



St. Vincent de Paul Alumni Association Newsletter

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Website: www.stvincentdepaulalumni.net

Planning Committee: StVincentReunion@aol.com

October 5, 2014

Grand Reunion at
Des Plaines Elks Club

Planning Committee

Ann Colletti Fontana '62

Joyce Dobiss Lendino '52

Carol Grundhoefer
Brandenburg '52

Mary Modica Hitpas '69

Fran Kelly Cunningham '55

Kathi Locallo Acciari '65

Karen Mahaney Wierer '60

Barbara Thompson
LaSpesa '56

Rev. Thomas Grace, CM
'51 recently celebrated the
50th anniversary of his
ordination.

Congratulations

Administrator

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Alumni and Friends Reunion — October 5, 2014

We're looking forward to seeing you in October at our Grand Reunion which is held every two years. A registration form is included with this newsletter. (Note: Some of you may receive both an email notification and postal mail.) Your meal will be served family style.

Graduating classes of years ending in '4' or '9' take notice! This reunion will provide a convenient venue as well as a good reason to include your own class reunion. We may be able to provide help locating classmates.

In Memoriam

Please say a prayer for our classmates:

Virginia Arnold Roche-Grimm '31

John Crimmins '34

William Crimmins '36

William Mutert '37

James Crimmins '38

Rev. Edward Mullin, CM '41

Thomas Francis Henry '42

Betty Minogue Baldaccini '42

Roseline Ann Erskine Barrett '43

Betty Marie Ginnelly '43

Loretta Bianchi Finger '45

Richard Binanti '45

William Lemley '45

Jeanette McGary Piefer '45

Howard Richter '45

Grace Sorci '45

George Jonscher '48

Mary Duignan Riola '50

Peter Rizzuto '52

Joseph Sullivan '52

James Cooke '53

Charles Wurst '53

Judy Grace Kopala '54

Rev. Patrick Harrity, CM '55

Donald Doyle '58

Cornelius Kennedy '58

Carolyn Volpentesta Visconti '58

Dan Bushell '66

Claudia Oblak '72

If you have information about the death of a classmate, please notify Fran Kelly Cunningham '55 after 6:00 pm at (773) 784-0567, or email Barbara LaSpesa at stvincentreunion@aol.com.

"Memories" (a new page on our website)

We received an email from John Mulligan '43 earlier this year and obtained his permission to publish it in this newsletter (see reverse side). His sometimes sad, sometimes funny and heartwarming account of life during his grammar school years inspired us to add a new section to our website where alumni can share their memories with all of us.

We all know how to write and spell, correct? After all, we were taught by BVMS. So put your St. Vincent School and other memories on a piece of paper or in an email. It can be as brief as one paragraph or as long as it takes to tell your story. Just remember that your sending it to us indicates it's okay to put it on our website. Emails may be sent to Barbara LaSpesa at stvincentreunion@aol.com, and paper mail to Carol Brandenburg, P.O. Box 175, Park Ridge, IL 60068-0175.

I am probably among the last of the 1943 class. I am John E. Mulligan and attended grades 4, 5, 6, and 8th grade. Before that I attended St. Thomas of Canterbury on Kenmore and Lawrence Ave.

In 4th grade I had Sister Mary Lelia, a true saint. She caught me squinting through my fist and moved me from the back row to a front-row seat. I thought she did it to keep an eye on me as I was a bit of a cut-up. To top it off she handed me a sealed envelope that I was to give to my mother. I knew I was in deep trouble and I waited until after supper to give mom the letter. I braced myself waiting to get whacked when she read the note. It said, "Your son needs glasses." A week later I walked into the classroom with my new gold-rim glasses and I looked up on the wall above the blackboard, and there was a picture of President Roosevelt and Abraham Lincoln. Sister let me browse for a minute while I checked out my "new" surroundings while smiling to herself, and then she said, "all right class, let's begin: In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost....."

The summer after passing 6th grade we moved to Northbrook, Illinois where I attended St. Norbert's until October when my dad died. My mother had a relapse of sorts and her employer drove me down to St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless where I spent nine months which included Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter.

I was the oldest boy and became the altar boy for the 6 a.m. daily mass held for the nuns there. I attended a one-room class for grades 1-8; there were 24 to 30 children in the class. I was the lone 7th grader and a girl named Mary was in the 8th grade. We were the teacher's assistants passing out the papers and helping the younger ones with their three R's. On Saturdays Mary and I worked in the laundry running sheets and pillowcases through the giant mangle machine and then we did the hand ironing of the personal clothing for the children. I did the boys' shirts and pants and Mary did the girls' dresses.

Meanwhile, Mom got a job with Republic Tool Co. turning out ejection bolts for the M-1 rifle. She was then able to rent a fourth floor cold water apartment on Armitage and Kenmore, and in May she came down by streetcar and sprung me out and took me to our new location. That September I returned to St. Vincent's entering 8th grade.

For our graduation party the boys drew the girls' names out of a box on Sister's desk. I drew Leone Gross, one of the nicest girls in the class. Of course they were all very studious and polite. During recess the boys played marbles on some neighbors' front yard wherever we could find a bare spot. Also most of us carried pocket knives, not to defend ourselves or to attack anyone, but to play mumble-ty-peg. Nowadays you would get expelled for bringing a knife to school. When you bought high top boots at Sears a jackknife would be included in a side pocket. The girls played jump rope, hopscotch, and jacks.

One year we had a guy from the Duncan Yo-Yo Company demonstrate in front of the class all the tricks that you could do. The yo-yos were ten cents each. Next day Sister had a half dozen in her bottom drawer that she had taken from those boys who played with them during class.

During those war years we showed our patriotism by buying War Stamps at 10 cents every week and pasted them in our booklet. I also remember Sister going up to each student and selling chocolate covered mints at a penny each, and every so often the one who got a pink center won a Baby Ruth bar. We were a mixed group of Irish, German and Italian kids and got along all those years without one incident.

These are some of my fond memories of that era.

Sincerely,

John Mulligan '43
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