For family, friends, & alumni of Cistercian Preparatory School

CONTINUUM

Spring 2025



The IMPOSSIBLE Dream

Class of 2025 on ending an eight-year journey

Teaching God in many Ways

The daily lives of 20 Cistercian Monks combine a prayerful, structured schedule with the challenges and opportunities of a college prep school

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Homecoming Dance



Upper School Drama


Arts Festival




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Lejeune Luau
(Formerly DSG Dance)


Alumni Christmas Party


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Reunions Weekend

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To learn more, contact Erin Hart, Director of Development, at 469-499-5406 or *ehart@cistercian.org*

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CONTINUUM

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Cistercian Preparatory School was founded with the aim of preparing talented boys for the colleges of their choice by challenging their minds with excellent academic programs, molding their character through the values of Catholic education, and offering them guidance with both understanding and discipline. Cistercian Preparatory School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of its admission and education policies, financial aid programs, athletic programs, and other activities.

Letter from the Headmaster

“I rejoiced when I heard them say let us go to God’s House, and now my feet are standing within your gates, O Jerusalem…” Psalm 122

Admittedly, standing on the graduation stage is a far cry from walking the streets of the heavenly Jerusalem!



Fr. Paul McCormick

Nevertheless, in our feature article written by members of the senior class, there is much rejoicing not only for an important destination having been reached but also for such a fond and endearing remembrance about the eight-year journey itself. We are so very proud of the Class of 2025!

Quite remarkably, this journey is one that now includes a record number of monks! **Twenty** Cistercians this year are working with and for students in a wide variety of roles alongside our outstanding lay faculty and staff. In our second feature by beloved former teacher Dr. Tom Pruit, you’ll discover an insightful and inspiring glimpse into the lives and motivations of some of these men who are proudly and joyfully carrying on our unique heritage of educating and forming young men in the Cistercian tradition.

Of course, along with news articles and alumni updates, please enjoy the wit of alumnus and current teacher **Patrick Spence ’08,** who humorously anticipates our new multipurpose theater by reflecting on, of all things, a “blimp hanger.”

Finally, with considerably more sobriety, Fr. Thomas considers the phenomenon of a still-expanding number of monks living and teaching together as an invitation for *pietas.* As the young gradually replace and carry forward the ministry of the old, he suggests, “We are always learning how to die, because we know that death is the merciful end of our earthly sojourn, one illuminated, to the end, by joy.”

Truly, *I rejoiced when I heard them say, let us go to God’s House!*



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News & Notes

2025 Hillary Award

Marc Maalouf '25 is this year's Tom Hillary Award recipient. Voted on by the coaching staff, this honor is given to a senior who plays multiple sports at a high level with sportsmanship, leadership, and character while maintaining a high level of achievement. "Marc is a wonderful young man, known for his passion, intensity, hard work, and leadership. He is a great example of what a Cistercian athlete can accomplish. A three-sport varsity contributor all four years in high school, Marc captained the cross-country, soccer, and track teams while maintaining a 3.99 GPA. He helped lead Cistercian to its first SPC Track Championship in 2024 and dominated on the soccer field—winning three consecutive SPC Soccer Championships in '23, '24, and '25," said J.P. Walsh, head varsity soccer coach.


Jim Reisch

Work of Heart Awards

Cistercian has been blessed with *four* Work of Heart Awards during the 2024-2025 school year! Given by The Catholic Foundation, the Work of Heart Award recognizes outstanding Catholic school educators for their "tenure and leadership, acts of kindness or charity, Christian example, and for simply going the extra mile for an individual student, family or the community." Last fall, Mr. Michael Humphries, Mrs. Nancy McGinnis, and Dr. Richard Newcomb received the award in front of students, faculty, and staff, and Mr. André Bruce was honored this spring. This well-deserved award includes a $1,000 gift.


Jim Reisch

Exodus recognized for excellence

HOME, Cistercian's 2024 yearbook, was recognized with an Award of Achievement from the Interscholastic League Press Conference. In the categories of unifying concepts and photography, *HOME* was awarded Distinguished Merit, ILPC's highest level of recognition. "It's certain this was a well-received cover for the students. [...] This is an excellent look, particularly since the photos are so stunning in many areas," commented one judge. Reflecting on his role as editor-in-chief, **Ryan Sporl '24** said, "I'm proud that I was able to show my love for Cistercian and its community. [This award] is only a result of my amazing *Exodus* team sharing that same love with me."



Jim and Lynn Moroney Award Dinner 2025

It was a wonderful evening at the 2025 **Jim & Lynn Moroney Award Dinner** honoring **Michael Moroney '77.** Introduced by **Sean Moroney '05** and surrounded by family, friends, and classmates, Michael shared memories of his time at Cistercian as well as stories about his late parents, for whom the award is named. Speeches from the evening may be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m3ZYZSUpt_4.


Jim Reisch

Plaque dedication to James Hartnett, Sr.

Fr. Abbot Peter '73 dedicated a Fr. Damian sculpture and plaque donated by **Kevin Spencer '85** in honor of James Harnett, Sr. Mr. Hartnett was one of a small handful of towering figures who helped found Cistercian in 1962 and who remained a vital School Board member and source of guidance throughout his life. The plaque is located on the wall outside of the headmaster's office.


Jim Reisch

Junior World Affairs Council (JWAC)

Cistercian's Junior World Affairs Council competed against 87 teams in the Academic WorldQuest competition in January. The Form VII team finished in a three-way tie for fifth place with **Matt George '26, George Birdsong '26,** and **Christian Oh '26** leading the way.



Mentoring & Internship Initiative prepares juniors for real-world success

This spring, eight generous Cistercian alumni returned to campus to support over a dozen juniors in preparing for the college admissions and job application process. As part of our Mentoring & Internship Initiative, these alumni conducted multiple rounds of mock interviews, giving students the chance to practice and sharpen their communication and presentation skills. Students received personalized, constructive feedback to build competence and confidence. As a capstone to the program, participants were then connected with employers offering summer internships exclusively for rising Cistercian seniors—an invaluable opportunity made possible through the support of alumni and alumni parents. Reflecting on the experience, **Barry McCain '02** said, "I was struck by how each student told me how much he enjoyed solving problems—it was refreshing to hear." **Alejandro Hernandez Gonzalez '05** added, "The group was very polished. Even when I tried to push them outside their comfort zone, they stayed focused and adapted quickly." Thanks to the commitment of these alumni mentors, this year's juniors gained skills that will serve them well in future academic and professional pursuits.



Guest speakers visit campus

Dylan Starrs '05, program director and co-owner of Mountain House Recovery in Flagstaff, AZ, addressed upper school students about alcohol and substance abuse. A long-term residential treatment program, Mountain House Recovery assists men and their families in building purposeful lives as they recover from substance use disorders and other co-occurring mental health struggles. "Dylan delivered a powerful message that is difficult for young men to hear: they are not invincible. As an alumnus who knows the School and the experiences the young men here go through, and at the same time being a fresh voice that they haven't heard before, allowed him to deliver that message in a powerful way to open the eyes of students and help them grow in care and concern for each other," said **Fr. Lawrence Brophy '01,** Head of Upper School.

Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, an acclaimed international Catholic speaker and evangelist, engaged with Forms IV-VIII on the issue of living authentic Catholic masculinity in a culture that is opposed to it. A sought-after speaker, his no-nonsense approach to living his faith challenges and inspires others. Fr. Lawrence said, "Deacon Burke-Sivers spoke with a power and directness that the young men found captivating. It's very rare for a speaker to hold a teenager's attention for 45 minutes, but the deacon did. His message that they are the Church of now not the Church of the future energized the high schoolers and encouraged them to cherish the gift of their masculinity and courageously bear witness to Christ in a world where his message is not always readily received."



News & Notes

Lejeune Luau (formerly the DSG Dance)

The DSG Dance is now named the "Lejeune Luau" after the French geneticist Venerable Jérôme Lejeune, who pioneered cytogenetics with the discovery of Trisomy 21 (Down Syndrome) and then served the Church and the world as a pro-life advocate for many decades. With over 120 student volunteers and 40 guests, the luau-themed event was packed with games, music, and dancing. Mr. Humphries led students in making balloon animals, and the Community Service Council brought in everyone's favorite ice-cream—Howdy Homemade, which employs over 150 men and women with special needs—to celebrate. **Harrison Hart '27** spoke for many students when he said, "It was so much fun to play foosball and other simple games with people who were so happy to be together."



