



50TH ANNIVERSARY  
1954-2004

MATER DEI

Vita

*A Tradition of Excellence in a Quality, Catholic, Caring Environment*

VOL. 12

No. 1

# CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF LIVING THE MISSION

## MISSION STATEMENT

*Mater Dei, a Catholic, diocesan regional high school, nurtures the spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, and social growth of young men and women. In a caring environment, respectful of individual differences, her comprehensive program educates, fosters faith, and develops gospel values.*



1956 - Thanksgiving baskets for the needy.



1962 - Carollers travel to the various places in Clinton County to spread Christmas cheer. The main spots of their visit include St. Joseph Hospital, St. Mary's Home for the Aged, and Sacred Heart Home in Aviston.



1964 - The nimble fingers of Marcia Ryherd, Donna Wuebbles, Irma Tebbe, Diane Thole, Ruth Sundrup, Mary Zahn, and Elaine Ratermann make many a rosary for the missions.



## LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Fifty years ago Bishop Zuroweste established Mater Dei High School to help promote and deepen the faith of the Catholic Church in Southern Illinois. Since that August 1954 date, over 7,000 young men and women have graduated from Mater Dei and went forward to become leaders in their communities, churches, and organizations. The mission of Mater Dei in 1954 is the same today, to foster faith and promote gospel values in a caring environment, respectful of individual differences.

Please be assured that everyone associated with Mater Dei today takes the responsibility of living the mission very seriously. It is the reason we exist.

Bishop Gregory says it best, stating, "The ultimate purpose for providing any child with Catholic education is not simply a preparation for doing good in the secular world — although we certainly hope that it accomplishes that as well. A Catholic education is not just moral, ethical, and sound doctrinal preparation for life — but that, too, is one of its goals. A Catholic education is first and foremost a formation in faith so that young people begin to see the world with the eyes of Christ and to love others with the heart of Christ and to serve others in the image of Christ. A Catholic education is intended to fashion young people into the very likeness of Christ Jesus."

Throughout our first fifty years we have focused on challenging our students to see Jesus in the eyes of others. Programs such as Murray Center, Pro-Life group, the adoption of a class mission, Senior Service Projects are all examples of ways we challenge our students to become aware of those in need and our responsibility as Catholics to answer the call.

Please enjoy this issue of the *VITA*, which we have dedicated to those who have lived the mission at Mater Dei Catholic High School. The examples of service to others within these pages are results of the mission of Mater Dei yesterday, today, and tomorrow. We have also enclosed a very special article written back in 1976 by Sr. M. Roselda, PHJC, on her reflections of the early years of Mater Dei.

As you enjoy this holiday season with family and friends, please remember the reason for the season and pass that on to your children. At this time let me thank you for your support, in prayer and financial resources that you and your family have given to Mater Dei. For over 50 years Clinton County and the surrounding area have been blessed with Mater Dei Catholic High School. It is our vision that we can continue to fulfill that mission for at least another 50 years. Have a great Christmas Season and know that Mater Dei is grateful for your support.

Sincerely yours,



Dennis A. Litteken  
Principal



## LEARNING TO SERVE; SERVING TO LEARN

*Learning to serve; serving to learn* has been the theme for our diocesan service project for the past ten years. It signifies so well what we strive to do at Mater Dei, not just imparting religious knowledge to our young people in the classroom but also creating an atmosphere that fosters the formation of our students into Christians who daily live out their faith, now and in their adult lives. This happens in a variety of ways:

**Senior Service Learning Project:** This year seniors are once again preparing for the project. All have made three requests for a site for their project. After collaboration by the Campus Ministers from Mater Dei and Althoff, each senior was notified of a site that would be theirs. Students will contact the site and interview with the supervisor. Confirmation of placements are sent to each site in mid-December. The project begins immediately after Christmas vacation for three weeks in January. Over the past ten years many seniors have returned to school with a different perspective on life, faith and the need for outreach in our world.

**Peer Mediation:** The Peer Mediation program offers interested students the opportunity to be trained in conflict resolution in order to assist their peers when a problem situation arises. Peers meet every 7 days to practice skills and report on happenings around school. The peers also seek out students who may need a little extra support from a friend. For the past three years the peer mediators have been assigned a group of freshman to assist and help get acclimated to their new high school surroundings.

**Retreat Ministry:** For over fifteen years, Campus Ministry has provided the opportunity for students to become involved with facilitating Confirmation retreats for

local parishes. What began as an idea by one of the local pastors has grown with Mater Dei students providing retreats for twenty or more parishes each year. More than 50 students are involved each year. While helping 7th and 8th graders prepare for Confirmation, MD students have the opportunity to deepen their own faith and assume ownership for their Church and its future.

**PSR Teachers:** This year 13 seniors are teaching before school in PSR programs in five different parishes. This allows them to do service as well as connect with the lower grades. It is hoped that this experience will be a stepping stone to the same type of Church involvement as adults.

### **Service Hours:** Mrs.

Judy Kampwerth's freshman religion classes are all working on completing their fifteen hours of service. The idea is to open the eyes of the freshmen to see how they can be of help to others. The minimum requirement is to do five hours of service at home, five hours of service at Mater Dei and five hours of service for their parish or community. Some examples of service done are tutoring other students, visiting Murray Center in Centralia, lecturing, cantor-

ing, painting a room for a neighbor, cleaning out the garage with dad, and the list goes on. It is noted that over the years most students do more than the 15 required hours because once they see a need they want to help. It makes them feel good about who they are!

