



ANNUAL REPORT

2024-2025



2024-2025 AT A GLANCE

- ◆ Our Mission statement: Impelled by the Catholic faith and the Dominican mission, Aquinas Institute of Theology educates men and women to preach, to teach, to minister, and to lead
- ◆ Founded in 1925
- ◆ Sponsored by the Dominican Central Province of St. Albert the Great
- ◆ In partnership with the Dominican Southern Province of St. Martin de Porres
- ◆ Designated as a Center for Institutional Studies by the Order of Preachers
- ◆ 12 full-time faculty
- ◆ 14 full-time administrative staff
- ◆ 106 students
- ◆ 33 Dominican student brothers
- ◆ Up to twelve full and partial merit and/or need based scholarships awarded annually
- ◆ 1,900 graduates in a wide range of ministerial positions through the United States including Catholic healthcare mission leaders, parish leadership and pastoral associates, university campus ministers, non-profit executive leadership, social justice advocates, hospital chaplains, youth ministries, academic administration, college professors, high school theology teachers

The development staff have made a sincere effort to ensure information contained in the annual report is accurate and complete. If you were a contributor to Aquinas between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025 and your name has been omitted, misspelled, or is listed incorrectly, please advise us by calling 314-256-8856 or email give@ai.edu.

A Message from the President

Dear Friends of Aquinas Institute,

As we share this year's Annual Report, I write with gratitude for the many ways the mission of Aquinas Institute of Theology has been strengthened over the past year. The dedicated collaboration of our Board of Trustees, faculty, staff, students, alumni, and friends, are all united in advancing the mission of Aquinas. None of the accomplishments we celebrate in this report would be possible without the generosity of our donors and partners. Your support sustains the work entrusted to Aquinas Institute and makes possible the formation of leaders prepared to serve the Gospel in both word and deed. Each contribution represents a shared investment in the Church's future.



This annual report is published at a moment of both reflection and anticipation. As the Church enters a new liturgical year, we are reminded anew of the mystery of the Word made flesh and of our call to respond with renewed faith and purpose. At Aquinas Institute, this call continues to shape our commitment to rigorous theological education and formation rooted in the Dominican tradition.

We now find ourselves amid a historic season for our school. As Aquinas Institute celebrates its Centennial Year, we give thanks for 100 years of faithful service while also looking ahead with confidence in inaugurating the public phase of our Centennial Campaign. This moment invites us not only to honor our legacy, but also to strengthen Aquinas for those who will be formed here in the decades to come.

Your gifts make this work possible. I am deeply grateful for your confidence in Aquinas Institute and for the privilege of serving a community so committed to the life and mission of the Church.

Please be assured of the prayers offered daily by the Dominican friars and the entire Aquinas community. We ask, in turn, that you continue to hold Aquinas Institute in your prayers.

With deepest gratitude and prayerful best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Mark E. Wedig". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Fr. Mark E. Wedig, OP, PhD
PRESIDENT

A Message from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

Dear Friends,

It is with gratitude and hope that I write on behalf of the Board of Trustees of Aquinas Institute of Theology as we reflect on this past year and look toward an important moment in the life of our school.

This year's annual report tells a story of generosity and shared commitment. The support of our longtime friends and those newly connected to Aquinas Institute continues to make possible our mission of educating men and women "to preach, to teach, to minister and to lead," in service of the Church and the world. Your partnership is vital and strengthens our mission at a time when well-formed preachers, teachers, ministers and servants of the Gospel are needed more than ever.



I am deeply grateful for the leadership of my fellow Trustees and for their active engagement in guiding the Institute during a time of growth and transition. I also wish to thank our President, Father Mark Wedig, OP, our Academic Dean, Father Michael Mascari, OP, and our dedicated faculty, staff, and students, whose collective efforts sustain the academic and spiritual vitality of Aquinas Institute.

We find ourselves now in the midst of a truly significant moment in the life of Aquinas Institute—our Centennial Celebration. Building on over 800 years of Dominican spirituality, as we celebrate 100 years of Dominican education and preaching at Aquinas Institute, we look behind with awe and ahead with purpose through the launch of our Centennial Campaign and an invitation to strengthen Aquinas Institute of Theology for the generations who will follow.

