man Is Human in a Marxist Society  
**JOSEPH CHANEY**  
*Irving, Texas*



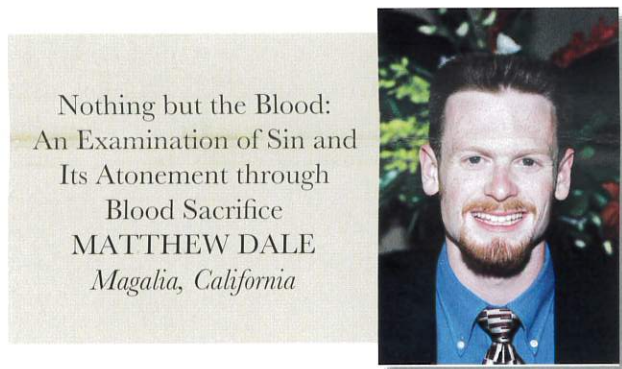
An Examination and Reconciliation of the Socratic and Aristotelian Accounts of the Conflict between Reason and the Passions  
**JOSHUA CLARKE**  
*Hastings, Nebraska*



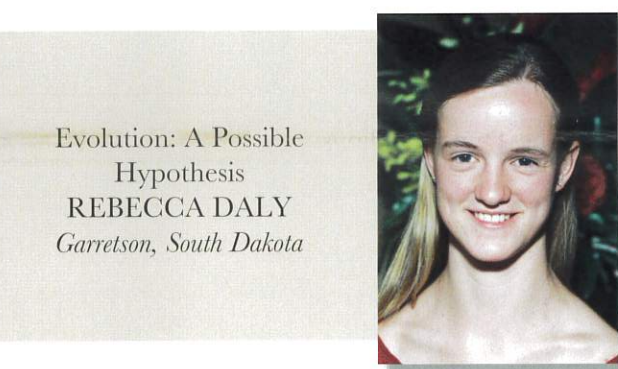
An Examination of Elemental Presence in Compounds  
**BERNADETTE COUGHLIN**  
*Santa Paula, California*



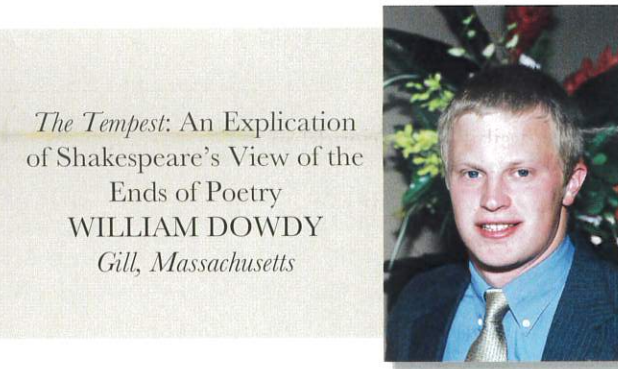
The Priority and Superiority of the Intellect to the Will in the Eternal Beatitude of Man  
**ALEXANDRA CURRIE**  
*Orange County, California*



Nothing but the Blood: An Examination of Sin and Its Atonement through Blood Sacrifice  
**MATTHEW DALE**  
*Magalia, California*



Evolution: A Possible Hypothesis  
**REBECCA DALY**  
*Garretson, South Dakota*



*The Tempest*: An Explication of Shakespeare's View of the Ends of Poetry  
**WILLIAM DOWDY**  
*Gill, Massachusetts*



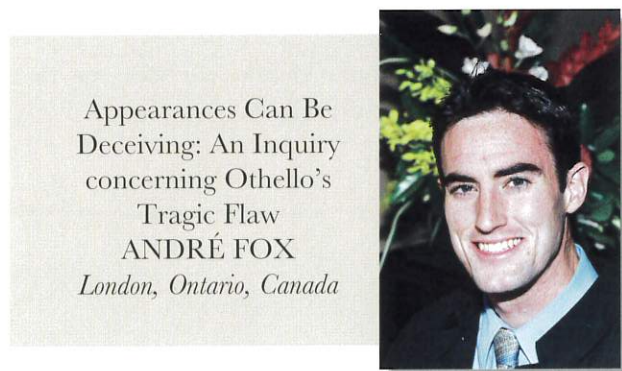
Dante's Difficulties in Earthly Paradise, or, The Unfall of Man  
**BENJAMIN DUNLAP**  
*San Jose, California*



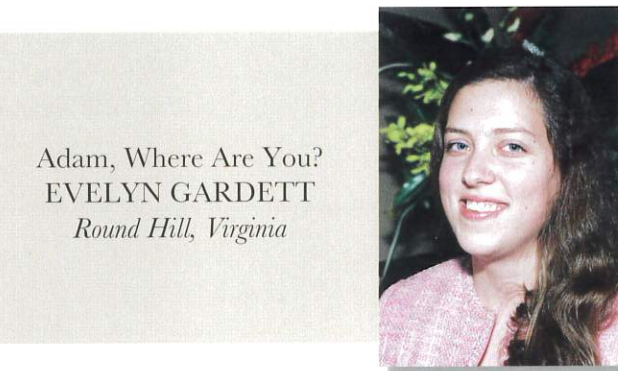
What Do You Know? Aristotle and Locke on the Object of the Intellect  
**TIMOTHY FEENEY**  
*Covina, California*



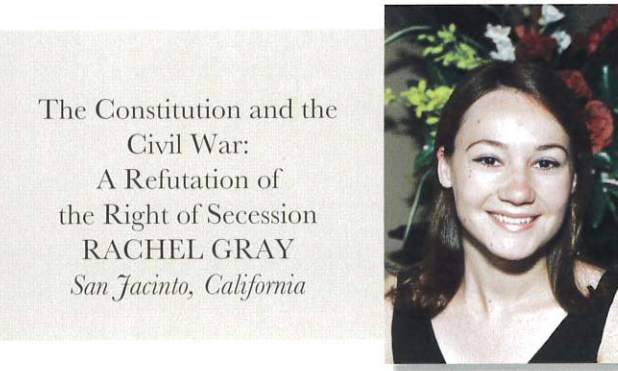
An Analysis of Henry Bolingbroke's Ascension to the Throne of England  
**ROSEMARIE DESILVA FINLEY**  
*Ojai, California*



Appearances Can Be Deceiving: An Inquiry concerning Othello's Tragic Flaw  
**ANDRÉ FOX**  
*London, Ontario, Canada*



Adam, Where Are You?  
**EVELYN GARDETT**  
*Round Hill, Virginia*



The Constitution and the Civil War: A Refutation of the Right of Secession  
**RACHEL GRAY**  
*San Jacinto, California*



