



Newsletter of the THOMAS MORE COLLEGE of LIBERAL ARTS

COMMUNITAS

Summer 2020

TRUE GREATNESS

THOMAS MORE AS STATESMAN

*By Walter J. Thompson,
Academic Dean*

Thomas More was a great man—arguably the greatest of his age, and among the greatest of any age.

More was great in his natural gifts—in his keenness of mind, liveliness of imagination, capacity of memory; in his gentleness, geniality, joviality, sobriety, and equanimity. He was gifted, both intellectually and temperamentally, and he knew whom to thank for his gifts.

But More was greater still in his cultivation of those gifts—in his single-minded pursuit of learning and virtue. Of himself, without much encouragement from his family, he eagerly sought wisdom, human and divine, applying himself to the study of humane letters and theology. He was a student of the great poets, orators, historians, and philosophers of antiquity,

both Latin and Greek. Though critical of the academic theology of his time, he was a student of theology rightly understood, a discipline rooted in the study of Sacred Scripture, and modeled upon the example and teaching of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church.

And he did not consider his studies merely preparatory, something to be gotten through for the sake of getting on to bigger and better things. He continued to pursue learning throughout his life. Even when pressed by the many demands of domestic and civil life, he would steal time—largely from eating and sleeping—for study and writing. More, who had lectured on St. Augustine's *City of God* as a young man, had learned from that great saint that, "it is the love of truth which seeks a holy leisure, while it is under the impetus of love that we should undertake righteous business. If this

latter burden is not imposed on us, we should devote our freedom to the search for and contemplation of truth. But if it is imposed on us, it is to be undertaken because of the impetus of love; and even then the delight in the pursuit of truth should not be entirely forsaken. For if these pleasures were to be taken away from us, our burden might prove too great for us." (*De civitate Dei*, XIX.19)

But besides and even before learning, More cultivated the virtues—not only the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude, but also the social virtues of truthfulness, friendliness, and wit, and the distinctively Christian virtues of piety, meekness, patience, forbearance, kindness, and mercy.

More was great in the virtues he cultivated, of both mind and character.

Continued on page 12



THE THOMAS MORE BANQUET, FEBRUARY 7, 2020

IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF A SAINT 3

CURRICULUM HIGHLIGHTS 4

WISDOM & ELOQUENCE 6


DEFENDING THE FAMILY 7

PUBLIC SERVICE SKILLS 8

THE COMING RESURRECTION 9

THE SOCIETY PAGE 15





COMMUNITAS

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Communitas is published by The Thomas More College of Liberal Arts
thanks to the generous contributions of loyal supporters.

To support this publication go to:
www.ThomasMoreCollege.edu/Support

To subscribe:
www.ThomasMoreCollege.edu/Communitas

Editor Amy Fahey	Publisher William Fahey	Layout Editor Dominic Cassella
----------------------------	-----------------------------------	--



IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF A SAINT

By William Fahey, President

Thomas More's last written work was a letter smuggled out of the Tower of London, written with a piece of charcoal perhaps just a few hours before his execution. It is a letter addressed to his oldest daughter, Meg. The opening of the letter concerns More bidding adieu to people in his household whom he hadn't had an opportunity to say goodbye to, and giving them little mementos.

More closes the letter with a personal address to his daughter, first commenting on the appropriateness of where his impending execution falls in the liturgical year:

"I cumber you, good Margaret, much, but I would be sorry if it should be any longer than tomorrow, because it is St. Thomas' Even and the Octave of St. Peter. I long to go to God. It were a day very meet and convenient for me to do so."

The last sentence More writes is a comment to Meg on her behavior the last time she saw him. In that final encounter, she broke through the armed

guard and crowd twice, threw her arms around her father's neck and kissed him, and received a final blessing from him: "I never liked your manner toward me better than when you kissed me last, for I love when daughterly love and dear charity has no leisure to look toward worldly courtesy."

What a powerful witness to Christian love and to paternal love St. Thomas More provides us with here. What is it that gives More the composure, on the eve of his execution, to write a letter to his oldest daughter, to ask her courteously to say goodbye to his old friends, to tell her he never loved her more than the moment when she put aside the world and embraced him—and then to go happily to his death?

What makes such a man?

I would like briefly to suggest three things that make Thomas More such a compelling model for sanctity and for fatherhood. First, he took very seriously discernment. Second, he practiced a model of household economy that extended to his entire family. And third, he structured each and every day so that

"More didn't have to sacrifice a dynamic public life for a rich spiritual life, or a rich spiritual life for an engaged family life. But in order to pull off this difficult balance he grounded his entire day in prayer, as well as in those things that made him, as Erasmus said, the wisest man in all of Europe."

he could engage in family life without sacrificing his public duties.

More didn't just wonder what he would do in life, spending year after year thinking, "Maybe I'll get married; or maybe I'll join a religious order." There was no lack of clarity in his mind what kind of father he was going to be. John More had spent an enormous amount of time with his son Thomas. The young More was a companion to and observer of his father's life. He has memories of going to St. Paul's, the spiritual center of London, where he would observe the varied walks of life in that great cathedral. When it came time for him to decide his path, he had a sense of what was out there.

More realized as a young man that he was drawn powerfully to two things: God, and women. He wanted to discern: should he be married, or should he be a priest?



Continued on Page 14

CURRICULUM

Burke's *Reflections* on



By Dr. Sara Kitzinger, Visiting Fellow

Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* has long been celebrated for its rhetorical and literary skill. Written as a letter and subsequently published as a political pamphlet, the *Reflections* chiefly refutes two great matters: abstract theories of rights and their enforcement under the name 'rights of man', both of which, he predicts, will make for the destruction of European civility and privilege. This refutation takes the form of an explanation of the English political constitution and concomitant liberties.

