

LETTER FROM BERNARD DOBRANSKI
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The publication of the inaugural edition of the *Ave Maria Law Review* is both a gift to the legal community and a measure of our progress as a school. This first issue of the Law Review aspires to serve a need not otherwise met by legal reviews. The publication also measures the progress of the law school from its inception nearly three years ago. Members of the Law Review are not only members of the inaugural class of Ave Maria School of Law but are also the first to bring to publication the Law Review.

That the Law Review will serve a need not met by other legal reviews is a claim not hastily made. America is served by over 180 accredited law schools and many other unaccredited ones. These law schools produce over 500 law review publications of various sorts. Some are scholarly, some are perhaps trendy, and many deal with a unique area of the law. None, however, is designed to publish articles regularly and consistently that consider the law from the perspective of the Catholic intellectual tradition.

The *Ave Maria Law Review* will publish articles that call upon this tradition, investigate it, and discern its place in our legal culture. The Catholic intellectual tradition is founded upon the natural law, the source of all law. The historical emergence of this tradition is no later than Abraham, our father in faith. It finds its embodiment in Jesus Christ, and is promulgated in the cultures and civilizations that span millennia throughout the world. Philosophers and theologians have considered this tradition and have contributed to it. Lawyers and jurists have incorporated it in the law. Judges have used it as the basis for their decisions. Indeed, without this tradition, founded in the natural law, even primitive societies would not have come into being.

Although the natural law is incorporated in laws throughout history and throughout the world, the *Ave Maria Law Review* will focus on the American legal culture. This legal culture can be found in the common law tradition, the federal and state constitutions, and the courts' decisions that have recognized it. Thus, the *Ave Maria Law Review* will uniquely contribute to the ongoing discussion and development of the law in the United States.

I also wish to add that the inaugural edition of the Law Review has come into being in less than three years. Such an accomplishment, coupled with the ABA's provisional accreditation in the shortest possible time, shows how the Ave Maria School of Law is quickly maturing into a school of national rank. I wish to thank all those who contributed to this Law Review and to the students who have ensured its production. Moreover, I hope and trust that this inaugural edition, anchored by Cardinal George's dedicatory address, has begun a new debate in the life of America about natural law and its importance in our law and our culture.



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