



CHARACTER



SIGNED WITH
ASHES



MORE SYRUP!

Hilltopics

Volume LIX

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Student Publication Since 1965

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Advisor

Mrs. Deann Sippel

Editors-in-Chief

Jonathan Prado and Nile Montes

Writers

Nile Montes
Jonathan Prado
Cristian Cruz
Hung Nguyen
Thien Hanh Mai
Diego Soto
Justin Tran
Max Trinh
Said Villa
Jonah Lim
Alan Mora
Bao Tran
Chris Vu

Photographers

Daniel Cornejo
Tyler Le
Jonathan Prado
Cristian Cruz
Jae-Soung Hong
Thien Hanh Mai
Joaquin Partida
Hernandez
Bao Tran



Letter from the Rector

I once came across the following joke: “Three men died and found themselves standing at the gates of heaven. There, St. Peter tells them that they can enter only if they can answer one simple question. St. Peter asks the first man, “What is Easter?” The first man replies, “That’s easy! It’s the holiday in November when everyone gets together, eats turkey, and are thankful.” “Wrong!” St. Peter said to him. St. Peter turned to the second man and asks him the same question, “What is Easter?” The second man replies, “Easter is the holiday in December when people put up coniferous evergreen trees, exchange presents, and celebrate the birth of Jesus.” St. Peter looks at the second man incredulously and says him, “You’re wrong.” St. Peter then turns to the third man and asks him, “What is Easter?” The third man smiles, and with confidence says to St. Peter, “I know what Easter is.” “Oh?” St. Peter replied. The man said, “Easter is the Christian holiday that coincides with the Jewish celebration of Passover. Jesus and his disciples were at the Last Supper. He was deceived by one of his disciples and was turned over to the members of the Sanhedrin, who handed him over to Pontius Pilate, who then condemned him to death. The Roman soldiers crucified him, and when he died, was buried in a cave that was sealed off by a large stone.” St. Peter is liking what he is hearing so far. Then the man continues, “And every year the stone is moved aside so Jesus can come out, and, if he sees his shadow, it means that there will be six more weeks of winter!”

I think we can say that none of the three men knew what Easter was. But nor did the disciples of Jesus. The disciples of Jesus did not know at that time the significance of Jesus’s rising from the dead. The Scriptures tell us that after Jesus died and was buried, Mary of Magdala came to Jesus’ tomb early in the morning, and when she found that the stone was turned, she thought that the body of the Jesus was taken. So she ran and told Peter and the other disciples. And when they arrived at the tomb, they saw the burial cloths were there but not the body of the Jesus. The Scriptures then go on to explain that the disciples of Jesus “did not yet understand” what that meant. Easter is a Mystery. The Resurrection of Jesus is part of the core tenet of our Faith called the Paschal Mystery—the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. For us, the followers of Jesus, Easter offers a new beginning—a new hope. We know that Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, is victorious over the forces of darkness, and triumphant over the over the powers of death. And if we believe in him, if we put our trust in him, if we follow him and be faithful to him, then we too will come out of the darkness of sin and become victorious and triumphant over death on the last day. We shall pass from death to life, from suffering to consolation, from sorrow to joy. Let us then live in faith, in hope, and in Christ’s light.

2023 - 2024 Hilltopics Staff



Miguel Herrera ('26)
Chicago, Illinois
Goal: Get better at playing the violin.
Hobby: Playing the Violin



Johnny Castillo ('27)
Chicago, Illinois
Goal: Prepare for the next Basketball season.
Hobby: Playing Basketball

Student Spotlight

By: Christopher Vu ('26)



Jeremy Galan ('27)
Chicago, Illinois
Goal: Survive the rest of the school year and relax.
Hobby: Playing Basketball



Alan Mora ('26)
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Goal: Get a 4.0 and get in better shape.
Hobby: Working out and Video Games

Sign Us With Ashes

By: Thien Hanh Mai ('25)

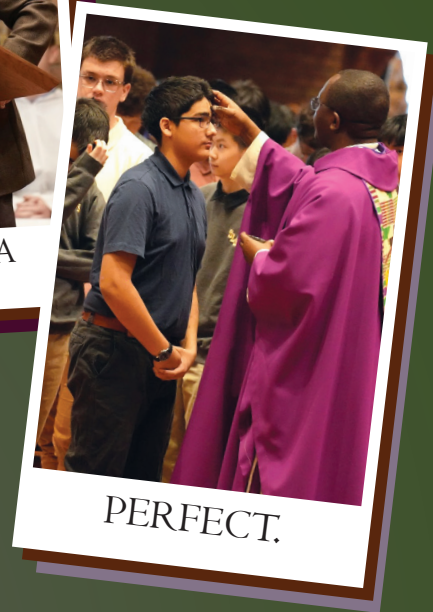
Ash Wednesday is an important day marked by fasting, abstinence, and the receiving of ashes. It signifies the beginning of the Lenten season. On Ash Wednesday, SLS had a half-day of school, followed by mass. During mass, everyone received the symbolic ash marking of the cross on his or her forehead. The crosses symbolize our sins and reuniting with God.

