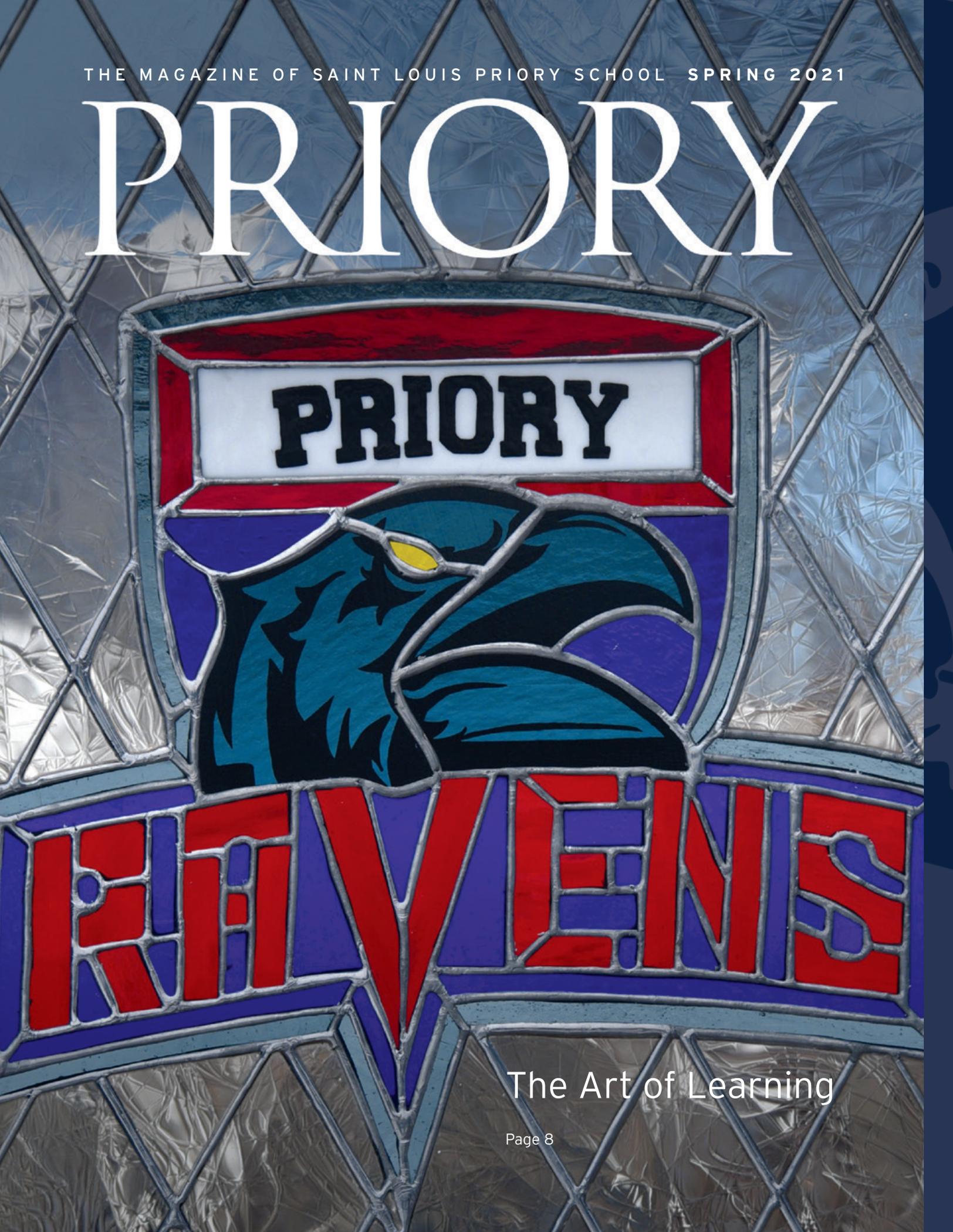


THE MAGAZINE OF SAINT LOUIS PRIORY SCHOOL SPRING 2021

# PRIORY



**PRIORY**

**RAVENS**

The Art of Learning

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## FROM THE HEADMASTER

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this letter, we will have celebrated more than 100 days of on campus learning. Not many schools can say they've reached this milestone and have provided both in person and virtual learning to students since Aug. 27. As you know, keeping our doors open safely has been a herculean task for everyone in our community. Thank you for your donations, counsel and prayers. Your support has made this milestone possible.

In this issue of the Priory Magazine, you'll read about some of the amazing things happening at Priory. God has blessed our students with tremendous creativity, and your support has enabled our faculty to expand our arts program to give students even more opportunities to develop their artistic gifts. Our well-rounded students are ready to take on the world and have an appreciation of the arts that continues into adulthood.

Not only do we have National Merit Finalists, but we also have accomplished artists, musicians and performers. Our diverse alumni are doctors, lawyers, engineers, actors, musicians, music producers and so much more!

Since last I wrote, we have had our first Junior School play ("The Norse Mythology Ragnasplosion"), our winter play, "Camelot" and the announcement of our first-ever summer theatre program. In Visual Arts, students of all ages have explored painting in different styles and media (including on the windows), with one senior turning an entire wall into the canvas for his senior thesis (photos included in this issue). Our Medieval Arts Program has built upon the foundation laid by Brother Symeon Gillette, O.S.B., with the addition of iconography to calligraphy and stained glass. Our choirs have performed outside and on Zoom, and a freshman has recently received local recognition for his adept playing of a Beethoven Sonata at the Fox Theatre.

St. Augustine believed that to sing was to pray twice; the same could be said of all of our students' creative expressions. I hope you will take the time to learn more about the important role of beauty in our community. May it move you to pick up a bow, paintbrush or script in the near future.

In Christ,



Father Cuthbert Elliott, O.S.B., '02  
Headmaster



# The Road **Less Traveled**

A Priory education opens many doors and offers graduates the opportunity for a wide variety of post-secondary education and career paths. While the first thing that may come to mind when thinking about Priory graduates would be professions such as attorneys, doctors and financial planners, graduates can also choose less traditional pathways.

**T**wo graduates who found success in what could be considered less conventional career choices are brothers Tim Convy '98 and Chris Convy '00. Tim and Chris discovered their passion for the arts while at Priory.

"The faculty and monks were so supportive and inspirational. They let you be what you wanted to be, and they gave you the time and encouragement to figure out what you wanted to become," Chris says.

Both Tim and Chris are successful St. Louis radio show hosts. They have extensive backgrounds in the entertainment world. Both worked at MTV as well as in television. Tim enjoys stand-up comedy and is a part of the band Ludo. Chris worked at Comedy Central and has produced dozens of live TV shows.

Tim says entertainment wasn't something he considered until he was nominated for an acting award at Priory. "It hadn't even been on my radar but being nominated made me pay a little more attention to that as an interest."

Both Tim and Chris grew up in Kirkwood and are Priory legacies. Their dad and uncles attended Priory.

Tim Convy Sr. '75 says it was a privilege to go to Priory. "My parents had to sacrifice to send us there, and I'm full of gratitude that I had the opportunity, and that my sons were also able to attend Priory. We had such a great camaraderie, and I wanted that for my sons. My parents wanted me to come out of there as an educated person and a gentleman. You learn a lot of skills at Priory that help you out in life."

## Choosing an Exceptional Education

"My whole life I knew I wanted to go to Priory," Tim says. "I wore the Priory gear, we went to the picnics, and I was way into it as a little kid. It was just sort of my destiny."

Chris on the other hand, had the opposite feeling. He wanted something different. "I was really into sports, and I was sure I wanted to go to DeSmet," says Chris. "My dad suggested that I at least visit Priory."

> Tim Convy '98, Tim Convy Sr. '75 and Chris Convy '00

**"My whole life I knew I wanted to go to Priory. It was just sort of my destiny."**

– Tim Convy '98



< Morning radio show hosts Chris Convy, Courtney Landrum and Brando interview Dan Dierdorf on "Curbside with Courtney" at 106.5 The Arch.

### Careers in Entertainment

After graduating from Priory, Tim attended the University of Missouri and studied communications, taking classes for television production. "At Priory, I played music, and knew that was sort of my thing. My hope was that I would find a rock band. I didn't think I'd last at Mizzou. But fortunately, the rock band thing didn't work out until after college."

Tim joined a rock band, Ludo, and toured the country for almost 10 years. The band signed with a major recording label and played on The Tonight Show and Jimmy Kimmel. When the band broke up abruptly, Tim was living in New York City and ran a small record label.

"It was cool, but I didn't love it, so I sort of shifted gears. I started doing stand-up comedy and writing," Tim says. As a comic Tim has shared the stage with Kyle Kinane, T.J. Miller, Chris D'Elia, Nikki Glaser, Jon Lovitz and more.

"I revisited television at that point. I went back to MTV and my brother was doing television like crazy," says Tim. During that time, someone Tim knew in music suggested he work in radio.

On the day Chris shadowed at Priory, it rained and flooded down by the bridge near the pond. "It was like a pool and a lake," Chris says. "Every single kid was soaking wet. We were swimming in it, and we were pushing each other around. We were sliding down the hills. It was basically the most fun I'd ever had - in or out of school. I thought, 'this place is amazing,'"

Additionally, on his shadow day, Chris got to go to class with his host. "It was all of these guys just hanging out and cracking jokes. I thought, 'this is where I belong. This is the kind of fun I want to be having. This is who I am. I told my dad - it's Priory for me.'"

Chris' dad called Priory and got the ball rolling, and there is no doubt in Chris' mind it was one of the best decisions he's ever made.





< Chris Convy senior photo

### Appreciation For The Arts

Just like other Priory students, Tim and Chris were involved in extracurricular activities including sports, Student Council (STUCO) and The Guild. Their involvement in the arts at Priory not only led to successful careers, but a lifelong appreciation of the arts.

“I was involved in The Guild and I was also very involved in the plays,” Tim says. “My junior year was the first year Priory had a play in the Kevin Kline Theatre. It was really fun to be a part of opening the theatre.”

It was at Priory that Chris knew he wanted to go into the entertainment business.

“I wanted to do film when I was there. Pat Schumacker '98 sort of transformed STUCO from skits and announcements at assembly to videos,” says Chris. “When I saw those videos, I remember thinking I wanted to do that.”

He joined STUCO and started making videos. “The videos were fairly well received. People really liked them, and we had fun,” Chris says.

Brother Symeon also had a big impact on Chris. “The other thing that happened the day I shadowed was that I toured the stained-glass studio, and one of the students suggested I paint a piece. Brother Symeon said that if I came to Priory, I could be a part of the team. He made good on that promise, and I was a part of The Guild.”

### Brothers Forever

There is a brotherhood at Priory that, for many, lasts a lifetime.

“My best friends to this day are my classmates from Priory,” Tim says. “I’ve gone on a very different path than most of them. But those are still my best friends. I talk to many of them literally every day. Those are my guys, for sure.”

Chris, who came to Priory as a freshman, says that Priory is magical. “You’re with these same guys for years, and it’s really special. You get to see your best friends every day, and every day you’re trying to come up with creative ways to make each other laugh. That’s the sort of thing

“I jokingly said I would if I had my own morning show. Over the next year we kept talking about it. I always liked the idea of coming back to St. Louis,” Tim says. “I figured I would try it for a year and see how it went. It’s been great and I’m happy to be back in St. Louis.”

Tim’s reunited band Ludo sold out a reunion show in 2018 at The Pageant in an hour. They ended up doing a total of three shows. He’s hoping once the pandemic ends, they will be able to play some shows and put out some new music.

Chris’ experience includes interning and working at MTV, starting a show on Comedy Central and being a Hollywood TV producer for a company which produced live awards events among other things.



Tim worked with famed St. Louis radio host Courtney Landrum, and when she started her own show at 106.5 The Arch, Tim told Courtney that even though he couldn’t follow her there, the next best thing was his brother Chris. It was his opportunity, which both of them welcomed, for Chris to move back and be closer to family.

“My brothers and I really enjoy working together,” Chris says. “We’re always trying to find things that are fun and allow us to spend more time together.”

^ Radio host Tim Convy

that helps you in building relationships throughout your life. I am best friends with some of the most fun people all over the place because I got to clown around with my friends every day at Priory."

### **Outstanding Faculty and Monks**

Both Tim and Chris have great memories surrounding the Priory monks and faculty.

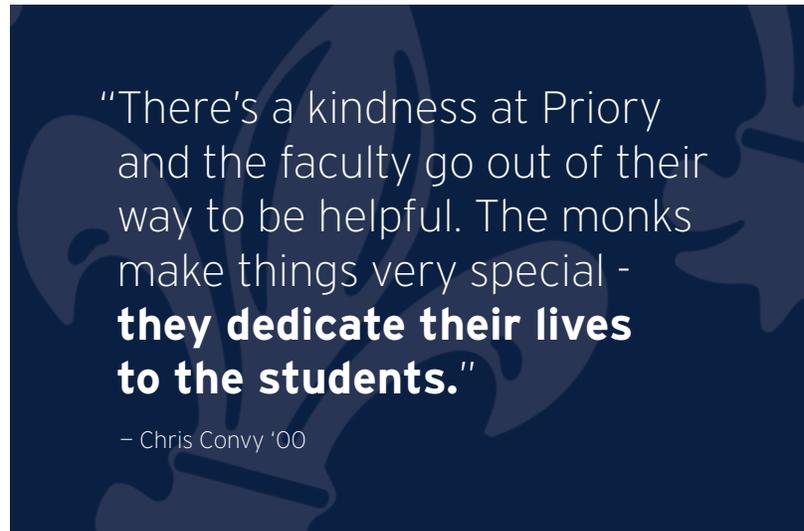
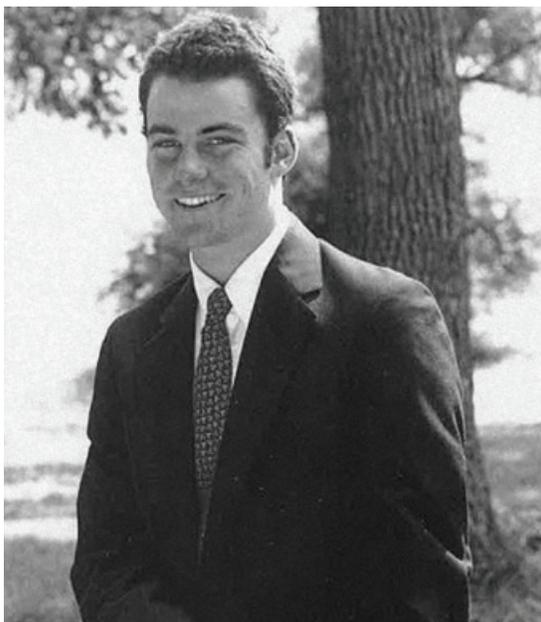
"Looking back, you realize the faculty and monks made such a difference in our lives," Chris says. "Teachers allow you to have a certain amount of mischievous fun. Brother (now Father) Augustine was about the coolest guy on the planet. He made rugby so much fun."

