

Hilbertopics

Saint Lawrence Seminary

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Volume LX

Issue II

the CITY

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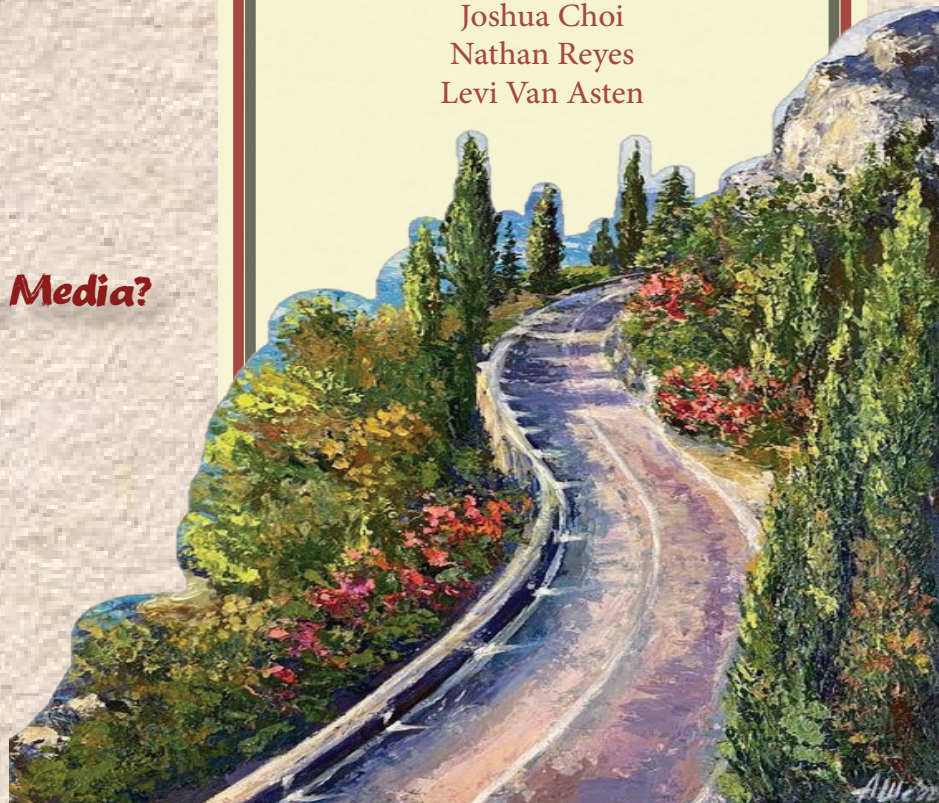
the mandrake has
 the late ancient lexicographer Suidas stated that the mandrake has
 a fruit which has hypnotic effects and allows everything to sink
 into forgetfulness. (Lexicon 436). The folk saint and seeress Hilte-
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Medicinal Use

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 L-HYDROXYAMINE, MAN-DRAGONINE, CUSCOHYGRINE, SOLANDRINE,
 3α-TIBILOXYTROPANE, AND 3,6-DITIBILOXYTROPANE (STAUB 1962).



A Spiritual Message



Thanksgiving is one of the time-honored and much-cherished holidays in the US. Celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November, Thanksgiving provides people with an opportunity to pause and ponder on the many blessings God has bestowed upon them, and to give thanks to God for those blessings. We don't have this kind of holiday in the Philippines, where I was born and raised as a child.

