



# THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

## COMMENCEMENT 2013

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### A Celebration of Faith and Reason

#### Cardinal DiNardo Inspires College's Largest Graduating Class

**L**ove the truth. Do the good. Allow the beautiful to overpower you."

These words were the advice of His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, to 91 seniors — the largest graduating class in the history of Thomas Aquinas College — at the 39<sup>th</sup> annual Commencement exercises on May 11, 2013. Speaking before some 1,500 of the graduates' family members and loved ones on the academic quadrangle, the Cardinal urged the College's newest alumni to make good use of their education "by going out into the public square."

"The culture needs correctives, but also positive enrichment from the kind of thinking you have learned," said His Eminence, the first cardinal to represent a diocese from the American South. "You have to do it, and you have to do it in your profession, wherever you are going." (See page 3.)

It is a charge that the Class of 2013 is taking to heart. Its members' post-graduation plans include a wide range of fields and vocations that involve influencing the culture in myriad ways, from public policy, to law, to journalism, to teaching, to the priesthood and religious life, with five members planning to enter seminaries or religious communities. (See page 11.) Having spent four years striving to love the truth, do the good, and allow the beautiful to overpower them, the graduates are ready to take what they have learned and, heeding Cardinal DiNardo's exhortation, "bring it into the public square." (See page 11.)

This year's Commencement exercises began with



the Baccalaureate Mass in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Seniors, the faculty, and members of the Board of Governors processed into the Chapel, clad in academic regalia. The College's three chaplains, visiting priests, and Cardinal DiNardo followed, vested in red for this Mass of the Holy Spirit. His Eminence served as the principal celebrant and homilist, telling the graduates to hold firm in the knowledge they have acquired and the faith they have nurtured at the College. "Stay faithful and attuned to what you have learned here," he advised, "not just in terms of the life of the mind, but in the contemplative life that comes through this chapel and through your prayer life."

At the following Commencement ceremony, held on the east end of the quadrangle, Senior Class Speaker Liam Collins also stressed the unity of the intellectual and the spiritual life. "In our quest for the truth, we have

come to realize that the truth is not a proposition which we can hold or demonstrate, not something we can possess," he remarked. "It is a person, the person of Jesus Christ." (See page 4.)

"Here, faith and reason are exercised more like a symphony than like a rhapsody," said Cardinal DiNardo in his Commencement Address. "The elements are densely related and compact, orchestrated with precision," he added. Bringing faith and reason together this way, he said, "is an essential obligation in our culture today, and I hope that it has been your delight in your four years here."

Such delight was evident as the ceremony unfolded, with the seniors receiving their bachelor hoods and diplomas amid cheers and applause. The College also awarded Cardinal DiNardo and its head chaplain, Rev. Cornelius M. Buckley, S.J., its highest honor, the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion. (See story below.)

"We are deeply grateful to His Eminence for traveling to our campus to preside at this joyful event, as we graduate the largest class in Thomas Aquinas College's history," noted President Michael F. McLean, who also thanked the graduates' parents and families. "We are grateful for your trust in us, for sending us these young people whose accomplishments we celebrate and whose futures we anticipate with great hope."

#### Commencement 2013

Video, audio, photo slideshows & more:  
[thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013](http://thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013)

### Faithful Fathers

#### Cardinal DiNardo and Fr. Buckley Awarded College's Highest Honor

**T**he Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion is the highest honor conferred by Thomas Aquinas College, and eligibility for it rests upon a single criterion: *fidelity*. Neither fame, titles, nor offices are sufficient qualifications; the honor is reserved solely for those who have demonstrated extraordinary dedication to God and His Church, as well as leadership in advancing the teachings of the Church.

"Nearly every year since our first Commencement in 1975, we have taken a moment to pay tribute to the year's Medallion recipients," said President Michael F. McLean during this year's Commencement ceremony. "This is a fitting time to do so, for we hope that as our graduates go forth from the College, they will emulate our honorees in their own lives." At Commencement 2013 the College recognized two priests who have dedicated their lives to the service of the Church and its people: His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo and Rev. Cornelius M. Buckley, S.J.

##### *His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo*

Thomas Aquinas College's 2013 Commencement Speaker, Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, is the youngest American cardinal, and the first cardinal archbishop from the Southern United States. In 2012 he celebrated the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination as a priest for the Diocese of Pittsburgh. It was also his 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a bishop, having been appointed to the episcopate by Bl. John Paul II in 1997.

In addition to his responsibilities within his own See, Cardinal DiNardo is an advisor to the National Association of Pastoral Musicians, a member of the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant

People, a member of the Board of the National Catholic Partnership for Persons with Disabilities, and a member of the Board of Directors of Catholic University. He also sits on the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Ad Hoc Committee to Oversee the Use of the Catechism.

From 2009 to 2012 His Eminence served as the chair of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, in which capacity he spoke eloquently and passionately in defense of the unborn and against the threat to religious liberty posed by the HHS Mandate. Referencing the Cardinal's commitment to the protection of human life, Dr. McLean said, "You will find, Your Eminence, that the graduates before you — and all our students — are zealous laborers in this vineyard of the Lord, and are most grateful for your leadership."

With a smile, the Cardinal replied, "Thank you for an award that I accept on one level willingly, but also accept with some humility. Because I look to Aquinas as kind of like the master: You cannot get better than Aquinas! So this award is not so much for *agency done* as *agency hoped for!*"

##### *Rev. Cornelius M. Buckley, S.J.*

Fr. Buckley served institutions of higher learning for some four decades before coming to Thomas Aquinas College in 2004. He taught at the University of Santa Clara, Gonzaga University, and the St. Ignatius Institute at the University of San Francisco. He also served as president of St. Ignatius College Preparatory High School in San Francisco, and later as acting dean of the University of San Francisco.

Still, to the community at Thomas Aquinas College, he is "ours" — the beloved Head Chaplain famous for his



charity, kindness, and quick wit. He has been a shepherd to all, and an inspiration to many students who, spurred by his example, have pursued vocations to the priesthood and the religious life.

Throughout his half-century in the priesthood, during an oftentimes troubled period in Catholic education, Fr. Buckley has remained faithful to the Magisterium. "He has served the students, faculty, and staff in innumerable ways, giving unstintingly of himself to one and all," said Dr. McLean. "Above all, he has been an *alter Christus* for this community, administering the sacraments, nourishing our souls with the Word of God, and bringing to our altar each day the Real Presence of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass."

Upon receiving his Medallion, Fr. Buckley remarked, "The greatest part of my life has been spent here at Thomas Aquinas College, and it is a great honor for me to receive this medallion at this time when the Class 2013 is graduating. Our friendship will last not just for this life, but for all eternity. It is a symbol of that great reward that we will have if we are faithful to the Lord's commandment that we love Him and love and serve one another."



# From the Desk of the President

## Dr. McLean's Remarks to the Class of 2013 at the President's Dinner

You are coming of age in important and challenging times for the Catholic Church. A new pope has been elected, and the Church's teachings on the natural law, marriage, and sexual ethics are under relentless attack.

Pope Francis has begun his pontificate by focusing on humility as a path to holiness and by emphasizing that humility is the foundation of our Christian vocation. In a recent homily, he pointed to your class patron — St. Joseph — who, with Jesus and Mary, traveled the “road of humility” to Bethlehem, and who “lowered himself to take on the great responsibility” of his bride who was with child.

The media, as might be expected, have picked up on some of the Holy Father's external acts of humility — for example, his refusal to stand on the customary platform above other bishops, his use of simpler vestments than his predecessors, the fact that he paid his own hotel bill after the conclave, and that he has opted out of the apartment that popes have lived in for a century in favor of simpler accommodations.

“Humility may or may not help us to win our temporal battles. However, if the witness of Pope Francis is any indication, we can hope that acts of humility are precisely what will draw people to Christ and the Church in these times. Whether or not this turns out to be true, we can be certain that humility will help us to win the one battle that really counts.”

### Humility as a Habit of Soul

I am certain, however, that Pope Francis, like many Fathers and Doctors of the Church, as well as churchmen throughout the centuries, knows that humility is fundamentally a virtue of the inner man — a habit of soul by which one “inclines to the lowest place” (St. Thomas, *Summa*, Q. 161, A1, ad.1). Interestingly enough, St. Thomas says that “humility moderates the movement of hope, which is a movement of the spirit aiming at great things” (Ibid. A.4). “For those appetitive movements which are an impulse towards an object, there is need of a moderating and restraining moral virtue, while for those which are a kind of recoil, there is need, on the part of appetite, of a moral virtue to strengthen it and urge it on” (Ibid. A1).

Hope has for its object a future good — beatitude — which is arduous, but possible, to attain. Humility restrains the appetite from aiming at this good immoderately or contrary to right reason; the virtue of magnanimity, on the other hand, urges the appetite to aim at this good moderately or in accord with right reason. “It belongs to humility, then, that a man restrain himself from being borne towards that which is above him ... [and so] he must know his disproportion to



that which surpasses his capacity.”

