

# Red or blue, the next governor will be Catholic



*Gubernatorial candidates Larry J. Hogan Jr. and Anthony G. Brown address their Catholic faith.*

*(Tom McCarthy Jr. | CR Staff)*

**By Maria Wiering**

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ANNAPOLIS - DeMatha Catholic High School in Hyattsville can claim a connection to the next governor, even though the election is still weeks away. Larry J. Hogan Jr., the Republican candidate, attended the Prince George's County all-boys school 1970-1972 before transferring to a Catholic high school in Daytona Beach, Fla., graduating in 1974. Lt. Gov. Anthony G. Brown, the Democratic candidate, has a son and stepson enrolled in DeMatha's freshman class.

Barring a highly improbable Election Day upset from a lesser-known candidate, one of these Catholics will become Maryland's 62nd governor Nov 4.

Hogan - who attended St. Ambrose School in Cheverly for grades one to eight - said his Catholic education "gave me a certain work ethic and discipline that you don't necessarily get in a private school."

Hogan is a parishioner of Holy Family Catholic Church in Davidsonville, Anne Arundel County. He said his Catholic faith is important to him, although it's something he considers private.

"I'm not a senior-varsity Catholic; I'm not the most devout Catholic you've ever seen in your life, quite honestly, but it's certainly made an impact on me," he said.

He prays daily, he said, and has asked God's guidance on the campaign trail. It hasn't factored into his stump speeches, however. Nothing in his campaign materials mention his church.

"I'm very not out-front about my faith," he said. "It's something important to me internally, and it's something that guides me in my decision-making and my thinking, but I'm not out there talking about it."

Maryland's Catholic bishops and members of the Maryland Catholic Conference's administrative board interviewed Hogan and Brown separately Sept. 26. The

candidates also spoke with editors and reporters from publications covering the archdioceses of Baltimore and Washington, and the Diocese of Wilmington, Del., all of which include Maryland counties.

### **Valuing Catholic education**

Brown told the bishops he was influenced by his father's Jesuit education at Fordham University in New York City.

A parishioner of St. Joseph in Largo, Brown did not attend Catholic schools, but was raised in a Catholic household, he said. His Jamaica-born father was a convert, and his mother was raised Catholic in Switzerland.

His parents emphasized serving others, he said.

"I watched my father every day as a doctor serving in poor neighborhoods near where I grew up, serving others," he said of his childhood on Long Island.

Service has been an important component of Brown's life, too, he said. It drew him first to the military, then pro-bono legal work and public office, he said.

Like Hogan, Brown downplayed his Catholic identity. "I'm not a Bible-quoting Catholic," he said, but added that the church's social justice teachings have "had a big influence in my life."

Brown's children attended St. Pius X Regional School, a pre-kindergarten-to-grade-eight school in Bowie.

There they received "a solid academic foundation for life" and religious instruction.

"This year the course that they're taking is the 'Search for God,' and it has them going beyond the just sort of memorizing milestones and moments in Christianity, but more the meaning of Jesus' life and his service," he said.

He conceded that his sons' sports - soccer and baseball - also drew them to DeMatha, which has a good reputation for both. It wasn't, however, so much a question of whether they would attend a Catholic high school, just which Catholic high school, he added.

The next governor will replace Martin J. O'Malley, who is also Catholic. In the past century, only two other Catholics have served as Maryland's governor: Parris N. Glendening, who held the office 1995-2003, and Herbert R. O'Connor, 1937-1947. Both were Democrats.

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