

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



PHOTO BY JEANNINE OF BLOCK PORTRAIT STUDIOS



COS 8th Grade Class of '25

STANDING ROW (Left to Right):
Francisco Martinez Sanchez, Lilibeth Dominguez Cruz, Isabella Edwards, Mihyanna Wilson, Dominic Smith, Joshua Maloney, Joel Ocon-Zambrano, Mason Mata, Josiah Ampey

SEATED ROW (Left to Right):
Melanie Bedolla Giron, Brielle Muhammad, Kaily Alexie Decena, Ariana Bostic, Keira Moore, Genevieve Tressell, Neelia Ledesma, Maila Frias

DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

Learn more on page 2.

COMMUNITY OF SAINTS 2025 GRADS Well Prepared and Ready to Launch

Next year, graduates from COS will attend seven different high schools all across the Twin Cities metro. It will be a big change for these students, most of whom started out together in preschool. I talked to some of them during their final weeks at COS and they all shared how much they'll miss their classmates and teachers next year. We also talked about how well prepared they feel to meet the challenges ahead. Here are some highlights from our conversations. — *Maggie Lee, editor*

Maila Frias Math and Science Academy, Woodbury



What are you looking forward to at the Math and Science Academy?

The academy is for anyone who wants a really good education. What's different about it is that you are judged not by age but by intelligence. If I take creative writing, I could be in a class with 9th, 10th, and 11th graders — so it can really be a mix.

How has COS prepared you for high school?

I'm really into math and at COS we have a math

tutor who helps kids who are advanced. Our math teacher, Ms. Benz, chooses different topics for us based on what we're interested in. I think that will definitely help me. I'm not as into science but I used to be in STEM Club, so I think that will also be helpful.

What's something you've learned that will help beyond high school?

I've learned a lot about community here and what I learned most is that community can be found anywhere. Things like how much money you have don't matter. I also learned a lot about how kind people can be, and it's nice to see how many accommodations are made for everyone. The teachers are always checking in to make sure that you're okay.

— Continued on page 4



Editors Note: *In the last issue of The Good News, we highlighted how Fr. Steve's commitment to social justice shaped his ministry and changed people's lives. In this issue, Fr. John Malone talks about the forces behind Fr. Steve's formation, as well as a friendship that spanned nearly seven decades. We are grateful to Fr. Malone for his generous tribute, delivered with a little spice on the side.*

In September of 1956, a recent grad of Nativity School, Steve Adrian, showed up at Nazareth Hall Preparatory Seminary. He could not have weighed more than 100 pounds. He wore glasses and spoke with a pronounced stutter. Who would have thought that he would become the marvelous priest that he was?

Steve and I shared eleven years in the seminary. We spent four years together at Incarnation Parish, South Minneapolis, the first assignment for each.

Perhaps the most significant influencers in Steve's ministry were Msgr. James Cecka and Fr. Ed Flahavan. Msgr. Cecka, longtime pastor at St. Matthew's, also taught sociology and history at Nazareth Hall. Msgr. Cecka made sure we all knew the importance of 19th century Pope Leo XIII's writings, particularly *Rerum Novarum*, which laid the groundwork for modern Catholic social teaching.

The encyclical addressed the social and economic challenges arising from the Industrial Revolution. It advocated for a just social order, emphasizing the dignity of labor, the right to private property, and the role of the Church in promoting social justice. Msgr. Cecka set the academic basis for social justice, and Fr. Ed Flahavan set the example for implementing those principles in the Archdiocesan Office of Social Justice.

How thrilled Steve would be to see another Leo become the Bishop of Rome.

Fr. Adrian led a few scripture studies at Assumption. After a particularly erudite explanation of a passage, I asked him, "How come after the same education you know so much more than I do?" Without any hesitation, he answered to the whole group, "Perhaps I'm just smarter than you." Smarter than most of us.

It was an honor and a blessing to have spent a few hours with Steve two days before he died. He didn't want his funeral to be stories of his life, but a meditation on the Eucharist that binds us together. Fr. Michael Joncas did a superb job of just that. Steve was a man of the liturgy — the word, and the table.

