

# HIGHER LEARNING

*Find out how Catholic colleges and universities  
are focusing on spiritual realities in the midst  
of a materialistic culture*

## FIRST GENERATION

# Welcoming first-generation students

*These Catholic colleges offer specific support and accompaniment for first-generation college students*

By Katie Yoder

Embracing their identity, Catholic universities and colleges nationwide are welcoming students of all backgrounds, including first-generation students — students generally defined as those whose parents did not complete a four-year degree in the United States.

These higher-education institutions want their first-generation students to know that they are not alone and that they will be accompanied every step of the way.

“Please know there are many of us who want to walk with you and join you in your journey so that you can thrive and not just survive college,” Marilyn Jones, director of the Lemonis Center for Student Success

(LCSS) at Marquette University, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, said. “My invitation to first-gen students is to open their hearts and allow themselves to welcome the support, knowledge and resources that we have put in place for them.”

Jones, along with representatives at College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, University of Dallas in Irving, Texas, and University of Dayton in Dayton, Ohio, spoke with Our Sunday Visitor about the myriad of programs they offer first-generation students. These educational institutions offer everything from special scholarships and peer mentorship to tailored events and workshops.

Surveys suggest a need for extra support: According to a 2021 Pew Research Center analysis, adults with at least one college-educated parent are far more likely to graduate from college than those with parents who are less educated.

Jason Reinoehl, vice presi-



**Dr. John Su, vice provost for academic affairs and student success, talks with first-generation students at a First-Gen Welcome event during orientation.** Photo courtesy of Marquette University

dent for strategic enrollment management at University of Dayton, recognized that first-generation students face unique challenges and explore many questions, from how to know the difference between grants and loans to how to register for classes.

“Don’t forget: You are the first in your family to go to college,” he stressed. “But you are

also a part of a larger community of people who have navigated the same questions.”

## First-generation students by the numbers

The universities and colleges that spoke with Our Sunday Visitor educate hundreds to thousands of first-generation students.

Jones, a first-generation grad-

uate herself, revealed that more than 1,650 students, or between 22-25% of the undergraduate student population at Marquette, are first-generation students.

At University of Dallas, Matthew Spring, director of academic success and first generation initiatives, shared that, for fall 2023, 206 of their undergraduate students, or around 15%, attended as first-generation students.

Jerrel Burgo, director of student inclusion and belonging in the Office of Justice, Equity, Belonging, and Identity (JEBI) at Holy Cross, said that, as of the fall 2023 semester, 15% of the student body identifies as first generation.

At University of Dayton, Reinoehl shared that around 10% of undergraduates — more than 800 — are first-generation students.

## Online resources

Many of these colleges and

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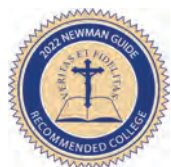
— Lucas



## Academics

"I'm supported and encouraged by professors who have become mentors (and even friends). They don't only care about my grades, but also my vocation and salvation."

— Sarah



**Continued from Page 2B**

universities provide a wealth of information online for prospective and current first-generation students. Some of them, such as Marquette and University of Dallas, list first-generation students, faculty and staff for networking or mentoring.

On its website, Holy Cross highlights a mentor network and other resources, such as a first-generation student success guide. Marquette also offers a first-generation student guide and other resources online tackling everything from financial aid and employment to classroom etiquette.

University of Dayton's website includes information about support for studying abroad and resources for first-generation students and their families, including financial information and definitions for academic terminology.

**Peer support**

Many of these universities and colleges highlighted peer mentorship opportunities for first-generation students.

"Our Small Groups program consists of 15 peer mentors who

are first-generation students and facilitate various events such as study halls, roundtable meetings and discussion groups," Judith Barrera, an academic success specialist at University of Dallas, described.

Academic adviser Ana Henriquez shared some of the concrete benefits, saying that these groups "provide an avenue for students to get to know each other, discuss challenges and how to rise above them, and network with other UD students and alumni."

Holy Cross' Odyssey pro-

gram and Marquette's RISE program — transitional programs that serve many first-generation students — also offer peer mentoring.

Marquette, Jones said, also offers first-year experience courses that help these students navigate the hidden curriculum, develop a sense of belonging and connect them to faculty and peers.

**Financial support**

As a part of welcoming first-generation students, these colleges and universities work to

provide or connect students with financial support.

"New this year is our Kessler Scholars program for first-generation students in our UD Sinclair Academy," Reinhoehl said of University of Dayton's partnership with the local Sinclair Community College that enables students to begin their degree at Sinclair before finishing it with University of Dayton.

"These scholars receive financial assistance; a summer introductory program designed for them; a dedicated success professional to help them navigate questions and challenges; the benefit of programming with their fellow first-generation students in the program; and more," he said.

University of Dallas, Henriquez said, offers a first-generation scholarship for Texas students, funded by the Constantin Foundation.

"This scholarship often makes the difference for students who need support financially, as well as academically and socially," Henriquez said, adding that applicants must meet with academic success staff and participate in the

small groups program.

Jones referenced Marquette University's Urban Scholars Program, which provides full-tuition scholarships to local high school seniors, with priority given to first-generation students.

**On-campus resources**

Several universities and colleges collaborate to continue offering existing programs while adding new ones for first-generation students.

Jones highlighted LCSS, a new center led by her at Marquette that is scheduled to open this year, as a hub for academic services and a network of support, including for first-generation students.

She also pointed to already-established programs for first-generation students such as Educational Opportunity Program, an academic program, and Project BEYOND-2, for nursing students, which work directly with many first-generation students.

At Holy Cross, Burgo said that his office, JEPI, chairs a committee of diverse faculty and staff who meet regularly to discuss support for first-gener-



Kessler scholars are a part of the Kessler Scholars program for first-generation students enrolled in the UD Sinclair Academy.

Photo courtesy of University of Dayton

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**Leslie Benitez '27 delivers a presentation. She is a first-generation student in the Constantin Scholars Program.** Photo courtesy of University of Dallas

ation students. This committee, he said, hosts events and works on programs that raise awareness and support students' academic, social and professional development.

He also announced new initiatives at Holy Cross.

"In the spring 2024 semester, the JEBI Office will begin hosting monthly discussion forums called C.A.F.E., or Creating Awareness for First-generation Experiences," he said. "In these forums, there will be discussion topics about first-generation experiences with opportunities for faculty, staff and students to connect, create awareness and gain insight."

**Special events**

Many of the colleges and universities organize special events for first-generation students.

Marquette's The Center for Engagement and Inclusion (CEI), among other things, hosts monthly "First Gen Fridays" that highlight first-generation student achievement and connect students.

