

THE AUGUSTINIAN

“Tolle Lege”

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St. Augustine High School



Snow Breaks for Saints Musicians



Saints musicians teamed up with OLP to form a Christmas rock symphony.



By Matt Tran ('18)
CONTRIBUTOR

For the Saints Instrumental Music Department, the coming of the holiday season signifies the coming of one the busiest times of the year. Students spend many weeks practicing and rehearsing for the various performances that they undertake.

The Saints Symphonic Band began the season with its “Voyages” concert in collabo-

ration with the University of San Diego on November 16th. Students were given insight on what it is like to perform in a collegiate setting. The concert was also a chance for alumni to perform with the Saints Band once again, as Luis Sanchez and Sara Anfsu ‘17 made up a part of the ensemble.

Ms. Tamara Paige, the music director at Our Lady of Peace, then paved the way into December with the OLP Winter Pops Concert

on November 30th. The concert was a showcase of talent from OLP, Saints, and many of Ms. Paige’s other students and alumni from around San Diego.

“I love to work with anyone as long as they are passionate,” Ms. Paige said. “Where there is passion, that is where I want to be”.

The concert program was just as varied as its student performers. To open, the OLP instrumental ensemble performed “St. James

Infirmary” by Louis Armstrong, followed by Christmas classics performed by the Saints Symphonic Band under the direction of Ms. Au; this included a performance of “Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas” sung by siblings Kieran and Maris Amsberry, as well as some mash-ups such as a piece called “Christmas at the Movies” which featured a medley of songs from Christmas movies such as *The Polar Express*, *Home Alone*, and *The Nightmare Before Christmas*.

The OLP Choral Ensemble also delivered a diverse collection of traditional and modern songs in a beautiful and wall-shaking fashion. A brief intermission would be the only repose before the stage was taken by the Rock Symphony made up of a mixture of students from Saints, OLP, and other schools around San Diego. This symphony performed pieces by the Trans-Siberian Orchestra. The climactic end to the show was “A Mad Russian’s Christmas,” a fiery and intense take on the “Nutcracker” by Tchaikovsky, accompanied by the OLP Dance Class.

The Music Department would have little time to rest in the intermediate period between concerts. In addition to rehearsing the music for the next concert, Saints Band students were also tasked with forming in chamber groups focused on performing in the community. A few of these chamber groups would offer their support to the Saints and OLP Art Show on December 8th, filling the space of Carondelet Library with merry music in the appreciation of the artistic talent of both schools.

Yet there was still more in store for the Saints Music Department. On December 11th, it would perform once more at its own

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Lessons in Literature with the Ladies



Seniors from AP English Literature discuss an AP essay prompt with one another.



By Nick Martinez ('18)
STAFF WRITER

Mr. Lamerato’s block three senior AP English Literature and Composition class found themselves in beautiful but unfamiliar territory last Thursday. The class departed Saints between blocks one and three and ventured over to OLP to take part in a joint class effort with their fellow OLP sisters. Upon arrival, Mr. Lamerato’s class was greeted by Mrs. Turner, OLP’s

AP English Literature and Composition teacher. The class was then guided to the area outside of the chapel, where students of both schools were provided with snacks and time to socialize with each other. After this, both classes then congregated inside of the chapel where Mr. Lamerato and Mrs. Turner introduced themselves and briefed the heterogeneous group on the activity for the day.

“In class we are having these really intense conversations about the literature that is

primarily written by and about men. We were interested to know what men think about literature,” said OLP English teacher Mrs. Turner, who pitched the joint project to Mr. Lamerato. He was very receptive to the idea.

The two classes were to split into multiple groups in which they would discuss and analyze an essay prompt from a past AP English exam. The prompt was chosen carefully by Mr. Lamerato, as it had perspectives from both sexes. There was an excerpt from the

Odyssey and a poem by Margaret Atwood entitled “Siren Song.” The Odyssey was told from a male’s perspective, whereas “Siren Song” was told from a female’s perspective.

Both classes cleared the chapel and headed toward the base of the amphitheater where students were assigned to a specific picnic table at which the coed groups would discuss the prompt. For the first fifteen minutes, the group was asked to discuss and analyze the prompt. Then, they were asked to rotate to a different assigned table, this time answering the prompt. After ten minutes in the second group, the classes were summoned back to the chapel where students from both schools volunteered to express their analysis of the two poems to the whole class.

Not only did the trip allow for different perspectives on a single topic, it allowed for a rare and unique opportunity for Saints-men and Pilots to connect in an academic setting. The joint class effort promoted a greater connection between the two sibling schools. While opportunities outside of the classroom are plentiful, such as sport games and dances, joint academic opportunities are rare.

