

SPRING 2024 | BC Performing Arts | Josh Sembrano | BC Maintenance Crew

# CRUSADER

MAGAZINE



WE ARE THE MUSIC MAKERS  
**Performing Arts Takes  
Center Stage at BC**







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## BERGEN CATHOLIC CRUSADER MAGAZINE

is a publication of Bergen Catholic High School, a college preparatory school for young men, grades 9–12. It is published by Christian Brothers (NJ) Institute under the direction of Dr. Brian Mahoney, President.

# UPCOMING EVENTS

## MAY 2024

### FRIDAY, MAY 17

8:00 – 11:00 PM

#### Class of 2003 20th Reunion

City Bistro  
56 14th Street  
Hoboken, NJ

### THURSDAY, MAY 23

7:00 PM

#### Cigars & Networking Night

Taverna on the Green  
314 Paramus Road  
Paramus, NJ  
*Golf available during the afternoon*

## JUNE 2024

### MONDAY, JUNE 10

7:00 PM

#### Bergen Catholic Golf Classic in Memory of Br. Burns

Hackensack Golf Club  
880 Soldier Hill Road  
Oradell, NJ  
*Congratulations to our Honorees  
Goya Foods & Tony Rocchio '76  
Morning & Afternoon Tee Times*

## JULY 2024

### SATURDAY, JULY 27

#### BC Beach Bash

Bar Anticipation  
703 16th Avenue  
Lake Como, NJ

## SEPTEMBER 2024

### THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

7:00 PM

#### Class of 1989 35th Reunion

Bacari Grill  
800 Ridgewood Road  
Washington Township, NJ

## OCTOBER 2024

### SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27

9:00 AM

#### Alumni Association Memorial Mass

Bergen Catholic Gymnasium & Cafeteria  
9:00 am – Doors open for Memorial  
Video Reflection  
10:00 am – Mass in the Gymnasium  
Brunch immediately following Mass  
in the Cafeteria

## NOVEMBER 2024

### FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 1

### SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2

#### Class of 1974 50th Reunion Weekend

##### Friday, November 1

Activities TBD

##### Saturday, November 2

10:30 am – Campus Tours  
12:00 pm – Tailgate  
1:00 pm – BC vs. Seton Hall Prep  
Crusader Stadium  
5:00 pm – 50th Reunion Mass  
BC Chapel  
6:30 pm – Reunion Dinner Reception  
Bacari Grill  
800 Ridgewood Road  
Washington Township, NJ

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21

#### Crusader Gala

The Venetian  
546 River Drive  
Garfield, NJ



Unless otherwise noted, please contact **Marge Quinn** at **201.634.4142** for event information, RSVPs and payment.

*If you would like to schedule your reunion, please contact Marge Quinn at the Alumni Office, 201.634.4142.*

*We are celebrating years ending in 4 and 9.*

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We Are The Music Makers

Cover photo by John Hund '79

# BC INVESTS IN ITS FUTURE

## Renovated locker rooms & LED scoreboard show commitment to Crusader student-athletes

Over the last few years Bergen Catholic has received generous contributions to help better the day-to-day lives of our BC student-athletes.

Thanks to the generosity of Gerry Crum AP '22, all of the Bergen Catholic locker rooms in Hoehl Gym were completely renovated thanks to the work of our BC maintenance team and now provide professional-grade locker rooms and team meeting areas for our Crusader student-athletes.

At Crusader Stadium, a state-of-the-art LED video board was mounted on a beautiful wall, which matches the stonework of other buildings on campus. Thanks to the generosity of Brian Delpome CP '24 (Ferreira Construction) and Eddie Guy (North Jersey Rebar), the scoreboard has become an essential feature of Bergen Catholic gamedays for the Crusader football, soccer, lacrosse & rugby programs and the envy of other schools in the area.



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Crusader Community,

We are delighted to share our spring Crusader Magazine with you. This edition highlights the many school-wide accomplishments and student successes we have achieved thus far in our academic year. As you turn the pages, we hope you'll be impressed with the outstanding efforts of our teachers and their quest to help students become the best version of themselves. Teaching and learning experiences are not only found in the classroom but through participation in mission and service opportunities as we embrace the charisma of our founder, Blessed Edmund Rice, and seek to live purposeful lives with a goal to give back and help those less fortunate.

As we look toward graduation in June, we're mindful of our seniors and their positive impact on our school community. Members of the Class of 2024 entered Bergen Catholic as young boys and are now positioned to graduate as gentlemen ready to lead; coupled with passion and energy, they'll shape the future as they make positive impacts in an ever-challenging world. This class continues to gain acceptance to top schools and receive generous merit scholarships rewarding them for their hard work and academic achievements. After a successful admissions cycle, we will proudly welcome over 200 incoming first-year students to the Class of 2028. We're impressed with the group of Crusaders joining us in September. They scored well on our entrance exams and are excited to be part of The Brotherhood.

The main feature of our Crusader Magazine provides an overview of the performing arts at Bergen Catholic. It's great to highlight our Men's Vocal Ensemble and the BC Drama Company led by long-time faculty member Barbara Peraino. Under her leadership, this group hosts Christmas and spring concerts and travels to multiple out-of-state locations to sing. We're proud of our young men and the women from Holy Angels who often perform with our students throughout the year.

We encourage you to participate in our Day of Giving on Friday, May 3. This is the one day our entire school community comes together to support our Crusader Fund and our greatest need — student tuition assistance. Gifts made to the Crusader Fund help to provide need-based aid to qualifying families and also help to keep tuition affordable while covering the gap it costs to educate each student. Please look for information on how you can help. Every dollar counts and goes to a great cause, which helps to make Bergen Catholic affordable for generations to come.

I hope you enjoy this issue of our Crusader Magazine. May God bless you and your family, and may we Live Jesus in our Hearts. Forever!

Deus Vult!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Mahoney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**Brian Mahoney, Ed.D.**  
President  
Bergen Catholic High School







# WE ARE THE MUSIC MAKERS

## The three leaders behind Bergen Catholic's Performing Arts program

**W**e have all become accustomed to familiar sounds lending to the soundtrack of our daily lives, transporting us back to specific times and places. For life as a student at Bergen Catholic, these familiar sounds may involve the steady wave of chatter in the cafeteria during lunch periods, the squeaking of sneakers in Hoehl Gym, or the cacophonous echo of the bell in the hallway when changing classes. But while many have experienced these recognizable sounds, they pale in comparison to the melodic notes of music that have been heard throughout the afternoon and evenings on campus courtesy of Bergen Catholic's Performing Arts program. A hidden gem for over the past 25 years in Oradell, the program is led by Peter Furlan, Barbara Peraino, and Charles Dougherty '05, and these three music makers are helping to lead the BC Performing Arts program into a new future.

While Bergen Catholic can boast of a rich tradition of academics and athletics since the school's inception in 1955, sadly it hasn't been able to look at a consistent dedication to the Arts in the same manner. In 1996, sensing a need to dedicate more opportunities and resources to musically-inclined students, principal Dr. Joseph Fusco hired Peter Furlan to help teach music lessons to Crusader students after school, and the modern age of BC Performing Arts was born.

Furlan came to Crusader Country as an accomplished saxophonist and music teacher, holding two master degrees in jazz performance and jazz composition and having shared the performance stage alongside music legends the likes of Dizzy Gillespie, The Temptations and the Four Tops. Furlan began his tenure at BC by simply hosting music lessons after school, but by his second year, he generated enough interest at the school to form a Jazz Ensemble and proceeded to host their first jazz concert, with special guests joining the Bergen Catholic musicians.

*Continued on next page*



“One thing we’ve always done is whenever we’ve had a concert is to have a guest artist, and that was for me always really inspiring,” said Furlan. “These guest artists come and rehearse with the kids, they talk to them, they inspire them. So that’s one thing that has helped the program grow. When you work with someone better, you perform at a whole different level, you have to raise your game.”

With the music foundation established, Furlan proceeded to expand on the music offerings at BC. He began teaching sectionals, which are longer practice periods during the school day, and even became the first faculty member to incorporate the use of Mac computers at the school when he ran a computer technology course with a focus on music technology and recording. These innovative music teaching opportunities, along with the Jazz Ensemble, helped pave the way for two of his BC students, Joseph Branciforte '03 and Rob Grimaldi '07 to later win Grammys as accomplished engineers and producers in the music industry, and established a legitimacy to BC’s Performing Arts program. But for 16 years, Peter Furlan remained the lone music teacher in Oradell, until a new operatic voice arrived.

Barbara Peraino came to Crusader Country in 2011, following a successful tenure leading the Gifted and Talented Program in Elizabeth, NJ for over 34 years. Before her time as an expert voice coach and teacher, Peraino herself was an acclaimed professional opera singer who performed with the Santa Fe Opera Company, Boston Opera Company, and became an international star in Europe, starring in the role of Cinderella in front of packed audiences at the Royal Opera House in Antwerp, Belgium. While some would say that playing the role of Cherubino in *The Marriage of Figaro* at the Paris Opera House would be a daunting task, an even greater challenge awaited Peraino: establishing a reputable men’s vocal ensemble at Bergen Catholic.

Upon her arrival to BC in October of 2011, Peraino started from scratch with her assembled students, and laid the foundation for her choral group. The rewards were seen in their first-ever spring concert later that school year, as Peraino worked her magic to have her students, who previously had no background in singing, perform “My Girl” in perfect unison. From that point on, Peraino raised the bar in her expectations of the newly established men’s vocal ensemble, and along with Peter

Furlan, began to expand the expectations and music offerings at Bergen Catholic overall.

“When we started there was no credibility, there was no accountability, if you didn’t show up, I had no power to do anything,” said Peraino. “But now the students get two credits a year and also get a letter grade twice a year, and they’re able to become a member of the Tri M National Music Honor Society, which is a service organization. I want these boys to share their musical talents.”

And the BC vocal ensemble has indeed shared their talents with audiences since 2011. A packed trophy case in the BC library is a testament to all the talented Bergen Catholic singers who have competed in choral competitions around the country under Peraino’s tutelage. And in addition to her work with her students, Peraino created the Bergen Goes to Broadway program, which allows anyone in the BC community the opportunity to purchase

tickets to a select Broadway show, dinner at famous New York restaurant Tony DiNapoli, and round-trip bus transportation from BC to New York. These group excursions to the Great White Way broaden an appeal to the Performing Arts throughout Bergen Catholic, and help to ignite possible hidden passions, much like what happened for one BC student at the start of his own crusade to a music career.

Charles Dougherty was on the fast track to success as soon as he stepped foot on campus in Oradell in the Fall of 2001. The future Bergen Catholic valedictorian for the Class of 2005 excelled academically, but

was looking to pursue and develop passions outside of his rigorous studies. Having played several different instruments in his childhood, Dougherty decided to take up playing the bass guitar as a freshman, and soon began to take notice of the sounds of jazz cascading out of a classroom during activity period while walking through the school. While other friends were already part of the Jazz Ensemble, Dougherty had yet to join the group, despite his own burgeoning music career. But one fateful afternoon, after walking past the classroom where the BC jazz musicians were assembled, Dougherty was called into the room by his friend, was formally introduced to Peter Furlan, and with that one encounter, a career of sweet music began.

“Much of who I am today is due to Performing Arts at Bergen Catholic,” said Dougherty. “Mr. Furlan encouraged me to join the Jazz Ensemble, so I did at the start of my sophomore year.

“When we started there was no credibility, there was no accountability, if you didn’t show up, I had no power to do anything.”





