



SUMMER 2020 ISSUE

# THE Bedan Record



## Greetings Saint Bede Academy Parents, Alumni, and Friends

I hope you are staying safe and healthy in these ever-changing times. I wanted to take a pause from planning to re-open for the 2020-2021 school year to introduce myself formally, as I have been honored to begin my tenure as the next superintendent of Saint Bede Academy. This is an exciting opportunity to lead a familiar institution, rich in tradition and academic excellence, while securing its long-term presence in our local community.

Saint Bede is close to my heart, as it's where my children, Jacob '13, Zoe '16, and Anna '19, upon graduation, joined the ranks of 130 years of Bruin alumni, proudly following in their parents '84 and '86, and grandfather's '56, legacy. I have witnessed the solid preparation they received for college and beyond rooted in the Benedictine education they received from the faculty and monks of Saint Bede Academy. I have spent the last 15 years of my career focused on securing the financial future of Saint Bede Abbey and Academy with the goal of continuing to keep the school thriving for all students and am thrilled to expand my skills, experiences, and commitment as your next superintendent. Throughout my career, there has been a common thread of financial leadership and management with a focus on long-term planning and stabilization. Prior to accepting Abbot Claude's offer to assume the position of Business Office Manager and then Treasurer for the Abbey and Academy, I enjoyed 17 years gaining valuable experience at Goldman Sachs and exploring Chicago. My husband Tim, and I, returned to the area in 1997 to raise our family in the Illinois Valley and immerse ourselves in a variety of local activities.



None of that is as important as my relentless pursuit of high expectations and closing financial gaps at Saint Bede in partnership with Dr. Ted Struck for the past 13 years. During our collective time working for the betterment of Saint Bede we have balanced the Academy budget, re-opened the campus to boarding students and introduced a capital campaign that has resulted in the first new construction of academic spaces since 1950. Dr Struck provided leadership and vision at a crucial time in our history and his commitment and dedication has been inspirational to those around him. As I began the transition to Superintendent nearly one year ago, I was fortunate to learn from and be mentored by Ted and am honored to follow in his footsteps. His legacy at Saint Bede is immeasurable, and for that, we have all been blessed and will be eternally grateful. Thank you, Ted and enjoy your overdue retirement!

Part of my transition planning to Superintendent has been to review the management of the Abbey and Academy and plan for our long-term leadership future. To that end Michelle Mershon, Principal, and I are excited to introduce Nick McLaughlin as Assistant Principal and a key new energy in our academic team. Nick joined us on July 1st and his immediate contributions to our Bruin Return to Learn Plan are evident. Please join me in giving Nick a warm welcome to the strong Saint Bede family.

I feel blessed to lead a stellar group of teachers with a passion and dedication to their students that is truly second to none. Their perseverance and commitment to remain connected and engaged with their students through e-learning last spring and tackle hybrid learning to students in-person and remotely to students locally and internationally this fall has been inspirational. It is the character of Saint Bede teachers

---

Thank you Dr. Struck for your 13 years of dedication and service to Saint Bede Academy. Congratulations on your retirement!



Eve Postula, Nick McLaughlin, and Michelle Mershon

that drives all of us to deliver the unique, student-centered educational program in the Benedictine tradition with the goal of seeing all our students prepared for college and beyond. Our teachers, and the administrators that support them, make the difference and I am thankful to be a part of this group at this time in history.

The events that have been unfolding in our nation highlighting racial strife and distrust have given me pause to think even more deeply about what we in schools can do. I know that I do not have the answers, but I do know that ALL children regardless of race, zip code, family background or any other characteristic deserve a high-quality education and a catholic education is even more important now than it ever has been. I believe all children can learn to live by example, and that education can be a powerful equalizer. As the new leader of Saint Bede Academy, I can promise that our school will be a place where diversity is welcome, and all students will learn from a global perspective. I am excited to continue the dialogue with our parents, alumni, and friends about how we can address these tough issues within our community, beginning in our classrooms. Again, I am so excited to be working with the teachers, staff, and principals to provide leadership for Saint Bede as we enter a new and exciting era, where together we can improve educational outcomes for all of our students.

Eve Postula  
Superintendent  
epostula@st-bede.com



## Moving Forward Together



As I write this letter to you we are excited to begin the start of a new school year. We are looking forward to being on campus in the fall. With a large campus and a smaller student population, we will be able to appropriately and safely social distance while maintaining interactive, live instruction. St. Bede will also incorporate e-learning into the weekly curriculum.

Our teachers, administrators and staff are doing an incredible job during these extraordinary circumstances. This uncertain time poses significant challenges, but our commitment to our students hasn't wavered. Continuing to serve the students who rely on us every day is only possible with your support. A core part of our mission is to help our young adults through life's challenges. At this challenging time like no other, you have made a real difference for our students. Because of you and your amazing generosity we had a very good finish to the fiscal year despite the circumstances due to COVID-19. More than ever, we are grateful for your support as we weather this storm together and I know we will emerge an even stronger St. Bede community. We are blessed for how much you care and support St. Bede.

