

Is the Notre Dame Degree Worth It?

Statistics show ND grads outearn the national median by a wide margin

CALEB VAUGHAN
Editor-in-Chief

A Notre Dame finance major who graduated in 2018 or 2019 was earning a median salary of over 160 thousand dollars four years later. Only two finance programs in the country performed better: graduates of Wharton at University of Pennsylvania and Olin at Washington University.

Notre Dame computer science (CS) graduates from the same year earned 143 thousand dollars four years later—the second highest paying major. It ranks in the 95th percentile of CS graduates across the country, but last among top-20 universities.

Notre Dame graduates of biology and architecture make more than alumni of any other school in those majors.

At the same time, the annual cost of attendance at this university has risen to an eye-watering 91,986 dollars, leaving prospective students asking: Is the price worth it?

The *Rover* analyzed a Department of Education dataset compiled by the HEA Group, which tracked the median earnings of 2017-18 and 2018-19 graduates of more than



Image by Irish Rover

32,000 bachelor's and associate's degree programs nationwide four years after they finished. It counted graduates who received federal financial aid and were working and not enrolled in further schooling. All earnings

were adjusted to 2024 dollars.

If each Notre Dame program is weighted by its number of graduates, the typical aided graduate earned 103,806 dollars four years after graduation. This ranks 53rd of the 1,721

bachelor's level institutions, or the 97th percentile. Among the 837 institutions with at least 10 reported programs, Notre Dame ranks 23rd.

The Department of Education initially gathered the data to

measure whether graduates of collegiate programs across the country earned more than high school graduates who never went to college. Notre Dame passed with flying colors. Even graduates of its lowest paying major—theology—earn a median of 20 thousand dollars more than those who never went to college.

Economics professor Kirk Doran told the *Rover*, “ND grads perform very well nationally, and ND econ is no exception to that. Looking at the data, you can see that ND econ is a unique opportunity to study in the College of Arts and Letters—which offers the richest and most varied education on campus—while also earning one of the top salaries of any major at Notre Dame.”

With the exception of pre-health, all of Notre Dame's lowest paying majors come in the humanities fields, including FTT, English, ethnic or gender studies, Program of Liberal Studies (PLS), and theology to round out the bottom.

Neither is this an indictment of Notre Dame—the average Juilliard graduate did not make more than the high school

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Teaching Women to “Preach” at Saint Mary’s College

Saint Mary’s hosts first PROCLAIM residency alongside Discerning Deacons program

ABIGAIL SMITH
Staff Writer

Twenty-seven women from 18 dioceses in the United States and Canada gathered at Saint Mary’s College this summer for the inaugural in-person residency of PROCLAIM, a new lay-preaching formation program operated by Discerning Deacons and funded through a 1.25 million dollar Lilly Endowment grant. The weeklong residency marked a milestone for the 22-month program, which began last fall with online coursework.

The residency unfolds as Catholics continue to debate the question of women in the diaconate. PROCLAIM’s parent

organization, Discerning Deacons, accompanies Catholics in “prayer, study, and conversation” about women “ministers of the Word.” Both Saint Mary’s and Discerning Deacons emphasize that PROCLAIM operates “fully within canon law,” forming women only for preaching in settings the Church permits. The Church currently excludes women from the diaconate.

The program began in September 2025 with online courses, formation companions—including Holy Cross Sisters—and regular Zoom circles where participants practiced preaching reflections. The Saint Mary’s residency added workshops on the history of women’s preaching, canon-law norms, and pastoral

practice. Participants also took part in a “Preaching Slam” at the Church of Our Lady of Loretto, where three women “stood before the large congregation [and] offered liturgical, traditional, and creative reflections” and concluded the week with a “liturgy in which the women blessed one another ... and were sent home to preach in their own ministry contexts.”

Daily Mass was celebrated throughout the residency, and the priest chaplain preached at each liturgy. Women preached only at non-Eucharistic services, consistent with canon law. “Catholic Canon Law 767 reserves the homily at Mass to priests and deacons,” said Ellie Hidalgo, co-director of Discerning

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ND Graduates Battle for Seats in 2026 Midterms

How ND is shaping local and national elections

TRISTAN BUTTIMER
Staff Writer

The 2026 midterm elections are fast approaching, and citizens around the country are beginning to register to vote and cast their ballots. Anticipation for the midterms is also taking place at Notre Dame, as the student government promotes voter registration and the Democracy Initiative of Notre Dame recently held a panel discussing political trends surrounding the midterms.

However, Notre Dame’s voter turnout turns out to be lacking. Only 26.6 percent of Notre Dame students voted in 2022, which was lower than Notre Dame’s 2018 turnout and the

national average of 31.3 percent. According to the Panetta Institute of Public Policy, 58 percent of college students are concerned about American democracy. Even though Notre Dame students are showing signs of lower electoral participation, this year’s midterms are full of important elections for Notre Dame across the country that could shape both Indiana and Washington.

Indiana’s statewide races are usually resoundingly red, but 2026 brings legitimate challenges from Democrats. The only statewide race in Indiana is the election for Secretary of State—the official who oversees elections and charters businesses

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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.

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

"You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." - John 8:32



Image by PICRYL

Notre Dame is Not a Trade School

GABE HOCKSTRA
Managing Editor



One quarter of Harvard's 2026 graduating class admitted to cheating with AI in a spring student survey. A similar share of Princeton graduates said the same in 2025. AI use has become ubiquitous on college campuses in a few short years, bringing with it rampant academic dishonesty. Its adoption threatens to drastically reshape learning in higher education.

Notre Dame is not spared from this crisis. A student survey published in the *Scholastic* last week found that 76 percent of respondents use AI at least weekly. The true number is likely much higher. Notre Dame Learning reported that "AI-related honor code violations have steadily increased."

In the early days of AI, professors could easily distinguish between human and artificial writing. Those days are gone. Advanced models can now suggest grammatical, structural, and stylistic changes, blurring the line between what is human and artificial. This enables Notre Dame students to outsource much of their coursework—particularly in their humanities classes—in ways that professors cannot reliably track or prevent.

Although the university prohibits students from presenting AI produced work as their own, it leaves the implementation of specific AI policies open to each instructor. For professors, it is the wild west. Some have completely prohibited AI use. Others have accepted that AI is here to stay and are instead attempting to redesign

assignments, exam formats, and grading policies to ensure that learning is not inhibited. Others embrace AI, even requiring its use, hoping that students will use it as a learning tool.

Some of these professors have found ways to effectively preserve rigor and student learning in their classes. But even so, the problem of AI continues to mount, particularly in the humanities. Here, practices essential for a student's holistic development are effectively being outsourced.

In an op-ed published this August, university president Father Robert Dowd, C.S.C., argued that the humanities "have never been more important" in a world with AI. He writes, "We must encourage [students] to cultivate curiosity, creativity, critical thinking, moral courage and compassion through their study of the humanities."

He continues, "These qualities cannot be replaced by artificial intelligence, and they are precisely the competencies our future leaders will need in order to navigate a world that grows ever more complex."

A humanities education, in its current form, cannot continue to exist in a world where AI is ubiquitous. Many professors have realized this, eliminating take-home essays and implementing reading checks and bluebook exams instead.

Some may contend that assignments should remain as is—students should be responsible for making ethical decisions that support their own learning, and there is only so much that professors can do to ensure academic integrity.

But is this a fair expectation for students at an elite university like Notre Dame? Here, students are expected to maintain immaculate GPAs while balancing numerous demanding extracurriculars to secure prestigious positions after graduation. When students are crunched for a midnight deadline with such pressure, are grades or integrity more likely to give?

AI use reveals a much deeper problem at Notre Dame: the

tendency to instrumentalize education for credentials. Classroom learning and teaching have already lost their primacy to careerism. As former Notre Dame professor Paul Blaschko notes, corner cutting ought to be expected in a system where students—and many faculty members—think that a Notre Dame education is primarily about getting a job.

But Notre Dame is not a trade school. It proclaims a different purpose of education, which is not merely instrumental. In its Mission statement, Notre Dame describes itself as being "dedicated to the pursuit and sharing of truth for its own sake." Teaching and classroom learning form a necessary component of this mission. It is in this environment that students develop "disciplined habits of mind, body, and spirit that characterize educated, skilled, and free human beings." This engenders a disposition necessary for the pursuit of truth. The humanities, and the core curriculum in particular, are essential for this.

Although it faces many of the same challenges with regard to AI, Notre Dame is unique among its peers. This is due to Notre Dame's Catholic founding and character. No other top 20 university includes the pursuit of truth in its mission statement. Many have simply replaced it with "inquiry."

This is because these universities, although they remain prestigious, lack a complete vision of the truth, and consequently of education. Notre Dame rightly frames learning in sacramental terms, as an encounter with God through the world he has created for us. In pursuing the truth, the students and faculty of Notre Dame are pursuing Jesus Christ. The university is tasked with forming students not only for this earth, but for heaven. The pursuit of truth for itself helps us to grow closer to the Truth Himself.

Notre Dame is responsible, therefore, for protecting its campus from the threat of AI and preserving it as a grounds for this

true formation to occur. If Notre Dame fails to do this, it damages not only her students' intellects, but their souls, too.

To accomplish this, Notre Dame must safeguard the core curriculum. It is in these classes that AI threatens the most important kind of learning—that which develops the wisdom and understanding constitutive of a free human being.

Furthermore, Notre Dame must reprioritize classroom teaching and learning above credentialism. Research is an important part of Notre Dame's mission, but it cannot be prioritized at the expense of individual student formation. In the world of AI, professors must act more like companions in the learning process and less like administrators. They must recall that teaching is first and foremost a relational endeavor.

College is the last time that many Notre Dame students will consistently engage with the humanities, and through them, personally develop and grow their faith.

If a student were to graduate from Notre Dame without having done these things—wrestled with challenging ideas, reflected on his role in the world, and learned to integrate his faith into each part of his life—in short, if he never formed the habit of pursuing truth itself, then Notre Dame would have failed in its mission.

AI threatens to make this a reality. Notre Dame must combat this imminent danger by forming a learning environment that aligns more closely with its mission to pursue the truth for its own sake. Her students' moral formation depends on it.

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One Campus, Conflicting AI Expectations

Every classroom has its own definition of “acceptable use”

ABIGAIL SMITH
Staff Writer

Ask a Notre Dame student whether they can use generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) on an assignment, and the answer depends on which classroom they are sitting in. The university offers broad guidance on responsible use, but the decisions that matter most to students are made course by course.

That is by design. Martijn Cremers, dean of the Mendoza College of Business, said Mendoza has not written its own AI integrity policy. “The university’s Honor Code policy on generative AI applies to every Mendoza student and every Mendoza course,” he told the *Rover*. He grounds this approach in the Catholic Social Teaching principle of subsidiarity—the principle that problems should be solved by the smallest, closest community able to do so. The college neither urges faculty to allow AI nor to ban it. “The authority to decide how AI is used in a given course rests with the faculty, subject to the university’s policies.”

In practice, a core curriculum course may prohibit AI entirely, while a class in Mendoza’s new Business AI minors builds it into the coursework. “We try to make sure students are always clear on the expectations,” Cremers said.

Discipline explains much of the variation. Tom Stapleford, associate Professor in the Program

of Liberal Studies, uses AI “minimally” and prohibits “any AI use that isn’t explicitly included as part of an assignment.” His pedagogy, discussion-based analysis of texts, leaves little room for it. “I never use AI to write things for me,” he said to the *Rover*. “I wouldn’t want another person to write for me; why would I hand that to AI?”

He does not see the inconsistency across classes as a flaw. “I think that’s almost inevitable,” he said. “Learning goals are different from one course to another, and AI might be more relevant in some contexts than in others.”

Troy Vogel, who teaches chemical engineering and serves on the University Committee on the Honor Code, identified the deeper misconception beneath all the arguments. AI was built for productivity, he told the *Rover*, but “is being productive the same as learning? No!” His own policy “is more of a philosophy.” Vogel occasionally requires students to use AI and critique the result, and relies on in-class writing, oral exams and quizzes to keep students responsible for their learning. Without guardrails, he warned, “it will solve it for you.”

Vogel said AI-related infractions did not appear until two or three years ago. Cremers dates Mendoza’s first cases to 2024-25 and said that they are handled like any other honor code case, through the Office of Academic Standards.

