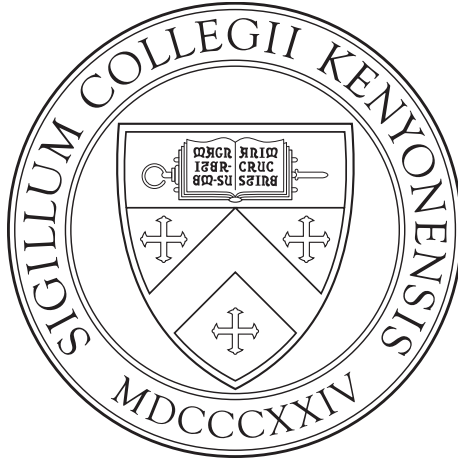


Kenyon College



Baccalaureate Service

Samuel Mather Lawn
One Thirty O'clock, May Twentieth
Two Thousand Eleven

Order of Service

The Processional*

The Scioto Brass Ensemble

The Invocation*

Elizabeth B. Keeney

Director, Board of Spiritual and Religious Life, Kenyon College

Welcome

S. Georgia Nugent

President

Texts from a Kenyon Education

Fine Arts Division

Selections from ***Truisms***, by Jenny Holzer

Read by Grant Klarich Johnson, Class of 2011, for the Department of Art

a little knowledge can go a long way
abstraction is a type of decadence
abuse of power comes as no surprise
being alone with yourself is increasingly unpopular
categorizing fear is calming
decadence can be an end in itself
disgust is the appropriate response to most situations
elaboration is a form of pollution
it's better to be naive than jaded
it's impossible to reconcile your heart and head
it's just an accident your parents are your parents
leisure time is a gigantic smoke screen
looking back is the first sign of aging and decay
morals are for little people
much was decided before you were born
noise can be hostile
planning for the future is escapism
remember you always have freedom of choice
self-awareness can be crippling
self-contempt can do more harm than good
some stones are better left unturned
sometimes science advances faster than it should

*Audience standing

taking a strong stand publically publicizes the opposite position
talking is used to hide one's ability to act
there are too few immutable truths today
thinking too much can cause problems
words tend to be inadequate
you can never outrun yourself
you must have one grand passion
you should travel light

Humanities Division

A passage from ***Paradise Lost***, by John Milton
Read by Emma Catherine Farnsworth, Class of 2011, for the Department of English

This having learned, thou hast attained the sum
Of wisdom; hope no higher, though all the stars
Thou knewest by name, and all the ethereal powers,
All secrets of the deep, all Nature's works,
Or works of God in Heaven, air, earth, or sea,
And all the riches of this world enjoyedst,
And all the rule, one empire; only add
Deeds to thy knowledge answerable; add faith,
Add virtue, patience, temperance; add love,
By name to come called charity, the soul
Of all the rest: then wilt thou not be loath
To leave this Paradise, but shalt possess
A Paradise within thee, happier far.
Let us descend now therefore from this top
Of speculation; for the hour precise
Exacts our parting hence; and see the guards,
By me encamped on yonder hill, expect
Their motion; at whose front a flaming sword,
In signal of remove, waves fiercely round;
We may no longer stay. . . .

Natural Sciences Division

A passage from ***A Brief Tour of Human Consciousness: From Impostor Poodles to Purple Numbers***, by V.S. Ramachandran
Read by Mark Patrick Sullivan Jr., Class of 2011, for the Department of Biology

But what about the self, the last remaining great mystery in science and something that everybody is interested in? . . . Its defining characteristics are fivefold. First of all, continuity: a sense of unbroken thread running through the whole fabric of our experience with the accompanying feeling of past, present and future. Second, and closely related, is the idea of unity or

coherence of self. In spite of the diversity of sensory experiences, memories, beliefs and thoughts, we each experience ourselves as one person, as a unity. Third is a sense of embodiment or ownership—we feel ourselves anchored to our bodies. Fourth, a sense of agency, what we call free will, being in charge of our own actions and destinies. Fifth, and most elusive of all, the self, almost by its very nature, is capable of reflection—of being aware of itself. . . . Maybe the solution to the problem of self is not a straightforward empirical one. It may instead require a radical shift in perspective, the sort of thing that Einstein did when he rejected the assumption that things can move at arbitrarily high velocities. When we finally achieve such a shift in perspective, we may be in for a big surprise and find that the answer was staring at us all along.

