



Consortio

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Beauty Will Save the World

by Dr. William Newton

The point is finding that path that most effectively leads the modern man and woman, peculiarly inoculated against the truth and the good, *back to them*. In our day, this way seems to be the way of beauty.

One of the vanguards of the “new evangelization” – an evangelization “that is new in its ardour, new in its methods, and new in its means of expression”¹ rather than in its content – is the Pontifical Council for Culture. Created by John Paul II in 1982 and later merged with the Pontifical Council for Dialogue with Non-Believers, it was given as its task “the study of the weighty phenomena of the rift between the Gospel and cultures.”² The final goal of such a study is a more effective evangelization by promoting an “encounter between the saving message of the Gospel and the cultures of our time, often marked by unbelief or religious indifference, in order that they may be increasingly open to the Christian faith.”³

Seeking to fulfill this mission, at conclusion of its 2006 plenary session, the Pontifical Council issued an intriguing document called “The *Via Pulchritudinis*.” Surveying the “signs of the times,” and after noting that “many live as though God did not exist, as though His presence and His Word had no influence on the life of people

and societies,”⁴ the document proposes “the *Way of Beauty*” as “a privileged itinerary to get in touch

with many of those who face great difficulties in receiving the Church’s teachings.”⁵ Beauty, it says, is *the* bridge able to span the gulf that has opened up between modern cultures and the saving message of Jesus Christ.

To say beauty is the *privileged* path is to compare it with the other transcendentals, namely the true and the good. *Via Pulchritudinis* points out that in the twentieth century the *truth* was hijacked by various totalitarian ideologies, such as National Socialism [Nazism] and Communism. The disasters that these ideologies brought upon the world have discredited the truth in the minds of many or, at least, made people *continued on page 4*



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Bringing Saint Thomas Around the Globe

ITI graduates tackle the project of publishing the works of the Angelic Doctor in English/Latin parallel editions.

The Popes say, “*Ite ad Thomam*,” “Go to Thomas,” but how does one do so in today’s non-Latin-speaking world? Several members of the International Theological Institute (ITI) family have collaborated to address this problem and make the works of St. Thomas Aquinas easily accessible to scholars today. ITI graduates Dr. Jeremy Holmes (ITI STM ’01) and Dr. John Mortensen (ITI STL ’01), and former ITI professor, Dr. Peter Kwasniewski, all professors at Wyoming Catholic College, looked around and



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saw that high-quality versions of the works of St. Thomas Aquinas were expensive and hard to find. Moreover, certain works had never been translated into English.

This problem was brought to the attention of Kwasniewski, Holmes, and Mortensen when they founded the Aquinas Institute in 2008 to offer summer courses to graduate students and religious. Over the course of eight weeks, the three colleagues, along with several guest professors, led students in a careful study of St. Thomas's commentaries on the letters of St. Paul. For this summer course, the Aquinas Institute developed editions of these commentaries using the unfinished translations of Fr. Larcher, O.P., which had been transcribed and revised by Ave Maria University students and faculty. Based on this experience, the Aquinas Institute launched its project in the summer of 2012 to publish the *Opera Omnia* of St. Thomas in hard-cover Latin-English editions.

The Aquinas Institute's announcement of the publishing project on June 13, 2012 attracted attention from around the globe. Although there was no formal publicity campaign at that time, preorders of the Pauline commentaries and the entire *Opera Omnia* poured in, not only from priests and academics, but from high school teachers, small business owners, and even a high school student.

Dr. Mortensen had written an online collaboration tool to facilitate international translating and editing of the texts of St. Thomas Aquinas. In cooperation with the online edition of the Latin texts of *Corpus Thomisticum*, the Aquinas Institute put together the entire collection of the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas and began the task of translating the missing pieces, revising older translations, and editing the texts for publication. The first five volumes of the commentaries of St. Thomas on the letters of St. Paul came out on the feast of Our Lady's

name day, September 12, 2012. The next eight volumes, the *Summa Theologiae*, were published on December 12, 2012. The *Commentary on the Gospel of John* is set to be published on March 25, 2013, and the *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* is scheduled for August 15th, 2013. After this, the Aquinas Institute will be systematically publishing the works of St. Thomas Aquinas until the whole 58 volume set is complete.

