

the Good news

FROM ALUMS & FRIENDS & FAMILIES

SUMMER 2024

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

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COS 8th Grade Class of '24

BACK ROW (left to right): Pablo Martinez Hernandez, Marco Silva, Jorge España, Simon Cortez-Orme, Connor Myran, Alonzo Doby, Jayden Millan-Matos, Bitania Meheretia

FRONT ROW (left to right): Javier VanDyke, Alberto Alaniz-Sevilla, Barrett Kowal, Brigitte Serrano, Selena Ortiz-Bell, Elayna Anderson, GeorgiaBella Gorr, Nina Rodriguez, Xitlaly Lara, Camilla Irlbeck, Aioki Bostwick

Congratulations Graduates!

This graduation season, we spoke with two of our newest alums, Alonzo Doby and Selena Ortiz-Bell, both members of COS Class of '24. They share their plans for high school and reflect on how COS prepared them for their next steps (see their stories below.) We also talked to three alums from the class of '20 as they prepared to graduate from high school. They left COS at the height of the pandemic which created distinct challenges for them as freshmen at new schools. Learn how they overcame obstacles to find their unique paths forward. See their stories on pp 4-5.

Alonzo Doby — Saint Thomas Academy Awarded Flaherty Family Scholarship

When Alonzo told his mom he wanted to go to Saint Thomas Academy (STA), she was surprised. She didn't think he'd be interested in a military school that emphasized discipline as a core principle, but that was actually one of the things that appealed to him. He also appreciated STA's track record for helping students get into good colleges.

To attend STA, Alonzo knew he would need to qualify for the Flaherty Family Scholarship which would cover most of the cost of tuition at STA for all four years.

— Continued on page 3

Selena Ortiz-Bell — Visitation School

Selena Ortiz-Bell, who's been at COS since preschool, chose Visitation for high school after shadowing her good friend and COS alum, May Knorr, who just completed her freshman year there. "I liked the classes and everyone seemed really welcoming," Selena explained.

A welcoming environment is important to Selena who has a reputation for being friendly to visitors and likes to help new students feel at home. "Whenever I see somebody new, I want to welcome them as soon as I can."

— Continued on page 3

MESSAGE FROM **father steve**

Dear Alums, Friends, and Families of COS,

On March 10th I was admitted to United Hospital, and after CT scans, MRIs, x-rays, blood draws, and other poking and prodding, I was diagnosed with stage-four lung cancer. Since then, I have begun chemotherapy and radiation treatment. So far, it's going as well as could be expected.

A side effect of the cancer is that I have lost my voice. Without a voice I am not able to fulfill my role as Canonical Administrator of Community of Saints.

I am pleased to announce that Father Paul Treacy, Pastor of the Church of the Assumption, has now also been appointed to be the new Canonical Administrator at Community of Saints. Father Paul is not new to COS. He is currently serving on the school's Board of Directors and is an active member of the school's finance and development committees. Assumption Parish has been very generous in support of Community of Saints under the leadership of Father Paul and Father John Malone.

I will continue to be active in supporting the work of COS through Alums & Friends & Families (A&F&F). Together we have worked to raise the funds to pay for Catholic education of students from families with modest incomes. Parents of these children never thought a Catholic school was within reach for their family. They simply did not believe they could afford it.

At Community of Saints no child will ever be turned away for financial reasons. Each family does what they can to support their student's tuition; then you and I step in. We work to fill the gap — we provide what is needed. There's a metaphor to describe our role: we are load-bearing members.

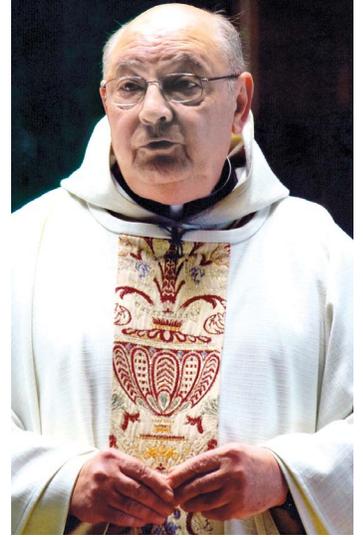
Load-bearing describes a structural element designed to support its own load in addition to the weight of other structural and non-structural elements. The weight of this load is carried down to the foundations of the building.

Come, and together we can open the door to Catholic education for even more families who thought it was out of reach.

