

# THE AUGUSTINIAN

Tolle Lege

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## New Saints Century Welcomes New Teachers



The four new Saints teachers. From left: Mr. Hitchcock, Mr. Adams, Mr. Bier, and Mr. Duffy.

Griffin Cappiello '24



By Michael Luzi ('25)  
EDITOR

This year marks the start of a new era for Saints: with the first century behind us, the next 100 years are already upon us. What better way to usher in the new era than by hiring new faculty members to help Saints continue its mission.

Saints welcomes four new teachers

to its ranks: Mr. Andrew Hitchcock, Mr. Robert Duffy, Mr. Jordan Adams, and Mr. Steven Bier. (This issue will focus on new teachers, while our next issue will report on new staff members.)

Mr. Hitchcock teaches Algebra II and Algebra II with Trigonometry. For college, he went to Grand Canyon University in Phoenix, Arizona, where he earned his bachelor's degree in math-

ematics and his master's degree in educational leadership.

He decided to go into teaching because he wanted to help future students become the best versions of themselves in school and in life. In the past, he has taught at Holy Trinity Catholic School in El Cajon, where he believes he "made a pretty big impact." One of the many things he did while teaching there was

raise \$16,000 to fix the basketball courts.

While at Holy Trinity, Mr. Hitchcock went to the eighth grade visitations at Saints with students. "At that moment, I knew that this is where I wanted to be for the next forty years," he said.

He loved how unique this school was, from its energy to the fact that it is an all-boys school. "It's a different experience

SEE TEACHERS, pg. 6

## Saintsmen Experience World Youth Day



By Griffin Cappiello ('24)  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Typically, a Saintsmen's summer vacation means going to the beach, enjoying time away from his teachers, and spending time in relaxation; however not all Saintsmen are satisfied with this "typical" summer. Some needed a summer filled with walking for miles in sweltering heat, sleeping on the floor, and, of course, an enriched sense of faith and fraternity with people from around the world.

This summer, a delegation of students, Augustinians, and teachers from Saints, St. Patrick's Parish in North Park, and Villanova Preparatory School – an Augustinian school in Ojai, CA – traveled to World Youth Day (WYD) and the Augustinian Youth Encounter (AYE) in Lisbon, Portugal.

At WYD, the largest gathering of Catholic youth around the world, Saintsmen deepened their faith and celebrated the universality of the Catholic Church. People from numerous different countries were in attendance, rec-

ognizing the worldwide power of the Augustinian core values at AYE.

Before the trip, the Saintsmen and their families celebrated a pilgrim's Mass with Fr. Gary Sanders, OSA, in the Saints chapel. Fr. Gary had some key advice for the Saintsmen during the Mass. "This is not a vacation," Fr. Gary reminded, "This is a pilgrimage."

Upon their arrival in Portugal, the pilgrims discovered that Fr. Gary's advice would ring true for the entirety of the trip – AYE would take place at a local school in Lisbon, and they would be sleeping on the floor of the gym.

Saintsmen quickly became friends with the delegations from other countries such as Australia, Spain, Panama, and the Czech Republic. Throughout the week Saintsmen and their newfound friends participated in international talent shows, enjoyed discussions of faith and Augustinian values, and explored Portuguese cuisine at local restaurants.

"I loved being able to meet people from all around the world," junior Dominic Bartel said. "The delegation from Australia was particularly friendly



The California delegation at AYE and WYD. Instagram: @saints\_info

and they were fun to hang out with."

The pilgrims also met Augustinian priests and brothers from all over the world. They had the opportunity to celebrate Mass in English, Spanish, and

Portuguese, and, despite the language barrier, exposed themselves to different cultures and traditions.

The following week, the numerous  
SEE WYD, pg 8

# Why is Trump in Trouble?



By Omar Jaibaji ('24)  
STAFF WRITER

Former US President Donald J. Trump is currently facing four felony trials as he vies for the Republican Presidential Nomination. Donald Trump is not new to facing legal challenges; however, the current charges he faces could have immense repercussions and consequences for his candidacy.

While it is unlikely that Trump will be barred from running for office, the discussion over its possibility raises several questions: what charges does he face, and how could they affect the upcoming presidential election?

Mr. Trump currently confronts a quartet of legal charges, comprising two state-level accusations from New York and Georgia, as well as two federal indictments. His response has been consistent, pleading not guilty to three of these allegations and intending to do the same for the fourth charge in Georgia.

The inaugural case, originating in New York, revolves around allegations of business fraud. Mr. Trump stands accused of orchestrating a payment scheme alongside his former attorney, Michael Cohen, and actress Stephanie Clifford.

Central to these claims is a \$130,000 payment to Ms. Clifford, ostensibly hush money to conceal a previous affair between the two. Mr. Trump is further charged with masking this payment as legitimate expenses and fabricating retainer agreements. Donald Trump vehemently denies these accusations.

The second case centers on classi-



Donald Trump's infamous mugshot.

fied documents that purportedly found their way from the White House to Mar-A-Lago. Mr. Trump is alleged to have retained these documents even after his presidential term concluded, violating a federal law. These efforts were made to conceal the existence of the documents, even after several warnings. This charge is fervently disputed by Mr. Trump.

The third indictment, Mr. Trump's second at the federal level, is linked to the 2020 election and allegations of interference. This charge lists Donald Trump and six unnamed co-conspirators, all accused of disseminating false

information concerning election fraud. These claims are said to have played a role in the events leading to the January 6, 2021, Capitol attack.

Lastly, the fourth case unfolds in Georgia and charges election interference under racketeering law. Donald Trump, alongside 18 others, faces this indictment. All parties surrendered to authorities and collectively entered not guilty pleas.

This case principally orbits around endeavors to reverse Georgia's 2020 presidential election results, a contest won by Joe Biden. Mr. Trump allegedly employed a combination of pres-

sure tactics and attempted to replace electors.

While these four indictments pose formidable legal challenges, the ultimate prospect of Mr. Trump's disqualification from seeking future office hinges on a nuanced interpretation of the Fourteenth Amendment.

This constitutional provision addresses individuals who have "engaged in insurrection" against the U.S. government; yet, the precise application of this clause to Mr. Trump remains uncertain.

Despite the charges against Donald Trump in recent times, he is still the frontrunner for the Republican primaries. He holds a commanding lead of over 50% in most national polls, with Florida governor Ron DeSantis holding a distant second, typically polling around 13%.

