

Sons of Calvary

St. Lawrence Seminary Alumni Magazine
Volume 6 Issue 1 Summer 2021



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Staying Face-to-Face in a Pandemic

REMEMBERING CAPUCHIN SONS OF CALVARY

Serving Dinner and the Lord

Reliving the Exploits of the Rebels of 1973!

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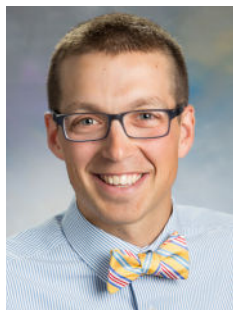
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Front cover: Neither rain nor a pandemic could stop graduation this year!

Back cover: Students gather in Mrs. Katie Daane's classroom for the final round of "April Avidity," an annual poetry contest modeled after basketball's "March Madness."



Editor's Note

I recently met a St. Lawrence Seminary alumnus within my community. We attended SLS decades apart. We certainly shared no teachers in common. The campus he knew and the campus I knew were very different. Yet, our memories have a certain commonality: dorm life, Capuchin teachers, Field Day. Talking with this total stranger immediately felt very easy. We share a history.

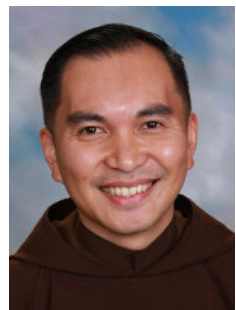
This issue is full of memories that will transcend time and even generations of alumni. Much of the issue is devoted to the shared memories of this past year's struggles on the Hill of keeping the pandemic at bay. The four classes that survived the 2020-2021 school year will have stories to tell at reunions decades from now. You may not have been here for it, but you can imagine what life was like on the Hill with a mask on!

At the end of the issue, Paul Skladanek '73 shares a whole slew of memories from the Hill. And although only his classmates were witnesses to his escapades, we can all follow along reimagining our own high school triumphs and mischief.

In the middle of the issue we remember three amazing Capuchins who died within the past year: Fr. Bob Wheelock '56, Fr. Werner Wolf and Fr. Marty Pable '49. For some of us they were classmates. For many of us they were teachers, spiritual directors, supervisors and role models. Their care and kindness touched the memories of scores of Sons of Calvary.

You and I may have walked these halls at very different times, but we share a history because we walked these halls.

-Anthony Van Asten '01



From the Rector's Desk

Thanks be to God! We have successfully ended the 2020-2021 school year delivering in-person learning and activities safely even in the midst of a pandemic. How did we do it? Through God's grace made manifest in the diligence of our staff, the help of our students and of their families and the support of our benefactors and alumni.

In the summer of last year, a COVID-19 task force was assembled to plan, establish, and evaluate mitigation strategies for the 2020-2021 school year. The task force has been meeting regularly, keeping abreast of the latest guidance from federal, state and county health agencies, as well as from the archdiocese and the province.

Mitigation strategies included performing daily health screenings for students; sending students to quarantine and requiring staff to stay at home when symptomatic or exposed; requiring the use of face masks on campus; reconfiguring seating arrangements to facilitate social distancing; enhancing cleaning throughout campus; and closing off the campus to visitors for most of the school year. All of these precautionary measures were observed until the last day of the school year, and they undoubtedly helped to mitigate the spread of the virus on campus.

This summer, the task force will continue to meet and plan for the 2021-2022 school year. We will once again deliver in-person instruction. We will remain vigilant and adapt our protocols according to latest guidelines. We continue to pray for the safety of all and an end to the pandemic. But it is also our hope that we will be closer back to normal than before.

-Fr. Zoy Garibay, OFM Cap.



A sophomore prepares his religion work for Sr. Marie Kolbe Zamora.



HOW TO KEEP A BOARDING SCHOOL OPEN IN A PANDEMIC

FACE-TO-FACE

BY: BENJAMIN BARTLETT '21

Even though students lived together, in most situations around campus, classmates masked up all year long.

There was no such thing as "normal" this past year. 2020 was a series of challenging circumstances. The pandemic closed schools and borders, the economy slowed, and doors were shut to normalcy. The death knells rang; the nation faced acute uncertainty and fear for the first time in a long time. Political polarity flashed red and blue midst the masks and an unorthodox presidential race. Last May – just about a year ago – as St. Lawrence was wrapping up its year online, everyone wondered if the status quo would return to the Hill in the fall.

