



## Thomas More at Oxford

Students and faculty explore the riches of history, literature, and our Faith in Great Britain.



## Syllabus of Errors

Rutler, Kreeft, Zuhlsdorf, Scalia and others dissect college heresies in book edited by Prof. Zmirak.



## Saving the World Through Beauty

David Clayton's 13-part Television Series on how good art leads us through beauty to the Truth.

# COMMUNITAS

THE MAGAZINE OF THOMAS MORE COLLEGE

## *Imitating the Carpenter: College Establishes Student Guilds*

Also in this issue:

Why Catholics *Can* Think  
The Pope Conquers England



## A Graceful Balance

BY DR. WILLIAM EDMUND FAHEY

The students of Thomas More College are great readers of poetry—and by reading, I do not mean the silent scanning of lines. For our students, the word is alive and meant to be enacted. Recently at lunch, one senior suddenly turned from the soup tureen and belted out “What’s he that wishes so, my cousin Westmorland?” Several minutes into one of the most famous of all dramatic speeches, a handful of earnest freshmen still gaped in wonder, but most students had recognized that King Henry V was before us—or, rather, that we were before him, back on the field of Agincourt. Faculty nodded, realizing, “Of course, it is St. Crispin’s Day, after all.” The Psalms, the works of Shakespeare or Robert Frost—these and much else give Thomas More College students the vital words that shape their ideas, utterances, and actions.

One such Thomas More College “classic” is the poetry of Richard Wilbur. In his “Love Calls us to the

Things of this World,” the reader will encounter a beautiful articulation of principles pondered by Plato, St. John, St. Augustine and others—the insight that there is a great pain in turning from the heights of thought and spirit to what appears merely mundane. And yet, Wilbur reminds us of the divine turning from higher things back to the world, a turning done out of love: “God so loved the world...” This is not just a momentary gesture of the Creator to His creation, but something deeply true and necessary to imitate. Wilbur teaches his readers that through the loveliness of the world, we are lifted up. We are both called from the heights and back to the heights by love—by the love of the ordinary which has been placed all around us and which we must sustain through our own works.

Life in this world is, as Wilbur suggests, a “difficult balance.” Words, ideas, and spiritual consolations must co-exist with works, actions, and ordinary duties. Part of this balance is to be found in accepting the profound yet humbling lesson of the Incarnation: that we must be about our pursuit of the highest goods in the midst of, and indeed through, the ordinary and earthly.

This issue of *Communitas* sets before you the current thoughts, words, and actions of the College.

It presents our own efforts to find and keep the difficult balance in our chief activity of study, balanced and made lovely by merriment, acts of creativity, prayer, travel, and complete acceptance of and gratitude for the goodness of the created order and the goodness of the life-giving Trinity that brings all into existence and sustains all.

Throughout this issue, you will find descriptions of the College’s internships opportunities as well as an account of our recent debate on the nature of Islam. Set beside tales of foreign travel, there is a satirical glance at the virtues and vices. Chickens and chain-saws jostle with meditations on religious poetry and the masterpiece that is a Chestnut tree. At the center is the story of our new guilds—the College’s attempt to encourage student creativity and discipline through the practical arts. Our hope is that ideas and action will find a balance at Thomas More College and be a cause of joy.

In Christ the King,

William Edmund Fahey, Ph.D.  
President

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## *Thomas More Students Hone their Skills Through Internships*

The liberal arts education offered at Thomas More College is aimed at the full development of the person, consonant with the educational philosophy of Blessed John Henry Newman. We recognize, however, that our graduates must have adequate preparation to enter the world of work which awaits most of them. The Church and society need responsible Catholic citizens, teachers, artists, communicators, businessmen, lawyers, legislators, and other faithful stewards. Graduates of Thomas More are called upon to translate their liberal arts education into practicable, productive endeavors which will help them to form and support families, and otherwise build up the Culture of Life.

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At Thomas More College, we assist graduates in bridging their intellectual formation and the practical application of that education by providing them with a variety of internship possibilities. Working with select institutions whose missions are compatible with the Gospel and the natural virtues, we offer these bright young men and women the opportunity to put to use the wisdom and knowledge gained in the classroom.

Since 2008, for instance, Thomas More students have been working as interns at an array of communications apostolates in Rome, such as Vatican Radio and H2O News, a video news service that is broadcast online throughout the world, and run in close association with the Vatican's TV offices. Students have narrated the news, dubbed the daily Mass readings into English, and learned the intricacies of audio and video production. They have also worked closely with Tony Assaf, an editor at Zenit News—a worldwide online service that has hundreds of thousands of readers every day. In 2010, H2O interns from Thomas More College included sophomores Maisie Sifert, Sam Miloscia, and Wilfred Thomas.

Closer to home, students have interned with the Culture of Life Foundation at its offices in Washington, D.C., and at the United Nations in New York, working to promote national and international policies compatible with the sanctity of human life. In 2010, two Thomas More undergraduates, Eleanor La Prade and Katie Lloyd, worked as editorial interns for the Intercollegiate Studies Institute, conducting research on major



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academic institutions and preparing profiles of them for *Choosing the Right College*, a 1,000-page biannual guide. Four recent graduates of the college, William and Rosie Herreid, Paul Kniaz (all Class of 2010), and Martin Lockerd '09, served as Contributing Editors for the guide.

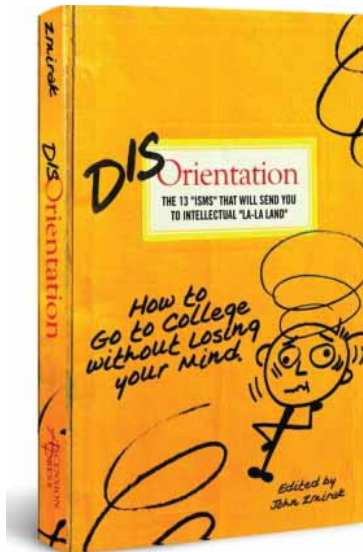
In the autumn of 2010, the college was also fortunate to host Dr. Michael Aeschliman, Professor of Education at Boston University, for a forum on preparing students for secondary teaching positions. Dr. Aeschliman, who also serves as Professor of English at the University of Italian Switzerland, advised the students on opportunities for teaching English as a Second Language (ESL), and guided them through the failures of modern education. He suggested that Thomas More students, by virtue of their Catholic liberal arts training, were uniquely prepared to avoid the pitfalls of progressive education. While deepening the students' understanding of the craft of teaching, Dr. Aeschliman also provided practical advice on obtaining the necessary credentials for a career in teaching.

# Syllabus of ERRORS

## *Top Authors Name (and Refute!) the 14 Heresies that Rob Catholic Students' Faith*

FROM THE INTRODUCTION BY TMC WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE  
JOHN ZMIRAK, EDITOR

The questions raised in this book are going to come up again and again throughout your life. Your dating behavior will be affected by where you stand on Relativism, Hedonism, and Feminism. Your choice of career may hinge on how much you have been influenced by Consumerism and Cynicism. How you vote will be influenced by your attitude toward Sentimentalism, Americanism, Marxism, and Multiculturalism. Life and death medical decisions regarding your parents as they age will depend on where you stand on Scientism and Utilitarianism. The state of your soul when you die may hinge on how you have reacted to Progressivism, Modernism, and Anti-Catholicism.



