

Notre Dame to Be Consecrated to the Sacred Heart

University joins the nation in historic devotion

KOLBE BARTA

Staff Writer

For the first time in its 183 year history, the University of Notre Dame will be consecrated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus on Friday, September 25. Following in the footsteps of the United States bishops, the university will consecrate itself after a special 5:15 p.m. Mass in the Basilica of the Sacred Heart, celebrated by Bishop Kevin Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend and concelebrated by University President Father Robert Dowd, C.S.C.

Father Brian Ching, C.S.C., Director of Liturgy and Rector of the Basilica, explained the consecration to the *Rover*. “The consecration to the Sacred Heart is a pious exercise by which we dedicate ourselves ... to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, imploring the graces that flow from it, and committing ourselves to using the Sacred Heart as our spiritual model and guide in the life of faith. ... Every single human being is meant to emulate the Sacred Heart of Jesus.”

The consecration originated with a group of students who responded to the call of the United States Conference of



Image by Notre Dame Magazine

Catholic Bishops (USCCB) for Catholic institutions across the nation to join in its consecration of the United States to the Sacred Heart on the occasion of the 250th anniversary of America’s founding.

Luke Fisher, a sophomore in Siegfried Hall on the Consecration 2026 Committee, told the *Rover*,

“[The consecration] began with a group of us students going to different faculty members, or priests, or heads of institutes, or members of Campus Ministry, and asking, ‘Has Notre Dame ever been consecrated to the Sacred Heart? Is it planning on doing so, and would it be interested in it?’ And we just got a

lot of really supportive and good feedback about it.”

Fisher continued, “The University of Notre Dame is being consecrated to the Sacred Heart because of the love it has for Jesus Christ and the desire that the university has to spread that love, not only to all of its students, but ultimately to the

whole world.”

Fr. Dowd; Bp. Rhoades; Father Pete McCormick, C.S.C., Assistant Vice President of Campus Ministry; and Father Gerry Olinger, C.S.C., Vice President for Student Affairs approved the idea and decided to consecrate the University to the Sacred Heart a few months after the USCCB.

Gabriel Wollak, a sophomore Old College Seminarian and member of the Consecration 2026 Committee, highlighted how the consecration accentuated the existing presence of the Sacred Heart of Jesus at Notre Dame. “Here at Notre Dame, our basilica is named after the Sacred Heart. We have a heart-shaped quad in the center of campus with a statue of the Sacred Heart [of] Jesus, so it is a very central part [of] the spirituality of Notre Dame, because it is a central part of Holy Cross spirituality.”

Father Gregory Haake, C.S.C., Vice President of Mission Engagement and Church Affairs, told the *Rover* more about the special devotion that Holy Cross priests have to the Sacred Heart. “The Sacred Heart ... is the titular patron of the Holy Cross priest.

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Notre Dame Reinstates Mandatory Test Policy After Six-Year Hiatus

University follows national trends in admissions

LUCY TROTTER

Opinion Editor

Notre Dame scrapped its COVID-era test-optional policy in a September 9 statement announcing that it will be reinstating mandatory standardized tests, beginning in the fall 2027 admissions cycle.

Notre Dame follows a national trend with its reintroduction of mandatory test scores for undergraduate applicants. Columbia, which will begin requiring scores in 2027, was the last Ivy League college to abandon its test-optional policies this past June, a month after Yale made the same move.

The September announcement requires first-year and transfer applicants to submit either an

SAT or ACT score. “Notre Dame’s decision follows a detailed review of its own admissions data across multiple cycles, which confirmed that standardized test scores provide important quantitative evidence of academic preparation and showed a strong correlation between test scores and classroom performance after students matriculate,” the announcement read.

Following the testing disruption during the COVID-19 pandemic, Notre Dame introduced a test-optional pilot program for 2020-2021 applicants in June of 2020, originally intended to last only a year.

But the policy was later extended through the 2023 application cycle, and once more after that. Don Bishop, then associate

vice president of undergraduate enrollment, explained in 2021 that the test-optional policy in no way hindered the university’s ability to accurately judge students’ academic strengths, saying, “[W]e feel confident that our evaluation process remains strong and we are selecting students who will find success at Notre Dame.”

Concerns about the test-optional policies implemented by a majority of American universities rose within the academic community as COVID became a thing of the past. An open letter written this past May by faculty from the University of California warned about the deteriorating capabilities of admitted students in math and science classes, which

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Twenty-Five Years After 9/11

The Center for Citizenship and Constitutional Government marks 25 years since 9/11

ABIGAIL SMITH

Staff Writer

Notre Dame marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the September 11 attacks this week with a rare, intimate panel hosted by the Center for Citizenship and Constitutional Government (CCCCG), giving today’s students a chance to hear directly from witnesses to that day.

Though Notre Dame’s campus held few formal commemorations, the center’s fifth annual Jeanie Poole O’Shaughnessey Lecture ensured the milestone did not pass by unnoticed. Its 2026 event, *25 Years After 9/11*, brought together

four figures whose lives were shaped by the attacks and whose reflections aimed to educate a generation for whom 9/11 is history rather than memory.

Professor Vincent Phillip Muñoz, director of the CCCC, called it “one of the most important” events the center has ever hosted. Unlike previous lectures, this year’s program took the form of a conversation rather than a formal address. The panelists—Rev. Edward Malloy, President Emeritus of Notre Dame; Jennie Bradley Lichter (’04), former president of the March for Life Education

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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.

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**"For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another."
 Galatians 5:13**



Image by Notre Dame Archives

Remembering a Tragedy We Never Experienced

CALEB VAUGHAN
 Editor-in-Chief



Everyone remembers where they were when the planes struck the twin towers on September 11, 2001. The words, "Never forget," are repeated each year as Americans mourn the harrowing events now seared in the memory of our country. But the memorials and services present a challenge to those of us born after that dreadful day: How can we remember something we never experienced?

We cannot. It can never be adequately impressed upon us how the world changed that day, nor can the shock of seeing the sky falling on Manhattan be felt. So what can be done? Rather than remember that day, we must carry forward the good from those ashes—love for God, country, and neighbor.

Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda were motivated by a hatred for the United States and all that she stood for, kindled by her military involvement in the Middle East. Bin Laden wanted the world to

live under Sharia Law and viewed American liberty as a grave evil. His 1998 Fatwa—which claimed that America had declared war against God and his messenger—declared that the killing of Americans was the "individual duty for every Muslim who can do it in any country in which it is possible to do it."

Our continued survival stands in the face of this challenge. Our Christian faith stands athwart bin Laden's most clear wish: that all should convert to Islam. A 2002 'Letter to America' by bin Laden includes specific instructions for Americans: "The first thing that we are calling you to is Islam."

Imagine bin Laden's dismay, then, when Americans responded to 9/11 with an outpouring of Christian prayer. This statement may seem naive, but in this landscape, the spiritual battle carries at least equal weight to physical combat. Across the country, millions of prayers and thousands of funerals were offered, and hundreds of candles were lit at our own Grotto. At Notre Dame, the immediate response was to gather in prayer. Less than six hours after the attack, an estimated 7,000 people gathered for Mass on South Quad.

Bin Laden's second request was an end to American immorality and debauchery. Surprisingly, the terrorist's critique of American freedom is not entirely off the mark. He was right to note that we often conflate freedom with license and abuse it in acts of sexual perversion and avarice. He is even right to note that true freedom is found in following the laws of God. Yet, he was led

astray by a false notion of God's law, for he departed from the truths found in the Gospels, from Truth itself.

We are told in the book of Galatians, 5:13, "For you were called to freedom, brethren; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love be servants of one another." This is what we are called to use our freedom for—not license, but love. Love, as St. Thomas Aquinas defines it, is to will the good of another. It is not some amorphous, sappy feeling. It is a positive good.

The American Founders defined freedom similarly. Benjamin Franklin wrote that "only a virtuous people are capable of freedom." The Constitution affords immense rights and privileges to us Americans, but this freedom comes with a responsibility to strive for virtue.

Therefore, we must use our freedom in this capacity. This is how we perpetuate not only the founding ideals that make our country great, but also the foundational truths expressed in the words of our Savior.

The immediate wake of the attacks on 9/11 was marked by an uncharacteristic sense of unity in America, a type of unity unimaginable to our increasingly divided nation. Public prayer outpoured as communities expressed their grief to a loving God who appeared silent. Yet, He was working through each of them.

Notre Dame alumnus, Jimmy Dunne III, was rebuilding his company at the time. A Wall Street executive for the firm Sandler O'Neill, housed on the

104th floor of the World Trade Center's South Tower, Dunne lost one third of his company that day, including his best friend. He responded to the attacks by resuming business. He picked up where he left off in order to support those spouses and children who lost their mother or father.

Dunne decided to continue paying the families of victims, to enlarge bonuses, to create college funds for those children who lost a parent that day, and to increase benefits for as long as he could. As a result of his efforts, 76 children graduated college, supported by the very same fund. He responded to tragedy by picking up his burden and loving those around him.

Freedom is the only means by which love exists, for love cannot be demanded or forced. It is this freedom, protected by the Constitution, which terrorism threatens.

Our freedom, scorned by bin Laden, is a God-given gift ordered toward virtue. As Notre Dame seeks to be a powerful means for good in this world, let us use our freedom to serve one another in charity and pray unceasingly that we—and our enemies—might one day be united with God.

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**Remembering 9/11**
continued from front

and Defense Fund; James (Jimmy) Dunne III, co-founder of Sandler O'Neill and Partners; and Associate Justice Brett Kavanaugh—spoke as witnesses to the tragedy.

The discussion opened with a shared recollection: the sheer normalcy of the morning of September 11. Lichter, then a Notre Dame sophomore, remembered feeling the sting of a Saturday football loss as she prepared for her first day of work at the Center for Ethics and Culture. Fr. Malloy was heading to a routine meeting. Dunne was practicing his golf game on a cloudless day. Justice Kavanaugh was in the White House serving as counsel. Terrorism, Lichter said, was not even in the “realm of possibility.”

Then the first tower fell, and the country plunged into chaos.

“Initially, it didn’t make any sense,” Lichter said. No one understood what was unfolding, not even the reporters covering the incident. All she could do was go to work. They promptly told her to leave, and Notre Dame cancelled classes. Students gathered around televisions, watching the tragedy unfold with the same stunned disbelief

felt across the nation. “There was no framework,” she said. “It was inconceivable because it had never happened.”

Justice Kavanaugh recalled the fear inside the White House. The Secret Service told the entire West Wing staff to run. They sprinted out of the building without anywhere to go, eventually gathering at the Mayflower Hotel to watch the news. He echoed Lichter’s disbelief: “How could this be happening in America? This doesn’t happen in America.”

Dunne’s account was the most sobering. His company was housed on floor 104 of the South Tower. He spent the morning making frantic phone calls, trying to determine who was alive. He described the moment he realized that Kevin Williams, an employee and caddie he had hoped was safe, was killed. Williams was not just an employee; he was a son, a friend, a beloved colleague. He was only one of more than seventy people Dunne’s firm lost that day.

Yet Dunne also remembered the resilience of the families who gathered afterward. Even within a grave conversation, he offered moments of levity as reminders that hope and human warmth persisted amid devastation. His reflections captured the paradox

of 9/11: profound desolation intertwined with great unity.

Even in the chaos, work had to be done. Malloy, then president of Notre Dame, immediately sought to protect students and identify those most affected. He recalled how quickly the campus responded, building an altar by the flagpole, forming a choir, and organizing a Mass on South Quad, over which he presided. “There was utter silence,” he said.

The panelists emphasized that 9/11 was not merely a single day. Its effects rippled through campus life for months. Football games became occasions to honor the fallen, with flags placed on seats and funds raised for affected families. Notre Dame hosted first responders from New York and held its first Blue Mass to honor their service. When Fr. Malloy visited Ground Zero a month later, he saw the rubble firsthand and spoke with first responders and victims.

Lichter described the lingering anxiety among students. Football games, normally celebrations of American spirit, became occasions shadowed by fear of another attack. Studying abroad felt dangerous; students were taught “how to be an American abroad.” Some joined the military to fight the “war on terror.” U2

opened its international tour at Notre Dame and invited first responders to the concert. All this formed part of the post-9/11 catharsis.

The panelists insisted that we must never forget the unity that arose from the rubble. Lichter remembered watching TV with her roommates and attending Mass with thousands on South Quad. Fr. Malloy recalled students locking arms during the Lord’s Prayer, a “much more intimate and personal” gesture of solidarity. Dunne noted that his community kept his company afloat; he says he could not have survived the loss alone.

The event was designed not only for those who remember 9/11 but for students who never lived through it. The message was clear: remembering 9/11 is not merely an act of recollection but a call to formation.

To this end, the panelists urged the audience to honor the heroes: the firemen and first responders, and the passengers of Flight 93 who sacrificed their lives to protect the nation’s capitol. Dunne emphasized that life will always bring challenges, and we must “prepare early for it.” We need “moral fiber” to make hard decisions. Lichter reiterated the need to “habituate ourselves in

virtue” so that heroism becomes possible. One does not simply rise to the challenge on the day; it takes years of spiritual and moral formation to be ready to sacrifice for others.