In his later years, Steve spent most of his time and effort on the success of Community of Saints school. He believed in the faculty and staff, the students and their families. He also believed in you, who are reading this tribute. Like you, Steve believed in the transformative power of a Catholic education, and that every child has a right to that education. On behalf of my good friend, thank you for your support — past, present, and future.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the parishioners of Assumption for their generous contributions to tuition assistance, and we sincerely thank Fr. Malone for his unwavering support and encouragement.



"COS is a wonderful school. It provides a loving environment for kids to learn and grow."
— FATHER PAUL TREACY

DOUBLE YOUR DONATION!

By giving now, you make it possible for us to provide tuition assistance to our students in the coming school year. Your contribution will be doubled by an anonymous donor.

Gifts made by June 30 will be matched dollar-for-dollar thanks to a \$25,000 challenge in honor of Father Paul Treacy, our canonical administrator and pastor of Church of the Assumption in St. Paul.

To make a contribution, please use the enclosed envelope, contribute online at www.communityofsaints.org/aff or call Natalie Hartung, Advancement Director, at 651-457-2510. Our students, their families, COS staff, and all of us at Alums & Friends & Families appreciate your generosity.

Remembering Pope Francis

To honor Pope Francis after his death, middle school students shared their thoughts about the impact of his leadership on them, the Church, and the world.

"Pope Francis made sure that no matter your past, your skin color, your culture, your beliefs, or your wealth, that you were heard and part of the faith. People looked up to him as a role model and as a leader. He helped people grow closer not just to Christ but to the community. He empowered people and gave them courage and strength." — Ariana

"Pope Francis also mentioned that there are not bad people, there are just people who chose the wrong path and are trying to get back on God's path." — Alaylah

"Pope Francis demonstrated to the world what it was like to be a follower of Christ by spreading his love to those who were having a hard time feeling it. Pope Francis went out to the sick, and kissed their cheeks, hands, foreheads and even washed the feet of strangers." — Kaily

"He was a religious leader, but he talked about more than religion. He talked about human rights. He helped the Church to be more inclusive and to be more active in practicing the true message of Christianity, about kindness and generosity, and caring for others." — Maila

"Pope Francis talked about how we should be building bridges and not more walls throughout the world. He showed me that no one should have to be ignored or excluded for who they are and that we always have a place not only in the Church, but also in God's heart." — Neelia

"A lesson from the Pope's life that I can apply into my faith journey is always seeing good in someone. The Pope always saw good things in other people no matter what. He also taught that Jesus is never tired of forgiving, it is us who get tired of asking for forgiveness." — Gianna



First grade students wrote prayers for Pope Francis as part of a school-wide remembrance of the deceased Pope.

2024-25 COS STUDENT BODY

196 students

kindergarten thru 8th grade,

PLUS

40 students

in PreK.

75%

Qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch.

47%

Multilingual learners (more than one language spoken at home).

93%

Receive tuition assistance.

54% Hispanic

22% Mixed Race

15% White

5% Black

3% Asian & Pacific Islander

1% American Indian

COS IS A TIER 1 DREXEL MISSION SCHOOL

COS is one of six schools in the Archdiocese designated as a Tier 1 Drexel Mission School. To qualify for Tier 1, a school must serve a minimum of 60% students of color, have 60% of students who qualify for Free/Reduced Lunch, and enroll a minimum of 100 students.

Community of Saints 2025 Grads: Well Prepared and Ready to Launch, *continued from page 1*

Any plans for after high school?

I'm deeply passionate about human rights and giving a voice to people who aren't heard, and I like to write so I might do some sort of journalism as a short term thing. I could also see working towards something that's related to the law.

Neelia Ledesma
Cristo Rey Jesuit High School, Minneapolis



What's your favorite memory from COS?

My first day of school. When I came to COS in second grade, I was 8 years old and scared I wasn't going to make any friends. When I sat down in the lunchroom a girl came running up to me and began asking me a bunch of questions. Then a bunch of other kids came, and I just got a feeling of being welcomed here. It was really good knowing that I was going to be part of a big family.

