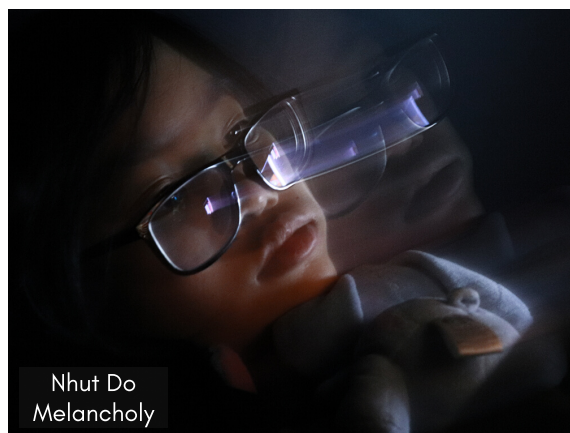


# Imagination

I steeled myself, raised my gun the way they do in the movies, and reached down for the handle. Twisting the lock sideways, I flung the door open to a roar and flash. The earth floated up and slammed down as before. The line marched on. After deliberating for a short while, I placed both hands on the gun and stepped forward through the door to the feeling of my kneecaps exploding with

a fiery pain. I collapsed onto the ground, my lower extremities a mess of discomfort and an inability to function. The gun fell from my grip, slipping out of my sweat soaked hand. Another blow struck my head and stars began to dance across my vision as I fell to the ground a few feet from the thunderous tall grass. My tongue tasted iron and I began to panic.

As my vision started to clear I looked up to see the grass reaching out to me with thin tendrils, creeping quickly across the ground. I scrambled to my feet and turned around to watch the door shut hard. Towering



Nhut Do  
Melancholy

over it stood one of those behemoths I had seen from across the field. Its large, imposing figure dwarfed me with legs like tree trunks leading up to a dark and muscular frame. It looked down on me through dark slits which I thought to be its eyes, eliciting a deep, primal fear. It stood frozen. The tendrils reached me and began to wrap around my legs. Thunder roared. Lightning flashed. The grass began to pull me in and envelop me. The tendrils twisted and crawled ever higher until I couldn't breathe. Suffocating, my eyes were left open to stare in horror at the dark clouds overhead as sheets of biting rain defied the laws of gravity and whipped into my back and towards the sky above. Between the sheets of rain, water vapor came down and settled in a thick cloud that burned and stung at my eyes and bare skin. The grass pushed me onwards, further from the door and home as I struggled desperately to breathe.

A great rumbling rose up from underneath me as the grass started to strain and contort. With a sudden, deafening crash that left ringing in my ears, the very ground underneath me was flung upwards. The grass lost its hold on me for a second and I raised my head to view the plain as I took a deep gulp of air, to see with dismay that the procession of otherworldly creatures had frozen in place. What's more, all of their heads had turned as if to look at me. With a blinding flash my body was sent back to the ground, knocking the wind out of me. The grass reclaimed its hold, taking my air supply yet again and leaving me with a feeling of dread. It pulled me further. The sheets of rain whipped at my back and the vapor ate away at my flesh, falling over me like a blanket. The thunder sounded yet again. I floated. I fell. I struggled to breathe. The grass pulled onwards for what felt like an eternity, with that same deadly trampoline occurring three more times. Finally, with my body weary and my mind at its limit, the grass spit me out and dumped me in a clump, facedown at the far edge of the field where the monsters stood, waiting for me.

# Imagination

Scores of warped yet seemingly human hands attached to masked beings began to pull me up and place chains around my wrists. I was pulled across the frozen ground by the chains placed around my wrists until I lie at the feet of a behemoth. The hands chained me to the great shackles around its massive leg, and the creatures' chains retracted to pull them back into their places in the line beside their monstrous escorts. The procession began again. I fought and struggled but the creature's legs which I was shackled to pulled me along. To resist was futile. We crossed the frozen plain until we reached the desert and, without stopping, pushed onward. Stepping into the desert, an intense wave of heat came over me. In that short time in between, my body felt caught between two intense extremes. The desert floor pulled at my ankles like quicksand as the behemoths marched on without trouble. Each step seemed to fill my ankles with more lead, pulling my ankles down and down, the heat pushing me beyond the point of exhaustion.

We marched for what felt like an eternity. The scenery would change briefly but always seemed to return to something similar enough, although I was too weary to remember landmarks for long. I walked zombified, being pulled along by the monster which dragged me at intervals, unable to stand on my own. My mind began to wander. Plans of escape danced through my head but were easily shot down with quick bursts of logic. I had no choice but to march on through the desolate wasteland. My spirit failed long before my body. At a certain point I gave up and simply let the monster drag me along; it was easier, at least.



Joseph Uholik  
Wandering

As time wore on we began to approach the horizon. The desert sand gave way to the skyline which showcased the other end of the long line of thin blue suns. The orbs of glimmering light seemed to dance in the sky with our approach. It appeared to be similar to the horizon at the beginning of the journey, with a steep drop off into nothingness. The desert simply gave way to shining, unnaturally deep blue sky. As the first in the long line of creatures approached the cliff, the lead behemoth took a step into the abyss without pausing and began to disappear. Soon its body was enveloped whole, its shackled figures in tow. The procession continued down the line until it was my turn, towards the back of the line, to take the step. With great trepidation, I cautiously approached the ledge as slow as the monster would let me. At the limit of my chain, I finally stepped forward into nothingness, expecting to fall forward into the abyss. My leg went cold as it struck ground.



# Imagination

The rest of my body followed, my head coming through with a second step to a loud thunderous roar and a flash of lightning. The field of tall grass stretched out to my right as the procession continued on. We kept walking as one of the behemoths ahead of me moved over to the storm and craned its neck towards the sky to suck a cloud into what passed as its mouth. Rays of blue sunlight poured through. Stretching to see above the field in order to catch a glimpse of the door, I watched a head retreat back through the door and shut it tight. A sense of dread welled within my stomach, pervading throughout my entire body. The procession continued as seconds later the door reopened and a face reappeared. It peeked further out, looked at the procession appearing from behind me, and then retreated back into the door. The procession stopped. The same hands which had once pulled me off the ground roughly forced a semi-transparent hood over my head. I knew what would happen next, but not the quickness with which it would occur. Within seconds the door was flung open, and I watched hopelessly as I, myself, stepped through the door.



The behemoth I had seen before unleashed a mallet shaped thing from its stomach attached to a sinewy piece of string. I was able to see it slash at my kneecaps from a third person point of view as the tendrils crept up the hill toward me across the field. I watched my body crumple as another blow slammed into his head, knocking him flat on his stomach. The same mallet shaped thing swung back through the air to slam the door shut behind the copy's body on the ground. The tendrils took hold around my clone's body and began its suffocation. I couldn't scream, I couldn't struggle. All that I could do is

watch. I watched in abject horror while my body floated into the air and slammed back down 1, 2, 3, 4, then 5 times, the tendrils reclaiming their hold. I watched myself be spit out onto the ground, a broken and bloody mess, and watched as the humanoid beings removed their masks and looked with sadness at the figure on the ground. When I looked at them, standing there, ma'am, it was the strangest thing.