Pretty soon I found that music was taking over my life, and the rest, as they say, is history. I even wrote my Common App essay about the bass when I was applying for college.”

Following his graduation from BC, Dougherty pursued music in his collegiate and post-graduate studies and that eventually led to a career performing and writing music in every conceivable genre for the past 15 years. Dougherty has run his own big band for the past six years, and has conducted another big band that has recorded two nationally-syndicated television specials. Having launched his professional career, Dougherty remained in contact with his mentor Furlan, and occasionally played with the BC Jazz Ensemble whenever they needed a bassist, becoming one of the guest artists that Furlan loves to have help mentor his young musicians. And when Bergen Catholic became interested in creating a Chamber Ensemble as a third different collective in the Performing Arts department, Furlan encouraged Dougherty to apply for the position at his alma mater, a decision that has paid off incredibly well for all involved.

Starting in the Fall of 2016, with a self-described “hodgepodge of instrumentation” and only seven students, the BC Chamber Ensemble has continued to grow and thrive, even through the time of COVID. The group is now a fully-functional chamber orchestra with 20 members, and at a recent competition last year, BC’s musicians earned the highest possible ranking, and only lost on overall score to a music charter school.

“Seeing my students who rehearse once a week go toe-to-toe with students who do music for six hours every day was immensely gratifying,” said Dougherty.

A fourth emerging part of the BC Performing Arts program has become the annual spring musical. Thanks to the efforts of Ryan Kitts ’19 during his time as a student in Oradell, Crusader actors have gotten the chance to perform in BC-sponsored shows, and are starting to garner their own spotlight as a legitimate school activity, drumming up increased interest during the lead up to auditions for this year’s spring production of “The Addams Family.” But with continued success, still comes plenty of hurdles for the ever-evolving BC Performing Arts program.

In addition to navigating the clear impediments of a lack of a dedicated music auditorium or music component in the overall school curriculum, each BC music maker fights the annual battle for student participation and financial support. Even with these challenges, each of the three champions of the arts are excited at the progress that has been made over the past 27 years, and hopeful for continued growth in the future with the help of the rest of the Bergen Catholic community.

“When I was a student at BC 20 years ago, the only Performing Arts offered was the Jazz Ensemble,” said Dougherty. “It’s been incredible to see the growth of the program since then, with the addition of the Chorus, Chamber Ensemble, and a yearly musical. BC has always had a wealth of talent in its student population, and I think it’s super important that the school offers as many avenues as possible for students to develop these talents.”

Peraino echoes this hopeful sentiment while urging for the continued financial support that allows talented BC musical artists to hone their crafts and develop their talents. “I hope that it [Performing Arts] continues to grow, I hope that it’s respected, and I hope that maybe more alumni could get involved and support it. Maybe we can get more equipment that we need, and maybe more kids would get involved if they knew there was some support behind them financially to do other things.”

These three talented musicians and artists have helped lead the Performing Arts through its infancy at Bergen Catholic and hope to continue to provide opportunities for students to nurture and fine tune their passions, because after all, music is a part of each and every one of us.

“Music is who we are, it’s in our DNA, it’s the first form of communication. As human beings it’s important to be able to express oneself. Music reaches me in so many different ways, soul, art, spiritually,” said Furlan. “I think what we have done up to this point is tremendous, and I can see us continuing to grow the program by just getting out there more and getting more visibility.”

# LIVING THE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS

## BC students and faculty participate in pair of Immersion service trips

Growing up in one of the most affluent areas of the country could understandably shelter some from the realities of life experienced by those who do not live in houses, do not come from plenty, or do not have the luxury of a familial support system. But it is with that understanding, that Bergen Catholic challenges its students to experience life from outside the comfort of their backyards, and to travel to areas where people are in dire need of help. The Christian Brothers North America Immersion Program has afforded Bergen Catholic students and faculty the opportunity to expand their horizons, and to help make a difference in the lives of others.

The Essential Elements of a Christian Brother Education are the pillars used to inspire students and educators to follow in the charism of the founder of the Congregation of Christian Brothers, Blessed Edmund Ignatius Rice. And one of these Essential Elements is, “Stands in solidarity with those Marginalized by Poverty and Injustice.” This Essential Element has been lived by Bergen Catholic students who have traveled to Brownsville, Texas in November, and to Lima, Peru in January, as the Crusader contingents traveled to both destinations to help the impoverished and experience the local culture, all while receiving an education outside their normal classrooms in Oradell.

In November, BC students and faculty participated in their first Immersion trip of the school year when they traveled down to the southern-most United States point of entry with Mexico in Brownsville, Texas. The students were brought to the border and were educated on the challenges and realities posed by immigration and migration. Each day the Crusaders worked with various relief aid groups, including Arise, an organization that helps women who come over the border by providing them with work programs and housing. The BC contingent also made meals for those in need at the Good Neighbor Settlement House, and volunteered at Catholic Charities RGV Humanitarian Respite Center, where immigrants seeking asylum are housed at the border. In total, the BC students helped served meals to over 500 people.

The BC travel group also experienced the beauty of Texas in addition to their charitable endeavors. The Crusaders attended a bilingual Mass in San Juan, Texas, and later soaked up the sun while spending time in South Padre Island. Capping off their experience in the Lone Star State was a visit to a fellow Edmund Rice school in Brownsville, Guadalupe Regional Middle School, where the BC students listened to students share their life stories on living at the border.







“Immersion is about opening doors and hearts and learning about ourselves through those who live in life’s most challenging ways,” said Br. Stephen Casey, who helps run the Christian Brothers North America Immersion program.

In January, a new group of Bergen Catholic students and faculty traveled to Lima, Peru for their second Immersion service trip of the school year. The BC contingent immediately went to work to help rebuild homes in Jicamarca, Peru that had been destroyed by flooding over the past year, and also brought much needed medical and food supplies and donations to local families in the neighborhood. The Crusaders leveled land, laid concrete, and framed houses, all while working in the foothills of the Andes Mountains.

In addition to their service projects, the Crusaders were able to experience the beauty of Peruvian culture on their visit to Lima where they celebrated Mass, shopped in local markets, and visited fellow Christian Brothers school Colegio Fe Y Alegria, where they shared meals with their new friends. These two service trips allowed both BC students and faculty the chance to reflect on their blessings while stressing the need to serve others.

“When you spend a week with people who live on less than \$2 a day, you realize happiness, fulfillment, and success does not come from ‘stuff’. It comes from sitting down for a meal with friends, hearing their story, laughing and playing with children, working alongside our brothers and sisters, serving the poor, learning to appreciate what we have, and never forgetting those who have not,” reflects Matt O’Connor, the faculty moderator of the Bergen Catholic Immersion Trips.

“Going abroad and being in an entirely different environment and way of living taught me to appreciate all the privileges I have, and the importance of giving back to people in need. All people everywhere deserve a safe, happy and healthy life,” says BC freshman Santiago Hernandez.

These two Immersion service trips helped to open the eyes, minds and hearts of all the Bergen Catholic students who chose to leave their homes and be educated in the struggles of those in need all throughout the world. The Crusaders were able to live the Essential Elements in their actions, words, and time, and were educated in an outdoor classroom with real-life lessons that they will always remember.







# INSPIRED BY A MOTHER'S LOVE

## How Josh Sembrano '14 is changing the world in honor of his mother Ruth

During his time in Oradell, Josh Sembrano '14, made plenty of waves, both inside and outside the swimming pool. A two-time Scholastic All-American swimmer, Sembrano captained the Bergen Catholic swim program to county and league championships, while proving to be one of the finest student-athletes in New Jersey. His academic and athletic exploits while at BC, earned him the honor of attending Army West Point as a Division-I swimmer after graduating from Bergen Catholic. So much of his success was thanks to his loving parents Ruth and Ruben, who challenged their three children to excel in all of their endeavors, balancing academic, athletic, and personal commitments in order to create lasting futures. But at the beginning of Josh's time at West Point, tragedy struck the Sembrano family when Josh's mother Ruth unexpectedly passed away on October 28, 2014.

Ruth Sembrano was born in Zamboanga, Philippines, where she would later complete a Bachelor's Degree in nursing from the University of Santo Tomas. Her nursing career would take her to Italy, where she worked for seven years before eventually emigrating to the United States in 1993. While in America, Ruth met her husband Rueben, got married, and started her family. Ruth's love and devotion to her family allowed her three children Josh, Kim and Rebecca to each excel, and gave them a model to emulate as she shared empathy and love alongside her dedicated work ethic while caring for her patients at Care One in Teaneck. Ruth Sembrano was an extraordinary person, and her devoted son Josh made it his mission to help continue his mother's legacy of love and support for others.

Following a highly successful collegiate swim career at Army West Point, where he served as team captain and earned All-Patriot League honors for the Black Knights, Josh Sembrano

became a commissioned officer in the United States Army after graduating with a degree in Business Management, and was based out of Savannah, Georgia. While serving our nation, Sembrano always remembered how his mother helped serve and care for others, and it inspired him to establish a 501(c)3 tax-exempt non-profit organization in her honor.

"The biggest thing that Bergen Catholic taught me about leadership is that no one can do it alone."

Founded in 2021, *The Ruth Sembrano Foundation* was established to improve access to quality education and healthcare in impoverished communities within the Central Philippines, where over 490,000 people live in poverty. The Foundation provides crucial modern equipment and supplies to enable local schools and medical clinics to better serve their communities. The goal is to help create an environment where individuals, particularly the youth, can access opportunities for success and forge a better future for themselves and their communities.

*Continued on next page*



“*The Ruth Sembrano Foundation* is my way of saying thank you to my mom for everything that she did,” says Josh. “It is my way of transforming a tragic event in my life into something that could be used as a positive influence in the world, similar to the positive influence that my mom was to me. I want the foundation’s legacy to live through the people that we help escape the cycle of poverty. I want our schools, clinics, and eventually hospitals to help allow people to dream of becoming something more and for them to believe that they can be anything that they want to be, similar to what my mom did for me.”

While he did establish *The Ruth Sembrano Foundation*, Josh hasn’t been able to do it all by himself, so he decided to enlist the help of a former Bergen Catholic swim teammate, Liam Kelly ’14, to help join the cause. Kelly joined the RSF team as the Director of Marketing and also serves on the foundation’s board. These two Crusader brothers have helped grow *The Ruth Sembrano Foundation* over the years by establishing fundraising events such as their “Friendsgiving Fundraiser” this past November in New York City, and by showcasing the constant construction and renovation of schools, hospitals and clinics in the Philippines thanks to funds raised by RSF on the foundation’s social media pages on Facebook and Instagram.

“From me leading our relays at Bergen Catholic and Liam anchoring, to us building an organization that has the potential

to change the lives of communities half a world away is incredibly exciting for me and feels like a dream come true,” reflects Sembrano on his chance to work alongside his Crusader brother.

Josh Sembrano has always been a natural leader, from his time walking the hallways in Oradell, to his current time assisting medical clinics and schools in the Province of Cebu in the Philippines. Josh learned to lead by following the loving example of his mother Ruth, who inspires him to push further in changing the lives of impoverished youth around the globe. Sembrano also credits his time at BC for helping to develop his leadership skills.

“The biggest thing that Bergen Catholic taught me about leadership is that no one can do it alone,” says Sembrano. “Great leadership doesn’t happen because of one person, it happens because of a person’s ability to bring people together to achieve great things, pick up teammates when they are down, motivate them to keep going, and inspire them to dream big.”

