

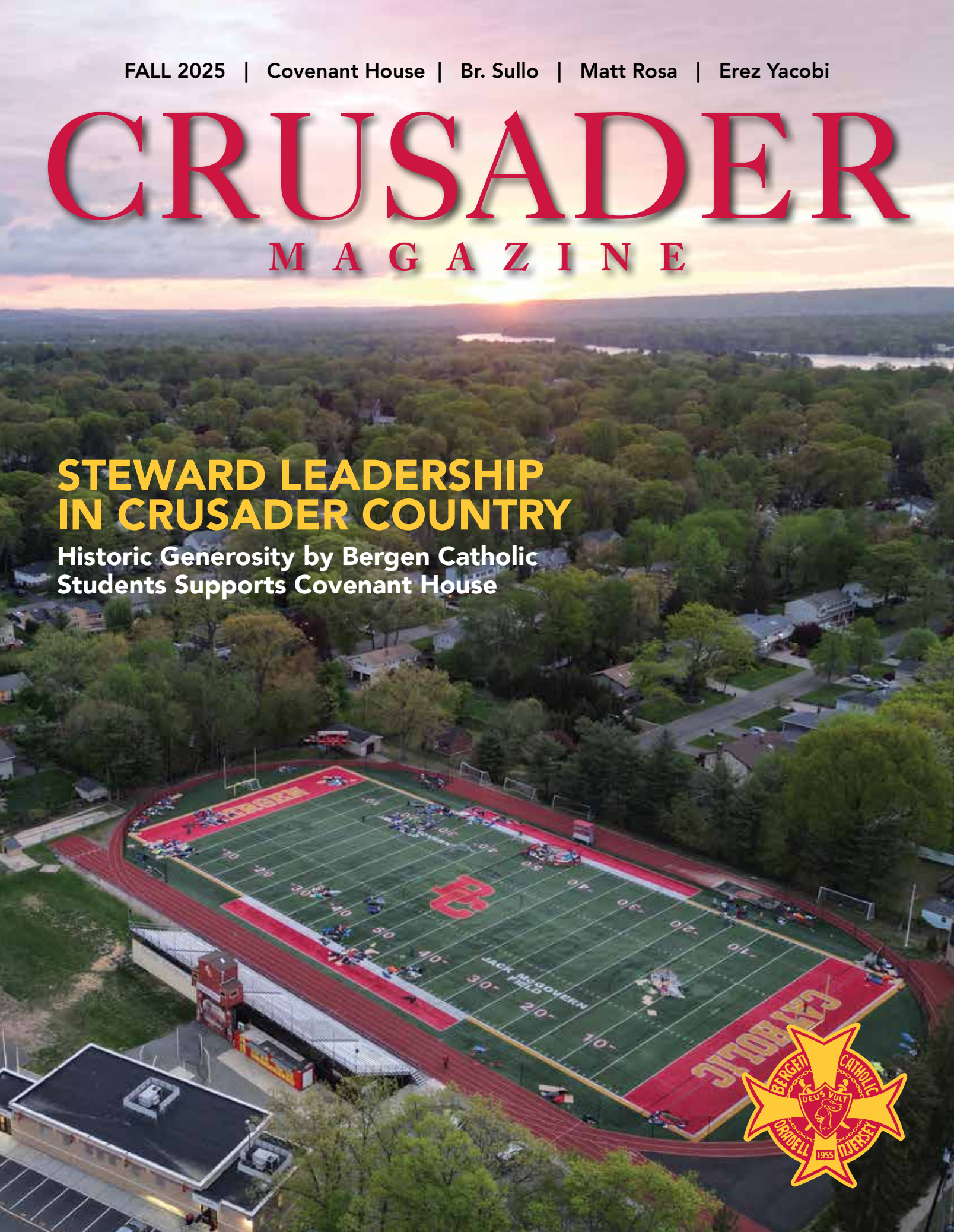
FALL 2025 | Covenant House | Br. Sullo | Matt Rosa | Erez Yacobi

CRUSADER

MAGAZINE

STEWARD LEADERSHIP IN CRUSADER COUNTRY

Historic Generosity by Bergen Catholic
Students Supports Covenant House





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BERGEN CATHOLIC CRUSADER MAGAZINE

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 2025

MONDAY, DECEMBER 1
Giving Tuesday

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7
10:00 AM
Grandparents Mass & Brunch
Hoehl Gymnasium

JANUARY 2026

THURSDAY, JANUARY 8
6:00 PM
Careers4Crusaders
Hoehl Gymnasium

MARCH 2026

SUNDAY, MARCH 22
2026 Bergen Catholic Hall of Fame
The Venetian
Garfield, NJ

MAY 2026

TUESDAY, MAY 5
Crusader Giving Day

JUNE 2026

MONDAY, JUNE 8
55th Annual Bergen Catholic
Golf Classic
Hackensack Golf Club



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

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

In 2026, we are celebrating years ending in 6 and 1.

FALL 2025

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Steward Leadership In Crusader Country
Cover photo courtesy of Joe DiFilippo '15

BC INVESTS IN ITS FUTURE

This summer there was a bevy of construction activity happening throughout the Bergen Catholic campus, including the renovation of two classroom spaces and the library. Rooms 1 and 3, each located adjacent to the Watros Business Center, received a complete remodeling with new floors, walls, lighting, HVAC and brand new furniture. The Bergen Catholic library was successfully remodeled after months of tireless work done by our BC maintenance staff all summer long. BCTV's studio was taken down and relocated, the trophy cases were moved, new overhead lighting was installed, new walls were put up, old book stacks were removed, and beautiful works of

art depicting Blessed Edmund Rice are now prominently displayed like an art gallery. The Crusader Bookstore was also relocated inside the library, all thanks to the support of the BC Alumni Association and from the generosity of current parents.

We thank our extraordinary BC maintenance team and for all those who put in tireless work all summer long to help remodel these beautiful classrooms. Bergen Catholic continues its commitment to providing elite educational resources and facilities for our Crusader students and faculty to utilize for years to come!



MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Fall 2025

Dear Crusader Alumni,

As autumn settles in and the leaves begin to turn, Bergen Catholic is alive with energy, enthusiasm, and tradition. September marked the start of our 71st academic year, a milestone that has filled our halls with excitement and a renewed sense of mission.

We recently celebrated our Mass of the Holy Spirit, asking for God's blessing on our students, faculty, and families. At that liturgy, nine seniors were installed as Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion, publicly committing themselves to service and faith leadership among their peers.

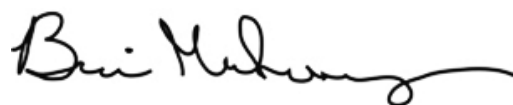
In that same spirit, we were blessed to welcome students from Saint Joseph School in Oradell for a retreat day on campus. Bringing our younger neighbors into our community reminds us that Catholic education is a shared mission, one that connects us across generations and schools.

Student life has also flourished. Our Activity Fair introduced more than 60 clubs and organizations, with activity periods built into the schedule twice a week so that every student can find a place to belong. The joy and enthusiasm on campus is unmistakable, whether at the activity tables, in classrooms, or in the stands cheering on classmates.

Throughout autumn, The Crusader College Counseling Program will welcome over 100 colleges and universities to our campus. Schools large and small will invite members of our senior class to attend seminars learning about the school as we continue to partner with our students guiding them as they research schools that are the best fit. Our recent Open House was tremendous! We welcomed over 300 families which led to over 750 people in attendance. We are proud of the turnout as it is a direct reflection on the academic excellence we offer and how we strive to help young men become Catholic gentlemen, and leaders.

Thank you for your enduring connection and support. As we celebrate 70 years of forming young men into leaders, I am reminded that this legacy belongs to you as much as it belongs to our current students. May we continue to build together a future rooted in faith, tradition, and excellence and Live Jesus in our Hearts, Forever!

Sincerely,



Dr. Brian Mahoney
President
Bergen Catholic High School







HISTORIC GENEROSITY IN CRUSADER COUNTRY

How the Bergen Catholic Brotherhood led the nation in their support of Covenant House

Bergen Catholic students, no matter when they attended the school, love themselves a good competition. And when the competition is for a great cause, then BC Crusaders really are known to shine. That was the case during the spring of 2025, as Bergen Catholic students rallied school-wide support and raised over \$95,000 to help the efforts of Covenant House, a national organization that combats youth homelessness and human trafficking in America. The school's munificent donation of over \$95,000 was not only the most ever raised in Bergen Catholic's recent history with Covenant House, but also ranked as the top overall donation by any single high school in the entire country for the 2024-2025 school year. Once again, Bergen Catholic established itself as a leader on the national landscape, and follows its tradition and legacy as an Edmund Rice Christian Brother institution.

Living just outside of New York, BC students are well aware of the plight of youth homelessness and human trafficking that affect those living in the surrounding areas outside the largest city in the United States. Covenant House was first established in New York in 1971 as a non-profit organization offering support to youths experiencing homelessness. But since its inception, Covenant House has evolved into a safe space that creates individualized programs for young people facing homelessness and human trafficking survivors in 34 different cities throughout the world, and with 5 different locations throughout New Jersey alone. Covenant House's supportive services are focused on assisting youths ages 18-24 years old, and not only provide food, shelter, and clothing for those in need, but also offer services that include job

Continued on next page

“Leaders aren’t born, they’re made and I think Bergen Catholic does this to the best of its ability daily.”

skills, education, access to mental health experts and legal assistance from their own Youth Advocacy Center.