While some have also mentioned the potential of other candidates such as Vivek Ramaswamy and Nikki Haley, the current trajectory for the Republican presidential nomination does not seem likely to change. Should the election cycle continue to unfold as it currently stands, we will be poised to witness another Trump vs. Biden election next year.

This is especially important for the senior class of 2024, as many will be 18 years old by election season and thus eligible to vote. It is vital for the next generation of voters to be well-informed about the candidates. The actions and policies of the next president will shape the lives of Americans and will even impact the world.

## GOP Candidates Clash in First Primary Debate



By Alex Granda ('24)  
STAFF WRITER

In a debate where everyone's question was "Where's Trump?," the 2023 Republican Party Debate was filled with statements ridiculing former presidents, personal attacks, and many dodged questions, leaving Americans dazed, confused, and worried about the state of politics in the 21st century.

In total, eight candidates showed up to the first 2023 GOP debate. The debate however, was largely dominated by former Vice President Mike Pence, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, and an interesting newcomer stealing the show: Vivek Ramaswamy.

Mr. Ramaswamy is an outsider when it comes to politics. Coming from a modest background, he was able to form the pharmaceutical company Roivant Sciences, becoming a billionaire in the process.

During the debate, Mr. Ramaswamy took the role that an "outspoken Trump" would have taken: constantly speaking over candidates, arguing with each and every other candidate on the podium, and generally having hot take after hot take.

His views, controversial, yet popular with younger Republicans, emphasize isolation and nationalism, ending US involvement in the war in Ukraine, and enforcing an America-first policy.

He was criticized during the debate for his lack of experience, even being called a "rookie" by Mike Pence, but what he lacked in political experience, he made up for in his speaking abilities, coming out as the favorite and the



America was properly entertained by the first GOP debate.

candidate most people would consider as the winner of this debate.

Coming in second in polls behind Donald Trump, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis was expected to be a major player during the debate, however, this was not the case. He came across as weak, disorganized, and generally had a lackluster performance. Even when given time to speak about policy, he

didn't seem attentive.

When asked the big question about whether he would support Donald Trump, even if he was convicted by law, Mr. DeSantis waited for other candidates to raise their hand until he eventually lifted his own.

Unfortunately, Mr. DeSantis came out to voters as part of the "political elite" which Republicans tend to de-

monize, making him this debate's biggest loser.

Former UN ambassador and former Governor of South Carolina, Nikki Haley, came into the debate with low poll numbers, but still made a strong impression. The only woman running for the GOP nomination, Mrs. Haley is known for her outspoken views and

SEE DEBATE, pg. 6

# Mr. Isaak: Pinball Wizard



Mr. Isaak collecting his prize after dominating the competition.

Courtesy of Mr. Isaak



By Michael Luzi ('25)  
EDITOR

When was the last time you played pinball? Since the advent of video games, it would seem the game of pinball has receded a bit as a pastime. But not for Mr. Isaak, a ranking world champ of the classic game who has seven pinball machines parked in his home.

*The Augustinian* interviewed the Pinball King who takes this simple game very seriously.

This interview has been edited for clarity.

*The Augustinian:* What is pinball? How did you get involved with the game?

Mr. Isaak: Pinball started all the way back in the thirties. There were literal pins on the machine, like a pachinko machine, and there were no flippers on it. The ball would go up, and the ball would hit pins as it came its way down. Sometime in the forties, they added flippers. So now it doesn't really hit pins on the way down, but it is still called a pinball machine. I got my start in pinball when I was five. We didn't have a washer and dryer in my house, so I went with my mom once a week to the laundromat and they usually had one or two pinball machines, and she would give

me a dollar. I had to learn to get good on a pinball machine, because a dollar would either go in thirty minutes or if you were good, you could win a few games. I learned all the rules, so that I could learn how to make that dollar last two hours, because the washer was an hour, the dryer was an hour. If I was bad, thirty minutes in, I would be sitting watching the washer for an hour and a half. After a while, I stopped playing, because I was playing pro golf, but when we moved to a new house, I started to get into pinball again. I was only supposed to get two pinball machines and one video game, and now it's morphed into seven machines, two video games, and seven more machines in Oceanside, and

along the way, I have been trading with friends. I've got everything from those 1970s ones to the new ones.

TA: Is there a reason why you collect so many pinball machines?

Isaak: Most people who collect have their own reasons. Some people will buy it primarily because of the theme. For instance, the Metallica pinball machine, you can choose what song you want to play, and depending on what you hit, you can change songs. So if you like Metallica, then you can immerse yourself in it while playing the game. I tend to buy them because of the shots that they hit. I have this one Jurassic Park machine that is probably my favorite, but I have never seen the movie Jurassic Park. And these things can range in cost. Some of these machines you can buy under \$1,000, some pinball machines push \$20,000. So you can spend however much you want. The nice thing about this hobby is that these pinball machines will go up in value. For example, some of the machines that were made in the 1970s were originally sold for \$1,500, but now they sell for \$15,000.

TA: Are there pinball leagues and championships?

Isaak: Yes, and they're really fun. There are tournaments all over the world. There was an annual tournament in Canada every summer, and next year I'll probably go to it. The biggest one that I play in is in Riverside. There are organizations that come, the biggest one is called the IFPA, the International Flipper Pinball Association. They run these big tournaments around every two months. They will have people from all over the world play in these tour-

SEE ISAAK, pg. 6

# Culture Clubs Bring Strength and Diversity



By Ben Nault ('26)  
EDITOR

There has been a sudden proliferation of what could be called "culture clubs" at Saints: Mexus, Black Student Union, Chaldean Club, Asian American Alliance, Pacific Islanders Cultural Association (PICA), Irish Club, Greco-Slavic Club, and the Italian Club.

It should come as no surprise. After all, San Diego is one of the most ethnically and culturally diverse cities in the country.

This rich array of culture clubs offers Saintsmen opportunities to connect with these different ethnicities and discover their treasures. Such diversity reflected in the clubs serves to enrich Saints and strengthen its community.

"Because heritage is an essential part of the student, having the ability for the student to express themselves gives [the student] the ability to be open, to feel more comfortable," said Club Coordinator Thomas Fuller, a senior.

Recently, there has been a surge in interest in such clubs, and according to Fuller their increase can be ascribed to people feeling more comfortable with their heritage and curiosity about other cultures.