Against all odds, and after a lot of work, this spring St. Lawrence celebrated the Class of 2021's graduation in person – guests and all. And except for the masks, it looked like a regular commencement. It seemed that normalcy had returned to St. Lawrence.

While graduation seemed to mark the beginning of the return, school officials had actually been striving for the status quo for much of the 2020-2021 school year. Students attended in-person classes, meals, Masses and regular morning and evening prayers. Sports seasons occurred when they always had. Traditions like Winter Carnival, Cultural Heritage Night and Field Day continued. The school year happened much as any other year.

One factor that worked in our favor: St. Lawrence is a boarding school. Unlike students at other schools, the Hilltoppers were mainly isolated from the pandemic and its negative externalities. But that was only going to go so far to keep students and staff safe.

In order to open in the fall, faculty and staff began developing a blueprint for the 2020-2021 school year immediately when all students went virtual in the spring of 2020.

In order to re-open face-to-face, faculty made changes across campus to allow for social distancing – from the classrooms to the gym bleachers, from the chapel to the auditorium, from the refectory to the music rooms. Staff created a hygiene plan for keeping campus clean and disinfected. Supervisors and the school nurse developed protocols for daily student screenings and allocated the guest house for quarantine of students showing symptoms. Admissions kept weekend visits small and brief.

In action, the plan focused on active responses to the virus. Ensuring social distancing and ample equipment to keep areas clean (alcohol bottles, rags, tissues, etc.) provided barriers to stop the spread before it could begin. Temperature checks every morning and staying overly cautious about

This spring, alumnus Dr. Peter Truong '11 held vaccination clinics at SLS, vaccinating eligible students.



Senior Grek Guzman smiles as he walks with principal Mr. Dave Bartel '78 to commencement. On May 23rd, the Class of 2021 celebrated their graduation in person, in the chapel.

symptoms prevented the possibility of missing a sick student or staff member. Making weekend visits briefer and limiting visitors on campus kept the community safe.

When the school opened in August for the 2020-2021 school year, the plan went into action. And because of all the planning, most of the year proceeded as years do. Aside from the most obvious addition, masks everywhere, it'd be difficult to notice a change.

Classes were all in person, with a few exceptions, and remained as such for the entire year. Spirit Week occurred as it always had, each class had their respective retreats, Transitus was celebrated in the gym, the Christmas concert was held in the Chapel. Winter Carnival pitted the teachers and the students against each other in a heated game of volleyball. The annual production – this year the musical *Newsies* – was both filmed and presented in-person.

The schoolwide efforts to create a safe campus worked only because the community took the situation seriously. Teachers reminded students to keep their masks in place the way they'd remind them to keep their shirts tucked in

during other years. Dorm supervisors reminded students to maintain social distancing in the dorms the way they'd monitor social skills in other years. Of course, things weren't perfect, but on the whole, everyone worked as a collective to maintain in-person classes. In the end, fewer than five students on campus had COVID-19 and fewer than ten staff came down with the virus, too. As most schools went virtual or created a hybrid environment that both students and teachers struggled with all year long, St. Lawrence seized its advantages and its spirit of unity to keep the Hill of Happiness open and alive.

And the community was the most important result of this endeavor: the characteristic Hilltopper brotherhood was able to thrive. Freshman received a proper introduction to integrating into the student body – an experience lost in virtual learning. Sophomores and juniors grew in responsibilities and leadership, increasing their responsibility and presence. Seniors completed their studies and threw their caps to be sent off into the wide world as brothers. The 2020-2021 school year seemed like an impossibility a year ago. Now, as it is sent off to the history books, students and faculty alike can revel in the memories of experiencing the status quo. ■

Benjamin Bartlett is the 2021 Class Valedictorian.



Mr. Matthew Bahr joined the faculty this year, teaching woodshop, graphic design, engineering and drafting.



One key component of St. Lawrence Seminary's program is the ministry program: service to others OFF campus. That was a difficult task during COVID-19, when the school was to be as buttoned-up as possible. Dr. Michael Donahou, new-to-SLS religion teacher and ministry director, was up to the challenge. He even managed to organize an end-of-the-year ministry trip to the Capuchin ministries in Detroit. Here is his recollection.

