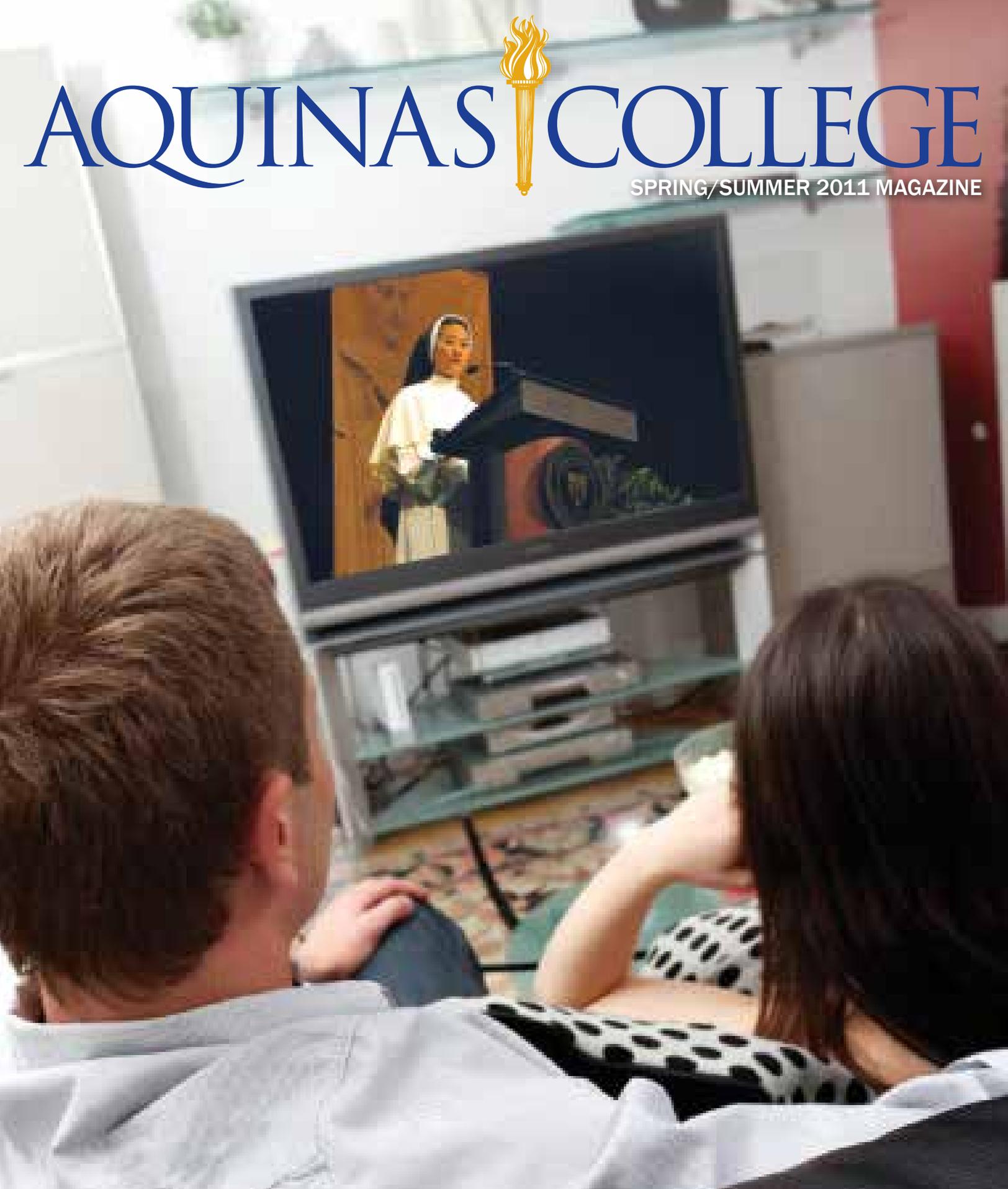


# AQUINAS COLLEGE



SPRING/SUMMER 2011 MAGAZINE



**AS SEEN ON TV: EWTN to broadcast Aquinas College conference**

*Dear Friends,*

This year has been one of engagement with the community and an affirmation of the strength of our programs.

Toward the end of a busy fall semester, we were grateful to be surrounded once again by the love and laughter of our ever faithful friends at the 32nd annual Benefit Dinner. In addition to welcoming the president of the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty, Reverend Robert Sirico, as our keynote speaker, it was a particular pleasure for me to recognize the accomplishments of my executive assistant Brenda Kincaid, who has given more than three decades of service to The Dominican Campus.

After Christmas, we were off and running to prepare for several big events. The spring lecture series truly offered something for everyone – from a front-row seat for the history of country music to a consideration of the faith of our founding father and first president George Washington. And in the midst of one of the best-attended lecture series to date, we hosted “Love and Life in the Divine Plan,” which we presented in collaboration with the Ruth Institute.

This conference brought together both old and new friends to spread the good news about how the Church is helping to defend and strengthen marriage and family. Among those present were our good friends at the Eternal Word Television Network, who plan to broadcast the conference as a series of six one-hour programs beginning in June. The DVD-version of the series is available for purchase on the EWTN website, and I encourage you to help spread the word.

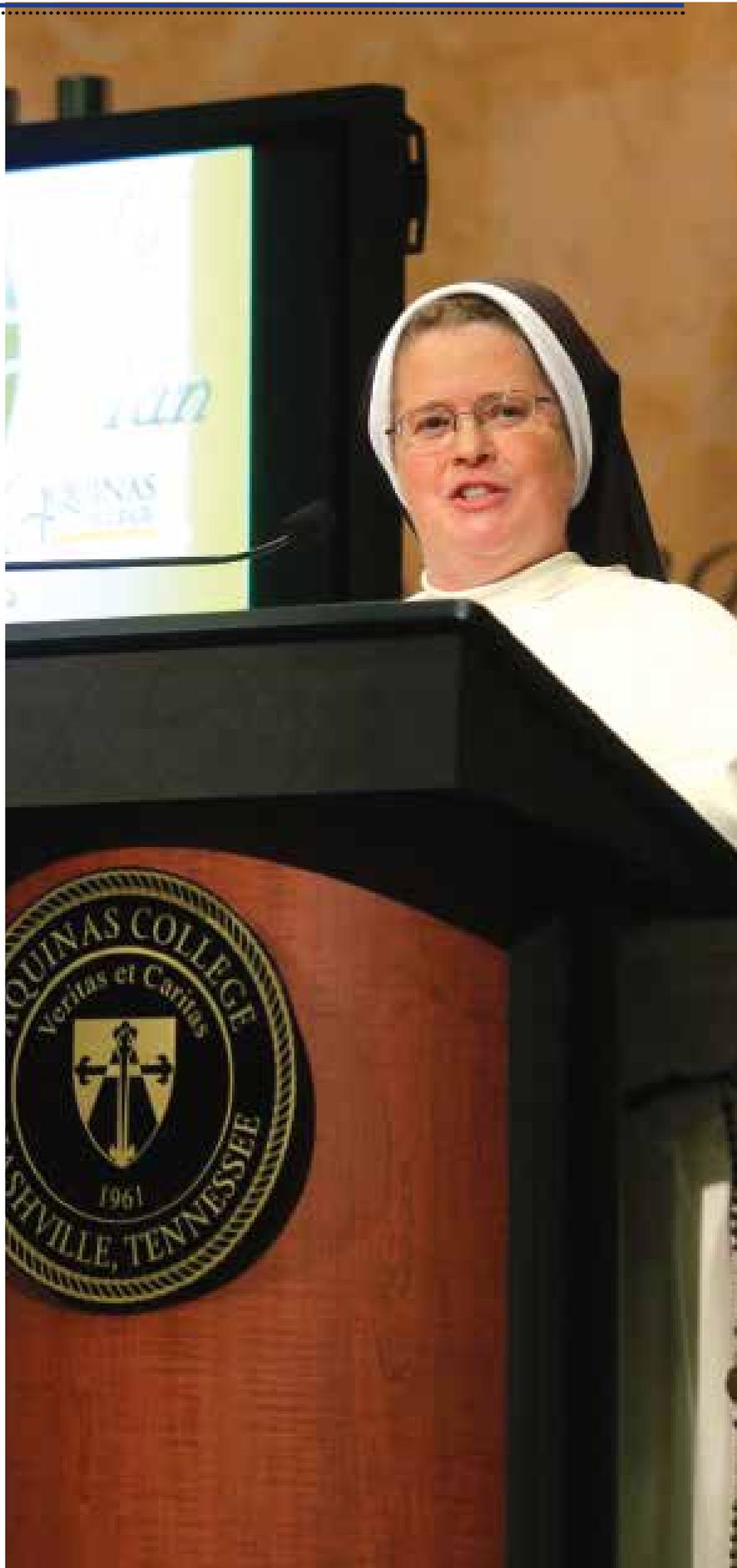
As we prepare for graduation, our hearts are filled with joy and joined with the Church throughout the world in celebrating the beatification of Pope John Paul II. Many of us were touched by the life and witness of this faithful servant and friend of God during his pontificate. I know that my own vocation as a Dominican Sister was directly impacted by his presence at World Youth Day in Denver in 1996. I hope that the late Holy Father’s beatification will be an opportunity for each of us to learn a bit more or to help others learn about the role of saints as our intercessors and friends in heaven.

May this issue of the Aquinas College Magazine serve as a reminder of the great dignity of each person who is made in the image and likeness of God. If we can help our students, friends, and family learn and live this message, we will have truly contributed to the culture of life envisioned by John Paul II.

*Yours in Christ,*

*Sister Mary Peter, O.P.*

**Sister Mary Peter, O.P.**  
President



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**AQUINAS COLLEGE 50TH ANNIVERSARY**  
SAVE THE DATE 2011-2012 CALENDAR

<b>September 1, 2011</b>	50th Anniversary Kickoff Day 11:00 am - Mass of the Holy Spirit 12 noon - Presentation of Proclamations 12:30 pm - Reception 6:30 pm - Film presentation "Nine Days that Changed the World" (at the Belcourt Theater)
<b>Fall 2011</b>	Alumni Night at Smashville with the Nashville Predators
<b>December 9, 2011</b>	Christmas Alumni Party
<b>January 26, 2012</b>	St. Thomas Aquinas Feast Day Mass and Reception Dedication of Aquinas Time Line Display
<b>Spring 2012</b>	Alumni Night at Smashville with the Nashville Predators
<b>May 12, 2012</b>	50th Anniversary Commencement and Reception
<b>June 2012</b>	Alumni Golf Scramble at McCabe Golf Course concludes the 50th anniversary celebration

TRANSFORMING LIVES AND CULTURE THROUGH TRUTH AND CHARITY.. FOR 50 YEARS

# The Pope of the Word of God

By Scott Hahn, Ph.D.

Late last year, Pope Benedict XVI captured the attention of the world – and held it for weeks – with an offhand comment made to a reporter about a peculiar point of sexual morality.

Meanwhile, the same man released a 200-page letter to the Church about the topic nearest to his heart. And hardly anyone noticed.

At the November 11 press conference releasing the letter, *Verbum Domini*, Archbishop Nikola Eterović described the Holy Father as “the Pope of the Word of God.”

The archbishop is right. *Verbum Domini* is Latin for “The Word of the Lord,” and that phrase could arguably stand as the theme not only of Benedict’s pontificate, but his life’s work as a theologian.

Indeed, never before has the Church seen an accomplished biblical theologian elevated to the chair of St. Peter. We may be too close to the situation to see how blessed we are.

The Word of God is Pope Benedict’s highest priority, as he recently set it out for the world’s bishops: “Leading men and women to ... the God who speaks in the Bible: this is the supreme and fundamental priority of the Church and of the Successor of Peter at the present time.”

And you can see that commitment in various ways. He declared a year devoted to St. Paul the Apostle. In his “spare time,” he has completed a two-volume account of the Gospel accounts of Jesus.

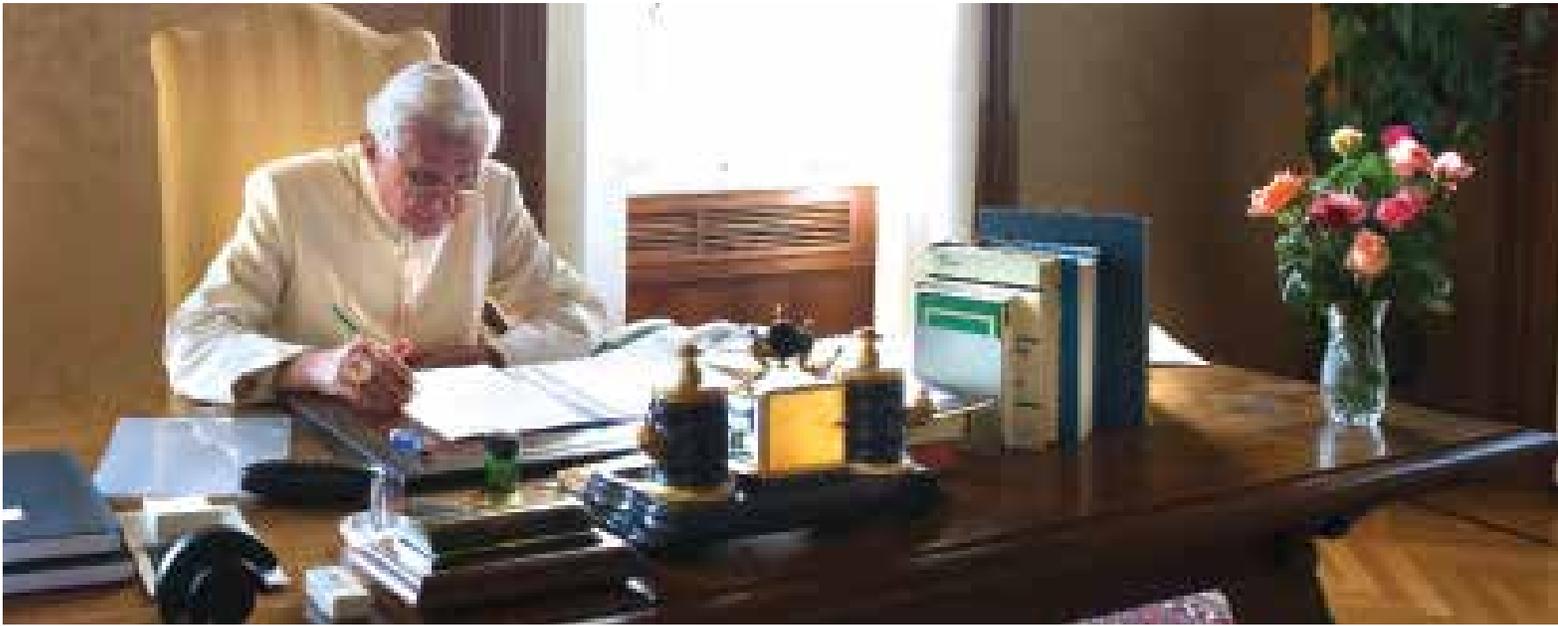
He summoned a synod of bishops to consider the Word of God in the life and mission of the Church. He himself took an active part in the synod, making incisive and insightful interventions.

