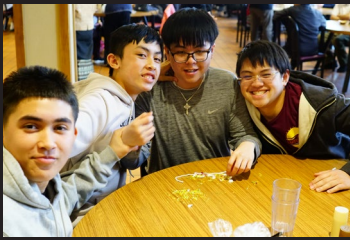
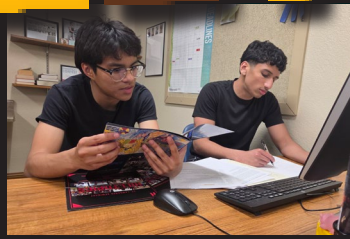
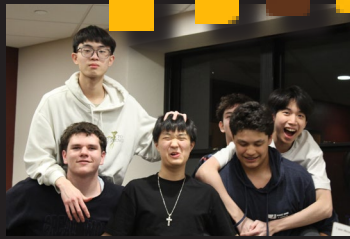


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ST. LAWRENCE SEMINARY



HILLTOPICS



VOLUME LXI

ISSUE 6

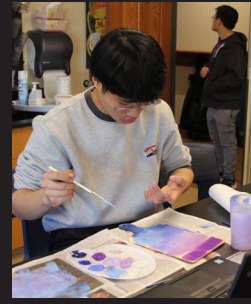
STUDENT PUBLICATION SINCE 1965



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CLASS OF 2026



"ROLL THE CREDITS!"

