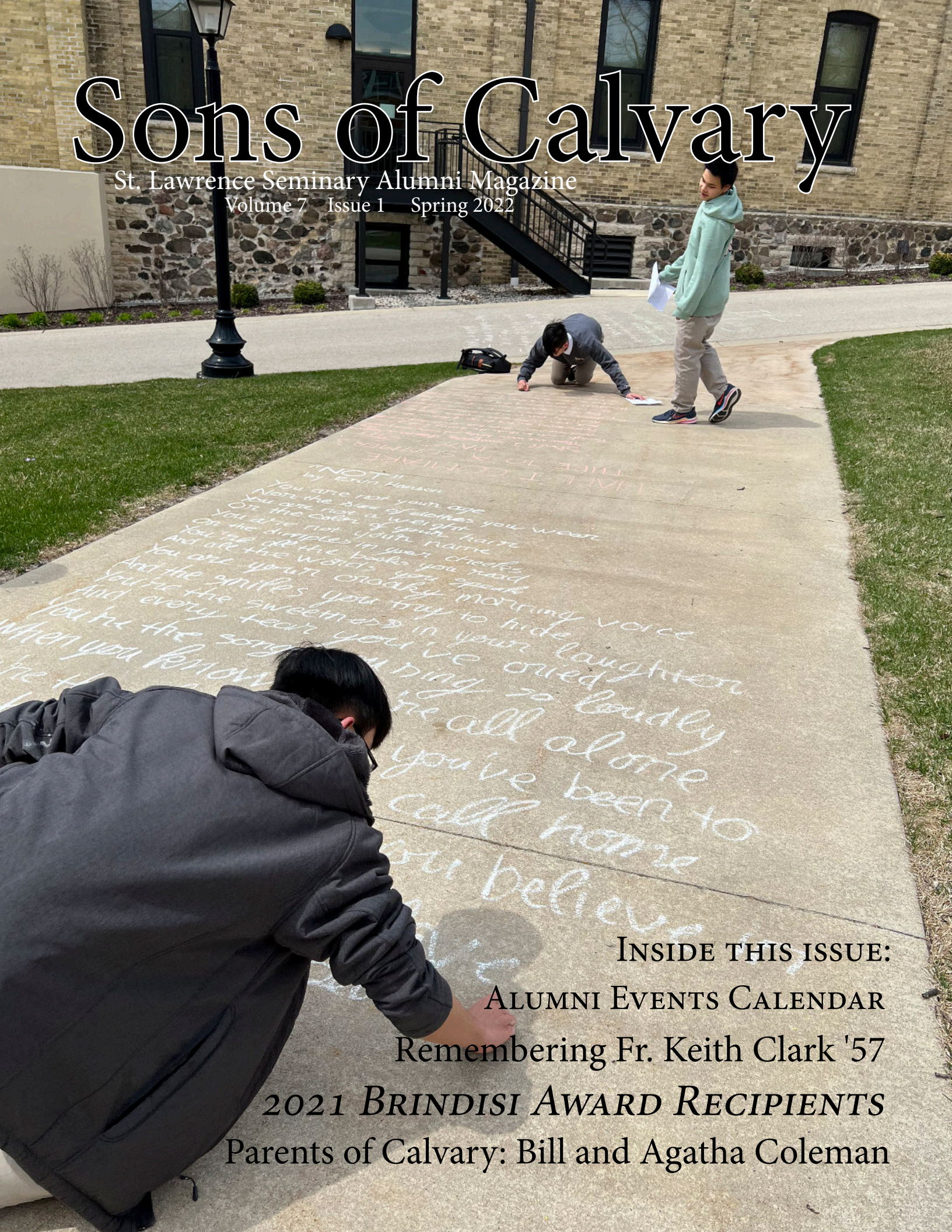


Sons of Calvary

St. Lawrence Seminary Alumni Magazine
Volume 7 Issue 1 Spring 2022



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ALUMNI EVENTS CALENDAR

Remembering Fr. Keith Clark '57

2021 BRINDISI AWARD RECIPIENTS

Parents of Calvary: Bill and Agatha Coleman

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FRONT COVER: Sophomores participate in "Poems on the Pavement" during April. April is National Poetry Month.

BACK COVER: Rick Voell '71 eyes the new St. Joseph Hall. Rick retired from the Seminary in 2020.



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Editor's Note

I was lucky to get Fr. Keith as spiritual director, as he was one of the more popular choices. We regarded him as a jovial grandfatherly figure. We were all drawn to his calm, reflective demeanor. He had the ability to recognize and accept you for you, and still challenge you on your shortcomings. In recent years, he had been an occasional presider at Mass, so my students had gotten to know him a little too.

He serves as a sort of through line for hundreds of alumni. Scores of Sons of Calvary before me, and scores of Sons of Calvary after me got to know the man. As Fr. Oliver says in his remembrance of Fr. Keith, "In many different jobs, in many different places, he got to know and love people. They became a part of him and he became a part of them."

