

Catholic Schools - Diocese of Victoria

Nazareth Academy-Victoria, Established 1867

St. Joseph High School-Victoria. Established 1868

St. Michael's School-Cuero. Established 1877

Sacred Heart Elem. & High School-Hallettsville, Established 1882

St. Rose of Lima Catholic School-Schulenburg, Established 1889

St. Michael School-Weimar, Established 1890

St. Joseph School-Yoakum, Established 1891

St. Ludmila Academy-Shiner, Established 1897

Holy Cross Catholic School-Bay City, Established 1940

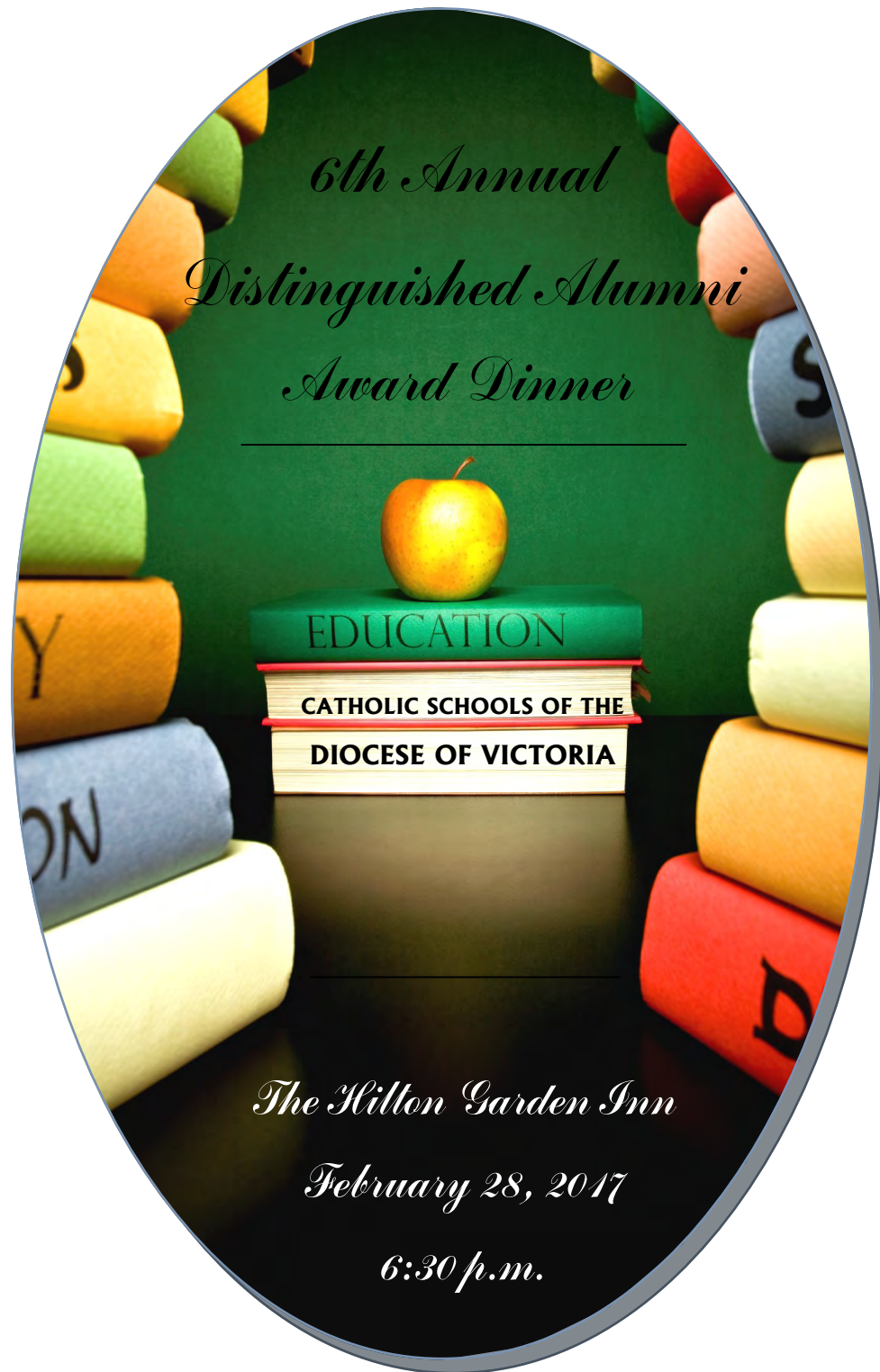
St. Philip the Apostle Catholic School-El Campo, Established 1949

