

## ***HALL OF FAME INDUCTEE***

### **Brother John G Bielen**

**Teacher/Counselor/Coach**



John Bielen was born December 27, 1939 in New York City. John attended All Hallows Grammar School and, upon graduation, All Hallows High School for his freshman year. He completed his high school education at the Christian Brothers School in Lakewood, New Jersey, in preparation for his ordination in the Congregation of Christian Brothers after his graduation from Iona College. On September 7, 1957, John Bielen was ordained as a Christian Brother of Ireland.

Having earned a BS in Biology from Iona College, Br. Bielen's first assignment was at Leo High School in Chicago, where he taught for 6 years and coached the track team to Cross Country Championships in 1966 and 1967, as well as an Outdoor Track and Field Championship in 1967, while somehow finding the time to get his MS in Biology from the University of Notre Dame.

In the fall of 1967, Br. Bielen was reassigned to Power Memorial Academy in New York City, where he continued to teach the sciences and, concurrent with earning an MA in Counseling Psychology from Manhattan College, began working as a counselor in the Guidance Department. He also continued to coach track and it was here that he and Power Memorial established their mark in New York City Track and Field history. Over the next 10 years, Coach John Bielen trained dozens of young runners in every event from the 100-yard dash to the 5000 meters and every distance in between. Under his tutelage, Power won 6 Catholic High School Cross Country City Championships in 1967, '69' 70, '71, '73 and '75. His teams also won the Catholic Indoor City Champs in 1972 and 1977, NYC Mayor's Cup Indoor City Champs in 1974, Outdoor Catholic City Champs in 1975, and back-to-back New York State Catholic Schools Outdoor Team Championships in 1975 and 1976.

His runners, competing individually and on relay teams, set City, State and National records in many races over the years. Power had its' share of winning relay teams at prestigious events such as the Penn Relays in Philadelphia and the Millrose Games at Madison Square Garden. Many of his athletes continued running for their college teams after graduating from Power. Two of his top runners each went on to become two-time Olympians and several more are currently coaching track at the high school and college levels.

Having received his PhD in Counselor Education from Fordham University, Dr Bielen left Power in 1977 to become principal at Bishop Hendricken High School in Warwick Rhode Island. In 1983, he became the Guidance Director at All Hallows High School, where he had started high school 30 years before. He'd come full circle.

From 1984 until 1992, John served as Assistant Principal at two suburban New York high schools, the Hewlett Woodmere School District and Valhalla High School. There is no telling where John Bielen could have gone from there. Unfortunately, he died on January 12, 1992 while on a Christmas vacation with his family in California.

While one can't deny that much of John Bielen's earthly fame and reputation are due to his involvement with his years coaching track-a world strictly defined by numbers such as race times, splits and distances-the true measure of the man is something that we can probably never quantify, and that is the number of people, students, parents, faculty-he helped over the course of his 30+ years as a teacher, counselor and administrator in secondary education.

A mentor is someone who sees more talent and ability within you, than you see in yourself, and helps bring it out of you. John Bielen was a true mentor to many young men and women in his time here. His legacy lives on through them.