



MAGDALEN COLLEGE

OF THE LIBERAL ARTS



Newsletter
November 2021



A Decade of Dedicated Service

Dr. Ryan Messmore, President

As the fall semester winds down, Magdalen College wishes to congratulate Fr. Roger Boucher on his upcoming retirement.

After a distinguished career that included many years of service in the Navy, Fr. Boucher came to Magdalen, where he is the longest-serving Chaplain in the College's history. For 10 years he has overseen the spiritual life on campus, including celebrating Mass, hearing confessions, mentoring students, leading a discernment group for young men considering the priesthood, celebrating engagements, weddings, funerals, and other important moments of our lives, and much more. His final Mass as Chaplain will be on Dec. 8, the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, although we certainly look forward to welcoming him back as a guest celebrant to the College he has shaped so deeply.

A significant legacy that he leaves for Magdalen is a beautiful and reverent approach to liturgy. For those who have participated in a Mass celebrated by Fr. Boucher, the sense that something special and sacred is taking place on the altar is palpable. The colors, incense, vestments, and posture involved in his celebration of the Eucharist help us all to enter the mystery of the Eucharist in a profound way. We are extremely thankful for his faithfulness to the Church and her traditions in his ministry.

Fr. Boucher is bi-ritual and has regularly celebrated not only the Novus Ordo Mass but also the Divine Liturgy in the Melkite tradition. We are proud that, through him, Magdalen students have been exposed to different rites and that our altar servers have been

trained according to these different traditions (serving for the Latin Mass as well) ... with the common thread being beauty and reverence.

I am personally grateful to Fr. Boucher for delaying his retirement to serve Magdalen this fall. Upon signing my contract earlier this year, one of the first things I did was call him and ask if he would consider staying on as Chaplain for a little longer as we got the new academic year up and running. He willingly agreed, despite the enormous energy required of this position.

On Dec. 13, the faculty and staff at Magdalen will hold a celebration in honor of Fr. Boucher's 80th birthday. We would like to gather and present to him on that day some well-wishes from alumni and friends who have known Fr. Boucher over the years. **If you would be willing to send a note of appreciation, gratitude, and/or birthday greeting,** please email administration@magdalen.edu and use "Celebrating Fr. Boucher" as the subject line of the email.

Several priests who are well-known by the College have already agreed to serve on a part-time basis in the spring semester to continue the same daily Mass schedule that we currently have. To guide the spiritual life of the College into the future, the Board of Trustees is actively speaking with candidates, and we are confident that a full-time priest will be on campus by August 2022.

Well done, Fr. Boucher, and congratulations on a well-deserved retirement. Your impact on the students and this College is immense, and you will be greatly missed!



Magdalen College Consecrated to the Blessed Trinity

On Sunday, October 31, 2021, Magdalen College was consecrated to the Blessed Trinity.

As the culminating event of our Welcome Weekend, parents and alumni joined faculty, staff, students, and trustees for this special occasion. In response to and trust in God's faithfulness to the College, the community dedicated itself to the care, protection, and guidance of the Blessed Trinity.

Fr. Boucher led the consecration service in Magdalen's Our Lady Queen of Apostles Chapel. After the congregation sang a Trinitarian-themed hymn and prayed a litany to the Trinity, President Messmore spoke about the significance of God's triune nature and the meaning of this consecration. Fr. Boucher then led the congregation in praying the Consecration Prayer. As the student choir sang "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow" and a beautiful rendition of the Trisagion, Fr. Boucher blessed the chapel walls and the congregation with holy water.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church asserts that "The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life." As President Messmore noted, this teaching has profound

implications for what it means to be human: "Consider that human beings are made in the image of this sort of God—a God whose very nature is a communion of love. That means that you and I were made in the imago dei as lovers. ... We are relational beings. We are meant for community, and we reflect and embody God's triune life as a community. 'By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.'" (John 13:35)

When we engage in self-donating love, President Messmore explained, we share in the very life of the Trinity. As 1 Peter 2:4 states, we "become participants of the divine nature." One result is that we participate not only in the Son's prayer to the Father, but also, enabled by the Holy Spirit, we share in the Son's knowledge of the Father. That makes the Consecration to the Blessed Trinity especially fitting for a Catholic liberal arts College like Magdalen.

We are thrilled that friends of the College joined us in praying a novena for the Consecration leading up to this special event. A recording of the Consecration Service can be viewed [here](#) on the Magdalen website. We invite those who view the service to consider consecrating themselves and their families to the care and protection of the Blessed Trinity.





