

EXCELLENCE

Season's Greetings

The students of Archbishop Shaw prepare their hearts and their community for the coming of Christmas

The Theology Magazine
of Archbishop Shaw
High School



Vol. 1 | Iss. 2

December 2021

archbishopshaw.org



Shaw faculty, staff, and students wore ugly Christmas sweaters on the last day of regular classes. Pictured are Zachary Tran, John Martin (both Class of '25), and Mr. Chris Whittington (Guidance Dept.).
 Courtesy Mr. Alex Cormier

IN THIS ISSUE

Reason, Religion, and Kindness

See how Shaw students live out the three pillars of Saint John Bosco's Preventive system

7

Letter from the Head of School	3
Fr. Steve Ryan, SDB	
Vietnamese Culture Night	4
Mr. Alex Cormier	
An Advent Reflection	11
Enrico Tapia	
Peer Ministry Senior Showcase:	12
Todd Ritter	
House Feast Day	13
Salesian Leadership	15
Br. Tom Junis and Dominic Alello	
Two Ways to Know God	17
Joshua Russell	





Upcoming Events



DEC
11

Morning Retreat

The Salesians of Don Bosco will be holding a retreat for parents and their sons this Saturday, December 11 from 9a-12p in Don Bosco Hall. We will be sharing Scripture, praying together, and preparing for Christmas. If you're looking for a way to deepen your spiritual life this Christmas season, this is a great way to be intentional and get started!



DEC
17

Nativity Play and Band Carols

Archbishop Shaw High school will present the Nativity Play at 10:30 a.m. at Joe Zimmerman Stadium. Students from Shaw and Academy of Our Lady will perform. The Shaw Band will be playing several Christmas selections. Hot chocolate and cookies will be served after the play. Come out and participate in this wonderful prayer and acting presentation!



JAN
18-23

March for Life

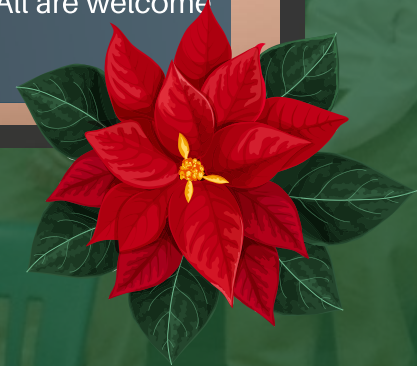
The March for Life is an inspiring, peaceful, vibrant, and joy-filled rally of women, men, young people, and children from all across the country calling for the end of legalized abortion. It's the largest annual human rights demonstration in the world. Shaw will be attending the March for Life in Baton Rouge. Please keep this important movement in your prayers.



FEB
1

Solemnity of Saint John Bosco

Archbishop Shaw will be celebrating our Salesian patron Saint John Bosco with this very special solemn Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. All are welcome to join us!

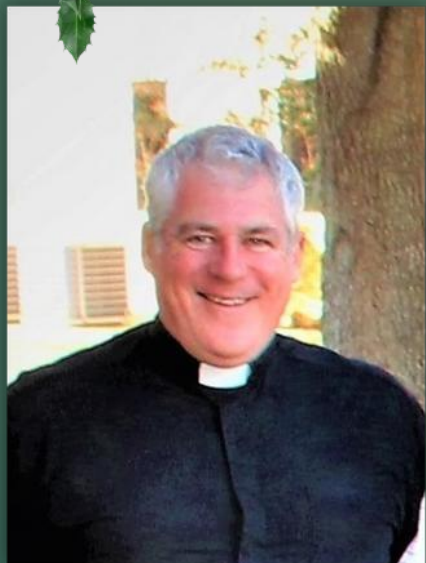


Please visit archbishopshaw.org to see our full calendar or events.



Letter from the Head of School

Fr. Steve Ryan, SDB



Fr. Steve Ryan is an ordained priest of the Salesians of Don Bosco and the current Head of School of Archbishop Shaw High School. Fr. Ryan was born in Staten Island, NY in 1964. He discerned his vocation from a young age after attending Camp Don Bosco in Newton, NJ. Fr. Ryan received a M.A. in Theology from the Josephinum Pontifical College in Ohio and a M.A. in Pastoral Studies from Loyola University Chicago.

Fr. Ryan served as a teacher at Archbishop Shaw from 1986-1988 as a Brother. Fr. Ryan was ordained a priest on May 31, 1992 at Saint Anthony Parish in Nanuet, NY. Since his ordination, he has ministered in youth ministry and served as the province Delegate for Youth Ministry.

While directing Salesian ministry in Tampa, Florida, he was part of a team that founded Cristo Rey Tampa High School. He served as the Vice Provincial of the Eastern Province for three years before being assigned to the role of Head of School at Archbishop Shaw.

Dear Shaw Family,

John the Baptist is a key figure of the Advent Season. He tells us clearly to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. In the Gospel people ask John the Baptist what they ought to do.

John the Baptist gave three recommendations to the people of his time and I think they can apply to us today in our stressful world. He said: **1. Share 2. Be fair and 3. Be humble.** Let's break it down.

Share: God's desire for us on this earth is to share the blessings that we have received. We are called to be generous. John the Baptist preaches clearly that God's Will for us is to share. "Whoever has two coats should share with a person who has none." "whoever has extra food should do likewise." Sharing is very needed in today's world. There are a lot of people needing food, friendship and prayer. We can be the ones who give it to them. So... amidst the stress of life don't be selfish. A selfish attitude just makes things worse in the world. Share your love, share your things and share your time with others.

Be Fair: John the Baptist told the tax collectors and the soldiers to be fair and to treat everyone the same. He preached that everyone has dignity and should be respected. Giving special favors to some people while disregarding others is not God-like. It hurts society and causes division. The gospel calls us to be just in all we say and do. In our world today we are called to practice fairness so that the two extremes- favoritism on the one hand and neglect on the other- will not dominate our culture.