BraveArt 2025: "A Feast of the Senses"

"This year, we continued to hone in on the simplicity of what makes BraveArt amazing for our students. We focused on the art and the artists, and our students had a new and fun experience through creativity," said Mrs. Tasia Magill, Head of Fine Arts. New workshops came mostly from the faculty: Culinary Arts with Mrs. Lisa Hernandez, Watercolor with Ms. Clare Frank, and Songwriting with Fr. Francis. During lunch, the Art Board hosted a Play-doh Sculpture Tournament and Bach's Lunch Medley, while the coaches led students in Capture the Flag. The seniors added their own spin to the original Christ the Redeemer statue in Brazil for their senior metal sculpture.



MLK Day

In January, Cistercian freshmen, sophomores, juniors, seniors, and faculty members engaged in various forms of service around the Metroplex in honor of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Service locations included the White Rose Women's Center, Project Finding Calcutta, Gospel of Life Disciples and Dwellings, Owenwood Farm, Dallas Ramps, Puede Network and Feed My Starving Children. Such service days are a wonderful way to honor the legacy of MLK and to conform our lives to the pattern set by Jesus, who "did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).



Alumni College Panel

After winter break, Cistercian upperclassmen engaged with an alumni panel made up of **Maxwell Vaughan '21** (University of Florida), **Evan Ringdahl '21** (Notre Dame), **Preston Schnorbach '22** (Texas A&M), **Ethan Christopher '22** (University of Texas), and **Christopher Hardin '22** (Harvard). They talked about how the time management skills learned in high school "would pay dividends" in college, in addition to their ability to write well, stay focused in class, and take better notes. They spoke to the competitive spirit of Cistercian, coupled with its rigorous curriculum and drive for excellence, that "more than prepared" them for the college environment and set them up so that they could pursue their individual endeavors with a greater sense of confidence.



Form I Field Study

In what has become a yearly spring tradition, Form I embarked on a field study to the John Bunker Sands Wetland Center. The boys viewed bald eagles and collected macroinvertebrates (which included a large leech, some fish fry, and freshwater shrimp). Based on these indicator species, they determined the quality of water at the wetland. Also, the boys met an ornithologist collecting data after catching and releasing various species of birds. Another great Cistercian day in the field!



Spring Arts Festival showcases student talent and draws a full house

Cistercian's inaugural Spring Arts Festival, held in March following Sunday Mass, brought campus to life with a vibrant celebration of creativity, performance, and community. The event featured three curated art galleries highlighting works by student and faculty artists. Throughout the day, attendees enjoyed indoor and outdoor choral and instrumental concerts, along with hands-on art activities for all ages—including collage making, found poetry, screen printing, painting, balloon animals, and face painting. The festival concluded with an original one-act musical written and choreographed by students in Peter Saliga's American Musical Senior Seminar. The show's reception was nothing short of electric. "The response said it all," said Saliga, "huge laughs, rousing applause, and a finale that had a beyond-capacity crowd on its feet, clapping and singing!" With its dynamic blend of visual art, music, and theater, the Spring Arts Festival was a resounding success—a new tradition in the making.



Cistercian takes second at Diocesan Middle School Religion Bowl

Cistercian's Middle School returned to the Diocesan Religion Bowl this spring to defend its first-place title—and proudly secured second place among 30 competing schools from across North Texas. Our four top religion scholars, one from each middle school grade, tested their knowledge of Catholic faith and tradition in a spirited academic showdown. "It was so much fun to be part of the team and answering such challenging questions," said one Cistercian team member. "And next year, we're taking back the trophy!" Congratulations to them for a great display of faith, knowledge, and teamwork.



Robotics team finishes a strong season

In another successful season, Fusion Corps competed in FIRST in Texas. Starting in Waco for a district event, the team finished third and received the Industrial Design Award sponsored by General Motors. A second strong performance and third-place finish followed in the Fort Worth District. The team qualified for the District Championship in Houston where they finished ranked 31/187 teams in Texas. The leadership of graduating seniors **Byron Duhé '25, Grayson Groves '25, Taylor Mackey '25, Pietro Miele '25, Archer Oliver '25, Rishabh Rengarajan '25, Stefano Salomone '25, Ariel Santiago '25, Roman Soriano '25,** and **Tristan Yuen '25** will be missed!



News & Notes

Quiz Bowl excelling nationally

For the second year in a row, Cistercian's Middle School Quiz Bowl team brought back a trophy from the National Quiz Bowl Tournament in Chicago. **Ewan Dilley '29, Markham Hay '29, Enrique Mosothoane '29,** and **Knox Shurley '29** finished 13th and came within one question of competing for 8th or higher. In the upper school, four freshmen attended the National Small School Tournament in Chicago and finished 11th in the open division, defeating a team that eventually finished tied for 8th. **Andrew Kosel '28** received the "Rising Star Award." A team of three juniors and one senior traveled to Atlanta over Memorial Day Weekend to compete in the National High School Tournament.



Cistercian returns to the Irving Arts Center

Student artists had their work featured in the Irving Arts Center's Courtyard Gallery this spring. Local residents who came in to vote early saw the installation of the show and were moved and inspired by the work.



Upper School presents a classic

Upper School students put on a TYA (Theater for Young Audiences) version of *The Lion, The Witch, and The Wardrobe* (a staple in Form I English) to attract a younger audience for the production. **George Saliga '25** was a noble and beloved Aslan, and **Byron Duhé '25** terrified audiences with his portrayal of Fenris Ulf, the captain of the White Witch's secret police. **Rishabh Rengarajan '25** and **Roman Soriano '25** made their stage debuts playing Tumnus and Centaur respectively. "The fights and music really set this show apart. I was able to bring in a professional stuntman and fight choreographer to work with the cast. None of it would have come together without the brilliant original composition and performance by **Joshua Hays '25.** His commitment and devotion to the show and cast shone so brightly throughout the whole production," said director Tasia Magill.


Jim Reisch

Formation Beyond the Classroom:

Capital Campaign Nears Goal—Help Us Cross the Finish Line!

This year, our current theater has been a hub of student creativity and community life—hosting everything from the Middle School musical *Oliver!* and the Upper School production of *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe,* to a senior seminar musical revue, an original student-written musical *O. Cist.,* community movie nights, Student Council speeches, US Coffee House, and admissions presentations.

While the space has served us well, it is clear: Cistercian is ready for a modern, multipurpose facility that truly matches the talent and energy of our students and their faculty advisers. And thanks to the generosity of our community, we are nearly there!

Although we reached our $15 million campaign goal last fall, rising construction costs and design enhancements have resulted in a funding gap of up to $2.8 million. Inflation, trade challenges, and improvements to the original plans—including transforming the theater into a two-story building with a new technology lab, art galleries, additional classrooms, and office space—have contributed to the increase.

The good news? We've received an incredible 1:1 matching gift challenge—every dollar donated up to $750,000 will be matched, doubling the impact of your contribution.

We plan to break ground in September, and we need your help to bring this vision to life. To make a gift or learn more, visit: https://cistercian.org/FormationCampaign or contact Erin Hart at ehart@cistercian.org or 469-499-5406. You can also scan the QR code here to donate directly.

Together, let's build a space worthy of the creativity and spirit it will inspire!

Renderings of new building and porch







Fr. Paul and Erin Hart visited alumni in Chicago and Nashville.



The ~~IMPOSSIBLE~~ Dream

Ending an eight-year journey

George Saliga ’25 and John Weinberg ’25

Title design: Henry Folmnsbee ’25 and Cub Gerber ’25

Just as arrows arced the heavens at the battles of Hastings and Agincourt, hundreds of water balloons torpedoed across the sky above Cistercian. On that Friday, the sun hid itself behind ominous clouds, while every member of the Upper School, freshmen to seniors, armed himself with incendiaries to bombard the opposing side, drowning out the overcast sky with explosions of yellow and blue.

The horde of high schoolers arrived at the upper parking lot after a wildly entertaining pep rally for the homecoming game that night. Seeing the buckets of water balloons filled to the brim, they suddenly understood why the final day of spirit week had been dubbed “beach day.” It wasn’t just to get everyone in a festive mood or to allow the wearing of Hawaiian shirts and sunglasses. Everyone was about to get soaked, and no one saw it coming.

Preparations had been made by the senior leaders of the Black Hand, who split the student body into two teams: the underclassmen on the left side of the lot and the upperclassmen on the right. At the count of three, all 180 students reached for ammunition; time seemed to slow down as the balloons hovered in the air, an inordinate number targeting Fr. Ambrose and other faculty who had entered the ranks. In that moment, thanks to the efforts of those members of the Class of 2025, every member of the Upper School was both involved and invested in an unforgettable experience.







“Incipe! Qui recte vivendi prorogat horam. Rusticus exspectat dum defluat amnis; at ille labitur et labetur in omne volubilis aevum.”