According to Chris, the student and faculty relationship is special and unique.

"There's a kindness at Priory and the faculty go out of their way to be helpful. The monks make things very special - they dedicate their lives to the students," says Chris.

The benefits of a Catholic, Benedictine, liberal arts education include building critical thinking skills, learning to communicate effectively and building interpersonal skills.

"At Priory, you are surrounded by intelligent people. I've been in some pretty cool settings and worked with amazing and talented people, but never in my life have I been surrounded by so many intelligent people and critical thinkers," Tim says. "It has an effect on you. Wit is so highly valued at Priory. You're in a place where the most valuable commodities are intelligence and wit. I think that goes a long way."



### **Taking Chances**

Both Tim and Chris agree that taking risks and finding the adventures that excite you are important for a fulfilling and fun life.

"I was able to take risks because of my Priory education. What Priory prepares you for is to be able to communicate, relate to people, and succeed in no matter what career path you choose," Tim says. "I chose some pretty crazy opportunities, and my Priory education helped me way more than I would have expected."

"I look back so affectionately at Priory because it's there that I learned that life is about making memories," Chris says. "Make sure you work hard and finish up your responsibilities. But when your work is done and somebody asks you to go out or do something, do it. Don't wait. Make memories with your friends."

Chris reflects on his last Priory dance and standing with Father (now Abbot) Gregory. "I remember thinking how much I loved Priory, looking around knowing it was going to be over and I would never have it again. I remember being so happy to be there, but already lamenting the loss of the fun I was having. And that to me - I vividly remember - was amazing. Those sorts of things stick with you."

< Tim Convy senior photo

# Students Express CREATIVITY

T H R O U G H   A R T   P R O G R A M S

Priory students have the opportunity to participate in Visual, Vocal and Performing Arts in order to recognize their gifts and explore new talents they may have never known before, thereby fostering their full creative potential. By participating in these programs, students gain an appreciation of the arts that continues into adulthood.

**I**n addition to the art programs, The Guild is a remarkable program for Priory students and has provided the opportunity for students to learn the art of stained glass, mosaics and calligraphy through the only medieval arts program of its kind in the United States.

## The Guild

The idea for a student craft guild developed one evening in 1989, according to Brother Symeon Gillette, O.S.B. He heard the former headmaster of Ampleforth College talk about his goal of bringing forth a degree of mastery in whatever subject he was teaching students. Brother Symeon thought about the medieval guild system and wondered if he could apply it to his own classes.

The next morning, he came up with a proposal and presented it to his high school calligraphy students. They were very excited, and the Priory Guild was founded.

The first Guild president, Dan Stokes '93, served for a record three terms. "We were very receptive to the idea of starting The Guild. At the beginning, the work was mostly calligraphy. The work was so detailed. Sometimes you would work for weeks or months on a project. It helped to develop patience and to appreciate the detail that goes into work like that. Seeing the final product was very satisfying."

Stokes has worked in the restaurant industry as an owner and chef since he graduated from Boston College in 1997. He says he learned a lot from being in The Guild. "I notice when I'm planning a dish that the detail work brings me back to some of the skills I learned as a Master Craftsman. You learn persistence, develop stamina and become very detail oriented."

As medieval stained glass and mosaics entered the curriculum, first as an elective and then as a replacement of the calligraphic arts, The Guild entered a new phase. The medium was changed to stained glass, and instead of having many projects leading to a "masterpiece" project, there might be one introductory project leading to a student's major work that in many cases took two or more years to complete.



## Medieval Arts Program

In 2008, Ryan Niemann '03, a Guild Master and former Guild president, took over as instructor of the stained-glass program and moderator of The Guild. He brought back the study of calligraphy with the Junior School students and renamed the program simply Medieval Arts to give students the ability to work in a greater variety of genres.

In 2020, Mary Claire MacDonald joined the Priory staff as the Medieval Arts instructor. She says when students enter The Guild, they are entering a long tradition started by Brother Symeon so many years ago. "Students from 7th grade to 12th work on long-term projects for the glory of God and for the purpose of bringing their community to God through beauty," says MacDonald.



Young students learn from older students in a collegial environment of mutual respect. "Students learn the patience required to make anything excellent and receive help as well as critiques from older craftsmen," MacDonald says. "Students are known and appreciated for the work they do and for the way they help one another."

Older students mentor the younger students to scale The Guild wall, moving from apprentice to journeyman, to junior guildsman, to neophyte master, and finally to master. The Guild's charter calls for students to always remember to accept nothing less than excellence. Members of The Guild must make it known that they intend to live their lives with honor, toward the praise of God, seeking inspiration for their art from Him.

^ The art of calligraphy is a mainstay at Priory.

< (Opposite page) Junior Thomas Daniel grinds pigment to mix the paint used for painting stained glass with guidance from Mary Claire MacDonald, Medieval Arts instructor.

> Brother Symeon



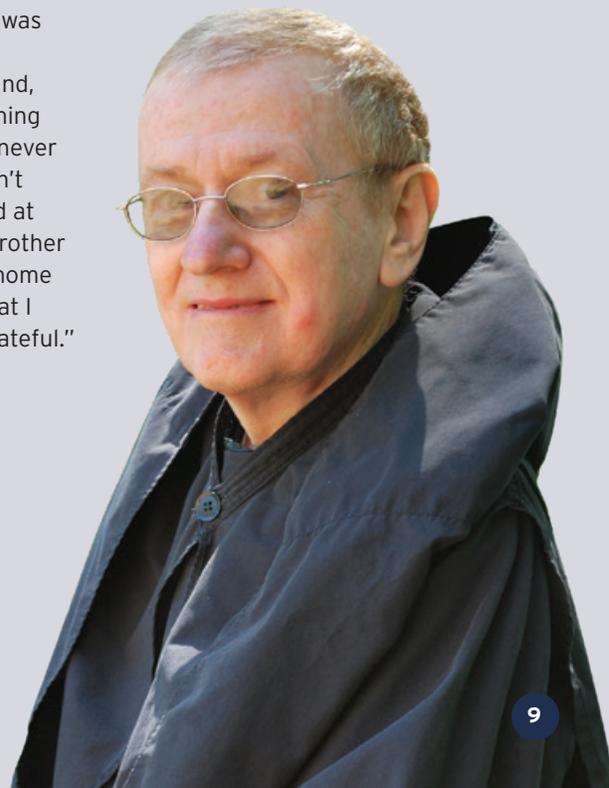
^ Students in the Medieval Arts Studio working on a number of different projects.

"When visiting Brother Symeon as an alumnus, I was always blown away at the work the students were working on. The Guild was blossoming as more and more students participated," Stokes says. "It's been exciting to see how the program has grown over the years. I'm proud to have been there during The Guild's humble beginnings and impressed with where it is today."

Brother Symeon reflects on his time with The Guild and says, "I have felt happiness so many times when Guild Masters would drop by the old studio and let me know how they were doing."

Diego Navarro '93, one of the first three Master Craftsmen at Priory, said the best part of The Guild was Brother Symeon.

"He was such a kind, generous, welcoming human being. I'll never forget that. I wasn't particularly gifted at calligraphy, but Brother Symeon made a home for me and for that I continue to be grateful."



## Theatre Arts

Things may have changed, but they have not slowed down in Theatre Arts this year due to COVID.

The first-ever Junior School theatrical production, "The Norse Mythology Ragnasplosion," took place this fall and was livestreamed from the Kevin Kline Theatre.

According to Tim Nowak, father of Form I student Luke Nowak '26, not being able to perform in front of a live audience turned out to be an advantage. "Getting that first play performance under the belt with a limited audience of classmates and camera might have calmed the nerves a bit," Nowak says. "I know that Luke had a blast, and the online performance did not change his love of the experience."

Nowak said he was very impressed with the commitment to provide the experience during a pandemic. "It would have been so easy to pull the plug and wait until next year, as I'm sure most other schools did," he says. "I'm grateful for Dr. (Doug) Erwin's work and leadership. I'm quite certain he has ignited a spark for the theatre in our son and in more than a few others."

Priory students participated in the Missouri Thespian Conference, which was held virtually this year. More than 3,000 students from all over the state competed in a variety of performance categories. Seniors Reid Miller and Andrew Lloyd entered the Duet Musical Theatre category, and Senior Max Look entered in the Solo Musical Category. All three students received Excellent or Silver ratings, which puts them in the top 20 percent in the state.



"I'm really proud of the work these students did under a very short and intense time frame," says Dr. Doug Erwin, theatre director and visual and performing arts department chair. "They worked hard to be ready and qualify."

The winter musical, "Camelot," was held in February and students put on eight performances. Forty-five students were involved, including 11 from neighboring girls' schools. Students who participated in "Camelot," along with some eighth graders, will also work on a musical this summer.

"The Boys Next Door" spring play will take place April 22 to 25. The play is about four disabled men who live in a group home and their social worker. "With that in mind, it's also a comedy," Erwin says. "It shows how people with disabilities are the same as everyone else."

For the first time, Cinema Priory will take place on May 12. "All students in video production are producing an independent film of no more than five minutes," Erwin says. "We will put it on the big screen and have popcorn and soda just like an actual movie. We will also showcase the senior creative theses at this event."

Each trimester, a Commedia dell'arte competition is taking place. The art form is the basis for all modern comedy according to Erwin. "The plays feature a plot outline with improvised dialogue and lots of physical comedy. They are known for 'lowbrow' and slapstick comedy," says Erwin.

^ Students perform in the first-ever Junior School theatrical production, "The Norse Mythology Ragnasplosion."

< Priory's winter play, "Camelot," took place over two weekends in February.



## Visual Arts

In her 19th year of teaching at Priory, Ann Schaefer says that whether it is in ordinary times or during a pandemic, students learn the skills of observation and attention by participating in visual arts.

“Seeing the world, or one’s environment, or one’s own face as it clearly requires practice, patience, and repetition,” Schaefer says. “Bringing this clarity to all interactions and activities - academic or otherwise - is a worthy aspiration. This process requires being still and quiet, at least for some length of time, which can be an antidote to life’s busyness.”

The pandemic has not interrupted the creativity for visual arts. The vast campus and roomy studios allow for students to spread out. When weather is nice, class oftentimes heads outside.

Freshman Daniel Kirt says prior to the pandemic, the art program felt a lot more centralized. “We were all sketching the same thing at the same time, albeit from different angles. Now, we’re all working on separate things.”

Schaefer designed projects with minimal to no sharing of supplies in order to keep students safe. “Each student was given a set of supplies to take home at the beginning of the year to be prepared in the event of distance learning,” she says. “I wanted studio work on campus to be actual and large-scale rather than virtual and small scale, to integrate projects within our community whenever possible, and to designate tech buddies during hybrid learning to keep distance learners engaged and in our fold.”

Ninth grade Studio Art students spent a lot of time outside sketching in preparation for work on their collaborative large-scale painting.

Kirt says this year has provided a lot of freedom. “We are split into groups of two or three, and each group picks a spot on campus to document. We go to our area, take pictures and make notes about the environment. Then we go back to the art room, we sketch and paint landscapes of our area. Some of us are also using Photoshop to alter the images we take. The project has really felt like my own.”



^ Visual Arts students work on their sketching skills at various campus landmarks.

The ninth-grade yearlong collaborative project is a large-scale canvas, mixed media image. This year, the project is entitled “Our Campus, Our Canvas: 150 Acres in Our Shoes.”

“Inspiration was drawn from our own experiences of distance learning last spring, which students described as sometimes feeling lonely, bored, confined, and sad,” Schaefer says. “We endeavored to create the opposite experience with this project. And looking outward, we draw inspiration from State of the Art 2020 - a group exhibition of contemporary artists curated by Crystal Bridges Art Museum.”

The project is an exploration of the Priory campus. Students walked as many of Priory’s 150 acres as navigable. They observed the ordinary, unusual, unexpected, peaceful, and the well-worn paths. The final product is a drop cloth as a base and will be a six feet by nine feet piece of art for all to enjoy and mark this time at Priory.

Schaefer says the best part of teaching at Priory is the students. “They are smart and funny, irreverent and well-mannered, and omni-directionally talented.”

## Vocal Arts

Music has always been an important component of life at Priory. In 1956, on the second day of the very first school year, the first class of 30 boys had choir practice for Mass. Choir, general music and art were all a part of the weekly curriculum.

"Music is literally in every part of our lives from the moment we feel our mother's heartbeat," says vocal arts instructor Stephanie Allee, who has been teaching at Priory for seven years. "By understanding, appreciating and performing music we can better care for ourselves and the world."

Singing with a mask and being socially distanced presents challenges to the vocal arts curriculum, which includes elements of music theory, sight reading and performing. It's important to be able to hear other singers. Therefore, when possible, Allee moved her classroom outside so students could sing without a mask.

