“WE WANT EVERY CUSTOMER TO LEAVE WITH THE SENSE THAT WE REALLY CARED FOR THEM AND THEIR INTERESTS WERE PARAMOUNT IN OUR MINDS,” said Karl Buder ’70, proprietor of The Thorncroft Inn in Vineyard Haven, MA. “Many of them are here celebrating a honeymoon, birthday or anniversary and we always honor those occasions in special ways. We have found that high level of care and concern about our customers is timeless. Our approach hasn’t changed in 27 years. We really care about the people under our roof. It’s ‘love your neighbor’ business-style.”

The Thorncroft Inn rests on two-and-a-half acres of treed grounds and one block from the ocean on Martha’s Vineyard (an island seven miles off the Massachusetts coast). A romantic bed and breakfast, Thorncroft has received a Four Diamond Award from the American Automobile Association (AAA) every year since 1990, and was voted the best bed and breakfast in America for 2005 by InnTraveler Magazine.

In addition to running the Inn, Karl is also a deacon in the Fall River Diocese, serving at Good Shepard Parish on the Vineyard. He credits his Catholic upbringing and education for guidance throughout his career and life. “As I look back on my four years at Assumption, I realize that the Catholic values infused during my grammar school and prep school days, were further solidified and strengthened at Assumption,” Karl explained. “In these days of moral relativism, having a Christian standard of behavior enables me to approach my business in a consistent ethical manner.”

Soon after graduating from Assumption, Karl spent most of the 1970s working as adult probation and drug enforcement and treatment officer in Hartford, CT. By the late ’70s, he was getting burned out and reexamining career options. He and his wife, Lynn, fell in love with the Vineyard while vacationing there in 1978. After purchasing properties in 1979 and ’80, they bought the property that would become Thorncroft in 1981 and moved to the island.

Karl also took a winding road to his post as a deacon. He explained, “I fell away from the Church for a few years because I couldn’t find the meaningful liturgy I experienced in college. In 1999 my wife discovered Lifeteen, a Catholic youth ministry, with relevant music and liturgy and I was hooked. I gradually became
As one of the more distinguished lodging options on the Vineyard, the staff at the Thorncroft makes it a point to interact and bond with its guests. Karl said, “We want to know why someone came to the island and how we can help them enjoy our marvelous seacoast environment.”