



The MDJCL



TOUCH

December 2025 - Calvert Saturnalia Certamen!





Table of Contents:

Pg. 19

Table of Contents

Pg. 18

Introduction

Pg. 17

Event Schedule

Pg. 16

Checking In

Pg. 14

The Calvert School

Pg. 13

MDJCL Art

Pg. 2

Google Forms to Know

Pg. 1

Upcoming/Thank You



INTRODUCTION:




Io Saturnalia!




Salvete omnes, et Io Saturnalia! The Saturnalia Certamen is a staple of our Certamen events, just as it was a staple of the Roman calendar! Not convinced? Here's what critics are saying about the holiday...

“Die... Saturnalibus, optimo dierum..”
-Gaius Valerius Catullus (Carmen 14)

“Quam nullo sacer exolescet aevo!”
-Publius Papinius Statius (Silvae 1.6)

“...ebrio ac vomitante populo [est]...”
-Lucius Annaeus Seneca (Epistulae Morales 18)

Reversals:

The festival of Saturnalia in Ancient Rome was all about reversals. Gambling became legal, slaves were temporarily freed, and class distinctions were ignored. In the spirit of the holiday, there are some reversals in this Torch - can you find them?

...but let's hope your opinions on this Certamen are not as split as these!

So, although the Saturnalia Certamen may not run for a whole week (and we can't legally permit underage gambling...), it's time to don your red pilei, gather your sigilaria, and maybe drop an empassioned

Io Saturnalia!

or two as you slap in to answer today's questions!



Event Schedule:

10 - 10:30

Registration (Middle School Lobby)

10:30 - 10:50

Icebreaker (Atrium, 1st Floor)



11 - 12:15

Certamen (Various Classrooms)



12:15 - 1:00

Lunch, Cookie Decorating, Gift Exchange
(Atrium)



1:00 - 2:15

Certamen Finals & Teacher Certamen
(Assembly Hall)



2:15 - 2:30

Saturnalia Songs Kahoot (Assembly Hall)



Checking In...

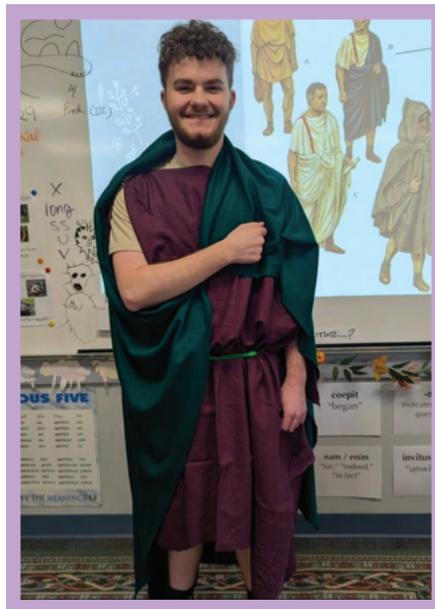


@maryland_jcl

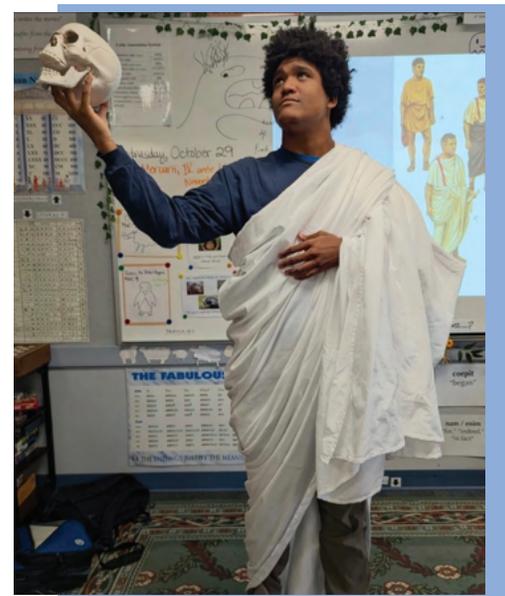
October Costume Contest Winners:



1st Place: Easton High School



2nd Place: McLean School



3rd Place: McLean School

November Cooking Contest Winner:



December Contest:
3D Art!