Scripture, of course, and the Church Fathers emphasize the importance of humility in the Christian life. “Learn of me,” Our Lord says, “for I am meek and humble of heart” (Matt. 11:29). This, says St. Thomas, is an exhortation to avoid striving to become great in earthly things, a principal hindrance to our spiritual welfare. St. Augustine, for his part, says that “almost the whole of the Christian teaching is humility.”

Pope Francis is right to call humility the foundation of our Christian vocation. St. Thomas says, “That which is the first step in the acquisition of virtue is likened to the foundation, which is first laid before the rest of the building. Now the virtues are infused by God ... [in which] the first step is the removal of obstacles: humility, thus, holds the first place, inasmuch as it expels pride ... and makes man submissive and ever open to receive the influx of divine grace” (Ibid. A5, ad 2). In the words of St. James, “God resists the proud, and gives grace to the humble” (James 4:6).

Appropriately enough, St. Thomas says that humility is an especially apt virtue for young people to develop, because hope, which humility moderates, abounds in the young. “For youth,” he says, “has much of the future before it, and little of the past ... it has little to remember and much to hope for.” Youth is full of spirit and so tends to what is arduous, and because the young have not suffered defeat, nor experienced obstacles to their efforts, “are prone to count a thing possible to them” (ST Q40, A6). For similar reasons, by the way, St. Thomas says that hope abounds in drunkards ... and so I would conclude from this that humility would seem to be doubly necessary in young adults who are drinking wine. But that is a talk for another time.

### Obstacles to Humility

Your very youthfulness can make humility a difficult virtue to cultivate. With the enviable spirit of the young, your class quotation from Pope Emeritus Benedict says, in part, that “we were created for greatness.” This is a noble aspiration. It is even a humble aspiration if we aim at high things “confident in God's help.” It is contrary to humility, however, to aim at high things “confident in one's own powers” (Ibid. A2). Out of reverence for God, we must restrain our appetite from tending inordinately to great things and we must not deem ourselves to be above what we are. In humility, we should restrain our own wills, acknowledge our shortcomings, and put others before ourselves.

Your very education can also make humility a difficult virtue to cultivate. You have attained a certain familiarity and facility with great things. You have acquired a certain confidence in your grasp of the truth and in your own intellectual powers. Yet, as St. Thomas points out, humility requires that we not be in a hurry to speak and that we not be immoderate in speech. You should be mindful of how much you have relied on others, not only the authors of the great books themselves, but your tutors and fellow students. You should remember that, with respect to wisdom, you enter the world not as masters but as apprentices, having more to learn than to teach.

Finally, the very times we live in make humility a difficult virtue to cultivate. I said at the beginning that some of the Church's central teachings are under attack. Nonprofit and for-profit Christian organizations, including the College, are under attack. We are threatened with substantial fines and penalties if we do not abide by the HHS mandate to provide insurance coverage for certain procedures and medications that are contrary to Catholic teaching. The mandate, in essence, requires the College to choose between its duty to obey the civil law and its duty to remain faithful to Catholic teaching. The mandate offers an “accommodation” to the College and others, but one that would continue to make the College complicit in the provision of questionable coverage. In this battle, the appropriate response for faithful Catholics appears not to be humility but rather righteous anger, legal challenges, and appeals to religious freedom.

### Humility in Battle

Even when combating the enemies of the Church, however, we must remember that we are called to humility by great saints, by the authors of Sacred Scripture, by our new Holy Father, and by Christ Himself.

The remainder of your class quotation from Pope Emeritus Benedict provides a sobering reminder: “The ways of the Lord are not comfortable, but we were not created for comfort.” Our times — your times — are not comfortable for believing Catholics and Christians. But St. Thomas, citing Gregory, says there is nothing great in being humble toward those who treat us with regard — even worldly people do this. We should be especially humble, says Gregory, toward those who make us suffer. Imitating our Lord, St. Thomas says, “We may even go so far as lovingly to embrace external abasement” (ST Q 161, A6, ad. 3).

Humility may or may not help us to win our temporal battles. However, if the witness of Pope Francis is any indication, we can hope that acts of humility are precisely what will draw people to Christ and the Church in these times. Whether or not this turns out to be true, we can be certain that humility will help us to win the one battle that really counts.

“Clothe yourselves with humility in your dealings with one another,” says St. Peter, “your opponent the Devil is prowling around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour ... resist him, steadfast in faith, knowing that your brothers and sisters throughout the world undergo the same sufferings. The God of all grace who called you to His eternal glory through Christ Jesus will Himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you after you have suffered a little” (1 Pet. 5:5-10).

With these words of reassurance, we welcome you as fellow pilgrims to a struggle — a struggle to win hearts and minds to Christ and to bring those whom you will encounter closer to the good, the true, and the beautiful. In this effort, you must always conduct yourselves with prudence ... always with humility of heart.

Thank you.



On May 8, 2013, Dr. McLean hosted the annual President's Dinner for the seniors, faculty, and staff of Thomas Aquinas College. Clockwise from top left: Jesse Schexnayder speaks with tutor Dr. David Appleby; Director of Admissions Jon Daly and Thomas Lawlor; Catherine Mohun makes a toast; Dean Brian T. Kelly bids farewell to the Class of 2013.



# Defending the Human Person in the Public Square

## Excerpts from the Commencement Address of His Eminence Daniel Cardinal DiNardo

It is a real pleasure to be invited today for this Baccalaureate and Commencement ceremony. I want to thank President McLean for his kind invitation and hospitality. To the Board of Governors, the staff and faculty, and above all to the parents and students, their families and friends, and any alumni, friends, and donors of this Catholic place of dedication to wisdom: Thank you so much for what you do! I express my gratitude and admiration for your commitment, and I congratulate the seniors as you reach Commencement, a genuine beginning.

The great St. Augustine wrote: *Ut esset initio, homo creatus est, priusquam erat nihil*. “That there be a beginning, man was created before whom there was nothing.” Obviously St. Augustine did not mean there was nothing *created* before human beings, only that the very *principle* of initiating something, of *creasing* the world in a creaturely, purposive way — only that happens when, “male and female He created them.”

Each human being is a great beginning, a unique newness. Education stimulates, disciplines, and beautifies that newness further, so that on a day like this, graduation day, this “beginning” may enter the world ready to shine and serve, contribute and effect things. There is great freedom in this, not the freedom of the runaway let loose on the world, but the freedom of a person sent for the life of the world, and then — as you are made aware of here so frequently — for a life that continues beyond the world’s confines. Thomas Aquinas College is based on and is concerned about the liberal arts; the liberal arts in college education help to prepare a person for freedom — the new beginning. Education helps to draw out the implications that every person is someone new and represents a unique “newness.”

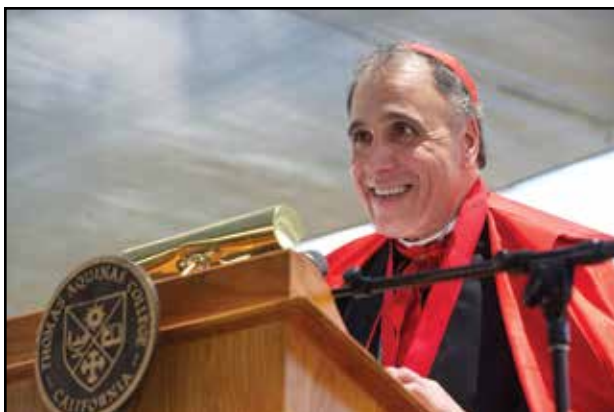
### On Faith and Reason

Graduates, your education here has been an intense conversation with great ideas and great persons. The ideas and the people involved endure and have consequence! Not all of the ideas or the people that you have read are necessarily good, but they matter. Reason matters! Your conversation was not just with remembered ideas and past figures. It was a living dialogue with the past and with present interlocutors, with mentors and fellow students.

This is a Catholic college. Its entire curriculum is warmly wrapped in light, as in a robe, says Psalm 104, with the truth and beauty of Revelation, with the Word of God given in the Sacred Scriptures and Tradition, and most especially in the thinking and writing of St. Thomas Aquinas. St. Thomas is *the* paradigm invitation as a Catholic writer, an invitation not just to thought and wonder, but to the essence and the *telos*, the sheer gist of things now seen in the light of God, or rather, things not seen now *in* God’s light, but *as* light because of their Creator.

At Thomas Aquinas College, faith and reason are celebrated, both *in actu exercito* and *in actu signato*, as a harmony. Here, faith and reason are exercised more like a symphony than like a rhapsody. In a symphony, the elements are densely related and compact, orchestrated with precision; but in a rhapsody, the two threads are

loosely and arbitrarily stitched together. Think of Beethoven’s *Fifth*; think of Rachmaninoff’s *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini*. From reading your catalog and listening to you, I think that is what you try to do here with faith and reason. This is an essential obligation in our culture



**“He is going to expect more from you because you know more. You understand more. You have got to utilize the knowledge you have been given, so that our culture can be touched anew.”**

today, and I hope that it has been your delight in your four years here.