University of Dayton also holds events, such as "First Gen Flyer Night," where students can meet other first-generation students and learn about available resources.

At Holy Cross, Burgo shared, students can attend mixers each semester and meet other first-generation students as well as faculty and staff who are first-generation graduates.

**Professional preparation**

Catholic colleges and universities work for the success of their first-generation students on campus and beyond.

At Holy Cross, the JEBI-chaired committee hosts events with campus partners, from financial literacy and resume workshops to graduate school information sessions.

Marquette offers "First Gen Professional Development" workshops with its career center on everything from resume building to interview skills. It also hosts "First Gen Connect," an evening of storytelling and conversation with first-generation employer guests, while celebrating "First Gen Week" in November.

**The role of Catholic institutions in welcoming students**

All of the colleges and universities that spoke with Our Sunday Visitor addressed the importance of welcoming first-generation students as Catholic institutions.

"We follow our Marianist tradition of valuing every person and their background, and working and learning together for the greater good," Reinhoehl at University of Dayton said.

Burgo at Holy Cross and Jones at Marquette emphasized their Jesuit tradition in educating and caring for the whole person, including that of first-generation students.

As a Catholic institution, Henriquez said that University of Dallas is called to be universal in welcoming all students and, in particular, those who may be at a disadvantage in accessing education.

"It may help to remember that St. Peter (and indeed, many of the apostles) might be called 'first-generation' students, for he came from a family of hard laborers, not of trained rabbis," she commented. "He may not have known all of the intricacies of Jewish theology, but he had a heart that longed for truth."

"Just as Christ welcomed all to hear him teach," she said, "so must we welcome all who wish to learn."

*Katie Yoder is a contributing editor for Our Sunday Visitor.*

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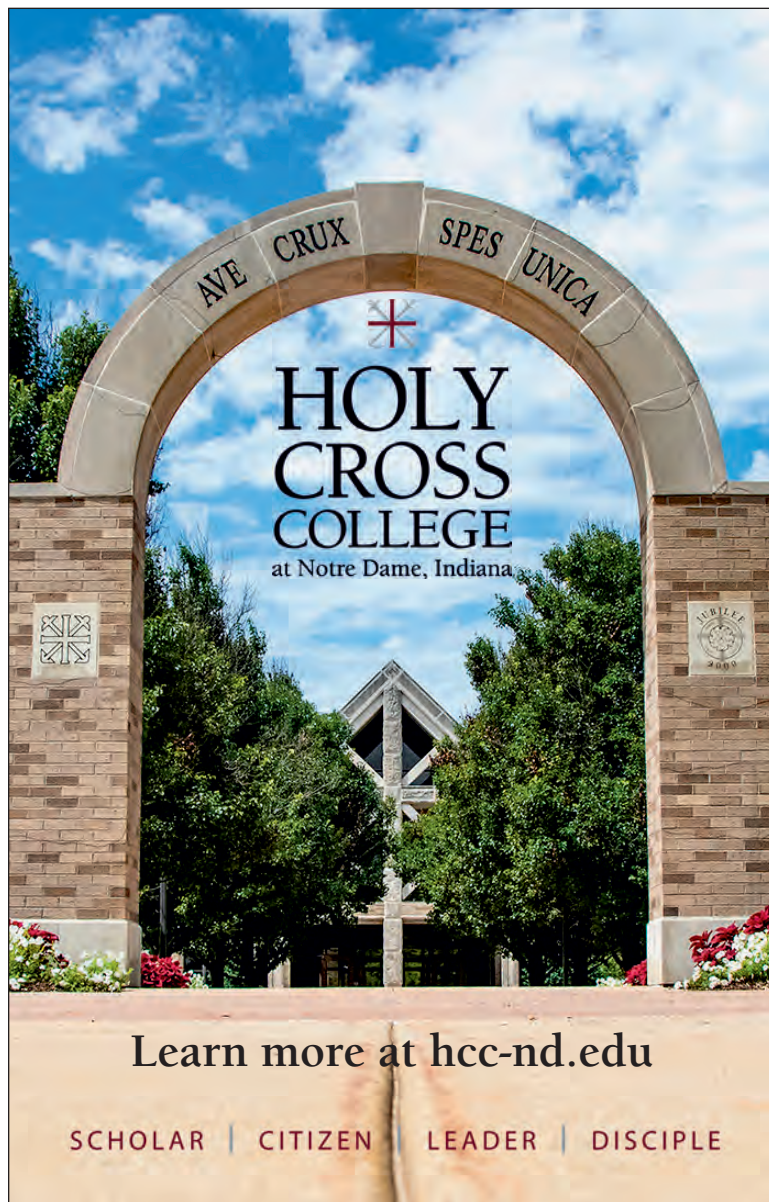


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## WONDER IN CREATION

# Backpacking for souls

*COR Expeditions, a ministry of Wyoming Catholic College, brings faith, nature and community together*

By Julian Kwasniewski

During the summer of 2023, a group of college students, young professionals, high-school teachers and two Dominican brothers congregated in Lander, Wyoming, to work as interns with COR Expeditions. The fledgling Catholic ministry is dedicated to providing a setting where “individuals from around the country” can experience “transformational encounters with Christ” through experiences of the wilderness and wonder of creation. COR is an outreach of Wyoming Catholic College, a four-year Great Books college with an emphasis on outdoor leadership. Some of the interns were looking for an opportunity to develop already existing outdoor skills, while others were discovering them for the first time.

Chris Rand, originally from California, is a literature teacher at a classical academy in Naples, Florida. A 2014 graduate of Magdalen College in Warner, New Hampshire, Rand has been an avid hiker for several years.

“My whole hiking career began with a literary dare,” he said. “A ninth-grader said to me: ‘Mr. Rand, you teach ‘Homer’s Odyssey,’ but have you ever been on one yourself?’ That summer I hiked the New Hampshire portion of the Appalachian Trail.”

As one of the more experienced, Rand said one of the most special things was working as a team. Familiar with long solo hikes, he found that at COR, “I had to have fidelity to the group and team, and looked forward to having consistent co-workers and companions. ... I considered myself an outdoorsman before this summer,” Rand added, “but was really taught what it is to learn and lead by learning from great leaders” in Lander.

## Importance of friendship

Russell Jarvis, a junior at Thomas Aquinas College’s east campus in Northfield, Massachusetts, started reading a



Photos courtesy of COR Expeditions/Wyoming Catholic College

lot of John Senior and began yearning for more experience of the outdoors. Jarvis loved how “poetically minded” he found the Wyoming Catholic students and graduates he was working with. The summer was “one of the first times I’ve worked with older guys, and I felt like they were not just treating me like an intern but trying to treat you more like a peer, or older brother,” he said. “As an oldest brother, it was an awesome experience to feel a little bit of what it’s like to have an older brother.”