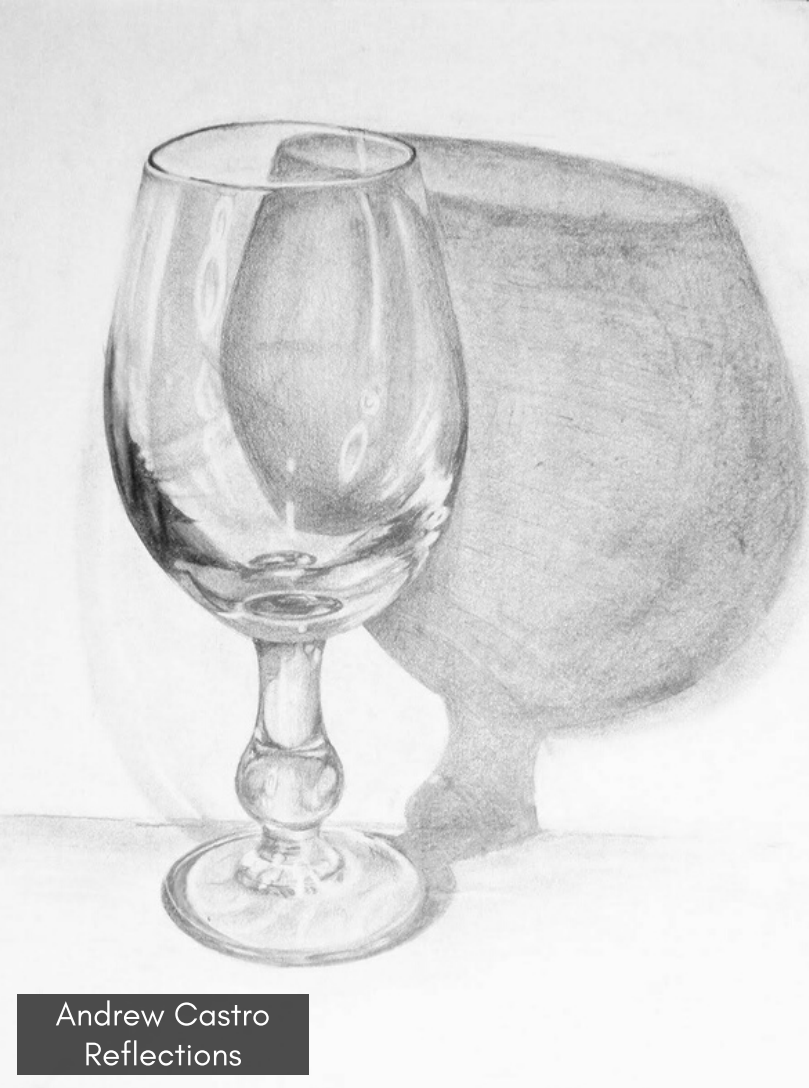
They all had my face.