This issue highlights the spring semester and the accomplishments of our students which from the later part of the semester were done safely from home. St. Bede was able to successfully adjust and change to provide outstanding academics through a robust e-learning curriculum. We are very proud to share with you that St. Bede was able to maintain important traditions and safely hold prom and graduation. We will continue to do all we can to preserve safely as many St. Bede traditions as possible. This year will definitely look different but our mission remains the same and we will discover new ways to thrive in uncertain times.

As we look to the school year ahead, that promises to be unlike any before, we will challenge our limits by moving forward together to accomplish the hard but necessary things to keep St. Bede vital for generations to come. I'm not exactly sure what the "new normal" will be, but I do know that St. Bede will be here to engage and support our alumni and their families. I'm looking forward to the time when we can have large events and are able to once again be together in person. Regardless of how things play out going forward, one thing I know is that we can count on each other because Bruins never quit!

**Stay strong and healthy!**

Julia Yaklich  
 Director of Mission Advancement & Major Gifts  
 jyaklich@st-bede.com

Contents	
128th Annual Commencement.....	2
Honor Awards .....	4
Athletics .....	5
E-Learning Success .....	6
Academics .....	7
The Legacy Project .....	8
Virtual Auction .....	9
Promise for the Future.....	9
Alumni News.....	10
Distinguished Alumnus Award .....	13
Abbey News.....	14
Br. George .....	15
Memorials.....	16
In Memoriam.....	17

# 128th Annual COMMENCEMENT



St. Bede Academy held its 128th Commencement Ceremony on Saturday, June 20, 2020. Seniors were able to graduate at St. Bede's first outdoor commencement ceremony where graduates and parents could gather safely and social distance. Despite the challenges the Class of 2020 faced this year, they were all smiles when receiving their diplomas.

## The Class of 2020 Legacies

Madysen Banasiak.....	Tim Banasiak '90
Macy Bosnich.....	Melissa (Greene) Bosnich '86
Kassidy Brady.....	Tom Brady '89
Peter Ceresa.....	Christine Ceresa '81
Kelly Considine.....	Tom '80 & Sue (Story) Sickley '85
Michael Dittmar.....	Richard Dittmar '72
Madison Miranda.....	Karen (Piletic) Miranda '89
Madeline-Rose Mudge.....	Gina (Brady) Mudge '94
Claudia Orteza.....	Norah (Gillhouse) Toraason '91 & Joe Orteza '91
Rhiannon Searl.....	Jennifer (Doran) Searl '92





Macy Bosnich - Valedictorian



Kassidy Brady - Salutatorian



Commencement speaker Abbot Philip Davey, OSB '65



Fr. Ronald Margherio, OSB '68 and Yijia Jason Zhang



## Class of 2020: Where Will They Go Next?

- Madyson Banasiak - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Jose Bejarano - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Bradley Benckendorf - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Zack Bohne - *Workforce*
- Beau Bonnell - *Marquette University*
- Macy Bosnich - *Northwestern University*
- Kassidy Brady - *University of Illinois*
- Camille Carlson - *Marquette University*
- Antonia Cattani - *Marquette University*
- Peter Ceresa - *Creighton University*
- Kelly Considine - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Michael Dittmar - *Marquette University*
- Eric Dudek - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Logan Flanagan - *Marquette University*
- Morgan Gray - *Blue Ridge Community College*
- Anthony Hernandez - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Alexandria Hernandez - *Iowa State University*
- Charleigh Holmes - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Connor Jackson - *Illinois State University*
- Kinnason Jackson - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Hannah Johnson - *Illinois Central College*
- Yusra Khan - *Knox College*
- Zemin Vicky Li - *University of California*
- Berklee Linnig - *Marquette University*
- Nicholas Lough - *Sauk Valley Community College*
- Jacob Lowery - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Samuel Maschmann - *University of Iowa*
- Lauren Millington - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Madison Miranda - *Michigan State University*
- Tyler Miskell - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Trevor Mooney - *Benedictine University*
- Mackenzie Mrowicki - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Madeline-Rose Mudge - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Ellyn Nowakowski - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Matt Obmann - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Claudia Orteza - *Southern Illinois University*
- Olivia Quartucci - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Jared Rouse - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Rhiannon Searl - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Christine Senica - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Hayley Short - *Mount Mercy University*
- Maxintong Candy Song - *University of Connecticut*
- Madeline Spayer - *Marquette University*
- Jakyb Stoddard - *University of Cincinnati*
- Ben Vaessen - *Kishwaukee Community College*
- Yibo Lance Wang - *Miami University*
- Abby Weber - *Illinois Valley Community College*
- Olivia Wojcik - *University of Iowa*
- Ziqi Aaron Xu - *Saddleback College*
- Xuan Cissy Yu - *Barnard College*
- Yijia Jason Zhang - *University of Wisconsin*
- Shuai Justin Zhao - *University of South Carolina*