For Jarvis, the spiritual formation components of the trips were very genuine and transformative. Now he hopes to use the skills he’s learned to introduce his classmates back at TAC to more outdoor expeditions and spiritual formation that such trips can facilitate.

“I really appreciated the realness and presence of the COR Missionaries ... being on trips, being in the woods, separated from friends and interns, you realize that friendships are really important,” Jarvis noted. “I think it would be awesome if a couple of TAC students came out here every year for the internship,” he concluded.

## Holiness among the group

Two of the interns were Dominican friars. Walking the streets of Lander in their white habits, their presence was a

sign of how COR and Wyoming Catholic draw an incredibly diverse crowd to the middle of the least populated state in America.

Brother Jose Maria, a brother in the western Dominican province, said he thought that spending some “time in the

*“There are phenomenal holy men and women in COR who are striving to facilitate an encounter with Christ and help others rekindle their love for his creation and reshape their identity that can only be truly found in Christ.”*

— Brother Jose Maria

back country would challenge me in ways that would dispose me to a greater love for Jesus Christ and his Church” and give him an “incredibly unique way of evangelizing high school and university students, young adults, and even men in formation for the priesthood and religious life

that is desperately needed in the United States.”

Along with Brother John Vianney, Brother Jose Maria spent the summer alongside the other interns, sometimes in the backcountry, sometimes in COR headquarters helping maintain gear and assisting with other behind the scenes support, like food packing.

“I was blown away with the generosity and genuine holiness of the instructors and staff at COR,” he said. “There are phenomenal holy men and women in COR who are striving to facilitate an encounter with Christ and help others rekindle their love for his creation and reshape their identity that can only be truly found in Christ.”

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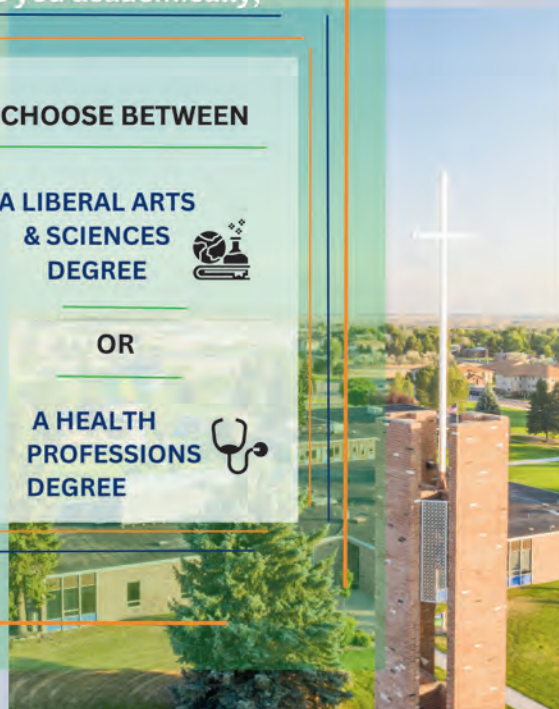
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### Faith and nature

Laura Montreuil is studying psychology at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana, and is deeply interested in pursuing wilderness therapy.

"COR is perfect because it combines my passion and desire to be outdoors with the Catholic Church, solving my problems of not having sacrament access," she said.

According to Montreuil, one of the most important therapeutic aspects of wilderness backpacking is the way it makes you reflect on your identity. "I think being in the backcountry strips you of any false sense of security that you can put your identity in," she said. "You are very vulnerable: everyone is dirty, smelly, gross — you can't put your identity in looks. You can't have a false identity with social media persona, and especially for participants with no base knowledge of the hard skills [like lighting a camp stove or setting up a tent], it's coming in without any relevant skills. You can't identify yourself by your strengths and your skills." This allows one to "fall back on your community, how you relate to others, how they relate to you."

For Montreuil, the summer led to a long-term relationship with COR, and she joined their team as a staff member in the fall. "I love being around people who are good doers," she said.

Each of the interns had different stories of fun and growth on their different expeditions this summer. Chris Rand shared stories of snowball ambushes and rebel war cries on a Fraternity of St. Peter boy's camping trip.

Sarah Decker, an undergraduate student studying classical voice at the University of North Texas in Denton, Texas, decided to vary her formation by taking a break from music for the summer to backpack with COR. "On our training trip, I almost started a gas fire!" she recalled.

*"COR is perfect because it combines my passion and desire to be outdoors with the Catholic Church, solving my problems of not having sacrament access."*

— Laura Montreuil

"After that I learned how to take apart Whisperlite stoves, and now I'm not so scared of them anymore!"

Brother Jose Maria's favorite "times during the summer were the conversations and meals shared with the interns and staff of COR."

### Mission of Wyoming Catholic College

COR Expeditions is intimately connected to Wyoming Catholic College, and grew from the vision of the college. "During my time in Lander," said Brother Jose Maria, "I was able to meet many inspiring Wyoming Catholic students and alumni. The mission and vision of Wyoming Catholic is an exceptional leadership formation program that prepares young people not solely for engagement in the liberal arts or for evangelizing the outdoor industry. It forms leaders for the Church for the 21st century in an incredibly distinctive way that is an asset to the Church in the United States today."

COR Expeditions also participates in that mission in its own way, offering many different trips for groups such as boy's high schools, homeschool families, seminarians, religious orders and veterans. To learn about upcoming opportunities, visit <http://www.corepeditions.org/>.

*A musician, visual artist and writer, Julian Kwasniewski is marketing and communications coordinator at Wyoming Catholic College*

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## THOMISM

# Thomistic thought on college campuses

*The Thomistic Institute shares the intellectual legacy of St. Thomas Aquinas with students across the country*

By Paul Senz

The Order of Preachers has been a fixture in the Catholic intellectual tradition since its founding in the 13th century. The white-habited friars with their occasional black capes have become synonymous with the life of the Catholic university and scholarship. The Thomistic Institute is continuing this rich tradition at colleges throughout the English speaking world.

The Order of Preachers, commonly known as the Dominicans after the founder, St. Dominic de Guzman, were founded in 1216. One of the largest and most significant religious orders in the Church's history, the Dominicans have produced numerous saints and blessed, including St. Catherine of Si-



Father Aquinas Guilbeau, OP, speaks at the University of Maryland, College Park. Photos courtesy of The Thomistic Institute

ena, St. Martin de Porres and St. Thomas Aquinas.

