

THE GOOD NEWS

FROM ALUMS & FRIENDS & FAMILIES

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

JOIN US FOR REUNION SUNDAY!

Sunday, April 28

11:15 a.m. Mass and reception at Community of Saints Regional Catholic School, 335 Hurley St. East, West St. Paul.

See page 8 for details.

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Class of '69 — It's Your 50-Year Reunion Party

These first graders are future members of St. Matt's graduating class of '69. On April 27, this group will be getting together for their first-ever class reunion — and it's a big one! If this is your class, you don't want to miss out — see page 2 for details.

Votel Family Credits Parents for Success

Editor's note: We always like to celebrate the accomplishments of alums, and few rival those of Joseph Votel '72, a four-star general who holds one of the highest positions in the United States Army (see page 5). Joe is one of nine Votel children who attended St. Matthew's School from the mid 1950s–70s. The siblings I spoke with give credit to parents who shared their exceptional faith, bedrock values, and core commitment to family.

In 1939, Hank Votel and Pat Lynch were married at St. Michael's Church. It was Pat's home parish. She'd been orphaned as a child and adopted by the Lynch family who owned a big house on Sidney Street. She and her brother Bill, also adopted, grew up going to church at St. Michael's, graduated from St. Michael's School and later, from Humboldt High School.

While Pat was from the West Side, Hank grew up in the Frogtown neighborhood of St. Paul, attending grade school at St. Agnes. After graduating from Cretin High School he went on to St. Thomas College, but things changed his freshman year when his father died suddenly. It was the Great Depression and Hank was the oldest of six children. He quit school and got a job to support his mother and younger siblings.

At the time of his marriage to Pat, Hank had a good job with a trucking company, which required the young couple to live in Rice Lake, Wisconsin, for several years. By 1950 they moved

Continued on page 4



MESSAGE FROM **father steve**

Dear Alums, Friends and Families of Community of Saints,

Community of Saints Regional Catholic School is built upon the relationships of individuals and families, teachers and administrators, neighborhood business people, service organizations, and churches.

In one way or another each has an investment in the education of neighborhood students — these students are ours.

The spring of the year is alum reunion time; an opportunity for classmates of yesteryear to reconnect with each other. It is also a time for alums to see the development and growth that has taken place at their alma mater.

So much has changed since 1969, and so much more has stayed the same. The “offspring” of the schools of St. Matthew, St. Michael, St. John Vianney, and Our Lady of Guadalupe — Community of Saint Regional Catholic School — continues to live and pass on those values that have always been at the heart of our schools.

The same Catholic expression of love of God and neighbor suffuses the student life of today. Students come to see themselves as “the good Samaritan on the banks of the Mississippi.”

High-quality academic programming and performance marks the students of today as it did the students of yesterday. Our students succeed and contribute to their family, church, and community as their predecessors do.

Strong and committed families always were and still are the backbone of COS (refer to the article on the Votel family); and we do all we can to strengthen families.

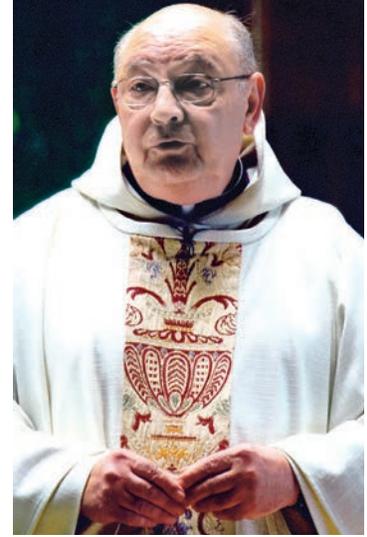
I fondly remember the time I spent with Hank Votel as he was dying. He expressed great pride in and gratitude for the opportunities that St. Matthew’s offered himself and Pat. He was especially grateful for the educational opportunity each of his children had at Saint Matthew’s School.

COS is not only located within a neighborhood, COS is a vital and active contributing member of a neighborhood community.

You, my friends, are integral to this story. You make it all happen. Without your generosity many families would not be able to provide this education for their children. You are Community of Saints. Give us a call, stop in to see us, and see your investment in action and paying dividends.

