



# THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

## SUMMER 2017

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### Eastward Bound!

#### Thomas Aquinas College Takes Ownership of New England Property

The morning of Tuesday, May 2 marked, as President Michael F. McLean described it, “a monumental day in the history of Thomas Aquinas College.”

At a signing ceremony on the beautiful, onetime campus of a preparatory school in Northfield, Massachusetts, officials from the National Christian Foundation (NCF) formally transferred ownership of the property to Thomas Aquinas College. By God’s grace, and contingent upon the approval of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, the site will become the home of Thomas Aquinas College’s New England branch campus, opening its doors to students in the fall of 2018.

“We are very, very grateful to the National Christian Foundation and to its leadership, especially Emmitt Mitchell and Larry Edge, for shepherding us through this process,” said Dr. McLean. “The opportunity here at Northfield presents Thomas Aquinas College with a chance to increase its reach and to increase the number of students who benefit from its education, and we are very grateful that the NCF has made this opportunity possible.”

In his role as an NCF Heartland Board Member, Mr. Mitchell oversaw the process by which the NCF selected Thomas Aquinas College — out of a pool of 153 initial inquiries — as the recipient of this historic campus. “I can tell you, I have never been so impressed, not only with the student body, but with the faculty and staff and their dedication to the mission. And these trustees ... How can I say it? They love that institution,” he said. “I feel very confident that we are making an excellent choice.”

The ceremony took place in Olivia Music Hall, on the site of the former Northfield Seminary for Young Ladies, which the popular 19<sup>th</sup> century Protestant evangelist



*Left: Dr. McLean and Mr. Larry Edge of the National Christian Foundation sign documents officially transferring the Northfield property to Thomas Aquinas College.*

*Above: Dr. McLean with members of the College’s Board of Governors and officials of the National Christian Foundation and The Moody Center.*

Dwight Lyman Moody established in 1879. In 1971 the Northfield school merged with another institution that Mr. Moody had founded, the Mount Hermon School for Boys, in the nearby town of Gill. The resulting coeducational institution, Northfield Mount Hermon, operated on both properties until consolidating to the Mount Hermon campus in 2005.

For the last 12 years, the Northfield campus has gone unoccupied, waiting for the day that it could be restored to its original mission of providing affordable Christian education for young adults. In granting the campus to Thomas Aquinas College, said Mr. Mitchell, the NCF is choosing an entity that “has a mission similar to Moody’s, which was to educate young people in a fashion that they can make a difference in the world — basically, a Christian message — give them the confidence to go out and do great things in their life.”

The NCF’s donation of the New England campus marks the largest gift in Thomas Aquinas College’s history, consisting of some 100 acres of land that include residence halls, a library and gymnasium, and ample classroom and admin-

istration space. The College has taken possession of 20 buildings in all, affording it the opportunity to expand its more than 45-year history of Catholic liberal education to the East Coast.

“This day marks the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Thomas Aquinas College,” said Dr. McLean. “Trusting in God’s providence, we will establish on this site a college which will be a beacon in higher education, a community of teachers, students, and friends of which we all can be proud.”

### Faculty Update

#### Dr. John J. Goyette Succeeds Dr. Brian T. Kelly as Dean of Thomas Aquinas College

To serve as the new dean of Thomas Aquinas College, President Michael F. McLean has appointed an alumnus and 15-year member of the teaching faculty, Dr. John J. Goyette.

“Dr. Goyette has served the College ably as a tutor since 2002,” says Dr. McLean. “He is eminently qualified, having previously served as assistant dean for student affairs and as a member of the Admissions and Instruction committees. I am very confident that he will serve the College admirably in this new position.”

Dr. Goyette assumed the position on July 1, succeeding Dr. Brian Kelly, who will return to full-time teaching.

“I am honored to be asked to serve as the dean of the College,” says Dr. Goyette. “I am committed to working with the faculty to continue to offer a truly Catholic liberal education, pursued under the light of faith and guided by our patron, St. Thomas.”

For as long as he can remember, the College has played a role in Dr. Goyette’s life. His parents became benefactors in its earliest days, and his elder sister, Patricia



Hierro (’86), attended before him. Perhaps owing to too much familiarity, he had his doubts about coming to the College when he was a high school student in the mid-1980s. “But when I visited and saw the students grappling with serious texts, it was clear how engaged they were in what they were studying,” he says. “I decided then that this is where I wanted to go.”

While a student at the College, Dr. Goyette met classmate Rebecca (Mathie). The two would go on to wed and are today the parents of nine children, including two graduates and two current students at the College. During his undergraduate years he also developed a love of philosophy and the intellectual life. After graduating in 1990, he attended The Catholic

University of America, where he earned a master’s degree and a Ph.D. in philosophy, focusing on ancient philosophy (especially Aristotle) as well as natural philosophy and political philosophy.

From there Dr. Goyette accepted a position as a professor of philosophy at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, where, for eight years, he “shared in the awesome task of training future priests.” At the request of the Most Rev. Allen Vigneron, Archbishop of Detroit, Dr. Goyette reformed the seminary’s philosophy curriculum, restoring its emphasis on the works of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, and incorporated elements of the Discussion Method into his classes.

Around 2002, however, he found himself “harkening back to serving the kind of students that I knew when I was here,” and thus returned to the College as a member of the teaching faculty.

Dr. Goyette is the editor of, and contributor to, a volume of essays on natural law entitled *St. Thomas Aquinas and the Natural Law Tradition* (Catholic University of America Press, 2004). He has

also published essays on Aristotelian/Thomistic natural philosophy, Cardinal Newman’s *Idea of a University*, and St. Augustine’s notion of education in *On Christian Doctrine*. His publications have appeared in The Catholic University of America Press, St. Augustine’s Press, *The Thomist*, *Nova et Vetera*, *Maritain Studies*, and *The National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*. Dr. Goyette’s most recent work is on the political common good.

Dr. Goyette now supervises the College’s tutors and its academic program, makes class assignments, and oversees the general welfare of the students. He also chairs the Instruction and Curriculum committees and administers a wide range of College programs, from student activities to the chaplaincy and faculty hiring.

Dr. Goyette begins his new position at an auspicious moment in the history of the College — as it seeks to launch a second campus in Northfield, Massachusetts. “This is an exciting time for the College,” he says. “I am eager to face the challenges ahead, trusting in Providence that our efforts will bear fruit.”



# “By Wisdom a House is Built”

## President Michael F. McLean’s Remarks at the Dedication of Founders Plaza

*Note: As a measure of gratitude to the men who established Thomas Aquinas College — as well as to their wives and families, for their sacrifices and loving support — on March 7 the College officially dedicated, in their honor, the plaza just to the north of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel. At a ceremony that morning, Dr. McLean presided at the unveiling of a plaque, affixed to the Chapel’s northern wall, declaring the area “Founders Plaza.” He also delivered the following remarks.*

We are gathered today on this great feast of our patron, St. Thomas Aquinas, a day on which we also celebrate the solemnity of the dedication of our Chapel. How appropriate a day this is to honor the founding of Thomas Aquinas College and to honor those who made the beginning of the College possible.

Our intention is to name this plaza Founders Plaza in the hope that all who will gather in, or pass through, this space will remember the founding of the College with gratitude and will offer prayers of thanksgiving to Almighty God for His providential care of the College, and offer prayers as well for the intentions of all of those who contributed to its establishment.

In the words of Scripture: “The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, but it did not fall, because it had been founded on the rock” (Mt. 7:25).

And Thomas Aquinas College has not fallen. On the contrary, thanks to its founders, faculty, Board, and benefactors, it has succeeded beyond measure and has helped generations of students grow in moral and intellectual virtue, reconcile the demands of faith and reason, and bring the light of Christ to a world so desperately in need.

We owe so much to the principal founders of the College — Ron McArthur, Mark Berquist, Jack Neumayr, and Peter DeLuca — for their ability to powerfully articulate the case for Catholic liberal education, their



ability to promote the College with eloquence and vigor, their commitment and discipleship to what is enduring and indispensable in Aristotle and in St. Thomas Aquinas, their abiding faith and trust in Providence, and their unstinting devotion to the teaching Church.

Faithful to the Scriptures, these men founded the College on rock. Their efforts made the College possible, and their vision enlivens and sustains it to this day.

Two of the College’s principal founders, Jack Neumayr and Peter DeLuca, are with us today, and I would like to ask them to stand as we express our appreciation to them.

Founding and sustaining the College was always something of a risk and a venture into the unknown. It would not have happened without the help and support of the founders’ spouses and families. The spouses of the four principal founders — Marilyn McArthur, Kay DeLuca, Bridget Neumayr, and Laura Berquist — are with us today, and I would like to ask them to come forward now to accept our deepest thanks and appreciation.

Founding a college, or any institution, is the work of many. Our principal founders and their families were not alone. We owe so much as well to:

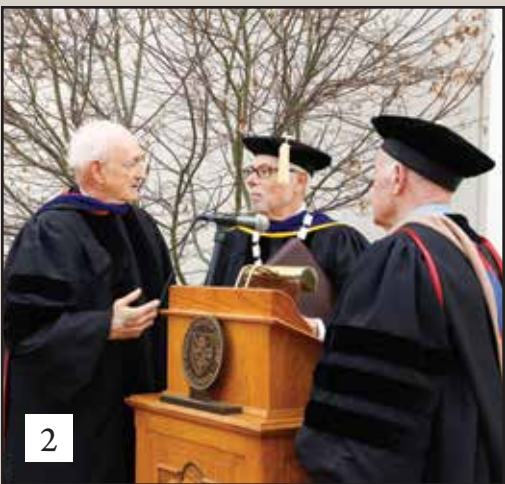
- The many prelates whose approbation, prayers, and support enabled the College to get started and, among other things, to find a home, first in the San Francisco Bay area and then in the Los Angeles Archdiocese.
- The earliest members of our Board of Governors, whose often sacrificial gifts of time, talent, and treasure guided and sustained the College in its infancy.
- Other benefactors, whose generosity, from the widow’s mite to many thousands of dollars, provided the resources so necessary for the College’s well-being in its earliest days.
- Our first chaplains and tutors, who provided for the College’s spiritual needs and brought the educational program to life.
- The parents who entrusted their children to an as yet unproven venture in Catholic education.
- And our first students, who made something of a leap of faith and committed themselves to a rigorous curriculum and to serious conversation, and who set the tone for the College’s academic, moral, and spiritual culture, a culture that has formed, and continues to form, so many so well.

