**Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25 High School Preseason Football Rankings; August 25, 202**

By CHRISTOPHER LAWLOR

NATIONAL CORRESPONDENT

CATHOLIC ATHLETES FOR CHRIST

ALEXANDRIA, Va. — After a season of uncertainly and one unlike any other, the high school football season is back … and thank God!

A year ago, we lived in a state of uncertainty with the pandemic surging and games being cancelled, seasons truncated and distance learning a new concept in some areas. However, we managed to push through it and are back to normalcy--at least in most states.

Nothing is perfect but we all in this one together.

For a fifth year, the Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25 High School Preseason Football Rankings, presented by Global Football, have arrived. If the pigskin is flying, so are the rankings. That means until the Christmas holidays in December, we’re going full throttle. We’ll bring you weekly updates nationwide from the Catholic high schools that play 11-man football.

As in the past, we’ll keep you abreast of the weekly happenings, including games of the week, player of the year and the coach of the week. Consider us a road map for Catholic schoolboy football.

Just sit back and we’ll bring the action to your computer.

# So, the top two teams in the CAC Preseason 25 are familiar teams from the Trinity League of southern California. The top-two teams are No. 1 St. John Bosco (Bellflower) and No. 2 Mater Dei (Santa Ana). They’ll meet in the regular season on Oct. 1 and more than likely again in the California Interscholastic Federation Southern Section Open Division playoffs.

The CAC Preseason 25 rankings are represented by 12 states and the District of Columbia. Leading the way is California with five teams, including four in the top-10.Ohio checks in with four teams, New Jersey three (all from the same league) while Pennsylvania, Louisiana and Maryland each contribute two.

The East Region has nine teams from New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, District of Columbia and Maryland.

Before we address a few news items, there an interesting opportunity from Global Football for an international event in 2022.

In the feature game, Northwestern plays Nebraska as part of the Aer Lingus College Football Series on Aug. 27, 2022, at Aviva Stadium in Dublin, Ireland.

In conjunction with the 2022 Northwestern-Nebraska college football game, the fifth ***High School Football Showcase*** will be organized by Global Football.

Here’s the rub: High school football athletic directors and coaches are invited to travel overseas with their teams for a competitive game against an American opponent. Schools are encouraged to bring their high school bands, cheerleaders and teams from other sports such as field hockey, rugby and lacrosse. It will be memorable trip and cultural experience.

For more information contact Patrick Steenberge (817) 219-7274 or email him Patrick@globalfootball.com. Also visit this site for additional details, [2022 Kildare High School Showcase PPT](http://www.globalfootball.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/2022-Kildare-High-School-Showcase-PPT.pdf).

Before we sign off this week, it was reported earlier this month that Detroit Catholic Central (Novi, Mich.) announced a one of its own passed away on Aug. 7. Stephen Sylvester, 15, collapsed during a conditioning five days previous.

“Sadly, Mary Alma Mater has brought another one of her Shamrock sons into the loving embrace of our Heavenly Father,’’ according to a statement on the school’s Facebook page. “Please pray for the repose of the soul of Stephen Sylvester ‘24, that he may rest peacefully in the fullness of the beatific vision.”

May the souls of all the Faithful Departed, through the mercy of God, Rest In Peace, Stephen.

Elsewhere in the Great Lakes State, veteran coach and athletics director George Porritt of St. Mary’s Prep (Orchard Lake) will retire at the conclusion of the season. Entering his 32nd season, Porritt has a 270-84 record with seven state titles and 14 Detroit Catholic League championships.

Porritt, who also coached basketball and lacrosse at St. Mary’s, was the 2007 Army National High School Coach of the Year and was inducted into the Michigan High School Coaches’ Association Hall of Fame.

We encourage fans, players, parents and coaches to follow the CAC Top 25 through social media at [www.Facebook.com/CACTop25](http://www.Facebook.com/CACTop25) and on Twitter @CACTop25. If there is a team, coach, player or story idea that we may have overlooked, reach out with the details. We’re all ears.

So, we’re going to take off a week and start our official regular-season run on Sept. 8. Next time we’ll give you a rundown of the inaugural Catholic Bowl, a special doubleheader, involving four Catholic high schools on Sept. 4 in Frisco, Texas. For tickets click [here](https://seatgeek.com/venues/ford-center-3/tickets).

