



Managers are better!



College Fair!

# Hilltopics

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Student Publication Since 1965



Transitus!

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## Letter from the Rector

In the Gregorian Calendar, the first day of the year is January 1. However, the Catholic Church uses a different calendar system to mark seasons, ferial days, memorials, feast days and solemnities. That system is called the Liturgical Calendar, and according to it the first day of the liturgical year is the First Sunday of Advent, which in this year, falls on December 3. The Sunday before that the Church will celebrate the Solemnity of Jesus Christ, King of the Universe, also known as Christ, the King. This celebration will signal the end of the old liturgical year and the coming of the new one.

As we near the end of the old liturgical year and prepare to enter the new one, the readings we shall hear will sound apocalyptic. Listening to them may evoke images of imminent disaster or final doom as well as feelings of dread or trepidation. Whenever I listen to and reflect on those readings, I could not help but ask myself, "Am I prepared for that day when Jesus comes? Am I ready to stand before the Lord? I think that the readings we shall be listening to on the days leading up to the Solemnity of Christ the King invite us to ask ourselves the same questions. The answer to them lies on how faithful we have been to God and His commandments, to the Gospel of Jesus and the teachings of the Church.

We live in a passing world and in transient times. Our lives pass away like a shadow. All things come to an end. Therefore, it is all the more important that we seize the day, that we seize every moment in our lives to live as if it is our last. Since we do not know the day or the hour, let every day then be the day or let every hour then be the hour, to live to the fullest, seizing every opportunity to do good, to show kindness, and to make peace with God, with one another, and with ourselves. That is how we best prepare ourselves for the Lord's coming. That is how we make ourselves ready to stand before the Lord. And when we live our lives in constant and perpetual readiness, we shall one day find ourselves in the company of all the saints and blessed, and with all the just and holy ones in God's kingdom in heaven. Now, that does not sound dreadful nor evoke feelings of trepidation, does it?



Christian Casilla ('26)  
Ras Tanura, Saudi Arabia  
Favorite Song: Get Up  
by New Jeans  
Hobbies: Volleyball and Reading



Anthony Le ('26)  
Houston, Texas  
Favorite Song: Traitor  
by Olivia Rodrigo  
Hobbies: Reading and Basketball



Lee Roy Bloker ('27)  
Munster, Indiana  
Favorite Song: Pink + White  
by Frank Ocean  
Hobbies: Listening to Music



Nathan (Minh) Nguyen ('27)  
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam  
Favorite Song: Destination  
by Crash Adams  
Hobbies: Playing Bass and Guitar

# Student Spotlight

By: Chris Vu ('26)



## Running Through the Hills of Happiness

By: Jonah Lim ('26)

On September 16<sup>th</sup>, the Hilltopper Cross Country Invitational was held and was the first big event of the school year. Saint Lawrence Seminary hosted the event, and along with the invitational event, there was an alumni reunion. This year marked the 45<sup>th</sup> annual Hilltopper. Fifteen high schools participated and competed in the five-kilometer race.

Hundreds of people attend the event, so most students and many faculty and staff helped in preparation and during the event. Mr. Chad Dowland, the SLS athletic director, organized the entire event, which takes a lot of work and dedication. He stated, "Overall the set-up and prep for the Hilltopper went well. The weather cooperated and it went smooth."

Races start early in the morning with the girls and boys varsity races first, followed by the JV race and then the Fun Run. The Fun Run is a race for anyone who wants to attempt to complete the Hilltopper course. Varsity runner, Cristian Cruz ('25) said, "It was an amazing experience for us runners, and I loved seeing the support of the SLS community." Overall, SLS varsity placed 9<sup>th</sup> and JV placed 4<sup>th</sup> this year. Assistant Coach, Fr. Truong said, "It was a fun and exciting event, and I was able to see many recent graduates. It was also great to see the new freshman running the course." This year was yet another great and successful Hilltopper; and some of the Hilltoppers cannot wait for next year's race.



Tummy Ache  
(and Bertha) Survivor



Final Sprint!

## Brothers Reunited

By: Alan Mora ('26)

Every year, during the Hilltopper weekend, St. Lawrence holds a special event for the alumni. Many alumni attend and join in the festivities of the day. After the long awaited Hilltopper cross country meet was completed, a soccer match was played. However, there was something very special about the match; it was the alumni verses the current varsity and JV soccer teams. The alumni team was victorious this year. Mr. Grant Bargender, a current dorm supervisor, JV soccer coach and alumnus that played stated, "It was fun being able to play on the field with old teammates." After the soccer game, everyone was invited back to the Hill to attend Mass in the chapel. It was a very special Mass as it included the choir singing and multilingual intercessions. Immediately following Mass, the annual Brindisi Award was presented. The Brindisi Award is given to an alumnus who continues to include the teachings of St. Lawrence Seminary in their lives, by inspiring others through their Christian faith and being exemplary role models. This year's recipient was, Fr. Bill Hugo, Class of 1971.

