



# HILLTOPICS

*Best Wishes to All*

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## Who's Next?

Christopher Lor ('23)

As the school year ends, so does the role of co-editors for Noel Choi and Christopher Lor. These two seniors worked directly with Mrs. Sippel for Hilltopics throughout this year. However, the Class of 2024 is eagerly excited to fill the role. Jonathan Prado and Nile Montes have been chosen to be the co-editors of Hilltopics for the 2023-2024 school year. Both Jonathan and Nile plan to bring new concepts and ideas to Hilltopics. Both being extremely creative students, they look to expand and enhance the publication. Nile stated, "I have a lot of ideas going through my head, but I want to bring a different vibe to Hilltopics." Jonathan seconded that statement saying, "I want to experiment with new themes and layout, and I want to make our version of Hilltopics stand out." Jonathan and Nile are ready to tackle any challenges they may face. May we continue to support them as the next co-editors of Hilltopics!

2022-2023

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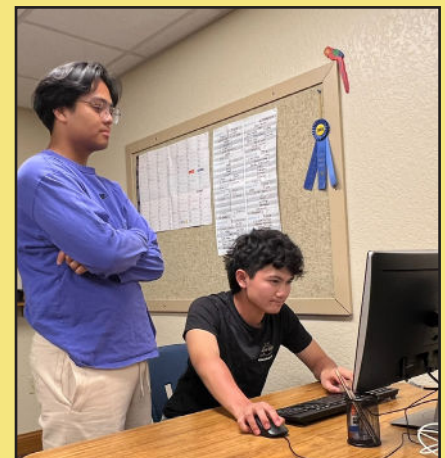
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*A special thanks to Mrs. Katie Daane for proofing Hilltopics articles for the past six years*



# Familiar Faces

Ken Hoang ('25)



**Aiden Murillo**

**Grade:** Freshmen

**City:** Chicago, IL

**Favorite Subject:**

Algebra

**How did you hear about**

**SLS?** "I heard about

SLS from an email advertisement."

**Hobbies:** Working out & playing basketball

**Favorite moment this year:** "Winning basketball MVP."



**Alan Gonzalez**

**Grade:** Freshmen

**City:** Milwaukee, WI

**Favorite Subject:**

Wood Shop

**How did you hear about**

**SLS?** "I heard about SLS

from an alumni."

**Hobbies:** Drawing

**Favorite moment this year:** "Winning first place in Winter Carnival."



**Diego Bahena**

**Grade:** Freshmen

**City:** Countryside, IL

**Favorite Subject:**

Algebra

**How did you hear**

**about SLS?** "I heard

about SLS from Cesar Gonzalez's ('24) aunt.

**Hobbies:** Running

**Favorite moment this year:** "Getting a sub 20 minute in cross country."



## Rector's Bubble



On Sunday, May 21, the Universal Church will celebrate the great solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord. Having accomplished his mission on earth, Jesus leaves his disciples and his mother on earth and returns to his Father in heaven. Jesus did so because he wanted to prepare a place for us in his Father's house. At the Last Supper, Jesus made this promise to his disciples: *"In my Father's house there are many dwelling places. If there were not, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back again and take you to myself, so that where I am you also may be."* (John 14:2-3)

The feast of the Ascension points to our ultimate destiny. As Jesus returns to our Father in heaven, so too shall we return to him one day. Returning home to the Father was the end point of Jesus' life on earth. It will be so for us as well. Saint Augustine, in his autobiography, *Confessions*, speaks about union with God as man's ultimate destiny. In perhaps the most famous line in the book, Saint Augustine addresses God saying, *"Our heart is restless until it finds its rest in you."* Our faith teaches us that communion with God in heaven is the destiny paved for all of us by Jesus Christ.