1st Place: Sophia Kantsevov, the Bryn Mawr School

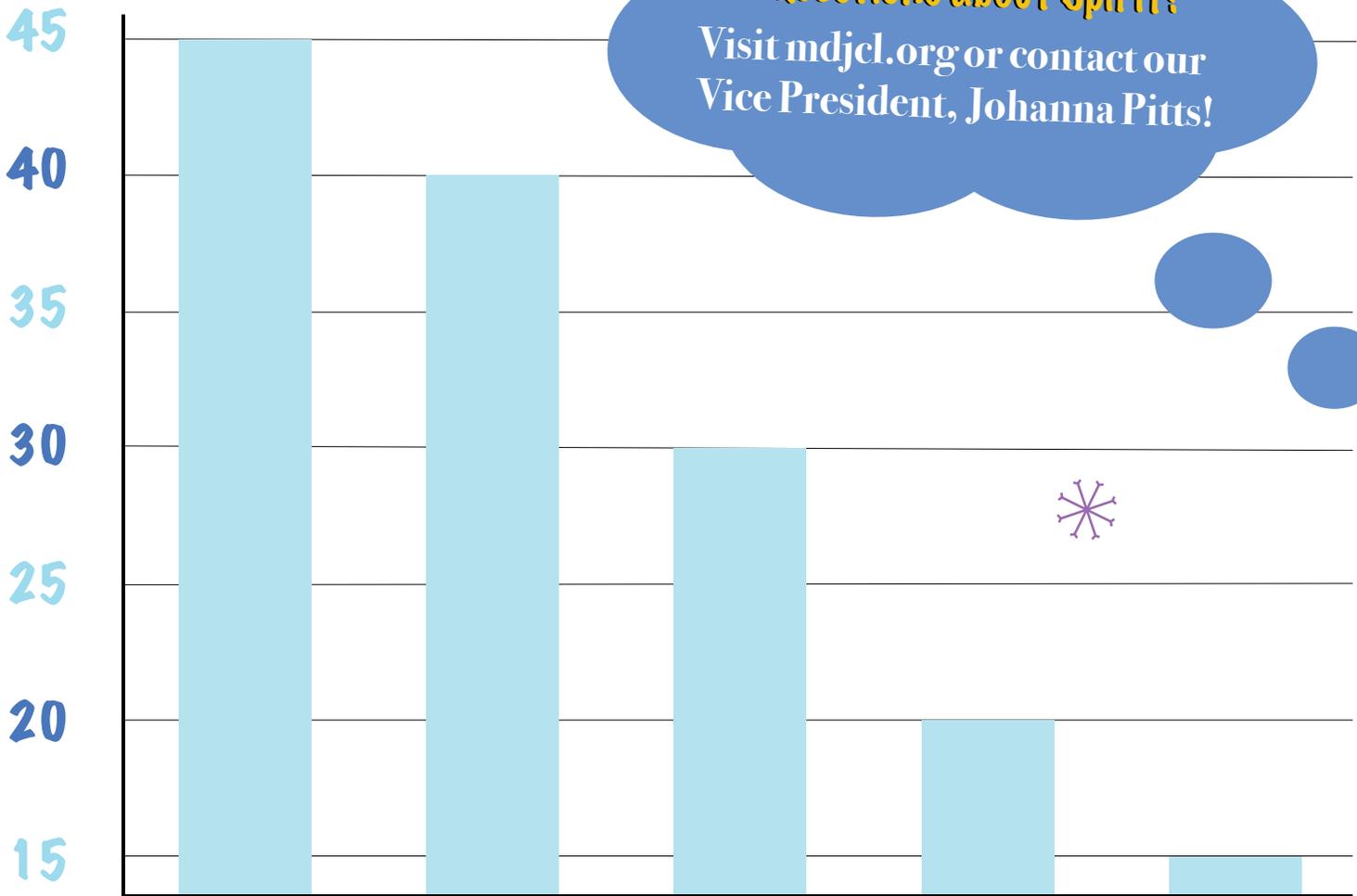




SPIRIT STANDINGS:



Questions about Spirit?
Visit mdjcl.org or contact our Vice President, Johanna Pitts!



