

Welcome to Our Lady's University

LUCY SPENCE
Editor-in-Chief

Dear readers—and especially the class of 2029,

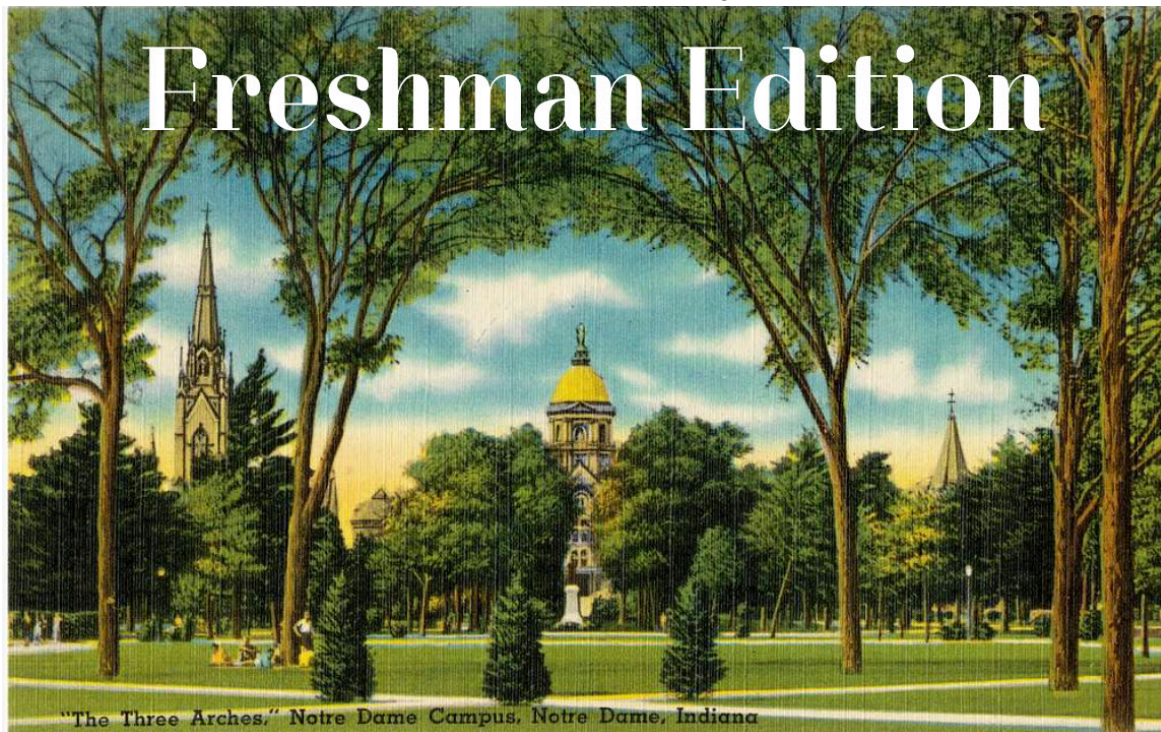
Welcome to Our Lady's university!

Perhaps a bit of congratulations are in order: you have survived Welcome Weekend, you've successfully completed one week of classes, and, more importantly, you've managed to feed yourselves in dining halls that defy all bounds of reason. If you're confused about the dining situation, don't worry. No one else understands the new maze that is South, either.

So you're at college—now what?

I arrived on campus my freshman year with many questions, as I'm sure you all have. How many clubs can I cram into my schedule? Will I find my best friends in my dorm? Where can I summon the nerve to speak in class? And when do we stop giving the "Notre Dame intro"?

The good news is that college is the perfect time for real formation. Notre Dame is positioned to give you the best chances to ask the big questions in an environment that fosters a genuine search for the truth, a deep love for the Faith, and a vibrant intellectual curiosity. All while offering you a storied football program, of



course.

Does Notre Dame just have it all, then? The blunt answer is no.

Notre Dame walks a tightrope between two identities: an institution that prioritizes inclusion, academic freedom, and its prestige relative to peer institutions; and her identity as a Catholic university. It's a precarious position that often leads to compromise in areas of the faith: drag shows in the name of "education," institutional support for LGBTQ programming, and much more.

Our mission at the *Irish Rover* is to hold the university accountable by reminding her of her Catholic mission in times when she goes astray, and by providing a vision, rooted in the Faith, for the future of Notre Dame.

Founded in 2003, our biweekly, student-run paper has brought a valuable voice to campus conversations, raising important questions, defending the good at Notre Dame, and keeping the institution "true to her name." We seek to contribute to collegiate debate through the articulation

of conservative principles, guided by our Catholic faith. As a paper independent from the university, we can afford to be candid about Notre Dame's state and the experience of life here as a student.

Notre Dame's founding was deeply rooted in the Catholic faith and in the cultivation of the entire person—heart, mind, and soul. The inspiration for the university's mission is embedded in Blessed Basil Moreau's words: "We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the

mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart. While we prepare useful citizens for society, we shall likewise do our utmost to prepare citizens for heaven."

Notre Dame has forgotten some of her mission in the pursuit of secularized "values" that are, in truth, washed-out renditions of the Christian virtues. Christian fraternity has become "belonging;" Christian charity, "acceptance;" and Christian honesty, "vulnerability." What is needed most now at Notre Dame is the individual who stands with courage in defense of the truth—who seeks a Truth he can serve, rather than a truth that will serve him, as Jacques Maritain would say.