Even good policies, however, age quickly. AI tools can now carry out multi-step tasks on their own, Vogel said. Due to the rapid advancements in AI, Vogel remarked, “What I wrote in my syllabus—merely 1.5 months ago—is no longer valid.” His conclusion: “Faculty are navigating just like students.” No professor is required to put an AI statement in a syllabus, he noted, though the committee encourages faculty to “talk about the elephant in the room.” Cremers said the University recommends a statement on both syllabi and Canvas, the software Notre Dame uses for digital class materials.

Stapleford praised the university’s resources but named time as the real obstacle. He likened the pressure to master constantly evolving AI tools to the COVID-era scramble to redesign courses—“only this time the redesign never ends,” he added. Stapleford also noted the shift toward in-class writing results in “a net loss of class time for other activities,” and perhaps less content covered overall.

Students weave between these rules every day. Katie Harfmann, a senior Mendoza student, takes one business class where AI is allowed on every assignment and a theology class where “if you get caught with AI, you fail the class.”

“Not being allowed to use AI while expecting it to be used in another class can be so infuriating,” she said. Her

solution: “I personally think ND needs to go all or nothing. They should go all in.”

Lynley Pace, a senior engineering student, sees the change in how assignments are structured. Her Arts & Letters classes relied on long essays freshman year, and now they are exams with in-class essays, which she calls “an appropriate shift given the availability of AI for at-home assignments.” But several engineering professors told her class that they used AI to organize syllabi and lectures. “This demotivates me because if the professors aren’t putting their full effort to make their class assignments, how can they expect me to then do them with full effort?” This semester she stopped using AI altogether. “Homework assignments take a ridiculously long time, but I feel like I know the material better now.”

Aiden Walsh, an Arts & Letters senior, is more accepting. “I understand the varying AI policies,” he said, noting AI can help with grammar, footnote formatting, and troubleshooting. “AI should never be used to substitute for reading or writing the assignment,” Walsh added. “It cannot replace genuine thought.”

He noted, however, that preventing students from using AI—though worthwhile—is no easy task. Instructors who want AI-free classrooms, he said, “have to avoid areas where AI can be used at all.”

The university’s policy, Cremers

noted, draws a deceptively simple boundary: AI may support learning, but it must never supplant the mind doing the learning. That distinction between supplementing and replacing is where classrooms begin to diverge. For a business student in an AI-driven curriculum, the line may fall in a different place than for a freshman wrestling with Homer’s *Odyssey*. Yet, Vogel insists, the stakes never change; the danger is the slow erosion of one’s own intellectual muscle. “Inappropriate use,” he said, “makes you a less prepared engineer, historian, etc.”

For now, the university entrusts its professors to draw that line, and its students to recognize where each one has placed it. In an age when answers can be generated in seconds, the harder work of thinking becomes even more essential. Students are still expected to think for themselves and do their own work. This expectation is almost countercultural: that a Notre Dame education still forms people who can wrestle with ideas, bear the weight of their own reasoning, and emerge capable of contributing something genuinely human to the world.

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ND Grad Earnings

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benchmark four years post graduation. In fact, Notre Dame graduates earn the most out of all 247 schools in the ‘theater’ category.

Indeed, for the university and her students, the purpose of these majors is not primarily a financial one. In a recent op-ed in *America Magazine*, Father Bob Dowd, C.S.C. wrote, “In a world with A.I., the humanities, which have always been at the core of Catholic higher education, have never been more important.”

Peer Institutions

Notre Dame measures its peers in a number of ways. Each year, it reports a list of universities that it considers ‘peer’ institutions. These peers outearn Notre Dame graduates by a modest 2.6 percent, while Notre Dame outearns schools that name it as a peer by 8.6 percent. Meanwhile, Notre Dame graduates earn more than alumni of Catholic universities and Indiana universities by wider margins of 15.6 percent and 37.4 percent, respectively.

Most impressively, Notre Dame falls behind just two of its peers in finance, ranking number three out of 428 finance programs in the country for earnings four years out. Finance is Notre Dame’s largest major with around

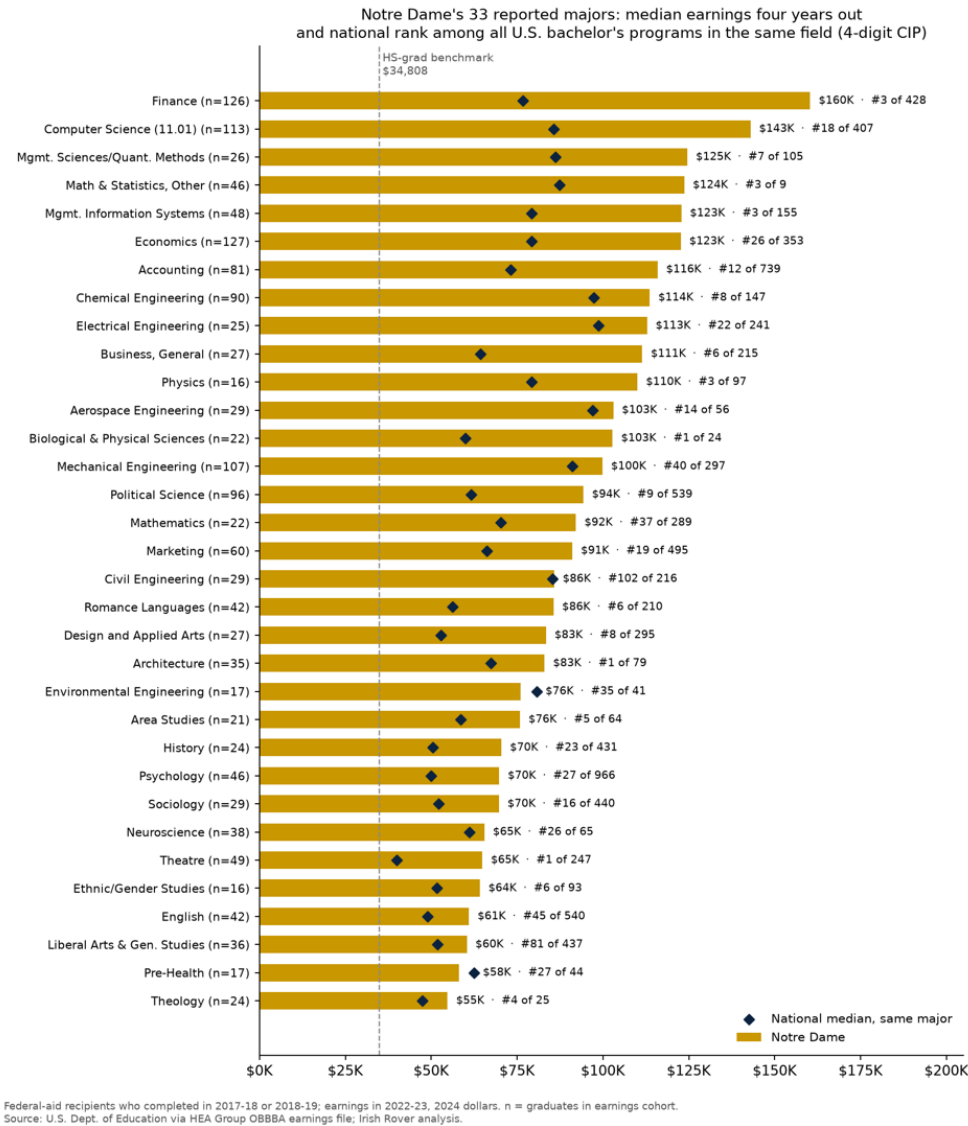
300 graduates each year.

The data reveals strengths in the program of which the dean is proud. Dean Martijn Cremers

told the *Rover*, “As dean of the Mendoza College of Business, I’m very proud of what all of our students accomplish.”

Further, “As a finance professor, I’m especially pleased to see that success reflected in the ... data.”

Cremers attributed success



firstly to excellent faculty and curriculum. Finance professor Carl Ackermann echoed this statement, “Since finance is the largest major at the University, the Department of Finance has the resources to offer specialized courses. So firms are hiring students who already have specific training in what they do,” he told the *Rover*.

Cremers also noted the extensive and active alumni network. Alumni readily mentor and hire Notre Dame students. Cremers said this alumni relationship “provides our students with extraordinary opportunities to learn, build relationships, and prepare to succeed and lead in one of the most competitive industries.”

Cremers testified, “Just as important as preparing students for career success, we also focus on the kind of people they will become.” Notre Dame seeks to cultivate cognizant business professionals who use wealth to contribute to human flourishing.

Caleb Vaughan is a senior from Orono, MN studying chemical engineering—the highest paying engineering major. Cha-ching. He can be reached at cvaugha2@nd.edu.



Keenan and Stanford to be Demolished

Office of Residential Life announces Keenan, Stanford face demolition and replacement

CLARE DIFRANCO
Campus Editor

In simultaneous meetings with the men of their dorms, rectors of Stanford and Keenan Halls informed residents that their buildings would be demolished. At 8 p.m. on Monday, October 5, Residential Life announced that Stanford and Keenan halls will be razed immediately following the upcoming spring semester. Beginning in the 2027-2028 school year, two new residence halls will be constructed in their place.

An official email announcement from the Office of Residential Life was sent to the rest of campus. Per the announcement, “Returning Keenan residents will relocate to Howard and returning Stanford students will relocate to Zahm until the new halls open in the fall of 2029.”

These new halls will house approximately 236 residents each. The new hall for Stanford residents will stand on the current location of Stanford-Keenan, and the new hall for Keenan residents will replace Haggard Hall on the end of North quad.

Father Chris Brennan, C.S.C., the rector of Stanford Hall, was not surprised by the announcement as, “rumors of Stanford and Keenan being

torn down have been circulating for years,” he told the *Rover*. Despite this, Fr. Brennan said, “I have mixed emotions about the decommissioning of Stanford Hall. This building has served us well and the architecture has helped us to be a tight knit community. I will miss it.”

The announcement to replace Keenan and Stanford arrives in the wake of the recent openings of Coyle Hall and Grojean Hall, which sit where Fisher and Pangborn halls once stood. It also follows a trend of residential development in the last decade at Notre Dame, including the renovations of historic dorms including Sorin, Alumni, Breen-Phillips, and most recently, Lyons Hall; this also includes the dissolution of Howard, Zahm, Fisher, and Pangborn.

Members of Keenan and Stanford will undergo a process similar to what the current members of Coyle Hall underwent beginning three years ago, when they lived in Fisher. On-campus seniors who have been members of Fisher hall since their freshman year can speak to the experience of living in the old hall, spending two years in a swing dorm, and now living in new facilities.

Coyle RA Jack Kelleher recalled his dorm community’s reaction to

the news of Fisher’s demolition. “Morale definitely took a huge hit when they told us they were tearing down our cinderblock palace,” he told the *Rover*. Despite his nostalgia for Fisher Hall, he noted the poor living conditions: “When they let us tour Zahm and we saw how much of an upgrade we were getting, spirits perked up.”

Kelleher expressed his gratitude for the upgraded amenities of Coyle Hall, saying, “As much as we all love and reminisce about old Fish, the boys were absolutely buzzing to get into the new building. A/C and active and generous donors (shoutout the Coyles) are a big plus.”

In light of the reactions of former Pangborn and Fisher students to their new halls, residents of Keenan and Stanford are anxious for the change to come.

Aragon Herrera, a sophomore in Stanford, told the *Rover*, “While it is sad that we’re leaving our cinderblock palace, it’s all about the guys. The brotherhood and traditions will continue to thrive wherever we are.” He continued, “I think most guys think of it as bittersweet, looking forward to next year but also reminiscing on the past in this building.”

Despite mourning Stanford’s incoming destruction, Fr.

Brennan remains optimistic about the future of the dorm community he stewards. He believes that it is not the building but the community within that shapes the dorm’s culture. Speaking to his favorite part of being Stanford’s rector, Brennan emphasized the opportunity “to see the young men of Stanford Hall grow in maturity, in faith, and authenticity.” He continued, “Our Sunday Masses are always a highlight for me—these Masses have shaped and formed me into a better priest and a better man. For many of our guys, they have done the same.”