Laughter: Whether It Can Be Good to Laugh at Something Bad  
**GABRIEL HAGGARD**  
*Chatsworth, California*



An Analysis of the Harmonic Unity of Debussy's *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune*  
**DAVID ISAAC HONG**  
*Tucson, Arizona*



To Know, Love, and Serve God: A Consideration of the Active and Contemplative Lives  
**JESSICA HOSKINSON**  
*Anaheim, California*



# The Class of 2005 and Senior Theses



Be Ye Perfect: Whether or Not Man Can Attain Perfection on Earth  
ALAN KEELER  
*Chehalis, Washington*



An Examination of St. Thomas' Account of How Real Distinction in God Does Not Compromise His Absolute Simplicity  
DIRK KENNEDY  
*Portland, Oregon*



That the State Has an Obligation to Lead Men toward Moral Virtue  
ROSIEANNA KRETSCHMER  
*New Paltz, New York*

Don Quixote de la Mancha: "Blessed Are Those Who Do Not See and Yet Believe."  
SARAH LEDBETTER  
*Brighton, Colorado*



The Wisdom of a Buffoon, or, The Heroism of Pierre Bezukhov in Leo Tolstoy's Epic *War and Peace*  
HOPE LOCICERO  
*Pasadena, California*



The Heart of Happiness: An Examination of "Happily Ever After" in *War and Peace*  
KATHERYN LYON  
*Battle Ground, Washington*



A Consideration of Why the Church Has Authority over the State  
JULIE LYONS  
*Battle Ground, Washington*



A Defense of St. Thomas' Argument for the Morally Binding Power of Human Law  
ROSEMARIE MAROTTI  
*Ann Arbor, Michigan*



Whether Civil Law Presupposes the Existence of Natural Law  
BRYAN MARTIN  
*La Canada, California*

The Possibility of Friendship between God and Man  
MICHAEL MARTIN  
*Sammamish, Washington*



The Things Oedipus Cannot Master  
MARY MATHIE  
*St. Catherines, Ontario, Canada*



An Explanation of Psalm cx.10: "The Fear of the Lord Is the Beginning of Wisdom."  
THERESE MCCARTHY  
*Gallup, New Mexico*



The Binding Power of Civil Law  
STEPHAN MCCARTY  
*La Crescenta, California*



Beatrice and the Bride: How Poetry Is a Suitable Expression of Love  
MELISSA MCEACHERN  
*Vilna, Alberta, Canada*



*Deus Caritas Est:* Love and Conversion in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*  
MARYANN MCGRATH  
*Stockton, California*

Crime and Punishment: That the Free Spirit under Modernity Is Only Free through Love  
PATRICK MCLAUGHLIN  
*Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada*



A Defense of Aristotle's View that Man Exists in the State by Nature  
IAN MOCHOW  
*Wrightwood, California*



On the Holy Mother of the Church and Holy Mother Church  
JONATHAN MONNEREAU  
*Irvine, California*



A Reconciling of Scriptural Passages concerning Childlikeness and Childishness  
BRIDGET MOREY  
*Mercer Island, Washington*



A Dangerous Game: Capitalism As Convicted by Karl Marx and Acquitted by Aristotle  
JACOB NAZECK  
*Ridgecrest, California*



The Art of the Possible: Five Principles of Legislation  
ANNE NEUMAYR  
*Thousand Oaks, California*



# The Class of 2005 and Senior Theses



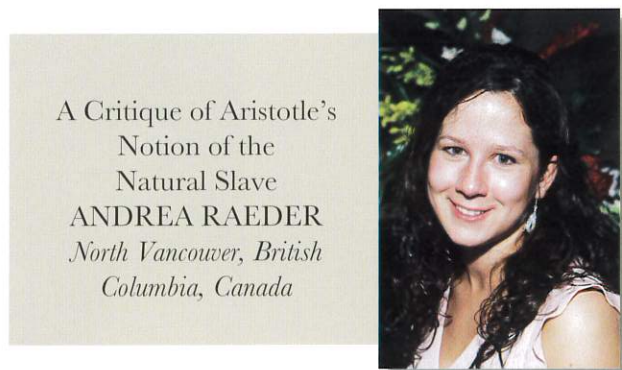
Euripides, Racine  
and True Catharsis  
**MARJORIE PATRICK**  
*Templeton, California*



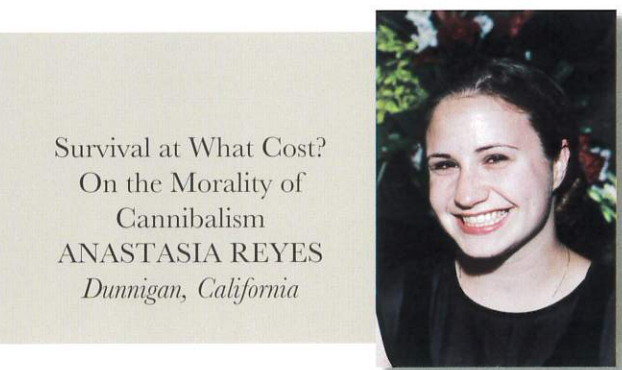
Freedom and Natural  
Contingency:  
The Undoing of Necessity  
**GREGORY PFUNDSTEIN**  
*Conyers, Georgia*



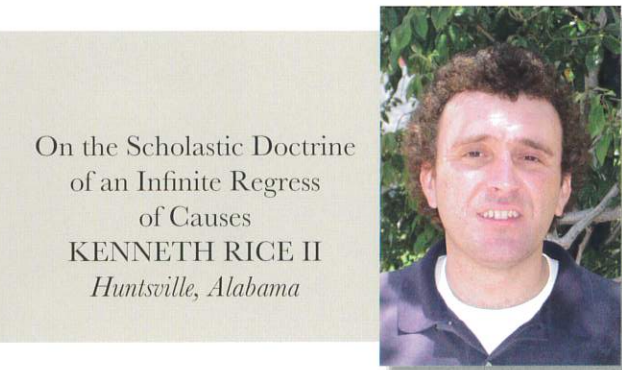
*De Vera Libertate Voluntatis:*  
A Stand against Relative  
Morality  
**ANNA RAAB**  
*Camarillo, California*



A Critique of Aristotle's  
Notion of the  
Natural Slave  
**ANDREA RAEDER**  
*North Vancouver, British  
Columbia, Canada*



Survival at What Cost?  
On the Morality of  
Cannibalism  
**ANASTASIA REYES**  
*Dunnigan, California*



On the Scholastic Doctrine  
of an Infinite Regress  
of Causes  
**KENNETH RICE II**  
*Huntsville, Alabama*



