

Campion's School in Rome

For the second time, the College held a special School in Rome last July, providing an intensive three-week course in Latin and History which included excursions and visits to museums. More than 20 Campion students and graduates attended, as well as two external participants, one of whom was John O'Halloran, a Sydney-based solicitor.



Students at the ruins of ancient Greek temples in the city of Paestum.



Michaelmas Term
at Campion

CAMPION'S BRAG

Catholic Learning in the Liberal Arts

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John O'Halloran is a generous supporter of the College, having jointly established with Mr Michael Gray an endowed Latin Prize named in memory of his father, Mr Ted O'Halloran. Here he recalls his experience of the latest Rome School.

What memories writing this piece revives!

All of us – Campion students and graduates and 'outsiders' such as myself – were under the expert and endlessly patient tuition and guidance of Dr Susanna Rizzo and Dr Matthew Tan of Campion, and Dr David Daintree (the College's immediate past President).

Allow me to give a snapshot of one day, Thursday 3 July:

We gather at 9am for Dr Rizzo's lecture to the whole group – a rapid-fire exposition, broad and deep, of the beliefs and attitudes of the ancient Romans on the subject of death and burial, and the changes wrought by the advent of Christianity. This sets up for animated discussion in the dappled shade by the fountain (for the History stream), and for the reading, in her own words, of Saint

Perpetua's diary of events leading to her martyrdom (for the Latin stream).

After lunch, we see, feel, and even smell what we have heard in the morning session.

We walk the original Via Appia to the Catacombs of St Callixtus. On the way, we pass the Church of Quo Vadis, where St Peter, leaving Rome, turned back to imprisonment and crucifixion. We descend into the Catacombs, and in the silence file past the burial places of Popes and Saints and hundreds of the faithful.

Ascending, we continue our walk along the ancient road and, in the brilliant sunlight, gaze on remains drenched in history: the Church of Saint Sebastian atop the catacombs named after him, the tomb of the Scipio family, the expansive Villa of the Emperor Maxentius, and the circular 1st century mausoleum of Caecilia Metella.

This was just one day. The others were in their own way equally rich learning experiences; always the mutually reinforcing combination of study and first-hand observation – indeed, an exemplar of education Campion-style.

But this is only part of the experience,



John O'Halloran

and of the great value of the Rome School. There is the camaraderie and friendships formed and fortified, engaging not just with the Rome of the Ancients, but the Rome of today – pizza-makers, providores and pickpockets – meeting students of other universities, and the laughter and many good times we enjoyed together.

A challenging Course and a stimulating experience! I have attended both Rome Schools. May there be another! If so, dear Registrar, could you please treat this as my enrolment application?

Preparing to graduate - Campion students reflect



From left; Peter O'Donovan, Anna Mathai, Robert van Gend, and Veronica Nejman

As the year draws to a close, Campion's Third Year students are preparing for graduation. Four of this year's Class reflect on how the experience of a Catholic Liberal Arts degree has prepared them for life after Campion.

I came to Campion not only because I sought a more tangible understanding of the humanities grounded in the Western tradition, but also because the overwhelming smorgasbord of courses offered at other universities made it difficult to continue studying without either locking myself into a particular career path or studying a course which was, for all intents and purposes, useless.

My experience at Campion has grounded me in the Western tradition and given me an understanding of the values upon which it is based – one which will be useful to more than simply my career.

The skills of clear and logical thinking and effective communication, both verbal and written, I am sure will be useful as I proceed next year to study law.

Peter O'Donovan (Brisbane)

Ever since my work experience placement in Year 10, at a centre for children with special needs, I have known that I would love to work as an Occupational Therapist.

Why, then, did I move interstate and undertake a Bachelor of Liberal Arts - instead of accepting my other offer to do a degree in Occupational Therapy?

Simply put, I wanted to expand my horizons - to be educated in matters which would not only help me in my career but throughout life - and give me a much deeper and broader understanding of the rich history and culture that have shaped our world today.

I am sure that the knowledge, skills, faith formation and self-confidence I have gained at Campion will help me in untold ways - not only in my proposed Masters of Occupational Therapy, but for the rest of my life.

Anna Mathai (Melbourne)

The Campion curriculum covers Western civilisation from the Greeks to the modern era.

By the time of graduation, we feel we have explored our own cultural world widely - and like Socrates, we now know

how little we really know.

My plan after Campion is to do further study in philosophy, history and science, initially at Notre Dame Australia and ultimately at Oxford or Cambridge - though, of course, that will depend entirely on scholarship success with the Cavendish, Monash or Rhodes!

Robert van Gend (Toowoomba)

I had only a modest background in the Arts prior to Campion, having completed a Science degree elsewhere. But I was drawn by the high quality and integrated nature of the Campion course.

Campion has opened up a whole new exciting world to me, enriching my life in countless ways - from learning to appreciate the beauty of poetry to widening my knowledge and interest in history, philosophy, theology and languages.

I believe a liberal arts education is very beneficial in the formation and growth of the person as a whole. This is something I hope will influence my future work as a teacher.