However, since I arrived here in the US as a young adult, I have come to appreciate this holiday. As a matter of fact, I have grown fond of it because its essence lies at the heart of what we, as Catholics, do when we gather around the table of the Lord to celebrate the Eucharist. One of the fondest memories I have of this holiday happened here, on the Hill of Happiness. It was during a Mass presided by the now late Capuchin friar, Fr. Vernon Wagner. During the homily, Fr. Vernon shared with those of us present what I would call "A Litany of Thanks from A to Z." Using the Roman alphabet, Fr. Vernon named the things he was thankful for. It was a creative exercise, and it opened the door to a new way of getting into the spirit of this holiday. Following in the footsteps of Fr. Vernon, I now would like to share my own litany of thanks: *A: Antonio* (my late father); *B: Bella* (my beloved mother); *C: Cecilia* (my sister); *D: Donors* (our benefactors who support our ministries in the province, including St. Lawrence Seminary); *E: Eucharist* (my daily bread and communion with the Lord); *F: Friars* (my Capuchin confreres); *G: Garibay* (my ancestors and extended family); *H: Hope* (the virtue that helps me to persevere through tough times); *I: Iloilo* (my home town and the cradle of my youth); *J: Julie* (my sister); *K: Kindness* (the acts of care, consideration, and generosity shown by others); *L: Love* (the inexhaustible, life-giving gift); *M: Mercy* (God's ceaseless compassion and unfailing forgiveness); *N: Nieces & Nephews* (my siblings' children); *O: Opera* (a passionate pastime of mine); *P: Province of Saint Joseph* (my religious home); *Q: Quiet* (moments of calm and peace); *R: Rey* (my brother); *S: Saints* (role-models and inspirational figures to me); *T: Today* (the gift of the present); *U: Universe* (God's wonderful and awesome creation); *V: Vernon* (the friar from whom I learned this exercise); *W: Water* (an earthly element that quenches thirst); *X: Xerox* (for printing materials needed for work and school); *Y: Yesterday* (precious memories and lessons learned); *Z: Zoy* (the gift of life that God has given me).

What about you? What are you thankful for? As we prepare to celebrate Thanksgiving later this month, I invite you to craft your own Litany of Thanks from A to Z. In so doing, you may discover how blessed you are, and that you have plenty of reasons to be thankful for. Happy Thanksgiving!

-Fr. Joy Garribay

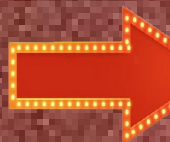




Into the Circus

By: Joshua Choi ('26)

The tradition of a senior led haunted house has been going on for decades. It is an opportunity for the seniors to show off their creativity, while creating something for everyone to enjoy. This year's seniors enjoyed planning the haunted house and putting it into action. Justin Tran ('25), the producer, shared a few words about the experience and stated, "The circus idea came from the entire class. Will, Tony and I sorted out the details of the haunted house, including the route. We based many of the clowns on those from horror movies, such as *Jigsaw* and *Michael Meyers of Halloween*."



It was decided to do it differently this year, starting by having the students use the woodchip trail to the back doors of the gym, where there was a ticket booth to allow participants to get into the circus. The students then walked through the canteen, where they were chased into the half courts to solve a riddle. "But wait, there's more!" As clowns chased the students back through the hallway and eventually into the main gym, where they found the captured circus leader. It was then revealed to be a trap as clowns chased the students out of the gym, bringing the haunted house to a close. Duy Do ('26) said, "It was good, very scary, and it was my first haunted house here. It was very creative. I could tell they put a lot of effort into it." In general, the students concluded the haunted house was a great time. To end the evening of fun, students went to the refectory, where the juniors hosted a Halloween party to wrap up the exciting and eventful night.





