



Richard Craig Vana

January 30, 1947 - January 14, 2026

The family of Richard C. "Craig" Vana, 78 of St. Paul, is saddened to announce his passing on January 14, 2026. He attended Notre Dame High School in Niles, IL and received three degrees from the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. Married to Cynthia "Cindy" on August 1, 1969, they remained devoted for over 56 years.

Craig started his 45+ year career in 1969 with the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis at St. Charles Borromeo where his legacy as coach and teacher will live on. He became an administrator in Minneapolis Public Schools in 1986 and was Vice Principal at Southwest HS, Principal at Folwell Middle School, Principal at Edison High School, and then became Associate Superintendent. Following retirement Craig became the interim administrator for several MPS high schools and for Providence Academy. He was dedicated to his faith and youth education and has been a lifelong active member of the Knights of Columbus 4th Degree.

Craig is survived by his loving wife, Cynthia "Cindy"; children, Matthew (Sarah), Katherine (David) and Stephen; four grandchildren, Luke, Jake, Anna and Sean whom he was very proud of and his legacy lives on in each; siblings, Mariann (Paul), Pam (Tom), Libby (Bill), Ellen (Joe), Roy (Barb), Tim (Julie) and Charlie (Jill). Preceded in death by his parents Richard and Marion; brothers Thomas and Christopher.

Visitation 4-7PM Wednesday, January 21st at Washburn-McReavy Hillside Chapel, 2610 19th Ave. NE, Mpls., and also one hour prior to Mass on Thursday in the CHURCH ATRIUM. Mass of Christian Burial 11AM Thursday, January 22nd at Church of St. Charles Borromeo, 2739 Stinson Blvd. NE, St. Anthony. Interment Hillside Cemetery.

Memorials preferred to Prolife Across America or St. Charles Borromeo School.

Cemetery Details

Hillside Cemetery (Minneapolis)

2600 19th Ave NE
Minneapolis, MN 55418

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN 21. 4:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Hillside Chapel
2610 19th Avenue N.E.
Minneapolis, MN 55418

Visitation

JAN 22. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Church of St. Charles Borromeo
2739 Stinson Boulevard NE
St. Anthony, MN 55418

Mass of Christian Burial

JAN 22. 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Church of St. Charles Borromeo
2739 Stinson Boulevard NE
St. Anthony, MN 55418

Tribute Wall

ES

“ Craig Vana was a joy to work with and a treasured friend who seemed to always figure out an ethical way to resolve differences with students, Principals, board members and community. Craig cared about high standards, listening to others, and most of all keeping things in perspective and adding humor. He was a rare human who it has been my pleasure to work with over 20 years.
Dr. Eleanor Ruth Schultz MPS

Eleanor Schultz - February 09 at 02:14 PM

LN

“ During my 40 years in Minneapolis Public Schools, Craig Vana was one of my favorite administrators. I worked with Craig when he served as the Director of Teaching and Learning and found him to be professional, respectful, upbeat, and hard working while also showing meaningful support. (Not always easy when you have 135 opinionated teacher leaders to manage.) He could be tough when needed but it was always when fighting for what was best for students and teachers. Beyond that, as a man, he was decent, kind, honest, a very good listener, and had an easy laugh. I had (still have) a great deal of respect for him. Thank you, Mr.Vana, for all your contributions. You made an important difference in the lives of many. Rest in Peace.

Lynn Nordgren - January 24 at 11:38 AM

EB

“ *Mr. Vana was well respected as a teacher at St. Charles Borromeo. He had a very unique style of teaching, cutting edge for the time. I very much enjoyed being his student and he made me want to strive for more...*

I had the pleasure of visiting with him recently at a mini reunion and I am very grateful for that special moment.

