

THE GOOD NEWS

FROM ALUMS & FRIENDS & FAMILIES

Providing tuition assistance to students at Community of Saints Regional Catholic School

STORIES FROM THE PANDEMIC

In this issue we present the stories of some alums, friends, and COS families, who describe their experiences with the pandemic. We would especially like to thank the many essential workers who helped us get through the last year. COS students pray for you.

Healthcare workers are getting vaccinated and encourage everyone to do the same as soon as they can. Nicole Stevens '02 celebrates with a double thumbs up. (Go to p.10 for Nicole's story.)



CAN'T PLAN FOR ANYTHING

“...if people miss work and then can't pay the bills. I understand how isolated these people feel.”

“My love for nursing gave me strength. ...spotlights the problem of inequity in this country. ...we saw COVID-19 embedding itself.”

“I would just say a little prayer to help me be safe. We didn't know anything about COVID. God's got a plan for me.”

“I was afraid, too, but I didn't want to show it. I FEEL OPTIMISTIC”

Dear Alums and Families and Friends of COS,

Paul Romer, a Stanford University economist, once opined “a crisis is a terrible thing to waste.” The word “crisis” comes from a Greek word that means “an opportunity for change.”

The COVID-19 pandemic is an international crisis of seismic proportions. Almost every aspect of what we were so sure could be counted on has been disrupted and probably permanently changed.

This issue carries some wonderful reflections on the effect of this pandemic on alums and friends of Community of Saints parishes and schools.



I ask you what I have asked Community of Saints scholars: “what have you learned about yourself over the past year?” “What new ways of living have you experienced?” “What good has come out of the pandemic for you?” “What do you cherish more today because of the pandemic experience?”

It truly would be a terrible thing to waste this crisis, this opportunity to see the world with different eyes, to understand relationships differently, to change the way I live.

These reflections of alums and friends share a slice of their lives that have changed — a piece of their life story. What is there about your life story that is different from March 2020?

Thank you for your continued support and commitment. You make Community of Saints possible.

Fr. Steve Adrian
Canonical Administrator of COS



Jennifer Herman, Registered Nurse

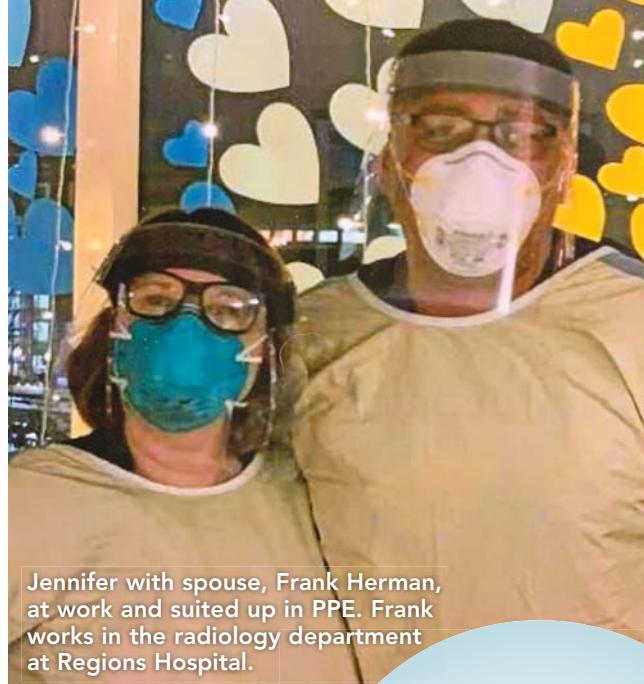
Before COVID-19, Jennifer monitored cardiac patients at Regions Hospital following surgery. In March, 2020, she became a COVID nurse.

Usually our unit is full, with about six or seven COVID patients at a time. Some of the patients are progressive care, so we're watching them to see if they deteriorate and need the Intensive Care Unit (ICU). It depends on how they're oxygenating. If they're not short of breath we treat them with some drugs, steroids, all kinds of antibiotics.

Many of the patients who are ICU, or critical care, are on a ventilator, but not all of them. Some are on high-flow oxygen and we watch to see if they can handle not being on the ventilator. Once we put them on the ventilator, they usually will be on it for four weeks. So, we push to find the limit, see how much they can handle without being intubated. It's a pretty rough road after they get intubated. If I have six patients, probably three won't make it after intubation.

Once they're intubated, it's a four-week wait and see. During that time, we talk to the family a lot. If there's no change after four weeks, we'll ask, "Do you want to withdraw care or are you willing to stick it out a little longer?" By that point we've tried everything we can to keep them alive and the only thing that's really keeping them alive is the ventilator and blood pressure medication.

