

The
ANGELICVM

NEWSLETTER OF THE PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

Pope Leo XIV,
Angelicum Alumnus



CANON LAW AND THE HOLY FATHER

Pope Leo XIV studied here at the Angelicum forty years ago for his Licentiate in Canon Law, and then did his Doctoral thesis in our faculty of Canon Law. We are very excited to see one of our students arrive to the chair of St. Peter, and proud of the formation we offer, at the service of those who minister within the Church.

Why is the study of Canon Law important?

Canon Law has a very practical aspect; it is at the service of the people, a concrete path that accompanies the Christian life. The life of Pope Leo XIV shows us that Canon Law is a study that opens many paths, such as a professor of Canon Law or a canonical judge in the diocesan tribunal, as Pope Leo XIV was during his years in Peru. But the study of Canon Law also prepares one to be a missionary, both in preaching and also helping the local Church to advance by proper leadership and governance. The Holy Father lived this aspect as the Major Superior of the Augustinians and then as a Bishop in mission territory. It is important to recognize that Canon Law is not closed in on endless juridical issues or questions of the proper interpretation of laws. Canon Law opens

many horizons, values aspects of the faith lived in the realities of daily life, and also brings a particular pastoral attentiveness.

What are some characteristics of the Angelicum formation that Pope Leo XIV likely experienced during his time studying in the faculty?

The formation we provide to our students in canon law, including future bishops and potentially the Holy Father, flows from the function of canon law within the life of the Church. In the pedagogy of our faculty, we focus on the theological roots of canon law. Another key theme is the idea of canon law as a means of justice, which is an important virtue for St. Thomas Aquinas. As Dominicans, we are attentive to law in religious life, carefully integrated into our curriculum, and to the fraternal life, which gives a certain spirit to our formation.

To return to the Holy Father, he is a member of the Order of St. Augustine, which is a mendicant order, like the Dominicans. Both founded in the 13th century, our rules are based on the rule of St. Augustine. We could say that our religious orders are “cousins” and have much in common. This may have influenced the choice to send him to study Canon Law at the Angelicum.



Fr. Loïc-Marie Le Bot, O.P.
Dean of the Faculty of Canon Law

As the 267th Bishop of Rome, Pope Leo begins his Petrine ministry with our great confidence and prayers, and we eagerly await his guidance.

On the cover: Pope Leo XIV gives his first greeting from St. Peter's loggia.

Photo credit:

