Newsletter of the THOMAS MORE COLLEGE *of* LIBERAL ARTS

COMMUNITAS

Fall-Winter 2026

250 YEARS OF TRADITION

HOW LIBERAL EDUCATION FORMS AMERICANS FOR CITIZENSHIP

By Paul Jackson, Executive Vice President

On September 17, 1787, upon leaving the Constitutional Convention, Benjamin Franklin was asked what kind of government the delegates had formed, to which Franklin responded, "A Republic, if you can keep it."

As we celebrate our 250th anniversary, there are some good signs we have kept our Republic. The Constitution established to secure and protect God-given natural rights is still intact, and we have a society that allows individuals to live according to reflection and choice, not according to compulsion or coercion. We enjoy religious freedom, and—although in need of constant protection—freedom of speech is prized by many of us.

Franklin's words, though, do indicate that every generation must work to maintain the Republic—and there are real problems we need to face. Progressivism has given rise to an administrative state that resembles an oligarchy more than a republic, while cultural Marxism continues to erode our morality.

But another danger, and one that is increasingly common, is the growing impression that our system is broken beyond repair. In a recent conversation with a friend of the College, I commented that in our curriculum students are taught to appreciate the American political system and how it functions, to which this friend responded, "It functions?" Though said in jest, the comment expressed skepticism.

He is not alone in his cynicism. Pew Research has been surveying Americans on the public's trust in government since

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COMMUNITAS

A COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

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Dr. Walz speaking at *Traditio* (L) and leading a seminar discussion on a work of St. Thomas More (R).

Matthew Walz Serves as College's Visiting Chair

Thomas More College of Liberal Arts is proud to announce that Matthew Walz, PhD, is the College's 2025–2026 St. John Henry Newman Visiting Chair in Catholic Studies.

Dr. Walz is an Associate Professor at the University of Dallas in Irving, TX, where he serves as the Director of Philosophy & Letters and Pre-Theology Programs. He is also the Director of Intellectual Formation at Holy Trinity Seminary. Dr. Walz graduated from Christendom College before earning graduate degrees at the University of Dallas and the Catholic University of America, and he specializes in medieval and ancient philosophy as well as philosophical anthropology. He and his wife Teresa have eight children.

As Visiting Chair, Dr. Walz will be co-teaching classes, leading faculty seminars, participating in the College's biannual *Traditio* readings, and lecturing. "It is a great pleasure and honor to welcome Dr. Walz to our academic community as this year's Visiting Chair," remarked Fellow and Dean Denis Kitzinger. "Dr. Walz's intellectual virtues are rivaled only by his love of the Faith and the Church. He is a true Catholic scholar and teacher. I have already been impressed by his presence on campus, in the classroom, and during our *Traditio* and Convocation exercises."

> *Whenever I come up here, I feel like it's a home away from home and it's such a beautiful setting. I love the tight-knitted feel of this community… united by worship and the liturgical life.*
>
> –Matthew Walz, PhD

"Dr. Walz and I have been friends since our graduate school days, but we have never had a chance to enjoy an intellectual and liturgical life at the same place," reflected Fellow and President William Fahey. "It is good to have a common home at last. Dr. Walz brings years of quiet reflection on St. Thomas Aquinas and other luminaries of our philosophical tradition. We are blessed by his humor and wisdom."

The St. John Henry Newman Visiting Chair in Catholic Studies is supported by a generous donor. Past Visiting Chairs include Dr. Robert Royal, founder and president of the Faith & Reason Institute in Washington, D.C., and esteemed Catholic author Joseph Pearce.

"Faith, Inte
Alumni in

By Jacinta Sigaud, Class of 2026

Military service and a liberal arts education might seem like an odd couple at first glance. One conjures up images of intense discipline, strict hierarchy, and technical know-how. The other suggests open-ended discussions, critical inquiry, and a deep dive into philosophy and history. The perceived dichotomy between these two fields, however, may be a misconception. Four members of the Thomas More College community who have served in the armed forces shared their thoughts on the intersection of the military and the liberal arts.

A graduate of the class of 2013, Vance Van Krieken served as an Infantry Officer in the Army from 2014 to 2020. Before college, Mr. Van Krieken was an active high-school athlete with an interest in philosophy, history, and political thought. Motivated by a desire to understand human nature, governance, and civic responsibility, Mr. Van Krieken decided to pursue a liberal arts education. These same interests would ultimately lead him to "explore military service as a profession of purpose and service."

Mr. Van Krieken's time at the College proved to be deeply formative. "Thomas More's Great Books education provided a foundation in critical thinking, moral reasoning, and ethical reflection within the tradition of Western civilization," he explained. The curriculum helped "give purpose and context behind the military and an officer's role within it—that an officer must develop and cultivate virtue in himself and in his unit: courage, temperance, fortitude, and justice." Mr. Van Krieken noticed a great deal of overlap between the culture of the Army and the principles outlined in the texts he had studied at the College, particularly in Aristotelian thought. The entire engine of the Army—"from the cultivation of discipline to unit cohesion—mirrors the moral and intellectual framework I studied at Thomas More," he pointed out. "Aristotle's notion that virtue is a habit formed through right action is embedded in military life: daily drills, repetition, and the pursuit of excellence are means of forming character." At Thomas More, Mr. Van Krieken learned the "why" behind the values of the Army. "The Army teaches soldiers to live [these values]; the College revealed their philosophical and theological roots—that virtue is not merely about performance but about ordering the soul toward the good. Together, they can help form a complete education: one moral, one practical."

