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2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT & HONOR ROLL OF DONORS



ST. AUGUSTINE HIGH SCHOOL

Catholic Education for Young Men Since 1922

3266 NUTMEG STREET • SAN DIEGO, CA 92104

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Our mission is to provide a Catholic liberal arts education for young men in an environment that promotes the development of mind, heart and body in the Augustinian tradition.

By helping to form loving disciples of Jesus Christ we communicate to the world the gospel values of community, truth and love.

Dear Friends of Saints,

What defines greatness? Words, ideas and concepts come to mind, but surely one response to such a question is impact. The impact that St. Augustine High School has on the young men who step onto the campus draws me to say unequivocally that it is truly a great school. That impact is like innumerable tributaries flowing into the ocean: the outstanding education of the mind, the development of integrity, character and joy in the heart, and the powerful culture of excellence and discipline in the sports program. Impact matters because what matters creates a deep and lasting impact both here and now and in the generations to come.

Saintsmen make an impact as they go out to offer our world their generosity of Spirit. That education of mind, heart and body, that love for service and supreme physical presence is welcomed at the finest universities, the finest work environments and most importantly it creates the finest friendships and families. This profound impact has its source in the goodness and creative generosity of God. And in this year 2024 to 2025, I can only humbly and sincerely thank you for your time, your talent and your treasure. I believe most strongly that your generosity is a sign that you are sharing in that same divine creative goodness. The fruits of your giving are evident and deeply felt and appreciated in the awesome academic program, the \$15.5 million Endowment Fund, and the continued development of the campus and surrounding facilities. The benefits are easily recognized in the fresh-faced Freshman as much as the Senior with one eye on the college of his choice. Impact matters.

St. Augustine said that "Since love grows within you, so beauty grows. For love is the beauty of the soul." You have impacted the lives of Saintsmen with your loving gifts and this is certainly seen in the magnanimity of the school community built on the values of unity, truth and love as well as an expanding growth of beauty in the world. God, the source of all things flows through this campus, creating green pastures that restore the soul for our students. Thank you for your impact because it makes Saints a truly great school.

Sincerely,

Very Rev. Barnaby Johns, OSA
PRIOR PROVINCIAL OF THE PROVINCE OF ST. AUGUSTINE



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Saints Community,

As I began recollecting the 2023-24 academic year, I was overwhelmed by the goodness, sacrifice, and generosity of the Saints Community. When our unity was cast in doubt this past year, we overcame it, when the love we have for one another was questioned we refused to be divided and when the Truth that we hold dear to our hearts was attacked, we held firm. Through the sometimes hazy fog of life, the strength of our community shone brightly for all to see.

On the day of Baccalaureate and Graduation, Mr. Hecht placed a program on each of the administrators' chairs. As I arrived and picked up my program, I noticed on the front of the program it was the 100th commencement in our illustrious history. It seems the busyness of the year had precluded me from this realization. Sitting there I could not help but think about all the families who had supported Saints through the years and thousands of young men that had become alumni during the decades since the founding of the school.

As I stood up for the procession of the class of 2024, I looked to my left and recognized the men from the class of 1974 who were present for their 50th reunion. Many of these men were back on campus for the first time in years and had returned to their school only to find new buildings, and a new modernized track and field. As we shared stories about the "good old days," I was reminded that the days we are currently experiencing are even greater in our quest to educate the next generation of Saintsmen. The Augustinian message to the class of 1974 must have been strong as it can still be seen in the way these men conduct their lives and speak of their time at Saints. Their education during the early 1970s still reverberates in our present traditions that have grown and changed with the times but continue to help Saints develop good men.

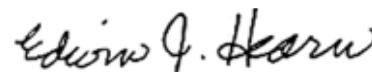
As my gaze shifted back to the class of 2024, I reminisced the many laughs, and moments of witnessing their integrity and competence I witnessed this past year. They give us hope for a better future.

There are hundreds of variables when organized and executed by the administrative team make for a tremendous school year. As these pages will attest, the generous support that comes from our ever-growing community of benefactors has been the catalyst of growing more opportunities for our Saintsmen. This was chronicled in our six-year WASC Accreditation in which every aspect of school life was rated at the highest possible levels and with 98% of the senior class rating their Saints Experience (all facets of school Life) at the highest end of the spectrum in the Exit Survey held this past May.

With a growing number of benefactors, the Endowment Fund of just over \$12 million in 2022-23 has grown to \$15.5 million this year. We were blessed to have received many individual gifts and a growing number of gifts from family trusts of Saints alumni. This growth has helped Saints partially fund more boys' educations. For some, they will be the first member of their family to attend college. We know that achieving this milestone affects a family for generations to come.

On behalf of the Augustinian Corporation, the Board of Directors, the administration, faculty, and staff, thank you for playing the pivotal role in providing Saints with the resources to come ever closer to fulfilling the Mission started by two Augustinian Priests, Fr. Thomas Healy, OSA and Fr. Alphonse Martel, OSA whose faith in the idea of an all-boys Catholic High School would become the lynchpin that plays and will continue to play a critical role in the development of the City of San Diego.

Sincerely,



Ed Hearn
PRESIDENT, ST. AUGUSTINE HIGH SCHOOL



GOD BLESS THE CLASS OF 1974

Vicotr Ancheta Ablang
Arthur Richard Adame
Manuel John Aguirre
Edmund Robert Alvarado
Robert Joseph Avvampato
William Charles Banach
Michael Ashley Barnes
Mark Gerard Beddow
Michael Hughes Bojorquez
Jackson Christopher Bourus
John Bowman
Michael Anthony Camarata
Daniel Edward Carey
Alvaro Luis Casares
Christopher Ralph Castellanos
Eduardo Alejandro Cervantes
Paul Robert Chacon
Luis E. Chacon
Gregory Kenneth Chambers
Paul Gordon Clark
John Edward Clarke
Kip Hiroyasu Cooper
Peter Joseph Carrao

Arthur Anthon Cortinas
William Jeffery Cowper
Thomas Michael Croke
James Edward Cunningham
David Garrett De Bow
Andrew Edward De Sogo
William Joseph Jude DeGrenier
Mark Edward Derenthal
William Charles DiBernardo
William Arthur Dorsey
Michael Vartin Eagen
Andrew Mario Escudero
Victor Joseph Estudillo
Robert Patrick Ferry
Thomas Lloyd Fischer
Dennis James Fitzmaurice
Charles Brian Foltz
Jonathan Kimo Fong
Steven Joseph Franca
Michael Louis Franco
Isaac Hilario Frutos Lopez
Richard Gilbert Garcia
Guillermo Anthony Garcia