There is something else about this feast that has urgent implications for us. The feast of the Ascension also reminds us of our common mission. Saint Luke describes the scenario in which the apostles, after seeing Jesus lifted up into heaven and disappeared from their sight, were admonished by two men, believed to be angels, who say to them, *"Men of Galilee, why are you standing there looking at the sky? This Jesus who has been taken up from you will return in the same way you have seen him go."* (Acts 1:11) The followers of Jesus are not supposed to stand idly by. They are supposed to do something. They are supposed to continue the work that Jesus has started: to proclaim the Kingdom of God and make disciples of all nations.

As disciples of Jesus, we share in the mission entrusted by our Lord to his apostles. The Holy Spirit empowers us and emboldens us to continue the Lord's work in our time. We are not to stand idly by. We are not to waste any moment. Instead, we are to roll up our sleeves and get to work. We are to get busy as the work is not finished. There is still much more to be done to help bring the Kingdom of God to its fullness.

As we are about to conclude this school year, let us take moment to pause and look back. Let us recognize the work we have done, celebrate our accomplishments, and acknowledge areas for further growth and improvement. May our brief respite during summer break refresh, renew, and reinvigorate us for the work that awaits in the new school year. Special thanks go to Mrs. Sippel and to our student editors, writers, and photographers for all their work in this year's editions of the *Hilltopics*. Well done!

# Time to Shine

Gunnar Stier ('23)

Saint Lawrence Seminary is known for its diversity, culture, and talent. One way that the school celebrates this is through the annual talent show. The senior class hosts the event, allowing the students to show off their unique gifts. The standard order of the talent show is as follows: The seniors create a video that will present a theme; this year, it was "minions in search of a master." The idea was that the performers were competing to be the "most talented villain," and they would win the minions' loyalty as a prize. There were many auditions for the chance to shine in the SLS talent show, and those who won a spot did not disappoint. There were many wonderful acts; for example, Justin Tran ('25) sang, Diego Orozco ('23) gave a splendid forensics demonstration, and the senior dance group performed a brilliant self-choreographed dance. Andrew Nguyen ('24) played the piano, Thien Hanh Mai ('25) sang, and a freshman group performed a forensics piece. These were just a handful of the most notable performances. The love for these acts was very evenly distributed. Kiet Pham ('24) had this to say about the senior's dance performance to the song "Ditto," "It was brilliant. I liked how they did all the choreography themselves, and the moves were cool." Angel Hernandez ('23) said he liked the seniors' dance as well but said, "The seniors' dance was my favorite to watch, but I really liked Thien Hanh Mai's performance and the freshmen's as well." Although these acts were terrific and brilliantly performed, there could be only one winner. The freshmen's forensics group interpretation took first place. They were voted the winners of the talent show...and the leaders of the minions.



## *Confirmed In Christ* Diego Soto ('25)

On Sunday, April 30th, twelve juniors received the sacrament of Confirmation. The students met one Sunday a month for seven months to study what the sacrament meant. During the sessions, the students wrote letters to Archbishop Jerome ListECKI. After the Confirmation Mass, Hunter Van's ('24) family prepared a 160-pound roasted pig and 1,500 egg rolls to share with the SLS community. The guests and students enjoyed the meal; it was a terrific way to celebrate the confirmands.

A few juniors were interviewed, one being Cesar Gonzalez ('24), and he said, "I learned the true value of what Confirmation is. The preparation was deepening, and it broadened my knowledge of faith. My patron saint is St. Augustine of Hippo." Micah Wood ('24) said, "I studied for confirmation class and realized that our role in the church is increasing and changing. Our relationship with God is deepening. I picked Padre Pio as my patron saint." After Mass, Micah's family shared the meal and then went home and had a family party."

Confirmation was an overall success. Give thanks to Br. Nathan for teaching and supporting the classes, Archbishop ListECKI for confirming the students, and Fr. Zoy, who made this possible. It was a joyful day on the Hill of Happiness.