The gravity of his role in the armed forces was not lost on Mr. Van Krieken. "When human lives are at stake," he emphasized, "decisions must be made with the utmost care and moral seriousness." That is why his Catholic moral formation at the College proved invaluable in making sound judgments. At Thomas More, Mr. Van Krieken studied not only philosophy but theology—"what makes a human being human, the nature of the Trinity, and the connection between those mysteries and our moral lives." Thomas More College taught him that "all people, allies and foes alike, are equal in dignity as image-bearers of God.... That awareness impressed upon me that, while war may sometimes be necessary, it is always tragic." Ultimately, Mr. Van Krieken concluded, "Thomas More College challenged me to integrate faith, intellect, and action—lessons that later became foundational in my military service and continue to guide me."

Like Mr. Van Krieken, the education Timothy McGuire '07 received at Thomas More gave him a unique perspective on Army life. "I like music and poetry," began Mr. McGuire. This might sound unexpected coming from a veteran of seventeen years, but to Mr. McGuire, the training he underwent in the Army and the academic life of the

LLECT, AND ACTION"
the Armed Forces

College are far from being at odds. A lover of English literature, Mr. McGuire served as a Master Sergeant in the Army during his military career. In his opinion, the Catholic tradition fostered at Thomas More and the tradition of the Army "share structural, ethical, and historical connections, particularly through their emphasis on discipline, service, and moral frameworks."

As a Catholic institution, Thomas More exists within the framework of the broader spiritual and intellectual tradition of the Church. Mr. McGuire noted that the Church, like the Army, relies on "discipline, obedience, and a hierarchical approach to governance, ensuring unified decision-making and mission execution. Both institutions," he continued, "find themselves at the crux of global issues and strive to create peace and order. Both have martyrs and cowards, saints and sinners, heroes and villains." Mr. McGuire had the opportunity to study Arabic and Spanish while in the Army and was trained in a variety of disciplines. His time in the Army also enabled him to pursue a master's degree in English literature.

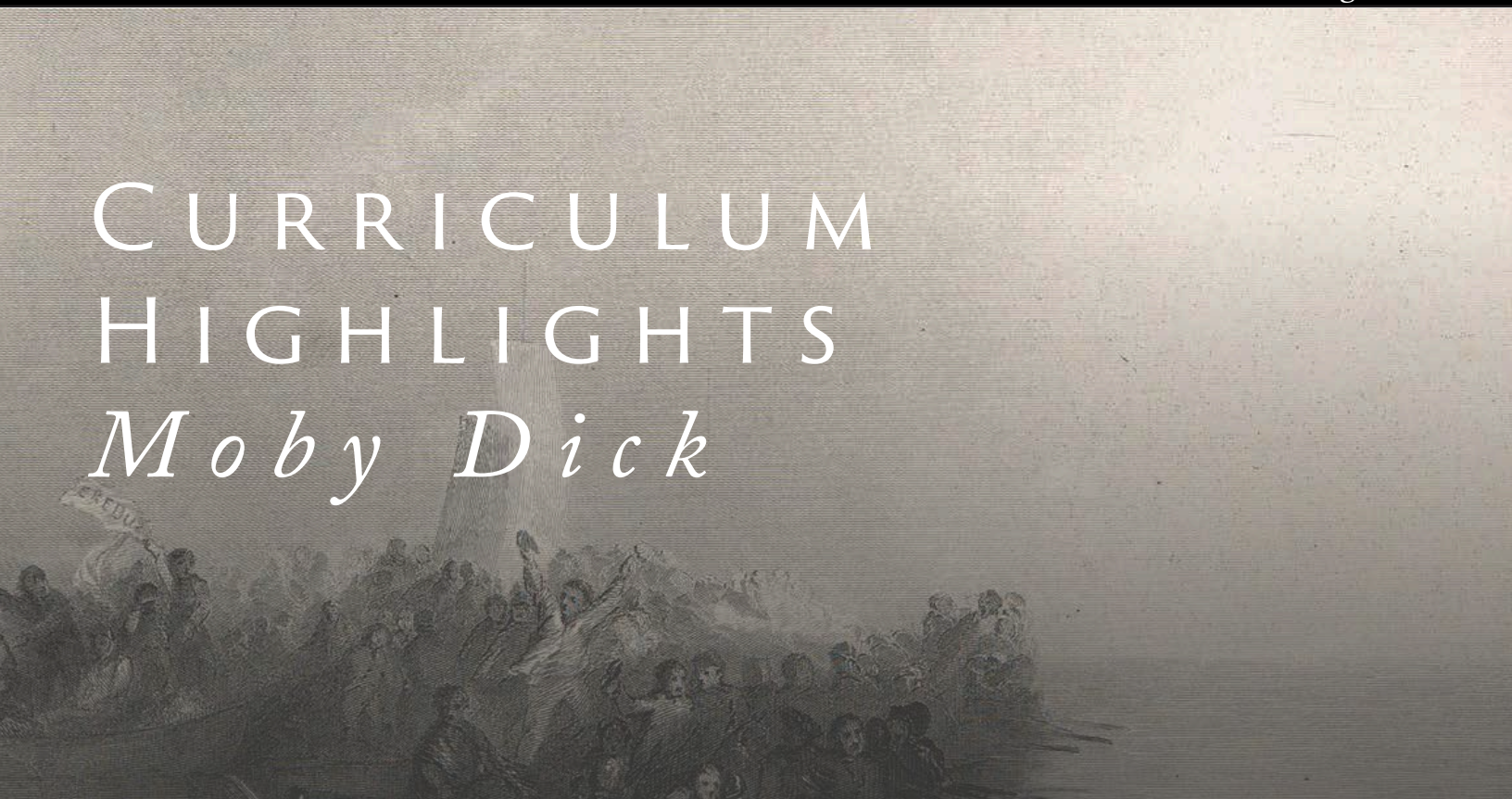
A current member of the class of 2026, Logan Basta served four years in the Marine Corps before college. He first began to consider military service seriously while in high school. "I always admired military service members, and I remember seeing the coverage of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars on the news," he recalled. "This had a big impact on my desire to join, as I wanted to serve my country just like those men on TV." Already a veteran by the time he got to college, Mr. Basta found himself uniquely equipped to navigate this new setting. "Military service prepared me for Thomas More College mainly through the discipline I learned and the leadership experience I gained when I was in the service. The discipline helps me to stay on track with assignments. The leadership experience has helped me to play an active role in community life through my years here at the College, as well as being better able to counsel friends and other students." Reflecting more broadly on his experience as both a service member and a liberal arts student, Mr. Basta stated: "The military and the liberal arts can and should build off each other. I find that they can mutually benefit each other in things such as discipline, cultivation of good habits, growth in virtue, and a pursuit of knowledge and understanding."