Senior Ben Ngo, the president of the Asian American Alliance and ASB Executive President credited the growth of culture clubs to the growing desire from students to learn more about their family's history and being proud about their culture.

Senior Donny Faranso of the Chaldean Club concurs.

"I like that I have the opportunity

to celebrate my culture with my Chaldean brothers on campus and to be more connected with my community," Faranso said. "It's also a great way for me to understand and carry on my parents' traditions."

Culture clubs give a safe space for students of a specific culture to engage with each other and form a stronger and closer sense of community.

"As a minority on campus, it's important to have a place where we can gather together. Our goal is to educate everyone on campus about Black culture and share our culture through food and music," senior Miles Harris, a member of the Black Student Union said.

Lots of people, however, don't neatly fit into any single ethnicity. Perhaps you're half-Italian, a quarter Irish, and a quarter Mexican—or maybe your ethnic makeup is even more diluted than that. This might lead you wondering which, if any, of the clubs you may join. The good news is, you can join any of them: you need not be of any particular ethnicity to join any culture club. Just bring your desire to converse, learn, and have fun.

"The most important part of Mexus is breaking the cultural barrier between Mexico and the US. We have so many students that cross the border from Tijuana to come to Saints, so it's important to share the true culture of Mexico, to bring *la cultura* to Saints," said senior Sam Velasquez, a member of Mexus.

Culture clubs welcome people into a community in which they can actively participate through different events and gatherings throughout the year. One activity that Fuller hopes to put on



Devin Manns '26 representing the Irish Club. Instagram: @saints\_theirish

this year is a Cultural Food Day, where the different culture clubs would showcase the richness of the cultures they represent through delectable foods and aromas.

Many of the clubs have a number of activities they individually put on throughout the year, like Mexus sponsoring special events for Dia De Los Muertos and Mexican Independence Day.

Ben Ngo also has some inclusive and fun events planned for the upcoming year. They plan to have a food mix-

er, a lunar new year celebration (with an ambitious hope for fireworks), and a possible collaboration with OLP's Asian and Pacific Islander Association for merch and food.

James Burrell, the founder of the Greco-Slavic club, one of the newest culture clubs at Saints, wants new Saintsmen to feel "invited the moment they entered the campus."

Through these clubs, Saints has become a microcosm of the world itself: full of diversity, rich in ethnicities. In short, Saints has culture.

# A Summer SCOTUS Summary



By **Nata Velarde-Alvarez**  
(‘24)  
STAFF WRITER

Congress and the President pass laws, but defining whether or not they’re constitutional is left to the judicial branch. The Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS) has affected the nature of laws on national and state levels through its power of judicial review.

In short, judicial review is the ability of the court to declare a legislative or executive act in violation of the constitution. Through judicial review, SCOTUS has decided on landmark court cases that have determined the constitutionality of a variety of policies. This past summer was no different with rulings on student debt relief, college admissions and religious liberty.

Joe Biden’s promised student-debt relief program has been a subject of contention since its announcement during the president’s campaign. While some argued relief would benefit students with massive loan debt, opponents argued it would be too expensive and increase the national debt.

There was no doubt that the constitutionality of the plan would be brought up in the highest court of the land. In *Biden v. Nebraska* and *Department of Education v. Brown*, arguments were made over whether the Biden Administration had the power to dismiss student loans under the HEROES Act, which allows the Secretary of Education to “waive or modify” rules regarding financial assistance programs.

Ultimately, on June 30, 2023, SCOTUS decided 6-3 against the student-debt relief program. Chief Justice John Roberts wrote the majority opinion of the court and declared that the Secretary of Education did not have the power “to rewrite that statute to the extent of canceling \$430 billion of student loan principal.” The decision stopped millions of people in student debt from receiving up to \$20,000 in relief.

College admissions have become more selective over the last few decades due to an increase in the number of people applying to college. In the world of college admissions, SCOTUS has greatly affected the future of the process. Affirmative action has been legally banned from univer-



**The US Supreme Court was very influential this past summer.**

sities across the country. What does this mean, though?

Affirmative action is defined as the practice or policy of favoring individuals belonging to groups regarded as disadvantaged or subject to discrimination. In SCOTUS case *Students for Fair Admissions v. President and Fellows of Harvard College*, affirmative action referred specifically to the consideration of race in the application process.

Since the 1960s, race-based affirmative action policies have been put in place across many universities in the US. The idea behind the “positive discrimination” was to create equity among prospective students by considering the race of the applicant and giving a “plus” to the applications of marginalized groups such as African-Americans and Latin Americans.

Since its inception, opponents have claimed the practice is racist as it allows for race to be a factor in the admissions process and could be construed as putting down Whites and Asian-Americans. Previous SCOTUS cases such as *Regents*

of the University of California v. *Bakke*, which prohibited racial quotas in universities, have challenged affirmative action. Several institutions, including the public universities in California, had already banned affirmative action in college admissions.

Now, on June 29, 2023, SCOTUS voted 6-2 to prohibit affirmative action in public and private colleges and universities, making it illegal to include race as a factor in the admissions process. This is in spite of the fact that previous affirmative action bans have resulted in lower probabilities of graduation or of going to graduate school in Hispanic and Black populations.

Chief Justice Roberts declared that the practice went against the “guarantees of the Equal Protection Clause” in the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. Justice Sonia Sotomayor wrote the dissent, saying the decision “rolls back decades of precedent and momentous progress. It holds that race can no longer be used in a limited way in college admissions to achieve such critical benefits.”

In the final case, two differing ideas clashed once again: which is more important, religious freedom or anti-discrimination? Colorado artist Lorie Smith refused to make a website for the wedding of a same-sex couple. The case *303 Creative LLC v. Elenis* considered whether a Colorado anti-discrimination law went against the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment.

A very similar SCOTUS case asking the same question occurred in 2018. In *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*, the court ruled 7-2 and stated that religious objections to same-sex marriage are protected forms of expression.

Again, the court sided with religious freedom and sided with Ms. Smith in a 6-3 decision on June 30, 2023, which meant the First Amendment protected an individual or business from completing a service that went against their religious beliefs.

Regardless of any political motivations that influence cases like these, the Supreme Court will continue to play an enormous role in shaping US laws.

## Writers, Actors Strike Over Unfair Wages



By **Ben Nault** (‘26)  
EDITOR

Are you looking forward to a new series of your favorite TV show? Or maybe the next Marvel movie? Then be prepared to wait. There’s a writers’ and actors’ strike underway and until it’s resolved, your favorite new shows will likely be delayed.

