The journey began for the Class of 2016 on a sunny Thursday, Aug. 23, when first-year students moved into their new homes. The move-in process was the beginning of a series of Orientation events stretching into the first weeks of the semester.

The Class of 2016 totals 884 students. According to Amanda Good, associate director of undergraduate admissions, the new undergraduates stand out for their high test scores and ethnic diversity.

“This year’s freshman class comes from a highly competitive applicant pool. The University admitted 10 percent fewer students this year,” Good said. “We continue to see students applying with strong GPAs and SAT scores.”

Orientation weekend included four days full of information sessions and social activities for students to learn about opportunities in the coming year.

The annual Mass of the Holy Spirit, held in the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, marked the official opening of the 2012–2013 academic year. Several thousand faculty, staff, and students attended the liturgy, celebrated by Cardinal Donald Wuerl, archbishop of Washington and chancellor of the University. Also in attendance was Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, apostolic nuncio to the United States. Following the Mass, he was greeted by students on the CUA Mall during the seventh annual University Picnic.

In his homily, Cardinal Wuerl reflected on the Church’s upcoming Year of Faith, beginning in October: “Our faith is the lens through which we see reality. Once we envision life through that prism, we see things altogether differently.”

Taking the Cardinal’s message to heart, 284 freshmen spent the weekend of Sept. 7–9 growing in faith and strengthening friendships during the Freshman Retreat, sponsored by the Office of Campus Ministry. It was the largest freshman retreat in University history.

“The freshmen definitely got some great advice on life and school, as well as bonding time with others who are working toward the same goals,” said Reanna Sealey, one of the sophomore retreat leaders who gave a talk during the weekend. “What made it a success was the fact that they were so open to everything going on and they are an amazing set of people.”

The freshman class participated in Orientation Extended, a program inaugurated in 2009 to help students continue their adjustment through the first six weeks of college. The program, which incorporates a range of programming including health and safety seminars, opportunities for faith development, and social activities, culminated in a University-wide barbecue and Battle of the Bands competition on Oct. 13. — J.G.
CUA Celebrates Largest Solar Panel System in D.C.

On Sept. 21, the last official day of summer, Catholic University celebrated the installation of 714 solar panels in the O’Boyle parking lot with a ribbon-cutting ceremony. The addition makes CUA’s solar photovoltaic panel system the largest in the District of Columbia.

The system features more than 2,600 solar panels generating in excess of 830,000 kilowatt-hours of clean electricity per year. The solar panels were installed by Standard Solar of Rockville, Md., and are owned and operated by McLean, Va.-based Washington Gas Energy Systems as part of a 20-year power purchasing agreement with CUA, signed in 2009.

Representatives from the University, Washington Gas Energy Systems, Standard Solar, Inc., and the District of Columbia government attended the ceremony, which included a demonstration of how an electric car can be hooked up to the solar-powered charging station in the parking lot.

“Part of being Catholic is a sense of gratitude for all the gifts God has given us in creation,” said President John Garvey. “We want our students to show that gratitude for God’s creation by their respect for the natural environment. We want this to be part of what they learn here.”

Along with the O’Boyle parking lot canopy, additional solar panels were installed this summer on the roofs of the Raymond A. DuFour Athletic Center, Pangborn Hall, and the Grounds Maintenance Complex. In 2009, installations were placed on the DuFour Center and Aquinas, Gibbons, and Flathers halls. In the three years since the University began using solar power, it has nearly tripled the amount of clean energy it produces.

Grand Piano Makes Ward Hall Debut

A new concert grand piano arrived at the Benjamin T. Rome School of Music on Sept. 24 from Steinway & Sons in New York City. A dedication and blessing ceremony led by Dean Grayson Wagstaff featured performances by music students and Ivo Kaltchev, head of the music school’s piano division.

“Finally we can proudly say we have one of the best concert grands in Washington, D.C. And we have an instrument that matches the incredible talent of our students and the caliber of training we provide here at Catholic University,” said Kaltchev (pictured).

The 9-foot, 991-pound grand piano is “every pianist’s dream. This fine instrument is a great gift to everyone at the University,” he said.