Since 2020, Bergen Catholic has become loyal partners with Covenant House, thanks in part to the tireless work first done by Constantine Rossakis II '23. During his days as a BC student, Rossakis laid the foundation for BC's annual support by having over 200 students participate in a Covenant House Sleep Out event, one of the primary fundraising efforts offered by Covenant House to participating schools and organizations.

During the Sleep Out, each BC student is first challenged to reach a personal fundraising goal and to gain sponsors before participating in the event. When the day of the Sleep Out arrives, the contingent of participating Crusaders meet in the cafeteria to hear from representatives of Covenant House, which includes former homeless youths who share their personal stories of poverty and resilience, and how Covenant House helped celebrate and saved their dignities but putting them on a pathway to future stability and success. Finally, Bergen Catholic students take to Jack McGovern Field inside Crusader Stadium, where they proceeded to huddle up in various locations around the football field in sleeping bags. And despite conducting this year's Sleep Out in late April, students still felt firsthand the adversity of sleeping outside in the elements, while trying to brave cold and windy conditions.

The 2025 Covenant House Sleep Out event was led by the efforts of three current BC students who also represent the school on the Covenant House student executive board: Alexander Rossakis '28, Joe Cabanita '26 and JJ Okorie '26.

“Leaders aren’t born, they’re made and I think Bergen Catholic does this to the best of its ability daily,” says Okorie. “I think taking part in Covenant House’s Sleep Out is only one example of the many ways that Bergen Catholic sets you up for success. We offer so many service opportunities and charity clubs that students can be a part of, but it’s really up to them [students] to show and make the effort, to make the first step, and to make a difference.”

Bergen Catholic’s students certainly heeded the call to make a difference, as close to 300 Crusaders contributed to produce both record-setting participation and fundraising efforts that saw Bergen Catholic eclipse every other high school in the United States by raising a donation of \$95,401 by May 21st. This collective schoolwide generosity parallels how Bergen Catholic students, faculty and staff live out the core tenets of the Essential Elements of an Edmund Rice Christian Brother education by standing in solidarity with those marginalized by poverty and injustice.

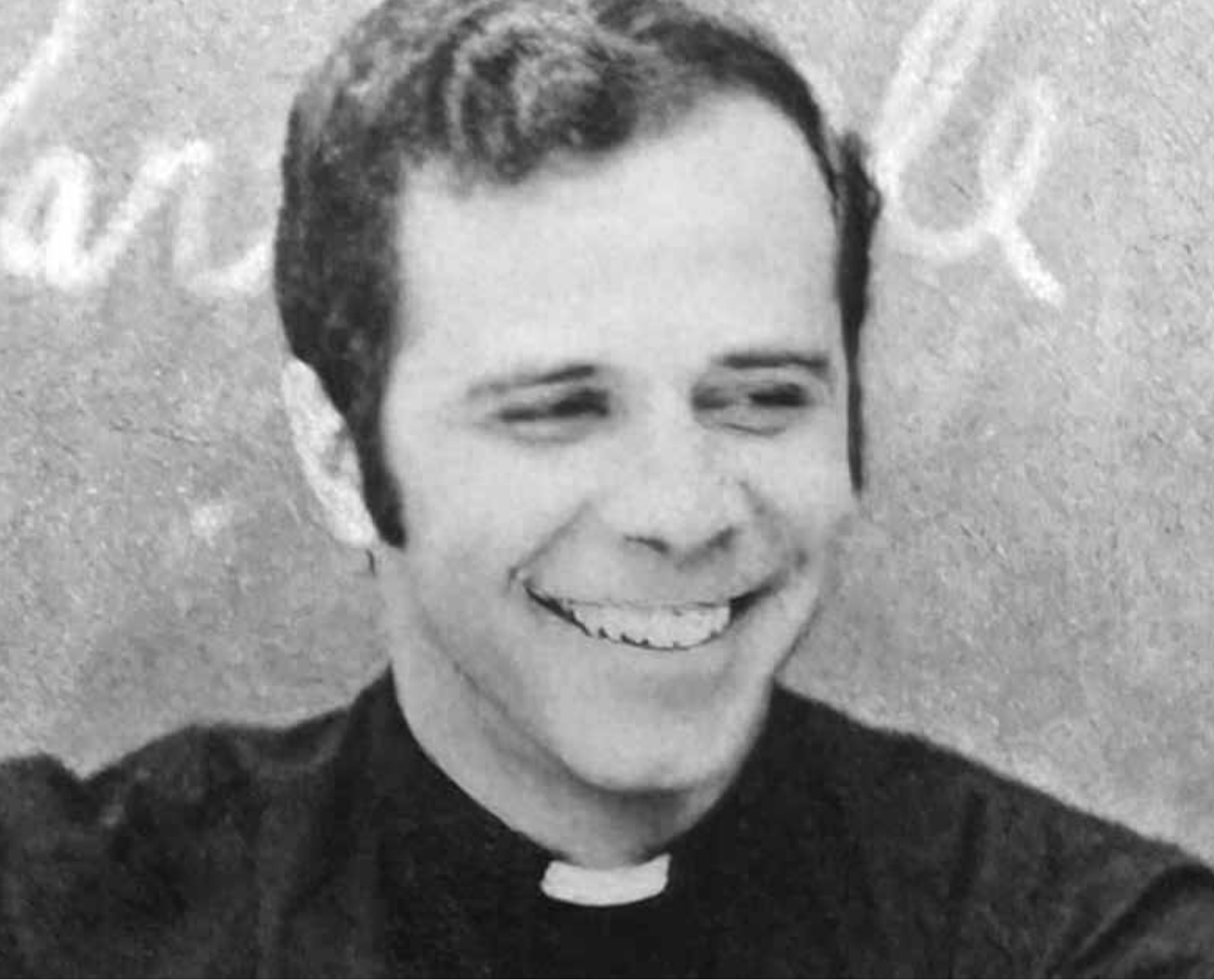
“You always want to strive to be your best, and that’s one of the most important things that we teach here at Bergen Catholic,” says Rossakis. “It’s really important that we set an example for other people joining Bergen Catholic now, because doing this Covenant House Sleep Out really shows how we’re committed here to leadership.”

An estimated 4.2 million youth and young adults experience homelessness each year in the United States, with 700,000 being unaccompanied minors, those who are the same age as Bergen Catholic’s students. This fact was not lost on the current Crusaders, who displayed communal empathy by choosing to not only donate, but to sleep outside in solidarity for those suffering homelessness and hardships. This one night of shared discomfort on the students’ part, allows them to truly walk in someone else’s shoes.

“I love the fact that we are able to help homeless teens raising funds and being able to understand and reflect in these Sleep Outs is amazing, because then we get more of a grasp on how these teens feel,” says Cabanita.

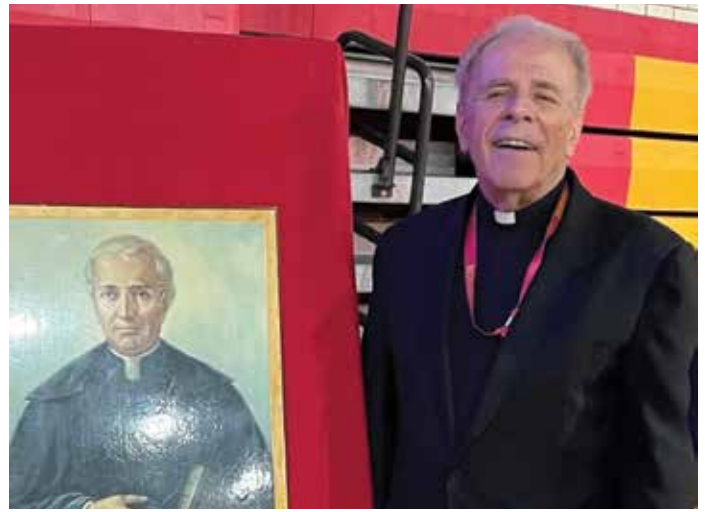
Bergen Catholic molds the leaders of tomorrow, and competition has long been a tool that has been used as a conduit in this transformative process of making boys into men. Whether it be in athletics, academics or service opportunities, Bergen Catholic routinely rises to the occasion and makes its presence known. This is exactly what the BC Brotherhood did in supporting Covenant House with the largest donation of any school in the country in 2025. Generosity and love, mixed with scarlet and gold, led to a historic moment of service, leadership and school pride in Crusader Country.





REMEMBERING A BERGEN CATHOLIC LEGEND

Honoring the memory of
Brother John Gennaro Sullo, CFC



Whether it be seeing his signature iridescent smile, or hearing his booming warm and gravelly voice, Brother John Gennaro Sullo certainly had an aura about him. Having been a part of the Bergen Catholic community over the course of four different decades, Brother Sullo emerged as a larger-than-life type figure in Crusader Country, having served in a plethora of positions at BC including teacher, coach, dean, principal and president. A man who prided himself in his faith, cooking talents, and encyclopedic knowledge of the history of Bergen Catholic, Brother Sullo was truly a legendary figure. And though he passed away on July 31st, 2025 at the age of eighty, Brother Sullo's legacy continues to echo around the Crusader campus.

