

ANGELICUM NEWS

The Newsletter of the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas Alumni and Friends



FALL 2018

A Pontifical University to Engage the World from Rome

A Letter from Fr. Benedict Croell, O.P. Director of Development & Mission Advancement



Eight years ago I finished my studies here at the Angelicum with the hope that I would go on for the doctorate, but my province had other ideas! I was made vocation director back in the States. Little did I know that once that assignment was finished, I would return. I am excited now to be back and am delighted to share with you why! Our faculty is now the strongest in the world in its ability to teach the thought of the Angelic Doctor.

As the saying goes, "All roads lead to Rome." Today from the heart of the Catholic Church, The Pontifical University of Saint Thomas Aquinas is *engaging the world from Rome*. The Truth of Jesus Christ has a certain splendor to it. When a person is able to see that truth, they are drawn to that truth and they will move towards it themselves. This is the wisdom of the "Doctor Communis" (common doctor) of the Church, St. Thomas Aquinas. We are especially excited that beginning this semester, the Angelicum now has a newly renovated **Thomistic Institute**. It will have even further reach and influence beyond Rome, and into Europe for the future and current leaders of the Church (<https://angelicum.it/thomistic-institute>).

The Angelicum is where students meet God, in the classroom and outside of it. Did you know that ours is the only Pontifical university in Rome which offers Eucharistic all-day adoration for our 1,000+ students, 100 faculty, and 53 friars in a historic chapel within our cloister? One professor shared with me what our rector, Fr. Michal Paluch, OP, said about his plan for the Angelicum, "Our starting point for studying Sacred Truth is to begin with God - in the holy Eucharist." I invite you to come to Rome to meet our rector and witness for yourself this beautiful expression of the love of our Lord and devotion to Him as the students not only study *about God*, but also actually get to *know God* - here.

This edition of **Angelicum News** has an exclusive interview with one the Angelicum's most popular professors, Fr. Paul Murray, O.P. and an update from Australian alumna, Joanne Bergamin with whom I studied here back in 2008. Not only did she convert to Catholicism after studying with Angelicum professor, Fr. Marius Zerafa, O.P. (Malta) but she also met her husband, a Swiss Guard!

In other news:

Our rector, Fr. Michal Paluch O.P. and I will be in New York City, Washington D.C. and Boston from November 2-11, 2018. We would be delighted to meet with any of you on the East Coast. Fr. Michal will give a talk on November 8th to St. John's Seminary in Boston, "To Be a Magister and a Student: Aquinas's Model." St. John's Seminary has their Pontifical accreditation via the Angelicum. On November 6th, Fr. Michal and I will connect with our DC Diocesan Priest alumni with special thanks to the Host Committee: Fr. Bill Byrne, Mrs. Susan Timoney, Fr. Mark Knestout, Fr. Stephen Wyble, Fr. Christopher Seith, Fr. Alex Scott. Any priest or bishop wishing to attend should contact Fr. Byrne: frbill@olom.org. If your Diocese would like to organize an Angelicum event - let me know ASAP - let's plan now!

The Dominican Order is near to completing major renovations of the living quarters of the friars on three of the four sides of the cloister courtyard of our university. The fourth wing is the largest and it includes one floor of classrooms (including the room where the young Fr. Karol Wojtyła defended his doctoral dissertation) and three floors of cells for 25 friars. This renovation is estimated at US \$3.5-4.6 million. If you recall, this is the actual wing you see as you walk towards the stairs of the

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university from via Panisperna. The wing looks handsome from the outside - it is the inside that needs significant work and restoration and some re-configuration of space. If the fourth (and last) part of the cloister is able to be completed, it would bring the capacity of the Angelicum to 75 friars. With so many high-ranking faculty members joining our university, more and more young Dominican priests are requesting to study and live here. Right now, we are at capacity with 53 friars - about 12 of them being student Dominican priests. Our hope is that a

benefactor might make a significant contribution (\$2 million) as perhaps a matching gift, so that we might jump start a major campaign to finish the fourth (and last) side of the cloister.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to me at anytime and stay up to date on our progress. I'm hopeful that the prayers for the Angelicum will bear great fruit. Please know of our prayers for each of you! Contact Fr. Benedict Croell, O.P. directly at +1-202-642-3597 or benedict.croell.op@pust.it

