

1909-1919

The start of Cardinal Gibbons High School as Sacred Heart High School in 1909 and the growth of the Catholic Church in Raleigh were closely interwoven. That combined story traces its roots to 1821 when the Rt. Rev. Bishop John England started a congregation for the dozen or so Catholics in the city at that time.



Pulaski-Cowper Mansion

By the 1870s, Raleigh's Catholic population had grown to approximately 100, triggering talks of the need for a school to help parents pass on Catholicism to their children. To help accommodate this desire Fr. James White, the congregation's pastor, in 1879 purchased the Pulaski-Cowper Mansion on Hillsborough Street. At the same time, John the Baptist Church was renamed Sacred Heart Church and the burgeoning Catholic community was christened Sacred Heart Parish.

Among the band of tireless priests who established missions in the state was Fr. Thomas F. Price, the first native North Carolinian to be ordained a Catholic priest. In 1899, Fr. Price, along with his sister, Sister Mary Agnes of the Sisters of Mercy, founded the Catholic Orphanage at Nazareth on a large tract of land on Nazareth Street. The orphanage housed both high and elementary schools, which initially served just boys and later girls as well.



Catholic Orphanage at Nazareth

In 1909, Msgr. Thomas Griffin and four Dominican Sisters of Newburgh, New York, opened Sacred Heart High School, along with Sacred Heart Parochial School, within the Pulaski-Cowper Mansion. The former was the first Catholic high school in North Carolina and the latter was one of the state's first Catholic elementary schools. The names of three of the four Dominican Sisters are: Sr. Mary Dolorita, O.P. (who died in 1962), Sr. Mary Clementine, O.P., and Sister Mary Leonella, O.P. The name of the fourth sister is not known.

Approximately 50 students, grades one through nine, attended classes in the lower rooms; the upper rooms served as a convent and dormitory. The first graduating class in 1912 was comprised of three students. The original three freshmen – later identified as Mrs. Graham Andrews, Mr. William Keyes, and Mrs. Herman Wolff, graduated at the old opera house in downtown Raleigh. Due to the flu epidemic that spread across the country in 1918, Sacred Heart High School was forced to close for the 1918-1919 school year.



**The 1912 graduates
photographed in 1954**

1919-1929

As Sacred Heart Parish continued to grow in the early 1920s, plans advanced to build a new church. From the beginning, parishioners and planners alike wanted a church of dignity, something that would complement the Capitol area in which it was to stand, and be a statement of faith and stability to the community.

Between 1922 and 1924, students going to daily Mass heard it at the Briggs Building at 220 Fayetteville Street, now the Raleigh City Museum, because that was where the altar was set up while the new church was being built. In 1924 the church - constructed of granite and graced with stained glass windows and a marble altar - was completed and the first mass was held on October 16, 1924.

There was no prom in the early days of Sacred Heart High School. Instead students attended a small dinner. The outstanding event of the school year was a Communion Breakfast each October.



Typing class



Instruction of faith



Sacred Heart Cathedral

In December, 1924, the Diocese of Raleigh was formed, Sacred Heart Church was chosen as the Cathedral, and the Most Reverend William J. Hafey was appointed the first Bishop of Raleigh. That same year, Sacred Heart High School was renamed The Cathedral Latin High School.

1929-1939



**Dominican Sisters
of Newburgh, New York**

The Dominican Sisters maintained a strong atmosphere of devotion to Mary at Cathedral Latin High School that started in the 1930s and continued through the 1940s and '50s. This was celebrated with the annual May Procession – a tradition that also included choosing a May Queen.



May Procession

When Msgr. Griffin died in 1931, his successor at Sacred Heart Parish, Msgr. Arthur R. Freeman, raised the funds necessary to tear down the more than 80-year-old Pulaski-Cowper Mansion, and replace it with a larger, granite structure to accommodate the needs of both Cathedral Latin High School and Sacred Heart Cathedral School.

Students stayed in one room for all eight of their classes. The high school was located on the third floor. There was no cafeteria so students brought their own bagged lunches. They could order half-pint bottles of milk and the Sisters sold snacks - moon pies were the most popular.