To Know and Serve the Lord

By: Dr. Michael Donahou

At the end of the school year, 12 brave souls from SLS: two seniors, six juniors and four faculty, departed the Hill of Happiness to join in the work of the Capuchin ministries for one week in Detroit. Fr. Zoy Garibay (Rector), Dr. Michael Donahou (religion teacher), Mr. Phil McCabe (English teacher) and Mr. Quan Nguyen (activities director) helped to chaperone the trip.

The SLS group stayed at the

Capuchin Retreat Center about an hour north of Detroit from Monday evening to Friday morning. The staff treated us with great hospitality and provided not only generous portions of food and comfortable lodgings, but also gave us some space to meet as a group each evening to reflect about the day's events and to make plans for the next day.

On Tuesday, we were joined at the Retreat Center by 17 nuns on



a silent retreat. Hmm, high school boys on a summer mission trip and silence? Per usual, the SLS crew rose to the challenge and whispered, smiled and nodded whenever a nun was present.

On Tuesday morning, we set out for the Capuchin Services Center in Detroit to help with sorting clothes and other donations as well as stocking their grocery shelves. We finished the day doing some much-needed yardwork outside.

Wednesday was set aside to visit the Capuchin Parish in town, tour the Bl. Solanus Casey Center and attend a blessing of the sick service in the afternoon. We also toured the city with one of the local Capuchin priests who talked about the re-development of the inner city as well as the obvious areas of neglect in downtown Detroit. Wednesday also offered us a chance to tour the Henry Ford Museum.

Thursday it was back to work in the urban farm and one of the Capuchin soup kitchens. Half of the

group harvested and washed greens, carrots, strawberries, and shallots which were to be used in the soup kitchens in the coming days. The other half of the group worked outdoors at the soup kitchen doing some more yard work.

Thursday's lunch was eaten at one of the soup kitchens and ended with a meeting with the staff, some art therapy and a blessing service for the students who had given their time to help those in need in Detroit. We also stopped at the Capuchin bakery in the city known as On the Rise and helped ourselves to some delicious selections. The students worked hard and were often complimented by the staff of the different Capuchin ministries.

We are hoping to make mission trips to Detroit a regular part of the SLS program as well as trips to the Capuchin ministries on the Cheyenne and Crow Reservations in Montana and the Texas-Mexico border as pandemic conditions allow. ■



Students both prepped food for the soup kitchen (above) and cleaned up the grounds around the various ministries (top).



Dr. Michael Donahou (left), with Mr. Phil McCabe (back right), Fr. Zoy Garibay (right) and eight SLS students at the tomb of Bl. Solanus Casey in Detroit.

In Memoriam

The past year has hit communities hard. That is especially true of the Capuchins of St. Lawrence Seminary. Here we remember a few of our own Sons of Calvary.

Fr. Bob Wheelock, OFM Cap. '56 by: Deacon Aaron Poyer '86



Fr. Bob is well-remembered by alumni for his work as a guidance counselor, spiritual director and compassionate listener.

“I have meditated on death often in 56 years in ministry and as I have experienced life from the viewpoint of diminishment, as well as the fact that, as life draws to a close, the past comes up to accuse as well as to affirm.”

These are words from a letter Fr. Bob Wheelock wrote to my wife Julie and me on the occasion of my ordination as a permanent deacon in October 2019. These words speak to the humility and simple faith of a man who sought to share the love of Jesus with countless people he met throughout his ministry so they might encounter Jesus too. It also speaks to the truth that he, despite his advanced degrees, was, like each of us, on a faith journey. When Fr. Bob died in August of 2020, I recalled these and many other words from this letter in which he reflected on various aspects of life, death and faith.

My memories of Fr. Bob from my time at SLS are of a man who loved us students as a good father, watched out for us, allowed us to come to him with anything, and who never scolded or condemned us. In that respect, Fr. Bob exemplified the mercy of Jesus.

I remember his door always open to us. I never feared being “in trouble” or judged by him, yet he had an ability to challenge me and made me want to be a better man. He had kind of a “How’s that working out for you?” approach to challenging less-than-ideal adolescent decision making. Through his kindness, we knew he loved us and eventually learned he wanted to help us grow into strong Christian men.

I remember his happy whistling and this odd finger-snapping, hand-clapping thing he did as he said, “Good morning, lad!”