* *Bryn Mawr* *Easton* *McLean* *Calvert* *Gilman*

 **10 points:** Boys Latin, the Key School

 **5 points:** the Country School, School Without Walls, Loyola, Dulaney, St. Tim's

SPECIAL FEATURE:

The Calvert School



Did You Know?

Calvert is the Alma Mater of two out of the five MDJCL student officers!
Can you guess who?

For the first time ever, the Calvert School is hosting this year's Saturnalia Certamen! Calvert has been a regular attendee of MDJCL events for several years now, and has competed in more Certamen events than I can count!

Founded in 1897, Calvert is a co-ed, private, K-8 school located in Roland Park. Its mascot (whom you may have spotted flying on the front cover) is named Cecilius after Cecil Calvert Baron Baltimore (Lord Baltimore). Calvert also has its fair share of songs, fitting in perfectly to with mirth of the holiday season. Check out the Calvert 8th grade graduation song, provided by a Calvert alumna!



Cave Apes!



"We're Going Far From Calvert"

We're going far from Calvert
Our own beloved Calvert
We're going as the eighth grade always goes
We've always loved you dearly
Our eyes see more clearly
We all belong to Calvert, but we must go!



MIDJCL ART

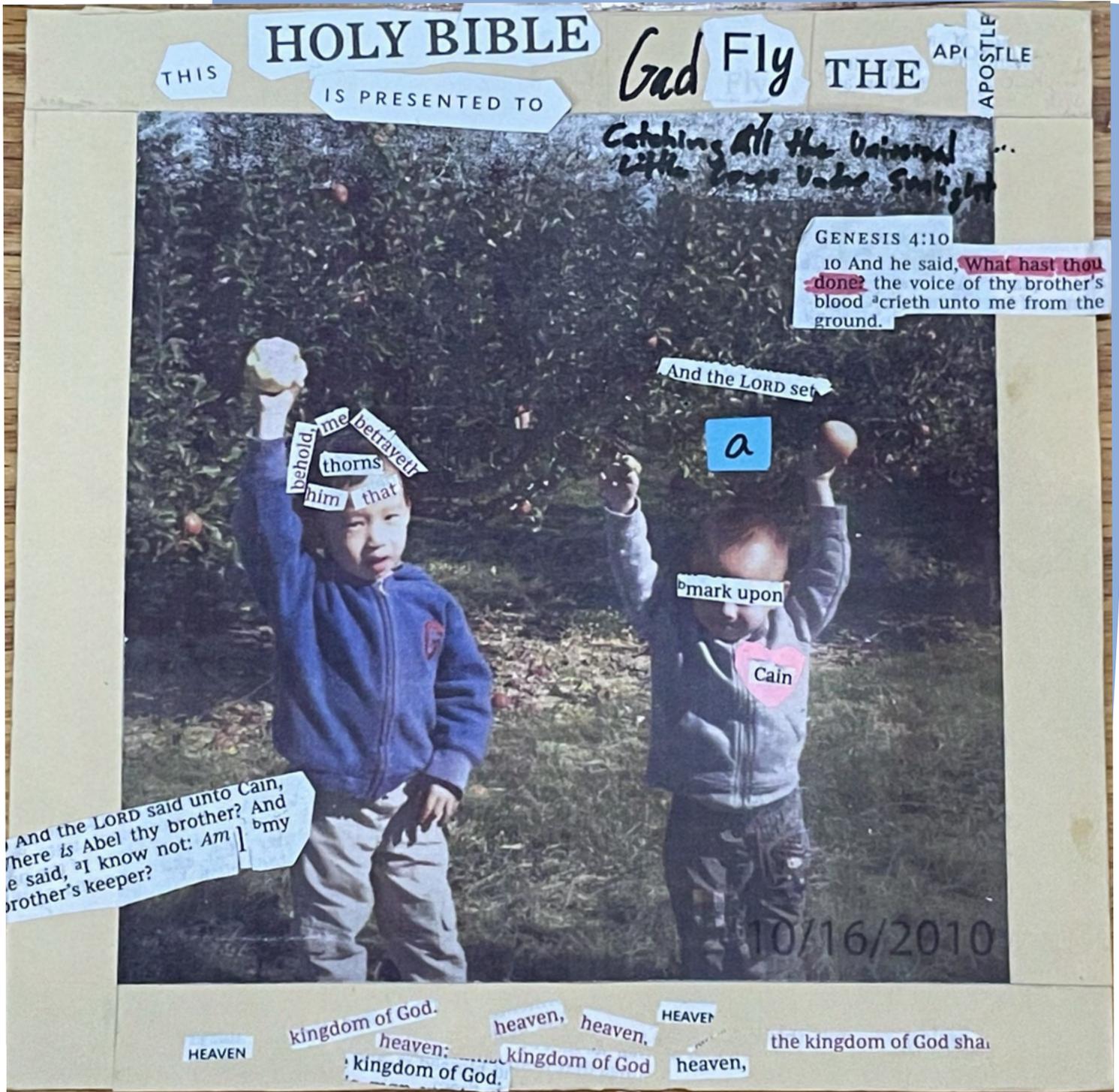


"Ad Passerem" (Catullus Project)



Painted by Vivien Wang, the Bryn Mawr School

"Gadfly" (Front Cover)



Created by Alex Zhao, Gilman





Additional Information (Front Cover):



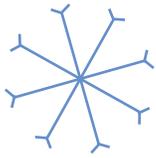
The band name spells out Catullus.

The title is 'Gadfly' because Catullus' love for Lesbia keeps coming back and stinging him whenever he tries to distance himself from her.

Why so much Christian imagery?

- I find it interesting how Christianity contains so much imagery on martyrdom, betrayal, and salvation.
