



THOMAS AQUINAS COLLEGE NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2015

VOLUME 43, ISSUE 1

St. Cecilia Hall

Fritz B. Burns Foundation Awards College Grant for New Lecture & Concert Building

The Fritz B. Burns Foundation of Los Angeles has graciously awarded Thomas Aquinas College one of the largest grants in the College's 44-year-history — \$8.5 million for the construction of a new lecture and concert building, St. Cecilia Hall.

"We are profoundly grateful to the Fritz B. Burns Foundation, which has generously supported the College since our founding, for making what is, by far, its largest contribution to date," says President Michael F. McLean. "We are also delighted to announce the construction of St. Cecilia Hall, which will be a blessing to our students and our friends for many years to come."

Located on the southwest corner of the academic quadrangle, adjacent to St. Gladys Hall and Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel, St. Cecilia Hall will host the biweekly events that make up the College's St. Vincent DePaul Lecture and Concert Series. "Thanks to the Foundation, we will soon have a facility worthy of the excellent speakers and musicians that we regularly bring to campus," says Dr. McLean. "We look forward to making the new building a place of welcome, where friends and neighbors can come to experience a key part of the life of the College."

Heart of the Academic Program

Although Thomas Aquinas College's normal pedagogy is the discussion method, through which students take a



more active role in their learning, the College "has always acknowledged the need for lectures to provide a structured, expert guide through complex topics," says Dr. McLean. "We also think it is important to listen to excellent music, and so the Lecture and Concert Series is a mandatory part of our curriculum."

It was the importance of the Series to the College's mission, says Dr. McLean, that appealed to the Fritz B. Burns Foundation's Board of Directors, who only two years ago contributed \$3.2 million for the construction of St. Gladys Hall. "They also seem to have been impressed by our students' musical talents and artistic performances, such as Gilbert and Sullivan productions, or the Choir's recent performance of Handel's *Messiah*. They are very keen on supporting something that is so integral to the program."

A Fitting Venue

For the last 35 years, the College has had to make do with using its dining hall, St. Joseph Commons, for lectures and concerts. "The Commons has served us well, but it is simply not designed to be an auditorium," remarks Vice President for Finance and Administration Peter L. DeLuca. Lacking air conditioning, the building can be uncomfortably warm, and speakers have to compete with the hum of refrigerators and ice machines emanating from the food-service area. Moreover, the constant need to rearrange the furniture for various events imposes expensive labor costs on the College and wear and tear on its facilities and equipment.

St. Cecilia Hall, by comparison, with its concert-hall acoustics, theatrical lighting, and 678-person stadium seating, will offer an ideal setting for lectures

and concerts. The building will also host the annual Matriculation ceremony and orientation assemblies, dramatic productions, dances, informal musical performances, and academic conferences. (See drawings, pages 6-7.)

In addition to the main auditorium, St. Cecilia Hall will include a discussion room for post-lecture question-and-answer sessions, informal "Tutor Talks," and senior thesis defenses. Its lower level will feature a recreation area and a coffee shop that opens out to a terrace overlooking the future site of the campus tennis courts. "We like that all these student services will now be available so close to the Chapel," says Dr. McLean. "We think that it will help to better integrate the campus and inspire more regular visits to the Blessed Sacrament."

Construction Timeline

The design architect for St. Cecilia Hall is Scott Boydston of Rasmussen and Associates in Ventura, California, who has designed 11 of the permanent buildings on campus. "Between now and the summer we will do construction drawings and obtain all the necessary permits," says Mr. DeLuca. "We hope to start grading by mid-to-late summer and then, six weeks later, begin construction, which will take about 12-13 months." The building should be completed and ready for use in time for the 2016-17 academic year.

St. Cecilia, patroness of music, pray for us!

Remembering a Chaplain and a Friend

Casters, A-1 Self Storage, Make Extraordinary Gift in Honor of Late Chaplain

One day last December, the College's director of gift planning, Tom Susanka, received a telephone call from a longtime, generous benefactor of the College, Terrence Caster of San Diego, California. "Mr. Caster seemed astonished by something he had read in the Fall 2014 Newsletter," Mr. Susanka recalls — namely, that the College must raise \$4 million each year to meet students' financial aid needs. He wanted to help.



He was also astonished that the College has kept tuition and room and board costs so affordably low in comparison with the costs of most other institutions. "May I send my 40 grandchildren to you?" Mr. Caster teased. "What's your average financial aid package?"

Mr. Caster and his wife, Barbara, then revealed their decision to make an extraordinary gift: \$100,000 for financial aid in 2015 with the strong possibility of similar gifts in the coming years.

Monsignor Gallagher

"We were introduced to Thomas Aquinas College back in the 1970s by one of its earliest chaplains, our good friend Msgr. John Gallagher," recalls Mr. Caster.

In 1982 the beloved priest invited the couple to campus to see that year's Commencement Speaker, Bl. Mother Teresa. "Monsignor had a passion for the College and its mission, which he quickly passed on to us," recalls Mr. Caster. "We began supporting the College right away."

The owners of one of California's oldest self-storage companies, A-1 Self Storage, the Casters maintain a family charitable foundation that underwrites more than 80 healthcare, educational, and social-service organizations throughout California, the United States, and the world. In 1978 they became one of the earliest members of the College's then-nascent President's Council, an organization of some 350 benefactors who give at least \$1,000 annually for student scholarships. Nearly four decades later, the Casters are among the Council's longest-serving members, having contributed faithfully to the College ever since.

As 2014 came to an end, Mr. and Mrs. Caster accelerated their giving to Thomas Aquinas College. "When we learned that the College must come up with \$4 million every year to meet the financial aid needs of its students, we decided to deepen our investment," Mr. Caster explains. "We want to help make this unique form of Catholic liberal education available to as many students

as possible." In recognition of the Casters' fidelity, the College now features A-1 Self Storage on a new page on its website that encourages friends to patronize the College's corporate benefactors (thomasaquinas.edu/corporate-benefactors).

Legacy Gift

Planning for their philanthropy to endure even after they have passed away, the Casters are establishing a trust that will continue to make charitable gifts for many years to come. Generously, Mr. and Mrs. Caster have selected Thomas Aquinas College as one of the trust's beneficiaries. Their initial gift of \$100,000 to the College's annual fund is roughly the amount needed to provide financial assistance for 10 students. "We're doing this," says Mr. Caster "to honor Msgr. Gallagher."

Mr. Susanka speculates that Thomas Aquinas College's late chaplain must be pleased. "I think it would delight Monsignor to know that his friends are giving so generously to the College he loved so much," he says. "It is amazing to think that, for years to come, students at the College will benefit from Monsignor's intercession — both in his earthly life and, quite possibly, beyond — as well as from the Casters' philanthropy in his name."

Recalling our Many Blessings and Expressing our Gratitude

President Michael F. McLean’s Remarks at the 2014 Thanksgiving Dinner

Washington’s Thanksgiving Proclamation, which we have heard this evening, and which was written shortly after the conclusion of the war for America’s independence and the formation of a new national government, is remarkable for its faith in God, trust in His providence, and gratitude for all of His benefits.

Noteworthy among these benefits are the “peaceable and rational manner” in which our constitutional government was formed and the “civil and religious liberty with which we are blessed.” Note, too, Washington’s exhortation that we unite in asking God’s “pardon for our national and other transgressions” and His help in promoting “the knowledge and practice of true religion and virtue.”

No less remarkable is Abraham Lincoln’s Thanksgiving Proclamation, promulgated in October, 1863.

This was three months following the battle of Gettysburg, in which 23,000 Union soldiers and between 20,000 and 28,000 Confederate soldiers met their deaths — about 50,000 young soldiers in a three-day period. It was approximately seven months before the Battle of the Wilderness, in which 17,000 more Union soldiers and over 7,000 more Confederate soldiers were killed. The surrender at Appomattox would not take place until April 9, 1865.

And yet in the midst of this, Lincoln proclaimed a national day of thanksgiving. In doing so, he did not forget the suffering and devastation wrought by the war. Like Washington, he called for citizens to offer “humble penitence” to Almighty God for “our national perverseness and disobedience” and “to fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty Hand to heal the wounds of the nation and to restore it as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquility and Union.”

Again like Washington, he looked beyond these afflictions to the nation’s essential goodness and to the great things that lie at its foundation. And so he implored his



fellow citizens to thank God for the peace the country enjoyed with many nations, for the blessings of its natural resources, for the maintenance of public order, and for obedience to its laws. He celebrated its economic vitality — “the plough, the shuttle, the ship, the axe, and the mines,” its expected duration, and the expansion of freedom.

And because these blessings are so constantly enjoyed, he noted our tendency to forget the source from which they come — “the ever watchful providence of Almighty God.” In this Lincoln echoed St. Thomas who, in his commentary on the Lord’s Prayer, says that in that prayer we pray to be free from the sin of ingratitude, which, he says, “is a great evil, since the ungrateful man prides himself on his wealth and fails to acknowledge that he owes all to God ... in order to remove this vice, the Lord says, *Give us our daily bread*, to remind us that all we have comes from God.”

Thanksgiving is a good time to join two of our greatest presidents in recalling our many blessings and expressing our gratitude for them with full hearts.

Like Washington and Lincoln, we should never forget the importance of the Christian faith to our country’s well-being. Like them, we should look beyond our nation’s tribulations and thank God for the underlying soundness of its institutions and the graces of its circumstances; for the abundance we enjoy and for the freedoms we take for granted. We should be grateful, too, that America is one of the few places on earth with the wealth, generosity, and political arrangements necessary for worthy endeavors like Thomas Aquinas College itself to thrive.

It is no accident that the College was founded in America, and that the blessings America provides make possible the education you are receiving; an education which at its core is *Christ-centered* — one which helps you to *think* as adults with Christ and the Church and to *love* as adults with Christ and the Church.

“Thinking with Christ and the Church” means that you are acquiring a robust sense of the harmony between faith and reason which will equip you, in the words of St. Peter, “to be always ready to give a reason for the hope which is in you.”

“It is no accident that the College was founded in America, and that the blessings America provides make possible the education you are receiving.”

It also means that you are developing a robust sense of the natural law, which St. Paul says “is written on our hearts,” and a deep appreciation of the fact that human laws should be framed, and our consciences formed, in harmony with the natural law. And it means that you are receiving a thoroughly Catholic understanding of human happiness, the good life, and moral and political virtue — the elements of the “understanding mind” sought by Solomon in the First Book of Kings.

“Loving with Christ and the Church” means that you are strengthening your sense of the order and beauty of the natural world, a sense encouraged by the study of mathematics and natural science and by the sheer physical beauty of the College’s setting and architecture.