Well, enjoy the season. The Catholic Athletes for Christ is in it for the long haul and we’ll be revealing the weekly rankings on Wednesdays until the conclusion of the state tournaments in December. Have a safe Labor Day Weekend and get out to a local game if possible. God Bless! *–- Christopher Lawlor*

**Catholic Athletes for Christ Preseason Top 25 Rankings, Aug. 25, 2021**

*All players are seniors unless denoted. Records and statistics are from the 2020-21 season.*

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

**In the Huddle:** Since 2013, the Braves have annexed three CIF state championships, with the last one in 2019 when the entire nation played in the fall. The biggest recruit is from the Class of 2024 with Matayo Uiagalelei (6-6, 265) as a top-notch edge rusher and TE. Under center, it’s 6-3, 200 pounder, Katin Houser (Michigan State recruit) and junior Pierce Clarkson, whose father Steve is one of the nation’s top QB gurus. RBs RB Rayshon Luke and Jabari Bates will run the ball with authority and Junior WR Jahlil McClain (5-10, 180) has offers from Arizona State, Pittsburgh, Arizona, Louisville and Oregon among others. OT Earnest Greene (6-5, 330) is a massive, talent. On defense, the Braves are led by LB Jalen Woods (UCLA), DTs Nathan Burrell (California) and Jarius Satele (Navy), CB Tayvion Beasley and S Sione Hala (Boston College). A spot check of the Braves’ schedule contains games against ranked teams Central (Miami), Alemany (Mission Hills, Calif.) and Oscar Smith (Chesapeake, Va.), and then two within the Trinity League with top-ranked Mater Dei and No. 23 Servite (Anaheim).

**2. Mater Dei, Santa Ana, Calif. (5-0)**

**In the Huddle:** What a shame the pandemic wreaked havoc on last season when the Monarchs were showcasing some of the nation’s top talent only to play a shortened spring season. Well, coach Bruce Rollinson is simply reloading and get this: gifted QB Elijah Brown is only a sophomore and is on track to become a four-year starter. That includes a perfect mark in the unforgiving Trinity League, where he hit on 74-of-107 passes for 973 yards and 15 touchdowns. Oklahoma-commit RB Raleek Brown rushed for 367 yards and 5 TDs on 53 carries and another weapon, WR C.J. Williams, who will sign with Notre Dame, caught 50 balls for 684 yards and 4 TDs. At 6 feet 1 inch, 190 pounds, Southern California-bound Domani Jackson is considered the nation’s No. 2 cornerback. The O-line features sophomore road-grader DeAndre Carter (6-5, 350) and junior BJ Tolo (6-2, 325) and D-line Aydin Breland (6-5, 315) another blue-chipper from the Class of 2024. LB David Bailey (6-3, 220) is a tackling machine with mostly Pac-12 interest. The Monarchs have an adventuresome schedule but are chock full of talent with at least 28 players earning at least an offer from a Bowl Championship Series program. That’s impressive! The annual showdown for the Trinity League title is Oct. 1 against No. 2 St. John Bosco (Bellflower) and they’ll meet again in the CIF-Southern Section Open Division final.

**3. St. Thomas Aquinas, Fort Lauderdale, Fla. (8-1)**

**In the Huddle:** The defending Class 7A champions have won two consecutive crowns and go for a state-record 13 this fall and have the horses to three-peat with the gifted backfield of RB Anthony Hankerson (1,178 rushing yards, 16 TDs) and dual-threat QB Zion Thomas. The main blocker is five-star OT Julian Amella (6-6, 290), who can name his college offers. WR Camden Brown is committed to Pittsburgh and WR Jalen Rogers is a Tulane pledge. TE Mason Taylor (6-5, 230) has the size and soft hands. Junior LB David Vadala has generated offers from Texas A&M, Syracuse, Michigan and Maryland. CB Jerrod Cameron (Coastal Carolina) has already verballed to an up-and-coming BCS program.

Opens: Aug. 28 vs. Northwestern (Miami).