I am deeply grateful to you, and I, as well as students and faculty, keep you in prayer at the altar regularly.

With gratitude,
Father Stephen Adrian, Pastor, Community of Saints



ST. MATT’S CLASS OF 1969

50th Reunion Celebration!

SATURDAY, APRIL 27

4:15 p.m. Mass, School Tour & Dinner | St. Matthew’s Church

Jim Letourneau ‘69 is helping to organize plans for the first ever reunion for his class. “That was a great group of kids I went to grade school with,” Jim said. “I don’t know why we’ve never had a reunion before, but all the folks I’ve talked to are really excited.” Attendees are invited to 4:15 p.m. Mass at St. Matthew’s. Following the service, the school building will be open for a tour, and there will be a gathering, dinner, and visiting with old friends in St. Matt’s Social Hall. Plans are in the works for members of the Class of 1970 to serve at the event.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

Jim Letourneau – 651-247-4058

Visit us on Facebook @ St. Matthews School — Class of 1969

CLASS OF ‘69 REUNION COMMITTEE: Jim Letourneau, Kathy Littfin, Mark Preuss, Denice (Roering) Marruffo, Barb (Plante) Ludin, Pat Bryant, and Tim Quinlan.

ONE OF JIM’S FAVORITE MEMORIES:

“When you were on school patrol, you’d try to get assigned the corner by church. We always had morning Mass before school and the school patrol at that corner was usually the last ones to go into church. We’d be the ones to ring the church bell. If you were light enough, you could ride the church bell ropes by just hanging on.”

CAN YOU HELP US
FIND A FEW
‘69 ALUMS?

Any tips are welcome.
See page 7 for the
names of missing
classmates.



Jim Letourneau
in 7th grade.

COS Partners With University of Notre Dame Alliance for Catholic Education

Community of Saints is one of five schools in the Twin Cities chosen to work with the University of Notre Dame's Higher Powered Learning Program offered through the Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE). The three-year program includes a grant for professional development, on-site training for teachers, and funding for new technologies, including Chromebooks for students. The school was also recognized for increasing its enrollment by 25% over the last three years, for serving a diverse student population, and for the success of its tuition assistance program.



PHOTOS BY PEG LINDLOF

Votel Family Story,

continued from page 1

back to the West Side with four young children: Dick was seven years old, Terry was five, Mike was three, and Mark was just a baby.

The older boys went to St. Matthew's School and the parish became a big part of family life. "Catholic faith was important to our parents and they instilled that faith in us," explained their oldest son, Dick. "I remember Dad prayed over every meal. He didn't make a big deal of it, but it's little things like that stick with you."

Pat volunteered with St. Matthew's Altar and Rosary Society, eventually serving as President. The family provided generous financial support as well. "In the old days in parishes like St. Matthew's, they published a list that showed how much everyone contributed," Dick recalled. "My dad's name was always near the top. I was proud of that. He taught us you needed to contribute to things that are important to you."

Pat was a homemaker who had a way of making everyday life feel special. "Family was really important to her," Dick remembered fondly. "We always ate dinner together on Sundays, and all the holidays were a big deal. She'd put decorations everywhere. At Christmas time, if you sat in one place too long, you'd get decorated."

By 1960, Hank and Pat had two more boys, Dan and Joe, for a total of six sons. By then the couple was in their 40s, an age when many parents might look forward to an empty nest; but Hank and Pat had other ideas.

After talking about it with their sons, some of whom were now in college, the family proceeded to adopt three girls from Korea. Kim in 1964, Ann in 1965, and Maria in 1968. The girls ranged in age from three to five when they arrived, and none of them spoke English at first. "It was a pretty unique situation for that time," Dick conceded. "In fact, it took a special act of Congress to adopt Maria. Back then families couldn't adopt more than two foreign children, but that didn't stop my parents."

Ann describes an idyllic childhood. "Mom and Dad would pack up the station wagon and we'd spend summers at the lake in Pine City. We thought we were the cool city girls," she laughed. "I thought everybody had parents like we did. Dad was a hard-working man and Mom was always teaching us things — like how to throw a fun party; when you visit friends, don't go empty handed; and help out — don't wait for people to ask."

