HURRIQUEAKE
Rattles CUA, But Classes Start on Time

When McMahon Hall reopened Sept. 1 following the “Hurriquake” of 2011, staffers in the Office of Enrollment Services found on their desks a CD that included Carole King’s “I Feel the Earth Move.” Put together by Associate Vice President for Enrollment Services and University Registrar Adriana Farella, the CD celebrated a start to the school year like no other at The Catholic University of America.

McMahon had been closed since Aug. 23, when a 5.8-magnitude earthquake rattled the campus, weakening two of the hall’s chimneys and prompting the evacuation of the collegiate Gothic-style building along with several others. With Orientation and move-in for new students just two days away, the University worked quickly to relocate displaced offices, but at the same time Hurricane Irene was bearing down on the East Coast. The University allowed returning students to move into their residence halls a day early.

The combination of earthquake and hurricane in one week created “more excitement than we usually have for freshman orientation,” quipped President John Garvey at a faculty luncheon in September. Garvey praised the staff and faculty who worked extra hours to keep the University up and running.

“I am filled with admiration for the work they did, day and night, weekdays and weekends, to assess the damage, clear the buildings, find alternate [classroom] space, move people, switch communications platforms, and so on,” Garvey said.

CUA’s emergency response team kicked in with the earthquake’s initial tremor. The Department of Public Safety immediately activated the University’s emergency response system, which, Garvey noted, “worked to perfection.”

With the start of the fall semester less than a week away, Farella and her staff started relocating classes to other buildings. As they juggled schedules, classes, and available space, Farella likened the process to “a combination of a giant jigsaw puzzle and dominoes.”

The University’s administrative academic offices were relocated from McMahon to Aquinas Hall and academic departments were scattered around campus. For Provost James Brennan, who was in charge of making sure that classes started on time, the week in Aquinas was probably the busiest of his 40-year academic career.

“We were determined to start on time despite the earthquake, a hurricane, and damaged chimneys,” said Brennan. “The University community came together like a finely tuned orchestra faced with last-minute changes to a concert program and worked extremely well under challenging circumstances to pull off a successful start to the school year.”

The day that Brennan and other occupants of McMahon moved back into their offices, the University evacuated Marist Hall, which had been evaluated by a structural engineer. He concluded that the exterior walls in the southwest wing had sustained cracks during the earthquake. An email to the CUA community noted that “out of an abundance of caution,” the University planned to vacate the entire building before repairs on the southwest wing would begin. Marist is closed indefinitely and offices and classrooms have been temporarily relocated on campus as well as at the adjacent Theological College and Pope John Paul II Cultural Center.

In the days following the hurriquake, Garvey learned that Cathy Wood had taken out earthquake insurance shortly after she was appointed as CUA’s vice president for finance and treasurer in 2009. As Garvey noted, “God bless Cathy Wood.” — C.L.
Anniversary Celebration in Full Swing

All around campus red banners proclaim that The Catholic University of America is celebrating 125 years. The cornerstone of the celebration has been the Cardinal Service Commitment, a campaign by the CUA community — alumni, students, faculty, and staff — to record 125,000 hours of service. The campaign was launched in May and will end on Founders Day, April 10, 2012, the University’s official birthday.

The ceremonial kick-off of the campaign came at the start of the new school year following the Mass of the Holy Spirit, with a service fair at the annual University picnic on Sept. 1.

Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl, University chancellor and archbishop of Washington, visited the fair after giving a homily at the Mass. As he stopped to meet representatives of 20 charitable organizations from the University and Washington, D.C., community, he said, “This is not only exciting, but so fitting for our Catholic faith, which tells us we are supposed to help one another, most especially those in need. This is the perfect way to celebrate 125 years.”

A 10-foot, sculpted wooden “thermometer” now stands in the Edward J. Pryzbyla University Center to gauge progress toward reaching the 125,000-hour goal. At press time, 63,049 hours had been recorded, with the highest number coming from students, reaching the 125,000-hour goal. At press time, 63,069 hours had been recorded, with the highest number coming from students, reaching the 125,000-hour goal.

Music Ensembles Perform in Czech Republic Festival

In September, ensembles from the Benjamin J. Rome School of Music performed as part of the Mutual Inspirations Festival, a two-month-long series of events hosted by the Embassy of the Czech Republic to celebrate the 170th birthday of composer Antonín Dvořák.