As the great professor Richard M. Weaver once wrote in a book of the same title, “ideas have consequences.” If you don’t believe this, pay a visit to Iran or North Korea. Iranians and North Koreans aren’t a different species, but their lives might look to us like something from a creepy science fiction movie. The reason? These societies are based on deeply mistaken ideas about human nature, human rights, and the nature of God. Since these ideas aren’t fully true, or fully human, they don’t treat people humanely. If we accept false ideologies, we will do the same thing, on a smaller scale. We will suffer, and so will the people around us, in this world and in the next.

*From Disorientation: How to Go to College Without Losing Your Mind, Ed. John Zmirak (West Chester, PA: Ascension Press, 2010), available at [www.disorientationbook.com](http://www.disorientationbook.com).*



# CYNICISM

George William Rutler

Cynicism is an intellectual stance that seeks to debunk the motives of other people and "expose" commonly treasured deals—generally for the sake of making the cynic feel superior to others, or freeing him from the necessity of attaining difficult virtues.



# AMERICANISM

Mark Shea

Americanism is the tendency, condemned by Pope Leo XIII, to put conformity with American culture and politics before the teachings of the universal Church.



# FEMINISM

Donna Steichen

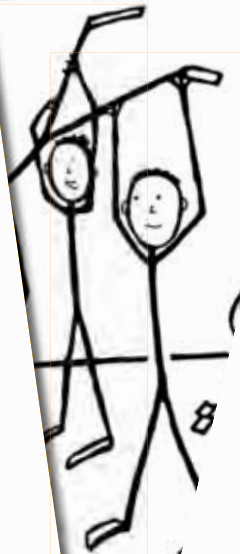
Feminism is an ideological movement that sees women in families as akin to exploited workers in industrial factories: as a "domestic proletariat" that must engage in class struggle within the family rather than the workplace.



# HEDONISM

John Zmirak

Hedonism is the belief that the pursuit of pleasure—intellectual, emotional, or physical—and the avoidance of suffering ought to guide human decisions.



# MULTICULTURALISM

Robert Spencer

Multiculturalism is an anti-Western ideology that urges us to view the achievements of Judaeo-Christian civilization with a jaundiced eye and to overlook the flaws in other civilizations, in order to redress the results of past injustices. It is the intellectual equivalent of affirmative action quotas.



# MODERNISM

John Zuhlsdorf

Modernism is the theological tendency that alters or even rejects unchanging Catholic truths given to us by divine revelation, to adapt the Faith to the perceived needs and preferences of modern man.



## *Peter Kreeft, Robert Spencer Debate: Is the Only Good Muslim a Bad Muslim?*

On Nov. 4, 2010, Thomas More College hosted two of the leading writers on religion in the world: philosopher and apologist Peter Kreeft, Professor of Philosophy at Boston College, and internationally-known

scholar and critic of Islam Robert Spencer, Director of Jihadwatch. More than 100 visitors (including numerous local clergy and religious), along with the whole of Thomas More College's student body, crammed into the Newman Humanities room and spilled out into the hallways as cameras rolled. Both Spencer and Kreeft also contributed essays to *Disorientation: How to Go to College Without Losing Your Mind* (see page 4).

The authors came at the invitation of Thomas More College's Edmund Campion Debate Society, which sponsors regular student debates to foster a deeper appreciation of Rhetoric as a liberal art. More student debates will be held throughout the 2010-11 academic year.

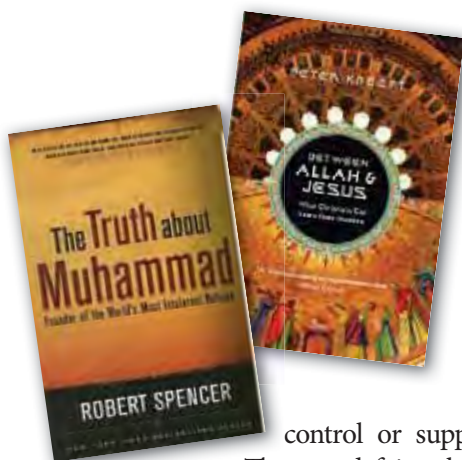
Addressing the topic "Is the Only Good Muslim a Bad Muslim?" Mr. Spencer (author of, among other best-sellers, *The Truth About Muhammad*) argued that orthodox Islam aspires to subjugate and oppress "unbelievers" and impose throughout the world sharia law—which is inimical to religious freedom and the human dignity of women. So Catholics should hope that Muslims are not devout enough to advocate sharia, by either warlike or peaceful means.

As in his latest book, *Between Allah and Jesus*, Prof. Kreeft highlighted the commonalities between Islamic and Catholic piety, and said that truly devout adherents of Islam put to shame some post-modern, dissenting Catholics students at secularized colleges. Kreeft argued that terrorism, military jihad, and the aspiration to subjugate Jews and Christians are not necessarily germane to the religious lives of Muslims. These are perversions of Islam, as witch-burnings, inquisitions, and religious wars were distortions of Christian faith.

Spencer responded: "Having studied the source materials—the Qur'an, the Hadiths, and the most authoritative scholars across the Islamic world—I regret that I must say: A tolerant Islam does not exist. I wish it did. So does Dr. Kreeft. But we must not settle for wishful thinking. There are many peaceful Muslims who do not engage in violent jihad and who support religious freedom, but they are acting like Catholics who practice birth







control or support legal abortion. They are defying their religion, because they do not have the authority to reform it," Spencer said.

Kreeft lauded the theological essence of Islam, which is a radical submission (Arabic: *islam*) to the will of God, a stark theocentrism that subjugates all merely human concerns to obedience to the creator. That willingness to serve (Latin: *serviam*) is for Kreeft almost identical to the humility and obedience displayed by Christian saints, and ought to serve as a lesson to contemporary Catholics. He said: "As Chesterton wrote, the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. For Christians, unlike Muslims, it is not the end. But if we do not have it at the beginning, we will treat God's law with contempt, as so many of us nowadays do."

Spencer countered: "Can Muslims really be our role models? Most schools of Islamic thought accept artificial birth control. A Muslim man can divorce his wife simply by telling her verbally. Then she must leave his home, with no rights to alimony or custody of children. Also, he can marry up to four women at a time, provided he treats them all 'equally.' Because the prophet Muhammad is seen as the perfect model of conduct, a Muslim man can marry a girl as young as 9 years old—since that's what Muhammad did."

Kreeft pointed out that "large elements of Islam are identical with Judaism and Christianity—because that's where Muhammad got them. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, all three of us worship the same God." Spencer countered that the many distortions of the divine and natural law unique to Islam made its common origin with Judaism and Christianity essentially irrelevant.

Students and guests peppered the authors with questions, and joined them for a convivial reception afterward in the Helm Seminar Room.

*Video of the debate can be viewed on Thomas More College's website at [www.ThomasMoreCollege.edu](http://www.ThomasMoreCollege.edu).*



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To learn more about our Summer Programs, please visit [www.ThomasMoreCollege.edu/SummerProgram](http://www.ThomasMoreCollege.edu/SummerProgram), or contact Mark Schwerdt, Director of Admissions, at [mschwerdt@ThomasMoreCollege.edu](mailto:mschwerdt@ThomasMoreCollege.edu), or (800) 880-8308, ext. 14.