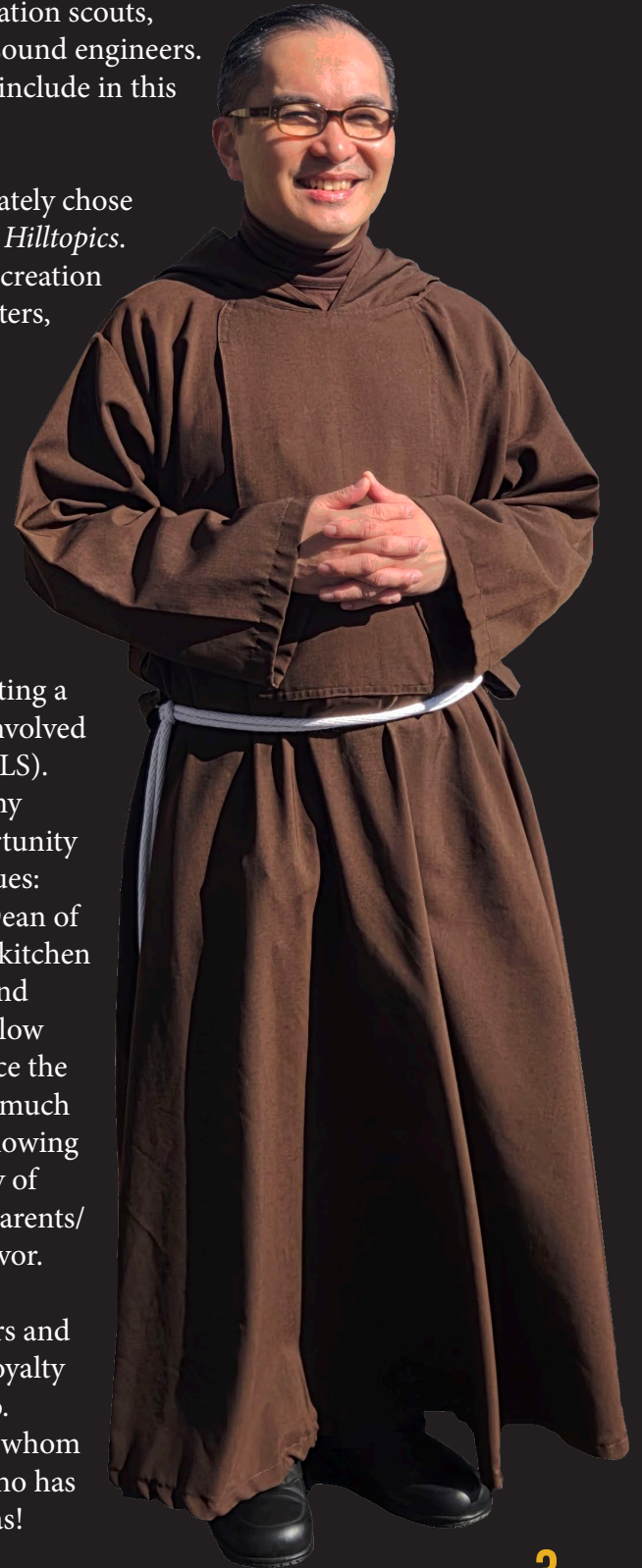
By: Father Zoy Garibay

At the end of a film, a list of cast members, production crew, companies, and contributors scrolls vertically as the film's theme song plays. The list can be quite extensive. End credits are an important feature of a film because they acknowledge the massive collaboration involved in creating a motion picture. There are actors, directors, camera operators, grips, and gaffers. There are also producers, production designers, location scouts, casting directors, editors, visual effects artists, and sound engineers. And there are a host of other workers, too many to include in this article.

This year's creative editors-in-chief quite appropriately chose "Roll the Credits" as the theme for the final issue of *Hilltopics*. As with a motion picture, many are involved in the creation of this student publication: the editors-in-chief, writers, photographers, proofreader, and staff advisor. They all deserve credit for producing, by far, the most creative issues I've seen. Their hard work and dedication paid off. I hope that you enjoyed reading the articles and looking at the images as much as I did.

As we draw near the end of another academic year in the long life of SLS, the image of rolling end credits comes to mind. If many are involved in creating a student publication, imagine how many more are involved in operating a school like St. Lawrence Seminary (SLS). Before this school year ends and before I wrap up my ministry here at SLS, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all my Capuchin confreres and lay colleagues: the teachers, dorm supervisors, weekend helpers, Dean of Students, school nurses, campus minister, coaches, kitchen staff, custodial and maintenance staff, admissions and development staff, administrative assistants, and fellow administrators, with whom I collaborated to advance the mission of SLS. Their labor and dedication deserve much credit. I would also like to thank the students for allowing me to be their spiritual companion on their journey of Catholic education and faith formation, and their parents/guardians for being steadfast partners in this endeavor.

Furthermore, I would like to thank our benefactors and alumni, whose generous support and unswerving loyalty allow us to continue the wonderful work that we do. Finally, I give honor, praise, and glory to God from whom all good things flow, and to Jesus Christ, his Son, who has guided and sustained me all these years. Deo Gratias!



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SAINT LAWRENCE GOT TALENT

By: Tam Tran ('28)

Everyone has talent yet publicly sharing those talents can feel petrifying. For the students at SLS bold enough to step into the spotlight and reveal their talents, the talent show calls their name. On Saturday, March 28th, SLS hosted the 2026 talent show, featuring acts ranging from freestyle dances to even mystifying card tricks. The night started off with a video made by the senior class that introduced the theme of the talent show- "The Avengers." The Avengers had lost their beloved hero Super Scammer and needed to find a replacement for him. To accomplish this, seniors Alan Mora and Emmanuel Esson suited up and acted as hosts and interviewers for the search for the most talented candidate.

The first candidate was none other than senior Anthony Le who wowed audiences with his deceptive card tricks and his long magic stick. Then, juniors Jacob Martinez and Alex Garcia followed with a hilarious recreation of the viral clip in which rapper NLE Choppa had to prove he was the real "NLE" against an impersonator. After a few more acts, the second senior video was shown revealing potential heroes trying to replace Super Scammer. Following this, performances like Joshua Choi and Chris Vu's piano duet and the junior's impressive Fortnite dances were presented to wow the judges. Concluding the night was a hilarious junior skit which involved a search for Mr. David Bartel's beloved dog Henry, and hysterical impersonations of some SLS staff members. Erick Perez de la Luz ('29) said, "Man, that junior skit had me dying of laughter. I was laughing so hard I could barely breathe."

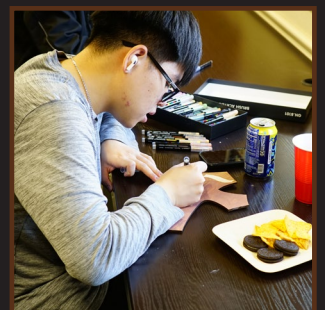
All talents were unique and impressive; however, only one could replace the Avengers' beloved Super Scammer. Alan Mora ('26) and Emmanuel Esson ('26) came out on stage to announce Super Scammer's replacement and the winner of the 2026 SLS talent show. Suspense filled the room; the audience was on the edge of their seats, and then the result was announced. The 2025 SLS talent show champion, Noah Nguyen ('28) became champion once again with his phenomenal mastery of the yo-yo. Noah had this to say about his back-to-back championships, "I'm so glad that people enjoyed my performance again. I spent a lot of time preparing and I can say it was definitely worth it." As the night concluded and the audience left the auditorium, they felt awed and inspired, not only to praise the talents that performed, but also to consider sharing their own.