The Thomistic Institute is associated with the Dominican House of Studies in Washington, D.C. Originally founded in 2009 as an institute for academic research, it quickly evolved into what it is today, promoting and fostering the Catholic intellectual tradition on numerous college campuses. The Institute's inaugural director was Father

Thomas Joseph White, OP, who served from 2009 to 2018. He was succeeded by Father Dominic Legge, OP, who is the present director.

The Institute "exists to promote Catholic truth in our contemporary world by strengthening the intellectual formation of Christians at universities, in the Church, and in the wider public square," according to its website. "The thought of St. Thomas

Aquinas, the Universal Doctor of the Church, is our touchstone."

## Students asking big questions

The Thomistic Institute currently has chapters at nearly 100 campuses across the United States, England and Ireland. These chapters are on-campus academic clubs, which are formed by the students and run by the students, with occasional guidance and programming assistance from the Thomistic Institute staff. Through sponsored lectures, seminars and reading groups, the chapters serve to help students seek answers to their deepest questions.

"Students in our colleges today want answers to some of the most poignant questions of religion, theology, philosophy and science," said Joe Murray, the lead campus programs coordinator at the Thomistic Institute.

The Institute's work is meant to meet this challenge, and to help students come to find the

answers they seek. Such authentic seeking is sorely lacking on many college campuses, quite contrary to the great tradition of the university. "The Christian intellectual tradition, and in particular the tradition proceeding from the work of Thomas Aquinas, has the resources to answer the questions which students desire to ask."

There is an "enormous wealth of scholarship that exists in answer to these questions," Murray said, but it is uncommon today for colleges to provide students with access to this treasury.

The forming of chapters happens at the initiative of the students. The students form a leadership team, under the guidance of Thomistic Institute staff, and get recognition as a student group from their university.

This is not to say that the Thomistic Institute is merely rear-facing, looking only to those great minds who have

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come before us. In fact, Murray's work focuses on bringing Catholic intellectuals to the campus chapters. A wide array of speakers have been featured, including the prominent Scottish philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre; English philosopher Sir Roger Scruton; Father Wojciech Giertych, OP, the Theologian of the Pontifical Household (a position also known as "The Pope's Theologian" and traditionally held by Dominicans); Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch; and many more.

The Institute hosts these lectures, as well as retreats, reading groups and academic conferences for college students interested in the Thomistic intellectual tradition. The staff assist chapters in starting reading groups, hosting events and forming a community of students interested in Thomas Aquinas, Thomism and Christian intellectual life, according to Murray.

**Other resources**

In addition to the campus work done by the Thomistic Institute, there is a constant stream of educational content



**Father Joseph White, OP, speaks with students at a Thomistic symposium at the Catholic Center at NYU.**

being produced by the friars and other staff members, teaching and promoting the beauty of truth in the Catholic intellectual tradition.

A video series called "Aquinas 101" introduces viewers and listeners to the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, perhaps the most influential philosophical and theological giant of the last thousand years. The series examines contemporary concerns through the lens of Thomistic thought, applying the thought of St. Thomas

Aquinas to issues such as the relationship between faith and modern science, or understanding the sacraments and how they give us grace in our daily lives.

Additionally, the Thomistic Institute Podcast features recordings of many of the lectures organized by the Institute around the country, making them accessible to those beyond the hallowed, ivy-covered halls of college campuses.

The profound scholarly tradition of the Dominicans is

ever-present in the Thomistic Institute. In addition to the lectures, podcasts and videos, the Institute also sponsors academic projects such as research, publications, colloquia and more, and provides scholarships to lay students who are studying theology at the Dominican House of Studies.

In 2022 the Institute launched a study abroad program at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (otherwise known as the Angelicum) in Rome. This program is for students from all around the world and involves a deep immersion in the Catholic tradition and history in Rome and its environs.

**Working with college students**

There are certainly challenges inherent in working with college students. Chief among them is the limited time that students have.

"We realize that there are a large number of extracurriculars competing for students' time," said Murray, "so it's a natural hazard to encounter. However, the students involved with the Thomistic Institute are some of the most commit-

ted and intellectually curious students I've ever met, and it's a pleasure to work with and for them."

It is not only college students who are served by the Institute, either. There are also groups of young professionals, just out of college, who are still intellectually curious and desire meaningful answers to deep questions, who collaborate with the Institute to host conferences and lectures in order to seek those answers. All Thomistic Institute lectures are free and open to the public, and many are made available online so that as many people as possible can benefit from them.

"Our work serves to give students in our universities today access to the magnificent Christian intellectual patrimony, which they desire and deserve," Murray said. "By connecting students with high quality theologians, philosophers, scientists and other scholars in the Christian intellectual tradition, we give them the opportunity to pursue an education that will provide them with answers to the most important questions."

*Paul Senz writes from Oregon.*

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## WARTIME REACTIONS

# Catholic colleges respond to war

*Colleges answer conflict in the Middle East with dialogue, awareness-raising and prayer*

By Maryann Gogniat Eidemiller

Franciscan University of Steubenville had partnered with Philos Project, a Christian advocacy group focusing on the Middle East, to hold a conference Oct. 24-26 on Vatican II document *Nostra Aetate*, a declaration on the relationship of the Church to the major non-Christian religions of the world. The theme of the gathering was to be “The Future of Catholic-Jewish Relations at a Time of Rising Anti-Semitism.” Then on October 7, Hamas attacked Israel, killing more than 1,200 people.

“We had planned this conference months in advance and when that happened, the thought never occurred to me to not have the conference,” said Stephen Hildebrand, vice president for campus affairs. “Those events gave the conference a heightened sense of importance and timeliness and dominated the conversations.”

After that weekend, the university joined a coalition of more than 100 colleges and universities across the nation that, according to the organizers, “stood in support of Israel and the Palestinians who suffer under Hamas’ cruel rule in Gaza.”

Rabbi Ari Berman, president of Yeshiva University in

New York City, is the convener of the coalition. He noted that because “the massacre in Israel put a spotlight on campuses” that university presidents have unparalleled strength in joining together “to lay the moral groundwork in which all civil dialogue is naturally based.”

### Campus unrest

However, not all dialogue was civil on campuses in the United States and abroad in the wake of the war. Pro-Palestinian demonstrations erupted, sometimes with violence, at a number of universities. Many Jewish students on those campuses felt threatened, or at least uneasy.

Father Dave Pivonka, TOR, president of Franciscan University, quickly took action to announce an expedited transfer process to Franciscan for Jewish students who felt in danger of anti-Semitic discrimination and violence on their campuses.

