

## New Award of Light

By Lily Hewitt

The 2025-2026 school year is well underway, and many exciting new developments have been made on campus.

Specifically, Principal Kevin Mullally created a brand new way to honor hardworking students and faculty and staff members who foster community by lifting others up and being positive role models.

This new development is, of course, the new Illuminator Award.

Mullally tied the award to the school mission. "Our mission talks about the communal pursuit of excellence, that we pursue excellence not for our own sake but for others," he said

The award allows Marist students and faculty to nominate any member of the community. So far, the award has truly been embraced by the community. In fact, there have already been 315 nominations, even though the award has only been given six times.

Ninth grader Autumn Grenier voiced his appreciation for the award. "I really like how the Illuminator Award recognizes people who do good in our community," he said.

Originally, Mr. Mullally was inspired to make the award from conversations had with people about what makes Marist School unique, and how we could highlight those features. This is why it is called the Illuminator Award; it helps to showcase the everyday compassion people show to others that is core to the school mission

The nature of the award allows for anyone at Marist to be nominated by anyone else. This approach ensures that the people who deserve to win the award are seen by the panel of administrators, including Mullally, Deans of Students Reilly Campbell, Steve Miller, and Nicole Salkaus, and Assistant Principals Molly Carlin and Kim Premoli.

Winners receive a special treat in the form of Crumbl Cookies or bundt cakes from Nothing Bundt Cakes.

Throughout Term 1 and during the first several weeks of Term 2, the award has been extremely successful. Mullally was especially excited about the enthusiasm surrounding the award. "Our community has really embraced and leaned into the award," he said.

Students and faculty alike love the new award, which allows those of us who selflessly encourage and help others to be recognized for all the good they add to our school atmosphere.

The new Illuminator Award has been a great addition to our school and will certainly become a beloved tradition.



The new bell tower will stand in Alumni Plaza and house a bell that once rang at the Blessed Trinity Shrine Retreat Center. The design of the bell tower is reminiscent of the architectural style associated with the original Marist School campus in downtown Atlanta. (Photo Credit: Digital Library of Georgia)

## Ring in the Bell Tower!

By William Riordan

A new project on campus has the Marist community excited to see its impactful, rippling effects.

Involving President J.D. Childs, Architect J Ryan Duffy, and Blacksmith Billy Riordan, the new bell tower will provide a new tradition in which graduates will ring the bell to signify the end of their high school career.

The bell is originally from the center of the Emmaus Retreat, a weekend special for seniors, and now takes its place in the center of our Alumni Plaza. The building of the bell tower complex will become an immense integration of the senior experience, and will become a custom students will look forward to.

The bell tower will be placed within the center of Alumni

Plaza, similar to the location of the Peace Pole. Greeting all students and staff upon entering through the parking places, the bell tower will stand as a center piece for the plaza and symbolize the changes and new opportunities yet to come.

The construction of the bell tower is currently in the works, and the school community has already given \$134 736 out of \$250,000 in donations aimed to cover the cost of the project. As the funds of this project continue to meet its goal, the architects and contractors are aiming for the graduating class of 2026 to be able to ring the bell once they have received their diplomas. Instead, it represents opportunity, growth, and the freedom to explore.

The primary goal of constructing the bell tower is to establish a new tradition that unites students and staff, which

will repurpose an old symbol of a significant event. Upon the archways of the bell tower, the building will feature the inscription "Sub Mariae Nomine," which can be seen throughout our campus and adds value to a new and exciting endeavor.

I had the upper hand upon gathering the information surrounding the new bell tower due to my father, a blacksmith, working with the architect, J Ryan Duffy, to make the Bell Tower a reality. Asked about the opportunity to help work on the project, Billy Riordan expressed his enthusiasm for the project. "I'm extremely excited to be at the beginning of what will hopefully be a long tradition at Marist," Riordan said.

It seems the bell tower will quickly become an integral part of the Marist tradition and a way to close a chapter of life in order to open new ones.

## Ooh la la, Marist!

By Finley Harris

From pastries to parties, the French Club has brought a taste of France to campus.