Professor Murray Sidlin conducted The Catholic University of America Symphony Orchestra — composed of freshman through graduate candidates — in a standing-room-only concert featuring Dvořák’s Symphony no. 9 in E Minor, “From the New World,” at the National Museum of the American Indian.

“The concert left the audience with such a satisfying experience that I heard many proclaiming it as their best concert experience,” said James Greene, dean of graduate studies, who attended the event.

The Rome Trio presented Dvořák’s Dumky Piano Trio, op. 90 in the National Gallery of Art. The trio comprises Jody Gatwood (violin), Ivo Kalchev (piano), and Michael Mermagen (cello).

The Archdiocese of the Czech Republic presented Sidlin with the Commemorative Medal of St. Agnes of Bohemia, acknowledging his philanthropic efforts and activities in the United States and the Czech Republic.

Symposium on Happiness of Priests

The author of a new study on the clergy says that 90 percent of priests report they are happy. This finding, along with others, was shared at the Oct. 5 Symposium on the Priesthood. The event, held at the Edward J. Pryzbyla University Center, drew more than 320 priests and seminarians.

Monsignor Stephen Rossetti, author of Why Priests Are Happy: A Study of the Psychological and Spiritual Health of Priests, noted that close friendships with fellow clergy and members of the laity correlated with higher levels of happiness. He identified several factors contributing to happiness in the priesthood, such as a sense of inner peace, a positive view of celibacy, and a good relationship with God.

A leading American authority on the Catholic priesthood, Monsignor Rossetti is clinical associate professor of pastoral studies and associate dean for seminary and ministerial programs at Catholic University.

The symposium also featured presentations by Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Atlanta, Joseph M. White, associate professor of Church history at CUA; and Monsignor Robert J. Parke, rector of the Blessed John Paul II Seminary. The event was cosponsored by Catholic University’s School of Theology and Religious Studies, the Associated Sulpicians of the U.S., the Saint Luke Institute, and Theological College.

Labor Secretary Announces Millions in Grants

U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda L. Solis announced $159 million in grants to 36 partnerships between private and public sector entities — including one involving Catholic University, nearby Providence Hospital, and other D.C.-area institutions — during a press conference held Oct. 4 in Father O’Connell Hall.

Catholic University and its partners will receive $4,175,500 to train health care workers in the University’s health information technology programs.

The announced awards were part of the first round of the H-1B Technical Skills Training Grant Competition. The program is designed to provide education, training, and job placement assistance in the occupations and industries for which employers are using H-1B visas to hire foreign workers for specialist occupations.

The grant money, raised by fees paid through the H-1B visa program, will be dedicated to training workers to succeed in high-growth, high-tech industries, Solis said.

Under a previous $1.5 million labor department grant, Catholic University launched four academic programs in health information technology in fall 2010. The Metropolitan School of Professional Studies (MSPS) introduced a bachelor’s degree, a certificate, and a competency development program. MSPS also partnered with the School of Library and Information Science to support the development of its master’s degree in information technology with a concentration in health information technology.

The University’s partners in the grant project are the Center for Urban Progress at Howard University; the D.C. Department of Employment Services; the D.C. Workforce Investment Council; the Children’s National Medical Center; and Holy Cross, Providence, and Sibley Memorial hospitals.

Before the press conference, President John Garvey, Provost James Brennan, and MSPS Dean Sara Thompson led Solis on a tour of McGinnis Hall for a simulation of a CUA health information technology course as well as a demonstration of the patent medical records technology used at Providence Hospital.

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Freshmen Arrive to Warm Welcome

President John Garvey and his wife, Jeanne, were up early one Thursday, Aug. 25, to serve on the "Cardinal Move-in Crew" — greeting the newest freshman class at Catholic University. They joined approximately 150 CUA upperclassmen who volunteered as orientation and resident advisers to help new freshmen settle in.

Freshmen moved into single-sex residence halls this fall as part of a change to Catholic University's housing policy. Eventually, all students living on campus will be housed in single-sex residence halls.

Slightly more than 900 freshman enrolled for the new school year, exceeding the target by about 50. More than 6,600 applications were received this year; and for the first time in the university's history, the Office of Admissions created a waitlist for students. This higher demand led to the incoming class having higher SAT scores and GPAs.

"All of these standard measures are very encouraging," Garvey said in August. "They show how the University is committed to improving our reputation and competitive market position while holding our position as a leader in Catholic higher education."