Andrew Castro  
Student Portrait

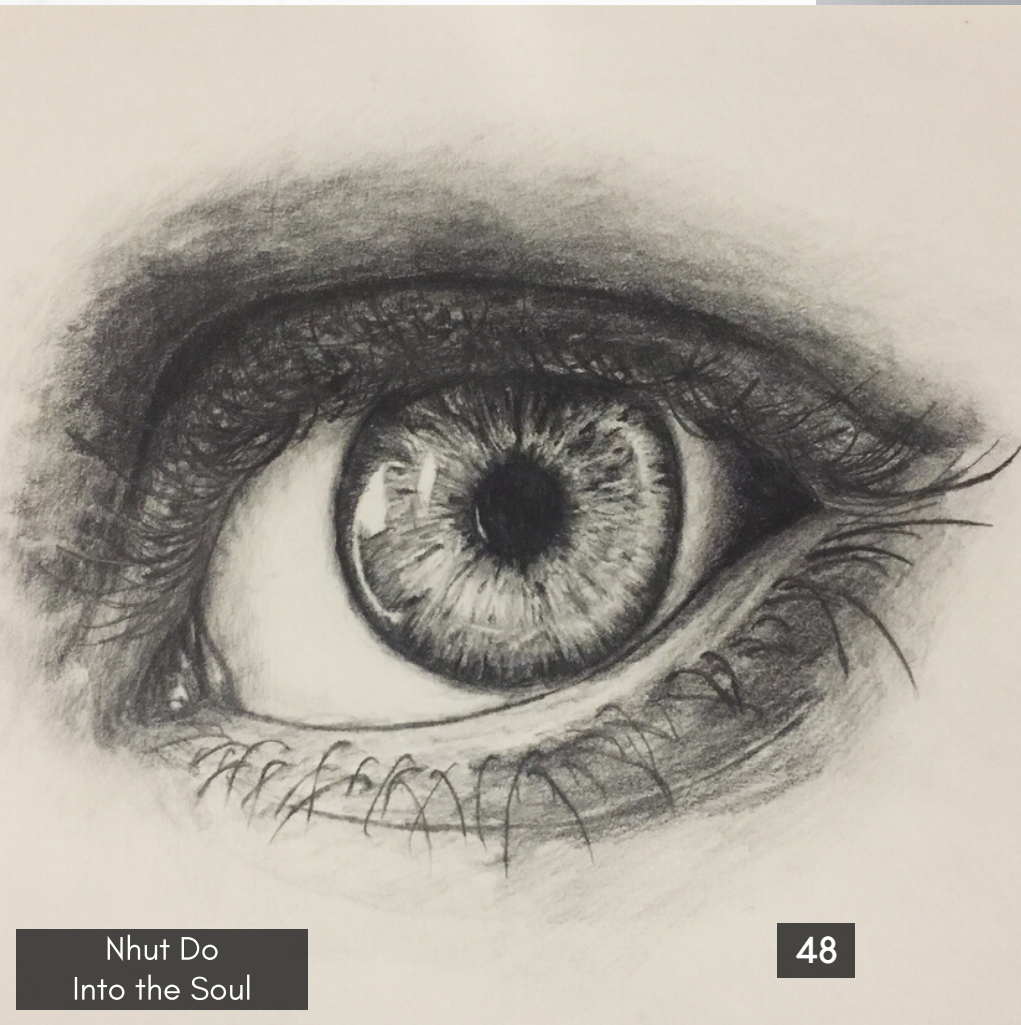




Andrew Castro  
Reflections



Nhut Do  
Balance



Nhut Do  
Into the Soul



Nhut Do  
Checkmate









Nhut Do  
Keyhole



Justice Cohen  
Vigilante



Andrew Castro  
Highchair



Nhut Do  
In the Loop





# *Community*



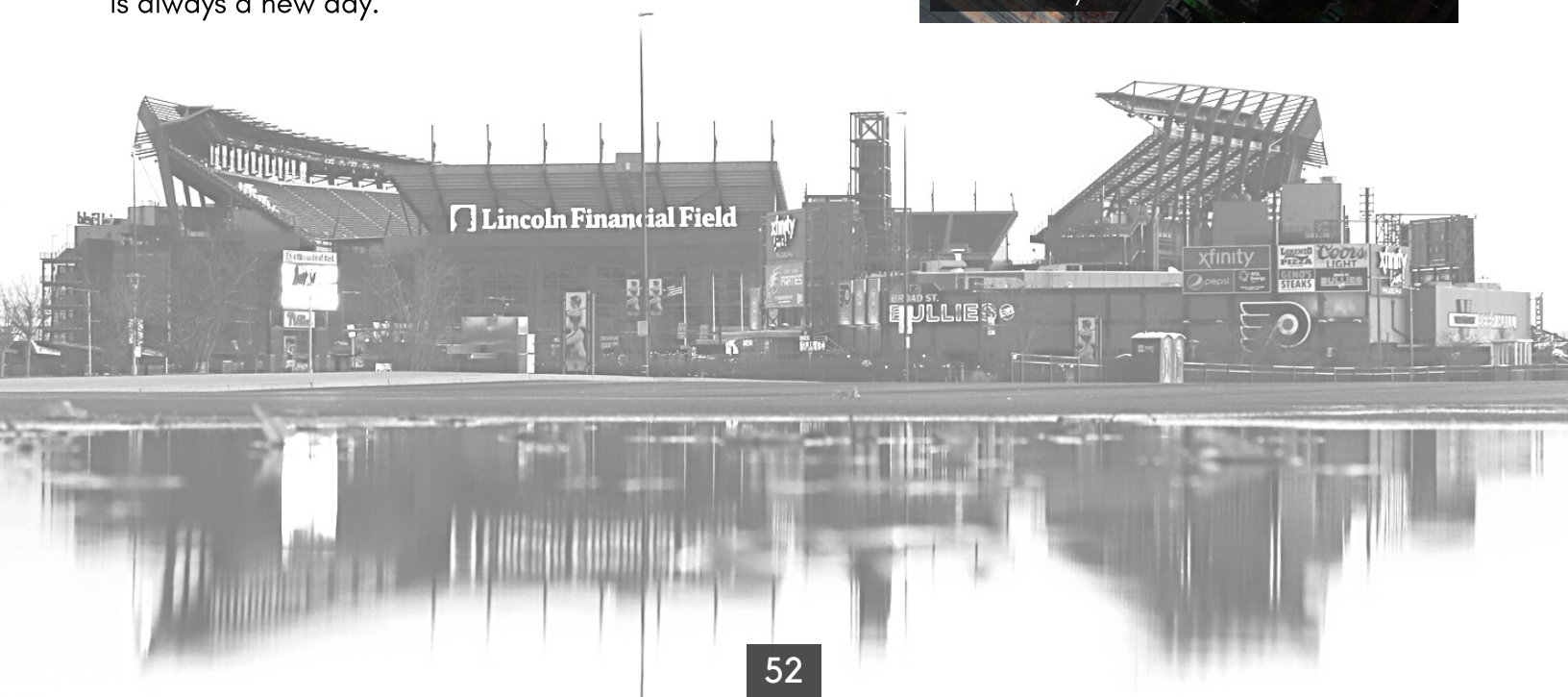


# Community

## Hope

*Elijah Karn*

The water rushes slowly past your head as you sleep  
Bathed in soft silver moonlight. When you wake  
The whole world has been turned upside down,  
Shaken by invisible hands. The sunrise is a splash  
Of lava on the blue canvas of the sky, that seems to set  
The whole world aflame. A fog sets in, casting  
An uncertain haze over the soft morning light  
That matches the uncertainty  
Of the times. Nothing can go right here,  
In one day, everything has changed.  
The very fabric of life has been ripped  
Apart from the seams. All that you knew  
And loved has transformed. Nothing  
Stays the same. Yet just as life changed  
For the worse, it will also change for the better.  
The world will get stitched together again.  
Young things grow old and die,  
And in turn give way too new life, just as  
Winter gives way to spring. Tomorrow  
Is always a new day.



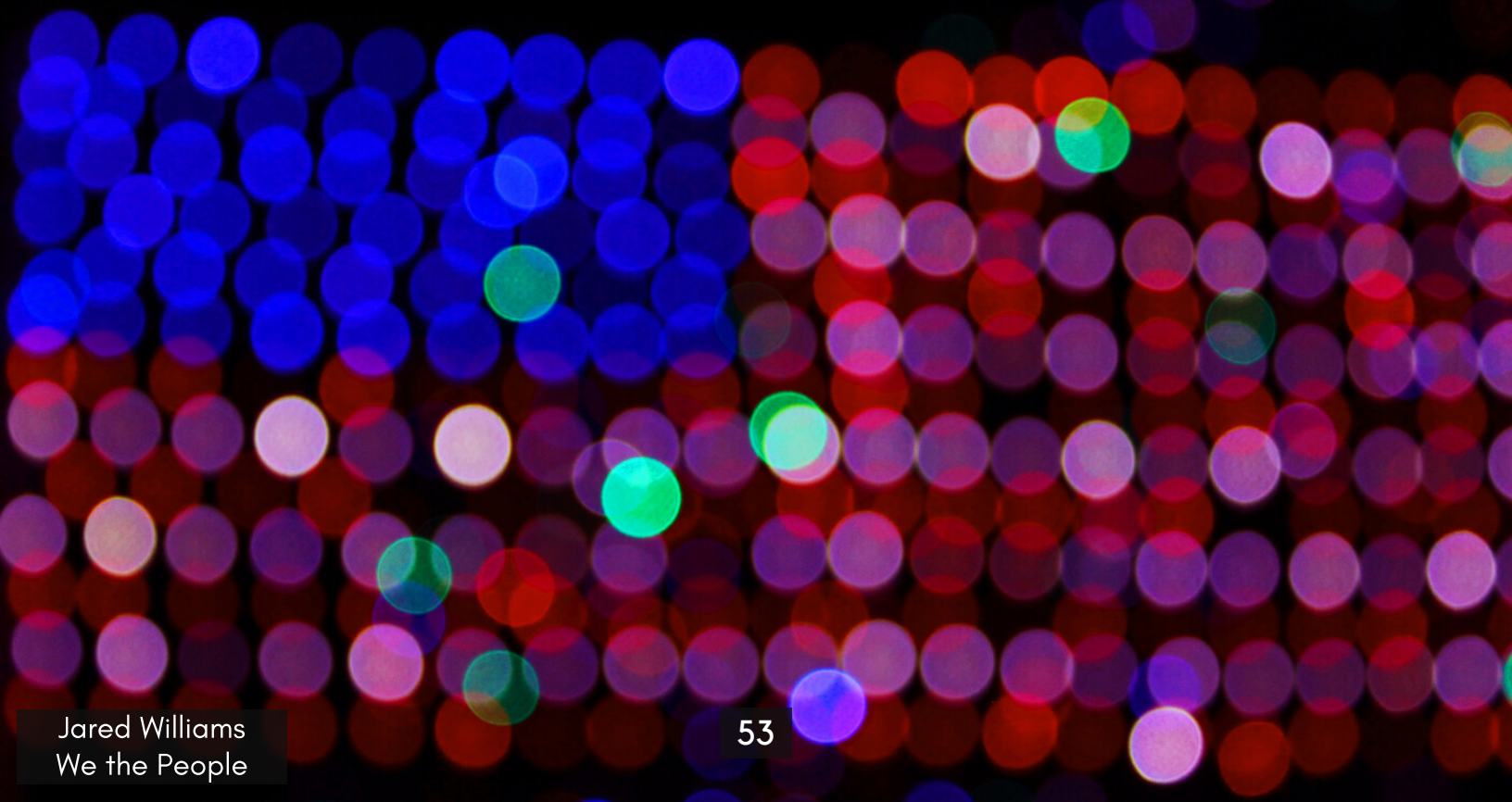




Andrew Castro  
Hope



Tam Minh Le was sentenced



Jared Williams  
We the People



# Community

## A Social Experiment

Anthony Kafel

*As a diocesan scholar, Anthony Kafel took college courses during his senior year, one of which was Sociology. While Anthony's essay records a serious sociological experiment, it does have a few humorous moments. This essay also serves as a stark reminder of pre-COVID-19 life. This experiment would've been impossible to conduct after CDC guidelines on social distancing were implemented.*