Be Humble: When the people asked the prophet what they needed to do he told them to be humble. John the Baptist said: "Jesus must increase and I must decrease." He said that his cousin Jesus was so great that he wasn't even worthy to touch his sandals. For us today, humility is crucial for growth as spiritual people. If we act like we just want to be left alone and don't need friends or family we won't learn how to love properly. If we think we can handle all the stress in life on our own and don't need God's Help—things will eventually become overwhelming. We need God. John the Baptist points us to Jesus.

May Jesus come into our hearts this Christmas and may we take the advice of John the Baptist—**Share, Be Fair and Be Humble.**

Sincerely in Christ,

Fr. Steve Ryan, SDB
Head of School
Archbishop Shaw High School



MỘT, HAI, BA, VÔ!

(One, two, three, cheers!)

Celebrating the Vietnamese community of the Westbank at Archbishop Shaw

by Mr. Alex Cormier

Ask anyone who is not a native Louisianan to identify the major cultural and ethnic groups of our state and you'll get familiar answers such as Cajun and Creole. However, an undoubtedly large part of our state's heritage is its sizable Vietnamese population.

Those of us who grew up in South Louisiana never thought twice about this: it seemed only natural that at school, Church, and the grocery store, along with black and white kids, were those of Asian descent. It wasn't until many of us grew older that we recognized that a Vietnamese population of this size was really quite unique in our country. How did we get to this point where, in a relatively short period of time, this singular group of immigrants became so integral to our communities?



Like many great migrations of people, the story is not without struggle, hardship, and sacrifice. Elizabeth M. Williams, author of the book *New Orleans: A Food Biography*, writes that after the Communist takeover of North Vietnam in 1954, a large number of families moved to South Vietnam. With the Fall of Saigon in 1975, those families had no place left to go. With the assistance of Catholic Charities, many families took the opportunity to move to New Orleans, Baton Rouge, and Acadiana.

" LET US STRIVE TO FARE WELL IN THIS LIFE AND IN THE NEXT "

-Saint John Bosco

Louisiana had much to offer those families: a sizable fishing industry and a strong Roman Catholic heritage that was not unfamiliar to many Vietnamese (Williams, 78). It is perhaps the latter that has led to Archbishop Shaw being the Westbank home to so many young men of Vietnamese descent over the past four decades.

One need only look at our institution to see that the influence of this people and their spirituality is unmistakable: we are resilient witnesses for the Lord.

(Top) Fr. Dominick Tran, SDB, Vice Provincial of the Province of Saint Phillip the Apostles of the Salesians of Don Bosco, recounts his story growing up in Vietnam.

(Left) Shaw students enjoy homemade Vietnamese foods and treats.



It was this spirit of hope, resiliency, and joy that led to the first-ever Vietnamese Culture Night on December 7. Vietnamese students and their families came together for a night of fellowship, spirituality, and, without mention, great food.

Father Steve Ryan, SDB, the current Head of School of Archbishop Shaw, recognized the need to celebrate the Vietnamese community on the Westbank.

"There's two reasons why we had this event", reflects Fr. Steve: "First, we want to increase enrollment at Archbishop Shaw and let the Vietnamese community know that this is a great place for their boys".

"Second, we want to cultivate a sense of pride in our students of Vietnamese descent. They should be proud of their heritage and celebrate it".

Students set to work organizing and calling together families (some of which had never met one another) and alumni for this special celebration. Their efforts even caught the eye of Fr. Dominick Tran, SDB, the Vice Provincial of the Province of Saint Phillip the Apostle of the Salesians of Don Bosco.



Pictured (from left to right): Sr. Celine, Sr. Rosa Hoang, Fr. Dominic Tran, SDB, and Sr. Ana Bui.
Photos courtesy Mr. Alex Cormier

Fr. Tran made a special visit to Archbishop Shaw to celebrate with Shaw families and reminisce on his early life in Vietnam.

In addition to the great joy he takes in recounting the story of his youth, Father Tran also remembers fondly his attraction to the Salesian spirituality and the example and guidance of Saint John Bosco.

"There's two things [the Salesians] try to provide young people: how to be good citizens and how to be good children of God".

"You can look to the example of... Saint Dominic Savio, one of Don Bosco's own boys, and...Blessed Laura Vicuña. It has been proven that Saint John Bosco helps young people become holy and become saints".

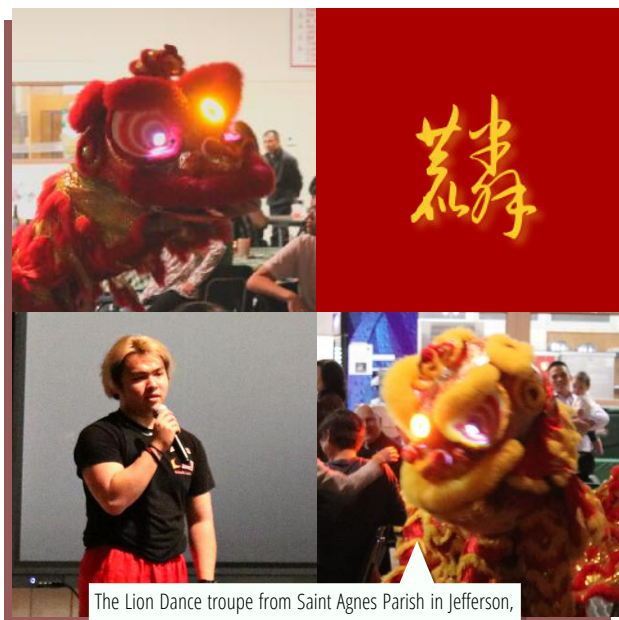
For Father Tran and the members of the Westbank Vietnamese community, the true celebration is not only the music, or dance, or even great food: it is a recognition of God's divine providence. It is a commemoration of the sacrificial love of those who have gone before us to offer us the opportunity to become good Christians and good children of God.

