



THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

COMMENCEMENT 2011

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“Proclaim the True and Living God”

Archbishop Gomez Calls Graduates to the New Evangelization

On May 14, 2011, Thomas Aquinas College held its 37th annual Commencement exercises, blessed by the presence of the new Archbishop of Los Angeles, the Most Rev. José H. Gomez. Visiting the College for the first time since his installation in March, His Excellency urged the 81 graduates, as beneficiaries of a Catholic liberal education, to bring the love of Christ to a “post-Christian” world that unknowingly yearns for it.

“As graduates of this fine Catholic college,” Archbishop Gomez told the Class of 2011, “you have a unique responsibility for the New Evangelization. You must promote a new dialogue of reconciliation between faith and reason.”

This theme of evangelization stretched throughout the end-of-the-year celebrations, beginning with the President’s Dinner, held for members of the Senior Class and the College’s faculty and staff, earlier in the week. At the event, President Michael F. McLean likened the state of modern society to that of the Roman Empire in the early days of the Church, saying, “Your challenge, then, is much like that of the first Christians — to bring Christ to an increasingly pagan world deeply in need of His wisdom and love.” (See page 2.)

Commencement Day

The challenge faced by those first Christians was vividly brought to mind the following Saturday morning at the Baccalaureate Mass. While the graduates, faculty members, and the College’s Governors processed into Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel dressed in academic regalia, Archbishop Gomez and the College’s two chaplains entered vested in red, in honor of the Feast of St. Matthias, apostle and martyr. “Become saints like St. Matthias,” His Excellency urged — a saint who, tradition tells us, evangelized an entire country, yet died largely unknown out of love of Christ. (See page 11.)



Following the Mass, the Commencement ceremony took place on the academic quadrangle. Speaking on behalf of the Senior Class, Luke Bueche echoed the theme of evangelization. “We who are custodians of the truth and realize its character have a duty to communicate it to others,” Mr. Bueche told his classmates. “In virtue of what we know, it seems especially imperative for us to take this role upon ourselves.” (See page 5.)

Archbishop Gomez added in His Commencement Address that the nature of today’s world makes the “imperative” of which Mr. Bueche spoke all the more pressing. “Powerful interests have been at work for decades now, seeking to erase the influence and even the memory of Western civilization’s Christian roots,” His Excellency warned. “God has been eliminated, not only in science, but also in our laws and public policies, in our arts and literature, in our schools and media,” due to a needless divorce of faith from reason. (See page 3.)

A Mission

The antidote to this dire state of affairs, Archbishop Gomez explained, is God’s grace made manifest in the courage of learned believers. “This is your mission as graduates of this great college,” the Archbishop declared. “You must proclaim the true and living God to a world where He is unknown and considered unknowable.”

The Archbishop then proceeded to bless and distribute diplomas to each of the members of the Class of 2011. At the conclusion of the ceremony, he and College President Michael F. McLean led the graduates away from the quadrangle and, symbolically, into the next stage of their lives.

“It was a great honor to have Archbishop Gomez here with us,” said President McLean. “He has challenged our graduates to put the blessings of this education at the service of Christ and His Church, and I have every confidence they will do just that.”

In Praise and Gratitude

College Honors Archbishop Gomez, Marcus Berquist, and Kathleen Burke

At each Commencement, amid the celebration of Thomas Aquinas College’s newest graduates and their efforts, the College takes time to laud and to thank its most cherished friends. In recognition of extraordinary fidelity and service to the Church, the College awards its highest honor, the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion; and in gratitude to its most exceptionally generous benefactors, the College extends membership in its Order of St. Albert the Great.

At Commencement 2011 there were three such honorees. Receiving the Medallion were His Excellency José H. Gomez and late College founder Mr. Marcus R. Berquist. Inducted into the Order of St. Albert the Great was Miss Kathleen Burke of Los Alamitos, Calif., a longtime member of both the College’s President’s Council and its Legacy Society.

The Most Rev. José H. Gomez

In introducing Archbishop Gomez, President Michael F. McLean praised this year’s Commencement Speaker as one “who courageously lives out his priesthood as a faithful shepherd.” Dr. McLean noted the Archbishop’s long service to the Church as a parish priest in Texas, an auxiliary bishop in Denver, the Archbishop of San Antonio, and as the newly installed Archbishop of Los Angeles. He commended His Excellency, who has already personally met with every priest in the Archdiocese, “for making the priests of our archdiocese his focus ... as we, the laity, depend so completely on them for our spiritual nourishment.”

Before presenting the Archbishop with the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion, Chairman of the Board of Governors R. James Wensley read from a Board reso-

lution citing His Excellency’s “exemplary loyalty and devotion to the Holy Father and the Magisterium.” The resolution further acknowledged his efforts to cultivate vocations to the priesthood, to promote authentic catechesis, and to provide strong leadership among Latino Catholics throughout the country.

“It is an honor for me to accept the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion,” said Archbishop Gomez. “I admire this college and your faithfulness to the Church’s mission for higher education and the New Evangelization.”

Mr. Marcus R. Berquist

Founder and longtime tutor at Thomas Aquinas College, as well as the principal author of the College’s founding document, Marcus R. Berquist was a beloved presence on campus from its earliest days until his death last November. On graduation day the College commemorated his four decades of faithful service and unflinching fidelity to the Church by awarding him the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion.

Accepting the Medallion on Mr. Berquist’s behalf was his wife of 34 years, Laura (Steichen ’75) Berquist, and two of their six children, Theresa Mastroieni (’01) and Richard (’10). In presenting Mrs. Berquist with the Medallion, Chairman Wensley quoted from a Board resolution, observing that her late husband



“worked tirelessly to proclaim, support, and defend the teachings of the Church and to advance the mission of Christ on earth.”

“Mr. Berquist was a tutor, devoted to his students and to his fellow tutors for whom he was a model of discipleship to our patron, St. Thomas Aquinas,” remarked President McLean. “He lived the vocation of a teacher.”

Miss Kathleen Burke

It was through her onetime pastor in San Diego — the College’s first chaplain, Msgr. John Gallagher — that Kathleen Burke first became aware of Thomas Aquinas College more than two decades ago. Drawn by the College’s strong Catholic identity and the morally healthy student life it informs, she became a member of the President’s Council in 1990, and she has been making provision for the College and its students ever since.



After receiving a Bachelor of Science degree from St. Louis University in 1944, Miss Burke moved to California, where she has worked in the healthcare field throughout her adult life. She has held positions in numerous organizations as a health nutritionist, helping to provide for the physical needs of people of all ages and walks of life.

“Miss Burke’s profession has afforded her the opportunity to perform innumerable corporal works of mercy,” said Chairman Wensley of the newest member of the Order of St. Albert the Great. “And through her many gifts to Thomas Aquinas College, she has also been engaged in a spiritual work of mercy for our students.” Added President McLean, “We are blessed by her friendship, and we are profoundly grateful for her kindness.”

From the Desk of the President

Dr. Michael F. McLean's Remarks to the Class of 2011 at the President's Dinner

It is an honor for me to address you this evening.

Perhaps the most difficult part of the President's job is the fact that I don't spend as much time with students as I would like. This year, for example, my duties unfortunately resulted in my missing the thesis draft-burning party and the junior-senior dinner. I suppose I should mention, however, that those duties consisted primarily of a 10-day trip to Rome, about which I will speak in a few minutes. So it certainly wasn't all bad. In fact, it probably wasn't bad at all!



Mr. Kelly has spoken to you this evening about the past — about what you have accomplished in your four years at the College; about how you have grown in moral and intellectual virtue, and in the virtues of faith, hope, and charity in that time. It falls to me to speak to you,

briefly, about the future and about what the College's hopes and expectations are for you as you leave us and venture into the world beyond our gates.

Reflections on Rome

I thought I would begin with some reflections about our recent trip to Rome. It was Mrs. McLean's and my first trip to Europe; we went for the beatification of John Paul II and to visit some Church leaders with whom Dr. Dillon had forged close friendships and some with whom he intended to forge close friendships in 2009, on the very trip on which he was killed.

In his homily at the beatification Mass, Pope Benedict XVI recalled:

"Six years ago we gathered in this square to celebrate the funeral of Pope John Paul II. Our grief at his loss was deep, but even greater was our sense of an immense grace which embraced Rome and the whole world: a grace which was in some way the fruit of my beloved predecessor's entire life, and especially of his witness in suffering. Even then we perceived the fragrance of his sanctity, and in any number of ways God's people showed their veneration for him."