'26 FINISHING STROKES

By: Khan Nguyen ('27)

The power of art to bring meaning into everyday life is clearly seen at St. Lawrence Seminary. Among all the clubs on the Hill, the Art Club is one of the newest and most active. This year's club leaders Bik Hmung ('26), Mark Tran ('26), and Alan Gonzalez ('26) have led the club along with Br. Jerry Cornish as adult leader. Bik stated, "The goal of Art Club is to create an opportunity for any students to freely express themselves to other students." The club, consisting of students from all classes comes together once or twice a month in Br. Jerry's Art Studio, on some Sundays for as long as four hours. There, Bik, Mark and Alan decide on a project for members to work on individually. These projects tend to follow a holiday theme such as their most recent project, Easter-themed mini trees, which members decorated their dorms with. When asked, Alan announced that leadership of the Art Club will be passed down to "those most skilled and knowledgeable about art." Though Bik, Mark, and Alan's time in the Art Club has come to an end, they will pass the torch to a new generation of leaders.





ST. LAWRENCE SEMINARY

DRAW BACK THE CURTAINS!

By: Christopher Vu ('26)

SLS is drawing back its curtains to premier *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat*. The musical brings to life the biblical story of Joseph from the Book of Genesis, setting his journey to music. In eight weeks of preparation, Mrs. Andrea School, Mr. Martin Vu, and Mr. Daniel Matthew perfected the students' choreography, music, and acting for the show. While Mrs. School's mother, Ann Gratton, worked on costumes, and her father, Andrew Gratton, built the background staging for the show.

Auditions were held for the main cast, supported by an ensemble that provides backing vocals throughout the production. Four female roles were filled by students from Kiel, New Holstein, Fond du Lac and the Holyland. A student volunteer pit was created to accompany the singers, with Mr. Matthew in charge. In addition to a theatre pit, Mrs. School invited kids from the Holyland parish to sing in a kids' choir. Mrs. School said, "Since our ensemble for the musical is not as big, I decided to reach out to nearby parents and asked if they would like their kids to participate in the musical. It worked out somehow and now we have a kids' choir to support our singers."

A stage crew was assembled to move props and prepare the stage for each scene. In addition, the auditorium work crew was responsible for operating the lighting and sound systems. Spotlight positions were also filled by students. Students acting in the play attended weekday practices after evening prayer with Mrs. School, Mr. Matthew and Mr. Vu, practicing 21 different songs. Alan Gonzalez ('26), playing Joseph, said, "I love the various genres of music the musical has, but I have a hard time acting with body language and gestures." The pit also practiced with Mr. Matthew daily.

A dress rehearsal was held on Wednesday, April 29, at 1:00 p.m. for faculty, staff, and students. Also in attendance were students from Holyland Catholic and middle schoolers from Seton in Sheboygan. The show then premiered on Friday, May 1, and Saturday, May 2, at 7:00 p.m., with a final matinee performance on Sunday, May 3, at 2:00 p.m. Tickets were available in advance and at the door. Audiences watched as the cast of *Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat* drew back the curtains and brought to life the inspiring journey of a boy whose dream was fulfilled.

ORIGINAL SPOTLIGHTS AND SPOONS? ...

March, 2026

▶ PLAY

+ MY LIST

By: Yubal Vazquez Genil ('28)



Saint Lawrence offers the Hilltoppers many opportunities to share and celebrate their diverse cultures. More specifically, the Cultural Heritage Festival is a highly anticipated spring event for both students and staff. Students come together in groups, guided by faculty and staff chaperones, to represent different countries. Together, they take on the role of chefs for their respective groups.

As with any successful event, the Cultural Heritage Festival relies on extensive preparation behind the scenes. Prior to the celebration, leadership of each group is assumed by the seniors, who select the dishes that will be served. After groups are assembled, roles are assigned to each participant, including cooking, organizing, and constructing country themed posters from which the meals are served. Unfortunately, some students - traditionally the freshmen - are assigned to the cleanup crew. On Friday, April 17, the groups began meal preparation in anticipation of the festival. Then Saturday, April 18, the hard work pays off, and the delicious meals were served to the Hilltoppers and guests. The meals were served outside during lunch and inside the refectory during dinner, allowing the entire community to participate.