©Daniel Ibáñez / EWTN News

*Congratulations from
your Roman alma mater.*

POPE LEO XIV

Elected 8 May 2025
Pontifical inauguration 18 May 2025

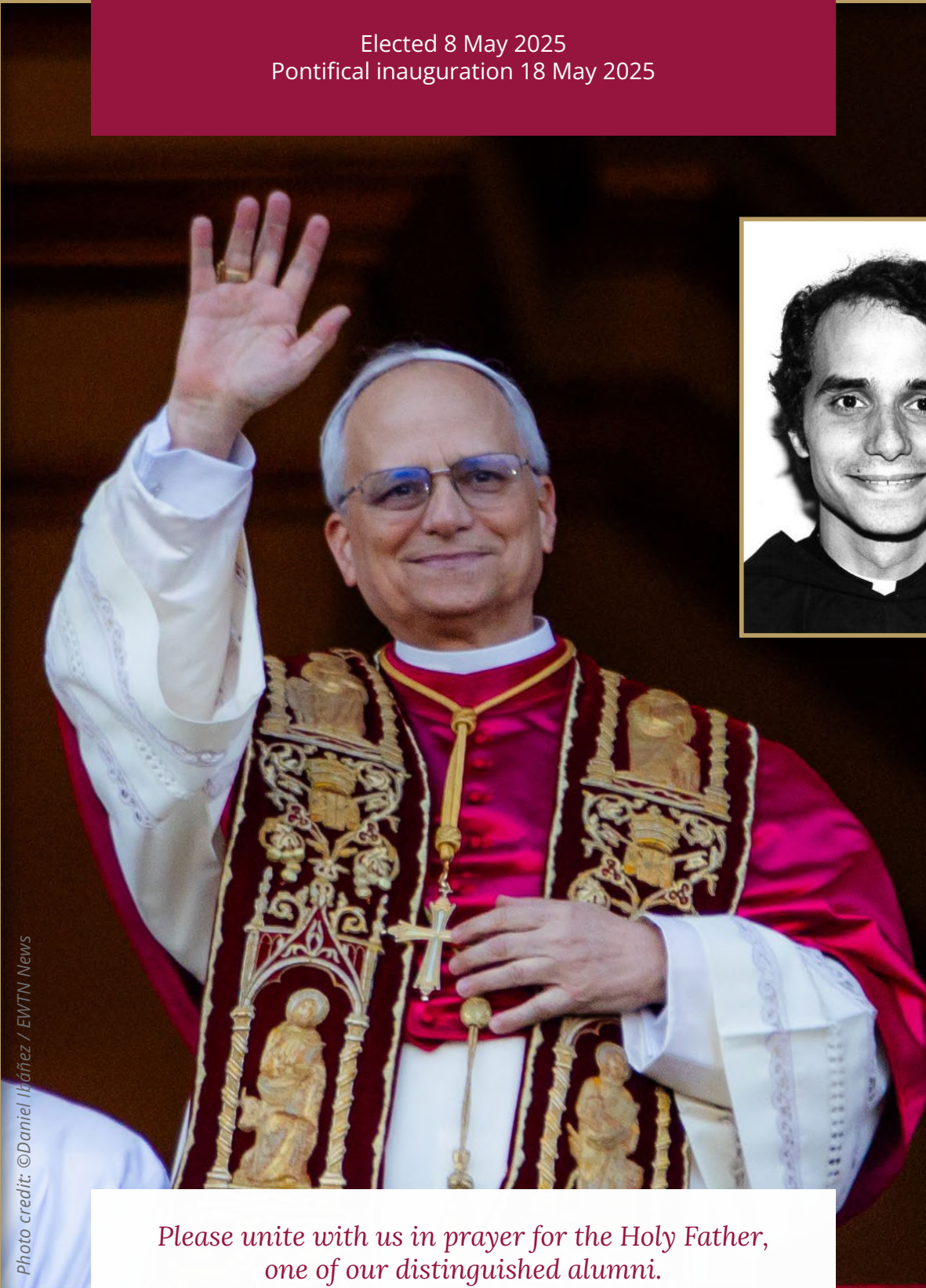


Photo credit: ©Daniel Iñáñez / EWTN News

Photo Courtesy of the Midwest Augustinian Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel

*Please unite with us in prayer for the Holy Father,
one of our distinguished alumni.*

1983 License in Canon Law (J.C.L.)
1987 Doctorate in Canon Law (J.C.D.)



A LEONINE REVIVAL



Reflections by Rector Magnificus, Fr. Thomas Joseph White, O.P., on Pope Leo XIV's choice of name, in light of his predecessors. The original text, published by *First Things*, is reproduced here with permission and edited for brevity.

In recent years, the Catholic Church has lived through three epochal pontificates, that of popes St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis. Each had its own brilliant style, immense spiritual effect on human culture, and inevitable human limitations, these latter being a lasting sign, in God's mercy, that the mere fisherman chosen by Christ is not Christ himself.

One initially striking thing about the pontificate of Leo XIV is that he clearly perceives the challenge and opportunity that lies within this

succession of recent popes. He is an unambiguous successor to Pope Francis, but he is also conscious of the contributions of the preceding popes, understanding them each, and thus also himself, within the framework of the mystery of the Church.