### To Know Something by its Ends

I admire the College’s syllabus and course descriptions, which I have read about in recent weeks on your website. Graduates, you are to be envied for the synoptic vision which you have received in your education, as well as for the more focused analyses which you have performed with your tutors in the various classes you have taken.

There is a tendency today in education to put an emphasis on making people quick-witted and nimble without knowing the substantial ends of things. Such education produces rational agents, but not necessarily reasonable ones. Anyone who possesses a sheer nimbleness of mind, but lacks an appreciation for the end of things, is a person of vice, says Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics*. And what does Aristotle say about such people? They are knaves! They are all around today, sisters and brothers. The knaves are invading!

But I have great grounds of hope about the graduates here, since I have read of what happens in courses and tutorials at this college, how being rational here is insufficient; one must also be reasonable and attentive to how words name things by naming them at their best. *Res Ipsa Loquitur*. This college does that and goes even a step further by naming things in the light of God. Theological mind is welcomed here!

### The Human Person

For three years I served as chair of the Pro-Life Committee for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. It is a very active committee, with the staff in Washington. I was on the phone every day, and every day something was happening — local, state, national. The bureaucratization of the human person is going on, sisters and brothers. And if you’ll excuse my vulgarity, it ain’t pretty. You are prepared, though, because of your study, to understand a little more carefully what we must do to combat this problem.

The traditional definition of a person was given by Boethius. He says, “A person is an individual substance of a rational nature,” a spiritual subject. “Person” always refers to an individual and is not exactly a common noun, like “man.” It is more like a demonstrative pronoun — “this.” We normally would say, “I want to show you a man out in the forest.” We do not normally use the expression, “I am going to show you a *person* in the forest,” do we? A person is a “this.” It is a demonstrative, right here.

A person is a singularity. Initial developments of the understanding of person came about because of Judeo-Christianity, particularly in the problems dealing with Christology and the doctrine of the Trinity. It was in light of trying to figure out the notion of *person* relative to Jesus Christ that things began to develop relative to the notion of *person* as applied to human beings. The ancient

Greeks knew about spiritual subjects, but they rarely ever talked about *person*.

Rational and free agents are denoted by the term “person,” but always as singulars. In his commentary on the *Sentences*, Peter Lombard makes the observation: “Being a part is at odds with being a person.” Jacques Maritain, in his political philosophy, noted that a human being is part of a larger whole, but being a person means transcending any whole. Being a person involves a special kind of agency, one that shows forth understanding and freedom. Because of that, persons are incredibly significant. Yet we are watching in our culture the notion of person being denatured.

In Christianity, within our Catholic understanding, there is also an analogical use of “person,” because the divine is understood as “personal.” The three Persons of the Trinity, one God, are beyond Creation. Creation is an act of complete generosity and love. God has no need of Creation, and even our creaturely desire to praise Him is His gift. But God is personal, and the three Persons of the Trinity are in a total relationship of mutual love and indwelling. Thus, even the notion of the human person is nestled within a larger understanding. Certainly, that understanding is initiated by faith, but it is an understanding nonetheless. This understanding cannot be underestimated, even today, in trying to deal with issues affecting the human person. You are not quite a person, if you know the Christian understanding of things, until you are called and sent by God.

### The Public Square

What is the alternative to the Judeo-Christian understanding of person today? No longer is the alternative paganism or even forms of deism. Today atheistic materialism is the major alternative. Atheistic materialism holds that everything is matter in motion. It can be very sophisticated matter in motion, but that is all it is. Christian faith and classical understanding see the holes in that argument. Have you ever read these neo-Darwinian writers? “You know who you *really* are?” they say in their books, even as they are trying to persuade you. Well, if you are trying to persuade me, why do you need arguments, if I am nothing but matter in motion? *In actu exercito, in actu signato*.

You are equipped, friends, to start answering the incoherence in this kind of thinking. You have to do it, and you have to do it in your profession, wherever you are going. This cannot be kept just at the theological, theoretical level. In light of Bl. John Paul II, who treated the human person so eloquently in *Veritatis Splendor* and *Fides et Ratio*, I propose that you not only keep the tradition in mind, but expand it by going out into the public square.

The current intellectual environment is not healthy. It needs correctives, but also positive enrichment from the kind of thinking you have learned to bring into the public square. So I am delighted whenever I see a group of young people who are going to graduate and know something more than just what they get dished out of their computers, who are not just nimble and rational, but who are up to good, and are interested in more than just money.

Jesus uses us just as He used the Twelve, and He moves us to understand the human person more. He is going to expect more from you because you know more. You understand more. You have got to utilize the knowledge you have been given, so that our culture can be touched anew by a sense of the human person that is not reductionistic.

Sisters and brothers, it has been an honor for me to be here. Love the truth. Do the good. Allow the beautiful to overpower you, so that when you go forth, there will be a definite *creasing* of the world, personally, by you all.

For audio of Cardinal DiNardo’s address, see [thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013](http://thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013).





# To Live in a Spirit of Joy and Love

## Excerpts from the 2013 Senior Address

by Liam Collins ('13)

**I** am filled with deep emotion at finding myself standing here, in this place, where were collected together the wisdom, the patriotism, and the devotion to principle, from which sprang the institutions under which we live.” Thus spoke Abraham Lincoln, at Independence Hall, in February of 1861. Lincoln spoke about the founding of one of the greatest nations on earth, the nation under which this college is blessed to live, which nation was at that time under dire threat of civil war.

We come together to celebrate a commencement ceremony for less than 100 graduates. Like all serious institutions, we at this college are engaged in the continual struggle to better understand, articulate, and give life to the principles from which we draw our existence. It is not always easy for us students to see beyond our daily assignments to the deeper beauty and meaning of what we are doing. This struggle is perhaps particularly pressing now, as we here still mourn the loss of several of the men who gave birth to this college and nourished it from its earliest days, and we must begin to look to a younger generation for leadership. But whatever minor pains we go through as a college are nowhere near as dire as the threat of civil war.

**“What we have been given here for the past four years is a truly wonderful life. By wonderful, I do not just mean generally pleasant and good, though it was certainly that. Rather, I mean a life deeply filled with awe and wonder, with astonishment at the workings of God.”**

On this fine spring day, then, we gather for reasons which are perhaps neither as weighty, nor as imminently critical, as those that moved Abraham Lincoln to speak over 150 years ago.

Yet despite the differences in our situation, Lincoln’s words are strikingly fitting on this occasion. Our college is, indeed, an institution brought forth by outstanding wisdom, patriotism, devotion to principle, and — I should add — devotion to the teaching Church. While it may fall short of the global significance of the United States, this college has formed each one of us graduates in good, deep, and lasting ways, making this occasion a truly momentous one — even if not for the whole world, at the very least for us graduates and our friends and loved ones. It is, therefore, a deeply moving honor for me to stand here before you in an effort to represent the largest class in the history of Thomas Aquinas College.

But just what exactly is the speaker in my position supposed to say? There are many subjects which I am not the best one here to talk about, many ways in which we graduates have looked, and will continue to look, to you all and to others for leadership and wisdom.

### Graduation and Humility

This leads me to let my first major statement be one made in what I hope is the spirit of humility to which President McLean exhorted us just a few nights ago at dinner. (See page 2.) We will not leave this campus as self-sufficient units of knowledge and power, but rather as members joining a larger body in which all have different roles to play. We hope, indeed, that we can contribute something significant to the great work of bringing the world to God, but we need not fear that we will be all alone in this work.

In a longstanding tradition, we will soon be given a piece of paper certifying that we have attained to a degree of knowledge. I take no issue with this tradition; a school which cannot claim to impart knowledge would surely be hard-pressed to justify its very existence. But we must always remember that the knowledge we have gained is not a complete and total understanding of all that is; nor



*The Class of 2013 elected Liam Collins of Ojai, Calif., as its Class Speaker ...*

does the knowledge which we do have mean anything if it does not lead us to greater love of God and neighbor.

Having acknowledged that we are part of something far beyond ourselves, though, we must also remember that true humility does not fail to recognize the blessings it has been given. It therefore does seem appropriate for me to speak about what we students have received in this education, not from some grand, metaphysical perspective, but rather in terms of what we have perceived here as good and beautiful, what has enabled us to live in a spirit of joy and love.