For my norm-breaking project, I decided to go against the social norms that are practiced in men's public bathrooms. Whether it is in an elevator or on the bus, there are certain unwritten rules when it comes to social situations. Those same rules apply in men's public bathrooms. The normative behavior that I broke in my experiment was the behavior of urinal selection. When you are in a men's room, there is typically a line of urinals for men to use. Depending on the size of the public bathroom, there could be a row of just three urinals to a row of twenty urinals. When more than one person is using a



urinal, the normal behavior is not to use the urinal directly next to someone. For example, say there is a row of five urinals in a bathroom. As you are going to use one, there is someone using the middle (or third) urinal. The normative behavior would be to use either urinal on the ends (or the first/fifth urinals). An abnormal behavior would be to use the urinal directly next to the urinal that the other person is using. The idea is that most people enjoy their own personal space and would prefer not to be near someone

when they are going to the bathroom. There are elements of privacy and courtesy that people respect when using the restroom. The people that engage in this normative behavior are usually men, especially when in public bathrooms because the setting allows for this normative behavior to be practiced. This normative behavior is not a written rule or posted in bathrooms, but rather is a general respect for others' personal space. It is not a behavior maintained by a particular person, but rather is a behavior maintained by the majority of men who use public bathrooms. It is not something you are taught, but is something that you pick up as you become more aware in your adolescent years.

In order to break this social norm, I had to find public bathrooms where this situation would be available. I conducted this experiment at the bathrooms in the Comcast Center, 30th Street Station, LaSalle University, and University of Pennsylvania. I performed the experiment twelve times, three times at each location. In order for the situation to be as awkward as possible, I tried to wait until there were only one or two people using the urinals at a time.



# Community

The first place that I tried this experiment was the Comcast Center. This was the least awkward because there were dividers between the urinals, making the experiment less confrontational. In order to conduct the experiment, I basically had to wait until someone would use a urinal. Once they did, I would use the urinal directly next to them. In the Comcast Center, there were only two or three urinals and dividers between them. I did not get any noticeable reactions out of people conducting the experiment there due to those two factors.



At 30th Street Station, the men's bathroom design was much more suited for me to conduct this experiment. There were about twenty urinals lined up in a row with no dividers between them. From side to side, there was less than a foot between each of the urinals. This was the first bathroom I conducted the experiment in where there were no dividers. The first guy I conducted the experiment on was using the urinal on the very end of the row. I walked up to the urinal right next to him and before either of us began to go to the bathroom he looked down the row of urinals, saw no one else was using any of them, and looked at me and said, "You have to be kidding me." This was my first test run so I could not contain myself and started cracking up. He went down to the other end of the row and used the urinal on that end. It felt so weird to be that close to someone, especially while in the bathroom. My natural reaction was just to laugh because of the fact that he moved all the way to the other end rather than just going to the bathroom. The guy was genuinely annoyed at the fact that I did that and was bothered enough to move before going to the bathroom. The second person that I conducted the experiment on was a poor choice in retrospect. This guy was 6'4, maybe 6' 5, and was built like someone who frequently lifts weights. He went to a urinal somewhere in the middle, and I walked up to the one right next to him.

He immediately said, "We got a problem buddy?" and I had to tell him what I was doing in fear of being hit or attacked. I told him that I was doing an experiment for my sociology class, and he let it go. However, he did tell me that I should probably not continue to conduct this experiment because it can be offensive to some people. I tried not to show it, but I was terrified that he was going to try to fight me. The last person I conducted the experiment on was already going to the bathroom when I walked up, so he had no choice but to stay there until he was finished. He just awkwardly turned his head the other way until he was finished, and gave me a disturbed look as he walked towards the sinks afterwards. I felt awkward as well because there was no reaction from him but I could tell he was uncomfortable, and that made me uncomfortable.

# Community

At LaSalle University, the men's bathroom in Haymen Hall was suited for this experiment as well. The only problem with this location was that I conducted the experiment early in the morning on three different occasions, before 8am classes began. It is my theory that because it was so early in the morning, people did not care as much. The first two people I conducted the experiment on had no reaction to me using the urinal next to them. However, the third person I conducted the experiment on did have a reaction. I walked up to the urinal and he asked me, "What are you doing, bro?" I responded, "Uhhhhh, peeing," and then turned my head the other way so I would not start laughing. When I was washing my hands, I heard him talking to someone outside the bathroom. He told them, "Some kid just peed right next to me and there was no one else in the bathroom," and the guy he was with just started laughing. Of course I waited a few minutes before I left the bathroom to avoid confrontation with them again.

Finally, I conducted the experiment at the University of Pennsylvania. This bathroom had dividers, so there were no reactions from any of the people that I conducted the experiment on. One guy held the divider while he went to the bathroom, and that was awkward for me because it initially looked like he was reaching for me or something.



Overall, it was a bizarre experience. It was strange breaking a social norm like that and not getting in trouble for it. When people break social norms, especially on public transportation, I sometimes wish there were sanctions for people who do that because it makes me feel uncomfortable. Doing this experiment also justified my opinion that breaking social norms is annoying. I felt annoyed being on the other end of it. Regardless, it was funny to see people's reactions.