# Honor AWARDS

## 2020 ILLINOIS STATE SCHOLARS

*Front row:* (L-R) Kassidy Brady, Samuel Maschmann, Claudia Orteza

*Back row:* (L-R) Macy Bosnich, Jacob Lowery, Madeline Spayer



## FR. KEVIN GORMAN AWARD

Beau Bonnell  
Kassidy Brady  
Antonia Cattani  
Christine Senica  
Abigail Weber



**SENIOR OF THE YEAR**  
Macy Bosnich



**SCHOLAR ATHLETE AWARD**  
Beau Bonnell and Kassidy Brady



**ATHLETE OF THE YEAR AWARD**  
Antonia Cattani and Trevor Mooney



## CLASS OF 2020 TOP TEN

*Front row:* (L-R) Camille Carson, Macy Bosnich, Madeline Spayer, Kassidy Brady, Samuel Maschmann

*Back row:* (L-R) Peter Ceresa, Antonia Cattani, Claudia Orteza, Madison Miranda, Jakyb Stoddard

# Athletics



## GIRLS BASKETBALL

Our Lady Bruins Basketball Team defeated Putnam County 40-19, scoring their first regional title in seven years.



## WRESTLING

The SBA Bruins Wrestling Team had a total of 14 dual wins for the season and sent five to sectionals, **Ethan Fleming, Henry Orteza, Noah Setser** and **Beau Bonnell**, with one champion, **Peter Ceresa**. St. Bede placed 4th overall as a team, out of 11 teams.



## BOWLING

**Trenton Acuncius '22** advanced to the IHSA Bowling Sectionals. He bowled a 1204 and ranked in the Top 10 at the Joliet Regional Tournament.

# E-Learning Success

On Friday, March 13, St. Bede Academy, like all schools in the State of Illinois, announced it would be moving to an e-learning environment due to the global COVID-19 pandemic and the accompanying restrictions outlined by the State of Illinois.

St. Bede's commitment to learning never stops and on Tuesday, March 17, learning continued without missing a beat as students and faculty shifted to an e-learning platform. "Our teachers and students have been working diligently to continue the learning process." Principal Michelle Mershon told students and parents "I truly believe that character is judged during difficult times and that the character of St. Bede will be strengthened by what our community is contributing."

Teachers used Google Classroom for discussions and assignments, along with Zoom to conduct face-to-face lessons. Computer Science instructor Rick Fess had his students use their home computers to do calculations for protein folding, using a technique called "distributed computing" where many computers share resources to solve complex mathematical tasks. English as Second Language (ESL) instructors Nicole Wiltse and Lindsey Olivero-Gong regularly utilized the WeChat and SnapChat apps to converse with our international students. Even P.E. classes were able to go virtual with students using their phone cameras or webcams to upload videos of them doing their daily exercises.

Through e-learning teachers were able to guide students in realizing their potential for academic, artistic, athletic, spiritual and moral excellence. The academic environment at St. Bede encourages our students to excel, both in and outside of the classroom. St. Bede stays committed to having graduates leave ready, both spiritually and academically, for life in the real world.

Spanish instructor, Brittany Rynkewicz used Zoom to talk about what her students had read in their novels. The students received cultural background with videos and articles before they read each chapter, so they had more contexts for the understanding.



Foreign Language instructor, Lindsey Olivero Gong used daily Zoom sessions to demonstrate and explain grammar functions and practice together as a class on Google docs.



Guidance Director, Ms. Theresa Bernabei conducted a Zoom meeting with several students.



Mute



Start Video



Invite



Manage Participants



Share Screen



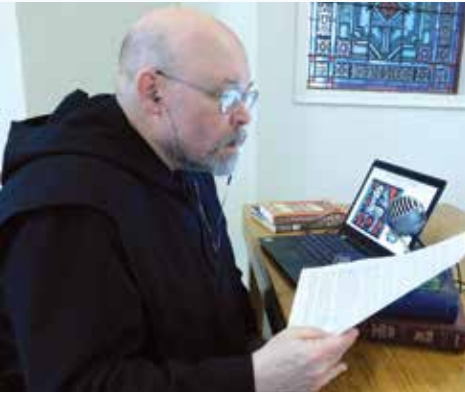
Chat



Record



Fr. Dominic Garramone, OSB used a professional podcast microphone (being stage manager has its perks!) to record narrated PowerPoint videos, uploading them to YouTube for his sacraments class.



Science teacher, Dr. Anila Gill celebrated the end of final exams with her students via Zoom.

**TIPS**  
DISTANCE LEARNING

As you are navigating distance learning together, create a learning space. Daily routine will have more success in distance learning. Communicate with your teachers. Rout their learning. Healthy habits.

