



SENTINEL OF THE SAINTS



Vol. XVI, Issue III: Fall 2020

Positive Convictions = Positive Results

Dear Friends and Benefactors,

Entering my fourth year at this well-established Academy, it is time to look back on where we were in the fall of 2017 and where we see ourselves today. Reflection on the past often produces fruit. Realizing what progress has been made brings encouragement to the heart. Unless one takes the time to reflect, efforts sink into the shadows of history without gaining momentum to make the future that much better!

Thanks to you, Mater Dei Academy has made tremendous leaps forward in the structural beauty of the building and grounds. This improvement in external appearances works hand in glove with the internal changes in uniform, name, and overall atmosphere. Past issues of this newsletter gave a glimpse into individual projects, but now we wish to present a more complete overview. The building has really taken shape over the summer and allows us to step back, reflect, and soak up the energy to continue with even more projects

that will help the Academy building become a greater host of memories and graces in the formation of souls.

It was said by Norman Vincent Peale, “If you think in negative terms, you will get negative results. If you think in positive terms, you will achieve positive results.” A past alumnus used this saying in our annual speech competition and we wish to apply it now. So often people look at our 1928 structure and see all of the paint needed for the walls — producing negative results. Rather, the recent tone of the Academy has been to look at the positive progress made...and the results are exactly what would be imagined — positive!

Let us see what has taken place, offer prayers of gratitude to those who have made such things possible, and continue to make the positive changes which will alter the trajectory of this Academy!

In Jesus and Mary,

Fr. Richard Boyle

Fr. Richard Boyle, Principal

“WHATEVER GOOD THINGS WE BUILD END UP BUILDING US.”

- JIM ROHN

Among many projects, the notable ones include...

The long-time leaking roof gets repaired.

Dormitory renovations result in better living quarters for the boarders.

The parish church in downtown Syracuse is sold, bringing parishioners to the academy chapel and gym for mass.

A new parking lot is laid to accomodate parishioners.

The long-time window campaign goal is met in the older part of the building, not only lending aesthetic value, but also practicality with heating the building.

The seniors transform a classroom into a pleasant cafeteria as a gift to their alma mater.

Hallways and lockers receive a new coat of paint and now bear the insignia of the academy.



The crumbling entryway is replaced with beautiful brick steps to match the exterior walls.



SPRING 2018 SUMMER 2018 FALL 2018

SPRING 2019

SUMMER 2019

SPRING 2020

SUMMER 2020

We become what we think about.

“...This is The Strangest Secret! ...But very few people have learned it or understand it. That’s why it’s strange, and why for some equally strange reason it virtually remains a secret.”¹

Education personnel are taught that the atmosphere of the classroom and the circumstances in which one teaches are crucial for the formation of the mind. The windows through which the light comes in, and through which one looks out to see the beauty of the day, are important. If they are broken or dirty, if they allow snow in during the winters (!) or cold air to freeze the fingers, the students will not appreciate these windows nor will they have the optimal atmosphere for learning.

“The soul is in the presence of God and the surroundings must reflect that reality.”

During recreation, having a clean, beautiful, and inviting place to walk and pray allows the mind to free itself from distractions and make way for the information and

¹The Strangest Secret by Earl Nightingale

reflection needed for all students. When the lockers are clean and sharp before school, during the day, and in departure, the eyes are enabled to sense a healthy pride in the location where their education takes place. The doors through which one enters offer a welcome and security. Continuing on to the gym in which a plethora of events take place — from Mass to graduation, plays to dodge ball tournaments, from speech competitions to indoor recess, and conferences to basketball practices — all these events require an atmosphere that encourages growth. During all the above mentioned times, the soul is in the presence of God and the surroundings must reflect that reality.

As we continue to make this building beautiful again, let us pray that the souls taking time to learn within these walls, gain more and more as the improvement continues and the disrepair becomes a distant memory!

Gym wall renovations beautify the parish “church.”

Blessed Virgin Mary Mother of God Academy officially reverts to its original name of Mater Dei Academy, setting it in the stone of the entrance sign.

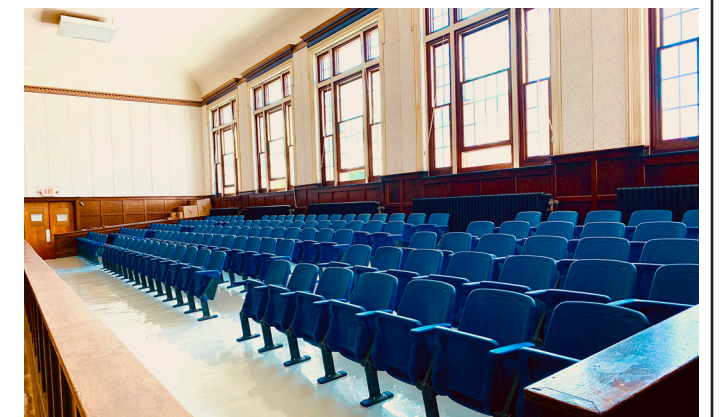
Offices for the priests are renovated.



A skylight is installed for the makeshift sanctuary.



New gym seats and floor replace their deteriorating ancestors. Also seen in the background are the new windows and walls.



Students tackle the inner sanctuary of the school and transform the former dog-pen of the academy’s mascot into a beautiful courtyard for the Mother of God.

RECENT NEWS



Lauren Edwards
12th Grade Sector
2nd Place



Thaddeus Petersen
12th Grade Sector
3rd Place



Joseph Mariani
10th Grade Sector
3rd Place

◀ On Saturday June 13, Mater Dei Academy sent four students to compete in a vocal competition open to high school singers in the Central New York area. On the audition day, they presented their songs before a panel of judges to receive constructive feedback on their performance, and to be ranked among other singers their age. Three of the four placed and the accompanist, Sabine Krantz, praised the Mater Dei students for their accomplishments considering they had never been formally trained in singing outside of school. All four contestants are also dedicated choir members at Blessed Virgin Mary Church.

▼ Parish young adults, among whom sit many alumni, assemble for a monthly gathering. Spiritual, as well as practical matters are discussed. Presentations focusing on the use of social media in our world today were given by some alumni.