To return once more to Scripture: As is written in the Book of Proverbs, “By wisdom a house is built, and by understanding it is established” (Proverbs 24:3).

To remember all of those whose wisdom and understanding contributed to the founding of Thomas Aquinas College, we today formally bless and name this plaza “Founders Plaza,” and we bless this plaque which calls upon us all to

*Please pray for the founders of  
Thomas Aquinas College  
For whom this plaza is dedicated.  
Their faith, vision, and commitment to  
Catholic liberal education made the College possible.*

### Founders Plaza Dedication



1. Dean Brian T. Kelly and President Michael F. McLean 2. Two founders of Thomas Aquinas College, Dr. John W. Neumayr (l) and Vice President for Finance and Administration Peter L. DeLuca (r), visit with Dr. McLean. 3. Chaplain Rev. Cornelius M. Buckley, S.J., along with members of the faculty and student body, applauds the unveiling of the plaque in honor of the College’s founders. 4. Mrs. McLean, Mr. DeLuca, Mrs. McArthur, and Dr. Neumayr 5. Head Chaplain Rev. Paul Raftery, O.P., blesses the plaque.



# College Update

## Recent Events and Happenings

### College Guides

• In the newly released, tenth anniversary edition of *The Newman Guide to Choosing a Catholic College*, the Cardinal Newman Society once again recommends Thomas Aquinas College as one of 29 Catholic institutions nationwide with a strong Catholic identity. The 2017-18 publication lauds the College for its “impressive intellectual rigor” as well as its “commitment to orthodox Catholicism.” Thomas Aquinas College, the guide reports, “is fully committed to its Catholic identity” and offers students a “vibrant spiritual program” that includes holy hours, regular confession, and four Masses daily.



• In assembling its annual list of “America’s Best Value Colleges,” the editors of *Forbes* magazine begin with a simple question: Will a college “deliver a meaningful return on investment?” To gauge the “best bang for the tuition buck,” the guide focuses on five key criteria: school quality, post-grad earnings, student debt and graduation success. Using these measures, *Forbes* has once again named Thomas Aquinas College to its list of “300 Schools Worth the Investment,” ranking it fifth among Catholic institutions.



### Judy Barrett Joins Board of Governors

The Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors welcomes its new member Judy Barrett. Mrs. Barrett is owner of the historic Chateau Montelena Winery in the Napa Valley. Her late husband, former College Governor James L. Barrett, guided the company from its rebirth in 1972 until his death in 2013.

“It is only fitting to have a Barrett on the Board again,” remarked President Michael F. McLean. “For the 18 years that Jim was a governor, Judy was always by his side, offering her wisdom and counsel. She has tirelessly served the Church in various capacities over the course of decades, and we are grateful that she is willing to put

her great leadership and experience at the service of Thomas Aquinas College.”

For nearly 20 years Mrs. Barrett served as the Respect Life director for the Catholic Diocese of Santa Rosa. She is a member of the Diocesan Communications Committee and is a frequent contributor to *The North Coast Catholic*, the newspaper of the Santa Rosa Diocese. She additionally serves on the Boards of St. Helena Montessori School and NPH USA, an organization that supports homes for orphaned and abandoned children in nine Latin American and Caribbean countries.

A graduate of Loyola Law School in Los Angeles, Mrs. Barrett is a member of the Napa Valley Legatus chapter and the California Patrons of the Arts of the Vatican Museums, as well as a steward of the Papal Foundation. In recognition of their magnificent generosity to the College over many years, she and Mr. Barrett were inducted into the Order of St. Albert the Great in 1998.

### Boards of Regents

It has been an active few months for Thomas Aquinas College’s Boards of Regents, groups of dynamic leaders who, serving as goodwill ambassadors for the College in their communities, help to introduce and promote it to new friends.

• On March 23 the Washington, D.C., Board hosted an event with Raymond Cardinal Burke at Top of the Town in Arlington, Virginia. More than 125 guests attended to hear His Eminence, Patron of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta, discuss the nature of Catholic education, using Pope St. John Paul II’s apostolic constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* as his framework. The Cardinal also spoke fondly of his experience with Thomas Aquinas College students and parents, as well as his 2010 and 2016 visits to the campus.

• The Orange County Board sponsored a May 18 breakfast at the Christ Cathedral Cultural Center in Garden Grove, California, with proceeds benefitting the College’s scholarship fund. Due to illness, the scheduled



keynote speaker, Leonardo Defilippis, founder of St. Luke Productions, was unable to attend the event. His wife, Patti, however, spoke in his place, discussing their family’s work in Catholic theater. Rev. Sebastian Walshe, O.Praem. (’94), a professor of philosophy at St. Michael’s Abbey, also addressed the gathering, describing how the College helped him discern his vocation to the priesthood and religious life.

• The College’s newest Board of Regents — representing the greater Chicago area — held a reception at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Umberto Brizuela on June 17. Serving as guest speaker was attorney Kyle Duncan of



### Much Ado

On Saturday, March 4, the St. Genesius Players treated Thomas Aquinas College students, faculty, and families to a production of William Shakespeare’s *Much Ado About Nothing*. The directors of this year’s production were Zoe Appleby (’18) and Benjamin Trull (’19); lead performers were Jack Murphy (’19) as Benedick, Caroline Guinee (’19) as Beatrice, Andreas Waldstein (’19) as Claudio, and Rosalie Simoneau (’17) as Hero.

Schaerr Duncan LLP, who spoke on an issue about which he has a great deal of expertise: religious liberty. In his former role as general counsel of the Becket Fund, Mr. Duncan was lead counsel in Hobby Lobby’s successful challenge of the HHS mandate. “This was our inaugural event, and it was a great success,” says Peter Colarelli (’92), chairman of the Chicago Board of Regents. “We were able to reconnect with some familiar faces and establish new relationships with those in the community who are friends of authentic, Christ-centered liberal arts education.”



### Faculty Summer Seminars

Twice during the month of June, members of the Thomas Aquinas College faculty — tutors and senior administrators alike — participated in their annual summer seminars, designed to aid them in their shared pursuit of the College’s mission.

“Our faculty is responsible for keeping the mission of Thomas Aquinas College alive and well,” explained then-Dean Brian T. Kelly. “Our summer Faculty Seminars are aimed at uniting us in a clear vision of this mission. We have sometimes read and discussed works that are explicitly about education or intellectual custom. This year we read two works that take us into the substance of perennial philosophy.”

The subject of the first seminar, held on June 1, was St. Thomas Aquinas’ *De Principiis Naturae*, summarizing the principles of natural philosophy. In the second seminar, held on June 19, members of the faculty read “Finality in Nature in Aristotle’s *Physics* II, Chapter 8,” by a late founder of the College, Marcus R. Berquist. “Our founding president, Dr. Ronald P. McArthur, often said that a classic hallmark of the loss of wisdom was the failure to grasp that nature acts for an end,” says Dr. Kelly. “This reading provided an occasion for us to meditate commonly on this very important, very foundational insight.”

The seminars are just one part of the faculty’s summertime preparations, which also include the Tutor Summer Program and the annual retreat for faculty and staff that precedes the start of the new academic year.

## St. Vincent de Paul Lecture and Concert Series

Endowed by Barbara and Paul Henkels

### Highlights from the Last Quarter

- One Friday night each semester, the student body and teaching faculty gather for the **All-College Seminar** — simultaneous meetings of small groups (about 20 students, drawn from all classes, and two tutors) to discuss a pre-selected reading. The spring semester’s seminar took place on February 10 and focused on St. Paul’s Letter to the Hebrews.
- In honor of President’s Day on February 24, **Dr. Paul Rahe**, a professor of history at Hillsdale College, delivered a lecture entitled, “Freedom of Speech and Religion.”
- To mark the celebration of its patron’s feast day on March 7, the College invited **Rev. Joseph Koterski, S.J.**, an associate professor of philosophy at Fordham University, to present the lecture, “The Philosophical Underpinnings of Catholic Social Teaching: The Role of Nature and Natural Law.”
- On March 24 the **Thomas Aquinas College Choir**, under the direction of Daniel J. Grimm (’76), performed Henry Purcell’s *Dido & Aeneas* before a packed audience in St Joseph Commons.

Text and audio from select lectures and concerts are available at [thomasaquinas.edu/lectures](http://thomasaquinas.edu/lectures).



# Cor Unum

## Students Celebrate College’s International Reach & Approach

One Sunday evening this spring, the rafters of St. Joseph Commons were festooned with flags from around the world. On the wall beside the community bulletin board were dozens of handwritten copies of the Lord’s Prayer, each translated into a different language — Nepali, French, Hindi, and Portuguese, among others. And, at the front of the room, students played music from Brazil and Germany, performed dances from Ireland, and recited poems from Russia, England, and Argentina.

The students had gathered for an event of their own creation, *Cor Unum*, or “One Heart,” named for a former dicastery of the Roman Curia, signifying, in the words of Bl. Paul VI, “a heart that beats in rhythm with the heart of Christ.” The first of its kind, the gathering was intended not only to showcase the international character of the student body, but to celebrate the universality of the Church. “Its purpose was to show appreciation for the College’s support of international students,” said Siobhan Heekin-Canedy (’18), “as well as to celebrate the solidarity among cultures in the Church.”

The event’s organizers were all students with an international background: Miss Heekin-Canedy, who skated for Ukraine at the 2014 Olympics in Sochi, Russia, and interned this summer in the U.S. State Department’s sports diplomacy division; Nnadozie Onyekuru (’17), who hails from Nigeria and is enrolling this fall at the University of Notre Dame’s Keough School of Global Affairs; and Esteban Rocha (’18), from Argentina who spent several of his formative years in England. “Our thought was that an international student event would unite us all under one common theme,” says Mr. Rocha, “the Catholic universal church.”