The Writers Guild of America (WGA) and the Screen Actors Guild (SAG-AFTRA) are demanding fair pay from big film executives, who currently pay writers and actors a shameful percentage of what they make off movies and shows.

The WGA started their strike on May 2, 2023 with the goal to gain better working conditions and higher pay from big streaming services, particularly Netflix, Disney, and Amazon.

WGA provides many benefits for its members, particularly negotiating and administering contracts that protect the creative and economic rights of its members against bigger companies. The two general groups that WGA helps are Film/TV/Streaming and Broadcast/Cable/Streaming News.

The organization helps with different cases of credit and arbitration. This is to say that the members of WGA have a

large union behind them to protect their streaming and credit rights, and especially to help combat huge streaming companies from running over the backbone of their industry.

“Writers forced to strike in this climate should come as a surprise to no one,” WGA Research and Public Policy Director Laura Blum-Smith said.

Writers are being harassed as companies like Netflix, Disney, and Amazon continue to grow, acquiring more streaming services by the day. With more of these acquisitions we will see the loss of a more diverse media landscape.

With this decrease in diverse streaming competitors, these giants have the opportunity to control the media market, devaluing creative work while they make more and more money off that same creativity. This might also be one of the last big opportunities for WGA to speak up for better pay and working conditions before we see this diverse market disappear.

“This is not just about fighting back, it’s also about fighting forward,” WGA President Michael Winsnip said. “Fighting back because we need to show the networks and studios and streaming services that we mean business. Fighting forward because we are unafraid of

confronting what lies ahead, because we know our value and the value of the humanity we bring to our craft.”

With the new age of AI, there are even more concerns to the security of writers’ jobs in the media industry. If you pulled up ChatGPT you could ask it to write a 2 hour script for a movie, and it will do so. This technology will continue to grow, and with that the human creativity behind movies needs to be protected.

The SAG-AFTRA strike started not long after, on July 14. They aligned with WGA in fighting for better working conditions and pay from media giants in the industry. According to SAG-AFTRA’s website, “We’re up against a system where those in charge of multibillion-dollar media conglomerates are rewarded for exploiting workers.”

SAG-AFTRA is involved in a large part of an actor’s professional life in helping them get the best treatment and contracts possible. The union specifically helps its members negotiate working conditions, wages, health, pension, benefits, and protecting future job opportunities.

SAG-AFTRA is fighting against the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP), which contains Amazon, Apple, Disney, Netflix, Warner

Bros, and Discovery (HBO) among many others. SAG-AFTRA claims that these giants are prioritizing Wall Street and shareholders, not focusing on the human aspect which makes movies the incredible medium that they are.

While SAG-AFTRA and AMPTP have come to agree on some stances, there are still many more that they haven’t come to an agreement upon. Among these is fair compensation for inflation, revenue sharing, protection from AI technology, and updates to the pension and health contribution caps “which haven’t been updated in decades.”

One of the most common things within both of these strikes is the lack of cooperation with the media giants. Both sides have presented demands that satisfy their needs, but the streaming corporations refuse to listen or reply with fair counter offers.

With both sides not ready to settle anytime soon, we are forced to watch a stalemate, instead of watching the new content we crave.



# Barbenheimer Blows Up Box Office



By Liam Olds ('26)  
MANAGING EDITOR

The Great *Barbie v. Oppenheimer* battle of 2023 was perhaps more destructive than the atomic bomb itself. The war resulted in the brutal burning of many wallets, accounting for 2.23 billion dollars in ticket sales globally as of September 2, 2023. Come on people, if we had donated all of that money to a worthy charity (like the Padres) we could have made a real difference. (Could we have finally played .500 baseball?)

Though complete opposites in tone, both summer films were a huge success (some might say explosive...). The excitement convinced far too many self-respecting people to dress themselves looking like my underwear drawer (all hot pink, of course).

According to the Classification and Ratings Administration, none of our underclassmen should have seen *Oppenheimer*, because of its 'R' rating. Being the cinematic masterpiece that *Oppenheimer* was, I knew I had to help our little freshmen out. As an underclassman myself, I realized I needed to whip out the big guns, so I grabbed my fake ID (I'm McLovin, a 25 year-old Hawaiian organ donor), put on my fedora-centric disguise, and rushed off to the theater.

As a completely overqualified movie critic with zero movie reviews to my name, I decided to try to settle things once and for all. With three simple questions, I further pitted the movies against each other in hopes of finally settling the debate and ending this terrible, terrible wallet massacre.

## Question 1: Which movie had the better cast?

While the artistic bowl cuts and outfits reminiscent of local Neighborhood Watch signs are quite compel-



## "Barbenheimer" took movie theaters by storm.

ling, the cast of *Barbie* was simply too overpowering. With enough stars for both movies, *Barbie* just had too many pretty people in it. I mean compared to the rest of this cast, Ryan Gosling was "just Ken." Anywhere else, in any other movie, he would undoubtedly be a ten. No offense to my boy Cillian Murphy but the *Peaky Blinders* haircut will only get you so far - a little bit of hair product, a fur coat and a Mojo-Dojo-Casa-House might be worth looking into.

Score: *Barbie* - 1, *Oppenheimer* - 0

## Question 2: Which movie had the best scene?

I feel terrible for saying this, but somehow, Dance of the Kens was not the most impressive scene between the two movies. *Oppenheimer* director Christopher Nolan just had to go out and do something spectacular to best an inspiring interpretive dance performed by a group of Ken dolls in

an alternate dimension. The scene to which I'm referring is the sequence in which the "Trinity" test is performed. The fiery plume meant to depict the explosion of an atomic bomb is sensational (I'm convinced it actually heated up the theater) and most impressively, it's real. Nolan and the production crew have insisted they didn't use any computer-generated imagery (CGI) in the scene. It was a combination of micro and macro shots with different techniques, along with shots of actual explosions creating an unbelievable effect. It was a very tough decision but I'm going to have to give the point to *Oppenheimer*.

Score: *Barbie* - 1, *Oppenheimer* - 1

## Question 3: Which left a greater impact?

While a blast yield of fifteen kilotons of TNT would leave a pretty big divot, the societal significance of Greta Gerwig's *Barbie* outweighs that of *Op-*

*penheimer*. *Oppenheimer* was undoubtedly an amazing cinematic experience with stunning visuals and fantastic performances by all of the actors involved, but the feminist messages and social commentary in *Barbie* couldn't have come at a more crucial time. Women continue to struggle with societal stereotypes and expectations in a time when rights are being stripped away from them.