The Aquinas Institute has been seeking independent funding for a project to translate St. Thomas's



Juliana Bridge, current ITI student, helped with the translating work for the new edition of the works of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard, which has never before been translated into English. This translation project will take as its point of departure the two largest portions of the *Sentences Commentary* to appear in English to date; namely, Dr. Beth Mortensen's (ITI STL '01) translation of the sixteen distinctions that form St. Thomas's treatise on marriage, and Dr. Peter Kwasniewski's translation of certain articles on charity, which appeared in his book, *On Love and Charity: Readings from the Commentary on the Sentences of Peter Lombard* (CUA Press, 2008). These texts were

translated in conjunction with Fr. Thomas Bolin (ITI STL '00) and Fr. Joseph Bolin (ITI STL '07).

The worldwide importance of these Latin-English editions has already been evident in the interest they have generated in Hong Kong, Poland, and other non-Western cultures where English is increasingly more accessible than Latin, even in academic circles. For more information on this project go to www.theaquinasinstitute.org 🗝️



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Fighting the Gender Blur in Lithuania

ITI graduates successfully resist the implementation of a so-called “gender equality” program in Lithuanian kindergartens. Do you want your kids reading, *The Day when Frederik was Frida*?

Recently, the Lithuanian National Association of Parents and Families was the main group which resisted the gender mainstreaming agenda imposed on Lithuania by the Women’s Information Centre and supported by the Council of Ministers of the Nordic Countries. ITI Professor Dr. Gintautas Vaitoska, who is a psychiatrist, and ITI graduate Vita Kuliaviene (Masters of Marriage and Family, ’08) were the experts of the Parents and Families Association in the working group which reviewed the proposed “gender equality” program for Lithuanian kindergartens. The proposed program tries to introduce the notion of gender as a ‘fluid’ reality subject to one’s personal choice, and attempts to “resocialise boys in the direction of femininity”. The very titles of the children’s books used in the program – *The Day when Frederik was Frida* and *The Day when Rike was Rasmus* – are revealing.

Representing the National Association of Parents and Families, Vita Kuliaviene and Dr. Vaitoska, with the help of other ITI graduates – among them Mindaugas and Emilija Radusis (both ITI MMF ’10), and Marius Minkevicius (ITI MMF ’12), exposed the dangers of the program with many publications and interviews in the central Lithuanian press. They argued that, among other things, the program puts some children at risk of developing a Gender Identity Disorder. This disorder is on the list of the International Classification of Diseases as a psychological disturbance.

The group emphasized the need to help Lithuanian children to strengthen their unique masculine or feminine identity rather than to blur it. On the fifth of November 2012, the working group which consisted of members of various Lithuanian Ministries and NVO’s, led by the Association of Parents and Families experts,

successfully resisted the immediate implementation of the program in Lithuanian kindergartens. The promoters of the program decided to stop the program and will open a public discussion (as before this, the program’s contents were not revealed to the public). The battle is not yet over, but the



ITI graduates, Mindaugas and Emilija Radusis helped to expose the dangers of the program.

The proposed program tries to introduce the notion of gender as a ‘fluid’ reality subject to one’s personal choice.

Lithuanian Association of Parents and Families is thankful to the ITI for the deep formation of its students – as well as for the moral support and prayer for the promotion of the authentic dignity of men and women in this Baltic country. 🙏



Vita Kuliaviene, ITI graduate, was one of the experts who reviewed and resisted the proposed program for Lithuanian kindergartens.

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wary of those who claim the truth. One is reminded of C.S. Lewis's *The Last Battle*, where the dwarfs, once deceived by the monkey and the fake Aslan will no longer swear allegiance to the true king of Narnia or to the real Aslan, despite Tirian having unmasked the deception. The dwarfs are not going to be 'taken in again' and from now on "the dwarfs are for the dwarfs!"⁶

Perhaps somewhat in reaction to this misuse of truth, the beginning of the twenty-first century is marked by a general apathy about the truth, what one might call a practical relativism. This is complemented by a more militant relativism, an ideology (another ideology!) that positively claims there is no objective truth at

all. Some go as far as claiming that relativism is the only possible foundation for a modern pluralistic and democratic society!⁷

The result is that "the very questions on the truth of Christianity and the existence of God are put aside and considered irrelevant and meaningless."⁸ This, of course, dramatically undermines

the ability of the Church to reach the modern mind with the Christian message – the saving truth – since even religious truth is seen as fundamentally relative. On the other hand, relativ-

ism plays very much into the hands of New Age spiritualities. The Pontifical Council calls the New Age (a major concern of the Council) a "religion of self" and a "do-it-yourself" religion, precisely because it rejects objective truth and even reason itself.⁹ Everyone is free to believe whatever they want, picking and choosing from the menu of religious truths (favouring those of Eastern flavour and generally despising those of Christian origin), one choice being as



Like every artist, God puts something of Himself into His work, into creation: a trace of His beauty.

good as another.