Save the Date for a Special Homecoming Event at the Angelicum in Rome: MAY 10, 2019 The First Annual Fr. Val McInnes Chairholder Talk and Donor Appreciation Event



All are invited to Rome for the first Annual Fr. Val McInnes Lecture and Reception honoring the John Francis Carrere Family with the St. Thomas Aquinas award. This year our speaker will be Fr. Thomas Joseph White, O.P., the 2018 chairholder. His topic will be: "The Sanctification of the Priesthood and the Church." The talk will be in the very classroom where our most distinguished alumnus, Pope St. John Paul II (Fr. Karol Wojtyła) defended his doctoral dissertation. Please join us in the Eternal City to see firsthand how your generosity is helping our university to spread the Gospel. For more information and to RSVP by April 10th please contact Fr. Benedict at benedict.croell.op@pust.it or 202-642-3597.



May 10, 2019

First Annual Fr. Val McInnes Lecture & Reception

Lecture at 6PM followed by Hors d'oeuvre & Salon Aperitif Reception

in the Sala de Colonne

~ tours of the university cloister ~

The Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas - Angelicum

Largo Angelicum 1 00184 Rome



ANNOUNCING ANGELICUM "Sponsor-a-Desk" CAMPAIGN

The chair (or *cathedra*) of St. Peter represented in the apse of St. Peter's Basilica, is just a stone's throw from his tomb directly under the high altar. From the chair, like Jewish rabbis and bishops, St. Peter would teach. Chairs are important - and so are desks! For this reason, we are excited to announce the beginning of an ongoing campaign to completely repair, renovate and beautify the study environment of our students, one classroom at a time, on the first floor around the entire cloister. The campaign will culminate in the modernization and restoration of the famous Aula 11, where Fr. Karol Wojtyla defended his doctoral dissertation.

Those of you who are alumni, you remember how uncomfortable some of the seats could be! Our 15 classrooms (exclusive of the Aula Magna and Aula Minor) make up the entire first floor of the university and range from 12 to 100 seating capacity. We already have updated the outside windows on the South side of the cloister and this week every classroom is being equipped with new digital projectors for audiovisual instruction. Some classrooms need sound systems to complement the new projectors, while others need a complete restoration of the historic terrazzo floors.

The estimate to sponsor a desk is about \$1,200. This would include the cost to repair/renovate the entire classroom: lighting, floors, desks, etc. The precise amount needed will vary depending on the needs of each particular classroom. If we had a significant matching donation of perhaps \$75K this would allow us to start gathering donations and to involve everyone in this major project.



Angelicum Faculty: Where are they now?

Fr. Michael Monshau, O.P.

written by Fr. Michael Monshau, O.P.

I was a member of the Spiritual Theology department while teaching at the Angelicum from 2008 to 2015. I taught liturgy, homiletics and various spirituality courses that were pertinent to the curricula of students who were preparing for formation ministry in their respective seminaries or religious communities. Since my time at the Angelicum I have been teaching at Christ the King Seminary in East Aurora, New York (the diocesan seminary for the Diocese of Buffalo, New York).

I am now in my fourth year as the professor of homiletics and liturgical studies at Christ the King Seminary. I am also one of the seminary's formation advisors (formators).

My secondary mission has always been to assist religious communities, and I have been able to maintain those duties as well. This fall, I taught a one-week course to the assembled novice mistresses of the cloistered Dominican nuns of the United States and Canada. I also continue my work of more than a decade of providing continuing theological formation for the communities located in the United States of the contemplative Holy Spirit Adoration Sisters, also known as the "Pink Sisters," the contemplative female branch of the Divine Word Missionary Fathers. This past summer my schedule was full giving retreats to several Carmelite monasteries as well as CMSWR communities. The Bishop of Buffalo has assigned me to be the spiritual director of a new religious congregation being formed in the diocese.

I have always loved teaching, but the course my teaching profession has taken has sometimes left me a bit surprised. My initial inclination was to be a teaching Brother, and earlier in life I imagined that would mean my days would be spent in elementary and secondary school classrooms. I smile when acknowledging that as a youngster, I never would have imagined that my life's vocation would be dedicated to serving seminarians, theology students and cloistered nuns! But that is precisely how my ministry has unfolded. I heard the call to the priesthood and to the Dominican Order, and as a young priest, my Province sent me to Vanderbilt University to earn the Ph.D.