How do the English know the constitution of their polity and what liberties are granted therein? In a word: tradition, or, to use Burke's analogy, "as an entailed inheritance." Burke uses the language and imagery of a family estate to explain this analogy. The estate (i.e., the organization of the polity and the privileges therein) is not simply passed down, it is "entailed"—that is, it is limited "to a specified line of heirs, so that it cannot be alienated, devised, or bequeathed." English liberties are legally inherited by those of the present from those of the past, and as such endure. Most importantly, English liberties and the political constitution are not derived from a "general or prior right." But Burke states that the English have not defended tradition for tradition's sake: "we are not guided by the superstition

of antiquarians." Rather, he notes that by considering liberties as an entailed inheritance, the English have been guided "by the spirit of philosophic analogy." With this statement, Burke has offered something ingenious yet curious. He has suggested that the manner in which nature has men live life—that is, in a multigenerational society that defers to the wisdom of the oldest members—is imitated in the exercise of the English constitution. Hence, liberties and privileges are not the result of a declarative document, but the ongoing result of the wisdom of past ages. Their political constitution, without referencing natural rights, "works after the pattern of nature" and so is "the happy effect of following nature."

This description of the English constitution works to expose the French Revolutionaries' 'rights of man' as uncivil, unjust, and contrary to human flourishing. In Burke's mind, abstract rights are suspect because they do not have their beginning in the social experience of common life. Such rights claims do not derive from the existence of men in civil society, and thereby misunderstand the notion of 'right'. As Burke argues prettily, "If civil society be made for the advantage of man, all the advantages for which it is made become his right." 'Real rights', as Burke terms them, are all those goods given by common life in the polity. Any assertion of a condition of men as "born free and equal in rights" does not have its source in the practicable way men live together. Rather, such an assertion will require an act of imagining men outside of practiced social life. This chimera must destroy all those practicable ways of living that have allowed for inequality among men. Burke fears this destruction will mean the complete dismantling of all those ancient humane institutions and customs known as Europe.

If Burke's description of the English constitution serves to condemn the Revolutionaries' ideology, it also works to expose something more about Burke's thinking. Burke very powerfully makes the case for 'real' rights that are such due to the "institution of beneficence" that we call political life. Yet he also states that natural rights "may and do exist" independent of civil society! Moreover, he argues that these same abstract rights are "metaphysically true" but not active upon entering civil society. In fact, a man gives up his original right "that he may secure some liberty" in the polity. This view, of course, is reminiscent of the thought of Thomas Hobbes and the claim that men's natural rights are at odds with political order.

Secondly, if we recall, Burke argues that the English constitution is the result of the wisdom of past ages. Still, the constitution was said to "work after the pattern of nature." What, in fact, is nature here? Burke explains that nature is "wisdom without reflection and above it." This reads like something analogous to the hand of God, but reduced, as it is "without reflection"—that is, without rational exercise. It appears as if free choice has been muted by the immutability of a non-rational 'invisible hand' or general law that acts for social harmony and good human relations. In Burke's explanation, it seems that order is a fruit of time, not a fruit of judgment.

If Burke's political philosophy doesn't offer a way men can identify the good beyond "the method of nature," Burke nevertheless seems to identify the good himself when he weeps, "Nothing is more certain, than that our manners, our civilization . . . have in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles. . . . I mean . . . the nobility and the clergy. . . . Happy if they had all continued to know their indissoluble union, and their proper place!"

H I G H L I G H T S

the French Revolution

By Michael Gonzalez, Class of 2017

Catholic students of the Western tradition are likely to find Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* a rousing and timely call to arms—perhaps almost as timely now as in 1790. On one hand, Burke castigates the secular French revolution for having “no respect for the wisdom of others” and destroying old orders merely because they are old. *Ceterum censeo*, indeed! On the other hand, Burke praises the established order of Christian England, enjoining it on his French correspondent: “We are resolved to keep an established church, an established monarchy, an established aristocracy, and an established democracy, each in the degree it exists, and in no greater.” Burke thus seems to present the familiar dichotomy between defenders of Christian civilization and promoters of reckless innovation. Catholics who have kept up with the “culture wars” will thus be tempted to find in the *Reflections* an early iteration of our own crisis, leaving Burke an apparent ally in the fight to conserve all things Christian. To be sure, Burke is a great defender of the traditional and precedented—that is, of the “home-bred” and prescriptive ways of one's own community. But does the cause of one's own necessarily coincide with the cause of Christianity?

Burke's teaching on precedent stems from a prudential concern about the limits of human reason: “We are afraid to put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason,” he writes in the *Reflections*, “because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations, and of ages.” In short, as Burke succinctly summarizes in another work, the individual is limited where the species is wise, “and when time is given to it, as a species it almost

always acts right.” Surely Burke was not so hidebound a promoter of human tradition as to ascribe equal moral worth to every tradition and precedent. Yet, Burke goes so far in the *Reflections* as to claim that human beings must come to know nature and God's teachings about what is right (that is, natural and divine law) through the “entailed inheritance derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to posterity; as an estate especially belonging to the people of this kingdom without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right.” In short, Burke was a pessimist about the ability of human beings to discern transcendent truths outside the traditions of their particular communities.

