



MAGDALEN COLLEGE

OF THE LIBERAL ARTS



Newsletter
May 2022



Dr. Brian FitzGerald also toasted the graduates on their academic accomplishments and what they contributed to Magdalen.

On Saturday morning the community celebrated a Baccalaureate Mass in the Chapel. The tradition of this ceremony dates to medieval Europe, when graduating candidates for the degree of Bachelor (bacca) were presented with laurels (lauri) or recognition of their achievement. The Very Rev. Fr. Jason Jalbert, Vicar General of the Diocese of Manchester, delivered the homily and was joined by Fr. Michael Sartori (Trustee), Fr. Roger Boucher (Chaplain Emeritus), Fr. Don Brick, and Deacon Karl Cooper (Faculty) to concelebrate the Mass.



After taking official class photos, the graduates, faculty, and staff proceeded to the gymnasium for the Commencement Ceremony. Mr. Jonathan Watson, who teaches theology at Magdalen, delivered a lively talk on behalf of the faculty. Mrs. Mary Eberstadt then delivered her Commencement Address. In it, she told the graduates that they are needed today as informed witnesses to beauty and truth, and she urged them to engage the public square boldly as Catholics. “You are essential personnel in the struggles to come,” she said, “struggles to make ours a more loving and humane country. You are missionaries of a whole new order, and to a new group in desperate need of your gifts.”

In particular, Mrs. Eberstadt noted that they will likely be the first graduating class in 49 years to enter an America in which federal law will defend the unborn regarding abortion. “And with evil now forced into recession, in however limited and circumscribed a form, good has a new shot in the

President’s Spotlight: A Weekend to Remember

Dr. Ryan Messmore

“The entire United States of America, at this momentous time, needs you, and the fruits of your extraordinary educations.”

So said Mrs. Mary Eberstadt to Magdalen graduates in her Commencement Address on May 7, 2022. An acclaimed author and award-winning essayist, Mrs. Eberstadt spoke about a significant cultural moment on a significant day in the life of the College.

The day marked the completion of the 2021-2022 academic year, and the undergraduate career of 17 seniors. We also invited back Magdalen graduates from the Class of 2020, whose graduation ceremony was upended by COVID-19. And, according to Mrs. Eberstadt, the day also marked the start of the next Great American Awakening!

Festivities began on Friday, May 6, with a Class of 2020 Senior Dinner hosted by the faculty and staff. Like the experience they would have enjoyed back in 2020, a formal dinner was served in the St. Francis de Sales Room, and I presented each graduate a copy of the Leisure Guide. This collection of recommended novels, poems, films, and musical works is a gift the faculty gives to encourage the life of the mind beyond college. Academic Dean

public square.” Channeling the musical *Hamilton*, Mrs. Eberstadt implored the graduates: “Do not throw away that shot!”



To conclude her remarks, she declared, “The first Great American Awakening began in Northampton, MA, almost two hundred years and some two hours’

drive southwest of here. The next one begins today, in Warner, NH.” (You can read the entire Commencement Address in *The Catholic Thing*.)

After the Address, it was time to confer upon the graduates their degrees. Eight graduates from the Class of 2020 returned to walk across the stage and FINALLY turn their tassels to the left. 17 members of the Class of 2022 were awarded bachelor’s degree hoods along with their diplomas during the event. Upon concluding the formal ceremony, graduates from both classes celebrated by tossing their mortar boards high into the air, rightfully joyful about what they have accomplished.

Congratulations to all our graduates. We are praying for you as you go forth from the mountain to take up your role in the next Great American Awakening!



The Magdalenian

Messages from the Mountains

Dr. Anthony Esolen Launches Newsletter

We’re excited to announce that Dr. Anthony Esolen has launched a private newsletter—called a “sub-stack”—exclusively for subscribers.

For just \$7/month (\$70/year) you’ll receive articles of wit and wisdom delivered directly to your email inbox 2-3 times per week. Commentary from Dr. Esolen will include current issues affecting the Church and society. [Click here](#) to read an introduction from Dr. Esolen and to subscribe to his newsletter entitled The Magdalenian—Messages from the Mountains.



Subscribe Today!



Academic Spotlight: Senior Theses

Dr. Brian FitzGerald, Academic Dean

Magdalen's entire student body gathered together at the end of April, as they have done every year since the earliest years of the college, for the presentation, discussion, and defense of senior theses. As the culmination of their years at Magdalen, those seniors who wish to graduate with Honors from the college embark on a thesis project. With a significant question in mind and a book from the Program of Studies as the basis of their reflections, each senior writes a lengthy research paper and then submits it to the faculty. The thesis subsequently must be presented to the whole college community, including a panel of professors who pose questions to gauge how well the seniors articulate their arguments, defend their positions, and persuade their audience.