Web Extra: View a photo gallery at cuamagazine.cua.edu

The Catholic University of America Magazine

ON CAMPUS

35 Years @ CUA
Shavaun Wall, B.A. 1972
Professor of Education

• Why did you apply to work at Catholic University? As an undergraduate at CUA, I had an excellent experience. I loved Washington, D.C., and my future husband was working here. I wanted to return to D.C. and was excited when a job in my field became available at CUA.

• Why have you remained at CUA? Besides being a professor, I also worked in administration as the vice provost and dean of undergraduate studies and then as associate vice president for academic planning. Prior to that, I served as chair of the education department. I’ve come to know and appreciate people in every division on campus. What I have really enjoyed is collaborating with bright, terrific colleagues. I greatly appreciate the students, too.

• What has been your favorite time on campus? The University community can unite to create inspiring ceremonies — such as the Opus Prize (a $1 million award given annually by the Opus Prize Foundation to an unsung hero to recognize and support the recipients’ good works and to inspire the next generation of faith-based social entrepreneurs. CUA partnered with the foundation and hosted the Opus Prize in 2007). I felt this event really encouraged people to promote service not only in our community, but globally. The tagline for the prize, “Prepare to be Inspired,” really showcased the CUA spirit toward service.

• What is the greatest change you’ve seen on campus? Our campus is the most picturesque it has ever been. With the largest campus in Washington, D.C., I think the University has added dynamic, attractive new buildings while maintaining peaceful, spacious, beautiful grounds. — M.M.H.

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ON CAMPUS

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Choosing a Contractor for a Home Improvement

• Do Your Homework. Read up about the problem that you are having at your home. The Internet is a great starting point, but don’t forget about the many home repair guides at your bookstore, or available for free at your public library. You may find that you can do simple repairs yourself with tools from the hardware or home improvement store.

• Don’t Be Afraid to Ask. Ask family, friends, or colleagues if they have had experiences with a similar problem or can recommend a trustworthy contractor. Also, once you are talking with companies, have them explain the problem and proposed solution well enough for you to understand. Write down technical terms and get more information on what they mean.

• Obtain References. Search for reviews about potential contractors’ past work before you contact them. Ask for contact information of past clients who can serve as references. Good contractors are proud of the quality of their work and customer service.

• Hire Experienced Professionals. Check that companies are licensed, bonded, and insured. Ask to see these documents or check with the respective government oversight office in your state. A license indicates that a contractor is competent and has permission to operate from the local government. A bonding company is like a third-party guarantor that could step in if the contractor fails to perform the work. Insurance covers incidents that could damage your home.

— Gunnar Lucko, associate professor, Department of Civil Engineering

Ask the Experts

Around the World in Snapshots

Three Catholic University students won prizes in the 2012 CUAbroad Photo Contest for pictures they took while studying overseas during the 2011–2012 academic year. Sponsored by the CUAbroad program of the University’s Center for Global Education, the contest drew 57 entries from students who had studied in a range of countries, including Croatia, Germany, Ireland, New Zealand, Portugal, South Africa, Switzerland, and Thailand.

“Vatican Sunset,” shot in Rome by first-place winner Dylan King, senior, architecture.

“Mount Fitz Roy,” shot in Argentina by third-place winner Chelsea Schewe, junior, Spanish for international service, and theology and religious studies.

“Secrets of the Sunrise,” shot in New Zealand by second-place winner Meghan Tumney, junior, nursing.

“Moss Bay Ray,” shot in Argentina by third-place winner Chelsea Schewe, junior, Spanish for international service, and theology and religious studies.

— Gunnar Lucko, associate professor, Department of Civil Engineering

Ask the Experts

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— Gunnar Lucko, associate professor, Department of Civil Engineering
**Dragon Sleuth**

**Robert Miller II, Theology and Religious Studies**

Miller is a secular Franciscan, associate professor of Old Testament, biblical studies area director, and an expert in the history and archaeology of ancient Israel/Palestine; the Bible and theology; anthropological methods; the ancient Near Eastern influences that have shaped the development of the Old Testament; and the book of Judges. His books, *Ghastlies of the Highland Clans: A History of Ireland in the 12th and 13th Centuries B.C. and Oral Tradition in Ancient Israel*, and related articles have made him a recognized authority on early Israel.