At a time when Catholics struggle against secular modernism to live, teach, and pray in accord with Sacred Tradition, it is difficult to fault Burke for praising human tradition so strongly. Yet, eventually a Catholic reader must part ways with Burke. On one hand, Catholicism is traditional: the Deposit of Faith contains the Sacred Tradition handed down by the apostles, but there are also fallible, human traditions that contain good things. On the other hand, as Pope St. Gregory the Great taught the English through St. Augustine of Canterbury, “things should not be loved

for the sake of places, but places for the sake of good things.” Christ Himself drew a stark contrast between His Way and the way of one's own community (Mt. 15:1-3). As G.K. Chesterton—an unlikely but ardent critic of Burke—argues in *What's Wrong with the World*, “[Burke] did not attack the Robespierre doctrine with the old mediaeval doctrine of *jus divinum* ... he attacked it with the modern argument of scientific relativity; in short, the argument of evolution. He suggested that humanity was everywhere molded by or fitted to its environment and institutions ... ‘I know nothing of the rights of men,’ he said, ‘but I know something of the rights of Englishmen.’ There you have the essential atheist.” Burke may offer sound warnings about reckless innovation, but his brand of conservatism is ultimately insufficient for the Catholic reader, who knows that a human being must search outside the tradition of one's community for that which is “ever ancient, ever new.” Robespierre may have defied old orders merely because they were old, but Burke comes near the opposite extreme in making the ancestral way of one's own community (one's historical “environment”) a good in itself and the exclusive means to knowing the truth.



MICHAEL GONZALEZ, CLASS OF 2017

WISDOM & ELOQUENCE

By Daniel Leahy, Class of 2019

With the presidential primaries once again upon us, I am reminded of an incident at a parish I attended during the 2016 election cycle. A Hillary Clinton supporter chose to spend her day of rest handing out political pamphlets on the steps of the Church moments before Mass. The pastor asked her to leave, and she asked for his boss. So our good priest promptly recited the phone number of the Bishop's office, and so she left, presumably to leave a voicemail. Later he explained that he wanted to keep the Church a sanctuary, a place set apart from the outside world.

This little episode is typical of election season. For it is a season of noise, a season in which every political pundit seems to be filled with the spirit of that irritated pamphleteer.

On the campus of Thomas More College, however, we find ourselves rather removed from the frenzy of our democracy's factions. Teachers are not protesting against Donald Trump, nor are students protesting against teachers. Yet our quiet is not a sign of neglect. Our beautiful campus is not an Epicurean garden where we shrink from the troubles of our world, to the displeasure of our patron, who struggled so mightily amidst the troubles of his. The peace of

our campus serves a purpose: we refrain from shouting, so that we may think. And although we are not a College devoted principally to politics, our Great Books curriculum allows students to pursue answers to the great political questions.

This means that students are not immediately throwing themselves into the disputes over the quality of this or that particular tax reform. Instead, they are wrestling with the more universal political questions. When the Sadducees and the Herodians berated our Blessed Lord with the question, "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?", He directed their minds to a principle of justice by uttering the immortal words, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

A study guide from my time as a student is a perfect illustration of this point. One of the questions asks for Aristotle's answer to the first of all political questions, to the question no politician can afford to neglect: What is the city ultimately for? Aristotle does not say it is for the protection of an endless list of invented rights, nor does he say it is for sustaining an ever-growing GDP. What he does say, however, is an antidote to so much political chaos, even though it is an answer far from the minds of modern politicians. He says the city is for the beautiful or noble life, which is what he understands happiness to be. And, of course, what happiness is and how man can acquire it is an inquiry present throughout the College curriculum, whether students are reading Aeschylus or Aquinas.

Such pertinent inquiries, so often ignored, should be the concern of anyone interested in politics. But if a man wishes to know how to best serve his city, he must pursue not only wisdom, but eloquence. Again, Thomas More College does not fail to cultivate

this power in its students. Like all Great Books colleges, Thomas More brings every student into contact with those very thinkers who wedded wisdom to eloquence. But unlike our peers, Thomas More makes especially rigorous demands of its students as writers. Sixty essays, three courses devoted to writing, two courses delving more deeply into poetry, a Junior Project, and a Senior Thesis refine a student's power to express with grace and clarity what he has gained through careful study.

The pursuit of truth and eloquence continues outside of the classroom as well. The Milk Street Society, named for the place of our patron's birth, is a student group that provides its members—through reading, discussion, and lectures—the occasion to reflect still more on significant political questions. Some of these questions are more particular: "What is meant by conservatism?" Some are more universal: "What is the ideal relationship between the Church and the state?" Thomas More College is also home to the St. John Chrysostom Guild of Oratory, a student group formed so that its members might in common consider the principles of rhetoric, study history's great addresses, carry out rhetorical exercises, and organize student debates.

Certainly those of us at the College live free from the chaos of politics; yet we are not free from the consideration of politics. Moreover, this consideration leaves graduates more prepared to meet the chaos. We trust, then, that the great martyr statesman of England who is our patron will look happily upon the college for its efforts to pass on political wisdom and eloquence. For these efforts are nothing other than a labor to share with students something of the light that helped guide St. Thomas More safely through the snares of a troubled world, from the start of his political career to the end of his heroic life, when he spoke those blessed words: "I die the King's good servant, and God's first."



DANIEL LEAHY, CLASS OF 2019

DEFENDING THE FAMILY

AN INTERVIEW WITH EMILY LAFATA, CLASS OF 2018

By Magdalena Dajka, Class of 2020

During their four years at Thomas More College, students are steeped in the intellectual tradition of the West and in the beauties of Catholic culture; they receive an intellectual and moral formation that few institutions can equal nowadays. The education at the College enriches each student personally, but it also equips him to be a light shining for Christ in the darkness of the modern world. That world has all but abandoned truth, beauty, and goodness, and is warring against the sanctity of life, marriage, and the family. The alumni of Thomas More College use what they have learned here to combat the confusion and darkness of modern culture, witnessing to the truth of Christ in their different ways, whether it be through their jobs, in their interactions with people, or in striving to live out the duties of their states in life as well as possible. Some alumni are more directly involved in the political fight for the truth. One such alumna is Emily LaFata, '18, who now works in Washington, D. C. for Alliance Defending Freedom, a non-profit legal organization that advocates for traditional values. In this interview, she speaks about her work and how her education at TMC has influenced her life after graduation.

