

ST. JOSEPH'S - ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

www.saintjosephscollege.org

Summer 2022 Newsletter

*We honor the past; We celebrate the present;
We plan for the future.....TOGETHER.*

ALUMNI EVENTS

ALUMNI DAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2022, OUR 40TH

Covid forced the postponement of our 38th and 39th annual Alumni Days. We will catch up with a “triple-header” for the 40th on Saturday, September 24th. We will have cocktails and dinner outside (weather permitting). Look for your Invitation in the mail in late August. If you can’t attend, please support the Raffle so we can keep this Association going. Thanks to our donors of Raffle items.

We will honor Fr. Jerry Coleman, PSS, and Mr. Dennis McQuaid with separate Alumnus of the Year Awards. Mary Murphy will help us bestow separate James P. Murphy Awards on Charles “Chuck” Smith, our website genius, and the indomitable Pat Cloherty, long time Treasurer.

We hope to see you. Spouses are welcome. Questions? Contact Don Carroll at donandmaryjocarroll@gmail.com.

SYNODALITY REPORT

On June 2nd, in a national webinar by Zoom, a good cross section of alums (priests, former priests and ex-seminarians, including some wives) responded to Pope Francis’ invitation to take part in the preparation for a Synod to culminate in Rome in 2023. In prayer, silence and then deep listening, we reflected on the “Joys” and the “Difficulties” we experience in the Church; we then expressed our “Hopes” for the Church.

A copy of the official summary of the Joys, Difficulties, and the Hopes was sent to the USCCB and also to Rome. (We have a receipt from Rome in four languages!) On June 22nd we sent a full copy of this summary to all alums for whom we have email addresses (c. 480). [Now, for the remaining 600 -700 of you, you will find it as an insert in this Newsletter.]

EDUCATION ISSUE - Part II

In each issue of this Newsletter we feature what alums have done in their lives in some particular endeavor. The theme for this issue (and for the next one) is “Education”. It is amazing how many alums have found their careers in some form of education. No doubt because that is a major way of serving others.

DAVID STRONCK

David R Stronck graduated from Serra High School in San Mateo in 1949 and then entered St. Joseph's College. He graduated from this minor seminary in 1951 and spent the next six years at St. Patrick's Seminary. On June 15, 1957, he was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of San Francisco.



*David R. Stronck, R '51
Ph.D., Professor Emeritus*

True story: At St. Patrick's Seminary, the seminarians were allowed to go to the area at the front of the main building only on "visiting Sundays." Near the driveway circle at the front of the main building were tall mature palm trees with hanging ripe dates. In our biology course, the old Sulpician wanted to assign each seminarian the project of finding and germinating a date seed. His assignment that was misinterpreted, had this wording: "On visiting Sunday, I want you to go out and get yourself a fleshy date." All of the seminarians screamed in laughter.

My first assignment was to serve as assistant pastor at St. Anthony's Church in Oakland. The previous assistant pastor at this parish had been moved because of conflict with the pastor. Soon I was eager to move from this assignment. In the Spring of 1958, when the Superintendent of Schools invited me to teach chemistry at Serra High School, I eagerly accepted the opportunity. In the Fall of 1958, I moved into residence at St. Pius parish in Redwood City where the pastor and assistant pastor were marvelous and very supportive.

The seminary provided me with introductory college-level courses in chemistry and in biology. The Sulpician priests who taught these courses were not inspiring. My interest in science came from my father who was an engineer and from my many scientific hobbies, ranging from astronomy to ham (amateur) radio. After I began teaching high-school chemistry, during summer sessions, I completed more science courses at universities, including a chemistry course at the University of California, Berkeley. In 1965, the National Science Foundation awarded me a fellowship to Oregon State University, Corvallis, where I became a full-time graduate student. I completed the M.S. in Biology in June, 1966 and the Ph.D. in Science Education, in early August, 1968.