American Cardinals Head to Chicago for Third Time

Plans are under way for the 23rd American Cardinals Dinner, Friday, April 27, 2012, in Chicago. Catholic University will co-host the Mass and dinner with Cardinal Francis George, O.M.I., archbishop of Chicago. The third and 11th American cardinals dinners were held in the windy City in 1992 and 2000, respectively.

Since its inauguration in 1989, the American Cardinals Dinner has raised more than $27 million for scholarships for Catholic University students. Visit http://cardinalsdinner.cua.edu for registration and other information about the Mass and dinner.

Nursing Students Study Down Under

In January 2012, seven Catholic University School of Nursing students will trade their Northeast Washington, D.C., campus for a Catholic university in the southeast corner of Australia. When they start their classes at the Melbourne campus of the Australian Catholic University (ACU), they will become the second group of CUA nursing majors ever to study abroad.

As part of the exchange program with ACU, six Australian nursing students will be enrolled at Catholic University next semester. Catholic University’s nursing school sent its first students to ACU for the spring 2011 semester. In the past, nursing majors haven’t studied overseas because the school’s curriculum has required students to take courses in a particular sequence, making it difficult for them to enroll elsewhere and still meet CUA’s requirements. But, because it was important “to build an international experience” into the program, the nursing faculty created an exchange program that provides CUA students some flexibility with their courses, said Teresa Walsh, assistant professor and director of CUA’s undergraduate nursing program.

Last year, the Catholic University students took courses and worked at a nearby hospital, Epworth Richmond. In Australia nursing majors start their clinical experience in hospitals a semester earlier than U.S. students. CUA junior Kathleen Lavoie, of Litchfield, Conn., who studied in Melbourne last spring, said her experience working in an orthopedic ward at Epworth Richmond gave her the chance “to really learn about hospital procedures and establish compassionate relationships with patients.”

First University Delegation Goes to World Youth Day

Almost two million of the world’s youth gathered on a Madrid airbase in August to celebrate the Catholic faith at World Youth Day (WYD). For the first time since Pope John Paul II initiated the triennial youth gatherings in 1985, Catholic University was represented by a delegation of 21 students. In the past, CUA students have attended WYD with groups from their home parishes and dioceses.

University President John Garvey accompanied the group, along with Rev. Peter Tymko, O.F.M. Conv., associate chaplain for graduate students; Jamila Evans, associate campus minister for women’s ministry and social justice; and her husband, Josh Evans, a doctoral theology student and teaching fellow.

From Aug. 15 to 21, there were Masses, devotions, concerts, catechesis sessions, and a “Forgiveness Festival” where 200 priests — and Pope Benedict XVI — heard private confessions in a multitude of languages.

The events culminated with an open-air Mass with the pope at Cuatro Vientos airbase. The day before, hundreds of thousands — including the Catholic University group — camped out on the grounds around the large altar platform constructed for the occasion.

In the evening, the pope led a vigil service that was punctuated by driving winds, rain, and lightning. But the volatile weather couldn’t dampen the crowd’s enthusiasm. “The spirit was infectious,” said Michael Pratt, senior philosophy major who helped organize the University’s delegation and was selected to sit in the section nearest the pope.

Afterward, throughout the night, small groups alternated praying before the Blessed Sacrament in tent “chapels” scattered throughout the crowds, while others slept on the ground. “We all laughed in the morning when we saw that President Garvey had been sleeping on the CUA banner we brought with us,” Pratt recalls.

The sacrifices of the pilgrimage were worth it, says Pratt. “To be united in that way to so many energetic Catholics from all over the world was so inspiring. It helped to put our faith in broader perspective.”

The next World Youth Day is in Rio de Janeiro in 2013.

Architecture School Celebrates 100 Years

The School of Architecture and Planning celebrates its 100th anniversary this year. To highlight the occasion, the school hosted a three-day symposium from Thursday, Oct. 6, to Saturday, Oct. 8, on sacred spaces, Transcending Architecture — Aesthetics and Ethics of the Numinous. Nearly 220 attended the lectures, some coming from as far as India, Argentina, and Denmark.

“Given the special mission of The Catholic University of America and our School of Architecture and Planning, it is very appropriate that we celebrate this milestone for our school with an important symposium on ‘sacred spaces,’” said Randall Ott, dean of the school. “This symposium and its theme highlight our nationally unique graduate concentration in cultural and sacred studies.”