Joseph Dionne '20 agreed with Mr. Basta's assessment. "I believe that the environment of Thomas More College and the study of the liberal arts is conducive to educating good soldiers. As a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army, I am charged with thinking critically, acting ethically, and leading with a purpose." He continued, "My grounding in faith and reason prepared me to accept and execute these charges, without the shock to the system that many new officers experience upon accepting their commission."

Mr. Dionne found that his liberal arts education prepared him for his position in a different way than most. "My branch in particular, the Engineers, possesses an abundance of highly educated technical experts. Despite having no engineering credentials or experience, I have not found myself to be underqualified for my position. The liberal pursuits of logic, rhetoric, and ethics fostered clear thinking and articulate expression, which are core attributes of mission-focused leadership. Study of the humanities has helped with human relations, allowing me to earn trust and communicate effectively."

Mr. Dionne concluded, "When someone asks me where I went to college or what my major was, I am sometimes met with skepticism. But more often than I had expected, soldiers inquire further about the liberal arts, Thomas More College, and my faith, out of genuine interest. They recognize the value of someone who leads, not merely to achieve objectives, but to form a cohesive, ethical, and resilient unit that is capable of logical thought and moral courage under pressure."

Above: Joseph Dionne '20 (center); Left, top to bottom: Vance Van Krieken '13 (L); Timothy McGuire '07; and Logan Basta '26 (L)



Curriculum Highlights
Moby Dick

By Sara Kitzinger, PhD, Teaching Fellow and Director of Cultural Life

During the carefree days of Summer, the College's rising Seniors collectively read Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*. This is done in preparation for the Fall Humanities course on the American experience. Massive in both size and vision, *Moby Dick* affirms Melville's extraordinary abilities as an American author of tragedy.

When we meet Melville's narrator, "Ishmael," we find him thoughtful and melancholy, dwelling upon death and thereafter. His ruminations have an eschatological quality. It is "high time to get to sea" (17),[1] he tells the reader. Ishmael knows that all men long for the water, but they remain "pent up in lath and plaster"—"tied," "nailed," and "clinched" (18). They remain prisoners of material pursuits and worldly constraints. He means to break out.

Ishmael wonders at the sea—"as every one knows, meditation and water are wedded for ever" (18). These vast waters, he reminds the reader, were deemed holy by the Persians and the Greeks, the stuff of "a metaphysical professor" (18). Though his curiosity of the visible and invisible "depths" has the lively intensity of youth, "the depths" themselves work his idealism into something very unboyish. Ishmael seems clear about the destiny of men. Death brings a quick end to a man and opens eternity. The question then arises: What is a man? Ishmael gives a heterodox answer: "Methinks my body is but the less of my better being. In fact take my body who will, take it I say, it is not me" (53).