St. Anthony Catholic School-Columbus, Established 1955

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School-Victoria, Established 1957

St. Paul High School-Shiner, Established 1963

Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic School-Port Lavaca
Established 1996





Program

Welcome



Prayer Before Meal

Bishop Brendan Cahill, S.T. D.



Dinner



Distinguished Alumni

Honorees Recognized



Closing Remarks



F.I.R.S.T. - Class Education...for life!@

(Faith-Integrity-Respect-Scholarship-Tradition)

Shiner Catholic School

Andrew Thomas Kocian

Class of 1969



Andrew "Andy" is the perfect example of how we should all strive to live our lives. He is a true testament to Catholic education and all it stands for. He has been a part of Shiner Catholic School his entire life. He attended St. Ludmila Academy and graduated from St. Paul High School. Later he attended Victoria College.

Andrew has been employed at Shiner Catholic School and Sts. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church for 34 years. He is also the owner of Andy's BBQ and Catering, a job he has proudly done since 1987.

Andy has touched countless lives along his journey. He gives back to the school in so many ways, always taking care of others. Some of the ways he's given back to both his community and church include serving as Army Reserve (Sgt. First Class), holding the position of KC Grand Knight and BBQ Leader, Team Roper, and Mule Trainer.

Additionally, Andy has hosted many Engagement Encounter couples, served as usher, was a past bus driver and mechanic, and taught shop class. Though all of these pale in comparison to what Andy calls his *greatest* accomplishment...***being Papaw to his Grandkids.***

Shiner Catholic School takes great pride in naming Andy Kocian as our Distinguished Alumni Award recipient for 2017.

St. Rose of Lima Catholic School - Schulenburg

Phyllis Venghaus

Class of 1972



Phyllis exhibits a true servant's heart. She is active in parish life and Catholic organizations. During her time in education, she was dedicated to the highest academic standards while maintaining time and attention to each student's spiritual foundation.

Phyllis graduated from the University of St. Thomas, Houston (1980), with a BA degree. She continued at UHV to earn education certification (1986). Phyllis earned her religion certification for the Diocese of Victoria, in 1997.

Her teaching experience has included 22 years at St. Rose School, St. Michael's School, Weimar, and Sacred Heart, Hallettsville. In 2006, Phyllis began serving the Schulenburg/Weimar Area *Parents as Teachers* program.

During her career, she may honors: Outstanding Educator Award (1987) for "Encouraging creativity and helping rekindle the spirit of invention in the classroom;" Invent America contest; Today's Catholic Teacher Nominee for Outstanding Educator of the Year (1988); Outstanding Conservation Teacher of the Year (Fayette Co. Soil and Water Dist. 1990); and recognized as Who's Who Among America's Teachers/Who's Who in American Education. Additionally, she is a founding board member of SWIFT (Schulenburg Weimar in Focus Together). Helping parents is her ministry.

At St. Rose, Phyllis is an Extraordinary Minister, Lector, Rosary Leader, and a member of the CDA Court of St. Rose #1597 for over 30 years (Vice Regent for 4 years). She also volunteers for the March of Dimes, American Diabetes Association, Raphael's Refuge, and Public Square Rosary Rally.