Gerwig's film offers insight into a polarizing figure of many girls' childhoods while still refraining from becoming a two-hour ad for Barbie's parent company, Mattel.

*Barbie* has been characterized by many as an unfair, unattainable representation of women that led to diminished self-perception and lowered self-worth. On the contrary, the toy was marketed as a feminine icon, a role-model for young girls, and a symbol for women being able to pursue accomplishments in any field.

Both views hold great merit and challenge the common notion that one's relationship to Barbie had to be either wholly positive or negative. Gerwig's interpretation, however, toes the line, creating a reality in which Barbie can be both an inspiration and a bad influence. *Barbie* provided much needed consolation and served as a unifying force in a time of such division and unrest. Point *Barbie!*

Score: *Barbie* - 2, *Oppenheimer* - 1

The summer yielded two amazing movies, both with their own subtleties and nuance - so which proved to be superior through my expert movie-reviewing skills? Well, I'm a Saintsman and an American at heart, so I like big bombs and I cannot lie; however I am a pretty pink princess (weird Barbie?) at heart. *Barbie* wins!!!

# Does T-Swift Have a New "Lover"?



By CHAT GPT  
AI OVERLORD

*Note from the Editors:* When we heard the rumors that pop music sensation Taylor Swift is allegedly dating Kansas City Chiefs tight end Travis Kelce, we knew that *The Augustinian* would need to cover the situation. After many long hours deliberating, we finally came up with the perfect idea inspired by former editor-in-chief Manny Butler, class of '21: have ChatGPT write a breakup song in the style of Taylor Swift. This one's for you, Manny.

(Verse 1)

I used to cheer you on every Sunday night,  
In that Chiefs jersey, under the stadium lights,  
You were my MVP, my football king,  
But now it's time to tell you something, Travis Kelce.

You caught my heart like a perfect pass,  
But now it feels like we're both out of gas,  
You were the tight end of my dreams,  
But things aren't always what they seem.

(Chorus)

Travis, Travis, I'm waving goodbye,  
Our love was a touchdown, but now it's a fumble,  
You're chasing touchdowns, and I'm

chasing the sky,  
It's time to break up, let our love crumble.

(Verse 2)

You had that smile that could light up the field,  
But lately, I'm wondering if it's even real,  
You're always in the spotlight, soaking up fame,  
And I'm just tired of playing in your game.

You said we'd be together, forever and more,  
But all I see now is the scoreboard,  
You're scoring touchdowns, breaking records, it's true,  
But where does that leave me and you?

(Chorus)

Travis, Travis, I'm waving goodbye,  
Our love was a touchdown, but now it's a fumble,  
You're chasing touchdowns, and I'm chasing the sky,  
It's time to break up, let our love crumble.

(Bridge)

I thought we were a team, but it's all about you,  
I was your cheerleader, but you never knew,  
You're in the end zone, but I'm on the sideline,

It's time to break free and leave you behind.

(Verse 3)

I'll miss the way you ran those routes,  
But I can't keep living in this doubt,  
You're on the highlight reel, making history,  
And I'm just a chapter in your story.

You were my touchdown dance, my victory song,  
But now it's time to admit we're wrong,  
I'm trading my heartache for a fresh start,  
I'm tearing your poster off my heart.

(Chorus)

Travis, Travis, I'm waving goodbye,  
Our love was a touchdown, but now it's a fumble,  
You're chasing touchdowns, and I'm chasing the sky,  
It's time to break up, let our love crumble.

(Outro)

So here's my goodbye, my farewell to you,  
I'm leaving this stadium, finding someone new,  
You'll keep playing the game, and I'll find my way,  
But Travis Kelce, we're done, no more to say.

## THE AUGUSTINIAN

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## TEACHERS

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than I had when I went to high school.”

Currently, he loves how everyone, from the students to the faculty, is very respectful towards him and other people. In his free time, he likes to watch the Mets, the Warriors, and the Sharks. He also enjoys playing softball and pickup basketball as well as helping out at his church.

The English department added Mr. Duffy who teaches freshmen and juniors. He was a college teacher in Philadelphia for twenty years and this is the first year that he is teaching at a high school.

A Saints graduate of 1990, Mr. Duffy was even taught by Mr. Cudal, who impacted his decision to become an English teacher.

After high school, he went to Villanova University, and later moved back to San Diego to study at SDSU where he earned his master's in English. While at Villanova, an English professor mentioned that he should become a teacher. Before that moment, Mr. Duffy had never really thought about being a teacher, but soon his old high school came to mind. He began to envision how he could make a lasting impact through teaching.

The thing that he loves most about Saints is the Brotherhood. He loves the energy that is present in every student in Saints. He also loves how helpful the faculty has been towards him.

“Enjoy every moment that you have at Saints,” Mr. Duffy said, “There is a

special bond and connection here. Do not just take Saints for granted.”

In his free time, he loves to watch the Padres. He is also a big music fan and he loves to read fiction, including the works of Chuck Palahniuk and T.C. Boyle.

Next is Mr. Adams, who teaches Physics, AP Physics, and Engineering.

He attended Cal Poly San Luis Obispo, where he earned his master's in Physics and his teaching credential.

Mr. Adams previously was a science teacher at Woodland Middle School and Harriet Tubman Middle School, as well as a Physics and AP Physics teacher at High Bluff Academy. He chose to go into teaching because while he was looking at the types of jobs he could do with a Physics major, he “didn't want to just count particles all day.”

One of his friends mentioned that he should substitute for one of his teachers for a day, and he really enjoyed that. He also loved teaching kids how to play tennis. He certainly knew that he wanted to teach kids how to do physics.

His path to Saints came through OLP where he was an assistant tennis coach. There he saw the Saints tennis team playing and decided to help coach the Saints JV team as well.

After a job position opened up in the science department, Mr. Adams pounced on the opportunity to teach at Saints.

“I had always been working with kids with weapons in their hands, so they found that I was qualified for the job,” Mr. Adams joked.

Besides tennis, Mr. Adams likes to play the trumpet in his free time.

He is impressed by how school spirit is present in every Saintsman. He also loves how the buy-in to be a saintsman is universal throughout all of Saints.

