

THE AUGUSTINIAN

Merry Christmas!

Issue 3

December 9, 2021

St. Augustine High School

Unwrapping a Shiny New Sports Season



By Liam Haskett ('22)
STAFF WRITER

As the days grow shorter, the Saints fall sports season has wrapped up, and the winter season is now in full swing. Football, cross country, and beach volleyball each finished their seasons with appearances in the CIF San Diego Section playoffs, with two of the teams making runs at the championship. Meanwhile, both basketball and soccer have started their seasons off strong while rugby has continued their dominance from past years.

FOOTBALL

The football team finished its season with a 23-14 loss to El Camino in the opening round of the Division I playoffs. Star running back Isaiah Pressley continued to dominate with a 15-carry, 158-yard game, including a 76-yard breakaway run in the third quarter that put the Saints in scoring position. Despite the strong performance from Pressley, turnovers continued to kill the Saints, with 2 interceptions and a fumble that hurt their chances of extending the season.

They finished with a 2-9 record in a season that saw three different starting quarterbacks for the Saints. Bright spots on the defensive side of the field were four-star Oregon commit Gracen Halton, three-star San Jose State commit Justin Stearns, and uncommitted linebacker Jake Bolin. Throughout the season, these stars were able to keep



Sophomore Harry McCue is riding a wave of excellence for the Saints surf team.

Courtesy of Jim Butler

games close in situations where it was difficult for the offense to produce. On the offensive side, Pressley finished the season with the third-most rushing yards in all of San Diego. Coach Joe Kremer will look to improve on this season's shortcomings next season, as he begins to look forward to his fifth year as the head coach of the Saints.

BEACH VOLLEYBALL

The top two beach volleyball pairs qualified for the top pairs tournament, which featured the top thirty-two duos from San Diego. Both of these teams produced stellar pool play, as they each

made the gold playoffs. Moving into the single-elimination tournament, the top team, senior captains Bodie Kerr and Caden Francke, lost in the early rounds to a talented Pacific Ridge team that eventually finished as the number two team in San Diego.

The number-two team, consisting of juniors Patrick O'Leary and Andy Boeh, upset both Bishop's and Sage Creek to make it all the way into the final four teams, before losing to the same Pacific Ridge team that took out Saints' top team. Saints' second team, which started out seeded twenty-sev-

enth out of the thirty-two teams, also upset the highly-ranked Francis Parker top team on their route to finish fourth overall.

CROSS COUNTRY

The Saints cross country team fell to a disappointing end of their season, as their berth in the state championship race was snatched from them by surprisingly elite performances from the competition. The team finished second in the Western League and fourth in San Diego Section's Division III com-

SEE SPORTS, pg. 5

The Ultimate Marty's Survival Guide



The line at Marty's can be a tough crowd.

Nick Luzi ('22)



By Aidan Rickwa ('22)
EDITOR

Every Saintsman knows the importance of eating three full meals per day. Having convenient, high-quality food available at school for purchase is an important safety net for those Saints-men who are too lazy to pack their own lunch. In fact, some students haven't eaten a squishy, homemade PB&J since middle school. However, anyone who has tried to tangle with Marty's knows

that attempting to buy lunch is not for the faint of heart. We here at *The Augustinian* will attempt to provide a guide to success for the weary Marty's travelers among us.

The first step is to be ready to enter the store before you get in line. This means knowing what you want before you get inside. Don't be the guy who stands around clogging up the store because the one item he wanted is gone. Be ready to make your decisions and purchases quickly, know where to grab

everything you want, and have money or Apple Pay handy. Make your choice quickly, and everyone will thank you for it.

Although it might sound obvious, make sure you can actually pay for what you want. The "walk of shame" to put back one or more items is not only embarrassing, it lengthens the process and causes longer wait times. If you are using a credit card and it doesn't work after the first three swipes, I hate to break it to you, but it probably won't work the fourth time either.

Now, we must tackle the biggest issue with survival at Marty's: the line. The main issue with the "line" is that there is no sense of order or structure, which causes longer wait times. Walking by the line three minutes after the bell is reminiscent of a Target on Black Friday. Every Saintsman who wants food immediately dashes out of class to shove in front of whatever stands in his way, be it a fence, a freshman, or Mr. Vignol. The resulting chaos is a blight on the school's environment. Not only are Saintsmen put at risk of personal injury from the shoving, but unsuspecting passersby may trip and fall over one of the many bags strewn willy-nilly across the pavement.

The most effective way to navigate through the line is to avoid it by going to Marty's at the end of lunch. The last

fifteen to twenty minutes of the lunch period is a great time to buy, as you'll be able to walk right up to the counter and finish your food before the start of class. Perhaps you will even have the foresight to ask your block five or six teacher whether they will let you eat in class; if they allow it, you can reap rewards in the form of a short wait, a full lunch, and additional time to eat.

For those who still seek to buy lunch as soon as possible, a strategy to tackle the line is needed. First, just like a roaring river, you want to enter where it is calmest, so do not dive headfirst into the front of the line. Ideally, try to enter the line with a friend or group of friends. Not only will it allow you to better maintain your spot in the line, but it will also prevent you from being bored while you wait.

Teachers who have been tasked with "protecting" Marty's, help out by taking your duty seriously. Don't be afraid to let detentions fly and call out anyone with dress code violations. Untucked shirts are low-hanging fruit for dress codes and a way to establish those teachers who mean business. Drop a few of those bad boys, and you can sit back and enjoy your lunch break without fear of disorder.

However, there is one final strategy that a senior can employ to avoid the line

SEE GUIDE, pg. 3

Mysterious Omicron Variant Emerges



By Ty Woods ('23)
EDITOR

The arrival of winter brings with it the season of colds and flu-like symptoms. This season, as the world continues to recuperate from the devastating COVID-19 pandemic, a new version of the virus has emerged.

Known as the Omicron variant, it has captured the attention of researchers and scientists all over the world because of its unusually high transmission rate. The virus is also less susceptible to the COVID-19 vaccine, prompting concerns among healthcare workers.

Omicron was first identified in South Africa and Botswana on November 24, but it has spread to over thirty-eight countries so far. Lockdowns have not been put in place for many European countries, but authorities in the European Union are continuing to monitor the situation.

European government agencies are not so quick to shut down their countries because of the holiday rush to travel and visit family; they are instead focusing efforts on monitoring travel from outside countries. Testing travellers and vaccinating younger populations have become the main goals of the United Kingdom in its fight against the variant. Dominic Raab, the U.K.'s deputy prime minister, stated that booster shots are "a sure defense" for people looking to resume holiday travel plans.

The first case in the United States was reported on November 29 from a traveller who had just returned from South Africa. The individual, who flew from Africa to San Francisco, was not the only reported case; another man from Minnesota contracted the variant from a convention in New York. Both

infected individuals were fully vaccinated and experienced only "slightly uncomfortable" symptoms as a result.