St. Lawrence is full of through lines: threads that connect us across time. They might be long-serving and well-loved faculty like Fr. Keith and the others whom Rick Voell writes about in his article. They might be well-respected, long-time supporting families like the Colemans whom I write about. They might be the very buildings and grounds of the campus itself, which Marc Nysten writes of in his piece. They might be from long-cherished memories like John Newman reflects on.

Whatever they are, those through lines connect us, all of us Sons of Calvary, to the graduates of this year and all the way back to the very founders in 1860. And it's those connections that might inspire a bunch of alumni of different generations to ride up to campus on their motorcycles or to meet for the first time on the streets of a city very far away from the Hill of Happiness. Whatever it is, I hope you allow it to bring you back and reconnect!

-Anthony Van Asten '01



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From the Rector's Desk

We started the 2021-2022 academic year delivering in-person instruction amidst a still-ongoing COVID pandemic. As COVID case rates continued to rise nationwide, safety protocols remained in place at SLS. The Guest House continued to be the quarantine and isolation station for students on campus. Parents were given the option to take their son home to complete quarantine or isolation. Remote access to classes was arranged for students in quarantine or isolation.

At mid-winter, the highly transmissible Omicron variant made a minor incursion into our little haven. For several days, the number of students sent into the Guest House ebbed and flowed. However, not long after, the numbers steadily declined. In February, a COVID vaccine clinic was held on campus. SLS alumnus, Danh Truong, Pharm. D., offered his services to administer COVID vaccines to eligible students. What a great service to our school! Now, with more than seventy percent of our students and staff fully vaccinated and having seen sustained periods with no active cases of COVID-19, or anyone in quarantine, we lifted our COVID restrictions. I am grateful to our students and their parents as well as to my colleagues for their understanding, cooperation, and patience, without which we could not have overcome the challenges we faced.

As we make our journey into spring, we are hoping for a return to normal. We are happy to resume and open to the public on-campus activities that were closed or limited because of the pandemic. So come and visit us! Your Alma Mater eagerly awaits your return!

-Fr. Zoy Garibay, OFM Cap.

What if...?

Remembering the life of friend and fellow Capuchin Fr. Keith Clark, ofm CAP '57

by: Fr. Oliver Bambenek, ofm CAP '57



My reminiscences about Fr. Keith Clark can be wound around a series of “What ifs...”

What if Archbishop Noll (Bp. of Fort Wayne, IN) hadn't come to St. Lawrence Seminary at the beginning of his journey to the priesthood, and eventually to become the bishop of Fort Wayne? What if a certain shoe salesman hadn't come to the shoe store in Monroe, WI to sell some shoes to Keith's dad? What if I, Oliver Bambenek, hadn't belonged to the south-side parish in Iron Mountain, MI?

The short answers: Bp. Noll never would have invited the Capuchins to build a novitiate in Huntington, IN; Keith Clark would never have come to St. Lawrence to follow his vocation, and I probably wouldn't have either.

As luck would have it, Bp. Noll got to know and admire the Capuchins in his years as a seminarian. A shoe salesman happened to suggest St. Lawrence Seminary to Keith's dad when he heard Keith was interested in going to the seminary. I attended St. Lawrence Seminary instead of St. Nazianz Seminary. If none of this had happened, I would not have met Keith nor gotten to follow my friend in becoming a Capuchin.

Huntington turned out to be a very significant and formative place in Keith's life. He finished his own novitiate year at St. Felix Friary, then at Huntington. Years later he was part of the formation team at the novitiate there. Formation work spurred him to look deeply into the life and spirit of St. Francis and let his heart be molded in that joyful, prayerful spirit.

It was the people of Huntington who greatly affected his becoming the loving and caring person we knew. In my opinion,

their shared life experiences became the concrete expressions for his down-to-earth books on prayer, celibacy and leadership style.

The person that Keith became through the years of formation was the one who went on to serve the Capuchin province, especially at St. Lawrence Seminary, with the energy and love that he gave to the tasks he was asked to take on.

I hope that most of you alumni have fond memories of friendships you formed as students. I know I do, and Keith was one of them. We started as freshmen together in 1953. Our places in the dorm were assigned alphabetically, so Bambenek and Clark were in the same section and got to know each other quickly. He told me the story of how he came to St. Lawrence (remember the shoe salesman?). Incidentally, many years later he was talking to a shoe salesman where he was looking at shoes. As the conversation went on, he discovered that this was the man that told his father about St. Lawrence! Keith wondered for years who this person might have been and if he would ever be able to thank him.

As a student, he didn't stand out as academically brilliant, and certainly not as an athlete either: his intramural basketball team was known as the Mickey Mouse Club, and they played with Mouseketeer hats on! He was a friend to lots of students and his personality and acceptance of people drew many to him.