## *Students Walk in the Footsteps of Newman, Chesterton, Tolkien*

FEW STUDENTS are afforded the opportunity to study in Oxford, England. Fewer still are able to study in the private archive of the late Catholic apologist, poet, and novelist G.K. Chesterton. But that is exactly what six upperclassmen from the Thomas More College of Liberal Arts did in the Summer of 2010.

The College's Center for Faith and Culture, based in Oxford, hosted the three week Catholic Culture of the British Isles Program. The seminar enabled students to conduct graduate-level work examining the history, literature, and spirituality of Catholic Britain from its flowering in the late Middle Ages through the period of destruction and persecution, and into its rebirth in the 19th century.

The mission of the College's Center for Faith and Culture is to recover and build upon the rich legacy of Catholic humanism associated with figures such as Blessed John Henry Newman, G.K. Chesterton, Christopher Dawson, C.S. Lewis, and J.R.R. Tolkien.

Through publications and short courses, the Center aims to foster a "new springtime" of Christian faith in the 21st century and the "culture of life" spoken of by Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI.

The Center currently produces the College's journal, *Second Spring: International Journal of Faith and Culture*, and houses a research library dedicated to G.K. Chesterton which includes Chesterton's books, writings, and other personal belongings. Thomas More College is the current caretaker of the collection for the Chesterton Library Trust.

Students participating in this year's Catholic Culture of the British Isles Program included Joseph Rudolph, Marielle Gage, Jonathan Gottlieb, Katie Lloyd, Meryl Trapp, and Tyler Tracy—all of whom hope to attend graduate school upon graduating from Thomas More College.

Prior to their trip to Oxford, students spent one week on Thomas More College's New Hampshire campus receiving an introduction to the British Catholic Revival. Students heard lectures on "The Formation of Catholic Culture in Britain," "Britain in the High Middle Ages," "The Tudor Revolution," and "The Years of Persecution and Secrecy."

"Having taught several of the seminars, I must say that the students participating in this year's Oxford Program were of the highest caliber," said Thomas More College President William Fahey. "They were eager to learn, and were committed to developing a greater understanding and appreciation of the history, literature, and spirituality of Catholic Britain."

After an intensive reading week in New Hampshire, students boarded an airplane for London and Oxford. There, the director of the Center for Faith and Culture, Stratford Caldecott, met the students and they set out for two weeks of study in the City of Dreaming Spires.



(Left:) Students attend a Shakespeare play at the reconstructed Globe Theatre—the stage for which it was written.



“The course work in Oxford focused on giving students a sense of the position of Catholics in England since the late Middle Ages,” said Caldecott. “We also gave them a deeper understanding of the importance of the imagination. Apart from our main topics, we also looked at other Christian writers from Chaucer and Shakespeare (taught by Lady Clare Asquith) to Hopkins, and there were excursions and guided tours to places like Stonor Park, where St. Edmund Campion ran his illicit printing press, and the Tower of London, where St. Thomas More was incarcerated and buried.”

Students were required to read 18 books as part of the program, and they completed a substantive paper that explored particular aspects of the English Catholic Revival.

“The Caldecotts were wonderful, as were all the guest lecturers we had,” said participant Marielle Gage. “All of the teachers were so knowledgeable and passionate about what they were teaching and conveyed so much to us in the time we spent with them.”

In addition to their regular course work and the other excursions, students visited many key sites in Oxford, including Tolkien’s grave, C.S. Lewis’ home, the Oxford Oratory, and Newman’s retreat center in Littlemore where he was received into the Catholic Church. Students found that these visits brought immediacy and relevance to their readings and coursework.

“To study Newman in his own office at Littlemore was unbelievable,” said Thomas More College junior Meryl Trapp. “The desk he wrote on is there, along with other possessions of his. It made our course work that day all the more immediate and tangible.”

Marielle Gage agreed. “It would take a book to give justice to our trip, but I can say that it was definitely a highlight of my life so far. Just being there, where St. Edmund Campion was educated and where Cardinal Newman converted, where Lewis taught and Tolkien thought, was amazing.”



*(Top to Bottom:) Students visit Cardinal Newman’s study in Littlemore, his beloved Anglican parish, which he gave up to enter full communion with the Catholic Church; Students reading Chesterton’s The Ballad of the White Horse, atop the prehistoric hill-carving that inspired the poem—the White Horse of Uffington; Class in Oxford’s Blackfriars Hall—a Dominican house founded in 1221, suppressed at the Reformation, and restored in 1921.*



# WHY CATHOLICS ~~CAN'T~~ THINK

*How philosophy is key to Catholic education.*

BY PROFESSOR WALTER J. THOMPSON, DEAN OF STUDENTS



The question is not whether human beings will think, but how. Those who haven't learned to think well *will* think, but they will do it badly. If we cannot distinguish lasting truth from passing fashion, good argument from bad, we will mistake the one for the other and so exchange good for evil. We will be vulnerable to the attacks of our cultured despisers. We may even reject reason and despair of finding truth. But man, created in the image and likeness of God, is made for truth. The universal mission of the Church is to teach and preach it. Therefore no Catholic can fear it.

Philosophy is indispensable to theology in many ways. As a systematic body of reasoned-out knowledge—that is, as a science—theology is founded upon truths revealed to us by God and held by faith. Philosophy is required to defend the mysteries of the faith against those who hold them to be impossible or unreasonable. But to perform that service, philosophy must remain

philosophy—rigorous and orderly reasoning from solid starting points.

The principal end of philosophy is the knowledge it yields. That knowledge and the habits we develop in acquiring it have countless uses. The study of philosophy renders us better able to speak as our calling and circumstances demand, for the glory of God and the good of our neighbors.

Some people ask why we begin with pagan thinkers like Plato and Aristotle. The answer is: to learn from them. Both men taught that human beings are essentially rational creatures who long to know the truth and to live truthfully. For these Greeks, the goal of philosophical inquiry was nothing less than wisdom—knowledge of the whole of reality in its causes, knowledge of the *what* and *why* of everything that is. Each saw his inquiry as culminating in the knowledge of the highest cause—the Divine.

From Plato and Aristotle we learn what human reason, inquiring in a rigorous and orderly way, can achieve and what it cannot. To the end, Plato's Socrates refused to call himself wise, only a lover of wisdom. And Aristotle concluded that the minds of human beings stand to the most intelligible things as the eyes of bats to the sun. As pagans—men who thought outside the history of God's revelation to His people—they teach us to wonder at the great mercy of God Who deigned to make Himself known.

As St. Thomas said, we study not to learn what this or that man thought was true, but to learn the truth. At Thomas More College, we put the question of truth front and center throughout the curriculum. We try to practice what Pope Benedict has called “intellectual charity”: since truth is the good of the mind, we desire in charity that our students come to know it.

*Prof. Walter J. Thompson studied political philosophy at Georgetown University and the University of Notre Dame. He helped found and served as Vice President and Academic Dean of the International Theological Institute in Gaming, Austria—established at the request of Pope John Paul II, with Christoph Cardinal Schönborn of Vienna as its Grand Chancellor.*

## Thomas More College's Artist David Clayton Hosts 13-part TV series on Catholic Art

Thomas More College's artist-in-residence is hosting a new Catholic art show for CatholicTV. Entitled *The Way of Beauty*, this 13-part series examines Catholic traditions in art and how the styles of these traditions relate directly to the liturgy, theology, and philosophy of the Church.

