



HILLTOPICS

Hello Sunshine

VOLUME LVIII

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MISCELLANEOUS

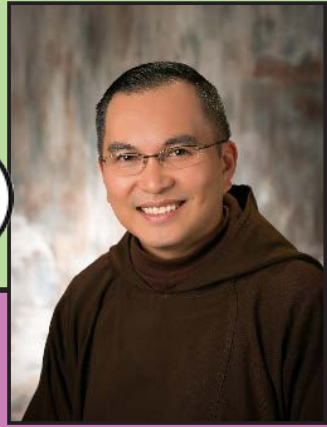
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New Sons of Calvary

Ken Hoang ('26)

Rector's Bubble



Hoa Duong



Grade: Sophomore
City: Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Favorite Subject: Algebra 2
How did you hear about SLS? "I heard about SLS from my Tam Vo ('23)."
Hobbies: "Playing pick-up games of soccer in the gym and sleeping."

Bao Le Gia Tran



Grade: Freshmen
City: Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Favorite Subject: Biology
How did you hear about SLS? "I heard about SLS from Phuoc Hoang ('24)."

Hobbies: "I like to play video games for my free time."

Miguel Herrera



Grade: Freshmen
City: Chicago, Illinois
Favorite Subject: Latin
How did you hear about SLS? "I heard about SLS from a podcast from the mail."

Hobbies: "Playing the violin and flute whenever I have the time."

Holy Week is just around the corner. On Palm Sunday we will listen to Luke's account of Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem (proclaimed after the blessing of the palm branches and prior the solemn procession) as well as his Passion (proclaimed during the Liturgy of the Word at Mass). There are striking differences between the two Gospel accounts, both in tone and in sentiment. On the one hand, in Jesus' triumphant entrance into the City of David, he was given a royal treatment: cloaks and leafy branches were spread on his path; people were swept in excitement—some shouting "Hosanna" and others calling him "Blessed." They were acclaiming Jesus as "(The one) who comes in the name of the Lord." On the other hand, in Jesus' Passion, there is quite a reversal of events. The mood has changed. When people realized that Jesus was not the Messiah they thought he was, they want him dead. Jesus is no longer given a royal treatment. He is now being treated like a criminal. The confetti and the palm branches are replaced with whips, spits, and choking dust. Cries of "Hosanna" have been replaced with shouts of "Crucify him!" The triumphal entry is now turned into a death march.

Perhaps the question for us to ponder as we enter into Holy Week is where do we stand in this great drama? As we look back to the beginning of Lent, perhaps, we should take a moment to evaluate ourselves. How focused were we in keeping our attention and mind on God? How consistent were we in seeking and doing his will? How engaged were we in prayer, fasting, abstinence, and almsgiving? Have we been fickle like the crowd—sure and confident one day and shaky and unsure in the next—or have we been faithful like Jesus?

Jesus knew his mission. He was obedient to God's will and was determined to fulfill it to the very end—even if it led him to Golgotha. As disciples of Jesus, are called to do the same. We are called to be faithful, consistent, and engaged in our mission. As we make our journey through Holy Week, let us focus our attention to Jesus and set our minds firmly on him, for he shows us the way and leads us to the Father. Let us be consistent in discerning the will of God for us and fulfill it with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our strength. Let us be engaged in works of piety and charity—even in the midst all the chaos that surrounds us or even in the face of difficulty and hardship. In so doing, may we bear the brand marks of Christ in our bodies, partake in his work of redemption, and share in the glory of his resurrection.

RETURN TO ASHES

Cristian Cruz ('25)

The beginning of the Lenten season was Ash Wednesday, a day of prayer and fasting. The Lenten season is a time for reflection and repentance in preparation for Easter. For Lent, SLS students gave up certain things in gratitude for Jesus's sacrifice: spending 40 days in the desert. On Ash Wednesday, the SLS students had a super-accelerated schedule, followed by Ash Wednesday Mass, during which the community received ashes. The ashes are a sign of the life cycle. The Mass introduced the Latin chants Agnus Dei and Sanctus, which is essential because it reflects the atmosphere of Lent, bringing us back to the roots. Br. Nathan said, "Ash Wednesday is a day in which we look honestly at ourselves, and, in recognition, we look for God's redemption. There is room to improve. It is a day to re-center myself with my relationship with Christ."