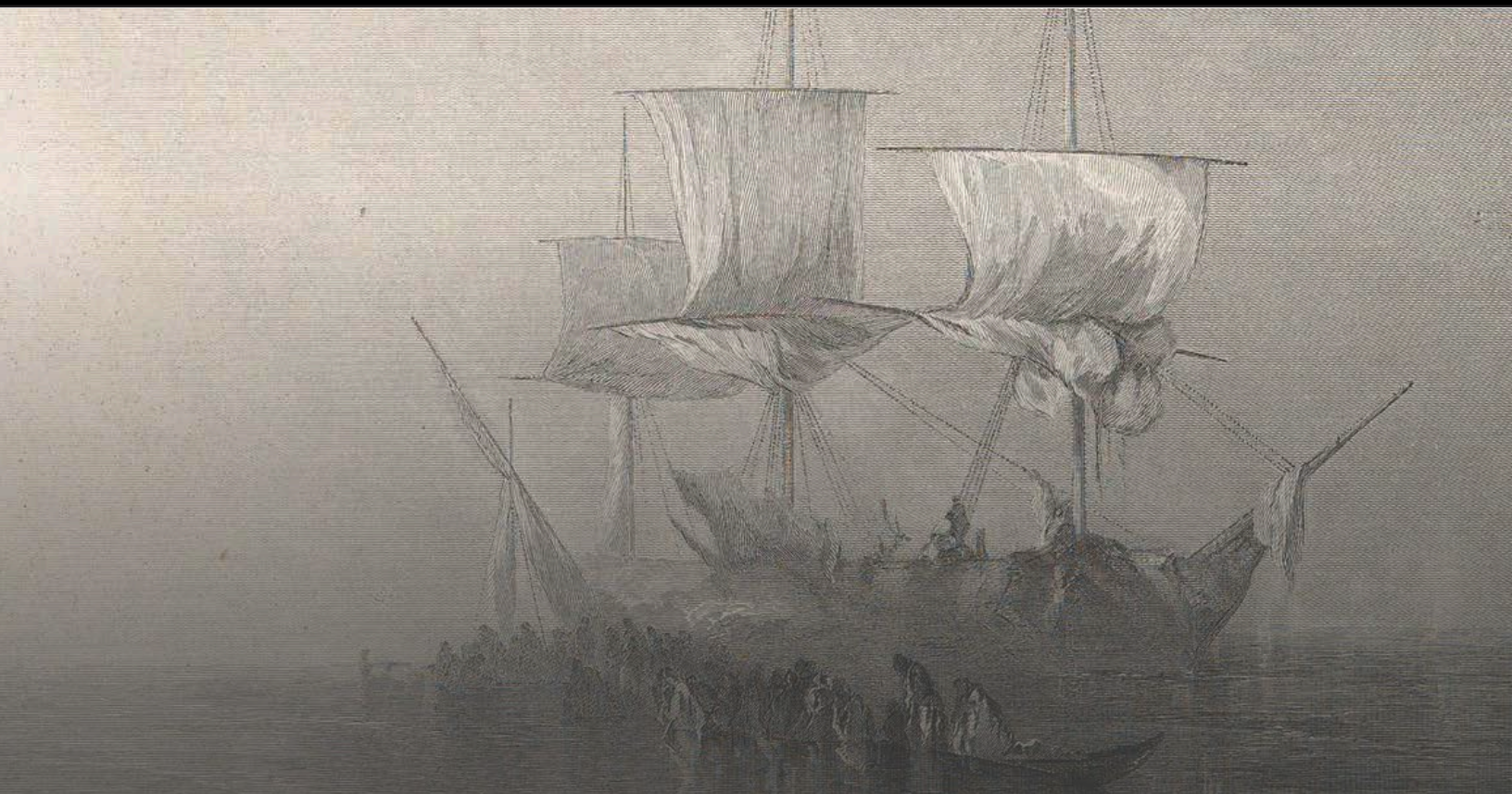
Melville has questions about spiritual freedom and he explores them. Does his Ishmael confess a peculiar Transcendentalism? A form of Hinduism? At the very least, it is a Platonic vision that privileges the soul over the body. Shortly after sailing from Nantucket, Ishmael ruminates on the danger of the leeward shore. The lee shore, the port, offers safety and comfort; but in the midst of a gale, the leeward land means certain destruction. Against these homeward winds, the ship must fight for open waters. Ishmael celebrates this intrepid fight and likens it to the preservation of independence of soul from the "slavish shore" (122). For "in landlessness alone resides the highest truth, shoreless, indefinite as God—so, better is it to perish in that howling infinite, than be ingloriously dashed upon the lee, even if that were safety!" (122). Reminiscent of Ralph Waldo Emerson's notions of transcendence, Ishmael celebrates the quest for this dislodging of soul from "home." It stands to offer "apotheosis" (122), but not much humanity.

Melville's Captain Ahab presents an alternative path to spiritual freedom. Contrary to Ishmael's way of eager wonder, Ahab "seemed made of solid bronze" (137) and is likened to Perseus, son of Zeus. In this case, a quest for freedom involves mastery: "For a Khan of the plank, and a king of the sea, and a great lord of Leviathans was Ahab" (143). Consumed with vengeance against the white whale for maiming him, he vows to strike at the unknown force that plagues men. Human frailty and suffering he cannot theorize away, so he attacks. Ahab explains to Starbuck, "How can the prisoner reach outside except by thrusting through the wall? To me, the white whale is that wall, shoved near to me" (179).

Unlike Ishmael's flirtation with a solution to suffering that exalts the soul by sacrificing the body, Ahab embraces the "iron way" set by the gods and takes action: "What I've dared, I've willed; and what I've willed, I'll do!" (183). He acts within the world of suffering and seeks to settle the score. "He piled upon the white whale's hump the sum of all the general rage and hate felt by his whole race from Adam down" (200). He claims complete knowledge of the workings

Continued on page 12

1 References correspond to Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (New York: Bantam Books, 2003).



By Seamus Othot, Class of 2023

Upon first reading Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, I was baffled, an experience I am sure is shared by many on first delving into Melville's *magnum opus*. Why is a work so often mentioned in discussions of "the great American novel" so unlike common conceptions of what a novel is? *Moby Dick* begins as one would expect a novel to start—introducing the first-person narrator with the now-famous opening "Call me Ishmael" (23)[1]—but it soon becomes far less conventional. In the first few chapters, Ishmael recounts his journey to Nantucket with the goal of setting out on a whaling vessel, while establishing himself as a man prone to philosophical musings—and thoughts deeper, perhaps, than one would expect of a sailor. The work's opening clearly follows Ishmael until he sets sail on the *Pequod*. Once Ishmael embarks under the command of Captain Ahab, he quickly fades into the background as a character, though his voice as narrator can still be heard.