Sáng danh Đức Chúa Cha và Đức Chúa Con và Đức Chúa Thánh Thần.

Như đã có trước vô cùng và bây giờ và hằng có, và đời đời chẳng cùng.

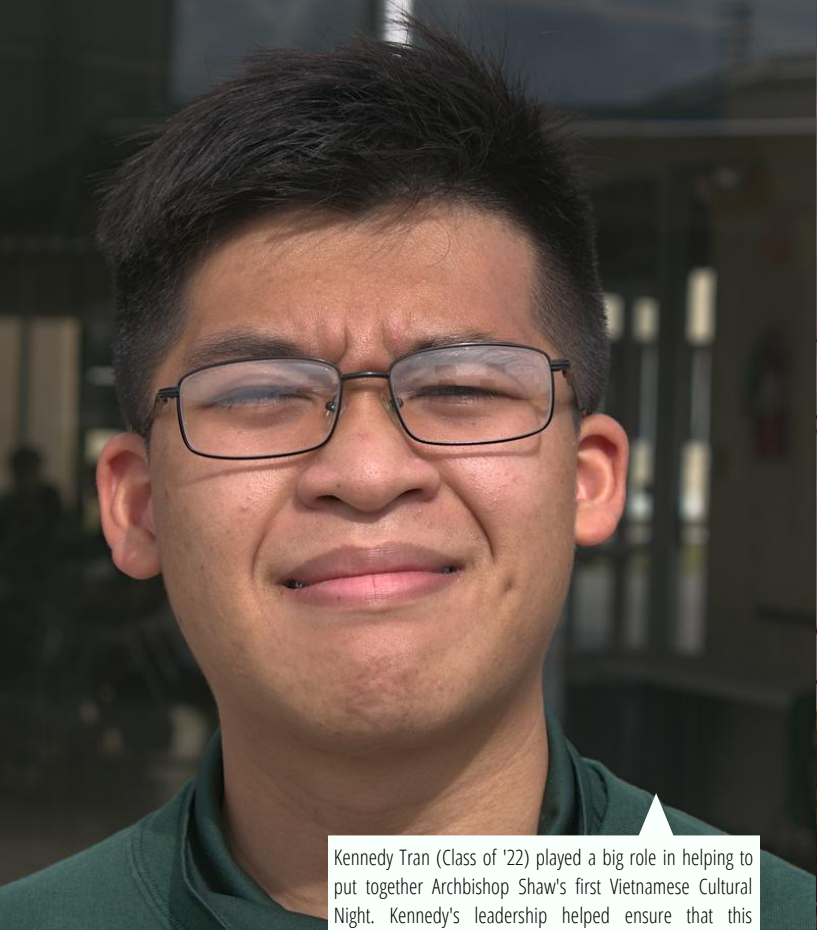
Amen.

Mr. Alex Cormier is the Theology I educator at Archbishop Shaw. He attended Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, LA receiving a Bachelor of Arts in English and a certification in Philosophy from Saint Joseph Seminary College in Covington, LA.



The Lion Dance troupe from Saint Agnes Parish in Jefferson, Louisiana enlivened the festivities with an impressive display of discipline, skill, and passion. One of the senior members of this troupe is Mr. Kevin Le (Class of '20).

Photos courtesy Nicole Giambelluca



KENNEDY TRAN, CLASS OF '22

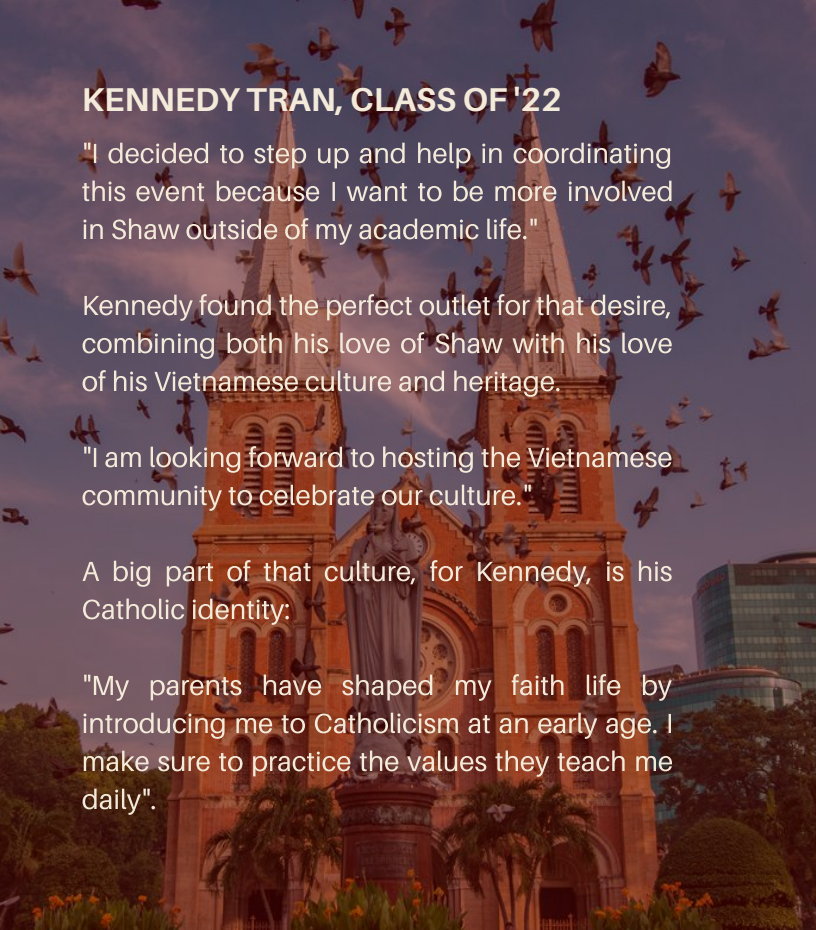
"I decided to step up and help in coordinating this event because I want to be more involved in Shaw outside of my academic life."