It is a privilege to serve this remarkable community, united by the Dominican conviction that every human person carries an innate and deep desire for Truth, Goodness and Beauty—the enduring attributes of God. Thank you so much for the hope and confidence you inspire in us by your generosity, encouragement and belief in our mission.

With sincere gratitude and prayerful best wishes in St. Dominic and St. Thomas,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan O'Brien". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

Dan O'Brien, PhD

CHAIR, AQUINAS INSTITUTE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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New Faculty Members for 2024-2025



Fr. Eric Wagner, CR, PhD joins Aquinas as an Assistant Professor for Old and New Testaments. A priest in the Resurrectionist congregation, Fr. Wagner graduated with his MA-MDiv from Aquinas in 2010, going on to receive his PhD in Biblical Studies from The Catholic University of America in 2021.



Dr. Brian Matz, STD is a familiar face around campus, having taught as an adjunct at Aquinas. While formerly serving as the CSJ Endowed Chair in Catholic Thought at Fontbonne University, he is joining Aquinas full-time in the roles of Professor of Historical Theology and Associate Dean for Academic and Administrative Assessment.



Fr. Vincent Dávila, OP, PhD moved to the role of Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology in the Spring semester after successfully defending his dissertation and completing his degree at the University of Notre Dame.

His dissertation, *"Glorious Abandonment: Christ's Cry of Dereliction in Hilary of Poitiers,"* at the University of Notre Dame was presented on December 16, 2024 with a large group of friars from St. Louis, Illinois, Indiana, and Michigan present to show their support. Fr. Dávila, an Aquinas graduate, is a Dominican Friar of the Province of St. Albert the Great (Central) and currently serves as Regent of Studies for his province. His academic areas of interest are in systematic theology, patristic theology and the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Fall 2024 Welcomes 24 New Students



On Monday, August 19, Aquinas Institute held New Student Orientation for the incoming 2024-2025 class. Many of the 13 new friars and 11 new residential students were on campus, along with some friendly familiar faces eager to help them become acquainted with all things Aquinas.

This year's class is nearly double the size of our previous 2023-2024 incoming class contributing to a vibrant and dynamic environment this year. The ability of lay students and friars to study side-by-side is a hallmark of an Aquinas education. The exchange of thoughts from such a diverse group of students encourages a comprehensive and richer understanding of knowledge that will better equip them in their future ministries.



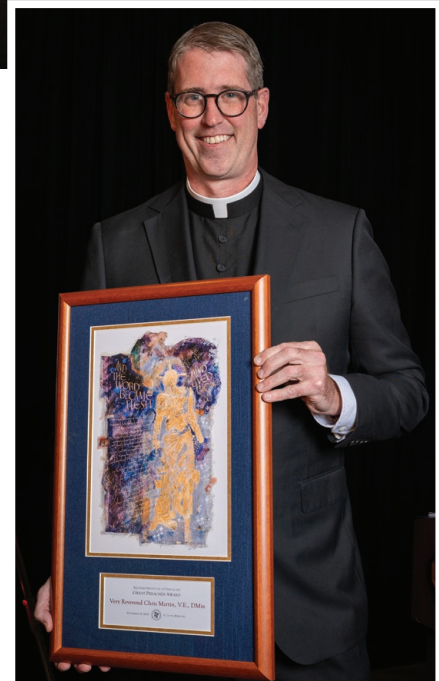
30th Annual Great Preacher Award Sets Records



Over 500 guests joined us to mark the 30th Annual Great Preacher Award, held Thursday, November 14, at the Hilton St. Louis Frontenac.

Old friends and new turned out to celebrate honorees The Very Reverend Chris Martin, VE, DMin, and the St. Margaret of Scotland Parish's Music Ministry.