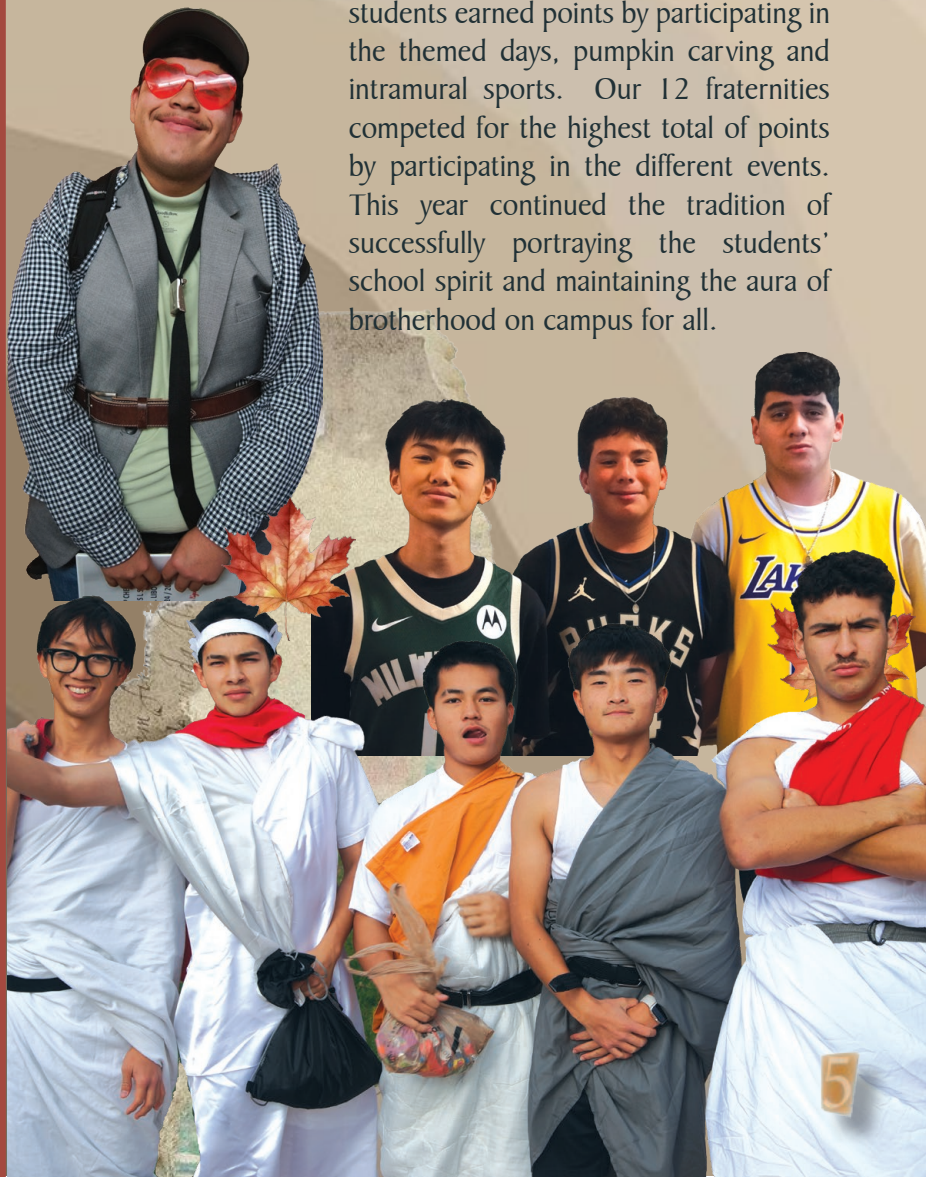
AURA WEEK

By: Max Trinh ('25)

Every year, St. Lawrence Seminary has a week-long event that demonstrates the spirit of SLS. This year's spirit week, like those that came before it, featured a theme for each day: 'Merica Monday, in which students wore red, white, and blue; Team Tuesday, when students represented their favorite sport teams by wearing the team's jerseys; Wacky Wednesday, in which students dressed in all kinds of bizarre combinations of clothing; and Costume Thursday, when students donned their Halloween costumes and went trick-or-treating around campus to different classrooms and offices.



To provide a bit of fun and competition within the student body, students earned points by participating in the themed days, pumpkin carving and intramural sports. Our 12 fraternities competed for the highest total of points by participating in the different events. This year continued the tradition of successfully portraying the students' school spirit and maintaining the aura of brotherhood on campus for all.



PERSONA SWITCH

By: ThienHanh Mai ('25)



Classes become monotonous when a teacher lectures for the entire class period; many students like to be active in classes. Some teachers avoid this monotony by immersing the class in the topic through hands-on activities. A teacher that does this well is Mr. Phil McCabe.

Most of the time, Mr. McCabe is mysterious and reserved, but this personality changes when he is in the classroom. Not only does he teach English, but he also encourages creativity. He reveals his true character in the classroom through the steampunk decorations, the various brain teasers at the game table, and by opening his own tavern called "The Thirsty Whale" to immerse the students in the setting of *Treasure Island*, a novel, by Robert L. Stevenson. He comes up with engaging ideas for students to learn the topics being presented. While re-enacting "The Most Dangerous Game," a short story by Richard Connell, his class played hide-and-seek -but a student got lost in the potato patch!

Mr. McCabe inspires others to show their true colors, work hard, and find their paths in life. He says, "My favorite moment in class is when I see, in the students' eyes, a connection made between the topic and their own life." From the bushy-browed giant to the fun English teacher, Mr. McCabe is an excellent teacher that truly cares about his students' learning processes.