The family can't visit, so it's hard for them to understand when their loved one isn't doing well. They try to connect over Zoom, but they still don't get a good idea of how their family member is doing. But they try.



Jennifer with spouse, Frank Herman, at work and suited up in PPE. Frank works in the radiology department at Regions Hospital.

Dear God,
Please heal people so they
can go back to their family.
Watch over the healthcare
workers to not get COVID.

Then send the dying to
heaven to rest.

Amen.

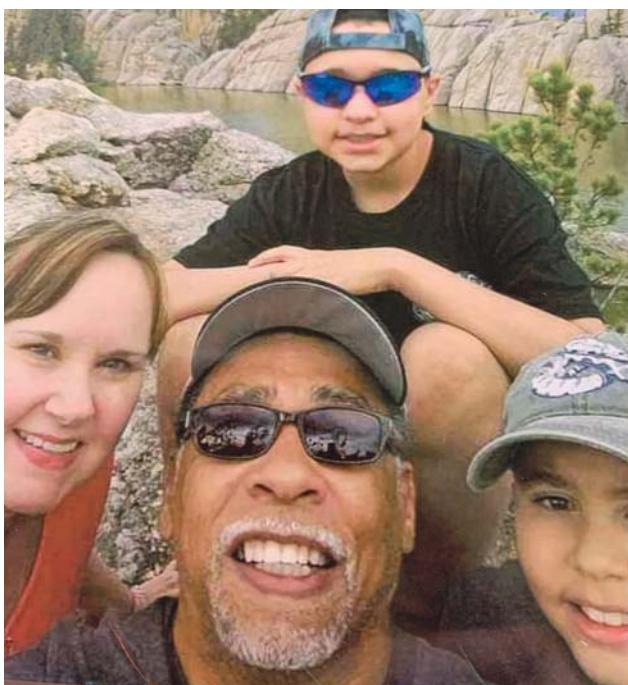
— ALAYLAH,
COS STUDENT

It's common for a family to call and ask, "Can we video chat with Dad?" Even though their dad is on a ventilator. We have an iPad on wheels, and we bring it into their dad's room, and they'll sing or they'll talk. Once or twice a day we'll do that just so the family can stay involved.

When we talk with the families, it's all honesty. It's facts. Now that there are so many statistics and we know so much more about how people are going to do, we give them the true facts. We don't try to sugarcoat it.

When I'm done working, I try to compartmentalize, and leave it at work. But I will sometimes find myself thinking about a patient who hasn't gone onto the ventilator yet but is teetering on the point of not doing well. Every so often it creeps in my head, "I wonder if they're okay. I wonder how they're doing. I hope they didn't get intubated."

My grandma died last March. She was 92. She couldn't have a normal funeral so there were only about seven of us at the wake and then we went to the cemetery and had a memorial. I wish I could have been there when she passed away. I wish all of the people who loved her so much could have come to the memorial for her. That was the hardest part. So, I understand how isolated these people feel when their family members pass away.



Jennifer and Frank's two sons are students at COS. Andre is in 5th grade and Frank Jr. is in 8th grade.

John Finnegan, PhD, Dean of the School of Public Health, University of Minnesota

John has served as Dean since 2005, and had planned to retire in 2020, but the pandemic caused him to delay those plans. He now expects to step down from his position this summer.

I learned what was going on in Wuhan Province in December, 2019. Michael Osterholm is on our faculty and he has been writing about pandemics for a long time. For a while he's been saying we were due for The Big One and he told us this was it. The last Big One was the 1918 influenza. No one knows for sure, but the death toll estimates were about 50 million worldwide and about 675,000 in the U.S. alone.

COVID-19 is the product of a corona virus (SARS-CoV-2) similar to the one that caused the SARS outbreak in 2003. The original SARS had a higher fatality rate, but it wasn't as infectious, so it was controllable with good public health containment practices. SARS was a shot across the bow because we saw how it spread by air travel within weeks. Someone infected with the new coronavirus can get on a jet and be anywhere in the world in less than 24 hours.

By March, when we saw COVID was really embedding itself in the U.S., the School of Public Health — indeed, all education institutions everywhere — had to quickly pivot. Our staff took 90 courses and worked with faculty to put them online, so students could continue work. The Walz administration wanted some of our faculty to help create models to assist the governor's decision-making for executive orders, so we were suddenly working in that arena. The School also has a global clinical trials unit that for several decades has been conducting research on everything from heart disease to AIDS/HIV and Ebola.

We were asked by the federal government to help conduct trials of existing drugs or new treatments that could be effective in treating COVID.