The classroom atmosphere differed greatly when it was coed, which was evident to all present. It affected the students not only mentally, but physically as well.

“It was the first time I wore deodorant in months” remarked one Saintman who

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Photo courtesy of OLP

The Turkey Trots Again



Sainstmen cross the finish line of the Turkey Trot

Nick Alcalay ('19)

By Thomas Vedder ('20)
STAFF WRITER

The 21st of November marked the return of an annual Saints tradition: The Turkey Trot. The event flew to new heights this year with nearly two hundred participants. Both alumni and faculty turned out in full force this year. The return of alumni is what distinguishes this event from any other event at Saints. It is the one chance for alumni to return to their High School campus, donate to a fundraising event, and take part in one of the longest Saints

traditions with the current members of the Saints community.

The day of the Turkey Trot started with Mass led by Father Joe Carroll, the founder of St. Vincent de Paul’s Village. During the homily, he told the story he often tells us when he visits, about how as a young priest he abruptly stopped the celebration of Mass and left the altar cold-turkey because the congregation exhibited little enthusiasm in their responses during the liturgy; they literally begged Fr. Joe to come back, and when he did, they roared back their re-

sponses.

Later in the day during an extended lunch period, we enjoyed the festivities of the Turkey Trot. Sainstmen gobbled up famous turkey pot pies from the Chicken Pie Shop sold by the Saints ASB. Most noticeably this year, we had a live turkey courtesy of sophomore Jack Klem. The Turkey probably does not have the same opinions on the turkey pot pies as we do. The overall winner of this year’s race was Senior Juan Garcia who finished with a time close to 14 minutes. The winner for the faculty

was Augustinian volunteer Stephen Forster, who finished just a few minutes after the student winner.

The festivities also included live musical performances by DJ Javi Lozano and lovely local Norteño band, Los Cimarrones, led by junior Sebastian Echegaray. “It was great to be a part of the Turkey Trot this year and we had positive feedback from the students and teachers,” said Echegaray.

This year’s Turkey Trot was another great success and special thanks goes to Mr. Pruter, sophomore class president Angelo Peraza and the rest of the Sophomore Class officers, and every other person who helped coordinate and execute this year’s Turkey Trot.

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asked to remain anonymous.

This rare pairing of OLP and St. Augustine students was deemed a major success by the teachers and students. Mr. Lamerato and Mrs. Turner seemed ecstatic about the result and are looking to plan more of such academic collaborations.

“I thought it was very productive,” said OLP Senior Nicole Valdivia. “The girls were nervous about what the guys were going to say, but I think the group did a really good job. You guys were very insightful.”

Sainstmen Jonathan Engle had a similar reaction. “It was a great experience. I really enjoyed being able to interact with girls in a classroom setting.”

Both students said that they would love for an opportunity like this to happen in the future, and if it improves the hygiene of our Saints Men, why not?

Meet Misa, the Puerto Rican Powerhouse



The Augustinian warmly welcomes Misael Rosado.

By Luis Andrade ('19)
STAFF WRITER

Saints is happy to welcome a new student on campus, junior Misael “Misa” Rosado. Rosado is a transfer from Arcibo, Puerto Rico, and a bit over a month ago, his life journey had taken a sharp twist.

Rosado had lived in Puerto Rico his whole life, but this past fall his family decided it would be best if he moved to San

Diego with some family friends after the devastation caused by Hurricane Irma. He met his new guardian, Joel Jones, a few years ago through basketball. Jones, as part of the Saints basketball team staff, advised Misa to enroll at Saints because it is both a great academic and athletic school, and after learning more about it, Misa knew he wanted to be a part of our community.

Leaving his family back home and moving to a region with a different lan-

guage and culture has been a challenge for Misa, but he has worked to adapt to the difference.

“Back home, I never learned English,” Misa said. “I am very thankful for my coaches, teachers, and friends for helping me and making my experience so far an easier and more enjoyable one. I am thankful especially for Coach Haupt and Mr. Tompkins, who are always looking to help me in any way possible.”

Misa is playing with our varsity bas-

ketball team this year, and the team already has a stellar start early in the season. Coach Haupt is very happy to have him on the team, and he describes him as a very skilled basketball player with great team spirit, both of which will help carry the team to victory over the next two years.

Misa has also been working hard in the classroom and has done well in a few presentations for Mr. Tompkins’s religion and photography classes. Misa is not afraid to practice his English, as he has already presented in front of the class in a bit of English, backing it up with his Spanish.

During his short time as a Saintsman, Misa has already experienced the core values of Unity and Love. Since his first day, he has felt welcomed and has been helped by Spanish speakers, both in the classroom and in the courtyard at lunch.

