

221 West 107th Street

Ascension Alumni Voice

ascensionalumni.org

February 2016

Happy New Year

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Membership Fund

We need your contributions badly to continue the work of the Alumni.

Please continue your generosity.

Mailing address.

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What Happened At Ascension?

1937 to 1945

We had Sisters and Brothers who, having taken the vows of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience were, now in my later years, I have come to realize that, they were truly our Sisters and Brothers in Christ! Their vocation was to teach us poor kids and give us a good solid Catholic foundation for our lives.

Some background.

Many, if not most of our families, were immigrants, coming out of the depression, and let's not forget prohibition, getting by with just enough to keep our families clothed and sheltered. For the most part, we didn't know we were poor. Some of our families really struggled to make ends meet and to teach us to behave, which in some cases was reflected in our behavior in school.

Enter World War II, reflected in our families and neighbors. Older brothers and neighbors going into the service. Blackouts, rationing, air raid drills, Pearl Harbor, D Day.

Through this maelstrom, our parents sent us to the Sisters and Brothers at Ascension to be disciplined to learning.

The first three grades were Boys and Girls together separated into two classes.

Were there 30 or 35 of us in each class? Taught by the Sisters. One sister teaching all subjects.

From the fourth to the eighth grades we were combined and separated to the boys side, taught by the Brothers and the girls side taught by the Sisters of the school.

That would have made classes of 60 plus? One Brother or Sister all day long, teaching all subjects, with a break for lunch. "Bless us oh Lord and these Thy gifts ---"

It's hard to imagine how they were able to do it! Put yourself in their place.

In class- Spelling Bees --- Art --- Music ---Talent time --- Singing- Dance ---

It's not hard to imagine that there would be one or two of us who were not able to behave in class and got smacked or were sent down to see the Principal, Sister or Brother, who was responsible for figuring out how to get us back on the right path, maybe calling our parents or sometimes using a yardstick on our knuckles? They each were responsible for three to four hundred of us.

The Brothers took us on hikes, we'd gather at 106th on the Drive and walk up to the ferry at 125th and go to Jersey and walk up past the GW into the woods, make a fire and cook hot dogs and beans. Other times we took the subway up and walked over the GW and hike up into the woods.

In the 6th Brother Vincent got us together up the hill in Central Park for a class track meet. He also got us down the Drive and formed us into a football team. Good Shepherd was the only game we didn't win. They tied us.

In the 7th Brother Lewis, the best English teacher in the city, diagraming sentences.

In the 8th Brother John took us out to Steeplechase in Coney Island.

At times, Brother Victor stood up on the wall to watch us play rough and tumble football, all grades together. Pick up the ball and try to run through the bigger guys, then kick it for somebody else to try. Nothin' organized about it. When we finished, the sun setting over Jersey, we'd go up that big hill at 108th. Somebody would drop the ball and have to go back down and get it.

Then there was the sleigh riding down the drive. Great! The bigger guys would jump on your back for the ride. Never saw the girls down there until the 8th. We found a porcelain able top to ride on. We had a great time pilin' on for the ride, the boys and girls together.

Pastor Bishop Donahue giving out report cards in the classroom ---

Great Priests --- hearing our confessions.

Going to mass together, down stairs, lower grades to the 9, nuns with the clickers ---

7th and 8th to the 8 upstairs ---Alter boys ---

Miss Beeler?, Great Choir (about 15 of us boys?) Singing Latin at the 11 high mass, John Sullivan singing Panis Angelicus. Practice in the auditorium,

Brother Victor sitting up on the stage watching us ---

Mrs. Mooney and the different plays every year, Professor Hess and the orchestra ---

Fire drills ---

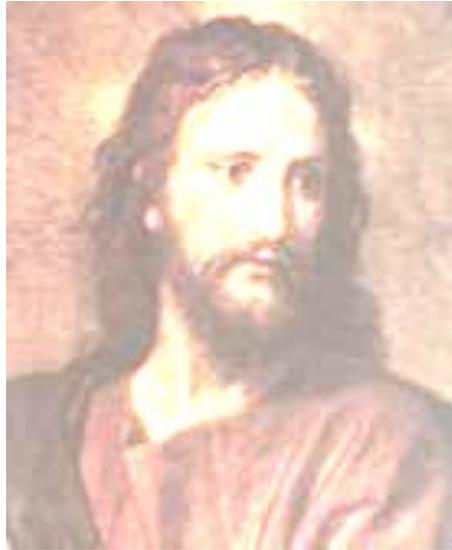
Crowning Mary, Queen of the May up on the roof ---

Playin' box ball on the street when we came back from lunch 'til it was time to line up before going back to class.

There might be some stuff to write about from your years. Send it to—

emcccclain1@tampabay.rr.com

Alumni O b i t s



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We have over 1000 Alumni on our mailing list.
 We have 326 Alumni on our email list.

Contact Ed McClain '45
emcclain1@tampabay.rr.com

We are at a point now where we **really need some younger Alumni** to get together to figure out how to keep the Alumni together.

So that we can continue to,

1. Send out the Alumni Voice.

It is through the Voice that we have kept in touch with 1000 of us.

It has served to bring in contributions to the Scholarship Fund and the Membership Fund.

2. With the Voice we send out Invitations and information about the reunions.
3. We hear from the alumni in the notes that they send with their contributions.
4. We can continue with the Alumni Website. <http://www.ascensionalumni.org/index.html>

We know that Facebook has served to keep some of us in touch.

Especially the younger alumni. It doesn't serve the purpose of reaching out to the vast majority of us. Those who do not have computers or do not get involved with Facebook.



Mailing Address

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We're on the web
ascensionalumni.org

Please include
Year of Graduation
 When you write to us

Let us know when an
Alumnus Passes Away

Don't get lost
**Send a
 forwarding address**

***Please remember Ascension Church
 in your will.***

Suggested wording:

**“I give, devise and bequeath to
 Ascension Church on West 107th Street NY, NY 10025
 the sum of \$ _____ for general purposes”.**