### What We Have Been Given ...

What we have been given here for the past four years is a truly wonderful life. By wonderful, I do not just mean generally pleasant and good, though it was certainly that. Rather, I mean a life deeply filled with awe and wonder, with astonishment at the workings of God. We have pondered the beauty of the stars, wondered at the straightness of light rays, and been moved by the order of fine music. We have been given the opportunity to ask the questions men long to ask, starting with questions about ourselves and the natural world around us, and culminating in questions about our Maker: What is life? What are we? Why are we here? What can we really know? How should we know it? How ought we to govern ourselves? Who made us and the world around us?

These are not immediately practical questions, and very few have the time and freedom to dwell on them the way we have. For four years, we have been largely free from the drudgery of repetitive work, and have been guided through the thoughts of the greatest minds of Western Civilization by wise and dedicated tutors. These tutors have treated us as equals in free and open discussions, and we have learned not only to hold what others have told us, but to truly think in a mature and free way.

One who did not realize that Christ had redeemed all suffering might think that a life like ours was the best life, or even the only life that was really worthwhile. We have been as separated from the passing things of this earth as it is possible to be on a natural level, thinking about eternal truths, like the demonstrations in geometry, or the things known by the ethicist, the politician, the scientist. We, for our part as Christians, know that we are called not to be served but to serve, and that the road to eternal life is often found in the lowest and most mundane of tasks.



*... and Peter LaFave of Butte, Mont., to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.*

But our freedom from the mundane here has given us a far better sense of the depth and wonder of the world, and has aided us in seeing the deeper ideas that explain ourselves and underlie many of the occurrences in human history. We hope, that by doing these things, we have begun along the path to being able to speak wisely about such things.

I would speak falsely if I gave the impression that we have not suffered at all, though. In immersing ourselves in the history of human thought — to some extent, even living it out in our own lives — we have submitted even those things held most dear to serious questioning, not in a Cartesian desire or intent to question all ruthlessly, but rather in the serious hope that we can be open to what is true. We have struggled to see the complementarity between faith and reason, and to more fully articulate not just what we hold, but why we hold it.

In this struggle together, we have become dear friends, continually looking to each other for insight, aid, and encouragement. I think there is no doubt in any of us that, even as we say our goodbyes today, the friendships we have formed here will last a lifetime.

### ... and What We Must Do

What does all this mean? How ought we to draw it together?

As he attempted to decide what to do with Jesus Christ, Pontius Pilate asked the question, “What is truth?” Our Lord did not respond in words; instead, He submitted Himself to death for the salvation of all mankind. Even as we have come to see the wonders of the natural world and to grow in Wisdom, we have become ever more aware of the weak-



*... Jane Grimm of Pasadena, Calif., to sing the National Anthem...*

ness of our own intellects. In our quest for the truth, we have come to realize that the truth is not a proposition which we can hold or demonstrate, not something we can possess. It is a person, the person of Jesus Christ.

The fact that we are not all-knowing, then, is no cause for despair. All we must do is follow Christ, Whose yoke is easy, and burden light. Surely this is the greatest blessing of all.

Looking back, what do we hope for at this commencement of our lives beyond this campus? When we look back in 5 or 10 years — when we look back on this day and try to assess how we have lived up to the dreams that we had at the completion of our college career — what will we see, what will we hope to have done?

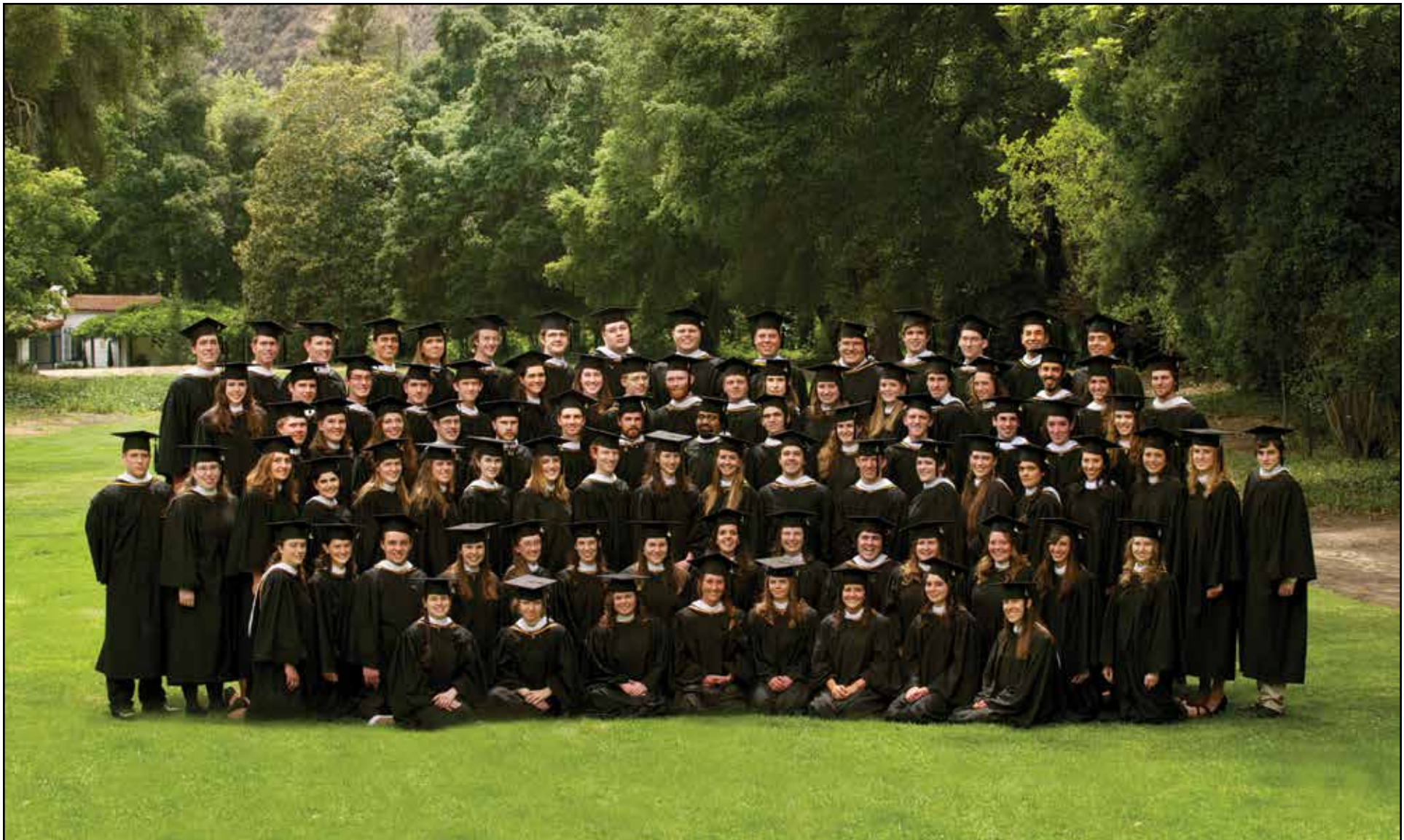
Let us hope and pray that we can share the childlike sense of wonder that we first encountered here in the Ancient Greeks. May we never forget the force of the question, “Where were *you* when I laid the foundations of the earth?” Let us always strive to live with thorough joy in Christ, to lead others with wisdom and charity. Let us strive not to forget the times or studies we had together here, but to bring them to our lives. And let us always have faith in the Lord, that “whether our tomorrows be filled with good or ill, we may triumph through our sorrows, and rise to greet Him still.”

Thank you.

*For the full text and audio of Mr. Collins’ address, see [thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013](http://thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013).*



The Class of 2013 and Senior Thesis Titles



“The ways of the Lord are not comfortable,  
but we were not created for comfort.  
We were created for greatness.”

– Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI



Love Thy Neighbor As Thyself?:  
An Inquiry into Natural  
Self-Love and Charity  
**LINDSAY MARIE ASTALOS**  
*Lakeport, Michigan*



The Appropriate Role of the  
Craftsman in Society  
**CATHERINE BAER**  
*Costa Mesa, California*



A Defense of Private Property  
in Light of St. Thomas Aquinas  
and the Teaching of the  
Catholic Church  
**DANIEL ARAM BAGDAZIAN**  
*Santa Paula, California*

The Unseen Image: An Account  
of the Productive Imagination  
As Coming from Diverse Powers  
**DUSTIN ALEXANDER  
BATES**  
*New Braunfels, Texas*



The Place of Motion in Geometry  
**MICAELA MARÍA  
BECCAR VARELA**  
*San Isidro, Buenos Aires, Argentina*



A Consideration of the  
Human Soul Insofar As  
It Is a *Hoc Aliquid*  
**NATHANIEL GLENN BLAIN**  
*Albuquerque, New Mexico*



God, Dostoevsky, and the  
Ordinary Way to Greatness  
**JORDAN SHAREE BRITTAIN**  
*Tempe, Arizona*



A Creature Existing for His  
Own Sake: A Comparison of  
Natural Slavery and the Catholic  
Conception of Human Dignity  
**LAURETTA MARIE BROWN**  
*Churchton, Maryland*