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## “Exploring Milwaukee: A Brief but Fulfilling Journey”

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Clive Moras ('23)

Throughout the years, the senior class has embarked on a weekend trip to explore the wonders of Milwaukee; however, this year’s trip was reduced to a single day, a shorter time frame, but a still enriching experience. Split into three groups, each led by a faculty member, the seniors set out early on their scheduled Sunday for Milwaukee. Their first stop was the St. Francis Parish, where they attended Mass and learned about the friary’s past. The seniors were treated to a scrumptious lunch cooked by the friars themselves, providing a glimpse into their daily lives.

The groups then had the opportunity to experience the artistic side of Milwaukee by watching a play at Marquette University and visiting either the Marquette Art Museum or the Milwaukee Art Museum. The Basilica of St. Josaphat and the Capuchin Community Services in Milwaukee were also on their itinerary, which allowed the group to learn more about the city’s history and how the Capuchins contributed to the local

community. Angel Hernandez, who accompanied Fr. Zoy’s group, said, “It was pretty neat how the painting of St. Francis at the Milwaukee Art Museum represents how far the influence of St. Francis and the Capuchins have spread.” It was a profound realization for Angel, demonstrating how the trip allowed students to

make meaningful connections between what they learned in school and the world outside. Another senior, Keith Fronteras, described the Milwaukee Experience as “nice.” His statement, though simple, illustrates how the trip offered something for everyone, from exploring a new city to learning about its culture and history.

Even though the Milwaukee Experience was shortened to a one-day experience this year, it was still full of learning and exploration for the seniors. As they continue their journey, the hope is that they will continue to explore such opportunities and enriching experiences.



# Willkommen!

Cristian Cruz ('25)

It has been a couple of years since students from Germany have had the opportunity of participating in the German exchange program. The connection between St. Lawrence and Collegium Johanneum allows students from SLS and Germany to visit each other's countries. The program alternates yearly, with students from Germany visiting SLS to SLS students visiting Germany.

The German students first arrived at the U.S. Capitol, Washington, D.C., before traveling to Mount Calvary. In D.C., they went sightseeing, were educated on the U.S., and explored more than just SLS in little Mt. Calvary, WI. After spending a few days in D.C., they took a flight to Chicago arriving at O'Hare airport, one step closer to their final destination. Mr. Kevin Buelow, the German teacher at SLS, picked up the visitors from Chicago. When they arrived at SLS, the students and staff greeted them with loud applause.

During their visit to the Hill, the Germans actively interacted with students, playing many different sports and enjoying Lower Saint Anthony's game room with foosball and Ping-Pong. They also helped with the maple syrup project, which they could take back home. The Germans also participated in a special school event, a soccer tournament, and had a blast! On the weekend, a few students from SLS assisted the Germans with shopping at the Fox River Mall in Appleton. This was a new experience for the Germans, as they did not have the variety of stores that were in America. The SLS students shared their interests in shopping by introducing new snacks and types of foods along with fashion in America.

The Germans also experienced a Brewers game and the Harley-Davidson museum. Diego Soto ('25) stated, "We went to a Milwaukee Brewers game where they played the New York Mets. The game ended with a walk-off home run; the Brewers won with a final score of 7-6. I introduced Leo to a Polish hotdog and got myself a Nacho Helmet! Later that day, we went to the Harley-Davidson Museum. The Germans were surprised at how many different designs of motorcycles there were." Philipp, one of the German students, enjoyed SLS and said, "Saint Lawrence is very different from my school, and the schedules are very different, not my usual one-and-a-half-hour periods. What I really liked about SLS was the close connections the students shared with teachers. You guys are not afraid of talking to the teachers. My favorite part of the visit was the baseball game. This was a really good experience for me."





The Germans' stay lasted into our Easter break, so a few SLS students in German classes and their families hosted the visitors for the Easter weekend. Daniel Pizaña ('25) hosted Leo and said, "Easter break was great! Leo was very nice and funny. We took him downtown to see the city, which allowed him to see the things that make Chicago, Chicago. We also took him to the Skydeck in Willis Tower and to Chinatown, where we ate Korean Fried Chicken, which was delicious."