*The Ruth Sembrano Foundation* is a fitting tribute to a mother’s loving legacy, that now touches so many lives thanks to her incredible son.

To find out how you can support *The Ruth Sembrano Foundation*, please visit [theruthsembranofoundation.org](http://theruthsembranofoundation.org).





# BERGEN CATHOLIC IS NUMBER ONE!

BC voted the top private school in Bergen County by two different media groups

**B**ergen Catholic is certainly familiar with top rankings for its plethora of championship Crusader teams and clubs, but the overall school has earned top honors this time as being known as private school of choice in Bergen County!

BC was first named the top overall Catholic school in Bergen County for the fourth consecutive year by Niche back in September. The Niche high school rankings gave Bergen Catholic an overall grade of A+ in their review, grading in school categories related to academics, diversity, teachers, college prep, clubs & activities and sports.

Then in March, Bergen Catholic was honored by *201 Magazine* by winning the title of “Best Private School K-12” throughout all of Bergen County. BC earned this distinction over the likes of Don Bosco Prep, Immaculate Heart Academy and The Academy of Holy Angels.

Congratulations to our entire Bergen Catholic community who all share in these tremendous school honors and for making Bergen Catholic the top Catholic school in Bergen County!





# HONORS RESEARCH

BC's innovative academic partnership with Holy Name Medical Center

In this challenging modern age, schools at all levels are looking for ways to help give their students a competitive edge in a changing workforce, and Bergen Catholic has done just that by offering a demanding, but greatly beneficial, academic course for seniors entitled Honors Research. The course is the result of a partnership between Bergen Catholic High School and Holy Name Medical Center in Teaneck, NJ, and encompasses two main learning experiences, pedagogical and clinical, with the goal of recognizing the crucial relationship between the two.





First created in 2022, Honors Research is taught by Bergen Catholic faculty member Mr. Brian Rendine '01, who also simultaneously advises the Bergen Catholic seniors through their research project and how it relates to their clinical experience. In Honors Research, all students are asked to navigate and explore the research process where they will: question & explore, understand & analyze, evaluate multiple perspectives, synthesize ideas, and work in teams to transform and transmit their ideas.

Honors Research is a year-long course where each student must complete an academic paper with an oral defense done each May. In addition to participating in Socratic seminars, reading assignments, class participation and peer reviews, each Bergen Catholic student is granted an internship in a clinical setting with a physician from Holy Name Medical Center in their chosen specialty, and must perform a minimum of 40 hours in their internship.

There are fourteen different internship fields for the students to choose from, including orthopedics, general surgery, athletic training, physical therapy and cardiology just to name a few. There are even opportunities for students to learn from Holy Name Medical Center mentors in the fields of engineering, operations and marketing in the hospital setting. This allows each BC senior the opportunity to receive hands-on training in the professional medical world, outside of their normal day-to-day student responsibilities on campus in Oradell.

“Honors Research gives students the ability to have the college experience while in high school,” said Rendine. “With the knowledge gained and the maturity that they develop through the course, they are in a great spot as the head off to college. In addition to all of this, it gives the students the ability to preview a future career as they start to make life decisions such as what college to attend and what they would like to have as their major in college.”

The Honors Research course continues to not only help Bergen Catholic attract some of the finest students in the area to come to Oradell, but also importantly helps set our Crusaders on the path to great future endeavors in college and beyond, with help from fantastic mentors from Holy Name Medical Center.

Bergen Catholic's Honors Research course challenges and prepares our BC students for the future, teaches them the discipline of academic writing, stresses organization and time management, and provides them with valuable networking and hands-on work experience with some the nation's finest physicians.

# LIGHTS, CAMERA, AMEN!

## Bergen Catholic's Fr. Stephen Fichter '85 writes movie *Trinity's Triumph*

For over 25 years, Fr. Stephen Fichter '85 has been working on a passion project that you would not immediately associate with a parish priest. But for the proud Bergen Catholic alum, Episcopal Vicar of Education in the Archdiocese of Newark, and pastor of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary parish in Wyckoff, NJ, his mind has been consumed with making a movie that details the true humanity of the Catholic priesthood. And after years of work, patience, resilience and faith, Fr. Stephen's dream became a reality this past November when his movie, *Trinity's Triumph*, was released on the major streaming and cable broadcast platforms, and the rest is movie magic.

"Originally, I had the idea for a movie when I was living in Rome 25 years ago. I wanted to make a movie that is a modern behind-the-scenes look at life in the priesthood," Fr. Stephen recounts. "*Trinity's Triumph* welcomes the viewer into the real world of priests, with all the ups and downs, and the twists and turns, that are part and parcel of every life. It is a story ultimately about the endurance of friendship and of being true to one's calling in life. I hope it helps to take priests off the pedestal of perfectionism while appreciating their commitment to God and to serving the people entrusted to their spiritual care."

*Trinity's Triumph* is the story of three young men who enter the seminary guided by their mentor Monsignor Heck, played by Emmy Award-winning actor Joe Morton. What begins as a single mission becomes divided, and each seminarian must decide what God is asking of them. Fr. Stephen wanted his movie to feel relatable and to all audiences, and worked with his fellow collaborators, Kathe Carson and Michael Wickham to have this common humanity come across on screen.

"My co-writer Kathe Carson and our director Michael Wickham, the three of us worked really hard to show that human side of it, with the hope that the next generation may feel inspired to say, 'Hey, even though I have my thoughts and failings, but I feel that God is calling me to this life of service and I can identify with this and enter the seminary.'"

It certainly didn't hurt getting help and advice from some film and literary giants along the way. Thanks to a mutual

acquaintance, Father Stephen had a copy of his first script find its way into the hands of famed Italian film director Franco Zeffirelli, who directed the acclaimed miniseries *Jesus of Nazareth*. Zeffirelli agreed to sit down with Fr. Stephen to discuss his work, enjoyed the script, and suggested making the story revolve around three priests, not just one. Later, Fr. Stephen also received advice on character development from best-selling author Mary Higgins Clark, who was his parishioner, and who also enjoyed his screenplay. With these notes in hand, Fr. Stephen went back to work perfecting his opus, and when finished, had to then find a way to solicit financial investors willing to help get the movie made.

But after years of patiently waiting, the film was finally greenlit and the dream that was *Trinity's Triumph* had become a reality when it was released in November 2023. The movie is currently available to buy or rent on all major streaming platforms including Apple TV, Amazon Prime Video, YouTube, Google and many more.

"I wanted to make a movie that is a modern behind-the-scenes look at life in the priesthood."

For Fr. Stephen Fichter, his personal crusade to make *Trinity's Triumph* lasted over 25 years, but eventually finished with him making a film that everyone can relate to in their lives. It touches on our shared humanity, bonds of friendship and empathy for others, as we each take a unique path in life, be it as a priest, screenwriter, or both rolled into one.

For more information about *Trinity's Triumph*, please visit [trinitystriumph.com](http://trinitystriumph.com)











# THE HEARTBEAT OF BC

## The exceptional men who make up Bergen Catholic's maintenance crew

While Danny Kurpick and his maintenance crew would jokingly be the first ones to refute any comparisons between themselves and the likes of Leonardo Da Vinci, or Michelangelo, they still should be regarded as Bergen Catholic's true Renaissance men. This collection of skilled artisans, landscapers, coaches, and bus drivers help make sure that everything is operational, aesthetically beautiful, and runs efficiently on campus in Oradell. The BC maintenance team provides a heartbeat for the rest of the school, and their service to others never goes unnoticed in Crusader Country.

Beginning his time at Bergen Catholic in February of 1990, Danny Kurpick has been ingrained in the fabric of BC for over three decades. As the school's director of facilities, Kurpick oversees a group of some of the most dedicated workers you will find in Larry Fierro, Rickey Ferriola, Uriel Orjuela, Luis Pena, and Jose Crespo. Each of these men help the school run on a day-to-day basis, and with over 70 years of combined service at the school, you can see the loyalty runs deep amongst the group. This loyalty is a result of the appreciation and respect shown by the school community to the men who do it all around campus.

"We're very highly respected, which is big," says Kurpick, who also raves about the workplace environment being a main reason why the staff has remained intact for so many years. "I like the comradery. Walking up the hallways saying hello to people, everybody has a good positive attitude about everything, that's what makes it for me."

Familiarity has a big part to play in this effective working unit. Larry Fierro grew up with Kurpick, and when an open position arrived on his staff, Kurpick immediately invited his high school classmate to Oradell to join his team, and that became one of the greatest additions in school history. Fierro wears many hats at BC, serving on the maintenance team, leading the championship Crusader bowling program as its head coach since 2004, and arguably being the funniest person in the building with his quick wit and comedic timing that leaves many in stitches. Fierro is also an accomplished singer, who showcased his talents as one of the masked singers at the 2023 Crusader Gala.

Rickey Ferriola is the mastermind of the grounds, and is the one responsible for the stunning array of colors seen in all the beautiful flowers and plants scattered throughout campus. His green thumb routinely shows off the perfect combination of reds and yellows that greets families and visitors when coming to Crusader Country, and creates an inviting and idyllic backdrop for the students in their daily academic lives.

"I have a great crew, everybody steps up, I think we all care about each other and I think that's the most important."

Uriel Orjuela, Luis Pena and Jose Crespo have helped shoulder the demanding work load while joining the maintenance team in the past decade and help provide support on and off campus as certified bus drivers who help provide essential transportation for the plethora of Bergen Catholic athletic teams and clubs.

In addition to their jovial natures that endear them to faculty, staff and students, Kurpick's crew have an incredible working resume that speaks for itself, and their legacies are seen in every major renovation project that they helped produce. This includes the creation of the BC guidance wing, which originally used to be the lower level of the Brother's Residence and consisted of

*Continued on next page*

bedrooms. In recent years, the maintenance crew were entrusted with the renovation of the three science labs, the creation of the Watros Business Center, as well as the running of over 200,000 feet of wire from the library throughout the entire building for Internet, PA system and television capabilities. Because each member is talented in various fields, this has helped Bergen Catholic reduce costs while leaning on the services of their in-house workers, rather than always having to hire outside specialists.

“A lot of the maintenance we do in-house and save the school a lot of money. Danny’s a mason and a carpenter, and we pretty much do everything, including light electrical work,” says Fierro.

The fruits of their labors are enjoyed by generations of Crusaders, from the students learning about the college process in the guidance wing, to the BC student-athletes getting a chance to gather in spacious and professional-looking locker rooms

and team meeting areas, all of those amenities are a result of the tireless work produced by these Renaissance men who are beloved members of the school community. The 2023 Crusader Yearbook was dedicated to them, and many former students who have worked with the maintenance crew over the course of their summers in college, have invited Kurpick and the crew to their weddings. At BC they are respected, admired, and treated like equals, something that is not necessarily done at other schools for their maintenance crews.

All of the members of the Bergen Catholic maintenance crew make a huge impact on the daily life at BC, and Danny Kurpick sees his team’s commitment as a reason for their success over the years.

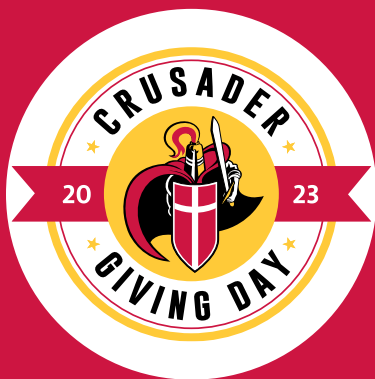
“I have a great crew, everybody steps up, I think we all care about each other and I think that’s the most important.”