“With our fellow Christians around the world, we are praying for peace and justice,” he said. “But with too many universities preaching tolerance but practicing prejudice, we feel compelled to do more. We are witnessing a very troubling spike in antisemitism and serious threats against Jewish students. We want to offer them the chance to transfer immediately.”

So far, there have been a number of inquiries, but no transfers. “To be honest, the offer of friendship and sympathy was really as important as the



Dr. Richard Crane (right), Father Antoine Lévy, OP, and moderator Dr. Stephen Hildebrand speak on a panel at the *Nostra Aetate* Conference at Franciscan University of Steubenville.

Franciscan University of Steubenville/Facebook

offer to have students come,” Hildebrand said.

The conference in October, he noted, was an occasion to educate students about other acts of persecution. That included the persecution of Christians in Nigeria and the brutal suffering of Christians in Iraq.

“Many students are not up on current events,” he said. “The conference made them very aware of what’s going on and made them think about it. It’s a constant struggle for all of us to be aware of what’s going on and then to make others aware.” Prayers for peace in all wartorn countries are offered at the weekend and four daily Masses on campus.

**Prayers for peace**

Seton Hill University in Greensburg, Pennsylvania, is the home of the National Catholic Center For Holocaust Education. They also have a genocide and Holocaust studies program.

“In the immediate aftermath of the Oct. 7 attacks in Israel and the conflict in Gaza, we held an interfaith prayer service for peace and we have



Students attended a January 30 panel discussion on perspectives of peace in Gaza hosted by the Department of Mission and Identity and the National Catholic Center for Holocaust Education at Seton Hill University. Seton Hill University/Facebook

continued to pray at all of our Masses for all those impacted by the ongoing violence,” said Jennifer Reeger, director of communications. “In addition, members of the Muslim Student Association have invited members of the campus community to join them in nightly

prayer for peace.”

There have been opportunities for the faculty in a variety of academic disciplines to discuss the ongoing conflict in their classes. Seton Hill has also hosted learning opportunities outside the classroom.

The center’s annual Eva

Fleischner Lecture in October featured scholars from the Institute for Islamic, Christian, and Jewish Studies in Baltimore. During the program, speakers discussed their work on advancing interreligious dialogue and understanding in the context of what’s happen-

ing in Israel and Gaza.

“Through United as Setonians, Together We Thrive — a series of programs in our first year residence halls — students were offered presentations, discussion and reflections on how as an inclusive community we listen to and respect each other,” Reeger said.

The campus ministry also hosted a coffee talk on “Religious Perspectives in the War in Gaza” that included faculty from political science, theology and the Holocaust Center. It focused on the historical and political background and context of the conflict, the presenters’ personal connections to Israel and Gaza, and how the Catholic community can come together in times of crisis around the world.

“During Founders’ Day in March, Seton Hill will also host an interfaith panel on the topic of ‘Religion and Violence,’” Reeger said. “It will explore how religion has contributed to violence and when religion has been a force of opposition to violence.”

*Maryann Gogniat Eidemiller writes from Pennsylvania.*

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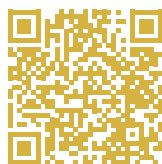
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## EUCCHARISTIC REVIVAL

# Bring Jesus back to the focus

Many Catholic colleges are helping their students participate in the National Eucharistic Revival

By Katie Yoder

As the 2024 National Eucharistic Congress approaches, Catholic colleges and universities are expanding their involvement in the National Eucharistic Revival — a movement to renew the Church by enkindling a living relationship with Jesus Christ in the holy Eucharist.

"From the beginning, Catholic universities have been among the shining lights in the Eucharistic Revival," Tim Glemkowski, CEO of the National Eucharistic Congress, told our Our Sunday Visitor, before listing some of their biggest sponsors as Benedictine College in Atchison, Kansas, the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio, and University of Mary in Bismarck, North Dakota.

"The Catholic students on these and other campuses are not just the Church of the future; they are the Church of the present," Glemkowski added. "They are hungry and hopeful for a Church that is vital and on mission — all flowing from a profound connection to the source of our life, Jesus in the Eucharist."

Glemkowski made his comments as Catholic colleges and universities nationwide take part in the National Eucharistic Revival, an ongoing three-year initiative launched by the U.S. Catholic bishops. These higher-education institutions are participating by doing everything from providing perpetual adoration and performing Eucharistic music to hosting the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage and attending the 10th National Eucharistic Congress.

Every school that spoke with Our Sunday Visitor — Benedictine College, Franciscan University, University of Mary, and University of Notre Dame in Notre Dame, Indiana — is sending students to the congress taking place in Indianapolis on July 17-21. The multi-day event,



Pilgrims participating in a cross-diocesan Eucharistic pilgrimage in the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind., walk on the final day of the 2023 journey that served as a test run for this summer's National Eucharistic Pilgrimage. OSV News photo/Joshua Schipper, Today's Catholic

the first national Eucharistic congress in 83 years, marks the culmination of the revival and is expected to draw 80,000 attendees.

Leading up to the congress, Benedictine College, Franciscan and Notre Dame will also serve as stops in a cross-country National Eucharistic Pilgrimage.

These schools are official sponsors: Notre Dame's McGrath Institute for Church Life serves as a revival sponsor, while the congress lists Benedictine College, Franciscan University and the University of Mary as mission partners. This comes after the team named OSV as one of its first mission partners last year.

"The Eucharist is the reason for our life," Father Dominic Bouck, chaplain and director of university ministry at Mary, said. "How can we sufficiently describe how important God himself is, made present to us in our daily lives on the pilgrimage of life, under the humble disguise of bread and wine?"

### Embracing the revival

For the revival, colleges and universities said that they are highlighting or expanding on the many Eucharistic opportunities they already provide.

"We're kind of digging into what we already do, the Eucharistic life of our campus," Father Jonathan St. Andre, TOR, vice president for Franciscan life at Franciscan, said.

His university, along with Benedictine College and University of Mary, offer perpetual

adoration and multiple daily Masses where students can directly encounter Jesus in the Eucharist.

At Notre Dame, Father Brian Ching, CSC, of campus ministry, rector of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, said that students also have ample opportunity for adoration, in addition to nearly 150 Masses a week and 40 Masses a weekend between the Basilica, residence halls and other buildings on campus.

At the same time, the university named two new, special projects focused on the Eucharist.

Michael Baxter, a visiting professor with the McGrath Institute, shared that he is offering a course this term on the Eucharist and the poor that consists of a lecture series and conversations among 50 undergraduates.

At the same time, Carolyn Pirtle, program director of the Center for Liturgy, spent more than two years writing a modern-day Corpus Christi mystery play cycle — a musical rooted in Scripture — that will be performed twice at the congress, on July 18 and 19.