Lent challenges Catholics to push themselves to follow the example of Jesus. The student body chose to give up snack periods and seconds each Wednesday during Lent. To focus more on God, each class decided to add an additional prayer to strengthen their faith. The freshmen class chose to dedicate a specific time for prayer on Friday. Instead of worship, sophomores decided to reduce their time spent in dorm and focus more on community and fraternity. The juniors took time to pray in their study hall. The seniors chose to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet after school on Fridays. The students will attempt to follow Jesus during this Lenten season through his example of 40 days and 40 nights in the desert.



Super Bowl Sunday, Fun-Day

Diego Soto ('26)

On Sunday, February 12th, the Super Bowl was hosted at the State Farm Arena in Glendale, Arizona. The Philadelphia Eagles played the Kansas City Chiefs for the championship, with the Chiefs winning 38-35. With just under 68,000 fans attending the stadium, thousands more were watching at home, including SLS students.

The freshmen watched the game in the freshman dorm lobby, where they enjoyed nachos with various toppings such as pulled pork, chicken, and jalapeños. Freshman Alan Mora stated, "I don't watch football, so I cheered for the team winning at the moment. I spent time with my class which was exciting."

The sophomores had their party in Tony's Place. They prepared tacos for the game but also ate chicken wings and ice cream. Sophomore Alexander Biju said, "The game was very intense. I had the Kansas City Chiefs winning. I'm glad the Chiefs won, and I hope they win again next year!"

The juniors had their party in the junior dorm lobby. Junior Micah Wood stated, "The Super Bowl was fun. We made our food: tacos, fried rice, meatballs, soda, and ice cream for dessert." Micah said, "I wish the Philadelphia Eagles had won, and I think they got robbed."

The seniors congregated in the Fr. Louie room for one of the last parties together as a class. Aidan Arredondo said, "As in most classes, we also made food. We made a traditional Mexican soup and tacos, bought Buffalo Wild Wings, and had soda and ice cream." When asked about the game, he said, "I wanted the Chiefs to win, and fortunately, they did."

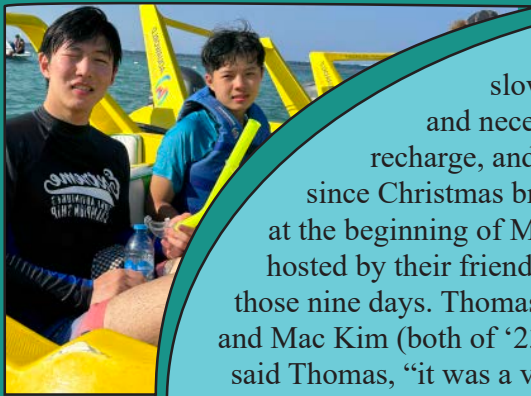
Overall, the students enjoyed the Super Bowl parties even if some students had stronger opinions on the game than others. Some have never seen or heard of the Super Bowl; nevertheless, the students enjoyed the Sunday Fun-Day.



RELAXED AND RECHARGED

Max Trinh ('26)

They say the third quarter goes by the slowest, which makes winter break the perfect and necessary opportunity for students and staff to relax, recharge, and have fun. After waiting an excruciating two months since Christmas break, students were ready to go home for a nine-day break at the beginning of March. Some went back to their own homes while others were hosted by their friends. Many of our fellow Hilltoppers did exciting activities over those nine days. Thomas Kim ('25) went to Cancun with Joshua Choi ('26), Noel Choi, and Mac Kim (both of '23). "We went snorkeling, para sailing, and relaxed on the beach," said Thomas, "it was a very fun experience." Andrew Saw ('24) hosted two sophomores Jason Hong and Cristian Cruz. Over break, they met up with a couple of seniors, and, together, they went to an escape room. After that, they had a chance to go eat. Cristian spoke on his trip, saying, "I love the cultural Burmese food I was introduced to." Mr. Grant Bargender, sophomore dorm supervisor ('21), described his break as restful yet adventurous. He played in the snow, celebrated a friend's grandma's birthday, and especially enjoyed his bubble waffle cone at Gordo's. "I had a great time with my friends and family, and I had a chance to explore Milwaukee more," explained Mr. Bargender. Some complained that the break was too short, but nonetheless, a break is a break; and we can all agree that this was a break much needed, not only for students, but for the staff as well.



ALUMNUS of the ISSUE

Samson Mathew ('23)



John O'Neill



Graduates of SLS, or any other high school for that matter, face many challenges and uncertainties after graduation. Mr. John O'Neill, a graduate of the Class of 2016, attended the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, majoring in political science on a pre-law track. During his sophomore year, he began experiencing doubts about those majors and added pre-med classes, which did not turn out great.