*The Way of Beauty* television show airs on CatholicTV five times each week. Each full-length episode can also be viewed online at [www.CatholicTV.com](http://www.CatholicTV.com).

David Clayton launched the Way of Beauty Program at the Thomas More College of Liberal Arts in 2008 to renew in artists, aspiring artists, and the general public an appreciation for the Catholic traditions in art and architecture. The Way of Beauty Program includes a series of courses offered as part of the core curriculum at Thomas More College, as well as lectures, workshops, and seminars hosted throughout the country.

The Way of Beauty Program has now added a television show to its already impressive array of educational outreach efforts.

"In this television series, I explore the Catholic traditions in art, as well as the theological principles behind them," said Clayton. "Viewers will be led to a greater understanding of the principles of harmony and proportion that are infused in the work of the old Masters."

"Christian culture, like classical culture before it, was patterned after the cosmic order, whose unifying principles run through every discipline," continued Clayton. "Literature, art, music, architecture, philosophy—all of creation and, potentially, all human activity—are bound together by this common harmony and receive their fullest meaning in the rhythms and patterns of the Church's liturgy."

"The principles of beauty are applicable to all aspects of daily life, including business, the academy—indeed, in all areas of human engagement," said Clayton. "This is the *via pulchritudinis*—the way of beauty—that Pope Benedict has spoken of as the most attractive path to God."

Since coming to Thomas More College, Clayton's Way of Beauty Program has become widely popular. In addition to his TV and teaching commitments, he writes about sacred art for the New Liturgical Movement web site and posts regularly on his own blog, [www.TheWayofBeauty.org](http://www.TheWayofBeauty.org), where readership has skyrocketed since its release in April 2010.

"I have very much enjoyed working with CatholicTV on the Way of Beauty television program—it has been quite a learning experience for me," said Clayton. "I am hoping that the series will help to publicize further these important ideas and work toward the renewal of Catholic art and, by extension, the evangelization of culture."



(Top to Bottom) David Clayton and President William Fahey filming the *Way of Beauty* show for CatholicTV; Marie O'Brien, class of 2014, demonstrated for the program how music fits into *The Way of Beauty*.



# Why Not Chinese and Arabic?

## THE CASE FOR STUDYING LATIN AND GREEK: *An Interview with Thomas More College Classics Professor Fred Fraser*

**Teaching Latin and Greek in college is an old tradition. But then, so are dueling societies. Why teach Classics today, instead of dueling?**

The study of Greek and Latin is an integral part of the liberal arts curriculum, which is unique to the West. Greek and Latin epics, love poetry, and philosophy have been a cornerstone of Western civilization. I give students an opportunity to read those foundational texts more closely.

**Are there intellectual skills one learns from taking Greek and Latin?**

Greek and Latin have never failed to improve students' thinking abilities. A typical Latin sentence is complex, with at least two dependent clauses—often twice the length of a long English sentence. Since a sentence in any language is the expression of an entire idea, this suggests that Latin thoughts are generally more complex and involved. Learning how to subordinate ideas in a single expression is a fundamental skill for anyone seeking knowledge of higher things.

**Why are the Classics especially important at a Catholic school?**

It is a proper response to the numerous exhortations of popes that the Classics, and especially Latin, be part of an early education. The Classics also play an essential part as a preparation for philosophy. Thus they shape a mind so that it may better receive and understand the tenets of the Faith.

**What's the connection between liberal arts education and the Catholic faith?**

The great Fathers of the Church—Saints Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great, John Chrysostom, Gregory Nazianzus, Basil the Great, and Athanasius—received much of their ability to read and scrutinize scripture from their own liberal educations. They themselves often encouraged liberal studies. The classic text on Christian rhetoric is St. Augustine's *De doctrina christiana*, in which he shows how a Christian may use pagan rhetoric—which was traditionally learned through pagan poetry.



The survival of such (sometimes bawdy) pagan authors such as Ovid and Catullus is in part due to Christian monks' devotion to Christian rhetoric as a study encouraged by St. Augustine. The monastic approach to pagan literature shows us that it is fitting for a Catholic to be devoted to the pagan ideas that are bedrocks to Western civilization. A great part of the pagan patrimony contains thoughts that are inherently enlightening and contribute to man's intellectual life.

**Does the study of Latin in college support its restoration in the liturgy, which Pope Benedict has urged?**

A Catholic liberal arts college is a fine place to foster a love of Latin as the Church's language. The youth of the students disposes them to be open-minded and courageous. Often, they are able to see the beauty of Latin and are undaunted by lofty endeavors, such as reviving what the world—but not the Church—has called a dead language. I have seen students of the Classics apply themselves to learning how to pray the Mass with Gregorian chant.

**How hard is it to get students to do their Latin and Greek homework?**

It is actually not hard. Greek and Latin have maintained their prestige in the face of educational trends, and students very often have a desire to learn at least one of them.



*Fred Fraser received a B.A. in Classical and Early Christian Studies at Christendom College and an M.A. in Classics from the University of Dallas. He is now working toward a Ph.D. in Greek and Latin at the Catholic University of America. This is Mr. Fraser's first year teaching at Thomas More College.*

## ***Catholic Education Is Not Possible WITHOUT YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT***

Please support Thomas More College today so we can continue to provide young men and women with a Catholic education that develops in them an unapologetic fidelity to the Truth. An envelope is enclosed for your convenience, or you may visit us online at

**[www.ThomasMoreCollege.edu/Donate](http://www.ThomasMoreCollege.edu/Donate)**

# FROM THE BAD CATHOLIC'S GUIDE to the **Seven Deadly Sins**

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BY THOMAS MORE COLLEGE WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE, DR. JOHN ZMIRAK

People say that laughter is the best medicine. People who say that don't have cancer. Those who do realize that sometimes highly toxic chemicals make much better medicine than, say, a Robin Williams movie. Nevertheless, there's a good reason to wield wit in practicing apologetics. Modern Americans don't lose their faith by reading Jack Chick pamphlets, but after watching dozens of George Carlin routines that render the Faith ridiculous. In these books, I turn the tables and show up the absurdity of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil.

In writing *The Bad Catholic's Guide to the Seven Deadly Sins*, I chose to pair one of the systematic character flaws, or habitual vices, that Christian moralists over the centuries came to call the Seven Deadly Sins, with the Contrary Virtue we're meant to cultivate instead. In other words, I listed each poison along with the antidote. Below is an introduction, taken from the book, to St. Thomas Aquinas' approach to finding and living each Virtue.