President's Spotlight: Dr. Ryan Messmore

How a World Leader Was Liberated for Success

One of the things I like about Gail Kelly is that she had triplets...and managed to do anything else! She actually acquired an extremely impressive portfolio of experiences, but it all started with her education.

Growing up in South Africa, Kelly loved learning and teaching Latin. In college she studied classics, and upon graduating, she landed her very first job: working as a high school Latin teacher. Several years later, however, Kelly wanted a change, so she became a bank teller. She had no university degree in banking... but she quickly succeeded.

In fact, Kelly's employer recognized her ability to work well with people, and she was fast-tracked in a leadership training program. Within five years she became head of human resources at the bank. She had not majored in Human Resources...but she quickly succeeded.

A few years later Kelly and her family moved from South Africa to Australia. She had not received an Australian Studies certificate or international relations degree in college to help prepare her for this change of cultures...but she quickly succeeded.

Kelly continued to work hard, even while raising

triplets, and was hired by a different bank. Its leaders recognized her ability to write and communicate well and made her General Manager of Strategic Marketing. She had no academic qualification in marketing...but she quickly succeeded. In time, Gail Kelly became CEO of the second largest bank in Australia, and was ranked 12th on the list of Top 50 Women in World Business.

I probably don't need to mention whether or not her undergraduate major was in executive leadership!

Gail Kelly was not successful in her career and her life because she pursued a formal education in a single, specific field. In this regard, she is not unusual. According to a study by the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, only 27 percent of college graduates land a job closely related to their majors.

Instead of pursuing a particular career qualification as an undergraduate, Kelly studied the liberal arts. And that education helped her to become the sort of person who could learn quickly what was necessary to succeed in many areas. It also helped her to develop skills—like effective communication and working with people—that were valuable throughout her life (including, but not limited to, her career).

With Kelly's story in mind, consider the words of Wendell Berry in his essay "The Loss of the University":

[S]tudents may not have the careers for which they have been prepared: The "job market" may be overfilled; the requirements for this or that career may change; the student may change, or the world may. [Expecting students right out of high school] to choose courses of study and careers that they do not yet know anything about is not, as is claimed, a grant of freedom. It is a severe limitation upon freedom. It means, in practice, that when the student has finished school and is faced then, appropriately, with the need to choose a career, he or she is prepared to choose only one.

At Magdalen, our education is geared less to pursuing a single, specific career and more to becoming a certain kind of person—the kind who is faithful and hard-working, can think critically and creatively, and can learn quickly what they need to know. As it so happens, that approach ends up being a very strategic way to prepare for the portfolio of experiences that many people accumulate throughout their working life.

Academic Spotlight: Dr. Brian FitzGerald

Magdalen Students Seek to Elevate Political Discourse through Debate

Recognizing the difficulty in these times of engaging in thoughtful, informed, and respectful discussion of significant political issues, Magdalen students recently organized a debate to do just that. On the evening of November 9, about thirty students, faculty, and staff gathered to consider the question, “Should media corporations have control over what is said on their platforms and who can use them?”

Helping guide the students through this timely yet fraught topic was a moderator from the organization Braver Angels, whose mission is to strengthen our American polity by helping citizens reach across partisan divides. To this end, Braver Angels moderators visit college campuses across the country

and help organize debates that are open, yet civil.

On this occasion, four Magdalen students – two on each side of the resolution – delivered opening remarks and fielded questions from those in attendance. Then followed a period in which anyone in the room could speak or ask questions. The conversation lasted nearly two hours without interruption, as students considered issues such as free speech, the free market and monopolies, subsidiarity, the scope of government power, and politics in the digital age. As the debaters sought to persuade the audience of the truth of their positions, they also found themselves frequently clarifying and qualifying those positions, while acknowledging the complexity of the issue.

There was no winner of the debate, since the goal was not victory for one side, but rather a deeper understanding of the various viewpoints people held. All present agreed that the debate did indeed bring about that understanding. Plans for further debates are already afoot.