"You must strive for sanctity in your work, whatever it may be; you must strive for sanctity in your families, should you be called to the married state; you must strive for sanctity as priests and religious, should you be called to the priestly or religious life."

Bl. John Paul II had a profound relationship with many members of the College community, some of whom were comforted by him in times of illness or other suffering; some of whom were guided to the Church, or back to the Church, by his example and inspiration; and some of whom were encouraged and inspired by his blessing or by his words. Of course, we know he blessed the plans for Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel, is commemorated with his coat of arms in the Chapel floor, and prayed in a special way for our late chaplain, Fr. Tom Conn. Of his many writings, it is probably fair to say that *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, which concerns Catholic higher education, and *Fides et Ratio* have been most relevant to the life of the College.

On our trip, Pope Benedict's words about people's veneration for Pope John Paul II were borne out by the women weeping and praying before John Paul II's tomb below St. Peter's, several days before the remains of the *beatified* John Paul II were moved upstairs into the main basilica; by the splendor and joy of the beatification Mass itself, culminating in the Holy Father's proclamation, "*Beatus Iohannes Paulus Secundus!*", an announcement greeted by the cheers of the many thousands of people gathered in the square and an announcement which seemed to echo in the air even during the quiet parts of the Mass; and by the piety and gratitude of the many women kneeling and prostrate on the cobblestones during the Mass of Thanksgiving the following day.

Of particular importance to the College, and to you, is the fact that on this trip we had meetings (either in person or by telephone) with 15 Cardinals and other leaders of the Church. Despite the College's rather remote location, its work, and the work you have done the past four years, is one with the work of the Universal Church. The Church leaders with whom we met have a profound respect for Thomas Aquinas College and for you, our students and soon-to-be graduates. They look forward with great

eagerness and confidence to your joining in their apostolates, in whatever ways you may be called.

You are well prepared to assist in their work, for you understand the proper relationship between faith and philosophy; you have a good understanding of the methods and doctrines of St. Thomas, and you will endeavor to apply those doctrines to the modern world in what I hope will be prudent and charitable ways; you have developed a love for reverent and prayerful liturgy; you are the well-formed and well-educated Catholics the Church so desperately needs.

Christianizing a Pagan World

A visit to Rome impresses one with the following fact: Rome's was once the story of Christianizing a pagan world. For example, St. Peter's was built on a pagan burial ground which itself had been displaced by a Christian cemetery in which St. Peter himself was buried. The Colosseum, site of so much persecution, is now in ruins while over 500 Catholic churches are in Rome. And, since the 5th century, a Catholic church dedicated to the Virgin Mary and all the Martyr Saints occupies the Roman Pantheon, the center of pagan worship.

Unfortunately, in our time, Rome's and the Western world's is more the story of paganizing a Christian world: There appear to be more tourists than believers in the churches; abortion is legal; euthanasia, while currently illegal in Italy, is already legal in the Netherlands, Belgium, and Switzerland; and Christian marriage is under attack. Your challenge, then, is much like that of the first Christians — to bring Christ to an increasingly pagan world deeply in need of His wisdom and love.

In the words of Archbishop José Gomez, who will be your Commencement Speaker, "Evangelization is all about bringing people before the person and the life of Jesus Christ. But it doesn't end there. After this initial personal encounter you have to complement it with education of the Faith — catechesis." You are well prepared to be teachers of the Faith, for you have the education, or at least the beginnings of the education. You have the words; what you must do is summon the rhetorical power and eloquence, the prudence and humility, the hope and the charity to find the right words at the right time.

In 1985, Bl. John Paul II said, "new saints are needed." You who are Christians are called to be those saints; you who are not Christian are called to lives of virtue. "You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect," says Our Lord. In *Lumen Gentium* we read, "All the faithful, whatever their condition or state — though each in his own way — are called by the Lord to that perfection of sanctity by which the Father Himself is perfect." You must strive for sanctity in your work, whatever it may be; you must strive for sanctity in your families, should you be called to the married state; you must strive for sanctity as priests and religious, should you be called to the priestly or religious life. Evangelization, whether new or old, requires that the world sees Christ in you or, in the words of Archbishop Gomez, that you bring people before the person and life of Jesus Christ.

To Make All Things New

I thought of all of us at the College, and especially of you seniors, as I listened to Pope Benedict make the same point at his April 27 general audience:

"Having put on Christ in baptism, we are called to be renewed daily in the virtues which He taught us, especially charity which binds all the rest together in perfect harmony. By living this new life we are not only interiorly transformed, but we also change the world around us. Charity in fact brings that spiritual freedom which can break down any wall and build a new world of solidarity, goodness, and respect for the dignity of all. Easter, then, is a gift to be received ever anew in faith, so that we may become constant leavens of life, justice, and reconciliation in our world. As believers in the Risen Lord, this is our mission: to awaken hope in place of despair, joy in place of sadness, and life in place of death. With Christ, through Him and in Him, let us strive to make all things new!"

As hostile as the world may be, as difficult as the work of evangelization may be, I urge you to go forth filled with courage and with hope, for we know Christ is with us even to the consummation of the world. We at the College have done our best to introduce you to the good, the true, and the beautiful. If you are to be successful evangelizers, if you are to fulfill Our Lord's commission to "go and make disciples of all nations," it is now up to you *to be good, to be truthful, to be beautiful* and, last, but certainly not least, echoing the words of the Gospels and of Bl. John Paul II once again, "to be not afraid."



On May 11, 2011, Dr. McLean hosted the annual President's Dinner for the seniors, faculty, and staff of Thomas Aquinas College. From left to right: Seniors Nathaniel Beckman and Philip Solorzano celebrate the end of the academic year; a standing ovation for College Chaplain Rev. Cornelius Buckley, S.J., who responds with his best impression of a papal wave; Dean Brian T. Kelly proposes a toast to the Class of 2011.

Our Task to Proclaim the Gospel of the God of All Creation

The Commencement Address of The Most Rev. José H. Gomez

President McLean, Dr. Kelly, and members of the faculty; Mr. Wensley and members of the Board of Governors; Fr. Buckley and Fr. Raftery; distinguished graduates; all of you, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ:

I am touched by the kindness of your invitation to be here and to share this beautiful day of joy with you.

I have been here in Southern California for almost a year now. On May 26, I will celebrate the anniversary of my installation as coadjutor. I have been the Archbishop of Los Angeles since the beginning of March.

I wake up every morning and I realize: I'm not in San Antonio, Tex., any more.

Los Angeles is truly an amazing city, with all of its liveliness and energy, all the diversity of languages, religions, cultures, and lifestyles!

I was reading the remarks of Bl. John Paul II when he visited Los Angeles in 1987. He called the city "a great metropolis." He was right. It is truly a city of the world.

And the Church is a kind of microcosm. We have almost 75 ethnic and national groups in the Archdiocese, and we celebrate the Holy Eucharist and minister to people in more than 40 different languages. It really is what God calls His Catholic Church to be — *una familia de Dios* — "One family of God," drawn from every country, race, and language.

I am humbled and excited by the possibilities for my ministry in Los Angeles. So I ask you please to remember me and my ministry in your prayers.

"We Need To Hear Thomas's Voice"

It is an honor for me to accept the St. Thomas Aquinas Medallion. I admire this college and your faithfulness to the Church's mission for higher education and the New Evangelization. So this is a sincere honor for me.

I have been studying St. Thomas since I was a young man in the seminary. I wrote my thesis on his theology of the virtues and specifically the virtue of courage.

Last year I wrote a book called *Men of Brave Heart*. I tried to take a fresh look at Thomas's theology in light of the teachings and witness of the saints, and I applied this teaching to issues in the moral formation of priests and seminarians.

We need to hear Thomas's voice today — especially his ideas about the image of God and the image of Christ and the *teleology* or purpose of the human person. He reminds us that, in the words of the *Catechism*: "The vocation of humanity is to show forth the image of God and to be transformed into the image of the Father's only Son."

Or in Thomas's own beautiful words: "The ultimate end of things is to become like God!"

Thomas's concerns are very close to the heart of what I want to talk with you about today.

Today's Challenge

I want to start with a story that Bl. John Paul II once told. I have been thinking a lot about him. I know you are as overjoyed as I am that he has been beatified.

I have always felt a strong connection of grace with him. I was a new priest, ordained just three months, when he was named pope in 1978. He called me to be a bishop in 2001 and, not long before his death in 2005, he called me to be an archbishop. And I feel the hand



Archbishop Gomez presents a diploma to Nathaniel Beckman.

of Providence at work in his being beatified as I begin my ministry here in Los Angeles.

