



A Day of Welcome

Visit of Archbishop Miller Marks Start of New Academic Year

As members of the Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors, faculty, and staff welcomed this year's incoming freshmen at Convocation on August 24, they were joined by a distinguished guest of honor: the Most Rev. J. Michael Miller, CSB, archbishop of Vancouver, British Columbia; former secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education; and the College's 2009 Convocation speaker.

As is customary, these exercises marking the start of the new academic year began with a Mass of the Holy Spirit. For the first time, however, this Mass was offered in the newly dedicated Chapel of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity, with Archbishop Miller serving as principal celebrant and homilist. "You are at Thomas Aquinas College because you are resolved to put your minds and hearts at the service of the sacred cause of truth," the Canadian prelate told the freshmen. "But your undertaking will be fruitful only if you attend assiduously to your spiritual formation according to the mind of Christ."

A Welcoming Ceremony

Just as the completion of the Chapel yielded a new setting for the Convocation Mass, so, too, did it improve the setting for the Matriculation ceremony that followed. Over the summer the College's facilities department dismantled the temporary chapel that for nearly 30 years had occupied roughly one-third of St. Joseph Commons, resulting in a much needed, much larger dining area, a space that could now accommodate the dais and backdrop for this august occasion.

There, Thomas Aquinas College Interim President Peter L. DeLuca told the new students that through the course of their studies they will "learn how to learn the truth and how to distinguish it from error." In his address, Archbishop Miller spoke of "the important role that I hope the Angelic Doctor will play in the coming years of your education here."

The Newcomers

The members of the Class of 2013 formally began their tenure as students when Director of Admissions Jon Daly called their names, and each approached the dais, greeting Mr. DeLuca and the Archbishop, then signing the College's registry. The College also welcomed its newest tutor, Dr. Michael Augros, who made the Profession of Faith and took the Oath of Fidelity. With the College thus prepared to start the semester, Mr. DeLuca proclaimed the start of the new academic year, and the students responded with a loud, standing ovation — an annual occurrence met, for the first time, by the sound of bells ringing gloriously from the tower of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel.

Gratitude

"We very much appreciated Archbishop Miller's coming to our campus to celebrate with us the opening of the 2009-2010 academic year," Mr. DeLuca later reflected. "We are grateful for his friendship, and our students were blessed to hear his thoughtful remarks."



Interim President Peter L. DeLuca and the Most Rev. J. Michael Miller, CSB, archbishop of Vancouver, British Columbia, greet freshman Daniel Bagdazian at Matriculation.

The sentiments were seemingly mutual. In a letter to Mr. DeLuca that His Excellency sent upon returning to Vancouver, he wrote: "It was indeed a great pleasure to visit the College. It was an unforgettable experience. The Chapel bears splendid witness to the beauty of God and the unifying place played by theology in your curriculum. Above all, however, I enjoyed my time with the students at the seminar and tutorial I attended. How confidently, respectfully (and even wisely) they discussed and questioned one another!"

A Look at the Class of 2013

Full Contingent of 102 Students Make Up Freshman Class

With private colleges nationwide suffering significant declines in enrollment due to the state of the economy, it is both a blessing and an encouragement that Thomas Aquinas College has assembled a full class of 102 students for the Class of 2013. "We are very grateful," says Director of Admissions Jon Daly. "This is a hopeful sign that even during tough times, people recognize the value of Catholic liberal education."

Moreover, the slumping economy has in no way compromised the College's admissions standards. Average SAT scores for the 52 women and 50 men who make up the Class of 2013 are in keeping with the College's 10-year average and rate among the top 20 percent in the country. "The students this college attracts," says Mr. Daly, "are willing to take up this unique kind of education, regardless of the economic climate."

The Thomas Aquinas College Class of 2013 hails from five countries and 26 states, with about half of the domestic students coming from east of the Rocky Mountains. The ages of the incoming freshmen range from 17 to 26; more than 50 percent went to public or private high schools; and the rest were home-schooled. The group includes several non-Catholics, a veteran, a high school valedictorian, and a cancer survivor.

Second-Time Freshmen

Unlike most college freshmen, Scott Faley of Chevy Chase, Md., has already earned a bachelor's degree. In 2005, he graduated from Williams College in Williamstown, Mass., where he majored in political science.



Members of the Class of 2013 pose outside Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel.

For the better part of six years, he also worked — first as a student and then as an alumnus — to establish an organization that promotes a vibrant Catholic presence on campus. He then lived for a year in Washington, D.C., where he served as the program coordinator for the Tocqueville Forum on the Roots of American Democracy, a political-theory program in the Department of Government at Georgetown University.

Mr. Faley, 26, is among the 15 percent of members of the Class of 2013 who are "freshmen again." These are students who, having already studied elsewhere, now seek to benefit from the College's classical curriculum taught in the light of the Catholic faith. They are not "transfers." All students at the College begin as fresh-

men, regardless of the extent of their previous schooling, so they can experience fully the College's integrated and sequential course of studies.

Although appreciative of his time at Williams, Mr. Faley graduated with the sense that his education to that point was somehow lacking. "I just became convinced," he says, "that there is this tremendous good in truly liberal education that I had missed out on." So he first applied and then enrolled at the College. "I really view the formation at Thomas Aquinas College as formation for life," he says. "It is an education to be a free man. It is the best possible foundation, not just for further study in any given field, but for a life of service to one's family, one's church, one's country."

Now Mr. Faley gets to benefit from the College's academic program, and his classmates get to benefit from the relative breadth of experience he brings to campus. "We very much welcome 'second-time students,'" says Mr. Daly. "They tend to add a certain wisdom, maturity, and insight that enrich the entire community. We take it as a great compliment that they choose to be here."

Summer Preview

"I wasn't sure I would be coming here even a few weeks before I left for campus," says freshman Christopher Sebastian of Livonia, Mich.

The problem was not whether Mr. Sebastian wanted to come to the College — he had decided that some time earlier — but whether he could. In March, he was diag-

continued on page 4

From the Desk of the President

Peter L. DeLuca's Matriculation Remarks to the Class of 2013



Your Excellency, Reverend Fathers, Governors, Faculty, members of the student body and particularly you who join that body today:

On this occasion it is customary for the president to offer a few thoughts on Catholic liberal education as we understand it here at Thomas Aquinas College. Let me begin by telling you that you are not here to study the great books.

Now I must explain myself, for you may very likely think that that is precisely what you are here to do. Let me be clear. You *are* here to read and discuss the great books, but not to learn them.

The books are not themselves the objects of our study. You are not here to study the great books as outstanding examples of the creativity of the human spirit. Neither are you here to study them in order to become familiar with your own culture and civilization, valuable as that might be. And you certainly are not here to become experts on them so you can make money lecturing about them.

Rather you will read the great books; you will read the works of Homer, Shakespeare, Plato, Euclid, St. Augustine, Descartes, Newton, St. Thomas Aquinas, and all the others; and you will discuss them, precisely because, more than lesser works, they can open up for you the truth about reality. And the truth about reality is what you are here to learn.

Starting Points

What does it mean for these books to “open up the truth about reality?” Is it that their authors will tell you the truth and you will believe them? Perhaps, in some cases, that will be the best you can do. But that is not what the College intends. It is not even what the authors themselves intend. The argument from authority is the weakest form of argument, and the authors of these books usually try to give you some better argument. That is one of the reasons we call these books “great.” They do not just give you a string of assertions and ask you to accept them because the author is an expert. All too often, that description fits rather a textbook.

An argument takes you from something you knew already to some new knowledge. But this process cannot be an infinite regress. There must be some things that we know without an argument. In each subject there must be starting points. You do not hold the truth of these starting points by an argument. Rather, these starting points are known by you in some other way. Each science has different starting points, and some even have a different kind of starting point. Each kind is held with a different degree of certitude, and consequently the conclusions of the arguments will also be held with a different degree of certitude.

In sacred theology, the starting points are taken from Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church. Those starting points are held by faith. Theology begins from these starting points and proceeds by argument to other truths.

In other subjects, the starting points are known through experience, but the kind of experience required also varies. In the case of mathematics, the experience is im-

mediate and universal like, for example, the experience of whole and part. Everyone sees immediately from the experience of whole and part that the whole is greater than the part. In ethics and politics, by contrast, the experience is indistinct, and its acquisition may require years of living. To see, for example, that it is true that virtues and vices are habits may take some experience of life. Natural philosophy reflects on the ordinary, common experience, while experimental science is based on a special experience of nature revealed in the laboratory.

A Life Lived in the Truth

It is not only the starting points that differ, but also the modes of argument. For while argument moves you from what you know to what you do not know, there are different kinds of argument, and they produce different degrees of certitude about their conclusions. There are arguments that are demonstrative and arguments that are only probable. There are demonstrations that something is true and demonstrations of why it is true. There are dialectical arguments and rhetorical arguments. There are arguments by analogy and arguments by example. Some of these arguments are appropriate to some subjects and some to others.

Now the liberally educated man knows the correct starting points and the proper kinds of argument for each subject. Within the curriculum of this college, you will formally study the kinds of argument from the text of Aristotle's logical works in freshman philosophy, but more broadly, you will learn what starting points are proper to each subject, and the modes of argument proper to it, by reading and discussing the writings of the seminal thinkers who embody each field of study most perfectly.

By reading and discussing the great books you will learn some truth about reality, but — and this is perhaps more important — you will also learn how to learn the truth and how to distinguish it from error. Eventually, you will be what Aristotle says is true of the liberally educated person, “critical in all or nearly all the branches of learning.”

This will enable you to live a truly free and humane life — a life lived in the truth. This education is liberal because it liberates you from ignorance and error. At the practical level, it makes you able to judge what others tell you. Since it is also Catholic, it enables you to live life in the light of Him who says, “I am the way, and the truth and the life” and “You will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.”

So I invite you to begin today the activity that will, I hope, occupy you the rest of your life. I invite you to begin a life of wonder about the good and the true; a life devoted to wisdom.

philosophy, but more broadly, you will learn what starting points are proper to each subject, and the modes of argument proper to it, by reading and discussing the writings of the seminal thinkers who embody each field of study most perfectly.

“I invite you to begin a life of wonder about the good and the true; a life devoted to wisdom.”



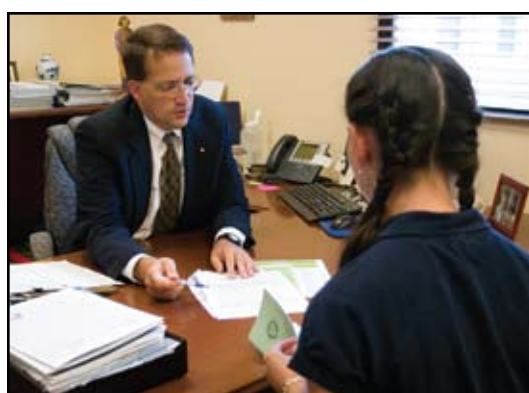
Sign of the Times: Financial Aid Needs Soar

Slow Economy Challenges College's Charitable Commitment to its Students

Ever since its founding, Thomas Aquinas College has sought to maintain a financial aid program that is as unique as its classical, Catholic curriculum. “Through the tremendous generosity of our benefactors,” says Interim President Peter DeLuca, “we have been able to meet our goal: to make a Thomas Aquinas College education affordable for all students who are willing and competent to undertake it.”

