

**Catholic Athletes For Christ Top 25**  
Presented by Siena Heights University  
& Global Football  
**Notes 2018-05**  
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## **CATHOLIC ATHLETES FOR CHRIST TOP 25 WEEK 3 RANKING**

### **Weekly Ranking of Catholic High School Football Teams Presented by Siena Heights University and Global Football**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2018 - ALEXANDRIA, VA.** – There is an annual anticipation that accompanies each season and it's no different in the Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25 High School Football rankings, where the best of the best are housed.

The anticipation surrounding the CAC Top 25 presented by Siena Heights University and Global Football, is waiting for the upsets, ginormous games and the next set of players who will matriculate to big-time college ball or the National Football League.

We are on the cusp of big games now that most of the CAC Top 25 teams will begin playing in their respective leagues, districts or conferences. In just over a month, schools in Indiana and Hawaii are headed for the playoffs.

Yet we can't look too far on the horizon because the fourth weekend in September is upon us and there are four notable games that are appetizing enough that football aficionados would stand in long queues to see.

The top six teams in the CAC Top 25 remained the same this week and nine of the Top 10 held on to their lofty status.

The CAC Top 25 rankings welcome back two teams this week: No. 19 Christian Brothers College (St. Louis, Mo.) and No. 22 St. Joseph Regional (Montvale, N.J.), which have previously been regulars. CBC (4-0) enters for the first time this season after a string of impressive wins. The Cadets are Missouri's top-ranked Class 6 team and favorites to go deep into the postseason.

Actually, the Green Knights (2-1) return to the rankings after a two-week absence. SJR gained a measure of revenge last weekend, toppling then-No. 11 DePaul Catholic (Wayne), 24-17. It was a rematch of last year's New Jersey Non-Public Group 3 final, won by DePaul, 7-3. The Green Knights have rough sledding ahead with league games against CAC Top 25 teams Bergen Catholic (Oradell) and St. Peter's Prep (Jersey City) along with area powers Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey) and Paramus Catholic.

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Taking the biggest tumbles are No. 24 Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, Nev.) and No. 25 Good Counsel (Olney, Md.) - both down 10 slots. However, Good Counsel's Washington Catholic Athletic Conference schedule is treacherous but rewarding (if you win), while Gorman has six regular season games with area teams and is in line for a 10<sup>th</sup> straight Nevada state championship.

As the opening month of the high school season is in full swing, the NFL released their 2018 Kickoff Weekend rosters and St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.) leads the way with 15 players in the league. The next closest school was Poly (Long Beach, Calif.) with seven. The only other CAC Top 25 eligible school mentioned was St. Augustine (New Orleans, La.) with four, though there are plenty of other players from CAC Top 25 schools playing in the NFL and we'll highlight them during the season.

The Aquinas alumni include: Geno Atkins, Bobby Hart and Giovani Bernard, Cincinnati Bengals; Joey Bosa, Los Angeles Chargers; Bryan Cox and Michael Palardy, Carolina Panthers; Phillip Dorsett and James White, New England Patriots; James Crawford, Green Bay Packers; Marcus Gilbert, Pittsburgh Steelers; Rashad Green and Brandon Linder, Jacksonville Jaguars; Gabe Holmes, Arizona Cardinals; Lamarcus Joyner, Los Angeles Rams and Sam Young, Miami Dolphins.

NFL players represent 1,332 high schools in 46 states and the District of Columbia, seven countries and a U.S. territory (American Samoa). The totals are based on the 1,694 men on Kickoff Weekend rosters.

### **Triple Option**

**Player of the week:** Maasai Maynor of No. 12 St. Peter's Prep (Jersey City, N.J.). Just when the Marauders needed their Navy-bound signal-caller to deliver a transcending performance, he did in a 34-7 pasting of then-No. 7 Bergen Catholic (Oradell, N.J.). With the win, St. Peter's flip flops with BC for the top spot in the New Jersey overall rankings and eased past them in the CAC top 25.

