



# THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

## SUMMER 2006

VOLUME 34, ISSUE 3

### Apostolic Nuncio Presides at 32<sup>nd</sup> Commencement Archbishop Migliore Awarded College's Highest Honor

On Saturday, May 13, 2006, members of Thomas Aquinas College's class of 2006 were granted the degree of bachelor of arts in liberal arts in recognition of their successful completion of the College's rigorous program of Catholic liberal education. Hailing from across the United States and abroad, 78 young men and women received their diplomas from the presiding prelate and Commencement speaker, His Excellency Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations. This was the largest graduating class in the College's 35-year history.

In his commencement address, Archbishop Migliore spoke about the proper pride the graduates should take in the work that God has brought to completion in them. Commenting on the breadth of their studies at the College, he went on to say, "In your study of physics, you most likely came across that famous quote by Archimedes: 'Give me a lever long enough and a place to stand, and I can move the earth.' Our world, our society desperately needs a jolt. Thomas Aquinas College strives to give its students 'the lever long enough,' in the form of the highest level of education. In addition, you have the most



Archbishop Celestino Migliore, a native of Cuneo, Italy, has served in the Holy See's diplomatic missions in Angola, Egypt, and Poland. Since 2002, he has served as Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer to the United Nations.

important element, 'the place to stand' to use that lever....Now, it is up to you to make good use of that lever." (See article below for complete text.)

Earlier in the morning, Archbishop Migliore was the principal celebrant of the Baccalaureate Mass. In his homily, the Apostolic Nuncio urged the graduating seniors to live the words of the Gospel—literally: "One time, live the word that speaks of justice, another time a word that

speaks of forgiveness, another one that expresses communion with our brothers and sisters, and yet another word that speaks of prayer. Threading together our experiences and knowledge of these words...we are clothed with the Word of God..." (See page 4 for complete text.)

In recognition of Archbishop Migliore's extraordinary dedication to God and His Church, and by resolution of the Governors of the College, Chairman of the Board, Mrs. Maria Grant, awarded him the College's highest honor, the St. Thomas Aquinas Medallion, during the commencement ceremony. Past recipients include Cardinal Arinze, Cardinal Schönborn, Cardinal Dulles, Cardinal Stafford, and Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

Reflecting on the Apostolic Nuncio's visit, President Dillon said, "Since being ordained to the priesthood in 1977, Archbishop Migliore has faithfully served the Church as a member of the Vatican Diplomatic Corps. It was, therefore, an honor to have with us one who for nearly all of his priestly life has been at the forefront of the Church's mission to advance Christ and His teachings among the nations of men."

*Continued on pg. 4*

### "A Lever Long Enough . . . and a Place to Stand" Commencement Address of Archbishop Celestino Migliore

Dr. Dillon, President of Thomas Aquinas College; Mrs. Maria Grant, Chairman of the Board of Governors; Reverend Fathers, faculty, graduates, students, and friends: It is a great privilege for me to be here to address the graduating class of 2006. I am honored to receive the St. Thomas Aquinas Medallion from such a prestigious college known for its excellence in education and in preparing individuals for a life of the mind, of action, and spirituality.

#### Proper Pride

My dear graduates, you, your parents, and your tutors ought to be proud of all you have accomplished during your scholastic career. Some of you may be surprised that a bishop is telling you to be proud. As you know from your good Catholic education, pride leads the list of the seven deadly sins.

Nevertheless, there is a certain kind of pride that is legitimate, even useful and necessary. We can call it by another name, for example, self-respect, or the ability to recognize the good things that we

are capable of accomplishing. It is the pride that we find in the Parable of the Talents, where those

**"I am honored to receive the St. Thomas Aquinas Medallion from such a prestigious College known for its excellence in education and in preparing individuals for a life of the mind, of action, and spirituality."**

entrusted with the talents were able to invest them and earn another ten or five. It is the specific pride of a Catholic college like yours. Today I would like to invite you to reflect upon how you can justly be proud of your faith and of your ability to make a positive contribution to society as citizens of the United States and of this world.

#### Called to Be a Diplomat

Ask your indulgence as I speak a bit of my personal experience. I would like to share with you my first-hand knowledge of this particular pride. Dr. Dillon introduced me as the representative of the Pope at the United Nations in New York. You may think this is something I chose to do or that I may have had an inclination towards this type of work, but nothing could be further from the truth.

I come from a family with no experience or tradition in diplomacy; therefore, I had no idea what this work entailed. I was born and raised in the northern region of Italy, in a town called Cuneo. While you may not be familiar with the name, most of you heard a lot about Torino as it was the site of the Winter Olympics. Well, that's my region.

When I was a boy I had many friends who were altar boys, and we would spend a lot of time together. There I knew a priest whom I admired very much because he was a wise man and had the ability of using his gifts for the service of others. This priest knew a lot about many things and was a man who was accessible to his people 24/7. His character, his wisdom, his availability to serve the poorest of the poor fascinated me, and I said to myself that I wanted to be like him. I did not yet know at the time what it meant to be a priest, but

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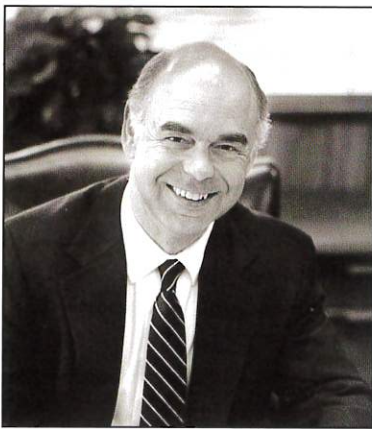


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# From the Desk of the President

## Farewell to the Class of 2006, President's Dinner



It is my distinct privilege tonight to be able to congratulate you, the Class of 2006, on behalf of the entire faculty and staff, for having formally completed the College's academic program.

In these past four years, you have put your minds upon very difficult matters, from the *Elements* to the *Principia*, from the *Organon* to the *Metaphysics*, from the *Confessions* to the *Summa*. You have made a good beginning in what should be a life-long pursuit of wisdom, having honed your intellects, cultivated your judgment, and refined your moral sensibilities. You are indeed to be commended for your perseverance and for your achievement.

You should be grateful to all those who have made your education here possible, including your tutors, your parents, and the College's benefactors. And you should give special thanks to God for an opportunity that very few have—four years set apart from the cares of the world to develop your minds and pursue the truth.

### **A Light to a World Stumbling into Darkness**

You are now leaving the peaceful campus of Thomas Aquinas College with a rare and precious gift—a true Catholic liberal education, wherein your reason has been elevated and illumined by your faith. Accordingly, you also have a great responsibility not to hide your light under a bushel, as Our Lord says, but rather to bring that light to a world stumbling more and more into darkness.

When Frank Shakespeare, the former American Ambassador, was here for Presidents' Day, he pointed out to me in our dinner conversation that we are living in epochal times. Why? All around the globe there are great and unpredictable shifts and changes taking place, changes that may mean that the world will look entirely different even in a very short 50 years from now. In Africa, a struggle for the soul of that continent is taking place between Christianity and Islam. In Russia, though it has now seen the fall of Communism, the replacement rate of the Slavic people is nevertheless in steep decline, while the increase in the Muslim birthrate there is the highest in the world.

Even in our own country, there is increasing polarization among our citizens about our future direction as a nation, with deep division as to whether we ought to live up to the principles of our founding and whether we should be shaped by our Judeo-Christian heritage.

Most significant of all, however, may be the situation in Europe, where, for example, Spain and Italy have the lowest birthrates in the world, followed closely by the native population of France—despite the fact that these three countries were once bastions of Christianity. For over 1,000 years Europe has been both the center of Christianity and the exporter of Western civilization worldwide. Now, however, we see throughout Europe an explicit repudiation of its Christian patrimony and a disdain for the good to be found in the bearing and raising of children. A strong case can be made that Christian Europe is dying, and with it the nurturing source of Western civilization, even as Islam, at least by way of demographics if nothing else, is on the rise.

### **Seek Out Lives of Sacrifice**

Now what does all this mean for you? In my view, it means that you cannot bury the treasure you have been bequeathed here, but you must be both emissaries for what is good in Western civilization—particularly the good of right reason as a guide to action—and you must

be missionaries for our Catholic faith, missionaries first here at home, where the Faith must be built up even as our beloved Church is assailed both from within and without. You cannot be content with lives of comfort; you must seek out lives of sacrifice. All of us are challenged to serve Christ daily, and the challenges for you in the coming decades will be tremendous.

Now, I don't want to paint too bleak a picture. For one thing, we know that the Holy Spirit will always be with us, and we know that in the long-run the gates of Hell will not prevail against the Church. Nevertheless, I do think that we are truly living in epochal times, that the Church is more despised worldwide now than it has ever been in my lifetime, and that the cult of materialism and self-gratification threatens us on one side, as does fanaticism in the name of religion on the other. Clearly, there is the need—and the opportunity—for a new evangelization. Given what God has provided you with here, you cannot stand on the sidelines and watch—you must do your part in bringing Christ to a needy world.

### **Ventures of Faith**

The readings for Mass just today are particularly instructive. In today's Gospel, Our Lord says the following:

*I came into the world as a light, so that everyone who believes in me might not rest in darkness...I did not come to condemn the world but to save the world...The Father who sent me commanded me what to say and speak, and I know that His commandment is eternal life. (John 12: 46-50)*

In short, in today's Gospel Christ tells us Himself that He comes into the world to be its light and to bring eternal life.