After the *Pequod* sails, Ishmael begins to interrupt his narrative with long chapters musing on whales, discussing the intricacies of cetology, and expounding upon the noble and heroic history of whaling. While on the *Pequod*, Ishmael only occasionally emerges as a character, instead taking on the role of an observer recounting Ahab's "demoniac" quest to slay the white whale Moby Dick. Ishmael's role as first-person narrator even becomes strained in places. The work follows, at some points, the structure of a play, complete with Shakespearean soliloquies that Ishmael the character could not possibly have witnessed—for example, a monologue from Ahab which the stage directions explicitly tell us takes place while the captain sits alone in his cabin.

If we read Melville's work as a purely narrative novel, we will be unable to appreciate the role of the numerous digressions into the history and nature of whaling and whales, or the soliloquies taking place outside the structure of Ishmael's tale. Ishmael gives readers the key to explain the work's strangeness in the very first chapter, "Loomings," in his discourse on the nature of water:

> Let the most absentminded of men be plunged in his deepest reveries—stand that man on his legs, set his feet a-going, and he will infallibly lead you to water, if water there be in all that region. Should you ever be athirst in that great American desert, try this experiment, if your caravan happens to be supplied with a metaphysical professor. Yes, as everyone knows, meditation and water are wedded forever (24).

He continues, saying that in bodies of water all men, like Narcissus, glimpse "the ungraspable phantom of life; and this is the key to it all" (24).

If the "metaphysical professor" is the man most drawn to the sea, it is no longer a mystery that the philosophical Ishmael is drawn to the hard manual labor of a whaling vessel. The monologues show readers that Ishmael is not the only person drawn to meditation; others on the crew have deep internal lives and see their quest as more than a simple hunt for a creature of flesh, bone, and blubber.

Moby Dick's strange idiosyncrasies, some of which appear to interrupt the story, suddenly fit when viewing the work as meditative rather than purely narrative. Ishmael's diversion to discuss "The Whiteness of the Whale" is no longer an unwelcome interruption, but an integral part of the book, a meditation on white as a symbol in nature and mythology, its various meanings, and how it can be viewed in different contexts as a sign of danger or a sign of purity or goodness. "And of all these things the Albino whale was the symbol. Wonder ye then at the fiery hunt?" (182).

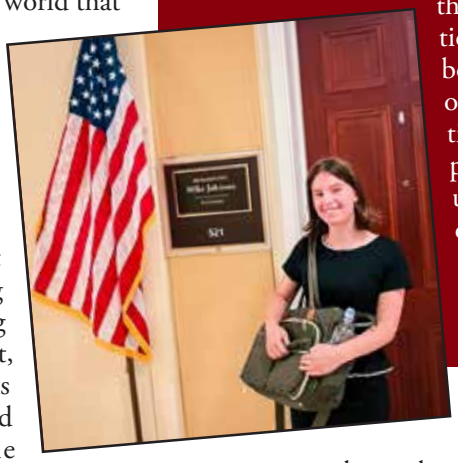
1 References correspond to Herman Melville, *Moby Dick* (Pleasantville: Reader's Digest Association, 1989).

A Summer Well Spent

By Jacinta Sigaud, Class of 2026

As the clock ticks down to the final year, the last summer of college often becomes a unique opportunity for growth, exploration, and the forging of futures. Four members of the class of 2026 sat down to speak about the eventful time they spent outside of the classroom and the lessons they learned.

For Anastasia Shanahan ’26, the summer represented a chance to get involved in politics in Washington, D.C. Miss Shanahan interned with the Clare Boothe Luce Center for Conservative Women, an organization whose mission is to prepare and promote young conservative women leaders. When Miss Shanahan was told that she had been selected from a competitive group of applicants because she had been deemed to be “philosophically sound,” her first thought was: “That’s because I go to Thomas More College.” Surrounded by a diverse number of people from different educational backgrounds, Miss Shanahan was able to reflect on the value of a liberal arts education in a world that “doesn’t know what freedom means.” Rather than offering a set of specific skills, Miss Shanahan realized she contributed a unique perspective on the principles that shape American life because of her formation at the College. From visiting the United Nations to helping plan the center’s D.C. summit, Miss Shanahan’s summer was packed with challenging and enriching experiences. The internship proved to be the best place for her to “learn valuable skills and experience the sort of difference women can make in the world.”



