

# THE AUGUSTINIAN

“Tolle Lege”

Issue 3 November 25, 2025 St. Augustine High School

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Former Saintsman David Popkins faced off against the Dodgers in the World Series as the hitting coach for the Blue Jays. UC Davis

## Saints Alumnus David Popkins '08 visits World Series with Blue Jays



By John Cook ('26)  
STAFF WRITER



By Liam Olds ('26)  
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The Toronto Blue Jays clinched the American League Pennant on October 20, 2025, sending them to the World Series for the first time in 32 years. Propelled by their bats, the Blue Jays can attribute some of their success to Saintsman David Popkins.

Popkins, the hitting coach for the Blue Jays, graduated from Saints in 2008. He played varsity football for three years, throwing for 1,304 yards and 16 touch-

downs as the quarterback in his senior year. He was a four-year varsity baseball player, a CIF Finalist in 2007 and won four league titles with the Saints. He was First Team All-Eastern League both as a junior and a senior and was awarded CIF Player of the Year in 2008. He played under Coach Craig da Luz, who took over as head coach the year after Popkins's departure.

“Coach da Luz is the man,” Popkins said. “He is an excellent coach and he really helped me as a player.”

Growing up, Popkins idolized players like Tony Gwynn and Ken Caminiti, loving Caminiti's “passion” and “intensity,” and the way Gwynn thought about the game.

When he came to Saints, Popkins cited the school's challenging atmosphere as an avenue for growth.

“The ability to learn, to grow, to always be better, to be competitive with your peers, you know? Discipline in the dress code and our schedules and just having to grind through the academics [at Saints]. It wasn't easy, so it was good to continue to challenge and continue to learn and progress as a person. And I think all of that, all of those skills that I learned there really helped me in my career,” Popkins said.

Popkins played for UC Davis after high school. He spent a few years in the minors playing in independent leagues, and

SEE POPKINS, pg. 4

## Winter sports tip off ring season



By Cole Dolin ('27)  
STAFF WRITER

### BASKETBALL

One of the most iconic and successful teams here at Saints (and in the state) will once again be returning for another season on Court '64.

Winning a Division I championship last season, the Saintsmen plan to continue their success this winter. Although a few key players have graduated or transferred, the new and returning players will stop at nothing to win again.

“We have a good group of guys, and I'm excited to see what we can do,” junior-transfer Jackson McCall said.

Another key factor to the team is our renowned Coach Haupt. Running the program for decades, he's an excellent coach, with his efforts having resulted in many championships and great teams throughout the years. This season looks very promising — prepare for another championship, Saintsmen!

### SOCCER

Equally impressive, the soccer team will be hitting the pitch once more. For decades, their superiority ran the county, but now, after winning two state banners in four years, they run the state.

Many key upperclassmen, however, who helped facilitate widespread success over the past three years, have departed. But, like basketball, the team has a number of talented, rising upperclassmen.

With the progress made over the summer and in the season, the team could easily live up to the greatness of last year's team.

“We're going for the four-peat,” junior Maximo Piancone said.

Led by three-time San Diego Coach of the Year and the 2012 state and regional Coach of the Year, Coach Johnston, the future of soccer is bright, with likely another ring at the end of the season.

### SURF

The surf team is also beginning to paddle out. The team had a rough season last year, not obtaining too many wins in the lineup — but this year, things are looking up. The Saintsmen are already 2-0 and hungry for more.

The splashback for the Saintsmen is largely attributable to the unity of the surf team and their environment. The relaxed and loving atmosphere of the team allows them to thrive in and out of the water. Coaches Mrs. Mekrut and Mr. Granados pour their time into ensuring that everyone is happy and no one feels the pressure.

By not worrying about what could go wrong, the Saints surfers have thrived — catching barrels and hitting 360 airs has become the new norm for the team. As the winter swells rise so do the hopes of the members of the team for a league championship.

## When the Saints go marching out

### The decline of The Pit



By Benjamin Nault ('26)  
MANAGING EDITOR

It only takes two men to make a Pit (or one man, a shovel, and a lot of time). But man is a two-man Pit depressing. I know how glorious this event has the potential to be, which is why I am bawling my eyes out while writing this article. Guys, where has the spirit gone? Where is the passion? WHERE ARE MY BROTHERS?

The so-called decline of The Pit has been occurring ever since we won the “Best Basketball Student Section in the Nation” in 2021. Since then, there have been fewer and fewer Saintsmen in The Pit, culminating this year with an average of eight guys in The Pit per football game.

One of the biggest issues is that there are “more  
SEE THE PIT, pg. 3



Senior Tommy Battaglia hyping up the Saintsmen.

Cristiano Shores '26



# Ol' McCaragher has a farm, E-I-E-I-O

 **By Matthew Cramp ('26)**  
STAFF WRITER

We here at *The Augustinian* have made a shocking discovery: Did you know that the very teachers who we thought spent their entire lives here at school... have actually been leading double lives outside of Saints?

One of our most egregious offenders is our beloved football coach, Coach Caragher, whose country home and farm in La Mesa has more than meets the eye.

Growing up surrounded by horses, Coach Caragher has always had an affection for animals. In his childhood community of Morgan Hill, California, he was surrounded by animals and livestock. He gained much experience early on with farming by feeding large animals and cleaning manure in the corrals.

Since the beginning of the COVID lockdown, his love for livestock has fused with the desire for self-sufficiency. Almost five years ago, the rising prices and scarcity of certain goods pushed him and his family to purchase animals like cows and chickens. These animals would produce increasingly expensive products. In addition to practicality, Caragher cited the health benefits of homemade goods over ones produced in corporate farms as a main reason for starting his rustic lifestyle.

In addition to a cow, a rooster, and about a dozen chickens, Caragher's farm is also home to many bees and a dozen Muscovy ducks from which the Caragher family is able to produce quality organic honey, eggs, meat, milk, and butter. Spruced with a lovely natural spring pond, his ranch attracts about a dozen wild Mallard ducks daily. Though they don't sell any of their products, the Caraghers love trading with neighbors for garden vegetables, fruit, and even fresh sourdough bread.

With so many animals to care of,

the homestead represents no small amount of work for Coach Caragher and his family. Responsibilities on the farm include feeding, milking (twice a day), cleaning the coops and corrals, overseeing the hatching of ducks and chickens, and, with the recent addition of a bull, delivering healthy baby calves.

Luckily, assisted by his wife, Wendy, and his eldest son, Josh, he doesn't have to tend to the farm alone. Even though it can be a lot of work, Coach Caragher wouldn't have it any other way.