Afterward, he took two years to produce a post-synodal document – the most important document on Scripture produced by the Magisterium in nearly half a century.

In the context of such words and such actions, we can discern the value and importance of *Verbum Domini*. It’s a manifesto of sorts, indeed the interpretive key to the Holy Father’s mind and heart, intentions and deeds.



Scott Hahn, Ph.D., is founder of the St. Paul Center for Biblical Theology. He is the author of many books, including *Covenant and Communion: The Biblical Theology of Pope Benedict XVI* (Baker). He teaches Scripture and theology at Franciscan University and St. Vincent Seminary. Dr. Hahn presented an expanded version of this article at the 2011 St. Thomas Aquinas Theological and Catechetical Forum on February 4-5.



The document itself is divided into three parts: (1) The Word of God; (2) The Word in the Church; and (3) The Word to the World.

In the first part, he develops the analogy between the incarnate Word and the inspired Word, how both are fully human and fully divine. He declares that “The divine Word is truly expressed in human words.” For that reason, the Bible is an “altogether singular” book — the only book authored by God himself.

Only when we understand Scripture’s divine authorship are we truly equipped to read the sacred page or hear it proclaimed. The New Testament itself declares all Scripture to be inspired — literally, “God-breathed” (2 Timothy 3:16). Inspiration, says the pope, “is clearly decisive for an adequate approach to the Scriptures and their correct interpretation ... Whenever our awareness of its inspiration grows weak, we risk reading Scripture as an object of historical curiosity and not as the work of the Holy Spirit.”

By acknowledging the divine origin of the Scriptures, we have the key to understanding them. Revelation is complete since the death of the last Apostle, but in another sense revelation is ongoing. By the power of the Holy Spirit, Christ is still present and active in our midst. Pope Benedict quotes the great St. Jerome, who said: “We cannot come to an understanding of Scripture without the assistance of the Holy Spirit who inspired it.” The reading of the Bible, like the writing of the Bible, is truly a collaboration between God and man.

And the collaboration is not just between the Spirit and the human authors, but between the Spirit and the Church. The Holy Father insists that the Bible’s true home is in the Church — and specifically, in the liturgy.

He points out that this is not an idea we impose on Scripture, but is evident in the biblical books themselves. The books of the New Testament, from the Acts of the Apostles through Revelation, describe a Church already well established, with a developed ritual life. It was in the midst of that liturgy that the first Christian congregations encountered the Scriptures of the Old Testament. It was for proclamation in the liturgy that the books of the New Testament were written.

But those books were not yet known as “the New Testament.” No, what the first Christians knew as the New Testament was the Eucharist, which Jesus himself called the “new testament” (or “covenant”) in his blood (see Luke 22:20). Jesus established the New Testament when he instituted the Eucharist and said “do this in remembrance of me” — not “read this” or “write this.” And the apostles went forth and celebrated the New Testament everywhere they went. Not half of them wrote books; but all of them went forth and celebrated the Eucharist. The Eucharist was celebrated as a sacrament for many years before the books we know as the New Testament were written.

The documents weren’t complete until the end of the first century, and even then

they were not called the “New Testament” until the end of the second century. The documents only gradually took that name, again because of their liturgical proximity to the Eucharist. They were the only books approved to be read in the Mass, and they were “canonized” for that very reason. The New Testament was a sacrament at least a generation before it was a document.

No wonder Pope Benedict can say: “A faith-filled understanding of Sacred Scripture must always refer back to the liturgy.” He makes so bold a statement about this relationship that I must quote it at length:

*Word and Eucharist are so deeply bound together that we cannot understand one without the other: the Word of God sacramentally takes flesh in the event of the Eucharist. The Eucharist opens us to an understanding of Scripture, just as Scripture for its part illumines and explains the mystery of the Eucharist. Unless we acknowledge the Lord’s real presence in the Eucharist, our understanding of Scripture remains imperfect.*

The Bible is not merely informative, the Holy Father goes on to say, but “performative.” It leads us to an action: the Eucharist, which is transformative.

Though the Bible can and should be studied, it is, first and foremost, to be proclaimed and interpreted in the context of liturgical worship. The Bible is at home in the Church, and especially at Mass, where we encounter it in its richness and we ponder it in the homily and in our

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# The Pope of the Word of God

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prayer. “The primary setting for scriptural interpretation,” says the pope, “is the life of the Church.”

Benedict makes these connections between the divine and the human, uniting what scholars and skeptics are prone to divide. In this letter he lives up to the origins of the word “pontiff.” Our Eng-

lish title comes from the Latin word for bridge-builder. In *Verbum Domini*, we find him making connections on every page: between the Old Testament and the New Testament; faith and reason; Scripture and theology; Scripture and tradition; the Bible and the Church; Scripture and Liturgy. Yes, these may be studied intensively in separate academic disciplines; but we must always remember that they co-exist

in an integral way in the divine economy, the law of God’s household.

Joseph Ratzinger spent a lifetime in theology laboring for a renewal of biblical theology in the Church. As Pope Benedict XVI, he has stepped up those efforts and asked each of us to reclaim our focus on our biblical heritage. In *Verbum Domini*, he shows us how. ■

## FORUM NEWS

# Highlights from the St. Thomas Aquinas Forum

Joan Watson, coordinator of the Office of Catechetics, shared insights into the life and mind of the Holy Father from her own research and personal experiences. Joan recalled how, while studying in Rome in 2005, she experienced firsthand the great sorrow when John Paul II, the only pope she’d ever known, died. She also recalled her experience of a joy equal in magnitude just 17 days later, when she witnessed Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger emerge on the balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica and declared himself “a humble laborer in the vineyard of the Lord.” Throughout her presentation, Joan related further evidence of the complexity of Pope Benedict’s personality: an unwavering defender of the faith yet possessing great humility.

Aquinas College philosophy instructor **Ben Smith, Ph.D.**, delivered an analysis of St. Augustine’s theory of history and reflection of this theory in the writings of Pope Benedict. Citing Augustine’s *The City of God* and Pope Benedict’s 2007 encyclical *Spe Salvi*, Dr. Smith said, “This theory of history is right at the heart of the way that Benedict and Augustine see the world. Living according to the flesh means living according to self, which means making ourselves the end.” Dr. Smith explained Pope Benedict’s views on contemporary culture from his many writings, that this self-love is evident in the feminist and sexual liberation movements of the 1960s and ’70, especially in its view on contraception and abortion. “Liberation theology is another example Pope Benedict gives of this desire to retranslate Christianity into a definitive paradise on earth and to see ourselves as an author of it. We should be rightly suspicious of those accounts of history that attempt to give us the definitive answer or the definitive interpretation, because we know from theology and from God’s revelation that the fullness of that explanation lies outside of history.”



**Sister Terese Auer, O.P.**, of the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation, former philosophy instructor at Aquinas College and current chair of the bioethics department at Pope John Paul the Great Catholic High School in Dumfries, Virginia, offered a presentation about the difficulties of conscience. Through this very interactive presentation, Sister argued that even though we are obliged to follow our conscience, we are equally obliged to keep it connected to the truth rather than falling into the traps of subjectivism. Sister explained, “The easy way is to retreat from truth, to go into our subjective shells, where we don’t have to encounter the truth, where we can do what we want. We don’t have to change. But in Ratzinger’s words, ‘The self withers away and becomes lost’ if it does that.”

**Sister Esther Mary, R.S.M.**, member of the Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma, Michigan, and professor of Sacred Liturgy at Saint John Vianney Theological Seminary in Denver, Colorado, focused on Pope Benedict’s devotion to the Liturgy. Sister explained, “We have the Holy Sacrifice of the Lamb. We have the Commu-

nion of Saints. And every time we celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, we participate in the heavenly liturgy.” Sister Esther Mary went on to describe Pope Benedict’s views on the Liturgy; culture and tradition; and the concepts of communion, order, and friendship.

**Michael Miller** of the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty discussed the social doctrine of Pope Benedict and how it relates to the Church. Drawing from his expertise in international development, philosophy, and business administration, Mr. Miller cited the works of philosophers and theologians that form the foundation of the Holy Father’s social vision. According to Pope Benedict, the State has a good and essential function of creating a foundation for human flourishing, but one should be wary of promises of a false eschatology. Miller explained, “Progress is good, but it’s the myth of progress that somehow all things can be taken in this world. Pope Benedict cares about the salvation of every single soul, which is more important than the political order.” ■



# The Facts of Life: Science Speaks

By Sister Mary Diana, O.P.

Much has been written in recent years concerning the Catholic Church's teaching on the sanctity of marriage and family life and reverence for the gift of human sexuality. Unfolded within this context is the Church's consistent teaching that contraception is contrary to the natural moral law. This remains a controversial and often misunderstood teaching, which the Church continually seeks to present with deeper clarity, compassion, and conviction. In the process, profound insights have been developed in the presentation of the theology of the body and the sacredness of marriage and human sexuality, all of which have made a tremendous contribution to clarifying the Church's unvarying stance regarding contraception. As a medical doctor I have been trained to approach the question from the vantage point of science, which studies nature and tries to determine how it "works." After studying and then practicing medicine, I never cease to marvel at the way in which science decisively affirms what we have come to know about the human person and human sexuality through the insights of theology. In a particularly clear way, I have found this to be the case in considering the matter of contraception. What

follows is an examination of this question from a strictly natural, scientific perspective. I will be using the language not of theology but of medical science.

It is the role of medical scientists, that is physicians, to study how the human body works correctly, so that we may understand what is wrong when the person is ill. We then apply what we have learned in order to bring the body back to health, or even to attempt to prevent the disease in the first place.

## A TALE OF TWO SYSTEMS

In demonstrating the disordered nature of contraception, I have found it helpful to consider analogously the proper biological function of the gastrointestinal (or GI) system and that of the reproductive system. If we then consider ways in which the function of each of these systems is sometimes purposely disordered, we see a kind of "disconnect," that is, an obvious example of dysfunction. In keeping with medicine's interest in avoiding dysfunctions of the body, such "disconnects" are clearly to be avoided. The health of the person is at stake

The gastrointestinal system includes the mouth, esophagus, stomach and intestines. Considering the system as a whole, we can

readily determine that the purpose of this system is related to nutrition. The gastrointestinal system enables us to take in food, break it down, absorb useful substances, and eliminate others. Those products that are absorbed can then be assimilated in our bodies for use as energy sources and to build and repair cells and tissues. That is what the GI system is about.

However, most of us do not actually approach our gastrointestinal systems with this thought of nutrition. In other words, there are very few of us who head to lunch thinking, "Oh, it is about time that I ingested some carbohydrates, proteins, and fats so that I can hydrolyze them and assimilate the by-products for my energy and synthetic needs." Instead most of us are more inclined to think, "I'm hungry, and I would like something that tastes good."

What should be clear to us as scientists is that satisfaction of hunger and taste is not actually what the GI system is all about. If we continue our considerations as modern scientists, we would say that the experience of hunger and taste when eating, draws us to foods with nutritional value. Without nutrition, we would die. So hunger and taste are a sort of incentive, a

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survival benefit. Considered purely from a biological aspect, our GI systems work because we have such incentives built into the system, stimulating us to take in food.

Moving to the consideration of the reproductive system, we are able to reason in a similar fashion about its healthy functioning. Reflecting on the individual structures of this system and how they work, what they do, we can determine the function of the system. In this case, the name gives it away. The function of the reproductive system is reproduction.

Just as in the case of the gastrointestinal system where the call to the lunch table is not the thought of nutrition, but the thought of satisfying hunger and taste, there is a parallel in the working of the reproductive system. It would probably be accurate to presume that when couples engage in the sexual act, reproduction in itself is not necessarily their primary thought. They have a desire for union within the sexual act, and there is pleasure associated with this act.

Just as hunger and taste are not the reason for the gastrointestinal system (rather, nutrition is), so sexual desire and pleasure are not the reason for the reproductive system. These desires, however, and the pleasure experienced with their satisfaction serve as stimuli, drawing persons to engage in acts vital to life itself. If there were no satisfaction of desire and pleasure in engaging in the reproductive act, people would not be likely to engage in the sexual act. And if they didn't, they wouldn't reproduce.

Certainly there is a difference between these two systems regarding the survival benefit. The function of the GI system benefits the individual who cannot survive without eating. In the case of the reproductive system, however, an individual will not die if he or she does not engage in a sexual act. Instead, the reproductive function is necessary in order for the population to survive. While there is a difference between the two systems, the analogy that relates the incentive to engage the use of the system to the actual function of the system still holds.

What happens if we create a "disconnect" between the incentive and the function of the system?

First, what happens if we separate the

satisfaction of hunger and of taste from the actual nutritive role of the gastrointestinal system? We will see that we run into problems. I will illustrate with a few examples.

I once read about a record set in 1977 by a person who ate a bicycle faster than anyone else. The bicycle was ground into fairly small iron filings, and the tires were cut into tiny pieces of rubber. Could one actually eat that? Evidently so. Now did the person eating the bicycle satisfy his taste? I doubt it. Did he satisfy his sense of hunger? Perhaps. The bicycle probably filled him up to a certain extent. Even so, there is no reason to believe that a person will gain any sort of nutritional benefit from consuming metal and rubber. Thus eating a bicycle is "disconnected" from the true function of the gastrointestinal system.

In a different example: Suppose one were to eat something that has lots of good flavor, and gives the sense of being full, of satisfying hunger, but has almost no calories in it — perhaps raspberry-flavored, artificially-sweetened gelatin. It tastes good, and it satisfies one's hunger. Suppose that was all a person ever ate. Would that be good for the person? Is that the proper use of one's gastrointestinal system? No. In fact, the person would starve to death. Does this happen? Yes, it does. There are young women who drink only Diet Coke, and essentially eat nothing. We call this anorexia; and we believe it is a medical illness, one that needs treatment. The problem is that the person has disconnected hunger and taste from the actual function of the gastrointestinal system.

There are, of course, other examples I have seen of "GI disconnect." In cases of severe obesity (i.e., where extremes of weight can reach well over 500 pounds), there is an obvious disconnect. In such extremely obese persons the taste for food and the desire to satisfy hunger so overtake any thought as to what really is needed nutritionally by the body that it creates a horrible health situation for the person. It is a situation that, for many reasons, could be fatal. Unfortunately, this kind of disconnect is a real problem for many people in our society today.

In cases of bulimia, a person attempts to enjoy the taste of food, and the satisfaction of fullness, but then purposefully regurgitates the food or uses chemicals to purge the contents of the gastrointestinal system. Most of us can see immediately that this is a terrible misuse of the body. It treats the incentives to nutrition — taste and hunger — as if they were the purpose of eating. Clearly, however, based on the evidence of science, they are not.

These examples demonstrate that it is possible, that we might choose, to use our gastrointestinal system in a way that does not connect with its true function. In some sense, we are "free" to do that. But if we do, it's not going to be good for us.