**4. St. Joseph’s Prep, Philadelphia (6-0)**

**In the Huddle:** The Hawks, like many teams, were robbed of potentially one of the famed seasons in Pennsylvania history. The Philadelphia Catholic League gold standard was they captured a sixth PIAA state championship and finished No. 2 in the Blue Star Media Elite 25 rankings, however, the corona-racked season was halted and restarted before winning two Class 6A playoff contests en route to the title--the program’s third straight in the state’s largest classification. Coach Tim Roken will lean on elite LB Josiah Trotter (dad Jeremiah played for the Eagles) and WR Reese Clark (Temple). OT Brad Harris (6-4, 255) is picking up offers nationwide and S Keenan Nelson Jr. committed to South Carolina. Keep an eye on sophomores defenders CB Omillio Agard and DT Richard James.

Opens: Sept. 3 vs. St. Mary’s Ryken (Leonardtown, Md.) to be played in Piscataway, N.J.

**5. Bergen Catholic, Oradell, N.J. (5-1)**

**In the Huddle:** New Jersey’s top-ranked preseason team is looking good … really good. And that’s an understatement. The Crusaders last won the Non-Public Group 4 state championship in 2017 but after three seasons all signs point toward adding another piece of hardware to the school’s trophy case. QB Steve Angeli, a Notre Dame recruit, threw for 919 yards and 6 TDs and ran for 3 more scores in a truncated schedule in 2020. He’ll have help in the backfield with Princeton-bound RB Ryan Butler (10 TDs). The state’s top edge rusher is junior D.J. Samuels (6-0, 240) and junior DL Sydir Mitchell (6-5, 350) bring the heat. The secondary has Jayden Bellamy (Notre Dame) and Jaeden Gould (6-3, 190), who committed to USC, as its bedrock. K Giancarlo Carbonaro (20 of 22 PATs) is a difference-maker in a tight game. The Crusaders were two points away from a perfect season after getting upset by archrivals Don Bosco Prep (21-20) and meet again on Sept. 24. Coach Vito Campanile’s squad ratcheted up the schedule with a challenging road opener and league games with rivals St. Joseph Regional (Montvale) and regionally ranked St. Peter’s Prep (Jersey City) in October.

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

**In the Huddle:** It’s been an interesting offseason since the Panthers last played in 2019. First, the coronavirus mostly claimed a very promising 2020 season. Then co-head coach Biff Poggi stepped down last month and returned to assist the Michigan Wolverines. Messay Hailemariam inherits the head coach slot along with Hank Russell. The defense will rely on LB Jaishawn Barham, DT Derrick Moore (Oklahoma recruit), DL Aaron Wilson, DL Nasir Pearce, CB Jamal hood (Boston College) and CB Cam Johnson. The O-line is bolstered by Jacob Sacra (East Carolina) and Jude Bowry (Boston College) and WRs Ike White (Minnesota) and smallish junior Lamar Patterson (5-9, 170) can stretch the field. The opening game is a dream national TV matchup but there are away dates with Elite 25 teams De La Salle (Concord, Calif.) on Oct. 1 and IMG Academy (Bradenton, Fla.) on Nov. 19.

**7. St. Xavier, Cincinnati, Ohio (10-2)**

**In the Huddle:** Last year’s Ohio Division I state championship was a bit of a surprise after the Bombers sat at 2-2 but rallied to win their final 8 games. Experience will be the key for the coach Steve Specht and he has five seniors that know what it takes to finish the job. QB Brogan McCaughey, a first team all-state selection, threw for 2,708 yards and 28 TDs, despite missing portions of three games with an injury. The O-line has Brian Parker II (6-5, 275), a Duke recruit, Air Force-bound OG Cameron Collins (6-4, 260). At 6-4, TE Max Klare is also committed to Duke and WR Terrell McFarlin (6 TDs) becomes the primary pass-catcher. LB Grant Lyons (6-3, 230) had 63 tackles and 6 sacks and DB Eli Kirk (74 tackles, 3 INT) leads the secondary. Again, a challenging schedule and the Greater Catholic League South will prep the Bombers for another postseason run.

**8. De La Salle, Concord, Calif. (6-0)**

**In the Huddle:** Until someone knocks off the Spartans to rep Northern California in the Open Division Bowl, they remain the favorite. One of the state’s top all-around athletes Zeke Berry (6-0, 185) recently committed to Arizona and play multiple positions on both sides of the ball but figures to be a CB in college. On defense, LB Damonie Perkins and DB Bryant Meredith are the leaders. The Spartans play another strong schedule, but the Oct. 1 date with No. 6 St. Frances Academy (Baltimore) is slated for a national broadcast on ESPN.

