



# HILLTOPPERS

VOLUME LVIII

Return of the Hilltoppers

ISSUE I

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2022-2023

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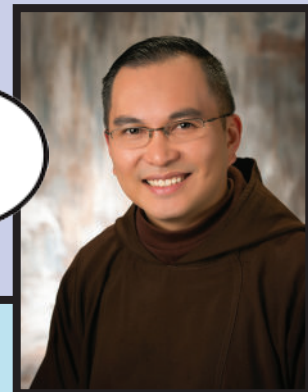
Diego Orozco



# Welcoming New Faces

Ken Hoang & Said Villa ('25)

## Rector's Bubble



The Mission of St. Lawrence Seminary is this:

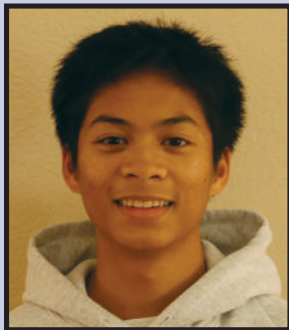
*"Inspired by the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the example of St. Francis of Assisi, St. Lawrence Seminary provides a residential college preparatory education in a living Catholic community nurturing mature, well-rounded men of faith, who prepare for a life of ministry as priests, religious and lay leaders in the Church and world."*

And the following are the values of our school: **SAFE ENVIRONMENT** (Providing the physical and emotional freedom that assists learning, growing and exploring), **SPIRITUALITY** (Fostering a relationship with Jesus that directs a lifetime), **KNOWLEDGE** (Pursuing academic, moral, and spiritual depth), **SOCIAL SKILLS** (Interacting in an effective, positive, and respectful manner), **HUMBLE COMMITMENT** (Serving by sacrificing for others), and **DIVERSITY** (Building fraternity and community by respecting and celebrating uniqueness).

I chose my first entry for the first issue of this year's *Hilltopics* to focus on our mission and values statement because it is good to begin the academic year with a reminder to all of us of who we are and what our goal is as an institution (mission statement), as well as how we are to achieve that goal (values statement). The administrators, members of the faculty and staff are custodians of the school's mission. They are entrusted with the noble task of educating and forming a new generation of young men to become lifelong disciples of our Lord Jesus, and who will one day become leaders in the Church or in our society. The students, on the other hand, are the beneficiaries of the school's mission who become, at their completion of the program, products and ambassadors of the mission themselves.

As we continue to make our sojourn into this new academic year, I invite all of us to take some time to reread and reflect on our mission and values statement. It truly is a beautiful and compelling document. It should not be reduced to a mere fixture on a wall, kept in a folder, or left buried in a stack of other documents inside a drawer or a file cabinet neither to see the light of day nor be seen or read again. Rather, it is to be reviewed and reflected on regularly. Read it by yourself or with others. Read it quietly or out loud. Let the words sink into your minds and take root in your hearts. Let them serve as a light that illumines your path and guides your day-to-day decisions while at work or in studies. Let them set the direction to your destination—both in the present and in the years to come.

May the Lord guide us and bless all our endeavors this year!



### Aaron Burgos, Freshman

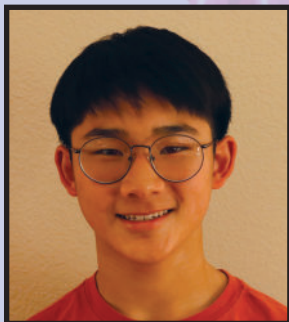
**Ethnicity:** Filipino  
**City:** Cras Tanura, Dammam,  
Saudi Arabi  
**Favorite Class:** General  
Science and English 9

#### How did you hear about SLS?

"I heard it through Rem Quintin David ('22) and my brother, Nathan Burgos ('25)."

**What do you do in your free time?** "I spend time with friends, read and play sports."

**What are your goals for the school year?** "To become VP of the freshman class and to have a blast."



### Jonah Lim, Freshman

**Ethnicity:** Vietnamese  
**City:** Houston, Texas  
**Favorite Class:** World History

#### How did you hear about SLS?

From his two brothers, Peter

Lim ('21) and Jacob Lim ('22), who attended SLS.

**What do you do in your free time?** "I enjoy doing puzzles and competitive swimming."

**What are your goals for the school year?** "To become the freshman class President and to do well in Cross Country, track and all my classes."