THE RETURNING DONOHUE

By: Thomas Kim ('25)

Nearly a decade has passed since Mr. Joseph Donohue last walked the familiar paths on the Hill, but now, with a heart full of memories and excitement, he returns to his beloved alma mater. Mr. Donohue graduated in 2015. After his time on the Hill, he pursued a major in Graphic Design with a focus on communication at St. Nobert College. On the Hill, he is currently a residential supervisor and when questioned on his decision to return, he said, "I want to experience that brotherhood feeling again." However, this time, that 'brother' hood will take on literal meaning: his younger brother, Patrick Donohue, is currently a senior. "It feels nice to live with family again." Patrick is not the only familiar face, Mr. Donohue's former classmate, Mr. Daniel Matthew, is also the current music director at SLS. Beyond reviving old feelings and bonds, Mr. Donohue views SLS as a place to further enrich his passion for art, and a good opportunity to explore the possibility of becoming a teacher. As Mr. Donohue steps back onto the Hill of Happiness, the SLS staff and community welcome him back with open arms and loving hearts.



THEIR ART IS EVER FOUND!

By: Christopher Vu ('26)



MINISTRY

By: Christian Casilla ('26)

Students at SLS are obligated to meet a certain number of ministry hours on and off the Hill. Champions Bowling, for example, is offered most Friday nights to seniors to encourage and help individuals with disabilities during a fun night of bowling. ThienHanh Mai ('25) attended recently and said, "Seeing their faces light up with every strike, regardless of their score is an amazing experience."

On the other hand, juniors may sign up for Friday's Broken Bread ministry, which distributes grocery necessities to the homeless and low-income families in the Fond du Lac area. Joshua Choi ('26), who participates in the ministry every other weekend stated, "Broken Bread is an eye-opening experience. Meeting and giving to the less fortunate allows me to see a selfless and humble character within myself."

Finally, sophomores may sign-up for a Bingo ministry, where they go off campus and play bingo at a nursing home with the residents. In addition to the off Hill ministries, there are also on campus ministry opportunities. Dr. Michael Donahou is currently running a toy making workshop after school in the woodshop for all students to participate in. Ministry opportunities are available most weekends. Many of the ministries, not only give students an opportunity to get off the Hill, but is also a way for their true character shine.



The Art Club has returned to SLS with Brother Jerry Cornish as the mentor and Tony Nguyen ('24) and Will Nguyen ('24) as co-presidents. The Art Club studio is on the third floor of St. Joseph's Hall, room 321. In the Art Club, students gather to work alongside each other on their own creations. The first meeting was an "open art studio" which took place on October 18th and 19th. The art studio is open every Friday and Saturday.

Brother Jerry Cornish shared that, "I want the club to be as student-ran as possible; I am just here to make sure everything goes smoothly." He also stated, he wants Art Club to be a place of expression and showing true character. He added, "I have experience running Art Clubs and I know that art can give students comfort and a sense of accomplishment, which is why I believe they should also submit their art to Inklings." As Art Club helps to motivate students to shape and develop their own art, their self-confidence and true character will begin to shine through as well.



Generous Heart

By: Alan Mora ('26)

SLS students grow due to many factors such as, classmates, teachers, work-crews, and extracurricular activities. However, none of this would be possible without the help and generosity of SLS's benefactors. Year after year, these benefactors donate to SLS to support its mission, to nurture mature, well-rounded men of faith. Annually SLS expresses our gratitude to our benefactors by hosting Benefactor Day – Open House.

On Sunday, October 20th the 25th annual Benefactor Day was held; the day began with the students helping the benefactors park and assisting them to the registration table in the Chapel. Once the benefactors had registered and entered the Chapel, they waited for a special Mass that was dedicated to them. The choir sang harmoniously, and the body of Christ was shared. Following Mass, a delicious luncheon was served. Seniors were asked to sit with the benefactors for lunch and visit with them, sharing their personal stories with those they dined with. After lunch, campus tours were provided to those interested. This allowed the benefactors to see firsthand the progress on campus and how we continue to live the mission.

SLS is what it is today because of its benefactors. Their donations enable many positive changes, such as the construction of new buildings or assistance with students' tuitions. Many of the benefactors are alumni, such as Glendon Bogdon ('55). Mr. Bogdon is an orthodontist and has been donating to SLS for several years. "God gave me a good life, a good job, and a good salary. I thought that I ought to give back," he responded when asked, why he helps. Mr. Kevin Buelow, the Director of Institutional Advancement, helped organize the event along with his colleagues. "The benefactors support St. Lawrence because they believe in the mission. When they come for the Open House, they can see with their own eyes how their generosity is supporting young men of faith, who will take what they learn while at St. Lawrence and become future leaders in the Church." Our benefactors help us because they believe in the students, and at the Open House, the students have the opportunity to show them just how much they are appreciated.



