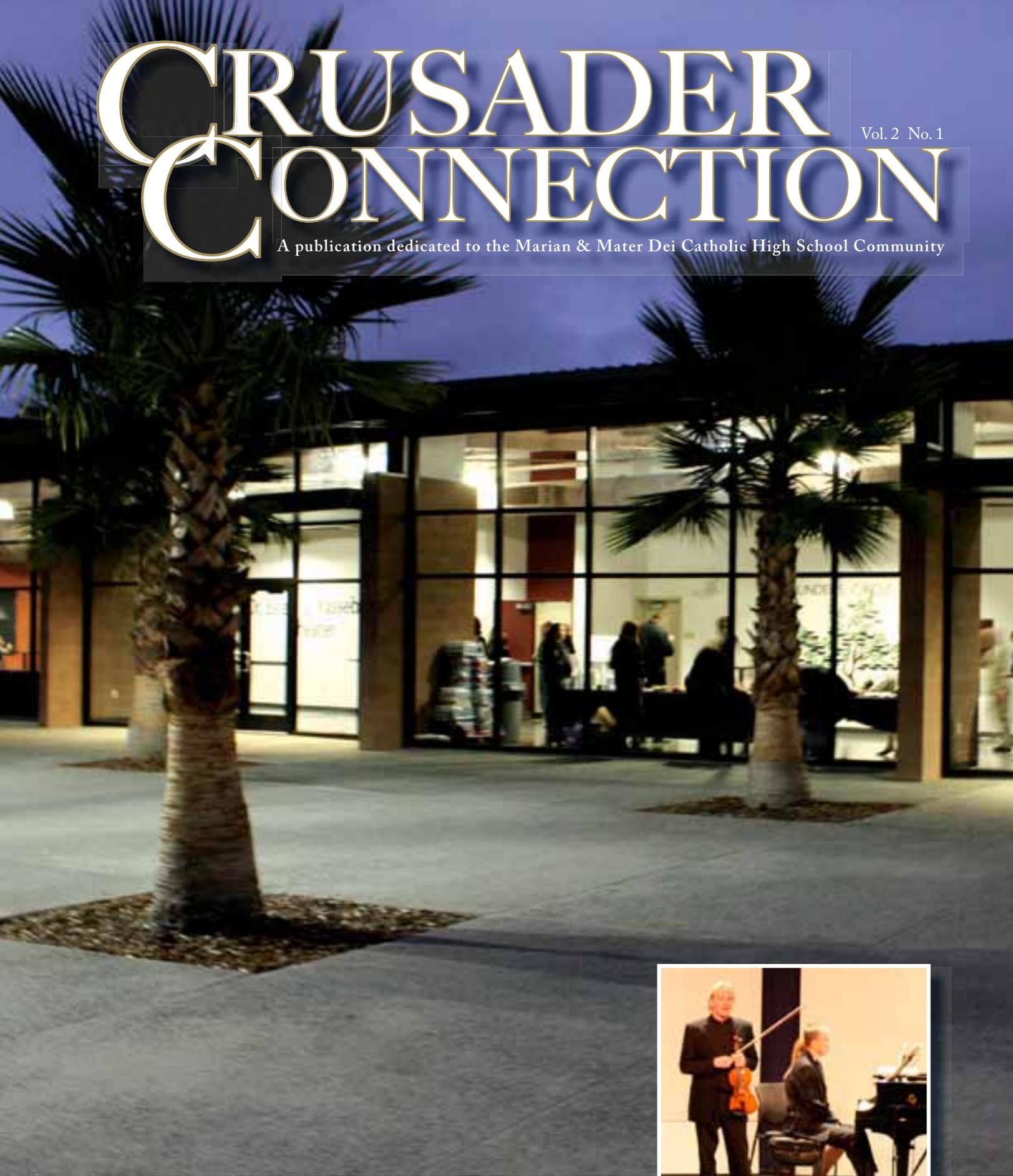


# CRUSADER CONNECTION

Vol. 2 No. 1

A publication dedicated to the Marian & Mater Dei Catholic High School Community



Featuring:

The Inaugural Performing Arts Series  
Dr. Estelle L. Kassebaum Theater

Mainly Mozart

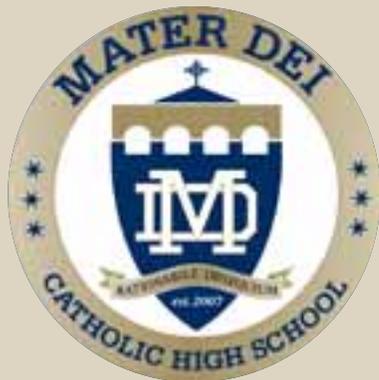
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**Westwind Brass**  
performing in the  
Dr. Estelle L. Kassebaum Theater  
on November 22, 2008.





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## A MESSAGE

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Crusader Parents and Friends,

The last few months have seemed like we've been through a storm as the activity in all of our individual lives as well as in our collective life as a civic community has been fast and furious. From the Presidential election in November through the Thanksgiving and Christmas Holidays and now past the New Year's celebrations we find ourselves sobered and concerned by a faltering economy and two international conflicts that are draining national resources and tearing at the fabric of society. Our brothers and sisters in Mexico are being terrorized by incessant gang warfare along the border that has touched many of our families in the Mater Dei community. But, through it all we are hopeful for a better day. We fervently pray that our leaders will be guided by God to forge a path through these multiple crises and lead our nations to wholeness and peace once again. We reach no compromise without God's help. It is only through Him that the grace to change for the better will come. I ask you all to pray for our leaders on both sides of the border and throughout the world, that God will touch their hearts and guide them in the ways of justice, mercy and peace.

These more global concerns will eventually have an impact on our school. The financial crisis in particular will place some of our families in difficult predicaments as to the affordability of Catholic secondary education. Our hope is that by providing significant increases in tuition assistance we can keep our current students and provide enough support to new students to help make their dreams of becoming Crusaders a reality. Almost all of the fundraising we do in the Marian/Mater Dei community is targeted toward helping families afford the education we offer. In these critical times we need your help more than ever. If you have donated in the past, please continue your support. If you have not donated recently, please consider the cause a worthy one for your patronage. Our students and families will be forever grateful for your help.

As we settle into the second semester this year at Mater Dei, it's an opportune moment to take stock of ourselves and look toward our own future as a school. Within these pages of the Crusader Connection are reports about a variety of events in the lives of our students and of our community. We celebrate success at many turns; ...on the academic front; ... on the athletic front; ...in the arts; ... among our alumni; ...and most importantly in Ministry and Faith formation. I encourage you to leisurely spend time with us as you review the work of the many talented hands that have gone into telling these stories and the Crusader lives that make up these pages.

Please keep in mind that above all else we are providing an atmosphere where a student's faith life is the most important ingredient in all the parts that make up the whole. It is through your continued prayers and financial support that we are able to do God's work in His small vineyard of Mater Dei Catholic High School. Join with us in our daily prayer...

Mary Mother of God, Lead us to your Son, Jesus.