## WYSE

The St. Bede WYSE Team once again took 1st place at regionals. The team carried their success through e-learning and after taking their virtual tests scored 1st place at Sectionals and were able to compete in the state competition, where they took 4th place. All scores are determined by taking the top two scores for each category on a 14 person team.



### Scores from the WYSE Sectionals and State

**CHEMISTRY** (SBA cleared all places at Sectionals)  
1st Place - Jacob Schirz  
2nd Place - Elaina Wamhoff  
3rd Place - Macy Bosnich

**COMPUTER SCIENCE**  
2nd Place - Ben Johll  
3rd Place (tie) Sectionals - Thomas Matlock and Jacob Schirz  
3rd Place for State - Jacob Schirz

**ENGLISH**  
1st Place - Ben Johll  
4th Place for State - Lucy Kleczewski

**PHYSICS**  
1st Place for Sectionals & 3rd Place for State - Samuel Maschmann  
3rd Place - Tina Li

## SCHOLASTIC BOWL

Our Varsity Scholastic Bowl Team had a great season that took them into the Regional Championship.



End Meeting

# The Legacy Project: Our Vision Continues with Phase Three



As the Saint Bede student population continues to grow in both day and boarding students, it is more important than ever that renovations to our historic building take place to keep up with demand. Our goal is to improve the learning environment for students and teachers, one where they can prosper in a dynamic educational paradigm. Thanks to generous donor support, the 70-year-old Academy restrooms were updated in fall 2019 with new plumbing, fixtures and receptacles. Phase Three continues with renovations to the historic Academy building, addressing the serious deferred maintenance challenges at a cost of an estimated \$4.2 million completed in four sub-phases. This sub-phase approach minimizes impact to the daily workings of our school and is cost effective.

Our plans to modernize our educational environment will begin with the Second Floor Corridor. We invite you to join us and enable us to help our students grow in knowledge, wisdom and faith. The renovation of the Academy building will ensure a safe, stable and stimulating learning environment. With your help, Phase Three will continue to keep Saint Bede thriving and achieving amazing success. When visiting Saint Bede, what will continue to be most evident and encouraging is witnessing our mission in action every day, enhancing our legacy for generations to come. Your support helps us to secure the future of the Saint Bede Benedictine tradition.

We ask our St. Bede community to help support Phase Three with a gift to help us achieve the transformation of our historic building. Your generosity and commitment ensure our ongoing ability to impact the lives of future generations. The Legacy Project is a capital giving opportunity and we are so very grateful for all who have invested in this most important initiative. Please contact Julia Yaklich, Director of Mission Advancement and Major Gifts at 815-250-0359 or [jyaklich@st-bede.com](mailto:jyaklich@st-bede.com) to leave your legacy and help us make this next phase a reality.

## PHASE THREE

### Second Floor Corridor Sub-phase 1: \$1,000,000

Renovations to the second floor corridor of the academy building will include the stairwells and wood railings, new tile for the corridor, heating system upgrades for efficient temperature regulations, and air conditioning installation throughout. A upgrade to the electrical system will allow Saint Bede to utilize better technology and improve lighting throughout the building.

### First Floor Corridor Sub-phase 2: \$1,000,000

Similar to the second floor corridor, renovations will continue to the first floor corridor.

### Classrooms Sub-phase 3: \$1,200,000

On the academic side, 26 classrooms will be renovated, as well as the addition of teacher collaboration rooms and all furnishings. In these updated spaces, students will be able to develop their academic and artistic skills in a setting worthy of their gifts and talents.

### Windows Sub-phase 4: \$1,000,000

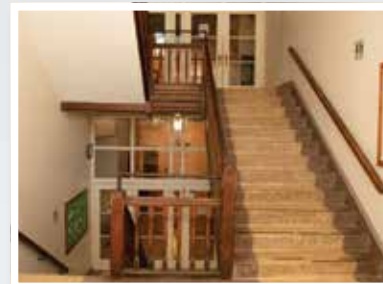
The building's 185 windows on the first and second floors will be replaced, providing increased efficiency and effective insulation year round.



First Floor Hallway



Second Floor Hallway



Stairwell

# Virtual Auction Success

St. Bede wrapped up its first ever Virtual Auction on Friday, May 8. The Virtual Auction included more than 80 packages and bidders from all over the country were able to bid online or on their phone to support St. Bede Academy.

Special thanks to our Sponsors and underwriters; especially our Presenting Sponsor, The J.A. Happ Family Foundation; our Green and White Sponsors, Cawley Chicago and Dr. Ted and Mrs. Gina Doran; and our Hear us Roar Sponsor, Nick and Beth Potthoff.

We are grateful for all the wonderful participation and generous support of the Auction and Special Events this year. Thank you!