Allee presented parents with the opportunity to hear the students at a brief outdoor performance in early November. "It was a perfect day with temperatures in the 60s, and somehow we found time in our crazy schedule that would not interrupt sports or academics," Allee says. "We used the hill on the west side of the church, and parents parked across the drive. I think they truly enjoyed getting to see their sons perform."

✓ When weather and schedules permitted, students in the Vocal Arts classes would practice outside socially distanced.

While students have not been singing at every Mass this school year because of the pandemic, there have been other opportunities to perform. A few seniors sang with the Schola Cantorum on the chants, and most weeks, one or all of the high school music classes would sing a post-communion piece.

"We've also performed for some of the other advisories," sophomore Cole Joyce says. "It's great being able to be a part of something that brings so much joy to others. Though it's been tough at times and our options have been limited, Mrs. Allee has continued to help us grow as performers and singers."

The sophomore Vocal Music class, joined by a couple of freshmen, did a virtual Christmas variety show. There were all types of performances. "Some made you laugh while others made you weep," Allee says. "The juniors did a beautiful virtual duet, and the seniors created another virtual choir video. It took a great deal of individual work by each student, which is so different from singing in a choir, but I feel it created a different type of musical growth for them."

New enrichment activities were added including taking a virtual tour of a concert hall, attending a virtual concert, studying a composer, creating a Google map with composers' birth places, composing a song or learning to play a new instrument.

Senior Adam Figueras, who has been distance learning all year, says music is meant to be created and performed together, in-person, so it has been challenging. However, the hard work he has put in has helped him grow musically. "I've enjoyed the class exploring topics beyond choral pieces. Topics such as how the composers of our pieces do their work as well as incorporating modern and popular music into our discussions made me even more interested in all things musical this past year."



## Brothers Spend Years Creating and Completing Work of Art

The Medieval Arts Guild is a signature program at Priory. Medieval Arts follows a set of principles strikingly different from those of contemporary art, according to instructor Mary Claire MacDonald.

"The artist does not sign their name to the work, as the goal is not self-expression or self-promotion. The *telos* (object) of this art form is to draw one's community toward God through beauty and through the humble work of a group of craftsmen," MacDonald says.

A beautiful example of this art form is a stained-glass project started by alumnus Jacob Conard '19, and completed by his brother Peter Conard, a sophomore. Peter thought the piece was lost or thrown out but was thrilled when he found it. He said it was very ironic that it was a depiction of St. Peter.

"My parents really pushed for my bother to finish it, and so when I finished it, they were very happy," Peter says.

Works are begun by an individual or a group and oftentimes finished years later by another member or members of The Guild. The work can span decades and pass through many hands and classes.

"This gets at the heart of our tradition as the word *tradere* in Latin literally means hand down," MacDonald says. "Jacob started the project but was ultimately unable to complete it prior to graduation."



> Junior Peter Conard (right) works on a stained-glass depiction of St. Peter, which his brother, alumnus Jacob Conard '19, (above) began during his time at Priory.

"My parents really pushed for my bother to finish it, and so when I finished it, **they were very happy.**"

– Peter Conard

One of Jacob's friends brought the window closer to completion, and Peter was able to complete the project this school year.

"These boys work to honor one another's work and ultimately to honor God through a communal effort to enhance our spiritual connection to God through beauty," says MacDonald.

"The Medieval Arts program is so different from all my other classes, and it allows for a lot of freedom and creativity," Peter says.

The skills learned in the Medieval Arts program include patience and attention to detail. "Stained glass art requires being very focused on small objects and having extreme control over your hands. That experience has aided in my assistance at a research lab while performing surgeries and perfusions," says Jacob, who is currently attending Case Western Reserve University and studying biomedical engineering.

Stained glass was one of his favorite activities at Priory, according to Jacob. "I am very happy that my brother finished the project. It looks great."



# A Life Dedicated

T O G I V I N G B A C K

When Jim McAtee '64 dedicates himself to something, he goes all in. His career as a financial advisor and managing director for investments at Wells Fargo Advisors spans more than four decades. His dedication, support, and devotion to Saint Louis Priory School has spanned more than 60 years.

James K. McAtee, more commonly known as Jim, was in the **first** seventh grade class at Priory. While he was attending an overly crowded parochial school in the sixth grade, his mother went to visit his class. She wanted to see what type of education he was getting with 63 students and only one teacher.

Feeling that he wasn't getting the rigorous education they desired, Jim's mom had him visit Priory. A friend said a school in Creve Coeur was expanding, and they were going to add a seventh-grade class.

While Jim didn't agree with his parents "yanking him out" of his current school and away from his friends, he very quickly realized they were providing him with the opportunity to have a stellar and unique education. When he reflects on his education at Priory, one word comes to mind - blessed. It was the foundational beginning of what has led to a lifetime of personal and professional achievements.

"I was forced to go to Priory, but I accepted it," Jim says. "Priory provided the foundation of a strong education and led me to develop a network of amazing people - both staff and other students. There's a brotherhood at Priory. You trust these guys."

Jim graduated in 1964 from Priory with 29 classmates that he considers brothers. All but two have remained in contact over the years. After graduating, Jim earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Georgetown University, and he attended University of Missouri-Columbia Law School for a semester before enlisting in the United States Marine Corps in the midst of the Vietnam War.

"After one semester in law school, I was draft eligible, so I ended up enlisting in the reserves," Jim says. "The change was a blessing. The Lord watches out for you. I decided I didn't want to be a lawyer. My brother suggested the brokerage industry, and all these years later I'm still working and enjoying helping people."

Jim has been married to his wife Pat for more than 50 years. They have two children, a son, Kevin, who attended Priory and graduated in 1997, and a daughter, Sara. Pat was very involved as a Priory mom. Jim and Pat are the proud grandparents of three, and he is hoping for a third generation at Priory for his grandsons.

Jim's son Kevin has been working with his dad for almost 20 years and says the fact that his father has inspired him is an understatement. "I think throughout my upbringing, I both consciously and

**"The core values that I have  
were formed by my parents and  
the monks and faculty at Priory."**

- Jim McAtee '64



< Kevin McAtee '97, Jake McAtee and Jim McAtee '64.

subconsciously witnessed a person who had it figured out. My dad was, and is, a happy fulfilled person who finds joy in everything he does. His overall passion for life and work is inspirational, and almost monastic in his dedication to it."

### **Outstanding Priory Education A Steppingstone To Lifetime Success**

More than 60 years after its founding, the purpose of Priory remains remarkably consistent with the vision of its founders. As a member of the first seventh grade class, Jim got to know the founders and monks, and he developed lifelong relationships. "The monks were brilliant scholars, and Priory was able to attract some really great lay teachers as well."

According to Jim, Priory offers young men a superior education. "The faith foundation allows for a stronger bond with your classmates," he says. "Priory was fundamental in my formation with Benedictine values. We worked hard at Priory, and we played hard. Everyone participated in sports, just as they do today. I am so proud of my Priory education."

Jim credits his Priory education with helping him to get into Georgetown University, another love of his. "I wouldn't have gotten into Georgetown if I didn't have the Priory background. It's all sequential. I've had the luck of falling into some pretty great places and meeting interesting people even when I didn't have a plan."

By being involved in things like Student Council at Priory, Jim built leadership skills. He went on to participate in similar activities at Georgetown. While there, he met former President Bill Clinton. They were in the same class and have attended college reunions together. In fact, two of the reunions were even held in the White House.

> Jim McAtee '64 senior photo.

### **Service to Others and Giving Back**

There is a plaque in the high school which reads "Everyone to whom much is given, of him will much be required."

One of Jim's classmates and life-long friends is Priory alumnus Jim Switzer '64. "I cannot think of a better example of someone who accepts the challenge of Luke 12:48, as presented on the plaque in the high school entry."

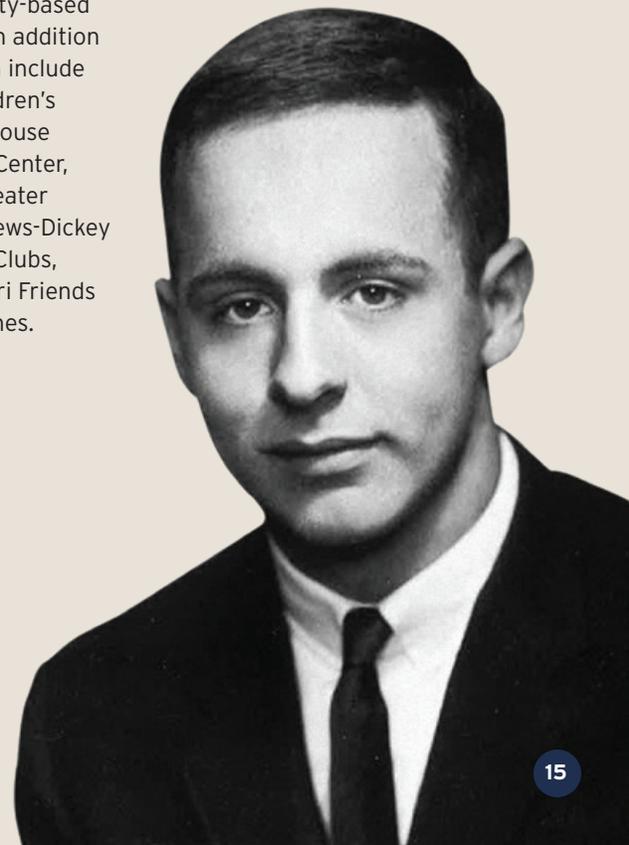
Over the years, Jim has been of service to Priory in many forms. "Jim has been a loyal and active member of the Alumni Board, the Board of Advisors and with our work on Aim High," says Abbot Gregory Mohrman, O.S.B., '76. "Through it all, he has epitomized the ideal of a Priory alumnus: thoughtful, sincere, kind and generous."

According to Jim, it is a duty and privilege to give back to causes which are important to him.

"It's an honor," says Jim. "The benefits of giving are so much more abundant than receiving. Helping people feels good. It's more fun to give."

Jim's contributions to Priory include the Priory Fund, Capital Campaigns, Monastic Campaign, the Alumni Golf Tournament, Sharing the Promise Campaign and Xanadu.

Jim has had a profound impact on many lives and has been actively involved in many community-based organizations in addition to Priory, which include Edgewood Children's Center, White House Jesuit Retreat Center, Aim High of Greater St. Louis, Mathews-Dickey Boys and Girls Clubs, and the Missouri Friends of Injured Marines.



# SENIOR THESES

Priory's unique thesis program allows students to stand out when applying to colleges and universities.

In 1959, the senior thesis was introduced in order to give students practice both in composing a somewhat extended treatment of a topic and in stringing 3,000 words or so together, according to "In Good Soil," by Father Timothy Horner, O.S.B., Priory's first Headmaster and a founding monk.

Visual Arts instructor Ann Schaefer says one particular joy she's had during the pandemic is advising two seniors on their creative theses. "At its best, the Senior Thesis thrives at the intersection of opportunity and fitness. The opportunity begins with parents sending their boys here, continues as the boys progress through the curriculum and culminates in their thesis."

This year, a number of seniors chose to do creative theses. Here are some highlights:

▼ A.J. Albert



## A.J. Albert

Senior A.J. Albert chose to do graffiti style artwork inspired by Leonardo da Vinci. "The purpose of my work is to create a rendition of *The Last Supper*, a hyper-realistic painting for its time, that portrays the events of the canonical biblical stories preceding Jesus' death, which would bring the possibility of salvation to this world."

Albert has worked to connect the events of *The Last Supper* and its biblical stories and Gospel passages to the world and to the social climate of today. He hopes by utilizing different artistic forms in his work he can promote deeper cognitive thinking through the use of symbols of the apostles in today's world.

"I hope my work can bring hope to the younger generations growing up in a world of social media, of constant propaganda, and of false or negative news that promotes a negative thinking about the downward trajectory of our society," says Albert. "I hope to create an aesthetically pleasing, socially aware, and emotionally moving piece."

## Ross Van Bree

Over the years, senior Ross Van Bree has built a studio in his basement where he can record guitars, bass, piano and vocals. He is also very interested in the physics behind vintage analog synthesizers. He chose to do a creative project, and is writing and producing two original songs as well as a cover piece.

"As part of my thesis, I use digital replicas of these synths to manipulate different waveforms to create my own synthesizer sounds, which I incorporate in my original music," Van Bree says. "I've spent countless hours editing the tracks, which are individually laid down by each instrument."

Van Bree uses different effects to each instruct so they fit together. He says when it's all done, the audio quality should be the same as you hear on the radio.

### **Tyler Buganski**

Performing the St. Crispin's Day speech from Shakespeare's *Henry V* in eight different rasaboxes would be challenging to many, but senior Tyler Buganski is up to the task and chose it for his senior thesis. Rasaboxes are a way for categorizing emotions within Sanskrit theatre, each having one positive and one negative, for a total of eight rasaboxes.

"The rasas all have very difficult names from Latin, but overall translate to wonder, love, fear, disgust, courage, comedy, sadness and rage," Buganski says. "The speech is incredible due to the amount of emotion it brings, but it is never exactly clear on what emotion it can portray due to the beauty of how Shakespeare writes."

Buganski looks forward to performing as a sort of grand finale to his senior year. "Theatre at Priory has always been a big part of who I am to my community at school and is one of my true passions. Doing this is a dream come true."

### **Aaron Cole**

In December 2019, senior Aaron Cole started to challenge himself on the piano with pieces such as *Clair de Lune* by Claude Debussy after not taking lessons for a number of years. "It was a huge challenge, considering I hadn't taken lessons since eighth grade," Cole says. "However, by March, I had conquered that challenge and was ready for a new one."

It was then that Cole decided to do a creative thesis and chose a piano performance. In addition to *Clair de Lune*, Cole wanted the rest of the program to include a big challenge.

"I chose a piece that I loved, but I also knew it would stretch my limits: *The Moonlight Sonata*," Cole says. "To fit the time requirement, I also decided to play *Rondo Alla Turca* by Mozart. After months of practicing, I performed my thesis on Jan. 23. It was an awesome experience, and I am so glad I chose it for my thesis."