Despite his passion for the homestead lifestyle, it can still be extremely difficult to balance with being a coach. Ranchers rarely ever get a break from the work as there is always something or some animal to tend to.

"Saturdays and Sundays are no different than weekdays in that the animals need to be fed, eggs need to be collected, and our cow needs to be milked," Caragher said.

When asked why he began his farm, aside from the practical reason, he said, "It's highly rewarding. It gets us out early in the morning, the sun is rising, and it's just beautiful."

The early bird gets the worm, and Caragher gets up at around 5am every day to have a peaceful morning coffee and workout. He then heads down to the chicken coop and corral for morning milking, feeding, and manure clean-up.

While it may be a large time and monetary commitment, homesteading certainly gives a lot back. Thanks to their backyard, the Caraghers are quite self-reliant, having fresh eggs, milk, and even honey-sweetened ice cream, all easily at hand.

These goods will remain off the market for the foreseeable future. Mr. Caragher likes the size of his farm, and wants to be more a homestead farmer



Coach Caragher throws a pigskin on the field and raises animals off the field. Caragher is pictured above at his homestead in La Mesa.

*Courtesy of Coach Caragher*

than a profit farmer, providing high-quality goods for his family and friends to use daily.

Living a dream like Coach Caragher's, however, doesn't come without its challenges. A problem faced by the Caraghers as well as farmers around

America are the high prices for almost everything. In 2020, a bay of hay cost about \$15. By 2023, that price had almost doubled to \$28 a bale. While these prices have dropped a little, the high costs certainly pose a challenge.

SEE CARAGHER'S FARM, pg. 5

## Mental Health: Family Relationships

 **By Joseph Walker ('27)**  
STAFF WRITER

Whether you like it not, family is and will be a part of your life for the rest of your time on Earth — be it through memories, culture, or other influences. Consequently, conflict within the family is likewise unescapable, especially with our parents.

Dr. Rafael Reyes, a clinical psychologist at PsychSanDiego and a Saints parent, along with school counselor Dr. Jerry Rey, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist, provided their expertise.

"Disagreements about household chores, school performance, curfews, finances, driving privileges, or college or work decisions are some of the most relevant arguments with which we might find ourselves afflicted," Dr. Reyes said. "Yet they can be ultimately resolved with the right approach to communication."

Communication, communication, communication. Humans are social animals, yet so many times do we find ourselves burdened with great silence. There are several steps to building effective communication.

**Empathy.** "Any two person system has an inherent instability," Dr. Jerry Rey said. "Parents tend to work with each other to help us make the right decisions, the right actions, the right movements. Yet, we might disagree

with them because we feel that 'They don't understand me' or, 'I know what I'm doing.' But we fail to see where they are coming from, what angle they are trying to point us towards."

"Trying to genuinely see the other person's perspective will help to decrease the energy in the conflict and open avenues toward resolution," Dr. Reyes said. "When we can understand why the other person might be behaving in that way, we can more likely understand that we are not being attacked."

So many times do we feel overprotected or isolated that we might be blind to the aspect of parental love. It's not that parents want to freeze us emotionally and socially, but they might see the dangers of certain activities, dangers that we have yet to see.

That is where communication comes into play. Talking with parents to understand why we must not do something or why to avoid certain situations, rather than "fighting the system" can do wonders for both parties involved.

**Disarmament.** "When we feel criticized we tend to respond defensively, and a defensive posture can lead to increased conflict," Dr. Reyes said. How many times do we act as if we weren't asked to do a certain chore, or how many times are we asked to do a chore and we say "later," knowing fully well that "later" will not come.

"Disarming means we find some

truth in the other person's words, thereby decreasing the conflict and improving communication," Dr. Reyes said.

Instead of denying as if we were in court, instead, we should accept a failure or a fall or a mishap, and work with our parents to remedy for the next chance we get.

Let's say your mom calls you out because you forgot to take out the trash. Instead of denying it or defending yourself, consider simply acknowledging that you forgot to do it, and apologize. This is how you disarm the person who is upset. If you recognize that what they are saying is true, it is more likely they will stop attacking you. After all, the reason they are going after you is to show you where you went wrong. But if you have already done that, they have no reason to continue — you have now disarmed them.

**Inquiry.** "Knowledge is power and sometimes conflict arises from misunderstanding," Dr. Reyes said.

Even if you feel guilty from asking for clarification regarding a favor your mom asked you, as you sat there pretending to pay attention, you ask again what she wanted you to get from the store, because it is better to ask twice than return home with bread instead of milk.

"You are in a position in your life where you can begin to have a more mature relationship with your parents," Dr. Rey said.

If you can not ask for the repetition of a chore or a favor because you would feel embarrassed, you need to remember that in the long run, measuring twice and cutting once allows for the house to be built more effectively.

The same goes for communicating our feelings with our parents. Feelings are not something best left unsaid. If you still feel unheard, that is when turning to a third party such as a counselor could be helpful.

**I-statements.** "When we find ourselves in conflict we tend to have the urge to lash out and criticize," Dr. Reyes said.

Many times when we find ourselves being told to take out the trash or walk the dog or go to the store, and we lash out with "you expect too much from me," or "you never stop giving me extra things to do!" A better thing to do is not to accuse with a "you" statement which is combative, but with an "I" statement which expresses how you feel about the situation. Dr. Reyes encourages us to say something along the lines of, "I'm feeling overwhelmed with everything on my plate," a statement which is not accusatory.

Parents discipline us in order to prepare us for adulthood, but their demands sometimes can come across as overbearing or unreasonable. Using the above tools for communication can be an effective way to convey to them what we are feeling and what we are needing.



THE PIT  
*continued from page 1*

demands on people’s time,” Dr. GO said.

We live in an age where we move move move and never stop to appreciate the good ol’ occasional football match. Not only do we live in a bustling world, but we also live in a world of tech.

“Because we live in a digital age, some of the factors is that a lot of our students now just rely on fantasy football and don’t really know actual football in general,” Mr. Hickey said. Dr. GO echoed the sentiment, noting that we love our clips and highlight reels but rarely take the time to watch football in real time, let alone in real life. This shortening of our football attention span leaves us susceptible to walking away from the game to talk to friends or go home.

One of the biggest issues which I think is the most crucial is leadership. My upperclassmen brothers, we need you DESPERATELY.

