



Λόγος

# LOGOS



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## A MEDITATION: *Between Two Candles*



I began writing this reflection on the eve of Advent. It was an unseasonably warm and sunny day for late November, a pretense of spring that belied the long winter to come. But the early darkness told the truth: winter was close at hand.

At Mass that evening we lit a single candle, the first of the season's four. Somewhat surprisingly, it brought me great joy and a quickened sense of hope. I would not have thought I needed it, the day having been so bright and pleasant, and yet I found that I did. It appealed to something in me that cannot be deceived by a day's respite. Deep down, I want something real, not merely comforting, something true and lasting. A light that does not merely mock the darkness but which dispels it: be gone! And it is.

Alas, the busyness of the end of the semester intervened and I had to put this aside. Only now in January and many weeks later am I free to take it up again.

It is undeniably winter now. The cold and darkness reign unchallenged, and the sky is shifting shades of grey. Some say there is even a chance of snow later today. Chilled on my walk across campus, I find myself thinking about spring, the return of the sun and warmth, and the appearance of the first crocus. But here again I risk deceiving myself. For whether it is winter or spring it will not last. Ecclesiastes and Lucretius are right: it is the nature of things to change, this side of heaven.

So I am consoled by the fact that we will light a second candle come Easter in April. Tall, thick and majestic, it will stand alone in the darkness. A wisp of its sturdy flame will be carried to many outstretched hands holding tapers, and into as many



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lives. “A flame divided but undimmed... a pillar of fire that glows to the honor of God...to dispel the darkness”, says the ancient hymn.

Our lives are lived between these two candles. It does not matter whether ours is a season of promise, like spring; or one of strength and exuberance, like that of summer; or perhaps one tinged with the wistfulness of fall, or thick with winter’s losses and hard won wisdom. To one and all, and in every season, they beckon.

One bids us to hope in a child, born in a stable, and in whom “heaven is wedded to earth”. The other invites us to believe in his victory, that he truly “dispels all evil, washes guilt away, restores lost innocence, brings mourners joy; ...casts out hatred, brings us peace, and humbles earthly pride.”

Here there is no deception, no comforting lie or passing semblance of what our hearts desire. That is why when he says to the darkness that shrouds our common frailty, and to the particular darkness in a given human life, be gone, it is. Really, truly and forever.

Fr. Joseph J. Guido, O.P.  
*Vice President for Mission and Ministry*

## NEWS & UPDATES

### ***Gifts and Donations***

The end of 2011 brought welcome and very good news in the form of generous benefactions to the Center for Catholic and Dominican Studies and the Fr. Phillip A. Smith, O.P. Fellowship Program. Through the generosity of Edward J. Quinn, Jr. '63, and his wife Kathleen Reilly Quinn, the Quinn Family Lectures in the Center are now close to being fully endowed. This will allow us to bring notable speakers to campus to address issues in the sciences, politics and culture from a religious perspective, as well as to sponsor the annual St. Thomas Aquinas Lecture on faith and reason. Maureen Davenport Corcoran '79 secured a large grant from the State Street Bank Foundation for the Fr. Smith Fellowship Program, and Robert T. Gorman '78 and Gus Cote, a retired faculty member, made generous gifts to the program. Combined, their generosity will allow us to award at least ten Fr. Smith Fellowships for this coming summer. We are so very grateful to them all.

### ***Revising the College's Mission Statement***

Fr. Brian J. Shanley, O.P., President of the College, has appointed a committee to revise the mission statement of the College. The committee is chaired by Fr. Joseph J. Guido, O.P., Vice President for Mission and Ministry, and includes students, faculty, administrators, alumni and a member of the Board of Trustees. It will begin meeting at the start of the spring semester. The committee's charge is not only to revise the mission statement itself, but to provide supplemental documents detailing the College's history, guiding vision and abiding values. Indeed, it is our hope that we can succinctly but clearly articulate the nature of Providence College as a Catholic, Dominican and liberal arts college and, in this way, help the various departments and offices at the College to reflect on and revise their own mission statements in light of the College's.