Last Friday, the 6-foot, 180-pound dual-threat QB saw his team trailing, 7-6, in the first quarter but that quickly changed. Maynor hit Ayir Asante for a 73-yard score and a 13-7 lead at the intermission. Two more TD passes in the third quarter made it 27-7 and that was it. For the game, Maynor completed 16 of 21 passes for 258 yards and four TDs and ran seven times for 70 yards.

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What's more remarkable about his outing was the previous week (a heartbreaking 35-27 loss to No. 9 St. Joseph's Prep of Philadelphia, Pa.), Maynor was picked off three times in the fourth quarter. Maynor chose the Midshipmen (he wants to major in cyber security at Annapolis) over Army, Cornell, Rutgers and Temple. As a junior he passed for 2,472 yards and 23 TDs and ran for 338 yards and five scores.

There aren't any gimmes on the St. Peter's schedule, especially when you play in the Super Football Conference United Red Division. St. Peter's still plays Union City, DePaul Catholic (Wayne), Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey), Paramus Catholic, Pope John XXIII (Sparta) and No. 22 St. Joseph Regional (Montvale) in that order. Don't worry, they're in good hands with Maasai.

**Coach of week:** Chris Merritt of No. 18 Columbus (Miami, Fla.). If you are a head coach in Miami-Dade County you'd better have a short memory and a thick skin. Merritt showed that leaving a 35-0 loss to nationally ranked Carol City (Miami Gardens) from the previous week in the rearview mirror proved the only solution last weekend. That's why a 28-21 comeback win over powerhouse Booker T. Washington (Miami) was clutch.

It was a seesaw game with the Explorers finally taking the lead late before BTW drove to the Columbus 10 in the waning seconds but two key defensive efforts preserved the victory in a state playoff caliber atmosphere in one of the nation's football hotbeds. Thankfully Merritt's club enters their bye week at 3-1.

**Games of the week (All times are Eastern):** There are great games each week that I'd pay to see. Here are four games that are impactful to the CAC Top 25 rankings and worth tracking down.

Central (Miami, Fla.) at No. 3 St. Thomas Aquinas (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.), Friday, 7 p.m.: Two nationally ranked teams go at it in Brian Piccolo Stadium. Aquinas is 4-0 and trending upward after posting a second straight shutout last weekend while Central is one of Florida's top Class 6A teams. It's Broward County vs. Miami-Dade; Catholic vs. Public school.

Archbishop Moeller (Cincinnati, Ohio) at St. Xavier (Cincinnati), Friday, 7 p.m.: The GCL South or the Greater Catholic League is one of the best in the nation. Two rivals enter league play at St. Xavier's Ballaban Stadium in Finneytown. St X is 2-2 overall while Moeller checks in at 3-1. Tickets are going fast!

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IMG Academy (Bradenton, Fla.) at No. 2 Mater Dei (Santa Ana, Calif.), Friday, 10 p.m.: Consider yourself fortunate if you scored a ticket to this one at the Santa Ana Bowl. If you can't attend then tune in on Fox Sports West Prime Ticket. Both teams are rested for different reasons, Mater Dei had a bye and IMG had a game canceled in Washington, D.C. by the hurricane. Both teams are top-5 nationally and this is one that will go a long way in determining a national champion. IMG has won 41 consecutive games since 2014.

Catholic Central (Novi, Mich.) at Brother Rice (Bloomfield Hills, Mich.), Saturday, 7 p.m.: This one is a legendary game in the Detroit Catholic League. Football buffs remember when Hall of Fame coaches Al Fracassa (for Brother Rice) and Tom Mach (CC) both stalked the sidelines and lifted this rivalry into the stratosphere. The names on the sidelines have changed but the fervor is still there. Both teams are 3-1 but Brother Rice lost last weekend to De La Salle Collegiate (Warren), 13-0.

There have been great individual, team and coaching efforts each weekend this season and there's plenty to go. We have the pulse of the Catholic national schoolboy gridiron scene and the CAC Top 25 teams are always at the forefront.

Fans, coaches, players and parents are encouraged to follow the CAC Top 25 through social media at [www.Facebook.com/CACTop25](http://www.Facebook.com/CACTop25) and on Twitter @CACTop25. The rankings will return on Sept. 26. If you want to nominate a player or coach for recognition get us the information no later than each Monday morning during the season by 11 a.m. ET.