Likewise, the Church faces real problems in engaging the modern world in a discussion about the *good*, at least in a way that can include God in the picture. In *Veritatis Splendor*, John Paul II begins by reflecting on the question of the rich young man, about the good he must do to inherit

1. John Paul II, *To The Assembly of CELAM In Port-au-Prince, Haiti*, 9 March 1983.
2. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Profile of the Pontifical Council for Culture*, A.
3. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Profile of the Pontifical Council for Culture*, B
4. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, I.1.
5. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, II.1.
6. C. S. Lewis, *The Last Battle* (Witney: Scholastic, 1995), 83.
7. Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Doctrinal*

Note On Some Questions Regarding The Participation Of Catholics In Political Life.

8. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Where is Your God? Responding to the Challenge of Unbelief and Religious Indifference Today*, 4.3.
9. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Where is Your God? Responding to the Challenge of Unbelief and Religious Indifference Today*, 4.2; Pontifical Council for Culture and Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, *Jesus Christ, The Bearer Of The Water Of Life: A Christian Reflection On The "New Age"*, 6.1.



eternal life (Mt 19:16), and then on Jesus' response that "no one is good but God alone" (Mt 19:17). He points out that this episode in the Gospel shows us that "*to ask about the good*, in fact, *ultimately means to turn towards God*, the fullness of goodness."¹⁰ True enough, but today we are faced with a situation where the good is utterly "horizontalized." One can be "good" without any relationship with God. What matters is "being true to oneself," and "not hurting anyone else." The result is that "anything goes between 'consenting adults'," and the Church's teaching on some aspect of personal morality (especially sexual ethics) appears incomprehensible. The good and God are divorced so that discussion about the good is not, for the modern man, a discussion about God.

The point is that, in the modern world, the evangelical power of the truth and the good have been somewhat blunted. They no longer necessarily or easily lead to the Truth and the Good. Summarizing this situation, *Via Pulchritudinis* quotes a really remarkable and prophetic text from Solzhenitsyn, from his *Discourse for the Nobel Prize for Literature* delivered back in 1970. Commenting on Dostoyevsky's words "beauty will save the world,"¹¹ he says:

So perhaps that ancient trinity of Truth, Good and Beauty is not simply an empty, faded formula as we thought in the days of our self-confident, materialistic youth. If the tops of these three trees converge, as the scholars maintained, but the too blatant, too direct stems of Truth and Good are crushed, cut down, not allowed through, then perhaps the fantastic, unpredictable, unexpected stems of Beauty will push through and soar to that very same place, and in so doing will fulfil the work of all three.

It should be noted here that neither Solzhenitsyn nor the Pontifical Council are recommending we abandon the true and the good, or discard the chances that some, perhaps many, can still be reached by placing evangelical energies into a defense and proclamation of the truth and the good. The point is finding that path that most effectively leads the modern man and woman, peculiarly inoculated against the truth and the good, *back to them*. In our day, this way seems to be the way of beauty.

In a recent address to artists in the Sistine

Chapel, a meeting organized by the Pontifical Council for Culture, Pope Benedict articulated the evangelical value of beauty. The essential point is the power of beauty to draw men out of themselves and towards something transcendent, or rather toward someone transcendent, namely God. In a word, beauty is ecstatic. The Holy Father reminds us that:

[A]n essential function of genuine beauty ... is that it gives man a healthy "shock", it draws him out of himself, wrenches him away from resignation and from being content with the humdrum – it even makes him suffer, piercing him like a dart, but in so doing it "reawakens" him, opening afresh the eyes of his heart and mind, giving him wings, carrying him aloft.¹²

Having stated its thesis – "beauty will save the world" – the document *Via Pulchritudinis* goes on to illustrate those particular aspects of the beautiful that are the most important means of engaging modern culture. These are the beauty of creation, the beauty of art, and the beauty of Christ manifest in holiness and the liturgy.