### ***New Campus Minister***

We are in the midst of hiring a new Campus Minister, which will allow us to offer international service programs for the first time. At present, Campus Ministry provides 1,500

students with the opportunity to serve in various domestic apostolates, ranging from soup kitchens and ESL programs to pro-life activities, and sponsors two domestic service trips: NOLA, during winter break, and Habitat for Humanity, during spring break. With the addition of a new staff member, Campus Ministry will be able to provide opportunities for overseas service inspired by the Gospel mandate to care for those in need. Indeed, in light of the College's pledge to the people of Haiti after the recent earthquake, we hope to sponsor our first international service trip to Haiti in 2013.

### ***Faith Works***

This coming summer we will inaugurate *Faith Works*, a Christian service program for new and transfer students prior to summer orientation. Incoming students will be introduced to the work of the Church in the Diocese of Providence on behalf of those in need, and will spend several days serving, praying and reflecting together. Our hope is that they will form a core group of students who will inspire their classmates to serve the needy under the aegis of Campus Ministry. *Faith Works* is the first of a three pronged effort to reach students who are not yet active in their faith, and will be complemented by *FaithSpeaks*, a program of evangelization and faith education, and *FaithAbroad*, a program of international service, as noted above.

### ***Chaplains to the National Alumni Association on the Web***

Thanks to the College's new website and the technical expertise of Fr. Kevin D. Robb, O.P., Associate Vice President, and our colleagues in Information Technology, Frs. John S. Peterson, O.P. and James F. Quigley, O.P. are now able to reach alumni/ae via the web (<http://www.providence.edu/mission-ministry/Pages/seasonal-homilies.aspx>). At present, several seasonal homilies by each are available as videos on the College website, and we hope to soon have videos of lectures and presentations available as well. We also are developing an online directory of young adult-friendly parishes for younger alumni/ae. Finally, we are preparing an electronic survey of alumni/ae to determine how we can meet the spiritual and faith-formation needs of alumni of different ages and with different needs and interests.



## REFLECTIONS

This issue's reflections were written by three students who have been involved with Campus Ministry, each of whom offers a unique perspective on what it means to be a faith-filled young adult. Saadia Ahmad '14 is a Muslim from South Brunswick, New Jersey, whose family originally hails from Pakistan. Her contribution first appeared in a slightly different form in *The Cowl*, the student newspaper at Providence College. Emily Foster '13 is a psychology major from Wrentham, Massachusetts who aspires to be lawyer. Her reflection is based on a talk she gave to the College's Board of Trustees at their fall meeting in 2010. Heidi Fraitzl '14 is from Bedford, New Hampshire. Her talk at this year's Connections retreat for freshmen and transfer students was very well received, and she graciously gave us permission to reprint it here.

### *A Spiritual Transformation*

by Saadia Ahmad '14

The first Sunday in November of 2011 marked Eid-al-Adha (Festival of Sacrifice), celebrated by Muslims to commemorate the willingness of Abraham (peace be upon him) to sacrifice his son in an act of obedience to God, before the Lord, satisfied with Abraham's faith, provided an animal to sacrifice instead. The day also serves as a festival following the conclusion of the Hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca, Saudi Arabia.

I spent the morning with the Muslim community at Brown University, with whom I traveled to Masjid (Mosque) Al-Kareem and later enjoyed brunch with at the Brown Muslim Students' Center. I concluded the day by listening to the beautiful singing of "Shepard Me, O' God" (a favorite prayer of mine) at the 10:30 PM "Last Chance" Mass at St. Dominic Chapel at Providence College. As a practicing Muslim at a Catholic college, I am constantly benefiting from these two faith traditions.

Before I came to PC, I never thought to spend a holy day with two distinct groups, from two different religions, both of whom cry out as one human race to our one God. My immersion in the Catholic faith does not occur at the sacrifice of my Islamic faith; rather, Catholicism grants me another means by which to form a closer connection with God.

I do not seek to minimize the differences between these two faiths, for I believe that God wills diversity in His plan for us. That being said, differences need not evoke conflict and tension; far from what the media might suggest, they can in fact serve as cause for unity in diversity. I strive to emphasize, through my own example, this incredible opportunity given to us all to build our own faith through our knowledge and experience of other faiths.

