



(Charles F. Sibre)

**HALL OF FAMERS** — The Office for Catholic Education saluted six distinguished graduates of Catholic schools, Nov. 19. Standing from left are: Lt. Gen. Thomas W. Kelly, Mercy Sister Cora Billings, Catherine C. Gandolfo and Robert S. Halvey. Seated, from left, Augustinian Father William E. Atkinson and Martin P. Mullen. See story on page 14.

# Six Catholic School Grads Enter Hall of Fame

By MATTHEW GAMBINO

Six men and women offered compelling evidence of the value of a Catholic education: their lives.

The six products of Archdioce-

san Catholic schools received the Distinguished Graduate Award at a Nov. 19 dinner ceremony at Maternity B.V.M. School Hall.

Chosen from 358 nominees from elementary and secondary

schools throughout the Archdiocese, the award recipients were recognized for their outstanding achievements and commitment to Catholic schools, according to the Office for Catholic Education.

The honorees, who each received a bronze award medallion, included:

- Father William E. Atkinson, O.S.A., a graduate of St. Alice School, Upper Darby, and Msgr. Bonner High School, Drexel Hill, is thought to be the first quadriplegic ordained a priest. He received a dispensation from Pope Paul VI and was ordained on Feb. 2, 1974. He currently teaches at Msgr. Bonner.

- Sister Cora Billings, R.S.M., taught in elementary and secondary schools for 18 years as a Sister of Mercy, entering the order in 1956. A graduate of St. Ignatius School and West Catholic Girls' High School, she now serves as pastoral coordinator of St. Eliza-

beth Parish, Richmond, Va., and works with the poor in Haiti.

- Catherine C. Gandolfo graduated from Annunciation School, St. Maria Goretti High School and Temple University. She joined Channel 6 Action News in 1975 as a writer and producer, became a reporter two years later and in 1978 landed her present position as New Jersey correspondent.

- Robert S. Halvey, a product of St. James School, Elkins Park, began his photojournalism career at Roman Catholic High, from which he graduated in 1935. For more than 50 years, Halvey has been a photographer for *The Catholic Standard and Times*, covering events that spanned the administration of four cardinal archbishops of Philadelphia.

- Retired Lt. Gen. Thomas W. Kelly graduated from Immaculate Conception School, Northeast Catholic High School and Temple University before beginning his

34-year career in the Army. He served as director of operations for the Joint Chiefs of Staff during the Persian Gulf War.

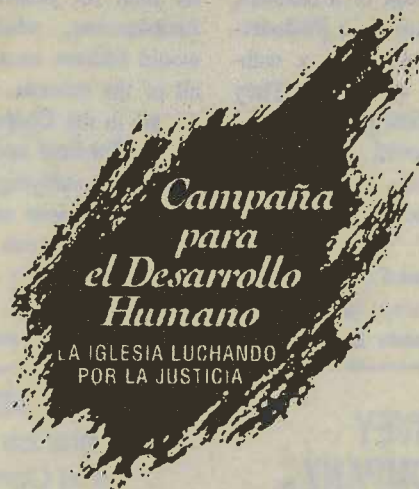
- Martin P. Mullen, prior to serving 28 years in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, graduated from Most Blessed Sacrament School, West Catholic High and Temple Law School.

Four award recipients are graduates from schools recommended for closure, although no decision has yet been made.

Gen. Kelly recalled the tough neighborhood of his alma mater and noted how Catholic education is still important to youth.

"Young people today walk a much tougher road than I did," he said, "and I walked a pretty tough road."