The Beauty of Creation

Like every artist, God puts something of Himself into His work, into creation: a trace of His beauty. The Bishop of Hippo, the one who exclaimed "late have I loved you, Beauty so old and so new: late have I loved you,"¹³ challenges us:

Question the beauty of the earth, question the beauty of the sea, question the beauty of the air, amply spread around everywhere, question the beauty of the sky, question the serried ranks of the stars, question the sun making the day glorious with its bright beams, question the moon tempering the darkness of the following night with its shining rays ... [q]uestion all these things. They all answer you, "Here we are, look; we are beautiful!" Their beauty is their confession. Who made these beautiful changeable things, if not one who is beautiful and unchangeable?¹⁴

In the modern world, the evangelical power of the truth and the good have been somewhat blunted. They no longer necessarily or easily lead to the Truth and the Good.

This, of course, is also the testimony of Scripture:

With whose beauty, if they, being delighted,

10. John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, 9.

11. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Idiot*, Part III, chapter 5.

12. Benedict XVI, *Meeting with Artists*, 21 Nov 2009.

13. St. Augustine, *Confessions*, 10, 27.

14. St. Augustine, *Sermo* CCXLI, 2. See, Benedict XVI, *General Audience*, 18 November 2009.



took them to be gods: let them know how much the Lord of them is more beautiful than they: for the first author of beauty made all those things ... For by the greatness of the beauty, and of the creature, the creator of them may be seen, so as to be known thereby (Wis 13:3,5).

The beauty of creation, *Via Pulchritudinis* tells us, should “bring us to the threshold of a contemplative silence”,¹⁵ where we are

Human art shares in the power of beauty: a power of drawing man “out of himself, wrench[ing] him away from resignation and from being content with the humdrum,” in a word putting him in contact with God.

morally good life.

Of course, there are several challenges here. First, one has to get out into nature *and* turn the iPod off, so to speak. This is a real challenge in a society dominated by what might be called an



forced to seek an answer to the question: “who is this Artisan with such powerful imagination at the origin of so much beauty and grandeur, such profusion of beings in the sky and on the earth?”¹⁶ The document also notes that “the contemplation of the beauties of creation causes an interior peace and sharpens the sense of harmony and the desire for a beautiful life.”¹⁷ By this it seems to mean that when exterior beauty is contemplated, a desire grows in a man to interiorize this beauty, to conform to it, and this manifests itself in a desire for “a beautiful life,” that is, a spiritual life and a

MTV culture, a culture of noise, images, virtual reality, “leaving neither time nor desire for something deeper than the immediate satisfaction of every craving.”¹⁸ Second, the modern concern for the environment is positive to the extent that it reflects a respect for creation. It is even a starting point for evangelizing along “the way of beauty.” But, precisely because the beauty of creation evokes awe and the desire to respond in worship, if

it is not properly directed, it can stop

short, terminating not with the Creator but with the creature. The Psalmist says that, because of the beauty of creation and creatures, man “took *them* to be gods.” This is what we see sometimes in the environmental movement, a tendency, under the influence of the New Age to a new form of pantheism.¹⁹

The Beauty of Art

Like the handiwork of God – creation – human art shares in the power of beauty: a power of drawing man “out of himself, wrench[ing] him away from resignation and from being content with the humdrum,” in a word putting him in contact with God. This being so, the Pontifical Council laments two rifts that have opened up in the contemporary world of art – and this shows that the privileged path of beauty is not without its obstacles!

The first divorce is between art and beauty. This

15. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.2.

16. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.1 A.

17. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.1.A.

18. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Where is Your God? Responding to the Challenge of Unbelief and Religious Indifference Today*, 2.5.

19. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.1.C.

is truly a divorce – they are meant to be married! John Paul II goes as far as to say that “beauty is the vocation bestowed on [the artist] by the Creator.”²⁰ But, *Via Pulchritudinis* speaks of a modern “sort of addiction to ugliness, bad taste and uncouthness promoted by publicity as much as by those *artistes fous* who profit from the squalid and the ugly, provoking scandal.”²¹ Yes, beauty, along with truth and goodness have been affected by the fall! In a recent meeting between Benedict XVI and five hundred artists to mark the tenth anniversary of John Paul II’s *Letter to Artists*, the Holy Father warned of an anti-art that, rather than lifting the spirit of men, depresses him, or stirs in him base and ignoble desires:

Too often, though, the beauty that is thrust upon us is illusory and deceitful, superficial and blinding, leaving the onlooker dazed; instead of bringing him out of himself and opening him up to horizons of true freedom as it draws him aloft, it imprisons him within himself and further enslaves him, depriving him of hope and joy. It is a seductive but hypocritical beauty that rekindles desire, the will to power, to possess, and to dominate others, it is a beauty which soon turns into its opposite, taking on the guise of indecency, transgression or gratuitous provocation.²²