At the conclusion of the evening's Mass and award presentation everyone was directed to the refectory for a social where a meal was served. The social also provided time for alumni to visit and share stories before the end of the evening. "I think it went very well." Mr. Francisco Saucedo, Director of Admissions and Recruitment stated, at the end of the event. A lot of planning and effort went into the organization of the event, and it paid off. Students and alumni finished the day with smiles and headed off in different directions.



Brindisi Award 2023!



How many more verses?



# Hallo, Hallo, Hallo!

By: Diego Soto ('25)

At the start of every school year, there are unfamiliar faces on campus. The obvious are the new freshmen, but there are also a few new faculty members this year. Mr. Buelow acquired a new position at SLS over the summer; therefore, creating a position for a German teacher. The new teacher is Mr. David Naegele and he comes from Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where he was born and raised. Growing up, Mr. Naegele went on many trips to Germany to see where his family originated. Over the years, he has lived and worked in Germany.

While interviewing Mr. Naegele he shared details about his personal life and family. He stated, "I'm married, and have two sons. The oldest is ten years old, his name is Will, and my youngest is six years old, his name is Christian. My wife especially likes to visit Europe, so we try to take trips to Germany and France." Mr. Naegele also shared his goals for the German classes, "I want to teach the students well enough so they are comfortable going on the upcoming German trip."

It is great to have a new teacher on campus. The German classes seem to have settled in nicely with Mr. Naegele, as he has been a positive addition to the SLS teaching staff.



Mr. David Naegele



Wir wünschen ihm viel  
Glück für die Schuljahr.

We wish him good luck for the  
school year.

# Cultural Exchange

By: Max Trinh ('25)

Juan Pablo Valencia is a Peruvian exchange student at SLS. You may ask why? He wants to perfect and hone his English-speaking skills. He is from Arequipa, Peru. He arrived on September 12<sup>th</sup>, and will be staying with us through November. Currently, Juan Pablo (JP) resides in the junior dorm. He has made many new friends and fits in with exceptionally.

Back in Peru, JP went to Colegio Max Uhle, a German international school. The grades range from kindergarten to high school. His favorite class is chemistry. His hobbies are tennis and video games. JP loves the International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) and has a lot of fun playing soccer; especially when he is winning.

Coming to America, specifically to SLS, JP has found it very different from life back in Peru. For example, he gets to sleep more here. However, he misses speaking with his parents. School life is also very different. At Max Uhle, JP is not required to wear a uniform and does not have daily prayers or Mass. Comparing the two schools; Max Uhle has ten times more students, thus more sports, for example, rugby, volleyball, gymnastics, and ping-pong. "This is a very new experience. I have learned a lot of English and how to be more independent. The students here are kind, and the teachers are helpful." So far, JP is thriving. He is getting more comfortable with life on the Hill every day. His one purpose in doing the exchange program was to learn English; and when he departs, he said, "I will leave with more than expected."



Academic Legend



First Hilltopper!



New Home and New Friends



# Parent Weekend

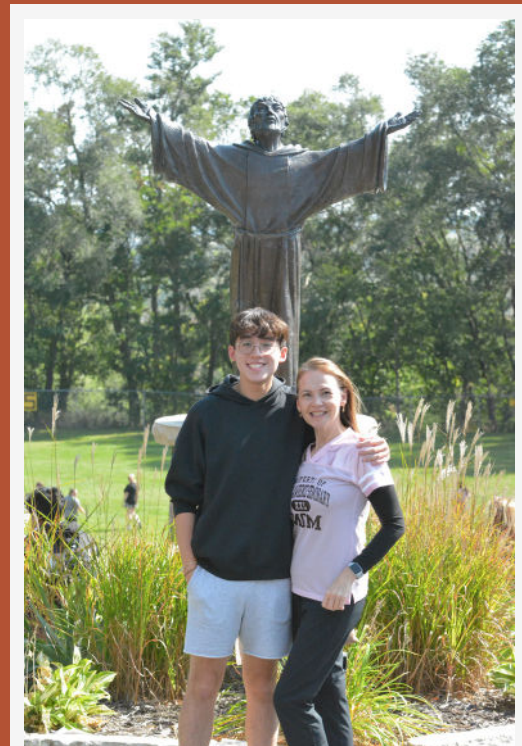
By: Hung Nguyen ('25)

SLS has held a longtime tradition, called Parents Weekend. With only five weeks into the school year, on September 23 and 24, parents were invited to visit campus to spend time with their sons. By this time, the students have started to adapt to the academics and dorm life on the Hill. The students had many stories, to share with their parents. The weekend was an opportunity for parents to share a day with their sons and join in some fun activities.