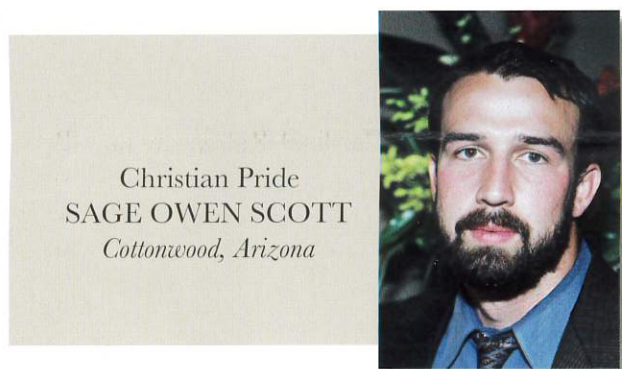
Of Unions Possible with God  
in This Life, the Eucharist  
Is the Most Perfect  
**MARY ROBINSON**  
*San Jose, California*



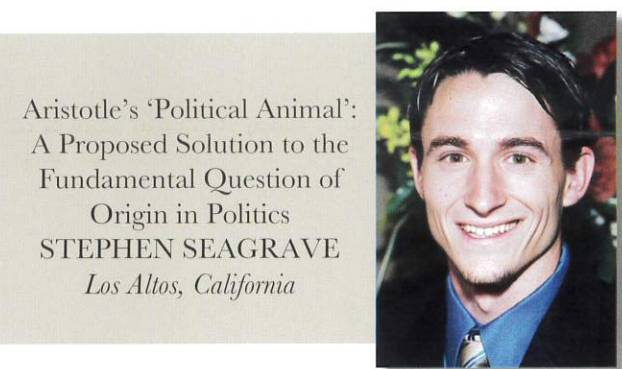
The Common Advantage  
and the Common Good:  
Are They the Same?  
**ERIN JEAN SALE**  
*Red Bluff, California*



Blessed Are You Who  
Are Poor: The Calling of  
All Christians to Poverty  
**CECILIA SCHEETZ**  
*Montrose, Colorado*



Christian Pride  
**SAGE OWEN SCOTT**  
*Cottonwood, Arizona*



Aristotle's 'Political Animal':  
A Proposed Solution to the  
Fundamental Question of  
Origin in Politics  
**STEPHEN SEAGRAVE**  
*Los Altos, California*



A Study of Locke's Second  
Treatise of Civil  
Government and Rousseau's  
Social Contract according to  
the Four Modes of Causality  
**REBEKAH SHAPIRO**  
*Pacifica, California*



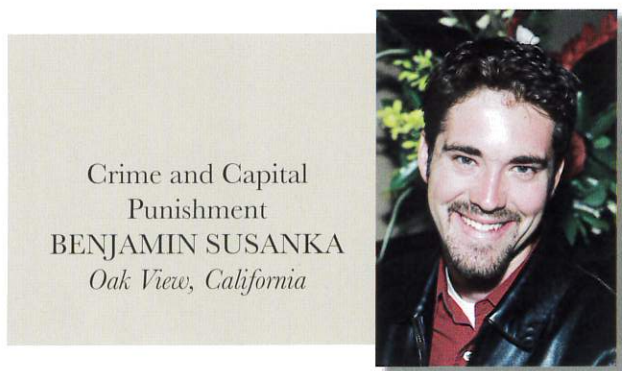
On Divine Ideas, or,  
The Franciscan Musings of a  
Modern Man  
**DANIEL SHIELDS**  
*Ojai, California*



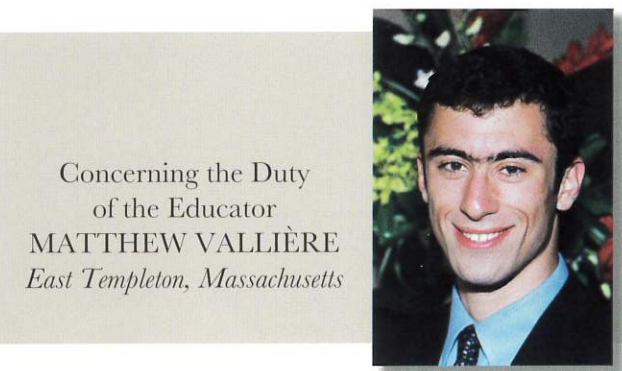
The Suffering of the Mystical  
Body of Christ according to  
Colossians 1:24  
**KATHLEEN STANTON**  
*Jenkintown, Pennsylvania*



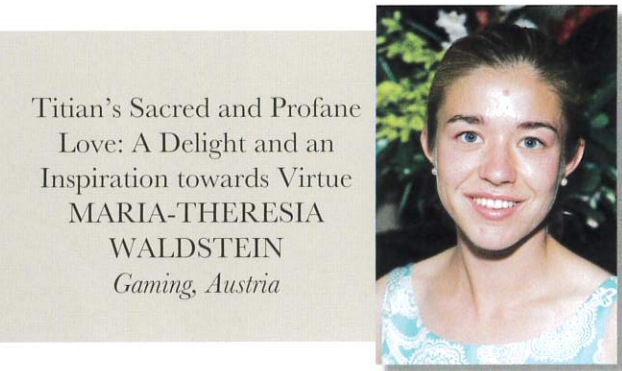
Justice Served:  
Macbeth's Crime and  
Punishment  
**THERESA SULLIVAN**  
*Manchester, New Hampshire*



Crime and Capital  
Punishment  
**BENJAMIN SUSANKA**  
*Oak View, California*



Concerning the Duty  
of the Educator  
**MATTHEW VALLIÈRE**  
*East Templeton, Massachusetts*



Titian's Sacred and Profane  
Love: A Delight and an  
Inspiration towards Virtue  
**MARIA-THERESIA  
WALDSTEIN**  
*Gaming, Austria*



Contemplation  
in Times of Need:  
A Resolution to the War  
within the Contemplative  
Man's Heart  
**CHRISTINA WEIBEL**  
*San Jose, California*



The Three P's: Karol  
Wojtyla's Personalistic  
Norm as  
Entrepreneurial Model  
**ANDREW WHALEY**  
*Desloge, Missouri*



*Utrum Deus Sit:*  
St. Thomas Aquinas vs.  
Descartes on Proving the  
Existence of God  
**VICTORIA WISEMAN**  
*Blackwood, New Jersey*



# “Learning in Wartime”

## Address by Senior Speaker, Gregory Pfundstein

Each year, the senior class at Thomas Aquinas College elects one from among its members to deliver the Senior Address at Commencement. It is an honor bestowed on the member of the class who they believe best exemplifies the ideals of the College: academic excellence, spiritual strength, and leadership. This year, the Class of 2005 chose Gregory Pfundstein from Atlanta, Georgia, Head Male Prefect at the College, to speak for them. Following is the text of his address.