The education you will receive at Notre Dame is one that should fine-tune your soul, deepening your faith and your understanding of who you are as a beloved child of God. Friendships at college can teach you your worth in ways nothing else can. My own experience at the *Rover* has been nothing but a blessing (so if you're still wondering what to do with those extra hours outside of class, send me an email at lsponce@nd.edu). Campus has a wealth of goods to offer you, countless opportunities for the sacraments, and a flourishing network of

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Do Good, Be Brave, Pursue the Truth, and Keep the Faith

FR. BILL MISCAMBLE, C.S.C.
Faculty adviser

Dear new and returning students:

No doubt you have already received much in the way of counsel as to how to take full advantage of your time here and you may not have much interest in reading what an aging Holy Cross priest might have to offer you. However that may be, let me assure you that I pray for each of you, and specifically that your best and true self will emerge here on our beautiful campus—the truly crucial part of you that is ready to learn well, able to fashion real friendships, willing to serve others, and eager to witness to your faith. There are no absolute guarantees in college, however. Much of what you "get" from Notre Dame will depend quite directly on what

you "give" here. But before I offer you some advice based on my decades of teaching here and my past associations with many good and able students, let me address a couple of larger questions regarding the state of higher education in the United States. These may seem like matters that are rather remote from your day-to-day experience, but let me assure you they are not.

Elite higher education in the United States, of which Notre Dame is a part, has been burdened by woke ideology in recent decades. Fortunately, Notre Dame's Catholic identity has helped it weather and limit some of the worst features of the 'wokism' that is still pervasive on American campuses and that interferes with the educational experience of many students.

Research by scholars at

Northwestern University and the University of Michigan between 2023 and 2025 revealed a chilling reality that many students hide their true beliefs in order to navigate the social and academic minefield brought on by woke ideological conformity. This study revealed "a pervasive culture of self-censorship, driven by the fear of social ostracism and academic penalty." The researchers argued that this ideological conformity stifles authenticity and halts genuine personal growth.

I trust your experience at Notre Dame won't replicate the worst elements revealed by that study. But I want to encourage you to be brave in the classroom and not to conform your views to the perceived requirements of progressive, secular wokism. You have come to a Catholic university

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C.S.C. Welcomes New Deacons

Four candidates profess final vows in basilica

MADELINE PAGE
Staff Writer

As students finished their first week of classes, four men took an important step in their journey towards the priesthood. Before the altar of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, the Congregation of Holy Cross witnessed the profession of final vows made by four seminarians, including the Baumer Hall rector. On August 30, Christopher Mulholland, Thomas J. Groden, Soikat Kulentuno, and Promad Rozario stood before packed pews of family, friends, seminarians, and students. Residents of Baumer Hall took up their own section of the basilica, there to support their rector, Deacon Groden.

Although all four men earned

their Masters in Divinity from the University of Notre Dame, only Mulholland and Groden attended as undergraduates. Originally from Bangladesh, Kuluntuno and Roazario received their bachelor's degrees from Tejgaon College in Bangladesh before deciding to complete their formation in the United States. Reverend William M. Lies, C.S.C., the Provincial Superior of the U.S. Province of Priests and Brothers of the Congregation of Holy Cross, presided over the Mass. He described the ceremony as "a moment of profound grace for [the votaries] and for us, and frankly for the entire Church." In his homily, Rev. Lies addressed the virtues embedded in the perpetual vows of obedience,

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THE FINE PRINT

Founded in 2003, the *Irish Rover* is an independent, Catholic newspaper published fortnightly by students of the University of Notre Dame du Lac, and, as such, it receives no funding or official recognition from the University. Indeed, the ideas presented herein are not necessarily those of the University, although they probably should be.

The *Rover* was established by Notre Dame students who desired a strong and organized conservative voice on campus with the primary purpose of keeping the University true to its founding mission as a Roman Catholic institution. The *Rover* seeks to facilitate part of what the University's mission statement desires in its community: "a forum where through free inquiry and open discussion the various lines of Catholic thought may intersect with all the forms of knowledge found in the arts, sciences, professions, and every other area of human scholarship and creativity." To provide this forum, the *Rover* offers a distinctive kind of coverage that includes campus news, religion, politics, culture, history, and humor.

Out of civility, the *Rover* will not critically mention names of students, professors, or administrators, unless the person is either a well-known member of the community, or he or she has openly sought publicity. Unsigned editorials represent the majority opinion of the *Rover's* Editorial Board, while content in individual columns represents the views of each respective author and should not be construed as representing the views of the entire staff. All comments and questions regarding the *Rover's* policies and editorial content, as well as Letters to the Editor, may be directed to the Editor-in-Chief, Lucy Spence, at NDIrishRover@gmail.com or PO Box 46 Notre Dame IN 46556. These letters may be printed anonymously, upon request. Also, please visit our website www.irishrover.net, where you can peruse archives and subscribe to the paper.



Image by Matt Cashore

Advice

continued from front

and you should expect to plumb the rich depths of the Catholic intellectual and moral tradition while you are here. I pray that you will find teachers and courses that allow you to do this. Discern well in this regard.

Engage your studies seriously and with integrity. Now you must navigate through the powerful temptations provided by the availability of artificial intelligence (AI). The whole area of AI promises to have major implications, not only for higher education but also for society as a whole, and perhaps even for your employment prospects. You should use AI responsibly. You have come to Notre Dame for an education that moves beyond mere technical competence in a field; you must search for true wisdom, rather than worrying about a lucrative "return on investment,"—or whatever the term is used these days by folks who see their education as merely job preparation, rather than a quest to understand what really matters in life. So please do your own work when it is appropriate, rather than relying on ChatGPT. You will find you learn more in the process. (By the way, let me assure you I have written this piece myself, rather than relying on artificial intelligence—perhaps you have grasped that already!)

Insightful students realize

quickly that there is a great deal of entitlement in elite higher education these days. Do your best to resist it. Remember that your being a student at Notre Dame puts you among the most privileged young people in the world. You should certainly be proud and grateful for your opportunity to study here. But also be grateful for the gifts extended to you and resolve to use those gifts well and in the service of others, including the many folk less fortunate than you. Shape your character to be women and men who are ready to use your talents for the benefit of others. This, in the process, will prepare you to be good spouses and good parents—essential vocations for you in the future and, in some ways, more important than the specific career tracks you might pursue.