# CRUSADER GIVING DAY **MAY 3, 2024**

In 2023, there were 1,083 gifts raising over \$579,000 on Crusader Giving Day, and TOGETHER WE DID IT!

**Join us this year, on May 3, 2024, and help lend a hand for Crusader Giving Day 2024, and help raise our Bergen Catholic banner to the sky! DEUS VULT!**

## Enormous Thank You to Our Challenge & Match Donors



### Milestone Challenge Donors

Susan & Henry Gomez '81 • Scott Robinson '92 & Family  
Jim Van Tassell '90 & Family • Patricia & Joseph Donlan '64  
Mr. & Mrs. James R. Fisher '73 • Maryellyn & Thad Miller '69  
all challenged us to reach important milestones throughout the day,  
and YOU helped unlock their generous gifts!

### \$100,000 Challenge Donor

This extraordinarily generous, anonymous, current family helped rally our entire community to unlock this special and unprecedented Crusader Giving Day gift when we reached 1,000 gifts!

### Faculty & Staff Match Donor

Board Member, Jim Dowling '64 committed to matching all Faculty and Staff donations. Last year, with the incentive to double their impact, they thoughtfully raised a record breaking \$10,000!





# BC CELEBRATES MILITARY APPRECIATION MONTH

## Aidan O'Toole '19 joins the ranks of Crusader alums who serve our nation

Service is the bedrock of an Edmund Rice Christian Brother education, and Bergen Catholic students lead on in their commitment to serving others. For many Crusader alums, this inherent selflessness can be seen in their dedication and sacrifice when choosing to serve our country in the United States military. This Military Appreciation Month, Bergen Catholic honors our service members and their families who have provided endless support and care in all of their endeavors.

Bergen Catholic boasts a strong tradition of military service, with Crusader graduates either matriculating to the various military academies after their time in Oradell, alumni participating in Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) at their respective colleges and universities, or Crusaders having enlisted to serve our nation immediately following their BC graduation, heeding an immediate call to serve.

Last spring one of these service members, Aidan O'Toole '19, decided to give back and returned to Bergen Catholic to speak to

Crusader current students about his path to the military. Aidan graduated from BC and enrolled in The George Washington University's ROTC program to pursue his dream of becoming an officer in the United States Marine Corps.

O'Toole gave an extremely candid and detailed presentation to an engaged BC junior class on his initial attraction to the military, his inspiration (Aidan's grandfather, Al O'Toole, was a proud Marine), and the commitment necessary to succeed in ROTC. He explained that it requires discipline and hard work, but that time can be carved out for fun as well. During his time at Bergen Catholic, Aidan was captain of the crew team, volunteered for Habitat for Humanity and achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. Aidan graduated from The George Washington University in 2023 and is currently commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the USMC.

Bergen Catholic salutes all of our active and retired military service members and their families. You make us proud!

# TREY ROLNICK '25

## Bringing holiday gratitude to our soldiers

For Bergen Catholic junior Trey Rolnick '25, the concepts of gratitude and service were embedded in his DNA from a young age, even more so when his older sister, Captain Samantha Rolnick, enlisted in the United States Army. He became witness to her call to service and sacrifice, and like so many military families, had to see his loved one serve abroad during the holidays. This instilled in Rolnick a drive to give back to all of those who make these personal sacrifices, so that the rest of the nation can have the luxury to celebrate the holidays with family and friends. So out of a love for his sister, and respect and gratitude for those serving in the Armed Forces, Rolnick created *Operation Santa: Sam's Soldiers* in 2020 at the age of fourteen, as a way of creating holiday care packages for soldiers serving in Europe during the holiday season.

When Rolnick's sister served in Italy, soldiers were not able to return home based not only on their tours of duty, but also because of recently created COVID travel restrictions, thus leading to a heightened feeling of alienation and homesickness for the service men and women. So, Bergen Catholic's Rolnick decided to be a leader and come up with his own way of supplying soldiers with holiday gifts while reinforcing the feeling of gratitude and respect that he had for all those who sacrifice. Rolnick humbly reflects on the start of this incredible service endeavor by stating his motivation was a simple question he asked himself, "Why not give back and do my part to help out?"

"I was absolutely blown away. To see the outpouring of gratitude from all of the students at Bergen Catholic has been extraordinary..."

Rolnick and his family started a GoFundMe and began sharing his project with family and friends. In their initial year, *Operation Santa: Sam's Soldiers* was able to help supply holiday care packages to 100 soldiers in Europe. Since its debut in 2020, Rolnick has now helped over 1,500 United States soldiers and has raised over \$125,000 for his charitable efforts. The care packages have included items such as Christmas stockings,

toiletries, hand sanitizer, socks, hand warmers, travel mugs, and blankets, all items that are greatly valued and appreciated by those serving on the front lines.

"The soldiers themselves were so grateful. I kept getting handwritten letters after Christmas and the following months from a bunch of soldiers expressing their gratitude. It makes you feel good that you are helping these people, and just getting that back warms your heart to receive those supportive messages and gratitude in general from the soldiers," said Rolnick.

While he has always had a strong familial foundation of support, Rolnick is also appreciative of the help he has received from the Bergen Catholic community, and how the BC Brotherhood has helped him lead this non-profit. In the Fall of 2023, Bergen Catholic helped Rolnick fundraise for his non-profit by having a school-wide dress down day in October, where all the proceeds raised would go towards *Operation Santa: Sam's Soldiers*. His classmates were there for him and the troops, as the school raised over \$2,200 on one day.

"I was absolutely blown away. To see the outpouring of gratitude from all of the students at Bergen Catholic has been extraordinary, and to see all the people dressing down and you realize what the money is going towards and it's all going toward these soldiers fighting over seas and sacrificing their lives for us every day, that's what makes it all worth it and what makes me especially grateful to the Bergen Catholic community that they're supporting me in my endeavors."

And Trey Rolnick's amazing efforts have not gone unnoticed, as he has done countless number of television interviews including on ABC's national morning talk show *Live Kelly & Mark*, as well as appearing on FOX News and on local cable television in the New York area.

Rolnick is not sure where his non-profit labor of love will take him in his future, but his leadership and gratitude have certainly been felt by so many soldiers serving abroad over the years, and he believes that it all reinforces what he learns on a daily basis in Crusader Country when he states with a smile, "Bergen Catholic is teaching you to be a better person in life as a whole."

For more information on how to support *Operation Santa: Sam's Soldiers*, please visit their GoFundMe: [www.gofundme.com/f/operation-santa-sams-soldiers-2023](http://www.gofundme.com/f/operation-santa-sams-soldiers-2023)









# THE CRUSADE FOR A THREE-PEAT

Bergen Catholic Football finishes as NJ's best for a third straight season

Navigating through the gauntlet of the New Jersey Non-Public football ranks is not for the faint of heart, especially in the current age when many of the Garden State's finest gridiron programs also reside amongst the nation's top 100 of high school football teams. But despite these obstacles, Bergen Catholic has emerged as the undisputed class of New Jersey football, having completed a rare "three-peat," winning their third consecutive Non-Public A state

championship this past November 28th at MetLife Stadium with a hard-fought (24-14) win over Delbarton. The victory capped off the twentieth football state title in Crusader history, the most of any Non-Public football program in the largest and most competitive classification in state history.

Much like its professional counterpart in the NFL, North Jersey's Super Football Conference prides itself on its abundance of talent and parody, and how any team can beat anyone on





any weekend. But while there has been a clear emergence of new programs who were once long afterthoughts as Non-Public football powers, as well as weekly examples of upsets and balanced wins and losses amongst the schools, Bergen Catholic has bucked the trend and has still maintained its position on top despite facing stiff challenges each weekend as the team to beat. This run of consistent dominance is a credit to not only the incredibly talented student-athletes who have worn the scarlet & gold, but also to the exceptional Crusader coaching staff that has forged a winning culture based on love, accountability and selflessness.

“It’s the full collection of people and having an extended family environment in the locker room.”

Head Coach Vito Campanile has already carved out his place in Bergen Catholic football lore based on his eye-popping body of work through his first six seasons manning the Crusader sideline. Campanile has gone (54-9) in his time in Oradell, winning a jaw-dropping 86% of his games, and joining Hall of Fame coach Fred Stengel as the only BC football coaches to have won three consecutive titles in their coaching tenures. For his efforts, Campanile was named the *USA Today* National Coach of the Year in 2021, but he still humbly credits others for the bountiful accolades that he and his program have earned over the last three seasons.

“To win it three times in a row says a lot for the whole program,” said Campanile in an interview with NJ.com after his team was named the NJ.com Football Team of the Year for 2023. “It’s the full collection of people and having an extended family environment in the locker room.”

And that sense of Brotherhood and love for one another can clearly be seen in the results on and off the field for the Crusaders. Since the start of the 2020 season, a season that did not have a NJSIAA postseason due to COVID, Bergen Catholic has

*Continued on next page*





gone (39-3) overall, and became the first Non-Public A school to win three straight titles since 2011. The Crusaders have also produced the most Ivy League football players out of any single high school football program in the country in this time period, including having nine players currently on active Ivy League rosters, showing that Bergen Catholic has not comprised its academic standards just for gridiron glory.

This Fall, Bergen Catholic finished undefeated against in-state competition for the second time in the last three seasons. They won the Super Football Conference's United Division with an undefeated record, finished #1 in New Jersey for the fourth straight season according to national high school sports media outlet *MaxPreps*, and finished ranked in the nation's Top 25 in several national media polls.

Several Crusaders had incredible seasons in leading BC back to the mountaintop in NJ. Junior wide receiver **Quincy Porter '25** was named the New Jersey Player of the Year by *MaxPreps*, after shattering school records this Fall. Porter caught 53 passes for 1,106 yards and 19 TD, a single-season touchdown record by a receiver in Crusader history. Fellow junior, quarterback **Dominic Campanile '25** threw for 30 touchdowns and 2,028 yards, while senior running back **Kaj Sanders '24** galloped for 17 touchdowns and 1,054 rushing yards.

On defense, the Crusaders once again proved to be the most dominant unit in the state, producing 21 interceptions and 32 sacks as a group. Senior linebacker **Christian Gonzalez '24** finished as the team's leading tackler with 70 tackles on the season, while junior **Naiim Parrish '25** led the team with 5 interceptions and senior defensive end **Anthony Morales '24** had a BC-best 7.5 sacks.

On special teams, junior kicker **Guytano Bartolomeo '25** was a perfect 6 for 6 in field goal opportunities while also connecting



on all 44 of his extra-point kicks on the season, while senior punter **Brandon Arpacilar '24** was sensational at flipping field position all season long and averaged over 35 yards a punt.

In total, five Bergen Catholic players earned All-State accolades, including **Marcus Linder '24**, **Nyier Daniels '24**, **Elijah Kinsler '24**, **Kaj Sanders '24**, and **Quincy Porter '25**.

Congratulations to Vito Campanile and his entire Bergen Catholic football program on another memorable championship season for all Crusader fans to celebrate for years to come. And for their opponents, this scary reality looms large over their heads: Bergen Catholic has no intentions of slowing down anytime soon.