Some highlights from the Virtual Auction included Fr. Dominic's prayer bracelets, a trip to Temecula Valley's Wine Country, and an exclusive Rich Harvest Farms golf package which Jerry Rich generously matched.

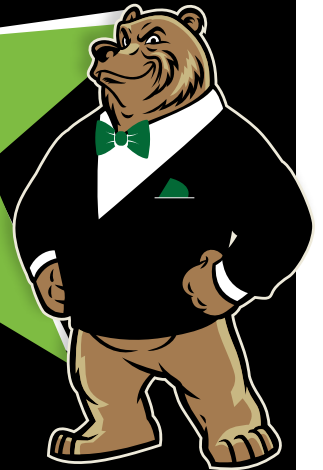
The Auction and Special Events exceeded our expectations with total net revenue for the fiscal year of over \$160,000. Given the circumstances of not being able to hold the in-person auction, we are pleased with the results. We are grateful for all the wonderful participation and generous support to help us reach this total. The Auction and Special Events are such an important part of what makes it possible to keep our tuition low and offer a Catholic education to young people and we are truly blessed with our St. Bede's Family's support especially during this unprecedented time.

Due to COVID-19 and the safety of our St. Bede family, the previously planned Part 2 On-site Live Auction Gala has been canceled this fall. We look forward to seeing you at the 2021 Auction which will take place on Saturday, April 24, 2021. Tickets, tables and sponsorships are available now and can be purchased at [www.st-bede.com](http://www.st-bede.com). All tickets, tables, sponsorships, and underwriting previously purchased will remain valid.

SAVE THE DATE

38th Annual  
St. Bede Auction

A  
Night  
to Roar!



SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 2021

**PROMISE**  
for the **FUTURE**

Thank you to all of those of who gave to the Promise For The Future – Emergency Student Aid Fund. Over \$83,000 was raised for tuition assistance for St. Bede students. The support of our Bruin Family has always meant the world to St. Bede, but it will be even more important over the next year as we see how COVID-19 continues to affect our students and their families. A special thank you to the class of 1961 for their most generous matching support.

## CLASS NOTES



**Joseph Jankowski '42** celebrated his 96th birthday in April.

**Richard (Dick) Guidici '46** and his son Dr. Michael Guidici visited the St. Bede campus in August.



**Joseph Howard '48** enjoyed reading the names of his classmates in the last edition of *The Bedan Record* and reminiscing about their time together at St. Bede.



**Jim Riggs '53** retired from Control Data after 25 years and became a licensed home building contractor. He spends more time with his great-granddaughters, Elle Marie (4/14/20) and Eve Malati Riggs (5).

**Roger Krolak '56** was recently elected as Grand Knight of the K of C Council 14995 at St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Church in Kettering, OH.

**Dr. James Mini '57** enjoyed a day of golf in February with **Richard Schlosser '56**, **Ron Mini '56** and **Dennis Donnelly '56** during the Italian Golf Outing in Naples, FL.



**Fr. Harold Datzman '56** enjoyed a surprise visit from **Mark Janko '73**, **Tim Shinnick '73** and **Bill Sramek '73**. Fr. Harold loves to hear from his Bruin

family. Please write to him at St. Joseph Nursing Home, 401 9th St, Lacon, IL 61540.

**Abbot Philip Davey, OSB '65** celebrated his 73rd birthday with a drive-thru birthday parade of more than 40 cars of SBA families and friends.



**Robert Jeffery '66** and his wife Sandy outside the "Ark Encounter," a replica of Noah's Ark in Williams, KY.



**Fr. Ronald Margherio '68** attended the five-day Notre Dame Vision Conference in South Bend, IN with St. Bede students JR Talbot, Lucy Kleczewski, Cassie Williams and Jacob Schirz.



**Fr. John Harth '68** retired after 33 years of service with the Diocese of Springfield in Cape Girardeau, MO. He looks forward to substituting in area parishes and continuing as a volunteer law enforcement/emergency services chaplain.

**Dan Ebener '71** will publish his fifth leadership book, *Leadership for the Greater Good: A Business Textbook* this fall.

**Patrick Murray '72** retired on January 1, 2020 after 34½ years with Alcoa.

**Class of '72 alumni; Bill Gahan, Bob Sabatini, Dick Fiocchi, Terry Egan, Patrick "Mac" Cawley, Mike Eiten, Pat Murray and Paul Draper '73** shared a photo representing the last of the all-male cheerleaders at SBA.



**John Braida '73** is proud to share that his son Jack graduated from the University of California (UCLA) in 2019 and his son Luke graduated from California State University (CSULB).

**Chris Hebel '76** (2nd from the right) rode the first leg of "Priests Pedaling for Prayers" for the Peoria Diocese in October of 2019. He is pictured with Fathers Tom Otto, Michael Pica, and Adam Cesarek, dipping their tires in the Mississippi River in Rapids City, IL.