**Q: Why are you studying dragons?**

A: I’m fascinated by evidence showing Israel was aware of the dragon myths of ancient Mesopotamia, now part of Iraq, and also of the Canaanites, Israel’s neighbors in the Levant — the region on the east Mediterranean Sea. In Israel, you find many links in the portrayal of dragons to the concept in other cultures.

**Q: How does this relate to the Bible?**

A: It’s clear that biblical dragons are derived from these Near Eastern myths. The Old Testament doesn’t have a devil with a pitchfork to symbolize evil; it has a dragon. Israel uses the myths in different ways in the Old Testament; they either co-opt the dragon slaying myth of some other god or they demote the dragon to an ordinary animal. This shows how one faith uses metaphors from another to express a theological truth, which Catholicism has regularly done, but also how much of the groundwork of the biblical story was already in place in the ancient world ahead of the Israelites.

**Q: How were your research explorations in Israel linked to this?**

A: I looked at possible connections between Baal, the dragon-slaying Canaanite god of thunder; the prophet Elijah, of the ninth century B.C.; and St. George, the dragon slayer from the late third century, by examining the location of shrines to the three figures. Elijah and St. George are often confused in Christian and Islamic traditions and they’re both known as El-Khader in Arabic. In most cases, I found that if a Christian or Islamic shrine dates back 300 to 400 years, it’s almost always on top of or near an earlier Baal shrine.

**Q: What are you studying now?**

A: Three things: Zion, the dragon, and the nations. Israel’s metaphors from the Canaanite dragon myth refer to Mount Zaphon — Baal’s mythical mountain home. However, Israel also uses Zaphon as a reference to Mount Zion, Jerusalem. But when Israel uses the mythical elements of dragon and mountain, it adds a new one about all the earth’s nations one day coming in pilgrimage to Zion. I think the new element expresses the idea that God, the cosmic victor over evil, must invite all peoples into his community.

**Q: Why do you describe yourself as an armchair archaeologist?**

A: My B.A. is in archaeology. I spent several years in Jerusalem doing field work, but I realized I didn’t want to be a field archaeologist. My master’s and doctoral studies are in biblical and Near Eastern studies with a heavy emphasis on archaeology. The combination provides the best of both worlds.

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**Italy in Two Weeks and Three Credits**

It isn’t often that a two-week summer course packs students in the presence of the Pope. But when graduate students in the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) traveled to Italy in June for the new course Visions of Italy: Culture in 21st Century Rome and Florence, they saw Pope Benedict XVI at a papal Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica and then again in a papal procession. They also saw the president of Italy in the Feast of the Italian Republic procession.

Those sightings weren’t the only highlights of the intense, three-credit graduate course. “Our visits to the Vatican archives and library were unforgettable,” says graduate student Susan Reyburn, who is a writer-editor in the Library of Congress Publishing Office. “Every time an ancient volume was opened, there were audible sighs from our group.”

Graduate student Yari Long, who works as a librarian with the rare books collection at the National Gallery of Art, also noted the visit to the Vatican Secret Archives as a highlight of the course, especially “seeing the Meridian Room. That was a rare treat, and one that many of my colleagues are quite jealous about.”

“Visions of Italy was offered by SLIS for the 2012 summer session. It was developed by Maria Mazzenga (Ph.D. 2000), education archivist/historian, American Catholic History Research Center and University Archives, and lecturer for SLIS and the Department of History. She modeled it after a semester-long graduate course — Public Programs, Outreach, and Exhibits in Archives, Museums, and Libraries — that she teaches, making use of the many well-known archives, museums, and libraries in Washington, D.C.

“I wanted these advanced-level students to have the opportunity to understand cultural heritage programming in an international city — to see how we compare to others around the world,” says Mazzenga.

Taking the class to Italy required much organization, she says. “Integral to the success of this course was partnering with CUA’s Center for Global Education: David Dawson Vasquez (Ph.D. 2010) runs the CUA/Abroad program in Rome and he knows the ins and outs of the city in a very sophisticated way. He was able to secure tickets to the Mass and access to key institutions for us.”