In late August of 1968, I resigned from the clergy in

protest over the newly published encyclical *Humanae Vitae* on birth control. I accepted a one-year appointment to teach biology at Sacramento State University. During that year, I dated my high-school sweetheart; we married in August, 1969. Later I was laicized and we were remarried in the Catholic Church. In the Fall of 1969, We moved to Austin, Texas, where I spent the next two years in post-doctoral research at the University of Texas. In 1971, I began employment in a tenure-track position in

Biology at the Washington State University, Pullman. There I was tenured and promoted to Associate Professor. I did well with many grants, mostly from the National Science Foundation. I had many publications and served in the elected office of President of the Washington Science Teachers Association. My success was noticed by a search committee of the University of Victoria. This committee offered me an excellent position at their university. In 1978 I accepted the offer and moved with my family to Victoria, B.C., Canada. I enjoyed this position, was tenured, authored many research studies, etc. But my wife and I disliked living in Canada. My wife wanted to return to the San Francisco Bay Area. In 1984 I accepted an appointment as the science educator in the Department of Teacher Education at the California State University, Hayward (recently renamed CSU, East Bay). There I was soon tenured and promoted to "full" professor. I wrote 8 books, more than 200 articles, was elected the Director of Research for the National Science Teachers, etc. I received many awards, including "Distinguished Service to Science Teaching" by the California Science Teachers Association. After 42 years as a professor in public universities, I retired in 2010, but continued working half-time for five more years. Since 2015, I work about 20% by supervising some student teachers.

I am an active alumnus of Serra High School, by attending meetings, reunions, and advising students about careers in education, etc. In 2014 I was honored by being recognized as the Outstanding Alumnus in Science and Technology. When I was a student at Serra High, the entire faculty consisted of priests with the exception of one layman who taught PE. In recent years, there are no priests at Serra High. One priest at St. Catherine's parish in Burlingame is listed as the chaplain although he

spends almost all of his time in pastoral work at his parish.

In the USA there is now a great shortage of priests. Trends shows that this shortage will soon get much worse as the old priests die. The USA now has most Catholic schools without any priests. We can predict most Catholic parishes without any priests.

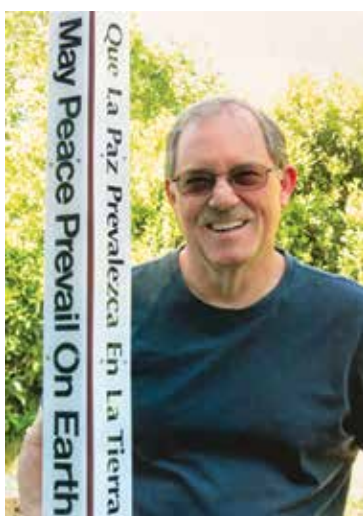
Sixty years ago, the culture within most local Catholic

families was highly supportive of careers of service, e.g., encouraging kids to become priests, or teachers, or nurses, etc. This religious dedication to service is disappearing. I have observed many young adults now focused on how to make lots of money with little effort. The current culture will produce few vocations to the careers of service. The profession of teaching is suffering now because relatively few are applying to teaching credential programs.

DAN ONORATO

In spring 1970 President Nixon widened the Vietnam War by sending troops into Cambodia. At an emergency full faculty meeting called by MJC's president the next day, I urged my colleagues, as educational leaders in our community, to sign an Op Ed statement I'd drafted to The Modesto Bee to end the war. Though one administrator warned me to "consider my future," and some colleagues wrote me off as a "Berkeley radical," I didn't withdraw the statement. Sixty-seven faculty (out of 240) signed it and The Bee published it. Looking back, in our conservative Central Valley area, that small but bold action marked the beginning of the dual focus of my 36-year teaching career at MJC (1969 – 2006). An integral part of my "teaching" would be activism.

When I left the seminary, I spent two years at UC Berkeley to earn a Masters' Degree in Comparative Literature (English and Spanish). I wanted to teach. I loved learning, and I wanted to keep growing throughout my life. In the seminary I'd had the experience and satisfaction of tutoring fellow students, and at both Cal and the seminary I'd had some truly great teachers. At Cal the best professors made literature come alive. They taught me how to read critically and with deeper comprehension and appreciation. They made learning exciting. Some teachers at St. Joe's and St. Pat's had that same gift, teachers like Larry Jacobs (Literature), Fr. Cornelius Burns (Latin), Fr. James Poggi, (Spanish), Fr. Jack Olivier (Choir), and Frs. Ron Cholchol and Bob Giguere (Philosophy). Fr. Poggi's teaching emphasized Mexican culture and learning to



Dan Onorato, R '64

The Classroom and Beyond
Dan Onorato, R '64
St. Joseph's : 1959 – 1964
St. Patrick's: 1964 – 1966
North American College
(Rome): 1966 – 1967
University of California,
Berkeley, 1967 - 1969

speak Spanish, not just learning grammar or how to read the language. His approach was preparation for real life communication with Spanish speakers. When I taught Spanish at MJC he was my model. Fr. Olivier's demand for perfection in choir was relentless, but the reward for rising to the challenge was exhilarating. I wish now that I'd told him, but for me he set the standard for excellence. And Fr. Giguere's lectures on philosophy were sometimes downright brilliant. At Cal when a professor finished an astonishingly insightful lecture, the whole class would rise out of their seats spontaneously and shake the windows in thunderous applause. Each year at least several times, Fr. Giguere deserved that same enthusiastic appreciation. All these gifted teachers made me want to carry on their legacy.

