

Memorare

The newsletter of the Cathedral College/ Cathedral Prep Alumni Association

The Cathedral Experience -a call to service

In our days at Cathedral we were being called to service in the sacrament of Holy Orders. Although many of us took the route of that other Sacrament of Service, Holy Matrimony, we carried the ideal of service into whatever path life led us on. Tom Sheridan suggested a short time ago that we dedicate an issue of *Memorare* to the subject of assistance rendered by our alumni to others. Our original intention was to do this with the Fall, 2021 issue. As it happens, two outstanding examples of Cathedral alumni rendering service came to our attention since Tom made that suggestion.

Consequently, we present to you in this issue the inspiring stories of Tom Bonhag (Prep '69) and John McGlynn (Prep '68). Further we welcome alumni to send us their stories of service or the those of other alumni known to them for inclusion in future editions of *Memorare*.



Amid Disaster, a Helping Hand

As an EMT and Red Cross Disaster Health Services team member, Tom Bonhag, Prep '69, has found renewed purpose in retirement.

After nearly four decades in the finance industry, no one would blame Tom Bonhag, Prep 69, if he wanted to kick back a bit, but his retirement has been anything but leisurely.

"I submitted my retirement papers on April 1, 2012, at age 60," Bonhag said.

"That was the easiest part in the entire process. The difficult part was trying to map out my plans for the next roughly 25 years of life."

Map them out he did. Since retiring in 2012, Bonhag has become a certified, licensed EMT and a member of the Red Cross Disaster Health Services (DHS) team.

He also earned an associate's degree in health information technology from Brookdale Community College in Lincroft, New Jersey, and volunteers at the Monmouth County Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (MCSPCA).

The common thread woven through Bonhag's "retirement" has been service to those in need. In 2018, as a member of the DHS team, he deployed to California to support victims of the Camp Fire, which ravaged Paradise, California, and claimed 85 lives, displacing nearly 50,000 people and burning about 11,000 homes to the ground. *(continued on page 2)*



Memorare is published by the Cathedral College/Cathedral Prep Alumni Association.

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College and Prep Directories and Class Listings

Alumni directories by class year along with contact information is available at:

<http://stlukes-parish.org/cathedral>

Note: Contact information is not available for every alumnus. Class listings are also available for all classes at the same location.

Thanks to St. Luke the Evangelist Parish in Westborough, MA for providing hosting space.

A Helping Hand - continued

"Deployments are emotional challenges because you're seeing people who have lost everything -everything," Bonhag said.

Bonhag worked in the family dormitory at a shelter at Chico Fairgrounds in nearby Chico, California. Working alongside a nurse from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m., he helped roughly 110 families "living on cots, with everything they own ... right next to them or underneath the cot." He was blown away by the donations that came in not just for the families but for animals, too.

"It was just amazing," he said. "It touched my heart because it crossed what I do with the SPCA with what I do with the Red Cross."

This year, Bonhag has deployed three times: to Mississippi in the wake of tornadoes, to Michigan after a dam collapse caused flooding, and to Philadelphia, when Tropical Storm Isaias prompted evacuations. Now, he's taking some time closer to home, acting as a "utility player" for the Red Cross working as a fiscal reviewer, an instructor, and a DHS team lead for Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania.

And "virtual deployments" enable Bonhag to lend support to 50 to 60 people daily. On the ground or on Zoom, helping people and hearing their stories keeps Bonhag going. "People, they get to know you," he said, "and they get to tell you their stories."

How our Association helps Vocations— *A Letter from Diego*

I would like to thank the Cathedral College Alumni Association for their continued support of my vocation, seminary formation, and college education.

I grew up in Fishkill, New York in a household of eight children and attended St. Joachim-St. John the evangelist parish in Beacon. I was homeschooled by my parents with an online classical curriculum, and through their guidance, was given the incentive to always strive for academic excellence. When I decided to apply to seminary after 13 years of home education, I chose to attend **Fordham University** to get the best education possible.

I would not be able to do this, however, without the continued financial support and scholarship opportunities of generous associations such as the Cathedral College Alumni Association.

My discernment to the priesthood, aided by the Archdiocese of New York Cathedral Prep program, began explicitly around the age of 15 through prayer and following of desire given by God. From then on, my classical education in philosophy and catechism deepened my desire and brought me to the conclusion to enter the seminary. There I continue my pursuit of God and wisdom through the seminary program, though I certainly would not be able to without the support, both financial and spiritual, of the Alumni Association and the Archdiocese of New York.

Thanks,
Diego

Who said that!?

Two editions ago we asked who said:

Q. *"There'd be no theology without Greek."*

A Fr. Bob Wilde
Courtesy of Msgr. Tom Sandi.

This Edition's quote

Q. Apples!

Answer in the next issue.

The following article was submitted by John McGlynn -Prep '68. It describes the effect of COVID-19 on a healthcare worker.

