

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

[www.saintjosephscollege.org](http://www.saintjosephscollege.org)

Winter 2022 Newsletter

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

## Alumni Events

### DAY OF RECOLLECTION

On February 5, 2022, beginning at 9:00 a.m., we will return in person to St. Patrick's seminary for our annual Day of Recollection. However, we will Zoom the event too. Thus, those of you who would like to attend but cannot because of the distance will be able to do so.

The "theme" will be "A Spirituality for Aging". This is a theme that many of you indicated an interest in hearing. Our Director for the Day will be Mr. Geoff Wood. Geoff is a former priest, a theologian and academic who has in his many years of marriage and family life suffered more than an ordinary share of "crosses". Now in his 90s, and still very much active, Geoff will bring a certain real authenticity in discussing with us a spirituality for our own aging. Priests generally do not have this "lived authenticity" that comes from experiencing tragedies of children dying, spouses in dementia, etc.. Thus, we are fortunate to have a Director who has suffered like many of us and who has the lexicon to speak of spirituality. Our thanks to Dennis McQuaid for securing Geoff for us.

Look for a separate Invitation or contact Don Carroll at [donandmaryjocroll@gmail.com](mailto:donandmaryjocroll@gmail.com).

**In this winter issue we again choose a different theme.**

**We choose to look at music in our shared history at St. Joe's and at St. Pat's.  
We would like to thank Frs. Jim Aylward and Milt Walsh for their hard work  
in producing this issue.**

## PRELUDE

### JIM AYLWARD, RHET'58

Last July my classmate Don Carroll contacted me, proposing, "We've just done a newsletter about sports at SJC. Now how about one on music?" I agreed. So, after much research, many interviews, and some hounding of guy to write articles, I present the result, which hopefully you'll enjoy reading.

Some folks consider the Olivier years (1947 – 1965) as central to S.J. C's musical life. No doubt about that – but records also indicate some not so insignificant musical times and talents before and after Olivier, as well as his spectacular

in-between years. In this issue we'll try to cover them all at least briefly (minus a few years' gaps here and there, where no records were available to us), trusting that SJC musicians of all generations may come to appreciate and admire each other's contributions to SJC's sixty-five-year history.

We've tried to use as many photos as space allowed, or that we could locate, of key SJC music figures. Photos of some, however, were just not available. The quality of those that were found, was not always the best, but we thought it better to include those photos rather than to omit them.

## MUSIC BEFORE OLIVIER

### JIM AYLWARD

The earliest musician on record, Fr. George Hoey (of SPS's first ordination class), began directing choir at SJC in 1924-25, at which time the "College" also boasted a band called "Sousa's Pride". Not long thereafter, Fr. Royal B. ("the Floater") Webster, S.S. (1879-1961), who had arrived at SPS September 9, 1908, moved to St. Joseph's to preside at the organ console, always surrounded by a screen. In the 1950's, as a substitute infirmarian, I now and then had occasion to bring meals to "the Floater's" third floor suite next to the elevator and to browse through (among many oddities) his collection of organ music, some of which was pretty decent stuff. My colleague, Paul Page (R'69) and I still possess a few of his scores (autographed!), which we were able to pilfer from the choir room bookshelf.



*SJC Choir, with Riddlemoser, 1937*

In the mid-1930's Fr. Joe Riddlemoser, S.S. (1899-1978) appeared on the scene "rendering the chant" not only in the old SJC chapel but also at pontifical high Masses in the Cathedral and Civic Auditorium. One can only imagine the scenario when he and the Floater teamed up to work with the choir.

An old *Patrician* notes that on December 3, 1939 (Rhet Night), Fr. William ("Bucky") O'Connor, S.S., (1887-1968), then SJC's librarian and classics professor, debuted his student orchestra, which continued throughout the '40's. Msgr. John Coleman (R '44) tells me that Bucky, a gifted violinist, generously and patiently attempted to teach him and the other students the instrument during that time.

Old *Patricians* also mention a number of other student musicians during the pre- Olivier years (E. Brainard, J. Cunningham, J. Duryea, J. Halligan, J. Heaney, W. Holleran,

J. Johnson, N. McFarland, M. Mitchell, F. Norris, J. Ryan, and L. Williams, to name a few.) Two names stand out: Joe Martinelli (R' 38) (eventually the Archdiocesan Music Director) and Jim Ward (R' 42), later pastor of St. Matthew's

parish in San Mateo, probably SJC-SPS's most outstanding pre-Olivier musician. A 1943 *Patrician* states that Jim Ward's name "was practically synonymous with music; whether at the organ, piano, or one of the brass instruments, James can play it." Invaluable as a performer, director, and arranger, Jim was always there to keep Joe Riddlemoser (not as gifted a musician as he) on the right note.

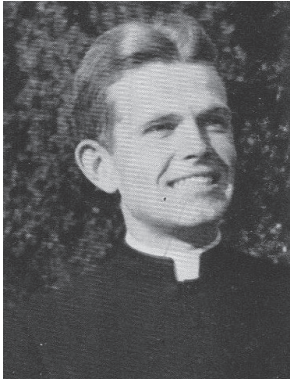
At the end of this line of musicians in 1943 came Fr. Andrew Forster, S.S. (1914-1997), a worthy precursor to Jack Olivier, "whose dogged and successful determination to teach his students to sight-read the chant and his humorous descriptions in music practice ("Your singing sounds so wooden, like storks walking down the stairs.") helped to give San Francisco a seminary choir of which it could be proud." As Bishop John Cummins put it recently, "Music at SJC blossomed under Forster."