It also means that you are becoming more strongly attracted to good and noble things, an attraction encouraged by your study of music and great literature. And it means that you are growing in fidelity to the two great commandments — love of God and love of neighbor — a fidelity which is a fruit of the study of Sacred Scripture and the fathers and doctors of the Church.

Together with my fellow faculty members and our chaplains, I urge you to do your very best from now until the end of the semester to rejoice in these gifts and to rededicate yourselves to the common good of the College and to what you came here for in the first place — not high grades or A’s on examinations, not the triumph of your own opinions or the esteem of tutors and students, but rather things of far greater worth and enduring importance: deeper relationships with Christ our King and the beginnings of Catholic wisdom and virtue. If you do these things, you will, I think, be preparing yourselves well for whatever God eventually calls you to do and, in gratitude, you will be paying back more than you have received to those who make your lives at the College possible.

2014 Christmas Dinner

Many of the dear friends who have given generously to Thomas Aquinas College and its students over the years gathered in downtown Los Angeles on December 6, 2014, for the annual Christmas Dinner. In keeping with the evening’s theme of gratitude, President Michael F. McLean honored several of the key benefactors who help to make the College possible: Donna Conn and her late husband, Walter, who was a member of the Board of Governors; J. R. and Claire Smeed; and the Fritz B. Burns Foundation, particularly President Rex Rawlinson, Trustees Maureen Rawlinson and Cheryl Robinson, and the late Executive Vice President Ken Skinner.



Photos, clockwise from top left: Vice Chairman of the Board of Governors Dieter and Cecilia Huckestein, President Michael and Lynda McLean, and Lannette and Scott Turicchi, Board Chairman; Vice President Paul O’Reilly and Governor R. James Wensley; Msgr. Sal Pilato, Rev. Marcos Gonzalez, and Richard Grant; Mrs. McLean and Maureen Rawlinson; a performance by members of the Thomas Aquinas College Choir; guests raises their glasses; students lead guests in the singing of several traditional Christmas carols.

In Memoriam

Sir Daniel J. Donohue, 1919–2014

Thomas Aquinas College mourns the death of a dear friend who was one of its earliest and most generous benefactors, Sir Daniel J. Donohue, who died on December 3, 2014.

Sir Daniel, as friends affectionately called him, served for more than 40 years as president and chairman of the Dan Murphy Foundation in Los Angeles, which promotes the very best Catholic initiatives, especially those pertaining to education and religious life. Under Sir Daniel's leadership, the Foundation provided extensive support to inner-city Catholic high schools throughout the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, to programs serving the poor, and to the works of the Church Universal. It was instrumental in the construction of the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels as well as in the founding of the Patrons of the Arts of the Vatican Museums and the Papal Foundation in Philadelphia.



Sir Daniel at the College's 30th Anniversary dinner in 2001

The Foundation has also been steadfast in its support of Thomas Aquinas College, playing a critical role at the time of the College's establishment and in the subsequent four decades. "As president and chairman of the Dan Murphy Foundation, Sir Daniel was principally responsible for the Foundation's generosity to the College," says President Michael F. McLean. "The Foundation contributed to the construction of many buildings, including St. Bernardine of Siena Library and Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel, and it generously supports our annual scholarship fund."



Commencement 1999: The College inducts the Dan Murphy Foundation into the Order of St. Albert the Great (pictured: Sir Daniel and Rosemary with Commencement Speaker Jan Cardinal Schotte and Dr. Dillon).

Man of the Church

Born in 1919 in Newark, New Jersey, Sir Daniel attended Mount St. Mary's College in Los Angeles. He briefly pursued a religious vocation before entering the seminary for the Diocese of San Diego, whereupon he served for three years as the personal assistant to Archbishop Francis Buddy. Yet he ultimately discerned a vocation to the married life and, in 1954, wed Bernardine Murphy. In 1957 he became a founding trustee of the Dan Murphy Foundation, named in honor of his father-in-law, the late Southern California railroad, oil, and cement magnate.

Sir Daniel was a Knight Commander of St. Gregory, Knight Grand Cross of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre, and Knight of the Sovereign Military Order of Malta. For many years he worked closely with the Holy See and with cardinals and bishops around the world. At the request of His Eminence, the late Timothy Cardinal Manning, Bl. Pope Paul VI named Sir Daniel a Gentleman in Waiting to His Holiness the Pope. He also conferred upon him the title "Gentleman of His Holiness," the highest award bestowed on a layman in the Church, and the first such award ever given to an American.

Through the Dan Murphy Foundation, Sir Daniel was one of Thomas Aquinas College's most generous benefactors. The Foundation's annual gifts have been for many years a mainstay of the College's financial aid program, and its Donohue Endowed Scholarship Fund more than sextupled the College's endowment, furnishing scholarships, in perpetuity, for deserving students. The Foundation also provided lead gifts and leadership to spearhead the design and construction of the College's library and Chapel. In 1993 the College awarded Sir Daniel its highest honor, the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion, and in 1999, it inducted the Dan Murphy Foundation into the Order of St. Albert the Great.

"Were it not for the unparalleled generosity of Sir Daniel and the Dan Murphy Foundation, Thomas Aquinas College simply would not exist, let alone thrive



Late College President Thomas E. Dillon presents Sir Daniel with the College's highest honor, the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion, at Commencement 1993.

"Were it not for the unparalleled generosity of Sir Daniel and the Dan Murphy Foundation, Thomas Aquinas College simply would not exist, let alone thrive as it does today. We thank God for this good man's loyal commitment to our shared, noble endeavor to help build souls for Christ."

— Michael F. McLean
President, Thomas Aquinas College

as it does today," says Dr. McLean. "We thank God for this good man's loyal commitment to our shared, noble endeavor to help build souls for Christ."

"Steward of God's Bounty"

On December 16, 2014, friends and mourners filled Los Angeles' Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels, where Sir Daniel's body is now interred, for his funeral Mass. The Archdiocese' archivist emeritus, Msgr. Francis J. Weber, delivered the homily. "While most people spend their lifetime taking," he observed, "Daniel spent his giving away. He always felt that he was only a steward of God's bounty."

In the eulogy that followed the Mass, the Dan Murphy Foundation's current president, Richard Grant, spoke of the breadth of Sir Daniel's philanthropy and, in particular, his dedication to the College. "Catholic education was at the top of his agenda as president of the Dan Murphy Foundation," said Mr. Grant. "Visits to Thomas Aquinas College were gratifying for Sir Daniel, because the College epitomized his idea of a Catholic, liberal education steeped in the philosophical tenets of our faith."

Sir Daniel is survived by his sister, Rosemary E. Donohue, who is an emerita member of the College's Board of Governors, and his nieces, Julie Donohue Schwartz and Rosemary Donohue. "We thank God for the life and work of Sir Daniel," remarked Dr. McLean. "We encourage all to join us in praying for the repose of his soul."

At 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, March 7, 2015 — the sixth anniversary of the Dedication of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel (and an on-campus solemn-



Sir Daniel and his sister, Rosemary E. Donohue, at the College's 25th Anniversary dinner in 1996



Sir Daniel and Dr. Dillon check progress on the construction of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel in 2007.

nity) — the College's chaplains will offer a memorial Mass for Sir Daniel. "We will pray for our friend and benefactor in the Chapel that he played such an instrumental role in helping to design and build," said Dr. McLean. "We invite all who are in the area to join us."

College Update

Recent Events and Happenings

College to Challenge HHS Ruling

On November 14, 2014, the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit denied Thomas Aquinas College's challenge to the HHS contraceptive mandate. In its ruling, the Court sided with the government's argument that the latest "accommodation" to the mandate — which requires Catholic employers to facilitate the availability of free contraceptives, abortifacients, and sterilization services to their employees — is sufficient to ward off religious-freedom objections.

Yet the revised accommodation "does not address the College's concerns," says President Michael F. McLean. "The College's notification would still be the 'trigger' for the provision of the objectionable coverage, and the College would still be cooperating in the provision of coverage for morally objectionable procedures and medications." As such, the College intends to continue its legal effort against the HHS Mandate. "We will be appealing the ruling, even to the United States Supreme Court, if necessary," says Dr. McLean. "We look forward to vindicating our religious liberty rights there."

Handel's Messiah

At the end of the last semester, the Thomas Aquinas College Choir performed Handel's *Messiah* at its annual Advent Concert. Although most productions of this lengthy oratorio are abridged, the choir performed the work in its entirety — from the Old Testament prophecies of Christ through His death, resurrection, and glorification in Heaven. The performance, under the direction of Daniel Grimm ('76) and accompanied by a student orchestra, earned a standing ovation from the packed audience of students, faculty members, and guests in St. Joseph Commons. A video of the "For unto us a Child is Born" chorus is available via the College's website, as is complete audio of the concert, at thomasaquinas.edu/messiah14.



Law School Offers Free Tuition to Seniors

Thomas Monaghan, the onetime owner of Domino's Pizza and the founder of Ave Maria University, visited Thomas Aquinas College on October 29, 2014, to make an extraordinary offer to members of the Senior Class: free tuition at the Ave Maria School of Law for all three years of their legal education.

The offer is part of Mr. Monaghan's effort to make Ave Maria the preferred law school for the nation's top Catholic lawyers. "We are planning on giving a full ride next fall to 50 students, primarily students from *Newman Guide* schools," he said. "And I would love to have all 50 come from *this* school, because I think it's the finest Catholic school in the country, and you guys have the perfect background for law school." To take advantage of the offer, students would first need to gain admission to Ave Maria and meet all the necessary requirements.



At a lunchtime gathering complete with Domino's Pizza, Mr. Monaghan discussed the details of his generous offer with some 40 students. "Everywhere I go, when I'm asked about Catholic higher education, I always mention TAC because I think it's the best Catholic college in the country," he said. He then quickly added, "Now the best Catholic *university* in the country is Ave Maria!"

Ave Maria is one of several universities from across the country to send representatives to the College to speak about their graduate offerings this year. "One of the many blessings of a liberal education is that our alumni are prepared to pursue nearly any line of work or studies," says Director of Career Services Mark Kretschmer. "As such, we welcome recruiters who represent a wide array of schools and disciplines, so that our students can get a sense of the range of opportunities available to them, and then choose the one that suits them best."

On the Family & the Synod

On the final day of last fall's Synod on the Family, the Vatican's official newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, published an essay about the Synod's purpose — and its challenges — by Rev. Sebastian Walshe, O.Praem. ('94). A professor of philosophy at St. Michael's Abbey Seminary in Silverado, California, Fr. Sebastian argued that, "The stakes are high," for the Synod. "Unless modern man can recapture the meaning which God has written into the natural human family, the result will be ignorance and error, indifference and animosity, toward the entire supernatural order."