No other classes are held during this two-day period of thesis presentations, so that the college can direct

its full attention to the accomplishments of the seniors. This year, twelve seniors presented the fruits of their labors on an impressive array of topics, including:

- the role of prayer in Dante's *Divine Comedy*
- St. Augustine's teaching on memory
- love and nihilism in Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*
- a defense of St. Anselm's ontological proof of God's existence
- the place of material beauty in Platonic thought
- Joseph Ratzinger's understanding of liturgical renewal

The students not only responded to inquiries from the faculty panel, but they then fielded the questions of other audience members, from freshmen to the President.

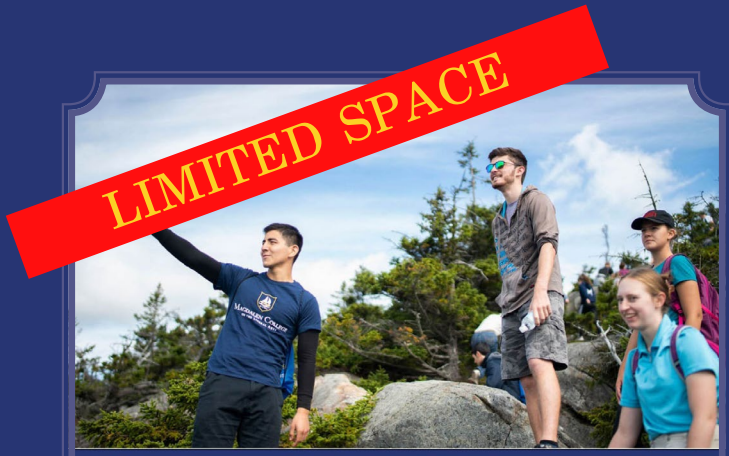


The standard of performance was very high, indicative of the academic quality of the seniors graduating with Honors. Close to 60% of this year's senior class finished their time at Magdalen with this distinction. In addition to completing a senior thesis, students who wish to graduate with Honors must maintain a GPA of 3.5 or above and participate in at least four Honors Colloquia, elective courses held each term on special topics.

At the end of two days, the college community gave the seniors an enthusiastic round of applause for their efforts. At the same time, the current juniors began developing their own ideas for questions and topics which they hope to immerse themselves in next year, as they continue the tradition.

Go Deep this Summer

Deepen your college preparation
journey by spending a
transformational two weeks at
Magdalen College.



Alpha Session

Engage a variety of liberal arts fields.
June 19 - July 2, 2022



Omega Session

Take a single course for credit.
July 10 - 23, 2022

Go DEEP into:

- the CATHOLIC faith
- the JOY of friendships
- the BIG QUESTIONS of life
- the LIBERAL ARTS tradition
- the BEAUTY of the mountains



magdalen.edu/summer

ACT NOW - both sessions are almost full

Alumni Spotlight: A Season of Homecoming

Tristan J. Smith

Over the past six weeks, alumni from far and wide have ascended the mountain to visit Magdalen College. There have been three distinct, joyful celebrations: a celebration of our Catholic Faith, a celebration of academic prowess, and a celebration of the sacrament of Holy Matrimony. It is evident that Magdalen alumni boast strong ties to their alma mater.

Alumni first emerged on Spy Wednesday, just before the Sacred Paschal Triduum. It is customary for alumni to return during Holy Week to partake of the solemn liturgies, the collegiate traditions, the feasting, and the breathtaking view from the mountain. It is an occasion to step away from the clamor of daily living and to return to the sources of nourishment. Alumni ignite the intellect through discourse with their professors of old; they are bathed in the springs of baptismal water at the Great Easter Vigil; they nourish the body with delicacies fastidiously prepared for the most exalted feast of the year; they receive the Blessed Sacrament in Holy Communion at the supper of the Lamb.

Alumni know that Holy Week is not to be missed. In many ways, it is a homecoming. It is a chance to sing, once again, the Hallelujah Chorus with the collegiate choir or to trek up Mount Kearsarge at the break of dawn to catch the first rays of the Easter sun. For alumni especially, the door is

always open and the lamp is always lit.

The second occasion to rejoice was a graduation celebration and reunion for the Class of 2020. Two years ago, the climate of our society was very different. Undeterred by the passage of time and the geographical dispersion of grads, Magdalen College remained intent on bringing this class back to campus to celebrate their graduation and subsequent achievements in the presence of families and friends. The festivities began with a reunion dinner to honor the graduates. The next day, the class donned academic robes to assist at the Baccalaureate Mass and to walk across the stage as part of the 48th Commencement Exercises of Magdalen College.