Mr. Spence taught us for three consecutive years, perhaps amidst the worst three years to teach a class: Forms III, IV and V (In his honor, no *-is* verbs ~~will be used~~ appear in this section). At the beginning of each period we recited a brief refrain in Latin, the first of which bears well as a reflective thought. Stated above in the original Latin of Horace, it roughly translates to: “Begin! He who puts off the hour of right living is like the bumpkin waiting for the river to run out: yet on it glides, and on it will glide, rolling its flood forever.”

Fr. John always folded new students into our Form memorably, beginning in Form II. That year, he welcomed Luke Roppolo and Taylor Mackey in accordance with a theme based around our class Betta fish, Leviathan. Fr. John crafted an enormous hat, painted himself blue, found ten buckets to be used as drums, and thus embodied the Spirit of Leviathan. He made a spectacle, and in so doing made it patently clear that the two new members of the Form joined the rest on equal standing. In fact, every year that we have received new students, Fr. John has dressed up—as a pirate, as Don Quixote, as Gandalf. He quickly incorporates new students directly into the fold of the Form: instead of waiting for the unchanging river (sorry, Heraclitus) to flow on, Fr. John ensured that each new student would cross over and become one of us. He did not wait until they acclimated, he did not put off the hour of right living, but instead jumped to make sure we grew into one community.

We, perhaps inspired by Fr. John, also do not wait to pluck the day, to use a more correct translation of the famous Latin proverb *carpe diem*. On our retreats, we did not pass up the opportunities to connect, and even beyond, our resolutions toward community have continued to thrive. Much to the chagrin of Fr. John, we have always had a penchant for games in the morning period. From desk ping-pong to gate volleyball to “Dungeons and Dragons” games without any element of Dungeons and Dragons, we have never avoided laughing and playing together—and although perhaps a backpack or two was left unpacked, the outcome of such games rarely outweighed the value of our time together.

Our desire to jump when opportunity calls does not limit itself to games—we saw the need and brought Hope Squad to Cistercian, we started apps to teach learning, we founded and lorded over pecan empires, we leapt over track records, and we wrote novellas, entire musicals, and journal-published research papers. And many of us have not yet reached eighteen. If success comes when courage meets opportunity and preparation, then it is exciting to think about what the Class of 2025 will go and do.





We never had a Jeffrey in our class. At least, not one that was human. We had about seven which were wasps, each of which held a dear place in our hearts in middle school. This love was mixed with fear, however. You see, many of our classmates were deathly afraid of wasps in Form I; wasps are fast and unpredictable and can sting with no warning. We'd open the windows to "let some fresh air in here," as Charlie Kobdish would say, but these little stinging creatures would always sneak their way in. And suddenly we had a wasp invasion on our hands in the fall. (Invasion here meaning every week or so one small insect would hang out near the ceiling.) The most daring of us would grab a tennis racquet from Josh Hays and try to vanquish the beast, and, many times, we reigned triumphant.

Each wasp had a funeral, a respectable burial using rocks from the courtyard, where we bestowed the name of Jeffrey (with a unique surname) upon each fallen creature. It was an odd relationship. We responded to the stinging monsters with some fear at first, but then also with a sense of curiosity and respect.

There are many ways to respond to a challenge, whether the challenge is something so trivial as wasps threatening to take over the classroom or as looming as giving a Ring Speech to the whole school. Fight or flight? One must choose.

When thinking about what it means to be a man of virtue, the voice of Dr. Pruit comes to mind, impressing upon Form III English students the words of Edgar Albert Guest: "There will always be something to do, my boy; there will always be wrongs to right; there will always be need for a manly breed and men unafraid to fight." During our time at Cistercian, we have been prepared to fight for the right each step of the way. Mentors like Dr. Pruit, Mr. Spence, and Fr. John have been there to guide us and presented challenges to help us grow into better people. Over the course of these eight years, we have learned to rise to challenges as a band of brothers, and we have shaped each other into leaders, iron sharpening iron. Now that we have reached the end of our time on campus together, we will recall the wisdom recited by our beloved English teacher: "So these are things that I dream, my boy, and have dreamed since your life began: that whatever befalls, when the old world calls, it shall find you a sturdy man."

The old world is calling; it's time to officially grow up and step into the adult world of college and beyond. Fr. John will not be waiting to provide guidance down the hallway, and we will leave for places which are far away from the band of brothers we have created. Will we be found as sturdy men?

A defining moment in our Form's history occurred when we memorized and sang "The Impossible Dream," from *Man of La Mancha,* at the all-school Winter Concert in our sixth-grade year. Since that time, we have continued "to follow that star, no matter how hopeless, no matter how far." That is what distinguishes us as the Class of 2025: We dream the impossible dream. And we would lean into that message often, but no more so than during our sophomore summer.

It is well known that Fr. John loves hiking and backpacking. In the summer before sophomore year, many members of our class embarked on the first COR Expedition in the history of the School. A good many of us anticipated pitching tents, sitting around a campfire, and just relaxing in the mountains. There were decks of cards in backpacks; Vaughn Irish and Carter Kenny even brought baseball gloves to play during hiking breaks. Evidently, we didn't know exactly what Fr. John meant when he said we'd all go backpacking together.

It was time for a reality check. The true wilderness is not lined with cabins for sleeping or set trails to navigate. For starters, the backpacks were thirty pounds heavier than we expected. And then we hiked up to eight miles a day, with hundreds of feet of





On the COR Trip







Enjoying cookies baked by Fr. John's mother

elevation change, hopping across rocks in stream beds and climbing over tree stumps in fallen forests. The world felt starkly different. There was even a day when it started to snow.

Some were ill-equipped for life in the wilderness. Cooking full meals with portable burners proved challenging, and the "spice girls" group was aptly named for losing all the salts and seasonings needed for cooking pasta and potatoes, resulting in comedically bland dishes. Some of our classmates had a fear of heights, making summit ascents and trudging across ridges of boulders with only air below nightmarish. To top it all off, we had to use sticks and leaves in place of toilet paper and dig our own toilets using a spade.

Such challenges left us, at times, just wanting to get out of the Colorado mountains and back to the beauty of home... or Whataburger. We were literally in the middle of nowhere, so it would've taken a helicopter to get back to civilization. Even if someone wanted to step back in a smaller way, say take a nap after the day's hike, adding extra work for the rest of the guys wasn't an option. Backing away from a challenge wasn't an option either. The wilderness pushed us to be there for each other and strengthened the bonds between us.

Despite our fears and numerous challenges, we made it out just fine. By the end of the trip, some returned to the vans singing what had become our theme song: "This is my quest, to follow that star, no matter how hopeless, no matter how far." We reached the end of the expedition celebrating our accomplishments. Fr. John was waiting to surprise ambush us from behind a tree upon our arrival, but when he heard the rousing anthem, he joined in.

Whether in the arts, on a sports field, or in the midst of community service, we knew how to work together, and we could do hard things. In fact, that trip gave us the tools we needed to move toward challenges instead of away from them. Fifteen seniors, under the guidance of Mr. Saliga, produced a musical revue. They prepped for this undertaking during lunches and some activities periods, and after getting their singing and blocking down, they put on a show to spread good cheer on the last day before winter finals. The middle schoolers, who would otherwise be in study hall watching the clock tick away the end of the semester, packed the house. The audience was treated to scenes ranging from Roman Soriano regaling the Brave Sir Robin (Riley Murphy) as he trotted across stage with his Monty Python knights to Cash Lechler performing a country solo with Carter Kenny accompanying him. For the last song, "We Need a Little Christmas," a row of first formers was pulled onto the stage to join the performance.

Cistercian soccer has been a powerhouse sport for several years, culminating in this year's third 3-A

SPC Championship in a row and back-to-back, undefeated seasons. No matter how fierce the competition, whether it was a soccer academy from Austin or a school with international players, senior leaders like Marc Maalouf, Brock Harrod, John Peterman, and Cash Lechler were able to rally the team to victory time and time again. They embraced the challenge before them, and in doing so achieved remarkable success.

Among the unsung heroes of tackling challenges has been Byron Duhé, who for the past four years has tutored lower school students after school. Instead of cruising off by himself with his intellect and work ethic, Byron has spent countless hours helping others. He doesn't get paid for his work, even when he is the only tutor down in the lunchroom; he does it out of a desire to help others face their challenges.

While the Class of 2025 faced its fair share of challenges, we leave Cistercian with a healthy store of memories to look back on when times get tough. Random memories. Happy memories.

Dr. Richard Newcomb is known for many things, from his deep love for classroom consistency to his incomprehensibly wide-ranging intelligence to his persevering care for his students. But one thing he is *not* known for is his enjoyment of poetry—which is why it may surprise some readers that he took a day of senior calculus from the schedule to provide us a poetry day.