How has COS prepared you to face future challenges?

I struggle with the work sometimes, so at COS I've learned that I need to advocate for myself. That has been a big change. I used to never talk or ask questions. Now I do.

What would you want people to know about COS?

This school helped shape who I am today. It taught me to always help others in need. It helped me realize I need to set up goals and push myself more. Basically, it helped set me up to succeed in high school.

Josiah Ampey
Simley High School, Inver Grove Heights



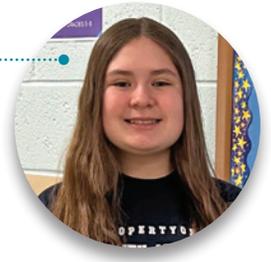
How did you choose Simley?

I decided based on their football program and their education. Both are important to me. I need good grades because after high school I plan to go to a DI college for football. Hopefully, I'm a good enough football player that I can make it to the NFL.

How has COS prepared you for high school?

Our teachers would simulate how it would be in high school. We would get assignments just stacked up on each other sometimes, and we would have to manage our time to get the work done.

Ariana Bostic
Two Rivers High School, Mendota Heights



What are your favorite subjects?

I'd say math and science. They challenge me in certain ways that other classes don't. I'm probably going to take AP science and math in high school.

How has COS prepared you for high school?

When I first came here, I was really shy. I didn't like talking to people or answering questions, and being here really helped me get out of my shell and get involved in the community.

How has COS impacted your faith?

When I came here in third grade, I really gained a closer connection with God. I was confirmed this year with the help of the school and the teachers. I want to continue that routine of going to church and learning about God even when I'm going to public school next year.



Jenna Tressell
Chesterton Academy, Stillwater

Jenna (*right*) is the fourth and youngest member of the Tressell family to graduate from COS, and this year, two of her sisters are also graduates. Rosalyn Tressell '21 (*standing, left*) graduated from Chesterton Academy and will attend University of Mary, in Bismarck, ND. Mari Tressell '18 (*sitting*) graduated from UMary in three years with a degree in Biomechanics and will begin earning her master's degree in athletic training at UMary in the fall.

"At COS, I knew the teachers would always be there for me, would always listen when I wanted them to, and help me get through anything I needed help with." — Jenna Tressell

Any plans for after high school?

I want to get a nursing degree and work in Neonatal Intensive Care with newborn babies who are really sick. If I don't go into nursing, I want to work in criminal justice or do something in law enforcement.

Keira Moore
Visitation School,
Mendota Heights



What will you miss most?

My favorite thing here is probably the teachers just knowing you. They know you on a personal level. If you're acting off or different, they notice and ask, do you need to go to a counselor? Do you need to talk to someone? Do you need time alone? I really like that.

What would you want someone to know about COS?

At COS, we have a bunch of really different people and it's nice to know their backgrounds and know what has happened in their lives. It helps prepare you for the world.

Brielle Muhammad
Cretin-Derham Hall
High School, St. Paul



What will be the hardest part of leaving COS?

Everything, literally. They've all become my family. I'll miss the teachers being so kind and caring. Ms. Kramer doing everything to make the school the best. Talking to Ms. Carrillo (the school secretary) every day, and just seeing all my friends and cousins that go here. When I

was younger, I wasn't the nicest person, and the school has definitely helped change that. I try to be nicer to people now. I try to talk to more people. I've become a better student. I try to have all my work done. I don't have any missing assignments. Usually, I try to get stuff done early.

How has COS impacted your faith?

When I was younger, I didn't want to go to church. I thought it would just take too long, but now I actually appreciate it, and I like my time with God. We have prayer journals where we write all our feelings to God, and nobody looks at it. It's something I rely on especially when things get tough. If I'm falling behind in school or friendships aren't going well, I take time with God.

Any plans for after high school?

I want to go to college but I'm not sure what I want to study. This year I learned about biomedical engineering in science and how they make things like pacemakers, so that was really interesting.

Josh Maloney
Cretin-Derham Hall
High School, St. Paul



What would you want people to know about COS?