A native of the Bronx, NY, Brother Sullo first entered the Christian Brothers after graduating high school in 1967, professed his first vows in 1969, and soon made his first arrival into Crusader Country in 1971, when he came to Bergen Catholic to teach Spanish and religion, and also coached soccer and tennis. During his first tenure in Oradell, the BC hallways and classrooms were packed with Crusaders, as classes saw a jaw-dropping student-to-teacher ratio of 45:1, and space was scarce all throughout the building. As one of twenty-four Christian Brothers on staff at the time, Brother Sullo even had to teach one Spanish class in a makeshift classroom space, instructing a handful of students in a side doorway entrance spot in the building. Despite these spatial challenges, Brother Sullo thrived in the classroom, and quickly became one of the most beloved educators to the entire BC student body.

Teaching is what was at the heart of what Brother Sullo considered to be his greatest gift. A brilliant academic who held degrees from Iona College, Middlebury College, The Catholic University of America, and Fordham University, Brother Sullo thrived in his one-on-one interactions with his students, where he invested as much in them, as they did in return. In an interview conducted with Brother Sullo on the Bergen Catholic Podcast in October 2024, he reflected on his role as a teacher as being his ultimate legacy in his illustrious career.

"It was great being principal and president, but I think what I want to be known for is my concern for my students," said Brother Sullo. "I have also had, by the grace of God, a very good rapport with my students. I think and I hope that I was a good role model for these young people and that's what I want to be remembered for."

After briefly leaving Bergen Catholic, Brother Sullo would return to Oradell in the 1980s to serve as dean. It was not until the fall of 1993 when Brother Sullo would make his third appearance in Crusader Country, this time as principal of Bergen Catholic for the 1993-1994 academic year, before making history after being named the first-ever president in school history. As school president, Brother Sullo made an immediate impact by hiring Dr. Joseph Fusco to be his successor as principal, as he established the president-principal model that has been in existence at BC since 1994.

"Being president was a joy, it really was, I got to see and meet a lot of people," Brother Sullo recalled in his 2024 podcast interview. "I was meeting alums that I taught back in the 70's, so it was great."

Brother Sullo oversaw a commitment to bettering the overall facilities while BC president, headlined by his decision to make Bergen Catholic one of the first schools in the country to have a synthetic artificial turf multi-sport field. This decision led many NFL and NCAA college football coaches and administrators to make pilgrimages to Crusader Stadium to see the revolutionary surface for themselves, and even led to college and professional athletes hosting practices at the home of the Crusaders over the next decades. At the heart of everything Brother Sullo did, were the Bergen Catholic students, and what was best for them and their futures.

"Brother Sullo was a gift to many," reflects Dr. Brian Mahoney, Bergen Catholic President. "His presence brightened every room, and his love for Bergen Catholic shone brightly for all to see. He will remain an inspiration to many and a friend to all."



A CRUSADER FOR SERVANT LEADERSHIP

Matt Rosa '08 takes on his new role as Vice President of Advancement

Name any type of job at Bergen Catholic, and there's a good chance that Matt Rosa '08 has already done it. Whether it be working as a student, teacher, coach, administrator, part of the maintenance team, or even back when he served as a ball boy for the Crusader football team as a child, Matt Rosa has ingratiated himself into the fabric of Bergen Catholic. So, after an incredibly successful nine-year tenure as the Vice President of Admissions and Outreach, Bergen Catholic president Dr. Brian Mahoney appointed Rosa to serve as the school's new Vice President of Advancement in July 2025. And while Rosa now inherits a new job on campus, his knowledge of mission, brotherhood, and Catholic identity continue to fuel him to make Bergen Catholic the envy of other high schools in the country, and a thriving home for generations of future leaders.

Rosa arrived in Crusader Country as a student in the Fall of 2004, and immediately thrust himself into the busy day-to-day life that Bergen Catholic has to offer. Ranging from being a member of the BC football, mock trial, and campus ministry programs, Rosa challenged himself physically, mentally and spiritually. This holistic educational approach served him well, as he later earned a scholarship to attend Loyola University in Baltimore, Maryland, where he earned an undergraduate degree in economics.

While attending Loyola, Rosa was inspired by the Jesuit concept of "Cura Personalis", the development of the whole person. Much like during his student days at BC, Rosa sought to deepen his own faith by serving in Loyola's campus ministry office, a program that allowed him the opportunity to pray, reflect, discern and connect with fellow members of the Loyola community. This program helped shape Rosa is pursuing life as a servant leader, and eventually led him back to his alma mater in Oradell.

After serving several years as an assistant coach in the Bergen Catholic football program, Rosa eventually took on a larger leadership role at his alma mater when he joined the BC

faculty as a religion teacher in the Fall of 2013. Working alongside many of his own teaching mentors, Rosa thrived in the classroom and earned the trust and respect from students, faculty and administration. But it was in 2017 when Rosa took up a different challenge outside of the classroom, as he was appointed as the Vice President of Admissions and proceeded to hold the position for nine years, a tenure that featured years of consistent growth in both applications to Bergen Catholic and enrollment of incoming Crusader classes.

"Being entrusted with leading Bergen Catholic's Admissions Office was both an honor and a calling," said Rosa. "From day one, I was surrounded by a team whose dedication matched their belief in our mission. Together, we welcomed families, told the Bergen Catholic story with authenticity, and ensured that every student who walked through our doors felt seen, valued, and inspired. The success we achieved was never the work of one person—it was the shared passion of colleagues who believed that what we do here changes lives."

Now after enjoying a nine-year tenure of success in Admissions, Rosa has been entrusted with a new role in the building after being named the Vice President of Advancement this past July. And while this new endeavor comes with different responsibilities, Rosa is more than prepared for the new challenge. This past May, Rosa received his master's degree in Church Management from Villanova University's School of Business. The specialized degree helped equip Rosa with a deep understanding of mission-centered leadership, strategic planning and ethical stewardship within philanthropy, all of which he has seamlessly woven into his work at Bergen Catholic.

"I am truly grateful to Dr. Mahoney for this opportunity," says Rosa. "I'm deeply humbled and excited to continue giving back to a place that has given so much to me. As we look to the future, I remain committed to ensuring that Bergen Catholic continues to be a beacon of brotherhood, faith and excellence."

A long chat with

BROTHER GABRIEL DUNBAR, CFC

Bergen Catholic's rich tradition and history is built upon the shoulders of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers, the religious order that founded and staffed Bergen Catholic since 1955. We honor our past in the present, by taking time to introduce to the Crusader community Brother Gabriel Dunbar, CFC, a member of the Campus Ministry Office at BC:

Tell us about yourself, where you grew up, where you went to school, and do you come from a big family?

I was born in Kearny, NJ, to Ruth and Robert Dunbar. My father was a Newark fireman, and my mother was a homemaker. I have one sister. I grew up in Newark, NJ, and attended Sacred Heart Elementary School and Essex Catholic High School. I finished my high school years at Brick Township High School when we moved to the Jersey Shore. I attended Temple University for a Bachelor's degree in Education. I also attended Iona University for a Master's in English Secondary Education. I earned 34 graduate credits in Religious Education at Fordham University. My father is deceased, but my mother lives in a nursing home near my sister in South Jersey.

What inspired you to join the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers?

I always felt the calling to religious life and to teaching since my childhood. I grew up in a religious home and attended Catholic schools. I was most impressed with the life and influence of the Christian Brothers at Essex Catholic. In those days, there were 2,000 students and 34 Brothers in the school. I would have entered the Brothers after graduating from Essex, but my family moved from Newark to the Jersey Shore at that time; so I finished in public school. During my college years, the call to become a Brother left me. I never lost my faith, but I stopped practicing it; failing to attend Mass and to maintain my spiritual life. It was my first teaching job at St. Peter the Apostle School in Philadelphia that brought me back to the Church. My vocation came back to me, and I started practicing my faith with greater fervor. I entered the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers at age 23 in 1981. It was the greatest decision. I do

not have all the things that "the world" tells me that I should have to be happy, but I am incredibly fulfilled and rewarded in my decision to enter religious life and to become more "God-centered and other-person-centered" in life.

What have been the blessings and challenges involved in working in various schools around the area during your career?

Bergen Catholic High School is the 8th Catholic school that I have been assigned to over the last 46 years. I spent 23 years in elementary schools; teaching all the subjects, from grades 3 to 8, and I was a principal for an additional 6 years. I taught religion and English for the last 17 years in high school and the last 2 years as a Campus Minister as well. The blessings over the last 46 years are countless. I think my greatest blessing has been to be "an instrument of God's Graces to many students". If one student drew closer to God and the Church; then I fulfilled my calling as a Brother. I think the greatest challenges are to help students to understand that despite life's many obstacles and hardships, God loves and cares for them, and they play important roles in God's plan of salvation. Keeping a close relationship with God and the Church will help them discern that role.

You come to Bergen Catholic after serving at All Hallows High School. Please tell us about your experience there as a teacher and campus minister.

I had been assigned to All Hallows High School in the Bronx, NY, for the last 17 years. I taught English, religion, and was the Campus Minister. All Hallows was a blessed school. It was the Christian Brothers' first school in the United States. Monsignor Power, the pastor of All Saints Church in Harlem, was taught by the Brothers in Ireland before immigrating at age 20 to the USA and becoming a priest. He invited the Brothers to come to America to teach in his school. Brothers Ryan, Curtis, Kelly, and Molloy accepted the challenge in 1906 with the approval of the



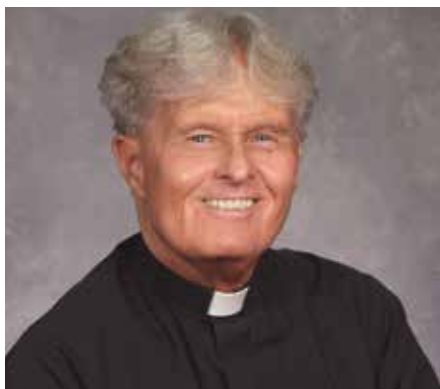
Superior General, Br. Whittey. They saw the need to expand and to begin our own school.