“I knew that the athletes had the school spirit, but I didn't realize how universal that spirit was throughout the school in different ways for different kids,” Mr. Adams said.

The last of the new Saints teachers is Mr. Bier. He teaches Comparative Religions and Comparative Politics, and he helps out Ms. Hammock in the Campus Ministry office.

He went to the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee where he got his bachelor's degree with a double major in economics and in political science with a pre-law emphasis. From there, he served in the Peace Corps for two years, during which he traveled to Ghana where he worked on preserving trees by running a nursery.

Mr. Bier then went to Creighton University in Nebraska for law school where he got his JD before later working for the US Department of Justice in Washington, DC.

He then moved to Indiana, where the governor appointed him as an Indiana state judge. He served as the chief judge on a review board for unemployment claims. The decisions he made could sometimes be reviewed by the Indiana Court of Appeals, and could even go to the Indiana State Supreme Court, but

Mr. Bier never lost an appealed case at the Supreme Court level.

After 15 years as a judge, he moved out to San Diego with his family. After his experience as a Saints parent, he made it his goal to work here someday.

“I came on campus and I said to myself, ‘This place is really cool!’” Mr. Bier said.

When Mr. Sipper called him with the chance to work as a substitute teacher, Mr. Bier jumped at the opportunity. He started subbing at Saints two years ago, and this year, he was offered a full time position.

In his free time, Mr. Bier enjoys cheering for Wisconsin sports teams—specifically the Green Bay Packers, the Milwaukee Brewers, and the Wisconsin Badgers. He also enjoys running. He completed a challenge to run a 5k every day for 52 days straight, and he is currently attempting the challenge again.

Mr. Bier shared some advice given to him by his friend: “You never know where you will be, but you will always be there.”

It is always wonderful to see new teachers on campus with every new school year, and this year is no different. All Saintsmen wish Mr. Hitchcock, Mr. Duffy, Mr. Adams, and Mr. Bier a fantastic first year at Saints, as they work to continue to educate the next generation of Saintsmen.

*Our next issue will feature our new office staff members: Ms. Priscilla Sandoval and Mrs. Kristen Hadzicki.*

## Chaplain's Corner



Fr. Max Villeneuve, OSA  
COLUMNIST

“Hay MUCHOS!” “There's MANY of them!!”

That was the joyful exclamation of one of the children at Casa Hogar La Gloria upon seeing the many Saintsmen and OLP students arriving at the orphanage, which might have been an understatement as there were over 30 Saintsmen and Pilots present!

Casa Hogar was founded in 1975, and the Augustinians quickly became involved by sponsoring the orphanage to give it more spiritual support. For about 20 years now, both Saints and OLP have regularly visited the orphanage one Saturday a month during the school year.

Our monthly trips to the orphanage are a wonderful Saints tradition. The trips are led by our Director of Christian Service, Mrs. Brophy, who helps student leaders plan activities and games for the visits. Seating in the school vans is limited and can be requested through Mrs. Brophy, but students are also welcome to drive themselves to the orphanage and meet the rest of the group there.

The visits are a great source of blessing for the children at the orphanage, but the experience can be equally as important for our students, as both groups have much to learn from each other. Every visit is also followed by a stop at a local taqueria for authentic TJ style tacos. Those who do not have a SENTRI pass then cross back into the United States on foot at the Otay Port of Entry – sometimes enjoying churros while waiting in line.

Many of us have different goals when beginning the school year—make sure that a visit to Casa Hogar is one of them!

## DEBATE

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steadfast conviction.

A known supporter of American nationalism and expansionism, the former UN ambassador, Nikki Haley, was outspoken about the US acting as a “protector”. She clashed heavily with Vivek Ramaswamy and called out his “lack of experience” when he pushed for US withdrawal from Ukraine and his lack of support for the Israeli government.

Overall, Mrs. Haley's performance was a surprising turn. Even though her pro-life views may turn off some moderate female voters, her popularity quickly rose following the debate.

Former Vice President Mike Pence also made his mark. Mr. Pence encapsulates the extremist right wing ideology which has generally dominated the Republican party in the last couple of years.

Mr. Pence is a devout evangelical who supports the banning of abortion in all cases except for preserving the life of the mother. He served as a cornerstone of the traditional, Reaganesque Republican party and his talking points reflected that.

When asked about his reaction to former President Trump's dismissal of the 2020 election results, Mr. Pence struck a chord with non-Trump-supporting Republicans, as he cited that he has chosen to defend the Consti-

tution, rather than ignoring it to side with Mr. Trump.

Overall, Mr. Pence is a flashback to the old Republican Party marked by conservatism and not the extreme populism which dominates the party now. Now more than ever, a portion of the Republican party feels it needs politicians such as Mr. Pence, who can bring back the old grassroots conservative spirit typically associated with the GOP.

Ultimately, the first GOP debate felt sluggish. Politicians were more focused on discussing former President Trump rather than talking about actual policy, and what little policy was discussed was overridden by people speaking over each other and by candidates trying to get “sound bites,” which perfectly encapsulates the spirit of American politics today.

As the first GOP debate passes, all we can do as young Americans and future voters is hope that the state of American politics can come back to debates about actual meaningful policy rather than a state of constant personal attacks and bickering over extreme partisan politics.

*Editors' Note: At the time of writing, the second GOP debate had yet not taken place.*

## ISAAK

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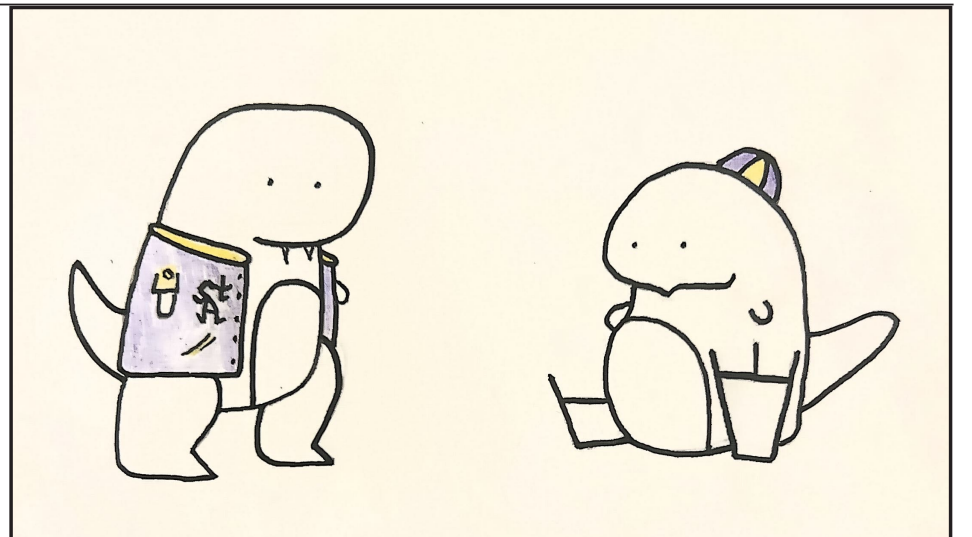
naments. There are smaller tournaments here in San Diego that are usually done every month. They're usually run by local restaurants or bars. The biggest of these is in the San Diego Aero Club, which has fourteen pinball machines, and the other one is in Brewski's where they have eight pinball machines.

