

**Artist Statement**

**Love Is Not A Sin**

*Love is universal and needs to be spread more than hate.  
My design is about the inclusion and visibility of the LGBTQ+ community.  
Human identity is an inherent gift intended for any and all people.  
The LGBTQ+ community should receive acceptance and empowerment,  
instead of exclusion and the message that their sexuality is a sin.  
This led to the words on my artwork, "Love is Not a Sin." The iconographic image  
of the Virgin Mary often resembles the positive and unconditional love of a mother,  
which is why I included the Virgin Mary and combined two positive ideas to  
promote LGBTQ+ visibility and acknowledgement amongst the Catholic faith.  
The LGBTQ+ community is meant to be affirmed through celebration and  
inclusion. I believe individuals can have a religious life even though they are a part  
of the LGBTQ+ community.  
My wish is that if others saw and understood my design, they would end up being  
more accepting of not only themselves but others as well.*

*—Haley Hartshorne '25*

**University Statement**

*Mount Mercy is a faith- and values-based institution rooted in the  
Catholic Mercy tradition, providing a distinctive education built on the  
Catholic Intellectual Tradition, Catholic Social Teaching, and the  
Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy. Our value of hospitality invites an  
openness to students, ideas, and beliefs, and our dedication to faith, truth, and  
Mercy supports the dignity of each person within the human community.  
Our university has the opportunity and responsibility to explore issues from a variety  
of perspectives to understand the impact of our words, actions, and art on people of  
various backgrounds and experiences.  
The PAHA cover art—and other works of art and literature in this publication—  
provide a pathway for deeper discussions about intent and the impact of an artist's  
work. As a result, the campus community has engaged in conversations about how  
we uphold the ultimate respect for human dignity while fostering  
an environment of open expression. We are proud to be a community where these  
meaningful and important conversations can take place.*