“I’m really thankful for all my fellow students, friends, and teammates,” Misa said. “It is amazing how people have helped me since my first day and have made me feel so welcome throughout my new experience.”

Not only has he enjoyed this love on a daily basis, but he also loves the support the basketball team gets from the Pit during games.

“The Pit is something different,” he said. “My fellow students are always so happy and so supportive, I really like the support we receive from our fellow Sainstmen.”

In addition to the aforementioned teachers and friends, Misa would like to thank his guardian Joel Jones for giving him this amazing opportunity and for being a true father figure to him; he will forever be grateful for the help he has received.

Chaplain's Corner

By Fr. Kirk Davis, O.S.A.
COLUMNIST

As a kid growing up in a suburb of Chicago, I lived in a somewhat idyllic time. At an early age—probably nine or ten—I gained freedom in the form of my bicycle. In the summers I would frequently bike uptown to the public library, from where I could explore the world. Also within cycling distance were my aunt & uncle and their kids (my cousins), and my grandparents. Both of these households received frequent, unannounced visits from me. I also developed the habit of visiting other people once I discovered where they lived or worked. A short list of these folks included my second grade teacher, my older sister’s best friend in high school, and my cousin Mary Pat at her office. While I always felt welcomed by those I visited, as time went by I began to endure the taunts and jeers of my older siblings for this habit of “serial visiting” I had developed... and as time passed I found myself doing less and less of it.

Several decades later, as a part of my education in preparation for ordination to the priesthood, I was asked by my superior to do some summer work in the form of a ten-week Clinical Pastoral Education program here in San Diego. The program was designed to train chaplains in interacting with people who are nearing the end of their lives. I was NOT looking forward to this experi-

ence, but the program facilitator led my group of chaplains-in-training through an exercise during our first week. We were asked to remember an experience from another time in our lives that we could apply to the difficult work we were now being asked to do. Immediately, I thought of the “serial visiting” I had been teased about as a kid...and that memory was now transformed into a gift that I was bringing to my ministry. You see, I was working as a home-hospice chaplain, and I was traveling from home to home visiting my patients.

Each of us has gifts we don’t realize we have. Sometimes these gifts might even seem like liabilities. At our Advent Prayer and Penance service a few days ago, students were asked to think about a gift they possess, and how that gift might be a light to other people. In this time of watching and waiting for the arrival of our Savior, I invite you all to consider how the hidden gifts you have might be transformed into light for the world around you.

I wish you all a fruitful Advent Season. I pray you all have a final exams week that allows you to successfully demonstrate how well you have mastered the material you’ve learned this semester. I wish all of you and your families a blessed Christmas. Enjoy the break. In everything you do, let your light shine!

THE AUGUSTINIAN

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► Music

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Christmas Concert in Sanders Gymnasium. To open the show, two of Ms. Au’s guitar classes performed various Christmas tunes and “When the Saints go Marching In,” a Saints favorite. In its first formal performance of the year, the Saints Strings Ensemble performed pieces ranging from classical, to contemporary, to seasonal.

Next to take the stage was the 32nd Street Jazz Band. Its members delivered a wide breadth of Christmas songs in jazzy style, with notable solos from seniors

Carlos Lopez-Tenorio and Matthew Lujan. Saints Symphonic Band would bring the program to a merry end, performing recognizable and familiar jingles, carols, and symphonies. Each part of the Saints Music Department contributed to making the program diverse and festive, culminating in a wild success.

Though performances have come to an end for now, the music will not. Classes and rehearsals continue on campus, and you may just catch the band at the next basketball game, supporting the team.

Don't Celebrate Christmas Backwards



We at The Augustinian wish you all the best as you prepare for Christmas!

Abraham Franco-Hernandez ('19)

By Vladimir Bachynsky
MODERATOR

I have a riddle for you: when is Advent not Advent? Answer: when it’s already Christmas!

It can be difficult to celebrate Christmas in a Christian—and especially Catholic—spirit now that Christmas has become so secularized. While this time of Advent is supposed to be a time of *preparation* for Christmas, the world *already* shouts “Merry Christmas!”, the halls are decked, carols are sung, parties are thrown, and Christmas trees are up right after Halloween.

Thus, viewed from a Catholic standpoint, Christmas “out there” is celebrated backwards.

Instead of Christmas beginning on December 25th, it culminates on the 25th; while the Christmas season is supposed to end on January 6th (and technically the Sunday after it) you’d be lucky to hear a single Christmas carol after New Year’s Eve, even in Catholic homes.