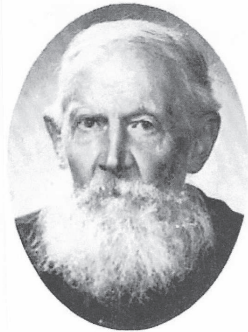
*Father Riddlemoser*

Gifted with a good voice and a real proficiency both in the chant and choir conducting, Fr. Andy for nearly 40 years allowed himself to be shuttled back and forth between SJC and SPS to keep the cause of music alive and to pick up the pieces during Jack Olivier's troubled later years at the College.

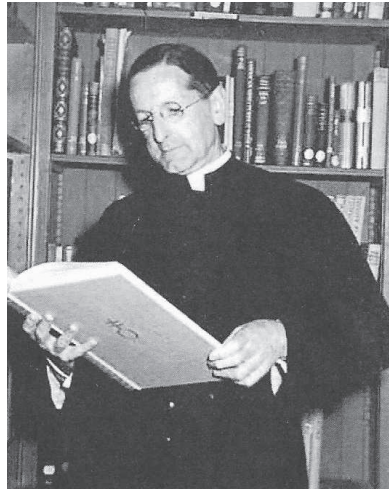
Both Paul Page (in his excellent article below) and I concur that the greatness of this humble and gentle priest consisted in his ability to bring the musical best out of students (some more talented than he) by allowing them to develop their conducting, composing, and accompanying skills publicly for the sake of the community.



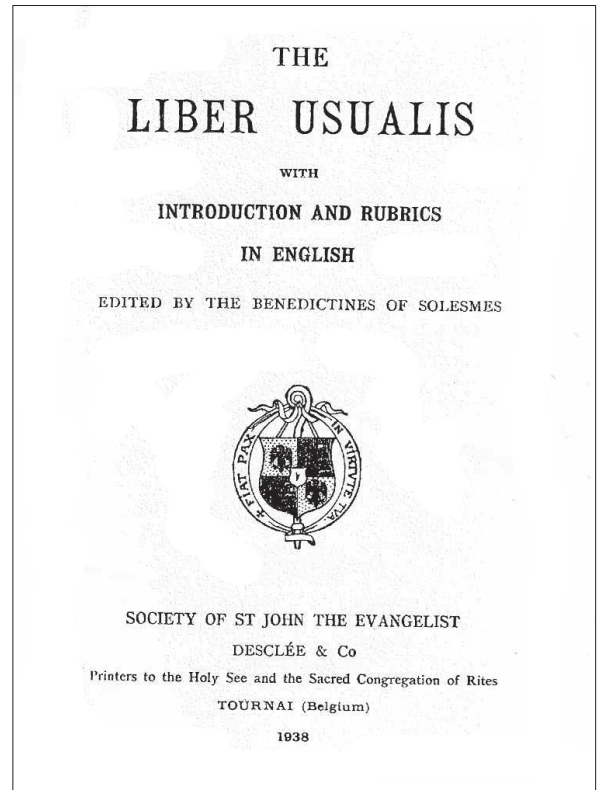
*Jim Ward*



*Father Royal B. Webster*



*Father William O'Connor*



*Liber Usualis*

During Andy's and Jack Olivier's years the staple of SJC's musical diet was Gregorian Chant, which both of them conducted exquisitely, in the best of the smooth, even Solesmes tradition. One would've had to search far and wide to find the chant better taught and performed. I might add that any student who spent a substantial amount of time at the College during their time would leave SJC endowed with

a generous exposure to the Gregorian repertoire (antiphons, hymns, psalm tones, Mass ordinaries and propers, etc.), truly a valuable legacy of Western musical culture.

Now onto that uniquely gifted priest musician John H. Olivier (1920-2013), as seen in Joe Gordon's (R' 65) very impressive portrait of him below.

## **THE MUSIC OF JOHN OLIVIER: HOW IT ALL BEGAN JOE GORDON, RHET'65**

I have no doubt that thousands of folks who remember Father John Olivier will inevitably include the word "music" whenever sharing memories of this exquisitely talented and much beloved man. His virtuosity as a trained pianist and organist, and his profound understanding of music's role in human lives are legend. But it might surprise you that relatively few have heard John himself tell how it all began. Here, then, is my transcription of a conversation we had sixteen years ago when John described how music came into his life, a topic about which he had shared very little with anyone before, or since, our chat.

On one of my frequent 2000s visits to John in Catonsville, MD, he asked me in 2005 to drive him to an ophthalmologist appointment. Macular degeneration was irreversibly destroying his sight. While in the waiting room, our conversation not surprisingly turned to music, and there followed a chat which provided a glimpse into the heart of

a dear friend, when I asked him something I had years before placed on my to-do list of questions for him, "About music, John, how did it all begin for you?"

"Well, Joe, my parents recalled for me when I was ten-something that as a three-year-old I would never scamper past our upright piano without tapping a few keys on my way to our Marquette, Michigan backyard. My parents loved making and playing music at home and so did our entire family, and one or the other would often invite me to the bench and for a few minutes guide me through some unison, no-harmony ditty or other. I'm grateful to this day that my mother and father never pressured me to become, or not become, a trained pianist, and I proudly tell folks that I share what was my father's prodigious memory for song lyrics and melodies. In the years before I entered St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, it was great fun to imitate him at our living room upright piano, and for many years, I might add, at many a free night of entertainment at St. Joseph's College.