Salvador-Diego Gonzalez ('25) took three German visitors home with him: Dana, Philina and Liana. Sal stated, "On Friday, we played Monopoly till five in the morning. On Saturday, we baked until five in the morning, and on Sunday, we played UNO until four in the morning. I met up with Jake [Seeling] and the people he hosted. We went to the city and visited Navy Pier, where two of the Germans went on a boat ride and three on the Ferris wheel. We also saw the bean. They were really interesting to talk to; I had a great time." Jake Regalado-Seeling ('25) hosted Melina and Luzie and told about his experience, "I took them to downtown Chicago, through trains and buses so they got the public transportation experience. It was fun, and I know they also had fun because they told me they did. They said it was a good experience. At my house, we sort of let them do whatever they wanted, but we had family dinners, which let us get to know them better." The German visitors experienced SLS life; some said it was very different from what they were used to. They each had a different adventure when they went home to the host families. They could eat new foods; some said they never had Mexican food, and their expressions showed it. SLS welcomed the German students and chaperones with open arms and gave them an unforgettable experience. Next year the table will turn, and SLS German students will have the opportunity to participate in the exchange program and experience Germany.



# A Taste of Home



Nicholas Dean('23)

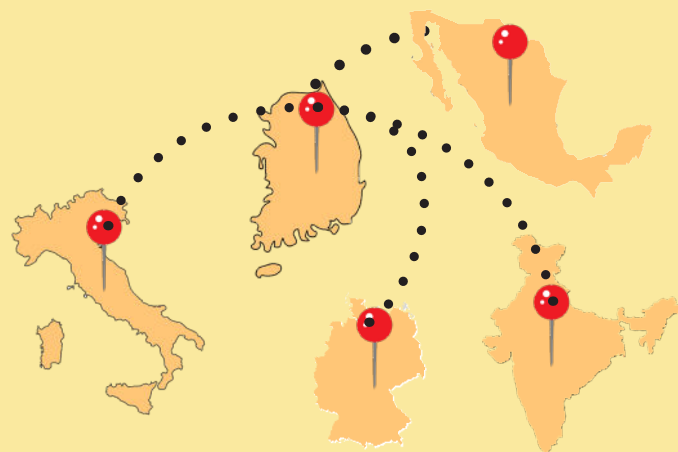
Saturday, April 29th, SLS held its annual Cultural Heritage Festival. The Cultural Heritage Festival allows students of all cultural backgrounds to come together, learn more about each other, and try different food dishes from each culture.

Serving as a boarding school for students worldwide, SLS's students celebrate ties to many different countries and cultural backgrounds. Because of this, it only makes sense to have a festival serving as a common cultural bonding ground among students and staff. It helps to promote diversity and multiculturalism, which can lead to a greater understanding and appreciation for different ways of life and one's own. It can also increase the student body's knowledge of other countries rich history, traditions, and customs, which helps serve, preserve, and promote cultural heritage. Not only does it serve as a way to connect with friends, but it also gives students a little taste of home and reminds them of how unique and essential their cultural background is, regardless of where on the globe they are from.

To many at SLS, this is their first "normal" cultural heritage, as the COVID-19 pandemic hindered the past two celebrations in numerous ways. But this year, things were back to normal as the festival was put into full swing and high expectations were set. As Fr. Chrispin can testify, the expectations were clearly met, even exceeded, stating, "Everything that I tasted was amazing, almost perfect. It was all very good."

As in previous years, this cultural heritage festival was separated into a lunch gathering at noon and then a dinner gathering at 6:00 P.M. The cultural groups that made and served the lunch menu consisted of Nigeria, Vietnam, Guatemala, India, and Germany. The cultural groups that made and served their food for dinner were Hmong, Italy, Korea, Mexico, the Philippines, and Portugal. This year, in light of SLS's summer pilgrimage to Portugal, Mr. Krieg and the students of the International Club proudly represented it.

Every dish from every culture was enjoyed to the fullest, with some favorites standing out among the crowd. Overall, the annual Cultural Heritage Festival was a massive success as it gave students a taste of other cultures worldwide.





