



first year experience  
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What will this mean for you?

What 'wants' doing in our world?

How do we avoid self-righteousness, what George Eliot calls, "unreflecting egoism"?

Do you have anything you might call a moral routine? Describe it.

#### BELIEFS AND IDEAS

*"I wasn't normal enough to overlook the wide-spread hunger and disease that plagued my country... My emotions seemed to be getting the better of my common sense—and my parents were desperately worried. All that tuition, all that education."*

Danilo Dolci speaks of love as action and his need to give "direct voice" to the voiceless. What examples of this have you seen in your life?

Your parents may begin to worry about you, particularly as you develop ideas that may run contrary to certain beliefs that have permeated your early life. How will you handle this potential conflict?

#### VALUES

*"I was about to bury myself in a materialistic society which glorified intellect to the point where it killed feelings, those very feelings which could become actions. And I felt the need of action. I suddenly realized that... A home, a car, and all the rest—they weren't enough."*

Your conversion may never be this extreme. Attend, however, to the values

## *the jesuit mission*

Catholic-Jesuit Education... is a process that has three key parts, being attentive, being reflective and being loving. It results in the kind of good decision-making that Ignatius called "discernment." The goal of Jesuit education is to produce men and women for whom discernment is a habit.<sup>1</sup>

This process of formational—where we define formation as the active development of individual character and awareness—decision-making is not an easy one. Students who truly begin to engage in the Catholic-Jesuit character of Boston College—rooted in a charism of informed service which is the very lynchpin of Ignatian education—will find ahead of them lives of great struggle. This is a good thing. For it is through challenge that growth and change must come, indeed we must "thank God for the people who help us go all that way—who take the big chance, who aren't 'utilitarian' and 'pragmatic,' but are 'unrealistic visionaries.'"

When St. Ignatius of Loyola commissioned St. Francis Xavier, set to embark on his voyage east—knowing full well that he would probably never encounter his good friend on this earth again—telling him to "Go set the world aflame," he was loosing an order of men charged with looking beyond the practical, the human, toward Ad Majorem Dei Glorium, the "greater glory of God."

In many ways, we gather at Boston College to do much the same thing. If we have succeeded as a community, students, faculty and staff will always be uncomfortable with this world; ever seeking to carry the torches of justice, faith and education in the face of skepticism, violence and despair. Men and women at Boston College, of which you the class of 2010 are now a part, must necessarily ask, as Robert Kennedy did at all times, "How can I be more, do more, give more?" This is a very active example of the Jesuit concept of the Magis; that there is always something more beyond the self. When we begin to examine the world with this lens we enable the possibility of becoming moral leaders, public servants and we will truly begin to live as men and women for and with others seeking ever to excel in the world. Catholic Jesuit education is complete when its graduates embody this vision of life and work.

afame  
logo

## *a history*

The First Year Academic Convocation began as a call for a new ritual called First Flight whereby members of the Boston College community might best welcome each incoming class into the academic conversation already resounding throughout the Heights. Begun as an effort of student and faculty collaboration, the event has grown from a commissioning of first year students to a bracketing procession; seniors now follow the same route on their day of graduation as they too are welcomed into the greater community of graduates, professionals, alumni.

### HONESTY

*"I think the people we met in Mississippi, they'll keep us honest." (Coles)*

*"They are honest, but I'm not sure they'll keep us that way." (Kennedy)*

What is important about this distinction made by Kennedy?

What will keep you true to your mission of vocational discernment?

What/who will keep you honest?

### KINSHIP

*"We few, we happy few, we band of brothers: for he today that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother..."*

What, for Coles, is flawed about this call to kinship?

How might we apply this idea to current political contexts?

### HUMILITY

*"For Conrad, then, moral leadership means..."*

It is our hope that in the four years that pass between the Convocation and Graduation, our young men and women will become charged with the sense that they are what William Conrad would call "folks who walk when walking has to be done." Ultimately we hope that they will have begun seeking what Dorothy Day might ask, "wants doing" in this world. The best way to get to that point of discernment is to engage in the act of conversation. And so the First Year Academic Convocation is an event but it is also a discussion, a literary experience centered around the vital issues put forth in an FYE program called Conversations in the First Year.

All incoming students, then, have been issued a book and the charge to begin engaging in conversations with faculty, staff and their fellow classmates, that we might struggle together to be active, to be loving as a community of learners. These conversations begin

# *handing each other along*

“There are a lot of issues out there, but it’s our job to decide which ones matter most.”

In so saying, Robert Kennedy has touched upon the human capacity for becoming overwhelmed in the face of great and multivariate need. Certainly there are myriad problems in this world begging for reconciliation, but how to choose which cause will become yours? Similarly there are many ways in which you, as a student, can approach your formal and informal education. The following are some touch-points to aid in your reading of *at, he*