If severing the connection between the incentives for using the GI system and its true function can be seen as misuse of the system, as an illness of the body, an evil for the human person, then the same can be said of the reproductive system. That is, responding to the sexual desire only by seeking to satisfy the urge for sexual pleasure, while denying the actual purpose of the reproductive system, is no less a problem to the human person than the disorders of anorexia, severe obesity, and bulimia. Considering three examples related to sexuality that are analogous to these three nutritional maladies can help us see why this is the case.

In our example of anorexia, we saw that it is possible to satisfy our hunger and taste by eating something that has absolutely no nutritional value. Is it possible likewise



to engage in an act that will satisfy sexual desire and achieve sexual pleasure in a way that has absolutely no relationship to an act that is reproductive? Yes, it is. The use of pornography, masturbation, and homosexual acts fall into this category. If we think about this purely from the point of view of science, based on what we understand about human biology, this use of our sexuality actually makes no sense. It is not congruent with the purpose of human sexuality as we understand it through scientific study. Can we, then, say in any way that such acts can be good for the person? If we are honest scientists, we have to say no.

Some would counter by arguing that it is enough that the human person has the “freedom” to choose these acts, that the person can decide for himself or herself which sexual acts are good for him or her. Is that really true? Think back to the fellow who ate the bicycle. That was his choice. Or the young woman who attempts to subsist on diet drinks. That’s her choice. Can I as a physician say that that is bad for him or for her? Yes, I can. And if I am true to my trade, I must.

If we return to consideration of cases of severe obesity, it seems there is an overriding attention to the pleasurable taste of food and the satisfaction of hunger such that the real nutritional meaning of eating is lost. This is an example of true addiction. It clearly fits the criteria for addictive behavior – and as with all addictions, it has grave personal and societal consequences. Is there similarly a condition in which satisfaction of sexual desire and pleasure is so predominant that an illness results? Yes. This is an addiction to pornography. From the point of view of medical science, is this truly an illness? If one looks at the criteria associated with addiction, yes. As a physician, am I simply to leave this as a patient’s choice? Again, that would not be true to my profession. I am required to take seriously addiction to cigarettes, chewing tobacco, drugs, and alcohol. Why? Because there is an inherent danger to the person and to those around him. The same is true of addiction to pornography. When we disconnect sexual desire and pleasure – the innate incentives to reproduction – from the function of the reproductive system, the result is a medical dysfunction.

The third example used earlier related to the GI system was bulimia. In this medi-



cal disorder, one enjoys the taste of food, and the satiety that it brings, by actually ingesting real, nutritious food; but then to thwart the threat of caloric absorption, the person uses some means to prevent the food from being assimilated into the body proper. The result is that one experiences all the pleasurable taste and the satisfaction of hunger, but none of the calories. We actually live in a society known for its bulimic mentality. The “perfect diet pill,” for example, would be one which would allow the dieter to eat everything delicious, and as much of it as one wants, to feel perfectly satisfied, and never gain any weight.

The analogous example in the realm of sexuality is contraception. One takes a pill that will make it possible to enjoy all the pleasure of a genital sexual act, an act ordered toward reproduction, but without the consequence of reproduction. Or replace the pill with a condom, or an IUD, or permanent surgical sterilization. The analysis of the use of these devices remains the same. One deliberately disables the proper functioning of the reproductive system, making satisfaction of the desire an end in itself.

From the point of view of science, human biology, or good medicine, can we argue that this is in accordance with the healthy functioning of the human body? Certainly the answer is no. The relationship of sexual desire and sexual pleasure to the function of reproduction is built

into the system in a particular way. The purpose of the system is not to satisfy that pleasure, but rather that pleasure is what brings the married couple to engage in the act enabling them to reproduce. The fact that we have the means to choose to disrupt that connection, to create this “disconnect,” does not mean that this is in accord with good health. In fact, it clearly opposes the good of the human person, in both body and mind.

Not every married couple using contraception, of course, does so solely from motives of experiencing sexual pleasure while avoiding conception. An integral good of the sexual act also lies in its unitive aspect, expressing and deepening in a physical way the spiritual and psychological bond of human love. This vital human need is certainly related to health and human flourishing. Separating this unitive aspect of the sexual act from the reproductive, however, does not protect it, but rather makes subtle inroads in the totality of the union which the act expresses.

While it is not in the scope of this discussion to enter into details, it is important to note that there are ways consistent with the nature of the human person for a married couple to postpone pregnancy. Natural family planning (NFP) is a practice which respects the natural cycles of the female reproductive system by determining at which times she is most likely to be

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fertile. Rather than disordering the sexual act, the couple simply chooses to abstain from the sexual act altogether during the wife's fertile period. NFP is scientifically effective, healthy, and statistically proven to strengthen marriages by promoting mutual respect and communication.

### IS CONTRACEPTION GOOD MEDICINE?

Let's step back a moment and recall the principles of good science. Good science seeks to take a look at the world and the things in it – including the human body – and understand the way that they are actually made. Unlike the many people who believe that everything is relative and that there is no real truth (just my truth or your truth), science takes for granted that there is an actual, objective reality, that we can know it, and that we can use it for our good. With this in mind, we can consider medical science and ask, "What is good medicine?"

Good medicine looks at the normal functioning of the human body and applies interventions to attempt two things. The first is the restoration of health. If an organ or an organ system is not working correctly, doctors intervene to bring it back to what is normal, that is, in keeping with the reality of what is good for the human body. In addition to restoring health, the other thing that good medicine attempts is to prevent disease.

With these considerations as background, it would be appropriate to examine some common contraceptive methods specifically with respect to these two objectives of good medicine: restoration of health

and prevention of disease.

### SURGICAL STERILIZATION

In surgical sterilization, either the female fallopian tubes or the male vas deferens is cut (or ligated or burned or otherwise disrupted) to prevent the passage of gametes through those tissues. Passage of sperm or egg is the normal function of these organs.

Recalling the two objectives of good medicine, we can ask: Does the destruction of normally functioning tissue in the body qualify as good medicine?

There is no other example in medical science where doctors intentionally destroy healthy tissue in a human body for the very reason that it is functioning correctly. Now, if a patient has colon cancer, I might cut out a piece of the colon because there is a cancer there. If I amputate a gangrenous finger, then I am doing so to prevent the gangrene from spreading to the rest of the body. But if someone came to me and said, "I don't like this finger anymore. Would you please take it off?" I would absolutely refuse to do that. So would most other doctors.

In fact, there appears to be only one system of the body where, for some reason, we allow this to take place, where doctors are allowed to destroy a normally functioning piece of the body precisely because it is functioning normally.

Besides the fact that the intention in surgical sterilizations is to destroy healthy tissue, we can also consider the risks and secondary effects of anesthesia and surgery, which are not usually advised except in situations of real necessity.

Given all these factors, it would seem very difficult to make the case that surgical sterilization could in any way be considered good medical practice.

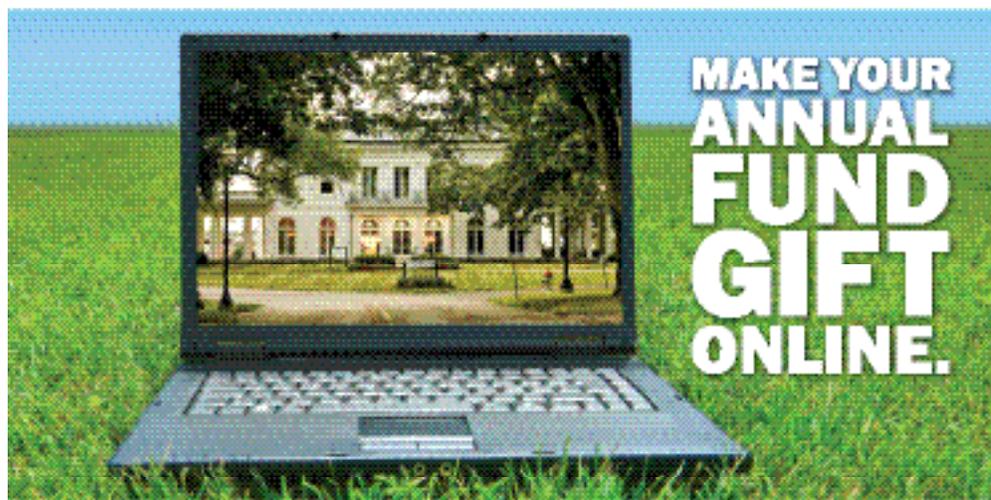
### INTRAUTERINE DEVICE

Another very common contraceptive method is the intrauterine device (IUD). The IUD is a metallic or plastic structure that is placed inside the uterus to decrease the likelihood of pregnancy occurring. It may or may not contain a hormone. Over time, there has been a change in the way people describe the function of the IUD, but basically the device provokes an inflammatory reaction in the uterus. This inflammatory reaction creates an environment that is hostile to sperm, hostile to egg, and certainly hostile to an embryo.

As a doctor, I find this idea of inflammation really interesting. All through medical school and residency, it is drilled into us repeatedly that inflammation is bad for the body; it is not normal. Take the example of asthma: Chronic inflammation is one of the central abnormalities of asthma, and it causes much more complicated disease over time. And so we do everything that we can to try to get rid of inflammation in the body – except in one case. The IUDs are inserted to create an inflammatory situation intentionally.

Another aspect of the IUD that I find remarkable is this: Here we have a device implanted in an essentially sterile environment, the uterus, with two little strings hanging out into an essentially non-sterile space, the vagina. I find this is quite amazing, because in medicine we are taught over and over again that this is a bad thing to do.

If a patient has an IV inserted in his arm at the hospital, the doctor wants it out within three to five days. Why? Because something going into a sterile space (the vein) that is extending out into a non-sterile space can cause an infection. The longer the situation endures, the higher the risk of infection. The same is true for urinary catheters, central lines, and other devices – they are used only when absolutely necessary and removed as quickly as possible, in order to reduce the risk of infection. Yet, with the IUD, there seems to be little concern about the fact that this device is sitting in an essentially sterile space with its strings extending into a non-sterile space. In inserting an IUD there is the possibility of perforating the uterus when inserting



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the IUD. In fact, two or three of my own patients have had uterine perforations resulting from IUDs placed prior to coming to my practice. Sadly, one of them required a complete hysterectomy in her twenties.

“THE PILL”

Finally, let us take a closer look at our society’s favorite form of contraception: hormonal oral contraceptive pills (OCPs). Reading the package labeling on oral contraceptives, one finds that they function in three ways.

- 1) They suppress ovulation so that it may not occur at all.
- 2) The hormones in OCPs alter the cervical mucus in a way that makes it more difficult for sperm to enter the uterus, reducing the chance of fertilization.
- 3) OCPs alter the endometrium (the lining of the uterus) to prevent implantation even if fertilization were to occur. This effect is commonly referred to as “abortifacient.” (I challenge anyone who insists that an OCP is not abortifacient to explain why drug companies list all three of these indications on oral contraceptives packaging.)

Someone might ask, “So what is the problem? Even if you don’t like the idea of altering body chemistry in these ways, this all sounds pretty harmless.” There are, in fact, several problems. First, there is ample evidence that women who use oral contraceptive pills have an increased risk of clotting – clots in the legs, clots that go to the lung (pulmonary emboli), or even clots that go the brain (stroke).

In only nine years of medical practice, I have already seen at least five, perhaps even ten, young women who have had strokes. I am not speaking of 60-year old women; these are 20 and 30-year old women having strokes while they were on oral contraceptives.

There is also evidence that oral contraceptives act as a kind of immunosuppressive in the body. It has long been understood that women on oral contraceptives have



higher rates of certain types of infections, including HPV infection, and that estrogen and progesterone interact with the immune system in a way that diminishes immunity.

As for carcinogenic (cancer-causing) effects of the pill, it is very interesting how the data gets played down in the United States. The research branch of the World Health Organization classifies oral contraceptives as a Class 1 carcinogen, just like tobacco. (Anyone wanting to look into this can find the publication online. It is enormous: 600 pages of data for almost every different type of oral contraceptive.) Although space limitations prevent my discussing other types of morbidity and mortality associated with oral contraception, there is no question that during the time that OCPs have been used, sexually transmitted diseases (including sexually transmitted cancers) have skyrocketed.

Once again, were we to ask if this makes sense in terms of good medicine, if this is about restoring health or about preventing disease, it would be dishonest to say yes. Contraception in any form is an attempt to alter fertility or to avoid pregnancy. From

what we have seen about the two objectives of good medicine (restoration of health and prevention of disease), it follows that the only way one could consider contraception as “good medicine” is if fertility is treated as an illness and pregnancy as a disease to be avoided. As a medical professional, I must emphasize for the reader the fact that this is wrong. Rather, fertility is normal. Fertility is healthy. A woman’s monthly period is actually the “reset button,” so to speak, of her “fertility cycle.” It is as if the body tells itself, “I didn’t get pregnant that month. We need to start things over again.”

Three things occur during the fertility cycle. First, there is a hormonal preparation of the uterus. What is the uterus preparing for? It is preparing for pregnancy. As that is happening, there is hormonal stimulation of ovulation. Ovulation is normal. It is not abnormal. It is the normal functioning of the female body. At the same time there are changes in the cervical mucus that occur exactly at the time of ovulation. This cervical mucus facilitates the movement of sperm through the cervix, uterus, and into the fallopian tubes for fertilization there. Since the body “knows” that it is only at this time that a woman can actually become pregnant, her body doesn’t waste resources producing this kind of cervical mucus at other times of the month.

An evolutionary biologist might admire the way in which natural selection favored the survival of those whose bodily functions were suited to promote pregnancy, reproduction, and the effective passing on of their genes. Our pastors might exhort us to praise God for things so fearfully and wonderfully made. Perhaps it is time that medical professionals took the initiative in leading our society to an awareness of the fact that fertility is an integral aspect of good health, and that understanding and protecting fertility are true objectives of medical science. Our commitment to human flourishing requires that we not only know and embrace this truth ourselves, but seek ways to draw those whom we serve to do the same. ■



**Sister Mary Diana, O.P.**, a member of the Aquinas College Board of Directors, has been providing healthcare for medically underserved patients at the Saint Thomas Family Health Center South Clinic since 2007. After entering the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation in 1989, Sister Mary Diana completed her medical training and residency in internal medicine at Vanderbilt University in 2004. She is currently a member of the Catholic Medical Association of Nashville. Sister presented this talk as part of the Aquinas College Lecture Series on November 9, 2010. Please see [www.aquinascollege.edu](http://www.aquinascollege.edu) for the video presentation.

# Love and Life in the Divine Plan



In recent years, there has been a lot of talk in the media and among political, social, and religious groups about the nature of marriage and family. In a day and age when much has been questioned in the area of traditional beliefs, Aquinas College recently took the opportunity to communicate the importance of the institution of marriage and why we should do all that we can as a society to protect and strengthen both marriage and family.