Over the years I taught a variety of classes: English as a Second Language; various literature classes, including Shakespeare; a critical exploration of the media; an inter-

disciplinary course on the Vietnam War and its legacy; and an across-discipline project on war (my sociology colleague) and nonviolence (me). But mostly I taught English composition and Spanish.

I liked teaching writing. At times with remedial classes I felt a bit like a missionary up against the odds of students many of whom hadn't given education or their own minds much attention. But I gave the challenge my best creativity, we enjoyed one another, and a good number grew less resistant and more skilled. With advanced classes in argumentation, the students were bound for a state college or university so we could read more challenging essays and books and discuss and write about complex ideas and issues. Two examples were a focus on genocide and what responsibility other nations have to confront it (We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: Stories from Rwanda, by Philip Gourevitch); and an exploration of forgiveness based on an Holocaust story and reflections about it (The Sunflower, by Simon Wiesenthal). As with so much of what I tried to do in my teaching, I wanted students to think beyond their own personal lives and concerns. In effect, as you'll note in the final part of this narrative, I viewed the world as an extension of the classroom.

One of my main goals as a teacher of writing was to help students gain confidence in themselves, to realize they had something worth saying and with practice could grow to say it well. A single mother of grown children won first place twice in short story writing in MJC's Celebration of the Humanities Contest, which I chaired for ten years. When Sylvia López Medina a few years later wrote her first novel, *Cantora*, she graciously thanked me for my encouragement in her acknowledgements: "I feel a special gratitude to Dan Onorato, both for his dedication to the Celebration of the Humanities Arts Competition, and for his unfailing belief in my ability as a writer." In the autographed copy she gave me, she added: "You never failed to believe in me. Now, I believe in myself."

Along with English I also taught Spanish. I'd studied Spanish formally in the seminary and at Cal. I'd lived and worked four summers in Mexico with Amigos Anonymous. I'd traveled widely in Mexico (and later other Latin countries). And I cherished the friendships made along the way. As a result, I spoke Spanish very well and had gained a broad understanding and appreciation of Mexican life and culture. In teaching Spanish I was

motivated by the wealth of open doors my knowing Spanish had brought me. My students' diligence could bring them similar gifts. I tried to make their learning fun. We listened to well-known songs, learned to sing some of them, and formed small groups to practice the oral drills I'd prepared. Halfway through class to rouse their energy and let them show off their agility, I led them in physical exercises—in Spanish, of course! In my last seven years before retiring, I thoroughly enjoyed leading eager students in a one-month summer program to learn Spanish in Cuernavaca, Mexico. They lived and ate with families, studied the language with Mexican instructors for six hours each weekday, and went on fascinating field trips to visit archeological sites and other places of cultural interest in Mexico City, Puebla, Tepoztlán, and other important historic places. I doubt they'll ever forget the colorful fiestas they were invited to or the festive weekend social gatherings in Cuernavaca's central plaza, not to mention the friendships they made. And they may well have a wiser, certainly better informed, perspective on both Mexico and the U.S.

Throughout my long tenure teaching I expended a great deal of time and energy bringing important activists to speak at MJC on issues of national and international import. I've worked with the Modesto Peace/Life Center since it started in 1970. When the Center invited notable activists to our community, I often arranged to have them speak at MJC, either in the big lecture hall or in classrooms where teachers invited them in. Guest speakers included Danilo Dolci, often called "The Gandhi of Sicily"); Phillip and Dan Berrigan, Catholic priest war protestors who burned draft files; Maryknoll priest Roy Bourgeois who still leads the annual protest at the School of the Americas; and Catholic Worker activist Kathy Kelly, who brought national attention to the plight of tens of thousands of Iraqis suffering from U.S. sanctions against Iraq. The Peace/Life Center also organizes Modesto's annual commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. I've been active in this project since it started 30 years ago. Our guest speakers give their keynote address in MJC's auditorium to a large audience of students and community people. We've featured an amazing array of well-known people from the Civil Rights era: Yolanda King, Rev. Joseph Lowery, Robert Moses, Congressman John Lewis, Diane Nash, Julian Bond, and Andrew Young. Other speakers include actors Edward James Olmos, Danny Glover, and Mike Farrell, historian Taylor Branch, and farmworkers leader Dolores Huerta.