Phyllis thanks her parents for providing her and her siblings with a Catholic education (St. Rose and Bishop Forest High School). She and Dennis, her husband of 40 years, have 3 sons and daughters-in-law and one SUPER grandchild; She is blessed, too, to still have her parents. "Life is great!"

Distinguished Alumni Award

2017 Honorees

Carey Orsak † Holy Cross Catholic School

Rev. Bryan Heyer † Nazareth Academy

Chris Bludau † Our Lady of Victory Catholic School

Pat Henke † Sacred Heart Catholic School

Bob Berger † St. Anthony Catholic School

Don Pozzi † St. Joseph High School

Dr. Brooke Jemelka † St. Joseph Catholic School

Nathan Post † St. Michael Catholic School

Timothy Leihardt † St. Michael Catholic School

Bonnie Parma Collins † St. Philip Catholic School

Phyllis Venghaus † St. Rose of Lima Catholic School

Andrew Thomas Kocian † Shiner Catholic School

Sponsored by the Office of Catholic Schools

Diocese of Victoria in Texas

Celebrating 20 Years

1996- 2016

OCS Staff: Dr. John E. Quary, superintendent

Mrs. Janie Carrales, administrative assistant

Holy Cross Catholic School - Bay City

Carey Orsak

Class of 1972



Carey Orsak is being nominated as Holy Cross Catholic School's 2017 Distinguished Alumni. He is an active parent of one of our kindergartners. He was previously active with two older children who attended Holy Cross. He gives classroom presentations, county Ag Extension presentations to school children, and works with teen youth in the church's Life Teen program. He is a respected member of not only the local community but also the statewide agricultural community.

After graduating from Holy Cross Catholic School (HCCS), in 1972, Carey went on to attend and graduate from Bay City High School. Following his graduation, he attended Wharton County Junior College, where he majored in Farm and Ranch Management.

Carey is the owner and operator of Orsak Farms, known for its ag production of corn, grain sorghum, soybeans, rice, and cotton. He has received distinction in the following areas: Grown from small farming operator to over 2000 acres in the past 32 years; Past Coop President; Management Ag-related Committees; Current Matagorda County Farm Bureau President; Current Chairman of Matagorda County FSA; Farm Bureau Grains Committee; and Agriculture Risk Management Committee.

Carey is also involved in youth education, through *Farm Bureau-Ag in the Classroom*, and he has served as a past HCCS Advisory Board member.

The Orsaks are active parishioners in all church and/or school events and have sent three children to HCCS.

St. Philip Catholic School - El Campo

Bonnie Parma Collins

Class of 1972



Bonnie Parma Collins is a 1972 graduate of St. Philip Catholic School. She is also a graduate of El Campo High School and Texas State University. She holds a Master's Degree in Education. Bonnie began her career in public education, but has worked for Wharton County Junior College as a GED instructor and as a Developmental Reading and English instructor for the past 25 years.

Bonnie helped implement the Children's Liturgy of the Word Ministry and served in that ministry for over ten years. She has taught CCE at various grade levels and is currently teaching at the sophomore level. She has been involved with the Teen Mass Ministry and with Vacation Bible School. In 2001, Bonnie was named the Distinguished Alumni from St. Philip Catholic School, where she chaired the committee to raise funds for the Read-a-Thon for the St. Philip Endowment Fund. She was also a P.T.C. officer and room mother chairman for several years.

Bonnie is a member of K.J.Z.T., Catholic Daughters of America, and ACTS. She has also served as a team member for ACTS.

Bonnie was a member and past president of the Sesame Club, a service organization in El Campo. She served as the Reading is Fundamental (R.I.F.) chairman for 10 years and raised funds for children's books with government assistance for both El Campo ISD and St. Philip Catholic School.

Bonnie and husband Ronny Collins, an attorney, have three daughters, also alumni of St. Philip Catholic School. Camille Collins Henslee has a Master's Degree in Public School Administration, Julia Collins Bridges has an Elementary Education Degree, and Lauralee Collins has a Juris Doctorate Degree. Bonnie and Ronny have four grandchildren.