He co-founded Franciscan Peacemakers in Milwaukee which still serves people at risk. The fruit of that ministry can be seen in countless lives changed by his response to Jesus’ call to care for “the least” among us.

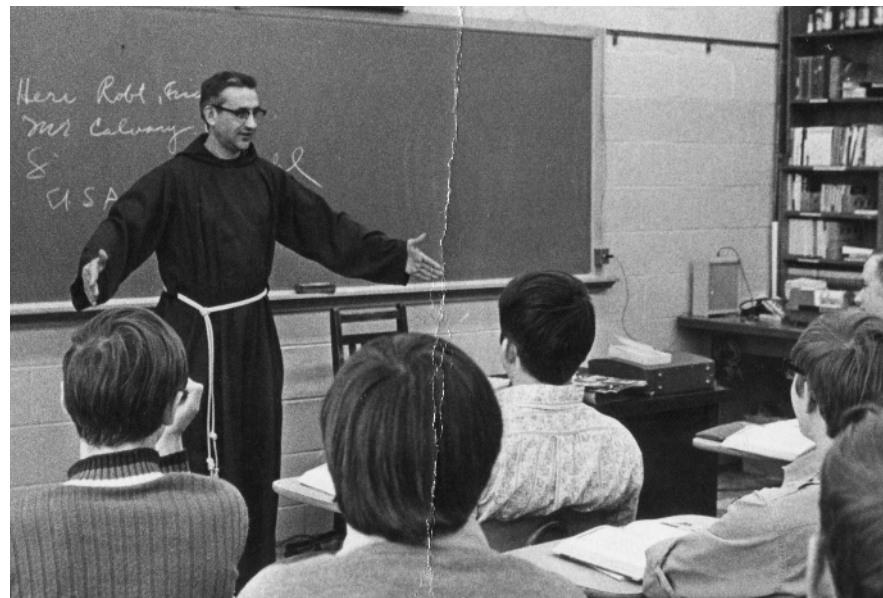
Fr. Bob influenced me to want to serve God’s people through the Church. I had no idea that over 30 years later, I would become a deacon, but the values instilled in me at SLS, and by Fr. Bob, certainly played a part in that process.

The words from his letter tell us he knew he was nearing the end of life. He wasn’t afraid but, in true Franciscan spirit, faced Sister Death secure in the knowledge that God is merciful. I believe the best way to honor Fr. Bob’s life is to live our own lives intentionally for Jesus and serve! ■

Fr. Werner Wolf, OFM Cap. '50

by: Kevin Merckx '78

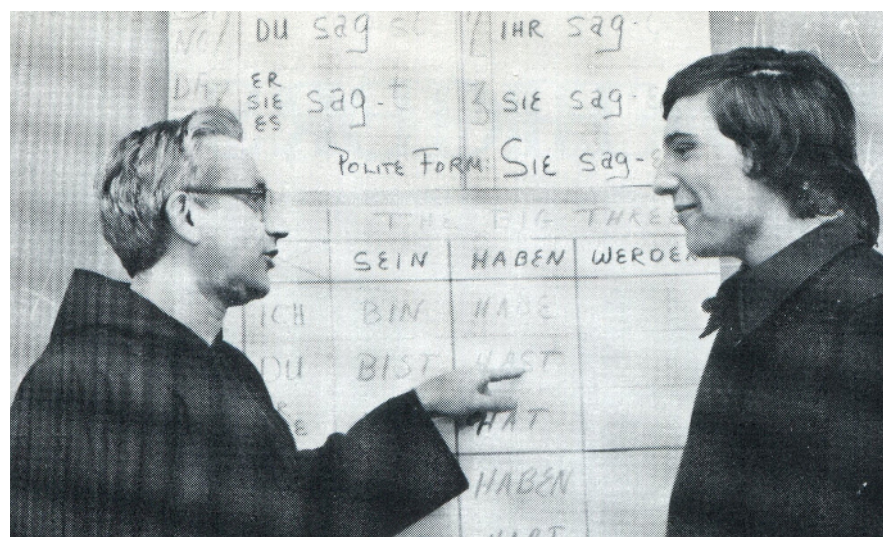
My fondest memory of Fr. Werner Wolf has got to be my first time in his German class. Not sure what to expect walking in his classroom, we sat in a semicircle. Fr. Werner started by reciting a bunch of words, in German of course, and we were to repeat exactly what he had said. Well, when he had gotten to me I don't recall the word he gave me, but I'll never forget it had an "R" in it. When Fr. Werner said the word with the very pronounced "R," I couldn't roll the "R" in a proper German dialect. To my surprise he stopped the class, went into his desk drawer and pulled out a toy truck! I wondered what he was up to? Well, the next thing I knew I was on the floor pushing that truck around making a motor sound. Fr. Werner was telling me to roll the "R" to make the sound. It took me the entire class to finally figure it out, but I did get it. What he really taught me was that you can learn and still have fun doing it. I still say the Our Father in German all the time. What memories it gives me of my years at St. Lawrence, and of such a kind and gracious teacher and mentor as Fr. Werner was.