The bishops, Fr. Sebastian continued, are "striving to interpret to the world the supernatural significance of the natural family" — a task that is treacherous, but essential, for "we cannot know God, we cannot love Him, without

knowing and loving the natural human family." The full column is available via a link on the Thomas Aquinas College website at thomasaquinas.edu/synod14.

D.C. Regents Host Fr. Schall at Nunciature ...

At an October gathering at the Apostolic Nunciature to the United States, Thomas Aquinas College's Washington, D.C., Board of Regents hosted a lecture by the acclaimed Jesuit teacher, writer, and philosopher, Rev. James V. Schall, S.J. An emeritus professor of political philosophy at Georgetown University, Fr. Schall had kind words for the College, calling it "the best school in the country in its own genre," and noting that it is "a place that I have great respect for." He then proceeded to deliver a lecture entitled, "On Being Roman Catholic," the subject of which, he said, is, "the great intellectual adventure of mankind." The Faith, Fr. Schall continued, "gives full credit to reason and to what it can affirm by human powers, but it is also aware that the fall and the consequences of sin are present among us." A transcript of his lecture is available via the College's website at thomasaquinas.edu/father-schall.

... and O.C. Regents Host Seminar at Cathedral

Just prior to Thanksgiving, the College's Orange County Board of Regents hosted a seminar and reception for friends of the College, both new and old, at the Christ Cathedral in Garden Grove, California. Some 50 participants, including alumni, parents of current students, and other guests, met in the Cathedral's Cultural Center to discuss the day's theme, "The Wisdom of Genesis."

To accommodate the large number of attendees, the group broke into two sections, both of which examined the first three chapters of Genesis and St. Augustine's Commentary on Creation. Leading the discussions were the College's president, Dr. Michael F. McLean, and Vice President Paul J. O'Reilly. The conversation focused on the biblical account of the origin and order of the natural world, as well as the meanings and implications of that account.

"It was wonderful to contemplate the mysteries of Creation, and to consider what Genesis tells us about the God Who made us and Who loves us," says Director of Development Robert Bagdazian. "We are grateful to Christ Cathedral for providing us with such a fine setting for our seminar, and we are grateful to the Orange County Board of Regents for hosting a truly fruitful and engaging event. We hope to do this again soon!"

College Receives "Outstanding Achievement" Award for Website

Three years after its launch, the Thomas Aquinas College website (thomasaquinas.edu) has received a prestigious Interactive Media Award for Outstanding Achievement. Created by the Interactive Media Council (IMC), the Interactive Media Awards exist "to recognize the highest standards of excellence in website design and development."

Out of a possible 100 points in each category, IMC's judges awarded the College's site with scores of 98 for content, 100 for feature functionality, 91 for usability, and 96 for standards compliance — resulting in a total score of 475 out of 500 points, or 95 percent. "We are gratified to receive the IMC's recognition because it confirms what we have long hoped and believed, namely, that our site is making it easier for people to learn about and interact with the College," says Director of College Relations Anne S. Forsyth. "We view the site as a wonderful way to help share and spread



the College's mission of Catholic liberal education."

Development of the current website began in 2010, thanks to the generosity of Germaine and James Wensley, then Chairman of the College's Board of Governors, who donated the funds for its construction. Mrs. Forsyth then assembled a project team consisting of members of the Development, Admissions, Alumni, Business, Financial Aid, and Information Technology departments, which conducted a nationwide search of Internet professionals to design and build the site. Working closely with R. Scott Turicchi, president of j2 Global Communications and the Board's current chairman, the committee ultimately opted for the services of a local firm, Wacky Puppy Design in Ojai, California.

"Wacky Puppy's founder and creative director, Alison Bradley, did a fabulous job of creating a highly usable site that

is in keeping with the College's Catholic identity and classical style," says Mrs. Forsyth. "And her associate, Andy Gilman, who holds a master of arts degree from St. John's College, brought to the table a strong understanding of liberal education, what distinguishes the College's approach to it, and how that could best be expressed online." The two worked closely with the College and an international team of programmers to design and build the site, which Communications Manager Chris Weinkopf edits, and Network Administrator Patrick Nichols maintains.

"The result of this collective effort has been a truly beautiful, highly functional site," says Mrs. Forsyth. In addition to offering a comprehensive account of the College's mission, history, and curriculum, the site includes rich content about the day-to-day life of the community. Among its regular features are news stories, photo slideshows from campus events, and audio and video from lectures and interviews with Church

dignitaries. Monthly e-mail updates about the site's newest contents are available via the College E-Letter (thomasaquinas.edu/subscribe).

Since the website's formal launch on July 21, 2011, traffic has increased by more than 500 percent and online giving has more than doubled. "I am delighted that the site has been so supportive to the College's communications efforts," says Ms. Bradley. "We work with many clients, but none approach Thomas Aquinas College's dedication and commitment to communicating its ongoing mission. We may have created a nice launch pad, but the College's team has provided the rocket fuel with heartfelt and thoughtful content."

The website "has done the College untold good in terms of attracting applicants, generating online contributions, and bolstering our communications," adds Mrs. Forsyth. "I am thrilled that Wacky Puppy is receiving the recognition it has justly earned."

Making Education Affordable

College Freezes Tuition Costs, Limits Student Loan Debt

To help ease the financial burden on students and their parents in a weak economy, the Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors has announced a freeze in the cost of tuition and room & board for the 2015-2016 academic year. Tuition will remain at \$24,500, and room & board at \$7,950, bringing the total cost of attendance — including books and all fees — to \$32,450. That amount is well below the average of \$37,948 for private institutions in the Western United States, according to The College Board’s Annual Survey of Colleges (2013-2014).

“In the midst of trying economic times, we are determined to make college as viable for our undergraduates as we can,” says Thomas Aquinas College President Michael F. McLean. “We are committed to being good stewards of the funds our benefactors give us for the benefit of our students.”

In order to keep its unique program of Catholic liberal education within the reach of all motivated students and their families, the College additionally maintains a robust financial aid program. No student is ever turned away on the basis of financial need, and the College maintains several policies — academic as well as financial — that help spare students from incurring excessive loan debt. Over the last few months these policies have garnered a fair amount of media attention, in both the Catholic and the secular press.

Debt Reduction

“We think it’s terrible how much students have to borrow at many other schools,” Director of Financial Aid Greg Becher recently told *The Catholic Times*.

“So we have two things we’re doing here at Thomas Aquinas College.” In an interview with the diocesan newspaper, which serves the faithful of La Crosse, Wisconsin, Mr. Becher discussed how the College is able to minimize student debt loads. According to the 2013-2014 Common Data Set, a data source used by most college surveys, members of the Thomas Aquinas Class of 2013 graduated with an average college loan debt of just \$15,521 — about half the national average of \$29,400.

“First, we limit the amount students have to borrow before they can receive institutional aid — such as work study or a grant from the College,” Mr. Becher explained. The College asks financial aid students to help bear the cost of their education by taking on no more than \$18,000 in loans over four years. “Many other schools will maximize the student loan before they provide institutionally.”

Second, “Thomas Aquinas College has a fixed curriculum, and most students finish in four years,” added Mr. Becher. “That itself limits the amount students have to borrow and the amount parents have to pay for tuition.”

Nationwide, just 39 percent of American college students graduate in four years, compared to 73 percent of the students at Thomas Aquinas College. As a result, the total cost of education at a typical public or private college — even if its tuition rate is nominally lower than the College’s — is oftentimes higher, because students must pay for 2-4 additional semesters. This delay also comes with the opportunity cost of missed time in the workforce after graduation. According to

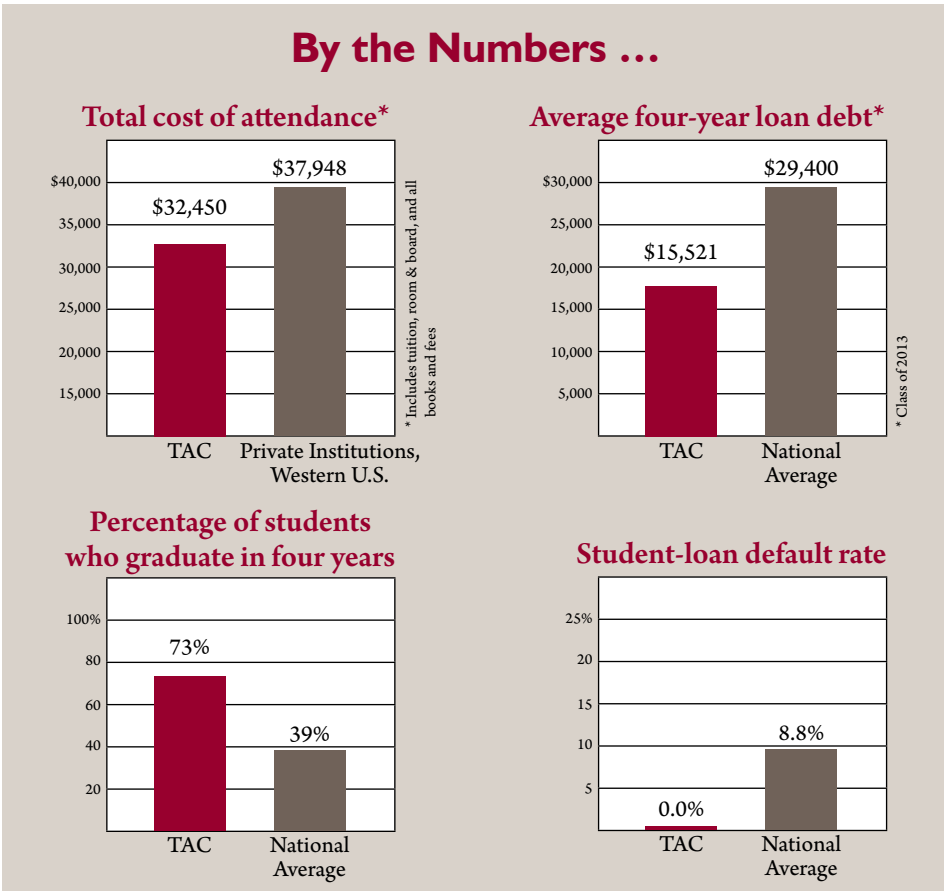
the California Student Aid Commission, Thomas Aquinas College alumni have a 0 percent default rate on their student loans, compared to a nationwide average default rate of 8.8 percent.