He, however, did not quit and instead added music as a major. He became part of the University of Notre Dame marching band, consisting of 400 people. Mr. O'Neill said, "It was pretty neat; the marching band was twice the size of my high school during 2016. We played for 80,000 fans every Saturday. I met most of my friends and my fiancé in the marching band." Mr. O'Neill is set to marry his fiancé in less than two months. Adding the music major seemed to be a beneficial change to his college work and plans.

After graduating from college, he knew he wanted to work in politics but was unsure what to do. Mr. O'Neill said, "I got a couple of job offers in D.C., but it did not feel fulfilling." He applied and finished the Echo/Theology Graduate Master's program through Notre Dame, which had him teaching high school theology as a volunteer in Salt Lake City, Utah. Mr. O'Neill said, "It felt like a great way to serve the Church."

In July 2022, he started working as the Church Outreach Coordinator for the Students for Life group. He was responsible for building church relations with other dioceses and Catholic schools. Students for Life is the largest youth pro-life non-profit group in the USA, with 14,000 students in 1,300 sub-groups nationwide. Mr. O'Neill invited SLS to the March for Life event in D.C. as Mr. O'Neill "found it to be a super informative experience." Mr. O'Neill has found his work fulfilling as he sees his two passions, politics and the Church, coalescing in his career. He likes politics as he likes the change involved in it. He was also interested in the Church, especially theology. He also feels fulfilled because he is changing how people see life. Mr. O'Neill overcame many challenges and uncertainties since 2016 and sees himself lobbying for the Church in the state legislature with a healthy family in the next five years.

Revvving up Learning

Clive Moras ('23)

For students at SLS, the annual, all-school field trip is a much-anticipated event. On Monday, February 13th, the students, faculty, and staff embarked on this year's trip to the Chicago Auto Show and the Harley-Davidson Museum. It was an opportunity to explore the latest innovations in the auto industry and appreciate the rich history of one of America's most iconic motorcycle brands.

At the Chicago Auto Show, students were greeted with an impressive display of vehicles from the world's leading automakers. The show featured the latest models, concept cars, and prototypes, highlighting the industry's future. For many students, the opportunity to ride in some of the latest electric vehicles was the trip's highlight. They were able to experience the speed and power of vehicles from brands like Jeep, Hyundai, Kia, and Volkswagen. Senior Chimnedum Osuala said that he had an exhilarating experience riding in the new model of the Hyundai electric car. The most exciting part of the auto show for Fr. Zoy was when he rode in the new Ford F-150 Lightning, Ford's new electric truck.

The Chicago Auto Show also allowed students to learn about the latest technology and safety features incorporated into vehicles. From cameras and sensors that help with parking and navigation to advanced driver-assistance systems that improve safety on the road, there was plenty to see and learn about.





After several hours at the auto show, the group went to Milwaukee to visit the Harley-Davidson Museum. Here, they could immerse themselves in the rich history of one of America's most iconic motorcycle brands. The museum featured a stunning collection of antique and modern motorcycles and exhibits that traced the brand's evolution over the years. One of the highlights of the Harley-Davidson Museum was the chance to sit on some of the latest models and snap photos. Students could get up close and personal with the bikes, appreciating the craftsmanship and attention to detail that goes into each one. Many students, like senior Samson Matthew, took advantage of the opportunity. He said, "I got a chance to sit on some of the coolest bikes and take some pictures. It was cool to see the history of Harley-Davidson and appreciate how far the brand has come."

As Fr. Zoy noted, "I think the trip went well. It was well received by both the staff and the students, especially judging by the smile on the faces of our students and their interest in the production of cars and concept cars. I even had a student say to me that it was the best outing ever." By exposing the students to new experiences and perspectives, SLS is able to help its students grow and develop into well-rounded individuals who are equipped to thrive in the world beyond the school walls. The students were given the opportunity to experience knowledge that would be very hard to gain in a classroom. For many students, the trip was a highlight of their time at Saint Lawrence Seminary. It was an opportunity to learn, explore, and have fun with their fellow students, as well as to deepen their appreciation for the auto industry and one of America's most beloved motorcycle brands.