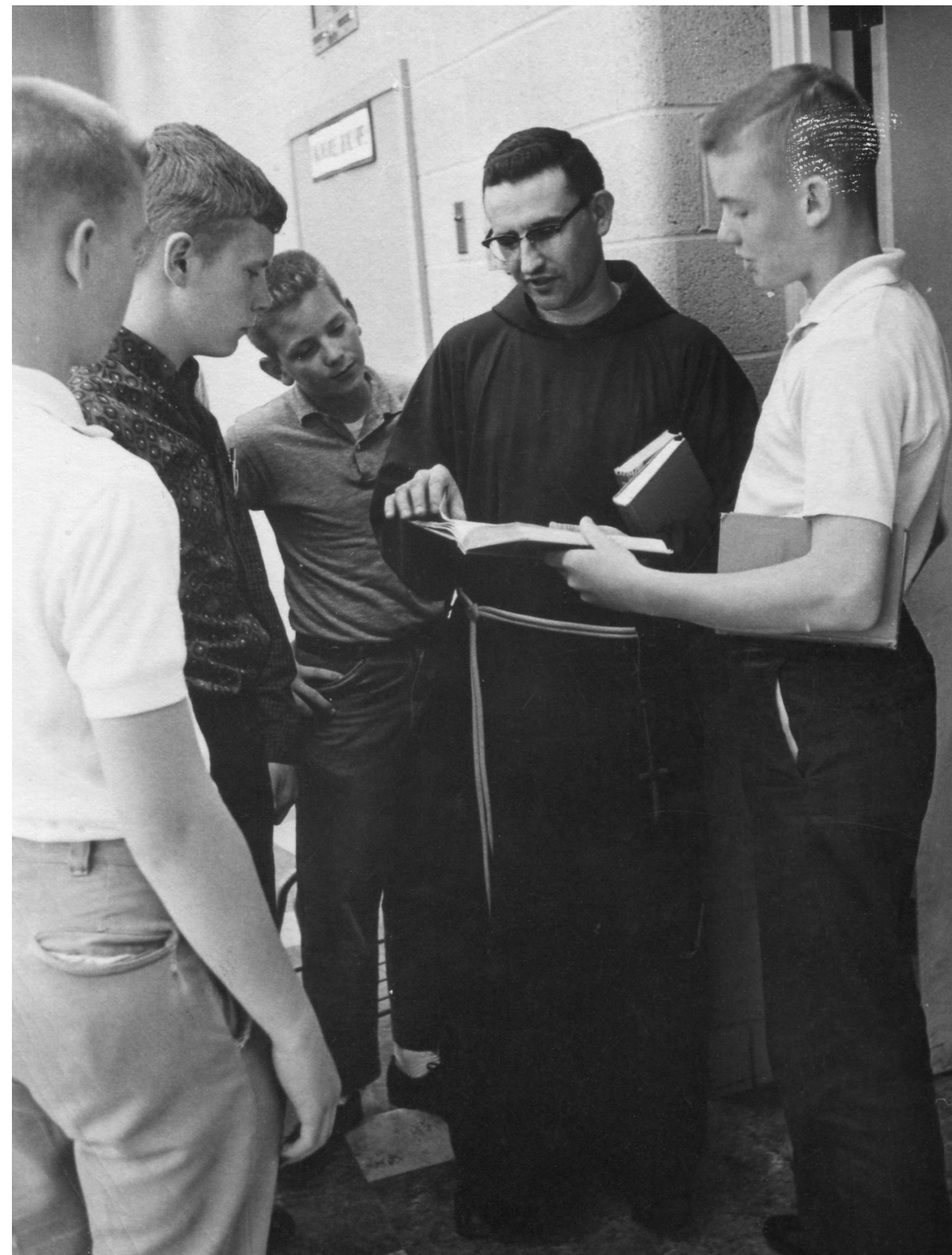
Whether in the classroom (top), in the hallway (right) or one-on-one (bottom), Fr. Werner worked hard to make students feel comfortable.

