



# NEWSMAGAZINE North Texas Catholic

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## *Nolan Vikings kick off golden year*



1961-2011—Nolan Catholic High School students have a good reason to start off the new academic year with cheers, shouts and applause. Founded in 1961 by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur and the Marianists, the Catholic secondary school is celebrating 50 years of growth and innovation with tailgate parties, special projects and class reunions. Exhibiting some of the school's festive mood are (top row left to right) David laPointe, Brianna Grimmert, Jaycee Weber, Cierra Guerin, Julius Powell, Stefan Puente, Maggie Kleiser. (bottom row left to right)- AnnElise Corpany, Maggie Puente, Abby Cook, Zoe Pfifer, Jenna Hagan, and Julie Spurlock.

*Nolan's halls (fewer than today's vastly enlarged campus) first filled with students in 1961, spurred by the prayers and work of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur and the Marianists*

## 1961 to 2011: Nolan celebrates Jubilee

**Story and Photos  
by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen**

### 'It's a golden time to be a Viking'

**J**ust ask the Nolan Catholic students who packed the gym on Aug. 15 to kick-off the high school's 50th anniversary celebration with a pep rally. The teens, dressed in Nolan's trademark blue and grey uniforms, stood and cheered from the bleachers as Principal Cathy Buckingham announced some of the activities that will showcase the school's five decades of history.

**"W**hen you go back to your parishes and communities, you'll be ambassadors of Nolan Catholic High School and our celebration of 50 years of Viking tradition"

— Nolan Catholic Principal Cathy Buckingham

"When you go back to your parishes and communities, you'll be ambassadors of Nolan Catholic High School and our celebration of 50 years of Viking tradition," she said, challenging the already enthusiastic student body. "It's going to be a fantastic year!"

The school's colorful heritage dates back to 1961 when the Marianist Brothers, together with the Sisters of St. Mary of

Namur, decided to launch a new era of Catholic secondary education in Tarrant County. Built on property donated by the Amon G. Carter Foundation, the venture combined Our Lady of Victory Academy for girls with Laneri High School for boys. For a short time, the newly organized secondary school was known as Our Lady of Victory but was renamed Msgr. Robert

M. Nolan Catholic High School in 1963 by the Bishop of Dallas-Fort Worth Thomas K. Gorman. Same sex classrooms and separate administrations were maintained until 1969 when the school became fully co-educational.

Today, Nolan Catholic is a ministry of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth and continues to flourish under the direction of the Society of Mary (the Marianists).

The college preparatory high school has maintained a faith-based curriculum and high academic standards throughout its history but has changed in size and appearance. Pat Pierret, director of alumni relations and a 1978 alumna, surprised her young listeners when she described a time when the school had no air conditioning or football field. The

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Senior Kelsey Hattersly, a/k/a Victoria the Viking mascot, leads the crowd in rousing cheer as students head out to the gym for a pep rally kicking-off Nolan Catholic's 50th jubilee anniversary. She is joined by (left to right) cheerleader Andrea Borrego, drumline members Jordan Mack and Katie Veltman, Ellen Bittenn and cheerleaders Katie Frederick, Adrienne Crawford and Clarissa Cruz.



(LEFT) Father Richard Villa, S.M. tells students they are part of an important milestone in their school's history during an address announcing the start of a nine-month long celebration that marks Nolan Catholic's 50th anniversary. (RIGHT) Nolan upper class members respond vigorously, showing their support of the anniversary celebration.

## Nolan Jubilee Pep Rally fires up students

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building had no D or E halls, and the large gathering space known as the Commons once served as a combined cafeteria/library and later as a combined cafeteria/dance studio.

Although Nolan now boasts a multi-purpose center complete with a large arena for athletic events, spirited pep rallies are still held in the smaller, original gym.

"Viking tradition has always prevailed over the years," Pierret pointed out. "That's obvious today with all of you in here cheering and getting ready to celebrate our 50th anniversary."

With 10,000 graduates, part of Nolan's legacy is the impressive number of alumni who send their youngsters to the school. Freshman Abby Pfaff is a third generation Viking. She is the granddaughter of Pat Vader '64 and Judy Parnell Vader '65 and the daughter of Emily Vader Pfaff '90.

