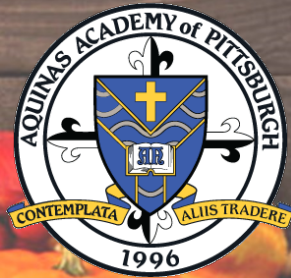


The Dumb Ox

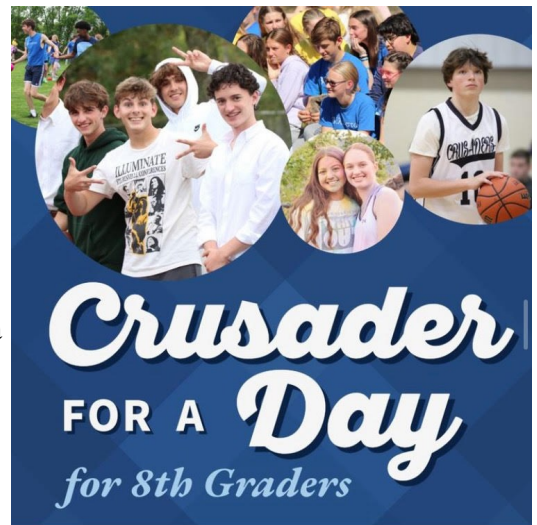
November 2024



Crusader for a Day: Eighth Graders Breach the Bridge Between the Buildings

By: Felicity Koble

On Thursday, November 7, eighth grade students from Aquinas and beyond got a taste of life in one of the highest ranked Catholic high schools in PA. Crusader For A Day, Aquinas's official high school shadow opportunity, is an annual event open to eighth grade students across the Pittsburgh area. Crusader For A Day allows these prospective students a chance to spend a day in the high school, attend classes, go to school Mass, and meet with teachers, coaches, and current students.



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Crusader For A Day has been a successful Aquinas tradition for upwards of seven years, and contributes to high admission and retention within the high school. In past years, eighth graders from Blessed Trinity, Sacred Heart, Blessed Seelos Academy, and other Catholic K-8 schools have visited

Aquinas as well as a smattering of public school students. This year in particular has seen a growth in non-Aquinas participants. "Last year we had 16 [non-Aquinas] students, and this year we have 27," Mr. Austin, director of admissions and leader of Crusader For A Day stated. Ava Lesnefsky, ambassador prefect, was excited about the potential these numbers show. "With almost thirty coming this year, that could be a big freshman class for next year! There will be sixty 8th graders participating in total which really shows how we are growing as a school."

Besides the increasing attendance, Crusader For A Day experienced several other changes this year due in part to the ninth graders' absence. "I'm really excited about the new model where we send the 9th graders on a field trip and have the 8th graders take their schedules," Mr. Austin continued. Ava agreed that the new plan "allows for the 8th graders to not be so split up". Not only did the eighth grade experience a more authentic schedule, they also got a chance to sit in on computer design class, play a game of dodgeball, and watch both a mock trial presentation and a live performance of "Getcha Head in the Game" from the high school play.

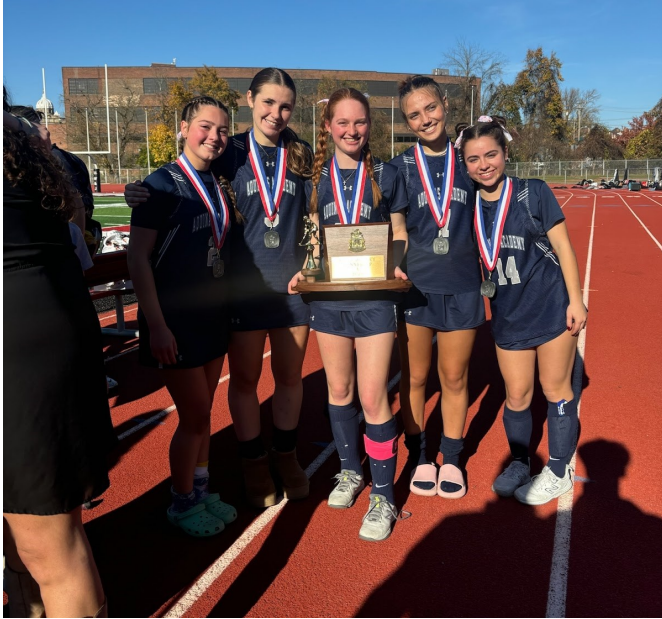
On an immediate level, Crusader for a Day was a hit. "It was a very good preview to what high school would look like," eighth grader Morgan Randall expressed. Hadley Rouse agreed that "it was a great experience meeting all the people." Jeremiah Koenig said he was "looking forward to some of the clubs and the blocked schedule." River Knox found the event challenging but helpful: "We were all out of our comfort zone which made me more comfortable." Other eighth graders such as Dominic Gruber especially enjoyed playing dodgeball with the prospective students. Jeremiah agreed that dodgeball helped with "getting to know some of the visitors." Ava Lesnefsky confirmed that the event was a success, "the whole day went really well and we had the most students ever!" Overall, hopes are high for a strong incoming freshman class, and current Aquinas high schoolers can be sure they will be seeing much more of the faces from Crusader for a Day in upcoming years.