Lent is a time to remember the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus through our own sacrifices. It is also a time to think about and strengthen our relationship with God. This year, the student body gave up snack and seconds on Wednesdays. Each class also decided to do something that would increase their spirituality. The freshman class decided to have Adoration together on Fridays, the sophomore class decided to have Mass on Tuesdays, the junior class decided to have a Mass every Monday, and the senior class decided to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet on Wednesdays.

The season of Lent teaches us to be humble and to be open to sacrifice. We are reminded to live out these values through this season of Lent. We are also reminded to reinforce our relationship with God.



LET'S TAKE A LOOK



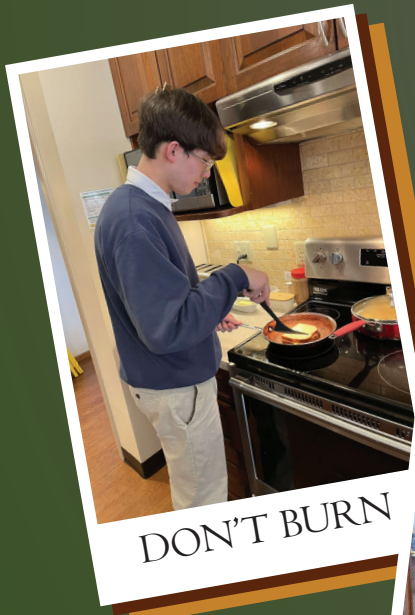
PERFECT.

In Good Hands

By: Alan Mora ('26)

Ministry is one of the core elements of student life at SLS. Every student is expected to choose a few to participate in. Among the many options that are available for students to consider to participate in, some are entrusted only to the seniors. One of these being the Hospice Home of Hope in Fond du Lac, WI. The seniors, led by Fr. Zoy Garibay, go to the facility on Friday's after school to assist with meals for the residents in care.

Upon arrival to the Hospice Home of Hope, the seniors go from room to room with the day's menu that list several food and drink options. After gathering the orders from the residents, and a little small talk, the students then go to the kitchen to prepare the meals and deliver the trays to each resident. Dr. Michael Donahue, the Director of Campus Ministry remarked, "The experience of bringing a meal to someone near the end of their life is a great honor and privilege." Joaquin Baldree ('24) commented, "I believe that the Hospice ministry makes us appreciate what we have and is truly an inspiring experience." Once each resident is finished, the trays are collected and the students clean up. To conclude the ministry, the seniors reflect on the experience. Alan Pham ('24) stated, it's very deep and sometimes sad. It makes you appreciate life."



DON'T BURN



LET US COOK.

Fraternity Love

By: Jonah Lim ('26)

The fraternity system here at St. Lawrence encourages students to build stronger relationships with their peers. Fraternities have student members from all four classes. Currently there are 12 fraternities. The frats, as we refer to them, sit together at breakfast and dinner, pray together, compete as teams for on campus events and go on outings together. Recently, Frat 7 and Frat 12 went off campus to spend time bonding with the members of their frats. Frat 7 went to Dragon Buffet, a Chinese buffet in Plymouth. Afterward, they went to Walmart to restock on necessities such as deodorant, soap, ramen, chips, and much more. Freshman, Kiet Henry Le said, "The Asian food was super delicious, especially the dumplings, fried rice, and meatballs." Frat 12 went to a trampoline park in Appleton called Urban Air Adventure Park. Sophomore, Mark Tran, said, "My favorite part of the trip was jumping on the trampolines and blocking Johnny Castillo in the basketball dunk." Through these exciting outings, the students create long-lasting memories and friendships.



Who Doesn't Like Syrup?