Most of us are familiar with the Twelve Days of Christmas, mostly through the song, but too many of us don’t know what the twelve

days refer to, or even when they begin. Jimmy Fallon recently started a Twelve Days of Christmas Sweaters countdown on the Tonight Show, where each day a different holiday sweater is featured until Christmas. Now, I realize the Christmas that Fallon is celebrating is not religious in nature, but still, it is a reflection of the popular perception—even among Catholics—that the twelfth day of Christmas is Christmas Day itself, the 25th. In fact, it is opposite! December 25th is the first day of Christmas!

Secular Christmas, of course, begins right after Thanksgiving, and we can thank commercialism for that. If you want shoppers to spend more at your mall, remind them that Christmas is around the corner. With music! With lights! With trees! Or better still, why wait? Christmas is ALREADY here!

Unfortunately, for those of us trying to keep Christ in Christmas, it’s a strong current to swim against. After all, we love Christmas. It is, as they say, the most wonderful time of the year. We can’t wait to bust out the music and put up the tree, to gaze at Christmas lights and listen to carolers. And let’s not forget the

presents! Advent? Yeah, that’s cute, but let’s just skip it and get to the good stuff...

And yet as Catholics, we should wait, we must wait. That is the very purpose of the Advent season—we await the arrival (=adventus in Latin) of the Savior incarnate. It is a time of prayer, reflection, and even penance.

But first, I would like to acknowledge that celebrating in the Christmas spirit strictly according the liturgical calendar would be very difficult, even impractical, in today’s world. I recently attended the faculty Christmas party, and yes, it was called a Christmas party, and I was very happy to be there. After all, when else could the party have taken place? During Christmas break? Impractical. After Christmas? Of course not! It simply had to be before the 25th. I also visited the nativity scenes at December Nights at Balboa Park and listened to Christmas carols performed by choirs at the Organ Pavilion. Should I have boycotted them all because it’s not officially Christmas?

Still, we should make an effort to make Christmas as Christian and as timely as possible, and so I’d like to offer some suggestions to make it easier to co-exist in the City of God

and the City of Man.

1. Don’t skip Advent—make it matter. Pray more. Reflect on God’s love. Read a spiritual book. Perform acts of mercy upon the needy. Repent and do penance.

2. Don’t play religious Christmas carols until Christmas. If you really just can’t wait, then play winter songs or “Christmas” songs that are obviously secular in nature. “Winter Wonderland,” “Jingle Bells” or even Santa Claus songs would do.

3. Attend the Christmas parties for sure, but keep an attitude in your heart of Christmas anticipation instead of Christmas-is-here.

4. Actually celebrate beyond Christmas beyond Christmas day itself, as the season celebrates more than just Christ’s birth. “Happy Holidays” is actually a profoundly Christian greeting, as it refers to the multiple holy days (where do you think the word “holiday” comes from?) celebrated during this time: Christmas Day, the Solemnity of Mary the Mother of God (January 1st), and Epiphany (January 6th), among others. In some countries, the Christmas season extends to February 2nd!

5. Ah, the tree. This is a tough one. In generations past (and in my family), the tree was erected on December 24th! And while that would be ideal, making such a change might be too abrupt for most. But there are some things we can do temper our impatience as we anticipate the second most important holy day on the Church calendar. For instance, we could delay putting up the tree until the feast of St. Nicholas, which is December 6th. St. “Nick,” the primary basis of the Santa figure, can put us into the mindset of giving as he himself was very generous to the poor. Then, refrain from decorating the tree fully until Christmas Eve. Perhaps that could be the evening it is lit, the star is placed, or the Nativity figures are positioned.

6. And whatever you do, don’t take down the tree until at least the feast of Epiphany! Those who are taking it down on the 26th are doing it when Christmas has only but started! And keep that Christmas music going!

So as we groan that some celebrate Christmas too early, we can be part of the solution, too, in our homes and in our hearts.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas—in advance—and may this current prayerful and penitent season of Advent prepare us for the joyous feast of His Nativity—and beyond!

Kouta Molds Local Festival for the Arts

 By Mitchell Stoddard ('18)
EDITOR

This past weekend marked the seventh annual South Park North Park (SoNo) chili cook off fundraiser orchestrated by Saints very own Kouta Shimazaki. The event was first created in 2010 by Kouta under the name of San Diego Ceramic Connection.

Kouta conceived the idea of SoNo when his son Charlie was in kindergarten at McKinley Elementary school a few blocks away from Saints. Kouta was frustrated by the lack of an arts program at his son’s school. McKinley Elementary School at the time was operated as a title one school which meant the students had little to no access to creative or artistic outlets. Kouta says he strongly believes in the necessity of art and creativity in a developing child’s education. Kouta came forward to the school principal at the time, Julie Grey, and offered his time and services to create an after school ceramic program. This was met with overwhelming success and gratitude as thankful parents offered their help in his program. Kouta’s program became larger and more popular as he included all grade levels and purchased a kiln and tables for the program.