The End of a Season

By: Lucy Flynn

Aquinas sports teams have all had very successful seasons, with most teams making it to the WPIAL playoffs.

The girls' volleyball team qualified for the WPIAL playoffs for the first time this year making history for Aquinas. They lost a hard-fought game against Bishop Canevin. Violet Johnson believes that the team played exceedingly well for the first time being in WPIAL, saying, "I think our team has promise for years to come."



The boys' soccer team also made it to the playoffs but lost a tough game against Greensburg Central Catholic. Noble Lurie remarked, "That game may not have been our best, but we win together and lose together. Overall, an amazing season,

but I wish we won more games." He believes the game that best represented their team was their home game against OLSH, 3-0.

The girls' field hockey team had an exciting season, winning the semifinal game against Oakland Catholic, 2-0. They unfortunately lost to Shadyside in the WPIAL finals, 1-0. This was their fourth year earning the runner-up position. Zoe Solomond, the senior offensive coordinator, states "The team has good strategies to win the game as well as the motive to do well. Our team's skills and unity are outstanding."

The girls' soccer team also made history for Aquinas by winning their first ever playoff game. Eliana BouSamra, team captain, said, "The team performed really well and got close as the season progressed. With each game we found our rhythm, and everyone played their part well." The team lost their second playoff match 1-0 to Sewickley Academy.

Girls' tennis also had an exciting season and made the playoffs. Maggie McBride believes that even though the team lost some seniors, they gained many more freshmen which added to the team unity. "I have high hopes for next year and I hope the team will go far."

The cross country and golf teams both gained many new additions including new coaches and new players. Runner Caitlyn Abbett commented, "This year was very beneficial for the team because it made the team unity grow and the team began to have many personal records this year." She hopes that the team will continue to get more recruits and grow for years to come. The golf team is also hopeful about the future as players continue to gain confidence and experience on the course.

This fall sports season was successful for Aquinas athletes and memorable for the fans who showed up to cheer them on throughout the season.

The Dumb Ox: An Undying Tradition

By Claire McMann

Everyone is familiar with the Aquinas high school newspaper, *The Dumb Ox*, but how many people know its origin? According to former Aquinas employee Juan Mata, the newspaper actually started in 1999, just three years after Aquinas was founded. The first issue was published March 12, 1999. The original team consisted of editors Mr. Mata and Mrs. Maglio, photographers Justin Conly, David Quinlin, Laura Petnuch, and Phil Mckeating. Format and design was done by Justin Conly and Matt Steiner. The writers were all the students listed above, as well as Katie Santypal, Irene Marx, and John Rueda. The inaugural copy included articles about the leak in the chapel roof, the Spring Gala, the first-ever ski outing, and bus drivers. It also included several poems, riddles, quotes, and one crossword puzzle.

In addition to this, the first paper included an editorial by Katie Santypal about the first copy. She wrote, "The newspaper has now officially begun. I think that it is going to be a success. It has many interesting articles that have been written by some talented students. With good cooperation and interest in the newspaper, it should prove to be worthwhile." She would

be glad to know that 25 years later, *The Dumb Ox* has been proven a success.

A popular spinoff of *The Dumb Ox* was Mr. Dolan's podcast adaptation of the newspaper, *The Dumb Vox*. The teaser trailer for it was uploaded October 26th, 2022, and was followed by 26 more episodes, ranging from 10-30 minutes each. Some of the more popular episodes include a double feature of Mary BuoSamra and Sam Buchanan about their Valedictorian and Salutatorian roles, an interview with Mr. Salinas, as well as one with Mr. Malchano.

While each and every new edition of the newspaper is unique and different from the last, some things always stay the same. Senior Maddy Bradley, who has been a part of journalism for two years, comments that she thoroughly enjoys journalism class every week and seeing her article in *The Dumb Ox* each month. *The Dumb Ox* still focuses on spreading information to the Aquinas community and continues to consist of a student-only staff that writes, edits, and designs each copy to make a unique, interesting, and informative newsletter for students.



THE DUMB OX

THE NEWSPAPER OF AQUINAS ACADEMY STUDENTS

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1
FRIDAY MARCH 12, 1999

HEADLINE

THE HOLY BUILDING
By: John Rueda, Tenth Grade

In case someone has not yet noticed, the Aquinas Academy building had a major problem. If the reader did not understand me, that's okay because I'm sure it went over your head. During the week of semester exams water with tar began dripping through the roof into buckets in many of the classrooms. This has caused no deaths or serious injuries so far. However it has caused the replacement of many, if not all the ceiling tiles, confusion in the hallways and Jason Clover even had to have to buy a new white school shirt. If you want to know how the tar-water tastes ask Jeff Pashel. He was reported to have swallowed a drop while talking in study hall, a warning to all students.