Finally, when asked which virtue Americans most need to recover to restore unity, each panelist offered a different answer. Dunne emphasized resilience. When asked by the *Rover*, Lichter pointed to prudence and wisdom in order to recognize the shared goodness in others. Justice Kavanaugh highlighted the need to listen and to seek the good in others. Fr. Malloy urged us to pursue “commonality” in an interview with the *Rover*.

The evening closed with a call to formation. Remembering 9/11, the panelists suggested, is not merely an act of looking back. It is a call to become the kind of citizen capable of courage, sacrifice, and solidarity.

Abigail Smith is a senior Program of Liberal Studies, theology, and classical linguistics major. When she is not reading for class, Abby can be found singing with the Liturgical Choir and poorly playing volleyball with her friends. Contact her at asmith78@nd.edu.

Controversial Jesuit Comes to Notre Dame

Fr. James Martin discusses vocation and new book amid petitions for his disinvitation

JACK CARTER
Staff Writer

Father James Martin, S.J., the Jesuit author whose LGBTQ ministry has made him a controversial figure in the American Church, made his first visit to Notre Dame from August 28 to September 3, drawing large crowds to two public addresses despite petitions calling for his invitation to be revoked.

Fr. Martin has garnered both firm opposition and support within the Church for his work in LGBTQ ministries. He is the author of *Building a Bridge*, a work which centers on relations between the Catholic Church and the LGBT community. In this book he writes: “For a teaching to be really authoritative it is expected that it will be received by the people of God ... From what I can tell, in the LGBT community, the teaching that LGBT people must be celibate their entire lives ... has not been received.”

He is also the founder of Outreach, an LGBTQ Catholic ministry whose website prominently features an article titled “This Transgender History Month, pray to Catholic saints who defied gender norms.”

The first of Fr. Martin’s speaking events took place on the evening of August 28, when the Institute for Social Concerns hosted its annual Rev. Bernie Clark, C.S.C., lecture

in Catholic Social Tradition, entitled, “A Conversation with James Martin: Joy, Work, and Purpose.” After an introduction from Provost John McGreevy, who labeled him “a prominent voice on some of the most consequential questions facing the church in American society,” Fr. Martin engaged in a fireside chat with Leo and Arlene Hawk Executive Director Suzanne Shanahan.

In front of a standing-room-only audience in the Geddes Hall auditorium, along with two full overflow rooms where the talk was broadcast live, Fr. Martin reflected on the recent death of Dolly Parton, whose charitable acts and public adoration he saw as evidence of the attractiveness of holiness, his own “loopy” path to the priesthood, and how to find meaning as a student.

When asked about his own vocation, Fr. Martin traced his path from Wharton, where he studied economics, to General Electric, where he grew steadily more miserable. He described watching a television documentary on Thomas Merton, a Trappist monk, as the beginning of his call, and posited that vocation rarely arrives in a predictable way, noting that he entered the Society of Jesus thirty-eight years ago to the day of this event.

Questioned how students should approach their own work to find meaning, Fr.

Martin said that in four years at Wharton no one had ever asked him what he wanted in life. The question he offered the Notre Dame audience instead: “Who do you want to be, and whose do you want to be?”

After being asked for his explanation for his controversial status, Fr. Martin responded that “people can have legitimate critiques and have legitimate concerns and have questions, but some of it’s kind of over the top. I just try to preach the Gospel.” He mentioned that he has been the target of protests, had hosts withdraw invitations, and received death threats, including what he called “Catholic death threats” from people wishing him to hell. However, he found solace in the fact that his Outreach ministry, *Building a Bridge*, and other works were undertaken with his superiors’ permission within the Society of Jesus, and quoted Pope Francis’ counsel to him: “There are Pharisees everywhere.”

The following Wednesday, Fr. Martin delivered the final of his two public speaking engagements in the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center titled “Work in Progress: A Conversation and Reading with Rev. James Martin, S.J.” Fr. Martin engaged in dialogue with the director of the Global Catholic Research Initiative and Professor of American Studies and History Kathleen

Sprows Cummings, followed by a reading of excerpts from his new book, *Work in Progress: Confessions of a Busboy, Dishwasher, Caddy, Usher, Factory Worker, Bank Teller, Corporate Tool, and Priest*.

Fr. Martin introduced his book as a lighthearted attempt to capture the 1960s–70s era of his youth, examining how a sequence of jobs led to his personal formation. He chose to read excerpts from his book about mowing lawns, daydreaming as a kid, and a vivid scene walking through a meadow as “one of the first times I felt a real longing for God.” He particularly stressed how these ordinary experiences and memories can reveal God’s presence, saying that “sometimes [God’s grace] is only possible to see in retrospect.”

Both the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property and LifeSiteNews organized petitions pushing the University to revoke Fr. Martin’s invitation to speak. In its petition urging the University to withdraw the invitation, the American Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family, and Property calls Fr. Martin a “wolf in sheep’s clothing,” alleging that he “supports transgenderism for children,” has said Catholics should “reverence” homosexual unions, and favors “homosexual kissing during Mass.”

Wesley Buonerba, a senior

studying architecture and theology, told the *Rover* that “[Notre Dame] is a Catholic University, and our mission is to provide constructive and critical analysis of the world, and all aspects of the church as well.” Buonerba reasoned that “excluding him because of the work he’s done in the past perhaps isn’t the most fair decision.”

In a written statement to the *Rover*, Director Shanahan defended the Institute’s choice of speaker: “He does all his work with consent of his Jesuit superiors and serves the Pope (Leo and Francis before him). His work is about engaging marginalized individuals and communities and that’s the work of the Institute.”

In his own written statement to the *Rover*, Fr. Martin commented: “It’s been a whirlwind. But maybe the most moving moment was participating in the Profession of Vow Mass with the C.S.C.s. At one point, looking up at the stained glass windows, and hearing the choir, I thought: I wish I had come here as an undergrad! But at least I finally made it!”

Jack Carter is a sophomore majoring in philosophy and Italian, and minoring in constitutional studies and international security studies. He can be reached at jcarte26@nd.edu.



Mandatory Testing *continued from front*

were forcing professors to “re-teach middle school mathematics.”

An internal study conducted by Yale in 2025 found that standardized tests were “strong predictors” of a student’s academic ability and were “less subject to bias than other elements of an application.”

Notre Dame’s announcement emphasized the university’s unchanged commitment to a holistic admissions process.

“[T]his change will not alter the comprehensive nature of the

admissions process,” the press release read, noting that test scores are “one data point among dozens” used when evaluating an applicant.

Micki Kidder, vice president of undergraduate enrollment, added, “Rooted in our Catholic mission and committed to academic excellence, we want students with strong academic potential, high moral character, and a desire to serve the common good. A test score, evaluated in full context of an applicant’s individual circumstances, is an additional measure to aid us in that process.”

The press release also included a

list of university initiatives aimed at guaranteeing affordability and accessibility to all its applicants during the admissions process.

Freshmen students at Notre Dame were generally favorable towards the decision. “I think that it’s good for there to be a baseline for everyone,” ROTC freshman Ryan Sweatman told the *Rover*.

“I think requiring standardized testing is great,” freshman Gabe Sigrist said. “It’s another piece of information for Notre Dame to consider on an application that helps them understand a student’s academic preparation. I also expect that Notre Dame will put

more weight on essays, leadership, and service involvement than on chasing a threshold for scores.”

“I think the requirement is probably a good thing to bring back,” freshman Amelia Wright told the *Rover*. “I didn’t submit my SAT, not because I doubted the score, but because the bar at Notre Dame had climbed so high it felt like submitting a decent score might actually hurt me. That’s why I think bringing the SAT back matters. It gives every applicant a real comparable measure again, instead of making students gamble on withholding a number that used to be pretty

good.”

“At the same time,” Wright added, “I recognize that the opportunity for people to get tutors and take the SAT many times varies, so while it’s a helpful data point, it’s not completely standardized.”

Lucy Trotter is a senior majoring in piano performance and the Program of Liberal Studies, with a minor in philosophy. She applied test-optional. Send her your condolences at lspace@nd.edu.

The Divided Souls of Americans *Professor Deneen delivers lecture on new book*

HENRY OMANGA

Campus Editor

Professor Patrick Deneen delivered a lecture entitled *American Odyssey: What an Ancient Story Reveals About our Divided Souls* on August 27 in the Eck Center Visitors Atrium, hosted by the Center for Constitutional Citizenship & Government.

Deneen’s talk came on the heels of his new book by the same name, published in July. He outlined the book’s central themes, aligning the story of Odysseus with American identity through the lens of a central tension within both: the simultaneous longing to go elsewhere, to a new place, a new world and the longing for home, the place where we find rest.

“It is a distinctive mark of the American people that we are a people on the move, a nation characterized by what Alexis de Tocqueville called restlessness, inquietude, the inability to be still,” Deneen asserted. He continued, “At the same time, however, we became heirs of another deep longing that equally animated our ancestors, no less than their progeny—the aching yearning for home, the place where we could find rest, where we might live among people whom we deeply know and love.”

Deneen published his first book in 2000, based on his doctoral dissertation, entitled *The Odyssey of Political Theory: The Politics of Departure & Return*, which also analyzed the *Odyssey*. However, his earlier work showcased the development of Western political thought in contrast to *American Odyssey*’s focus on American culture.

American Odyssey was published just four days after the release of Christopher Nolan’s anticipated film, *The Odyssey*. Coupled with the particular opportunity the 250th anniversary of the United States provides, Deneen saw the reemergence

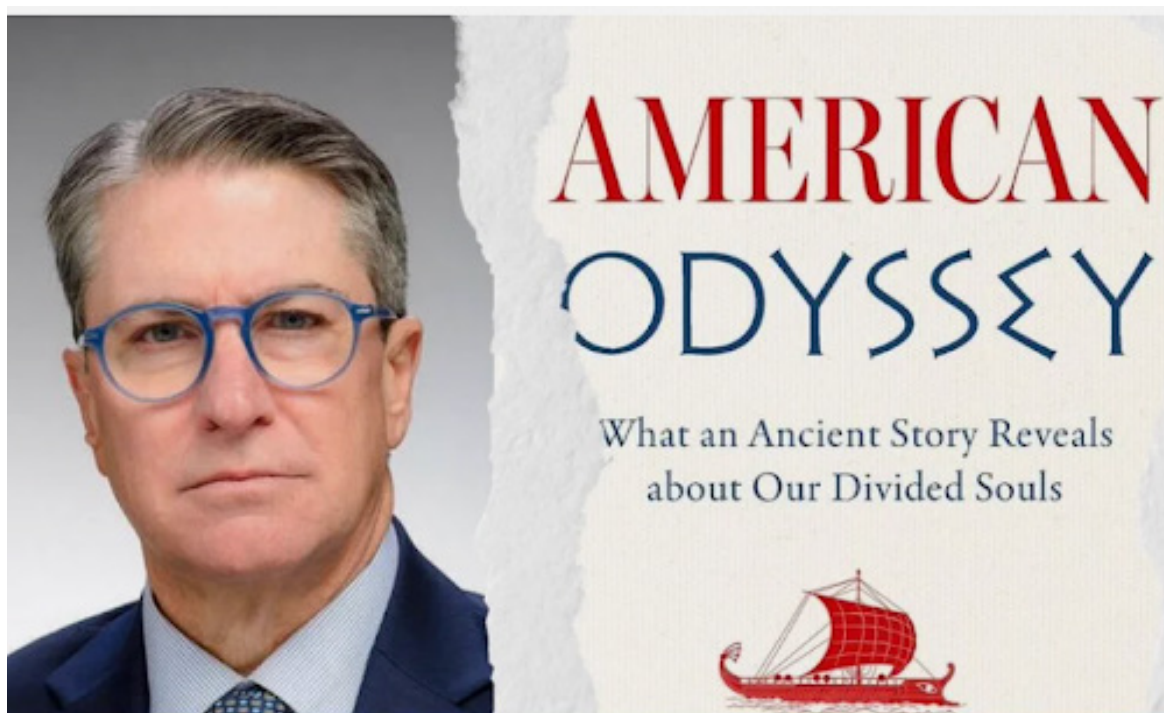


Image by Irish Rover

of the classic in American cultural thought as fertile ground for a reexamination of American culture and identity. “Indeed,” he says, “these two events are rather distinct: one more political and historical, the other more cultural and artistic. But I prefer to think of the proximity of these two events as providential, and indeed to appeal to the old—the *Odyssean*—way of seeing things as a kind of portent.”

Deneen pointed out many similarities between Homer’s epic and American culture, particularly its development. “The journeying of Columbus was nothing more than a repeat and a reiteration of the *Odyssean* journey itself. It wasn’t just the case that America was discovered by European explorers such as Columbus, in the minds and in the imaginations and in the way that the story was being told in contemporary Europe,” Deneen stated. He continued, “They had a paradigm. They had a frame of reference by which they understood someone venturing forth to find a new world, and that was explicitly *Odyssean*. It was, in a sense, Odysseus who discovered America.”

Despite the apparent distance between the 2,800 year-old epic

or the discovery of America 500 years ago, Deneen posits that the story is intensely personal for each of us as Americans, and not just because of the recent film. “And all of us can tell that story simply by relating our own ancestry. Most of us arrived, in some way, shape, or form, from somewhere, and this may be our home, or our home may be elsewhere. But the intention is to journey somewhere or home.”