**Given what God has provided you with here, you cannot stand on the sidelines and watch—you must do your part in bringing Christ to a needy world.**

Now consider the first reading from today's Mass, which is taken from the Acts of the Apostles. The first line is "The word of God continued to spread and grow." How did this happen? From the text of today's reading, we see that, guided by the Holy Spirit, the first Christians took the initiative to travel about and courageously proclaim the word of God. Moreover, before they went on their missions, they "fasted and prayed" and "worshipped the Lord."

As it turns out, those early Christians were also living in epochal times. They, too, had no sense of what exactly the future would bring, but they were willing to "put out into the deep," to make, what Cardinal Newman calls, in a slightly different context, "ventures" of faith, without knowing whether their immediate endeavors would succeed or fail.

So, too, let me urge you to make "ventures of faith" to do what you can to bring Christ to a darkening world, without worrying whether any particular venture will succeed or fail in the short-run. As Newman also makes clear, such ventures, to be genuine, always entail risk and sacrifice, but this is precisely what demonstrates a real commitment of faith.

Remember, too, that the early Christians did not rely wholly upon themselves, but looked for guidance from the Holy Spirit and prayed and fasted to that end.

### **Expressions of Hope**

As you may know, I have recently returned from a trip to Europe where I was able, in an extremely brief conversation with Pope Benedict, to obtain his blessing on our chapel project. My wife and I also had dinner in Vienna with our friend Cardinal Schönborn, the editor of *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, as well as dinner

in Rome with Fr. Giertych, the Dominican priest who has been newly appointed as the theologian of the papal household, where we talked about the importance of the thought of St. Thomas for the Church. We also had extended visits with, among others, Cardinal Arinze, Cardinal Grocholewski, and Cardinal Martino, all prefects of important Vatican congregations, and an hour's visit with Cardinal Szoka, the president of the Vatican State.

What was very edifying to me was that no matter with whom we visited, we found great respect for Thomas Aquinas College and heartfelt expressions of hope in you and in what you can contribute toward the good of the Church.

### **Keep Your Thoughts and Aspirations High**

Now, as you know, the best way to evangelize and bring Christ to others is to exemplify Christ in our own lives. It is especially by tending to our interior lives, by advancing in personal virtue and faithfulness, that we can best bear witness to Our Lord.

Your class quote from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians presents very practical counsel for this interior development of soul:

*Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. (Phil. 4:8)*

You are so right to want to keep your thoughts and aspirations high to keep yourselves focused on what is pure, just, honorable, and true. In fact, there is additional inspiring advice to be found elsewhere in St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians. In verse 27 of Chapter 1 we read, "Let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ," and verses 3-8 of Chapter 2 advise the following:

*Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves, which was in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.*

### **Especially Humility**

Now in order to help you acquire the humility of which St. Paul speaks, allow me to offer you one more piece of advice, which I offer to graduating seniors every year—that you make the prayer after Communion of St. Thomas Aquinas your own. In that prayer, he says of the Holy Eucharist, "May this sacrament perfect me in charity and patience, in humility and obedience, and in all other virtues."

This fits so well with what we have just seen in the Letter to the Philippians, and it is my hope that these four explicitly-named virtues—charity, patience, obedience, and especially humility—will be the distinguishing marks of graduates of Thomas Aquinas College and that you will always keep in mind that what you have achieved here is not wholly your own doing, but is very much a gift from God.

Lastly, may I ask you, as you take your places in the larger world, to please remember your *alma mater* in your prayers, that we always remain faithful to Our Lord and do His will, as best we can. I promise to pray, in turn, that God will bless you all, that He will keep you in His grace, and that He will guide you on your way.

May He be with you always.



# The Pope's Man at the U.N.

## An Interview with Archbishop Celestino Migliore

Since being ordained in 1977, his Excellency, the Most Reverend Celestino Migliore, has been a member of the Vatican Diplomatic Corps. During the past 25 years, he has served in the Holy See's missions in Angola, Egypt, and Poland, and has represented the Holy See in various European capitals.

In 2002, Pope John Paul II appointed Archbishop Migliore as Apostolic Nuncio and Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations (U.N.), where he is the voice of the Church. He brings Her teachings to bear on matters such as international trafficking in persons, population control and family life, and immigration and asylum.

Thomas Aquinas College is most grateful to Archbishop Migliore for taking time out of his busy schedule to preside over the College's 2006 Commencement ceremonies and for graciously agreeing to be interviewed by Director of College Relations Mrs. Anne Forsyth.

**Q: One hears the terms "Vatican" and "Holy See" often used interchangeably. But there are differences between the two. Would you please distinguish the two for us?**

**A:** In 1929, the Vatican State was created by an agreement between the Holy See and the Kingdom of Italy. A decision was made to establish Vatican City in order to assure the Pope a basis for his absolute independence and autonomy from any earthly power. The Vatican is intended to ensure independence for the action of the Holy See, thanks to a territorial sovereignty reduced to its minimal expression. However, it is the Holy See that is the juridical interlocutor within the international community. The Holy See is the Pope, together with all the bodies of the Roman Curia through which he governs the Catholic Church. The Holy See is a sovereign juridical person because it is the supreme organ of the Catholic Church. Its attribute as a sovereign subject is recognized in international law.

**Q: How does one become a member of the Holy See's diplomatic service?**

**A:** Generally it comes about through the Secretariat of State that contacts bishops of various dioceses, bearing in mind the needs of the representations in different continents and countries of the world. The bishops, in turn, propose a suitable candidate for this service. These candidates are then interviewed and trained at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy in Rome where they share a communal life and study.

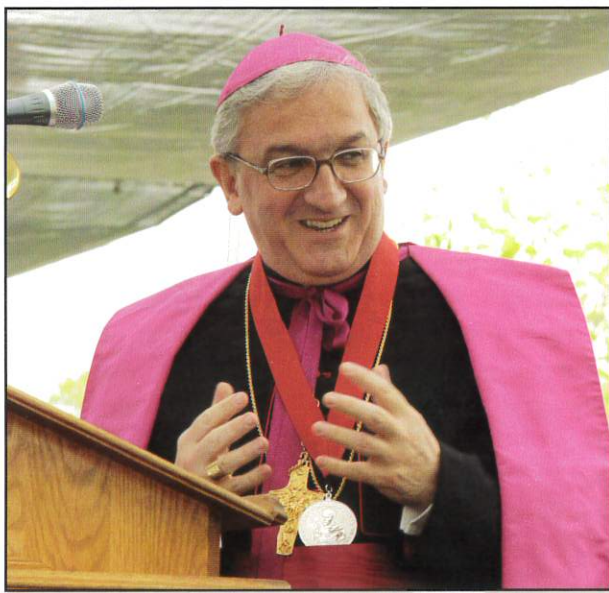
**Q: For a number of years you were a visiting professor at the Pontifical Lateran University in Rome, teaching ecclesiastical diplomacy. What kinds of classes have you taught there and what kind of training does one receive in preparation for diplomatic work in the service of the Church?**

**A:** For more than 300 years, the Holy See has had its own diplomatic institute at the Pontifical Ecclesiastical Academy, where formation of future "diplomatic agents" of the Holy See study for a minimum of two years.

These candidates enter after having been ordained priests. Therefore, all of them already possess a degree in theology. Many also possess another degree in various disciplines, specifically in Canon Law.

The academic curriculum consists of two years of specialized studies: ecclesiastical diplomacy, international law, monographs on international organizations and on techniques of negotiations; the history of ecclesiastical diplomacy, diplomatic styles, courses on great modern cultural and theological strains; and economic and social questions.

At the same time, they take courses in information technology and languages. Each student, at the end of the curriculum, has to possess



By resolution of the College's Board of Governors, Archbishop Migliore was awarded the College's highest honor, the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion for his years of service to the Church in the Holy See's Diplomatic Corps

a working knowledge of at least two languages in addition to his mother tongue. The major languages studied are: English, French, Spanish, and German, and increasingly, Arabic and the languages of Eastern Europe and Asia.

**Q: Is your rank as Apostolic Nuncio equivalent to that of an Ambassador?**

**A:** Correct. This equivalence is found in Art. 14 of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations. There it states that the heads of diplomatic missions are the ambassadors or nuncios accredited to Heads of State.

**"The diplomacy of the Holy See... always sides with people, not with a given parliament or particular administration."**

**Q: Why does the Holy See have "permanent observer" status at the United Nations rather than "full member" status? What are the privileges and/or disadvantages of "permanent observer" status?**

**A:** Having the status of a Permanent Observer at the U.N., the Holy See has the right to speak, to take the floor, to participate in shaping the consensus through negotiation. The Permanent Observer does not have the right to vote—which is proper to Member States—nor do we have the right to bring forward candidates for various positions. But we do have the right to speak—and this, in and of itself, is important. Inevitably, voting and full membership would entail direct participation in questions of a political nature, or in military and economic issues which go beyond its objectives.

**Q: What are the primary concerns of the Holy See with respect to international relations?**

**A:** The diplomacy of the Holy See involves some basic values. I believe that this diplomacy has its own specific characteristics. First, it has a moral aspect, which means we are always mindful that we are called to promote the moral and ethical aspects of issues. Second, it is a diplomacy of unity. It has no natural boundaries because it is universal and concerns all peoples of the world. Third, it has a humanitarian perspective, that is, it is a diplomacy which always sides with people, not with a given parliament or particular administration.

