



Alumni Spotlight

Deacon Lewis Palos

Class of 1961



Since you have graduated from James L. Collins Catholic School, what academic, career, and/or volunteer paths have you taken? What is your current job title and company?

While attending James L. Collins, I began my social life being involved with the Cub Scout and Boy Scout programs and earned my way through all the ranks of the program and was eventually an Assistant Boy Scout Master. I also began to serve on the Altar at Mass every chance of opportunity. I was simply drawn to the Mass and felt it such a privilege to be on the altar during the Consecration. Father Merkel instructed me well in the discipline of being an altar boy and he taught me the new Mass form after Vatican II. I learned Latin from the Latin rite of all the Mass prayers. Upon graduation I began to search for a career in Law Enforcement and was gainfully employed by the Corsicana Police Department in 1967 at the age of 17. I began as a Cadet, Dispatcher, Patrolman, Accident Investigator, Juvenile Officer, Detective, Sergeant of Patrol and Detectives, Assistant Chief of Police and eventually as Interim Police Chief in 1993. During 1993 and the worst time in the history of the department due to the civil unrest because of a custodial death, I was able to recall all my education and spiritual influence received here at James L. Collins and Immaculate Conception, to help calm the situation. During my police career, I joined the US Air Force Reserve program and attained the rank of Sergeant at the time of my Honorable Discharge in 1973. Also in 1985 I began my discernment for the Permanent Diaconate of the Roman Catholic church and in 1992 was ordained for the Dallas Diocese and will celebrate 25 years of ordination in January of 2017. At this time I have retired from employment and primarily devote my life to the Diaconate here at Immaculate Conception, where I assist Father Marco at Mass, preach, perform weddings, conduct funeral services, visit the sick and home bound and conduct Communion services and provide consultation services for those in distress. All of these attributes began here at James L. Collins Catholic School and I am proud and fortunate to have this wonderful beginning along with my loving parents and the James L. Collins scholarship to provide this opportunity.

What lesson did you learn while at James L. Collins Catholic School and how has it shaped you into the person you are today?

The most important lessons learned here were to work hard, apply yourself and set your goals high and treat others with love and good works. Never allow yourself to be discouraged and think you cannot accomplish all your endeavors. You can, and with God's help and faith in Jesus all things are possible. Carry yourself with dignity and respect, and honor all that your Father and Mother taught you.

How have any of the four cornerstones of James L. Collins Catholic School allowed you to transform the world in your own way?

I was able to use all these virtues to form my ideology in life and apply all these to accomplish everything I wanted to do. I grew up in a time of great prejudice against my heritage and my Catholic faith, but I never felt that I was not as good as anyone else and never let it hold me back with my determination to achieve.

What advice would you like to give to the students at James L. Collins Catholic School?

My advice to all the students is never give up, and set your priorities for all that is good. Never allow yourself to be talked into something you know and feel is wrong. Walk away and say a prayer for strength. Honor your father and mother, and love your family and friends.