Be men and women who deeply respect yourselves and others. Show a special regard for all those folk at Notre Dame who serve you in one way or another—the wonderful folk who staff the various offices and the generous people who cook for you and clean up after you. Never pass up an opportunity to say thank you. Those simple words of gratitude can mean a lot, as you already know well.

It seems that a surprising number of young people today

emerge from their undergraduate years feeling rather empty and insecure, as well as a bit confused and quite anxious. They studied and got their degrees but it appears that they missed out on crucial life lessons in the process. They now find themselves in a more distrustful and atomized world, and suffer increased levels of depression and anxiety. I hope Notre Dame will afford you a better outcome. Indeed, I pray that Notre Dame will allow you to clarify well the real meaning and purpose in your lives.

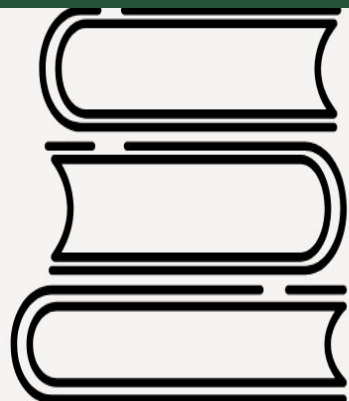
College might allow you to appreciate some of those lessons of history that normally involve some adversity and even pain—that things don't always turn out right, nor the way we expect, and certainly not the way we want. Welcome adversity as an opportunity to grow stronger, to build your resilience for the greater challenges that will surely come after college. Yet, always recognize that you can turn to the Lord and to others to assist you in any difficulty or challenge. Knowing how to rely on others and, when needed, to extend support to others is a crucial element of your character that you must build and strengthen here.

In the end I pray that you don't just drift along here at Notre Dame, but that as this year gets

underway you begin a quest to follow the path God calls you to travel. God has a distinct plan for you and you must use your time at Notre Dame to discern it well and to prepare for your life vocation. Don't be timid during your time here, but brave, and be willing to ask the toughest of questions within your academic classes and beyond them.

Here is a question for you to consider: "Good Teacher, what must I do to share in everlasting life?" (Mark 10:17). This was the rich young man's question to Jesus, and as you know, he balked in his response. He declined the Lord's invitation to full discipleship, but left sad because deep within himself he knew that he had refused to be what God called him to be. May you avoid a similar sadness. Instead, may each of you resolutely keep the Faith and truly make a difference.

Fr. Bill Miscamble is a professor emeritus of history and a member of the *Rover's* board of faculty advisors. Contact him at wmiscamb@nd.edu.



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Rover Recommends: Campus Clubs

Listed below are several clubs that the *Irish Rover* staff recommends to students who are interested in diving deeper in their faith. We hope this will be a helpful guide as you navigate your first year on campus.

Right to Life

At Right to Life (RtL)—the largest non-academic, student-run club on campus—we resolve to promote a culture of life in the Notre Dame community through prayer, service, education, and community. Guided by Church teaching and animated by the Holy Spirit, we wholeheartedly believe that all life has value, from conception to natural death.

Our mission is twofold: first, through club programming, Right to Life seeks to build up a community of passionate, pro-life leaders who are unafraid to defend the sanctity of human life at every stage. Whether at lectures with prominent pro-life speakers, RtL bonfires and dances, service events around the South Bend community, or at our weekly Mass to pray for the sanctity of life, Right to Life seeks to be the voice for the voiceless—a true force for good.

Secondly, Right to Life strives to foster a culture of life by supporting student mothers and families in their decision to choose life. From promoting pregnancy resources in dorms to throwing baby showers, and providing peer to peer support and babysitting after the baby is born, the Right to Life community pledges to radically support pregnant mothers as they embrace the gift of life.

Join Right to Life as we seek to make Notre Dame a place of radical love toward every mother, father, and child. Learn more about our events by visiting our website and join our email newsletter and GroupMe to stay connected!

Welcome to the Notre Dame Right to Life family where we strive to create a culture of life, hold each other accountable in promoting what the Catholic Church teaches regarding the value and dignity of all human life, and celebrate the joy of each and every life within the Notre Dame family and beyond. We hope to see you at the bonfire, at Mass, at the lectures, and at the March for Life in D.C., but until then, Go Irish, Save Babies!

Students for Child-Oriented Policy

Students for Child-Oriented Policy (SCOP) focuses on promoting the wellbeing and safety of children through education and advocacy. It is pro-family, pro-marriage, pro-adoption, and pro-education, and it is anti-sex trafficking,

anti-pornography, and anti-substance abuse. It is known for its petition to ban pornography on campus wifi, and it hosts a myriad of events involving each club pillar each year. Our biggest events of the year are our attendance of the Sexuality, Integrity, and the University Conference at Princeton each fall and WRAP (White Ribbon Against Pornography) Week in the Spring. To inquire or join, please email Jack Krieger at jkrieger@nd.edu or Theo Austin at jaustin5@nd.edu.

Knights of Columbus

The Notre Dame Knights of Columbus is a student organization and local council of the global Knights of Columbus organization. Since our founding in 1910 by a group of Notre Dame students—including the future Cardinal John Francis O'Hara, C.S.C.—as the first Knights of Columbus college council in the world, Council #1477 has had a long and proud history. Thousands of Knights have volunteered tens of thousands of hours, raised millions of dollars for charity, and made immeasurable strides in their faith.

For instance, the Knights maintain a scholarship endowment for students in need, grill and sell steak sandwiches on home game days in order to raise money for various local, national, and international charities, and organize a number of events for both the brother knights and the community at large. Since the founding of Steak Sales, the Knights have raised over \$1.6 million for various local, national, and international charities, raising \$90,000 during the 2024 season alone. The Knights and university leadership have worked hand-in-hand over the years to advance Catholic culture at Notre Dame, and as a token of gratitude, Fr. Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C., provided the Knights with their current council hall, located on South Quad, making the Knights of Columbus the only Notre Dame student organization with its own dedicated building.

