



## Alum Joins Religious Order

Megan Spelic '05 SMM alum, graduated from Benedictine College in May 2013 with a Bachelors degree in Mass Communications/minor in Theology. She then entered the Little Sisters of the Poor in October 2013. In July 2014, she was officially received into the Novitiate and took the religious name of Sr. Bernadette Rose. She is now beginning her 2nd year as a novice with the Little Sisters and continues to reside at St. Ann's Novitiate in Queens Village, NY. The Little Sisters of the Poor are an international congregation of Roman Catholic women religious founded in 1839 by St. Jeanne Jugan. They serve the elderly poor in over 30 countries around the world. Bill & Denise Spelic, her parents



Megan Spelic, far left, with Pope Francis when he visited New York.

said, "We always believed we were truly blessed to belong to the SMM community. Kudos to Catholic education and thanks SMM for the great solid foundation in our faith. Hello to Mrs. Grennan and the staff!"

## Alum Returns to SMM



It is good to be home! As the new Vocations Director for the Archdiocese, it is a particular pleasure to be able to live in the very place that I began to first hear my own call to the priesthood. My name is Fr. Andrew Roza, and I went to grade school at St. Margaret Mary, was involved in the youth group as a high school student, and have always claimed the parish as my home. While parish duties will not be my first priority, I am really looking forward to being able to celebrate Mass and assist here, knowing full well the humbling reality that I will often be preaching to people who helped raise me!

After graduating from SMM, I went to Prep and graduated in the class of '99. I then spent two years at UNO before entering seminary and going to Columbus, Ohio where I graduated with a major in Philosophy and a minor in Hispanic Studies. I then went to Rome for my theology studies. After being ordained and completing my theological education, I served for six years as a full-time chaplain, teacher, and campus minister at Scotus Central Catholic in Columbus, NE. I loved my time there with the students and their families! This past year I served as the Associate Pastor at St. Robert Bellarmine here in Omaha, and came to a much deeper appreciation of the value and need for parish priests. My position now will involve helping guide our current seminarians, being available in a particular way to those young people who are considering priesthood and religious life, and lending a hand with Campus Ministry at UNO. Thanks for the many ways that you have already supported and blessed me.

- Fr. Roza



Coach Malliard poses with the winning team consisting of from left to right, Morrissey, Muelleman, Bresnahan, Detlinger, Dytrych & Paul.

Next Tourney  
 THIS  
 December!

**In the Loop...Do you have an interesting update on an SMM alum...**

Or other news or memories to share? We welcome your additions to the newsletter. Please send to alumni@smmomaha.org.

We are accepting memorials, honors & donations. Please send to: St. Margaret Mary School 6116 Dodge Street Omaha, NE 68132

## School Wish List

There are so many ways you can help SMM. Currently we are in need of carpet and painting in all the classrooms.

If you would like to help with these items please send a contribution to: SMM, Attn: Peggy Grennan/Wish List 123 N. 61st St, Omaha, NE 68132.

Your support and any donation is greatly appreciated!

## St. Margaret Mary Spirit

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**SMM & Social Media: Attention SMM Alumni a new Facebook Page has been launched featuring current activities at the day school and accomplishments of our alumni. Please like us and follow all the amazing achievements of the past and present Spartans. The Facebook page is St. Margaret Mary - SMM Omaha Alumni. Also don't forget to follow us on Twitter @SMMschoolOmaha.**



## Upcoming Reunions

Following are the classes that have upcoming milestone reunions in 2016:

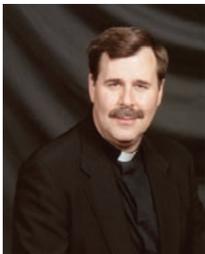
- 2006- 10 yr.; 1996 - 20 yr.; 1986 - 30 yr.; 1976 - 40 yr.; 1966 - 50 yr.; 1956 - 60 yr.
- 40 If you would be interested in planning a reunion for your class please email: alumni@smmomaha.org.

**You are Invited to SMM's Founder's Day  
 Eat, Pray, Laugh on January 29, 2016  
 Held at Creighton Prep - featuring comedian Johnny Beehar. Call 402-689-7750 for details.**

## 2nd Annual Alum Basketball Tournament

Over the fourth of July weekend SMM held its 2nd Annual Alumni Mens Basketball Tournament. In the championship game team 2006, led by Mike Detlinger's 35 points and Kevin Dytrych's 19 points beat back team 2013 by a score of 75 to 61. Team 2006 took control late in the first half when foul trouble forced 2013 to try and play small ball. Team 2013 was led by Sean Toohey's 19 points and Liam Keating's 12. In the consolation game team 2005, led by Sam Setter's 34 points (9 for 11 from the 3-point line), rallied from 12 down to beat team 2007 66-63.