Splash Back

Gunnar Stier ('23)



All the alumni enjoyed being back on the Hill with their classmates, but they loved the idea of competing more. They all competed hard in the 3-v-3 tournament, but there was only one winner in the end. This year's champions were the Class of 2008, undefeated to the finals. The Class of 2008 showed tenacity, grit, and chemistry that demonstrated they were meant to be the champions. At the tournament's end, the alumni gathered for a huge pizza party in the canteen. They reminisced and shared memories of times past and the life they were currently experiencing. The tournament brought to life the brotherhood that transcends time; alumni from all different eras, who had never met each other, became united by the common thread that is SLS. At the end of the night, they all said their goodbyes, thanked the staff and returned to their hotels and homes. The 3-v-3 tournament is a simple event that leaves a lasting impact on the alumni year after year.

Saint Lawrence Seminary has an iconic phrase, "SLS, the Hill of Happiness." Many alumni recall their experiences at SLS and proclaim it the best four years of their lives. Because SLS knows how much of an impact it has had on its alumni, it invites them back multiple times a year for organized games and events to bring back those euphoric memories.

Saturday, February 18th, was the beloved 3-v-3 basketball tournament. It invites alumni to form teams based on their graduation year and compete against other classes. This year's lineup featured teams from the classes of 1976 - 2022. Many made journeys from all over the U.S., from as close as Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, to as far as Houston, Texas. The excitement, enthusiasm, and joy were on the alumni's faces and in their words. "The feeling of being back on the Hill, seeing my friends, and competing with others who have gone through similar experiences, it's awesome. But now, I gotta go splash on the court," expressed Jude Stier ('21). Fabian Rico Sanchez ('20) explained, "Saint Lawrence has an air to it that cannot be described. Once you have experienced it and come back to a place that has influenced me so much, it's just...peaceful."



RAISING the Bahr

Christopher Lor ('23)

When SLS students returned from Christmas break and started the second semester, a new elective was introduced into the SLS curriculum: Photography. Taught by Mr. Matthew Bahr, he looks to guide students into comprehending the professional and creative sides of photography. He stated, "My goal is to develop a larger department, to broaden the student's horizons to something they would not normally take or find somewhere else." Mr. Bahr hopes the class will strengthen the knowledge and creativity about cameras and editing. In photography class, SLS photographers have the opportunity to take snapshots of the SLS campus. Using these images, they begin to edit and enhance the photos using programs such as, Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom Classic. The students learn a vast range of camera composition rules.

Using all of these techniques, the photographers use their inventiveness to display their "perfect" photos. Whether it is a novice or an experienced photographer, SLS students are always learning new ideas and concepts. As a senior photographer, Sungho Bak said, "Even though I thought I knew how to use cameras pretty well, Photography class has taught me a new perspective and thought process about photos and camera work." Photography has paved the way for a new beginning of classes that expand on the imagination and originality of students on the Hill.



A Terrifying Tale

ThienHanh Mai ('26)



In the past, SLS students have performed a wide variety of plays; this year, Mr. Danny Matthew and Mrs. Andrea School selected a fun and unique musical called Little Shop of Horrors. The story is about a shy boy who meets a mysterious sentient plant and how his life changed after meeting this creature. It features exciting music and strange scenes with a mix of humor and horror.

Jonathan Prado ('24) is very excited about the play and tried out. He will play the main character, Seymour Krelborn. Jonathan stated, "I'm nervous and excited at the same time to perform in a new environment. Justin Tran ('25) is a member of the three-man gang that sings most of the music. Justin commented, "The role will be a new experience that is nerve-racking but interesting."

A lot of planning goes into a large project like this. Mrs. School is helping the students with the acting portion of the play. Mr. Matthew is helping the students with the music that will go into the play. Mr. Martin Vu is coordinating the choreography. "The overall goal," according to Mr. Matthew, "is to engage the students and to have fun." Mrs. School had a similar explanation, "The goal for this year's musical is for the cast and crew to build community and have tons of fun." She also stated, "I am proud of the students' hard work and dedication to something completely new to them."

Mrs. School is excited to see the results of all the hard work that the students put into the musical, and the student actors are looking forward to performing this year's musical. They are also excited to see the audience reactions to the performances. Little Shop of Horrors will be staged May 5, 6 and 7. Stay tuned for more details.



Little Shop of Horrors

Track is back and the SLS athletes and coaches are preparing for another competitive, yet successful, spring season. Mr. Phil McCabe, Mr. Kevin Buelow, and Mr. Joshua Brath will again coach this year's track team. After a full year off, the athletes and coaches are eager to get back into the swing of things and start strong. The big issue for the upcoming season, per usual, is the weather. Mr. Brath commented on this obstacle saying, "The weather is really up and down this year. We could get a lot of snow, or no snow at all." As it turned out, over eight inches of snow fell in the day before the very first track practice.