“We just don’t get seniors and juniors coming back for games, and without senior and junior leadership, the Pit doesn’t happen,” Dr. GO said. Freshmen and

sophomores still show up to the games, God bless them. But I haven’t felt like an outsider more than at my own football games, maybe recognizing one or two upperclassmen if I’m lucky. If we don’t have veteran leadership, no one is motivated to join in the fun.

Now, I know what you are thinking: “But Ben, we want to talk to girls. You’ve probably never talked to a girl so you wouldn’t understand.” And to that I say, yes, I have talked to a girl, and no, you all are not the players you think you are.

Every night, I see numerous Saints-men either sitting above The Pit, on their phones, or just leaning on the railing doing nothing. Trust me, you all don’t look cool. The girls aren’t checking you out from behind. SO, go down to The Pit, have some fun, and make it as glorious as it was four years ago.

“If you’re a true fan of a team and... passionate about it, you’re with them through the good times and the bad times,” Mr. Hickey said. “Go out and support them through the highs and lows. Because, again, [during] the lows, they need your support as much as the highs.”

# Sophomore Noah Pabarcus holds the line



Sophomore Noah Pabarcus sizing up the competition. *Cristiano Shores '26*

 **By Kieron Scanlan ('26)**  
STAFF WRITER

Last year, sophomore Noah Pabarcus finished first team all league — among the highest individual accolades one can achieve — in indoor volleyball, an impressive feat for a freshman. Furthermore, he’s on the ones pair in beach volleyball this year, the team’s strongest two-player duo.

Noah has been around volleyball his whole life. Both his dad and sister play, so he's never had trouble finding someone to practice with. He started playing organized volleyball in the fifth grade. Though he said that he “didn't really like... [his] first season,” after receiving encouragement from his dad, he continued onwards and eventually fell in love with the sport.

Moreover, he enjoys the strong relationships he’s developed through the team. He attributed this to Saints being a small school which allows him to see his teammates more frequently.

Noah plans to continue his volleyball career after graduating from Saints where he hopes to play at the University of Southern California or at the University of California, Los Angeles.

To further develop his skills, Noah plays on a club team for both indoor and

outdoor volleyball which runs all year round, taking a hiatus during the high school season. He finds more enjoyment playing indoors, which works perfectly as it better aligns with his goal to make a living off volleyball, seeing as beach volleyball unfortunately doesn’t have pro teams where one could have a stable career.

Head coach of the beach volleyball team, Coach Palafox, said that Noah “has a passion for the sport and his love for the game is going to bring him far in life.”

The best piece of advice Noah received was when he was told to read Jon Gordon’s *The Hard Hat*, a book that provides advice for athletes to become better teammates. The book was recommended by one of his coaches this season. Noah’s big takeaway from the book was to “have positive and contagious energy, always trying to bring your teammates up.”

Noah, however, is not a one-trick pony of ultimate teamwork. He said that his biggest strength is his “decision when [he] set[s], to know who to set the ball to and when.”

Coach Palafox expressed the same sentiment on his skill level saying his “volleyball IQ far surpasses any other guy his age.”

# Saints dips its toes into water polo



The Saints water polo club practicing with OLP. *Courtesy of the Water Polo Club*

 **By Mattie Gosling**  
STAFF WRITER

Have you ever played football, soccer, and swimming all at once? You will when you join the Saints Water Polo club. Water polo is a 7-on-7 battle in a deep pool where each team is trying to score a goal in the opposing team’s net. There’s fast swimming, quick passes and crafty plays that will hopefully lead your team to victory. Luckily, Saints water polo is currently scouting for students ready to dive in and join in one of the toughest, most rewarding sports known to man.

The Saints water polo club offers students who may not have a sport in the fall or winter season something to participate in. The best part, there are no prerequisites or anything holding you back from getting in the pool with the boys. As long as you can tread water and swim relatively well, Saints water polo is a great opportunity to grow in *Unitas*. Thanks to Club President sophomore Dylan Jensen and Club Moderator Mrs. Crachy, the club now has access and will play at the University of San Diego (USD).

A favorite memory for Dylan has been “seeing so many new faces show up to our first meeting,” he said.

Adding water polo to the Saints community gives all students another option to participate in Saints sports. Since men’s swimming is in the spring, having

water polo in the fall “gives those swimmers the opportunity to compete in more than just one season,” Mrs. Crachy said.

On November 10, the club had their first clinic, which was a great success. There were Saintsmen from not only the water polo club, but also both the surf and swim teams. The Saintsmen who were present had the opportunity to practice with the OLP Water Polo team.

“It was a perfect mix of fun and training,” Dylan said.

Both Saintsmen and Pilots got the opportunity to run drills with the OLP coach and improve their skills. All around, it was a great environment of learning and fun, truly creating two schools with one spirit.

For those interested, there will be future clinics on November 24, December 1, December 8, January 12, and January 26, all from 3:30-5pm at the USD pool.

While making water polo a sport at Saints is definitely a future goal, Dylan said that for now, what would make him happy is just seeing boys in the pool having fun. This club would not exist if it were not for Dylan’s selfless dedication to providing a fun atmosphere for Saintsmen.

If you feel hesitant, know that Dylan and Mrs. Crachy would love to see you at a clinic no matter what level you are at. For any questions, go and ask Mrs. Crachy or Dylan Jensen to join the WhatsApp group chat.

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# Looking back at Project 2025

*The document guiding Trump 2.0?*



President Trump with Russell Vought, Project 2025's chief architect.

 **By George Burrell ('26)**  
EDITOR

This past year has been one of the most topsy-turvy political roller coasters Americans have experienced. The main reason why this may be is because of President Donald Trump’s political agenda, inspired by the controversial Project 2025.

For those of you who may not know, Project 2025 (more formally known as the 2025 Presidential Transition Project) is a controversial political playbook created by the right-winged Heritage Foundation. The plan not only blue-printed a policy agenda for President Trump, but also a transitional timeline for the first 180 days of his term.

Prior to his inauguration, Trump admitted that he had not looked over Project 2025, nor had he planned on implementing any of its plans.

“I have nothing to do with Project 2025... I’m not going to read it,” Trump said during his debate with Kamala Harris last year.

As time would tell, many of the Heritage Foundation’s ideas would become a major part of Trump’s administrative agenda, while others would be tossed to the side. So, what of Project 2025 did (and didn’t) become a part of the past political year?

One of the key objectives of Project 2025 was to abolish the Department of Education (DOE). In March, President Trump signed Executive Order 14242, shutting down a number of its essential functions. Among these functions was appropriating public school funds to the states — a critical strike, since around 90 percent of school-age kids in the US attend a public school.