**9. Bishop Gorman, Las Vegas (0-0)^**

**In the Huddle:** A year away from football after Nevada cancelled the season only makes the Gaels starved to play. It’s a loaded senior class with S Zion Branch, edge rusher Cyrus Moss (Oregon commit) and CB Fabian Ross (USC) the defensive muscle. OT Jake Taylor (Oklahoma) leads the way for RBs Jadyn Ott (California) and Cam Barfield (Boston College) and TE J.J. Bwire has committed to Air Force. The Class of 2023 features WRs Jeremiah Hughes and Zachariah Branch, CB Justyn Rhett and S Kodi Decambra. When the Gaels last played, they saw a 55-game win streak against instate opponents fall in a setback in the regional playoffs, ending a decade of state championships. In January 2020, Gorman elevated defensive backs coach Brent Browner to the top spot. He’s about to coach his first game after a long year away from competitive games.

**10. Servite, Anaheim, Calif. (4-2)**

**In the Huddle:** The Friars are a serious threat in southern California and the Trinity League. Playing the nation’s top two teams in league play will keep coach Troy Thomas’ team on its toes. Arizona-bound QB Noah Fifita can really sling it while WR Tetairoa McMillan (Oregon) and TE Kyan Burnett (USC commit) figure prominently into the offensive game plan. OG Josiah Laban

two-way lineman Mason Graham (6-4, 300) anchor the trenches. The defense features LB-RB Aiden Eckenwiler and LB Jacob Manu, both first team all-league performers in the spring.

A demanding nonleague slate will have the Friars ready for an opening night game with Orange Lutheran in the Trinity on Sept. 30.

**11. St. Peter’s Prep, Jersey City, N.J. (4-2)**

**In the Huddle:** After 33 seasons as head coach of the Marauders, Rich Hansen stepped down last fall, but his son, Rich Hansen III, was elevated to the head position after serving 13 years as the defensive coordinator. The younger Hansen knows the ins and outs of the Super Football Conference (one of the best in nation) and how to win a New Jersey Non-Public Group 4 title. That means matchups with nationally ranked Bergen Catholic, St. Joseph Regional, DePaul Catholic, Seton Hall Prep and Don Bosco Prep. The top two recruits are TE Trent McGaughey and DT K.J. Miles (6-3, 290). Miles is off to the ACC and will sign with Georgia Tech; and McGaughey has offers from ACC, Pac-12, SEC and Big 12 programs. RBs Sam Slade and Paul Lefkowitz are the primary ball-carriers and junior two-way lineman Eric King (6-3, 300) and Purdue-bound OT Andre Oben (6-5, 285) open the holes and protect the QB. WR Fitzroy Ledgister (6-2, 185) is a deep threat with sprinter’s speed.

**12. Archbishop Hoban, Akron, Ohio (11-0)**

**In the Huddle:** The defending Division II state champions are built on their hog mollies in the trenches with four starters returning on the O-line. That quartet features tackle Colton Burkhart (6-2, 260), junior guard Drew Holt (6-2, 290), junior Keon Johnson (6-5, 345) and C Michael Noe (6-3, 260). The beneficiary of that line is junior QB Jayvion Crable along with RBs Lamar Sperling (547 yards, 8 TDs) and Markim McKinnie and WR Tyson Grimm. The Knights are blessed with three-year starter junior DT Jason Martin III (6-0, 275) and DE Bryce Sisak (6-2, 250). The schedule is littered with teams such as No. 5 Bergen Catholic, St. Ignatius (Cleveland) and St. Edward (Lakewood) but the state title game could be a dream matchup with No. 19 La Salle (Cincinnati) in December.