Best College Value

Notably, Thomas Aquinas College’s latest ranking on Kiplinger’s “Best College Values” list rose to No. 30 in the nation, up from No. 41 just a year ago. A likely explanation for this jump is that, for the first time, Kiplinger now measures four-year graduation rates. “That change penalizes schools with a high percentage of students that graduate in five or six years,

but it’s based on simple math,” wrote Sandra Block, senior associate editor for *Kiplinger’s Personal Finance*. “The faster your child graduates, the less money you’ll spend on his or her education.”

“We don’t want to burden students with an unusually large amount of debt after graduation,” said Mr. Becher. “We want them to be productive members in their communities, not hampered in their job decisions by excessive debt, and not burdened if they decide to marry or go on to the religious life with difficult amounts to re-pay. By God’s grace, and thanks to the generosity of many benefactors, we are able to do just that.”



Hail, Holy Queen

College Serves as Filming Location for Video Series about Our Lady

In the final days of Christmas vacation, just before students began to return to campus, Thomas Aquinas College served as the filming location for a forthcoming video series, *The Bible and the Virgin Mary*. A production of Dr. Scott Hahn’s St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology, this 12-part catechesis will include discussions of the Scriptural roots of the Church’s teachings about Our Lady, an examination of the 10 Vatican-approved Marian apparitions, and stunning videography — shot almost entirely in and around Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel.

“Aesthetically, the Chapel was the most perfect place for our discussions of the Virgin Mary,” says Linda Kane Hitchcock, art director for the project and chief creative officer of Skyrocket Pictures. “The cleanness of the environment allows the viewer to focus on what is being said, while still understanding that we’re in this beautiful, majestic space.”

The Bible and the Virgin Mary is one of six parts in the St. Paul Center’s acclaimed “Journey through Scripture” study series, and it is based on Dr. Hahn’s 2006 book, *Hail, Holy Queen: The Mother of God in the Word of God*. Collaborating on the project are Ms. Kane Hitchcock’s Skyrocket Pic-



tures and Falling Upwards Productions, whose president, Lannette Turicchi, is the wife of R. Scott Turicchi, chairman of the Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors. The St. Paul Center’s executive director, Matthew Leonard, is the presenter for the series, delivering nearly six hours of Biblical catechesis.

The Bible and the Virgin Mary will be the first of the “Journey through Scripture” series to be published in video format. Recognizing the value of the catechesis for furthering the New Evangelization, His Eminence Donald Cardinal Wuerl, Archbishop of Washington (D.C.), has championed the project since its earliest stages. “Cardinal Wuerl was instrumental in the founding of the St. Paul Center, and he was very encouraging when we decided to turn ‘Journey through Scripture’ into a video series,” says Mrs. Turicchi, the project’s executive producer. His

Eminence even lends his image and voice to the production as the reader for its numerous Scripture passages.

Throughout the last week of Christmas vacation, the College’s chaplains removed the Blessed Sacrament from Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel each morning after the early Mass. The film crew then entered the building and set up its equipment for shooting, which continued throughout the day, ending in time for the evening Mass at 5:00. It filmed scenes all over the Chapel — in the plaza, at the transept shrines, from the choir loft, and in the sacristy — as well as elsewhere on campus.

“We shot images of the Virgin all around. We went down do the grotto. We shot the steeple. We also shot some of the paintings,” says Ms. Kane Hitchcock. “We wanted a broad appeal for the series and had a specific design aesthetic in mind to reach that goal. This location captured that vision perfectly.” Adds Mr. Leonard, “The Chapel has a very beautiful, personal look that fits the ambience we are trying to create. And, of course, it is named after Our Lady, so it just makes perfect sense to film here.”

“We are so grateful that President

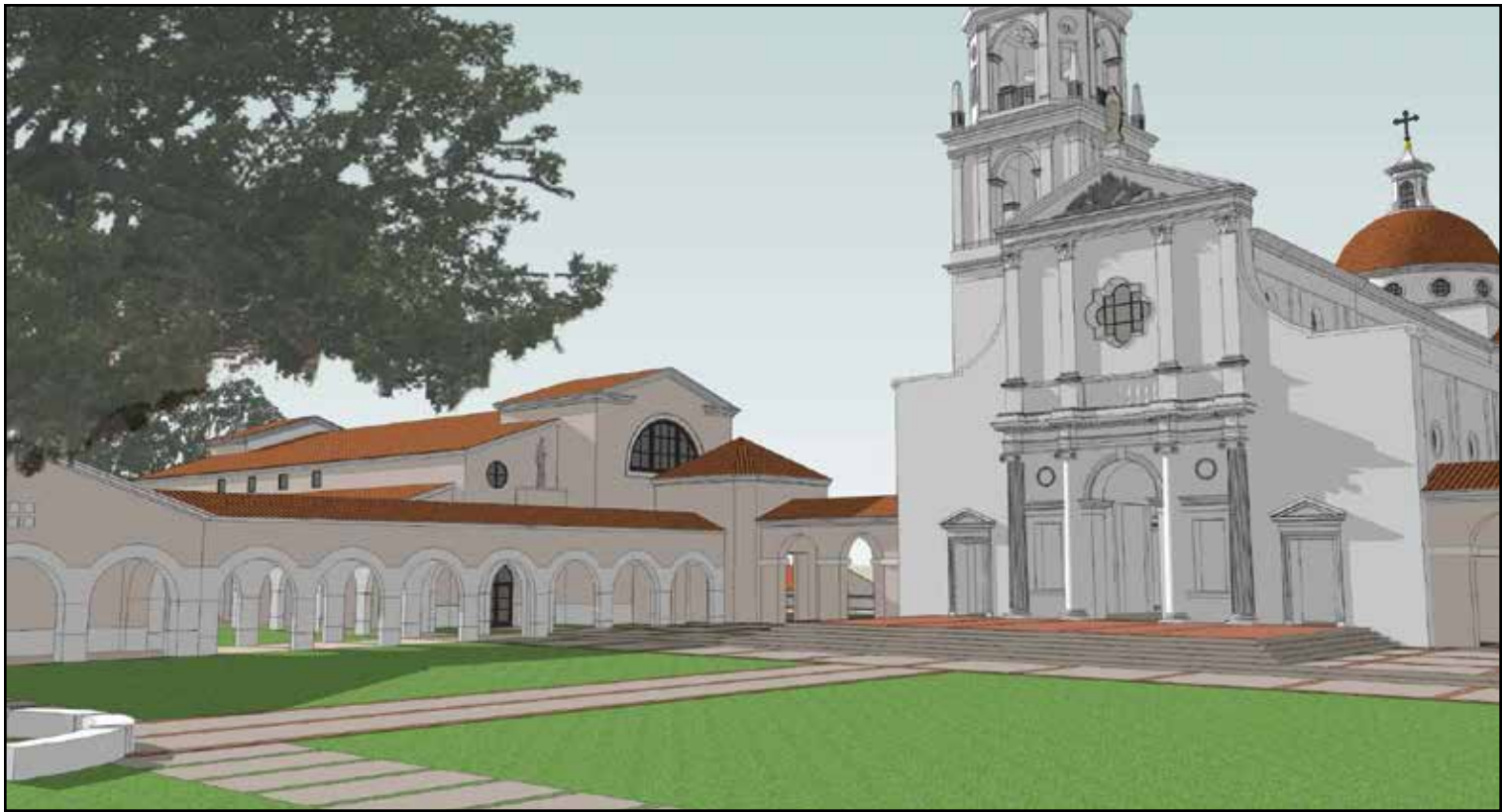
McLean and the Board allowed us to shoot at the College because it was the perfect venue for this production,” says Mrs. Turicchi. “We also want to thank the chaplains, especially Fr. Hildebrand and Fr. Buckley, who were very helpful, and who each played a small on-camera role in our production.” Fr. Buckley’s hands, clutching Rosary beads, will appear in one shot of *The Bible and the Virgin Mary*, and an image of Fr. Hildebrand in the confessional has been saved for a future installment of the “Journey through Scripture” video series.

The Bible and the Virgin Mary is due to be released sometime during Lent, both in DVD and in streaming video, via Lighthouse Catholic Media. Although intended primarily for parish programs, the videos and accompanying study guides will also be available for individual purchase.

“The point of this project is to help Catholics understand where the teachings about Our Lady come from, and also to answer the questions of others who may have an interest in what the Catholic Church teaches about our mother,” says Mr. Leonard. “It’s about helping us to fall in love with our mother and to see the role she plays in getting us to Heaven.”

A Look at St. Cecilia Hall

Designs and Architectural Renderings



As seen from Albertus Magnus Hall

Situated between St. Gladys Hall and Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel, St. Cecilia Hall will be the final piece that completes the academic quadrangle. The large semicircular window above the building's lobby references those in the Chapel's transepts, and the smaller circular windows reference those that line the Chapel's nave.



As seen from the southeast

The small tower in the foreground houses the elevator that will provide easy access to the coffee shop and recreation room in the lower level, as well as to the balcony seating in the auditorium.



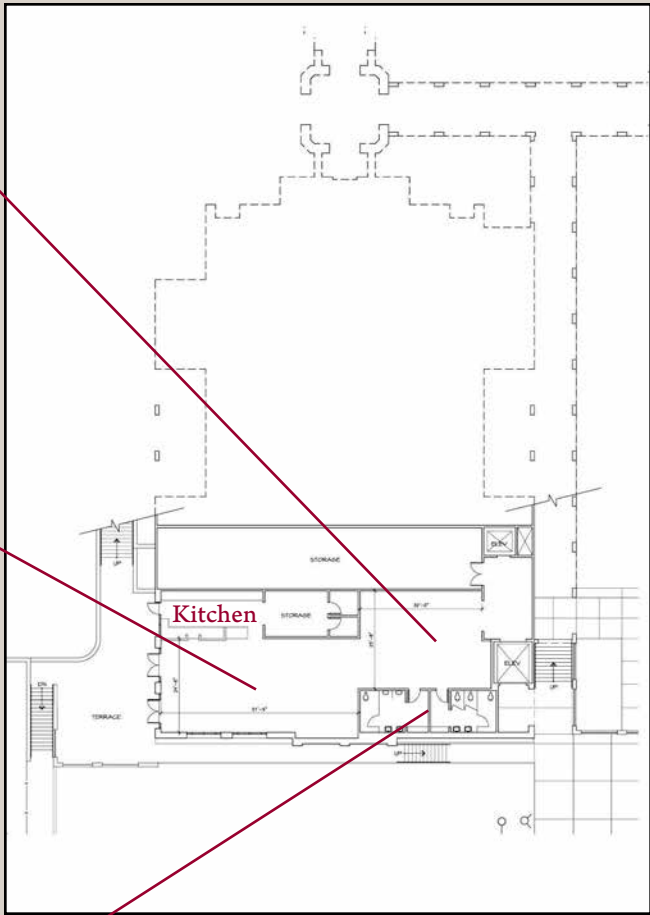
Lower Floor

Recreation Room

Students can relax in the lower level of St. Cecilia Hall, where they will find couches as well as pool and foosball tables.