St. Michael Catholic School - Weimar

Timothy Leihardt

Class of 1970



For many years Mr. Leihardt has been the “Go-To” person for St. Michael School, and he still remains to be. After graduating from St. Michael, Tim attended Weimar ISD, then joined the US Army, and became a medic. That training led to his position of twenty years as a member of the Colorado County Ambulance Service.

Mr. Leihardt volunteered many years of coaching basketball and softball, later coached football. He served on the School Advisory Committee as a member and was President for about 8 years.

Tim has served in the following capacities: Past Grand Knight and Deputy Grand Knight Trustee in the Knights of Columbus 2153; past Faithful Navigator acting admiral in 4th degree St. Michael’s Assembly; past Commander American Legion Post 259; and a Life Member Vietnam Veterans Chapter 870. Additionally, Tim proposed originating a special fund from the KC’s specifically for financial assistance towards the St. Michael’s Catholic School teacher subsidies.

Mr. Leihardt was on the “Founding Committee” that started our annual fundraiser Night On The Town. This has been a huge success for the school for 20 years.

Tim is an Assistant Scout Master, and also serves on the Eagle Scout Advisory Committee. Tim and his wife have one son, Travis, and wife Jenna. They are expecting their 1st grandchild in June 2017.

Nazareth Academy—Victoria

Rev. Bryan Heyer

Class of 1987



Father Bryan is passionate about Catholic Education, having gone to Nazareth Academy, St. Joseph High School and St. Thomas University (seminary at St. Mary’s, Houston). He is happy to currently be pastor at a PK-12 grade school.

Additionally, Fr. Bryan received his Bachelor’s degree in Ecology in 1995 at A&M University; he also attended Holy Trinity Seminary, Dallas and St. Mary’s Houston, where he graduated with a Masters’ of Divinity from St. Thomas University, Houston.

As a Catholic priest, Fr. Bryan presently serves as pastor of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church, Shiner. He was previously pastor of St. Anthony of Padua Church in Palacios.

Some of his special achievements include: Co-Led World Youth Day in Madrid, 2011; pilgrimage Spiritual Director to Israel, Rome, Medjugorje; spiritual director of several trips to March for Life in Washington DC; mentored four seminarians during their respective Pastoral Year; and aided in Vocation camp, Youth Spectaculars, and National Catholic Youth Conference.

Fr. Bryan supports Catholic education, in Shiner, by his presence and involvement, for Shiner Catholic School, local public school, and the Capital campaign of the parish.. He also supports Nazareth Academy, in Victoria, each year by celebrating Mass for the Fishing Tournament Auction Mass and meal. For the past two years, he has served on the Diocesan School Advisory Council.

Our Lady of Victory Catholic School—Victoria

Chris Bludau

Class of 1987



Chris Bludau has stood out among all others as a most supportive and contributing parent and SAC President-giving of himself with his time, talent, treasure. I can think of no one more deserving. He could teach a course in being an outstanding SAC president.

After high school, Chris obtained a BS in Zoology from Texas A & M University.

Chris is a Financial Advisor for Edward Jones, where he serves as a mentor for new financial advisors. Edward Jones is rated in the top 10% of U.S. investment companies for customer satisfaction.

One of Chris's long-standing commitments has been his active membership in the KC's 9088 Holy Family Council since 1998 (19 years), which has included barbecuing chickens, cutting firewood, and the Nazareth Academy Fishing Tournament. These were all important functions until he found his wife, Gina, and started a family. Among others, Chris has held the following positions: Counselor for Columbian Squires 1998 -2006 (State Recognized Top CIRCCG twice); Holy Family Choir 2003-2013 and Cantor when needed; Holy Family Finance Council 2012-Present; Holy Family Festival Auction Committee 1999-Present; KC 9088 Youth director 1999-2010 & KC 9088 Degree Team 2008-Present; chair of the "Big Ticket" raffle; OLV school advisory council 7 years (6 as president); and Victoria Sunrise Rotary Club 2002-2007.