### **Seppo Hoijarvi**

Graffiti and mural art have influenced senior Seppo Hoijarvi's artistic development and style. Visual Arts teacher Ann Schaefer encouraged Hoijarvi to pursue graffiti art in his independent study.

"Mrs. Schaefer allowed us to work by ourselves and develop our own styles and projects. After a few months of learning how to manipulate a spray can, I made my first mural on the walls in the art studio," Hoijarvi says. "Art has always been something I've enjoyed, but when I was painting during my junior year of independent study, time seemed to stand still. One period was never enough, and I would often show up late to my next class, my hands covered in flecks of paint."

Hoijarvi says his understanding of graffiti and mural art has evolved from his initial perceptions. "The most important thing I've learned is that art is what you want it to be. My artwork usually reflects the way I feel at the moment or the type of week I'm having. I think it's important that observers are inspired by my artwork in their own way."

### **Reid Miller**

Senior Reid Miller chose to do a vocal music recital for his thesis. "After being heavily involved with theatre and vocal music at Priory for the past several years, I thought an event like this would be a fun way for me to wrap up this part of high school," Miller says. "I also thought it would be a great way to challenge myself and see how much I've improved over the past six years."

The performance consists mostly of musical theatre songs, but Miller also included one more operatic, biblical piece in order to push himself outside his comfort zone. That process began at the beginning of the school year when he started working on the track list.

“Most of the songs loosely fit into a theme of new beginnings and change, which I thought was appropriate for senior year and everything going on right now,” Miller says. “Since then, the track list has been mostly solid with a couple of exceptions, and I’ve spent the last several months learning and practicing.”

### **John Reinker and Patrick Zheng**

Partnering and using their strengths to collaborate on a film on theological virtues is what brought seniors John Reinker and Patrick Zheng together

for a unique creative thesis. Reinker had the idea and wanted Zheng to help with filming. Once approved, they began writing a summary, putting together the storyboard, writing the script, figuring out who would be their actors, deciding on film locations, gathering props and scheduling.

The collaborative film is told in three different parts, with each part following a different character. The parts are not told in chronological order, but instead broken up into pieces that when complete, tell the whole story. The story itself follows the theme of three theological virtues: charity, hope and faith. Each story illustrates what happens when one of these virtues is corrupted.

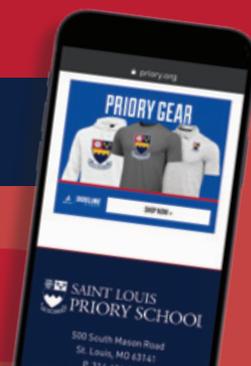
“We wanted to do a short film because we love doing it,” Reinker says. “It’s extremely time-consuming - even small scenes that will take up a minute in the actual movie can take hours to film. We can’t wait to share it with everyone.”



PRIORY

**Be sure to check out  
our online store to  
order all your favorite  
Priory and Raven gear!**

[www.priory.org/spiritstore](http://www.priory.org/spiritstore)



# Student Ambassadors

SHINE A LIGHT ON A PRIORY EDUCATION

Who better to tell the Priory story to a prospective student than one of our very own?

The role of student ambassador evolved this year - just like many things due to the pandemic. Our stellar group of student ambassadors stepped up to the plate and hit a home run as a part of Priory's evolving Enrollment Management program.

Ambassadors fill a very important role at Priory. They show off our campus, curriculum and community at evening and weekend events, in addition to hosting prospective students in our shadow program.

"When I had the opportunity to become a student ambassador, I had to take advantage of it," seventh grader Alex Bader says. He adds that when he came to Priory as a prospective student, he loved it, and he wants to share that experience with other prospective students.

Student ambassadors led the charge this year to help adapt to the virtual world of recruiting and embraced different ways of sharing their Priory experience.

Freshman Quinten Bauman says being a student ambassador is an awesome way to exemplify his dedication to Priory. "The Zoom meetings were a great way to allow prospective families to dip their feet in the water. During these sessions, the Enrollment Management team did a wonderful job with steering conversations in the right direction."

Student ambassadors develop their social skills and improve time management skills.

> Student Ambassadors, left to right: Carter Coleman '21, Sami Haddad '21, Nick Parafiniuk '22, Owen Spore '23, Chuck Taylor '26

Sophomore Owen Spore says Priory has been a dream come true. "I want those after me to have the same experience that I have," he says. "So, I made it a priority to share my experiences with prospective students and their families. I'm proud to call Priory my home."

Student ambassadors were also a critical component of the mini open house experiences where small groups had a 90-minute Priory experience. High school students led the presentation to parents with the academic team in the library, and seventh and eighth grade students engaged with prospective students in collaborative learning and athletic experiences.

Prospective students were able to participate in French lessons, stage combat, STEM work with bending light and the science behind it, espionage and coding. There were also fierce games of whiffle ball and Ultimate, and chances to shoot hoops with the varsity basketball team.

If you know a young man who would benefit from the Priory experience, please contact Jen Nowak, director of enrollment management at [jnowak@priory.org](mailto:jnowak@priory.org) or 314.434.7184.



# HYBRID

## LEARNING

In the fall 2020 edition of Priory Magazine, we looked at all the changes the school made to prepare for a year overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Now, approximately two-thirds of the way through the year, we asked some of our students, parents, faculty and staff members to share their thoughts on how things have gone.

**Overall, how has the school year been going? Academically? Athletically? In extracurriculars?**

"In athletics, we have made adjustments by wearing masks during all activities, whether strenuous or not, but sacrifices like this allow us to continue. For sports in the fall, masks were not required while on the field or course, but as COVID numbers have risen we continue to implement safety guidelines that allow us to continue doing what we love in a safe manner. For example, I have joined wrestling this year, and through the combined efforts of **Coach Jennings** and each member of the team, we are able to continue participating. We have worn masks at all times and divided into pods based on weight class and wrestling experience. The different pods are not able to wrestle each other to ensure that if one person from a certain pod begins to show symptoms of the virus or even tests positive, it has not spread to others who are not in the pod."

– **David Mohrmann**, Form VI

**How was your transition into Priory as a new student? Have you been able to get to know your classmates and settle in?**

"In my first year as a Priory student, there are some advantages to having masks all the time. One of my biggest fears coming into Priory was the social aspect, having to make new friends and such. But masks and social distancing allowed me to take more time as I needed to meet people. However, in the present time, it can be hard to interact with friends because of social distancing and masks."

– **Sam Palka**, Form I

**What are some of your or your sons' accomplishments this year that you're most proud of?**

"It has been a crazy year, but they are still here, and not just surviving but thriving! They have been so creative in dealing with this pandemic. Figuring out ways to socialize completely outdoors. Doing group projects over FaceTime. They seem to be a lot more flexible than I would be in rotating between virtual and in-person learning. They seem to be able to buckle down and get things done either way without much change to their routine. There are five boys in our family, and the older two who go to Priory have spent a ton of time with the younger three, which has been a silver lining of this whole thing. They have been great older brothers."

– **Sara Clark**, mother of R.J., Form VI, and Michael, Form IV

< Both in-person and virtual learners take advantage of technology in Dr. Andrew Davis' math class.





Lunch during the pandemic is served in the gym.



Father Linus Dolce, O.S.B., teaches both math and science.



Seventh grade students Freddy Gaertner, Bing Behrman and Tyler Cineus collaborate in the Junior School.



The dining hall was transformed into a classroom where Steve Zaegel teaches scripture.



High school students heading to Mass from the high school on a beautiful day.



The multipurpose gym is converted into this year's dining hall so students can socially distance at 6-foot tables. Eighth graders John Varley and Wes Harvey enjoy a meal prepared by the catering staff.



< The pandemic doesn't stop our students from enjoying a break outdoors.

**How has the technology in the classroom (Zoom, individual student computers, software programs and online tools) affected learning?**

"The need to teach both in the classroom and on Zoom every day has made teaching Latin even more challenging than it already is! Not only do lessons have to be even more organized and clear than they should be in the first place, but they all have to be reinvented to work in the hybrid format. So, my prep for classes has at least doubled. But probably the biggest change is just the way class begins. Every single class involves a complicated process – logging in three or four different places each time I begin a class, and then ensuring that students are on Zoom, and then making sure all of my 'tabs' are in place for the lesson, then making sure my computer is projecting both in the room and on Zoom – and that's not actually the complete list of "action items" just to begin a single class session. On top of this process is the normal, day-to-day of a school, with students wanting to chat about this or that, so it's all quite a flurry of activity. I think this entire situation is what has changed the most: Class is no longer simply walking in and saying, 'Hi guys!'"

– **Dr. Kellen Plaxco**, Theology and Classics teacher

**What fun and interesting things have your sons shared with you about their classes this year?**

"Michael has loved Tech and Business because it is such real-life experience. They form groups and the groups come up with innovative products and ideas. They create and build them and present them to the class. From there, a few are chosen to be presented to actual investors. It is such a great learning experience where they synthesize things from all different subject areas. It also really gets their creative juices flowing and gets them excited about innovation."

– **Sara Clark**

**When it comes to distance learning, how have fall and winter of this year been different from last spring?**

"Comparing school at Priory now to the spring at my old school, there are some substantial changes. First, we are more adjusted to the pandemic now compared to during the spring. We have learned more about the virus and how to stay safe, whereas last spring we were scrambling to follow the latest guidelines and it was a new topic. Second, the teachers are more prepared because they have based their curriculum around virtual learning in case of another lockdown. Overall, I think we are more ready to adapt to new changes that may come in the future."

– **Sam Palka**

**What are some of the challenges your students have faced this year? How did you overcome them?"**

"Some of the biggest challenges this year have just been getting everything done in a day's time. I've never had to be as careful with my time as I have this year, and the stress has taken its toll, of course. My colleagues, however, have simply been gracious and supportive. In spite of everything, the fact that I work with people who are really supportive and understanding is what's getting me through everything."

– **Dr. Kellen Plaxco**

**What are some things you're most looking forward to in the spring?**

"The spring is a joyous time for seniors. I am very eager to be able to spend time with my fellow brothers at Priory, and this is only possible because of the work the school has done to remain safe. Difficulties come from this pandemic, but we should all be proud of making it through this. It is an accomplishment that we are able to continue normal schooling, and I am very proud of the adjustments I have made to do this. I am proud of the school for the way it has dealt with the pandemic."

– **David Mohrmann**

# SAINT LOUIS ABBEY JOURNAL



## DEAREST FRIENDS,

As I write this, we stand on the verge of the great Feast of the Presentation of our Lord, which celebrates that day when Mary and Joseph brought the infant Jesus to the temple to dedicate him to God. At that time, the prophet Symeon and the prophetess Anna met them and both exclaimed that this child was the fulfillment of all of Israel's expectations for what God had promised.

Promises fulfilled. The world we currently live in is full of expectations of promises (both great and small) being fulfilled. By the time you read this, perhaps many of our greatest immediate desires for promises fulfilled will have come to pass. But whether or not COVID is clearly receding, we have the great promises from God that He will fulfill all that He has promised. In any time and every place, we can hold on to that promise from the Lord.

As I write this, the monks all remain healthy and well. In fact, a large number of them have received the second dose of the COVID vaccine! We continue to live the daily round of prayer, work and community life that is the hallmark of Benedictine monks, and we keep all of you in our prayers.

I join my thoughts to those of Saint Paul:

*Always be joyful, then, in the Lord; I repeat, be joyful. Let your good sense be obvious to everybody. The Lord is near. Never worry about anything; but tell God all your desires of every kind in prayer and petition shot through with gratitude, and the peace of God which is beyond our understanding will guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus. Finally, let your minds be filled with everything that is true, everything that is honorable, everything that is upright and pure, everything that we love and admire - with whatever is good and praiseworthy.*  
(Philippians 4:4-8)

May God richly bless you all!

Yours in the Lord,

*Abbot Gregory Mohrman, O.S.B.*

Abbot Gregory Mohrman, O.S.B., '76

# SAINT ANSELM PARISH NEWS



Like the rest of the world, things continue to roll on despite the current circumstances in which we live. Some of the highlights from Saint Anselm Parish over the past few months center around our Parish School of Religion and Confirmation programming, the Advent and Christmas seasons, and various efforts of the parish to reach out to the wider community.

In our Parish School of Religion Program, we celebrated the Sacrament of First Reconciliation with our second-grade students in late November. This event was held in the Abbey Church with an intimate group of students and their parents. The evening consisted of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, prayer, first Confessions for the students, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. We look forward to the second graders' reception of First Holy Communion in the spring. We've been able to hold in-person classes on Sunday mornings with our students while giving those families who prefer distance learning the opportunity to do so. In the area of Confirmation and Youth Ministry, we've continued this programming more or less as planned. We did reschedule the *Luke 18* Confirmation Retreat from the fall, which we hope to hold in the spring. The Confirmation students are scheduled to receive the Sacrament of Confirmation this spring during a Mass celebrated by Bishop Mark Rivituso.

We were blessed with fruitful Advent and Christmas seasons. We offered Adoration and Confessions on Tuesday evenings through the Advent Season. These evenings were found to be a blessing for our parishioners to prepare for the Christmas Season. We had a favorable turnout for Christmas Masses. In order to welcome as many people as possible to Christmas

Masses we made some special arrangements. The 4:30 p.m. Vigil Mass was livestreamed from the church to the Parish Center and Priory gym. We made an additional 8 p.m. Christmas Eve Mass available in the Parish Center and the 11 a.m. Christmas morning Mass was live streamed through our parish YouTube channel. We offered an outdoor Christmas morning Mass at 10 a.m. Yes, it was a cold morning, with the high temperature reaching a balmy 12 degrees.