Unlike the original COVID-19 virus, scientists are unsure of the effects of a new mutation on completely vaccinated populations. In Israel, there was a case of transmission between individuals who had received three shots each. Although this is only one example, health leaders are reevaluating the ability of three shots to control transmission among a population of vaccinated individuals.

One such health expert, William Hanage, explored the first impressions of the relatively new variant. As an associate professor of epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health, Hanage and his team of researchers have been working tirelessly to learn more about the coronavirus variant. "We are not going to know it all overnight," Hanage said. "We are still in the process of learning a lot more."

Preliminary data from the South African Medical Research Center suggested that milder illnesses were more commonplace in connection with the Omicron variant. It also stated that a disproportionate amount of younger patients were becoming infected. However, the number most likely originates from the lower rate of vaccinations in the young populations of South Africa. Of course, the data was extremely limited due to scientific unfamiliarity with the variant.

Given the short-lived nature of the Delta variant, Omicron's future as a serious, lockdown-level threat remains unknown. Pfizer and Moderna estimate that it could take weeks to develop an entire profile of the virus, but they are unsure about the efficacy of a new vaccine. The variant's mutated spike protein reacts less to the antibodies that are sent to fight the virus, so scientists



AFP

will be searching for new alternatives as the vaccine's progress speeds up.

The situation is only made worse by the cold winter weather. According to the National Institute of Health, the cold weather allows the virus' outer shell to harden into a rubbery gel. The coating allows for easier transmission, and the virus does not die as easily on surfaces or in the air. When families are confined to a single household during the holidays, viruses like the Omicron variant can easily spread. The cold winter weather also chases populations indoors, where restricted airflow causes transmission to skyrocket.

New York City, which has now reported ten new Omicron cases, is taking action against the virus to halt its spread in the cold weather. Mayor Bill de Blasio announced workplace vaccination requirements for all employees in the city, stricter guidelines than most of the country.

Unfortunately for the United States, mutations may become even more commonplace as winter turns to spring, thus bringing more opportunities for the virus to evolve. New guidelines may follow as scientists continue to learn more about the variant.

Idiocy of the Month: Travis Scott's Astro Disaster



By Manny Butler ('22)
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Travis Scott found himself in a tough spot on November 10, having put on a concert the day before that resulted in the deaths of several people. Scott's Astroworld event was immediately decried as a complete and utter catastrophe, and not without good reason.

Although Scott's performance, the main event of the first night of the concert, did not take place until after 9:00 PM, several key failures took place in the hours leading up to Scott's set. The venue began admitting concertgoers at 1:00 PM, and within the hour, security had lost control of the points of entry, as fans rushed the entrances and used bolt cutters to enter through barricades. This led to one injury and several arrests.

Concert organizers had intended to limit the crowd to fifty thousand people for Scott's concert, but the unexpected stampede led officials to estimate that the crowd was closer to fifty-five thousand people in size. The concert's medical staff was rapidly overwhelmed by patients, as many attendees were victims of traumatic injuries and overdoses. By 8:15 PM, before Scott even hit the stage, the staff was so overwhelmed that they began triage, rationing medical care to those in most immediate need. By that point, so many attendees had overdosed on opioids that the staff had run out of naloxone.

Approximately twenty minutes before Scott's set, the human crush in front of the stage had gotten so bad that people were already climbing the barricades to escape. One EMT told the *Washington*



Astroworld was a disaster for rapper Travis Scott.

Post that the mob was so out-of-control that he and his colleagues decided it would not be safe for them to enter and help those who had been injured.

Clearly, there was already so much going wrong at this concert that it could have warranted an "Idiocy of the Month" article all on its own. However, the show was not called off; Scott was permitted to take the stage, and, in true Travis Scott fashion, he made everything worse.

When Scott appeared, the sea of people in front of the stage grew more unruly, leading to more injuries, which caused more panic, which made the crush even worse. Mere minutes into Scott's set, the

Erika Goldring security guards at the front of the stage were already tying the supports on the barricades together to keep them from collapsing. Just six minutes into the performance, fans began screaming for medical help, but their cries went largely unnoticed. Seventeen minutes in, fans were climbing the speakers to get away from the crowd. Fans tried to get Scott's attention in between songs, but the rapper seemed not to notice what was going on in front of him.

Twenty-four minutes into his set, Scott noticed an ambulance in the crowd. Instead of making the obvious decision to find out what was happening, he asked

the crowd to raise both arms if they were okay. When many people did, he simply launched into his next song.

Thirty-six minutes in, he finally seemed to take notice of what was going on and stopped his performance mid-song. After an unconscious man was removed from the area, he resumed his performance, seemingly oblivious to all the other carnage around him. Shortly before 10:00 PM, Drake joined Scott for a song, during which people were filmed dancing on top of a golf cart used by the concert's medical staff. Mercifully, the concert ended a few minutes thereafter, but the damage had already been done.

Eight people died the night of the concert, and two more who suffered injuries died in the following days, including a nine-year-old boy. Additionally, over three hundred people were injured.

Immediately after the concert ended, Scott was lambasted online for his role in the disaster. Scott and event organizers ScoreMore and Live Nation are facing over 140 lawsuits, with damages reaching into the billions of dollars. The following day, Scott took to Instagram to apologize, offering an apology widely criticized for its insincerity.

Perhaps the most saddening aspect of this situation is how preventable it was. Videos of countless artists from Kurt Cobain to Eminem stopping shows to preserve the safety of the crowd went viral in the aftermath of the disaster. The concert was completely riddled with flaws, and it cost some people their lives. While the fallout of this tragedy has not settled and may not settle for a very long time, one thing is clear: Travis Scott deserves every last bit of punishment to come.

Team Spotlight: Wrestling Grapples with Victory



Saints wrestling moved up to the Western League. Nick Luzi ('22)



By Luke O'Leary ('25)
STAFF WRITER

As the fall sports season comes to an end and the winter season begins to peek through the clouds, one sports team emerges above the rest. This issue of *The Augustinian* will shine a spotlight on the fabled St. Augustine wrestling team.

In its history, Saints wrestling has won eight league championships and one CIF title in 1992. Last season, three wrestlers placed in CIF, winning a third, second, and first place medal: juniors Blaze Ackerman and Kevin Clements and the now-graduated Dominic Pacheco, respec-

tively. They are also coming off a victory in the Eastern League. They are extremely confident that the 2021-2022 season will be one of the best the school has ever had.

This season, the team hopes to place at least three wrestlers and also place in CIF as a team. One primary obstacle in attaining a CIF victory is the number of players on each team. Many other schools have much larger teams that take kids from all over San Diego. It is tough to compete with schools that have a much larger talent pool due to their large size.

With last year's victory in the Eastern League, Saints was promoted to the Western League. This new competition will be a challenge for St. Augustine but can be

overcome with hard work and dedication. Their main league competition includes Cathedral Catholic, Madison, La Jolla, Mission Bay, and University City.