Yours in Christ,

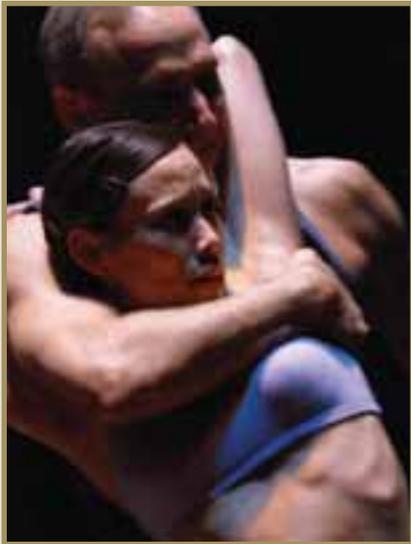
Thomas Clayton Beecher  
President



Last spring, Mainly Mozart founding executive director Nancy Laturno (and mother of Mater Dei sophomore Mark Laturno) was asked by Mater Dei President Thomas Beecher to help organize a performance program at the school. Mainly Mozart is a 21-year-old San Diego-based organization (best known for its annual summer festival) that presents world-class artists in year round concerts and education programs reaching over 50,000 children annually. Historically, South Bay residents have had to travel northward to enjoy world-class performing arts programs in San Diego County. This inaugural series has

brought professional performing artists of world renown to the consciousness of the South Bay.

Mater Dei students and parents played a key role in the series, serving as ushers, selling tickets, distributing fliers to area shopping centers, soliciting auction items and organizing post performance receptions. Sophomore Ivana Ames attended the California



*Malashock Dance*

Ballet program with her mother and uncle. "It was nice to be able to go with the family. I really liked the program," said Ames who aspires to a career in psychology and dances jazz and ballet. "It was interesting to see professionals perform here," said Jorge Sanchez, a junior who attended four of the five performances. "I think all of us (students) need more culture in our lives."

The Mater Dei series began Oct. 4 when Mainly Mozart presented internationally celebrated pianist Anton Nel, cellist Andrew Shulman, and violinist Dale Bartrop performing works by Mozart, Beethoven and Handel. The series continued with an eclectic line-up. On Oct. 18, California Ballet got into the Halloween spirit by performing excerpts from Charles Bennett's popular "Dracula," a "delightfully scary" take on the title character of Bram Stoker's 1897 novel. The five-member Westwind Brass presented "Music of the Californias" on Nov. 22, a tribute to music from the missions of Baja California, the

Gold Rush era, the stylings of Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass, as well as selections from Disney Studios films. On Dec. 6 Malashock Dance staged "Let's Duet," created in 2007 by Emmy award winning company founder and artistic director John Malashock. Consisting of 14 short pas de deux, this work gave new meaning to "artistic trust" as dancers flung, fell and flew against their partners. The series concluded Dec. 13 when San Diego Ballet presented excerpts of its production of Tchaikovsky's Christmas season classic "The Nutcracker." All of the hour-long "San Diego's Performing Arts" shows were followed by a reception (coordinated by Patty Sanchez, parent of junior, Jorge Sanchez) during which audience members could mingle with artists.

"Hosting professional performing artists in the Kassebaum Theater on the Mater Dei campus has been a dream fulfilled," said Mater Dei President Thomas Beecher. "It was always our intention to become a home for the arts and be a resource to the South County community. The quality of the performances in this series has established a firm standard that we hope to continue in the years ahead."

Mater Dei Catholic High School and Laturno from Mainly Mozart are currently finalizing programming for a second Mater Dei series next fall. If season one was any indicator of artistic quality and audience interest, season two is bound to be another winner.



*Westwind Brass*

# “PRAISE for the PERFORMING ARTS SERIES”

“Mater Dei’s commitment to providing a home in the South County for professional companies to perform is a real gift to the community. Mainly Mozart is proud to have been asked to partner with Mater Dei in this new series. We look forward to many years of partnership.”

– Nancy Laturno, founding executive director, Mainly Mozart (and mother of sophomore Mark Laturno)

“It was important to bring high quality art to communities that do not regularly travel to the main cultural centers of San Diego. It was brave of Mainly Mozart to undertake and organize the series. We definitely made new friends through our performance.”

– John Malashock, founder and director, Malashock Dance

“We had a great time socializing with the audience.”

– Barry Toombs, director and member, Westwind Brass

“The audience seemed to really enjoy our program. San Diego Ballet would be happy to perform at Mater Dei again.”

–Robin Sheretz Morgan, co-director, San Diego Ballet

“CalBal enjoyed having a presence in the South Bay. The facility was wonderful and the production staff was very helpful. We have been invited to dance again next year and look forward to it.”

– Maxine Mahon, founder and director, California Ballet

“The series gave us an experience that has never before been available to our community. The hour-long programs were just about right, but always left us wanting more.”

– Sylvia Lugo, volunteer (and mother of sophomore Raymond Lugo)



*San Diego Ballet*

## THE DIARY



## OF ANNE FRANK

## FALL PRODUCTION

The holocaust came alive here at Mater Dei Catholic High School this fall with the student production of *The Diary of Anne Frank*. It was presented in the Dr. Estelle Kassebaum Theater on Friday evening, November 21st, and Saturday afternoon, November 22nd. This true story of a young Jewish girl in hiding in Amsterdam, Holland, in the 1940’s is still as heart wrenching and poignant today as it was when it was first dramatized in the 1950’s. The director, Mrs. Rebecca Brown, chose to produce Wendy Kesselman’s newly adapted version of the classic Frances Goodrich and Albert Hackett script. This play taught the actors and the audience about the tragic results of intolerance, and the need for respecting and helping others who are vulnerable in society.

The students brought such vitality to their roles that there was hardly a dry eye in the house at the close of the play. Anne Frank herself was played by freshman Edith Camargo in Act I, and by Briana Gamez in Act II. Margot Frank was deftly portrayed by Kat Celaya and Mrs. Edith Frank by returning sophomore Chelsea Chenelle. Mr. and Mrs. Van Daan were played by Andrew Thein and Frances Lopez, while their son Peter was junior Ryan Ortega. The dentist Mr. Dussel was junior Sam Acosta; and their protectors Miep Gies and Mr. Kraler were Teresa Chiappe and Mauricio Lopez. The show stopping performance of Otto Frank was none other than the multi-talented Alvin Almazan. Fortunately, the stage crew was run by the very able hands of the new stage manager, junior Alec Kuzukian (who also wore the Nazi uniform in Act II), and his assistant, Marisol Padilla. In addition to the cast and crew, we were graced by the wonderful klezmer violin music of sophomore Daniella Fierro – who accompanied a professional accordionist to pre-show and intermission entertainment.

The students are looking forward to the spring production, March 27 and 28, when they will showcase student written one-act plays. Half a dozen student playwrights feverishly wrote plays this fall under the supervision of the S.D. Playwrights Project – and have just completed those original scripts. So we hope that you will join us at the end of March to celebrate the performances of our own students’ creativity.

– Rebecca Blakely Brown

# DR. THREATT

**Deacon Dr. Marvin Threatt has been a Theology teacher at Marian/Mater Dei for seven years. Dr. Threatt has a Master's in Education from the University of San Diego and a PhD in Education from Honolulu University. He has been a Deacon in the Diocese of San Diego for twenty five years.**



**MDCHS:** How long have you been teaching here at Marian/Mater Dei?

**Dr. Threatt:** I am beginning my seventh year this year. Of course I did serve back in the nineties for about a year as interim principal at Marian. This is my seventh year though teaching.

**MDCHS:** Where did you work before Marian?

**Dr. Threatt:** I was in the military for twenty years and when I got out I started teaching over at St. Jude's. I taught there for a year and then I went to University of San Diego High School and I taught there for a year when I was tagged for Dean of Students and I have been in administration from then on. I only taught two years before I went into administration. I was at Uni for a while and then I went to Verbum Dei Los Angeles as Principal. After that I came back to San Diego and started a charter school over in southeast San Diego. Once things were up and running I decided to return to a Catholic School and that's when I came back to Marian.

**MDCHS:** How do you view your legacy as a Crusader teacher?

**Dr. Threatt:** I hope they remember me as someone who not only taught about the faith, but who lived the faith. I hope they remember me as somebody who lived what I believed in, that God was real to me and that faith was real to me. Just that I was who I said I was.