**Q: How does the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See make its voice heard at the U.N.?**

**A:** I would like to categorize the activity of the Holy See at the U.N. on three levels.

First, it makes contributions to the international debate on current issues: development, peace, security, eradication of poverty, access to education and health, rights of the children, women's issues, right to life, and religious rights. Through democratic debate, we have an opportunity to shed the light of Catholic social thought—recently summarized in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*—on these issues.

Second, the Holy See contributes to the building of a consensus. As an Observer, the Holy See is admitted to negotiations on resolutions, declarations, conventions, treaties. This is an important facet of the Holy See's activity, because conventions and treaties, once adopted, form international law. Besides, international treaties now tend to regulate not only the reciprocal obligations between states, but they deal more and more with rights of the individuals (rights of the child, women's rights, right to life, religious rights).

Furthermore, resolutions, declarations, and plans of action, though they belong to the so-called "soft law" with a merely advisory value, are extremely important. Nowadays, national parliaments, when legislating, keep an eye on the international soft law. Scholars, non-governmental organizations, and national courts do the same. In view of the impact of international law and its influence on domestic policies, we are convinced that we, too, can promote our views on relevant social, civil, cultural, and developmental issues through our contribution to the negotiations within the U.N.

Third, the Holy See gives voice to those who have no voice. This is perhaps a poetic way to phrase it. But I would like to point out that this is the most challenging, interesting, sometimes difficult, but always gratifying side of my daily activity. I am referring to dioceses, associations, religious congregations, and individuals who turn to us, confident that we can help them to meet with and present to the right offices and persons their views and requests, which are usually humanitarian in nature. And I have to say that our interlocutors always give much attention and oftentimes operative consideration to the issues we present to them.

Please Reserve Saturday, September 30, 2006

Thomas Aquinas College  
35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration

5:00 p.m. Mass • 6:00 p.m. Cocktails • 7:00 p.m. Dinner

The Regent Beverly Wilshire Hotel • Beverly Hills, California

For information call Mrs. Patti Harmonson 805/525-4417 ext. 329

# “Clothed With the Word of God”

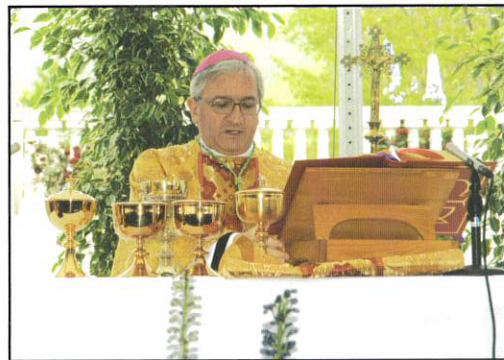
## Baccalaureate Mass Homily of Archbishop Celestino Migliore

A month ago, we celebrated the solemn Easter Vigil. That night we read the creation account from the Book of Genesis and we heard how at the very beginning of the world, “...The earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss...and the Spirit of God swept over the water...” (Genesis 1:2) God was searching for a place to set His glance, a place in which He could infuse His life-giving Spirit.

With respect to creation, in our day, the Spirit does not blow from the skies but wells forth from human hearts, in each one of us, who make up many temples in whom He takes up residence.

The Spirit of Life interiorizes the Word of God in the heart of man, making him capable of living the Word of God in complete freedom. In and with the Spirit of Life, we creatively transplant the will of God intimately in every person whom we encounter. This is the service that we render to our society and to all people who come in contact with us.

Many people think that wisdom comes automatically with a Ph.D. diploma. The essential Ph.D. is when the “P” stands for purity, the “H” for humility, and the “D” for devotion. According to the Gospel, purity means having a transparent mind and heart, a transparency that allows us to see God, to acknowledge the



presence of God in our neighbor and in the events of our life. It means having a clear vision of what really matters in our lives. Humility means being able to make the right decision. And devotion means not simply going to church from time to time, lighting a candle, and saying a prayer, but rather, it means conforming our will to the will of Christ.

### Clothed with the Word of God

How does one come to do all these things? By living, literally, all the words that Jesus has left us in the Gospel. If every day or every week we live one word—even just one word from Mass on Sunday—we will put on His word. One time we will live the word that speaks of justice, another time a word that speaks of forgiveness, another that expresses communion with our brothers and sisters, and yet another word that speaks of prayer. Threading together our experiences and knowledge of these words we create an outfit—we are clothed with the Word of God. Our mind, our thoughts, our affections, our will is conformed to that of Christ.

In Italy, children frequently dress like harlequins to celebrate carnival. The harlequin figure is carefree and happy because his outfit is made from patches of colored material that sewn

together become attractive, cheerful, and colorful. A Christian, on the other hand, wears different clothing made of different textiles. By regularly concentrating on living a word of the Gospel, putting on the mind of Jesus, His affections, and His will—all these in turn form the Christian outfit.

If we pull together in our community our knowledge and our experiences of the Word of God with others, we create a piece of society that thinks, lives, and loves like Jesus. A modern-day mystic once said: ‘Even if a hypothetical fire were to burn all the Bibles and Gospels that exist in this world, we should be capable of rewriting the Gospel verbatim by looking at the life of the Christian community.’

### Making the Word Part of Our Culture

God has given us His Word to live by and to make it part of our culture. Living the Word of Jesus leads us to liberate social and civil institutions, the rules of human living, academic learning, mass media information; it liberates us from human trappings and egoism, and renders us more like Christ; it moves us toward freedom and toward His transparent love. Christianity is not a private lifestyle choice. Christian living and Christian

values have public benefits and consequences, and people who are serious about their faith generally seek to live it out in appropriate ways in every part of their lives.

Today, May 13, marks the 89<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Fatima. It was on May 13, 1917, that Our Lady appeared to three barely-literate Portuguese children while they were tending a small flock of sheep. She made them precious and docile instruments to call humanity to conversion during a time ravaged by war and hatred.

Mary, the Mother of Jesus, chose what was weak—three illiterate children—to confound and change the hearts of the powerful and strong. In the Spirit, and with the Spirit of Life, those three children creatively transplanted the will of God intimately in their own lives and in every person whom they encountered. This is the service that they rendered to our society and to all people they came in contact with.

This is the service to humanity that Our Lady is proposing to each one of us today at Thomas Aquinas College.

As we continue on our journey with the Holy Spirit at our side, let us make a concerted effort to collaborate with Him to transform the world.

## 32<sup>nd</sup> Commencement, *continued from pg. 1*

The class of 2006 elected as its speaker, Thomas Waldstein of Gaming, Austria whose father, Michael ('77), had received the same honor 29 years before. When Thomas took the podium, he addressed the 1200 assembled guests in eloquent terms, reflecting first on the heights attainable by human wisdom and the necessity for doing well the work of the lower arts and sciences because they are, in turn, ordered to theology. “In his Incarnation,” he said, “Our Lord has revealed to us truth far surpassing the natural power of human reason. This is the wisdom that we have sought in these past four years.”

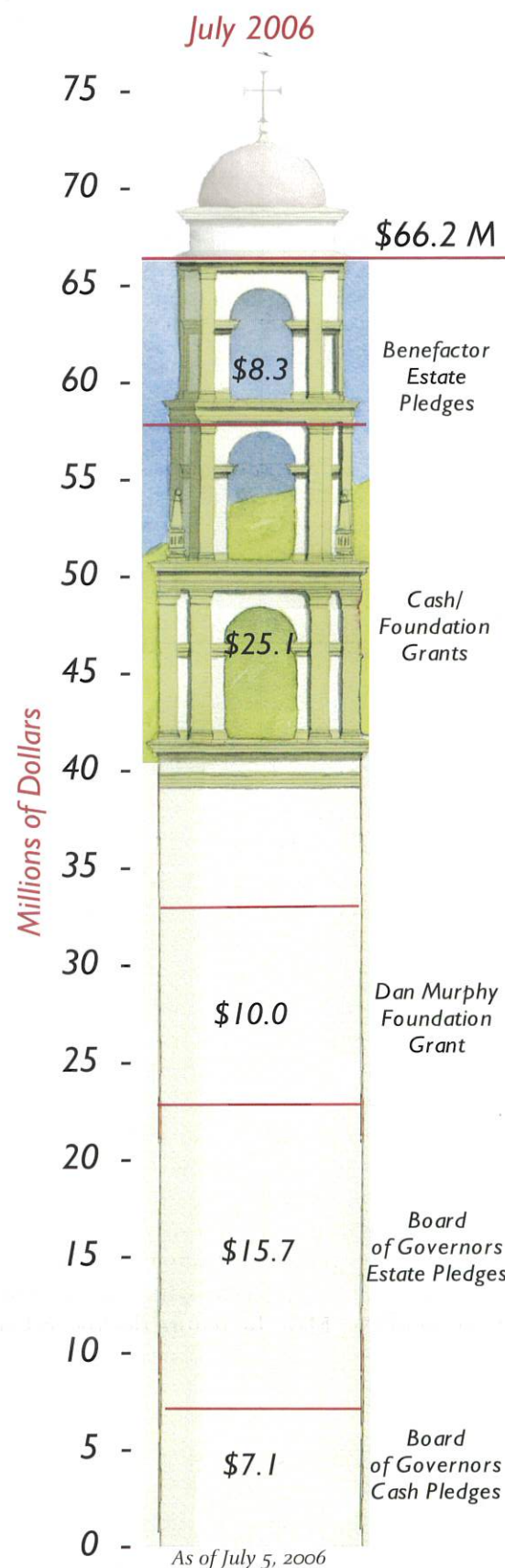
He encouraged his fellow classmates to continue to seek the truth whether it be in their graduate studies, work, family or parish. Exhorting them to follow St. Thomas’ example of humility, he said, “In whatever state of life we enter, let us pour out our lives in love of neighbor for the love of God that our lives may be united to the sacrifice

of Christ, an acceptable offering to the Lord.” (See page 5 for complete text.)

