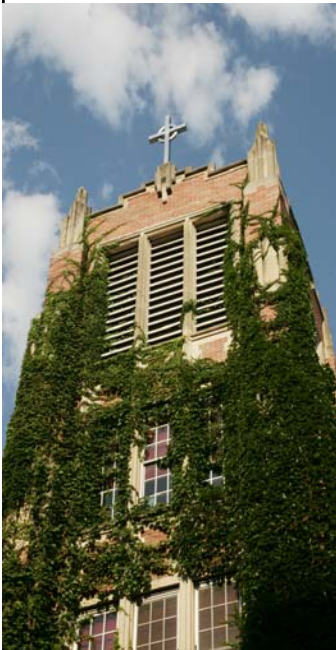


# The Well

## The Newsletter of Catholic Studies at Aquinas College

### FROM THE DIRECTOR



Catholic Studies at Aquinas College finished its first academic year with students signed up for the new Catholic Studies minor, seniors with no time to complete the minor but who enrolled in courses anyway (wishing Catholic Studies had been around at the time they entered Aquinas), and a good deal of interest from West Michigan Catholics. A difficult economic time is not the ideal moment to launch a new program, but there can be no delay in meeting *Ex Corde Ecclesiae's* call for Catholic colleges to share "the rich experience of the Church's own culture." This is exactly what Catholic Studies at Aquinas is all about: sharing the beauty and diversity of the Catholic tradition with students, faculty, and the people of West Michigan.

The Catholic Studies minor is designed for students interested in exploring the Catholic tradition, as expressed in art, literature, theology, popular piety, and philosophy. Courses in the core of the Catholic Studies program focus on those elements of Christian history, culture, and thought that are critical to understanding what Catholic culture is or was, how the Church and Catholic Christianity developed over time, and the ways the faith has expressed itself over the centuries.

Catholic Studies at Aquinas is not limited to the academic minor. Our program goals are these: (1) To share "the rich experience of the Church's own culture" in an academically challenging setting with students and Catholic educators. (2) To host lectures, seminars, and other programming geared toward the mission of the program. (3) To establish a Catholic Studies Center. (4) To endow a named annual lecture series on the intersection of Catholic faith, thought, and culture. (5) To endow a named chair in Catholic Studies who would oversee the minor as well as the Center and (6) To launch an academically challenging, faith-centered Semester-in-Rome program.

As we embark on the 2009-2010 academic year, there are exciting things happening in Catholic Studies. Aquinas will be hosting some major Catholic speakers and intellectual events this year. Through Catholic Studies, Aquinas is also preparing to launch a Semester-in-Rome program. For more information, see the Upcoming Events and News sections in this newsletter. Because of Catholic Studies, students at Aquinas continue to have an expanded opportunity to learn about Catholic culture both in and out of the classroom.

This newsletter takes its name from one of G.K. Chesterton's most influential books, *The Well and the Shallows*, written in 1935. In this book, Chesterton criticizes modern ideologies that seek to replace the traditional, common sense moral teachings of the Church with materialist fads, relativism, and irrational arguments. These ideas may at first glance appear to be broad-minded and advanced, but as Chesterton ably demonstrates, they are merely the "shallows." On the other hand, "the one deep well" of the Church contains Truth and Life in abundance. If you believe in Catholic education, I urge you to pause for a moment and look at the strides Aquinas College is making in furthering its mission as a college offering an authentically Catholic liberal arts education.

Dr. John C. Pinheiro  
Director of Catholic Studies and Associate Professor of History

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On March 3, 2009, a crowd of over 100 people turned out at Aquinas for the first lecture in the new Catholic Studies Lecture Series. The speaker was Duncan Stroik, a professor of architecture at the University of Notre Dame, who discussed the "Meaning of Sacred Architecture." Stroik is editor of the Sacred Architecture Journal. His most recent sacred structure is the new chapel at Thomas Aquinas College in California. Here are some comments from attendees of the lecture:

"I found myself thinking what a great privilege it is to have this Faith of ours and how much it has enriched, even transformed, the world. If this lecture is indicative of the quality of your program at Aquinas, you have implemented a very worthwhile undertaking."---Joseph G. Scoville, U.S. District Court, W.D. Michigan

"Listening to this man speak actually opened my eyes to something I had never thought about in the 18 years I have been raised Catholic. I have always admired the beauty of the many churches I have visited . . . but never once thought about how long it would have taken to build them or the different meanings behind the way they were built."---Student