Back to the roof. The reason why the roof has leaks is not because of the multiple vortex footballs which have been thrown on top of it but because of the properties of water. When water freezes it expands and that is exactly what happened on the roof. The freezing rain landed on top of the flat roof and stayed there because the drains were probably clogged. As the rain began to freeze it expanded and forced open the rubber seams on the roof. This gave the uninvited water free entry into the building.

SUMMARY

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There is a solution. The roof could be patched but this means that they would first need to clean off all of the old rubber with toxic chemicals. They are very dangerous and could harm someone, maybe even a student, if there was an accidental spill. This might work but it would only be a temporary solution. The other solution is more costly and would take a lot of time to complete. It would require replacing the flat roof with a peaked roof, which allows the water to flow off.

What does this mean for the students? Well most likely, more interruptions during class. Some of these interruptions might be workers walking in and out of the classrooms. There would also be workers stomping and pounding on the roof and could even result in workers falling through the roof and creating a new skylight.

However big the problem is, don't

Continued on next page pg. 1

Picture Column

Woah! We have a library!

What did I do?

Wildcats in the House

By: Caitlyn Abbett

It was the start of something new as the Aquinas high school students staged a production of the iconic *High School Musical* on November 15th and 16th. Auditions started September 27th, and rehearsals kicked off on October 2nd. The students worked many hours after school and on the weekends singing and dancing to make the performance incredible.

Mr. Flynn, the longtime director of Aquinas plays, said he wanted to do something "less classic," and a lot of the students had been asking for something Disney. Joe Chufo came to him with the idea of *High School Musical* and after looking the script over, Mr. Flynn confirmed everyone's hopes. Many of the faculty were also excited by this announcement, as many of them grew up with the film. Mrs. Allen came to the show with one of her high school friends and really enjoyed it. "The movies came out in my middle school/high school years, so it was a very nostalgic experience for me," she remarked. "I loved watching the students put on something I knew from when I was their age!"

Joe Chufo, who starred as Troy, expressed his excitement for the musical saying, "I knew I was taking on a lot, playing the lead while also helping to direct the show in a short amount of time, but I was really happy about getting the part and working with such a big and enthusiastic cast!" Along with Joe, other cast members helped to direct the play. Lucy Fowler, who played Gabriella, and Ashlin Knox, as Ms. Darbus, helped to direct the show and choreographed the dances. Felicity Koble, who played Kelsi, orchestrated the musical with her amazing piano skills. She learned the music last summer then rehearsed the songs with the cast in



order to teach them the melodies as well as the harmonies.

Many of the actors had a lot of fun rehearsing and felt that their time and dedication paid off. Daniel Hartle, who played Zeke, said that he liked, "being able to step outside [his] comfort zone, and singing a lot more than expected" Laila Tuffiash, who was in the ensemble, loved that the extras got to play a much bigger part than in previous years. "We got to be in a majority of the scenes and sing and dance a lot. It was a really fun experience and I got to be in a piece of something that came together incredibly!"

A record number of fans came out to support the talented cast both opening and closing night, with the audiences completely filling the gym. Friends, family, and students were captivated by the upbeat numbers, themed costumes which were coordinated by Mrs. Meland, and beautiful set created by Ms. Fetchko and Mr. Buchanan. Alumna Laura Richthammer, who came to the performance both nights, exclaimed, "I thought it was so great to see so many Aquinas kids go out for the musical! The production was very well done, and the students brought so much energy into their performance!" Junior

Alexa Risdon, who also came back for night two, loved the chemistry that the leads shared. "You could tell that their friendship was strong, and it made the show so much fun to watch!"

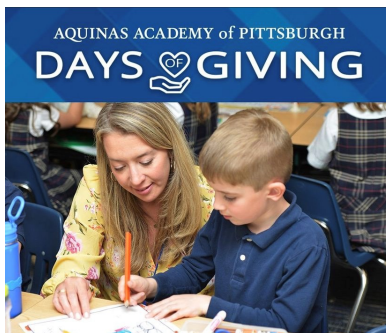
The musical was a big hit for both the audience and the students performers. It was also a great bonding experience that brought all the different cliques of Aquinas together to create an outstanding showstopper. We cannot wait to see what Mr. Flynn has in store for next year's high school play!

No Gift Is Too Small

The Days of Giving is an important Aquinas fundraiser. This campaign raises money each year for the school's annual fund and is run by Aquinas President Peter Blume. The event takes place every year from the Friday after Thanksgiving until Giving Tuesday (November 29th to December 3rd this year).