Coffee Shop

The Ken and Joyce Skinner Coffee Shop is significantly larger than the existing Dumb Ox Café in St. Joseph Commons. Equipped with a kitchen, it will also serve hot food.



Restrooms

The location of St. Cecilia Hall offers easily accessible restrooms at the campus picnic area, which is outside to the south.

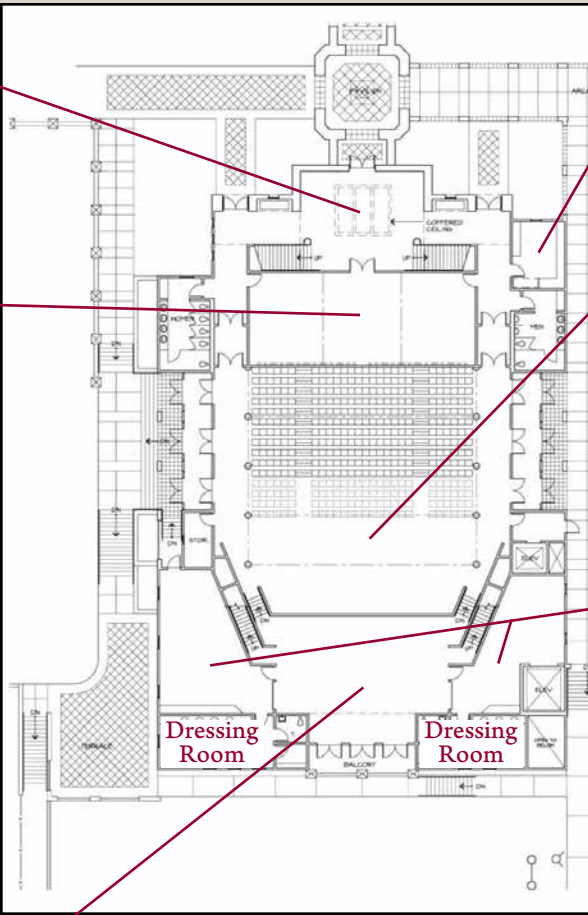
First Floor

Lobby

At either side of the lobby are doors leading to the Fritz Burns Auditorium and stairs to the balcony seating area.

Discussion Room

The Dr. Thomas E. Dillon Discussion Room, located under the auditorium's balcony seating, will contain roll-away dividers that can split the room into two or three smaller rooms as needed. Its primary purpose will be to host intimate discussions with speakers after lectures, but it will also serve as a venue for "Tutor Talks," senior thesis defenses, and other gatherings.



Stage

The stage features curtains, foot-level and overhead lighting, and a state-of-the-art sound system.



As seen from the Chapel terrace

The south pavilion of the Chapel serves as an exterior vestibule for St. Cecilia Hall. This small garden at the west front will feature the lovely, bright pink rose named for the building’s patroness.



As seen from the site of the future gymnasium

On the lower level of St. Cecilia Hall will be the Ken and Joyce Skinner Coffee Shop, which will open onto a terrace overlooking the future site of the campus tennis courts.

Names and Patrons

“The Fritz B. Burns Foundation, which contributed the funds for the construction of St. Cecilia Hall, is very sympathetic to the College’s policy of naming buildings after saints,” says President Michael F. McLean. “Its directors were glad to help us choose a patron for the lecture and concert hall.” Rather quickly, it became clear that St. Cecilia, the 4th century virgin and martyr who is the patroness of music, was the right choice.

“Music is such an important part of this college, not just within the curriculum, but also in terms of extracurricular activities and the liturgy,” says Dr. McLean. “Then, at the time we were having these discussions, Maureen Rawlinson, a trustee at the Burns Foundation, had planted St. Cecilia roses in her garden — a providential sign, we thought, that we had chosen the right name.” In honor of the building’s patroness, the College will plant her namesake roses in the adjacent garden.

In keeping with College custom, the Fritz B. Burns Foundation has opted to name some of the building’s interior spaces after friends of the College and the Foundation. The



Fritz B. Burns

auditorium, for example, will bear the name of Fritz B. Burns. “What could be better than to name a concert hall after a super salesman who was a music lover, a singer, a comic, and a poet?” asks the Foundation’s president, Rex Rawlinson.

The Foundation has likewise chosen to name the discussion room after Dr. Thomas E. Dillon, the College’s former president. “Tom was a master of clarity and an indefatigable leader of discussions,” says Mr. Rawlinson. “Outside of Socrates, I can think of no one better to name a discussion room after.”



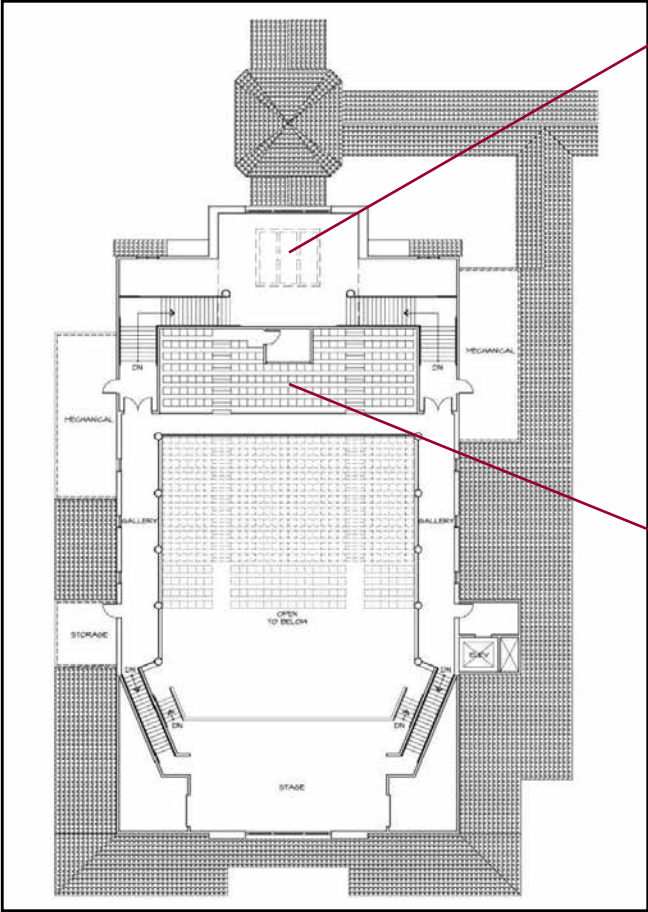
Dr. Thomas E. Dillon

Finally, the coffee shop will carry the name of the Foundation’s longtime executive director, Ken Skinner, and his widow, Joyce. “Ken was one of the most completely honest people I ever met,” recalls Mr. Rawlinson. “And Joyce is a very generous woman with a big heart. I cannot think of a better example of charity.”



Ken and Joyce Skinner

Second Floor



Prep Kitchen

A small kitchen will allow for food service at dances and other events.

Auditorium

An innovative design allows most of the auditorium’s seating to be quickly and easily stowed away, thus creating open space for dances and student parties.

Stage-Craft/ Art Rooms

Flanking the stage on both sides are art rooms that can be used for set design and students’ personal projects.

Lobby

Forming the ceiling of St. Cecilia Hall’s two-story lobby are three 17th century wooden coffers, matching those in the ceiling of St. Bernardine of Siena Library, that were originally crafted in 1620 for a convent of disclated Mercedarian nuns in Spain.

Balcony

At the back of the balcony is the lighting and sound control room, which will also house a film projector to allow the Fritz Burns Auditorium to serve as the campus movie theater.

Senior Reflections

“Like Nothing I had ever Experienced”

By Sarah Rivera ('15)

Note: The following essay is adapted from comments that Miss Rivera, a senior from Kendall Park, New Jersey, made to the Thomas Aquinas College Board of Governors at its October 2014 retreat.



My Thomas Aquinas College experience started in an unorthodox way. I had not heard of the College until my junior year of high school. I was looking at some big state schools and some Catholic schools, and I was seriously considering Princeton and Harvard. To further my chances of getting into these schools, I wanted to do a college summer program between my junior and senior years in high school. So I googled “programs for high school students at colleges,” and then scrolled through pages of search results. When I found Thomas Aquinas College I saw that the application was short, so I fired it off and moved on.

I was accepted to both the College’s summer program and Harvard’s, but Harvard’s cost around \$10,000, so my parents said, “You’re going to Thomas Aquinas!” At that point I took another look at this college to see where I would be spending two weeks. I saw “Socratic Method,” and didn’t know what that was. I saw that the College offered the Latin Mass, and I freaked out a little bit. I got a packet in the mail that spoke about a dress code, and I freaked out a little more. This was like nothing I had ever experienced. I told my parents I wasn’t going. They used their parental authority and said, “Yes, you are.”

The Summer Program ... and Beyond

So I came to the Summer Program, and something totally unexpected happened: I fell in love with this school. The texts and the classes were amazing. My tutors brought up ideas that I never would have considered on my own. And then my classmates and I also began to draw out new concepts from the text. When the tutor

asked us questions, we realized that it was up to us to think through the matter for ourselves. It was, indeed, like nothing I had ever experienced.

Then there was the joy of being immersed in the spiritual community of the College, to see students who were alive in their faith, who were making use of the Sacraments, who really cared about what we were learning. These weren’t the boring, stuffy people I was expecting. They were smart, friendly, and attractive people who were going to go out into the world and do good things. To see that there was a place that was fostering such people, almost as its mission, was life-changing.

After the Summer Program I thought the College was amazing, but I didn’t think I would go here because it was so unlike what I had expected to do in college. I applied to TAC anyway, because it remained something of a dream for me, but I also applied to the other schools I had considered. I was accepted at TAC, waitlisted at Harvard, and accepted at some other schools.

So I took another serious look at the College and what it had to offer. For four years I could have this intense encounter with great ideas, great books, and other people my own age. The College would teach us how to interact with the truth, not only in the discussions we have and in the books we read, but also spiritually, how to interact with the Truth as a person. I’m not sure how distinct my awareness of all this was at the time, but I knew that I wanted my education to be about who I was and not what I was going to do. So I chose Thomas Aquinas College, and it is one of the best decisions I have ever made.

Mathematics and the Natural Sciences

There is so much I could say about my experience at the College, but today, I want to focus on just one part of it, and that is the way we study math and the natural sciences. I have always been a math-and-science person; it’s kind of my passion. In high school I really liked the problem-solving nature of these subjects, but I never understood *why* we were doing what we did. If I asked, the response was, “That’s beyond the scope of this course,” and that was always dissatisfying.