Kennedy found the perfect outlet for that desire, combining both his love of Shaw with his love of his Vietnamese culture and heritage.

"I am looking forward to hosting the Vietnamese community to celebrate our culture."

A big part of that culture, for Kennedy, is his Catholic identity:

"My parents have shaped my faith life by introducing me to Catholicism at an early age. I make sure to practice the values they teach me daily".



Kennedy Tran (Class of '22) played a big role in helping to put together Archbishop Shaw's first Vietnamese Cultural Night. Kennedy's leadership helped ensure that this celebration of Vietnamese heritage as a success.

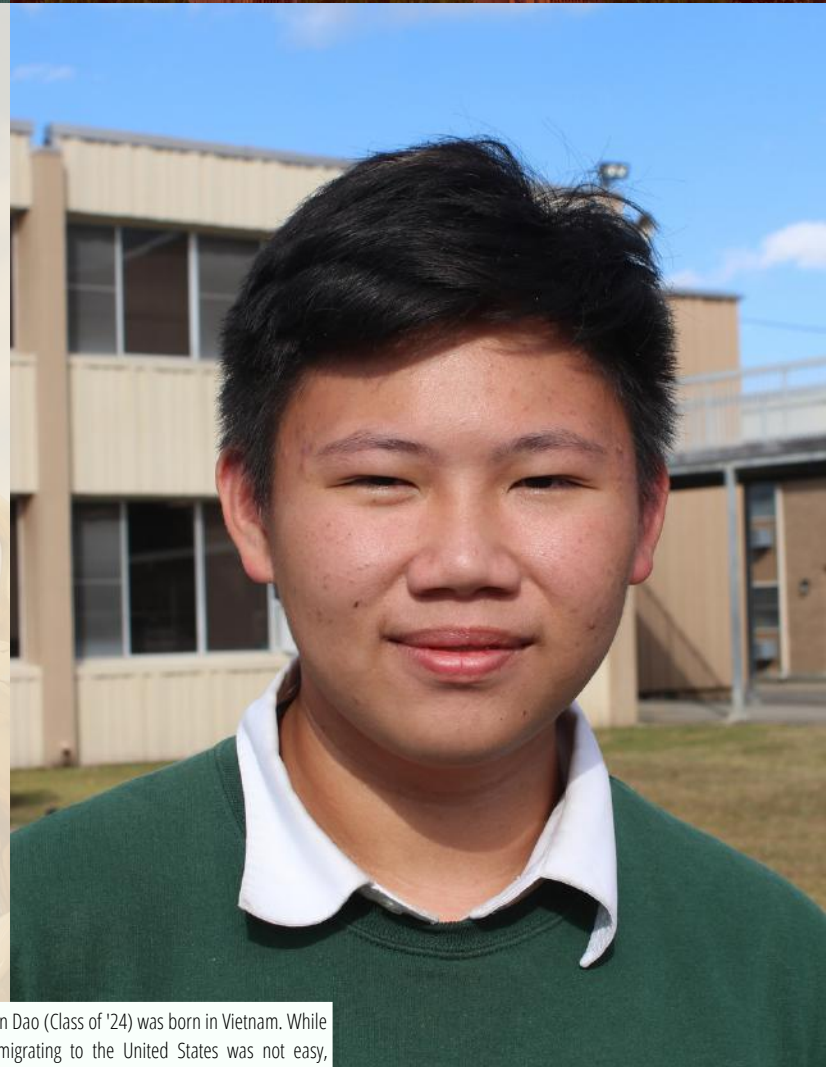
Shaw is blessed to have exemplary members of our community who have stepped up to make our first Vietnamese Cultural Night such a special event.

TIEN DAO, CLASS OF '24

My family is from Vietnam and we lived there for a long time before we moved to the United States.

I decided to step up and serve as a leader in coordinating this event because I think this is a very good opportunity to let other people know more about who I am, what is so special about being an international Vietnamese student, and my experience when studying at Archbishop Shaw High School.

The thing that I am most looking forward to is bringing people together and helping people better understand Vietnamese students studying at Archbishop Shaw High School. I want people to understand more about the country of Vietnam and the important role our faith has played in our lives.



Tien Dao (Class of '24) was born in Vietnam. While immigrating to the United States was not easy, Tien's faith and family has seen him through his trials: "my faith is important to my identity".
Photo courtesy Mr. Alex Cormier



REASON, RELIGION, KINDNESS

"*Excelsior*" is the battlecry of a man of Shaw as he strives to live out the three pillars of Saint John Bosco's Preventive system: reason, religion, and loving-kindness. Every single day, our community pursues these goals in all that we do.

REASON

Engaging Body, Mind, and Soul

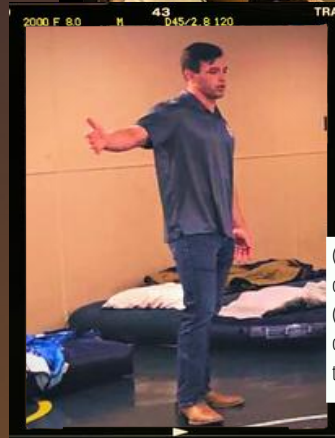
The Archbishop Shaw Wrestling Team held its second-annual Wrestling Retreat over the Thanksgiving holiday. Head Coach Brandon Surrency (Class of '09), Assistant Head of Institutional Advancement, notes that last year's retreat, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, was canceled. "We didn't [get] the traditional team bonding experience," Coach Surrency explained.

So it was important for the team to take time out of their practice to spend with one another.