Can you tell us a little about your family background and why you chose to come to Thomas More?

I am the oldest of 12 children, and I grew up in Northeast Pennsylvania. My parents homeschooled me, and though my curriculum was not strictly classical, I read and fell in love with many beautiful works of literature—first the Laura Ingalls Wilder series, and then the works of many authors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: Lewis, Tolkien, Dickens, Austen, Bronte, and others. I knew that I wanted to study literature in



EMILY LAFATA, CLASS OF 2018

a program that would challenge me, and I was looking for classes where the ideas of the authors, rather than a modern hermeneutic, would be presented in the classroom and taken seriously. The curriculum at Thomas More College was highly recommended by family friends, so I applied.

Where have you been working since you graduated from the College?

In Fall 2018, I interned with the Communications team at the Heritage Foundation, a conservative think tank in Washington D.C. Afterwards, I joined the Media Communications team at Alliance Defending Freedom (ADF) in D.C. ADF is a non-profit legal organization that advocates for the sanctity of life, marriage, and the family, and for religious liberty.

What does your job entail?

I am on the Media Communications team at ADF, and in my current role, I help with both administrative and media relations tasks. On some days, I help with various administrative tasks and scheduling, on others I assist with logistics for events, respond to reporters and producers, draft quotes, book

media interviews—I really just jump in wherever my team needs me. I've learned a lot about earned media and the work that goes into a PR lift, and I'm excited to continue to grow in my role.

How did your time at Thomas More help prepare you for your job?

The readings and detailed feedback from professors on writing assignments helped me to think and communicate with more precision and clarity. I grew more confident as I continued to write, and through practice and guidance I was able to develop my own writing style. I also worked for a year on the events team for Mercy Hall (the College's *beaux arts* mansion in the heart of Nashua), and I learned from my supervisor about all of the details and preparation required for a well-executed event. I loved that job, and am happy to be continuing to help with events in my role now. And as I studied in Rome, I discovered that I love many aspects of city life—quite the change for a girl from the suburbs!

Continued on Page 13

PUBLIC SERVICE A ROLE MODEL AND

**By Hon. Maureen Mooney,
Class of 1997**

Note: Maureen Mooney, '97, recently retired as Dean of School at the Founders Academy, a public charter school for grades 6 – 12, to run for public office in New Hampshire. She is a member of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, and Corporate Secretary and Trustee of the Thomas More College of Liberal Arts.

Those seeking public office should prepare for this arena. It requires the right example in the form of a role model, and the appropriate skills provided by the College that bears his name. St. Thomas More—the man—is the role model, and Thomas More—the College of Liberal Arts—provides the skills.

While serving in public office, I realized how well Thomas More, both the man and the College, had prepared me. In what follows, I hope to offer some reflections on the qualities of St. Thomas More relevant to the modern public servant, and the necessary skills the College cultivates to prepare one for public service.

St. Thomas More: Role Model

On October 31, 2000, St. Pope John Paul II named St. Thomas More the “heavenly patron of statesmen and politicians.” In his Apostolic Letter, “Proclaiming Saint Thomas More Patron of Statesmen and Politicians,” the Holy Father stated:

There are many reasons for proclaiming Thomas More Patron of statesmen and people in public life. Among these is the need felt by the world of politics and public administration for credible role models able to indicate the path of truth at a time in history when difficult challenges and crucial responsibilities are increasing.

The story of St. Thomas More is obviously one of courage, virtue and patience. However, a closer look at his life offers deeper guidance for those in modern public life, particularly in coping with injustices, defending faith, and unconditionally trusting God.

Suffering Injustice

A primary reason for entering public life is to work toward and hopefully achieve justice. Although this is a noble and attainable goal, there are instances in which public servants encounter

injustice. Injustice is never easy to understand or face.

St. Thomas More suffered horrible injustices. Accusations against him were unfounded; his friends betrayed him; his trial was unfairly conducted; and his sentence was grossly disproportionate to the false allegations. He hungered and thirsted for righteousness but did not find it in this life. How did he possibly cope in the face of such injustice? As he says in his Psalm of Detachment (1534): “To bewail my sins passed, for the purging of them patiently to suffer adversity; Gladly to bear my purgatory here, to be joyful of tribulations; To walk the narrow way that leadeth to life, to bear the cross with Christ.” Thomas More met injustice with prayer, the acceptance of suffering, and reliance on the grace and example of Christ. Inevitably, the modern statesman will encounter injustice despite the sincerest attempts to avoid it. St. Thomas More’s example can lend guidance in such trying circumstances.

Faith vs. Popularity

When entering the public arena, holding unpopular positions on issues can test one’s faith. Practically speaking, succeeding in elected politics necessitates popularity. There may be times when one’s Faith is unpopular, challenged or even condemned.

St. Thomas More’s Faith clashed with the popular beliefs of his day. His rejection of King Henry’s illicit marriage and self-proclaimed title as Head of the Church of England was grounded in Catholic faith and morality. “Little and little utterly to cast off the world, and rid my mind of all the business thereof.” (Psalm of Detachment, 1534). St. Thomas More remained steadfast to the promises of Christ and never wavered on the inconsistent opinions of mankind. His uncompromising devotion as a Disciple of Christ serves as the exemplary reaction to immorality.