This year, French Club introduced something entirely new: the French Fête, or "French Party." Club officers put their ideas into action, from decorations to activities. The result, an interactive celebration featuring dancing, food, and bracelet making.

French Honor Society Co-President Christian Nordstrom voiced his enthusiasm for the new approach. "It was super-duper fun making our own event with our own ideas," Nordstrom said.

Payton Ingham, Co-President of the French Honor Society, shared her views. "It was awesome to design and make the event whatever we wanted it to be," Ingham said.

It's hard to capture all the fun and excitement of the French Club in just one word, but club President Maggie Slovensky did just that. "Vivant!" she exclaimed, meaning lively!

Looking ahead, Department Chair Madame Penn previewed upcoming events celebrating French language and culture. "We will be celebrating La Chandeleur at the end of January," she shared. "It is when people eat crêpes to symbolize the sun."

With every event, French Club not only shares French culture but also brings the campus closer, leaving students and teachers with lasting memories and smiles.

## The Road After Graduation



Contributed

By Alec Devlin

With graduation on the horizon, seniors at Marist are beginning the transition from high school to college, choosing majors that will help pave the way toward their future careers.

Despite these important decisions, many seniors remain uncertain about what they want to do in life. While some feel confident in their chosen paths, others see college as an oppor-

tunity to explore different interests before committing to a future career.

For many seniors, uncertainty stems from the pressure to make a lifelong decision at a young age. With countless career options available and limited real-world experience, choosing the right major can feel overwhelming.

Some students worry about selecting a path that may not align with their interests in the

long run, while others feel influenced by expectations from family or teachers. As a result, many seniors view college as a time to explore rather than immediately commit to a single career.

Some seniors here at Marist know exactly what they want to do in the future. Some students plan to pursue careers in fields such as healthcare, business, or engineering.

Senior Ian Westfall is passionate about pursuing a career in finance. "I plan to major in finance at university next year, which will teach me the skills necessary to pursue my dream career of working for a hedge fund." Westfall is attending Texas Christian University in the fall.

While most seniors tend to major in a business-related field, some opt for a different route.

Senior Bennett Patterson, who is still undecided about where he will attend college, shared that he aspires to be-

come a dentist. "I am interested in pursuing this career because it runs in my family, specifically on my dad's side. My father's dad and uncle are both dentists who started their own dentistry together," Patterson shared.

One example of an inspiring career path is that of business teacher, Dr. Priestley, who previously worked in London for Visa before transitioning into education.

After gaining experience in the global business world, she chose to bring that real-world knowledge into the classroom. Drawing from firsthand experience in finance and international business, Dr. Priestley helps students understand how the concepts they learn in class apply beyond high school. "Learning how to work with data will help you, ultimately, no matter what you choose to do professionally, pretty much every domain within the economy now is dominated by data." Priestley shared.

## Deal or No Deal?

Turn to page 2 where staff writer Claire Dedeaux breaks down the action from the Christmas assembly.

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Photo Credit: Brian Collier

## News From the Court

Staff writer Alec Devlin highlights the boys varsity basketball season on our Sports page.

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Photo Credit: Art of Life Photography

## "The Social Network"

Spencer Patton explores the lessons to be learned from cinema in our Opinion section.

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## Students Give Thanks

By John Elrod

Thanksgiving break came and went quickly this year, but students were still able to find something they were thankful for during the holiday season.

Students from around campus were interviewed about what they were thankful for, and overarching themes emerged from their responses.

Many students found that they were most thankful for the ability to spend time with their families amid a stressful period of the year.

“I’m thankful for my family and friends, and my ability to connect with them over this break,” said senior Rex Nassah. “Even though it’s hard to have family time as I work on my college applications and schoolwork,” Nassah continued, “this week provides me with the space to bond with my family before I go to college next fall.”

Other students took time to show how thankful they were for the staff and environment at our school. “I’m thankful for Mr. Engsborg and how he enhances my math abilities,” said senior Thomas Mastella, demonstrating how teachers and staff at our school are appreciated even outside of the classroom.

Other students voiced their appreciation for our school’s holiday traditions, speaking about their love for the Christmas preparations around campus this time of year.