When the parents arrived, they were asked to register. After completing registration, students and parents could enjoy a walk around campus, or they could watch the varsity soccer game vs. Oostburg. Then families could enjoy lunch together.

There were many activities planned for the afternoon. A mother/son kickball game was held first. Following the game, there were presentations offered to families for each class. Seniors, Preparing for the First Year of college; juniors, College Planning; sophomores, Vocational Discernment and What the "Seminary" in SLS is all about; and for freshmen, The Social Skills Program and Dorm Life. When the presentations were done, there was a father/son softball game. Surprisingly, the parents won in every activity.

Mass for everyone followed the afternoon activities and games. After mass students were allowed to leave campus with their parents. Those that did not leave campus were able to share in a wonderful cookout. Jerry Escamilla ('25) said, "The day was wonderful for me, after the activities, I went off the Hill with my parents to celebrate my father's birthday." Parents Weekend is a great opportunity for students to reconnect with their parents.



Mother - Son Duo







It's so dark



## Passing From Death Into New Life

By: ThienHanh Mai ('25)

The life of St. Francis of Assisi has a very deep influence our school. Our lives here on the Hill are based on the teachings of St. Francis during his lifetime, as well as, the way he lived. As a school, which is founded and is supported by Capuchin Franciscans, a friary order inspired by St Francis, the Transitus and Solemnity of St. Francis is a very important celebration each year.

On the eve of the Feast Day of St. Francis, the students, friars, and guests had a special Transitus prayer service that involved the lighting of candles and the breaking of bread, both, which symbolizes the example of the brotherhood that St. Francis wanted everyone to portray to one another. The service also included important stories from St. Francis's life, such as his renunciation of all worldly goods. Br. Baudry Metangmo, junior dorm supervisor, said, "The prayers really struck me because it reminded me of why I became a Franciscan brother in the first place. The celebration of Transitus at SLS is very moving because it's celebrated in such a unique way."

On the day of the Feast of St. Francis, the students celebrated Mass with a guest presider, Fr. Anthony Julius Milton. Following Mass, everyone on campus enjoyed a delicious feast prepared by the kitchen staff. The meal consisted of homemade bread, chicken penne alfredo, asparagus, and banana cake.

The following Saturday night, the students watched an informative film on the life of St. Francis. Seamus McCarthy ('26) mentioned, "The movie was a wonderful eye-opening film that really helped me understand why St. Francis is so important." To SLS, this feast was more than just a Mass and a meal. It is an incredibly special day celebrating an incredibly special person: St. Francis, our inspiration. All the students, staff, and friars at SLS enjoy this special celebration of the feast of St. Francis.

# Shopping for Schools

By: Cristian Cruz ('25)

The seniors went to a college fair! On October 19<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Sy Vanissaveth, the SLS Guidance Counselor, scheduled the seniors for a field trip to the Wisconsin Education Fair, which was held at Lakeland University near Plymouth, Wisconsin. It was remarkably similar to a job fair but instead of previewing jobs, we previewed colleges. At the fair, there were almost 100 different booths highlighting different Technical Colleges, Community Colleges, Military Branches, and Universities.



When the students arrived, they were given a bar code on their phones to use at the specific booths of interest. While exploring the different booths, students inquired about the programs of study, student life, sports, extracurriculars, and application process. If the students liked the school, they presented their barcode to receive more information and to contact them later. Khoi Hoang ('24) stated, "It was pretty helpful experiencing the fair. The people were very engaging and friendly. When I asked about financial aid, they told me right then and there."

There were many other students from different schools in attendance causing the room to be very crowded. Even though it was so busy, Joaquin Baldree ('24) said, "It was fantastic! I was able to look at every school and college. Each college had its own pros and cons; but it helped in finding what school might be a good fit. I did like the fact that when asking questions, I received an immediate response." Mr. Vanissaveth noticed a booth representing his alma mater so, he challenged the seniors, with clues, to find his college, provide paraphernalia as proof and if they did, they received a prize. The prize was a Little Debbie snack! All and all, the seniors enjoyed being off campus and shopping for their future education.