Kathryn Rhadigan, 50th anniversary project coordinator and Nolan parent, hopes the celebration draws former students,

like the Vaders, back to the campus for a visit.

"I think there's something to interest everybody. I'm really excited about the tailgates we're having for each of the five decades of classes," she said, explaining the first home football game on Aug. 26 will honor members of the classes who graduated during the 2000s.

In addition to class reunions, Nolan is planning specialty reunions for graduates who were involved in theater, ecology, band, and other clubs.

"They'll get to interface with current students at those reunions," Rhadigan promised.

Current and future generations of Vikings also will benefit from two special projects designed to commemorate the school's jubilee. An existing hallway in the school is being renovated with glass cases to house Nolan memorabilia and historic artifacts.

"There are bits and pieces of history everywhere in the school, but it's not in one central location," the coordinator said. "There's an old cheerleader uniform here and an old program there. We want

to pull it all together in one place — like a museum — so we have a retrospective of where we've been."

Organizers are also planning a centrally-located prayer garden that can serve as a place of reflection for students and visitors.

"These special gifts are for other generations," Rhadigan added.

The nine-month long anniversary celebration will conclude with a June 2, 2012 family Mass, picnic, and concert. For Zoe Pfeifer, the best part of being a Nolan student during the school's 50th anniversary is the excitement and activity.

"I'm looking forward to meeting all of the alumni and learning about the memories they created at Nolan," the junior said.

Principal Cathy Buckingham encourages alumni to visit their alma mater, so they can enjoy the sense of community that makes Nolan Catholic such a very special place for their students and alumni.

"I think if they come back and attend some of these events they will see how Nolan has grown and matured," she said. "They'll be proud to say, 'this is my school.'"

# Calendar of Events

## AUGUST

August 15 - 50th Anniversary Pep Rally

August 26 - Salute to the classes of the 2000s

6 p.m. Tailgate Reunion & BBQ Dinner

7:30 p.m. Football Game-Halftime Recognition

## SEPTEMBER

September 9

Salute to the classes of the 1990s

6 p.m. Tailgate Reunion & BBQ Dinner

7:30 p.m. Football Game-Halftime Recognition

September 16

Salute to the classes of the 1980s

6 p.m. Tailgate Reunion & BBQ Dinner

7:30 p.m. Football Game-Halftime Recognition

September 23

Salute to the classes of the 1970s

6 p.m. Tailgate Reunion & BBQ Dinner

7:30 p.m. Football Game-Halftime Recognition

## OCTOBER

October 7

Salute to the classes of the 1960s

6 p.m. Tailgate Reunion & BBQ Dinner

7:30 p.m. Football Game-Halftime Recognition

October 21

Homecoming Game / Doskocil Stadium / 7:30 p.m.

## DECEMBER

December 6

6 p.m. Christmas on Campus

7 p.m. Fine Arts Christmas Concert

## JANUARY

January 14

5 p.m. Spirit Leaders Reunion

Cheerleaders, Royelles, Norsemen & Mascots

7 p.m. MEB Memorial Basketball

January 19

Viking Day of Prayer

11 a.m. Chaminade Liturgy

12:30 p.m. Reunion of Chaminade & Marian Award Winners and Esto Dux Recipients

January 21

Faculty & Staff Reunion

5 p.m. Mass / 6 p.m. Dinner

## FEBRUARY

February 5

Student Council Reunion

11 a.m. Mass / 12 p.m. Luncheon

February 11

MARDI GRAS AT COWBOYS STADIUM

## MARCH

March 3

5:30 p.m. Theatre Reunion

7 p.m. Spring Musical

March 11

Academic Champions Reunion

11 a.m. Mass / 12 p.m. Luncheon

## APRIL

April 18

7 p.m. School Board Reunion

April 22

Ecology Reunion

11 a.m. Mass / 12 p.m. Luncheon

## MAY

May 6

5 p.m. All Sports Reunion & Legacy Dinner

May 20

Golden Viking Reception

Honoring the OLV Class of 1962  
Commencement, Class of 2012

## JUNE

June 2

Grand Finale Celebration Event  
Family Mass / Family Picnic, Concert & Activities