Recently, I was reading some retreat talks he gave for university students of Krakow in 1972, back when he was still Cardinal Karol Wojtyla. In one of these talks, he described a letter he received from a great natural scientist. Here is what that scientist wrote to him: "For the most part, I do not find God on the paths of my science. But there are moments — most often in the face of the majesty of nature, the beauty of the mountains, for example — that a strange thing happens: I, who do not find God on the paths of my science, at such moments, I feel that *God exists!* And then I begin to pray."

This is what I want to talk with you about this afternoon. It is something that concerns me very much.

Why is it that during the course of this good man's scientific work he could not find God? How come, when he was in his laboratory or doing experiments in the natural world, this great scientist could not discover that God exists? Why did he not think of his scientific work as a kind of prayer, as something pleasing that he could offer to God?

"As graduates of this fine Catholic college, you have a unique responsibility for this new evangelization. You must promote a new dialogue of reconciliation between faith and reason."

My dear sisters and brothers, he could not because we have allowed Almighty God to become eclipsed in our scientific and intellectual life — in higher education, and in our culture in general.

We have eliminated God from all the processes by which we seek knowledge about ourselves and about our world. God is no longer a factor in our methods. Hence, God is nowhere to be found among our conclusions.

This fact has profound implications for the world you are entering into, my dear young brothers and sisters.

You are entering into a culture in America and in the West that is increasingly secularized and "de-Christianized."

Powerful interests have been at work for decades now, seeking to erase the influence — and even the memory — of Western civilization's Christian roots. God has been eclipsed not only in science, but also in our laws and public policies, in our arts and literature, in our schools and media.

The goal, advocates of this effort say, is to get to a "post-Christian society."

They imagine a beautiful world, liberated from depending on God or superstitious or "magical" thinking. They imagine a society governed by reason and technology, dedicated to individual freedom and the pursuit of material comfort. And they imagine a society that would have no interest in defining the "good life," or making distinctions among the array of religions, cultures, lifestyles, and viewpoints we find in the modern metropolis.

Now, I believe this "goal" of a secular, post-Christian society is a seductive illusion and a trap. But that is the subject for another talk at another time.

This afternoon, I just want to point out that this mindset will be a challenge to you, dear graduates. But it forms the territory of your Christian witness and mission. This is the environment in which you are called to proclaim Christ as His disciples.



You are about to commence into a world where more and more of our brothers and sisters live without any awareness of their need for God. You will realize very quickly that in order to participate in the economic, political, and cultural life of our society, you will be asked to essentially conduct yourself as if you don't believe in God or as if He does not exist.

It is increasingly common today — even for good, faithful people — to treat their religious faith as something private that has nothing to do with the rest of their lives.

You need to resist that temptation in your own lives. But you also have an important duty to confront this culture with the power and the promise of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Our world needs to be brought to a new remembrance of the God Who created us and redeemed us and Who calls us to a love that never ends.

A Reconciliation of Faith and Reason

As graduates of this fine Catholic college, you have a unique responsibility for this new evangelization. You must promote a new dialogue of reconciliation between faith and reason.

Bl. John Paul taught us that: "Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of the truth."

That is a beautiful saying. God made us with minds that can reason and hearts that can believe. We are "hard-wired," you might say, to seek the truth about who we are, the truth about the world we live in, and the truth about God.

And we can only discover these truths through our use of *both* reason *and* faith.

The fundamental problem today is that we have told ourselves that the insights of faith are irrelevant to our study of the world and to the study of the human person. Our Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI speaks of "the modern self-limitation of reason." What he means is that we have told ourselves that there are certain things we can never really know. We have made a decision to *limit* our reason to only certain kinds of knowledge.

We have told ourselves that we can only know those things that we can experience ourselves or verify by experiments in a laboratory or by a mathematical equation. Everything else is rejected as "subjective," something private and hence unknowable.

Since we cannot "see" God with a telescope or detect the human soul with an MRI machine, we conclude that trying to talk about these realities is a waste of time. We conclude that we cannot know for sure whether they are true or not.

Now, my brothers and sisters, this way of thinking is like going into a fight with one hand tied behind your back, or trying to fly with only one wing.

Do we really want to accept that "reality" is only what we can see or touch or "prove" with experiments? What about the reality of the Eucharist or the sacraments? What about our Confession of Faith — our belief in things that are seen and *unseen*, visible and *invisible*?

Continued on the following page

Our world needs the eyes of faith, my brothers and sisters.

The “modern self-limitation of reason” has led to moral chaos. We are building a world where faith and life are completely separated; a world where knowledge and technical ability are separated from ethics and morality; and where power is divorced from responsibility. It is a world in which we can identify causes and effects, but not reasons or purposes.

Reason is a great gift from God. But reason alone can't give meaning to our lives. Reason alone can find “no reason” to defend the weak, the unborn, or the human embryo. Reason alone can find no reason, no value in a person born with disabilities.

The Second Vatican Council warned us, and Bl. John Paul stressed again and again: “Without a Creator, the creature vanishes.” When God is unknown, we are unknowable to ourselves.

That is what has happened with the divorce of faith and reason.

Without faith, we can discover how the world works. But not *why*. We can't know where we come from or how we ought to live. Or why we were created.

Reason gives us only partial truths. But we are made to desire the fullness of truth. We are made to desire our Creator.

The problem today is that our intellectuals and our cultural leaders no longer have confidence. They are skeptical that we can know our Creator from what He has created. So we bracket off the question of God as something we cannot know.

The New Evangelization

My brothers and sisters, you are commencing into a world that has made the one true God an “unknown god.” It is a lot like the world that the first Christians lived in. You are entering a world that is a kind of “spiritual bazaar” — filled with ancient religions, new spiritualities, new paganisms, and all sorts of obsessions and substitutes for religious faith.

It is a lot like Athens, when St. Paul visited there in the first century. Do you remember his great speech at the Areopagus, the forum for Athens's cultural elite? St. Paul said:

“Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious. For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, *To an unknown god*. What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you” (Acts 17: 22–23).

This is your mission as graduates of this great college, my brothers and sisters. You must proclaim the true and living God to a world where He is unknown and considered unknowable.

Bl. John Paul used to talk about the need to evangelize all the new “areopagi” of modern culture. He called us to infuse Gospel values into all the areas where elite attitudes and opinions are formed and expressed — science, politics, business, the arts, philosophy, higher education, popular entertainment, and the media.

This is *your* mission, dear graduates!

Every Christian in every age has to give an account of the hope that is in him! In our times, the great defense we have to make is that God is “knowable.” We have to help



Members of the Class of 2011 sing *Non nobis, Domine, Domine non nobis, Domine Sed nomini, sed nomini, tuo da gloriam* — “Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Your name give glory” — at the conclusion of the Commencement exercises.

people understand that it is still possible to know God, to love God, and to serve God.

We must tell the world once more the good news that we have a Creator!

We *can* know God through reason. As St. Paul said, we can know the invisible nature and eternal power of our Creator, from the visible and temporal things of creation.

Science and reason have helped us to see that our world *is* intelligible, that it is “reasonable,” that it operates according to patterns that have a precise order and a predictable logic.

The world is *not* chaos and random chance. It is the opposite. From the tiniest cell to the orbit of the planets, we know there is an intelligent structure to everything in creation.

This confirms the revelation of faith. This confirms what the Gospel tells us. That in the beginning was the Word, *the Logos*. And in Him all things were created.

But faith opens us to know even more. Faith opens us to know that the Creator is not only divine Reason. He is Love. He is the One the poet Dante spoke of: *The Love that moves the sun and the other stars!*

The designs of nature speak to us of God's love and truth! Creation is the work of God's plan of loving goodness — a plan of love born in the heart of God before the foundation of the world.

This is what we must tell people!

To again quote your patron, St. Thomas Aquinas: “Creatures came into existence when the Key of Love opened His hand.”

My brothers and sisters, we can never be content with only proving God's existence. We need to proclaim God's love. We need to proclaim Him as Lord of creation, and Master of history, and King of every human heart.

We must proclaim the Gospel of the God of all creation to the men and women of our day. We must tell them the good news that our Creator is a Father of tender mercies. That He made this world for a reason. That He made each one of us for a reason.

We must proclaim that the world exists for the praise of God's glory. And that, as Irenaeus declared: “The glory of God is man fully alive.”

Dear graduates: You are called to make many converts to the God of all Creation.