Stephen Paul Garrison
Steven Andres Gastelum
Daniel Joseph Goebel
Charles Gregory Gonsalves
James Alferd Green
William Dale Hightmen
Carl Andrew Hoeger
Michael Albert Hughes
Michael Patrick Hyatt
Timothy Paul Irving
Joseph David Izidoro
George Antonio Jaime
Patrick Roger Jenkins
Jose Alferdo Jimenes
Peter Eric Kammerer
David Alexander Kisic
Laszlo Alex Kisteleky
Martin Frekericus Koeleman
John Dan Kosich
Timothie Adam La Toure
Timothy Roy Labadie
John Joseph Lawrence
Joseph Daniel Lee

John Charles Lewis
Peter Paul LoCoco
Albert Amescua Luna
Michael Patrick Malloy
Michael John Malouf
Mark Anthony Martinez
Edward Paul Martinez
Carlos Victor Martinez
Oscar R. Martinez
Peter Anthony Mattera
Larry McCarthy
John Gregory Micheli
Robert Paul Miller
Joseph Minick
Enrique Careage Morones
Georg Manuel Nava
John Earl Newell
John Michael Nonzeta
Randolph Norris
Timothy Leo O'Hara
Robert Terrance O'Leary
Bernard Christopher Ordona
George Yogi Parco

Rebert Lee Payne
Gary Joseph Perkovack
Richard Alan Podwoski
William Moyer Quaintance
Manuel Quinones
Sergio Rangel
Gary Charle Recker
David R. Rodriguez
Daniel Richard Rotner
Michael Anthony Safino
Solomana N. Sagiao
Steven Jon Saxon
Bradley William Schwartz
Mark Stephen Scott
Matthew Senecal
George Alberto Silva
John Anthony Silva
Jeffery Ellis Silva
Steven Singleton
Michael Grerad Sohm
James Lawrence Stangl
Richard Thaddeus Stoklosa
Duane Grant Stone

James Rae Stone
Thomas Lang Strickland
Theodore Lee Strohauser
William Johnny Taylor
David John Talor
Vincent John Thayer
Thomas Patrick Thelen
Guido Jose Trevino
Delano Manuel Tulao
Alfredo Valencia
James Eugene Valenzuela
Richard John Vattuone
William Paul Virissimo
Joseph John Weber
Glenn Dean White
William Roy Whittaker
Ronald Everett Wiggins
Brian Edward Williams
Dean Williamson
Alfred Stanley Wrigley
Michael Patrick Yeatts
William Albert Yetman



FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

For over 100 years, Saints has been dedicated to forming Christian Gentlemen to be leaders in our community. We are grateful for the trust that families have placed in us, and look forward to the next century of Catholic Educational Greatness!

Like every great educational institution, St. Augustine High School faces the “slings and arrows of outrageous fortune” that test our resolve and challenge our priorities. I cannot be more proud of our school for always holding fast with a profound integrity even in the storms of adversity.

This integrity is, I believe, a huge example for our young men who walk the campus so they may know that we are rooted in our core values of Unity, Truth and Love, and that we must always act according to conscience and the Gospel. Our choices as a school create our core identity and choosing the right and the good is of paramount and eternal importance. Compromising the Truth is not an option.

St. Augustine said:

“Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are Anger and Courage.
Anger at the way things are, and Courage to see that they do not remain as they are.”

We must continue to use our moral courage to be the rock in the storm that surrounds us, the safe haven for those in need. For if not us, who? In this present age, being steadfast in the face of any adversity is where we wish to position ourselves, for this is the light that dispels the darkness.

I am proud to head a board that understands this and remains committed to training our sons and brothers to become modern day knights who defend God’s Word. Friedrich Nietzsche’s words written over a century ago still resonate today:

“That which does not kill us makes us stronger.”

With a strong sense of gratitude and love in Christ,

William R. Hamlin
CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS



FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Friends,

With 101 years of tradition, St. Augustine High School has established a standard of excellence in the educational experience it offers to young men and their families. Our commitment to educating young men in the faith, while providing a rigorous liberal arts curriculum designed to prepare them for college, is both a tremendous responsibility and an outstanding opportunity.

This past year we completed our WCEA/WASC accreditation and finalized our Strategic Plan for 2024-2030. Our goal is not only to maintain our tradition of achievement and care for others but also to find new ways to enhance the quality of education and programs we offer to students and families.

The plan can be found on our webpage www.sahs.org

At the heart of the Saints Experience is a desire to prepare young men to thrive in the world while deepening their relationship with God. Our partnership with loving parents, dedicated faculty, virtuous coaches, and enthusiastic alumni ensures that our students will acquire the skills and knowledge necessary to become productive, moral citizens and leaders in an ever-changing world. I am deeply grateful for the support we receive as we guide our Saintsmen during these times of economic, cultural, and moral tension.

Our core values of community, truth, and love dictate that the realization of our dreams at Saints comes from collaborative efforts. We want to extend our sincere thanks to all benefactors, board members, parents, faculty, alumni, students, and friends who contribute to fulfilling our vital mission.

In the Spirit of Catholic Education,

James Horne
PRINCIPAL



WITH GOD'S GRACE THE CLASS OF 2024 REBOUNDED *By Ed Hearn*

As the sounds of excitement begin to fade and the Class of 2024 moves on from their Saints Experience into the world beyond the safety of their home for the past four years, it is important to gaze back over their short four years at Saints. When this class began in the fall of 2020, it was organized unlike any of the countless classes that preceded them. Freshman football, the Freshman Retreat, and Freshman Welcome Week were all different. This class became Saintsmen with Covid restrictions.

In December of 2019, when the class of 2024 was in the midst of eighth grade, we began to hear about an unrecognizable disease that was having fatal consequences for older people and others with compromised immunity issues. By the second week of March, the world was shuttered, and over a weekend with most schools replacing person-to-person learning with Zoom school. Most graduations were replaced with stringent protocols in place that did not resemble a normal ceremony.

The Class of 2024 experienced their Freshman year unlike almost all of their contemporaries in California. They were able to meet for class on campus but under the strict guidelines of the county. While campus life was more normal than most, it was still unlike any school year in Saints history. They met in cohorts and had to be spaced during class with most classes cut in half. Their teachers had to teach each of their classes twice as half the class gathered outside to study, while the other half of the class was taught by their teacher.

When the class of 2024 returned to Saints for their sophomore year, it was clear that Saints was attempting to adjust to incoming freshmen who had learning issues resulting from the isolation they experienced while being taught via Zoom during their middle school years. There was a great deal of catching up taking place, especially in math where freshmen testing indicated math skills had taken a hit for many boys. While the year appeared normal, it wasn't. People tended to be more aggressive in their demands for their sons. In some cases, arguments, bad body language, and accusations replaced the respect that previously had been accorded the administration, teachers, and staff.