The Saints wrestling program is led by Coach Mo Pacheco '86, who has brought with him over fifteen years of wrestling and coaching experience. Its top competitors are Blaze Ackerman and Kevin Clements. Clements hopes to wrestle in college, but Ackerman has decided not to due to the difficulty of the college weight cut.

A typical practice consists of warmups, technique work, drills, and, eventually, live play. Many players must work hard to stay in or change weight classes. There are different ways to accomplish this, from dieting to strenuous exercise. "I'll put on like four hoodies, four pairs of sweats, tuck them into the socks, and then just go for a run for maybe six miles," Ackerman said.

Some athletes, however, go about weight loss unhealthily and starve themselves for days or even weeks. During this time they only eat foods such as chicken and vegetables, avoiding foods high in carbohydrates like bread and sugar. Some wrestlers may eat only a few hundred calories per day, periodically using gum to satisfy their hunger. It is important for wrestlers to try to be healthy in their weight loss, or it can result in dehydration or malnutrition.

An individual wrestling match is won by pinning the opponent or turning him to his back. To win a team wrestling match, also called a dual, each wrestler earns points for his individual match based on his performance. Wrestlers get six points for pinning an opponent and additional points based on their margin of victory. Once the dual is complete, the team with the highest number of points is awarded the win.

The season consists of duals every Wednesday and tournaments on Saturdays for freshmen, JV, and varsity. Some tournaments can last up to two days and may require a wrestler to miss a Friday

school day. The duals on Wednesday make up the league play, and they determine the team's ranking going into play-offs.

One major difference between wrestling and other sports is its emphasis on individual competition. Unlike team sports like basketball or football, wrestling is a one-on-one competition. Though the larger duals and tournaments are won as a team, the success of the team depends on each wrestler independently. Because of this, wrestling is a character-building sport. Every win and loss is personal—you have no one to blame but yourself. Wrestling teaches young men discipline and courage that will help them in the future.

The great sport of wrestling takes a lot of time, dedication, and endurance. Wrestlers work tirelessly to ensure that they are in peak condition so that they can perform exceedingly well. So, if you want to become a wrestler, you will need to put in just as much effort as your fellow Saintsmen do.

GUIDE

continued from page 1

at Marty's entirely. Seniors, turn in your off-campus lunch form and enjoy leaving the Marty's line to the underclassmen. Consult the previous issue's "Riley Ranks" to find delicious options nearby. Underclassmen should do themselves a favor and ask any seniors in the Marty's line whether or not they've turned in their off-campus lunch form. The results of seniors vacating the Marty's line will be dramatic; opening up the possibility of dining at other establishments will reduce the crowd by as much as twenty-five percent, furthering the decline in wait times and leading to a more pleasant on-campus dining experience.

If you feel that this guide has helped you navigate the Marty's line, please let us know on Instagram @staneewsaper. For those readers with additional advice, feel free to share. Your advice may be featured in upcoming issues.

Senior Gibbons Develops Own Video Game



By Caden Webster ('23)
STAFF WRITER

After seeing this column in the last two issues of *The Augustinian*, one may wonder how the paper selects its subjects for the student feature. A proper candidate for this article is someone with impressive achievements in a specific field, above and beyond his normal academic and extracurricular obligations. Senior Elliott Gibbons has done just that.

During the shutdown caused by the pandemic, Gibbons decided he would work toward his goal of learning how to code. It began with learning basic code on the platform Unity Engine, a program that gives all the basic tools to create a video game. Learning how to code was extremely challenging at first, but using YouTube and lots of patience, Gibbons began working on his first game.

Originally, Gibbons wanted to make a first-person shooter game. After much trial and error, he realized that it was going to be too complicated for a rookie programmer, and he decided to take inspiration from other games he has enjoyed—driving games.

This led him to develop *Highway Mayhem*, a randomly generated map where the player has to run away from cops, achieving a high score based on his survival time. It took him about three or four months to create the

game, since he was learning along the way, and creating a video game is no easy task.

Why did Gibbons desire to learn how to code? It started with him making maps on *Halo 5's* "forge mode." This inspired him to learn how to code and make his own creation without limitations. His inspiration came out of boredom as well. "It would be nice if I had my own game I could mess around in," Gibbons thought frequently, when he was bored and staring at his phone. The sudden increase in free time brought on by the quarantine provided the perfect opportunity for him to start learning.

As well as developing *Highway Mayhem*, Gibbons has also worked on a zombie game, a dungeon crawler game, and, his most recent, a game with mini games in it, such as foosball and ping-pong. Although it may seem easy to create a simple driving game, there is much more going on behind the scenes that takes months to learn and years to master.

In coding, there are different languages that are used to develop the structure of a game, app, or website. Since Gibbons started on Unity Engine, he first worked on the C# coding language. However, he recommends beginners learn Python because it is much more beginner-friendly and easier to understand.

Gibbons holds a firm conviction that anyone who is interested in learn-



Elliott Gibbons playing his own game, *Highway Mayhem*. Nick Luzi ('22)

ing how to code should start. "Learning how to structure is the hardest part," Gibbons said. According to him, once you know how to structure, the rhythm and flow falls naturally into place. "It looks hard, but honestly, it really isn't," Gibbons said.

After high school, Gibbons hopes to attend the Air Force Academy, Naval Academy, or Purdue and look for a career in the military. Although he greatly enjoys developing video games,

he sees it as more of a hobby than a career. His life goal is to work in artificial intelligence and computer security.

Gibbons's game can be found on the Google Play store, so anyone can download and enjoy it. Anyone wanting to know more about coding or interested in participating should look up the YouTube channel "Brackeys," and download Unity Engine to get started, the same way Gibbons learned how to code.

Riley Ranks: Christmas Songs



By Riley Scanlan ('23)
STAFF WRITER

Christmas music is an important part of many people's preparation for the holiday season. Though there are many different opinions on when the Christmas season officially starts, it was early November when I was assigned this article. I began listening to Christmas music to refresh my memory and pick my top ten Christmas songs. Thanks to the editorial staff for starting my Christmas so early! *Editors' note: It is our firm belief that playing Christmas music before December 1 is highly inappropriate. However, we temporarily set aside this rule in order to bring our readers this content. Happy reading.*

10. **"Happy Xmas (War is Over)"**—Former Beatle John Lennon released his Christmas classic as a single on December 1, 1971. He recorded this song with his wife, Yoko Ono. It reached number 4 in the U.K. charts. The song brings hope for the end of the Vietnam War, as it imagines soldiers reuniting with their families. When Lennon was killed in 1980, the song reappeared on the U.K. charts in remembrance.

9. **"Sleigh Ride"**—This song by the Ronettes sets an atmosphere of Christmastime in old-timey fashion. This joyful song gives listeners a warm holiday feeling similar to a piping hot mug of hot chocolate. It gives the thrill of a sleigh ride through newly fallen snow.

8. **"Run Rudolph Run"**—At the dawn of the rock & roll era, Chuck Berry led the way with this Christmas anthem. He brings the 1950's flair to Christmas music with its upbeat sound, electric guitar instrumentals, and great singing. This song gets classic rock fans into the

Christmas spirit.

