



Rev. Bernard McMahon Inducted 1996

There is no better measure of the amount of love and respect that a student body has for a member of the school community than to dedicate a year book to him. Stepinac's class of 1972 thought of this tribute fitting for Rev. Bernard McMahon. "He was a person to whom anyone could turn," that year's edition of *The Shepherd* proclaimed.

From 1951 - 1971, Father McMahon was the consummate priest, teacher, friend and loyal advisor to all who came in contact with him at 950 Mamaroneck Avenue. With passion and purpose, he arrived at our doors as a young priest with a master's degree in English from the University of Minnesota. A Doctorate from St. John's University soon followed as well as the distinguished honor of receiving a Fulbright Fellowship to study at Cambridge University in England.

As chairman of the English department, as well as the moderator of the Dramatics society, *The Shepherd*, *The Phoenix*, our literary magazine, and the Alumni Association, he constantly prodded and cajoled his students to bring out the best in them. He was known to hold "court" with his fellow faculty members and engage them in endless bouts of scholarly conversation and debate. One former colleague called this era, Stepinac's "Golden Age of Literature."

Father McMahon is perhaps best known for his contributions to our school's theatrical history. He was an instructor and dram coach to no less "dramatis personae" than Alan Alda and John Voight. During Father's first year at Stepinac, a senior, "Al Alda from Elmsford" asked him to produce and direct a musical comedy that he had written called "Love's the Ticket." A review of the play in the local newspaper in 1952 reported, "The Major Bowes Theatre at Stepinac can be classified as 'kissin kin' to Broadway - for this weekend at least!" (Alda's father was appearing in "Guys and Dolls" on the Broadway stage at the time.)

Father McMahon has also written textbooks. He taught actress Mercedes Ruehl and Pulitzer Prize - winning newspaper reporter Madeline Blais. When asked about his success as a dramatics coach and advisor, Father McMahon said in a recent interview in the *New York Times*, "My job was not to impose, but to elicit what my students had inside of them. What I tried to do was create a sense of joy. If they have that joy, they will find the real person in the character they are presenting."

Ordained a priest in 1948, Father McMahon still insists that his primary mission is as a teacher and campus chaplain. Countless students have turned to him to officiate at their weddings and baptize their children. Earlier this year, he celebrated the funeral liturgy at Jon Voight's mother at Our Lady of Fatima Church, Scarsdale.

As the members of the Stepinac Family celebrate Father McMahon's induction into our Hall of Fame, we repeat with deep reverence and admi