The retreat is more than an opportunity to improve wrestling skills: "the goal of the retreat is to make the athletes think more, build a stronger relationship with God, build team camaraderie and learn perspectives from our various guest speakers," said Coach Brandon Surrency; "it's an exhausting weekend but it's well worth it".

Since the retreat, many students have begun participating in not only other extra-curriculars but several Youth Ministry-related organizations and groups as well.

Speakers included Shaw 2021 Alumnus of the Year Troy DePreist (Class of '86), Assistant District Attorney Lonnie Taix (Class of '88), alumnus and former wrestler Brennan Falcon (Class of '14), and ten-time state champion wrestling coach Robbie Dautreive.



(Above) Troy DePreist (Class of '86) speaks to the importance of keeping God first and foremost in everything we do.
(Left) Brennan Falcon (Class of '14) recounted how the discipline and accountability he learned on the mat translated to law school.

RELIGION

Leading Students to Christ

Shaw's Peer Ministry team consists of students who strive to bring the light of Christ into all areas of student involvement, even if those students are just a bit younger.

Peer Ministers such as Wyatt Marque (Class of '22) have been assisting with and conducting retreats for students of local schools such as Saint Rosalie Elementary in Harvey and Immaculate Conception School in Marrero.

"I decided to start helping with retreats last year when Fr. John Langan approached me," recounts Wyatt. "I loved going on retreats as an underclassman, so being able to help plan these retreats and make them the best that they

can be".

"Every retreat that the Peer Ministry team and I plan has a purpose. Starting from visiting seventh-graders to Seniors here at Archbishop Shaw". That purpose is to help students grow in faith throughout their school-years.



(Top) Wyatt Marque (Class of '22) and Brycen Foret (Class of '26) work on a retreat activity together.
(Bottom) Jayce LaCava (Class of '23) carries Randal Smallwood (Class of '26) on his shoulders.



"I get closer to God each retreat I help with".
Wyatt Marque, Class of '22

Of course, all of the fun and games is not just fun and games. "Getting closer to God can be from an activity with a group, a witness talk, adoration, or even playing basketball," explains Wyatt. "As long as, at the end of the day the participants felt God get a little closer to them, the retreat is a success".

The authenticity that comes from student-led retreats put on for students is one of the many reasons these retreats have borne so much fruit for both Archbishop Shaw and the universal Church.



KINDNESS

Feeding the Soul

The holiday season, while a festive time for most, can be a difficult time for others: one that highlights the inequalities between peoples and the grim fact that many this season will go without.

Coach Wesley Laurendine, head coach of the Archbishop Shaw Basketball team, understood the extent of the need. "I first learned of [a] program [at a previous job]... that feeds hundreds of families," recounted Coach Laurendine. "It was one of the best things I've been a part of".

This Thanksgiving, Coach Laurendine felt inspired to bring that program to the school.

He realized that he already had an army of volunteers waiting to help: his basketball team.

"When I mentioned my intentions to the team, it was a quick 'yes, let's do this' from everyone," said Laurendine. "No Questions asked. They understood this was a priority".

The team got to work and began seeking out donations from their own families to give to a family in need. Coach Laurendine, working with a contact, was soon paired the King family whose matriarch, Mrs. King, was in need for the holiday.



"My intention is to help grow this program little by little", says Coach Laurendine, "we're not here to reinvent the wheel; just grow a great tradition [at Shaw] which helps so many here on the Westbank. [The basketball team] hopes to help two families next year".



I was excited to supply someone else with the things they needed to have a good holiday," reflects Senior Jene Baquet (Class of 2022). Jene, along with the rest of the team, worked to get all of the essentials for every member of the family down to the smallest: "Mrs. King was taking care of a baby, [so] we stocked up on baby foods, too".

By all accounts, this charitable act by the team was a great success, but Coach Laurendine is acutely aware of the outstanding need.



(Far left) Rodney Phillips (Class of '22) carries a box of goods into Mrs. King's home.
(Left) Christian Harris (Class of '24) shares a warm embrace with Mrs. King at her home during the week of Thanksgiving.
(Right) Isaiah Barnes carries donated items into Mrs. King's home. The team was able to visit and get to know the family during their time together.

Thinking back on the experience, Coach states that there was more than food and goods that were exchanged on that day.

"I believe these young men grew in loving kindness, compassion, and gratitude for what they have at their own home. We all have different struggles, yet all of us are here to help one another."

An Advent Reflection

by Enrico Tapia

Advent to me means waiting. Not waiting for Santa or Christmas Gifts but waiting for Jesus to be born. It's about waiting with friends and family for that solemn and wonderful day.

Some ways that me and my family celebrate Advent by taking time do more things as a family, especially moments of prayer. Another way we celebrate is by praying with and lighting a traditional Advent wreath in our home. Every Sunday, we light the next candle, counting down the days to Christmas.



Our school community could more fully enter the Advent season by helping others who are in need. Our school offers many opportunities to be of service to the community. Over the past semester, we've had a number of service opportunities such as food and clothing drives and volunteering at the Giving Hope food bank.

With Advent being the season of hope, I hope that people start coming together more in their own families and as a universal Christian family and celebrating what Christmas is really about: a time of waiting for Jesus's birth.

Enrico Tapia (Class of 2024) was born in Marrero, LA He is a member of the Shaw Cross Country team, Track team, and the Golf team.



The Surprise of the Repetitious

by Mr. Alex Cormier

If there's one thing Catholics are often accused of in their prayers, liturgy, and seasons, it is being "repetitious". Ask any antsy student whose ever sat through the Most Holy Rosary and they'd probably agree.

Advent seems to be one of those things. How many times have we heard the stories and experienced the build-up to Christmas? Yet, we still get giddy at the thought of exchanging gifts, listening to carols, and celebrating the Christmas mystery.