While some residents are positive about the change, many also lament the loss of the old hall and fear the change in culture that may follow.

Keiran Lobo, a senior and former president of Keenan hall, told the *Rover*: “While I understand why the change is being made, I would be remiss to not say that it is unfortunate that 70 years of rich history and tradition, from both the Keenan and Stanford side, are going to go away just like that.”

Lobo emphasized the significance of the dorm building as an integral part of the hall’s culture, and touching on his later placement in the hall as a transfer, he remarked, “Coming in as a

gateway, I was worried about what dorm I would be put into, but I could not have found a dorm that suited my personality better. While Keenan and Stanford don’t have the best living conditions, and don’t even compare slightly to the newer dorms, this forces the guys to hang out.”

Lobo continued, “While we have a rivalry with Stanford, I truly believe our two dorms have the best culture on campus because we have no amenities, and therefore have to buy into the amazing culture and tradition.” He concluded, “at least dorms like Grace and Flanner are still standing ... but I’ll be sad to bring my kids here in 20 years time and not show them my actual dorm. In the end, these dorms feel like that true dorm experience.”

As noted in the email announcement from the Office of Residential Life, further details regarding the new dorms will be announced at a later date.

Clare DiFranco is a senior studying accounting and Italian. While she misses the chapel and arch of Lyons Hall, she is availing herself of the fine amenities of Zahm Hall. She can be reached at cdifranc@nd.edu.

When did Eddy Street Get So Violent?

A perspective on Eddy Street’s history of crime

SENAI ALEM

Staff Writer

CLARE DIFRANCO
Campus Editor

While Notre Dame Stadium was filled with fans watching the Michigan State game, two people were injured by gunfire on Eddy Street Commons. The shooting, which occurred on the evening of Saturday September 19, follows a trend of increasing crime and acts of violence in the student-oriented commons.

On the night of the shooting, Notre Dame police informed the South Bend Police Department (SBPD) of a man aiming a gun at civilians near Eddy Street. While responding to the call, South Bend police officers heard a single gunshot near Eddy Street and Angela Boulevard, where the officers found a woman with a non-fatal gunshot wound, and a South Bend police officer was also injured by ricochet from the gunfire. The injured woman was hospitalized while the officer was treated on-scene.

A separate shooting occurred the same night on Bissell Street,

a few blocks away. The SBPD reported that officers were called at 11:30 p.m. on reports of a large fight. Upon arrival, officers found three gunshot victims in critical condition. All three victims were eventually pronounced dead.

South Bend mayor James Mueller commented on the Eddy Street shooting. He stated, “This is an unfortunate issue where you have at the start of the game, folks are being pushed outside the tailgate areas, and oftentimes they’ll go to the Eddy Street area.” This is not the first incident of shooting on Eddy Street this year. Three people suffered non-life-threatening injuries from an earlier shooting on August 8.

South Bend Police Database provides evidence of increased violent crime trends over the course of the last few years. According to the database, calls for service have been steadily mounting in South Bend since 2022. According to WNDU, the number of victims killed or injured by shootings doubled to 10 in the first three months of 2026.

While Eddy Street is not within the borders of campus, it is a student-oriented area which acts as an “extension” of Notre Dame’s

campus. Its development was first announced in a 2007 press release by Kite Realty Group, the agency which developed Eddy Street Commons in partnership with the university. The press release includes a quote from Notre Dame’s then-Executive Vice President Dr. John Affleck-Graves, stating, “when it is complete, the development ‘will revitalize the neighborhood at the University’s ‘front door’ and provide modern housing and commercial businesses within easy walking distance of campus, filling a decades-long void.”

The commercial development and trending restaurants create a welcoming facade, but the threat of crime remains.

Blanca Beltran, the general manager of Bibibop on Eddy street, decried the increased crime to the *Rover*— “We were having a lot of issues where they were breaking into cars. ... mine was one of them.”

Alanna Galicia, a Holy Cross College senior and employee at O’Rourke’s on Eddy Street, told the *Rover*, “I was very disappointed in the reports of ongoing crime on Eddy Street.” Speaking to her experience of working a shift the day following

the shooting, she continued, “It made me feel unsafe and nervous to attend work at night.”

Following the shooting, Kite Realty enforced a curfew whereby all establishments must close by midnight. Additionally, more South Bend police officers now patrol the area at night.

In a media statement to the *Rover*, the SBPD stated, “The South Bend Police Department, University of Notre Dame (including NDPD), and Kite Realty meet, and have met regularly for years, to discuss gameday safety—including Eddy Street Commons (ESC). Those conversations have become more frequent in the wake of an incident at the ESC on September 19, 2026.”

Beltran remarked, “There’s a greater sense of safety, not just for the owners or the business managers, but even for the students and our families.”

Students shared varying levels of concern in light of Eddy Street crime trends.

Sophomore Shane Unger remarked that he feels “very safe” on Eddy Street, but he also acknowledges the reality of the present threats. He told the *Rover*, “I feel like past a certain hour, it’s

probably best to not be near the Eddy street area.”

Max Gerd, a sophomore, expressed his thoughts on the effectiveness of campus police. “Obviously the measures they’ve taken haven’t been working, but I’m glad they’re responding to the scene quickly,” he shared with the *Rover*.

An anonymous student said, “I think aside from Eddy Street, Notre Dame does a pretty good job of making sure campus is safe, but I do think Notre Dame views what happens on Eddy Street as outside the Notre Dame ecosystem.”

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Clare DiFranco is a senior studying accounting and Italian. Nothing will stop her from attending karaoke at O’Rourke’s on Eddy Street. Email cdifranc@nd.edu if you would like to perform a duet.



dCEC Hosts 26th Fall Conference

Scholars examine wisdom in our modern age

JOSEPH KURKOWSKI
Staff Writer

The de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture (dCEC) hosted its 26th annual Fall Conference from October 1-3 with the theme, “But Where Can She Be Found? Wisdom from Age to Age.”

The dCEC is committed to strengthening the Catholic moral and intellectual tradition on campus through teaching, research, and public engagement, engaging in dialogue with “the most pressing and complex questions of ethics, culture, and public policy today,” per the center’s website. To this end, among other initiatives, the center held the first Fall Conference in 2000 entitled, “A Culture of Death,” which examined the culture of death identified in *Evangelium Vitae*. It has since grown to become the largest annual academic event at Notre Dame.

This year’s Fall Conference brought over 120 speakers from around the country to present on the relation of wisdom as shaped by an ancient and ongoing Western and Christian tradition with the “hegemony

of mastery, technique, and mere information” of our modern age.

Father Thomas Joseph White, O.P., current *Rector Magnificus* of the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, delivered the first keynote lecture titled “Beauty, Wisdom, and Christ: a Trinitarian Perspective on the Human Vocation.” He urged the audience to “consider God as Beauty and the beauty of creatures in light of God,” relating to Aquinas’ definition of the virtue of Wisdom that “consists in understanding all things in virtue of their explanatory first cause and final end,” who he defines as God.

Fr. White asserted that to know God, we must turn to His Son. “In [Christ’s] human beauty, we begin to be beatified, to turn our own faces towards God inwardly and upwardly,” he stated. This, however, can only be done in prayer: “Mental prayer is an integral part of the search for the truth.”

The second and final keynote address was delivered by Professor Michael Hurley of Cambridge University. His presentation, titled “What Only Poetry Knows,” related Gerard Manley

Hopkins and Saint John Henry Newman to metaphysics, best summarized in the words of St. Newman: “Thought and speech are inseparable from each other. Matter and expression are parts of one: style is a thinking out into language.”

Freshman Tess Anastasi told the *Rover*, “It was very interesting how he discussed how poetry can express certain truths about life that can’t be expressed through straightforward facts alone. It helped me obtain a different perspective on poetry and to understand how it can help us discover meaning and develop wisdom.”

Kolbe Barta, a sophomore in Duncan Hall and Sorin Fellow, praised the Fall Conference, calling it, “one of [his] favorite events every year.” He told the *Rover*, “This year’s presentations taught me about wisdom, the courage to seek it, and how discussion about prudence and other virtues still shapes conceptions of wisdom today.” He further emphasized the value of the conference not only to himself, but to the university at large, saying that “The Fall Conference is vital, not only to

some theology and philosophy professors, but to Notre Dame at large, to situate ourselves within, and engage seriously with this Catholic tradition that animates our home.”

Jaden Lukose, a sophomore in Alumni Hall, noted to the *Rover* how the Fall Conference not only proves valuable for Notre Dame, but also for other universities and communities. He remarked, “The pursuit of truth is an essential part of Notre Dame’s mission statement, and the Fall Conference is a wonderful opportunity that invites professors, students, and other people from outside the university to join in this mission. The conference stimulates an environment that makes it possible to better understand the human person and human flourishing.”

The Hillbilly Thomists, a band of Dominican friars which includes Fr. White, concluded the conference with an intimate performance of their charting bluegrass music in Washington Hall. They derive their name from a letter of Flannery O’Connor, who wanted to be viewed as a “hillbilly Thomist,” rather than

a “hillbilly nihilist,” as readers may have concluded from her southern gothic style, reflecting her fusion of Catholic wisdom and personal setting.

The four priests played original music on instruments including the guitar, banjo, piano, harmonica, a washboard, and even the spoons. Following the conclusion of the concert, the dCEC hosted a reception in the Morris Inn ballroom. The reception featured drinks, desserts, and an opportunity for conference attendees to meet the Hillbilly Thomists.

Prior to the start of the concluding concert, the dCEC revealed that next year’s Fall Conference theme will be eschatological, examining the last things.

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Student protests in France escalate

Comparisons drawn to incidents of violence on U.S. campuses

ANTHONY FEDORUK
Staff Writer

What began as a small demonstration in support of a labor strike among teachers in Paris has escalated into a violent national crisis in France, unprecedented in recent memory. French authorities estimate that hundreds of thousands of students, teachers, and union delegates took to the streets on October 6, in what protesters have designated as a national day of mobilization.

France has struggled to contain the massive student-led demonstrations that have forced hundreds of schools to completely halt classes due to safety concerns. More than 6,000 people have been taken into custody over the past few weeks, but this is just a small portion compared to the 256,000 people who have participated in these violent protests. Many students, teachers, and police officers have suffered severe injuries from the protests.

The movement began as a small demonstration on September 21 at Saint-Exupéry High School in North Paris when students joined their teachers to protest a lack of staff and resources at the school. This unexpectedly led to a nationwide mobilization of high school students, teachers, and more across the country. The education protests seem to have been overtaken by Muslim-led,

pro-Palestine protests in Paris, with observers reporting Muslim students as taking part in both demonstrations.

French student leader Manés Nadel described the scale and impact of the demonstrations saying, “It’s an unprecedented number of schools that are now involved,” while adding that France’s Education Ministry has been “totally overwhelmed by the crisis.”

French President Emmanuel Macron expressed sympathy for the protestors’ cause, yet condemned the harmful consequences of the movement. He said in a public statement, “I hear, and I understand the anxiety, the anger,” while adding, “However, none of these debates, none of these fears justifies violence. And on no account ... can political leaders legitimize violence.”

In referring to political leaders, Macron drew attention to far-left leaders in France who have condoned the demonstrations, with some even taking to the streets themselves. The leader of the far-left party La France Insoumise (LFI), Jean-Luc Mélenchon, joined high school students in the streets of Paris on October 6.

Mélenchon conveyed his support for the demonstrators saying, “I call on you, young people, wherever you may be, to embrace the discipline of the struggle,” while also emphasizing, “You must use nothing but

nonviolent methods of struggle.”

Despite Mélenchon advocating nonviolence, Macron and others in government have accused him and other LFI members of legitimizing the violence that has taken place. French Prime Minister Sébastien Lecornu spoke angrily about Mélenchon’s involvement stating, “The reality is that you (Mélenchon) are ambiguous about violence because violence is part of your political plan to throw the country into chaos between now and the presidential election.”

In a government crisis meeting on Thursday, October 1, French intelligence agencies briefed government leaders that the organization of the protests was heavily linked to politicians in the LFI and LFI-associated left-wing anarchist groups. These briefings have further elevated concerns that far-left groups are using the chaos and violence for political gain.

These widespread pro-Palestine student demonstrations have more recently become violent and have caused mass destruction to property, schools, and public buildings across the nation. Such left-wing protests draw comparisons to recent incidents of violence on college campuses in the U.S.