Robert Myler, a sophomore in St. Edward’s Hall, recognized the conflicting desires explicitly in his own life. “There is a tension between my desire to be home with my family and the desire to experience all the good things that Notre Dame can give me. The tension is somewhat inescapable, but it has become important to me to not ignore it or try to escape it,” he said. However, he claims to have found a balance: “On the steady foundation my home has given me, I can embrace so many beautiful and exciting opportunities away from home as a student.”

Particular instances and examples that reflect this latent tension from American culture made especially vivid how Odysseus’ own struggles are, in

a sense, shared by Americans throughout history. From Dorothy’s journey through Oz that culminated with her timeless incantation, “There’s no place like home,” to George Bailey’s struggle between his desire to build a life outside Bedford Falls and his familial obligation, to the constant movement of the Ingalls in Laura Ingalls Wilder’s enduring set of stories, to name a few, Deneen drew a connection to a deeply ingrained streak that runs through our shared identity and culture.

But there is also danger in the quest into the unknown for more. He pointed out that Odysseus’s unceasing craving led to his placement in the eighth circle of hell in Dante’s *Inferno*, even though European thought later conceived the tale of hubris to a story as one of human limitlessness. “Indeed, he’s punished for seeking more than that which is permitted to a human being. He is struck down and thereby finds himself in almost the deepest circle of hell—he sought to exceed that which is permitted us, like our forebears Adam and Eve, to have a knowledge that is not permitted to him.”

Sophomore Sabrina Richter

was struck by his application of this struggle, specifically as it applies in the present. “Thinking about it that way was kind of eye-opening to me a little bit. Today, society’s sort of endless consumerism focuses on technological innovations that push into new territory. It’s just this infinite pursuit of more satisfaction, of infinite desire that just keeps going and keeps going. Then, on the other hand, there’s this desire for stability and home, that has its unhealthy manifestations nowadays in a sort of complacency.”

However, Deneen proposed that the *Odyssey* offers a resolution to the tension within the American people. He referred in closing to the blessing that Odysseus is able to acquire upon his return to Ithaca, “to his home, his wife, his child, his city, and perhaps above all, his condition as a human being—as a mortal.”

“The moment that the Trojan War comes to an end is not on the plains of Troy. It’s when Odysseus and Penelope are finally reunited. Thus, the actual ending of the Trojan War ends in the domestic home, the literal bed that Odysseus carved from an olive tree, rooted in the earth. I think in that moment we are offered, in our own tradition, inasmuch as we are heirs of that Western tradition, an enticing, and inviting, and, I hope, a hopeful vision of domestic tranquility.”

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William Mattison Assumes Theology Chair

Moral theologian takes charge of Notre Dame department

JOSHUA BARNARD
Staff Writer

Wilsey College Professor of Theology William Mattison became chairman of the Notre Dame theology department on July 1, 2026, succeeding Fr. Khaled Anatholios. Mattison's appointment comes as the theology department ranks best in the world for the second year in a row. In addition to his chairmanship, Professor Mattison also serves as Faculty Director of the Moreau Program, which he helped revise in 2024.

A Long Island native, Mattison is an alumnus of Georgetown. He received his Ph.D. in moral theology and Christian ethics from Notre Dame in 2003. Mattison's scholarship focuses on moral theology, particularly virtue and the theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas.

Professor Mattison is well connected with undergraduate students at Notre Dame. In addition to his role with the Moreau program, Mattison taught over 450 students in a one-credit course focused on the works of C.S. Lewis in the spring of 2025 and teaches many other popular undergraduate and graduate level courses.

Mattison outlined his vision for the department under his leadership in an interview with the *Rover*. He emphasized that the department is "rooted in the Catholic intellectual tradition"



Image by University of Notre Dame

and formed by "a preponderance of Catholics, and also other non-Catholic Christians and people of other faiths, all of whom share the common mission of wanting to channel and reinterpret and pass on tradition."

Mattison praised the department's faculty and programs as "world leading and amazing." He described undergraduate programs as being "totally life giving" and lauded the work of professors including Father Kevin Grove, C.S.C. and Professor Anthony Pagliarini for the success of their Foundations of Theology courses.

Mattison also discussed the "many prongs" of the theology

department to provide a formative experience for undergraduates. He told the *Rover*, "We have Bible study groups. We have a one credit course every spring. We have tons of events through the newly revamped theology club."

Over the past 10 years, the theology program at Notre Dame has more than doubled in size, reaching over 800 majors and minors. Professor Mattison attributed this growth to the work of the Holy Spirit, saying, "I think this shows that the Spirit is rousing in the students' hearts a desire for God, the one in whom we all find rest." Mattison also highlighted the department's highly ranked graduate M.Div., MTS, and

Ph.D. programs, as well.

Many of the department's top professors recently retired, including Cyril O'Reagan, Gary Anderson, Jerry McKenny, Tim Matovina, and Mattison's own doctoral advisor Jean Porter, among nearly a dozen others. But maintaining a strong faculty is a top priority for Mattison. He told the *Rover*, "You don't lose a hitter like Aaron Judge or Ohtani and not notice it. We've had a lot of people that have retired, and we need to make sure through our own growth with both our current faculty and new hires that we're able to keep providing the service to the Church and the students that we've been able to."

The growth of theology majors and minors also presents potential challenges with accommodating the large number of students. "We've had to split major courses because they're so big, which is a nice problem to have. We have to cultivate our undergraduate program to continue to respond to the need that students have in a way that's best able to serve them," Mattison commented.

Speaking to the culture of faith at Notre Dame, Mattison told the *Rover*, "One of the biggest blessings we have here is so many young, smart, faithful, service-oriented, and joyful people around here. This is a place where people care about these big picture questions. They're willing to wrestle with and talk about their

faith lives to support one another on the challenging journey of discipleship to celebrate with one another."

"Find places where you can connect with people and be friends with people, where you can talk about your faith journey, about what God's doing in your life, and get support on that and support one another," Mattison encouraged students.

Noah Schoenfelder, a junior theology and business analytics major who attended a retreat with Mattison, told the *Rover*, "Professor Mattison was an excellent, patient, and wise discussion leader who focussed on us as individuals. He seemed committed to reaching us as college freshmen who just needed people to talk to and a quiet place to spend an afternoon."

Schoenfelder continued, "I was also able to take his class on C.S. Lewis. He is a great lecturer and makes theological concepts applicable to the everyday lives of his students. I am very excited to hear that he is becoming the theology chair! He will do great good!"

Joshua Barnard is a junior studying history and philosophy-theology with a minor in constitutional studies. He is from Greeley, Colorado and can be reached at jbarnar2@nd.edu.

From Many, One? What the Catholic Church Can Teach America about Pluralism

ND Democracy Initiative hosts pluralism panel

SENAI ALEM
Staff Writer

The Notre Dame Democracy Initiative (NDDI) hosted a forum discussing Catholic experiences with polarization and its relevance to American democracy on September 1. The panel discussion was entitled, "From Many, One? Catholic Perspectives at America's 250th."

It was hosted in partnership with the Global Catholic Research Institute, Ansari Institute for Engagement with Religion, and the Klau Institute for Civil and Human Rights. The event was also hosted by *InterFaith America*, a non-profit organization aimed at encouraging political pluralism.

Panelists included Donn Carroll, President of the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities; and G. Marcus Cole, Joseph A. Matson Dean of Notre Dame Law School; as well as the archbishop of the Archdiocese of Louisville, Archbishop Shelton Fabre, who is currently chairman of the United States Conference

of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

The discussion was moderated by Professor Kathleen Cummings, the John A. O'Brien Collegiate Professor of American Studies and History, as well as the director of the Global Catholic Research Initiative.

In honor of America's bicentennial, *InterFaith America* has launched Pluribus 250—a public initiative aimed at celebrating pluralistic achievements in America's history. The philosophy of *InterFaith America*, according to its website, is to "embrace the power of pluralism, where we cooperate across differences for the common good."

President Carroll commented on the necessity of respect and tolerance when ideas conflict with one another in the sphere of education. She stated, "As I think of pluralism in Catholic universities, I really think of the important opportunity for us to bring people together that are different, and not let[ting]

difference be divisive, but rather ... enriching our education."

Abp. Fabre elaborated on Carroll's point, noting that "the important thing about pluralism is that everybody has a respect for the other person." He specifically cited the presence of pluralistic interests within particular religious communities, as he stated, "In any archdiocese there are all kinds of different interests—Catholic schools, higher education, youth ministry, Adoration, the charismatic group—all these different things that are all gifts."

Abp. Fabre continued, tying the pluralism present within the Church to the need for tolerance of each other's conflicting interests. He explained, "We do respect one another. We look for the giftedness in one another. ... So for me, pluralism is differences and different approaches to things, but I think that there's also a respect there for each and every viewpoint."

In response to Abp. Fabre, Carroll offered advice on how to engage and confront diversity within a Catholic environment.

She said, "If we can ground [ourselves] in that common understanding of what we believe, then we're not fearing difference. And if we're not fearing difference, we can engage and learn from it. And it doesn't need to be divisive." She added, "I think Catholics are made for this polarizing moment, to be that unifying community and voice that helps democracy move forward."

Dean Marcus Cole expanded on Carroll's point by magnifying the importance of pluralism to a national scale. For Cole, the importance of pluralism in the Notre Dame community is that we "actually model for our country what it means to serve."

To demonstrate his point, Cole provided an anecdote from the Archdiocese of Washington, D.C., stating "The archbishop of Washington, D.C. in 1956 was urged to close Catholic schools in a Black section of Anacostia. ... The argument was made to him that we should close these schools because these kids aren't even Catholic." And yet, they kept the school open. To Cole, "That's

an example we can set for our country."

The *New York Times* notes that Roman Catholic Churches are experiencing a significant surge in adult converts, with many reporting year-to-year increases of 30 percent to 70 percent. The Catholic Church remains the largest non-governmental provider of social services, while also boasting a globally diverse population. Cole provided the following advice: "If we are going to be true to the Gospel, we also need to embrace the immigrant, especially as Catholics. And if we are to grow as a Church, we have to look to where the Church is growing."

Senai Alem is a sophomore majoring in the Program of Liberal Studies and Arabic. He enjoys reading classics, listening to 2000's hip-hop, and eating cheesecake. Contact him at salem@nd.edu.



Backlash Against Data Centers in South Bend

County Council to vote on data center moratorium

LUKE D.F. SEVERSON

Staff Writer

The St. Joseph County Council will vote September 22 on a resolution to ban new hyperscale data centers, a measure supported by five of the council's nine members amidst debate over economic growth and water use.

A hyperscale data center is not a server room, but a sprawling campus—the kind Amazon and Microsoft build to run cloud and artificial intelligence services. Supporters argue that the facilities bring thousands of jobs and—through the tax revenue they generate—lower electric bills for nearby residents. But the same server farms need enormous amounts of water to keep their equipment cool, straining the region's aquifer and fueling the county's fight over a proposed ban.

The resolution, filed August 27 by County Council Republicans Amy Drake, Joe Thomas, Randy Figg, and Andy Rutten, directs the Area Plan Commission to amend the county zoning ordinance to prohibit the building of new data centers. Once Amazon's campus near New Carlisle and Microsoft's in Granger—both neighbors of South Bend—are complete, no more data centers will be built. Democratic council member Jenn Shabazz joined the four sponsors, giving the resolution majority support on the council.

Republicans had proposed a two-year moratorium just a week earlier. “We just think it's a great



Image by Unsplash

time for a pause; we're going to have over 40 data centers in our community and—our county—we think that's enough,” said Joe Thomas, one of the resolution's sponsors.

Fellow sponsor Amy Drake said that the county should not put all of its economic growth into one industry. “We don't know the future of data centers. ... Do we want to create, you know, a hundred data center buildings in St. Joe County and see the industry change?” she questioned.

For Mayor James Mueller, the question is not whether the county should allow data centers, but how it should judge each one. He opposes the ban, saying in a recent interview, “I don't believe a moratorium or a ban is serious policy. We're in election season, and unfortunately, [campaigns have] very [simple] policy.” He

pointed to Indiana Michigan Power's ratepayer pledge as the kind of safeguard the community should seek instead of a moratorium.

Indiana Michigan Power, a local electric utility company, filed a plan on August 26 with state regulators to cut rates by 79 million dollars a year and freeze them for three years—saving each household roughly 100 dollars each year. The utility company attributes these rates to the revenue gained from large consumers, most significantly, data centers.

Mueller called the plan “great news for South Bend families.” Amazon has employed nearly 4,000 people at its fourteen billion dollar New Carlisle campus, completed in 2026. The campus also included more than 1,000 full-time workers, with

nearly half of those employees residing in St. Joseph County.

The disagreement does not run cleanly along party lines as business leaders share the mayor's skepticism of the ban. “A ban sends a message to the rest of the world that we're not open for business,” said Jeff Rea, president of the South Bend Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Three council Democrats, President Bryan Tanner, Mark Catanzarite, and Diana Hess, also oppose a ban or moratorium. “I don't think that an arbitrary time clock is a replacement for good judgment,” Tanner noted. Several other Democrats have emphasized that their priority is evaluating each data center individually as opposed to the Republican strategy of introducing absolute bans.

The relevance of this ban will continue to linger over South Bend politics, as candidates from both parties have made it clear that data centers will be an issue in the November 3 election. Inside city limits, a version of the same debate is already underway.

Plans surfaced in December that New York-based developer, Western Hospitality Partners, seeks to build a 300-acre, 10-building data center in South Bend. It will be located adjacent to South Bend Ethanol and across Prairie Avenue from Four Winds Casino.