In past years, the Days of Giving took place only on Giving Tuesday, but Aquinas was creative and changed it to Days of Giving to set Aquinas apart. People give to many different organizations on Giving Tuesday, the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, which is a movement to promote generosity. Another way Aquinas gets creative is that each year for the fundraiser they come up with an inspiring slogan to encourage people to donate. This year's slogan is "Make a difference so they can be the difference."

The annual fund is "vital to covering the gap between the actual operating costs and tuition revenue," says Mr. Blume. The Aquinas tuition revenue covers between 80-90% of operating costs, which is normal for a private or independent school. Since the full costs are not covered, it is important to have this fundraiser to bridge the gap. Mr. Blume also notes that "the success of the annual fund is the school's primary



By: Madison Bradley

means for minimizing tuition increases." Even though the annual fund receives donations throughout the school year, it is best to donate during this fundraiser because the gifts given to Aquinas may be matched by other donors.

Last year, Aquinas was very successful, both money and participation-wise. Aquinas raised \$361,000 for the annual fund and had a participation rate of 72% of the school's community. Mr.

Blume and the Aquinas community were very grateful and hope the participation rate and the money raised will increase this year.

No gift is too small. Aquinas aims for 100% participation because when the school applies for grants or donations for projects, the first thing the organization wants is to see the community's participation in the annual fundraising. Therefore, it is vital that the school community participates in this campaign. Mr. Deschamps reminds students that "the Days of Giving are an important fundraising tool to ensure we cover our operating expenses each year. Encourage your parents, grandparents, siblings, friends, people you meet in the grocery store, social me-

Out With The Old, and In With The New

If you have attended Mass recently, you may have noticed the music sounds somewhat different. Last month, the Aquinas chapel said goodbye to the old organ and welcomed a newer, better sounding one. Compared to the old instrument, it has a clearer sound and tone. It can also be heard more clearly from the back of the chapel.

The organ was donated by the priests at the Congregation of the Oratory in Oakland. They recently installed a new pipe organ, and Fr. Reed advocated moving the Oratory's old organ to Aquinas. Mr. Meland shared that, "The old organ was slowly dying. On any given day, some of its keys refused to work. The new instrument from the Oratory has a fuller, bright-



By: Abigail Irvin

er, and more varied sound. Like the old organ, it is electronic, but it is a more sophisticated instrument and should last a good, long time." The organ is made by the Allen Organ Company, a reputable manufacturer. The school community is grateful to Fr. Reed and his fellow Oratorians for donating and moving the organ.

Just as Aquinas has made a change in the organ, the prevalent music of worship has been changing. In the past few decades, a new style of Christian music formed. It is called Praise and Worship, and it combines Godly lyrics with pop and rock style music. Recently, churches have been using this form of praise during the Mass and Adoration, especially to appeal to younger audiences. At Aquinas, there has been a movement to add more praise and worship into daily Mass and at Adoration nights. But that raises the question: do students prefer traditional chant or praise and worship? And which one is right to use in worship? Clara Yuo shared her opinion that, "Both have a place as long as it uplifts the congregation. With chant, it is easier to do it right, but it can still be done with praise and worship." Savannah Deschamps shared for her, "There is a time and place for both, and both chant and praise and worship can be uplifting for the congregation." Fr. Peter Gruber gave his point of view on how music ought to be used in Mass. "It's good to praise God however we can, but traditional forms of worship are at the heart of the church. Contemporary music is the beginning of praise, especially in our modern society, but we should move towards Gregorian chant in Mass and Adoration."

Whether you use traditional or modern music, or both, to worship God, the most important thing is to become closer to Him and grow in faith.

Month of All Souls

By: Katherine Repasky

Every November, the Aquinas community comes together to observe the month of All Souls, a special time dedicated to praying for our dearly departed. All Soul's Day, which is celebrated on November 2nd, opens the month dedicated to remembering and praying for the souls of those who have passed away, especially those in our Aquinas community.

All Soul's Day is traditionally the day the Catholic Church honors the dead and prays for the purification of souls so that they may enter Heaven. The day is marked by Catholics with candle vigils, Mass, and visiting cemeteries to offer prayers. It is also closely related to another holy day, All Saints' Day, which is celebrated on November 1st. This special day focuses on the faithfully departed that have already arrived in heaven. We are able to then pray to these saints in hopes that our own family members will be granted access to Heaven as well. The entire month of November is seen in the Church as a time to remember those who have come before us and pray for the dead, emphasizing the Church's teachings on purgatory and the role of the church militant to pray for these souls, so that they too may enter into the communion of saints.

A special Aquinas tradition during November is to send home prayer slips to families which will then be used for November intentions. Families submit the names of their deceased loved ones and receive a printed card with another family's deceased relatives' names to pray for. "It is a really nice gesture by the school in an effort to connect families in mourning," said senior Brynn Burnsworth. This tradition highlights the importance of family and community, particularly in times of loss, creating a sense of unity through prayer across the entire school.