For a few years in the 1960s, the family lived near St. Luke's parish, where the younger children went to



Hank and Pat Votel at their wedding in 1939. Above, the portrait they took for their 50th wedding anniversary.



ABOVE:
Votel boys (left to right): Dick, Mark, Mike, and Terry.



RIGHT:
Votel girls (left to right): Kim, Maria, and Ann.

school, but by the time Joe was in fourth grade Hank and Pat once again returned to the West Side. The four youngest Votel children all went on to graduate from St. Matthew's. From there, Kim and Ann went to Brady High School, Maria graduated from Derham Hall, and, in keeping with tradition, Joe graduated from Cretin.

In the late 1980s Pat began showing signs of the disease that would consume her. "It happened so quickly," Ann said as she described the forgetfulness and confusion that beset her mother in the early stages of Alzheimer's. Pat declined rapidly to the point where she could no longer leave her bed.

For ten years Hank cared for his wife at home with help from his children. Pat died in 1998. Not long afterward, Hank was diagnosed with double pneumonia and his children feared they'd lose him, too. "His heart was broken. He was ready to give up," Ann said. "I told him, 'We just buried Mom, now you want to go, too?'" He finally snapped out of it."



Votel family at St. Matthew's Church for Joe's promotion to Brigadier General in 2004. (Left to right) 1st row: Henry, Maria, Ann, and Kim. 2nd row: Dick, Dan, Joe, Terry, Mark, and Mike.



ABOVE: Recent gathering of the Votel brothers. Seated (left to right): Joe, Dr. Tom Votel (Uncle), Mark, Dick, and Mike. Standing (left to right): Terry and Dan.



LEFT: Votel sisters (left to right): Kim, Ann, and Maria.

Hank recovered and in 2004, he had a front-row seat for his youngest son's promotion to Army Brigadier General. By then, Hank had cancer and wasn't well enough to make the trip to MacDill Air Force Base in Florida as he'd done for past promotions. But Joe wanted his father present, so he arranged for a private ceremony to be held at St. Matthew's Church. Later that same year, Hank passed away. Like his wife, he died at home, surrounded by family.

Dick recalled how his dad made a point to talk with each of his children before he died. "He summarized our lives and told us nice things," Dick reflected. "To this day, all nine of us get along. That doesn't happen by accident."

Ann shares that feeling. "When people ask why my name is Votel I love explaining that I was adopted," she said. "My parents — they were a ten."



Joe and Michele began dating in high school when they met while working at Little Sisters of the Poor. (Each of Joe's sisters also worked at the nursing home during high school.) The couple are shown here with their two sons: Scott (far left) and Nick.

Commander General Joseph Votel '72

After St. Matthew's and Cretin High School, Joe Votel attended West Point, the United States Military Academy. He was commissioned in 1980 and climbed steadily to the rank of four-star general. In 2016, President Obama appointed him Commander of U.S. Central Command, with an area of responsibility that includes West Asia, parts of North Africa, and Central Asia. He is currently stationed at MacDill Air Force Base in Florida but is more likely to be on the move, traveling to geopolitical hotspots such as Egypt and Yemen, Syria and Iraq, and Afghanistan and Pakistan.



ABOVE: In 2018, General Votel was honored during the Vikings game.

LEFT: He frequently travels to countries in Asia and the Middle East.

St. Matthew Class of 1969



Row 1 | Thomas Maher, Jim Letourneau, Michael Gubash, David Scherbel, Charles Karas, Daniel Riehle, Msgr. Cecka, Mike Vesey, Tom Lonning, Vincent Langevin, Benjamin Bagley, Mike Tackaberry, James Del Vecchio

Row 2 | Bob Tonda (*Deceased*), Bill Bengston, Michael Casalenda, Don Einberger, Jean (Gangl) Lecher, Barbara (Hager) Curley, Mary Todora, Beverly (Kelzer) Kirk, Barbara (Plante) Ludin, Peggy (O'Brien) Endres, Geraldine (Johnson) Padellford, Denice (Roering) Marruffo, Peter Schwartz, Jim Hafiz (*Deceased*), Tony Larson, Richard Bauer