All Hallows High School began on West 124 St. in Harlem, on September 13, 1909, with 25 students and 3 Christian Brothers. Brothers Dooley and Ward were sent from Ireland, and Brother Lannon was sent from Newfoundland. Ironically, the other Brothers were asked to remain teaching at All Saints. By 1926, when the enrollment reached 275 students in 4 row houses on W. 124 Street, the Brothers purchased property on E. 164 St. in the Bronx. The new school opened in April of 1931. All the students were involved in the move from W. 124 St. to E. 164 St. by carrying their own desks on the #4 subway. Like so many poorer inner-city Catholic schools, increasing debt, needs for building renovations, widening gap between the tuition income vs. the cost to educate each student, and decreasing

enrollment led to the closing of the school on June 30, 2025, after 116 years.

As one of the newest members to the Bergen Catholic community, what role do you hope to play at the school in regards to campus ministry?

I would like to be of service in the Office of Campus Ministry at Bergen Catholic and continue to be “an instrument of God’s Graces for others”. At age 68, I would like to retire from the classroom, but I want to remain active by being “Brother” to the faculty and students. I also plan on introducing the Order of Christian Initiation of Adults (OCIA) program to any interested students at Bergen Catholic who would like to receive the sacraments and be a member of the Catholic Church.





YOU CAN GO HOME AGAIN

Four familiar faces have returned to work in Crusader Country

In Thomas Wolfe's posthumously published novel *You Can't Go Home Again*, the author argues through his characters that because of change over time, a person can never truly return back home to what they've remembered nostalgically. But while Wolfe brings up a fascinating point, he may have thought differently if his characters had returned to Bergen Catholic. This year's faculty and staff have four members making their returns to Crusader Country, as alums Peter Rice '88, Bob Murray '83, and Joe DiFilippo '15 come back to work at their alma mater, while Br. Raymond Vercruysse returns to his rightful place inside a BC classroom.



PETER RICE '88 (Vice President of Admissions) For Peter Rice, admissions and Bergen Catholic is a dream combination, having served for 27 years in admissions at the collegiate level, and having a love for his alma mater as both an alum and as alumni parent '18. The chance to return to BC was an opportunity he couldn't pass up, and he welcomed the new career challenge knowing that there's been plenty of change at the school since both he and his son Brian walked the halls.

"I was never dreaming that this would really happen, and to come back here feels great and feels very similar, but different in a very good way," says Rice. "The culture at BC feels very much the same, the faculty are all different names and faces, but I can equate them to the faculty from the late 80s, the ones who made this experience magical to me."



BOB MURRAY '83 (Director of Annual Giving) After having been the quarterback and captain of the 1982 state championship-winning Crusader football team at Bergen Catholic, Bob Murray returns to Crusader Country to once again help be a leader, this time as a member of the BC Advancement Office as the school's Director of Annual Giving. For Murray, this opportunity to work at BC allows him the chance to give back to a place that set him up for his own future of success.

"We're trying to bring people together, we're trying to remind them of the success that they have had in their life, is grounded in the Bergen Catholic faith, the Bergen Catholic Brotherhood" says Murray. "But it's also grounded in the things that they learned and the people that they have gotten to know, that's the reason why they're successful. And encourage them to create the opportunity for the current students to have that same experience that they did."



JOE DIFILIPPO '15 (Business Teacher) Despite not starting his high school career as a freshman at Bergen Catholic, Joe DiFilippo has made up for any lost time by being a mainstay in Oradell, first as a standout student-athlete for two years, followed by his extensive coaching career in several different Crusader sports. And now DiFilippo has furthered his role as a full-time member of the BC faculty, becoming the school's first full-time business teacher.

"I am thrilled to step into the role of Bergen Catholic's first full-time business teacher, a position that allows me to shape an exciting and robust curriculum for our students. This expanded program will dive into essential areas like accounting, marketing, and financial markets, equipping students with practical skills and real-world knowledge to thrive in today's dynamic economy."



BR. RAY VERCRUYSSSE (AP Research Teacher) Brother Ray Vercruyssen has not only happily found his way back to Bergen Catholic, but he's also back inside his favorite setting; a classroom. Br. Ray has returned to Crusader Country to teach a senior section of AP Research, a new course being offered at BC that sees students conduct a year-long independent investigation on a topic of their choice, culminating in an academic paper and presentation.

"I am happy to be back at BC and the chance to return to the classroom means a lot to me. I have always been a teacher even in the variety of ministries that I have been engaged in over the years."



FINDING A HOME AND DISCOVERING A PURPOSE

Erez Yacobi '24 and his unique path to Bergen Catholic and beyond

Over the course of the 70-year history of Bergen Catholic, the school has seen many transfers come in and out of the BC community. More often than not, when public schools are involved, it normally means a student is leaving BC for their local school. But in certain cases, the reverse is true, and a student is willing to leave the comforts of their home school district to attend Bergen Catholic. That is the exact decision that Erez Yacobi '24 and his family made when he joined the Bergen Catholic Brotherhood. For Erez, it proved to be one of the most consequential decisions he's ever made in his life, and a choice that has set himself on a road of self-discovery and service.

Growing up in Allendale, NJ, Erez Yacobi has been enamored with the sport of hockey since he first began playing at the age of six. Becoming a standout goalie, Erez commanded the attention of many different high school coaches based on his natural talent, but chose to play for his hometown public school of Northern Highlands. The Highlander program has established itself as one of the top tier public school hockey programs in the Garden State, having captured three state titles since 2018, so Erez' decision made sense on the surface level, but deep down he felt like there was something missing in his student-athlete career. So, after spending two years at Northern Highlands, Erez decided to trade in his black and red jersey for a scarlet and gold sweater, and made the decision to transfer into Bergen Catholic before the start of his junior year.

This was not the easiest decision to make for a variety of reasons. First off, Erez knew that he would be coming into a highly-competitive BC program with its own rich tradition of championship success, along with a deep lineup of talented players at all positions. He also would be leaving childhood friends and embarking on a new journey as an incoming junior. Lastly, Erez comes from a Jewish family, and wondered if the transition would be difficult for someone of a different religious faith at a Catholic school. All those fears and anxieties were relieved upon his arrival at Bergen Catholic, as Erez and the entire Yacobi family were welcomed with open arms, and quickly immersed themselves into the BC Brotherhood.

"Bergen Catholic is a very, very understanding school. I was initially worried that I'd be forced to pray every morning, but it actually became something I enjoyed," said Erez. "Watching the unity — how even in the middle of arguments or tough days, everyone paused to give a few minutes to something greater — it really connects the school and the people as a whole. Even if our beliefs aren't exactly the same, there's a place for everyone at Bergen Catholic."

While stuck behind two talented senior goalies on the varsity for the 2022-2023 season, Erez waited his time and saw action in one game, but more importantly learned what it took to become a valuable member of a Bergen Catholic team, and to practice and play at an elite level in order to compete against some of the state's best programs as part of the Gordon

Continued on next page

Conference, the toughest division in New Jersey hockey. He also felt a sense of comradery with his new teammates that he didn't experience at his previous school, and this sense of brotherhood helped fuel him in getting prepared for his senior season.

"The best way I can describe not just hockey, but Bergen Catholic sports in general, is the dire need to win — not just for yourself or your future, but for the school," reflects Erez. "I remember game days vividly — how excited everyone would be. Then you walk out of the locker room and see your friends, family, and even teachers coming to support. There's no feeling like it. There's so much support and pride in winning — not just on the field, but in the classroom, too."

"Bergen Catholic will always have a place in my heart. It's a place that teaches you how to become a man and how to put others before yourself. I'm so incredibly grateful for the school, and I honestly don't know what I would do without it."

All the hard work in the offseason paid off for Yacobi, as he became Bergen Catholic's starting goalie for the 2023-2024 season. Starting 13 games that winter, Erez posted a (8-5) overall record, making 347 saves and posting a 90% save percentage for the season. The highlight moment for the

Crusader netminder came in the finals of the 2024 Bergen County tournament, when he crafted his signature outing of his Bergen Catholic career, producing a magnificent 41-save shutout performance in a (3-0) win over Don Bosco Prep, and earning BC their fifth county championship in program history. For Erez, it was the icing on the cake of a monumental decision he made to transfer to Bergen Catholic, but he would not be done making tough choices and selflessly committing to bigger causes.

Following his championship senior season, Erez Yacobi finished out his academic career at Bergen Catholic, and graduated alongside the Class of 2024, forever taking his place in the BC Brotherhood as a proud alum. But for Erez, the leadership role and skills he learned while at Bergen Catholic ignited a desire to do more upon graduation, and instead of attending a college in the United States, he made the difficult decision and chose to make Aliyah, which is when someone immigrates back to Israel to become a citizen. In addition to this move across the globe, Erez also chose to enlist in the Israeli army and to be a part of the Israeli Defense Force. Before beginning his training, Erez took classes studying the Hebrew language for over five hours a day at Tel Aviv University and found time to play hockey for the Ashdod Dolphins of the Israel Elite Hockey League, where he helped lead his team to their first-ever championship and was named IEHL Rookie of the Year.