One of the poems chosen by Dr. Newcomb was "Do Not Go Gently into that Good Night" by Dylan Thomas. His distinctive voice narrating the poem along with witnessing together two eclipses (more about that later) held important lessons for our class: "Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight, and learn, too late, they grieved it on its way, Do not go gentle into that good night."

Our experience with the 2024 eclipse was something that, although shared with the rest of the School, was unique to us. In his Ring Speech, Theodore Andrews talked about our Form's special connection to eclipses. Our very first Form I party was marked by an eclipse, as was our transition to Upper School. Last year's eclipse was the fullest and most complete, symbolizing our Form's history.

We are a Form of wild men—grieving the "sun in flight" that is Cistercian along the way. As boys and humans, we are not perfect, and the tremendous blessing of Cistercian's workload was accompanied by some amount of grief. The same youth that, in part, led us to rejoice in the "sun in flight" led us to spurn it too. And so we realized once the moon eclipsed the sun,





Jim Reisch







providing a sample of "that good night," that perhaps we wasted moments of our time in the sun of Cistercian complaining when we should have been rejoicing.

After the last eclipse in our junior year, we stepped up our game. We saw metaphorically a moment of our time after Cistercian, and in it the end of much that we love, we hate, we distrust, and that we will try to save. And so, we sought to capitalize. Our time after Cistercian is unknown and mysterious to us and in many ways a good night, so we invested ourselves fully in our late junior and senior years. Every single member of our Form went to homecoming, our class average GPA jumped, and our social leadership of the School was spirited (although at times perhaps too much so). The Class of 2025 will not go gently into that good night.

Impossible dreams have defined our Form since our first days together. In Form I, Coleman Griffith famously crafted a life-sized trebuchet for extra credit in a class in which he already had an A. In Form II, we all learned the song "Libero" (a Latin translation of *Frozen's* "Let it Go"), and sang it so loudly in Form Master's period that even the soundproof walls of the music room gave way to our tsunami of 11-year-old voices. Even in the most trivial of dreams, we aim higher than expected of us; we are an above-and-beyond, over-the-top, and sometimes too-much group of young men.

We do not pretend that this behavior is always virtuous of us. In Form I, we all decided to drop our physics books at the same time in English class, and just this year, we created an enormous fireball which threatened to engulf the foliage around the Upper School porch. Although dreams and youth do not always mix well and we ended up tilting at a windmill or two, the Class of 2025 would not be who we are without big, and sometimes impossible, dreams.

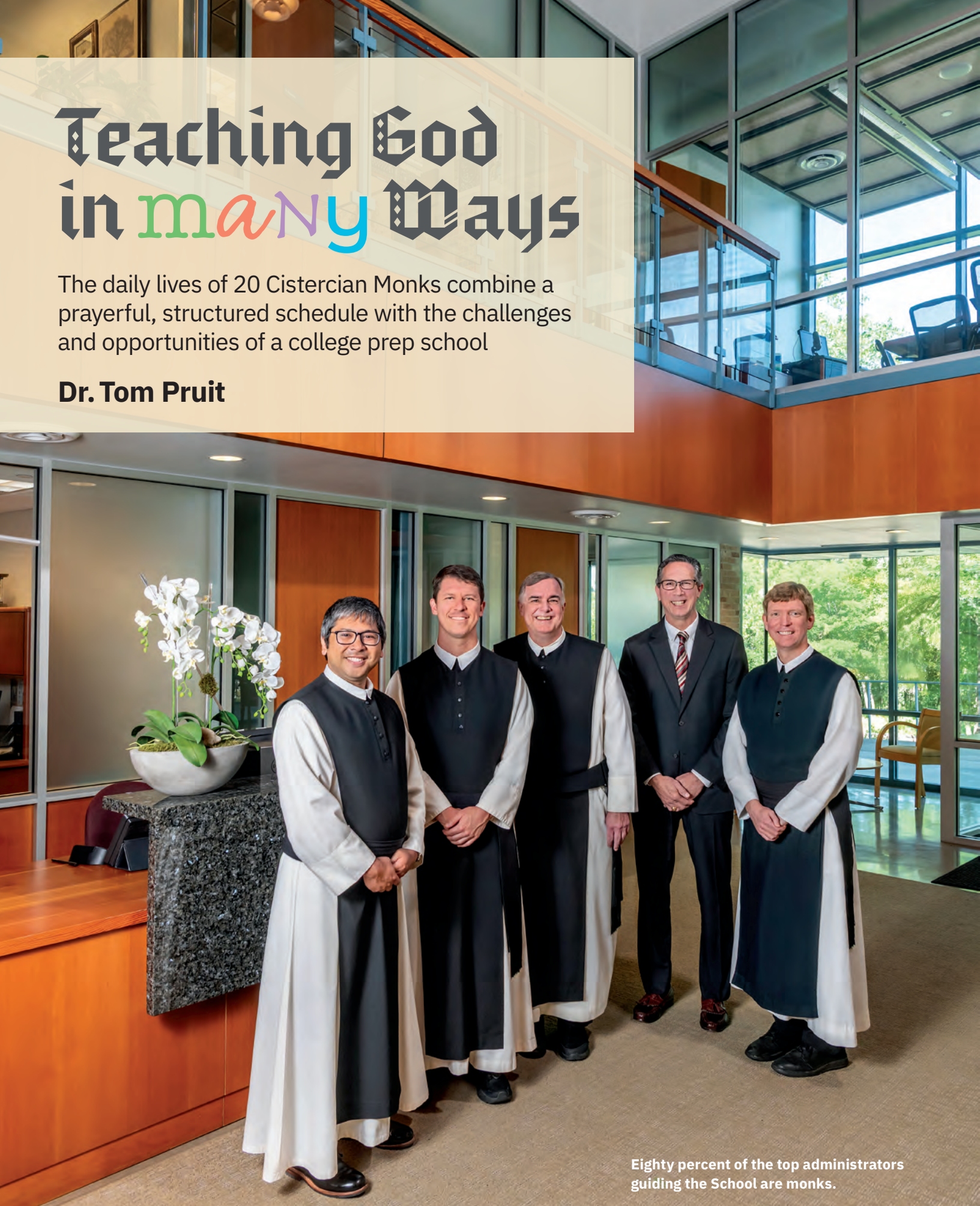
We have those whose glorious quest is athletic, like our nationally ranked #8 fencer, Silas Choi, and those whose glorious quest is academic, like our eleven National Merit Semifinalists. We have Dhruva Kumar who, despite his genius far beyond even Cistercian, strives until his last ounce of energy to help others and Tristan Yuen, who makes the world better for his actions on the forefront of teen mental health research, having already been published in *Nature* magazine. We have guys who refuse the senior late start every Monday and try, even when their arms (and minds) are weary, to play a musical worship service for students with developmental disabilities at the Notre Dame School of Dallas, and we have people like Grayson Groves, who without question or pause, gives his time to help produce Middle School musical productions.

It would be nice to think we all came in to Cistercian fully formed and ready to take on the world, but we would be ignoring the impact on our class of the greatest dreamer of us all: Fr. John, our Form Master. His vision is nothing short of grand, and, God willing, he gets it done. Far from accidentally, Fr. John taught us to run where the brave dare not go; not only by example, but by intentionally created logos and pathos. He poured everything he could into us, and he expected that we too would be invested. This Form has unabashedly thrown itself headfirst into everything we do and everything we are—we will march into hell for a heavenly cause. And that is the mark we will make on this School. We are not afraid to be ourselves; we are not afraid to dream the impossible dream. •

Teaching God in many Ways

The daily lives of 20 Cistercian Monks combine a prayerful, structured schedule with the challenges and opportunities of a college prep school

Dr. Tom Pruit



Eighty percent of the top administrators guiding the School are monks.

Jim Reisch

This year, among the 64 members of its faculty and staff, Cistercian had a record-setting 20 monks who were making the trek 'over the hill' to the School to teach, and four novices helping with confirmation. Of the 63 courses offered in the fall, 24 were offered by monks, and there is at least one monk in every academic department. In addition, the headmaster, as well as the heads of both the middle and upper school, is a monk as are the dean of students and the director of maintenance. Monks sponsor various clubs, including those involved with community service, pro-life, the yearbook, and student council. Six of the teaching monks are alumni with two more alumni novices eagerly awaiting the opportunity to join the teaching ranks next year.