Help Others Make this Journey

I want to leave you with a beautiful story of conversion. It is the story of one of our contemporaries, a great priest, professor, and theologian, Cardinal Avery Dulles. He died just a few years ago at the end of a long and fruitful career of service to the Church.

He had grown up very privileged and as a high-church Presbyterian. His dad, as you may know, was the famous John Foster Dulles, who was secretary of state under President Eisenhower.

But by the time he got to Harvard University in 1936, Dulles had no faith. He was very much a modern man. He believed science had proven religion to be all superstition.

He thought that God was a kind of excuse made up to explain things that could not be explained yet by reason. As he saw it, the world was just a mass of matter and energy. Human life had emerged by chance and evolved according to the process of natural selection.

Dulles remained a seeker after the truth. He loved philosophy and history and poetry.

One day, he was reading St. Augustine's book, *The City of God*. He got up and took a walk outside. It was springtime, and the trees were just starting to bud. Dulles began to think about the trees. Why every year, at around this time, did the trees and flowers start to bud?

He wrote in his memoir: “The thought came to me suddenly, with all the strength and novelty of a revelation, that these little buds in their innocence and meekness followed a rule, a law of which I as yet knew nothing.”

Dulles reasoned that if the trees exhibited an order and purpose, there must be some higher power of intelligence behind them, a Designer, a Creator.

That was the start. That night for the first time in years, he prayed the “Our Father,” which he had learned when he was a child. He started reading the gospels every day. He discovered and came to fall in love with Jesus Christ.

This is a beautiful story.

We don't know if that scientist who wrote to Bl. John Paul all those years ago ever came to the Faith. We do know that the beauty of this world, the beauty of creation, brought him to pray to his Creator, as it did for Cardinal Dulles.

What we must all do, my brothers and sisters, is to help others make this journey also.

We must help them to cross the threshold — from the wonders of this world, from all the beauty in heaven and earth, to know the God of all creation. And to believe in Jesus Christ, the firstborn of all creation, through Whom He created the world and through Whom He upholds the universe, by the Word of His power!

Thank you for your attention today my friends. And thank you again for the great honor of this St. Thomas Aquinas Medallion.

I ask the intercession of our Blessed Mother, the Seat of Wisdom, that our Father in heaven will bestow upon you all the blessings of creation and salvation.

The Most Rev. José H. Gomez, Archbishop of Los Angeles, was the 2011 Thomas Aquinas College Commencement Speaker. Audio of his address is available on the College's website, www.thomasaquinas.edu.

Semper Fidelis 2011

Joseph O'Brien tries to contain a smile as his parents, Maria and John O'Brien of Crofton, Ky., affix single gold bars to his midnight-blue coat, signifying his new rank as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. Mr. O'Brien, who spent six weeks over each of the last two summers at the Corps' Officer Candidate School in Quantico, Va., received his commission only hours after Commencement 2011 on the very same stage at the foot of the academic quadrangle. He joins four other recent Thomas Aquinas College alumni who have become officers in the Marine Corps over the last few years.



The Class of 2011 and Senior Thesis Titles



"Bless the Lord, O My Soul!":
The Appeal of the Holy Sacrifice of
the Mass to the Soul of Man
DAGNY ALISE BACH
Lidgerwood, North Dakota



Mary, Queen of Scholars:
An Exposition of the Blessed
Mother As an Exemplar of the
Catholic Intellectual
EMILY KATHERINE BARRY
Port Washington, New York



Experience Speaks in Overtones:
A Look into the Unity of Music
**NATHANIEL CHARLES
BECKMAN**
Anaheim, California

On the Book of Creation
MICHAEL JAMES BERNDT
Camarillo, California



The End of the Journey is
Transformation into God: An
Inquiry into Contemplative Prayer
As a Perfection of Man Whereby
Charity Unites Man to God
LAUREN ELENA BERTOTTI
Susanville, California



"Thou Shalt Not Bear False
Witness against Thy Neighbor"
CARLIE PATRICIA BETZ
Fall City, Washington



Boethius and Dante:
Why Circular Motion Fittingly
Represents the Relationship
between God and His Creatures
**ERIKA MARIE THERESE
BROWN**
Churchton, Maryland



They Shall Bear You
upon Their Hands
LUKE WILLIAM BUECHE
Shelby Township, Michigan



Determining the Indeterminate:
How Much Can Natural Science
Grasp Matter?
**CARA MICHELLE JOAN
BUSKMILLER**
Dallas, Texas

Charity: Unfolding the
Mystery of Man
ISABEL CACHO
Costa Mesa, California



Whether the Vicious Man
Is Irreversibly So
KEVIN BROR CARLSON
Douglasville, Georgia



An Exposition and Criticism of
the Marxist Epistemology
**DANIEL FREDRIC WATSON
CARPENTER**
Anchorage, Alaska



Eliot, Joyce, and Social Progress
**NICHOLAS ANTHONY
THOMAS MORE COLLINS**
Santa Paula, California



Take a Chance on Aristotle:
A Defense of Aristotle's Claim That
Chance Is in Things Which Are for
the Sake of an End
LOUIS MARTIN CONKLIN
Mount Angel, Oregon



The Educational Role of the
Family in the Ethical and Political
Dimensions of the Human Good
**CATHERINE BERNADETTE
SYREN CONNELLY**
Tacoma, Washington

Determinacy and Contingency in
Nature and the Supernatural
**PATRICK AUGUSTINE
COUGHLIN**
Santa Paula, California



Reconciling God's Simplicity with
His Free Will: How St. Thomas's
Solution Solves the Difficulty
DEAN MAXWELL COVALT
McHenry, Illinois



*Quid Est Dignitas?: A Philosophical
Account of Human Dignity
According to St. Thomas Aquinas*
**PETER RICHARD WATSON
CROSS**
Leominster, Massachusetts



PATRON

Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman



CLASS QUOTATION

"When I was yet young, before I wandered about, I sought for wisdom openly in my prayer. I prayed for her before the temple, and unto the very end I will seek after her, and she flourished as a grape soon ripe. My heart delighted in her, my foot walked in the right way, from my youth up I sought after her."

— Sirach 51:13-15



"I Do Not Do the Good I Want, but the Evil I Do Not Want": An Investigation into the Moral Struggle
SARA KAMALI'I
YURIKO DALE
Volcano, Hawai'i



"Now There Seems to Be the Greatest Friendship between Husband and Wife": An Examination of Sacramental Marriage As the Greatest and Most Complete Friendship
IRENE CATHERINE DANA
Sacramento, California



Whether We Ought to Use Our Imaginations to Follow the Two Great Commandments
JOSEPH HENRY DETAR
Liberty Lake, Washington

Let Everything That Has Breath Praise the Lord: A Theological Reflection On Liturgy and Music
MATTHEW GEORGE DOLAN
Worcester, Massachusetts



"My Way Is All Confidence and Love": An Investigation into the Identity of Christian Confidence
EILEEN ROSE DONOVAN
Mequon, Wisconsin



"Behold, I Set before You This Day a Blessing and a Curse": The Role of Advanced Technology in Society
THERESE MARIE DOVEL
Cork, Ireland



The Wealth of Nations: A Critique of Adam Smith's *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*
JOSEPH PHILIP ROBERT DOYLE
Ottawa, Ontario, Canada



The Complexity of Grace by Which Man Is Saved: An Inquiry into St. Thomas's *Treatise on Grace*
DORIANNE HOPE DROGIN
Irving, Texas



"The Riddles of God Are More Satisfying Than the Solutions of Man": On the Foolishness of God in *The Brothers Karamazov*
LUCY APPERSON FEIL
Atlanta, Georgia

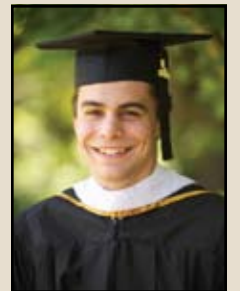
Whether Kant's Categorical Imperative or Aristotle's Idea of the Good Better Substantiates the Idea of Moral Necessity
JANE FAY FORSYTH
Santa Paula, California



Before You Vote: An Investigation into the Qualities That Make a Great Democratic Leader
CLARA MARIE ANNE FOX
London, Ontario, Canada



What St. Thomas Would Not Do during World War II: Why Double-Effect Ends when Lying Begins
DANIEL FLEMING GERRITY
Santa Maria, California



The Slavery of the Sons of God: Whether Men Can Truly Be Called Slaves of God
CONSTANCE MARIE GRAVES
Kingston, Washington



