

SAVIO NOW

October 2024



SAVIO
CLERGY ON CAMPUS:
Fr. Roopesh & Fr. Lijo
serving at Savio

page 8

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Dear Savio Family and Friends,

We are off to a great start to the 2024-2025 school year and this magazine will share several highlights and things to know. As with any quarterly publication, the process of preparing articles and discerning highlights is a challenge as there are so many items from which to choose. We hope that you find something of interest, awareness, and connection in this edition. As always, if you have questions, want clarity, or have your curiosity aroused, please reach out and let us know what is on your mind and in your heart.

This is an exciting year for our school as we celebrate the 15-year journey that got us to this point and update our strategic planning for the next quarter century. The St. Dominic Savio Board of Advisors, Principal Psencik, and I have been working on the target areas of focus over the summer and will be sharing these areas, progress made, and next steps moving forward in upcoming magazines and via the school website. Please look for those items and support our efforts as we work to build not only the future of this school, but also the Kingdom of God by serving His children here.

Of course, we need your prayers along with your generosity as we build resources for this year and for years to come. The Annual Fund and Soiree' are two upcoming opportunities that provide much-needed assistance. We also will have some new opportunities during the year to gather as a community, share stories, and discuss upcoming projects for our school campus.

This year, I personally invite you, your loved ones, and friends of St. Dominic Savio, who want to establish a legacy gift, to reach out to me directly. I would love to hear your story, share ours, and work together to create a way to ensure, guarantee, and establish a gift that will impact so many, for so many years. The establishment of a St. Dominic Savio Endowment this year will, over time, generate a sustainable funding source to support tuition assistance for decades.

Respect the past, celebrate the present, and build the future. A mantra with meaning, sincerity, and action. May this year of remembrance, celebration, and forward leaning be filled with engagement, empowerment, and evangelization. God's plan, in God's time, calls us to trust in Him as we serve His children.

Thank you, God bless you and let us have a great school year!



TIM CULLEN | PRESIDENT





DID YOU KNOW?

... THAT SAVIO HAS ADDED ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE CLERGY AS AN ALUMNI?

This summer, Fr. Andrew Smith was ordained in The Diocese of Tyler. His first assignment is to the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Tyler. Congratulations to him and his family! Please keep Fr. Smith in your prayers.

... THAT SAVIO IS PREPARING TO UPGRADE THE BALLFIELDS?

We are preparing to publish and receive bids for running electrical services to the ballfields to set the stage for future lighting and other upgrades. This is the first construction effort in over 10 years. A positive step in the right direction.

... THAT NOMINATIONS ARE OPENING SOON?

We will again be accepting nominations for our Savio Athletic Hall of Fame and Savio Heritage Award Class of 2025 later this fall. The inaugural group for these distinguished awards were enshrined last year and we are looking forward to adding to the list this spring. Please check our website for more details in November.



CLASS LEADERS

Head Boy, Head Girl Tasked with Building Community

From organizing house events, house points, family time, or pep rallies, the Head Boy and Head Girl are always doing something at Savio to build up the community.

After asking the Head Boy, Collin Uebersax, why he applied to the position, he answered that throughout his years at Savio he was a leader in his class and always encouraged school spirit to his peers. So, he prayed about it and now as Head Boy continues to try his best to build the community and lift school spirit because he loves Savio so much. Our Head Girl, Emma Leland, said she was drawn to apply because she was in House Council as a prefect her junior year, loved the community and wanted to have her hand in what goes on at Savio.

Leading the school comes with a lot of responsibilities such as having to work with both students and admin, organize house events, points, pep rallies, international week, and always being a role model. Sometimes these tasks can be overwhelming or in Collin's words "more than expected" but within the first few weeks of school, both Collin and Emma were able to take this leadership in stride. Furthermore, both Head Boy and Head Girl have goals to build up the community of Savio. Emma said her goal is to "make them [Savio students] feel comfortable so they can immerse [themselves] into community and to stay organized [as house council] when it's hectic". Similarly, Collin said his goal is to "bring more people to love Savio, and not be afraid to go out and do house competitions and be hype for house competitions and family."

As seniors, both the Head Boy and Head Girl are excited for the future and life past Savio. Collin hopes to join the core and with his experience as Head Boy, eventually be selected to be a Yell Leader at his dream



college Texas A&M University. Emma hopes to take her experience from Savio and being Head Girl to pursue a career in the medical field as a Dermatologist with a minor in Communications, working with and around many people.