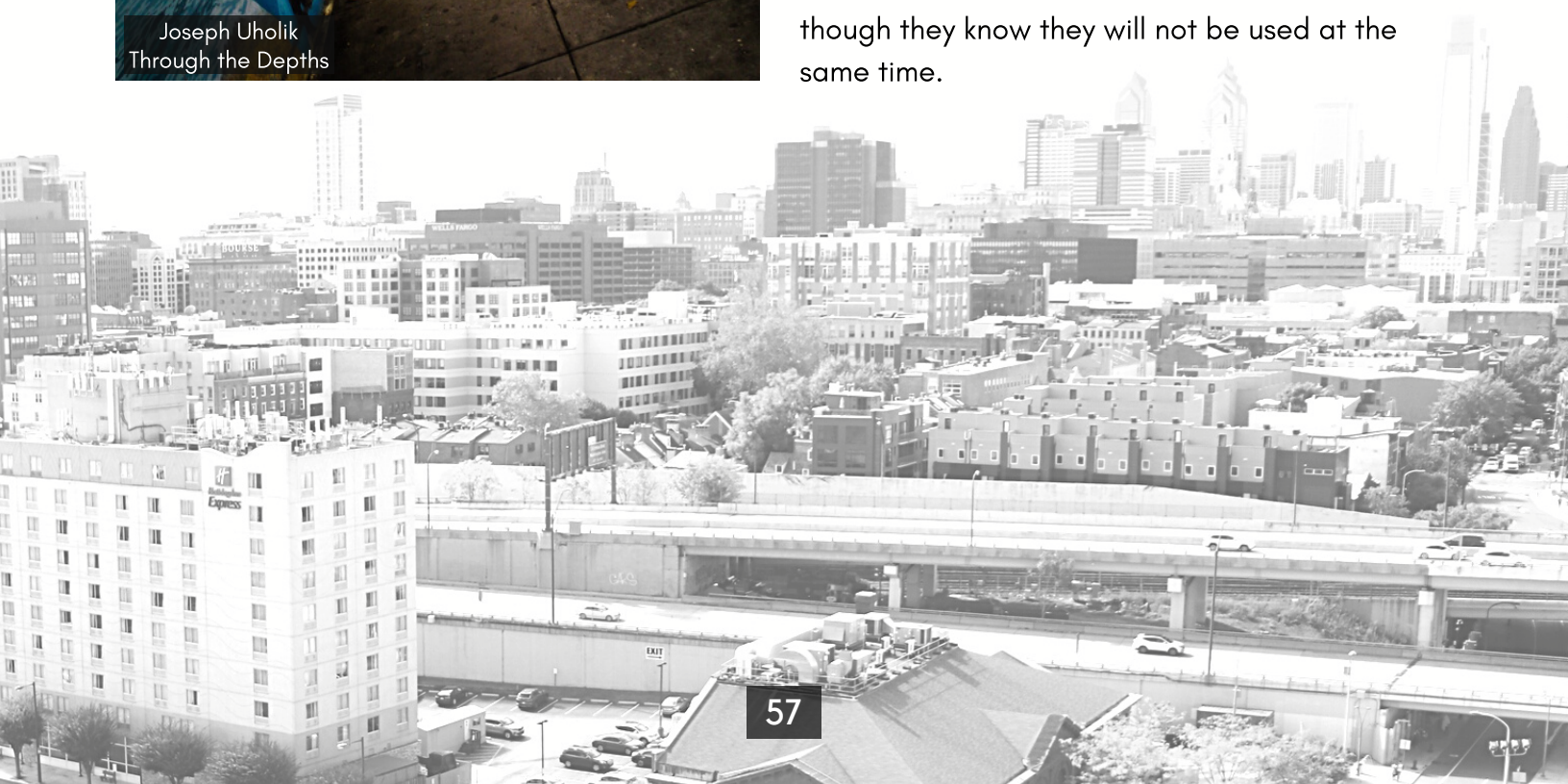
# Community

I think both structural functionalism and symbolic interactionism can be applied to this situation. In terms of structural functionalism, people enjoy the concept of personal space and privacy, which is why people follow the structure of not using a urinal directly next to someone. When you break that norm, it violates that barrier of respect and comfort. This norm is functional for men because it creates a safe setting where people can use the restroom in peace. My violation of that norm insinuates a response of panic because I have ignored the “safety net” of personal space. In terms of symbolic interactionism, the fact that I was willing to do what I did non verbally communicated to

others that something was off. Without saying anything, people were automatically offended that I was going to the bathroom near them in a bathroom. I was technically doing something normal, but the close proximity made people uncomfortable. This norm is non verbally taught too. I have gone into busy bathrooms where every other urinal was occupied and I have seen people either wait to use a urinal or use a toilet instead of waiting. That is usually my course of action as well when a bathroom is busy. It is a natural instinct that you adapt once you get to a certain age because you develop that sense of personal space. What is truly strange is that most men feel this way, and yet men still design bathrooms where urinals are that close to each other even though they know they will not be used at the same time.



Joseph Uholik  
Through the Depths







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All Photos Captured By  
Sam Orange





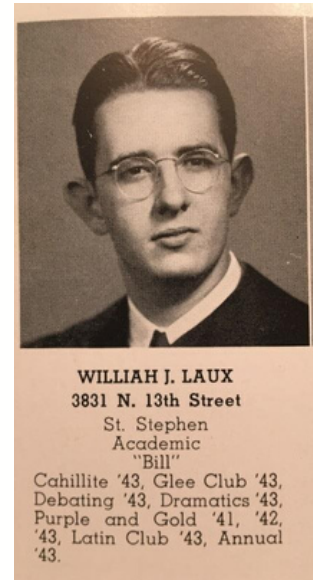
# Community

## The 75th Anniversary of VE Day Commemoration

*John Nori*

Senior government students from the graduating Class of 2020 commemorated the 75th Anniversary of Victory in Europe (V-E Day), May 8, 1945 with a zoom memorial service on June 3, 2020, to honor the men who left Roman in those years to make a difference in the world at a time of great peril. To cap off an extensive curriculum unit on the history of the end of the war that included research into the lives of the 114 Cahillites who gave their lives in the conflict, students were asked to write a reflection on an essay written by William J. Laux, RCHS Class of 1943.

Bill Laux graduated Roman in 1943. His senior yearbook photo shows he led an active student life at Roman as a member of The Cahillite, Glee Club, Debating, Dramatics, Purple & Gold, Latin Club, and Annual. When Bill was a junior he entered an essay contest sponsored by the Junior Board of Commerce on "Why America Must Win This War." Sixty schools participated and over 10,000 essays were submitted. Bill Laux's essay on "Americanism" was selected as the winning essay.



After graduation Bill attended the University of Pennsylvania on scholarship, majoring in political science. In the fall of 1943 he was inducted into the US Army, like the overwhelming majority of his Class of 1943 classmates, including Joe Kiernan, Charles Keenan, Al Perkolup, and many others. Bill served as an infantry man in the European theater, where he was killed in action on November 30, 1944 near Metz, France.

The senior students were asked to read and reflect on Laux's prize winning essay; then to respond to and analyze the values of citizenship described by Laux, how those values were lived by men of his generation, and how these same values might inspire young men of Roman to live their lives today. Seven essays were selected as finalists and three award winners were named: First Prize to James Vassallo; Second Prize to Jack Debes; and Third Prize to David Sun. The four honorable mentions were Blake Campbell, Phil Cox III, Erik Grady, and Michael Nichols. The judges for the essay contest were Mr. Joe Kiernan, Class of 1943, and Mr. Ed Keenan, Class of 1954.

Highlighting the zoom memorial service was the reading of the names of the 112 Roman men who gave their lives in the war, and moving remarks by Mr. Joe Kiernan '43, Mr. Ed Keenan '54, and Mr. Chris Gibbons '79, as well as the contributions of Mr. Bob Durkin, Mr. Fitz Gallagher '94, Mr. Keith Beaver Campus Minister, and senior students James Vassallo and John Nori from the Class of 2020. The service ended with a recitation of the entirety of the Purple and Gold.



# Community

## The 75th Anniversary of VE Day Commemoration

The picture below is an article about a contest that William Laux won along with his original essay.

The picture on the right is Laux's obituary from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

### CATHOLIC HIGH JUNIOR WINS "AMERICANISM" ESSAY CONTEST

William Laux, a junior at Catholic High, was adjudged the winner in the boys' section of an essay contest sponsored by the Junior Board of Commerce on "Why America Must Win This War."

He received a certificate of merit and a medal on May 26 at the Dobbins Vocational School from Rear Admiral William G. DuBose, president of Cramp's Shipyard.

Sixty schools cooperated with the Board in conducting the contest, and over 10,000 essays were submitted.

Hon. Paul V. McNutt, chairman of the War Manpower Commission, presided at the meeting and made the principal address.

The text of William Laux's winning essay follows:

"The American people today find themselves at war. Their opponent is force, represented by Germany, Italy, Japan, and such other nations as these three have compelled, willingly or unwillingly, to do their bidding. These nations are powerful in arms and boundless in ambition. They seek to rule the world.

"We Americans must win or perish. Primarily, then, we must preserve our existence, personal and national. The method of procedure employed in the past by the Axis in dealing with individuals and nations leaves us no illusions as to our own status if defeated. France, Poland, Greece, and China are significant examples of Axis brutality and destruction.

"But existence alone is barren, unless there is added to it the other 'inalienable rights' of 'liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' Americans are fighting for freedom—not to do as one pleases, but to do what is right, or rather, not wrong, according to the dictates of conscience and human law—freedom of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition. The rights of justice, equality before the law, and equality of opportunity are no less highly prized by all clear-thinking Americans; they are the 'American way.' Without these fundamentals: freedom, justice, equality, national well-being is impossible and personal existence intolerable.