By: Bao Tran ('26)



The Maple Syrup Project established in the spring of 2019 when current English teacher, Mr. Anthony Van Asten commented to Dr. Gereon Welhouse, the former Chemistry and Physics teacher, "Hey, let's do something different." The unique experience would include staff and student involvement; they called the Maple Syrup Project. The purpose, to teach students how to make syrup from the trees on campus and spend time together outside in nature. The process is reliant on the weather, but is quite simple: tap the trees, hammer the spile or peg into a hole and connect a tube into a bucket. Over the next days and weeks, wait for the sap to flow, collect the sap and boil it down in an evaporator pan until all the water is gone and it becomes syrup. Lastly, bottle the syrup and enjoy. Seamus McCarthy ('26) said, "I enjoy being involved in this project, it taught me how to make syrup and it keeps me busy after school, making my life more interesting." The project is a lot of work and is open to anyone who wants to help. Even Mr. Wehner, from the maintenance department, also helps. Again, the process does rely on the spring weather, as to when and how much sap is collected. Mr. Van Asten stated, "Hopefully, we can make a good amount, but the weather has been weird this year."

Catholic Schools Week

By: Nile Montes ('24)

During the week of January 28th, the United States celebrates Catholic Schools Week, a week-long event that seeks to highlight the importance of a good Catholic education and celebrate the work done by Catholic schools across the country. The event culminated in a mass on Friday, February 2nd, where five staff and faculty members were honored for their dedication and many years of service to SLS. Mr. Jeffrey Krieg, Mr. Kevin Buelow, Mr. Tom Wehner, Mr. Chuck Lefeber, and Br. Neal Plale were the staff members who have dedicated many years of service and gratitude to SLS. When asked about their careers at SLS, they stated:

Mr. Jeffrey Krieg

“Working at SLS for 36 years has been overwhelmingly positive and I have been blessed to have worked with colleagues that are like family to me. Working on 21 volumes of Hilltopics and 30 volumes of our yearbook, Laurentian has been stressful, but I am ever grateful for the extraordinary work done by our students. Daily interactions with students and the community of SLS are constant sources of gratitude, and I am blessed to serve in this environment.”



CONGRATULATIONS!



MM HMM.

Mr. Kevin Buelow

“When I was in college, I never assumed I would return to SLS as a staff member, but after 25 years, I happily say that SLS gives me more than I could ever give back. One of the greatest aspects of SLS is the people, with so many Capuchins, lay staff, students, and friends from the German exchange program having made me a better person.”



WE CAN DO BETTER.

— Mr. Tom Wehner —

“SLS has been wonderful, and the people here are like family. We have accomplished a lot, the biggest challenge being the St. Joseph Hall fire, but we stuck together and got the job done. Every day is different; water leaks, ringing fire alarms, snow, boilers not working, etc., regardless of that, fixing stuff is fun and we are blessed here with a great team.”



DRIVE SAFE!



NO I IN TEAM!

— Mr. Chuck Lefebvre —

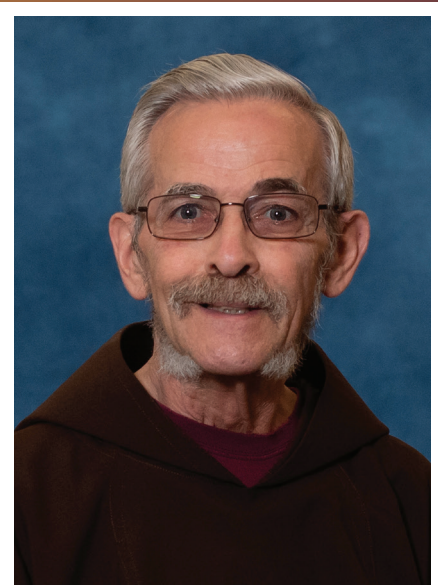
“Throughout my years at SLS, I have enjoyed teaching and working with students from diverse backgrounds, because it has opened my eyes to different cultural perspectives. Coaching baseball here for 30 years and making it to state finals was a highlight here.”

— Br. Neal Plale —

“Working here at SLS has given me many different experiences. While I have supervised in dorms, study halls and other activities around campus, the one ministry I enjoyed, and still do, is my music ministry, which lets me assist the students in their prayer life through music. I am blessed to work alongside many talented and dedicated people. I have a deep sense of gratitude for the benefactors and my colleagues, who I consider my friends.”



