



# THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

## WINTER 2012

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### Constantly Learning

#### Dr. Thomas Kaiser, First Tutor to Teach All 23 Courses in College Curriculum

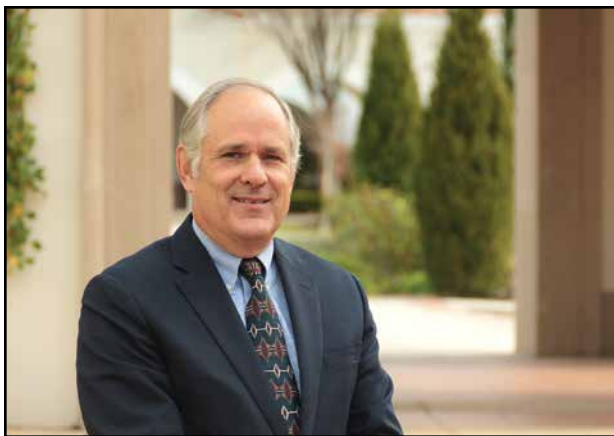
*Because Thomas Aquinas College offers a fully integrated curriculum, it is unique among American colleges and universities in requiring its faculty members to teach not only in their area of expertise, but in a wide variety of disciplines. At the end of this semester, Dr. Thomas Kaiser, a senior tutor and a member of the Board of Governors, will be the first tutor in the 40-year history of the College to have taught every one of the 23 courses in the College's classical curriculum — language, logic, mathematics, music, natural science, seminar, philosophy, and theology.*

*A member of the College's first graduating class in 1975, Dr. Kaiser went on to earn his doctorate in biology at the University of California, Los Angeles. He returned to the College as a tutor in 1982. Over the years he and his wife, Paula (Grimm '75), have seen all 11 of their children come to Thomas Aquinas College, with the youngest enrolling last fall.*

**Did you consciously set out to teach the entire curriculum, or did it happen organically over the course of three decades?**

I intended to teach the whole program when I came back here as a member of the faculty. As a student I felt like I had only skimmed the surface of the material we studied here. So one of the things I had in mind when I came back was to do it all over again and try to do it more deeply.

I had the experience of being a teaching assistant while I was at UCLA, and I assisted with the same course three times. One of the things I found somewhat discouraging was that the professor just took out his lecture notes and gave exactly the same lecture three years in a row. I thought, "This must get awfully boring." It seemed it would be much more enjoyable to keep yourself intel-



lectually interested in what you are doing and constantly learning. That is one of the joys of teaching this program.

**Would you say that it is essential for tutors to teach across the curriculum for the program to work properly?**

Yes, I think it is absolutely critical that the tutors teach all the parts of the program, as much as possible. Because of the integrated nature of the program, what you do later depends on what you do earlier. So it is necessary for tutors to know the parts of the program as tutors, so they know what the students have already learned. They can then help bring that to bear on the discussions the students are having. I have found that tremendously helpful in class.

An example is senior theology. Things that the students have studied in the language tutorial, for example, modes of signifying; in logic; in natural science, especially sophomore philosophy with the *Physics* and *De Anima* of Aristotle — those things all come to bear in theology, especially in the Treatise on the Trinity. So you can

remind the students of what they already know and help them bring those things to bear on the conversation.

I think we have a terrific faculty that really has the desire to tackle all the disciplines, and I especially see that in the young tutors. They really push themselves hard to get to the various parts of the program, to take on courses that are outside their area of expertise. There are several tutors who are not far behind me in terms of completing the whole program, and some of them are very close.

**Does one need to be an expert in all disciplines in order to teach the breadth of the College's curriculum?**

No. When most people hear that the tutors at Thomas Aquinas College teach the various parts of the curriculum, they think that is a bit strange and maybe a bit presumptuous. Part of the difficulty is they are thinking about what happens at most universities, where the professors who teach the courses are real masters in what they are teaching; they specialize in that particular area, and they are the primary teacher. We do not consider ourselves the primary teachers here, and that is part of what justifies our approach. We think that the authors of the great works that we are reading are the primary teachers, and we are just helping the students learn from them. So it is not quite as presumptuous as it might sound.

**How would you answer the critic who says, "I don't want my child to be taught by someone who is himself a learner? I want him to be taught by someone who is the expert in a given subject?"**

That is a good question. I would say that the tutors set a good example for the students by making it clear that

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### Walking for Life 2012

#### More than 200 Students Make Trip to San Francisco for West Coast March

If Thomas Aquinas College students had wanted to skip this year's Walk for Life West Coast, they would have had no shortage of excuses.

Because the 50,000-person gathering took place on a Saturday, the walkers would have to endure a late drive and little sleep the night before in order to participate. Lodging was scarce, as the church that provided space in years past was severely limited in its ability to do so again. With gas nearing \$4 a gallon, money for the 350-mile trek was also tight, and the weather forecast predicted heavy rain.

Yet the more than 200 Thomas Aquinas College students who participated in this year's Walk were not interested in excuses. As they have every year since

the Walk's founding in 2005, more than two-thirds of the student body attended, joined by numerous members of the faculty and all three of the College's chaplains. In His Providence, God provided abundantly for all their needs.

The late-hour arrival in San Francisco proved to be a nonissue. After students arrived they took part in all-night adoration vigils. When they slept it was on basement and gymnasium floors provided by various parishes throughout the city. A generous gift from the Chairman of the College's Board of Governors, R. James Wensley, and his wife, Germaine, paid for most of the travel expenses, and donations from members of the faculty and staff covered the rest. Finally, defying forecasters and skeptics alike, the sun shone throughout the two-mile march from the Civic Center to Justin Herman Plaza.

It helped, of course, that the students were spiritually fortified for the annual walk, held two days before the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's January 23, 1973, ruling in *Roe v. Wade*. The previous weekend the College had hosted a Mass for the Unborn, at which Chaplain



Rev. Cornelius Buckley, S.J. served as the principal celebrant. Deacon Chris Sandner, Respect Life Coordinator for the Santa Barbara Region of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, was the homilist.

"Barely 120 days after Thomas Aquinas College opened its doors to welcome its first students, the U.S. Supreme Court heard legal arguments in the case of *Roe v. Wade*," said Deacon Sandner. "It is no accident that this school has flourished during this same period, in large part because it so clearly, openly, and consistently opposed the direction the nation has taken."

Inspired by these words, the students took to the streets of San Francisco. Joyfully they marched, sang, and prayed, in stark contrast to the pro-abortion counterdemonstrators who jeered from the sidewalks and tried to obstruct their route. As in the past, the students also assisted Walk organizers with security.

After spending another night in the City by the Bay, they made the long return trip to campus, buoyed by the blessings of the day, confident in the justness of their cause, and eager to resume the studies that will prepare them for a lifetime of defending the truth.





# From the Desk of the President

## Dr. Michael F. McLean's Remarks at the Annual Christmas Appreciation Dinner

We are gathered this evening to strengthen our friendships, to thank God and our benefactors for the blessings they have bestowed on Thomas Aquinas College, and to anticipate joyfully the coming of our Savior.



The dedication and commitment to the College of all our friends—in particular, the members of the Board of Governors—has been inspiring to me this past year and bodes very well for the College as we go forward. Under Jim Wensley's leadership as Chairman, and Maria Grant's leadership as the head of the Trusteeship Committee, we have added three excellent new members to the College's Board of Governors, and it is my pleasure to acknowledge two of those new members who are with us this evening: longtime tutor and graduate Tom Kaiser, who has replaced the late Mark Berquist on the Board, and longtime friend of the College Lloyd Noble of Tulsa, Okla. Let me ask Tom and his wife, Paula, and Lloyd to stand so that we can acknowledge their service to the College. Not with us this evening is new Board member Pat Lynch of Vail, Colo. Pat is well known in national Catholic circles, has served on many boards (including that of the Papal Foundation), and will be an excellent addition to the Board of Thomas Aquinas College.

It gives me great pleasure, too, to introduce our new vice president for development, Paul O'Reilly. Paul and his wife, Peggy, graduated from the College in 1984. Paul earned his doctorate from Laval University in 1989 and began teaching at the College that same year after stints at St. Anselm College and the Thomas More Institute. He has been an excellent tutor at the College, and I am confident that he will do an excellent job as the College's chief development officer. Let me ask Paul and Peggy to stand so that we can acknowledge their service to the College.

The College remains strong in every essential way. This is due in no small part to your friendship and gener-

osity, for which all of us at the College are deeply grateful, and to the friendship and generosity of benefactors all across the country.

This past year, Lynda and I have traveled many miles, including to Rome and Vienna, meeting friends of the College. Among these are many leaders of the Church. Time and time again we have been edified and humbled by their warmth and generosity to us personally and by their commitment to, and affection for, Thomas Aquinas College. Particularly encouraging is the fact that we, or others from the College, attended four alumni ordinations. With your help, we have now ordained 52 priests in the College's 40-year history, testimony to the fact that we are preparing young men and women for lives of citizenship in the earthly city and in the heavenly city to come.

Your generosity makes this possible. Your contributions bear fruit in the lives of our students and in the good that they will do in the Church and in the world. They can convey their gratitude better than I.

Consider the student who writes, "It is a joy every morning to wake up and remember that at Thomas Aquinas College I am completely free to live the Faith that forms such a large part of who I am." Consider the student who writes, "I thank you for placing your faith in Thomas Aquinas College and I assure you that I will try hard to reward that faith by strengthening in myself a love and desire for all that this college stands for: the true, the good, and the beautiful." And consider the student who writes, "The tutors at the College model for us a passion for wisdom and learning, and during our class discussions they encourage us to read critically, think deeply, and speak purposefully ... one of the most important things we learn at Thomas Aquinas College is that our learning never ends."

So much for the claim, heard in many quarters, that a liberal education is a waste of time or of no value; on the contrary, the education provided by the College, and which you help to make possible, is indispensable to the Church and to our civilization. In closing, I can do no better than a final quotation from a current student:

"In the three years between my high school graduation and the time I arrived at Thomas Aquinas College, I engaged in a variety of entrepreneurial, community, and educational activities. During that time, I pondered deeply what an education is or should be, and what I wanted from the academic life. I realized that the sort of learning I craved consisted of a *subject* possessing real meaning and a *method* pushing me to discover and own as much of that meaning as possible. I have found both at Thomas Aquinas College."