### Make Disciples of All Nations

“We have never deliberately recruited international students,” says director of admissions, Jon Daly. “There has never been a need. They find us on their own. We are glad to welcome them, and honored that our program of Catholic liberal education is so far-reaching.”

Consider Mr. Onyekuru, who learned about the College when he stumbled upon the 2004 Commencement Address of a fellow Nigerian, His Eminence Francis Cardinal Arinze, then prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship. Inspired by what he read, Mr. Onyekuru pored over every page of the College’s website. “When Nnadozie first contacted the Admissions Office, we all marveled at how much he knew about the College,” recalls Mr. Daly. “His interest and devotion couldn’t have been more clear, and the Admissions Committee concluded that he would make a fine addition to the next year’s Freshman Class.”

Over the years the College has enrolled students from Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, France, Ghana, Ireland, Lithuania, Mexico, Nigeria, Nepal, South Africa, Spain, and the United Kingdom. “It is amazing to see students from so many cultures come together as one to pursue this course of studies,” says Mr. Daly. “It speaks to the versatility and universality of our program.”

### Neither Jew nor Greek

Yet what separates Thomas Aquinas College from many other schools with sizable international popula-



tions is that the College treats students from foreign countries no differently than it does their domestic counterparts with regard to admissions and financial aid. At most American colleges and universities, citizens of foreign countries — who are generally ineligible for Pell Grants or federally backed student loans — do not qualify for institutional financial assistance. As such, only the wealthiest can enroll, and admissions offices are sometimes known to regard foreign nationals more as sources of revenue than as members of the student body.

“The College’s policy has always been to make this program available to anyone who has the ability and the sincere desire to pursue it,” says Director of Financial Aid Greg Becher. “So that’s what our office does.”

As with all students, the families of foreign nationals must make a maximum effort to pay as much of the cost of tuition as they reasonably can, and the students themselves are required to borrow a fixed amount (not more than \$18,000 over four years) before seeking need-based aid from the College. Because foreign students cannot typically qualify for student loans, the College acts as the lender of last resort, extending the loans directly. Any remaining need is covered by the College’s institutionally funded work-study program and direct grants, made possible through the generosity of the College’s benefactors.

Thus, whereas at most colleges international students receive no financial aid, at Thomas Aquinas College they are eligible for a plan that publications such as *U.S. News* and *The Princeton Review* describe as one of the best in the country. “We see our policy as fair, equitable, and in keeping with the universality of the Church,” says Mr. Becher. “The Church needs good leaders in every nation. If we can play a role in forming those leaders, we consider that an honor.”

### Give Thanks in all Circumstances

Indeed, gratitude for the College’s support of its international students was one of the principal motivations of *Cor Unum*’s organizers. “I had just been reading so much in magazines and newspapers about education, and the ways that international students are occasionally regarded at other schools, and it made me think, ‘Wow, this school does so much for us,’” says Mr. Onyekuru. “The College will not blow its own trumpet, so we should blow a trumpet for the College!”

The event began with a late-afternoon seminar on Pope Benedict XVI’s 2008 message for the World Day of Peace, “The Human Family, a Community of Peace,” led by tutor Dr. Anthony Andres, who for years directed the College’s conferences on the Social Doctrine of the Church, and Director of College Relations Anne Forsyth, who lived in Africa and the Caribbean when her late husband was a member of the U.S. Foreign Service. “The conversation was centered around the Universal Church, and how it exists for all people,” says Mrs. Forsyth. “We also discussed the family as the birthplace and nurturer of peace, without which there can be no peace in the world.”

From there followed the celebration in St. Joseph Commons, complete with the global decorations, cultural performances, and foods from around the world. The night also included trivia questions about the Church and international affairs, as well as Mr. Rocha’s grateful account of how he came to the College.

### As the Body is One

“It is heartening that our international students are so appreciative of the College,” says Dean John J. Goyette. “The College, too, is very grateful — not only that they would come this far to be here, but for all that they contribute to our academic program.”

Dr. Goyette likens the presence of international students to that of non-Catholics, who, because they do not share the same theological assumptions as the College’s Catholic majority, compel their classmates to think critically about what they believe and why they believe it. “We see something similar take place when, for example, our international students read the documents of the American founding, or when we study the Sacraments, which — though in essence the same — are often celebrated differently in other Catholic rites and cultures,” he says. “The various understandings that students from other countries bring to the classroom reinforce our commitment to approach the text that we are reading on its own terms, rather than relying on preconceived notions.”

So works the Body of Christ, each part serving a different purpose, all nurtured by the same *cor unum*.

## IN MEMORIAM

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

**John C. O’Mara**

September 3, 2016

*Legacy Society member*

**Stanley A. Gerkman**

January 5, 2017

*Benefactor*

**Mary Lou Vella**

January 14, 2017

*Mother of Marc (’93)*

**Alice Ann Rooney O’Donnell**

March 6, 2017

*Mother of Rev. Matthew O’Donnell (’88)*

**Mary “Peggy” Lawton**

March 10, 2017

*Wife of William S. Lawton, Jr., founding member of the College’s Board of Governors*

**Hazel Bauernfeind**

May 6, 2017

*Legacy Society member*

**Bert Caster**

April 6, 2017

*Brother of President’s Council member Terrence Caster*

**Carroll Caroline Jorgensen**

June 05, 2017

*Benefactor*

**Pat Gallaher (’89)**

June 8, 2017

*Alumnus*

**Olivia Boyle**

June 15, 2017

*Legacy Society Member*

**Rev. James S. Stromberg**

June 19, 2017

*Benefactor*

**Dr. Thomas Neumayr**

July 2, 2017

*Brother of College Founder Dr. John W. Neumayr*





# Four Ordinations Bring Number of Alumni Priests to 71!

## Future Canon Lawyers: Rev. Jeffrey Hanley ('13) and Rev. Maximilian Nightingale ('13)

“What is God calling you to do? What does God want you to do and to be?”

Rev. Jeffrey Hanley ('13) — then a 17-year-old high school student from southern Michigan — was attending a Catholic youth conference in Ohio when he first heard these questions. They unsettled him. “Until then, I had always thought about what I wanted to do in life in terms of my own fulfillment,” he recalls. “But hearing the question turned around like that — what does *God* want me to do? — gave me an inkling that I was being called to the priesthood.”

As it happens, there was another 17-year-old high school student from southern Michigan at that conference, Rev. Maximilian Nightingale ('13). He, too, was just starting to think seriously about his vocation. The two young men, who lived in adjacent parishes and attended rival public high schools, had never met before, but soon discovered that they had much in common.

In addition to their deep faith and their budding vocations, they shared an interest in the great books. A year earlier, Fr. Nightingale had taken up Plato’s *Republic* and Dostoyevsky’s *Crime and Punishment*; Fr. Hanley, meanwhile, had been reading Boethius’ *Consolation of Philosophy*. Both also expressed an interest in attending Thomas Aquinas College, and although they would only bump into each other on rare occasions over the next two years, they each decided to enroll as freshmen in 2009.

“I fit in right away,” remembers Fr. Nightingale of his first days on campus. “I loved the reading. I loved the discussions. The spiritual life was even more than I had expected. Before I came to the College, I thought I might go to weekday Mass once in a while. But then, when I got there and I found that lots of people were going every day, I began to do the same.” For both students, the experience made all the more clear the call that they had



begun to hear in high school. “My time at the College helped foster that vocation, helped me to grow stronger in my faith, in my understanding of the Faith, as well as in my spiritual life,” observes Fr. Hanley. “It helped me to become more attuned to the word of God, both in word and in sacrament.”

As their awareness of their vocations grew, so did their friendship. By senior year, when they roomed together in St. Bernard Hall, both had submitted applications to become seminarians in their home diocese of Kalamazoo, Michigan. Shortly after graduating from the College in 2013, they entered Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit. One year later, they departed for Rome, where they spent three years at the Pontifical North American College. And on June 24, 2017, the Most Rev. Paul J. Bradley, Bishop of Kalamazoo, ordained Fr. Hanley and Fr. Nightingale at the city’s St. Augustine Cathedral.

“During the Litany of Saints, when you are on the ground, giving your whole life right there, and everyone is praying for you — that’s when you feel the weight of what you are doing,” says Fr. Nightingale. “Then, right afterward, at the reception, you are giving first blessings to everyone who is coming up. It is amazing to see, as people tell you what they would like you to pray for,

the great hope that is inspired by just the sight of a newly ordained priest.”

Witnessing an ordination is a reminder that “the Lord is faithful to His promises,” explains Fr. Hanley. “The Lord promised that we would not be left without a shepherd to guide His people. I know in talking with a lot of parishioners, a lot of friends, a lot of family members, they see Fr. Nightingale and my ordinations as one of those ways in which the Lord fulfills that promise.”

The young priests are currently serving at parishes in Kalamazoo, where they will remain for the rest of the summer. Fr. Nightingale is a parochial vicar at the cathedral, and Fr. Hanley at St. Joseph Catholic Church. In the fall, however, both will return to the North American College in Rome, where, over the next two years, they will complete their licentiate work in order to become canon lawyers. There they will be joining a fellow alumnus, Rev. Nicholas Callaghan ('96), who is studying canon law for the Diocese of New York.

“Most of our canon lawyers are approaching retirement age,” says Fr. Nightingale, and so Bishop Bradley, recognizing the impending needs of his diocese as well as the aptitudes of his two newest priests, chose them to undergo legal training. “Everything we studied at Thomas Aquinas College was a preparation for this,” Fr. Nightingale continues. “I think, especially, of St. Thomas’ treatise on law, which we read in our Junior Theology class. That background helps us to approach ecclesial law, for sure.”

For Fr. Hanley, taking this next step is a continuation of the journey that began when, as a teenager, he first consciously decided to live his life according to God’s will rather than his own. Becoming a canon lawyer is the way Our Lord has chosen for these two longtime friends, says Fr. Nightingale, “to do service for the Church — and for the people of God.”

## Physician of Souls: Fr. Patrick Seo ('06)

In his third year at Thomas Jefferson University’s school of medicine, around the time that most medical students consider the possible specializations that will define their careers, Patrick Seo ('06) made a rather unconventional choice. Although he had been thinking about family medicine — he liked working with a wide range of patients in a hands-on, personal way — he decided instead to become a physician of souls.