"Coach" Father Michael Monshau (in Dominican habit) with the Christ the King Seminary Basketball team.

in homiletics. Also equipped with an S.T.L. in Spiritual Theology from the Angelicum, I have been serving on the seminary faculty and formation staff during the academic year, and during the vacation periods, I serve religious communities, particularly those of contemplative cloistered nuns, as an advisor or retreat master. And I spontaneously acknowledge that this has been a labor of love.

One final surprise is that I have been needed at Christ the King to serve as the seminary's basketball coach! My novitiate classmates have suppressed a smile or two over this since basketball has never ranked among my areas of interest or competence. However, when I arrived at Christ the King, a faculty member was needed to sponsor the team to the annual basketball tournament for seminarians conducted at the Pontifical Josephinum Seminary in Columbus, Ohio. The seminarians felt they could coach themselves, but a faculty member was needed who would officially assume the title of "coach" and who would accompany the team to the tournament. I agreed to this arrangement and was delighted to discover that about half of the other coaches at the tournament are my former Angelicum students! In particular, I look forward to an annual reunion with Father Brian Noel of the Diocese of Pittsburgh and Father Jeffrey Montz of the Archdiocese of New Orleans, both of whom serve their dioceses as seminary formators (and basketball coaches)! The post-Angelicum years for me have been fruitful and rich.



Sr. Sean Marie Striby, Student at the Angelicum

Written by Sr. Sean Marie Striby

My name is Sister Sean Marie Striby and I am a member of the Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma, Michigan. The Religious Sisters of Mercy were founded in 1831 in Dublin, Ireland by Venerable Catherine McAuley to serve the poor, sick and ignorant in Ireland. Naturally, the two main apostolates that developed from this initial vision were health care and education. These are still the main works of the Sisters of Mercy today, along with many other services under the umbrella of the corporal and spiritual works of Mercy.

I am the oldest of four children and grew up in a suburb southwest of Denver, Colorado. I grew up in a Catholic family and was always involved in my local parish. I went to college in Northern Colorado and graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. After college, I worked as a Registered Nurse at the Children's Hospital in Denver on a medical inpatient floor. During this time, I also took a couple of classes in a Master's program for Sacred Scripture. While I loved being a pediatric nurse, I also had a great love for learning more about the faith, especially scripture.



During this time, I began to be drawn to the religious life. After about a year of intense discernment, I entered the Religious Sisters of Mercy of Alma, Michigan. In 2013, I was assigned to serve in Rome as a nurse for the seminarians and priests of the North American College. While this remains my primary apostolate here, I have had the privilege of studying at the Angelicum for the past three years. In our Institute, the thought/teachings of St. Thomas Aquinas form a major part of our formation as Sisters. He is also the heavenly patron of our Institute. Being able to intensely study St. Thomas has been a great gift.

I am currently a student in the philosophy program. My experience at the Angelicum has been wonderful. The professors are very knowledgeable and experienced in teaching. They are approachable and invested in the success of their students. They truly desire that their students understand the material and come to be able to integrate it. On the other side, the students come from all over the world so it is a great experience of other cultures and backgrounds. The atmosphere created by the professors and students is warm and welcoming; everyone is happy!

The professors of the Angelicum use Thomism as the overriding principle guiding their teaching. This provides for a wholistic approach to theology and philosophy that helps the student to integrate their studies. It has taught me how to think correctly, to understand the dignity of the human person as God created him and to understand with greater depth the teachings of the Church. In our current culture, where individualism and secularism create misery and isolation from God and each other, it is vastly important to understand how to be good Catholics, good humans. The Angelicum is providing a solid education in these very important areas. I am truly grateful for this opportunity to study at the Angelicum.