Whatever we hope for tomorrow is found within the COS students of today.

Pray for me, as I pray for you.

Father Steve Adrian
Stephen the Silent



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Donations received BY JUNE 30
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generosity of Roy Ferber '59 and
the family of Tom McKeown.

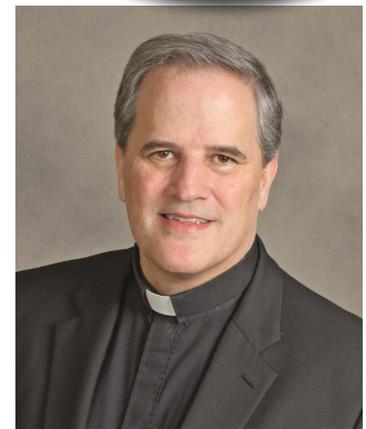
**Please use the enclosed envelope
or donate online at**
www.communityofsaints.org/give

Meet Father Paul Treacy New Canonical Administrator at COS

Father Paul Treacy has been the pastor at Church of the Assumption since 2017 and has been a member of the COS school board for the past two years. Father Paul has a deep commitment to the school's mission and vision, and he is actively engaged in moving our school forward.

Father Paul, the youngest of 10 kids, is a graduate of Hill-Murray High School and the University of St. Thomas. After college he worked in the insurance industry for 12 years prior to entering the seminary in 2000. Following his ordination in 2006, he served at several parishes, including St. Stephen's in Anoka, Our Lady of Peace in South Minneapolis, and as pastor at St. Vincent de Paul in Brooklyn Park.

We are fortunate to have Father Paul continue to be a part of the COS community in this new and meaningful way.



Father Paul Treacy

ALONZO DOBY, continued from page 1

While his mom supported his efforts, she limited her role to offering encouragement. "It says in the application Alonzo needs to take the reins," said Liz Doby. "We set him up with gmail and said here's the info, be yourself."

For the first step Alonzo had to answer a series of essay questions. Liz chose not to review his responses for fear she'd be tempted to make changes, but when his submission qualified him for an in-person interview, Liz read what he wrote and was impressed. "He was very honest," she said. "He shared that when he was younger, he started getting into trouble at school. At that time, we told him he had a choice to make about which path to follow and he talked about how he made his choice and has stuck to it."

Alonzo is his parents' oldest child and has four younger siblings ages 12 years to four months old. "My mom likes to remind me that the youngers are always watching," said Alonzo. "They're going to copy what I do, so I have to try and be a really good big brother at home."

When Alonzo first came to COS as a 5th grader during the pandemic, he admits his expectations weren't very high. "I thought it would be like every other school where you're the new kid and nobody's going to talk to you," Alonzo said. "But it wasn't like that — all the kids talked to me."

Alonzo's favorite classes are social studies and English Language Arts (ELA). "I love to read," he said. Middle school teacher John Capistrant has taught Alonzo for the past three years and describes him as a hard worker and considerate leader. "He's also a talented soccer player who regularly gets a game going at recess that's very inclusive," said Capistrant. "He welcomes anyone who wants to play."

When he's at STA, Alonzo plans to play soccer and is thinking about the debate team. "I like to argue," he said with a laugh. While he's looking forward to next year, he's a little wistful about leaving COS. "For a long time, I couldn't wait until high school, and now I don't want to leave because I'm going to miss so many of my friends here. I know it's going to be a very big transition."



Alonzo Doby '24

SELENA ORTIZ-BELL, continued from page 1

Selena's mom said COS was the perfect fit for her daughter, and not just because they live right around the corner. "At COS, everybody knew Selena," said Christina Ortiz. "She'd be walking down the hall when she was just five or six years old, and everybody would say 'Hi Selena.'" That sense of community was especially important after Selena's father passed away in 2015.

Selena is the youngest in her family with siblings who are nine to fifteen years older, which may explain why she chose to surround herself with younger children by volunteering at the afterschool, preschool, and summer daycare programs at COS.

"This summer's going to be my third year helping out," said Selena. "Ms. Katie (Hartz) schedules me from 8 am–1:30 pm, but I really like doing it, so I stay longer."

Preschool director, Katie Hartz, describes Selena as an important part of the program. "Selena has built meaningful relationships with the children and is very helpful to the teachers," said Hartz. "We are so grateful to have her."