This year, students formed 10 distinct groups representing countries from around the world. Representing South Korea, Quan Ngyuen ('28) said, "I love cooking, so this celebration gives me a chance to practice my hobby. We cooked tteokbokki, also known as spicy rice cakes." Fr. Baudry, represented South Africa and added, "Cultural Heritage is, in a way, a gift for the students to experience the cultures around them." The group from the Philippines made kwek kwek, or fried quail eggs. A famous dish, bánh xèo, a crispy crepes/pancakes were made by the Vietnamese group. The Latin America/Mexican group prepared mole, a traditional sauce with chicken, while the Venezuelan group made pastelitos, flaky puff pastry treats with sweet or savory fillings. The International Club made peri peri chicken from Mozambique. Other represented countries were India, Myanmar, and Germany.

Overall, the Cultural Heritage Festival highlights what makes Saint Lawrence such a unique community. Through shared meals, collaboration, and celebration, students were given the opportunity to learn about different cultures while strengthening bonds with one another. The hard work behind the scenes and the joy shared during the event demonstrate that diversity is not only present at SLS, but proudly celebrated.



1. PLANNING THE MEALS

Preparations begin for the dishes being served on Saturday.



2. ¡BUEN PROVECHO!

The Mexican group sells out of food and rejoices in a job well done.



3. LET THEM COOK NOW

The Philippines group works together in the kitchen to cook meals for the student body.



4. SERVING THE CULTURE

South Africa serves up smiles by the power of Benjamin Dao's inner African.



WHERE BROTHERHOOD BEGINS

By: Ethan Thomas ('26)

At SLS, few things are as impactful as the relationship shared between seniors and freshmen. Each year using a “big brother/little brother” system, every freshman is paired with a senior who mentors him helping him to adapt to life on the Hill. What begins as simply meeting someone new quickly grows into a genuine friendship and sense of brotherhood, making the transition to boarding school far less intimidating.

At the start of each school year, the two classes come together for a social designed to break the ice and begin building connections. This year, everyone went outside and played hide-and-seek across campus, which quickly turned into a lot of running, laughing, and fun. Afterward, everyone cooled off with ice cream and had time to just hang out and talk. Seniors tried to include their “little brothers,” making sure no one felt left out. It’s a relaxed, fun setting where everyone can be themselves and be comfortable with each other.

As the school year progresses, those relationships naturally grow. Seniors check in, give advice, and provide help when needed. Whether it’s with school, sports, or just adjusting to the campus dorm living environment. Over time it becomes a real friendship. Freshman George Donohue said, “having an instant big brother made coming to SLS so much easier because I always had someone there for me.”

At the end-of-the-year social, it was almost like saying goodbye. Again, the seniors and freshmen came together one last time for a social duplicating the first social. This time, however, it carries greater meaning as everyone reflects on the friendships and brotherhood built throughout the year. For the seniors, it’s the end of a journey; for the freshmen, it’s a moment that inspires them to move forward with confidence. What’s left are real friendships and a sense of brotherhood that defines the SLS experience.

ROLLING THE CREDITS ON TRADITION

By: Luke Joseph ('27)

SLS celebrated, for the first time the Lao New Year. The traditional Lao New Year starts before the rainy season and is celebrated by the Lao people. The event follows the Buddhist calendar, also known as the Lunisolar calendar. It officially falls between April 14th and April 16th. However, it is usually observed between April 11th and April 20th. Traditionally, the Lao New Year is viewed as a time of purification. As a result, many water festivals are held during this time.

The SLS celebration was hosted by none other than our Guidance Counselor, Mr. Sy Vannisaveth, along with some of his family members. The event took place during dinner on Sunday, April 19th in the refectory. There was a variety of different foods including a fried noodle dish (Kua mee), a papaya salad (tum muk hoong), a chicken salad (laab gai), and a traditional Lao sticky rice. In addition, one of Mr. Vannisaveth’s family members performed a traditional Laotian dance. Afterwards, the students all engaged in a special Lao New Years tradition. This tradition involved tying a white string around each other’s wrist and blessing it. This blessing is believed to provide good luck, and the string is only to be removed after three days. However, it must be untied and not cut. If the string is cut, it is believed that the blessings have been severed. Carl Vincent Glory Tango-an ('27) stated, “I found the tying of the strings to be very unique, and I truly felt blessed afterwards.” Most SLS students and staff members enjoyed the Lao New Year celebration, the new foods and to experience a small taste of Laotian culture.