During the Advent Season, our Acts of Kindness ministry and Saint Vincent de Paul Conference organized various opportunities for our parishioners to support those in need. The Acts of Kindness group hosted the annual Advent giving tree in our parish, collecting Christmas gifts for the Ville Neighborhood and other communities in the St. Louis area. Our Saint Vincent de Paul Conference organized a modified but fruitful Christmas program to support families in the St. Louis area to have a joyful and brighter Christmas season. Our annual Saint Vincent de Paul Christmas Breakfast was replaced this year with a drive-thru poinsettia giveaway at the Parish House.

We in the parish, as I'm sure many of you do, hope the world will continue to return to normal in the months ahead. We have begun to make plans for the Lenten and Easter seasons. We hope to celebrate the great liturgies of Holy Week and Easter in the Church this year. We're also planning with hope for various summer programs in the area of our Parish School of Religion and Youth Ministry programming.

Thank you for your continued generous support and prayers for the Abbey, Saint Louis Priory School, and Saint Anselm Parish.

May God continue to bless you and your families,

*Father Aidan McDermott, O.S.B.*

Father Aidan McDermott, O.S.B.



# IN MEMORIAM

JULY 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2020

Margaret Bannister, wife of former faculty member Robert Bannister

Ray Bayer, Sr., grandfather of Ray Bayer, III '11

Gene and Rosalie Buckley, parents of Tom Buckley '77, Steve Buckley '78, and Marty Buckley '80

Lynn Buss, grandmother of Sean Buss '15

Rosemary Cagle, parishioner

Don Coleman, father of faculty member Stephanie Allee

Tom Conley, father of Tom Conley '79, Mike Conley '82, grandfather of David Taiclet '11, Jack Taiclet '12, Matthew Spellman '18, and Brennan Spellman '20

Kunigunde Dömer, grandmother of Max Cruz '08

Herman Fikes, parishioner

Mary Fox, mother of Thomas Fox '78, Patrick Fox '80, Christopher Fox '85, and John Fox '99

Jack Freund, father of Dr. John Freund '82

Benjamin Gambaro, grandfather of Colin Gambaro '09

Catherine Harig, grandmother of Matthew Politte '22

Matt Hurley '97, brother of Brian Hurley '98

Almighty and merciful God,  
whose Son, for our sake,  
willingly underwent death in the flesh,  
grant mercifully, we pray,  
that these your servants may have part  
in the wondrous victory of Christ's Resurrection.  
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, for ever and ever.  
Amen.

Bill Kelly, grandfather of Will Kelly '21

Kit Kienstra, wife of Ted Kienstra '60, grandmother of Cory Lenz '06, Ryan Lenz '09, Colin Bruns '11, and Samuel Bruns '13

Dr. Albert Jolivert, father of Louis Jolivert '89

Sally Klohr, parishioner

Janet Lane, grandmother of Kerns Lane '06, Ted Lane '08, and Patrick Lane '15

Dr. Royce Laycock, grandfather of faculty member Mary Claire MacDonald

Dominic Licovali, parishioner

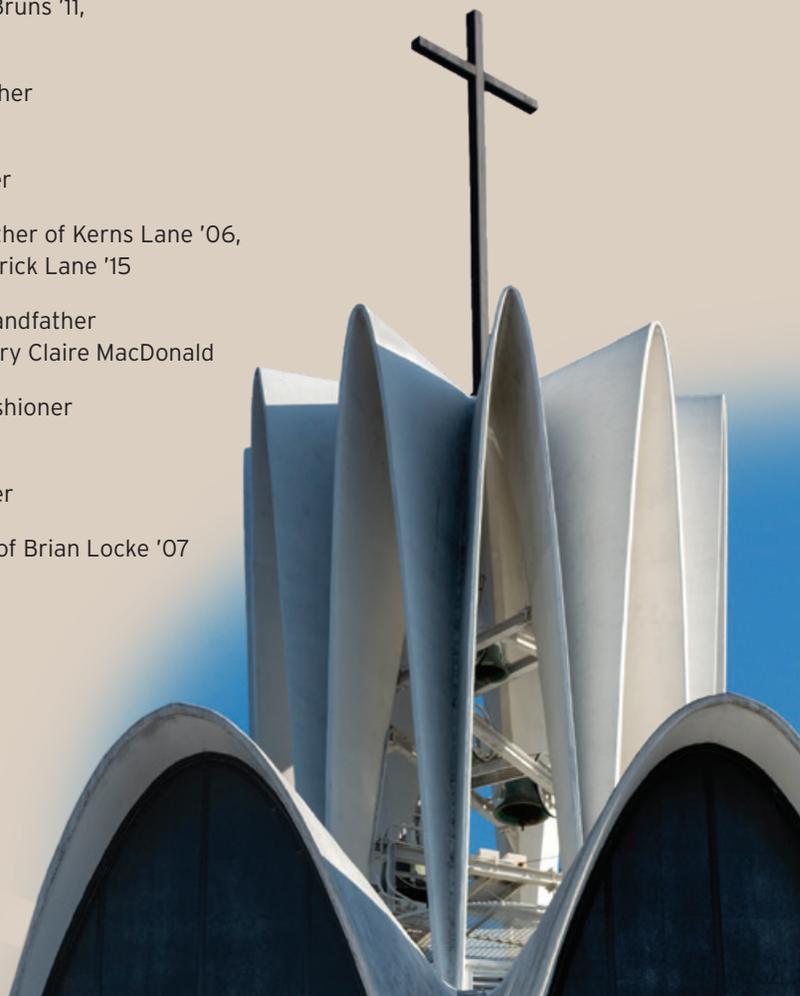
Dr. John Lindeman, former faculty member

Tommy Locke, father of Brian Locke '07

< Father Aidan McDermott, O.S.B. held Mass outside for St. Anselm parishioners during the pandemic.

< Father Aidan McDermott, O.S.B and parishioners gathered together and collected food for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.

> Photo courtesy of Richard Sprengeler



# IN MEMORIAM

Constance McClellan, grandmother of Ian McClellan '16

Lucy McNamara, Confrater, wife of Confrater and Oblate Robert McNamara (deceased), mother of Mark McNamara '78

Kenneth Mihill, Jr., brother of Chris Mihill '83

John Mitchell, grandfather of Duncan Phillips '19 and Aidan Phillips '21

John Moellenberg, parishioner

Gordon Moen, grandfather of Alec Moen '08, Brett Moen '11, Andrew Moen '16, Sean Moen '20, and Michael Moen '21

Cecelia Moley, infant daughter of Patrick Moley '10

Peter H. F. Moy, grandfather of Peter Moy '26

Gene Puschel, grandfather of Will Puschel '24

Christopher Reid, father of Christopher Reid '86 and Mark Reid '89

John Reilly, grandfather of Jimmy Newell '14 and John Newell '22

Dorothy Reitz, grandmother of Zach Kuchan '15

Kaitlin Richardson, daughter of Confraters Dan '60 and Jean Richardson, and sister of Andrew Richardson '89

Phyllis Schaeffer, grandmother of Joey Ciapciak '13 and Mark Ciapciak '17

Kelly Stettner, sister of Matt Gould '98

Fred Switzer III, Abbey Society Member

Greg Vatterott, Sr., father of Greg Vatterott, Jr., '89

Richard Wagner, grandfather of Cole Wagner '14, Jack Wagner '20, and Charlie Wagner '24

Mary Yuan, former wife of Iggy Yuan '74, mother of Brian Yuan '07 and Kevin Yuan '09

Jean Zinsmeyer, Confrater, wife of Confrater Andy Zinsmeyer and mother of Jon Zinsmeyer '92

Photo courtesy of Richard Sprengeler

# WE ARE PRIORY

## WE ARE THE RAVENS

Priory students, faculty and alumni are soaring boldly into the future.

**A**fter many months of thoughtful planning and weeks of excitement, the Priory community tuned in to watch parties for the big reveal on Dec. 16.

The highly anticipated branding transformation and new mascot and logo - the Raven - was embraced with overwhelming support.

Senior members of Priory's Student Council enhanced their leadership skills by heading up a task force to choose the new mascot, which expresses Priory's identity as a Catholic, Benedictine school.

Administration knew it was critical to get input from a variety of stakeholders, including faculty and alumni. As a result, the task force included five students, five faculty members and five alumni.

Senior Sami Haddad says he is thrilled about the mascot change and that it was an honor to be on the task force. "I am happy that I got to play a role in this long-lasting change and help improve the community that has given me so much."

Haddad says the process was extremely thorough and the task force discussed many options before deciding on what they thought was the best choice.

"There are many reasons the Raven is the best choice for Priory," Haddad says. "The Raven represents the culture of loyalty and service that is exhibited at Priory. The Raven is a symbol of fierceness, loyalty and service. All three of these qualities are found in the Priory community and they are what makes our community so special."

Why a raven? The raven plays an important role in the faith of the Priory community. The Bible recounts how Noah released a raven from the ark, and the prophet Elijah was fed meat and bread in the wilderness by a raven.



Additionally, St. Gregory the Great, in his story of the life and miracles of Saint Benedict, recounts how Benedict had a pet raven, who used to come every evening to be fed bread from Benedict's own hand. Once, when Benedict was given poisoned bread by a disgruntled and envious priest, Benedict told the raven to take the poisoned bread and drop it in a place where no one could find it. The raven obeyed and returned for his nightly treat.

The raven's bravery and obedience ultimately saved others from the wrath of a wicked man. This kind of selfless dedication is seen in our students at Priory as they excel in all ways.

"As I got to know the relationship Saint Benedict had with a raven, it became a natural fit for our school," says Alumni Board President Matt Wagner '90, a mascot task force member.

**“The Raven represents the culture of loyalty and service that is exhibited at Priory.**

– Sami Haddad

Wagner says he’s excited for the Priory community to be able to purchase Raven gear and show their support. “Seeing the Raven come to life has been a lot of fun. Ravens are fierce, clever, intelligent and team players. It’s a natural fit for our mascot.”

Ravens are known for their incredible intelligence and ability to strategize while on the hunt, making them fearsome predators. They also tend to work together to overcome challenges, much like our students who find they can reach new heights with the help of their classmates.

“Whether it’s in the classroom, on the field or out in the world, our students and alumni soar boldly,” Abbot Gregory Mohrman, O.S.B., ’76 says “We are the Ravens!”

Another member of the task force, senior Devin Kancherla, says, “The Raven fits the three pillars of Priory: athletics, academics and spirituality. Not only are Ravens fierce and intimidating, but they are also curious and intelligent. I’m excited to see the sleek logo design on uniforms.”

Kancherla says he’s thrilled about the future of the mascot. “It will be exciting to integrate the Raven into the typical Priory lifestyle. Whether it’s reading the weekly Raven Report, reconnecting with classmates at Raven Roundup, or jamming out at the annual Raven Rock, I am eager for what’s in store for our Priory Ravens.”

Show your Raven pride by ordering swag at: [www.priory.org/spiritstore](http://www.priory.org/spiritstore)

## Priory Magazine Cover Photo **Features Raven Stained Glass**

Around the time the new Raven mascot was revealed, the communications department reached out to Mary Claire MacDonald, the medieval arts instructor, to see if her students would be interested in designing and making a stained-glass piece of art with the new Raven logo. Her students were very excited to come up with some creative ideas, including parts of the piece that have monks wearing masks.

“Seeing the boys come together to try to finish the nearly impossible task of creating the Raven window has been the greatest joy this year,” MacDonald says. “Every class is working on it and many members of The Guild, old and young. All said and done, more than 30 students will have worked to make it possible. I’ve also loved seeing students devote so much of their weekend time to The Guild. We have some very dedicated workers who come in on the weekends with me any chance they get.”

“Seeing the boys come together to try to finish the nearly impossible task of creating the Raven window **has been the greatest joy this year.**”

– Mary Claire MacDonald, Medieval Arts Instructor





> Athletic Director Harold Barker sporting his Raven hoodie.

## NEWS BRIEFS

### National Merit Scholarship Program

Five members of the Class of 2021 are National Merit Semifinalists! There are approximately 16,000 semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program out of more than 1.5 million students who took last year's PSAT. Semifinalists have the opportunity to continue in the competition for approximately 7,600 different NMSP college scholarships. Pictured here, left to right: Reid Miller, Ryan Mitchell, Sami Haddad, Michael Moen and Devin Kancherla. Congratulations to all of these students!



Five members of the Class of 2021 earned Letters of Commendation in the National Merit Scholarship Program. They are among the approximately 34,000 commended students out of the 1.5 million who took the 2019 PSAT, landing among the top 50,000 scores. Pictured left to right with Father Cuthbert: John Reinker, Adam Rolwes, Shad Lundal, Will Dolan and Gabe Kemna.



### Palka Named Nussbaum Music Scholarship Winner

Sam Palka is this year's recipient of the Nussbaum Endowed Music Scholarship. The Nussbaum Scholarship is an award provided by the generosity of Mrs. Frederick Nussbaum from the Frederick and Anna May Nussbaum Music Fund, which is held at Priory. It is presented to a 7th grader each year after auditions in the fall and is renewable annually. For Sam's audition, he performed the first movement of Vivaldi's Concerto in A Minor.

### Campus Beautification

Our 7th graders spent part of their last day before Thanksgiving break helping add some greenery to our campus. For the past several years, the facilities staff has engaged our newest students to plant trees in various locations around the school – a great team building and service opportunity. This year, the new trees are clustered along Mason Road, near the monastery, next to the Junior School, and around the pond.

### Kancherla Named Coca-Cola Scholars Semifinalist

Senior Devin Kancherla was named a semifinalist in the Coca-Cola Scholars Program. 1,600 students have been named semifinalists out of a pool of almost 100,000 applicants. A joint effort of Coca-Cola bottlers across the country and The Coca-Cola Company, the Coca-Cola Scholars Program is the largest corporate-sponsored, achievement-based scholarship program in the United States. The program's criteria for selecting its scholars include "well-rounded, bright students who not only excel academically, but are also actively involved in their schools. These leaders are passionate and service-oriented and demonstrate a sustained commitment to bettering their community." Coca-Cola scholars receive a \$20,000 scholarship for college and attend a leadership development institute and awards banquet at the company's Atlanta headquarters over the summer. In March, 150 scholarship winners will be notified.