In addition to her volunteer work, Selena has been involved in an impressive array of activities at COS. She played three sports, sang in the school choir, served on the student leadership team, was a member of STEM Club, and this year, she played a lead role in publishing the school's yearbook. "I've always wanted to do the yearbook," said Selena. "When I was in 6th grade, one of the 8th graders told me about it and I thought that sounds really exciting!" Principal Bridget Kramer credits Selena for doing most of the work on the publication. "She really took the project and ran with it," said Principal Kramer.

Selena's favorite subjects are science and math, but she admits good grades don't come automatically. She works hard and follows a disciplined routine she's honed over time. "I try to take good notes in class, and when I get home, I do all my homework first," she explained. "Then I make sure all my notes are organized and I study them so I'm ready for a test."

Selena is excited for high school but knows it will be a big change. "COS teachers have helped me through all the challenges I've been through so I could move on to where I am now," said Selena. "Here at COS I know everyone, but next year I'll be one of the new kids."



Selena Ortiz-Bell '24

Catching Up with the Class of '20

Not only did COVID disrupt their last year at COS, it also had a major impact on their entry into high school. As schools practiced hybrid learning, social distancing, and severely limited social activities, it wasn't easy to make new friends and adjust to the new academic environment. But these students persevered and by junior year, they all said they'd found their place. Now, Marly, Lydia, and Adri are excited about the future as they embark on unique paths forward.

MARLY RODRIGUEZ '20

Graduate of Cretin-Derham Hall High School

In June, Marly is headed to Florida International University in Miami where she has been accepted for early fall admission to study Marine Biology. After earning her undergraduate degree, Marly plans to go to graduate school.

Marly has known what she wants to do for a while. "I first got interested in the field by watching nature documentaries," she said. "As soon as I got my driver's license, I got a job at Sea Life at the Mall of America to see if I really liked it. I did and it just grew my love for being around animals."

At Cretin-Derham Hall (CDH), Marly took as many science classes as she could and wound up with ten extra science credits when she graduated. Her interest in science was nurtured at COS, especially in middle school. "In Ms. Moorhouse's class we'd do a lot of experiments," she said. "When we started using microscopes I felt so scientific."

Marly projects the confidence of a young woman eager to start the next phase of her life, but she admits, high school wasn't always easy, especially as a freshman during COVID. "Our COS class was really close," said Marly. "Only three of us went to CDH and with COVID, it was hard to make new friends the first year or two."

Marly pushed herself by trying out for volleyball,



Marly Rodriguez '20 got a job at Sea Life at MOA to pursue her interest in marine biology.

which she played through junior year. She also participated in service clubs, and joined the Isaac's Blessing Bags club, founded by her COS classmate Isaac Garcia (see story below). By junior year school felt normal again and Marly began to challenge herself more academically. "In high school I started out taking all regular classes, but I found them boring," she said. "Junior year I took advance and honors classes for everything, and in my senior year I took all AP and college classes."

Advice to COS Class of '24

"Try to get out of your comfort zone, and don't slack off your freshman year just because you think you have three years to make up for it."

Congratulations to Isaac Garcia '20 Recipient of Archbishop John Ireland Award

Every year, Cretin-Derham Hall High School (CDH) recognizes one outstanding member of the senior class for their faith, leadership, integrity, and commitment to service and social justice. What makes the Archbishop John Ireland Award even more unique is that the recipient is chosen by their peers.

This year, COS alum Isaac Garcia was selected by his CDH classmates for this honor citing his generosity to others, his compassion and sense of responsibility for those who live on the margins of society. In the last issue of *The Good News*, Isaac was featured for his ministry to homeless people, Isaac's Blessing Bags, which he began as a 6th grade student at COS.



Isaac, shown here with his parents Tara Peron and Jose Garcia Sr., will attend the University of St. Thomas.

LYDIA SANCHEZ '20

Graduate of Two Rivers High School

Next year Lydia will attend Dakota County Technical College to get the training she needs to begin a career as a union welder.

"My mom originally told me about welding and my initial response was 'no,'" said Lydia. "it seemed too manly of a job." Despite her reluctance, Lydia agreed to give it a try by signing up for a welding class at Two Rivers High School. As she suspected, all of her classmates were male, but to her surprise, Lydia discovered she loved it.