"Blessed are the Barren": On the Implications of Lockean Principles in the Constitution
JORGE ALBERTO GUARDADO, JR.
Camarillo, California



Persons Attempting to Find a Moral Will Be Shot: How Stories Affect the Soul
JOHN FRANCIS HAGGARD
Chatsworth, California

All Aboard the Soul Train: Heaven on Earth Here We Come
ANNE ELIZABETH HUGUELET
Frankfort, Illinois



"There Is Nothing So Precious As a Faithful Friend, and No Scales Can Measure His Excellence" (Sirach 6:15): An Investigation Concerning the Role of Friendship in Man's Salvation
ANNE ELIZABETH KAISER
Ojai, California



The Free Market and Human Dignity: A Defense of Capitalism
CHARLES JOHN KAUPKE
Villa Park, California



The Interior of a Doll's House: An Examination of the Relationship between Husband and Wife As Found in *A Doll's House*
SARAH MICEAL KELLY
Anacortes, Washington



Beginning the Hour by a Miracle
ESTHER MAURA KING
Brussels, Belgium



Virtue As Madness in Don Quixote
VICTORIA CORRIENE LEWIS
Three Hills, Alberta, Canada

Senior Thesis Titles



“Lord, You Are My God and My Lord, and I Have Never Seen You”: A Consideration of Man’s Natural Desire For God in Light of His Natural End
PAULA THÉRÈSE LYONS
Battle Ground, Washington



Sublimely Divine: The Plan of Zeus and the Natural Order in the *Iliad* of Homer
JOSEPH MAHAR
Phoenix, Arizona



“He That Loveth Iniquity, Hateth His Own Soul”: Sin and Self-Destruction in Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*
MARY COLETTE MASTELLER
Santa Paula, California

Nothing Comes from Nothing, Nothing Ever Could: Why Every Mobile Needs a Mover
JORDAN RICHARD CRUZ MATTEOLI
Eureka, California



“Fierce Wars and Faithful Loves Shall Moralize My Song”: An Examination of Edmund Spenser’s Poetical Presentation of Courage in the Legend of the Red Cross Knight
MARIA CATHERINE ROSE MAZZA
Oak Creek, Wisconsin



“The Element of Nobility, Not What Is Beastlike, Should Have the Leading Role”: An Aristotelian Argument against Machiavelli’s View of Peace and His Subsequent Understanding of Virtue
MONICA GRACE AGNES MAZZA
Oak Creek, Wisconsin



“We Go to the Father of Souls, but It Is Necessary to Pass by the Dragon”: Redemptive Grace in the Works of Flannery O’Connor
EMILY ANN MCBRYAN
Narberth, Pennsylvania



Be Still and Know That I Am God: The Need for the Silence of Contemplative Prayer in an Active Life
MARY CECILIA THÉRÈSE MCCANN
St. Louis, Missouri



“It Is Impossible to Step into the Same River Twice”: Whether Truth Requires That the Way One Understands Be the Same As the Way Things Are
JOHN MYLES MCCARTHY
Gallup, New Mexico

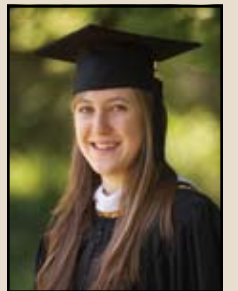
“Eat, O Friends, and Drink: Drink Deeply, O Lovers”: The Eucharist As the Source of Charity
KIMBERLY CATHERINE MCCARTHY
Los Angeles, California



Philosophus et Orator: A Reconciliation of Aristotle’s *Ethics* and *Politics* and Cicero’s *De Officiis* through the Role of Honour in the Context of the City
CLARKE TOMÁS MITCHELL
Minard West, County Kerry, Ireland



In the Mighty Throng: On the Fittingness of Human Community in Man’s End
MONICA MARIE MONTANARO
Stafford, Virginia



Letters
MATTHEW ALBERT NOLAN
Andover, New Jersey



By Whose Authority: An Investigation of the Source of Authority in Government
JOSEPH ALOYSIUS O’BRIEN
Crofton, Kentucky



First Things First: A Consideration of the Principal Differences between Aristotle and Descartes
CATHLEEN ROSE O’REILLY
Ojai, California

Are You Sure About That?: An Investigation of Certainty in Knowledge
ALEX JOSEPH SAMUEL OGRODNICK
Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, Canada



Love Promises Eternity: What It Means for Sacramental Marriage to Be a Sign of Christ and His Church
MARINA SHEA OLSON
Fresno, California



Strange Bedfellows: The Apparent Opposition and Actual Relation between the Political Life and the Contemplative Life
HELENA EMILIA ORELLANA
Santa Paula, California



Male and Female He Created Them: An Inquiry into Gender As Integral to a Creation That Reflects the Divine and Its Existence in the Human Soul
KJERSTEN HOPE PANTHER
Nampa, Idaho



The Tragic Ciceronian: Tacitus on the Moral Economy of Freedom
MEGHAN AISLINN PARKER
Los Angeles, California



Evil and The Infinite God: An Argument against the Claim That the Problem of Evil Proves God Does Not Exist
ERIC MICHAEL PATRICK
Whitmore, California

The Class of 2011 and Senior Thesis Titles



An Intolerable Separation:
A Critique of John Locke's *Letter Concerning Toleration* in Light of Catholic Doctrine on the Relation between Church and State
DEREK RICHARD REMUS
Coaldale, Alberta, Canada



The Unbreakable Chain:
Fate, Providence, and the Problem of Evil in *The Consolation of Philosophy*
DEAN CHRISTOPHER ROWINSKI
Independence, Ohio



Doubting Thomas: Aristotle's View of Justice in Light of Hobbes's Objections
BRIAN JAMES ROXBURGH
York, North Yorkshire, United Kingdom

In Rendering Caesar His Due, One Fulfills a Duty to God: A Defense of Christians As Faithful Members of a Political Community
ERIKA CELESTE RUDZIS
Edmonds, Washington



When *Wow!* Leads to Prayer: How the Beauty of the Natural World Brings Men Closer to God
ALLISON ELIZABETH RUEDIG
Libertyville, Illinois



The Layman's Ladder of Humility to Heavenly Exaltation
SIERRA WINSLOW SCOTT
Cottonwood, Arizona



"Every Careless Word They Speak": An Investigation into the Proper Limits for Private Moral Judgments about Others
MELISSA THERESE ANGELICA SEDLER
Oxnard, California



For Richer or for Poorer: Whether Material Goods Are Necessarily Contrary to Human Perfection
MONICA MARIE ANTOINETTE SHANEYFELT
Santa Paula, California



"Let Him Who Has No Sword Sell His Tunic and Buy One": The Individual's Obligation to Use Lethal Force in the Defense of His Neighbor's Life
MARY ROSE SHORT
Ojai, California

The Manly Spirit of America: Popular Government and Faction in the Federalist Papers
COLLEEN QUINN SMITH
Angels Camp, California



An Inquiry into the Sin of Usury and the Causal Characteristics of the Sin
SEAN KRAMER SMITH
Oakdale, California



Can You Have Your Cake and Taste It Too?: A Consideration of Whether Substance Is Sensible
PHILIP HENRY SOLORZANO
Webster, New York



A Critique of the Biological Species Definition
PAUL ANDREW STEIGERWALD
Elm Grove, Wisconsin



Man's Natural Desire for God
DOROTHY LOUISE TULBERG
Santa Paula, California



Let Me Play You a Song, Then Tell Me How I Feel: An Inquiry into the Signification of Music
SAMUEL JOSEPH TULBERG
Santa Paula, California

"When I Found Him Whom My Soul Loves, I Held Him and Would Not Let Him Go": Contemplative Prayer—Every Man's Path to Sanctification
CHRISTINA VAN SCHOICK
Nazareth, Pennsylvania



"A Garden Locked Is My Sister, My Bride": Mary As Theotokos and the Sacredness of Woman As Life-Bearer
ELIZABETH CLARE WOOD
Ojai, California



On the Principles of Psychology and the Necessity of Affirmation As a Tool for Psychological Health
FRANCESCA LYN YAKLIN
Bellevue, Iowa



The Phenomena of the Intermediate Sciences: An Exploration of the Use of Mathematics in Physics
MICHAEL JOSEPH YANOSCHIK
Ada, Michigan



Calculus: Real Knowledge
MICHAEL LOUIS ZEPEDA
Jerome, Idaho



Truly Thou Art a God Who Hidest Thyself: St. Paul, St. Thomas Aquinas, and Blaise Pascal on the Possibility of Proving That God Exists
RAMONA GRACE ZEPEDA
Alhambra, California

“To Live a Life Truly Infused with Wisdom”

The 2011 Senior Address

By Luke Bueche ('11)

Your Excellency, chaplains, president and faculty, members of the Board of Governors, friends of the College, parents, and my fellow students; graduates of the Class of 2011: Welcome and thank you for the privilege of giving this address.

