I first met Don Doyle some forty-five years ago when were young teachers in the same social studies department at a new Long Island school. It was readily apparent that he was a serious-minded, scholarly member of the profession as were many of our colleagues. What really singled out Don for me was overhearing a certain discussion he was having with another faculty member after classes one day. The other gentleman considered himself a “progressive” Catholic. He was engaging Don in a debate on Church teaching, and was citing certain well-known dissenters to bolster his argument. Don countered with a brilliant explanation of the Church’s doctrine and its conformity to the Natural Law. The “progressive” was dumbstruck. With a straight face, he asked “What law was that? When did the Vatican pass that law?” Case closed! Don shook his head in disbelief, broke in a smile, and said to his adversary, “I’ll pray for you.” From that moment on, I knew that Don and I would be friends.

There would be other examples of Don’s defense of Church teaching where I witnessed Thomistic logic in action. I don’t know any layman better able to explain and invoke the Natural Law in Catholic apologetics than Don Doyle. Regrettably, I must admit that I can’t think of too many Catholic clergymen who were his match in such matters.

Our friendship blossomed as the years went on. We had so much in common: young families, graduate studies, mortgages. When he and his wife, Arlene, bought a house in Commack where my wife and I were raising our family, we became fellow parishioners at Christ the King. Our professional association developed in a social friendship.

Upon retirement from the school district, Don took a full time position at Molloy College in Rockville Centre, Long Island, where he had been an adjunct for several years. Hundreds of students were the beneficiaries of his well-prepared, incisive lectures on the American political system and our nation’s founding documents. Several of his students told me they never appreciated the meaning of the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution until they took Dr. Doyle’s course. Later, I joined Don at Molloy as an adjunct in the history