Among the most tranquil places I have found to pray reflectively on campus is St. Dominic Chapel. I would not substitute it for a Muslim house of worship – to do so would be to disrespect both religions. Nor would I overlook its ever-growing importance in my life as a sanctuary of peace and comfort, a place to remember God after long days and nights of classes and meetings.

It is for these reasons that I cringed upon hearing a news report about a lawyer who filed a complaint against the Catholic University of America, and objected to the presence of crucifixes in classrooms and buildings. He demanded their removal because of what he perceived to be a human rights violation towards Muslims.

This is not the first time that, where I find God's grace in the potential to celebrate differences, others see an obstacle that must be removed, literally and figuratively. I wonder if such individuals realize that in failing to respect the beliefs and practices of other religions, they insult the very God they claim to revere and worship.

I also was disappointed with the harsh language and angry comments found in a Google search about this story. I understand the frustration of both sides, but to neither would I justify such dehumanizing rhetoric. It simply is not conducive to honest, dignified communication and peaceful coexistence.

A Catholic school should never be called upon to revoke or apologize for its Catholic name; such a request is inherently un-Islamic. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) demanded utmost tolerance and respect for Jews and Christians as Ahl al-Kitab (People of the Book). A passage from the Qur'an asserts, "Be they Muslims, Jews, Christians, or Sabaeans, those who believe in God and the Last Day and who do righteous deeds will have their reward with their Lord. They have nothing to fear, they will not grieve" (2:62, 5:69). A proverb from the African philosophy or ethic called Ubuntu summarizes this well: "I am who I am because you are who you are."

God forbid that there should ever be a threat to the Catholic name and identity of PC. Trust that I would stand in the forefront of those fighting to defend and protect the school and faith; indeed, I would make it my jihad (struggle). As a student, as a friar, and as a Muslim, that is my responsibility. I put my complete and utter support behind PC, CUA, and all religiously-affiliated schools to uphold their identities in our ever-increasingly globalized, diverse world. I hope and pray for the strengthening of their religious identities – but not by ignoring the presence of religious diversity.

God does not require us to shun or condemn those on other paths in order to be a true believer in our own faith. In actuality, He expects us to protect the minority, to love thy neighbor as thyself. I ask, then, why would any religiously-affiliated school not choose to support students of other faith and non-faith backgrounds? Supporting all students in their faith, with open minds and pure hearts, leads to the deepening and flourishing of everyone's faith

and spirituality, and their relationship with God. Indeed, my own experience and transformation – a Muslim at a Catholic college who defends its Catholic identity – is proof of its potential and promise.

***From Being a Seeker to Seeking the Non-Seekers***  
**by Emily Foster '13**

I am extremely involved in Campus Ministry on campus and as Music Ministry Coordinator, I am coordinating music for all weekend masses this year. I am also involved in the Board of Programmers, a group that sponsors various on and off campus activities for students. I am a member of the Mock Trial Team on campus and I participate in Best Buddies as well.

But this wasn't always the case.

You see, for me, the Catholic and Dominican Mission of the college almost completely shaped my faith life and made it what it is today. Throughout my elementary and high school years, I would certainly not describe myself as a practicing Catholic. Yes, I went to Catholic schools and was sure to attend mass on Christmas and Easter, but those were the only times I set foot in church. I attended CCD classes during sacrament years, received reconciliation, Eucharist, and was confirmed. I was a Catholic by definition, but faith was not a part of my daily life.

When I began my freshman year at Providence College, I knew that I wanted something to change. I had begun to feel uncomfortable with the fact that I was so disconnected from my faith and felt a calling to do something to correct that. The Campus Ministry Center provided a perfect opportunity for me to explore my faith and to make it either a large or a small part of my life.



During the first week of my freshman year, I attended the Campus Ministry open house and signed up for my first college group, Liturgical Choir.

I remember attending my first choir rehearsal and being excited about getting involved in a new club and about singing, but I had no idea how much my joining that group would come to affect my overall experience at Providence College. Because of my involvement in choir, I came to be more comfortable spending time in the Campus Ministry Center and started to get to know the Campus Ministry staff. I was amazed by the fact that there were so many adults who were constantly available to talk to me about the little things, like how my day was going or the tough issues, like where I was at with my faith life. For the first time, I felt comfortable opening up to adults that I barely knew about my faith journey and was so excited that they were genuinely interested to hear what I had to say.