# PEBBLE BEACH RAFFLE

## The trip of a lifetime

If you attended the 52nd Annual Golf Classic last June, you may have witnessed the pure excitement when Pete Coleman's raffle ticket was pulled as the winner of the Pebble Beach Trip. Pete is not only the Assistant Principal for Academics and Discipline at Bergen Catholic, but he is also the Assistant Golf Coach. He happened to be wearing a Pebble Beach golf shirt at the time of the drawing, and said it has been a dream of his to golf at Pebble Beach. He instantly made 50 new friends, and chose 3 to join him at the resort in the fall. He described the trip as the "Experience of a Lifetime."

Don Watros won the Pebble Beach raffle at the 51st Annual Golf Classic and shared pictures of his trip to the resort with us. Don and his guests worked with Land & Links to customize their trip and create a memorable experience. Don reported, "It was a perfect trip and very well organized by the team at Land and Links! We enjoyed golfing, excellent restaurants, and the amenities at the resort."

Thank you to everyone who participated in the raffle in the past. Your ticket purchase directly supports the students at Bergen Catholic!



Land & Links is an industry leader in crafting memorable golf experiences at the best courses in the world, and Pebble Beach is one of the most sought-after golf courses in the country. Will you be the lucky winner this year?

Tickets are on sale now for the 2024 Pebble Beach raffle by accessing the following page: [www.bergenatholic.org/golf-experience-raffle](http://www.bergenatholic.org/golf-experience-raffle).

Congratulations to the winners of the  
2023 Pebble Beach Golf Experience Raffles!



# A BC PRESIDENTIAL LEGACY

How one family produced a pair of Crusader Student Government Presidents



In the American political landscape, it's common to find certain families that have established their political & familial legacies while sharing the highest of offices in the nation's history. Names like Adams, Roosevelt, and Kennedy have become families synonymous with political service throughout multiple generations. And now at Bergen Catholic, one family has helped create a lasting legacy in regards to the student government presidency, where both Frank Mastrangelo '73 and his nephew Ian Smith '24 have had the shared honor of being the leaders of the BC school student body.

As a senior, Frank Mastrangelo was elected president, and served as Bergen Catholic's student leader for the 1972-1973 school year. Prior to arriving to Crusader Country, Mastrangelo had served as a student leader in grammar school and immediately took a hands-on approach on his arrival in Oradell. As the world was in the midst of significant cultural and political change in the early 1970s, Mastrangelo's leadership helped bring progress to the Bergen Catholic community through successful fundraising efforts and a successful working relationship with the school administration.

"The early 70's were an interesting time to be a teen," Mastrangelo reflects. "Music, fashion, attitudes were changing significantly. BC provided important structure and focus which served many well. This and the various sports and activities programs brought a lot of the student body closer together. A significant part of my role as president was to find ways to build on this sense of togetherness."

During this era of change, Mastrangelo effectively led Bergen Catholic into a better future by first ensuring the Student Government finances were net positive and could financially support a number of activities including the burgeoning Hockey & Soccer clubs. The main fundraising events were the highly successful BC Student Government sponsored dances, which produced \$1,000 per dance in profit for the SGA. In addition to incorporating popular school dances into student life, Mastrangelo was granted approval for establishing and funding the first cheerleading squad for BC sports with students from Immaculate Heart Academy, and worked with the BC administration to change the school dress code to allow all students to not have to wear tie and jackets for the warmer weather months. These significant accomplishments established Mastrangelo as an effective leader throughout his time at Bergen Catholic, and helped plant the seed of leadership for a nephew who would follow his lead while embarking on his own crusade.

Ian Smith was elected as Student Government president for the 2023-2024 school year, serving in the same leadership position that his uncle did 51 years earlier. Much like his uncle, Smith was always drawn to leadership positions while growing up, and upon his arrival to BC, Smith became immediately involved in the student ambassadors program and the Performing Arts program, utilizing his elite communicative skills and personable nature to become a fixture in both groups as an underclassman. While generating notoriety throughout the school community

through his work in various activities, Smith decided to run for Student Government president and campaigned on changes to the dress code in regards to acceptable shoe choices, a renewed commitment to community service, as well as better representation between all grades. Smith was elected as the leader of the Bergen Catholic student government, an honor that he never took lightly.

"It is really something special, there's so much to do here, and being able to have a little part of all of it is really incredible," says Smith. "Whether it's in the field of academics, or its celebrating extracurriculars or athletics that we have here, or welcoming new kids to the Brotherhood, it's awesome and really special to me."

Since beginning his presidency in the summer, Smith has worked tirelessly to help make the Class of 2027 feel as welcome as possible into Bergen Catholic. Through summer orientation programs featuring field days, pizza parties and team-bonding activities, Smith wanted the newest generation of Crusaders to form a lasting bond and affinity with their new BC Brotherhood, something that Smith and his Class of 2024 did not have the luxury of enjoying as incoming freshmen due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which made the school a virtual learning community, rather than the normal school setting we all have come to know and love in our own student experiences. Smith's commitment to community service has helped make a difference for the younger Crusaders.

And in following the footsteps of his uncle Frank, Ian Smith has also found creative ways of making Student Government financially relevant. Instead of sponsored dances, now the SGA fundraises with t-shirt sales, several of which that have also gone to charitable causes supporting cancer research and awareness. And while his uncle helped make morning announcements over the school's PA system, Smith has become the face of BCTV, serving as the school television station's main anchor throughout his senior year. Smith's dedication to service and Bergen Catholic is a source of pride to his fellow BC president.

"I am very proud of Ian's selfless interest and his energy in many different areas at BC, but particularly his heading up the student government," says Frank Mastrangelo. "I think it will make him that much more effective in assuming additional responsibility and leadership roles in the future, I know it did for me. The structure, learning, growing, values, opportunities and friendships aren't limited to the 4 years you're in the school—they stay with you for a lifetime."

And Smith remains humbled and honored to join the rich lineage of Crusader leaders in his family, as 7 different people in his family proudly call themselves Bergen Catholic alumni.

"Bergen Catholic is just home. It's a shared experience that I not only had with my uncle Fran, but also two of my other uncles as well. I have cousins that have went through BC. It's something that I believe all made us, and helped shaped us into who we are, and I think a lot of that is credited to Bergen."

# 2024 HALL OF FAME

**MARCH 24, 2024**



2024 Hall of Fame Honorees

The 2024 Bergen Catholic Hall of Fame Reception was held on March 24, 2024 at The Venetian, Garfield, NJ. This year's group of six distinguished inductees, along with our 1965 Varsity Football Team induction, were joined by over 300 family members, administration, fellow alumni, Hall of Famers and friends for a most enjoyable evening of fellowship and fond remembrances.

Joining the 218 previous members of the Hall of Fame are:

- John Dowdell '67 (Contributor)
- Carl Haas P'87 (Contributor)
- Joseph Haemmerle '86 (Contributor)
- Bryan Kelly '91 (Athlete)
- Joseph Mele '61 (Athlete)
- Rudolph Wagner, MD '70 (Special)
- 1965 Football Team

Many thanks are extended to our Hall of Fame Leadership Team: Mike Ference '87, Greg Tramontozzi '88 and J.R. Meloro '91. Master of Ceremonies, Brian Hughes '86, kept the evening well-paced throughout. The speeches were alternately touching, hilarious, inspiring, and fondly reminiscent of times much enjoyed and long remembered.



Once again, the night showcased the diversity of the Bergen Catholic family, with its many unique perspectives, talents, and experiences. Pervasive throughout was the awareness that our individual and collective BC experiences enrich our lives, while forming us into the persons we've each become over time.

Thank you to our generous 2024 Hall of Fame Sponsors:

**Award Sponsors**

- The Krayner Family
- Joe Patterson '60
- Frank Sorrentino '79 & Family

**Faculty & Staff Sponsor**

- Gerri & Rich Scanlon '99

**Crusader Sponsors**

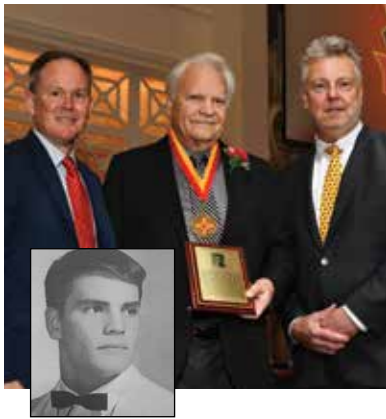
- Lisa & John Amoratis '77
- Aleta & Rich Taylor '70

**Scarlet Sponsor**

- Michael Ference '87

Congratulations to our newest Hall of Fame members! Continue to represent your Bergen Catholic heritage proudly in all that you do.





### John Dowdell '67

John was a three-year varsity football team member. As a junior, John started as defensive middle guard (nose tackle) and made strong contributions during the 1965 undefeated/untied season, culminating in a State Championship. John and Ken Lavery, another

junior defensive starter, were selected by the team's graduating seniors as Co-Captains for the 1966 season. This team again finished undefeated/untied and State Champions. John received all-star recognition from state, county, regional and league entities. John and Ken were awarded Bergen Catholic's Brother Tracey Trophy for outstanding play, John for football and Ken for baseball. After receiving a BS and an MBA from Fairleigh Dickinson University, John began a 34-year career with 3M Company. John and Alice (Rochford) were married in 1969 and relocated several times with 3M. Their final assignment was in Chandler, Arizona, where John served as President and CEO of Durel Corporation, a 3M joint venture. Now retired, John and Alice split their time between Arizona and Wisconsin. They have two children: Shannon and her husband, Mike, have three daughters, Sara, Alison and Lindsay; and Michael and his wife, Greta, have a daughter, Sophia, and a son, John. John and Alice recognize the long-term goals of BC and appreciate the focus on Fine Arts, STEM, and other academic programs that are important to BC's continued excellence. John and Alice are committed to continuing their support of BC to provide an educational experience second to none and valued by many.



### Carl Haas P'87

Carl's 40-year relationship with Bergen Catholic began with his son, Dr. Donald Haas's, acceptance to BC in 1983. Carl became a member of the Crusader Touchdown Club and was elected the Club's President in 1986, a season that ended with a

State Championship. Carl continued as a member of the Club acting as its Treasurer and while also starting the Club's McGovern Award. He was involved in the Br. Martin P. Burns Golf Classic, chairing the event,

and acting as its treasurer for several additional years. He initiated the annual BC Football Alumni Reception during Thanksgiving. Carl was also asked to become a member of the Bergen Catholic Development/Advancement Committee. In 2014, Carl was awarded the prestigious Bergen Catholic Founder's Medal. Over the years he also received the McGovern Award, the Brother Martin P. Burns Award, the Horizon Award, the Scarlet Award, and is a member of the Cornerstone and Legacy Societies. Over a 20-year period, Carl supported and funded the Carl Haas Scholarship Fund to deserving members of the BC Football program. He was also a major contributor towards the construction of the Saingas Center and supported many other worthwhile BC endeavors. Carl continues his 40 years of contributions to Bergen Catholic, currently serving as the Moderator and Treasurer for the Football Program, Touchdown Club, Cheer Program, Crusader Football Alumni Club, as well as the Basketball Program.