**MDCHS:** When did you receive the calling to become a deacon?

**Dr. Threatt:** The call has always been there. When I was 15 I went into a monastery in Northern Alabama to become a monk. I was a monk from about 15 to about 21. So the call was always there. I came out, turned 21, got married, and then went into the military. It was in Vietnam that I reconnected with my need for God in my life and my need to serve. So the call was always there but sometimes we run from God until God catches us. He caught me in one of those fox holes in Vietnam and I never turned back from there.

**MDCHS:** Could you tell me a little bit more about the magnitude of the experience in Vietnam and how it changed you as a person.

**Dr. Threatt:** Vietnam was of course one of the most intense times of my life. In Vietnam I was assigned to a Marine Corps unit as a medic. The Marines don't have medics so the Navy supplies the Marine Corps with medics. I was assigned to a Marine Corps unit that was in charge of reconnaissance. Their job was to go each night to gather intelligence. One night we were caught in an ambush and things looked pretty bad. We were pinned down for about five or six hours from about 1 o'clock in the morning until day break. In the time that I was pinned down, I began to reflect on my life because there was a possibility I was not coming out of there alive. That was the time that I began to reconsider giving my life to the Lord.

**MDCHS:** How long have you been a deacon?

**Dr. Threatt:** Twenty five years. As a matter of fact, last year I celebrated twenty five years as deacon.

**MDCHS:** Congratulations. That's great.

**Dr. Threatt:** It's amazing that I'm still standing after twenty five years, that's the amazing thing. But again that's part of the faith that the Lord has sustained me with for all this time, through everything. I'm still standing after twenty five years.

**MDCHS:** You mentioned that you grew up in the south during the civil rights movement. Is it true that you marched with Dr. King?

**Dr. Threatt:** Yes, it was right before I went to the monastery. I was in my junior year of high school. It was during the integration of Birmingham, Alabama. Dr. King came to Birmingham to help integrate. It was said to be the most segregated city in the nation. It was horrible. He would gather us all at the 16th Street Baptist Church. There was a city park that they would try to integrate. All





# OUT OF AFRICA

he wanted to do was make it so black people would have the right to go to the park on Sunday afternoons. It took all that marching, all that stuff to get permission for blacks to be able to use the city parks. Dr. King was the leader. He led the crusades. We went out to walk, and toward the end of the march, people kept marching and the city authorities got a little more defiant and that's when they started using the dogs and fire hoses.

**MDCHS:** What emotions does that elicit from you?

**Dr. Threatt:** A lot of emotions. For a long time there was a lot of scarring and a lot of hate. I carried a lot of hate in my heart for years and years. One thing the military helped me with was to get past that because I saw people for who they were. That helped a lot. I am just amazed at what I see now. Given what I have lived and what I've seen I am overwhelmed. What this tells me more than anything is that God is a God that involves himself in history. That this event that we see with Barrack Obama is not about Obama, it's not about one person. It is about the nation changing. It is about God working in history to do these things. This is where I am now. It is unbelievable what I see now compared to what I saw 50 years ago. This brings me tremendous joy.

**MDCHS:** We know that you go to Africa each year. What type of work do you do there?

**Dr. Threatt:** The work in Africa is a social justice ministry. What we are trying to do is bring about long term systemic change that will affect the welfare of people. That's what it's all about. We have built four elementary schools, two HIV clinics and one teen center. Now we are working on a boarding high school for girls, which is the largest thing we have done to date. All these activities are meant to be long term things that will change and prove to bring about a better life for the people.

**MDCHS:** Which country do you go to?

**Dr. Threatt:** Nigeria. About 54% of the population in Nigeria is Christian. I also go to Ghana and to Senegal for small works.

**MDCHS:** Who organizes the whole trip?

**Dr. Threatt:** It's through a small group called Friends of the Poor. The unique thing about it is that Friends of the Poor is a group of volunteers. That's the amazing thing about it. They are very influential people. They have friends that pay for our funding. They raise the

money and give it to five of us who start the projects and oversee the projects in Africa.

**MDCHS:** How did you get involved with Friends of the Poor?

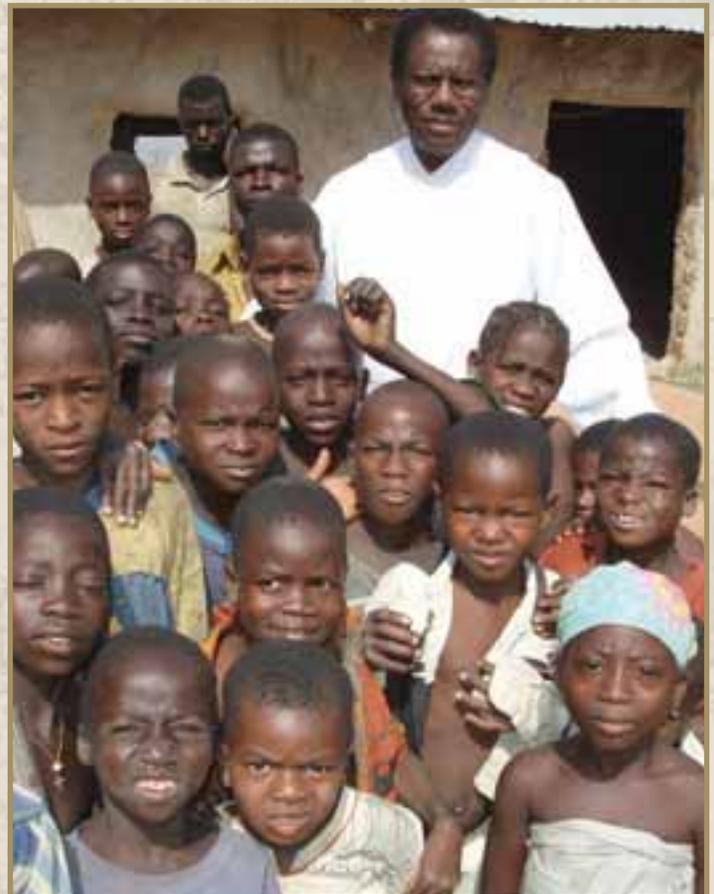
**Dr. Threatt:** The President of Friends of the Poor just asked me. She had heard me preach and one day came in to see me. She asked me if I would go with her to Africa to do this work. I said yes without even thinking about it and it has been going on now since 2002. We have gone every year since 2002.

**MDCHS:** What it is like to see the results of your work?

**Dr. Threatt:** It is unbelievable. Some people think that God is not at work, but God is at work in our everyday life. This work in Africa is proof of God's work here on earth. It's not me, it is God.

**MDCHS:** What piece of advice would you give to your graduating seniors?

**Dr. Threatt:** I would tell the seniors that life will change for you dramatically the minute you walk across that stage, so be prepared at graduation to become an adult and to take on personal responsibility. That's the big thing. You know it's not the same. Once you graduate people see you differently. You are on your own now and you must take responsibility for yourself. The most important thing is get ready to take personal responsibility for your life upon graduation.



# FALL SPORTS

The sports programs at Mater Dei Catholic are continuing to evolve. Now that everyone is acquainted with the new facility, there has been a renewed focus on player and team development. This is exemplified by the incorporation of in season lifting across the Fall sports spectrum. Having our athletes well conditioned and well trained definitely paid off in late season competition this fall. This aspect is especially important since the move to Mesa League. Our teams routinely face schools with enrollments that triple our student body. While there were not as many league champions crowned this fall, the competitiveness of the Crusaders and heart displayed equal that of any previous Fall sports campaigns. With a highly experienced coaching staff, the Crusaders hope to flourish in the new league and develop themselves into perennial contenders for CIF championships.