Your Eminence Cardinal Dulles, reverend fathers, President Dillon, members of the Board of Governors, faculty and staff, parents, families, friends, guests of the College, and my brothers and sisters of the Class of 2005:

Three years and eight months ago, our class, the Class of 2005, arrived on the campus of Thomas Aquinas College just as had 30 freshman classes in 30 straight years before us, ready to take up the pursuit of Catholic liberal education. Yet unlike those other classes, our class began our very first class on one of the most catastrophic days in American history — September 11, 2001 — now known forever as “Nine Eleven.”

I remember we gathered in between our first classes at Fr. Borden’s house, where the only television on campus was located. There we watched the drama of that day unfold, as thousands of people went to their deaths through acts of terrorists bent on destroying our nation. I remember the sorrow, the concern, the anger, and the fear as we beheld this profound evil from a distance. Yet, because of that distance, we were allowed to undertake, in the solitude of our surroundings, the remainder of our classes and the pursuit of the Catholic intellectual life.

### Learning in Wartime

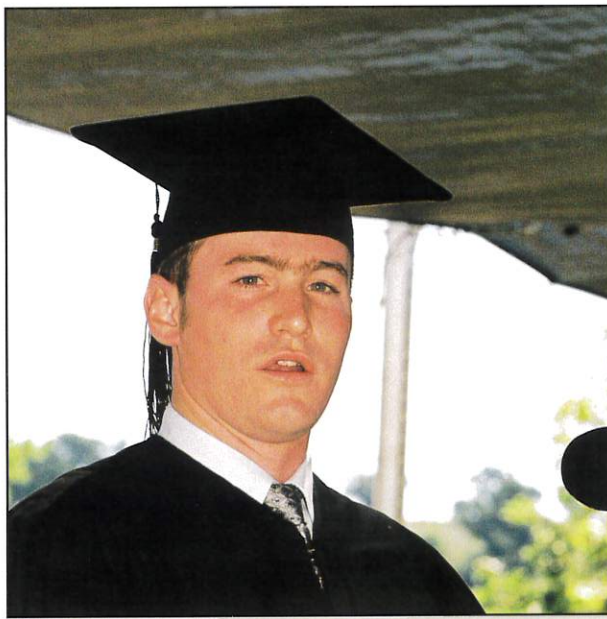
Just days before, in preparation for our studies, we were asked to read a little-known sermon by the great English writer, C.S. Lewis, given at St. Mary the Virgin at Oxford in the fall of 1939. The title of his sermon, given on the eve of World War II, was “Learning in Wartime.” How appropriate. Now we, too, were learning in wartime.

And then in our sophomore year, on March 19, 2003, when the United States brought the war to Iraq, and we continued to watch and pray during the days and months following, we were reminded again, that in spite of the unsettling circumstances, we were still learning in wartime. And even now, as troubles continue to mount, as America continues its war on terror, and as many of us have lost people dear to us through it, we have continued learning in wartime.

The question C.S. Lewis raised in his sermon to his students on the eve of world war was, and remains, one common to us here: what sense is there in pursuing a liberal education in a time so uncertain and terrifying as a time of war? With the insane Emperor Nero in mind, he asks, “Is it not like fiddling while Rome burns?”

Lewis answers this question by putting it in its eternal context. Every Christian, he says, must face a question of far greater import than the questions that arise in a time of war. How is it possible for a Christian, who at every moment is advancing either toward Heaven or Hell, to spend his time on the comparatively trivial pursuit of a liberal education? He says.

*“To admit that we can retain our interest in learning under the shadow of these eternal issues, but not under the shadow of a European war, would be to admit that our ears are closed to the voice of reason and very wide open*



Senior Speaker Gregory Pfundstein is now Executive Assistant to the president of Pacific Equity Management, Inc., Inner City Scholarships, Inc., and the Casillas Foundation in La Jolla, CA.

*to the voice of our nerves and our mass emotions. War creates no absolutely new situation: it simply aggravates the permanent human situation so that we can no longer ignore it. Human life has always been lived on the edge of a precipice. Human culture has always had to exist under the shadow of something infinitely more important than itself. If men had postponed the search for knowledge and beauty until they were secure, the search would never have begun.”*

### The Life of Learning — Our Vocation

Lewis put the situation, our situation, in perspective: how can we pursue the life of learning when there is our salvation and the salvation of others to be concerned with? And this is the question that we all were faced with in the early days of our career at Thomas Aquinas College. But the answer to this question is ready at hand. Since, as Lewis points out toward the end of his sermon, good philosophy must exist if only so that bad philosophy may be refuted, for some the life of learning is a duty. And insofar as it is a duty for some, indeed for us, we must fulfill it in order to attain our salvation. It is our mission. It is our vocation.

It is fitting that as we today take our leave of Thomas Aquinas College, we consider the great responsibility that is proportioned to the great education we have received here. We have been educated in the perennial tradition of the Catholic Church, under the light of faith. We have read the greatest works of the greatest minds of Western civilization, and with these great minds as our guides, we have discussed the most important questions that man has asked. Can we know by reason the existence of a Supreme Being, a first cause of all that is? What is wisdom? What is nature? What is motion? What is the good? Our pursuit of these questions and our consideration of the most well-reasoned answers, both true and erroneous, have sharpened our minds and given us the ability to address any questions presented to us in the future. We have been liberally educated. We have been prepared to lead the good life. We have become free men.

In our world today, such an education is a rarity. It is true that, while good philosophy is in fact good for us, it must exist at least as an answer to bad philosophy, which is, of course, bad for us. But today good philosophy is rare, and bad philosophy abounds at every turn. What does this mean for us? What, in light of this fact, is our responsibility to the Church and to the world?

### To Draw Close to Christ — Our Responsibility

Our time at Thomas Aquinas College began with a great event of tremendous consequence for the world in which we live. Now, it closes with another great event of tremendous importance — the election of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger as His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI. Just last month, again cramped in Fr. Borden’s house, around his

lone television set, we watched and prayed as first we beheld the death of the only pontiff we had ever known, our beloved Pope John Paul II, and next, as we mounted vigil between his death and the coming election. It was just before that election that we beheld the Mass for the election of Pope and heard the homily given by then-Cardinal Ratzinger as Dean of the College of Cardinals, which sheds some light on our responsibilities as graduates of Thomas Aquinas College.