Row 3 | Mary Vasterling, Linda (Piringer) Niederkorn, Laureen (Sieber) Finley, Jeanne Stoven, Patricia (Cassidy) Schleichert, Susan (Dalton) Longworth, Virginia Morin, Cynthia (Wenzel) Steinhoff, Kathleen Littfin, Chris Pavlak (*Deceased*), Theresa Schmidt, Jeanine (Moe) Elizondo, Martha Denysiuk, Kathy (Dwuznik) Ward, Marcella (Walker) Peterson, Debra Penner (*Deceased*), Debra Prokop, Carleen Berg



Row 4 | Timothy Quinlan, Douglas Kaiser, Russell Duncanson, Robert Fischbach, Joseph Wilmes, Bill Leko, Matthew Isaac, Jeffrey Schwartz, David Bellows, Bob Heining, Tim Regan, Mark Preuss, Steve Tabor, Mike Poemann, David Krull, Patrick Costello

Row 5 | Lynn (Nehring) Johnson, Mary (Cruz) Gooch, Nancy Deustermann, Roxanne (Hauck) Foss, Linda (Schwab) Winn, Patricia (Meyer) Kolb, Michelle (Diloia) Ritacco, Karolyn Anderson, Patricia Brysky, Constance (Bossart) Ruesch (Deceased), Laura (Rowan) Lafaver, Judith (Blissenbach) Cocchiarella, Cathy Dalzell (Deceased), Vicki Argo, Angela Adams (Deceased), Valorie (Huey) Nelson, Diane (Bateman) Steiner, Diane (Grant) Halligan, Anne (Stevens) Silver

Not Pictured | Dave Leyde, Tom Milan

ST. MATTHEW
CLASS OF 1969

**Help Us Find
These Missing
Alumni**

Vicki Argo
Richard Bauer
Carleen Berg
Nancy Deustermann
Tony Larson
Thomas Maher
Virginia Morin

St. Michael Class of 1969



ST. MICHAEL CLASS OF 1969

Help Us Find These Missing Alumni

Nancy Busse
 JoAnne Carroll
 Don Coury
 Roxanne Dyczkowski
 Russell Emeott
 Linda Flaspeter
 Kristine Koppy
 Mark Laverty
 Maria Moran
 Tom Murray
 Jean Novak
 Lynn Olchefske
 Debby Pepin
 David Rowe
 Joe Snyder
 Linda Swanson
 Mary Ellen Sweeney
 Patty Zecha

Row 1 | Linda Swanson, Barb Pietruszewski, Debby Pepin, Bob Finlayson, Jim Blaha, Mark Deziel, Nancy Busse, Josephine Winzig, Mary Dierberger

Row 2 | Geoff Saign, Gene Capistrant, Kenny Mauer, David Houle, Linda Flaspeter, Roxanne Dyczkowski, Joe Snyder, Don Coury, Denise Seidl, Mary Mansur, Craig Saign, Mark Laverty, Robert Bach, Tom Jones

Row 3 | Maria Moran, Lori Huntress, Jean Novak, Dave Rowe, Jim Riebe, Margie McGuire, Carol Ecker, Colleen Sullivan, Kristine Koppy, Tom Murray, Roxanne Smith, JoAnne Carroll, Patsy Quigley

Row 4 | Glen Miller, Joe Palermo, Nancy Maher, Kurt Seidl, Mary Ellen Sweeney, Mary Ann Roeller, Patty Zecha, Diane Morgenstern, Jim Kluck, Lynn Olchefske, Doug Bisser, Russell Emeott

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Please Join Us for Reunion Sunday on April 28

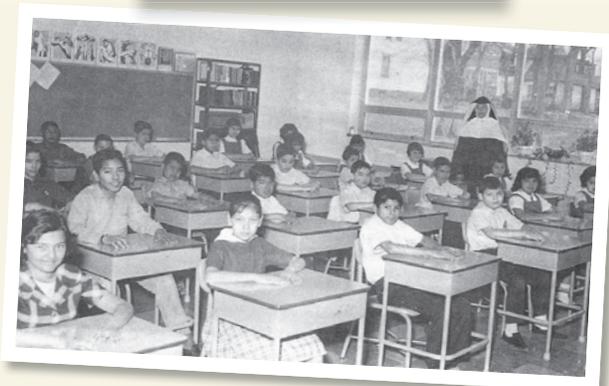
Connect with Old Friends and Share Good Memories

WHO: Alums of the schools of St. Matthew, St. Michael, St. John Vianney, and Our Lady of Guadalupe. Special invite to alums who graduated in years ending in a 4 or 9.