“By the time I was six or seven they were asking me if I would like piano lessons. I happily agreed! Soon I began lessons with one of our neighbors, who guided me in sight reading and music theory which later aided me enormously in my seventy-some years of accompanying choirs and congregations. (My ear for music, though, was my teacher par excellence!) Continuing those lessons throughout my high school years in Marquette I was soon well on my way to playing more and more difficult pieces, and hosting lighter family entertainment, a la Victor Borge, on frigid Michigan evenings.

“Now, what about the organ?” “Well, in one of my high school summers the pastor of Marquette’s St. Peter Cathedral made his usual announcement that the annual visit from an organ tuner was imminent, and the tuner would need a piano-savvy summer assistant to assist him from the console when he hollered instructions from deep inside the pipe chambers. The tuner would not only be servicing the organ, I discovered, but he would also be evaluating me, and soon I was hired! Recognizing that I had skills and training that were more developed than a typical adolescent’s, he eventually asked, to my delight, if I would be interested in taking organ lessons. ‘Absolutely!’, I enthused, and he taught me the rudiments of playing and reading music for two hands and two feet, and all manner of details about the pipe organ. I was also bringing to the organ my skill at transposing, wonderfully useful in later years when I would accompany seminarians’ early morning husky voices just out of bed. I made splendid progress in those organ lessons, and as a delightful extra, our Cathedral organ was at my summer-time disposal. Yes, I was making swell, even great progress... Sorry, I couldn’t resist that, Joe.” (JHO’s unforgivable pun, not mine.)

“When I entered St. Charles College Seminary in Catonsville at about the age of 17, I became proficient on that organ, too, and I was soon selected to join future Sulpician and classmate Paul Genovese and one or two others as a St. Charles College organist. Sulpicians Geno Walsh and John Selner became marvelous mentors to Paul and me in our subsequent years at nearby St. Mary’s seminary in the Roland Park area of Baltimore.

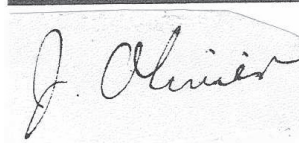
“Having heard of the possibility of weekly organ lessons at Johns Hopkins University, the St. Charles faculty recommended a weekly after-school class at the University’s prestigious Peabody Institute, provided

those sessions not interfere with my coursework and other responsibilities at St. Charles.” (JG: a San Francisco priest and former Sulpician on the faculty of St. Charles at the time, John Zoph, fondly recalled that “Jack was the best organist of them all.”) “Since I had already expressed a desire to become a Sulpician after ordination, the Superior and Faculty at St. Mary’s approved my request, and if the Bishop of Marquette agreed I would then be assigned after ordination to, very likely, one of the Sulpician minor seminaries. My teaching would include, among numerous non-music courses, significant responsibilities for the seminary liturgical music program.” (JG: Jack’s students would doubtless agree when I recall that he was one of the most gifted teachers in any course we had there or elsewhere, ever.)



Joe Gordon

“I arrived at St. Joseph’s College as a newly ordained priest in 1947, and my duties brought me immense happiness in that eighteen-year assignment. Eventually, with the approval of Fr. Al Giaquinto, President of the College in the early 1960s and the Sulpician Provincial in Baltimore, I was accepted for evening courses at nearby Stanford University, in an arrangement that enabled me to study privately under the University Church organist and professor of music, Herbert Nanney, as well as the opportunity to enhance my music education acquired years earlier at Peabody. Earning a second Master’s degree from Stanford came easily, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco was calling on me more frequently for input into its liturgy and music programs for parishes and schools in the marvelous directives of the second Vatican Council. I was also asked by the Archdiocesan Director of Music, Robert Hayburn, to offer my suggestions in the eventual purchase of the Austin organ, to be installed in the new College Chapel in 1955. That extraordinary instrument, having survived the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, now superbly serves the community at the St. Patrick’s Seminary chapel in Menlo Park. It was ‘born’, however, at the headquarters of the Austin Organ Company in Hartford, CT, and I remember how pleased and proud I was that I had persuaded Bob to select and Austin for the new chapel.”



At that touching and serendipitous moment the ophthalmologists nurse came into the room and informed John that the doctor was ready to see him.

John Olivier shared all of this with me when he was a young 85 years old, and since all of us who knew him recall how reluctant he

was to ever talk about himself, having him open up at my request was a John Olivier gift second only to the gift which he had been sharing with thousands for 82 years, and it all began at the family upright piano in Marquette: the gift of his music. He liked to describe certain folks and moments in

life with the adjective “noble” whenever appropriate, and I can think of a no more heartfelt way to thank him for this conversation than to say (certainly not to sing, however) Praise God from whom all blessings flow, and praise God for this noble man named John.

## THE EARLY OLIVIER YEARS

### JIM AYLWARD

I arrived at SJC as a Sixth Latiner on 9-9-52 with a smattering of piano lessons in my portfolio and even less organ. The following Sunday, toting a black *Liber Usualis*, a blue St. Gregory Hymnal, and a tan Selner “Catholic Hymns”, I entered the old SJC chapel for Solemn Mass. As much as any fourteen-year-old could have an “epiphany”, I did, astonished by the sound of the choir, the novelty of the Chant, and the quality of Father Olivier’s organ playing. Ditto for that afternoon’s Vespers.