### Joseph Haemmerle '86

Joe Haemmerle, the founder and first coach of the BC lacrosse program, is a Member of the New Jersey Lacrosse Hall of Fame. In 1988, Fred Stengel hired Joe onto the varsity football coaching staff and over the next 25 years the

Crusaders would win nine state championships. In 1991, Br. Killelea hired Joe to teach with the mission "to teach young men, not history." In more than 35 years of educating BC students, he has never forgotten those words. As Head Varsity Lacrosse Coach, Joe led the program to become a state power, winning more than 240 games, one state championship, and four county titles. Joe has served the school in many roles, including Dean of Freshmen and Asst. Principal, Asst. Track Coach, Attendance Officer, Religion Teacher, and Director of Admissions. Joe was instrumental in the creation of the Red and Gold Club, a student ambassador program. As Associate Athletic Director, he has published more than 200 issues of the weekly sports newsletter TWIBCS. His latest pursuit has been the Birding Crusaders, a student club that has visited numerous national parks, learning about various species and habitats. Joe thanks the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers, the school community and especially his parents, Richard and Kathleen, brothers, Mike '88 and Dan '91, and children, Matt '15, Grace, and Jack for their support.

# 2024 HALL OF FAME Continued



## **Bryan Kelly '91**

Bryan was one of the most dominant swimmers in Bergen Catholic history. In his senior year, he was ranked #1 in the US in the 100 butterfly, broke the NJ State record, won the gold medal at the 1991 Olympic Festival in Los Angeles, California, and

was a top 16 finalist at the US Open Swim meet. He was a high school All-American and Academic All-American, as well as the NJ State Champion in the 100 Butterfly. As a four-year varsity letter holder and team Captain, he led his team to multiple league and conference swimming championships in 1988-1991. In his sophomore year, he set the 100-meter butterfly record for Bergen Catholic and then went on to break multiple other school records in the 50 Freestyle, 100 Freestyle, 100 Backstroke, 200 Freestyle Relay, 200 Medley Relay, and 400 Freestyle Relay. Bryan went on to The Ohio State University, earning a full scholarship, where he achieved both All-American and Academic All-American status. He qualified for the 1996 Olympic Trials and the NCAA championships in 1993 and 1994. Bryan was part of the record-breaking 200 and 400 medley relay teams at The Ohio State University. Today Bryan resides in Hoboken, NJ, with his wife Karen and their three wonderful boys, Luke, Andrew, and Jake. Bryan still enjoys recreational swimming and all of his boys followed in his footsteps and swim competitively.



## **Joseph Mele '61**

Joe was a member of Bergen Catholic's third graduating class. During his time at BC, Joe was a three-sport athlete – participating in football, basketball, and baseball. As a sophomore, he was a member of BC's first football team and played in the inaugural

“Bergen-Bosco” Thanksgiving Day Game, which Bergen Catholic won 14-0. During his senior year,

Joe was Co-Captain of the football team and was a member of the varsity basketball team which won the League Championship. Joe's athletic accomplishments were recognized on graduation day when he was presented with the Outstanding Athlete Award by Archbishop Boland. Upon graduating from BC, Joe attended Iona College and received a BBA-Accounting degree, which led to a career in public and private accounting. He joined the firm of Harry M. Stevens Inc., the concessionaire for many sporting venues around the United States, where he worked for many years. In 1967, he married the love of his life, JoAnn Salvetti. Their marriage was blessed with three wonderful children, Joseph, Michele and Lisa. Their family expanded with the marriages of their children and the addition of five beautiful grandchildren. Joe has continued to be an avid supporter of Bergen Catholic by being a Decade Representative, a Class Chair, a member of the Alumni Board, and member of the Crusader Football Alumni Club. Joe is currently self-employed and operates an accounting/consulting business. He and JoAnn reside in Wyckoff.



## **Rudolph Wagner, MD '70**

Rudy credits BC with preparing him to excel in the sciences and for instilling in him the confidence to pursue a career in medicine. He graduated from the University of Notre Dame and Rutgers Medical School. He was

trained in Pediatric Ophthalmology at the Wills Eye Hospital in Philadelphia. Dr. Wagner is a Professor of Pediatric Ophthalmology at Rutgers in Newark. There he teaches surgery, performs research, and maintains a clinical practice caring for children with ocular disease. He focuses on providing care to children without access or resources both in the United States and internationally. He is a volunteer faculty member with Orbis International, a non-profit NGO with the mission to eliminate preventable causes of blindness. In this role, Dr. Wagner has performed eye surgery for over 25 years aboard the Orbis Flying Eye Hospital, providing care in remote locations including Mongolia, Bangladesh, Ethiopia and, most recently, Vietnam. Through this program, not only does Dr. Wagner benefit individual patients, but he also teaches local ophthalmologists who receive hands-on training.





Dr. Wagner also helped establish a pediatric eye clinic in the Bustamante Hospital for Children in Kingston, Jamaica. This Crusader is the Editor of the Journal of Pediatric Ophthalmology and Strabismus and served as the President of the New York Society of Pediatric Ophthalmology. He has authored more than 200 scientific articles and textbooks, and pioneered the use of botulinum toxin for the treatment of eye muscle disorders. Internationally renowned as a surgeon and educator, he received the Senior Honor Award from the American Academy of Ophthalmology. Rudy resides in New Providence, NJ with his wife Jean, where they raised four daughters.

### 1965 Football Team

The 1965 Varsity Football Team is honored to be the first athletic team inducted into the Bergen Catholic Hall of Fame. With a record of 9 wins and 0 losses, this was BC's first undefeated, untied football team in the school's history. Head Coach Keith Kraymer and Assistant Coaches Ralph Pinto and Mel Streeter forged what became the epitome of a "team." Every player stepped up to make big plays, enabling the team's success. Led by Co-Captains Manny Garcia and Dave Stack, the Crusaders won numerous awards and set school records, including being crowned Bergen County Champions, Parochial North A State Champions, Paterson News Team of the Year, Daily News Metropolitan NY Team of the Year, and Tri County Catholic Conference Champions. The team still holds the school record for most points scored in a game and largest margin of victory as a result of its 76-0 victory over St. Joseph Regional of Montvale. The season scoring differential of 345 points for and 63 against was remarkable for a nine-game schedule. A significant number of the team's players received individual awards and other individual honors. The Crusaders' talented senior class was bolstered by a gifted junior class that made major contributions throughout the season. Indeed the following year, the team went on to achieve another undefeated and untied season coached by Bob Norton.



**SAVE THE DATE**

*26th  
Hall of Fame*

**SUNDAY, MARCH 30, 2025**  
THE VENETIAN

*To make a Hall of Fame Nomination, please submit an application to the Bergen Catholic Hall of Fame Leadership Committee at [BergenCatholicHallofFame@gmail.com](mailto:BergenCatholicHallofFame@gmail.com)*

# CRUSADER GALA

**NOVEMBER 10, 2023**

Bergen Catholic hosted the 2023 Crusader Gala on November 10th at The Venetian in Garfield, NJ, and this year's theme was "The Masked Singer." Several talented members of the BC Community dazzled the crowd with their extraordinary singing and dancing talents, before revealing their true identities to an appreciative audience. The night was full of great dancing, laughter, and glamorous smiles as everyone came together to help support Bergen Catholic for generations to come!









# ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Fellow Crusaders,

Our Alumni Association is stronger than ever and we are proud of the efforts our Brotherhood has made in expanding our reach to benefit and support our 12,000+ brothers. We have successfully made great progress in providing support to each of our alum both professionally and personally. The new year ahead will bring many new opportunities to support the mission of Bergen Catholic High School and our dedication to furthering our Brotherhood through value added initiatives. We are proud to have just inducted seven new members into our Hall of Fame and encourage you to visit our website to learn more about these remarkable members of community.

I continue to challenge each and every one of you to get involved. We have many committees for school involvement, career advancement and professional networking as well as many fun activities planned for the year ahead. Bergen Catholic has helped shape each of us and played an integral part of who we are today. I ask you to remain connected and share in the Brotherhood that keeps us strong. To that end, volunteers are needed to help us further our mission. Your involvement will help us stay strong for the generations that follow us.

Contact me anytime for more information on how to get involved. Similarly, remember that as your Alumni Association we are here to support you as well, so please feel free to reach out if there is an area where you think we can grow.

**John W. McDermott '99**

President, Bergen Catholic High School Alumni Association



*John W. McDermott '99*  
*bergencatholicalumniboard@gmail.com*

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## CAREERS4CRUSADERS **JANUARY 4, 2024**

Bergen Catholic once again hosted its Career4Crusaders alumni networking event at Hoehl Gym, and this year's event was a huge success. Over 40 experienced BC alumni represented various career fields such as law, finance, health care, computer science, marketing, sales and engineering.





# ALUMNI EVENTS

## MARCH MADNESS **MARCH 21, 2024**

BC alumni gathered together at Union Hall in Hoboken to celebrate the start of the 2024 NCAA Tournament, and had a great time catching up with old friends while enjoying March Madness.

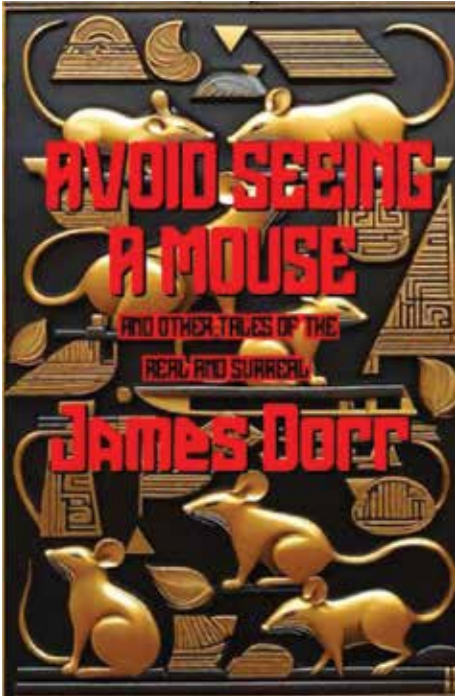


## GRANDPARENTS MASS & BRUNCH **DECEMBER 3, 2023**

The first Sunday of Advent, we had the honor of celebrating mass and brunch with many of our Bergen Catholic Grandparents and families. It was wonderful to welcome our Celebrant, Bishop Michael A. Saporito, Campus Minister, Br. Ben McDonough, Campus Chaplain Fr. Sam Monaco, and Current Parent '25, Deacon Ed Stoker who all helped guide us through this special mass.

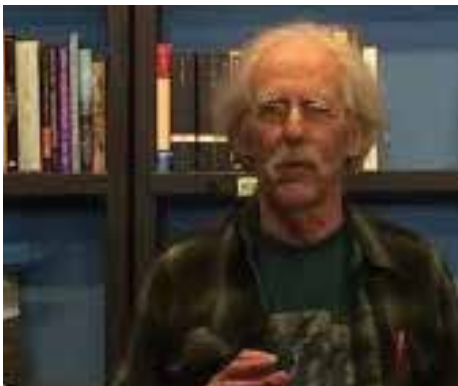


# ALUMNI NEWS AND NOTES



Jim Dorr's book

**59 James Dorr** recently published a new fiction collection titled *Avoid Seeing A Mouse; And Other Tales of the Real and Surreal*. The book is a fairly short read (12 stories) with some science fiction/fantasy/horror overtones and as the title suggests, intended to be more imaginative than realistic. Information on the book can be found on Goodreads.



Jim Dorr

**60 Jim Webb** continues to enjoy his retirement. He remains active in the Franklin Lakes, NJ Fire Department. He is a member of 2 ministries in St. Elizabeth parish in Wyckoff, NJ. Jim and his wife, Adeline, also keep busy with their 9 grandchildren.

**61 John Hermann** and his wife, Louise, welcomed their 9th Great Grandchild, Chloe Herman in October 2023 and their 10th, Nicholas Gaeta in January 2024. John is still in touch with Nelson Biffar '61 and Jim Maher '60.