There was no science room, no labs, no experiments. All studies were done solely from textbooks. Meanwhile, the Sisters were on the lookout for mischief, or “rubbernecking” as it was called back then. For instance, girls were not allowed to wear makeup. Teresa Hester Perry, ’33, recalls that she put mercurochrome on her lips in lieu of lipstick and told the Sisters it was medicine. They weren’t fooled.

In 1936, the new granite school building was completed and a year later The Most Reverend Eugene J. McGuinness was appointed the second Bishop of Raleigh. Some students from Nazareth Orphanage were transferred to the new school. The Dominican Sisters also oversaw the preparation for and pursuit of North Carolina State School accreditation through the 1938-39 school year, receiving it that spring. The high school’s graduating classes were small - typically 5-6 students and their class rings were made of gold and cost \$6.



Cathedral Latin High School & Sacred Heart Cathedral School, cir. 1936



Drawing by Chris Kemple '89

Ann Hall Marshall '38, also remembers those early days. She writes of putting on plays in the old mansion’s ballroom and of sitting in classrooms heated by potbellied stoves and of moving in 1936 to what she described as “a handsome new [school] building.” She was one of just four graduates and the only one to buy a class ring, which she donated to Cardinal Gibbons High School in 2007. Reflecting on the education she received she writes: “I found myself excellently prepared to cope with the world of higher education. My teachers had taught me, as my parents did, to aim high, work hard and never whine.”

1939-1949

It was also in the late 1930s, that the new Cathedral Latin High School introduced its original school seal and chose as its motto *Veritas Vincit Omnia, or Truth Conquers All*. The seal was comprised of a series of signs and symbols representing the Dominican Order, a black and white cross, the symbol of purity,



School seal and motto in the 1930s

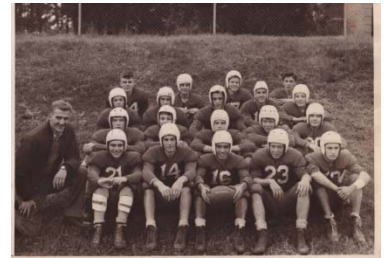
prime among them. While each graduating class chose its class motto, class flower, and class color, over time, more and more classes selected the phrase, *Cum Deo Omnia Possum* or With God, I Can Do All Things, as its class motto.



Class of 1944

During the 1935-1936 and 1936-1937 school years, Cathedral Latin was temporarily housed in the rooms of the First Baptist Church of Raleigh at the corner of South Wilmington and Salisbury streets. The Sisters taught classes there. In 1942, the office of principal was created after Fr. Lenox J. Federal, Rector of Sacred Heart Cathedral, was elevated to Monsignor, relinquishing the daily oversight of the school to Sister Grace Electa, O.P.

Throughout the 1940s and 1950s several sports teams were formed, including the football team, the Cathedral Football Players; the boys' basketball team, the Cathedral Cagers; and the girls' basketball team, the Latin Lassies. No football field or basketball court – all practices were done on a dirt court behind the school. During the winter when it was cold, athletes would have to walk or catch the city bus to the N.C. State campus where they practiced in the old National Guard Armory.



**Cathedral Latin High School
Football Players**

1949-1959

In the early 1950s a significant turning point in the history of our school, as in the nation, took place. In 1953, The Most Reverend Bishop Vincent S. Waters – third Bishop of Raleigh – decreed that all discrimination in Catholic parishes, programs and institutions cease. Bishop Waters' decision to integrate Catholic schools was significant because it came one year before the Supreme Court decision that compelled public schools across the country to integrate.



**Cathedral Latin
was the first integrated
school in North Carolina**

In 1954, Cathedral Latin High School became the first integrated school in the state by admitting students from St. Monica Grade School, part of St. Monica Parish, which was founded in 1930 to serve Raleigh's tiny African-American Catholic community. There was, however, a temporary backlash because of Bishop Waters' actions. Other athletic teams in the area refused to play "integrated" Cathedral Latin teams. Because of this, all sports activities had to be called off for the 1953-1954 and 1954-1955 school years. By the 1960s, all of St. Monica's students were fully incorporated into the elementary and high schools and the faculties of St. Monica School, the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart, and the Dominican Sisters of Newburgh, New York, joined forces.