At that Mass, Cardinal Ratzinger said:

*“How many winds of doctrine have we known in recent decades, how many ideological currents, how many ways of thinking.... The small boat of the thought of many Christians has often been tossed about by these waves — flung from one extreme to another.... Every day new sects spring up, and what St Paul says about human deception and the trickery that strives to entice people into error comes true. Today, having a clear faith based on the creed of the Church is often labeled as fundamentalism. Whereas relativism, that is, letting oneself be ‘tossed here and there, carried about by every wind of doctrine,’ seems the only attitude that can cope with modern times. We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognize anything as definitive and whose only goal consists solely of one’s ego and desires.”*

Cardinal Ratzinger continued, “We, however, have a different goal: the Son of God, the true man. An adult faith is not a faith that follows the trends of fashion and the latest novelty; a mature adult faith is deeply rooted in friendship with Christ.” He went on to say, “Truth and love coincide in Christ. To the extent that we draw close to Christ, in our own lives, too, truth and love are blended. Love without truth would be blind; truth without love would be like a ‘clanging cymbal.’”

### Faith and Reason Amidst the ‘Winds of Doctrine’

These words of Cardinal Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI, show us the problem and the solution. Relativism has devastated modern Western culture, spreading its corrupting influence



Dean Michael McLean and Senior Tutor Marc Berquist place the academic hood on the shoulders of senior John Almeida.

throughout the world and even the Church. The individual’s ego and desires are the highest law. But there is hope in the true man Christ, who is the one source of hope for all men of all time. Christ is Truth, and he has come so that the Truth might set us free. To the extent that we draw close to Christ, truth and love are blended in our lives.

So, in a world which denounces both faith and truth, we go out as witnesses to the Church’s unwavering principle that both faith and reason are paths given by God that lead us to the one truth, which is found only in God. The world into which we are going is hostile to this principle. But Christ calls us and all Christians to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth. How can we make a difference in the world? How can we make the world better?

A wise man once said that when he was young, he wanted to change the world, but that now that he is old, he realizes he should have changed himself first. It is a sobering thought. Many have set out to change the world. Few have succeeded. The world is changed one man at a time, and the only men that any of us truly have the power to change are ourselves.

*Continued p. 10*



## Senior Address

Continued from p. 9

### Devotion to the Holy Rosary

As I look back over the last four years, I see how much so many of us have changed. Thomas Aquinas College has been for us a place of conversion and of spiritual and intellectual progress. As we leave, we cannot take with us all the elements that have contributed to this change, but perhaps there are some we can.

During our four years here, we have had the opportunity each day to attend Mass, recite the Liturgy of the Hours, and to pray the Rosary and Divine Mercy Chaplet. We have enjoyed processions, consecrations, Stations of the Cross, and retreats. We have witnessed the daily exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction, and monthly nocturnal adoration. We have had the opportunity to immerse ourselves in the liturgical life of the Church and to participate in her favorite and most universal traditions and devotions. Few of us will have such opportunities again for the rest of our lives, opportunities that have been tremendous sources of grace and conversion. But there is something of all this that each of us can take with us, and that is devotion to the Most Holy Rosary.

St. Louis de Montfort tells us in his book, *The Secret of the Rosary*, that the Rosary has been given to us as a sure means for the conversion of the most hardened sinners and heretics, and that if we recite it faithfully we will receive a crown of merit in our lifetimes, a crown of peace at death, and a crown of glory in heaven. John Paul II, in his apostolic letter *Rosarium Virginis Mariae*, calls the Rosary a prayer for peace. He says, "The grave challenges confronting the

world at the start of this new millennium lead us to think that only an intervention from on high... can give reason to hope for a brighter future. The Rosary is by its very nature a prayer for peace, since it consists in the contemplation of Christ, the Prince of Peace." He calls the Rosary a prayer of and for the family. At this time, when the world is faced with war and with the breakdown of the family, the Rosary must be our prayer. If we take one thing with us from the rich spiritual life of Thomas Aquinas College, let it be devotion to the Holy Rosary.

### Friendship and the Love of Wisdom

Many of us have developed excellent friendships through our discussions, inside and outside of the classroom, and through the common life we

**So, in a world which denounces both faith and truth, we go out as witnesses to the Church's unwavering principle that both faith and reason are paths given by God that lead us to the one truth, which is found only in God.**

have led together on this small campus. It is fitting that our last seminar reading, Plato's *Phaedrus*, is a discussion of the importance of friendship for the life of philosophy. In it, Socrates tells Phaedrus that books without discussion are dead, serving only to remind those who know the truth already. The true lover of wisdom will "demonstrate the inferiority of his own writings out of his own mouth." What is needed is true friendship, in which there is a common pursuit of the good, the true, and the beautiful. It is precisely this sort of friendship that we have been developing for the past four years. Without friends

one would not even wish to live, and without friends we will certainly not grow in our love of wisdom. So, let us never abandon our friendships with each other, nor let us fail to build new friendships based on truth and goodness. Only in this way will we continue to grow, changing ourselves and the world in which we live — a world which is, and will continue to be, deeply troubled. I, for one, am deeply thankful to have had the opportunity to have been learning in wartime.

I will close here with the last lines of the *Phaedrus*. Socrates and Phaedrus have been discussing all day, and as they come to a conclusion, Phaedrus suggests that they should be going since the heat of the day is past. Socrates asks, "Oughtn't we first to offer a prayer to the divinities here?" Phaedrus answers, "To be sure." Socrates then prays,