7. **"A Holly Jolly Christmas"**—The 1964 song by Burl Ives leaves listeners feeling the joy of the Christmas season. The song is best known for its use in the television classic *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer*, and it has been covered countless times by the likes of Michael Bublé, Harry Connick Jr., Dolly Parton, Faith Hill, and many others.

6. **"Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree"**—The 1958 hit single by Brenda Lee was an instant classic. The song has sold over 25 million copies and is the fourth-highest selling Christmas song of all time.

5. **"It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas"**—Originally written by Meredith Willson, this song was released by Perry Como in September of 1951, followed by Bing Crosby's version just a month later. This song has been covered by many people, including Johnny Mathis and Michael Bublé. This song gives a warm and calm feeling to the meaning of Christmas. The smooth voice of Bublé alongside the soft piano makes this song one of my favorites.

4. **"Jingle Bell Rock"**—Written and sung by Bobby Helms in 1957, the song is instantly recognizable, which means anyone can sing along to it. The song captures the Christmas spirit as it makes references to the infamous "Jingle Bells" with its own twist.

3. **"Please Come Home for Christmas"**—As the title track to their 1978 album *Please Come Home for Christmas*, the Eagles' work on their Christmas masterpiece is not overlooked. The song is a cover of the 1960 song by Charles Brown and successfully joins the list of classic Christmas rock songs.

2. **"Last Christmas"**—As one of

George Michael's most iconic songs, there's no doubt that this 1984 song can be considered anything other than a classic. Ironically, the heartbreak song gives off impressions of joy, probably due to the excitement of Christmas ahead.

Honorable Mention: **"All I Want for Christmas Is You"** by Mariah Carey. As much as I dislike this song, I can't go without speaking about it due to its sheer popularity. It is important to note that I received strict instructions to avoid any mention of this song in this article. You are welcome, editors! *Editors' note: We find this displeasing, but we'll allow it.*

1. **"Wonderful Christmastime"**—Written and sung by Paul McCartney (the best member of the Beatles), this wonderful Christmas song gives listeners the opportunity to enjoy Christmas music with a catchy twist. Released in 1980 alongside his album *McCartney II*, the song's simplistic sound can leave anyone in the mood for Christmastime.

Did I get it right? Am I missing a classic? Let me know on Instagram: @staneuspaper



Chaplain's Corner



By Fr. Max Villeneuve,
O.S.A.
COLUMNIST

**Inflame Your Heart
with the Light of Advent**

Advent is a season of waiting and a season of hope.

As sunlight evermore diminishes day by day, we progressively light the candles of our Advent wreaths—allowing light to shine ever more brightly in a world of growing darkness.

In my personal prayer this Advent, I have found myself continually being presented with the question, "and what are we to do with this light?"

This time of year we gather with our families and loved ones into the innermost portion of our homes while awaiting the birth of the true light of heaven. This light, however, is not meant to merely be gazed upon while providing us with small comforts and consolations. Rather, it is a light that we are called to invite into our hearts in order to inflame them, which in turn impels us out of our homes with the courage and confidence to be light unto others.

It had never occurred to me that the many depictions of St. Augustine holding his heart on fire for God in his hand would have any connection to Advent or Christmas. Yet how can it not? Augustine's heart set aflame by the Light of the World is an invitation and a model for each of us to follow. May our Advent preparations facilitate this welcoming of the Light, that our hearts may be newly set aflame for Him.

You're Not a Mean One, Mr. Grinch



By Patrick O'Leary ('23)
MANAGING EDITOR

I'm not saying the Grinch had the right idea, I'm just saying I understand. And not just the "living in a cave away from people" part.

I think we were all a little too quick to judge one of Christmas's most beloved "villains." Pop culture has twisted our perception of the Grinch as an antisocial green monster, the personification of anticapitalist Ebenezer Scrooge

himself. But if you go back to the famous children's story, you'll find that this portrayal is wildly inaccurate.

First of all, he didn't just live near "Whoville," he also lived near Costco. Anyone who's been to Costco from July through January understands that there's something unsettling about that much Christmas merchandise being thrown in your face—a person can only hear Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas Is You" so many times before suffering irreversible mental

damage.

I'm sure the Grinch was just trying to escape the summer heat into Costco's world-renowned air conditioning. And I bet he didn't hate Christmas the first time he entered in August. The reindeer were probably an excellent addition to the Arctic climate.

It is frustrating, though, when they replace all the kayaks and foosball tables with twenty-foot-tall penguins and miles upon miles of plastic lights. Or, heaven forbid, they remove the free samples to make room for fake trees. I don't blame the Grinch for being a little grouchy.

He really tried to solve his issues peacefully. What better way to avoid confrontation than to live in a cave? He even brought a dog for companionship. But you've gotta figure that when you can still hear the sound of singing all the way at the top of a mountain, maybe you're not the problem.

And you know what, sure, the Grinch could have moved somewhere else, but it's not easy to uproot your life and your dog. It's much simpler to just get rid of Christmas altogether.

Which brings up my second point—boy was that Grinch an impressive entrepreneur. I mean, think about how hard the post office works just to deliver your presents two weeks late. The Grinch developed a complicated system of home invasions and robberies of which the *Ocean's Eleven* crew would be proud. He didn't even have a team; his entire enterprise was just him and his dog. And anyone who has a dog knows that, for all their positive attributes, they lack the stealth and fine motor skills to excel as burglars.

The Grinch was left with the daunting task of stealing an entire town's Christmas decorations all by himself. Each individual house can have as much as three hundred pounds of "Christmas spirit" if fronted by a sufficiently motivated white woman. Outdoor lights especially can bring the toughest man to tears with an array of weaves and tangles that put the Gordian knot to shame.

But the Grinch knew what he was up against. Anyone who has seen the beloved cartoon knows that he contrived a variety of clever gadgets and techniques to make the job easier, often using the presents themselves to aid in his theft. Not to mention his organizational skills—only God Himself could have fit more Christmas trees onto that sled.

Sure, stealing Christmas was objectively wrong, but the Grinch felt remorse, didn't he? He returned everything to the owners, didn't he? The Whos still got their Christmas, didn't they? So why's everyone making such a big deal out of it?

And I gotta say, it seems like a pretty light crime to warrant such a hurtful Christmas song. I mean, "Your soul is an appalling dump heap?" That's pretty harsh. And "you really are a heel?" I don't even know what that means, but it sounds bad. This sort of hateful language is not only a misrepresentation of the Grinch's intentions, it is also completely out of place in a season supposedly dedicated to happiness and love. We really should have more empathy for the Grinch; it's hard to have Christmas spirit when everyone around is singing songs about how much of a jerk you are.