Providence had intervened. “I had just read *St. Anthony in the Desert* by St. Athanasius, and it gave me this fire to do God’s will,” he recalls. “I realized I hadn’t been living for God.”

After graduating from Thomas Aquinas College in 2006, Fr. Seo reflects, he entered medical school mostly by default, following in his parents’ footsteps. Medicine was a noble profession, to be sure, but was it his calling? The sense of restlessness he experienced suggested otherwise. He knew God was asking more from him. Thinking of St. Anthony’s monasticism, he concluded that he was being called to the religious life.

Leaving his medical studies behind, Fr. Seo began visiting religious houses across the country, among them a Carthusian monastery on a Vermont mountaintop, where he spent a month in prayer and contemplation. “I loved the silence and the solitude, and I loved my time there,” he says. “But I didn’t have a sense of peace about staying.” Through prayerful reflection and spiritual direction, he began to discern that his vocation was perhaps not to the religious life after all, but to the secular priesthood.

The Carthusian novice master thus suggested that Fr. Seo go back to his native New Jersey, where an auxiliary bishop — the Most Rev. Manuel Cruz of Newark — was said to “love Carthusians even more than the Carthusians do.” His Excellency, in turn, offered Fr. Seo a one-year position working in the cathedral while discerning his next step. When the year was up, Fr. Seo entered the diocesan seminary and, four years later, His Eminence Joseph Cardinal Tobin, C.Ss.R., Archbishop of Newark, ordained him to the priesthood on May 27, 2017, at the Cathedral Basilica of the Sacred Heart.

Today Fr. Seo is the parochial vicar at Our Lady of Mercy, a 3,300-family parish in Park Ridge, New Jersey. Tending to the spiritual care of his flock — a wide range of people with a seemingly infinite variety of needs — is reminiscent, he finds, of his medical-school rotations. “The diocesan priesthood is the family medicine of the spiritual life. We are the front line,” he says. “The Lord gave me this joy that comes from being with His people, and it will be exciting to see how He uses me to deliver His grace.”



## The Provisor: Rev. Miguel Batres, O.Praem. ('08)

Rev. Miguel (Gaspar '08) Batres, O.Praem., was not surprised when, as a transitional deacon studying at Rome’s Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas, he was asked to serve at Vespers for His Holiness Pope Francis. After all, several of Fr. Miguel’s Norbertine confreres had done so in recent years, in no small part because they are experienced with Gregorian chant and can speak Latin. He was, however, caught off guard when, on the eve of the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, the Pope approached him and started a conversation.

“I was not expecting to talk to him!” he recalls. “So when he came to me, I didn’t know what I wanted to say. I just said, ‘Can I give you a hug?’ I then hugged him and told him, ‘Thank you for the responsibility you take, and be assured of my prayers.’ In meeting the Holy Father, says Fr. Miguel, “It struck me — this is the Vicar of Christ. This is the successor of St. Peter, and this is not just an everyday opportunity. It was an amazing privilege.”

Twice more in the ensuing months Fr. Miguel would get to serve with Pope Francis — including on Good Friday, when he chanted the words of Christ during the papal Celebration of the Passion of our Lord at St. Peter’s Basilica. That sense of gratitude he had experienced in Rome filled him yet again on June 24, when the Most Rev. Timothy Freyer, Auxiliary Bishop of Orange, California, ordained him a priest at Mission San Juan Capistrano.

A canon at St. Michael’s Abbey in Silverado, California, Fr. Miguel — the second youngest of 11 children of Mexican immigrants — had long imagined this day. “It’s something I received as a child,” he says of his vocation. “I don’t remember ever wanting to be anything else.” During his sophomore year in high school, his parish priest took him for a visit to Thomas Aquinas College. “I saw the goodness of the school,” he says. “And I knew that it would be good for my future as a priest.” At the College, another priestly mentor, Rev. Charles Willingham, O.Praem., brought him and some friends to St. Michael’s Abbey for the Easter Triduum, a visit that ultimately led to his entering the Norbertine Order.

Since his ordination, Fr. Miguel has taken on the role of his community’s *provisor*, charged with providing for its material needs. He also offers Masses in Spanish at nearby parishes. In the fall he will teach freshman religion at the abbey’s prep school. “It has been very beautiful to offer the Mass and serve as a priest,” he says. “It is a true blessing, almost at times unbelievable, and I am very grateful for it. Thanks be to God!”





# Eastward Bound!

## Pioneer Spirit

### President McLean Names First Members to Team for Proposed New England Campus

Four seasoned members of Thomas Aquinas College’s teaching faculty, an Admissions counselor, and their families have agreed to be among the “pioneers” prepared to settle the College’s envisioned New England campus.

“I am pleased to announce that Dr. Thomas Kaiser will head our proposed New England team and, per our governance plan, will have the title of associate dean,” says President Michael F. McLean. “Joining him will be Dr. Patrick Gardner, who will have the title of assistant dean for student affairs, and tutors Dr. Michael Augros and Dr. Phillip Wodzinski, as well as Mr. Patrick Cross from our Admissions Office. All have demonstrated an admirable willingness to take on the challenge, and I am very confident that with a team of this quality we will be successful.”

In May the National Christian Foundation gifted the College with the former campus of a preparatory school in Northfield, Massachusetts. By God’s grace, and contingent upon the approval of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, the College plans to open the doors of a branch campus to students in the fall of 2018.

#### **Dr. Thomas Kaiser**

Leading the team is Dr. Kaiser, a 35-year member of the teaching faculty who oversaw the College’s natural science laboratories for 20 years and served for eight years as assistant dean. A member of the College’s first graduating class, Dr. Kaiser earned his doctorate in biology at the University of California, Los Angeles. He holds the distinction of being the first member of the faculty to have taught all 33 courses in the College’s classical curriculum.

“As a member of the first class on our original campus, I know what it will be like for those first students we hope to welcome in New England, and that should be helpful in getting us off to a good start,” says Dr. Kaiser. “I think launching a branch campus should be an adventure and a challenge. It will be a sacrifice for my wife, Paula, and me to be away from our 11 children and 20 grandchildren, who mostly live here in California, but I think it will be exciting to be among the founding faculty.”

#### **Dr. Patrick Gardner**

Like other members of the prospective New England team, Dr. Gardner has ties to the region, having earned his undergraduate degree at Harvard University before obtaining his master’s and Ph.D. in medieval studies at the University of Notre Dame. It is the pioneering example of the College’s founders and early students, he says, that has inspired him and his wife, Kate, to volunteer to move across the country, along with their five young sons.

“We had it easy in our own journey to Thomas Aquinas College, which began about six years ago,” Dr. Gardner explains. “We didn’t have to make the tremendous leap of faith that, in the early years of the College, both tutors and students had to make. We came later, when the goodness and greatness of the founders’ vision and God’s blessings were already manifest in hundreds of students, a generation of grateful alumni, and a breathtakingly beautiful campus. This fact has ever deepened our gratitude for the pioneers of the College, as our love for this community and this education has grown. So when the possible Northfield opportunity arose, and the pros-



*Thomas Aquinas College’s prospective New England team: Patrick and Kate Gardner, Patrick Cross, Melissa and Phillip Wodzinski, Thomas and Paula Kaiser, Michael and Amy Augros*

pect opened — both exhilarating and a bit frightening — of being, in a very secondary way, a pioneer myself, I thought, ‘How could I refuse?’”

#### **Dr. Michael Augros**

A New England native, Dr. Augros is a graduate of the College who earned his master’s and doctoral degrees in philosophy at Boston College. “My wife, Amy, and I both grew up in Merrimack, New Hampshire, about an hour’s drive away, and our parents still live there,” Dr. Augros reflects. “That’s part of why I volunteered for this opportunity — but only part. I also want to contribute what I can to help make our venture a success.”

Dr. Augros taught at Thomas Aquinas College from 1995 to 1998, then moved back east to teach for 11 years at the North American campus of the Pontifical University Regina Apostolorum, before returning in 2009. In 2015 he published his first book, *Who Designed the Designer: A Rediscovered Path to God’s Existence*; his next, *The Immortal in You*, is forthcoming from Ignatius Press. He and Mrs. Augros are the parents of three children; one of them is a student at the College, and another plans to enroll next year.

“My hope for the New England property,” he says, “is that we can establish a thriving campus, and that God will send us able students and tutors who have a pioneering spirit and who want to help found something new and beautiful. It would be wonderful to see, over the course of a reasonable time, a branch campus that goes from being a newborn to a kind of twin sister to the California campus.”

#### **Dr. Phillip Wodzinski**

Like Dr. Augros, Dr. Wodzinski attended graduate school at Boston College, where he earned his master’s and a Ph.D. in political science, having previously completed his bachelor’s degree at Xavier University. “Founding a new campus requires an immense effort on the part of everyone involved, and it will succeed only if God wills; but I cannot imagine *not* helping to take on this challenge,” he says. “New England has held my imagination for as long as I can remember, from my elementary school years, learning of Samuel Adams, William Lloyd Garrison, Henry David Thoreau, and Nathan-

iel Hawthorne. The depth of the historical character of the campus, the surrounding area, and the whole of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts will never be lost on me.”

The Wodzinskis have been enthusiastic champions of the New England project from the moment that College officials first learned that the National Christian Foundation was making the property available. “The Northfield campus is a special environment, one that I felt the first time I visited,” he says. “My wife, Melissa, who has researched it over the course of many hours, felt this before even visiting. We, and our four children, long to be on that campus, and this longing involves a deep respect for the neighboring community. If given the opportunity, the people of Northfield and the surrounding towns will find the faculty, staff, and students of Thomas Aquinas College to be good, affectionate, and reliable neighbors.”

#### **Mr. Patrick Cross**

A graduate of the College and a three-year veteran of its Admissions Office, Mr. Cross will depart for Massachusetts at the end of the summer. “I grew up just an hour away from Northfield in Leominster, Massachusetts, and attended Trivium School in Lancaster,” he says. “Naturally I was excited when I heard that we would be receiving this campus. Helping to bring such an exceptional education to my home state is a wonderful opportunity and a real blessing.”