In November 2025, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) began an investigation into violent riots that broke out at the University of California, Berkeley outside of a Turning Point USA

event. During the on-campus event, dozens of protesters gathered nearby. Eventual fights broke out between demonstrators and police officers, with some students even throwing smoke bombs.

At the time, Attorney General Pam Bondi suspected that the far-left, anarchist activist group Antifa was linked to the agitation as suggested by investigations within the DOJ. Bondi expressed her concern following the DOJ’s findings, saying in a public statement, “Antifa is an existential threat to our nation.”

In April of 2024, pro-Palestinian protestors occupied several buildings on the campus of Columbia University in New York City, NY for more than twelve hours, while many participants were documented as issuing violent threats and antisemitic remarks to Jewish students. Far-left groups, led primarily by Arab and Muslim activists, were linked to organizing the takeover. The NYPD subsequently made nearly 300 arrests while clearing the encampment.

With violent student protests linked to far-left groups in France and the U.S., many have expressed concern with the escalation that can result when far-left groups attempt to use violent methods for political gain, and how the original goals of nonviolent movements can be distorted.

Natalie Szerman, a researcher in radicalization and extremism in

France at MEMRI, commented on the French protests saying, “It quickly became clear that the violence demonstrated in these protests conveyed a huge amount of hate towards the ‘system’ and not much concern for better material conditions in schools.”

Simone Rodan-Benzaquen, senior envoy to Europe at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, said, “French students need their teachers to show up to class, and their parents need to know they will be safe at school ... but (LFI leader Jean-Luc Mélenchon) is encouraging the citizens to see their schools as a front in a larger political battle, one whose real prize is the presidency.”

A senior in Siegfried Hall commented on the media coverage of the French protests. He said, “I find it interesting that the media, at least from my perspective, has not paid much attention to the left-wing origins of the protests. I feel like if right-leaning groups were involved, it would be a much bigger story in the media.”

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.



Graduates in Midterms

continued from front

in Indiana.

The election drew attention during the nomination process, when incumbent Republican Diego Morales' bid failed due to a series of personal controversies—including accusations of sexual assault, corruption, and embellishing his military record. Subsequently, party leaders withdrew support from Morales and nominated Max Engling, a staffer who previously worked for Senator Jim Banks and former Speaker Kevin McCarthy.

On the Democratic side, Beau Bayh swiftly picked up the nomination. Bayh, the son of former Indiana Senator Evan Bayh, has collected 2.3 million dollars in donations. His campaign has emphasized his military experience while highlighting Morales' corruption.

In addition to the two major candidates, former Indianapolis mayor Greg Ballard is running for the seat as an independent. He has raised more money in the last three months than Bayh or Engling respectively. Libertarian Lauri Shillings is also in the race, adding further electoral and ideological pressure on the right-wing candidates. Though

Bayh and Englings are far ahead in the polls, these two candidates could offset voters from Engling, further endangering the seat for Republicans.

Nevertheless, Notre Dame voters needn't look statewide to find important races: Professor James O'Brien of the Mendoza College of Business won a contested Republican primary to run for St. Joseph County Council, District C, which encompasses Notre Dame. An alumnus of Notre Dame, O'Brien stepped down from the County Council in 2018 to focus on his family but revealed in a statement to the *Rover* that he wants to serve again to lower taxes and halt the construction of more data centers. He says his accounting background, experience in the role, and close ties to the community make him the best suited candidate.

Along with city council elections, State House District 8, which includes St. Joseph's county, is holding an election as well. Though Rep. Ryan Dvorak (D-8) is favored, it is the first time he is being challenged in an election since 2020. In terms of congressional races, Indiana's 2nd District, which includes Notre Dame, is a Republican stronghold and will likely reelect

Rep. Rudy Yakym, another Notre Dame graduate.

Notre Dame's influence in the midterms spreads far beyond the Hoosier state. There are currently seven members of Congress who graduated from Notre Dame, and all seven are running for reelection in districts deemed safe or likely by the Cook Political Report. In an interview with the *Rover*, O'Brien argued that alumni like himself have an advantage when working in Congress, noting, "Notre Dame graduates take away an appreciation of giving back and serving."

Of the seven, Rep. Warren Davidson (R-OH) is the most nationally recognized, making headlines for voting against hostilities in Iran. Rep. Mike Flood (R-NE) holds an important position in the GOP as chair of the Main Street Caucus, a group of Republicans focusing on economic growth.

Rep. Jeff Hurd (R-CO) is the only ND alumnus running in a "likely" district and is currently chair of the Subcommittee of Indian and Insular Affairs, while Rep. Mike Kelly (R-PA) also holds an important seat as chairman of the Subcommittee on Taxes, with his focus squarely on lowering taxes for everyday Americans.

Kelly was also a member of the Notre Dame football team. Rep. Pat Fallon (R-TX), too, played on the team; he was a wide receiver for the 1988 championship team. Fallon recently returned to campus with fellow alumnus Rep. Brendan Boyle (D-PA) for a dialogue hosted by the ND Political Union focused on finding common ground.

The discussion covered multiple topics, especially the economy, with Boyle highlighting Democrats' priority to remove tariffs and pressure President Trump to end the war in Iran. Fallon, however, noted the trade deficit's effect on prices, stating this would be a priority for Republicans in the next Congress.

The final incumbent, Rep. Rudy Yakym (R-IN), is in a unique position competing against Jamie Decio, a Democrat who also graduated from Notre Dame. This matchup is the first time two Notre Dame alumni are running against each other.

Along with Decio, two other alumni, Melat Kiros and Maria Jokic, are running for office as Democrats. While Jokic is expected to lose in Ohio's 14th district, Kiros is the favorite in Colorado's 1st after drawing national headlines for defeating 15-term Rep. Diana Degetter

with a democratic socialist platform.

Professor O'Brien argued voters should not be put off by these expectations, saying, "If we don't vote, the folks that show up will have the bigger voice." Across the country, voters are hearing this message and reshaping America's political landscape.

Many Democratic voters have swept aside political giants for a younger, progressive generation of candidates. Red states like Alaska, Ohio, Texas, and Kansas have suddenly become intense battleground states, while Republican senate candidates are polling shockingly well in bluer states like Minnesota and New Hampshire. Look no further than Indiana, where the state could elect its first Democrat to statewide office since 2012, and voters mobilized to elect multiple Trump-endorsed candidates in primaries for the State House. The 2026 midterm elections are about to make history, and Notre Dame is set to play its part in Indiana and beyond.

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Notre Dame Increases Number of Employees with H-1B Visas

Despite concerns over American graduate students, Notre Dame continues to prioritize international students

RAYMOND WEBBER
Politics Editor

Due to a new federal law that requires institutions to maintain a Public Access File on the hiring of employees with an H-1B visa, Notre Dame's department of International Student and Scholar Affairs (ISSA) recently revealed that the university is hiring four employees with the legal status of an H-1B or E-3 employee. The notice of intent disclosed that the Keough School of Global Affairs will be hiring an H-1B employee for the role of its Associate Director in Global Supply Chains, and the Kellogg Institute for International Studies will be hiring an H-1B employee for their new Executive Director role.

Additionally, the notice declared that the university hired one H-1B employee to occupy an unspecified executive director role and another to work as a DevOps (IT) engineer. All of these new employees have been offered salaries in the range of 82 thousand dollars and 155 thousand dollars. Over the course of 2026 alone, Notre Dame has filed for 49 H-1B visas for its employees. 46 of these have been certified by the federal government; zero have been denied.

Since 2019, only one H-1B visa has been rejected for Notre Dame employees—under the Biden administration. Over 300 employees with non-immigrant

work visas across 45 countries currently work at Notre Dame with most working as professors, researchers, and marketing analysts. ISAA celebrates this, stating on their website, "[These] employees join the thriving academic community of Notre Dame, enriching departments, classrooms, and labs across campus every year."

They go on to say, "International Student and Scholar Affairs collaborates with colleagues by providing the necessary immigration documents and expert advising for scholars and employees on the requirements and responsibilities for maintaining their immigration status while in the US."

Despite the Trump administration's recent legal investigations into visa fraud among elite universities, the University of Notre Dame has steadily increased its hiring of H-1B employees and has maintained organizations committed to the incorporation of students and employees with non-immigrant visa statuses.

Outside of ISAA, which directly provides resources to such students and employees, the Klau Institute for Civil and Human Rights has publicly promoted their Migration Research Initiative which raises money for research that accompanies the aims of ISAA. According to the initiative, this research is intended to "deepen the university's appreciation for the dignity of migrants." Recently, the initiative

funded Amy Hsin to research how "barriers to immigration limit opportunities" and "hinder people from pursuing education."

The Notre Dame Institute for Latino Studies created the Cross-Cultural Leadership Program that funds students to engage with Latino and immigrant populations in major cities through internship opportunities. The Student Coalition for Immigration Advocacy (SCIA), the university's only student immigration-focused club, promotes immigrant vendors in South Bend through their Bi-annual Flea Markets; hosts UndocuAlly Trainings aimed at helping students form alliances with undocumented individuals; and fundraises money for undocumented immigrants and refugees.

Nevertheless, even with the vast amount of resources that Notre Dame has dedicated to immigrant workers and students, the university ranks 570th among all visa sponsors in the U.S. and hires far fewer H-1B employees than some of her elite colleagues. For example, Harvard University filed for 1,379 H-1B visas last year; the University of Michigan filed for 2,381; and Stanford applied for 500 H-1Bs in comparison to Notre Dame's 49.

Beyond employees, Notre Dame's peer institutions also significantly outweigh Notre Dame's foreign-born undergraduate population. Foreign-born students make up 26 percent of Harvard

undergraduates, 40 percent of Columbia, 25 percent of Duke, and about 18 percent of Georgetown, while only 10 percent of Notre Dame undergraduates are foreign born. This aligns with Notre Dame's lack of international or foreign-born diversity quotas, despite its strategic plan's aspirations to raise Notre Dame's international students to 12 percent of the student body by 2033.

This number drops drastically, however, when looking at Notre Dame's international graduate students, whose demographics closely align with those of other elite universities. Specifically, 30 percent of Notre Dame's graduate students are foreign-born and 43 percent of the students in Notre Dame's ESTEEM Master's program are foreign-born.

According to the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics, nearly half of U.S. doctorate recipients with temporary visas were from China or India. Additionally, only 61 percent of all doctorate recipients from American universities were American citizens. Last year, Notre Dame admitted 2,200 graduate students, almost 700 of which are not American citizens.

The declining amount of American graduate students in comparison to foreign-born students has long been an issue. According to Jeffery Mervis in an article in ScienceInsider written in 2011, "U.S. students had a much harder time getting into American graduate schools

this past year than did their peers from China and the rest of the world." In 2017, the New York Times published an article titled, "The Disappearing American Grad Student" that described how Chinese students were outperforming American students. Despite these concerns, Notre Dame continues to increase the rate of their foreign-born graduate students.

Although the Trump administration has targeted specific universities, like Harvard and Stanford, for their H-1B hiring practices—including penalizing these universities for admitting and hiring those with non-immigrant visas and investigating visa fraud on their campuses—President Trump is no longer pursuing restrictions on H-1B visas for most colleges. After a judge struck down Trump's 100,000 dollar H-1B visa fee for universities in September 2025, the Trump administration removed the fee altogether and exempted nonprofit research institutions—like Notre Dame—from visa caps.

As a result, Notre Dame has largely persisted in her H-1B hiring, and has even expanded the number of H-1B employees on campus with little to no administrative interference over the past two years.

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Notre Dame's Diversity Efforts Face New Federal Test *ND shifts language toward Catholic mission, but maintains diversity goals*

LUKE SEVERSON
Staff Writer

In response to a series of federal laws from the Trump administration that revoke tax-exempt status for private schools that use racial preferences, Notre Dame has renamed its diversity offices and recast faculty hiring around its Catholic mission over the past two years. If they were to maintain their Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs and lose the tax exemption, Notre Dame would have owed more than 500 million dollars last year, the *Observer* reported.

Despite such changes, the universities' 10-year strategic plan establishes the goal for a more diverse campus with specific expectations, and several programs retain an explicit racial focus.