The city described the concept as “speculative at best,” and has announced nothing since. Davis, an at-large councilman, called for a one-year city moratorium.

“What we need to do is study the whole impact of what data centers are doing,” Davis said. Davis did not respond to a request for comment for this article.

Water remains the central point of dispute. A recent investigation by ABC57 found the Amazon campus could push demand on the Kankakee Aquifer to 35.5 million gallons a day. This would be about 80 percent of the aquifer's safe yield, against a state industrial cap of 24 million gallons. Notre Dame Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering and Earth Sciences Alan Hamlet warned that drawing 80 percent of the supply would be risky in a prolonged drought.

Amazon spokesperson Brandon Oyer countered, arguing that the campus draws water for only about two percent of the year. “Most of the year, 98 percent, we're not using water, just cooling via air,” Oyer said.

The County Council votes September 22. If the resolution passes, the Area Plan Commission would rewrite the ordinance and return it to the council for a final vote. Tanner, as president, could keep the measure off the agenda, but council rules allow a majority to override him.

Luke Severson is a sophomore political science major. His favorite hobby is listening to Dr. Taylor Marshall lectures. Contact him at lseverso@nd.edu.

Justice Department Report Reveals FBI Targeting of Catholics

Report reveals investigators conflated Catholic beliefs with extremism

ANTHONY FEDORUK

Staff Writer

The United States Department of Justice (DOJ) recently issued a report that revealed the FBI's Field Office in Richmond, Virginia had been targeting members of the Catholic faith during the Biden administration. According to the DOJ report, members of the FBI improperly associated widely held Catholic beliefs with domestic extremism, which led to a subsequent investigation of two Catholic priests without sufficient cause.

The report states that in 2023, the FBI relied on biased and unverified materials to form the basis of its investigation. Specifically, an internal assessment labeled as the “Richmond Domain Perspective” was compiled in the FBI's Richmond Field Office, outlining “extremist” political ideology among Catholic clergy.

Despite the fact that federal agents did not ensure that

their sources were credible, they proceeded to conduct an investigation on two Catholic priests, which included monitoring their travel and communications. Nevertheless, even with these extensive efforts to discover wrongdoing among the priests, the FBI found no link to criminal activity or violent extremism among the Catholics they targeted.

Given that the FBI relied on biased and unverified materials to form the basis of their inquiry, internal reviews by the DOJ concluded that “the product improperly conflated religious doctrine with violent extremism and ignored First Amendment concerns.”

Under the Biden administration, FBI leadership reportedly “took minimal corrective action” after the Richmond memo was leaked and they neglected to make the revelations public. The DOJ report further stated, “Richmond leadership openly defended their work. Staff continued refining

the perspective even after it was removed from FBI systems.”

After a substantial review of internal documents and investigative records, the DOJ's Weaponization Working Group concluded that the FBI engaged in “unjustified law enforcement and intelligence activity” under President Biden.

U.S. Attorney General Todd Blanche issued a public statement after the DOJ released its report, stating, “President Trump's Department of Justice will not tolerate a weaponized bureaucracy that chills First Amendment activity.” FBI Director Kash Patel further reiterated Blanche's point, saying, “Political weaponization against any innocent religious member will never be tolerated at Trump's FBI.”

The DOJ report also affirmed that the FBI personnel responsible for the Richmond Domain Perspective have been terminated from their roles. While officials in the Trump Administration have firmly stood by their response, others have

questioned whether the firing of FBI members involved in the case is appropriate.

Stacey Young, executive director of a DOJ alumni group, warned the public of the negative consequences that may come from the firings. Young cautioned, “These terminations will only cause them (the FBI) to pull back on areas they fear are politically divisive, leading to blind spots in the threat picture and underinformed policymakers.”

In response to the DOJ report, many Notre Dame students shared concerns over their ability to freely practice their Catholic beliefs without public conflict, but no students expressed fear in the FBI directly oppressing their First Amendment rights.

Senior Robert Richardson told the *Rover*, “As a Christian, if I want to try to put myself on a platform to express my religious views, compared to five or more years ago, I feel like I would have more pushback today.”

Senior Owen Donaher held a

similar view as he explained, “I don't feel like the government's very interested in what I'm doing, but there's definitely some secular hostility towards Catholic views today. I feel like it has a lot to do with polarization on social media. I would blame the media.”

A senior from Knott Hall expressed his confidence in the Trump administration to prevent the further targeting of Catholics. He told the *Rover*, “I know our current administration will not tolerate blatant targeting like this. Weaponization has no place in our country.”

Anthony Fedoruk is a senior Political Science major with a minor in Theology. His favorite hobby is cheering on Philadelphia sports teams. Contact him at afedoruk@nd.edu.



Lindsay Clancy Case Ends in Mistrial

Both supporters, opponents left unsatisfied with the outcome

RAY WEBBER
Politics Editor

The criminal trial of Lindsay Clancy, who pleaded not guilty to fatally strangling her three children on the night of January 24, 2023, was ruled a mistrial after a single holdout in the jury prevented Clancy's acquittal by reason of insanity. The case was extensively covered in national media and sparked public debate about the defense's claim that Clancy lacked criminal responsibility due to her postpartum psychosis.

The defense argued that medical providers did not appropriately address Clancy's mental health disorders and that she was improperly diagnosed. As a result, the defense claimed that she was not rationally conscious of her actions and that her murders occurred as a result of medical negligence. The prosecution refuted such claims as they demonstrated to the court that Clancy's awareness of her actions immediately following the murders as well as inconsistencies in her claim that she was hearing voices proved her criminal responsibility.

Due to the emphasis of the case being on women's mental health, hundreds of female protestors gathered outside of the trial in Plymouth, Massachusetts to support Clancy by wearing pink

to demonstrate their solidarity and carrying signs that read, "She Asked For Help," "Mothers Support You," and even "Patrick Did It." Others took to social media to propagate conspiracy theories concerning the case, with many claiming that her ex-husband, Patrick Clancy, was behind the murders, which Clancy herself denied in an interview with NBC News.

The trial became a highly contentious topic on social media, where the debate extended beyond questions of maternal health or the legitimacy of Clancy's claims of insanity and instead centered on the current conflicts within America's sexual politics. The pro-Clancy contingent, as expressed in Emma Cieslik's article, "What the Lindsay Clancy Trial Reveals About America's Failure to Support Mothers in Crisis," argued that the murders occurred as a result of sexism in the American medical system and that patriarchal oppression neglects the needs of mothers and the psychological burdens they carry.

Cieslik wrote, "The healthcare system consistently fails to recognize how social expectations and pressures surrounding motherhood contribute to medical negligence and the lack of systemic support for mothers and parents."

Even right-wing political pundit

Candace Owens supported this claim on her podcast, saying, "Lindsay Clancy is obviously not guilty. There are a fleet of doctors who should be imprisoned for what they put her on. I speak out against 'Big Pharma' all the time, and they are getting away with murder."

However, pro-life advocates and the anti-Clancy contingent, as demonstrated in Paul Batura's article "Culture of Death Creates Moral Confusion Surrounding Clancy Trial," argued that the justification for Clancy's actions are rooted in the present idea that women have a right to murder their children when the children's presence causes suffering or inconveniences for them.

According to Batura, "When you rationalize away immorality regarding one evil act (abortion), it can become easier and more likely to somehow excuse it in another. The failure to distinguish between what is evil and what is good is what drives and multiplies cultural confusion." Many posts on TikTok and Instagram support Batura's claim, as several women have posted videos in support of Clancy from the standpoint of bodily autonomy.

Fr. Dan Reehill—a Catholic priest, the exorcist for the diocese of Nashville, and host of the Battle Ready radio program on Radio Maria USA—showed his disdain for the public support of

Lindsay Clancy and viewed the protests outside the courthouse as an extension of pro-abortion movements. He stated, "There would be 'no universe' where hundreds of men would gather to support a father accused of killing his children."

Due to the high publicity of the case, many of the jurors in favor of acquitting Clancy spoke to national media sources. Three white female jurors interviewed by NBC Boston expressed their frustrations with the lone holdout juror's refusal to "follow the court's instructions of reasonable doubt."

Jury Foreperson Roni Carlson said, "It was obvious that she loved her children. Everything proved that she loved her children—from her journals to the testimonies of her mother-in-law and loved ones. For that reason, I could not say she was guilty." Juror Kellie Farina claimed that the holdout juror was acting against the standards of the court, saying, "He had the hardest time getting over the fact that Lindsay viciously murdered her three children," implying that he ignored reasonable doubt out of an emotional reaction.

Juror Nick Dargie also criticized the legality of the holdout juror's actions as he told ABC News that "he didn't show a single piece of evidence to explain his vote." However, the holdout juror,

recently revealed to be a black male, has not yet provided any statement to the public on the matter.

Beyond the concerns of distributing justice in the Lindsay Clancy case, many are concerned that Clancy's innocence could be used as justification for other mentally-ill or suffering mothers to murder their children. Some speculate that a recent case in Illinois, in which a woman murdered her two-year-old son, may have been a "copycat murder" of the Lindsay Clancy murders.

Corie Walsh, a forty-year-old who was reportedly "deeply invested" in the Lindsay Clancy trial, hanged her son in the basement of her home. His body was discovered by his siblings as they returned home from school. Walsh's defendants, just like Clancy's, argued that she was acting out of insanity. Consequently, many believe that some mentally-ill mothers may use post-partum psychosis or similar conditions to justify murdering their children in the future.

Raymond Webber is a junior philosophy major. His favorite hobby is listening to Bishop Fulton Sheen homilies on YouTube. Contact him at rwebber2@nd.edu.

Flock Cameras in South Bend

Cameras bring promise and concern to the city

JACOB SCHIERL
Staff Writer

The South Bend Police Department stated in a Facebook post from 2023 that it "has never shied away from embracing technology to help fight crime." They have remained true to their word—South Bend is now home to 53 automated license plate readers (ALPRs), all but one of them Flock Safety units. The city accounts for nearly two percent of all of Indiana's ALPRs.

Although Flock Safety offers other products, including video-surveillance cameras, gunshot detectors, and first responder drones, local police departments primarily deploy ALPRs—small, black, AI-powered, shoebox-sized cameras usually mounted high up on streetlamps. Flock Safety dominates the ALPR industry, accounting for roughly 82 percent of the mapped total among competitors like Motorola Solutions, Genetec, and Leonardo.

Flock cameras are generally used to identify vehicles. Many are designed to take pictures of vehicles' license plate numbers and assist in identifying the make and model of these cars. ALPRs do not actually record and store videos—they only take snapshots of moments in time.

Pictures are enough, however, for law enforcement to reconstruct a vehicle's movement, as they can map their location with time stamps and cross reference them with other cameras. Pictures are taken together in short bursts, which provides something functionally equivalent to a short video clip.

ALPRs in South Bend offer much promise in regard to solving crime. They have proven enormously useful in identifying cars involved in crimes around the city. Current South Bend mayor James Mueller said, "These are tools that are part of our crime-fighting efforts and they've been very effective." In 2024 alone, Flock cameras assisted the police department in 151 cases, including 50 percent of all homicide cases.

With the mass installation of ALPRs and security cameras across the country, though, public outrage over infringement on civil liberties has arisen. Mueller acknowledged the privacy concerns in South Bend, saying, "You've got to make sure that you've got the right guardrails. ... We believe we have those here locally."

Many Indiana counties are yielding to public concern over privacy violations and reconsidering the merits of Flock cameras surveilling their citizens.

Kosciusko County, located Southeast of St. Joseph County, voted on September 10 to remove all Flock units.

On September 8, Starke County also announced the end of their contract with Flock. Sheriff Jack Rosa of Starke County said, "there were just too many questions for us to keep on doing it. It just wasn't in the best interest of the public."

Backlash has been brewing across the country; many citizens feel uneasy knowing that their vehicles are constantly surveilled. Vandals have been active in 36 states, some destroying ALPRs with guns and saws. The prospect of the AI-powered devices operating beyond human oversight has only fueled public concern.

Some oppose ALPRs on legal grounds, citing citizens' "God-given right to privacy recognized in the Fourth Amendment." Law enforcement's newfound ability to track citizens as they move from place to place in their vehicle strikes critics as a blatant violation of their privacy.

Flock Safety is not unaware of the concerns over citizens' civil liberties. Plastered across their website are mottos that assure the visitor of their dedication to the privacy of communities under the surveillance of Flock cameras. Under a section titled

"Raising the bar," they report that their revised recommendation for data storage has been decreased from 30 days to 7. Flock has also touted "increased transparency around data ownership, security, and agency policies."

Flock partners primarily with local law enforcement, providing them with powerful surveillance information. This information, placed in the hands of local officials, raises little concern among most citizens. However, Flock does not regulate the information collected on citizens past the use of its customers.

The company employs a hands-off approach in the dissemination of the information gathered using their products. In fact, the Chief Communications Officer told the press that "It is not Flock's job to police the police."

Chief among the concerns of critics is the distribution of data to federal agencies, particularly Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Information collected from Flock is not automatically shared with the federal government, and Flock's website states, "sharing only happens if an agency chooses to participate."

Therefore, communities could safeguard information from the federal government, and Flock would honor their request. The privacy of citizens' data is

ultimately up to the customer—the local agency—rather than the people themselves. This means that should a local agency wish to share information with the federal government, it would have the ability to do so.