Mr. Waldstein will enter a Cistercian seminary in his native Austria to study and prepare for the priesthood. He is one of six in the Class of 2006 who will enter seminaries both in the United States and abroad; and one young lady will enter the religious life. Still others will pursue advanced degrees in law, medicine, nursing, journalism, education, philosophy, and theology at institutions such as Northwestern, Princeton, Purdue, the University of Notre Dame, and the University of Chicago.

As though in response to Archbishop Migliore’s urging that they take pride in what God had accomplished in them, the Class of 2006 rose at the end of the ceremony to sing the stirring hymn they had prepared, a hymn that has been sung by graduating seniors at the College’s 31 previous commencement ceremonies: *Non Nobis Domine*, “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to your name give the glory.”

# Campaign Update



## IN MEMORIAM

Dr. William Parnassus  
April 10, 2006  
Brother of Msgr. George J. Parnassus

Mr. Ralph E. Klink  
May 2, 2006  
Benefactor

Mrs. Anna Mae Garceau  
May 7, 2006  
Mother of Rev. Hildebrand J. Garceau, O.Praem. ('78)

Mrs. Mary Catherine Thein  
May 10, 2006  
Mother of Mathew J. Thein ('00)

Mr. Robert A. Riccomini  
May 14, 2006  
Brother-in-law of tutor Thomas J. Kaiser ('75)

Mr. Todd Ocker  
May 23, 2006  
Former employee

Mrs. Helen P. Kelly  
June 5, 2006  
Mother of Rev. Brendan Kelly ('85)  
and tutor Brian Kelly ('88)

Mrs. Margaret M. Karcher  
June 6, 2006  
Wife of Carl N. Karcher,  
emeritus member of the Board of  
Governors and member of the  
Order of St. Albert the Great

Marie Rose Guadalupe Cain  
June 28, 2006  
Infant daughter of tutor Steve Cain

# Wisdom: Human and Divine

## Address by Senior Speaker, Mr. Thomas Waldstein

In this great season of Easter, as our Holy Mother the Church exults in the Resurrection of the Lord, the whole of nature seems to reflect her joy. The splendid California hills, shadowed in a cool mist, blossom with abundant life. They are covered with flowers, among which innumerable insects buzz, the birds sing, and the trees rustle in gentle breezes. All these creatures give a constant illustration of the teaching of the Philosopher [Aristotle] that the most natural of all desires is to participate in the eternal and divine. All the works of natural things are for the sake of this end.

### A Divine Spark

While all other creatures follow this desire blindly, living and bringing forth others like themselves in obedience to it, man only is capable of knowing what he does. Reason, like a divine spark, enables man to reach for what is eternal.

Precisely because of this higher participation in the eternal, man is paradoxically the only animal who really has time. The brutes, as Nietzsche has written, are unhistorical; they live entirely in the moment. Man's immortal soul is the form of a mortal body, and thus his mind is stretched out and distended in time. This distention in time of a thing that shares in the eternal enables man alone of the creatures of this world to have destiny and tragedy. It is beautiful but it is also sad. *"Sunt lacrimae rerum et mentem mortalia tangunt."* "Tears awaken tears, and honor, honor brings, and mortal hearts are touched by mortal things," Aeneas cried out. All of our human life is marked by mortality in the desire for the eternal.

My dear classmates, as we look back on the four years which we have spent here, the great joy of our accomplishment is inevitably touched by a gentle sadness over this time which has passed to return no more. Man by nature desires to know since knowledge is a participation in the eternal. But even his pursuit of eternal truth is marked by mortality.

### The Real Question

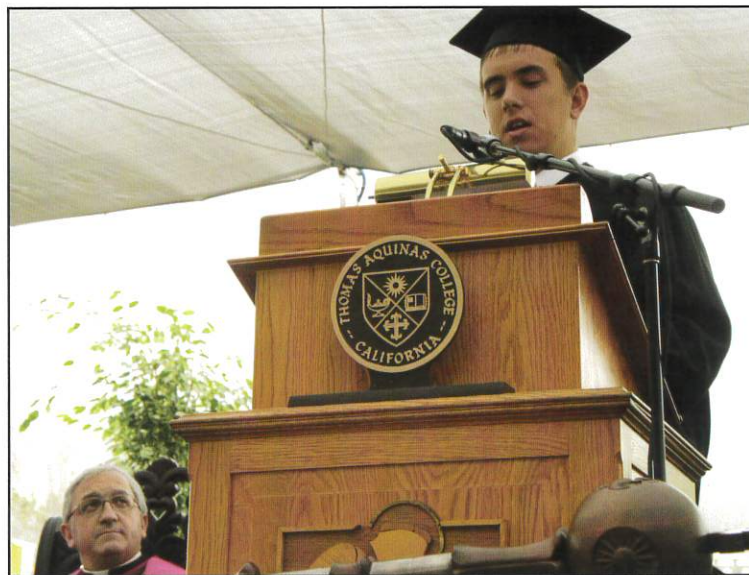
What a strange creature man is. When we arrived here four years ago to find the education fitting to the free man, we were filled with the wonder of our own existence, and we desired to obey the injunction of the Delphic Sybil, "Know thyself." Perhaps we shared something of the adolescent goofiness of Kipling's hero when he said to himself, "Kim, Kim, Kim....Kim?"

Now four years have passed, and we have spent them seeking knowledge from the works of the greatest philosophers of the past. With those philosophers we have looked at the strange creature, man. We have seen that his mind is a *tabula rasa*, a blank slate. It can only become actual by union with intelligible form, which it can only come to through the senses of its mortal body. This mind ardently desires to attain the first cause of being. All of its knowledge is a union between it and the Being from whom all other beings partake being. This is why we say knowledge is desirable for its own sake because it is a participation in the divine itself.

Man's mind cannot rest in the knowledge of participated beings but always looks beyond them, to seek their cause in itself. The real question for man is, thus, not the question implied by the command of the oracle, "Who am I?" but rather the question so beautifully expressed by our patron, St. Thomas, in his first recorded words when he was a little child at Monte Casino, "Who is God?" It is this knowledge that we have primarily sought here.



The Commencement program opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, led by Henry Teichert of Oak View, California.



Senior Speaker Thomas Waldstein, a second-generation graduate from Gaming, Austria, addresses the audience of more than one thousand as Archbishop Migliore looks on. Thomas' father Michael ('77) was also Senior Speaker in the 1977 ceremony.

### The Limits of Human Wisdom

Man's unaided reason can attain in some measure to knowledge of God through His effects. While this is the most wonderful natural knowledge and worthy of the name wisdom, it cannot satisfy our minds completely. For in it we do not behold God's essence as it is in itself but only in so far as it causes effects which always fall short of it; thus our knowledge always falls short.

Plotinus described well our predicament: *That alone, simple, single, and pure, from which all depends and to which all look and are and live and think (for it is cause of life and mind and being)—if anyone sees it, what passion will he feel, what longing in his desire to be united with it, what a shock of delight....But how shall we find the way? What method can we devise? How can one see the inconceivable beauty which stays within the holy sanctuary and does not come out where the profane may see it?*

We cannot fully attain what we glimpse through created effects.

We are like the souls which Virgil described on the shores of the River Acheron, *"Stabant orantes primi transmittere cursum tendebantque manus ripae ulterioris amore."* "They stood pleading to be the first ferry to cross with hands outstretched in desire, in stretched desire for the farther shore." But who can ferry us across? In vain we stretch out our hands. At this point human wisdom can take us no further.

### The Riches of Divine Wisdom

But in our years here we did not study human wisdom primarily, for all our studies were ordered to sacred theology, the wisdom which springs from Revelation. We used human wisdom as a tool to gaze together at the astonishing surprise which is the Christian faith. "For love does not consist in this that we have loved God but that God has loved us and has sent us his Son as expiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10) The God whom we desperately seek has come to seek us. The inconceivable beauty has come out of the sanctuary. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. The eternal God has taken on our mortal flesh, and by doing so He has transformed it.

In this Easter season, the Church celebrates in a special way the death and Resurrection of Our Lord. By his death and Resurrection, He has broken for us the bonds of sin and death. Our mortal life is transformed into the seed of an immortal life to come. Christ has become our ferryman so that in His boat, the

Church, we can cross over to an eternal life of the vision of God's essence. To strengthen us for the journey, He has given us Himself as our food so that already, before we reach the final goal, we may become part of His mystical body and live from His abundant life.

In his Incarnation, Our Lord has revealed to us truths far surpassing the natural power of human reason. This is the wisdom we have sought in these past four years. Human wisdom we have sought, also, because it is good in itself, but mostly because it is helpful for learning divine wisdom.