Veronica Nejman (Rosedale, Queensland)

The College's support for Timor-Leste

For some years, Campion College has engaged in a special aid project for the people of Timor-Leste (formerly East Timor). Several Timorese women have attended the College, one of whom, Helena de Jesus, graduated in 2013.

At different times, Campion students have visited Timor-Leste on work projects. Last July, an alumna, **Siobhan Reeves** (pictured), and four Campion students spent two weeks at Klibur Domin, a Ryder-Cheshire home, located in a village outside Dili and providing care and rehabilitation for those with disabilities.

Siobhan has written a report on the most recent trip, of which this is an edited version.



The Campion student group completed, in challenging conditions, a range of small but important projects, including the following:

- constructing insect screens for external doorways, and at a home of five long-term residents, for the purpose of keeping flies out of the patients' and residents' food and bedrooms;
- repairing tears in mosquito netting on windows to prevent the spread of malaria and dengue fever;

- conducting a two-day workshop on cross-stitching with two disabled girls living at St Damien's Respite Centre; and
- providing general assistance with vehicle maintenance, to take patients to and from Dili Hospital, and as emergency transport for the local community.

Money raised at Campion College made possible these various projects, and the students also provided materials to assist the Salesian sisters in Balide, the Franciscan sisters in Tibar, and the Capuchin mission in Laleia.

The trip was a great success, and all involved hope that it will recur on a regular basis.

Siobhan's more detailed report on the Campion students' trip is available on request - by ticking the appropriate box on the donation flyer.



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Pictured: Campion's main building, with the specially commissioned statue of St Edmund Campion in front

The Champion Story

Campion College opened in 2006 as Australia's first institution of higher education offering a foundational undergraduate degree in the Liberal Arts. A *Founding Statement*, *The Champion Book*, has recently been written on the College, explaining its origins and the ideals and principles that have inspired its development.

In the first of a multi-part series, the cultural and religious background to Campion's establishment is outlined.

A copy of the *Founding Statement* is available on request from the College. Further excerpts will be published in issues of Campion's Brag.



Death of Three 'Campion friends'

Campion is mourning the loss of three Catholic writers and artists intimately associated with the early development of Campion College - Pierre Ryckmans (left) in Sydney, Stratford Caldecott (first on right) in Oxford, and Helen Hitchcock (second on right) in St Louis (USA).



Campion College is a young college with an ancient history.

It owes its origins to a new connection with the centuries-old Catholic tradition of the Liberal Arts, forged in response to the cultural and religious turmoil of the late 20th century.

The name of 'Campion' was adopted in honour of the 16th century Oxford scholar and martyr, St Edmund Campion, who was invoked by lay Catholic educational movements in Australia, beginning with the Campion Society in the 1930s and renewed in the Campion Fellowship in the 1970s.

A crucial influence was various figures in the Catholic intellectual and literary renaissance of the 20th century, in particular G.K. Chesterton and Christopher Dawson.

Chesterton's ability to demonstrate the intellectual appeal of the Christian faith inspired the desire for a Catholic response to the secularist incursion of Western society, while Dawson's grasp of the historical nature of the cultural crisis, and of the type of educational institution needed to confront it, defined the character of the Catholic response.

Of decisive importance was Dawson's *The Crisis of Western Education* (1961), in which he advocated a foundational program of studies in Christian culture incorporating the classical Liberal Arts.

This program formed an essential basis of the curriculum that later developed at Campion College.

Changes in Australia

The cultural and religious changes that began to unfold in the 1960s, in Australia and elsewhere, were a catalyst, if not a cause, of the birth of Campion.

The apparent certainties of the post-war years had given way to a broad upheaval of culture and faith. For Catholics, the turbulence of the culture - involving such disparate developments as the Vietnam war, student and worker uprisings, and a transformation in sexual mores - was reinforced by the changes in religious culture following the Second Vatican Council.

A crucial arena affected by this conjunction of changes was that of education.

Here the Catholic people felt the full force of an interruption to faith and learning - to the transmission of a religious faith to their children, and to a tradition of learning that carried the meanings and memories of that faith across the generations.

A new need in Australian life had become clear - namely, an education in Christian culture, in the varied patterns of life and thought that were the continuing expressions of the Incarnation in history. And a new institution was required to offer such an education, a cultural grounding in faith and learning.

Such an initiative, making Christian belief credible and a Christian life practicable for the great majority of ordinary people, was now fundamental to the preservation of a Catholic identity in secularist Australia.

Education and the continuity of culture

Christopher Dawson argued that the survival of any civilization was vitally dependent on its educational tradition, which created a common world of thought with common moral and intellectual values and a common inheritance of knowledge.

He believed that the educational tradition in the West had been ruptured - with calamitous effects on culture.

A vacuum had arisen in universities from the disappearance of 'the classics', the study of Graeco-Roman language and culture that formed the Western tradition.

This educational foundation was being replaced by a dual approach which intensified the collapse of a common culture of learning - in teaching, a utilitarian emphasis on vocational training, and in research as well as in teaching, an ever-growing subject specialisation.