"The list of reasons given in support of the axiom that we must win the war is still incomplete, however, if we stop with our rights. Having secured them for ourselves, we could not deny similar rights to others. Such a stand would be morally unjust, and unwise even from a material viewpoint. Markets and raw materials are the requisites for economic welfare; unless all nations have equal access to them, there can be no lasting peace or victory. We are not necessarily fighting 'to make the world safe for democracy,' but our war efforts must be exerted to secure orderly government, personal safety, justice, and cooperation among nations. We cannot afford to conceal hatred and narrow-mindedness under the name of patriotism. Our own rights we must and will have; these can never be safe unless our neighbor's rights are likewise secure."

### HONOR FATHER DIAMOND

Rev. John W. Diamond, '07, Rector of the Church of St. Philip Neri, celebrated his Silver Jubilee with a High Mass on Sunday, May 31.

A banquet was given in his honor by the parishioners on Tuesday evening, June 2, in the parish hall.

The speakers were Hon. Vincent A. Carroll; A. J. Fagan, president of the Holy Name Society, and Rev. John J. McKenna, of St. John's, Manayunk.

**BUY  
WAR BONDS  
and  
STAMPS**

### Casualties

## 2 Killed, 46 Hurt From Phila. Area

A War Department casualty list released yesterday and notifications to next of kin revealed the names of 46 men from the Philadelphia area wounded in action and two others reported killed.

All but one of the casualties occurred in the European theater of operations.

Private William J. Laux, 19, an infantryman, was killed in Germany Nov. 30, according to War Department notice received by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. J. Raymond Laux, of 3831 N. 13th st.

Private Laux, whose father is an investigator for the Federal Alcohol



PVT. W. J. LAUX

Tax Unit here, was inducted late in 1943 while majoring in political science at the University of Pennsylvania, to which he had won a scholarship. He was a graduate of Roman Catholic High School in 1943, and the previous year was winner of a Junior Chamber of

Continued on Page 4, Column 3



# Community

## First-Prize Winner of the Laux Reflection Essay

*James Vassallo*

The main values and ideals expressed in the Laux essay is that freedom, justice, and equality are inviolable rights that must be preserved through Americanism. Laux emphasizes that it is America's responsibility to stand up and defend the brutality and destruction of these rights in the name of freedom. Laux's rhetoric looks to inflame the deep rooted nationalism found in the hearts of Americans and compel citizens to join the war on foreign shores. These values and ideals remain important for us because it gives a deeper understanding to the reason America fights. We fight to preserve the inalienable right to freedom not only for ourselves but for everyone who is under the violent oppression of those who threaten these rights.

Roman men lived the words written in the Laux essay by answering the call to action. During the time of their graduation the entire world was at war, and every one of them knew they had a choice to make. Would they stand aside secure in their freedom and deny others a chance at theirs or will they answer William Laux's call to preserve the rights of those less fortunate. History had its eyes on these men, watching as they changed the landscape of the world they knew; most of whom gave the ultimate sacrifice of their life, in the trenches of the battlefield, hoping that Laux's words wouldn't be lost on the lips of future generations of Americans. And that if there is ever a time to fight for freedom, Americans are the first ones into the inferno. It has now fallen upon us to give them the voice they lost and remember how these Roman men of World War 2 reacted when history called upon them.

My values have been shaped through my culture, my relationships with others, and my life experiences. In many ways my ideologies can relate to William Laux's essay, through the many points he makes about freedom, sacrifice, and accountability. All of the Roman men in the class of 1943 have similarly inhabited these values and have used them to create a better world for those who came after them. Their bravery and resilience in trying times is an inspiration for anyone struggling through something they cannot control. These men made a decision when they were 18 to not let the sign of the times define their generation; instead they fought for the values they believed to be true. These men and William Laux have inspired me to craft a better version of myself every day in an attempt to live up to their excellence; starting now and reaching into the future. My hope is that one day people can look back and say that the values instilled in me through my Roman brothers have helped change the world for the better.



# Community

## Second-Prize Winner of the Laux Reflection Essay

*Jack Debes*

William Laux talked about needing to preserve our rights. He says that without liberty or the pursuit of happiness, life is barren. If the Axis powers were to prevail, those rights along with the freedoms of religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition would be forgotten, and life would be intolerable. He also speaks of how important it is that we not only think of ourselves, but also our neighboring countries who share the same ideals as us. Throughout Laux's essay I found that the reoccurring ideology he speaks of is selflessness. He talks about how we need to not only think our wellbeing, but the country's wellbeing; and to think not only of the country's wellbeing, but our neighbors' wellbeing as well.

The men from Roman who went to fight in the war perfectly exemplified what it means to be selfless. I'm sure they all had hopes and ambitions for the future, and fighting in a war thousands of miles away from home was not one of them. But still they knew what had to be done and did it. They knew that if the axis powers were to persevere, the world would be changed for the worse, so they put the world's needs ahead of theirs. And that is what it means to be selfless. Most of the men probably dreamed of having a wife and kids and a nice big house where they could live the "American Dream."

My values have been shaped by the people who have had positive impacts on my life. I can learn a lot from the Roman graduates and all the men who gave their lives for our country. I keep going back to the word "selfless" because it's a great word to keep in mind when living your life. After learning about the men who gave their lives in the war, I think all students, not only at Roman, should have to learn about those men as well. Because it's easy to forget what those men did when we are living in our great nation today, but without those sacrifices the world would be a much different place.



# Community

## Third-Prize Winner of the Laux Reflection Essay

*David Sun*

The ideals that Laux describes are the willingness to fight for what is right and the generosity to ensure that others can benefit from your struggle as well. These values will always be important to a free society because there are times when the rights valued by such a society will be threatened by those seeking to fulfill their agenda at the cost of others. Such people cannot be reasoned with until they no longer have the capacity to harm others, and use of force may be necessary to achieve this. It is also necessary for those with rights to fight for the rights of others because to do otherwise would be hypocritical and in violation of those rights themselves.

The men of Roman themselves, including Laux, lived out his ideals when they went to fight a war overseas to protect multiple European and Asian nations from foreign invaders. Despite the fact that this war had little to no personal impact on Americans living on the mainland, the young graduates of Roman Catholic realized that fighting this war to protect others was vital to preserving the rights of people everywhere. All of them sacrificed their youth, and many of them sacrificed their lives, but they still saw this war to the end and never gave up fighting for what was right.

The ideals that Laux wrote about in his essay explain very clearly why protecting one's own rights are never enough. Protecting the rights of others is both morally and logistically important; this revelation has led me to reconsider some of my views on current events. When considering how America should act in response to international and foreign issues, it is not enough to just focus on what will be lost and gained in the process. It is vital to try and predict how our nation's actions will shape the lives of others and the decisions that other countries will make in response.



# Community

## Laux Reflection Essay

*John Nori*

In his essay, Laux breaks down the war against facism and totalitarianism into three basic components. In order to “Win This War,” Americans had three tasks: survive, maintain democracy, and take care of its neighbors. Laux argues that the brutality of the Axis powers was so much of a threat, that an Axis takeover of the world would surely result in the destruction of the American people: “We Americans must win or perish.” But simple victory in war, over the “force” of the Axis was not enough. America needed to maintain its own democratic institutions and continue to protect “the rights of justice, equality before the law, and equality of opportunity.” “Without these fundamentals: freedom, justice, equality,” Laux argues, “national well-being is impossible and personal existence intolerable.” So America must remain true to its roots. World War II was not just a physical war; it was an ideological war -- a war between good and evil, light and darkness, democracy and dictatorship. Laux notes that America must win both the ideological war and physical war if it is to survive, for “existence alone is barren, unless there is added to it the other inalienable rights of ‘liberty and the pursuit of happiness.’” Finally, Americans must care for the citizens of neighboring states. “If we stop with our rights,” Laux argues, “the list of reasons” for why “we must win the war is still incomplete.” Laux contends that “cooperation among nations” must be secured. Furthermore, Laux contends that citizens in every nation have the right to “orderly government, personal safety, and justice.” “Our own rights ... can never be safe unless our neighbor’s rights are likewise secure,” Laux says. This is a heavy responsibility to place upon the shoulders of America. First, we must win the physical war. Second, we must win the ideological war. Third, we must create a world where something like this never happens again.