Saddest Time in My Life

We were having dinner in a Sydney Opera House restaurant on March 10, 2020, when the TV flashed that Tom Hanks and his wife Rita Wilson tested positive for Covid 19. People in the restaurant commented that the couple had been there just two days earlier. Then another news flash. Trump was closing all foreign travel into the US on Friday the thirteenth at midnight. We got ourselves together and caught the last flight out of the Sydney airport. We arrived in Houston 13 hours later and the terminal was empty.

Our connecting flight to JFK has 7 passengers, and 9 crew members. "What's going on here?" I asked the stewardess. "It's been like this going to New York. But we are packed 100% leaving New York," she said.

We heard on the Australian news that a place called New Rochelle was the epicenter of the virus in the US, so it was not a surprise to hear that the hospitals were overflowing. But I did not know until we got back home that they were very short staffed. Watching the news after getting home, there was a public service announcement calling for retired doctors and nurses to help out. So, I got a job as a staff nurse working for Montefiore's New Rochelle Hospital. I was assigned to the Covid 19 unit overflow unit in the Skilled Nursing facility next door that opened a unit to care for the overflow. Before work, I had to sign for a mask. I was oriented to the med pass, skin care and documentation, and went home exhausted.

Returning the next day, I was asked "Where is your mask" "I threw it away." "You are supposed to wear it for a week, then you get a new one." Having taught college Infection Control courses, I thought "this is crazy" But I better get with the program.

That morning, I met my assigned patients. They were not allowed out of their rooms. They were not allowed visitors. They were not allowed flowers. They were not allowed Get Well Cards. They were not even allowed to see the faces of the staff taking care of them. Staff had to bundle up in plastic jump suits, booties, hair nets, goggles and masks that were in such short supply. It was surreal. All the patients had on their TV sets watching the constant news coverage about Covid 19, and all seeing themselves as one more death count imminent static. Each and every patient was all alone, except for the staff caring for them.

I saw vacant eyes. Hopeless, helpless expressions. And deep, very deep sadness. There was no fight, no rebellion, no complaining about the dire restrictions. The patients could not even have the Chaplain. Only direct care essential staff. I went home exhausted, going through the basement and removing all my clothes and throwing them in the washing machine with hot water setting, before jumping in the shower.

The horrendous damage that this virus was causing was etched in each and every patient I saw. The patients were so alone. No wife could be with her husband. No husband could be with his wife. No children could be with their parent, and no parent could be with their child. No friend, no relative, no loved one could be there to give the comfort that all of us expect to have when we are dying. And so it went on day after day until enough staff recovered from their own bout with the disease and I could be relieved.

Yes, this was the saddest time of my life.

Remember When:

The following was taken from a 1968 brochure promoting Cathedral Prep

CURRICULUM:

REQUIRED COURSES

Religion (4 years)

Latin (4 years)

English (4 years)

History (4 years)

Mathematics (3 years)

Biology (1 year)

Chemistry (1 year) Guidance (1 year)

ELECTIVE COURSES

French (3 years)

Spanish (3 years)

Italian (3 years)

Earth Science (1 year)

Political Theory (1 year)

Advanced Mathematics (1 year)

Economics (1 year)

TUITION: \$200. per year.



The now Most Reverend Charles Balvo (Prep 68') looks into Cathedral's experimental

Back to the Futurescope

in 1964 to see what will become of him in the 21st century.

Facebook Group

For those who use Facebook, we have a group and you can check for information and updates. This is the site address: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1031291000372044/>

Know your Latin



I didn't know it was this kind of conjugal visit!

A senator was 15 minutes late to the Senate on a day Cicero was giving a speech. He sat in his usual seat and quietly asked the senator next to him what Cicero was talking about. The senator replied. "I don't know. He hasn't gotten to the verb yet!"



Lessons from West End Avenue



This from Fr. Mike Fleming, one of two religion teachers (Fr. Tom Murphy, being the other) and spiritual director at Cathedral in the 1960's. Fr. Fleming rather offhandedly told us one day that he never passed a beggar on the street while he was wearing his collar without giving him a quarter (which meant a lot more then than it might today, of course). His rationale? You never know when, at the last moment of that beggar's life, he would remember the kindness shown him by the stranger in the Roman collar and turn to God. That lesson is still giving spiritual direction to many of us today.

Requiescat in pace et in amore

John J. O'Connell '66 (Cathedral College)

Rev. Msgr. Richard Guastella '66 (Cathedral College)- Richard died of the COVID-19 virus He was a much-beloved pastor in Staten Island. (per email from Ray LaManna – 10/30/20)

Edward L. Toro—'68 (Cathedral Prep)— 11/25/20

Kevin Dillon February 24, 2021

Class Notes

Once again we are soliciting submissions. If the information regards someone other than yourself please be sure to have the permission of the subject or his family.

Also please include your name and class as well. If it's someone else's information, the class (college? prep?) year of graduation of the subject.

You can send the information to Bill Bishop (BillB70@optimum.net). Please include "Alumni class note" in the subject line.