Through the beloved game-day tradition of Steak Sales, dedicated contributions and support of the community, and the charity, unity, and fraternity that binds all its members, the Knights of Columbus have made themselves an essential fixture of the Notre Dame community.

We encourage all practical Catholic men to consider growing in faith and fraternity with their fellow Catholic men and joining an organization that makes a real difference in the community by becoming a member of the Knights of Columbus. While membership

is limited to Catholic men, all are welcome to attend council events and participate in charitable activities.

Contact Grand Knight Bartosz Karol Chramiec at bartosz.chramiec@nd.edu for more information.

Children of Mary

Filii Mariae (Children of Mary) is a student group dedicated to enriching the spiritual life of Our Lady's university by the promotion of Latin liturgy and Catholic devotions drawn from the Church's tradition. The club's principal event is the very source and summit of the Christian life: the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Each Saturday and Sunday of the academic year, *Filii Mariae* hosts Latin Masses in Alumni Hall's St. Charles Borromeo Chapel.

These Masses are celebrated in Latin, the mother tongue of the Western Church. Nonetheless, one need not be a senior Classics major to participate in the Mass with both heart and mind. For those who wish to follow the texts of the Mass, hand missals are provided in the chapel for both the Saturday (Ordinary Form) and Sunday (Extraordinary Form) Masses. In addition to offering Latin Mass, *Filii Mariae* also sponsors traditional Latin Compline (i.e. night prayer) on Sunday evenings.

By offering the liturgy according to both forms of the Roman Rite and making ample use of important elements of the Roman liturgical patrimony (e.g. Gregorian chant, incense, ad orientem celebration), Children of Mary offers those in the tri-campus area the opportunity to join a vibrant community of committed Catholics in the worship of God in intentional continuity with the tradition of the Church.

In addition to its liturgical offerings, *Filii Mariae* also sponsors traditional devotions. On Sunday evenings throughout the academic term, the group hosts rosary walks around St. Mary's Lake (weather permitting) and traditional first Saturday devotions including adoration, benediction, and confessions—stemming from the words our Lady spoke when she appeared at Fatima, Portugal in 1925.

Children of Mary also strives to foster community among its members. In addition to events throughout the year, the club hosts brunch in South Dining Hall every Sunday after Mass.

Saturday Ordinary Form Masses take place in Alumni Hall at 10 a.m. (9:30 a.m. on football home game days). Sunday Extraordinary Form Masses occur in Alumni Hall at 10 a.m. Our regular schedule has already started,

so feel free to join us anytime for Mass! More information can be found at <https://childrenofmarynotredame.wordpress.com> or by emailing mary@nd.edu.

Militia of the Immaculata

Founded by St. Maximilian Kolbe in 1917, the Militia of the Immaculata (MI) strives “to lead every individual with Mary to the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus.” This mission is lived out in a variety of ways, both on and off campus. Some examples include distribution of the Miraculous Medal during home football game days, a daily Rosary, Marian consecrations and retreats each semester, and a Marian procession and Eucharistic procession in the fall and spring semesters, respectively. The MI can be seen in the dining halls spreading awareness about Our Lady and her role at her university during the year and actively trying to increase devotion to the Blessed Mother throughout the student body.

There are a variety of reasons why Catholic students who are serious about their faith should join the MI. Firstly, they'll be able to develop their devotion to the Blessed Mother, whose intercession has provided many graces in their lives. Secondly, they'll fall into a routine of prayer that will improve their interior life with our nightly rosary. Thirdly, they'll be surrounded by a strong community of firm believers and great people whose faith serves as an inspiration for all their actions. Finally, they'll have lots of fun! The MI hosts several fun, enriching experiences throughout the year and is open to suggestions for even more!

Highlights of the semester include a Rosary at the Grotto every night at 11 p.m., our opening MI Mass on September 12, a retreat at the National Shrine of St. Maximilian Kolbe at Marytown on October 5, a Marian procession on October 7, a Marian consecration Mass on December 9, Grotto Evangelization with the Miraculous Medal on home game days, several Marian feast day Masses, and many more! Though members are by no means required to participate in all these wonderful experiences, we would love to have you join us for as many as possible.

With any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us at ndmi@nd.edu. Please know of our prayers for you at the start of this college year!

Sorin Fellows

An offering of the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture (dCEC), the Sorin Fellows Program provides integral student formation in the Catholic moral

and intellectual tradition.

Through this program, Sorin Fellows are supported by the de Nicola Center and provided opportunities to encounter role models and befriend peer mentors who exhibit virtues of integral formation, consider enduring and contemporary issues through the lens of the Catholic moral and intellectual tradition, nourish their interior life and appreciation for the spiritual heritage of the Catholic Church, and discern and cultivate their gifts and talents through grant funding and internships. The Center supports over 600 Sorin Fellows at the undergraduate and graduate levels, representing nearly every field of study from across the range of the university's constituent colleges and schools.

By actively participating in and contributing to the life of the de Nicola Center, Sorin Fellows also play a crucial role in amplifying Notre Dame's witness to human dignity, authentic human freedom, and the common good in the global public square.

The over 600 undergraduate and graduate student Sorin Fellows on campus have access to superb programming ordered toward personal formation in the Catholic tradition. Programming includes a weekly Mass, periodic Masses each semester, annual pilgrimages (destinations have included Rome, Israel, and the UK to date), and a family tailgate during football season. Additionally, there are dinners at faculty homes, lectures from faculty on topics related to human dignity and the common good, exclusive audiences with speakers for the Center's annual Fall Conference and with other invited speakers throughout the year, a women's formation group, and more.

Open to all, applications to the Sorin Fellows program may be submitted year-round and are evaluated once each semester. Once you become a Sorin Fellow, you have access to all the activities listed above, in addition to the de Nicola Center's competitive pool of funding for professional and personal formation-oriented activities. Sorin Fellows can receive funding for retreats, living expenses for internships, and participation in academic conferences. Start your application now to become involved with an indispensable network of students who care about the university's Catholic mission!