Xavier Summers ’26 felt Rome’s call during the summer months. He undertook a walking pilgrimage from Toul, France to Rome, making the 786-mile trek in 33 days. He and a friend modeled their journey on Hilaire Belloc’s *The Path to Rome*, a travelogue that students read in their second year at Thomas More College. “Every day was a memorable moment,” Mr. Summers remarked. “Every day brought some new story or some new crazy experience.” Though the experience was fraught with hardship, it was also filled with beauty and joy. “Going on pilgrimage is a great opportunity for suffering,” Mr. Summers commented, “but suffering isn’t always a bad thing. As a Christian, I take it as a proof of God’s love for me, and I’m grateful for the invitation to suffer for other people.” Walking long stretches during the day and sleeping everywhere from “monasteries and convents to riverbanks and mountain ranges,” Mr. Summers learned to turn outward and appreciate the wonder of his surroundings. “There’s so much beauty around us that we’ve become dull to,” he reflected. “Thomas More has instilled in me a sense of wonder and a desire for beauty, both natural and man-made.”

Tynan Roth ’26 traveled far from his native Maine to fish salmon off the Alaskan coast. “There were moments of great excitement,” Mr. Roth recounted. “We almost crashed onto the rocks, we caught a salmon shark, we had a whale in our net.” The adventure reminded Mr. Roth of the maritime stories he read as a child. “A lot of those stories came back to me because it is a very hard lifestyle. I only did it for one summer, but it was very clear how doing that over and over again forms these fishermen into hard, salty characters.” Mr. Roth considers his time at the College to have shaped and given meaning to his work on the fishing boat. “The days are long, the work is very hard and uncomfortable, but at the same time we worked very closely with nature and creation. There was a sort of wonder which heightened the experience.”

This past summer, Thomas More College helped me secure an internship with Americans United for Life (AUL). AUL is a pro-life legal advocacy group, focusing on helping states to pass pro-life laws and then defending those laws in the courts. I spent my internship working for a lawyer who specializes in the Constitution. Under her guidance, I wrote articles about assisted suicide and sidewalk counseling and edited letters to the Supreme Court. Additionally, I was able to research our country’s current laws and founding documents. This summer showed me the necessary work which pro-life lawyers do, and I am now considering a career in law.

As we approach the 250th anniversary of our country’s founding, it can sometimes be difficult to feel hopeful when we see widespread corruption and immorality. During my work for a small part of the pro-life movement, however, I discovered new reasons to be proud of the United States. Our Declaration of Independence clearly states that “all men are *created* equal” [emphasis added] and that life is one of our “inalienable rights.” It is in our nation’s blood to protect all human life, including the unborn. Furthermore, our Constitution gives us the freedoms of speech and assembly to address wrongs—such as abortion—within the country. Despite setbacks, the American pro-life cause has not given up. Rather, pro-life groups are using the freedoms our founders wrote into our laws to defend the unborn, protect the vulnerable, and bear witness to God’s law.

–Sarah Newton, Class of 2028

“I learned so much this summer that I couldn’t sum up easily,” Miss Shanahan concluded. “I learned that if you want something, you have to be the person

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Left, clockwise: Xavier Summers ’26 (r) in Rome; Anastasia Shanahan ’26 (r) with Harmeet Dhillon, the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights; a fishing vessel off the Alaskan coast; Wynonah Hogan ’26 at her internship at the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library.

Above: Sarah Newton ’28 outside the office of House Speaker Mike Johnson, R-LA.

Ninth Annual Catholic Literature Conference

Faith, Freedom, & Place in American Literature

Featuring:

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James Matthew Wilson
Jeremy Beer • Matthew Mehan

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Early bird pricing ends March 25. Registration required, spaces limited.

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250 Years of Tradition

Continued from page 1

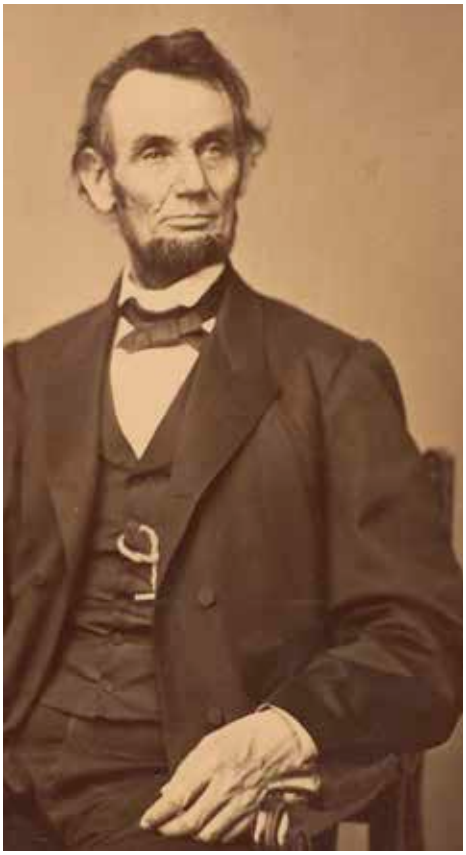
1958. At that time, "73% of Americans trusted the federal government to do the right thing almost always or most of the time." Fast forward to 2024 and the numbers are bleak in comparison, with only 22% answering positively to that question, a 51% decline.[1]

In his famous 1838 Lyceum address to young men in Springfield, Illinois, Abraham Lincoln delivered a talk entitled "The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions." His question was simple: How would the current generation preserve and pass on the American inheritance to succeeding generations?

In the address, Lincoln begins by identifying where we should look for the greatest dangers to this inheritance. It is not, he says, from foreign countries or nations: "All the armies of Europe, Asia, and Africa combined, with all the treasure of the earth (our own excepted) in their military chest; with Bonaparte for a commander, could not by force, take a drink from the Ohio, or make a track on the Blue Ridge, in a trial of a thousand years." Instead, the true danger is much closer. Lincoln argues, "I answer if it ever reach us, it must spring up among us. It cannot come from abroad. If destruction be our lot, we must ourselves be its author and finisher."