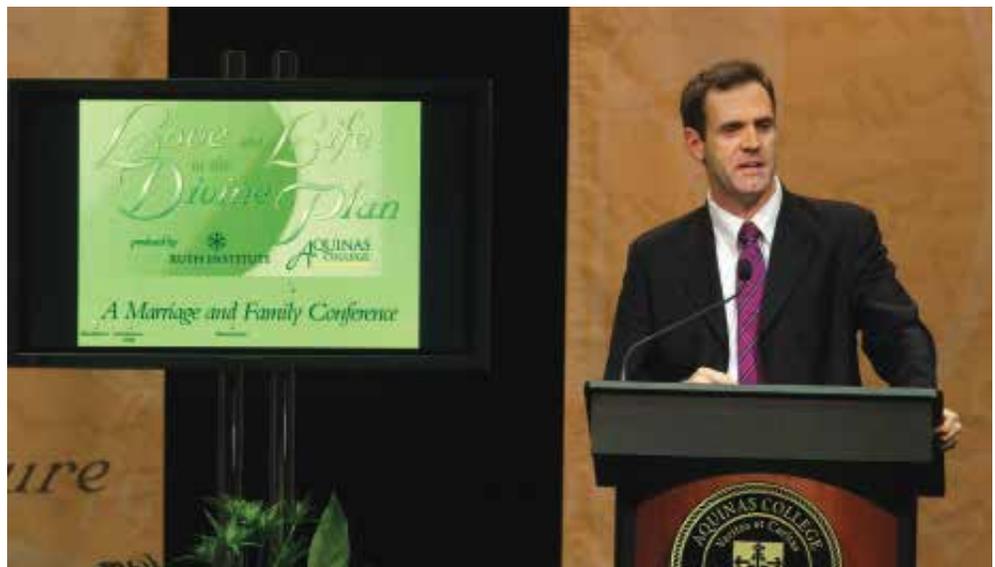
In collaboration with the Ruth Institute, the College hosted “Love and Life in the Divine Plan,” a two-day conference on marriage and family, on February 25-26. Based on a 2009 pastoral letter of the United States Conference of Catho-

*“Man and woman were made ‘for each other’ – not that God left them half-made and incomplete: He created them to be a communion of persons, in which each can be ‘helpmate’ to the other, for they are equal as persons ... and complementary as masculine and feminine.” (CCC 372)*

lic Bishops entitled “Marriage: Love and Life in the Divine Plan,” the conference featured presentations by six leading scholars and public intellectuals on each of the four modern threats to marriage identified by the bishops, as well as presentations on Christian anthropology and the real gift of God’s love.

## Male and Female He Created Them: Human Anthropology and Marriage

**Samuel Gregg, Ph.D.**, is director of research at the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty. He has written and spoken extensively on questions of political economy, economic history, ethics in finance, and natural law theory. In his lecture, Dr. Gregg affirmed that the answer we give to the question *Quid Sit Homo?* (Who is man?) predetermines to a large extent the answers we give to any number of controversial issues, including present-day debates about marriage and the family. Through a discussion of classical, Christian, and modern sources that all present a vision of men and women as different but complementary, Dr. Gregg demonstrated that the Christian anthropological understanding of people formed for communion with each other is in fact more reasonable than modern alternatives.



## Contraception : Why Not?

**Janet E. Smith, Ph.D.**, holds the Father Michael J. McGivney Chair of Life Ethics at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit and is serving a third term as a consultant to the Pontifical Council on the Family. In her presentation, Dr. Smith revealed the devastating effects of “The Pill” on modern society. Touted as a major medical advance leading to greater freedom for men and women, stronger marriages, and fewer teenage pregnancies, contraception has instead been a social disaster. Since the introduction of artificial contraception in the 1950s, divorces have skyrocketed, more than 40% of children are born out of wedlock, and babies are seen more as a burden than a blessing. Sharing statistics, decades of research, keen intellect and her sharp wit, Dr. Smith exposed the crippling effect that the contraceptive culture has had on relationships, families, and physical and mental health and demonstrated that the Church’s

teaching on sexuality and natural family planning may be the only antidote to our culture’s woes. Her talk “Contraception: Why Not” and a series of talks on “Sexual Common Sense” are available at [www.mycatholicfaith.org](http://www.mycatholicfaith.org).

## In Whose Best Interest? Cohabitation, Adults, and Children

**W. Bradford Wilcox, Ph.D.**, is associate professor of Sociology and director of the National Marriage Project at the University of Virginia. A researcher who studies marriage, fatherhood, parenting, and religion, Dr. Wilcox noted that over the last forty years, cohabitation has come to occupy a major place in the American family system, with more than 65% of adults cohabiting before marriage, and more than 40% of children spending at least some time in a cohabiting household. Dr. Wilcox shared statistics that indicate that intimate relationships characterized by autonomy, flexibility, and an easy

“exit” are not likely to prepare men and women for the classic functions of marriage: mutual dependence, parental responsibility, and the emotional security of a love that never dies. He observed that children in cohabiting unions perform consistently worse by all measures of academic and social achievement than children in intact, married families – exhibiting higher rates of psychological problems, educational failure, and drug use – and that they are more frequently victimized by abuse. Since marriage is in the best interests of both adults and especially children, Dr. Wilcox advocated renewing the economic, legal, cultural, and religious foundations of marriage for our day.

## The Economics of Divorce: Theory and Evidence

**Doug Allen, Ph.D.**, is the Burnaby Mountain professor of economics at Simon Fraser University. In his presentation, Dr. Allen shared more than

25 years of research illustrating the devastating effects of divorce on the family and culture. Discussing the relative importance of the law, changes in women's labor force participation, and other broad demographic changes, Dr. Allen demonstrated how changing social norms about divorce have had many unintended and unexpected consequences, impacting cultural spheres as various as the well-being of children, fertility, investments, and suicide rates. "Marriage is an earthly institution," he concluded. "Where our sinful nature goes, so goes marriage."

**Threats to Marriage: Same Sex Unions and Artificial Reproductive Technology**

Jennifer Roback Morse, Ph.D., is founding president of the Ruth Institute, a non-profit educational institute promoting lifelong married love at home, at work and in the public square. In this talk, Dr. Morse showed that contemporary efforts to redefine marriage have many hidden pitfalls. She noted that same-sex "marriage" creates a whole new definition of marriage, not just an expansion of an existing institution to more people. She listed four key principles that have been undermined by the advent of same-sex "marriage":

- Children are entitled to a relationship with their mothers and fathers.
- Mothers and fathers are not interchangeable.
- Biology is the primary way that we define parenthood.
  - The state may recognize parentage, but it does not (or should not) assign parentage or control it.

Dr. Morse predicted that if society continues to ignore the threat to these principles, it will witness the following negative consequences: Marriage will become the kind of thing that



*From left to right: Bishop David R. Choby, Dr. Janet Smith, Dr. W. Bradford Wilcox, Sister Jane Dominic Laurel, O.P., Dr. Jennifer Roback Morse, Dr. Doug Allen, Dr. Samuel Gregg.*

separates children from their parents; fathers will be marginalized from the family; "triple parenting" will be unstoppable; the expansion of state power will be breathtaking in its scope. Dr. Morse also discussed the role that artificial reproductive technology plays in the debate over same sex "marriage," showing how it has distorted the way people make decisions about marriage and the way they think about parenthood.

Noting that support of same-sex "marriage" and the unlimited use of artificial reproductive technology has become the "default" position for many, Dr. Morse cautions that the attendant injustices to children, to men, and to women are capable of creating an almost inhuman future for society.

**The Rich Gift of Love**

Sister Jane Dominic Laurel, O.P., is an instructor at Aquinas College and a popular guest speaker on religious life and theology. In her presentation, Sister explored the nature and meaning of love, both human and divine. Discussing how the religious and married states of life are really two different paths to the same end — loving God above all things and neighbor as self — Sister showed that commitment in the face of limitations and suffering is necessarily a part of real love. Her discourse included examples of real-life couples whose human love reflects the divine love revealed definitively by Our Lord during His Passion; and she recalled the promise of the Resurrection for those who maintain innocence, purity, nobility, and self-sacrifice in their commitment to spouses.

**EWTN films marriage conference**

The relevance of the topics along with the impressive roster of guest speakers attracted the interest of the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), a global Catholic television station based in Irondale, Alabama. EWTN made its first visit Aquinas College to videotape the event and hopes to collaborate with Aquinas College on other projects in the future.

EWTN plans to broadcast the conference to its worldwide audience beginning in June 2011. DVDs of the conference are available for purchase at [www.ewtnreligiouscatalogue.com](http://www.ewtnreligiouscatalogue.com).



# Spring Lecture Series Highlights

By Rickey Schuller

The Aquinas College Lecture Series kicked off on February 16 with “A Journey Through the History of Country Music” by **Glen Thompson**, founder and long-time president of the Grand Ole Opry Fan Club. Thompson, known as “Mr. Country Music,” was joined by old friends **Kayton Roberts** (steel guitarist for Hank Snow), **Richard White** (guitarist, vocalist, and radio personality), and **Roger Carroll** (Opry veteran as bassist for Hank Snow). Taking the audience through the history of country music beginning at its inception through the 1960s, Glen provided a detailed history of the music genre. The lecture was illustrated by the group’s rendition of songs from the various eras, providing a perfect blend of authentic country music instrumentals and vocals.

The following week artist **Maestro Igor Babailov** shared insights from his life’s work in the classical-realist tradition of painting. Born and raised in Russia, commencing his formal art education at nine, he received his Master of Fine Arts degree from the Surikov Academy in Moscow. Trained in the renowned Classical Realism curriculum he studied the technique and principles of such masters as Leonardo de Vinci, Michelangelo and Raphael. He discussed his works featured in the North American tour of “Vatican Splendors: A Journey through Faith and Art”, an extraordinary exhibit celebrating the history of Vatican art currently touring the United States. This exhibit features his most famous work, the painting of Pope Benedict XVI which His Holiness selected to represent his papacy. Illustrating his lecture with both images of his works and original works that he brought with him, he discussed techniques, inspirations and stories regarding some of his more famous clients such as George W. Bush and Russian President Vladimir Putin. The evening ended with demonstration of his talents. Using an audience member as a model, he created a pencil drawing while discussing his technique for the audience.

Aquinas College theology instructor **Sister Jane Dominic Laurel, O.P.** gave a dynamic presentation on “Media, Culture, and the Teenager” on March 1. Citing clear examples of the mainstream media’s disregard for the impact of targeted marketing on the well-being, spirituality, and health of our youth, Sister asserted that the billions of dollars at the disposal of teenagers appears to be the incentive for corporations to aggressively go after our children. Sister challenged students, parents, and teachers to take control of the media exposure in their lives and to rededicate ourselves to family. She encouraged us to be aware of the way that electronics,

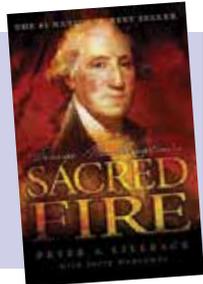


media, and outside sources interfere with the important time spent with family members and promote deceptive ideologies. The question and answer session following Sister’s lecture evidenced the impact of her talk on those who attended.

The lecture series concluded on March 8 with a visit from best-selling author **Peter A. Lillback, Ph.D.** In addition to the lecture the evening included a book sale and signing of Dr. Lillback’s New York Times bestseller, *George Washington’s Sacred Fire*. The book comprises 725 pages of text and more than 400 pages of appendices,

endnotes, bibliography, and index – an exhaustive treatment of the faith of the nation’s first leader that represents the culmination of fifteen years of research. The book has received popular praise and has been critically acclaimed by academicians, including Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Walter A. McDougall of the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Lillback provided an engaging evening with his gentle, humorous style and highly intellectual arguments, with ample opportunity to ask questions. The lecture, which drew a wide variety of attendees from all over the middle Tennessee area, was a fitting conclusion to an exceptional lecture series.

Dr. Lillback’s book is “the culmination of an exhaustive fifteen years of research that reveals a world icon driven by the high-test of ideals, not the least of which was his genuine Christian faith. Using George Washington’s own writings, journals, letters, manuscripts and those of his closest family and confidants the author reveals the truth of this awe inspiring role model for all generations.” The book is available for purchase at [www.providenceforum.org](http://www.providenceforum.org).



In his lecture, Dr. Lillback summarized his position by outlining five elements of deist thought and showing how Washington’s own words demonstrate a mindset that was theist rather than deist.

Deism	Washington
Anti prayer	Writings include more than 100 prayers
Anti clerical	Closest friend was a pastor, entertained or corresponded with more than 50 pastors
Anti Providence	270 explicit references to Providence in 37 volumes of writings
Anti Scripture	200 examples of Bible quotes/allusions, including 40 references to Micah 4:4
Anti Christian	Exhortations to governors of the 13 colonies to imitate the “Divine Author”

## Benefit Dinner

On November 3, 2010, Aquinas College hosted its thirty-second annual Benefit Dinner at the Hutton Hotel in Nashville. Brenda Kincaid, executive assistant to the president of Aquinas College, was inducted into St. Thomas Aquinas Society in recognition of more than three decades of service to The Dominican Campus. The College also presented the 2010 Distinguished Alumnus Award to Marco A. Fernandez ('95), director of Clinical Education and Work Force Development for St. Thomas Health Services, who has played an active role in helping the College secure resources and clinical space for its growing nursing program.

The keynote speaker of the event was Reverend Robert A. Sirico, president of the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty. In his address to the nearly 300 attendees, Father Sirico discussed human dignity as the basis of a free and virtuous society, emphasizing the principle of subsidiarity as a feature of the organization of free citizens.



*"The needs that human beings have are best met at the most local level of their existence. If you have a need in your life, you are the first person that is responsible to meet that need. Sometimes a person finds himself in a dire circumstance, maybe a physical or mental ailment, we need other people to help us. Who is best suited to help us? It's the people closest to us, it's our families. They're not dispensable. We can't just play around with it. It's a natural organism in human life. But if the family itself has a problem, we need to go to extended families. But if there's a problem there, we have to go to the neighborhood, the Church, a whole series of institutions that surround people like different clubs or aid agencies that are local, where we bond with people, where we know people. The knowledge between neighbors is so important. When you go to the polls, you have to vote on things thinking about what's going to diminish my capacity to be a neighbor. What's going to diminish the capacity of my neighbors to be a neighbor to me when I'm in need? We shouldn't bureaucratize and politicize everything so it's removed from our own neighborhoods and our own cities and brought to some far away bureaucratic system."*

– Reverend Robert A. Sirico, president of the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion and Liberty

## Welcome Brother Ignatius!

Members of the area health care community and dignitaries of the Dominican Order of Preachers gathered on January 26 to welcome Brother Ignatius Perkins, O.P., dean of nursing and director of the RN-BSN program, to Nashville.



Rosalyn Sneed, recipient of the winter 2010 St. Catherine of Siena Nursing Award, and her husband Eric

## ASN program pins 54 winter graduates

Father Jacek Kopera, O.P., celebrated the annual winter baccalaureate Mass for 54 new nurses and their families and friends at the Cathedral of the Incarnation in Nashville on December 9. The ASN pinning ceremony immediately followed the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass.