## FOOTBALL

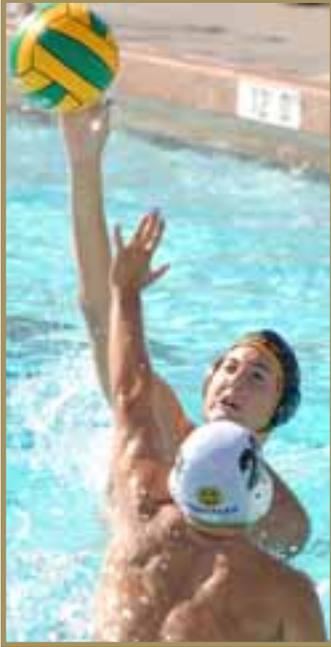
This season the Crusaders faced a very difficult schedule. Seven of the teams on their schedule spent time in the county top 10 this season. Two of their opponents played for a CIF title. This daunting schedule did not deter the Crusaders from coming to work hard every single day. The preseason schedule was designed to give the Crusaders top flight competition so they would be well tested come Mesa League play. Facing the likes of Valhalla and Valley Center the Crusaders finished their non-league schedule 2-3. After a bye week there was no rest for the Crusaders. Chula Vista and Eastlake awaited. While the Crusaders fought diligently, they finished the first part of the schedule with an overall record of 2-5. After the Eastlake game 19 varsity players were all that was left to play against Bonita Vista. And play they did. The Crusaders pulled off the improbable comeback against Bonita Vista and used that momentum to finish third place in league with a 5-5 overall record. Their late season flourish also resulted in a playoff birth and a three seed. Alas, the Crusaders faced a very talented team from Mission Bay and were ousted from the playoffs on their home turf. The results of the playoffs cannot dampen what the Crusaders achieved this season. They proved they belong in the Mesa League and next season will look to improve upon this season's record.

## VOLLEYBALL

The defending South Bay League champions knew that stepping up to the Mesa League would be a much stiffer challenge. This season's squad had a very experienced senior group. This senior leadership was necessary considering the talented group of freshmen who broke onto the varsity squad this season. With the seniors leading the way and the frosh filling the gaps, the Crusaders played very well this season. Throughout league play the Lady Crusaders endured the roller coaster of playing very difficult competition. The crowning achievement for the girls was their thrilling victory over Otay Ranch in the season's penultimate competition. This vaulted them into the playoffs. They hosted their first round and survived a tough match against a team from the desert. Their next match was against a stacked team from The Bishop's School. The Lady Crusaders eventually fell to the CIF finals bound Knights, but not without serving up a valiant effort. Hopefully the difficult schedule of this season will serve as a reminder that their hard work is necessary to compete in the new league.



## BOYS WATER POLO



The Crusaders polo team had a significant rebuilding project this year. They only returned two swimmers from last year's league championship team. The Crusaders battled in the water this year in the South Bay League. While they did not repeat their league title, they did gain valuable experience in the pool. A number of Crusaders were named to the All Mesa League. Junior Sergio Fourzan and sophomore Andrew Thein were named to the First Team All Mesa Team. Junior Kalum Figy was named to the Second Team All Mesa Team and sophomores Mark

Laturno and Raymond Lugo were named Honorable Mention Mesa League. The future for the Crusaders looks bright with a renewed off-season dedication to spending time in the water. This is a team on the upswing.

## CROSS COUNTRY



Perhaps in no other sport on campus did a team feel the brunt of the new league than the Cross Country team. Facing schools with teams four to five times their size, they rarely stood a chance in their Mesa League meets. The Crusaders never lost hope and raced their hardest against the clock to try to improve their individual times. With a large group of underclassmen their hard work, dedication, and experience will be a boon to the team for seasons to come.

## GIRLS TENNIS

The girls' tennis team continued their domination of the south county this year. They won their second consecutive title this season. They are also undefeated in the last two seasons in league play. What an accomplishment! Their season this year included a thrilling victory over Bonita Vista to clinch the Mesa League championship. The girls could be just as strong next year with the return of their major contributors. With CIF qualifiers in singles and doubles, the experience gained on the section level can only mean good things for the girls as they prepare to defend their title next year.



## GIRLS GOLF

The girls' golf team was short on experience but long on dedication. With a lot to learn, the girls went out everyday and played their best. While their results were not always positive they continued to improve on an individual basis. Their scores continued to approach par throughout the season. Junior Perla Laborin was named to the Second Team All Metro Conference. With more practice on the driving range and continued practice rounds, the girls should compete for the title next year.



— Matt White

## STUDENT LIFE



**MDCHS:** What elementary school did you come from and why did you choose to come to Mater Dei?

**Hillmann:** I went to Santa Sophia Academy in Spring Valley and I was planning on going to OLP for my whole life. It was set. Then I heard about Mater Dei in seventh grade and I told my dad they had a nice campus and a theater. At first he said it was too far away. When the 125 opened my dad began to consider it. So we went down to the tour and my parents just fell in love with it! That's how we came to choose Mater Dei.

**MDCHS:** What do you like most about Mater Dei?

**Hillmann:** The people. I've met really great friends here and I love the teachers. Everyone just seems like a big family. I just love the people.

**MDCHS:** How would you describe the Crusader culture if you had to explain what it meant to come here to one of your friends?

**Hillmann:** I really love how everyone is involved with their faith. I love the people. Everyone is really sweet, genuine and welcoming. We are so tight knit, like a family. Everyone knows everyone. Seniors are friends with freshman and freshman are friends with sophomores, juniors. There are teachers that you can always talk to about anything. So I love that we are all so close and like a family.

**MDCHS:** What role does faith play in your life on a daily basis?

**Hillmann:** A huge role. I talk to God all the time, I pray all the time. I'm not wearing it today, but I have one of those Catholic Saints bracelets. I don't ever feel lonely because I always have God to turn to. That's really comforting.

**MDCHS:** Could you tell me a little bit about the community service that you have done here at Mater Dei?

**Hillmann:** This past summer I worked at Whispering Winds with my Church for a weekend. It is a Catholic campsite in Julian where groups go for retreats. I worked as an aid for the kids. It was a lot of work but it was a lot of fun. I volunteer a lot of my time at my Church. I used to altar serve and now I work at the Vocation Bible School as a youth advisor to all the adults so that they can get a little taste of what we, as the children of the Church, want to see more of.

**MDCHS:** Where would you like to attend college?

**Hillmann:** My two dream schools are UCLA and Belmont University in Nashville.

**MDCHS:** Why those two?

**Hillmann:** I have always had a thing for UCLA. I don't know why I just hold it in high esteem. UCLA has a really good music program. Belmont is in Nashville and that's where I want to be. It has an awesome music program and it has a music business program.

**MDCHS:** What do you admire most about your parents?

**Hillmann:** My parents are really strong people. They are really focused, hard working and determined. They don't just let things go and I really want to have that same strength and determination as I grow up. That's something I really look up to.

**MDCHS:** What would you want people to remember about you after you leave Mater Dei in two years?

**Hillmann:** Oh man. I want them to see me on the CMA awards and be like, 'Oh my gosh she went to my school.' But, I really want them to remember me as a dedicated and determined person who is always there to help and who worked hard and who achieved her goals.

