



# *the assumptionist ...*

Volume 2, Issue 2

Summer 2004

## WHAT DOES ASSUMPTION COLLEGE MEAN TO YOU?

### FROM YOUR EDITOR'S DESK

For a hundred years, the Assumptionists and Assumption College have been seen as one reality. Though the two are now legally distinct entities, the College continues to be integral to the mission of the Assumptionists in the Church of the United States and the world. Many members of our extended family have come to know and love the Assumptionists at and through the College ... and many continue to be connected with us there.

Most of this issue is devoted to this very special place! I asked friends in the larger College community to tell us what Assumption College means to them. I encourage you to read their very personal thoughts and feelings.

We also recently celebrated the mission of the Assumptionists in Moscow (and the men who devoted so many years of their lives in service in that mission).

And we also want to remind you that our dream of establishing an Assumptionist presence in the Philippines and in Asia continues to take shape. In order to help share that vision (and to get some funding help with it), a group of the extended family are putting together a genuine **Barrio Fiesta** (a "block party") which will take place at Saint Anne Shrine in Sturbridge (Fiskdale), Massachusetts on July 31. Come join us for the fun and support a great cause!

Fr. Donald Espinosa, AA, Editor

**Many thanks to so many of you who responded so generously to our first Annual Retirement Fund Appeal. So far, your generosity has added over \$ 13,000 to the Fund.**

"The four years I spent at Assumption College afforded me considerable foundation for who I have become. After graduate school, I worked in ministry for 5 years then started a new career with a large financial corporation. Even without a financial background, the significant lessons taught at AC: how to learn . . . how to think...how to reason, helped me to become very successful in my new field. The Assumptionists taught me how to hear and to respond to God's invitation and to assume my responsibility to make God's kingdom a reality. Living on campus with so many great friends was truly an experience in Christian Community. After more than two decades I continue to draw on the many lessons of the Catholic Liberal Arts education that I received at Assumption."



Sarah Thomas-Tracy,



Chuck Belisle, alum

"My degree from Assumption was far more than a lot of three credit courses on a college transcript! While many of the specific details I was taught in Art, Science and Theology have long since been forgotten, my eight-year Assumption "life experience" is always remembered. This experience developed my faith, provided direction in my life, enabled me to accept life's challenges and look forward to each new day."

"I certainly didn't realize it at the time, but Assumption College was my introduction to the "real" world - a world of good friends and well-formed and incredibly dedicated teachers, a world of living deep traditions, a world of ideas, a world full of wonder, of hope and of faith."



Donald D'Amour,



Marc LePain, alum/

"Assumption is where I have come to love learning in the company of my fellow students and to see that God often writes straight with crooked lines."

"Much more than just a job, Assumption is a place that has offered me the opportunity to make a difference in young people's lives while I have experienced personal and professional growth doing God's work in a challenging and rewarding community setting."



John Fleming, administra-



Nancy Wysocki,

"We started going to church at the Chapel of the Holy Spirit because we were searching for a "living church" - a place where people gathered to share and celebrate their faith as opposed to just showing up out of obligation, habit or guilt. We adopted Assumption as our parish/church and Assumption adopted us as guests and family."

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### EDUCATION WAS A MATTER OF PRIME IMPORTANCE FOR FR. EMMANUEL D'ALZON.

Firmly rooted in the great Catholic tradition which affirms the vitality of both faith and reason, d'Alzon wanted his brothers to be educators in whatever work they undertook. He also wrote in his letters of his dream for a Catholic university. While he did not realize this dream himself, a small group of his followers, nearly 25 years after his death, established a school which grew from modest beginnings into today's Assumption College.