Symbols and Words:  
A Defense of Traditional Logic  
Against the Attacks of Modern  
Symbolic Logicians  
**ALEXANDER GERARD  
BUECHE**  
*Shelby Township, Michigan*





“A Great Poem Is a Fountain  
Forever Overflowing with  
the Waters of Wisdom”: The  
Importance of the Poetic Image  
**MARGARET MARY  
ELIZABETH CAIN**  
*Santa Paula, California*



“Whosoever Shall Exalt Himself  
Shall Be Humbled; and He That  
Shall Humble Himself Shall Be  
Exalted”: An Exposition of the  
Virtue of Humility  
**HANNAH MARGARET  
CHANCE**  
*Rolling Prairie, Indiana*



“A Holy People”:  
On the Fittingness of Man’s  
Salvation in Community  
**JEAN MARIE COLLINS**  
*Santa Paula, California*

Creativity, Natural Science, and  
the Intelligibility of the Cosmos  
**LIAM DELAIRE COLLINS**  
*Ojai, California*



“You Are a Chosen Race, a Royal  
Priesthood”: How the Common  
Priesthood Is Perfected Through  
the Eucharistic Sacrifice  
**SARAH MARIE THERESE  
COTUGNO**  
*San Juan Capistrano, California*



“Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam”:  
Reconciling Loving God for His  
Own Sake with Self-Love  
**BRIDGET MARGARET  
MARY COUGHLIN**  
*Santa Paula, California*



Why Are There Two  
Commandments of Love?  
**CLARE MARIE RAPHAEL  
DANA**  
*San Francisco, California*



Behold, I Make All Things New:  
An Application of Doctrinal  
Development  
**JONATHAN MARK DICKMAN**  
*Chico, California*



Care of the Body for the Sake of  
the Soul: An Essay Considering  
to What Extent the Catholic  
Man Should Pursue Health  
**KIMBERLY ALLISON  
DOCHERTY**  
*Woodstock, Georgia*

Punic Curse: An Examination of  
the First Cause of the Fall of the  
Roman Republic  
**PATRICK RYAN DODD**  
*Fresno, California*



“In a Galaxy Far, Far Away”:  
The Inclusion of Extra-Terrestrials  
Within Christianity  
**DOMINIC DOYLEND**  
*Ottawa, Ontario, Canada*



Disrobing Prospero:  
The Discovery of What It  
Means to Be Human in  
Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*  
**ARIELLE ELIZABETH  
DUNKEL**  
*Tracy, California*



“Take This and Eat It”:  
An Examination of the  
Significance of Eating in the  
Sacrament of the Eucharist  
**KATHERINE RACHEL  
EDSON**  
*Tigard, Oregon*



A Still-Held Truth:  
An Investigation of the Declaration  
of Independence and the Right to  
the Pursuit of Happiness  
**JAMES HENRY ENDRES**  
*Oregon City, Oregon*



Loving Jesus in the Night:  
On the Dark Nights of the Soul  
**ALYSSA MICHELLE EUBANKS**  
*Yucca Valley, California*

Unfortunate Fantasy:  
Rousseau’s Failed Attempt to  
Distance Man’s Original Nature  
from Its Present Corruption  
**HANNAH MARIE FLANDERS**  
*Muscatine, Iowa*



Do Yourself a Favor and  
Become Your Own Savior:  
An Essay Concerning the Moral  
of *Huckleberry Finn*  
**SAMUEL FUSINI**  
*Windsor, Massachusetts*



My Tears Mar My Counterfeiting:  
An Exploration of Grief and  
Identity in *King Lear*  
**MARA TERESE GAWARECKI**  
*Minnetonka, Minnesota*



“Honey and Milk Are Under  
Your Tongue”: Metaphors As a  
Necessary and Pleasurable Aid  
for Attaining Divine Truth in  
the Sacred Scriptures  
**JANE FRANCES GRIMM**  
*Pasadena, California*



“Now Cracks a Noble Heart”:  
A Defense for the Nobility of  
Hamlet’s Character  
**JEFFREY DAVID HANLEY**  
*St. Joseph, Michigan*



Improbable Artifice: Pierre  
Corneille’s Happy Ending for  
*The Cid* Is Simply Tragic  
**MARGARET MARY ROSE  
HARRAHILL**  
*Monrovia, California*



# Senior Thesis Titles



“Through Him, with Him, and in Him”: An Examination of Marriage, How the Punishments Due to Original Sin Became a Means of Achieving Grace in Marriage by the Redemptive Act of Christ  
**BRIDGET MARY AGNES THERESE HEFFERNAN**  
*Springfield, Illinois*



Biting the Invisible Hand: A Critique of Self-Sufficiency and Protectionism  
**KATHARINE MARIA HUFFORD**  
*Whitmore, California*



On the Purpose and Importance of M. Descartes’ *Geometry* in Light of Sir Isaac Newton’s Criticism of the Same  
**KEVIN SAMUEL KASSON**  
*Coralville, Iowa*

Stumbling Block or “Most Sweet Bait”? A Consideration of Mary’s Power to Attract Souls As Shown in *The Divine Comedy* and *The Education of Henry Adams*  
**FRANCESCA GABRIELLA KRESTYN**  
*Fillmore, California*



A Justification for the Polygamy in the Old Testament  
**PETER JAMES LAFAVE**  
*Butte, Montana*



What’s the Matter with Being?  
**CATHERINE MARIE-ROSE LANGLEY**  
*Willis, Texas*



Why We Name the Relation of the Known to the Knower “In”  
**ROSE VERONICA LANGLEY**  
*Cleveland Heights, Ohio*



Dare to Compete: A Defense of Competition  
**CHRISTOPHER PETER JOSEPH LAWLESS**  
*Hulbert, Oklahoma*



“This is a Great Sacrament”: An Investigation of the Principal Purpose of Marriage  
**MICHELLE THERESE LAWLESS**  
*Hulbert, Oklahoma*

Federalism and Subsidiarity: An Investigation into the Principles of the United States Constitution and Their Possible Effects  
**THOMAS GEORGE LAWLOR**  
*Mequon, Wisconsin*



The Perfect—an Enemy of the Good: On the Implementation of Imperfect Abortion Laws  
**MARIE REBECCA ANNE LEMIEUX**  
*Ottawa, Ontario, Canada*



“All You Need Is Love”: That True Happiness Can Be Had in This Life through Charity  
**KATERI MARIE LEMMON**  
*Nevada City, California*



“It Is Sufficient That Gravity Exists, and Acts According to the Laws Set Forth By Us”: An Examination of the Explanatory Character of Newton’s Mathematical Laws in the *Principia*  
**ANASTASIA MARIE LETTENey**  
*Santa Paula, California*



Against the Author’s Orders: A Discussion of *Huckleberry Finn* and Natural Law  
**ELEANOR ROSE LOGSDAIL**  
*Stamford, Connecticut*



“He Hath Made a Decree, and It Shall Not Pass Away”: Examining the Laws of Mathematical Physics and St. Thomas Aquinas  
**JOSEPH CURTIS LOZANO**  
*Culver City, California*

A Higher Plane of Morality: An Investigation into the Final End of Government  
**ANNE COURTNEY LUKEHART**  
*Bakersfield, California*



A Criticism of Plato’s Account of Creation in the *Timaeus*  
**MARK VIANNEY LYONS**  
*Battle Ground, Washington*



“There Remains the Passion of His Body”: An Exposition of Suffering for Another in Light of the Mystical Body of Christ  
**NICOLE MARIE MADRO**  
*Mission Viejo, California*



Why Praise a Song? An Examination of the Material Necessities of Music  
**DOMINIC MASON**  
*Lovettsville, Virginia*



“Only the One Who Loses Himself Can Find Himself”: Retrieving the Theological Notion of Person with Cardinal Ratzinger  
**MICHAEL COONEY MASTELLER**  
*Santa Paula, California*



The Art of Seduction: Poetic Knowledge and Prophetic Philosophy in *Oedipus at Colonus*  
**MOLLY ROSE MCALISTER**  
*Bayard, Iowa*





“They Shall Be Two in One  
Flesh”: An Inquiry into Why It  
Is Natural for Marriage to Be  
between One Man and One  
Woman for Their Entire Lives  
**ANDREA MARIA  
ELISABETH MCCANN**  
*St. Louis, Missouri*



“Never Does Nature Say One  
Thing and Wisdom Another”:  
On the Insufficiency of the  
Reductionist Account of Life  
**MARGARET MARY ISIDORE  
MCCANN**  
*Chesterfield, Missouri*



“And Sure He is an Honorable  
Man”? Politics and Honor in  
Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*  
**MEGAN ROSE MCGUIRE**  
*Denver, Colorado*

Aristotle, the Intellect, and  
Divine Illumination  
**MICHAEL MILLINGTON**  
*Dallas, Pennsylvania*