One thing you'll notice about Head Girl and Head boy is that they truly care about everyone at Savio and that their experience is worth it and meaningful. They value working alongside the student body, not above them. Emma and Collin want Savio to be like a second home where students have fun and grow in community with each other.

Written by Marissa Lopez



Annual Family BBQ brings crowds, fun

Hundreds of Savio families attended the 3rd annual Family BBQ this year, hosted by the Admissions Office on August 18.

The family tradition started in recognition of St. Dominic Savio's parents and volunteers who do so much for our school all year long.

"There's nothing better than a family gathering and Savio's annual Family Reunion BBQ didn't disappoint!" said Savio Admissions Director Holly Bologna. "What I love is that there was something for every member of the family: children, parents, and grandparents."

Whether they played the water balloon toss, bingo, cornhole, or simply enjoyed the delicious food, everyone had a great time.

This event was also a wonderful way for the freshmen families to get to know each other and welcome any new students to the Savio family.



BY THE NUMBERS

80 POUNDS OF CHARCOAL	266 BAGS OF CHIPS
128 BURGERS	240 HOT DOGS
560 WATER BOTTLES	240 BROWNIE BITES

1 Great night with Savio friends and families!





Moment of Grace

All-School Eucharistic Procession Begins the Year

The most beautiful sight occurred at St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School on Friday, August 16, with an all-school Eucharistic Procession and school blessing organized by Dominican Sisters Mary Mother of the Eucharist, Sister Mary Esther Downey, OP, and Savio's Director of Formation and Ministry Mr. Gian Gamboa, along with the TIM Team.

Father Lijo Koodathinal Thomas, OSH, Savio's Chaplain and Parochial Vicar at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, began the procession from the school's chapel. Students prayed the rosary over the loudspeaker as the Monstrance made its way around the school visiting every classroom and each office of the faculty and staff.

"What a moment of grace for the whole Savio community, to have Jesus Himself blessing every student, every adult, and every part of our campus," said Sister Mary Esther Downey. "I was so impressed by the reverence of our students as they prayed the rosary, knelt before our Lord as He passed through the hallway and visited their classrooms, and adored Him together in the gym."

Following the Eucharistic Procession all students met in the gym for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

"I hope this becomes an annual event. What better way to begin a year together than with our eyes fixed on Jesus?" Sister added.



America in One Room

Savio Student Chosen for Inaugural National Program

When you see senior Michael Thadikaran in the hallways of St. Dominic Savio this year, be sure to extend congratulations to him for his work over the summer with America in One Room: The Youth Vote in Washington, D.C.

The inaugural America in One Room: The Youth Vote gathered a scientific and nationally representative sample of over 500 young Americans in our nation's capital from July 19-22, 2024, from a variety of geographic, demographic, socioeconomic, cultural, and ideological backgrounds. Over four days, students:

- Considered key policy issues facing the country involving the environment, health care, economic issues, and democracy and elections.
- Deliberated in small groups in a thoughtful, civil, and substantive fashion.
- Had townhall discussions with balanced groups of policy experts.
- Completed pre- and post-program surveys on policy attitudes and views on key civic health indicators, including trust in others, tolerance for diverse perspectives, and belief in democracy.
- Students returned home as Civic Ambassadors equipped to hold their own deliberations and gather data on youth perspectives nationwide.

“We had very balanced discussions on topics that offered me a clear understanding of the positions of both sides of topics such as changing the legal voting age and increasing the minimum wage,” said Thadikaran.