From now on the Alumni Tournament will be moved to its permanent spot, December 26-27-28. It was felt that these dates would find more players in town. So there will be a 2nd tourney this year, the 3rd Annual Alumni Tourney will be played over the Christmas holiday. If you are interested in playing, contact Denny Maillard at: marilynmal@aol.com.



## From the Pastor

By Father Greg Baxter

Dear St. Margaret Mary School Alumni,

The autumn of the year is settling in and the students of St. Margaret Mary School are hard at work with faith formation, academic studies, and extracurricular activities and are succeeding in many and various ways.

Academically they are outperforming students statewide and nationally on standardized academic achievement tests. While this is an important and valuable measure of their success, what will ultimately make a difference in the end is the value of the Catholic moral life they develop, and their ability to think, analyze and come up with good faith based decisions when faced with challenges now and in the future.

While we are paying close attention to the individual needs and formation of our own students, we impress upon them the importance of lending a helping hand of service to others. Creating responsible leaders of the future requires opening students' eyes, minds, and hearts to the needs of the complex world in which they live. The parents, faculty, and staff of St. Margaret Mary School are to be commended for their diligence in providing a quality Catholic formation for our children.

These are indeed exciting days at St. Margaret Mary School, but without you, our alumni, what is happening today could never have happened. We stand on your shoulders, you who came before us, benefiting from the sacrifices and dreams of those who nourished and nurtured the seeds that have so wonderfully taken root. We continue to rely on you for our future success.

I thank all of you who have donated so generously to enable our school to face the challenges of the present and the future. I will remember you in my prayers, asking God to continue to bless you and your families.

Sincerely, *Fr. Greg*



A photo from the archives! This is a wedding at SMM in 1942 before the bell tower. Do you have photos from

SMM to share from any decade? We would love to see them. Send them to: [dschinzelsmmomaha.org](mailto:dschinzelsmmomaha.org)

## Spartan Sports

The 2014-15 basketball season was a great success. We had 125 kids sign up from grades 5th through 8th. The 7th and 8th grade boys teams took the PAL league and many other teams were very competitive. As usual, the SMM Basketball Tournament was heavily attended with many kids entering the 3 point contest and several people tried their luck at shoot for the loot. We are looking forward to another fun, competitive season this year.

Football 2015 was a year of getting better and better for the varsity. The Spartans knocked off a very good St. Thomas More team and the South Division champion, St. Albert on their way to the PAL championship game. The 7-2 Spartans continued to build on the school record; 42 of 43 winning football seasons.

Volleyball saw an increase in popularity in 2014 that has continued into the 2015 season. With the retirement of George Stryker, Scott Haag and his committee look to build on the tradition they inherited while infusing some new ideas.

Smm also had 309 kids and 49 adult volunteer coaches participate in soccer this year. There were 23 teams for grades 1 through 8 involving 240 kids. 8 teams of preschool and kindergarten kids involving 69 players, played micro soccer at SMM.

These are volleyball uniform shirts found in the equipment cage at SMM school. We think that they're from the early 80s. The eighth-grade girls got them out and wore them for a weekend of their volleyball games. They thought it would be fun to know what year they're from and see pictures of the original owners wearing them. If you recognize these jerseys and have any info. or photos let us know!



## Notable Alum Accomplishments

Smm 1970 Alum Rachel Dowd first went to the Dominican Republic as a Creighton Nursing Student to work with the poor of that country. In 2010, after an earthquake in Haiti, Rachel returned to work with Dr Filipi on his not for profit Medical and surgical programs for the poor.

Sean and Ryan Tate, SMM 2011 and Prep 2015 were on the swim team all 4 years at Prep - The Prep swim team was State champions all 4 years. Sean is at Duke University on a swimming scholarship and Ryan is at Northwestern University on a swimming Scholarship. Congratulations!

Congratulations to 4 SMM Alumnae at Marian High School who were inducted into Rho Kappa National Social Studies Honor Society. The inductees include: Cecilia London, Hannah Uhl, Sydney Miller and Sara Flaxbeard.



