

# James "Jim" McNamara '47

## August 17, 1928 – June 13, 2012

Ask family, friends and members of the CB community about Jim McNamara '47 and you are sure to hear about his warmth, humor, deep Catholic faith, commitment to service and unabashed love of baseball. As CB's starting shortstop in 1946 and 1947, Jim's fielding is credited with helping the Gaels finish the 1946 season with a perfect 14 and 0 record. In 1947, as co-captain of the team, he was named to the All-City team by both the Sacramento Union and Bee newspapers.

Following graduation, Jim continued playing baseball in Sacramento. He Jim signed with the New York Giants organization in 1950 and played five seasons of minor league baseball. After returning home, he married Mildred Petralli, his wife of 56 years. Together, they were blessed with a loving family that included daughter, Patti Wagstaff '75 (Joseph), son Tom '78 (Julie). He was a devoted grandfather to Jennifer '07, Alex '12 and John '14 Wagstaff, and Kelsey '10, Jimmy '12 and Joe '16 McNamara.

Jim loved Christian Brothers High School, serving as president of the La Salle Club for many years. In that role, he helped raise thousands of dollars for CB's athletic program. He chaired the Baseball Hall of Fame Dinner for 13 years and his stamp on the event is indelible. As a parent, he served as vice president and president of the Parent Service Club and later as a member of the Board of Regents. He generously supported and assisted with the Building on the Tradition Campaign, Phases I and II that brought the Science, Math and Technology wing and the athletic field house to campus. In 2007, the school's Alumni Association presented McNamara with its most prestigious honor, the Alumni Service Award, in recognition of his many years of dedicated service.

When Jerry Kirrene '53 formed a committee to chronicle the long and storied history of Christian Brothers High School, he asked Jim to research and write about baseball. For two years, Jim researched and then worked with his nephew, Joe McNamara '83, to write what accounts to a 70 page book.

Professionally, Jim enjoyed a 34-year career as an administrator at the Sacramento County Courthouse. Following his retirement in 1987, Jim began a 25-year run in senior softball that included many hours on the field with his brother, Frank'51, and continued until shortly before his passing.

"Jim was one of the kindest men I have ever had the pleasure of knowing," says CB President Lorcan Barnes. "He was Lasallian to his very core in a life filled with faith, family, baseball, and service. All of those, he embraced with tremendous zeal and a joyful spirit. I believe the world is a better place because of Jim, Christian Brothers High School certainly is, and I am better for having known him."

Jim is survived by Mildred, his children, grandchildren and siblings, Mary Kessinger, John '50 and Francis'51, and numerous nephews and nieces. Nephew, Joe McNamara '83, wrote a wonderful tribute to Jim which can be read online at [joegrill.blogspot.com](http://joegrill.blogspot.com)