At the College we have gone through many of the same subjects I covered in high school — such as geometry, algebra, calculus, physics, and chemistry — but in a totally different way. In the math classes, for example, we do not merely memorize the proofs for geometry, we work our way through them and come to understand them. I now know that the equations I used in algebra and calculus in high school are true, and why they are true, and that makes them more my own.

In our natural science classes, we learn material the way the great authors did. They looked at creation, saw things that they did not understand, and then set out to make sense of them. Here we work through the same problems that they did, performing the same experiments, and witnessing the same results. It can be frustrating and exciting all at the same time. You don’t know why, say, water can travel 30 feet in the air through a siphon, or why friction causes glass and resin to attract to one another, but then you work through the discovery process. The knowledge becomes yours. It was so wonderful to have subject matter that was already dear to me presented in such an exciting way.

Looking Ahead

And that leads me to what I want to do after I graduate this spring. I am not yet sure, and there are many possibilities, but I think I want to teach math or science, incorporating some of the ways that they have been presented to me at the College. Math and science are often undervalued; people tend to see them as useful but boring. I think they are exciting and beautiful. If schools approached the subjects in a way that appealed to students’ natural sense of wonder, and not just as a means toward getting a certain kind of job, students would learn the material better and appreciate it all the more. I would love to share what I have gained at the College with other students.

I hope my story gives you a glimpse of what TAC has meant to me. Thank you for everything you do to make it all possible, for your time and for the guidance you provide the College. It is such a blessing to us. God bless you.

Words of Wisdom from a Beloved TAC Priest

College Publishes Selected Sermons of Fr. McGovern

To mark the 30th anniversary of the death of one of Thomas Aquinas College’s most beloved tutors, the College has published a collection of sermons by the late Rev. Thomas Aquinas McGovern, S.J., who died on February 19, 1985.

A graduate of the Université Laval in Quebec, Fr. McGovern taught at Canisius College in Buffalo, New York, before coming to the College in early 1972. He served as a member of the faculty and, later, the Board of Governors. The year after his death, he posthumously received the College’s highest honor, the Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion, given in recognition of his lifelong fidelity to the teachings of the Catholic Church.

Alumni from the College’s early years remember well Fr. McGovern’s meticulously crafted and edifying sermons. “I had the great honor of serving at the altar with Fr. McGovern,” recalls Gregory A. Pesely ('77), mission integration manager for OSF Healthcare System in Peoria, Illinois. “He once confided that it usually took him 8-10 hours to craft, perfect, and memorize every homily.” Adds Kelly Geier ('76), a senior software engineer at Welch Allyn in San Diego, “When he delivered his homilies, he had a gift for inflaming the hearts of his listeners with the same love for God that he had.”

Edited by Suzie Andres ('87), for whom the work was



truly a labor of love, *The Selected Sermons of Rev. Thomas A. McGovern, S.J.*, begins with a homily for the first Sunday of Advent and continues with others for all the Sundays of the seasons of the liturgical year. An additional section features sermons for special feasts and occasions, from Solemnities of Our Lord to Saints’ days and Baccalaureates.

The collection was a project close to the heart of the College’s founding president, Dr. Ronald P. McArthur, who waited nearly 30 years for the publication of Fr. McGovern’s sermons, and who dictated the book’s foreword in the last week of his life. “Having studied at Laval, Fr. McGovern was a disciple of St. Thomas and Aristotle,” wrote Dr. McArthur. “I think his are the best sermons you can read now. I can’t believe that Chrysostom and the Fathers of the Church have written better; his sermon on the Blessed Sacrament, in particular, is simply breathtaking.”

In *Selected Sermons*, the reader will find not only the wit, wisdom, and humility for which Fr. McGovern was known and loved by his students and colleagues, but also the good fruit of his lifelong discipleship to the Angelic Doctor. “I had always hoped that one day his homilies would be published,” observes Mr. Pesely. “What a treasure this collection will be for both those who had the honor to study St. Thomas with him and those who have only heard about him.”

Copies of this elegant, hardbound book are available for \$25 each, which includes shipping and handling within the U.S., via the Thomas Aquinas College bookstore (thomasaquinas.edu/frmcgovern or 800-634-9797).

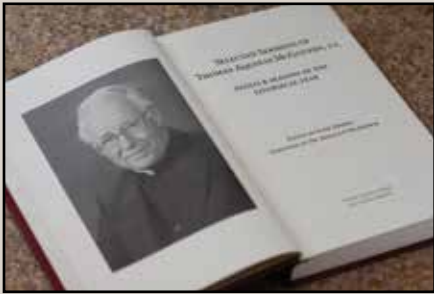
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The Art, Science, and Business of Medicine

Alumni Profile: Dr. Samuel Caughron ('96)

“I am not a great decision-maker,” admits Dr. Samuel Caughron ('96). “My approach to big life decisions is to pray a lot, to get as much information as I can, to wait until the last minute — and then to make a decision and go with it.”



It was during his Senior Year at the College that Sam first began to think seriously about what to do after graduation, and that decision did not come easily. He initially considered entering the seminary but, after much prayer, discerned that his vocation lay elsewhere. He then contemplated becoming an educator, but realized he did not have a teacher’s temperament. Finally he found himself torn between two competing desires — to follow in his father’s footsteps as a physician, or to tap into his entrepreneurial talents and enter the world of business. (While a student at the College, he ran a small software company.)

Ultimately he opted for both. As the president and managing partner of the MAWD Pathology Group in Kansas City, Missouri, Dr. Caughron is now a physician and a businessman, treating patients, managing the company’s operations, administering its medical laboratory, and overseeing a staff of over 50 employees.

The Path to Pathology

After graduating from the College in 1996, Sam completed prerequisite courses at Creighton University before entering the university’s medical school in 1998. At first he expected that he would choose primary care for his area of specialization, but this decision, too, took time and consideration.

“I liked the idea of helping people on the front lines, but as I went through medical school, I realized that my interests and skills were a better fit for pathology,” he says.

“It’s more analytical. Pathologists are sometimes called the ‘doctor’s doctor.’ Our role is to be more understanding of the science of medicine. We tend to deal with the rarer diseases, and we are the ones who diagnose cancer.”

There was also another advantage to pathology, one that became more evident during his first year of medical school, when Sam married his Thomas Aquinas College classmate Erin (Mackey '96). A pathologist’s hours are more predictable than those of most other physicians, thereby lending themselves more readily to the demands of family life. Being a pathologist, Dr. Caughron finds, makes it easier for this physician-businessman to tend to his duties as husband-father. And with Mrs. Caughron expecting the family’s 12th child in April, he still has plenty of opportunities to care for patients on the “front lines” of his own home.

Family Business

Upon completing medical school, Dr. Caughron stayed at Creighton University to complete a residency in Anatomic and Clinical Pathology, and then traveled to Nashville to Vanderbilt University, where he completed an advanced Fellowship in Molecular Genetic Pathology, focusing on new methods of DNA-based medical testing and their application to patient care. He then worked for two years at a private pathology practice in Billings, Montana, before returning to his native Kansas City in 2009 as a pathologist at MAWD. Five years later, he became the group’s president and managing partner.

In this latter capacity, he is primarily still a physician, maintaining an office at Kansas City’s Shawnee Mission Medical Center, and he directs the company’s molecular laboratory, ensuring the accuracy and quality of all medical testing. “I am also involved with running the business of our practice fairly extensively,” he says. “Medicine today increasingly requires the physician to be aware of the business side of things.”

Among his 10 fellow pathologists at MAWD is none other than his father, Dr. Michael R. Caughron, whose seven children are, like Sam, all graduates of Thomas Aquinas College. “We have been working together more and more,” the younger Dr. Caughron observes. “It’s a real privilege that I get to practice side by side with him.”

Hippocrates & Socrates

In addition to his day-to-day responsibilities, Dr. Caughron has served as a member of the board of the College of American Pathologists and is the current president of the region’s guild of the Catholic Medical Association. Often, he says, when he is participating in the meetings of these professional organizations, he thinks back to the Socratic discussions at Thomas Aquinas College.

“Sitting in a classroom at the College and sitting in a board discussion with leaders of a specialty of medicine from across the country are actually remarkably similar,” he reflects. “You have a bright group of people. You are approaching a question, you have to break it down, analyze it, and figure out where you need to go with it. The College’s educational approach teaches one to think critically, and that is a skill that is, especially in higher-level fields or functioning, very useful.”

Yet even more important, Dr. Caughron adds, was the spiritual formation he received at the College. “The intellectual life of the College is its gem, but its heart is obviously the Faith. For me, there was growth in both areas during the four years there.” It was the intellectual growth that prepared him to be a doctor and businessman, and the spiritual growth that prepared him to be a caregiver and servant.

“I consider being a physician an incredible privilege and an honor,” he says. “People come to you at their weakest, at least bodily, and they seek your help. It is an incredible blessing to be in that role and to be able to help them.”

In Memoriam

Edward N. Mills (1930–2015)

On January 17, 2015, Thomas Aquinas College lost a dear friend, a generous benefactor, and a long-serving member of its Board of Governors. After a long illness, Edward N. Mills passed away at his home in Oak View, California, at the age of 84.

A man of business and technology, Mr. Mills had no particular interest in Catholic liberal education until he started seeing the effects it had on his children, four of whom graduated from Thomas Aquinas College. Over time, as he met his children’s classmates, he became a fervent advocate of the College. In 1992 he joined its Board of Governors, which he dutifully served until his retirement in 2006. By resolution of his erstwhile colleagues, he was then granted emeritus status in honor of his many years of exemplary work.

Throughout the years, Mr. Mills and his wife, Dolores, not only made many significant financial contributions to the College, they also donated a large collection of sacred objects rescued from shuttered churches in their home state of Wisconsin. Among these items are the crucifix that hangs in St. Joseph Commons, the statues of Sts. Matthew and Thérèse that stand in Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel’s gardens, and the Chapel’s century-old Stations of the Cross. In 2010 the College inducted Mr. and Mrs. Mills into the Order of St. Albert the Great in honor of their decades of generosity.

“Ed Mills was a good and faithful friend of the College and a true leader on the Board of Governors,” says President Michael F. McLean. “I hope that all members of the College community will join us in praying for the repose of his soul and for the consolation of his beloved family.”

Mr. Mills was born and raised in the chemical business. His father worked at the Shell Oil refinery in Roxana, Illinois, a company town that so dominated the

1,200 people who lived there that even the high school team was known as the “Shells.”