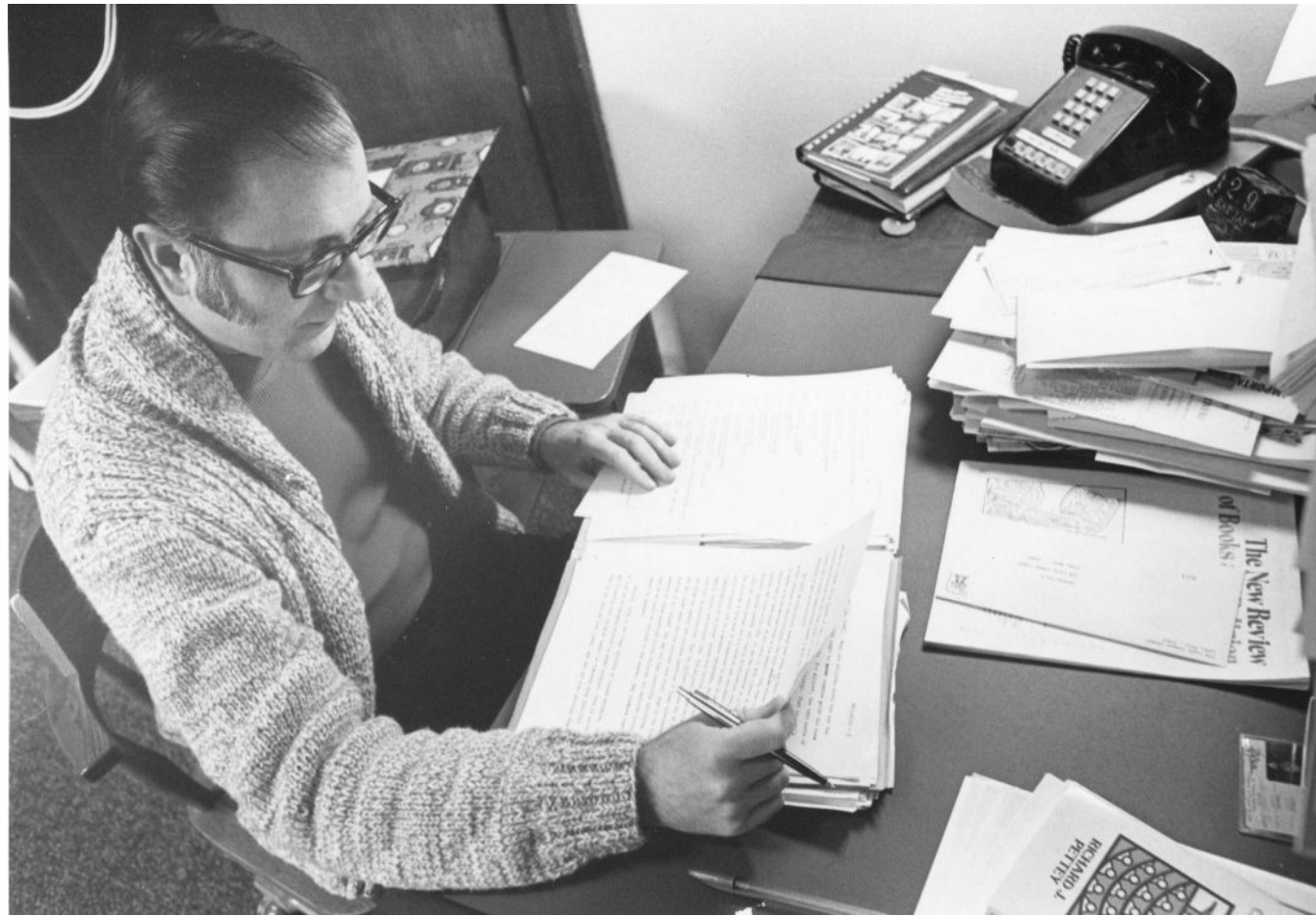
I will forever remember he was always in the stands at the gymnasium cheering on the Hilltoppers. Now most remember they had the faculty chairs set up courtside during the games. I never saw him sit there; he always sat with the students.

