

Towson Catholic student a Page worth reading

Ever since she was a little girl, Catherine Warner has been the curious sort.

The Sacred Heart of Glyndon parishioner and Towson Catholic High School senior says that is because she lives by one motto.

"I've always believed in order to truly understand something, you have to experience it firsthand," she said with a maturity well beyond her 17 years.

If it's not learning to be a sacristan at church, reading at length or bolstering her 4.1 grade point average, Catherine is asking her father questions about the Catholic faith. Quite simply, she just has to know.

She'll take that curiosity to the political realm when she serves as a page for two weeks in the 2009 session of the Maryland General Assembly. Catherine was chosen for the annual student page program by the Baltimore County selection committee. Students from around the county competed for the 18 total spots, four of which are alternates. Around the state, 120 high school seniors, with 36 alternates, are picked to work in Annapolis.

The Maryland General Assembly meets from mid-January through mid-April and consists of 47 senators and 141 delegates. A page helps keep up-to-date bill books for members, provides them information, runs errands, helps visitors and attends to office needs.

All of it promises to be an eye-opening experience for Catherine, who has never been to the Maryland State House during her visits to Annapolis and says she doesn't follow politics closely.

"It was mainly to see how politics in this country works," she said of her interest in becoming a page. "I'm kind of amazed and overwhelmed by it. The process hasn't changed so much since it started over 200 years ago. It's lasted so long."

Alberta Latorre, Towson Catholic's coordinator for the student page program, can attest to Catherine's insatiable curiosity.

"When Catherine first heard the announcement about the Maryland General Assembly Page Program, she stopped in my room immediately to pick up an application even before I made copies of the application to distribute," Ms. Latorre said. "She seemed very excited about the program and the opportunity to broaden her view of state government."

Catherine has sought a well-rounded experience at Towson Catholic over the last four years. For the last two years, she has served on the student government and been a cheerleader and member of the National Honor Society.

"I just take it one day at a time," she said of her hectic schedule.

She plans to become an early childhood teacher and eventually earn a masters degree in special needs education. She says her interest in helping those with disabilities stems from volunteering at local school with autistic children

Her unique combination of compassion and determination has impressed the Towson Catholic faculty.

"She takes a very serious approach to her education, shows a great amount of initiative and possess the willingness to work hard to achieve her goals," Ms. Latorre said. "She is a respectful, kind and pleasant young lady who will willingly perform any favor asked of her and who is quick to volunteer when help is needed."