### Emmanuel Hernandez, Sophomore

**Ethnicity:** Mexican  
**City:** Jefferson, WI  
**Favorite Class:**  
Communications

**How did you hear about SLS?** "I heard about SLS from Fr. Zoy"

**What do you do in your free time?** "I like to hang with friends."

**What are your goals for the school year?** "To do well in soccer."

# *I'm Sorry!* I'm Still Learning **Everyone's Name!**

Hung Dao ('23)

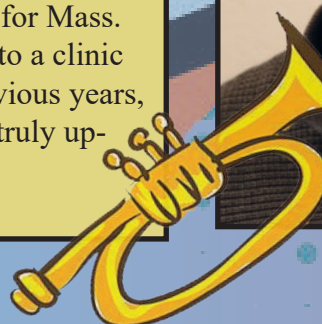
Graduating from SLS in 2021, Mr. Grant Bargender returned to the Hill as a sophomore dorm supervisor. He is also helping to coach varsity soccer. When asked about coming back, he said, "I'm blessed with the opportunity to come back, but it also feels weird knowing what the students are going through, as I experienced much of the same just a few years ago." The sophomores and the soccer team are lucky to have Mr. Bargender's recent experiences to help guide them this year.



Mr. Max Eliason, also a recent alumnus from 2018, is a senior dorm supervisor. He is pursuing a law degree and, is currently studying for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test) so that he can start law school next fall. In transitioning to the role of supervisor, he said, "I carried my SLS schedule into college, so the adjustment wasn't that bad." Mr. Eliason has his work cut out for him this year, but so far, he has done a good job looking after the seniors.



A Son of Calvary from 2015, Mr. Daniel Matthew returned to take the mantle as the new band and choir director. He has brought new energy into the music department. For the past two years, he worked primarily with seventh and eighth-graders. When asked about returning to SLS, he said, "It's good to be back and also good to work on more advanced stuff." Within a few weeks, he has already begun using new instrumentations and hymns for Mass. Later in the year, he plans to bring the band and choir to a clinic to hear other bands and adjudicators in contrast to previous years, where clinicians would come to SLS. Mr. Matthew is truly upping the ante this year for the SLS music department.



Br. Nathan Linton serves as SLS's campus minister. His responsibilities include preparing evening prayers and organizing students' spiritual direction. He plans a variety of prayers for the students to keep them engaged and elevate their prayer experience. Concurrent to his responsibility as campus minister, Br. Nathan is also studying to become a deacon. Anyone who has spoken with Br. Nathan knows he is deeply knowledgeable about faith. He said, "I just love to share my faith with the community." His faithfulness and prayerfulness truly radiates through everything he does.



Mrs. Janet Schneider fills the role of assistant to the rector. Her day-to-day business involves supporting Fr. Zoy Garibay with administrative needs. She keeps count of all the students and their whereabouts, as well as, scheduling meetings, and helping students. She stated, "I still have much to learn, but everyone here is kind and always answers my questions, so it has been very enjoyable." The work of Mrs. Schneider is crucial and greatly appreciated.

Mrs. Maggie Stielow was added to the Guidance Office. Her focus is to help students figure out their college and career goals. This position is new to SLS, and Mrs. Stielow is starting to settle in. She stated, "I'm learning something new right along with the seniors. Everyone being so welcoming helps." Mrs. Stielow is a great resource for students, especially the seniors, as they prepare to graduate and go out into the world.



Summertime brings out new opportunities. This summer a group of SLS students embarked on two different trips. Two of the seniors, Angel Hernandez and Christopher Lor traveled to Eau Claire to attend Badger Boys State. Two juniors are selected each year by the faculty of the social studies department to represent SLS at the summer conference. It is an opportunity for them to learn how government works and to model the basics of leadership through creating their own “state,” holding mock elections, legislative sessions and even court cases. Angel said, “I felt that having Christopher there with me was comforting. I was full of uncertainty at first, but I started to meet a lot of different people, and it soon became a surprisingly great opportunity. I started to climb to the top and was elected the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. It was an extraordinary experience.

Another summer trip available to the students was the Mission Trip to Southeast Montana. It was an opportunity for seven SLS students and three staff members to enlighten themselves about Native American culture and Native American landmarks. On the road trip, SLS students saw the likes of the Bighorn Mountains in Wyoming and the location of the Battle of Little Bighorn in Montana. They also had the chance to spend time on the Northern Cheyenne and Crow Reservations. During the time spent on the reservations the group accompanied Fr. Paul Koenig and Fr. Larry Webber on their daily ministries helping them in any way possible. Dr. Michael Donahou stated, “It was a great cultural experience for everyone.” He also remarked that the trip was a “Ministry of Presence.” Diego Orozco (‘23) said, “It was eye opening. My favorite moment throughout the trip was definitely hiking in the Bighorn Mountains. I just love to hike.” For most of the SLS students that went on these trips, it is something they will remember for the rest of their lives.