SERVE THE CREDITS...

By: Joshua Choi ('26)

When the freezing cold temperatures yield to warm, sunny days, you know the spring sports season is about to begin. Although each day isn't exactly sunny and warm, tennis has kicked off right on schedule. During tryouts this year, coach, Mr. Sy Vanissaveth decided to do things a little differently. Instead of everybody trying out together through simple exercises, he formed groups of 5-6 students, where each student played a short game against the other students in the group. This proved to be very different from the tryouts of years past. Minh Nguyen ('27) commented, "I think this type of tryout really helped rate each players' abilities. It was also very challenging for me." Although each student has their own specific goals for the tennis season, Coach Vanissaveth has his own goal for the entire tennis team this year. "I hope that the players can reach a level of consistency in all their skills. I want to find out what each player struggles with and help them with it. In the end, however, with a competitive spirit still in mind, I want everyone to have fun." As the tennis season unfolds, the players will experience wins and losses, while growing in skill under the guidance of Coach Vanissaveth.



FORE!

By: Conner Mills ('27)

Spring sports are here, and the SLS golf team is ready to tee off! Led by coaches Mr. Chad Dowland and Dr. Michael Donahou, the team is gearing up for an exciting and competitive season. So far, the team has spent four weeks training on the golf simulator, staying sharp indoors when outdoor conditions weren't ideal. When asked about how the season looks, Coach Dowland said he's very confident in his varsity team members, who have been golfing for a few years now, and that they should compete well at conference. When asked about challenges in the season, he pointed out the weather that recently cut short the first meet of the season. In addition, many junior varsity players are new to the sport, and with the school year winding down, staying motivated has been a challenge—but the team continues to push forward. However everyone will face these challenges head on. Coach Dowland said, "I am looking forward to the season and I believe we will be competitive."



H CONFIRMED IN CHRIST

By: Alan Mora & Christian Casilla ('26)

There are three sacraments of initiation in the Catholic Church: Baptism, First Communion, and Confirmation. Each marks an important step in the journey of faith. In Baptism, one is initiated into the Church to begin their life with Christ. In First Communion, one receives the Body and Blood of Christ for the first time and deepens a relationship with Jesus. And in Confirmation, it strengthens one's grace and confirms one as a truly mature member of the Church. With Confirmation comes the responsibility of living and sharing your faith by being endowed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

On Sunday, April 26th, 18 juniors received the Sacrament of Confirmation. However, this wasn't all done in one day. It took careful planning and mentoring with the help of the SLS Campus Minister, Fr. Baudry Metangmo, ofm Cap. Confirmation isn't just a one-off ceremony, but a rite of passage which prepares you for the rest of your life. Fr. Baudry mentioned, "The purpose of the classes was not only to teach knowledge, but also to help students embrace the mission entrusted to them as Catholics." In the classes, the juniors reflected on their faith, learning how to deepen their relationship to God and how to share that same bond and love with others. During this year's Confirmation Mass, Archbishop Jeffrey Grob was present to bestow the sacrament.

During the process of Confirmation, each candidate writes a letter to the Archbishop expressing their desire to be confirmed. Additionally, each candidate chooses two types of mentors: a Confirmation sponsor, who serves as an earthly mentor, and a patron saint, who serves as a heavenly mentor. Each mentor helps guide the candidate during and after the Sacrament of Confirmation. The reasons for picking these mentors vary with each candidate. Joseph Becker ('27), chose Herman Joseph, inspired by the life of the saint. While candidate Alan Dominguez ('27) chose Martin De Porres, attracted by his humility and service. Similarly, Levi Van Asten ('27) chose Blessed Solanus Casey who is soon to be one of the many Capuchin saints. The Sacrament of Confirmation leaves a permanent mark on the candidate's soul, strengthening them to live out and continue their faith throughout their life.