God Bless, enjoy the games in your area, and keep the people affected by Hurricane Florence in your prayers. – *Christopher Lawlor*

### 2018 Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25, September 19, 2018

#### 1. St. John Bosco, Bellflower, Calif. (5-0)

Previous rank: 1

In the Huddle: The Braves made quick work of their latest assignment, beating Chaminade (West Hills), 56-20. RB George Holani rushed for two TDs in the opening half. The Braves head into their bye week before starting the Trinity League schedule and play No. 15 JSerra (San Juan Capistrano) on Sept. 28.

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**2. Mater Dei, Santa Ana, Calif. (3-1) #**

Previous rank: 2

In the Huddle: Idle. The Monarchs will have had plenty of rest when nationally ranked IMG Academy (Bradenton, Fla.) comes to town Friday night for a huge test.

**3. St. Thomas Aquinas, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (4-0)**

Previous rank: 3

In the Huddle: It's never a dull moment in Broward County for the Raiders, who dismantled Stranahan (Fort Lauderdale), 52-0. The defense posted a second straight shutout and third this season. If last week was a cakewalk, this Friday is the polar opposite with nationally ranked Central (Miami) visiting Brian Piccolo Stadium.

**4. St. John's College, Washington, D.C. (3-0)**

Previous rank: 4

In the Huddle: Game with nationally ranked IMG Academy (Bradenton, Fla.) was canceled by Hurricane Florence as the state of Maryland declared a state of emergency. The could be made up at a later date. Instead the Cadets had an unexpected week off with Marietta (Ga.) coming to town on Saturday.

**5. St. Frances Academy, Baltimore (1-0)**

Previous rank: 5

In the Huddle: Idle. Coach Biff Poggi's club plays at Lee (Jacksonville, Fla.) on Thursday night.

**6. Archbishop Hoban, Akron, Ohio (4-0)**

Previous rank: 6

In the Huddle: The Knights scored 35 points in the first quarter and went on to trounce Ursuline (Youngstown), 56-28. The opening quarter deluge saw QB Shane Hamm run for a score and pass for another; RBs Tyris Dickerson and DeaMonte Trayanum both rushed for TDs and Marcus Saahir had a pick-six from 10 yards.

**7. De La Salle, Concord, Calif. (5-0)**

Previous rank: 8

In the Huddle: The Spartans remain unbeaten but barely after a 27-21 win over then-No. 14 Bishop Gorman (Las Vegas, Nev.). Trailing 14-7 late in the third quarter, the Spartans rallied for the win. RB Henry To'oto'o rushed for two TD, including a 55-yarder that put his team ahead to stay. To'oto'o went for 125 yards on 14 carries. This weekend it's a road game at Buchanan (Clovis).

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### **8. Gonzaga, Washington, D.C. (4-0)**

Previous rank: 9

In the Huddle: The Eagles captured the Jesuit Gridiron Classic, toppling rivals Georgetown Prep (North Bethesda, Md.), 30-0. A ferocious defense, led by Alabama-bound DE Joseph Wete with three shutouts in four games, has allowed only 7 points all season. QB Caleb Williams hit John Marshall for a pair of TDs and WR/DB Dean Ingram was named the game MVP. The Eagles entertain Peddie School (Hightstown, N.J.) on Saturday.

### **9. St. Joseph's Prep, Philadelphia, Pa. (2-0)**

Previous rank: 10

In the Huddle: For the second straight game, the Hawks found a way to stop a CAC Top 25 team, beating then-No. 15 Good Counsel (Olney, Md.), 34-27. Sophomore QB Kyle McCord passed for 369 yards and three scores. Coach Gabe Infante's team gets a break this weekend before opening the Philadelphia Catholic League schedule on Sept. 29 against rivals La Salle College (Wyndmoor).