## From the Principal

By Peggy Grennan

To Our Wonderful Alums,

Our theme this year is Believe There Is Good in the World -Be the Good! The classrooms are figuring out ways to live our theme: How can they-- help others, pray for others, care for others, raise funds for others, be kind to others, teach others, play with others, encourage others, support others, and love others. These are all ways we can Be the Good!

New Teacher and Staff this year: Kindergarten, Ms. Kelly O'Brien, Teacher, Kindergarten part-time TAs: Ms. Erin Moses, Mrs. Mary Tarsney Kelly '82, Mrs. Kara Collins, & Mrs. Bernie Dorsey Bresnahan (former SMM kindergarten teacher!) 4th grade TA, Mrs. Margie Fecci and Jr. High TA, Mrs. Diana Rehn.

Teachers, students, families and friends have been praying for seventh grade classmate, Michael Spitzenberger, who is battling ALL Leukemia. Please keep him in your prayers. His mother is Kara Knox Spitzenberger '84.

Highlights:

- The crisp fall air is invigorating everyone – especially the PE classes. They are learning how to play the games of lacrosse and disc golf this fall.
- The 3rd grade performed their music program The More We Know to a packed house.
- The kindergarten has been to the pumpkin patch and attended their first all-school Mass.
- 2nd grade is preparing for their First Reconciliation in November.
- Grades 3, 4 & 5 are exploring their new Journeys reading series.
- Grades 6, 7 & 8 are delving into Vocabulary Workshop
- K-8 continue working on their writing skills. It's so fun to walk down the halls and read the different stories that adorn the walls. They're learning some good tips on how to revise their content, utilizing Bella Criare Scriveri ©
- We have two artists-in-residence teaching this year. Many thanks to Carey Hernandez and Megan Brudney '03, for sharing their gifts with us! Our next step is getting an Art Room built!
- Work is underway for our school's strategic plan and our accreditation visit next year.
- Our school has become a Monarch Butterfly Weigh Station this year. 3rd grade teacher, Mrs. Kate Rezac, received a grant from the NCEA to build a butterfly garden, grow butterflies, then tag and release them. Students also capture visiting butterflies--- tagging and releasing them. We're learning about migration patterns, the growth process of a butterfly, the importance of math, and how to take care of God's creation. Follow us on Facebook at St. Margaret Mary Monarch Meadow or Twitter @MonarchMeadow.

Thank you for keeping us in your prayers,

*Peggy Grennan*

## Alum Fr. Ned Cassem Remembered

Fr. Ned Cassem, S.J., is an SMM Alum 1949, His parents Squire and Winifred were long-time parishioners.

From his obituary: Generous and grateful, Ned sought to infuse God's grace and joy into others' lives and ease their burdens, always reminding those around him of their humanity and dignity. Despite the intensity of his work, he managed to live his own life peacefully and calmly, integrating his vocation as a physician within his vocation as a priest.



Fr. Cassem died on July 4, 2015. He was 80 years old, a Jesuit for 61 years, and a priest for 45 years. Ned was born with his twin brother, John, in Omaha. After graduating from Creighton Prep he entered the Society of Jesus at St. Stanislaus Seminary in Florissant, Mo. He completed the required course of studies at St. Stanislaus, Saint Louis University, and Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Massachusetts. During that same time, Ned earned a degree in psychology at Saint Louis University, attended Marquette University for pre-med studies, and graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1966. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 4, 1970, made tertianship in Omaha, and pronounced his final vows on December 26, 1985. Over the years Ned gained national recognition for his work in palliative and end-of-life care. He completed important research on the relationship between depression and heart disease. From its original publication through its sixth edition, Ned edited The MGH Handbook of General Hospital Psychiatry. In 2009, Harvard established an endowed chair in psychosomatic medicine in Ned's honor. During his career, Ned served in many professional organizations – the American Psychosomatic Society, the Academy of Psychosomatic Medicine, the American College of Physicians, the Society of Critical Care Medicine, and the American Psychiatric Association.

A gifted man, Ned always strove for the magis, whether in his academic accomplishments or ministry to others. Generous and grateful, he sought to infuse God's grace and joy into others' lives and ease their burdens. He did this well, always reminding those around him of their humanity and dignity. Despite the intensity of his work, Ned managed to live his own life quite peacefully and calmly, integrating his vocation as a physician within his vocation as a priest.

## In Memorium

Michael Beck, Class of 1981, died on May 24, 2015. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

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Please send your email to: [dschinzelsmmomaha.org](mailto:dschinzelsmmomaha.org).