Members of our student body were also thankful for the friends they have made among the student body over the years. “I’m thankful for my friends and the memories they have given me,” said senior Campbell Caldwell. Other students shared this opinion, stating that Marist has provided them life-long memories and friends that they will always be thankful for.

During Term 2, students have to balance extracurriculars, cold weather, and a barrage of academic work. But one thing is for sure this year – students had plenty to be thankful for during this much-needed, annual Thanksgiving week of rest and relaxation.

## Xmas Assembly Mayhem

By Claire Dedeaux

Holiday spirit was in the air as the Marist community gathered in Young Gym for the annual Christmas assembly on December 19.

After many years as master of ceremonies, Fine Arts Department Chair Eric McNaughton officially passed the torch to Student Council Co-presidents Cece Watson and Ryan Akin, with Akin dressed in his best Santa attire.

To kick things off, the Marist Trio, comprised of Flannery Hipp, Jane Bennett, and Lena McMorrow, opened the assembly with an upbeat western-style Christmas carol complete with cowboy hats and bandanas.

The festivities then continued with an exciting game of “Wrap the Administrator.”

The participating administrators included Principal Kevin Mullally, Dean of Faculty Molly Carlin, Deans of Students Ri-



Photo Credit: Brian Collier

## Attendance at Wed. Mass on the Rise

*Student proves a little effort goes a long way*

By Anna Herrero

On Wednesday mornings, the chapel no longer sits half-empty and silent. Instead, it fills with the familiar faces of students choosing to begin their day gathered in prayer.

While morning Mass has always been offered at school, this year has seen a noticeable rise in student attendance, largely due to the initiative and dedication of seniors.

Last year, Andrew Weigand and Colton Walker began attending weekly morning Mass together with the hope of deepening their faith. “We were sad that we were oftentimes the only students in attendance,” Andrew shared.

What began as a quiet personal commitment soon became an opportunity to invite others into the experience. De-

termined to build community, Andrew reached out individually to more than 100 classmates, discovering that personal invitations were far more effective than announcements alone.

“I have found that directly reaching out to students is the best strategy,” Andrew explained.

“People love that you are thinking of them and are passionate enough to think of them personally.”

With the addition of donuts after Mass, dubbed “Donuts and Jesus,” attendance slowly began to grow.

The impact of those efforts became especially clear in recent weeks. “One Wednesday, I walked into the chapel and stopped in awe,” Andrew said. “A room that was once dim and empty now buzzed with warmth and belonging . . . I

counted over seventy peers patiently waiting for Mass.”

Fr. John has also noticed the change. “Attendance is much better in general this year over previous years,” he said, crediting seniors who encourage participation. He emphasized that morning Mass “gets the day off to a good start” by allowing students to center their day in God.

While some may point to donuts as the draw, Fr. John notes that “they come because friends go,” and because Mass fosters connection.

As more students choose to pause, pray, and gather before the school day begins, Wednesday morning Mass continues to shape a stronger sense of faith and community.

## Rebel Priest for Love

By Anna Nicolaidis-Christofi

When most people think of Valentines Day, they picture roses, chocolates, and hearts all around, but many are unaware of the reason why we celebrate it in the first place.

During the reign of Claudius the Cruel in Rome, the city took part in numerous bloody battles. Claudius sought to build a powerful army that would protect the Romans from harm’s way but was struggling to find men willing to serve.

Claudius concluded that this reluctance was because men were too attached to their families, and, therefore, banned marriage and engagement from Rome altogether. Valentine, a holy priest, defied Claudius’ orders and continued to marry couples in secret.

Upon discovering his Valentine’s actions, Claudius demanded that he be arrested and sentenced to death. On February 14th, around the year 270 CE, Valentine was beheaded before the prefect of Rome. He was officially canonized by Pope Gelasius I in 496 CE.

Unfortunately, in 1969, he was removed from the General Roman Calendar due to the lack of knowledge about him. Even to historians and theologians, something as simple as his name remains a mystery.

Despite these uncertainties about his life, Valentine is still recognized as an official saint and is honored for his bravery.