# Philosophy major guiding students in the pursuit of wisdom

Prospective students who may be asking “What is truth?” will now be given the opportunity to explore the answer with faithful and trustworthy guides. Last winter, the Aquinas College Board of Directors approved a curriculum proposal by the Liberal Arts Program for a new major in philosophy, and interested students will be able to enter the program as soon as fall 2011.

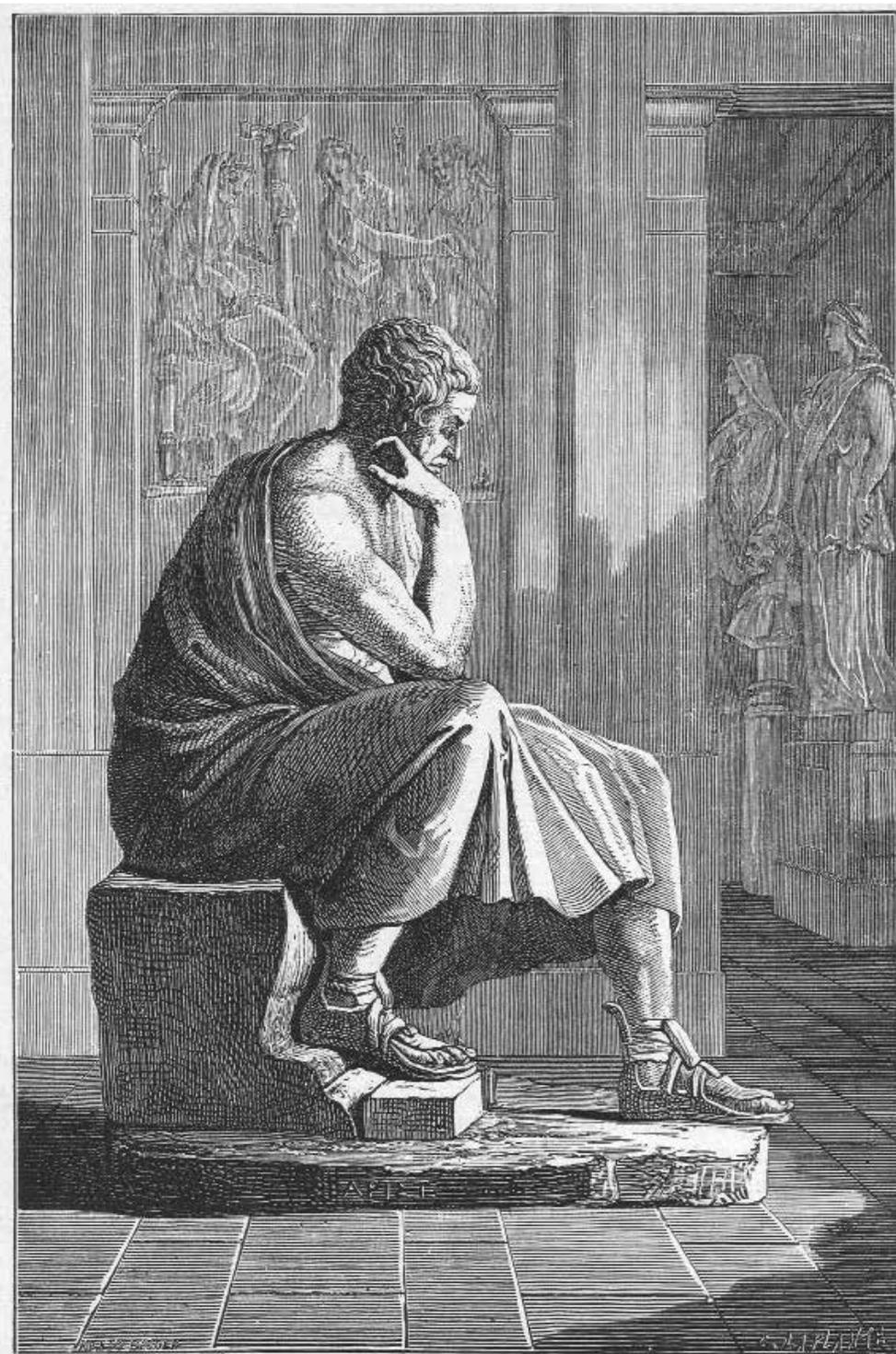
According to program director Bill Smart, Ph.D., Aquinas College professors Peter Pagan, Ph.D., and Ben Smith, Ph.D., along with adjunct instructors Sister Elinor, O.P., and Sister Therese, O.P., were instrumental in defining the curriculum and goals of the philosophy major.

“With respect to the suitability of the philosophy major, our faculty recognizes that the discipline provides an important, and arguably indispensable vehicle for the communication of our mission,” said Dr. Smart. “Although the philosophy minor and the liberal arts core already offer a wide selection of courses in philosophy, the new major provides the Liberal Arts Program with a coherent “package” that will enable interested students to pursue a bachelor of arts in the discipline.”

Among the humanities, philosophy is a popular major and provides graduates with a variety of career and post-graduate opportunities, including professional degrees in areas such as law. Even so, most students are attracted to the discipline because it addresses perennial questions about truth, reality, and the purpose of life.

“Philosophy is rational inquiry into first principles and first causes,” said Dr. Ben Smith, who assisted Dr. Peter Pagan in finalizing the curriculum plan. “For example, philosophy asks ‘What is truth?’ and ‘What is nature?’ It seeks answers to foundational questions such as these, relying on reason, nature, and experience to find ultimate explanations.”

Dr. Smith noted that the Catholic approach to philosophy is guided by the Church’s Magisterium and inspired by classical thinkers. The philosophy curriculum at Aquinas College emphasizes the insights and methods of Saint Thomas Aquinas, in particular, along with substantial reference to classical sources such as Aristotle and other great thinkers.



For more pragmatic minds that question whether philosophy has anything relevant to say to the modern world, Dr. Smith has a suggestion.

“What we think about first principles

affects how we think and how we live our lives. In other words, if your answer to these questions is wrong, everything is wrong. In every time and place, including our own, these are the essential questions for human understanding.” ■

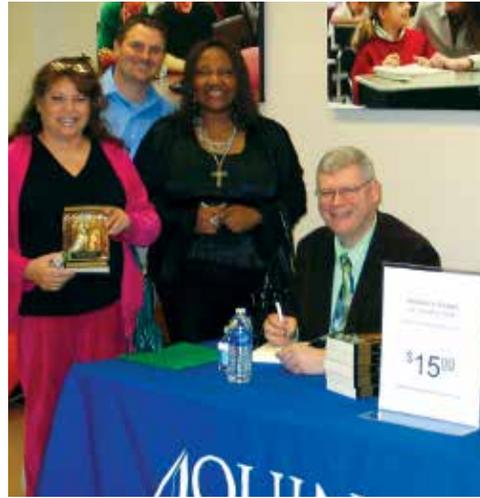
## FACULTY BRIEFS



**Sister Jane Dominic, O.P.**, presented "The Theology of the Body and the Medical Profession" at meetings of the Catholic Medical Association on August 21 and November 6; "Bringing God the Father's Love to the Classroom" at the faculty retreat of St. Henry's Catholic School in Nashville on October 6; "Let Them Eat Cake: Birthday Cake" at the fall pro-life conference hosted by the Aquinas College Frassati Society on October 6; "Masculinity and Femininity" at Vanderbilt University on November 11; "The Exciting Life of a Catholic Teenager" at St. Mary's Catholic School in Jackson, Tenn. on December 9; and "Media, Culture, and the Teenager" at the Aquinas College Lecture Series on March 1.

Sister also led a women's retreat for the Diocese of Birmingham, Ala., on November 12-13; and presented at various retreats and workshops at St. Cecilia Motherhouse, including "Giving the Word a Home - The Life of Prayer" on October 2; "Media, Culture, and the Catholic Teenage 'Rebellion'" on

December 22; and "St. Thomas Aquinas and the Angelic Warfare Confraternity" on January 9.



**Dutton Kearney, Ph.D.**, presented "The Rhetorical Roots of Political Impasse" at The Philadelphia Society's regional meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, on September 25. The conference theme was "The Ethics of Rhetoric in a Digital Age." Dr. Kearney also presented "Swift's Kick at Modernist Thought: Satire and the Defense

of Tradition in Gulliver's Travels" at the Aquinas College Lecture Series on October 20.



**Peter Pagan, Ph.D.**, presented "Is Homicide Ever Justifiable Morally?" at Aquinas College on October 6 and "The End of Democracy: Authority or Freedom from Truth?" at the American Maritime Association's annual international meeting in Canton, Ohio, on October 14-16.



**Ben Smith, Ph.D.**'s paper "Political Theology and Thomas Aquinas: A Reading of the De Regno" was selected through peer review for presentation at Philosophy and Language, the 84th annual meeting of the American Catholic Philosophical Association, in Baltimore, Md. on November 5-7, 2010. The paper will be included in a forthcoming publication of the ACPA. Dr. Smith also presented "Reason, Love, and History: The Augustinian Tradition and Benedict XVI" at the 2011 St. Thomas Aquinas Catechetical and Theological Forum in Nashville on February 4-5.

### Aquinas College: the next step in following God's call

As the only four-year Catholic college in middle Tennessee, Aquinas College offers something that cannot be measured merely by a catalog of course offerings. Since we are specialists with a unique focus on the dignity of the human person, we offer something that is rooted in Someone: the person of Jesus Christ, Who has a plan for each of us. Contact us today to find out why Aquinas College is considered one of the "top 21" in North America.\*

TRANSFORMING LIVES AND CULTURE THROUGH TRUTH AND CHARITY

# FALL PREVIEW DAY

**Saturday, October 22, 2011**

**9 am to 1 pm**

**RSVP (615) 297-7545 or [admissions@aquinascollege.edu](mailto:admissions@aquinascollege.edu)**

For more information on our undergraduate degree programs in the liberal arts, teacher education, nursing, and business, please call (615) 297-7545 or visit [www.aquinascollege.edu](http://www.aquinascollege.edu)

\*Aquinas College is among the twenty-one institutions profiled in The Newman Guide to Choosing a Catholic College.

# Balloon Kid Means Business

Anthony Lena is transforming lives and parties with balloons and hilarity

A sophomore majoring in business management, Anthony Lena selected Aquinas College as his first choice after being awarded a scholarship from the Scarlett Family Foundation. He plans to use his business education to become an “un-poppable” force in the entertainment world.

## How did you get started?

When I was about ten years old, my parents gave me a simple balloon kit that included a pump, balloons, and instructions. I didn't have much interest in it until a neighbor, seeing my abandoned kit, asked her mom to buy her one like mine. Later, when she showed me all the cool balloons she had made, I got a little competitive.

I got out my own kit and soon filled half the room with balloons. Balloons became a fun hobby for me, and whenever I saw a balloon artist out

in public, I would ask questions and get new ideas.

## How did you turn balloons into a business?

Every year, my family and I attend the Centennial Hospital NICU reunion to visit the staff that took care of me when I was a four-pound, four-ounce premature

baby. For the 2003 reunion, I brought a very special balloon, two doves kissing inside a heart, to my nurse Mrs. Patti Scott. Admiring the balloon, she said, “Keep practicing, Anthony, and next year we'll hire you to make balloons for all the children.” I was so excited! By giving me my first job, Mrs. Scott inspired me to take my balloons to a professional level. In October 2004, at the age of 13, I became “Anthony the Balloon Kid” and made balloons for more than 100 children at the NICU reunion. Within 18 months, word got around, and my business has been thriving ever since.

## How did you decide to major in business management?

As a senior in high school, we were required to do a semester-long senior project. I had to do extensive research on a life-long career that I was considering, and, of course, I chose “children's entertainment.” I interviewed world renowned entertainers, and when I asked them what college courses had helped them the most, they replied, “The business classes were the most helpful.” One balloon artist said, “In show business, it is great to have the ‘show’ part down, but you must have the ‘business’ part down to be successful.”

**What is your favorite class?** Right now, I'm enjoying Management Science. We have been learning about linear programming and other methods for making the best business decision.

**Has your work been recognized or awarded?** I have been very fortunate to receive several awards. One of my balloon sculptures, after winning the title “Best of Nashville,” competed against 39 “bests” from other cities and recently took first place as “Best of U.S.A.” Also, I was twice voted “Best Birthday Party Entertainer of the Year” by the readers of *Nashville Parent*. The biggest prize, though, was the scholarship that I was awarded as a result of being a young entrepreneur. Mr. Joe Scarlett of the Scarlett Family Foundation said that my application was the most unique that he had ever seen.

**How can readers inquire about booking Anthony the Balloon Kid?** They can contact me on my Facebook page, Anthony the Balloon Kid. ■



# TEP alumna puts her class on the MAP

Fred Kjellgren knows how to make wise investments. He is a private man, now enjoying retirement from a successful business career. He is also enjoying some satisfaction that one investment in particular has paid off so handsomely. His daughter Denise is doing what she loves for a living – and her success as a teacher has recently been recognized by her fellow educators.

Denise Kjellgren ('06) is a second-grade teacher at Bonita Springs Charter School, an independent K-8 educational institution in Bonita Springs, Florida. Her two children, 12-year old Zachary and 11-year old Sydney, also attend the school, which is one of some twenty institutions operated by Charter Schools USA.

Prior to attending Aquinas College, Denise was living in Florida and struggling to raise her two young children when her parents offered her the opportunity of a lifetime.

"They told me that if I wanted, I could move back to Tennessee and go back to school," said Denise. "They offered to help with Zachary and Sydney while I was in class; and of course, they helped me with the finances. I am really blessed to have such awesome parents."

Given the chance to finish her degree, there was no question of what program Denise would choose.

"I always wanted to be a teacher," she said.

And the "mission fit," so to speak, is evident. Denise was recently honored with her institution's Milestones Award (MAP), which recognizes the achievement of teachers whose classes score in the top 25 percent of all charter schools in southwest Florida. MAP teachers also pass the scrutiny of four classroom observations each academic year – two by the school's principal and two by Charter Schools USA, a leading provider of charter school management that has produced some of the



strongest academic gains in reading and math in the nation. Denise's recent MAP award recognizes her performance during the 2009-2010 school year, her third year as a teacher.

Denise says that she loves teaching second-graders. "They are at an age when they have calmed down enough to be really interested in learning. They are just soaking up knowledge."

A second grade class also provides a good amount of humor throughout the day. Once, when Denise was covering animals and their habitats, a youngster raised his hand to ask earnestly, "When do the elk turn into moose?" Hiding her amusement, Denise just as earnestly explained that elk never turn into moose—they are two different species.

Asked what she remembers most about her college days, Denise mentions "the feeling I

had every time I stepped onto the campus – that feeling of peace. Talking to the sisters, the spirituality – all of that made me feel really supported in my learning."

Denise's father shares this assessment of her education and experience at Aquinas College. In fact, Mr. Kjellgren and his wife Diane recently demonstrated their support by providing a substantial financial contribution to the College's efforts to launch the secondary education counterpart to the elementary Teacher Education Program. "The sisters tutored Denise and took a personal interest in her progress," said Fred Kjellgren. "They taught her how to enjoy being dedicated."