Four of his five years at Calvary he was a barber. With close to 300 students at that time, there was a need for a lot of barbers and the money he made helped pay his tuition. The barber shop was a gathering place, and Keith entertained by sharing his love for the musical play *My Fair Lady* (with Julie Andrews) with everyone. His recording was played frequently; and after a month or so, he had all the songs memorized. He never lost his love for the play; years later he staged it (adapted to an all-male cast) at the house of theology at Marathon. It wasn't a public performance, just for the Capuchins of the friary. That's a lot of work, but

we went to great lengths sometimes for our own entertainment.

He was often pivotal in the pranks our class became known for. Two come to mind that we played on Fr. Ralph, our college Latin teacher. Fr. Ralph was known for his deep, booming voice, and one of his favorite antics was to tell his students to “Look it up!” when they didn't know a Latin word. His voice could be heard all over campus when the windows were open.

Keith decided to catch him at his own game. He made a large sign with the phrase “Look it up!” on it and fixed it face down to the wall over the teacher. He attached a string which he controlled from his desk



Keith and Oliver with their classmates of '57.

in the back of the room. When Fr. Ralph inhaled to boom out his command, Keith quickly pulled the string and dropped open the sign above Fr. Ralph's head. First, we all laughed, and then the room went deadly silent. Then we heard Fr. Ralph start a quiet laugh deep in his stomach that grew into a full belly laugh, and we all began to breathe again.

Fr. Ralph was also fond of citing the Sanskrit root of Latin words. So for Christmas, Keith made a present: he took an old history book, glued the pages shut at the outside, cut out a space in the middle, filled it with

sand, and covered the sand with clear plastic. The cover had a new title printed on it: Sanskrit Dictionary.

But Fr. Ralph got the last laugh. He never said a word about the book. Months later we asked one of the other Capuchins if he ever said anything about our “gift.”

“Oh yes,” he said. “Whenever a visitor comes, Ralph runs up to his mailbox to bring out the book and show it off!”

In our last year as students at SLS, he and I and two others formed a barbershop quartet. We were even invited to sing for the Mother's Day choir concert. The four of us ended up going to the Capuchin novitiate together, so the quartet stayed together for many years.

He had a logical, organized mind that made his class notes for philosophy and theology very helpful for preparing for tests. And they were in English, whereas our textbooks were in Latin. He would type his notes in triplicate or more and

We were trying, they said, to train academically and spiritually-founded leaders for the church, including priests and religious brothers. We were also trying to provide a high school program for at-risk (academically or behaviorally) students, especially minorities. All were wonderful ministries, but spread out time, talent and energy in too many directions. Rather, we should choose one and do it better. They were also able to give us a profile of a potential graduate.

As a result, our recruitment program began to focus more on these two elements. Typical of his form of leadership, he didn't just tell the recruiters to do it one way. He got involved in recruitment in his own unique way. He encouraged and met with the recruiters. He listened to them too. He prayed for more students, not just privately, but out loud. His prayer group got used to his daily intention, “For 200 students, we pray to the Lord.” After some thought he

MY FRIENDSHIP WITH KEITH OVER THE YEARS WAS SOMETHING UNIQUE. BUT THEN, I THINK ALL HIS FRIENDSHIPS WERE UNIQUE. EACH PERSON WAS UNIQUE TO HIM. THANK YOU GOD, FOR SHARING HIM WITH ALL OF US.

share them with others who had a tough time with Latin. (“Typing” is a b.c. word – before copy machines. You had to use carbon paper. Don't know what that is? Google it!)

After many years of service in administration for the Province, he came back to St. Lawrence in 1985. Enrollment was very low at the time and some wondered how long we could continue.

He became president in 1987, and among the first things he did was to have a study of the school done. He hired the Anderson Roethle company to do a survey of the Seminary: what did they see we were trying to do as an institution? what did we do well? could they tell us what were the characteristics of a successful graduate? This company interviewed faculty, students, parents and alumni of the school. Their report said that we were trying to do too many things with limited resources.

modified the prayer: “For 200 GOOD students...”

One summer he added another part to his recruitment efforts. He noticed that occasionally a student who had enrolled, decided in the summer not to come to SLS. He decided to send all the prospective new students a pair of SLS socks with a note: “Don't get cold feet.”

He kept a strong interest in students once they came to SLS. He would often stand in the doorway of his office between classes and interact with the students as they went by. At times he heard some of the shorter students grumbling about never getting any taller. He thought about that for a while. Next time he heard the grumble, he told the student to come to his office. He had them stand in the doorway while he marked their height with a pencil on the door frame. Each month they were to return to be re-measured, and there on



the door was proof that they were getting taller. His door frame got a little messy, but there were some happy students when they walked out of his office.