So, this Valentines Day, whether you go out with friends or stay home curled up watching a rom-com, remember St. Valentine and his nobility to preserve love, even when it was outlawed.

## A Look Back on the Season of Advent



Photo Credit: Brian O’Connor

By Ryan Hewitt

As December starts and Christmas decorations go up, it’s easy to jump straight into the holiday rush. But before Christmas actually arrives, the Church celebrates Advent, a season all about waiting, preparing, and reflecting.

So what exactly is Advent, and why does it matter in our school community?

The word “Advent” comes from the Latin word “adventus,” meaning “coming.” It originated in Spain as a waiting period prior to baptisms performed during Epiphany, January 6. By the time the practice

reached the Roman Empire in the 6th century, the word was associated to the four weeks leading up to Christmas.

According to School Chaplain Fr. John Ulrich, “Advent gives us the opportunity to focus our attention on the upcoming feast of Christmas.” It is a period meant to prepare hearts and minds for the coming of Christ, encouraging all to make room for Him in their hearts.

Here at our school, there are plenty of Advent traditions to prepare for Christmas. Among these is the relatively new “Light Up the Night,” an annual Christmas tree lighting ceremony complete with carols, hot chocolate, and Santa Claus. The Marist chapel, decorated in purple for the season, also houses a traditional Advent wreath with four candles representing hope, peace, joy, and love.

The Marist priests also offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation to the entire school community during Advent, inviting reflection and renewal and allowing everyone to open their hearts in preparation for the birth of Christ.

Fr. Ulrich also emphasized the importance of the two-week school holidays students enjoy every December. “It is not winter break for us; it’s Christmas break,” he said.

Advent reminds us that this season is not only about time off or packed schedules. It is about preparing our hearts for something meaningful.

In a world that pushes constant activity and commercialization, Advent challenges us to slow down and refocus on the true purpose of Christmas.

ley Campbell, Stephen Miller, and Nicole Salkaus, and Dean of Academics Kim Premoli.

Two students from each grade were chosen to wrap the administrator assigned to their grade from head to toe in Christmas paper.

Chaos ensued as the students rapidly got to work. The eighth graders quickly pulled ahead with the seniors close behind. For a brief moment, the eighth graders thought they had won; however, they were missing a bow on top of their administrator’s head. The seniors then swooped in and stole the victory.

Next up, Mullally revealed the December Illuminator Award winners. These award recipients are individuals who bring light to the Marist community and inspire others through kindness, positivity, and encouragement.

The Foundation recipient was eighth grader Emmy Ingham. Ninth grader Marya Trotman received the award at the high school level. Lastly, representing the faculty was Technical Director Anna Lee Lanning, who works tirelessly as part of the Fine Arts Department.

To add to the excitement, Mullally announced an Illuminator Day out of uniform for

January 6, 2026.

The Christmas fun continued with two rounds of another game called “Let’s Make a Deal.”

Students from each grade were chosen by student council to participate. Santa Akin then offered each contestant a deal.

One person each grade could choose to accept an offer from Santa or a wrapped present.

In round one, not a single person took Ryan’s offer. The presents ranged from seventh grader Elsie Fitzgerald winning a JBL speaker to senior Kalib Kaham winning a sound box that makes goat noises.

Round two included even more ridiculous presents, including a free car, an inflatable pickle, a bacon air freshener, and a pair of Mullally’s socks.

The game concluded with the senior class selecting a mystery box or the choice to end the assembly early. To nobody’s surprise, the seniors picked to end the assembly early and students were quickly dismissed for Christmas break.

Overall, the Christmas assembly brought laughter, competition, and cheer, sending the our school community into winter break full of holiday spirit.

# Boys V B-ball Off to Great Start

By Alec Devlin

With winter having arrived, the varsity boys' basketball team tips off the new season with renewed confidence, led by seasoned veterans and rising underclassmen.

The team finished last year with a record of 21-9, losing to North Oconee in the Sweet 16 round of the playoffs. The team lost five seniors, including Owen Ritger, who is now playing at Furman. A new head coach is now leading the War Eagles, Reilly Campbell.