His family is dedicated to Catholic education through their children attending OLV and his wife teaching at St. Joseph's HS. He is simply continuing the legacy that was taught to him and his wife by their parents and grandparents.

Since Chris's family has grown, his ability to serve has diminished, but only because his #1 commitment is to his wife and children.

St. Michael Catholic School - Cuero

Nathan Post

Class of 1951



Mr. Post has been a supporter of St. Michael's Church and School for many years. As a Church Council Member, he has given up his time to support the school, the church, and the community of Cuero. He graduated 8th grade from St. Michael's Catholic School in 1951. Since that time, Nathan Post has continued his entire life to support the values of Catholic Education by bringing those values to the various community and church organizations of which he has been a

part.

Mr. Post graduated from Cuero High School, received an Associate of Arts degree from Victoria College, and earned a BS in Geology from University of Texas in Austin. Additionally, he attended South Texas College of Law, and took continuing education courses in Finance for Industrial Operations.

Currently, he serves as an Oil Service Consultant, after having held various management positions in sales and operations of Oilfield Service Companies, which have included: Project Manager for Subsea Drilling Operations, Worldwide Manufacturing Systems, Chief Executive over oilfield service plants, Vice President of Sales for oilfield services operations, and presenter for APICS and Manufacturing Systems.

Mr. Post has also received the Mechanical Engineering Dept. of the University of Texas at Austin Exemplary Service Award for Visiting Committee. A partial listing of other achievements/affiliations is as follows: Parish Council Board Member & President, Holy Ghost Catholic Church, Bellaire, TX and St. Michaels, Cuero, TX; Eucharistic Minister and Lector at Holy Ghost and St. Michael's; Chamber of Commerce: Board of Directors and President, Cuero; Cuero Country Club-Board of Directors and President; Chisholm Trail Museum's Endowment Committee; Society of Mechanical Engineers; and St. Michael's School Endowment Committee.

St. Joseph Catholic School - Yoakum

Dr. Brooke Jemelka

Class of 1995



Dr. Jemelka has taken her Catholic foundation and teaching and has carried it with her in her profession. She is an example of doing the right thing when it may not be the easy thing. She is teaching others to walk in the footsteps of Christ by living her faith through her medical career. She is an advocate for NFP and for all Catholic teachings in dealings with women's reproductive systems and rights.

Dr. Jemelka earned a medical degree from Texas A&M Health Science Center and completed residency training in Obstetrics and Gynecology at Mercy Hospital in St. Louis, MO.

As a medical doctor of obstetrics and gynecology, Dr. Jemelka is dedicated to providing holistic, comprehensive, and restorative services for women from adolescence through menopause. She is a member of St. Luke's Medical Group Caritas Women's Care in Sugar Land.

Dr. Jemelka is a member of the American Academy of Fertility Care Professionals, American Association of Gynecologic Laparoscopists, International Institute of Restorative Reproductive Medicine, American Congress of Obstetrics & Gynecology, and the Catholic Medical Association. As one of only a handful of fellowship-trained NaPro TECHNOLOGY surgeons in the United States, Dr. Jemelka uses this technology to address and treat a full range of gynecological health concerns, such as: routine obstetrical and gynecological care, natural family planning, minimally invasive surgical techniques and other procedures.

Dr. Jemelka is an active participant at St. Joseph Parish, in Yoakum. She attends the annual SJS PTC Gala and the St. Joseph Parish Picnic. This year she participated in the first annual Jack O'Lantern Jog 5K and Fun Run.

Sacred Heart Catholic School—Hallettsville

Pat Henke

Class of 1972



Pat Henke received a Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education from Southwest Texas State University. After graduation, he found himself returning to his alma mater of SHCS.