In practice, though, the information is rarely restricted to the eyes of the agency. Inherent in Flock's business model is a strong incentive to share information with the national database. If local officials should choose to provide access to the data they collect on their citizens, it would gain access to the data of all of the other communities participating in the nationwide network. As a result, 75 percent of Flock's law enforcement customers have agreed to join the National Lookup Tool and pool their data.

Flock's technology presents South Bend, like many other American cities, with a difficult decision: to fund Flock ALPRs in hopes of deterring crime or to remove the cameras in the name of citizens' privacy. Whither, South Bend?

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ND Consecration *continued from front*

... As priests, we're supposed to ... conform our hearts to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and to love like the Lord loved the people of God."

Fr. Ching also highlighted this prior presence of the devotion. "It's not as if the university will just discover the importance of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the 25th of September, but the act of consecration is a way of focusing our attention, ... then calling us to action to live out what the Sacred Heart means for us as Christians, as Notre Dame students, as disciples of Jesus."

While the university is no stranger to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the devotion to the Sacred Heart predates the university, the Congregation of Holy Cross, and America itself. The love of God has been a common theme

throughout Church history, but it was St. Margaret Mary Alcoque, a 17th century French nun, who popularized devotion to the Sacred Heart as we know it today.

Fr. Haake told the *Rover*, "St. Margaret Mary Alcoque receives these apparitions of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and ... [He] tells her to promote devotion to His Sacred Heart. The devotion had existed before, but that's really [when] it explodes."

Fisher commented, "The Church saw fit that we grow in devotion [to] the Sacred Heart, because, as it has been said, to know the heart of Jesus is to know the entire person. If we grow in devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, we will get to know the entire Person of Jesus a lot better."

While the Mass and consecration are the only Sacred Heart-related events officially sponsored by the university

itself, campus institutes and organizations are hosting many events as Notre Dame shows and deepens its devotion to the Sacred Heart.

"Behold This Heart: The Theology of Consecration to the Sacred Heart" is an all-star panel hosted by the deNicola Center for Ethics and Culture and the McGrath Institute for Church Life, featuring Professor Jennifer Martin, Professor John Cavadini, Father Kevin Grove, C.S.C., and Professor Anthony Pagliarini. It will be in the McKenna Hall Conference Center on Monday, September 21 at 5:00 p.m.

"Letters from the Heart" is a service opportunity happening at the Clarke Memorial Fountain on Thursday, September 17 from 12:00-6:00 p.m. The Notre Dame family will write notes and letters to prisoners, extending God's love to those rejected and set apart from society.

There is Eucharistic Adoration in the Basilica after 11:30 a.m. Mass on each Friday of September, from 12:30-5:00 p.m. On September 4, Exalt praise and worship Adoration was Sacred Heart-themed. Additionally, most dorm's spirituality commissioners have organized a Sacred Heart-themed event, which can be found by contacting your spirituality commissioner or by consulting the ongoing list.

Lastly, the Office of Mission Engagement and Church Affairs is showing the *Sacre Cœur* film, bringing the life of St. Margaret Mary Alcoque to the screen, in the Browning Cinema in the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center (dPAC) on Friday, October 2 at 6:30pm. Guests can reserve tickets using dPAC's official website.

Fr. Ching highlighted these events but also spoke about the transformation he hopes takes

place in the hearts of his students. "Part of being in college is that you're naturally focused on yourself, because so much of the narrative is about my success and how hard I have to work and my production. ... The Sacred Heart calls us to think about life not just in terms of what I'm doing to advance my own cause, but how I'm using my gifts and my talents in service of others, in service of the Church, in service of the Body of Christ."

Kolbe Barta is a sophomore in Duncan Hall, a proud Texan, and studies theology and economics with a minor in constitutional studies. If you do not find him studying in the swanky new CCCG suite in Flanner Hall, email him at kbarta3@nd.edu.

Bishop Rhoades Dedicates New Residence Hall Chapels

Residents reflect on new dorm chapels

MADLINE PAGE
Staff Writer

Notre Dame opened three new residence hall chapels over the summer, the chapels of the recently constructed Coyle and Grojean Halls, and the renovated chapel of Pasquerilla West Hall. During the first two weeks of classes, Bishop Kevin Rhoades of the Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend celebrated dedication Masses attended by students, faculty, and donors.

Bp. Rhoades dedicated the chapel of St. Theodore Guerin in Grojean Hall on August 26. Students, hall staff, and the Grojean family knelt as Bp. Rhoades incensed the altar and anointed it with holy chrism.

"Here, you will receive the grace and strength you need for your lives here at Notre Dame," Bp. Rhoades said in his homily. He exhorted the women of Grojean, former residents of Howard Hall, to use the chapel as a space to grow in sisterhood with each other and in friendship with Christ. At the conclusion of the Mass, Bp. Rhoades presented the Grojean community with a relic of St. Theodore Guerin.

Juniors Meredith Kononchek and Isabel O'Brien, who both serve as faith commissioners in Grojean Hall, commented on the chapel dedication in interviews with the *Rover*.

"The Grojean chapel is so different from the Howard chapel," Kononchek told the *Rover*. "While I absolutely love both of them, Grojean's feels more like an actual church. ... Hopefully this bigger chapel allows for more people to attend Mass." In addition to their Sunday Mass, the women



Image by Madeline Page

of Grojean will host a weekly smoothie bowl Mass at 8:30 p.m. on Thursdays.

Although Grojean does not have a priest in residence, University President Emeritus Reverend John Jenkins, C.S.C. is assigned to minister to the dorm.

"While Fr. Jenkins will not be living in Grojean Hall, many of us are very excited to have a priest designated to our dorm," O'Brien told the *Rover*. "The consistency will allow Fr. Jenkins to become a familiar face for Grojean residents and improve their ability to connect with and get to know a priest on campus. It will also make it much easier for commissioners like myself to coordinate Eucharistic Adoration and Confession in the hall."

Days after dedicating Grojean's chapel, Bp. Rhoades dedicated the chapel of St. Paul in the newly constructed Coyle Hall. "The increased capacity and grandeur of the space is just an indication of how much we take [our faith] seriously," Coyle Rector Joey Quinones told the *Rover*. "That being said, we need

to carry the weight of such a chapel, which can only be done by everyone's individual and collective spiritual life."

Unlike many other residence hall chapels, the chapels of St. Theodore Guerin and St. Paul feature lofty ceilings, reminiscent of the Basilica of the Sacred Heart. Furthermore, increased seating capacity promises to harbor a greater number of Mass attendees, as indicated by the first Coyle Hall Ice Cream Mass. Building on a beloved tradition, the inaugural Mass and ice cream social on the Wednesday following the dedication was attended by 179 students.

Following the St. Paul chapel dedication, the chapel of St. Clare of Assisi in Pasquerilla West Hall was dedicated on September 1. Over the summer, the chapel was fully remodeled: tiles replaced carpet, pews were added to the expanded congregational seating, and the walls were redone in pink and white. The chapel was renovated in the style of the Basilica of St. Clare in Assisi, Italy.

Pasquerilla West senior and

resident assistant Anna Buckler described the chapel in an interview with the *Rover*. "The renovations have really elevated the chapel's look and feel. ... I love the openness, light, colors, and the addition of elements that point to St. Clare," she said.

Annabelle Clark, a junior living in Pasquerilla West, echoed Buckler's sentiments. "We feel [the chapel] perfectly encapsulates our faith and femininity," she told the *Rover*. "It's a beautiful expression of what [Pasquerilla West] spirituality means to us, while preserving the history and legacy of our chapel that we hold so dear."

"We continue to pray for a shepherd to help guide us, a priest in residence," Clark added.

Pasquerilla West will offer Muffin Mass on Mondays at 9 p.m., with rotating flavors of homemade muffins.

The presence of chapels offering Sunday and weekday Mass is a unique aspect of Notre Dame's identity. Bartosz Karol Chramiec, a resident assistant in Coyle, reflected on

the significance of living under the same roof as the Eucharist.

"Our chapel ... gives people of all backgrounds, even those without any experience with faith at all, the opportunity (and not just one!) to encounter the Living God," he told the *Rover*. "The red lamp tells all that the Word-made-Flesh resides in the chapel. Having Christ in the tabernacle in a college dorm is the first step in growing spiritually. The traveler just has to accept His invitation."

Sunday and weekday Mass times for the new chapels can be found online at unifynd.org.

Madeline Page is a junior studying biology. As a proud PW Purple Weasel, she is thrilled to have such a beautiful dwelling place for the Lord within her home. Now, if only PW could get a priest in residence...if you are a priest, contact mpage4@nd.edu for all the reasons why you should move to the Purple Palace.



Feed Your Faith Draws Hundreds to Campus Faith Community

Campus Ministry hosts dozens of faith-based groups for students

NOIRIN DEMPSEY
Staff Writer

Anyone who set foot on South Quad on the evening of August 26 would have seen crowds of students lining the sidewalks clad in blue t-shirts, smelled tacos and pizza from food trucks, and heard praise and worship music echoing across the quad. For returning Notre Dame students, these sights can only mean one signature campus event: Feed Your Faith.

This annual faith kickoff event, organized by Campus Ministry, featured nearly 50 student clubs and attracted over 1,400 students. With the help of roughly 200 volunteers, Feed Your Faith offered abundant options for those seeking to explore spiritual opportunities available on campus.

Emily Mountain, a freshman in McGlinn Hall, attended Feed Your Faith and joined clubs such as the Children of Mary, Notre Dame Right to Life, and the Militia of the Immaculata. She described her experience

to the *Rover*, “It was definitely a place where you were invited to find a group that you fit in with,” Mountain said. “Everyone I met there was really nice and encouraging.”

Junior Carlos Jison, a member of Asian Student Ministry, described the wide variety of opportunities at Feed Your Faith in an interview with the *Rover*. “Campus Ministry is obviously Catholic and Christ-focused, but a huge part of who we are ... is meeting people where they are in their faith.” Jison continued, “Feed Your Faith really provides a great opportunity to see all that Campus Ministry has to offer, and that Campus Ministry really has something for everyone.”

Alongside Catholic groups such as Exalt Praise and Worship Adoration, OCIA, and Hallow were tables featuring clubs like the Muslim Student Association, Iron Sharpens Iron, and the Orthodox Christian Fellowship. Additional tables advertised various liturgical choirs, retreats, multicultural clubs, and more.

Sophomore Mark Mikhail, president of the Maritain Fellows

program through the Jacques Maritain Center, described how the many tables helped students establish the groundwork for deepening their faith.

Mikhail told the *Rover*, “They’re each very specific, but there’s so many of them that you can find your own niche in order to grow your faith.” For students, he went on, “knowing that there are these places that can nourish your faith with God is foundational.”

Lucy Konrad, a junior who helped represent the Campus Ministry Retreats table, echoed the event’s emphasis on welcoming all students into a faith community. “I had really good conversations with some first-years who were curious about retreats,” Konrad told the *Rover*. “There’s so many people, and it’s fun, and everyone is there for the same reason: to bring people into the love of Christ and to build a community around that.”

Beyond merely being welcomed, students at Feed Your Faith were invited to take an active role in the larger faith community. Director of Student Ministry Mike Buckler told the

Rover in an email, “In Campus Ministry, we want every student to know that they are not only welcome, but actually called to live into their role as beloved daughter or son of God, as a disciple of Jesus.”

Buckler continued, “Feed Your Faith tries to help students find a ministry that will best help them grow in faith and share their gifts, to contribute to authentic Christian community, and actually be [the] Church on campus.”

Konrad described Campus Ministry Retreats as having a similar call to action. “[They are] equipping people to go out into the campus community and to love others as Christ loves and to take what they learn ... and to go out and spread the Gospel.”

From attending Feed Your Faith last year as a freshman to running a table this year alongside new friends, Mikhail told the *Rover*, “seeing my friends behind all of these tables ... just made me so proud of everybody who’s working really hard to try to serve the Notre Dame community in order to grow their faith.” He

added, “I see God’s grace working ... a lot in my friends.”

Buckler noted that Feed Your Faith’s invitation persists even after the event’s conclusion. “Each person on this campus is invited by the university to deepen their faith during their time here—if you will, to feed their faith,” Buckler explained. “We hope that Feed Your Faith is an event that invites all students into something deeper, something more meaningful, and that students connect with a community of faith that will make possible such a deepening.”

Noirin Dempsey is a sophomore from Lake Geneva, Wisconsin currently living in McGlinn Hall. When she’s not studying political science and journalism, she can usually be found playing piano in the McGlinn chapel, wandering the snack aisle at Trader Joe’s, or watching the Chicago Bears win football games. You can contact Noirin at ndempsey@nd.edu.

Notre Dame Professors Appointed Consultors to Vatican Dicastery

Sedmak, Fr. Katongole to advise Vatican on integral human development

CLARE HETTICH
Religion Editor

Pope Leo XIV appointed Notre Dame professors Father Emmanuel Katongole and Clemens Sedmak as consultors to the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development on August 18.

The dicastery, created by Pope Francis in 2016, focuses on “overcoming the many obstacles to people’s integral human development. Among others, these include violence and war, human rights violations, humanitarian emergencies, environmental degradation, unemployment, inaccessible healthcare and forced migration,” according to the dicastery’s website.