For the last third of the century-long history of the College, the Assumptionists have exercised the role of sponsors. With the assistance of an ever increasing number of lay collaborators, the community fulfills that role by looking for ways to promote what is best in the Augustinian and Assumptionist vision of education. Seeking to avoid the fragmentation which characterizes higher education in our time, the Assumptionists are advocates for a kind of education which, in its passionate pursuit of the truth, transforms the minds and hearts of those who give themselves to it. In this we are guided and inspired by the motto of the College, "Until Christ be formed in you," which gives expression to the conviction that the truth is ultimately to be found in the person of Christ.



As trustees, as classroom teachers, by presence in the residence halls, through the activities of the Office for Mission and Campus Ministry, the Assumptionists, together with the Religious of the Assumption, seek to serve the students, faculty and staff in the building up of God's kingdom at Assumption College. All of this activity finds its origin and goal in the liturgical life of the campus community. Our presence at Assumption is a labor of love in service to the Church and to one of the great causes of our time. As we assist our students in the discovery of their own vocations and our faculty in seeing the richness of Assumption's educational mission, we Assumptionists find ourselves simply grateful to be part of this good work.

(Fr. Dennis Gallagher, AA, Vice-President for Mission at Assumption College)

**"From the very beginning, our apostolate has taken on various forms, in particular: teaching understood in the broadest sense of the word ... "**

Assumptionist Rule of Life

### AMERICAN ASSUMPTIONISTS WHO SERVED IN MOSCOW

were celebrated by their Assumptionist brothers, family members and friends on May 8 at St. Anne's



"In March of 1950, barely two months after his arrival in the Soviet Union, the third American Assumptionist assigned to the Moscow chaplaincy, Fr. Louis-Robert Brassard, wrote to his superiors, "The situation could be very disheartening because, as yet, I have not been able to minister to my flock. Nevertheless, I feel that my mission is being accomplished even though it is not taking the shape that I would desire. Just my being here means that the Church is still alive." Since 1934, American Assumptionists in Moscow kept the flame of the Catholic faith alive, at times the only Catholic priests allowed to function publicly in the entire country; beacons of hope, sources of moral encouragement, and ministers of grace.

On the seventieth anniversary of the arrival of the first American Assumptionist in 1934, Fr. Leopold Braun, (and the hundredth of Assumptionist presence in Russia), we salute the ten Americans who served the Moscow chaplaincy so well from 1934 to 1999 (Antonio Laberge, Louis Robert Brassard, George Bissonnette, Joseph Richard, Louis Dion, Eugene Laplante, Phil Bonvouloir, Robert Fortin, and Norman Meiklejohn) and we gratefully acknowledge the struggles they faced: the loneliness of being far from one's brothers and isolated from local citizens, the daily hassles of having



Fathers Joseph Richard, Eugene Laplante, Philip Bonvouloir, Norman Meik-

one's apartment bugged, of not knowing how to pay the rent or find food, of being followed regularly, of seeing parishioners harassed, of locating a place to say Mass, or of being constantly considered, as one chaplain said, "an agent of the Vatican and the U.S. government."

For one hundred years these men (and the French Assumptionists who preceded them), at a most difficult time in Russia's history, fulfilled their founder's dream of a mission in Russia. It is with a deep sense of gratitude and pride that we honor all of these men in the person of those who are still alive and with us today."

(Fr. John Franck, AA, North American Provincial)



## MEET A COUPLE SPECIAL MEMBERS OF THE EXTENDED FAMILY ...

### MELZ

If you want to know anything about anybody, just ask Mel. She either has the lowdown on nearly every Alum, or knows someone who knows someone who can get it. Melanie Demarais, our "adopted" Alumna, has been an integral part of the Assumption College Community since arriving here to work in the Dean of Students Office back in 1979. Fresh out of St. Michael's, Melanie brought a spirit of caring and concern about every student she came into contact with in the Dean's office. She left the college for a while to work at Boston University, but returned as Director of Alumni Relations and has been in the Development Office since.