Trump’s action is one based in the Reagan-era concept of devolution: that is, returning more legislative and fiscal responsibility to the states.

“We’re going to be returning education back to the States, where it belongs,” Trump said.

This has put financial tension on the states, as some rely heavily on government funds for infrastructure support and other necessary expenses.

A second plan similar to this that took into effect under Trump was the dismantling of Diversity, Equity and

*The New York Times*

Inclusion (DEI) programs. In his own inauguration speech, Trump stated that the federal government would henceforth only recognize two genders — male and female — and that DEI would fall soon after. Later that day, Trump signed Executive Order 14151, ending DEI for good.

As a result, many federal protections for LGBTQ workers were revoked. The US military also saw an overhaul of LGBTQ personnel: just a week after his inauguration, Trump signed a follow-up Executive Order abolishing all DEI-based offices in the Department of Defense.

In its place, Trump has planned to replace DEI with a merit-based employment system. While this too is a part of the Heritage Foundation’s plan, Trump does not go to the fullest potential described. Project 2025 specifically called for loyalists to fill government offices — a plan that, while Trump has followed in some regard, has not been brought to the extent that the Heritage Foundation intended.

This is a pattern that can further be seen through Trump’s fiscal plans. One thing that Trump completely followed through with was tariff policy. Attempting to bring production back ashore is something Trump has worked for through his “Liberation Day” actions. While he fulfilled his campaign promises to substantially cut taxes for corporations and billionaires, he did not make changes to the 2017 Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, which set a seven-bracket tax structure. Project 2025’s goal would be to dismantle this Act, replacing it with one consisting only of two brackets.

At the end of the day, Trump’s presidential policy was no doubt shaped by Project 2025: the plan has influenced a lot of change surrounding the federal government’s responsibility in education, taxation, and the like. Trump, however, did not go to the extent that the Heritage Foundation projected, with many of his policies being simpler and less extreme than those described in Project 2025.

Then again, 2025 is just the first year of Trump’s second term — he’s still got three more to make change happen, for better or for worse.

**POPKINS**  
*continued from page 1*

he got as high as AA ball in the Cardinals system. Popkins primarily played in the corner outfield.

“I didn’t get many balls out there, so I could really think about what I was going to do in my next at bat. That’s probably what I liked the most about it,” Popkins chuckled.

Then he turned to coaching.

Despite not having any salaried coaching positions available, Dodgers hitting coach Robert Van Scoyoc wanted Popkins in the Dodgers system. They signed Popkins to a minor league deal where he was to serve as a player coach, not appearing on the field in any games. In 2019, Popkins started coaching for the Arizona Dodgers in the Arizona League, before moving to the Great Lakes Loons, a Dodgers High-A affiliate. While Popkins coached the Loons, the team hit more home runs than all but two of the 90 teams in Class A and AA.

In an interview last month with The Athletic, Popkins said he became “addicted to finding out why good hitters are really good. Why certain guys have really good years, it was like this puzzle.” He spent his time in the Dodgers organization bouncing ideas off “equally addicted hitting minds” like Will Rhymes, Josh Byrnes, and Will Vandenberg — the Dodgers player development vice president, senior VP of baseball operations, and research scientist, respectively. He also worked with Dustin Kelly and Keith Beauregard, currently the hitting coaches for the Cubs and Tigers, and Lou Lannotti, now his assistant hitting coach with the Blue Jays.

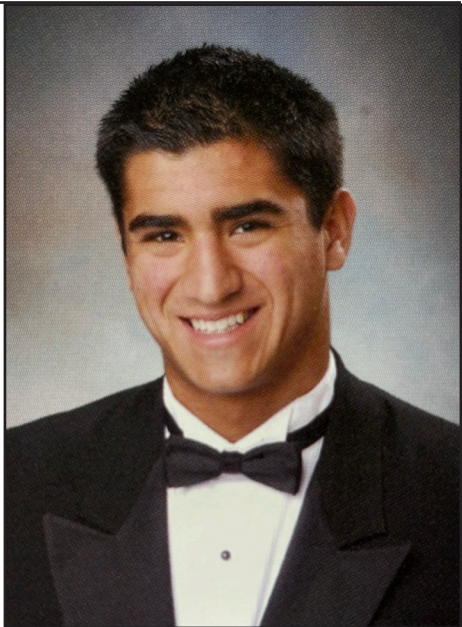
“To this day, those conversations really helped mold who I am,” Popkins said to The Athletic.

After a year with the Loons, The Minnesota Twins hired Popkins to be their big league hitting coach. Popkins then made the move to Toronto after the 2024 season.

“[After 2024], the Twins didn’t renew my contract, so I was essentially a free agent as a coach,” Popkins said. “[The Blue Jays] called me...and they thought I did a really good job in Minnesota... I went there and kind of connected and hit it off and they decided they wanted me to be the guy. Literally the same day they let me know I was the guy after the interview, so it went really well.”

Popkins saw great success in his first year with the Jays. The Blue Jays led the Major League in hits, batting average, and on-base percentage. In true Tony Gwynn style, they had the second lowest number of strikeouts in the majors, with only three more than the Kansas City Royals who had the least.

Working with a dynamic lineup, Popkins declined to pick a favorite player he has coached, though he did mention infielder Bo Bichette.



**David Popkins's senior portrait (2008).**  
*Courtesy of Saints Yearbook*

“Bo is really fun to work with because he’s so cerebral when he hits and he’s just such a smart hitter and really is detailed with his preparation and his performance,” Popkins said.

In an interview with the Toronto Star last month, Blue Jays outfielder George Springer shared his respect for Popkins.

“He knows hitters and he understands players. When you have a guy who you trust — and I have the ultimate trust in him — it makes it easier to believe everything he says,” Springer said. “Pop has been able to resonate with pretty much everybody here.”

Springer revitalized his career last season working with Popkins. Springer hit .309 after posting a career low .220 in 2024. His WAR jumped to 4.8 after an anemic 1.1 the previous season.

Reflecting on his career thus far, Popkins emphasized personalization as essential to success as a coach.

“The best lesson I’ve learned was that everyone is unique and everyone is different. You really have to learn the individual. How they function, how they’re motivated, how they learn,” Popkins said. “I think when you learn to treat people as unique you start to find things that really help performance and development.”

Popkins graduated from Saints over 17 years ago, but he is still looking out for current and future Saintsmen. He offered some advice to current students pursuing baseball.