When evaluating this year at Saints, we see the strong post-Covid headwinds of history play into the life of the community. It was a year of ups and downs for our boys. No one experienced it more deeply than the class of 2024. The entire community was tested as the DNA of Saints was threatened by a cloud of suspicion surrounding the football program. It was a time of soul-searching, a time to learn from how this moment happened. It was a difficult time, but with God's grace Saints rebounded into a stronger school focused more fully on unity, truth and love.

Although life is rarely predictable, Saints became better prepared to face its future due to the aftermath of this explosive event that rocked Saints. It appeared that the seniors were able to move forward through these difficult moments with their pride intact for Saints.

Having lived through the Covid and post-Covid world and the many events of their senior year, there was the worry that the Saints Experience for these young men might have been tarnished. After reviewing the annual senior exit interviews in 32 notable areas of school life in the waning moments their senior year it was clear the seniors had a great four years. When rating their moral and spiritual education and overall Saints Experience, 98% of the seniors rated that experience as good to excellent, while 99% of our young men rated their intellectual development as outstanding.



CLASS OF 2024 TOP HONORS AT GRADUATION

THE ST. AUGUSTINE MEDAL

Awarded to the student who, from the viewpoint of academic achievement, citizenship, and leadership, is regarded as the most representative graduate this year. He must be a four-year Saintsman. The key quality is leadership. Selection is by faculty vote.

Awarded to Thomas Dean Fuller
Honorable Mention - Griffin Christopher Cappiello



THE PRINCIPAL'S TROPHY FOR EXCELLENCE IN STUDIES OVER FOUR YEARS

The Principal's Trophy for Excellence in Studies Over Four Years is given by the administration. The awardee was Chase Gadler.
Right: Honorable Mention David Wise, Award winner Chase Gadler, Honorable Mention Samuel Velasquez-Ocello with Principal Mr. James Horne



THE CHRISTIAN CONDUCT MEDAL

Awarded to the student whose citizenship record has been of the highest excellence and who is judged to have shown positive evidence of those attributes befitting a Christian gentleman. Selection is by faculty vote.

Awarded to Zachary Alexander Horne
Honorable Mention - Daniel Feiner



THE REV. JOHN R. AHERNE, O.S.A TROPHY

The Rev. John R. Aherne, O.S.A Trophy is awarded to the Varsity Football player with the highest academic standing.
Right: the 2024 recipient is Zachary Horne with Assistant Principal Mr. Mike Haupt



THE GOLD MEDAL FOR EXCELLENCE IN ATHLETICS

Awarded to the student who has excelled in at least two sports for two years, and exhibits the attributes befitting a Saintsman.

Awarded to Isaiah Hasten
Honorable Mention - Lawrence "Lolo" Rudolph



EVENSON FAMILY AWARD

Saintsman Thomas Sarmiento was recognized with the John D. Evenson award and a \$5000 scholarship for his commitment and dedication to the Saints Intramural program this year. Thomas is pictured with Karene Evenson and her son Tony Evenson '87.



THE GOLD MEDAL FOR EXCELLENCE IN VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS

Awarded to a student who has excelled in at least two of the Visual and Performing Art disciplines for at least two years, exhibited creative and intuitive thinking and exhibited the attributes befitting a Saintsman. Selection is confirmed by faculty vote.

Awarded to Alexander Thomas Watson
Honorable Mention - Luca Espino DiMarino



Godspeed, Class of 2024



PROUD TO CALL EACH OTHER BROTHERS

By Griffin Cappiello



I want you all to think back to the first time you stepped foot on the Saints campus. I can vividly remember exactly what was going through my mind on that day over four years ago. I was in 8th grade, touring Saints on an open house day. I walked up from the underground parking structure and saw those three big words printed on the front of the Commons: Unitas, Veritas, and Caritas.

There was only one problem. I misread that last word, and thought it said “carnitas” instead, which made me slightly overestimate the amount of tacos that Saints would provide for us.

If you told me then that those three words would come to define my life, I certainly would not have believed you. However, if the past four years have taught me nothing else, it’s that those three Augustinian values “community, truth, and love” are the secret to finding joy and success in life.

From the first day of SSS the summer before freshman year onward, Saints has always emphasized the importance of community. I distinctly remember Coach Oliwa marching out on the football field, shouting and telling us that it would be up to us to hold our brothers accountable for the work they put into training. The faculty and staff at Saints established how important the Brotherhood truly is from Day One. Whether we were in the classroom, electing Tolu as our class pope in Mr. Bachynsky’s class freshman year, or on the field, winning more league and CIF titles than most people can count, the Saints community never dwindled. It’s only fitting that the first national championship Saints has ever won was for having the best student section in the nation - of course we would win the award for having the best community support for our teams, that is a key part of what St. Augustine High School is.

In our time at Saints, we have also learned many essential truths about the subjects we studied, about the world, and about ourselves. This wasn’t always easy - Coacher coming up to you after you just bombed a test and saying to you, - “Hey buddy, grades don’t matter” isn’t the most comforting thing to hear - but it was an important lesson to learn. In fifty years when we look back at our time at Saints, we won’t remember the grades we got on our tests, or whether or not we passed an AP exam - we’ll remember the moments we shared together and the friendships we made. I couldn’t tell you what my final grade in Mr. Cudal’s class was, but I can absolutely tell you that the colors of the rabbits in Of Mice and Men were red, green, and blue. I think it’s fair to say that we aren’t the same timid little kids that we were when we arrived at Saints four years ago. Throughout our time here, we’ve come to discover ourselves - we’ve learned who we are so that we can become the best version of ourselves, and in doing so, we have transformed into strong young men who are ready to take on the world.

Finally, in our time at Saints we have learned the value of having love in our lives. Jesus instructed us to love each other as he has loved us, and I truly believe that Saints has taught us to do just that. Everything we have done at this school over the past four years has been out of love - love for one another, love for our school, or simply just love for ourselves. Even if you haven’t realized it, the love that Saints has instilled in us manifests itself in our everyday lives. It has a profound impact on my life, and I know it has affected you all in similar ways. I think this is what Saints does best - no matter what we do, we carry ourselves with a spirit of love.