SARS-CoV-2 which causes the disease COVID is a virus. You need a very powerful microscope to even see it. Viruses are the cause of most newly emerging infectious diseases all over the world. There are certain "Hot Zones" in different parts of the world where many of these get their start — often with human-animal contact in some form. So, we live in a world where whatever happens in the smallest village of Africa, India, or China is really important to the smallest village in Minnesota, and vice versa. Where humans go, there goes the virus. Few people expected West Nile Virus would ever come to Minnesota, yet we have it. It's not as prevalent as in more tropical places perhaps, but it's here.

I'm very lucky that I'm able to work from home. People who must leave home to work are usually people who are paid less — providing service, working at stores — jobs that are impossible to do from home. They're the ones most vulnerable to this disease every day in addition to healthcare workers. God bless them.

There's a lot of institutional stress right now. I think all institutions are looking at the death of George Floyd and issues related



**John Finnegan with his spouse,
St. Matthew's alum Jan (Mosberger)
Finnegan '64.**

to COVID and how they spotlight the problem of racism and inequity in this country. I hope the impact of COVID and Floyd's death will result in progress. It won't happen in a week, a month, or a year. It's a journey. Every generation has to take a crack at making progress against this 400-year-old legacy of racism and inequity so many experience in our nation to this day. If we don't do it, who will?

Dear God,
I would like to pray for
all the people who have
COVID-19 so that they can get
better and go back to living a
normal life. I also pray that
COVID ends so that we can go
back to doing what we usually
do instead of staying 6 feet
apart and wearing masks.

— YARETZI,
COS STUDENT

Alexis and Molli Hernandez are third-generation members of Our Lady of Guadalupe, with siblings who attended St. Michael's. Their four nephews and niece are students at COS.

Alexis Hernandez, MSN, Registered Nurse

When it started, nobody knew what was going on. We didn't know anything about COVID-19 last March. We had a lot of scared nurses, nursing assistants, and staff. Some were pregnant, some had kids, and they didn't want to bring it home to their families. It was just a lot of emotions when this first started.

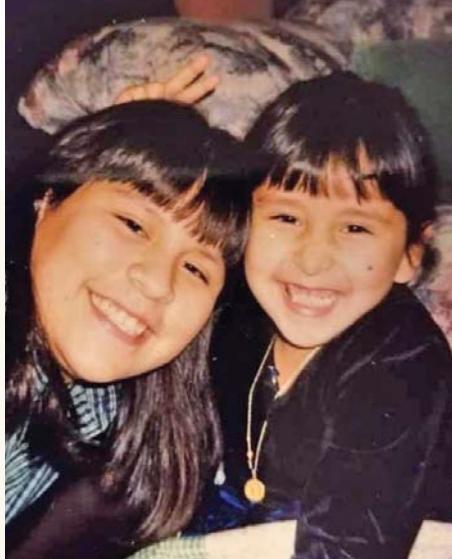
I had been a floor nurse for 12 years and in November, 2019, I took a new role as a supervisor. I was learning that job in March when COVID hit. I went from not knowing exactly how to be a supervisor to having to be 100% there for the staff. This was an unknown virus and it was life threatening. There were so many unknowns that I was just trying to be a listening ear for the staff. They didn't want to go home and talk to their families about this because their families were scared enough. I had to be available to calm their fears as much as I could. I was afraid too, but I didn't want to show it. I wanted them to be open with me.

Molli and I have been able to support each other because we know what each other's going through. Then my parents, my mom, she's always a rock for us. And then just my love for nursing gave me

strength. I was probably nine years old when I knew I wanted to be a nurse. When Molli was a baby she had had some health issues, so we were in the hospital often, and I saw the nurses taking great care of Molli. I just knew from that moment that I was meant to be a nurse.

Our family is really close, so trying to stay separate has been really hard, but we didn't want to bring it to our parents or the children, because we don't know how COVID affects kids. We were able to get together outside in the summer, but then the winter months came, and we had to separate again.

Looking ahead, I feel optimistic. I know we're not going to solve this in a day, or a month, or two months. It's going to take more time but thank God for the vaccine because that's going to be a game changer for everybody. We're getting on the right path. People still need to



Alexis (left) knew she wanted to be a nurse at age nine, when she saw how nurses cared for her baby sister, Molli.

social distance, wear masks, and keep doing everything that we're doing right now to prevent the virus from spreading. Especially now that we have different variants, and they're spreading fast. There are still a lot of unknowns.