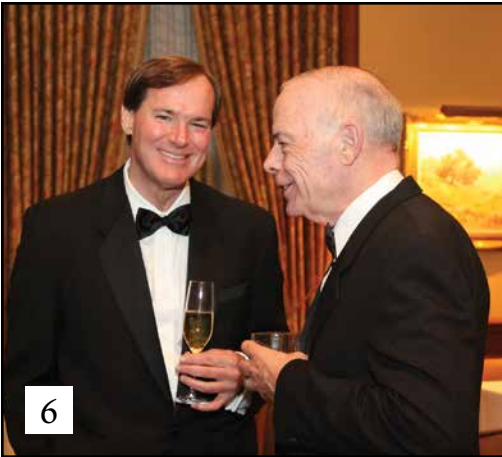
Thank you for making this possible, and may God bless you this Advent and Christmas season.

### St. Vincent de Paul Lecture and Concert Series

*Endowed by Barbara and Paul Henkels*

#### Recent Highlights

- 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. This semester's seminar took place on October 14 and focused on Flannery O'Connor's short story "Everything That Rises Must Converge."
- On November 11, **Dr. Peter Kalkavage** of St. John's College delivered a multimedia presentation, complete with singing and piano, entitled, "Passion and Perception in Mozart's Magic Flute"
- The College gathered on December 2 for the Thomas Aquinas College Choir's **Advent Concert**.
- **Dr. Marc Guerra**, an associate professor of theology at Ave Maria University, lectured on January 13 on the subject, "The Church and Modern Democracy on Justice in Human Affairs."



1. Chairman of the Board of Governors R. James Wensley and President Michael F. McLean propose a toast. 2. The room unites in the singing of "Away in a Manger" ... 3. ... and "Hark the Herald Angels Sing." 4. Board of Governors Member Robert J. Barbera with his wife, Josephine 5. Dan Grimm ('76) reads St. Luke's account of the Nativity. 6. Benefactor Paul Griffin with Peter L. DeLuca, vice president for finance and administration 7. Harpist Carol Robbins provides music during the dinner. 8. The newest member of the College's Board of Governors, Lloyd Noble II, with President Michael F. McLean 9. Rev. Msgr. Francis J. Weber, the archivist for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, with the College's librarian, Viltis Jatulis



# A Mother’s Love

## Parent Profile: Fidelia

Fidelia was surprised — “shocked,” she says — when she learned that her daughter Helen, a then- 23-year-old graduate of England’s University of Cambridge, wanted to enroll as a freshman at Thomas Aquinas College. “Cambridge is the highest school in Britain. Helen finished from there, and did very well on her exams. Now she wanted to get a second bachelor’s degree?” Fidelia remembers her response when Helen first proposed the idea: “Are you mad?”

She had reason for concern. For any family, getting a child into — let alone through — an institution like Cambridge is a great feat. For this family, which knew tragedy and hardship all too well, the challenge was all the greater. The prospect of Helen undertaking undergraduate studies for a second time was too much to bear. Yet three semesters into Helen’s tenure at Thomas Aquinas College, this proud mother now has a newfound respect for her daughter’s “mad” suggestion.

### “I Will Become a Better Person”

Fidelia and her husband, John, emigrated to the United Kingdom from their native Nigeria in the 1970s. In 1987, when the eldest of their six children was 10 years old, and the youngest — little Helen — was just 9 months, John succumbed to a physically, emotionally, and financially devastating battle with pancreatic cancer. Penniless, Fidelia returned to school, established a career in the fashion industry, and saw to it that her children all received a Catholic primary education



and went to college.

During her time at Cambridge, Helen — “the light of the family,” as Fidelia describes her — thrived. She grew in her faith, earned degrees in history and theology, and held prestigious internships at Scotland Yard, the House of Commons, and London’s premier newspaper, *The Guardian*. Fidelia fully expected that her daughter would soon be returning to school, albeit for an advanced degree.

For Helen, however, the College offered something she could not get in graduate school: formation. She had come to know the mother of a Thomas Aquinas College student who spoke glowingly of the College and its unique, fully integrated curriculum, and Helen was fascinated. “I needed more formation, and the College sounded so amazing,” she recalls.

Despite her skepticism, Fidelia did not stand in the way of Helen’s plans. “I will

become a better person if I go there,” she recalls her daughter pleading — a request any parent would be hard-pressed to deny. Still, giving her blessing was not easy. “I wept as if I lost her,” Fidelia admits. “I didn’t understand.”

### Brighter than Olympic Lights

That would soon change. “I sat down and read about the College on its website, and I realized it was interwoven with Christianity,” says Fidelia. Impressed by this dovetailing of faith and reason, she began “accepting the College gently,” as she puts it. “I could finally begin to see why my daughter would want to spend another four years and come out with another first degree.”

“Cambridge is the highest school in Britain. Helen finished from there, and did very well on her exams. Now she wanted to get a second bachelor’s degree?”

The real turning pointing point came this past November, when Fidelia visited Helen for two weeks on campus.

She was struck by what she witnessed in the classroom. “The class was quite different from what I am used to,” Fidelia says. “There was not one of the 14 children, none of them, who was absent-minded, and no one spoke on top of one

another. Their orderliness, their eagerness to contribute — that’s something. In some universities and colleges, some students may be chewing gum, or a phone will ring, or they will secretly be texting, but this one was full heaven.”

Moreover, the decorum she saw inside the classroom extended outside as well. “There are no miserable faces. The students walk together. They say hello. They are respectful, and they are always looking to help,” she remarks. In the lives of the students, she could see the virtue of the College’s rules of residence which, to safeguard a healthy community and intellectual life, limit technological distractions. In the residence halls, “There is no Internet, no TV — and the students are happy!” she reflects. “I don’t think you all realize what you’ve got here!”

Most important were the changes she observed in her own daughter. “Helen is a different young woman now,” she notes. “She’s deeper into her Christian faith. She says, ‘Mommy, now I can ask questions, I can genuinely ask positive questions!’ She can’t just accept something without reasoning anymore,” Fidelia says. “I think she’s beginning to know what she will be and where she is going.”

As a result, Fidelia is more confident than ever in Helen’s character and in her future. “Helen is the light of the family. I pray that the way she has carried her light to this college she will carry it — brighter than Olympic lights! — from Thomas Aquinas College into the world.”

# Walking the Walk

## Alumni Update: Rev. John Higgins (’90)

“I am responsible for all the souls within the boundaries of my parish,” says Rev. John Higgins (’90), pastor of the Church of the Assumption in Peekskill, N.Y. “That is an honor, but it is also humbling and challenging, to be responsible for their salvation before God.”

It is a responsibility Fr. Higgins takes seriously. He has the blisters to prove it.

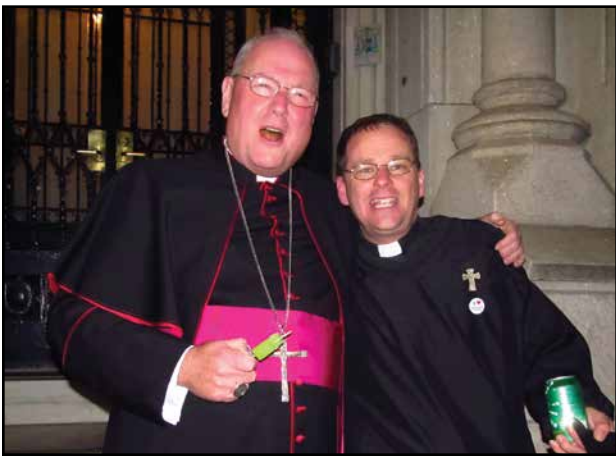
At 5:30 on the morning of November 10, 2011, Fr. Higgins offered the early Mass at Assumption, then put on a pair of sneakers and began walking. At the end of the day, he reached the Archdiocese of New York’s St. Joseph’s Seminary in Yonkers, where he spent the night, and then resumed his pilgrimage the next morning. Late that afternoon, he finally arrived at his destination — St. Patrick’s Cathedral in midtown Manhattan.

The 50-mile trek led Fr. Higgins through some of the tougher neighborhoods in the metropolitan area, where he offered prayers and blessings for the many well-wishers he encountered along the way. The sight of a priest in clerics, walking mile after mile, drew the attention of newspapers and TV stations from throughout the region, as well as a warm welcome at St. Patrick’s from the Most Rev. Timothy Michael Dolan, Archbishop of New York.

Yet it was neither the publicity nor the accolades that inspired Fr. Higgins to undertake his journey. It was his solemn responsibility as a shepherd of souls.

### The Road to Peekskill ...

Born in the city, Fr. Higgins is a native New Yorker who grew up mostly upstate, the second of three children and the product of Catholic education. After high school he enrolled at the College, primarily at the urging of his father, who was “looking for true Catholic education in a truly Catholic environment.” The elder Higgins



As Fr. John Higgins (’90) completed his 58-mile walk to St. Patrick’s Cathedral, the Most Rev. Timothy Michael Dolan, Archbishop of New York, greeted him with a celebratory popsicle and soda.

was thrilled when he discovered such a college nestled among the foothills just outside of Santa Paula, Calif, and in short order, his son would be, too.

“I rediscovered my faith at Thomas Aquinas College,” Fr. Higgins recalls. “Not all peer pressure is bad, and at the College, there was good peer pressure. The majority of my peers attended daily Mass, and one of my classmates talked me into joining the Legion of Mary. That was a key turning point in my life,” he says. “It soon became clear to me that God was asking me to give my life to Him.” One year after graduation, John enrolled in the seminary program for the Archdiocese of New York.

On May 11, 1996, at the hands of New York’s John Cardinal O’Connor, he was ordained to the priesthood of Jesus Christ. Fr. Higgins then spent the next six years as a parochial vicar at a parish in the Bronx, followed by three more at a church in New York’s Rockland County.

For the last six years he has been the pastor at the Church of the Assumption, a duty that ultimately led him to walk the distance of almost two marathons to the very cathedral where he was ordained.

### ... and to St. Patrick’s

“There is nothing like Catholic education. As G. K. Chesterton once said, there is a Catholic way to teach everything, including spelling, even if that simply means not looking down one’s long nose at those who can’t spell,” says Fr. Higgins. “The Faith should imbue every subject, the entire teaching environment. It can produce a kind of learning that cannot happen in public school.”

The Church of the Assumption has a 225-student elementary school, which Fr. Higgins considers central to his mission to evangelize, catechize, and aid his parishioners in their lives of faith. A large portion of the city of Peekskill, however, is a poor, largely immigrant community, and most of his parishioners cannot afford to send their children to Assumption School, despite the heavily discounted tuition that the parish provides. Thus Fr. Higgins’ walk to Manhattan.