It is little wonder, then, that this year The Princeton Review named the College as one of only 13 institutions nationwide on its first-ever “Financial Aid Honor Roll.” Likewise, it should come as little surprise that a program aimed at meeting all real needs would now be threatened by the current state of the economy — when needs are greater than ever.

“Financial aid expenses have grown even faster than we anticipated,” reports Greg Becher, the College's director of financial aid. “As a result, we now find ourselves about \$400,000 short in this year's budget.” Reflecting a nationwide trend, 82 percent of this year's incoming freshmen require financial assistance, a 20 percent increase from last year. Citing a loss of employment for the family's breadwinner, about 5 percent of the College's existing students have also requested an increase in financial assistance for the year, as have many others due to a significant drop in family income.



Director of Financial Aid Greg Becher meets with a student in his office. Due to the failing economy, the College faces a \$400,000 shortfall in its financial aid budget this year.

Willing to Help

The financial aid office assigns aid on the basis of need alone, awarding families whatever assistance is necessary to put the price of a Thomas Aquinas College education within reach. Further, the College is determined not to saddle graduates with excessive debt that could hinder the pursuit of their vocations, be it marriage or the priesthood or religious life, upon graduation.

“If students and families are willing to make a maximum effort to cover the cost of tuition through their own income and savings,” Mr. Becher explains, “the College stands ready and willing to help make up the difference.” First, the College assists students in securing reasonable loans; then it provides additional support by way of on-campus service-scholarship jobs of 13 hours per week; finally, if need be, the College covers the remainder through direct grants.

This approach, Mr. DeLuca observes, is in keeping with Thomas Aquinas College's Catholic identity. “The first Spiritual Work of Mercy,” he explains, “is to instruct the ignorant. We would fall well short of this obligation if we educated only those who could afford the full cost.”

Faith in the Faithful

The question, then, is how the College will continue to honor its commitment to make tuition affordable for its families despite the current economic downturn. To this end, the College is appealing to the generosity of its donors to help meet the financial aid crisis.

“Our benefactors have always been faithful, helping us to answer whatever challenges come our way,” says Mr. DeLuca. “We have little doubt that if we also remain faithful — faithful in our prayers, faithful to our generous friends, and faithful in our commitment to the families who depend on the College's assistance — God, in His generosity, will provide.”

St. Thomas Aquinas: Master and Guide

The Matriculation Address of His Excellency J. Michael Miller, CSB

Before offering a few remarks, I would like to express my gratitude to Thomas Aquinas College for the unique role it is playing in the landscape of higher education in North America. Not a large institution in terms of the number of students and faculty, you nonetheless have been at the forefront of renewal, offering a Catholic liberal education which not only has changed the lives of its alumni but also has modified the course of a great many other institutions which have been influenced by your pedagogical method of tutorials and seminars and your rigorous curriculum, which aims to bring unity to the intellectual life.

In the Archdiocese of Vancouver we have many graduates of the College who are making enormous contributions to our particular church as artists, teachers, professionals, and parents of families — and I am extraordinarily grateful for their gifts honed here with such care.

After so many years of admiring the College from afar, it is good to be here on the campus. This is truly a Catholic center of learning because it reverberates with the ecclesial life of faith, a faith which unfolds the richness of reason and is given fervent expression liturgically, sacramentally, and through prayer, acts of charity, and a passion for justice.

This year begins with a significant difference since one of the great and visionary men who guided the College with such integrity, vision, grace, and hope is no longer with you. I was in Ireland, at the very meeting which Dr. Dillon was to attend, when news reached us of his tragic accident. It was a great loss for you and for Catholic higher education, but your foundation has been laid with such wisdom and with so many prayers that you have every reason to be confident that the College will remain a beacon for all of us in the years ahead.

Dr. Dillon taught you well by his word and example. He was a man imbued with “intellectual charity,” that dimension of charity which led him to recognize that his responsibility to lead this community to truth was nothing less than an act of love. He fostered your true perfection and happiness, upholding the essential unity of knowledge against the fragmentation which ensues when reason is detached from the pursuit of truth.

St. Thomas as Master and Guide

Now I would like to say a few words to you this morning, especially to the freshmen who are entering the College, on the important role that I hope the Angelic Doctor will play in the coming years of your education here. I would like to suggest that your academic endeavors take fully into account the world and its perennial questions and to recommend that you adopt St. Thomas as your intellectual master and his teaching as your trustworthy guide. The reasons for this are laid out in Pope Leo XIII’s encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, published in 1879:

Among the Scholastic Doctors towers the chief and master of all, Thomas Aquinas, who, as Cajetan observes, because “he most venerated the ancient doctors of the Church, in a certain way seems to have inherited the intellect of all.” The doctrines of those illustrious men, like the scattered members of a body, Thomas collected together and cemented, distributed in wonderful order, and so increased with important additions that he is rightly and deservedly esteemed the special bulwark and glory of the Catholic faith. With his spirit at once humble and swift, his memory ready and tenacious, his life spotless throughout, a lover of truth for its own sake, richly endowed with human and divine science, like the sun he heated the world with the warmth of his virtues and filled it with the splendor of his teaching.

Thomas, then, shows us the path first proposed by the Apostle Peter: “Always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks you for a reason for your hope” (1 Pt. 3:15).

Relativism and the Crisis of Truth

According to the Holy Father, among the major challenges to the Church of the 21st century is the massive presence of a relativism in society and in the halls of higher education. All too often relativism is not only the academic’s creed, but also



Members of the Class of 2013 applaud Archbishop Miller’s address and the start of the new year at Convocation.

that of the person on the street. Indeed, relativism has become a secular dogma. This “dictatorship of relativism” — a phrase from Cardinal Ratzinger’s homily before the cardinals entered the conclave and elected him pope — expresses society’s “profound crisis of truth.”

For perhaps even a majority of people, seeking truth is considered a hopelessly impossible, even naive, undertaking. They will accept as true only what can be experienced. These views, which assuredly you must challenge, diminish the authority of human reason and produce, the Pope thinks, “a terrible schizophrenia ... which has led to the coexistence of rationalism and materialism, hyper-technology and unbridled instinct” (Benedict XVI, *Angelus*; January 28, 2007).

Dear freshmen: If you are going to fulfill your mission in the Church as students of Thomas Aquinas College, of being men and women able to give an account of the faith you have received, you are going to have to meet this crisis of truth head-on by arguing convincingly, with passion and respect, that the truth can be pursued and, to a limited but real extent, attained by the human mind and communicated to others.

You must do what St. Thomas did in the 13th century. He was always ready to receive the truth wherever it is found. Just as he succeeded in establishing “a fruitful confrontation with the Arab and Hebrew thought of his time” (*Ibid.*), so must you, with a similar wisdom bequeathed by the Holy Spirit, be able to argue convincingly that the search for truth is the only quest which satisfies the human intellect and heart. St. Thomas and his teachings are a sure beacon which helps you grasp that Christianity claims to tell the truth about God, the world, and man and presents itself as the religion of truth.

Faith and Reason

Closely related to the crisis of truth, another challenge awaits you, one which John Paul II considered the greatest challenge of our age: the growing separation between faith and reason, between the Gospel and culture. You can face this crisis with serenity if you take the Angelic Doctor as your master. He is the Church’s “Common Doctor,” and his explanations about the relationship between faith and reason belong to the patrimony of the Catholic faith itself. In his great encyclical on the renewal of philosophy in light of St. Thomas, Pope Leo XIII wrote:

Clearly distinguishing, as is fitting, reason from faith, while happily associating the one with the other, (Thomas) both preserved the rights and had regard for the dignity of each; so much so, indeed, that reason, borne on the wings of Thomas to its human height, can scarcely rise higher, while faith could scarcely expect more or stronger aids from reason than those which she has already obtained through Thomas (Aeterni Patris).

It is the genius of Thomas — in the face of the rather different answer offered by the Fathers, owing to their historical context — to have highlighted the autonomy of philosophy, and with it the laws proper to reason, which enquires on the basis of its own dynamic. He gave a new emphasis to the specific responsibility of reason, which is not to be absorbed by faith. Thomas was writing at a time when Aristotle’s philosophical works became accessible in their entirety, and the Jewish and Arab philosophies presented themselves as the continuation of Greek philosophy. In this new environment, Thomas clearly saw that Christianity was obliged to argue the case for its own reasonableness.

Consequently, for Thomas, these two dimensions, faith and reason, should not be separated or placed in competition; rather, they always go hand in hand. “Both the light of reason and the light of faith come from God, (Thomas) argued; hence there can be no contradiction between them” (John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 43).

Pope Benedict on Thomas

As a philosopher and a theologian, Aquinas offers “an effective model of harmony between reason and faith, dimensions of the human spirit that are completely fulfilled in the encounter and dialogue with one another” (Benedict XVI, *Angelus*; January 28, 2007). In a brilliant lecture prepared for the University of Rome, *La Sapienza*,



the Pope thinks, “a terrible schizophrenia ... which has led to the coexistence of rationalism and materialism, hyper-technology and unbridled instinct” (Benedict XVI, *Angelus*; January 28, 2007).

Dear freshmen: If you are going to fulfill your mission in the Church as students of Thomas Aquinas College, of being men and women able to give an account of the faith you have received, you are going to have to meet this crisis of truth head-on by arguing convincingly, with passion and respect, that the truth can be pursued and, to a limited but real extent, attained by the human mind and communicated to others.

You must do what St. Thomas did in the 13th century. He was always ready to receive the truth wherever it is found. Just as he succeeded in establishing “a fruitful confrontation with the Arab and Hebrew thought of his time” (*Ibid.*), so must you, with a similar wisdom bequeathed by the Holy Spirit, be able to argue convincingly that the search for truth is the only quest which satisfies the human intellect and heart. St. Thomas and his teachings are a sure beacon which helps you grasp that Christianity claims to tell the truth about God, the world, and man and presents itself as the religion of truth.

Faith and Reason

Closely related to the crisis of truth, another challenge awaits you, one which John Paul II considered the greatest challenge of our age: the growing separation between faith and reason, between the Gospel and culture. You can face this crisis with serenity if you take the Angelic Doctor as your master. He is the Church’s “Common Doctor,” and his explanations about the relationship between faith and reason belong to the patrimony of the Catholic faith itself. In his great encyclical on the renewal of philosophy in light of St. Thomas, Pope Leo XIII wrote:

Clearly distinguishing, as is fitting, reason from faith, while happily associating the one with the other, (Thomas) both preserved the rights and had regard for the dignity of each; so much so, indeed, that reason, borne on the wings of Thomas to its human height, can scarcely rise higher, while faith could scarcely expect more or stronger aids from reason than those which she has already obtained through Thomas (Aeterni Patris).

