

THE CENTER FOR THOMAS MORE STUDIES  
at the University of Dallas, www.udallas.edu



# THOMAS MORE ON ETHICS, LAW, AND LIBERTY

AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. THOMAS

SCHOOL OF LAW

MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

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Terrence J. Murphy Institute

## Friday-Saturday, 31 May - 1 June 2013

**MAJOR FOCUS:** What is Thomas More's understanding of law, conscience, liberty, and ethics? And how are they related?

**FOR:** Law Professors interested in examining More's understanding of ethics and law

**Method of presentation for each session:** Introductory lecture followed by seminar exploration of each major text

**Texts to be sent in January, with reading guides and outlines:**

*A Thomas More Source Book; More's Tyrannicide, Richard III, Utopia; statutes and documents related to More's trial.*

### Thomas More and Legal Ethics

Voted "Lawyer of the Millennium" in 1999 by the Law Society of Great Britain and selected "Patron of Statesmen" in 2000, Sir Thomas has been widely recognized as one of the great lawyers and humanists of all time. Historian and philosopher, lawyer and judge, politician and ambassador, loving father and devoted citizen, More defended the importance of "integrity" in his work as a lawyer and public official. After completing his law studies at twenty-four, More spent three years mastering Greek and then spent another fourteen years studying the Greek, Roman, Christian, and native English traditions he inherited -- all before joining the service of King Henry VIII. Before joining that royal service, More discussed issues of conscience with Henry VIII, as he would do again in becoming the Lord Chancellor of England a decade later. As Speaker of the House of Commons, More gave the first known defense of free speech, and he was also a poet who wrote a diplomatic reminder to his monarch that law and citizen support were of greater importance than hereditary power and privilege. More is the first English person known to present that combination of political elements eventually adopted by the United States: rule of law for all, division of power, separate jurisdictions of church and state, elected representation, and protected forms of free and public deliberation. As we read More's most famous writings, we will ask: Why was the ongoing study not only of law but also of philosophy, theology, history, politics, literature, and rhetoric essential to More's work as a lawyer and public official? How, for example, did Cicero's view of law, justice, conscience, duty, and civic friendship affect More? How was More's understanding of the human person as free and self-governing related to his view of law and ethics?

### Friday, 31 May 2013

-- arrival Friday morning --

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|-----------|--|
| 2:00-3:30 | More's <i>Dialogue on Conscience</i> & writings on integrity           |
| 4:00-5:30 | More's Trial and Accompanying Documents (including his Prison Letters) |
| 7:00-8:30 | Thomas More, "First Citizen" -- as Represented in Early Works of Art   |

### Saturday, 1 June 2013

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| 9:00-10:30  | Book 1 of <i>Utopia</i> & Latin Epigrams   |
| 11:00-12:30 | Book 2 of <i>Utopia</i> & More's "Petition for Free Speech"                                      |
| 2:00-3:30   | More's unpublished <i>Richard III</i> ; More's first published literary work: <i>Tyrannicide</i> |
| 4:00-5:30   | Thomas More & Teaching Legal Ethics: Review and Overview   |

5/20/2013