Even though it's a small school, this school has a big heart. They support everyone. They don't care who you are, they'll always help you.

What's something you've learned here that will help beyond high school?

The idea that God brings everyone together. It could be through sports or friendship, or just someone you meet in public. I feel like there's always a connection between you and someone else and God will always help you find that connection.

Congratulations to Mihyanna Wilson, Flaherty Family Scholarship Recipient
Cretin-Derham Hall High School, St. Paul

Flaherty Family Scholarships are awarded to high-potential scholars, and provide financial and mentoring support through high school and college.

When did you start going to COS?

My mom switched me and my siblings to COS when I was in sixth grade. I didn't want to go at first but then when I came here, I loved it and was really happy. Everyone was super nice.

What's your favorite memory from COS?

Our week at Wolf Ridge Environmental Center was my favorite. We would all be in our pajamas, and no one cared. It was really fun. Our class just gets along and we're natural with each other. We don't have to worry about being cool.



May Activities at COS



TRIP TO FORT SNELLING & STATE CAPITOL

Middle school students stepped back in time during a visit to Fort Snelling, then headed to the State Capitol where they got to see legislators at work trying to wrap up the session.



COMO ZOO & CONSERVATORY

It was a beautiful day in May when students in grades 3-5 visited Como Zoo. Students gathered in small groups to explore the Conservatory and check out the animals.



SPRING CONCERT

For their last concert at COS, the 8th graders donned antennae to team up with their kindergarten buddies for a song they first sang back when they were in kindergarten, *Peace on Earth and Lots of Little Crickets*.

SPRING SOCIAL — 8TH GRADE FUNDRAISER

The spring social is one of several fundraisers hosted by the 8th grade class each year to help pay for their field trip to Wolf Ridge Environmental Center. Games and activities, including face painting, are run by 8th grade students, while their families donate and prepare the food sold at the concession stand.





Volunteers from St. Thomas Academy (left) help track time and keep score after students program their robots to play a lively game of freeze tag.



STEM CLUB Receives Program Award for Academic Excellence & Student Engagement

This spring, COS STEM Club received the 2025 Minndependent Program Award in recognition of its innovation, impact, contribution to academic excellence, and student engagement.

STEM Club is an after-school program for students in grades 5-8 that meets once a week from September to May. Founded in 2019 by middle school science teacher, Audrey Moorhouse, the club provides hands-on, project-based learning in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM).

Club activities are guided by student interest, and so far, students have been interested in robotics. Students work in small groups to build robots and write code that enables the robots to engage in a variety of activities, as well as complete a series of challenges developed by Moorhouse.

"The cool thing about STEM Club is it's not for a grade, so it's a group of kids who want to do this," said Moorhouse.

Student Progress Accelerates

This year, two groups reached Challenge 12, which is the ultimate challenge, at least until Moorhouse dreams up something more difficult. For Challenge 12, students use everything they've learned to create a rescue robot that will enter a collapsed four-room building. The robot must perform four unique

"The cool thing about STEM Club is it's not for a grade, so it's a group of kids who want to do this."

— AUDREY MOORHOUSE

actions, in randomized order, within four unique rooms, simulating an unknown hazardous area. Tasks include extinguishing a fire, navigating around wreckage, taking air samples, and rescuing a victim.

Moorhouse observes that students are moving through the challenges faster than ever. "Either I'm becoming a better teacher, or our repeat STEM Club members are getting better and better."



COS faculty, Audrey Moorhouse, accepts the award from Tim Benz, president of Minndependent, a nonprofit that works to connect and strengthen Minnesota's private schools.

Moorhouse appreciates the award, and while she knows she is the face of STEM Club, she is quick to point out that it's been a team effort from the start. "So many people have put in time and effort to make this happen."

**COMMUNITY OF SAINTS
REGIONAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

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**DOUBLE
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DONATION!**

**Donations received
BY JUNE 30 will be
DOUBLED —
see page 2.**

West Side pride was on full display at the annual Cinco de Mayo parade where COS families marched together to celebrate their school and their heritage. The event was just one of many during the busy month of May. To see what else students were up to this May, go to page 6.