We have made a good beginning. We have studied from the works of the greatest masters of human and divine wisdom and we have been guided in our study by men and women who have given their lives to understanding the works of those masters. In making a beginning in this wisdom we have also started on what is the true way of following the injunction of the Delphic Sybil, for as the Second Vatican Council has taught, Christ, the new Adam, in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of His love, fully reveals man to himself and brings to light his most high calling.

### Gratitude for a Great Gift

What we have been given in these four years is a great gift and, therefore, it is fitting that we give thanks. We give thanks to our parents and benefactors who have by their hard work and devotion enabled us to receive this gift. What you have given us we cannot repay. May God reward you.

We thank the benefactors of the College, the Board of Governors, the administrators and staff of the College who enable it to thrive. May God continue to bless your wonderful work.

We thank our tutors who have guided us in our pursuit of truth. You have performed for us the office of true friends. May we one day be reunited.

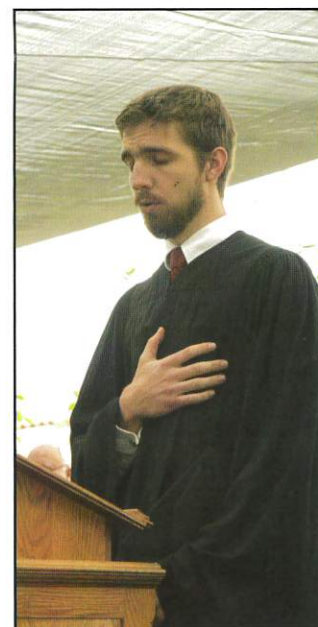
We thank our chaplains who fed us with the Bread of eternal salvation. You have been true fathers to us. May the work you have done bear fruit in eternal life.

We thank especially His Excellency Archbishop Migliore, who has found time to come to our Commencement. Your Excellency's presence here is a sign of our union with the apostolic Church and thus a pledge of our union with the will of Christ. Thank you for the encouragement which you give us.

### Wisdom with Humility

From those to whom much has been given, much will be expected. We who have been given such a good beginning in the pursuit of wisdom must spend the rest of our lives continuing this pursuit. Wherever we find ourselves, whether in another school or at work or in the family or in the monastery or parish, we must seek wisdom.

Like our patron, St. Thomas, let us seek wisdom with humility. We who follow the doctrine of the Angelic Doctor, let us follow also his example. St. Thomas looked for the truth wherever he could find it, even in the writings of Averroes and



Daniel Lendman of Modesto, California led the singing of the National Anthem.

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# The Class of 2006 and Senior Theses



*God and Evil: The Paradox of Hell and the Infinite Good*

**PAUL BRYAN ASPER**  
Front Royal, Virginia



*Swift's Critique of Houyhnhnmland*

**JUSTIN ROBERT BLUM**  
Dallas, Texas



*Henry IV: The Seesaw of Virtue and Vice*

**CLAYTON I. BROCKMAN**  
Lakewood, California

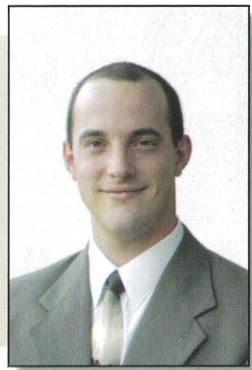
*A Defense of Aristotelian Place with a View to Newton and Modern Cosmology*

**NICHOLAS A. BUCHER**  
Dallas, Texas



*The Created Image: An Investigation of God in Marriage through an Understanding of Man's Body*

**JOHN JOSEPH BULCHER**  
Necedah, Wisconsin



*A Defense of the Principles of American Democracy*

**RYAN MICHAEL BURKE**  
St. Louis, Missouri



*Friendship among States*

**ZHIMEI LILLIAN CAO**  
Shanghai, China



*An Exposition of the Composition Attributed to the Person of Christ after the Incarnation*

**KAROLYN J. CAUGHRON**  
Kansas City, Missouri



*Beselehel Redivus: How Artifacts Are Known*

**ROY AXEL COATS**  
Martinez, California

*Kepler's New Astronomy and the Nature of Modern Science*

**CALEB MURRAY COHOE**  
Burgessville, Ontario, Canada



*Newton and Einstein on Place: A Critique*

**KATHRYN E. COOPER**  
Yucca Valley, California



*On Craftsmanship*

**JOHN M. CUNNINGHAM**  
Poway, California



*Faith and Obedience*

**MATTHEW G. CURRY**  
Shawnee, Kansas



*A Mathematical-Metaphysical Treatise on the Limit*

**JESSICA JANE CURTIN**  
Stanley, New Mexico



*The Epic Life of Dorothea Brooke: An Experiment in Form*

**LAURA C. DEFURIO**  
Tampa, Florida

*An Exposition of the Holiness and Saving Power of the Name of Jesus*

**ELISABETH L. DROGIN**  
Irving, Texas



*Natural Right and Natural Law, or, Do Men Have Rights?*

**AARON MARK DUNKEL**  
Tracy, California



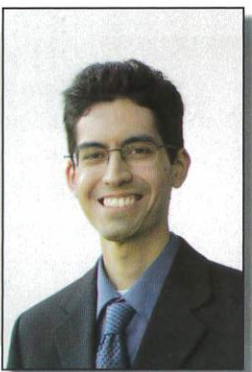
*King Lear and the Earl of Gloucester: Paternal Love and Selfishness in King Lear*

**BRIENA LEE DUNKEL**  
Tracy, California



*Free Will and Necessity: The Apparent Inconsistency between the Narrative and Epilogue of Tolstoy's War and Peace*

**RACHAEL A. ERRAMOUSPE**  
Shoshoni, Wyoming



*Proclaim That Mercy Is the Greatest Attribute of God*

**PHILLIP L. ESCANDON**  
Lake Forest, California



*The Elegant Structure of the Heavens: A Critique of Newtonian Mechanics*

**JOEL HURT FEIL**  
Atlanta, Georgia

# The Class of 2006 and Senior Theses



*The Holy Spirit: The Soul of the Living Church*

**VERONICA FERRI**  
Pembroke, Ontario, Canada



*Sharper Than a Serpent's Tooth: Filial Impiety in King Lear*

**ROSE D. FERRIER**  
Santa Paula, California



*"Let Him Deny Himself and Take Up His Cross:" On Christian Suffering*

**REBECCA T. FREER**  
Adelaide, South Australia

*Reflection on The Brothers Karamazov concerning How the Suffering of Innocents Is Reconciled with the Notion of a Loving God*

**MARGARET J. GORDON**  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin



*An Exposition of Rational Sensation*

**DANIEL F. GRIMM**  
Ojai, California



*A Critique of Hobbes' Sovereign according to the Political Works of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas*

**MICHAEL JOSEPH GRIMM**  
San Dimas, California



*To Err Is Human: An Inquiry into the Role of Forgiveness in Friendship*

**JACLYN INEZ HAGON**  
Santa Barbara, California



*Pascal vs. Aquinas: A Question of Method for Christian Apologetics in Modern Times*

**ROSE MARY HALPIN**  
Chesterson, Indiana



*Out of the Mouths of Babes: An Investigation of the Rationality of the Child through Language and Language Development*

**JOHANNA HASSINK**  
Tulsa, Oklahoma

*An Examination of Descartes' Method for Finding a Tangent to Any Curve As Compared to Leibniz's Calculus*

**JOHN HEILMAN III**  
Overland Park, Kansas



*The Order of Fine Art and Poetry to Knowledge*

**IAN MICHAEL HONG**  
Tucson, Arizona



*On the Central Idea of Prayer Being an Ascent of the Mind*

**JOSEPH JIN HSIEH**  
Dallas, Texas



*My Brother's Keeper: On the Moral Duties of a Catholic Citizen in a Republic*

**KATHERINE JOHNSON**  
Glen Ellyn, Illinois



*Understanding Aristotle's Account of the Relationship of the Household to the State*

**CATHERINE E. JOLIAT**  
Waterbury, Connecticut



*On the Generation of Animals*

**NICHOLAS W. KAISER**  
Ojai, California

*"My God, My God, Why Hast Thou Forsaken Me:" How Christ in His Cry of Abandonment Teaches Man the Way to Perfect Charity*

**JOSEPH PATRICK KENNEY**  
Columbus Township, Minnesota



*Ivan Karamazov: Dostoevsky's Expression of Human Suffering and Redemption*

**STEPHEN B. KLASKE**  
St. Charles, Illinois



*The Compatibility of Catholicism and Agrarianism: A Comparison of Agrarianism and Smithian Industrialism*

**EMMA JO CLARE KUMMER**  
St. Helens, Oregon



*The Theology of The Ascent of Mount Carmel*

**ANDREW M. LANG**  
Maple Grove, Minnesota



*John Locke: An Essay concerning His Understanding*

**KATHLEEN L. LAWLOR**  
Mequon, Wisconsin



*Whether There is a Monastic Theology*

**DANIEL LENDMAN**  
Modesto, California

# The Class of 2006 and Senior Theses



*Ave Maria, Ave Mater:  
Mary, Mother  
of the Angels*  
**BRIDGET ANN McBRYAN**  
Glenside, Pennsylvania