It behooves a watchdog to bark. Good, Rover.

Meet the 2025-2026 Rover Staff

Lucy Spence ’27 <i>Editor-in-Chief</i> Dorm: Pasquerilla West Hall Major: Program of Liberal Studies, piano performance Minor: Philosophy Favorite Study Spot: Hesburgh reading room Event Most Excited for this Year: First snowball fight on South Quad Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: Go to office hours and meet your professors!	Kephas Olsson ’26 <i>Executive Editor</i> Dorm: Duncan Hall (now off-campus) Major: Program of Liberal Studies Minor: Glynn Family Honors Program Favorite Study Spot: O'Shag, especially the PLS lounge! Event Most Excited for this Year: Mozart Requiem Mass on All Souls Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: Notre Dame affords you the opportunity to challenge yourself. Take classes that push you academically.	Haley Garecht ’26 <i>Managing Editor</i> Dorm: Pasquerilla East Hall (now off-campus) Major: Political Science Minor: Constitutional Studies, Irish Studies Favorite Study Spot: Second floor of Hesburgh Library Event Most Excited for this Year: Any snowy football games! Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: It's okay if you don't feel like you fit in with your dorm immediately, you have plenty of time to meet new people!	Michael Canady ’26 <i>Editor-in-Chief Emeritus; Opinion Editor</i> Dorm: Sorin College (now off-campus) Major: Classics Minor: Constitutional Studies Favorite Study Spot: Outside while it is still nice Event Most Excited for this Year: The next O'Rourkes karaoke night Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: Chippewa Bowl has 25 cent games on Mondays
Clare DiFranco ’27 <i>Campus Editor</i> Dorm: Lyons Hall Major: Accounting Minor: Italian, marketing Favorite Study Spot: Cafe J Event Most Excited for this Year: ND football games Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: Grab N' Go exists	Caleb Vaughan ’27 <i>Campus Editor</i> Dorm: Morrissey Major: Chemical Engineering Minor: Theology, business Favorite Study Spot: Fifth floor Duncan Event Most Excited for this Year: Zach Bryan concert Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: The <i>Irish Rover</i> exists	Shri Thakur ’26 <i>Politics Editor</i> Dorm: Off-campus (formerly Alumni) Major: Economics Minor: Constitutional Studies, French Favorite Study Spot: Newfs Event Most Excited for this Year: CJ's Latino night Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: You can just do things, and you need to be doing things. College doesn't last forever.	Darius Colangelo ’27 <i>Culture Editor</i> Dorm: Stanford Hall Major: Program of Liberal Studies and Mathematics Minor: Glynn Family Honors Program Favorite Study Spot: Hesburgh Grand Reading Room Event Most Excited for this Year: Liturgical Choir singing Mozart's Requiem for All Souls Day Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: College is less complicated than you make it out to be
Elizabeth Mitchell ’27 <i>Religion Editor</i> Dorm: Farley Hall Major: Program of Liberal Studies, Theology Favorite Study Spot: Any space with quiet and lots of natural light Event Most Excited for this Year: The dCEC Fall Conference Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: God didn't give you the unique desires of your heart just to taunt you. Be at peace, and trust that despite whatever hiccups you have along the way, He will bless your time at Notre Dame.	James Whitaker <i>Humor Editor</i> Dorm: Brideshead Program: Ph.D in Theology Favorite Study Spot: By the lakes on a sunny day Event Most Excited for this Year: Holy Week at the basilica Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: You can write for the <i>Rover</i>!	Eddie Giuntini ’27 <i>Publisher</i> Dorm: Stanford Hall Major: Aerospace Engineering Favorite Study Spot: The cubicles on the third floor of Fitzpatrick Event Most Excited for this Year: Broomball Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: Decio Cafe has the best food on campus, get the wraps	Matthew McBride ’27 <i>Webmaster</i> Dorm: Carroll Hall Major: Mechanical Engineering Minor: Corporate practice Favorite Study Spot: Carroll printer room Event Most Excited for this Year: Wednes-Jay's wings at Jay's Lounge Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: Don't be afraid to reach out to new people, no matter how awkward it might feel.
Gianna Castillo ’27 <i>Layout Manager</i> Dorm: Pasquerilla East Hall Major: Applied and Computational Mathematics and Statistics Minor: Theology Favorite Study Spot: PE lounges Event Most Excited for this Year: Homes games Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: You never know where you will meet your closest friends, so go into everything with a postive attitude.	Bridgette Rodgers ’26 <i>Events/Photography Direcorr</i> Dorm: Farley Hall Major: Political Science and Theology Favorite Study Spot: LaFun Event Most Excited for this Year: Obviously any and all <i>Rover</i> events Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: You have a great ability to receive the sacraments at Notre Dame. Typically when things feel uncertain or chaotic, it is a sign you need to return to the sacraments or the stillness of being present with God. Your dorm chapel is always open...use it!	Sofia Fair ’27 <i>Social Media Coordinator</i> Dorm: Pasquerilla West Hall Major: Accountancy and Supplemental Theology Minor: Business Honors Program Favorite Study Spot: Anywhere with sunlight! Event Most Excited for this Year: Zach Bryan concert and A&M game back to back! Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: Interests change over time! It is okay to shift gears when it comes to life plans... this is part of discovering your vocation.	Harrison Barkley ’27 <i>Webmaster</i> Dorm: Streets of Rome Major: Mechanical Engineering Favorite Study Spot: Saint Peter's Basilica Event Most Excited for this Year: Seeing Pope Leo Something you wished you knew as a Freshman: The burritos at Decio Faculty Cafe are top tier.



Welcome

continued from front

and you should expect to plumb students and professors united in faith and truth.

This particular “Freshman Edition” is a collection of articles

from past issues to give you a taste of what we cover and how we cover it—whether it’s the arts, campus news, faith formation, or a showcase of our humor section. We’ve also compiled a list of other clubs that are well worth your time, so be sure to read through

it. Look out for future issues of the *Rover*, and please don’t hesitate to reach out to me with thoughts, concerns, or questions!