I think he knew that he had done some good things for the Seminary. But he never considered himself the “savior” of the school. And as with all his jobs as a Capuchin, he sensed when it was time to move aside and let another take the helm from there on.

His final ministry years were spent at Monte Alverno Retreat Center in Appleton. Preaching and spiritual direction weren't new for him. They had been a part of most of his years. But here it was the center and focus. He did this ministry as he did others – as a team member. He was never THE retreat master; he was part of the team that planned the retreat theme for the year, did his part of the preaching, and encouraged and supported each member of the team.

In many different jobs, in many different places, he got to know and love people. They became a part of him and he became a part of them. For many of his years, his vacation time was spent visiting some of the many friends he had met over the years. He was glad to see them, and they

The Mickey Mouse Club. Front row: Vincent Bromley, Michael Sullivan, Robert Ries, Jerry McDonald Back row: John Newman, James O'Hearn, unknown, Keith Clark, Harold Renshaw (Photo courtesy of John Newman '57.)

were glad to see him.

Those who gathered for his funeral in early December were a good cross section of that—friends over the years. He was always happy when his friends from one place and time got to meet his friends from another place and time and become friends to each other. He didn't hoard his friends; he shared them.

This is a snapshot of Keith through the lens of my camera. He was a dear friend of many years. He was a great support through some rough periods in my life, and I will always be grateful for that. His family became an extra family for me. They still are.

He also introduced me to his dear friends in Huntington, IN. For that, too, I am grateful. Those who had nurtured him became those who nurtured me. I have often said they made a human being out of me. ■



Parents of Calvary

Bill and Agatha Coleman: among the most dedicated parents the Seminary has ever had.

By: Anthony Van Asten '01

If there were a trophy for the most dedicated parents in the history of St. Lawrence, there would be some stiff competition! We've had parents who drive for hours to be at every soccer game, basketball game or cross-country meet. We've had parents who have dedicated years as faculty and staff. We've had parents who have recruited many, many students for SLS. We've had parents who sacrificed much to send their boys here.

However, perhaps the strongest contenders, I would argue, for the nonexistent "Parents of Calvary" trophy would be Bill and Agatha Coleman. Between 2000 and 2020, Bill and Agatha "parented" 16 Sons

of Calvary, only two of whom were their own.

How? It all began with a brochure.

Papa Coleman, Bill and Agatha's second son, came home from St. Nicholas Catholic Grade School in Milwaukee one day with a brochure for St. Lawrence Seminary High School. A recruiter had given a presentation to his class, and Papa was interested, so he grabbed the brochure.

Papa's older brother, Kwesi, was already attending school at Marquette University High School. That might have been enough for the Coleman boys. But Papa's parents, Bill and Agatha Coleman, didn't

balk at the idea of choosing a different school for their second son. Instead, they decided to give St. Lawrence a look.

While the thought of sending your son off to boarding school at an early age is a strange concept for some, it was one that Bill was all too familiar with. Bill grew up in Ghana, where Catholic boarding schools were common. Bill had attended them since primary school.

After high school, Bill attended DePaul University in Chicago. He met Agatha there, though he had known her family back in Ghana. They married and settled down in Milwaukee, determined to raise a family in a Catholic community.

Catholic community is very important to the Colemans, both in the U.S. and at home in Ghana. And Bill and Agatha know a LOT of people who feel the same. When Papa and his parents chose St. Lawrence Seminary, they talked about their decision with friends in Ghana. A few of the Colemans' friends liked the idea of being able to send their sons to a Catholic boarding school in America, so the Colemans offered to be their points of contact. That's how, in addition to Papa Coleman '04, Bill and Agatha also took responsibility for James Tchokpa '04, Edem Dzodzomenyo '04, and Kobina Brew-Hammond '05.

A few years later, Boateng Akyeampong '09, Papa Oti-Boateng '10 and the Colemans' youngest, Nana Coleman '10, also joined the ranks of the Hilltoppers.

A long list follows: Opoku Akyeampong '11, Michael Esson '12, Charles Van Hein Sackey '14, Edem Tagbor '15, Kenneth Ohene-Adu '15, Anthony Coompson '15, Anthony Mensah '15, Jefferson Welbeck '17 and Gabriel Aidoo '20.

16 Hilltoppers in all.

Where did they all come from? Mostly word-of-mouth among friends. Kenneth's mom was friends with a nun who was friends with Bill. Bill knew Charles' uncle, who was the archbishop of Accra. Anthony Coompson and Anthony Mensah are both nephews of Agatha. And so on, and so on.

It seemed like every year or

two, another set of parents would hear about this school in the United States and want that for their son. Whenever a family from back home in Ghana would express an interest in St. Lawrence, the Colemans always offered to serve as surrogates.

That meant Bill and Agatha were a constant fixture on the Hill. Registration days, Sunday Masses, school plays, games, confirma-

"I particularly enjoyed my weekly phone calls with Mrs. Coleman. She was always interested in my physical and mental well-being while at SLS, and would pass the occasional joke, which was always heart-warming."

