

CATHOLIC HERALD



North Shore Catholic Schools Mass a Family Affair

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To kick off Catholic Schools Week, on Monday, Jan. 27, the North Shore Catholic K-8 schools — Holy Family, St. Robert, St. Eugene and St. Monica — convened at Dominican High School for a special Mass presided over by Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKi.

The mood in the Dominican gymnasium recalled that of a family gathering — a very big one. More than 1,100 students, teachers and staff members filled the large room with smiles, joyful greetings, excited chatter and song.

It was a moment to celebrate Catholic education, but also to celebrate the special relationship that the four K-8 schools share with one another, and with their local Catholic high school, Dominican.

“We have been having conversations the last few years about ways that we can collaborate as Northshore Catholic Schools,” said St. Monica principal Mike Landgraaf. “We recognize that we all become stronger by working together and creating opportunities for all of us

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▲ Archbishop Jerome E. ListECKi greets a student following a Catholic Schools Week Mass for North Shore Catholic schools on Monday, Jan. 27, at Dominican High School. (Photo by Tim Townsend)

Marching for Life

Young people from across the archdiocese marched in support of life.

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Eucharistic Miracles

St. Francis Borgia to host exhibit Feb. 7-9.

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to grow in our faith.”

“While there is a friendly competition between the schools, we all recognize that we are united in our mission to evangelize the Catholic faith. Today’s Mass allowed us to celebrate our common mission,” said St. Eugene Principal Rebecca Jones.

“There is power in our unity,” said Archbishop ListECKI at the Mass. “When we come together and we identify with one another and we see the power of those who are part of our Catholic schools — there’s a sense of fulfilling the mission that Jesus has for us. To go out, preach, teach, baptize in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit — but you can only do that if you’re disciples.”

Plans for the Mass began to take shape at the end of the 2018-19 school year, as a way to celebrate the increasingly collaborative relationship between the schools, said Dominican High School President Leanne Giese. A committee of representatives from all five schools was assembled by Dominican High School campus minister Nate Friday.

The Mass “really showcased the fact that Catholic education is alive and thriving,” said Giese.

“And like Archbishop ListECKI stated in his homily, our faith is the essence of our community and it is our responsibility to love and care for one another and continue to spread the good news of Jesus Christ,” she added.

Archbishop ListECKI opened his homily by stating proudly that he himself is the product of “decades” of Catholic schools. He shared a story of “one of the great rites of passage” that he experienced on the first day of first grade, when he and his friend Patrick insisted on walking the six blocks home from school alone.

“We were going to be like the big kids,” he said. Their mothers agreed and the

boys made it home safely —but years later, they found out their mothers had actually been hiding in alleys and behind cars, clandestinely following their sons on their first solo walk home from school.

“They were watching every step, making sure that our journey was protected and we were safe,” he said. “You know what that tells me about us, here? There’s someone always watching us. There’s someone always who cares about us. Even though we don’t always know it, their eyes are on us, and they care about our safety and our well-being. That’s a wonderful aspect in terms of Catholic schools.”

Concelebrating the Mass with Archbishop ListECKI were Frs. Paul Hartmann and Jordan Berghouse, pastor and associate pastor at St. Eugene and St. Monica Parishes; Fr. Ray Guthrie, pastor of St. Robert Parish; and Fr. Enrique Hernandez, part-time shared associate at St. Robert and Holy Family Parishes.

“This Mass showed all of us that we are part of something bigger,” said Landgraaf. “We are blessed to have Dominican, a wonderful Catholic high school that supports all of us. It was wonderful to look around to see all of the dedicated faculty and staff and great children all gathered together to start Catholic Schools Week. I was honored to be a part of such an uplifting experience surrounded by dedicated educators, students, and priests.”

The Mass featured a choir that included members of all schools, led by Dominican High School choir teacher Sarah Parlier.

“To hear the voices of 4-year-olds up to seniors in high school singing God’s glory was moving,” said Jones. “Our students felt privileged to be a part of something so special.”

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