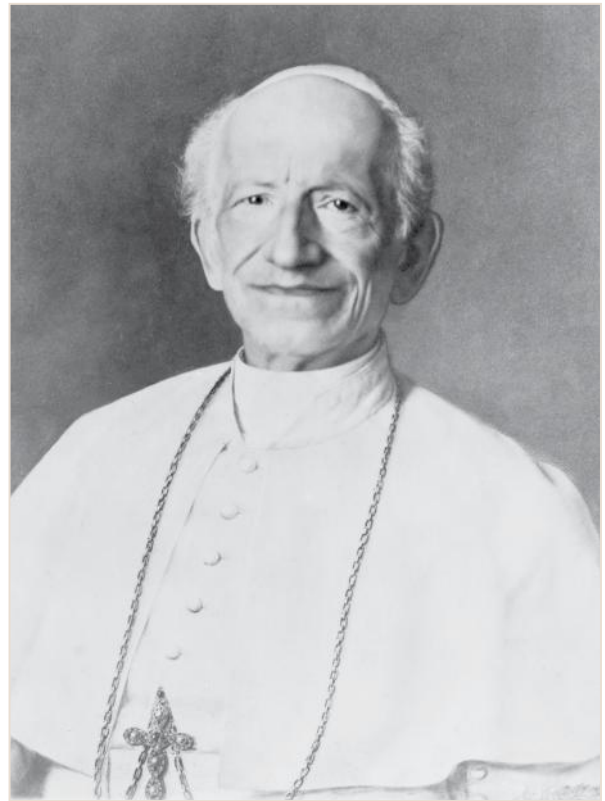
There is something to learn from each of the pontificates, in search of a more comprehensive unity: from St. John Paul II, his evangelical witness to the teaching and practice of the Catholic faith, in ways that were radical and sometimes counter-cultural in the face of a

secularized world; from Benedict, the search for a deeper liturgical life in the Church and his commitment to scholarship and theological reflection; from Francis, his message of universal mercy, his concrete and policy-oriented solidarity with the poor, his consultation of the faithful, and his outreach to those previously alienated from the Church's hierarchy.

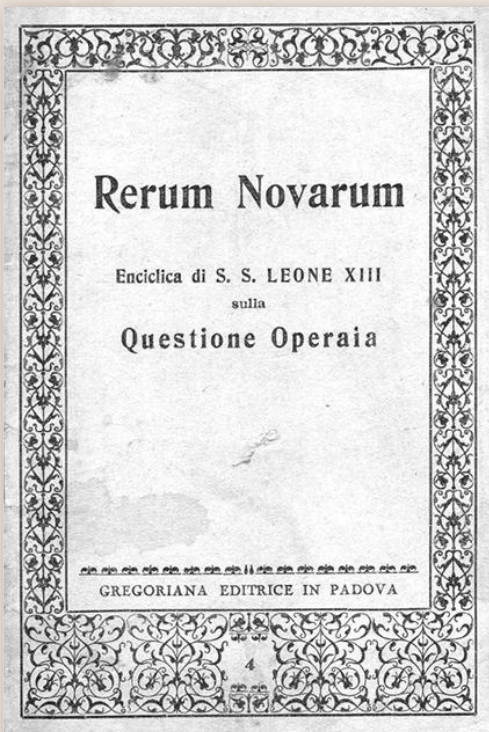
No doubt there is something new now coming into being, but we have something to learn from all of these previous great witnesses to the Catholic faith.

Pope Leo XIII published his landmark encyclical *Rerum Novarum* in 1891, only twenty-five years before the outbreak of the 1917 Communist Revolution that would mark the modern world irrevocably. In that document, he sought to indicate a middle way between two extremes. On the one side, Leo was responding to the new and revolutionary changes emerging from the creation of industrialist capitalism. On the other side, Leo was responding to the emergence of secular “socialism,” as he called it, which would seek to deny the rights of private property, abolish the role of religion in public life, and claim authority to redefine the natural human family.

In this context, it is noteworthy that Leo XIII refers us to three societies (the family, the state, and the Church) that must mutually benefit one another, each of which makes reference to the human person in his or her natural dignity. First, Leo notes in *Rerum Novarum* that the state presupposes the reality of the family, since every citizen begins life as a child born and educated by his or her parents. Thus without the family there is no state, and the role of the parents in educating their children is invaluable to the common good, which the parents contribute to by their very way of life.



Pope Leo XIII (born Vincenzo Gioacchino Raffaele Luigi Pecci)



Pope Leo XIII did a great deal to advance the education of peoples, not only in the domains of theology and of philosophy, but also in all forms of secondary and university education that would advance and empower a civilization of human flourishing.