Tracing the spectrum from Virtue to Vice requires a delicate moral calculus, and as Barbie said, math is hard! As all good Thomists know—which means that nowadays, it's practically a secret—you can't just take a Vice and look for the opposite extreme, then tag that as a Virtue. Otherwise, the Contrary Virtue to Lust would be Frigidity, and the cure for Wrath would be a steady course of cringing, fawning Servility. In trying

to resist a Deadly Sin, we take the crooked timber of our humanity and try to train it the other way—countering Lust with ascetical practices that remind the flesh who is boss or Wrath with slow, deliberate actions meant to school our will in

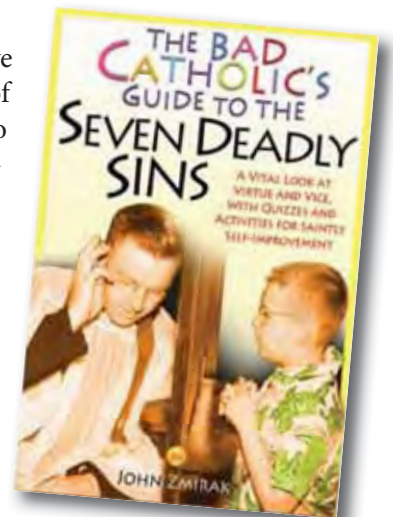
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**A healthy conscience  
avoids the extreme of  
*laissez-faire* laxity on the  
left, and self-destructive  
scrupulosity on the right.**

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Patience. Aristotle described this as like bending back a stick to get it straight. However, it's possible to bend the stick too far—for instance, leaping from Sloth to Fanaticism, without ever stopping at healthy Diligence, passing Go, or collecting \$200. For instance, someone countering Sloth shouldn't do so by becoming a workaholic. Nor should Lustful people try to rip out their sexuality, root and branch. We're not meant to binge and purge. Our Lord really doesn't want us to cut off our nose to spite our face.

A healthy conscience avoids the extreme of *laissez-faire* laxity on the left, and self-destructive scrupulosity on the right. Likewise, each Contrary Virtue lives somewhere between a Deadly Sin and what we moderns might call a neurosis.



VICE	VIRTUE	NEUROSIS
Lust	Chastity	Frigidity
Wrath	Patience	Servility
Gluttony	Temperance	Insensibility
Greed	Generosity	Prodigality
Sloth	Diligence	Fanaticism
Vainglory	Humility	Scrupulosity
Envy	Magnanimity	Pusillanimity

In each case, we seek what Aristotelians call the Golden Mean. Each Contrary Virtue stands not just between two extreme modes of behavior but above them—reconciling the partial truths they exaggerate in a higher synthesis that points to Truth. To determine where the pursuit of a Contrary Virtue shades off into a Neurosis, we lean on the Church’s wisdom, remembering that, if some interpretation of Scripture we’ve come upon sounds too extreme, to the point of lunacy, it usually is. Before doing violence to yourself, get advice from a trusted priest. Indeed, the Church insists we get permission for something as simple as fasting, to prevent us from harming ourselves through misguided, shortsighted zeal. (Some saints, like Ignatius of Loyola, did permanent damage to their health this way and came to bitterly repent their penances.)

Throughout this book, with each pair of opposing Vices and Virtues, the reader will face a quiz—not on the names, dates, and concepts gleaned while skimming the text in the rest room, but rather on where he lands on the spectrum of Virtue/Vice/Neurosis. If you find yourself on the Golden Mean that hangs in tension between the two, you’re safely marching the “straight and narrow” path that leads to Heaven.

Or else you’re lying on the quiz. But that’s between you and your confessor. If this book accomplishes nothing else, I hope it sends people trooping off to those curious wooden booths that are open for approximately fifteen minutes every Saturday afternoon at local Catholic parishes to talk to the well-educated celibates who sit in them, playing Sudoku. These men dedicate their whole lives—and several chunks of each weekend—to the service of souls. As it stands, most of the folks who stir themselves every Saturday come to confess the sins of their grandchildren, by which I mean you. Why not show up sometime and give your side of the story? Sure, it isn’t exactly therapy. For one thing, it’s free. For another, you climb out with absolution, not a prescription—and much better side effects, in my experience.

*From The Bad Catholic’s Guide to the Seven Deadly Sins, by John Zmirak (Chestnut Ridge, NY: Crossroad Publishing, 2010).*





# Words, FLESH, & MAKING

BY EDITORIAL STAFF AND MERYL TRAPP

Sometimes words betray themselves. Or rather, the connotations that have encrusted a word's windshield during the bumpy ride of history obscure what the word really means. For instance "liberal" traditionally meant "pertaining to freedom," and its opposite was "servile," which referred to slavery. In this sense we still use the term "liberal arts," although it sometimes misleads well-meaning people—for instance, the Christian radio host who asked a Thomas More faculty member: "Why do you teach the 'liberal' arts? Why not the *conservative arts*?" It doesn't help that liberal arts teachers at so many institutions have in fact infused the classroom with modern ideologies that also claim the name "liberal."

Yet we go on teaching the liberal arts, as we persevere in explaining that "freedom" doesn't mean what moderns think it does. Freedom, as Aristotle taught and the Church agrees, is the liberty to do *what is good*. In transmitting the liberal arts, plus a solid foundation of Catholic theology, we as educators are freeing our charges to become the men and women God made them to be, by cutting away false entanglements to vice and ignorance. This training of the intellect and will, we follow the Church in insisting, is the very best preparation for any vocation or state in life.

But there's more to life than thought. Since our society—unlike that of the pagan Greeks who gave us (with so much else) the names of such things—is blessedly free of the institution of slavery, perhaps it's worth rechristening the "servile" arts as the "practical." The Christian embrace of humility, its sacramental insistence on the goodness of creation, and the example of carpenters like St. Joseph and Jesus Himself and hundreds of saints, should move us to see with new and unjaded eyes the arts that render bodily life more blessed and beautiful. If Sloth is a deadly sin, its opposite is Diligence, which means that work and our attitude towards it can play a make-or-break role in our moral lives. Whether our model is St. Paul making tents or Mother Angelica manufacturing fishing lures to fund her ministry, we should not turn up our noses at work that entails a little sweat and tires our muscles. Indeed, there's nothing more refreshing to the weary mind than the useful exercise of the body. Better still if we weary ourselves serving others, acquiring excellence in crafts that can contribute to the corporal works of mercy.

(continued)





*Despite our chosen patron saint, we at Thomas More College don't pretend that we can reverse the English Reformation. But we can, in our own small way, order our own intermediary association—the College—to better foster the full development of the person. And to that end, the College has established its own system of guilds designed to train all students in some of the practical arts that enrich and ennoble daily life. Through the guilds we have established, students will gain skills and experience from master craftsmen.*

That was the spirit in which Christendom developed the institution of guilds, which arose in the High Middle Ages as a means to organize, regulate, and infuse with Christian charity the pursuit of honest trades. Everyone from weavers to lawyers, everywhere from England to Italy, banded together to set just prices, high standards of quality, and terms of fair employment. They typically adopted patron saints, endowed local churches and monasteries, organized charity to the poor, and thereby served as one of the “intermediary associations” that Catholic social teaching holds up as a necessary buffer between the individual and the State. Strip away such organizations, and you have gone a long way toward tyranny, as pope after pope has warned. Yet that is precisely what kings such as Henry VIII accomplished when they suppressed the guilds, at the same time as they trampled the liberties of the Church.