Paul VI sounded a similar warning in his closing address of the Second Vatican Council. While affirming and encouraging artists in their important work and emphasizing that the “world in which we live needs beauty in order not to sink into despair” and that “it is beauty, like truth, which brings joy to the heart of man,” he cautioned against “tastes which are passing and have no genuine value” and encourages artists to

be “free ... from the search after strange or unbecoming expressions.”²³

Art is a veritable battle ground where a war for souls is being waged. On the one side is a true uplifting beauty, on the other a false beauty, depressing and degrading. In the words of Dimitri Karamazov, “beauty is mysterious as well as terrible. God and the devil are fighting there and the battlefield is the heart of man.”²⁴

The second divorce is that of art from religious sentiment. Aware of the power of beautiful art to raise men up to God, the Second Vatican Council and recent popes have made significant efforts to re-forge the alliance that for centuries existed between artists and the Church. Marc Chagall reminds us that “for centuries painters dipped their brushes into that colourful alphabet which was the Bible.”²⁵ The Vatican Council recognized that “the fine arts are considered to rank among the noblest activities of man’s genius,”²⁶ and John Paul, in his *Letter to Artists*, says the Ecumenical Council considered “artists as having ‘a noble ministry’ when their work reflects in some way the infinite beauty of God and

raises people’s minds to Him.”²⁷

In a by-gone age the communication of the Gospel message

by means of art was of particular importance because so many people could not read. In our time, the age of literacy, so many people can but do not read. We live in what *Via Pulchritudinis* – thinking no doubt of television and the internet – calls a “civilization of the image.”²⁸ In such a civilization, the artistic communication of the

Gospel is once again particularly vital.

The beauty of God should be reflected in a special way in the human being. This happens, of course, when a person is especially conformed to God, a conformity that we call holiness.



20. John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, 3.

21. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, II.2.

22. Benedict *Meeting with Artists* 21 Nov 2009.

23. Paul VI, *Closing Address at Vatican II*, 8 Dec 1965.

24. Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *The Brothers Karamazov*, trans. Constance Garnett, (New York: Dover Publications, 2005), 94.

See also, Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, II.2.

25. See, Benedict XVI, *General Audience*, 19 November 2009.

26. Vatican II, *Sacrosanctum Consilium*, 122.

27. John Paul II, *Letter to Artists*, 11.

28. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.3.A.

The Beauty of Holiness

A trace of the beauty of God the Creator undoubtedly shines forth in every part of creation. But man alone is created in God's *image* and not just His likeness (Gn 1:27). Accordingly, the beauty of God should be reflected in a special way in the human being. This happens, of course, when a person is especially conformed to God, a conformity that we call holiness. Holiness, in the words of John Paul II, is "a beauty which surpasses all natural or artistic beauty; a supernatural beauty in which the beauty of God Himself is reflected in a more essential and direct way than in any

other created beauty."²⁹ In the words of Pope Benedict – on the occasion of the first canonization of his pontificate – "the saint is the one who is so fascinated by the beauty of God and by His perfect truth that he is progressively transformed by it."³⁰

It is grace – a participation in the divine nature (2 Pet 1:4) – that makes us at once holy and beautiful. Grace makes us graceful. And, since every drop of grace comes to us from Jesus Christ, all we are saying is that the saint manifests something of the beauty of Christ: "now the Son is beauty, and so it follows that the sons-in-the-Son will share His beauty. To quote St. Thomas ... 'man is made like to the splendor of the eternal Son through the brightness of grace.'"³¹

So the holy life is a beautiful life. When the gospels speak of "good works" (Mt 5:16) the word "good" (καλός) might as easily be translated as "beautiful," so rendering "good acts" as "beautiful acts," and a "good life" as a "beautiful life."³² Sensitive to this, Malcolm Muggeridge did well

to name his "biography" of Mother Teresa, *Something Beautiful for God*. This, of course, would be an appropriate title for the biography of every saint! And it should be the life story of all Christians! We are called to a beautiful life capable of leading others to God. In the words of *Via Pulchritudinis*, "the Christian life is called to become, in the force of grace given by Christ resurrected, an event of beauty able to arouse admiration and reflection and incite conversion."³³