God willing, and through the efforts of these educators, the College’s unique form of Catholic liberal education will flourish in New England, just as it has in California.

“I joined our teaching faculty in the early days of the College, and I remember well both the challenges and joys that came with being part of such a tremendous undertaking,” says Dr. McLean. “I deeply admire, and am grateful to, these members of our team and their families for volunteering for this opportunity. Please pray for them, as well as for the students yet to come, who may one day matriculate at a Thomas Aquinas College, New England, and help to spread the renewal of Catholic liberal education across the country.”





# Excitement & Gratitude

## Hundreds Attend Thomas Aquinas College New England Reception

Friends from all points along the Eastern seaboard — from Quebec to Florida — gathered July 1 on Thomas Aquinas College’s newly acquired property in Northfield, Massachusetts, for a chance to learn about the College’s unique program of Catholic liberal education and to meet members of the faculty.

“When we set up this reception not more than three weeks ago, we expected that 100-150 people might come, and we would have been quite happy with that number,” says Director of Admissions Jon Daly. “With less than a week to go before the event, our numbers topped 300 — and from all over! We had folks representing 21 states and 2 Canadian provinces.”

In May the National Christian Foundation gifted the College with the onetime campus of a preparatory school in Northfield. Contingent upon the approval of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education, the College hopes to establish a New England branch campus on the site, welcoming its first class of freshmen in the fall of 2018. The July reception offered a chance for members of the local community, interested families, alumni of the College, and benefactors, both old and new, to get a glimpse of what the future holds for the campus; to tour the grounds; to meet with tutors; and to ask questions.



### “For the Greater Glory of God”

The day began with registration outside the Merrill-Keep residence hall, followed by an introductory assembly in the Moody Auditorium. There Dean John Goyette welcomed guests and gave an overview of the College’s academic program, focusing on five distinctive features — the core curriculum, the great books, the Discussion Method, the importance of math and natural science, and the program’s orientation toward theology as the highest science. “This property is an ideal setting for a second campus of Thomas Aquinas College,” said Dr. Goyette. “We look forward with great hope to working with our new neighbors.”

Following Dr. Goyette, the College’s vice president for development, Paul J. O’Reilly, addressed the audience, singling out two attendees, Lucia and David Powell. Mr.



Powell is a great-grandson of D.L. Moody, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Protestant evangelist who founded the school that originally occupied the Northfield campus. “On behalf of Thomas Aquinas College, I would like to tell you,” Dr. O’Reilly assured the couple, “we aspire to follow D.L. Moody’s example,” particularly in two key manners: “We strive to be fully devoted to Jesus Christ, so that everything we do here will be for the greater glory of God,” and “we hope to offer an education to those who are willing and able to do our educational program regardless of their financial circumstances.”

From there, the group set out to walk the grounds, with Dr. O’Reilly warning guests that “when we tour the buildings, you will see that some are in need of repair and renovation.” Yet, “we should not be intimidated,” he added, noting that, “this will be a journey of faith,” and inviting guests to support the College’s proposed eastward expansion with their prayers and, if possible, financially. “If God has blessed you with abundance, please think about joining us as partners in this movement of grace.”

### Restoration

The larger group then divided into six smaller sections to facilitate the tour, which included stops at Olivia Music Hall, Meany Gymnasium, Sage Chapel, and Palmer Science Hall, where tutors presented mathematical demonstrations and answered questions about the College’s academic program. In one room, Dr. Thomas Kaiser and Dr. Michael Augros spoke about the role of mathematics, natural science, and music in the curriculum; while in another Dr. Patrick Gardner and Dr. Phillip Wodzinski discussed the role of literature and language, as well as the preeminence of philosophy and theology. Both classrooms were set up with a large, central table, so as to illustrate the College’s use of the Discussion Method in its classes, and displayed many of the great books that make up its classical curriculum.

The tour concluded in the Moody Auditorium, where Dr. Goyette introduced the proposed faculty team for the New England branch campus and members of the College’s Admissions staff. College officials then answered questions, which ranged from matters of financial aid and admissions standards to faculty training and possible campus development.

The audience was additionally treated to the testimonial of David Dowdy — the father of a TAC graduate and a teacher at Northfield Mount Hermon School (NMH), which previously occupied the Northfield campus — who spoke of his unique relationship to both the College and the region. Mr. Dowdy shared stories of his own hope and prayers, as well as those of the many other people who have prayed that the Northfield campus would

become, once more, a place of Christian learning.

“I began to pray,” he says, recalling when NMH decided to sell the property in 2005. “And so did so many, many, many, others with prayer walks, prayer vigils, individuals, groups, organized, impromptu, Rosaries, and so on. I doubt there’s any other parcel of real estate in New England as prayed for, prayed about, or prayed over as this one — with the possible exception of Plymouth Rock.”

Those prayers have borne tremendous fruit. “We know that people with various connections to this beautiful campus have been praying that it serve the purpose for which it was created, the education of young men and women who have a desire for the pursuit of wisdom under the light of faith,” remarked Dr. Thomas Kaiser, who is scheduled to head the initial New England team as associate dean. “We humbly and gratefully accept that responsibility. I know that these tutors and the administrators of the College will devote all of their energy to making this a success.”



### Giving Thanks and Praise

The culmination of the day came at the conclusion of the assembly, when guests made their way across campus to Sage Chapel for the first public Mass to be offered there since the College acquired the property. The building will require significant renovations before it is fit for regular Catholic worship, but the congregation did not mind: A temporary altar was erected in what, God willing, will one day be the chapel’s sanctuary, and those attending knelt directly on the floor, since the pews do not yet have kneelers.

An alumnus — Rev. Michael Goyette (’94), a priest in the Diocese of Camden, New Jersey, and Dr. Goyette’s brother — served as the principal celebrant and homilist, assisted at the altar by Rev. Charles Di Mascola, former pastor of Our Lady of Czestochowa Parish in nearby Turners Falls, Massachusetts. Alumni and students formed an impromptu choir, singing hymns from the Sage Chapel loft. “It was the high point of the day,” says Dr. Wodzinski. “It was profoundly moving and transcendent.”

The reception concluded with a barbeque dinner in the Hibbard and Wilson residence halls, with guests spreading out across the lawn between the two buildings. The weather — which had threatened rain all day — held out until the end, with a storm arriving just as the last cars were departing campus, leaving College officials to happily clean up in the ensuing downpour. “It was an effort-filled endeavor,” one remarked, “and a joyous one.”





# Alumni Updates

## Graduates Put Faith in Action

### Dr. Marie I. George ('79)

A professor of philosophy at St. John's University in New York, Dr. Marie I. George ('79) has compiled and edited a newly published collection of essays, *100 Books to Read Before the Four Last Things: The Essential Guide to Catholic Spiritual Classics*.



The book's 37 featured reviewers are all laypeople, writing for fellow laypeople — and 15 are Thomas Aquinas College alumni. "The reason I turned to TACers as contributors was because I knew that they were solidly grounded in the Faith, and they knew how to read," she says. "The College has an amazing network. Some of the reviewers I did not know personally, but learned about through other alumni who are my friends."

Although the book delivers on its title — cataloguing 100 works worthy of reading before one encounters the Four Last Things — it is much more than a literary "bucket list." Its essays carefully examine each title subjectively, allowing readers to choose the books best suited to their temperament and current stage of spiritual development. Most of the reviewed works are non-fiction, with some exceptions, categorized by theme, such as "autobiographical works," "Divine Providence," or "the Mass and the Blessed Sacrament."

Generously, Dr. George is donating half of the book's proceeds to the College. (A member of the Lay Fraternities of St. Dominic, she is contributing the other half to the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C.) "My gratitude for the education I received at Thomas Aquinas College," she says, "combined with the fact that so many of the reviewers were TAC alumni, made the College an obvious choice."

### Sean Murray ('97)

The latest issue of *Ad Veritatem*, the publication of the St. Thomas More Society of Orange County, California, features an interview with alumnus attorney Sean Murray ('97). Mr. Murray, a member of the Catholic legal organization's Board of Directors, is a partner in the Orange County office of Knobbe Martens Olson & Bear LLP, where he specializes in patent, trademark, and copyright law.



In the interview, Mr. Murray discusses how an experience while still a student at the College led him to pursue a legal education at the University of Virginia School of Law. He describes the role his parents played in shaping his faith, his favorite Scripture passage (Job, for perspective), and his most beloved saints (which include, of course, St. Thomas Aquinas). He then concludes the interview by offering some thoughtful and practical advice for Catholic attorneys.

"Attorneys are often under pressure by colleagues and clients to do things that are morally ambiguous or worse. I'd recommend letting colleagues and clients know right away that you are Catholic and doing your best to live according to a moral and ethical code," says Mr. Murray. "That can be communicated without being preachy, often with a few casual remarks. If someone knows you are trying your best to do what's right, they won't expect you to do otherwise. But this is much easier to communicate early on, before a questionable decision presents itself and a client has formed an expectation that you will do anything and everything to further its interests."

### Daina Andries ('09)

The website of the Library of Congress has published an interview with Daina Andries ('09), a metadata technician with the Digital Resources Division of the Law Library of Congress. In it Miss Andries discusses her

work at the library — "capturing and reviewing meta-data, or data about data, which renders a resource more searchable by supplying identification information about the resource" — as well as her background, which includes a master's degree in French from the University of Delaware and a master's of science in information from the University of Michigan.

She also describes her education at Thomas Aquinas College and how it prepared her for the complex, detailed-oriented line of work that has become her passion. "The curriculum at Thomas Aquinas was rigorous and interdisciplinary. Every class was taught as a seminar, providing practice in critical thinking, reasoning logically from first principles, and grappling with scientific, literary, and philosophical texts held to have shaped Western thought," she says. This "foundation in logical reasoning and philosophy" helped, she adds, "with learning about semantics and knowledge organization, object-oriented programming, and analytics."



Having graduated from Michigan and moved to Washington, D.C., just last year, Miss Andries is still very much a newcomer to the Library of Congress. It is "a place that stirs the imagination," she says. "It's the largest library in the world, and you're guaranteed to find something with regard to any topic you can imagine. It's a privilege to help with the work of making the Library's wealth of unique resources accessible to researchers and to the public."

