

Notre Dame Preparatory celebrates 50 years of 'wisdom' in Towson

TOWSON - One by one, 50 pairs of students holding banners processed up a winding road on the campus of Notre Dame Preparatory School Sept. 14.

The banners displayed each class the Towson campus of the school has hosted since 1960. The sound of NDP's alma mater floated in the air, as young women wearing the traditional blue dress uniform and saddle shoes formed a route for the banners.

NDP was celebrating its 50th year on the Towson campus with the parade of students and a liturgy inside the school. Students knew they were carrying a legacy on their shoulders.

Previously housed on the College of Notre Dame's campus on Charles Street, the school made the move to Towson to serve young women from kindergarten through 12th grade. Now, it serves sixth through 12th and has 785 students.

Seniors Emma Suarez-Murias, Hailey Vonasek, Eliza Bower and Kerry Anderson led the procession by carrying the United States, Maryland, Vatican and school flags. It was meaningful to them, as several had family members attend the school.

Bower said NDP traditions, like the annual Gym Meet, are ingrained in their own families as well.

"It's the place you hear about when you're a little girl and think, 'That's where I want to go to high school,' " Suarez-Murias said.

School Sister of Notre Dame Patricia McCarron, headmistress of NDP, said the anniversary allows the school the opportunity to celebrate the past, while affirming the future. She was at the school as a teacher during its 25th anniversary in Towson.

"Today is a celebration about a mission that was alive 137 years ago on our original campus on Charles Street, a mission that moved here to Hampton Lane 50 years ago and a mission that is still very much alive today," she said. "In the spirit of the

School Sisters of Notre Dame, we educate young girls believing that the world can be transformed through education.”

Sister Patricia said the move to Baltimore County was forward-thinking and has “allowed us to have the wings to fly.”

She said the students at the school continue to inspire her fellow sisters and the staff.

Jesuit Father James McAndrews celebrated Mass for the student body after the parade. Father McAndrews once celebrated a Baccalaureate Mass at the school, telling the student body then, “there is a spirit about this place.”

That message has become part of the fabric of the school. Teachers have the words displayed on their desks and in classrooms.

“Now we know what that spirit is,” Father McAndrews said. “It’s the spirit of wisdom. It’s the spirit of Notre Dame Prep.”