Sedmak, Professor of Social Ethics and Director of the Nanovic Institute for European Studies, told the *Rover*, “The dicastery deals with all matters relating to, you could say, enacting Catholic Social Teaching globally.”

According to Sedmak, the dicastery is “a two way street of communication” between ecclesial authorities and local dioceses. “On the one hand, the dicastery would listen to what’s happening on the ground, especially through dioceses

and universities and bishops’ conferences. On the other hand, they would bring the concerns of Pope Leo XIV, for example, to those places.”

Sedmak, originally from Austria, holds doctoral degrees in philosophy, theology and social theory. Along with positions at the University of Salzburg and Kings College London, he has been a visiting professor at multiple other international universities.

Fr. Katongole is a Professor of Theology and Peace Studies and serves as a full-time faculty member of the Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies in the Keough School of Global Affairs. He is a priest of the Archdiocese of Kampala in Uganda and founded the Bethany Land Institute, an organization that employs integral ecology to help young people in Uganda learn regenerative agriculture and economic innovation.

Fr. Katongole did not respond to the *Rover*’s request for comment.

Professor Suzanne Shanahan, Leo and Arlene Hawk Executive Director of the Institute for Social Concerns, where both Fr. Katongole and Sedmak are faculty fellows, wrote to the *Rover*, “We are thrilled and deeply honored by the appointment of Fr. Emmanuel Katongole and

Clemens Sedmak as consultors. ... Their appointment is a testament to their profound scholarship and lived commitment to marginalized communities.”

Professor William Mattison, the Wilsey College Professor of Theology and Chair of the Theology Department, warmly praised both professors. “[They work] at the highest level of intellectual rigor, and deeply in service, deeply animated by the Faith, both the Catholic intellectual tradition and the faith lives of each of those people. They’re both scholars who are deeply faithful, and who engage broader audiences too.”

As consultors, the professors will offer the dicastery research and insight from their academic expertise. Sedmak explained, “Consultants tend to be more on the academic side because they are experts in a certain field. But ... it’s a mix of practitioners, dignitaries of the Church, and academics, which is also part of the beauty of the Catholic Church.”

Prof. Sedmak and Fr. Katongole join Father Daniel Groody, C.S.C., Vice President and Associate Provost for Undergraduate Education at Notre Dame, who serves as a member of the dicastery. Fr. Groody did not respond to a request for comment.

When asked how their work intersects with the dicastery topic, Sedmak’s and Fr. Katongole’s colleagues noted the resonance between Notre Dame’s mission and the promotion of integral human development.

Shanahan said the dicastery’s work is similar to the mission of the Institute for Social Concerns. “The work of the dicastery is rooted in Catholic social tradition, which the institute animates by connecting faculty and student research with vulnerable communities across the globe,” she commented.

Professor Mary Gallagher, the Marilyn Keough Dean of the Keough School of Global Affairs and a professor of global affairs, wrote to the *Rover*, “At Notre Dame, we think about development broadly, not simply in terms of economic growth, but in terms of the dignity and flourishing of the whole person and the communities in which people live.”

Sedmak noted that his time at Notre Dame has given him unique insights to contribute to the dicastery. “One thing I think I could bring as a Notre Dame person [is] having interactions with students, [with] whom we talk about issues of Catholic Social Teaching, who themselves are not Catholic.”

A second way Notre Dame

has enhanced Sedmak’s potential contributions, he said, is that “the Congregation [of Holy Cross] is the animating force behind our university, and that makes a big difference, also in terms of how visible Catholicism is lived on campus, because it’s lived through a congregation that is not only about academia; it’s also about mission.”

Mattison said that these professors’ appointments reflect on Notre Dame as an institution. “It says a lot about them that they were chosen, but also a lot about them that they were willing to, with all the commitments they have, to do this work in service to the Church, and it tells a lot about Notre Dame, that it’s our people who are being picked for this, so thanks be to God.”

Clare Hettich is a sophomore from Potomac, Maryland studying theology and the Program of Liberal Studies. According to Google Calendar Time Insights, she spends 70% of her time reading, 20% chatting, and 10% sending emails. She welcomes more emails at chettich@nd.edu.



Summer Staff Picks

Caleb Vaughan
Editor-in-Chief

Pick: *Les Miserables*, (Victor Hugo)

If you wish to understand Christ’s agony at Gethsemene, read only Monsieur Madeleine’s sleepless torment over Jean Valjean’s guilt. If you wish to know why Christ accepted crucifixion and descended into Hell, read only Fantine’s darkest hour of sacrifice for her daughter. “He who knows that sees all darkness. He is alone. His name is God.” I would not, though, fault any reader who picks up the abridged version. Hugo’s descriptions of the Battle of Waterloo, the Parisian sewers, and his diatribe against European monastic life are only a few among a number of skippable passages.

Gabe Hockstra
Managing Editor

Pick: *The Path Between the Seas* (David McCullough)

David McCullough weaves together the political disputes, financial struggles, personal trials, and heroism that made the building of the Panama Canal, a seemingly impossible task, into a reality. His narrative raises questions about a nation’s willingness to stake its resources and reputation on the promises of one charismatic leader. I recommend this book to anyone interested in American history and enterprise.

Henry Omanga
Campus Editor

Pick: *Father Elijah* (Michael O'Brien)

Though on its face an apocalyptic novel that follows the titular character as he leaves the monastery to call to repentance the most powerful man in the world, I found it to be a thought provoking reflection on spiritual warfare through the lens of the end times. Few other books I’ve read have both gripped me and required me to acquire a sort of divine perspective to grapple with such significant content.

Ray Webber
Politics Editor

Pick: *Metropolitan* (1990)

This film is a whimsical account of young New York aristocrats who are fearing their impending downward social mobility. They evade the consequences of the collapse of the aristocracy by attempting to uphold the polite society of old by attending balls, debating politics, and obsessing over personal titles. The film is a critical look at the consequences of democratic egalitarianism and America’s growing resentment of elitism and inherited authority.

Jack Krieger
Executive Editor

Pick: *Murder in the Cathedral* (T.S. Eliot)

My favorite read this summer was T.S. Eliot’s *Murder in the Cathedral*. I read it on a train, just days after visiting Canterbury Cathedral in England as part of a summer research trip. Eliot’s play made St. Thomas Becket’s martyrdom come alive, and helped me to realize how significant Becket was in the history of England. It is a powerful, short play, which makes the reader question what he’d die for. My favorite line is Becket’s comfort to the priests as knights siege the cathedral: “I am not in danger: only near to death.”

Lucy Trotter
Editor-in-Chief Emerita; Opinion Editor

Pick: *The Godfather Part II* (1974)

A star-studded classic, this Best Picture movie is well worth a watch for mature audiences (although only if you’ve seen *The Godfather*). The film follows the youngest Cordileone son, Michael, down his tragic path of moral decline as the head of a powerful mafia family. Tensions between Italian Catholicism, American political corruption, and familial loyalties are brilliantly portrayed in this heartwrenching work that defies the usual curse of mediocrity faced by a sequel.

Clare DiFranco
Campus Editor

Pick: *Persuasion* (Jane Austen)

This novel persuaded me from regarding *Pride and Prejudice* as my favorite work by Jane Austen. *Persuasion* follows the story of a thoughtful and discerning Anne Elliot, whose highly-regarded trait ultimately results in her indecision and subsequent rejection of Captain Wentworth. For years following the rejection, she battles a line of potential suitors, unsought input from opinionated family members, and lingering feelings for the captain. I would recommend this novel to anyone looking for a period drama about a slow-burn romance. Plus, it’s Jane Austen, need I say more?

Clare Hettich
Religion Editor

Pick: *Music by Brother Isaiah*, CFR

This summer, I discovered music by Brother Isaiah, CFR. I found his songs to be a humbling reminder of Christ’s love, in an upbeat style that adapts itself even to everyday moments like working out or taking a shower. He employs different musical genres, but the songs are usually acoustic guitar-based. A great bonus is that a lot of his music is on Hallow, so, for ND students, ad-free!



Continued from pg. 10

Andrew Blake
Culture Editor

Pick: *Missa Brevis in F* (Mozart)

I have loved listening to orchestral Mass settings since I first discovered them. Although they are seldom used today, I was fortunate enough to hear this setting used in a Mass this summer. While certainly not feasible for all parishes, I believe sacred music like this can help remind us of the grandeur of the Mass in a way that ordinary hymn tunes do not.

Eddie Giuntini
Publisher

Pick: *Good Morning, Vietnam* (1987)

This film stars Robin Williams as Adrian Cronauer, a military radio DJ in Vietnam who uses comedy, rock music, and satire to entertain American troops during the Vietnam War. Along with hilarious performances from Robin Williams and a fantastic setlist from the era, the movie offers a vivid depiction of the realities of war and the impact it has on people’s lives.

Joseph Ferguson
Humor Editor

Pick: *The Siege of Jadotville* (2016)

Richie Smyth’s 2016 movie recounts the untold story of Pat Quinlan, an Irish commander (and practicing Catholic) with his battalion of 150 soldiers, sent by the UN to a small town of Jadotville in Congo on a peacekeeping mission in 1961 during the Congo Crisis. While political tensions rise between European powers and different factions within the Congo, Quinlan and his men are faced with defending the town against 3,000 Katangese secessionist troops led by French and Belgian mercenaries. My Irish-Catholic blood appreciated this accurate retelling of a fascinating conflict in a little-known corner of history.

Sofia Fair
Events Director & Social Media Coordinator

Pick: *Sense and Sensibility* (2008, BBC)

Sense and Sensibility is the perfect mini-series to spend a rainy weekend watching. The films bring to light the deception that one can fall into under the guise of love. Following two sisters under the social and romantic pressure of their time, the retelling of Jane Austen’s story highlights the hope and perseverance needed to find true companionship. If you end this show by rewatching its final scene a few times—you’re not alone! I recommend this to a helpless romantic looking for an unexpected ending.

Harrison Barkley
Webmaster

Pick: *Young Washington* (2026)

Young Washington tells an often-overlooked story of George Washington’s relentless advance towards the Ohio frontier for the English crown. Washington’s failures prove that any successful leader must learn from failures to forge the resilience necessary to make big decisions in a split second—he inspires viewers with his leadership from the front in the Battle of the Monongahela when he acts with violence and intensity after his commander goes down, taking the fight into his own hands. The echo of the war cry “To Virginia!” at the end of the movie was especially meaningful to myself and anyone so lucky to be from the great Commonwealth.

Matthew McBride
Webmaster

Pick: *Dodgeball* (2004)

Dodgeball is a classic underdog sports comedy about a ragtag team, led by Vince Vaughn, competing for a cash prize in a dodgeball tournament in order to save their local gym. However, the competition heats up when Ben Stiller, the CEO of rival fitness chain Globo Gym and Vaughn’s childhood enemy, enters the tournament to defeat him. The movie’s corporate satire feels more relevant now than in 2004, and its dialogue and humor have become a quotable time capsule decades later.



It behooves a watchdog to bark. Good, Rover.



Notre Dame Students Excavate San Clemente Basilica

Notre Dame Rome partners with the San Clemente Project

RYLEN LASTRELLA

Staff Writer

A new initiative beginning in the fall of 2026 will give students of the University of Notre Dame in Rome an opportunity to participate in efforts to restore the Basilica of San Clemente through internships with the San Clemente Project. The project is being undertaken by the Hortus Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and restoration of “timeless works of Catholic cultural heritage.”

Located near the Notre Dame Rome building, San Clemente is named after Pope Saint Clement I, the Catholic Church’s third pope. Through excavation efforts in 1857, the Prior of San Clemente discovered two layers of buildings beneath the present basilica.

The layered archaeological structure of San Clemente has its roots in the history of the area. After the Great Fire of Rome in the first century rendered buildings in the area unlivable, dirt layered over time and became the foundation for two first-century buildings. When these buildings were abandoned, a house was built on top, and then finally, around the year 400 A.D., the house was made into the first Basilica of San Clemente.

Joseph Sciortino, a fourth-year architecture student, shared his experience visiting



Image by Wikimedia Commons

the basilica while studying abroad in Rome. Sciortino told the *Rover*, “It is located in the same neighborhood as the villa, so I was able to go to daily Mass there and became intimately familiar with the church.” Sciortino also stressed the importance of San Clemente in the history of Rome, noting that the many unearthed layers reveal the story of Rome’s lengthy history.

By the year 1100 A.D., the church building was abandoned and filled with rubble when the rising street level compelled the construction of a taller church. This newer building, run by the Irish Dominicans, is the current

Basilica of San Clemente.

The Hortus Foundation’s project focuses on the restoration of this twelfth century church, which bears the damage of cracked paint, decayed frescoes, and ceiling disrepair. The total estimated time of reconstruction efforts is approximately two years, which the basilica estimates will include “major restoration work” and scaffolding until mid-2027.

Meredith Glunz, also a fourth-year architecture student who studied in Rome, told the *Rover*, “It was interesting to see the progress of the restorations going on this past

year. Different sections of the church would appear from beneath scaffolding, revealing incredible craftsmanship that was thoughtfully and beautifully restored.”

Glunz continued, “I think that this collaboration is a gift to the Notre Dame community, for both the students participating in the internships and for the future generations who get to experience the beauty of the Catholic faith through the architecture and history captured and preserved in this space.”