- In the poems I've read in class, Catullus has mentioned similar themes.
- Catullus 5 - Heaven/ambrosiaic feeling he gets when he's in love with Lesbia, and how he craves her physical affection
- Betrayal - Seen in many of his poems. It's this feeling of the ruination of a great love he was 'promised'. Not due to his own failings, but to that of Lesbia. This idea that he put in so much work only for the whole thing to fall through.
 - His only failing was trying to salvage something out of the love he was promised
- Salvation - At the bottom of the cover, the phrases 'heaven' and 'kingdom of god' appear. Originally, the final scrap of paper had "the kingdom of God shall come." (ripped off I suppose.)
 - Catullus waits for his 'heaven' to come
- Punishment - God sets a mark upon Cain to warn all of Cain's sins.
 - Catullus is damned by his hope, his only sin. His mark is the desperation etched into the poems that have survived over two millennia.

The picture is of my friend and I when we were little. Note that I had unmatched swag as a 3 year old.



"Gadfly" (Back Cover)



13 And Cain said unto the LORD,
My punishment is greater than I
can bear.

Starring: **Marietta** CALL 955

25 Reasons Why
Jannah
Job

Featuring: **Gbecca Morra**
CALL 955

Mourning this Morning
Best You Can Do, Better Than Me
A Detailed Threat in Elegiac Couplet
to the Boy Who Caught My Attention
in the Arby's Parking Lot

Smith the LORD:

for I will forgive their iniquity,

and

I will remember their sin no
more.





Additional Information (Back Cover):



‘25 Reasons Why’ would likely have the same vibe as Marietta’s Cinco De Mayo Shit Show.

‘A Detailed Threat in Elegiac Couplet to the Boy Who Caught My Attention in the Arby’s Parking Lot’ would have a similar feel to that of Glocca Morra’s Irrevocable, Motherfucker.