LITTLE TASTE OF HOME

By: Diego Soto ('25)



The last weekend in September, families were invited to the Hill to participate in the annual Parent Weekend. To kick off the day's events, the JV soccer team play a match against Fond du Lac High School, followed by the varsity team vs New Holstein High School. The Varsity team won; however, the JV team

lost. Donovan Blattner ('28) watched the game and said, "I got to watch the soccer game with my family, which was cool because my mom is a soccer coach."

After lunch, families attended the Parent Talks, which included three different topics: dorm life and partnering with parents/administration, ministry, vocations and getting ready for college. Later in the afternoon, yard games and a mother/son volleyball game were set up. The mom's dominated in volleyball. Following the volleyball game the Sons of Calvary played a heated game of softball against the dads and the dads won. The afternoon events finished with Mass, which students attended with their families.



To conclude the day, dinner was served in the refectory. Sal Gonzalez ('25) and his family provided Chicago style hotdogs and hamburgers for the entire school. ThienHanh Mai's ('25) family contributed by making Boba Tea for dessert. After the long day Sebastian Montemayor reflected, "My parents saw me play in the soccer game, I played in the mother-son volleyball game and the father-son softball game and after church we went off campus for dinner and shopping. My last Parent Weekend was awesome, I had a great time participating in the activities."

Overall, Parent Weekend was a success. It wouldn't have happened without the help of faculty, staff and a great turnout from parents. Thanks to all parents for supporting the mission of St. Lawrence Seminary.



SENIOR SPILL

By: Said Villa ('25)

"As a senior, I realize how much I could have done throughout my four years here, like being more involved in sports and activities. So, my advice to the freshmen is get more involved, even if you are trying something for the first time. Broaden your horizons."

- Larry Gonzalez ('25)

"Looking back on my freshman year, it was one of the best moments of my SLS experience. If I had the chance, I would be more open and take advantage of every opportunity."

- Christian De La Fuente ('25)

"As a freshman, I would try to learn how to manage my time better; this was my biggest struggle. Had I learned how to balance my time earlier, it would have made for a smoother year. I hope after reading this, you can take some of the seniors' valuable advice. As they have come full circle, they now have learned their true character."

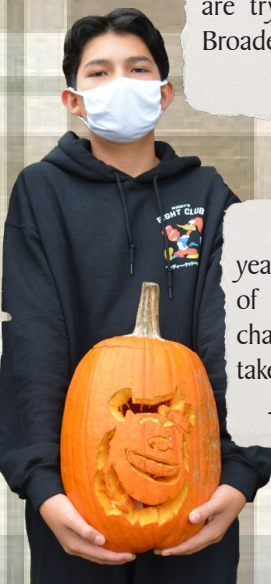
- Will Hying ('25)

"Something I would tell my freshman self is not being scared. I was very nervous my freshman year and did not talk to many people but now as a senior I wish I talked to more people."

- Andrew Lee ('25)

"If I were to go back to my freshman year, I would try new sports because some of the most fun times I had was playing sports for the first time."

- Ken Hoang ('25)



Counselor's Advice

By: Mr. Sy Vanissaveth

In ACP, one of the toughest questions you might have to answer is, "What do you want to do after SLS?" Why can this question be such a head-scratcher? Perhaps it's because one of the foundational questions that needs to be answered first is, "Who am I?", and guess what, you're probably still learning who you are. You may already know some of your skills, likes, dislikes, social and environmental surrounding preferences, insecurities, and strengths. But now, it's about learning how that applies to you as a student, dorm-mate, friend, brother, son, Catholic...as a follower of Christ.



An ongoing debate on the development of your character traits and personality is the theory of Nature vs. Nurture. Nature refers to your genetics, innate traits, and can be seen as something that is prewired within you. On the other hand, nurture is viewed as the influence on your personality and behavior from your experiences and interactions with your environment.