Albert Einstein once wrote that the purpose of life is to continually widen our circles of compassion. That wisdom has been my lodestar. It's been what I tried to instill in my students, both in the classroom and in the community, not so much in words as in action, by example. Below is a list of such efforts at MJC and in the wider Modesto community.

1970's: I organized and participated in Peace/Life protests against the Vietnam War; organized a "Solar Faire" in a local park, an event that included local power agencies, to promote solar energy and conservation; helped start Stanislaus Safe Energy to oppose nuclear power plants; and worked for Prop. 15, a state-wide initiative to end nuclear power in CA.

1980's: I participated in "Choose Life," a protest at the Lawrence Livermore Lab against its work designing nuclear weapons. I was arrested for civil disobedience. After a six-month journey with my wife and children in Central and South America (as part of a sabbatical leave), I started the Stanislaus County Interfaith Committee on Latin America to educate the public and oppose U.S. policy in Central American countries. I fasted publicly on liquids only for 10 days to pray for peace in Central America. I was arrested again for civil disobedience at the Nevada Test Site to end its testing of nuclear weapons.

1990's: In preparation for an inter-disciplinary course I initiated at MJC on "Vietnam and its Aftermath," I spent two weeks on sabbatical leave in Vietnam with the Asia Resource Center and a week in Cambodia and Thailand on my own. I saw Vietnam first-hand and listened to the perspectives of informative Vietnamese who lived through the war. I also received a National Endowment for the Humanities grant to study at George Mason University in Virginia about that war to help me prepare for the course I was planning. I decided the course would cover the war and its consequences, especially as it affected American vets and Southeast Asian refugees from Indochina who lived in Modesto. At a class that dealt with the experiences and reflections of American vets, I remember one veteran panelist saying how much he and his brother vets appreciated this opportunity to speak to people who would listen to them. "Up till now," he said poignantly, "no one has wanted to listen."

I opposed the U.S. sanctions against Iraq and the disastrous war that followed by making another public fast, this time for 14 days. I welcomed the Omron Bus Tour to MJC to educate about the devastating effects of

the sanctions (estimated 500,000 victims) and ongoing U.S. policy in Iraq. I also opposed the U.S. invasion of Panama. In the early 90's the founder of Amigos Anonymous, a Newman Club priest at Cal (Fr. Joseph O'Looney) started a scholarship program to financially help children from poor Mexican families to complete their educations. Recipients then could finish high school, tra Image de school, university, and beyond. Ever since then, I've been on the Board that grants the scholarships and coordinates the program with our Mexican Director. Most scholarship recipients complete their education to become attorneys, engineers, teachers at all levels, agronomists, nurses, architects, and people in business, including an increasing number who work in managerial roles in tech industries near where they live. (Nearly 20 seminarians from St. Joe's and St. Pat's participated in Amigos in one or more projects from 1963 to 1968. Like the Peace Corps, we worked on community organizing projects with poor people, mostly in small rural towns in the states of Guanajuato and Michoacán in Mexico.)

2000's: I organized in the MJC art gallery in 2000 a "family" photo exhibit called "MJC at the Millennium: Who We Are." It showcased the diversity of our faculty, staff, and student body. The next year I organized a much larger collaborative county-wide photo exhibit called "Faces of Stanislaus," located in the downtown County Education Office. It celebrated the many different and enriching ethnic groups of people in our county. In 2001 the MJC Foundation honored me with the Purdy Award for Excellence in Education (given to one instructor each year). In summer 2005 I traveled to Israel-Palestine with the Interfaith Peace Builders and on my return presented a photo lecture at MJC that argued for an end to Israel's occupation and for a just peace and security for both Israel and Palestine. I also wrote Op Eds in The Modesto Bee and articles about the conflict in the Peace/Life Center's publication, Stanislaus Connections. In my last semester of teaching in 2006, as a project of my class on nonviolence, my students and I created a large educational photo exhibit in the MJC library called "The Wall of Hope." It highlighted people and organizations world-wide who were actively committed to nonviolent social change.