“No matter how dim or dark you think your opportunities are currently — or even if things are going really good — don’t stop working and don’t stop trying to get better. I’ve seen crazy stories of guys that were late developing and they ended up making it and ended up being the best player in college and professional. I’ve seen guys that have been really good when they were younger and they stopped working. [Those] who kind of relied on that really fizzle out. Even before senior year. So don’t stop striving to get better and don’t stop learning and improving,” Popkins said.



**Popkins sliding into home during his senior season with Saints.**  
*MaxPreps*





## Provider Spotlight: Faith Marin, RN BSN

Starting in general surgery, Faith observed the effects of nutrition and lifestyle on wound healing. She was thereby drawn to aesthetic dermatology where she uses lasers and chemical means to create tiny wounds and her medical knowledge to best recruit the body's own regenerative abilities for natural restorative results. An OLP alum ('17) and the wife of a Saint (Reilly '10), she's always happy to care for Saintsmen and their families.

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# Thanksgiving Sides



**By Ben Bayona ('27)**  
STAFF WRITER

Thanksgiving is a time to be grateful — not for family, friends, or another cliché, but for a true American value: gluttony. While the centerpiece of the Thanksgiving meal, the turkey, is arguably the holiday's most prominent imagery, what is a Thanksgiving meal without its sides? As a seasoned “bigback,” I believe myself to be an expert on the subject and an able guide through this culinary experience.

### Green Bean Casserole

Simply searching images for green bean casseroles pulls up images of a dull, bland, unappealing hodgepodge that is somehow considered a dish. Sure, appearance isn't the most important aspect of food, but how far can some green beans cooked in mushroom soup really get in taste? The two ingredients lack cohesion, both in palate and in structure. I better not see this sludge present in the Thanksgiving spread. Green beans lightly seasoned with oil, salt, and pepper work better than the whole casserole.

### Rice

Rice will be the baseline for this list of foods. While green bean casserole will meet the depths of the trash can, there's not much one can really say about rice. At least green bean casserole is considered a Thanksgiving classic; rice has no special label or holiday connotation attached to it. It's usually a food in normal life, and I think it serves its role well. It's versatile and can be served with almost anything, including the protein of a Thanksgiving meal. Rice's only problem is its blandness and doing the bare minimum in taste.

### Stuffing

Stuffing is basically bread infused with herbs and turkey drippings. With an elevated taste and a practical use in cooking, stuffing beats out rice and absolutely surpasses green bean casserole. While packed with flavor, some stuffings, when cooked with the turkey, lose texture and end up mushy. The product is still tasty, but the loss in a crunch brings down stuffing.

### Macaroni & Cheese

A staple in the diets of children and childlike teens, macaroni and cheese is a fine dish. Even the worst macaroni and cheese dishes still usually taste decent. The only thing is that it's really not that hard to mess up macaroni and cheese. Besides the base pasta, the dish can easily be altered to enhance the flavor. Different cheeses can be used, meats can be added, breadcrumbs can be used to add flavor, and so on. A bite with creamy cheese and al dente pasta is heartwarming. Macaroni and cheese can easily stand by itself as a dish.

### Mashed Potatoes

While I personally prefer macaroni and cheese, mashed potatoes is the quintessential side dish of Thanksgiving, almost as synonymous as the turkey. I'm more of a smooth mashed potato guy, as I think the texture comes from the other foods paired with it. No matter if there are chunks or no chunks, one bite is all just starchy goodness. And for even more taste, you can just add enough amounts of butter and cream to fatten a Victorian-era child in one bite. It pairs perfectly with whatever protein is at its side. If you want a richer flavor, pair it with some gravy to give the potatoes a deep, meaty kick.

To sound cliché, what sides are on the dinner table don't matter. What really matters is absolute gluttony. And happy holidays.

## CARAGHER'S FARM

*continued from page 2*


Additionally, medical care is no cheap affair, but thankfully, the Caraghers' animals have been spared of any major health problems.

Despite the costs and risks of raising such a collection of animals, the positives of a healthy, readily-available meal are more than worth the hassle in Coach Caragher's eyes.

Got questions about your pet chicken — or a pesky duck that won't leave your yard? Ask Coach Caragher, the animal whisperer.

# Chaplain's Corner

## Come and ask me a question!



**By Br. Tony Moreno, OSA**  
COLUMNIST

*Student: “Hi, Brother Tony, can I interview you and ask you a few questions?”*

*Br. T: “Sure, how about today?”*

The questions were fascinating:

- 1) What is the relationship between Faith and Science?
- 2) What are two things you want everyone to know about God?
- 3) How does Jesus fulfill the covenant laid out in the Old Testament?...(to name a few.)

I responded to them, one by one.

1) To the first, I believe God made everything out of nothing because he loves us: Faith. We can observe the natural world, make hypotheses as to how it works, test these to make theories, and eventually define laws, e.g. gravitation or Newton's laws of motion to describe how things move in the world: Physics. Science can describe what happens and forecast what will happen, but never tell us “Why?” For that we need revelation: God disclosing Himself to us, how to live, how to love, and how to follow Jesus Christ, his Son, our Lord and Redeemer.

2) To the second, I want everyone to know God is omnipotent and merciful. God is all powerful, our creator, so it is proper to worship Him in gratitude. In the Old Testament we read of God's mercy. In the New Testament, God's mercy comes in the person of Jesus Christ—the Word made flesh. Our sins can be forgiven by the passion, death, Resurrection, and Ascension of Jesus Christ: By his Paschal mystery. As chaplain, I invite all Catholics to seek sacramental confession—especially at our Advent Penance Service on December 3 rd . Non-Catholics are invited to speak to the confessor priests that day.

3) The prophet Isaiah speaks of the Lord's mercy from the 1st chapter. In Exodus, The Lord calls Moses to lead his fellow Israelites out of slavery. But not before they sacrificed a lamb, ate its flesh, and put its blood on the door posts as a code to “SAVE-US!” Jesus IS God's Mercy; He is the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world.

Have some questions of your own? Stop by. You are welcome in my office.



# 2026 Predictions

## Marvel. Matcha. GTA VI.

 **By Paddy Ward ('26)**  
STAFF WRITER

2026 is going to be an absolute banger of a year — trust me. How do I know? Well, it came to me in a dream... possibly a divinely-inspired dream. Granted, it *was* after taking melatonin. Nevertheless, these predictions are guaranteed to happen. And if they don't, then they'll happen later. I am the one true oracle, infallible and all-knowing.