The Church, in Her wisdom, recognizes that there's something very important about *remembering*. There's a mysterious moment when we go beyond simply recounting the Christmas story to *living it out* in its fullness; Christ's birth becomes actually present to us in the prayers of the Church and Her liturgy.

Maybe this Christmas season can teach us something new: that just because we've heard something a thousand times doesn't mean it's any less present to us. Even though these stories may seem, repetitious, at times, they still surprise and delight us in their relevance and mystery.

Peer Ministry SENIOR SHOWCASE



Every month, we will be featuring seniors who have made great contributions to their school and community by their service and dedication to peer ministry.

Todd Ritter



Where are you from?

I am from Harvey, Louisiana.

Tell us about your family.

My mother is a registered nurse. My sister attends Mount Carmel School and is a Shaw cheerleader.

When did you begin to attend Archbishop Shaw?

I came to Shaw for my eighth-grade year in 2017.

When did you first get involved in Peer Ministry?

I've been friends with many of the men who are active in Peer Ministry. Following their example, I became involved during the 2020-2021 academic year.

How has your experience in Peer Ministry impacted your own faith life?

Peer Ministry has helped me in many ways, most especially in prayer. I now know how to speak to the Lord and have a relationship with Him. Being a part of this ministry has helped me to be more mindful and

aware of the needs of those around me. It's given me the gift of being able to see the good and potential in everyone.

How has your faith life grown while at Shaw?

My family was, at one point, regularly practicing Catholics. Over time, we no longer practiced the faith. However, since my time at Shaw, I am proud to say that I am, once again, a regularly practicing Catholic. It has given me the awesome opportunity to develop a relationship with God and His Church.

What are you planning to do after high school?

I plan to become a lineman for the Entergy Corporation.

What advice would you give to your younger brothers here at Shaw as you move on?

Don't wait to start doing the right thing. Doing the right thing starts now. I believe that choosing to do the good every day can have an influence on those around you.

Please visit archbishopshaw.org to learn more about our Youth Ministry outreach and how to help support us in this sacred mission.

HOUSE FEAST DAYS

Shaw dedicates day for formation and growth outside of the classroom

by Mr. Alex Cormier

Since the introduction of the House system at Archbishop Shaw, students have been competing, serving, and excelling to bring pride and honor to their cohorts.

For those who are unaware, the House system consists of four houses under the patronage of Saint Frances de Sales, Saint Giorgio Frasatti, Saint Dominic Savio, and Blessed Carlo Acutis. Each student is assigned a house at the beginning of their careers at Shaw and stay in that house until graduation.

Despite all of the competition, service, and opportunities to excel, House members also need to get to know other members of the house.



That's when Mr. Benjamin Russo, Director of Student Activities, came up with the idea for a day devoted for that very purpose.

:"They sit together at Mass, we're at pep-rallies, but we never had the chance to bond with our house-members at this events," explains Mr. Ben Russo. "We're trying to build up those relationships, to know one another".

The day began when the Prefects of each house rallied house-members together and began a day filled with team-building activities, prayer, spiritual formation, and service.

"The Juniors and Sophomores did a great job [involving] the eighth-graders and Freshman. Mr. [Eric] Budd (one of Shaw's newest faculty members) did an awesome job leading field games".

It was, without a doubt, the field games that most students found as a good way to build up a sense of belonging to their House as well as fostering fraternity.

Perhaps one of the most unique moments of the day was the opportunity for students to hear vocation stories from seminarians from the Archdiocese of New Orleans and the Diocese of Lafayette as well as recently-ordained priest Fr. Ajani Gibson.

Fr. Gibson is currently the youngest ordained African-American priest in the United States, a fact that he is proud to share.

Fr. Gibson recounted his journey from entering seminary to ordination to the students. Like many young men who discern the priesthood, Fr. Gibson was initially hesitant to enter seminary.

"I had run out of excuses," explains Fr. Gibson, "so I agreed to enter seminary. My heart dropped; 'what did I just do?'"

Fr. Gibson then describes that, in that moment, he felt a peace wash over him unlike any he ever felt in his life. It was in that moment that he knew he was called to the priesthood.



Students were blessed enough to hear stories just like Fr. Gibson's; stories of young men willing to heed the Lord's call for their lives.

MR. REED BELLINGHAM, 3RD THEOLOGY DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE

I was most excited to share with the Students that God has a unique calling for each of them (that could be marriage, priesthood or religious life) and that he wants them to find out what it is.

I told them to ask God in prayer and then be open in their lives to receive his answer whether it comes through people they meet or circumstances they encounter. God will answer; they just have to be open to hearing and receiving his message.

(Left) Fr. Ajani Gibson greets students who were curious about how he found his way to the priesthood.

(Right) Mr. Reed Bellingham encourages students to discern God's call for their lives.



I clarified that it is not just about whether or not we get married that we have to discern, but that even who we are supposed to marry should be brought to God and even the very little decisions of everyday life. God wants us to make him a part of our whole lives.

I was surprised that the students were so attentive. They were interested in what God desired for their lives and that he was interested enough in them to respond. God wants to help them to achieve what he made them for at every step of the way. I was really impressed that they seemed to be open to the challenge.

Some of the students asked what seminary was like or what sports I played in high school. They were surprised to hear that seminarians don't just pray all the time but are normal people with similar interests. I hope that made clear for them the distinction that seminary teaches you to properly order your life so that, when things get busy, the things that are not as important fall away. Through seminary formation, you come to desire to deepen (and never budge on) your relationship with God.

Shaw is already planning for its next House day for the Spring semester.

SALESIAN LEADERSHIP

Three day retreat offers students the opportunity to grow in faith with others

by Mr. Alex Cormier

Students are always excited to go on a school-sanctioned trip. However, the annual Salesian Leadership Retreat comes with a catch: students don't really know what to expect.