# On The SPOT



Samson Mathew ('23)

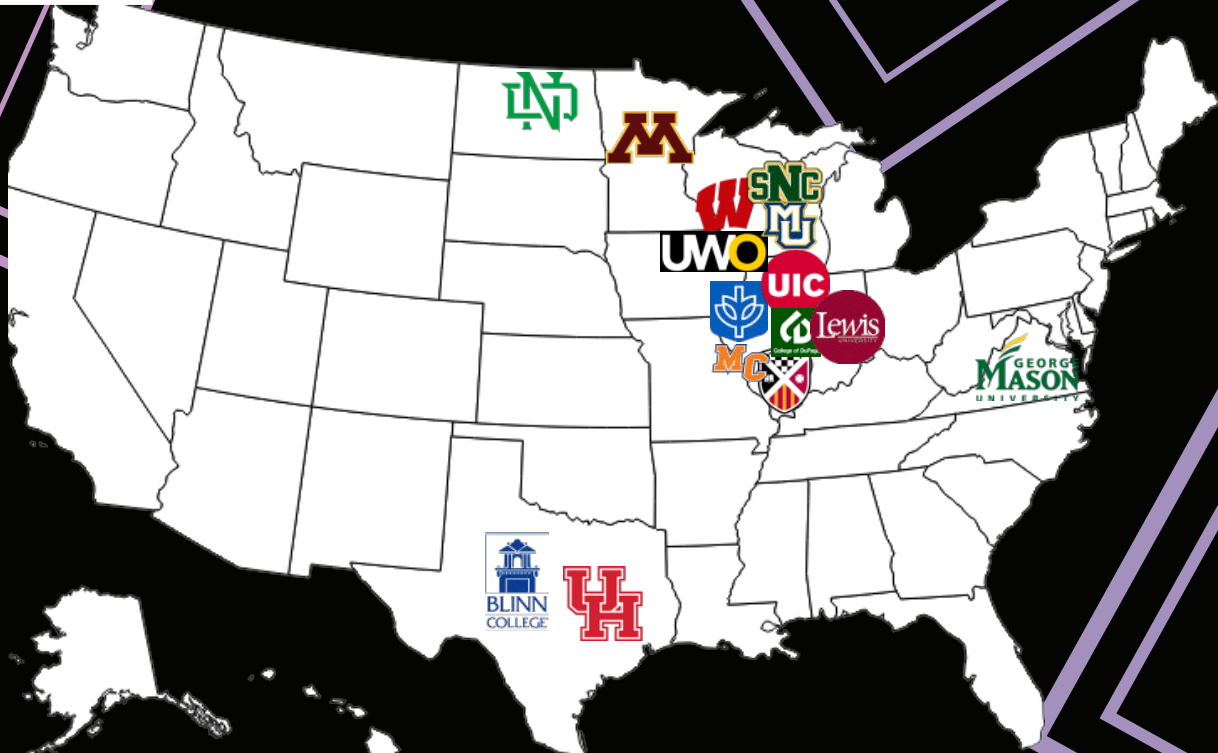


Keith Brylle Fronteras aims to be a dentist after college. He plans to do his pre-med education at the University of Chicago, Illinois. He has yet to decide where to do his med school. He intends to do his pre-med in Chicago to maintain close contact with his friends from the Hill. He plans to get a job, like lifeguarding or cooking, to help finance his education. Keith is planning to work in the USA as a dentist when he is done with his schooling. Keith also intends to pursue his interest in music during college.

Instead of attending college, Oscar Lazaro intends to begin an apprenticeship in his hometown, Chicago, Illinois, under the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE). He plans on budgeting his money to buy a house before his late twenties. He looks to broaden his horizons on martial arts by taking jiu-jitsu classes due to Ryan Do. Oscar plans on restoring, cleaning, and reselling sneakers after leaving the Hill.