# SUPREME

## JOURNEY Christopher Lor (‘23)



# And God Sent Forth the Flood

Clive Moras ('23)

Saturday, August 27<sup>th</sup>, was the day that many of the seniors had been looking forward to for as long as they could remember: the senior trip to Noah's Ark. The day started off with a forecast of probable rain in the coming hours. However, they weren't worried as the clouds were expected to clear out, but as they reached Wisconsin Dells, things didn't look any better. Despite the weather setbacks, the seniors powered ahead into Noah's Ark. John Bui ('23) described the rides as being "exhilarating." However, the park closed an hour later due to lightning being spotted in the area. "We were only able to go on three rides after which we were ambushed by a storm," is how Angel Hernandez ('23) put it. After a quick lunch, everyone packed up and headed back to school. The senior supervisors, Fr. Peter Kafumu and Mr. Max Eliason, had to come up with something to help with the dejected looks on the seniors' faces. At about 6 P.M. they gathered the seniors and headed to Fond du Lac for a class dinner at McDonald's. "I liked the trip to McDonald's because the whole class was there and we were able to reminisce about the times we longed to be seniors. And finally, here we are," stated Angel Hernandez ('23). Even though the day didn't go as the seniors expected, they were still able to make the most of it and create memories they will cherish forever.



# HILLTOP

# JOY

Nicholas Dean ('23)



The beginning of the school year does not only mark the arrival of the grueling homework assignments or the fall breeze at Saint Lawrence Seminary, it also marks the beginning of the fall sports season. One of the extracurricular sports that SLS has to offer is cross-country. Whether you need something to do in your free time, to get in shape, or even to train for a marathon, running cross-country at SLS gives students, as well as the coaching staff, the opportunity to enjoy the season and bond as a community.

With Mr. Kevin Buelow, Mr. Joshua Brath, and Br. Troung Dinh as this year's cross-country coaches, the team is sure to be in for a real treat as all three have been either coaching or running for years. Br. Troung, a new member of this year's coaching staff, has been running with the students to train for the upcoming Chicago Marathon. When asked why he wanted to train with the students, Br. Troung said, "I want to encourage the underclassmen to run and take advantage of the opportunities we have here at SLS." Br. Troung's excellent example has led many of the new first-year students and the returning sophomores to try out for the cross-country team.

Cross-country is not a sport that students do just for the sake of running, there are many joys of running as an SLS Hilltopper. Cesar Gonzales, a returning junior who is new to the cross-country team, said, "My favorite part of cross-country is finishing the races. There is a lot of joy and relief knowing that it is finally over." From the student runners, to the coaching staff, cross-country is a joy for all who are part of the team.

## New Season, NEW COACHES

Gunnar Stier ('23)



The soccer season of 2022 is looking promising. After Coach David Bartel stepped down at the end of last year, Coach Sebastian Vervaeck stepped up as only the second head coach of varsity soccer in Saint Lawrence Seminary history! Coach Vervaeck was extremely excited to start this new journey. He acknowledged that there would be many challenges and described the most difficult challenge as "a lack of players at tryouts." He explained further saying, "The most challenging thing we've faced is the drop in enrollment. Because it affects life on the Hill and the school as a whole, it affects the variety of players trying out for soccer." However, Coach Vervaeck will not have to face these challenges by himself because Mr. Grant Bargender, the new sophomore dorm supervisor, has stepped up to fill the position of assistant coach. Coach Bargender was equally excited to start the season and share what he knows as a former team captain of the soccer team that was the state-runner-up. He described his goal as helping the players learn what it means to be on the field, and what their roles on that field are. Coach Bargender said he wanted to, "help the players on the team to realize that each of them has a specific role on the field, and without each and every one of them fulfilling their roles, we won't accomplish a lot." Together the two coaches want to achieve the goals of improving their players as a whole, and ultimately, placing first in the conference.





# SQUEEZING FUN Between WORK

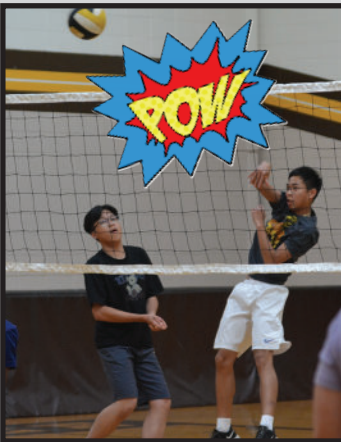
ThienHanh Mai (\*25)

People from around the United States celebrate Labor Day in different ways. Here at Saint Lawrence Seminary, the students and staff celebrate it in their own special way. The students started with a half day of school, all classes before lunch. After classes, the students and staff enjoyed lunch, and, following lunch, sports practices were held. After sports practices concluded, the students participated in a multitude of activities. The activities included kickball, flag football, volleyball, Mario Party, and the dunk tank.