Melanie has woven her professional life at Assumption into the lives of so many people: students, faculty, alumni, Assumptionists and community leaders. Honestly, you cannot go anywhere with Melanie and not bump into someone she knows. Melanie truly understands the core values of Assumption and lives her life carrying out the mission of the College. There are countless anecdotes of how Melanie has connected one person to another and networked on behalf of so many others.

She is the spirit of Assumption !



Melanie Demarais

### SISTER ANNE,

"I believe very strongly in the mission of the Assumption religious community at Assumption College and I enjoy being part of it in a very simple way.

As an advisor to the international students, I have tried to help those students to find their place at Assumption. I have also accompanied groups of students to different "mission experiences" : in New Mexico, Philadelphia, Texas. Each adventure has been a unique blessing : the joy of seeing a motley group of twenty-somethings coming together in service, discovering themselves and one another, learning to appreciate the people they meet ; the amazing amount of giving and receiving that takes place when people open their hearts to one another...; the deepening of one's faith and spirituality.

Friendship and simple presence are also part of my being an Assumption Sister here on Campus. A simple "hello", or a conversation, a smile or a nod given or received; attending an event, sending an email; all these strengthen the connections that build a community - a part of the kingdom of God. My prayer is that each of these contacts might be a step toward " Christ being formed in us "



Finally, if I am an Assumption sister here, it is within an Assumption community of Sisters and Brothers. Our visible presence as community, at prayer in the Chapel, at official celebrations, in moment of pain and of joy, is a witness and a mutual support. And for me personally, it is a great help, to belong to a group of people who try "to walk humbly with their God" in the Assumption way - and with whom I can laugh or argue, relax or be serious, knowing that we are there for one another.



Sister Anne Francoise,

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"The early Assumptionists were extraordinary men laboring in the vineyard. ... It is such a joy to be part of the rich experience of Assumption College which has been the catalyst in the lives of thousands of young men and women. Today, as we enter our second century, we are reaping the harvest of our founding fathers. This is indeed a sacred trust that we do not take lightly."



Heidi Paluk, alum/

"As an alum of the undergraduate and graduate program at Assumption, and as a current administrator, Assumption is a significant part of my life. Although the skills it taught me are priceless, it is the community atmosphere that makes Assumption what it truly is...a caring, nurturing environment. Whether as a student or a director, I know that I am part of an organization that truly wants to see an individual strive for excellence and achieve success."



Frank Gurley, administra-

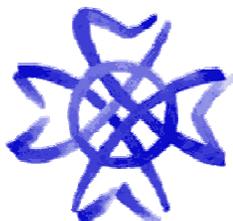
"Assumption College is a place where you can make choices about whether you will simply go with the flow or stand up for yourself and change the things that need changing. I realize that I've been shaped and molded by challenges and joys that have brought me into this new place. The best part has been coming to see myself as the person I've wanted to be yet knowing there is always more room to grow."



Claire Lajoie, stu-

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# **SATURDAY, JULY 31 IN STURBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS**

**COME SPEND THE DAY**

**BEGINS AT 10:00 AM  
CONCLUDES WITH 4:00 PM MASS  
IN OUTDOOR PAVILION**

**IN HONOR OF**



**SAN LORENZO  
RUIZ  
OF MANILA**

**AT SAINT ANNE'S SHRINE  
ON ROUTE 20  
IN FISKDALE**



**... A BRIDGE OF FRIENDSHIP  
AND UNDERSTANDING  
... THE VERY BEST OF FILIPINO  
CULTURE AND CHARACTER  
OPENNESS, GENEROSITY, TRADITION, ART  
... THE SHEER ENJOYMENT OF LIFE  
... WITH NEW FRIENDS ... AND OLD**

**THE PROCEEDS FROM THE DAY WILL HELP TO FUND  
OUR PROJECT TO ESTABLISH THE  
ASSUMPTIONIST COMMUNITY OF PRIESTS AND BROTHERS  
IN THE PHILIPPINES AND FOR ALL OF ASIA**