Senior Zoe Solomond shared about her family's experience, "Participating in the prayer service with my entire family throughout November really does a great job of emphasizing community and how much of a difference we can make in each other's lives simply through prayer alone." The feeling of community and family that is alive at Aquinas is evident through this tradition. As we collectively honor and remember our deceased loved ones throughout November, may we all remember to pray for others.



Pro-Life in November: From Bottles to Stand-Ins

By: Jack Hoerster

Vivat Vita, the student-led organization that promotes the pro-life movement at Aquinas, is finding various ways to give back to the Pennsylvanian community. This year, the club is run by co-presidents Savannah Deschamps and Felicity Koble, vice president Lara Hainan, and is supervised by Mrs. Allen. These leaders pick a non-profit for Aquinas Academy to primarily support and promote, and this year, Aquinas has decided to work alongside Genesis. As co-president Savannah Deschamps puts it, "[Genesis] is a non profit organization that helps women in crisis pregnancies," which are scenarios where the mother requires support or financial assistance in order to better raise her child.

One of the ways Aquinas is helping provide aid to families is through the annual Baby Bottle Campaign. According to co-president Felicity Koble, the program "uses plastic baby bottles as banks sent home to each family to raise money for a pro-life cause." This is a very successful program for both Aquinas and Genesis, as senior Alice Rothus stated that last year the campaign raised "around \$4,500 for Birthright." Savannah says the money will help "provide women with counseling, healthcare, various prenatal classes, and even housing. After the baby is born, Genesis provides them with baby supplies, such as clothing, formula, cribs, and car seats." No matter the amount of money, anything and everything will go to help those in need. This year's Baby Bottle Campaign is expected to surpass \$5,000.

Additionally, Aquinas took part in the 40 Days of Life this year, which Felicity mentioned is a "40 day period of pray-

er and fasting for the end of abortion that takes place throughout the world." Moreover, groups will often pray outside of Planned Parenthood facilities in order to make their message more visible. Vice president Lara Hainan mentioned that "Last year, we prayed a rosary in front of a Planned Parenthood, which was a very powerful experience." This is a great way to take part in the pro-life movement. Despite being less visible than a physical march, prayer is the most important step in the pro-life movement.

Aquinas and Vivat Vita have many different ways to take part in the pro-life movement. Whether it is attending the PA or D.C. March for Life, or taking part in the monthly novena for the pro-life movement, Vivat Vita is intent on serving the cause in any and every way they can.



Aquinas' Traditions of Thanks

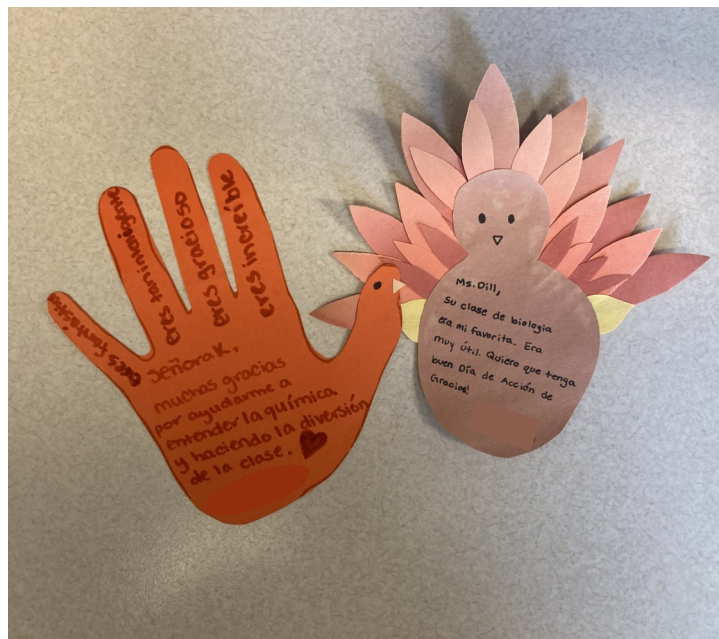
By: Laila Tuffiash

On the few days of the week before Thanksgiving break, Aquinas students look forward to some fun activities that truly start off an Aquinas Thanksgiving.

On the last Spanish class before Thanksgiving, Señora has her students show their thankfulness to their teachers by having students create hand turkeys with personalized Spanish messages. "Making hand turkeys in Spanish is a lot of fun, and I love showing my teachers how much I appreciate them," said junior Savannah Deschamps. Teachers also really appreciate receiving these paper turkeys, as many of them have expressed how much they love this tradition.

The last day before Thanksgiving break is a half day with no classes. Middle and high school students gather on Dolan Field and the Bubble for a long time tradition, the turkey bowl, in which students compete in their color teams in a game of two hand touch football. Junior Alexa Risdon expressed, "I love the turkey bowl because it gives everyone a sense of teamwork and adds almost an extra level to the spirit of our teams because of the competition between us. I love how we always do it the day before break because it's a good flow into Thanksgiving."