I will begin by observing the duty of any recipient: to offer thanks for what he has received. So for myself and on behalf of the whole

Senior Class, thank you to all of those who made this day possible: to Your Excellency for celebrating Mass and giving the Commencement Address, and to all of those who assisted in preparing the grounds and executing the ceremonies.

As we seniors saw all the preparations being made in the last few days, we would nudge each other and say, “That’s for us!” We are really appreciative of all the effort that has gone into this day on our behalf. Thank you also to the staff, and the administration as a whole, for attending to the practical side of this institution, keeping it running and organized. Without you we would not be here.

Thank you to our parents who were instrumental both in bringing us into this world and to Thomas Aquinas College, and who made many sacrifices to keep us here. I am eternally grateful to my parents for all they have done for my education, and we thank all of our parents who were similarly committed.



“Our studies have given us a brief glance at the most precious of all things. There should be no influence whatever that should induce us to surrender these things. No kind of calling or occupation should distract us from what is highest and most essential.”

We also owe a huge debt of gratitude to the faculty. They have been our teachers for four years, the master artisans who formed and shaped our thoughts and learning. For their tireless dedication, for their eagerness in sharing, for their willingness to stay late and “repeat it one more time” for those of us who didn’t get it, for the fun times in class, and for the hard times, thank you. We will take more from you than from anyone else in this community, and it is through your devotion and effort that we sit here today. Thank you, and may God bless you for it always.

As my classmates and I observe the proceedings of this day, it seems to me that we ought to have two questions in mind: What have we done, and what ought we to do?

What We Have Done ...

In answer to the first: Graduation signifies the fulfillment of four years of labor, in which we have struggled to complete the rigorous program laid out for us at Thomas Aquinas College. It signifies that we have completed that program with a degree of aptitude and comprehension sufficient for this institution to deem us “knowers,” and to go out to the world stamped with its seal. Most of all it signifies that we, through our labors and knowledge, have grasped something of Wisdom, and know, in theory if not in practice, what it is to be a wise man.

We have studied Wisdom at its foundations, in subjects like geometry, mathematics, and laboratory. These disciplines do not so much impart Wisdom as, by their internal order and study of the natural world, prepare the mind for the reception of Wisdom. The countless hours spent memorizing props and the endless flow of (seemingly) unrelated handouts in lab were for this end: to bring the mind to a condition of orderliness, accustoming it to logically follow premises to their conclusions; and to familiarize the mind with the works of created nature in which the genius of the Uncreated manifests itself.

We have also studied the beginnings and intermediary stages of Wisdom. Philosophies of nature and of created things help us to see broadly where to categorize any of the numberless particulars we may happen upon. They present us with a comprehensive view of reality, and lead us to understand nature and created things through their causes. Aristotle’s *Physics* and *De Anima* have especially assisted us to realize these truths.

Finally we have studied Wisdom itself. In the *Metaphysics* we no longer study nature or particular created things, but all things in one span. We study being as being. This study reveals to us the first causes of all things. Since it deals with what is causal for all beings and with what is causal primarily, it is the highest science and it encompasses all others. We also study Wisdom itself by studying the first cause no longer as cause but in itself. This is the study of God, which we do through the *Metaphysics* and the *Summa* of St. Thomas. It is truly the primary science because its subject, God, is Himself the highest being as well as the source and cause of all being.

Our efforts, then, have led us to Wisdom, which is, in summary, knowledge of all things ordered as all things are seen under the formal aspect of being, as well as knowledge of the highest being. We did not seek this knowledge as a means to any further end, nor could we have. Practically speaking it is useless. We sought it because it is per-

fective in itself, and because this knowledge is highest and most true. Man is a knower, and his natural perfection is therefore to know true things: the things we have studied.

This is what we have done.

... And What Ought We To Do?

Now turn to what we ought to do. Our studies have given us a brief glance at the most precious of all things. There should be no influence whatever that should induce us to surrender these things. No kind of calling or occupation should distract us from what is highest and most essential.

Through our studies we possess the means to be as good as possible from a human standpoint, as well as to reach out to the Divine. In the human mode of knowing, the mind actually takes on a likeness of the thing known. Our souls, by being full of Wisdom, can actually become like Wisdom. We can interiorize and become what we study.

It is for this reason that St. Thomas calls the pursuit of Wisdom perfect. He says: “It is more perfect because, in so far as a man gives himself to the pursuit of Wisdom, so far does he even now have some share in true beatitude. And so a wise man has said: ‘Blessed is the man that shall continue in Wisdom’ (Sirach 14:22).” St. Thomas describes the study of Wisdom as beatitude, the vision of God here on earth. It is the highest possible possession. We ought to cherish it for the rest of our lives.

A second duty we graduates ought to consider is the sharing of truth with others. We are now knowers, and as such are invested with certain responsibilities. Truth is a common good; it follows, therefore, from its very notion that truth is a public commodity. We who are custodians of the truth and realize its character have a duty to communicate it to others. In this regard we are uniquely situated to fulfill the command of Christ, Who said, “Nor do men light a lamp and put it under a bushel, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. Let your light so shine before men” (Mat. 5:15-16). We are the lamps burning brightly with the truth. Christ Himself has ordered us to be teachers. In virtue of what we know then, it seems especially imperative for us to take this role upon ourselves.

An Appeal to Simplicity

I would like to make one last appeal. It concerns the virtue of simplicity, which I think I ought to be especially relevant for us. Simplicity, according to a common notion, might be described in several ways. For example, one could call it single-mindedness, clarity of vision, striving for what is essential while disregarding what is ancillary, frankness, or a kind of humble lowliness. I think that this virtue ought to be the special virtue of the wise man for two reasons.

First, with regard to the wise man as teacher, simplicity will guard against the temptation that besets all instructors and those considered wise: namely, to regard themselves as superior. To realize that one has more necessarily means that he realizes that others have less. This in itself is not an evil, because a teacher must have more, and even realize how much more determinately he has, in order to teach well. From this point, however, it is easy to attribute to ourselves more than we actually deserve, namely that we are the cause of our achievements. Such a view can lead to disdain of the students and eventually even to a disposition which would encourage us to keep our knowledge to ourselves and refrain from enlightening those who we deem are not “worthy” of it.

This is exactly the opposite of the view of the truth, I argued a moment ago, that the wise man ought to have. Anything we have is received from God. If we remain simple we will attribute our knowledge to God. In other words, we will assign to ourselves a correct view of our lowliness and never lose sight of our true roles as teachers. We will also be better teachers because we will realize the character of our knowledge. In this we can take as our example the Blessed Virgin, who, though herself the Seat of Wisdom, the Lord chose to regard “in her lowliness” (Lk. 1:48).

The second reason I think that simplicity applies particularly to the wise man stems from a consideration of Wisdom itself. Aristotle emphasizes in the *Metaphysics* that Wisdom is the knowledge of first causes. First causes are the most remote in the chain of causality. They are also the cause of numerous effects. For example, I am the immediate cause in the delivering of this speech. If one traced the line of causality back, he could say, more remotely, that my parents are the cause of this speech. In addition, however, my parents are not only the cause of me but also of my brothers. Further, since my brothers and I have the same cause, one could now see us under one aspect: as part of a family. Thus more remote causes can be the causes of numerous effects and they can also be the means by which I can better understand their many effects. Said in



Commencement 2011: Jane Forsyth sings the National Anthem, and Joseph O’Brien leads the Pledge of Allegiance.

Continued on page 10

Archbishop Gomez: Joy as Our Means of Witness to the World

Excerpts from the Homily at the 2011 Baccalaureate Mass

I am so happy to celebrate this Holy Eucharist with you on this joyful occasion. This is a day for joy! I rejoice with you, dear graduates!

Our Lord Jesus Christ tells us in the Gospel today: “I have told you these things, *that my joy might be in you and that your joy might be complete*” (John 15:9–17). Joy is what should make us different as Christians, my brothers and sisters! And joy must be the mark of our discipleship and *the means* of our witness in the world. Each one of us is called to bring others to Christ through our own joy at our salvation and eternal life! We are to be messengers of the joy that comes from knowing the hope of His resurrection!

