



On March 3, 2009, a crowd of over 100 people turned out at Aquinas for the first lecture in the new Catholic Studies Lecture Series. The speaker was Duncan Stroik, a professor of architecture at the University of Notre Dame, who discussed the "Meaning of Sacred Architecture." Stroik is editor of the Sacred Architecture Journal. His most recent sacred structure is the new chapel at Thomas Aquinas College in California. Here are some comments from attendees of the lecture:

"I found myself thinking what a great privilege it is to have this Faith of ours and how much it has enriched, even transformed, the world. If this lecture is indicative of the quality of your program at Aquinas, you have implemented a very worthwhile undertaking."---Joseph G. Scoville, U.S. District Court, W.D. Michigan

"Listening to this man speak actually opened my eyes to something I had never thought about in the 18 years I have been raised Catholic. I have always admired the beauty of the many churches I have visited . . . but never once thought about how long it would have taken to build them or the different meanings behind the way they were built."----Student

"I found it fascinating how pertinent the lecture was to my art history lectures. . . . I had no idea that a working knowledge of liturgy and theology was required to create architecture for religious institutions."---Student

"Thank you for your efforts in publicly launching the Catholic Studies program with the offering of the excellent lecture by architect Duncan Stroik. . . . The program is one of a small number of signs of recognition that human existence has higher, broader, and deeper ends than can be expressed in psychological, economic or political terms." ---Dr. Stephen C. Peterson

Catholic Studies Minor Well Under Way

Along with already extant elective courses in Baroque art, Renaissance art, and theology, in 2008-2009 students also enrolled in classes created as part of the new Catholic Studies minor: History 177: History of Christianity and English 260: Catholic Writers. Catholic Studies students currently are taking Philosophy 247: Catholic Intellectual Tradition. Spring 2010 classes will include a course on Catholic Political Thought and a seminar on Catholic Culture.

Semester-in-Rome Program

Through Catholic Studies, Aquinas is in the process of forming a partnership with the Vatican Studies Center at Thomas More College of the Liberal Arts to offer a Semester-in-Rome program. Although there may be a few slots available in spring 2010, the intention is for this program to be opened officially to a limited number of Aquinas students in fall 2010. Students would live at a 13-acre monastery in Rome. This program offers internships with Vatican Radio, H2O News, Inside the Vatican magazine, Zenit, and several Vatican congregations. These opportunities are matched with a strong liberal arts curriculum. What better place to study history, art, theology, and architecture, not to mention Latin or Italian, than in the heart of the Eternal City!

This Semester-in-Rome program is unique, not simply because of its internships but because it is the only such program in the United States that actually places interns inside the Vatican while offering guided tours of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith by curial officials.

A as C