**70th Reunion—Class of 1952**

**SICP, September 17, 2022—Fr. John Mossi, SJ: Homilist**

I’m sure that you are familiar with the Jesuit teaching device of the Pop Quiz. This cruel and unusual torture was inflicted when classes became rowdy and world order, discipline and peace needed to be asserted, if not imposed. We are going to engage in a Pop Homily! I’m going to need your help. In 1952, The City hummed and functioned extraordinarily. Everything worked. There was a pride about this jewel by the bay. Who could think of living elsewhere?

Let’s see how well your memory-elevator goes to the top floor as we review the cast of characters on the 1952 San Francisco world stage.

* Mayor of San Francisco? Elmer E. Robinson, two terms.
* California Governor? Earl Warren.

In 1953 he became Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court.

* US Senators? William Knowland, two terms.

Richard Nixon, In 1953, US VP.

* President? Harry S. Truman.
* Archbishop of SF? John J. Mitty served 26 years until 1961.
* Pope? Pius XII served 29 years until 1958

The cost of a gallon of gas in 1952? 20 cents. Average cost of a new house? $9000.00. A new Chevy, Ford, or Plymouth? $1,700.00. The average cost of rent was $80 a month. A decent wage was $3,850.00. To ride the Muni? 10 cents. Golden Gate Bridge Toll? 40 cents, each direction. Elizabeth II at the age of 25 took the throne and guided 15 prime ministers during her remarkable 70-year reign.

Downtown movie palaces and neighborhood theatres were quite the rage in 1952. The huge Hollywood blockbuster was The Greatest Show on Earth, along with High Noon, The Snows of Kilimanjaro, and The Quiet Man starring John Wayne, Maureen O’Hara, Barry Fitzgerald, directed by John Ford. Some of the top hits you danced cheek to cheek to were Blue Tango by Leroy Anderson, Cry by Johnnie Ray and the Four Lads, Wheel of Fortune by Kay Starr, and You Belong to Me by Jo Stafford.

Fr. William Finnegan served as principal of the 222 Stanyan St. enterprise. Fr. Finnegan’s message in the Ignatian yearbook reads: “To graduate from High School is to have scaled a mountain barrier that must be crossed to get to another land. All who have climbed successfully and stood on the peaks are to be congratulated. The pull upward was a stiff one even for the best.” In your 4 years at SI, the class of 1952 must have climbed Mount Everest free solo!

Growing up at 619 Marina with Til and Clara, I got to know some of your classmates who would visit with the excuse to see Til, but really to be around Clara: Phil Morrissey who eventually married Clara, along with Gerry Grisez, Dick Wall, George Pasha, and Angelo Devincenzi to name just a few.

At SCU, I lived with Fred Tollini, SJ, and Fran Smith, SJ. They were brilliant, dedicated and greatly respected professors. I also knew Fr. Ed Thylstrup, SJ, missionary to Taiwan, and Br. Richard Devine, SJ, Missionary to Japan.

In many ways, 1952 was a slice of idealized Americana, a very special moment in history for The City and our Church. The gospel talks about the art of sowing seed in good soil. Through your 4 years of sweat and labor at SI, enriched by these past 70 years, the grace of God has been at work. Your class is outstanding in so many ways, especially with your remarkable gift of $1,659M in cumulative gifts to SI. The Class of 1952 has contributed $357,516K in endowed scholarships. This is Good News for SI and deserving Students. May we each, with our talents and gifts, strengthened by God’s grace, continue to produce 100%. That is our “Red and Blue, we’ll always be true” mission.