-Charles Van-Hein Sackey '14

tions, parent-teacher conferences and graduations—they came for it. They were always willing to play the part of Mom and Dad on the Hill for these young men.

Which also meant that they hosted these young men during vacations. Thanksgivings, Christmas and Easters were all filled with Bill and Agatha's "kids."

That's not to say there was pandemonium: the Colemans' house was a continuation of life on the Hill. The same rules applied. They ate meals together and attended Mass together. There were rules about phone calls and curfews for going out. There were rules about making

beds and doing laundry. The kinds of community and life skills the boys would learn at SLS were reinforced at the Colemans'. Bill even required the boys to open bank accounts and learn how to manage money.

The Colemans became somewhat legendary on campus: this couple that just kept on supplying SLS with good young men and then reinforcing the values of SLS at home. You could just tell if a student had come from the Coleman household. It became a sort of a joking threat from faculty to say, "Do you want me to email Mr. Coleman?" if one of them had forgotten to do some piece of homework or had done poorly on a test. It was clear that Bill and Agatha ran a tight ship and that these boys were benefitting from the discipline.

The Colemans didn't just sponsor boys for St. Lawrence. In all of this, they also hosted four young women from Ghana who wished to attend college in the United States.

Now, after 20 years of standing in as the American parents of many, many students, their work still isn't done. While their hosting days may be over, they are still parenting their 20-some "kids." They talk to each of them regularly. They offer them help and advice, though now it's less about homework and more about life! And every Thanksgiving, they still welcome each back "home" for the vacation. With significant others and children, it's gotten to as many as 45! ■



Some of the Coleman's 16 "boys": (from left) Opoku Akyeampong '11, Kenneth Ohene-Adu '15, Kobina Brew-Hammond '05, and Papa Oti-Boateng '10 with Nana Coleman '10.

Aaron Poyer '86

“Love her spirit, hold it ever, let our lives profess, ‘We are loyal Sons of Calvary, Hill of Happiness.’”

These words from our Alma Mater speak to an important element of what it means to be a “son of Calvary,” which is to know that we belong to something greater than ourselves. The “spirit” of St. Lawrence Seminary beckons us to serve others in the name of Jesus.

I spent the first four years after St. Lawrence attending college in Detroit and volunteering with an organization called “Team for Justice.” My role there was to minister to incarcerated juveniles in the Wayne County (Detroit) Youth Home, with particular attention to the kids who only spoke Spanish.

I had learned Spanish at SLS. Besides having two good Spanish teachers in Br. Mark Davis and Fr. Joe Diemeier, I had friends with whom I practiced outside of class. I actually became fairly proficient with just a few years of high school Spanish!

Periodically throughout my law enforcement career, I have had to speak Spanish with victims and witnesses of crime. As a permanent deacon assigned to a grouping of parishes in Detroit, I have found myself ministering in Spanish more often and speaking it publicly—preaching homilies and leading public prayer in Spanish really has tested my language ability. I am grateful to my SLS experience for preparing me for these opportunities.

I remember learning from Br. Bob Smith about the Tuskegee Experiment in which African-American U.S. soldiers were subjected to experimental vaccines without their knowledge or consent, and many became very sick and died as a result. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck, I recalled the Tuskegee Experiment as I organized a vaccination clinic at our racially and ethnically diverse parish in an African-American neigh-



borhood. This was when the vaccines were limited to various age and health demographics and there was reluctance in our community to register for the vaccine. Without the information and awareness I learned at SLS, I would have simply been frustrated. Instead, we used our awareness and took an intentional approach of invitation, welcome, and community during the clinic to maximize participation. It was a team effort by parishioners and staff!

I think often of SLS as a critical part of my formation into what I hope is an “intentional disciple” of Jesus. I believe without SLS, I would not have the same view of Church teaching on social justice, or the same comfort level ministering to diverse groups or, for that matter, serving nearly 35 years in law enforcement in a major U.S. city.

All life experiences form us. Each experience equips us for the next. Reflecting on our experiences—learning from them—is the key. I’m not always good at the reflecting part, but I’m working at it so that I might be ever more prepared for where the Lord calls me next.

SLS brothers: “Let our lives profess... We are loyal Sons of Calvary.” ■



LEFT: Aaron Poyer with Fr. Bob Wheelock at an SLS basketball game.

TOP: Poyer serves the Church as a deacon and was recently appointed to serve as the delegate for Consecrated Life and Priestly Mission in the Archdiocese of Detroit.

Rick Voell '71

Tradition. Generations. Relationships. The Brindisi Award is about passing on the SLS tradition of nurturing relationships from generation to generation.