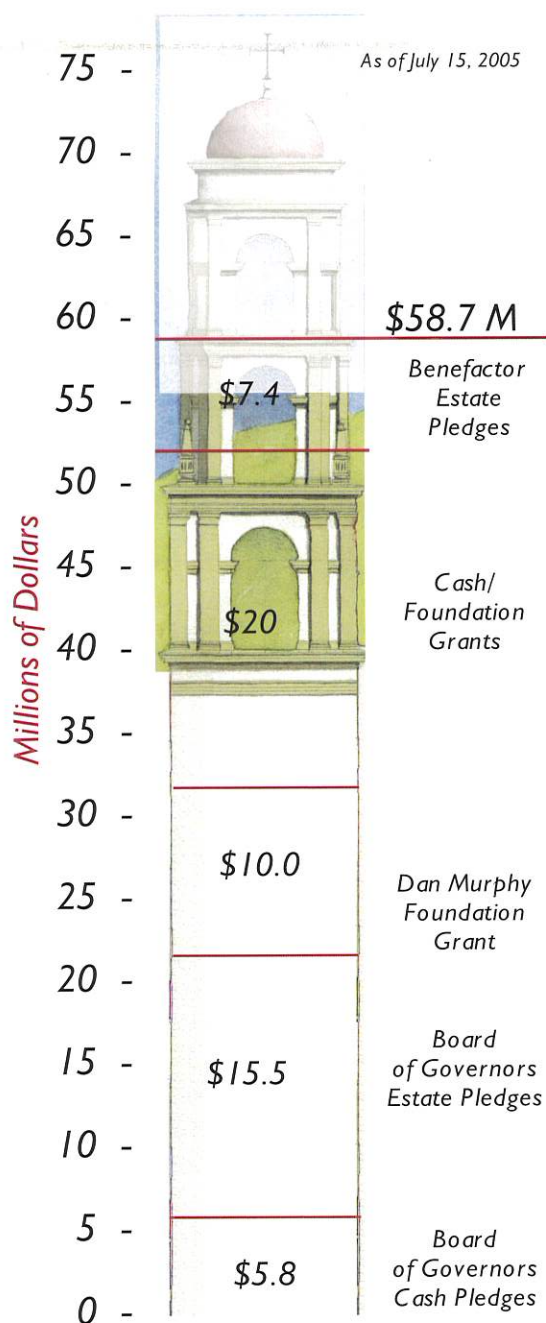
*"Dear Pan, and all ye other gods that dwell in this place, grant that I may become fair within, and that such outward things as I have may not war against the spirit within me. May I count him rich who is wise, and as for gold, may I possess so much of it as only a temperate man might bear and carry with him."*

Socrates then says, "Is there anything more we can ask for, Phaedrus?" "The prayer contents me," Phaedrus responds; "make it a prayer for me too, since friends have all things in common." Socrates then closes by saying, "Let us be going."

And so brothers and sisters of the Class of 2005, let us be going, and wherever we are, let us remember who we are and the friendships we have built here. Onward, Christians. Let us be worthy of the name we bear.



## Campaign Update



This summer we have made a great leap forward in our Campaign with a \$3 million bequest from Richard L. Noble, deceased member of our Board of Governors. We expect more gifts to the Campaign as we begin construction of the crown jewel of our campus, Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Thank you for your generosity!

## Board of Regents to Host Golf Tournament

### Event Scheduled for Prestigious Sherwood Country Club

The College's newly formed Board of Regents will host the inaugural Thomas Aquinas at Sherwood Golf Tournament next spring, on Monday, May 22, 2006 at the prestigious Sherwood Country Club in Thousand Oaks, California.

Dedicated to fostering and promoting the good of the College, members of the Board of Regents have taken the initiative to organize this inaugural tournament in order to attract interest in and support for the College from members of the local community. Says Regent, Jim Scanlon, "Though Thomas Aquinas College is well-known in many places across the country, it is for many in Southern California still a well-kept secret. We hope this golf tournament will raise awareness of this nationally-recognized, unique Catholic college, devoted to advancing genuine Catholic liberal education."

David Young, Chairman of the Board of Regents and member of the College's Board of

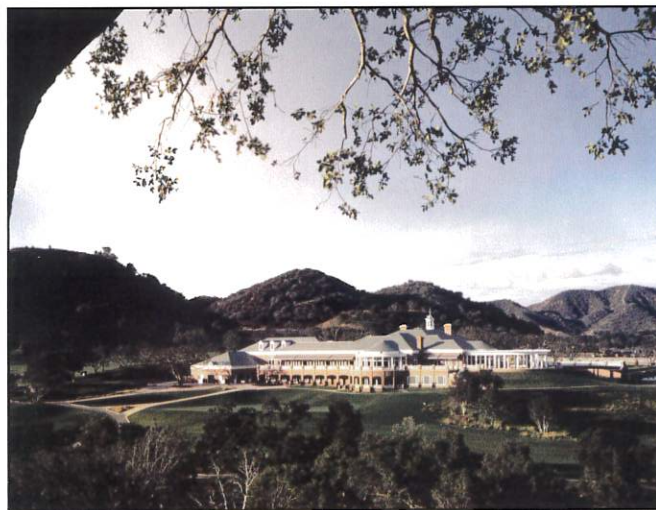
Governors, echoes Scanlon's remarks saying, "More and more, Thomas Aquinas College is recognized by Southern Californians as one of the most academically challenging and thoroughly orthodox institutions of higher learning in the country. This

golf tournament will celebrate the College's achievements during its 34 years of existence and provide support for its mission of educating young people in the best traditions of our Catholic and Western heritage."

Sherwood is one of the top courses in California and boasts one of the country's best layouts. Designed by famed architect and

golf pro Jack Nicklaus, it is considered one of the most spectacular, tournament-friendly sites for both players and spectators.

Thirty-six foursomes are planned for the Tournament next spring. Cost will be \$1,000 per player, or \$4,000 per foursome. Please contact Jim Scanlon at 818/316-0999 for further information.



Sherwood Country Club, Thousand Oaks, California

## IN MEMORIAM

**Mr. Eugene Keating**..... April 5, 2005  
Father of Eugene ('91), Eileen Douglass ('93), and Paul ('98)

**Mrs. Elizabeth Coughlin** .....April 16, 2005  
Mother of tutor Glen Coughlin ('81) and grandmother of Bernadette ('05) and Mary ('07)

**Mr. Edward Joseph O'Reilly** .....May 30, 2005  
Father of Paul ('84), David ('87), and Shane ('95)

**Timothy Montanaro** .....June 6, 2005  
Son of Andy ('78) and Cindy (Six) Montanaro ('77)

**Mrs. Sandy Young** .....July 7, 2005  
Mother of David P. Young, member of the Board of Governors

**Mr. John E. Schaeffer**.....July 21, 2005  
Father of Martha Long ('76), Anne Forsyth ('81), Mary Richard ('82), Joan Waxstein ('85), Laura Langley ('89), and first member of the Board of Governors



## An Interview with Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.

The son of former U.S. Secretary of State John Foster Dulles, and a convert to the Catholic faith, Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J., is the only American-born theologian ever to be elevated to the rank of cardinal in the Catholic Church without being a Bishop. He holds the Laurence J. McGinley Chair in Religion and Society at Fordham University, and is an advisor to the Committee on Doctrine of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops and a past member of the International Theological Commission.

An internationally known author and lecturer, Cardinal Dulles has published over 22 books and 750 articles on topics such as the Catholic Church's teaching on hell and capital punishment. His most recent book, about Venerable John Henry Cardinal Newman and simply titled *Newman*, was published by Continuum Press in 2002.

In his long academic career, he has held many distinguished academic positions, including professor of theology at The Catholic University of America, and visiting appointments at the Gregorian University in Rome, Princeton Theological Seminary, Oxford University, and the North American College at Louvain.