The Fulfillment of Antonia’s  
Life As a Woman through  
the eyes of Jim Burden in  
Willa Cather’s *My Antonia*  
**SALVADOR MIRANDA**  
*Los Angeles, California*



“What Will It Be Like There, and  
What Has It Been Like Here?”  
The Temporal and Spiritual  
Journeys of Marya and Andrei  
Bolkonsky in *War and Peace*  
**CATHERINE LOUISE  
MOHUN**  
*Santa Paula, California*



If Children, Then Heirs, Heirs  
of God, and Fellow Heirs with  
Christ, Provided We Suffer  
with Him: On the Necessity of  
Suffering After the Passion  
**ALEXANDRIA MARIA  
MONTES**  
*Rancho Santa Margarita,  
California*



“And the Two Shall Become One  
Flesh”: Pope John Paul, Saint  
Augustine, and the Development  
of the Doctrine on Marriage  
**ATHENA MOTA DE  
ALCÂNTARA**  
*Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil*



“The Dreamers of What Is True”:  
On Poetic Knowledge  
**NICHOLAS PATRICK  
MURPHY**  
*Sacramento, California*

Laissez Faire et Laissez Passer,  
le Monde Va de Lui Même! A  
Critique of Keynesian Economics  
**DYLAN PETER NAEGELE**  
*Alexandria, Virginia*



Materia Prima Est Imitatio Formae  
Primae: A Consideration of God’s  
Knowledge of Prime Matter  
**MAXIMILIAN JACOB  
NIGHTINGALE**  
*Stevensville, Michigan*



Natural Law: Whether It Is  
Naturally Knowable to All Men  
**CATHERINE LYNN  
PATRICK**  
*Whitmore, California*



“Tho’ Nature, Red in Tooth and  
Claw”: An Investigation of the  
Role of Violence In Nature  
**THERESE MARIE PFEIFFER**  
*Waterford, Wisconsin*



An Investigation of Charles Ryder’s  
Journey to God  
**ELIZABETH QUACKENBUSH**  
*Ojai, California*



Is Money Everything?  
An Investigation of Adam  
Smith’s End in *Wealth of Nations*  
**JOHN EDWARD RICHARD**  
*San Jose, California*

“Deus Vult!” An Examination of  
the First Crusade According to  
the Just War Doctrine  
**ROBERT FRED RICHARD III**  
*Concord, California*



The Probable Argument:  
An Investigation into the  
Nature of Probability  
**NATHANIEL FRANCIS  
ROBERTS**  
*Key West, Florida*



“How Shall We Find the  
Concord of This Discord?”:  
An Introduction to Comedy  
**ELIZABETH ANN ROSEMA**  
*Pasadena, California*



On The True Nature of Things:  
An Examination of the Nature of  
Prime Matter  
**ANDREW ROSSI**  
*Bakersfield, California*



The Lift Which Must Raise Me  
Up: Woman’s Way to God  
**CLARE FRANCIS RYAN**  
*Shaver Lake, California*



Poetry, Wonder, Philosophy:  
A Cure for Faust’s Scholasticism  
**MARGARET LEIGH  
RYLAND**  
*Steubenville, Ohio*



# Senior Thesis Titles



Imagination and Measurement in  
Descartes' *Geometry*  
**MAUREEN REGINA RYLAND**  
*Great Falls, Virginia*



Religious Liberty As Catholic  
Doctrine: A Defense of  
*Dignitatis Humanae*  
**MARIA TERESA SANTOS**  
*Fort Valley, Virginia*



Sensing the Divine:  
Whether Faith Extends to  
the Cogitative Power  
**JESSE PAUL SCHEXNAYDER**  
*New Iberia, Louisiana*

The Kingships of Revolution:  
An Examination of the Upheavals  
in Kingship in Shakespeare's  
Plays: *Richard II*, *Henry IV Part 1*,  
*Henry IV Part 2*, and *Henry V*  
**JUDE MICHAEL  
SCHWALBACH**  
*Versailles, Kentucky*



It's Not Crazy; It's Sports:  
An Examination into the  
Benefits and Dangers of  
Professional Sports in Culture  
**CHRISTOPHER CHARLES  
SEBASTIAN**  
*Livonia, Michigan*



Huygens and Newton to  
Einstein: An Inquiry into the  
Nature of Light  
**READE SELLE**  
*Valley, Washington*



"Let No One Ignorant of  
Geometry Come Under My  
Roof": A Study into the Benefits  
of Geometry with Regard to the  
Acquisition of Virtue  
**THERESE BERNADETTE  
SMILLIE**  
*Lancaster, Massachusetts*



The Dignity of Manual Labor  
**PETER GEORGE  
STEIGERWALD**  
*Elm Grove, Wisconsin*



"Rejoice Evermore":  
Sin Is the Most Common  
Cause of Depression  
**GEORGE THOMAS**  
*Ahmedabad, Gujarat, India*

The Price of Money:  
A Justification for Lending  
Money at Interest  
**ALEXANDER RICHARD  
TOMBELLI**  
*Lansing, Michigan*



"Blessed Are the Peacemakers, For  
They Shall Be Called Sons of God":  
An Examination of the Nature of  
Conscientious Objection  
**DAVID JOSEPH TRULL**  
*St. Louis, Missouri*



"Love and Do What You Will":  
On the Place of the Old Law and  
Human Law in the Pursuit of  
Christian Perfection  
**ELIZABETH CLAIRE URBAN**  
*Mentor, Ohio*



Spilling the Milk of Human  
Kindness: An Examination of  
the Consequences of Acting  
Contrary to Nature in *Macbeth*  
**ELIZABETH ANN  
VANHORN**  
*Littleton, Colorado*



On Apprehension of  
Individual Agent Causes  
**ANDREW REINO WALSH**  
*Banks, Oregon*



On the Two Definitions of the  
Parabola  
**THERESA KRISTINE  
WALSH**  
*Banks, Oregon*

Sicut Sagitta a Sagittante:  
An Examination of  
Saint Thomas's Fifth Way  
**PHILIP EDWARD WILMETH**  
*Anderson, South Carolina*



"Beauty Will Save the World":  
An Account of How the  
Encounter with the Beautiful  
Leads to a Knowledge of God  
**SEÁN JOSEPH WOOD**  
*Ojai, California*



Scholasticism and Pessimism:  
A Realist Defense of Nietzsche's  
Apollonian-Dionysian Duality  
**AURELIUS AUGUSTIN  
MARIANUS ZEHNDER**  
*Tehachapi, California*



"Before I Formed You in  
the Womb, I Knew You":  
A Philosophical and Theological  
Investigation of Immaterial  
Individuation of the Soul  
**MARTIN JOHN ZEPEDA**  
*Alhambra, California*

## Patron of the Class of 2013:

### St. Joseph





# Cardinal DiNardo: “A Gift of God in Christ Jesus through His Spirit”

## Adapted from the Homily at the 2013 Baccalaureate Mass

Sisters and brothers, it is the 42<sup>nd</sup> day of Easter — eight more to go. St. Augustine says that, indeed, the Christian community fasts for 40 days, and feasts for 50 days. Apparently Catholics prefer feasting to fasting!

Eight more days of Easter *hilaritas*, as Augustine would say — the joy of God’s achievement of salvation in the newly baptized, the newly confirmed. There are first communions, ordinations, and graduations. Easter season is a beautiful time to recognize Christ’s Paschal victory in all of those who, through His achievements, also can look at their own achievements as mystically fulfilled.

We are with Mary and the Apostles in the upper room. They are getting ready for the Pentecost. With an impoverished faith of the 12 that is genuine, but expectant, the Church goes along with them and awaits the fullness of God’s Holy Spirit, Who already is present in Christ’s Resurrection. In John’s Gospel, the Apostles are in the Upper Room, then the Risen Jesus enters, and the first words out of His mouth are, “Peace be with you.”

As I tell all the confirmation children in Houston, thank God He didn’t say, “Where *were* you on Good Friday?”

### From Ascension to Pentecost

With the Ascension of the Lord, Jesus has taken our poor humanity, elevated it, and brought it to the Father. He goes away to get near. *He goes away to get near.*

For those of you who want to unpack that, read Pope Leo the Great’s seven homilies on the Ascension, the most essential doctrine about that mystery of faith that we have ever had. St. Leo says that everything Jesus Christ said and did in His public life and in His Passion, Death, and Resurrection, at the Ascension *transiit in sacramenta*. All these things pass over into the sacramental life of the Church. That is why anything that happens in the sacramental life of the Church is so powerful.

*He goes away to get near.* One form of presence is supplanted by a presence that is so powerful that, as St. Leo the Great said, not even the most refined of tortures could keep away the taste and the discernment that the Ascension provides.