Lincoln points to an "ill omen" growing across the land: "I mean the increasing disregard for law which pervades the country; the growing disposition to substitute the wild and furious passions, in lieu of the sober judgement of courts; and the worse than savage mobs, for the executive ministers of justice." He tells the young men that such mob justice encourages the lawless in spirit to become lawless in practice, while those who love tranquility and peace become disgusted when their government offers them no protection. The end effect would be the erosion of what Lincoln called "the strongest bulwark of any government," namely, the attachment of the people.

In our own moment, this attachment of the people to their government is strained. The widespread distrust and disappointment with government is having serious consequences, and this can particularly be seen in the choices of young voters. Plato's Socrates, in several dialogues, points out that the youth are that portion of the city that require



Abraham Lincoln in 1864

the greatest attention and care. It is no coincidence that Lincoln's address on the perpetuation of our political institutions is directed toward young men. Young people—who are typically full of passion, idealism, daring, optimism, and a long life ahead of them—lack experience; they need training and education, specifically an education in our American tradition.

Tradition is not antithetical to education; it is essential to it. It does not impede innovation, free expression, or free thought. Tradition provides a framework and a reference within which a person can think well. We are the inheritors of the Western tradition, out of which has grown the American tradition. As a Catholic college, a Thomas More education presents our students with a realistic vision of both, animated by the Catholic intellectual tradition.

Education is not the solution to every problem, but it is the soil in which young people can cultivate those virtues, habits, and knowledge that serve as a bulwark against discredited ideologies and falsehoods. It is the ground in which youth develop attachments to a particular way of life. Without such an education, young people are defenseless.

As Pope St. John Paul II stated in his 1989 address in Detroit, "By reason of her history, her resources, her creativity—but above all by reason of the moral principles and spiritual values espoused by her Founding Fathers and institutionally bequeathed to all her citizens—America truly has the possibility of an effective response to the challenges of the present hour."[2]

As we approach America's 250th anniversary, and consider how great of a responsibility it is that our future is in our hands—and that we can shape our culture, our government, our character, and our nation—let us commit to being who we are: the inheritors of a great Republic, one that requires great effort if we are to keep it.

Page 1: John Trumbull. *The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776* [detail]. 1786–1820. Yale University Art Gallery.

Above: Anthony Berger. *Abraham Lincoln* [detail]. 1864. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

1 Pew Research Center, "Public Trust in Government: 1958–2025," December 4, 2025, https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2025/12/04/public-trust-in-government-1958-2025/

2 "Remarks Following an Audience with Pope John Paul II in Vatican City," Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, The American Presidency Project, https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/node/262685

Curriculum Highlights

Continued from page 6

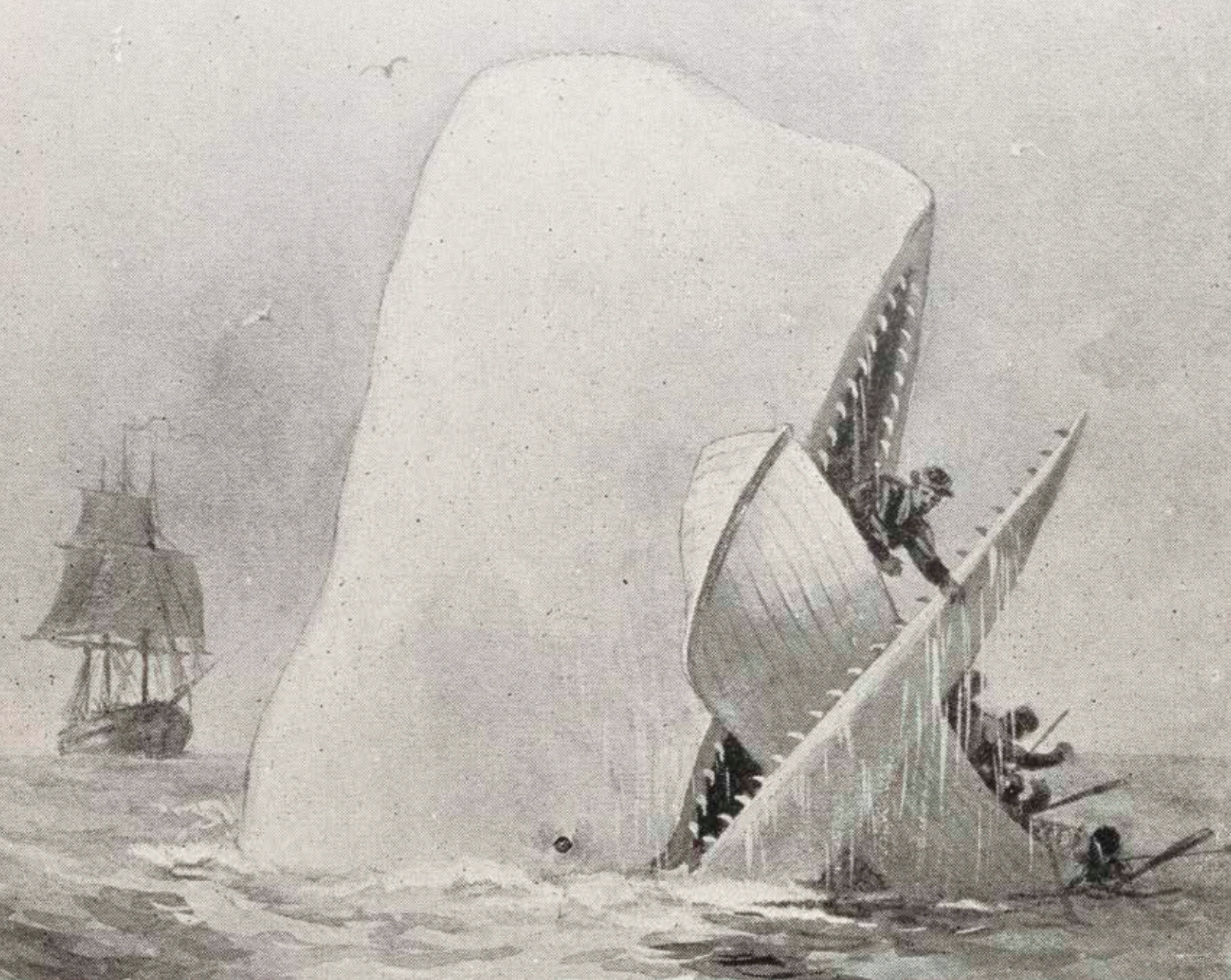
of fate and puts on the "Iron Crown of Lombardy" (182). Ahab has cast himself "the prophet and the fulfiller one" (183), a dark redeemer.

