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SJU's outsized influence

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Quad 136

SJU’s Outsized Influence

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SJU’s Outsized Influence

There is a nice reminder of the wide influence of Saint John’s University and Abbey in the 10 October 2013 edition of the [New York Review of Books](#) (behind a paywall). Historian Garry Wills reviews *Suitable Accommodations: An Autobiographical Story of Family Life: The Letters of J. F. Powers, 1942-1963* by J. F. Powers, Edited by Katherine A. Powers and writes that, “St. John’s Abbey was central to the lives of both Gene McCarthy and Jim Powers.”



Writing about the influence of the mid-20th Century Catholic Renaissance on McCarthy and Powers, Wills notes that the Liturgical Movement centered at Saint John’s and led by Fr. Virgil Michel, “deeply affected” both Powers and McCarthy. For those interested, I’d recommend reading the whole article, which I cannot do justice to here, but the important point is the impact Saint John’s Abbey and University had on the political life of McCarthy and the literary life of Powers—both of whom were linked to the even more influential Liturgical Movement which continues to affect Catholic theology and practice today.

All this from a monastery and liberal arts college in the woods of central Minnesota.

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Michael Hemesath is the 13th president of Saint John’s University. A 1981 SJU graduate, Hemesath is the first layperson appointed to a full presidential term at SJU. You can find him on Twitter [at] [PrezHemesath](#).