### Movies & TV

For the past decade now, the habit of lazily rebooting, remaking, and “prequel-sequeling” has been all the rage. In the upcoming year, however, there may actually be some new and original pieces of film. Or realistically probably not. Eh whatever.

First off is Star Wars. Now that *Andor* is over, Disney needs a new serious show or film. I predict that, for the first time, there will be a Star Wars horror movie. It could be about Project Blackwing and chronicle a nightmarish zombie outbreak on a star destroyer, or maybe a doomed rescue mission on a monstrous forest planet.

In fact, Disney might go ultra-horror by bringing back Jar Jar Binks for a five-season series titled *Jar Jar Binks, Salacious B. Crumb, and Gaper Bingzoid's Wacky Outer Rim Adventures!*. Lightsabers will be nerfed even more as well as people forgetting how to use the force... oh, and of course, Palpatine will come back.

For DC, James Gunn is just going to create more “peak” and keep flexing his music taste.

And then there's Marvel. Um, yeah I have no idea. Oh wait, hear me out. They have all of these upcoming movies like *Avengers: Doomsday* and *Spider-Man: Brand New Day*, but seem to be missing a key, 2020's and late 2010's beloved theme: THE MULTIVERSE! Turns out that Spider-Man and the gang are going to go on a wacky-wormhole-multiversal-transversal-dimensional-time-looping-lollygagging lollapalooza throughout the different universes — hijinks and a gabillion dollars in CGI will all be included.

### Video Games

Funnily enough, while writing this, I was planning on joking that *GTA VI*

was going to be delayed. It has been.

Now it's pushed to November 19, 2026, but that's still a little too generous. June 2027 is going to be the day... (probably not).

Bad news for you *Battlefront* and *Red Dead* fans — you get nothing.

### Culture

Big news for the performative men in the world! The new niche Asian drink, niche indie female artist, niche archaic technology, and the new, nichest niche that ever niched are all coming soon.

Matcha is *much* too mainstream now: the new option will be grabbing an Ube Thai Coffee. The draw of this drink is its unique, eye-catching purple that'll pop out much more than that now, unremarkable, cucumber-lime, Gatorade green matcha. Make sure to get a clear cup!

And sure, drinks are important and all, but the real meat lies in music taste. If you really want to get ahead of the performative performatives, Sophia Sheth is where it's at. With only 8675 monthly listeners on Spotify, you're sure to be the king of underground artists.

### Faculty

2026 will be a year of new style for some of our beloved St. Augustine High School faculty members.

On the facial hair frontline, there'll be some lovely changes. Daddy and Duffy will join the mustache march of Saints teachers. Just imagine Daddy evolving into his final fatherly form with a stache that emits paternity, as an open reactor core would.

Mr. Hickey will grow out his illustrious facial hair once again, but instead of his famous beard, it'll be a Nietzsche-inspired mustache.

Dr. GO will need a new moniker as either the High Admiral GO or as the Hype Magnate. This is because he'll tout some absolutely majestic sideburns that would make anyone from the 1800s, be they a street urchin or railroad tycoon, swoon.

Mr. Barnes will bring back his old hair. His beautiful, flowing, luscious, voluptuous, lion-mane-like, golden, gilded, surfer-esque, locks will return in due time.

# Trump lays waste with the power of AI

 **By Oliver Winn ('27)**  
STAFF WRITER

Good old-fashioned, well-meaning satire has always been a useful tool for noble monarchs to assert their divinely-appointed authority by ridiculing those laughable rebels who insist on “freedom of speech” and “peaceable assembly.” President Donald J. Trump, indisputably more patriotic and powerful than any monarch of the olden days, has carried the powers of satire to new heights, to ballroom-level ceilings, the likes of which satirists have never seen before: generating and posting AI videos of himself dropping human excrement on “No Kings” protesters.

You can't deny it: to be blessed at all with the sight of the noble Donald, excrement-a-blazing as he fearlessly pilots the skies in his own F-18, is a blessing those unpatriotic extremists never deserved. Nor could they have possibly deserved the mild splash of mere feces when their signs and chants obviously represent no less than a hate crime on America.

Still, the president's video heralds a new age in American satire, one in which the president is no longer held back by fake, liberal-produced words like “respect” or “human decency.” Screw anything and everything that gets between the president's odorous armaments and “protesters” exercising their “First Amendment rights.” President Trump's recent video breaks down any and all such barriers to the depositing of moist justice on the heads of transgressors. Besides, as Speaker Mike Johnson said, it was all just harmless satire.

Inspired by the fearlessness of our

commander in chief, I would like to advance a humble proposal, one which no respectable, excrement-dumping politician could possibly turn down: when any disloyal American voices a complaint against a decision of the noble Trump administration, federal agents must splash them in the face with a golden goblet of feces.

Our president has already shown the path toward unrestrained delivery of justice by his lionhearted piece of satire. Now, the lawmakers of the land (subordinate, of course, to Trump) must uphold that noble course by ensuring that no traitorous extremists ever break from our country's glorious path toward greatness.

My proposed method will send two clear messages to those disloyal Americans who criticize the political embodiment of all good. First and foremost, this administration will not allow any dissenters to break from the glorious path that our noble executive has been forging. If you haven't been deported by ICE, buckle up, because we're all in this pursuit of feces-slinging greatness together. Second, Trump's government will use any and all means — forget “decency” or “human dignity” — to enforce what is the unquestionable will of the people. You might be thinking to yourself, “Wait, but isn't that just a tad bit unconstitutional? Isn't there, I don't know, a First Amendment that guarantees freedom of speech, press, and peaceful assembly?”

Watch what you do with those traitorous thoughts. You might just get a cupful of fecal matter hurled at you.

Thank you for your attention to this fecal matter.

# Government Shutdown: 43 Days of Silence

 **By JM Prado Gonzalez ('27)**  
STAFF WRITER

On October 1, 2025, the government, after disagreement over a bill between Republicans and Democrats, shut down. This shutdown soon became the longest in American history, lasting 43 days under President Donald Trump.

President Trump is no stranger to shutdowns. The second-longest government shutdown took place from 2018-2019 and lasted 35 days during his first administration.

A government shutdown occurs when Congress fails to pass funding, halting many federal operations. Here, the shutdown was triggered because “them Dems” could not agree with the bill Republicans were trying to pass.