SPORTS

continued from page 1

petition, behind strong performances from junior Jimmy Markowicz and senior Evan Williams. Seniors Nalu Coons and Michael Butcher also had very strong years, as they consistently finished in the top ten of most races. The future is bright for the cross country team at Saints; freshman Shane Larabee and junior Nate Wilson impressed with strong seasons this year, as well as Jimmy Markowicz's continued success.

BASKETBALL

Although the fall sports teams fell short, the winter sports teams are off to a very strong start. The basketball team has started their season 6-1, with wins by twenty points or more against all of their San Diego matchups. Their one loss came against Sierra Canyon, ranked number one nationally, who defeated the Saintsmen by a score of 51-46, despite a 17-point performance from sophomore Lolo Rudolph.

With nine returning players, the Saintsmen are currently ranked eighth

in the state and look to improve on this ranking in two upcoming national tournaments, the Tarkanian Classic in Las Vegas and the Holiday Classic at Torrey Pines High School. In both of these tournaments they will face a steady diet of top-15-ranked teams, so a solid performance would greatly boost their rankings.

The team is led by junior Jurian Dixon, who has posted four performances of thirty points or more on the season. Junior Jaden Matingou and sophomore Ian de la Rosa provide the energy and hustle for the team, as Matingou leads the team in charges drawn and de la Rosa leads the team in steals. Their next game is Friday, December 10, against Carlsbad at Saints at 5:00 PM.

SOCCER

While Saints continues its dominance on the court, the soccer team has also shown promise. Soccer began their season with a 2-0 record that featured commanding wins over Calexico and Granite Hills, by a combined score of 9-3. The team looks to win their fourth

'Twas the Night Before Finals

'Twas the night before finals, the students did quake
Over essays and scantrons they soon were to take
Their notecards and cheat sheets lay coated in ink
To save them from horrors of having to think

Minds just as empty as the first day of school
Notebooks still blank but for splatters of drool
Such pity, when burdened with this daunting feat:
"Memorize the whole year in only a week!"

On their laptops, the emails were already penned
To their teachers, imploring their mercy to send
And their desperate voices repeatedly sound
"Please teacher, I humbly beg you to round"

But as Coach Oz will tell you, an eighty-nine-five
Shows second-rate work and inadequate drive
And since numbers and boundaries and calculations hold true
The eighty-nine sticks—there'll be no A for you

straight Western League championship and continue the success from last year's state championship. They are led by seniors Santi Gallego, Michael Patterson, and Evan Williams.

RUGBY

The rugby team started the season with a one-sided win in a scrimmage against Coronado. The team returns with all but one starter and has high hopes for playoffs; they have high expectations for winning the Western League and making a big push for the state title. They are led by seniors Chase Basson and Isaac Morrill and junior Lucca Rohrer, but they consistently receive big contributions from the other returning seniors. Their first league game is January 1.

WRESTLING

The Saints wrestling team enjoyed strong performances at the Granite Hills Invitational and La Costa Canyon Hamada Classic, where juniors Kevin

Clements and Blaze Ackerman placed in the top five at both meets. Saints will look to win dual meets against University City and Patrick Henry for advancements in the league standings.

SURF

The Saints surf team started their season with a win against Santa Fe Christian and a loss to High Tech High. In their opening meet, the Saints prevailed in big, heavy waves on a cloudy day at Mission Beach, thanks to strong performances from junior shortboarders Julian Iacono and Casey Bayless. A smaller day at Avalanche saw them fall to High Tech High, as the Saints were unable to overcome High Tech's strong performance in the longboard division.

Although the fall season may not have gone as expected, the winter season looks to be one where the Saints are in good position to bring home three league championships and, hopefully, a few San Diego Section CIF titles.

THE AUGUSTINIAN

Manny Butler

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Patrick O'Leary
MANAGING EDITOR

Aidan Rickwa
EDITOR

Mr. Vladimir Bachynsky
MODERATOR

Ty Woods
EDITOR

Griffin Cappiello
EDITOR

Nick Luzi
CHIEF PHOTOGRAPHER

The Sounds of Spanish

By Nick Watson ('22)



Trippin' at the Trot (Return of the Cartoonist) By Hudson Daley ('22)



Ask an Expert: Mr. Vignol Explains the Crusades



By Nathaniel Kotnik ('23)
STAFF WRITER

The Augustinian: The Catholic Church is often attacked today for her involvement in the Crusades, but the “Holy War” had less to do with religion than most people think. What would you say is the biggest misconception about the Crusades?

Mr. Vignol: The Church didn't really control them. They were military campaigns, very often under the leadership of secular rulers, and the Church often wielded very little influence. For example, in the First Crusade, there was a papal representative who traveled with the Crusaders, but the military leaders made all the decisions. And, in the Fourth Crusade, the pope tried to prevent Crusaders from sacking Constantinople, but they ignored him. The Church's influence is usually overstated when talking about the Crusades.

TA: But the Church did have some role in starting the Crusades, yes?

V: The issue was the holy places. Turkish Muslims controlled Jerusalem, and there was a desire to get it back. The Eastern Empire, the Byzantine Empire, was also in danger of collapse. So they appealed to the pope, and he agreed to help them. The pope preached the Crusades from two aspects: save the Eastern Empire and save the holy places.

TA: How did the Holy Land fall under Muslim control?

V: Muhammad the Prophet, the founder and central figure of Islam, died in 632. His death launched a massive military drive out of the Arabian Peninsula to expand Islam in the 7th century. Within a few decades, Muslims overran most of the Middle East, northern Africa, and Spain. They were so successful that by 711 they controlled a massive empire from India to Spain, through southern Europe and northern Africa.

Their rise really threw off the power dynamic in Europe. They considerably weakened the Byzantine Empire



Siege of Antioch by J. J. Dassy, 1850

and took Palestine, Syria, and Egypt. The Muslim empire was eventually divided into smaller kingdoms, and the Seljuk Turks came to control the Holy Land in the year 1077. The Turkish Muslims were much more restrictive in allowing Christians to visit holy sites than the Arab Muslims had been, which led to tensions with Christians.

TA: What was the political climate like in Europe leading up to the First Crusade?

V: Europe in the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries was in a state of total chaos. There were invasions from three different directions: the Vikings from the north, the Magyar Empire in the east, and Muslim pirates in the south. As the first millennium was winding down, people started wondering if it was the end of the world. It didn't seem like things could get any worse.

And then it started to turn around. The Holy Roman Empire was reestablished as a regional power. Countries like France and England were stabilized, fighting back invaders and building stronger governments. So, in a sense, the Crusades are a reaction against the onslaught of invaders. After

centuries of defensive mode, Europe began to go on the offensive, trying to expand.

The Crusades were part of this expansion. There were Crusades in the Middle East but also in eastern Europe and in Spain. But whereas the Middle Eastern Crusades centered on reclaiming the Holy Land, these other Crusades were more about expanding Christianity.

TA: Did the Crusaders ever have any success?