He has also received numerous awards, among them Phi Beta Kappa, the Croix de Guerre, the Cardinal Spellman Award for distinguished achievement in theology, the Cardinal Gibbons Award from The Catholic University of America, the John Carroll Society Medal, and 28 honorary doctorates.

Following Commencement on May 14, 2005, Cardinal Dulles graciously agreed to be interviewed by Director of College Relations, Mrs. Anne Forsyth. Below are excerpts from that interview.

### Q: What is the work of a Catholic theologian?

The Catholic theologian's work is something that is done within the Faith. One can do



philosophy outside of faith; one can do lots of good things outside of faith. But, at least as we understand theology, it is done within faith. If it is Christian theology, it has to be done within Christian faith. If it is Catholic theology, it has to be done within Catholic faith, which means that one accepts the creeds and doctrines of the Church, with the doctrinal force that the Church gives to them. Certain things are subjects for discussion, certain things are not; there are articles of the Creed, dogmas of the Church — these are matters that are settled and not to be contested within the Catholic faith.

The first requisite for being a Catholic theologian, then, is that you have the Catholic faith. If you do not, you had better do something about it — that is, if you want to become a Catholic theologian. If you are outside the Catholic Church, you cannot do Catholic theology.

Having said that, I would describe the theologian as the one who tries to fit it all together, to see what the full picture is, to see the balance and harmony of all the elements in the Catholic faith, and to contemplate them. It makes up a very beautiful picture when you see the truths of the Catholic faith in harmony and their relation to the essential dogmas, like the Trinity, the Incarnation, the Redemption, and so forth. In the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, one finds a very beautiful synthesis of Catholic doctrine.

The theologian works in an area where he is constantly in dialogue with other theologians in the present and in the past. Whenever a question arises, I want to know what the Scriptures say about this, what the Doctors of the Church say about this, what the *Magisterium* says, and I rely very heavily on St. Thomas Aquinas. If he's written about the topic, I'm not going to pass him by. I'm going to look at him very, very carefully, and generally agree with him.

So, in summary, one could say that a Catholic theologian is one who contemplates the harmony and the unity and intelligibility of the Faith that has been revealed to us. I think that's why I was bitten by the theological bug already as an undergraduate in college.

### Q: What are the pitfalls for a theologian, and how does one avoid them?

Well, they are all over the place, like a minefield, I suppose. I think that when attempting to explain the Faith to contemporaries in our own culture the primary danger is twofold: first, one can attempt — and fail — to explain a point in theology by too-rigidly adhering to technical terminology of an earlier age that is not understood by people of today; or, the opposite of this, one can become so contemporary that one distorts the faith or dilutes it in order to explain it.

One can always make something seem more intelligible if one empties out

the mysteries. But the truth is that the great mysteries of the Faith are not things that can be easily explained. The mystery of the Incarnation, for example, and all the doctrines of the Faith are very mysterious. In trying to explain them, as the theologian tries to do, the danger is to oversimplify them, or make them sound too contemporary. That's perhaps the principal danger.

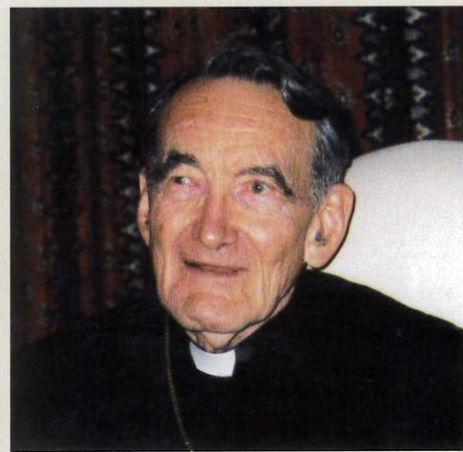
### Q: Could you say a little more about the importance of precise terminology when doing theology?

These days we are playing very fast and loose with terminology. Technical terminology is as necessary in theology as it is in other sciences. You would expect a mathematician or a physicist to use technical terminology to explain the principles of indeterminacy or the principles of relativity. One must, at a certain point, use technical terms.

The technical terms in theology have been hammered out with great care after centuries of discussion, and to do away with those and make it all simple is really a very dangerous operation. There is a danger of injuring the Faith itself.

People have to learn technical terms if they're going to make progress in understanding these deep mysteries. They don't have to be theologians; one can be a pious Catholic without being a theologian. But if one wants to be a theologian, one must understand how the Church uses terms like *person*, *substance*, *nature*, *subsistence*, and so forth. One has to know philosophy. One must read Plato and Aristotle before reading St. Thomas.

### Q: How are you, as a theologian related to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF)?



I don't have, as a theologian, a formal relationship to the CDF.

It's there, of course, and they occasionally put out declarations and warnings and things like that to tell us about prevalent errors that we must guard against, which are very salutary warnings. But, by and large, I'm not tempted to embrace the errors that they point out.

So, I have a very harmonious relationship with the CDF. So far as I know, my writings have never been *delated* to them. (*Delated* — that's a technical term for reporting errors.) Often people read the work of a theologian and they will write to Rome and say, "This error is in this book. Will you please do something about it?" If the CDF receives serious and multiple complaints, then it will conduct an investigation. That is generally the way they proceed. They don't initiate much, but they react when people send in complaints.

I think the CDF is more passive than is widely understood. I've never seen them go after somebody, except after that person has been widely denounced, and then they have to investigate. It is their duty to say "Is this a departure from the Catholic faith?" If so, they have an obligation to say, "This may not be said within the Catholic Church; it is contrary to Catholic doctrine." They may have to say that, but they always investigate for a while before they say that. They invite people over to Rome, and they invite them to respond by letter, and so forth. And sometimes people get cleared.