Molli Hernandez, Nursing Assistant

I work in the ICU in the cardiac unit. We were getting patients like normal, and then bam, COVID hit. We changed our rooms, procedures, and started wearing masks and personal protection equipment. I told my mom, "I look like an astronaut with my cap and my gown on." In the beginning we had to reuse our personal protection equipment over and over again because there wasn't enough for everybody.

This is my first job in healthcare and being in the ICU, you see a lot. I wasn't really prepared. Seeing patients that have to get intubated has been the hardest thing. One minute you're talking to them about their families and their wives or their husbands, and the next minute they're on the ventilator and you're not able to talk to them anymore. When the second wave hit, there were so many deaths that we had to deal with. All those patients — it's really hard.

I had to lean on my family a lot for support. My family, along with my faith.



Molli (left) is a nursing assistant and Alexis is a clinical education specialist. They both work for M Health Fairview.

Below, Molli Hernandez in her personal protection equipment. "I told my mom, 'I look like an astronaut in my capper and gown.'"



I believe in the power of prayer. I would just say a little prayer to help me be safe, help me stay healthy, and help me to help my patients, my nurses, other nursing assistants, and the doctors. I say that silent prayer to myself every day to give me strength to keep battling on.

Originally, I wanted to become a physical therapist, but then decided I didn't want to wait that long. Seeing Alexis and how she became a nurse and earned her Master's degree got me interested in nursing. I earned an Associate degree from Inver Hills Community College and then went to St. Catherine University. But I was working three jobs and taking classes, which was hard to do, so I took time off and got the nursing assistant job. I see it as getting my foot in the door. I am going to pursue my career in nursing. I know it's going to take a lot of hard work, but I think I can do it. Alexis is a good role model, so is our other sister, who's a social worker with a Master's degree. Having great role models helps.

My nieces and nephews are back in school at COS. I pray for our kids and our educators. They're frontline workers as well and they've been doing as much as they possibly can.

Dear God,
Please help protect the people on the frontlines who are trying to treat COVID-19 and please help the people who are losing their jobs and their homes.
I trust in you, God.
— LORENZO, COS STUDENT

A Family Tradition of Helping Others How La Clinica Health Center Got Its Start

Molli and Alexis mentioned a story about their grandparents, Nicolas and Tomasa (China) Castillo, and the role they played in the founding of La Clinica, the community healthcare center on Concord Street. Their mother, Virginia Hernandez, shared her memories from that time.

"I was a teenager," explained Virginia Hernandez. "And it really troubled my mom that so many people didn't have insurance and couldn't afford to see a doctor."

In the late 1960's, Virginia's mom, who went by the nickname, China, worked in the office of Our Lady of Guadalupe. She and her husband were leaders in the Latino community and always looked to share their love of Mexican culture with others. China volunteered at West Side schools to teach students about Mexican traditions, while her husband, Nicolas, played in a Mexican band. "When Dad's band played, my mom would collect money at the performances and donate it to people in need," said Virginia.

To get the clinic started, the Castillos got help from Representative Karen Clark, who was also a nurse. She connected them with doctors and other nurses willing to volunteer their time. The Castillos sought donations of equipment and furniture, renting whatever they couldn't get for free. "God just let this all fall into place," Virginia said.

In 1968 the clinic opened its doors in the basement of the old St. Michael's Church, but by 1969 it moved to a storefront on Robert Street. Services were free and bilingual. Staffed by volunteers, the People's Health Center, as it was called at the time, served Mexican immigrants, native born Mexican Americans, as well as anyone considered low income. In 1972 the clinic moved again, this time incorporating as a non-profit, and changing its name to the West Side Community Health Center/La Clinica at

Neighborhood House. In 1983, the clinic moved into its current home, a newly constructed building on Concord Street.

Nicolas died in 1987, but in 2018, China cut the ribbon for Parque Castillo, a newly renovated park located a block from La Clinica and named in honor of her husband for his work as a community activist. China passed away in 2019, one month short of her 100th birthday.

The Castillos legacy of service and love for the community lives on in their children and grandchildren, including Alexis and Molli.