How does this influence of monks make Cistercian different from other schools—monastic, parochial, private and public? What sets us apart as an institution? Fr. Denis Farkasfalvy, whose firm commitment both to the School's mission and to its mere survival throughout the early years never wavered, was once asked, "Why, given your expertise in and acclaim for your theological studies (he had been appointed by Pope John Paul II to the Pontifical Biblical Commission), aren't you teaching theology?" He responded to the question with his characteristic terseness, "I am teaching God through teaching math." That sentiment certainly captures the current state of affairs among the monks who are teaching in the School. Fr. Lawrence Brophy '01, who is now the Head of Upper School, has followed in those footsteps of his former teacher and mentor, teaching math, being a Form Master (in the midst of his second time around) and working in administration.

While unable to profile all 20 monks and four novices in these few pages, one can easily see the underlying theme—these men are monks and brothers, but they share life far beyond theology and religion with all who know them.

At the beginning of a faculty and staff meeting last fall, Fr. Bernard Marton began a short personal reflection by writing *Bernarde, ad quid venisti?* [Bernard, for what purpose have you come?] on the board behind him. In the quotation, "Bernard" refers to St. Bernard, who used this phrase to check himself, to examine his motives before taking an action. Fr. Bernard has posed that question to himself over and over again in his life as a Cistercian monk. Throughout his time at the School and well beyond, Fr. Bernard has been a witness of faith. He has offered Mass to countless students, shepherded a record six classes through as Form Master, taught a variety of subjects, served as headmaster and college counselor, and kept control of afternoon carpool pickup, all proof positive that the witnessing of faith appears in different ways.

What is perhaps most attractive about having so many "men in black and white" among the faculty is that they are all in a sense "teaching God" but are doing it through many different avenues. Graduating senior John Weinberg experienced this firsthand: "I'm not Catholic and therefore am not drawn to the priesthood for myself, but I have to say that my experience here for eight years around the monks has been that, though some of them do actually teach theology, none of them treat it merely as a subject to be learned. They live it every day for all of us to see. That's very cool."

Sitting atop his "sweet ride" (which he has affectionately named 'Rhonda, the red Honda'), Fr. Christopher Kalan certainly represents a new phase in Cistercian "monkdom" as he is the first monk to oversee the entire 82-acre property as Director of Maintenance. In the words of Tim Parker, his immediate boss, "Fr. Christopher is simply doing an excellent job. He has an uncanny ability to identify problems, fix them quickly, and, like Superman, he can change quickly out of his clothes which identify him as part of the maintenance crew into his habit which identifies him as part of God's crew." As the "maintenance monk" (though he also teaches computer, is a 'go-to' for most issues either the boys or faculty may have with technology, and will be the Form Master for the incoming Class of 2033), he has a unique perspective: "No day is ever the same. The physical aspect of the Monastery includes not only the abbey buildings and those of the School but all the grounds as well, so something somewhere always needs attention. The variety of problems is a challenge, but one I take on gladly."



Fr. Christopher Kalan

Coming first to the University of Dallas from a farm in southern California, what attracted Fr. Raphael Schaner to the abbey was simply the community life, in which everyone seemed to be working so hard at so many different tasks. “I saw many very different, very normal men who were facing a lot of individual challenges but who saw them not as problems first but as blessings.” In addition to teaching theology, sponsoring the yearbook, and teaching visual art electives, Fr. Raphael offers farming electives, which give students the opportunity to get their hands in the soil as gardeners and to become more intentional stewards of the earth. In July 2023, Fr. Raphael and Fr. Ambrose Strong accepted, on behalf of the School, a gift of four beehives from the family of a Cistercian student, transporting them in the back of a pickup truck to the open landscape behind the abbey. Since then, an important segment of each of his farming electives, spring and fall, includes the intricate processes first of harvesting (properly suited up!) and then of “jarring” the honey produced by these now localized bees. “The students, both in and out of the elective, are universally intrigued by the way in which these little fellow creatures live. There’s something mystical about them—a grand design found in such a tiny package,” said Fr. Raphael.

On a different side of campus, one of Fr. Anthony Bigney’s deepest aspirations is to become a saint—and be known as the saint of third base coaches. He would be, we’re pretty sure, unique in that role. “Fr. Anthony is an integral part of our baseball program. I am appreciative of him, not only as a Form Master and spiritual advisor, but for all he brings as a coach. He knows the game of baseball, and his passion for the game ignites something in the boys and the coaches,” said Ricky Barrett, varsity baseball coach. Cheerful, witty, known for his nearly endless supply of unique socks and for uttering a kind word to everyone he meets, he is a second-time Form Master and teaches both history and religion in the middle school. He has also served as director of admissions and still can be seen occasionally leading tours of the School. He simply seems to radiate the joy of the Gospel.



Fr. Raphael Schaner



Fr. Anthony Bigney

According to the National Catholic Education Association, only 2.5% of the faculties of Catholic schools nationwide are members of religious orders.



Jim Reisch

Fr. Mark Ripperger



Jim Reisch

Fr. Abbot Peter Verhalen ’73

Every alumnus who has had Fr. Mark Ripperger for Form III Science remembers the yearly rocket project, and some are likely still to have the remnants of their rocket stashed away. After a lengthy preparation over several days in the spring, third formers can be seen proceeding out to the Hidden Field behind Fr. Mark, who always dons a white lab coat over his Cistercian habit and will be seen sporting a red baseball cap—indicating that he’s the one who controls the button which sends the rockets “soaring into the air, to land who knows where.” The red cap is not random; it is the actual one Fr. Mark wore while teaching at the U.S. Navy’s Submarine Firefighting Training Program onboard his submarine. The red cap indicates the person in charge and the one whose job it is to teach and keep others safe. Fr. Mark, who serves God humbly and quietly, manages the computer network, teaches Form III physics, and is also the founding and current sponsor of the award-winning and wildly popular Robotics Club.

With more than half a century as student and then teacher, Abbot Fr. Peter Verhalen ’73 has insisted, both as Abbot and formerly as Headmaster, that he keep his hand in the classroom. That stability has not gone unnoticed by students. “Since he teaches my Form this year, I’ve noticed he gets the biggest smile on his face when he sees me at Mass with my family on Sunday morning,” said Levi Hebert, Form III. Abbot Peter currently teaches English Lab in the middle school, though for many years he taught the most grueling and difficult of classes—Form IV Latin. He began his teaching career, however, as a high school English teacher, shepherding sophomores through British literature. He has brought God to his students over these many years in many ways in the classroom—through Latin and English as subjects but also as the

delicate balance between imposed discipline and personal interest, engaging the head and the heart in the pursuit of wisdom. "Fr. Peter is a tremendously important man, with a lot of things on his to-do list that might seem more important than seventh-grade English Lab. But it's more than simply teaching boys how to diagram a sentence. It's about being a presence in their lives, making a connection, establishing a relationship. By teaching them ELab, he shows them that they are important," said Fr. Anthony.

In the classroom, Fr. Ambrose Strong teaches both religion and Latin while shepherding his second group of boys as Form Master. What really sets him apart in the students' eyes is that as the sponsor for Student Council, he takes on the monumental task of coordinating the annual Homecoming preparations, remaining right in the thick of things from start to finish, as well as helping the boys coordinate all other StuCo activities—the various parties and other events which often involve hosting girls. He shares not only Mass and class time with the students, but he is also an integral part of their social lives. As Dean of Students, Fr. Ambrose finds himself "teaching God" indirectly in all these places. Junior Jack Landis has a unique perspective when it comes to Fr. Ambrose since he has been a member of the Student Council for the past three years and was recently elected to be the president next year. "He's a theologian and very smart, but he's also a really fun guy to be around," said Landis. "No matter how late we have to stay cleaning up after a party or event, he's there until the last minute. He teaches us a lot about life and how to be a better person."



Fr. Ambrose Strong



Jim Reisch

Fr. Philip Lastimosa '00

What makes the relationship here so special is that almost every student can find a monk with whom he can identify—one he can relate to as a mathematician, an artist, an athlete, a thinker, one who enjoys music or movies or board games or hiking.

Almost any board game ever played has a place in the repertoire of Fr. Philip Lastimosa '00 and has been passed on to any interested students, especially those who happen to be in his Class of 2020 and his current Form V. He is patient and strategic. These traits come across as he performs his tasks as Head of Middle School, Form Master, and physics teacher. Perhaps most significant (and underappreciated) is his apparent easy mastery of the infamous scheduling board, which was invented by Fr. Bernard in the School's early years before its arcane maneuverings were passed on to Mrs. Christine Medaille. The torch was passed to Fr. Philip, and the sequence and all its variations and frequent changes have never phased him. Quirky, funny without meaning to be, yet caring deeply for his students, Fr. Philip was the model for the Jedi Monk metal sculpture created by his Class of 2020.