When asked why he felt so strongly about the need to volunteer, Kouta responded, “I have lived in San Diego for twenty-seven years and North Park for twenty-two of them. North Park used to be a much rougher neighborhood. I love this community and believe strongly that if I could change the elementary school I could change the neighborhood. All children should have access to art. I wanted to fill the hole created by the system.”

Even after the ceramic program at McKinley was accepted as an official class, Kouta still sought ways to help. This was the birth of the first SoNo fest. Kouta began contacting his friends in the music and restaurant industries and asked them to volunteer their time



Kouta enjoys the atmosphere of SoNo Fest.

Photo courtesy of Kouta

and services for the arts program at McKinley Elementary.

Kouta holds his annual “Throw-a-Thon” at his studio months before SoNo fest where Kouta and his friends from the artistic community make as many ceramic bowls as they can in six hours. Kouta then goes on to trim, glaze, and fire the bowls over the next two months.

Every year the event has drawn larger and larger crowds, this year drawing in an estimated 16,000 people. SoNo 2017 featured over forty of the most exclusive local restaur-

rants. Each restaurant was required to bring over thirty gallons of their chili, totaling over twelve hundred gallons of chili consumed by the end of the day. The beer garden featured twenty-two kegs from different local breweries. Entertainment was provided by twelve local bands, hand picked by Kouta himself. The award for best chili was taken home by Carnitas Snack Shack, located on University Avenue in North Park.

Kouta says he was extremely grateful to everyone who attended and once again expressed his delight in being able to help the art

foundation at McKinley Elementary school.

“I always enjoy the SoNo journey from start to finish. The event itself is always a blast and I am so thankful to the volunteers from all crafts for donating their time and craft. We have such a talented array of artists and the opportunity to share art with the community is truly special.”

SoNo fest is an amazing event that embodies the core values of Saints. We as a Saints community are proud of Mr. Shimazaki for his efforts to reach out and unite the community while also promoting the arts.

Food Critic Visits Marty's Kitchen

 By Abraham Franco-Hernandez ('18)
STAFF WRITER

As an acclaimed food critic, I, Abraham Franco-Hernandez have tried everything served on my plate, including New York’s cheesecake, Barcelona’s Paella, Bologna’s bolognese, Brussel’s sprouts and even Buffalo’s wings. However, the Food Network has commissioned me to embark on a whole new culinary adventure: digging into the food found in Saint Augustine High School’s very own Marty’s Kitchen. Below is my tough, delicious, and at times salty critique of Saints food service.

Foodies at Saints are ecstatic about the new joint which replaced Ted’s Kitchen last year.

“I am delighted with the amount of options available at Marty’s,” Senior Nicholas Fudge said. “It is a definite step up from Ted’s.”

After hearing so many good things about the food at Marty’s, I was raring to devour these culinary marvels. The very first dish I had was the “Taco Tuesday Special,” which features pollo adobada or carne asada tacos with rice and beans as a side. To be able to have the whole experience with this dish, I had one of each taco. The first bite I took out of the carne asada taco was like a step into Gordon Ramsay’s kitchen. The meat was tender, chewy, and beautifully charred. Next, I dug into the pollo adobada taco. The adobada flavor was a perfect combination of sweetness and piquancy. The meat was juicy, and the tortilla’s dryness perfectly balanced out the texture of the meat to make a brilliant taco. This taco experience is only comparable to what you might find in a street taco stand in Tijuana.

During the preparation for my next dish, I inquired around campus to get an



Abraham Franco-Hernandez evaluates some of the most popular dishes at Marty's.

Andrew Tran ('19)

idea of some of the people’s favorites.

“The Big Bopper and Hash Brown, provided for a low price, are without a doubt the best things sold in Marty’s Kitchen. They really light up my day,” junior Austin Williams said.

Taking this student’s advice, I decided to have both the mythical “hash brown” and boasted “Big Bopper” as my second course.

On the surface, the hash brown was pan-fried enough to attain a perfect shade of Fort Knox gold. As I bit into it, the crisp and crunchy outer layer was unmissable. The tender part of the potatoes on the inside, combined with the crunchiness of the exterior, left my mouth desperately

begging for a second bite. Joined by the ketchup made with Marty’s secret recipe, the Hash Brown had to go down as a top ten on my food list. The savoriness of the ketchup, mixed with the saltiness of the hash brown, nearly made my head explode due to the lavish amount of flavor. I would go as far as saying that the hash brown at Marty’s was unquestionably superior to that which McDonald’s provides.