FINDING GOD OFF THE HILL

By: Donovan Blattner ('28)

Faith is a cornerstone of SLS, and the encounter night down at Holy Land parish was the perfect opportunity for spiritual growth among students. The night itself was one meant for personal reflection and adoration of God. Songs of praise and thanks were sung, creating a beautiful atmosphere for reflection. The sacrament of penance and reconciliation was offered with numerous priests receiving confessions. Additionally, prayer groups were present, where students could pray with a few Holy Land parish members for any intention they may have had. Many students had positive things to say about the night, including Quan Nguyen ('28), "I felt a real connection that night, getting closer to Jesus and just finding peace." Clearly, the night was not without the fruits of faith showing themselves, both the students and others attending encountered an eye-opening and tranquil experience.



TO BE CONTINUED...

“These are going to be the fastest four years of your life,” is a phrase you’ll hear a lot from every single graduating class of SLS. And now, as I experience the inevitable fate that awaits every student here, I look back on my past four years with a sense of fondness and nostalgia.

Yeah, I could have done things better. And yeah, other things could have gone smoother, but it is what it is; I don’t think I would change anything, from the myriad of experiences I’ve had here. I’ve grown, matured, and changed, from being a wee little freshman and sophomore, to joining the big leagues as a junior and senior. There are a lot of responsibilities that have befallen me.

To the freshmen, I say: have fun and don’t get in trouble. To the sophomores: be wise kids, not wise fools. To the juniors: good luck trying to get the 24/7 phone policy. Also, make sure that Luke Joseph (‘27) does a great job as one of next year’s editors, or else. And finally, last but not least, to the seniors: have a blast! I’ll see a lot of you around after graduation.

And with the deepest gratitude, thank you to everyone I’ve gotten to know here. It’s been great growing alongside my class all these years. It’s an honor serving as a role model for the classes below me. It’s been great learning from all the staff and faculty, and I am honored that I had the opportunity to be a *Hilltopics* editor along with one of my best buds, Christian Angelo Casilla.

I would talk about how much fun I’ve had and about all the memories, but I don’t need to because we have lived them all together as brothers. The fond memories of homework, horseplay, work crew, bedtime, practices, choir, classes, meals, and everything else that has happened will be near and dear to my heart. This place has kept me busy in the best way possible. I guess I could say it’s like a movie. You write your own ending. My story here is over. One day, yours will be too.

NEW EDITOR!



By: Alan Mora (‘26)

By: Christian Casilla (‘26)

Wow! It’s already been an entire year. I swear it was only just last week that Alan Mora and I decided on the theme we were going to use for *Hilltopics*; and now I blinked and I’m handing the Publications Office keys to Carl Tango-An (‘27)... what a year it has been! It feels so surreal.

Even though I’ve only been on this Hill of Happiness for three years, it feels like I’ve been here for most of my life. From cooking spam with friends, to playing volleyball until St. Fidelis closes at 10 p.m., I can’t help but admit I am going to miss this place. Most of all, I’ll miss the time spent in this office, the Publications Office. *Hilltopics*, this year, would have never been so good if it wasn’t for Alan Mora. Not only has he been a fellow co-editor, he’s also been one of my closest friends, sticking with me even during the times I was not easy to work with.

Unfortunately, our time has come to leave this Hill. In a few weeks, I won’t have to worry if I have a yearbook article to clutch up, (sorry Mr. Krieg) or whether I remembered to wear a belt, (just kidding, Mr. Nguyen). At the same time, I won’t be able to wake up on a Saturday morning to play tennis with my friends or make ramen for breakfast. I won’t be able to go for walks or spend hours talking with friends on a bench.

While my time here at SLS has come to a close, your time here is not over. So go out and enjoy the brotherhood here, because before you know it, you’ll be packing up and preparing to move on to the real world, just like me.



NEW EDITOR!!

Hilltopics
301 Church Street
Mt. Calvary, WI 53057



Art Contributed by: Mark Tran ('26)

YOU'VE FINISHED **HILLTOPICS**

SPECIAL THANKS TO...

MRS. DEANN SIPPEL

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CHRISTIAN ANGELO CASILLA

KHAN NGUYEN

ALAN MORA

LEVI VAN ASTEN

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QUAN NGUYEN

JOAQUÍN PARTIDA HERNANDEZ

OMAR VALENZUELA

LUKE JOSEPH

TAM TRAN

YUBAL VAZQUEZ CENIL

DONOVAN BLATTNER



THANKS FOR READING