V: In the First Crusade, the Crusaders were able to channel their aggression after centuries of violence, and they actually succeeded in conquering the Holy Land. They formed the Crusader States, which were essentially their own independent kingdoms. But their success wasn't as much due to superior military strategy as it was division among the Muslims. And pretty soon the Muslims were able to unite under Saladin, and they forced the Crusaders out.

TA: What kinds of people took part in the Crusades?

V: Only a small number of people were actually under the influence of the

Church. You had these military orders, which were religious orders of soldiers. They were knights who went to the Holy Land to help defend it. But they didn't take part in the First Crusade.

Lots of people just seized the opportunity. Sure, some of them were intent on expanding Christianity, but most just wanted power and money. There were all these tangled motives among the Crusaders. It was a marriage of convenience. And in the Middle Ages, these conveniences ran out very quickly.

TA: What about the conduct of the Crusaders? Like the slaughter of Jews or the sack of Constantinople?

V: It's important to keep in mind that they were coming out of the Dark Ages. They were so used to violence that they brought similar attitudes with them on the Crusades. There was also this religious ruthlessness from the Muslim conquests. And anti-Semitism had always been there, but the Crusades gave it an outlet. For example, some Crusaders going through Germany sought out Jews and just massacred them.

In the Fourth Crusade, the Crusaders agreed to help a Byzantine emperor gain the throne in return for payment. But when he couldn't pay them what he promised, they looted the city. The Church condemned the sack of the city, but they never actually did anything about it.

When Crusaders captured Jerusalem, it was a bloodbath. They slaughtered all the Jews and Muslims. This was an age where you didn't just defeat your enemy—you annihilated them. This was an era in which tolerance was not a common practice.

TA: After all the campaigns ended, how did the final boundaries fall?

V: In 1296, the last Crusader kingdom fell, and boundaries were the same as before the conquests. But the Crusader idea did not die out. Several popes tried to reinstate the Crusades, but they didn't have the resources, the money, or the manpower. The era of violence gave way to the era of commerce and of business.

Then vs. Now: Spiritual Life at Saints



Father Gary celebrating Mass in 1985 and in 2021. Donovin Bocalan ('23)



By Griffin Cappiello ('24)
EDITOR

As a Catholic school owned and operated by the Order of Saint Augustine, religious and spiritual life is held very closely to the heart of Saint Augustine High School. Immediately next door to our campus is the Augustinian monastery, where some Augustinians live full time, and others visit from around the world.

Just as academics and discipline have greatly changed throughout the history of Saints, so has the spiritual side of the Saints experience. This article compares the spiritual life of Saints today to that of about fifty years ago.

The most significant difference is the presence of the many Augustinians that

taught at Saints. Compared to the one priest that currently teaches on campus, anywhere from eight to twelve Augustinians would be teaching during the school year.

These Augustinians taught a variety of classes, including science, English, and math. In addition, there were no lay religion teachers on campus, as all religion classes were taught by a priest.

With such a significant presence on campus, these Augustinians could provide spiritual guidance to students. If a Saintsman's favorite teacher happened to be an Augustinian, he could simply stay after class and ask a question regarding his religious life.

Since there were so many Augustinians on campus, the celebrant of the weekly

Saints Mass would rotate frequently. The various Augustinian priests on campus would take turns saying Mass, often leading the school in the celebration of the Eucharist many times throughout the course of the school year.

Saints still had its weekly Mass, a key piece in our identity as a Catholic school. However, as opposed to the current schedule in which Mass takes place every Wednesday, Mass was held on Fridays.

During each celebration of the Mass, various priests would be available to hear confessions. This was not uncommon for the time, as penance services frequently accompanied Masses.

Due to the rotating schedule that decided which Augustinian priest would say Mass, there were no guest priests invited to celebrate the Mass with the student body as there are from time to time today. Only the Augustinians on campus would lead each week's Mass.

While many Augustinians said Mass, Saints still had a school chaplain, similar to Fr. Max today. However, the chaplain's role was slightly less pronounced due to the larger presence of Augustinians on campus. The chaplain would say Mass more often than the other Augustinians; however, his role was more similar to that of a campus minister, comparable to the modern Ms. Hammock.

There was no campus ministry program in the way that there is today. How-

ever, one of the chaplain's duties was to make sure that there were retreats made available to Saintsmen. “I remember going on a retreat during each of my years at Saints,” Dr. Rey '70 said, “although they were less impressive than they are now.”

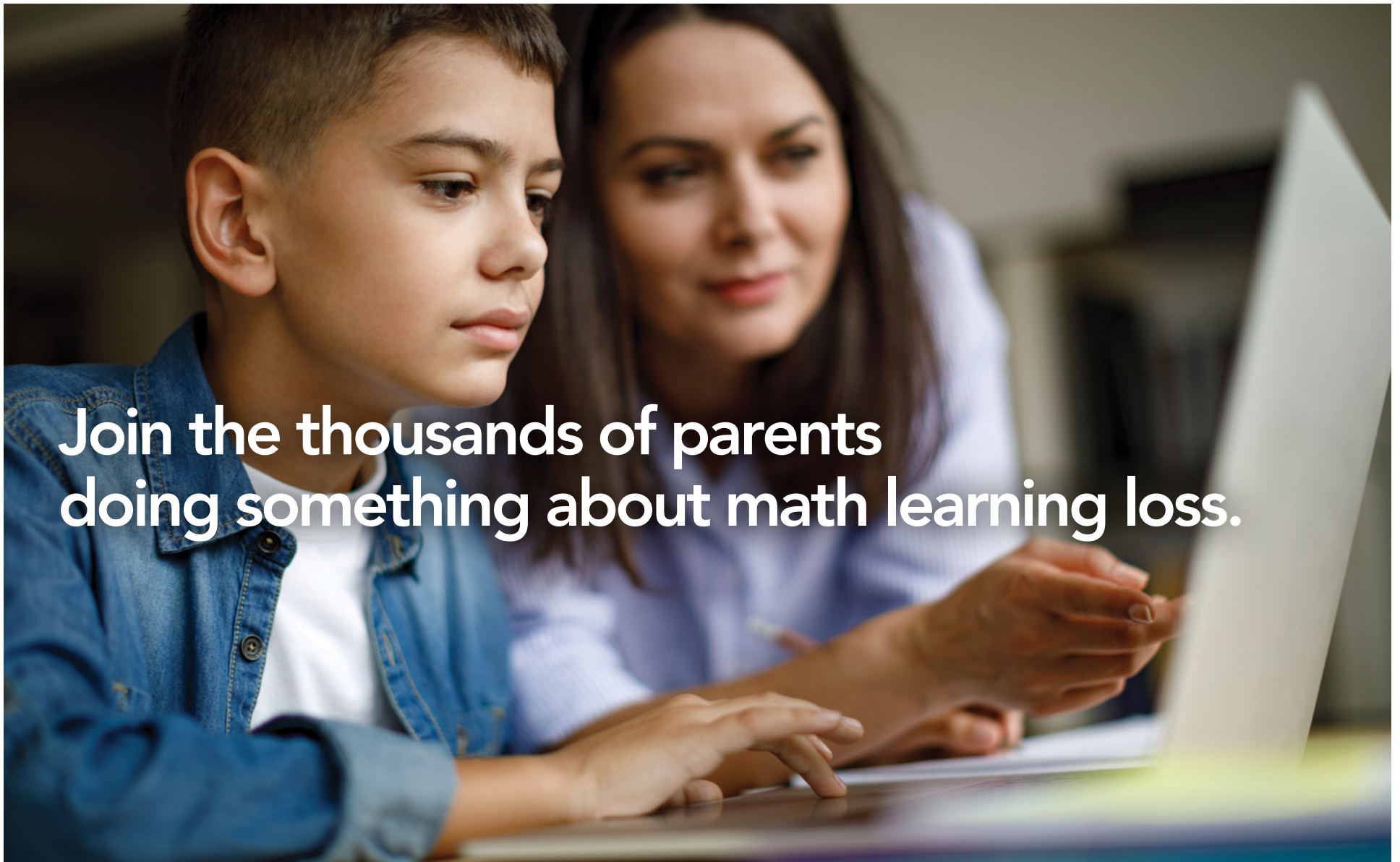
There was nothing to the extent of the freshman retreat or Kairos, both beloved by many current Saintsmen. “They would put us on a bus, then drive us to Balboa Park or to a monastery out in East County,” Dr. Rey explained. “There would be a speaker, we would break into small groups, and that would be it.”