As you begin your education here, have the vision to see Notre Dame for more than an academic institution. Look to the dome,

not as a symbol of institutional identity and pride, but as the golden center of the university, on which stands the Mother who will watch and protect you with love these four years.

May your time here be marked by spiritual growth,

deep friendships, much laughter, enlightening conversations, warm weather, and many victorious football games!

In Notre Dame,
Lucy Spence
Editor-in-Chief

Rover Interviews Artist Behind Controversial Mural

Side-by-side images of the Virgin Mary, Cesar Chavez, Pride flag

JAMES WHITAKER & HALEY GARECHT

Notre Dame commissioned Juan Sánchez for a large mural printed on ceramic tiles and installed in the middle of Duncan Student Center in 2019. The work, titled *Prevalence: Sacred Traces*, includes images of the Cross and Our Lady of Guadalupe alongside portraits of Gandhi, Frida Kahlo, and other contemporary figures. Additionally, the mural incorporates political symbols, including a pride flag and a modified American flag representing black liberation.

The *Rover* spoke with Sánchez about his artistic process behind the piece and with members of the Notre Dame community about its impact on campus life.

Sánchez, currently a professor of painting, photography, and combined media at Hunter College, is a nationally recognized artist with pieces in the Museum of Modern Art, the National Gallery of Art, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. *Prevalence* was his fourth commissioned mural, and the only one created outside of New York, where Sánchez has lived and worked for nearly his entire life.

Creative Process

When the construction of Duncan Student Center was nearing completion, Professor Gilberto Cárdenas of the Institute for Latino Studies contacted Sánchez, whose work he had long followed. As part of his application, Sánchez produced a mock-up proposal based on his visit to the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Sánchez told the *Rover*, “When I saw that church ... it blew me away, and so visually that influenced much of the design of [the mural].” His proposal was accepted and he began work on the mural.

As he refined his design, Sánchez sought input from members of the Notre Dame community. “One of the things that I wanted to do was to work with MFA [Masters of Fine Arts] graduate students,” he said. “I wanted them to be involved, I wanted them to have an input in the design.” Sánchez ran a series of workshops with eight volunteer graduate students in the MFA program, all of them women.

During the workshops, several students created some of the tiles used in the final mural, including a collage representing the year



DUNCAN STUDENT CENTER

Notre Dame allowed female students and an image of past Notre Dame football players.

When asked by the *Rover* whether Notre Dame’s Catholic character played a role in his thought process, Sánchez responded, “No, I don’t think so.”

Nonetheless, the mural features several Christian elements, including a verse from Paul’s Epistle to the Galatians from the NIV translation of the Bible. Sánchez said, “I knew that in the bottom of the design, I wanted to incorporate text, and I started looking at quotations ... like Gandhi, Martin Luther King, John F. Kennedy. ... I said, ‘You know what, I have to take something biblical.’ And so I found a quote from Jesus Christ, I think.”

Prevalence depicts symbols from other religions, including a Native American “spirit circle” and “medicine wheel.” Alongside religious symbols are images relating to the history of Notre Dame, such as a photograph of Father Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C. standing with Martin Luther King, Jr. Additionally, the mural features political figures including Cesar Chavez, a Chicano activist, socialist, and labor union leader.

At the top of the mural are three images that represent the Trinity, according to Sánchez. Sánchez further explained this element: “Even though there is a little bit of left-wing elements in the work, I try very hard as a born-again Christian myself.”

The Artist’s Perspective

Describing the tone of his work overall, Sánchez said, “It’s very

politically loaded, politically layered. ... It’s about colonialism. It’s about racism.”

Through *Prevalence*, Sánchez sought to weave together Notre Dame’s history with his usual artistic subjects. “My concept was to integrate certain aspects of the history of the university in relation ... to events that had gone on throughout the years, throughout the decades,” he said. “So, there are elements in that mural that speak to the civil rights movement, it speaks to Native American culture. ... I tried to cover as many different groups as possible.”

Sánchez confessed that, during the approval process, his characteristic style and artistic focuses led to censorship “on a number of occasions.” When he submitted his design to the Notre Dame committee in charge of the mural, he was asked to remove certain elements. Sánchez told the *Rover*, “I [had] an element that spoke against police violence on youth, black youth and brown youth. ... I changed the police violence to just violence, gun violence, period.” At the committee’s request, Sánchez also replaced an image of Angela Davis, a Marxist and feminist activist, with poet Maya Angelou.

Overall, Sánchez found the committee very accommodating to his ideas: “Very much to my surprise, they were fine with a lot of stuff that I had in there ... but with certain things ... they offered [suggestions].”

Campus Reactions

One senior studying political science told the *Rover*, “I think

the mural is pretty with lots of bright colors, but I have no idea what the point of it is or what the meaning behind it is.”

Students with more negative perspectives cited the mural’s depiction of miscellaneous religious content as an issue. An O’Neill Hall senior expressed concerns, saying, “The pride flag, which represents an understanding of sexuality at odds with the Church’s teaching, should not be enshrined in the image of stained glass, a traditionally sacred medium.”

Maria Sermersheim, a PhD student in the theology department, remarked that her “least favorite part is the use of social justice leaders’ quotations in parallel with the Bible. It gives too much a sense of equality in my perception, and as wonderful as these leaders of social justice are, they simply are not the Word of God.”

Sermersheim identified one of the mural’s main themes as “ecumenism,” saying, “Ecumenism is good, but ... I’m wary of the ways in which the mural might blur the lines of identity at a Catholic university such as Notre Dame.” Skeptical of this theme, which she called “a classic move of a particular flavor of DEI Catholicism at Notre Dame,” Sermersheim worried that the mural “may fall into a blind incorporation rather than an ecumenical charity which does recognize distinction and difference.”