### **10. Saint Louis, Honolulu, Hawaii (4-0)**

Previous rank: 12

In the Huddle: It took an extraordinary defensive effort but the Crusaders finally prevailed, 35-28 over Punahou School (Honolulu). DT Faatui Tuitele had two sacks, leading a defense that had four INTs, including a 43-yard pick-six from Kamo'i Latu. QB Jayden de Laura rushed for two short TDs and passed for another. Next up is Kapolei on Friday.

### **11. DeMatha Catholic, Hyattsville, Md. (2-1)**

Previous rank: 13

In the Huddle: Game against Canada Prep Football Academy (St. Catharines, Ontario) was canceled. The Stags play at Friendship Collegiate Academy (Washington, D.C.) on Saturday afternoon.

### **12. St. Peter's Prep, Jersey City, N.J. (2-1)**

Previous rank: 22

In the Huddle: The Marauders may have recorded the biggest win in the CAC Top 25, besting then-No. 7 Bergen Catholic (Oradell), 34-7. It was a small payback after losing last year's New Jersey Non-Public Group 4 state championship game to BC. There were several standout performances but WR-DB Ayir had an all-around game that included two TD receptions of 71 and 18 yards from QB Maasai Maynor and a fourth-quarter interception on defense. Coach Rich Hansen's club will gear up for Union City on Friday.

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**13. Bergen Catholic, Oradell, N.J. (2-1)**

Previous rank: 7

In the Huddle: The Crusaders took a quick 7-6 lead in the first quarter but that was about it in a 34-7 loss at No. 12 St. Peter's Prep (Jersey City). QB Andrew Boel had a TD toss to account for BC's points. This weekend it's the first home game with rivals Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey) on the docket.

**14. Blessed Trinity, Roswell, Ga. (4-0)**

Previous rank: 16

In the Huddle: Idle. The Titans play West Hall (Oakwood) on Friday.

**15. JSerra Catholic, San Juan Capistrano, Calif. (5-0)**

Previous rank: 17

In the Huddle: QB Caden Bell, a Columbia recruit, hit on 11 of 15 passes for 211 yards and four TDs to four different receivers as the Lions ripped Faith Lutheran (Las Vegas, Nev.), 50-10. Coach Pat Harlow's team is off this week and that's good because they play at No. 1 St. John Bosco (Bellflower) on Sept. 28.

**16. Covington Catholic, Park Hills, Ky. (5-0)**

Previous rank: 18

In the Huddle: The Colonels scored 21 points in the each of the middle two quarters and hammered Beechwood (Fort Mitchell), 49-21, for their 20<sup>th</sup> straight victory. RB Casey McGinness was a one-man wrecking ball, scampering for TDs of 45, 1 and 64 yards and added a 50-yard TD reception late in the third period. This weekend the Colonels travel to St. Francis de Sales (Columbus, Ohio).

**17. McGill-Toolen, Mobile, Ala. (3-1)**

Previous rank: 19

In the Huddle: CJ Evans rushed for 138 yards and a 40-yard score on 24 carries as the Yellow Jackets shut out Davidson, 21-0. Next up is a road contest at Mary G. Montgomery (Semmes) on Friday.

**18. Columbus, Miami, Fla. (3-1)**

Previous rank: 20

In the Huddle: The Explorers rebounded after a tough loss a week earlier to knock off Booker T. Washington (Miami), 28-21. RB Henry Parrish, a major junior recruit, ran for 164 yards on 18 carries and scored three TDs. Parrish's most important run of the night, a 75-yard TD run with 6:40 left in the game, snapped a 21-all tie. Next up is Miami High on Sept. 27.

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### **19. Christian Brothers College, St. Louis, Mo. (4-0)**

Previous rank: Not ranked

In the Huddle: The Cadets return to the CAC top 25 after defeating cross-town rivals De Smet Jesuit (St. Louis), 49-14. It was the Bryan Bradford show as the RB went for 312 yards and three TDs of 3, 93, and 5 yards on 20 carries. QB Brett Gabbert was 18 of 27 for 245 yards and four scores. Next up is Saint Louis University High on Friday.