Now why all the fuss, huh? Why couldn't the Democrats just stomach the bill and move on? Well, the Democrats also wanted to include “an extension of expiring tax credits that make health insurance cheaper for millions of Americans and a reversal of Trump's cuts to Medicaid, a government healthcare programme used by millions of elderly, disabled and low-income people,” the BBC reported. They were also opposed to cutting funds directed towards government health agencies.

Why, how greedy of them! How dare they want to spend our government funds to help the people of the USA. Jokes aside, Republicans were against the Democrats' proposal. They were adamant that Democrats wanted health insurance subsidies for illegal immigrants.

“Democrats shut down the government in order to put illegal immigrants

ahead of Americans, attempting to undo vital reforms that Republicans enacted just three months ago,” said representative Jason Smith (R-MO), Chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee.

Now, in this case, the term “illegal immigrant” is a bit vague. In reality, the Democrats aimed to supply healthcare for “lawfully present immigrants.” What is the difference? Well Republicans sure didn't ask.

A lawfully present immigrant is any alien living in the United States under legally recognized and lawfully recorded permanent residence — completely different from an illegal immigrant. One is actually illegal and undocumented while the other is “legally recognized.”

The use of the word “illegal immigrant” is only used to spread misinformation and sway the public toward the Republican side.

The deal to end the government shutdown saw no clear winner. It guaranteed “back-pay” for laid-off federal workers while reversing their lay-offs.

SNAP is finally back on the menu, though the deal did come with some loss.

What Democrats wanted was “a guaranteed extension of expiring health insurance subsidies that affect around 24 million Americans,” the BBC said. “Healthcare costs are poised to skyrocket for lower income Americans if the subsidies are not renewed.”

Eventually, Trump decided to sign the bill. In the wake of this historical shutdown we can only wait and look out for the effects on the economy, effects on the people of America, and the effects on daily life and policy forthcoming.

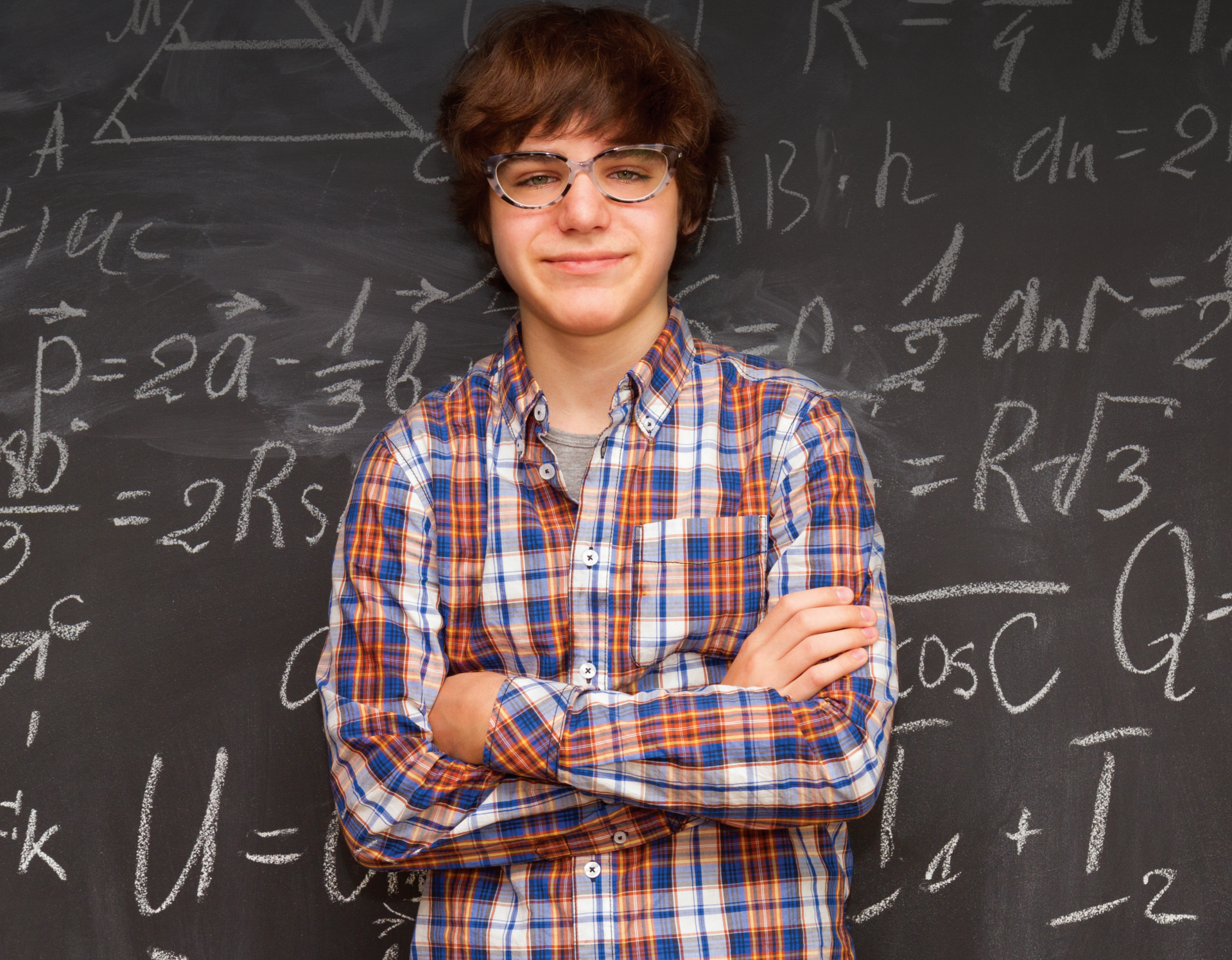
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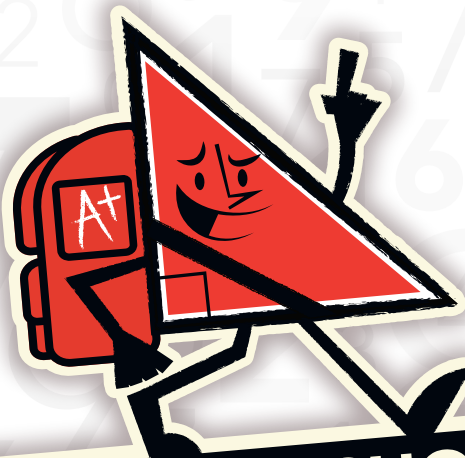
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# Why Saints teachers are grateful



Edited by Benjamin Nault '26

 **By Erik Johanson ('27)**  
STAFF WRITER

What are you thankful for, Saints-men? That dress code from Mr. Wehbe last week? That stern talking to from Lawd Gayton? Maybe that lollipop that you acquired from the front office that was definitely not an act of grand theft? We students have many reasons to praise the Lord, but surprisingly teachers might just have more.