Famously in this regard, Leo sought to restore the study of classical theological sources, especially the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas but also other scholastics, and of course, the study of St. Augustine of Hippo. It is a serious historical error to think that this aspect of

his thought is separable from his social and political thought. For Leo, the revival of scholasticism in the modern world was about the deep harmony of divine revelation and natural reason (both philosophical and scientific), but it was also about political empowerment. By giving people true knowledge of the principles of human dignity and by showing how these principles relate to other disciplines like the natural sciences, one fosters a greater personal autonomy for everyone, and a greater access to economic viability.

Leo XIII was responsible for the foundation of a wave of Catholic universities in the Americas as well as in Europe, and he was prophetic in seeing education as something deeply related to integral human development. The work of Pope Leo XIV in Peru provides an example of a person who made use of his education at Villanova University and from the Augustinian Order, as well as his education at the Angelicum, to promote the good of others, in keeping with this evangelical tradition of service.

ANGELICUM
ANNO ACCADEMICO | ACADEMIC YEAR 2024-25
27
Mag | May
MESSA DI CHIUSURA
End of the Year Mass
Messa dello Spirito Santo
Mass of the Holy Spirit
10:30 AM
Chiesa di Ss. Domenico e Sisto
Church of Sts. Dominic and Sixtus
Card. Robert Prevost
(Prefect of the Dicastery of Bishops)
Conferimento dei gradi
Conferral of Degrees
12:00 PM
Aula Magna
I sacerdoti che desiderano concelebrare sono pregati di portare l'alba e una stola bianca
Priests who wish to concelebrate are asked to bring their alb and a white stole
CONFERIMENTO DEI GRADI
CONFERRAL OF DEGREES
in AULA MAGNA
SEGUIRA' UN RINFRESCO NELL' EMICICLO | RECEPTION IN THE HEMICYCLE



Cardinal Prevost was scheduled to be at the Angelicum for the close of the academic year.

Alongside Leo XIII we should also mention Pope Leo I, aptly named Leo the Great. That historic figure was himself a disciple of St. Augustine of Hippo, who brought Augustine's theology into wider influence through his pontificate, characterized by profound theological preaching and social teaching. As is well known, Augustine, on the first page of his *Confessions*, describes the restless heart of the human being that cannot rest in anything other than God. In *City of God*, he also explains how the Church is collectively animated by the inward stirrings of divine charity that fills the hearts of the faithful. For this reason, they cannot rest on this earth or find their home merely in time, but are bound to ever move forward to God's city of heaven, toward the vision of God. By this same measure, Augustine notes, the Church in this world cannot be restricted to a life defined merely by political powers and the gods of the Roman state. It is only once one sees this that one can find true rest and peace in God, and so also true political perspective. Leo the Great understood this and brought this perspective into the papacy. He stood before Atilla the Hun in 452 to ward off the destruction of the Roman people by civil diplomacy. By the love of God, he conquered.

May Leo XIV, Augustinian at heart, be empowered by God's Spirit to speak to the restless hearts of our modern era, and may he find inspiration from both these precedent Leos to meet the great powers of our age with those words of the risen Christ that are of unsurpassed political relevance, even in our own day: "Peace be with you."

Read the full article at the link or QR code below.

<https://firstthings.com/a-leonine-revival/>



Fr. Prevost, in his Augustinian habit, with Angelicum professors and fellow doctoral student of Canon Law Mons. Andres Carrasco (Nunzio to Ecuador) in the Angelicum cloister gardens.

Watch an interview with Fr. Thomas Joseph on Pope Leo XIV and Catholic social teaching.

<https://bit.ly/aleoninerevival>



FROM THE ANGELICUM, ANOTHER POPE

On Thursday, May 8th, 2025, the world rejoiced to see white smoke emerging from the Vatican. Within a couple of hours, Pope Leo XIV stepped onto the loggia and addressed the crowds. Many Americans rejoiced to witness the first Holy Father from the United States. Many marvelled at the idea that a kid named Bobby from the South Side of Chicago could become Pope.

A similar reaction took place decades ago, when in the Fall of 1978 Cardinal Karol Wojtyla became Pope John Paul II. The Polish people, who had held tightly onto their Catholic faith in the midst of oppression from Communist rule, rejoiced that one of their own had risen to the See of Peter.