Talk is cheap. I, personally, am a firm believer that actions speak louder than words. Anyone can say anything they like, but it takes more to actually backup one’s own rhetoric. The men from Roman Catholic who served and ultimately made the supreme sacrifice in WWII lived the values that Laux describes. These men died so that so many others could live in freedom, could experience justice, could fight for equality. Not only did William Laux write this essay, he backed up his own words with action, as did the other Cahilitites who fought in WWII. As we remember all those who have gone before us to secure our personal freedom (which we often take for granted), we remember not only what these men did, but why they did it. We remember their fight for freedom, justice, equality, and ultimately world peace. In many ways, WWII was a paradox. The most devastating war in the history of mankind led to the longest period of peace, prosperity, stability, and freedom that the world has ever known.



# Community

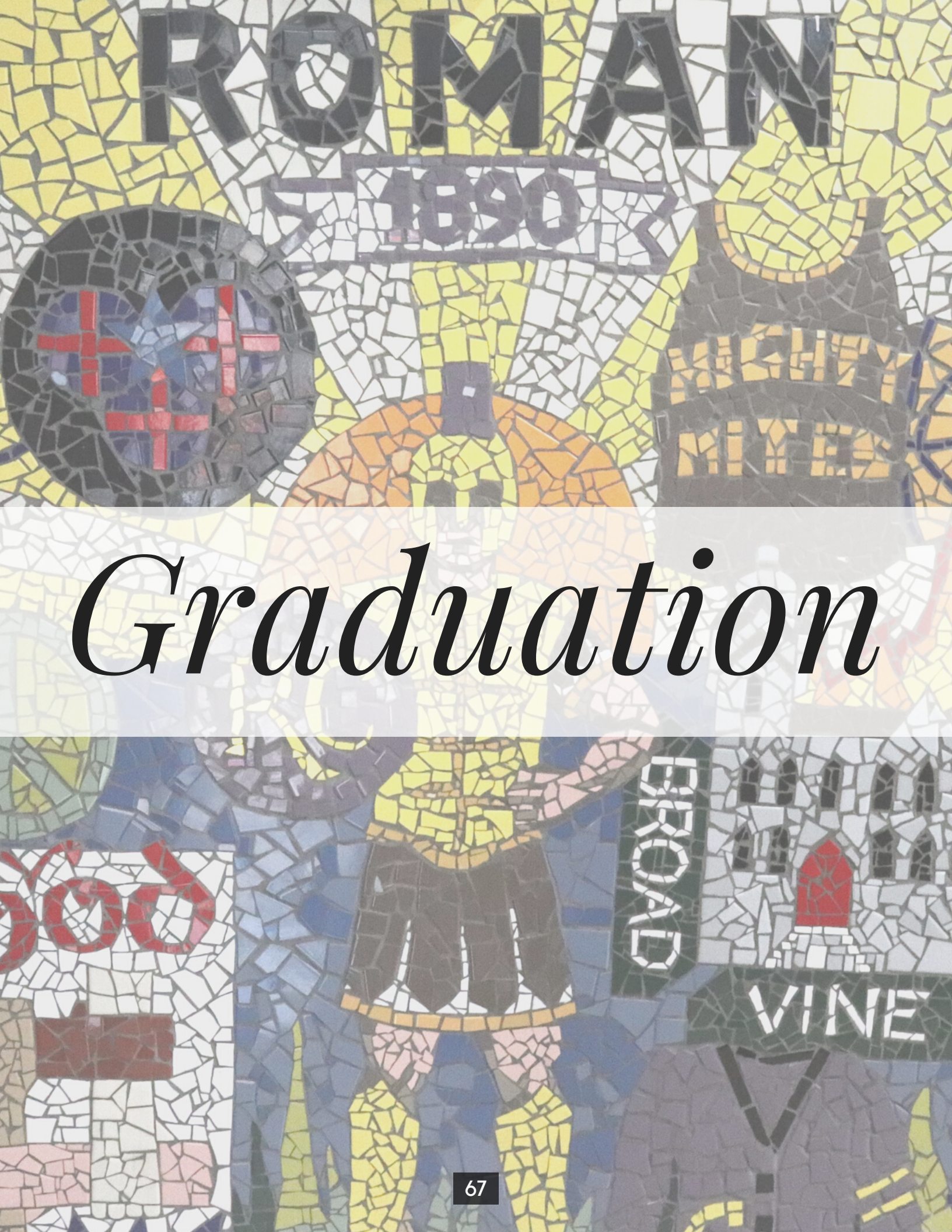
It is important to remember our history. America was founded on the universal principles that Laux describes in his essay. Has our nation always lived up to those principles? No, of course not. Are those principles perfectly applied in today's society? No, of course not. But there is a reason why America was the world's beacon of hope when the world was almost completely covered in Nazi darkness. There is a reason why America has consistently been viewed as a land of promise, a land of freedom throughout its history. Those universal principles of freedom, justice, equality -- of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness -- have remained America's cornerstone. They have remained ideals for the American people -- and the world -- to strive for. Empires come and fall. Nations change hands. People die off. But ideas live forever. And that is what America is: an idea. America was an impossible experiment performed by a group of mad scientists that has blossomed into something much greater than anyone could have imagined. Knowledge and conversation are the two pillars, I believe, to living out the values described by Laux. Psychological studies have shown that interaction with others is the most important factor in reducing intergroup prejudice and bias. If we are to continue the legacy of the "Greatest Generation" of spreading hope to the hopeless, of expanding universal rights to all, interaction is key. If we understand where we came from, why we are here, and what our mission truly is, then the idea of America can never be corrupted, no matter how much some may try.











# *Graduation*

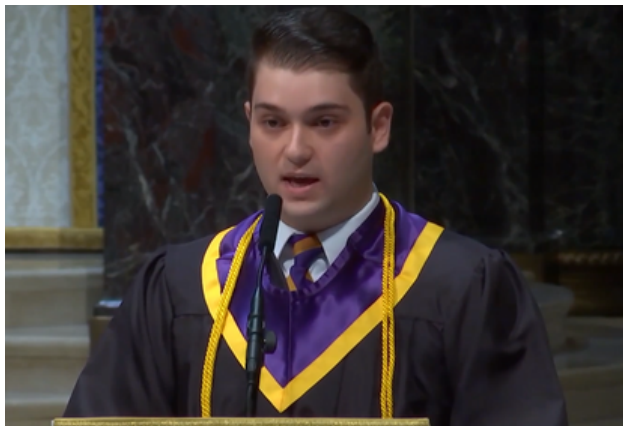


# Graduation

## Class of 2020 Salutatorian Speech

*Rawad Albarouki*

Father Bongard, Mr. Tarducci, administration, faculty, parents, friends, and the Class of 2020, I want to welcome everyone to the Class of 2020 virtual Graduation. I also want to thank Father Bongard, Mr. Tarducci, and the faculty for their hard work and guidance during this difficult time.