TA: Do you ever use mathematics to play pinball?

Isaak: Yes. There are all kinds of rules, and there is a risk/reward. So pinball is a combination of both skill and luck. Like the best players, I got up to 312th out of 80,000 ranked pinball players in the world, so usually the better players are able to overcome bad luck. The math part of it is knowing what the risk/reward is. Like this shot is risky, but what does it set up? So yes, math is very important. Especially in a tournament, where there will be four of us playing one machine. I have to know my score relative to everybody's, so sometimes when I go up to a ball, I know, “Ok, I've got to blow this ball up and score a lot.” Other times, I look around and go, “Ok, I don't need to go that hard on this, because you guys are not playing as well. Ok, what can I do on the playing field to score some guaranteed points without using too much risk”. You're always playing your odds here, especially later in the game when you're looking at all the other scores.

## Caption Contest

Come up with a creative caption for this cartoon by Kieron Scanlan '26 and submit it by DMing @saintsnewspaper on Instagram. The editing staff of *The Augustinian* will select a winning caption. The 3 best captions will be published in the next issue of *The Augustinian* and the winner will receive a \$10 In-N-Out gift card. Everybody – students, teach-





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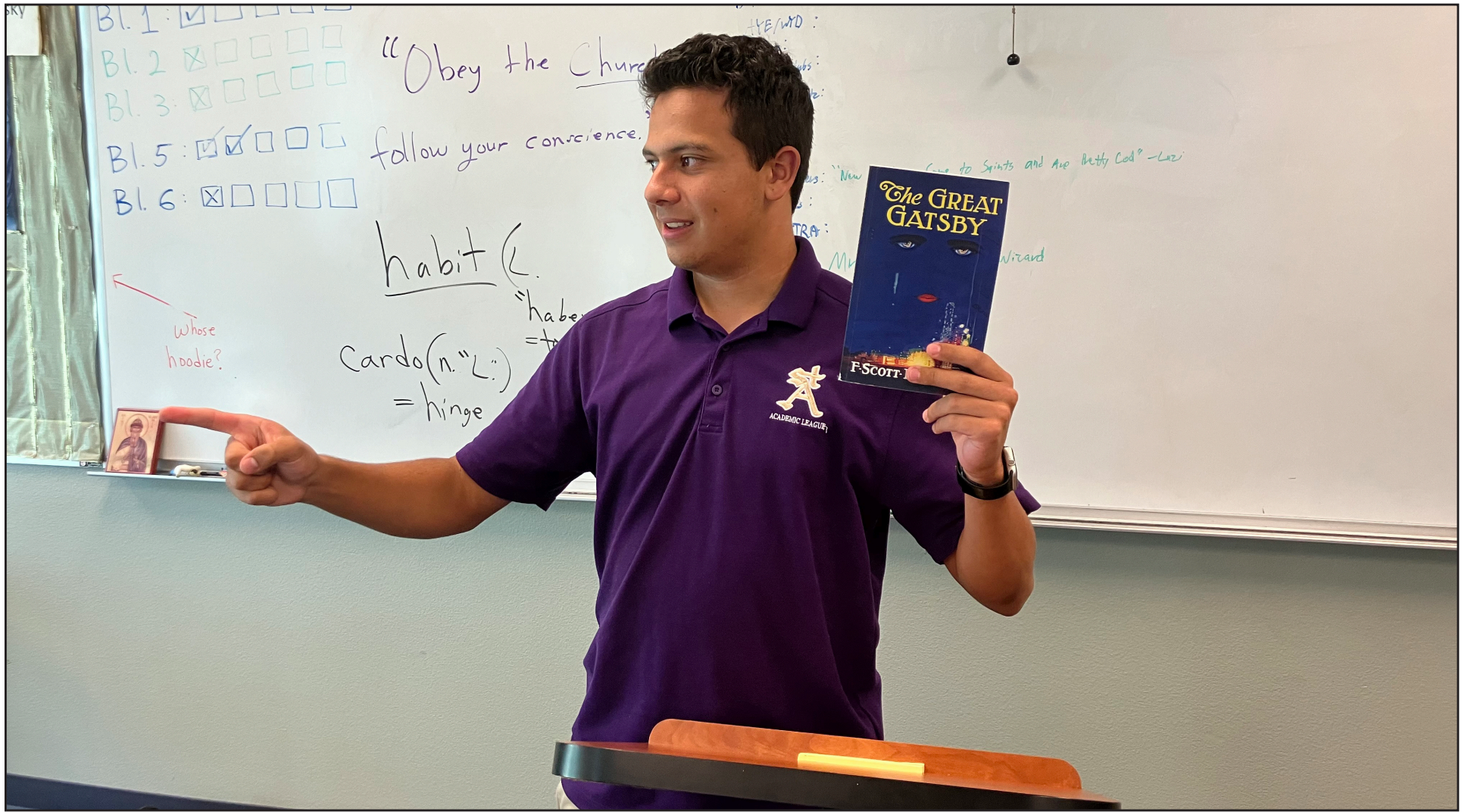
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# Totally Not Fake New Classes Come to Saints



Dr. Griffin, PhD lecturing in front of his Sarcasm 101 class.