### **20. St. Pius X, Houston, Texas (3-0)**

Previous rank: 23

In the Huddle: QB Grant Gunnell is making it look easy after completing 22 of 37 passes for a season-high 444 yards and two scores rushed for two more TDs in a 42-0 pasting of Episcopal (Bellaire). In three games, the Arizona-bound gunslinger has thrown for 1,246 yards and 13 TDs and run for four more. Friday's opponent is Manor at home.

### **21. Chaminade-Madonna College Prep, Hollywood, Fla. (3-1)**

Previous rank: 24

In the Huddle: Defeated Northeast (Oakland Park), 48-0, for a third straight win and second consecutive shutout. The Lions play the defending Class 5A state champions American Heritage (Plantation) on Friday.

### **22. St. Joseph Regional, Montvale, N.J. (2-1)**

Previous rank: Not ranked

In the Huddle: The Green Knights return to the CAC Top 25 after knocking off then-No. 11 DePaul Catholic (Wayne), 24-17. Last year, DePaul beat St. Joe's in the Non-Public Group 3 state final. Junior QB Michael Alaimo passed for 145 yards and a 36-yard TD strike to Gavin Sharkey in the third quarter and sophomore DT Frankie Monte had two sacks in the fourth. Next up is Pope John XXIII (Sparta) on Saturday.

### **23. Charlotte (N.C.), Catholic (3-1)**

Previous rank: 25

In the Huddle: Idle. The Cougar are next scheduled to play on Friday at Monroe.



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### 24. Bishop Gorman, Las Vegas (1-3)

Previous rank: 14

In the Huddle: Lost to No. 8 De La Salle (Concord, Calif.). The Gaels led 14-7 late in the third quarter but could not hold on. QB Micah Bower passed for 180 yards and a TD and rushed for 74 yards and a score on nine carries. With the national portion of their schedule in the rearview mirror, the Gaels have six left against Nevada opponents, beginning with Silverado (Las Vegas) on Sept. 28.

### 25. Good Counsel, Olney, Md. (2-1)

Previous rank: 15

In the Huddle: Lost at No. 9 St. Joseph's Prep (Philadelphia, Pa.), 34-27. The Falcons must regroup with Bishop Sullivan Catholic (Virginia Beach, Va.) paying a visit on Friday.

**Dropped out:** No. 11 DePaul Catholic (Wayne, N.J.) and No. 21 Dowling Catholic (West Des Moines, Iowa).

*# Includes a forfeit loss*

**Special Consideration:** Bishop Chatard (Indianapolis, Ind.); Xavier (Cedar Rapids, Iowa); Reitz Memorial (Evansville, Ind.); St. Anthony's (Melville, N.Y.); Central Catholic (Pittsburgh, Pa.); Bishop Dwenger (Fort Wayne, Ind.); Aquinas Institute (Rochester, N.Y.); St. Ignatius (Cleveland, Ohio); Central Catholic (Toledo, Ohio); Catholic (Baton Rouge, La.); Mount Carmel (Chicago, Ill.); Strake Jesuit (Houston, Texas); O'Dea (Seattle, Wash.); Elder (Cincinnati, Ohio); Nazareth Academy (LaGrange Park, Ill.); Eastside Catholic (Sammamish, Wash.); Brother Rice (Chicago, Ill.); St. Edward (Lakewood, Ohio); Cathedral (Indianapolis, Ind.); DePaul Catholic (Wayne, N.J.); Iona Prep (New Rochelle, N.Y.); St. John's Prep (Danvers, Mass.) and Catholic Memorial (West Roxbury, Mass.).

*The Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25 High School Football Rankings, presented by Siena Heights University and Global Football are released on Wednesdays from September until the conclusion of the high school season in December. Criteria include the quality of the team and its players, strength of schedule, tradition, and quality of the team's league, conference, region or district. The rankings are compiled by Christopher Lawlor, an award-winning writer, who is a voting committee member and advisor for several major national high school events. All Catholic high schools from the United States that feature only four-year players on 11-man teams are eligible for consideration. Catholic Athletes for Christ chapters and presenting sponsors provide input into the weekly rankings, including Global Football Founder & President Patrick Steenberge, who benefited from 16 years of Catholic education at University of Notre Dame, Erie Cathedral Prep and St. Luke's School, Erie, Pa.*