

First-ever Congress of Assumptionist Educators will take place July 17-27 on College's Worcester Campus; Former U.S. Ambassador to Speak

WORCESTER, MA (June 30, 2016) — The Venerable Father Emmanuel d'Alzon, founder of the Assumptionists and the Oblate Sisters of the Assumption, was convinced that the best way "to strengthen the flagging spirits and heal the moral fatigue" in his own day was a solid education enlivened by a genuine love of the truth and inspired by the light of the Gospel. Convinced as they are that education plays a crucial role in shaping the hearts and minds of young and old, **approximately 70 Assumption educators—men and women, lay people and religious, from Africa, Asia, Europe, and North and South America—will gather for the first time from July 17-27 at Assumption College, 500 Salisbury St. in Worcester, to reflect together on Father d'Alzon's educational insights and to help each other put these principles to work in their own institutions.**

The goal of the Congress is to reinvigorate educators with Fr. d'Alzon's vision on education, as they work to fully integrate these teachings into their individual institutional missions. The program is broken into three parts: at first, some time to become better acquainted with the Assumptionist educational work being done in the world; then an opportunity to evaluate that work in the light of Fr. d'Alzon's vision; and finally time to imagine how to move forward and to collaborate even more in the shared mission. Participants will review and discuss Fr. d'Alzon's vision on the purpose of education, with presentations on key topics and on the historical context in which the founder launched the educational mission of the religious order. Educators will then be tasked to draw very concrete conclusions about how they might renew their own institutions to make them even more faithful to the Assumption spirit in education.

"This Congress is historic, as it will convene, for the first time in the same place, representatives from every Assumptionist institution," said Father Richard E. Lamoureux, A.A. "It is only appropriate to host such an historic event at Assumption College, the first institution of higher learning founded by the Assumptionists and the embodiment of Fr. D'Alzon's legacy and vision of the Catholic university. It was his dream to establish a Catholic institution committed to the

pursuit of truth and academic excellence through a dialogue between faith and reason, and there is no better way to honor that vision than by discussing his teachings and sharing ideas on how to better the world."

The conference will feature an array of speakers, including an address by Dr. Mary Ann Glendon, professor of law at Harvard University and former Ambassador of the United States to the Holy See. A friend of Assumption College and familiar with its educational projects all over the world, **Dr. Glendon will offer her own insights on the challenges facing Catholic education in the 21st century on Monday, July 25 at 9:30 a.m.** The general public is welcome to attend Dr. Glendon's presentation.

Participants attending the Congress represent a wide range of international institutions that identify themselves Assumptionist schools: a secondary school run by the Oblate sisters of the Assumption just south of Paris; a trade school run by the Assumptionists in Butembo (Democratic Republic of Congo); Assumption College in Worcester (USA); a large primary/secondary school run by the Assumptionists in the center of Buenos Aires (Argentina); a secondary school under the direction of the Oblate sisters in Arusha (Tanzania) in the shadow of Mount Kilimanjaro; and many others.

Assumptionist educators date to the French Revolution, when Fr. d'Alzon (1810-1880), vicar general of the Diocese of Nîmes, believed that ignorance of faith was responsible for the state of the world in the years following the French Revolution. Convinced that the world's intellectual crisis was at the heart of its social and political crises, Fr. d'Alzon had the inspiration to found two religious congregations that would advance the Kingdom of God through "education in all its forms," which became the Augustinians of the Assumption (AA), or, the "Assumptionists" and the Oblate Sisters of the Assumption The Assumptionist presence in the United States began in 1895 with construction on a new Catholic university, the most cherished project of Fr. d'Alzon, which in 1904 became Assumption College. Fr. D'Alzon envisioned an institution committed to the pursuit of truth and academic excellence through a dialogue between faith and reason. He sought to develop the whole person and wanted students to grow in the knowledge of their human condition.

The Augustinians of the Assumption continue to guide Assumption College today. In collaboration with the trustees—many of whom are Assumptionists—and the entire administrative, academic, and clerical staff, they have a primary role in guaranteeing the Catholic character of Assumption College and in promoting a philosophy of education that is consistent with the highest Christian and classical values and ideals.

For more information, and a list of conference events that are free and open to the public, visit www.assumptioneducation.com

ABOUT ASSUMPTION COLLEGE

Founded in 1904 by the Augustinians of the Assumption in Worcester, Mass., Assumption College is a Catholic liberal arts institution that offers undergraduate students 42 majors and 48 minors in the liberal arts, sciences, business, and professional studies; as well as master's and continuing education degrees and professional certificate programs—each through an educational experience that grounded in the rich Catholic intellectual tradition. The curriculum enables students to gain a depth and breadth of knowledge that leads to professional success and personal fulfillment. Students—whether on the Worcester campus or at the College's Rome, Italy, campus—become engaged participants in Assumption's classic liberal arts education, exploring new ideas and making connections across disciplines. To prepare for the workforce, students learn cutting-edge theory and best practices, conduct innovative research, and develop excellent communication and critical-analysis skills. Assumption graduates are also known for their thoughtful citizenship and compassionate service to their community. For more information about Assumption College, please visit www.assumption.edu

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