

Comet Alumni Spotlight

Patrick Travers

St. Thomas Class of 1996



Educational Background:

I went to St. Thomas from kindergarten through 8th grade, and was the first class to graduate with the new gym and renovated classrooms. Afterwards I went to PND for four years, and then to the University of Illinois where I got a Bachelor's and Master's in Structural Engineering.

Recent Achievements:

Achievements is a funny word for someone who is a consecrated brother. My life is really all about serving the Church and others. Sharing the joy that living the Christian life has given me with others is a blessing. I never would have imagined this lifestyle. I even avoided the Newman Center at the U of I for four years, and now I am the Director of the Newman Center for Penn & Drexel in Philadelphia. I feel very blessed for my community of brothers, the Sodality of Christian Life, as well as for the community of students and young adults at our Newman Center. Helping young people discover a relationship with Christ and his call to discipleship is truly a gift. It brings me a lot of hope to see young people embracing the Christian life, and the Lord's mission to share the Good News.

St. Thomas teacher who made an impact on you:

There were many great teachers over the years, and I probably gave quite a few of them a pretty hard time. I was a teacher's pet in some ways, but also looked to push their buttons. Mrs. O'Toole was so committed to us, Mrs. Harn was always a part of the St. Thomas family, and Mrs. Crawmer showed us that she cared about us. There were many others, but these three stand out!

Family:

My parents, Bob & Kathleen, raised me and my two siblings in Peoria Heights. My dad owned a small business that sold kitchen countertops, and my mom was a school teacher in Dunlap.

Comet Siblings & what they are up to now:

My sister, Caitlin, was three years behind me and now raises two wonderful boys in Chicago. My brother, Bobby, is ten years younger than me, and now lives in Chicago and works in financial planning. They both went to St. Thomas and PND as well.

Favorite experience as a St. Thomas Comet:

There are too many to count. I will say that it wasn't always perfect. I experienced my share of feeling like an outsider and not fitting in. But I also experienced many positive things, and appreciate the Catholic formation that we received, and the care our teachers had for us. I remember my first crushes, the pranks we would pull, and many of the lessons learned. One memory that sticks out though was when one of my classmates was being bullied, and in order to fit in, I joined the group. I remember a lady from our lunchroom who came up to me after she saw it happen. She told me that I wasn't like that, and I shouldn't join in. It really stuck with me, and helped me to try and keep my integrity.

Piece of advice for current Comets:

Be patient! I remember thinking when will this ever be over?? I can't wait to be an adult. Now I can't believe I'm already 40! Time flies, and being young is a gift. I still think of myself as a kid! So embrace being a kid, and let life come to you. You're gonna make mistakes, and that's ok. Oh, and God loves you, and He wants to have a relationship with you.