At Franciscan, Father St. Andre highlighted a February retreat for students, faculty and staff called "Behold."

"With this idea of beholding Christ, coming to know the Lord, Our Eucharistic Lord, as the Lord of our life," he described. "We're trying to bring our whole campus together, one body in Christ."

Continued on Page 16B

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### Eucharistic adoration and devotions

At Benedictine College, Paul Burghart, chief of staff and director of extension programs, named several opportunities to participate in the revival, beginning with a weekly holy hour for administrators and students to unite in prayer for increased devotion to the Eucharist.

The college also commits to Eucharistic education: It has distributed more than 2,500 books on the Eucharist to the community while offering events focused on the Eucharist, from Theology on Tap talks to a symposium last year with the theme “Proclaiming the Real Presence: The Body of Christ in a Secular World.”

The college ministry program also trains students to be missionaries of the Eucharist not only while traveling on mission trips but also in their daily lives.

At University of Mary, Father Bouck said that, in addition to starting perpetual adoration, which involves 350 students taking a weekly hour, they organize regular Eucharistic processions. They also hold a bi-annual 40 Hours devotion — where the Eucharist is exposed for 40 con-

secutive hours.

This semester, he said, they are welcoming Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay, Wisconsin, and Tanner Kalina, a Eucharistic missionary with the revival, to speak on the Eucharist.

Rebecca Raber, assistant professor of music and director of Cappella, the university chapel choir, shared that Cappella has engaged in a two-year project “to honor and draw focus to the Real Presence in the Eucharist.”

Last year and this year, she said, Cappella and University of Mary commissioned two composers — Michael John Trotta and Philip Stopford — to write settings for Eucharistic motets. Last spring, she added, they sang Eucharistic texts at sites of Eucharistic miracles in Spain as well as at St. Thomas Aquinas’ tomb in Toulouse, France.

“We are compiling recordings of our Eucharistic music into an album,” she added.

### Hosting the pilgrimage

Several schools are preparing to open their campuses to the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage. The pilgrimage, which begins May 17-19, will accompany Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament on four different routes — from

*“Being involved in the pilgrimage, being involved in sending students to the Eucharistic Congress, reminds our students that they’re a part of the wider Church and what’s going on in the wider Church.”*

— Father Jonathan St. Andre

the north, south, east and west — and unite in Indianapolis for the congress.

While traveling from the north, pilgrims will process with the Blessed Sacrament through Notre Dame. On the route from the east, the precious host will stop at Franciscan. Pilgrims coming from the west will celebrate Mass and join in Eucharistic processions at Benedictine College.

Burghart described Benedictine College’s participation on Tuesday, June 25, and Wednesday, June 26.

“On Tuesday, we will have a procession up to campus, eve-

ning prayer with the monks of St. Benedict’s Abbey, an evening celebration, and all-night adoration,” he said. “On Wednesday morning we will have a Mass followed by a procession around campus.”

At Franciscan, Father St. Andre revealed that around 1,500 youth conference participants will pray before the same host and monstrance in the pilgrimage on June 22.

Father Ching shared that the pilgrimage would travel through Notre Dame’s campus July 6-7. The university will hold Mass, a Eucharistic procession, and special programming.

### Attending the congress

Burghart said a delegation from Benedictine College will attend the National Eucharistic Congress that will include President Stephen D. Minnis and other administrators, as well as students and alumni. The college will also host a sponsored session at the congress in addition to a gathering for alumni and friends.

At University of Mary, Father Bouck said they are planning to bus about 100 students, along with around 200 people from their diocese, to the congress.

Notre Dame is sponsoring a trip for around 20 undergraduate students to attend, while Father St. Andre at Franciscan shared that he is currently helping plan a student pilgrimage retreat to the congress.

Several Catholic universities and colleges addressed the importance of participating in the revival and called the Eucharist central to their identity.

“To believe in the Eucharist is to be Catholic,” Ed Konieczka, assistant director of university ministry at University of Mary, said. “There is no greater gift that we can pass along to our students than a deep understanding of the Eucharist and its centrality to our Faith.”

For his part, Father St. Andre shared how he hopes the movement impacts students.

“I think if we were just to do things on campus, we wouldn’t be connected to the wider Church,” he said. “Being involved in the pilgrimage, being involved in sending students to the Eucharistic Congress, reminds our students that they’re a part of the wider Church and what’s going on in the wider Church.”

*Katie Yoder is a contributing editor for Our Sunday Visitor.*

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CAMPUS CONVENT

# University of Dallas builds a convent on campus

*The Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia will provide a countercultural witness to students*

By Maryann Gogniat Eidemiller

Plans are underway at the University of Dallas (UD) to build a convent for the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, who teach at the Irving, Texas, university. The sisters also teach at nearby Mary Immaculate Catholic Elementary School and currently live off campus.

“The house they’re living in is large but it’s not conducive to their spiritual life and to their community life, which are very important parts of their vocations,” said university president Jonathan J. Sanford.

Known as the Nashville Dominicans, the teaching order based in Tennessee has sisters serving across the United States and abroad. When he was the dean of education, Sanford, in 2016 invited them to join the faculty. Three years later Bishop



An artist's rendering of the future convent on the University of Dallas campus. Photos courtesy of the University of Dallas

Edward Burns invited them to teach at the elementary school.

The sisters’ community in Irving now includes two professors, one doctoral student and four teachers at the elementary school. Discussions about building a convent began in 2019, and the project was announced in January. Fundrais-

ing for the \$7.1 million project is in progress and has already attracted donors.

“After the word got out, a number of people expressed an interest in getting behind this,” Sanford said.