While middle and high schoolers have fun playing football, lower school goes through the classrooms in stations to participate in various fun activities. Highlights of these activities include watching *A Charlie Brown Thanksgiving*, making fun Thanksgiving crafts, reading seasonal stories, and enjoying snacks. The kindergarten class has their own special class meal, in which students and their families enjoy Thanksgiving food and learn about the origin of Thanksgiving. No matter what grade level you are in, Aquinas has a fun tradition to lead you into Thanksgiving break.



It's Turkey Time!

By: Jules Shemer

It is finally the beginning of the holiday marathon. Filled with good food, family, friends, and traditions, Thanksgiving is here and the Aquinas community is ready for a relaxing and family-filled break. Students and teachers are counting down the days until Thanksgiving break and are excited to eat delicious food and enjoy family traditions.

Traditions are a crucial and exciting part of any holiday, and Thanksgiving is no exception. When asked what her favorite Thanksgiving tradition is, Latin teacher Ms. Young responded, "My favorite Thanksgiving tradition is when we all try to take a family picture with my 18 nieces and nephews and try to get all of them to smile and it never works." Sophomore Fredy Gutierrez recalled his favorite tradition, "I would say it is driving down to Virginia to my childhood town." Senior Nick Urban added, "Probably going to the country club with my family."

Junior Tess Duer gave her opinion on what her favorite Thanksgiving tradition was, "My family and I make hand turkeys every Thanksgiving morning. Then we write what we're thankful for all around it." With so many Thanksgiving traditions, it is hard to pick a favorite. Religion teacher Mr. Kuniega, when asked the same question, replied, after 15 seconds of pondering, "Cooking my family's Thanksgiving feast for them...as of the last five years."

Thanksgiving traditions are all fun and games, but what many people really look forward to is the sumptuous food that is prepared after hours of hard work. When asked about her favorite Thanksgiving food, freshman Pury Martsolf said, "all the deserts." Head of School Mr. Deschamps replied with "stuffing," and Ms. Dill responded with "corn casserole."

Whether it is the smell of freshly cooked turkey, traveling, or large family gatherings, Thanksgiving is a heart-warming holiday loved by many. Students and teachers are looking forward to a relaxing break that includes family, traditions, eating, and sleeping.





With Thanksgiving quickly approaching, households around the world are pulling out their old family recipes for a great traditional meal. Students at Aquinas are no stranger to these family recipes. Thanksgiving foods range from rolls to butter to turkey, and Aquinas students put their own personal touch on these famous seasonal foods.

Senior Madison Bradley has a special roll recipe that she loves to make every year. “Making the bread for my family is the best part of the meal!” she exclaims. Her father and grandmother cook the rest of the meal, so she is grateful to have her own little part in it. Her secret is using an “average roll recipe” with some extra sugar in the dough. She also loves to top it off with melted butter and oregano.

There is also a recipe for the perfect spread for these rolls. Senior Claire McMann was excited to share that she makes the butter every Thanksgiving. “It makes me so happy to do it every year. I’ve been doing it since I was five.” With twelve years of experience, she considers herself an expert now. She explains that the recipe starts off with heavy cream in

a little jar with a marble inside. Then, she adds salt and shakes it for around thirty minutes, at which point it has turned into butter. Her mother and sister agree that it is “better than normal butter.”

Finally, for the main course, Senior Nolan Thiel has his own family recipe for his turkey. While some years his dad likes to deep fry it, Nolan’s favorite years are when he is able to make the turkey himself (with a little help from his grandmother). He says that his grandmother taught him to glaze the turkey with oyster sauce and Sprite. They also garnish it with extra lemon. He says that he “enjoys the tradition of making it when I can.”

Thanksgiving is a time for families and friends to come together. Whether that be in the kitchen cooking up a family tradition, or at the dinner table talking with friends, Aquinas is proud to take joy in it!



Snowflakes a photo by Anne Dolan

Shop Til You Drop

By: Ashlin Knox

After Thanksgiving, when Americans spend their week basking in pies and family dinners, they go from splurging on calories to splurging on merchandise. Black Friday takes place the Friday after Thanksgiving, marking the start of the Christmas shopping season. According to Mood Media, it all began in Philadelphia during the 1950s when fans arrived early before the annual Army-Navy football game the day after Thanksgiving. Because of the major influx of fans in the city, holiday shopping started early and turned a profit, moving ledgers from red to black. The excess number of people created massive traffic jams and increased the need for the police force in the area. Black Friday weekend includes Small Business Saturday and ends with Cyber Monday. Last year Americans spent \$9.8 billion dollars on Black Friday and \$17 billion on Small Business Saturday.



pillow.” Following Black Friday, Small Business Saturday was introduced in 2010 in order to encourage people to shop small and send more money into the local economy. When asked if SBS should be a large focus in society, Señora responded with, “then the small business wouldn’t be a small business.” There are plenty of small businesses that locals can support. For example, Señora supports Half Crown Hill Orchard which sells its own honey and beeswax products. People can also support other companies like PGH Candle or Carnegie Coffee Company. There are so many options for people to shop at on Small Business Saturday that can help the local economy grow, while outlets and malls are turning profits on everyone who walks through their doors the day prior.