Vasquez has been director of the Rome program since its inception in 2002. He also teaches the theology courses for the program. “Using a city for teaching always adds a richness that is priceless,” he says. “Rome and Florence have so many specialized libraries and archives that are just waiting to be explored by scholars.”

“The course was a wonderful opportunity to see how others manage their cultural heritage. Italy has an advantage, in that for 2,000 years, dazzled visitors have been spreading the word, so a lot of cultural sites in Rome and Florence don’t need it to market themselves extensively. Even so, they have developed some creative approaches to managing their bounty,” says Reyburn.

“Being granted access behind the scenes to collections that even the most serious of scholars rarely get to see is an experience that could not have been duplicated in any other way, and it broadened my appreciation for the necessary care, handling, and protection of cultural materials,” says Long. — E.N.W.
So Long, Colonel Brooks

Colonel Brooks’ Tavern served its last customer on Sept. 14. The Monroe Street bar and restaurant has a place in the memories of many alumni dating back more than 30 years. “The whole CUA community — faculty, staff, students, alumni — has been critical to our business, both as patrons and, with the students, as employees. Many will remain friends,” said owner Jim Steigman.

Prayer, Pizza, and Presence in Residence Halls

Junior Dan O’Connell, a Flather Hall resident assistant, sometimes slips into the Sacred Heart Chapel on the first floor for a few minutes of silent reflection. An international business major from Albany, N.Y., he attends Mass in the chapel and hangs out with Rev. Christian Raab, O.S.B., (pictured) who lives in the building as part of the Religious-in-Residence program. The program and the opening of the Flather chapel last January are part of new initiatives undertaken by the University in the past two years.

The Flather chapel is the third one in a CUA residence hall. The others are in Caldwell and Opus halls. Father Christian, a monk from Saint Meinrad Archabbey in Indiana and a doctoral student in systematic theology, and three women religious who live in Regan and Reardon halls, provide a ministry of presence to students through the residential program.

Father Christian also provides guidance to the Gentlemen of Flather, a group started last year that promotes faith, valor, integrity, and perseverance through community service and social activities such as pizza nights, held in the Flather Lounge.

Rev. Jude DeAngelo, O.F.M. Conv., University chaplain and director of Campus Ministry, notes that the new Religious-in-Residence program provides students with “immediate access to a place for prayer and the sacraments. It’s a gift for young people. They can get to know happy and healthy priests and sisters and begin to understand why they took that path and realize this might be a life choice they could make.”

Speakers Urge Respect for Religion

Religious freedom “is under often violent attack in other nations with terrible human consequences,” said Cardinal Timothy Dolan, archbishop of New York, speaking at a Sept. 12 conference on international religious freedom at The Catholic University of America.

Cardinal Dolan, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), was one of several speakers addressing the often brutal repression of religious liberty around the world as part of “International Religious Freedom: An Imperative for Peace and the Common Good.”

Although scheduled many months in advance, the conference came the day after the American ambassador to Libya and three other Americans were killed in a terrorist attack amidst an outbreak of religious violence.

“We come to this event with a sense of urgency,” Cardinal Dolan said. “We need to be respectful of other religious traditions at the same time that we unequivocally proclaim that violence in the name of religion is wrong.”

The event was co-sponsored by the USCCB, the University and its Institute for Policy Research & Catholic Studies (IPR), and Catholic Relief Services.

Maryann Casimano Love, associate professor of politics at CUA, participated in the plenary panel “What Can the Church Do to Defend International Religious Freedom?” She noted the vast majority of victims of religious violence are women and children. Religious repression causes violence, she said.

Speaking on the topic of U.S. policy and international religious freedom at the conference were Thomas Farr, director of the Religious Freedom Project at the Berkley Center for Religion, Peace, and World Affairs, Georgetown University; and Deputy National Security Adviser Denis McDonough.

“In countries around the world, religious institutions of every faith experience violence and brutal repression,” said Stephen Schneck, director of IPR. The co-sponsored conference on international challenges to religious freedom, he added, “represents the very heart of this University’s mission, serving both Church and country.”