Student Life Spotlight: Radiating Joy

Mazel Belt, Dean of Students

“Out of the weariness of daily labor into an unending holiday.” – Josef Pieper

Students at Magdalen study the thought of Josef Pieper, who advocated an understanding of leisure in terms of enjoying things that are good for their own sake. This sort of enjoyment is evident in a number of student life events that take place at Magdalen. As one student explained, “I’ve taken part in different groups, associations, and institutions throughout my life, and the charity and the joy that exudes from everything we do together inside and outside of classes [at Magdalen] is something I’ve never seen anywhere else.” Five such events that have taken place this past month include:

Spes Vitae Pro-Life Club

Once a week, Magdalen students rise before the sun to go and pray for the unborn and their mothers in front of the abortion clinic in Concord, NH. One student commented on being drawn into contemplation of the true, the beautiful, and the good even in the car ride there as the students listened to hymns and watched the sun rise. “It’s definitely early,” noted one of our freshmen, and yet she has gone almost every week

since the beginning of the semester.

The Winter Formal

Dancing is a significant part of the culture at Magdalen, and this year’s winter formal featured a few different kinds, including waltz and swing. Several group dances as well as extra activities like the gingerbread cookie decorating station and the photo booth made it a welcoming experience for everyone! One freshman commented, “I love swing dances. I had never danced before coming here but, these swing dancing awakened a passion that I didn’t know that I have.”

Pasta with the President

Once every few weeks, smaller groups of students gather at the president’s residence for a home-cooked meal and intimate conversation around a focused topic. The most recent topic was forgiveness. As one sophomore attested, students appreciate the opportunity to engage in deep conversation with others in a different, family/home setting.

Coffee House

Coffee House is a student-run and mostly student-filled talent show that takes place once a semester and is meant to encourage community. In early November, students sang songs, put on hilarious skits, performed dramatic scenes from plays, and even choreographed an Irish stepdance to reflect the first proposition in Euclid’s *Elements*. Several staff members also shared their musical talents during the evening. One of the students in charge of Coffee House this year explained the leisurely nature of the event by saying, “There is no additional goal to the event other than just enjoying the acts and the fellowship. For example, we are not trying to fundraise. There is simply a radiation of joy.”

Adoration

Every Sunday evening our devoted chaplain, Fr. Boucher, exposes the Blessed Sacrament in the main chapel for an hour of Eucharistic Adoration that ends with sung Compline and Benediction. Sundays at Magdalen are sacrosanct; there are only two regular events on the calendar: Mass and Adoration. We are a community of celebration, and as Josef Pieper says, “we therefore hope that this true sense of sacramental visibility” will help us to be “carried away out of the straightness of the workaday world into the heart of the universe.”

Welcome Weekend



On Oct. 30-31 we enjoyed sharing the Magdalen experience with alumni, parents, and prospective students. Whether playing faculty Jeopardy, swing dancing, or participating in seminar discussions, a good time was had by all!





“Where Words Fail, Music Speaks”

- attr. Hans Christian Andersen

Tristan J. Smith, Director of Collegiate Choirs

Silence is the tapestry upon which the musician paints. Without silence, there would be no music. Perhaps it is no happenstance that the season of Advent, a time of silence and waiting, is replete with a musical richness that is treasured by those who yearn and thirst for the source of beauty.

Already, like the dew dropping down from the heavens, a blanket of snow has cloaked Magdalen’s campus while everyone slumbered. In just a few days, students will break the frosty silence of night, rising before dawn to gather by candlelight and sing the ancient Gregorian Proper of the Rorate Mass. The men’s schola will intone the haunting, mystical Introit *Rorate caeli de super*, begging God to send dew from above to nourish the earth so that it may “bud forth” a Saviour. By the end of Mass, rays of the rising sun will stream through the chapel’s stained glass, mingling with the smoke of incense and candles that is but a vestige of the sacrifice that took place moments before upon the altar. As the priest retires in procession, organ and choir will

thunder “Lo, He Comes with Clouds Descending” to the majestic hymn tune HELMSLEY. The people that waited in darkness have caught glimpse of a great light, and the silence has receded into the night.

The Rorate Mass is but a taste of the musical treasures that Magdalen students participate in via sacred liturgy. In the past month alone, students sang the All Souls Requiem with Absolution at the Catafalque. Every major feast day has been marked with Gregorian Masses sung by the college’s two chant scholae. On the Feast of Christ the King, the entire student body (pictured above) traveled to the diocesan cathedral to sing as guests of Dr. Eric Bermani and the Very Rev. Fr. Jason Jalbert. Over 75 voices joined together that day in singing Handel’s Hallelujah Chorus, heralding the everlasting reign of Our Blessed Lord. Earlier this fall, Magdalen’s polyphony choir traveled to one of New England’s most venerable churches to sing an entire Mass composed and conducted by Paul Jernberg. Magdalen’s four sacred music ensembles have not rested!