Wanting to play like JHO, I approached him several weeks later, hoping that he’d give me some lessons; but he didn’t seem interested. And to be honest, I, unlike many of my fellow SJC musicians below (Wingell, Osuna, Perry, Gordon, Page, etc.), never received a great deal of explicit encouragement from him during my six years there.

Yet, his very musical excellence and presence inspired me throughout SJC to observe and imitate what I would hear from him until I could begin to do it myself. (Of course, summer organ lessons from Bay area musicians helped.) Jack’s smooth and sophisticated accompaniment of the Chant surpassed the stodgy rules often found in plainsong textbooks. His rhythmically exciting and harmoniously adventurous hymn playing went beyond what run-of-the-mill hymnals contained. In fact, a Protestant organist once told me in amazement, “That Jack Olivier can play the hell out of a hymn!”

Most of all, though, Jack could masterfully create, during services, melodically finished, harmonically subtle, metrically consistent improvisations light years ahead of the usual “noodling” one might hear from the best church organists. In a word, JHO was never “blah” at the console.

I have to admit that even without lessons or encouragement from him his musical excellence and presence influenced my musical development more than any subsequent music professor I’d later encounter in the academe. Without his modeling I doubt that I’d ever have had the wherewithal to gain an MA in music (SJSU), a doctorate in organ performance (CUA), certification in Gregorian Chant, to become archdiocesan music director, and to compose-publish seven well-reviewed albums of organ music.

But now let me pass on to several contemporaries, some more gifted than I, with whom I had the privilege of working during my years at SJC; in the order of seniority:

DICK WINGELL (1936-2012): When Dick Wingell (R’ 55), already a superb pianist, entered the College in the fourth high, Jack Olivier auditioned him and said, “You’re going to be my organist.” Dick responded, “but, Father, I’ve never played the organ and don’t know how to read the Chant.” By the end of the year, however, Dick would accompany the Chant at sight from the *Liber*, and by the middle of theology would attain the American Guild of Organists second highest award: AAGO certification.

Without Dick, most of SJC’s musical activities throughout the early 50s, liturgical and secular, would never have happened. He either accompanied or directed countless musicals, arranged or composed sacred motets and pop songs, played an inimitable, and enviable pop and jazz piano, etc., etc.

At an alumni celebration before he died, Dick confided to me his immense gratitude to Jack Olivier who had encouraged him from the moment he entered SJC, motivating him to become a proficient organist, to earn after ordination a doctorate in musicology at USC (quite a feat for a jazz pianist!) and to spend his adult years there as professor of music. Dick also authored several books, his magnum opus being *Experiencing Music* (Alfred, 1981), an insightful selection and analysis of key moments in the history of western music.

As Junior house organist to Dick for several years, I can attest that he was arguably the finest all-around student musician to have passed through the halls of SJC during the Olivier, or perhaps any, years. May he rest in peace.

DON OSUNA (Rhet’57): Don Osuna entered SJC as a sophomore in 1953. In his own words, “Soon after I joined the choir, Olivier recognized my musical talents, and handed over the choir direction to me, preferring to accompany the group on the newly installed organ. His first love and forte was always the keyboard.” Thereafter, Don became essential to SJC’s musical life, organizing with his classmates Mike

Kenny and Dan Danielson, musical endeavors like “Kismet”, “California or Bust”, Benjamin Britton’s “Ceremony of Carols”, and on the road Christmas, summer, wedding, and first Mass choirs. “Under Olivier’s inspiration I undertook formal musical studies at Holy Names College, Stanford, and UC Berkeley. Ten years after ordination I completed a Masters of Fine Arts at Mills College in Oakland in



Don Osuna

electronic music and recording media.” Don also became music director of the Oakland Diocese, composed service music still published in missalettes, and with John McDonnell (R’58) established the monumental, nationally known Oakland Cathedral liturgy, about which you can read in

Don’s fascinating book, “How Awesome Is This Place” (Aventine, 2011). “At every stage of my musical life, Father John Olivier was there, encouraging, fostering and inspiring me to move forward. He was truly a musical mentor and model to many a seminarian, embodying an appreciation, for all musical idioms and the fine arts in general.”



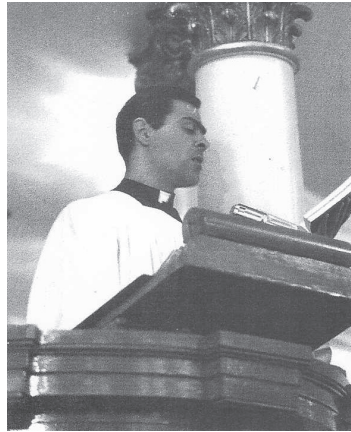
Jerry Brown and Jim Aylward at Alumni Day, 2018

JERRY BROWN (Rhet’58): Jerry, my classmate, entered SJC with one of the best solo and ensemble voices I knew and, of course, the ability to read music. For all twelve years he was a mainstay in the second tenor section of the choir, eventually rising to student choir director. While still in the seminary Jerry not

only took vocal instruction but also completed the rigorous coursework required by the *Institut Gregorien de Paris* to gain certification in Gregorian Chant. In addition, Jerry took major roles in and/or directed several extra liturgical events such as the “Mikado”, Eastern churches day concerts, in-seminary Christmas choir recitals, and summer music events in parishes. Later as a Sulpician priest he organized and directed several seminary choirs of note, and cantored at a

papal visit. After serving as Sulpician Provincial, president of SJC and Rector of SPS, Jerry retired to the Sulpician house in Baltimore where, until the Covid crisis, he continued to cantor for daily Masses.