Philip Bess, Professor Emeritus in the School of Architecture, reflected on the mural’s aesthetic qualities: “It’s a competent

piece of art in its composition, thoughtfulness, and formal organization. It’s flat, but modern art is flat, so I wouldn’t necessarily expect something different.” He noted the work’s triptych organization, its ordered subdivisions, and its detailed border ornamentation.

Bess also commented on the mural’s significance as a piece of art in a Catholic university: “I think the most generous reading of it is that [the artist] doesn’t seem to be against [the Catholic Church], and so he’s for us. Most of the themes presented are not contrary to the Gospel, but they’re also a little over-congratulatory to Notre Dame. They tend to reaffirm the way many of us at Notre Dame would like to think of ourselves.”

Bess continued, “We might have been better served by daily encounters with some of the sharper biblical passages better suited to our present moment — ‘male and female He created them,’ ‘be fruitful and multiply,’ [etc.] — that instead of patting us on the back, kick us in the ass.”

The mural remains on public display at the main entrance of Duncan Student Center.

James Whitaker is a PhD student who loves to critique art but does not have an artistic bone in his body. He sings, but he’s not sure that counts. If you would like him to investigate any other campus artworks, please send a proposal to jwhitak5@nd.edu.

Haley Garecht is a junior who loves to critique things, and this time it happened to be art. She says she paints, but few have seen her “artworks.” If you would like to commission her for a permanent mural installation, email her at hgarecht@nd.edu.



Final Vows

continued from front

poverty, and chastity. He extolled true obedience as “listening together to the Lord to do service to the needs of the world,” and emphasized the communal nature of professed religious life. Drawing from the chosen Gospel passage, Rev. Lies compared the vow of poverty to Simon Peter’s stepping out of the boat and walking across the Sea of Galilee towards Jesus (Matthew 14:22-33).

“Poverty is about the radical trust to step out on the water with empty hands, knowing that Christ alone sustains us,” Rev. Lies said. “Holy Cross poverty is not destitution, but freedom... our security lies not in wealth, not in control, but in Jesus, who always stretches out His hand.” Addressing the vow of chastity, Rev. Lies described chastity as making “our hearts transparent to the world, a window through which others can glimpse the glory of God.” He explained that in professing their final vows, the candidates do not claim to have mastered the virtues that the vows

acclaim, but acknowledge their trust and dependence on God. Mulholland, Groden, Kulentuno, and Rozario stood before the congregation and professed their intention “to persevere all the days of [their] life in the service of the Lord, in communion with [their] brothers in Holy Cross, with whom [they] wish to live and die.”

As the Liturgical Choir led a chanted invocation of intercession from the saints, the candidates prostrated themselves as a symbol of their total submission to God. Rev. Lies then received the vows of Deacons Mulholland and Groden, while Rev. Anthony Sushanto Gomes, C.S.C., the Assistant Provincial of the Sacred Heart Province in Bangladesh, received the vows of Deacons Kulentuno and Rozario.

Following the reception of vows, the candidates each received a crucifix, and were publicly admitted as lifelong members of the Congregation of Holy Cross. Resounding applause echoed through the basilica as the candidates processed down the aisle.

“I chose not just to enter but to



stay in Holy Cross because I fell in love with our community and our mission,” Deacon Mulholland told the *Rover*. “Holy Cross is about the Lord’s work of bringing hope to the hopeless. Our charism, educators in the faith, has always taken the form in which we are most needed,” whether that be in village schools, university classrooms, or student mentorship. Mulholland reflected on how his role in pastoral ministry at Notre Dame shaped his formation, explaining that it

Image by Basilica of the Sacred Heart

“brought him close to Jesus’ own heart.”

The following morning, the candidates were officially ordained as Holy Cross deacons at Moreau Seminary. They will complete their formation and receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders as Holy Cross priests later in the 2025-2026 academic year. More information on the newly ordained deacons and their upcoming ordination can be found on the Congregation of

the Holy Cross website.

Madeline Page is a sophomore studying biology, and a Catholic living in modernity. She enjoys contemplating transubstantiation and theology of the body, but struggles to interpret contemporary slang. To tutor her in how to be more sigma, email mpage4@nd.edu.

Notre Dame Theology: Elite and Excellent *Professor highlights ranking, growth, orthodoxy*

CALEB VAUGHAN

Campus Editor

For a university that prides herself on academic prestige, Notre Dame’s highest ranked department, theology, often flies under the radar. For two of the past four years, Notre Dame has been ranked first in theology, often above institutions like Harvard, Cambridge, and Yale.

Father Theodore Hesburgh, C.S.C. wrote in 1962, “The Catholic university must strive mightily to understand the philosophical and theological dimensions of the modern problems that face man today.” He continued, “It goes without saying that the Catholic university cannot fulfill this essential function in our day unless it develops departments of philosophy and theology as competent as its departments of history, physics and mathematics.” The theology department—boasting current faculty such as John Cavadini, Jean Porter, Gary Anderson, Ulrich Lehner, and Cyril O’Regan, recipient of the prestigious Ratzinger Prize—upholds this “essential function.” Undergraduates interested in theology can choose from two majors, three minors, or a supplemental major. The majors include theology and a joint theology-philosophy major. Students may also add a supplemental major in theology or minors in theology, Catholic social teaching, or liturgical music ministry.

Since 2015, the total number of undergraduates studying theology has doubled, and is growing at 7

percent annually—a trend which shows no sign of slowing. This number accounts for enrollment in both majors and minors in theology, but the recent growth has been driven primarily by an explosion of minors which now total around 500: over 5 percent of the undergraduate student population.

This trend is not mirrored at universities nationwide. According to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, majors in the humanities are on the decline, especially in the area of religious studies.

In an interview with the *Rover*, Anthony Pagliarini, Director of Undergraduate Studies in theology, pointed to three reasons that he believes have catalyzed the growth in theological interest, bucking the national trends.