The pinnacle of the collegiate choir’s Advent preparations is yet to come. At 7:00 PM on Sat., Dec. 4th, the entire student body will present the annual Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Join us as we prepare our hearts for Christmas through Scripture, hymnody, silence, and adoration.

Alumni Discuss Life after Magdalen

Dr. Eric M. Buck, Career Pathways Director

During our Welcome Weekend in late October, the Career Pathways Program sponsored a panel discussion of alumni entitled “Life After Magdalen”. Participants included:

- Mark Gillis (1990), headmaster of Holy Family Academy in Manchester, NH;
- Mike Girard (2015), canon lawyer and auditor for the diocese of Manchester;
- Andrew Dytewski (2016), computer programmer in cybersecurity;
- Cindy Coughlin (2017), licensed clinical mental health counselor with Catholic Charities;
- Emma Towne (2019), Director of Operations, Abigail Addams Institute, Cambridge, MA;
- Sean Haefner (2019), Ph.D. student in Philosophy at Boston College.

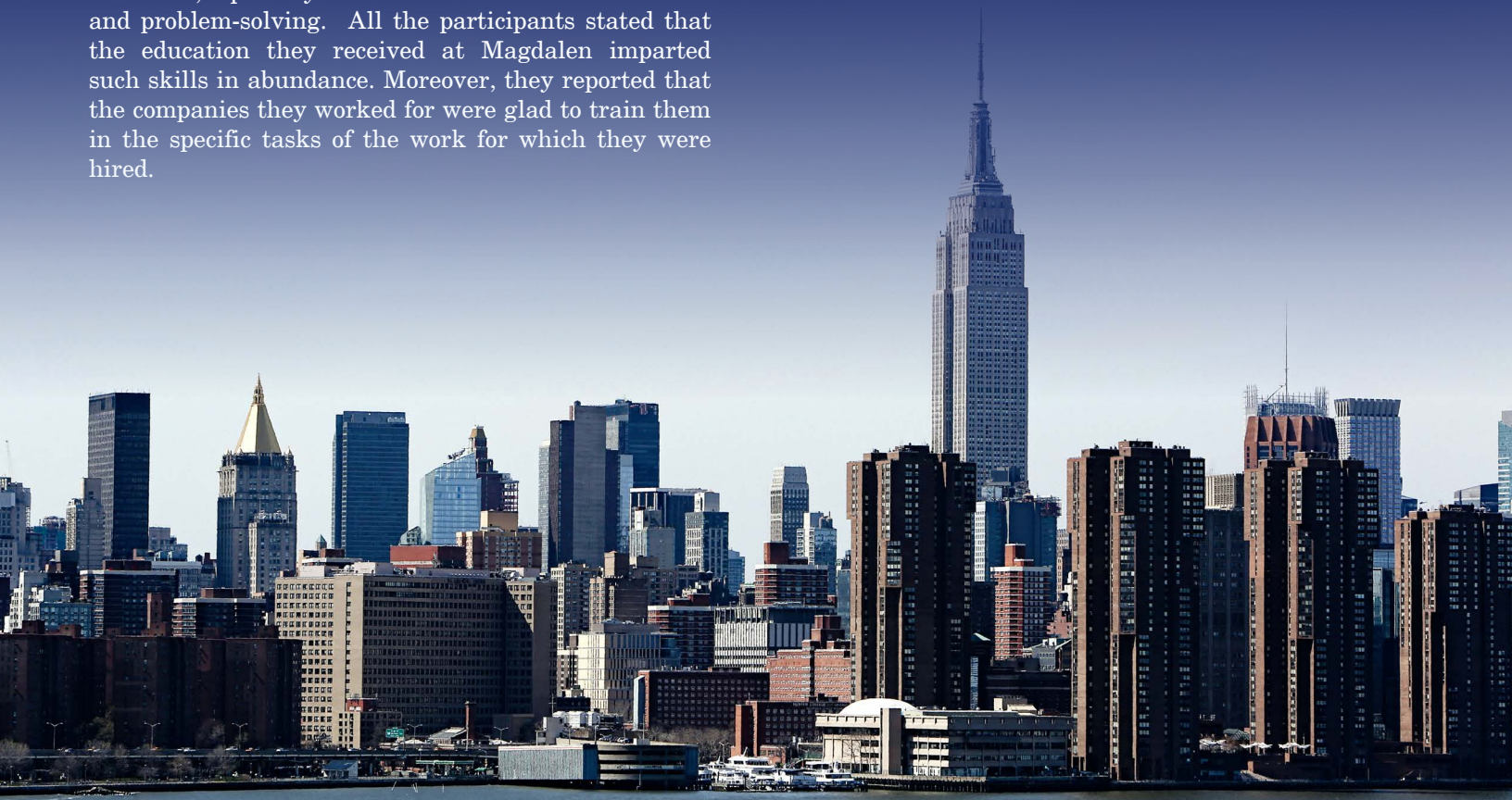
While reflecting upon their particular career pathways, the panelists agreed that the most important thing for preparing for working life is developing a number of soft skills, especially in oral and written communication and problem-solving. All the participants stated that the education they received at Magdalen imparted such skills in abundance. Moreover, they reported that the companies they worked for were glad to train them in the specific tasks of the work for which they were hired.

