



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

March 10, 2017

Dear Aquinas College Supporter,

Because you are a part of our family at Aquinas College in Nashville, which is owned and operated by the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation, I am writing to share with you some important news regarding its future. After careful discernment of factors involving financial challenges and related issues, the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation have decided to reconfigure Aquinas College so that its focus will be that of preparing teachers to serve the Church in its mission of education.

Beginning in the fall of 2017, Aquinas will focus its academic programming on the School of Education and on course offerings in philosophy and theology. In addition, Aquinas will continue its initiatives designed to support educators, catechists and those involved in faith formation. Aquinas will no longer offer degrees in arts and sciences, business and nursing, nor provide residential housing and student life activities.

The decision to reconfigure Aquinas College was made only after a process of careful discernment, as we considered the College's long and persistent history of difficulties in finances, fluctuating enrollment, and development, as well as other complexities related to operating a traditional college in today's world. The Congregation has concluded that there is no viable long-term solution which would adequately support a traditional college with residential and student life without placing both the College and the Congregation in serious financial risk. Given these considerations, we have sought to reach the most financially responsible decision possible, both for the short and long term. This decision has no impact on the Congregation's other schools. Each of these is independent of the college, having its own budget, development program and endowment.

This decision is a difficult one because of its impact on the lives of our students, faculty and staff. We are making every effort to assist our students, and are in conversation with colleges similar to Aquinas in order to help secure suitable placements for them. Likewise, we are committed to assisting our faculty and staff as they pursue opportunities for future employment.

We are profoundly grateful to our faculty, staff and students for their loyal commitment to Aquinas College. We are equally indebted to you and our many alumni, as well as benefactors and friends who, since its founding in 1961, have supported the college with their time, resources and prayers. We love Aquinas College, and are proud of the accomplishments of all our graduates who today serve the Nashville community and beyond.

This decision to focus Aquinas College on the preparation of teachers primarily for Catholic schools is consistent with the 157-year heritage of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, who founded and operate Aquinas College. Still, we recognize that the decision will come as a surprise to many, particularly those like you who are close to Aquinas and know firsthand the high quality of our programs, students and faculty. We have had to ask ourselves what our best and most responsible options are for addressing the present financial challenges and future needs of Aquinas, while remaining true to our heritage.

We give thanks to God for our students, faculty and staff whose dedication to Aquinas College has been such a great blessing. We look forward to its future, grateful to the City of Nashville and the wider Catholic community whose friendship and loyal support continue to be a source of strength for its life and mission.

We are grateful for your prayers and support as we do everything in our power to assist and walk with those whose lives are affected by this decision.

Sincerely in Christ,

Sister Mary Sarah Galbraith, O.P.

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