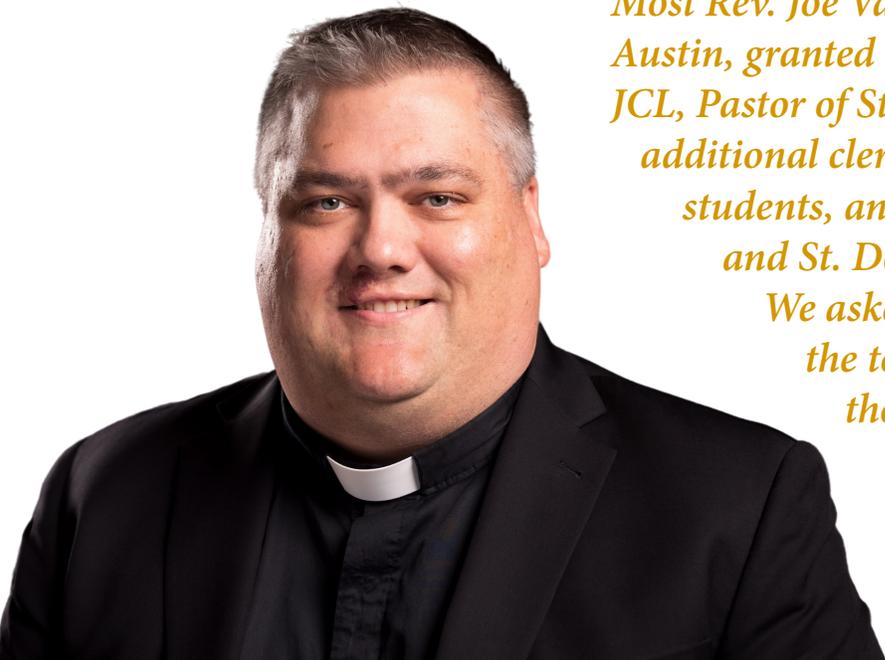
He added that the focus of the four days was not on a certain political party as much as on how the discussion topics affect people from their regions and environments.





Five Minutes with Fr. Tom

Creative solutions for clergy on campus



Most Rev. Joe Vasquez, Bishop of the Diocese of Austin, granted a request by Father Tom Reitmeyer, JCL, Pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, for additional clergy to be made available for faculty, students, and staff of Holy Family Catholic School and St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School.

We asked Father Tom for his perspective on the topic with a few questions recently, and those answers will be made available in this edition, as well as the upcoming December edition of this magazine.



How does the process work for a school to request clergy from the Bishop?

Father Tom: Our Diocese has 19 Catholic Schools. Of those, fourteen are parish schools who are under the care of their pastor (and parochial vicar at some parishes). Two of the schools are independent schools, one of which contracts with two retired priests for chaplaincy services. Holy Family, St. Dominic Savio, and St. Juan Diego are diocesan schools. The pastoral care of these schools is the responsibility of our Bishop, Most Rev. Joe Vásquez. While St. Dominic Savio had a full-time chaplain in its early years, there have not been enough priests available to provide for all our needs in the diocese and assign a full-time chaplain to the schools.

I can assure you that the request for chaplains in our schools has not fallen on deaf ears. Our bishop cares deeply about our schools, and I know it has been difficult for him to be in a position where he could not dedicate a full-time priest to our schools. At the beginning of the summer, Bishop Vásquez not only agreed to assign a third priest to St. Vincent de Paul to assist me in my duties here at the parish and allow us to provide chaplaincy services to the schools, but he also helped form an agreement between priests at St. Ignatius Martyr Catholic Church in South Austin to provide chaplain services for St. Juan Diego Catholic High School as well.

The best thing we can do to ensure a strong presence of clergy and consecrated religious both now and in the future, is to pray for more vocations for our diocese and from our diocese. I am convinced that God is calling some of our students to a vocation to the priesthood or consecrated life. We need to work together to build a culture so that our students respond generously to this call and our parents support them in pursuing their vocation.

How did you assist us in this process?

Father Tom: Other than asking Bishop Vásquez and providing a creative solution, not much. I would rather all the credit and gratitude go to Bishop Vásquez for showing his commitment to our schools. It may not be where we want to be in the future, but it is a great first step in the right direction. I hope our parents will share their gratitude with Bishop Vásquez. He cares deeply about our schools, students, families, faculty, and staff.



Opposite: Fr. Lijo talks with students before class begins. Top: Fr. Lijo and Fr. Roopesh visit a theology class of Mr. Williams.

Above: Fr. Roopesh talks with students in a theology class.

