

The image shows the interior of the Basilica of St. Thomas Aquinas. The central focus is the altar, which is highly ornate with a white and gold facade. Behind the altar is a large, colorful stained glass window featuring a central crucifix and various figures. The walls are covered in frescoes and murals. In the foreground, a priest in a black cassock is seated at the altar, facing a congregation of people whose backs are to the camera.

THE Pontificia Università di
San Tommaso d'Aquino
Winter 2023

ANGELICUM

University Family

Family in Heaven and on Earth



Fr. Benedict Croell, O.P.

All of us come from a family. For some of us, our families are small; for others, our families are large. I'm the youngest of five kids and I have four step brothers.

But there is a wider and larger family that everyone has and it's the family of our Faith in Jesus Christ. It knows no bounds and welcomes anyone to become a part of it. Without it we would lose our identity. Without it we would not be able to flourish in this world for lack of direction.

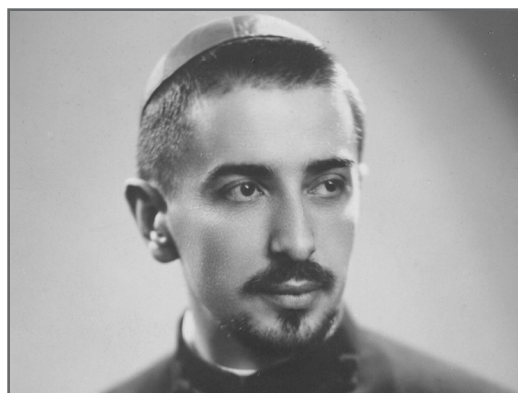
Within this precious family is also the Angelicum family, of which you and I are members. Our University family goes all the way back to St. Dominic and St. Thomas Aquinas who are some of our shining lights. This intellectual tradition born from an abundance of contemplation of the Word of God, continues to our own day and includes Friends, 1,000+ Students (including the friars and sisters in these pages), and our beloved professors and alumni, both living and deceased.

Recently a lecture with speakers from the Vatican's Dicastery for the Beatification for Saints, "Two Angelic Icons: Blesseds, Bishops and Martyrs - The Life of Faith of Blessed Titus Liviu and Blessed John Suci" summarized the lives of two Angelicum alumni. Both came from Romania and suffered martyrdom during post-world war II persecutions by the communist regime. In the late 1940's, there was a forced union of the Romanian Greek Catholic Church and the Romanian National Orthodox Church. Our alumni, refusing to renounce their Catholic faith and allegiance to the papacy, were sent to the Sighet extermination prison, where they died. Two other alumni also died as martyrs at this time in Romania (Blesseds Bishop Anton Durcovici and Mons. Vladimir Ghica). This event, which coincided with the 90th anniversary of their graduation, included an address from the Major Archbishop of the Greek Catholic Church in Romania, His Beatitude Lucian Cardinal Muresan, Cardinals from the dicastery, ambassadors, and members of the Romanian community in Rome.

Won't you help us to increase the size of our family? I invite you to make a donation for scholarships to grow the number of students who study at the Angelicum. Thank you for all you have done for us and please pray for our efforts!

Fr. Benedict

Director of Mission Advancement



Bl. John Suci



Bl. Titus Liviu Chinezu

Cover: Fr. Thomas Joseph White, OP speaking at Santa Maria Novella in Florence
Credit: Frati Domenicani di Santa Maria Novella (Firenze)

Promoting the Dignity of the Family

JULIA DEZELSKI '18

The official delegation from the US for the World Meeting of Families in Rome this past October had a member of the Angelicum family at the lead. Julia Dezelski, STD is dedicated to serving family life in her mission as Assistant Director for Marriage and Family Life Ministries for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. This includes serving as a liaison to diocesan directors of marriage and family life, as well as advancing and recommending priorities of pastoral concern. Originally from western Massachusetts, Julia lives in Hyattsville, Maryland, a suburb of Washington, DC with her husband (also part of the delegation), three daughters, and neighborhood of friends. One recent project from her work is the development of the National Pastoral Framework for Marriage and Family Life Ministry, “Called to the Joy of Love,” which is intended to assist dioceses with pastoral planning that places married couples and families at the forefront of pastoral care, accompanying every family in its struggles and joys. She also oversees the USCCB website for engaged and married couples and families, [ForYourMarriage.org](https://www.usccb.org/topics/marriage-and-family-life-ministries).