Fr. Augustine Hoelke '00 was drawn to the Monastery by the stable community of monks he saw there. "I hoped they could provide the sufficiently sturdy root structure for me to cultivate and live out faithfully my vocation. What I wanted when I looked inward was a deeper conversion within myself," said Fr. Augustine. The role of teacher was almost an afterthought, something in the back of his mind as he thought about all he had needed as a Cistercian teenager. But as he nears the end of his second eight-year stint as Form Master, Fr. Augustine sees how important that life as a teacher has been to his spiritual growth as a monk. "Having just spent my Spring Break hiking in Utah with 25 of my guys, to the point of true physical exhaustion, I can only hope and pray that my investment, effort, and constant presence are giving off a light to the boys that will last."

Perhaps the true 'translation' of *ardere* is no better illustrated than in the life of the current senior Form Master, Fr. John Bayer, who, besides teaching theology to sophomores, also conducts a senior seminar in philosophy, has attended several summer workshops on the intersection of faith and science, and recently helped lead a discussion at Hockaday on the moral implications of AI. This monk's zeal for God is manifest in his seemingly endless energy, and he finds a more direct outlet in his sponsorship of Community Service. Yet, it is not uncommon to see him in the midst of his seniors, participating, encouraging, cajoling—whatever it takes to get them across the finish line as "young men of character."



Fr. Augustine Hoelke '00

Returning to Fr. Bernard's "little talk" to faculty in the fall, he wrote a second quote just under the first, one very familiar to the entire Cistercian community: *ardere et lucere* ("enkindle and enlighten"), the School's motto taken from John 5:35 where Jesus refers to John the Baptist as a "shining and burning lamp." Fr. Bernard stood before us, a member of the Cistercian community for over 60 years. Now in his mid-80s and nearly blind, he stared out at us with a look of exhaustion. Yet, when he began speaking, his words clothed his infirmities with a simple joy. "To translate *ardere* as 'enkindle'," he began with a vigorous waving of his arm, "simply won't cut it; it is too weak a translation. The sense is rather 'to burn or burn up.' There is such passion in that word, such desire for holiness!"


Jim Reisch
Br. Charbel Salhab '20

The sense of sacrifice, made in so many different ways, still lives on in the Monastery, even though just about all the early Hungarian founders now 'reside' in the crypt. Novice Br. Charbel Salhab '20 often found himself looking at his college friends who were making great sacrifices for their studies, friend groups, and career goals, and he wondered, "Sacrifice for what?" What, he wondered, was all that passion really being expended for? "For what purpose," in the words of St. Bernard, "had they come?" For him that purpose had to be something transcendent, something associated with a more radical identification, one rooted in the good soil that produced a hundred or sixty or thirtyfold. Spending some time praying in the crypt, Br. Charbel agreed, helps the younger monks get in touch with the sacrifices made by this very diverse group of men. The vow of stability which unites those currently living out their lives in the Monastery and School with those whose lives have carried them into the crypt, is a central fact of this 'good harvest.' George Saliga, a member of the senior class, noted that taking the vow of stability "establishes a tone whose effect, like the effect of light on a prism, is felt everywhere in the School," while another senior, Josh Hays, could see the beauty in that rootedness. "We're surrounded by men who are very different, yet each takes his vocation seriously, and all live their lives joyfully. How can we not be inspired by *that*?" said Hays.

The priests who teach in the School generally play an important role in the boys' lives; their constant presence makes them much more available for spiritual counseling and direction.

There is much discussion about the School's motto and what it means to "shine" and "burn." Br. Charbel and Br. Michael Kattady '20 agree that the two phrases have to be taken together. At the prep school, Br. Charbel notes, there is a tendency to reward those who "shine" with end-of-the-year ribbons, certificates, books and pins, honoring those who achieve visible success. "But the shining," Br. Michael insists, "has to come after the burning, after the passionate pursuit of the Good and the Beautiful." He then related an analogy for a 'good burn' he had heard involving the proper use of incense. "If you take a handful and throw it into a blazing fire, it will have very little effect. But if you place a charcoal in a thurible, carefully light and blow it slowly to a white-hot heat, adding just a couple of teaspoonfuls of incense will create a properly billowing smoke, which will then "rise up to Heaven." So it is, Br. Michael is discovering, with monastic life in general. "We are preparing for the long, slow burn whose 'shine' is seen in the aroma, the aura, the vibrant life of daily prayer, of liturgy and the gift of the sacraments performed over a lifetime of service to the Lord, and we're doing it together, as a community of men with very different personalities but united around a single goal of serving God."

"The 'institutional' slides easily into the 'familial' and the deep sense of community revolves around the ubiquitous presence of the same black and white habits worn by men who live a common life under a single roof and who are addressed by the first names given to them when they enter the Monastery," said Peter Saliga, longtime history teacher and mentor to many, both current students and alumni.

As Fr. Bernard brought his "little talk" to a close, he chose the metaphor of a candle to make his final point. "As we all know, a candle consumes its own substance." Then he turned to his final quotation, written out neatly below the other two, written this time in plain English: "the past is history, the future a mystery, and the present is a gift. That's why they call it the present" (spoken by Master Oog in *Kung Fu Panda*). After reading it slowly off the board, he then turned to face us. "On seven different occasions, I renewed my vows, and on each occasion, I began my response with *'Adsum!'* [I am present]. That 'present' still echoes through my life; I am still affirming that vocation, and it is still a gift. Such obedience to that call, for all of us, however, has a cost. My candle has about burned out."

With that, Fr. Bernard threw out his arms and finished his point: "What you see standing before you is a puddle of wax. Yet, I gave it my all... and I loved it!" •

In Memoriam

Peter Salgo ’74

Remembered by David Stewart ’74

News last spring that Peter Salgo would attend our 50th Reunion spread quickly through the thinning ranks of the Class of ’74 (only 16 of the original 21 graduates remained in May 2024).



Peter Salgo

Peter had missed several decades of these June gatherings, so his classmates wondered what to expect. We remembered him as a vibrant blend of Swiss and Uruguayan roots who was neither quiet nor a shrinking violet. Peter energetically applied his talents to interests that ranged from chemistry and art to furniture-making and horses.

Most of us expected a graying version of the young man we had known. Years of working in construction, however, had taken a toll. Peter’s body was noticeably slower. But he was quick with a smile and a kind word. He didn’t complain about his sore knees; instead, Peter openly expressed his joy in reuniting with his classmates and their spouses. Bonnie and Peter Smith, his hosts for the weekend, said he was the perfect guest. Those few days of the 50th Reunion exceeded his expectations, and his delight was contagious. Near the end of the weekend’s festivities, Kelly Bloodgood and Barbara Moroney shared with him what many were thinking—the hope that he might make more trips to visit. “I guess,” he said with a smirk familiar to his classmates, “I shouldn’t have waited 50 years to come to a reunion.”

Peter passed away on November 26, 2024. “In hindsight,” reflected Jim Bloodgood, “his effort to attend [the reunion] was a wonderful gift to the class.” •

Chuck Dolan ’71

Remembered by the Class of 1971

“Dolaaaaaaaaaaan!”

That was the shout, because we all called each other by our last names. Still do, in fact. And we shouted for (and at) Dolan a lot, because he was our go-to guy for athletics. Natural-born jock? Maybe. He wasn’t tall, but he killed it on the basketball court. Baseball? Eagle-eyed pitcher and Babe Ruth slugger. Golf? Unbelievable.



Chuck Dolan

“I watched him stack two golf balls on top of each other, then hit each one straight down the fairway with two easy swings,” recalls Brian Melton ’71. “It was astonishing.”

Handsome, gifted with an easy smile and a comforting demeanor, Dolan served as a subtle anchor to our little class, which numbered just 11 by graduation in 1971.

Class El Jefe Buck Smith ’71 said in remembrance, “Dolan was an excellent golfer with a totally natural swing developed as a kid playing at Brookhaven Country Club. A few of us hackers were starting a golf team that played and practiced at Las Colinas Country Club. Chuck and Charlie Williams ’70 were the only players who could hit the ball out of their shadows.”

If his claim to fame was just as a natural athlete, that would have been enough. But he was also a brilliant student in a Renaissance manner. He grasped physics concepts with ease, actually enjoyed trigonometry, yet could turn on a dime to deeply appreciate the poetry of Yeats, Frost, and Cummings. In fact, his profound appreciation of language led him to the editor role of the 1971 *Exodus,* Cistercian’s yearbook.

Given his obvious natural gifts, it’s easy to think he might have been a bit full of himself. But while he carried himself with dignity, he was also the guy who’d indulge in self-deprecating jokes. Despite his obvious gifts, he never took himself seriously.