Irishman of the Year 2023 Jim Burke '64

**64 Jim Burke** is a retired USMC LT-COL. Jim was honored twice in 2023. First as the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick Irishman of the Year and then as a notable Vietnam War Veteran on the 50th anniversary of the war's end. Jim rode in both San Diego parades in a vintage red T-Bird. Jim has been Guest of Honor at five Marine Corps Birthday Balls! Nine grandchildren keep Jim and his wife, Terry, (a Pascack Valley '65 Indian) happy! 2024 is the Class of 1964's 60th Anniversary of graduation. He lives in Carlsbad, CA and is interested in attending.

**68 Gerard "Rod" Hennessey**

Gerard ("Rod") Hennessey writes: "In May, I was fêted as The Nature Conservancy Virginia Coast Reserve's first director at their 50th anniversary celebration at the Barrier Islands Center in Machipongo, Virginia. I worked as the startup manager from 1974 to 1984. I did the initial resource inventory and prepared the management principles, which are still used today. I've lived on the seaside of the Eastern Shore of Virginia ever since our farm on Bell Neck."



Gerard "Rod" Hennessey '74 marks the 50th anniversary of The Nature Conservancy's Virginia Coast Reserve, attending a commemoration event at the Barrier Island Center in Machipongo, Virginia.

**72 Dominic "Nic" Cols** "If the Crusader Magazine had been around in my day (1968 through 1972), my notes today would be equivalent to notes from the class of 1920 — if BC had had such a class. It's interesting to note that the year we entered Bergen Catholic (1968) was closer to the end of World War 1 than it is to today. <sigh> Like so many of 'you all' (hey, I've lived south of the Mason Dixon line since 1982 and have picked up the jargon in addition to losing my New Yawk accent — a strategic imperative, along the lines of pulling for Carolina Tarheels and



settling on my favorite bourbon). We are now retired and enjoying golf and grandchildren: 3 granddaughters under age 5 here in Raleigh, plus two more under age 4 in Atlanta. I am also singing in about 5 different a cappella choirs and quartets. That about sums up retirement). We've reconnected with a few BC 72'ers: Bob Hebert, Dennis Miller, and Kevin Freeman; plus all the great guys who attended our 50th reunion a couple of Falls ago. The whole process started about 6 years ago when the BC Football team came to play Grayson High School in Atlanta. (I had a job in Atlanta at the time and Dennis Miller told me about the game). My wife and I went to the Alumni dinner the evening before the game, and then I went to the game itself. BC spanked Grayson, who was ranked 5th in the nation. The next day, for the first time since graduation, I came across a bunch of my old buddies. I just loved the whole affair. The 50th Reunion Weekend activities were so terribly connective and joyous — I smiled so much that weekend that my face hurt! I hope the others felt the same. Maybe if any of you are traveling through the Raleigh, NC area, I'd love to reconnect. Let me know! 706-570-9859."

**72 Philip Tornetta** lives in Carlsbad, CA. He recently retired after serving as a Judge of the State of New Jersey. He is currently a Professor of Law at Northwestern California University School of Law.

**73 Bob Fortsch** recently celebrated his 45th anniversary at Prudential in Paramus, NJ. He is technically retired. Bob continues to work with his team of young agents. He and his wife, Pat, reside in River Vale where Bob has served as chairman of the Zoning Board and Vice-Chairman of the Joint Planning Board. Feel free to reach out to Bob if

you have any questions. bob.fortsch@prudential.com.

**74 John McDermott** and his wife, Emjay, are happy to announce the birth of their first grandchild, Liam McDermott Lockwood on November 7, 2023. Liam is a very happy and healthy little boy. John's youngest daughter, Tara, along with her husband, Sean Lockwood are the proud parents.

**79 Michael Russo** and his wife, Suzanne, are proud grandparents to 18 month old Theo and 14 month old Caroline. Suzanne is retired from teaching and Mike is semi-retired from practicing law.

**82 Michael Marasco** and his wife, Cori, adopted a beautiful infant girl on January 29, 2024. Welcome Gianna Marasco!

**82 Steve Sheridan** retired from a career in banking on December 31, 2021 and has been enjoying retirement ever since. He and his wife, Teri, live in Las Vegas, NV since graduating college in 1986. A son, Sean, lives and works at a hospital in Bend, OR where Steve and Teri love to visit as often as they can. Their daughter, Katie and her husband, Matthew live near them in Las Vegas. They blessed Steve and Teri with their first grandson, Krew, in November 2022. Steve took up cycling upon retirement and regularly rides out into the desert and through Red Rock Canyon. He has completed a dozen races since he started and has quite a few lined up for 2024. Steve volunteers alongside his brother, Bob, at Ronald McDonald House of Las Vegas. They regularly support their various fundraising efforts. Steve says, "Life is good indeed."

**83 Thomas Hanna** teamed up with Fr. Stephen Fichter '85 to produce his feature film, *Trinity's Triumph*. *Trinity's Triumph* is a coming of age story about three seminarians and their mentor, played by Joe Morton. This has been a passion project of Fr. Stephen's for 25 years. Ray Hopkins '83, John Crowley '85 and Neil O'Halloran '90 are supporters of Fr. Stephen and *Trinity's Triumph*.

**84 Michael Bibbo** has been in the Television and Film industry since 1992. He and his wife, Jennifer, have lived in Norfolk/Virginia Beach (Tidewater) area since 2000. Michael currently owns his own production company called WaverlyCreative. They are currently building a television and film academy for middle school and high school students that will open in August 2024. Sophia, Michael and Jennifer's oldest daughter, will graduate from Virginia Wesleyan University this May. While Julia, their youngest daughter, will attend James Madison University as a freshman in the fall.

**88 John Fox** recently joined BNP Paribas Securities Services as Head of US Agency Lending. He brings over 25 years' experience in the financial and securities lending markets. Prior to BNP Paribas, John was Head of Client Management and Sales – North America for BNY Melon and Head of US Client Services for Deutsche Bank. James Sullivan shared that he recently joined Seyfarth's Corporate department in New York City where he will be part of the firm's Restructuring and Insolvency practice. James advises clients on their corporate restructuring, bankruptcy and transactional matters.

Continued on next page

# ALUMNI NEWS AND NOTES Continued

**89 Steven Napolitano** lives in Mahwah, NJ with his wife, Claire and their three children. Gabriella is a senior at IHA and is heading off to Lehigh University (Steve's Alma Mater) in the fall. Christina is a junior at IHA. Steven is in 8th grade at St. Elizabeth's School in Wyckoff and will join Bergen Catholic's Class of 2028 in the fall.

**91 Tom Barry** lives in Los Angeles, CA and recently received his black belt in karate.

**94 Noel Naughton** of Leaffree Gutters LLC recently formed a new DBA called Kelly Exteriors. They focus on all commercial roofing and roofing service in NY, NJ and CT. Noel has an 8-year old son who is focused on going to BC in 2030. He wants to play basketball like his dad and football like his cousin, Dylan Garrity '23.

**95 David Kriso** left the teaching field. He is now a clerk with the US Postal Service in Rutherford, NJ. David is a 14-year veteran cruise line shoreside agent in the New York area. He is also a published travel writer and lecturer. David recently wrote the preview story for American Rail Magazine, the new affiliate magazine for the Rail Passengers Association, based in Washington, DC. His website is DEKTravelJournal.com.

**96 Jody Ratti** and his wife, Gillian, welcomed their third son, Vincent Dennis, at the end of

March. Vincent, BC '42, joins his older brothers, Anthony BC '34 and Patrick BC '41.

**01 Pat Hart** and his wife, Emily, announced the birth of their third child, a daughter, Caroline in January 2024. Amelia (4) and Declan (2) can't wait to show their little sister the ropes.

**03 Conor McManus** joined the Bergen Catholic Board of Directors on July 1, 2023, and also was admitted as a Partner at PwC, based in Florham Park, NJ. From 2020 to 2022, Conor was on secondment with PwC Switzerland, living in Basel and working with a multinational pharmaceutical company. Conor resides in Mendham, NJ with his wife, Jennifer, and their two children, Luke and Harper.

**04 Ashkan Hamzelou** started his fellowship in Nephrology at Robert Wood Johnson University Hospital this past year and is planning on applying for a second fellowship in critical care medicine in 2025.

**06 Frank Rizzo** along with his wife Jennifer are happy to announce the birth of their daughter Francesca Gianna. Proud grandpa is Francis Rizzo '79 and proud uncles are Gerard Rizzo '07 and Joseph Rizzo '11.



Carl Caceres, S.J.

**07 Carl Caceres** professed his first vows in the Society of Jesus at St. Thomas More Catholic Church in St. Paul, MN on August 12, 2023. He has been missioned by the Midwest Jesuit provincial to pursue a doctorate in Higher Education at Loyola University Chicago. In addition to his coursework, Carl currently serves as a spiritual director for Loyola students and young adults in the Chicago area. He is also a volunteer at Misericordia Heart of Mercy, a community for adults with developmental disabilities associated with the Archdiocese of Chicago.



Frank Rizzo's daughter, Francesca Gianna





Carl Caceres '07 Vow Class

**11 Martin Scheuring** shared the good news about his daughter, Kaci Rose's birth on June 14, 2023. Proud grandpa is Michael Scheuring '82 and proud uncle is Craig Scheuring '14.



Martin Scheuring's daughter, Kaci Rose

**15 Michael Jost** recently celebrated his one year work anniversary at the Teaneck Fire Department and graduated from probationary status.

**16 John Mead** attended Wagner College, Iowa Southeastern CC and Franklin Pierce University where he received his bachelor's degree in sports media. He went on to attend Wilmington University to get his master's degree in business management. At all of the named colleges, John played baseball and while at Wilmington he was All-NCAA Eastern Region 1st team. John has played professional baseball for the past 2 years. In 2022, he played for the State College Spikes in the MLB Draft League. In 2023, he played for the Tri City Valley Cats in the Frontier League. He recently signed another professional baseball contract for 2024 with the Sussex County Miners of the Frontier League sponsored by MLB.

**WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

If you have an event or milestone you would like to share with your fellow alumni, please submit a short email, with photo if available, to Regina Radoslovich at [rradoslovich@bergencatholic.org](mailto:rradoslovich@bergencatholic.org).

# ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

Dear BC Family,

Spring is in the air and there is a lot of excitement at Bergen Catholic as we prepare to send off our graduating seniors and look forward to welcoming our next freshman class. Throughout my first year here at BC, I have had the opportunity to meet many alumni, from so many different class years spanning generations, as well as family and friends, and all of you have added to my excitement because of your dedication and passion for such a wonderful school. Thank you!

During many of my meetings and conversations I have been asked questions about how you can help. Most of you know about our Crusader Fund, which is the least restricted way to support all that BC has to offer, and the Student Tuition Assistance Fund which directly supports students, ensuring the best and brightest have access to a Bergen Catholic education.

Participation in our events and activities is also very important to us and the life of BC. As alumni, family and friends, who have opportunities to talk with our students about colleges, universities, various majors and career options, you give BC graduates guidance that is priceless. Attending events, like our Annual Gala, Golf Outings, Cigar Nights, academic competitions and athletic events helps to generate excitement that inspires others to stay connected or to re-engage with Bergen Catholic.

Finally, for those who like to plan ahead and also take advantage of tax saving benefits there are many options. You may choose to include Bergen Catholic in your estate plans, to support the school with donor advised funds, or direct your IRA required annual distribution to Bergen Catholic as a charitable gift. These gifts can make a big impact at BC while allowing you to ensure your support of your family and while avoiding certain taxes.