While working as a counselor at a local Boy Scout Camp during the summer before his senior year in high school, Ed met a young girl from nearby Alton, Illinois, Miss Dolores Springman. Dolores was one of eight children from a devout Catholic family. Ed was an only child from a non-practicing Presbyterian family. The two began dating, and in short order the Catholic example of Dolores and her family left its mark on Ed. By Christmas break of his freshman year at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana, he entered the Church. In 1950, at the end of his sophomore year, he and Dolores were married.

After graduating, Mr. Mills took a job with Shell’s Chemical Division as a sales correspondent, and a few years later he went into business for himself, launching the Milwaukee Solvents and Chemical Corporation. He quickly found a niche in reclamation efforts, taking used chemicals and making them reusable through chemical processing. By 1998, when Mr. Mills sold Milsolv and retired to Oak View, California, the corporation had grown to 160 employees in three states and was doing \$114 million in business annually. Mrs. Mills was with him every step of the way. “She’s been the best business partner I’ve ever had,” he once remarked.

After 54 years of marriage and having raised 10 children, Mrs. Mills passed away in 2004. Among the Mills’ survivors are 12 alumni and current students of the College: children Julie Teichert ('79), Anne Miller ('80), James ('81), and John ('88); and grandchildren Michaela ('12), Maria ('14), and Bridget ('17) Pape; Henry ('06), Jonathan ('06), Joseph ('08), Mary ('08), and Cecilia ('15) Teichert, and Bernadette (Teichert '12) Langley.

IN MEMORIAM

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

Monsignor Thomas Henry Smith

August 31, 2014

Benefactor

Dr. Robert G. Olsen — November 14, 2014

Legacy Society member

Robert G. Kelsey — November 16, 2014

Benefactor and father of Sean ('92), Matt ('95), and Jessica Haggard ('99)

Sir Daniel J. Donohue — December 3, 2014

Recipient of Saint Thomas Aquinas Medallion, benefactor

James Nolan — December 3, 2014

Legacy Society member

Helene Calvanico — December 17, 2014

Legacy Society member

Thora Isabelle Netzel — December 31, 2014

President’s Council member and mother of Joanne Ambuul ('93)

Margaret Rose Raab — January 8, 2015

Mother of Paul ('78) and Leo ('80), grandmother of Emily ('02) and Anna Zalesak ('05)

Dr. Harry V. Jaffa — January 10, 2015

Friend

Bernard Bujnak — January 13, 2015

Father of Danielle ('95), Stephanie Ward ('07), and Alexandra ('09)

“Do Whatever the Lord Tells You, and be Faithful to Jesus”

An Interview with the Most Rev. Samuel J. Aquila

Note: The Most Rev. Samuel J. Aquila is the Archbishop of Denver. He served as the College’s Convocation Speaker last fall, at which time he granted the following interview.

How did you discern your vocation to the priesthood as a young man at a secular college in the turbulent 1960s?

During my college years I really searched for a faith, and there was always some underlying belief, but I went through a period where I was at best agnostic and not really sure of the existence of God. Then I began to study Eastern religions, and as I studied those I slowly worked my way back to a firm belief in Christianity. I then was involved with the Wesley Foundation, which was a campus group, and I remember vividly one time we were having a communion service. I asked the others what they believed about the Eucharist, and they said, “Oh, you know, it’s just something spiritual.” And I thought, “The Catholic Church has the real thing!”

I wanted the real thing, and so that brought me back into the Church. I went to confession and then began to think very, very, seriously about the priesthood. Once I finished college I went into the seminary, and after six months it was clear that God’s plan was that I be a priest, little knowing what He had in store for me. But it was really just about opening my heart, surrendering to the Lord, and giving myself as a gift to Him.

What is the role of Catholic colleges in fostering vocations?

When I look at this college I am really envious of the education the students are receiving, the fact that they are reading great books. It is an incredible gift to be able to learn that way. A college like this can really help foster vocations because students are constantly entering into dialogue and reading the great works. I just walked through your bookstore and saw some of the books that the students are reading. Those books are going to make them think, and they are also going to give them the desire to do the will of God. In that way a college like this can have a huge role in really preparing young people, whatever their vocation. Your graduates will have a great foundation for whatever they do and wherever the Lord is calling them.

As I shared with the students today in my homily, I am firmly convinced that God has a plan for each and every human being that only *that* human being can ever fulfill. It is when we open ourselves to that plan that we can find true joy, peace, and happiness.

When you were giving that homily, you may have noticed that in the back of the Chapel, just above the two bronze doors and below the statue of Our Lady, is your —

Yes, my motto.

“Do whatever he tells you.” Why did you choose those words of the Blessed Mother for your motto?

I have always had a special devotion to Mary and to Our Lady of Guadalupe. Her deepest desire is that we come to know her son, and she will lead us to Him when we entrust ourselves to her. I found out that I was named a bishop on the Feast of the Visitation of Mary, May 31, and so that night I was praying about what I should do. Should I say “yes?” Should I say “no?” And Elizabeth’s words kept coming to me: “Who am I that the mother of my Lord should come to visit me?” Deep down in my heart I knew I had to say “yes,” but there was also that sense of, “Do whatever He tells you.” Those are Mary’s last words ever spoken in the Gospels. They are her message for every disciple, to do whatever the Lord tells you and be faithful to Jesus.

In your homily you said, “Our education is not about ourselves.” Could you please elaborate on that?

We live in a society — and I find this even with some



“When I look at this college I am really envious of the education the students are receiving, the fact that they are reading great books. It is an incredible gift to be able to learn that way.”

of our seminarians and some of the young people today — where there is such a focus on ourselves. Certainly narcissism has been around for a long time, but there is more of an inclination toward it today. And young people may often look only at themselves and what is happening around them: It is about me rather than the Gospel message of really loving your neighbor.

So when I say that our education is not about ourselves, the point is that we should not approach education with the perspective of, “What’s in this for me?” Education should be seen as a gift that is given to us in terms of having the time set aside for learning and for seeking what God’s desire is for us. It is about helping young people to encounter Christ, especially in a program like the one at Thomas Aquinas College and through the great books that your students read. Whether it is through St. Augustine’s *Confessions*, or Aquinas, or through the great works of literature, they come to discover the importance of loving their neighbor as themselves. It is not about me, but it is about community and living in the community of the Trinity — the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The focus is not on ourselves, it is on the Lord and others.

To what do you attribute the rise in narcissism in the culture?

When you abandon God, the only thing left is yourself, and when you remove God from the equation, what is the reason for any altruism, any sense of the other? How do I really care for people if I do not believe in a God? The whole approach of a secular culture and liberal culture is to focus on my own pleasure and what’s in it for me. So we see young people very easily moving in and out of relationships, without much thought or meaning, and then they cannot understand why they are so unhappy.

When you move away from God, there is no moral compass, and so the world is going to be very confusing and dark. It is going to be a world without hope. As Christians we believe that every human is made to live for eternity, and that is where we will find our true happiness. But in a culture that does not have that, people will look for happiness elsewhere, whether it is in drugs and alcohol, or in sexual intimacy, or money, or materialism, but none of that brings true happiness.

How does this narcissism, or faithlessness, play itself out in the life of the family?

By losing that sense of the other; there has been a

removal, or stepping back, from commitment to family and instead an emphasis on materialistic or career success — basing one’s meaning, dignity, worth, and value on career, materialism, and success, and not on the gift of motherhood and fatherhood. The most joy-filled people I have ever seen are mothers as they gaze upon their newborn children. The happiness in mothers, the joy in mothers — it is an incredible gift, and certainly our culture today does not see it as much. The beautiful nature of woman is that she is the one who bears children, but the gift of children is seen more as a burden today than it is a gift.

Contraception is a real denial of that gift of motherhood and of the dignity of motherhood. In *Humanae Vitae*, Paul VI offered dire warnings about the use of birth control and its demeaning of women and their true womanhood. Contraception takes away from the mutual responsibility of man and woman; it undermines the recognition that the marital act not only communicates the love between husband and wife, but is also for procreation. That is why we have the discussion around civil unions and same-sex acts and everything else, because we do not look at what is the truth, the dignity, and the meaning of human sexual intimacy. Once you remove procreation from the equation, you can justify anything.

My hope is in the many faithful, young Catholic families I see. I have seen the joy in those couples, the real desire to give themselves to each other. They are not entering into marriage with rose-colored glasses; they know the ups and downs that they will experience in a lifelong commitment. They are deeply convinced of the truth of the teachings of the Church and of the three goods of marriage.

The College’s new classroom building, St. Gladys Hall, is named for a wife and a mother. Can St. Gladys be a model of marriage and family life for young people today?

Honestly, I had never heard of St. Gladys before coming here. And yet she is really a saint for our age, and I think it is fantastic that you named this building after her. Both she and her husband are saints, and they have eight children, six of whom are saints. The fact that she was involved in the material world, yet lived the call to holiness in the vocation of marriage, seeking the sanctity of her husband and her children — and her husband seeking the sanctity of his wife and his children — shows what is possible for the family. You really want to hold her up for young people, for men and women to see what is possible for the family and what every family is called to.

You have written that “reason alone” will not win over the culture, but that “something more is needed.” What is that something more?

It is faith. It goes back to *Fides et Ratio*, the great encyclical of John Paul II, which said that there are two wings that are needed for the fullness of the human person. Even as we meditate and grow in understanding of the mysteries of faith and the reasonableness of them, we always reach a point where we have to have faith and trust; we have to put our faith in something. It is either going to be in the God who is love, or it is going to be in humanity.

The Second Vatican Council is clear that the role of every Catholic, and particularly lay Catholics, is to be a leaven in the world. But too many Catholics have accepted a false understanding of church and state, and they no longer seek the good but compromise with evil every day. They support evil while hiding behind the lie of being “pro-choice” or the lie that “these people do not have dignity because they are here illegally.” So it is important in the program here at the College that you really help the young people not only to see the close relationship between faith and the gift of reason, but also what it means to bring that faith into society and into the culture for its transformation.

The Beauty, Majesty, and Awe of God’s Revelation

Why — and How — We Study Sacred Scripture

By Dr. Brian T. Kelly ('88)



Note: The following remarks are adapted from Dean Brian T. Kelly's report to the Board of Governors at its October 2014 retreat. They are part of an ongoing series of talks about why the College includes certain texts in its curriculum. To read the rest of the series, see thomasaquinas.edu/whywestudy.

At the beginning of the school year, President McLean spoke to the students, and especially the freshmen, about why we study Sacred Scripture. He pointed out that theology as a science depends on God's revealed word for its very starting points. The Bible is an important source of the revelation necessary for the science of Sacred Theology. Dr. McLean also told the students that reading the Scriptures carefully would stir up in them a sense of wonder about theological matters; it would whet their appetites to learn about the Trinity, the Sacraments, the Incarnation, and more. Today I want to supplement Dr. McLean's comments by talking about *how* we read the Bible.