"Since I arrived, I was drafted into an elite combat unit and I'm now less than a month away from finishing my advanced training," reflects Erez Yacobi. "Even in the toughest moments — no sleep, barely eating, and facing challenges that seem impossible — I'm so thankful for what Bergen Catholic taught me. They prepared me to keep pushing when my back is against the wall, and to always find a solution."

For Erez Yacobi, the decision to come to Bergen Catholic was a life-altering experience. He still cherishes the close bonds he has forged with his BC brothers, routinely talking to former BC classmates in the brief free time he is afforded while in the midst of intensive combat training. His immediate acceptance into the school community by the students, faculty and staff allowed him the opportunity to make a new home as a junior transfer, and he never felt like an outsider. The collective passion, work ethic, and brotherhood challenged Erez to do more in his hockey playing career, and paid off in a Bergen County championship. While the lessons of servant leadership taught to him in the BC classroom called him to a life of purpose in Israel.

"Bergen Catholic will always have a place in my heart," says Erez. "It's a place that teaches you how to become a man and how to put others before yourself. I'm so incredibly grateful for the school, and I honestly don't know what I would do without it."





Year	Player	Points			
87-88	89-90	90-91	1989	Mike Pedone	1,160
91-92	92-93	93-94	1991	Robin James	1,065
94-95	95-96	96-97	1999	Mark Jerz	1,200
97-98	98-99	99-00	2003	Sean Banks	1,519
BIG NORTH CONFERENCE					
12-13	14-15	15-16	2003	Joe Sandberg	1,153
16-17	17-18	18-19	2008	Nick Vier	1,043
20-21	21-22	22-23	2014	Nadi Beciri	1,017
			2015	Justin Salem	1,114
			2017	Taj-Malik Banning	1,024
			2019	Doug Edert	1,817
			2018	Zach Freemantle	1,152
			2020	Matt Zosa	1,236
			2021	Julian Brown	1,105
			2022	Will Richardson	1,579



A PARTNERSHIP FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION

How a pair of Oradell Catholic schools have banded together

Catholic education has long been a cornerstone in society for generations of students throughout the world, but it currently faces an abundance of financial challenges and pitfalls that have led to school closures, consolidations, and have created a void in many communities. Even though it is situated in affluent Bergen County, St. Joseph's School in Oradell is not immune to the same type of problems that have plagued Catholic schools in more urban and lower income locales, which have seen class sizes dwindle, educational costs rising, and eventually leads to doors closing. In identifying this as an overall problem that will affect all levels of Catholic education, Bergen Catholic has forged a new partnership with St. Joseph's, in hopes of strengthening the Catholic grammar school's curriculum and offerings to the public, while BC receives help from St. Joseph Parish in regards to a new OCIA program being offered at BC.

This partnership between the two Oradell-based Catholic schools may prove to become a roadmap for other Catholic schools to use in the future, creating a pathway for sustainability and collaboration in a competitive educational market. In the Upper School of St. Joseph's, there are currently 34 students in grades 6-8. In order to attract more prospective families to their school community, SJS believed they needed to improve their enrichment program offerings, and that's where Bergen Catholic stepped in to help. The SJS grammar school students will come to BC throughout the school year to learn from the senior Honors Research course taught by Brian Rendine '01, and take back ideas and lessons to incorporate into their own science programs. This new SJS enrichment program will then hopefully attract more prospective families to enroll their children at St. Joseph's School, because the foundations of their enhanced science program are rooted in the accomplished Bergen Catholic program, run in conjunction with Holy Name Medical Center.

Bergen Catholic benefits from the partnership with St. Joseph's when it comes to its newly established OCIA (Office of Christian Initiation of Adults) program. Started this September by Br. Gabriel Dunbar, 37 Bergen Catholic students have expressed an interest in officially joining the Catholic Church and receiving the necessary sacraments for full initiation. The majority of interested BC students are looking to make their confirmations, while four Crusaders will be receiving the sacraments of Baptism, First Communion and Confirmation. Because of this, Bergen Catholic legally needed a

Continued on next page



parish to help host the celebration and of these sacraments for their students. So, Father Christian Scalo, pastor of St. Joseph's in Oradell, agreed to help host these sacraments in his parish, so that the BC students would have their proper paperwork and registrations housed accordingly. As BC helps SJS thrive in their enrichment offerings, St. Joseph Parish assists BC in their burgeoning OCIA program and helps welcome new members to the Catholic Church.

The partnership between Bergen Catholic and St. Joseph's officially kicked off on September 19th, when BC hosted a retreat on campus for the SJS Upper School students and their teachers. Br. Dunbar led the retreat with the overall theme being on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the SJS students and teachers were broken up into groups where they discussed how they were each empowered from their baptisms to live the gifts of the Holy Spirit in their daily lives. Following these morning workshops, the contingent from St. Joseph's joined the rest of the Bergen Catholic community in celebrating the Mass of the Holy Spirit, BC's first Mass of the new 2025-2026 school year. Finally, to close out their days at BC, the grammar school students were treated to a barbecue lunch down near Crusader Stadium on campus.

"It was a delight to be with the Bergen Catholic High School Community along with our St. Joseph School Upper School Community at the Mass of the Holy Spirit this past September," recalled Fr. Christian Scalo. "As I looked out

at the vast student body, my heart was filled with hope and excitement for the future, not only for Catholic Education, but also for our Church at large. From my personal experience, I can see that many young people are not only interested in the Catholic faith, but also are enthusiastically embracing it through a willingness to receive the Sacraments. Our Catholic Schools and Parishes play a vital role in introducing our next generations to the person of Jesus Christ and I am excited as the Pastor of St. Joseph's in Oradell to play a small role in inspiring the next generation of believers."

"It was a wonderful way to begin this partnership," said Br. Dunbar. "We're helping the students at St. Joseph's, and then St. Joseph's is helping us with the OCIA program and Fr. Christian will be the one initiating this partnership where our students will be able to receive the sacraments at his church from the Bishop."

Over time, this promising partnership will hopefully help both Oradell Catholic schools continue to grow in numbers and influence, while also promoting greater participation in the Catholic Church. This shared commitment to strengthening Catholic education is shown in the ideal of servant leadership, something that is promoted by this partnership between Bergen Catholic and St. Joseph's School and Parish. Rather than doing it alone, these schools are taking the journey together, and spreading the Good News in the process.

You Are Invited!

BE THE

INSPIRATION



JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE OUR EDUCATORS —
PAST AND PRESENT

THE HEART AND SOUL OF BERGEN CATHOLIC

NOV 20 2025

On this night, we will come together to honor the dedicated men and women who have shaped generations of Crusaders. As Bergen Catholic celebrates 70 years of forming young men into Christian Leaders, we invite you to take part in this milestone celebration.

There are many meaningful ways to say thank you to our teachers for their years of service and devotion:

Attend the Gala • Become a Sponsor • Place an E-Journal Ad



Join us in honoring those who make Bergen Catholic's mission possible — our teachers.

Visit bergencatholic.org/gala to purchase your tickets as well as raffle tickets for the big night!

2025 GRADUATION

JUNE 8, 2025

Congratulations

Luke George Apergis
Matthew James Arencibia
Jerry Aaron Armstrong
Joseph Shane Barbaro
Guytano Bartolomeo
Andrew Jeremiah Boakye
William Agemian Borg
Nicholas Vincent Brignola
Andrew Brian Byrnes
Sean Michael Cahill
Shant Michael Cakirdas
Daniel Allan Calianese
Dominic Joseph Campanile
John Michael Cantarella
Logan Anthony Cantone
Alessandro John Capano
Jake Brady Carcich
Benjamin Robert Carey
Alejandro Ignacio Castro-
D'Albenzio
Tyler Joseph Certo
Austin Cha

Christian Y. Choi
Ethan Carmelot Cohall, Jr.
John Paul Colello III
Steven Jace Copeland II
James Edward Corcoran
Tyler Joseph Cusumano
Colin Joseph Daly
Matthew Charles Daly
Daniel Charles De Bono
Phoenix-Orion DiCosmo
Daniel Jacob Dmitrievsky
William Graham
Bradford Dodds
Francis Xavier Dooley
Avery Bennet Miller Drapkin
Michael Patrick Elwood
Jorge Espinosa, Jr.
Noah Miles Esposito
Kieran Rafael Farley
Christopher Isaias Fernandez
Delaney Anthony Fludd
Nicholas Dominic Frassetto

Christian Joseph Gallagher
Keegan Allen Galligher
Peter Louis Gallo
Leonardo Richard Gentili
Alexander Demetrios Georgiou
Dylan Cash Gerbsman
Rudy Gonzalo
Patrick John Guinan
Daniel Lucas Hernandez
Heydon V. Hernandez
Colin James Higgins
Ian Raymond Holmes
Jake Evan Howarth
Ronan Carroll Howell
Thomas Richard Hunt
Eunkyul Nathan Hwang
Genti Idrizi
Kaden Garin Irby-Mason
Ali Hussein Ismail
Cameron Robert Jaffe
Jonathan James Jerez
Nathan Maxen Johnston