Fr. Werner always had time to talk to you. Not just idle talk, though. He would talk personally about family back home, your studies, your spiritual well being. He never talked down at you; he talked to you like you



were life-time friends. When I was done talking to him, I always remember feeling important, like some kind of big shot because he stopped and literally had an interesting conversation with me. I think what made me admire him the most was that he genuinely cared for the students and staff, and it showed in his daily interaction with everyone. Always a smile and a good word for everyone, he epitomized someone who truly loved his calling and was very good at what he did...a perfect fit! May he Rest in Peace. ■





Fr. Marty Pable, OFM Cap. '49 by: Steve Pable '90

Above my desk at the parish where I work is an old photo of my baptism. Like a lot of old photos, it's a very imperfect moment in time. It's not chosen from twenty rapid taps on the smart phone, cropped and filtered, capturing The Moment. In the early '70s, you were lucky to get a shot in focus, with recognizable faces. Luckier still if the picture made it into a collection that survived. Suffice to say this one is not going in a museum. But I treasure it nonetheless.

Mom is holding me tenderly, though I'm mostly obscured, swallowed in the satiny fabric of a baptismal gown that she crafted from her own wedding dress. It was worn by seven siblings before me, and one after. It was later worn by probably two dozen grandchildren.

Two of my older brothers are peeking over the font, like awkward cherubs from a Renaissance painting. (Be assured this is the only time I'll describe any of my brothers as "cherubs.") Dad was behind the camera. My sisters were no doubt gathered somewhere out of the frame.

But what strikes me is the central image in this sacramental tableau. Extended in blessing over my head is The Hand. While his face is nowhere to be seen in the photo, the hand belonged to our dear uncle, Fr. Marty Pable, OFM Cap. (SLS Class of '49).

Marty was our dad's best friend and hero. Dad followed him to St. Lawrence, and even into the Capuchin Order. While Marty went on to be ordained, Dad dropped out of novitiate, joined the Army and met my mother through Young Catholic Workers. They married and raised nine children. Marty was ordained on Saturday, September 20th, 1958. He celebrated his Mass of Thanksgiving on Sunday, and officiated at my parents' wedding on Wednesday. Ever since then he was irrevocably woven into our family and faith. He witnessed my wedding, and those of most of my siblings. He baptized each of us, and nearly all of our children. He presided at the funerals of his parents, each of his three sisters, and my father.

It wasn't until I worked in parish ministry that I began to appreciate Fr. Marty's life of service. At countless gatherings, people would see my nametag and ask if I was any relation to Marty Pable. They would mention having been to a parish mission or retreat that he'd conducted. Or they'd been a student of his. Or they'd read one of his books. Or they'd seen him for counseling. Or he'd helped out at their parish. And we weren't even in the same diocese!

But despite the many people Fr. Marty had influenced across the Midwest and beyond, our uncle was most at home in the fellowship of friars and family. He lived his Franciscan vocation as joyfully and authentically as anyone I've ever known. He radiated peace, warmth, and laughter. He loved Jesus, his Capuchin brothers, and his family with his whole heart.

The Hand in the photo represents so much of what Fr. Marty has been to us. He truly was a blessing and a guide. He baptized us into Christ. He united us in love. He brought healing and unity in the Eucharist, often in the Cathedral of St. Hedwig (his mother's living room). He commended the souls of so many dear ones to our heavenly Father. His hand and his presence were the tangible touch of the Lord in moments big and small. And all the while, he labored tirelessly in the Lord's vineyard. We can only hope to honor his legacy by laying down our lives as humbly and charitably as he did. We thank God for his life and witness. ■

In his writing (left) and in his spiritual direction (below), Fr. Marty worked to bring people closer in their relationships with God.



Hero's Heroes



GOING THE (SOCIAL) DISTANCE BY: REM QUINTIN DAVID '22

At the beginning of the year, St. Lawrence Seminary administrators were unsure if there would be sports. With all the unknowns regarding the COVID-19 virus, athletic directors and school administrators in the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) were leery of exposing their athletes. Still, they understood the need for high school athletics.

It was a blessing for coaches and students to find out that there would be sports seasons. Athletic Director Chad Dowland met throughout the year with other WIAA athletic directors to formulate regulations for participating in and spectating athletic events.