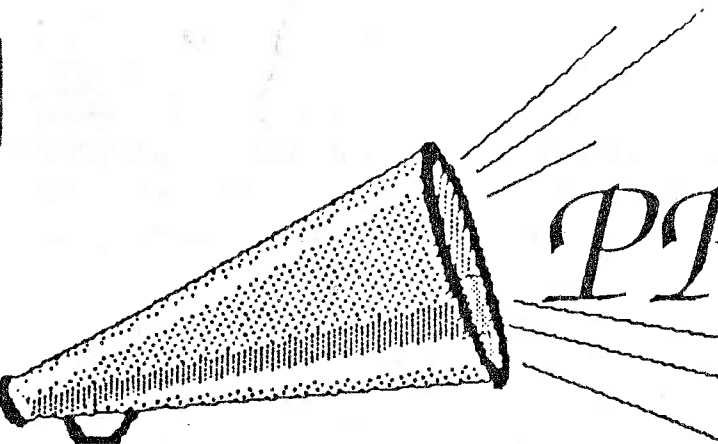
Halvey, the son of a 1905 graduate of Roman Catholic, called his career an "adventure I have enjoyed," with its "backbone" being his Catholic education.



**Gracias Por Su Generosidad**

Estamos agradecidos por su generosa repuesta a colecta para la Campaña





# PRonouncements

*From Sr. K. Patricia Spingler, I.M.M.,  
Supervisor of Marketing and Public  
Relations*

## **HALL OF FAME**

*A dinner reception to honor this year's winners has been scheduled by Thursday, November 19, 1992 at Maternity B.V.M. Hall on Bustleton Avenue in Philadelphia. The choir and schola of St. Matthew's Elementary School will sing Grace before meals and a musical salute after the six awardees are inducted into the Hall of Fame.*

*This year's winners have been selected from the 385 names that I received from our Archdiocesan Schools. Those who live their faith challenge others to grow. All of this year's winners certainly have set a clear example for the students in our schools to follow.*

## **PROFILE OF DISTINGUISHED CATHOLIC SCHOOL GRADUATES**

**REV. WILLIAM E. ATKINSON, O.S.A.** was born in Upper Darby in 1945. He was nominated by St. Alice School, Upper Darby, where he received his elementary education. After graduating from Msgr. Bonner in 1963, Bill chose to follow the religious life of the Augustinians and was sent to New Hamburg, New York to start his Novitiate. In February 1965, Bill was in an accident that caused a broken neck and a lifetime of paralysis. His career as a priest had seemingly been snuffed out by an outrageous accident. Several times the doctors gave up hope. However, Bill drawing on spiritual strength proved them wrong. His goal was to study and to dedicate his life to God.

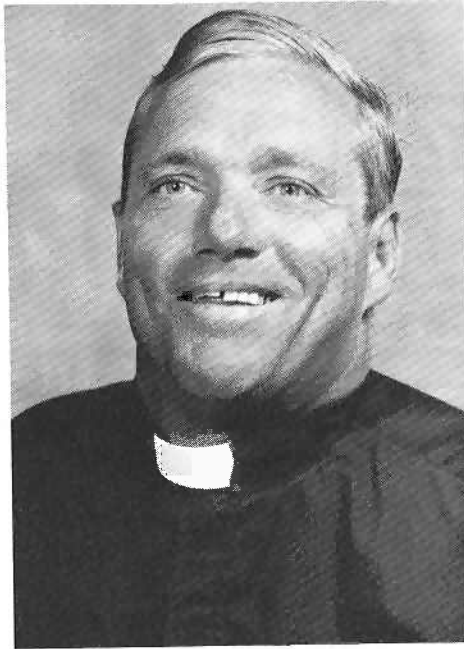
*With absolutely no motor function from the neck down, Bill was faced with the dilemma of trying to attain a goal never achieved by any person in the history of the Catholic Church. And...he achieved it! Bill received a special dispensation from Pope Paul VI and was ordained a priest on February 2, 1974. Father Atkinson presently teaches at his alma mater, Monsignor Bonner. According to letters of support, Father Atkinson... "epitomizes every characteristic to help students develop into responsible, mature, Catholic young men. He is learned, just, concerned, effective, humble, loyal and holy."*

DISTINGUISHED GRADUATE

REV. WILLIAM E. ATKINSON, O.S.A.

"During my elementary school years, the I.H.M. Sisters reinforced the values and principles that were part of my family. Academics, religion and sportsmanship as well as the Christian values associated with each of them became a vital ingredient of my formative years.

The influence of the Augustinians and the lay teachers prepared me for higher education and planted the seeds of my vocation. Through their Christ-like example, I was able to vision an active way to put Christ's teachings into practice. I have been very fortunate not only to have heard God's call but to become a small part of His presence in our world today."