MAUREEN MOONEY, CLASS OF 1997

VICE SKILLS AND HIS NAMESAKE

Trust in God

Public service can create precarious situations, especially when tensions heighten and human nature disappoints. It is then that we are called as Christians to trust God unconditionally. St. Thomas More demonstrated trust even when situations seemed unbearable. “To set my mind fast upon thee, and not to hang upon the blast of men’s mouths.” (Psalm of Detachment, 1534). The ability to disregard the noise of untruths and immorality in order to trust in God’s will for one’s life seems impossible, if not for heavenly grace and the good example of St. Thomas More. As More advised in his letter to his daughter Margaret: “For verily trust in the goodness of God, seem it never so evil to this world, it shall indeed in another world be for the best.” (1535) In the instances when public service results in being treated with contempt, consider St. Thomas More, who reacted such contempt by imitating Christ.

Thomas More, the College of Liberal Arts

Whether preparing for the Junior Project, delivering the Senior Thesis, or learning to better understand humanity from the classics, the education I received at Thomas More College was invaluable in preparing me to serve in public office.

The Junior Project

The nearly year-long preparation for the Junior Project culminated in an oral exam, during which the full faculty joined you around the table in the library and asked questions for an hour on your subject. All the while, there were no notes or papers other than a bibliography. The student could only rely on preparation and knowledge. Afterward, the student would sit in another library room awaiting the results of the oral exam.

Similarly, in the legislature and elsewhere, a public servant often speaks before committees and commissions



LEFT TO RIGHT: CASEY JACKSON AND EMMA CULBERTSON, CLASS OF 2023

charged with a specific area of public policy. This takes preparation and an ability to listen and respond accurately to questions and challenges. This is precisely what the Junior Project prepared us for.

The Senior Thesis

During Senior year we were required to prepare a thesis. The student presented the thesis to the entire college community. Peers and professors asked questions to challenge the presenter. This process taught students how to impart large amounts of information quickly and understandably, to argue persuasively, and to defend a theory or position.

The skills obtained researching and delivering the Senior Thesis were optimal for arguing on the floor of the New Hampshire House of Representatives. Addressing a legislative body of 400 members on a proposed bill or constitutional amendment requires preparation, delivery, answering on-the-spot questions, critical thinking, and persuasive arguing.

Understanding Humanity

Human behavior is timeless throughout literature, philosophy and political science. Reading the classics and actively discussing and debating them in class at Thomas More College helped reveal fundamental truths about unchanging human nature. Those in public life encounter all personality types, personal beliefs and styles. Knowing what motivates and persuades people proves very helpful. Thomas More College provides an unparalleled foundation for understanding human behavior.

Thomas More: Admiration and Preparation

Modern public service is an arena where both guidance and training are essential. Graduates of Thomas More College are well suited to enter the arena with the ideal role model as its namesake and skills acquired over four years of study. Admiration for St. Thomas More, combined with academic preparation at The Thomas More College of Liberal Arts, have proven indispensable to public service.

THE COMING F

AS I AM LITIGATING IT AT

By Michael C. Gilleran

Note: Michael C. Gilleran is a litigation attorney in Boston, Massachusetts and Vice-Chair of the Board of Trustees of Thomas More College. The views expressed herein are his own and not those of his law firm. On June 30, as this issue was going to press, the Supreme Court decided in favor of Ms. Espinoza.

Imagine if there was a program to help fund Catholic secondary schooling, including the costs of Catholic homeschooling. Further imagine that such a program was not under the control of large corporate donors who demanded that it be Catholic in name only, or worse, that it only help with inner city schools. Not possible, right? Wrong!

I was at the U.S. Supreme Court the morning of January 24th for oral arguments in the landmark case of *Espinoza v. Montana Department of Revenue*. No, I was not there to argue the case in for one side or the other; I was there because I had helped write a friend-of-the-court brief in favor of the side supporting a funding program for alternative schooling.

Yes, the Supreme Court justices were there in the majestic courtroom, with Corinthian columns behind them and a five-story high coffered ceiling above them. The seats were all packed. The reporters were all straining to get every word, the slightest nuance of how a justice might be leaning. And the public lines to get into the hearing were long, with only a very small number of those making it into the courtroom.

Talk about a momentous occasion—this was it! The Supreme Court had already ruled that public school vouchers could be used at religious schools as long as the choice to attend a religious school was a purely individual and private decision without any state involvement. And the Supreme Court had also already



MICHAEL C. GILLERAN WITH CARDINAL RAYMOND BURKE

ruled that where a state made available a program that could benefit anyone, religious people or institutions could not be excluded. So why not allow state-based scholarship programs, funded by state tax credits, that could be used to fund alternative schooling, even religious schooling, where the choice of schooling was solely up to the scholarship recipient?

The answer is ancient state laws, enacted with rank anti-Catholic bias, known as Blaine Amendments. These Blaine Amendments are named after the 1870's U.S. House Speaker, James G. Blaine who, it so happens, was running for President and seeking anti-Catholic votes. Blaine sought to enact a constitutional amendment barring use of public funds for any "sectarian purpose," which in those days was plain code for use at any Catholic school. Blaine's amendment fell short of the necessary two-thirds approval in the U.S. Senate by just four votes. But then many states went on to enact Blaine Amendments as part of their state constitutions, with the same language and the same invidious anti-Catholic bias.