As part of the symposium, the school hosted lectures and panels on sacred design, led by renowned scholars and practitioners in a variety of disciplines, from architecture and religion to philosophy and social work. Speakers came from leading universities in the United States and abroad. The keynote lecture, “The Sacred in Architecture,” was delivered by Juhani Pallasmaa, principal of Juhani Pallasmaa Architects in Helsinki and one of the world’s leading architectural theoreticians and practitioners.

“The symposium was a success at many levels,” said Julio Bermudez, director of the cultural studies and sacred space concentration. “It brought together a unique interdisciplinary mix of experts on architecture, planning, philosophy, social work, culture, and religion who focused on the luminous nature of the built environment. The topics of discussion affirm the leadership role that The Catholic University of America and its School of Architecture and Planning play in raising awareness and advancing the scholarship of the spiritual dimension of our designed environments.”
Retired Archbishop Philip M. Hannan (at left), World War II veteran, confidant to President John F. Kennedy, and the namesake for Catholic University’s Hannan Hall, passed away on Sept. 29. He was 98 years old.

Archbishop Hannan, trustee emeritus of the University, served the Church as an auxiliary bishop of Washington and as archbishop of New Orleans. In World War II, he enlisted as the chaplain of the 82nd Airborne Division. He parachuted throughout Europe, ministering to paratroopers during the Ardennes Offensive.

While auxiliary bishop of Washington, he provided spiritual counseling to the Kennedy family. He was the principal homilist for Kennedy’s state funeral.

He received his doctorate in canon law from Catholic University before being ordained in 1939. Archbishop Hannan later served as chairman of the University’s Board of Trustees and was the driving force behind the expansion of the University’s physics program. In 1987, the University honored him by naming the new physics building Hannan Hall.

Timothy J. May, trustee emeritus of the University’s Board of Trustees, passed away on Oct. 19. He was 79. He graduated from CUA with a bachelor’s degree in English in 1954. Trained as a lawyer, May became managing director of the Federal Maritime Commission, served as a consultant to the Kennedy White House, and was general counsel of the United States Post Office. At the time of his death he was a partner at the Patton Boggs, LLP, law firm in Washington, D.C.

He was a member and later chairman of the University’s Board of Regents. Subsequently, he was appointed to the Board of Trustees. With his financial support, a prominent space in the John K. Mullen of Denver Memorial Library was renovated and renamed in the memory of his uncle, Timothy C. May (1903–1969, B.S. 1929, M.A. 1930, Ph.D. 1938). The May Gallery is a venue for the staging of exhibits and the celebration of special events.

President Appoints New General Counsel

University President John Garvey has appointed Lawrence J. Morris as the University’s new general counsel. He began work in August.

Morris manages the University’s responses to litigation and other legal proceedings. He provides legal guidance on matters related to Catholic University’s operations.

Morris has more than 29 years experience as a U.S. Army and civilian attorney. Just prior to his appointment at Catholic University, Morris was the civilian chief of advocacy for U.S. Army Headquarters, where he oversaw the quality of advocacy training of 600 Army prosecutors and defense counsel.

Previously, as an active Army colonel, Morris served as chief prosecutor for the Office of Military Commissions, litigating cases of suspected terrorists detained in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. In 2007, Morris was a founding co-executive director of the multinational Law and Order Task Force in Baghdad, Iraq. Morris received a Bronze Star for his work there.

He was general counsel of the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y., and chairman of the Criminal Law Department of the U.S. Army Judge Advocate General’s School in Charlottesville, Va.

Archives Highlights Hollywood Producer’s Collection

John Farrow, a film producer, director, and writer, is the focus of a “finding aid” posted on the University Archives website. The finding aid — an online inventory of a collection — details the archives’ holdings of some of Farrow’s correspondence, notes, book drafts, newspaper clippings, photographs, manuscripts, and reviews of films he produced.

Farrow was nominated for an Academy Award for best director for his 1942 film Wake Island. In 1956, he won an Academy Award as co-writer of the screenplay for Around the World in Eighty Days. Farrow’s wife was actress Maureen O’Sullivan, who was famous for her motion picture roles, including Jane in several Tarzan movies. His daughter Mia Farrow also is a well-known actress.

Also included in the Farrow collection are several items that belonged to O’Sullivan. She donated the Farrow collection to Catholic University in 1978. Farrow died in 1963.