Continued on pg. 23 - See “Brothers”

THE AUSTINS

The Austins, oral examinations in the fields of English, mathematics, religion, science, social studies, and visual and performing arts are given to seniors selected from among the top 10% of the class in academic rank:

GRADUATING AUSTIN SCHOLARS

SUMMA CUM LAUDE: Mitchel Glen Sanford

MAGNA CUM LAUDE: Chase Benjamin Gadler, Samuel Andres Velazquez-Ocello, Romeo Nataniel Velarde-Alvarez, David Josef Wise

CUM LAUDE: Nathaniel James Butler, Daniel Matthew Feiner, Ryan Alexander Ortega

GRADUATING CUM LAUDE HONORS

Based on a 3.6 or higher academic weighted cumulative grade point average after seven semesters:

Tyler Sam Abbo	Robert Michael Grohman	Ethan James Ramon Piñon-
Christian Audish	Salvador Gutierrez Navarro	Larkin
Colin Michael Babich	Justin Peter Heffler	Thomas James Pokorsky
Thomas Patrick Banzhof	Griffin Helfand	Lucas John Rogers
Nathaniel James Butler	Kieran LaRocque Hodson	Carson Michael Sahd
Griffin Christopher Cappiello	Matthew Stirling Hopkins	Julian Christopher Salem
Carlos Eduardo Casta	Patrick Peter Hormiz	Mitchel Glen Sanford
Lukas Jaroslav Cerny	Zachary Alexander Horne	Logan Andrew Sanford
Aaron Steven Thomas Cramp	Talan Makoto Hunter	Hector Santillana De Soto
Byron Laird Cunningham	Ryan Alexander Ireland	Colin Patrick Shughrou
Ian De La Rosa	Omar Jaibaji	Alonso Somohano
Luca Espino DiMarino	Owen Patrick Johnston	Nevin Andrew Steinbuch
Benton Carl DiPasquale	Aidan Michael Kalla	William Ancel Stowell
Jack Nicholas Dougenis	Landen Edward Kassab	Patrick Jamison Studebaker
Alejandro Emmanuel Duron	Luca Liciaga	Luis Fernando Urbina Calvillo
Donovan Faranso	Javier Alejandro Lopez	Fernando Valladolid Belendez
Daniel Matthew Feiner	Stephen Matthew Lorentzen	Romeo Nataniel Velarde-
Colin O'Donnell Foley	Shane David Martin	Alvarez
Sam Christoph Fries	Harry Patrick McCue	Samuel Andres Velazquez-
Thomas Dean Fuller	John Paul McNamara	Ocello
Chase Benjamin Gadler	Julian Jose Molina	Iain Christopher Wagner
Alan Gamiz	Noah Pablo Nayve	Alexander Thomas Watson
Shane Augustin Garcia	Evan Newlon	David Josef Wise
Andre Frederick Gaston	Benjamin Nguyen Ngo	Matthew Thomas Wisniew
Julian Gistaro	Joseph Binh Nguyen	Kenneth Ward Wright IV
Javier Alexander Granda	Ryan Alexander Ortega	Diego Andre Yee
Leo Wakelin Graves	Drew Brady Patterson	

COMMEMORATION OF PSA FLIGHT 182

Ed Hearn's description of the event:

Unlike the day of the horrific crash of PSA 182 and a small plane, the gathering of the Saints Community, neighbors from the surrounding North Park community, and those who suffered loss so many years ago were greeted by a cloud covering the commemoration of the newly completed prayer garden on the north side of the Raymond Center of the Performing Arts. At 8:55 AM the assemblage was called to order. With the entire student body present and standing behind neighbors and guests who were seated in chairs in front of the podium on Palm Street, Fr. Max Villeneuve offered a sober invocation setting the tone for the presentation to follow. As the President, I then explained the nature of the gathering.

After finishing my remarks, the Associated Student Body President, Jack Parada '25, read the inscription etched on the basalt stone slab of the memorial to our assemblage:

“In an air catastrophe witnessed by Saintsmen on our campus and in the surrounding neighborhood on September 25, 1978, at 9:01 AM, there was a collision between a small airplane and PSA Flight 182 that led to a crash at nearby Dwight and Nile Streets. A total of 144 people died, both in the air and on the ground. The victims were first transported to this location, then to Dougherty Gymnasium, until being moved to their final resting places.

St. Augustine High School is forever grateful for the heroism and faithful service of the First Responders, the Augustinians, and the North Park and San Diego communities. May the memory of the deceased, and all who served that day and the days that followed, be eternal.

This memorial was inspired by the class of 1980 with an initial gift in gratitude to the Augustinian Friars.”

When Jack finished his task, it was precisely 9:01 AM the time of the crash 46 years ago. We paused in prayer and reflection for a 2-minute moment of silence. Tubular Bells were used for this expression of remembrance. A music student rang the bells every 10 seconds, 12 times, denoting the loss of the 144 victims who perished that day just a few blocks from the school.

When this reverently concluded, Fr. Jim Clifford, OSA, who witnessed the collision of these two planes, spoke next. He traveled from Oregon to be with the Saints Community and offered his experience of heartache as he realized the two planes were too close and then the terror of the planes colliding. As he shared his remembrance he stated in horror that the commuter plane looked as if it was now heading directly at St. Augustine High School. Students who were between classes were running to escape in all different directions as it also appeared to them the final destination of this flight was directly at the campus. It was at this moment the nose of the plane shifted down and crashed in the neighborhood blocks away at Nile and Dwight.

Fr. Jim along with two other priests immediately drove to the crash site and arrived just before the Fire Department. They were told to leave the area and by the time they returned to Saints, it had been determined Dougherty Gymnasium would be used as the triage center for the crash. As human remains began arriving at this location it became obvious no one survived the crash, and the gym unceremoniously became the morgue. Fr. Jim Clifford, OSA, along with Fr. Patrick Keane, OSA, and Fr. Tom Bonica, OSA did the only thing they could do – they anointed each of the dead in a “Catholic way.”



It should be noted that two weeks before the commemoration, John O'Beirne, '84, the Assistant Principal for Student Services organized an assembly for the students to prep them for this gathering. He invited Ben Smith and Steve Chipp, '68, both Saints administrators at the time who experienced this horrific day.

The students' seriousness on the day of the commemoration was noticed by everyone in attendance. They understood as young men the gravity of what they were witnessing. From the beginning to the end of the ceremony, they stood riveted by the remarks of the various speakers. In a thank you note, received a few days after the event, Fr. Clifford wrote, “I want to commend the students of Saints. They were incredibly well-behaved. There was no pushing or talking or any other normal behavior for that age group. They were silent, listening, and respectful. Thank them for me.”

Mayor Todd Gloria followed Fr. Clifford with a brief speech commending Saints great response in San Diego's darkest hour and the need for this new memorial to give victims of this accident a place to mourn their horrific losses.

The Provincial, the Very Reverend Barnaby Johns, OSA concluded this gathering with a prayer and blessing of the memorial.