The Treasury Department and the Internal Revenue Service published the newest rules on DEI programs on September 4. The rules would deny tax-exempt status to any private school that considers race in admissions, scholarships, or other programs, even if the school says its goal is to increase diversity or make up for past discrimination. Specifically, Treasury Secretary Scott Bessent said in a statement, "Schools rebranding race-based preferences as equitable, inclusive, or diversity-enhancing does not change their discriminatory nature."

As a result, the university shifted its approach to faculty hiring since the second Trump administration took office on January 20, 2025.

Initially, on January 17, Provost John McGreevy wrote in an email

to Notre Dame faculty that hiring new Catholic professors is one goal, and increasing the number of women and underrepresented minorities on the faculty is a "second overlapping and equally important goal," according to the *National Catholic Register*. He also said a hiring guide would take effect on July 1, 2025.

On January 21, however, President Trump signed an executive order targeting DEI. By September, McGreevy's emphasis had changed. In a September 3, 2025 letter to faculty, McGreevy wrote that Notre Dame was "proceeding with a slate of faculty searches" while "many of our peer institutions have stopped faculty hiring."

Rather than repeating the diversity goal, McGreevy announced a task force on "mission faculty hiring," chaired by Father John Jenkins, C.S.C., the university's president emeritus. The provost wrote that "one important dimension" of faculty hiring "is hiring faculty who are committed to our distinctive Catholic mission." The letter did not mention diversity, women, or underrepresented faculty.

The university has since created a senior position for this new effort. On September 11, Notre Dame named James Schmiedeler vice president and associate provost for faculty recruitment support. He will help departments with "hiring for Notre Dame's Catholic mission." Schmiedeler has experience in "inclusive" hiring practices as he currently serves as the College of Engineering's associate dean for faculty advancement and inclusion, and the announcement says he will also "help integrate

mission hiring with the University's commitment to building a beloved community."

Nevertheless, DEI-adjacent language remains present in the mission of the Provost's Office. The "Inclusive Excellence" page of the office's website says Notre Dame "is called to be a community distinguished by its inclusivity" and that its mission "depends on ensuring that seekers of truth from every background and intellectual perspective feel welcomed."

Assistant Provost Keona L. Lewis is currently leading these efforts for "Inclusive Excellence." When Notre Dame hired Lewis in 2023, her title was "assistant provost for academic diversity and inclusion." The provost's staff directory now lists her only as "Assistant Provost."

In March 2025, the Department of Education (DoE) opened investigations into Notre Dame and 44 other universities over their partnerships with The PhD Project, a doctoral program that allegedly "unlawfully limits eligibility based on the race of participants." In February 2026, the DoE determined that the schools violated Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, and Notre Dame was among 31 that agreed to end their affiliation with the program.

Separately, in May 2025, Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita opened his own inquiry into Notre Dame's DEI practices, which he later expanded with civil investigative demands. Rokita's inquiry cited Notre Dame 2023, the 10-year strategic plan the university released in 2023 to set its academic and institutional priorities. The plan, which still

contains its diversity goals, states, "Becoming more diverse and strengthening the university's Catholic mission is a single project, not two parallel tasks," and that "aspirations for faculty and staff hiring and retention need to be articulated and programs to ensure an inclusive campus expanded."

Notre Dame has also renamed its two main diversity offices without changing their leadership. In August 2025, the Center for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion became the Sister Thea Bowman Center. A month later, the Office of Institutional Transformation became the Office of Belonging, Engagement, and Mission, which is still led by vice president, the Rev. Hugh Page, who also serves as an advisor to the president.

Student programs show a similar pattern of new language for existing programs. In 2023, Campus Ministry advertised the "Plunge Retreat for First-Year Black Students," which was open to all first-year students "but is especially geared toward Black students." This year's page renamed the event to "The Plunge: Black First-Year Retreat" and drops that line, clarifying that the retreat is open to all first-year students. Separate Asian and Latino first-year retreats were held the same weekend.

The retreats are run with Multicultural Student Programs and Services, which made a similar change to its bias workshop. In 2024, its "Microaggression Intervention at Notre Dame" workshop aimed to help students "understand the nature of racial microaggressions," according to an archived version of its page. It is now called "MiND Workshop:

Understanding Bias, Interrupting Exclusion," and its description no longer mentions race. The office also lists 62 affiliated clubs, including the Black Student Association, the Latinx Student Alliance, and Graduate Students Against Racial Injustice.

Similarly, the College of Engineering introduced Yvette Rodriguez in 2022 as its "Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion." Her title is now "Wilma Sanchez Director of Inclusive Excellence," and each engineering department now has a faculty director of "inclusive excellence."

The *Rover* interviewed several students who expressed their concerns with Notre Dame's response to Trump's DEI policies in the perspective of her Catholic mission. A junior who lives in O'Neill Family Hall told the *Rover*, "Notre Dame should oppose both diversity and pure meritocracy by favoring its Catholic mission in the most authentic way."

Another junior political science major told the *Rover*, "Diversity is an essential part of Catholic social teaching, which emphasizes spreading the Gospel of love to everyone. ... [T]he university should ground its hiring decisions in its Catholic mission rather than on the modern notion of diversity."

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

Dominican Sisters to Receive *Evangelium Vitae* Medal *de Nicola Center announces awardee of university's highest pro-life honor*

ALY ROTHFUS
Staff Writer

On Respect Life Sunday, the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture (dCEC) announced that the sixteenth annual *Evangelium Vitae* Award will be given to the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne. First awarded in 2011, the medal recognizes individuals or groups whose outstanding efforts have proclaimed the Gospel of Life by steadfastly affirming and defending the sanctity of human life from conception to natural death.

Ken Hallenius, communications specialist at the dCEC, explained the significance of the award to the university. "It was seen as a way for Notre Dame to proclaim to the world our distinctively Catholic identity as an institution dedicated to the dignity of all human people." He told the *Rover*, "It flows out of and is inspired by Pope John Paul II, who was a great influence

in the life of David Solomon, our founding director, and it's tied to the university's proclamation that we are a pro-life institution."

Past medal recipients include Anthony and Phyllis Lauinger in 2025, Doctor Elvira Parravicini in 2024, and Robert P. George in 2023. This year, the medal was awarded posthumously to Wm. David Solomon, the founder of the dCEC. These pro-life leaders were recognized for their care and advocacy for beginning-of-life issues, while this year the recipients' ministry focuses more on end-of-life issues.

The awardee selection process is not taken lightly. "It is years of planning," Petra Farrell—culture of life program manager at the dCEC—told the *Rover*. "We discuss different individuals within our advisory committee, and then within our staff. People put out different individuals and groups that have come to mind that have really just represented not only our faith but the greater pro-life movement."

Farrell pointed out that "each [recipient] shines a light on different ways that we can approach the pro-life movement." She added, "The Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne represent exactly where we need to go as far as respecting life from womb to tomb ... They treat [their patients] as if they are Christ, and they treat them as if they're family."

The order of the Dominican Sisters of Hawthorne was founded in 1891 by Venerable Rose Hawthorne Lathrop. Their mission is to "preach God's love and His healing presence in the world today through our ministry to his sick poor." Their motherhouse is located in Hawthorne, New York, and they have another home in Atlanta. The sisters aid specifically to the impoverished with incurable cancer.

Recently, the Dominican Sisters encountered legal trouble concerning the Medical Aid in Dying Act (MAID) in New

York State. The law took effect on August 5, 2026, and permits terminally ill patients with a prognosis of six months or less to appeal for drugs that end their lives. In conjunction with the Palliative Care Information Act, doctors and nurses are required to brief patients on all end-of-life options—including MAID. There is a religious exemption, but the qualifications for it are strict. Even if a religious institution opts out of the law, they are still required by New York State to counsel patients on assisted dying. If a patient wants to transfer to an institution that will assist them in suicide, the sisters would be required to arrange it. On July 30, 2026 the district court ruled that the sisters are temporarily exempted from this law.

Mother Marie Edward, O.P., the mother superior of the sisters, will accept the medal on the sisters' behalf on April 14, 2027 at the *Evangelium Vitae* Mass and banquet. The sisters will be

awarded with the *Evangelium Vitae* Medal, along with a ten thousand dollar prize.

Sophomore Jemma Lubbe, who attended the *Evangelium Vitae* dinner last year, expressed her excitement about this year's award recipient. "I think it's good to see that careers and Catholic morals are not mutually exclusive. I'm really excited for this year's dinner because as a pre-PA student who works in geriatrics, it's important to see that end of life care is just as important as any other stage of life."

Aly Rothfus is a sophomore from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania studying history and theology. During this autumn season she's been indulging in the Cafe J chai latte and listening to the one-hour loop of the Great Pumpkin Waltz. If you need any coffee or song recommendations you can email her at arothfus@nd.edu.



PROCLAIM residency *continued from front*

Deacons, to the *Rover*. “Canon 766 allows lay people to preach in other settings according to norms set by bishops’ conferences. PROCLAIM abides by and follows this teaching.”

Those settings include retreats, days of reflection, OCIA, Bible studies, the Liturgy of the Hours, children’s liturgies, and prayer services in hospitals, prisons, schools, and nursing homes. Hidalgo said many women already serve in these ministries but lack access to formal preaching formation. “Women are underutilized,” she said. “PROCLAIM forms women to inhabit those places faithfully, authentically, and more fully.”

Some participants said that the residency offered a rare opportunity for spiritual formation rooted in obedience to the Church. Lillie Rodgers, a graduate of Notre Dame’s M.Div. program who serves at the Catholic Newman Center in Laramie, Wyoming, described the week as “a boon for the soul.” After months of online formation, meeting her cohort in person “was deeply transformational,” she told the *Rover*. “PROCLAIM has given me the confidence to allow the Holy Spirit to use me in ways I couldn’t have imagined previously.”

Rodgers emphasized that her attraction to PROCLAIM was not driven by activism but by a desire for deeper spiritual grounding. “I have yearned for not just professional development, but spiritual development alongside other passionate Catholic women and leaders in the Church,” she



Image by Lee Visser

said. She hopes to carry forward a renewed sense of baptismal identity: “PROCLAIM is equipping me to grasp my identity as a conduit of God’s Word. All of the baptized have this essential role.”

Saint Mary’s became a core partner with PROCLAIM in 2024, citing the legacy of Sister Madeleva Wolff, C.S.C., who expanded graduate theological education for women.

The college stated that Bishop Kevin Rhoades of Fort Wayne-South Bend supported the partnership, though he declined to comment to the *Rover*.

While Molly Gower, Vice President for Mission at Saint Mary’s, also declined speaking to the *Rover*, students on both Saint Mary’s and Notre Dame’s campuses expressed concerns about Saint Mary’s partnership with PROCLAIM. Notre Dame senior Kalia Stalboerger agreed that “it is important to ensure that women have opportunities for leadership roles within the Church,” but she also raised some

concerns about the program. She told the *Rover*, “This program does raise some ambiguities on what exactly [women’s] roles might be.” “As Catholics,” she adds, “We should look to the female saints as models for how to lead ... so that we can follow their footsteps rather than simply try to give women specific titles and positions.”

Saint Mary’s senior Salma Gamsho similarly expressed her concerns to the *Rover* and commented, “Women’s dignity and vocation do not require the Church to change her teachings, and Saint Mary’s should empower women to serve faithfully within them.”

The Church has definitively ruled out priestly ordination for women but has not issued a definitive judgment on the female diaconate. A Vatican commission released a report in December 2025 concluding, by a seven to one vote, that the Church “cannot currently move toward admitting women ... to the diaconate,” while calling the question open to further study and encouraging

broader access to existing ministries for women. Pope Francis stated an emphatic “no” to ordained female deacons in a 2024 CBS interview. As a cardinal, the future Pope Leo XIV affirmed the exclusion of women from priestly ordination but noted that multiple Vatican commissions had studied the diaconate question.

Conservative Catholic analysis remains divided. Some theologians argue the question is closed due to the unity of Holy Orders; others say the matter is unsettled but unlikely to change. Background perspectives can be found in *First Things*, *Catholic World Report*, and the *Rover*’s earlier coverage.

Supporters say that PROCLAIM simply implements existing norms. Hidalgo told the *Rover* that the organization welcomed the Vatican commission’s report and remains committed to “discernment in communion with the Church.” She added that PROCLAIM is one concrete example of the commission’s encouragement to expand ministries for women.