Before joining Marist, Campbell served as a varsity coach and athletic director at Cardinal Newman High School in West Palm Beach, Florida. In 2023, Cardinal Newman went 23-6, and Campbell led the team to its first district championship in eight years.

Although it is still early in the season, the team has demonstrated considerable potential under Campbell's leadership. The team is currently 5-1 and has a 3-0 record in region play. They have picked up wins over Galloway, Clarkston, Dunwoody, North Springs, and Druid Hills. They lost a tough game to Mount Vernon at the Buckhead Hoops Festival hosted at Holy Innocents.

With the football season still in action, the basketball team's active roster only has eight players, with five sitting out due to football. Because of this, the team has turned to freshman point guard Bryce Fedor to play some crucial minutes early on in the season.

Playing under Coach Campbell's leadership has been different than years prior. "Playing under Coach Campbell has been very rewarding. We keep improving each week, and we are definitely well-conditioned from his practices," shared Ryland Hoover, a senior forward on the team.

The goals for the Marist basketball program are higher than ever under the new coaching staff. According to Ryland, "We have a lot of work still left to do; we are striving each day to make sure we can deliver a region title and a state championship." Jay Walsh is another senior on the team, currently averaging about twenty-five points per game. "We want to win the region, especially winning against Pius both times we play them," Walsh stated.

The student fans also have great expectations for this year's basketball team. Student fan Ryan Wurst shared, "I expect big wins from the team this year under the new coaching staff."

The team has a tough road ahead with about 20 games left to play, including two games against talented rival St. Pius X and a trip down to Florida over Christmas break. We will have to wait and see how the rest of the season plays out.



Photo Credit: Brian Collier

# Swim & Dive Comes to an End

By Genevieve D'Amore

Swimming is one of the few sports that focuses on individual competition while building friendships on a team. The Marist swim teams have won multiple state championships. In recent years, the girls have been state champions in both 2022 and 2025.

The boys have been champions in 2020, 2021, and 2022. In fact, our boys swim team is ranked eighth, and the girls' team is ranked second in the state of Georgia! Right now, the boys' record is 3-2, while the girls' is 4-1. These winning teams deserve lots of school support.

The swim season starts in the fall or winter with practices every Monday through Saturday from 4 to 6:30 pm. People might be surprised to learn that swim teams usually start their practices either on the football field or in the weight room. For example, swim teams often do stretching and cardio and work on their core. In the weight room, they build up their strength for their strokes and starts.

For our team at Marist, freshman swim team member Lucy Thomas explains how swimming has helped connect her to other students. "My experience on the Marist JV and Varsity team has been an amazing way to connect with older peers. The Marist swim team has also allowed me to become closer to others as we grow and train on the team," she said.

A swimmer since seventh grade, Thomas noticed the differences between the middle school and JV teams. "One difference between the middle school team and the Marist JV

and Varsity team is longer practice lengths, later practices, and dryland at the start of practice," she said.

The swimmers' practices typically consist of three parts: a warm-up, a main set, and a cool-down. Senior swim captain Andrew Wiegand explains what the swimmers do. "For the swimming portion, there is usually a 15-minute warmup, then some easier full workout sets that could involve using equipment and possibly a pull or kick set, followed by at least one main set, where we get most of the distance and hard work for the practice in. Then, we will always end with a cool down," he said.

Diving is also a very important part of the swim team and does not get nearly as much attention and recognition as it deserves.

Merritt Grassi, a senior on the dive team, explains how important the team really is. "On announcements, it will often say an upcoming swim meet or the swim team, and the dive team will not be mentioned. This can be hard at times as we each play a contributing role in the overall score of the team, and in some instances have been the reason for winning local or state meets," she said.

Diving practices are usually very different from the regular swim team practices.

Grassi explained what they regularly do for their practices. "Diving practices are normally around two hours Monday - Friday. If we have a meet the next day, then that practice, we will normally do between two and four of each of the six dives we will compete at the meet the next day. If we don't have a

meet the next day, then we will usually work on two or three of the dive groups out of the five," she said.