"I found it fascinating how pertinent the lecture was to my art history lectures. . . . I had no idea that a working knowledge of liturgy and theology was required to create architecture for religious institutions."---Student

"Thank you for your efforts in publicly launching the Catholic Studies program with the offering of the excellent lecture by architect Duncan Stroik. . . . The program is one of a small number of signs of recognition that human existence has higher, broader, and deeper ends than can be expressed in psychological, economic or political terms." ---Dr. Stephen C. Peterson



### CATHOLIC STUDIES MINOR WELL UNDER WAY

Along with already extant elective courses in Baroque art, Renaissance art, and theology, in 2008-2009 students also enrolled in classes created as part of the new Catholic Studies minor: History 177: History of Christianity and English 260: Catholic Writers. Catholic Studies students currently are taking Philosophy 247: Catholic Intellectual Tradition. Spring 2010 classes will include a course on Catholic Political Thought and a seminar on Catholic Culture.

### SEMESTER-IN-ROME PROGRAM

Through Catholic Studies, Aquinas is in the process of forming a partnership with the Vatican Studies Center at Thomas More College of the Liberal Arts to offer a Semester-in-Rome program. Although there may be a few slots available in spring 2010, the intention is for this program to be opened officially to a limited number of Aquinas students in fall 2010. Students would live at a 13-acre monastery in Rome. This program offers internships with Vatican Radio, H2O News, Inside the Vatican magazine, Zenit, and several Vatican congregations. These opportunities are matched with a strong liberal arts curriculum. What better place to study history, art, theology, and architecture, not to mention Latin or Italian, than in the heart of the Eternal City!

This Semester-in-Rome program is unique, not simply because of its internships but because it is the only such program in the United States that actually places interns inside the Vatican while offering guided tours of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith by curial officials.



Villa Serenella Monastery

### Fall Colloquium

Brown Bag Colloquium  
 October 13, 2009  
 12:20 to 1:30 pm  
 Loutit Room  
 3rd Floor of the  
 Wege Center

This fall's Brown Bag Colloquium in Catholic Studies will examine the English historian Christopher Dawson, considered by many to be one of the greatest Catholic thinkers of the twentieth century.

"Christopher Dawson and the Idea of Progress"

Paper presented by: Dr. Joseph Stuart  
 University of Edinburgh;  
 Wilbur Fellow at Russell Kirk Center

Commentary by: Dr. Dennis Marshall  
 Aquinas College

Questions by attendees



### Peter Kreeft, Ph.D. to Speak at Aquinas

January 29, 2010  
 Noon to 1:30 pm  
 Wege Ballroom  
 3rd Floor of the Wege Center  
 Bring your lunch or purchase it  
 from our cafeteria



Peter Kreeft, Ph.D.

The Catholic Studies Lecture Series continues with Professor Peter Kreeft of Boston College, who will speak on "Seeking and Responding to Truth." This lecture is co-sponsored by Campus Ministry as part of St. Thomas Aquinas Week festivities.



### REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

The growth and success of the Catholic Studies program at Aquinas College hinges on the support of alumni and those who recognize, as did Pope John Paul II, that Catholic higher education was born "ex corde ecclesiae," from the heart of the Church. If you believe in the value of a truly Catholic, liberal arts education, please prayerfully consider donating to Catholic Studies at Aquinas. Together we can make Aquinas College, in the words of President Ed Balog, "the regional center for the study of Catholicism." Support Catholic Studies at Aquinas College.

- I am interested in learning more about Catholic Studies at Aquinas.
- I am interested in making a donation to help support Catholic Studies at Aquinas.

Please make checks payable to "Catholic Studies at Aquinas College", or for your convenience you may use Visa, MasterCard or Discover card.

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## CATHOLIC STUDIES ADVISORY BOARD

Dr. John Pinheiro has formed an external advisory board composed of Catholic scholars and representatives from Michigan's Catholic community. The board's role is to give input and feedback to the director of the program, especially in the area of identifying prospective major gift donors and recommending speakers for the Catholic Studies Lecture Series. Current members are Father Jim Chelich, pastor of St. Thomas the Apostle Church; Father Matthew Barnum, pastor of St. Mary's in Muskegon and alumnus of Aquinas College; and Dr. Mark Pestana, professor of philosophy at Grand Valley State University.

For further information please contact:

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