### Let the Spirit Come

In this time of expectation for the fullness of the Spirit that the Ascension gives, we are celebrating graduation at Thomas Aquinas College. What beautiful readings the Liturgy of the Word gives us this morning, sisters and brothers (Ez. 36:24-28; Gal. 5:16-25; Jn. 14:15-16, 23b-26).



First of all, at this liturgy our very selves are moved to prayer: prayers of thanks, prayers of gratitude to God, the prayers of the faculty and administration, the prayers of the parents and families, prayers for donors, prayers of intercession for the graduates, prayers like incense for the whole church. It may be that, in one or two cases, there may even be prayers of relief, as well. I don’t know.

The grace has appeared. God’s grace is here at this Mass for ongoing illumination and inspiration of the Spirit upon these 90-plus graduates, the largest class in the

“God’s grace is here at this Mass for ongoing illumination and inspiration of the Spirit upon these 90-plus graduates, the largest class in the history of this wonderful college. It is a beautiful, beautiful day.”

history of this wonderful college. It is a beautiful, beautiful day.

The Book of Ezekiel is a strange book. It has more odd metaphors than almost any book of the Old Testament. In fact, when I was a young priest and taught this section of the Book of Ezekiel to high school seniors (not brilliant college seniors; these were smart-aleck high school seniors), one of them said, after reading the passage of Ezekiel 37, “What, Father, was he smoking when he wrote this?”

That is the famous vision of the dry bones: the open fields, bones strewn about. How dry they were! Then God says, *let the Ruah, let the Spirit come*, and they start coming together. Pretty soon they are a massive, massive group, but there is still no spirit of breath to give

them that vitality. So Ezekiel calls for that, the spirit comes, and they rise up, an army.

Sisters and brothers, can these bones live? *Listen, oh House of Israel. It is not because of you. It is because of me and my faithfulness.* This passage calls to mind the death and burial of Christ, and the promise of eternal life that accompanies His resurrection. As the Letter to the Hebrews says, when Jesus went back home to his *abba-daddy*: *Here I am, Father, and all of the kids you gave me.* Ezekiel 36 is the anticipation that, not because of Israel, but because of God — after 30 chapters of Ezekiel saying to Israel, *you’re bad, you can’t repent, who cares about you, Israel?* — everything changes. *Do I really want you to have stony hearts? I want you to have new hearts, hearts, of flesh! So I will do it. I will send my Ruah.*

### Saving us from Spiritual Amnesia

Can you imagine the night of the Last Supper, when Jesus turns to the 11 around Him? Remember, in the Gospel of Matthew, the Last Supper is about 30-35 verses long. In Mark, it is 30. In Luke, it is about 38 verses. In John, it is *five chapters*. Obviously John thinks the Last Supper is very important! And in the midst of that, what does Jesus say to the 11 (at this point Judas is already gone) about *Ruah*?

Note the personalization that goes on here. Jesus is using the first-person singular like it has never been used before, talking about his *abba*: *Me and my abba/father. Do you know we want to make a home with you? We want you to be a temple. Do you know how that is going to endure? I promise a Spirit, and what is the Spirit going to do? Teach and save you from religious amnesia* — a particularly virulent virus that is all around right now. *I will save you from spiritual amnesia through the Spirit. He will teach you. He will remind you.*

Do you notice the incredible spiritual poverty of Jesus in the Spirit? In their relationship to one another and the Father, they do nothing except what they do together. This is incredible. Graduates, when you are looking at what you have achieved, do you see the way Jesus speaks about achievement? His achievement is total obedience to the Father.

So on this day, with these beautiful readings, we are mesmerized by what Ezekiel promises, and what Jesus accomplishes — sending us a personal spirit,

the love of Father and Son. And just so we do not get overly mystical before we go to Communion, the lectionary planners decided to put Galatians as the second reading. You talk about coming down a step!

When Paul wrote his letters, at the beginning he would always say something like: *Grace and peace be yours. This is Paul, and I thank God for how beautiful you are, Corinthians or Philippians, and how God’s grace has worked in you.* There is only one letter in which St. Paul does not say any such words at the beginning. That is Galatians. Boy, was he mad! He opens the letter, *Grace and peace*, and then says: *I’m wondering why it is that you so soon abandoned everything in the Gospel.* He then spends four chapters just smacking them around.

When he gets to the end, though, isn’t it beautiful how he says, with a little dig: *There is no law against charity, joy, peace, patience, you Galatian circumcisers. No, I’ll tell you what the problem is. The issue is the flesh, and the flesh is in backbiting, as well as sexual immorality, and it is tearing apart the community.* In St. Paul the flesh is *anything* opposed to Christ Jesus.

Perhaps even on a day like today we need to hear that. We need to hear that there is, indeed, in the Christian community, in us, a need. There are things we should not be doing, and things God allows us to do in Christ Jesus. I personally would rather dwell on Ezekiel and John today, but the Church’s liturgy calls us also to Galatians. There the list of vices and the beauty of the virtues that spring from the grace of Jesus Christ are presented to us.

At the conclusion of this section, St. Paul says so beautifully, “Bear one another’s burdens.” That is stating the whole point. Sisters and brothers, it is a great day for you. I hope that you will go from today illumined, delighted, proud of your achievements. But never forget that they are a gift of God in Christ Jesus through His Spirit, Who keeps you knowledgeable, and Who solves and heals the religious amnesia in our society. We desperately need that gift of the Holy Spirit.

### The Gift of Wisdom

May the Spirit so operate in you. Congratulations! What a great day. What a beautiful alleluia we can sing on this, the 42<sup>nd</sup> day of Easter, first of all because of the Resurrection and Ascension, and second of all because of you. That is good. Please stay faithful and attuned to what you have learned here, not just in terms of the life of the mind, but in the contemplative life that comes through this chapel and through your prayer life.

May Jesus Christ Himself be your lord. May the Father of all mercies smile upon you and keep you safe in the days and years ahead. May you never forget Thomas Aquinas College, where you first learned of the gift of wisdom.

For audio of Cardinal DiNardo’s homily, see [thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013](http://thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013).





# Not Comfort but Greatness

## What’s Next for the Class of 2013

When the Class of 2013 met to choose a class quotation, its members selected the following observation from Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI: “The ways of the Lord are not comfortable, but we were not created for comfort. We were created for greatness.”

Looking over the plans of the graduates who have settled on a vocation or career path, it is clear that the Class of 2013 is taking the Pope Emeritus’s words seriously. These graduates are foregoing comfort — in many cases taking on years of additional study or other personal sacrifice — to follow the ways of the Lord. They are committed to sharing the fruits of their education and the gifts of their faith, whether in the workplace, in the home, in the classroom, or from the pulpit. They are taking their talents, as Cardinal DiNardo encouraged them, “into the public square,” and they have set their sights on greatness.

### Priesthood and Religious Life

**Jeffrey Hanley** first became aware of a calling to the priesthood while in high school, but “my experience at the College has only strengthened that vocation,” he says. “Being enriched in the tradition of the teaching Church has helped open my eyes to the depth of thought in the Catholic Church, and it has enriched both my prayer life and my intellectual life.” This fall Mr. Hanley will enter formation for the Diocese of Kalamazoo, where he will be joined by classmate and fellow Michigan native **Maximilian Nightingale**. Some 5,000 miles away, **Philip Wilmeth** will enter into a life of prayer and penance with the Benedictine Order at the Monastery of San Benedetto in Norcia, Italy. **Nicole Madro** also hopes to join a religious community, possibly the Norbertine Sisters, after working for a year to pay off student loans.

### Marriage

During their time at the College, several members of the Class of 2013 were blessed to discern vocations to the married life. “Four years of training in this program have taught Peter and me to be more comfortable and capable of discussing all of our thoughts and concerns, and to work as a team in pursuit of something higher and better than the two of us,” says **Clare (Ryan)**, who wed Peter Asper (’12) one week after Commencement in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Two days later, **Christopher Lawless** married Kate (Becher ’14), and a third Class of 2013 wedding is planned for later this summer.



Clare (Ryan ’13) and Peter Asper (’12)

### Business

“I worked for a construction company in Washington, D.C., last summer,” recalls **Nathaniel Roberts**. “I was supposed to be a helper on the job site, but they ended up being shorthanded; so my boss kept assigning me more and more responsibilities that a superintendent would normally do. Eventually I was running the site.” Impressed with Mr. Roberts’ attention to detail and decision-making, the company contacted him earlier this year and offered him a superintendent’s position starting this summer. He will be in charge of a work site, supervising employees, and organizing the subcontractors, schedule, and budget.