Chuck passed away on January 11, 2023. He’ll be missed. •



Fr. Abbot Peter and Fr. Stephen at Easter Vigil (2025)

Winter Sports

DYNASTY!!! Soccer Wins Third Consecutive SPC Title



For the fourth time in five years, the varsity soccer team finished as undefeated champions. This year, Coach J.P. Walsh's squad went 17-0-2, scoring 61 goals and giving up only one. *The Dallas Morning News* ranked Cistercian the best in DFW for team defense and goalkeeping.

The back line consisted of four juniors: **Jacob Liu '26, Raad Nino '26, Patrick Sporl '26,** and **Will McHugh '26.** Sophomore goalkeeper **Mateo Maalouf '27** recorded 18 shutouts. Big wins over Bishop Lynch, Greenhill, and St. Mark's prepared the Hawks for the playoffs.

In the SPC Championship quarterfinal, Cistercian crushed Oakridge, 7-0. In the semifinal, the Hawks dominated Fort Worth Country Day, 3-0, with goals from **John Peterman '25, Dylan Kowalski '26,** and **Marc Maalouf '25.** In the final, Cistercian took on Houston's Awty International School. The game went to penalty kicks, and after goals by **Marc Maalouf '25, Dean Nevitt '26, Brock Harrod '25,** and **Patrick Sporl '26,** the score was 4-4. **Mateo Maalouf '27** saved Awty's fifth kick—allowing **Raad Nino '26** to score and secure the 5-4 victory for the Hawks.

Basketball secures third seed in SPC Championship Tournament

This year, the Hawks varsity basketball team was tasked with replacing nearly two-thirds of their scoring, rebounding, and assists from the 2023-2024 season. Fortunately, captains **Dylan Smith '25 and Stuart Walton '25** were ready to step up and lead by example for this group as many team members were stepping into new roles.

Smith finished the season as the leading rebounder, while also finishing second in scoring and assists. His rebounding total landed him in the Basketball Hall of Fame for a single-season total, and he finished his career as the tenth, all-time leading rebounder in the School's history. **Burke Landrum '26** stepped into a much larger role this year, leading the team in scoring and three pointers made. Landrum was one point shy of the single game scoring record with a 35-point outburst in a win against Fort Worth Country Day. **Sebastian Soriano '27** had a remarkable sophomore season, leading the team in assists and charges taken. Other key contributors were **Luke Roppolo '25** and **Jack Roman '26,** whose tenacious defense, rebounding, and timely scoring changed the course of several wins. **Omah Egedigwe '25, Owen Kane '25** and **George Saliga '25** also provided valuable minutes off the bench throughout the season.

The Hawks secured the third seed in the SPC Championship Tournament, their highest ever since the conference split into 3A and 4A, winning their first-round game vs Trinity Valley for the third year in a row. And, again for the third year in a row, the Hawks came up just short in the semifinal game, this time vs St. Andrew's. With Landrum, Soriano and Roman returning alongside several talented up and comers, Coach Dorn is looking forward to what next year's group can accomplish.



Swimming

Led by **Drew Durgin '26, Mateo Rey '26,** and **Luis Duarte-Acevedo '26,** the Cistercian swimmers met and overcame the challenges of having a small team, no diver, winter weather, and pool availability obstacles, as well as the usual illnesses and minor injuries.

In the end, the AquaHawks secured the second-place trophy for the second year in a row in the razor-close 2025 3-A SPC Swimming and Diving Championship, only nine points behind Awty International School and only three points ahead of John Cooper.

Carter Ivory '27, Landon Osterberger '27, Addison Sloan '27, Daniel O'Connell '26, William Thomas '27, Durgin and Rey earned All-SPC Honors. Even more impressive, every swimmer swam personal best times in their individual events. The Cistercian relay teams were at the top of their game, finishing second in all three relays, with season best relay times and adding 42 points to the team total.

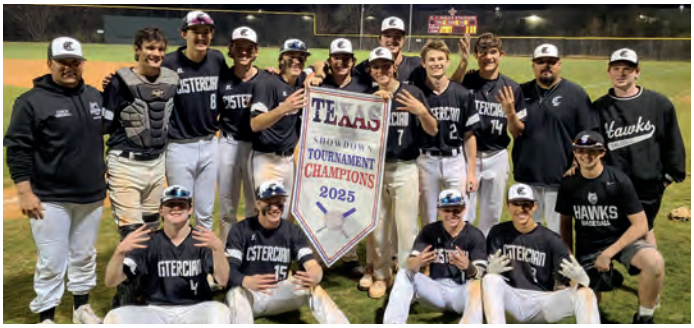
Devin DeSilva '27 and **Patrick Denholm '28** contributed to the team and are expected to be SPC scorers next year. With Rey and Osterberger joining Durgin as year-round club swimmers, the improvement of the rest of the team, and the likely addition of a young club swimmer for next season, the Aqua-Hawks are set up for great success in coming years. •



Spring Sports

Baseball

Cistercian baseball opened their season with a strong win in the Texas Private School Showdown Tournament. After falling behind 0-2 in pool play, the Hawks battled back by going 4-0 on the last day of tournament play. Wins over Covenant Classical, First Baptist, Oakridge, and Dallas Christian secured the tournament championship for the Hawks! **Alex Wang '27, Major Beasley '26,** and **Vaughn Irish '25** played pivotal roles in the team's efforts. The Hawks would carry this momentum into SPC play where they finished with a 5-3 record while clinching the #2 overall seed for the SPC Championship Tournament, Cistercian's highest seeding since 3A/4A play began. Team captains **Jamison Berard '25, Owen Kane '25,** and **Dillon Pitts '26** led the way as the Hawks avenged last year's championship loss to Trinity Valley with a huge 7-6 victory at Hawk Field. Thanks to great defensive plays by **Charlie Kane '27, Cash Lechler '25,** and **Charlie Kobdish '25,** Cistercian held off a comeback push from the defending champions giving the Hawks their first win over Trinity Valley in five years. While the season did not end with the SPC Championship trophy, these young men will remember and cherish the bonds they forged with one another. "I am a blessed coach. These guys always gave 110%, and the relationships we built with one another will always be my greatest accomplishment no matter how many championships we win," said Head Coach Ricky Barrett.



Golf



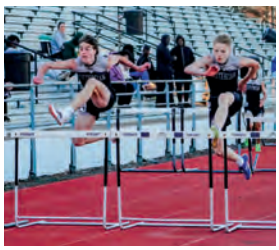
The Cistercian golf team completed another successful season in May. Led by seniors **Jamison Berard '25, Dylan Smith '25, Brock Harrod '25,** and **Stuart Walton '25,** the Hawks placed fourth at the Hockaday Invitational. At the SPC Championship Tournament in Houston, Berard posted a team-best, two-day total of 165. The golfers represented Cistercian with pride and class throughout the season.

Track & Field



The season started with a first-place finish at the Hockaday Split H Relays. The 136-point effort was led by **Zachary Fernandes '25** and **Patrick Sporl '26,** who won discus and the 110m hurdles, respectively. Sporl went on to win the 110m hurdles all six times he ran the event in 2025.

The Hawks won two more meets and finished second in the remaining three regular season meets, which included a 164.5-point effort at the John Paul II Spring Break Meet. At JPII, **Henry Litton '28** and the 4x100m relay team with **Garrett O'Neill '26, Bobby Quinn '25, Brady Quinn '28,** and **Coleman Griffith '25** won their events. Litton claimed two school records in the 1600m and 3200m runs.



A final victory came at home with 166 points posted at the Hawk Relays. The victory was spearheaded by gold medal jumps from O'Neill and **Matthew Brown '26,** who broke and tied the Cistercian records in triple jump and long jump, respectively. **Ben Brittian '26** and Sporl added to the gold medal tally with wins in the 3200m for Brittian and the 110m and 300m hurdles for Sporl.

The Hawks finished third at the SPC Championship and brought home eight medals: Brown (silver, long jump), Fernandes (silver, shot put), **Arthur Moran '27** (silver, discus), Sporl (gold, 110m and 300m hurdles), **Paul Ellison '27** (bronze, 110m hurdles), **Fernando Peña '27** (bronze, 300m hurdles), and Brown, Griffith, O'Neill, and Brady Quinn (bronze, 4x400m relay).

Tennis

Undefeated in 3A play, the Hawks earned the number one seed in the SPC Championship Tournament in Houston, despite losing three of the top seven players from their 2024 SPC Championship team.