Fr. John Langan, the Youth Minister of Archbishop Shaw, explains that while the annual retreat is focused on building faith students aren't told what exactly will happen. Even before you set foot on the plane, some faith and trust is required.

"It's an opportunity for them to step away from their daily lives to recognize God's presence," says Fr. John.



Three Juniors and five Seniors were nominated by Shaw Faculty members and selected by Youth Ministry to travel to Immaculata-La Salle High School in Miami, Florida November 11-14. "There's opportunities for prayer, for sharing, and for team building built into every moment of those days," remarks Fr. John.

Father says that the students were, admittedly, excited, but nervous. For some, this was the first time they participated in a three-day *anything* with youth from across the country.

However, speak to any of the participants and that nervousness quickly turned into a life-changing experience, one that many of them hope to replicate here at Archbishop Shaw.

Father is tight-lipped about what exactly sparked that shift within the students, but he did offer up this: "the moment they showed up on campus, they were welcomed with thunderous applause. The assimilation was instantaneous".

"Perhaps I've already said too much".

Attending the Salesian Leadership Retreat is a privilege that only those students who are determined enough get to experience. However, it is absolutely clear that it is an experience every student who participates would never want to miss.



(Top; top row from left to right) Br. Tom Junis, Jude Monaco, (unknown), Dylan Vo, Jene Baquet, Garrett Allelo. (Bottom row from left to right) Peter Nguyen, Brock Dupre, Dominic Allelo, Jason Brown.

If there's one message Fr. John wants all students and their parents to know, it is the life-changing fruit that comes from intentionally building up the faith of young people with others just like them.

"I hope parents encourage their kids to strive throughout their career here at Shaw to become a part of this. Opportunities like this can really affect a young person's life."

While the Salesian Leadership Retreat is not the only opportunity for faith-formation available to Shaw students, all of them require dedication and commitment on the part of the student.

"Young students should get involved as much as they can. It's important for them to make the most of their time: five years at Shaw go by quick".

DOMINIC ALLELO, CLASS OF '23

The Salesian Leadership Retreat was an eye opening experience. I met people who have affected my life so much and I hope I can meet them again.

I learned about how strengthening my relationship with God can help me become a better leader for my peers. Through the religious talks, Eucharistic adoration, and Masses, I got to figure out where I was lacking in my faith so that I could focus on it. I never truly realized how I affect those around me and how many people see me as a leader.

The experience has motivated me to become a better leader and a positive beacon of light in my school. I learned that my faith is essential to being a good leader as without God I wouldn't have been on that retreat in the first place.

I learned that surrounding yourself with people who have the same faith or leadership priorities amplifies your want to be better. You can learn from those who are older and know more and then implement it into how you lead.

Overall, I met lifelong friends who had a lasting impact on me, and learned how and what it means to be a Salesian leader. Everyday I am thankful for that chance to go on the SLR, and not a day goes by where I don't think about those lifelong friends and their impacts on my life.

Dominic Allelo (Class of '23) is a distinguished student of Archbishop Shaw High School.



BR. TOM JUNIS, SDB

The Salesian Leadership was a beautiful experience. As a Theology teacher and religious brother, one of my greatest desires is for my students to experience the love that God has for them and to know Jesus as alive and present in their life. I thank God I was able to witness the working of his grace in so many of the students who went on the retreat. It gives me a lot of hope to see students on fire for their faith and desiring to live it out even when it is difficult.

Br. Tom Junis grew up as the third of three children in Bloomington, Illinois. He earned his Bachelor of Education from Illinois State University. He has been with the Salesians for six years and this is his second year at Archbishop Shaw.

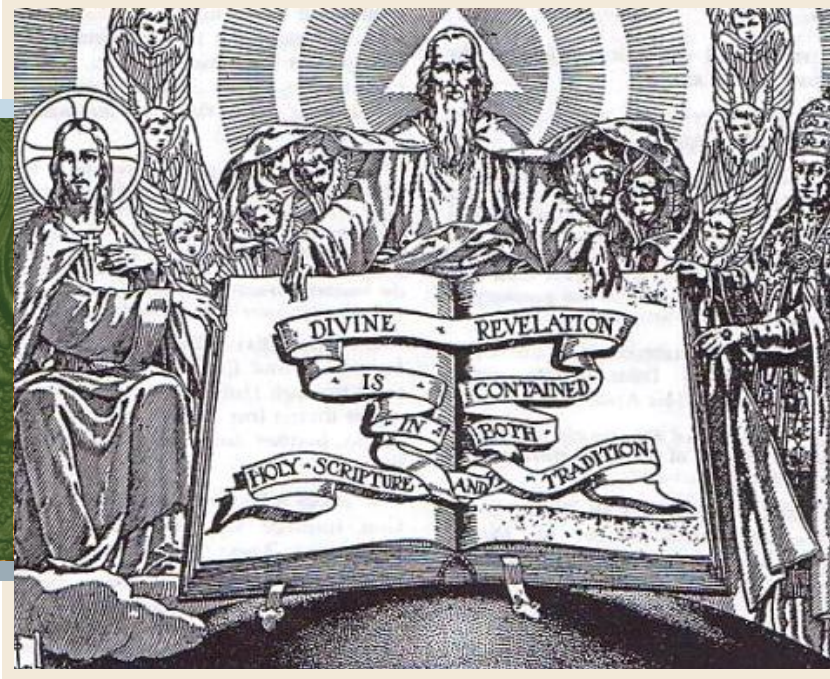


It is important to note that opportunities like this are financially supported by the Salesians of Saint John Bosco, our own faculty and staff, our Shaw families and the wider community. Without their support, this experience would not have been possible. Thank you.

If you are interested in ensuring that future generations of students have the same opportunities to grow in faith and to be the future Catholic leaders our world so desperately needs, please consider supporting us with your gifts and time. Contact Mr. Brandon Surrency, Assistant Head of School of Institutional Advancement, for more information.