- Both are amazing songs.

Jannah - Islamic heaven

Job - Guy from the Bible

Mourning this Morning - I liked the sound of the title.

Best You Can Do, Better Than Me - I liked the idea of the title.

The picture is one I took while waiting in line for a snowcone. Note its stoicism in the face of the great unknown. Take notes.



What’s the Deal with the Album Covers?



Earlier this year, H/Latin V students from both Bryn Mawr and Gilman were tasked with creating album covers based on the poetry of Catullus. From hidden records, to childhood photographs, to Johanna nearly burning her house down in pursuit of the perfect paper texture, and even Vivien spending over 24 hours painting, these album covers had it all! But then again, I would expect nothing less for the drama king of Roman poets...



"Sealed with a Kiss" (Front Cover)



Created by Johanna Pitts, the Bryn Mawr School





"Sealed with a Kiss" (Back Cover)





"Pauci Dicta"



Created by Bani Gourab, the Bryn Mawr School

Mythological Characters and Creatures Bracket!

+ some history - vote [here!](#)



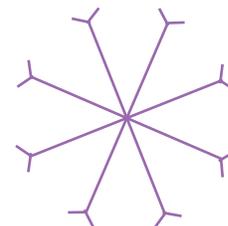
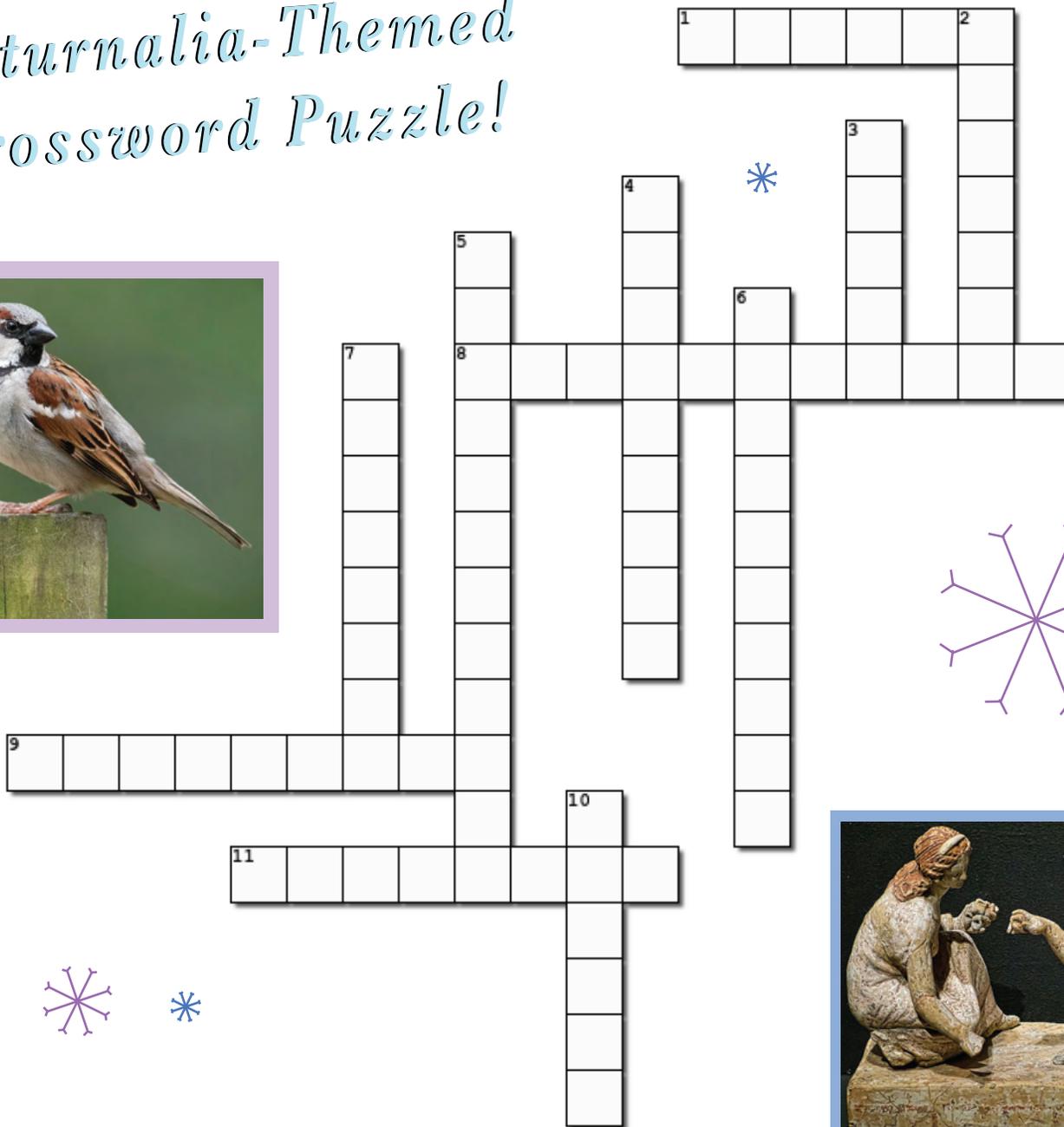
Quarterfinals!!