I would be delighted to speak with you about any of these great initiatives and to hear about your experiences with Bergen Catholic, so I hope you reach out. We would also like to welcome you back to Bergen Catholic, to see, first-hand, how so many of you staying connected have helped the school to grow and thrive for almost 70 years!

Thank you for all you do for BC!



**Karen DiMaria**  
Vice President of Advancement  
Bergen Catholic High School



*Karen DiMaria*

## Follow Us!







## *How to leave your legacy...*

## CRUSADER LEGACY SOCIETY

It is never too early to think about estate planning. Providing for your family while supporting the work of charities and not-for-profits that you are passionate about are only a few reasons to plan your estate. Did you know that there are a lot of tax saving benefits as well?

At BC, you can use many tools to give while supporting an area that is meaningful to you at the same time. By leaving a set amount, a % of your residual estate after family support, making a gift of stock, utilizing a donor advised fund, or designating a portion of your IRA to Bergen Catholic, you can make a significant impact here. You can also fund something of interest to you:

- Student scholarships and tuition assistance ensure access to a BC education for those whose families may not be able to afford it.
- Upgrades in technology allow for cutting-edge ways in which our students learn.
- Modernization of our classrooms and campus effect the environment where our students learn.
- Investing in BC's endowment will provide for Bergen Catholic's strong future.

Many ways to give through estate planning can allow you to maximize your support while saving capital gains and other taxes. We would be happy to talk more with you about giving opportunities at Bergen Catholic and we hope you reach out to your financial advisor to ask for more information about what may work best for you and your future plans.

No matter the vehicle, your gift can make a lasting impression, leaving your legacy here at Bergen — one in which future Crusaders strive to emulate as they follow in your footsteps.

### CRUSADER LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP ROLL\*

Thomas J. Alrutz '61	Peter Manzetti, Jr. '78
Joseph L. Branciforte '64	Mr. & Mrs. Gerard J. Maughan, Parents
Roger W. Breslin, Jr., Parent	Thomas McCarthy '72
John M. Brunner '65	Mr. & Mrs. James W. O'Brien '62, Parents
John G. Chambers, Parent	Mr. & Mrs. Robert G. O'Connor '92
Mr. & Mrs. Owen T. Clarke '67	The Honorable John B. Paoletta '67
Francis X. Donlan '63	James C. Petrolino '62
Robert E. Fortsch '73	Artie Prior '59
Mr. & Mrs. Robert F. Fortsch '73	Robert J. Rapport '69
Deirdre Fortune, Parent	Dennis M. Sigrist '82 (RIP)
Thomas J. Furlong, Jr. '80 (RIP)	Frank J. Sposato '69 (RIP)
Carl G. Haas, Parent	Mary C. Steidl, Parent
Rev. Msgr. Robert J. Harrington '62 (RIP)	Mr. & Mrs. Brian A. Tramontozzi '90
Russ M. Hartmann '60	John A. Uzzi '63
Michael J. Haviland '78	Mr. & Mrs. James Whelan, Parents
Jack C. Howley '79	Joseph A. Zodl '66
Michael James Jordan '61	Anthony M. Zupcic '66
Mr. (RIP) & Mrs. John Lowe, Parents	
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Mady, Parents	

\*Represents all self-reported planned gifts through publication date

# IN MEMORIAM

## Deceased Alumni

Richard Moser Musso '59

James W. "Wally" O'Grady '59  
*Father of Andy '87 (RIP)*

Raymond T. Kerwin '61  
*Brother of Paul '63 (RIP)*

John S. Carman '63

Arthur G. DelColliano '63

Francis P. Pomar '63  
*Brother of Gerard '69 and Joseph '72*

John Kirlick '64

Joseph Sartori '64

Terry Meisse '65

Richard Dunphy '66  
*Brother of Thomas '71*

Gerald Taylor '66

J. Kevin Toomb '67

Anthony Sartori '68

Frank W. Ix IV '69  
*Brother of Terry '74, Anthony '78 and Gerard '84*

Edward Hoff '73  
*Brother of Vincent '72 and James '82*

Michael O'Herlihy '74

Francis Wetzelberger '75  
*Brother of Bill '77 and Bob '81*

Gary Mazzie '77  
*Brother of Michael '81*

Thomas Saracino '78  
*Brother of Dino '74, Uncle of Kyle Mullen '04 and Shane Mullen '05*

Edward Shalhoub '79  
*Brother of Michael '80, John '82 and Robert '87*

John Napoli '80

Stephen Quinn '81  
*Brother of Ed '83, Uncle of Evan Quinn '16 and Chris Bailey '07*

James Shalhoub '82

Robert Donfield '83  
*Brother of Kevin '87 and Nephew of Chris Donfield (RIP), Former BC Faculty*

Todd Mikolajczyk '85  
*Brother of Brian '79 (RIP)*

Michael Monks '88  
*Brother of Joseph '90*

Gary Grant '03

Joseph Hess '62  
*Father of Joseph '87*

## Deceased Family and Friends

Angela Armenio  
*Mother of Peter '72*

Ronald Boyajian  
*Father of Greg '96, Father-in-law of Chris Barry '93 and Grandfather of Joseph Barry '23*

Diana L. Butler  
*Wife of Kevin '88, Sister-in-law of David '85*

John Casazza  
*Father of John '91*

Curtis Chin  
*Father of Nate '25*

Eleanor Cole  
*Mother of Brian '79, Grandmother of Brendan '09 (RIP) and Connor '12*

Paul Contillo  
*Father of Bob '71*

Helen Copeland  
*Grandmother of Steven '25*

Antoinette Cushing  
*Mother of Michael '92 and Brian '05*

Donald Demers  
*Father of Donald '91, Andrew '97, Kevin '00 and Father-in-law of Michael Pane '87*

Jerry Derenzo  
*Cousin of Andrew Clark '02*

Joseph Desiderio  
*Grandfather of Jack Moynihan '15*

Gloria DiCocco  
*Mother of Jeff '82*

Gerald Dinallo  
*Father of Jerry '87 and Anthony '92*

Jack DiPiazza  
*Grandfather of Chris '10*

Robert Donfield, Sr.  
*Father of Bobby '83 (RIP), Kevin '87 and Brother of Chris Donfield (RIP), Former BC Faculty*



*Bergen Catholic wishes to extend its prayers and condolences to the family and friends of those who have passed away.*

**Patricia Dougan**

*Grandmother of Vito Campanile, BC Faculty, Nunzio Campanile, Former BC Faculty, Great Grandmother of Dominic Campanile '25 and Michael Campanile '25*

**Nora Esposito**

*Wife of Joe '99*

**Claire Fallon**

*Mother of Gerry '83*

**Miles R. Feinstein**

*Father of Matt '96*

**Thomas Gaggin**

*Father of Thomas '82, Timothy '87, Grandfather of Connor Byrne '23 and Father-in-law of William Byrne '84*

**Jean C. Galano**

*Grandmother of Brandon Woods '19*

**Alyson Garino**

*Sister of Jeff '02 and Ed '03*

**Linda Greaney**

*Mother of Brian '95*

**Margaret Hanke**

*Wife of Edwin '69 and Mother of Nicholas '91*

**Thomas Harkin**

*Father of Tom '91*

**Christopher Harrington**

*Father of Chris '87*

**Kimberly Henry**

*Niece of Hyden Henry, BC Faculty*

**Suzanne Higgins**

*Sister of Mike Janson '65, Steve Janson '71 and Aunt of Jesse Janson '99*

**Braylon Hodgson**

*Brother of Ryder '24*

**Bruce Lee**

*Father of Mark '85*

**Joseph Mahoney**

*Father of Dr. Brian Mahoney, BC President*

**John Marinaccio**

*Grandfather of Joseph '23 and Gianluca '27*

**Ann Maron**

*Mother of Ed '76, Michael '77, Gerard '87, Grandmother of Michael '04, Brendan '07, Kyle '09, Patrick '12 BOD and Brian '22*

**Cyril Massar**

*Father of Robert '81, Grandfather of Richard Abrahamsen '90, Father-in-law of Steven Ford '71 and John Brust '75*

**Edward McDermott**

*Father of John '99 and Edward '01*

**Georgina McGoldrick**

*Mother of John '90*

**Margaret McManus**

*Mother of Kevin '78, Stephen '81 and Mike '86*

**Daniel Minogue**

*Father of Bo '81, Mike '85, Uncle of John Vinci '83, Charlie Vinci '88, Ken Vinci '88 and Great Uncle of Jack Vinci '17*

**Gino Morin**

*Grandfather of Matthew '25*

**Robert O'Byrne**

*Uncle of Tim Harwick '14, Matt Harwick '16 and Jack Harwick '17*

**Vincent O'Byrne**

*Grandfather of Liam '19*

**Denise O'Dea**

*Wife of Bryan '96 and Sister-in-law of Chris '94*

**Vincent Oliveri**

*Grandfather of William '22*

**Rita M. Petric**

*Mother of William '85, Dean '87 and Scott '94*

**Matthew J. Ritter**

*Cousin of Ben Ritter '20, Austin Sargenti '23 and Nephew of Cecilia Sargenti, BC Staff*

**Mary Roberts**

*Mother of Tom '79, Brian '81, Keith '86 and Kyle '88*

**Nicola Romana**

*Grandfather of Nicolo '24*

**Gloria Rorro**

*Mother of Joseph '81*

**Clara Rothenberg**

*Mother of John '79 & James '83*

**Nancy Sattely**

*Mother of Jim '84*

**Karen Setti**

*Mother of Craig '86*

**Florence H. Skevin**

*Mother of John '73*

**Joan Stappenbeck**

*Sister of Mike Morrow '73 & Ken Morrow '77*

**Thomas J. Sullivan**

*Grandfather of Tommy '23, Uncle of Tom Meloro '82 and J.R. Meloro '91*

**Henry Tomczak**

*Father of Paul '85, John '88 and Mark '93*

**Anna Maria Trause**

*Grandmother of Joe '08*

**Mary Wetzelberger**

*Mother of Frank '75, Bill '77 and Bob '81*

**Br. James van Koolbergen**

*Brother of Jerry '59 (RIP), Uncle of Jerry '88 and Martin '89*

**Mary Jane Holzmann**

*Mother of Bill '87 and Greg '95*

**Patrick McManus**

*Father of Kevin '78, Stephen '81 and Michael '86*

**Robert Neuner**

*Father of Rob '85 and Chris '90*

**Kathleen Puglise**

*Wife of Paul '68*

**Nelson Zabransky**

*Father of Nelson '83 and Grandfather of Brett '19*

*Never Forgotten*

**Bergen Catholic High School**

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**MISSION STATEMENTS**

**Bergen Catholic High School**

Bergen Catholic High School is a diverse, Catholic community, which prepares young men to become dynamic global leaders by deepening religious faith, developing academic excellence and strengthening social consciousness and responsibility in accordance with the Essential Elements of an Edmund Rice Christian Brother Education.

**Office of Advancement**

The Office of Advancement, guided by the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice, seeks to build growing, sustainable relationships with people and organizations who care about the mission of Bergen Catholic High School and to spread the "good news" of Bergen Catholic to all who care to hear it, embrace it and support it with their time, talent, treasure and prayer.



**BERGEN CATHOLIC  
HIGH SCHOOL**

CATHOLIC. GENTLEMEN. LEADERS.