The 2024 GPA set a fundraising record, an attendance record, and was the first time Aquinas has bestowed the honor on a music ministry program. Aquinas President Fr. Mark Wedig, OP, explains the reasoning behind the choice of the SMOS Music Ministry program: "Especially embodied in the liturgical reforms of Vatican II, the ministry of music is understood as a unique expression of the Word proclaimed in the Church's assembly. God's Word made flesh is encountered distinctively through ritual song. Presiders, preachers, and parish musicians work in concert together as the assembly together giving praise to God."





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41st Annual Aquinas Lecture - January, 2025



Fr. Henry Donneaud, OP, the Regent of Studies for the Dominican Province of Toulouse and Professor of Theology at L'Institut Catholique de Toulouse, was the presenter of the 41st Annual Aquinas Lecture on Thursday, January 30.

His presentation “Revelation: Between Phenomenology and Theology/Jean-Luc Marion in Conversation with Thomas Aquinas,” was quite engaging and provoked great questions by attendees.



Fr. Mark Wedig, OP, Aquinas Institute of Theology President, explains, “This year’s Aquinas Lecture will explore how we understand divine revelation by putting the contemporary theologian, Jean-Luc Marion in conversation with Thomas Aquinas. Marion’s critique of metaphysics redefines theology as revealed theology through the phenomenology of givenness and presents the figure of Christ as the highest degree of givenness. Fr. Henry Donneaud’s lecture examined the strengths and weaknesses of Marion’s ideas concerning God’s givenness in conversation with Aquinas’ important contribution on the subject of divine revelation.”



Requiem Aeternam - Spring, 2025

The Aquinas Institute community mourned the loss of two beloved members in the spring of 2025.



Dr. Nathan Chase, Aquinas Assistant Professor of Liturgical and Sacramental Theology, passed away peacefully March 1, 2025, after a year of treatment for Leukemia.

Nathan loved to travel and cared about seeing the on-the-ground places where liturgical history had been made. He was also a dedicated and generous collaborator who developed heartfelt friendships and co-authored and -edited numerous projects.

His passion project in his last months was the production of an Open Access Exultet Scroll modeled on the medieval Exultet rolls but intended for contemporary church use for the proclamation of the Easter Vigil. This project, one of his last, shows the deep intersection of his love for liturgical history and of the church. He gifted a reproduction of one of the scrolls to Aquinas Institute and a photo of it can be viewed on page 3.

Excerpt from obituary composed by Kimberly Hope Belcher and edited by Katharine E. Harmon.

“[Nathan] was a pleasure to work with – always positive-minded, well-organized to a fault, and above all, passionate about the liturgy. His passing is a tremendous loss to the church. May he rest in peace.”

– FR. ANTHONY RUFF, OSB



Sr. Diane Kennedy, OP, a Sinsinawa Dominican Sister, passed away on March 30, 2025. Sr. Diane was Academic Dean and Vice-President of Aquinas Institute from 1990–2003.

For over 50 years, Sr. Diane was in the ministry of educating and animating communities in the Dominican Catholic intellectual tradition.

Sr. Diane was Dominican University’s inaugural vice president for Mission and Ministry and founder of the St. Catherine of Siena Center, while also serving as the Promoter of the Cause for Fr. Samuel Mazzuchelli, OP.

Excerpt adapted from obituary published by Dominican University.

“Diane had a gift of seeing the face of God in everyone and reflecting that back to us. Her love of God, community, prayer and contemplation was shared with each of us. Her commitment to good theological conversation and scholarship was such a joy to engage.”

– DR. RACHEL HART WINTER

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,
and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May the souls of all the faithful departed,
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.
Amen

Habemus Papam

As the world mourned the loss of Pope Francis, Aquinas President Fr. Mark Wedig, OP, released this statement upon return from Easter break on Tuesday, April 22:

Dear Members of the Aquinas Institute Community,

It is with profound sadness that we join the global Catholic community in mourning the passing of Pope Francis. Through his ministry as Shepherd of the Church, Pope Francis advocated for peace, human dignity, and synodal conversation that inspired us all to act in solidarity in the face of injustice, autocracy, and violence in our world.