Angelicum Alumni: Where are they now? Joanne Bergamin

Written by Joanne Bergamin

I am an Australian girl, born and bred on the beautiful Gold Coast, who via the hand of God moved to Rome, converted to Catholicism, found a job in the Vatican, married one of the Pope's Swiss Guards and moved inside the Vatican. My story is a great tale of love and conversion and the Angelicum ("the Ange") played a great role in the story – both in my conversion to the Catholic faith and in my career. As a 'taster', I attended a Christian Art class excursion to Florence one Saturday with a friend who was already a student at the Ange. Fr. Marius Zerafa O.P., a Maltese professor at the Angelicum, showed us as much sacred art around Florence as is humanly possible in just a few hours. We saw the David, the Duomo and more significantly for me, we visited the intimate cloister and Museum of Saint Mark, standing in front of the famed frescoes by Fra Angelico. While taking in his magnificent image of the Annunciation of the Lord from the early 15th century, Father Zerafa explained that this was the moment that Mary gave her "yes" to God, to the announcement by the Angel Gabriel that she would conceive a son by the power of the Holy Spirit to be called Jesus (Luke 1:26–38). It was at that moment that I was inspired and compelled to give my own "yes" and embark on my Catholic faith journey.

I was fortunate to be surrounded by many good young American and Australian seminarians and priests from the Pontifical North American College during my studies at the Ange. They didn't seem to mind my endless questions and debate about Catholicism as I toyed and toiled with the doctrine of the Church. It's not a simple matter for a modern woman to find her place in the Catholic Church, but the more I learnt about the faith, the real truth and beauty of the doctrine shone through. My studies at the Ange led me to finding a job inside the Vatican for the Pope's newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano* and that's where I met my future husband, in his Renaissance-style uniform! It's now 12 years since I moved to Rome and I've spent most of them inside the Vatican.



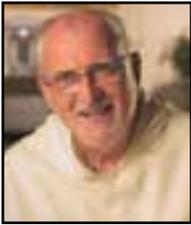
Follow me on my faith journey and for insight into what it's like to live behind Vatican walls and among the beauty and chaos of Rome! I can now be found either trying to be a good [@SwissGuardWife](#), blogging at [travelangel.me](#), or assisting young entrepreneurs at John Cabot University.



Fr. Jude Chidiebere Egbuom, Angelicum Alumnus Murdered in Nigeria ***Requiescat in pace***

Fr. Jude was murdered by gunmen in Nkwerre in the Nkwerre Local Government Area of Imo State, Nigeria, on the night of Monday, September 10, 2018. The attackers were reported to have made away with his vehicle. Fr. Jude was attacked around 8:00 pm when he went to a barber's shop on Anara-Nkwerre Road in Nkwerre town. He reportedly resisted giving the car keys to his killers, which angered them. The cleric was immediately shot together with the other victim in his vehicle, while the criminals fled. Fr. Jude Egbuom completed his S.T.L. at the Angelicum in 2015 and was until his death in charge of St Patrick's Catholic Parish, Amucha, Nigeria.





Angelicum Faculty: Interview with Fr. Paul Murray, O.P.

Interview by Fr. Benedict Croell, O.P.

Irish Dominican and professor of Theology, Fr. Paul Murray OP, sat down with us to share his experience of teaching at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas, “Angelicum”.

Tell us about your homeland. Aren't you Irish?

Yes! The place where I was born, in Newcastle Co. Down, was at the foot of the

Mountains of Mourne. A wonderful place to grow up. We never locked the doors back then, and our house faced the sea. As you can imagine, I've been an exile ever since!

How did you end up at the Angelicum? A wonderful providence brought me here. Already, before I came, I was teaching in Dublin and was involved in spiritual formation.

But what *formed* me before I came, both as a man and a priest, apart from my Dominican education, was the opportunity to meet with men and women recovering from addiction. I can't tell you what a learning it was and what a privilege to listen, hour after hour, week after week in the parlour, to men and women who had the courage to open up their whole lives to the light. It's called “the fifth step” in recovery. All my teaching in Rome has been marked, I have no doubt, by that apostolate of listening.



What classes have you taught at the Angelicum? Partly because of my own limitations, and partly because of enthusiasm, I've been drawn to explore not so much the great speculative questions in theology but rather to read and explore the vivid writings of saints like Catherine of Siena and John of the Cross. Their theology is a lived theology. It is theology on fire. It is theology “on its knees”. One of the joys of my life as a teacher at the Angelicum has been the opportunity to witness, year after year, students from all over the world catching fire with new enthusiasm for the saints and mystics of the great spiritual tradition.

Apart from teaching you have published a number of books.

What are the main themes? When it comes to the books I owe everything to the Dominican Order and to the students I've been teaching. In recent years I've been drawn to focus attention on Aquinas. What has often been forgotten is that St. Thomas was, first and last, a commentator on Scripture, and also a very considerable poet and a master of prayer. These are the aspects of his work which have most engaged my attention.