I know this story well because I have worked against the Blaine Amendment in my state, Massachusetts, for over twenty years. And before me, many others labored long, hard, and unsung, for the same purpose but without

success. Our Blaine Amendment was the direct product of virulent hatred of a "foreign ecclesiastical power," and designed to prevent Catholic children from escaping the general Protestantism then taught in the public schools. These Blaine Amendments are the last roadblock, the final outward-facing palm at the schoolhouse door.

The relief sought by Plaintiff Kendra Espinoza is a court ruling declaring the Montana Blaine Amendment to be in violation of the U.S. Constitution and therefore ineffective in barring Montana's tax-credit funded scholarship program. Ms. Espinoza uses the scholarship funding from the Montana program to help pay for her two daughters to attend a nondenominational Christian school. A single mother, she lacks the funds to pay for such schooling on her own. Her avowed purpose is that the religious values she teaches at home should be mirrored in what her daughters are taught in the classroom. The Montana Department of Revenue blocked the scholarship program based on the Montana Blaine Amendment. However, the scholarship program and Ms. Espinoza's two daughters got a reprieve while the case challenging the Montana Blaine Amendment is waiting to be decided by the U.S. Supreme Court.

RESURRECTION

THE U.S. SUPREME COURT

Ms. Espinoza's legal argument basically is that the Montana Blaine Amendment bars recipients from access to the funding for an otherwise neutral, publicly-available program, and from using such funding, based on strictly private choice, at a religious school. Ms. Espinoza's lawyers, a crack team at the Institute for Justice in Washington, say such a bar from using a neutral program for religious purposes violates the non-discrimination clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and the free exercise of religion clause of the First Amendment. They also say that the anti-Catholic bias animating the Blaine Amendments likewise renders them unconstitutional. Many believe that based on past decisions of the Court and its current make-up that Ms. Espinoza stands a very good chance of prevailing.

So what actually happens if Ms. Espinoza wins? The roadblocks will finally fall. States can then enact tax-credit funded scholarship programs, free of any fear of Blaine Amendments, where the scholarship funds can be used at religious schools and even to pay for the costs of home schooling. These programs would give religious people a real chance to escape publicly-controlled schools that are increasingly hostile to religion in general and especially to religious people. Of course, none of this will be easy politically, but then the problem will be politics and not state constitutional barriers.

Many expect us to prevail in the *Espinoza* case. At the hearing on January 24th Justice Kavanaugh said of the Blaine Amendments: "They're certainly rooted in grotesque religious bigotry against Catholics." And Justice

Alito said to counsel for Montana who sought to justify its Blaine Amendment: "Basically what you're saying is ... it's permissible to discriminate on the basis of religion. It's not permissible, ever, to discriminate on the basis of race. That's what you're saying." These words were mortifying to all who heard them. However, the Justices we expected to oppose our position opposed it. But we counted tentatively, even probably, five votes in favor of our position and four against it. That's enough.

New funding for Catholic schooling, and even new funding for Catholic homeschooling, could be coming. And that funding would not be under the control of those who support it in name only. Resurrection is the right word for it.



THE MILK STREET SOCIETY AT THE MASSACHUSETTS FAMILY INSTITUTE GALA

THOMAS MORE AS STATESMAN

Continued from page 1



ST. THOMAS MORE & HIS FAMILY BY HANS HOLBEIN THE YOUNGER

But he was greater still in the use he made of them, according to the circumstances in which he found himself, in his work as a husband and father, lawyer, diplomat, councilor, defender of the faith, and finally, martyr. Though by nature a lover of liberty and leisure, More knew that anyone in a position to act for the good of his community has the responsibility to do what his circumstances, rank, and talents allow.

According to his friend Erasmus, More had to be compelled to enter public life, “for no man was ever more consumed with ambition to enter a court than he was to avoid it.” (Letter to Ulrich von Hutten) This is surely an overstatement, but it does reflect More’s remarkable detachment from those worldly goods—wealth, honor, power—desire for which draws many to court and occupies them in competition thereafter. No man was less deceived by the allure of wealth, power, and glory than More, because no man better knew the fleeting nature of such goods and their inability fully to satisfy the human heart.

More, who had studied the Greek philosophers, had learned from them that he alone should rule who does not seek his happiness in ruling, who knows that there is something better than ruling, and strives to lead his fellow citizens toward that end. In the epitaph

he wrote shortly after retiring from public life, More singled out a few of his achievements: that “he witnessed, in the capacity of ambassador, to his great joy, the renewal of a peace treaty between the supreme monarchs of Christendom and the restoration of a long-desired peace to the world;” that “he so conducted himself all through this series of high offices or honors that his Excellent Sovereign found no fault with his service;” and that “neither did he make himself odious to the nobles nor unpleasant to the populace.” In all his public service, More sought the common weal of the realm and of Christendom—that peace or ordered concord of mind with mind that arises within and between human communities when each member receives his due. This too More had learned from St. Augustine: “The peace of all things lies in the tranquillity of order; and order is the disposition of equal and unequal things in such a way as to give to each its proper place.” (*De civitate Dei*, XIX.13)

Even when Henry’s intention to separate England from the larger body of Christendom made it impossible for More to continue as Chancellor, he strove to remain, until the end, “the King’s good servant, and God’s first.” In our individualistic age, we assume that More set being true to himself and his conscience above his duties to king and common weal. But More’s position

was more complex, and more complete: “the faithful subject is more bound to his conscience and his soul than to anything else in the world, provided his conscience ... does not raise scandal or sedition.” More made clear to Henry that his refusal to please him in all he wished derived not from preferring his own will to that of his king, but from preferring the law of God to both. Until the end, More acceded to the just demands of the king, for the sake of the common good of which he was steward. But he would not accede to more, to save himself or to please the king, lest he imperil his soul.

