

# I GO THERE

BY RONNI BENNETT



## What Monroe is and what it isn't: A student's perspective.

My name is Ronni Bennett, and I am a junior attending Monroe Catholic High School. I'm Catholic—born and (being) raised in Fairbanks, Alaska. I love to write, play piano, cook, and I also love to go to school. That's exactly why I'm writing this. *I love my school.* A phrase like that isn't commonly heard from a sixteen-year-old, but I'm proud to be able to say it. It's a phrase that motivates me every day. It encourages me to enthusiastically greet each morning and work towards the goals I have set.

## So, what makes the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks so exceptional?

At the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks (CSF) I've experienced three especially important themes: **faith, education, and community.** Faculty and students feel like a second family—I am beyond grateful for that connection. Additionally, I feel that through education and support here at Monroe Catholic High School, opportunities for my future have surfaced; I am hopeful about those!

CSF core values are shown through the 5 Jesuit Pillars embodied by students and staff daily. These pillars are to being open to growth, intellectually competent, religious, loving, and committed to doing justice. Every day I see examples of them within the school. It's a teacher taking extra time with a student, members in a team caring for each other, students conducting community service, or students and staff participating in religious retreats. *The exceptional value of an education at CSF shines and this experience is not exclusive.*

## Aren't the Catholic Schools incredibly expensive?

My family is not rich, in fact we are painfully far from ever being so. That fact might contradict some of the notions surrounding the school I go to. Many people will often ask, "Do you even go there?" My answer is, "YES, Monroe Catholic High, I go there!"

Monroe is not a place for the rich, outright. It's a place — a home — for everyone who wants to have an exceptional education with a focus on faith and a strong community. And this leads to my core hope, which is to make CSF, the school I love, available to all. I want to break that impression of exclusivity and shed light on all the impressive things we do here.

I hope to continue to submit articles covering our wonderful faculty, our sports, our student life, our faith, and more. *The first thing that I can do is to tell my own story about attending CSF.* I have attended these schools since first grade. A smaller, closer environment is what I have been accustomed to and where I thrive. Over these years, I've been through highs and lows and through it all the school was my safe haven.

In middle school, my family situation changed drastically and suddenly attending Monroe hung in the balance. During that transition, being a part of CSF was challenged and losing that community scared me. I have been fortunate to continue attending; it would never have been possible without the help of the school. Some of my closest friend's families also struggle from year-to-year with the cost of tuition as well. Despite the challenges, they all continue to find the sacrifice worth what the schools have to offer.

## What makes attendance for students like this possible? Financial Aid and Tuition Grants.

The full cost of receiving a Catholic education at CSF is daunting. We know this. Many families are not paying this full price. There are financial aid opportunities for every student — from a variety of tuition discounts (based on things like income, being part of a catholic parish, and being an alumni) to a tuition reimbursement. Annually, Monroe Foundation, Inc., holds an annual dinner and auction called **HIPOW**, (Happiness is Paying Our Way). The purpose of the auction is to raise funds to help support the tuition grants needed to help supply financial aid and to help support the operational costs of the school. People from all over the state attend each October and hundreds of volunteers help make the auction and dinner a success.

My school is much more than an exclusive private school. It's a family where everyone is welcome and it's a place that strives for excellence. And alongside all of this, God is at the center. To learn more about aid opportunities and admissions you can visit **[www.catholic-schools.org/enrollment](http://www.catholic-schools.org/enrollment)** and make sure to check out the next page about the BEST Allotment available to families.

**Our community makes our school possible!**  
**To donate visit [www.catholic-schools.org/donate](http://www.catholic-schools.org/donate)**

Monroe Catholic students attend Bishop Steven's Ordination



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-Ronni Bennett

Installation of student Eucharistic Ministers at the Catholic Schools of Fairbanks



Members of the Girl's Cross Country Team pose for a picture at Regionals before heading to State.



**About the author:**

Ronni Bennett, a junior at MCHS, is involved in a variety of activities at CSF including Track, Cross Country, Band, Academic Decathlon, and National Honor Society. She serves as both a Eucharistic Minister and Altar Server at Mass. In her parish, Sacred Heart Cathedral, she serves as a lector.

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- ALUMNI DISCOUNT-5%
- INCOME BASED FINANCIAL AID & GRANTS (2024-2025)
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