The Beauty of Liturgy

Alongside holiness, it is in the Liturgy that the beauty of Christ should be most splendidly

evident. Liturgical beauty, *Via Pulchritudinis* emphasizes, is more than just having beautiful vestments, churches, singing etc, even though these *are* important. More than this, it is a beauty that comes from contact with mystery: "it is first of all the deep beauty of meeting with the mystery of God."³⁴ Again, we are looking for a beauty that can break through the religious indifference of modern cultures, an evangelical beauty. In this regard, lack of liturgical beauty is not neutral, it is, the document emphasizes, decidedly negative. It says that "superficial-

ity, banality and negligence have no place in the liturgy. They not only do not help the believer progress on his path of faith but above all damage those who attend Christian celebrations."³⁵

Reflecting on the evangelical power of liturgical beauty, *Via Pulchritudinis* reminds us of the famous story of Prince Vladimir of Kiev and his decision to adhere to Orthodox Christianity on the basis of the reports of his ambassadors returning



The "world in which we live needs beauty in order not to sink into despair" Pope Paul VI

29. John Paul II, *General Audience*, 28 Nov 1990.

30. Benedict XVI, *Conclusion Of The 11th Ordinary General Assembly Of The Synod Of Bishops And Year Of The Eucharist*, 23 October 2005. See, Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.3.B.

31. John Saward, *The Beauty of Holiness and the Holiness of Beauty* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1997), 62, quoting St.

Thomas, *Summa Theologiae*, III 23.2 ad3.

32. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.3.B.

33. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.3.B.

34. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.3.C.

35. Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.3.C.

from Constantinople after they had witnessed the beauty of the Divine Liturgy in the Basilica of Hagia Sophia. Of this story, Cardinal Ratzinger says:

[I]t is in effect certain that the internal force of the liturgy played an essential role in the diffusion of Christianity...that which convinced the ambassadors of the Russian prince, that the faith celebrated in the Orthodox liturgy was true, was not a missionary style argument whose elements appeared more convincing to those disposed to listen than those of any other religion. No, that which struck home was the mystery in itself, a mystery that, precisely because it is found beyond all discussion, imposes on reason the force of truth.³⁶

Mindful of this, *Via Pulchritudinis* goes on to lament certain liturgical trends that have sought to make the liturgy more “accessible,” perhaps with the laudable intention of making them more attractive and inclusive. Yet, paradoxically, this, it notes, has often been done at the expense of the experience of mystery and because of this have actually made the liturgy less *missionary*!

Conclusion

In Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*, there is a scene when the young Lord Sebastian Flyte is sitting with his new friend Charles Ryder under the colonnades of Brideshead, Sebastian's spectacular family home. It is the second Sunday of Charles's stay at

Brideshead and Sebastian has just come back from Mass in the private chapel. For the first time Sebastian speaks overtly about being a Catholic, remarking wistfully that “it's very hard being a Catholic.” Charles, somewhat surprised, responds by noting that it does not seem to make much difference to Sebastian's way of life. It is certainly true that Sebastian was not much concerned with the true or the good. His life as a student in Oxford was conspicuously marked by a lack of interest in his studies and a strong interest in carousing.

Anyway, Charles continues, he cannot imagine that Sebastian really believes “such an awful lot of nonsense” – such as “about Christmas and that star and the three kings and the ox...”

“Oh yes I believe that. It's a lovely idea,” Sebastian responds.

“But you can't believe things because they're a lovely idea,” retorts Charles.

“But I do. That's how I believe.”

Only the power of beauty – the “lovely idea” of the Christmas story – had a hold on him. ✂

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36. Joseph Ratzinger, *Eucharistia come genesi della missione*. Conference at the XXIII Eucharistic Congress of Bologna,

20-28 September. See, Pontifical Council for Culture, *Via Pulchritudinis*, III.3.C.

A Birthday Tree for Msgr. Hogan

Our venerable Rector, Msgr. Prof. Dr. Larry Hogan, received a special gift for his seventieth birthday. A Himalayan lime tree was planted by the ITI staff as a token of appreciation for his dedicated service to the ITI. It was the first tree planted in our



The ITI planted a tree to warmly congratulate our President, Msgr. Dr. Hogan, on his 70th birthday.

new Campus park.

The idea came from Franz Jahner and Lukas Lindemann who came to the ITI as students and, being master gardeners, ended up improving and taking care of the gardening needs of the Schloss park and campus land. They are always seeking the best plants to beautify the grounds and contribute to the ITI community life. Last year they planted a herb garden that is now used by students when they cook their meals. Franz and Lukas now plan to develop the land next to the campus apartments and Msgr. Hogan's tree was the first significant step.