Elizabeth Bray

Elizabeth Bray - January 21 at 05:24 PM

JV

“ *John V. planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Craig Vana.*

John V. - January 20 at 11:48 PM

TS

“ *The Hendersons, Koonces, Giegerich and S purchased the Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum for the family of Richard Craig Vana.*



The Hendersons, Koonces, Giegerich and S - January 20 at 01:17 PM

MF

“ *Matt and Megan Stevenson and Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Craig Vana.*

Matt and Megan Stevenson and Family - January 19 at 09:56 AM

MF

“ *Matt and Megan Stevenson and Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Richard Craig Vana.*



Matt and Megan Stevenson and Family - January 19 at 09:56 AM

KS

“ *Kurt & Debra Schuster planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Craig Vana.*

Kurt & Debra Schuster - January 17 at 09:20 AM



“ *Basket Full of Wishes was purchased for the family of Richard Craig Vana.*



January 17 at 09:20 AM

TG

“ *Thomas G. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Craig Vana.*

Thomas G. - January 17 at 01:45 AM

JL

“ I'm truly saddened to hear of his passing. This is my post on Facebook today.

My favorite teacher, Mr Vana, passed away yesterday after a long battle with Parkinsons. (Craig Vana, but we weren't allowed to call him that, it actually still makes me nervous) He, along with my gym teacher, Mrs Egan, literally saved me in 6th grade, and not when Peter jumped on my head and damn near paralyzed me...that was 8th grade. Gary moved out forever the day he saved me. If I ever thought Gary was scary, lol, Mr. Vana pissed off at Gary was scarier, but in a good way! He was my Vice principle, home room teacher, religion teacher, softball coach...and a true educator of too many things to name. He was my lifelong neighbor and will always be my Hero. I won't lie, I'm really sad. It feels more like my Dad died. Mr. Vana was more of a father than Gary ever could have been.

RIP Mr. Vana. You will always be my favorite teacher. I'm so blessed and grateful to have had you in my life.

Jessica Plinske LeCuyer - January 16 at 08:18 PM

JS

“ Craig had a HUGE influence on my life as I attended St. Charles. Seriously, I can't think of any one person (outside of my parents) who had as great an impact on how I view the world and how I try to live my life. What a legacy he left of helping mold the character of so many young people. RIP, Craig and God's speed to Cindy, their kids and grandkids.

John Schroeder - January 16 at 03:36 PM



“ *Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Richard Craig Vana.*



January 16 at 12:11 PM



“ *Ralph, and the entire Strangis Family planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Craig Vana.*

Ralph, and the entire Strangis Family - January 16 at 10:36 AM



“ *Ralph, and the entire Strangis Family purchased the Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet for the family of Richard Craig Vana.*



Ralph, and the entire Strangis Family - January 16 at 10:36 AM



“ *Richard Craig Vana Family, Our family had the pleasure of knowing Mr. Vana through St. Charles Borromeo Catholic School where Mr. Vana was respected as Vice Principal.*

Greg & Shirley Mueffelman

Shirley Mueffelman - January 16 at 10:24 AM

FM

Craig Vana was an outstanding educator and colleague. I was truly blessed to work with and learn from him. He inspired many students and educators and created a positive and inclusive community for learners. May his soul and all the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace. We thank his family for sharing him with the Minneapolis Public Schools community.

Former Supt. Carol Johnson Dean, MPS - January 18 at 07:05 PM

DS

“*Dave, Kate, Anna and Sean planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Richard Craig Vana.*

Dave, Kate, Anna and Sean - January 16 at 10:20 AM



“*Heavenly Heights Bouquet was purchased for the family of Richard Craig Vana.*



January 16 at 10:20 AM

GK

“*Our sincere condolences to Cindy, their children and grandchildren. Craig was truly an example of a great man of Faith, husband, father, and brother. He put his heart into everything he pursued and truly shared God's love with all that he met. We are all better for having known Craig.*

Greg Kamykowski - January 15 at 08:49 PM

HS

Mr. Vana was my teacher at St. Charles school. He was strict but had a kind heart and gave great advice. He shared so much of his time and talents that it doesn't seem fair he would leave this earth so soon without having enough time off with family and friends. But I'm sure our Lord will use him in heaven to ensure they are following the rules (heehee). May the fond memories of Mr. Vana as husband, father, grandfather and teacher remain with you forever! Rest in Peace, Mr. Vana!

Holly (Zgutowicz) Stene - January 18 at 06:06 PM