In prayerful gratitude, we remember Pope Francis' profound legacy and influence on our lives and in our world. May we remember this great leader of our Church for his courage and witness to especially serve the least in our world.

In St. Dominic and St. Thomas Aquinas,

Fr. Mark and the Executive Leadership
Aquinas Institute of Theology



Pope Leo XIV

On May 8, 2025, any Aquinas faculty, staff, and students in the building gathered in the Commons once the white smoke came from the Sistine Chapel to get our first glimpse of the new pontiff. Aquinas Institute joins the global Church in excitedly anticipating what the papacy of Pope Leo XIV, the first pontiff from the United States, will bring.

“Allow me to extend that same blessing: God loves us, God loves you all, and evil will not prevail! All of us are in God’s hands. So, let us move forward, without fear, together, hand in hand with God and with one another other!”

– POPE LEO XIV, MAY 8, 2025

Continuing Education Unveils New Offerings

Be Engaged and Transformed

Aquinas Institute's Center for Continuing Education, led by Aquinas President Fr. Mark Wedig, OP, in conjunction with Coordinator Ezra Doyle and New Frontiers in Preaching Coordinator Theresa Orozco, made a few changes in the 202-2025 year.

With a renewed purpose and enhanced zeal for satisfying the ongoing hunger of the Catholic community to understand more about the faith, The Center has released new opportunities which were encompassed in four different categories of offerings: Mini-Courses, Lunch and Learns, one-time Events, and Preaching Formation.

What is included in some of these new categories?

- ◆ Each of the mini-courses had four to six sessions on topics such as trauma healing and pastoral care to an examination of sacred art and buildings to embodying the Dominican spirit today.
- ◆ In contrast, the lunch and learn sessions were single events dedicated to the practices and spirituality of various liturgical seasons. The four lunch and learns will focused on the seasons of Lent, Holy Week, Easter, and Pentecost.
- ◆ The Aquinas Lecture was offered as a stand alone event. *(See page 8 for more information about the 41st Annual Aquinas Lecture.)*
- ◆ Preaching Formation encompasses the New Frontiers in Preaching Academy, which trains pastoral leaders and deacons to be master preachers to the traditionally underserved Black and Hispanic Catholic communities, as well as the Diaconal Formation program, which provides a variety of formats for diaconal formation.

Aquinas Institute of Theology

THE CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

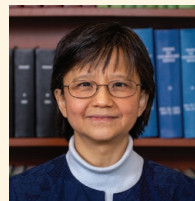


MINI-COURSES OFFERED BY THE CENTER FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION

Through Brokenness:

Trauma Healing and Pastoral Care

Dr. Hsin-Hsin Huang, Instructor



This course integrated theology, spirituality, and psychology to address important aspects of trauma healing and pastoral care. It was especially suited for pastoral leaders, chaplains, and professionals in the psychology field.

Sent Out to Preach: Mission and Spirituality of a Lay Dominican

Fr. Vincent Dávila, OP, Instructor



This course explored the apostolate of Lay Dominicans and its accompanying spirituality. The class did so by placing this vocation within the broader context of the vocation of the laity in the world and the spirituality of the Dominican Order, and drawing heavily on the teaching of St. Catherine of Siena and Yves Congar.

Built of Living Stones: Edifice and Image in Christian History

Fr. Mark Wedig, OP, Instructor



This course explored six periods in Christian history that each embody distinct ways that the Church is expressed through its sacred buildings and the art which adorns them. Attention was especially given to the ways that liturgy is "housed" in each of these paradigms.

Go and Make Disciples: Aligning Parishes for Evangelization

Fr. Brent Bowen, OP, Instructor



This course explored how the church understands evangelization and postmodern conversion. Parish pastoral teams were introduced to the concepts needed to align their communities around the mission of evangelization.

Students Ordained to the Diaconate

On Saturday, February 8, 2025 three student brothers were ordained deacons: Br. Joseph Van Havermaet, OP, and Br. Dominick Jean, OP (*both of the Province of St. Albert the Great*), and Br. Andrew Martin del Valle, OP (*of the Province of St. Martin de Porres*). The Auxiliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, the Most Reverend Mark Rivotuso, (*now Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Mobile*) ordained the brothers at the Chapel in St. Dominic Priory, St. Louis, Missouri.