**13. Gonzaga, Washington, D.C. (5-0)**

**In the Huddle:** In the Washington Catholic Athletic Conference it’s a four-way fight for the top with the Purple Eagles, No. 14 DeMatha (Hyattsville, Md.), Good Counsel (Olney, Md.) and St. John’s College (Washington, D.C.) separated by a razor’s edge. Coach Randy Trivers’ team gets the preseason nod with diminutive RB Joseph Hammond (5-7, 185) the primary ball-carrier. Georgia Tech-bound TE Nate Kurisky (6-3, 235) creates mismatches and Cameron Wilson (6-4, 270) can plug in anywhere on the O-line. LBs Jordan Shuler (6-1, 215) and Kadari Machen (6-1, 210) are productive and disciplined. Junior linemen Evan Link and Isaiah Link are large prospects. The Purple Eagles have scheduled aggressively with nonconference dates with McDonogh (Owings Mills), No. 4 St. Joseph’s Prep (Philadelphia) and Archbishop Spaulding (Severn, Md.) before the WCAC schedule kicks in with DeMatha on Oct. 8.

**14. St. Edward, Lakewood, Ohio (6-2)**

**In the Huddle:** After a quick exit from the Division I, Region 1 playoffs, the Eagles are looking for redemption this term and should challenge for a state championship. The two-headed monster in the backfield is QB Christian Ramos (6-2, 200) and RB and Daniel Enovitch (5-11, 180) which tends to run over the opposition. Up front is TE Brad Delphia (6-2, 185), OT Joe Lavelle (6-1, 270), junior OG Richard Wolverton (6-3, 300) and OG Giovanni Kennedy (6-1, 265). The defense is experienced with MLB Zyion Freer-Brown (6-1, 220) and DB Joel Castleberry (6-1, 180). DE Trey Bixby verballed to Minnesota. The Eagles main rival is St. Ignatius (Cleveland) but the biggest game might come on Oct. 22 against No. 12 Archbishop Hoban (Akron) to end the regular season.

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

**In the Huddle:** Entering his 32nd season at the helm of the Stags, coach Bill McGregor know the best days are ahead with promising junior and sophomore classes. At 6-1, QB Blake Kendall, a senior transfer from Cardinal Gibbons (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.), is a godsend. Speedy RB Brendan Wyatt (5-9, 185) has sprinter’s speed and WRs Kalen Cobb and juniors Kristian Tate and Tyler Stewart will allow Kendall to spread the ball. Junior OT Michael Crounce (6-5, 290) anchors the line. Junior DE Jason Moore (6-6, 270) is a menace and the secondary has S K.J. Winston (Penn State recruit) and CB Zilan Williams, who has offers from Rutgers and Virginia Tech. A competitive regional schedule gives way to the WCAC slate with the goal of reaching the title game on Nov. 20.

**16. Cathedral, Indianapolis, Ind. (13-1)**

**In the Huddle:** Indiana’s preseason No. 1 Class 5A team is the same one that finished in the same position a year ago after claiming the state championship. Sophomore Danny O’Neill inherits the signal-caller position is mature beyond is youth. Princeton-bound OT Cooper Koers (6-6, 280) and Owen Wood (6-5, 330) will make sure O’Neill’s transition under center goes smoothly. TE Parker Spellacy (4 TDs) and junior Jaron Tibbs (29 receptions, 502 yards, 2 TDs) and senior Michael Page (40 receptions, 604 yards, 5 TDs) are the “good hands” receiving corps.

If the Fighting Irish go unscathed deep into October, they get a chance to avenge last year’s lone loss to Indiana’s top-ranked Class 6A team Center Grove (Greenwood) on Oct. 22.

**17. Catholic, Baton Rouge, La. (9-2)**

**In the Huddle:** Despite a 1-2 start, the Bears rallied to win eight straight and the LHSAA Division I state championship in dominating fashion. After that coach Gabe Fertitta left for University of Louisville and David Simoneaux, Jr. (from Pointe Coupee Catholic) was hired in March. The new coach will have sophomore Daniel Beale, who quarterbacked the Bears to the title, and RB Corey Singleton and TE Prince Edwards. Up front, blue-chip OT Emery Jones (6-5, 340), who is off to LSU, is light on his feet and the main blocker in a run-oriented offense. Junior WR Shelton Sampson is the next special player in Louisiana and has all the tools to earn All-America status. The D-line is punctuated by Joshua Johnson and the LBs, Jordan Toaston (6-3, 230) and speedy junior Harold Lawson (6-0, 205), are difference-makers. The Bears open at Good Counsel (Olney, Md.) on Sept. 3.