As a side note, the story of integration at Cathedral Latin was not merely a success trumpeted in North Carolina, but was considered an inspirational example of integration in action across the world. In 1959, the Rector of Ledalero Theological Seminary in Maumere, Indonesia wrote a letter congratulating the school for its success story.



The Big Green Machine

This decade also ushered in some yearly traditions. They include the Ring Ceremony at which rising seniors receive their class rings, a tradition that continues today.

The “Crusader” mascot dates to the 1949-1950 school year. At that time, the high school age students at Nazareth Orphanage were transferred permanently to Cathedral Latin High School; two years later the orphanage’s elementary school closed. Once the two teams merged, Cathedral Latin adopted the Nazareth mascot as its own. Meanwhile, the most popular after school gathering places for students during the 1950s were Finch’s Drive-In on Peace Street and Roy’s Drive-In on Hillsborough Street.



Basketball Players 1950s

1959-1969

As the only Catholic high school in Raleigh in the 1960s, space was limited at Cathedral Latin High School, which was on the verge of outgrowing its granite building in downtown Raleigh. In turn, Bishop Waters decided to build a new high school on a portion of the former Nazareth Orphanage site off Western Boulevard. Since that time Sacred Heart Cathedral School has occupied the entire downtown building.



Students 1959



Cardinal Gibbons High School, 1962-1999

The new high school building - designed by Raleigh architects Holloway and Reeves and built by Clancy Construction Company at an approximate cost of \$160,000 - was completed and dedicated by Bishop Waters on Friday, July 27, 1962. It was named Cardinal Gibbons Memorial High School. The new brick high school opened with 148 students and contained a science room, a language laboratory, and a classroom for business courses. The library was a separate building, while a third building housed the administration offices, a health room, and a chapel.

All of the clubs, athletic teams, and activities, including the May Procession that had existed at Cathedral Latin High School were transferred to Cardinal Gibbons High School. In 1962 the phrase *Cum Deo Omnia Possum* or With God, I Can Do All Things, became the official school motto. The new yearbook, starting in 1963, was called the *Landmark*; and the monthly school newsletter was named *Veritas* or truth to retain the Dominican spirit of Cathedral Latin High School. Its school seal - a bishop’s crosier above the Dominican Order breastplate around which was the new school motto, *Cum Deo Omnia Possum* – is still used today as is the Alma Mater song:



Junior/Senior Banquet 1961



School Seal

Alma Mater, we salute thee.
Alma Mater, school we love.
Make us worthy of thy lofty standards
And thy noble teaching prove.

Cheer for Gibbons, High School of fame!
Chant her praises, great is her name.
Raise her colors, float them on high
While singing, "Hail to the High School we love."

Alma Mater, Home of Wisdom
Alma Mater, Shrine of Truth
We will ever as thy loyal children
Bless the Mother of our Youth.

The 1963-1964 academic school year brought significant change in our school's climate and culture. In response to Pope John XXIII's 1963 encyclical that sought to foster a greater sense of brotherhood among all people, theology classes at Cardinal Gibbons High School started to feature lessons with a social justice emphasis. The intent was to encourage young men and women to be active in their community and to help the less fortunate - values that characterize Cardinal Gibbons High School today.



Cheerleaders, 1960

The first lay faculty member, Mrs. John Fr. Deery, was hired to teach biology in 1964; two years later Homecoming was introduced and Carol L. Janesick was named the school's first Homecoming Queen. Meanwhile, the dress code was relaxed - in the mid-1960s and then again at the start of the next decade.

1969-1979



Students, 1970

In 1971, the Dominican Sisters left after 62 years of service because a change in their mission required them to work with the indigent and for social justice. Replacements could not be found, forcing the school to close for one year. It reopened in 1972 under the administrative leadership of the Sisters of Notre Dame of Chardon, Ohio, with Sr. Mary Teresita Gresko, S.N.D. as principal.