PICTURED LEFT TO RIGHT: Fr. Louis Morrone, OP, Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Albert the Great; Br. Joseph; Br. Dominick; Bishop Rivotuso; Br. Andrew Martin; and Fr. Roberto Merced, OP, Prior Provincial of the Province of St. Martin de Porres. PHOTO: MICHAEL PERA



Sr. Carla Mae Streeter, OP Says Farewell to St. Louis

On Monday, March 24, Aquinas administration, faculty, and staff held a small gathering to bid farewell to Professor Emerita of Systematic Theology and Spirituality Sr. Carla Mae Streeter, OP, ThD. After decades of work in St. Louis, Carla Mae, as a Dominican of the Congregation of Catherine of Siena of the Racine Dominicans, has relocated to the sisters' residence in Racine, Wisconsin at Siena House. A social justice advocate who helped found Compassionate St. Louis and an educator committed to interfaith cooperation, Streeter also received Congregation Temple Israel's Malachi Award for Interfaith Relations and Understanding.

Aquinas Receives a Gift from the Orlando Family Foundation

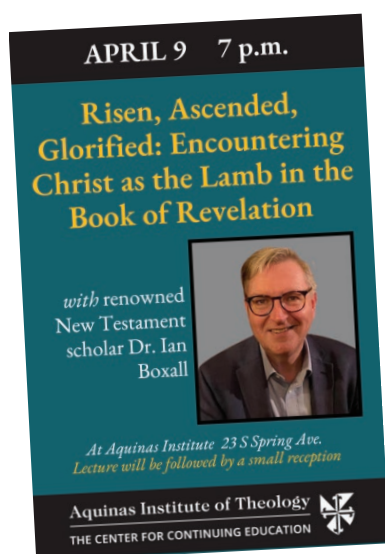
On March 27, Aquinas was one of three institutions represented at the presentation of a generous gift from the proceeds of the annual Orlando Family Foundation for Charities. The presentation was held in the home of Sam and Jan Orlando. We are grateful to our Board of Trustees chair, Dr. Dan O'Brien, who generously purchased a table at the Orlando event in January that enabled Aquinas to be eligible for the drawing.



Sam and Jan Orlando, FRONT, with LEFT TO RIGHT: Erin Hammond; Fr. Mark Wedig, OP; Donna Thro; Angie Doerr; Dr. Dan O'Brien; Br. Juan Gabriel Siegle, OP; and Mimi Ravarino.

Lecture by Dr. Ian Boxall

Dr. Ian Boxall, the Senior Tutor and Tutor in New Testament Studies at St. Stephen's House, University of Oxford, presented his lecture "Risen, Ascended, Glorified: Encountering Christ as the Lamb in the Book of Revelation" to the Aquinas Community on April 9. Dr. Boxall's presentation cleverly integrated artistic representations with the assertions in his lecture.



What the Ascension looks like from the other side was a premise that led the lecture, which led into the background of the use of the image of the Lamb, the Lamb in Revelation, and the Lamb in liturgy and art. Ending with a discussion of the Lamb as controlling metaphor as the Lamb takes the throne, Dr. Boxall employed wit and accessibility to provoke the imagination and contemplation of the subject for his audience.



A Generous Grant is Awarded

Aquinas Institute Receives \$1.25 Million Grant From the Lilly Endowment, Inc.

The new \$1.25 million grant, funded by Lilly Endowment's Nurturing Children Through Worship and Prayer Initiative, will fund Aquinas Institute's Worship and Prayer Through Children's Catechesis Project (WPCC).



This grant will help Aquinas strengthen and expand the scope of the Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies — Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (MAPS-CGS) program. Aquinas Institute's MAPS-CGS degree is the only one of its kind.

Aquinas Institute is one of 170 organizations funded through the grants, which are meant to help congregations in a broad spectrum of Christian traditions develop new or enhance existing programs as they design worship services and prayer practices that more intentionally and fully engage children.

