



DISSERTATION EXPLORES THOMAS AQUINAS AND 'BEING'

8/23/2016



Pictured left to right: Dr. James Clarage, Dr. Steven Jensen, Dr. Thomas Osborne, Brian Kemple, Dr. John Hittinger, and Dr. Mirela Oliva

Brian Kemple publicly defended his dissertation on Aug. 26 before the University community and his dissertation board. It was accepted by the Center for Thomistic Studies, and in May he will be the 28th recipient of a doctorate in philosophy from the University of St. Thomas.

Kemple's dissertation, "Ens Primum Cognitum in Thomas Aquinas and the Tradition" addresses an issue central to Medieval scholarship and especially to Thomistic thought: what does Thomas Aquinas mean by stating that being is the first object known by the intellect? The dissertation lays out a coherent interpretation of Thomas' position by examining his theory of knowledge, aided by a consideration of some of the most important thinkers in the Thomistic tradition.

"In the spring of 2011, the first year of earning my master's at St. Thomas, Dr. John Deely said a few things about what Thomas means by 'being as first known' in his class," Kemple said. "He and I talked

about it quite a bit that semester, and have talked about it ever since."

After graduation, Kemple will teach Ethics at the Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston while applying for full time positions at universities around the country. He intends to continue writing and publishing in philosophy with a current interest in comparing Martin Heidegger and Charles S. Peirce, and the intersection of their respective schools of phenomenology and semiotics.

Learn more about the Center for Thomistic Studies at www.stthom.edu/thomisticstudies.

The Center for Thomistic Studies is the only graduate philosophy program uniquely focused on the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas in the U.S. It is also home to the national office of the American Catholic Philosophical Association and sponsors the annual Aquinas Lecture, which features many of the Catholic scholars in philosophy and theology.