**18. Iona Prep, New Rochelle, N.Y. (5-0)**

**In the Huddle:** The Gaels played a shortened spring season, averaging 42 points and allowed 42 in five games. There’s plenty offensive firepower returning with junior QB Ajani Shepard, WR Mike Ryan, TE Justin Joly (6-4, 220) and the O-line is fortified by C Scott Becker (6-3, 290), Justin Federico (6-4, 280) and junior Jorge Ruiz. Defensively, the line features edge rusher Chris Foster and junior NG Capri Martin (6-2, 250) and LBs are Kaloni McIntyre (6-2, 200), Jose Ruiz (6-1, 215) and junior Zyian Moultrie-Goddard (6-2, 240). The NYCHSFL Class AAA title will come down to a regular-season date with Cardinal Hayes (Bronx) on Oct. 16 and then likely a second meeting in the playoffs.

**19. La Salle, Cincinnati, Ohio (8-3)**

**In the Huddle:** Last year’s Division II state semifinals were just warmup. The Cardinals are ready to finish their quest for more hardware. And you would too if dual-threat QB Zach Branam (3,000 offensive yards, 35 total TDs) was running the show and Indiana-bound RB Gi’Bran Payne is the primary ball-carrier. The O-line is fierce with seniors Paul Haywood, **Ryan Reynolds and Austin Rack.** The Cardinals aren’t backing down with games against at least four nationally ranked teams but it’s always about three games in the vaunted GCL South that defines the regular season.

**20. Brother Martin, New Orleans, La. (8-1)**

**In the Huddle:** The District 9-5A champions and LHSAA Division I semifinalists are buoyed by QB Garrett Mmahat (6-2, 190), who completed 97-of-155 passes for 1,785 yards and 16 TDs, and makes smart decisions in the pocket. The RBs will rotate with Torey Lambert, Troy Santa-Marina and Jordan Thomas getting carries. The receiving corps goes seven deep, starting with senior Julien Oubre and TE Nicolas Malek. The O-line features Air Force-bound Jayson Montgomery Scott (6-3, 315) and Michael Braud (6-3, 335). The defensive front has Kai Brown, Dakota Burns and Brendan LeBlanc and LBs Anton Brown and Ashton Sheperd also return. Torey Lambert and Corey Lambert Jr. (6-2, 210) are fixtures. The Crusaders opens at defending state champions St. Thomas More on Sept. 3 and the schedule only toughens. Coach Mark Bonis will have his team ready for the slog.

**21. Cathedral Catholic, San Diego, Calif. (5-0)**

**In the Huddle:** There are a couple of familiar surnames playing for the Dons, QB Charlie Mirer (dad Rick played in NFL and at Notre Dame) and WR-DB Rex Haynes (Hall of Fame CB Michael Haynes). At 6-6, Mirer has a powerful right arm and hooking up with the 6-4 Haynes will stretch the defense and allow veteran coach Sean Doyle to think more passing than his run game. RB Lucky Sutton, who has several Mountain West offers, will work with a big O-line that features Louie Lauifi-Tufaga and Preston Lauifi-Tufaga. The defense is loaded with California-bound tackle Jaxon Moi (6-2, 260) and LBs Tanoai Letuli and Harmon Savaiinaea. The Dons open this weekend against state powerhouse Corona Centennial.

**22. Central Catholic, Pittsburgh, Pa. (6-2)**

**In the Huddle:** Coach Terry Totten’s squad is aiming for an unprecedented third consecutive WPIAL Class AAAAAA championship. That’s entirely possible considering Vikings have won seven titles in the last 16 years. The elusive three-peat has become the mantra. For that to happen, the “Chain Gang” or the defense needs to pick up where it left off in the playoffs. It starts with senior lineman Donovan Hinish, a Notre Dame pledge. TE-LB Anthony Speca is a coveted sophomore, who is fielding several FBS offers. The ground game is extenuated by RBs Gannon Carothers and Antonio Pitts. Sophomore QB Payton Wehner gets the start but when the drive stalls expect Totten to trot out K Matt Schearer, who can split the uprights. Getting out of Western Pennsylvania isn’t easy and if the Vikings do, they could see No. 4 St. Joseph’s Prep (Philadelphia) in the PIAA playoffs.