TWO WAYS TO KNOW GOD

by Joshua Russell
(Class of '26)



Chapter 1 in eighth-grade Theology focuses on the two ways to know God. While the two ways are divine and natural revelation, one might ask what these terms mean. Divine revelation is the way God reveals himself through his actions and words in order to form a relationship with his children on earth. This is most fully shown by God sending his Divine Son, Jesus Christ. We also know God through divine revelation by believing in the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Our second way is through natural revelation, which is the knowledge of the existence of God and his basic attributes that can be derived by human reason while reflecting on the creative order. This means that as we study the world, and understand how it works, we can come to know that God does exist.

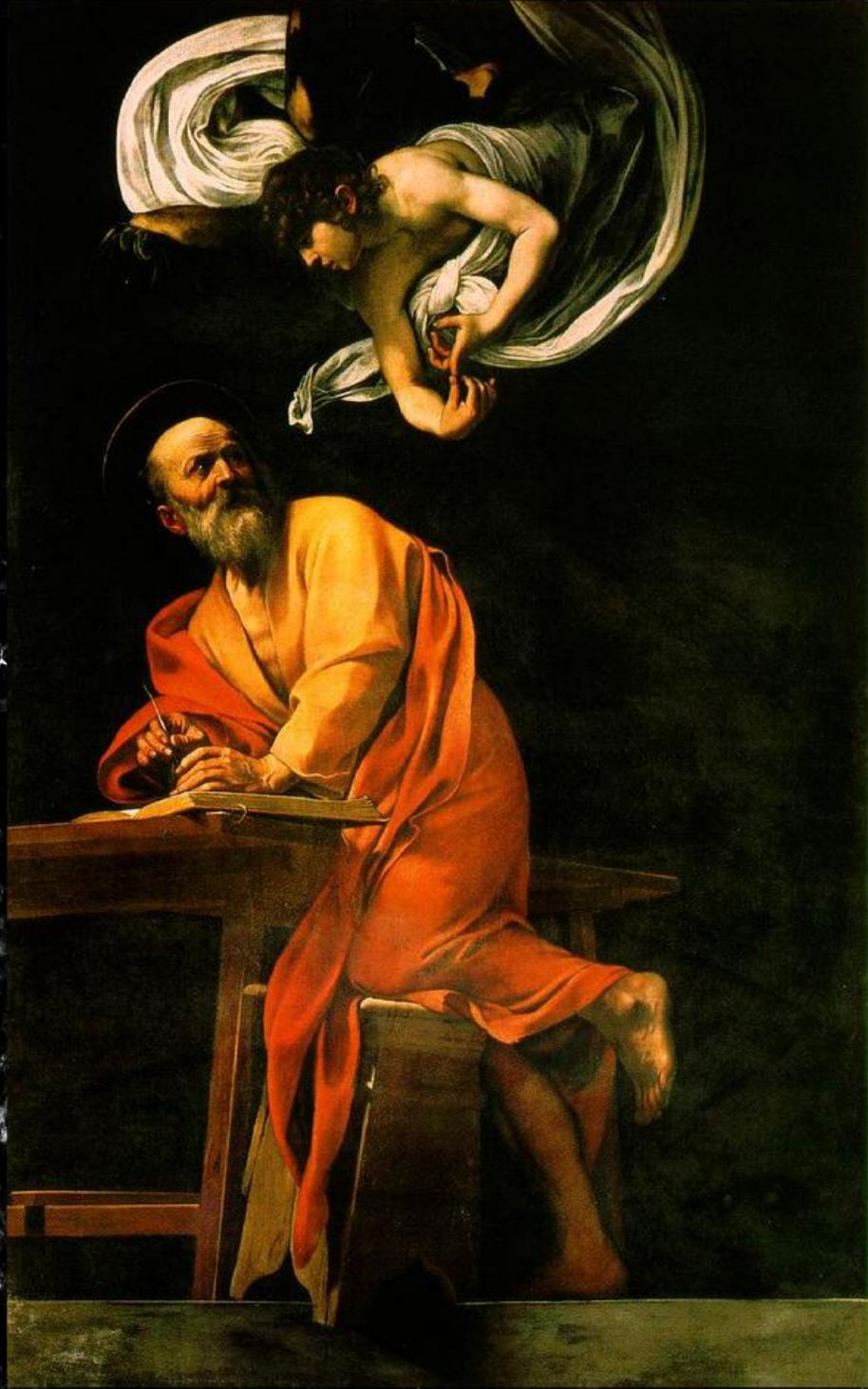
An important person that helps us understand natural revelation is Thomas Aquinas. He came up with five ways to help us find God. These were prime mover, first cause, necessary being, from perfection, and from order.

We studied an example of natural revelation in physical science class. The Law of Conservation of Energy and Mass states that neither mass nor energy can be created nor destroyed. Scientists started to go to their faith to answer this question because they have no explanation except for God. Another important person is Father Georges Lemaître. He came up with the Big Bang Theory.

The concepts in chapter 1 have been very interesting and informative to help us learn about our faith. Chapter 2 and beyond will fill in the rest of the gaps.



The four Evangelists (Gospel writers) have traditionally been depicted in a *tetramorph* ("four elements"). Matthew is depicted as a winged man because he emphasizes Jesus' Incarnation. Mark is depicted as a winged lion because he speaks of Saint John the Baptist who famously lived in the wilderness. Luke is depicted as a winged bull because he speaks of Zechariah's sacrifice to God. John is depicted as an eagle because the eagle is considered to be wise; John's Gospel is much more theological than the others.



Merisi, Michaelangelo (Caravaggio), 1602. *San Matteo e angelo*. [Oil on canvas]. San Luigi dei Francesi. Rome.

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