Have you written on other Dominican saints? Just now I'm trying to finish a book on the theme of freedom in St. Catherine of Siena. But already, several years ago, I wrote a small book of general introduction to the Dominican tradition of spirituality. It was entitled

The New Wine of Dominican Spirituality: A Drink Called Happiness. Happiness! Here in Rome, among all the Pontifical Universities, the



Angelicum has always been known, and *uniquely* known, as “the joyful University”. The cloister of the university is beautiful and is open to the sky, and we have an amazing garden much loved by the students. Of course, the task of study itself must always remain serious and demanding. But there is, at the Angelicum, an atmosphere of ease and fellowship between professors and students. It's no surprise, therefore, to find Thomas Aquinas, the patron of our university, defending in his writings, laughter and

good humor, declaring, for example, in the *Summa*, “If anyone is incapable of saying something funny, that person is morally unsound”! Thomas is known as the Angelic Doctor. But, on one occasion, St. John Paul II, our most famous alumnus here at the Angelicum, referred to Thomas as “Doctor Humanitatis” - Doctor or Teacher of Humanity. Today, as Dominican teachers here at the Angelicum, whether friars or sisters, we are, you could say, lucky poor men and women

who have inherited a great tradition. We have our limitations, God knows, but I like to think that a decidedly Dominican and *human* atmosphere pervades our day to day life, and that, inspired by Aquinas, an enlightened Christian humanism informs all the many different ways that there are of learning and teaching at the Angelicum.

What other distinctive characteristics of the Angelicum impress you? One thing comes to mind, and it is what I would call the *religious* character of the university. The Angelicum is unique

in the sense that all the academic life is taking place *physically* inside the walls and structure of a religious community. The university still retains its integrity as an academic institute, but the day to day life and work of the university is colored by a strong and distinctive religious atmosphere.

Do you have any advice or words for our friends and alumni?

I am hardly one to give advice, but I would say simply keep in contact with us. So many alumni I've met across the world speak with pride about their years here in Rome and about their studies at the Angelicum. That's very humbling, and it's a sign that the Spirit is still somehow working with us and through us. And, of course, never to be forgotten, are the many generous donors we have known over the years without whose generosity we would be in a sorry state. These men and women understand that to help a place like the Angelicum to survive and to thrive is to give aid to the many hundreds and thousands of people in the world today who are starving - and not only for food but for the bread of meaning, for answers to troubled questions, for the alms of truth. To live and work in a university such as the Angelicum, and to have had the opportunity, as a lay person or as a priest, of studying here and of breathing in something of the spirit of the Gospel and of the Dominican spirit, what a privilege, what a responsibility is ours!





Improvements at the Angelicum: Building Renovations and New Website

Other major renovations have taken place recently around the university: a new elevator for the administrative wing going all the way up to our six new guest rooms; the restoration and fixing of the historic fountain at the center of the cloister and the fountain outside at the bottom of the steps. The Angelicum also recently launched a new website at www.angelicum.it.



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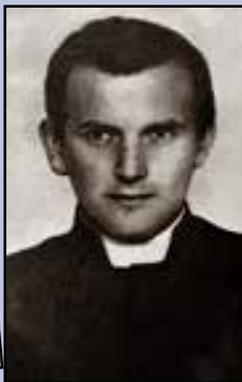


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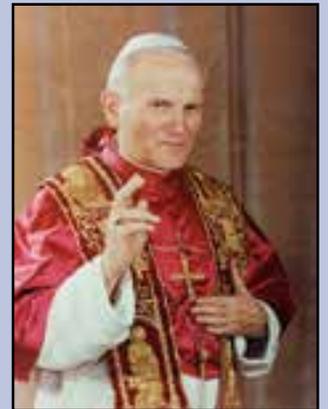
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Fr. Michal Paluch, Rector of the Angelicum, recently gave an interview with EWTN on the feast day of St. John Paul II (October 22). Fr. Karol Wojtyla received a doctorate degree from the Angelicum in 1946-48.



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deeply from and quench their
thirst with the Living Waters
of God's Word, transmitted
orally and in writing, and
offered palpably at the table
and altar of Our Lord!***

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