### Emily (Barry '11) Sullivan

Emily (Barry '11) Sullivan returned to her alma mater in April to lead a retreat for the women of Thomas Aquinas College, "*Fiat: On the Dignity and Vocation of Women*." Sponsored by Endow, a Catholic educational apostolate, the retreat included a series of talks on Pope Saint John Paul II's encyclical *Mulieris Dignitatem*.

A mother of three, Mrs. Sullivan — also known as the "Stay-at-Home Thomist" — was until last year the Northeast program manager for Endow, which publishes study guides for women about ecclesial documents and the writings of various saints. She has spoken at the University of Notre Dame, Princeton University, various Catholic women's conferences, and the 2015 World Meeting of Families. She frequently speaks on topics surrounding gender complementarity, the dignity of women, and the vocation of marriage and motherhood.



In June Mrs. Sullivan appeared on the "Pints with Aquinas" podcast with popular Catholic speaker Matt Fradd, where she discussed her love for St. Thomas and the role the College played in nurturing it. "You tread through the greatest works of Western civilization and discuss these ideas in small seminar classes, and there's a special devotion to St. Thomas," she said. "You're studying Latin so you can read the *Summa* in the original language, and you're doing a lot of the philosophy of Aristotle. Freshman Year you read through all of Sacred Scripture, so you're really good with the Bible, and then Sophomore Year is a lot of the Church fathers, heavily on St. Augustine, all in preparation for Junior and Senior Years — being able to read St. Thomas Aquinas."

### Peter LaFave ('13)

Four years ago, as he was completing his Senior Year, Peter LaFave ('13) was recruited by the insurance conglomerate WellPoint for a summer internship at its Thousand Oaks, California, headquarters. Although he did not land the position, he made a favorable impression and, in 2014, the company approached him about a full-time opportunity. Three years later, WellPoint is now called Anthem, and Mr. LaFave, having risen to the title of strategic sourcing consultant, has been named to the supply-chain industry's list of "30 Under 30 Rising Stars."



The list, which is a joint venture of the Institute for Supply Management and ThomasNet, is "selected from hundreds of worthy nominees" and features supply-management professionals who "accomplish big things at their companies and exhibit limitless potential," its sponsors note. "Representing the best qualities of their generation, they are the profession's future leaders who stand out from their peers in initiative and performance."

At Anthem Mr. LaFave is "responsible for creating strategies, influencing decision-makers, managing and negotiating deals, and building relationships with both VP-level internal constituents and external executives at major ad agencies," his "30 Under 30" profile observes. He manages over \$150 million in annual spending, and he consistently exceeds his cost-saving goals by 15 percent or more. At home he is a husband and a father. Mr. LaFave met his wife, Adrienne (Grimm '14), while a student at the College. The couple lives near campus in Santa Paula, California, with their two-year-old son and newborn daughter.

In being named to the "30 Under 30 List," Mr. LaFave follows in the footsteps of Kayla (Kermode '12) Six, a fellow Anthem employee who earned the honor in 2016.

### Michael Masteller ('13)

A seminarian for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, Michael Masteller ('13) spent six weeks in the Eternal City this summer as part of The Rome Experience. The program, run under the auspices of the Bishops Advisory Board, allows seminarians from throughout the U.S. to "pray and study in the heart of the Catholic Church, beside the Chair of St. Peter, and at the tombs of the saints and martyrs."

The first 10 days of the Rome Experience include pilgrimages to several holy and historically significant sites such as the Shrine of St. John Vianney in Ars, France; the major basilicas of Rome; and the Catacombs. Then,



for the next four weeks, the seminarians take classes at the *Centro Internazionale Di Animazione Missionar* and the Pontifical University of the Holy Cross on such topics as "Priests in the New Evangelization" and "The Human Virtues for Priestly Fatherhood." The program concludes with pilgrimages to Lourdes and Madrid, where St. Josemaria Escriva founded Opus Dei.

A highlight of the Rome Experience is the annual "Circle the Vatican Race," in which seminarians sprint along the arms of St. Peter's Square. This year's winner was none other than Mr. Masteller, who — in addition to receiving a prized cup of gelato — will have his name forever memorialized on a plaque listing the names of "Circle the Vatican" victors. Mr. Masteller and his fellow seminarians also had the pleasure of a visit from an old friend of the College, His Eminence Raymond Cardinal Burke, patron of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and the College's 2010 Commencement Speaker.



# “We Should Have a Peaceful Confidence about the Truth”

## An Interview with Rev. Paul Scalia

*Note: At the College’s 2017 Commencement exercises, Rev. Paul Scalia, Episcopal Vicar for Clergy in the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, served as the principal celebrant and homilist at the Baccalaureate Mass.*

**In the introduction to your new book, you say that the priest’s goal is to help us “unite truth with love, head with heart, and charity with dogma.” Why is this difficult? What are the challenges?**

As part of fallen human nature, we all experience in ourselves, and among ourselves, a constant temptation to divide truth and love. We see this in something as simple as a “white lie.” But as today’s moral issues touch more and more on fundamental truths, the division between truth and love becomes more dangerous. Everything is being pushed back to first principles. “Do not kill” has given way to killing the child in the womb, violating the fundamental relationship between mother and child. Then there is the even more fundamental relationship between man and woman, which is now in question. The most fundamental relationship, though, is that of being a creature, of having been created by God. So as the moral discussions get closer and closer to that first principle of creation, it becomes more and more difficult to unite these things. Truth is saying one thing, yet false compassion is saying another.

A friend and I have an ongoing argument. He says the most controversial passage in Scripture is, “Male and female He created them.” But I say it is, “He created them,” because I think that’s where we are now. People don’t want to be created; they want to create themselves. But if we are created, then we have to conform to the design according to which we were created. There is just no getting away from that. If we are not created, though, we can say, “Yes, my body is this way, but I myself am some other way.” So we’re not speaking now of things that are on the periphery but of the fundamental principles.

So what can the faithful do? Study the Faith; eliminate a lot of the technology; observe the Sabbath. These are things that will disconnect us from the culture that blinds us.

Also, in interacting with others, we should have a peaceful confidence about the truth of our faith. Pope Benedict XVI modeled this beautifully. He was so confident in the truth that he could speak without rancor. I think having that peaceful confidence in the truth of our faith is the responsibility of every Catholic.

“We should not be setting aside our faith. We cannot put brackets around our faith, go about our professional lives, and then come back and expect our faith to still mean the same thing. It has to be integrated into everything.”

**Since *Amoris Laetitia* was issued, there has been a great deal of talk about taking a “pastoral” approach to ministry that involves diluting doctrines, as if the teachings of the Church on marriage, divorce, remarriage, and the reception of Holy Communion are “anti-pastoral.” What are your thoughts on this?**

The term “pastoral” can be used to cut corners on the Faith, and that is not authentic. If we are going to show pastoral charity, we have to convey the truth properly. In *Humanae Vitae*, Bl. Paul VI says, “To diminish in no way the saving teaching of Christ constitutes an eminent form of charity for souls.” That is what it means to be pastoral.

Now in order to be charitable, you have to convey the true doctrine. At the same time, the true doctrine deserves a fitting vehicle/messenger. So it is unworthy of the doctrine of Christ if we are conveying it an uncharitable or harsh or judgmental way. To be pastoral means to convey the truth in a way that the person can receive it. It is not pastoral to just deliver the truth and have no



concern for the person who needs to receive it.

**Much has been written about Justice Scalia’s public legacy, but what is your father’s legacy for your family?**

I have a pretty good sense of his legal legacy and the importance of it, but as for his legacy to the family — for each sibling it is a little different. We are all agreed, though, that it is primarily our time together as a family. And for me, what made the greatest impression was his example of faith.

Our dad took family time seriously. We were together for two weeks every summer at the beach, and we had long family drives — the kind of things that, at the time, you think, “Well, we have to do this.” But these are the things that knit us together, like going fishing with Dad at the beach, playing cards.

Family dinner was also important to Dad. Our conversations were rarely as intellectually profound as people might think. But I do remember some very, very good discussions, in particular, my dad going over the peyote case [*Employment Division v. Smith*] with us. That’s the only case I remember him discussing, and it was a good exercise because he walked us through the right of religious freedom and how it would apply to us as Catholics.

People would say, “It must be amazing to have a dad on the Supreme Court.” But you know, I still had to mow the lawn, and if it wasn’t done I was still in trouble. And he was still Dad when he came home at night. When the trash needed to be taken out, he used to joke, “Don’t you know I’m a Supreme Justice?” But it was precisely that, a joke. He didn’t take himself too seriously.

**You just mentioned religious liberty, and in a recent interview in *Washingtonian* magazine, you spoke about unrelenting efforts to sideline religion and faith from the public square. Would you explain the notion of religious liberty?**

I am not a lawyer, but my layman’s understanding is that the First Amendment presumes a vigorous religious life in the nation, one in which the federal government does not impose a religion on the people, and in which the people are free to worship and practice their religion.

People must have a vigorous practice of their faith so that they bring it into the public square. I think it was the former papal nuncio, Archbishop Viganò, who said, “Where did the government get this idea that they could exclude us from the public square — except from us? We were the first to say, ‘We won’t bring it there.’” John F. Kennedy made a complete misstep when he told voters he would not let his religion influence his decisions as president, and we have been paying the price for that for a long, long time.

We should not be setting aside our faith. We cannot put brackets around our faith, go about our professional lives, and then come back and expect our faith to still mean the same thing. It has to be integrated into everything.

This is something a lot of people valued in my father. He was very vocal about two things: first, that he was a Roman Catholic and that he loved his faith; and second, that he did not allow it to touch his opinions as a judge. That second part was a source of controversy. But he said, no, I’m doing the work of a judge and I happen to

be Catholic. That was very important for people, that he lived that publicly.

So while it is true that my dad didn’t bring the *Catechism* to oral arguments, or to the conference room when he was drafting his decisions, there are certain things about the Catholic faith that inclined him to have the kind of jurisprudence he did. One of them is the reverence for the text. Another is that every text has a context. In the Catholic faith that context is Scripture and Tradition. In his jurisprudence, he took the text very seriously: It means what it says. And if you want to know what it says, to understand it better, you look at how the Founding Fathers understood it, and at how we as a nation have always understood it. I think his Catholic faith disposed him toward that — which is really how it should be, that the Faith should affect you in such a way that you are acting in that way without even knowing it.