Inspired by a parishioner who asked him to sponsor her in a local walkathon, Fr. Higgins decided to undertake his pilgrimage to raise funds for the school. He prepared for weeks in advance by ramping up his usual exercise regimen, and he provided live updates along the way via Twitter.

All in all Fr. Higgins’ walking campaign raised more than \$69,000 for Assumption School. Admittedly, he says, “I could barely move my legs” at the Mass of Thanksgiving he offered upon his arrival at St. Patrick’s, but that was a small sacrifice to make for his school, his parish, and the souls entrusted to his care.



# Campus Update

## Recent Events and Happenings

### Mother Mary Assumpta Long to be 2012 Commencement Speaker

Mother Mary Assumpta Long, O.P., has accepted President Michael F. McLean's invitation to serve as Thomas Aquinas College's 2012 Commencement Speaker. The prioress general of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, in Ann Arbor, Mich., will travel to campus this spring to participate in the College's May 12 graduation exercises.



In just 15 years, Mother Assumpta has helped to establish one of the most vibrant, orthodox religious communities in the United States. Inspired by Bl. Pope John Paul II's exhortation to the New Evangelization, she and four *consoeurs* from the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia in Nashville, Tenn., formed a new community in 1997. With more than 100 members today, including two alumnae of the College, the sisters have outgrown their motherhouse in Michigan, and are now planning new houses in Northern California, Florida, South Carolina, and Texas. Their apostolate is education, and they teach at the elementary and secondary levels in various dioceses across the country.

Mother Assumpta is well known as a public champion of the Faith and the religious life. In addition to giving talks at colleges, universities, and conferences, the Sisters of Mary host *Truth in the Heart*, a catechetical television series for children on EWTN. Perhaps most famously, they have also appeared twice in recent years on the *Oprah Winfrey Show*, generating international interest in their lives of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

In a recent letter to Dr. McLean, Mother Assumpta wrote, "My relationship with Thomas Aquinas College goes back to almost its beginning, and I have been amazed at the growth and success of this wonderful institution. The good its graduates have done for the Church and society as a whole is incalculable." Dr. McLean, meanwhile, has expressed admiration for the Sisters of Mary and gratitude for Mother Assumpta's agreeing to serve as Commencement Speaker.

"We are honored that Mother Assumpta would come celebrate Commencement with us," says Dr. McLean. "She is one of the great voices in the Church today, and we are eager to hear the words of wisdom she has for our graduates."

### Two New Members Appointed to Board of Governors

Born on New York's Staten Island, **Patricia Crane Lynch**, a new member of the College's Board of Governors, earned her bachelor's degree at Chestnut Hill College in Philadelphia before pursuing graduate studies at New York's Fordham University. In 2011 she received a Doctorate of Humane Letters, *honoris causa*, at Ave Maria University, where she served on the Board of Regents. She is a member of the Papal Foundation, a Dame of Malta, a Lady of the Holy Sepulchre, and a member of the Libris Society of Chestnut Hill College.

Mrs. Lynch serves on governing boards for the Dietrich von Hildebrand Legacy Project, the Family of the Americas Foundation, the BRAVO! Colorado Music Festival, the Charitable Foundation of the Diocese of St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, and Thomas Aquinas College. She is also active in various media projects, including music and film production.

Previously, Mrs. Lynch served on the boards of St. John Vianney Theological Seminary, Franciscan University of Steubenville, the Pelican Foundation, the National Center of Opus Dei, Chestnut Hill College, the Philharmonic of New Jersey, and Private Initiatives, Inc. She has also attended several United Nations international conferences as an NGO delegate.

Mrs. Lynch and her husband, Frank, live in Edwards, Colo. They are the parents of 4 children and the grandparents of 13.

Joining Mrs. Lynch as a new member of the Board is **Lloyd Noble II**. Mr. Noble first became acquainted with Thomas Aquinas College while visiting the campus in 2003 to attend a memorial for his half-uncle, Richard Noble. Richard had served on the College's Board of Governors from 1977 until his death in late 2002, upon which he left his entire estate to the College. Lloyd has been a loyal and generous friend ever since that first meeting, routinely returning to the campus for Commencement and other major events such as the dedication of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel.

Mr. Noble majored in business at the University of Oklahoma and has spent his career investing in oil and gas ventures and marketable securities. He has also served as a director and officer of numerous privately held companies, and continues to do so today. Although raised an Episcopalian, Mr. Noble entered the Catholic Church in 2000, and is currently a member of Tulsa's Christ the King Parish. He occasionally attends Mass at Our Lady of the Annunciation of Clear Creek Abbey in Hulbert, Okla., a Benedictine monastery that is home to 10 Thomas Aquinas College alumni.

In addition to his work in behalf of the College, Mr. Noble serves as a director for the Oklahoma Council of Public Affairs. He has previously done work for the Oklahoma Air & Space Museum, Indian Nation Boy Scouts, the Salvation Army, the Philbrook Museum of Art, Culver Legion, and the Noble Foundation. In 2011 he was made a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre.

### Hilton and Andersen Foundations Award Generous Year-End Grants

For more than two decades, The Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and the Fred B. and Katherine C. Andersen Foundation have been loyal benefactors to the students of Thomas Aquinas College, and this year is no exception.

In mid-December the Los Angeles-based Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, which has among its priorities the nurturing of Catholic schools, awarded a \$200,000 grant to support the more than 70 percent of Thomas Aquinas College students who receive financial aid. The grant marked the Foundation's single largest gift to the College, doubling its previous largest contribution, and bringing the Foundation's total giving to the College to nearly \$1 million.

Shortly thereafter, the Fred B. and Katherine C. Andersen Foundation stepped forward with a generous gift of its own, a \$175,000 grant also targeted toward financial aid. The Minnesota-based philanthropy contributes funds only to institutions which do not accept "federal, state, or local government funds or loans of any kind" — a policy Thomas Aquinas College has maintained since its founding so as to preserve its autonomy and Catholic identity. The Andersen Foundation has contributed more than \$4.5 million to the College since 1996.

"Once again, we find ourselves owing a great debt of gratitude to the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation and the Fred B. and Katherine C. Andersen Foundation," says Thomas Aquinas College President Michael F. McLean. "We are committed to making the unique education we provide here available to anyone who is prepared to undertake it. It is generosity such as this that makes our commitment possible. We are profoundly grateful to both foundations for their long history of friendship and support."

### College Hosts Legatus Forum

On Saturday, October 15, 2011, Thomas Aquinas College hosted the annual Legatus-Aquinas Forum for some 20 members and spouses of the Ventura-North Los Angeles and Pasadena chapters of Legatus, the international organization of Catholic business executives. The day began with Mass in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel, offered by College Chaplain Rev. Cornelius Buckley, S.J., and enriched by the singing of student and alumni members of the Thomas Aquinas College Choir.

Following the Mass, the Legates, who included members of the Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors, Board of Regents, and alumni, met for a 90-minute seminar conducted in the Socratic Method, as are all classes at the College. College President Michael F. McLean and Vice President for Development Paul J. O'Reilly led the conversation, which focused on the short story "The Enduring Chill" by Southern Catholic novelist Flannery O'Connor.

"We always enjoy the Legatus-Aquinas Forum, and we appreciate the opportunity to give a glimpse into the life of the College to these faithful Catholic business leaders," says Director of Development Robert Bagdazian. "We are grateful that they would come spend the day praying, discussing, and being with us, and we look forward to welcoming them back next year."



### Class of 2011 Bless Chapel with Candle Rack

Throughout their senior year, members of the Thomas Aquinas College Class of 2011 consistently found innovative ways to raise money for a farewell gift to their alma mater. Demonstrating great entrepreneurial spirit, they marketed Valentine's Day gift baskets to Thomas Aquinas College parents, hand-delivered to their sons and daughters on campus. The seniors sold 200 baskets in all, and raised \$3,800 toward their class gift, which has at last arrived — a votive candle rack, designed by Arte Grande in Spain, for Our Lady of the



Most Holy Trinity Chapel. The brass rack rests in a small shrine just below a painting of the Annunciation in the Chapel transept. It holds 30 candles, each symbolizing a prayer offered for the intentions of the person who lighted it. "We are touched by the Class of 2011's thoughtfulness and generosity," says President Michael F. McLean. "We will certainly remember its members and their intentions each time we see their beautiful gift."

### President McLean to Host Reception in New York City

On April 10, 2012, President Michael F. McLean will host a New York City reception for friends, alumni, and benefactors of Thomas Aquinas College. The featured speaker will be William McGurn, a vice president of News Corporation and author of the weekly "Main Street" column for *The Wall Street Journal*. Previously Mr. McGurn served as chief speechwriter for President George W. Bush from 2005 to 2008, and he worked for 10 years at the *Journal's* European and Asian bureaus. Space at the reception is limited; for more information please contact [events@thomasaquinas.edu](mailto:events@thomasaquinas.edu).



# A Church that Reaches

## Chapel Bell Tower Attracts New Friends to College

Although nominally a highway, California Route 150 — the road which passes by the campus of Thomas Aquinas College — is hardly a bustling thoroughfare. Its winding two lanes, connecting the cities of Santa Paula and Ojai, are lined by oak trees, family farms, and the occasional country market. It is not the place one expects to encounter a motorcade of brightly polished Porsches. Yet such was the case on November 17, 2011.

That morning, some 24 members of the Porsche Club of America’s Santa Barbara chapter made the 50-mile drive to campus. What brought them to the College for a tour and a luncheon was not their shared passion for a particular make of European sports car, nor a burgeoning interest in Catholic higher education. Instead they were drawn by a stunning sight that they had previously seen only on weekend drives through the Ventura County countryside — a stately, 135-foot-high bell tower and a majestic, 89-foot dome, topped by gleaming crosses, rising above the arching oak trees.

Ever since its completion in 2009, Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel has served as a magnet, attracting to campus numerous admirers, often in large groups. The Porsche enthusiasts, like many other visitors, came to Thomas Aquinas College inspired by the Chapel’s beauty, and left enamored by the goodness and truth in the College’s program of Catholic liberal education.

