

“A Great Momentum”: Highlights From Trump’s First Month in Office

BY GABE SUS

On January 20th, Donald J. Trump was elected to his second term, becoming the nation’s 47th President and the first since Grover Cleveland to serve two non-consecutive terms. In the wake of an election marred by accusations of scandal and political unrest, Trump promised sweeping changes that he said would usher in “the golden age of America.” After nearly a month in office, President Trump has delivered vast changes vows to introduce many more.

The rhetoric utilized by his campaign has been a mainstay of Trump’s campaign, and now that he’s in the Oval Office, he isn’t letting up. “Donald Trump unleashed rhetorical warfare as predictable as it was extreme,” wrote CNN’s Phil Mattingly in April 2024. He described Trump as a man who “unapologetically shattered norms with an unrelenting message of grievance, vengeance, and retribution.” New York Magazine called his statements a “dizzying mix of fearmongering, conspiracy theories, [and] threats against his enemies.”

On January 20th, Trump officially took office as the nation’s 47th President, the first ever to be a convicted felon. He vowed that he would bring America into a new era of unprecedented global dominance. “We must be honest about the challenges we face,” he said in his inaugural address. “While they are plentiful, they will be annihilated by this great momentum that the world is now witnessing in the United States of America.”

From his first marathon signing of executive orders, many of Trump’s policies have been controversial right out of the gate. Almost immediately upon taking office, he announced he intended to end birthright citizenship for the children of

undocumented immigrants. Birthright citizenship is enshrined in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. He is intent on regaining ownership of the Panama Canal, claiming that China actually influences shipping through the vital channel. He has also pledged to acquire Greenland, saying that the United States will “protect it, and cherish it” and “Make Greenland Great Again.” He has levied burdensome tariffs on Canada, Mexico, and other countries, which analysts warn could throw the world financial order into chaos.

As President, Trump has also cracked down on immigration even more than his first campaign. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement (ICE) officers have begun immigration “raids” aimed at deporting undocumented immigrants. On February 4th, an Air Force flight carrying a group of immi-

grants landed at Guantanamo Bay detention camp, a military prison known for housing the architects of the September 11th attacks. As the latest step in Trump’s anti-immigration plan, this action has already drawn criticism, and legal and ethical issues are already coming to light. Furthermore, he has begun his plans to reduce the size and scope of the federal government, gutting positions and disbanding vital agencies.

The Trump administration has offered “buy-outs” to federal workers to quit their jobs and retain their benefits until around September, including at essential agencies like the Federal Bureau of Investigation and Central Intelligence Agency. The administration has also attempted to disband the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), removed the United States from the Paris Climate Agreement, and World Health Organization, and speculated that the country should depart from the United Nations.

The first month in any President’s term is always momentous, but the 47th President of the United States is wasting no time advancing his “America First” policy. Many of his actions have faced legal challenges and drawn harsh criticism, and other promises fall into the grey area of a President’s actual power and that which is blatantly unconstitutional. He promises many more changes in the coming four years, leading many around the world to fear for the future of geopolitical order. Regardless of party affiliation, however, it is clear that Donald Trump is not going to beat around the bush when it comes to advancing his lofty ambitions.



Solemnly Swearing Trump takes the oath of office accompanied by wife Melania Trump and daughter Ivanka Trump. Trump was sworn into office on January 20th. Photo courtesy of Chip Somodevilla of Reuters.

Lectio and Monks and Oblates of this House

BY GUEST WRITER BR. JEROME KMIECIK, O.S.B.

Over the past year and especially during Catholic Schools Week, the Mount Michael community has been hearing more from alumni of Mount Michael and St. John Seminary during the morning chapel talks. Alumni were invited to give short presentations on their individual experiences of attending St. John Seminary/Mount Michael or the Benedictine values. Many of them begin their presentation by expressing gratitude for being invited to speak. It is obvious that they feel strongly about what they want to say and welcome the opportunity to do so.

One common theme that runs through most of their presentations is experiencing hospitality and the brotherhood of the community. The living component is usually the avenue through which these experiences happen. Many chose concrete examples about life in school to be clear about what they are saying. A good number of them say that choosing to attend Mount Michael was the best decision they made in their life, even if at first, they did not know a single soul in the school.

I must admit that I listen very carefully to what each former student has to say. I suppose that I am wondering what sticks with them after they have left us. Do they really remember anything about Benedictine spirituality and what makes Mount Michael different from any other Catholic high school? Do they grasp what we are all about?

A few years ago, I introduced a monastic way of praying to the Mount Michael students. It is called Lectio. Since I have been Director of the Oblates and I use the method of Lectio with the adult oblates, I thought it would be good to do the same with the students. I thought the silent periods and listening would be a good thing for teenagers as well as for adults. The method involves slow reading of a Scripture passage three times, silence, and then expressing aloud what the passage might be saying personally to those who participate. At first it was a bit difficult to get the students to express anything, but now it comes very easily, and it really seems natural to them. This year’s seniors, the class of 2025, have been leaders at Lectio and an example to the other students. They have been very faithful and serious about this method of praying, even if there are sporting events the night Lectio is scheduled.

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APRIL

DATES TO KNOW

2 WEDS	JUNIOR SERVICE DAY AT 8:00 AM
2 WEDS	PLAN GIVING SEMINAR AT 6:30 PM
9 WEDS	SENIOR SERVICE DAY AT 8:00 AM
16 WEDS	FRESHMEN SERVICE DAY AT 8:00 AM
17 - 22 THURS-MON	EASTER BREAK
30 WEDS	SENIOR MASS AT 2:45 PM
30 WEDS	SENIOR AWARDS NIGHT AT 6:00 PM