

Archbishop Lori says teens can live out Gospel

By Matt Palmer

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During his first Eagle of the Cross ceremony in the Archdiocese of Baltimore June 6, Archbishop William E. Lori told the high school juniors and seniors honored that they are an inspiration for others.

This year, 33 teens were given the archdiocese's Division of Youth and Young Adult Ministry Office Eagle of the Cross medal, which celebrates apostolic action, Christian leadership and moral integrity amongst high school juniors and seniors.

"What a joy to be here today and what a joy to be here with all of you and all that you represent" Archbishop Lori told the 18 recipients in attendance. "We've gathered together to recognize wonderful qualities in you, our young people, that not only bring us a lot of joy, but also bring us a lot of hope."

Archbishop Lori said that the media can often be divisive and fixate on the culture's problems.

The archbishop continued: "We've gathered together this afternoon to celebrate qualities that bring us together, qualities that bring us joy - a love of the Gospel that is infectious, the courage that you have to share the Gospel with your peers, the

desire to reach out in service to those who are in need and the quality of living your life with great integrity. That's not just living an honest life, but, indeed, a Godly life."

St. Agnes, Catonsville, parishioner Branan Durbin said she felt blessed to receive the Eagle of the Cross.

"It makes me really proud to be a teen in the archdiocese," said Durbin, who just graduated from Mount de Sales Academy in Catonsville. "I felt like I was amongst greats."

This year, Durbin taught the fourth grade religious education classes at her parishes along with a friend and took part in the archdiocese's High School Leadership Institute last summer.

While at High LI, she said she learned an important lesson.

"Always listen to people," she said. "God doesn't call the perfect. He perfects the called."

She also has been on the servant team as St. Agnes' youth group has paired with St. William of York's.

"I really hope that I can give enough and contribute enough to help the program grow," she said. "I'm so blessed to be part of St. William's youth ministry."

Andrew McCarthy, a parishioner of Holy Trinity in Glen Burnie, is a member of the Archdiocesan Youth Advisory Council and took part in High LI as well. He said youth ministry programs alter lives.

"I've changed so much from being a freshman to now a graduating senior," McCarthy said. "I've grown a lot."

McCarthy added that young people “have such a viable role in the church and are important today. They’re Eucharistic ministers and lectors. They’re not their own side church. They are in fellowship with the whole church.”

This year’s recipients of the Eagle of the Cross include:

Allen LaVonta, St. Cecilia’s Church; Colette Aroh, St. Ursula Church; Kathleen Bosse, St. Michael’s, Poplar Springs; Caroline Butler, Mount De Sales Academy; Paul Cillo III, Calvert Hall College High School; Sara Connolly, Our Lady of Mount Carmel High School; Norman Crone III, Our Lady of the Chesapeake; Mary Frances Duggins, St. Maria Goretti High School; Branan Durbin St. Agnes Church; Aubrey Fetters, Bishop Walsh School; Amanda Garcia, Cristo Rey Jesuit High School; Ian Gill Our Lady of the Fields; J.P. Hechter, Loyola Blakefield; Nicholas Henninger, The John Carroll School; Erin Hook, Our Lady of Sorrows

Matt Kokaska St. Joseph Church, Cockeysville; Gloria Marino St. Margaret Parish; Andrew McCarthy, Holy Trinity Church; Emma McDonald, St. Pius X; Kevin McDonough, Our Lady of Mount Carmel School; Sean McKavitt, St. Mary’s High School, Annapolis; Timothy McNamara, St. Mary’s High School, Annapolis; Sarah Morsheimer, Archbishop Spalding High School; Sarah Pargan, St. Timothy’s, Walkersville; Nicole Racine, St. Mary’s Church, Pylesville; Tanya Rudakevych, Holy Family Catholic Community; Emily Schweich, St. Francis of Assisi, Fulton; Mike Tincher, St. Paul’s, Ellicott City; Emily Vinton, St. William of York; Alysia Welsh, Seton Keough High School; Joseph White, Shrine of the Sacred Heart; Morgan Williams, Institute of Notre Dame; Ann Margaret Zelenka, St. Ursula Church

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