For many alumni, the occasion to rejoice culminates in the celebration of a wedding. Students who are called to married life frequently meet their future spouse among our faithful student community. Magdalen College was honored when Marc Doucette, '19, and Rose Phelps, '21, recently traveled all the way from Colorado to enter into the covenant of marriage at Magdalen's chapel. They felt such a strong connection to Magdalen, the place where their courtship blossomed, that they desired to profess their wedding vows here in the presence of our Chaplain Emeritus, the Rev. Fr. Roger Boucher. The bridal party, the altar servers, the choir, and even the waitstaff at the reception were replete with graduates who knew and loved the happy couple. Over fifty alumni, ranging from the Class of 1990 to the Class of 2022, were present. Magdalen College extends hearty congratulations to the newlyweds, Mr. and Mrs. Marc Doucette!





Congratulations Class of 2022



Career Pathways Spotlight: Soaring Off the Mountain

Dr. Eric M. Buck, Director

What Lies Ahead for the Class of 2022

Saturday, May 7, saw our class of 2022 graduates cross the stage and receive their diplomas. Naturally, we wonder what adventures they will pursue next.

Several will be attending graduate school, while another is setting out on a path to film direction. One graduate will study to be an accountant at SNHU, and one will work for Magdalen in admissions. Other graduates are heading into various kinds of teaching jobs as well as more diverse fields such as artisanal craftsmanship.

The places our graduates are going include greater Boston, New York City, Washington, DC, Kansas, and various towns in south-central New Hampshire.

There will be at least one wedding among them in the coming year, and the graduate who is already married is expecting his first child this fall.

We are proud that our graduates will pursue a variety of interests and arenas as they venture forth from Magdalen. We wish them well!

Annual Cardinal Newman Teaching Institute in Full Swing

This May, four of our students have participated in a three-week teaching internship in the Cardinal Newman Teaching Institute, held at nearby Mount Royal Academy. Each weekday, the students spend the full day on MRA's campus. They observe teaching and receive instruction in various topics related to the craft of education from experienced MRA teachers. The four students report that, although teaching is exhausting, they are loving it and learning a great deal. The whole experience is a valuable opportunity in discerning a sense of vocation in teaching. Likewise, the Mount Royal staff values the energy and practical assistance our students provide in bringing the liberal arts to young people and forming them according to the pattern of Christ.



Overheard on Our Podcast

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

Episode 33: Dr. Anthony Esolen on *Sex and the Unreal City*

"In this area, the Church is more materialist than the materialists. ... The Church is rooted in the sense that material reality is good. The sexes are good as such."

"If you lose a sense that the sexes are for each other, it becomes much more difficult for young men and women to sense that their natural destiny is for [heterosexual] marriage."

"Consent is a woefully insufficient standard for healthy relationships. People who play Russian Roulette consent. Dualists consent. The consent doesn't make evil behavior good; it just multiplies the number of people who engage in it."

Episode 34: Our Essential Moment - Mary Eberstadt's Charge to Magdalen Graduates

"These graduates need to be witnesses to beauty and truth in an age that increasingly believes in neither thing. They are especially important now because they have spent years steeped in exactly those things. Their education here at Magdalen College is the skeleton key to treasures—treasures of Western civilization that a lot of their peers know nothing about."

"The wider world needs their witness as Catholics in the public square. ... We live in a moment made essential by what's happening at the Supreme Court right now. ... It gives them a very special charge."

[Listen at Magdalen.edu/podcasts](http://Magdalen.edu/podcasts)

Student Life Spotlight: Farewell Traditions

Sophia Harne, Class of '23

As different feast days mark the times and seasons of the liturgical year, so do collegiate festivities celebrate the stages and transitions occurring in the lives of Magdalen students. Each year, as the spring semester comes to a close, the community's focus turns toward the seniors. As thesis discussions conclude and classes come to an end, we begin to realize that soon the Class of 2022 will no longer be with us.

This is a time when conversations begin to center around plans for graduation, and the seniors prepare for convocation. They will soon set out into a new deep, answering the particular call that God has for each one of them. All of this causes a sense of gratitude to permeate campus life—underclassmen

celebrate the seniors at a Senior Goodbye, and seniors express their gratitude for faculty and staff by hosting a formal Senior Dinner.

Traditionally hosted by the Juniors, the Senior Goodbye commemorates the senior class in a special way. Each senior is presented with an award that characterizes who they have been as a person over their four years at Magdalen, and students perform songs, skits, and other acts dedicated to their fellow students individually and as a whole. This year, the awards included "The Little Prince Award," the "St. Joseph Award," and "The Bougie Sophist Award." Among the many acts were performances by the Milliken brothers, a skit demonstrating the ever-so-practical benefits of having a philosophy degree (done in honor of the many philosophy majors graduating), and a scene from *King Lear* (one of their favorites from last year's production) performed for the final time. The evening concluded with a slideshow covering the seniors' adventures over the past four years.