My daughter recently shared a quote with me attributed to Gustav Mahler, “Tradition is the passing on of flame, not the worshipping of ashes.” The passing of the flame of Franciscan spirit certainly rings true for me, especially at the time of this writing and the passing of Fr. Keith Clark. He passed on the flame to many.

November and December are powerful seasons of remembrance at St. Lawrence. The rituals of The Book of the Dead, singing of the litany, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Advent candles and songs and smells. As these traditions are repeated year in and year out, our hearts are touched and spirits strengthened. It is appropriate in this season of “remembering” that I recall some of the Capuchins who have touched my life, who have helped to form me in the spirit of Francis. Their spirit continues to breathe life and light into all of us born of the SLS tradition:

Ron Smith (attentiveness), Brian Braun (critical thinking), Mike Crosby (speaking truth to power), Ron Jansch (awareness of the big picture), Booker Ashe (walking with the poor), Campion Baer (incisiveness),

Werner Wolf (praise Jesus), Kenan Siegal, Al Veik, John Willger (stewardship and inventiveness), Marty Pable (presence), Matt Gottschalk (awareness), Keith Clark (what gospel is that from?). I was nurtured in so many ways by these Capuchin brothers. It is the value and importance of relationships that I take away from all these men.

Through the decades I have worked on keeping alive and sharing the flame of divine presence that was passed to me. This was most evident for me with Carol, my spouse of nearly forty years, four children, six grandchildren and 25 foster children. I learned of the deep joy of relationship through years in pastoral ministry and decades in Catholic education. Experiences on mission trips to Mexico and south Texas, as well as innumerable ministry trips with SLS students, nurtured an awareness of divine presence in all relationships.

The Brindisi Award is a living award; it flows from all the holy men and women and their commitment to Gospel values and Franciscan charism. I was fortunate enough to know these women and men, be in their presence and be enlightened by the flame that burned in and through them. ■



Rick with his four children: Elizabeth, Matt '01, Maria and Joe '04.

Marc Nylen '87



Words cannot describe the privilege and honor of returning to the Hill of Happiness in September of 2021 to receive the Sons of Calvary Brindisi Award. I was joined that beautiful, sunny day by my entire beloved nuclear family, and other treasured extended family members who wished to celebrate this incredible day together! Having graduated in 1987, one might imagine there would be no "butterflies" felt as we made our way to the hallowed grounds of Saint Lawrence Seminary after 34 years. However, that was not the case. I can say with full honesty and conviction that the flood of memories that filled my mind transported me back to 1983 when I first stepped foot on the Hill of Happiness as a teenager. The love, care, respect, and feeling of welcome on that Saturday this past September of 2021 was the same way I felt when I began my four-year academic journey at SLS in August of 1983. Interacting with former students, some of whom were classmates, others who had deeply influenced me from earlier class years; and finally, the embrace and love that I felt in spending

time with faculty and staff from my SLS era as well as the current cohort of students, staff and faculty made this experience one that I will never forget.

Anyone, and I mean everyone who has experienced the blessings of Saint Lawrence Seminary in whatever way they experienced the campus, truly understands the deep, life-changing, powerful and life-altering influence the Body of Christ has on those students, staff, faculty, family members, friends and all others who witness first-hand or experience the after effects of those of us who had the incredible gift of calling the Hill of Happiness our home, in my case, for four years.

That September day brought with it the gift of spending time with faculty and staff whose powerful influence and impact on my life were profound: the laughter of past memories; the vivid recollections of stories, moments and experiences that were recalled with such ease and joy. The day also brought with it the gift of being able to share this experience with my family: my beautiful wife, Amy, with whom I have shared the past 30 years; my children: David, Daniel and Olivia who have heard and been impacted by countless stories told by a man who has hoped to humbly demonstrate what it means to be a Capuchin Franciscan, and whose daily aspiration is to attempt to leave the world better in the same manner our Capuchin Franciscan brethren have. And finally, to share the day with my extended family whose love and support have been powerful and deeply valued.

While attending Saint Lawrence Seminary, I was profoundly influenced and guided by a faculty and staff whose love for me as one of their own is a trait, quality and gift that I attempt to emulate daily. One such faculty member, Dennis Holm, was my teacher for several biology classes, my coach for baseball and basketball, and my mentor. Again, it is hard to put into words the influence he had on my life during my four years on the Hill of Happiness, and more importantly as I have reflected on and attempted to embody the qualities, traits, talents, and characteristics that he has compassionately and selflessly shared with students for almost 50 years at Saint Lawrence. Thank you, Mr. Holm, for always caring for us, challenging us, loving us and looking after us like we were members of your own family. Teaching is a sacred profession, and your passion, inspiration and deep care and concern for each of us is a gift I have cherished

for the past 34 years and know I will for my entire life! At the end of that Saturday night in September, on my way home my heart and mind could not fully comprehend or express the true magnitude of my family's

return to Saint Lawrence Seminary. However, the memories of that day and, equally importantly, the four years that I lived in the beautiful community of Mount Calvary, Wisconsin, in the presence and under the amazing guidance and influence of the Capuchin Franciscan staff and way of life have made me the man I am today. The cherished memories will last forever; the impact will continue to be profound.