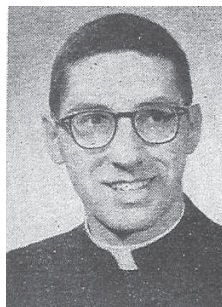
BOB SILVA (Rhet’59): when Bob entered Sixth Latin in 1953, able to sing and play the piano, he was right away drafted by JHO into the first bass section of the choir, a



Bob Silva

twelve year stint. Like Don Osuna and Jerry Brown he participated in or directed SJC musical events and cantored (I still remember Bob’s uncanny ability to improvise chant melodies to English lyrics in accurate modal style). Like them he rose to student music director. Bob’s talent and musical experience prompted Bishop Hugh Donohoe (R’ 24) to appoint him

Stockton music director after ordination, as well as chaplain of UOP, where he organized the chorus and orchestra and served as the University’s lecturer in Gregorian chant. Bob later cantored for the NPM Convention and helped found the Tuolumne County Symphony Orchestra. Now actively retired, Bob can boast many post-ordination music achievements, for which his SJC experience well-equipped him.



Paul Perry

PAUL PERRY (Rhet’61): when Paul entered first high he already played the organ so well that Olivier immediately drafted him. Thereafter Paul served as Junior organist to me, as I had to Dick Wingell, and then as sole house organist after I was ordained. Often when JHO directed the choir, he demanded some not-so-easy on the spot musical feats from his organists (transpose this, improvise

that, play louder, softer, faster, slower, in such-and-such a style, etc.) all of which Paul could not only handle with ease but seemed to enjoy doing. In addition, Paul accompanied many SJC/SPS musicals and was much in demand as an organist at first Masses. When Paul “graduated” from SJC to SPS, a 1961 Patrician article asked, “Who can take his place? - - which was a question foremost in the mind of Father Olivier, whom he served as organist.” After ordination Paul would give several organ recitals each year (until Covid struck), thrilling audiences with his repertory, but only after instructing them, “WATCH THE FEET!”



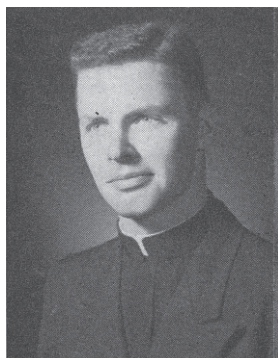
Before passing on to Paul Page's outstanding piece on the later Olivier years, via Paul Gorman's fine article on SJC's jazz band, I'd like to cite several other musicians and impresarios of the early Olivier years worthy of mention: Terry Loughran (R'52), Rolando Juarez (R'53), Louis Persano (R' 54), M. Barrigan (R' 55), Bill Souza (R'56), Gene McAuliffe (R' 58), Jim Riordan (R' 60), Ed Gaffney (R'61), and Larry Carolan (R' 63), some of whom served as student music directors, or who produced, directed, and

sang in various SJC musical events. Many others deserve mention but my aging memory, alas and apologetically, no longer permits their recall.

To conclude. If JHO were still with us, he would have good reason to look with satisfaction and pride on the constellation of musical achievers that emerged from SJC under his tutelage and influence.

## BYE, BYE BLUES PAUL GORMAN RHET'53

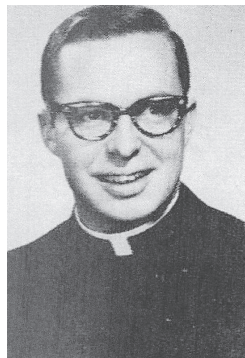
It all began with a little banjo ukulele I got for Christmas in 1950. I taught myself a number of popular tunes from the thirties and would play at the side of the pool while the guys joined in. "Five Foot Two", "Ain't She Sweet", and the like. This led to the formation of a group that played in one of the vacant bedrooms on the fourth floor assigned to us. Jim Fitzgerald ("Fitzbo", R' 54) plucked a huge bass fiddle found in Father Bucky O'Connor's "music room", Joe Skillin (R' 55) the trombone, and I an old banjo. We played, "Mamma don't allow no fiddle playin' around here ... or 'trombone playin' or 'banjo playin'" over and over, and loud.



Paul Gorman

At about that time Dick Wingell, who played piano with great skill, transferred from Serra. He really liked New Orleans blues: "St. Louis Woman", "Sweet Georgia Brown" and Count Basie stuff like "Black and Blue". My dad gave me a decent banjo and with Dick on the piano we began to sound like a civilized band. I was practicing at home in the summer, keeping up with the "Firehouse Five" Dixieland band on the phonograph. At Christmas the hospital choir

would come over to our house, Wingell would play my mom's piano, and Fitzbo would bring that big old base and we would make a joyful sound the neighbors could enjoy through the open windows.



Dick Wingell

decided to transfer to USF, Miles Riley stepped behind the big double bass.