Another major difference in the style of retreats is that female students from other local high schools would be present at various retreats. Though the current model for retreats works very well, this would still be a welcome addition to the modern-day Saints retreat experience.

The many in-depth retreats that Saints currently offers its students is a favorite part of the Saints experience for many Saintsmen, and without them, Saints would be drastically different.

In addition to the difference in retreats, service hours were not required. “There was no day of service,” Dr. Rey said.

These differences remind us that just as our academic lives will change, so too will our spiritual lives. As a Catholic school, Saints prepares us with the values that we will need as we grow into Christian gentlemen.



Join the thousands of parents doing something about math learning loss.

The pandemic has had a major impact on the world, including on our children's education. The subject that has been hit the hardest? Math.


To help make up for math learning loss, thousands of parents are turning to Mathnasium. Our customized learning plans have been proven to improve grades and help students catch up, keep up, and get ahead. No matter their grade or skill level in math. Take control of your child's math education and give them the edge they need in school with live, face-to-face instruction in our center or online.



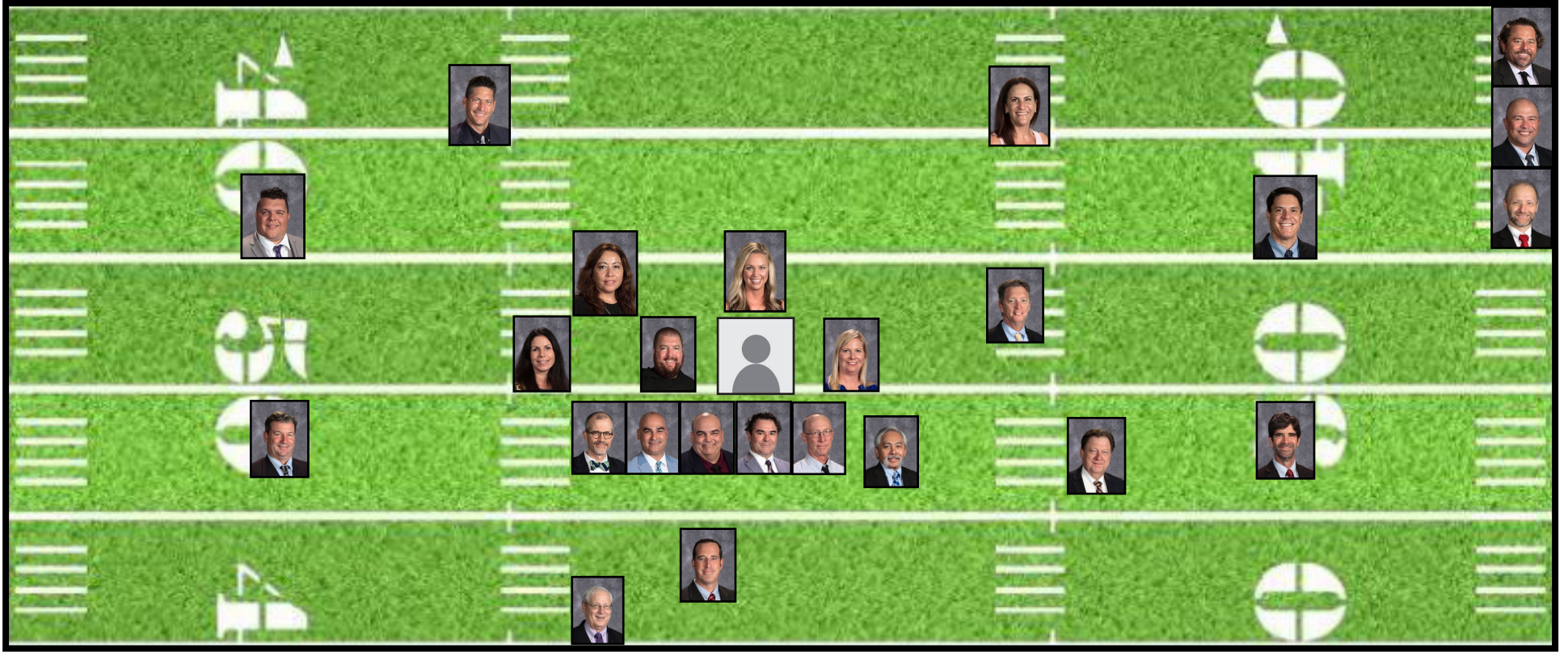
Contact us today for a free assessment.

Mathnasium of Mission Gorge
 (619) 281-MATH (6284)
mathnasium.com/missiongorge
 10330 Friars Rd. #109, San Diego, CA 92120


 Changing Lives Through Math™


MATHNASIUM[®]
 The Math Learning Center

Future Super Bowl Champions: The Teachers



By Griffin Cappiello ('24)
EDITOR

In an effort to get over the...less than impressive season our football team had (sorry guys), I will attempt to provide an answer to the burning question that everyone has been asking: What if the teachers of Saint Augustine High School had their own football team? After a long period of deliberation, I, Coach Cappiello, along with quarterbacks and defensive tackles coach Butler, have selected what I believe to be the perfect combination of teachers to get the job done on the field. While some of my selections may appear unconventional, I assure you that numerous hours of researching and watching film have been poured into this lineup.

OFFENSE

Left Tackle: Mr. Chesser—A quick Google search can tell you that the University of Georgia has a knack for producing NFL-caliber offensive linemen, so Mr. Chesser might have a leg up on his competitors because of his educational background. The man known as “The Mountain” will face his foes with a flurry of frantic literary devices: juxtaposition and alliteration and irony and polysyndeton. They’ll never know what hit them.