The coaches are optimistic for the season as the team faces major changes with new talent coming in from the freshman and sophomore classes. Mr. Buelow said, "As a coach, we always want to see success. Whether your times improve or you place well at a meet." To many, track is a way to get out there and display individual talents. But, what about the underclassmen who are new to running track? This is where the coaching staff comes in. Mr. McCabe, the team's head coach, said, "Students come in not knowing how to do certain events. My goal as a coach is to teach them how to do well in their event."

One of SLS's first-year athletes eager to compete on the team is Aiden Murillo. Aiden expressed his hopes for the season saying, "I really want to be a thrower and do the shotput event." Senior Chimnedum Osuala is setting goals for himself early in the season. Nedum stated, "I'm going to try and push myself to get a time of eleven seconds in the 100-meter dash." Spring is an exciting season for sports at SLS, especially for the track and field program, as many athletes are willing to try out and compete. No matter what this season will bring, SLS's athletes and coaches are prepared to compete, succeed, and have fun.



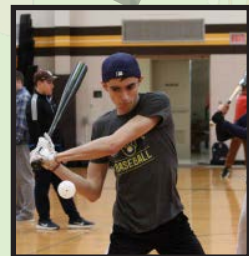
DIAMONDS IN THE ROUGH

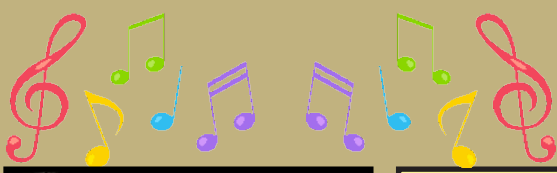


Hung Dao ('23)

Fourth quarter has many events that thrill students besides the end of the school year. One of those is baseball. Like previous years, many students came to tryouts to get a feel for America's pastime. The coaches, Mr. Noel Sippel, Mr. Matthew Bahr, and Mr. Alan Kraus, worked closely with the players to help improve their baseball skills. Commenting on the challenges facing the team this season, Coach Sippel said, "We will be without three of our four pitchers from last year and key positions, such as, shortstop and catcher due to a bunch of reasons. With that being said, I hope to see the players improve immensely over the season as well as find a new passion for the game of baseball."

The players themselves also have high hopes and expectations. Senior Diego Orozco commented, "I want to have a winning season but, mainly to enjoy it since it's my last." Senior Eugenio Tinoco chimed in, "My goal is to get a better hitting percentage than Diego. But seriously, my goal is to get at least five runs." As the village baseball diamond, SLS's home field, is getting equipped with new lights and a sound system, the Hilltoppers hope to shine bright on the field and enjoy the season.





The Competition OF SOUND

Said Villa ('26)



This year, many students participated in the annual music competition called Solo and Ensemble. This is an event where both choir and band students are judged on pieces they perform either individually or in small groups. Mr. Daniel Matthew, SLS's new band and choir director, did something unique with student performers by allowing them to sign up for one-on-one practice sessions with him. This event is an especially significant time for all of the participating students because it provides an opportunity to show off their hard work. This year a good number of students prepared for the competition, such as, sophomore Thien Hanh Mai, who performed the vocal solo, "If I Sing," which is a Grade "A" piece. While senior Nick Nguyen prepared four instrumental entries: a violin piece, an African drum quartet, a trombone duo, and a violin solo. According to Nick, "I'm had a lot of fun with the solo ensemble, and was excited for the competition." This year, the band solo and ensemble competition was held on March 18, in New Holstein while the choir competition was held on February 25 in North Fond du Lac. Students who earned a starred first at the district level go to state for choir. They include junior Micah Wood and sophomores Thien Hahn Mai and Justin Tran (receiving a perfect score) with Musical Theater Solos; a sextet made up of sophomores Justin Tran, Thien Hahn Mai, Nathan Burgos, Christian De La Fuente Cameron Nolte and freshman Aidan Murillo; and an octet made up of seniors Washington Thor, Ray Anthony Hurtado, James O'Neill, Nicholas Dean and juniors Andrew Saw, Huy Tran, Nile Montes and Micah Wood. The students who participate in the Solo and Ensemble events put in a lot of practice and, in return, received impressive results.