Once I joined choir and became comfortable in Campus Ministry, my involvement took off. I joined a few more committees and was able to take advantage of the numerous opportunities PC Campus Ministry presented me with. I went on a life changing Connections retreat during which I made some of the best friends I have ever had that I still see all the time. I was given the opportunity to participate in the March for Life in Washington, DC and saw how passionately so many people feel about a child's right to life. Finally, I traveled to Wilmington, Delaware on a Habitat for Humanity trip during my spring break last year. I had always wanted to go on a trip with Habitat for Humanity but had never been given the option to do so. The trip not only showed me how fortunate I am but also showed me that I can serve others in so many ways, and that there is no one right way to reach out to those around me.

Throughout my time at PC thus far, faith has become a

much more significant part of my life. I now attend mass every weekend and stop by the Campus Ministry Center numerous times a day. Involvement in PC Campus Ministry has certainly helped me to not only explore, but to improve upon my faith and to be more aware of it in my everyday life.

Now you just heard the story of my faith journey and the ways in which PC has helped me to grow in my faith over the short amount of time that I have been here. It is important to note, however, that there are over 4,000 undergraduate students currently attending Providence College who all have completely different stories and who are all at different places in their faith journey. The school is full of students who are strong in their faith, students who are searching for their faith, and students who are non-believers. To me, the Catholic and Dominican Mission of the college means providing each and every student with the resources with which to explore their faith and strengthen it, if the student chooses to do so. The mission is to give all students the chance to grow closer to God over their time at PC, and to make this chance as accessible to the students as possible. Providence College aims to foster an environment where people can find God's will for their lives and then move on to pursue this goal following graduation.

Currently, Providence College is doing a fantastic job in its mission. Campus Ministry alone offers over 25 different groups that students can get involved in, some that focus very highly on a religious and theological aspect and some that are focused more on service. St. Dominic Chapel offers numerous masses each weekend and allows the students to choose which type of mass setting they feel most comfortable in. The Campus Ministry Center is warm and inviting and gives students a great place to study, and has some strategically placed religious references as well! These references do not come simply in the form of handouts however; recently, Campus Ministry

sponsored an incredible talk by Bishop Thomas J. Tobin on The Church and the Modern World, which was well attended by students and faculty alike.

As I said before, I think that one of the key features of the PC mission is that it constantly invites students to consider their relationships with God. Over my time here as a student, I have certainly benefitted from that. But, it should be noted that my experience with my faith came because I sought it out and knew that I wanted to move along in my faith journey. Not everyone is seeking. So, one of the main challenges to implementing the mission in the future is inviting and reaching out to students who aren't actively seeking this deeper relationship with God. The college's goal should be to get these students to ask questions that they are not currently asking and to provide them with the resources that they need to find the answers to these questions. How can we go about doing that? Student leaders in Campus Ministry have suggested a number of solutions, including: better publicity about Campus Ministry events, building stronger relationships with other departments and offices on campus, and increasing the number of opportunities for faith sharing among students.

For me, this reaching out to others is at the heart of what it means to be Dominican. After all, from its very foundation, the Dominican order has gone out into the world looking to invite men and women to grow in their friendship with God. One of the most famous stories from St. Dominic's life tells of his nightlong, tireless conversation with an innkeeper, convincing him to change his sinful ways. His most important sermon came not from a pulpit, but from a barstool. As Providence College moves forward and attempts to integrate its mission more effectively into campus life, we must remember the importance of going out into the community and reaching those who perhaps did not even know that they were missing something in their lives. The mission of

Providence College has so deeply and fully affected me that I can only hope more students will be given the opportunity to find, as I did, as closer relationship with God over their time here.

### ***Connecting to Others and Finding Myself*** **by Heidi Fraitzl '14**

April 30th 2010. I sent in my deposit. Soon after, I received my housing application in the mail, and what seemed like thousands of papers to sign; even a pen to do so. I started to prepare myself for college life, as part of St. Michael College's class of 2014. Everything was perfect; my best friend would be going to school 15 minutes away, and my cousin and I had already agreed to be roommates for freshman year. The icing on the cake was that my boyfriend was going to St. Mike's too. I would be leaving home but some of the most important parts of home were going with me. This started the foundation of my college career.