Interior Offensive Line: The da Luz Brothers—Chemistry in the interior of the offensive line is the key to creating the perfect pocket. What possible bond is greater than that of brotherhood? The da Luz brothers provide the perfect combination to protect our QB.

Right Tackle: Coacher—Which ever poor defensive lineman has the misfortune of lining up against Coacher better not be a “comunista.” Coacher will promptly convince the misguided individual not to be a “doinker,” while simultaneously reminding his teammates that PFF grades don’t matter.

Quarterback: Daddy—John “Truzz” Lamerato will be the teachers’ version of Lamar Jackson: a dual-threat quarterback with the leadership ability to handle the offense. His “do your job” mentality combined with his hatred of “hero ball” will allow him to keep a cool head under pressure and deliver when it matters most, because Daddy provides. As the quarterback and face of the franchise, he will be the highest-paid player, so, *ahviously*, money won’t be a problem.

Running Back: Mr. Vignol—Obviously, ball security is the number one priority for any running back. Anyone who witnessed “Johnny Rocket’s” legendary Turkey Trot dash last year knows why he is the perfect selection. The force with which he gripped that turkey will guarantee a grand total of zero fumbles on the year. Pair that with his blazing speed out of the backfield and Mr. Vignol is certainly a lock for running back.

Tight End: Mr. Cudal—It’s the mustache. No defender will be able to comprehend its greatness, so he’ll be able to go out for passes, while never letting anyone by him when he stays back to block. But Mr. Cudal’s greatest strength is in the final five minutes of the game. The opposing team better not dare to look at the clock, or they’ll face the consequences.

Wide Receiver: Mr. Ozdowski—It would be a criminal offense to not select the teacher with the most NFL experience to my starting lineup. After further research into his career, I have decided that Mr. Ozdowski’s talents would be better suited on the offensive side of the field. He can use the Mean Value Theorem to assess the speed of the defending cornerback at a certain point, then use his own elusive speed to get by him. And, when in doubt, we can always throw him on the defensive line, and he can just do what he did to Ken Jones.

Wide Receiver: Mr. Manley—The combination of mathematical philosophy and a love of film is a frightening sight for anyone. Mr. Manley studies his film with a burning passion and executes on the field by using the wonders of pre-calculus.

Wide Receiver: Mr. Wallace—Mr. Wallace is from New York, a place that clearly knows nothing about football, as it is home to both the Jets and the Giants. Despite this, he will prove to be a great asset with his hands comparable to those of Jerry Rice, and his experience as a religion teacher will dispel any possible notions of “seeing ghosts” from our team.

DEFENSE

Defensive End: Mrs. Walp—Her Army training has made her tough as nails, so she won’t tolerate any trash talk from the opposing offensive line.

Defensive Tackle: Fr. Max—Father Max is one of the biggest and strongest members of the Saints faculty. Sticking him at defensive tackle is an easy decision. In addition to his

physical tools, his training as a priest has instilled a strict sense of discipline, meaning penalties will be few and far between. He will avoid face masks like the plague.

Defensive Tackle: Mr. Wehbe—“Mean” Joe Wehbe will terrorize the opponent’s o-line with his pure athletic prowess. He’s a young guy, so we’ll be able to keep him on the team for years to come. He can also be our stats guy. Evidently, he doesn’t seem to think that this team is worth his time, as he neglected to show up for team picture day.

Defensive End: Mrs. Walker—Mrs. Walker has been selected to the defensive line for the sole reason that her last name begins with a “w.” Think about it. The opposing offensive line won’t know who to block when most of the defensive linemen have names that start with “w.” Even Fr. Max’s “m” could just be an upside-down “w.”

Linebacker: Sra. Gormly—Yes, I know she’s from Chile, and this may not be the type of football she’s used to, but I believe Sra. Gormly is a force to be reckoned with. If any of the opposing players talks to some chicas during the game or if they don’t share their food with her, she’ll simply come after them with the chancla.

Linebacker: Mrs. Crachy—Mrs. Crachy’s height puts her first on the list for middle linebacker. If anyone on the opposing team dares to move a single inch while the Angelus bells are ringing, she’ll dash over to them, and they’ll quickly regret their mistake.

Linebacker: Mr. O’Beirne—Imagine, if you will, a running back coming out of the backfield, his long hair flowing in the wind. Then BAM! He is immediately hit with the swift fist of justice that is “The Assassin.” Pre-written dress code in his hand, he stands over the running back with a stern look on his face. The poor running back will sadly walk back to his sideline and immediately cut his hair with the scissors so graciously provided by the home team.

Cornerback: Dr. GO—I’ll be honest, I wasn’t quite sure where to put the Minister of Fun. Then he put on his signature golden suit, and I made the connection. He’s basically just Deion Sanders. Think about it: they both have flashy suits, they both have cool little dances, they both have relatively unknown rap records. Now that I think about it, maybe Dr. GO is Deion Sanders...

Cornerback: Mr. Yoakum—He’s the cross country coach. He’s

fast. He can outrun literally any receiver. Yes, even Mr. Ozdowski. With his brand new Zoomer 3000s and his arsenal of roasts and comebacks, Chris “The Crusher” Yoakum offers a crushing defense for any who get in his way.

Strong Safety: Mrs. Palafox—Years spent teaching freshmen have helped Mrs. Palafox develop the hard-nosed, no-nonsense attitude of the NFL’s best strong safeties. Surely anyone who can handle those little punks can handle some receivers.

Free Safety: Mr. Isaak—The man supercharged by Diet Coke will be unstoppable on the football field. We all know how Lamar Jackson played after his little bathroom break, and since Mr. Isaak takes so many, his level of play is simply elevated over Lamar’s. Sorry Ravens fans.

SPECIAL TEAMS

Returner: Mr. Bachynsky—The Ukrainian whirlwind known as “The Impaler” is every coach’s dream returner. With the chaos that can only be brought by an Eastern European high school religion teacher, Vlad will speed past anyone who tries to stop him. He also has an intense workout regimen, often taking breaks from teaching to get in some dumbbell curls, box jumps, or sprints.

Punter: Sr. Dent—With the amount of skill that the supreme rugby chico possesses, it’s a no-brainer to slot Sr. Dent at punter. He may try to convince the opposing players to join his rugby team, but that’s a risk I’m willing to take.

Kicker: Mr. Pruter—He walks around campus barefoot. He’s basically a lock for kicker.

Obviously, the most important element of any football team is depth, so any teachers who may not be included in the starting lineup are likely on the bench. If any of you wanna-be coaches feel that I have missed the mark with any of my selections, or that I have left a potential star on the bench, send me a DM on Instagram: @stanewspaper.

If you are a teacher who feels that I have disrespected your football-playing talent by neglecting to include you in my starting lineup, I will be holding tryouts on the football field after school. Show me why you deserve to be included on the team. Or just send me an email: saintsnewspaper@gmail.com.