**Class of '77 alumni; Steve Nieslsawski, Drew Bernabei, George Knott, Bill Wimbiscus, Mark Dudek and Tom Leydon** enjoyed a guy's weekend in Breckenridge, CO.



**Class of '78 alumni; Fran Brolley, Dave Noonan, Bob Gilligan, John Toraason and Gary Roach, Bill Ebener, Tom McGinnis '79, Rich Dudek and Tim Murphy** gathered in Eagle Meir, PA, for a fishing trip.



**Tom Krolak '80** retired in March 2020 from Teck after 32+ years as a geologist at the Red Dog Mine in arctic Alaska. He is now enjoying the retired life (in rural Missouri) with his wife Harumi and their many dogs and cats.

**Jim Shields '81** is a member of the 2020 diaconate formation class of the Archdiocese of Louisville. He has been involved in the formation process for five years and the ordination of the class members is scheduled to take place on August 29, 2020 at St. Patrick Church in Louisville, KY. Jim and his wife Lisa live in Prospect, KY and have two daughters.

**Class of '81 alumni; Lisa Potthoff Newman, Molly Maher Pyszka, Peggy Kessel Tonarelli, Christine Ceresa, Jane Weiden, Julie Pambianco, Mary Noonan Schmitt, Maureen O'Sadnick Johnson and Jennifer Narog Sucher** traveled from near and far for a Witches Night out in Ottawa.



**SBA Alumni from 1968-2016** attended the wedding of **Casey '10 and Jaclyn '09 (Snell) Ficek** in December 2019.



**Kathleen (Wall) Zabaneh '82** and her husband Firas at the entrance to the Holy Sepulchre in the Christian Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem.



**Mary Story Pryde '84, Fr. Gregory Jarzombek, OSB and Erika Hueneburg** at Jagiellonian University, the oldest University in Poland.

**Dr. Robert Morrow '85** and his staff at St. Margaret's Family Health Center celebrated *#hospitalweek2020* in May during Covid-19.



**Ashley (Triepeke) Konczak '02** was able to visit with Br. George Matsuoka while her students from Midland Elementary School were Christmas caroling at St. Joseph's in Lacon, IL.



**Sarah Frank '02** is currently working on her doctorate for a nursing degree from the University of Northern Colorado and will finish in 2021. She is currently working in orthopedics.

**Sarah Safranski '03, Gina (Milus) Baker '03 and Laura (Ladzinski) Pleiss '03** served as bridesmaids for the wedding of **Kathryn (Andreoni) Kurkowski '03** in December 2019.



**Dr. Akash Goel '03** is a gastroenterologist at Weill Cornell New York Presbyterian Hospital in New York. He has several articles published on medicine and was featured in the *News-Tribune* for a commentary on the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Fr. Jacob Rose '05** was appointed as the principal of Costa Catholic Academy in Galesburg beginning in July of 2020. He is actively pursuing a degree in Educational Leadership.

**Blake Dobrich '12** has a new position as Business Manager, Community Health and Hospitals Division at University Chicago Medicine.

## CLASS NOTES *continued*



**Chris Kerasotes '13** was promoted to 1st Lieutenant Field Artillery in the U.S. Army. He is assigned to the 4-9 Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, TX.

**Gabrielle Mendoza '14** started working as a physical therapist at Elmhurst Hospital in February 2020.

**Gabrielle '14, Aiko '17 and Aleanna '22 Mendoza** visited the Central Perk pop-up shop in New York.



**Emma Wilke '16** graduated a semester early from St. Mary's College, Nortre Dame, IN with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration.

**Chase '17, Seth '19, Reese '21 and Renn '22 Ludford** enjoyed time in Negril, Jamaica with their parents, Dr. David and Ginger Ludford.



**Alexa Damerell '18** was named to the Spring 2020 Dean's List for History, College of Arts & Sciences at Illinois State University.

Good friend **Felicitas Sebastian** just finished writing her book, *Broken and Beloved*, published by Amazon.

## ST. BEDE BABIES

**Heather Luna '05** and her husband Joshua White welcomed a daughter in January 2020.

Grant Lawrence Filipiak, son of Michael and **Kassi (Sandrolini) '08 Filipiak** was baptized on June 7, 2020.



**Abigail (Milus) '12 Nambo** and her husband Justin welcomed their daughter Sophia Nambo on April 17, 2020.



**Alex Niewinski '12** and his wife Chelsi Straughn-Niewinski welcomed their son Robert "Bobby" Francis Niewinski on April 23, 2020.



**Kelsey (Thompson) '14 Klein** and her husband Dan welcomed their third child Bohdi James Klein on February 4, 2020. They also have a daughter, Makenna Rose (4) and son, Jay Daniel (1).