Reflecting on her time at the Angelicum, Julia shared that it was a gift to be able to study in English, after taking classes at other Pontifical faculties that teach exclusively in Italian. “The Angelicum certainly provided a solid foundation on which I can rely in my career and as a mother. I am grateful for the individual care that was demonstrated to me as a young student who was in need of support and guidance. The one-on-one attention may have been the most valuable aspect of my education at the Angelicum.”

However, her memories reach beyond the classroom walls to the relationships she shared with fellow students, the cloister orange trees and the silence of student-led Adoration. “The opportunity to pass a few moments or a full hour in prayer in the adoration chapel was something I rarely missed. I normally had strenuous days since I taught long hours at an English school alongside my studies. The adoration chapel was a refuge during that time of intense work and study.”

For Julia, the impact of her education comes back to the family. “In my ministry, I am constantly returning to the truth that Pope St. John Paul II (our illustrious alumnus!) declared: “as the family goes, so goes the nation and so goes the whole world in which we live.”(*Familiaris Consortio*, §86) I continue to observe in my work how accurate these words are. In a similar way, the experience of the Angelicum was of a family that took real steps to care for its members. I think that this is the most valuable aspect of my experience there, along with the excellent academic formation.”

Learn more about these initiatives and find resources for families at: <https://www.usccb.org/topics/marriage-and-family-life-ministries>

BISHOP, PRIESTS AND DEACON: A FAMILY OF ANGELICUM ALUMNI

This October, at the Altar of the Chair of St. Peter, 23 young men were ordained to the transitional diaconate. This yearly tradition for those studying for the priesthood at the North American College was focused on the reality of family as perhaps never before. Deacon Steven Vetter, a current student, was surrounded not only by the universal Church but also by family from his home Diocese of Bismarck, North Dakota, including fellow Angelicum alumni. His brother, Fr. Nicholas Vetter '2020 (Diocese of Bismarck), vested him with the deacon's stole and dalmatic; his uncle, Msgr. Tom Richter '1996 (Diocese of Bismarck), concelebrated the ordination Mass, and his uncle, Bishop Austin Vetter '1992, ordinary of Diocese of Helena (Montana) was the ordaining prelate.

Deacon Steven shared about the role of each of them in the life of their family. Bishop Vetter is the youngest of his brothers and sisters, and was always present for important family events. "He was always the practical one, the one to whom we looked up to, but also very accessible. He was a big part of my vocation." Msgr. Tom Richter had particular zeal for catechesis and reaching the young members of their family. "You would always find him at family gatherings surrounded by the youth and young couples. He would speak to them about the Faith, morals and family life. They were naturally attracted to him and would ask him questions." Currently a pastor in Dickinson, North Dakota, he works extensively in youth formation. His younger brother, Fr. David Richter is currently a pastor in Minot, North Dakota as well.

Fr. Nicholas entered seminary after high school. Deacon Steven shared how he was struck by the new freedom his brother found in following his vocation, a witness which challenged him to take the question of a vocation more seriously. "It was a gift to study with my brother here at the Angelicum for several years." He looks forward to sharing the priestly fraternity in their home diocese. "My parents were excellent at forming us in discipline and human virtues, especially practicing the spirit of sacrifice for something bigger than ourselves. They taught me balance in zeal for righteousness with the warm welcome of mercy - open to all."



Deacon Steven Vetter and Fr. Nicholas Vetter at Steven's Diaconate Ordination in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome.

“Time at the Angelicum has made more clear how my uncles approached ministry, and also my understanding of the priesthood,” Deacon Steven said. “We all received the same intellectual formation. The Dominican tradition is positive and attractive when speaking about the Christian life. I have a real hope and confidence that I have been given the tools to be able to communicate the Gospel to the people of God, and to teach with clarity, through the tradition of St. Thomas.”

“The Angelicum is an experience of the Church as a big family.” Even with so much diversity, there is an underlying principle: “It is the Faith; it’s Jesus...I have grown to love my classmates.” The deacon’s past classes with Fr. Thomas Michelet, O.P. on the Sacraments and Ecclesiology have allowed him to see a new and deeper perspective of the Church and the Faith. “The courses helped me to have the courage and the confidence to know what I am teaching, and what soon will be performing in the Sacraments - but also the humility to recognize that so much more of the Mystery remains to be understood. There is a certain humility required in all of my theological studies that helps me to remain open to what Jesus is doing.”