*"A Pleasing Odor  
to the Lord"*  
**SAMANTHA J. McCALL**  
Centerville, Ohio



*The Contribution of  
Women to Society: Both  
Useful and Noble*  
**BRIDGET M. McCARTHY**  
Ojai, California

*Examining the Participle,  
or, Why This Title Is Not a  
Complete Sentence*  
**INGRID K. MITCHELL**  
Minard Lispole,  
County Kerry, Ireland



*Fairy Stories:  
The Manly Thing to Read*  
**JOEL BURTON MOORE**  
Bakersfield, California



*The Inclination toward  
Sin: Man's Further  
Punishment after the Fall*  
**BERNADETTE V. MOREY**  
Mercer Island, Washington



*Modernism:  
The Synthesis  
of All Heresies*  
**DANA M. MORGAN**  
Fallbrook, California

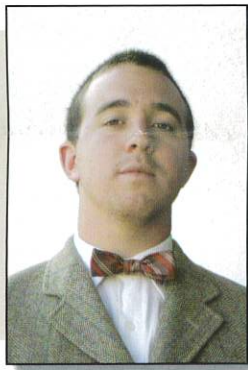


*The Possibility of  
Friendship between Those  
Here on Earth  
and the Saints in Heaven*  
**GREGORY F. MORTENSEN**  
Boise, Idaho



*An Examination of  
Anna Karenina in  
Terms of Poetic and  
Scientific Knowledge*  
**MONICA M. MURPHY**  
Powell River,  
British Columbia

*A Metaphysical Inquiry  
into the Nature of the  
Human Soul*  
**ANDREW C. NORTON**  
Huron, Ohio



*In Virtue of What Is Man's  
Love of God Called Love*  
**CLAIRE E. POWERS**  
Springfield, Virginia



*Cut My Life into Pieces;  
This Is My Last Resort:  
A Consideration of Blame  
and Suicide*  
**JULIA SUZANNE RAIA**  
Huntington Beach, California



*Happiness in Unity:  
An Argument for the  
Necessity of the Body in the  
Final Happiness of Man*  
**VERONICA ANNE RIOUX**  
Lewiston, Maine



*Quaerens Intellectum  
Fidei: Seeking  
Understanding of Faith*  
**ASHLEY N. ROBINSON**  
Turlock, California



*"Ad Te Videndum  
Factus Sum": Love  
and Knowledge in the  
Beatific Vision*  
**EMILY LAW ROWNEY**  
Mariposa, California

*The Worth of Passion:  
A Defense  
of Poetic Heroines*  
**CHARLOTTE R. RUDD**  
Chattanooga, Tennessee



*Hospitality:  
Invitation to Happiness*  
**CATHERINE S. RYLAND**  
Steubenville, Ohio



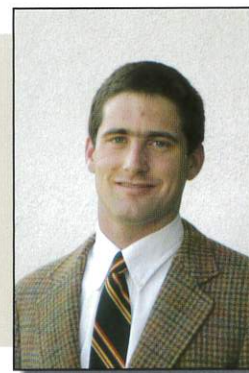
*Live in the World,  
but Not of the World*  
**BRENNA M. SCANLON**  
Camarillo, California



*Where Do Aristotle and  
Newton Stand?  
An Examination into  
Aristotelian and  
Newtonian Place*  
**JOSEPH T. SCHROEDER**  
Temple Terrace, Florida



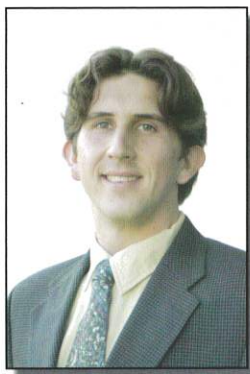
*Beati Estis: Aristotle  
and St. Thomas  
Aquinas on Happiness*  
**PATRICK J. SEO,**  
Englewood Cliffs,  
New Jersey



*Torture: An  
Application of  
Aquinas' Theory of  
Punishment*  
**THOMAS A. SHORT**  
Ojai, California



## The Class of 2006 and Senior Theses



*To Die for What: An Investigation into What the Good Is for Which Man Ought to Give His Life*  
**STEPHEN A. SIX JR.**  
 Northford, Connecticut



*Don Quixote and Sancho Panza: An Aristolelian Friendship of the Unqualified Good*  
**KATHLEEN M. SULLIVAN**  
 Manchester, New Hampshire



*The Establishment Clause, the Supreme Court, and Judicial Chaos*  
**HENRY E. TEICHERT**  
 Oak View, California

*The Road to God: What Is Humility, and Why Is It Important*  
**JONATHAN D. TEICHERT**  
 OAK VIEW, CALIFORNIA



*To Be in the World, and Not of the World: A Scriptural and Philosophical Analysis*  
**JONATHAN G. TONKOWICH**  
 Falls Church, Virginia



*The Fittingness of Mary's Status: Virgin, Mother and Wife*  
**ELIZABETH ANN TROJACK**  
 St. Paul, Minnesota



*Work out Your Own Salvation with Fear and Trembling: Man and Coming to Salvation*  
**JOHN F. TRUJILLO**  
 Oakton, Virginia

*Calculus and the Mind of God*  
**DONAL E. TURRENTINE**  
 Fairfax, California



*Unity, Order and Peace: On the Superiority of Traditional Hereditary Monarchy over Modern Liberal Democracy*  
**THOMAS P. WALDSTEIN**  
 Gaming, Austria

*A Defense of God's Poetry as a Means of Helping Us to Know and Love Him*  
**CHELSEA C. WEBB**  
 Cleveland Heights, Ohio



*Whether It Can Be Just to Turn the Other Cheek*  
**ELIJAH CAMERON WHITE**  
 Nairobi, Kenya



*On The Expression of the Nature of Man*  
**CARL JOSEPH WIESNER**  
 Napa, California



*The Origin, Nature and Proper Use of Money, Stuff, and Things*  
**MATTHEW JOSEPH WISE**  
 Seattle, Washington



*To Each His Due: Honor and Cultus Sanctorum*  
**ANTONIA ANN YAKLIN**  
 Bellevue, Iowa



*A Reconciliation of St. Thomas Aquinas and René Descartes*  
**HENRY T. ZEPEDA**  
 Alhambra, California

### Senior Address

*Continued from pg. 5*

Avecinna. Let us not allow the fact that we have been formed in St. Thomas' intellectual custom lead us to ignore the truth when it is expressed in other ways. For thus we would not be true followers of St. Thomas. We must be open.

Let us not fall, however, into a false openness which holds all opinions equal. We must be servants of the truth and witnesses of it to others. The truth is not given as a private possession to be hoarded or used as an instrument of pride, but a great common good to be shared in gentleness and love. If we can lead others to this great good, we must do so with gentleness and humility, not with overbearing arrogance or contempt.

We have studied the revelation of Christ. We must live by it. "If you remain in my word," our Lord tells us, "then you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth and the truth will set you free." (John 8:31-32) "This is my commandment,

that you love one another as I have loved you." (John 15:12)

Dear classmates, let us not be sluggish in following the Lord, but in whatever state of life we enter, let us pour our lives out in love of our neighbor for the love of God that our lives may be united to the sacrifice of Christ, an acceptable offering to the Lord.

My friends, the time has come for us to go our ways. Let us put out into the deep with eagerness and joy. These flowering hills, these singing birds point to the One who has already won our victory for us, Christ Jesus, who has risen to die no more. All we have to do is unite ourselves to Him with all our energy and gifts as He brings His work to perfection. If there is sadness in our parting, it is a pledge that we shall be reunited again at His wedding feast. Let us call on our Blessed Mother to help us on our way. Today is her feast as Our Lady of Fatima. Let us entrust ourselves to her Immaculate Heart that we might serve her Divine

Son with purity and love. *Sub tuum praesidium confugimus Sancta Dei Genetrix.*



Michael Waldstein, father of this year's Senior Class Speaker, was, like his son, chosen to speak at his own graduation from Thomas Aquinas College in 1977. He went on to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard divinity School and is the founding president of the International Theological Institute in Gaming, Austria.

## Commencement Address

Continued from pg. 3

I wanted to be like that pastor who put himself at the service of all. With this in mind, I entered the seminary, began my studies and gradually learned what it meant to be a priest. At times I was discouraged because I thought it was impossible to realize, but the desire to emulate that model of priesthood always sustained me.

Shortly after my ordination, my bishop called me and told me that I was being sent to Rome to begin specialized studies for the diplomatic representations of the Holy See around the world. I thought it was a bad dream. I knew nothing of this kind of work. In fact, it seemed totally contrary to my ideals. I was afraid that it was bureaucratic work, office work, in which I would not be able to do any good for anyone.

My immediate response was that I was unable to accept. But the bishop insisted saying, 'Look at the Gospel: Peter was a fisherman; he never attended school—he only knew how to fish—and yet, he began to follow Jesus. Eventually at a certain point, Peter, who always lived in Palestine and spoke only Aramaic, got into a boat and went to Rome which was the capital of the world at the time. In Rome he met many people. He spoke frequently to the first Christian community and had to learn Latin since that was the language of the Romans. From a man who barely knew his own geography of Galilee and the skill of fishing, Jesus made him a man capable of confronting life in the capital of the world. Matthew, likewise, was a tax collector. He knew how to add and to collect other people's taxes. Nothing more. He decided to follow Jesus and became a writer whom we admire to this day, two thousand years later, whenever we read the Gospel according to Matthew.'