"When you're welding, you're in your own space doing your own thing," Lydia explained. "It requires patience, and it's hard work, but it's worth it. And it's fun!" She thinks it will make a for good career doing work that's in demand, pays well and she enjoys. It also won't require her to take on a lot of debt which is important because Lydia knows she needs to pay her own way.

Lydia lives with her mom, stepfather, and four half-siblings, ages one to seven. Her sister, Abby, just completed first grade at COS and she expects all of her siblings will go there eventually. Lydia transferred to COS in 6th grade, and has fond memories of middle school. "At COS, we were like a family, and I still miss it," she said. "Even though we were little troublemakers, the teachers had a lot of faith in us and taught us to be the best version of ourselves."

As she contemplates a career where only 9% of the jobs are held by women, Lydia admits she's a little nervous, but she's done her research. "Women who go into welding are highly respected," said Lydia. "Women often turn out to be the best welders."

Advice to COS Class of '24

"Don't be afraid to try new things in life. You never know what you'll fall in love with."



Lydia Sanchez '20 is the first in her family to attend post secondary school.

ADRIANA SILVA '20

Graduate of Cretin-Derham Hall High School

This fall, Adri Silva will be a freshman at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities Campus where she plans to study animal science as an undergraduate, with the ultimate goal of becoming a veterinarian.

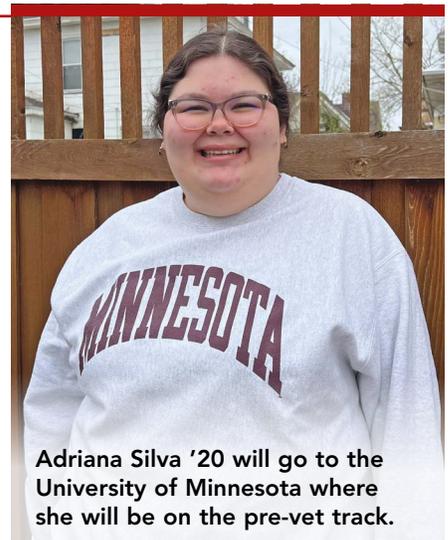
"I'll be on a pre-vet track at the U," explained Adri. "Dogs are my favorite, but I'm interested in all types of animals." Adri's also excited about the chance to study more science. "I know some kids dread it, but I'm always excited to go to science class."

Adri's love for science was first sparked at COS. She recalls germinating plants in Mrs. Milner's fifth grade class, and in middle school she looked forward to Ms. Moorhouse's science question-of-the-day. "Even at CDH when I'm

studying physics or anatomy, I think back to science lessons we had in middle school and can relate them to what I'm learning now," said Adri.

At COS Adri also learned to keep an open mind when she meets someone new or hears a novel idea. "At COS I met a lot of different people from different backgrounds," she said. "That experience grounded me in a diverse view on life. It helped me to go to CDH and have the confidence to be who I am."

Thinking back to 8th grade at COS, Adri recalls that after the pandemic struck, school was kind of a blur. "On the last day of March, they sent us home and we thought we'd be back in school in three weeks, but we never came back," she said. It was kind of crazy."



Adriana Silva '20 will go to the University of Minnesota where she will be on the pre-vet track.

Advice to COS Class of '24

"When you enter a place where you know very few people, put yourself out there to make new friends. It will only benefit you. Remember that everyone, especially in your freshman year of high school, is in the same position as you."



NASA Astronaut Visits COS

Shares His Story with Middle School Students

Duane Gene “Digger” Carey is a retired lieutenant colonel in the United States Air Force and former NASA astronaut. In 2002, he piloted the space shuttle Columbia during a mission to service the Hubble Space Telescope.

Carey shared that he grew up on the West Side in a single parent household where money was always tight. While he enjoyed reading, he didn’t have much interest in school, and he had a strong dislike for math. After his mother remarried, his family moved, and he attended Highland Park High School, where he wound up in summer school to make up for classes he failed. When he graduated, he headed to California on his motorcycle thinking he was done with school forever.

But Carey’s dream was to become a fighter pilot and he discovered he’d need a college degree, so at age 24, he enrolled at the University of Minnesota. To get his degree in Aerospace Engineering and Mechanics he had to study a lot of math. It wasn’t easy, but he did it. After graduating from the U, Carey attended the Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps and eventually was accepted into NASA’s astronaut program.

Advice from “Digger”

DON’T GIVE UP!