## Video Gaming is a Sport!

By: Bao Tran ('26)

It is the season for E-sports and Super Smash Brothers Ultimate, which is a video game on the Nintendo switch, where two players are in combat. Each player chooses a character. Every character that has ever appeared in any previous Smash Brothers game is available on the Nintendo Switch. These would include characters from Super Mario, The Legend of Zelda, Metroid, Kirby's Dream Land, Star Fox, Pokémon, Sonic the Hedgehog, and even Wii Fit.

E-sports is fairly new to SLS and it continues to gain popularity with the students. Mr. Logan Burge, the coach, commented, "The team has had a slow start, and yet it has been good." At the writing of this article, the teams have won four and lost three matches. There has been a real spark of interest among students resulting in more joining the JV and varsity teams, totaling twelve students. Thomas Ruiz ('27) said, "It has been really nice. I have had the chance to socialize with upper classmen and improve my skills, while being on the varsity team." Thomas will only gain experience for the Super Smash Brothers while being on the team. Even though E-sports is new, our team shows great potential in winning.



I love e-sports!

# Harmonious Journey

By: Justin Tran ('25)

“Good morning! We are musicians from the Hill of Happiness.” This is our introduction before we begin a Mass at a hosting school. Last school year, Mr. Daniel Matthew, the Music Director at SLS, started the SLS Traveling Music Ministry program. What is its purpose? It is a ministry that provides a great opportunity for students to share and display their musical talents by contributing to Liturgies around the area. More importantly, the purpose of the ministry is to support the local parochial schools’ music programs or Liturgies. Mr. Matthew shared, “Our biggest goal for the ministry is to get our SLS students more involved with music, and also to spread the love of music to others.”



Look at the camera!

Since the beginning, it has made a positive impact on the SLS students involved. They have met many wonderful people and shared the music of God with others. One of the chapel musicians, who had a chance to participate in this ministry, Diego Soto ('25) said, “It was nice to meet other people and share our music love with them to create a great Liturgy.” This ministry provides an opportunity for us, together with other students and church members, to create a harmonious community that resonates with the beauty of Church music.

## Life of Service

By: Said Villa ('25)

Saint Lawrence offers many different opportunities for students to take part in helping others through its ministry program. The ministries are a unique opportunity that not all teenagers get to experience during their high school careers. SLS offers various ministries so that the students experience what it is like to help others less fortunate.

The freshman are given the opportunity to help with the Weekend Visits on the Hill, by greeting the visitors, giving them tours, and making visiting students feel at home. The sophomores go and help the elderly at the Villa Rosa, an assisted living facility in Mt. Calvary. According to Christian Casilla ('26), “It was a unique experience, spending time with the elderly; it showed me a new appreciation for the staff that works at the Villa Rosa.” The upperclassmen are able to go off campus to serve their ministry time. For example, the juniors go to the Broken Bread Food Pantry in Fond du Lac, where they help distribute food to the less fortunate. They also helped make apple pies, for Divine Savior Catholic School’s annual fundraiser, in Kiel.

A popular ministry with the seniors is Special Olympics bowling and basketball. SLS students assist and encourage the participants who are born with disabilities. Another ministry students can participate in are Friday night fish fries, which takes place at both Saint Peter Claver, in Sheboygan, and St. John the Baptist, in Plymouth. Students help the parishioners in many ways by preparing the fish, serving the fish, and helping with clean up.

These are only some of the ministry opportunities offered to SLS students. As students’ progress through the social skills and maturity, they are offered more opportunities to help others. Dr. Michael Donahou and Father Peter Kafumu head and organize the ministry program. Dr. Donahou said, “Our school is inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the example of St. Francis of Assisi. We know that both of those men endeavored to minister to people on the margins of society, people who might be overlooked or even avoided by others. Those are the kinds of people we interact with regularly in our ministry programs.” Without the direction from Dr. Donahou and the help of many staff members, who help with transportation and chaperoning, the SLS ministry program would not be possible.

Hilltopics  
301 Church Street  
Mt. Calvary, WI 53057



## *From the Editors*

With the cold settling in and the colors fading, the second issue of Hilltopics has arrived! This year has kept us all busy, and without knowing it we're almost at Thanksgiving, and Christmas break is right around the corner. The Haunted House was fun to put on, but the temperature change also signifies a change in focus. A lot of the seniors are now working on their college applications and preparing for the next step after high school. We're so close to the halfway point, so keep it up!

-Nile and Jonathan

## **What we're listening to:**



God of Music by SEVENTEEN



A Very Laufey Holiday by Laufey



Blue Banisters by Lana Del Rey