When the commemoration concluded, those in attendance were encouraged to move closer to the memorial to witness the craftsmanship and the art displayed in this beautiful prayer garden. Some in the crowd milled around speaking in hushed tones but others came forward to see and feel the monument. That evening, I asked Holly Ferrari, a co-worker who lives a block away from Saints to take a photo of the memorial at night when the lights would be highlighting the various elements of the tribute. When she arrived, she texted me that she would have to come back as people from the community were present who had taped photos of some of the deceased to the memorial and had placed flowers between the two benches. The next morning, I drove down Palm Street past the memorial. There were a few women from the neighborhood sitting on the benches in the garden in front of the memorial. Finally, after 46 years, North Park had a place to pray and reflect upon the loss of 144 souls in this tragic episode.

Father Max Villeneuve, Chaplain of St. Augustine High School message to Ed Hearn:

“World class institutions do world class things. Today, was a day where we were world class in front of everyone.”



Pablo Romero '27, Fr. Max Villeneuve, Gianni Trakas '27 and Ed Hearn

SAINTSMEN GETTING THINGS DONE

St. Augustine High School Theater Project

By Pablo Romero, '27 (English II-A Essay), November 7, 2024

In May of 2024, during our showing of “The Lightning Thief: Percy Jackson Musical” Saints Drama was having some microphone issues with the then rented equipment. The microphone signal wasn’t great and the microphone elements were breaking rather easy. This prompted my partner Gianni and me to take initiative and think together of a plan to fix and permanently resolve this issue.

Following the show, we jumped right into getting a quote for our own equipment. During this process, we did some extensive research on The Raymond Center for the Performing Arts. We found out that microphones were originally planned to be in our theater with the remodel. However, due to budget issues, the initial project never was completed and we were left with only four built in mics. The new theater microphone equipment was originally quoted to be \$60 thousand then reduced to \$30 thousand. Despite the significant reduction in price we still needed to find a place where to get the money from.

Gianni and I started looking for places in which we might be able to get some form of financial assistance. After some research, we found “The St. Augustine Foundation.” We had hope that they could help us because not only are they an Augustinian group but they are also linked directly to St. Augustine High School. With this in mind, Gianni and I decided to type a letter to the school’s admins and get the necessary steps to go forward with our project.

Much to our surprise, we received all the needed signatures. Having the signatures from the correct people, we sent the letter to the foundation with our chaplain Fr. Max Villeneuve, OSA endorsing the project. The letter was sent to the foundation in late June 2024 and it was now a long waiting game. A few weeks later, the foundation informed us that they couldn’t fulfill all \$30 thousand to the school. With our hopes still up we started looking for donors.

A few weeks go by and in July 2024, we hear from the foundation. The St. Augustine Foundation has granted us 15 thousand dollars under the condition that St. Augustine High School matches the other required \$15 thousand. Gianni and I then go to the financial department and we are told that we would have to wait till the 2025-2026 school year in order for them to budget properly and even then it’s not a guarantee that the \$15 thousand is secured from the Saints side. This is where our president Mr. Hearn becomes a lifesaver for this project. In October 2024, Mr.

Hearn found us a very generous alumni donor, Mr. Steve Smith class of 1966, who very generously wrote us a check for more than the \$15 thousand we needed.

Shortly after, we placed our order for 16 new microphones in the theater. Sweetwater also generously gave us a discount on our order. Our equipment arrived shortly after and was successfully delivered in early November and we were able to use the equipment for our fall showing of “Trap.” These microphones were initially planned to debut with our spring show “She Loves Me,” but with the hard work of Gianni and me, we were successfully able to get them up and running for the fall play.

This project means more than words could ever describe to the Saints Drama Department and Gianni and me. We will forever be grateful for all the time and effort put into this project by the various different people. This will definitely leave a lasting impact for future generations of actors and technicians of the Saints Theater.

I along with Gianni, and the entire Saints Drama Department would like to extend our deepest thanks and gratitude to everyone who made this whole project happen. Special thanks to my partner Gianni Trakas, Mr. Steve Smith - Class of 1966, Mr. Girolamo Carini - Tech Assistant, Mr. Travis Blumer - Drama Director, Ms. Cindy Au - Music Department, Mr. Ed Hearn - President of St. Augustine High School, Rev. Max Villeneuve, OSA - Chaplain, Mr. James Horne - Principal of St. Augustine High School, Ms. Michelle Drummy - VAPA Dept Chair, and everyone else who made this project possible. This project never would’ve been possible without everyone’s help. Again, this means so much to us and will leave a lasting impact on our drama department for generations to come. We simply can’t thank you enough.

Inspiration and Success Story Of Raising Money For Saints Theater

By Gianni Trakas

I’ll never forget my first show with Saints Theater: The Lightning Thief during the spring season. It was a massive production, with over 20 characters and a high level of complexity on the technical side. Mr. Blumer, our theater director, had to stretch his entire budget to cover the rights, rented microphones, props, and all the extras that made the show possible. Despite all the planning, one of our main character’s microphones began to make loud crackling noises during a show, disrupting the performance and frustrating both the audience and cast. After that, we had to scramble to check every mic before each show – clearly, the rented equipment needed to go.

Seeing this issue firsthand, Pablo Romero and I decided to step up. We wanted to raise funds for a new, reliable microphone system—not only to improve our shows but also to help save Mr. Blumer rental costs in the long run. When Pablo suggested applying for a grant from the St. Augustine Foundation, I was skeptical they’d support a theater tech project. But we thought, “Why not try?” So, we created a proposal and met with several school leaders to get their backing. With the support of Fr. Max, we finally submitted the grant request.

Four months later, we got the exciting news: the Foundation would offer \$15,000 if we could match it with another \$15,000. This was a big win, but because our school is nonprofit, simply requesting the other half wasn’t possible. Thankfully, Mr. Hearn believed in our vision and connected us with a donor willing to fund the remaining amount.

Now, I’m thrilled to say we’ve ordered and installed the new microphone system, just in time for our next production, Trap. This project has taught us the value of perseverance, teamwork, and community support. I’m proud of what we did – not just for Saints Theater, but for everyone who will enjoy the benefits for years to come.