Donations for trees and flowers are most welcome! If interested, contact Lukas Lindemann, l.lindemann@iti.ac.at ✂





Theology on One's Knees

The Aquinas Institute of Ireland inaugural summer school
(Knockadoon, Ireland, 25 August to 2 September 2012)

What could possibly inspire a professional journalist, a doctoral student in computer science, a seminarian, an environmentalist, a lawyer, and a housewife to spend ten days together in a small fishing village on the southern coast of Ireland?

The answer is: a thirteenth century monk and scholar by the name of St. Thomas Aquinas. Along with more than thirty other students – that included monks, nuns, other seminarians and lay persons from all walks of life – this diverse group of adults spent ten days in late August meticulously studying the first thirteen questions of the *Summa Theologiae* at the inaugural summer school of the Aquinas Institute of Ireland.

[The Institute] was founded in order to promote the study of St. Thomas in Ireland among those who, until now, have had little opportunity.

The Institute was formed last year by a

professor of the International Theological Institute - ITI (William Newton) and two graduates of the ITI (Robert McNamara and Patricia Mannering) along with a Dominican brother from Ireland (Conor McDonough).

It was founded in order to promote the study of St. Thomas in Ireland among those who, until now, have had little opportunity to engage with the profound and ever fruitful thought of the Universal Doctor of the Church.

In conformity with the pedagogical ethos of the Institute, the format of the school was designed to put the participants in *direct* contact with the philosophy and theology of St. Thomas. It required every student to read each of the first thirteen questions of the *Summa* and then enter into a detailed discussion of the texts in small seminar groups guided by experienced professors from Queens University, Belfast, the International Theological Institute, Austria, and the National University of Ireland, Maynooth, as well as from within the Irish Dominican Order.

Despite the rigorous academic character of the week, the over-riding goal was to facilitate a deepening of faith. To this end, significant amounts of time were given over to communal prayer (Matins, Vespers, and Compline) as well as to daily Mass and

to extended periods of Eucharistic adoration. In a word, the idea was to do “theology on our knees.”

Undoubtedly, the setting for the school added to the overwhelmingly positive experience of the participants. Knockadoon camp – a long established retreat centre owned by the Dominicans – is located at the end of a long country road opening out onto the expansive and breathtakingly beautiful Youghal Bay. Moreover, and not to be taken for granted in that part of the world, the sun shone!

The choice of studying the first thirteen questions of the *Summa* was a considered one: it fulfilled two important goals. Firstly, in these questions, St. Thomas marshals many of his most important ideas and principles. This gave participants – both those experienced in the philosophy of St. Thomas and those

coming to it for the first time – the possibility of discussing and assimilating the key features to the great Master's thought. Secondly, in these questions, the Angelic Doctor teaches us what can be known about the existence of God and His attributes by the unaided power of human reason. This makes these initial questions of the *Summa* required reading for anyone interested in engaging an increasingly secular and even militantly atheistic culture; a problem from which modern Ireland is no longer immune.

This then points to the continued importance of directly studying and grappling with the thought of St. Thomas. It sharpens the mind and quickens the heart in such a way that those who undertake this (sometimes) difficult venture with enthusiasm are, with the help of St. Thomas, drawn closer to The Truth and thereby more able to pass Him onto to the people of our age.

As Pope John XXII said of the Genius from Aquino: “a man can derive more profit in a year from [reading] his books than from pondering all his life the teaching of others.” We only had ten days, but it was a good a start.

The next Aquinas Institute of Ireland summer school will be held from June 22 – 29, 2013 in Knockadoon. For more information see www.aquinasinstitute.ie ✂



Top: The four founders of the Aquinas Institute of Ireland; bottom: Participants discussed the first thirteen questions of the *Summa Theologiae*.

Cardinal Schönborn's Address – Majority Rule is Not Enough

Cardinal Schönborn travelled to Germany in the fall of 2012 and spoke there on the importance of holding fast to Europe's Christian roots. He addressed German politicians, among whom was German Chancellor Angela Merkel, as well as supporters of the ITI. His Eminence pointed out that people are marginalizing their Christianity and that mainstream thought is the exact opposite of Christian thought – and this is to the detriment of society. He gave the example of the recognition and legal protection of human life, which the Church defends as a rationally justified human right and not simply as a point of confessional belief. He also brought up the euthanasia debate which is being waged with inexorable consequence in more and more countries in Europe. In a third example, the Cardinal spoke about embryonic research, which again has to do with natural law and inalienable human dignity, and yet the Church's position is on the losing side. "I think we have reflected too little on what this marginalization of Christian identity means for today's secular Europe. How far can the political compromise go when it depends on the legislative process of the parliamentary majority?"