Liam Olds '26



**By Griffin Cappiello ('24)**  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

With the arrival of a new school year at Saints also comes the arrival of a slate of brand new classes that Saintsmen will be able to take. The following is an entirely real list of new Saints classes:

**AP Algebra I** (Mr. Wehbe) - Do you really like math? Is your schedule missing some weighted classes? Do you want to give the College Board even more of your money for classes that are honestly kind of pointless? Then AP Algebra I is for you! Mr. Wehbe teaches the exact same curriculum as regular Algebra I, except the College Board dictates that he has to present it in a way that makes no sense. And you have to pay them 97 bucks to take the AP exam.

**Bow Ties and Their Properties** (Mr. Chesser) - If you've ever seen Mr. Chesser walking around campus, you should know that he is the world's leading expert on bow tie fashion. In the first semester, he explains the history of the bow tie, and how the bow tie has evolved over time. In the second semester, Mr. Chesser will instruct students on the practical applications of bow ties, specifically, how to tie them.

**Honors Facial Hair Grooming** (Mr. Cudal and Mr. Hickey) - As two of the Saints teachers with the most impressive facial hair, Mr. Cudal and Mr. Hickey will instruct a course on how to

grow – and take care of – beards and/or mustaches. Despite much protesting from Mr. O'Beirne, students enrolled in this class will be exempt from dress codes for facial hair.

**Life Lessons** (Coacher) - As anyone who has ever spoken with Coacher knows, he loves to share his life lessons with anyone who will listen. This class gives him the perfect opportunity to lecture on how grades don't matter, the importance of a "one-percent skill," the real reasons to go to college (spoiler: not related to academics), and other good strategies for succeeding in life.

**Honors Naptime** (Mrs. Crachy) - In this course, Mrs. Crachy teaches a small group of seniors who will spend their time learning the elusive art of napping. Subject matters in this class include: sleeping positions, blankets, and pillows. Note: students may apply for this class, but the final group of students will be selected by Mrs. Crachy.

**Super APUSH** (Sensei da Luz) - The course material is the exact same as regular APUSH. The only difference is that Mr. da Luz will teach at twice the speed. This class is only for the bravest students and should not be attempted by mere mortals.

**Honors Newspaper** (Mr. Bachynsky) - Only the best and brightest students at St. Augustine High School are accepted into Mr. Bachynsky's rigorous Honors Newspaper class. Students will spend countless

hours slaving away, piecing together the best school newspaper in the country. Late nights locked in the gulag will leave even the toughest scholars with irreparable mental scarring. And then after all this, Mr. B says "it isn't good enough. Re-edit everything!" On the bright side, students in this class occasionally eat chicken and waffles together.

**Honors Men of Literature** (Mr. Cudal) - In his Honors English I class, Mr. Cudal goes over every paragraph of *The Great Gatsby*. In Honors Men of Literature, he has the time to go over every word. This class has secretly been available to a very select group of Saintsmen, and only 4 students have ever passed this class: Mr. Cudal himself, the legendary Ignacio of Mr. Cudal's stories, Patrick O'Leary, and Liam Olds.

**Honors Pit Chants** (Dr. GO) - In the follow-up class to Pit Chants 101, students tackle the more advanced properties of school spirit. Graduating from the simple "Let's go Saintsmen," to more advanced chants, such as the "I Believe" chant, is not for the faint of heart. Dr. GO demands a perfect classroom atmosphere, and only accepts the most disciplined, yet the loudest, students. Wearing a shirt is not required.

**Rugby 101** (Mr. Dent) - In all fairness, this isn't exactly a new class – it's more of a rebrand. Mr. Dent spends so much time recruiting for the rugby team, so the administration thought it

would be best to rename his Spanish I class as Rugby 101. This class will still teach you the basics of Spanish, but with fun field trips for beach clean-ups.

**Intro to Smiling** (Mr. Okuley) - Rumor has it that the smiley emoji was modeled from Mr. Okuley, so he's incredibly qualified to teach this class. In a single semester, Mr. Okuley instructs students on the various techniques behind smiling. Your grade is determined by the length of time you can spend smiling – an easy 168 hours per week for Mr. Okuley.

**Intro to Frowning** (Mr. O'Beirne) - Similarly to Mr. Okuley's Smiling class, Mr. O'Beirne is the instructor of the equally important Frowning class. Although he is actually a rather jolly man, Mr. O'Beirne has mastered the art of frowning. He spends a semester explaining the intricacies of frowning, including the history and motivations behind frowning. The final consists of looking at pictures of cute baby animals and keeping a straight face.

**Sarcasm 101** (Dr. Griffin, PhD) - This intensive course is the highlight of the year for all students fortunate enough to take it. The only problem is that you can never tell if Dr. Griffin, PhD is being serious or not. In the course, he covers the intricacies of sarcasm while providing essential life lessons to his students (don't date theater kids). For the final exam, students will attempt to replicate Dr. Griffin, PhD's iconic eye roll.

## WYD

*continued from page 1*

World Youth Day festivities began. On the first day of the event, the Saints pilgrims attended the opening WYD Mass with the Archbishop of Lisbon alongside over 1.5 million other young Catholics.

Later, Saintmen also met with Cardinal Robert McElroy of San Diego, who held a special Mass just for San Diegans who made the pilgrimage to Portugal.

The highlight of the week was marked by the arrival of the Holy Father, Pope Francis. Nearly 2 million

young people lined the streets, hoping to get a glimpse of the Pope, and several Saintmen were lucky to get close enough to get a picture of the Holy Father.

The participants of WYD remembered the Stations of the Cross with the Pope, while Portuguese youth acted out the stations through interpretive dances. Pope Francis gave a short homily in which he spoke of the power that young people hold not only in the Catholic Church, but also throughout the world.

At the end of the week, the pilgrims made a four mile trek to an open area

where the final papal Mass was held. The Saintsmen slept outside under the stars with millions of other young Catholics, and woke up to celebrate Sunday Mass with the Pope.

Pope Francis gave an inspirational homily, in which he urged the young people of the Church not to be afraid. He instructed the youth to strive to affect change not only in the Catholic Church, but also throughout their local school and parish communities.

"It really put into perspective how many people share your same beliefs and took the same journey to get there,"

Bartel said, "It was really cool to share in that experience."

At the end of Mass, the Pope blessed all of the pilgrims and wished them a safe journey back home, before announcing that the next World Youth Day would take place in Seoul, South Korea.

Underclassmen will be able to share in the pilgrimage experience as Saints will take a delegation of students to South Korea for WYD in 2027, giving a new generation the opportunity to meet and hear the inspiring messages of the Pope in person.