With the pandemic ongoing,

coaches and students needed to remain vigilant at practices and events. Anyone who went to sports events had to follow rules about masks and social distancing.

Given the isolated conditions on the Hill, it was understood that if the virus was ever to reach campus, it would be over for sports. As a result, the annual Hilltopper Cross Country Invitational was not held this year. Instead, SLS set up a Fun Run with three other schools.

Despite the pandemic and the restrictive conditions, the SLS soccer team had a phenomenal year, finishing 2nd at State in Division 3.

Having sports was rejuvenating for the students, having just come back from

quarantine. This was not only true for the athletes, but also for the student spectators who watched the games. It was a perfect way to forget about the pandemic.

Because of the success of the fall sports season, the WIAA continued to offer sports throughout the year, with continued caution. Basketball, wrestling, track, baseball and tennis seasons all happened, though in abbreviated forms.

There were many changes made from unforeseen issues in each season, but everyone acted accordingly and adapted. As for the Hilltoppers, a pandemic could not stop them. ■



Nicholas Dean '23 sprints to make up one more place at the finish line.



The members of the 2020 varsity soccer team pose with their trophies, including the WIAA State runner-up trophy.

ST. LAWRENCE SEMINARY HIGH SCHOOL
ENROLL NOW!



The Rebels of 1973

Since I was in second grade at St. Dominic's in Brookfield, I wanted to be a priest.

I am now a retired Mechanical Engineer living in Brookfield Wisconsin, about three miles south of the house I grew up in.

My wife and I have four children and six grandchildren (and counting).

My great-uncle, Father Donald Reiff, was a priest who graduated from St. Lawrence. He convinced me to go to St. Lawrence too.

My first few days at SLS were scary, being a young kid my first time away from home. If it wasn't for Father John Zickart, I don't think I would have made it through high school.

Father John was my mentor and most probably my savior. At that time, any student needed to be approved and invited for returning the following year. Fr. John stood by a smart aleck, punk kid (myself) and went to bat for me.



Fr. John Zickert

My education was second to none. I am one of seven children. With the faculty being mostly the priests, if anybody needed help they were always there.

The friends I made at the seminary I will never forget.

With the seminary being in a small town (Mount

Calvary, WI) that has more cows than people, I had to keep myself busy or I would have gone out of my mind, so I turned to sports.

I played four years on the football, basketball and track teams.

Basketball season was my favorite time of year. Being 6' 6" as a senior wearing jersey #24, I was the tallest kid in the conference. Unless I am mistaken, I am still on the records for rebounds at SLS.

The Class of 1973 was a very athletic class. At that time, there were class basketball tournaments at the end of the basketball season. The class of '73 (nicknamed "The Rebels") accomplished the unthinkable, winning the tournament as sophomores, juniors and seniors. I do not believe that has been done since.

In track I pole vaulted, high jumped and long jumped, having a great time.

And who can forget Field Day! The first weekend in May (Friday, Saturday & Sunday) was always time for Field Day. We would do stupid things to get a rise out of the faculty, like throwing a freshman off the tower (only a dummy).

On Field Day if you caught a water balloon thrown from the tower, you would get five bucks. You had to do it with your bare hands. Hank Rosochaki and I used a towel.



Senior hijinks!



(Below) Skladanek in his element, rebounding in the paint. (Right) The Rebels of 1973 enjoying some time off in the canteen after school. (Bottom right) Skladanek in his home today, thinking back on his days as a proud Son of Calvary.



We didn't get the five bucks, but we thought it was good humor throwing the water balloons at the faculty.

About fifteen years ago my wife and I were refinancing our home. When the appraiser came to the house, she pronounced my last name perfectly. Usually not done. I commended her for same. She said she knows me. I asked from where? She said, "We went to school together." Right away I knew she must be thinking of one of my three brothers. I asked her if she wanted to bet the cost of the appraisal (\$265.00) that we did not go to school together. She thought for a few moments and asked why I was so sure we did not go to school to-

gether. I told her, she could not have passed the physical where I went to school.

My faith and values are a direct reflection of my time at SLS.

Big shout out to all the Rebels of the Class of '73. ■

HAVE A STORY TO TELL OR A MEMORY YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE? WRITE TO US OR SEND AN EMAIL AT: sonsofcalvary@stlawrence.edu

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