2010 – present: Through my writing I helped educate about the U.S. war in Afghanistan and the continuing Israeli-Palestinian conflict; helped raise local awareness and the need for policy initiatives to slow global warming;

helped start CJAN (Climate Justice Action Now) to promote local efforts in environmental justice; continued participating in the Peace/Life Center's monthly public vigils (that we've held for years) to highlight relevant social justice and peace issues; visited the Amigos scholarship recipients in Apaseo El Grande, Mexico, to encourage them; and worked with the Peace/Life Center promoting racial justice and police reform.

Looking over my life as a teacher activist, I feel deeply grateful. First and foremost, for my wife and children who

endured all the time I was absent from them because I was too busy correcting papers or "saving the world." They have been incredibly gracious in their abiding love. I'm thankful also for my seminary teachers and other mentors and friends whose understanding, wisdom, and kindness have guided and inspired my growth. I profoundly appreciate the emphasis in the seminary on nurturing a spiritual path. My spirituality strengthens me and sustains me in all I do.

PAUL PAGE, C '69 – MUSIC EDUCATOR

Don Carroll R'58

We can't do an issue on alums in Education without mention of Paul Page (C'69).

I first met Paul at the Council for Civic Unity (CCU) in San Francisco back in 1970-1972 (Vietnam War days). As a CCU board member and President, I had the pleasure of working with Paul and his boss, the late, great newspaperman, Eugene Block, to challenge racial discrimination and other social issues in The City. The CCU was the main civil rights advocacy organization in San Francisco. Paul worked there for over two years as alternative service to satisfy his draft obligations. ("I wanted to do something beneficial for mankind.") He was, therefore, teaching moral pacifism even as a very young man.

Paul taught for 36 years at Saratoga High School: 11 years directing choirs, string and full orchestras; teaching music theory and guitar; and producing/musical directing many years of musical shows, many which his wife, Theodora, directed; seven years teaching journalism; and 18 years teaching English. Paul says that especially in those 18 years his classical education in the seminary in philosophy and ancient languages served him well. Paul took his youth choirs on three occasions to Europe and thereby gave these young people their first education in a broader world view. He toured Europe on five other occasions with his "ad hoc" adult choir, the Santa Clara Choral Spectrum; has adjudicated choral festivals in



Paul Page at St. Patrick's

Feldkirch and Vienna, Austria; and is a Fulbright Memorial Fund scholar spending some time in Japan learning about its culture, traditions, and educational system.

Paul, moreover, taught the People of God how to worship through music. As many alums know, along with his teaching career, Paul concurrently directed liturgical music at St. Lucy Parish in Campbell and later at St. Mary's in Los Gatos for a total of

some 43 years of music ministry. The Diocese of San Jose honored him with its Benedictus Award for his contributions to liturgical music in the diocese. He has played/directed the music for us on several Alumni Days. Paul's many scores and recordings of music can be accessed at <http://www.paulpage.org>. He is known internationally through the many YouTube performances of his music by others as well as through the French composers' site <http://www.free-scores.com> where over 750 of his scores are shared gratis around the world.

Now retired, Paul lives with his wife of over 50 years, Theodora (in the Greek: theos dorion — "gift of God") in San Jose where he continues to compose new music to share with the world. He has two daughters and five grandchildren.

Teacher, composer and performer, Paul is a source of pride to his late mentor and friend, Fr. Jack Olivier, PSS, as well as to all of us.

JIM HANSEN

I enjoyed a wonderful, fulfilling career in education, but it was a long, circuitous road in me getting there.

It was mid-morning on a beautiful day in the fall of 1965. My dad and I were loading my dresser and a box of my clothes into the family's 1958 Chevy station wagon. After the car was loaded, my mom came out with a paper bag containing some sandwiches in preparation for the long drive to St. Joes.

My nine brothers and sisters stood on the porch of our house in Hayward waving good-bye to me. The house was originally a three-bedroom house, but, as the family grew, my dad had added a dormitory on the back where my three brothers and I slept. I was the second oldest of the crew. My sister Joan was 11 months older than me so she would stay home to watch my brothers and sisters as my mom and dad and I made the trek to Mountain View.

Once we arrived on the seminary grounds and drove up the long drive to the front steps, we were met by one of the upper classmen, Tom Hanson, who unfortunately spelled his last name incorrectly. Despite the errant spelling of his name, Tom and I have been friends ever since this chance meeting. At this point, Tom guided my parents and me to the house elevator near the foyer and helped us load my dresser into it. He hit the button for the fourth floor and up we went. At the time, I didn't realize that this would be the last time I would ever use an elevator in the building.