### An Inviting Presence

“When I first took the call from the Porsche Club, I thought it was the *Portia* Club,” laughs Director of College Relations Anne S. Forsyth. Mrs. Forsyth could understand why a club with a Greek name would be interested in the College’s classical curriculum, but it was less clear to her, at least at first, why the representative of an automotive organization would be calling. As the conversation progressed, however, it all began to make sense. As it



happened, Nicolas Liakis, president of the Porsche Club’s Santa Barbara chapter, is a former dean at New York City College who was aware of the unique nature of the College’s program and impressed by its excellence.

Having seen the Chapel from afar, his group’s members were intrigued. “Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel has drawn visitors of all kinds,” says Mrs. Forsyth. “We have had organizations of educators and architects come by, as well as Catholic groups and others you might expect, but also a wide range of organizations with no direct connection to the mission of the College. We have had fraternal organizations, members of other churches, people who often have had no exposure to the College other than having seen the Chapel from the road.”

As a result the College, which has long enjoyed a strong reputation nationally while remaining something of a hidden gem within its own region, is gaining a new level of prominence in Southern California. “We never anticipated this when we built the Chapel, but we probably should have,” Mrs. Forsyth adds. “Traditionally the purpose of a bell tower is to draw attention. The steeple announces this House of God and declares it the most important building in the area. Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel certainly does that on this campus, and the message is evidently traveling well beyond.”

### Spreading the Word

Many of those who visit to see the Chapel — and all who come as a part of a larger group — arrange ahead of time for an overview of the campus, a tour of the Chapel, and occasionally a luncheon or a classroom visit. While they may have arrived knowing very little about the College, they depart with a great appreciation for its spirituality, its academics, and the moral and intellectual seriousness of its students.

For instance, the Porsche Club’s review of its visit, as described in its monthly magazine, begins, “Located in a former cow pasture high in the hills above Santa Paula is one of our nation’s greatest learning institutions.” The review notes that the College’s students “are among the finest America has to offer. They will become leaders of academia, industry, law and other professions.”

The review concludes with this advisory: “Next time you drive on Hwy. 150 between Ojai and Santa Paula, you will notice the bell tower of the Chapel. Put it into your memory banks and be sure to arrange for a visit. You will certainly be impressed.”

*For information about arranging a group visit to Thomas Aquinas College, please contact Mrs. Forsyth at [aforsyth@thomasaquinas.edu](mailto:aforsyth@thomasaquinas.edu) or 800-634-9797.*

# Choosing the Right Candidate

## WellPoint Finds Recruiting Success at Thomas Aquinas College

“How many ping-pong balls can fit in the cabin of a 747 airplane?” and “How many Starbucks franchises are in San Diego?”

Such topics are seldom if ever addressed in the Socratic discussions that take place in Thomas Aquinas College’s classrooms. Yet the College’s students — by virtue of having developed their analytical skills through a rigorous, classical curriculum — are well prepared to answer them and other hypothetical queries that come up in job interviews.

That was the experience of three recruiters from WellPoint, the 37,000-employee health-insurance giant, who came to campus to interview four seniors this past December. “We were impressed by the candidates. We found them to be very bright people who have a very highly developed sense of critical thinking,” says Gregory Antoniono, a strategic sourcing manager. “They were articulate and engaging.”

### Speeding Up the Process

“We are always looking for talent,” says Shane O’Reilly, WellPoint staff vice president for corporate sourcing and a member of the Thomas Aquinas College Class of 1995. Working out of the company’s Thousand Oaks, Calif. office, Mr. O’Reilly has long conducted recruiting trips at prestigious business schools, both undergraduate and graduate, but experience has led him to expand his company’s outreach to Thomas Aquinas College.



WellPoint’s Shane O’Reilly (’95), Roopa Radhakrishnan, and Gregory Antoniono

“When our new hires come in, we have to orient them to what we do,” says Mr. O’Reilly. “Choosing the right candidate is about speeding up that process,” because those who are better prepared will acclimate more quickly to the demands of the job. Thus, he explains, his “off-the-wall” questions to applicants about ping-pong balls and coffee shops. “It’s not about having a specific answer. It’s about how they handle an unexpected question in a pressure situation, and seeing how they respond. That’s what the real world is like.”

At the College, he says, students learn to identify a problem, discern a solution, and then explain that solution to others. “What is different about the students here is their ability to listen and come up with thoughtful answers,” he says. “You can tell that they are used to being intellectually challenged in a group setting.”

### Alumni Seeking Alumni

Upon graduating from the College in 1995, Mr. O’Reilly worked in a number of business jobs before coming to WellPoint in 2003. His success there, he says, as well as that of a WellPoint colleague and fellow alumnus, Michael Hodgins (’08), gave him a greater appreciation of how valuable the College’s academic program can be in equipping workers for an idea-driven economy. “From day one as a student at the College, thinking my way through Euclid, the program had an impact on me. It forced me to think logically about every step, and that ability is something that translates directly into the business world. It is far more important than knowing the latest theory relative to macro- or microeconomics.”

He also found that the give and take of the College’s Socratic discussions was an excellent rehearsal for the

workplace. “That whole exchange of views is very similar to what ends up happening in business meetings and conference calls,” he says. “You find yourself leading groups in those sessions, trying to take them in a certain direction. The interplay you get in the classrooms at the College definitely prepares you for that.”

After soliciting résumés from Mark Kretschmer, director of the College’s Office of Career Advisement, Mr. O’Reilly selected four seniors to participate in interviews that he and two colleagues conducted on campus. The interviews ran slightly less than an hour each.

### The Hire

“Even though our academic program is ordered toward wisdom, and not training for any particular line of work per se, recruiters always seem pleased with our students,” says Mr. Kretschmer. “In a tight job market where employers’ needs are constantly changing, companies value candidates who are intellectually nimble, who can quickly learn new skills as needed.”

The College’s students “all seem very bright and analytical, which is a huge part of the job,” says Roopa Radhakrishnan, a WellPoint business process consultant, adding that “their communication style is great.” The four Thomas Aquinas College students who interviewed for WellPoint this year were among scores from numerous colleges and universities, all vying for just three openings — one of which will be filled by a member of the Thomas Aquinas College Class of 2012.

After multiple rounds of follow-up interviews and testing, WellPoint has offered a position to Kayla Kermode, a senior from Maple City, Mich. Miss Kermode will join the company after her graduation in May.



## College Honors Fr. Buckley with Fund, San Francisco Reception

On July 31, 2012, College Chaplain Rev. Cornelius M. Buckley, S.J., will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. The author of the book *When Jesuits Were Giants*, Fr. Buckley is himself a “giant” to those who have had the privilege of knowing him during his five decades of service to Christ and the Church. A widely published writer with advanced degrees in history and philosophy from Gonzaga University and the University of Paris, Sorbonne, Fr. Buckley has devoted most of his life to young Catholics.

He has served at various educational institutions as a teacher, an administrator, a chaplain, and a friend. One can hear the echo of his footsteps in the halls of the University of Santa Clara, Gonzaga University, St. Ignatius High School, and the University of San Francisco. Since 2004 he has served with distinction as Thomas Aquinas College’s head chaplain and assistant dean for religious affairs. He is an integral part of the lives of the students, offering them the sacraments and spiritual direction — and always with a lively wit.

“I have been very happy here,” says Fr. Buckley. “It is the crowning point of my career, you could say, to be at Thomas Aquinas College.”

### *The Fr. Buckley Scholarship Fund*

In recognition of Fr. Buckley’s abiding love for young people and his care for them, his friends and family decided to create the Fr. Buckley Scholarship Fund. Contributions to the fund will be distributed annually to support the more than 70 percent of Thomas Aquinas College students who are in need of financial assistance. In this way, the Fr. Buckley Scholarship Fund will help young people for many years to come, just as Fr. Buckley has aided young people throughout his half-century in the priesthood.

“Fr. Buckley has touched so many lives and brought so many young people closer to Christ,” says Dr. Paul J. O’Reilly, the College’s vice president for development. “His friends and family could think of no better way to celebrate his golden jubilee than to establish a scholarship that will continue to bless those to whom he has so completely devoted himself throughout his ministry.”

Although characteristically humble about accepting the honor, Fr. Buckley is hopeful that the fund will enable more young people to receive a strong formation and an authentically Catholic education. “If this helps raise money for needy students to attend the College, then let’s do it,” he



says. “The important thing is that we find ways to make a quality Catholic education available to those who seek it.”

To honor Fr. Buckley and to add to his legacy, please make a donation to the Fr. Buckley Scholarship Fund. Checks may be made payable to Thomas Aquinas College, 10,000 Ojai Rd., Santa Paula, CA 93060. To contribute online, please see [thomasaquinas.edu/buckleyfund](http://thomasaquinas.edu/buckleyfund). Or, for further information, please contact Dr. O’Reilly at 805-421-5974 or [poreilly@thomasaquinas.edu](mailto:poreilly@thomasaquinas.edu).

### *An Evening with Fr. Buckley*

To commemorate Fr. Buckley’s Golden Jubilee, the College will host a reception for many of his friends and admirers in his home city of San Francisco. “There are so many people who love Fr. Buckley and are grateful for the influence he has been in their lives,” says Dr. O’Reilly. “This seemed like a wonderful opportunity to let them say thanks.” The evening will include a reception, a buffet dinner, and a program featuring testimonials about Fr. Buckley, as well as a few words from the guest of honor himself.

“We look forward to celebrating Fr. Buckley’s 50 years of priesthood,” says Dr. O’Reilly. “His life offers all who know him a remarkable example of the virtues of obedience, charity, fidelity, and humility. It is marked by that joy that is a sure sign of the true believer.”

The San Francisco reception will take place on March 14, but space is limited. Those interested in attending should contact the College by e-mail at [events@thomasaquinas.edu](mailto:events@thomasaquinas.edu) for more information.

## An Interview with Fr. Buckley

**What was your experience working with young people before you came to Thomas Aquinas College?**

I have worked with young people a long time. Before I was ordained I taught at St. Ignatius High School in San Francisco, and I was very much involved with young people then. After my ordination I was at the University of Santa Clara for three years, and eventually I ended up at the University of San Francisco. I was there for 25 years, and I lived in a dorm at both the University of Santa Clara and at the University of San Francisco, and I taught at both those places.

**Why did you come to Thomas Aquinas College?**

I left the University of San Francisco in 1998, and I worked for Tom Monahan of Domino’s Pizza for three years, when he was just starting Ave Maria University. Then my order’s provincial brought me back and put me at Santa Teresita Hospital in Duarte, Calif. That was a very fortunate place to be, and I liked it very much, but the hospital soon collapsed financially. In 2004 the College’s then-president, Tom Dillon, asked me to come up and to be interviewed here. He told me that he had written to my provincial, and the provincial had said it would be all right to come here. So here I am.