“The people of our day long to know what you have learned here at Thomas Aquinas College. They want to know what St. Augustine called *gaudium et veritate* — the joy that comes from knowing the truth!”

It is fitting that we are celebrating your graduation today on the Feast of St. Matthias. He is chosen to succeed the apostle who betrayed Jesus, as we hear in today’s first reading (Acts 1:15–17, 20–26). This is the only place St. Matthias is mentioned in the New Testament.

Tradition suggests that he was one of the 70 whom Jesus sent out to heal the sick and proclaim the Gospel. This could well be true, because as we hear today, St. Matthias was one of the men who accompanied the Apostles throughout Jesus Christ’s public ministry — from His Baptism until His Ascension into heaven.

Tradition says that later St. Matthias helped to evangelize Armenia and that he returned to Jerusalem and died as a martyr around the year 51 A.D. But we don’t really know. And that is a beautiful example for us, in its own way. For each one of us is called to be a faithful witness to the teachings and the deeds of Jesus Christ. We are called to be faithful witnesses to His Resurrection and to the difference that the Resurrection makes in our lives.

Let us pray this morning to become saints like St. Matthias — saints that no one may ever know about, except the people who are close to us, the people we live with and work with. By our prayers, our teaching, and good example — and by our joy — let us bring many people to know Jesus Christ.

To Love as He Loves

My friends, our nation and our world are waiting for a new encounter with Jesus Christ.

People sense that there is something more, some greater joy and happiness that awaits them — if only they could find it. We know what they are looking for. We know *Whom* they are looking for. We

know that this joy, this happiness that they seek, has a name and a face. It is Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is the heart of this fine school — as He must be the heart of every Catholic college. Jesus is the *Logos*, the divine Reason through Whom the universe is created. He is the Truth and Wisdom of God. In Him we find not only the unity of knowledge, but we also find the fundamental harmony of faith and reason, truth and freedom, justice and mercy, beauty and wisdom.

But Jesus Christ is not an abstract principle. He is a divine person. He is the one Who calls us by name. Our Lord has given us a new commandment, my brothers and sisters, the commandment to love as He loves. We are to love through the complete gift of ourselves. We are to deny ourselves and to live for the love of God and the love of our brothers and sisters.

Our Eucharistic Offering

Jesus is our teacher in all the ways of this God. In all the ways of love. And we learn by our imitation of Christ. We learn by loving as He loved.

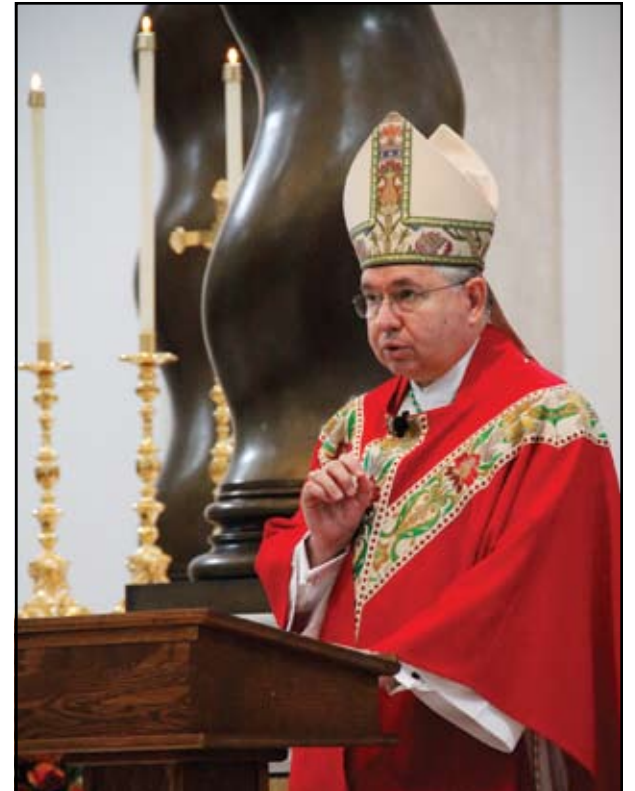
Our lives are not our own, my friends. We have been bought at a great price — the Blood of God’s only Son, shed out of love for each one of us.

What can we possibly do to repay such love? What can we offer back to God in return? Nothing less than our own lives. This is the meaning of this Eucharist we celebrate. In the Eucharist, we ask that our Father accept the gift of our lives, along with the bread and wine, in thanksgiving for the love He has shown to us and for the praise and glory of His name.

My prayer for you, dear graduates, is that you grow always in this Eucharistic spirituality.

Everything you do, even the smallest duties and the littlest things in your day, if done in faith and with love, can be offered up. Try to do everything for love. Even the little things you do every day. Offer them to God. Make them “spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

The world needs your discipleship, you faithful witness to His resurrection, dear graduates. The people



of our day long to know what you have learned here at Thomas Aquinas College. They want to know what St. Augustine called *gaudium et veritate* — the joy that comes from knowing the truth!

You have learned your lessons well. But your faith and your education are a gift that you have been given to share. Now is the time for the sharing! You are being sent out, my brothers and sisters. To be disciples of Christ! To be messengers of His joy! To bear fruits of love!

Our Lord is calling you to tell the world of His love — a love that is stronger than death! He wants to touch everyone with His love. And He wants to use you, each one of us — to be instruments of His love.

So rejoice today, dear graduates!

My prayer for you is that you will always strive for the truth in love.

I pray also for this fine Catholic college, that you be always renewed in the spirit of your patron, St. Thomas Aquinas, who devoted his life to the service of God. St. Thomas once said: “I envisage, as the main duty of my life, the working out of my debt to God in such a way that I express Him in my every word and attitude.” Let that be our prayer this morning, too. Let us seek to express Christ in our every word and attitude.

And I ask our Blessed Mother, Our Lady Seat of Wisdom, to help you always walk in the paths of His love!

The Most Rev. José H. Gomez, Archbishop of Los Angeles, was the principal celebrant and homilist at the Thomas Aquinas College 2011 Baccalaureate Mass. The text of his full homily is available on the College’s website, www.thomasaquinas.edu.



Senior Address continued from page 9

another way, I can know many things through one thing by knowing their cause, and in this way, since I see them in one view, I know them simply. Thus, as Aristotle teaches, a wise man knows first causes, which means that he knows the many through few. With these thoughts I can now build a simple syllogism:

A wise man knows first causes.
Knowing first causes is to know simply.
Therefore, a wise man knows simply.

Thus the notion of simplicity is intimately tied to the wise man himself. He knows the first causes, and the First Cause Himself, and he sees all things in one simple, united vision. Since this is the character of the Wisdom of the wise man, it does not seem amiss to regard simplicity as a virtue especially germane to the wise man as a whole. If,

as Plato describes, a wise man ought to imitate the things he seeks in wisdom, then, as his Wisdom is simple, so the wise man ought to be simple.

For this reason I think that we ought to foster the virtue of simplicity, not only in the manner in which we know, but in the whole of our lives. We ought to live our lives with the unity and purpose similar to the intellectual gaze of the wise man. As he sees all individuals in all their complexity, yet bound together as emanating from one source, so we ought to live, partaking of all particular events singly, yet seeing them as directed to one final goal, namely Heaven.

To live a life so directed would be to live a life truly infused with Wisdom. As we graduate and leave this place, and as we live out our lives in the future, it will be no small accomplishment if we can put in to practice these things, which the study of Wisdom has taught us.

Infusing Gospel Values into All Facets of Life

What's Next for Members of the Class of 2011

In his Commencement Address, the Most Rev. José H. Gomez, Archbishop of Los Angeles, urged Thomas Aquinas College graduates to “infuse Gospel values into all the areas where attitudes and opinions are formed and expressed: science, politics, business, the arts, philosophy, higher education, popular entertainment, the media.”

This is a charge the Class of 2011 is taking to heart. Its members are pursuing or discerning professions in each of the fields that His Excellency named — and then some. Yet whether choosing a career in medicine or the arts, whether answering the call to the religious life or to marriage, these new alumni are united in their determination to “infuse Gospel values” into all facets of culture and society. Below are some of the primary disciplines, professions, and vocations into which members of the Class of 2011 are headed.

Priesthood and Religious Life

Two members of the Class of 2011, **Dean Covalt** and **Derek Remus**, share a calling and a plan. Both intend to take one year off to retire student debt, and then enter the Dominican Order, with the hope of being ordained to the priesthood. “Having a chapel on campus, being open to the sacraments every day, having priests available — these have all had an influence on me. They have pushed me to make that step of faith,” reflects Mr. Covalt. Several of the women in the class are likewise discerning vocations to the religious life, most notably **Annie Huguelet**, who has entered the Norbertine Priory of St. Joseph in Tehachapi, Calif.