Meme created by
Micah Loveland, Gilman



Saturnalia-Themed Crossword Puzzle!



Across

1. Red felt cap often worn by commoners or freed slaves
8. The title of this month's Torch, in appearance
9. Sacrificial structure that appears in Book 6 of Caesar's De Bello Gallico. Or, the sigillaria that Gilman brought last year
11. Who competes in the annual Reverse Certamen (responde latine)?

Down

2. Bird that is the subject of several poems written by the author who described Saturnalia as 'optimo dierum'
3. Declension that the Latin word for 'snow' belongs to
4. The name of Calvert's bumbling mascot
5. Popular gambling game played during Saturnalia
6. 'Let us celebrate' in Latin
7. The number of the month that Saturnalia takes place in (responde latine)
10. The God honored during the festival of Saturnalia - his Greek equivalent

2025-2026 NJCL CREATIVE WRITING CONTEST

QUOD SI TAM GRAECIS NOVITAS
INVISA FUISSET QUAM NOBIS,
QUID NUNC ESSET VETUS?

BUT IF THE GREEKS HAD BEEN SO HOSTILE TO INNOVATION AS WE ARE, WHAT WOULD NOW BE OLD?

Imagine a modern technology that had somehow become available and usable in the ancient world. Tell a story that highlights how people, either historical figures or mythology characters, would respond to this technology.

You are encouraged to be creative and innovative in your story. Your characters, whether historical or mythological, should remain true to their origin.



Questions?
Creative Writing
Contest Chair:
creativewriting@njcl.org
NJCL Programs Chair:
programs@njcl.org



More detailed instructions can be found using the QR code to the left or by going to <https://bit.ly/njclcwc>

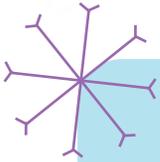


THE DEADLINE FOR ENTRIES IS FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2026

Google Forms to Know:



Suggest a
Constitutional
Amendment!



MDJCL
Game Night
Interest Form!



Apply to be an
Officer-At-Large!

DUE BY THE END OF DECEMBER



SAVE THE DATE:

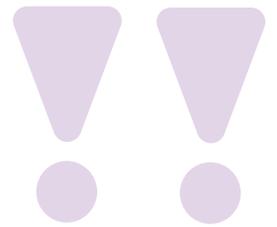


Gilman Certamen!

Saturday, January 31st 2026



THANK YOU



To everyone who submitted to the December Torch! Submissions for January will open soon, and once they do you can scan **this** QR code to get to the form!!



You can also access the link through the **MDJCL Instagram** (once it's posted) or at **mdjcl.org** under the **Archive** → **Torches** page!

Happy Holidays!