“I have been very happy here — very, very happy. It is the crowning point of my career, you could say, to be at Thomas Aquinas College.”

When I was hired, it looked like I would be here for only two years because, well, I was nearing middle age, but I have stayed on ever since. I am still waiting for a pink slip in my box. I can never tell when it will come! But I have been very happy here — very, very happy. It is the crowning point of my career, you could say, to be at Thomas Aquinas College.

**Why so?**

Thomas Aquinas College is everything I think that a good college should be. It is what people *dream* a good college should be. First of all are its students, who are wonderful. Then there is the curriculum, the vision of the school. It is not only a vision that is in words, but it is a vision that

## Standing on the Shoulders of Priestly “Giants” Remembering Fr. Buckley’s Late Predecessors at Thomas Aquinas College

### *Rev. Harry Marchosky*

Born to Jewish parents in Panama, Harry Marchosky was an unlikely Catholic priest. As a young man he enrolled at the University of Chicago with plans to study accounting, but then discovered philosophy through Mortimer Adler and Robert Hutchins’ great books program. In short order he became a Catholic and eventually completed his studies at the Université Laval in Quebec, alma mater of several of Thomas Aquinas College’s founders. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Quebec in 1952.

Nearly two decades later Fr. Marchosky received permission to relocate to Southern California so he could care for his ill mother. Through his Laval connections he had come to know the College’s founders and was excited about their vision. “I was still living up in Northern California, and I would come down for days at a time and stay with Fr. Marchowski,” recalls Vice President for Finance and Administration Peter L. DeLuca. “He would drive me all over Southern California in his Peugeot to meet with prospective students and donors.”

An accomplished scholar who spoke six languages,

Fr. Marchosky was an original member of the teaching faculty until 1973. His last earthly words before dying in 2007 were, “I love Our Lady so much. I want to go home.”

### *Rev. Thomas A. McGovern, S.J.*

A fellow Laval graduate, Fr. McGovern previously taught at Le Moyne College in New York before coming to Thomas Aquinas College in early 1972. He served as a member of the faculty and, later, the Board of Governors until his death in 1985. The following year he posthumously received the College’s highest honor, the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion.

Alumni from the early years remember well Fr. McGovern’s meticulously crafted and edifying sermons. To this day he remains a perennial presence on campus. Each fall at the freshman orientation the College’s incoming students read one of his essays, “Liberal Education and Freedom.”



His insightful words help to provide them with the understanding that will carry them through their next four years of learning:

The natural effect [of the College’s program] is not good accountants, or good carpenters, or good musicians, but good men. Such education tends to be regarded as impractical, but the fact is that a people cannot long neglect the type of questions it raises and answers except at that people’s own peril, for such matters are basic to the good life.

### *Rev. Msgr. John Gallagher*

With his Irish brogue, biretta, and twinkling eyes, Msgr. Gallagher “reminded you of Barry Fitzgerald playing a priest,” recalls Mr. DeLuca. Formerly the pastor of a large San Diego parish, Msgr. Gallagher was retired and conducting research in his area of specialty, canon law, at The Catholic University of America when asked to come to Thomas Aquinas College in 1974.

“There was an electrical fire in his trailer one night at about 2 a.m.,” recalls Mr. DeLuca. “People were horrified.



# ood: Rev. Cornelius M. Buckley, S.J.

is implemented — its emphasis on the intellectual life and the spiritual life, the social life, the commitment that the students give to their studies and to their faith and to what they want to do in the future. Being here has been a wonderful experience.

## What is it that you most enjoy about working with the students?

It is a stimulus to be around these students, spiritually first of all. They go to Mass regularly. They have night prayers in the dorm. We have confessions all the time — I think there are 10 times a day when confessions are scheduled. And besides that people come to me constantly for confession, and that is a great inspiration. That is extraordinary. I spend a lot of time with the students. I sit with them at lunch and enjoy that very much. They are very entertaining! I like to listen to their insights, hear about what they have done during the day, and so forth.

## What is your impression of the Catholic character of the College?

Catholic character is, first of all, built on Scripture, and these young people take Scripture very seriously. It is also based on the Catholic character and the doctrines of the Catholic Church, but most of all it is experienced, and it is manifested in the lives that our students live. They truly live the life of the spirit, and that is not just an intellectual conviction, although that is there, of course. It is also lived-out, everyday Catholicism. It is a kind of preview of the next life. I think the next life really begins right now, and we see that here.

## Is that why so many vocations come out of the College?

If you mean vocations to the religious life, yes, they do, but I think all of these students have a vocation. We all have a vocation because of our baptism, and everyone has a special vocation, called by the Lord Himself. Most of these students have a vocation to be good laywomen and laymen. And as we see in our alumni, they perform that; they function in that way. For the sake of our future it is important to have lay vocations, but along with that the Lord has given a number of students — about 10 percent of the population of the graduating classes — special vocations to be called either to the priesthood or to the religious life in some way.

## What effect do you think the College has had on the

“Sometimes people think of the College as being conservative, but it often happens in history that the people who are in *advance* of the age are the so-called conservatives, and that is how it works here.”

## Church and society?

Well, the College is only 40 years old, and most of the graduates are just beginning to get into their stride right now. Each year gives more and more promise to the future. We see these extraordinary young men and women graduate and excel in areas you would not even expect. For instance, the other day I went to a student Schubertiade and listened to the musical talent. You would never expect from just walking around that so many of these students are extraordinary musicians, and actors, and they are good on the athletic field, too. They are just extraordinary students. I cannot say it enough.

## What are your thoughts about the Fr. Buckley Scholarship Fund?

It is something that is very pragmatic; that is, if it helps to bring money into the College for student financial aid, then it is a good thing. I think people are more driven by *ideals* than *ideas*, that is the concrete image of an idea. When you talk about just giving to a college, that sometimes is merely an idea, or an abstraction; but when you are talking about giving to a specific purpose, that encourages people to give to that purpose, especially if it is given for the betterment of the students. If it is done under my name or anybody else’s name, that is fine, so long as it helps bring in the resources to make this education possible for our students.

## As the College grows through the years, do you think it will remain true to its mission?

I hope so, and I think so far it gives good indication of doing so because the administrators and the Board of Governors are committed to this school and to the idea of this school. You know, it is ironic because the College has really put into practice the ideals of Vatican II. In Vatican II the laity are given a special emphasis, and

this school was founded by laymen. Sometimes people think of the College as being conservative, but it often happens in history that the people who are in *advance* of the age are the so-called conservatives, and that is how it works here. I think these people are the forerunners of what the Church is trying to be like in the years to come. A lot of new, faithful colleges have been founded in recent years because, unfortunately, some of the older Catholic colleges have not honestly fulfilled their mission. Some do not even pretend to maintain a Catholic mission any more. So I think places like this are way in advance.

## How would you describe your life as a chaplain at the College?

Every day brings something great. I am very, very happy here, and I think every day gets better. Not only in the eschatological sense — every day you get closer to the Resurrection, your own death and burial, and seeing the Lord face to face — but there are so many other faces that you get to see in the meantime that are previews of that great awakening. I wake up every morning and thank God for the opportunity to have another day here. I hope it lasts a long time.

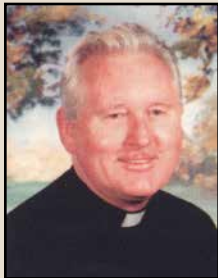


They rushed up there thinking he was inside. There was a big crowd around the trailer, and in the back of the crowd was Msgr. Gallagher himself, who had been praying in the Chapel in the middle of the night. That was typical. He was a very ascetic and holy man.”

Msgr. Gallagher served at the College until being diagnosed with Alzheimer’s Disease in 1990. He passed away more than a decade later in 2001.

## Rev. Thomas Conn, S.J.

Raised in Pasadena, Calif., Fr. Conn spent most of his adult life as a missionary in Mexico before becoming a chaplain at Thomas Aquinas College in 1992. It was Fr. Conn who introduced his brother James, now a member of the Board of Governors, to the College. Tragically, in 1997 Fr. Conn was diagnosed with brain cancer, and he died shortly thereafter. “He was very beloved in this community,” notes Mr. DeLuca, and the affection was



mutual. One of the priest’s brothers once remarked that, in coming to Thomas Aquinas College, Fr. Conn was “the first Jesuit to have gone to Heaven before he died.”

Fr. Conn said as much in a reflection he penned about the College’s students in 1996:

Evening rosaries in the dormitories are well attended and form a special bond of unity. Many students make the use of weekly confessions — even with three chaplains, we are extremely busy during the school year! Just as important is the charity which students show for one another. They really pray and care for each other, and support one another in doing the right thing. As a result, they seem to really enjoy their lives here, and have wonderful friendships which are based on mutual love of God and pursuit of virtue.

As I’ve told many of my friends, the zeal of our students reminds me of my seminary days. Their zeal and devotion inspire me to strive to do my best for them. I see in them a real hope for the Church in the coming Millennium.

In 1998, the College posthumously awarded Fr. Conn with the Medallion of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

## Rev. Wilfred Borden, O.M.I.

A native of Nova Scotia, Fr. Borden joined the Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1956 and was ordained to the priesthood in 1963. He spent his entire active priestly life in Catholic education, ministering to young people at both the secondary and undergraduate levels. Prior to coming to the College in 1992, he served for 10 years as rector of Pangborn Hall at the University of Notre Dame, where he was also chaplain to the ice-hockey team. The College was blessed to have Fr. Borden for nearly 15 years until he suffered a debilitating stroke in the fall of 2006. He died three years later.

Famous for his hospitality, his craftsmanship, his love of sports, and his great care for the Stations of the Cross behind his campus home in Loyola Hall, Fr. Borden was a favorite of students and faculty alike. Indeed, many alumni attribute their conversion to the Catholic faith to Fr. Borden’s guidance, and numerous alumni priests and religious credit him with inspiring and nurturing their vocations through his priestly example and spiritual direction.





# Alumni Update: Graduate Returns as New Chaplain

## Rev. Hildebrand Garceau, O. Praem. ('78)

“My best memories of Thomas Aquinas College were being in the tutorials, learning through the great books, and the spiritual life,” recalls Rev. Hildebrand Garceau, O. Praem. ('78). “Our chaplains back then, Rev. Thomas McGovern, S.J., and Msgr. John Gallagher, were both very fine spiritual guides. It was through their example, and also through the prayer life we had at the College, that I developed my vocation.”