Marriage and Family

One week after Commencement **Kimberly (McCarthy)** married Paul Lazenby ('10), and two weeks after that **Emily (Barry) Sullivan** wed her husband, Joe, a member of the Class of 2009. “Having lived in this community, which is so rooted in Catholic love and Catholic spirituality, has been an excellent preparation for living the married life,” says Mrs. Sullivan. “God willing, we will be able to witness to the beauty of marriage in a day and age where the institution is so under attack.” Three other marriages, including two intra-Class of 2011 unions, are also in the works, with weddings planned over the next several months.

Education

About 10 percent of the College's Alumni enter the field of education, and the Class of 2011 is no exception. **Lauren Bertotti** has enrolled in a teacher credentialing program through California State University, with a likely concentration in grades K-8. **Jake Detar** will teach apologetics to 15-20 students in a home-schooling cooperative in Liberty Lake, Wash. **Emily McBryan** is becoming a math, literature, theology, and Latin teacher for middle- and high-school students at Trivium School in Lancaster, Mass. **John McCarthy** will coach, teach, and counsel at Saint Gregory's Academy, a boys' boarding school in Elmhurst, Penn., where **Sean Smith** will serve as a “dorm father.” **Winslow Scott** is studying for a master's degree in special education, with a focus on hearing disorders, at the John Tracy Clinic in Los Angeles. **Colleen Smith** will be teaching at St. Monica's Academy in Pasadena, Calif. On the administrative side, **Annie Kaiser** and **Monica Shaneyfelt** are working for the Mother of Divine Grace distance-learning program in Ojai, Calif., and **Isabel Cacho** and **Louis Conklin** have returned to their alma mater as members of the Thomas Aquinas College Admissions Department.



Monica Shaneyfelt, Louis Conklin, Jake Detar, Emily McBryan, Lauren Bertotti, Maura King, and Winslow Scott

Business

During the last year the Class of 2011 demonstrated great entrepreneurial spirit by marketing Valentine's Day gift baskets to Thomas Aquinas College parents, hand-delivered to their sons and daughters on campus. The seniors sold 200 baskets in all, and raised \$3,800 toward their class gift, a votive candle rack for Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Among the graduates who seek to take that industrious spirit into the world are **Kevin Carlson**, who has been selected to participate in K-Mart's corporate management program, and **Dan Carpenter**, who is considering Chevron's Horizon Management program, with future plans to pursue a master's degree in either economics or business administration.

Arts & Entertainment

“I want to use the medium of film to bring people closer to God,” says **John Haggard**, “because that's something the arts have historically done through the ages.” He is returning to his native Los Angeles, where he will work in the entertainment industry and develop his own projects on the side. **Jane Forsyth**, who in her senior year played the title character in *Iolanthe* and co-directed the student choral group *Chrysostomos*, will pursue professional voice training and work as a cantor in her home parish. **Sam Tulberg** is completing a two-year music-theory program he began before coming to the College, with the eventual goal of writing film scores.



Jane Forsyth, John Haggard, and Sam Tulberg

Science and Technology

Among the members of the Class of 2011 who intend to pursue careers in science and technology is **Michael Zepeda**, who will study physics at the University of Idaho. **Sara Dale** and **Paul Steigerwald** will be studying engineering at the University of Notre Dame and the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee, respectively.

Mathematics

Although torn by a desire to study philosophy, **Nathaniel Beckman** has decided to attend Old Dominion University, where he has received a full scholarship to study applied mathematics. Two of his classmates, **Nick Collins** and **Daniel Gerritty**, also intend to pursue graduate work in math after first obtaining some necessary prerequisites. “Math is just beautiful — the order of the truths that you find and the way things connect together,” says Mr. Collins. “It's fascinating. I can't keep away from it, really.”



Nick Collins, Nathaniel Beckman, and Daniel Gerritty

Psychology

“To bring this education into something that could really help others,” says **Helena Orellana**, she is entering the Institute for Psychological Studies this fall. Says **Peter Cross**, who also intends to study psychology after first paying off student loans: “My education at the College has begun the process of acquiring a proper understanding of the human soul and the dispositions.”

Politics and Law

Among the members of the Class of 2011 interested in shaping, making, or practicing law are **Molly McCann**, who seeks to work in public policy in Washington, D.C. “The intellectual formation of the College and the spiritual formation have both really given me a foundation” to function in a political world where, she says, “there is such a great need for moral surety and formation of the soul.” **Brian Roxburgh** has received a fellowship to pursue graduate studies in political science at the University of Dallas. **Clara Fox** intends to work in a law firm for the next year while studying for the LSAT, and then to enter law school. **Jorge Guardado** will be attending the University of the Pacific's McGeorge School of Law this fall.

Armed Forces

Only hours after the completion of the 2011 Commencement exercises, graduate **Joseph O'Brien** returned to the stage on the academic quadrangle for another ceremony: his induction as an officer in the United States Marine Corps. “I hope to be able to lead young men and women and to be a good moral influence on them, and I see my education here as being a good start for that,” he says. **Joseph Doyle** will also enter the armed forces, albeit in a different branch and under a different flag, as an officer in the Royal Canadian Air Force.

Medicine

Fueled by a desire to “love Christ in my patients,” **Cara Buskmiller** leaves for Texas A&M Health Science Center, where she will study to become a physician. **Patrick Coughlin** and **Michael Yanoschik** also have plans for medical school after first completing some prerequisite coursework. Longing to support the Culture of Life, **Sarah Kelly** and **Francesca Yaklin** are studying to become midwives. **Luke Bueche** is pursuing a career in anesthetic nursing.



Colleen Smith, Patrick Coughlin, Cara Buskmiller, Luke Bueche, Francesca Yaklin, and Michael Yanoschik

Philosophy

Answering Archbishop Gomez's call to undertake graduate studies in philosophy are four Class of 2011 scholars: **Michael Berndt** and **Jordan Matteoli** at the University of Dallas, **Alex Ogrodnick** at the Catholic University of America, and **Cathleen O'Reilly** at St. Andrew's University in Scotland. “It is fascinating to me to see how much better you can understand the world if you learn it through a philosophical approach rather than just a scientific one,” says Miss O'Reilly.

Theology

Because the Thomas Aquinas College academic program is ordered to the knowledge of God, it should come as little surprise that several graduates plan to pursue advanced studies in theology. “I would love to be able to take the education I've gotten here and use it to reach people's hearts, to bring people closer to the person of Jesus Christ through evangelization and through catechesis,” says **Elizabeth Wood**, who is starting a graduate theology program at the Augustine Institute in Denver. Other aspiring theologians include **Catherine Connelly**, who will begin her graduate studies at the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C.; **Marina Olson**, who will do her graduate work at Ave Maria University; and **Emily (Barry) Sullivan**, who is considering various programs both in the U.S. and abroad.



**CAMPUS
LIFE**



1. Members of the Senior Class process from St. Joseph Commons to the academic quadrangle for Commencement 2011. 2. Seniors cheer their classmates as they complete their truly final examination. 3. Catherine Connelly ('11) and Pat Coughlin ('11) dance at an end-of-the-year celebration. 4. Cara Buskmiller kisses Archbishop Gomez's apostolic ring when receiving her diploma. 5. Louis Conklin ('11) tosses his text onto the pyre at the thesis draft-burning party. 6. Seniors celebrate the end of their four years with the traditional dunking of their head prefect (Peter Cross) into the Guadalupe Fountain. 7. Hats off to the Class of 2011!

**Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel
Summer Schedule of Masses ***

Weekdays

7:00 a.m. (extraordinary form)
5:20 p.m. (ordinary form)

Saturdays

7:15 a.m. (extraordinary form)
9:30 a.m. (ordinary form)

Sundays

7:15 a.m. (extraordinary form)
9:00 a.m. (ordinary form)

* Schedules may vary; if traveling from afar, please call in advance to confirm.

Calendar of Events

- Convocation August 22
- Opening Lecture:
Dr. Paul O'Reilly on Catholic liberal education..... August 26
- Opening ConcertSeptember 2
- Lecture: Rev. Wojciech Giertych, O.P.
Theologian of the Papal HouseholdSeptember 16
- 40th Anniversary Gala.....September 17
- Lecture: Rev. Anselm Ramelow, O.P.
Dominican School of Philosophy and TheologySeptember 23

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