So, what does all of this have to do with showing your true character? I guess the only way to truly describe it is that it's complicated, especially when you return to discovering who you are as a Catholic and as a follower of Christ. It's important to be authentic because it creates genuine relationships and fosters confidence and happiness; however, our true nature is also marred by our sinful nature — passed down by the fall of Adam and Eve. However, we rejoice that despite our sinful nature, we have a God who loves us so much that he would send his Son to save us, and now, we take on this image of Christ. Therefore, the closer our true character is in line with the image of Christ, the more we can live a life filled with purpose and joy.

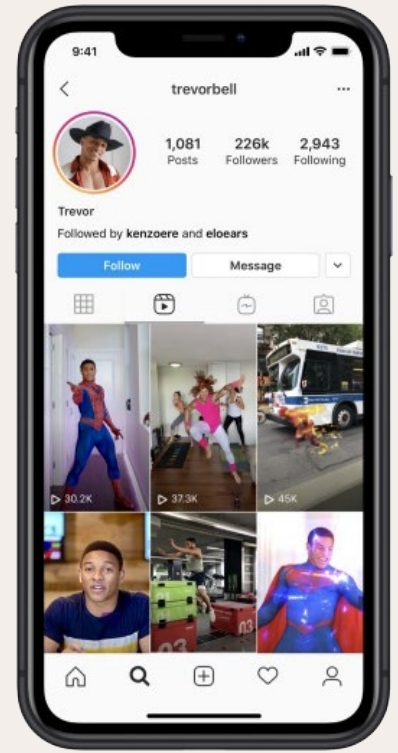
REAL VS. REELS



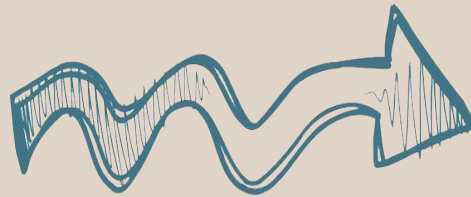
By: Jonah Lim ('26)

Teens are always engaged on social media, staying updated on the latest trends and current events. Many things become popular or “go viral” through the likes and comments on platforms such as TikTok, Instagram, and YouTube. By watching endless short videos, unknown songs and events can quickly gain fame. Teens can showcase their true character by creating these short videos about their personal and daily lives. However, in today’s digital age, it can be hard for them to distinguish between what is real and what is fake, especially with the excessive use of artificial intelligence. This technology is utilized in apps like Snapchat and Instagram to enhance pictures and videos, sometimes masking the true appearance of people. Influencers can use filters to create a “fake” version of themselves that does not reflect reality.

A trend that has emerged, to combat these fake personality, is the posting of “glow ups” on the internet. These glow ups are positive transformations in appearance, physique, or lifestyle. People feel confident, attractive, and proud of their new selves. Those who experience a glow up often look completely different than before. A memorable video to note would be Nikocado Avocado’s comeback, where he claims to be “two steps ahead.” He is a YouTube mukbanger, a livestream or pre-recorded video where the host eats large amounts of food while interacting with an audience, and he fooled many people by losing 250 pounds. Many of these viral videos influence viewers to do a similar thing and show their true character. These glow ups, shared in reels or short videos, can have a positive and real effect on teenagers today. Social media not only connects teenagers through the digital world but can also shape the character of our society.



NIKOCADO
AVOCADO



“Be more concerned with your character than your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.”

- John Wooden

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According to our faith, each of us was crafted by God in his own image. We are all different masterpieces that He has painted. And within us, He has placed a gift, something entirely our own. With over 8 billion souls on this earth and the world growing more crowded each day, it has never been more crucial to uncover the unique gift God has given us.

However, today, many children, teens, and young adults are lacking the conviction to find their gift. Instead of seeking to find the character in themselves, they get swept away by the appeal of social media fame. They trade their authenticity for temporary applause.

To prevent this superficial trend from spreading on the Hill, we, the editors, endorse our theme of "Showing True Character" for issue two. We want to encourage every Hilltopper to go out and show themselves without fear. Since we all come from different cultures, why not embrace the beauty of our differences instead of trying to mimic some dumb social media influencer who doesn't know anything about life? At the end of the day, ask yourself: "Am I happy with who I am? Or am I just a clown putting a mask on to hide my true self?"

from Justin & Thomas
This issue's postcard artwork is
contributed by Seongwook Choi ('28)



Submit your artwork to
hilltopics@stlawrence.edu
to be on our next Issue's
postcard!