**MDCHS:** What are some of the activities you participate in outside of Mater Dei?

**Hillmann:** Well, I'm a singer so I sing. I work with my voice teacher. I was in a girl band, like a vocal group, but I left them because I had to focus on my school work and that was taking a lot of time. Right now I'm recording my demo CD which is 3 original songs and I'm actually flying out to Nashville to record the final version of my single, which is so cool. I'm so excited. I'll be able to take that demo to record labels and that's basically how you get a record contract. I'm doing that right now so I'm singing all the time and writing all the time and that's really what I do.

**MDCHS:** What type of music?

**Hillmann:** Country, Country Rock, kind of like Keith Urban.

**MDCHS:** Do you write the music?

**Hillmann:** I do write a lot of the music, yeah.

**MDCHS:** Which instruments do you play?

**Hillmann:** I play the guitar and the piano.

**MDCHS:** I know you said your goal was to produce your own record. What are your aspirations from there assuming that it happens?

**Hillmann:** Well, if I get a record deal, I would want to record an album and have a bunch of number one hit singles. Then tour and produce more albums and eventually establish myself as a dominant country artist. From there, I want to open my own record company one day and be able to produce my own records and produce other country artists.

**MDCHS:** What makes you different from most performers that people would not know?

**Hillmann:** That I am a songwriter. I think that is really important because I think it brings more to the artist when they actually write their own material. I write about everything and I play my own music and of course I sing. It really is my life. It is what I want to do. I always say that my guitar is my best friend. My guitar knows more about me than I do because I write so much on it.

**MDCHS:** What is your greatest academic accomplishment so far in your year and a half at Mater Dei?

**Hillmann:** Well, really my proudest achievement so far was getting the scholarship after taking the entrance exam. Ranking in the top 5 was really cool and I didn't expect that at all. I am also proud to be maintaining a 4.5 GPA.





## BRANDON TRUFFA

# STUDENT LIFE

**MDCHS:** What elementary school did you come from and why did you choose to come to Mater Dei?

**Truffa:** I went to Fletcher Hills Elementary School. It's a public school and I chose to come to Mater Dei because my parents wanted me to get a better education since I went to a public elementary and middle school.

**MDCHS:** So why did you choose Mater Dei as opposed to the other private schools?

**Truffa:** Well, actually it's a funny story. We were looking at Saints and I actually applied to Saints and got on the waiting list for Saints. And then we started looking at Cathedral and other schools. Then my mom found a school called Marian. So we went to Marian and we didn't like it at all. We didn't like the whole campus and we just thought it was in a really bad area. So we went there and just left. And then that night my mom was looking on the internet and she found Mater Dei's campus map. She started looking into it and then went back to Marian and found out that they had the map there. We found out that Marian became Mater Dei and that's how we found out about Mater Dei.

**MDCHS:** What do you like most about Mater Dei?

**Truffa:** I like the campus the most and the kids are a lot nicer than at public school. In public school the kids are a lot more uncontrollable. Here they are a little more laid back and under control because you have to earn your spot in the school. In public school you do not have to earn your spot.

**MDCHS:** What activities do you participate in here at Mater Dei?

**Truffa:** I am a member of the Ambassador for Christ Corps and I also play golf.

**MDCHS:** How do you like being a part of the Ambassador for Christ Corps program?

**Truffa:** It's really cool because you get to meet a lot of interesting people. I've met some people from Japan and you don't meet people from Japan everyday. The real message is you get to express what you feel about Christ in your life. That to me is really special because I get to tell people how Christ applies to my life every single day.

**MDCHS:** How would you describe the Crusader culture if you had to explain what it was like to come here to one of your friends?

**Truffa:** I'd say it is a very spirited school and religious school. This school is more of a family. We have a lot of alumni around, so we have people who have been in the class of 1972 come back and see a ball game in 2008 or 2009. That's pretty cool to see people from the past in the present now.

**MDCHS:** Can you tell me a little bit about the types of community service that you have done during your time at Mater Dei?

**Truffa:** For my service hours I actually worked with Children's Hospital for an organization called CHI Fund, which is an organization that my mom actually started with a couple other moms of heart patients. They throw a gala every year to help raise money for the heart institute and it's really cool because I get to give back to all the

doctors and all the surgeons that helped save my life. Last year I sold over \$1,000 in raffle tickets and presented an award to a doctor. I have also spoken at numerous events about my heart and I talk to the little kids who have had surgeries at the gala.

**MDCHS:** You mentioned that you have had some heart surgeries. Could you tell me a little bit more about what happened?

**Truffa:** My mom has all of the real details. When I was born there were some major problems with my heart and was immediately rushed to Children's Hospital. I had heart surgeries at 2 days old, 5 days old, 18 months old, 3 years old and then 5 years old. After the last surgery, they said they had fixed it all and hopefully I will not have to have another surgery. Every time I go back they say I'm doing better and better each year. Basically the problem was that my heart was born on my right side of my body with two chambers. They fixed it all and made it all work.

**MDCHS:** What do you admire most about your parents?

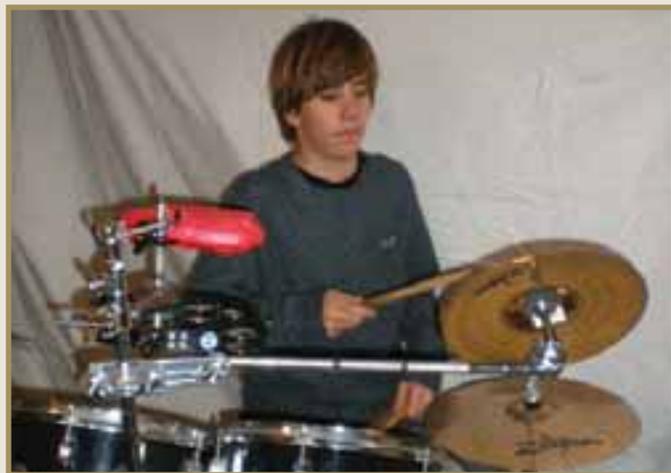
**Truffa:** I admire them because they push me to do more than my best. They know what I am capable of doing and if I'm doing less, they push me to do more. They are always trying to get me to do better and to have fun at the same time. They always tell me to have fun because this is your only life and why not just have fun. They tell me to do the things that normal people wouldn't do and not to live my life in a cave.

**MDCHS:** How have your medical concerns changed your perspective on life?

**Truffa:** I just think it's a miracle. I am really grateful that I am able to wake up and know that I don't have to take any medication. I don't have to worry about something happening at school and having to be taken to the hospital.

**MDCHS:** What is the most valuable thing you have learned at Mater Dei?

**Truffa:** Always trust God. Always. That's one thing I can carry throughout my life. Always trust God and never give up on God. He might not do what you want, but it might be good for you in the future. If you are asking God for something like wanting the Chargers to win and they don't, then it might be that God may have them on the list to win in 2011. You never know. But always trust in God because He may be saving up his powers to do something better for you in the future.





# CAMPUS MINISTRY



## CAMPUS RETREATS

It is in the quiet of our hearts that we encounter the Lord most profoundly. In order to enable the students to grow closer to Christ in their spiritual journey, Campus Ministry hosts class retreats. The freshman and sophomore retreats are during the school day on campus. The Junior and Senior retreats are overnight and are held off-site.

This year, our theme for Campus Ministry is “God is calling, will you answer?” Each individual retreat applies this theme in a unique way. The freshman retreat, on September 18-19, had the theme: “God is calling you to community, will you answer?” The speakers, skits and discussion groups focused on what it means to be a part of the Mater Dei Catholic community and the negative effects that peer pressure and cliques can have on the unity of the school. The freshmen enjoyed the day and it ended with Mass celebrated by our chaplain, Fr. Pat Mulcahy.