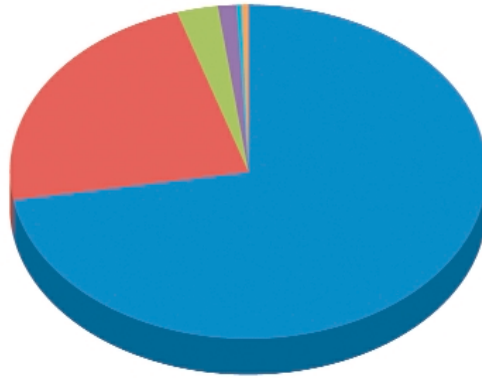
Sincerely,
Gianni Trakas

2023 - 2024 OPERATING ACTIVITIES

2023 - 2024 REVENUE

Tuition & Fees	20,058,941
Less Grants & Scholarships	(4,989,554)
Net Tuition & Fees	15,069,387
Contributions	4,756,848
Auxiliary & Student Activities	581,462
Summer School Programs	259,195
Special Events Revenue	78,027
Other Sources	90,945
<hr/>	
TOTAL REVENUE AND OTHER SUPPORT	20,835,864

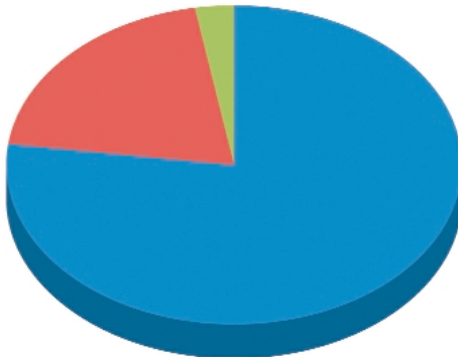
- Net Tuition & Fees
- Contributions
- Auxiliary & Student Activities
- Summer School Programs
- Special Events Revenue
- Other Sources



2023 - 2024 EXPENSES

Instructional & Student Activities	12,750,037
General & Administrative	3,325,588
Fundraising	457,006
<hr/>	
TOTAL EXPENSES	16,532,631

- Instructional & Student Activities
- General & Administrative
- Fundraising



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 We apologize in advance for overlooking any of our valued donors.
 Creative Direction by Casey Callery, Design by Kirk Crow*

BROTHERS

Continued from pg. 10

From watching Fr. Max chokeslam Dr. GO through a table in the middle of a rally, to making hype videos for an Academic League match, to going crazy when Laden Kassab hit a beautiful three pointer in the last basketball game of the season, everything we do at St. Augustine High School is inspired by a genuine love and joy for what we do.

As we all go our separate ways and face whatever comes at us next in life, we all ought to keep living with the same spirit that has made the past four years some of the best of our lives. By continuing to live out the values of unitas, veritas, and caritas, we will certainly go far in life. Always remember that you have a home here at Saints, and that this class of 2024 will have a special bond that no others can share. We should be proud to call each other our brothers, and I have no doubt that we all will achieve great things in life.

Thank you, and may God bless you all.



REMEMBERING FR. BOB

It was with no small blend of sadness mixed with gratitude and joy that the Augustinian Province of St. Augustine in the West announced the death of brother Rev. Robert (Fr. Bob) Gavotto O.S.A. on March 4th of this year.

Fr. Bob was born in San Diego, Ca on February 14th, 1938 to Carl Gavotto, and Mary Baldo Gavotto. He is survived by his brother, Ed. His brother, Richard, predeceased him.



Fr. Bob attended St. John the Evangelist school in San Diego. His high school years were spent at St. Augustine High School in San Diego. He graduated from Saints in 1955. At the end of that year, he began studies at the Georgetown University School of Foreign Service in Washington D.C. After one year he began formation as an Augustinian religious in 1956, studying at the Augustinian Prep Seminary in Staten Island, New York. He entered the Augustinian novitiate in January of 1957, and professed vows in February of 1958. The next two years he studied at Villanova University. The following four years, he studied for the priesthood at St. Monica's International College in Rome. He was ordained a priest in Rome on March 14, 1964. For the next four years he studied for his doctorate in canon law, and received his degree in 1969, while he was a student priest at Assumption Parish in Lawrence, Massachusetts. The next two years he served as a teacher at Saints.

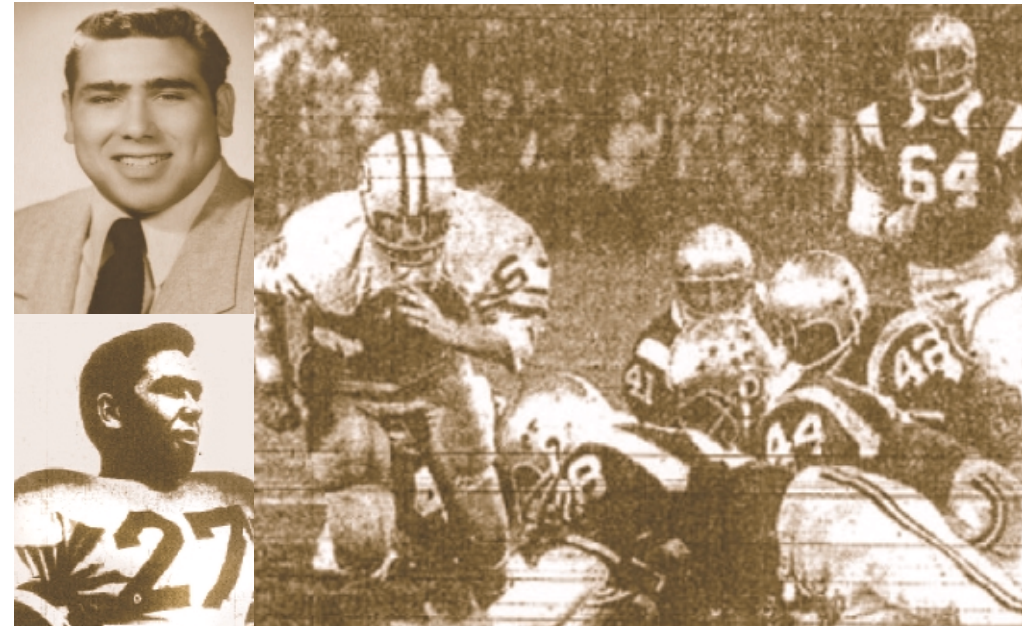
In 1970, having just begun his associate pastor assignment at Our Mother of Good Counsel in Los Angeles, his talents brought him back to The Augustinian General Curia in Rome, where he was elected Secretary General of the Order. In 1971 he was elected Assistant General of the Order of St. Augustine, under Prior General Ted Tack. Two years later he again served as a teacher at Saints. In 1977 he accepted the invitation of Bishop Leo Maher to be the Vice Chancellor of the Diocese of San Diego, as well as the Director of the Office of Evangelization. From 1980 to 1987, he was the pastor of St. Patrick's parish in San Diego.

The next five years Fr. Bob again served at Saints as both a teacher and Director of Recruitment. He served as pastor of Our Lady of Grace parish in Castro Valley from 1992 to 1999. The next three years he served as a canon lawyer for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles. From 2002 to 2004 he served as President of Villanova Preparatory School in Ojai. For the next twelve years he served as chaplain at Saints. While he retired in 2016 he remained the unofficial chaplain for the Saints football, basketball, and volleyball teams.

In addition to his being an avid fan of Saints athletics, he was also drawn to the allure of the high seas, having served as a cruise chaplain more than thirty times, and alternating those with long visits to Hawaii during his retirement. In Hawaii, he also proved himself to be an accomplished artist.