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Master carpenter Frank Jenkins trains students in the St. Joseph Woodworking Guild; Thomas More College artist-in-residence David Clayton heads the St. Luke Sacred Art Guild; College admission director Mark Schwerdt leads students in the St. Gregory Music Guild; student life director Annie Clark and Daryl McGann (lead baker at Me & Ollies Bakery in Portsmouth, N.H.) head the St. Honorius Baking Guild; and President William Fahey directs the St. Isidore Homesteading Guild.

College President William Fahey notes, “Guilds in their earliest form were developed out of man's natural spirit of association. The Catholic Church took medieval guilds under its tutelage and infused into them the vivifying spirit of Christian charity. Not only will students learn skills they can use throughout their lives,” said Dr. Fahey, “they will have an opportunity to bake bread for the homeless, produce artworks for local churches, create chairs, cribs, and other projects for the needy in our community, and bring music to nursing homes and hospitals.” Lest we sound too high-minded here, the chickens which students tend in a coop behind President Fahey's office also provide a nice source of fresh, organic morning omelets.

While the guild system only began in September 2010, students are already discovering some of the benefits of learning the practical arts. Maisie Sifert, a junior at Thomas More College and a member of the St. Isidore Guild, said: “If I ever own a farm, I'll know how to take care of hens! I've learned how to do things I normally never would have seen myself doing... like catch escaping chickens!” Junior A.J. Schenck agreed: “Being in the guild has given me the confidence to know that I have accomplished something, even though to say that I raised chickens of my own sounds corny. At least now I can start a small homestead of my own. There's no point in thought without action. Learning skills in the guilds connects us with concrete reality, which is something that liberal arts students sometimes lose sight of.”



# Words, FLESH, & MAKING

Freshman Catherine Mazzarella of the St. Luke's Sacred Art Guild said, "The icon lessons are like no art class I've taken before. It's not all about self-expression, but creating something in a more directed, perfect way. I'm improving my skills, such as duplicating things I see in front of me, and I look forward to working with egg tempera. In the end, it will be great to have an art piece to use for prayer. An icon is more than something just hanging on the wall. It is used to actively contemplate your life and soul."



Members of the St. Honorus Guild work with flour instead of egg tempera, and they are equally enthusiastic about this new dimension to campus life. Said freshman Molly Marr: "Being in the guild reinforced my desire to progress in the art of baking—especially for the benefit of the students who get to eat our bread!" Sophomore Mary Marceau added, "It's a lot of fun to eat something you made with your own hands. Making bread is fundamental; it's an essential product for our well-being. It's no wonder that it is a Biblical symbol. Everyone should know how to make bread."

Students in the St. Joseph Guild, no surprise, train in woodworking and carpentry. Freshman Marie O'Brien said that through the Guild, "I've gained a deeper appreciation for wood. I'm more attentive now when I see a piece of furniture: you can appreciate the workmanship." Her classmate Oliver Domina agreed, "We learned all about wood, what trees are good for what things, and how an individual tree's growth affects the outcome. We also had an entire class all about tools. We tried out different planes. It's interesting that so many things on campus are made of trees, for instance the Barn. Being in the guild has given me a greater appreciation of things like this; it opens your eyes."

Paul Guenzel, a freshman in the St. Gregory Music Guild, said: "Having learned a few songs, I've gained a new appreciation for folk music. I hope that we can eventually reach a certain point where we know

the songs well, sing well together with a nice complement of all the voices, and also play the instruments." Guild members will move on from folksongs for use at college festivities to learn Gregorian chant for use at Mass.

Likewise, students in the wood-working guild will help to build a new projected altar for the College's chapel, while students in the sacred art guild are already producing icons to hang on its walls. This is only fitting, according to President Fahey: "We must never forget that even communities based on the intellectual and spiritual

life must make visible signs of culture in this world. The ideals of the mind and the riches of the spiritual world can be visibly drawn down into our daily lives."

"In many ways, our guilds will show students how to live," added Thomas More College director of admissions Mark Schwerdt. "Students will know how to fix their own furniture or make music with their families. They will learn how the common man can create works of art as well as how to balance work, family, and leisure—all while enhancing their ability to be creative."



## Why We Chase Chickens in College

*Didn't Bl. John Henry Newman argue in the Idea of a University that "knowledge was its own reward" and that we should avoid muddying the distinction between the liberal and the servile arts?*

**William E. Fahey:** Newman stood against those who lessened the nobility of the liberal arts by making them servant to, say, political struggle or money-making. Yet if you look at his *University Sketches* and his essays on Benedictine education, you find a vision of education which pays attention to the formation of the whole person in virtue. In "The Mission of St. Benedict," he writes: "Benedict found the world in ruins and his mission was to restore it.... Silent men were observed about the country, or discovered in the forest, digging, clearing and building and other silent men, not seen, were sitting in the cold cloister, tiring their eyes, and keeping their attention on the stretch, while they painfully deciphered and copied and re-copied the manuscripts they had saved... by degrees the woody swamp became a hermitage, a religious house, a farm, an abbey, a village, a seminary, a school of learning, and a city." That describes the quiet transformation of Europe and the creation of a new civilization through a different kind of education, one that brought together hand-craft and traditional studies.

*So, the periods of time spent on wood-work or icon painting or gardening are meant to help rebuild our civilization?*

**WEF:** In a quiet way, they may contribute to the renewal of culture, yes. More immediately the guilds are for the renewal of the students and to bring some order to their lives. Again, I don't want to burden our students or the curriculum, but there is something special about Christian education here that involves balancing hard intellectual effort with a reminder that reality is present all around us and it includes much more than an individual mind. This isn't solely Christian. When Aristotle, in his *Politics*, makes the distinction between servile or manual arts and the liberal arts, he cautions against an exclusively liberal arts education.

*Really?*

**WEF:** Yes, he says the freeman should pursue the liberal arts to a certain, balanced degree. He actually says that "if a student attends to the liberal arts too closely, as if to attain perfection, an evil effect will follow," by



which he means that a person's health and mental capabilities will become deformed. In fact, he encourages all liberal arts students to include a small amount of "useful" or "mechanical" art for the sake of balance and practicality. Elsewhere he talks about the need for real, hands-on experience. In both his logical and his biological studies, he points out that a person working only from theoretical knowledge is bound to make mistakes and cannot approximate the approach of someone with the direct experience of nature and the everyday world.

*So, it is both Christian and classical to bring these together?*

**WEF:** Well, Aristotle certainly prescribes such a course. It really springs from Christian theology and practice. Recently, the Holy Father spoke to educators in Europe at the Colleges des Bernadins and made this point. Jewish education brought together manual labor and teaching—think of St. Paul, who was both trained as a Rabbi, but also practiced tent-making. St. Augustine speaks of this tradition and the Benedictines were pre-eminent in bringing the two—the liberal and the practical—together. Pope Benedict explains that this stems from something that Greco-Roman civilization lacked: the creator God, a God Who does not remove Himself from His creation, but enters into and shapes it. Christ tells us His Father is "still working and I am working." Our Lord Himself was both learned and—as the son of Joseph—a carpenter. As the Holy Father says, this new vision of education brought together "a culture of the Word" and a "culture of work." In some small part, that is what we are attempting.