Longtime Aquinas professor Dr. Ann Garrido, a leader in the US Association of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and the originator of the MAPS-CGS degree program at Aquinas, will oversee the implementation of the grant.

Aquinas President Fr. Mark Wedig, OP, stated, "The Endowment's grant monies will help Aquinas to extend its outreach, especially to the alumni of the MAPS-CGS program and to catechists across the CGS movement."



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2025 Commencement



In May, Aquinas had the opportunity to celebrate our newest class of 25 graduates. Fr. Eric Salobir, OP, a Dominican friar of the Province of France and an expert in technology, was Aquinas Institute's 2025 Commencement speaker and recipient of an honorary doctorate.

Fr. Salobir is a widely respected expert on technology, guiding the Dominican Order, the Holy See, and UNESCO on ethical issues related to disruptive technologies. He is the founder of OPTIC Technology, a Catholic network that promotes research, innovation, and various technological fields through a Catholic viewpoint. He is also the author of the book *Dieu et la Silicon Valley (God and Silicon Valley)*.

Fr. Salobir worked at the French Embassy in Prague before joining the Dominicans in 2000. He is the President of the Executive Committee of the Human Technology and is also a member of the Conseil National du Numerique (French Digital Council) in France.



2025 Commencement



2024-2025 DONORS

With gratitude to the following individuals
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With gratitude to our Annual
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We are grateful to the following friends of Aquinas Institute, each of whom have made a commitment of \$25,000 or more which makes it possible for Aquinas Institute to offer full-tuition merit scholarships with housing and book stipends to academically gifted lay men and women who desire to serve the Church.

Deacon Patrick and Lyndy Toole * * ♡

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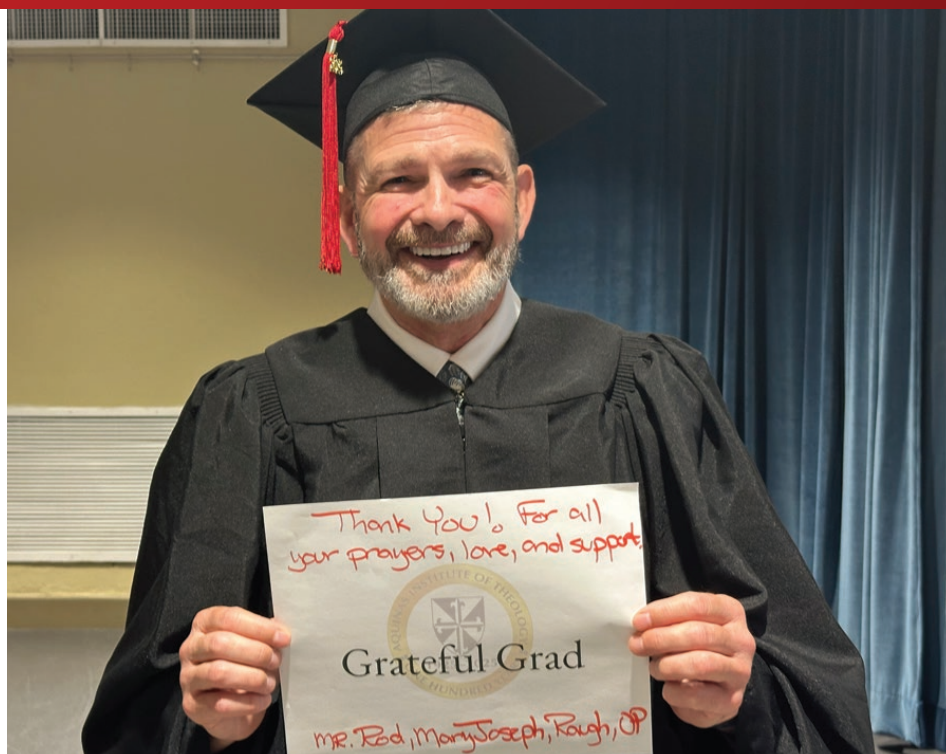
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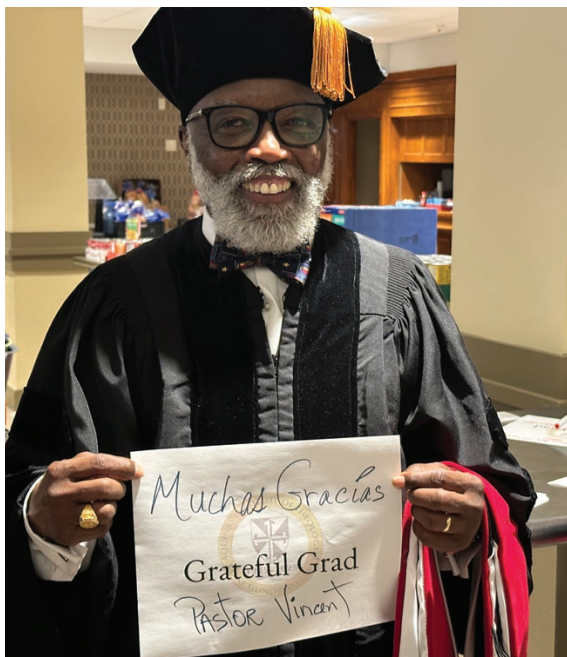
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The development staff have made a sincere effort to ensure information contained in the annual report is accurate and complete.