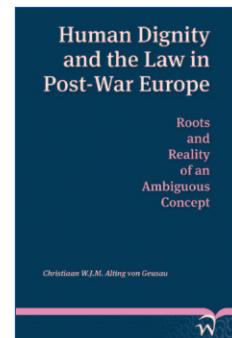
Berlin, Fall 2012 - German Chancellor Angela Merkel talks to Christoph Cardinal Schönborn at St. Michael's annual reception. To the left of the Chancellor, Archbishop Robert Zollitsch, chairman of the German Bishops' Conference.

His Eminence then reminded those gathered that many laws deal with matters where compromise is needed, but as Pope Benedict XVI has pointed out, the majority principle is not enough in fundamental issues of law concerning the dignity of man and of humanity. ✂

Human Dignity and the Law

Dr. Christiaan Alting von Geusau's book, *Human Dignity and the Law in Post-War Europe: Roots and Reality of an Ambiguous Concept* is due to be published in March 2013. In his book, the Chief Development Officer of the ITI shows how the protection of human dignity is not a distant legal concept, but a reality that concerns every human being every day on all levels of society. Human dignity is not just a worthy ideal to be pursued exclusively by philosophers

and lawyers; it describes the core of what it means to be human. The book can be ordered at www.wolfpublishers.com ✂



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Why Study at the ITI? continued from page 12

what we're learning about in class. I've also been learning a whole lot about the Eastern rites of the Church, which is completely new to me, as a cradle Roman Catholic.

The ITI brings together students from all over the world, "to breathe with both lungs of the Church," and is truly a unique place among schools of theology. The



the Lord has brought me here to study for a little while! ✂



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It was especially the focus on marriage and family studies, the commitment to studying the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, the seminar style of teaching, and the strong community life that drew me to the ITI.

“Anti-Choice” List Distributed in European Parliament Includes ITI

In October of 2012, a document was distributed to the European Parliament listing the personalities and institutions that were considered “anti-choice” or “against abortion” at the national level. The International Theological Institute (ITI) is one of the few educational institutions mentioned for all of Europe and the only Institute named under the title “Education” in Austria.



ITI grad, Gudrun Kugler is seventh on the list of “Anti-choice” personalities

A sort of “hit-list,” the document also names the ITI under the section listing “anti-choice” organizations at the European Union level. ITI graduate Gudrun Kugler, who was elected to the Advisory Panel of the EU Fundamental Rights Agency in April 2010, is listed as number seven of the top twenty-seven “anti-choice” personalities. We must be doing something right. ✂

Why Study at the ITI?

by Christine Friedrich

A year or two ago I came across a summer program that some ITI graduates had started, and I found it very intriguing. I wasn't able to go to it, but I found out some more information about the ITI and kept it in the back of my mind as a future possibility.

I studied biology and secondary education at Boston College, then was a chastity and pro-life speaker for Generation Life, a group that does chastity and pro-life education in Philadelphia and around the United States. It was a privilege to be able to work full-time for a mission that has been very close to my heart ever since high school. I then discerned religious life with the Sisters of Life in New York for a little while, and after worked again in the chastity education field. However, I desired to have more time to delve into studying these topics more thoroughly. I've always loved learning, and while I was in the convent I gained a new appreciation for learning for its own sake.

So when I was thinking and praying about different possibilities for this year, the ITI came back to mind. It was especially the focus on mar-

riage and family studies, the commitment to studying the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, the seminar style of teaching, and the strong community life that drew me to the ITI. This matched up very nicely with the main pillars of the ITI's mission. I was also excited to come and spend a year in Europe and soak up the rich cultural experiences as well!

The thrill of learning something because it is critical in order to draw closer to God (and to help draw others closer to Him) stayed with me – I didn't come to ITI in order to get a degree or to advance a career. I'm here because I want to know and love God as much as possible, and this school seemed like a good place to draw some water along the way. The motto of the school is not “*Sicut Cervus ad Fontes*” in vain.

When I came here, I found a group of people very dedicated to “doing theology on one's knees.” It is beautiful to have adoration throughout the day on campus, and to see the example of so many families on campus who live *continued on page 11*