During her time as principal (1972-1976) Sister Mary Teresita introduced "flexible modular scheduling, in which school time was divided into 15 or 20-minute units used to schedule classes in a variety of lengths. This allowed students and faculty to



Sr. Mary Teresita
Gresko, S.N.D.
Principal 1972-1976

decide how to divide their time, with both pursuing classes and subjects that interested them most. She also allowed a series of “mini-courses” to be conducted on various topics that piqued students’ interest. These college-like seminars ranged from Russian Strategy to Group Dynamics and Journalism. It was during her tenure that the school bookstore was introduced and new sports teams, including girls’ volleyball and boys’ soccer were added – all remain fixtures at today’s Cardinal Gibbons.

By the 1975-76 school year, The Most Reverend F. Joseph Gossman was the fourth Bishop of Raleigh and Cardinal Gibbons High School was well positioned as a college preparatory school. At the same time, it experienced an increase in enrollment as families moved to the area to take advantage of jobs in the growing Research Triangle Park.



Clockwise from upper right: Pam Heyl, Annette Jay and Toni Sutphin

Through the end of the 1970s several faculty and staff members - who still serve the school today - joined the Cardinal Gibbons community. They are English teacher Toni Sutphin, Pam Heyl, current chairperson of the Social Studies Department and Annette Jay, school registrar. Mrs. Jay, who served in many support staff administrative positions over the years, received the Most Reverend Vincent S. Waters Award in 2007, a first in school history, for her three decades of dedicated service to Cardinal Gibbons

1979-1989

In 1979, the student population more than doubled to 223 and the predecessor of the current “Penny Challenge”, called “Pickle Jar Penny War” began. The following year, Sr. Frances Taymans, S.N.D (then known as Sr. Mary Bernette) took over as principal.



Class of 1979



Sr. Mary Frances Taymans, S.N.D., Principal, 1980-1984

During the summer of 1980, parent volunteers, donating much time and working in record heat, prepared modular units for use as additional classrooms, as well as built a dining room and a long-hoped-for chapel. Students and parents helped to re-panel the gymnasium floor, moved furniture and assembled desks. It was at this time that the notion of the school as a second home for students began; and the school began to be referred to and promoted as “the Gibbons family”.

In the 1980-1981 school year, under the guidance of Principal Sr. Mary Frances Taymans, spiritual retreats became a permanent fixture of Cardinal Gibbons student life. In the spring of 1981, Cardinal Gibbons was officially designated by the Board of Trustees as a four-year college preparatory school. At the start of the



Students, 1983

next academic year, Sr. Mary Frances Taymans authorized the purchase of the first video display terminal, navigating Cardinal Gibbons into the uncharted waters of the new P.C. age.

In 1984, in conjunction with the school's 75th Anniversary, a new cafeteria was added, the library was enlarged, and business offices and faculty spaces were remodeled and expanded. The student body itself had a number of important experiences, aside from the anniversary festivities. In January, for instance, Cardinal Gibbons sent a contingent of students to participate in the first Washington, D.C. March for Life. Students still make the trip today. Meanwhile, demand for Catholic education persisted and Cardinal Gibbons High School continued to grow. A permanent expansion plan became imperative.

During the 1980s several other faculty members, who still serve the school today, started at Cardinal Gibbons High School. They are Rebecca Dason, chairperson of the Fine Arts Department, Catherine Sokash, chairperson of the English Department, Jana Mauney, chairperson of the Business Department and Theology teacher Patricia Gallagher.

1989-1999



Starting in 1989, plans began to address the growth needs of the school. In 1991, the Sisters of Notre Dame ended their administrative leadership of Cardinal Gibbons, though they remained members of its faculty and staff and still serve the school today.

Sr. Janet Schemmel, S.N.D. &
Sr. Mary Jean Korejwo, S.N.D.

In 1994, at the request of Bishop Gossman, the Franciscan Brothers of Brooklyn, New York, assumed leadership of Cardinal Gibbons High School. The Brothers agreed to manage the school through its next phase of growth. Br. Michel Bettigole, O.S.F. and Br. Gary Cregan, O.S. F. were principal and vice principal respectively. Br. Richard Contino, O.S. F. joined them as an English and Theology teacher. The Brothers were called to instill the Franciscan charism of joy that still endures today, epitomized by the phrase "capture the heart, and the mind will follow".



