

Add to our Catholic schools' legacy

The Archdiocese of Baltimore celebrated Sept. 26 the legacy of Catholic education in America with a gala dinner, not far from where Catholic schools in our nation began with St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, in her home on Paca Street.

Could she have envisioned two centuries ago how the Catholic school system would grow and prosper? Could she have known that there would be schools in every corner of this country dedicated to teaching not just the essentials, but also faith and morals? Could she have known there would be not just elementary schools, but also high schools, colleges and universities, pre-schools and schools for children with special needs?

St. Elizabeth Ann and other pioneers of Baltimore's Catholic schools – mostly religious sisters in the early years, mostly lay people now – have remained steadfast in their mission. As recalled in a video, teachers taught children of this country the Baltimore Catechism, which had been formulated by the Plenary Council in our backyard. Today, they teach children the elements of the faith while also teaching them the chemical elements in updated science labs.

As Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien encouraged guests at the dinner, "It's for the children. It's for the children. It's for the children."

For them, we must secure the future of Catholic education. The archdiocesan Blue Ribbon Committee on education is holding listening sessions. And the Maryland Catholic Conference will hold an informational forum about the state tax credit for education, BOAST, Oct. 6 in Annapolis.

Get involved in these efforts to be fully informed. Catholic education is not merely a legacy. It is our children's future.

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