# The Pope in Britain: A SECOND SPRING?

BY STRATFORD CALDECOTT, EDITOR OF THOMAS MORE COLLEGE'S JOURNAL, *SECOND SPRING*

In mid-September, Benedict XVI made the first-ever state visit by a Pope to the United Kingdom. John Paul II had come on a pastoral visit in 1982, but that was the only precedent. The Catholic Church is, of course, older than the United Kingdom, indeed older than the several countries, such as England and Scotland, of which it is composed. The visit seemed to mark a turning point in several ways. It was a turning point in the history of the Reformation, because the Pope was being invited and welcomed by a Crown that had rejected his authority for more than 400 years, and was given the opportunity to address the Government and the Church of England in a direct way, both in Westminster Hall (where William Wallace and later St. Thomas More had been tried and condemned in 1535) and Westminster Abbey, sitting side by side with the Archbishop of Canterbury on the famous Cosmati Pavement that symbolically represents the cosmos. It was a turning point, too, in the history of the New Atheism, because the expected protests did not appear and instead the country seemed to be swept along in a wave of curiosity and even respect. Many in the media were surprised and horrified, but the fact is we are now a more ignorant and confused people than we are an anti-Catholic one. The Blessed John Henry Newman's own conversion and his *Apologia* had marked the beginning of that change in the nineteenth century, sowing the seeds of a new respect for Catholicism.

When the Pope beatified Newman on September 19<sup>th</sup>, we were there. How could we stay away? Thomas More College's journal *Second Spring* (edited from Newman's beloved Oxford) was named after the great sermon Newman preached at St. Mary's College in Oscott in 1852, at the restoration of the English hierarchy. Later that same day the Pope visited Oscott to meet with the bishops of the three countries, and there he mentioned the "Second Spring" sermon and related it to the New Evangelization, speaking of the urgent need "to proclaim the Gospel afresh in a highly secularized environment." It was like a manifesto for the work that Thomas More College is trying to do through the Centre in Oxford and through its work in the education of the young, combating the influence of



the relativism and the culture of death that Newman saw as a growing threat in his day and which is now so pervasive around the world.

The purpose of Thomas More College's Summer Programme each year in Oxford is to teach young Americans about the Catholic Literary Revival and the great Christian writers that flourished in Newman's wake and were often inspired by his example. From Gerard Manley Hopkins to G.K. Chesterton, C.S. Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, not forgetting Belloc, Dawson, Houselander and a host of others, Newman's "second spring" bore abundant fruit, and the richness and brilliance of those writers and thinkers can still illuminate what it means to be a Catholic intellectual today. But it is not enough to read the books of great men and women; one needs to walk in their footsteps, see the sights they saw, meet the people who knew them, breathe in the culture that formed them, and that is what Thomas More College students do when they come to Oxford.

The Pope, too, was walking in Newman's footsteps. As he spoke to us, it was plain that he saw Newman as a figure of importance not just for Britain, but for the universal Church. He saw the Englishness of Newman, too, as a gift for the Church. Through that great, civilized and civilizing spirit, that great teacher and philosopher and pastor of souls, the best of British culture flows back into the Church for the benefit of all.

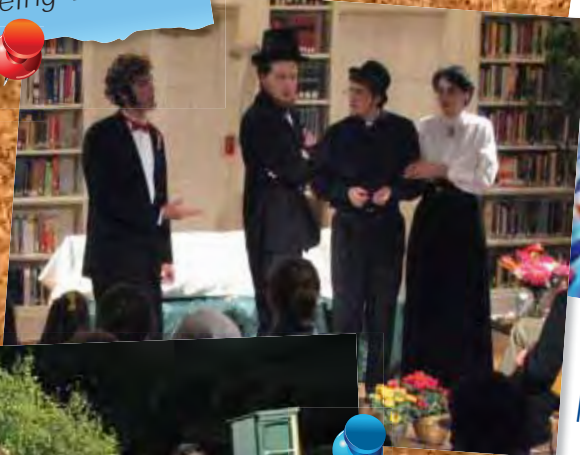




Hashing out Southern Lit in the crisp New England air.

Students and faculty on the annual Walk for Life in the heart of Boston.

Students enact The Importance of Being Ernest.



Students read aloud Robert Frost's poetry at Frost's own farm



At the Virtus Bowl, the Virtues seem thankfully to outnumber the vices.



TMC sophomores shake off jetlag their first day in Rome.



Are you sure  
we don't  
have a real  
soccer ball?



CHRISTIAN  
HUMANISM.

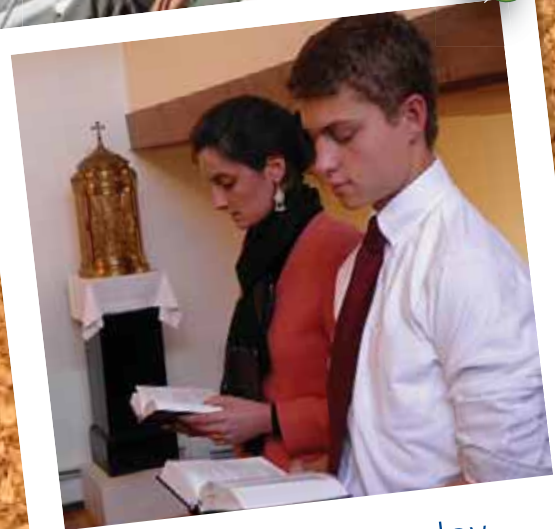


Well, until we can start throwing  
snowballs, this will have to do.

TMC students  
brave the always-  
chill waters of  
Boston Harbor.



And YOU'RE in the  
baking guild?!



Starting the day  
with Lauds



# Thoughts on the American Chestnut

BY CHRISTOPHER O. BLUM, ACADEMIC DEAN

Each autumn amidst the blazing of the Sugar Maples, I take my Natural History students on a little pilgrimage to see one of the great proofs of the regenerative power of nature, the American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata*). Formerly the proud ruler of the eastern hardwood forest, the Chestnut is today found in the understory with the witch-hazel and the viburnum, where it is shaded by the oaks and hickories it once overmastered. The Chestnut was brought low by a fungus introduced from Asia just after the turn of the twentieth century. Some of the last nuts, however, were able to sprout and to grow. While those trees also succumbed to the blight, their roots send forth new shoots today. In the hills and dales of our region, hundreds of Chestnut saplings reach heavenward, and not far from the College, two large adult trees go on producing nuts. I hope that a resistant strain may soon be bred, and my children's children will see the Chestnut restored, once again offering shade, mast, and timber.

St. Thomas Aquinas observed that since we are God's apprentices, we should attend to His masterpiece, nature. And so we might see in the story of the Chestnut a lesson that applies to Catholic education. The intellectual life of the Church grew into a great tree, from whose bounty the multitudes were nourished. The story is a familiar one. The Fathers of old—Ambrose and Augustine, Basil and the two Gregories, and so many more—labored to wed Greek rationalism and Roman dutifulness to the testimony of the prophets, evangelists, and apostles. The Age of St. Benedict, so marvelously evoked by Blessed Cardinal Newman in his famous essays, saw the slow maturation of this seed into a tough plant, bound to the soil of Europe. By the twelfth century, when Abelard, Hugh of St. Victor, and St. Bernard were teaching and arguing, praying, and preaching, the Church's intellectual life had taken on a definite and recognizable shape. The central practices of



*lectio divina*, the composition of liturgical poetry and recounting of the lives of saints, Scriptural commentary, preaching, and philosophical and theological disputation were elaborated with care in monasteries and schools, universities, and later, in colleges and in seminaries. These institutions produced lasting monuments of wisdom and eloquence during their imposing career of some five centuries—at least in Catholic Europe—before being laid low by the blight of modernity in the era of the French Revolution.