Ryan Do plans to fulfill his prerequisites at a community college back in his hometown, Katy, Texas. He wants to give himself some more time before finalizing a choice of majors. He plans to graduate from Texas A&M. He intends to deepen his interest in jiu-jitsu and MMA in college. Ryan will work during the summer and during college to save money for his future endeavors.



# Hole-IN-One

Max Trinh ('25)

SLS welcomed its newest sport into the program: golf. Despite starting two weeks after track and baseball, it showed promising interest from many students. The team comprises twelve players, two managers, and one coach. For most players, golf is an entirely new experience; however, a few have some knowledge of the sport. Golfers who made the team can go to a local golf course to practice or down to the soccer fields. However, most of the practices have been indoors because of the cold and early spring weather. Just recently, the golf and baseball teams had practice in the form of a dodgeball game. Coach Chad Dowland is optimistic for the season. "My goals are to have the team realize they have a coach who cares and to see improvements within the team." Coach Dowland also stated, "It's very exciting since this is the first golf team in the history of SLS." Despite obstacles, such as weather, the golf team shall prevail and looks forward to a season of competition, victory, and, of course, fun.



# ACED

ThienHanh Mai ('25)

The spring sports season has begun on the Hill! One of the four sports options in the spring season is tennis. This year's coaches, like last year, are Dr. Michael Donahou and Mr. Tre Waldren. Dr. Donahou commented, "The ideal season is one that will bring little to no injuries and bring a lot of fun. Our expectations for the team are to learn the basics of tennis, to represent the school through good sportsmanship, and to improve in the future." They both have supported the team in the past and have returned with the hope of another great season. The team is excited to have them back and get back into the "swing" of things. One of the team captains Keith Brylle Fronteras ('23) stated his personal goal is to "win as many games as possible and to have a lot of fun." The tennis team is very passionate about their sport and has high expectations for their performance this season. Huy Tran ('24) said, "I want to be conference champs this year. I think it is very achievable." Everyone on the team is excited about the season and the rewards of their hard work. The tennis team has had much fun together and has formed a great dynamic to be successful.



# A BUILDER, A LEADER, AND A BROTHER

Hung Dao ('23)

Many people have never experienced a funeral, and they probably believe that it is a sad affair, something that burdens the heart and mind with tears and troubled thoughts. But funerals are not necessarily so woeful. It is an occasion to remember the life, the work, and the impact of the deceased. Sure, it is sad, but it is also uplifting to see that even though physically the individual is gone, their legacy will last a long time.

On March 14th, students and staff of St. Lawrence Seminary, along with guests and family members, filled St. Lawrence's humble chapel to give Fr. John Holly a final earthly farewell.

After graduating from St. Lawrence in 1971, he soon joined the Capuchins and was ordained a priest in 1980. Before returning to St. Lawrence, he served in several Capuchin ministries throughout the Midwest. In 2012, he was appointed as Rector of St. Lawrence. The old St. Joseph Hall burned down during his leadership. Several building projects were commenced and finished throughout his time as Rector, making St. Lawrence better than when he first arrived. He retired in 2017 and was succeeded by Fr. Zoy Garibay.

Reflecting on the life of his predecessor, Fr. Zoy said, "Fr. John was very fraternal and a team player. I have known Fr. John as a Vocations Director, Guardian, and Rector. Fr. John gave his very best in all that he did, and his efforts yielded good fruits for the Capuchin Province of St. Joseph, for the community, and for SLS. Fr. John truly was an