WHEN: 11:15 a.m. Mass with Fr. Steve Adrian presiding

WHERE: Community of Saints Chapel, 335 Hurley St. East, West St. Paul

RSVP: To join us for refreshments, call Doug Lieser at 651-457-2510 x119 or email alums@communityofsaints.org.



Classroom at Our Lady of Guadalupe's school in 1963.

St. John Vianney Class of 1969



Row 1 | Matt Patterson, Greg Stelzner, Jeffrey Lawrence, Fr. Richard Wolter, Fr. Zweber, John Smolik, Dennis Ryan, Stephen Rademacher

Row 2 | Sharon Campbell, Lynn Wituski, Ann Morbacher, Debbie Kelly, Cheryl Christensen, Carol Curry, Mary Mikatowski, Peggy White, Jane Hall, Kathy Guindon

Row 3 | Pat Brenna, Peggy Joyce, Susie Mikatowski, Barb Bauer, Ann Dearing, Jill King, Debbie Gould, Sandy Krueger, Debbie Warzecha, Polly Benjamin

Row 4 | John Stewart, Steven Bartholomew, Pat Hall, Richard Ciupik, Scott Dahms, Joe Fahey, Wayne Krueger, Roger Elmore, Roger Novotny

Marge Milner Will Retire After Teaching for 30 Years

Help Us Honor Her Lifetime Contribution to Catholic Education

ST. JOHN VIANNEY CHURCH

SUNDAY, MAY 19 — 10:30 A.M. MASS FOLLOWED BY A RECEPTION

It won't be easy, but it's time to say goodbye. Marge will retire at the end of this school year. She has been the fifth grade teacher at Community of Saints since the school opened seven years ago. As the school's most experienced faculty member, she has generously mentored other teachers and been equally eager to learn from them.

Before COS, Marge taught fourth grade for 22 years at St. John Vianney (SJV). As a lifelong member of SJV parish, she attended the parish school and credits her third grade teacher, Sr. Denise, for sparking her own desire to become a teacher.

Marge has always stood out for her unfailing kindness, energy, and positivity. She is known for the loving atmosphere she creates in her classroom and is one of those teachers all the students look forward to having, and remember long after they've moved on. We will miss her.



Remembering St. Michael's School Gerald Kegler 1950-1959

When my parents moved to St. Paul in the 1930s they found work and housing relatively near Dad's relatives on the West Side. As Germans, they would have ordinarily been drawn to St. Matthew's parish; but Dad's French Aunt Christine had a run-in with the pastor there and moved to nearby St. Michael's parish, even though it was an "Irish" parish. So when my parents, Andy and Clara arrived, they joined St. Michael's.



Jerry Kegler

Fr. John O'Neill

I remember, of course, kindly "Fr. John" O'Neill and his heavy, one leg, limp walk. His hallmark sermon was on Trinity Sunday when he preached about the Trinity using the Irish shamrock to illustrate the three in one (Father, Son and Holy Spirit). Every year he would make a big production of announcing a day off from school on the feast of St. Joseph in honor of the Sisters of St. Joseph who taught us. His constant call of parish envelope use was "one hour's wage per week."



Fr. John O'Neill addresses a classroom of students.

The Old Church and School

- Fr. John had a habit of walking up and down the aisles, hands clasped behind his back, before Mass, greeting people. More than once he stopped in the aisle near Dad, calling him by name and saying "Andrew — first Apostle called."
- We always sat in the same pew and the woman in front of us wore a muskrat stole with the rat eyes staring at us.
- I remember roller skating with clamp-ons in the old church basement.



St. Michael's original campus.