It is the genius of Thomas — in the face of the rather different answer offered by the Fathers, owing to their historical context — to have highlighted the autonomy of philosophy, and with it the laws proper to reason, which enquires on the basis of its own dynamic. He gave a new emphasis to the specific responsibility of reason, which is not to be absorbed by faith. Thomas was writing at a time when Aristotle’s philosophical works became accessible in their entirety, and the Jewish and Arab philosophies presented themselves as the continuation of Greek philosophy. In this new environment, Thomas clearly saw that Christianity was obliged to argue the case for its own reasonableness.

Consequently, for Thomas, these two dimensions, faith and reason, should not be separated or placed in competition; rather, they always go hand in hand. “Both the light of reason and the light of faith come from God, (Thomas) argued; hence there can be no contradiction between them” (John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 43).

Pope Benedict on Thomas

As a philosopher and a theologian, Aquinas offers “an effective model of harmony between reason and faith, dimensions of the human spirit that are completely fulfilled in the encounter and dialogue with one another” (Benedict XVI, *Angelus*; January 28, 2007). In a brilliant lecture prepared for the University of Rome, *La Sapienza*,

continued on page 10

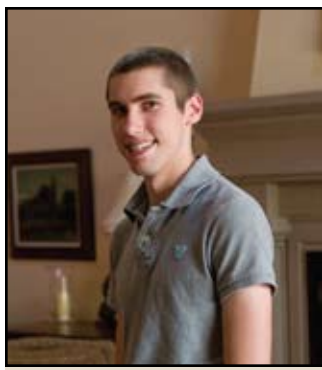
nosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, and his accelerated regimen of chemotherapy and radiation continued until nearly one week before Matriculation. “The grace of God enabled everything to work out,” he beams. “It just reinforces that it was His plan for me to be here.”



Scott Faley

Like 44 of his classmates, Mr. Sebastian is an alumnus of the College’s Summer Great Books Program for High School Students, a two-week session designed to give prospective students a taste of the College’s curriculum and life on campus. “I came to the program with no expectations, not sure if I wanted to come,” he says. Yet the summer session quickly changed his mind. “The quality of education was like nothing that exists elsewhere, and I had experienced it.”

When he arrived for orientation in August, Mr. Sebastian was eager to see his old friends from the high school program, but because his radiation treatments had left him bald, some of his peers required a re-introduction. He recalls greeting a classmate at the freshman barbeque who did not know who he was. “I recognized everybody,” Mr. Sebastian laughs, “but he did not recognize me at all!”



Christopher Sebastian

Grateful to God for his recovery and thrilled to be on campus, Mr. Sebastian now delights in delving more deeply into the education he first sampled a year ago: “It’s better than I could have hoped,” he says.

International Appeal

While many students travel far to come to Thomas Aquinas College, few travel farther than has Micaela Beccar Varela, whose family lives some 6,000 miles away in San Isidro, Argentina. In high school, Miss Bec-

car Varela planned to go on to study veterinary medicine until, at her brother-in-law’s urging, she came to the College’s summer program for high school students, where she learned that “I like philosophy much more!”

Still, there are philosophy programs in Argentina, and Miss Beccar Varela was admitted to an excellent one, but she ultimately decided to come to the College instead. “Thomas Aquinas College is broader than just philosophy, and I really like that,” she explains. “Along with the curriculum, I also really like that there is this whole sacramental life around it.” She now considers finding



Micaela Beccar Varela

the College to have been providential. “I could have come to this college or to any other, but He wanted for me to come here,” she says, adding that she “completely fell in love with the College.”

Owing to its international reputation, 15 percent of the College’s students come from outside the United States. In addition to Miss Beccar Varela, the Class of 2013 includes several Canadians and one student from India. Miss Beccar Varela admits feeling reluctant to travel so far for college. “I thought I would be homesick,” she explains, but the more she contemplated attending, the more sure she was that she should. “After six months, after a lot of prayer, it became pretty obvious that I had to come here.”

A Family Legacy

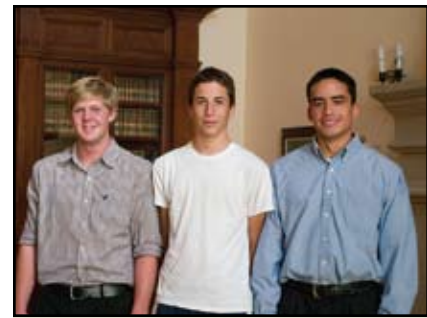
When John Richard of San Jose, Calif., made the trip to Thomas Aquinas College for orientation, he knew there would be at least two fellow freshmen he would already know well — his cousins Robert Richard and Michael Forsyth.

Although the College does not extend special consideration to “legacy students” in its admissions process, many relatives of alumni, such as Messrs. Richard, Richard, and Forsyth, do apply and are admitted. Of this year’s freshmen, 52 have either siblings, parents, or both who are alumni.

This trend is due in no small part to the example and encouragement of family members. Consider the case of Mr. Forsyth, whose mother and four of his aunts are alumnae, and whose sister, Jane, is currently a junior. “I think that they are all wise people,” he says, adding that their experience proved invaluable in forming his own decision about where to go to college.

For all three young men, however, familial influence alone was not enough to convince them; they also came to appreciate the College on its merits. “My mom really wanted me to come here,” says Robert Richard, but he was not persuaded until he visited the campus for himself. “Everyone here was very focused on learning. It looked like a really good place to grow and learn.”

The spiritual life of the College, coupled with its academics, is what attracted John Richard. “It’s not like going to a monastery for four years; you’re learning something, too,” he notes — an observation he has gleaned through the alumni in his family. “The people who come out of this school are usually very educated and



Michael Forsyth, John Richard, and Robert Richard

they know a great deal,” says Mr. Richard, who, like his cousins, would no doubt love to hear his own children use such words to describe him one day.

Know of any High School Seniors who might be a good fit for the Class of 2014?

To send Thomas Aquinas College information to prospective students, please contact the Admissions Office via the enclosed envelope, call 1-800-634-9797, or e-mail admissions@thomasaquinas.edu.

The Making of a Thomas Aquinas College Freshman

Orientation Prepares New Students for Campus Life

The new freshman arrives at Thomas Aquinas on the Thursday before Convocation, not knowing where he will live, who will be his roommate, or what his class schedule will look like. By the following Tuesday, these questions have all been answered, and he is mastering Euclidean definitions, performing exegesis on Ecclesiastes, and debating the finer points of *The Iliad* — all in the company of new friends he already holds dear.

Just what happens during these days of transformation?

“It is a time of great grace,” says Jon Daly, the College’s director of admissions who also arranges the freshman orientation program. “The freshmen tend to arrive very excited and also a little nervous, but by the first day of classes, they are ready to go.”

Socials and Soirees

In order to facilitate friendships and forge class unity — thereby creating an optimal learning environment — the students’ first weekend on campus consists of multiple social gatherings. Thursday night begins with a barbeque dinner at which freshmen and their families meet the faculty, followed by a student ice cream social in St. Joseph Commons.

There, in addition to coming to know their classmates, the new students can acquaint themselves with the evening’s hosts — the prefects and student activity directors, who serve ice cream for the freshmen, then join them at their tables for conversation. “The prefects are the freshmen’s first guides, introducing them to the campus and to the College itself,” says Mr. Daly. “Throughout the day, they have been helping the freshmen move into their rooms and get settled in. So it’s nice for everyone to be able to relax that evening and get to know each other better.”

For Friday’s social there is a casual “evening soiree” on the academic quadrangle. Joining in the festivities are the College’s three chaplains, Rev. Cornelius Buckley, S.J.; Rev. Paul Raftery, O.P.; and Rev. Charles Willingham, O.Praem, who formally

introduce themselves to the new students. Then, when the evening cool breaks the summer heat, the crowd heads over to the basketball courts for two highly competitive games: the freshman women vs. their prefects, followed by a men’s match.

Finally, for Saturday night’s social, the new students return to the quadrangle for comedic ice-breakers, a team trivia game, and various team-building competitions. At last, the evening ends with a movie, which is, fittingly, a classic — *The Maltese Falcon*.

Readings and Dialogues

There is more to orientation, however, than socializing. A significant portion of the weekend is dedicated to preparing freshmen for the classroom discussions that define Thomas Aquinas College’s pedagogy. On both Friday and Saturday, the new students meet for “practice” seminars with their tutors and the classmates who will be in their “sections,” or class groupings, for the semester. “The idea behind these seminars,” says Mr. Daly, “is to help the students become comfortable with the discussion method prior to the start of classes.”

The readings for the seminars, which freshmen receive when they arrive on campus, are the same used every year: “Learning in Wartime” by C. S. Lewis; “Liberal Education and Freedom” by the late tutor Rev. Thomas A. McGovern, S.J.; and “Liberal Education and the Humanities” by College founder and tutor Marcus R. Berquist. “We want the texts to be fresh in the students’ minds when they meet to discuss them,” explains Mr. Daly. “And we want them to put their strong study habits to use during that first busy weekend.”

Thus, by the first day of classes, the freshmen have gained a good sense of what the life of a Thomas Aquinas College student entails — the discipline that careful reading demands, the listening and active participation required for a productive classroom discussion, and the camaraderie and fellowship that will shape their lives for the next four years.

New Tutor Profile

The Return of Dr. Michael Augros ('92)

Although the son of a philosophy professor, Michael Augros took little interest in the subject until he was 18 years old. One of his teachers at Merrimack High School (N.H.) tried to organize a debate on abortion, but scrapped the plan when he could find only one student — Mike — willing to argue the pro-life side. Thence followed several outside-the-classroom conversations that whetted the senior's appetite for argumentation. So Mike approached his father, a member of the philosophy department at St. Anselm College, who in turn introduced him to Plato.

"I read through all of Plato," Mike recalls, but "I wanted something more definitive than I was getting." His father then recommended the works of Plato's most famous student. "I read the opening of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*," Mike continues, "and that's when my fate was sealed. I knew I wanted to do this for life."

A gifted artist, Mike passed up an offer to attend the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design, opting instead to study at St. Anselm. During his freshman year, however, he was disappointed by his inability to find classmates who shared his zeal for intellectual conversation. "But I had this teacher," he pauses, "Paul O'Reilly" — a 1984 Thomas Aquinas alumnus who would go on to join the College's faculty in 1989. "He saw my frustration and recommended that I apply to Thomas Aquinas College."

After completing his freshman year at St. Anselm, Michael became a freshman again, enrolling at the College in 1988 along with his younger sister, Hélène (Froula '92). "I really flourished here," he says, recalling his love for the curriculum, the enduring friendships that he formed, and the opportunities he had to deepen his faith. "I was made for this program. It was everything I was hoping it would be."

Upon graduating in 1992, Michael traveled east to undertake graduate studies at Boston College. There, he was reacquainted with an old friend from high school, Amy Desrosiers, with whom he would soon fall in love and then marry just one year before completing his doctoral work in 1995.

That fall, Dr. Augros returned to his *alma mater*, where he would spend the next three years as a tutor, a time which was professionally fulfilling but personally challenging. "I never wanted to leave teaching here," he says, but adapting to life on the West Coast proved difficult for his family, especially for his wife, who was a new convert to the Faith and away from home for the first time with small children. "We wanted our kids to know their aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents" — all of whom were 3,000 miles away.