Although waking up early and beating the lines for the sale might seem absurd, junior Elliot Keverline’s family joins in on this Black Friday tradition. She shared that her family “gets up at 4am, stops for breakfast, and drives to Grove City Tanger Outlets at 6am to shop all morning.” Some of her favorite stores for the “best deals” are Nike, Aerie, and Vera Bradley. Elliot enjoys this experience every year versus online because “you get better deals in the stores; plus being there with the whole family makes it special.”

On the contrary, Señora disagrees saying, “After Covid, stores don’t have the inventory they used to.” She prefers online shopping, adding “Back in the day I loved the store vibe, but now online is more convenient.” Mr. Malchano rarely partakes in Black Friday shopping unless it is for tools. He believes Black Friday stores are “taking advantage of having so many people off for the holiday. It incentivises people on the loss leader principle, where, for instance, everyone goes to buy that cheap Xbox, but then gets lured in with buying socks and a



Coffee Corner: Brother Andre’s

By: Alice Rothfus

Brother Andre’s is a Catholic coffee shop staffed by adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The coffee shop is named after St. Brother Andre Bessette, patron of caregivers, who in his life struggled to find a job due to sickness. The spot is located in the basement of Epiphany Church (adjacent to PPG Paints Arena). They have a plethora of drinks on their menu along with breakfast and dessert options. After being requested many times to give Brother Andre’s a formal review, I finally took a trip to the city and visited.

I came in on a Saturday morning. The space was plain, but the ambiance was wholesome. There were college students, Epiphany parishioners, city workers, and families. On the side of the ordering counter, there was a merchandise display that consisted of hoodies, t-shirts, mugs, and other items. The employee who waited on me was very kind and patient with me, as I discerned what to order. The coffee did take a while to come out, so it is not ideal if you are in a rush. Alternatively, they do have mobile ordering.

The drinks I tried included the Peanut Butter Cookie Steeped Cold Brew with oat milk, the Signature Chai Latte, the Love You a Latte, and the iced Pumpkin Pie Boujee. The Peanut Butter Cookie Steeped Cold Brew (\$5.50) was their most recently debuted drink at the time. They use gluten free peanut butter cookies in their recipe, which is not great for people with peanut allergies, but fantastic for those with gluten sensitivities. This was my favorite drink. It had that rich coffee flavor, while having peanut butter cookie notes. Senior Anne Dolan shared, “I really like it because it is made with the coffee I use at home



[Wild Goose Blend]. I enjoy a more bitter coffee, so it's a good choice that is not too sweet." Unfortunately, the Signature Chai Latte (\$4.50) was not satisfying. The drink was overly sweet and had an artificial chai flavor, which is a problem that most chais have. The Love You a Latte (\$4.50) was a pleasant drink. The beverage was creamy, slightly sweet, and had a nice bitterness to it. The latte is supposed to have honey and cinnamon in it; however, I did not get much of a cinnamon taste. Finally, the iced Pumpkin Pie Boujee (\$5.50) was a delicious and beautiful drink. With a rich foam on top, it was cold, but comforting. Every flavor was perfectly balanced from the spices to the sugar to the coffee.

The Brother Andre's experience was spectacular, inspiring me to give them a 9/10 rating. Faculty member Ms. Ali McGrath stated, "I love how much Brother Andre's supports the community and seeing friends, family, and students there. The space is so welcoming, and you can meet entirely new people. Overall it's a good environment for building community." If you have time and are looking for a new coffee place to try out, you should give Brother Andre's a visit. For those in the Bellevue area, there is a second location that is to open soon at Assumption Church. Going to Brother Andre's you can meet with fellow Catholics, have a delightful refreshment, and know that your money is going to a wholly good cause.

A League of Their Own: Fantasy Football in the Sophomore and Junior Classes

By: Alexa Risdon

Aquinas students are always finding new ways to have fun and compete with each other. This year some of the sophomores and juniors decided to create their own Fantasy Football leagues.

Fantasy Football allows people to select their own NFL players for their teams and adjust the lineups every week. The students' teams match up every week and earn points by racking up stats in their real-world game. Whichever fantasy team lineup earns more points that week wins the matchup. Standings are calculated as in a traditional sports league, in which people are competing for a playoff entry based on standings. After 14 weeks of the regular season, playoffs begin. Playoffs consist of three rounds in which the teams compete head-to-head, in a tournament format, to determine the league winner.