On the brink of the final chase of Moby Dick, his better self is awoken by the sweet, southern breezes. He is moved to hearth, kin, and all good things. Unable to reconcile this goodness with his fated dark, "iron way," he asks, "What is it … recklessly making me ready to do what in my own proper, natural heart, I durst not so much as dare?" (557). He cries out, "Is Ahab, Ahab?" (557). Who is responsible for his actions? He had previously shaken his fist at the gods and, in his capacity as a man, promised to strike at them within their own game of fate.

But Ahab miscalculates. Even in the noble embrace of his broken body and magnanimous soul, he miscalculates. With home and goodness provoking his mind, he looks over the ship's railing and pulls back in horror. There within his reflection he meets the sinister eyes of the phantom Fedallah. The grand stage of the epic battle upon which he is playing this game is a mere reflection of the more pressing battle between good and evil within him. He, his embodied "I," his actions, have meaning! His freedom is his own. Alas, he chooses death and the waves roll on.

Page 6–7: Robert Brandard. *Whalers* [detail; edited]. 1879–1880. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.

Below: Shute, A. B. *"'Both jaws, like enormous shears, bit the craft completely in twain,' Opp. p. 510"* [detail; edited]. 1892. The New York Public Library Digital Collections.



Thomas More College of Liberal Arts
CENTER FOR THE RESTORATION OF CHRISTIAN CULTURE

Spring 2026 Lecture Series

Wednesday, February 11:
The Dignity of Dependence

with author ***Leah Libresco Sargeant***

Monday, February 16:
Doctor of the Church and Co-Patron of Education:
A Newman Symposium ***(begins at 7:00 PM)***

with Faith & Reason Institute president ***Robert Royal***
and author ***Edward Short***

Wednesday, March 11:
Thirteen Novels Conservatives Will Love
(But Probably Haven't Read)

with American Enterprise Institute Senior Fellow
Christopher Scalia

Wednesday, April 15:
G.K. Chesterton and Walker Percy

with Catholic Answers Live host ***Cy Kellett***

Lectures begin at 7:30 PM | Nashua, NH

Talks are free and open to the public. Registration requested.

A Summer Well Spent

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to go out and pursue it, and not to give up." It is with that spirit of perseverance that the Class of 2026 has embarked on the culminating year of their time at Thomas More College. Even more great adventures will await them as they graduate and set off into the world, shaped by the lessons and experiences of the last four formative years.

Right: Wynonah Hogan '26 (L) representing the WWPL.

Below (R–L): Sarah Newton '28 (second from R) interning at AUL; Anastasia Shanahan '26 (second from R) and fellow interns with women's sports activist Riley Gaines; Xavier Summers '26 on pilgrimage from Toul to Rome.

This summer, I had the privilege of working as the Education Assistant Intern at the Woodrow Wilson Presidential Library and Museum (WWPL) in Staunton, Virginia. This internship gave me a fantastic opportunity to explore the museum industry, archives stewardship, and education program development for all ages. The solid foundation in reading, thinking, and writing that I have received during my time at Thomas More College proved invaluable as I wrote blog posts, digital classes, and in-person programs for the WWPL.

A major part of my research examined Woodrow Wilson's policy decisions surrounding the United States' participation in World War I. I researched and wrote an interactive program discussing conscientious objectors from the military draft and the balance between government interests and freedom of conscience and religion. My favorite project was a classroom resource for high school teachers that walks students though a selection of WWI poems, putting them in historical context and incorporating photographs, music, and artwork from and about the period. It was exciting to apply what I learned about poetry analysis and imitation in my classes at the College to this program! I hope that it will instill in high school students a greater appreciation for poetic literature and the fine arts. I am so grateful for all that I learned in my internship—most notably, how important it is for our history to be taught in a truthful, respectful, and engaging manner!

–Wynonah Hogan, Class of 2026