Returning to campus in October as the College’s newest chaplain, Fr. Hildebrand now has the opportunity to be the same sort of mentor and influence that the late Fr. McGovern and Msgr. Gallagher were when he was a student at the College more than 30 years ago. With Fr. Hildebrand joining Rev. Cornelius Buckley, S.J., and Rev. Paul Raftery, O.P., the College is now blessed to have three chaplains serving the spiritual needs of its 350 students, offering four Masses and numerous opportunities for confession each day.

### Taking a Chance

A native of Connecticut, Jim Garceau, as he was known then, moved to Jackson, Wyo., in 1973, where he worked at Grand Teton National Park. During that time he came to know the Rev. Charles Taylor, J.C.D., a close friend of the College’s founding president, Dr. Ronald P. McArthur. “Fr. Taylor told me that in order to get into Catholic education, which was my interest at the time, I had to go this college in Southern California,” Fr. Hildebrand remarks. “He was pretty convincing, so I decided to take a chance.”

Despite having already completed some undergraduate coursework elsewhere, Jim entered the College as a 24-year-old freshman in 1974. Four years later, he would

be one of 19 members of the College’s fourth graduating class. For one year after graduation, he taught at the Buckley School in Sherman Oaks, Calif., before discerning a vocation to the priesthood and joining the religious community of the Canons Regular of the Immaculate Conception. He attended Mt. Angel Seminary in Oregon and was ordained to the priesthood in 1984 by Timothy Cardinal Manning, then the Archbishop of Los Angeles.

After two decades with the Canons Fr. Garceau discerned a calling to a more monastic vocation, and in 2003 received permission to transfer to the Order of the Norbertine Fathers at St. Michael’s Abbey in Orange County, Calif. Upon entering the Norbertines he received the religious name of Fr. Hildebrand.

In 2004 Fr. Hildebrand was appointed associate pastor, and in 2005, pastor, of St. John the Baptist Church in Costa Mesa, Calif., a 3,000-family parish where Mass is offered in four languages: English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Latin. Under his leadership, St. John’s placed a special emphasis on the Sacrament of Penance, offering not just the usual one hour for confession on Saturdays, but confessions every Thursday evening, and Sundays during the 12:30 p.m. Latin Mass. The church additionally operated a Eucharistic chapel for perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

### Home Again

Fr. Hildebrand served at St. John the Baptist for seven years, until he moved to the College this past fall. “To me it was a surprise,” he says of his superiors’ request that he return to his alma mater as a chaplain. “But when you are a religious, you don’t ask too many questions besides, ‘When do I go?’” Nonetheless he was delighted



by the prospect.

“I have always considered the College to be a milestone in my human development because it really helped to form my way of thinking and strengthen my faith,” he says. “I hope to give back to the College at least a little bit of what it has given to me.”

Being an alumnus, Fr. Hildebrand says, helps him in his new role as a College chaplain. “I know what the students are going through, the studies, and the challenges that come with the program. I also have some knowledge of the spiritual formation that the College offers,” he notes. “My goal is to help the students spiritually and as much as they need. I hope to serve them, and I pray that I will be able to be an effective minister to their spiritual needs and also to serve the liturgical needs of the College at large.”

Like the fine Thomas Aquinas College chaplains that have preceded him, Fr. Hildebrand views his role and mission at the College as straightforward. “As Pope Benedict XVI said when he first became pope, I am a servant of the Lord,” he explains. “My time here is all about helping the students work toward greater holiness.”

## Constantly Learning continued from page 1

they are themselves learners. There is a kind of humility that is necessary in the intellectual life. Nobody here claims to be a wise man in the full sense of the word. We are lovers of wisdom, so we pursue it, in humility, and that becomes evident to the students when they see that we learn in class and we consider ourselves also to be students, just at a more advanced state of knowing these matters. We learn more and more by doing the program. That encourages the students; it sets a good example about the right attitude about the intellectual life. There is a danger of thinking that you know it all and you have it all under your belt — “Just listen to me and I’ll tell you the way it is” — there’s a danger in that.

We have a tremendous faculty, and we understand the nature of the program well. We have members with an expertise in every part of the program. So if you, as a tutor, are doing something new and you have questions about it, there are people you can go to for help on the faculty. We also have the summer tutor development program, where tutors who are experts at various parts of the program teach those who want to learn those parts of the program.

### Does the Catholicity of the College aid the integration of its curriculum, and by extension, aid the tutors who teach across the curriculum?

Yes. Our whole program is ordered to studying the highest wisdom, and the highest wisdom is found in theology, which we consider to be the queen of all the sciences. All the other sciences are the handmaids to theology. That is the principle of unity of the whole program. All of the parts of the program are ordered to a whole that finally makes it possible for us to study theology in the best way possible.

In modern times scientists are considered the wise men. Philosophy is not seen to be a realm where one can actually arrive at truth. It is just your private opinion; it is what you think. It seems to me that if you have Catholic education and you think there is a teaching church, you obviously think that there is a higher truth than can be

achieved by natural science. I think the bridge between theology and natural science is philosophy. It is what allows us to see how the truths that we have by faith fit with the truths that we come to by natural reason. Natural philosophy and metaphysics form the bridge between what we would call the natural sciences as they are understood now and what we know by Revelation. St. Thomas, our patron, was kind of an exemplar in showing how those things fit together.

### Now that you have taught the whole program, do you intend to start it all over again, or do you want to remain more focused on a few particular areas?

Well, I remember Dr. John Neumayr, a founder of the College, once said that the philosophical life is essentially a circular process. You start at the beginning, then you go out and see what follows from those things, and then you get to some kind of terminus, come back, and look at the starting points again, much more deeply. I have seen that myself because I have done certain parts of the program over and over again, and I really do learn more every time.

Because the whole program is ordered toward philos-

ophy and theology, there might be some tendency to rest in those disciplines, but I really enjoy doing other parts of the program, too. I have done freshman science over and over again, and I get something out of it every time. I put that program together, the biology portion of it, yet I still learn from it, and I enjoy working with the students when they wrestle with these things for the first time. I find that very enjoyable.

### What is the most rewarding aspect of your job?

I enjoy seeing the effect this program has on the students. I enjoy seeing the way they learn the material, and I enjoy seeing them wonder about the things that we study and take joy in coming to learn those things. It is also very rewarding to see what they do after they graduate, how successful they are, and the good they are doing for the Church.

We form friendships with our students while they are here, and when we see them again it is great to see friends. I think that is the kind of relationship we have with our students. They really do become our friends, and some become lifelong friends.

6<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL

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AT

SHERWOOD COUNTRY CLUB

Thousand Oaks, California

MONDAY, MAY 21, 2012

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# “The Pope’s Theologian”

## An Interview with Rev. Wojciech Giertych, O.P., Theologian of the Papal Household

*Rev. Wojciech Giertych, O.P., served as the keynote speaker at Thomas Aquinas College’s 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala on September 17, 2011. During the preceding week he stayed on campus, visited several classes, delivered a lecture, and graciously sat for the following interview.*

**Could you say a little about your own history and that of your family?**

I was born in London to Polish parents who had emigrated from Poland after the Second World War. My father had been active in Polish politics before the war. Being anti-communist and Catholic, and being a writer, he knew he would not be able to publish his books in Poland, and in the Stalinist period he probably would have been imprisoned. So they settled in England.

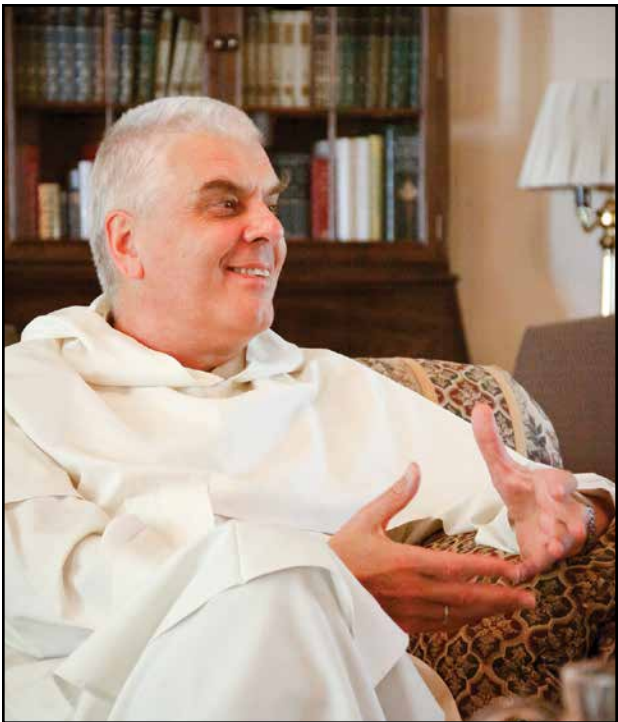
I had a normal education in England in Catholic schools, but there was a strong Polish identity at our home. When I finished high school I decided I wanted to see the real Poland — not the somewhat romanticized Poland that my parents were telling me about. So I went to Poland, which was still suffering under the communist regime. I studied history at the University of Poznań, which was marked, as all universities were, particularly in the humanities, by Marxism. But I had my antidote coming from England and from my family.

During my university years I discovered my vocation and when I graduated, I acquired Polish citizenship and entered into the novitiate of the Polish province. I went through my philosophical and theological formation in the Dominican House of Studies in Kraków. At that time the local archbishop was Cardinal Karol Wojtyła. I was a student there when he was elected Pope. I was ordained in 1981, and over the next several years I went back and forth between Kraków, where I was involved in the formation of our Dominican students and taught moral theology, and Rome, where I earned a doctorate in moral theology at the Angelicum, and where I finally became a professor.

After the fall of communism we had some Dominican students from Ukraine, Russia, Belorussia, Latvia, and Lithuania who studied with us. We also would send some of our Polish Dominican priests to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and the countries of the former Soviet Union. I would visit these former students of mine and so I witnessed the rebirth of Dominican life in that part of the world. Religious orders had basically been abolished in what was the Russian Empire after the insurrections in 1830 and even more so after 1863. Then, after the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 all religions were brutally persecuted. But remnants of the Faith survived, and so with the collapse of communism some vocations to the Catholic priesthood and religious life were being born, although these men were extremely fragile. The Soviet Union disappeared, but the *homo sovieticus* with all the fears and insecurities and lack of basic Christian initiation remained, presenting a formative challenge to the Church.