Grassi also explained that the divers warm up before practice differently from the swimmers. "Before each practice, we will stretch for about 15 minutes and then warm up on the board with front jumps and front rainbow dives," she said.

Just like swimming, the divers have different dives they can select for competitions.

Grassi listed all the different kinds of dives they are able to do at Marist. "There are five groups of dives: fronts, backs, inwards, reverses, and twisters.

For Marist, on a one-meter diving board, the list consists of one and a half tuck or pike, double tuck, back one and a half tuck or pike, inward one and a half tuck, reverse dive tuck or pike, or reverse one and a half tuck, and front full twist, front one and a half full twist, back one and a half full twist, or back one and a half," she said.

Just like the swim team, the divers were amazingly successful this year. The girls' record so far is 5-0 while the boys' is 4-1. In recent years, both the girls and the boys diving teams won the Metro Championships in 2025. In 2021, the boys earned a region title.

Grassi goes on and explains how much she enjoys being on the dive team. "I have loved being a diver during my time at Marist. The team is very close, and we have fun at all the practices," she said.

On February 3, the team will compete at the GHSA 4A State Championship at Georgia Tech for another state title and end their season.

# Grade 9 Boys B-ball Takes to the Court

By Harris Cope

Marist ninth grade basketball is off to a flaming start in the 2025-26 season.

With four decisive victories over Dunwoody, Milton, North Springs, and Chamblee, this team is setting our school's athletics standard throughout Georgia high school basketball.

Drew Santa, a player on the basketball team, believes that this particular team has an advantage over their competition. "Everyone on our team is capable of playing an entire game if we need them to and the running is a direct correlation of this," Santa said. He believes that this hot start was ready to come to this team as they have been hard at work in practice with not only playing basketball but also conditioning.

Throughout the start of the season and even before the season officially started, this team has been getting in great basketball shape and will continue to do so.

Santa has one simple rule for continuing this recent success. "Win every game," Santa said. This team believes that they can go undefeated this year and, as of right now, it is believable with their impressively strong start.

James Economos, another player on the team, agreed with Drew. "Win," Economos said.

This team has pride, power, grit, and determination; exactly what a successful Marist athletics team has. They have every right to believe that they can go undefeated this year.

# Flag on Play? Not for this Team



Photo Credit: Art of Life Photography

By Katie Nussbaum

Only their second season, and they're already breaking records, stealing flags, and lighting up the scoreboard.

Throughout the season, our War Eagles had an impressive winning record and made it to the elite eight after working their way to the top by defeating

many talented teams in a series of well-fought games.

From fast-paced offensive drives to lockdown defensive stands, the team consistently proved it could compete at a high level.

Flag football requires speed, strategy, and teamwork, and the War Eagles demonstrat-

ed all three. On offense, quick passes, sharp routes, and strong quarterback play led to frequent touchdowns, keeping fans on their feet each game.

Defensively, the team focused on communication and anticipation, successfully pulling flags, forcing turnovers, and shutting down opposing offenses.

Even with this incredible season, the team not only thrived in their athletic abilities but also in their team friendship and cooperation. With each game, the girls grew closer, learning how to trust one another and work together under pressure.

All who attended a game could not deny the fun, positive, and upbeat environment that the team reflected through their strong relationships and enthusiasm on the sidelines. The team bonded and came together, allowing them to gain

momentum as the season progressed and face tougher competition with confidence.

Team member Grace Warren, a junior on the varsity team, shared her view of the season. "It was an amazing opportunity to meet new people and make the best of friends, all while working hard and scoring some touchdowns," Warren said.

Other team members described the team as having "a bond like no other they had seen before" and "a family-like atmosphere that pushed everyone to play their best."

With determination, teamwork, and passion for the game, our War Eagles have proven that the new flag football program is thriving, and how this season is only the start.

Photo Credit: Brian Collier



## The Real Cost of Success

By Spencer Patton

“You don’t get to 500 million friends without making a few enemies.”

David Fincher’s 2010 film, *The Social Network*, remains one of the most important and influential films of the twenty-first century. Throughout the film, we see how a young Mark Zuckerberg navigates a turbulent journey of friendship, sacrifice, and betrayal.

