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MERRIMACK COLLEGE

# RECORD

## A Year of Making History at Merrimack College

Colleagues,

Merrimack College is 71 years old this fall, and I don't know if our community has had a more momentous year than the one we are living in right now.

On Monday, we announced the College's **move into NCAA Division I athletics**, months after watching our men's lacrosse team earn the Division II Championship at Gillette Stadium.



We learned that we have become a top-50 school in our U.S. News category, and are also one of the "most innovative" schools in the northern United States. This follows on Money Magazine's recognition of us as one of the 10 "most transformative" institutions in the country.

We welcomed our largest-ever freshman class — more than 1,100 students — opened our fifth school, Health Sciences, and won preliminary state approval to begin offering nursing degrees.

We are very close to marking the culmination of the largest capital campaign in Merrimack history, in which thousands of alumni, faculty, staff, students and friends of the College have expressed their support for who we are and what we do.

On Thursday we will open and dedicate the Dr. Alfred L. Arcidi Center, honoring one of our earliest alumni and a family that represents three generations of Merrimack education. And Friday night, fittingly, we will come together for our annual Block Party, capping the week with fireworks that will be a very public manifestation of the excitement we are all feeling.

When we broke ground for Crowe Hall, the College's first new academic building in three decades, I noted that Merrimack was replacing the promise of "we will be" with the reality of "we are" — transforming years of potential into a present of achievement and a future of success. Truly, we have come into our own as an institution and a community.

This week's announcements are not the reason for that success — they are the results of it.

We are successful because we had a great vision, in our Agenda for Distinction, and worked with discipline and purpose to implement that vision.

We are successful because we have recruited great faculty and staff, nurtured and developed our people, rewarded talent, and invested strategically in academics and facilities, and these

decisions brought us ever more students who are excited by the prospects we promise for their future.

We are successful because we did all this by following our Augustinian guiding principles — that we live and learn best when we act as a community, that we are always restless to achieve more and better, that under God we seek, and share, true wisdom.

And we will continue to be successful because we will not rest. We know the value of hard work and the rewards for it — we see them very clearly this week. We will be proud but never let pride overshadow our mission; we will celebrate and then turn back to the task before us.

We are Merrimack. We are top 50. We are Division I. We are transformative and innovative. And most importantly, we are all these things together as a community.

I thank you again for everything you do every day for our students and this College. Our future is ever more bright because of you.

Go Warriors.

Chris.

## **Merrimack Named Top 50, 'Most Innovative' in U.S. News**

**Merrimack College has risen to 50<sup>th</sup> place to U.S. News & World Report's best regional universities in the North for 2018. The category includes 197 institutions.**

**Merrimack was also ranked as the 11<sup>th</sup> most innovative school in the Regional Universities North category. The college landed at 52 for Best Value on the same list, and cracked the Top 100 for best Undergraduate Engineering programs nationally.**

**The North region stretches from Maryland to Maine, including Pennsylvania and New York.**

**The ranking follows on the heels of Money Magazine naming Merrimack one of the top-10 "most transformative" institutions in the country based on student outcomes, such as graduation rates and post-commencement salaries.**

**In 2010, Merrimack was ranked 174 in its U.S. News category.**



Fr. Gregory Boyle, author of 'Tattoos on the Heart,' addresses Academic Convocation.

## Leadership, Fr. Boyle Welcome Community at Convocation

Merrimack College held its Academic Convocation Sept. 6, welcoming freshmen from the Class of 2022 to campus and showcasing the graduating senior Class of 2019, highlighted by keynote speaker the Rev. Gregory Boyle, S.J., who shared poignant stories of gang members who have overcome personal hardship to spread message of love.

"Convocation is a collegiate tradition that marks the beginning of an academic year," said President Christopher E. Hopey. "It comes from the Latin word for 'calling together.'"

The freshman class includes students from 34 states and 16 countries, he said. The college years will be exciting and rewarding as they stretch themselves as persons and academicians.

"You have brought your energy, enthusiasm, passion and intellect to this wonderful community," Hopey said. "We are grateful for your arrival."

Hopey reminded seniors they have done well in school the last three years but he forecasts the coming year will be special. This academic year should be savored and every opportunity offered by the school should be seized but seniors must take leadership roles for students in lower classes.

"I know you will provide the kind of leadership, wisdom and counsel that we have come to expect from the Class of 2019," he said. "This will be a great senior year."

Provost Allan T. Weatherwax urged students to learn from professors but also offer their own insights and observations so that their instructors also continue to learn.