"It was very painful to leave the College, but I realized my family needed me to be somewhere else," Dr. Augros says. When an offer to teach at a Legionaries of Christ

seminary in New York presented itself, he accepted.

For the past 11 years, Dr. Augros taught philosophy at the seminary, mostly through the lecture format, with little outside-the-classroom interaction with his students. Although content, he missed the College's "society of intellectual friendships," as he describes it, as well as the Socratic method, the freedom to teach more than one discipline, and the great books that make up the College's classical curriculum. This sense of academic restlessness, more than the scandals that have recently beset the Legionaries, fueled his longing to return to Thomas Aquinas College.

With the death of President Dr. Thomas E. Dillon this spring and the subsequent opening on the College faculty, Dr. Augros considered coming back to Santa Paula, but feared the move's effect on his family — a concern that Mrs. Augros quickly put to rest. "I'm ready now," he remembers her telling him. "Things are different. The kids have grown. I'm a veteran Catholic. All of our life circumstances have changed."

Their children — Maximilian Thomas (13), Evelyn Rose (11), and Benjamin Michael (9) — have long since established the close relationships with their extended family that Mike and Amy sought more than a decade ago. Moreover, as the children have matured, the family's needs have shifted. "One of the reasons I was anxious to come back as a tutor," Dr. Augros explains, "was for the spiritual life of the College, which I wanted for my family."

With his wife and his children's blessing, Dr. Augros brought his family back to California this past summer and now teaches junior lab, sophomore math, and sophomore theology. "I'm having conversations with students outside of class," he smiles — a passion he first discovered as a high school senior more than 20 years ago. "This is where I fit."



Chaplain Rev. Cornelius Buckley, S.J., administers the Profession of Faith and the Oath of Fidelity to the College's newest tutor, Dr. Michael Augros.

The College in the News

Curriculum, Chapel, Dr. Dillon, and Students Garner Headlines

Pacific Coast Business Times

"College Has Tools for Making Business Leaders," reads the headline in the August 14-20 edition of the *Pacific Coast Business Times*. The article that follows examines the ways that liberal education prepares well-rounded graduates to thrive in most any career or discipline. "Thomas Aquinas College may have the key to educating better employees for companies everywhere" the article begins. "The Santa Paula school's uncommon curriculum and learning structure set it apart from other liberal arts colleges. But most important to employers, graduates are trained in sparking discussions and handling ethical issues."

"EWTN Live"

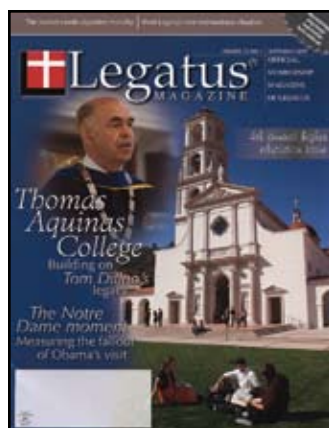
Thomas Aquinas College's president and communications manager appeared on the EWTN television network for the September 30 edition of "EWTN Live"



with host Rev. Mitch Pacwa, S.J. The show highlighted Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel, featuring video footage from the Dedication Masses in March and Pope Benedict XVI's blessing of the Chapel cornerstone in 2008. Noting that many colleges "draw attention to themselves through their sports teams," Fr. Pacwa credited Thomas Aquinas College with instead "doing it through orthodoxy in the classroom and in the new architecture visible on campus."

Legatus Magazine

The cover story of the September 2009 issue of *Legatus Magazine*, the flagship publication of the national organization for Catholic business leaders, spotlights the College's new chapel and offers a memorial to late



reporter Judy Roberts. "He raised nearly \$100 million and gained national recognition for the college's Great Books program." In an accompanying editorial, editor Patrick Novacosky reflects, "Each person was created by God. Each person was created for God. Tom Dillon lived that reality, and the world is a better place for it."

Ventura County Star

A front-page feature story in the August 25 edition of the *Ventura County Star* featured a spectacular photo of the Most Rev. J. Michael Miller, C.S.B., archbishop of Vancouver, offering the Convocation Mass in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Just above, the headline proclaims, "Staying Faithful to its Teachings." The ensuing story observes that "Thomas Aquinas College is not your typical modern university," and that it is "attracting national attention for its small classes, generous financial aid and strong academics." The ar-

chbishop of Vancouver, offering the Convocation Mass in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Just above, the headline proclaims, "Staying Faithful to its Teachings." The ensuing story observes that "Thomas Aquinas College is not your typical modern university," and that it is "attracting national attention for its small classes, generous financial aid and strong academics." The ar-

chbishop of Vancouver, offering the Convocation Mass in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Just above, the headline proclaims, "Staying Faithful to its Teachings." The ensuing story observes that "Thomas Aquinas College is not your typical modern university," and that it is "attracting national attention for its small classes, generous financial aid and strong academics." The ar-

chbishop of Vancouver, offering the Convocation Mass in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Just above, the headline proclaims, "Staying Faithful to its Teachings." The ensuing story observes that "Thomas Aquinas College is not your typical modern university," and that it is "attracting national attention for its small classes, generous financial aid and strong academics." The ar-

chbishop of Vancouver, offering the Convocation Mass in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Just above, the headline proclaims, "Staying Faithful to its Teachings." The ensuing story observes that "Thomas Aquinas College is not your typical modern university," and that it is "attracting national attention for its small classes, generous financial aid and strong academics." The ar-



chbishop of Vancouver, offering the Convocation Mass in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. Just above, the headline proclaims, "Staying Faithful to its Teachings." The ensuing story observes that "Thomas Aquinas College is not your typical modern university," and that it is "attracting national attention for its small classes, generous financial aid and strong academics." The ar-

Sacred Architecture

Duncan Stroik, the design architect for Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel, penned a moving tribute to late president Dr. Thomas E. Dillon in the June 2009 issue of *Sacred Architecture*, the journal of the Institute for Sacred Architecture. "Behind every great building and its architect there is a visionary patron," writes Mr. Stroik. "Someone who thinks big, takes risks, raises funds, and above all recognizes the significance of architecture." Dr. Dillon was, he adds, "like most patrons ... an incredibly busy man, but he found time to do the things that mattered, such as visiting artists' workshops and traveling to Europe to pick out marble." The architect and the patron, says Mr. Stroik, worked "in the spirit of co-authors," and the "length of the nave, the heavenly light from the clear windows, and the simple color palette ... all flowed from (Dr. Dillon's) vision for the church and his own character."

Orange County Register

In its June 3 edition, the *Orange County Register* featured a profile of Nicole Madro, the co-valedictorian at JSerra Catholic High School in San Juan Capistrano, Calif., and now a member of the College's Class of 2013. Noting that Miss Madro graduated with a 4.7 GPA, the article quotes JSerra Principal Tom Waszak as praising her "devotion to furthering the gospel message through service." Asked where she sees herself in five years, Miss Madro replied, "I will have finished college with a liberal arts degree, and I will probably be working to earn money for graduate school. During college, I will hopefully have gained a better sense of how I can use my intellectual talents in a career that truly builds up society."

Princeton Review: College True to its Founding

At this time of year, the various college guides publish their annual editions, which, although imperfect measurements of goodness or worth, do, in their own way, reflect on the value of authentically Catholic, truly liberal education in the world today. As Interim President Peter L. DeLuca, one of the College's founders, recently put it, "When we founded Thomas Aquinas College 38 years ago, we had in mind to do the very best kind of Catholic liberal education first and foremost for the benefit of students. But we also had a secondary goal in mind: We wanted to demonstrate that, without compromising either the Catholic character of our institution or our unique academic program, we could show that it is viable in the modern age. The College's high rankings in the various guides, both secular and Catholic, indicate that we are achieving that goal. We have not compromised our institution or our program and yet we are being widely recognized as offering an excellent education."

The Princeton Review's compilation of *The 371 Best Colleges, 2010 Edition* contains 62 "Top 20" ranking lists based on nationwide surveys in which some 122,000 students rated their schools on criteria ranging from faculty and cost of living to social life and campus food. According to these surveys, Thomas Aquinas College's reputation for academic excellence and the faith and honesty of its students continues to flourish. Meanwhile, students report being highly pleased with the financial aid the College extends to their families.

Highest Rating for Academics

"We commend Thomas Aquinas College for its outstanding academics, which is the primary criterion for our choice of schools for the book," says Robert Franek, vice president for publishing of The Princeton Review and author of *The Best 371 Colleges*. The guide profiles only the top 15 percent of the nearly 2,500 four-year colleges in the United States. Of those, it ranks Thomas Aquinas College among the "Top 50," giving it the highest possible score of 99 for academics. Further, acknowledging the use of the Socratic method in the classrooms, the guide hails the College as a place where "class discussions (are) encouraged."



In its profile, The Princeton Review quotes extensively from Thomas Aquinas College students, one of whom observes that the purpose of the College's classical curriculum is "to discover the truth by studying the greatest minds of Western thought," and that "eternal truth is the end goal, not just some credentials for a job later." Another writes, "The academic experience is amazing," and praises the College's tutors as "inspiring models of inquiry, wonder, and disciplined understanding."

All of which is heartening, says Interim President Peter L. DeLuca. "In the classroom, we get to see daily how students embrace and, indeed, thrive in this rigorous academic program," he remarks. "It is good to see that, by way of a popular college guide, this enthusiasm is now on display for a much wider audience."

"Most Religious Students"

Among the various "Top 20" rankings featured in *The 371 Best Colleges* is the perennial category of "Most Religious Students." Traditionally, the Mormon Brigham Young University has topped this list, but this year the first-place designation went to Thomas Aquinas College, based on students' reports about the seriousness of their faith and the regularity of their religious practice.



"The frequentation of the sacraments on campus is of capital importance," says Chaplain Rev. Cornelius Buckley, S.J., noting that the Mass is offered four times each day in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel, and confession is available both before and after each one. Students also take part in many other voluntary devotions, such as Eucharistic adoration and nightly rosaries, that provide an abundance of grace and can lead to vast spiritual growth over the course of four years.

Campus Morality

The fruits of this spiritual growth seem evident in the students' morality and personal conduct. In its list of key findings about the College derived from student surveys, The Princeton Review reports that "No one cheats." Moreover, the College ranked ninth on the Review's list of the country's most "Stone-Cold Sober Schools" (based on minimal use of alcohol plus extensive time spent studying) and seventh in the U.S. on the "Future Rotarians and Daughters of the American Revolution" list, which takes into account numerous social criteria, including "the prevalence of religion."

Although such titles are cheeky and perhaps, in light of the broader cultural climate, intended to be deprecating, Thomas Aquinas College students wear them "as a badge of honor," says junior Emily Barry. "If you're a serious Catholic trying to live the Christian life in fidelity to the Gospel, then there's something attractive about a community that's going to promise you an opportunity to live the Faith and be formed in a life of virtue. Most college campuses can't provide that," she adds.



Each year roughly two-thirds of Thomas Aquinas College students travel some 400 miles north for the Walk for Life West Coast in San Francisco.