Rodgers, who has two young daughters, hopes the Church continues to strengthen women’s roles without compromising doctrine. “I feel called to do my small part to help the Church increasingly reflect God’s Kingdom,” she said. “I believe the Catholic Church needs women’s voices in preaching to align with the roles women already occupy in teaching, ministering, and serving within the Church.”

On the other hand, some Notre Dame students said the rollout of PROCLAIM has already collided with existing tensions on Campus. Notre Dame sophomore Isabelle

Glunz and her friends noticed a flyer from Discerning Deacons posted in Flaherty Hall’s chapel. They were alarmed by the flyer’s framing, which they felt blurred the Church’s teaching on women and the diaconate.

The flyer read, in part, “Since 2021, our mission has been to engage Catholics in the active discernment of our Church about women and the diaconate and contribute to the renewal of this ministry for our times.” Glunz said the language raised questions about what kind of advocacy was being promoted in residence halls and how it aligned with official Church teaching.

PROCLAIM is funded entirely through the Lilly Endowment’s Compelling Preaching Initiative, which supports 142 preaching-formation programs across Christian traditions. Twenty two of those programs are Catholic. All Lilly funds are restricted to PROCLAIM and primarily cover participant tuition. Discerning Deacons raises separate funds for its synodal work and educational forums.

A second residency and a new cohort are planned for summer 2027. Participants will continue coursework this fall as the Church’s global conversation on women’s ministry and the diaconate continue to unfold.

Abigail Smith is a senior from Nashville, Tennessee. She can be reached at asmith78@nd.edu.

Jennifer Newsome Martin Receives Sheedy Award *PLS and Theology professor honored for Excellence in Teaching*

MARIE SPENCER
Staff Writer

Professor Jennifer Newsome Martin became the 2026 Recipient of the Sheedy Award for Excellence in Teaching on October 1, 2026. Martin, the John J. Cavanaugh Associate Professor of the Humanities, an associate professor in the Program of Liberal Studies (PLS) and theology, and the director of the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture (dCEC), received this distinction for her teaching and contribution to the college.

The Sheedy Award is bestowed annually by the College of Arts and Letters to an outstanding teacher in his or her respective field. Founded in 1970 in honor of Rev. Charles E. Sheedy, C.S.C., the dean of the College from 1952 to 1968, this award “acknowledges a faculty member who has sustained excellence in research and instruction over a wide range of courses.” Faculty members are nominated by their peers and students.

Alison Rice, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies in the College of Arts and Letters, told

the *Rover*, “[The Sheedy Award] recognizes a faculty member who has demonstrated sustained excellence in teaching, informed by research, over a wide range of courses while employing innovative and creative teaching methods. ... [Martin’s] enthusiasm ... makes her a well-deserving winner of this year’s Sheedy Award.”

In both the Theology and PLS departments, Martin teaches seminars and tutorials covering an array of topics, from literature to political theory to systematic theology, and she has mentored a plethora of students during her time at Notre Dame, directing over 30 undergraduate theses and serving on 12 dissertation committees.

Patrick Bunal, a junior who took a PLS seminar with Martin during his freshman year, spoke of Martin’s impact on his learning even after the course ended. Her class inspired Bunal to become a PLS major, and he told the *Rover* that he “still reminisce[s] about our class on [Plato’s] *Symposium*.”

Bunal recalled Martin’s memorable teaching style, including “seeing how she



Image by deNicola Center for Ethics and Culture

approached the text with a genuine wonder and curiosity herself, more as a fellow student than an educator. A student much, much more advanced than us, of course, but a fellow student of Plato nonetheless.”

In addition to educating students in her own classes, Martin helped pilot the updated Moreau First Year Seminar, compiled several of the readings for it, and trained the first group of instructors, along with serving as the speaker in one of the course’s videos. Professor William Mattison III, Faculty Director of Moreau, told the *Rover*, “She

is a true beacon of Catholic liberal arts education, the heart of Notre Dame’s undergraduate formation.”

Martin also directs the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture (dCEC), which includes the Sorin Fellowship, in which around 800 undergraduates take part every year. Assistant Director of the dCEC Margaret McManaway spoke highly of Martin’s impact in an interview with the *Rover*.

“Professor Martin represents the very best of Notre Dame: attentive, thoughtful, rigorous, encouraging—and above all, deeply committed to Notre Dame’s unique Catholic mission,” McManaway reflected. “She takes her students and their questions seriously, challenging them intellectually while also making them feel known and valued. She models the blending of a life of faith and life of the mind that students find naturally attractive; they see in her a compelling example of a life well-lived, one they might aspire to themselves.”

McManaway also shared that although Martin’s passion for gardening is less well-known than

her other accomplishments, this hobby reveals a lot about the way she approaches her teaching, her students, and the Notre Dame community. “She understands that cultivating a garden and cultivating an intellectual community requires patience, attention, care, and a willingness to give generously,” McManaway explained.

McManaway concluded, “She brings a gardener’s sense of abundance to everything she does, pouring herself generously into her students, the de Nicola Center, and Our Lady’s University, delighting in helping them all flourish.”

Martin will be honored with the Sheedy Award Ceremony on December 1, 2026, at 3:30 p.m. in 215/216 McKenna Hall, with a reception to follow.

Marie Spencer is a freshman majoring in Classics and Honors Math. When not in Hes, she can be found in the dining halls creating food hacks. Send her your best ones at m Spencer8@nd.edu.



Notre Dame Law Challenges Supreme Court Ruling

Amicus brief highlights religious restrictions of Locke v. Davey decision

JACK WOODIEL
Staff Writer

Notre Dame law professors and students filed an amicus brief with the U.S. Supreme Court on September 14, urging the court to reevaluate the 2004 case *Locke v. Davey*, which infringed on religious liberty in higher education.

The brief urged the court to overturn *Locke* via two ongoing cases, *Hall v. Fleming* and *Johnson v. Fleming*. Major institutions to file include the Lindsay and Matt Mouron Religious Liberty Clinic, the Notre Dame Law Project, the Notre Dame Program on Church, State, & Society, and the Union of Orthodox Jewish Congregations of America (Orthodox Union).

A ruling in favor of the plaintiffs in the *Hall* and *Johnson* cases could overturn *Locke*, which allows states to uphold statutes that permit certain scholarships to deny recipients funding based upon their intent to study a topic related to religion. Even though the court has narrowed the definition of *Locke*, it still allows for the exclusion of those who seek religion-adjacent degrees.

In an email to the *Rover*, Nicole Stelle Garnett, the John P. Murphy Foundation Professor of Law, described Notre Dame Law School's involvement with the brief. "Because of our Catholic mission, Notre Dame Law School



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has a commitment to religious liberty and educational freedom, and this is an important case raising both issues," she wrote.

An amicus curiae brief, named for the Latin phrase meaning "friend of the court," permits interested individuals or organizations to provide relevant information that pertains to a case and may have been overlooked.

Professor Rick Garnett, the director of the Program on Church, State, & Society, explained why the program contributed to the amicus brief in an email to the *Rover*. "The *Hall* case is directly related to the Program's mission, because a strong constitutional rule against religious discrimination helps to facilitate the full participation of religious institutions in public life."

Under *Locke*, both Rick and

Nicole Garnett see potential issues for students pursuing advanced degrees, particularly in the Masters of Divinity program, Nicole Garnett said that even undergrads who pursue theology degrees could potentially be impacted by the ruling. Overturning *Locke* would open up scholarship opportunities previously closed by the ruling.

In the *Hall v. Fleming* and *Johnson v. Fleming* cases, the State of Virginia denied two Liberty University students, Bethany Hall and Cameron Johnson, funding from Virginia's Tuition Assistance program. The amicus brief supports the students, who claim that the discrimination on the basis of their religious studies violates the Free Exercise Clause of the First Amendment.

Professor Rick Garnett commented on this issue. "At

a general level, the case is about discrimination against religion," he wrote. "More specifically, although the Supreme Court has ruled a number of times that governments are not allowed to exclude religious beneficiaries and participants from benefits programs on the basis of religion, a number of programs continue to do so, if the participant is or could be preparing for religious ministry."

"*Locke* is hard to square with contemporary First Amendment doctrine and the overriding rule that the government simply can't discriminate against religious people in funding programs," Professor John Meiser, Director of the Lindsay and Matt Mouron Religious Liberty Clinic, wrote to the *Rover*. "And as long as *Locke* sits on the books, it frustrates a consistent application of that rule by leading many states to stand by religious exclusions that cannot be constitutionally justified."

In an interview with the *Rover*, second-year law student Matthew Krauter also mentioned this inconsistency and his frustration. "One of the judges [in the *Hall* case] agreed that it's about time *Locke* gets overruled, but his hands were tied. He's bound by the Supreme Court until they take the step to overrule it. They can't do anything. So the courts agree with us that it's time for [*Locke*] to go. We're just asking the Supreme Court to recognize where they've already been heading."

Krauter called attention to the resources available to students in finding unfair statutes. "If you're curious about these things, you should check out our religious discrimination tracker website," he said. "Stay up to date with religious liberty stuff like our clinic; the religious liberty clinic at the law school does a lot of really good work filing amicus briefs on important cases."

When asked why she is passionate about the *Locke* case, Garnett explained that educational choice and religious liberty are two primary focuses of her scholarship. She commented, "There has been great progress in advancing religious liberty and educational choice, both in the Supreme Court and in education policy, and *Locke* is both out of step with those developments and relegates believers to second class citizenship. I think the case was wrongly decided in the first place, and hope the Court will rectify that problem."

Jack Woodiel is a freshman from South Bend majoring in statistics. He enjoys being in nature, playing guitar, listening to folk music, and occasionally all three at once. Contact him with questions you have or answers he needs at jwoodiel@nd.edu.

A Rule of Thumb From Augustine

Avoiding the near occasion of sin

JAMES THUNDER
Staff Writer

Before my class of one hundred graduated from grade school—from Mary, Seat of Wisdom School in Park Ridge, Illinois, in 1964—we had a Day of Recollection at our parish conducted by one of the priests who belonged to the Mission Band of the Archdiocese of Chicago.

This priest gave my class two rules of thumb to avoid sin and the occasion of sin: "Do not do in a crowd what you would not do alone," and "Do not do at night what you would not do in the day."

Since I did not always remember these rules of thumb, at least not in a timely fashion, I can look back and personally attest to their wisdom. Maybe you can too?

I suggested these rules to my children as they were growing up. And I added one of my own: "Lots of bad things happen after midnight."

The history of the Church includes a great saint who on at least one occasion violated *both*



Image by Wikimedia Commons

the rules of my grade school retreat master at the same time. It is easy to violate both rules at the same time: being with a group at night doing what you would not do if alone or in the light of day.

Saint Augustine (354-430 A.D.) was Bishop of Hippo in what is now Algeria. He is a Doctor of the Church, author of *The City of God*, works on grace and free will, on the Trinity, on the

Psalms, on the Book of Genesis, and more. In an autobiography he completed in 400 A.D. while serving as bishop, *The Confessions*, he related his journey of sin and his quest for truth which led him to baptism in the Catholic Church—the Church of his mother, St. Monica, and the bishop of Milan, St. Ambrose. Augustine converted in 386 A.D., at age 32.

Augustine recounts in *The Confessions* that, when he was 16, he was with a group of young men his own age: "A group of young scoundrels, and I among them." It was at night: "It was our bad habit to carry on our games in the streets till very late." The sin was stealing pears: "We carried off an immense load of pears, not to eat—for we barely tasted them before throwing them to the hogs. Our only pleasure in doing it was that it was forbidden." It was purely gratuitous: "I was evil for no object ... seeking no profit from wickedness but only to be wicked."

Augustine was 46 when he published his report of this night when he was 16. Clearly, this incident, this sin of unalloyed evil, haunted Augustine for his

entire life. One of the benefits of avoiding sin is not being haunted.

A version of this piece was originally published in the New Oxford Review's Narthex Blog in 2022. It has been reproduced here with permission of the author.