"Remember, college is, above all, a community of the mind — a shared exploration of the world around us, and the world we want to create," Weatherwax said. "Faculty and students explore this world together, they draw upon each other's experiences, talents, capabilities and curiosity. I really do speak for all Merrimack faculty when I say: We are here to teach you but we are also here to learn from you."

Boyle, the keynote speaker, started Homeboy Industries in 1988 to employ and train former street gang members in social enterprises such as a bakery, and to provide critical services to thousands of people each year. He authored the book "Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion" about his experiences while working with the poorest residents of East Los Angeles, which made it to The New York Times bestseller list in 2010; and "Barking to the Choir: The Power of Radical Kinship" which appeared on the 2017 Los Angeles Times bestseller list.

Changing the world means going to the edge of your comfort zone, Fr. Boyle said. Creating change in society requires standing with those who are demonized and considered disposable. Rather than changing those people who are living on the fringes of society, those who go to help them will be changed, he said.

"You go to the margins so the folks at the margins make you different," he said. "Stand in awe at what the poor have to carry rather than judge how they carry it."

The crowds would part in front of them when Fr. Boyle walked with a former gang member named Mario. He was the baddest, meanest looking person on the street with tattoos all over his body. Even his eyelids were tattooed with the words "the" and "end" so when he died everybody would know his story was over. But to talk to Mario meant learning he is one of the nicest and thoughtful of people, Fr. Boyle said.

Another ex-gangster identified only as Jose was told by his mother to kill himself because he was such a burden when he was 6 years old. Three years later she abandoned him at an orphanage in Mexico, where he stayed for 90 days until his grandmother learned where he was. All through elementary school he wore three T-shirts to school no matter how hot it was, in order to hide the blood on his back where his mother beat him daily.

He was ashamed of his scars well into his adulthood but now carries them with joy.

"After all, how can I help others heal their wounds if I don't welcome my own wounds," Fr. Boyle said while recounting Jose's reasoning.

Boyle urged students to make Merrimack College a community of kinship and "connection of exquisite mutuality" that God will recognize.

## **At Mass of the Holy Spirit, Merrimack Answers the Call**

The academic year at Merrimack College started with the traditional Mass of the Holy Spirit in the Collegiate Church of Christ the Teacher, in which members of the community were invited to respond Biblically to a call for action.

While the Rev. Raymond Dlugos, O.S.A., was celebrating the Mass, he used an untraditional prop to get students motivated and interacting as he announced the rebranding of a popular program on campus.

Drawing from the Isaiah 6:8 quote, "here I am; send me", Fr. Dlugos announced that in recognition of the phenomenal growth in the popularity of service learning trips in recent years, Campus Ministry is changing the name of the trips from Alternative Break and Service Immersion to the Send Program.

Students, faculty and staff were then asked to don complimentary headbands emblazoned

with the Isaiah quote.

Fr. Dlugos referenced the poor leadership of Isaiah's time that led to a decline in religious faith and spirituality but pointed out that, "God looks for somebody among us to proclaim the Good News." God called Isaiah more than 2,700 years ago but still needs people to help in His work, the priest said.

We live in a world where it's easy to distrust people because they are different but so many live in poverty with insecure housing and undrinkable water that God needs His people to help through the Send Program, said Fr. Dlugos.

"He is going to call one of us, or probably many of us, and say, whom shall I send?" Fr. Dlugos said. "We're hoping we can respond as Isaiah did – here I am."

Athletic coaches with their teams, faculty and staff were invited to call out one-by-one, "here I am; send me."



Fr. Ed Enright offers communion during Mass of the Holy Spirit in the Collegiate Church.

## Hamel Health Center Offers Flu Shots

Flu shots will be available to students, faculty and staff at Hamel Health Center from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sept. 20 and 1 to 5 p.m. Oct. 18.

The clinic will be in the first floor of the Sakowich Campus Center. No appointment is needed.

Most health insurance plans are accepted; please bring proof of

## Coming up

Sept. 11 - Staff forum, first meeting  
• 1 p.m., Crowe Executive Room

Sept. 12 – Class add/drop deadline

Sept. 13 - Evening of Gratitude  
• 6 p.m., Arcidi Center plaza

Sept. 14 - Block Party  
• Sakowich Campus Center lot

Sept. 25 - Author Dan Kaufman

insurance. The cost is \$35 without insurance.

• 4 p.m., Writers House

Oct. 8 — Columbus Day; college closed.

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