I learned growing up in St. Paul, it gives us some advantages. As you guys know, we have some cold weather here. We have some difficult situations that make you strong and make you tough. When you have that kind of attitude, if you go after something and you don’t give up, you can accomplish anything you set out to do.

STUDY MATH!

When I was in school, I said I’d never use the stuff I learned in math. Here’s why it’s worth it to learn math.

Math is the language of God. *I believe God is very proud of creation and God gave us math so we can begin to understand the universe. If someday we encounter other life forms in the universe, our common language will be math.*

Math makes your brain a lean, mean, learning machine. *If you can figure out how to learn hard math challenges, you can learn anything. When you give yourself the ability to learn new things and learn them quickly, there’s no opportunity you can’t meet.*

In the Words of Students

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“I found it interesting that you need to have good social skills to be able to go to space. His experience inspired me to do good in school now, so I don’t have a hard time catching up later.” — XITLALY

“What inspired me most was how he came from a struggling family and had a lot of the challenges that many teenagers in society face every day. Despite this, Digger was able to become an astronaut, something most people wouldn’t believe possible. He talked about how his mom had to work two full-time jobs in order to make ends meet, and how he failed high school, but he chose to change his destiny. It’s never too late to change your path and pursue your dreams. Digger talked about how going to space seemed impossible to a lot of people, but he once thought that, too.” — KAILY

“I was inspired by his decision to not go to college at first, but then he went back later and got his degree. Digger motivated me to think about pursuing a goal that I once thought was off the table for me. I think it takes persistence and motivation to pursue big goals. You have to want to do something to make it happen.” — MAILA

DO-OVER

St. Michael Class of 1974

In the previous issue of *The Good News*, we incorrectly identified the students from the St. Michael Class of 1974. We are republishing the names in the correct order. We apologize for this oversight.

Front Row | Betty Ann Jones, Renata Winzig, Mary Banazewski, Julie Geisler, Sandy Williams, Susan Dierberger, Patty Kelly, Bob Johnson

2nd Row | Tom McEllistrem, Mark Kinsel, Richard Karas, Paul Galles, Joe Carroll, Bill Burke, Joe Adams, Mike Schendel, Mark Thomas, Paul Cushing

3rd Row | Vince Gramling, Melissa Nitti, Lisa Gutzmann, Karen Snaza, John Weegman, Pat Siedow, Pat Cates, Patty Fitzpatrick, Margo Demulling, Steve Wolters, Rick Madigan

Top Row | Tim Blaeser, Julie Blechinger, Laurie Quehl, Debbie Karas, Camille Mansur, Paul Breister, Peter Mansur, Bill Kunik, Chris Jacobs, Brian Kraft



To learn more about COS and the different ways you can support the school, contact Natalie Hartung at NHartung@communityofsaints.org or call 651-457-2510.

COS Has a New Advancement Director

This June, Natalie Hartung trades her role as the 5th grade teacher at COS to become the school's new advancement director, a position previously held by Doug Lieser. In her new job she will support fundraising, community outreach, and student enrollment efforts at COS.

Natalie is a graduate of the College of St. Benedict and earned her Masters degree from the University of St. Thomas. She took a leadership role in implementing the STEM curriculum at COS, which was funded by a three-year grant from the University of Notre Dame.

Having taught at COS for six years, Natalie has a deep understanding of the challenges COS students and teachers face. She hopes to strengthen the school's existing partnerships and looks forward to building new ones.

Natalie grew up in Woodbury and was in one of the first classes to graduate from St. Ambrose Catholic School. After that, she attended Hill-Murray High School. "I'm a product of Catholic education," Natalie said. "To be honest, I never thought I would end up teaching at a Catholic school, but I fell in love with the culture and community here at COS. I'm very excited to work with the many individuals and organizations that support our school and share our mission."

"I never thought I would end up teaching at a Catholic school, but I fell in love with the culture and community here at COS." — NATALIE HARTUNG

**COMMUNITY OF SAINTS
REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

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PHOTOS BY JEANNINE OF BLOCK PORTRAIT STUDIOS

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- RMD contributions from your IRA or 401(k)
- Name COS as a beneficiary for your IRA or 401(k)
- Legacy Gift — consider including COS in your estate plans

For more information or assistance with your donation, contact Natalie Hartung, COS Advancement Director, at **651-457-2510**.

Donations received BY JUNE 30 will be doubled by generous contributions from Roy Ferber '59 and the family of Tom McKeown.