Today, the halls of academe are so many bare, ruined choirs. The intellectual life of the Church is not likely to be found at the Sorbonne or at Oxford; it lives instead in smaller institutions, those the world ignores or considers marginal. Yet the life of faith seeking understanding continues to attract students and teachers. A new, blight-resistant generation has arisen, and they are putting down roots, not only at Thomas More College, but in secondary schools, other colleges and universities, houses of study, Newman Centers, and graduate programs. This new generation of scholars strives to bring together into one the authentic discoveries made since the days of Galileo with those truths long known and pondered by the wise. In this task, faith both calls us to great endeavors and inculcates humility. And if the Christian intellectual life is once again to flourish, humility seems almost the one thing needful. For even a passing acquaintance with the riches of the thought of St. Augustine or St. Thomas Aquinas shows us that we are not the measure, but the measured. To our generation falls a tremendous task of recovery, rebuilding, and yes, replanting. Like the young American Chestnuts who may—we hope—soon prove themselves to be blight-resistant, the intellectual life of the Church that makes its home at Thomas More College and its sister institutions across the land is both true to itself and newly vital.



# Ruminatio

## considerations from an academic life

BY WILLIAM EDMUND FAHEY, PRESIDENT AND PROFESSOR OF HUMANITIES

Living truth is hard. To read truth may be difficult, but to live the truth is hard. At a college, student and teacher together read *about* the truth and they talk *about* the truth. Most times they are unaware of truth's fullness or vigor, or jealousy. So powerful is this preposition—"about"—that they find nothing demanded of them apart from the first demand of the truth: simple understanding. The pivotal moment arrives when the student stands *under* the truth, like a man standing under the moon who suddenly sees the land lit up around him and finds all his senses newly tuned. At that moment, the truth takes particular form in dialogue with each person; it illuminates and calls. Then the truth is not merely read, but heard. Then the truth is either engaged, or not. All engagement with the truth, like all engagement with a poem or a bayonet, demands a response. One either allows the truth to play out in the mind and move to the heart, or one does not. If it stops in the mind, it is no living truth; indeed, it may become fashioned into something else.

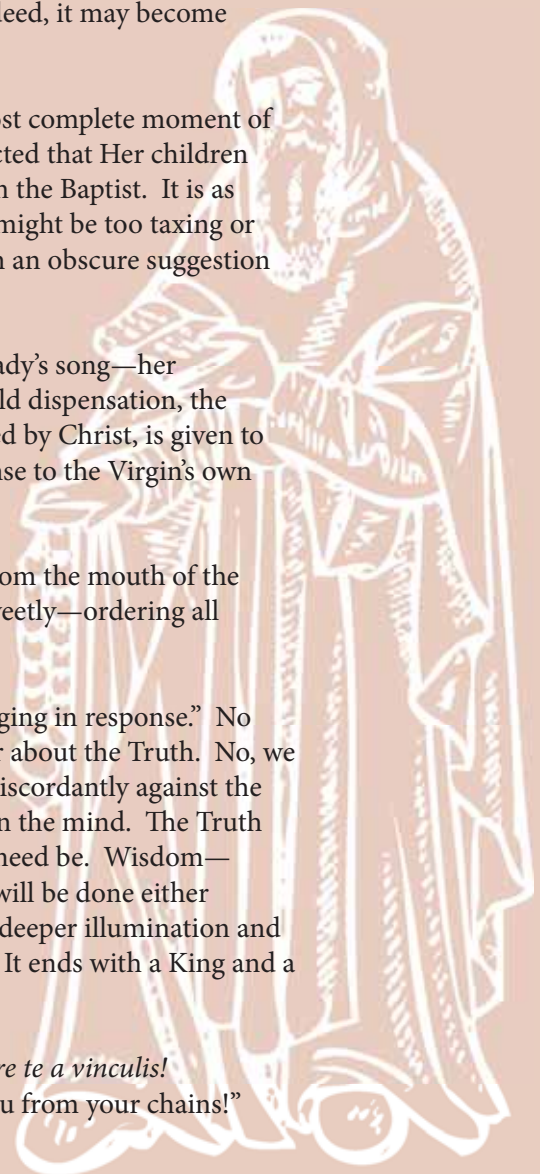
With kindly foresight the Church assigns the richest and most complete moment of Christmas preparation to the final stretch. It is as if She suspected that Her children might be sluggish to the truth proclaimed by Isaiah and St. John the Baptist. It is as if She knew that the proclamation of the six-winged Seraphim might be too taxing or that the soft garments decried by the last prophet would remain an obscure suggestion amidst all the holiday preparations and shopping.

In the last days before Christmas, the Church adorns Our Lady's song—her *Magnificat*—with the Great "O" Antiphons. The whole of the old dispensation, the whole longing of the Jewish people, the whole fulfillment offered by Christ, is given to Her children like a nursery rhyme or sea shanty, sung in response to the Virgin's own sublime song.

And we begin with Wisdom: "O Wisdom, You came forth from the mouth of the Most High; you reach from beginning to end—mightily and sweetly—ordering all things. Come, teach us the way of prudence!"

An "antiphon" in ancient Greek is a "singing against" or "singing in response." No longer will the Church allow us sluggishly to read about or hear about the Truth. No, we must sing in response to the Truth; or, if need be, we can sing discordantly against the Truth. But we are invited to bring with us something more than the mind. The Truth calls and sings, and expects no less; and will wrestle with us, if need be. Wisdom—which comes from the Most High—will order things, and this will be done either mightily or sweetly. It begins in song and through song brings deeper illumination and inspires action. It begins with Wisdom coming from on High. It ends with a King and a Law-giver and a Savior.

*Leva oculos tuos; vide Dominum tuum, quia jam veniet solvere te a vinculis!*  
"Lift up your eyes and see your Lord for he is coming to free you from your chains!"





THOMAS MORE COLLEGE  
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# think again.

At the end of the dialogue *Phaedrus*, Plato has Socrates describe how, when the god Theuth gave the art of writing to the Egyptian king Thamus, the king responded with a perceptive comment. “If men learn this, it will implant forgetfulness in their souls; they will cease to exercise memory because they rely on that which is written, calling things to remembrance no longer from within themselves, but by means of external marks.” It will fill them, he went on, not with wisdom but with the conceit of wisdom. So it proved to be—though of course writing has also made possible many great advances in civilization. Something similar applies to the computer and the internet. The tendency of human technology is to take a human faculty—such as the ability to memorize or

calculate—externalize it, and magnify it in the process. The danger is that in this way we may empty ourselves and become dependent on our machines. The ability to make wise use of the powers we gain through control of these techniques has not grown as fast as the powers themselves. Perhaps it has not grown at all. To become wise we must develop our interior life and attain a mastery of our passions, rather than simply learning how better to indulge them. Technology must be put at the service not of our desires and intentions, but of truth, and in particular the truth of the human person who is made for love.

Stratford Caldecott  
Editor, *Second Spring*