What do these two popes have in common, aside from being the first pope elected from their respective countries? For starters, both studied and received their doctorates at the Angelicum!

Pope John Paul II studied Theology and wrote his doctoral thesis on St. John of the Cross under the renowned Thomist Fr. Réginald Garrigou-Lagrange. Pope Leo XIV studied Canon Law and wrote his doctoral thesis on obedience and authority in his own Augustinian Order. During the '80's, the Angelicum's Canon Law faculty had over 100 students (43 of them from the United States), and was staffed by Spanish Dominicans; they had a deeply Thomistic orientation and were some of the best Canon Law scholars of their time.

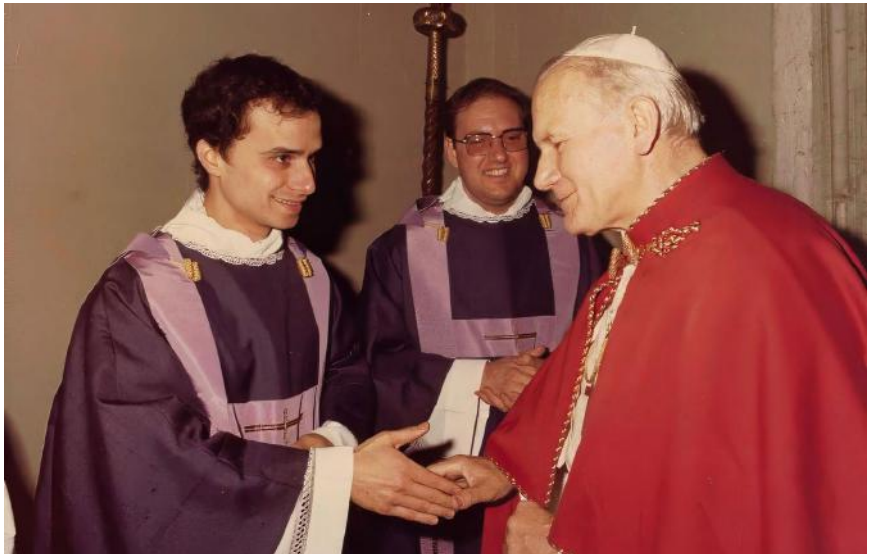


Photo Courtesy of the Midwest Augustinian Province of Our Mother of Good Counsel

We can therefore also say that both popes received a substantial amount of formation from the Dominicans and from a Thomistic approach to theology and ecclesial governance. The continuing relevance of St. Thomas Aquinas, nearly 800 years after he made his great theological contributions to the Church, has to do with his openness to the truth, and his expansive and comprehensive vision. Whether in theology, philosophy, or canon law, a Thomistic approach combines attention to precision and detail with a firm grasp of the big picture, and how everything fits together.

This vision contributed to Pope John Paul II's ability to lead the global Church as a whole, while also being deeply attentive to more detailed and specialized challenges, such as the application of moral principles to complex and difficult frontiers in

bioethics. Through this ability, Pope John Paul II surprised the world, emerging as a giant on the global stage, both as a spiritual leader and as a decisive force in geopolitics at the turn of the new millennium.

Shortly before becoming pope, Cardinal Robert Prevost was set to celebrate the closing Mass of the academic year at the Angelicum. Although his calendar had to change due to his new responsibilities, his initial acceptance of the invitation speaks of his esteem for his alma mater.

While it is too early to tell what kind of role Pope Leo XIV will play in the Church and in the world, we can confidently say that he is grateful for the Thomistic formation he received at the Angelicum, a formation which will no doubt be a contributing factor to the many strengths his papacy will bring to the Church.



A WORD FROM OUR STUDENTS

Sr. Mary Livia Aseru
Sisters of Notre Dame
(Uganda)

"It is a privilege and an honor to be a part of this great Angelicum story, to study at the same place as the newly-elected Pope, and also where St. John Paul II studied. For me it is a privilege, and I am so grateful to be able to follow in the footsteps of great people like them. Being the leader of our Church, I pray and I join the rest of the students and alumni of the Angelicum to pledge our prayerful support".