Positivity Project

New initiative seeks to build a strong school culture

The Positivity Project, or P2, is a new initiative this year at St. Dominic Savio seeking to continue to build a strong school culture. The goals of the program are:

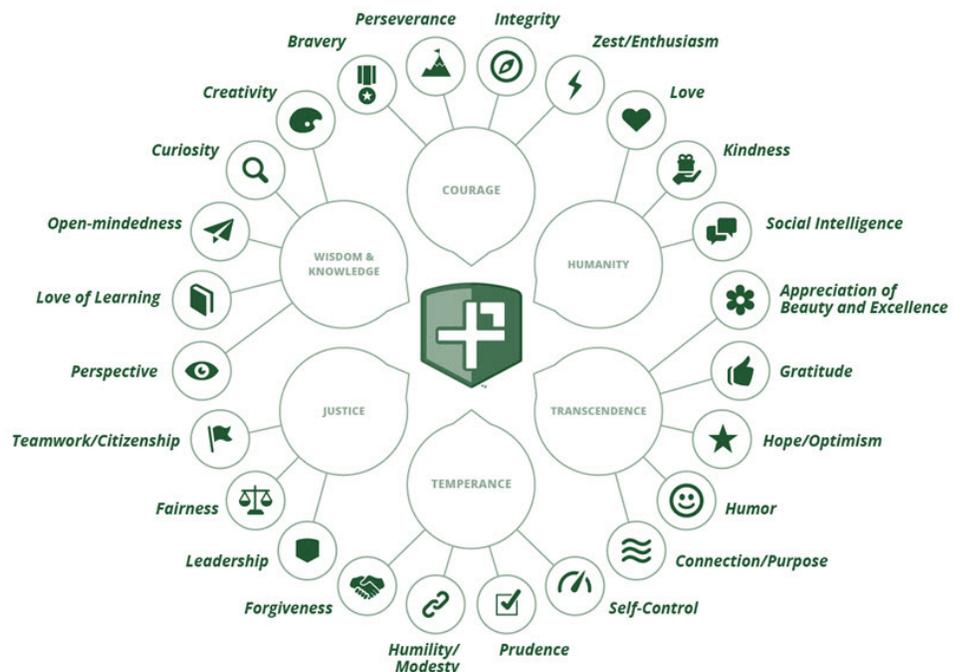
- To help students build positive relationships with one another, to combat the rising number of young people who are experiencing loneliness
- To help students become more self-confident and self-aware through the building of 24 character strengths which are based on positivity psychology
- To help our students have an “Other People Mindset” to see how their words and actions affect others
- To support students' mental well-being through giving them the skills to manage stress and anxiety, resolve conflicts, and manage their emotions

These goals are accomplished through focusing on the aspects of the program. Three to four times a week, depending on the weekly schedule, students spend 10 minutes a day focusing on one of the character strengths, other people mindsets, or skills. The lessons involve videos, discussions, journaling, and other activities.

To learn more about the Positivity Project, visit their website at posproject.org.



The Other People Mindset





EAGLE UPDATES

The athletic department is in full swing with our fall sports. Our coaches have been coaching up our student-athletes and getting them prepared for our new TAPPS 6A district schedule. We look forward to the continued success in all of our programs, as we compete for district and state titles.

VOLLEYBALL

Volleyball started the season by traveling to the TAPPS Spikedown tourney in Ft. Worth. We had a very good showing by both our Varsity and JV Gold teams. They continue to work hard every week for competition and prepare for district play. We have seen some great plays by all three of our teams to start this season with our JV Blue team finishing second at the Holland tournament. We are excited to get into district play and compete.



FOOTBALL

Our football team has competed very well and is battling each and every week. Our coaching staff is doing a terrific job getting them prepared each week for competition. The team has shown great things throughout the first part of the season, with big plays on both sides of the ball. As we head into district play, we look for our Eagles to show our new district that we are here and ready for any opponent.



CROSS COUNTRY

Cross Country has started its season very strong competing in multiple meets thus far. All four of our teams have brought home hardware this season. Both girls' and boys' teams along with the coaches are preparing consistently for competition on the road to state.

XC photo credit Johanna Laya

Football photo credit Marissa Lopez



SAVIO'S INAGURAL WEEK OF GIVING



In an effort to secure our Eagle Fund giving early in the year, St. Dominic Savio is holding its first Week of Giving October 7-11, 2024. This event focuses on concentrated outreach and marketing efforts to engage all families and current donors to support the school. We invite you to contribute or pledge a gift to our Eagle Fund, which supports the operating budget and helps us fund the GAP that exists between what a student pays in tuition and what it actually costs to educate each student.