Social Sciences Division

A passage from *The Sociological Imagination*, by C. Wright Mills
Read by Tricia Marie Shimamura, Class of 2011, for the Department of Sociology

The sociological imagination enables its possessor . . . to take into account how individuals, in the welter of their daily experience, often become falsely conscious of their social positions. Within that welter, the framework of modern society is sought, and within that framework the psychologies of a variety of men and women are formulated. . . . The first fruit of this imagination—and the first lesson of the social science that embodies it—is the idea that the individual can understand his own experience and gauge his own fate only by locating himself within his period, that he can know his own chances in life only by becoming aware of those of all individuals in his circumstances. In many ways it is a terrible lesson; in many ways a magnificent one. . . . We have come to know that every individual lives, from one generation to the next, in some society; that he lives out a biography, and that he lives it out within some historical sequence. By the fact of his living he contributes, however minutely, to the shaping of this society and to the course of its history. . . . To recognize this task and this promise is the mark of the classic social analyst. . . . And it is the signal of what is best in contemporary studies of man and society.

Texts from Our Religious Traditions

Buddhist Tradition

“A Traveler’s Gatha” (poem), by Ziyong Chengru (1605-72), a Buddhist nun
Read by Hannah Grace Brooks, Class of 2011

I still recall how, with my bag on a pole, I forgot my yesterdays,
Wandered the hills, played in the waters, went to the land of the clouds.
The lift of an eyebrow, the blink of an eye—all of it is samadhi;
In this great world there is nowhere that is not a wisdom hall.

Christian Tradition

A passage from ***A Passion for the Possible: A Message to U.S. Churches***, by William Sloane Coffin (1924-2006)

Read by Jared Hillary Ruark, Class of 2011

The challenge today is to seek a unity that celebrates diversity, to unite the particular with the universal, to recognize the need for roots while insisting that the point of roots is to put forth branches. What is intolerable is for differences to become idolatrous. When absolutized, nationalism and ethnicity, race, and gender are reactionary impulses. They become pseudoreligions, brittle and small, without the power to make people great. No human being's identity is exhausted by his or her gender, race, ethnic origin, or national loyalty. Human beings are fully human only when they find the universal in the particular, when they recognize that all people have more in common than they have in conflict, and that it is precisely when what they have in conflict seems overriding that what they have in common needs most to be affirmed. Human rights are more important than a politics of identity, and religious people should be notorious boundary crossers.

Hindu Tradition

A passage from the Katha Upanishad

Read by Diana Deoki, Class of 2011

Know that the self is the rider, and the body the chariot; that the intellect is the charioteer, and the mind the reins. . . . The senses, say the wise, are the horses; the roads they travel are the mazes of desire. . . . When a man lacks discrimination and his mind is uncontrolled, his senses are unmanageable, like the restive horses of a charioteer. But when a man has discrimination and his mind is controlled, his senses, like the well-broken horses of a charioteer, lightly obey the rein.

Islamic Tradition

A passage from ***Rumi Daylight: A Daybook of Spiritual Guidance***, taken from the works of Jelaluddin Rumi (1207-73) and translated by Camille and Kabir Helminski

Read by Shaakira Olabisi Raheem, Class of 2011

No mirror ever became iron again; no bread ever became wheat; no ripened grape ever became sour fruit. Mature yourself and be secure from a change for the worse. Become the light.

Jewish Tradition

A passage from the work of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-72)
Read by Saul Benjamin Nathan-Kazis, Class of 2011

Over and above personal problems, there is an objective challenge to overcome inequity, injustice, helplessness, suffering, carelessness, oppression. Over and above the din of desires, there is a calling, a demanding, a waiting, an expectation. There is a question that follows me wherever I turn. What is expected of me? What is demanded of me? . . . What we encounter is not only flowers and stars, mountains and walls. Over and above all things is a sublime expectation, a waiting for. With every child born a new expectation enters the world. . . . This is the most important experience in the life of every human being: something is asked of me. Every human being has had a moment in which he sensed a mysterious waiting for him. Meaning is found in responding to the demand, meaning is found in sensing the demand.

Anthem

“Eternal Ruler of the ceaseless round”

Melody: Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625)

Words: John White Chadwick (1840-1904), upon his graduation from Harvard Divinity School in 1864

Sung by Benjamin R. Locke

Robert A. Oden Jr. Professor of Music

The Baccalaureate Address

“The Capacity to Perform”

James A. Steen

Head Men’s Swimming Coach

Benediction*

Marc W. Bragin

Director, Kenyon College Hillel

The Recessional*

The Scioto Brass Ensemble