To this day, the film is still one of the most realistic depictions of the price of success and the consequential decisions one must make to achieve it. Ultimately, the film argues that ambition often comes at the cost of loyalty, transforming friendship into betrayal in the pursuit of success.

From its opening moments, *The Social Network* establishes an atmosphere of isolation and competition. Set within the prestigious atmosphere of Harvard University, the film presents a world driven by status and achievement rather than genuine connection.

Fincher’s dark and moody cinematography, combined with the masterfully crafted score by Trent Reznor and Atticus Ross, creates a tension that accentuates the strained relationships we encounter throughout the film.

But what really sets this film apart for me is the script by Aaron Sorkin. Sorkin’s dialogue has a mesmerizing quality that keeps the viewer glued to every conversation. With standout performances from actors Jesse Eisenberg, Andrew Garfield, and Armie Hammer, Sorkin’s script comes to life in a way that feels authentic to the true story it’s based on.

The result is a film that captures your imagination in the opening scene and keeps it until the closing credits.

The central theme of the film is how ambition to succeed and achieve status can cause one to lose sight of what’s important in life, even to the extent of losing one’s self. The film’s protagonist, Mark Zuckerberg, experiences this dislocation on many levels throughout the story.

A conversation around Mark’s desire to belong to an exclusive club leads to his girlfriend breaking up with him. This breakup is the catalyst for him starting what will ultimately be Facebook. But along the way his relationship with his best friend, Eduardo Saverin, is also heavily tested.

Throughout the film, we see the direct correlation between the rise of Facebook and the breakdown of Mark’s most valued relationships. Ultimately, you get the sense that Mark’s relationship with himself, and his own identity, comes into question.

It’s hard to imagine that when David Fincher was first asked to consider directing *The Social Network*, he wasn’t sure if he was right for the project. Little did he know he was about to make one of the best films of his career.

## Why You Should Join More Clubs

By Harris Cope

With around 84 clubs to offer, school clubs are a great way to become involved in the Marist community. Whether you are interested in student government or academic competitions, there is a wide variety of options to choose from. Being involved in a community is not only something that tightens relationships but also creates new relationships. The more involved you are in a community, the better off the community is.

Membership in a club provides you with many benefits. Clubs can improve social skills, mental health, and your overall wellbeing. Joining a club gives you one sense of meaning and value to contribute to something bigger than themselves.

Spanish Club is a fun club that the Marist community has to offer. From block parties to kickoff events, this club cer-

tainly is something to look forward to every once in a while throughout the school year.

A fun event that almost all members love going to is the annual block party. Speight Knowles shared his favorite part of Spanish club and the block party. “Free food,” he said. If you like free, delicious, Hispanic food, you can attend the annual block party where you can also learn about all of the amazing Hispanic cultures

There are many other fun aspects of other clubs at Marist, too. Mrs. Urrea, a co-moderator of Spanish club and a Spanish teacher, highlights the benefits of being a member of a club like Spanish club. “Joining a club allows students to engage with a group of students who share a similar passion,” she said.

Therefore, club membership can positively affect your mental health as you can create strong relationships with people

with similar interests.

Club membership not only benefits one’s self but it also can help you to be a part of something bigger than yourself. People who are members of clubs can contribute to meaningful projects in one way or another.

Mrs. Urrea describes an example of a time when a club made a lasting impact on someone else. “We just wrapped up a service project in which we collected over 1,500 books for the students at Berkley Lake Elementary School,” she exclaimed. This truly draws light towards the positive effects that being a part of a club brings to a community.

Not all clubs have to be massive commitments. Finding a club that meets your personal participation requirements can allow you to find something you are passionate about.

Joining multiple clubs is also

a great way to become even more involved. If you have a good deal of extra time on your hands on Fridays during activity period, you should definitely consider joining another or more clubs.

The club you join doesn’t have to be Spanish club, but it is a great recommendation to do so because it has brought lots of great experiences to many students at Marist. However, finding a club at Marist that offers something you are interested in and joining that specific club, can be one of the best decisions you can make in your entire high school experience.