Since 2010, Priory has had three other Coca-Cola Scholars. They are Matt Menendez '10, Tejas Sekhar '17 and Sohan Kancherla '18.

### Two Seniors Named College Board National Hispanic Scholar Honorees

Seniors Aaron Cole and Shad Lundal were named two of this year's College Board National Hispanic Scholar honorees. This program recognizes approximately 5,000 Hispanic/Latino students each year from among the more than 400,000 who take the PSAT. Students who receive this recognition become eligible for a number of scholarships and programs through the schools to which they apply. Since 2011, Priory has been blessed to have 10 additional students recognized as National Hispanic Scholars. Congrats to all!

> Sam Palka



### Sumner Named Winner of VFW District Event

Junior Peter Sumner was named the Missouri winner of the VFW Voice of Democracy audio-essay program in addition to being named the winner of the VFW's 12th district (St. Louis metro). The Voice of Democracy program, which more than 64,000 high school students competed in nationwide last year, provides high school students with the opportunity to express themselves on patriotic themes in a recorded essay format.

The 2020-21 topic is "Is This the Country the Founders Envisioned?" Peter was recognized at VFW Post 3944 in Overland/St. Ann. In non-COVID years, the winner from each state receives a trip to Washington, DC where winners are announced. This year, the event will be held virtually. Peter and other state winners are also invited to a four-day Youth Leadership Program. Congrats Peter!

### Student Council

STUCO found ways to stay active this year despite many events being canceled. The year began with the merging of the Junior School and High School STUCO. The transition was seamless and gave the students a new perspective that helped make changes to benefit the entire student body. In the fall, they worked diligently on Spirit Week in the hopes of uplifting the community in these challenging times.

Efforts to strengthen the community were further exemplified with the mascot change. Younger members of STUCO helped gather ideas from their classmates, and Senior STUCO was the voice of the students on the mascot task force, which selected the new mascot and the new logo. STUCO leaders say they are proud to now have a mascot that represents the fierce loyalty and spirit of service of the Priory community.

A retreat was held over the summer to assist us with planning and to discuss servant leadership. A team building outing to play paintball also provided lots of fun. Two canned food drives were held including Priory's first competition with Visitation Academy, and one blood drive, with plans for a few more.

STUCO hosted Form Christmas parties over Zoom with Kahoot games to foster Christmas Spirit, and as part of Spirit Week, homecoming shirts were designed and distributed, treats were handed out to the student body, and a creative video was shared with the community.



Devin Kancherla



Aaron Cole



Shad Lundal



Peter Sumner



Yrwin Batan

## **Batan Named Semi-Finalist in St. Louis Teen Talent Competition**

Congratulations to freshman Yrwin Batan, who has reached the semifinals of the St. Louis Teen Talent Competition sponsored by the Fox Performing Arts Charitable Foundation. The annual contest offers local high school students the chance to win scholarships and cash prizes worth up to \$8,000. Yrwin's performance of Beethoven's Sonata No. 1, Movement 4, on the piano earned him one of 50 semifinalist slots, which took place in February. Finalists will perform at the Fox Theatre in April.



USO Club writing letters to military service members

## **CLUBS**

### **USO Club Grows and is Recognized in West Newsmagazine**

Sophomore Drew Limp wanted to find ways to honor our nation's military. He went to Priory's administration last year asking to start a USO (United Service Organizations) Club. Limp's older brother Collin, a 2017 Priory graduate, is now in the United States Military Academy West Point.

2019-20 was the first year for the club and there were about 20 students involved. That number has more than doubled for the 2020-21 school year. The club sends care packages to soldiers serving overseas. They also have developed a large letter writing campaign to send to deployed active military.



Scholar Bowl

### **Scholar Bowl**

Members of Priory's Scholar Bowl team participated in the virtual American Quiz Bowl League Tournament. The team went 7-4 over the course of the day, taking 8th place out of 40 teams. Senior Drew Scheiner placed 12th individually out of the 120 participating students. Team members include: sophomore Evan Hugge; juniors Matthew Broder and Ryan Lally; and seniors Will Dolan, Max Look, and Drew Scheiner.

### **Chess Club**

Chess Club membership increased despite the pandemic and members are enjoying increasing their skills and knowledge. To meet the increased demand and adhere to social distancing guidelines, chess went virtual. Students registered online with Lichess.org and competed against one another in weekly tournaments. Because of the changes, the club was able to transition seamlessly to virtual competition as well.



Chess Club

## NEW STAFF

### School Nurse



The addition of registered nurse Mrs. Mary Kluba to Priory couldn't be timelier in the midst of a pandemic. Kluba brings with her a wealth of experience in the school setting. She worked in the Rockwood School District for more than 20 years, and currently volunteers at Most Sacred Heart in Eureka. She

joined the Priory community on Jan. 4 on a temporary basis through at least the end of the school year. Each morning she assists with reviewing daily screenings, helps with contact tracing and gathers required information for the local health department.

She is also available to consult with staff regarding general student care. Kluba's office is located in the Junior School.

### Cross Country and Track Coach



Dr. Kent Pettit joined our community in the fall as an assistant cross-country coach. He was also recently named the new head track coach. Pettit has lived in St. Louis since 2013, having spent most of his life in Indiana, Tennessee, and Georgia. He ran track and cross country in high school and is still an avid runner.

Pettit is a certified teacher with an M.A. and Ph.D. in English and a B.A. and M.Div. in theology. He is currently supporting supervision needs through the end of this unusual year, manning the distance learning hub where all students who have remote teachers are attending class.

### Communications



Ms. Cathy Tweedie joined the Communications Department in the fall as the director of communications and public relations. She brings with her a wealth of experience including marketing, website development and project management. She spent the last seven years working in education

communications for Special School District of St. Louis County. Tweedie is a graduate of Purdue University and earned her Accreditation in Public Relations in 2018.

She is a member of the National School Public Relations Association. She helped manage and implement Priory's first digital marketing campaign as well as the new mascot rollout. Her office is located in the library across from the Technology Department.

### Advancement – Special Events



Mrs. Lisa Brnjac joined the Advancement staff as assistant director of special events. Brnjac has been a part of our Priory community for a very long time. Her son, Bart '18 and her husband, John '88, both attended Priory. She chaired the Xanadu auction in 2018, and she brings a wealth of knowledge and relevant experience with her. Additionally, she has fundraising experience

with Visitation Academy and Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, and most recently served as the Priory Alumni Mothers' Club President. Brnjac is responsible for coordinating Xanadu, Trivia Night, Graduation, the Awards Ceremony, the Form II Celebration as well as managing the Mothers' Club, Fathers' Club and Alumni Mothers' Club. Her office is located in the Switzer House.

### Enrollment Management



Mrs. Jen Nowak joined the Advancement staff in 2018, where she worked to raise awareness and support of the Priory Fund. In June of 2020 she transitioned to the Admissions team as the assistant director of admissions.

In January, Nowak was named the director of enrollment management. The Admissions Department is currently transforming into a comprehensive Enrollment Management Department. She is the proud mother of two Priory students, and she is passionate about cultivating the right prospective students for Priory. Nowak is a graduate of Butler University where she received her bachelor's degree in communication and Spanish.

## 2020-21 ATHLETICS

### Cross Country

The team competed well with 3rd place team finishes in both the Metro League Conference meet and District Meet. Congratulations to senior **Brody Whalen** and sophomore **Peter Conard** who competed at the Class 3 State Meet on Thursday, Nov. 5 in Columbia. Peter finished the State Meet in 40th place and ran one of his best times of the year. Brody's highlights include winning the individual championship at the Metro League Conference Meet, finishing 3rd overall at the District Meet (All-District Honors) and finishing 9th overall at the Class 3 State Meet (All-State Honors).

### Honors

*All-Conference/All-District/All-State*

- **Brody Whalen**, senior (individual conference champion)

### School Records in 2020

Senior **Brody Whalen** set a school record at the league meet with a time of 16:38.92 then beat that record at the state meet with a time of 16:31.40.

### Football

After opening the season with a tough loss to John Burroughs, the football team won two impressive games over Principia and Clayton. They finished the regular season with a record of 2-1 and defeated Herculaneum in the first round of district play. The team traveled to St. Francis Borgia and played a fantastic district semifinal game, where the score went back and forth until the middle of the fourth quarter. Unfortunately, the team came up a little short and lost to Borgia, ending their season with an overall record of 3-2.

### Honors

*All-Conference*

#### First Team

- **Myles Kee**, senior, wide receiver/punter
- **Henry Weas**, junior, offensive line
- **Harrison Wilmsen**, senior, quarterback

#### Second Team

- **Jahaad Fort**, junior, defensive back
- **Jack Ramey**, junior, linebacker
- **TJ Soriano**, junior, linebacker

### All-District

#### First Team

- **Myles Kee**, senior, wide receiver/punter
- **Henry Weas**, junior, offensive line
- **Harrison Wilmsen**, senior, quarterback

#### Second Team

- **Jahaad Fort**, junior, defensive back
- **Jack Ramey**, junior, linebacker
- **TJ Soriano**, junior, linebacker

### All-State

#### Third Team

- **Myles Kee**, senior, wide receiver

### School Records in 2020

#### Senior **Myles Kee**

- Receptions
  - 1st All-Time (170)
  - 1st Single Game (14 vs. Borgia)
- Yards Receiving - 1st All-Time (2600)
- Points Scored - 1st All-Time (340)
- Touchdowns Scored - 1st All-Time

*Kee had previously set school records for yards receiving in a single season (2nd, 1107, 2019), yards receiving in a single game (1st, 212, vs. MICDS, 2019), points scored in a single season (1st, 166, 2019) and points scored in a single game (1st, 25, vs. Orchard Farm, 2019).*

#### Senior **Harrison Wilmsen**

- Pass Completions
  - 1st All-Time (433)
  - 1st Single Game (32 vs. Borgia)
- Yards Passing
  - 1st All-Time (5963)
  - 1st Single Game (371 vs. Borgia)
- Touchdown Passes
  - 1st All-Time (67)
  - 1st Single Game (5 vs. Principia)
- Pass Attempts - 2nd All-Time (705)
- Completion % - 1st Single Season (67.9%)
- QB Rating - 2nd Single Season (124.0)

*Wilmsen had previously set school records for touchdown passes in a single season (2nd, 25, 2019), pass attempts in a single season (2nd, 277, 2019) and pass attempts in a single game (2nd, 51, 2019).*

> Senior soccer players participated in signing day on Feb. 5 with a proud Coach John Mohrmann by their side. Continuing their athletic careers are R.J. Clark who will play at Regis University, Will Kelly, who will play at Tufts University and Donny Ross who will play at Saint Louis University.

## Soccer

The soccer program started and played a shortened season, and due to the new MSHSSA Championship Factor the team moved up to Class 4. They finished the regular season with a record of 8-6. In arguably the toughest district in the state (Priory, De Smet, CBC and Marquette) the varsity team ended their season with a tough 1-0 loss to Marquette in the first round of district play.

Three Ravens will go on to play soccer in college, and they signed their letters of intent in early February at a ceremony in the Corley Gym attended by their parents and classmates. They are R.J. Clark (Regis University; Denver, Colo.), Will Kelly (Tufts University; Boston, Mass.) and Donny Ross (Saint Louis University).

**Coach John Mohrmann** did a great job with this year's team, with 14 seniors in the program who will go down as one of the most decorated classes in school history!

## Honors

*All-Midwest (United Soccer Coaches)*

- **Donny Ross**, senior, defender

*All-State*

First Team

- **Donny Ross**, senior, defender (Class 4)

*All-Region*

- **Donny Ross**, senior, defender  
(Region 2 Defensive Player of the Year)

*All-Conference*

First Team

- **R.J. Clark**, senior, midfielder
- **Will Kelly**, senior, forward
- **Donny Ross**, senior, defender

Second Team

- **Steven Virtel**, senior, midfielder

Honorable Mention

- **A.J. Buckalew**, sophomore, forward
- **Murphy Reese**, senior, defender



Priory Cross Country



Priory Football



Priory Soccer



## Basketball

The 2020-21 Ravens varsity basketball season has certainly been an interesting one, but not one we will soon forget. The Ravens started the year winning their first nine games, with a top-10 state ranking. In December, the team won back-to-back tournaments at Lutheran St. Charles and Affton.

Senior **Harrison Wilmsen** led the team throughout the season and was the leading scorer in the area most of the year with a 25 points-per-game clip. He was fourth in the area in rebounds at 12 per game. His dominating presence did not go unnoticed, as he was double- and triple- teamed every game, but still managed to put up huge numbers. Senior **Myles Kee** added spark and energy that motivated the entire team, and he has been a great team leader averaging 10 points per game while also dishing out five assists per game. Junior **Jahaad Fort** was as steady as any player, and not only put up 13 points per game but also asked to guard the other team's best player. Senior **Gabe Kemna** was the team's sharpshooter since game one and connected on 27 three-pointers. Other seniors contributed significantly including **Steven Virtel**, **David Hartenbach** and **Brayden Schnurbusch**. Juniors **Jimmy Temprano** and **James Wong** added spark off the bench. Sophomore **Gerard Grewe** was a force on both ends of the court all year.

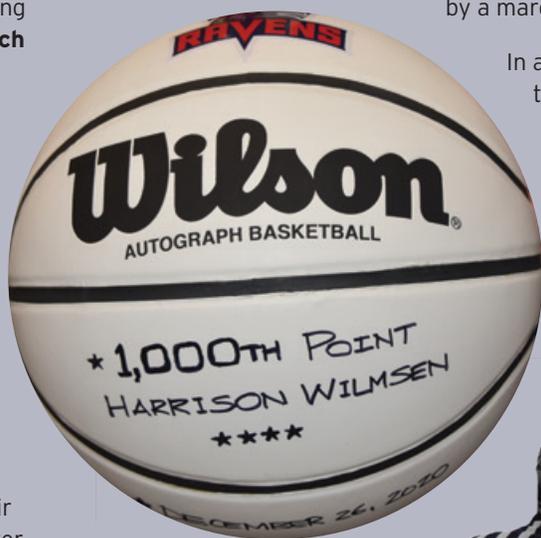
The team ended the season with an 18-6 record, and entered the district tournament as the #3 seed in the district. In the quarterfinal, they beat John Burroughs in overtime, 49-45, but ended their season with a loss to Westminster in the district semifinal.