After I finished with the hash brown, I proceeded to take a bite out of the Big Bopper. The chocolate chip cookie that sandwiched the generous amount of vanilla ice cream was satisfyingly tender, but it wasn’t as good as I hoped it would be. It lacked the fresh, out-of-the-oven taste

that we all love, which can be attributed to the fact that it is refrigerated. On the other hand, the ice cream was AMAZING. It was sweet and frozen, as you would expect, but it was also creamy and buttery. It wasn’t so hard that it was a chore to bite into, but it wasn’t so tender that it could almost completely melt in your mouth. I couldn’t control myself, and devoured the “Bopper” in less than 10 seconds. The brain freeze that ensued was well worth it.

Overall, the experience at Marty’s Kitchen was unlike anything I have ever had. The food was absolutely delicious, so I’ll be sure to stop at this food joint whenever I have the chance. For me, Marty’s was 5 stars out of 5.

From Senate to Saints, a Sanfilippo Story



By Alejandro Eros ('19)
EDITOR

He is only in his first year at Saints; however, Mr. Dominic Sanfilippo is already making waves in our school community as a teacher, Mass band director, and Director of Christian Service. You'd be hard-pressed to find anyone who doesn't like him. But who is Mr. Sanfilippo, and what makes him tick?

Mr. Sanfilippo is an intellectual for sure. He has a deep love for literature and history, and earned a degree in Philosophy and Human Rights Studies from the University of Dayton. His collegiate academic journey also carried him to London and Oxford to perform research for his undergraduate thesis.

"I really liked the style of learning at Oxford because of how direct it was. All of my classes were one-on-one tutorials with great professors, and it really challenged me to think critically and write sharply. Also, Oxford looks like Harry Potter in real life," said Sanfilippo.

He has interned for the U.S. Senate and the Illinois State Senate, "where politics usually plays out a little less healthily than desirable, but I remain hopeful." He loves to explore neighborhoods, frequenting the coffee shops of Little Italy. He plays Frisbee Golf at Balboa Park, considers himself a movie fanatic, and just started going to a spin class, "which is slightly terrifying," Sanfilippo said.

Mr. Sanfilippo grew up in the Southwest Side of Chicago and has Sicilian roots, so he has attended his fair share of large family gatherings and holiday celebrations. His educational background is Augustinian, coming from our sister school, Providence Catholic High School in New Lenox, Illinois. He always favored reading and lit-



Mr. Sanfilippo at the press secretary's podium during a D.C. internship.

Photo courtesy of Mr. Sanfilippo

erature in school because he views books as doorways into understanding the world. Sanfilippo said, "I see education as an outlet into other adventures and a chance to jump into the world."

His job description as Director of Christian Service consists of organizing service trips, service opportunities, building off the foundations for service at Saints, and inspiring young minds to leave the confines of their comfort zone and follow their vocations. He hopes to help create leaders, community builders, and peacemakers.

"I want to capitalize on the great work Saints already has going on," Mr. Sanfilippo said. "So much of the world is super complicated, and a big part of Campus Ministry is getting Saintsmen to open their eyes and

see that they are called by God to help their communities, especially those who are vulnerable."

Sanfilippo is very invested in his senior Social Issues class, and considers informing youth about social issues around the world to be a substantial part of helping the next generation find their voice. Through this class, he hopes to influence students to become active citizens.

"He is very willing to serve the Saints community and he is very patient and flexible," said senior Andrew Moura.

If further questions were asked to other Saintsmen, answers would be more of the same. Mr. Sanfilippo has a generally positive effect on the community and is a source of energy for others in Campus Ministry.

Music has almost always been a part of Mr. Sanfilippo's life, but it has not always been through an instrument. He found himself involved with music by organizing the business end of bands for his friends and relatives. Later he took up the guitar, and he continues to fulfill his passion for music through Mass band at Saints. He listens to pretty much any kind of music, but some of his favorite playlists now include Chance The Rapper, Dave Matthews Band, and movie soundtracks.

There is no doubt that Mr. Sanfilippo is a capable and constructive addition to Campus Ministry and the Saints Community. If you haven't already, spend some time with him and get to know him. You will probably learn something new.

I'm Dreaming of a Green Christmas



By Andrew Moura ('18)
GUEST WRITER

Christmas is arguably the most anticipated holiday in America. We spend the holidays eating, giving gifts, decorating trees, and spending quality time with friends and family. As we celebrate, however, it may be prudent to stop and consider the effect Christmas has on the environment.

Christmas trees are to Christmas as a moustache is to Mr. Cudal. Christmas just isn't the same without a tree. But when it comes to picking a tree, it may seem like you're choosing between deforestation and the Pacific Garbage Patch.