Given the students' moral convictions, especially as they pertain to contentious political issues relating to abortion, euthanasia, and marriage, it should come as little surprise that the College ranked No. 16 in yet another category — the "most conservative students" list. Yet it would be a mistake, argues Interim President DeLuca, to infer that either the intellectual or the moral life of the College is motivated by politics. "The truths of reason and of the Faith precede and transcend any politics," he says. "Our aim is not to train liberals or conservatives; it is to form lovers of truth."

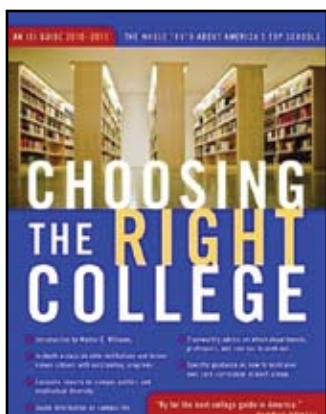
"Top Value"

Owing to the relatively modest price of tuition, the complete absence of "fees," and a generous system of financial aid, The Princeton Review also listed the College

College Guide Round-Up

Choosing the Right College 2010-11

"In the early 1970s, as many eminent Catholic colleges began to detach learning from the Church's traditional principles, a small group of scholars in California formulated a new vision for liberal arts education," begins the chapter on Thomas Aquinas College in *Choosing the Right College*. "Today," the guide continues, "Thomas Aquinas College remains faithful to that vision."



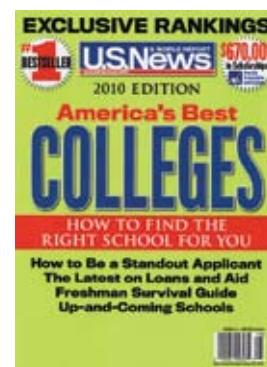
The guide, produced by the Intercollegiate Studies Institute in Wilmington, Del., takes a decidedly academic approach to evaluating colleges. Its focus is not on such qualities as the campus social scene or athletics program, but whether a school is truly educating its stu-

dents. It bases its evaluations on "how rigorous a school's core curriculum is," "the school's attention to teaching," "free expression and open debate," and the "quality, safety, and sanity of life on campus and in dormitories."

From that vantage point, *Choosing the Right College* credits Thomas Aquinas College with having "one of the strongest curricula of any school" and a "corporate commitment to a rationally knowable objective reality." Further, it mentions that the College "does not press its ideas onto students through lectures and textbooks, but genuinely tries to lead them through the Socratic method, placing the emphasis on their own reasoning powers as engaged with a text and other readers."

U.S. News: "America's Best Colleges 2010"

In the latest edition of its annual report, "America's Best Colleges 2010," *U.S. News & World Report* ranks Thomas Aquinas College in the top tier of American liberal arts colleges. The College is one of just four Catholic institutions to be ranked among the magazine's top 100.



In addition to its high esteem for the College's academic program, *U.S. News* also recognizes Thomas Aquinas College among all liberal arts colleges for its affordability and the generosity of its financial aid program. The guide lists Thomas Aquinas College as one of the nation's "Best Values," rating it 32nd out of the top 40, and 45th of the top 50 institutions in terms of the "Least Debt" carried by its graduates.

Forbes: "America's Best Colleges 2009"

Whereas most college guides create separate rankings for liberal arts colleges and universities, Forbes combines them all for a single list of 600, or the top 15 percent, of



as one of its “Best Value Colleges.” This rating is based on “the percentage of ... students determined to have need who received aid, the percentage of need met, and the percentage of students whose aid was fully met,” while also factoring in survey data about students’ “satisfaction with their aid awards.” The College is one of only 13 in the country to be named to The Princeton Review’s first-ever “Financial Aid Honor Roll” of schools, earning the highest possible score of 99.

Sports on Campus

Although The Princeton Review ranked Thomas Aquinas sixth on its “Intercollegiate Sports Unpopular or Nonexistent” list, most students would be quick to point out that the key word in that designation is *intercollegiate*. Due to the College’s strong academic focus, it does not sponsor teams that travel and compete against



other institutions. Nonetheless, sports are and have always been an important part of student life on campus.

Basketball is arguably the most popular sport on campus, closely followed by soccer and flag football, as well as tennis, rugby, and street hockey. Part-time student athletic coordinators, one for

men and one for women, help to arrange the various teams and schedules. Participation, though entirely voluntary, is widespread, with roughly 60 percent of students involved in at least one intramural sport. The annual pre-Thanksgiving Turkey Bowl — a flag football competition between upperclassmen and underclassmen — is a favorite campus tradition.

An Appreciation for Beauty

In an ironic twist — given that the College operated for most of its first few decades out of modular units — The Princeton Review ranked it 16th nationally on its “Dorms like Palaces” list. The ranking is based, according to the report, “on students’ rating of dorm comfort.”

“We certainly never set out to build ‘palatial’ residence halls,” laughs Mr. DeLuca. “But we have always had student comfort in mind, as well as beauty, which predisposes all of us to what is true and good.” Indeed, beauty has been an integral facet of the design of the campus and all of the buildings the College has erected over the years, from the residence halls, to the library and, of course, to the new chapel.

That The Princeton Review — and more important, the students it interviewed — recognizes this beauty, in addition to the goodness and truth of the academic program, is a hopeful sign that the College remains true to its informal motto of *verum, bonum, pulchrum* — the true, the good, the beautiful.



St. Monica Residence Hall

the more than 4,000 campuses in the United States. “It is important to note,” the guide advises, “that if a school appears on this list at all, that indicates it meets a certain level of quality,” due to the list’s relative exclusivity. High academic performance and reputation are prerequisites for consideration.

In its 2009 evaluations, the business magazine places Thomas Aquinas College in the top third of this elite grouping. The College is one of only a dozen Catholic colleges or universities to be included in this upper echelon.

Kiplinger’s: “100 Best Values in Private Colleges”

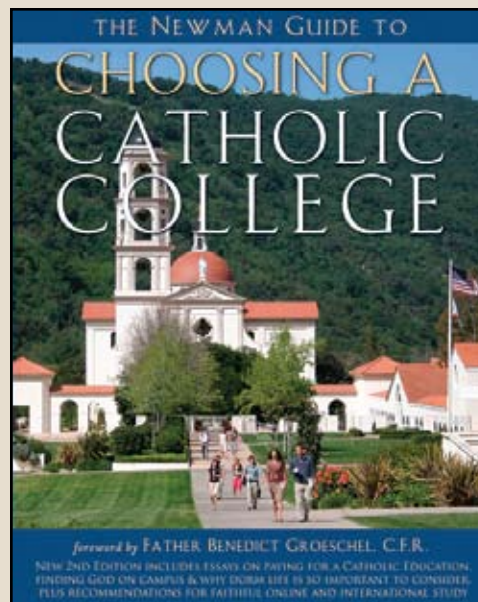
Best known for its periodicals offering business forecasts and personal-finance advice, Kiplinger’s also produces a college guide dealing primarily with value in education — that is, getting the maximum benefit out of every dollar spent on schooling. The guide starts with institutions known for offering high-quality education and then determines, among those, which are priced most reasonably.



Using that measure, Kiplinger’s has named Thomas Aquinas College to its “100 Best Values in Private Colleges,” ranking it 33rd among liberal arts colleges. It also rates the College 3rd among liberal arts colleges for lowest “Cost After Need-Based Aid,” 10th for the lowest “average debt” among its graduates, and 2nd in the nation for lowest “total costs” after factoring financial aid.

Newman Guide: College a Model for Catholic Campuses

Featuring a stunning photograph of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel and Thomas Aquinas College students on its cover, the second edition of *The Newman Guide to Choosing a Catholic College*, published by the Cardinal Newman Society, recommends only 21 “faithful Catholic colleges in the United States.” Of these, it recognizes Thomas Aquinas College as being “the first of the new Catholic colleges launched after the onset of the crisis of Catholic higher education in the



late 1960s,” crediting the College for often serving “as a guide for these institutions.”

What makes *Choosing a Catholic College* unique within the college-guide genre is that it is distinctly Catholic. The Cardinal Newman Society, which is committed to restoring and enhancing genuine Catholic higher education nationwide, places an emphasis in its reviews on qualities that are largely ignored by its secular counterparts, such as fidelity to the Magisterium, a dynamic campus spiritual life, morally healthy student living conditions, and a sound core curriculum.

“Great Books Oasis”

“While there are several solid Catholic colleges that successfully reflect the Catholic intellectual tradition,” *The Newman Guide* singles out Thomas Aquinas College for having “built a national reputation for its rigorous Great Books approach” as well as “a discussion-style class format and a curriculum that emphasizes ... St. Thomas Aquinas.” The guide’s enthusiasm for the College’s academic program is matched by its regard for the College’s tutors. “Among (the College’s) many strengths,” it says, is “an impressive faculty of ... well-rounded academics.”

“The intellectual environment is rigorous across the curriculum,” the guide adds, observing that the College attracts a student body from 42 states and a number of foreign countries and that 45 percent of its alumni undertake graduate studies. “Those interested in a broad educational focus can thrive in this Great Books oasis,” it says. “In fact, about 5 percent of the students already come with bachelor’s degrees. Of those, some are professionals in their 20s who want the undergraduate education they might have missed earlier.”

“Vibrant Spiritual Program”

Describing Thomas Aquinas College as “the first of the new orthodox Catholic colleges after Vatican II,” *The Newman Guide* goes on to note that the College’s founding document, *A Proposal for the Fulfillment of Catholic Liberal Education*, was in many ways ahead of its time. The Blue Book’s commentary about the perilous state of Catholic education was, according to the Cardinal Newman Society, “as much a prediction as an acknowledgment in 1969.”

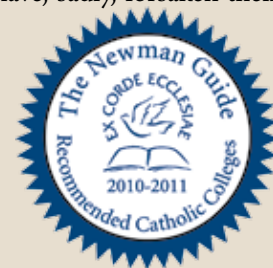
Noting that too many colleges in the United States have, sadly, forsaken their Catholic identity and stopped trying to maintain fidelity to the teaching Church, *The Newman Guide* compliments Thomas Aquinas College for its faithfulness and the faith of its students. “There are four Masses daily offered by three non-teaching chaplains who are of the Dominican, Jesuit, and Norbertine orders,” the guide notes; “students also participate in an evening Rosary and Eucharistic Adoration and frequent opportunities for confession.” It also celebrates the campus’ new crown jewel, Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity, which, it says, “enhances an already vibrant spiritual program.”

Finding that there “have been no questionable speakers on campus,” *The Newman Guide* says Thomas Aquinas College “reflects a strong public witness to the Faith.” As just one example, it points out that roughly two-thirds of the student body participates in the annual Walk for Life West Coast — “about 400 miles away.”

“A Wide Following”

Echoing the findings of the various secular college guides, *The Newman Guide* comments on the high value of a Thomas Aquinas College education relative to its price. “The price for this nationally recognized education is well below the average for private colleges in California,” the guide reports, while acknowledging that the College maintains “this high quality of education ... without accepting federal or state government support.”