The Eagle Fund is crucial for financing important items that elevate the educational experience of EVERY Savio student. This includes such areas as technology and other educational resources and programs, faith formation and community outreach activities, teacher professional development and salaries, athletics, and fine arts programs to name a few.

Prayerfully consider how you can support Savio students and make a pledge today! We look forward to sharing our results in the next edition of Savio Now in December!

PLEDGE OR GIVE TODAY!
OCTOBER 7-11, 2024



**WE ARE
STRONGER
TOGETHER!**



SCAN TO GIVE

OR VISIT [TINYURL.COM/EAGLEFUND2024](https://tinyurl.com/eaglefund2024)

THE SAVIO DIFFERENCE

Savio alumna Makes Final Vows as Dominican



“Just keep praying – truth is a goal for your life.”

Sr. Maria Reginald, Savio '14



During Sister Maria Reginald’s four years at St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School from 2010-2014, she can look back now and see the hand of God at work.

In freshman Theology with Father Lui, the class watched a video of Oprah Winfrey interviewing the Foundresses of the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist.

“This was when I noticed something awaken in me,” said Sister Maria Reginald, from her California Priory in June, one month before making her final vows on Thursday, July 25, at Christ the King Catholic Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

She says the feelings of becoming closer to God were on the rise as she attended a Steubenville Retreat the summer before sophomore year, but having a chapel on campus was what made the difference during that school year.

“I would go into the chapel before meeting up with my friends and recharge,” Sister recalled. “I had timed it so that I could go to the chapel, then meet them before they even knew I was gone.”

It was a weekly Mass on a random Wednesday that Sister cites as a God moment that could even be seen in her by others.

“Father McMaster was celebrating Mass in the gym, but I really wasn’t in a prayerful mode having just come from another class,” said Sister. “During the homily, Father mentioned that God is not outdone by generosity. For some reason, that filled me with joy.”

When Sister went to her next class the teacher asked her to say a prayer since she looked “high on Jesus!” It occurred to her that the joy she was carrying from the Mass was visible to others.

From the beginning of Sister Maria Reginald’s high school career St. Dominic Savio High School had been a working road map for where she is today. Following her final vows on July 25, Sister returned to the Dominican Sisters of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist serving at JSerra High School in San Juan Capistrano, California, to teach Algebra I and Algebra II.

Sister offers words of encouragement to the St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School students of today.

“Just keep praying – truth is a goal for your life.”



If you are a St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School Alumnus and would like to be featured in our Savio Now! magazine, let us know at advancement@saviochs.org.

UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 15-16 Senior Retreat at Eagle Wings
Session, Student Led Conferences (half day), SPA Parent Social

OCTOBER 16 PSAT, Fall Concert
OCTOBER 21-25 Homecoming Week

OCTOBER 18 Parent Information
OCTOBER 26 Homecoming Dance

Scan to see more events on the school calendar:



OCTOBER 30
Trunk or Treat

NOVEMBER 1
All Saints Day Mass

NOVEMBER 1-2
Fall Play Performance

NOVEMBER 6
Senior Class Photo, Evening with the Eagles (Open House)

NOVEMBER 8
SPA Community Coffee

NOVEMBER 9
Savio Holiday Arts Fair

NOV 14-17
National Catholic Youth Conference

NOV 18
Eagle Classic Golf Tournament

NOVEMBER 15
Parent Information Session, Junior Retreat #1

NOVEMBER 20
Grandparent's Day

NOVEMBER 22
Friendsgiving

DECEMBER 4
Christmas Concert

*Haute Spot
Save the Date*



SAVIO SOIREE
APRIL 26, 2025





**PLEASE JOIN US
FOR GRANDPARENTS DAY**

NOVEMBER 20, 2024

7:45 AM - 11:00 AM



**LOTS OF FUN IS IN STORE
FOR ALL!**

**ST. DOMINIC SAVIO CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL
9300 NEENAH AVE. AUSTIN, TX 78717**

**CASINO
NIGHT!**



**Save the Date
January 25, 2025**



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Forming Servant Leaders in the Image of Christ

SAVIO'S SECRET WEAPON

Do we have a new Eagles player?! Principal Mr. Psencik practices with the Savio Football Team on Wednesday, September 18. *(photo credit Marissa Lopez)*