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*AD MULTOS ANNOS, FATHER BILL!*



Office of the Cardinal  
222 N. 17th Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299

November 19, 1992

*My Dear Distinguished Catholic Graduate:*

*I offer my congratulations and best wishes to you as recipient of the "Distinguished Catholic Graduate Award." It is a particular honor to be chosen as an outstanding member of the Catholic community. The honor given to you, which is so well deserved, in fact honors all of our schools as well as the members of your own family.*

*Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia have enjoyed a tradition of excellence for more than 100 years. Each year, our schools graduate thousands of academically, artistically, and spiritually gifted students. The values learned in Catholic school provide a foundation for a lifetime of achievement. This recognition is not for any single event in which you excelled, but for the cumulative effort of many years of commitment to the values of a Catholic life.*

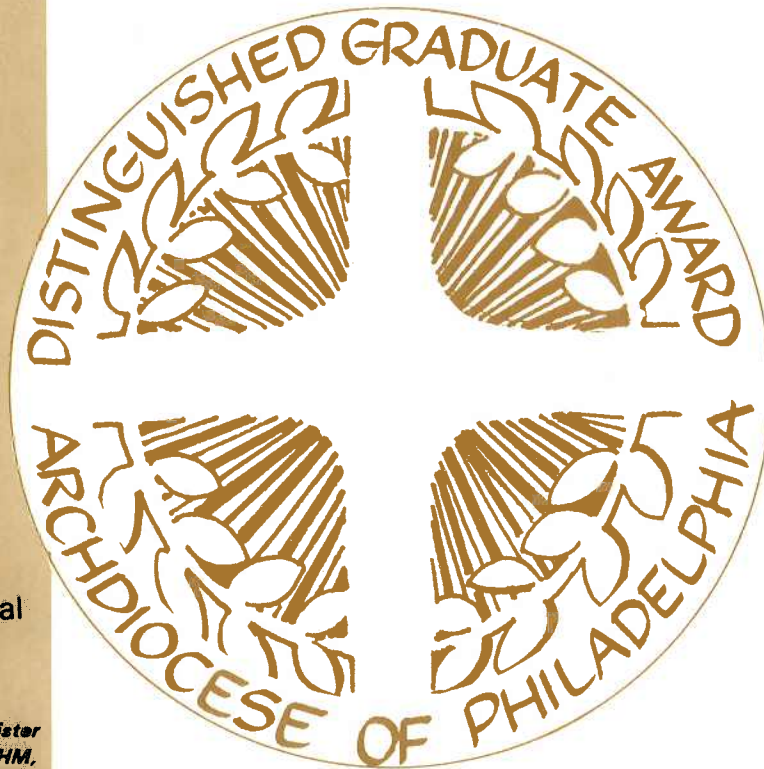
*By your example many souls have been strengthened in the light of faith. Please accept my congratulations and gratitude for all you have done and will continue to do to challenge others to grow in their faith.*

*I ask God's blessings on you and your families on this happy occasion.*

*Sincerely yours in Christ,*

*Archbishop of Philadelphia*

# THE SECOND ANNUAL DISTINGUISHED GRADUATE AWARD CEREMONY



## The Medal

Designed by *Sister Helen David, IHM*, the medal is cast in bronze.

It symbolizes open-ended, on-going, stimulating growth & maturity as well as consciousness of belonging to the human community--being connected and in relationship to others.

Catholic schools of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia have enjoyed a tradition of excellence for more than 100 years. Each year, Catholic schools graduate thousands of academically, artistically, and spiritually gifted students. The values that our children learn in Catholic schools provide a foundation for a lifetime of achievement.

In recognition of our outstanding graduates, the Archdiocese of Philadelphia, Office of Catholic Education, has established the Distinguished Catholic School Graduate Award.

This award recognizes graduates of Philadelphia Archdiocesan Catholic Schools who by their outstanding contributions, achievements, and continuing commitment to the values of a Catholic life, have inspired an appreciation for the values of the Catholic school tradition.

Established in 1991