May 4th. I absentmindedly answered my cell while studying for IB exams. It was Laura, my admissions counselor from Providence College, where I had been waitlisted. She had a spot to offer me in the class of 2014. Without even thinking twice, I begged her to overnight the admissions package and told her I would be on campus in two days. Unfortunately, my parents weren't as thrilled to take a day off of work with such short notice, but after seeing my excitement and realizing that PC had secretly been my top choice, we packed up the car and headed down to Rhode Island to visit one last time.

September 2nd. I stood on the steps of Dore Hall until the glow of my dad's taillights was no longer visible. I had been counting down until this day since my freshman year of high school, and now that it was finally here I didn't know what to do first. So I cried. I climbed the stairs



to my room and worked with my roommates to decorate our new shared space. My hopes of immediately becoming best friends with my roommates were soon crushed, once I learned that my roommates were already best friends from home and wanted nothing to do with me. By the time orientation ended, I had met most of the girls on my floor, and started meeting people I thought I could be friends with. Slowly, I began to build myself up.

The first week of classes was over, and my roommates told me that they were going to take me “out”, as a last ditch effort to bond. I had been having issues with my boyfriend 400 miles away, and they decided I needed to forget about it for a while and have some fun. After too much makeup and not enough clothing, they deemed me acceptable to go out on a Friday night and off we went. Let’s just say it was an interesting night. Being from a small town in southern New Hampshire, the culture shock smacked me square in the face.

The next morning I opened an email from my boyfriend entitled “My Thoughts”. Although “we could just be friends”, our attempt at managing a long distance relationship wasn’t working out for him. I finished the weekend curled up into a ball in the corner of my bed, more alone than ever. I started questioning my decision to no end; why on earth would I give up going to school with three of my closest friends and trade it for a school in a state that I had never been to before? Here I was, surrounded by acquaintances rather than friends, I still couldn’t find my math class without a map, and was already running low on my Easy Mac stash. Orientation had gone by in a blur, and I couldn’t remember any more than ten names of all the people I had encountered that weekend.

With promises of food, my RA convinced me to check out the Campus Ministry open house. Within fifteen minutes, I had written my email address on almost every sign-up sheet and met almost every person in the Campus

Ministry Center. It was a small step in the right direction. I continued my sign-up frenzy at the school-wide involvement fair and collected a good amount of pens and highlighters while I was at it. Soon I was bombarded by emails and get-to-know each other meetings, but I realized that I wasn’t the invincible person I thought I was. I was too nervous to go to most of the meetings and my determination to put myself out there got sidelined for a while.

By this time, my roommates had decided that PC was not the place for them, and proceeded to spend every waking moment complaining about whatever they could think of: all the way from their 8:30 classes to our Hall Director’s name. They refused to eat in Ray, and would order food each night. Our room turned into one of the most negative places to be, and I couldn’t be comfortable in my own space. The only times I was able to find peace and quiet were weekends, when my roomies went home and we had a two hour buffer between us.

The first liturgical choir rehearsal was when I realized that I started feeling comfortable and surrounded by “friends” at PC. I was doing something I loved, and surrounded by people that were doing the same. I looked around the room and saw so many friendly faces and I suddenly wanted to get to know each one, and actually make an effort to learn their names. My foundation was beginning to build upward.

Soon after, I went on my Connections II retreat. The doubts I had about PC were erased by the end of that weekend, and now I had a “family”. Surrounded by people I had never seen three days previously, I felt more at home than I had in the past month and a half. Once I got back to my dorm, I called my mom to tell her about the weekend. Later she would tell me that the phone call from that weekend was the first one that didn’t make her cry afterwards.

Connections provided me with a small group of friends, and I rapidly made more “connections” through them. It wasn’t the moment that my life at PC took a complete 180 degree turn, but it definitely started it off in the right direction. I had a group of friends to go to all over campus: in the Campus Ministry Center, choir in the Smith Center, a Civ study group in McVinney. I started to round out the confident, independent and adventurous person I always thought I had been. I was building myself up, brick by brick, activity by activity.