**Italian themes**

The sisters had input in the

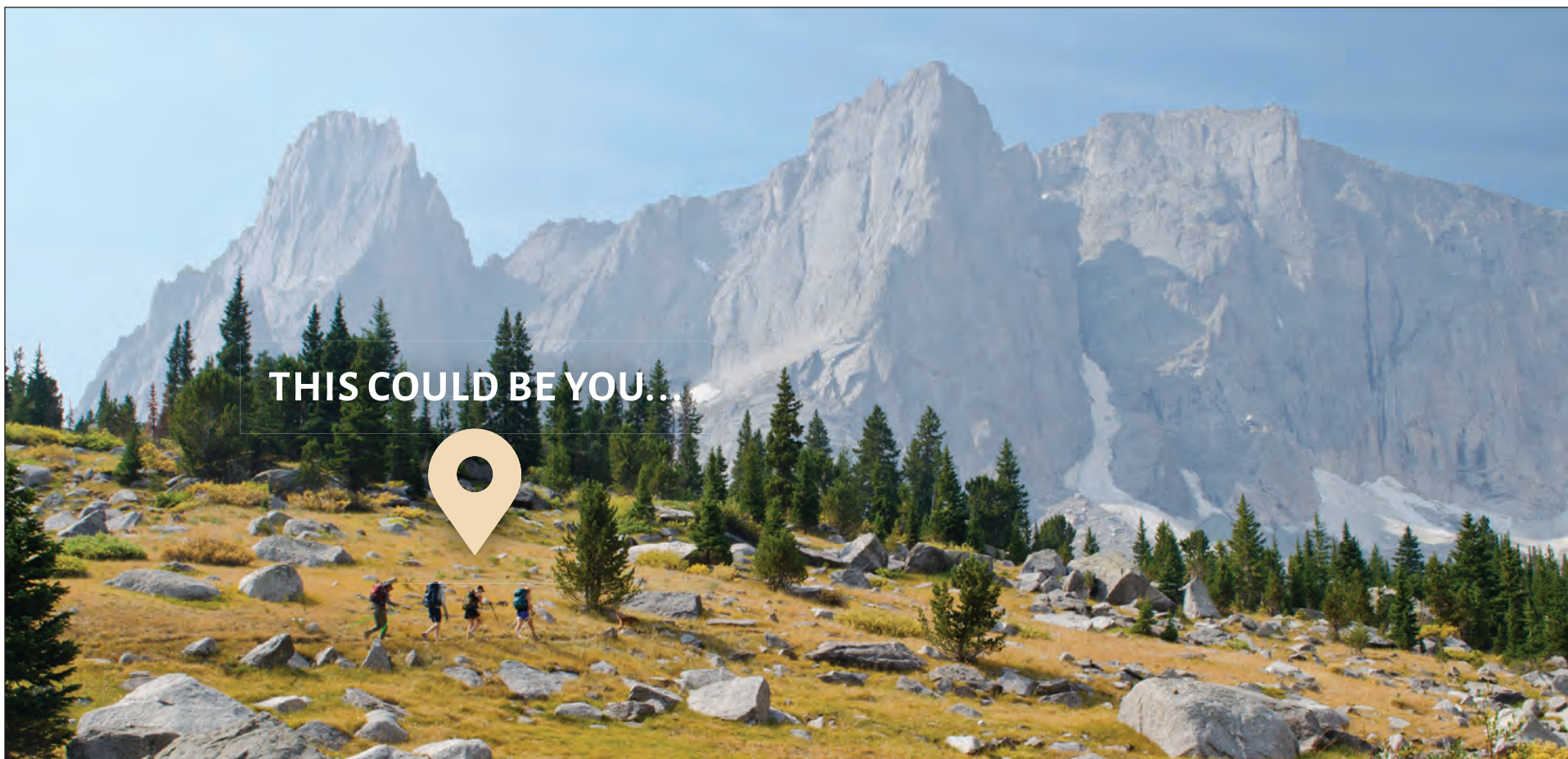
design of the single-story brick convent that features simple lines plus some Italian themes inspired by the university’s 15-acre campus in Rome. There will be a common eating area, a gathering area, a chapel and a courtyard where the sisters can walk and plant gardens.

Ten rooms — known as cells

— will be built for the sisters with a hallway designed to accommodate future expansion.

“We are so grateful to the university for its desire to provide a convent on campus for our sisters teaching there and at Mary Immaculate,” said Sister

Continued on Page 18B



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Anne Catherine Burleigh, OP, the congregation's vicarress general. "We know that the presence of religious sisters played an integral part of the founding and early days of the university, and we are humbled to be involved in such a wonderful community that takes seriously the pursuit of truth, wisdom and virtue."

## A history of vocations

UD was founded in 1956 and is under the sponsorship of the Diocese of Dallas. The original faculty included members of the Cistercian Order, the Sisters of Saint Mary, Franciscan priests and a number of laymen. Dominican priests arrived in 1958 and the Sisters of Notre Dame came to teach four years later.

The university is blessed with

the proximity of Holy Trinity Seminary, St. Albert the Great Priory and Novitiate (of the Dominican Province of St. Martin de Porres), and Our Lady of Dallas Cistercian Abbey. The presence of the Nashville Dominicans adds to the campus in many ways.

"They are exemplary teachers," Sanford said. "Their patron St. Cecilia is the patron of

fine arts and they have a real love for beauty and each of its manifestations. They model for our students a radical countercultural commitment and do so in a way that's inspiring. They are in the world amongst us on campus, and the student body has responded well to their presence." The university itself has a rich history of inspiring vocations and counts among its alumni more than 100 men and women in various religious or-

ders, 12 bishops, six permanent deacons and over 200 priests.

The two sisters who currently teach are alumnae, and so is Dominican Sister John Thomas Armour, who graduated with a bachelor's degree in theology in 2001. She met the Dominicans on a retreat when she was UD's Rome coordinator in 2002 and soon entered the convent. She returned to UD for doctoral studies in literature.

"The university challenges students to ask the deeper questions about life, its purpose and our responsibility, and what is a life well-lived, and that often leads one to God," Sister John Thomas said. "That raises up questions about vocations and callings and raises us up to the transcendent, to the one who can answer those questions."

Sanford noted that the university is dedicated to orienting its students towards wisdom, truth and virtue, and to having a vital engagement with the contemporary world.

"Our evangelistic mission that's executed through profes-



sional excellence helps to power our commitment to intellectual and character formation," he said. "The sisters help in both forming the minds of students in their roles as professors, and in the forming of their character." They also provide spiritual direction and participate in student life through campus ministry, retreats and other activities on and off campus.

"First and foremost, we are religious, consecrated women and our presence, our priority and our primary identity form

that," Sister John Thomas said. "And so we are happy to be part of the spiritual as well as academic and intellectual mission of the university."

The University of Dallas has a shrine dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe. "We are asking for her intercession and for the intercession of St. Joseph the Worker," Sanford said about the project.

Maryann Gogniat Eidemiller writes from Pennsylvania.



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**Website:** www.stvincent.edu  
**Contact:** admission@stvincent.edu  
Saint Vincent is an educational community rooted in faith, the heritage of Benedictine monasticism, and the love of values inherent in the liberal approach to life and learning. Consistently ranked as a top-tier liberal arts college and one of the most transformative colleges in the nation, SVC offers a unique blend of opportunities to study, work, play, and grow.