After the orientation meetings, my parents left. As a I waved farewell to them as they began the drive down the circular driveway, I saw my mom put her hands over her face and cry. I knew she had just realized that she had just dropped her fourteen-year-old son off in a strange place. At that point, I too realized I had just been dropped off in a strange place. I immediately became homesick.

As I went downstairs, I found a number of new Sixth-Latiners sitting on the stoop overlooking the tennis courts. I joined them. They were discussing the confessors that they had just been assigned. One of Sixth-Latiners, I think it was Frank Brown, mentioned that he was told that if anyone had been assigned Father Riddlemoser, that they should request a change right away. Out of my pocket, I pulled out the little paper that held my confessor



Jim Hansen, HS '69

assignment. I checked it. Indeed, I was assigned to Father Riddlemoser. I started to get nervous, but then I remembered that I had my own room! I could handle anything because I had my own room! As it turned out, Father Riddlemoser and I hit it off pretty well!

I spent my entire high school career at St. Joseph's from 1965 to 1969. I had many wonderful experiences there and met many lifelong friends. I left the seminary after high school graduation and went to UC Berkeley with the idea that I would return to the seminary after I graduated from college. At Berkeley it was fun to run into fellow classmates from St. Joe's who also had made the switch to Berkeley, including Paul Calhoun, Bob King, Mark Nolting, and Ray Frost. After I finished at Berkeley, instead of returning to the seminary, I started teaching at St. Clements School in Hayward while I figured out what I wanted to do with my life. It was a good move to work in the Catholic schools because it was there that I decided that teaching would be a good career for me and, incidentally, that is where I met my wife, Judy. Ultimately, I enrolled at St. Mary's College in the credential program and did my student teaching at St. Elizabeth's Elementary School in Oakland.

In 1977, Judy and I bought a house in San Ramon so when a teaching job opened up in the nearby Amador Valley Joint Union High School District in Pleasanton for the one English teacher at a very small, brand-new school called Village High School, I applied and got the job. While teaching there I got a Master of Arts in Education Technology from the San Francisco State University and later I received my Administrative Credential from Cal State East Bay.

As a seminarian, I looked forward to a life of service to others as a priest. Service to others was an important concept in my family. My mother, Barbara, was a surgical nurse at Eden Hospital and my father, Jack, served as a teacher and a successful basketball coach at St. Elizabeth's High School in Oakland. A few years later my dad became the Dean of Boys at San Lorenzo High School and after that he served as the principal of Russell City Continuation High School in the San Lorenzo School District until his retirement. My older sister, Joan, had already become a teacher so I felt that since I had

already decided that I wasn't going back to the seminary, I could still be of service to others by following my dad's example and becoming a teacher. It turns out five of my nine siblings ultimately did the same.

I taught at Village Continuation High School for seven years where a former Franciscan Seminarian and friend of mine, Rich Puppione, was principal. Incidentally, Rich's brother Don Puppione had been a seminarian at St. Joes. I had many role models from my time at St. Joes who influenced my teaching style. From Fathers Roland Holstein and Jim Parke along with Chuck O'Malley and Gordon Lacey, I learned that preparation, enthusiasm, humor, and positive relationships were important qualities to have as a teacher. From Mr. O'Malley I also learned that a good aim was important. Father Riddlemoser taught me that "three in honor of the Trinity" is better than "zero, Bub!"

I taught at Village until I became vice principal at Dublin High School in 1986, where a former St. Josephs alum from Maryknoll, Jack Keegan, also served as vice principal. I left Dublin High to serve a short stint as principal at Valley Continuation High School in Dublin where Rich Del Tredici was a teacher, but when the principalship opened up at Dublin High, I returned there to take that position. Rich Del Tredici, whose brother went to St. Joes, followed me as principal at Valley. While I was principal at Dublin High, I had the good fortune to hire Charles Young as an English teacher. Charles spent some time in the seminary at St. Pat's so we had some things in common. Incidentally, he just announced his retirement from the superintendency of the Benicia School District. Following my time at Dublin High I served as principal at Wells Middle School in Dublin (1991-99), Harvest Park Middle School in Pleasanton (1999-2010) and at Amador Valley High School, also in Pleasanton (2010-2013). I then retired (for the first time.)