Joseph Donnelly
Thomistic Institute Study
Abroad Student (USA)

"I was simply struck by the Pope's appearance in St. Peter's Square after he was elected, immediately starting by speaking of the peace of Christ. I am excited that the Pope is from the Angelicum, but even more so given what he has shared with the faithful thus far".

Sr. Maria Tran Thi Luot
Congregation of the Missionary
Sisters of St. Peter Claver (Vietnam)

"The Holy Father's election was a surprise for all of us. I was in class when he was elected, and when we heard that there was white smoke we left everything. I went to the Vatican together with my Sisters in order to greet the new Holy Father. At seeing him, I felt much joy because I recognized his mission for the Church, which is a difficult mission. We must pray for the Holy Father, especially us religious Sisters, asking the Holy Spirit to assist him to serve the Church".

Christopher Clements
Seminarian
(Scotland)

"The fact that both the Holy Father and Pope John Paul II studied at the Angelicum is a powerful testament to our university's excellence. It's truly inspiring".

Francis Al Samhour
Seminarian
(Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem)

"It is an honor to be studying at the same university as the Holy Father... it makes us feel even more motivated to carry on in our priestly formation, especially at our university".



Sr. Maria Tran and her Sisters, above on the morning of the inaugural Mass of the Pontificate of Pope Leo XIV, joined many of our students and thousands of others for this moment of grace for the Church.

UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENTS

• **Cloister restorations** (Phase II) are uncovering and restoring beautiful frescoes of ionic columns, and painted bricks under five coats of paint. Expected completion is December 2025. The Administration has sought creative ways to ease renovation fatigue, including bringing donuts for the students and faculty.



• **Library renovation prep** has moved most books into accessible storage. Frequently used books are now in the Sala Colonna (the university's temporary library).

• To boost our Italian programs, the university has launched an advertising campaign across Italy. Next year the new **St. Antoninus Scholarship** is available for Italian section students.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS - SECOND SEMESTER HIGHLIGHTS

- Over 1,000 students from 99 countries enrolled.
- Angelicum alumnus **Dr. Timothy O'Donnell, STD '81**, Christendom College President Emeritus, taught a course in spiritual theology in the Spring semester.
- **Fr. Reginald Lynch, O.P.** (Fr. Val McInnes Chair) taught a course on the Eucharist and spoke for our annual benefactor event. A reception followed in the university garden and was well attended.
- Beginning with issue #100, the Angelicum academic journal has entered an exciting editorial collabo-

ration with Marcianum Press (Edizioni Studium Srl), promising a new phase of growth.

• **New Academic Chair:** We're excited to announce the establishment of the St. John Henry Newman Chair. Professor Andrew Meszaros is the first to hold this new academic position.

• **Award Recognition:** **Fr. Mariusz Tabaczek, O.P.** is the recipient of the prestigious Mercier Prize 2024 (UCLouvain & KU Leuven) for his work in metaphysics.

• **Fr. Michael Sherwin, O.P.** and alumnus **Fr. Ryan Connors** received awards from the Aquinas Center for

Theological Renewal.

• **New staff: Father Corwin Low, O.P.** was appointed the new director of Development and Mission Advancement at the Angelicum, effective September 1. Fr. Benedict Croell, O.P. will continue to work in the office, and expand the university's efforts through parish missions.

• **Fr. Fabrizio Cambi, O.P.** is now part of the Public Relations team of the Angelicum.

• **Postdoctoral Scholarships:** Applications for four scholarships are now open for the 2025-2026 postdoctoral program in Ecumenism.

EVENTS & CONFERENCES

• **The St. John Paul II Institute of Culture** celebrated its 5th anniversary at the Angelicum in Rome on May 18, 2025, a day that coincided with the inaugural Mass of Pope Leo XIV and the 105th birthday of Karol Wojtyła, highlighting the Angelicum's distinction of having educated both popes. To mark the occasion, Institute students performed Karol Wojtyła's theatrical drama, "Jeremiah" on May 19th. The Institute serves as the sole Roman academic center dedicated to John

Paul II's legacy, fostering interdisciplinary research inspired by his life and thought.

• **Angelicum students** and chaplains took a walking **pilgrimage to the monastery of Saint Mary of the Rosary of Monte Mario** - the same community of Dominican Nuns that used to live in the monastery of Saints Dominic and Sixtus, which is today the Angelicum.

