

The Right Thing to Do, Write Now
By: Hung Dao

At St. Norbert College, a word that is frequently used is *communio*. As it sounds, *communio* is about the unity of community, and the college tries in all aspects to perform it. Thus, it is something that is expected of all members of the college, including student organizations.

The college asks student organizations to “complete one project or program per year related to advocacy/education, direct service, or philanthropic giving,” according to their website. Another consideration for these projects is that they should be related to the activities of the group. Current *St. Norbert Times* Editor-in-Chief Gracelyn Giese ('24) found Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign while researching writing-based community service projects and decided to lead the members of *St. Norbert Times* to join the campaign as a part of the Times' service.

Write for Rights began as a day-long writing marathon to celebrate Human Rights Day. Over time, it has evolved to become the event that it is today. The purpose of the event is to encourage people to write letters to support those whose basic human rights are currently infringed upon and demand justice for them from their authorities. People from more than 200 hundred countries join this yearly campaign to demand justice and support others.

This year, the campaign is focused on nine individuals and groups whose freedoms have been violated. One individual is Angola's Ana da Silva Miguel, or Neth Nahara, who was arrested after criticizing the president on TikTok. Another is Joel Paredes from Argentina, who was blinded in one eye after participating in a protest, and whose perpetrator has thus far not been held accountable.

Maryia Kalesnikava was sentenced to 11 years in prison for questioning the conduct of the 2020 Belarusian election, which is heavily disputed. Dang Dinh Bach from Vietnam was prosecuted for a tax crime that he did not commit. In British Columbia, the Wet'suwet'en land defenders have been criminalized for opposing pipelines in their ancestral lands. Oqba Hashad

has been in detention for years in retaliation against his brother's activism by the Egyptian government.

Saudi Arabia arrested Manahel Al-Otaibi for standing up for women's rights and posting photos of herself without coverings. Kyung Seok Park has become a victim of a smear campaign and retaliatory litigation for his disability rights activism. Şebnem Korur Fincancı has been prosecuted for terrorist ties after calling for an investigation into allegations of chemical weapon use by Turkey.

The *St. Norbert Times* session had about a dozen students in attendance, and Giese, who is graduating in December, said that she "can't wait to see how St. Norbert Times will use service opportunities like Write for Rights to engage students!"

Sources: Amnesty International and St. Norbert College