In 1994 I began teaching at the Angelicum in Rome, and in 1998 the Master of the Dominican Order appointed me to the General Council of the Order of Preachers with the title of the *Socius* (assistant) of the Master of the Order for Central and Eastern Europe. I would travel throughout the region maintaining the link between the newly reestablished Dominican communities and the Master of the Order. After four years I became the *Socius* for the Intellectual Life — a sort of “minister of education” within the Dominican Order. In these years I would see the brethren in Fribourg, Jerusalem, at the Angelicum, Santa Tomas in Manila, and I conducted canonical visitations of various Dominican provinces, including Switzerland, Slovakia, Russia, and Ukraine; and then Canada, West Africa, Jerusalem, and also the province of St. Joseph here in the United States.

I had been a member of the General Council for seven years and towards the end of my term I was hoping to go to Ukraine, when, suddenly, I received a letter from the



Holy See informing me that I had been appointed as the Theologian of the Papal Household.

**Can you describe your work as the Theologian of the Papal Household?**

I review all the speeches that the Holy Father gives, apart from the ones that he writes himself. There is a staff of people who write the discourses for the Pope, and finally I receive the text, and make some suggestions. The discourses, of course, are written by Catholics, but the formulations have to be clear, and sometimes another term may be more appropriate. It is important that the Holy Father does not receive a text which is ambiguous. Of course the Holy Father may change the discourse, and sometimes he does this; but serving him we have to ensure that he is given a text which will not require corrections. I am not, of course, competent in all fields, but with my Thomistic formation, having access to the speculative theology of Aquinas and having taught moral theology, which has been my field, I am expected to be able to critically assess the discourses that will finally be in the hands of the Holy Father.

The Holy See for centuries has always wanted to have a Dominican in this post. This is a sign of respect for St. Thomas Aquinas and an appreciation of the clarity of his thought. It is the Holy See’s experience that it is useful to have somebody at hand who would know Aquinas well and who could help in the process of the formulation of the final text of the papal discourses.

**How did you learn about Thomas Aquinas College?**

Way back, when I was a formator in Poland, I remember finding in an American publication an ad about Thomas Aquinas College. On various other occasions I had heard that there was this college that was traditional in teaching and spirit and devoted to St. Thomas Aquinas. At some stage, when I was already at the Vatican, Dr. Dillon came with his wife to meet me, and I learned more. Since then, I started receiving your newsletter. Out of curiosity I would always read the titles of the senior theses. And hearing about the method of teaching, the tutorial system and about the great books, I was curious. So, when I received the invitation from Dr. McLean, I was happy to come here to see how this teaching method and program function.

**Now that you have seen Thomas Aquinas College, what are your impressions?**

I am impressed by the extremely high standard of the interactions that I saw in the students during the seminars that I attended. I would like to incorporate what you do here into our way of studying in Poland. Seeing this school, which is not a school of theology leading to ordination, but a school which is forming people to be intelligent within the Catholic faith — and seeing its teaching method — is extremely interesting.

There is something typical of Americans, not only here; I see this in the American students in the Angelicum: You Americans are more free than people elsewhere, you are more outspoken. People are not reserved toward somebody who is higher in authority. The meal here with the two elderly professors who were the founding fathers of this college, Dr. McLean, and a few students was an occasion for me to see this. We were talking about theological subjects, and the students fully participated in the conversation. In Eastern Europe they would be timid because the professor is there. What they really think, they would not say because they would be abashed by the presence of somebody whom they respect.

But you Americans, you are direct. You drink Coca-Colas together; it is a cowboy culture! But it means that you have an openness and an intellectual liberty. Your students do not have to struggle through a sort of emotional coat of arms that has been imposed upon them, to free themselves from it and to look for truth. The students focus directly on the truth because it is true — whether within the realm of reason and philosophy, or within the realm of revealed truth. It is the truth that is most important for them.

**When you attended the theology classes and you observed the students trying to understand St. Thomas, did you think they were effective?**

From what I saw and heard, the quality of the debate was much higher than what I have seen among seminarians. The students really fleshed out the underlying philosophy, they understood the terms they were using, and they were trying to grasp, “What do these statements about God really mean?” They have been intellectually equipped.

If you ask a man in the street, “Please read this text,” he will not make heads or tails out of it, whereas these students have been prepared. In class it was obvious that first of all they understood the importance of the issue that was discussed. They saw that this is not something out of the blue, that it is not just a sort of jigsaw puzzle that you can play with or not, but that it concerns something real. The terminology and the concepts which they used have been grasped, and so the students were precise and very clear. They knew what they meant, and this helped them to see more of the light in the mystery ... which remains a mystery. But they want to know, “What can we know of that mystery?” And certainly your students are keen. It was obvious during the seminars and discussions.

“The students focus directly on the truth because it is true — whether within the realm of reason and philosophy, or within the realm of revealed truth. It is the truth that is most important for them.”

I also attended a class on Shakespeare’s *Henry IV*. I had not read the text, but I had read some Shakespeare in my school days more than 40 years ago. When we studied Shakespeare, we focused more on the language. But here the students were well beyond that, and so they were discussing the characters — the games that they were playing, their positions, their underlying ethos, and whether they were true to what they were saying. Basically the seminar was a training in prudence, to see how people act, how they sometimes wear masks and have hidden agendas. So the students were analyzing the characters in the play from the point of view of their moral character and what are they really after. I came out of this thinking: “These are only 20-year-olds, but this exercise will form them for real life.”

*continued on page 10*



About the campus itself, do you have some thoughts?

It is clear that it was built by people of faith. There is a line from Aquinas in his treatise on the New Law that I find pertinent. He says that even the letter of the Gospel will be frustrating if the interior hidden grace of faith is missing. So even if a text of the Gospel is read, if there is a lack of faith both on the part of the reader or the listener, the text will be frustrating. The expression of what we say therefore is always to be tied with faith. And I think that this applies not only to the spoken word but also to the arts — and to architecture.

There is a difference between a functional building, which technically may be well built, and a building that has been



“The dormitories are up on the hill, so the students see the church out of their windows; the church is the focus of the campus. The various buildings were built at different moments, but right from the beginning there was an idea. The church came last, but it was planned first.”

built in such a way that it will be conducive to faith and will grow out of faith. When art serves faith, and is born of faith, it is conducive to prayer.

If you enter a church where people have prayed, which was built by people who prayed and who built it in such a way that it will help in prayer, and you come in and genuflect, being there only for two minutes, during those two minutes you pray. But if you enter a church and it looks like a railway station, even though the light may be interesting as it is coming in from the side, prayer will be more difficult. An architect who may be proficient in all his calculations, but is an atheist, may build a good hospital, or a good railway station, but not necessarily a good church.

It is not easy to build sacred art in such a way that it will be conducive to prayer. But I think you have succeeded in

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this here, using the Hispanic Californian style. The dormitories are up on the hill, so the students see the church out of their windows; the church is the focus of the campus. The various buildings were built at different moments, but right from the beginning there was an idea. The church came last, but it was planned first.

I have lived always in historical buildings — Dominican priories — and when you have a big community, the corridors (arcades) have to be wide. When people bypass you need the space. You need the space when you stroll around the cloister of the priory or go to church. You need

architecture that leads to prayer. This sort of a sacred space is important for the psychic well-being of the religious who live in the community, where there is a mixture of private life and community life.

Here there is that mixture. You have the private rooms of the students in their dormitories, the offices and classrooms, and you have that sort of sacred space in front of the church, with the cloister on one side. Once you have built your remaining buildings and the cloister on the other side, it will be even more like the *Piazza San Pietro*!

In Memoriam  
Matthew J. Wise ('06), 1984 – 2011

“I don’t think I would buy discount skydiving lessons,” Matthew Wise ('06) once quipped. “I’m willing to pay full price.”

When friends recall the life of this young alumnus, it is this quality — his quick wit — that immediately comes to mind. “Matt had an awesome sense of humor,” says Patrick Six ('09). “That was one thing that struck me about him and one thing most people saw; he was just very funny.” On Ash Wednesday, Mr. Wise created the following emoticon for his Facebook status update: + : )

“He was very spiritual as well,” says Mr. Six, remembering the great faith and gentleness that characterized his late friend. This past year the two were roommates in Washington, D.C., where Mr. Six was attending business school at The Catholic University of America and Mr. Wise was in his second year at the George Mason University School of Law.

The two originally met through Mr. Six’s brother, Stephen ('06), who was a classmate of Mr. Wise at Thomas Aquinas College. “Matt was a particularly happy and friendly guy. He really seemed to care about people,” says Stephen. In



his senior year, Mr. Wise chose a thesis topic that was reflective of both his thoughtfulness and his wit: “The Origin, Nature and Proper Use of Money, Stuff, and Things.”

After graduation Mr. Wise taught high school briefly in Northern California before moving to Kansas, where he worked in the insurance business with his four-year roommate from the College, John Heilmann. In 2010 he became a law student at George Mason, where he was a member of the Thomas More Society.

One morning this fall Mr. Wise awoke with symptoms of pneumonia that brought him first to urgent care and then to the emergency room. During his ensuing hospitalization, he suffered an adverse reaction to medication, triggering a 47-day struggle with Acute Respiratory Syndrome that ultimately resulted in his death on November 30, 2011, at the age of 27. He is survived by his loving parents, Mary Susan and Michael Wise, as well as his eight brothers and sisters.

Numerous members of the greater Thomas Aquinas College community attended Mr. Wise’s Requiem Mass of Christian Burial at his family’s parish, St. Mary of the Immaculate Conception Church in Fredericksburg, Md., including President Michael F. McLean. Four of Matthew’s classmates — Mr. Heilmann, Joel Moore ('06), Mr. Six, and Henry Zepeda ('06) — joined his four brothers

as pallbearers. Mr. Wise’s younger sister Mary ('12) read the first reading from the Book of Wisdom, “The righteous man, though he die early, will be at rest.”

Even before his death Mr. Wise had brought together many alumni and friends of the College, from across the country, who prayed for him and his family, receiving updates on his status via a

dedicated Facebook page. “The outpouring of love that has accompanied this tragedy is astounding,” says Dr. McLean. “It is abundantly evident how beloved Matthew was, and how very much he is already missed.”