With that, I accepted my bishop's invitation, having faith in his words, and I never regretted having said yes.

Earlier I spoke of a just pride. Well, I feel proud, not of myself, but of Him who has called me, of Him who proposed things far beyond what I was able to accept; of Him whom I once accepted and who has followed me, has given me perseverance, tenacity, the willingness to go forward, and the courage to start again after difficulties.

This is the difference a Catholic college ought to make: that is, to offer a diploma of the highest academic standards, and to offer the ways and means to obtain the highest level of personal—human and spiritual—and social achievement.

### "A Lever Long Enough"

In your study of physics you most likely came across that famous quote by Archimedes: "Give me a lever long enough and a place to stand and I can move the earth." Our world, our society desperately needs a jolt. Any successful Catholic college, such as Thomas Aquinas College, from which you are graduating today, strives to give its students "the lever long enough," in the form of the highest level of education. In addition, you have been given the most important element, "the place to stand" to use that lever, that is, your personal, communal, and ecclesial relationship with God.



Each year, graduates are called to the podium one by one and given the academic hood by the Dean of the College. As each one is hooded, President Dillon signs his or her diploma and passes it to the presiding prelate to bestow on the graduate.

Now, it's up to you to make good use of that lever, and to treasure the transcendent place to stand, which I hope will be for you a source of personal and social creativity. That is one thought I would like to leave with you graduates this day.

### The Natural Law Must Take Precedence

There is a second message. When speaking of diplomacy, of the work that I do, one often thinks of hypocrisy. Indeed, diplomacy is a word full of meaning. The popular notion is that which comes from Machiavelli when he said: "Diplomacy is the art of getting what you want at any cost and by any means." How can the Holy See accept this concept of diplomacy, this vision of things?

My time in the diplomatic service has taught me that what changes the world is not might, but the truth. The truth is not simply reporting facts and verifying the accuracy of words and figures without distortion; rather, it is a natural law that cannot contradict itself and which takes precedence over the laws of any state and deliberations of international institutions.

**Be proud of Thomas Aquinas College where you learned to walk side by side with God in your life.... Remember the virtues imparted by your Catholic education here.**

The Catholic Church is convinced that real democracy cannot be based simply upon the majority opinion of any given moment in time. A viable democracy recognizes the authority it has comes from a set of universally accepted principles upon which every political society is founded. These principles can be found in the national constitutions and in the great international declarations—which merge together in recognizing natural law, a healthy philosophical and religious spirit, and the principles and experiences that have established a national community. For this reason, the subsequent laws voted upon by a particular majority must always be in accord with fundamental, objective values. These values, once acknowledged as true, may be updated and expressed in contemporary ways, but never abrogated.

### In Truth, Peace

At the start of this year, Pope Benedict XVI addressed Catholics and all women and men of good will, inviting them to unite their efforts in reflection, cooperation, dialogue, and prayer to overcome terrorism and build a just and peaceful coexistence in the human family. In his message for World Day of Peace, entitled *In Truth, Peace*, the Pope expressed "the conviction that wherever and whenever men and women are enlightened by the splendor of truth, they naturally set out on the path of peace."

In particular, Pope Benedict spoke of two trends that are very fashionable today: nihilism and fundamentalism. These two trends "share an erroneous relationship to truth: the nihilist denies the very existence of truth, while the fundamentalist claims to be able to impose it by force. Despite their different origins and cultural backgrounds, both show a dangerous contempt for human beings and human life, and ultimately for God Himself. Indeed, this shared tragic outcome results from a distortion of the full truth about God: nihilism denies God's existence and His provident presence in history, while fanatical fundamentalism disfigures His loving and merciful countenance, replacing Him with idols made in its own image."

In view of those risks, "all Catholics in every part of the world have a duty ... to show that acknowledgment of the full truth of God is the first, indispensable condition for consolidating the truth of peace. God is Love which saves, a loving Father who wants to see His children look upon one another as brothers and sisters, working responsibly to place their various talents at the service of the common good of the human family....History has amply demonstrated that declaring war on God in order to eradicate Him from human hearts only leads a fearful and impoverished humanity toward decisions which are ultimately futile. This realization must impel believers in Christ to become convincing witnesses of the God who is inseparably truth and love, placing themselves at the service of peace in broad cooperation with other Christians, the followers of other religions and with all men and women of good will."

### Be Proud of God

Today's ceremony at which degrees will be conferred suggests an ending, an end of a long period of intense study. And yet, ironically, this ceremony is called a "commencement." This word comes from the Latin which means "a beginning," "a start."

Today you are going to start or begin a new chapter in your lives. And so, dear graduates, as you pursue your studies or begin your respective professional lives, be proud of Thomas Aquinas College where you learned to walk side by side with God in your life; be proud of God who at any time can make of you a new creation, a new being. Remember the values and virtues imparted by your Catholic education here at Thomas Aquinas College and seek to use your voice as a means of spreading truth and love.

## A Parting Gift

### Class of 2006 Chooses Monstrance for Class Gift

In keeping with a custom established in the early years of the College, this year's graduates presented the College with a Class Gift at the President's Dinner, a farewell event held each year in the week leading up to Commencement. After holding various fundraisers throughout the year, the Class of 2006 chose to make a gift that will benefit the entire College community for years to come: an exquisite monstrance for use at daily Adoration and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, and at processions on feastdays such as *Corpus Christi*.

The monstrance was created for the California company, *Veritas Polska*, by Polish artisans

committed to making sacred vessels that are traditional and timeless works of art.

With a golden luster, the vessel is set with gemstones and stands 27 inches tall. The *luna*—the center-piece that will hold the consecrated host—is fittingly rimmed with gold and surrounded by a magnificent sunburst. Featured also around the *luna* are silver medallions of the Holy Spirit, the four Evangelists, the Lamb of God, and the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

The College is most grateful to the Class of 2006 for its generous gift and looks forward to the day when it will take its place on the altar in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel.



Senior Jaclyn Hagon presents the 2006 Class Gift to President Dillon at the President's Dinner.

# Answering God's Call

## Spring Ordinations Bring Number of Alumni Priests to 42

This past spring, Joseph Lee ('00) and John Paul Erickson ('02) were ordained to the priesthood, bringing the total number of Thomas Aquinas College alumni priests to 42. Though the backgrounds of these two young men were quite different, they share a bond in having attended Thomas Aquinas College, an experience integral to the discernment of their vocations.

Born in Portland, Oregon, the son of Korean immigrants, Joseph Lee attended Jesuit High School there. Though his older brother attended Thomas Aquinas College, Joseph believed his own life would take a different course. "I really thought I'd be going to the University of Portland and get into pre-med or computer science," he remembers. "But a visit to the Thomas Aquinas College campus altered those plans. In the Commons, I saw all these young people coming out of the chapel. No one was putting on airs about it, but I could feel this piety coming from their hearts. It made a big impression on me."

One of the most important events in Joseph's life was meeting the late Rev. John Hardon, S.J. A renowned catechist, spiritual director, and retreat master, Fr. Hardon had been a long-time friend of Thomas Aquinas College, its Commencement Speaker in 1981, a recipient of the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion, and the man most instrumental in arranging Blessed Mother Teresa's visit to Thomas Aquinas College in 1982.

Joseph encountered this most extraordinary priest at the Santa Teresita retreat center in Duarte, California. He was immediately struck by Fr. Hardon's holiness and deep spirituality as they discussed St. Ignatius' spiritual exercises, now an integral part of Joseph's spiritual life. Not long after, when Fr. Hardon visited the College to give a talk on writing and spirituality, he sought Joseph out and, as the young man tells it, "kind of dragged me by the ears" toward a deeper understanding of God's call for him.

After graduating from the College in 2000, Joseph entered the Seminary of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Peter, a Society of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right founded with the approval of Pope John Paul II in 1988. The Fraternity is dedicated to the formation and sanctification of priests through the use of



Fr. Joseph Lee gives one of many "First Blessings."

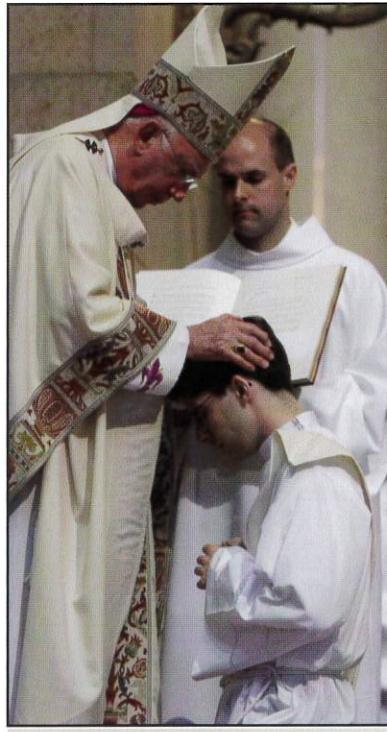
the traditional liturgy of the Roman Rite, and dedicated to the laity through its work in parishes. With numerous fellow graduates of the College in attendance, Fr. Lee was ordained a priest of the Fraternity on Saturday, June 3. His first assignment is at the St. Rose Philippine Duchesne Latin Mass Community in Kansas City, Kansas.