Notre Dame students will work hands-on with the project’s three restoration

phases. The first consists of cleaning, repairing, and modernizing several portions of the twelfth century church. The second involves excavating and preserving many elements within the fourth century church below the current basilica. The third phase will introduce a museum experience.

Chris Winter, a 2026 graduate, also studied abroad in Rome as a student. He echoed the same sentiments as Sciortino: “The Basilica of San Clemente is one of the most impressive archaeological, artistic, and religious marvels in a city that is full of them. Notre Dame students now have access to an incredible opportunity in being able to contribute directly to the restoration and preservation of this great monument of our Catholic heritage.”

Winter also urged future students to consider this program as “it will surely be the experience of a lifetime.”

Rylen Lastrella is a junior studying in the Program of Liberal Studies and theology. His room has become quite the archaeological site of its own. Like the Basilica of San Clemente, it contains layer upon layer of books because apparently there is such a thing as too much reading and too little shelf space. If you want to aid in the acquisition of a suitable bookshelf for his room, he may be reached at rlastrel@nd.edu.

Pilgrims Visit Green Bay Marian Apparition Site

Sorin Fellows pilgrimage combines faith and football

MADELINE PAGE

Staff Writer

The deNicola Center for Ethics and Culture took 37 Sorin Fellows on pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Champion in Wisconsin over the weekend of September 5-6. The shrine is just a few miles down the road from Lambeau Field, where the Fighting Irish beat the Wisconsin Badgers on Sunday.

The Shrine of Our Lady of Champion is the only verified Marian apparition in the United States. In 1859, Servant of God Adele Brice met a beautiful woman standing between a hemlock and a maple tree while on her weekly 10 mile walk to Sunday Mass. At the prompting of her parish priest, Brice questioned the lady as to who she was. The lady replied, “I am the Queen of Heaven who prays for the conversion of sinners, and I wish you to do the same. ...Gather the children in the wild country, and teach them what they should know for salvation ... go, and fear

nothing.”

Brice devoted the rest of her life to catechesis. A shrine was constructed at the site of the apparition, and, a dozen years later, marked the location of the Miracle of the Fire.

Regarded as one of the worst in U.S. history, the 1871 Great Peshtigo Fire ravaged Wisconsin, killing an estimated 2,000 people and burning over 1.2 million acres. The land around the shrine was destroyed and the bordering fence was scorched, but the shrine was left completely untouched. Every pilgrim who fled to the shrine and sought the intercession of Our Lady of Champion during the fire was saved.

For senior Peter Onder, the pilgrimage was the perfect opportunity to “spend the weekend with Sorin Fellows in prayer and reflection while visiting a beautiful Marian site.”

The pilgrims departed early Saturday morning, arriving at the Shrine of Our Lady of Champion by the afternoon. Students were introduced to the history of the shrine by the Fathers of Mercy, the order

serving as the shrine’s chaplains and rectors. They also listened to a spiritual reflection from the accompanying chaplain, Father Chris Brennan, C.S.C., and Professor of Philosophy John O’Callaghan.

“It was amazing to see how humble the shrine is,” sophomore Danny Rowan told the *Rover*. “From the street, it is just a few buildings in the middle of nowhere.”

Adoration, confession, a Rosary walk, Stations of the Cross, and the recitation of the Chaplet of Divine Mercy were all offered in the afternoon. Onder told the *Rover* it was “most spiritually rewarding to be able to go to Confession with one of the Fathers of Mercy,” which was “very grounded and spiritually fruitful,” Onder added.

To conclude their time at the shrine, the pilgrims attended a Votive Mass for the Blessed Mother in the Apparition Chapel.

“I got a deep sense of peace,” senior Joseph Dragonowski said of his experience at the shrine. “It was very restful and very

beautiful. ... It was kind of what I needed because I had been worrying about various things, and the sense of peacefulness inspired me to just not worry. ... I can just trust God.”

After spending the night at the Zechariah House retreat center, the students concluded their pilgrimage by attending Sunday Mass at the National Shrine of St. Joseph on the campus of St. Norbert College in De Pere.

“I’m so grateful for the chance for contemplation before the semester got too busy,” senior Elizabeth Mitchell told the *Rover*. “While I had heard about Our Lady of Champion from a variety of peers who had visited her shrine before, I wasn’t familiar with the rich history of her story. It was so beautiful to hear her impact on the people of Champion—especially as a fellow Midwesterner! Something I found very moving from the pilgrimage was seeing how Christ had worked through so many people on the trip.”

Spiritually invigorated, many of the pilgrims marched on to Green Bay to cheer on Our Lady’s team in the Shamrock

Series. This year, Notre Dame competed against the Wisconsin Badgers in the NFL’s Lambeau Field.

“It was awesome!” Rowan related. “I explored Lambeau Field with the other sophomores on the pilgrimage, and the atmosphere was incredible.”

The Irish dominated the second half of the game. With a final score of 41-13, Notre Dame maintains their undefeated record in the Shamrock Series games.

The Sorin Fellows victoriously returned under the mantle of Our Lady to campus immediately following the game, and arrived back on campus early Monday morning.

Madeline Page is a junior studying Biology. She has no shortage of school spirit, but relies on her brother to explain everything regarding Notre Dame football to her (even though she has been here for two years). Send further help to mpage4@nd.edu.



What China Taught Me About Evangelization

How should we use our freedom to evangelize at Notre Dame?

MO YEUNG
Staff Writer

In Beijing, a catechism sign outside a church gate can become a political incident.

One Christmas, the Catholic parish to which I belonged received an unusually large crowd. Amid the crowd of people, a sign advertising its catechism class was pushed beyond the church grounds. The parish was subsequently fined 5,000 renminbi—about 700 dollars—and its pastor was questioned by the authorities.

Nothing on the sign was politically provocative. It simply invited those interested in Catholicism to learn more. Its location was the problem.

Article 33 of the Beijing Regulations on Religious Affairs prohibits evangelization in public places, offices, and commercial premises outside authorized religious venues. Inside the gate, the sign belonged to ordinary parish life. Outside it, the same words constituted unlawful religious propagation.

Such boundaries shape the habits of Chinese Catholics. We learn where Mass may be celebrated, where religious literature may be displayed, and what consequences a public invitation may bring upon a parish and its priests. The Church continues to celebrate the sacraments and instruct catechumens, but it learns caution. Practiced long enough, caution can become silence.

Notre Dame has no comparable gate. According to the university, more than 160 weekday Masses and 40 Sunday Masses are celebrated across campus each week. Notre Dame has more than 50 chapels and over 70 priests, and every undergraduate residence hall has its own chapel. In 2026, Notre Dame reported the largest OCIA cohort in its recorded history: 76 people in the yearlong program, alongside 87 participants in the fall and spring short courses.

Here, students may discuss faith in dorms, dining halls, classrooms, and on the quads. A catechism poster does not need to remain a legally prescribed distance from a chapel door. Inviting a friend to Mass will not bring a rector in for questioning. Yet the first story I heard about Chinese evangelization at Notre Dame began with an email sent by Protestants.

At a gathering of the Matteo Ricci Chinese Catholic Fellowship, a visiting scholar from Peking University told us how the group began. She was a friend of a Chinese Jesuit priest who had once come to Notre Dame as a visiting scholar. According to her account, before his plane had even landed in the United States, he received an

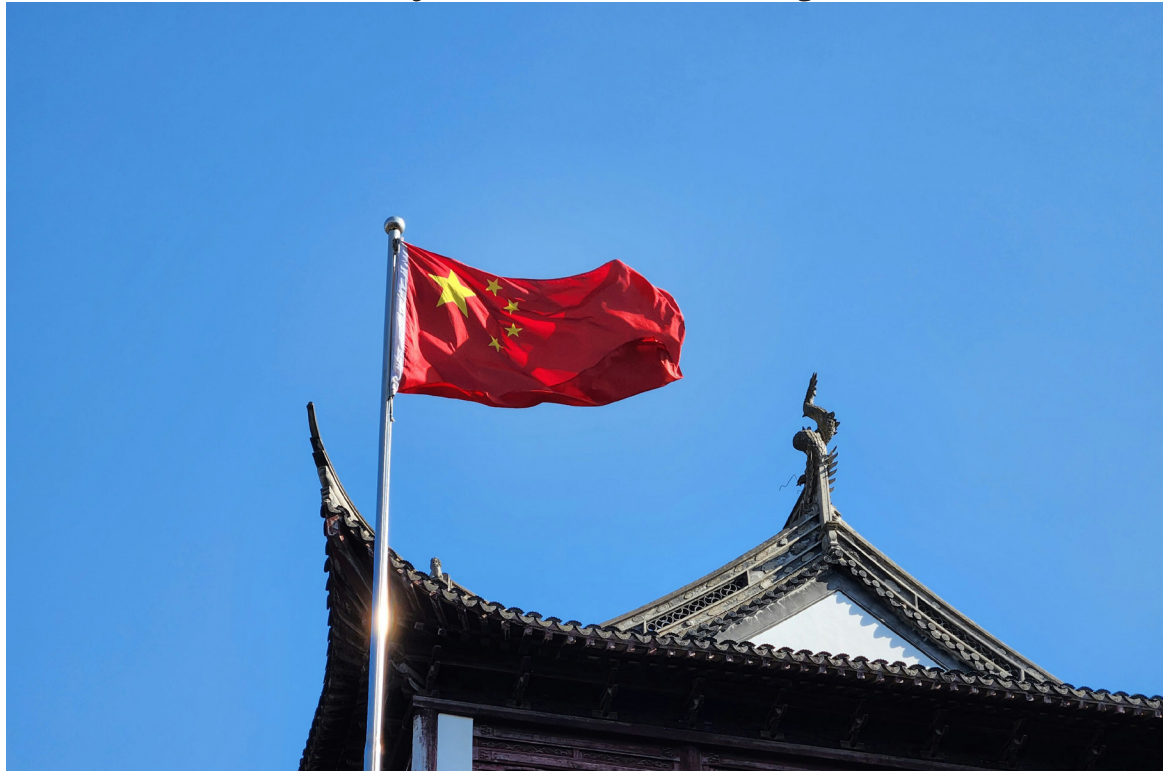


Image by Unsplash

email from a Chinese Protestant fellowship in the South Bend area asking whether he needed someone to pick him up.

A low, surprised “Oh” moved through the room.

At a university founded in the Catholic tradition, Chinese Protestants had been the first to find a Chinese Jesuit. According to the visiting scholar, that experience later became one of the reasons the Matteo Ricci Fellowship was established.

I have not independently verified every detail with the priest, so I can present the story only as it was recounted at that gathering. But its central contrast has remained with me. In Beijing, Catholics were punished when a catechism sign crossed the church gate. In South Bend, a Protestant email had crossed a denominational boundary and reached a Catholic priest before he crossed the airport gate.

My first response was hardly ecumenical. I have long been uncomfortable with Protestantism, especially the highly organized methods of evangelization found in some Chinese fellowships. I disliked seeing Protestants reach Chinese students first at one of the world’s most prominent Catholic universities. I readily interpreted their initiative as recruitment and Catholic reserve as spiritual depth.

That judgment was convenient. It spared me from asking whether our reserve was actually passivity. Chinese Protestant fellowships often notice the immediate needs of newcomers. Who will meet them at the airport? Where will they go on Friday evening? Who will remember their names? Who will invite them to a familiar meal while they are still adjusting to life in the United States?

A few professors and students can form a fellowship in a living room. They share food, study Scripture, and reach newcomers

through networks of friends. Those who were once welcomed learn to welcome the next person.

Catholics possess churches, sacraments, priests, a liturgical year, and a stable institutional life. We can easily assume that everything essential has already been prepared and that sincere seekers will eventually find us.

But Christ’s command contains a verb: “Go.”

Religious restrictions help explain why Chinese Catholics developed habits of caution. They do not justify our passivity in a free society. Trust in grace does not release us from apostolic responsibility. Matteo Ricci did not remain in Macau waiting for Chinese scholars to find him. He learned Chinese, studied the Confucian classics, adopted the dress of a literatus, and entered the intellectual life of late Ming China. He became known as *Xiru*—the “Western Confucian.”

The title did not mean that Ricci concealed his Catholic faith. In *The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven*, he openly discussed God, the soul, and human nature. He entered another culture with convictions clear enough to invite disagreement and with respect deep enough to sustain dialogue.

That balance reflects a central Catholic understanding of conversion. In the theology of “double agency,” God and the human person do not each contribute half of a conversion. God acts as the primary cause, while the person acts as a genuine secondary cause through intellect and free will. The two forms of agency operate in the same free act without competing on the same plane. Grace precedes, prepares, and elicits the human response; it does not replace it.

The Catechism puts the point plainly: “God’s free initiative demands man’s free response...” It also teaches that

grace precedes and calls forth that response while summoning human freedom to cooperate with it.

This doctrine gives Catholics no warrant for waiting idly. We remain responsible for going, speaking, inviting, and accompanying. It does, however, prevent us from claiming another person’s conversion as our achievement. We cannot manufacture faith through social technique. Baptism is not a recruiter’s trophy, a student organization’s growth metric, or proof that one denomination has defeated another.

I saw how quickly religious inquiry could be translated into denominational competition when I discussed Catholic and Protestant teachings with a student who had recently joined a Protestant fellowship. After she posted an image of the Blessed Virgin reading, one friend joked that she was “once again lingering at the door of Catholicism.” A fellowship member reacted with alarm that she might be converting. By the time the story reached an older Catholic student, it had become a report that we had “bullied” a Protestant newcomer.

