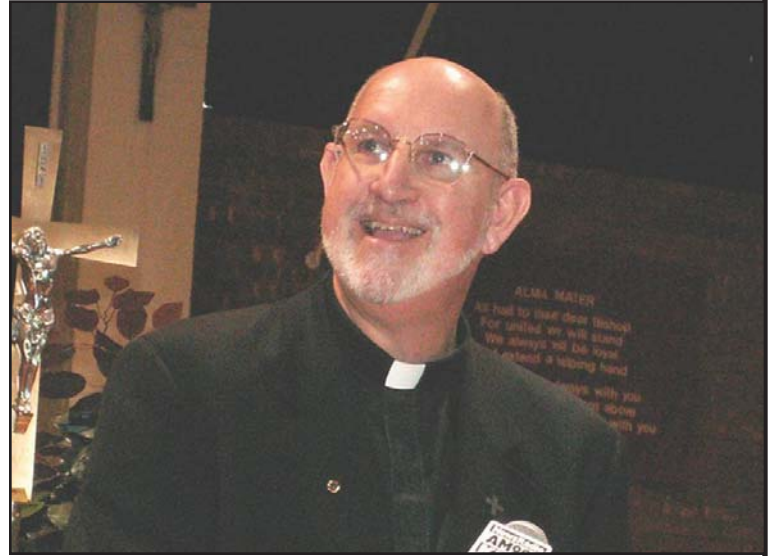




Leadership in Education

2008 Catholic Secondary Education Award

Bishop García Diego High School principal, Fr. Tom Elewaut, C.J., received the 2008 Catholic Secondary Education Award from the National Catholic Education Association at its annual convention held in Indianapolis March 25-27. The award is presented in recognition of distinguished service to Catholic education, stated NCEA Executive Director Secondary Schools Department, Sr. Mary Frances Taymans, S.N.D., Ed.D. Fr. Elewaut is one of six high school educators among 1213 high schools honored this year by the National Catholic Education Association.



A Josephite Father for the past twenty-six years, Fr. Tom holds a Masters degree in Education from California Polytechnic University and a Masters of Divinity from St. John's Seminary, Camarillo. He served the community of St. Joseph High School in Santa Maria for twenty years as teacher, principal (1990-1998) and president (1998-2002).

During his years of service as principal and president Fr. Tom oversaw the enrollment reach capacity at 650 students. In addition, a number of renovation and expansion projects included a Campus Ministry Center, computer lab sponsored by Den-Mat Corporation, new science labs, athletic trainer room, football stadium lights, and several modular buildings. He was instrumental in securing national recognition for St. Joseph High School as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence in 1993.



Fr. Tom with Brian & JD, Class of 2008

By piloting the President-Principal model in 1998, Fr. Tom led the way for other high schools in the Archdiocese of Los Angeles to adopt the model and better meet the expanding leadership needs of Catholic secondary schools.

Since becoming Principal of Bishop Garcia Diego High School in Santa Barbara in 2002, Fr. Tom has been influential in many ways. In a bold and courageous fashion, Fr. Tom realized the future of the struggling school which required a change in governance, enabling Bishop Garcia Diego High School to become an independent private Catholic high school with a spirited identity.

Supported by a Board of Trustees, the school has implemented more than \$4.6 million in facility and program improvements including a second gymnasium, college-like campus courtyard, weight room and other athletic facility improvements. In addition, the school expanded its course offers to seven periods daily.

Besides Church ministry on the weekends, Fr. Tom has served as a civilian chaplain for the United States Air Force, a NCEA Regional Associate for Region II for the past 15 years and as a Visiting Committee Accreditation Chair for the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.