For Catholics, Dawson thought that the disintegration of traditional culture would

weaken the basic sense of Catholic identity among ordinary people, and finally destroy the very idea and possibility of a Christian people.

Only an historical steeping in Christian culture, in the spiritual springs of cultural expression throughout history, could anchor - and reanimate - a sense of Catholic identity at the popular level.

The systematic study of Christian culture would provide a means of understanding Western civilization from *within*.

It would demonstrate the integration of natural reason and supernatural faith that underpins the Western tradition, and bring about a rediscovery of the tradition of liberal education - of the Liberal Arts as a coherent program across the major disciplines of study; in particular, history, philosophy, literature, science, language and theology.



G.K. Chesterton



Christopher Dawson - drawn by Helen Hitchcock



St Edmund Campion drawn by Helen Hitchcock

Stratford Caldecott (1953-2014) was one of the early members of Campion's International Board of Advisors, established before the College opened to enlist the advice and support of Catholic scholars across the globe.

Only a few weeks before his death, Stratford wrote to Campion College to express his regret that he had not been able to do more in the past few years because of his failing health.

'My main interest,' he said, was 'in education and the liberal arts, of which Campion is a kind of exemplar.'

An accomplished writer, Stratford produced two companion volumes in his final years. The first was *Beauty for Truth's Sake: On the Enchantment of Education* (2009), which offered a unifying perspective on the liberal arts. It revisited the original Quadrivium, and viewed science and mathematics through a poetic lens.

The second was *Beauty in the Word: Rethinking the Foundations of Education* (2012), which shed a fresh light on the foundational Trivium in the liberal arts - recasting Grammar, Dialectic and Rhetoric as Remembering, Thinking and Communicating.

Stratford worked with the Thomas More College of Liberal Arts in New Hampshire (USA), serving as editor of the journal, *Second Spring*, and directing the Centre for Faith and Culture in Oxford.

Helen Hitchcock (1939-2014), in conjunction with her husband, the historian James Hitchcock, played a crucial part in the long years of preparation for Campion College.

From the late 1970s, Helen and/or Jim visited Australia on several occasions, speaking at conferences which formed a prelude to Campion's creation.

Helen was a great 'apostle of the Faith', engaging in many areas of the Church's life, particularly the promotion of sacred liturgy (she founded and edited the *Adoremus Bulletin*) and fostering the faith of orthodox Catholic women in the face of radical secular feminism (she started the movement, Women for Faith & Family, and edited its magazine, *Voices*).

Among her other abilities, Helen was a gifted artist, drawing a portrait of St Edmund Campion in the years before a crest and motto had been developed for the College. It has most recently appeared on the inside front cover of *The Champion Book: A Founding Statement*.

Pierre Ryckmans (1935-2014) was a distinguished Catholic author and scholar of China (often known by his pen-name of *Simon Leys*).

Pierre developed an early love of China and wrote extensively on Chinese culture throughout his life. He achieved widespread fame, as well as controversy, for being among the first to highlight the horrors of Mao Zedong's 'Cultural Revolution' in the 1960s, leading to the death of more than a million and a half people.

In March 2006, Pierre gave the Occasional Address at a special dinner to mark the opening of Campion College.

His speech focused on 'An Idea of the University', which was published in his collection of essays, *The Hall of Uselessness* (2011).

Pierre reflected on the abandonment of the ideal of a 'liberal education' - enunciated by John Henry Newman in his classic 19th century work - which had taken place in universities during the late 20th century.

He confessed that he felt 'a deserter' for retiring early and not continuing the struggle, but he admired the initiative of a new liberal arts institution in Australia:

'Today my heart is with the brave people who are starting Campion College and will continue to fight the good fight - and it is to show them my support that I have come here tonight.'

Campion graduate teaches Latin

Miriam Thompson, (pictured, holding book), a 2013 graduate, studied Latin at the College as part of its foundational Liberal Arts degree. She offers this report on the value of her Campion education in helping her to teach Latin at school level and also tutor at Campion.



Last year, I was appointed to teach Latin in Years 9 and 10 at Tangara School for Girls in the Sydney suburb of Cherrybrook.

I began in the deep-end from day one, and have gained much experience since then.

My experiences, and my learning at Campion, feature regularly in my school

lessons, and have greatly informed the way I teach.

I am now half-way through a Masters of Teaching; and, although the content is exactly what I was warned about, it has given me much insight into the current education system in Australia's schools.

And it has convinced me that anyone

wishing to pursue a vocation in teaching should start at Campion!

Earlier this year, Dr. Susanna Rizzo, Campion's Polding Lecturer in Classics, asked if I would like to tutor the First and Second Year Latin courses at Campion.

I had only recently finished my degree, and felt unworthy to share the academic hallway with those who had just been my teachers. But the experience has been a wonderful privilege - and yet another chance to learn and grow.

I feel thankful to Campion for all the opportunities I have had in 2014, and for the benefits which will last a lifetime.

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