The Hill of Happiness is a place that I loved calling HOME. ■



LEFT: In September, Marc brought his whole family home to St. Lawrence for the Alumni Reunion and the Brindisi Award presentations. OPPOSITE: Marc and Amy Nylen feel right at home on the campus of UW-Oshkosh.

SLS Brindisi Award Nominations

The Alumni Association Board welcomes nominations for the Brindisi Award to outstanding alumni of Saint Lawrence Seminary. Outstanding award recipients are to inspire others through their Christian faith, and in particular, be exemplary role models for current Saint Lawrence Seminary students and graduates. The candidate must be actively engaged in a Christian faith community and demonstrate excellence in one or more of the following award criteria:

- Outstanding service outcomes clearly recognizable as inspired by Christ's Gospel message.
- Transformational ministry that strengthens their respective Christian communities, Saint Lawrence Seminary, or the Church.
- Faith-filled leadership that inspires others to conversion, ignites the Catholic faithful, or defends the innate dignity of all God's children.

Nominations for deserving SLS alumni are welcome by completing the information in the nomination form and submitting to Alumni Board Chair William Burge at WmBurgePhotography@wi.rr.com (414-588-4898). To obtain a current nomination form or inquire about the nomination process, please contact Alumni Board Brindisi Award Coordinator Michael Pickart at pickartm@icloud.com (715-338-8947).

We shall never 'ere be parted...

STAYING IN TOUCH WITH WHAT'S GOING ON AT THE HILL CAN BE TOUGH, ESPECIALLY WHEN OUR SONS OF CALVARY ARE SCATTERED ALL OVER THE WORLD. CHECK OUT THESE EVENTS, PAST AND FUTURE, AND PLAN A TRIP BACK! OR FIND AN ALUMNUS IN YOUR AREA AND GET TOGETHER TO SWAP STORIES.



The Class of '71 gathered to celebrate their 50th at the annual Alumni Reunion.

Alumni News:

3-on-3 Basketball Tournament

On Saturday, February 12th the Alumni Association held its annual 3-on-3 basketball tournament. Over 50 alumni participated, ranging in years from '03 to '21. This year, the Class of '17 won. Congratulations, '17, and thank you to all who participated!



Students Boosted

A special thank you to Danh Truong '11 who conducted a vaccine clinic at St. Lawrence on February 18th. Dr. Truong held an earlier vaccination clinic on the Hill last spring.



Welcome to our New Board Members

The Alumni Association Board welcomes Matt Swift '98 and Marc Nylén '87 to the board.



Matt and his wife Jill have been living and working in the Boston area for the past 15 years where he is currently a VP of Client Services in the Marketing Technology field. Matt is excited for the opportunity to reconnect with fellow alumni in this role.

Marc earned his Bachelor's and Master's degrees at UW-Oshkosh and has worked there ever since. He has been active in the Newman Center Ministries and has led students on ministry trips in Guatemala, Mexico, Appalachia and Oshkosh. He is eager to reconnect with the Hill through the Alumni Board.



You can find the complete list of board members, along with other useful information, at www.stlawrence.edu.

Alumni Service Project

On Saturday, April 30th, Fr. Mike Bertram '71 welcomed 14 alumni to St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Milwaukee. Despite cold and rainy weather, the group spent several hours cleaning up on the grounds. Afterwards, alumni gathered to socialize over dinner. Their efforts were much appreciated by the parishoners and the group is looking to do this project again next year.



Spring Play: Twelve Angry Men

On May 6th, 7th and 8th, St. Lawrence students performed *Twelve Angry Men*. The Alumni Association hosted a gathering for alumni before the Saturday performance. Several dozen alumni were able to gather and reminisce prior to the show.



Upcoming Alumni Events:

JUNE 18 Sons of Calvary Ride

Last summer saw the first Sons of Calvary motorcycle ride. This year the ride will take place on Saturday, June 18th. Participants will converge on the Hill for a cookout, followed by Mass and a blessing of the bikes by Fr. Zoy Garibay. There will be two routes: one coming from western Wisconsin and another from northern Illinois. If you would like to participate, contact Bill Burge at: WmBurgePhotography@wi.rr.com so he can organize groups.

Don't ride a motorcycle? Feel free to meet on the Hill anyway! It's sure to be a great time of fellowship with many Sons of Calvary, regardless of how you get there!

SEPTEMBER 17 All Alumni Reunion at the Hilltopper

The All Alumni Reunion will be held on campus on September 17th. The format will be similar to past years' events, including an alumni-student soccer match and courtyard activities. The day will culminate in Mass and the awarding of the Brindisi Award, followed by a social. The students and staff at SLS are looking forward to hosting all alums at what is traditionally our biggest alumni event. Bring the whole family!