During the Freshman Year we read nearly all of the Bible, omitting only the two books of Chronicles, in our normal discussion mode. In order to accomplish this feat, we have to proceed with some haste, but we are not aiming to plumb the depths of each individual text. If we were to read just the Gospel of John, for example, at the pace that that text merits, we could spend the whole year or longer. Our goal, however, is more modest: to make an *intelligent first reading* of Sacred Scripture, familiarizing students with its length and breadth, so that they can formally begin the study of Sacred Theology in their Sophomore Year.

Some might judge the Discussion Method as inappropriate for Sacred Scripture, and I would agree that it is not a good way to arrive at a more advanced and authoritative reading. It is, however, extremely helpful for achieving the intelligent first reading that we seek. Moreover, because the Discussion Method actively engages the mind of the student, it is ideal for stirring up a sense of wonder and personal involvement in the word of God.

“Sola Scriptura”

When studying the Bible during the Freshman Year, we make no appeal to St. Thomas Aquinas, to the Catechism, or to any other magisterial document. This pedagogical approach may seem strange, given our institutional and personal commitments to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, but we are not leaving these sources of wisdom aside out of disrespect. It is just that, because we are attempting to make only an intelligent first reading of the Sacred Scriptures — and not a more advanced analysis — we need not yet seek the aid of more advanced thinkers and teachers. Instead we ask the students to listen carefully to what the books are trying to express, in the books' own words.

It is only through the magisterium that we receive the Bible as the revealed word of God; otherwise we could only grasp it as an accidental collection of works written at different times by different authors, sometimes with very different ends in mind. But to undertake the task of Sacred Theology, it is helpful to begin with the Bible itself. Indeed, when Holy Mother Church teaches, a very important part of what She is doing is unfolding the import of Scripture to us, the faithful. Thus to read the Catechism, or any other magisterial documents, it is very helpful to have first read the Holy Scriptures.

How does this play out in class? When we read the Gospel of Luke, for instance, the tutor might ask, “Who is Jesus?” The answer is not always immediately apparent. Is He a prophet? Is He a madman? Is He divine? Is He merely human? These are questions that arise and are not always easy to lay to rest. With the Catechism in hand,

we could rattle off an answer immediately. From the careful reading of Scripture, part by part, we work up more slowly to a definitive conclusion.

It is also worth noting that our students are not finished with the Bible after Freshman Year. At the beginning of Sophomore Year, St. Augustine, in his *On Christian Doctrine*, helps to teach them how to make a more penetrating reading of the Scriptures. For the rest of their time here, they pursue this deeper understanding through theological treatises by Church fathers and doctors, especially St. Thomas Aquinas.

Hard Teachings

In order to make a good beginning in their Freshman Year, it is important for our students to get past a facile understanding of the Bible based on authority. They must push themselves to wrestle with God's word and engage themselves personally in the pursuit. This often makes for a challenging transition. To help students adapt to the discipline of giving their own reading of the text under consideration, we begin the year with two texts that defy pious but shallow interpretations: Ecclesiastes and Job.

The tutor might begin the first discussion by reading the text where the Preacher says, “Vanity of vanities! All is vanity,” and asking what he means by that. Invariably a student will offer that the Preacher is saying that it is futile to place your hopes in this world; that perfect peace and justice will only come in the next life. At this suggestion the tutor, or sometimes another student, will ask if the first student has a text to support the view that the Preacher is pointing to the next life. In fact, it is not clear from the book itself that the author is even aware that there is life after death. He says, “The dead know nothing and they have no more reward ... their love and their hate and their envy have already perished ... there is no work or thought or knowledge or wisdom in Sheol, to which you are going” (9:5-6, 10).

It is difficult to truly read the Bible without moving past the saccharine. The students are fairly quickly confronted with difficult and sometimes shocking scenes or actions. For example, on some occasions God tells the Israelites to conquer a foreign nation and to “kill everything that breathes.” Exodus 21 seems to allow a father to sell his daughter into slavery. Deuteronomy 21 commands that rebellious children should be stoned to death before the elders of the city. These passages are hard to read and to square with the balloons-and-butterflies vision of Jesus. I remember one student, horrified by the commanded genocide, arguing, “This is not my God. This is not the Christian God.” This was a genuine cry of frustration from a devout Catholic wrestling with the profundity and difficulty of the sacred text.

Old and New

After working our way through some difficult parts of the Old Testament, we start at the beginning and read the Pentateuch. Through these first five books of the Bible, many of the elements of salvation history are brought to the fore: creation and corruption, good and evil, sin and righteousness, faith and obedience, treachery and idolatry, and the awesome power of God, Who is and Who is jealous. The nation of Israel is separated and dedicated to the Lord. Covenant and family, sacrifice and atonement, priesthood and prophecy, justice and mercy — these are some of the topics that the Pentateuch confronts us with and, by the end, students have followed the thread of a significant portion of the story.

We then dance back and forth between the Old and the New Testaments. This juxtaposition is fitting because the two are essentially connected and continuously shed light upon each other. On its own the Old Testament is like a riddle to which the New Testament provides an answer. As St. Augustine says, “The New Testament lies hidden in the Old, and the Old is unveiled in the New.” The discipline of the Old Law is ordered to prepare for the freedom of the New. The various kings, prophets, and priests of Israel are to pave the way for the dawning of the

age of redemption at the hands of the one Who is most powerfully priest, prophet, and king.

This connection between the Old and New Testaments helps to underscore the importance of reading the entirety of Scripture. Without reading the whole it is difficult to assess the argument that is embedded in the Bible.

Put one way, the argument is this: A collection of writings of a motley assortment, written over thousands of years by different men in different locations in different languages, has been gathered together and called one book. They are not merely one as a collection is one, but as though they have the same author. The claim is that they are by different authors, but also one author.

It is obviously believable that these writings are by different authors, but is it believable that they are also by one divine author? Here is an argument from the text itself: read it and see for yourself if it hangs together as a complete whole. By requiring our students to read the whole of Scripture in a limited span of time, i.e., when the various parts can be relatively fresh, we put them in a position to make a personal assessment of this claim.

Pascal puts the argument a little differently. He calls the books of the Old Testament the “oracles.” They are written prophecies that foreshadow Christ. Why should we accept that Christ is who He says He is? One reason is the testimony of the oracles. The oracles point to Him as God and savior. Pascal also contends that the oracles are especially worthy of being believed in this regard because they were written and maintained by a nation that rejected Jesus.

In sum, by reading nearly all of Scripture, we give freshmen a rough sense of the whole that allows them to see the big picture and the unity of the Bible. It also prepares them to make a beginning in Sacred Theology, the queen of the sciences. This experience tends to draw our students into an immediate and personal encounter with the beauty, majesty, and awe of God's revelation of Himself.

St. Vincent de Paul Lecture and Concert Series

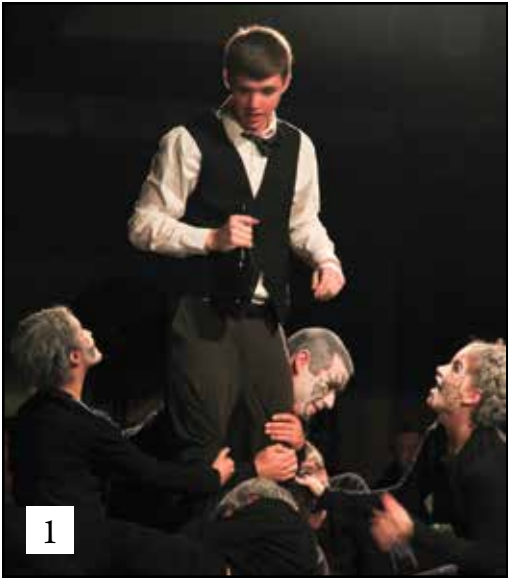
Endowed by Barbara and Paul Henkels

Highlights from the Last Quarter

- On November 7, **Br. Kenneth Cardwell, FSC**, a professor and the director of the Collegiate Seminar at Saint Mary's College of California, delivered a lecture on the Plague of Frogs in Exodus.
- Classical guitarist **Paul Galbraith**, a Grammy Nominee and *Billboard* Top Ten Artist, performed at the Fall Concert on November 21.
- The College gathered on December 5 for the Advent Concert, in which the **Thomas Aquinas College Choir** performed a complete, unabridged production of Handel's *Messiah*.
- On January 16, **Dr. David R. Arias**, a member of the College's teaching faculty, presented the first lecture of the new year, “St. Thomas on the Plurality of Forms.”

- Periodically members of the faculty or chaplaincy present on-campus “Tutor Talks,” informal lectures followed by question-and-answer sessions. These late-afternoon gatherings afford an opportunity for the speakers to discuss some topic of interest to them and to share their thoughts with other members of the community. On January 21, tutor **Dr. Phillip D. Wodzinski** gave one such talk, “Music, Culture, Politics: Aspects of the Hymnal.”

Text and audio from select lectures and concerts are available at thomasaquinas.edu/lectures.



CAMPUS LIFE



1. Edward Seeley ('16) plays the role of Stephano in a November performance of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. 2. Freshman twins Theresa and Elizabeth Gallagher play a duet at November's Schubertiade. 3. James Knuffke ('17) makes a catch during the annual Turkey Bowl flag-football game. 4. Resident Assistant Sarah Dufresne ('14) leads a group of students to historic Grant Park Cross in Ventura for "Sunset at the Cross." 5. Students surprise onlookers with a choral "flash mob" at Ventura's Pacific View Mall. (For video, see thomasaquinas.edu/flashmob2014.) 6. The Christmas Dance: Bernadette Buches ('17) and Sean Donnelly ('17) waltz ... 7. ... and Ben Coughlin ('15) reads "A Visit from St. Nicholas" to children of faculty members.

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.

* Schedules may vary; please call in advance to confirm Mass times.

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

Calendar of Events

For more information, please see www.thomasaquinas.edu/calendar

President's Day Lecture: Dr. Daniel Mahoney Professor of Political Science Assumption College.....	February 22
Don Rags.....	March 3-5
Solemnity of the Dedication of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel.....	March 7
Memorial Mass for Sir Daniel J. Donohue Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity Chapel.....	March 7 (11:30 a.m.)
Lecture: Dr. Mark Blitz Fletcher Jones Professor of Political Philosophy Claremont McKenna College On Plato's Political Philosophy	March 27
Easter Recess	April 2-8
Anniversary of the Death of College President Thomas E. Dillon.....	April 15

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