I AM  
SCARED.....



LABOR DAY



The dunk tank, being the most popular, was an activity where freshmen had the chance to dunk their seniors by throwing balls at a target. Some of the sophomores and juniors got to dunk the seniors as well. Freshman Jeremiah O'Neill described the experience as "fun and exciting." After the activities, dinner was held, which included hamburgers, hot dogs, corn on the cob, potato salad, and apple turnovers.

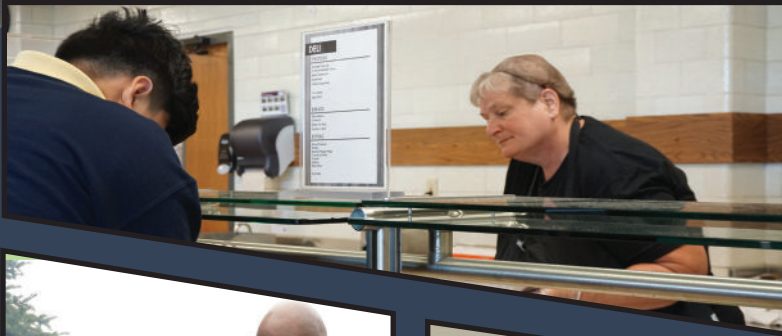


New sophomore Emmanuel Hernandez said, "The dinner was really good." After a short break, the sophomore, junior, and senior classes elected their class leaders. To finish out the day, there were class socials with ice cream. Students often look forward to special schedules and this Labor Day did not disappoint. It was a fun and exciting experience.

# FLIKtastic!

Max Trinh ('25)

They say to improve is to change, and that perfection is constant change; those statements may be very true based on one particular recent experience at SLS. Since switching food service companies from Sodexo to Flik over the summer, returning SLS students have had nothing but praise for the new food service company, known officially as Flik Independent School Dining. Many students and staff think that switching to Flik was an improvement and was the right thing to do. "I feel like there's more of a variety in each meal, the food is more balanced, and it generally tastes better," stated Daniel Pizana, a current sophomore. Another returning student, junior Phuoc Hoang said, "The food is amazing, especially when they make Asian food. The deli has also significantly improved, and we are never hungry because they always make more than what we need." The Flik employees also have a lot to offer as their company goals are to provide great meals, nourish a better future, and bring about a happy campus. We can't wait to see what Flik has in store for us as we experience a new era of extraordinary food.



## CLIMB to GLORY

Diego Soto ('25)

On August 28<sup>th</sup>, SLS brought back the tradition of hosting a pep rally for the students, which hadn't been done in years. The students and staff gathered in the gymnasium for the rally to introduce the new athletes for the fall sports. During the pep rally, the students met the new soccer and cross-country teams, as well as learned some new chants for the season. The students cheered on the teams and practiced the school chants. ThienHanh Mai, a sophomore, was asked how he felt about the pep rally. Thien said, "The chants this year are very energetic and will boost the team's enthusiasm." Mr. Quan Nguyen, Mr. Dave Bartel and Mrs. Katie Daane helped plan the event. They were asked what the purpose was of bringing this tradition back. Mr. Bartel and Mrs. Daane had similar replies. Mrs. Daane said, "The purpose was to build school spirit, a sense of community and to recognize the fall sports, as well as, the new team members." Bringing the tradition of the pep rally back really allowed students to get involved and create excitement for the fall seasons.



# Relationships Bloom

Samson Mathew ('23)



The senior-freshmen relationship is one that lasts for a long time; for most, it extends even after graduation. On August 20<sup>th</sup>, the newest group of seniors and freshmen had a picnic at Long Lake, near Dundee, Wisconsin, to begin to build those bonds that will hopefully extend beyond SLS. The seniors played icebreaker games with the freshmen, such as Life Experience Bingo and a few name games. The seniors and freshmen learned a lot about each other and started forming a sense of community and brotherhood. Senior Clive Moras stated, "I learned a lot about my freshmen. I came to know that he is passionate about classical music and plays the violin." Mr. Burge organized games for the students to help them get acquainted. The games included Infection, a form of tag, where a small number of students tried to infect all the other students. The students also had some free time when they swam and had chicken fights in the lake. Some played volleyball alongside Fr. Chrispin Shirima and Fr. Peter Kafumu. Mr. Anthony Van Asten brought kayaks to the picnic and students learned how to kayak on the lake and had a nice time. Some seniors even had small races with the freshmen. Overall, it seemed the students had a fun time, creating new memories and forming new bonds.