No organized attack had occurred. A theological conversation had passed through several people and emerged as a struggle over membership.

These were individual reactions, not an official position of the fellowship. Still, they reveal how easily a person disappears behind the question of which group will retain her. What does she believe? What questions is she asking? Does she understand the claims of either tradition? Where does she believe God is leading her? Those questions matter more than who reached her first.

Catholics should learn the Protestant practice of active hospitality. We should meet people at airports, invite them to dinner, hold gatherings in homes, and write to someone

who has quietly disappeared. Seventy priests cannot substitute for one timely email. Forty Sunday Masses do not automatically tell a Chinese newcomer which chapel to enter, where to sit, or what to do when others receive Communion.

Our motive matters. If a guest tells us that he will never become Catholic, will we still pick him up, feed him, and remain his friend? Continued friendship shows that we love a person. Interest that vanishes with the prospect of conversion suggests that we wanted a member.

Social warmth can open the door to faith, but it cannot substitute for faith. Admiring a professor, enjoying a weekly dinner, and finding companionship abroad may become occasions of grace. They are not themselves knowledge of Christ. Feeling welcomed is not understanding baptism. Enjoying fellowship is not comprehending the Church.

Catholics and Protestants also need more serious theological dialogue. Our disagreements over Scripture and Tradition, the Eucharist, ordained ministry, Mary, and ecclesial authority are real. Christian unity will not emerge from pretending that these differences are trivial. It requires us to state our beliefs accurately, listen carefully, and allow questions without treating uncertainty as betrayal.

Protestants can remind Catholics to cross the church threshold. Catholics can remind Protestants that conversion cannot be reduced to a decision, a social network, or a moment of emotional certainty. Both communities can examine how belonging sometimes outruns understanding. Both can pray for the unity Christ desired for his disciples.

The freedom to evangelize is not an ordinary feature of campus life to me. I know what can happen when a catechism sign crosses the wrong boundary.

A sign passed through a church gate in Beijing and brought a fine and an official summons. An email passed across a denominational boundary in South Bend and helped inspire a Chinese Catholic fellowship. Both leave Notre Dame’s Catholics with the same question: What will we do with our freedom? We can open the door, prepare the table, explain what we believe, and accompany those who seek. The rest belongs to grace and freedom.

Mo Yeung is a junior at the University of Notre Dame originally from Beijing. He is writing under a pen name.



“What would Osama bin Laden not want us to do?”

Wall St exec recounts 9/11, Notre Dame

CALEB VAUGHAN
Editor-in-Chief

Moments before the *Rover* sat down with investment banker Jimmy Dunne III on September 11, 2026, Dunne received a text message from Avi Barak, Managing Director of financial services at Piper Sandler. Barak wrote, “One of my favorite Jimmy Dunne-isms is, ‘What would Bin Laden NOT want me to do?’” The dryly humorous mantra, originating after the attack on 9/11, has guided Dunne ever since.

Jimmy Dunne, a co-founder and managing partner of the investment bank Sandler O’Neill (later Piper Sandler), should have been working at the World Trade Center on September 11, 2001. Instead, he was out golfing, practicing in hopes to qualify for the U.S. Mid-Amateur Championship. That morning, Dunne lost 66 of the company’s 171 employees in their offices on floor 104 of the South Tower. Eighty-three were in the office that day. Seventeen made it out alive.

The *Rover* talked to Dunne about his life on Wall Street and his experiences in the aftermath of 9/11.

According to Dunne, the terrorists had two goals: “Number one, kill as many people as humanly possible, but anybody that they don’t kill, they want to leave a message of fear.”

“If they didn’t kill you, their second intention would be to get you to back down, to act in a cowardly, fearful way,” Dunne said.

“I was in the unique position of doing just the opposite of that,” Dunne told the *Rover*. “I was determined to do exactly the opposite of what [the terrorists’] intention was.” He continued, “Every capitalistic principle and principle of faith and dignity and human service that was possible—apply all of it immediately at its full strength.”

In the immediate aftermath of the wreckage, Sandler O’Neill returned to business with determination. Bank of America loaned them a small office, where the firm reopened the very next day, on September



Image by Wikimedia Commons (edited)

12, 2001.

The company’s commitment went beyond the business, however. The firm vowed to attend as many of the 66 funerals as possible. Dunne personally committed to paying out the year’s salaries for all employees, including bonuses higher than anything previously received and benefits for several years. Lastly, he created a fund to send all of the children of the deceased to college, fully paid for.

Years down the line, Dunne’s colleague Barak wrote that his answer to the bin Laden question has “always been writing business on this date (September 11th).” He continued, “Today, we not only wrote a ticket, but we did it with Jack Connor, Jimmy Connor’s son.”

Jimmy Connor was a partner at Sandler O’Neill who died on 9/11. His son, Jack Connor, now works for the firm. He was one of the 76 beneficiaries of the college fund commitment.

“So,” continued Barak, “even slightly sweeter revenge.”

1993 Bombing

9/11/2001 wasn’t the first time Dunne narrowly avoided death at the hands of al-Qaeda in Two World Trade Center.

Sandler O’Neill moved into the South Tower in February of 2026, just one week before the 1993 bombings.

In 1993, a group of al-Qaeda terrorists filled a U-haul truck with explosives and set it off in the basement floor C3 of One World Trade Center.

“The smoke had reached us in the other building within about five minutes from the time that that bomb went off,” Dunne told the *Rover*. At the time of the explosion, Dunne had an appointment to take ID photos for their new office in the World Trade Center. He didn’t attend the appointment, which was supposed to be on floor C2.

“There were seven people who died, which no one thinks about, although they are at the memorial now. And they all were on C2, which is where I was supposed to be,” Dunne said. “I have cheated death more than one time in that building.”

Even so, Islamist terror was not yet a settled reality in the minds of Americans.

“We had terrorism attacks on embassies and ships and things that were well outside of the U.S. That was the first time [there was an attack] inside the U.S. border,” Dunne noted.

Herman Sandler, a Russian Jew, was the first man Dunne heard identify the crash as

terrorism. In the 17 minutes between the crash into the North Tower and the second plane hitting the South Tower, which spelled his death, Sandler discerned the perpetrator: jihad.

Notre Dame

Dunne is a 1978 graduate of Notre Dame and has served on the Notre Dame Board of Trustees since 2010. He donated Dunne Hall, a men’s residence built in 2016 and delivered the commencement address in 2021.

In the address, he left no doubt that Notre Dame is the finest educational institution in the United States. Dunne told the *Rover*, “You can get excellence in academics, or you can get excellence in athletics, or you can get even some good things spiritually. But Notre Dame is a combination that does the entirety of the person, and it prepares you better than any other university in the world. I’m convinced of that.”

He highlighted many elite qualities, but he spent the most time reflecting on the lasting relationships he made here.

In the Friday interview with the *Rover*, Dunne’s three college roommates from Alumni Hall were also present. One roommate, Rich Riley,

commented, “Anytime there’s been a major decision, these guys are involved in it.” He continued, “We go through this exercise on an annual basis where we talk about what our goals are for the next year. How are you going to be a better person to your family? You know, professionally, all those other kinds of things. Then we report on it every single week.”

Fifty years later, they are still holding each other accountable. “In this group, they don’t let you hide on this stuff,” Riley said.

Dunne reflected, “You go back 50 years ago, and now we’ve all had good fortune in our lives, but to me, [John] saying ‘Let’s room together’ was an early invitation that made a big impact.”

“There’s not a club in the world that I can’t get into now. That was the most important invitation of my life.”

Caleb Vaughan is a senior studying chemical engineering. Piper Sandler employees can reach out with job offers to cvaugh2@nd.edu.

The Dark Night of the Soul

By: St. John of the Cross

In a dark night,
With anxious love inflamed,
O, happy lot!
Forth unobserved I went,
My house being now at rest.

In darkness and in safety,
By the secret ladder, disguised,
O, happy lot!
In darkness and concealment,
My house being now at rest,

In that happy night,
In secret, seen of none,
Seeing nought myself,
Without other light or guide
Save that which in my heart
was burning.

That light guided me
More surely than the noonday
sun

To the place where He was
waiting for me,
Whom I knew well,
And where none appeared.

O, guiding night;
O, night more lovely than the
dawn;
O, night that hast united
The lover with His beloved,
And changed her into her love.

On my flowery bosom,
Kept whole for Him alone,
There He reposed and slept;
And I cherished Him, and the
waving
Of the cedars fanned Him.

As His hair floated in the breeze
That from the turret blew,
He struck me on the neck

With His gentle hand,
And all sensation left me.

I continued in oblivion lost,
My head was resting on my
love;
Lost to all things and myself,
And, amid the lilies forgotten,
Threw all my cares away.



Touse? Bouse? What's a Frosh to do?

A Freshman's Guide to the Best (and Worst) Spots on Campus

JOSEPH FERGUSON
Humor Editor

Imagine this: you are an incoming freshman at the University of Notre Dame, Our Lady's University, the 3rd-ranked university in the nation. Well, 20th if you care about academics. It wasn't too long ago that you were just a wee high schooler, screaming in jubilation upon opening your acceptance letter, watching your mother weep tears of joy because another one of her babies will become a Domer, and watching your dad smile as he mentally calculates how many years your tuition is pushing back his retirement.

Now, you have arrived on campus. Your parents have moved you into your dorm and departed; you met your random roommate, realized they are a lot shorter than their Instagram profile picture lets on, and breathed a sigh of relief upon discovering that they aren't a stinky pothead—or that you aren't living all the way in Carroll. All the sophomores and juniors in your dorm are affectionately calling you a “frosh” and assuring you that you will find your spouse at

Domerfest. You have all your textbooks, you remembered to bring your four-function calculator, and you realized that buying three more fans might not be such a bad investment. You have also solidified your academic schedule, mapped out where all your classes are, and decided that you will definitely be choosing South over North Dining Hall.

You just got through syllabus week and are comfortably settling into your routines. Then, you hear the question: “Hey, are you on Fizz yet?” You have heard this word before: Fizz. At first, you thought people were talking about a new dietary supplement, but now you realize what it truly is: a campus-wide platform for people to anonymously post literally whatever slipped through their mental filters at any moment. Sounds like fun, right? So naturally, you whip out your phone, watch the Fizz app download, and open your account to start catching up on all the weighty intellectual material that you have been missing out on. Immediately, something catches your eye: an AI slop poster of ... is that a rat donning sunglasses at a pool

party surrounded by babes? Another gaudy poster jumps out at you: this time, it's a horde of Vikings drinking apple juice out of horn tankards. Then you realize: Carroll and Siegfried Halls are throwing parties this weekend. Seemingly everyone is joining the debate: dorms are competing for attention and numbers, vying for the attendance of the masses, and the discussion quickly turns to slander: “Keough is bouse!” one anonymous intellectual cries. “No, Flaherty is touse. YOUR dorm is bouse!” someone replies.

At the beginning of each academic year, the debate is the same: which dorm is best and which is worst. Recently, the terms have shifted: “touse” (“top house”) is now the ultimate title of glory, while any dorm seen as subpar is immediately dubbed “bouse” (“bottom house”). If you were not yet familiar with these terms, I formally apologize for forcing these words into your lexicon. Ironically, these terms were originally coined to be used for Greek life, in which Notre Dame famously declines to partake.

If you are a freshman and found any of the above relatable

or enlightening, then allow me to continue educating you. Here is everything you need to know about what is Touse and what is Bouse at Notre Dame.

Touse: The Basilica of the Sacred Heart. If you have not yet attended a function at the Basilica, I heartily recommend it, for multiple reasons: first, there is no cover charge. Forget about a \$7 Venmo at the door: just walk right in and join the party. Second, the aux is always phenomenal. Depending on what time of day or night, the music is always a little different, and features different styles, but they never miss. Third, there is a little-known speakeasy-style lower section of the building known only as “The Crypt” that usually only throws parties during the ungodly hours of the morning. Fourth, and most importantly, the company is unbeatable. Have you ever walked into a party and thought: “Jesus Christ!?” Well, that happens pretty much every time at this place.

Bouse: Identifying Bouse poses even less of a challenge than Touse: it's the Stepan Center. Quietly ruining the view of Ricci Fields, looking like a golf ball that was run over by

a lawnmower, Stepan Center is where freshman dreams of a 4.0 GPA go to die. Anyone who has taken an exam there knows what I'm talking about. Imagine that you are a student at Hogwarts and taking an exam in the Great Hall, with the vast rows of desks set up in the open space, except Hogwarts looks like a prison gymnasium, and it smells like the carpet hasn't been cleaned since the '60s.

Whether you prefer pool-going rats or debaucherous Vikings, I would recommend all freshman on campus follow the advice of the best post on Fizz by far this year, which read: “Instead of Fest Fest [Party], why don't we have Rosary Fest, where instead of being debaucherous, we all just venerated Our Lady?” Seems like a more fitting start to the semester.

Joseph Ferguson is a senior studying PLS and Business Economics. Reach out to him at jfergu22@nd.edu for advice as to how to be present at three Domerfests in a row.

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2025-26 SCOTUS RECAP

Friday, September 18, 2026 | 12:30–1:45 p.m. ET
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Rick Garnett



Derek Muller

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