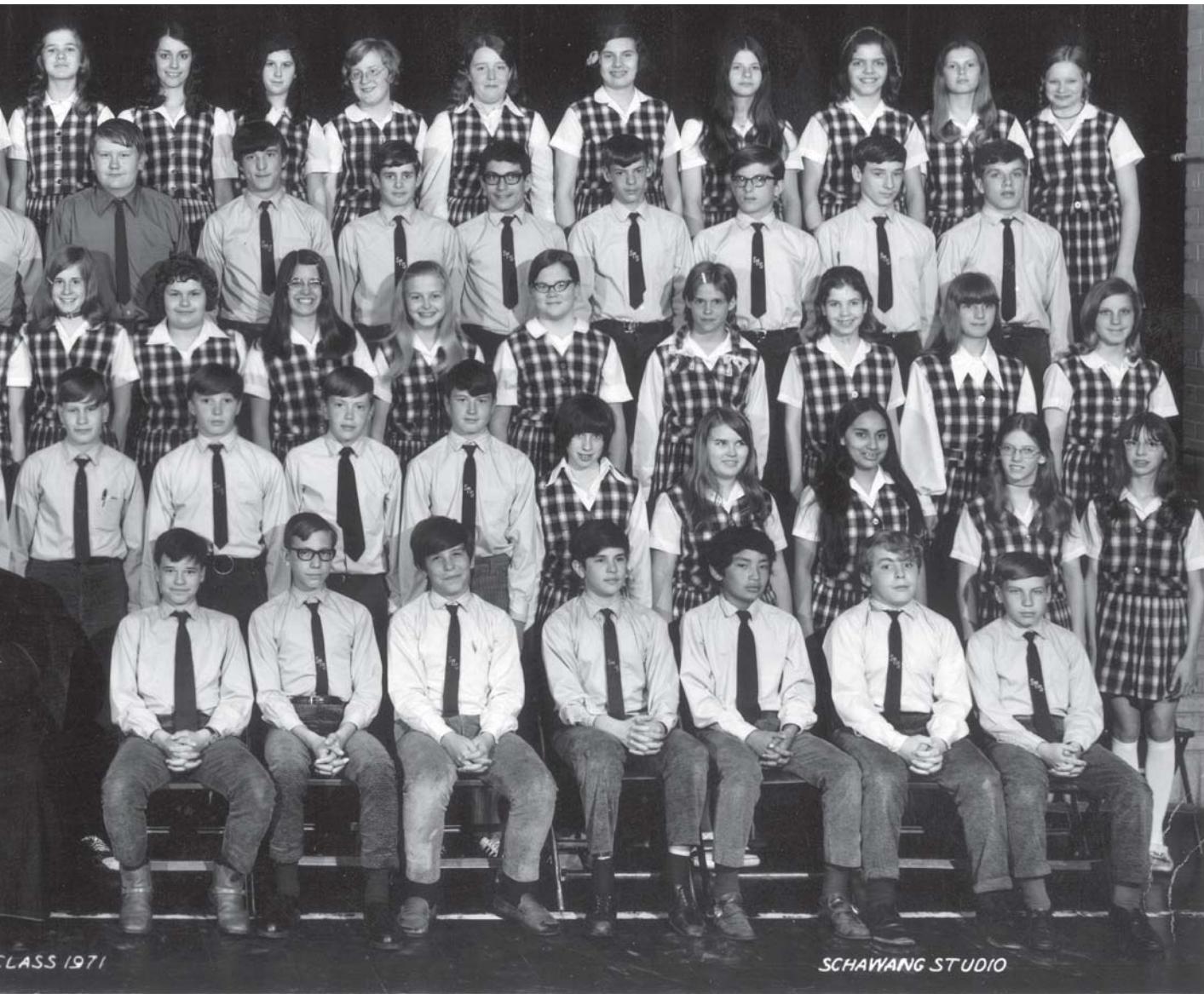
Nicolas and Tomasa (China) Castillo helped start La Clinica in 1968.

St. Matthew Class of 1971



CLASS OF 1971, CAN YOU NAME YOUR CLASSMATES?

We do not have names that correspond to the picture. We would love to have that for our records. If you can name the students in the picture, please email Doug Lieser at [dliester@communityofsaints.org](mailto:dlieser@communityofsaints.org). Here is an alphabetical list.



Thomas Abbott, Raymond Achman, Katie Stevens Adams, George Altendorfer Jr., Debra Arias, Robert Auge, Deborah Bachel, Mark Bade, Kathy Barber, Jeffrey Barthe, Cherie Belmonte, James Benoe, Joan Berg, Ann Bergstrom, Deborah Birch, Deborah Blomgren, Paul Boehmer, Paul Bredehoft, Mary Claire Brengman, Denise Burg, Stella Castillo, Shannon Conlin, Thomas Cullen, Tom Cybske, Patricia Dee, Nick DelVecchio, Sheila Cassidy Deyo, Linda Diederich, Mary Lou Durham, Susan Evans, Daniel Gangl, Nancy Duncanson Geissinger, Michael Groetsch, Patricia Halligan, Donald Heppleman, Laure Herold, Michael Hossalla, Ann Hurley, Jean Kelly, Cyril Kosel Jr., Michael Krueger, Patricia Leko, Arlene Letendre, Linda Lockway, Patricia Lofgren, Dennis Maher, Connie Mansfeldt, Kenneth Meyer, Edward Michaelsen, Judy Michaelsen, Thomas Michaelsen, Greg Moe, Susan Moe, Mark Mooney, Anna Marie Goldberg Moseng, Joseph Mrozinski, Michael Nieman, John Noyola, Kelly O'Brien, Mark Ohmann, Nancy Olson, Theodore Page, Julieanne Palacio, Paul Paquette, Thomas Patton, Deborah Prow, Patricia Reed, Katherine Reicher, Georgine Roers, Kim Rowan, Kathleen Sarageno, Glen Schlichte, Greg Schmidt, David Schmitt, Anna Schrul, Jane Zimmerman Schwartz, Donna Shepherd, Wallace Sieber, Kathleen Simon, Carolyn Smith, Greg Stein, Madonna Tackaberry, Mary Thomas, Suzanne Todora, Dennis Traynor, Pamela Verdeja, Michael Walker, James Wanger, Joanne Waschek, Cynthia Westbrook, Donna Wilberg

St. Michael Class of 1971



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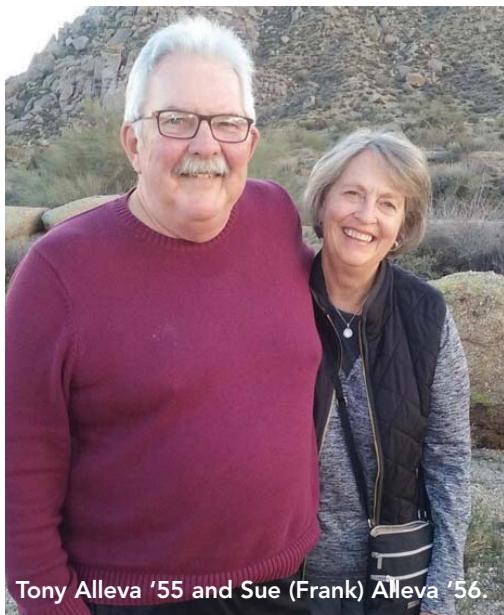
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Row 1 | Colleen Delougherty, Cathy Colmer, Leann Weldon, Lynn Seidel, Kris Gutzmann Bauer, Mary Smith, Claire Richtman, Natalie Melniczak, Becky Deziel

Row 2 | Rich Price, Greg Giesler, John Youness, Steve Nielsen, John Marthaler, Joe Kluck, Jeff Lemmer, Tom Einhorn, Pat Kinsel, Mike McEllistrem, Mike Thomas

Row 3 | Jean Mansur, Sue Aden Bemner, Sharon Maher Pirkle, Mary Van Guilder, unnamed student, Michell Galles Cochran, Dorothy Verstraete, Jean Wadell, Cindy Gramling, Marylou Weegman

Row 4 | Rich Garcia, Mark Zaspel, Jeff Kraft, Mark Gress, Steve Riehm, Bob Michaud, Bill Stewart, Dave DeTomaso, Bob Gritner, Jeff Studeman



Tony Alleva '55 and Sue (Frank) Alleva '56.

Alums Choose Legacy Gift to Invest in COS Students

We'd like to thank Sue and Tony Alleva who recently added Community of Saints to their estate plan. "The young people are our future," explained Tony. "Giving them the opportunity for excellence in education is paramount." Tony added that the couple's background helped make it an easy decision. Tony was a member of St. Michael's first graduating class at "the new school on the hill," while Sue graduated from St. Matthew's, along with her five siblings. Sue and Tony are now members of St. Francis of Assisi in Lakeland, but value their connection to COS. "Our legacy dollars will go directly to helping provide an excellent education for all the young people at COS," said Sue. "That is so important to us."

St. John Vianney Class of 1971



Front Row | Unnamed teacher, Michael DuBois, Mark Loomis, Dennis Fahey, Ronald Peters, George Schwamberger, Fr. Zweber, John Kedrowski; Mark Galatowitsch, Charles Engelmeier, Gary Stelzner, Mark Haakinson

Back Row | Monica Marschinke, Catherine Patterson, Mary Jo McDonough, Maureen Bauer, Mary Beth McGonagle, Lauren Cashman, Joan Miller, Mary Jo Tinucci, Jody Gallahue, Debra Manuel, Jeanne Elmore, Sister Marion

We can't gather for Reunion Sunday this year, but we still want to acknowledge some of our alums.

Happy Birthday to Florence Bandholz who turned 100 in January. She graduated from St. Matthew's in 1934.