OCTOBER 15 Alumni Retreat

The SLS Alumni Board and Fr. Michael Bertram '71 are hosting a one-day retreat at the St. Francis Center in Milwaukee on Saturday, October 15th. Following the retreat, there will be a Mass and social. Join us for a day of spiritual reflection and rejuvenation! Watch for details in the coming months.

Stay Informed!

To make sure that you have all the information on upcoming alumni events, including dates and instructions on how to register, update your contact information with the Alumni Association at www.stlawrence.edu. ■



TOP: Roger Sherman '97, Marc Vargas '18 and Tobias Harkleroad '96, far from the Hill, met up in Washington, D.C. in March. Bottom: Last summer a number of alumni converged on the Hill in the first Sons of Calvary motorcycle ride.



Dozens of alumni turned out for the annual 3-on-3 alumni tournament in February





OUT TO LUNCH

CATCHING UP WITH
CC CONFERENCE CHAMPION
JOAQUIN BARAJAS-OROZCO '23

JOAQUIN BY THE NUMBERS:

- YEARS RUNNING: 3
- FASTEST MILE: 4:56
- FASTEST 5K: 17:08
- FASTEST HILLTOPPER: 18:50

SoC: Why did you start cross country?

Joaquin: My brothers went here and they played soccer and I just really didn't want to be like them. So, when I came here, I wanted to be different from them. That's basically why. I didn't really like soccer.

SoC: What does it feel like when you're out running?

Joaquin: For me it just feels like I need to get this done. It's torture. I don't know, I just feel like for me it's just to keep me in shape. I just go out there and run.

SoC: Is there a thing that you focus on when you're running to keep you going?

Joaquin: Yeah, the Gatorades and the lunch they give us after. I remember my freshman year, that was the only thing on my mind. Like, OK, I get to run and the lunch is waiting for me at the end.

SoC: How does it feel to be the Individual Conference Champion?

Joaquin: I don't really like the attention or being congratulated. I mean, my mom thinks it's cool, and my brother thinks it's cool. I don't know how to explain it. I don't really like the recognition. I like staying out of the spotlight rather than being in it.

SoC: You're just there to get the job done.

Joaquin: Basically. Run for the Hilltoppers!

SoC: Do you have any goals for senior year?

Joaquin: I want to go to state. I was upset I couldn't go to state this year because of health protocols.

SoC: So now it's more than just running to get to the Gatorade and lunch!

Joaquin: Yeah. I feel like now there's opportunity for me to run in college. Maybe even get scholarships. It's about more than just lunch. ■



Coached by Dave Bartel '78 and Sebastian Vervaeck '00, the 2021 varsity soccer team claimed the Flyway Conference Championship and Regional Championship.

A Major Award

by: John Newman '57, '59



I arrived on the Hill in September of 1956, after struggling more than a year of daily two-hour commutes to and from my former high school. For a kid who grew up in Chicago, it took awhile to adjust to rural Wisconsin. However, in a few months the spirit of this Franciscan community renewed me as both a student and a person. I overcame my difficulties with Latin. Father Silas encouraged my curiosity in chemistry with extra experiments, sometimes with explosive results! Later in Greek class, the legendary Father Louie gave me the puzzling honor of a “Greek horse” for some effort, which I guessed was like a farmer’s trusted work horse.

SLS also opened the door to involvement in school activities. Fellow classmate, Jerry McDonald, encouraged me to enter the annual speech contest and helped with my preparation. We discovered a trap door on the stage floor in the old St. Thomas Hall, which inspired a “speech” that involved the 1950’s comic TV character Ed Norton—from the 1950’s Jackie Gleason Show—emerging from his NYC sewer to recite the surreal poem, “Pigeons on the Grass, Alas.” The unusual approach amused students and, surprisingly, won the college-level gold medal in 1958. One thing led to another, and this one-time struggling student ended up serving as the president of his 1959 graduating college class.

The spiritual life at St. Lawrence fostered a commitment to service, though not in the priesthood: I have been blessed with a wonderful marriage to Anne Morrissey, my wife of nearly 52 years. Instead, like many graduates, I found my vocation in education. In my first position as a history teacher, I helped organize and then lead the district’s first teachers association. After Master and Doctor of Education degrees, I worked in history education, supervision and administration. I have worked with professional organizations and in teacher preparation. I have taught college students and even wrote an AP US History textbook, which over a hundred thousand students still use each year. What Father Louie might call a “history horse.”

I have kept the gold medal to remind me of the three years at St. Lawrence that changed my life. My three years at SLS were my major award. ■

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

TOP: After all these years, John still treasures his gold medal for his 1958 speech. RIGHT: John poses with Fr. Gratian on the occasion of his graduation in 1959.



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