Cardinal Gibbons High School,
1999-present



With the full support of the bishop and the Diocese, a new school was to be built on a parcel of land off Trinity Road. In 1996, a capital campaign was initiated, and the following year, construction began at the current Edwards Mill Road location. The Franciscan Brothers oversaw the school's move to its current campus, and welcomed 760 students to the present Cardinal Gibbons High School building when it was completed in 1999.

Br. Michel Bettigole,
O.S.F., Principal
1994-2006

During their time at Cardinal Gibbons High School the Franciscan Brothers:



**Br. Gary Cregan,
O.S.F. and Br. Richard
Contino, O.S.F.**

Sponsored the Franciscan pilgrimage to Assisi, Italy, sending teachers every year to instill their charism of joy to the school staff.
Built an active list of student-led and faculty moderated clubs.
Brought back the school newspaper, “The Crusader”.
Began to expand the AP program and the roster of AP classes available to students.
Saw the start of several new teams, including lacrosse and dance, which was also made an elective course; as well as of a junior varsity athletic program.
Expanded the Fine Arts Department.



Jim Freeman and students

During the 1990s Cardinal Gibbons welcomed faculty and staff members who continue to serve the school today. They are: Dale Foushee, Head Librarian, Dean Monroe, Athletic Director, Jim Freeman, Assistant Athletic Director, Sr. Janet Schemmel, S.N.D., Chairperson of the Science Department and Academic Dean, David Bierlein, Technology Coordinator, Casey LoFrese, English teacher, Karen Scharf, Chairperson of the Foreign Language Department, as well as Sr. Mary Jean Korejwo, S.N.D, and Susan Sauls, both administrative assistants.

1999-2009



**Mr. Jason Curtis,
Principal,
Most Rev.
Michael F.
Burbidge, 5th
Bishop of Raleigh**

The start of the 21st century brought renewed prosperity for Cardinal Gibbons High School, which continued to grow under the guidance of the Franciscan Brothers of Brooklyn. In 2005, at the recommendation of the CGHS Board of Trustees, Bishop Gossman appointed Fr. Daniel Kenna, O.F.M., as President of Cardinal Gibbons. Fr. Dan together with then Assistant principal Jason D. Curtis spearheaded a five-year strategic planning process, initiated the first summer (2005) leadership conference for rising seniors and updated the school’s Mission Statement:

Cardinal Gibbons High School is a college preparatory school of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Raleigh. We embrace the mission of Jesus Christ:
To form men and women of faith, service, and leadership in church and community.

In 2006, when Br. Michel Bettigole, O.S.F., retired as principal, the leadership of Cardinal Gibbons High School was turned over to Principal Jason D. Curtis. He along with four assistant principals: Mike Curatolo (Student Life), Mike Rogosich (Student Activities), Nancy Barkan (Instruction) and Fr. Scott McCue (Spiritual Life), administer the school,



Students perform “Annie”

which continues to flourish as its academic, spiritual outreach, athletic and extra curricula programs grow and expand. In August, 2006, The Most Reverend Michael F. Burbidge became the fifth Bishop of Raleigh.

From the outside, the Cardinal Gibbons High School of today may seem a vastly different school than the one that opened a century ago. But inside, little has changed. Here, the Gibbons spirit can be felt – then as now – in the students, faculty and staff who along with parents and alumni make up the Cardinal Gibbons High School community. It is that spirit and that community that embrace students and, in turn, students embrace – often for a lifetime.



Students and administrator, 2007



Students, 2009

Students and graduates – young and old alike – talk wistfully of life at their alma mater: sitting in classrooms heated by potbellied stoves, marching in the May Procession, meeting friends under the shade of the giant oak tree on the Western Boulevard campus and finding solace in a tiny corner of Kristie’s Garden at the current campus. And so, the past forms the bridge to the present - and to the future.

As Cardinal Gibbons High School continues to evolve, its devotion to providing Catholic education to the Diocese of Raleigh’s youth is stronger than ever, as is its commitment to its mission of forming men and women of faith, service, and leadership. On any given day stroll onto campus and watch today’s students arrive. Their faces are bright with promise, recalling those of students in 1909 and portending those of students in 2109.