James Thunder is the Secretary of the Class of '72; author of over 300 publications in law, public policy, history, biography and religion, including the new compendium of 49 biographies, United States Attorneys for the District of Columbia, 1801-2024, the most famous of which is Francis Scott Key. Thunder has been the facilitator of a parish monthly discussion group on St. Augustine since 2013 and speaks and writes about his ancestor, Augustus Welby Pugin (1812-1852), the Gothic revivalist. (A Pugin-designed plate and spoon, donated by the authors' father, are with the Raclin Murphy Museum of Art.)



A Virtue For Our Times

Recovering the practice of modesty

ANDREW BLAKE
Culture Editor

“Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves” (Genesis 3:7).

Even for non-Christians, the story of the fall and Adam and Eve’s shame is a familiar one: ashamed of their nakedness, the two seek to clothe themselves. Adam and Eve covered their nakedness not because their bodies became evil, but, in part, because of the lust which entered the world through their original sin. As Pope Saint John Paul II explains, “Man is ashamed of his body because of lust” and “... together with the lust of the body, shame was born.”

While the body God created remained good, Adam and Eve could no longer live in what John Paul II called “original nakedness.” Clothing themselves, or practicing modesty, was how they responded.

Unfortunately, our culture today has largely lost its appreciation for the practice of modesty. Modesty is not simply a product of a particular time period or a set of antiquated and oppressive norms; rather, it is a virtue which we must seek to cultivate. As the Catechism explains, “Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden. It is ordered to chastity to whose sensitivity it bears witness.”

There are two main reasons why we should dress modestly: out of love for others and out of love for ourselves.

It is regrettable yet undeniable that, in a world where pornography use is rampant and in which sex is viewed not as a gift but as a means of entertainment, we can frequently fall prey to viewing others as objects for sexual gratification rather than as persons made in the image of God. This objectification is at the heart of lust.

Our Lord warns us sternly against the sin of lust, saying, “Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Matthew 5:28). Saint Alphonsus Liguori referred to sexual sins as “hell’s widest gate,” and Our Lady at Fatima affirmed that “more souls go to hell for sins of the flesh than for any other reason.”

Despite our knowledge of the gravity of the sin of lust, we often fail to recognize how our decision to wear revealing clothing may potentially provoke others to this sin. I anticipate some readers will object to this point. After all, are we really responsible if someone chooses to lust after us? Scripture and the Church tell us that we are.

The Catechism defines the sin of scandal as “an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil.” The section continues, “The person who gives scandal becomes his neighbor’s tempter. He damages virtue and integrity; he may even draw his brother into spiritual death.”

“Scandal can be provoked by laws or institutions, by fashion or opinion,” the Catechism adds.

Christ himself is clear in his condemnation of behavior that leads others into sin. He warns us sternly against causing “one of these little ones to sin,” (Luke



Image by Wikimedia Commons

17:2). As Catholic theologian Andrew Swafford notes, the phrase “little ones” refers not only to children, but also to those who are less spiritually mature. In this case, the “little one” in question is the man or woman who is tempted to lust by another’s immodest dress.

Moreover, Cain, when asked by God, “Where is your brother Abel?” provides a similar excuse to ours, answering, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” (Genesis 4:9).

Notre Dame Professor of Theology John Cavadini addressed this theme in a written statement to the *Rover*, saying, “It’s true that people, men in particular, are responsible for their own emotions and passions. ... However, to embrace an ethic of chastity means to embrace an ethic of respect for the embodied personal dignity of oneself and others.”

Cavadini continued, “[Embracing an ethic of chastity] means to participate in the creation of a shared culture of such respect. This means in part not to dress in a way that you know invites disrespect from others

because that is a failure to respect oneself and one’s commitment to a culture where chastity becomes a public, shared virtue.”

As Cavadini alludes to, even if we choose not to dress modestly for the sake of other’s souls, we should at least do so for our own sake. When one lusts after another, not only does the one who lusts commit sin, but the one lusted after is used in an inhumane way. Lust not only divorces sexual pleasure from its intended end, but it also objectifies and demeans. In the words of Pope Francis, “[Lust] plunders, it robs, it consumes in haste, it does not want to listen to the other but only to its own need and pleasure.”

Some readers may still object, arguing that what is considered “modest” is primarily a product of cultural and societal standards. Therefore, in order to dress modestly one should simply abide by the prevailing local customs.

A version of this argument is given by St. Alphonsus Liguori in his work *Moral Theology*. St. Alphonsus argues that “even superfluous ornamentation,” so long as it is in accord with “local custom” and is not “directed to provoking lust” is permissible, even though in other instances this superfluous ornamentation would be a mortal sin (*Moral Theology*, Book 2, Treatise 3, On Charity, Chapter 2. 55). Therefore, one might argue that, even though the clothing worn today would have been rejected by previous generations, custom now allows it.

While this argument may be applicable to customs such as length of dresses, it cannot be used to abrogate a minimal

standard for modest dress. As Venerable Pope Pius XII stated, “... the so-called relativity of fashions with respect to times, places, persons, and education is not a valid reason to renounce a priori a moral judgment on this or that fashion which, for the time being, violates the limits of normal decency.”

“... [N]o matter how broad and changeable the relative morals of styles may be, there is always an absolute norm to be kept after having heard the admonition of conscience warning against approaching danger: style must never be a proximate occasion of sin,” Pius XII concludes.

Lastly, we should avoid falling into the trap of believing that the virtue of modesty only applies to women. While it is certainly true that men are more prone to lust than women are and that, as Professor Cavadini explains, “Cultural standards [of modesty] are generally stricter for women,” men too are responsible for dressing in a manner that helps to keep others from sin and preserves their own dignity. As Cavadini concludes, “Standards [of modesty] are not non-existent for men, and observing these standards means resisting the temptation for a man to turn his body into a continual bid for sex and little else.”

At a university dedicated to Our Lady, we should seek to imitate her virtues, especially the steadfast purity of her Immaculate Heart.

Andrew Blake is a junior studying political science and PLS. He can be reached at ablake5@nd.edu.

To the Sacred Heart

St. Thérèse of Lisieux

When Magdalen before the Tomb, with tears
Sought for her Jesus,
bowed in pain and grief,

The Angels longed to soothe her troubled fears,

But naught to her gave solace or relief.

O ye Archangels luminous in grace,

Your shining beauty stilleth not her quest.

She yearns the Lord of angels to embrace,

To bear Him in her arms, afar to rest.

Last at the Sepulchre near Calvary’s height,

First is she there e’er breaks the dawn above;

Cometh her Jesus, veiling now His light.

She may not vanquish Him on field of love!

Showing her gently first His Face benign.

Soon from His Heart one only

word o’erflows:

“Mary,” O sweetest name from lips divine!

Jesus all peace, all happiness bestows.

One day like Magdalen I sought in vain

To find thee, Lord, and lovingly draw near,

My searching eye swept the far reaching plain,

Would that its Master and its King appear!

To see the crystal wave, the starry sky,

Bird, blossom, Nature’s wealth of sunlit bloom,

And yet to see Thee not, O God, I cry.

’Tis all for me a vast and silent tomb!

I need a Heart whose tenderness will be

My strength abiding, my unfailing stay,

Loving all in me e’en my frailty,

Leaving me never more by night, by day.

No creature can I find whose love is mine,

Ever and always with undying power,

O God, Thy love must make my nature Thine;

Be Thou my Brother in each suffering hour.

Well hast Thou heard me, Lover whom I love,

Coming in human guise to steal my heart;

Shedding Thy Blood—O Mystery thereof!—

Yet living on the Altar-throne Thou art.

If I see not the shining of Thy Face,

Nor hear Thy dulcet voice with sweet refrain,

I may, O Lord, live ever by Thy grace,

Reposing on Thy Sacred Heart remain

’Mid lightning flash Thy law was heaven-assigned;

Hide me within Thy Heart, I tremble not,

My strength, my merit all in Thee I find.

If I to see Thy glory would aspire

My soul must know Thy crucible of flame,

But Love, I choose my purgatorial fire

Thy burning love, Heart of my God, I claim.

My exiled soul, up-winged as the dove

When called from earth to heaven—its home of light,

Would fain out-breathe in act of purest love

Thy Heart to enter with unswerving flight.

O Heart of Jesus, treasured tenderness,

Thou art my joy supreme, my hope, my all;

Thou who didst charm my youth and sweetly bless,

Stay with me till the twilight shadows fall.

Master to Thee alone my life I give,

My every longing sigh to Thee is known;

Lost in Thy goodness infinite, I live,

O Heart of Jesus, lost with Thee alone!

Ah! Well I know our justice in Thy sight

Hath naught of value. That I may impart

A worth to sacrifice—how passing slight—

I would immerse it in Thy flaming Heart.

Thou hast not found Thine Angels without spot,



Columbus Murals Controversy Continues

Students disagree on whether murals should remain veiled

MADELINE PAGE
Staff Writer

Beneath the glow of the Golden Dome, a series of controversial murals hides behind unassuming tapestries. In 2020, then university president Father John Jenkins, C.S.C. veiled Notre Dame's Columbus Murals in response to student and faculty opposition. Six years later, his decision is still contested on campus.

The Columbus murals were painted between 1882 and 1884 by Vatican artist and Notre Dame professor Luigi Gregori. Adorning the second floor walls of the Main Building, the series of 12 murals depicts scenes from Columbus' voyage, including the arrival in the New World, interactions with Queen Isabella of Spain and other Catholic figures, and interactions with Native Americans.

At a time when anti-Catholic and anti-immigrant sentiments were widespread, the murals were intended to demonstrate the critical role that these groups played in the foundation of America. At the time, Columbus was regarded as an American hero, and his status as both an immigrant and a devout Catholic was undisputed. When Father Edward Sorin, C.S.C., commissioned the murals, he hoped to "[send] the message to the Notre Dame community that they too, though largely immigrants and Catholics, could be fully and proudly American," Fr. Jenkins wrote in his 2019 "Letter to Campus Regarding Columbus Murals."

This view of Columbus as a figurehead for American Catholicism was echoed by then



Image by Wikimedia Commons

Pope Leo XIII. "Columbus is ours," he wrote in his 1892 encyclical *Quarto Abiente Saeculo* addressing the quadricentennial of Columbus' voyage. "Columbus threw open America at the time when a great storm was about to break over the Church."

However, Columbus' reputation has been tarnished since the nineteenth century; his practices of forced labor and violence towards Native Americans have prompted questions and controversy.

In response to an open letter calling for their removal, Jenkins covered the murals with tapestries depicting Christian, Marian, and Potawatomi inspired imagery in 2020. Each semester, the murals are temporarily unveiled to allow for academic engagement, a decision that some students argue fails to fully acknowledge history.

"It is a mistake for the university to veil the Columbus murals," the Notre Dame College Republicans told the *Rover*. "The university should embrace the Catholic role in America's genesis rather than distance itself from it. It is

understood that Columbus' arrival on this continent contributed indirectly and directly to immense suffering, but the actions of many of history's heroes were devastating to some."

"It appears that the university is more preoccupied with diversity than with tradition because they are uncomfortable with the history of this nation," the club continued.

Max McNiff, the Grand Knight of Notre Dame's Knights of Columbus chapter—an organization of Catholic men named after Columbus—also expressed disapproval of the murals' veiling.

"Ironically, the university, in an attempt to give a voice to the oppressed and marginalized, is suppressing the figure who did just that," McNiff told the *Rover*. "For many Catholics coming to America for the first time, they were viewed with great suspicion by the country in which they sought refuge. [They] sought to demonstrate their allegiance to America, but were excluded from

civic life, and Columbus was the figure they stood behind to defend their claim to American heritage."

"For [the Knights] today, Columbus represents the Catholic heritage that America has inherited since her founding," he said.

Junior Patrick Bunal also expressed disapproval. "I'm inclined to think that the decision is incorrect," he explained in a written statement to the *Rover*.

However, Bunal stated that he understands its controversial nature, explaining "... [At secular universities] where [the murals would be] more prone to being misunderstood as legitimate history, instead of being symbolic of how you can be Catholic *and* American, I would sympathize more with veiling the murals."

Although dissent is present, many students approve of Fr. Jenkins' decision, citing the need to acknowledge the discomfort that the murals prompt for some students.

"Welcoming a diverse student body means including a variety of perspectives, which means historical traditions should be examined, not discarded entirely, and expanded so that all students see themselves reflected accurately in the story of our nation and Notre Dame," the Notre Dame College Democrats said in an interview with the *Rover*.