Help...

Christian Cruz ('25)

## THE RACE OF THE HILL



Every year SLS holds a Cross-Country Invitational meet, the Hilltopper, and an alumni event. This year they took place on Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>, and in attendance were seventeen schools and well over 100 SLS alumni. Mr. Chad Dowland, the SLS athletic director, organized the event, which took many days and much help to make the Hilltopper possible. The invitational took place in the morning, starting with the girls' and boys' varsity runs, followed by the junior varsity run. Sophomore Antonio Brand-Gonzalez said, "The Hilltopper was fun and difficult at the same time!" Most SLS students lined the course, supporting the team, as well as, the other runners. Many runners had a hard time on the course, due to its sloping landscape, including the infamous hill "Bertha." SLS placed ninth in the invitational; our top finisher, Nicholas Dean ('23) placed fourteenth on varsity, with a time of 19:24. After the meet, the "fun run" took place. The fun run is for anyone on campus who wants to experience our course or run it again for fun. Freshman Ugo Osuala said, "The course was hard, especially at the potato patch and Bertha."



MINE !!!

After all the running was complete, lunch was held, which included a variety of drinks, chips, fruits and sandwiches. After a short break, the annual alumni vs. student soccer game was held with the students winning 4-2. During the game, Sebastian Montemayor ('25), and his family were very generous and served tacos during the game.

The day ended with Mass and an alumni social. The special Mass included multilingual intersessions, the choir singing, and alumni awards which were given to two alumni. To finish out the day, the alumni were invited to join the SLS community for a cookout and to socialize. The cookout included hamburgers, hot dogs, potato salad, fruits and a whole lot of laughs. As Fr. Zoy said, "The social was a fitting conclusion to a memorable day. The Hilltopper from the morning running events to the evening social was a huge success."



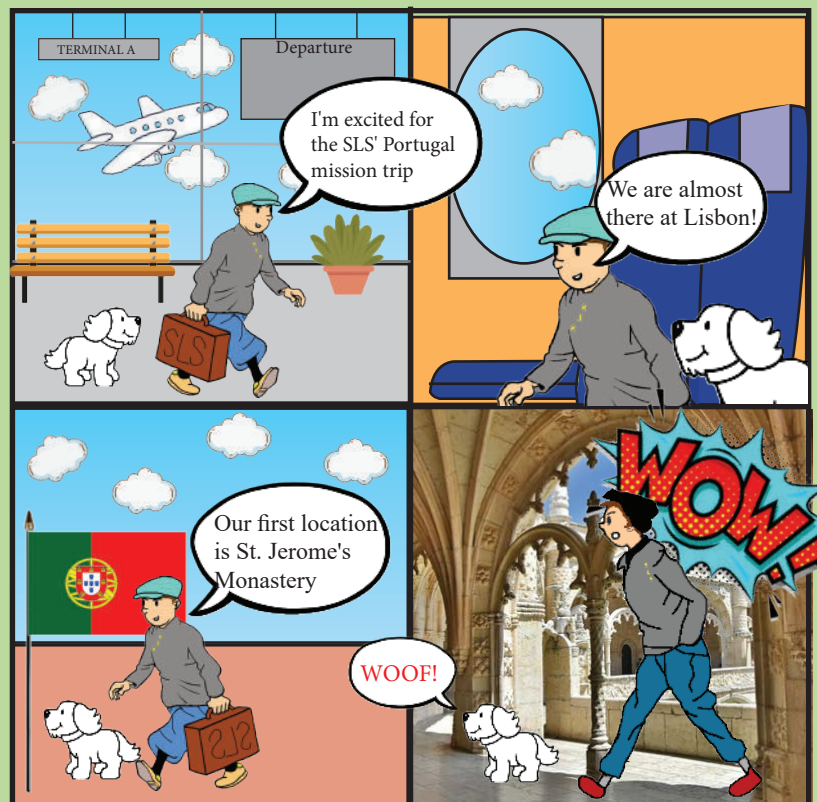


**HILLTOPICS**  
 WORDSEARCH  
 PUZZLE

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|---------------|------------|--------------|---------------|
| Alumni        | Eau Claire | McDonalds    | Soccer        |
| Athletes      | Flik       | Montana      | Social Skills |
| Coaches       | Hilltopics | Portugal     | Summer        |
| Cross Country | Long Lake  | Saudi Arabia | Texas         |

**JOURNEY TO PORTUGAL**



To Be Continued...