At a time when teacher protests clamor for headlines in the national media, it is comforting to know that Aquinas College teachers are dedicated to the most important focus in education – their students. ■

## FACULTY BRIEFS



**Sister Mary Anne, O.P.**, presented "Draw Near: The Transformative Power of the Eucharist," part of the catechetical in-service training for the Diocese of Joliet, Ill., on October 9-11.



**Sister Margaret Andrew, O.P.**, represented the Roman Catholic perspective at "Daughters of Abraham," a panel discussion hosted by the Christian Women's Leadership Center at Samford University, Birmingham, Ala., on September 23.

# First-year ASN students rally to comfort classmate

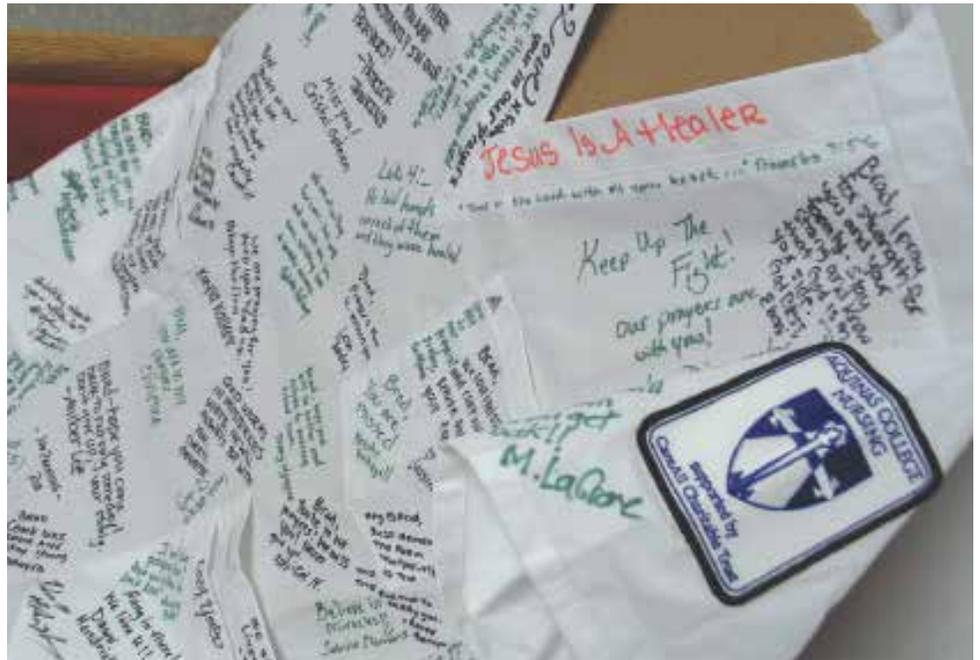
Thanks to the Associate of Science in Nursing (A.S.N.) program's reputation for rigor, most students who enter the A.S.N. program do so with the expectation that they are about to encounter the challenge of their lives. When Brad Collins was accepted into the A.S.N. program, he had no idea that the challenge he was about to face would be for his life.

Brad, who had been awarded the Alumni Medallion of Merit scholarship, began the academic year in seemingly good health; within a week, however, he began to exhibit symptoms of what would soon be diagnosed as non-Hodgkins lymphoma, a cancer of the white blood cells.

"Brad took his textbooks with him to the hospital and was determined to stay enrolled," said Peggy Daniel, director of the A.S.N. program. "Although that turned out to be impossible given the intensity of his treatment, we guaranteed him a spot in the program as soon as he was able to return."

When Brad began chemotherapy, his friend and classmate Jessica Bruce decided to do something concrete to help him stay motivated. She obtained signatures from the entire first-year class on a Aquinas College nursing scrub shirt and took it to the hospital. A few weeks later, Jessica organized a student group to participate in the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's annual fundraiser "Light the Night" at LP Field on October 7.

After months of prayers and gestures of support, the entire Aquinas College family was delighted when Brad returned to the campus on March 1 to take Ms. Daniel up on her offer. He plans to take classes this summer before claiming his seat in the A.S.N. first-year class in the fall of 2012. Aquinas College is grateful for his recovery and looks forward to sharing in the professional development of this remarkable young man. ■



## KNOW THIS PERSON?

if **YES**, join us for the **Photo ID Party** (for schedule see back cover)  
 or contact Rickey Schuller at (615) 297-7545 or [schullerr@aquinascollege.edu](mailto:schullerr@aquinascollege.edu) for details.



# Invitation to mission

Dear Aquinas College,

Several years ago, my daughter Margaux Wolfington (A.S.N. '06) realized that she had a vocation as a nurse and was accepted into the Associate of Science in Nursing program. Even before she graduated, Margaux felt a calling to serve in Africa, but it wasn't until last August that she finally had the opportunity to take a break from her work on the medical-surgical floor at Vanderbilt University Medical Center and travel to Kenya on a medical mission.

Both of our lives were changed by that trip. Upon facing dire need in several remote villages, Margaux and I knew that, as Christians, we must respond. To that end, we established World Care Connections, a non-profit organization that supplies the financial means for medical volunteers to serve the people who need it most around the world. World Care Connections provides essential care to those in need medically, materially, and educationally. It also offers support to those caring for children orphaned by disease or calamity.

Inspired by her Kenya experience, Margaux and another nurse went to Haiti for a week in February to serve at an orphanage. This summer, Margaux plans to travel to Uganda to serve at two orphanages for



children with AIDS and then on to Tanzania to help a group of albinos with special medical needs.

I am writing, in the first place, to express my appreciation for the fine education my daughter

received at Aquinas College. The work you do has had a far-reaching effect in the lives of others.

I am also writing to let you know that we are looking for nurses to volunteer in global medicine who may need financial support to do it. That volunteer experience will enrich their lives beyond belief.

Please log on to our new blog to read more about what we are trying to accomplish at [www.worldcareconnections.blogspot.com](http://www.worldcareconnections.blogspot.com). If you can pass it on to others, we would be grateful!

Most sincerely,  
Marcella Carlson Mastro

## FACULTY BRIEFS



Brother Ignatius Perkins, O.P., dean of nursing and RN-BSN Program director, delivered the keynote address "Nurses Taking the Lead in Emerging Issues" at the Kentucky Nurses Association's biannual convention in Louisville, Ky., on October 21.

Lydia Grubb, assistant professor in the Associate of Science in Nursing program, was named one of Saint Thomas Hospital's "Guardian Angels" in a surprise presentation in front of Ms. Grubb's class on December 2. In appreciation for her "devotion and obvious love for nursing," a family member of one her recent patients nominated Ms. Grubb for the honor.



While National Nurses Week kicks off each year on May 6 and concludes on

Florence Nightingale's birthday on May 12, the work of nurses goes on around the clock. To recognize the tireless efforts and vital contributions of these professionals, Aquinas College once again participated as a sponsor of the "2011 Salute to Nurses Awards" organized by the Tennessean and the Tennessee Nurses Association.

## New tax law provides opportunities for charitable IRA donations to campus schools

by William R. O'Bryan, Jr.  
Attorney-at-Law and Chair  
of The Dominican Campus  
Endowment Committee  
[wobryan@millermartin.com](mailto:wobryan@millermartin.com)

Last year, Congress enacted the Tax Relief, Unemployment Insurance Reauthorization, and Job Creation Act of 2010. Persons who have attained the age of 70 ½ may now transfer up to \$100,000 from his or her IRA to qualified charities which include The Dominican Campus schools.

If the IRA distribution is made directly by the IRA trustee to the qualified charity, you will not pay income tax on the distribution. The contribution also counts against

your minimum distribution requirement for 2011.

As a result, if you act this year, you can make a gift of up to \$100,000 from your IRA to charitable organizations like The Dominican Campus schools in 2011, without being taxed on the distribution from your IRA. As always, you should consult your tax advisor before making the contribution.

The information in this article and throughout this publication is not intended as legal, tax or investment advice. For such advice please consult an attorney, tax or investment professional. ■





## Write REASON Center ensures traditional learning

In an 1888 letter to George Bainton, Mark Twain wrote, “The difference between the almost-right word and the right word is really a large matter—it’s the difference between the lightning bug and the lightning.”

Aaron Urbanczyk is here to ensure that students see that light, in a quantifiable way.

Last fall, as part of the accreditation renewal process by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), Aquinas College proposed to implement a quality-enhancement plan designed to measure every student’s proficiency in writing and critical-thinking skills. The plan, entitled “Write REASON,” was overwhelmingly recommended for approval by the SACS visiting team, which went so far as to describe Write REASON as “brilliant.”

The Write REASON plan aims to enhance

each student’s ability to express clear, organized, and accurate ideas, as established in the classic liberal arts “trivium” of grammar, logic, and rhetoric. The plan calls for the use of a uniform rubric for evaluation and a writing center offering one-on-one support for students as they develop their writing and reasoning skills.

Dr. Urbanczyk was appointed in January as director of the new Write REASON Center. “The traditional trivium upholds grammar, logic, and rhetoric as foundational pillars for college level learning,” said Dr. Urbanczyk. “My vision is to gain consensus among faculty and administrators on a rubric that is concise, intuitive, and easy to use for an integrated evaluation of these three closely linked modes of learning.”

Dr. Urbanczyk explained that this rubric will be used to evaluate written assignments containing a critical thinking

component in courses for each program at three points: a core class, a mid-level class, and a capstone class. The use of the Write REASON rubric is an added measure whereby instructors can enhance the College’s emphasis on critical thinking and writing skills and assess student progress in these areas.

The first project of the Write REASON Center was a Writers’ Night Contest, which Dr. Urbanczyk hopes will become an annual tradition at Aquinas College. The five best student papers were selected by a faculty committee, and the authors were invited to read their papers at the Writers’ Night event. All nominees were recognized at the event (even those not selected to read their papers), and the winners received prizes that evening. ■

See the papers at: [www.aquinascollege.edu/students-current/write-reason.php](http://www.aquinascollege.edu/students-current/write-reason.php)

Prior to joining Aquinas College, Dr. Aaron Urbanczyk was an associate professor of English and Philosophy at Southern Catholic College in Dawsonville, Ga., and adjunct professor at Catholic Distance University. He earned a master’s in English at Franciscan University Steubenville and a doctorate in English at Florida State University.

COLLEGE BRIEFS



**Sister Elizabeth Anne, O.P.**, vice president for academic affairs, has been named to a blue ribbon panel of educational leaders who will address how Catholic colleges can support the work of Catholic elementary and secondary schools. The Catholic

Education Foundation's venture "Catholic Elementary, Secondary Schools and Catholic Colleges: An Interdependent System," plans to expand and strengthen cooperation and relationships between Catholic elementary and secondary schools and Catholic colleges in order to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ more effectively. Other panelists include Sean Cardinal O'Malley, OFM Cap., Archbishop of Boston; Reverend Michael Scanlan, T.O.R., chancellor of Franciscan University of Steubenville; Kenneth Whitehead, a noted author who served in the Reagan administration as the Department of Education's director of international education programs and later as deputy assistant secretary for higher-education programs and assistant secretary for postsecondary education; Dr. William Thierfelder, president of Belmont Abbey College, Belmont, N.C.; and Sister Marie Pappas, C.R., associate superintendent for mission effectiveness in the Archdiocese of New York.



**Sister Mary Michael, O.P.**, conducted catechetical in-service training for all school & CCD teachers in the Diocese of Joliet, Ill. on October 9-11, during which she presented "The Heart of Catechesis in the Mind of the Church." Sister also presented

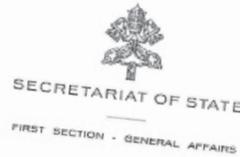
"The Mission of the Catholic High School" at Mount de Sales High School's professional development in-service training in Baltimore, Md. on October 20; "Understanding the Church's Encyclical on Human Life" at the Aquinas College Lecture Series on November 9; and "The Ecclesial Nature of Catechesis" at Ministries Day 2011 in the Diocese of Knoxville on January 7.



**Joan Watson**, coordinator of catechetics, presented "Joseph Ratzinger: The Heart of the Shepherd" at the 2011 St. Thomas Aquinas Catechetical and Theological Forum in Nashville on February 4-5.



**Jamie L. Sawyers**, assistant to the president, was named "Volunteer of the Year" by the Lupus Foundation of America, Mid-South Chapter. Jamie and volunteers from 27 other healthcare-related local charities were honored at the Champions in Health Award Dinner hosted by Community Health Charities of Tennessee on February 17.



From the Vatican, 8 November 2010

Dear Sister Mary Michael,

The Holy Father has received your brochure, and he has asked me to thank you.

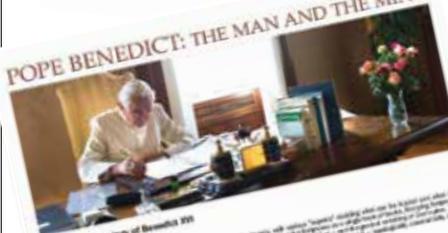
His Holiness sends prayerful good wishes for your work and invokes upon you God's abundant blessings.

Yours sincerely,

*Peter B. Wells*

Monsignor Peter B. Wells  
Assessor

POPE BENEDICT: THE MAN AND THE MIND



The papal throne of Benedict XVI...  
 Benedict, like all other...  
 Consider & act...  
 Pope Benedict and the church...



He liked it!

When the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia Congregation hosted a distinguished guest from Rome last fall, Sister Mary Michael, O.P., director of the Office of Catechetics, seized the opportunity to do a little international marketing for one of her office's major annual events. With the flier for the 2011 St. Thomas Aquinas Theological and Catechetical Forum hot off the press, Sister asked Monsignor Peter Wells to deliver a copy of the flier to Benedict XVI with a request for his blessing, which the Holy Father graciously granted.

# Cavalier Chronicles: The Seventies and Eighties

By Steve McCarthy

On December 21, 1971, the regional governing body, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, awarded accreditation to Aquinas College. Over the next two decades, the College was growing as an institution in numbers of students, programs, and facilities. The graduating class size in 1970 was 11. Fifteen years later the graduating class was 70.

The following year an athletic field was built, tennis courts were added in 1972, and the Cavaliers played their first intercollegiate baseball game in March, 1974. The baseball field was aptly named Edmund Field in honor of Mr. Edmund Notebart, who gave his untiring support towards its completion.

The basketball program began in 1971, and the College broke ground in 1975 on a physical education facility for its intercollegiate basketball team and intramural sports. Bishop James Daniel Niedergeses dedicated the Aquinas Center in 1976. To help finance the project, the Aquinas Singers made a recording of Christmas carols called "Merry Christmas is the Nicest Hello." Today, the Aquinas Center houses the college library.

Associate degree programs in religion and law enforcement education were started in 1973. In conjunction with Vanderbilt University, an ROTC program was also offered.