## FALL EVENTS UPDATE

In response to COVID-19 related health and safety concerns and for the well-being of our Bruin Family, St. Bede has made the decision to postpone our on-campus Homecoming festivities. Out of abundance of caution, we have also decided to further postpone the on-site auction and to cancel large in-person social events and gatherings on campus through the fall semester.

**Our current plan is to welcome all of our alumni from the "0's & 5's" back to campus for a double reunion celebration with the "1's & 6's" in the fall of 2021.**

St. Bede will continue to share updates so that you'll have time to make plans. We know all of our alumni were looking forward to being on campus this year, and we are working on ways to bring classmates and alumni together online.

*Your safety—all of our safety—is our top priority. We thank you for your understanding to postpone these events and look forward to seeing you on campus in 2021.*

**SAVE THE DATES FOR HOMECOMING 2021: SEPTEMBER 23-26**

## ST. BEDE WEDDINGS



**Kathryn Andreoni '03** married Kyle Kurkowski on December 31, 2019. Kathryn is the daughter of **Atty. James '72** and Leslie Andreoni.



**Jon Blomquist '05** married Monica Dziejdzina at The Watson House in Emerald Isle, NC on October 26, 2019.



**Max Duncan '09** married Lauren Metts on June 13, 2020 in Dallas, TX. Max is the son of **James Duncan '77**.



**Alec Schwab '11** and **Hillary Brolley '11** were united in marriage on June 6, 2020. Hillary is the daughter of **Fran Brolley '78** and Tracy Washowiak.

Do you have news to share or need to update your contact information?

Go to: [www.st-bede.com/yourcontactinfo](http://www.st-bede.com/yourcontactinfo)

# Distinguished Alumnus Award

The St. Bede Alumni Association is pleased to announce the recipient of the **Distinguished Alumnus Award for 2020, Dr. Andrew J. Bacevich '65.**



After leaving St. Bede, Dr. Andrew Bacevich graduated from the U.S. Military Academy at West Point in 1969 and served for twenty-three years as a commissioned officer in the United States Army. He received his PhD in American diplomatic history from Princeton. Before joining the faculty of Boston University in 1998, he taught at both West Point and at John Hopkins University.

He is presently Professor Emeritus of the International Relations and History at Boston University and serves as president of the Quincy Institute for Responsible State Craft.

Andrew served his country in Vietnam, and later held posts in Germany and the Persian Gulf. He is married to his wife, Nancy, and they had four children. Jennifer, Amy, Katy and Andrew, Jr., who followed his father into the service and died in action fighting for his country in the Iraq War in 2007.

Besides his successful military and academic career, Andrew is a prolific author, op-ed author, and frequent TV expert for all of the major news networks. He is seen as one of the leading experts on international relations, diplomatic and military history, and American conservatism. His most recent books include: *American Conservatism: Reclaiming an Intellectual Tradition*, which was released earlier this year and was well-reviewed, *The Age of Illusions: How America Squandered Its Cold War Victory* (2020), *Twilight of the American Century* (2018), and *America's War for the Greater Middle East* (2016). Other books include: *Breach of Trust: How Americans Failed Their Soldiers and Their Country* (2013); *Washington Rules: America's Path to Permanent War* (2010); *The Limits of Power: The End of American Exceptionalism* (2008); *The New American Militarism: How Americans Are Seduced by War* (2005); and *American Empire: The Realities and Consequences of U.S. Diplomacy* (2002). He is the editor of *The Short American Century: A Postmortem* (2012); *The Long War: A New History of U.S. National Security Policy since World War II* (2007); and *Imperial Tense: Problems and Prospects of American Empire* (2003).

His essays and reviews have appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Harper's*, *Foreign Affairs*, *New Left Review*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, and *The London Review of Books* among other publications.

**Dr. Bacevich will be recognized Homecoming Weekend 2021.**

# Abbey News



**MY DEAR FRIENDS,** who could have guessed what all has happened this year. At the onset the Coronavirus virus did not seem it was as problematic and threatening as it has turned out to be. This illness gives us cause for prayer and attention to what we say and do. It is now five months that the monks have been confined to the St. Bede campus and limited in many ways. And though we are

fortunate that we have a 700-acre campus to enjoy nature, we were very disappointed when we had to limit our daily mass to members of the monastic community. The monks are eager to resume our ministries to people in the local area. It goes against our nature and the Rule of St. Benedict to not be able to freely welcome people as visitors or for prayer. Having to answer “no” to so many requests is disappointing to the monks as well as to those that make the request. It is some consolation that Fr. Michael had convinced us a few years ago to acquire a system so we could broadcast our liturgies. We find comfort in the knowledge that our friends can join us in prayer and celebrate the Eucharist over the internet.

