

A great mission

In the neighborhood of Purdue University and on its campus, the Aquinas Educational Foundation seeks to help students, professors, and life-time learners in every field of work in the diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana

- to **think** about their Catholic **faith**,
- and to let their **faith think** about what really matters to them and to our world,
- to let faith inform their actions.

The foundation does these things through the classes offered in the Notre Dame Theological Extension Program; invited, evening lectures by prominent Catholic intellectuals; seminars; workshops; interfaith dialogue; internships, and scholarships.

*"How Shall I make a return to the Lord for all
the good he has done for me"*

Psalm 116:12?

Support for AEF

The Aquinas Educational Foundation hopes for a steady increase in the educational offerings of the AEF: funded lecture series, scholarships, internships.

For more information about how you can become involved in and support the work of AEF, see www.aquinas-foundation.org
Call (765) 743-3021, e-mail jmlauer@purdue.edu
or write to

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West Lafayette, IN 47996-2316

Aquinas Educational Foundation

History and Current Programs



2007 marks the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Aquinas Educational Foundation (AEF) in West Lafayette, Indiana. Thomas Levergood, founder of the Lumen Christi Institute, has praised the AEF as a "model for Catholic studies at a secular campus, a model to be imitated."

Contribution to the Aquinas Educational Foundation

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(One time donation. Please make check payable to: Aquinas Educational Foundation)

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A rich legacy

For four decades Purdue University students and area residents have been taking Theology courses for transfer credit through the Notre Dame Theological Extension Program. Two university presidents (at Purdue University and Notre Dame) approved the Notre Dame extension. Two exceptional pastors at the Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center—Fr. Leo Haigerty and Fr. Leo Piguet—first envisioned it and then worked to realize it through the Aquinas Educational Foundation.

A sense of community

An estimated 15,000 Catholic students attend Purdue University. The university has over 400 Catholic faculty and staff members, affiliated with seven different parishes in the Greater Lafayette area. The diocese of Lafayette-in-Indiana has 62 parishes, with 100,000 members. Adults throughout the diocese look for means to continue their study of the church's history and teaching and to couple that knowledge with professional growth.



The Aquinas Educational Foundation seeks to unite these people in their faith, in their search for understanding, and in their desire to serve the community as a whole. It brings them together for occasional lectures and discussions, as well as for regular study. It provides a vital, intellectual and social bridge between the parishes and the campus. It offers the secular, land-grant university and its students a virtual "Catholic Studies" center, equipped with rich, ecumenical, inter-religious, and interdisciplinary resources. It gives the wider community access to the best and brightest scholars working in the Catholic tradition.

Notre Dame Theology



Thomas Ryba (Ph.D., 1988, Northwestern University), the tenth Notre Dame theologian-in-residence at the St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center at Purdue, has designed and taught thirty-two separate Theology courses to more than 700 students, undergraduate and graduate, since he first came to Purdue in 1990. He is an adjunct faculty member in the

Department of Philosophy at Purdue, where he also participates in the Religious Studies and Jewish Studies programs.

Through Dr. Ryba's efforts, a Master's component has been added to the Notre Dame theological extension, with branch campuses in West Lafayette and Geist. Dr. Ryba contributes regularly to inter-religious and ecumenical dialogue at the diocesan and national level.

His students call him "an amazing instructor and an amazing person." They term his classes "challenging" and describe them as "an intellectual pleasure." A Purdue faculty member who has audited Dr. Ryba's classes reports, "He succeeded not only in strengthening and deepening our faith, but also in whetting our desire to take additional theology classes." "Every Catholic student should take his classes," one undergraduate declared.

Recent course offerings include: Introduction to Theology, Christology, Theology of St. Paul, Theology of the Old Testament, Fundamentals of Systematic Theology, The Western Christian Mystical Path, Theology of John Henry Newman, Vatican II in Its Historical Context, Theology of Edith Stein, Four Theologians Who Influenced the Twentieth Century: DeLubac, Congar, Rahner, and Von Balthasar, Fundamental Theology (Apologetics), The History of the Afterlife, and Foundations of Moral Theology.