## TEXAS

**St. Mary's University**  
One Camino Santa Maria  
San Antonio, TX 78228  
**Phone:** (210)436-3126  
**Website:** www.stmarytx.edu  
**Email:** uadm@stmarytx.edu  
St. Mary's University is committed to academic excellence, exceeding expectations and equipping tomorrow's leaders with the professional and interpersonal skills to succeed. Undergraduates study within humanities, science and business schools, with options to pursue graduate, doctoral and law degrees. Students benefit from a balance of rigorous curriculum with community service.

**University of Dallas**  
1875 E Northgate Dr.  
Irving, TX 75062-4736  
**Phone:** (800)628-6999  
**Fax:** (972)721-5017  
**Website:** udallas.edu/admissions  
**Email:** admissions@udallas.edu  
The University of Dallas is the premier Catholic liberal arts university in the country, known for its rigorous undergraduate Core Curriculum and robust graduate and professional programs in business, ministry, education and the humanities. With campuses in Texas and Italy, UD stands apart as a thriving community of lifelong learners committed to an education that forms students intellectually, socially, and spiritually for a life well-lived. For more information, visit udallas.edu

**University of St. Thomas-Houston**  
3800 Montrose Blvd.  
Houston, TX 77006  
**Phone:** (713)525-3500  
**Email:** admissions@stthom.edu  
**Website:** www.StThom.edu  
University of St. Thomas-Houston is a comprehensive Catholic university grounded in the liberal arts. Committed to the unity of all knowledge, we offer programs in the traditional liberal arts, professional and skill-based disciplines. Graduates of the University of St. Thomas think critically, communicate effectively, succeed professionally and lead ethically.

## VERMONT

**Saint Michael's College**  
One Winooski Park, Box 7,  
Colchester, Vermont, USA 05439  
**Phone:** (800)762-8000  
**Website:** www.SMCVT.edu  
**Email:** admission@smcvt.edu  
St. Mike's is a residential, liberal arts Edmundite Catholic college in the Burlington area of Vermont. Whatever your field of study, expert faculty will mentor you, illuminate your career and life paths, nurture your talents and challenge you to explore your values. Take our virtual tour and learn more.

## VIRGINIA

**Christendom College**  
134 Christendom Drive  
Front Royal, Virginia 22630

**Phone:** (540)636-2900  
**Website:** www.Christendom.edu  
**Email:** admission@christendom.edu  
**Contact:** Sam Phillips, Admissions Director  
We are an authentically Catholic liberal arts college offering a time-tested, rigorous education and extensive 86-credit core curriculum, faithful to the Magisterium. Located in the beautiful Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, our vibrant and joy-filled Catholic culture helps students learn the Truth, live the Faith, and thrive as Catholics so they are well-prepared to go into the world and "restore all things in Christ."

## WISCONSIN

**Viterbo University**  
900 Viterbo Dr.  
La Crosse, WI 54601  
**Phone:** (608)796-3010  
**Website:** www.viterbo.edu  
**Email:** admission@viterbo.edu  
Viterbo University has a proud Catholic, Franciscan heritage and stands apart because of its commitment to a values-based education. Small class sizes give students space to thrive and find their path to success, as evidenced by Viterbo's 100% post-graduation placement rate. Students can choose from over 40 career-focused traditional or online graduate and undergraduate programs.

## WYOMING

**Wyoming Catholic College**  
306 Main Street  
Lander, WY 82520  
**Phone:** (877)332-2930  
**Email:** admissions@wyomingcatholic.edu  
**Website:** www.wyomingcatholic.edu  
Escape the noise. Embrace the wild. Tap into Ancient Wisdom. We live in a world distanced from its past, isolated from our fellow men, often alienated even from ourselves. Wyoming Catholic College is an integrated community designed to help heal this modern fragmentation and isolation through a rigorous immersion in the primary sources of the classical liberal arts tradition, the grandeur of the mountain wilderness, and the spiritual heritage of the Catholic Church. With limited technology, students become grounded in real experience and thoughtful reflection. From learning to speak Latin to riding horses, from rock climbing to Aristotle, our graduates love truth and beauty, think clearly, and communicate eloquently.

## GRADUATE SCHOOLS

**Divine Mercy University**  
45154 Underwood Lane  
Sterling, VA 20166  
**Phone:** (571)290-7580  
**Website:** www.DivineMercy.edu  
**Email:** sshowalter@divinemercury.edu  
**Contact:** Steven Showalter - Director of Partnerships  
Divine Mercy University (DMU) is a Catholic graduate school of psychology and counseling offering a Doctoral (Psy.D.) degree in Clinical Psychology, a Master of Science (M.S.)

degree in Psychology, a Master of Science (M.S.) in Counseling and a Spiritual Direction Certificate.

## TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

**Catholic Polytechnic University**  
Los Angeles, CA  
**Website:** www.CatholicPolytechnic.org  
**Email:** info@catholicpolytechnic.org  
admissions@catholicpolytechnic.org  
**Contact:** Dr. Jennifer Nolan  
Giving Glory to God Through Science, Technology and Engineering, our mission is to advance the evangelical mission of the Catholic Church entrusted to her by Christ through the formation of scientists, engineers, and technology leaders with expertise in business, communications, and theology. Offering degrees and programs in Computer Science, Science and Engineering, Business and Humanities. Now accepting applications for Fall 2024!

## TRADE SCHOOLS

**Harmel Academy of the Trades**  
3333 E Beltline Ave NE,  
Grand Rapids, MI 49525  
**Phone:** (616)485-2345  
**Website:** www.HarmelAcademy.org  
**Email:** i.allen@harmelacademy.org  
**Contact:** Isaac Allen, Outreach Coordinator  
Harmel Academy is a Catholic, residential trade school for men. At Harmel, a young man is trained in a skilled trade, schooled in a robust humanities curriculum, formed spiritually through a life of common prayer, and is prepared for excellence by living in an intentional community.

## LAW SCHOOLS

**Ave Maria School of Law**  
1025 Commons Circle  
Naples, FL 34119  
**Phone:** (239)687-5420  
**Website:** www.AveMariaLaw.edu  
**Email:** info@avemarialaw.edu  
Unabashedly Catholic and consistently ranked as The Princeton Review's "Most Conservative Law School," one of Princeton Review's "Best Law Schools," and preLaw's "Most Devout Law School." We provide a traditional legal education while placing an emphasis on how the law intersects with the Catholic intellectual tradition and natural law philosophy. That's the Ave Law difference!

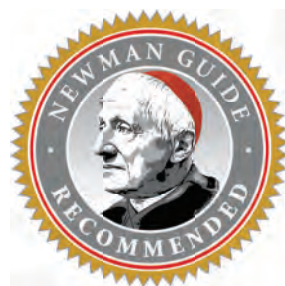


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