

# Λόγος LOGOS

Office of Mission and Ministry

Volume I, Number 1

September 2006

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## Welcome to LOGOS

Welcome to the inaugural issue of LOGOS, the newsletter of the Office of Mission and Ministry at Providence College.

The ancient Greek word, λόγος, had two common meanings, reason and word. St. John the Evangelist added a third when he used it in his Gospel and letters to refer to Jesus as the incarnate Word, the second Person of the Holy Trinity. It thus seemed a fitting title for this newsletter. For the Office of Mission and Ministry, charged as it is with maintaining and enhancing the Catholic and Dominican identity of the College, is committed to establishing a dialogue between faith and reason, and to using the spoken and written word to deepen our knowledge and experience of the Word.

Each issue will include news from campus including recent and upcoming events sponsored by the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies and the Office of the Chaplain/Campus Ministry. We will also provide reflections on the life and person of St. Dominic and on issues affecting the church, society, and Catholic higher education.

Our aim is to bridge what is commonly divided: mind and heart, body and soul, the church and the academy. Admittedly, this is not easy to do and its final achievement is certainly beyond our ken. But to the extent that we are successful, if only in a limited way, to that extent we will be faithful to the Catholic and Dominican tradition that is meant to animate all that we do at Providence College.

We welcome your comments and suggestions, and rely on your prayers.

## Looking Back: Spring 2006

The Office of the Chaplain/Campus Ministry accomplished a major structural reorganization. Where formerly spiritual and liturgical activities, and service and social justice activities, were undertaken by separate student organizations they are now united in a single entity called Campus Ministry. It is hoped that this will more nearly model the necessary relationship for Christians between prayer and worship, on the one hand, and service and advocacy for justice, on the other hand.

The Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies sponsored an Aquinas Colloquium in January on the theology of Yves Congar, O.P. and its influence on the papacies of Blessed John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II. Additional programs of the Center included a talk for parents on the religious journey of college students, a series of Lenten reflections on prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, the St. Joseph Lecture on the history of the Dominicans in the eastern United States, and the St. Catherine of Siena lecture on Dominic and Catherine as models of mission and ministry.

Individuals associated with Mission and Ministry have been active on several important College committees including Core Curriculum Review, Strategic Planning, NEASC Re-accreditation, and Campus Culture, Conduct, and Civility.

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Looking Back: Spring 2006 (continued)

Perhaps the most taxing yet necessary work of the last academic year was the completion of a self study and strategic plan for the division. Entitled *Cor ad cor loquitur: Heart Speaking to Heart*, it represents the views and experience of more than a thousand individuals associated with Providence College. Approved by Fr. Shanley and the Cabinet, it will guide the development of programs and services in the years ahead, including those aimed at students who may be absent of faith, alienated from the church, or who have simply stopped practicing the faith. The complete text can be found on the Mission and Ministry website under the Resources tab at: [www.providence.edu/Mission+Ministry](http://www.providence.edu/Mission+Ministry).

One finding that emerged from this self study was the need to better attend to the spiritual needs of the adult members of the College community, and to this end Fr. John S. Peterson, O.P., '57 was named the first full time Chaplain of the National Alumni Association.

Finally, we received a grant of \$42,000 from the David and Lynn Angell Foundation to enhance the retreat program for students. This allows us to offer retreats free of charge for the first time and to design retreats to meet the needs of students at various levels of faith formation. As a result, the newly designed freshmen retreat, entitled Connections, has already enrolled 120 students, more than ever before. We are deeply grateful to the Angell Foundation and to Joe Brum and Greta Mittner of Institutional Advancement.

## An Unwelcome Anniversary

This year marks the fifth anniversary of two events most of us would prefer to forget: the terrorist attacks on the United States, and disclosure of widespread sexual abuse of minors by priests. Many have suffered in their wake, and the pain, anger, and confusion that they have engendered are understandable and justified.

Although some of the religious questions attending these tragedies have been debated publicly – how can a good God permit such evil? Is there something about religion or Islam in particular that spawns violence and abuse? – one has been rather muted: why do people go on believing in God despite all that has happened?

In the immediate wake of 9/11, spontaneous shrines appeared throughout lower Manhattan: crosses, flowers, scribbled prayers, and flowers adorned signposts and plywood barriers. A rabbi composed a *kaddish*, or mourner's prayer, that consisted entirely of telephone messages recorded that day by victims for the loved ones they left behind. And even though some Catholics in the Archdiocese of Boston initially stayed away from church when the scandal broke, in time most returned, however tentatively, looking for what they had lost or what, more properly, had been taken from them.