No man accomplished more through his learning and virtue, no man attained greater heights of power and influence, no man was more universally renowned for his achievements, and yet no man so readily relinquished what he had never set his heart on, when the greatness of his position was no longer compatible with his duty as a Christian.

In the end, the greatness of Thomas More was the greatness of a Christian, the greatness of one who has learned, through the example of his Lord, that greatness does not exist merely for the exaltation of the one who possesses it, but to be spent for the good of all. He knew that whoever among us would be great, whoever would be first, must become the last of all and the servant of all. (Cf. Mark 9:35; Matt 20:25-28)

The final prayer More composed in the Tower while awaiting execution concluded with a petition *pro inimicis*—for his enemies. In it More asked the good Lord, in his mercy and wisdom, “to amend and redress” both his and his enemies’ faults and so to bring them all to the joys of heaven.

To the end, Thomas More remained the good servant of the merciful God who desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth.

DEFENDING THE FAMILY

Continued from page 7



How did your time at Thomas More College help prepare you not only for your work but also for living a good life in the world?

There are three things in my life that were shaped by my time at Thomas More College: a new approach to leisure, my love for our patron, St. Thomas More, and a deeper understanding of the role of friendship. I used to think leisure was just “free time”, and I hadn’t given a lot of thought to the meaning of the word or the most fitting use of it. In my four years at TMC, I came to realize that study and the pursuit of wisdom are not just work—they are a beautiful form of leisure. I came away hungry to learn and to continue what will be a lifelong journey of pursuing wisdom. Also, I had the opportunity to study the life and writings of St. Thomas More in some of the classes and in my senior thesis. I loved reading his ideas about how we are called to participate in society and to order it for the better, and I admire his great intellect, his prudence, and his joy and kindness. I pray to him as I continue to work in D.C. and discern my own calling to serve God and others. Thomas More was aptly described by

his contemporary Erasmus as “a man born and made for friendship,” and as I continue studying More in my graduate work, I love to contemplate his example and reflect on how true friendship can shape life. As I think of lessons I took away from college, they all have the same thing in common: they were a result of a friendship I had built with different professors and their patience with me in lessons and conversations, or from discussions that I had with friends and siblings about ideas introduced in classes or life in general. It’s no accident that the great philosophers all talk about friendship.

Do you have plans to develop your career or continue your education?

I’m currently pursuing my M.A. at Hillsdale College’s Van Andel Graduate School of Government, a liberal-arts based program designed for full-time professionals in D.C. I’m delighted to be studying the writings of the founding fathers and framers of our Constitution, and revisiting Shakespeare, Augustine, Aquinas, and the great Thomas More. In my career, I’m continuing to gain experience in both events and media

communications, and I am working to move forward in that direction. I know that at some point, I’ll likely pursue a career in education, but I’m still discerning that path.

Would you recommend a liberal arts education to those who are contemplating working in your field?

Without a doubt, spending time with the greatest authors and ideas of the ages is helpful to anyone who wants to communicate and persuade for a living. Not all aspects of communications and PR can be learned in a classroom, but the liberal arts provide a solid foundation to build on. It was a gift to spend time with Homer, Dante, Milton, Shakespeare, and countless other poets and philosophers who shaped language and left a testament to the great power of the word. Studying the classics also made me more receptive to learning, which is a good habit to bring into the communications field.

Any other words of wisdom or advice?

My wisdom at this point in my life is sophomoric at best, but I’ll share a couple phrases that have helped me. During my senior year of college, Dr. Fahey exhorted all of the students at Thomas More to “do hard things.” I loved this phrase, and it inspired me to go far out of my comfort zone and beyond the arbitrary limits I once set for myself. For me, the challenge “do hard things” led me to seek out a career and life in an environment I once found intimidating, to work on mastering different technical skills, and to embark in a serious study of government and political principles. I certainly fail every day in my efforts, but I am encouraged by that phrase and by the words of Benedict XVI: “The world offers you comfort, but you were not made for comfort. You were made for greatness.”

IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF A SAINT

Continued from page 3

When it came time to make a decision, he spent time in a Carthusian charter house in London and participated in the life of the monks. He allowed himself to discern by considering both the religious and married life, and he was able to find a path forward in a unique way that presents a great model to Christian laymen today. He chose to create a lifestyle that allowed him to pursue holiness dynamically and richly.

More was very concerned with the economy, the structure of the household. His household was famous, perhaps the most famous in his day in all of Europe. His first home in London had a cloistered section with a garden and a sort of menagerie, including a pet monkey. This cloistered garden formed a part of his end-of-the-day practice, unwinding and observing and enjoying nature with his children. But it only took him fifteen minutes to walk out of

his house and get to work. Yet of greater importance to More was that it only took him fifteen minutes to get back home to his family, to pray, converse, and entertain. In the 1520's, he moved to Chelsea, an estate with thirty-seven acres which he developed into marvelous gardens. Nearly one hundred people lived in this household. More always found the balance between preserving a quiet, even interior life, and being fully engaged in the world. He did it in such a way that his children could witness the fullness of his life, that they could see and know and were part of what he did.

More didn't have to sacrifice a dynamic public life for a rich spiritual life, or a rich spiritual life for an engaged family life. But in order to pull off this difficult balance he grounded his entire day in prayer, as well as in those things that made him, as Erasmus said, the wisest man in all of Europe.

We all strive to imitate Christ. Sometimes in order to do that, it is best to start simply with the friends of Christ, those who have striven for mastery themselves. The beauty of looking at the friends of Christ is that often you discover that, as in the case of St. Thomas More, the secret to success is quite simple: chiseling out time in the day, exercising self-discipline, and opening your mind to great learning and your soul to the graces that will make you—without any diminishment of your own personality—a magnificent husband, father, and friend.