## Basketball Milestones

Congratulations go out to senior **Harrison Wilmsen** on reaching 1,000 career points, which is quite an accomplishment for any player, but especially during a pandemic.

Varsity coach **Bobby McCormack** earned his 500th career win during his eighth season as head coach at Priory and his 29th season overall. Congrats coach!

▲ Wilmsen 1,000 Point Ball



## Hockey

After much uncertainty due to COVID-19, and even a full-team quarantine, the Ravens hockey team returned to the ice this winter to play a shortened 16-game season. All play was restricted to within divisions, which meant we were unable to schedule games against familiar Challenge Cup opponents. After graduating seven seniors last year, our two biggest questions heading into the season were what kind of goaltending we would get and where the offense would come from. Despite not having a single AAA player on the roster, we were very proud to finish the year on top of the division with an 11-2-3 record. We averaged five goals per game (73 in total) against two goals given up per game (30 in total).

We won our division for a fourth consecutive year, but we missed our goal of returning to the Challenge Cup. However, we were, surprisingly, crowned the number one seed in the Wickenheiser Cup Tournament! The team continued our dominant play through the round robin part of the postseason, winning all three games and outscoring our opponents by a margin of six to two.

In addition, the team overcame adversity from the league when an officiating mistake near the conclusion of our playoff game against John Burroughs resulted in having to replay the final six minutes and 16 seconds nearly five days after the game originally finished. The result was the same, a three to one victory for Priory. However, our season came to an end in the quarterfinals against defending Wickenheiser champions Duchesne. Their goaltending was just too dominant.



This year's seven graduating seniors have been to three Challenge Cups, advancing to the quarterfinals in two of those years and losing to the eventual cup winners each year. They are four-time central division champions and earned the number one overall seed in the Wickenheiser tournament. They have reestablished Priory as a competitive hockey school, and their contributions will be missed, but will live on with quality players going forward.

## Wrestling

At the High School level, the wrestling team, led by captains **Adam Rolwes, Gabe Gross, David Mohrmann** and **Reuben Goldschmidt**, finished its regular season with four dual meet wins in a row, and with a record of 10 wins and six losses. Head coach **Chris Jennings** expressed his excitement about his team's chances in the postseason. "We're wrestling well. Our juniors and seniors are showing their talent and leading the team, and our freshmen and sophomores are wrestling so well I often forget they are freshmen and sophomores. It's a good problem to have."

Districts were held on the weekend of Feb. 13, and nine wrestlers qualified to compete. Eight of those wrestlers then qualified for sectionals on the weekend of Feb. 27. Of the eight sectional qualifiers, senior **Adam Rolwes** and freshman **Huck Simmons** both came in first place in their weight classes at districts.

The team sent nine wrestlers to districts, and eight of those wrestlers made it to sectionals. Senior Adam Rolwes and freshman Huck Simmons qualified for the state tournament in Kansas City in mid-March.

At the Junior School level, navigating through COVID-19 proved difficult for wrestling this season. With only five on the squad, **Tommy Forget** selflessly stepped up in a big way and represented Priory solo at the first dual of the year. Later, Tommy was joined by teammate Eli Rolwes in what was possibly the last dual meet of the season. "In such a stifled season, it's tough to stay excited," Jennings said. "However, both wrestlers competed with class and excitement." Jennings said he is looking forward to seeing them and their teammates return next season with some of their classmates.



Bobby McCormack  
and Harrison Wilmsen



Harold Barker and  
Bobby McCormack



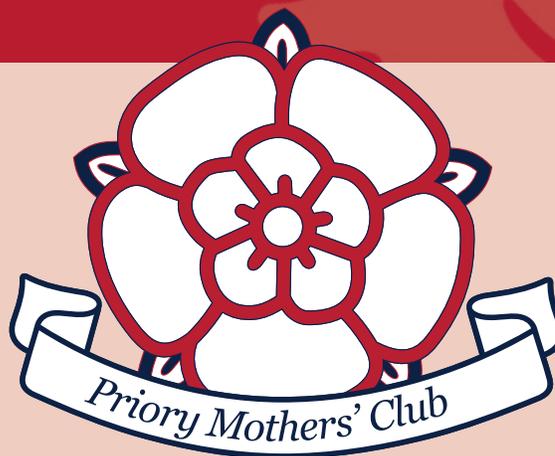
Priory Hockey



Priory Wrestling

## Special Shout Out to the Mothers' Club and Fathers' Club!

Thanks to the financial support of the Mothers' Club and Fathers' Club, each student received a complimentary Priory Raven hoodie sweatshirt after the announcement of our new mascot on Dec. 16. The Ravens hoodies were a tremendous hit and can be spotted around campus daily. Ka Kaw!



The Mothers' Club, under the leadership of President **Kelli Mitchell**, hosted several events this year.

### Mothers' Fall Mass of Thanksgiving

Priory moms gathered for Mass on Nov. 21, which was celebrated by Headmaster **Father Cuthbert Elliott, O.S.B., '02** at the Abbey Church, and received a lovely gift from the Mothers' Club.

### Christmas Boutique

The Mothers' Club hosted its first virtual Christmas Boutique for the current and alumni mothers and their friends. Over 20 vendors provided a wide array of holiday shopping options.

**Julie Wagner** (Cole '14, John '20 and Charlie '24) and **Colleen Wasinger** (Alex '20 and Andrew '22) chaired this perennial favorite.

### Junior School Mother & Son Mass

In February, the Junior School mothers spent the morning with their sons for a special Valentine's Mass. **Stacey Bealke** (Adam '24), **Kathleen Dixon** (Paul '06, Anthony '21 and Joseph '21) and **Maria Spivey** (John '24) organized this wonderful event.

### Ash Wednesday Mass

A special evening Ash Wednesday Mass ushered in the Lenten Season with current and alumni moms in attendance, which **Carine Azrak** (Cesar '16, Carl '19 and William '22) organized.

### We Appreciate You! Gifts for Faculty and Staff

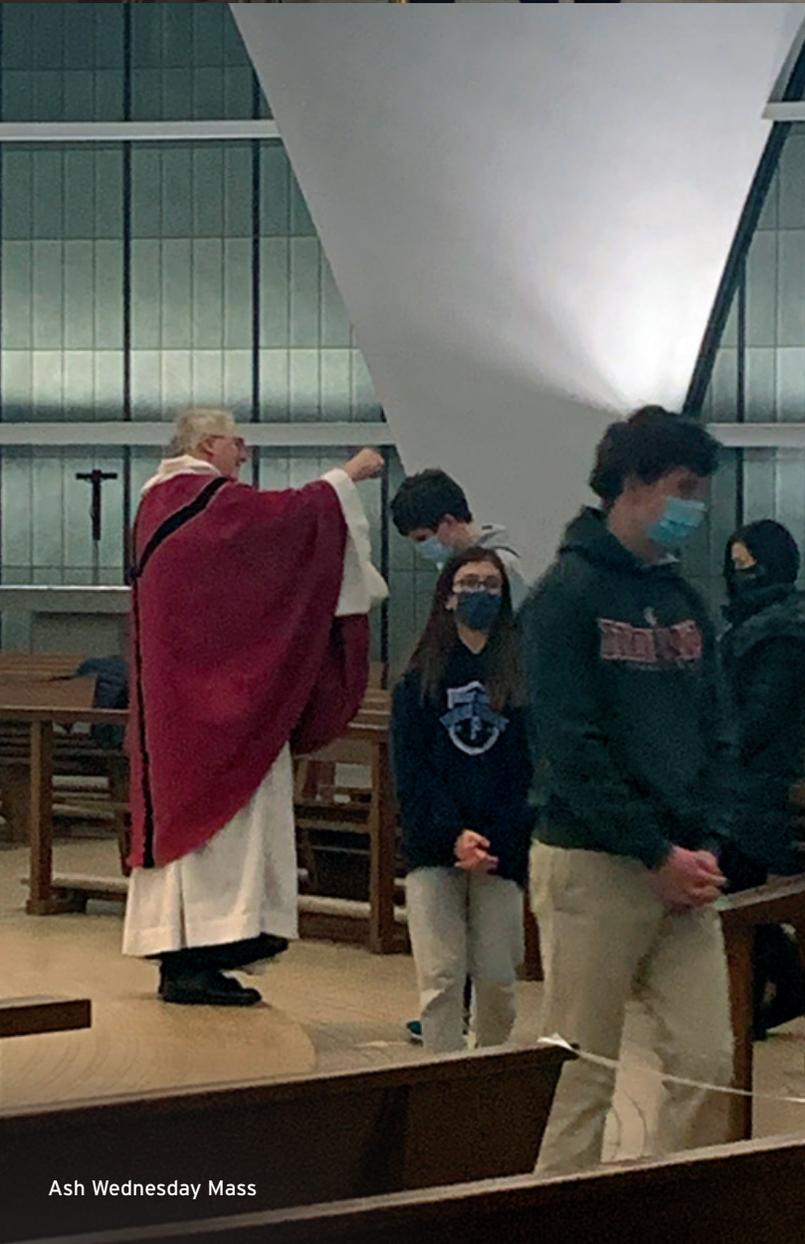
The Mothers' Club has been providing monthly gestures of appreciation to the faculty and staff at Priory during these unusual times. Form Mothers have included hand-written notes of gratitude and small tokens of appreciation like candy or cookies for a job well done. The faculty and staff are grateful for the support of the Priory parents.



Raven Hoodie Handout



Mother's Club President  
Kelli Mitchell with her  
son Ryan '21



Ash Wednesday Mass



Liz Hansen with Form I son Matthew at  
the Junior School Mother and Son Mass



Mothers' Mass of Thanksgiving

# ADVANCEMENT



Father & Son Washers Tournament



Father & Son Washers Tournament



Fathers' Club President **Murphy Reese '85** and the Executive Board have provided guidance to the Fathers' Club this year as they host several events to continue growth in participation and involvement.

### Form I Father & Son Washers Tournament

In August, the Fathers' Club welcomed incoming Form I fathers and sons for the annual Washers Tournament, chaired by **Jim Corrigan** (Jack '25), **Ryan Eisenbeis** (Owen '25), **Kevin Harrison** (William '25), **Leonard Kemna** (Nolan '17, Gabe '21 and Jude '26) and **Whitaker Varley** (John '25). The event provided a great way for the fathers and sons to get to know each other before classes began in the fall.

### Upcoming Father & Son Virtual Brunch

Not to be outdone this year, the Fathers' Club will host the second virtual Father & Son Brunch featuring a live-streamed Mass celebrated by **Father Cuthbert Elliot, O.S.B., '02**. Fathers are encouraged to make brunch with your sons and send in photos of culinary masterpieces. Watch your email for more information.

✓ Chris Wong and son Cameron '26, James Temperano and Robby '26 and Fathers' Club President Murphy Reese '85 at the washers tournament.





The Alumni Mothers' Club, under the leadership of President **Jill McNeive (Matthew '18)**, worked this past fall to keep the alumni mothers connected to Priory and the monastery.

#### **Switzer House Gardening**

Alumni moms spent several hours beautifying the gardens around Switzer House this fall. A special thank you to the gardening team of **Judy Wagner** (Michael '07, Joe '09 and Jack '18) and **Suzanne Cichelero** (Jacob '18).

#### **Monks' Thanksgiving**

The monks enjoyed a fabulous Thanksgiving dinner organized by **Kelly Messmer** (Thommy '20), which included multiple turkeys, sides, wine, and even a beautiful centerpiece.

#### **Coalition for Life St. Louis Donations**

Donations collected throughout the past year were donated to the Coalition for Life St. Louis in January. They were sincerely appreciative of all of our generosity.

## COVID RELIEF LEGISLATION:

### Possible impact on your charitable gifts to Priory

For the 2021 tax year, people who take the standard deduction can deduct up to \$300 of *cash* donations to charity. Note the emphasis on the word "cash" - this deduction isn't available if you donate a car, clothing, food, furniture or any other property. The \$300 amount is per person. So, if you're married and filing a joint return, you can deduct a total of \$600 on your 2021 tax return (which you'll file in 2022). The deduction won't reduce your 2021 adjusted gross income, though.

This new deduction was originally allowed for 2020 returns only. However, the recent COVID-relief and government spending bill extended the \$300 charitable deduction for non-itemizers for another year. As always, please consult your accountant for qualified financial advice.



# ALUMNI

## The Class of 2004 Soars to New Heights!

The Class of 2004 challenged themselves to improve their alumni giving percentage during the Priory Day of Giving held last June. The class efforts were spearheaded by **Nick Ahlering** and **Ted Horan**. They improved their percentage of alumni donors from 12% in the 2018-19 school year to 40% in 2019-20, which resulted in their finishing in the Top 10 Classes.

Ahlering explains why he supports Priory through donations to the Priory Fund: "We know how important the Priory Fund is to be able to provide continued academic and athletic excellence. The class of '04 looks back on our time at Priory very fondly and all agree the strength of our experience helped shape us into the men we are today - much more so than even our collegiate experience. We want Priory to be able to continue delivering the experience we all had for many generations to come, and therefore feel a strong desire to support the Priory Fund. One of the best pieces of advice I can give is to start a class email chain. The class of '04 calls ours the El Puerorum Forum, as an homage to the fine years spent in Mr. Miller's Latin classes."