The theme of the sophomore retreat, held on November 20-21, was “God is calling you to respect yourself, will you answer?” The day began with several great talks, skits and small groups focusing on self-esteem and the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse. In the afternoon, the girls and guys split up for presentations on the Dignity of Womanhood and the Dignity of Manhood, respectively. Two Mater Dei alumnae, Jazmynn Himan and Nina Baumgardner spoke with the girls and Fr. Anthony Saroki, Diocesan Director of Vocations, spoke with the guys. Many students experienced God in a deeper way through the presence of the Holy Spirit.

Overall, the retreats were a great success this semester and the campus ministers and myself are looking forward to the junior and senior retreats in the spring.

– Chris Schnitzius



## YOUNG LEADERS OF TOMORROW



Michelle Andreoli '12 was selected as one of the 12 national winners of the Young Leaders of Tomorrow contest sponsored by Catholic Digest and QSP, the educational fundraising arm of Time Inc. Michelle was recognized on the basis of her strong leadership skills, positive attitude, impeccable character and deep commitment to her faith. Each recipient was awarded a \$2,000 scholarship given jointly by Catholic Digest and QSP.

# STUDENT LIFE

## SCHOOL SPIRIT

The Associated Student Body of Mater Dei Catholic High School can be described as an inventive, hard working team. With Toni Vasquez as the President, she leads our team and poses as a positive influence for the whole school. Each person within the Associated Student Body reveals their own special talents through the jobs they pursue. Whether it be playing the upbeat music at rallies or making the lively posters to advertise the school's upcoming events, each member works hard at their job. The ASB of Mater Dei Catholic High School ensures the well being of their fellow classmates. They make sure that the school functions are fun, while posing as a positive, Christ-centered event for everyone to witness. They are the leaders of the school who guide one another through each obstacle they encounter, always making sure that everyone will get involved. The skills that they learn in ASB not only apply to MDCHS, but also apply to their everyday lives and will benefit them in their future after high school. Each ASB member strives to be the best they can be, for themselves and the school.

Some of the activities that the ASB provides for their fellow students are dollar jeans day, culture night and many activities focused around upcoming holidays. Two ASB events that we really focus on during the year are Homecoming and Prom. The ASB plans the schedule of events every day of the week and then organizes the rallies in the gym to ignite school spirit throughout the school. While focusing on giving the students an enjoyable atmosphere at these dances, we also focus on each person's safety and well being during these times.



One event that the ASB is particularly proud of is the giving of presents and snacks to our soldiers in Iraq. The ASB gathered as much food and amenities as they could to give to these soldiers for the Christmas holidays. This event, by far, was one of the most heart-felt and gracious things that we as the ASB team had ever done. It made the holidays extra special for all of us.

The ASB Team prides ourselves on being team players and trying to make the Mater Dei Catholic Campus the best place for all of our students. Go Crusaders!

—Christine Bayaca '09



The Annual Student Walkathon was held on Friday, November 7. This event benefits the Student Financial Aid Fund with over \$25,000 raised this year. The top student money raiser, Alan Stahl '11, turned in pledges of over \$1,000 and won a lap top computer.



# second semester ACADEMIC HONORS

**FIRST HONORS** – a grade point average of 3.8 and above

## SENIORS

Violeta B. Arista-Palacios  
 Matthew B. Atchley  
 Gene I. Barroga Jr.  
 Diego A. Chig  
 Susan Dabdoub  
 Janine A. Dacayo  
 Mario Delgadillo  
 Frances Leane A. Fernandez  
 Axel Gonzalez  
 Genevieve M. Guarnes  
 Jesus Emmanuel Gutierrez-Nunez  
 Ebone N. Henry  
 Adriana Hernandez  
 Danae N. Johnson  
 Soo-Jin Kim  
 Luisa M. Lopez  
 Ailin M. Mendez  
 Paulina M. Millan  
 Christina M. Padilla  
 Michael A. Rodriguez  
 Andres Schramm-Flores  
 Toni R. Vasquez  
 Judah Villescascas  
 Laura F. Watts-Cesena  
 Vanessa L. Wood  
 Diane Zoura

## JUNIORS

Dianne K. Acevedo  
 Rafael Blanco  
 Mariana Burkle  
 Rafael E. Carrillo-Baylon  
 Jasmine B. Cota  
 Lilia G. Covarrubias  
 Kacy R. Espinoza  
 Sergio A. Fourzan  
 Mariana Gomez  
 Lucia Gonzalez  
 Marie Elaine Y. Guilas  
 Andrew R. Haines  
 Erickson P. Julve  
 Nora A. Leyva  
 Alicia M. Lopez  
 Alfredo Lucero-Canaan  
 Andrea Lucero-Canaan  
 Patrick R. Mayor  
 Andrea A. Navarro  
 Paola Odriozola  
 Carolina Ortega  
 Diana L. Paredes  
 Alejandra Y. Perez-Madriral  
 Erica N. Petway  
 Maria Cassandra P. Pimentel  
 Yazmin Razon  
 Johanna V. Rhein  
 Michel E. Sanchez  
 Marto Winata  
 Miranda M. Zora

## SOPHOMORES

Jessica M. Baumgardner  
 Samantha N. Baxley  
 Ariel R. Cabrera  
 Ivan A. Camara  
 Valeria L. Cardenas  
 Michael Joseph N. Carton  
 Alison S. Castaneda  
 Chelsea A. Chenelle  
 Daniela Corona  
 Sergio Fernandez  
 Claudio Gage  
 Diego-Emilio Galan  
 Kristin Nicole V. Gonzales  
 Elizabeth Gonzalez  
 Christine M. Hillmann  
 Anthony R. Jaquez-Moreno  
 Andrea Martinez-Casillas  
 Jose M. Martinez-Rebollar  
 Theodore D. Matula Jr.  
 Maryel Quintero  
 Ricardo Rosales  
 Jose M. Rosillo  
 Isela A. Ruiz  
 Carla G. Sanchez  
 Carolina Silva  
 Raul T. Silva-Martinez  
 Isabel Stonehouse  
 Alicia X. Wang  
 Christopher K. Weller

## FRESHMEN

Mariana Barrera  
 Angela J. Beck  
 Leslie Bustillo-Moreno  
 Edith Camargo  
 Karla P. Castro  
 Theresa E. Chiappe  
 Daniela Contreras  
 Mallory K. Davenport  
 Sofia D. De La Garza  
 Kenny Espinoza  
 Caleb A. Galvez

Alexa A. Garcia  
 Jocelyn Garcia  
 Victor A. Gonzalez  
 Stephanie G. Grimaldi  
 Ilse A. Gutierrez-Nunez  
 Jeff Q. Guzman  
 Thomas L. Hahn  
 Alexis M. Hawley  
 Vannia C. Hernandez  
 Hollie Keene  
 Cristina N. Kelbaugh

Stephanie A. Licht  
 Maritza A. Lopez-Portillo  
 Viviana Marchena-Pompa  
 Alejandro Marquez-Escobedo  
 John T. Matranga  
 Haley J. Mendoza  
 Brandon D. Nguyen  
 Teresa M. Padilla  
 Eva Mariana Perez-Cecenas  
 Angela M. Reyes  
 Ariana Rodriguez

Jonathan E. Rodriguez  
 Nina Riana B. Salazar  
 Sabrina R. Scott  
 Paola Torres  
 Brianna R. Truffa  
 Andres Velderrain  
 Xavier A. Villanueva  
 Thomas P. Wright  
 Michelle L. Zoura

# ALUMNI NEWS

Since the beginning of this school year, the Crusader Alumni Association has been busy with various events that are geared to fellow alums in hopes of providing a venue for alumni to socialize and give something back to the Home of the Crusaders. Please contact Erika Briz '98, Alumni Association President, if you would like to get more involved in the Alumni Association at EBriz@SempraUtilities.com.