James Marlowe '26 and **Jacob Liu '26** had decisive victories over Trinity Valley to create a 2-2 tie in their semifinal match at the SPC Championship. Then, after a three-set, almost-three-hour doubles match, **Liam O'Neill '26** and **Kouki Fraccaroli '27** faced match point, with Fraccaroli hitting a daring backhand winner to advance to the finals. The Hawks placed second in the SPC Championship after losing a close match with Awty International School.

The top eleven players were Liu (MVP), **Peter Bui '26,** Fraccaroli, O'Neill (most improved), Marlowe, **Rishi Gopal '27, Ian Tran '27, Dean Nevitt '26, Christopher Bergin '27** (Flying Hawk Award), **Ethan Bui '28** (best newcomer), and **Kishen DeSilva '28** (best newcomer). Rounding out the competitive team were **George Saliga'25** (captain), **James Hays '27, Joe Schulz '26, Jules Tyler '26, Hayden Lake '27, Carter Ivory '27,** and **Christian Berbarie '27.**

With all of the top players set to return in 2026, Hawks Tennis will remain a top contender for the SPC Championship. •



Floating an Idea

What blimp hangars might teach us about the new school theater

I had an epiphany about the new arts space that we're building while I was researching a Spanish waterpark housed in a blimp hangar in Germany.



Patrick Spence '08

I've been getting into blimps recently. Not physically, because I have a rule about flying in anything that could be shot down by Robin Hood. But on the list of things I want to know more about, blimps are right up there with the lost tragedies of Sophocles and what my Fourth Formers really mean when they say they want to be investors.

A blimp is a kind of miraculous lung. One deep breath and liftoff. What a blimp inhales can vary. Hydrogen works well for non-smoking blimps and in the total absence of static. (Leave your fur coats and Zippos at home.) Helium is safer, but it has to be piped up from finite reserves underground, so it costs more, and, like hydrogen, it diffuses easily out of blimps unless they're made of mylar.[1] Plain old hot air will work too, but you burn a lot of fuel keeping it at 250°F.

Still, the journals that report on airship travel are all quick to tell you about the advantages of airship travel. It's eerily quiet, unless you're on the Hindenburg. Its lower speeds give you ample time to take in sights on the ground, unless you're on the Hindenburg. And it burns only ten percent of the fuel you'd need to take a plane the same distance, unless you're on the *Hindenburg*.

Only a few passenger blimps are in service today, including the *Airlander,* which looks like two regular blimps smushed together side by side and is affectionately called "the flying bum." Some things weren't meant to fly, but there it goes, bringing up the rear. Hopefully there's cloud cover. The rest of this column is going to write itself. [*Ed. note: We removed about a page of these jokes—you're welcome.*] The *Airlander* will even take you to the North Pole, with what seems like reckless disregard for Charles' Law ($V_1/T_1 = V_2/T_2$).

Passenger blimps can cross the Atlantic in about three days, which is faster than a ship, but you can see why most current blimp development aims at cargo applications. One such project is the "Flying Whale," a hydrogen-fuel-cell-powered blimp that can lift 60 tons, designed by a French firm in collaboration with the Chinese government. What could go wrong? Maybe they'll christen it the Hindenblimp, or the Unexplodable, or the Convenient Taipei Shuttle That Is Not Technically a Bomb. Still, if you need to move something really heavy—say a 60-ton solid-cast bust of Mao—to an uninfrastructured inland site like Yushan mountain, the Flying Whale might be your best option, politics aside.

The Russians recently announced development of a 600-ton-capacity, lens-shaped cargo blimp, which will need to be filled with helium at 400°. I don't know if I'd trust anyone, especially in a country not renowned for sobriety, to strap 600 tons to a hot blimp and fly it over me. But the blimp is on hold after recent financial sanctions.

Some of my readers might be wondering about military applications. Blimps and zeppelins used to be a part of every major air force, but compared to other modes of flight, they're too slow and offer too much accountability. Predator drones are a lot tougher to identify and less vulnerable to strong winds. There is nothing surgical about a blimp strike in strong winds. The blimp is a vessel of peace.[2]

Occasionally, the byproducts of the blimp industry have proved as delightful as the blimps themselves. In 2000, the German airship start-up CargoLifter built a blimp hangar in Brandenburg large enough to house several Space Shuttles, and then went bankrupt after the dot-com bubble. A Spanish company bought the hangar and built a gigantic tropical waterpark inside it, which is kept at 80° year-round in imitation of Bali. Now you can escape the German winters just a bit north of the forests where Varus' legions fought Arminius and Segimer and were obliterated. The hangar's roof is so high you can take hot-air balloon rides inside it, if, unlike me, you don't mind flying in something that can be brought down with a good slingshot. Families can camp in the waterpark overnight.

I like to think that whoever designed the hangar would still be pleased by what the space became. Sometimes you get ready for one thing, and something else happens that's better than what you had planned. For example, when the *Continuum* asked for this column, did they expect an article on blimps? No, but I guess they're letting it fly.

Right now, Cistercian is preparing to build a new theater and a large adjoining covered porch. We'll be able to house plays, assemblies, clubs, homecoming dances, and whatever else fits. We have our plans, but who knows what the boys will do with that big, open floor? The thing is to give them some space. •

1 They used to use gas envelopes made from cow intestines, the most airtight material available in the early Zeppelin era (*Graf,* not Led).

2 Just a thought: if Cistercian bought a blimp, we could put some treadmills in it and train the cross-country team at altitude.

Community Calendar 2025

August 17
Profession of Temporary Vows at the Abbey

August 19
Opening Ceremonies

October 10
Homecoming Game vs. Fort Worth Country Day

CISTERCIAN
PREPARATORY SCHOOL
3660 Cistercian Road
Irving, Texas 75039

Four *Pietas* of Multiple Generations

Rare is the house that has three or four generations living together under its roof, sharing the same appliances, annoying each other daily, and learning to persevere in love. The modern American family, if there is such a thing, likely has Grandma living in a nursing home, whether three states away or in the same city as her children. Much is lost in the absence of interaction between the generations; the elderly far too often are left alone to meet their approaching end, while the young fail to receive the wisdom of age and the healthy reminder of inevitable decline and fall.



Fr. Thomas Esposito

The wisdom of the ancients is also ignored. For Confucius, the lack of filial piety in the men and women of 6th century B.C. China foretold a doomed civilization. Devotion to one's elders, which he defines as "the principle of Heaven," upholds the harmonious structure of a society, strengthening the familial bonds across generations rather than making them contingent upon personal choice or convenience. The great image of *pietas* from ancient Rome, memorialized in Bernini's unforgettable sculpture, is Aeneas, the ancestor of the Romans, fleeing conquered Troy with the past, his father Anchises, on his back and the future, his son Ascanius, walking by his side. The Old Testament abounds with commandments and exhortations to honor parents and elders.

One of the unexpected blessings of my first year in the monastery was the daily assistance that my fellow "young monks" and I provided to the sick and elderly, especially Fathers Pascal, Aloysius, and Melchior. Father Henry died in January of my novice year, and I was immediately introduced to the beautiful mystery of death as received and even welcomed within the flow of monastic life.

I then blinked, only to have 20 years blitz by since that novice year of service, and now I am one of the "mediocre" monks seeing a new crew of "young monks" enter and flourish. Twenty-two to ninety-two is the current age range of the monks in the monastery. Our recreation of Bernini's masterpiece would have Father Philip (Class of 2000) carrying his Form Master, the venerable Father Julius, with the young Brothers Charbel and Michael (Class of 2020) walking next to their middle-aged Form Master. I strongly suspect that Father Philip would be quite unwilling to attempt such a pose.

An essential component of filial piety is contained in the Latin motto *Respice finem*—"Look to the end." The arc of a man's life features innumerable unknowns that cannot be accounted for by any financial forecast or retirement plan. The one certainty, his mortal end, renders those meticulously curated plans as cold as a tombstone slab. Yet that certainty is divinely designed to be the portal that returns him to his present moment reanimated by a humble hope, one that leads to God and beatific life even now and radiates every word and deed with an eternal hue.

We practice the virtue of *pietas* in the honorable care we give to our aging fathers, those workers who entered the Abbey and School vineyard at the first hour and have borne the heat of the day and its burden (Matthew 20:12). The construction of the crypt several years ago is a further expression of this beautiful and reciprocal gift between young and old, living and dead. In gathering the generations of monks under the same roof, we obey Saint Benedict's injunction "to keep death daily before our eyes." We do this with gratitude for the past and quiet hope for the future—our community is a lifelong "school for the Lord's service" in which we learn, by teaching each other, to number our days aright (Psalm 90:12). By living and teaching together, we are always learning how to die, because we know that death is the merciful end of our earthly sojourn, one illuminated, to the end, by joy. •