BANQUET

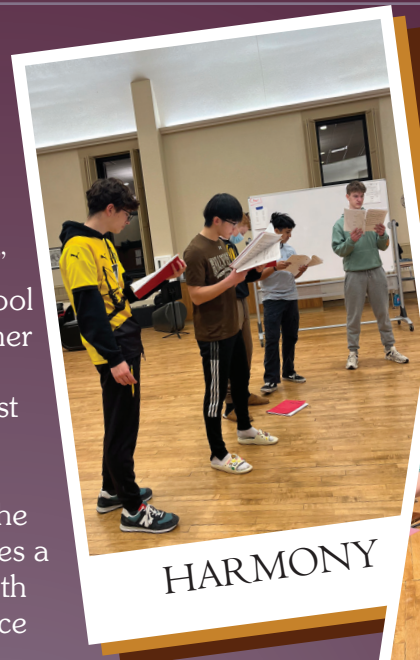


B.I.B.L.E.

Preparing for the Lights

By: Said Villa ('25)

Preparations for the musical, "Something Rotten" is well under way. In fact, Director, Mrs. Andrea School started looking for musical options back in the summer of 2023. It takes a lot of work, from many different people, to get the play up and running. Once the cast is chosen, there are sets to be designed and created. Lighting to be considered, costumes to be made and many rehearsals to be had. Mrs. School meets with the different cast members to review their lines three times a week. Music Director, Mr. Daniel Matthew, meets with the cast to go over the music for the show and practice with the musicians. In addition, Mr. Martin Vu helps with choreography and Mrs. Ann Gratton helps with the costumes and props. Mrs. School said, "I direct these musicals because, when I was a student, I enjoyed them. I enjoy watching the students have fun and present something good." She also states that it is a lot of work to pull off these musicals. All of these people work together behind the scenes to make the students of SLS shine on stage.



HARMONY



PERFECT!!

Trip du Jour

By: Diego Soto ('25)

On Tuesday, February 20th the Hilltoppers took the opportunity to embark on the annual all school field trip. The annual trip is chosen between one of four themes: history, religion, science and industry, and performing arts. This year's outing focused on the performing arts and the entire student body went to see the musical, Les Misérables. Fr. Zoy stated, "The purpose for all the school trips is to not only be educational but also entertaining." He also said, "Les Misérables was an amazing opportunity because it gave students the chance to attend a live musical, in a grandiose theater." The musical also gave the seniors, a sneak peek into senior English with Mr. Lou, as the students read parts of the book. Most of the student body said it was amazing. Thien Hanh Mai ('25) stated, "Seeing actors and musicians perform the way they did was an amazing sight! The passion each actor carried was unbelievable, and this is their job." Mrs. Katie Daane, the Dean of Studies and English teacher, expressed her opinion by saying, "The set designs and the lighting alone were just incredible. The trip was beneficial for many students because many have never been to a live theater, let alone one that size!" The school trip was a success, giving some students a once in a lifetime opportunity. What will next years all school field trip be?



ON OUR OWN



STARS

Melodic Showdown

By: Justin Tran ('25)

The Solo & Ensemble competition is a special event where talented musicians have an opportunity to perform their musical skills. Participants can perform either a solo or as a small group in many different categories, by playing an instrument or singing. This year, SLS students had 37 entries in both band and choir categories. Sixteen of them qualified for the state competition. The SLS Music Director, Mr. Daniel Matthew stated, "I'm so proud to see that our students are confident to show off their talents." Daniel Pizana ('25), Levi Van Asten ('27), Bao Tran ('26), and Kiet Pham ('24), students from all four classes, decided to form a low-brass quartet and performed an arrangement of "The Entertainer" by Scott Joplin. Daniel shared, "We wanted to challenge ourselves with this energetic piece and have fun as a group." ThienHanh Mai ('25) chose to perform a classical number, "Ave Maria," a beautiful prayer to the Blessed Mother Mary, and he qualified for the state competition in April. This competition is a wonderful experience for musicians to receive feedback from judges, which helps them improve their musical abilities and a chance to show off their passion for music.



SOLO ENSEMBLE SWEEP

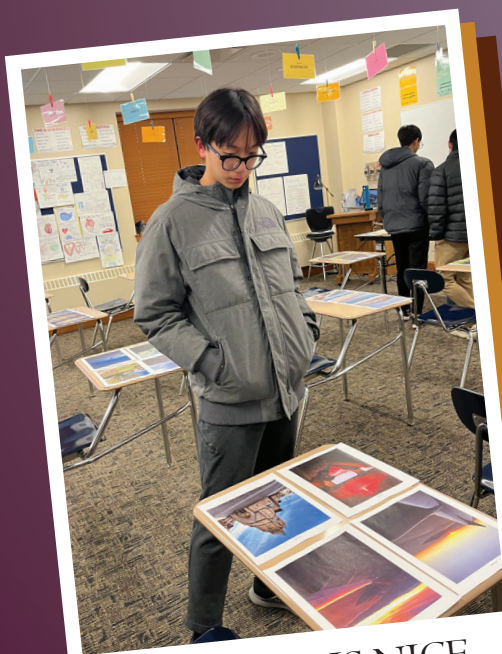


TOGETHER

The Colorful Magazine

By: Hung Nguyen ('25)