I was ordained in 1959 and for me the music ended until a Semnet gathering (4-26-2012) when Fitzbo and Larry Murphy and Dick Wingell and I got together and played one more time. We ended with, "Bye, Bye Blues". Dick died Dec. 27, 2012.

## THE LATER OLIVIER YEARS PAUL PAGE RHET'67

Entering St. Joseph's College in September 1961, I vividly remember my first day there. Vespers took place at 4:00 p.m.; I'd never heard music like that and was immediately mesmerized by the sound of 350 boys chanting the Psalm tones back and forth. Then there was Benediction, Thursday morning Mass, and chant class with JHO in the basement of the high school wing every week. Learning about neums, punctums, quilismas, and the various modes so different from the diatonic scales and notation I'd experienced from eight years of piano fascinated me.

By November that year Fr. Olivier had asked me (the only freshman) to join the choir, which was in the midst of learning the *Missa Salve Regina* by Jean Langlais, with the intent of singing it for Immaculate Conception, but then a flu epidemic struck. The Rector, Fr. Charles ("There will be no epidemic") Dillon (1914-2003) had to relent and send us home ten days before the scheduled vacation. Though the choir preparation was in vain, I managed to abscond with the full score (for safekeeping) which I still have.

In January 1962 it was announced that Olivier was

“taking a leave” and that Fr. Roger O’Brien, S.S. would serve as music director the rest of the year. Meanwhile, Jim Aylward and Paul Perry tag-teamed as Sunday organists because, with Jack gone, we had no one to play. In April, Fr. O’Brien learned that I was a pretty good pianist and asked me to play the organ for Benediction and eventually Mass. Little by little, practicing the organ in the chant room below the Chapel, I started to get the hang of it.

When school resumed in my sophomore year (Sept. ‘62), Fr Olivier magically reappeared and asked me to accompany, at least part of the time, while he handled the harder things. At that time we also had capable choir directors like Wally Nicholas (R’65) and Mike Gannon (R’65). During that year one significant thing stood out for me. I had the inspiration to compose a Latin Mass and asked Fr. Olivier to listen to it. His reaction (and I remember his exact wording) was, “Very nice, Paul. Maybe we can sing that someday.” As a matter of fact, we never did, and in retrospect thankfully so. But just the thought of “maybe someday” was enough to inspire in me a life of musical composition.

In the fall of 1963, Fr. Olivier composed a new Mass in honor of St. Andrew, dedicated to Fr Forster, who had joined our faculty the previous year and was celebrating his 25th anniversary. JHO asked me to accompany on the organ while he directed. Listening to his masterful organ improvisations that year, learning to play as many hymns as I could as well as some Bach, and doing a bit of composing expanded my musical education tremendously. I continued showing my compositions to Fr. Olivier, who was a gentle and wise teacher, always full of intelligent thoughts about music, but never suggesting that I change a thing. His method was to let the music and my skills evolve gradually.

By the end of 1963 Fr. Olivier was not doing well and was reassigned to SPS. Thus began my tenure as “house organist” under the leadership of Fr. Andy Forster, who encouraged my composing music and using it during the services. During 1965 I met Bob Freitas (R’ 67), quite a fine organist, with whom I began not only to share organist duties but to stage annual piano recitals, inviting other talented students

to participate. We did some good solo repertory as well as duets. Also that year we bound together a large collection of newly composed vernacular Masses, mostly by Fr. Olivier and some by me, which endeavors Fr. Forster backed 100%.

In my Rhet year (1966-67) I took over all the organ responsibilities, inviting some younger students like Kevin Joyce (R’ 71), a good performer, to play as well. At that time Fr. Forster allowed me to try my hand at writing “proprs” for every Mass in the liturgical year. The Liber no longer holding exclusive sway. Fr. Forster’s having such faith in me really gave me a chance to spread my compositional wings.



*Paul Page and Jack Olivier*

When I entered First Philosophy at SPS in 1967-68, Olivier, though nominally in charge of things liturgical, was not doing well, and music for high Mass and Vespers virtually stopped completely. I composed a Mass that featured the entire assembly whistling (no kidding) during bridge passages. We sang it only once. At Easter, Fr. Olivier came back to direct the choir, which I accompanied on a rented electronic organ. For the final hymn (“Roll back, ye heavens”) he hopped onto the pipe organ bench, and we essentially had dueling organs going at the end of Mass. Hilarious!

My Second Philosophy and final year at the seminary, I had a car and freedom to come and go as I wished, working at St. Lucy’s parish playing weddings, funerals, and Sunday Masses. This was a strange year because half my class lived at SPS and the other half at SJC. Also that year (1968) Fr. “Bucky” O’Connor died. In one evening I composed a Requiem Mass for his funeral and invited the SPS choir to join our choir at SJC for the funeral. Kevin Joyce played the organ; Tom Smith (R?) played Bucky’s violin; and I directed. Finally and fittingly, that year I played the organ for my graduation Mass.



*Father Forster*

Over my six years in the Sem we did a number of musicals (My Gentle Man, The King and I, Oliver, The Roar of the Greasepaint and the Smell of the Crowd); Forster organized the orchestra (as he often had when he first came to SJC in the 40’s) which played beautifully.