**Mr. Adams: Neo Quiz Deluxe Generator**

This year, Mr. Adams has crafted his most potent quiz generation tool to date: the Neo Quiz Deluxe™. A marvel of Google Sheets mastery, the Neo Quiz Deluxe is world-renowned for ruthlessly and efficiently separating the chancellors from the busters in a matter of minutes. Though Mr. Adams’s patent is still being processed, his classes have become well-acquainted with the generator’s awesome powers.

**Mr. Isaak: Even-Numbered Problems**

“On the next page, do numbers 66, 68, and 70..”

For Mr. Isaak, even-numbered problems are an oasis, a haven of safety from the most terrible landmine a math teacher could ever stumble into: speaking aloud the two consecutive digits following five. No other utterance is scientifically known to activate such a primal, instinctual reaction from the freshmen, and Mr. Isaak must avoid it at all costs, or else his class will be bogged down by chaos, uproar, and the all-too-familiar brainrot.

**Coacher: Spanish-to-English Dictionary**

No other resource known to man is as green, pocket-sized, or packed full of translations as *Merriam-Webster’s Spanish-to-English Dictionary*. After all,

how would you be able to do your Spanish tarea without any cell connection? One never knows when they may need to look up the difference between ser and estar for the thousandth time on top of a Guatemalan volcano, deep in the Peruvian Amazon, or most isolated of all: inside the Saints parking garage.

**Mr. Raines: Mitochondria**

We know it. We love it. It’s everyone’s favorite organelle (sorry golgi body): the powerhouse of the cell. And Mr. Raines will be the first to vouch for just how essential these little generators truly are. Without the mitochondria, it’s safe to say that Saints would be pretty boring. Nobody would have any energy to play intramural sports, lift weights in the sweat box, or build out presentations about the... mitochondrion itself? Fair play, mitochondria.

**Mr. Sipper: The Raymond Center**

The gargantuan class size of Mr. Sipper’s Block 1 AP World History class is truly one of a kind. Without the expansive room that the theater provides, those sophomores would be in for some uncomfortable arrangements. Would they have to share three to a yoga ball in Mr. Pruter’s room? What is the maximum they could fit on a beanbag if they all piled into Mr. Okuley’s room? Could they cram any more desks into Mr. Manley’s room?

**Mr. Bachynsky: Draft Deadlines**

Mr. Bachynsky knows that there is nothing Saintsmen love more than to push a deadline to the very limit. If this publication did not set deadlines for article drafts, things would be left until the absolute latest second... more than they already are. If there is a way to procrastinate while still barely scraping by in time, rest assured that Saintsmen will find a way. (Yes, I am writing this Sunday night at 11:30. Yes, I have it under control.)



By Head Cartoonist Kieron Scanlan '26

## All they want for Christmas

 **By Gannon Hayes ('27)**  
STAFF WRITER

As stores pump out the Christmas music in NOVEMBER, we are forced to recognize that *The Augustinian* will not be around when the true Christmas season rounds the bend. Hence, we are forced to write a Christmas article when we are given the chance. Hopefully, these teachers are on Santa’s nice list, or else these things may never happen.

**Sensei da Luz: The End to War In Ukraine**

While most people are asking for a new espresso machine, Amazon giftcards, and a working projector this Christmas, Mr. da Luz has his eyes set on something loftier: the end to the war in Ukraine. Step into his classroom and you will understand why. Every square inch of his room is plastered with flags, forming what could best be described as a scaled United Nations, but with more energy and American exceptionalism. If equipped with the right coffee and a slideshow without his face hidden in the photos, Mr. da Luz might just be the man for the job to put a peace deal out there. Most teachers are just concerned with making it to Christmas break. Mr. da Luz is wishing for something bigger: world peace, goodwill toward men, and a few less SAQs to grade.

**Mr. Chesser: A Vacation to Europe**

It is no surprise that Mr. Chesser, a former finance bro, is saving his money from Christmas and rolling it into a larger, grander extravaganza — a vacation to Europe. Truly embodying the Christmas spirit, he wants nothing more than a lovely time with his family and to escape from his inept, exasperating, hellish Honors English II students. And honestly, who can blame him?

His students, I hear, are throwing in some of their own pocket change, as at this time of the year, they want nothing more than a tranquil sojourn far away from all the stress, schoolwork, and avalanche of AP Lang annotations that send a chill down their spine like the dreaded

“SE?”. Perhaps, while covering Mr. Chesser’s class, sir Martin would only assign 15 pages to read, not 63 due the next day.

**Mr. Raines: Fewer AP Bio Boys**

At the start of this semester, Mr. Raines received horrifying news: his small, peaceful Block 3 of AP Bio would not be big enough for what was coming. A mob of overconfident and underprepared students flooded into his room at numbers akin to the electron carriers in cellular respiration. Now, his class is packed to the gills both figuratively and literally, as “AP” Bio students pester him with questions to the point that Mr. Raines is wondering if their brain cells have committed apoptosis. Consequently, his Christmas wishlist — albeit, a Christmas miracle — is for half of his AP Bio class to disappear: not from Earth, but from his classroom.

**Mr. Adams: No Wall Times**

While many of the crusty busters believe that Mr. Adams takes a sick, sadistic pleasure in exiling them to the cold, dreaded wall, the one thing on the top of Mr. Adams’s wishlist is for no more wall time. Mr. Adams wants nothing more than to trust the youth of America, specifically with the all-too-powerful hot glue gun, and torment them with his coin flip quizzes. True chancellors know he uses his completely democratic — absolutely not tyrannical — powers for the noble betterment of America’s future, and not just because crusty activity and buster behavior offend him on a spiritual level.

**Mr Hickey: a Nintendo Switch 2 and a PS5**

Many students know that Mr. Hickey has a love for math, football, drone soccer, and maintaining a beard (R.I.P) that puts Santa Claus to shame. One thing students may not know is that Mr. Hickey has a love for gaming and is looking to improve his setup with a Nintendo Switch 2 and PS5 this Christmas. Mr. Hickey loves to test limits — not just the calculus kind, but the limits of his own reaction time as he humbles cocky students both in Street Fighter and with their test scores, like a math-themed warrior.

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