The club continued, "We understand the difficulties of reckoning with the past of a growing, learning, and rapidly changing nation. However, we believe it is important to learn about the 'bad' in our history and provide the means to rectify our mistakes. In our case with the Columbus murals, this means covering them with a tapestry that

represents the Native American communities negatively impacted by the consequences of the Columbus voyages."

Disputes over how best to acknowledge both the good and the bad of America's history are not confined to Notre Dame. In Columbus, Ohio—the capital city named for the controversial explorer—the statue of Columbus adorning the city hall steps was removed in response to public outcry in 2020. Although a "Reimagining Columbus" council was formed to determine a new place for the statue, no progress has been made thus far.

The removal of monuments portraying other controversial historical figures, such as Robert E. Lee and a purportedly pro-segregationist Texas Ranger, are under scrutiny in other parts of the country, as officials seek to strike a balance in acknowledging all aspects of American history.

Notre Dame's Columbus murals will next be uncovered for academic engagement from October 26 to October 30. More information on the murals and their history can be found on their website.

Madeline Page is a junior studying biology. She loves the giant leaves that litter the ground during autumn at Notre Dame, so she collects them, presses them, and keeps them in a folder. She has no idea what she will do with all her leaves. To give her suggestions (or tell her where to find a really big leaf), email mpage4@nd.edu.

Keenan, Stanford Ploughed to Make Way for New Data Centers

North Quad renovations advance university push to lead AI research

CALEB VAUGHAN
Editor-in-Chief

The university informed residents of Stanford and Keenan Halls that their communities would be displaced effective immediately as the university announced plans to construct a gigawatt data center.

Shortly after residents of the affected dorms were informed of the changes, Residential Life sent an email to the rest of campus. It read, "As a Catholic university, we are informed by the universal mission of the Church to serve those most in need of intelligence. Motivated by this mission, we are eager to supply artificial intelligence to the most retarded."

The university quickly sent a follow up email to the campus community apologizing for their use of the word retarded; it slipped

undetected through their AI editor. Grok originally wrote the statement.

"Hell, ever since we went test-optional, many of our students could use a little of this artificial intelligence," said one AI advocate. The statement and advocate severely misunderstand 'artificial' intelligence.

Residents of Stanford Hall will spend the rest of the year in the recently vacant Howard Hall. Although there is not space for all of them, they are expected to "squeeze in," according to a statement from Residential Life.

Keenan Hall residents will be relocated to Stepan Center. According to university officials, "We just needed somewhere to put them." The university will be providing cots to residents, but cannot promise running water, as water resources will need to be diverted to the new data center.

Some have argued that the cinderblock construction of Keenan and Stanford was meant to be temporary and the dorms would have to undergo significant renovations, if not demolition, in the coming years.

When asked, a ND Facilities spokeswoman told the *Rover*, "No, the buildings were totally fine. We purely needed the space for data centers—and the power plant being nearby is a huge bonus."

The North Quad location was chosen because of its proximity to the power plant. The power plant, which runs on turbo engines, is reported to have sufficient power to keep the datacenter running, so long as the rest of campus stays dark.

North Quad was reportedly the only location on campus with close enough proximity to the plant to draw sufficient power.

Notre Dame originally

considered placing the data center off campus in nearby South Bend or a surrounding town, but consistent protest from municipal groups proved too much resistance. Between that and city government red tape, the university gave up and instead decided to relocate the data center to campus, where the university is also the municipal government.

Here, any protests that lasted longer than 15 minutes were quashed with overwhelming force, as the law demands. The first couple protests gained major traction among the student population, but after seven deaths, student spirits were subdued.

One Keenan Knight told the *Rover*, "I always thought Keenan was worth dying for, but I changed my mind."

In a ground-breaking ceremony (literally, they already started digging into North Quad), the

university president addressed crowds gathered to protest. But by the time the crowd scattered at 14 minutes and 59 seconds, the president hadn't yet finished his story about how this data center is going to help the new mom in Kenya who smiled one time.

Funded by a 150 million dollar gift from the Lilly Endowment, the project aims to advance the University of Notre Dame as a leader on the frontier of AI research and ethics.

Caleb Vaughan is a senior who could use a little more of this artificial intelligence they're working on. Send him some of yours at cvaughan2@nd.edu.



Pipes, Prayers, and Proposals

Trad Guide to Dating under the Dome, Part II: Male Edition

ABIGAIL SMITH
Staff Writer

Welcome back, gentlemen! This second issue has been created because apparently y’all need even more help than the ladies. This time, I’ve enlisted my brother Andrew (siblings, not dating) for some advice to guide ND men through the spiritual purgatory known as “courtship.”

Step 1: Finding the perfect “Trad Wife”

Gents, stop looking for your wife on Marriage Pact. Stop looking at the bars! You’ll find your trad wife in her natural habitat: The Basilica. Your future wife will probably be:

In the front pew, praying with her best friends. (Yes, they all look the same ... just pick one.)

Still genuflecting, making sure her right knee fully touches the ground.

In line for confession, with her head bowed in repentance for forgetting to pray the third day of the St. Thérèse novena.

Be sure to sit behind her to make sure she does not raise her hands during the Our Father. Remember, you want a Trad wife, not a Vatican II wife.

Step 2: Dress for the job WIFE you want

A man’s wardrobe is critical to his courtship strategy. What you wear tells a woman everything she needs to know about your spiritual life and your future children’s likelihood of having names like Benedict or Philomena. Be sure your wardrobe includes:

A pair of dress shoes: loafers say, “I tithe.” Sneakers say, “I’m broke.”

Navy blazer or tweed jacket: a good coat says “I have a job,” or “I vote Republican.” (If neither are true, she’ll never know.)

A watch that ticks: a real watch says, “I’m a man who knows when Mass starts.”

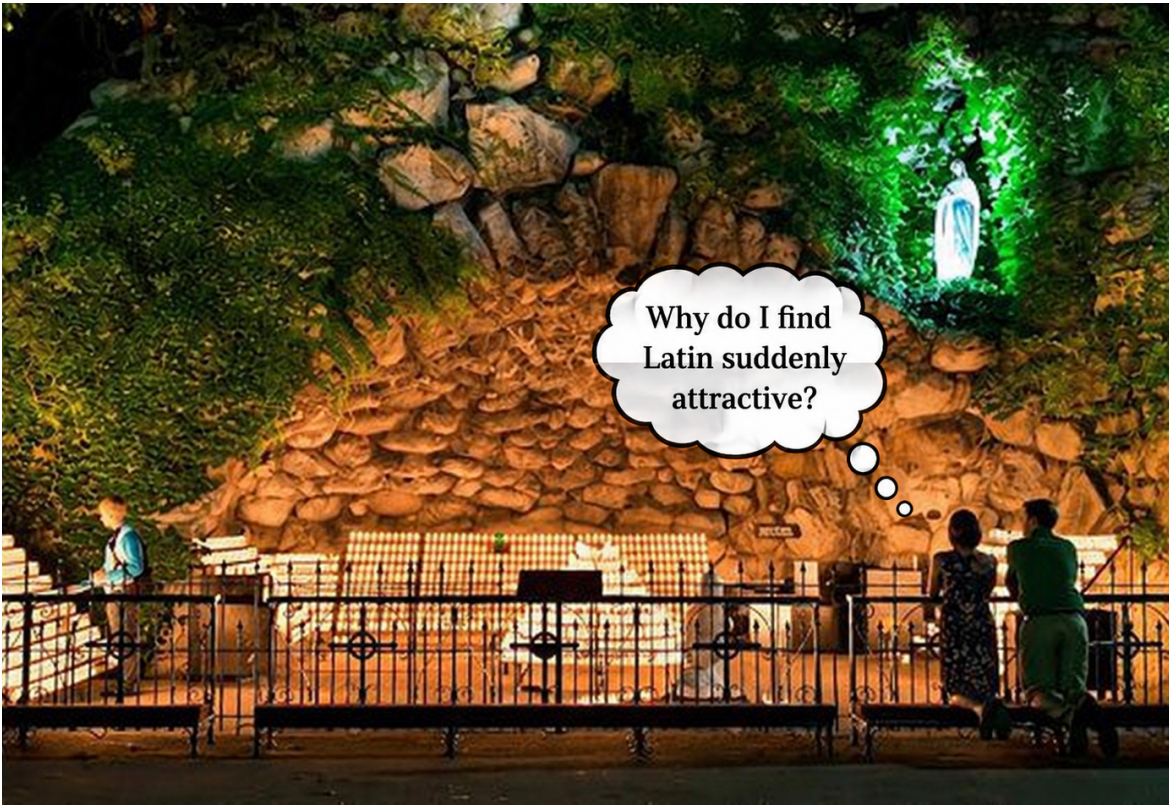


Image by Notre Dame modified by the Irish Rover

When it comes to clothes, men, don’t dress as you are (a broke college student). Dress as you intend to be; the kind of man who can afford a mortgage, owns a toolbox, and has ten kids.

Step 3: Initiate courtship before she’s recruited by the Dominican Sisters

For some reason, girls like to be told when you’re interested in them. If you wish to verbally let them know that you’re interested, be sure to:

Flirt via text, email, and/or DM on LinkedIn, with sayings like: “crazy homily today” or “random question: do you believe in Josephite marriage?” If you can carry a conversation online, hopefully you can power through in person. I know you find it easy to flirt with “the boys,” but girls want to be hit on with at least one complete sentence that isn’t a meme.

Talk to her after Mass, asking for the third time, “What’s your major?” even though you already know because you stalked her

LinkedIn. ... You just can’t think of anything else to say because she’s so beautiful.

Ask her out using the word “DATE.” It may seem like overkill, but girls do indeed need this specific word in order to know that it’s a date.

Make sure that she feels secure in how you feel about her. You are not just interested in a date. You want to spend time with HER.

Step 4: Demonstrate leadership by planning dates

This is your chance to show her that you can plan romantic dates and be the leader that a woman can follow—Ephesians 5:22-style.

Ideal dates to show your romantic yet affordable side can include:

Watching the whole extended editions of The Lord of the Rings: this way, your couples costumes will always be Aragorn and Arwen. Plus, it will give you 12 hours and six minutes to sit next to each other (however, be prepared to pause every

five minutes to explain the Christological imagery!).

The classic SDH date and walk around the lakes, quoting G. K. Chesterton as if you had read the book, when really you just heard it quoted by Matt Fradd.

Any activity you KNOW you can win, such as mini golf, bowling, or (let’s be honest) almost any sport.

I know you may think it is polite to let her win ... it’s not. Show no mercy! This is love AND war! This one event will determine who will be the “breadwinner” in your future family, and it better be you!

Step 5: Chivalry-maxxing

Show her that you care by:

Making sure she NEVER opens her own door. If she tries, force the door shut so you can re-open it for her.

Always drive, because she can’t. Standing between her and danger, including traffic and the campus raccoons.

Lift heavy things, saying something gallant like “M’lady,

allow me.”

If anyone accuses you of trying too hard, simply remind them that somewhere out there is a girl in a long skirt adding you to her “potential husbands” list on her notes app.

Step 6: Pursue her like you’re a crusader, reclaiming the Holy Land

When you know she’s the one, you will become a crusader of courtship. You will pursue her with the kind of intensity usually reserved for medieval men who would fight a hopeless last stand simply because their fellowman shouted, “God wills it!” Your mission may involve fewer geopolitical complications and a lot less Muslims, but you will defend her from Menbrozas, bad Tinder dates, and (let’s be honest) that one very enthusiastic Knight of Columbus who has read too many papal encyclicals and not enough social cues. Stop casual dating and enter into courtly warfare.

Man-to-man:

Be half Southern gentleman, half Crusader, and half ND football player. Yes. That’s three halves, but it’s “girl math.” Trust me. It’s what they want. In short: dress well, pray hard, lift heavy, and ask her out. If she rejects you, offer it up and throw another 45 on your max bench.

May your rosaries be sturdy, your confidence unshaken, and your Windsor knots (like your sexuality) forever straight.

Abigail Smith is a senior who has survived three years of men using Aquinas as a pickup line. Contact her for a “lake walk” at asmith78@nd.edu.



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