**How did you come to be a chaplain for the College’s Washington, D.C., Board of Regents?**

I had come to know a number of alumni in the Arlington Diocese, and I had done marriage prep for some of them. And you know what? Your alumni are pretty good ambassadors. I don’t know who among them recommended me for the Board of Regents, but when I was invited, I was very happy to do it. I had grown to think very highly of this school. There are some other good Catholic schools worthy of support. But what struck me about Thomas Aquinas College is that it has the whole package: the Faith, integrated with the great books, integrated with the community, and the uniting of faith and reason.

“What struck me about Thomas Aquinas College is that it has the whole package: the Faith, integrated with the great books, integrated with the community, and the uniting of faith and reason.”

**As you know, the College is in the process of obtaining approval from the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education for a branch campus in Northfield Massachusetts. What are your thoughts?**

I think it’s great. I have thought that one of the most important things for the College is to keep your small size, and my visit here has confirmed that. The typical American approach is usually, “Bigger is better. If you have 375 students, then 450 would be better.” But that is just not always the case. I think you lose something when you get bigger. So, there is a great wisdom to capping the size on this campus. Establishing an East Coast campus is a wonderful idea, and the site just seems perfect for what you want to do.

**What advice would you have for the College’s young men about discerning whether they have a vocation to the priesthood?**

I think many men would give their lives for their country if we were being invaded. They would sign up. But Mother Church really has a prior call on our allegiance, and the need is increasing in our nation for priests. I think men need to think about being generous and saying, “There is a need for priests, and if I can be a priest, then I can respond to that need.” I think men have to think of it in those terms.

A lot of young adults say, “I don’t know; I might be called to marriage.” But we’re all called to marriage; we’re all designed for that. The call to the priesthood is a call beyond the natural call. I believe it is a mistake to put the two vocations on equal footing. There is a hierarchy among the states of life, and the priesthood or consecrated life is a higher calling than marriage. Marriage is a holy state, but for some, the Lord says, “I want you to do more than that; I’m inviting you to do more.”



# Defending the Vulnerable

## An Interview with Mother Agnes Mary Donovan, S.V.

*Note: Mother Agnes Mary Donovan, S.V., Superior General of the Sisters of Life, served as the College’s 2017 Commencement Speaker.*

### What is the charism of the Sisters of Life?

I must go back to the source to answer that. In the 1980s, our founder, the late John Cardinal O’Connor, was on retreat in a Carmelite Monastery on the perimeter of the concentration camp in Dachau. He was walking the grounds and came to the crematorium. As he described it, somewhat mystically, “I put my hands into the semicircular red-brick ovens and felt the intermingled ashes of man and woman and child, of rabbi and priest and minister, and my soul screamed out to God: Good God, how could man have done this to man?” The cardinal left with something newly impressed upon his soul: For the rest of his life, he would defend the dignity of the human person. With that experience was born the charism of life. Nearly a decade later, he would raise up a community of religious sisters to serve the vulnerable human lives he defended.

In the beautiful intricacy of God’s design we would learn, but only after Cardinal O’Connor’s death, that he was Jewish. He was born to a Jewish mother, who was a convert to Catholicism as a 19-year-old young woman, before she met and married his father. There is something exquisite about the fact that God chose Dachau as the place to grant him this incredible grace.

The Sisters of Life are devoted to the dignity of the human person at all stages of life. At this moment in history, those most vulnerable are the unborn who can, literally, do nothing to defend themselves. The philosophy which undergirds a culture in which abortion is normative, has opened the door to euthanasia which will be the next battlefield for life.

“The truth cannot be stifled, ultimately. There is so much violence and terror in the world, that I think people are willing to hear a reasonable argument from the other side. The truth is the truth, and people will not rest easily with abortion”

### Do you see any change in attitudes about abortion?

Definitely. The truth cannot be stifled, ultimately. There is so much violence and terror in the world, that I think people are willing to hear a reasonable argument from the other side. I don’t think that means they are ready to let go of their legal “right” to abortion, but there is a greater willingness to understand that not everybody will accept that, and that perhaps it is not making us a better people.

The truth is the truth, and people will not rest easily with abortion — even those who practice it. We have a large ministry to those who suffer after abortion.

### Do you mean to those mothers who have had abortions?

Yes, and who grieve tremendously. Their lives have been changed by the experience of abortion. Watching the Lord set these women free is one of the most life-giving works of the Sisters of Life. We witness women who through a program of prayer and accompaniment recover their own sense of self-worth and experience the mercy and forgiveness of Jesus. They begin again, and enter into a personal relationship with God who has loved them back to life. His mercy endures forever, and is bigger than abortion.

Not long after our founding in 1991, a group of women who had formed a prayer group gathered around us as a corps of volunteers. After about a year, they asked if they could talk to me. So we sat down, and they shared with me: “We have all had abortions — and now we suffer. We have come to you because we believe that since



you defend life you would understand us, and you would have a heart for our suffering.” So with these women we designed retreats and the days of hope and healing for those suffering after abortion. It has become a powerful mission which has served more than a thousand women.

I look at people my age and older, the Baby-Boomers, who were involved in abortion at young ages. I pray they find forgiveness and reconcile with God so they can approach death without fear.

### How do you help the pregnant women who come to you?

The large majority of women who come to us are still considering abortion, but they are looking to see if there are other options. How you speak to a woman, and how you receive her, is vital because she is not in a position to hear moral truths in an explicit way; she needs in the moment of her crisis someone who will receive her and listen to the desires of her heart.

Usually, in the chaos of thoughts and emotions, she just doesn’t believe that carrying the baby within her to term and making room for another in her life is possible or doable. So we’ll ask her: “If everything were different, what would you desire?” And the answer is consistently: “Oh, I’d have this child.”

So we help her by providing resources to fulfill the real needs she names. The mother, herself, will actually design the program for us that make another option possible. It is our work to provide for her real needs, and we do that through the practical compassion and love of our Co-Workers of Life. They are essential; they are our arms and our feet providing the support of friendship, housing alternatives, jobs, pro-bono medical care, etc.

### In describing your work you use the phrase “pregnancies that can cause a crisis for the mother” rather than “crisis pregnancies.” How important is language to the Culture of Life you seek to nurture?

Language is vital. Those opposed to our notions about the sacredness of the human person decades ago seized a compelling language, and got the edge in the argument. Actions follow language. So the pro-choice movement began with the notion of “choice” — a very American notion.

I think Cardinal O’Connor’s genius was his way of looking at the issue through a Christian lens. Moving beyond the issue of justice, the Cardinal preached the truth that every human person is created intentionally by God. Each person’s origin and destiny lies in God, making every human life unique and of infinite value. We are literally *loved and willed* into being by a God who first thought of each one of us. Language is vital. How we speak to and receive women is crucial.

### The Sisters of Life is both contemplative and apostolic. How does this play out in your daily lives?

In living the contemplative dimension of our lives, we spend four to five hours a day in common prayer. Each morning we rise and praise the Lord for another day by way of the Divine Office and the Liturgy of the Mass, and silent meditation. At midday we break again to pray in common Midday Prayer, again from the Divine Office. And later in the day, we have an extended period

of Eucharistic Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament during which we recite together the Rosary, have time for mental prayer, and chant Vespers. Finally, we close the day with Compline. It is our prayer life that sustains us in our daily, 6-hour commitment to the apostolate at the service of life.

### Turning to your work as chairperson for the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious (CMSWR), would you explain its mission and role in the Church?

The mission of the CMSWR is to support the vitality and flourishing of religious life in our nation by providing services and support to its members who are major superiors of religious communities of women, that they may be effective spiritual leaders in their local congregations. It also provides a context for information sharing and friendships among peers who live the joys and loneliness of leadership.

### There is a magnetic quality to authentic, faithful, religious orders such as the Sisters of Life and some others. What accounts for the influx of vocations to your order and others like it?

I would attribute it to fidelity to the order’s founding charism while living a life of public witness; a common life in community; and a corporate apostolate. These are the marks of authentic religious life.

The habit, an eschatological sign, plays an important role in our public witness. People know that you exist for them. On the streets of New York City, those we encounter will freely ask Sisters for prayers whether we are on a subway platform, a bus, or in a park, saying: “Sister, would you pray for my mother? Her name is Elaine, and she’s dying.” It’s a beautiful thing to witness such faith. Without my habit, that would never happen.

### What would you say to young girls who are discerning a vocation?

God has a plan for your life, and created you for a purpose. Each young person’s responsibility is to discern and understand the call of God. God has created each one of us with a most fundamental vocation to love. So we must ask ourselves, and God in prayer, the question: “How will my love be given totally in this world? And to whom will it be given?” Love can only be given to a person, whether divine or human.

To recognize one’s vocation to love, it is critical to develop a very real relationship with the living God. Within the context of that relationship one hears and recognizes the voice of God. With prayer she will discover the vocation which is in the mind of God for her. It is important that a young person receives the opportunity not only for liturgical prayer but also for personal times of mental prayer where one can, in the quiet, encounter the Lord.

“God has a plan for your life, and created you for a purpose. Each young person’s responsibility is to discern and understand the call of God. God has created each one of us with a most fundamental vocation to love. Love can only be given to a person, whether divine or human.”

### What is it that attracts you to the College?

By way of the education you provide students, Thomas Aquinas College is producing young people who have the *capacity to think*, which is in short supply in the culture these days. As we heard today, there is an avalanche of information, but few are capable of sorting through and thinking about the information that is in front of them. I think you’re doing something that is really unique here, creating educated people capable of thinking clearly. You’ve done a great job!



# Doctor of Grace

## Why We Study St. Augustine

The following remarks are adapted from then-Dean Brian T. Kelly's report to the Board of Governors at its May 12 meeting. They are part of an ongoing series of talks about why the College includes certain texts in its curriculum. To read the full text and the rest of the series, see [thomasaquinas.edu/whywestudy](http://thomasaquinas.edu/whywestudy).