When asked to reflect on the importance of family and vocation, he said, “One faithful family can change the whole course of a diocese, and really in not that long of a time, in 20-30 years it can have a massive impact. And they don’t have to have all the gifts that maybe you would expect. They just simply need to be faithful to the Church, to Jesus, to the Sacraments. I really look forward to serving the people that way, to build up His Family, His Body, the Church! I cannot imagine any other life.”

Deacon Steven Vetter will be ordained to the priesthood of Jesus Christ on June 12, 2023. Please pray for him and all those preparing for ordination to the priesthood at the Angelicum. (editor’s note: there are a few other Vetter/Richter cousins also in formation for the priesthood.)



First Mass of Deacon Steven - Left to Right: Msgr. Thomas Richter, Fr. Nicholas Vetter, Dcn. Steven Vetter, Bishop Austin Vetter.



Vetter Family at Fr. Nicholas’ First Mass.

FRIARS STUDYING AT THE ANGELICUM 2022-2023



fr. James-Peter, O.P.
Province of St. Albert
the Great (United States)



fr. Thaddeus, O.P.
Province of St. Joseph
the Worker, Nigeria &
Ghana



fr. Celino, O.P.
Vicariate of Angola
Portuguese Province of
St. Dominic



fr. Alan, O.P.
Province of Slovakia



fr. Raymund, O.P.
Province of St. Joseph
(United States)



fr. Jayson, O.P.
Dominican Province
of the Philippines



fr. Gianmatteo, O.P.
Roman Province of St.
Catherine of Siena



fr. Tuan, O.P.
Province of Our Lady,
Queen of Martyrs in
Vietnam



fr. Rafael, O.P.
Holy Rosary Province
(Spain)



fr. Alven, O.P.
Vice Province Filius
Mariae, Pakistan



fr. Perakash, O.P.
Vice Province Filius
Mariae, Pakistan



fr. Rudolf, O.P.
Dominican Province
of the Philippines



fr. Carlos, O.P.
Province St. Vincent
Ferrer in Central
America (Costa Rica)



fr. Raj, O.P.
Province of India



fr. Giovanni, O.P.
Roman Province of St.
Catherine of Siena



fr. Reginald, O.P.
Province of Toulouse



fr. Thien, O.P.
Province of Our Lady,
Queen of Martyrs in
Vietnam



fr. Paolo, O.P.
Roman Province of St.
Catherine of Siena



fr. Salvatore, O.P.
Roman Province of St.
Catherine of Siena



fr. Jesse, O.P.
Province of Ireland
(Trinidad & Tobago)



fr. Gerardo, O.P.
Province of Colombia



fr. Charles, O.P.
Province of St. Joseph
(United States)



fr. An, O.P.
Province of Our Lady,
Queen of Martyrs in
Vietnam



fr. Tomasz, O.P.
Province of Poland



fr. Wiktor, O.P.
Vicariate of Ukraine,
Province of Poland



fr. Moses, O.P.
Vice Province of
Southern Africa
(Zambia)



fr. Joseph, O.P.
Province of Our Lady,
Queen of Martyrs in
Vietnam



fr. Bertrand, O.P.
Province of St. Charles
Lwanga In Equatorial
Africa (Cameroon)



fr. Paolo, O.P.
Province of St. Dominic,
Italy



fr. Kellan, O.P.
Province of Ireland



fr. Youfei, O.P.
Holy Rosary Province
(China)



fr. Hilario, O.P.
Holy Rosary Province
(Myanmar)



fr. Roland, O.P.
Province of St.
Augustine in West
Africa (Ivory Coast)



fr. Peter, O.P.
Province of St. Joseph
(United States)



fr. Scott, O.P.
Province of the Most
Holy Name of Jesus
(United States)



fr. Matteo Giovanni, O.P.
Roman Province of St.
Catherine of Siena



fr. Martial, O.P.
Province Saint
Augustine in West
Africa (Benin)



fr. Jude, O.P.
Holy Rosary Province
(China)



fr. Nestor, O.P.
Province of Hispania,
Spain (Cuba)



fr. Adil, O.P.
Vice Province Filius
Mariae, Pakistan



fr. Matthew, O.P.
Province of Ireland
(Trinidad & Tobago)



fr. Peter, O.P.
Holy Rosary Province
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Province of the Most
Holy Name of Jesus
(United States)