The sophomores have a league that consists of John Dolan, Matt McGrath, Sam VanVickle, Jack Stanton, Miller Rouce, Clayton Frissora, Eli McWilliams, Rocco Fischer, Liam Kelch, Richie Haring, Ian Patterson, and Isaac Rogers. When interviewed about how his team has done in the league, John Dolan, whose team is called "Auto Draft for the Win," shared, "I'm 4-3, but I lost some matchups due to bad decision making." John believes Sam VanVickle or Jack Stanton will win because of the skill of their teams. Jack Stanton's team is 3-4. He says, "It started off at 2-0, but then injuries happened. However, my team is back and doing better now." Jack thinks that he is going to win his league because his team is "fully healthy and the best team."

The junior league includes Anthony Rossi, Daniel Hartle, Sam Duer, Jonah Burchill, Andrew Giancola, Owen McKernan, Gio Spotts, Luke Crawford, Xander Beaven, Henry Hynds, Henry Buchanan, Patrick Richthammer, Marco Anselmino, and Louis Bentivegna. Andrew Giancola stated, "Andrew's astounding team is 4-2 right now, but Louis and Jonah have really good teams and one of them will probably win." Andrew Giancola's favorite team is the Texans, and he believes they will make it to the SuperBowl this year. Henry Hynds and his team, "Hynds Ketchup," have four wins and three losses, and he believes he or Sam Duer will win their league. Anthony Rossi believes that Sam Duer has a "pretty good squad," and is most likely to win the league. Sam Duer, only having lost one game in the league so far, is doing great and has confidence in himself that he will win.

After a few more weeks of the regular season, the playoffs will begin and determine the true champions in our midst.

Question:

Every time I attend Mass at school, I see a few girls who cover their hair with veils. Why do some Catholic women choose to veil for Mass?

Answer:

I had the privilege of reading a wonderfully crafted essay on this topic by a friend of mine, which explains this tradition in great detail. I'll do my best to summarize her explanation, but if you'd like more information about this, feel free to email me and request the whole essay.

To answer this question, we must first look to the women of Jesus' time. Only a woman's husband was allowed the privilege of seeing his wife's hair; the veil was both a practical barrier preventing other men from viewing her beauty, and a sign that only one man could view her heart. In the context of prayer, the veil acts as a barrier between the outside world, i.e. noise and distraction, and the interior world, i.e. the intimacy between God and a soul; Bridegroom and Bride. It prevents anyone other than the Lord from entering "the cloister in your heart," says St. Catherine of Siena. The veil is a physical reminder of the powerful spiritual reality present in Mass and Adoration, that God is truly present in the room: Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity. It obscures the surroundings, causing the sole focus to be the Lord on the altar.

In a more traditional sense, veiling demonstrates submission to the authority of God. It demonstrates a willingness to be vulnerable, to be provided for, to be humble before the Lord. Our Lady is the clearest example we have of this "handing over" of self, this *fiat*. She was perfectly submissive to God's authority, "Behold, I am the handmaiden of the Lord (Luke 1:38)!" This *fiat* in no way diminished Mary's free will; it was her choice to hand over her life to God, trusting in His plan for her. How freeing it is to relinquish control to the One who is knowledge and truth itself! "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future (Jer. 29:11)."

If you do not personally feel called to veil, do not worry! It is such a personal decision, but I would encourage all of you to pray about this concept of submission, of *fiat*. Maybe, with Advent approaching, create some liturgical new year's resolutions for yourself to find small ways to hand over your life to God.



Writers' Favorite Thanksgiving Food

Abigail: Chicken Pot Pie

Anne: Stuffing

Alexa: Mashed Potatoes

Alice: Mac n' Cheese

Ashlin: Pumpkin Pie

Brynn: Rolls and Butter

Caitlyn: Stuffing

Claire: Bread and Butter

Felicity: Apple Pie

Jack: Turkey?

Jules: Sweet Potato Casserole

Katherine: Pumpkin Pie

Laila: Turkey and Cranberry Sauce

Lucy : Stuffing

Maddy: Mashed Potatoes

Sam: Stuffing

Snips & Quips

Talking about chemistry

"So...I'm converting..."

-Aurora

thinking she meant religion

"to WHAT??"

-Felicity

"Oh my word. I need an egg shaker."

-Meghan

"LOOK AT MY QUADS!!"

-Henry Buchanan

after geeking out about Star Wars

"I'm surprised I'm married."

-Mr. Malchano

Talking about solitary confinement

"You can't hear, see, and have no sense of time. You go insane."

-Mr. Malchano

"I'd rather do that than physics."

-Abigail Irvin

"Why can't we wear Nike socks?"

-Louis Bentivegna

"Because it prevents us from learning."

-Henry Buchanan

"We love women! They're the best!"

- Daniel H.

"We're so mathletic."

-Clara Yuo

Please send articles, ideas, corrections, or Snips and Quips to: thedumbox@aquinasacademy-pittsburgh.org

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