In 1974, Aquinas College celebrated the seventh centenary of St. Thomas Aquinas, a fitting reminder of the great Dominican teacher and philosopher for whom the College is named. As Sister Rose Marie Masserano, O.P., wrote in *Nashville Dominicans*, "The Church has always attached significance to the naming of an institution as a means of establishing its identity."

The first annual Aquinas College Benefit Dinner was held in 1979. The list of luminaries who have given generously of their time in support of the College at this annual event includes Mother Angelica; the late John Cardinal O'Connor of the



Diocese of New York; the Most Reverend Timothy Dolan, Archbishop of New York; best-selling author and syndicated columnist George Weigel; local author John Siegenthaler; and the late television news commentator Tim Russert.

In 1981, Charlie Anderson was hired to coach basketball at Aquinas College. (His son, Chuck, would serve in the same capacity for the baseball team.) In his twenty years at the College, Coach Anderson compiled an outstanding record of 451 victories and 179 losses. The high point of his tenure was winning the 1991 National Junior College Championship with a 74-68 victory over Arizona Western College, the first time a basketball team from Tennessee had won the tournament. Three Cavaliers made the All Tournament Team, bringing national attention to Aquinas College.

In partnership with campus neighbor Saint Thomas Hospital, the College launched the Associate of Science in Nursing program in 1983 with 28 students. The second floor of the science classroom wing was remodeled for the new program. The next year the "White House," looking much the same as when built at the turn of the century, was placed on the National Register of Historic Buildings and became

an administration building of the College, housing the business office and the office of institutional advancement. In honor of the 25th anniversary of Aquinas College in 1986, Sister Aloysius Mackin, O.P., published *Ventures Rewarded*, a comprehensive history of the College beginning with the 1860 arrival of the Dominican Sisters in Nashville.

Administratively, Sister Dominica Gobel, O.P., served enthusiastically as academic dean from 1961 to 1989. Sister Henry Suso Fletcher, O.P., president from 1967 to 1977, was voted one of five women of the year in 1974 by the Davidson County Business and Professional Women's Club for her contributions to the community. Sister Robert Ann Britton, O.P., who attended the Educational Convocation at the Catholic University of America in honor of Pope Paul II in 1979, was president from 1977 to 1986, followed by Sister Inez Cabaniss, O.P., from 1986 to 1989.

Like much of Nashville, the 1970s and 80s presented Aquinas College with new challenges and opportunities, but none greater than becoming a four-year institution in 1993, which will be the main topic in the next installment of Cavalier Chronicles. ■

**NEXT: Aquinas College and Beyond**

# Planning the Future of Aquinas College

By Timothy J. Stransky

The Catholic Church and her institutions like Aquinas College have reached all of us in many ways. You may remember many special moments such as marriages, baptisms, first communions, or difficult times when our Faith has sustained us.

Estate planning offers an opportunity to thank God for the many blessings that He has given to us. Once loved ones have been provided for, you can use your assets to support the many important needs at Aquinas College. Thanks to the generous support of caring alumni, friends and benefactors like you, estate planning has provided a variety of services at the college such as scholarships, campus ministry and sisters' education.

Estate planning allows you to manage your affairs properly at the present time and to arrange for an orderly transfer to others in the future. A well designed estate plan also has the benefit of enabling you to deal with the emotional and financial impact your death will have on your loved ones. Even if your estate is rather modest in size, it is in the best interest of your survivors for you to spend at least 1/20 as much time with a professional in this area as you do planning your vacation.

Almost 40 percent of people who have a will or trust have either not updated it in the last five years, or have never updated these documents at all.

If you have made a plan for your financial future through a will or trust, congratulations! It guarantees that your wishes will be carried out exactly as you've intended, and it ensures that your family is provided for in the future.

If you have not made an estate plan, you are among the 56 percent of Americans who do not have a will or trust. If you

To help you with your planning, the following is suggested bequest language your attorney may use in preparation of your will and Estate Plans:

"I give, devise and bequeath \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_"

(detail the gift to be given; for example, a cash sum, a percentage of the residue, or all of the rest, residue and remainder of the estate) to Aquinas College, Nashville, TN, (presently located at 4210 Harding Road, Nashville, TN 37205) for its general and unrestricted religious, educational or charitable purposes."

**Special note:** As with any financial decision, you should consult with your own financial advisors. If you are considering a gift to us, please let us know so we can ensure your gift is used according to your wishes.

die without executing either one of these documents, your assets will be distributed in the state where you legally reside based on a legal formula, not according to your preferences.

A basic reality of life is that if you intend to have money or property at death, then you have an estate planning issue. Estate planning is a team approach that helps you, your family, and your accountants, attorneys, and other estate planners coordinate effectively to ensure that your last wishes are known and handled according to your preferences.

I will leave you with these two thoughts: The IRS is counting on us to do nothing. And the choices we don't make affect those we care about the most.

Remember, there are no small bequests in the sight of God. Bequests of any size are greatly needed and deeply appreciated. ■

Please contact Tim Stransky, Vice President of Institutional Advancement, at (615) 383-3230 or stranskyt@dominican-campus.org to request an Estate Planning Worksheet that will help provide a framework for a new will or trust or serve as a guide to amend your current estate plan. Review your documents today, and call your attorney if you feel changes should be made.

## Tell us what's new with you!

We are interested in your accomplishments and family news. Please use this form to tell us about yourself and update your home and/or business information as well.

**SEND TO:**

Aquinas College  
 Office of Alumni Relations  
 4210 Harding Road  
 Nashville, TN 37205  
 Fax: (615)383-3196  
 E-mail: alumni@aquinascollege.edu

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Ladies, please include your maiden name.

**Class Year:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Degree/Major:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Company Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**State:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Business Phone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ALUMNI NEWS AND COMMENTS:**

Please print clearly.

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Please see reverse for more information.

## IN MEMORIAM

### CHECK ACTIVITIES WITH WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE TO HELP:

- Alumni Association
- Alumni Awards
- Student/Alumni Service Project
- Medallion of Merit Scholarship
- Reunions for Class/Program/Student
- Activities
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

### NEWS ABOUT YOU:

### WHAT TOPICS WOULD YOU ENJOY READING MORE ABOUT?

- Alumni
- Students
- Faculty
- Campus
- Departments
- Upcoming events
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**JOHN LAWRENCE CONNELLY**, former Aquinas College instructor and dean of students in the early 1980s, passed away on March 17 at the age of 87. A lifelong teacher and public servant, Connelly also taught at East High School and the University of Nashville, served as Davidson County Historian, and founded the Germantown Oktoberfest.

**EDWARD J. GLASER Jr.**, Aquinas College benefactor, died on January 30, 2011, at the age of 85. A veteran of the United States Navy and Aladdin Industries employee for 55 years, Ed was an inaugural member of The Dominican Campus Heritage Club.

#### REVEREND MONSIGNOR

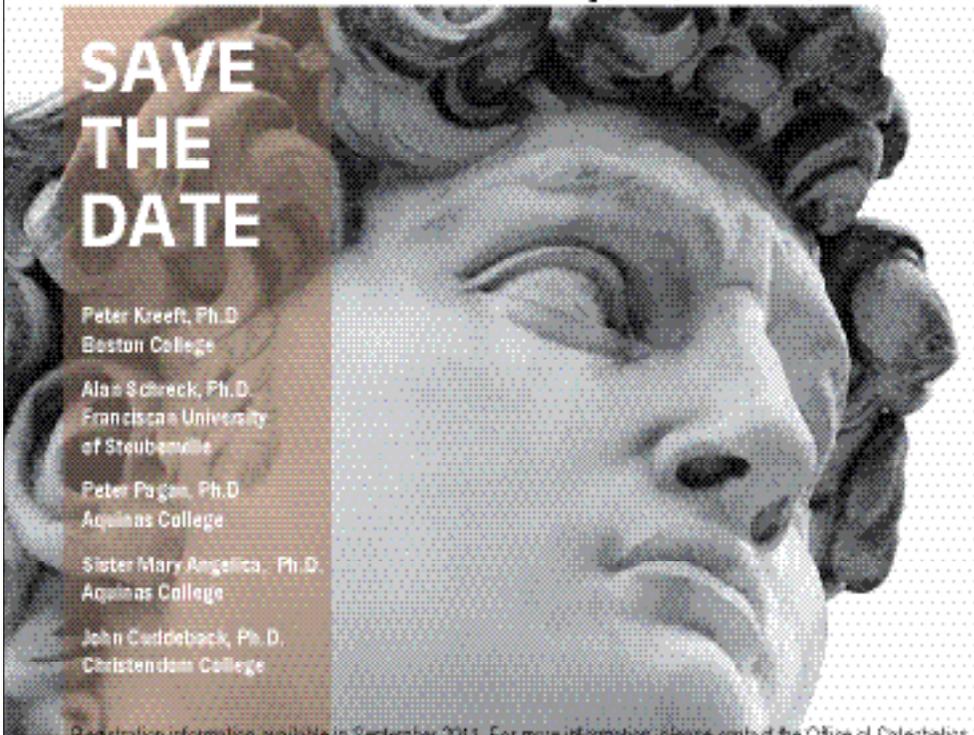
**GEORGE W. ROHLING**, former member of the Aquinas College Board of Trust, died on September 13, 2010, at the age of 97. Monsignor Rohling served as pastor of numerous parishes and built several chapels, rectories, schools, and new churches throughout the Nashville area.

**JULIA DAVIDSON**, a 1985 graduate, died on Thanksgiving Day 2010 from complications due to Alzheimer's Disease. An active volunteer for charity and successful businesswoman as founder of the Tulip Tree, Julia fulfilled her lifelong dream of earning a college degree when she graduated from Aquinas College at the age of 64. She went on to earn a master's degree from Vanderbilt University.

**CHRIS KEMP**, a 1992 graduate and basketball team member, died on November 21, 2010, of natural causes. Chris served the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department for seven years before joining the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation in 2003, becoming a Special Agent in 2006.

**FRANK A. "BUBBA" VARALLO IV** died on December 30, 2010, at the age of 50. A member of St. Edward's Catholic Church who attended Aquinas College from 1980 to 1984, Bubba owned the Varallo Insurance Agency for twenty-five years.

## The 2012 St. Thomas Aquinas Forum



# SAVE THE DATE

Peter Kreeft, Ph.D.  
Boston College

Alan Schreck, Ph.D.  
Franciscan University of Steubenville

Peter Fagan, Ph.D.  
Aquinas College

Sister Mary Angelica, Ph.D.  
Aquinas College

John Cuddeback, Ph.D.  
Christendom College

Registration information available in September 2011. For more information, please contact the Office of Catechetics.

# Faith and Reason

February 3-4, 2012  
St. Cecilia Motherhouse

*Dear Aquinas College Community,*

I have not been able to stop talking to my family, my friends, my colleagues, my community or anyone who will listen, about my new job as Director of Community and Alumni Relations at Aquinas College. To know me is to know how proud I am of the community in which I was raised, in which I raised my children, and in which I have lived my entire life.

I have been a student of the Dominican Sisters since early grade school at St. Pius X School, through my high school years at St. Cecilia Academy, and in my young adulthood at Aquinas College. I graduated from Aquinas College in 1977 and went on to the University of Tennessee Knoxville earning my B.A. degree. Returning to Nashville, I went to law school and upon graduation began my career as an attorney. Along the way, and most importantly, I was raising my family and remaining deeply committed to my community.

It was that involvement and commitment that brought me back to The Dominican Campus about two years ago to undertake preparations for the 150th anniversary celebration of St. Cecilia Academy. One thing led to another, and a series of conversations with various sisters culminated in a conversation with Sister Mary Peter, O.P., in January of this year. The result: I took early retirement from my career as an attorney and accepted the position of Director of Community and Alumni Relations at Aquinas College.

Thirty-three years after graduating from Aquinas College, I can attest to the fact that a lot has changed here. There are many more students – 747 total; applications for admissions are booming; and the College is bursting at the seams. Every square inch is used and many spaces have multiple uses. Mass is offered every day in the St. Jude Chapel, there is a wonderful on-campus bistro in the Carriage House, the library has expanded substantially, and the number of religious on campus every day – including Father O’Neill, Father Jacek, and Brother Ignatius along with the Dominican Sisters – are a visible sign of the Holy Spirit at work.

**Please visit us online:** [www.aquinascollege.edu/alumni](http://www.aquinascollege.edu/alumni) [alumni@aquinascollege.edu](mailto:alumni@aquinascollege.edu)  
**Facebook:** [aquinascollegealumni](https://www.facebook.com/aquinascollegealumni) **E-mail directly at:** [schullerr@aquinascollege.edu](mailto:schullerr@aquinascollege.edu)



But so much has not changed. The unique qualities of an Aquinas College education that have been present since the earliest days have not changed. Ambitious, hard-working students who seek a more personal experience in higher education are still drawn to Aquinas College. The Truth is still taught here. It is taught every day. It permeates everything that occurs on this campus; and it is taught in classes, in small groups, and when needed, it is taught one on one.

One of my first assignments at my new job was facilitating the Spring Lecture Series Events held at the College during the evening hours beginning at 6:30 p.m. One evening while setting up for a lecture, I passed a student seated at a laptop. Oblivious to the activity around him, concentrating intensely on the monitor, he appeared to be struggling. Later in the evening as I was winding up my duties, I passed by him again. Only this time, I saw a familiar figure seated next to him. It was Brother Ignatius Perkins, Dean of Nursing and Director of the RN to BSN Program at the College. Having pulled up a chair, now poring over whatever was on the computer screen, Brother Ignatius and the student were solving the problem together. Still intense, still focused (but now smiling), the student was engaged in a lively conversation with Brother.

I was reminded of my beloved Sister Dominica, O.P., academic dean of Aquinas College for its first 28 years. Her legacy and the mission of Aquinas College were present with Brother and the student: a passionate commitment to teaching, a mission assuring students of highly personalized intellectual exploration and transformative personal relationships. Teaching essential Truths day in and day out – this is what has made Aquinas College successful for the past 50 years – a success that is evident from the growth of the College and the high rate of employment among its alumni.

My goal in my work on campus is to reach out to the alumni of Aquinas College with a renewed sense of purpose. In this our 50th year, we have a great deal to celebrate in the contribution this institution has made to our community throughout every decade since its founding in 1961. I look forward to working together with you as we celebrate the gem that is Aquinas College. ■

*Peace in Christ,*

**Jeanne (Rickey) Chick Schuller '77**

**RECONNECT WITH OLD CLASSMATES**

**Join us for the Photo ID Party**  
 (for schedule see back cover)

or contact Rickey Schuller  
 for details at (615) 297-7545  
 or [schullerr@aquinascollege.edu](mailto:schullerr@aquinascollege.edu)



# Semper fi

Hank Goodrum's faith sustains him in the battles of life

"I don't know how it came to him to join the Marines," said Mary Ann Goodrum, the mother of Aquinas College alumnus Hank ('82) and his eight siblings. "Three of my boys went to basic training, but we don't have a strong family tradition of military service. I thought that it was just a fling."

