

# John Carroll students visit tomb of namesake

One by one, freshmen from The John Carroll School in Bel Air placed a yellow or white carnation in front of the tomb of their school's namesake in the undercroft of the Basilica of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Baltimore.

The 163 students were members of the first freshman class to make the trip to the basilica to learn about the history of the archdiocese and to visit the tomb of Archbishop John Carroll, the first bishop of Baltimore and of the United States.

Stephen Snyder, a freshman and one of the **Carroll Scholars**, said it was a great opportunity to learn about the history of the Archdiocese of Baltimore and about **Archbishop Carroll**.

"It's important to know who we're named after because he's such an important figure in Catholic history," Snyder said.

David Huber, a religion teacher at John Carroll, added that "it's nice to come here to the basilica and get a sense of the history and get a sense of the man."

Archbishop Carroll was a cousin of Charles Carroll, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The archbishop was the driving force behind the establishment of the Baltimore Basilica, a building he hoped would embody the American ideal of religious freedom. His vision of a cathedral built in a neoclassical style of the new federal city in Washington was realized with help from Benjamin Henry Latrobe, architect of the U.S. Capitol.

Groups toured the basilica, its undercroft and crypt, which holds the tombs of nine former archbishops of the nation's premier see. They also listened to presentations at the Catholic Center across the street given by alumni Rachael Rice, class of 1988, and Thomas Kelso, class of 1970, about their careers and successes after attending John Carroll.

"It's so important to tie the kids to their traditions," said Steve DiBiagio, president of

John Carroll. “It’s so important to that they hear those (alumni) stories.”

DiBiagio said the trip fits nicely with the school’s theme for the 2018-19 school year, “Every Patriot Has a Story.”

“It shows where you can go after John Carroll and where a Catholic education can take you,” Poist, also a Carroll Scholar, said of the alumni speeches.

Rice is president and CEO of Rice Consulting, a political consulting firm. She is also a former John Carroll Board Trustee, a member of the school’s Alumni Advisory Board and the inaugural recipient of the Patriot Service Award for her dedication to John Carroll.

Kelso is managing director, principal and head of Downstream Energy and Convenience Retail Group for Matrix Capital Markets Group, chairman of the Maryland Stadium Authority Board of Directors and former chairman of John Carroll’s board of trustees and longtime advocate for the school.

The school plans to make the basilica trip an annual tradition for the freshman class.

“I thought it was interesting to learn where our school came from and everything John Carroll achieved,” said London Poist, a freshman, who saw the basilica for the first time.

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