Nathaniel Christian Johnston
Henry Pierce Soonhan Jordan
Elijah Reed Joseph
Junmo Kang
Harrison Vincent Kazimir
Nicholas Ji-Hoon Kim
Yonjae Kim
Paul Luke Klele
Geonwoo Ko
Eric Kwon
Ryan Kwon
Maximus John Lahoud
Leonardo LaSpisa
Joseph Alexander Legato
Nicholas Ryan Liggio
Vincent Pio Lombardi
Joseph Kenneth Maimone
Antonio Ursolino Mamsaang
Christian Juvenal Marchisio
Sebastian Ardy Margono
David Anthony Matesic
Gregory Edward Matute





Tyler Leo McQuaid
 Dimitri Surge Melnikov
 Brandon James Michael
 Matthew William Montgomery
 Dylan Amit Moondra
 Matthew Nicholas Morin
 John Christian Morris
 Matthew Sawyer Morrissey
 Matthew Moya
 Stuart Giles Murray
 Alexander Joseph Neunzig
 Sean Christopher O'Brien
 Jakob Keith Oliver
 Aiden John Pacheco
 Alexandre Jordan Palacios
 Aanand Pandey
 Jeongsoo Park
 Yujun Park
 Naiim Darius Parrish
 Marcello Anthony Passanante
 Stephen Nicholas Paul
 Anthony Charles Perrotti

Quincy Darrin Porter
 Alexander Richard Reese
 Bourke William Reid
 Robert Emmanuel Reynoso
 Michael John Robertelli
 Christian James Roche
 Joshua Edward Rodman
 Trey James Rolnick
 Nicholas Blaise Rossig
 Mujahid Ibn Russell
 William Dennis Ryan
 Nikhil Sahu
 Gabriel Saint-Hilaire Urbina
 Markus Peter Samko
 Jaiden Roberto Santiago
 Luis Alejandro Santos
 Thomas Stark Santos
 William Daniel Saracino
 Richard Sarkisyants
 Jiwon Seo
 Jaehyeok Shin
 Nicholas Josiah Shortridge

Benjamin William Shue
 Dylan Thomas Silk
 Nehemiah Christopher Snell
 Brian Tchae Myoung Song
 Daniel Tchae Sung Song
 Patrick James Sorrentino
 Evan Kristian Soto
 Edward James Stoker
 Zion Michael Suitt
 Liam Eugene Sullivan
 Sean Xavier Tandy
 Miles Jay Taylor
 Anthony Nicholas Tetto
 Jeremiah Itaru Tomioka
 Michael Renna Tompkins
 Corey Lea Trainer White, Jr.
 Joseph Kevin Tramontozzi
 Joseph Emil Trione
 Eamonn Henry Twomey
 Christian Paul Velardi
 Rocco Francesco Venezia
 Christopher Angelo Vigna

Miguel Angel Visbal
 William Joseph Vozzolo
 Christopher Michael Vrtis
 John Patrick Walker III
 Lockton Thomas Walker
 Maxwell Franklin Wright
 Ricky WenKang Wright
 Declan Thomas Wucherpfennig
 Eric Dohhyung Yoo
 Kayden Taewoo Yoo
 Tyler Taean Yoo
 Blake Jackson Young
 Jamie John Zee



GRADUATION

CLASS OF 2025



DEUS VULT!

Graduation Medal Winners

Blessed Edmund Rice Medal – “First in Merit” <i>Br. Edmund Rice is the Founder of the Christian Brothers.</i>	Eric Kwon
Br. Alfred X. Keane Medal – “Second in Merit” <i>Br. Keane was the second Principal of Bergen Catholic.</i>	Daniel T'chae Sung Song
Br. James B. Walsh Medal – Religious Education <i>Br. Walsh taught Religion for many years at Bergen Catholic.</i>	William Joseph Vozzolo
Br. James H. Vaughan Medal – English <i>Br. Vaughan, a true gentleman Scholar, taught English for two terms at Bergen Catholic.</i>	Daniel Allan Calianese
Br. Edward T. Beyer Medal – History <i>Br. Beyer taught History at Bergen Catholic for forty years (1969-2009)</i>	Daniel Lucas Hernandez
Medal for – Physics	Daniel T'chae Sung Song
Medal for – Chemistry	Jaehyeok Shin
Br. Edward Roepke Medal – Biology <i>Br. Roepke was Principal and teacher of Biology at Bergen Catholic.</i>	Christian Y. Choi
Medal for – Calculus	Tyler Joseph Certo
Thomas Fuchs Medal – Mathematics <i>Mr. Fuchs was a member of the Math Department for forty years (1971-2011).</i>	Jamie John Zee
Richard D’Orazio Medal – Spanish <i>A teacher of French, Spanish and Italian, Department Chairperson, leader of trips to Europe and South America, passed away during the 2001-2002 school year.</i>	Matthew Nicholas Morin
Br. Thomas J. Jensen Medal – Latin <i>Br. Jensen was a teacher’s teacher who inspired his students to excel.</i>	Avery Bennet Miller Drapkin
Medal for – Mandarin	Brian T'chae Myoung Song
Medal for – Art	Aiden John Pacheco
James J. Obrotka Medal – Music <i>Mr. Obrotka was an early faculty member who composed and wrote the school’s Alma Mater.</i>	Ryan Kwon
Medal for – Technology	Eric Kwon
John Courtney Medal – Christian Service <i>Mr. Courtney was an early faculty member who founded the Crusaders for Christian Action.</i>	Elijah Reed Joseph
Victor Liggio Medal – Outstanding Scholar – Athlete <i>Mr. Liggio was a Business teacher, Baseball coach, and Dean at Bergen Catholic.</i>	Benjamin William Shue
The Jack McGovern Memorial Award	Dominic Joseph Campanile
The Bergen Catholic Alumni Association Award	Matthew Nicholas Morin
The Bergen Catholic Alumni Association Award	William Joseph Vozzolo
The Scarlet and Gold Award <i>Awarded to those who capture the charisma of Bergen Catholic.</i>	Thomas Richard Hunt Nicholas Ryan Liggio David Anthony Matesic Aanand Pandey
	Trey James Rolnick Jiwon Seo Miles Jay Taylor

CLASS REUNIONS



ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Dear Fellow Crusaders,

I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to serve as your Alumni Association President. At the heart of our mission is our **Three-Point Plan**, which continues to guide every effort we make on behalf of the Bergen Catholic community:

1. Support the School's Mission

We are committed to upholding the values and traditions that define Bergen Catholic — ensuring that future generations receive the same faith-based, high-quality Catholic education that shaped us into men of faith, wisdom, and integrity.

2. Strengthen Alumni Participation

With more than 12,000 powerhouse alumni worldwide, our brotherhood has never been stronger. Together, we celebrate our shared legacy and deepen the bonds that unite us as Crusaders for life.

3. Develop Alumni Mentorship and Career Support

It is both our duty and our privilege to guide the next generation through mentorship, professional development, and opportunities that extend far beyond the classroom.



R. Steve Estrellado '96

Building Momentum

This past year has been filled with tremendous milestones and meaningful connections. We began with a **powerhouse Hall of Fame celebration** honoring our best and brightest. Our association also hosted several camaraderie-building events, including **Cigar Night**, our **first-ever Yankees Day**, and the **Crusader Cup Golf Weekend** — each reinforcing the strength and spirit of our community. Looking ahead, we're excited for upcoming highlights such as the first annual Crusader Leadership Symposium led by Dylan Usatine '27, our **Memorial Mass**, **Spirit Men's Group**, **Annual Gala**, and **Careers4Crusaders** on January 8, 2026. We remain fully committed to supporting our current students while continuing to create memorable experiences for our alumni family.

A Heartfelt Thank You

A special thank-you to **Marge Quinn**, the matriarch of our alumni community, whose lifetime of dedication and service to Bergen Catholic has touched countless lives. We love you, Marge, and we are forever grateful for your unwavering devotion.

Class Chair Membership Program

We're excited to announce the launch of our Class Chair Membership Program, designed to support initiatives that directly benefit our students and alumni.

This year, your contributions will help Bergen Catholic acquire a **state-of-the-art communications and podcast platform**, enhancing how we share our mission and connect our global Crusader network.

I invite you to step up, get involved, and help us strengthen our alumni association — ensuring Bergen Catholic continues to stand as a **national powerhouse of Catholic. Gentlemen. Leaders.**

Deus Vult!

R. Steve Estrellado '96

President, Bergen Catholic Alumni Association

ALUMNI EVENTS

54TH ANNUAL BERGEN CATHOLIC GOLF CLASSIC

JUNE 9, 2025

We are grateful to all who participated in the 54th Annual Bergen Catholic Golf Classic on June 9th, held in memory of Br. Martin P. Burns at Hackensack Golf Club. Dave Monahan '80 was this year's honoree.



NETWORKING & CIGARS NIGHT **MAY 15, 2025**

The annual cigar event at Taverna on the Green was a wonderful evening filled with great food, friends, fun, and an energizing auction. Thank you to our dedicated Cigar Committee for making it all possible and to Brendon Scott '87 of Ferio Tego Cigars!



SARATOGA DAY AT THE RACES **AUGUST 10, 2025**

It's no surprise to find Bergen Catholic in the winner's circle, as the first-ever "BC Day at the Races" event at Saratoga proved to be a great success! Thank you to our BC alumni, families and friends who came out to enjoy a marvelous summer day together at one of the most historic sporting venues in America.