**23. St. Joseph Regional, Montvale, N.J. (6-2)**

**In the Huddle:** Second-year coach Dan Marangi won’t breathe easy coming out of the gate with Good Counsel (Olney, Md.) and No. 6 St. Frances Academy (Baltimore, Md.) before Labor Day and then an in-state schedule that rolls out DePaul Catholic (Wayne), Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey), No. 5 Bergen Catholic (Oradell) and No. 11 St. Peter’s Prep (Jersey City). To combat that lineup, junior Jimmy Mullen (6-3, 250) is a mega edge rusher and LB Jack Smiechowski is a senior leader. Junior QB Luke Henrich and RBs Devin Miller-Singh, sophomore Yasin Willis and Luke Tucci comprise the backfield and WRs Donovan McKoy and Jaden Wimberly will keep defenses honest.

**23. St. Rita, Chicago, Ill. (6-1)**

**In the Huddle:** RB Kaleb Brown be Illinois’ top prospect after averaging 10.3 yards per carry and tallied 5 TDs in an abbreviated spring season. Brown committed to the Ohio State Buckeyes in June, where’s projected to play wide receiver. OT Valen Erickson (6-6, 315) is also headed to the Big Ten and will sign with Nebraska. QB Thomas Ulatowski threw for 1,073 yards and 8 scores.LB D’Jabril McNabb (34 tackles, 3 sacks) is a rising talent. The Mustangs will contend with Loyola Academy, Nazareth Academy and Mount Carmel for CCL/ECSS Green supremacy before entering the Class 5A playoffs. The first three games are brutal.

**25. Nolan Catholic, Fort Worth, Texas (8-1)**

**In the Huddle:** DE Curlee Thomas (6-5, 237) is a monster on the D-line as is DT Kaleb James (6-5, 245) and that’s what will carry the Vikings until the offense catches up. TE Saimone Davis will figure prominently and there’s already a buzz about gifted WR Tre Parks-Vinson (4.4 speed). Don’t be surprised if the Vikings meet district rivals Dallas Parish Episcopal for a second straight year in the TAPPS Division I final. Additionally, the Vikings play Little Rock (Ark.) Catholic on Sept. 4 in the inaugural Catholic Bowl in Ford Center at The Star in Frisco, Texas.

**Special Consideration:** Archbishop Alter (Kettering, Ohio); Archbishop Spalding (Severn, Md.); Archbishop Stepinac (White Plains, N.Y.); Bishop Chatard (Indianapolis, Ind.); Blessed Trinity (Roswell, Ga.); Cardinal Gibbons (Fort Lauderdale, Fla.); Brother Rice (Chicago, Ill.); Cardinal Hayes (Bronx, N.Y.); Central Catholic (Lawrence, Mass.); Central Catholic (Grand Rapids, Mich.); Central Catholic (Portland, Ore.); Chaminade-Madonna College Prep (Hollywood, Fla.); Christian Brothers College (St. Louis, Mo.); Christian Brothers (Memphis, Tenn.); De Paul Catholic (Wayne, N.J.); De Smet Jesuit (St. Louis, Mo.); Detroit Central Catholic (Novi, Mich.); Don Bosco Prep (Ramsey, N.J.); Dowling Catholic (West Des Moines, Iowa); Eastside Catholic (Sammamish, Wash.); Good Counsel (Olney, Md.); Loyola Academy (Wilmette, Ill.); Marist (Chicago, Ill.); McGill-Toolen Catholic (Mobile, Ala.); Roncalli (Indianapolis, Ind.); St. John’s College (Washington, D.C.); Saint Louis School (Honolulu, Hawaii); St. Thomas More (Lafayette, La.); Santa Margarita (Rancho Santa Margarita, Calif.); Serra (San Mateo, Calif.); Trinity (Louisville, Ky.) and Ursuline (Youngstown, Ohio).

**About:** The Catholic Athletes for Christ Top 25 High School Football Rankings, presented by Global Football are released on Wednesdays from late August until the conclusion of the high school season in January. 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, who consults with Patrick Steenberge of Global Football in Granbury, Texas to coordinate the CAC Top 25. All Catholic high schools from the United States that feature only four-year players on 11-man teams are eligible for consideration. Fans are encouraged to follow the CAC Top 25 at [www.Facebook.com/CACTop25](http://www.Facebook.com/CACTop25) and on Twitter @CACTop25.

**-30-**