Father Al Giaquinto was a great influence for me as I took on the role as principal. Father Giaquinto had this uncanny ability to remember every student's name. He knew my name the first time I met him and I watched him throughout my time in the seminary call everyone by name. Just that simple fact of knowing my name impressed me and I knew he was going to be someone special in my life. I asked him how he was able to learn so many names. He told me would study photos of students with their names attached and remember them. He also was able

to attach associations to people he met and then bring that up when he needed to know that person's name. He told me that he felt it was better to call a student by name rather than "Hey, you." He felt it was a matter of respect and forging positive relationships.

I adopted this philosophy when I was serving as a vice principal and, later, as principal and managed to learn all of my students' names or, at least, give the impression that I knew all of their names. Once I got to Amador which had 2600 students it was a little more difficult, but I did manage to learn most names over time. Now, when I meet former students and parents, they always say how much they appreciated how I always knew their names and would ask me how I did it. They would tell me that it made them feel important and cared for. I would always tell them the story of Al Giaquinto. It is about respect and forging positive relationships. It also had a positive impact on school discipline. Since students knew I knew them by name and probably had their parent's phone number memorized (which I didn't), they were more likely to behave and follow the rules.

One example of how I instituted Father Giaquinto's philosophy into my own practice happened in 1999 when I was the new principal at Harvest Park Middle School in Pleasanton. Early in the year I would spend time to get to know my students and to learn their names. One warm fall day, I decided I would grab a lunch at the cafeteria and, being the new principal, go out in the lunch area and meet some of my students. There was this one student sitting by himself so I sat on the bench next to him and introduced myself to him. I then asked him his name. He hesitantly said that his name was Kevin. I said "That's great! That's my son's name". Then I asked him what his last name was and he said that it was Calhoun. To me that name rang a bell. I then asked him if his dad's first name was Paul. Again, he hesitantly responded in the affirmative. I said did your dad grow up in Oakland? He said, "I think so!" I said, "Did your dad play basketball in high school?" He said "Yea". I said "Did your dad go to St. Josephs High School?" He said, "I think so." At that point, I announced to Kevin, "Your dad and I went to high school together!" Then, with a worried look on his face, he asked, "Hey, you're not coming over for Thanksgiving or anything are you?" And this is how I first met the seventh-grade son of my friend and classmate from the seminary, Paul Calhoun. A few years later when Kevin was a junior in high school, he came back to my

office at the middle school and asked me if I would be his confirmation sponsor. This was one of the greatest honors I remember receiving in my career. I think it goes back to Father Giaquinto's idea of respect and forging positive relationships.

((There is one thing where I think Father Giaquinto missed the boat, however. I remember asking him one day why we didn't have a typing class for all of us. He looked at me bemused and said in his high-pitched voice, "Ah, son, don't worry. You'll have a secretary!" Unfortunately, in the late '80's at the beginning of my first principalship, I did run in to an issue with Father Giaquinto's reassurance that I didn't need to learn to type. It was August and I was a brand-new principal at my first school. Using a yellow legal tablet, I had just finished writing a letter of welcome to my new staff and one for my new students. I walked from my office into the outer office and asked the school's long-time administrative assistant to type the two letters for my signature. With horror in her eyes, she looked at me and said, "Jim, I don't type!" I swallowed hard and asked her, "If you don't type, who typically prepares the school correspondence?" She explained that the previous principal had typed all of his own letters. I told her that I didn't type either, but we would do what we could to make it work. As a result, I learned to hunt and peck my own letters and school correspondence. It turns out my administrative assistant was wonderful with the students, their parents and the staff and, over time, we both learned to type.))

Earlier I mentioned that I had retired after I served as principal at Amador Valley High School in 2013, but that was a short-lived retirement. In 2015, the Superintendent of the Pleasanton Unified School District suddenly

announced that she was leaving the district and moving to a neighboring district to be superintendent there. Since there was really no time to do a superintendent search, the school board asked if I would meet with them. I had no idea what to expect, but I did meet with them. They asked me to serve as superintendent for a year so they could do a thorough superintendent search. They said that they needed someone who was well-known and respected in the district. Never having worked at the district office, I was surprised that they selected me for this role, but I was honored by this request. After some real soul searching, I came out of retirement and accepted a one-year contract to serve as the Superintendent for the Pleasanton Unified School District. I was a little worried about whether or not I could do this job, but then, just as when I started the seminary and realized I had my own room, I realized that in my new superintendent's office had my own bathroom. My own bathroom! I can do this job! I have my own bathroom! I loved every minute of my year as superintendent! I think we accomplished a lot in the district that year.