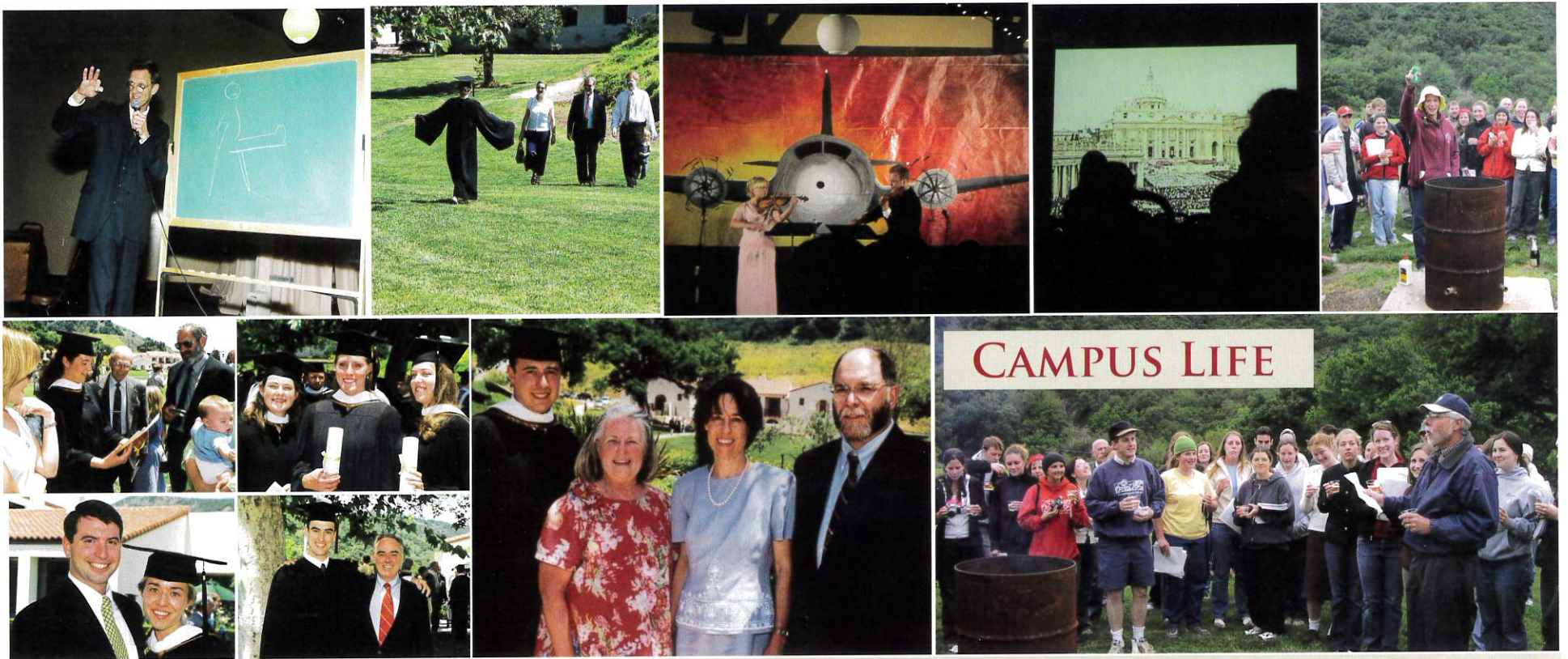
Occasionally, the CDF will consult me on works of other theologians, asking, "Well, you see these complaints — what do you think about them?" So, I might have to write them a letter and say that, as a matter of fact, I think this or that is off-base; or else I'll read the book and can't find anything wrong in it.

### Q: You indicated earlier that you had a tendency towards theology even as a young man, before you entered the Catholic Church. Would you say that you were a convert like the subject of your latest book, *Cardinal Newman* — that you came to the faith through your intelligence?

Yes, I would say so. That had everything to do with my coming into the Church. I really read my way into the Church. As I mentioned, even before I was a Catholic, I was fascinated with theology. I did my senior thesis on a lay theologian from the Renaissance, and I got very interested in theological questions. So I've been blessed to have spent my life in this work. I'm also a teacher, and I do a certain amount of writing and speaking and so forth and it's all part of my work as a theologian, as St. Thomas speaks of '*contemplata aliis tradere*.' And so you transmit to others what you have yourself contemplated. And that's what I'm trying to do in my writing and in my teaching.







## CAMPUS LIFE

TOP ROW, left to right: Dir. of Gift Planning Tom Susanka uses "high tech media" to illustrate his annual comic presentation to the graduates; grad Mary Robinson runs to greet her parents and brother; Teichert siblings Mary ('08) and Jonathon ('06) perform at the Spring Dance with "Casablanca" theme; students watch Pappal funeral on big-screen in the Commons; Senior Rosieanna Kretschmer burns her thesis draft in celebration. MIDDLE ROW, left to right: Jessica Hoskinson admires her diploma; Beau Braden ('00) and fiancée Maria-Theresia Waldstein ('05); friends Julie Lyons, Cecilia Scheetz and Evelyn Gardett; André Fox and his proud father; three generations of College graduates: Johnathon Almeida ('05), his grandmother, Cheryl Docktor ('78), his parents, Tracy (Smith) Almeida ('82) and Joseph Almeida ('81); Dean Michael McLean enthralled the seniors as he recited an original poem of appreciation for the graduates at the annual (thesis) Draft burning party. BOTTOM ROW: Gilbert & Sullivan's *The Mikado* came to life in an extravagantly costumed production by the College choir and orchestra, under the direction of Daniel J. Grimm.



## The Charitable Gift Annuity...

THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE  
*California*



For an irrevocable gift of cash or stocks, the College provides a fixed and guaranteed yearly income for you and your spouse, or for one or two other beneficiaries.

- ◆ Rate of return increases with age. Examples:
  - 60 years old, 5.7%
  - 90 years old, 11.3%
- ◆ Tax benefits:
  - An immediate income tax charitable deduction
  - Part of your income is tax free for many years
  - Applicable estate taxes reduced or eliminated
  - Lower capital gains taxes if gift is appreciated stocks
- ◆ Payments may be annual, semi-annual, or quarterly
- ◆ \$10,000 minimum gift
- ◆ Beneficiaries must be at least 60 years old to receive payments

A Thomas Aquinas College Gift Annuity is part gift, part investment. When the last beneficiary passes away, the remainder of your donation will help educate young men and women to live, love, and defend their Catholic faith.

*A gift of lifetime security for you and for Thomas Aquinas College*

Learn more about the Charitable Gift Annuity

- Contact Tom Susanka, Director of Gift Planning at 800-634-9797 or at [tsusanka@thomasaquinas.edu](mailto:tsusanka@thomasaquinas.edu)
- Or visit our website at [thomasaquinas.edu](http://thomasaquinas.edu)

## Calendar of Events

Freshman Orientation Begins  
August 19

Convocation Day  
August 22

Opening Lecture:  
Dr. Ronald P. McArthur  
August 26

Friday Night Lecture:  
Dr. Robert Barry, Providence College  
September 16

All-College Seminar  
September 30

Columbus Day  
No Classes  
October 10

Friday Night Lecture:  
Dr. John Alvis, University of Dallas  
October 21

Board of Governors' Retreat  
October 28 - 30

805/525-4417  
[www.thomasaquinas.edu](http://www.thomasaquinas.edu)

Nonprofit  
US Postage  
PAID  
Oxnard, CA  
Permit 556

THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE  
10000 North Ojai Road  
Santa Paula, CA 93060-9622

Address Service Requested