But for Hank Goodrum, the United States Marine Corps was no fling. He went to boot camp in the summer of 1980, served in the reserves during college, and went on to build a successful 28-year career

with the branch of the U.S. military whose motto is *Semper Fidelis* – Always Faithful. Although the motto signifies the lifelong dedication of individual Marines to "Corps and Country," Hank's story suggests that, to him, "Semper Fidelis" means something even more profound than mere human loyalty.

A graduate of Father Ryan High School in Nashville, Hank enrolled at Aquinas College after completing basic training and earned an Associate of Science degree in 1982. He continued his studies at the University of Tennessee before transferring to

the University of Houston, where he was awarded a bachelor's degree in political science in 1984. He married and had his first child Lydia, now 27 years old. After college, Hank moved to Camp Lejeune and began his full-time career with the infantry while pursuing graduate education, earning his master's degree in business management at St. Mary's College.

While stationed in Hawaii, Hank became good friends with the Catholic Chaplain of the Marine Corps and assisted at daily Masses as a Eucharistic minister. In the years that followed, Hank continued to

practice the Faith whenever he could. At every base, in every country, he has made it a priority to try to attend daily Mass.

"I went to Mass wherever I was sent," said Hank. "I noticed a certain confidence among fellow Catholics that many others don't have – it's reassuring to know what you believe and why you are Catholic." Hank's practice of the Faith was widely known among the other men which often provided an occasion for evangelizing and educating his fellow Marines about Catholicism.

"More than once, I was able to correct misconceptions that others have about Catholics," said Hank. "Some guys were amazed to learn that Catholics don't believe that others are automatically going to Hell."

While the Gooddrums have been described as a "typical" Catholic family, Hank's service in the military made them even more aware of the importance of faith in their lives. Not long after Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in the summer of 1990, Hank called his family from France to let them know that he was deploying to an

"undisclosed location."

"For the first time, we understood what it was like for so many other military families in wartime," said his mother. "We increased our prayers and looked for the blessing."

During Operation Desert Storm, Hank headed a platoon charged with special security aboard the *U.S.S. Dwight D. Eisenhower*, the first ship to conduct sustained operations in the Red Sea in response to the invasion. Hank's platoon made history as the *Ike* transited the Suez Canal for the first time, the second nuclear-powered aircraft carrier to make the passage.

Throughout it all, faith in God's protection kept Hank focused, and the Goodrum family hopeful. After the Persian Gulf War ended, Hank was sent to Okinawa in the Pacific for an assignment and eventually came home to the U.S. to work at the Pentagon. Hank and his wife Aidan welcomed the arrival of their first son, Nathan, in 2000. In 2004, they welcomed their second son, Garrett.

The first several months of Garrett's life were typical, albeit tinged with the family's awareness that Hank was scheduled to deploy to the Republic of Georgia soon. That trip, however, was not to be. When Garrett was nine-months old, a doctor at Bethesda Naval Hospital discovered a tumor.

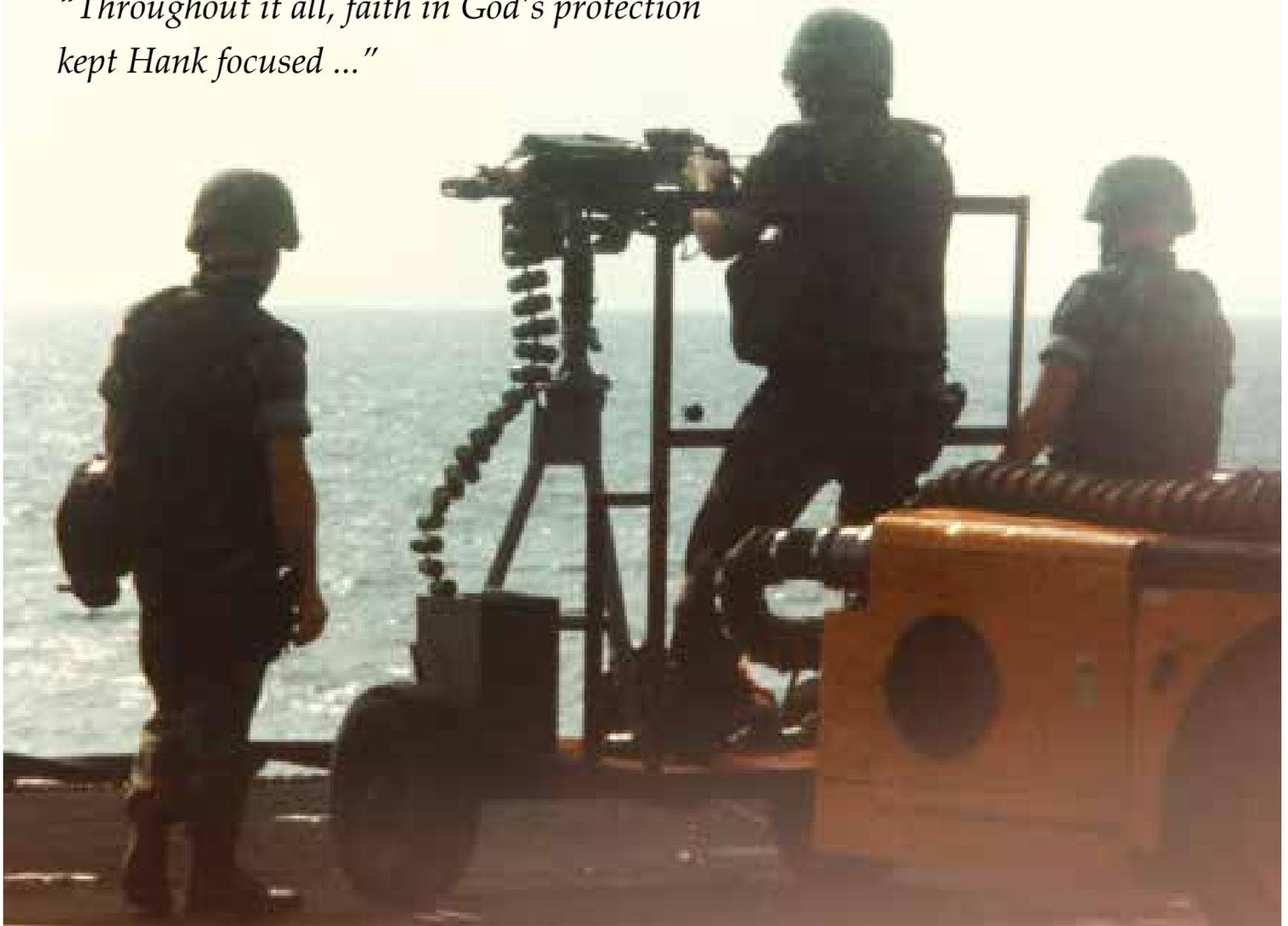
"The doctor knew that I was about to deploy and said that he could take care of the biopsy for us the next day," said Hank. "After 45 minutes, of a normally 30 minute procedure, he came out of surgery and told me, 'Call your command; you're not going anywhere.'"

Garrett was diagnosed with Ewing's sarcoma, a cancer that is typically a bone cancer, but in rare cases can also be found in soft tissues, where it was found in Garrett. Since Bethesda is a facility for adults, Garrett was admitted to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, a hospital with pediatric cancer facilities. Hank and Aidan took turns staying with Garrett during his year-

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*“Throughout it all, faith in God’s protection kept Hank focused ...”*



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long intensive chemotherapy treatment, and other members of the Goodrum family travelled there to assist. Now, Garrett continues his cancer survivorship check-ups at Vanderbilt Children’s Hospital. As always, faith sustained Hank and the Goodrum family.

“One day a nurse came into the room because Garrett’s blood pressure was dropping rapidly,” recalled Hank. “It was 100/80, then 80/60, 50/30...She thought the machine was broken. As I watched her take a manual reading, I knew it was very serious; but I wasn’t afraid. I was calmly thinking, ‘We’ll just wake him up, and he’ll be fine.’ As soon as I had that thought, the nurse woke him up.

“In the hospital especially, you get a sense of how much faith matters. There were several other children that were undergoing treatment at the same time as Garrett, and two of them did not live.”

Hank also noted how important it was to be faithful. “One of the other dads on the pediatric cancer ward abandoned his son.” After five years of treatment, Garrett has been declared cancer-free and is currently in the first grade. Hank and his family credit Garrett’s total recovery to prayer. Although Hank retired from active duty in the infantry three years ago, he has remained active in serving his country as a civilian. Most recently, Hank has been leading efforts to train the Afghan Army as a civilian contractor, work which

earned him the Civilian Meritorious Award in 2010. During his time in Kabul, Hank continues his practice of seeking out ways to serve the Church as well as his country, assisting the US Army Chaplain in Kabul as daily sacristan.

It is this fidelity, more than all the awards and medals earned by retired U.S. Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel Hank Goodrum, that impresses one “professional” soldier of Christ: his youngest sister, Sister Mary Cecilia, O.P. “When you see a seasoned soldier get down on his knees, close his eyes and pray with his children, when he tells you it’s time to pray the rosary as you drive with him, you know that he knows Who is the source of his strength.” ■

Aquinas College sorrowfully announces the death of former alumni director and longtime friend John Brett, who passed away on October 27, 2010, after a long battle with cancer. As an inaugural member of the Alumni Advisory Council, John was known for his large-heartedness and the fullness with which he embraced the mission of the College. Asked personally by John to speak at his funeral, former president Sister Thomas Aquinas said of John, "He came to Aquinas because he wanted to give back – he had had a successful marketing career's worth of experience that he wanted to draw upon to serve his community somehow, and ultimately to serve God for all

the blessings he had received in his life. John fully believed in and was completely committed to the mission of Aquinas College: transforming lives and culture through truth and charity."

Dominican Campus Chaplain Father John O'Neill and several sisters were present at the hospital on the day of his death. John is survived by his wife of 44 years Alyne, children Heather and Sean, grandsons Noah and Luke, mother Vera, and sister Linda. He wrote the following article shortly before his death last fall. May God grant John the reward he deserves.

## Aquinas Nurses ... a patient's point of view

By John Brett

From time to time you may have read in this publication and the local media about the quality of nurses who graduate from Aquinas College. The program has one of the best reputations in the Nashville and mid-state areas for producing skilled, caring nurses. To really appreciate how well these nurses are prepared however, you have to experience Aquinas nursing care "up close and personal."

As the former director of Alumni Relations and Grant Development for Aquinas College I've written several articles for this magazine and a number of grant requests for the Nursing program. All were written after extensive research in the program, its results and the elements that make it outstanding. So, as you might expect, I thought I knew something about the program and the nurses it produced. But I've learned that the impressive curriculum and outstanding faculty are only a small part of what makes Aquinas graduates remarkable nurses.

I retired from the College in April 2007. After about a year of traveling and pursuing my photography hobby, I was diagnosed in May 2008 with multiple myeloma, cancer of the bone marrow. Since then I have been in and out of the hospital, and on and off chemo to the point it has been a full time job for my wife and me just trying to keep ahead of the side effects and complications of cancer treatment. I can't count the number of times I've been admitted to the hospital or the various tests and procedures I've undergone. It has been a real roller coaster ride.

There isn't enough space to mention all of the Aquinas nurses who have been there for me on this journey, but one who recently cared for me on the Oncology floor at Centennial Medical Center came to mind as a great example: Nicole Williams, ASN 2008.

First, you might ask, "How do you know your nurse is an Aquinas graduate?" I always inquire within minutes of meeting a nurse, "From what nursing school did you graduate?" Apparently not many patients do this because I often receive a surprised look and a hesitation in her or his response. About 25 to

30% of the time I get Aquinas College as the answer. And when I do, my wife and I relax in the knowledge that I will be cared for with skill, compassion and respect.

Until you or a loved one deals with the emotional and physical demands of cancer, it's difficult to fathom the stress it creates. There is the pain that accompanies the disease, the side effects one must endure from the chemo and radiation treatments, and hanging over your head, the possibility (or probability) that you will lose the battle. Add to that the demands on your caregiver(s) – usually a spouse or another family member or both – to keep track of medications, act as chauffeur for all the doctor and treatment appointments, plus handle all the household chores. The caregiver is in need of support, too.

There is nothing like a kind word or a light moment followed by a gentle laugh to help put a patient or a family member at ease. I believe that the principle instilled in all Aquinas nurses to "recognize the human dignity in everyone" helps the nurse perceive herself as an instrument of God's love, and to view the work they do as a calling ... a ministry.

Nicole Williams is typical of the Aquinas nurses who have cared for me recently. She graduated in December 2008 and started in the Sarah Cannon Oncology Center of Centennial Medical Center in March '09. When I asked why she chose oncology, she replied that she had lost her stepmother and grandfather both to cancer and felt this would be one way to honor their memory. She added, "Plus it's rewarding because I learn and get so much from the patients." Nicole, by the way, gave birth to her first child in November.

I don't know if it's typical of all Aquinas nurses, but those I've encountered in oncology won't hesitate to spend time with you. They will answer questions as their knowledge permits, or they may guide the conversation to something else entirely to get your mind off of the disease and keep your thoughts positive. They are tuned in to your needs and committed to make patients as relaxed and comfortable as possible while in the hospital.

In the Summer 2003 issue of *Dominican Im-*



ages, a story entitled "Growing to Meet the Need" appeared, addressing the shortage of nurses in the country and the expansion of the Associate of Science in Nursing program at Aquinas. The reasons for the program's popularity were numerous and specific to Aquinas College, according to Peggy Daniel, director of the Associate of Science in Nursing degree program, and the late Linda Watlington, then director of the RN-BSN program.

Both directors attributed the success of their programs to the Christian environment at the College, which sets a fine example for women and men entering a profession centered on care.

"We feel comfortable addressing spirituality and the interaction between mind and body. We incorporate philosophy and theology into our curriculum in ways other programs may not," said Daniel.

Writing this account from a patient's point of view has been a rewarding exercise for me personally. It has enabled me to reflect on the generous sharing of God's spirit that emanates from virtually every encounter with an Aquinas nurse. Should you need a nurse someday, I pray that you be blessed with the love and devotion of an Aquinas Nurse to care for you. ■

# CALLING ALL ALUMNI! Photo ID Party



In the process of collecting photographs from the archives for our 50th anniversary celebration, we have unearthed several hundred photos dating from 1961. In an effort to identify every person photographed at Aquinas College, we are hosting a series of Photo ID Parties this summer.

If you are an alumnus of the College and are interested in lending a hand to identify students and faculty from your years here, please consider joining us on one of the following Photo ID Party dates below (refreshments provided, RSVPs appreciated) or contact Rickey Schuller at (615) 297-7545 or [schuller@aquinascollege.edu](mailto:schuller@aquinascollege.edu) to arrange an alternative time to stop by at your convenience.

**Saturday, June 11 – 10 am to 12 noon**

**Thursday, June 16 – 6 pm to 8 pm**

**Tuesday, June 21 – 6 pm to 8 pm**

**Saturday, June 25 – 10 am to 12 noon**

**Wed., June 29 – 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm**

Even if you can identify just one other person, it will be a great gift to posterity. We welcome all the help we can get!