For many years Fr. Bob was a fixture at All Hallows Church in La Jolla. His relationship with its parishioners was mutually beneficial, spiritual and social. It was appropriate, then, that his funeral mass was celebrated at All Hallows.

May Fr. Bob Gavotto O.S.A. rest in peace, and may his memory be a blessing!



REMEMBERING COACH DITOMASSO

Mr. Joseph "Joe" DiTomaso, a Saints graduate of the legendary Class of 1954, died earlier this spring. He played varsity football at Saints then went on to become a career teacher and coach. He was on the first football team ever fielded at his college alma mater: University of San Diego. During his coaching career at Saints, he led varsity football to its first CIF Section title in 1970 with and twice he earned Coach of the Year honors.

Mr. DiTomaso coached and taught in the San Diego area for over 30 years. He and his late wife, Mary, were married for 62 years. The DiTomasos had three daughters: Ann, Eileen, and Maureen.

In 1970, Saints as Eastern League champs beat Grossmont High 13-8 for the 2A championship. That season, Varsity Football went undefeated logging a 12-0 record, which included four shutouts and outscoring its opponents 282-80.

During Mr. DiTomaso's tenure, Saints home games were played at the Aztec Bowl – now the site of Viejas Arena on the San Diego State campus.

Coach DiTomaso's record at Saints was 42 wins, 9 losses and one tie. He taught and coached at Saints for six years and seven years at Santana High. He posted a career record as head coach with 66 wins, 54 losses and 4 ties.

**“COACH D's PERFECTO. Neither rain nor sleet nor snow
can keep the Saints from twelve and Oh.”**

That was scrawled on an Aztec Bowl locker room blackboard. The team lived up to the boast winning its first CIF championship in 1970. Prep sports historian Rick Smith provided research and the photo of the championship game vs Grossmont in which Saintsman Curt Young recovered a fumble in the endzone to thwart the Foothillers, 13-8 at the Aztec Bowl. The 1970 team included running legend (Player of the Game) Frankie George; Lineman, Greg Ricks, and Robert George on defense and others.



The Commons Rooftop was the perfect venue for Taste of Saints 2024



Kate Crachy, Briana Colorado, Janeen Palafox, Katie Walp, Jessica Brophy and in the background John Hickey



In conversation with Saints President Ed Hearn (second from left) Tom Fuller, Ed Hearn, Angelica Fuller, and Phil Barney '64



Casey Gayton, school facilities manager with tasty plate of salad and pasta.

A NEW TRADITION

For the past decade at the conclusion of every final student Mass before graduation, the senior class sings “The Scientist” while linking arms.

Origin of a Tradition:

How a song by the band Coldplay became intertwined in Saints lore.

All traditions have an origin story and this is the tale of how a song by the band Coldplay became intertwined in Saints lore.

One interpretation to “The Scientist” one of Coldplay’s most popular tunes, says it eludes to the story “The Birthmark” where a scientist neglects his love due to his devotion to science.

Others say it’s just a beautiful song.

Whatever it’s called the song has a tradition at Saints. Seniors sing the song after the last Mass of the year, the final time before graduation.

The connection with the lyrics of The Scientist and Saints happened ten years ago.

Mr. John Lamerato teaches AP Literature and Composition, along with English IV, and instructs the majority of the senior class each year. A hallmark aspect of his class is a weekly “music appreciation” lesson, where he introduces the class to an artist/ band, and an accompanying activity includes listening to a selected song and analyzing the lyrics.

While most of the songs rotate over the years, Coldplay’s “The Scientist” is a yearly staple.

Mr. Lamerato would typically introduce this song in the second semester and he noticed that with graduation on the horizon, some of the sentiments of the song began to resonate with the seniors. Specifically, lines like, “Take me back to start,” matched some of the emotions related to not believing four years had gone by so quickly and a desire to do it all over again. Also, “It’s such a shame for us to part,” connects with the trepidation over graduating



and no longer seeing their Saint's brothers on a daily basis. Finally, “Nobody said it was easy, nobody said it would be this hard,” ties directly to challenges of moving on and leaving St. Augustine High School.

In 2014, Mr. Lamerato became the senior class moderator, which meant he was in charge of prom. Noting the emotions that “The Scientist” had evoked in class, Mr. Lamerato requested that the DJ play the track as the final dance at prom. During the playing of the song, the seniors locked arms with each other on the dance floor and shared a sing-a-long.

That same year, senior student and talented musician, Nicky Valentini (’14), was in Mr. Lamerato’s AP Literature and Composition class and was also in the Mass Band. Seeing the impact the song had on seniors in class and at prom, unprompted, Nicky decided to perform the song on keyboard at the final Mass of the year. Also without prompting, the seniors stood, locked arms and swayed to the song.

Having witnessed the final Mass as juniors, the senior ASB in 2015 wanted to have a similar experience. They worked with the Mass Band to make sure the song would be played and passed out lyrics to the senior class during the final Mass. “The Scientist” was once again performed and the seniors shared a moment, similar to their brothers the year before.

Thus, a tradition was born.

“The Scientist” By Coldplay

Come up to meet you, tell you I’m sorry
You don’t know how lovely you are
I had to find you, tell you I need you
Tell you I set you apart
Tell me your secrets and ask me your questions
Oh, let’s go back to the start
Running in circles, coming up tails
Heads on a science apart
Nobody said it was easy
It’s such a shame for us to part
Nobody said it was easy
No one ever said it would be this hard
Oh, take me back to the start
I was just guessing at numbers and figures
Pulling the puzzles apart
Questions of science, science and progress
Do not speak as loud as my heart
But tell me you love me, come back and haunt me
Oh and I rush to the start
Running in circles, chasing our tails
Coming back as we are
Nobody said it was easy
Oh, it’s such a shame for us to part
Nobody said it was easy
No one ever said it would be so hard
I’m going back to the start

Songwriters: Christopher Anthony John Martin / Guy Rupert Berryman / William Champion / Jonathan Mark Buckland · The Scientist lyrics © Universal Music Publishing Mgb Ltd.



SENIORS ON THE MARCH

As per another hallowed Saints graduation tradition, the Class of 2024 participates in the Senior March, a parade through the halls, pathways and patios led by the Saints Pep Band playing the familiar “When the Saints Come Marching In.” At the end of the march, participating Seniors gather for another beloved rite of brotherhood – The Big Toss where fellow classmates are launched in the air.

So far, everyone has landed safely.



FR JOHN KELLER, O.S.A.

John Keller – A Man who Set the Table for Generations of Saintsmen
From Saints Scene, December 2023 - By Ed Hearn

Occasionally, we meet people who seem to engage us in a way that we take an interest in their leadership. They operate on a different level, are visionary, serious and seem to perform at a level we rarely see. While not understandable, they have authority in our lives, not due to their power but due to their attributes and the way they conduct their lives. They challenge our thinking and change us!