In the conclusion of its nine-page review, *The Newman Guide* says, “In some ways, Thomas Aquinas College stands by itself among Catholic colleges.” The author attributes to the College “an impressive intellectual rigor ... matched by a commitment to orthodox Catholicism,” adding that “this combination has attracted a wide following” that extends not only “around the country” but has also “become international.”



President's Council Profile: Dr. Thomas Krause

California Businessman Finds Success in Hiring College's Alumni

For 22 years, President's Council member Dr. Thomas Krause has actively supported Thomas Aquinas College as a benefactor, a parent and, perhaps most notably, an employer. The chairman of Behavioral Science Technology, an international consulting firm specializing in organizational culture and safety management, Dr. Krause regularly hires the College's graduates — and with great success.

A native of Northern California, Dr. Krause learned of the College around the time he started practicing psychology in the nearby city of Ojai in the 1970s. "Hearing about the curriculum locally caused me to be interested because I knew I had never read all those books, even though I had a PhD in a social science," he says. Then his sister-in-law Leslie Hidley ('86) enrolled as a freshman in 1982 and "had a really wonderful time," confirming his positive first impressions.

When his daughter Christel (Kelsey '91) was nearing graduation from high school, Dr. Krause and his wife, Cathryn, were determined to send her to the College. "She had been accepted at a really good school, an Ivy League-kind of college, and that's where she wanted to go," Dr. Krause recalls, but Christel agreed to give the College a try. During her time on campus, she "got taken with the curriculum," as well as with the Faith, converting in her freshman year.

"None of us were Catholic at that time," Dr. Krause observes, "but most of the family is now," including Dr. and Mrs. Krause, who were received into the Church three years ago. "Christel's conversion had a big influence on me in that it caused me to re-think things I hadn't thought about in a long time."

Enthused by Christel's learning, in 1990 Dr. and Mrs. Krause joined the President's Council — the College's financial backbone, consisting of hundreds of loyal benefactors who contribute \$1,000 or more annually. As a token of gratitude, the College invites Council members to its Great Books Weekends each July, which the Krauses enjoyed immensely. "It was those early seminars that really got us interested; it was having the actual experience of reading and discussing those books," Dr. Krause remembers. Eager to get a further taste of such an education, he went on to earn a master's degree in liberal arts through a program at St. John's College in Santa Fe, N.M., where he has been a member of the Board of Visitors and Governors since 2001.

When Christel and her friends began graduating from the College, Dr. Krause began hiring alumni for his company. He soon discovered that these liberally educated men and women made for exemplary workers, chiefly for three reasons: First, through reading political philosophy the College's graduates acquire a proper sense of citizenship. "A good citizen is someone who understands the overall objectives of the organization and works hard to accomplish them," he says. "It's almost rare these days to find

someone that gets the idea of organizational citizenship. It's an idea that's almost lost in the modern culture."

Second, Dr. Krause finds that because of their knowledge of the Socratic method, the College's alumni are uniquely adept at solving problems and working cooperatively. "If your task is to, say, lead a discussion with a client, you need to have some familiarity with what a discussion is and how a set of issues gets approached," he explains.

Finally, Dr. Krause notes that the graduates' thoughtful study of philosophy prepares them for the modern economy, where intricate and impersonal relationships, often far-removed, can complicate ethical decision-making. "What the employer is looking for is an employee who gets that (complexity), is willing to examine it carefully, and behaves in a way that's consistent with an ethical standard," he says.

"When you're looking to hire someone, you're looking for someone you think of as a good person, someone who will be a good colleague," Dr. Krause adds. "It's very hard to tell when you interview people who's going to be like that because everyone is trying hard to *look* like that.... So, knowing that (an applicant) went to a college like Thomas Aquinas gives you a kind of direction that goes in a positive way."

Dr. Krause's experience — as both a parent and an employer — has sustained his generosity toward the College over the years as a member of the President's Council. "I think it's very important to American Catholicism that there is a place like Thomas Aquinas College," he says. "It is the only place of its kind in the U.S. That's good for education and it's good for Catholicism. So as a Catholic and as a citizen, I have at least two reasons to support the institution."



For more information about the President's Council, or to become a member, please contact Mr. Robert Bagdazian, director of development, at 1-800-634-9797 or rbagdazian@thomasaquinas.edu.

In Memoriam

Dr. Harry Gray Browne, 1929 – 2009



In the early morning hours of August 28, Thomas Aquinas College lost a member of its Board of Governors and one of its dearest friends, Dr. Harry G. Browne, who died in his sleep, unexpectedly but peacefully, at his home in Sparks, Nev.

A graduate of Yale University and Cornell University Medical College, Dr. Browne was vice president of Therapeutic Antibodies, Inc., in New York; a clinical assistant professor of pathology at Vanderbilt University School of Medicine; and a specialist in tropical medicine. His passion for travel and foreign languages led him to conduct research and open businesses world over, including in Mexico and Egypt. A lover of ideas and words, Dr. Browne delighted in debate and wrote a number of short stories, often set in North Africa. He is survived by his wife, Jean, as well as five of their six children and 10 grandchildren.

"Harry Browne was a man of great intellect, deep faith, and extraordinary generosity," says Thomas Aquinas College Interim President Peter DeLuca. "He was always a proud spokesman and ambassador for the College, wherever his journeys took him."

A scientist and physician with a profound devotion to Christ and His church, Dr. Browne embraced the harmony of faith and reason to which Thomas Aquinas College aspires. "Truth is important — in the spiritual and the material realms," he remarked in 2004. "In the scientific world, all too often, truth is cast aside in favor of hard, cold facts. But to be a good scientist, you can't reject one type of truth or one type of knowledge. If you do, you're going to start with a potentially weak premise and probably not know how to check your conclusions as you go along. The practical sciences necessarily depend on theoretical knowledge. A doctor of medicine like myself should be the type of person that is very interested in philosophy, reality, religion, and even revelation."

The son of an early benefactor and member of the Board of Governors, Margaret Gray Browne, Dr. Browne faithfully continued his family's tradition of supporting the College. After Mrs. Browne retired from the Board in 1983, her colleagues elected Dr. Browne to replace her, a position he held from 1985 until his death.

A generous benefactor, Dr. Browne was a member of the President's Council since 1976 and was inducted into the Order of St. Albert the Great in 1998. He was a regular participant at the College's Summer Seminar weekends for President's Council members, and he helped host receptions and golf tournaments on the College's behalf. Just four days before his death, he was on campus for Convocation and a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Board of Governors.

In 2007, Dr. Browne was overjoyed when his son John Douglas Browne II (Doug), a successful entrepreneur and farmer, enrolled at the College at the age of 41. Tragically, Doug was forced to leave the College after only a few months due to a struggle with kidney cancer, which claimed his life one year later. Many of his fellow members of the Class of 2011 joined Dr. Browne and other members of the Browne family for an on-campus memorial Mass last winter.

On Friday, October 2, the College likewise held a memorial Mass for Dr. Browne in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

IN MEMORIAM

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

Gerald Lubin, M.D. – June 17, 2009
Benefactor

Mrs. Marie Cammarota – July 31, 2009
*Benefactor and mother of Nicholas ('84),
Isabelle (Coonley '85), and Fran ('89)*

Harry G. Browne, M.D. – August 28, 2009
*Benefactor and member of the
Board of Governors*

Mr. Stephen Paietta – August 31, 2009
Brother of tutor Michael J. Paietta

Mr. Richard Blewett
September 14, 2009
*Brother of John W. Blewett,
emeritus member of the Board of Governors*

Mr. John B. Friedrich, Jr.
September 15, 2009
Son of benefactor Mrs. John B. Friedrich, Sr.

Mr. Kevin Sinnott – September 21, 2009
Nephew of tutor Brian Kelly

Mrs. Carol Ann Cain
September 28, 2009
Stepmother of tutor Steven R. Cain

*Please join us for a memorial Mass for the
deceased benefactors of Thomas Aquinas
College on the first Friday of each month at
11:30 a.m. in Our Lady of the
Most Holy Trinity Chapel.*

“The Pursuit of Truth Illumined by the Grace of the Holy Spirit”

The Convocation Homily of His Excellency J. Michael Miller, CSB

Dear faculty, administrators, staff, students, and friends in Christ:

The Eucharist we are now celebrating inserts this community of Thomas Aquinas College into a millennial tradition of institutions of higher learning in the West that have invoked the Gift of the Holy Spirit at the beginning of a new academic year. It belongs to the very nature of a college dedicated to the pursuit of truth and the love of wisdom that it calls upon the guidance of God's Spirit as its faculty and students begin or continue their journey of learning together. Today we join that long stream of men and women who have prayed that their sometimes anxious but always exciting search for the truth continue in the year ahead to be animated by the *Donum Dei*, the Gift of God.

The Spirit of Truth

In this morning's first reading (Ez. 36:24-28), the Prophet Ezekiel, a witness of one of the most tragic ages the Jewish people lived through—the destruction of the Kingdom of Judea and its capital, Jerusalem, followed by the bitter exile in Babylon—prophesied a great change of fortune. He became a herald of hope for a distraught people. After their purification through trial and suffering, the dawn of a new era was about to break forth, a time which would be marked by the people's reception of a “new heart” and a “new spirit”: “I will give you a new heart, and place a new spirit within you, taking from your bodies your stony hearts and giving you natural hearts” (Ez. 36:26). This “new spirit” given by God to His people will be His Spirit, the Spirit of God Himself.

The life-giving Spirit that brought creatures to life at creation is insufficient on its own to reach the destiny God has planned for it. The law of Moses pointed out obligations, but could not change the human heart to fulfill them. A new heart and a new spirit were needed, and that is precisely what God offers us through the Redemption accomplished by Jesus. The Father removes our hearts of stone and gives us hearts of flesh like Christ's, enlivened by a new spirit, the Holy Spirit, who sustains us, moves us, and guides us toward the light of truth and pours “God's love ... into our hearts” (Rom. 5:5).

Since Pentecost, the prophesy of Ezekiel is now fulfilled anew every time the mind and heart are filled with the Spirit of Truth sent by the Father. We pray fervently this morning that it will be fulfilled in this glorious Chapel of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity today and throughout the coming academic year.



His Excellency delivers his homily from the Chapel's mahogany ambo.

The Living Water

In the Gospel (Jn. 7:37-39), Jesus invites His listeners who are thirsty to come to Him and drink. The water of Jesus is the Holy Spirit. On the feast of Tabernacles Jesus promised to quench humanity's spiritual thirst with this Spirit: “Rivers of living water will flow from within him who believes in me” (Jn. 7:38). The Creator Spirit transforms our stony hearts, emptying them of darkness and filling them with divine light and life, wisdom and joy.

The Holy Spirit's presence in the Church and in individual souls in the state of grace is a permanent indwelling, dynamic and creative. Those who have drunk the Water of Jesus will have within themselves “a fountain of water that leaps up to provide eternal life” (Jn. 4:14).