Artificial trees last, on average, about ten years, which means ten fewer trunks get toppled. There is some uncertainty as to whether or not one fake tree is less detrimental to the environment than ten real trees; The American Christmas Tree Association, which represents the artificial Christmas tree industry, reports that this is the case.

However, a 2009 study on the Christmas tree industry done by Ellipsos, an environmental consulting firm, concluded that when considering ecosystem quality, human health, climate change, and resources, it would take twenty years of buying live Christmas trees to create the same impact on the environment as an artificial tree.

The study focused on areas where Christmas trees are grown locally, comparing artificial trees shipped from Beijing to locally grown and sold natural trees. In places like Southern California, though, natural trees are not typically grown locally. This means natural trees must also be transported long distances, often by diesel trucks, and thusly can have a greater impact on the environment region by region

Around 350 million Christmas trees are being grown sustainably on farms throughout the U.S. In some places, Christmas tree farms have served as a push back against



What is better for the environment? Real Christmas trees from farms or artificial trees?

urbanization. Due to the hardness of the fir tree, it can be grown in places where many other crops wouldn't survive. Farmers who turn a profit on their land are less likely to sell to developers, and the Christmas trees provide that profit. They also serve as a home to certain animals that have been displaced by urban expansion.

As Christmas trees go up across America, so does an array of festive lights. Every year, as the month of December begins, the streets become illuminated by hundreds of lights. There are entire neighborhoods made famous by this practice, becoming hotspots for traffic. Our love of these festive lights is even observable from space.

A report released by NASA in 2014 found that in cities and their surrounding

suburbs light intensity increases from 30 to 50 percent during the holidays. This additional light pollution is detrimental to both humans and animals. By interrupting the day and night cycles in urban ecosystems, the excess holiday light can threaten the dynamic between predators and prey. Without the cover of darkness, prey species are easily hunted.


Light pollution also affects the biochemistry of living organisms, humans included. A study published in March of 2012 by the American Association for Cancer Research suggests that light pollution may cause cancer. The presence of light during the nighttime suppresses the production of melatonin that occurs during the night. Melatonin is responsible for the prevention of some types

of cancer.

None of this is to say that Christmas is purely bad for the environment. For example, during the holidays families across America travel, supporting ski resorts or other natural parks. These areas are often protected from development and other human pressures. Without tourism, these places wouldn't exist. Adoption of shelter animals as Christmas gifts helps to keep feral populations in check, which in turn prevents the spread of harmful diseases and viruses.

The effects of Christmas on the environment are not always clean-cut. While a white Christmas in places like San Diego may be impossible, we can always strive for a greener Christmas here and everywhere else.

Fit for Finals with P-90 Hecht



By Liam Brucker-Casey ('19)

EDITOR

P90 Hecht's Test Tips: During Finals week, don't survive...THRIVE.

As Assistant Principal for Academics, Mr. Hecht knows a thing or two about finals. Being the most academically (and possibly physically) fit man on campus, Mr. Hecht will make sure that you finish this semester strong. In an exclusive interview with The Augustinian, Mr. Hecht reveals his eight secrets to success, so that you too can become (academically) RIPPED.

1. Prioritize studying over everything else, grandma can wait, YOUR TEST WONT.
2. TAKE BREAKS. After a session of studying reps, allow your mind time to RECOVER.
3. Stay well rested. Do not cram the night before the test, get plenty of sleep so that you can CRUSH THE COMPETITION.
4. EAT A HEALTHFUL BREAKFAST.
5. Make studying enjoyable: While you're going hard in the paint, remember to have fun, study with a friend, or make creative games to BE ON YOUR A-GAME.
6. Test yourself: Don't find out how much you know during the test, take online quizzes and tests or make some yourself. FIND OUT IF YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES.
7. DON'T BE HELPLESS: If you need help, GET HELP. Your teachers, friends, and counselors are great resources, UTILIZE THEM.
8. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN ACADEMIC FITNESS. Don't email your teacher about a fraction of a percent. If you take your final and think you deserve an A when you have an 89.99%, THINK AGAIN.



Get academically ripped with P-90 Hecht!

Recent Saints Alum Creates Video Game



By Mitchell Stoddard ('18)

EDITOR

The following is an interview with Saints alum Eric Lujan, who graduated with the class of 2015. Eric is in his third year at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in New York and is a dual major in Computer Science and Games and Simulation Arts and Sciences with a minor in Music. Eric has recently reached the beta testing phase in his own video game Terrium, which features online world creation along with networked sci-fi vehicular combat. By 2019, this will be available on mobile and virtual reality platforms.

Q: How long have you known you wanted to develop video games? When did you first start learning to code?