The Wise family has requested that memorial gifts be made in Matthew’s name to Thomas Aquinas College.

IN MEMORIAM  
Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

<b>Dolores Di Paolo</b> December 14, 2010 <i>Friend and Legacy Society Member</i>	<b>Cyril Vodhanel</b> November 1, 2011 <i>Friend and Legacy Society Member</i>
<b>Helen Arnerich</b> January 28, 2011 <i>Friend and Legacy Society Member</i>	<b>Leanne C. Summe</b> November 23, 2011 <i>Mother of Maximilian Summe ('07)</i>
<b>Denise Ann Sullivan</b> August 28, 2011 <i>Friend and Legacy Society Member</i>	<b>Matthew J. Wise ('06)</b> November 30, 2011 <i>Brother of Mary ('12)</i>
<b>Dorothy Osbaldeston</b> September 18, 2011 <i>Mother of Br. Bernard Osbaldeston ('78)</i>	<b>Anthony Cardinal Bevilacqua</b> January 31, 2012 <i>Recipient of Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion and Commencement Speaker, 1998</i>
<b>Eugenija Adomaitiene</b> July 21, 2011 <i>Mother of Vytautas Adomaitis ('96)</i>	<b>Mary B. Schaefer</b> February 12, 2012 <i>Friend</i>



# A Great Apostle for Philosophy

## Why We Study Plato

By Dr. Brian T. Kelly

*Note: The following remarks are adapted from Dean Brian T. Kelly's report to the Board of Governors at its October 21, 2011, meeting. They are part of an ongoing series of talks in which Dr. Kelly explains why the College includes certain authors in its curriculum. The full series is available at [thomasaquinas.edu/whywestudy](http://thomasaquinas.edu/whywestudy).*

Plato was born in Athens in the late 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. He was descended from Athenian monarchy, and as a young man fancied himself destined for a political career. But he met a street philosopher named Socrates and fell into his circle of adherents. This encounter changed his life forever; from then on he committed himself to living out the call to philosophy. He founded the Academy, a school devoted to philosophy through an intense formation in mathematics. His most famous pupil at the Academy was Aristotle.

“This is a wonderful introduction to the life of the mind ...”

Socrates lived philosophy and never made any attempt to write a book. Plato, fortunately, did not follow his example, though he shied away from composing treatises proclaiming his views. Instead he wrote dialogues, mostly featuring Socrates, which record or invent serious and extended discussions on great themes such as justice, courage, the immortality of the soul, etc. These dialogues present timeless questions in a vibrant and dramatic mode. It was as though he recognized the impact that Socrates had on his own life, and he wanted to make it possible for others to have their own encounter with his teacher.

There are many masterpieces in the collection of these dialogues. *The Republic*, *The Symposium*, *Phaedrus*, *Thaetetus*, *Meno* and, of course, the *Apology*. I could name several others, but I want to single out one work, the *Gorgias*. In this dialogue the discussion begins by focusing on rhetoric, but inevitably turns to the question of justice. Socrates always saw this as the great and pressing question. This dialogue presents a marvelous window into the fundamentals of Natural Law. It is especially evident here that Socrates cares deeply about the people with whom he contends, however violently they reject him.

These dialogues continue to challenge modern readers and awaken in them a sense that reason matters and should govern their actions. Plato's encounter with Socrates stirred in him the seeds of his philosophic vocation. Many of today's influential Catholic thinkers would freely admit that the choice to pursue the true, the good, and the beautiful was fundamentally effected by their own encounter with Socrates in the dialogues of Plato. Thomas Aquinas College myth and lore has it that founding president Dr. Ronald P. McArthur turned to philosophy under



the influence of this great character.

If this story is true then Thomas Aquinas College would probably not exist without Plato. But that is fine with us; we do not want to exist without Plato! Our students read Plato in every year of the program in five different courses. He is the first author our students read in Philosophy and the last author they read in Seminar.

### An Introduction to Philosophy

Why is Plato featured so prominently in the initial stages of our philosophy sequence? Are we not Thomistic and therefore Aristotelian? Should we not give pride of place to Aristotle rather than to Plato, who represents a fundamental alternative to the Aristotelian view of reality?

Late Thomas Aquinas College founder Marcus A. Berquist addressed this question saying that these dialogues “are intended as an introduction to philosophy ... through the representations and arguments in these dialogues, one is made explicitly aware of the supreme good of searching for and living by the truth, and of coming to true knowledge rather than being satisfied with plausible opinions.”

In these works we encounter true philosophical discourse. In these discussions Socrates leads his interlocutors, by way of questions, to see the truth lying hidden in their own opinions. They want to say that justice is the advantage of the stronger, but he leads them to see that when the stronger man takes advantage of the weaker man he is actually harming himself. They want to say that happiness consists in continually satisfying sensual appetites, but he leads them to see that such license will only make them wretched. What is remarkable is that he leads them to see that their own views compel them to these conclusions. He asks them little questions that produce big distinctions. By their own answers they refute themselves. Sadly, it is rare that they accept their self-refutation with the appropriate graciousness.



Raphael's School of Athens

You can see that this is a wonderful introduction to the life of the mind, where we have to step back from rhetoric and our own desires, and seek the answers to the great questions by building up from little questions and proceeding by baby steps. It is a very appropriate introduction to the life ordered to truth, in that it presents quite powerfully the need to let go of our pride. To fully submit to truth we must reject all egoism. When the argument shows us we are wrong we must be prepared to humbly admit our error. Humanly speaking this is difficult, and it is helpful to see how wrong Socrates' interlocutors are, and how foolish they appear, when they refuse to grant that they have erred.

The sequence of dialogues read at the beginning of freshman year ends with an account of Socrates' trial, imprisonment, and execution. Here we learn that Socrates is not living the life of dialectic for the sake of fame or attention. He is so committed to reason that he is prepared to die rather than depart in any particular from what reason tells him is the just way. He lived as something of a public conscience, arguing with his fellow citizens that they should care more about virtue than about money, or power, or any other passing good. He asked people what they understood, and then examined their claim to see if they really knew what they thought they knew. Almost universally he showed that what was proclaimed as knowledge was actually on much shakier ground.

In showing his fellow Athenians that their “knowledge” was really a kind of ignorance, and that they were committed to vain pursuits, he grew very unpopular. With hindsight his execution on trumped-up charges appears inevitable.

After his conviction Socrates' friends arranged to buy his way to safety in exile. But Socrates refused to cooperate since it would undermine the laws of the city. Even though his sentence was manifestly unjust he would do nothing to harm the rule of law. He argued that committing an injustice is much worse than suffering an injustice. He would rather die than depart from the argument.

Plato experienced these things firsthand and was never the same after. It is impossible not to admire Socrates' courage and equanimity; it is hard to resist the courage and conviction of the mar-

tyr. Plato's Socrates is a great apostle for philosophy.

### Aristotelian or Platonist?

But what about the conflict between Aristotle and Plato? Are they not diametrically opposed? Samuel Taylor Coleridge once said that “every man is born an Aristotelian or a Platonist.” This certainly implies a radical difference. Think also of the famous Raphael painting, *The School of Athens*, where Aristotle and Plato stand next to each other; Aristotle turns his hand to the ground while Plato points upwards. Doesn't this also suggest a great divide? If they are so opposed, how can the study of the one appropriately introduce the study of the other?

It is true that there are serious disagreements between the two. Plato thought that all knowledge was recollection, that the soul was imprisoned in the body, that a common or universal name depends on the existence of a separately existing form, etc. Aristotle did find fault with him on these points. But this is to single out the ways that the student surpasses the teacher. There was much that they held in common; for example, that friendship is a precious good, though truth is greater than friendship. And they were indeed friends. Aristotle owed to Plato the deep formation and education that allowed him to penetrate more deeply the mysteries of God and creation. In his *Metaphysics* Aristotle even refers to himself as a Platonist. Although in Raphael's painting they strike different poses, they are still standing side by side and looking to one another.

In Plato's dialogues, and especially in the character of Socrates, we experience philosophical wonder in its burst of youthful vigor and enthusiasm. He attacks the great questions with bravery and hope, though he has trouble settling his mind that he has reached any fixed conclusions. Arguments are unfurled in strikingly dramatic contexts. They are stories at the same time as they are philosophy. The dramatic element makes these works well proportioned to the young.

But youth either burns out or matures. In Aristotle we have Plato's youthfulness brought to a kind of maturity. The dialectic is still there, though not in a dramatic or personal presentation. In Aristotle's treatises the give and take of the argument concludes with an answer; the mind settles. He builds from natural science to metaphysics with a rigorous caution about the limits of each science. There is delight and satisfaction here but not of the youthful, dramatic sort. This would not be an appropriate place to start with the young. They are much better off first encountering in Socrates “the supreme good of searching for and living by the truth.”

As we grow and mature we want to maintain the dreams of our youth; we want to keep alive as much as possible the vision of the child. It is very good to begin with Plato, but it is also important for us to return to him again and again and to be refreshed.





## CAMPUS LIFE



1. The quarterback launches a pass in the fall's annual Turkey bowl ... 2. and the crowd rushes the field! 3. Chaplain Rev. Hildebrand Garceau, O. Praem. ('78) blesses students with a relic of St. Thomas Aquinas during the final-examinations week. 4. The California fall and foliage arrived on campus in early December. 5. Students perform a comedic skit at the Christmas Dance. 6. Daniel Grimm ('76) directs the Thomas Aquinas College Choir at its Advent Concert. 7. Tutor Phillip Wodzinski leads his junior music classes during a late-afternoon performance in the rotunda of St. Thomas Hall.

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

Weekdays	Saturdays	Sundays
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.

\* Schedule may vary; if traveling from afar, please call in advance to confirm.  
The first Mass of each day is offered in the extraordinary form.

### Calendar of Events

St. Thomas Day Lecture.....	March 7
Rev. Lawrence Dewan, O.P., Dominican College “Faith and Reason: Creation and Metaphysics”	
San Francisco Reception in Honor of Fr. Buckley .....	March 14
Lecture — Dr. Bainard Cowan, University of Dallas.....	March 30
“The Novel as Literary Form”	
Easter Recess .....	April 4–11
New York City Reception.....	April 10
Guest Speaker: William McGurn	
Admissions Visits to Colorado and Wisconsin .....	April 23–29
Commencement 2012 .....	May 12
Thomas Aquinas College Golf Classic .....	May 21
High School Summer Program.....	July 22–August 4

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