If you look at the beautiful façade of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel, you will find three statues. Our Lady sits atop the peak, but two men flank the main entrance, St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Augustine. A youthful St. Thomas is lost in wonder at the divine mysteries he writes about; an aged St. Augustine is preaching to the end. St. Augustine was ultimately called to the episcopate, whereas St. Thomas was able to devote himself, more or less completely, to the life of prayer and contemplation.

It is fitting that these two great doctors of the Church stand side by side appearing to support the edifice on which Our Lady stands. They are the two greatest theologians the Church has ever known; their teaching has laid a sure foundation for what Pope St. John Paul calls “the very logical and demanding edifice of Christian doctrine.”

St. Augustine's influence can be seen concretely in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, where he is cited more than any other “ecclesiastical writer” by a wide margin. He is cited 87 times. St. Thomas comes in second with 61. No one else comes close. For obvious reasons I cannot bring myself to agree with my old teacher, Rev. John Hardon, S.J., when he says that Augustine is “the greatest Doctor of the Church,” but second best is not too bad.

Like St. Thomas, Augustine wrote voluminously on all aspects of Christian theology. Unlike St. Thomas, most of what he wrote was polemical in nature, answering particular objections to the Faith or addressing particular heresies. His great *City of God*, for example, was written to address the objection that Rome had fallen to barbarian invaders because the empire had abandoned her official pagan practices. And several smaller treatises on free will and grace constitute his carefully teased out response to the lure of Pelagianism. For this great work in particular, Augustine was named the Doctor of Grace and is even referred to by this title in the *Catechism*.

In the history of the Church there have been many heresies. It is somewhat striking how many there were in the first few centuries after Christ. But when heresies arise the faithful teachers and thinkers are called on to address these serious errors by looking more deeply into the deposit of faith. This is the great benefit of heresy, that the heretic raises a great question in a new way. We have to be especially grateful to those who have answered error with truth. St. Augustine, especially after his reluctant vocation and selection as the Bishop of Hippo, was a very important figure in combatting Manichaeism, Pelagianism, Donatism, and Arianism.

St. Augustine forms the backbone of our Sophomore Theology sequence. Here we begin with his small treatise *On Christian Doctrine*, which provides the principles for reading and interpreting the Scriptures. Here the students learn the generous and expansive rule of charity, which holds that any interpretation of God's word that builds up charity should not be rejected. After all, the Holy Spirit is the ultimate author of Scripture, and in His infinite wisdom He can intend a multitude of meanings for any one passage.

Our sophomores also read several of Augustine's shorter treatments of grace and nature in response to the Pelagian heresy. Here he gives a careful reading of the Pauline epistles to show that every good thing we have is received as a gift, and is not exclusively or autonomously ours. This even applies to our meritorious actions; God

works it in us to freely choose the good. The only things in our lives that are truly and exclusively our own are the sins that we commit and the wicked habits that we form. In all else we are cooperating with God's grace.

A good deal of time is then spent reading the *City of God*, tracing the arc of salvation history, beginning with the first words of Genesis and ending with the book of Revelation. In many of these pages Augustine meditates on the peculiar nature of pride as the most insidious of temptations. It is the one that always accompanies good action, and it is the secret door through which good men are corrupted. He speaks as one familiar with this temptation.

But the most influential of his works that our students read, perhaps his single most influential book, is his *Confessions*. If you asked a number of Thomas Aquinas College alumni what book from all four years had the most significant impact on their lives, I suspect the majority would name this book. It strikes at the heart and conscience of the good-willed reader. In it, Augustine humbly relates the story of his life in the form of an extended prayer. He confesses his own shortcomings and God's many blessings. It is in many ways a model of Christian prayer. He speaks frankly to the Lord with intimacy, love, and reverence. Pope St. John Paul calls this “a work in which those who thirst for truth and know their own limitations have always discovered their own selves.”

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St. Augustine was born in 354 in what is now Algeria. His mother, Monica, was Christian and is now recognized as a saint. His father, Patrick, was neither Christian nor saintly and hence Monica is sometimes considered the patron saint of abuse victims. Augustine was not baptized but learned about Christ from his earliest days. As a youth he pursued a serious classical education — and worldly vanity. Augustine, the confessor, wrestles with the mystery of evil as he recalls stealing pears from a farmer's tree without any intention of eating them, but only for sinful fellowship with his ruffian friends. His mother grieved for him as he grew further and further away from the Faith and more enmeshed in the world. He fell into sexual sin and fathered a son.

St. Monica, model of maternal persistence, prayed constantly for him, hounding him sometimes to the point of distraction. He sheepishly confesses that when he decided to move from Carthage to Rome he lied to his mother about it so that she wouldn't follow him. Once when Augustine was adhering to the doctrines of the Manichaeans, Monica almost despaired but received a vision to encourage her prayers. And another goodly bishop assured her, “It cannot be that the son of these tears should perish.”

In many ways the story of Augustine's conversion revolves around two opposing forces, the millstone of sinful habit and the immense power of a mother's love.

As Augustine overcame his intellectual doubts, he remained trapped by the pleasures of the flesh. His famous prayer was, “Lord make me chaste, but not just yet.”

He felt powerless to release himself and slow to desire freedom. He says:

I no longer had my usual excuse to explain why I did not yet despise the world and serve you, namely, that my perception of the truth was uncertain. Now I was indeed quite sure about it. Yet I

was still bound down to the earth. I was refusing to become your soldier. ... The burden of the world weighed me down with a sweet drowsiness. ... The thoughts with which I meditated about you were like the efforts of those who would like to get up but are overcome by deep sleep and sink back again. ... The law of sin is the violence of habit by which even the unwilling mind is dragged down and held, as it deserves to be, since by its own choice it slipped into the habit. “Wretched man that I was, who would deliver me from this body of death other than your grace through Jesus Christ our Lord?”

After many struggles his inner conflict comes to a crisis. He says:

From a hidden depth a profound self-examination had dredged up a heap of all my misery ... that precipitated a vast storm bearing a massive downpour of tears ... I threw myself down under a fig tree and let my tears flow freely ... a sacrifice acceptable to you ... I repeatedly said to you: “How long O Lord? ... how long is it to be? Tomorrow, tomorrow. Why not now? Why not an end to my impure life this very hour?”

While Augustine was thinking this, he heard a child's voice from a nearby yard saying, “Pick up and read. Pick up and read.” Inspired, he picked up his Bible and opened it at random, “and in silence read the first passage on which my eyes lit: ‘Not in riots and drunken parties, not in eroticism and indecencies, not in strife and rivalry, but put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in its lusts.’ (Romans 13:13-14). ... It was as if a light of relief from all anxiety flooded into my heart. All the shadows of doubt were expelled.”

During Augustine's many years of waywardness, Monica persevered in prayer; she believed and hoped that God would claim her son in the end. What joy she felt when Augustine told her of his inward conversion and his desire for baptism! “She exulted ... and blessed you who ‘are powerful to do more than we ask or think.’ (Eph. 3:20).”

In truth Monica rejoiced to see her beloved son baptized, but this triumph came very shortly before the end. After his baptism she traveled with her son to Ostia, by the mouth of the Tiber, where she breathed her last. But Augustine describes a beautiful moment of deep spiritual communion with his mother. He says, “Step by step we climbed beyond all corporeal objects and the heaven itself. ... We ascended even further by internal reflection and dialogue and wonder at your works ... and while we talked and panted after [the eternal], we touched it in some small degree by a moment of total concentration of the heart. And we sighed and left behind us ‘the first fruits of the spirit’ (Romans 8:23).”

In that moment Augustine says, “We attained the eternal wisdom which abides beyond all things, ... and this world with all its delights became worthless to us.” Before Monica died she told him, “My hope in this world is already fulfilled. The one reason why I wanted to stay longer in this life was my desire to see you a Catholic Christian before I die. My God has granted this in a way more than I had hoped.”

You can see why she is a patron saint of mothers and why Augustine was so heartbroken when she died a few short weeks later. What a great blessing it was for Augustine to have a mother so devoted to his conversion and salvation. And what a blessing to the Universal Church her prayers have turned out to be.

I have touched on just a few central moments in one of the most beautiful and enriching books ever written. St. Augustine and St. Monica, please pray for us and for all wayward souls and their anxious mothers.





# CAMPUS LIFE

1. Inspired by a classic scene from Chariots of Fire, students participate in the annual run around the academic quadrangle. 2. Old friends reunite at the West Coast Alumni Dinner. 3. Members of the Class of 2018 play volleyball ... 4. ... at their "Rejuniorate" beach party in the spring. 5. The Thomas Aquinas College Choir performs Henry Purcell's Dido & Aeneas. 6. Students pay a visit to the Getty Center as part of an ongoing tour of local museums. 7. The men of Thomas Aquinas College do battle in the end-of-the-year soccer tournament.

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

Weekdays	Saturdays & Civic Holidays	Sundays & Holy Days
7:00 a.m.**	7:15 a.m.**	7:15 a.m.**
11:30 a.m.	11:30 a.m.	9:00 a.m.
5:00 p.m.		11:30 a.m.

\*Schedules may vary; please confirm Mass times at [thomasaquinas.edu/masstimes](http://thomasaquinas.edu/masstimes).

\*\* The first Mass of each day is offered in the extraordinary form.

## Calendar of Events

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

- Lecture: "Redemptive Suffering and the Eucharist"  
Dr. Dawn Eden Goldstein  
Assistant Professor of Dogmatic Theology  
Holy Apostles College and Seminary .....September 8
- Lecture: "Which Essence is at Stake in the Essence/Existence Distinction?"  
Dr. Thomas Osborne  
Professor of Philosophy  
University of St. Thomas, Houston..... September 22
- All-College Seminar.....October 13
- Fall Concert: Paul Galbraith  
Classical guitarist.....October 27
- Lecture: Dr. Gregory Vall  
Professor of Sacred Scripture  
Notre Dame Seminary, New Orleans .....November 3
- Concert: The Thomas Aquinas College Choir  
Mozart's Coronation Mass in C (K.317) &  
Vivaldi's Gloria in D major (RV 589).....November 17

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