Though Fr. John Paul Erickson's background differed in both geography and culture from that of Fr. Lee, he nevertheless found himself at the same destination—the altar of God. Born and raised in St. Paul, Minnesota, John Paul, as his name reveals, is a member of what is sometimes called "the Pope John Paul II generation." The second youngest of six children, he attributes the quickening of his faith to the strong Catholic identity of his high school, St. Agnes in St. Paul.

As strong and deep as his faith was, John Paul prized his freedom too much to seriously entertain the thought that he might have a vocation to the priesthood. When he came to the College, however, he began to see the priesthood in a new light. "My time at Thomas Aquinas College," he recalls, "showed me that yes, the priesthood is a life of sacrifice, but it is also a life in which faith is lived so vibrantly and so totally that it can be a great source of satisfaction and joy."

Fr. Erickson was ordained on May 27<sup>th</sup> for the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, joining Fr. Mark Moriarty ('95) as the second Thomas Aquinas College alumnus to serve that archdiocese as a priest. His first assignment is as parochial vicar of the Cathedral of St. Paul.

In reflecting on his experience at the College, Fr. Erickson says, "My time at Thomas Aquinas College was deeply important for my formation, both as a Catholic and as a future priest. Above all, I am thankful for the tangible Catholic identity of the College, which gave me a profound appreciation for my faith and the glorious culture it has given rise to over the millennia. May God continue to bless the College with the graces it needs to persevere in its vocation, an inestimably important one."



John Paul Erickson kneels to receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

Photo by Dave Hrbacek, The Catholic Spirit

# Capstone of the Senior Year

## The Senior Thesis

Within the pages of this issue of the Thomas Aquinas College newsletter individual photographs of this year's graduating class are featured along with the titles of each graduate's Senior Thesis. Undertakings such as *A Reconciliation of St. Thomas and Rene Descartes* and *A Defense of Aristotelian Place with a View to Newton and Modern Cosmology* represent a culmination of four years of arduous and serious study. With guidance from the faculty, the graduating seniors of 2006 have produced theses demonstrating their ability to fashion logical, sound, and worthwhile academic inquiries.

Dealing with a topic that arises from a consideration of ideas presented in the "great books" that make up the curriculum, the Senior Thesis includes a 20 to 30-page paper on a topic of the student's choosing as well as a 30-minute oral defense of the same. Dean Mike McLean considers the Senior Thesis "... the capstone of a student's four years at the College and a test of our students' abilities to engage in a deeper way, with the help of an advisor, an issue of the sort they encounter every day in class."

The process initiates at the beginning of the school year with the proposal of the thesis topic due in September. At that time, each senior chooses a faculty member as an advisor who will draw the student's attention to the proper order of the inquiry and the principles that bear on its subject matter. Though the faculty advisor is there for guidance and assistance, in the end the thesis must be the work of the student and no one else.

The thesis itself is viewed more as an extension of class work rather than a wholly new kind of academic endeavor. It is a kind of "grand finale" to the writing program of the three previous years, and whether the title of the thesis is *Modernism: The Synthesis of All Heresies*, or *Examining the Participle*, or *Why This Title Is Not a Complete Sentence*, the topics examined grow organically from all parts of the College curriculum and its integrated nature. Thus, topics run the gamut of the disciplines—from mathematics to poetry and philosophy to theology.

Understandably, the Senior Thesis Defense looms large in the life of upper classmen at the College. Nevertheless, Dean McLean counsels seniors in dread at the prospect of having their work gone over with a fine toothed comb not to think of it in dire terms. "I try to encourage seniors to think of the defense not as a defense in strict terms," he explains, "but rather as a conversation about a matter that they have thought about for some time. Consequently, they should know the topic even better than their tutors do."

With various interim deadlines along the way, seniors at last turn in their completed theses in mid-March. The defense schedule is soon posted with two tutors and the senior's advisor having been selected for the defense board. The defense usually lasts no more than 30 minutes. Once the student makes his summary statement, he is questioned by the three-member board and asked to defend the positions taken in the paper. The event takes place in a classroom open to the public and is usually well-attended by fellow seniors as well as underclassmen hoping to get some first-hand experience of the defense process. Immediately following, the board members meet to evaluate the thesis and the efficacy of the student's defense and give it either a pass, pass with distinction, or—in the rarest of occasions—a failing grade.

Difficult at times, and certainly academically challenging, the Senior Thesis truly is a capstone for all of the graduating seniors, but it is also good preparation for those students who will go on to graduate school. Though the curriculum at Thomas Aquinas College is devoted exclusively to the consideration of original sources, the Senior Thesis presents an opportunity for students to do research from secondary sources about their topics.

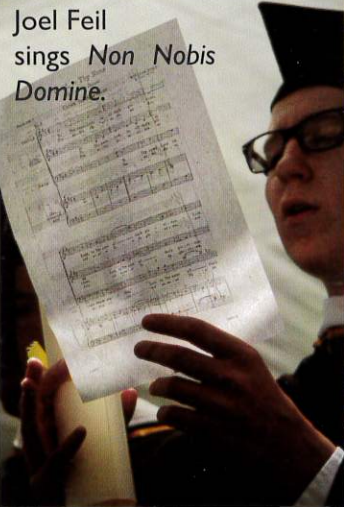
As Dean McLean points out, "The best thing about the Senior Thesis is that it demonstrates to both the student and to faculty members the progress the student has made toward wisdom and in acquiring intellectual habits that will last a lifetime."



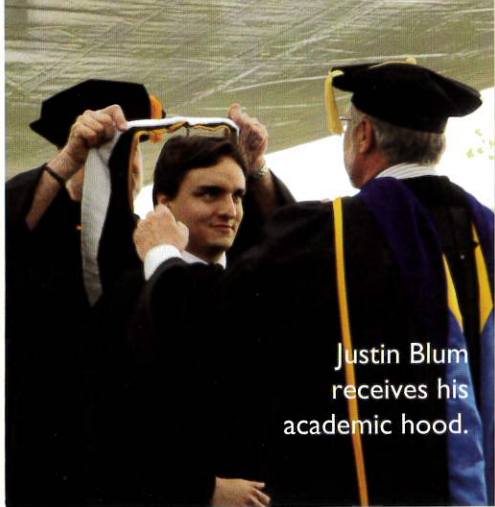
Michael Grimm ('06) defends his thesis, *On Tyranny and the Common Good: A Critique of Hobbes' Sovereign according to the Political Works of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas* before Tutors John Baer (l), Paul O'Reilly (r), and Dean Michael McLean (center).

✂ ✂ ✂

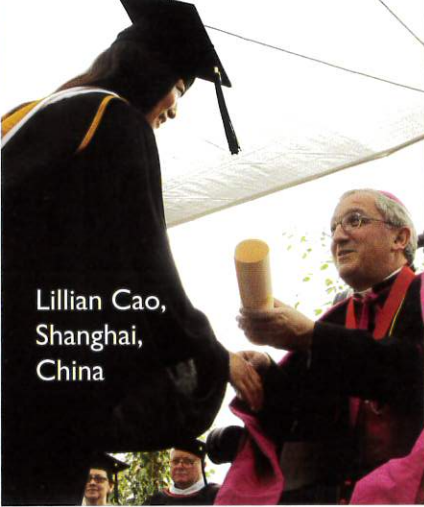
# COMMENCEMENT 2006



Joel Feil  
sings *Non Nobis  
Domine.*



Justin Blum  
receives his  
academic hood.



Lillian Cao,  
Shanghai,  
China



Chelsea Webb  
celebrates.



Moving the tassel to the left side of the mortarboard signifies completion of a bachelor's degree.



Brenna  
Scanlon



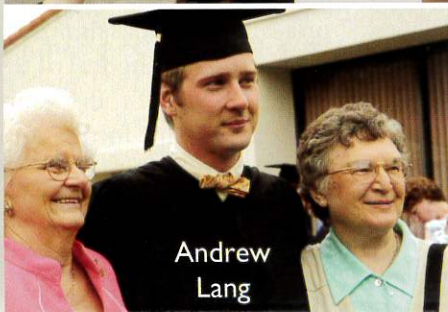
Briena  
Dunkel



Joseph  
Hsieh



John  
Bulcher



Andrew  
Lang



Stephen Six, Elijah White,  
Roy Coats, Patrick Seo



Thomas Aquinas College hoods signify a  
bachelor's degree in liberal arts.

The *future* never needed the *past* more than it does today.



Imagine a world enlivened by the wisdom of Socrates, Aristotle, Cicero, St. Augustine, St. Thomas, Dante, Shakespeare, Madison, Cardinal Newman and T.S. Eliot...



Imagine shaping the future with a legacy gift today.

## THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE

Legacy Society

For information about a legacy gift to Thomas Aquinas College in your will or living trust, or through charitable remainder trusts, contact Tom Susanka, 800/634-9797.

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### Calendar of Events

Great Books Seminar Weekend I .....	July 7 - 9
Great Books Seminar Weekend II .....	July 14 - 16
Order of Malta Retreat .....	July 21 - 23
High School Summer Program .....	July 23 - August 4
Convocation Day .....	August 21
Dramatic Presentation of the <i>Iliad</i> , by Mr. Eldon Quick .....	September 8
35 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, On-Campus .....	September 16
35 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala, Beverly Hills .....	September 30
Alumni Day .....	October 7
Concert: Valaam Ensemble, Russia .....	October 20

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