Mr. Roberts’ story is typical of those members of the Class of 2013 who are pursuing careers in business. For the last three summers, **Arielle Dunkel** worked for Morningstar Packing in Santa Nella, Calif. — an experi-



Nathaniel Roberts, Katherine Edson, Thomas Lawlor, Alexander Tombelli, and Arielle Dunkel

ence that has landed her a full-time job with the company in research and office support. Following a successful summer working for All-Terrain Marketing in Milwaukee, **Thomas Lawlor** has been promoted to a field coordinator, managing event promotions for Chevrolet in the Indianapolis market. Having worked two summers at the Owen Roe Winery in St. Paul, Ore., (owned by David O’Reilly ’87), **Alexander Tombelli** foresees a career in winemaking, starting with a job at a winery in Ojai, Calif. **Katherine Edson** is building on her three years’ work-study experience in the Thomas Aquinas College kitchen with a position at a food and catering company in Portland, Ore.

### Arts & Entertainment

“Reading works at the College about the dignity of beauty made me want to pursue that as a career,” says **Augustin Zehnder**, who intends to earn a master’s degree in violin performance at California State University, Long Beach, and then work as an orchestral violinist and composer. A cartoonist and comedienne, **Elizabeth Rosema** is moving to Chicago, where she will try to land a spot with the Second City improv/comedy-screenwriting school. **David Trull** is staying in Southern California to begin a career as a professional singer and songwriter.

### Teaching

Every year, teaching is the most popular career choice among the College’s graduates, and 2013 is no exception. “It is important to instill in children an interest in what’s going on around them, a love for the truth, and a strong foundation for their lifelong search,” says **Margaret Mary Cain**. For this reason Miss Cain looks to become a teacher, first earning a master’s degree in education, and then teaching at the elementary level.

A number of this year’s aspiring educators will head to Arizona, where the Great Hearts Academies — a consortium of charter schools that boast a classical curriculum — is expanding rapidly, and thus requires a steady stream of qualified new teachers. Starting this fall, **Dustin Bates** will teach the arts and poetry to students in grades 5 through 12. **Jordan Brittain** will be an assistant teacher, and **Katherine Hufford** a teacher’s aide. **Megan McGuire** will be teaching 7<sup>th</sup>-grade English literature and composition and 11<sup>th</sup>-grade drama, and **Molly McAlister**, high school drama and 6<sup>th</sup>-grade fine arts.

**Rose Langley** and **Andrea McCann** will also be teaching classical curricula, in their case at private Catholic schools. Miss Langley has accepted a job at The Lyceum in South Euclid, Ohio (founded by Mark Langley ’89), and Miss McCann with the Mother of Divine Grace distance-learning program in Ojai, Calif. (founded by Laura Berquist ’75). Others plan to teach at conventional K-12 public and parochial schools, including **Patrick Dodd**, **Elizabeth Urban**, **Maggie Harrahill**, and **Alyssa Eubanks**. Still others have more specialized teaching goals: **Michelle Lawless** has accepted a position with the Institute for Excellence in Writing in Hulbert, Okla.; **Lindsay Astalos**, who taught piano part-time while at the College, will expand her business; **Athena Mota de Alcântara** expects to pursue graduate studies in, and then teach about, marriage and the family.

### Education Administration

Three other members of the Class of 2013 will work in education administration. **Peter LaFave** has applied for development and marketing positions at various Catholic institutions. **Christopher Sebastian** is the new director of public relations and marketing for Mother of Divine Grace School. Although she has a long-term vision of becoming a Montessori teacher, **Jean Collins** will first return to her alma mater as the College’s resident assistant.

### Theology

Because the whole of the Thomas Aquinas College curriculum is ordered toward the study of theology, it is not surprising that every year at least a few graduates undertake further studies in this discipline. After a year of teaching, **Bridget Coughlin** plans to study theology at Ave Maria University because, as she puts it, “theology makes me love God more.” **Sarah Cotugno** looks forward to deepening her theological knowledge through graduate studies at the Augustine Institute in Denver, Colo.

### Medicine

Between her sophomore and junior years, **Eleanor Logsdaile** took a year off from her studies and worked with the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta at a home for the destitute and dying. “I fell in love with the work there, just taking care of people,” she reflects. Inspired by that experience, she will spend the next year completing the prerequisites to apply for a nurse-practitioner program, after which she wants to assist surgeries or work in an emergency room. **Maggie McCann** will also spend the next year completing prerequisites, and then apply to veterinary school. **Alexandria Montes** has accepted a position for the WellPoint insurance company, and **Catherine Mohun** will work in elder care, but both also seek to earn nursing licenses, as does **Therese Pfeiffer**. The oldest of 11 children, **Jane Grimm** has a love for babies which will serve her well as she studies to become an obstetrical nurse or midwife.

### Public Service

Upon graduating, **Salvador Miranda** will begin the process of applying to the Air Force, where he aims to serve his country as a pilot. **Robert Richard** intends to put his talents to work for his community as a firefighter. “I’ve wanted to do that ever since I was a little kid,” he says. “It’s a good job and a good way to help people.”

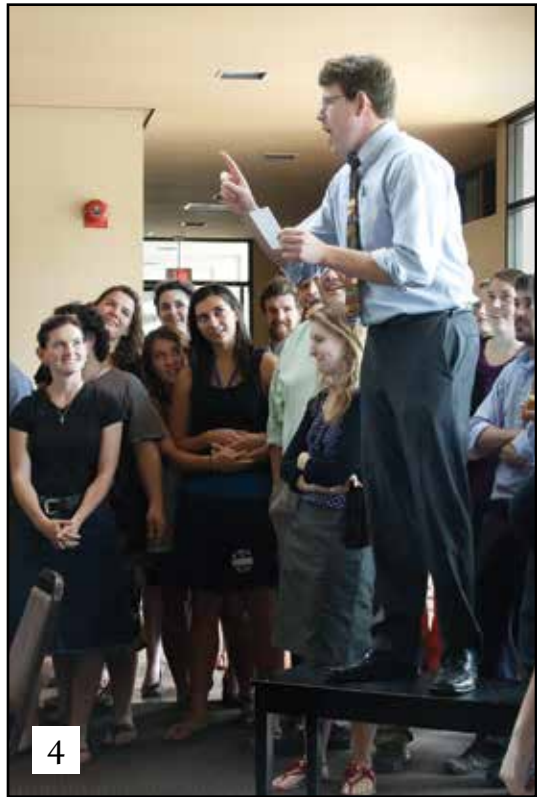
### Public Policy

“At the College you get to think about ideas on a really big scale, and that was helpful for me to clarify my thoughts and opinions about government,” says **Maria Santos**. The beneficiary of a Collegiate Network fellowship, Miss Santos will spend the next year as an editors’ assistant at *The Weekly Standard*, pitching and writing articles about politics and policy. **George Thomas** is enrolling in a master’s program in cultural studies at the William Carey University, with the goal of working eventually for an NGO, most likely in the developing world.

### ... and More!

Some members of the Class of 2013 are following career paths that are unique to them alone: Combining a lifelong love of sewing with an admiration for the way the College’s dress code “disposes us toward acting professionally in the classroom and in our community,” **Catherine Baer** hopes to nudge American fashion in a more positive direction as a professional in the material-textile industry. **Rebecca Lemieux**, who credits the College with helping her to “recognize the beautiful,” yearns to bring more beauty to family life as an interior designer. After completing his aviation license, **Alexander Bueche** will seek employment as an agricultural pilot. Finally, **Lauretta Brown**, **Mara Gawarecki**, and **Liam Collins** are applying to graduate school to study law, English literature, and physics, respectively.





# CAMPUS LIFE

1-2. Andrew Rossi raises his glass at the President's Reception for Seniors and their Families, held the evening before Commencement. 3. Seniors celebrate the completion of their last exam with a swim in one of the College's ponds. 4. Jonathan Dickman proudly announces the Class of 2013's accomplishments to the underclassmen during lunch in St. Joseph Commons. 5. Commencement Speaker Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston, meets with some of the College's Texan students. 6. Salvador Miranda tosses his text onto the fire at the thesis draft-burning party. 7. Enjoying one last get-together at the Junior-Senior Dinner

## Commencement 2013 Keepsakes!



Order photos, portraits, and DVDs at [thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013](http://thomasaquinas.edu/commencement2013)

### Calendar of Events

For more information, please see [www.thomasaquinas.edu/calendar](http://www.thomasaquinas.edu/calendar)

- Summer Seminars 2013 — The Year of Faith: Marriage and the Family  
[thomasaquinas.edu/summerseminars](http://thomasaquinas.edu/summerseminars) ..... July 12-14 & July 19-21
- Summer Great Books Program for High School Students  
[thomasaquinas.edu/summerprogram](http://thomasaquinas.edu/summerprogram) ..... July 21-August 3
- Seminar: "On Human Work" at the Napa Institute 2013 Conference  
[thomasaquinas.edu/napa](http://thomasaquinas.edu/napa) ..... August 1
- Convocation ..... August 26
- Opening Lecture: On Liberal Education  
John Baer, Thomas Aquinas College ..... August 30
- Fall Concert: Symbiosis Ensemble ..... September 13
- Lecture: Rev. Robert Barron  
Word on Fire ..... October 18

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