The power of the internet and social media became very apparent to us when Br. George passed away. For about a year he was at St. Joseph's Nursing Home in Lacon where he seemed to thrive and was a favorite of the residents and the staff. He was well cared for and was coherent and able to communicate almost to his final moments. I was moved by the fact that he died on Easter Sunday, the day of the Lord's resurrection and I trust it was the day of Br. George's arrival in heaven. We knew Br. George touched so many lives and that the St. Bede community would want to know about his death and join us for the prayer service and funeral rites. Due to the Coronavirus we were unable to invite the public to join us, so we recorded the funeral mass and within 90 minutes of posting the mass 3000 people were watching and praying for

Br. George. The next day there were 7000 more viewing and then we stopped counting. Br. George remains with us in spirit, and the wonderful statue of him reaching out to shake hands and welcome people will keep his memory and examples alive in our hearts.

When Ted Struck came to St. Bede I was optimistic because for a number of years we were experiencing a significant deficit in our budget and the future of the Academy was in doubt. With Ted's experience and zeal he met that financial challenge and has led us to a position where we have been able to add the Perino Science Center and to begin plans for further improvements in our facilities and program. Perhaps the quality that Ted surprised me with was his humility. On a number of occasions, he would say to me, this is the situation I am facing, and this is what I would do, but what would a Benedictine do? It gives me a level of comfort and satisfaction knowing Ted will continue to serve St. Bede in an advisory role. When you see him anywhere at any time be sure to thank him.

In his time here Ted worked extensively with Eve Postula, who served as our Treasurer and Business Office Manager for the past 15 years. They worked together on a transition plan and prepared for her to take over his position in the Academy. I have great confidence in Eve as our new superintendent and know she will continue to be a real blessing to the St. Bede family.

We are incredibly grateful for your generosity. The support we have received, especially during this time, has touched our hearts and we are grateful for all that you have done to keep St. Bede Abbey and Academy thriving.

Let us pray for one another, May the rule of St. Benedict be our guide and may the spirit of St. Bede stay with us forever.

*Abbot Philip Davey OSB '65*

Abbot Philip Davey, OSB '65  
frphilip@st-bede.com



Monk's Market, the sales outlet of St. Bede Abbey, offers many items produced by St. Bede monks such as handmade candles by Fr. Patrick and cookbooks written by Fr. Dominic, as well as a number of items for resale from other religious communities. Shop online at [www.monksmarket.com](http://www.monksmarket.com).



# Brother George Matsuoka, OSB

## 1921-2020



Brother George Matsuoka, OSB, monk of Saint Bede Abbey, was called to his eternal home the morning of Easter Sunday on April 12, 2020 at the age of 98. He entered the novitiate at St. Bede in 1943, professed his vows on May 17, 1944 and celebrated his 75th anniversary of profession in 2019.

Br. George was born in Chicago, Illinois on August 27, 1921 to George and Emma (Laudstrom) Matsuoka. After his mother's untimely passing, George was raised by his father for a short time before making the difficult decision to entrust George's care to the religious sisters of the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ who staffed the Angel Guardian Orphanage.

Upon arriving at St. Bede in 1942, Br. George worked in the bakery and then the Abbey print shop. When he received a driver's license he began making deliveries for the print shop. Br. George's deliveries always took longer than expected because he would stop along the way to give tins of cookies to his many friends. Throughout his time at St. Bede, Br. George would frequently give students bags of cookies to give them extra energy for their extracurricular activities.

After his retirement from the print shop, he began the tradition of greeting students at the beginning and end of each school day. He enjoyed this so much it became his main ministry, which he did with a smile each and every day. Anyone who stepped through the doorway of St. Bede would get a hand-shake, a smile and a cookie from one of the Abbey's most endearing personalities. Br. George always personified St. Benedict's directive to receive everyone as if they were Christ.

*Anyone who stepped through the doorway of St. Bede would get a hand-shake, a smile and a cookie from one of the abbey's most endearing personalities.*

It was Brother George who was arguably the face of the monastic community. George won so many friends at St. Bede that in 2009 he was inducted into the St. Bede Athletic Hall of Fame and was later memorialized with a statue, arm extended in a handshake unveiled at Homecoming 2018. More than 120 donors provided funds for the statue fabricated by Larry Johnson '69.

Great affection and reverence for Br. George was held by many. He will always be the faithful presence at the top of the entrance stairs of the school extending Benedictine hospitality to all. May those who knew him pray to God in gratitude for the many blessings Br. George has given.







# THE BedanRecord

SUMMER 2020 ISSUE

St. Bede Academy  
24 W US Highway 6  
Peru, IL 61354-2903

[www.st-bede.com](http://www.st-bede.com)



Legal title: The Benedictine Society of Saint Bede

Non-Profit Org  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Crystal Lake, IL  
Permit No. 174

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED



**Save the date**  
**for Homecoming 2021**  
**September 23-26, 2021**

A DOUBLE  
**REUNION**  
CELEBRATION

Celebrating the classes ending in “0’s & 5’s” and “1’s & 6’s.”  
We look forward to welcoming all our alumni back to campus next fall!