After leaving the College I went into high school teaching (doing orchestra and choir) and



kept playing and conducting for over forty years, first at St. Lucy's in Campbell and then at St. Mary's in Los Gatos. A final note: my wife Teddy and I just celebrated our fiftieth wedding anniversary. We'd been married in 1971 by my dear

friend Fr. Bill O'Keefe, concelebrating with John Brennan (R '62), and of course, Andy Forster, whom we had been so fortunate to have had at SJC.

## MUSIC AFTER OLIVIER MILT WALSH, HS '70, C '74

When I arrived in Mountain View in September, 1966, one year after the close of Vatican II, I was a "Sixth Latiner." Students wore ties to class (clip-on for many of us!), and cassock and surplice for Sunday Mass. Beneath every other seat in the chapel lurked a hefty *Liber Usualis*, which got occasional use. Most of our music came from: wonderful four-part Mass settings in English by Fr. Olivier and Paul Page, *The People's Mass Book*, a hymnal created by Fr. John Selner, S.S., and a slim volume of in-house-produced music. Fr. Forster presided over the choir, instructed us in Gregorian Chant ("Don't bump the quilisma!"), and provided a great deal of entertainment to us, intentionally and not, as he had for generations of seminarians before us.

We had a robust choir and a student organist (Kevin Joyce) and several guitarists. The old traditions were still in place, with a veneer of novelty. The following year everything changed. As we sang, "It's a Brand New Day"! Cassock and surplice were gone, ditto with ties, the seminary opened up, and in fact 1968 saw the birth of two communities on one campus: a four-year high school in the old building, a four-year college in the new wing. Weekends away meant less time and energy to devote to in-house activities; no more musicals, for example. Andy continued to preside over liturgical music, as he would for the rest of my time in high school, but it was a world very different from what had gone before. The choir continued and more student organists emerged (two of them my classmates, Mario Starc (HS 70) and Jim Denman (C' 74), and later, Ray Sacca, C' 75), but the tide was turning quickly: now guitar music was in the ascendant with chant, choral music, and traditional hymns on the wane.

Some of the early "folk Mass" music left much to be desired. Sebastian Temple and Ray Repp were particularly weak. For an entertainment night my classmate Steve Otellini and I took some of their tunes and set new lyrics to them, everything from a "Chefboyardee" spaghetti commercial to a

tribute to the Native Americans then occupying Alcatraz Island. Fr. John Ward (1914-2009) called us in and in the nicest possible way (as he did everything), informed us that we could not perform these pieces. Why not? "The music director for next year, Fr. Bill Queenan, likes Sebastian Temple, and if I let you do this, we will never be able to perform his music in the chapel again." "But, Father, that's our goal!" Guitarists grew apace during those years, aided now by drummers and other musicians. Everything was done with great enthusiasm. This was "our" music.

This mix of mostly new and some old continued when we moved over to the college wing. Our muse there was Fr. Denis Des Rosiers, who had arrived at the college in 1969 and was there for most of my time there. Better music was being written (thank you, Sr. Suzanne Toolan!), and Denis developed a repertoire of very good modern choral music. John Greene (C' 72) joined the line of talented organists. Wednesday night Mass, a rockin' event, was open to the public and drew a lot of people. And our choir became musical ambassadors for the seminary, performing for celebrations outside. We sang at several events at the new St. Mary's Cathedral, including the dedication, and at various ecumenical events around the bay area, even an Easter Mass at Grace Cathedral. The attention to quality of performance continued in the post-conciliar seminary, as it had before, but the repertoire was now far more eclectic. The fact that

St. Joe's was no longer where we spent almost all of our time made a change ... but the "outreach" following Vatican II meant that the seminary musicians and choirs now enriched the liturgical and musical life of the wider Church.

But wait, there's more!

Jim Aylward interviewed Sr. Veronique Wiedower, CSC, who served as the College liturgy and music director (keyboard, guitar, choir) from 1974-5 and 1979-85. She held a BA in music and an MA in liturgical



Milt Walsh



Sister Veronique

studies. She told Jim that when she arrived at the College in 1979 there was no predecessor as music director and the situation was “grim”. When she left in 1985, there was no successor. During her tenure she developed small groups and a volunteer choir. The community relied on the hymnal *Worship*, music of the Dameans, and early St. Louis Jesuits compositions. Music featured lots of inculturation (students

from Colombia, Mexico, and Vietnam) and creativity. A couple of noteworthy student musicians were Liam Wait, who sang and played the bass (he called his instrument “Mabel”), and Mike Pavlakovich, who was a singer and composer. Sister’s comment: “I had a wonderful time there: music was such a great gift, as well as working with the Sulpicians.”

## MUSICAL MOMENTS BY SEVERAL OF US

Music-making at SJC and SPS allowed for all sorts of memorable episodes,  
from the sublime on down. Here we replay a few.