Graduate students appreciate Dr. Ryba's scholarly work, many academic publications, and fidelity to Church teaching. His book, *The Essence of Phenomenology and Its Meaning for the Scientific Study of Religion* (1991), is critically acclaimed. He currently serves as the North American editor of the highly respected academic journal *Religion*.

Past Programs

The Albertus Magnus Evenings

Besides the Notre Dame Theology classes, the Aquinas Educational Foundation has offered a series of Albertus Magnus Evening lectures. Open to the public, these lectures have been jointly sponsored by the Haigerty-Piguet Memorial Lecture Fund and various programs and departments at Purdue University.

Each lecture has been combined with opportunities for shared prayer (Vespers) and a meal. "AEF events are hospitable, gracious, an occasion for networking and for genuine conversation about important things," said one AEF Board member.

Featured speakers and topics in the Albertus Magnus Evening series (2004-2007) have included:



Mary Reichardt (University of St. Thomas), "What Is a Catholic Writer?"

The editor of the *Encyclopedia of Catholic Literature*, Professor Reichardt discussed the fiction and poetry of many notable Catholic authors. What makes literature "Catholic," Professor Reichardt suggested, is its exploration of "profound Catholic issues through the expansive freedom of the imagination." She characterized the Catholic imagination as dramatic, incarnational, sacramental in its use of imagery, inclusive of suffering, celebratory of life, and capable of educating its readers toward a greater human empathy.

Francis Cardinal George, O.M.I., Archbishop of Chicago, "The Mission of a Catholic Scholar on a Secular Campus"



Speaking in Purdue's Stewart Center to a hundred Catholic scholars, the Cardinal referred to Pope John Paul II's love for the splendor of truth in the face of the fragmentation of knowledge. Emphasizing the integration of reason and faith, he outlined the scholars' calling: to become competent in their fields; to form a self-consciously Catholic community; to dare to be counter-cultural and foils to the prevailing assumptions in the culture of death; to dialogue with those of other faiths; and to practice their faith openly through charity, a moral life, and personal and communal prayer.



George Weigel (Ethics and Public Policy Center), "From John Paul II to Benedict XVI: Achievements and Challenges"

Speaking to an estimated 200 people on March 31, 2006—a date close to the first anniversary of Pope John Paul II's death—George Weigel, a noted Catholic public intellectual and the official biographer of the pope, reflected upon the legacy of his papacy in the history of the world and Church. Weigel emphasized Pope John Paul II's confrontation with communism, his ecumenical and inter-religious dialogue, his appeal to youth, his philosophical writings and orientation, his canonization of saints, and his blessing of the many ecclesial movements of renewal.

Jean Bethke Elshtain (Divinity School, The University of Chicago), "Faith-Based Political Engagement"



Elshtain showed that faith and politics have long been intertwined. Medieval theological debates about God's omnipotence paralleled political controversies concerning the extent of the king's power. When state-craft and soul-craft were separated into distinct realms during the Enlightenment, the state continued its claim of sovereignty. Since then, Elshtain showed, religious faith has played a variable role in politics—sometimes, as in the case of Martin Luther King, Jr., a prophetic one.

Cyprian Davis (St. Meinrad Archabbey) and **Diana L. Hayes** (Georgetown University), "African-American Spirituality: A Catholic Perspective"



Focusing on the unique experience and rich spirituality of Black Catholics in the United States, two noted scholars—a theologian and a distinguished Church historian—gave a moving presentation about the courageous and joyful spirituality of African-American Catholics, including candidates for canonization as saints.

Special Programs

Archbishop Celestino Migliore (Permanent Observer of the Holy See to the United Nations), "Coming to Debate and to Deliver on the Challenges Confronting the World"



In a lecture co-sponsored by Discovery Park, Archbishop Migliore addressed a standing-room only audience in Krannert Auditorium. He described the role of his office in the United Nations, as it struggles to deal with global warming, HIV/AIDS, war and terrorism, and economic development.