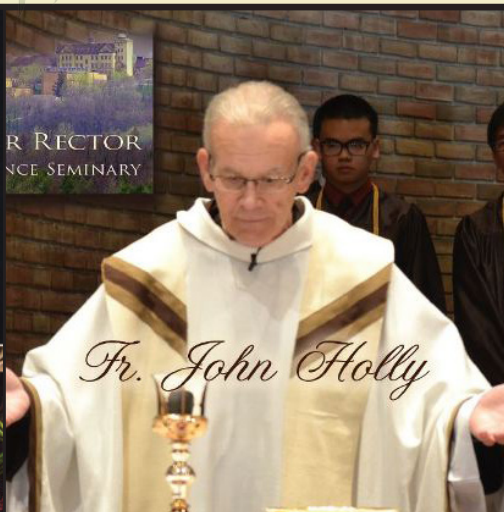
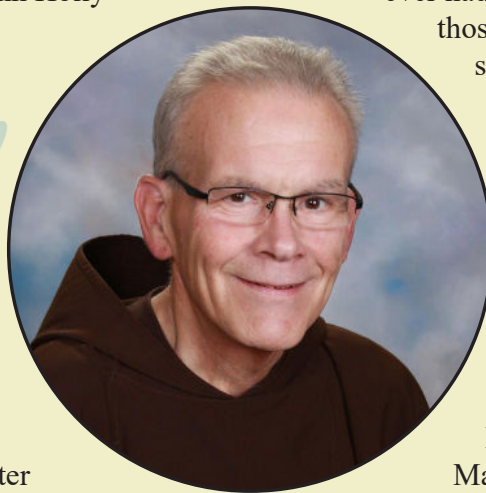
inspiration to me." Another staff member who served alongside Fr. John, Mr. Kevin Buelow, commented, "We joined the Administration at the same time, so I have a lot of fond memories of him. He was compassionate and always looking out for the students, especially through the building projects." He certainly impacted a significant number of people throughout his service.

His impact could not have been summarized better than at his funeral Mass. During the homily, Fr. Bill Hugo simply welcomed everyone whom Fr. John had ever had the pleasure of working with or for and those whom he called family. The list was staggering, and it clearly demonstrated the depth of the goodness of Fr. John's life. From students of St. Lawrence past and present to Capuchin brothers young and old, and his relatives near and far. And it was far.

His Irish roots were highlighted. He had visited Ireland to connect with his family there. A letter from his cousins in Ireland was read during the Mass, and his Irish family witnessed the Mass online as they could not be present.

As his coffin was processed out, a traditional bagpipe resounded through the chapel.

Forever a man of firm faith, Fr. John indeed had no fear of death, for Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die." With trust in God, we leave Fr. John's soul to Our Father.



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## Noel Choi



As my high school career is nearly reaching its end, I began to look back on my memories of the past three years that I have spent with my brothers at SLS. I remember when coming back from sporting events or outings, I would often say that we are finally home when getting back to the Hill. I will always remember this Hill of Happiness as my home, not as just a normal high school that I graduated from.

Before saying farewell to all our readers, I want to express my gratitude to Mrs. Sippel for what she has done for us throughout this year, to Mrs. Daane, for proofreading the articles and Mrs. Mathes for her photos when we needed them. I also want to give a special thanks to my co-editor Christopher Lor for his dedication to our Hilltopics. I would also like to recognize the Hilltopics writers, photographers, and miscellaneous workers for their contributions, without their efforts, we would not have been able to create these magnificent issues. I am also thankful to Nile Montes and Jonathan Prado for being our replacements as next year's Hilltopics editors. I am sure that they will produce the best Hilltopics ever created. Good luck and ADIOS!

Thank you! I want to thank everyone who has supported me during my senior year. For my parents, who continued to challenge me throughout my life, instilling core values that I carry today. For my teachers, who taught me concepts in school and expanded my knowledge that I will "remember" for the rest of my life. For my friends, who taught me the importance of "brotherhood". For all Hilltopics readers, I express gratitude for supporting Noel and me. For Mrs. Sippel, who guided me throughout this year and for being our biggest supporter. Lastly, for Noel Choi, I could not have done this volume without you. Thank you for the exciting time.

Without these individuals and those not mentioned, I would not be who I am today. Hilltopics has been fun this year. I am happy to say that Noel and I completed six issues because of your support. I will continue to support the publication, and I wish the best of luck for the next volume. Thank you, everyone, for a year to remember!



**Christopher Lor**