I am now retired, but I still spend time in the schools. I help out as administrative support in Pleasanton and Dublin and serve as an administrator when they are short at one school or another. I am also happy to coach new administrators in their first two years on the job and guide them in receiving their full administrative credential through the ACSA LEAD program. Working with these aspiring young vice principals as they begin their administrative careers, I am encouraged that the future of education is in good hands. I know these issues will be addressed for the sake of the kids. Kids are still kids! And as Father Giaquinto indicated to me many years ago, it is all about respect and forging relationships.

COACH GORDON LACEY HONORED BY FORMER ST. JOE'S ATHLETES AT BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Former St. Joseph High School athletic director and coach Gordon Lacey celebrated a milestone birthday with more than 40 ex-student-athletes, along with a number of their wives and girlfriends, on Saturday, June 18th at St. Patrick's Seminary in Menlo Park. Held in Archbishop Riordan Hall adjoining the seminary's dining complex, the much-anticipated party – originally planned for 2020 but delayed due to COVID – marked Mr. Lacey's 80th birthday. The catered event was partially funded by the

Alumni Association, while the seminary venue was made available thanks to the generosity of St. Patrick's rector Fr. Mark Doherty.

Coach Lacey had flown in from Seattle with his wife, Lynne Simons, to attend the celebration and reconnect with many of his former top athletes, some whom he had not seen in more than 50 years. Mr. Lacey headed the seminary's athletic program from 1966-1975 and has

often referred to his time at St. Joe's as "some of the best years of my life."

During a brief introductory talk, Alumni Association president Mike Sheehan (H'71) noted that Coach Lacey was the driving force behind the establishment of interscholastic sports at St. Joe's, as well as the building of a new high school gym with its modern basketball court, spacious locker room and first-class equipment.

"Sports were an essential part of seminary life for many of us, and Coach provided opportunities for every student with ability to train and compete against other schools, while also maintaining the traditional on-campus



*Coach Gordon Lacey
Honored by Former St. Joe's Athletes at Birthday Celebration
with Sal Chavez (l) and Mike Sheehan (r)*

intramurals program," Sheehansaid. "His leadership and guidance allowed the soccer, basketball, baseball, tennis and track teams first to become competitive, then eventually successful by stressing hard work, dedication and conditioning. Perhaps the on-field culmination of Coach Lacey's impact was that he helped turn a tiny school with less than 150 students into a soccer powerhouse with 38 wins in two years against only 11 losses. When the St. Joe's Bruins showed up to play wearing their blue and gold uniforms, every public and Catholic school opponent knew they were in for a tough match."

Coach Lacey addressed the crowd of well-wishers.

"I'm very happy to celebrate my birthday with a group that means so much to me," he told the gathering. "Having known you as boys during the late 1960s and early 1970s and then seeing your faces again today as men is one of the most satisfying events of my life. Knowing that I played some part in your personal growth and professional careers gives me the best birthday present one could ask for. My teaching and coaching position at St. Joseph High School and St. Patrick's College was meant to be, and I'm most grateful for having been given the opportunity."

Following Mr. Lacey's comments, a large sheet cake was brought out and the group warmly sang "Happy Birthday" to their former mentor and coach.

"I'm very grateful to Mike Sheehan and the Alumni Association for making this day possible," Coach Lacey said. "I hope we can find a reason for another celebration before too much time passes that gives us the opportunity to share more memories and stay in touch."

"Thank you to everyone, especially those who traveled so far to attend," he concluded. "Please know that each one of you will always hold a special place in my heart."

EDITOR'S NOTE: Gordon Lacey also said: "As students, as intramural participants and as members of an after school sport we bonded together to study, to have fun and to compete against individuals with a high degree of skill in after school sports. You bonded together as teenagers and now we must bond together as adults. The Alumni Association is the backbone to keeping us together, to be there when one is in need. Remember, our sports programs were successful because we played as one, we picked each other up when they were down, we padded one on the back when they did well, and now as we approach the senior age we must again reach out with a helping hand when in need. If you have not already, join the Alumni Association, attend the next sports banquet and definitely attend my 85th birthday celebration!"

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Thank you!

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Please do contact us with any change of address, suggestions, alumni updates, opinions or concerns.

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