• **The Angelicum Thomistic Institute's Project for Science and Religion** held

a conference on "Human Nature: Scientific, Philosophical, and Theological Perspectives."

• **Fr. Thomas Joseph White, O.P.** spoke in NYC's Union League Club on **The Future of Catholic Theology**. This was the first annual Angelicum Aquinas lecture with over 400 in attendance. It was co-sponsored by **First Things**.

• The Angelicum held the annual **Communitas** interfaculty conference, focused on artificial intelligence.

OBITUARIES: +Fr. Bruce Williams, O.P. (1939 - 6 October 2024) • +Fr. Alfred Wilder, O.P. (1935 - 4 February 2025)
+Fr. Brian Mullady, O.P. (1946 - 22 April 2025)

HOW TO SUPPORT THE ANGELICUM

To donate or make a wire transfer online, visit:

[ANGELICUM.IT/GIVE](https://angelicum.it/give)

Donations made by US citizens via the Angelicum's 501 (c)3 charitable arm are tax deductible:

"International Dominican Foundation"
1 Galleria Blvd., Suite 710-B
Metairie, Louisiana 70001 USA



"The Angelicum supports world class scholarship, with students from 99 countries. Help us strengthen this crucial educational mission for the Church. Please contact us for more info about giving options."

Eduardo Andino, Chief Advancement Officer



Monthly Giving

Your monthly gift builds more than a university, it builds the Church.

Recurring support gives the Angelicum the freedom to grow, to plan boldly, and to form students rooted in truth and ready to serve a world in need. Month by month, you help shape a future rich in wisdom, faith, and leadership. Contact Fr. Benedict Croell, O.P. directly.

Start your pledge TODAY at angelicum.it/give

Capital Campaign

Renewal at the Heart of the Church:
The Campaign for the Angelicum

For centuries, the Angelicum has stood as a beacon of theological and philosophical scholarship in the heart of Rome. Today, we embark on a transformative journey to renew our historic campus, ensuring it meets the needs of future generations of scholars, clergy, and laity from around the world. Our Capital Campaign aims to:

- Restore our beautiful 16th-century campus to preserve the rich architectural and spiritual heritage that defines the Angelicum.
- Improve academic excellence through endowed chairs and world-class professors.
- Provide scholarships to deserving students from all over the world.
- Build campus programs that help our students share the Gospel.

Join us in this pivotal moment. Your support will help us continue our mission of forming leaders grounded in truth and faith.

Be part of our renewal. Visit renewal.angelicum.it to learn more and contribute.



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Learn about restorations and other capital campaign projects
at renewal.angelicum.it

CONTACTS FOR THE ANGELICUM

LARGO ANGELICUM 1 | ROME, ITALY 00184 | TEL. (+39) 06.67.021 | ANGELICUM.IT

CONNECT WITH US:     

RECTOR MAGNIFICUS

Fr. Thomas Joseph White, O.P. rettore@pust.it

DIRECTOR OF ADMINISTRATION

Sr. Maria Silva, O.P. amministrazione@pust.it

SECRETARY GENERAL

Fr. Mirek Sander, O.P. segretariogenerale@pust.it

DEAN OF THEOLOGY

Fr. Dominik Jurczak, O.P. decteor@pust.it

DEAN OF PHILOSOPHY

Fr. Dominic Holtz, O.P. decanus.philosophiae@pust.it

DEAN OF CANON LAW AND VICE-RECTOR

Fr. Loïc-Marie Le Bot, O.P. decdir@pust.it

DEAN OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

Sr. Helen Alford, O.P. decfass@pust.it

DIRECTOR OF THE HIGHER INSTITUTE OF RELIGIOUS SCIENCES - MATER ECCLESIAE

Fr. Marcelo Solórzano, O.P. preside@pust.it

CHIEF ADVANCEMENT OFFICER

Eduardo Andino advancement@pust.it

DIRECTOR OF MISSION ADVANCEMENT, PUBLIC RELATIONS, CHAPLAIN

Fr. Benedict Croell, O.P. development@pust.it

+1.202.642.3597 | WhatsApp & Signal



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