1. Kevin Ryan (R’ 53) and later Mike Kenny (R’57) soloing the Pentecost “Veni” - - bringing a tear to the eye. (JA)
2. Andy Forster, disgusted with our Vespers chanting, throwing his biretta into a choir seat and later plunking himself down on it, forgetting he’d tossed it there. (Don Carroll, R’ 58)
3. Being confronted after Sunday Mass by an irritated Kop Wagner (1902-1964) with, “Oh, organist, your Offertory piece gave me a hemorrhage” (Yup!). Playing the same kind of music as he *often* did, JHO would soon have caused Kop to bleed to death. (JA)
4. Floater entering the room where, as a Sixth Latiner, I was practicing the piano, asking if he could play for me. For a few remarkable moments he chortled in glee as his long-nailed fingers clattered over the keys. Leaving, he encouraged me to keep practicing. Within a couple of months, he was dead. (Paul Page, R’ 69)
5. Paul Gorman (R’ 53) playing the banjo, spectacularly. (JA)
6. Dick Wingell flawlessly accompanying the Jazz Group while at the same time gabbing with bystanders, a cigarette dangling from his mouth. (Paul Schmidt, R’ 58)
7. Hearing for the first time the *Widor Toccata* on the old chapel organ. Quite a motivation for a Sixth Latiner organist to keep practicing. (JA)
8. Olivier, as our Vesper psalm tones began going flatter and flatter, stepping up to the organ console and sounding the proper pitch loud, louder, and earsplitting, until we got it. He had perfect pitch, and when ours dropped, his temper rose. (Antonio Valdivia, R’ 57)
9. A dozen years later, the same Olivier striding up the chapel aisle during our Litany of the Saints and holding his nose in disdain at our ever-sinking pitch. Problems don’t change, just the solutions. (Paul Page)
10. Riddlemoser (1899-1978), Dillon (1914-2003), and Giguere (1917-2003), in a rare feat of togetherness, masterfully chanting the Holy Week Passions. (JA)
11. Rehearsing “There was a Man”, a musical life of Jesus, with the seminarians and trying to teach them how to dance and to mime the Resurrection. (Sr. Veronique Wiedower, CSC)
12. Dick Wingell and I before Sunday Vespers trying to disable a large, wailing organ pipe by pulling it from its socket, only to be greeted by a frightful sibilation, which we promptly strangled with a stray pair of old pajamas; that day, the organ lost a D-flat. (Good sense prevented us from telling Kop Wagner, the Rector and former organist, who probably went to his grave without discovering the missing D-flat, or the pajamas.) (JA)
13. The choir singing harmony under JHO’s direction at the yearly Corpus Christi procession in the courtyard and Marian feasts in the grotto. Pleasant memories! (JA)
14. Getting caught at 5 a.m. in the choir room practicing the organ for Sunday Mass, and Al Giaquinto threatening me with a “C” in conduct. My reply? “Give me my usual ‘A’ or find another organist.” I got my “A”. (Paul Page)
15. Playing for the first time (1956) SJC’s new Austin pipe organ (now in SPS chapel), which replaced the Moller organ (now in St. Kevin’s church, S.F.) from SJC’s old chapel. That’s 1118 vs. 250 pipes! (JA)
16. To conclude the annual Halloween bonfire, Olivier at an old piano atop a makeshift platform in the middle of the playing field accompanying us as we belted out the *Salve Regina*, holding cups of hot chocolate. Oh, to be back there again, well, only for a minute! (JA)



## POSTLUDE JIM AYLWARD

Preludes and postludes organists seldom play any longer, but as a finale, we who put this issue together admit the pleasure we had recalling the musicians, melodies, and memories that brought such fun, uplift, and joy to our time at SJC.

For much of that we can thank Andy Forster and Jack Olivier, under whose guidance the seminary (though by no means a music school) managed to produce scores of men who in choir and class learned to sing, to appreciate good music, and to foster it in parish churches, not to mention six diocesan music directors, five advanced degree musicians, several composers, music teachers, and choir masters. As my friend Jack O'Neill (R'61) used to quip, "We got enough music in the Sem to earn us a Masters in it at ordination."

St. Joe's truly bequeathed not only wonderful memories and lifelong friends, but, no less importantly, Christ-like modeling in moral, intellectual, and disciplinary skills which enabled many of us to excel in such diverse fields as law and the academe, theology and science, building and administration, finance and psychology, priesthood and raising families, and, yes, sports and music, a terrific legacy that might profitably be explored in future issues of the alumni newsletter.

Before concluding, I'd like to offer colossal thanks to Paul Gorman, Paul Page, Revs. Joe Gordon and Milt

Walsh for contributing articles to this issue; to Revs. Jerry Coleman, Denis Des Rosiers, Don Osuna, and Paul Schmidt, Monsignors John Coleman, John Talesfore, and Tony Valdivia, Sister Veronique Wiedower, CSC, Professor Al Wingell, Bishop John Cummins, Terry Loughran, and Don Carroll, all of whom offered interviews, pictures, and/or useful advice; to Mr. Moises Rendon for processing photographs; to Matthew Horwitz (SPS Librarian) for his hospitality and patient assistance in the library; and finally to Jim Harvey for his painstaking work on this issue's layout. Without their cheerful and generous cooperation, this Newsletter wouldn't have been possible.

All the above having been said, let me sum up this Newsletter with the words of old Fr. Patrick ("Jiggys") Lydon (1883-1969) as he departed SPS for retirement in 1952: "*Multa variaque labentibus annis et vidi et audivi quae olim meminisse iuvabit, si verba Maronis laudare liceat.*" i.e. "If I may freely paraphrase the good Virgil: 'As the years passed I saw and heard many things which I shall with pleasure remember.'"

No one is grading, but if you could not translate this sentence yourself, you may hear deep in your soul the judgment of the ages: "You give me nothing, I give you nothing. Zero."

Jim Harvey, Editor

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Thank you!

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### Contact Information

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

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