Note: This article is adapted from an address given by President Fahey for an online conference entitled "Rediscovering Fatherhood." For a full recording of that talk, please visit:

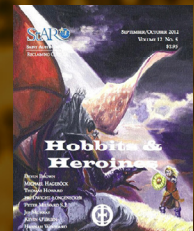
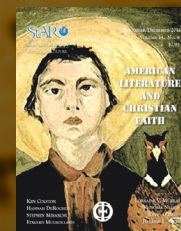
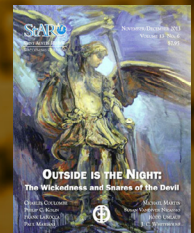
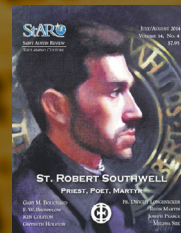
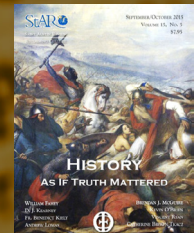
restorationchristianculture.org/event/rediscovering-fatherhood.

StAR

SAINT AUSTIN REVIEW RECLAIMING CULTURE

The *St. Austin Review* (StAR) is the premier international journal of Catholic culture, literature, and ideas. In its pages, printed every two months, some of the brightest and most vigorous minds meet to explore the people, ideas, movements, and events that shape and misshape our world.

Subscribe to the Saint Austin Review today to support their mission of evangelizing today's culture through the power of goodness, truth, and beauty.



staustinreview.org

THE SOCIETY PAGE



“The glory of God is man fully alive, and the life of man is the vision of God.”—St. Irenaeus

Left to right, top to bottom:

WEDDINGS: Paul Guenzel '14 and Madeline Steigerwald; Jonathan Wanner '14 and Ana Elena Volz; Kevin Ang '17 and Paola Copto; John Tardiff '17 and Clarissa James.

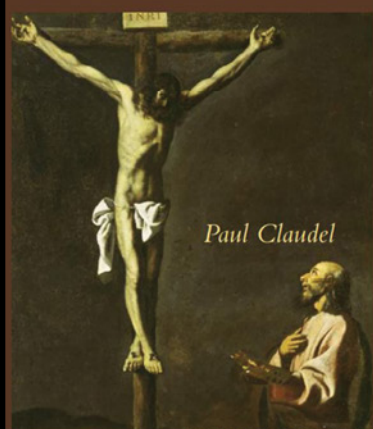
BIRTHS: Sebastian Naccash, son of Zachary Naccash '18 and Marguerite (née Deardurff) '18; Eloïse Aurelia Lajoie, daughter of Peter Lajoie '19 and Theresa (née Mazzarella) '19; Beatrice Catherine Sinclair Derham, daughter of Paul Derham '17 and Ella (née Fordyce) '19; Jude Deardurff, son of Vince Deardurff '15 and Allison (née Welton) '16; Karen Lourdes Antonia Schroder, daughter of Joseph Schroder '17 and Miriam (née Collins) '17; Sebastian Ryan Fagan, son of Ryan Fagan '19 and Brigitte (née Nelson) '19; Camilla Faustina Gonzalez, daughter of Michael Gonzalez '17 and Marlene (née Schuler) '17.

To share your alumni news and pictures in the next *Communitas* visit:
<https://thomasmorecollege.edu/alumni/communitas-submissions>



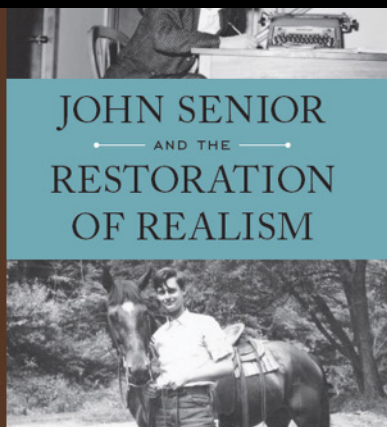
THOMAS MORE COLLEGE
of LIBERAL ARTS
Six Manchester Street
Merrimack, NH 03054

A POET BEFORE THE CROSS



Paul Claudel

JOHN SENIOR
— AND THE —
RESTORATION
OF REALISM



FATHER FRANCIS BETHEL, O.S.B.
a monk of Clear Creek Abbey

The Conversion of Augustine



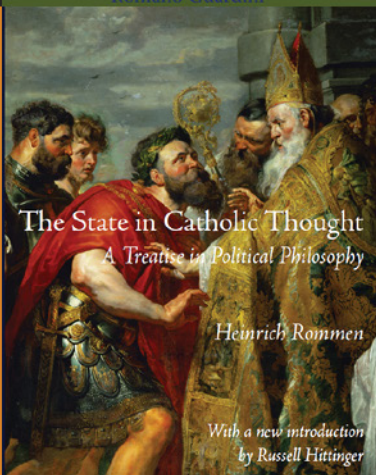
Romano Guardini



St. Thomas
Aquinas
and the
Mendicant
Controversies:
Three Translations



The Satirical Letters
of
SAINT JEROME



The State in Catholic Thought
A Treatise in Political Philosophy

Heinrich Rommen

With a new introduction
by Russell Hittinger

“FOR THOSE WHO STILL SEEK
THE TRUE, THE GOOD, AND
THE BEAUTIFUL THROUGH THE
PRINTING OF NEW AND NEWLY
REDISCOVERED WORKS.”

WWW.PRESS.THOMASMORECOLLEGE.EDU

SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS