

PAX ET BONUM

WINTER 2020 VOLUME 17 • NUMBER 2

WELCOME TO
ST. FRANCIS



ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

CELEBRATING

FULL OF HEART SINCE 1940

80



PRESIDENT

Theresa Rodgers

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Helen Manfredi Pierson '74, P'00, *Chair*

Jennifer O'Brien Cooley '89

Mary Geary Ellingson '67, P'94, P'97

Noel Hesser, REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS, *Ex Officio*

Alison Morr '89

Lincoln Snyder, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF
CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Most Reverend Bishop Jaime Soto

Celestine Syphax, P'15

The Very Reverend Michael Vaughan,
VICAR GENERAL, *Ex Officio*

Trish O'Connell Ziegler, P'08

Rena DeNigris Zellars '95

ADVANCEMENT

MaryAnne Kelly, P'09

DIRECTOR OF ADVANCEMENT

Natalie Anzini

SPECIAL EVENTS ASSOCIATE

Christina Canaday Evey '05

ADVANCEMENT OPERATIONS MANAGER

Ann Moritz Gregory '89, P'21, P'22

ADVANCEMENT ASSOCIATE

Kristie Figone Ishoo '05

ALUMNAE & CONSTITUENT RELATIONS

MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS

Tina Tedesco '91

DIRECTOR OF STRATEGIC MARKETING AND
COMMUNICATIONS

Leigh Hiers '96

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF MARKETING,
COMMUNICATIONS

IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
- 4 ST. FRANCIS CELEBRATES 80 YEARS
- 6 IN COMMUNITY TOGETHER:
HOW ST. FRANCIS IS RESPONDING TO THE CHANGING
NEEDS OF EDUCATION DURING PANDEMIC
- 12 NEW BEGINNINGS, AGAIN:
RACIAL LITERACY AT ST. FRANCIS
- 18 TROUBIE NEWS
- 20 EVENTS: SELF_e, THANKFUL THURSDAY, & REVELRY 2021
- 22 ALUMNAE: CELEBRATING OUR 2016 COLLEGE GRADS
- 24 ALUMNAE SPOTLIGHT: FELICIA GILBERT '99
- 27 CALENDAR



The *Pax et Bonum* magazine seeks to share with the reader the spirit of St. Francis Catholic High School. Stories and pictures of the activities and accomplishments of students, alumnae, parents, and staff provide glimpses into the ways in which the school's mission is carried out and its legacy continued. St. Francis benefactors are gratefully acknowledged in the *Statement of Community Support* each fall.

St. Francis Catholic High School
5900 Elvas Avenue • Sacramento, CA 95819
Phone: 916.452.3461 • Fax: 916.452.1591
www.stfrancishs.org

St. Francis Catholic High School is fully accredited by the
Accrediting Commission for Schools,
Western Association of Schools and Colleges (ACS WASC.)

533 Airport Blvd., Suite 200 • Burlingame, CA 94010 • www.acswasc.org



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

DEAR ST. FRANCIS COMMUNITY,

If this year has taught me anything, it's that we belong to each other. The world, and our beautiful St. Francis community, has seen more illness, death, hardship, isolation, pain, and malaise in the last nine months than we should see in a lifetime. We have hurt for and with each other. I have witnessed the beauty of how our community has cared for each other. St. Teresa was right – “We belong to each other!”

As 2020 draws to an end (and for many, not soon enough), this Advent season begins a new liturgical year. Advent is a time of joyful anticipation and solemn preparation for the two comings of Christ — first, as a newborn in a manger, and second, when Christ will come again to reign forever and make all things new. His name is Emmanuel, God With Us. We know and declare that because of Advent, hope lives here. Peace lives here. Joy lives here. Love lives here.

While our 80th Anniversary appeared in a year we could not have imagined, I think about the 11,090 alumnae that have taken our pillars of faith, excellence, leadership and service out into the world. When our campus opens up, I look forward to all of you taking a stroll down “Alumnae Way” where you will see the names of all these amazing women. This edition of our *Pax et Bonum* magazine takes us through the challenges and changes that have impacted our year. To say that I am proud of the innovation and efforts of our extraordinary teachers and staff is an understatement. As Sarah Ruano pointed out in her article, we've encountered some big storms this year, and yet our God is faithful and carries us through.

Dr. Javier-Watson prompts us to begin again in our work towards achieving a racially just culture at St. Francis. I commend our teams of faculty, staff, parents and alumnae who have committed to working alongside us, and I am humbled and impressed by our students who remind us that the real work is not just building and implementing a plan, but rather building trust that leads to authentic relationships and reconciliation.

Even in spite of COVID, I love seeing how our students are thriving and making the most of opportunities. From interesting real-world summer internships, to TV appearances, they are stepping out in faith and challenging themselves. And we are here to cheer them on. I can't help but feel overwhelming gratitude that our school is a place where students grow in their faith, as we see one of our students receive the Sacraments of Initiation and be welcomed into our beautiful Catholic Church.

Our motto is graduating women who change the world. It's inspiring to read how one alum's early aspirations led to a life of service and the privilege she feels as she helps people deal with challenging issues in the workplace. We commend our young alums from the Class of 2016 on their college graduations and look forward to hearing where their journeys lead them. #TroubieForLife

We truly have a lot to celebrate with our rich 80-year legacy and the vibrancy and resilience of our students and families. I hope you all can join us at our first-ever Curbside Crab Feed (completely safe for our patrons, not so much for the crabs) and our virtual Revelry auction. Thank you to the amazing teams that are leading these efforts.

May your hearts and homes be filled with Christ's Advent hope, peace, joy and love in abundance, and may the world experience God's renewal through us all.

Advent blessings,

Theresa Rodgers



FULL OF HEART SINCE 1940

ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL CELEBRATES 80 YEARS

St. Francis Catholic High School was founded on the belief that our students can be a force for Pax et Bonum or “peace and goodness” throughout the world. Now more than ever, we need that force!

For 80 years, an education at St. Francis extends well beyond the classroom walls. Our students are encouraged to develop their talents and discover their passions in every area of their lives. Whether they are in the science lab, on the playing field, in the studio, or on a service trip, our students encounter countless opportunities for growth in academic and extracurricular programs, campus ministry, Christian service, technology, the arts

and athletics, although we have had to reimagine some of these opportunities in 2020.

St. Francis students are prepared to succeed wherever they go and no matter what challenges they encounter, because they cultivate a genuine love of learning inside and out of the classroom in conjunction with a deeper sense of purpose.

Every young woman who attends St. Francis is challenged to reach their full potential by dedicating themselves to the Four Pillars: Faith, Excellence, Leadership, and Service. St. Francis Catholic High School graduates women who can change the world!

1940

In the Fall of 1940, St. Francis Elementary School at 2500 K Street added a 9th grade class and twelve young women became the first to attend St. Francis Catholic High School. They were transferred to St. Joseph's School at 8th and I Streets in 1942.

1945

The young women who began their freshman year in 1941 became the first graduating class of St. Francis Catholic High School.



1956

Increased enrollment created a need for more high schools, and the newly erected Bishop Armstrong became the school for juniors and seniors from St. Francis, St. Joseph and Christian Brothers High Schools.



1964

Christian Brothers purchased Bishop Armstrong to create a four-year boys' high school and 520 young women in tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades transferred to the present site of St. Francis Catholic High School. The ninth graders remained at the K Street site for one more year.

1975

The Sisters of Notre Dame, Sisters of Mercy and the Franciscan Sisters were no longer able to staff the school and Bishop Alden J. Bell appointed the Sisters of the Apostles of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, who served until 1999.

1979

The first association of St. Francis alumnae and alumnae mothers was formed, calling themselves the Franciscan Guild.

1991

In the Fall of 1991, the Alumnae Association was started with a mission to promote and sustain the traditions and unity of St. Francis among its alumnae, and to develop financial support and share individual resources for the benefit of the St. Francis community now and in the future.

2004

Several new campus facilities were put into use including the Gymnasium, Fine and Performing Arts Complex, the Library Resource Center and science classrooms/labs. The entrance to the school moved from M Street to Elvas Avenue.



2007

For the first time, enrollment grew to over one thousand with 1,060 students in August 2007.

2014

A new Dining Hall was constructed to meet the needs of our growing student body.

2018

The outdoor math classroom was constructed using repurposed shipping containers and is designed to function as



an alternative classroom for students in which to discover the natural relevance of mathematics in their world. "The Grove" is named to honor Mr. Charlie Schwing, who taught Math and technology courses at St. Francis for 36 years and retired in 2013.

2020

The main walkway into the heart of campus was transformed into "Alumnae Way" with the addition of several beautiful panels that list every single SFHS alumna since the first graduating class of 1944.





AS WE HEAD INTO THE SECOND SEMESTER OF THIS ACADEMIC YEAR, WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE A GOOD TIME TO REFLECT ON ALL THAT'S HAPPENED THESE PAST SEVERAL MONTHS AND TO ACKNOWLEDGE ALL THAT WE'VE ACCOMPLISHED.

THE GOAL HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO BE IN COMMUNITY TOGETHER.

WE RECOGNIZE THAT THE EXPERIENCE OF ATTENDING ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL IS PART OF WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE. SO, AS WE HAD TO PIVOT IN MARCH AND AGAIN IN AUGUST, WE HAVE ALWAYS KEPT IN MIND THAT WE WANTED TO PROVIDE A SENSE OF COMMUNITY, OF NORMALCY AND OF SECURITY FOR OUR FAMILIES. THIS IS HOW WE'VE BEEN ABLE TO ACCOMPLISH IT:



IN COMMUNITY TOGETHER

HOW ST. FRANCIS IS RESPONDING TO THE CHANGING NEEDS OF EDUCATION DURING PANDEMIC

BY SARAH RUANO

In early February 2020, before COVID-19 overturned our everyday lives here in California, the Daily Gospel reflection from FaithND arrived at my email inbox as usual. In the gospel of Mark 4:35-41, I read the familiar story of Jesus inviting his disciples to “go across to the other side,” the storm that ensued, and Jesus bringing calm and peace. A Notre Dame parent reflected on that gospel: “There are many storms in our lives that we have to weather. In the middle of the turmoil, we don’t think so much about how we got there, we only think about how we can get through it. Perhaps, if we knew that we would encounter such difficulty, we wouldn’t have set out on that path in the first place. To me, this reading invites us to always consider that we could “cross over to the other side” with Jesus. What could that mean?

Well, if I only knew then what the next months would bring! What better example of encountering storms, working together as a community, and having faith, than the last year? From our initial campus closure and pivot to distance learning in March, to summer planning for multiple scenarios of campus reopening amidst constantly changing guidelines, to bringing faculty and students back to campus in late October, this has been the year for driving this gospel message home: Allowing God to calm the storms within us as much as those around us, to be in community with one another, and to continue to work, learn, and love, in the midst of the storms in our lives.

WHAT IS SFHS DOING TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF STUDENTS, STAFF?

One of the first steps towards ensuring the safety of students and staff on campus was assigning students to **cohorts**, or stable groups that stay together for all activities (i.e. instruction, lunch) and serve to limit the number of potential exposures should someone on campus become ill. Small cohorts are more difficult to maintain at the high school level, compared to elementary, simply due to the nature of class choices and student movement between classrooms. However, by assigning students to one of two cohorts in which they attend classes in-person two days per week (Mon/Tues or Thurs/Fri), while the other cohort attended class online (**creating a “hybrid” model**), we reduced the number of individuals on campus at any given time by more than half. This takes into account students who opted to continue distance learning full time. Additionally, since we already implemented **block scheduling** several years ago, we were well poised to refine our schedule to offer longer classes with fewer subjects, only four per day, as recommended by Sacramento County Office of Public Health, along with cohorts and the hybrid model.

Sarah Ruano is Director of Data and Assessment at St. Francis Catholic High School. She began her career as a high school English teacher and has worked at the U.S. Department of Education and UC Davis Extension. At St. Francis, her work includes WASC/WCEA accreditation, program and teacher evaluation, and student assessment.

“ST. FRANCIS
MAINTAINS
ACADEMIC
EXCELLENCE
IN A HYBRID
LEARNING
MODEL
FIRST AND
FOREMOST
THROUGH THE
INNOVATION
AND
EFFORTS OF
EXTRAORDINARY
TEACHERS
AND STAFF.”

We implemented a wide range of safety procedures, including rigorous **cleaning and disinfection protocols**, carried out by our amazing facilities team and supplemented by student efforts, like wiping down desks with sanitizing wipes before sitting down for each class. We ensured **social distancing** by removing desks from classrooms and spacing the remaining ones farther apart. In Serra Court, we painted spots on the concrete and regularly remind students to “find a dot, that’s your spot” and added well-spaced desks to the Rec Room. These strategies provide students visual cues to help them maintain space at lunch and during free blocks because teenage girls love to huddle up! We also had arrows painted on walkways to encourage **one-direction flow of movement** between classes.

Students and staff are required to wear **masks** at all times, except when eating or drinking. **Hand-washing stations** were placed throughout campus and **hand sanitizer** is provided in every classroom. Through campus signage and a Return to Campus video created with the help of student ambassadors, we communicate safety protocols and “The Big Five”: 1) Wear your mask; 2) Wash your hands; 3) Wipe surfaces; 4) Socially distance; 5) Symptoms? Sick? Stay at home and participate in classes in distance learning.

Finally, we implemented a program for **regularly testing** all staff and students for COVID-19. Through a partnership with Dr. Oshita, who also happens to be the parent of a Jesuit student, and his colleague, Dr. Williams, emergency physicians and creators of the Immunify App, anyone planning to be on campus is required to participate in weekly, on-campus, drive-through testing (RT-PCR) as well as daily symptom screening in order to enter campus. Lab results are uploaded to the Immunify app on any smart device. Individuals are prompted daily to respond to screening questions. When staff and students have clear test results and no symptoms or exposure, the shield on the app will display green and school leaders can admit them to campus.

Our **RT-PCR screening process** is a critical part of identifying cases of COVID-19 and has minimized the risk to our larger school community. When a positive test result is identified, any student, faculty, or staff that may have been exposed to the individual(s) that tested positive have been notified directly. Sacramento County Public Health (SCPH) and their contact tracers are notified and those affected isolate at home per the agency’s guidelines and monitor symptoms with their personal health care providers.

HOW IS ST FRANCIS ABLE TO MAINTAIN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN A HYBRID LEARNING MODEL?

St. Francis maintains academic excellence in a hybrid learning model first and foremost through the **innovation and efforts of extraordinary teachers and staff**. Our teachers and counselors (guidance & wellness) and other staff (e.g. Campus Ministry) made making human connections a top priority from our first day of distance learning in March 2020. They checked-in with students via email, Zoom, telephone, and our learning management platforms, extending care and concern for their well-being and helped identify for administrators students and families in need of extra support. They encouraged students and prepared them to meet high expectations in spite of the circumstances. In fact, in 2020, we had the greatest number of AP students take the most exams (and earn passing scores) that we’ve ever had - despite distance learning and exams moving online!

In March, after a brief crash-course on **Zoom** video conference facilitated by technology staff and administrators, teachers pivoted quickly to using Zoom for daily classes, as all students already had access to Chromebooks. A smaller cadre of teachers attended additional training

and spent hours scouring FAQs and discovering the functionalities of Zoom and our Learning Management Systems (first Power School, later, Schoology - which offered more reliability), and training/supporting their colleagues. Using Zoom video and the share screen features, teachers deliver content (lecture, slide presentations, video, etc) as well as facilitate classroom discussions, engaging students verbally or through the chat feature. They use breakout rooms for smaller group collaborations, and polling to check for understanding. They enlist Google Suite products (documents, slides, forms, etc) to convey content, support students in working together cooperatively on shared projects, provide feedback, and assess learning.

In **Schoology**, our new learning management system which we moved to in August, teachers built out their courses in the virtual environment, providing an organized structure in which students access daily agendas, assignments, unit resources, and all learning materials. On any given day, whether a student is on-campus, at-home in distance learning, or absent, she knows what is expected of her and where to find the materials she needs. Additionally, our teachers have sought out and identified other products and tools, such as Turn-it-In (to attach



a customized rubric and leave voice comments about student writing), Padlet (students post items to interactive web pages), PearDeck and Google Forms (check for student understanding of concepts), and the list goes on.

Certainly **technology**, including one-to-one Chromebooks, was critical to these efforts, as well as our dedicated **technology staff** who responded to any and all technology issues from students and faculty. As we moved to hybrid learning, more was needed to teach in both places (in the classroom and at home) including document cameras, earbud microphones, etc. Somehow, teachers and technology staff have found ways to make it happen - albeit clunky at times - for learning to take place in two places at the same time!

Additionally, with remote learning and fewer instructional minutes, teachers had to **distill lesson and unit plans to the most essential elements** and student learning outcomes. Working collaboratively in departments across grade levels, they identified the critical content and skills to be covered, strategized for how to cover in the most efficient manner possible, and planned for how/when to circle back to omitted content in future courses. Finally, teachers reimaged assignments and projects, offering more student-selected options on topics and presentation platforms. Our teachers were forced to “get more creative,” which modeled for and facilitated our students getting more creative as well.

IN THE THICK OF ADMISSIONS SEASON, HAS RECRUITMENT BEEN A CHALLENGE? HOW ARE YOU INNOVATING THROUGH THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS?

The Admissions Department has been busy reimagining how we recruit new students since our signature events – Open House, Parochial School visits, Student and Parent Shadow Days – cannot be held in person. The challenge has also brought fresh opportunities to tell the St. Francis story and reach out to prospective families in new ways. Open House 2020 was a combination of pre-recorded and live virtual events; each academic department recorded an overview and there were three live welcome sessions with a President/Principal welcome and student panel as well as sessions focused on Arts and on Athletics. We also introduced a new interactive campus map and testimonial videos focused on students, teachers, and parents. Our Open House Troubie Trivia challenge was a hit and we mailed prize packs to nearly 100 participants who completed the challenge during Open House.

Open House was followed by a series of unique programs, starting with Troubie Talks – small group Zoom gatherings with St. Francis Ambassadors conversing with 8th grade students about choosing a high school and answering their questions. We held two Meet the Coaches Zoom events so that prospective students could learn about St. Francis athletics and our 12 sports. The “How St. Francis Prepared Me for College” panel event featured our Guidance department class and college counselors and four young alumnae currently attending college at Georgetown, Northeastern, Boston College, and UC Irvine. We also did a joint Zoom event with Jesuit High School that focused on the brother-sister connection and a Troubie Friendsgiving where more than 75 8th graders were mailed boxes with treats, a craft, and SF swag. During the Friendsgiving Zoom we talked about the important St. Francis traditions and the strength of the sisterhood. We continue to offer single-family, Covid protocol campus tours so that prospective families can see our beautiful campus.

We have also made changes to the admissions process in response to Covid. We are not requiring a placement test (the HSPT) for applicants, and rather than hosting in-person interviews each applicant will be submitting a short video that allows us to get to know them in a unique way. Our enrollment continues to be strong, and we look forward to a robust incoming Class of 2025.

THE HIGH SCHOOL EXPERIENCE AT ST FRANCIS GOES BEYOND THE CLASSROOM. HOW ARE STUDENTS ABLE TO ENGAGE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES?

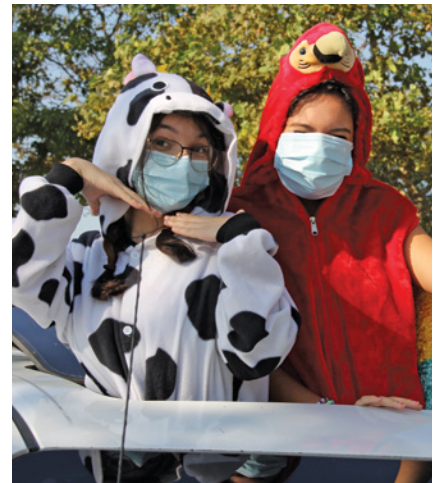
Modified schedules, such as ending the school day an hour earlier and using Wednesdays, the day between cohorts, as a Flex Day for office hours only, have allowed students to get a break from screen time and have more time and flexibility, including opportunities for extra-curriculars. “Drive-in/drive-through” events have become a staple during the pandemic. We hosted a “drive-in” Freshmen Welcome and Senior Sunrise on the softball fields and parking lot, “drive through” welcome events to pick up yearbooks, Chromebooks, and packaged “Caf Cookies,” as well as a Saint Francis Blessing of the Animals Parade welcoming students, parents, and their beloved pets (lizards, parrots, goats, cats and dogs!) to campus for treats and a special blessing. We’ve made slow traffic in the parking lot our goal!

In addition to planning “drive through” events, Student Activities has organized class meetings on Zoom, facilitated a virtual club rush to engage students in our over 70 clubs, coordinated a virtual spirit week (daily themes for dressing up and a break from uniform), and curated virtual music playlists. The senior class was also invited to a virtual event with guest speaker, Isaac Serwanga, who spoke to them about (and provided complimentary copies of) his best

selling book, *How to Network in College*. All nine academic teams, including a new addition, Cyberpatriots, are actively meeting and engaging in virtual conferences and competitions.

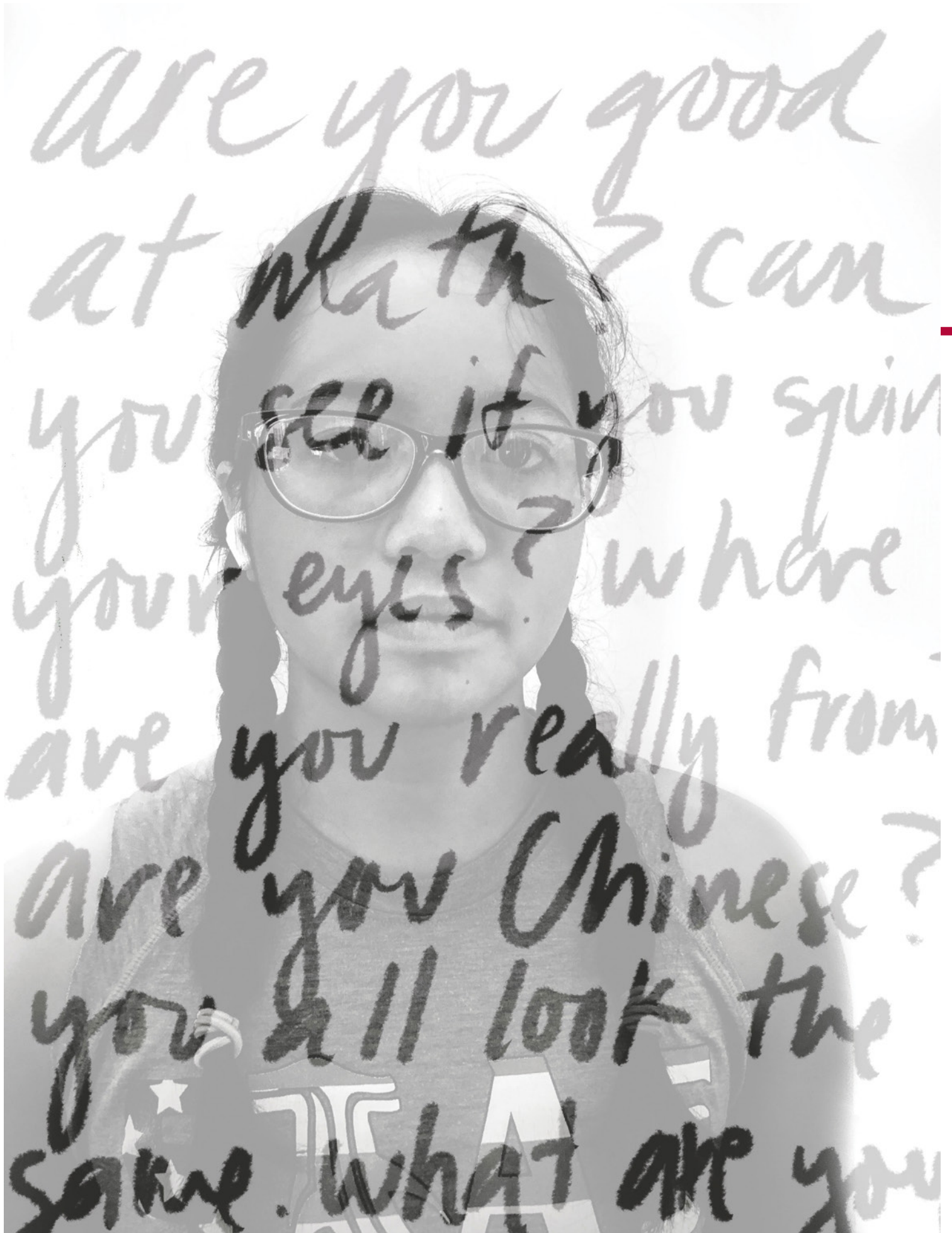
In addition to reimagining our beloved St. Francis Day celebration as a drive-through parade and blessing, Campus Ministry hosted virtual/hybrid schoolwide masses, and recorded weekly prayers and meditations, as well as how-to videos for making rosaries. Additionally, although requirements have been modified, St. Francis students continue to participate in service projects, both in-person and remotely. Since June, more than 56 Troubies have volunteered in-person at nine local food banks. Others made care packages including hand-written notes for UC Davis Home Care Services, servicing Hospice patients and families, as well as Eskaton Senior Care and Services, serving seniors in our community.

Guidance counselors offered a wide array of presentations and support related to college admissions and changes in standardized testing requirements. In Arts, students acted in and produced two showings of our Fall play, *Sense and Sensibility*, based on the novel by Jane Austen. Finally, our Wellness team sponsored a “Mascot Move-A-Thon Challenge” encouraging students to “keep it moving” for positive mental health. By performing and logging 30 minutes of choice movement (Ex. Jump rope, yoga, dance, skate board, bike ride, swim, etc.) students had the chance to earn a week of free dress for their class (mascot)... and the winners were... the freshmen!



As 2020 draws to a close, we look to the new year with an open heart and open mind, knowing that we really don't know what the rest of this academic year will look like. We are grateful to the entire SFHS community for making it all work: Faculty for their willingness to pivot on their lesson plans, execution of daily classroom presentations, final exams; Guidance and Wellness counselors for continuing to support our students' social and emotional well-being; Administrators, implementing policies, procedures, schedules (then revising based on lessons-learned); Facilities staff, for implementing our new protocols; leadership and staff who, beyond their regular jobs, are supervising and subbing for teachers who are out; And to our parents - for believing in what we're doing, being patient with the process and continuing to keep us in their prayers; STUDENTS who are following protocols and persisting with their learning in the face of unprecedented times. While the journey is difficult, we will be stronger for it.

I'm often reminded that ALL of us encounter storms in our lives, and that it is in these times that God carries us through, enabling us to do hard things and help carry each other. In my nearly nine years working at St. Francis, I believe our community's response to crises over the last year has been just that. It hasn't been perfect, but we continue to learn and grow, and extend our gratitude to all - faculty, staff, students, and parents - for being part of this journey with us. God Bless.



MADELINE CHING '23

NEW BEGINNINGS, AGAIN

RACIAL LITERACY AT ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

BY DR. JASON JAVIER-WATSON

Last winter, I wrote an article introducing our racial literacy work to the alumnae community. At the time, there were a number of projects in development meant to raise awareness about the negative psychological, physical, and spiritual effects of racism on our students and families of color. Our work was rooted in our Catholic faith and the belief that a healthy community can only be achieved if human decency is honored and protected for everyone in the community. In 2018, the USCCB released *Open Wide Our Hearts*, a pastoral letter against racism, which has been the foundation of our work. The following is the introduction of that document in its entirety:

Holy Scripture boldly proclaims, “See what love the Father has bestowed on us that we may be called the children of God. Yet so we are” (1 Jn 3:1). This love “comes from God and unites us to God; through this unifying process it makes us a ‘we’ which transcends our divisions and makes us one, until in the end God is ‘all in all’ (1 Cor 15:28).”¹ By the work of the Holy Spirit, the Church is called to share with all the world this gift of love. As Pope Francis points out, “The salvation which God has wrought, and the Church joyfully proclaims, is for everyone. God has found a way to unite himself to every human being in every age.”² Through his Cross and Resurrection, Christ united the one human race to the Father. However, even though Christ’s victory over sin and death is complete, we still live in a world affected by them. As bishops of the Catholic Church in the United States, we want to address one particularly destructive and persistent form of evil. Despite many promising strides made in our country, racism still infects our nation.

This powerful statement at the beginning of this profound document from the US bishops puts to rest the question of whether or not Catholics are called to confront racism as a matter of faith. We as a school community have chosen to confront the issue of racism on our campus using a racial literacy framework. Racial literacy, generally speaking, is the ability to read, recast (lower stress), and resolve racially stressful encounters. This approach focuses on mindful awareness during the face-to-face moments where racist attitudes can keep us from truly seeing and being with one another. Therefore, our racial literacy approach makes it possible to identify and solve the specific racial problems we face by focusing on: 1) our unique context, and 2) our unique experiences of race as individuals.

By examining “in the moment” racial conflict, as opposed to broader political or sociological racial conversations, we have been focused on the core issue for us as a Catholic school; if members of our community are suffering, it is our duty as Christians to address that suffering. We noticed that too often dialogue on racial issues gets hijacked

Dr. Jason Javier-Watson is the Assistant Principal for the 9th and 10th grades at St. Francis. He is the facilitator of the Student Life Council (SLC) and moderator of the Racial Justice League, a student club that advocates for racial issues on campus and in the wider community.

If you are a current student of St. Francis, an alum, or a parent of a current/former student, feel free to contact Dr. Javier-Watson to share your story. jjavier-watson@stfrancishs.org or 916-737-5001.

¹ Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, no. 18.

² Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium*, no. 113.

“OUR NEW
BEGINNINGS
WILL CONTINUE
AS WE WORK
TOWARDS
ACHIEVING A
MORE RACIALLY
JUST CULTURE
AT ST. FRANCIS
CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL.”

by overwhelming emotions, defensiveness, and taking sides. When racial conflict arises, we may go into fight, flight, or freeze. In this state, doing the right thing becomes nearly impossible. It is in these brief moments that judgement suffers, that biases take hold, and that racism is perpetuated. The racial literacy tools we were practicing with staff and students alike are meant to provide the social and emotional skills necessary to engage in racial conversations in a productive manner.

Then, this summer, it felt like the ground quaked beneath our feet. First, in March we closed our campus as COVID-19 began to spread across the globe. Then a series of tragic deaths of Black people resulted in prolonged social unrest. Ahmaud Arbery was gunned down on a Georgia road while jogging; Breonna Taylor was killed by police during a “no-knock” raid on her apartment; and George Floyd died after a Minneapolis police officer pinned him to the ground and pressed his knee into his neck for eight minutes and forty three seconds. While racial injustice is not new, these painful events caused a shockwave of overwhelming grief and anguish centered in large, metropolitan cities, rippling through the suburbs, and extending out into rural America. After this summer, any racial justice efforts we had put forth as a school felt small and insignificant.

Our shortcomings as a Catholic community were laid bare as a social media post meant to sympathize with those hurting in the wake of these deaths had the opposite effect. In the introduction to our Racial Reconciliation Plan, I wrote:

In the weeks after George Floyd’s death, many of our students and alumnae felt that we as a school community did not stand in solidarity with them during this painful time. Furthermore, a social media post meant to honor the struggle of our students of color was instead experienced by many as deeply hurtful because it was too little, too late, and not an authentic statement given our actions as a school. Furthermore, the comments on the post were filled with stories of mistreatment; and worse, that we neglected to act to protect our students in the face of this mistreatment.

In response, we held listening sessions where students, alumnae, and families of color were invited to share their racial experiences at St. Francis in a public forum. The goal of these sessions was to listen, to learn, and to hopefully provide a truthful, healing space for our community. Shining a light on the truth is only the beginning, however; for reconciliation to occur, trust must be built upon accountability and action. Our Racial Reconciliation

Committee has been working hard to follow through on the commitments we made to our community following those listening sessions. Students, parents, and alumnae can follow our progress on our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion webpage: www.stfrancishs.org/diversity-equity-inclusion.

So, now we start again with new information, a renewed energy, and a fresh focus. Our “new beginnings” will continue as we work towards achieving a more racially just culture at St. Francis Catholic High School.



KATHERINE PATELLA '23

THE STUDENT ARTWORK USED IN THIS ARTICLE IS FROM *IT'S (NOT) PERSONAL*, AN INTERACTIVE ART EXHIBITION WE PLANNED TO SHOW THROUGHOUT MARCH 2020. WE COLLECTED PHOTOGRAPHS, DRAWINGS, AND PAINTINGS FROM THE ART CLASSES AROUND THE THEME, “MICROAGGRESSIONS.”

HEALING OURSELVES AND OUR COMMUNITY

OUR STUDENT PERSPECTIVE

BY PRINCESS PASCUA '21 & HAILEE MCKINNIS '22

The pain students of color experience is real. We want healing. It's important for people to acknowledge that change is needed for healing to take place.

When we think of what needs to change to make St. Francis a safer learning environment for students of color, we think about the common phrase **diversity, equity, and inclusion**. This essay will clarify those terms and explain how a focus on each can make St. Francis the place it is striving to be.

DIVERSITY (LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF THE EXPERIENCES OF SoC IS A PROBLEM)

Diversity to us means seeing role models who look like us in positions of authority or care. Hiring diverse teachers, administrators, and staff members creates a feeling that the adults around us have a shared experience. We want to see someone who looks like us and makes it easier for us to reach out if and when we feel the need. Right now, all we see for the most part are white faces. This is a very important issue that needs broad support within the adult community at St. Francis if diversity among staff is going to improve. This is not just a preference. Research shows that when teachers and counselors of color are helping students of color, the students excel and feel safer in their learning environment.

The divide in our community that exists today is caused by the reaction White students and families have to the way students of color look and act. There is a lack of openness and ability to learn among some of our peers and it results in the too common reactions: looking at Black students when conversations of slavery arise, seeing all Latina students as "illegal" or "immigrants," or seeing all Asian students as Chinese and smart. Racial stereotypes are passed on, unchallenged, by people who have little to no contact with these cultures and ethnicities. Many students react in ways that they were taught: television, social media, and, sadly, family. There are little to no opportunities for cultural clubs to present their culture and traditions to the campus. Having more adults on campus who are non-White helps us to feel seen and heard as the complex

human beings we are, not just a person of a certain race or ethnicity. Right now, we feel we are only praised for being successful academically and athletically. Embracing diversity means embracing all of who we are.

EQUITY

Diversity alone will not fix the history of racism that plagues our country. Equity is not simply equality -- equity takes into account that inequality has existed for centuries and needs to be taken into account when considering fairness. We as a school need to create more awareness around the concept of equity. Social media is a great way to encourage students to learn more. However, we hope to see a deeper and ongoing commitment from the school in regards to equity. We want equity to be an issue that is constantly talked about by the school. What happened? What is happening? How is healing happening? Overall, more awareness from all the adults on campus is necessary to create an equitable campus community.

INCLUSION

Inclusion to us is the feeling of safety that many White students feel just being themselves on campus. There is a growing sense of inclusion on campus now for students of color, but it is not where it could be. We are hopeful because we are in a position now where we can talk about racial issues. This is a good thing. School is supposed to reassure students that we can use our voice and not be singled out because of the color of our skin. More than anything, inclusion means psychological safety and protection. We need to include everyone of every color and incorporate this approach



Princess and Hailee are the president and vice president of the Racial Justice League, a student-led club focused on providing racial justice tools to the St. Francis student community.

throughout the school. We can't single out girls of color or put them to the side. We need more of their voices to be heard and included in everything the school does. Inclusion ties together closely with diversity and equity – inclusion is the feeling of belonging that comes from being represented throughout the entire school racially, ethnically, and culturally.

With the focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion, we can begin to build trust. Adults on campus are where students go when they feel attacked and need to find safety. Building trust between the school and students of color is important, because without trust there can be no healing. A good step towards building trust starts with transparency. We will be working with administration so that they communicate progress to the students and families who care so passionately about these issues.

RECONCILIATION

This is the most important part about this transition. We need reconciliation with one another if we are to build back our community. Students of color need to seek all the resources possible to feel supported. This includes resources outside the community such as mental health professionals who understand the experience of people of color. If faculty, staff, and administration are worsening trauma for students of color, we will not be able to reach our potential. We are hurt, and we are in pain. We need to feel safe, protected, and cared for at St. Francis. While a plan for racial reconciliation is important to the overall organization of St. Francis, we all need to remember that people are affected by racism. We look forward to continuing to build trust and better relationships. We appreciate all of your efforts and thank you for the opportunity to share our perspective with you.

CHANGE DOESN'T HAPPEN OVERNIGHT

BY CELES SYPHAX

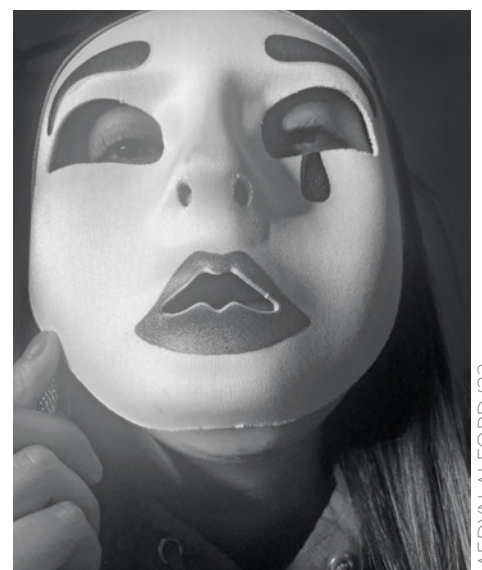
“Change doesn't happen overnight. It is a culmination of people willing to listen to distinctive views, work together and value each person's contribution. The Hiring Committee's objective is to diversify St. Francis Catholic High School staff with the intent to represent the diversity within the Sacramento Diocese as well as the diversity of the greater Sacramento area. I chose to participate on this committee because I believe my value addition was unique due to my affiliation, work and civic engagement within communities of color — especially the Black community. I see my role to serve as a conduit by intentionally identifying organizations of color with the goal of expanding the employment candidate pool. Research has shown that diversity on Boards and Committees is a valuable asset in conducting business by offering unique perspectives.

Under the Direction of the Hiring Subcommittee Chair, Gina Vinella, all of the committee members work as a team to reach a diverse group of candidates seeking employment with St. Francis Catholic High School. Each member of the team is valued for their contribution and unique perspective. St. Francis has taken the initial first steps toward change; however, I believe its goals are a means to measure its processes. To affect the change it seeks its goals must be a continual and evolutionary process that promotes empathy and healing while addressing diversity, equity and inclusion within the St. Francis Community.”

Celes Syphax is the parent of alumna Jade '15 and is a member of St. Francis Catholic High School's Board of Trustees.



MARISA GAGNON '21



JAEDYN ALFORD '22

RACIAL RECONCILIATION PLAN UPDATES

NOVEMBER 2020

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE

- Chair: Jason Javier-Watson, Assistant Principal
- 3 hour full-staff racial literacy training with Dr. Howard Stevenson in August, 2 hours with the Board of Trustees with Dr. Javier-Watson
- Full-staff trainings on hold until we can do them in person, or in small groups (by department) online next semester

BLACK ALUMNAE GROUP SUBCOMMITTEE

- Chair: Natalie Allen '09
- Regular meetings established
- Held a joint activity with BSU and Black Alumnae Group

BLACK PARENT GROUP SUBCOMMITTEE

- Chair: Margo Scott, P'21 and Nena Anyimi, P'22
- Regular meetings established
- Regular communication with Admin established

MENTORSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE

- Chair: MaryAnne Kelly, Director of Advancement
- Shift towards development of a mentorship program, rather than a scholarship program
- Developing partnership between Advancement Department, Black Alumnae Group, and Black Parent Group

EQUITABLE DISCIPLINE AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE SUBCOMMITTEE

- Chair: Cynthia Cost, Dean of Students
- Working with the sub-committee to identify best practices for racially related issues in classrooms and training needed to reduce conflict, ignorance or misunderstanding.
- Working with the committee, and various SFHS students on training and empowering students/adults to immediately educate others to help alleviate situations from escalating.

EVALUATION & PERSONNEL ISSUES SUBCOMMITTEE

- Chair: Sarah Ruano, Director of Data and Assessment
- Developing case studies that can be used to facilitate discussions with faculty and staff around the feelings at the heart of student experiences and what actions (by teachers, and/or the school) are regarded positively by students, and how they made them feel.
- Upcoming Professional Development (Nov-Dec): Restorative Practices for Educators and Facilitating Listening Circles
- Researching restorative practices, racial literacy skills to add to our teacher performance rubric in the coming months

CURRICULUM SUBCOMMITTEE

- Chairs: Kore Zimmerman, Math teacher; Christopher Arns, Social Studies teacher
- Currently in Phase 1: gathering data. We are currently working with a subcommittee of 10 faculty members to evaluate the diversity in our courses as presented through scopes and sequences and syllabi. We are finalizing a questionnaire for all faculty to audit their own courses as well, with regards to diversity in materials and environment.

CELEBRATING ETHNICITIES AND CULTURES SUBCOMMITTEE

- Chair: Cassy McGreevy, Director of Student Activities
- Reaching out to current students to ask: Do you have any cultural or ethnic celebrations you would like us to know about and acknowledge that may differ from current SF traditions?
- Look at that data to identify ways to incorporate those traditions into the SF experience

HIRING SUBCOMMITTEE

- Chair: Gina Vinella, Human Resources Business Partner
- Establishing relationships with Black-run businesses and business-related entities
- Using those entities to post job openings



ALANA & SR. MARIANA



ALANA RECEIVING THE RITES OF INITIATION

ASHLEY MAXWELL

ALANA KAUR "TERESA" SAELTZER

RECEIVES THE SACRAMENTS OF INITIATION

It was a beautiful October 1st evening, and with Sacramento County moving into the Red Tier just two days prior, Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish was able to open its doors for the Sacraments of Initiation for St. Francis Sophomore, Alana Saeltzer.

Alana recalls being apprehensive entering St. Francis Catholic High School because she didn't know anything about Catholicism. Her education began with her freshman theology teacher, Mrs. Anna Owens, who was also in her "first year" at St. Francis. "She was really virtuous and a good example of the faith," Alana recalls. She credits the first-year theology curriculum, Introduction to Scripture, and Jesus Through the Ages, as a good way to learn the fundamentals of the faith.

It was Alana's evolving friendship with her Math Teacher, Dominican Sister of Mary, Mother of the Eucharist, Sr. Mariana, who had a profound impact on her, including her extended friendship with all the Sisters. As one of only two freshmen in that Math class, she spent a lot of time after class getting to know Sr. Mariana. "She's insane," Alana notes. "She wakes up at 4:30 or 5:00 am. She has nothing and yet remains so joyful." This realization made Alana question where she was finding joy in her life. "As teenagers, we get so caught up in the world, that it takes a while to realize it offers you nothing. I thought about the two greatest commandments. I was not doing either of these; this was a wake-up call."

Alana became more and more eager; she loved theology and would stay up for hours reading. Faith became the center of everything. She wanted to receive the Sacraments, but felt like she was too young for traditional RCIA and too old for a Faith Formation program. Her father, Michael Saeltzer, encouraged her to talk to Sr. Mariana, but Alana didn't want Sister to realize she wasn't Catholic. Her father, a Jesuit High School graduate that had stepped away from the faith — stirred the pot and let Sr. Mariana know about Alana's desire to be baptized when he attended SWAP Day last year. Michael has now entered the RCIA program to complete his Confirmation.

The next Monday, Alana was nervous but Sr. Mariana excitedly relayed the conversation to her. In her previous assignment at Marin Catholic, Sr. Mariana had worked on creating a program for high schoolers to prepare their hearts and minds for full participation in the life of the Church through the Sacraments of Initiation – Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist.

Their work together started in earnest, and then came COVID. After a small break, Alana and Sr. Mariana picked it up on Google Docs. Alana was introduced to Eucharistic Adoration with the Sisters in April, and fell in love with it, attending each week. All of the Sisters became like spiritual mothers, and their youth and passion were something Alana could relate to and connect with. "I love that Sr. John Mary is now teaching freshmen. She is so gentle yet clear in her beliefs," Alana noted.

REAL-WORLD EXPERIENCE

HAANYA NIAZI '21 PARTICIPATES IN THE SEES SUMMER INTERNSHIP AT AUSTIN'S CENTER FOR SPACE RESEARCH

St. Francis Catholic High School senior, Haanya Niazi, participated in the prestigious Student Enhancement in Earth and Space Science (SEES) summer internship hosted by The University of Texas at Austin's Center for Space Research. This nationally competitive program sponsored by NASA's Texas Space Grant Consortium selects students to conduct authentic research using NASA data.



As part of the COVID-19 Safety & Health team, Haanya helped research the spread of COVID-19. "A few things that my group and I discovered are that urbanized areas have a higher transmission risk, that low socio-economic populations are affected more by the pandemic, and that as human activity and mobility increases, so does the number of cases. In order to effectively combat COVID-19, we all must continue to wear face coverings and practice social distancing," said Haanya. "This was such an amazing experience through which I learned so much about not only COVID-19, but also how to better collaborate with others, take initiative, analyze data, and manage my time." Haanya's favorite aspects of the SEES Internship were the NASA Earth Science courses and the NASA Speaker Series. "Through the Earth Science courses, I was able to use NASA data and satellite images to explore earth and the other planets from a whole new perspective. The NASA Speaker Series allowed me to hear firsthand experiences from NASA engineers and astronauts. These speaker sessions were very inspiring and helped me to better understand what it means to be a part of NASA."

The NASA SEES high school interns work with scientists and engineers to conduct authentic research using NASA data and analysis tools. Teams are organized around an aerospace or space science theme drawn from NASA's diverse engineering and scientific research programs. The SEES internship provides an outlet for the excitement many students feel about Earth and space science. Interns are offered a unique opportunity to work with professional scientists and engineers at the cutting edge of NASA science, experience being part of a science team, and explore STEM career options firsthand.



"THE VOICE" OF LARRIAH

LARRIAH JACKSON'S APPEARANCE ON THIS SEASON OF NBC'S "THE VOICE"

We're so proud of Larriah Jackson '22! She made it to the four-way knockout as a member of Team Gwen on this season of NBC's *The Voice*. You showed your talent to the world... and are the epitome of a St. Francis Troubie! Congratulations, Larriah!

CHRIS HASTON/NBC

Father Stanley at Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish let Alana know that he would celebrate the Rites of Initiation whenever she was ready. Alana spent much time in prayer, trying to discern her confirmation saint. The one that kept returning to her was St. Teresa of Calcutta; then the school year theme also quoted her. Alana's Mother, Dr. Surinder Kaur, is from India, and was concerned that Alana might lose a little of herself in this process. "St. Teresa of Calcutta felt right for many reasons. She dedicated so much of her life to taking care of the poor and ill in India," Alana recalled. "The selection of St. Teresa was a demonstration that she would love and care for her family forever." In reality, Alana believes, our confirmation saints choose us.

That October day arrived, and Alana was radiant. Her Godmother and long-time family friend, Amy Alameda, was with her every step of the way. Alana remembers looking at the Crucifix over the Altar and realizing she had prayed for this day for a long time. The Sisters were cantors in the Mass. Their selection of the Communion Song, "This is Jesus" by Jim Cowan, really spoke to Alana. "This is Jesus, Emmanuel. God is with us, in this sacrament, come receive him, adore him. This is Jesus, our Lord." The addition of the Litany of Saints to the service was especially meaningful. "It was so special to hear all of the Saints names and Doctors of the church," reflected Alana. "Jesus knows our longing for companionship and friendship, so He provides us friends in heaven."

Weeks after that special day, Alana talks about feeling different. She continues to pray a daily Rosary and fully participates in Mass and Eucharistic Adoration. "This is how I want to live my life," says Alana. "Pope John Paul II described the Mass as Heaven on Earth, explaining that what we celebrate on Earth is a mysterious participation in the heavenly things."

SELFe SUCCESS!

St. Francis was delighted to have Kerri Pomarolli as our keynote speaker for our 3rd Annual (and first-ever virtual) SELFe Event on October 25th. Anytime, but especially during a pandemic, it's important to take a break, be inspired, and have a good laugh. And Kerri delivered that for our "live" audience of more than 500 listeners. Stay tuned for next year, when we hope to be back on campus!

THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS:

EMPOWER SPONSORS

- East Sac Hardware • Dignity Health • The Niello Company • PorterCo •

EVOLVE SPONSORS

- Jesuit High School • Political Solutions •

MEDIA SPONSOR

- 103.9 FM The Fish •

SET SPONSOR

- Parc Studio Interior Design •

ART SPONSOR

- Tim Collom •



📷 JACLYN HUTCHESON '00

"Kerri tells it like it is, is a strong woman who has a way of bringing things home and making you think, she is funny and real. I enjoyed her connecting with the audience as well."

"I LOVED imagining my granddaughter (a freshman) hearing about never giving up, taking small steps, having a plan and most of all what happens when you are 'all in' with God's plan for you!"



THANKFUL THURSDAY
OCTOBER 22, 2020

THANKFUL THURSDAY

OUR 9TH ANNUAL DAY OF GIVING RAISED MORE THAN \$190,000! THANK YOU!

Even in these challenging times, our community got involved to provide tuition assistance for our students:

- 638 donors participated
- Alumnae from near and far participated
- 227 alumnae gave
- 19 states
- Parent and Grandparent Clubs supported the effort with class letters, Zoom parties and peer-to-peer calls
- Even with the delay in returning to campus, our students stepped up to support their Troubie sisters
- Congratulations to the Freshmen for the highest percentage of participation. Enjoy your Yo-Yo Yogurt!

JOIN US IN CELEBRATING ST. FRANCIS CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL'S

80 Year Legacy



Revelry Virtual Auction

SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 2021

Celebrate St. Francis' 80th Anniversary by joining us for a very special Revelry event! This virtual event will include a premium auction featuring a robust silent auction, wine & spirits section, sign up parties, and "live auction" items. There is no need to purchase a ticket so you'll have some "fun" money to spend on fabulous items and experiences. Join us, or better yet, set up your own watch party with a group you are comfortable with! You don't want to miss an opportunity to celebrate this special anniversary year!

QUESTIONS? PLEASE CONTACT NATALIE ANZINI,
NANZINI@STFRANCISHS.ORG, 916-737-5015

WWW.STFRANCISHS.ORG/REVELRY

HIGHER LEARNING



MEG ANDERSON '16



MELANIE BACCAY '16



MADDY CARNAHAN '16



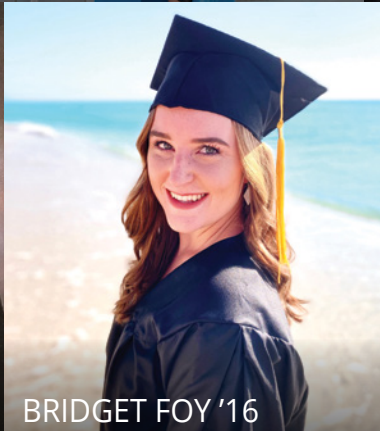
JULIANA
CEREZO-RANGEL '16



KELLY CHAVEZ '16



LILLY ENES '16



BRIDGET FOY '16



MADISON HARRIS '16



MADALYN
LAVEZZO '16



EMMA
MARCHANT '16



YVONNA
MOLODANOF '16



LILLIAN MURPHY '14



MIRANDA
MYERS '15



EMILY PETERS '16



SAMMI RUGGLES '15



AVERY SPECTOR '16



LESLIE YOUNG '16

Meg Anderson '16 graduated from the University of Portland with a Bachelor in Business Administration in Economics. She earned the Pamplin School of Business Dean's Award and the Award of Excellence for Economics as well as being named a Valedictorian for the Class of 2020.

Melanie Baccay '16 graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Human Biology from Michigan State University. She accepted a position with Gilead Sciences, Inc. in Foster City, California. She was an All-Metro and All-Delta League selection as a senior for the Troubadours.

Maddy Carnahan '16 graduated from the University of Kentucky with a double major in Communications and Integrated Strategic Communications.

Juliana Cerezo-Rangel '16 graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration with a concentration in Accounting and a minor in Computer Science from Sonoma State University. She competed for the Track & Field team after picking up the sport her junior year at SF. She plans to go into the business field and will be applying to get her Master of Business Administration and become a business analyst.

Kelly Chavez '16 graduated from University of South Carolina, Magna Cum Laude with a major in Economics and minor in Business Administration. She plans to move to and work in Denver, Colorado.

Lilly Enes '16 graduated from Yale University with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science. She was on the Women's Varsity Track & Field team as a sprinter for four years, where she now holds the records for the indoor 400m and 4x400m relay. She finished her SF career with school records in the 4x100 and 4x400m relays and ranks fifth all-time in the 400m. She will be working in San Francisco doing strategy and consulting for the financial tech company Worldpay.

Bridget Foy '16 graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles with a Bachelor of Science in Marine Biology and Cum Laude Latin Honors and Departmental Honors.

Madison Harris '16 graduated from the University of Nevada, Reno with a Bachelor of Science in Biology with two minors - Analytical Chemistry and Ecohydrology.

Madalyn Lavezzo '16 graduated from the University of Denver where she double majored in International Business and Spanish, and minored in Political Science. Madalyn is now working for Deloitte in their consulting branch and living in downtown Denver!

Emma Marchant '16 graduated from San Diego State University with a degree in Kinesiology and started graduate school at University of California, San Francisco for her Doctorate of Physical Therapy in June. She played soccer for the Troubadours and is the older sister of Maggie '21.

Chloe Mitchell '16 graduated from Fordham University with a Bachelor of Science in International Political Economy and Political Science. She finished out her career as a distance freestyler on the Women's Swimming and Diving Team as team captain. After her summer internship, Chloe accepted the offer to return as an analyst at Morgan Stanley at their New York City headquarters, working in the Legal and Compliance Division. She has plans to apply to law school in the fall of 2021. Says Chloe, "I am so grateful to the St. Francis teachers, counselors, coaches, and athletic staff for teaching me the skills and building my confidence to pursue academic, athletic, and professional opportunities while in college."

Yvonna Molodanof '16 graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Wine and Viticulture from California Polytechnic State University and began her work with Insight Global in San Francisco in August.

Lillian Murphy '14 graduated from California State University, Sacramento with a Bachelor of Science in Biological Sciences. She received the President's Medal for the College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics, the school's most prestigious academic honor. Sacramento State News writes, "She is a leader in the Mulligan Lab, where her research has been focused on genetic patterns in the brains of fruit flies that carry risk factors associated with autism. She has presented her findings at various research symposia on campus, as well as at the annual CSU Program for Education and Research in Biotechnology (CSUPERB) conferences. She was accepted into doctoral programs at the nation's top educational institutions, including Harvard University, and will pursue her doctorate at UC Berkeley. She plans to become a professor with a larger goal of helping to prevent and treat human diseases."

Miranda Myers '15 graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Education with a concentration in Early Childhood credential from Northern Arizona University. Miranda helped the Lumberjacks to the NCAA XC Championships and earned All-Big Sky honors as a senior. She has also been accepted into the Master's program in Education at California State University, Sacramento. Miranda has also been hired at St. John the Evangelist as their new first grade teacher, following in the footsteps of her own first grade teacher, Mrs. Castellon, as she begins her own teaching career.

Emily Peters '16 graduated from California Polytechnic State University with a Bachelor of Science in Recreation, Parks, and Tourism Administration. She competed for four years for the Mustang's Swimming and Diving program after her Troubie career, which included qualifying for the CIF State Championships. After completing her position with the Giants Community Fund working with the Junior Giants At Home in August, she began her journey as a Sales Representative for E. & J. Gallo Winery.

Sammi Ruggles '15 graduated from the University of California, Santa Barbara with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and is currently studying for the Law School admission exam. She participated in track and field for the Gauchos after her standout career with the Troubadours. Sammi is the school record holder in the shot put and ranks second all-time in the discus.

Avery Spector '16 graduated from California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo with a Bachelor of Science in Construction Management. She is headed to San Diego to work for DPR Construction. Avery was awarded the Outstanding Leadership Award for her graduating class at Cal Poly. She played Varsity Tennis and Soccer for SF and was the Delta League Tennis MVP as a senior.

Leslie Young '16 graduated from The University of Alabama with a Bachelor of Arts in Communication and Information Sciences. She served two terms as a senator for the Student Government Association and also served as a Veterans and Military Affairs Ambassador throughout her four years. Leslie is pursuing her career in the communication and public affairs field.

UPCOMING REUNIONS

If your class year ends in a "0" or "5," it's time to start planning a reunion weekend for 2021. To help plan your class reunion, please contact: Kristie Figone Ishoo '05 at kishoo@stfrancishs.org, or 916-737-5020.

WWW.STFRANCISHS.ORG/REUNIONS

FELICIA GILBERT '99

EARLY ASPIRATIONS LEAD TO A LIFE OF SERVICE



Some people just know. Whether it's an inspirational early teacher, an unusual life experience, or in Felicia Gilbert's '99 case, it was *The Cosby Show* and the countless televised trials and courtroom dramas she watched with her mother. "There was something about Phylicia Rashad's portrayal of Clair Huxtable that resonated," Felicia recalls. "Here was this wonderfully intelligent, loving and strong Black mother. Working as a lawyer, Clair modeled the importance of maintaining a successful career and strong household simultaneously." With these early influences, it's no surprise that Felicia dressed as a lawyer for her 3rd grade Halloween party.

Coming from public school and being the first in her family to attend private school, it was daunting entering St. Francis in her freshman year. The majority of girls came from other private schools, and it seemed like everyone knew each other from school, sports or other extracurricular activities. That, coupled with her being one of four Black students in her class at St. Francis at that time, contributed to her feeling of "otherness." The first club she joined was the speech and debate team, led by her History teacher, Ed Cundiff. "The level of adrenaline I felt surprised me," notes Felicia. "I loved memorizing speeches as well as going to competitions with all the preparation that was involved, and then having to think on the fly. That experience was terrifying and exhilarating!"

She remembers many of the magic moments and the camaraderie with her fellow 99ers. "The camaraderie was a noteworthy component of this very unique St. Francis all-girls culture," Felicia reflected. For Spirit Week her senior year, she and some of her classmates planned to stay up all night to make something that would surprise people. They created a 60-foot, ginormous banner, that wrapped around the entire auditorium. "It was magical. The same way the girls are into their studies and sports, these events really created an important way to bond."

While she may have known early what she aspired to do professionally, her journey to where she is today was rich in

experience and learning. Felicia was accepted into Stanford University in the fall of 1999. Her mother was working at KVIE Television at that time, and the President—a Stanford alum—offered to take Felicia to lunch. Expecting to hear about the academic rigor, he spent the lunch talking about his experience playing rugby there. A seed was planted. Felicia was a competitive soccer player all through elementary, middle and high school, but in her junior year she realized that her brains would get her into a better school than her soccer skills. Shortly after starting at Stanford, she saw a flyer about tryouts for the women's rugby team.

Rugby turned out to be a perfect fit. "Things I would normally get a yellow or red card for were now part of the game," Felicia reflected. "The physicality of the sport was great and going out to practice and knocking people over relieved stress." Her rugby experience provided balance to an academically demanding load and helped her from a mental health perspective. Since varsity status was yanked from rugby teams in the 1970s, they were deprived of the perks enjoyed by Stanford's celebrated football and basketball teams and the rugby teams had to do all of their own administrative work. It will come as no surprise that Felicia found herself as Captain and President of the club.

Rugby provided even more; it gave her an opportunity to meet people she had little in common with except the sport. She recalls her first coach, the amazing Emile Bruneau, who was the kindest, most good-natured person she had ever met. His philosophy on the game, and life, was fascinating. They maintained a friendship and Bruneau went on to work at Penn State's Peace and Conflict Neuroscience Lab, applying cognitive science to understanding intergroup conflict and developing countermeasures. In addition to rich friendships, Felicia also got to travel and see much of the world during her rugby days, which including captaining the national under-23 15s and 7s rugby teams. "I'm glad I was able to do it when my body allowed," Felicia notes. It also was a great opportunity for her parents to visit her in college, although they often had to lay their worries

and fears at the door knowing they raised a pretty determined young woman. Her maternal grandmother, on the other hand, struggled; although she tried to attend Felicia's rugby matches at UC Davis, she would need to get up and stroll the campus as soon as she saw the first scrum or tackle. This very devout and loving Catholic woman had a profound influence on Felicia's life.

Being one of so few students of color at St. Francis, Felicia also wanted to be part of the Black and Latinx communities at Stanford to learn more about her cultural heritage. While at St. Francis, she took a sociology course at Sac City that enabled her to draw parallels between modern socio-economic inequality and what she learned about slavery and the formation of the U.S. economic system in Mr. Agos' AP U.S. History class. A political science major at Stanford, Felicia also took courses in African Studies and Latin American Studies. "There was a lot of interesting stuff that happened in the '60s, '70s, and '80s in Latin American politics," she muses. "Learning about how much influence the U.S. had on those countries—and in particular, poor people, in those countries—was important." In addition to these studies, Felicia stayed a fifth year and earned a Master of Arts in Sociology with an emphasis in social stratification and inequality.

With an end goal to be a lawyer, Felicia was off to Columbia Law School. While at Columbia, she served on the Journal of Law and Social Problems and as a Teaching Fellow on the Columbia Law School Moot Court Editorial Board. As part of Columbia Law School's Child Advocacy Clinic, Felicia helped design research protocol for adolescent representation and provided legal assistance to young adults transitioning out of foster care. She also interned with the Criminal Appeals Bureau of the Legal Aid Society, a nonprofit that remains dear to her heart today.

Fast forward 20-plus years since her St. Francis graduation where she gave the Valedictorian address (and she still apologizes for forgetting to thank her parents in that speech), Felicia is the San Francisco Managing Partner of Sanford Heisler Sharp, LLP, a national law firm with offices in the District of Columbia, New York, California, Tennessee and Maryland. Here she represents employees in individual and class actions involving race, gender, and pregnancy discrimination.

"I have the privilege at this point in my life and career where I can help people deal with really tough issues in the workplace," she shares. "There are elements to what my clients are experiencing that I can relate to. I know what it's like to be made to feel like you don't belong or don't have a right to be in a particular academic or professional space. This enrages me and motivates me to bring them justice." A lot of her clients worked really hard to get where they are in their careers, and many of them come from humble backgrounds. "It is a true

privilege to serve through my work," Felicia knows. "It wasn't always that way. I had to have some tough experiences early in my career as a corporate attorney. Now I manage an office and have the opportunity to mentor the people who report to me. I try to use, and not let go to waste, the opportunities my parents didn't have."

As a Black and Latina woman among the American Bar Association's reported five percent African American and five percent Hispanic lawyers in the United States—where these statistics have remained static over the past decade—Felicia's practice and business acumen are informed in part by her own past experiences with disparate treatment and bias in educational and corporate settings. "It has been the most rewarding work of my career to advocate on behalf and in support of clients, as they face the emotional (and sometimes, physical) toll of discrimination and unchecked bias in the workplace. Their courage, determination, and resilience inspire me to approach impediments with optimism and creativity, when working to achieve outcomes that enable them to get their lives and careers back on track," Felicia modestly states.

Felicia reconnected with her St. Francis roots during this summer of listening. Learning about St. Francis' efforts to address concerns from students and alumni of color triggered some hurtful memories about painful experiences. She remembers comments and references that she got into Stanford because she was a minority. Or, that she was given certain recognition because of factors other than merit. "It reminded me of this feeling of 'otherness' I experienced at times," she recalled. "I was lucky to have a couple of really close friendships, and regret not working harder to maintain them over the years." Being one of very few Black people at St. Francis did prepare her for academia and her profession she notes.

She shares her perspective gained through her career and now being a managing partner. "Cultural change doesn't happen overnight, and it can be really complicated. A lot of organizations are not doing the work. I'm so happy and proud that St. Francis has taken all of this so seriously. It's easy for people to say they believe in certain things; it's entirely different to make an investment of time, energy and resources," Felicia notes. "We all have work to do. As a woman of color who has benefitted tremendously from my education at St. Francis and beyond, I am blessed and grateful to be in a position of relative privilege that affords me the opportunity to try to be part of the solution."

This #TroubieForLife is truly living the St. Francis motto, "Women who change the world." Thank you for sharing your journey with us, and during this time of great challenge and uncertainty, we wish you moments of pause and long walks with your partner, Ja, and your Rottweiler, Jax.

St. Clare LEGACY SOCIETY

The St. Clare Legacy Society honors donors who have made St. Francis Catholic High School part of their legacy, ensuring that future generations of young women can call St. Francis home and benefit from an exceptional faith-based education program.

We invite you to join the members of the St. Clare Legacy Society by naming St. Francis Catholic High School as a beneficiary in your will and estate plans. Your generosity will make a positive and lasting impact on the future of St. Francis by enabling us to fulfill our mission to educate young women to change the world through faith, excellence, leadership and service.

ST. CLARE LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERS

The St. Clare Legacy Society recognizes donors who have made St. Francis Catholic High School part of their estate and legacy.

Thank you to our inaugural members:

Marion & Paul Bishop
Tracy Brazil
Linda & David Coward
Kathleen & Jim Deeringer
Lindsay DeFazio '95
Lisa & James Ferrin
Dr. Paul J. Fry, II
Katalin Ernest Hart & Alan Hart
William Hegg Charitable Annuity
Monsignor James Kidder
Jeanne Moore '69
Alison Morr '89
Monsignor T. Brendan O'Sullivan
Candice Pederson
Kathleen Peterson and Family
Jeanette & Chris Ray
Loreine & Nicholas Simopoulos
Anthony Spinetta
Jaqueline Peterson Ward '73 and Family

“Go forth in peace, for you have followed the good road. Go forth without fear, for He who created you has made you holy, has always protected you, and loves you as a mother. Blessed be you, my God, for having created me.”

ST. CLARE OF ASSISI



You can become a member of the St. Clare Legacy Society by:

- ✦ placing St. Francis Catholic High School in your will
- ✦ making St. Francis Catholic High School the beneficiary of a retirement account
- ✦ making a gift of a life insurance policy
- ✦ creating a charitable gift annuity
- ✦ establishing a charitable trust

Please join the members of the St. Clare Legacy Society in leaving a bequest to St. Francis Catholic High School.

For more information, contact MaryAnne Kelly at 916.737.5033 or mkelly@stfrancishs.org.

CALENDAR

JANUARY

CURBSIDE CRAB FEED

Saturday, January 30, 2021

St. Francis Catholic High School will host our first-ever Curbside Crab Feed. Just like our traditional Crab Feed, this in-home event will feature a scrumptious meal and bring together our current families, faculty and staff and Alumnae community. The meal includes antipasto platter, salad, bread, hearty meat sauce over rigatoni and crab, crab and more crab! Sponsor the event and your meal will be delivered! We encourage you to decorate your at-home gathering and get festive while we celebrate Troubie style!

For more information, visit www.stfrancishs.org/crab-feed.

MARCH

REVELRY GALA & AUCTION

Saturday, March 6, 2021

Celebrate St. Francis' 80th Anniversary by joining us for a very special Revelry event! This virtual event will include a premium auction featuring a robust silent auction, wine & spirits section, sign up parties, and "live auction" items. There is no need to purchase a ticket so you'll have some "fun" money to spend on fabulous items and experiences. Join us, or better yet, set up your own watch party with a group you are comfortable with! You don't want to miss an opportunity to celebrate this special anniversary year!

For more information, visit www.stfrancishs.org/revelry.

THE ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY MOURNS THE LOSS OF THE FOLLOWING ALUMNAE:

Carolyn Marie Panattoni Perry '50

Maureen Powell VanCleave '50

Sr. Carole Marie Kelly, OSF '52

Beryl Belchamber Castro '53

Mary Ann Matushak Rich '53

Maureen O'Hare Moreno '54

Mary Jane Bacchi Granzella '55

Susan Reynolds Haley '56

Doris Wilcox Senf '56

Olivia Ayala Hernandez '57

Patricia Pesce Kafati '70

Monica Neumann Lunardi '75

Regina McDonald '76

Michael McCullough (Theology Teacher 1998-2010)

*Eternal rest
grant unto them,
O Lord,
and let perpetual light
shine upon them.*

*St. Francis of Assisi -
Pray for us.*

*St. Clare of Assisi -
Pray for us.*



CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

5900 ELVAS AVENUE
SACRAMENTO, CA 95819

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Sacramento, CA
Permit #290

For information about important
dates and upcoming events,
please visit our website:
www.stfrancishs.org

Parents of Alumnae:

Please forward this publication and
notify the Advancement Office of the
updated address for your daughter.

Curbside **CRAB FEED**

When life hands you lemons, crack some crab!

**SATURDAY,
JANUARY 30, 2021**

**80th
ANNIVERSARY**

**GET YOUR
TICKETS
TODAY!**

www.stfrancishs.org/crab-feed