The Holy Spirit changes the lives of those who welcome Him, renewing the face of the earth and transforming all creation. The Font of Life is our inner teacher and, at the same time, the strong wind that blows the sails of the bark of Peter to the shore of the heavenly Jerusalem.

“Remaining faithful to the Lord Jesus (whom Mary presents to us), you are being interiorly prepared to commit yourselves intensely to intellectual work, to the pursuit of truth, illumined by the grace of the Holy Spirit.”

St. Paul and Christian Wisdom

I would like to remind you of what the Apostle wrote about wisdom, that wisdom which is the gift of the Holy Spirit. St. Paul speaks of the “wisdom of the Cross,” a wisdom opposed to the so-called wisdom of this world. He contrasts these two wisdoms, with only the former being true, while the latter is “foolishness.” This contrast of the two wisdoms is not the difference between theology, on the one hand, and philosophy or science on the other. Rather, for Paul, it is a matter of two fundamental attitudes. The “wisdom of this world” is a way of living and of viewing things apart from God, the following of dominant opinions, according to the criteria of success and power. “Divine wisdom,” on the other hand, consists in following the mind of Christ; it is Christ and His life-giving Spirit who open to us the path of truth.

Dear students, you are at Thomas Aquinas College because you are resolved to put your minds and hearts at the service of the sacred cause of truth. But your undertaking will be fruitful only if you attend assiduously to your spiritual formation according to the mind of Christ: “Have in you the mind that is in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 2:5). In order to know and understand spiritual things, it is necessary to be spiritual men and women. If you are of the flesh, with a stony heart, inevitably you will fall into foolishness, even if you study a great deal, acquire scholarly habits, and become what St. Paul calls a “master of worldly argument” (1 Cor. 1:20). For such people, the Cross is only a scandal and folly. The Apostle says so with impressive force: “The message of the Cross is foolishness to those who are perishing” (1 Cor. 1:18).

So Paul invites you—the faculty and students of Thomas Aquinas College—to go beyond the wisdom of this world to the deeper wisdom of the Cross. It reveals “the full power of God's boundless love, for the Cross is an expression of love, and love is the true power that is revealed precisely in this seeming weakness” (Pope Benedict XVI, General Audience; October 29, 2008).

Learn then, dear friends in Christ, from the Spirit you have received, that the highest wisdom is that of the



The Most Rev. J. Michael Miller, CSB, incenses the altar of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel during the Convocation Mass of the Holy Spirit.

Cross. Paul's teaching confirms Jesus' own words when He blessed the Father and affirmed: “You have hidden these things from the wise and clever and revealed them to babes” (Mt. 11:25). The “wise” of whom Jesus speaks are those whom Paul calls the “wise of this world.” Only the “babes,” those who accept “the message of the Cross” (1 Cor. 1:18), can become truly wise.

The wisdom of the Cross is a light that illumines the whole meaning of human life. For this reason, St. Augustine rightly speaks of the Cross as the chair of the Divine Teacher. It is from this chair that we receive the sublime revelation of God's plan and of His love for us. The limits of merely human wisdom are expanded by faith in the God-Man nailed to the Cross and raised to life in the glory of the Resurrection. Embrace, therefore, this *cathedra* of true wisdom, the Cross, from which Christ draws all things to Himself. He who was Himself thirsty on Golgotha quenches the thirst of those who contemplate His face and offers them the “rivers of living water,” of true wisdom, as a gift of His Spirit.

This is not an anti-intellectual attitude, a turning away from reason and toward a facile fideism. St. Paul does not denigrate the use of reason. Nor does he undervalue the human effort necessary for the pursuit of knowledge. What St. Paul denounces is a worldly wisdom steeped in human pride. Following Jesus, the Apostle opposes the type of arrogant intellectualism in which a person, even if he knows a great deal, loses sensitivity to truth and the freedom to open himself to the wonder of the divine plan of salvation.

“Societas Spiritus”

On Mary's lap sits the Wisdom of the Father, that is, Jesus the Christ. He continues to send us the Spirit, transforming this college into what St. Augustine might call a “*societas Spiritus*,” a community of the Holy Spirit, where you gather together to study, ponder, and contemplate the wonders of God, the human person, and the good and holy life. Remaining faithful to the Lord Jesus (whom Mary presents to us) you are being interiorly prepared to commit yourselves intensely to intellectual work, to the pursuit of truth, illumined by the grace of the Holy Spirit.

As we continue this Eucharistic sacrifice, let us once again implore the Lord that He will guide the beginning of your work this academic year, direct its progress, and bring it to a fruitful conclusion. Gathered under the maternal protection of Our Lady, let us pray: “*Veni, Sancte Spiritus!* Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful at this college of yours, and kindle in them the fire of your love!” Amen.

His Excellency J. Michael Miller, CSB, the archbishop of Vancouver, British Columbia, was the principal celebrant at the Thomas Aquinas College 2009 Convocation Mass of the Holy Spirit.



College Hosts Summer Studies

Alumni Study Social Teachings; Benefactors Gather for Seminars

The greatest challenge for Catholic colleges and universities today is to be faithful to the teachings of the Church, even in the midst of a declining culture — to be a sign of contradiction in a society that with each passing year grows more and more decadent.

— Thomas E. Dillon †

On June 12, nearly 30 alumni and guests, representing 17 graduating classes from 1976 to 2008, gathered on campus for a two-day series of seminars. The conference was hosted by *The Aquinas Review* and facilitated by *The Review's* editor and the founding president of Thomas Aquinas College, Dr. Ronald P. McArthur, along with College faculty members Dr. Anthony Andres, Mr. Steve Cain, and Dr. John Nieto. Convened to examine questions regarding social justice and economics, it included select readings from Wendell Barry, a 20th century social critic of modern industrial society; the *Politics* of Aristotle; St. Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae*, concerning fellowship and charity in the polity; and finally, readings from Charles De Koninck regarding the nature of the common good.

Dr. McArthur, explaining why *The Aquinas Review* decided to sponsor this conference at this point in time, says, "We noted that most Catholics had no real grasp of the social doctrine of the Church. How then, we thought, could Catholic laymen exercise their role as Christians in the evangelization of their society without

understanding the lineaments of a good society in our time? So, we thought, there should be a conference in which we could begin the study of the social doctrine we needed to know."

The timing of the event could not have been more fortuitous, directly anticipating the release of the Holy Father's latest encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, in which he states:

The risk for our time is that the de facto interdependence of people and nations is not matched by ethical interaction of consciences and minds that would give rise to truly human development. Only in charity, illuminated by the light of reason and faith, is it possible to pursue development goals that possess a more humane and humanizing value.

The conference was also a response to a request made of the College's late president, Dr. Thomas E. Dillon, by the president of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Renato Raffaele Cardinal Martino. After having attended, at Cardinal Martino's request, the international meeting convened in Mexico City in 2005 to promulgate the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Dr. Dillon had received a letter from Cardinal Martino expressing his desire that Thomas Aquinas College help in some way to advance the understanding of the Church's social doctrine. When, therefore, Dr. McArthur discussed his thoughts for this conference, Dr. Dillon was happy to endorse it.

Although this summer's seminar did not explicitly examine the Church's teachings on social justice, it served as a preamble to that discussion, defining the precepts and first principles upon which that teaching is built. This first conference marks the beginning of what one hopes will be a fruitful dialogue among alumni, friends, and faculty of the College. Says Dr. McArthur, "We intend to have a similar conference yearly and hope that many more alumni and friends will attend as we go along."

Summer Great Books Program

Each summer the College offers to its President's Council members the opportunity to experience life at Thomas Aquinas College firsthand. Each July, these benefactors can attend one of two Great Books Summer Seminar Weekends during which they participate in three seminars led by the College's president, dean, and other senior members of the teaching faculty. Readings are taken from the great books, and topics range from the nature of happiness to the relationship of faith and reason. This past summer, attendees undertook a consideration of sin and forgiveness, discussing works by Sigrid Undset, Søren Kierkegaard and, of course, St. Thomas Aquinas.

Held annually since 1990, these weekends are designed to give participants an inside look at the College's unique education that they so generously help to make possible.



Rev. Cornelius M. Buckley, S.J., serves as chaplain for the events, offering Mass and confession daily and joining in the classroom discussions. Between seminars, attendees enjoy delicious meals served both in and outdoors on the campus.

President's Council members should mark their calendars now for next year's Summer Seminar Weekends, which will be held on July 9-11 and July 16-18, 2010.



Renato Raffaele Cardinal Martino, President, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace

Matriculation Address continued from page 3

Pope Benedict describes St. Thomas' understanding of the relationship between philosophy and theology, between reason and faith, by using the classical formula adopted by the Council of Chalcedon to describe the relationship between Christ's human and divine natures. Philosophy and theology, he said, must be interrelated "without confusion and without separation."

"Without confusion" means that each of the two must preserve its own identity. Philosophy is a quest carried out by reason with freedom and responsibility; but it must recognize both its limits and its greatness. For its part, theology draws upon a treasury of knowledge, divine Revelation, that always surpasses it, the depths of which can never be fully plumbed through reflection.

Balancing "without confusion," there is also "without separation." Philosophy does not start again from zero with every thinking subject in total isolation, but takes its place within the great dialogue of historical wisdom, which it accepts docilely and develops critically. In its pursuit, philosophy, the use of reason, cannot exclude what religions, and the Christian faith in particular, have given to humanity as signposts for the journey. The Holy Father observes that St. Thomas thinks that human reason, as it were, "breathes"; it moves within a vast open horizon where it can express the best of itself. If, instead, "a person reduces himself to thinking only of material objects or those that can be proven, he closes himself to the great questions about life, himself, and God, and is impoverished" (Benedict XVI, Address at the University of Regensburg; September 12, 2006). Such a person has divorced reason from faith, rendering asunder the very dynamic of the intellect.

Following Thomas, Pope Benedict is convinced that it is urgent for contemporary thinkers "to rediscover anew human rationality open to the light of the divine *Logos* and His perfect revelation which is Jesus Christ, Son of God made man" (Benedict XVI, Angelus; January 28, 2007). God who has revealed Himself as *Logos*, creative Reason and, as *Logos*, has acted and continues to act lovingly on our behalf. "In the beginning was the Word," the *Logos*, and "the Word became flesh" (Jn. 1:1,14). The divine *Logos*, eternal Reason, is thus the origin of the universe, and this same *Logos* was united once and for all with humanity, the world and history, in Christ.

Because God is *Logos*, He is Reason. "And this is why our faith is something that has to do with reason, can be passed on through reason and has no cause to hide from reason" (Benedict XVI, Address to the Swiss Bishops; November 9, 2006). Moreover, this Reason is not merely a mathematics of the universe nor first cause that withdrew

after producing the Big Bang. Rather it has "a heart such as to be able to renounce its own immensity and take flesh."

As students of Thomas Aquinas College, you are called to bear witness to the dignity of human reason and its capacity for knowing reality. Faithful Catholics have no fear of reason, but have trust in it. Just as grace builds on nature and brings it to fulfillment, so faith builds on reason.