Homecoming this year saw an alumni pre-game tailgate at the Kateri' Café where today's Crusaders have lunch every day at school. Over 150 alumni and their families enjoyed a full tailgate menu and a chance to join fellow alumni prepare themselves for the homecoming game. The Alumni Association set up an "Alumni Zone" on the north end of the home seating area and provided a place for alumni to view the game and enjoy the friendship of fellow alums. The Class of 1989 sold Crusader Alumni shirts and other items, with proceeds being donated back to the school. The proceeds are designated for an Alumni Scholarship, to be given to a future student of a Crusader Alum.

## COSMIC BOWLING

For the fifth year, the Thomas Otte '77 Memorial Cosmic Bowling event took place at the Brunswick Bowl, in Chula Vista, on Saturday, November 15. Over 180 students and a number of alumni joined in the fun with profits being used to help defray the cost of Alumni tee-shirts given by the Alumni Association to graduating seniors.

## CLASS OF '64

This year, the Class of 1964 will be celebrating their 45th reunion. They have been invited back to sit on the dais with the graduating seniors of 2009 on June 12.



## GEORGE MILKE into the HALL OF FAME



George Milke, Marian Class of 1972, was inducted into the Crusader Hall of Fame as a member of the 2008 Class, at a student body gathering at Mater Dei Catholic High School, on Wednesday, January 28, 2009. George was a varsity letterman in football, basketball and baseball at Marian and a Collegiate Baseball World Series MVP in 1974 for the University of Southern California. George returned to Marian in the fall of 1985 as a faculty member and coach. He was appointed Principal of Marian in 2004 and remains Principal of Mater Dei.

George was a varsity letterman in football, basketball and baseball at Marian and a Collegiate Baseball World Series MVP in 1974 for the University of Southern California. George returned to Marian in the fall of 1985 as a faculty member and coach. He was appointed Principal of Marian in 2004 and remains Principal of Mater Dei.



# ALUMNI IN THE SPOTLIGHT

## MAURICE LUQUE

**Maurice Luque graduated from Marian High School in 1965. Maurice has worked in public affairs and media services throughout his career. Currently he is the Media Services Manager for the San Diego Fire-Rescue Department.**



**MDCHS:** What do you remember most about the spirit of your class at Marian High School?

**Mr. Luque:** Well, we looked at ourselves kind of like pioneers. We were the second graduating class. We did the best we could with what we had there and it was fun. There was a closeness, not only among ourselves as students, but with the faculty. We appreciated the almost one on one attention we received. It was fun to get up and go to school because of the closeness, that family feeling, that existed. That's what I remember.

**MDCHS:** What teacher or administrator inspired you the most at Marian?

**Mr. Luque:** Without a doubt, Father Leo Lanphier. Leo Lanphier was one of those people I had deep respect for, but at the same time I considered him a friend long after I graduated. Father Lanphier was head of the drama department. If I owe anyone for being successful in my career, it's Leo Lanphier and the drama department. I was in a number of plays and musicals doing things I never would have thought of doing in front of anybody. It gave me a lot of self-confidence and I got a lot of it from the coaching I received from him and the support I got from the students that were part of the drama department with me. It was a great experience and it gave me a lot of self confidence in my ability to present myself and in my ability to address large groups of people. It paid big dividends to the rest of my education and now into my career.

**MDCHS:** What is one piece of advice that you would give to current Crusaders?

**Mr. Luque:** Have manners, I think it is very important. To be successful, people need to understand the importance of respect and having manners. People need to learn how to listen during the

initial stages of getting started in a job rather than talking. I would advise students to thoroughly listen to what others are saying and to never underestimate the power of a thank you. I think in this age of competitiveness and aggressiveness sometimes those things are forgotten and I don't think that helps somebody get further in their career. I think the other thing to do is to look for opportunities, don't wait for opportunities to present themselves to you. Look for those opportunities, seek them out and make yourself indispensable and find ways to make yourself valuable. Businesses, organizations and municipal agencies are going have to make some hard decisions on personnel in this recession. They are going to keep the people that get results, the people that are the team players, the people that want to work hard, the people that do work hard. Those are the people who are going to survive in situations like this. These financial things are cyclical, they'll come and they'll go, but if somebody is looking for stability and advancement, I think they have to be consistent with how they approach it. I think seeking opportunities and maximizing opportunities, along with having manners are two of the keys to success.

**MDCHS:** You currently serve as the Media Services Manager for the San Diego Fire and Rescue Department. What aspect of your job do you enjoy most?

**Mr. Luque:** Informing and being a means of educating people about the emergency responses done by fire fighters, paramedics and other emergency personnel, including life guards. I enjoy educating the public about those things, advising and informing the public of the kinds of services that are provided on a day in and day out 7/24 hour basis for the citizens of this region.

**MDCHS:** What is a typical day like in your job?

**Mr. Luque:** You know there is no typical day. There is no typical day in my job at all and that is what I love most about it. I can wake up one day or be awakened by a page or phone call about some major incident like I was a couple of days ago when the jet crashed into the homes over in University City. I was sitting down at lunch with another fire chief from the North County Agency and I got that call. My routine is never routine and it can start at any hour of the day or night in terms of part of my role, which is to respond to emergency incidents and serve as the department liaison to the community.

**MDCHS:** What would you say is your proudest accomplishment so far?

# IN THE SPOTLIGHT

**Mr. Luque:** My proudest accomplishment I believe is successfully maximizing the opportunities that were presented to me or that I sought out for myself and achieved. By that I mean everybody needs a break to get a start, but it is what you do with that opportunity. I have been blessed with an education and supportive parents and my belief in God to make me strong and to enable me to take advantage of these opportunities in my life and in my career, for that I am very thankful. I don't take it for granted at all. Everyday I thank God that I have been able to be successful. No one makes it on their own.



**MDCHS:** Who is the most interesting person that you have met at your job or in your career?

**Mr. Luque:** I would have to say that one of the people that really helped me at an early stage and gave me confidence, was supportive of me and helped me was Father Leo Lanphier at Marian. He was a very knowledgeable and approachable person. I learned a lot from him. He became a good friend well after I left Marian.

**MDCHS:** What has been the most challenging day professionally?

**Mr. Luque:** I think I have had a couple challenging situations with the Cedar Fires in 2003 and the Wild Fires of 2007. I was involved with both of those from a public information, media communications stand point. Both of those situations were very, very challenging mentally and physically. In both cases I was up three and four days straight handling media calls with other responsibilities related to the support efforts that I provided the command center. With the Cedar Fire, it was my first day on the job. I had left one job to take two weeks vacation before I started my new one at the fire rescue department. And it was during the two week vacation that the fires broke out. I figured for me to walk into the fire rescue department two weeks later after the fires were out wouldn't work too well with the culture like the fire department. I called in early and told them I was ready to start early if they needed me. They said they needed me and that's how I started my first day on the job. Four years later with the start of the Wild Fires in 2007 was another huge challenge. It was a weekend and we were on high



alert. When the fires started breaking in the east county we knew they were headed into the city of San Diego. With that potential I made some calls, again I did not wait to be called. So that was a start to a week that was quite challenging. So I have to say that both of those fires, Cedar Fires of 2003 and Wild Fires of 2007, were probably the most challenging days of my career.

**MDCHS:** I saw a picture of you with Governor Schwarzenegger. Did you have much contact with him in either one of the fires?

