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"The Life and Miracles of Fisher Alumnus Peter Santandreu"

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"The Life and Miracles of Fisher Alumnus Peter Santandreu"

Abstract

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"What can one say about life with a degree in Religious Studies from St. John Fisher College?"

Well, it's almost been a year since graduation and I can say that things are definitely different but ever the same. I am now at the Faculty of Theology at the University of St. Michael's College (USMC) in Toronto, Ontario. When people ask me what I am doing with my life now, I do sometimes answer using the acronym. Of course, to an American, it is first heard as the branch of the United States military and not a theological institution. But here in Canada, USMC has no other connotation than a member school in the Toronto School of Theology consortium. The TST is a good fit for me. Here I am exposed to many different theological outlooks and denominational worldviews that could have otherwise gone unnoticed in a different setting. Such diversity is refreshing and, at times, challenging. On the whole I view these opportunities as growing/learning experiences."



*“The Life and Miracles of Fisher Alumnus **Peter Santandreu**”*

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I must first express my thanks to all my professors at St. John Fisher who have lent their expertise to the task of my education. In a special way, I would like to thank the Religious Studies department. There was nothing “Micky Mouse” about a REST class at Fisher. I really feel like I was prepared to go onto higher education after my time at St. John Fisher. If I didn’t know everything, at least I knew where and how to find it. So thank you again REST faculty and staff, you’ve done good by me.

That being said, let me tell you, it was not all sweetness and light starting out. The first semester here was probably the most difficult schooling since Kindergarten when I failed motor skills because I couldn't skip or do a summersault. Each class would be another humbling encounter with those who are incredibly more knowledgeable than me. There were times when I seriously considered attempting something else, like drywall or landscaping. But I made it through and learned a lot from it. I learned that I don't have to be good at everything and that if I can do a few things well and succeed in my concentration, I'll be alright. Thus I came to understand how to be a grad student just like when I finally learned to summersault my sophomore year of high school...skipping is still in the works though.

Recently I have had some really good days where I get up, drink a pot of coffee, read for eight to ten hours, go to class if I have to, and then take the rest of the night off. I am very fortunate to be naturally disposed to solitude because it has been a pretty constant experience for me. God willing, I should be able to keep up this routine at least until the end of the semester (April 12th here in the Great White North).

One last point that I find important: von Balthasar was right, one cannot study theology without doing it from the knees. Granted, it is possible to maintain a dispassionate stance about one's personal faith-life while in a theology program, but why miss the opportunity? This is not to say that these opportunities are only available while attaining an advanced theological degree, but rather that it is something that one is faced with every day and thus allows for greater exposure. It has been an interesting journey thus far and I am very excited to get back into classes in the Fall.

St. Michael's College, University of Toronto