ALUMNI EVENTS Continued

BC ON THE ROAD **LBI EVENT • JULY 24, 2025**

Once again Bergen Catholic alumni, families and friends took in the beautiful sights down the Jersey Shore as they got together to celebrate BC at The Clubhouse at Shelter Harbor Marina in Beach Haven, NJ.



BC-YANKEES GAME DAY **SEPTEMBER 7, 2025**

Bergen Catholic alumni, family and friends enjoyed a special BC game day at Yankee Stadium, as the Crusaders watched the Yankees beat the Blue Jays from the Jim Beam suite! In addition to a fun day of baseball, food and drinks in a suite, every BC fan received a customized BC/Yankee hat as well. We hope to take more Crusaders out to the ballgame in the future!



2025 CRUSADER CUP **SEPTEMBER 8, 2025**

It was another great day to play golf and catch up with fellow Crusaders as Bergen Catholic alumni came together at Soldier Hill Golf Club in Emerson for a day of fun and networking.



PRE GAME RECEPTION BEFORE BC VS. EAST ST. LOUIS FOOTBALL GAME **AUGUST 28, 2025**

For the second consecutive year, BC hosted a pre game reception at Josie Kelly's Public House, in Somers Point, NJ as BC alumni and friends met up before watching their Crusaders produce a thrilling (22-21) comeback victory in a matchup featuring two nationally ranked teams in Ocean City, NJ!



JUPITER/WEST PALM BEACH, FLORIDA **OCTOBER 16, 2025**

Dave Monahan '80, graciously hosted a fantastic time in Florida that saw a round of golf for our groups, (where John Walsh '95 proceeded to sink a hole in one), followed by a fun afternoon of lunch, laughs and plenty of BC stories. The East Coast of Florida became Crusader Country!



ALUMNI NEWS AND NOTES



Owen Clarke

67 Owen Clarke is an avid antique automobile collector. He is also a showman, chauffeur, movie buff, walk-on actor and loves to see children smile. Cars have been part of Owen's life from an early age. His grandfather had a parking garage in New York City that had special rooms for chauffeurs with billiard tables. Owen's dad got his start at that parking garage and later owned a Ford dealership in Cliffside Park, NJ. Owen still owns and drives his favorite vehicle, a 1963 Lincoln Continental Convertible. This is the car Owen drove to his BC Prom in 1967 and then to his 50th reunion in 2007. Owen's happiest moment with vintage cars, thus far, happened when the Make A Wish Foundation called. A young boy recovering from cancer wanted to be the Grand Marshall of a parade. Owen was more than happy to provide his 1963 Lincoln for the occasion. "That was the thrill of a lifetime. Seeing the smile on that little guy's face was so incredibly rewarding," said Owen.

67 Fr. Bob Stagg celebrated 50 years as a priest on June 1st at the Church of the Presentation in Upper Saddle River where he has been Pastor for 19 years. Fr. Bob officially retired on June 30, 2025.



Rod Hennessey

68 Rod Hennessey celebrated with the 25th Virginia Independent School State Championship Broadwater Academy team at a recent Homecoming. Rod was the Coach.



Stephen Sammut and Dan Seely

68 Stephen Sammut and Dan Seely were recently reunited after far too many years. Together, they brought the Crusader 1968 yearbook to fruition and were the closest of friends during their high school years. After his studies at Catholic University, Dan spent his career in defense and intel-



Fr. Bob Stagg

ligence at such companies as TRW and Northrup Grumman where he was CTO. Stephen pursued a career in life sciences following his studies at Villanova and moved into health and biotech entrepreneurship following studies at the Wharton School where he continues to teach in the MBA program. Dan and Stephen recently spent a long weekend together at Stephen's home adjacent to Valley Forge National Historical Park, PA. They also attended a couple of events on the University of Penn campus and are planning some additional outings. Stephen makes several trips each year to Africa on global health projects with the Knights of Malta. Dan and his wife plan to accompany Stephen next year. In the meantime, Dan is moving to a new home. Dan will also be giving a guest lecture on quantum theory to Stephen's venture capital class at Wharton in January. They agreed after long conversations that the memories of BC were profound and impactful. The lessons (and examples) from the Brothers, the faculty, the coaches, and their fellow classmates prepared them for fruitful lives, especially after the enormous challenges they lived through in their final year at BC – 1968. Deus vult!



Dave Vermilyen and his daughter, Katie

68 Dave Vermilyen has a suggestion for retired dads. A special trip with a

ALUMNI NEWS AND NOTES Continued

daughter should be on your bucket list. I recently returned from a brief trip to Kilimanjaro, Tanzania with my 40 year old daughter, Katie, a mother of 4 young children. We were visiting a primary, residential school (Faraja) for children with physical disabilities that I have helped fund and oversee for 15 years. The children adored her as they sensed a professional mom. They followed her everywhere hand in hand. We also did a brief safari, her first, and it was such fun seeing her react as though she was seven years old.



Fr. Bob Stagg, Mike Haviland and Doug Sanchez

78 Mike Haviland recently played golf at North Jersey Country Club with **Fr. Bob Stagg '67** and **Doug Sanchez '81**.



Jeff Rutkowski

80 Jeff Rutkowski and fellow Crusader, **Mike Shea '97** were ordained permanent Deacons in the Archdiocese of Newark on May 18, 2025.

85 Tony DeBellis is the President of Anthony DeBellis Agency Inc. in Hackensack, NJ. Tony writes business, employee benefits, and trucking insurance solutions throughout NJ, NY and PA. www.debellis-ins.com

86 Ronald Rydell has relaunched his consulting practice, RLR Human Capital Consulting, which partners with individuals, schools, and organizations to develop leadership, career readiness, and emotional intelligence skills. With over 20 years of executive experience in Human Resources across Fortune 500 companies, Ronald now focuses on empowering the next generation of leaders and professionals through coaching, training, and strategic HR support. Learn more at www.rlrhumancapitalconsulting.com.

89 Frank Ballabio and his family have relocated to Texas from historical Irvington, NY.



Mike Shea



Andrew Napoli

89 Andrew Napoli completed his first year as a member of the Senior Executive Service (SES) at the Department of the Navy. Andy serves as Assistant Commander for Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) Public-Private Ventures (PPV), and real Estate for the Naval Facilities Engineering Systems Command (NAVFAC). In this role, he is the principal advisor and execution leader for real estate acquisition, management, and disposal for the Navy and Marine Corps, as well as for over 62,000 privatized family and unaccompanied housing units worldwide. Andy has just completed 30 years of combined Federal government service between the legislative and executive branches. He works out of the Washington Navy Yard so any alumni in the DC area should drop him a line!

95 David Kriso had an article published in *Trains Magazine* in June 2025. *Riding Amtrak's Palmetto* is a destination story about the Palmetto's ride to Savannah, GA.

Continued on next page

95 Al Spiegel successfully defended his dissertation at Rowan University, receiving his EdD in Educational Leadership. Al's dissertation was on Catholic school teachers' sources of self-efficacy in active shooter scenarios. Al is officially Dr. Albert J. Spiegel.



The LoCascio Family

00 Salvatore LoCascio checked in with us and reports that he and his wife, Alyssa, are expecting their fourth child, a girl, in early January 2026. Baby number four joins older siblings, Lorenzo, Gabriella and Gino.

00 Matt O'Daniels is working for Imagining Assoc. in Charlotte, NC.

05 Clayton Patton and his wife Alex, welcomed their second child, a son, Cooper John on September 27, 2025, weighing in at 7 pounds 9 ounces. Big sister, Cameron, is ready and willing to show him the ropes. Proud uncle is **Jordan Patton '11** and proud grandma is **Marge Quinn**, Director of Alumni Relations.

06 Patrick O'Daniels is working for the United States Air Force in Fort Gordon, GA.

07 Matthew Miller is a member of MENS CAVE, a service group of

St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church of Flower Mound, TX and helped produce "first day home" kits for families with babies in local NICUs.



The Guzik Family

08 David Guzik and his wife recently had a baby girl, Mika.

12 Patrick Maron has recently been named to the Hospice News Future Leaders 40 Under 40 – Hospice + Palliative Care Class of 2025 by WTWH Healthcare and Hospice News. This recognition celebrates emerging leaders shaping the future of the field. It's not just a personal achievement but a testament to the incredible teams at Villa Marie Claire and Holy Name, embodying compassionate care, innovation, and dignity daily. The honor strengthens the dedication to enhance compassionate end-of-life care, nurturing meaning-

ful connections, and advancing a more dignified, accessible hospice experience for all. Patrick hopes to sustain this momentum and continue to create a lasting impact.



Mike Quinn and his fiancé, Lauren Waldman

16 Mike Quinn recently became engaged.

21 Elijah Somerville recently graduated Magna Cum Laude from Rutgers University with a Bachelor's Degree in Criminal Justice and a Minor in Military Science. He will be commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the United States Air Force where he will serve as a Force Support Officer.

25 Harrison Kazimir and Christian Choi successfully completed Cadet Basic Training and officially joined the Corps of Cadets on Acceptance Day on August 16, 2025. The two Crusaders now join Doyee Kim '24 as part of the "Long Gray Line" of the United States Military Academy at West Point.



Harrison Kazimir and Christian Choi

ADVANCEMENT OFFICE

Dear Members of the Bergen Catholic Family,

In the heart of the Gospel, Christ kneels before His disciples, washes their feet, and calls them to “do as I have done for you.” This image of humble, self-giving service is the very foundation of servant leadership — a calling not to be served, but to serve; not to seek glory, but to give of oneself for the good of others.