Firstly, he said, Notre Dame is attracting Catholic students who are increasingly devoted to their faith. Notre Dame’s admissions have long had a soft quota of around 80–85 percent Catholic students; this has continued in spite of the inevitable tension between recruiting a diverse class and a religiously Catholic one. And despite the percentage remaining constant through the years, Pagliarini noted that today’s 80 percent “probably includes a lot more people who are deliberately and thoroughly practicing their faith.” He called it a sort of “self-selection” as the American culture trends more secular to the point where faith has to be a deliberate choice.

While Notre Dame is drawing more religious students, it is also bringing in students from more diverse backgrounds who have little to no religious experience. To address this, the theology

department has “had to do things like introduce an alternate version of Foundations, we call fundamentals.” This alternative to the required first theology course is specifically designed for those with no exposure to Christian theology.

Secondly, Pagliarini said, “What we do as a theology department ... is not religious studies. ... What we do here as a theology department is theology.” In other words, Notre Dame is less interested in studying world religion from an anthropological perspective, but rather more from a desire to contribute to an understanding of the Catholic faith—and ecumenically other faiths as well. This professedly Catholic approach, unique among Notre Dame’s peers, attracts a different type of student than religious studies programs at Duke or Oxford.

Pagliarini’s third reason for the increase in theological interest is that the department “put[s] a lot of time and effort into the required courses. These are not perfunctory, leftover on repeat.” Pagliarini pointed out that last year, only five to ten freshmen entered Notre Dame intending to major in theology, but by the end of spring 2024, 50 freshmen were enrolled in a theology major and 178 had declared minors. This trend is not unique to 2024; it has been seen in each of the past several years. Pagliarini, who speaks with every student that declares a theology major or minor, credits the required introductory course with a major role in the theological interest of the student body.

Despite the number of students the Foundations of Theology course brings into the major,

the university once considered removing the theology requirements from the core curriculum. A 2015 report from the *National Catholic Register* revealed that Notre Dame’s most recent curriculum review—led by Gregory Crawford, former Dean of the College of Science, and John McGreevy who now serves as university provost—suggested dropping the theology and philosophy requirements. In response, Professor John Cavadini told the *Register*, “The core curriculum, with the theology requirement, is probably the most important component of Catholic identity.” Another prominent Notre Dame theologian, Sister Ann Astell, commented to the *Register*, “Philosophical and theological study is simply the indispensable, defining mark of Catholic education,” because “realizing the natural potential of the individual person is inseparable from the ‘supernatural goal of human perfection in Christ.’” Indeed, Fr. Hesburgh called theology and philosophy of “ultimate importance” in an essay concerning the idea of the Catholic university in *America Magazine*.

More information on Notre Dame’s theology department can be found at theology.nd.edu. Prospective majors or minors can contact Professor Anthony Pagliarini at apaglia1@nd.edu.

Caleb Vaughan is a junior studying chemical engineering with a minor in theology. He can be reached at cvaugha2@nd.edu.

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Notre Dame Shuts Down Confession Hotline

Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?

JOE RUDOLPH
Staff Writer

The confession hotline at Notre Dame has been forced to unplug its phones after a series of heretical actions were uncovered.

“Confession Hotline was created to provide students a quick and easy absolution without the humiliating experience of standing in line at the Basilica,” said Rayfa Loll. “When I’m in line, everyone just looks at me as if they know that I was the one who put the asbestos in Baumer’s drinking water. That makes me uncomfortable.”

Notre Dame’s rigorous academic schedule made it difficult for students to receive confession. This hotline was an easy fix to the problem. Their jingle even made a comforting appeal as well: “To Avoid Being Possessed, Call 1-800-CONFESS!”

After a month of success, it expanded to a 24/7 service. “We wanted to make ourselves available for everyone at any time,” said Fr. Doug. “Unfortunately, the hotline received a lot of prank calls.”

He continued, “One time a kid confessed arson on Ryan Hall. I



Image by Wikimedia Commons

just hung up the phone. Thankfully he was lying. Another time, a student offered me eighty thousand dollars and a free trip to Kokomo in exchange for permanent indulgence. He may have been

bluffing, but that one was tempting ...”

Though the hotline faced challenges, it persisted. That was, until the interns arrived. According to our whistleblower, one priest in particular would let their student interns take the night shift on weekdays. “God doesn’t rest, but I do,” said Fr. José Siesta.

This information was uncovered by a freshman in Fisher Hall. “I called the hotline after a long day of academic dishonesty, and I suspected I wasn’t speaking with a priest. I expected to hear some comforting words of advice after my confession. Instead I heard, ‘Bro, don’t even worry about it. I cheat all the time in my physics class, and the TA never notices. She’s also super hot.’”

The line was traced to the eighth floor of the Hesburgh Library, and I decided to return to my investigative work. I dressed up as a visiting priest with a name tag labeled, ‘Father Daniel Tuttle’ and quickly rushed to the scene.

I searched until I found a large office in the back. There, I found some suspicious interns, one of whom was talking to a penitent, saying, “Dude, I threw one of

those Grubhub bots in the lake too, you’re totally fine.”

I began to investigate the scene of the crime more thoroughly. Behind the intern desks were chalkboards filled with sins and tally marks. At first I thought they were forming a statistical analysis of confessions. But when I saw the cash I smelled gambling. Feeling nauseated, I called my mom immediately.

The chalkboard revealed that in the second week in September, callers confessed vehicular manslaughter just once, vandalism 12 times, and 305 times for impure thoughts. “Certain students really need to dress more modestly,” said an overwhelmed freshman. “The boys wearing leggings to Mass are killing me.”

Police confirmed that a significant amount of confessions were not administered by a priest. “We’re tracing all the non-priestly calls right now. If we can catch the person who committed vehicular manslaughter, their case is admissible in court.”

To issue a complaint, please contact Joe Rudolph at jrudolp3@nd.edu.

PUBLICATION CALENDAR

FALL 2025

September 3
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October 15
November 5
November 19
December 5

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