A: Since I was eleven. I started with a programming tool called Scratch made for children by MIT. MarsXPLR, my game's predecessor, is what inspired me to learn how to program and make games.

Q: Can you describe your past employment at NBC 7 and what you learned from it?

A: I have interned at NBC 7 San Diego over the last three summers and winter breaks. Each time I gained valuable experience in a corporate environment, learning teamwork and communication. As the only software developer at the station, I found inefficiencies in workflow at other departments and worked on optimizations. For example, news producers had the laborious task of transcribing video footage. To facilitate this daily process, I developed an automated transcription and timestamping software integrated with their video management software, Stratus. Similarly, I developed a weather data parser and crawl feed that updates the weather on live television. I defined my role at NBC 7 using skills no one



A trailer for the game is available on YouTube.

else had and taught myself new trades along the way. I enjoy the challenge.

Q: How long have you been working on this particular game? Can you describe the major steps and process of developing the game?

A: Most of the work put into Terrium was done in the last two years. Developing this cross-platform game has taught me proper coding, UI / UX, and music composition practice, among many other facets of game development. My biggest achievement was implementing cross-platform portability, as well as scalable game and server architecture. Working with both volunteer and freelance developers taught me transfor-

mational leadership, which I use to inspire and motivate.

Q: What were some setbacks you experienced along the way and how did you deal with them?

A: Network programming proved to be remarkably more difficult than anticipated. Lots of trial and error. You have to stay motivated and be willing to learn until you succeed.

Q: How did Saints help you on your path and contribute to your talents in the technological field?

A: Saints offers an environment that fosters independent and critical thinking. My experience here prepared me for leader-

ship. (Unfortunately, there weren't any computer science or game development courses around.)

Q: What advice do you have for any Saintsmen who want to pursue a career in Computer Science or Games and Simulation?

A: Game development is a multi-faceted skill, but worth the effort to master. It's remarkably fulfilling to build the world of your dreams.

Q: How does Rensselaer University help facilitate your growth in your field?

A: I go to a polytechnic, which allows me to learn all the hot sciences. The game design department here is also very strong.

Photo Courtesy of Eric Lujan

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Rumors Spread about Secret Santa



Isn't the resemblance astounding?

 **By Michael Senoff ('18)**
MANAGING EDITOR

A recent rumor floating around the St. Augustine campus has caught the attention of the Editorial Staff of *The Augustinian*. There is reason to believe that a member of the Saints faculty might actually be a real life Saint—St. Nick to be exact. Recent evidence has led many students to believe

that Mr. Christian da Luz may in fact be Santa Claus.

Reports of Mr. da Luz being extra jovial, referring to his Mercedes-Benz Sprinter as “The Sleigh,” and even a list, found on his desk, of his APUSH students categorized as either “naughty” or “nice” have all led multiple students to conclude that we may be in the presence of Father Christmas himself. Coincidentally, even the words “Santa” and “Claus” can be spelled just by a quick rearranging of the letters in his first and last name. (Seek me out if you need proof). He has withheld his comments on such reports, but his students were very open to commenting on the topic.

“Really, there’s more evidence to prove that he is Santa, than to prove otherwise,” said junior Parker Richardson.

The theory provides a very viable explanation for how he obtained all the flags

in his room. After visiting so many countries in one night, why wouldn’t you take a souvenir for the road? These rumors also explain why he knows so much about U.S. history. Besides studying it, he lived through it and personally delivered coal to those belonging to the Confederacy until the end of The Civil War. This would also explain the seasonal stubble that Mr. da Luz grows. What else can keep his face warm during the long, cold San Diego December nights?

Mr. da Luz also previously coached the Saints roller hockey team, a winter sport based off ice hockey. Coincidence? We think not. It can be assumed that his knowledge of roller hockey comes from his experiences in the frigid climate of the North Pole, I would imagine he could skate circles around reindeer.

He has often claimed that caffeine is the reason for his very jolly attitude, but it’s clear that the true cause of his merry demeanor is the powerful stimulant that is... the Christmas Spirit. Speaking of caffeine, if these reports are true, then one thing’s for sure, Mr. da Luz will need plenty of it in order to have everything in order by Christmas. One can only imagine how hard it must be to juggle entering final semester grades while also making sure that all the good boys and girls around the world receive their Christmas presents.

Even his own son has his suspicions. “I’ve seen him with my own eyes put Christmas presents under the tree,” junior Nainoa da Luz said “he thinks he’s so sneaky.”

Whether or not Mr. da Luz is making a list and checking it twice, be sure not to get on his naughty list, or an F in APUSH may not be the only thing he gives you this Christmas.



The Perfect Gift

by Austin Max Lalangan ('18)