Inklings, was started in 2014 by Mrs. Katie Daane, one of the English teachers at SLS. It is just one of the student publications written here on the Hill. Its purpose is to highlight students' creativity by publishing student artwork, photography, and writings. According to Mrs. Daane, "I founded Inklings for students to show off their talents, as well as, their creativity that weren't being highlight in their academic classes." Students can submit their works for consideration, which may include a variety of works such as sculptures, sketches, acrylic paintings, watercolors, photographs, poems, prayers, or short stories. The Inklings' staff gathers several times throughout the spring to view, discuss, and vote on works that are submitted for print. The completed issue, which is published off campus, is distributed in May. All past issues are available on the school's website (www.stlawrence.edu) via a link at the bottom of the page.



THIS ONE IS NICE

Bye-bye Seniors!

By: Cristian Cruz ('25)

The seniors are planning their futures and are preparing to be ready to take the next steps in their lives after high school. Daniel Josh Cornejo ('24) plans to attend Dominican University in River Forest, Illinois. He wants to become a physical therapist. He plans to major in Sport Medicine. He said, "I can't wait to actually drive myself to school, every single day!" Ricardo Santos ('24) hopes to attend Heartland Community College in Normal, Illinois with plans to become a dental hygienist. "I am interested in the dental field, and am planning to attend a three-week course and do two years at Heartland. After that, I am going to transfer." Quang Pham ('24) plans to attend the College of Southern Nevada in Las Vegas for four years to study biology. He then plans to take the test to go onto a medical school. Quang said, "I cannot wait to visit the casino when I'm legal, and isn't Elvis Presley from Las Vegas?" God bless all the seniors on their journey and their next steps after high school.



HOORAY COLLEGE!



LET'S GET THIS BREAD



CASINO TIME



Do You Mind?

By: Christopher Vu ('26)

The SLS curriculum offers many elective courses for upper classmen to take, one being psychology, taught by Mr. Tim Schultz. Psychology is the study of mind and behavior. Mr. Schultz finds psychology to be very interesting. He stated, "Psychology helps us to better understand who we are; as individuals, as a society, and as humans. Being able to introduce to students how we are interconnected and how our body and brain play such a large role, can be a lot of fun." In psychology, students learn how the inner body works, such as, what happens during sleep, or why do humans have certain emotions. Currently the psychology class is working on a self-research project where students find and test a concept of human behavior. They have control over the way they test and the people they test. Xavi Saucedo ('24) stated, "I am excited for our upcoming psychology project; I decided to test how accurate the feeling of being watched is." So, keep in mind how interesting psychology can be and consider taking some of the elective classes in the future.



I CAN'T SEE

Stepping Up with Honor

By: Max Trinh ('25)

St. Lawrence Seminary has a well-established program for meritorious students called the National Honor Society (NHS). NHS recognizes a select few students for their excellence in areas of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. This year's induction ceremony took place in the auditorium on Tuesday, February 26th. Nile Montes introduced Mr. Chad Dowland and Mrs. Katie Daane to address the students about the National Honor Society, followed by current NHS members who explained the meaning of each of the pillars. The 2024 candidates were escorted on stage and were inducted into the society. Mrs. Daane commented, "It's very heartening to read the applications and see the candidates' involvement in the community." ThienHanh Mai ('25) stated, "I feel a sense of rejuvenation and newfound responsibility. I love to serve the community, and I'm willing to accept the responsibility that comes with it." Thomas Kim ('25) said, "I was happy I got in. From that moment, my life changed. Now, I am a certified super student." These students have proven themselves ready to take on the awaiting leadership positions, and we commend them for their sterling achievements.



CONGRATS!





From the Editors

Spring is right around the corner, and our Tennis, Baseball, Track, and Golf teams are preparing for a good season. Time is passing by faster than ever now, and these last two months before graduation will fly by faster than we'd like. For us seniors, we must really make good use of the time we have both on The Hill and with each other. But for now, we can't wait to see what the Musical and our sports seasons have in store.

-Nile and Jonathan

Masterpieces on our minds:



Mona Lisa by Leonardo
Da Vinci



Arnolfini Portrait by Jan
Van Eyck



David by Michelangelo