So yes, if you see a club you think you might be interested in, go join that club; it might bestow you with many life changing experiences that you will carry with yourself for the rest of your life.

## Tapping into the Essence of Marist

By Luke Childs

A student leaves AP European History having just discussed Newton, Kepler, and the Scientific Revolution. Moments later, they walk into Honors Physics, where similar ideas arise, not as historical turning points but as equations governing motion and force.

Newton’s Principia shifts from a historical reference and text to an active tool.

The humanities at our school are essential and vibrant yet often tucked away. They offer students a home for those searching for meaning and voice, and a guide for ethical, critical, and creative thinking.

This editorial is not an argument against STEM. Rather, it is a recognition that empirical evidence can explain how the world works, but the humanities explore why it matters: its values, ethics, culture, and consequences.

I aim to illuminate and celebrate the humanities at our school as a foundation that shapes students every day.

The Rapier, Marist’s literary magazine, highlights love, passion, and dedication through the arts. The Blue & Gold newspaper informs students through storytelling and the ins and outs of real publication.

A student-driven Film Club becomes a space to interpret visual narratives through a common love of cinema. Philosophy Club invites students to

question ideas that inhabit and grow in one’s mind but have not yet been articulated or spoken into the world.

Creative Writing class offers freedom to experiment with voice through poetry, fiction, and songwriting.

Even Latin taps into something more with students leading events like Mount Vesuvius and the Read-a-Thon. It is not simply a language class but a study of history and culture, and an acknowledgment of the thinkers and beliefs that are core and foundational to the Western world.

Across these spaces, students find belonging. They learn how to interpret and express ideas that are still forming.

This overlooked aspect of the humanities is highlighted by AP Euro teacher Armand Bodrug. “Students enrolled in this class usually develop into a tight community of learners,” Bodrug said. The communal learning shapes not only the individual but also their peers, leading to further communal growth.

The humanities do not stop at the humanities.

The transition from AP Euro to Honors Physics is not accidental. As teachers emphasize, Marist intentionally cultivates conceptual thinkers, students who understand not just formulas but beginnings and origins.

This design is perhaps most visible in AmEx. Taught by Mike Burns and Nicolas Hoffman over consecutive periods,

the course blends American literature and history while expanding into film, art, music, food, current events, and pop culture.

Students take annual trips to Montgomery’s Legacy Museum and the National Memorial for Peace and Justice. Burns views the class as a stepping stone. “Students discover something that resonates with them and makes them want to learn more and think deeper,” he said.

The combination of different mediums in AmEx is not knowledge for the sake of knowledge but an intentional, gained understanding of complexity and how these understandings can be used to benefit and further society.

For students who feel “not STEM enough,” the humanities provide affirmation that intelligence is not singular. They teach students how to think, not what to think.

In a world increasingly driven by speed and surface-level consumption, this deeper mode of thinking is endangered. Reading becomes an afterthought. Libraries are viewed as relics rather than homes of current, available knowledge. Devices devour. Ideas are formed in fifteen-second clips rather than through sustained inquiry. AI accelerates production and efficiency but risks dulling critical thinking.

AP Literature teacher Shannon Hipp underscores an important distinction. “So much

about what our culture seems to value right now is quick, easy, productive learning over slow, challenging thinking. But the thing is: the slow, challenging thinking is in the end – if you make time for it – super rewarding,” Hipp explained.

It is precisely deep reading and reflective thinking, sitting with a poem, debating an interpretation, and listening deeply during Harkness discussions, that lead to fruitful learning.

The humanities outlets, such as AP European History, Philosophy Club, The Rapier, and AmEx, resist this erosion. Discussion becomes the work. Inquiry into complex topics, allowing new ideas to surface, serves as the core of learning and helps enhance the material encountered in classes like AP Lang, Creative Writing, AP Literature, and the wide range of religion classes.

The humanities are not hidden at Marist. They are simply waiting to be noticed, woven throughout the school.

STEM is noble and important but the humanities, lingering and nourishing, are the core marrow needed to sustain life. To recognize them is not to look backward but to ensure the continued growth of general and necessary knowledge.