Coach Pat Henke has been dedicated to Sacred Heart Catholic School for the last 41 years. His leadership roles as a parent, coach, athletic director, and supporter have exemplified his service and Christian morals to the school, church, and community.

While coaching, Coach Henke has held the following positions: Athletic Director, Head Football Coach, Assistant Girls Basketball Coach, and Junior High Sports Coach... all at Sacred Heart Catholic School. During that time, the following titles have been garnered: 8 Football State Championships, 9 Softball State Championships, and Ass't Coach Girls Basketball Championship.

Coach Henke has also had these distinctions: TAPPS Coach of the Year – 1990-1991, 2000-2001, 2002-2003, 2011-2012, TAPPS Coach of the Decade – 1990-1999, TAPPS Hall of Honor -2010, Dave Campbell – Texas High School Football 4th all-time leading Winningest Coach as of 2016 season (295 wins), and Victoria Advocate's Coach of the year-2002.

Coach Henke is also a member of Knights of Columbus # 2433, an Extraordinary Minister, Sacred Heart Parish Picnics worker, and assists at numerous extra-curricular events and fundraisers for Sacred Heart School.

Coach Henke has been an inspirational leader for the students at Sacred Heart. He has instilled the desire for young men and women to make Christ-like responsible decisions.

St. Anthony Catholic School

Columbus

Bob Berger

Class of 1960



St. Anthony Catholic School (SAS) opened in 1956. Bob Berger attended SAS for three years and was in the first class to graduate in 1960. Bob graduated from Columbus High School and attended Wharton Junior College.

Bob has been a very active member of St. Anthony Catholic Church and the Columbus Community. Bob has been a member of the Knights of Columbus since 1978. He served as the Grand Knight for 2 years and was the Employee of the Year for CPL in 1987. He and his wife, Sandra, are currently serving as Eucharistic Ministers. One of his grandchildren is an 8th grader at SAS.

Bob has continued to financially support the church and the current Capital Campaign to build a new school building for St. Anthony Catholic School.

Bob was employed by CPL for 30 plus years spending many late hours making sure families were receiving electrical service.

He served as a Columbus Volunteer Fireman for 35 years risking his life to save families, homes, businesses, and property. Bob has also been a member of the Colorado County Crimes Stoppers for 15 years.

SAS is pleased to recognize Bob Berger as our Distinguished Alumni Award recipient for 2017.

St. Joseph Catholic High School

Victoria

Don Pozzi

Class of 1961



Don Pozzi attended St. Joseph School and has continually supported the school through the years. As a current member of the STJ Board of Directors, he has shown his commitment to the importance of Catholic education in the Victoria community.

Don's educational background included attending St. Joseph School 1948-1961, St. Mary's University 1961-1965, and St. Mary's Law School 1965-1968. He became an attorney and subsequently a retired judge, who was a partner at Mallette & Pozzi from 1971-2003.

Don is a lifelong supporter of St. Joseph High School and the Victoria Community. He attended STJ for 13 years and currently serves on the Board of Directors. Don has lived a life of service to his community, serving as the Victoria County Judge for 12 years. As a judge he helped strengthen local economic projects, create an Emergency Operations Center and ensure that the Victoria Regional Airport continued to provide service to the area.

Don attends Holy Family Catholic Church. He served in the US Army as a Sgt. E5 stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and the Republic of Vietnam. Currently, Don serves on the Navigation District Board, Victoria Alliance and St. Joseph High School Board. In the past, he has served on the boards of Citizens Hospital, Youth Home of Victoria, Victoria Housing Authority, Child Welfare, VEDC, Workforce, Our Lady of Victory School, and the Metropolitan Planning Organization. He is a member of the Vietnam Veterans of America, American Legion and Life Member of the VFW.

Don has truly lived a life of service to the Catholic Church and to his community. By serving on the STJ Board of Directors, he is showing his commitment to Catholic education at the very same school that he once attended.