The alumni panelists also discussed what should motivate and guide the discernment of a calling, emphasizing passion, desire, prayer, meaningful work, and the opportunity to contribute to something bigger than one’s self. Once their respective careers began, the most important thing for them was human flourishing, which entailed a continuing love of reading great books. Several panelists also noted the importance of bringing a “growth mindset” to your work, whatever the field.

We’re proud of these alumni and pleased to hear their testimonies about how Magdalen College prepared them well for careers and life after college.

Calling All Alumni!

To assist current students, Magdalen College would like to assemble an Alumni Advisors Guide. This list of alumni, categorized by career field, will be available to students who would like to receive advice about what particular fields of work are like and how best to prepare for them. They would also be able to provide other forms of assistance, such as recommending internships and job boards or reviewing rough drafts of resumes and reference letters. If you are willing to help Magdalen’s students in this way, please email Dr. Buck at ebuck@magdalen.edu, subject line “Alumni Advisory Guide.” Indicate your name, graduation year, fields of work and areas you could advise in, and the email address and phone number at which students should contact you. We hope to release the first edition of the guide in spring of 2022.





Overheard From Our Podcast

These quotes were overheard on the “From the Summit” podcast this month. Visit magdalen.edu/podcasts/ to hear the full episodes!

Episode 21: Why the Trinity?

“We all have a God. ... The question is, ‘Which one?’ That’s what the doctrine of the Trinity does. It points us and our worship, our longings, our loves, our hearts, and our sacrifice towards the right object.”

“If God is love, that means that what God is can be practiced by human beings.”

“If truth, goodness, and beauty transcend any particular thing because they are found in everything that has reality, then they are simply descriptors of the triune God. ... We understand them [most deeply] by understanding their source and essence, which is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”

Episode 22: Higher Education Today

“The word [“college”] suggests a band of people ... bound by a common enterprise, born out of common love. ... It’s a real community of people dedicated to the life of the mind, to discovering truth and to sharing with others what you have discovered. ... The thing itself is exceedingly rare, but we have it at Magdalen!”

“There’s a certain mirthfulness that comes from being in a morally healthy place; you can have a lot more fun.”

“In Michelangelo’s painting of Adam ... why did he leave that electric space between the finger of God and the finger of Adam? It’s the most famous piece of nothing being painted in the history of paint.”

Listen at Magdalen.edu/podcasts



An Advent Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

Saturday, December 4th, 7:00 PM
Our Lady Queen of Apostles Chapel

Prepare your hearts for the joy of Christmas with a tapestry of Scripture readings and carols sung by the 70-voice Collegiate Choir. With Exposition, Adoration, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

The service will be followed by refreshments in the dining room. RSVP by calling (603) 456-2656



2022 Collegiate Summer Program

Discover the joy of learning next summer at
Magdalen College of the Liberal Arts.

High school students will experience, in miniature form, the academic community and life of Magdalen College. They will be introduced to liberal education through classic texts from philosophy, literature, theology, and political thought. Daily Mass is offered.

Stay tuned to our website and social media for more info – dates will be announced soon!



\$2,000

Come and See Scholarship

Visit and apply to Magdalen College by **February 18, 2022**, and receive a one-time \$2,000 scholarship if you **enroll** for the fall of 2022! Your application will also be reviewed for acceptance into the Scholarship Competition weekend which will be held on April 2, 2022.



magdalen.edu/visit

admissions@magdalen.edu | (603) 456-4113