The New School

- We had an extra-long Christmas vacation during fourth grade because the new school "on the hill" was not quite ready for students.
- How different it felt taking the bus to the new school after being used to walking to the old school.
- Playing "Pump Pump Pullaway" and "King of the Hill" in schoolyard snow banks.
- Everlasting all season mini-football on Hurley Street during recess.
- In fifth grade, Sr. Hiltrude was teacher and altar boy drill sergeant "ad deum qui laetificat juventutem meum." "Confiteor deo omnipotente." "Credo in unum deum."



Principal Sr. Joseph Carmel (center) used her old-fashioned hand bell to call us in for class at the old school.



Sr. Hiltrude's fifth grade students in their new school in 1956.

Sports

- Fr. Larkin, who could kick a football sky-high.
- Basketball in narrow gym — Church space was to be proper gym when new church was to be built.
- Fr. Lavan, Herm Marthaler, who were the football, baseball, and basketball coaches
- Walking home in all kinds of weather after sports practice.



Jerry played football and basketball for St. Mike's.

Remembering St. Matthew's School

Mark Votel 1951-1958

I attended St. Matthew's from 1st to 6th grades. I left St. Matthew's in 1958 when my family moved. I missed all of the friends that I had made over those years; a couple of them ended up being life-long friends. It was an adjustment to start over at a different school as the 'new kid' in 7th grade. Here are a few memories from my days at St. Matthew's.



Mark Votel

I remember really enjoying the annual 'fun-fests' held near the end of the school year. There were lots of treats, games, and other activities.



When I was in 5th grade, my mother somehow made arrangements that I would play my banjo before the class. I was very embarrassed, but survived. I'll never forget that one of the songs I played was "Oh Susanna." I think I played it "with my banjo on my knee" and can never listen to it the same way as I did before my performance.

In 6th grade, we were studying fractions and I was physically "inverted" before the class because I forgot to "invert and multiply when dividing fractions;" it was quite embarrassing.

I remember marching out of the school at the end of the day to John Philip Sousa's "greatest hits."



I was feeling sick one day in class and asked the teacher if I could leave. Since it was close to the final bell, she told me to wait. Unfortunately, a classmate 'paid the price' for her decision when I threw up on him.

I was an altar boy at St. Matthew's Church. I can still remember walking to church in the dark to serve at the 6:00 a.m. Mass. I also remember the fun times at the altar boy picnics.

St. Matthew's playground across the street in the old rock quarry was great. There were many enthusiastic ring toss games played there. I had my first fistfight there with a classmate (really just kind of a shoving match).

The parking lot by the 'old' convent was also used as a playground in the winter. There was some kind of a pump handle there and a 'right of passage' dare for the boys was to lick it in the cold weather (like in the movie, "A Christmas Story"). It was not a pleasant experience.

I was a Boy Scout in the St. Matthew's Troop. I remember that at one of the PTA meetings, the troop was demonstrating the drowning life-saving technique in the gym. The kid who was supposed to be the victim was absent that day, and I was forcefully "volunteered" to do it. I did not have a swimsuit on under my pants (as required for the victim) and had the pleasure of being "rescued" in my 'you know whats.'

In those years, there were also high school students at St. Matthew's; I didn't see them often, but always thought I'll never get that old.



Even though I did not graduate from St. Matthew's, I attended the 35th reunion after meeting some class members and receiving an invitation to join them. We shared a lot of good memories.

**COMMUNITY OF SAINTS
REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

335 Hurley St. E.
West St. Paul, MN 55118-1605

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
TWIN CITIES, MN
PERMIT NO. 3673

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quarterly by



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Celebrate Mass with Archbishop Hebda

THURSDAY, APRIL 4 | 9:10 AM

COMMUNITY OF SAINTS REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL
335 Hurley St. E., West St. Paul

Save the date



**MASS WITH
ARCHBISHOP HEBDA
AT COS**

This event is rescheduled from January when schools were closed due to weather.

Alums, friends, and families are invited to join COS students for school Mass when Archbishop Bernard Hebda will preside. A reception will follow and tours of the school will be available.

For more information, or to let us know you'll be attending, please contact Doug Lieser at [651-457-2510](tel:651-457-2510) or by email at DLieser@communityofsaints.org.