I urge you, then, to develop the capacity for a dialogue between faith and reason, between religion and science. Engage the stimulating confrontation between faith and reason that aims to recover the harmonious synthesis achieved by St. Thomas and other great Christian thinkers, a synthesis frequently challenged by many currents of modern philosophy. By doing so, you not only make it possible to show your contemporaries the reasonableness of faith in God, but you can also demonstrate that "the definitive fulfillment of every authentic human aspiration rests in Jesus Christ" (Benedict XVI, Address to the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith; February 10, 2006).

Obedience to Truth in Humility

Dear freshmen: You know that you are privileged to be able to pass four years here at Thomas Aquinas College. This privilege brings with it an enormous responsibility: to yourselves, to your families — present and to come — to your country and, above all, to Christ and His church. I urge you to seek obedience to the truth in humility. For this you will need purification of intellect and will, of mind and heart.

But you also cannot be silent before the grandeur of God, for His greatness dwarfs our words. Think of the last weeks of St. Thomas' life. In these days, he no longer wrote; he no longer spoke. His friends asked him: "Teacher, why are you no longer speaking? Why are you not writing?" And he said: "Before what I have seen now all my words appear to me as straw."

Fr. Jean-Pierre Torrell, a great expert on St. Thomas, tells us not to misconstrue these words. Straw is not nothing. Straw bears grains of wheat, and this is its great value. It bears the ear of wheat. And even the straw of words is worthwhile since it produces wheat. Your task, dear faculty and friends, is to ensure that your straw, watered by a life of contemplation and integrity, may truly bear the wheat of God's Word.

His Excellency J. Michael Miller, CSB, the archbishop of Vancouver, British Columbia, was the Thomas Aquinas College 2009 Matriculation Speaker.

"Adopt St. Thomas as your intellectual master and his teaching as your trustworthy guide."

From Rome to Vancouver

An Interview with His Excellency J. Michael Miller, CSB

Q: In your Convocation Address you spoke to our students about making St. Thomas Aquinas their intellectual master. Can you talk about what that means and how one remains free even when he has a master?

A: It seems to me one of the great ways in which we do make St. Thomas a master is to appreciate the freedom that he actually brought to the study both of philosophy and theology in his own time — I mean his use of Aristotle and his willingness to engage both Arab and Jewish thinkers.

St. Thomas had an understanding that the truth brings with it freedom, not the suppression of questions. He didn't pull things off the table *a priori*. There

“To have an intellectual master does not mean that one simply repeats or parrots St. Thomas and his theorems; it's more about a Thomistic way of going about it.”

was nothing narrow. St. Thomas was a man who raised the question and then made a *determinatio*, which is a method that we can continue to use.

Of course, the genius of St. Thomas, the Common Doctor, is that he so well formulated so many properties of the Faith. But to have an intellectual master does not mean that one simply repeats or parrots St. Thomas and his theorems; it's more about a Thomistic way of going about it.

Another thing that I think we should bear in mind is that Thomas was very much a man of his time who was dealing with the questions that arose in his environment at the University of Paris particularly, but also in the other centers and the other *studia* in which he lived.

Q: What were some of those issues?

A: Well, there were all kinds of arguments about universals. There was also the terrific argument about whether mendicant orders and the Dominican way of life were legitimate. So we see St. Thomas wasn't simply a man abstracted, but a lot of his work was in fact driven by the ecclesial situation in which he lived.

And that is what we have to do. The Lord has given us a particular time to live in the Church. He didn't give us 50 years ago. He didn't give us 300 years ago. And He didn't give us 100 years from now, either. He gave us this time. That is His gift, and we can't complain. This is the time out of which we work, because this is where souls are now, where their salvation is being played out. We can not just seek a refuge in the past nor pretend that we are arrived at a future that we might imagine.

Q: While we are talking about St. Thomas, would you comment about the place of reason in the life of faith?

A: Our way is not the Protestant way — to mine Scripture and become sort of fideists, separating faith and reason. Our intellectual tradition is the *preambula fidei*: that faith is, obviously, not a problem for reason, but that it is reasonable. It seems to me this is the greatest single contribution that Catholics make, because the Protestant tradition of Christian education just does not have the appreciation for reason.

This is one of the things, I think, on which Pope Benedict is much stronger even than John Paul II. I mean, he just insists on that over and over again. It is important because otherwise faith is a matter of will, which is actually a terrifying thought, for we would then have a capricious universe.

It would be like children who have been abused. They tell you that whatever they did, they never knew if they were going to be hit or not. Most parents are consistent, so children can know that if they do this, they will be punished. But a child in an abusive home does not know when he will be punished. He lives in a terrifying

and ultimately psychologically damaging world. And to think that God could be like that! You would be simply, just *simply* subservient to capriciousness. Instead, as I mentioned in my Convocation Address, we are able to “give a reason for the hope that is in us.” You know, each pope has his own quote. That quote of St. Peter is going to be Pope Benedict's quote!

Q: How would you describe your experience working in the Roman Curia?

A: It was really quite wonderful to be there, and I admire the fellows who do it for a lifetime because it's very ascetic. Rome is quite hierarchical. Some of the qualities that we would associate with good management — fast turnarounds, efficiency, widespread consultation — are not typical Roman practices. And initiative has never been the gift of the Roman seat of the Church; rather, the Roman See has always been the guardian of right thinking. The ministry of Peter is not the ministry, particularly, of innovation. It is a safeguarding ministry. Therefore it needs to move slowly. And so we can't apply to it the same criteria that we would use for another kind of bureaucracy. But we are not used to that kind of a system.

My first assignment in Rome was at the Secretariat of State, as a minor official, where there were seven or eight of us. You got off the elevator in the Apostolic Palace — the Secretariat of State, of course, is the only branch that is actually in the Apostolic Palace — and if you turned to the left, you went down to the doors that went to the Pope's apartment. But we didn't ever turn to the left; we always turned to the right! We would walk down those magnificent corridors decorated with frescoes of the world in 1570 — very wonderful. Then we would go behind the second set of doors where people who don't work there don't go, and you find the coffee machine and metallic grey desks. It looked like army equipment from the 1950s.

I learned there how the system worked. I didn't have much responsibility in that job, but I came to appreciate why things are slower in the Vatican. It is not the same thing as other bureaucracies.

Q: You were later appointed Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education.

A: Yes. That was a *very* different job. There I was responsible for the day-to-day running of the Congregation, which is one of the nine Vatican congregations dating from the reform of 1588.

We had three sections. The first was the seminary section, which oversaw the 110,000 seminarians in the world, both diocesan and religious, except for seminarians in mission lands that fall under the Society for the Propagation of the Faith.

Then we have the section on ecclesiastical faculties and Catholic universities, or higher education. The Holy See issues in its own name university degrees, and has done so from the beginning. Of those there are about 250 faculties of theology around the world. Those are regulated by an apostolic constitution called *Sapientia Christiana*, and the Holy See is the guarantor of their academic excellence.

And lastly, the Congregation oversees the other 1,300 Catholic institutions of higher education which are regulated by *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*.



Q: Would you tell us about the Archdiocese of Vancouver?

A: Vancouver itself is a very secular city, which is probably induced — this is a strange thing to say — by the fact that it is *so* beautiful a place that it can feed neo-paganism. And, I think, it has. Catholics have never, therefore, been a dominant force and have built up a world that has never been fully engaged *qua* Catholic in the wider culture. We built our own schools, and we have a very strong Catholic school system. Our practice rate is pretty high by Canadian standards. But we have never had a large Catholic university; we have never had that engagement with wider things. We do not have a resource like Thomas Aquinas College, or even another kind of Catholic university. But Vancouver has always been — thanks be to God — blessed with vocations.

Q: How does your appointment as archbishop of Vancouver differ from your previous assignments?

A: It is very different. My other assignments were not pastoral in the same way. I didn't have the direct care of souls, the direct *cura animarum*. So this is very wonderful — but frightening. One has a vision of the bishop leading his flock to the Heavenly Jerusalem. It's easy to say. But if you are the one who must lead, then you say to yourself, “Am I leading? In the right direction?” Actually, in the end you do have to have a little of Pope John XXIII in you and say, “It's your Church, Lord. I'm going to bed.”

I don't ever remember being so aware that people pray for you. People often ask for my prayers, and I say, of course, “I'll pray for that.” But I will also say, “Pray for me.” And they will answer, “Oh, but we pray for you every day,” or they will say, “at every Mass.” Or somebody will come and say, “We always offer a decade of our rosary for you.” I am really kind of caught up with the wonder of people, that they understand that a bishop needs prayers. They're not offering prayers gratuitously. I think they know that in order to carry out the responsibility given, they have to do this. That is very humbling.

THE FUTURE NEVER NEEDED THE PAST MORE THAN IT DOES TODAY.



For information about a legacy gift to Thomas Aquinas College, please contact Tom Susanka, Director of Gift Planning, at tsusanka@thomasaquinas.edu.

Imagine a world enlivened by the wisdom of Socrates, Aristotle, Cicero, St. Augustine, Dante, Shakespeare, and St. Thomas Aquinas himself . . .

Help shape the future with a legacy gift today.



Happy Birthday, Dr. McArthur!

“My advice to you as a very, very old man now is *study*. Study while you’re here. It will change your life forever. Don’t take anything for granted. Pay attention to what you’re doing. Learn, and learn from the great people. Become a disciple of St. Thomas Aquinas, and he will take care of you. That’s my advice, and thank you very much.”

— Dr. Ronald P. McArthur, addressing the students of Thomas Aquinas College on his 85th birthday



1

CELEBRATING 85 YEARS



4



3



2

On September 22, the students, faculty, and staff of Thomas Aquinas College surprised founding president Dr. Ronald P. McArthur on his 85th birthday with cake and a rousing rendition of “Happy Birthday to You” during lunch in St. Joseph Commons. **Photos:** 1. Dr. McArthur waves to students as they sing in his honor. 2. Librarian Viltis Jatulis presents Dr. McArthur with a hand-made sash she ordered from her native Lithuania which reads (in Lithuanian), “We are greeting you on the occasion of your 85th birthday.” 3. Interim President Peter L. DeLuca joins students in their cheers. 4. Dr. McArthur offers his words of advice to the student body.

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

Weekdays

7:00 a.m. (Extraordinary Form)
11:30 a.m. (Ordinary Form)
5:00 p.m. (Ordinary Form)

Saturdays

7:30 a.m. (Extraordinary Form)
9:30 a.m. (Ordinary Form)

Sundays

7:30 a.m. (Extraordinary Form)
9:00 a.m. (Ordinary Form)
11:30 a.m. (Ordinary Form)

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

Calendar of Events

- Lecture: Pamela Kraus, PhD, St. John’s College:
“On Descartes’ *Regulae* and *Discourse*” October 30
- Halloween Dance October 31
- Lecture: Andrew Moran, University of Dallas:
“On Hamlet and Othello” November 20
- Turkey Bowl November 21
- Thanksgiving Dinner November 22
- Advent Concert December 4
- Christmas Dance December 5
- Final Examinations December 12-18

THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE
10,000 North Ojai Road
Santa Paula, CA 93060-9622

Address Service Requested



805/525-4417
www.thomasaquinas.edu