At Bergen Catholic, this calling has been lived out for generations, inspired and shaped by the charisma of the Edmund Rice Christian Brothers.

Blessed Edmund Rice saw Christ in the faces of the poor, the marginalized, and the forgotten. He responded not with words alone, but with action — founding schools that would form young men of compassion, conscience, and courage.

Today, that same spirit permeates our classrooms, our playing fields, our service projects, and our alumni community. It is alive in the young Crusader who tutors a struggling classmate, in the teacher who stays late to mentor, and in the graduate who returns to guide the next generation.

This heritage calls each of us to stewardship — to offer our time, talent, and treasure in gratitude for what we have received, and in hope for what will yet be. Stewardship is more than generosity; it is discipleship in action. Every volunteer hour, every skill shared, every gift given is part of a greater mission — to ensure that Bergen Catholic remains a place where faith and excellence meet, where the Gospel is lived daily, and where young men are formed into leaders for life.

Your financial generosity is an essential expression of this stewardship, ensuring that our mission continues to flourish for current and future Crusaders.

Participation in the Crusader Fund directly supports every student by enhancing academic programs, faith formation, athletics, and extracurricular activities. We also invite you to join us at special events such as our Crusader Gala on November 20th — a night of celebration and community as we celebrate the exceptional faculty past and present, whose unwavering commitment enriches the minds, hearts, and souls of our students — and to take part in our 50/50 raffle, where every ticket purchased strengthens Bergen Catholic while offering a chance to win. Beyond these, there are many opportunities to contribute in ways that align with your passions and capacity. Each gift, no matter the size, is a powerful investment in the young men we are called to form, and in the legacy we are privileged to uphold.

As we embark on another year, we invite you to join us in this sacred work. Your involvement — whether by mentoring a student, serving on a committee, praying for our community, or making a financial gift — strengthens our mission and sustains our future. Together, we extend the legacy of the Christian Brothers, ensuring that the light of Christ continues to shine brightly through Bergen Catholic into the world.

May we each be inspired to lead by serving, to give without counting the cost, and to live the Gospel as joyfully as Blessed Edmund Rice. Thank you for all you have done, and all you will continue to do, to make Bergen Catholic a beacon of faith, brotherhood, and excellence.

Live Jesus in our Hearts, Forever!

Matthew Rosa '08

Vice President of Advancement



Matthew Rosa '08

Follow Us!





How to leave your legacy...

CRUSADER LEGACY SOCIETY

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

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

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

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

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

CRUSADER LEGACY SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP ROLL*

Thomas J. Alrutz '61	Thomas McCarthy '72
F. Ronald Biggs '65 (RIP)	H. Stephen Merry '68 (RIP)
Roger W. Breslin, Jr. (RIP) P'89	Daniel Minogue (RIP) P '81, '85
John M. Brunner '65	William S. Molloy '74 (RIP)
John Chambers '61, P '94	David M. Monahan, Jr. '80
Owen T. Clarke, Jr. '67	Mr. & Mrs. James W. O'Brien '62, P '87, '89
Robert B. Conway '60 (RIP)	Robert G. O'Connor '92
Francis X. Donlan '63	Alex D. Orlando '09
James J. Dowling '64	James C. Petrolino '62
Robert F. Fortsch '73	Artie Prior '59
Deirdre Fortune, Friend	Susan and Joseph Raich '65
Thomas J. Furlong, Jr. '80 (RIP)	Robert J. Rapport '69, P '06
Mr. and Mrs. Kevin T. Gaynor '65	Dennis M. Sigrist '82 (RIP)
Carl G. Haas P '87	Rev. Msgr. Robert H. Slipe '65 (RIP)
Rev. Msgr. Robert J. Harrington '62 (RIP)	Ralph J. Spohn '61, P '88
Russ M. Hartmann '60 (RIP)	Frank J. Sposato '69 (RIP)
Michael J. Haviland '78, P '06, '09	Mr. & Mrs. Brian A. Tramontozzi '90
Gregory P. Heidelberg '81 (RIP)	Brendan P. Twomey '91, P'25, '28
Jack C. Howley '79	John A. Uzzi '63
Michael James Jordan '61 (RIP)	John A. Walsh '95
Stephen Koll '69	Mr. Stephen E. Warwick '60
Mr. & Mrs. John Lowe (RIP) P '69	Mr. & Mrs. James Whelan, Parents
Jean E. Lowe & John Lowe, Jr. '69	Richard Wisch '62 (RIP)
Douglas J. Lundell '64	Kurt E. Zecchin '68 (RIP)
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Mady P '05	Joseph A. Zodl '66
Peter Manzetti, Jr. '78	Anthony M. Zupcic '66
Mr. & Mrs. Gerard J. Maughan P '07, '10	

*Represents all self-reported planned gifts through publication date

IN MEMORIAM

Deceased Alumni

Br. John H. "Jack" Mostyn '59

Br. Patrick J. "Sean" Moffett '59

Thomas A. Brown '60

Peter A. Costanza '60
Brother of Ed '65

Thomas Godfrey '60
Brother of Robert '67

Robert D. Marciani '60

Lester W. Alberque '61

Joseph Morrison '61

Gregory F. Burde '64

James F. Wenthe '64

Robert P. Schaffner '65
Brother of Tim '67

William H. Herbert '67

Joseph M. Orzech '67

Dominic "Nic" Cols '72

Michael J. Fury '72
Brother of Mark '77

John E. Curry '73
Brother of Thomas '70 & Michael '76

Martin G. Connolly '74
Brother of Jack '67

Robert Astarita '75

Leroy J. Flynn '75

Stephen E. McNally '75

Kevin D. Flood '77
*Brother of Keith '79 (RIP), Joseph '81 &
Brother-in-Law of Stephen Neeson '82*

Francis Neeson '77
Brother of Stephen '82

Eugene O' Reilly '79
Brother of Brian '80 & John '83

Vincent F. O'Rourke '97
*Brother of David '91, Nephew of Paul '67,
& Uncle of Ethan '24*

Wayne T. Ko '99
Brother of Haynes '00

Michael A. Garone '00
Brother of Greg '02

Marc Lamporello '00
Brother of Adam '93

Christophe K. Lafontant '01

Charles M. Sgro '10
Brother of Vincent '00

Never Forgotten

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

Deceased Family and Friends

Helen Ball

*Mother of Thomas '73, William '74,
Robert '77, Richard '86 &
Grandmother of Chris Rickey '14*

Alan Bronner

Brother of John '60 & Uncle of Matthew '92

MaryAnne Cronin

*Mother of Brian '84, Michael '95 &
Grandmother of Andrew '22*

Kristine DeRubertis

Mother of Andrew '17 & Liam '21

Stefano DeSteno

Father of Dominick '95 & Uncle of Marc '88

Yvonne Driscoll

Mother of John '84 & William '88

Donal Duff

Father of Brendan '16

John Falcone

*Father of John '96 & Grandfather of
Jack '27 & Luke '29*

Robert Farrell

Father of Robert '14

Rickey Ferriola

*Father of Rickey '04 &
BC Maintenance Staff*

W. James FitzPatrick

Father of Dan '86 & Andrew '94

Frank Giordano

*Grandfather of Constantine Rossakis '23
& Alexander Rossakis '28*

Sandra Hines

*Sister of Robert '92, Sister-in-Law
of Chris Mendler '86 &
Aunt of Chris Mendler '18*

Fadil & Zyrafte Idrizi

*Parents of Korab '16, Shqipron '17 &
Gente '25*

Mary Kent

Mother of Paul '84

Stacia Kleinknecht

Sister of William '78

James Kurpick

Father of Dan, Director of Facilities

John Landrigan

Son of Bill '72

Joanne Larimer

Sister of Regis Goetz '73

Mae Lester

Mother of Chuck '80 & Chris '82

Russell Lipari

Father of Anthony '79

Robert Luckow

Uncle of Michael '83 (RIP)

Grisel Martinez

Mother of Tyler Ortiz '28

Edward McGrath

*Father-in-law of Tom Finnegan '74,
Grandfather of Conor Finnegan '10,
Riley Finnegan '12, Aidan Finnegan '14
& Miles Finnegan '16*

Marylou Murphy

Wife of Frank '61

Anthony Pluhar

*Father-in-Law of Brian Langan '83 &
Grandfather of John '18*

Manuel Rodriguez

Step-Father of Joe Muraglia, BC Faculty

Anthony Romano

Father of Vincent '00

V. Timothy Rooney

Father of Michael '94

Frank Samarro

Father of Frank '85 & Jonathan '89

Kenneth Schott

Grandfather of Carter '28

John A. Simon

*Father of James '84 & Cousin of
Owen Clarke '67*

Br. J. Gennaro Sullo, C.F.C.

Former BC Faculty, Principal & President

Robert Ulshoefer

*Father of Michael '90 &
Grandfather of Sean '17 & Daniel '19*

Eugen Van Biert

Father of Eugene '97

Carol Viceconte

Mother of James '81, Peter '83 & Chris '90

William Zeis

*Grandfather of Billy McKee '17 &
Jack McKee '19*

Bergen Catholic High School

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MISSION STATEMENTS

Bergen Catholic High School

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

Office of Advancement

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



**BERGEN CATHOLIC
HIGH SCHOOL**
CATHOLIC. GENTLEMEN. LEADERS.