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Catherine of Siena



fr. Jean-Baptiste, O.P.
Province of Toulouse



fr. Alan, O.P.
Province of St. Joseph,
(United States)



fr. Peter, O.P.
Province of St. Joseph,
(United States)



fr. Massimiliano, O.P.
Roman Province of St.
Catherine of Siena



fr. Jean-Gabriel, O.P.
Roman Province of St.
Catherine of Siena
(Singapore)



fr. Bienvenu, O.P.
Vice Province of St. Pius V
of the Democratic
Republic of Congo



fr. Felix, O.P.
Dominican Province of
the Philippines



fr. Philip, O.P.
Holy Rosary Province
(Myanmar)



fr. Mario, O.P.
Roman Province of St.
Catherine of Siena



fr. Adhemar, O.P.
Vice Province of Bolivia



fr. Antonio, O.P.
Province of Hispania,
Spain



fr. Anthony, O.P.
Province of St. Joseph
the Worker, Nigeria &
Ghana



fr. Dung, O.P.
Province of Our Lady,
Queen of Martyrs in
Vietnam



fr. Solomon, O.P.
Province of St. Joseph the
Worker, Nigeria & Ghana



fr. Hoang Vinh, O.P.
Province of Our Lady,
Queen of Martyrs in
Vietnam



fr. Aftab, O.P.
Vice Province Filius
Mariae, Pakistan



fr. Dominic Francis, O.P.
Province of India



fr. Alan Joseph, O.P.
Province of Malta



fr. Jean-François, O.P.
Province of St.
Augustine in West
Africa (Ivory Coast)

DOMINICAN SISTERS STUDYING AT THE ANGELICUM 2022-2023



Sr. Annie, O.P.
Dominican Missionary Sisters of
the Sacred Heart of Jesus, Zambia



Sr. Federica, O.P.
Roman Congregation of St.
Dominic, Italy



Sr. Mariastella, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of St. Rose of
Lima, Italy (Peru)



Sr. Noora, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of St. Catherine
of Siena, Iraq



Sr. Alba, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of the
Immaculate Conception, Peru.



Sr. Giang, O.P.
Vietnamese Dominican Sisters
Congregation of St. Catherine of
Siena, Thanh Tam



Sr. Grace Ann, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of St.
Catherine of Siena, Nigeria



Sr. Jacintha Gracy, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of the
Presentation of Our Lady, India



Sr. Jennifer, O.P.
Religious Missionaries of St.
Dominic, Philippines



Sr. Lucy, O.P.
Religious Missionaries of St.
Dominic, Myanmar



Sr. Maria Bambina, O.P.
Religious Missionaries of Saint
Dominic, Myanmar



Sr. Rintu, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of St. Mary of the
Rosary, India



Sr. Teresa, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of the
Immaculate Conception,
Vietnam



Sr. Stephanie, O.P.
Dominican Daughters of St.
Catherine of Siena, Democratic
Republic of Congo



Sr. Marry, O.P.
Vietnamese Dominican Sisters
Congregation of St. Catherine of
Siena, Thanh Tam



Sr. Amelia, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of St.
Catherine of Siena, Italy



Sr. Anna, O.P.
Vietnamese Dominican Sisters
Congregation of St. Catherine
of Siena, Thanh Tam



Sr. Maria Estela, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of the Most Holy
Rosary, Philippines



Sr. Gemma, O.P.
Religious Missionaries of St.
Dominic, Philippines



Sr. Madhuri, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of the
Presentation of Our Lady, India



Sr. Mary Magdalene, O.P.
English Dominican Congrega-
tion of St. Catherine of Siena
(United States)



Sr. Ngoam, O.P.
Dominican Sisters of St. Rose of
Lima, Vietnam

ANGELICVM

ROMA

PONTIFICIA UNIVERSITÀ S. TOMMASO D'AQUINO

MEET FATHER JOHN EMERY, O.P.

2022-23 FR. VAL MCINNIS CHAIRHOLDER - PROVINCE OF ARGENTINA

Share about yourself

My family is from the USA, but my dad worked for a company in Argentina, where I was born and mostly raised. My mother was a catechist who taught me the faith. I have 6 sisters, most of them still in Argentina. I grew up with a bi-cultural reality; I don't feel like I am from one country, I have never had just one language. Now I speak 3 languages well (Spanish, English and French). I can understand others, like German and Italian, and can also read Latin, Greek and Portuguese.

How did you discover your vocation?

I actually discovered Aquinas before I discovered that I wanted to be a priest, when I was 15. I was struck by his way of asking questions and his balanced responses, not shying away from difficult questions. Later I met a Dominican priest at a retreat who was a Scripture scholar. I was struck by his gratuitous relationship with truth. He was a witness that truth is something worth devoting one's life to, not merely as a means to some end. With this encounter, I felt that I had found my intellectual home. When I received the priestly vocation, it was very clear to me that my vocation was going to be tied to contemplation. I discovered that to truly contemplate, the giving is very important and this led me to the vocation of preaching which is part of the Dominican charism. And I have been a priest now for 19 years.