**Mr. Luque:** During the Wild Fires of 2007, one of my many responsibilities was to brief the media as well as elected officials about the fires; including what the status of it was, what progress was being made, what the challenges were, what was the loss figure in terms of lives if any, what number of structures had been damaged and what was the prognosis for getting the fire put out. In the course of doing that Governor Schwarzenegger made a visit to one of our staging areas and one of my responsibilities was to brief the Governor about the status of the fires.

**MDCHS:** What role does faith play in your life on a daily basis?

**Mr. Luque:** Not a day goes by that I'm not grateful and that I don't thank God in some way or another for the gifts and opportunities that have presented themselves to me in my lifetime. I go to church every Saturday evening so I can go surfing all day on Sunday. I run about 5/6 miles everyday and it's during that run every morning that I reach a certain hill and I see the eastern skyline and I always thank God for my health and my ability to be out there at 61 running like I am and to have the job I have and the life that I've had. Everyday I do that. That is one moment of my run that I take the time to thank Him for everything that I have been blessed with.





# ALUMNI NEWS

## 32nd Annual Golf Tournament



The 32nd Annual Crusader Golf Tournament was held on Sunday, November 2, at the Bonita Golf Club with 140 golfers (including 26 alumni or future alumni) participating in the Four Person Best Ball Scramble format. A silent auction and raffle took place before dinner. The team led by current parent, Ignacio Martinez, father of three, current alumni, Nacho '05, Allison '07 and David '08, and two future Crusaders, Alex '11 and Carolina '13, won the tournament with his teammates Ted Bohler, Rick Schneider and Gene Bianchi. The team of current Crusader golf members, David Moreno '09, Octavio Fernandez-Simon '09, Cesar Ybarra '10 and Jose Labastida '11, came in second and the alumni team of Tom Judge '78, Paul Kelly '78, Dan Trybulski '78 and Mike Stockalper '77, won third place honors. Proceeds from the event were designated for the Student Financial Aid Fund at MDCHS.

– Bill Gerken

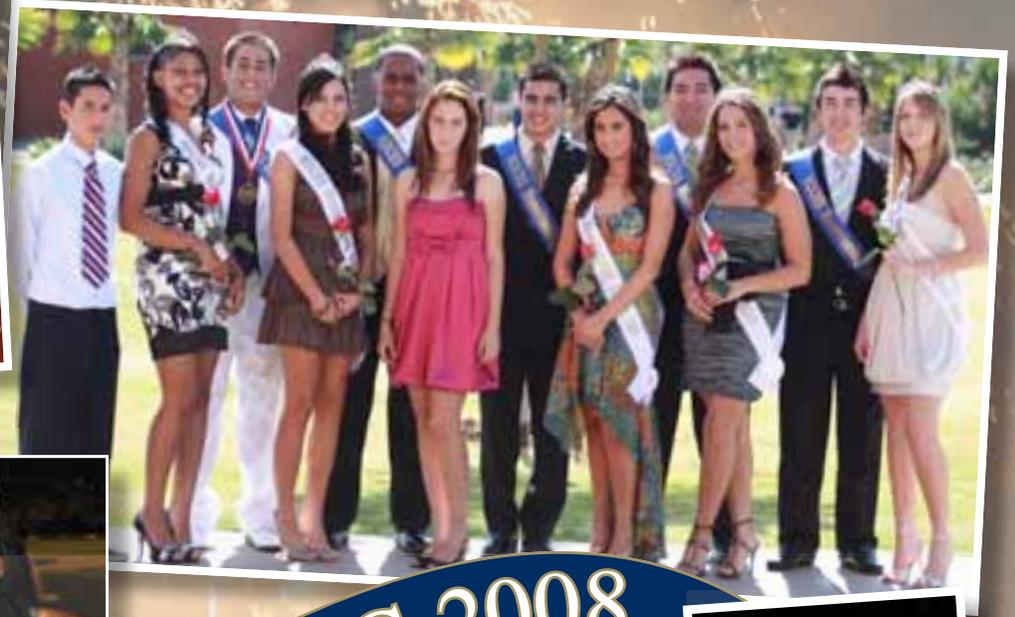
## ADVANCEMENT

To those of you who have already contributed to this year's Annual Crusade, we sincerely and gratefully thank you. To those of you who are considering a gift, please do so with the full consideration of the impact your gift will have on the students of Mater Dei. The Annual Crusade runs from July 1 to June 30 of each school year and includes all of our fundraising efforts which help augment our school's operating budget. So far to date the Annual Crusade has raised over \$180,000 from 261 donors. As we approach the end of our fiscal year, please consider your support of Mater Dei as particularly meaningful, knowing that your gift is truly one that will impact lives for years to come.

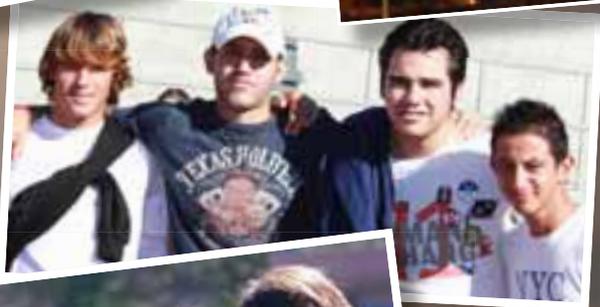
One of the exciting ways that you can help us is by considering the 20/20 Vision Program. When you enroll in the 20/20 Vision Program you pledge to make a \$20/month contribution for 20 months. When your pledge is completed, we will have a special memorial Mass where you will be invited to have a friend or relative memorialized both during the Mass and on a commemorative brick paver behind Marian Chapel on the Mater Dei campus. We hope it will be a meaningful way for our community to gather in prayer each year to remember someone that has influenced their lives. All donors who have given over \$400 this fiscal year or who have completed their 20/20 pledge will be invited to the Memorial Mass on June 20, 2009. All gifts received in response to this campaign will be recognized in the annual report that will be produced this summer. To properly recognize our many donors, we have decided to inaugurate Annual Crusade giving levels as follows:

|                             |                          |                      |                      |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>President's Society</b>  | <b>\$5,000 +</b>         | <b>Crusader Club</b> | <b>\$100 - \$399</b> |
| <b>Founder's Circle</b>     | <b>\$1,000 - \$4,999</b> | <b>Friend</b>        | <b>Up to \$99</b>    |
| <b>Blue &amp; Gold Club</b> | <b>\$400 - \$1,000</b>   |                      |                      |

Please feel free to contact John Rey with any questions at (619) 621-5705 or at [jrey@materdeicatholic.org](mailto:jrey@materdeicatholic.org).  
Thanks for your continued support of Mater Dei Catholic High School.



# HOMECOMING 2008



# 2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## march

- 3 10th Grade Registration
- 4 11th Grade Registration
- 5 12th Grade Registration
- 10-12 9th Grade Registration
- 27-28 Drama Production,  
*Voices From Within II*

## april

- 1 Career Day
- 6-17 EASTER BREAK  
– School & Offices Closed
- 23 National Honor Society Ceremony

## may

- 1 “FIESTA ON THE GREEN”  
– Parent Social Event
- 6 Grandparents Day Liturgy/May Crowning
- 15-22 ASB Elections
- 16 Senior/Junior Prom
- 22 Senior Class ESLR Presentations  
NO SCHOOL FOR GRADES 9-10-11
- 27 Spring Awards Ceremony
- 28 Senior Grad Night at Disneyland

## june

- 4-11 Senior Final Exams
- 11 Final Exams Begin for Grades 9-10-11  
Baccalaureate Mass
- 12 GRADUATION
- 20 Alumni Memorial Mass
- 29 Summer Session Begins



**Mater Dei Catholic High School**  
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[www.materdeicatholic.org](http://www.materdeicatholic.org)

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