Other notables alums:

CLASS OF 1946 Mary Sue Brass	CLASS OF 1940 Sr. Lorraine Mosso
CLASS OF 1943 Stella Lindquist	CLASS OF 1939 Carmella Maher
Edith Lamars	CLASS OF 1938 John Sperl
Peter Willems	CLASS OF 1936 Bernie Grossman
CLASS OF 1942 Bill Mosso	



Peter Willems '43, Stella Flis Lundquist '43, Edith Minea Lamars '43, Florence Bandholz '34.



Celebrating Reunion Sunday back in 2018: (ABOVE) Peter Willems '43, Stella Flis Lundquist '43, Edith Minea Lamars '43, Florence Bandholz '34.

Reunion Sunday

Joe Nasseff '60, Owner of Joseph's Grill

Joseph's Grill has been a West Side landmark since the 1980's when the St. Matthew's alum opened the doors at the original location at Concord and State Street. In 2001, Joe moved the business to the corner of Wabasha and Plato Boulevard

We're taking it one day at a time. Right now, we're allowed to operate at 50% capacity. Some days we get close to it — but it's got to be for more than one meal for us to make it.

It's hard when you don't know what's going to happen. For the last shutdown, we got last-minute notice. You buy product then you have a shutdown, and you can't use it. We didn't know when we'd be allowed to open, then when we did, we were short product. We try to go with the flow.

There are expenses that don't stop during a shutdown. Your insurance keeps coming, rent, Xcel Energy needs to be paid. Payroll

will vary depending on business.

I'm fortunate, I have a tremendous staff. They even volunteered to work for free. I know these kids need the money — I can't let them work without compensating them.

Right now, you can't plan for anything. We used to be able to plan for Minnesota Wild games or events at Harriet Island — times when you knew you'd be busy. Those things aren't happening. During the holidays we lost all our business. People are scared about coming back. We're fighting that on a constant basis. But we're open. We want to be visible in the community. I grew up on the West Side. I love

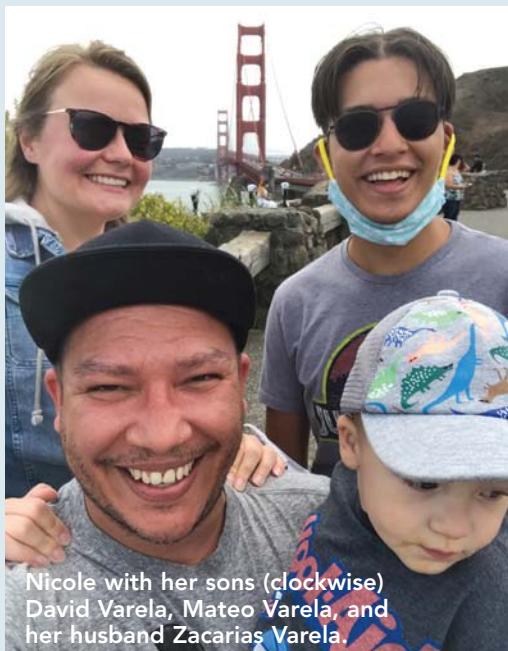


the West Side. There are great people on the West Side — absolutely great people. It's hard to give that up. I pray I don't have to make that decision.

Government money, the Paycheck Protection Program, has helped. Family has helped a lot. The staff all want to make it work. I can't say enough nice things about the staff. If it weren't for them, I would have walked away, but I won't turn my back on them. In a small business like this, employees become your family. They've been there for me through thick and thin. My wife passed 10 years ago, and they got me through it. I can't put a price on it.

Nicole Stevens '02, Registered Nurse, Ramsey County Public Health Department

Nicole credits her experience at St. Matthew's school and the friends she made there with her decision to study Spanish, along with nursing at St. Catherine University. As a student, Nicole interned at La Clinica on the West Side, and has pursued a career that focuses on community health.



Nicole with her sons (clockwise) David Varela, Mateo Varela, and her husband Zacarias Varela.

I'm assigned to work for COVID-19 case investigation, which means contact tracing. My job is to call people who tested positive. I try to get information from them to determine where they most likely were exposed to the virus. Then I try to find out who they may have exposed while they were infected. That's contact tracing.

It's all done over the phone. I hope the people I call answer, but I don't have much leverage. Before COVID I worked with the tuberculosis population. Tuberculosis can be spread through the air and it can be a public health issue if an infected person doesn't take medication. If someone refuses to answer questions, there are some actions we can take. But with COVID, there are so many cases, there's not much we can do if people refuse.

Contact tracing is just a temporary deployment. We take turns that last for one month. I started doing it in January and I noticed a trend — I was talking to lots of people who'd gone to New Year's Eve parties. I also talk to a lot of people the week after they've traveled.

