The Story of the Inferno and Me
Kristen Popham

The fire at Our Lady of the Lake University occurred during my first semester at the college. Thankfully I was not on campus on the night of May 6, 2008. I was bartending at Buck's Saloon on pool league night. I was serving some customers when I looked up at the television and saw Mann building on fire. I was left speechless by the sight before me.

I learned more about myself and my fellow students in the days following the fire than I ever imagined. For example, I never thought that in such a short period of time, less than one semester, I could become so attached to a school nor gain so many good friends that truly care about me and my safety.

This love among OLLU students became very clear to me when minutes after the fire showed its pure power I began to receive phone calls from friends and fellow classmates on campus wanting to know where I was and if I was safe. People who attend this college and the Lake family are very compassionate.

This bond among students has helped me recover from the fire on campus. I am a history major and have discovered that the history department, for example, was heavily damaged in the fire.

We have lost a number of irreplaceable items. This is very tragic, but not so much when compared to the idea that no lives were lost. As the rebuilding continues I am just grateful that everyone survived the fire without any serious injuries. This is the most important thing to remember.

Carriers of the Mission
Maintaining Faith

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2008