What do you do when you are not in the classroom?

I like singing and music, and have studied Gregorian Chant. I have also done a lot of apostolates with the youth. Our province does a yearly summer camp that includes a taste of Dominican life and combines studies with hiking and other camp activities. We would also do yearly missions with university students to small country parishes. It is a beautiful opportunity to form the youth for future vocations, and also strong Christian marriages. This idea of maturing in Christ is something that becomes incarnate and incorporated into their lives through experiences like this. Recently, I have also been giving a hand with some necessary improvements at the priory.



Can you share about your Lecture on May 11?

The topic is, "The Divine Guest: Friendship and Human Flourishing". I have been discovering gradually how God Himself is present and acts in us, especially in the Son and Spirit who are sent to us. Our spiritual and moral life are more work of the Divine Guest. They are 100% our work and 100% God's work, but he has the initiative. His action with our cooperation leads to our flourishing through this intimate cooperation of friendship.

"Beloved, we are God's children now; it does not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is."

(1 John 3:2)

UNIVERSITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

There are still a few spaces available for the Alma Mater Long Weekend (May 11-14) to welcome Friends of the university from around the world and participate in the Fr. Val McInnes Lecture with Fr. John Emery, O.P. (Province of Argentina), “The Divine Guest: Friendship and Human Flourishing.”

5 March began the 22nd Year of the Angelicum’s Eucharistic Adoration, held each day of class - a beautiful practice begun by the students of the university that continues to this day.

Many Angelicum friars and students attended the historic funeral in St. Peter’s Square of Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, presided by Pope Francis.

The university was saddened to hear the news of the death of His Eminence, George Cardinal Pell, a great friend of the Angelicum. Friars and students attended his wake and funeral in St. Peter’s.

On 16 January another class of the Thomistic Institute Study Abroad at the Angelicum began with 16 students from universities across the US and Mexico. Fr. Albert Trudel, O.P. is the Director of the program connected with the US based Thomistic Institute.

From 26-27 January at the Dominican University, Ibadan (Province of Nigeria) Angelicum professors participated in the conference: “Thomas Aquinas: Medieval Thinker in the 21st Century Global Village.” The first pontifical faculty of Africa will be established there with the assistance of the Angelicum through the Vatican’s Dicastery for Culture and Education in the coming year.

On 18 January the Angelicum’s Dean of Social Sciences, Sr. Helen Alford, O.P., spoke on the contributions the Church can offer to Europeans in resolving their various problems and crises in the light of the thought of John Paul II. The talk, part of the JP2 Lectures of the St. John Paul II Institute of Culture was entitled: “The Crisis of Europe in Light of the Church’s Social Teaching”.

On 19 January the Aquinas for Asia Conference took place with Angelicum students and a delegation led by Angelicum alumnus and missionary from France, Fr. Will Conquer from Cambodia. The group included Buddhist monks and civil leaders, who were received by Pope Francis in a special audience following the conference. (For more info on Fr. Will see the Fall 2020 edition of The Angelicum)

In January the Rector delivered a talk in Italian at the church of Santa Maria Novella in Florence, “Thomism, Why Does it Matter Today?” (See the picture from the cover)

On 25 February the Angelicum, along with all of the Pontifical Educational Institutions of Rome, were received by Pope Francis in a special papal audience.

On 4 March a special closed-door, day-long seminar for grad students took place with Prof. Thomas Cattoi of the Graduate Theological Union in Berkeley and Prof. Gavid D’Costa from the University of Bristol on “Christian-Buddhist Interreligious Relations: A Catholic Theological Approach”.

There are still a few spots
available for the Alma Mater
Long Weekend

May 11-14, 2023

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Mon - Wed, April 24-26, 2023 | 9:30 am & 7 pm

THE PRESENCE OF
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St. Michael the Archangel Roman Catholic Church
490 Arnold Mill Road Woodstock GA 30188

Teams of Angelicum Dominicans preached a series of Lenten parish missions in Florida and Texas. The last is after Easter in Georgia. Fr. Curtis Cunningham M.C. '03, of the Missionaries of Charity Fathers, will join the friars. After the missions, Friends of the university organized "Angelicum Gatherings" to expand our network.

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