One of the benefits of going to college without knowing anyone was that I could be anyone I wanted. Growing up in a small town where everyone knew everyone, I felt that I was never able to truly assert myself. I couldn’t go anywhere without someone recognizing my name, or worse, my car. My parents always knew where I was even if I didn’t tell them. Someone was bound to report back to them. The “Heidi Fraitzl” in Providence, Rhode Island knew no one, and was fully prepared to take advantage of that. I started getting involved with activities that I loved, and while trying out new things. I realized that the “Heidi” my roommates had created on that first Friday night was not exactly who and what I wanted to be. The person I had spent a long time in a relationship with was not the person I was looking for and deserved. But if I never had those experiences, I would have never learned. Each and every one of my experiences became a building block off of which I grew taller, and more myself.

In my Connections small group, I learned I wasn’t the only one having difficulty adjusting to college. Nor was I the only one that thought a perfect Friday night could be spent watching a movie in sweats and a t-shirt. I was not alone. In my efforts to make friends, I had forgotten to acknowledge my interests, and focused only on what I *thought* everyone would want to hear. Reaching out to upperclassmen, I found opportunities I wouldn’t have ever come across, and learned from their experiences, getting

the inside scoop on the best things at PC and in Providence. I finally found the courage to go to meetings alone, and to my surprise I already knew half the people there. The busier I was, the happier I was.

Despite all my “soul searching” in Rhode Island, no one from New Hampshire was shocked when I joined three choirs on campus and could be found in the Dore kitchen at all hours of the night baking. I never changed myself, but I did improve and become a better person.

As the year progressed, I had struggles and I had successes. I learned more about myself and who I was that year than I had ever known, and grew into a stronger person than I had ever imagined myself to be. My oh-so-lovely roommates ended up transferring, and I took back control of my room. I looked forward to going back to Dore to unwind from the day, and slowly my depression went away. I traveled to Baltimore, Maryland and New York City with the *I Cantori* choir, and I spent endless nights discussing the meaning of life over pizza. Over winter break, one of my closest friends from home deployed to Afghanistan. Being the classic worrier that I am, I sent myself into a perpetual spin of worry and anxiety. But unlike the last time I was down in the dumps at PC, I had a solid group of friends to rally around me and help send care packages and letters.

On yet another retreat, I came away with the advice to “let go and let God”. These five words spoke to me more than anything else, and I saw how I had already followed the advice without knowing. I had waited it out, and given PC another chance to show me that it truly was the best place for me. Despite my planning to go to Vermont for school, PC really was the place for me, as long as I gave it time. Making any initial judgment during freshman orientation or even the first weeks and months wouldn’t have allowed me to explore all the possibilities and opportunities available. I was presented opportunities I never had dreamed



of, and introduced to so many people who have made a marked difference in my life.

Where else could I have played bananagrams with a Dominican Friar? Or joined a gospel choir? Worked on a group project with an NBA draft pick? Never could I have imagined being on staff with a Patriots' cheerleader? Or made friends with Lydia, our Euresst worker in Dore. Janina and Fran in Ray know me by name now, and I've mastered the art of showering in a 2 foot by 2 foot cubicle. Each and every one of these things and more add up to who I am today. I might have had a rough start to college, but it has only made me stronger and more willing to test the limits.



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**Masses and Confession on Campus**

***St. Dominic Chapel (when school is in session)***

Masses for Sunday 4:30 p.m. Saturday (Vigil)  
4:30 p.m. Sunday  
7:00 p.m. Sunday  
10:30 p.m. Sunday

Weekday Masses 11:35 a.m.  
4:30 p.m.  
9:00 p.m. (Monday - Thursday)

Confessions 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Wednesday  
8:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. Wednesday  
3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m. Saturday

***St. Thomas Aquinas Priory (when school is in session)***

Mass for Sunday 11:00 a.m. Sunday

Weekday Mass 7:25 a.m. (Monday - Friday)  
8:00 a.m. (Saturday, with  
Morning Prayer)

