



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

January 2020

Dear students, faculty and staff of Aquinas College,

As we celebrate the gift of Catholic school education during St. Thomas Aquinas Week, Jan. 22-28, and national Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 26-Feb. 1, I write to express my gratitude for your contributions to the blessing that is Catholic education in the Diocese of Grand Rapids. From early childhood through higher education, families in our diocese have access to a lifetime of learning built upon the message and mission of Jesus Christ, the cornerstone of our Catholic faith.

We have much to be proud of! Aquinas College offers students a distinctively Catholic education in preparation for their future careers. I congratulate the College on opening the Sister Aquinas Weber Wing of the Albertus Magnus Hall of Science earlier this academic year. This new wing, bearing the name of a woman who has been a champion of Catholic education in our community, will enhance educational opportunities in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math for generations to come. I look forward to continued collaboration with Dr. Kevin Quinn and his advisors as they build on the tradition of ensuring all students have the opportunity for Catholic education at the higher education level.

Our diocese is home to 31 Catholic elementary and secondary schools serving more than 6,340 students. This year we welcomed our largest preschool, kindergarten and first grade classes in recent years. It is encouraging to see so many families choosing Catholic education for their children.

Additionally, our Catholic school faculty from preschool through high school have undertaken a number of professional development focus areas this past year:

- An ongoing study of Theology of the Body, Pope John Paul II's teaching on the vision of the human person, which will be incorporated into the curriculum during the next academic year
- The study of the U.S. bishops' recent pastoral letter against racism, "Open Wide Our Hearts," as well as methods for culturally-responsive teaching, in order to serve a diverse student body representative of the universal Church
- The implementation of inquiry strategies in mathematics to encourage students' critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills

May we continue to take inspiration from the "Angelic Doctor," St. Thomas Aquinas, as we work together to ensure that our Catholic schools are places where students learn, serve, lead, and succeed.

Know of my prayers for you and for success in your academic endeavors!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak  
Bishop of Grand Rapids



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

Enero 2020

Estimados estudiantes, profesores y personal de Aquinas College,

Mientras celebramos el regalo de la educación escolar católica durante la Semana de Santo Tomás de Aquino, del 22 al 28 de enero, y la Semana Nacional de las Escuelas Católicas, del 26 de enero al 1 de febrero, escribo para expresar mi gratitud por sus contribuciones a la educación católica en la Diócesis de Grand Rapids el cual es una bendición para nosotros. Desde la primera infancia hasta la educación superior, las familias de nuestra diócesis tienen acceso a una vida de aprendizaje construida sobre el mensaje y la misión de Jesucristo, la piedra angular de nuestra fe católica.

¡Tenemos mucho de qué estar orgullosos! Aquinas College distintivamente ofrece a los estudiantes una educación claramente católica en preparación para sus futuras carreras. Felicito al Colegio por abrir el Ala Hermana Aquinas Weber del Salón de Ciencias Albertus Magnus a principios de este año académico. Esta nueva ala, que lleva el nombre de una mujer que ha defendido la educación católica en nuestra comunidad, mejorará las oportunidades educativas en los campos de la ciencia, la tecnología, la ingeniería y las matemáticas para las generaciones venideras. Espero continuar la colaboración con el Dr. Kevin Quinn y sus asesores, ya que se basan en la tradición de garantizar que todos los estudiantes tengan la oportunidad de recibir educación católica en el nivel de educación superior.

Nuestra diócesis alberga 31 escuelas primarias y secundarias católicas que atienden a más de 6,340 estudiantes. Este año recibimos nuestras clases más grandes de preescolar, jardín de infantes y primer grado en los últimos años. Es alentador ver a tantas familias elegir la educación católica para sus hijos.

Además, nuestra facultad de la oficina de escuelas católicas han emprendido una serie de áreas de enfoque de desarrollo profesional de preescolar hasta la escuela secundaria el año pasado:

- Un estudio en curso de Teología del Cuerpo, la enseñanza del Papa Juan Pablo II sobre la visión de la persona humana, que se incorpora al plan de estudios durante el próximo año académico
- El estudio de la reciente carta pastoral de los obispos de EE.UU. contra el racismo, "Open Wide Our Hearts", así como los métodos para una enseñanza culturalmente receptiva, con el fin de servir a un grupo estudiantil diverso representativo de la iglesia universal
- La implementación de estrategias de investigación en matemáticas para fomentar el pensamiento crítico, la creatividad y las habilidades de resolución de problemas de los estudiantes

Que podamos seguir inspirándonos en el "Doctor Angélico", Santo Tomás de Aquino, mientras trabajamos juntos para asegurar que nuestras escuelas católicas sean lugares donde los estudiantes aprendan, sirvan, lideren y tengan éxito.

¡Conozca mis oraciones por usted y por el éxito en sus esfuerzos académicos!

Sinceramente suyo en Cristo,

Reverendísimo David J. Walkowiak  
Obispo de Grand Rapids



January 2020

Kevin G. Quinn, Ph.D.  
President

Dear Partners in Catholic Education,

I have been around Catholic schools my entire life, and have witnessed myriad ways in which Catholic education transforms lives. Aquinas College is blessed to be among the schools and parishes that serve and educate more than 6,340 students across the Diocese of Grand Rapids.

I see many of our diocese's students on our campus – as neighbors, visitors and as Aquinas students. I am always struck by their confidence, leadership, knowledge and compassion. We are honored to be your Catholic college in the diocese and are grateful to partner with you in providing students with pre-k through masters level Catholic education and opportunities for lifelong learning.

At Aquinas, we work hard to continue the formation of our students through our pillars of prayer, study, service and community so that they can lead a life where they thrive in all dimensions. Through education at Aquinas, we enable students to realize God's purpose for their lives, to pursue Truth and the common good, and be empowered to use their gifts to serve their communities.

On behalf of Aquinas College, I thank the families, clergy, faculty, staff, alumni and volunteers of the Diocese of Grand Rapids for your continued investment of time, resources and prayer. Your contributions are what build such a vibrant community of Catholic education.

You are our partners in Catholic education, and I invite you to experience Aquinas College's beautiful campus, historic buildings and urban tree canopy as an extension of your schools.

Visit the brand new Sister Mary Aquinas Weber, O.P. wing of the Albertus Magnus Hall of Science, hear a music performance in Kretschmer Recital Hall, see an AQ Saints sporting event, attend a show in the Performing Arts Center, go to a public lecture in Wege Student Center, view an exhibit in the Art Gallery, and offer prayer in Our Lady Seat of Wisdom Chapel. We hope to see you soon!

Enjoy the Catholic Schools Week celebration!

Sincerely,

Kevin Quinn, Ph.D.  
President