Speak Up

Noel Choi ('23)

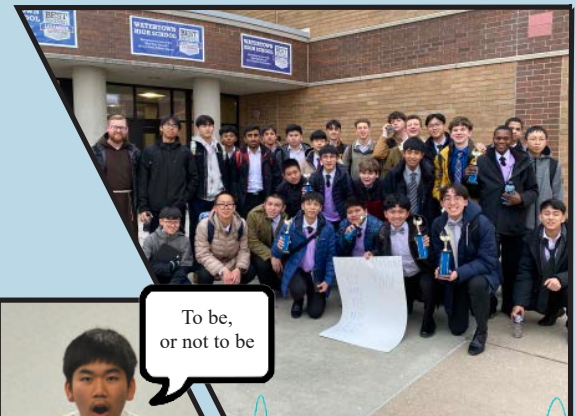
Over the past three years the Forensics season has been affected by Covid-19; however, now that Forensics is returning to "normal," where they no longer have to wear masks or compete in online tournaments, the coaches are excited to prepare the students for the upcoming season. Veteran coach Mr. Martin Vu is grateful for the assistance of the newly assigned coach, Br. Nathan Linton. He is also looking forward to the help of Mrs. Katie Daane and Mr. Anthony Van Asten, who help coach members of the team on campus.

The Forensics team consists of students from all four classes, many of whom joined the team for the first time this year.

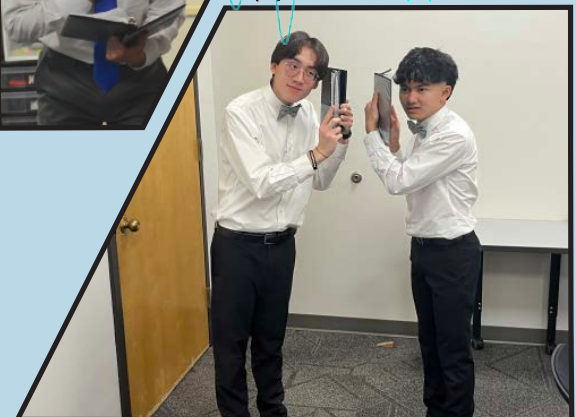
A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

New to the team, Eugene Tinoco ('23) said, "My goal is to bring remarkable results to SLS and learn to become a better speaker." According to Mr. Vu, "I am excited to see that a majority of the team consists of freshmen and sophomores." He explains that this means he will have the opportunity to watch nervous and quiet underclassmen grow into talented and confident speakers. In addition, even though this is the seniors' last year to perform as members of the Forensics team, it will be their first year to perform face-to-face without masks. This is very exciting for the team. The team is excited to watch other schools perform and learn from those experiences.

The Forensics team has traditionally brought great success to the Hill, especially with Conference and State Tournament wins. With elevated expectations from SLS and strong support from their coaches, the Forensics team will try to continue its victorious journey.



To be, or not to be

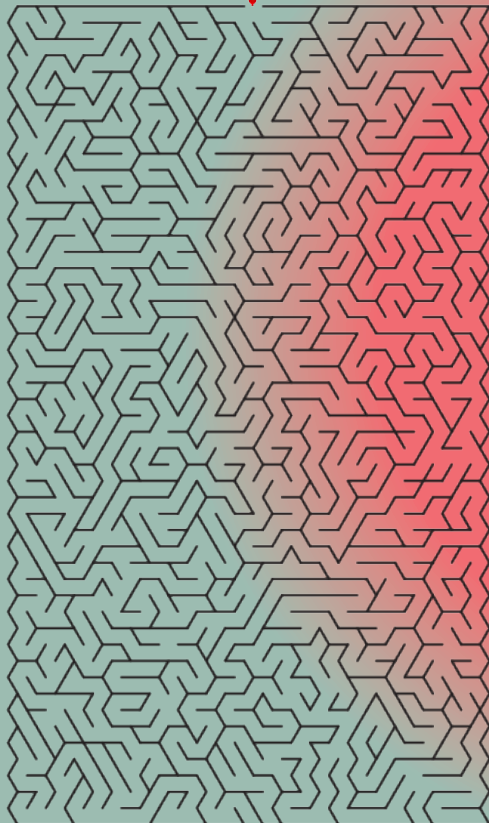


Hilltopics
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Mt. Calvary, WI 53057



HILLTOPICS Maze

HERE



JOURNEY TO PORTUGAL

Day 7&8

There will be a Pilgrimage Walk today!



Go out to the world! So that you can witness your faith as Apostles did.



We get to spend free time at Meto Beach today!



This concludes our journey to Portugal. I will see you guys this summer.



The End