Of the 126 graduating classes of Roman Catholic High School, I am proud to say we are the second to survive the difficulties of a quarantine. We join the class of 1919, when Cardinal Dougherty shut the schools during the influenza pandemic over a century ago. We have become a part of Roman's history. Even though we are currently in a time of uncertainty, we should be thankful for our health. As we are sitting at home watching our virtual graduation, we should be asking ourselves a very important question. Will

Roman Catholic remember us? At the beginning of Freshman year, the first lesson we learned was that we remember High School by the moments we create. Looking at our graduation caps from home, we should all be able to answer this question. Even though we are not able to bring back time and sit in our classrooms one last time, all we have to do is close our eyes and remember.

If we imagine that we are walking through our hallways and looking inside the classrooms, we can recall the memories we created with our teachers. For instance, when we walk by Room 54, we hear Mr. Penn reading Gunga Din or his wooden stick striking the ground to the rhythm of a poem. When we walk by the doors of Room 41, we immediately know it's Mrs. Berrios teaching her soldiers Spanish or preparing them for a fiesta. When we go down to the basement, we can hear Mr. Miller's room blasting Jesus Christ SuperStar and everyone singing along. And if we are lucky, we might hear Mr. Miller talking about the Giants slaughtering the Eagles. Wherever we wander at school, we know Mr. Brennan's class is always laughing about someone losing his backpack or the 7 wonders of Calculus. Even outside the classrooms, we have made many memories with our teachers. Some were disappointing like losing the senior faculty volleyball game, but many were amusing including the teachers being wrapped with toilet paper during Catholic schools week or the students playing alongside the teachers at River field during spirit day.



# Graduation

Visualizing these classrooms is not only about the funny moments we had. We also learned a lot from our teachers. For instance, remembering Room 16, Mr. Durkin taught us why words are important. Rooms 38 and 39 are known for Mr. Eaves' and Mrs. MacLuckie's fun dissections. Even though the frogs and cats smelled terrible, we learned to persevere. While maturing from these classes, we also experienced spiritual guidance from teachers. Even though Dr. Bell taught chemistry or anatomy, he always managed to incorporate morality into our lessons. And trust me, you never want to be late for his class. Also as a Roman student, we can not forget about Ms. High and her daily prayer intentions. In Ms. Canavan's class, she always used fun activities like basketball to help us study Spanish. Speaking for the entire class of 2020, we will miss our teachers. We thank them for an unforgettable four years. Without them, we would not be where we are today.

The mental tour of Roman Catholic does not end here. In addition to remembering the different classrooms and teachers, walking by the trophy cases or the walls filled with medals and plaques also sparks so many memories. For our four years, we have definitely made our mark on Roman. Even though we are very proud of the dedication and effort of our sports teams, the school as a community has also taken part in these accomplishments. The two Basketball PCL Championships could not have been won without us cheering on our team and motivating them to victory. Even our famous pep rallies show our Roman pride and spirit. The truth is, after today, we will be remembered by Roman Catholic. We truly are the great class of The Roman Catholic High School.



When we stand as one community, we show all the other schools what Roman is all about. This was evident during every class trip and sports event. Even though they might see us as a crazy group of boys wearing purple and gold, we showed them how Roman is different. Our uniqueness shines when we cheer together as classmates, friends, but more importantly, as brothers. For four years, we have made it our mission to strengthen this bond and make the most out of High school. And today, I stand here to prove that our goal has been accomplished. Four years ago, we stood in the auditorium as nervous freshmen. Now we graduate as mature, young men prepared for the future. Even from home, the corner of Broad and Vine is with us and will always be a beacon of our Brotherly Love.



# Graduation

## Class of 2020 Valedictorian Speech

*John Nori*

Fr. Bongard, Mr. Tarducci, administration, faculty, parents, friends, and the class of 2020.

There are certain things that high school teachers say that you remember forever. Sometimes it's a funny catch phrase; other times a more serious comment. There was a phrase that Mr. Murphy would repeat during junior-year Theology class that has always stuck with me. He would say, "Be who God created you to be and be it well." In other words, be the best version of yourself day in and day out; strive to become better each and every chance you have.

Right now we are facing unprecedented circumstances. It probably seems difficult or even impossible to stay motivated or optimistic. And it is. We find ourselves asking, "How can I possibly be the best version of myself with everything going on in the world right now?"

On the social media pages for Roman athletics over the last few weeks, there has been a hashtag that has accompanied almost every post: "#Romanresilience". Roman Resilience" has become the motto for not only our sports teams during this time, but our entire school, especially the class of 2020. Life is like a sport, and one of the defining characteristics of a great athlete is resilience. The best athletes refuse to quit, even in the face of impossible odds. They never stop practicing, working, or striving to become the best that they can be. When they're down, they're not out; they can never be counted out. The class of 2020 has demonstrated the same relentless drive, the same resilience, not only over the last two months, but over the last four years. Back in August, in the team's season opener, Roman Catholic football faced a seemingly impossible deficit of 26 points. But our team fought on. They refused to settle. And, in the end, it was Roman Catholic's incredible comeback that was written about in the Inquirer the next day. This demonstration of resilience was the first for the class of 2020 during our senior year, but it certainly would not be the last. The class of 2020 has come to embody resilience, and that strive for excellence in the face of adversity is what has and will continue to define us all.





# Graduation

In our class, we have future doctors and lawyers, professional athletes and coaches, politicians and leaders ready to make their mark on our world. There is no doubt that just as the class of 2020 made Roman Catholic High School a better place, it will also make the world a better place. This class has so much potential because of our resolve, our ability to persevere no matter the odds. Our graduating class will be remembered, not for what happened to us, but for how we responded to it, for how we rose above the challenges that have been thrown our way. Resilience is what has made the class of 2020 so special over the last four years, and it is what will make our class so successful in the future.

Of course, we must recognize those who have shaped the class of 2020 into what it has become. To everyone who has helped our class grow throughout our four years at Broad and Vine, we sincerely thank you. To all of our parents, family members, and friends, without your continued love, support, and sacrifice, the class of 2020 would not be who we are today. To the faculty and staff of Roman Catholic High School, it is hard to express our gratitude in words. From the leadership of Father Bongard and Mr. Tarducci that has guided our school community through this difficult time, to the unforgettable lessons from Mr. Pen and Mr. Eaves all the way back during Freshman year, we thank each and every administrator, and faculty member for their hard-work and dedication to our school during our time at Roman.

Roman Resilience. That's how we become who God created us to be. And that is why the class of 2020 is so unique. Roman Catholic is what it is because its students are who we are: confident in the face of uncertainty, steady in the face of challenge, resilient in the face of fear. As young adults, we are now entering the next chapter of our lives. It is impossible to know what the future holds until it has passed. We do know, however, that life is going to present us with challenges -- that much is for sure. President John F. Kennedy said, "Do not pray for easy lives, pray to be stronger men." It is the determination to keep going, to become that better student, athlete, son, brother, and man that distinguishes the good from the great. To all of us, this current situation is not fair. The end to our high school careers happened much sooner than any of us would have liked. But this ending was just the beginning of something new, something greater. Our paths will diverge, but we will remain Brothers for Life. Even though our high school journey has ended, we are all on to bigger and better things.

Life is going to knock us down, but the setbacks are not what life is about: "It ain't about how hard you hit. It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward; how much you can take and keep moving forward. That's how winning is done!"

Thank you, class of 2020, for making Roman a great place to be for the last four years, and may we all continue to do great things in the future!