What both the saints and modern research counsel is that in times of suffering and dismay, when all seems forfeited and little is sure, God can be found at a greater depth than before, one less tethered to immediate experience or reliant on custom and common usage. But for this to occur one must be willing to undergo a conversion of sorts, a change of perspective and understanding that seems to affect our faith at its very foundations. This can be as unsettling at its beginning as it is reassuring in the end, and for this reason the light of faith must often be held for us by others until we regain our footing.

This fall the Office of the Chaplain/Campus Ministry will offer special masses on September 11, and an opportunity to inscribe the names of loved ones in a book of memory to be read in St. Dominic Chapel. In addition, the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies will sponsor two talks on finding God in the wake of 9/11 and the scandal in the church.

Please join us as we consider how grace can transform painful memory into hope.

# Looking Ahead: Fall 2006

The fall semester 2006 promises to be busy and will hopefully prove enriching. The accompanying calendar provides a sampling of the semester's programs. What you might note is that the programs for the fall encompass the historical and the contemporary, matters of enduring importance and those of more immediate import, some to enlighten the mind, others to stir the heart, and still others to enliven faith. This is as it should be.

St. Dominic was a man of keen intelligence and learning but also a man of deep compassion and pastoral concern, and in founding the Order he sought to bring the richness of tradition to bear on the most pressing problems of his day. Yet in all that he was and did he was first and foremost a man of Christ, imbued with a deep faith. He was confident that the God who alone could heal, redeem, and transform us would not hesitate to do so if only we would let him.

It is our prayer that every member of the Providence College family share St. Dominic's faith and confidence in this provident God.

May God bless you and yours, and keep you unto life eternal.

## Center for Catholic & Dominican Studies

The Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies serves as a place of intellectual exploration and dialogue where students, faculty, staff, administration and alumni can gather for discussion, reflection and service in light of the Catholic and Dominican mission of Providence College. It is housed in the former Aquinas Chapel the renovation of which was made possible by the generosity of alumni and friends, including the Class of 1955. Many of the original elements of the chapel have been restored and incorporated into the Center. The Center is open weekdays 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

The Center is directed by Fr. Thomas D. McGonigle, O.P., a member of the history and theology departments. He can be reached at 401-865-2870 or via email at [tmcgonig@providence.edu](mailto:tmcgonig@providence.edu).

## Office of the Chaplain/Campus Ministry

The Office of the Chaplain/Campus Ministry serves the liturgical, pastoral, and spiritual needs of the campus community, and provides a wealth of opportunities for service to those in need. It has responsibility for St. Dominic Chapel and the Campus Ministry Center, Harkins Chapel, and St. Catherine of Siena Oratory. Fr. Thomas Blau, O.P. is the Chaplain and is assisted by Fr. Thomas Ertle, O.P., Ms. Jessica Pane, and Fr. John Paul Walker, O.P. The Chapel and Campus Ministry Center are open all day and late into the night. The Chaplain and campus ministry staff can be reached at 401-865-2216 or via email at [chaplain@providence.edu](mailto:chaplain@providence.edu).

Mass at St. Dominic Chapel (*academic year*)

Weekdays      11:35 a.m., 4:30 p.m., 9:00 p.m.

Weekends      4:30 p.m. Saturday (*vigil*)  
4:30 p.m. Sunday  
7:00 p.m. Sunday  
10:30 p.m. Sunday

Confessions at St. Dominic Chapel (*academic year*)

Wednesday      3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m., 8:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.

Saturday      3:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m.

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# Office of Mission and Ministry

The Office of Mission and Ministry is charged with coordinating the college-wide process of maintaining, enhancing, and promoting the distinctive mission of Providence College as a Catholic and Dominican college. It oversees the work of the Office of the Chaplain/Campus Ministry and the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies, serves as a resource for existing departments and programs, and helps to develop new initiatives expressive of the mission of the college.

The word mission comes from the Latin, *missio*, which means "to be sent," while ministry means to serve. The office therefore serves the College community by helping us to think about our many efforts in light of a broader and deeper call and mission, and by creating a culture on campus in which everyone -- students, faculty, alumni, administration, staff, trustees -- partake of and benefit from a common mission inspired by faith and enabled by grace.

Fr. Joseph Guido, O.P. serves as Vice President and Fr. Kevin Robb, O.P. as Associate Vice President, and they can be reached at 401-86-1210 or via email at [jguido@providence.edu](mailto:jguido@providence.edu).

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