Fr. John Keller is one such person. Although he has lived a simple life and has pushed any acclaimed to the side, when he speaks people take notice. He is now 87 years old and has officially retired from public affairs, but his impact will continue to resonate among those of us who were fortunate to have lived and worked by his side.

Just about the time Dougherty Gymnasium was completed in 1952 after only 30 years from the founding of Saints, John Keller, a freshman, made his official entrance into the St. Augustine community. By his own admission, these early days were not pleasant, and he did not especially enjoy his high school days. He was bookish, not an athlete and did not connect with boy culture like most of the young men at Saints do during their high school days. At almost the precise moment of beginning his academic life, the Augustinians were making an intellectual push in the school to foster a more robust and challenging program.

To spearhead this movement, Fr. John Sparrow, OSA was recruited from Villanova Preparatory School to be the new principal. In September 1952, Fr. Sparrow gathered the faculty together on the day before classes were to begin, went back to the Monastery that evening, and after dinner with the Augustinian Community he died of a heart attack. All was not lost however, as there was a talented Augustinian priest, Fr. John Aherne OSA who was serving the school as the Assistant Principal. He was pegged to lead the school as the interim principal until that November when he was named principal.

Under his guidance the intellectual climate of Saints markedly improved during the next decade of his leadership. The climate on campus shifted and John Keller watched it all through his Saints Experience and discovered the direction for the rest of his life. As an Augustinian priest, he served Saints as a teacher, principal, and president the California Province as a provincial, and worked in campus ministry at the University of San Diego – a position he loved.

Fr. John Keller, as a Saints student, saw the way Augustinians lived in community and their interest in promoting Augustinian spirituality.

When asked what phrase should be chosen for the statue of St. Augustine and the student, John paraphrased a sentence from the Rule of St. Augustine, “One in heart and mind on the way to God!” This was a capstone phrase from St. Augustine that captured Fr. Keller’s central theme of his life. There was an intellectual element that would become more pronounced through his time at Saints – one that was appealing, one that captured the attention of others and one that he would promote throughout his priestly life.

The value of this truth found its way in the work of the late Fr. Bill Mahedy, OSA, who developed a framework for the value of our relationships and community in our personal well-being. Fr. John Keller, who worked with Fr. Mahedy developed these important ideas that sprang directly from their Augustinian experience. When Mahedy left the Augustinians for marriage and became an Episcopalian Priest, their friendship remained strong. Fr. Keller worked diligently with Mahedy on a conceptual framework that ultimately became a tenet for a program developed for veterans returning from Desert Storm who were dealing with PTSD. It became one of the important ways the Veterans’ Administration ministered to returning veterans.

After being elected provincial in the 1980s, it was clear to Fr. Keller that the declining number of Augustinians would necessitate the hiring of more lay people to take the place of Augustinians in their schools. The question of how the ten Augustinian schools would remain Augustinian was his overriding concern. He could have used a top-down approach but chose a ground up process. After promoting Fr. John Sanders, OSA, to the principalship in 1988, the two of them developed a questionnaire that would identify the values that were most important to the two Augustinian educational communities at Saints and Villanova Preparatory School in Ojai. The Core Values of Unity, Truth and Love emerged as the critical values that were at the heart of both schools. Interestingly, these are the same values that were placed on the seal of the earliest historical reference to the Order of Augustine after Pope Innocent the IV formed the Order in 1244.

With these values having been identified, the structure of Augustinian education could then be taught to lay people. Fr. Keller was an instrumental voice in developing the Augustinian Values Institute (AVI), an annual Institute for educating the educational communities of the ten North American secondary schools. Those who were chosen to attend heard presentations on each of the Core Values, Interiority, and the life of St. Augustine. It has become the way for the Augustinian ethos to be internalized in the inner workings of the schools.

When I was named President in 2006, Fr. Keller remained the protector of the Core Values and purveyor of ideas and the energy to move them forward. This not only applied to Saints and Villanova Preparatory, but the rest of the North American schools.

The annual Augustinian Secondary Educational Association (ASEA – the formal association of the schools in North America) meeting presented a source of irritation for Fr. Keller. He was full of ideas for further developing Augustinian education that were met with indifference by the other Augustinian heads of school. This was troubling for a person such as Fr. Keller.

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As a member of the ASEA, it was obvious that many of the presidents and principals were much more interested in protecting their turf than promoting a unified future direction for all the schools.

I watched meeting after meeting of his deepening frustration with other Augustinians' lack of interest and his motivation for developing the mission across North America.

Fr. Keller, not to be deterred, felt a deeper experience for those who had attended the AVI needed to be developed. Out of this sprang Building the City of God, an experience he championed for years. It has served Augustinian educators for the past six years.

With the advent of these two programs, Fr. Keller's impact has not only affected Augustinian education in North America, but also in Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Australia. As others discovered these tools, both the AVI and Building the City of God have helped to pass on the richness of Augustinian education to lay men and women working in their schools across two oceans. His persistence has placed St. Augustine's ideas at the center of our work.

After Fr. Sander's died, Fr. Keller was named principal from 2000 to 2003. Fr. Keller saw the need to employ a new model of governance – the President/Principal Model. He hired James Horne as principal to operate the school, while he became the first President of Saints. He divided the position of Head of School into two positions – one that ran the internal workings of the school and the other who looked outside the school to further the development of Saints.

Realizing that Saints faced unprecedented competition with the new Catholic schools to its north and south, he began forming a strategic Board of Directors for the purpose of developing a Master Plan for the campus, hire an architect, a builder, develop a way to rebuild the campus and raise the required funds to re-imagine Saints.

In 2006 the groundbreaking for Phase I took place. It was one month prior to Fr. Keller stepping down as President. He had completed his work.

It was his vision that propelled Saints forward into the campus and school that exists in 2024. After he stepped down as President, Fr. Keller was named the Director of Education for the Province. It was his good advice and friendship that helped guide the development of Saints from 2006.

Even with fewer Augustinians, our schools have remained true to the core values of the Order of St. Augustine. Fr. Keller was a thinker and a molder of Augustinian communities. His kindness and happiness were part of his priesthood that brought people together. He took credit for none of it. His humility through his entire life has been a model of Christian charity. The Augustinian elements found in Saints were strengthened and broadened so that more people could see the value of the centrality of Augustinian thought in the good development of life at Saints. His interest and persistence have been a strong contributing factor in the school we see today and the health of Augustinian education worldwide. It is with grateful hearts we acknowledge Christian charity at its best – impact that will resonate for years to come and will continue to influence our approach to how boys are taught.



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