The hardest part is how grueling it can be because of the amount of people who don't answer. I understand people being wary. If I see a number I don't recognize, I don't answer. I leave a lot of voicemails.

Joe Nasseff at his restaurant, Joseph's Grill, which is open for dine-in, take out, and delivery.

Faith helps, too. Fr. Steve Adrian, Fr. John Malone, and my cousin, Fr. Ray Monsour, have been exceptionally influential in my life. I told Fr. Malone, "Hey Rev, God's got a plan for me. I don't know what it is. But there's a plan." I'm not scared. I believe it's going to work out.

Back in June we installed an air purifying system. It cleans the air every 10 minutes. I want people to feel safe coming in here. I hope after people get the vaccine, they will feel safer. Until people feel comfortable moving out and about it's going to be hard. I understand — I have very good friends scared to come. I appreciate that. I don't try to persuade anyone. It's got to be their choice. But we're open.

Dear God,
I am thankful that
my family is safe and with
good health. I am also
thankful that we get to go
back to school and see
our friends again.
— BONNIE, COS STUDENT

Some people share information, some don't. It's hit or miss. When I do get someone who has concerns or questions, and I'm able to help, it feels good. Helping people avoid unintentionally spreading the disease to others makes all the voicemails and missed calls worth it.

We're telling people to quarantine for 2-4 weeks, but it isn't always realistic. In Ramsey County we send groceries, cleaning supplies, diapers, and formula to help people stay at home. But it's a huge thing if people miss work and then can't pay the bills. A lot of jobs don't pay sick leave. I can see the divide between people who can follow the protocol to quarantine and those who can't.

Rachel (Goldenstein) Maus '04, PhD Assistant Professor of Oncology at the Mayo Clinic

Rachel, a St. Matthew's alum, earned her doctorate in immunology and has focused her research on how the immune system responds to cancer. Rachel is quick to say she's not a COVID-19 expert, but given her background, she has closely followed the science behind vaccine development.

As an immunologist living through the pandemic, what sticks out to me is the timeframe. Never in a million years would I have thought a vaccine could be developed in less than a year. For a lot of us in the scientific community, it's changed our outlook on things. COVID vaccines are using technology developed in the cancer realm. It's a novel application of the technology, but we expect other vaccines will move towards this approach, including flu vaccines.

Traditionally, creating vaccines requires growing large amounts of a virus and then weakening it or taking out the critical piece, and that takes a lot of time. The COVID vaccines don't infect you with the virus at all. It is an mRNA-based vaccine and what's cool is it gives our cells the recipe for one of the virus' proteins — the spike protein — which the virus needs to enter our cells. The vaccine tells our cells to make this one piece of the virus. Then our immune system recognizes the spike protein as foreign and destroys it. Then, if we're exposed to the virus in the future, our immune system already has the antibodies it needs to kill it.

For anyone who has doubts about the vaccine, I would encourage them to speak to their doctor about their reservations or health concerns. Like with anything, your source of information matters. It's frustrating sometimes when I see information on social media that's using false data, or where there are no experts in the conversation.

At the end of the day, we need to get the vaccine for ourselves and our greater community. If we can achieve herd immunity, then the virus has nowhere to go. There won't be enough hosts for it to survive. That's an even more pressing concern as more variants emerge. We certainly want to avoid that.



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FIFTH GRADE STUDENTS WERE INVITED TO WRITE A PRAYER FOR THEIR SCHOOL

Dear God, Thank you for blessing me and others with such a great school. You help us understand everyday how to be kind and love others. Thank you for an education and awesome students! Please help us to be better every day. Also, please help people to stay safe and healthy. Amen.

— JOSEPHINA

Dear God, I pray that you will help us learn. Help us listen. Help us to love everyone around us. Help us to obey our teachers. Help us to work hard and always help others. We always pray to you in need.
Amen.
— CAMILLA

Hello God, Thank you for bringing me to this amazing school filled with amazing people. I made so many friends and I can't wait to make more. I appreciate every single teacher. This school is called amazing for a reason. Everybody in this school is full with kind hearts. God, make sure everybody in the school always has a roof on top of their head. Amen.

— ASHLY

COS Students Celebrate Catholic Schools Week with Service & Prayer

COS students packed up 300 pounds of food to donate to the food shelf at Neighborhood House. It is one of the annual service projects student leaders organize to serve the community, and reflects the COS philosophy that you teach service by doing it.

Other Catholic Schools Week activities included a Geography Bee, Pajama Day, and Winter Competitive Sports.

7th grade student, Jaziel, packs food that was collected for Neighborhood House.