Horan describes how they were able to encourage their class to donate. "We're fortunate to have a very engaged and generous class to begin with, so we had a very good response from our initial email to all our old classmates about supporting the Priory Day of Giving. However, a little bit of competition didn't hurt either. As our class was climbing in the rankings of giving percentages that day, we started to provide updates to the group to let them know that we had a chance to end up near the top five of all classes. As the day went on, the enthusiasm for catching the classes ahead of ours grew, making the push for donations even easier."

Thank you to all of our donors who supported Priory during our Day of Giving in 2020.

▼ Ted Horan

▼ Nick Ahlering



## Priory Internship Program

Are you interested in hosting a Priory student for a summer internship? Our current seniors are discussing their Priory internship experiences on their college essays and applications. Please consider helping a Priory student discern his future by working alongside you for a day, a week or a month! To learn more please contact Ann Bender, director of alumni relations at 314.434.3690, ext. 326 or [abender@priory.org](mailto:abender@priory.org)

## Submit a Class Note

We love good news! Please email your information about graduations, promotions, awards conferred, new jobs, marriages and children to [alumni@priory.org](mailto:alumni@priory.org) or [www.priory.org/classnotes](http://www.priory.org/classnotes).

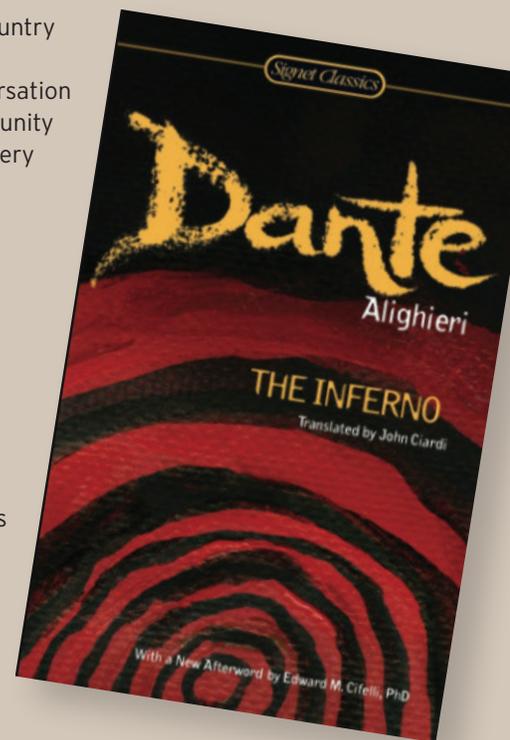
## Alumni Virtual Events

We sorely miss being able to welcome our alumni on campus during COVID-19. To combat not being physically together, we provided several ways for alumni to connect "virtually".

Alumni from across the country joined Abbot Gregory and Father Cuthbert for Conversation and Community, an opportunity to learn about the Monastery and the School on Jan. 14.

Abbot Gregory engages alumni in a bi-weekly discussion on Dante Alighieri's poetic masterpiece *Inferno*.

For more information on alumni programming contact Ann Bender, director of alumni relations at 314.434.3690, ext. 326 or [abender@priory.org](mailto:abender@priory.org).



## Homecoming & Reunions 2020NE

October 22 & 23, 2021

Honoring the classes ending in 'x5, 'x6, 'x0 and 'x1

Please join us for Mass and a reception in the High School on Friday, Oct. 22. Individual class reunions will be held on Saturday, Oct. 23.



\*Five-year reunions and 50th reunions will be held during a different weekend. Details for all events will be emailed to you in the summer.

\*If you do not receive emails from us please send your contact information to [alumni@priory.org](mailto:alumni@priory.org)

## Is a Gift of Stock Right for You?

Maybe your stocks have appreciated greatly since you purchased them. Maybe a surge in value of one of your holdings has thrown your portfolio off balance. Maybe you just want to refocus on other investment categories. If you also give to charity, these scenarios should encourage you to review your investment portfolio with a donation strategy in mind.

Why? Because donating stock directly to charity is one of the most tax-smart ways to give. Yet, it is often not well understood or widely used. According to a study by Fidelity Charitable, 80 percent of donors own appreciated assets, such as stocks, mutual funds or bonds, but only 21 percent of those donors have contributed these types of assets to charity.

If you are interested in making a gift of stock, please reach out to Janice Bailey, Assistant Head of School for Mission Advancement, at [jbailey@priory.org](mailto:jbailey@priory.org) or 314.434.0783.

# CLASS NOTES

**Dr. Chris Paletta '70** lives in Alexandria, Virginia with his wife Blair Forlaw. Dr. Paletta has been working as a clinical consultant supporting the USG COVID-19 pandemic response.

**David Chaplin, M.D., Ph.D. '70**, professor in the Department of Microbiology at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, has been elected as a distinguished fellow by the American Association of Immunologists.



**Dr. Stephen Lockhart '75** has retired from Sutter Health after 35 years. He most recently served as the chief medical officer. Dr. Lockhart has been instrumental in advancing health equity, not just in Northern California, but throughout the nation.



**Dr. Sean Pinney '86** is a professor of medicine and co-director of the Heart & Vascular Center for the University of Chicago School of Medicine. Dr. Pinney recently spoke to our students about careers in medicine.

**Sean Kelley '90** is a sports broadcaster with ESPN Radio. Sean is pictured here in his home studio where he proudly displays a Priory football helmet. Sean currently broadcasts national games and conducts zoom meetings with coaches around the country from this space.



**David Bealke '92** is the senior vice president of commercial lending at Midwest Bank Centre. He supports middle-market companies in the St. Louis region with financial backing for growth. He focuses on the bank's commercial and industrial (C&I) lending portfolio and commercial real estate lending.

**Damian Paletta '95** is a senior economics editor for the Washington Post. His son Connor is in 8th grade at St. Anselm's Abbey in Washington D.C.

**John Lowell '95** and his wife Tracey welcomed baby boy Joseph Patrick to their family last fall.

**Jonathan Williams '96** was named the police chief for the city of Crestwood. He previously served as a lieutenant for Webster Groves.

**Dr. Christopher Kinsella '00** has recently relocated to Bellevue, Washington. Topher is the co-founder and CEO at Watershed Medical.

**Ben Noll '00** lives in Nashville with his wife and children. Ben is a healthcare associate with World Wide Technology.

**Dr. Lou Aliperti '03** is a urologist practicing in St. Louis.

**Patrick Erker '03** and his wife Lauren welcomed baby Theo to their family last fall.

**Ben Wisnewski '03** lives in Columbia, Mo. where he works for IBM. Ben has created two inventions and was issued two patents for IBM. The patents are for Deep Learning Allergen Mapping and Cognitive Message Dynamic Response Optimization.

**Ted Yemm '06** lives in St. Louis where he is a principal for the Global Advanced Technology Practice at DHR International.

**Charlie Capps '06** has returned to St. Louis and works as a law clerk for the U.S. Court of Appeals. Charlie earned his J.D. and PhD in philosophy in spring of 2020 from the University of Chicago.



**Jim Bresnahan '08** has recently relocated to Denver.

**Alex '08** and Abby Kluesner welcomed baby boy Russell Joseph into their family in November.

**Tim McAleenan Jr. '08** was recognized by the peer review guide firm Best Lawyers as a "Best Lawyer, One To Watch" in the field of "Best Lawyers for Personal Injury Litigation - Defendants in St. Louis, Missouri" for drafting a brief that was successful before the Missouri Supreme Court. Tim credits Priory's teaching of the analytic method for solving problems in a categorical manner as a main reason for the achievement.

**Joe Wagner '09** has relocated from Hawaii to New York City.

**Joe St. Amour '09** and his wife Taylor had their first child, a baby girl, Harper Grace (pictured below) born in January. Joe and Taylor live in Nashville.



**Conor Ahlering '10** and his wife Yuval had a baby girl, Georgie, in December.

**Nicholas D'Orazio '11** studied at Saint Louis University and then matriculated to Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia where he earned his PhD in physical therapy.

**Matt Finneran '12** married Haley Grantham in April 2020 in Pensacola, Fl. Matt and Haley will be relocating to San Diego where he will fly F-18's for the United States Marine Corps.

**Henry Steuby '15** lives in St. Louis and works at the John J. Steuby company.

**Aris Sevastianos '15** graduated in Dec. 2020 with a master's degree in accounting from The University of Texas at Austin. He works as an investment banking analyst at Trust Securities in Atlanta.

**Chris Holland '16** graduated from Northwestern in spring 2020 and is now employed by Beghou Consulting as an associate consultant.

**George Ahlering '16** has received the Dean's Letter of Commendation from the Carroll School of Management at Boston College. George graduated in 2020 and works as an assurance associate at Pricewaterhouse Coopers.

**Charlie Krause '16** graduated from Indiana University with a degree in kinesiology and sports management & marketing in May 2020. He is employed by the O'Fallon Hoots as a corporate sponsorship intern.

**Tejas Sekhar '17** recently created a nonprofit called EndingCOVID and launched it under his parent nonprofit, TejHospitality, after winning first-place at the 2020 TFA Social Innovation Challenge at Northwestern University. Since the beginning of April, the nonprofit has grown its student-led team to include more than 20 students and has expanded its initial focus from St. Louis to mobilize students to benefit communities in other cities, including Chicago, Boston and Raleigh.



**Kendall McLemore '18** is serving in the United States Navy aboard the USS Somerset. He recently was promoted to the next rank of DC3.

**Ethan Hare '20** attends Illinois Wesleyan University, where he is playing lacrosse.



# LEADERSHIP

## **Monastic Council**

Abbot Gregory Mohrman, O.S.B., '76  
Prior Cassian Koenemann, O.S.B., '97  
Father Dominic Lenk, O.S.B.  
Father Aidan McDermott, O.S.B.  
Father Cuthbert Elliott, O.S.B., '02  
Father Athanasius Soto, O.S.B.

## **Board of Advisors 2020-2021**

Michael DiMarco, Chair  
Kenneth Bower '89  
Daniel Bruns  
Roger Cammon  
Jerry Dow  
Lisa Flavin  
Dr. Charles Garvin '76  
Dan Leary '87  
Mark Luning '73  
Father Paul McCormick  
Daniel McDonough  
Sheila Michalski  
Thomas Miller  
Dr. Alicia Noddings  
Dan O'Keefe '87  
Michael Palmer  
Jane Sehnert  
David Stokes '87  
James Switzer '64  
David Taiclet  
Matt Wagner '90  
Philip Willman '71  
James Wilmsen '86

## **Alumni Board 2020-2021**

Matt Wagner '90 *President*  
Alex Borchert '02 *Vice President*  
Ryan McDonald '99 *Secretary*  
Tom Cummings '89 *Past President*  
Nick Ahlering '04  
Teddy Altepeter '09  
Dave Binz '01  
Bob Busch '95  
Tom Byrne '85  
Father Cuthbert Elliott, O.S.B., '02  
Jim Ferrick '87  
Dan Flynn '06  
Rich Francisco '86  
Dr. Charles Garvin '76  
Anthony Gennaoui '99  
Jim Havel '09  
Kevin Hoffman '93  
Ted Horan '04  
Chris Kerckhoff '68  
Ted Lane '08  
Abbot Gregory Mohrman, O.S.B., '76  
Gerard Mudd '75  
Jack O'Brien '12  
Mike Reedy '00  
Eric Stange '14  
Cartan Sumner '83  
Patrick Thornton '02  
Ryan Wehking '08  
Phil Willman '71

## **Saint Louis Priory School Leadership Council**

Father Cuthbert Elliott, O.S.B., '02  
*Headmaster*  
frcuthbert@priory.org

Janice Bailey  
*Assistant Head of School  
for Mission Advancement*  
jbailey@priory.org

Laurie Krieger, CPA  
*Assistie Head of School  
for Facilities and Finance,  
CFO of Saint Louis Abbey*  
lkrieger@priory.org

Judy Mohan  
*Assistant Head of School  
for Intellectual Formation*  
jmohan@priory.org

Mike Nickolai '03  
*Assistant Head of School for  
Human and Spiritual Formation*  
mnickolai@priory.org

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**Mark your Calendars Now!**

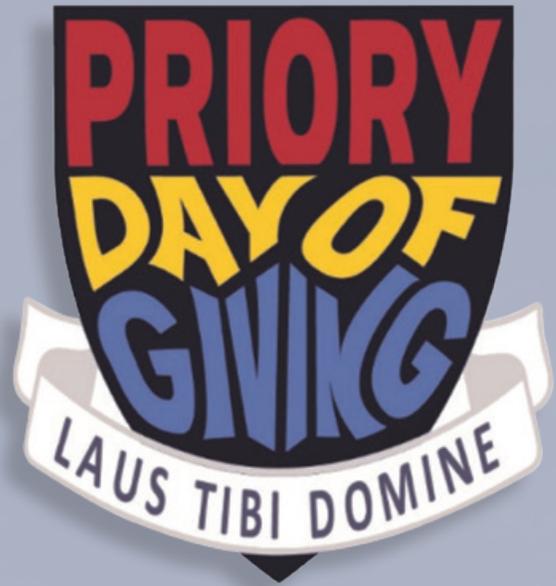
**ONE DAY. FOREVER IMPACT.**

**Three Ways to Give**

1. [Priory.org/give](https://www.priory.org/give)
2. Venmo @STLPriory
3. 314.434.0783

On Wednesday, June 16, we invite you to partner with us on one very exciting day of giving! Each year, more than 14 percent of the School's operating budget comes from generous donors like you.

We ask you to prayerfully consider being part of this 24-hour online giving campaign. We will have some tremendous news to share with all of you as the date draws near – so stay tuned.





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# SAVE THE DATE

- Hosted by the Alumni Board
- Missouri Bluffs Golf Course
- Sponsorship opportunities are available
- Registration opens May 1

For more information, visit [www.priory.org/golf](http://www.priory.org/golf)  
or contact Ann Bender at [abender@priory.org](mailto:abender@priory.org)  
or **314.434.3690, ext. 326**



## PRIORY GOLF SCRAMBLE



# FRIDAY, JUNE 11