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There are many ways to plan a legacy gift, from a simple bequest in a will to naming a charitable beneficiary for your IRA, life insurance policy, or retirement account. Required minimum distributions (RMDs) from retirement accounts also offer a unique opportunity to give without affecting your family's inheritance.

Making a legacy gift is not just about finances or status—it's about reflecting on what you value most in life and ensuring those values endure. Legacy gifts make a lasting impact and enable Aquinas Institute of Theology to continue the Dominican mission to prepare preachers, teachers, and leaders who serve the Church and the world.

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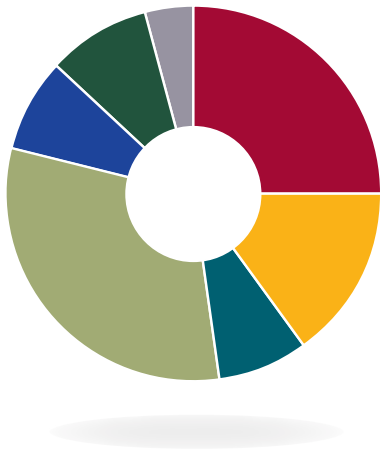
The **1925 Society** exists to honor our most dedicated donors, those who have included Aquinas Institute in their estate plans. Membership begins when you contact Aquinas to indicate your intention to leave a legacy gift to the school.

If you want to learn more about how you can make a lasting impact, or if you have already included Aquinas in your will, contact Fr. Patrick Baikauskas, OP at baikauskas@ai.edu. No matter the size of your gift, you have the power to make a difference that lasts for generations.

Fiscal Year 2024-2025 Financial Overview

(As of June 30, 2025)

Sources of Funds



Source	Amount	Percent
Tuition and Fees	\$1,098,063	25%
Gifts (unrestricted)	\$ 686,635	15%
Gifts (restricted)	\$ 367,148	8%
Grants	\$1,374,974	31%
Contributed Services/ Subsidy	\$ 369,049	8%
Investment Income	\$ 383,685	9%
Shared Facilities Revenue	\$ 156,589	4%
Total	\$4,436,143	100%

Uses of Funds



Source	Amount	Percent
Education Programs	\$1,756,028	58%
General Administrative	\$ 989,469	33%
Physical Plant and Depreciation	\$ 263,005	9%
Total	\$3,008,502	100%

The Dominican Blessing

From an anonymous thirteenth century source

May God the Father bless us,

May God the Son heal us,

May the Holy Spirit enlighten us and

give us eyes to see with, ears to hear with, and

hands to do the work of God with,

feet to walk with, and

a mouth to preach the word of salvation with,

and the angel of peace to watch over us and lead

us at last, by our Lord's gift, to the kingdom.

Amen





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