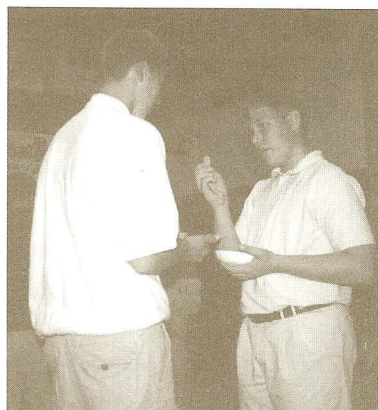
**Eucharistic Training:** The Diocese of Belleville initiated a program called Train the Trainers where people of the diocese were trained as Eucharistic ministers, lectors and cantors. Mrs. Judy Kampwerth was trained to train others to become Eucharistic ministers. Thirty-one of our Mater Dei seniors have been trained as Eucharistic ministers not only for Mater Dei but also for their individual parishes and future college choices. The seniors were commissioned



1956 - Bishop Thomas J. Danehy, M.M. smiles his approval at the sophomores who sponsored the Bishop's Clothing Drive collection.



at the Homecoming Mass this year by Fr. George Mauck and were given a Eucharistic minister certificate that is valid for three years. At the training session the focus is on their



2003 - Students serve as Eucharistic ministers.

spirituality, the guidelines of the Belleville Diocese, identifying the vessels used at liturgies, the routine used at school and actual practice of giving communion to others. The newly commissioned students are then sent forth to their individual parishes to complete their training on the routines used there and a tour of the parish rectory. Mrs.

Kampwerth has also held some Eucharistic minister training in surrounding parishes. This is a wonderful ministry to be called-to be able to give the Body and Blood of Jesus to their fellow classmates and parishioners.

**Weekly Missions:** Mater Dei students and faculty are given the chance each week to help others in need by donating to the weekly missions. Every Wednesday during Homeroom the mission money is collected and given to the mission designated by each class. The seniors have their mission money go to Guatemala through the School Sisters of Notre Dame, juniors to Rwanda through Catholic Relief Services, sophomores to Guatemala through the Belleville Diocese CYO and Colette Kennett, freshman to Mexico through the Poor Handmaids of Jesus Christ. So far this year the students and faculty have raised almost \$4,000.

Also, on September 15, 2004, the weekly mission collection was used for the missionaries in Haiti, and the Advent collections will be directed to Heifer International.

A new fundraiser this year sponsored by Mater Dei librarian Carol Bandre and Student Council was the Scholastic Community Book Fair in which the proceeds were used to help pay utility bills for local residents.

Through their generosity Mater Dei students learn the gift of giving and helping others. It is just one more way that the mission of Mater Dei continues.

Campus Ministry along with the Religion Department seek ways to get our students involved in the faith life of the Church and to become confident leaders. As we move to a new and

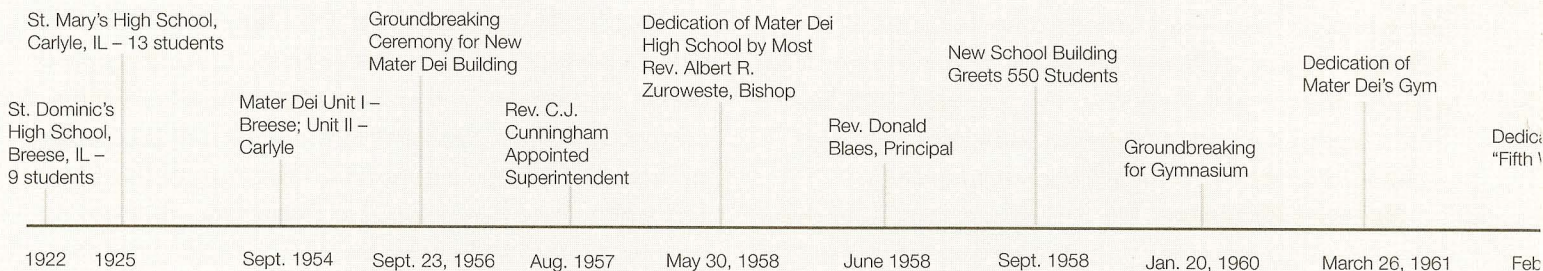
challenging time in Church history, Mater Dei continues to form faithful leaders for the future of the Church.



1970 - Children from Salenas Guatemala who go to the school that was built by the funds raised by the class of 1970.

**Murray Center Visits:** *Mater Dei students continue the tradition of service to others by participating in the Murray Center visits. Mrs. Eileen Goeke, religion teacher and Murray Center moderator, explains what the visits involve and reports*

## History of Mater Dei





her observations.

This year Murray Center activities are many. We will be attending Murray Center eight times. Six times will be Saturday morning visits, and two will be to help at a holiday dance in the evening.

Students sign up in religion classes to attend the visits. Hours are used to fulfill service hour requirements. Many students go because they enjoy it, and not simply to meet requirements. Often, the first visit is difficult, but students return for more visits. Seeing and dealing with those having

developmental disabilities, students can feel uncomfortable. We try to be well prepared and stress the importance of just relaxing and just letting the time unfold. Most students find themselves participating with the activities almost immediately.

We usually visit three of the Murray Center cottages, depending on the number of students attending. Apple, Berry and Cherry cottages

are the ones we visit most often. Activities from our visits this year include two seasonal art activities, a Halloween windsock made with Styrofoam meat containers, markers, stickers and string and a Thanksgiving cornucopia made with paper sacks and colored fruits and vegetables. We try to do a craft with which the students can help and the residents can take to their rooms to display. We also plan some

sing-along songs with actions or finger plays. The residents enjoy music, and those able to participate in the actions do so. Dancing to popular CD's usually concludes our visits.

Attending the dances is new to us the past two years. We found offering service opportunities in the evenings free those committed to Saturday morning activities to attend. We supply eager DJ's and the students dance in groups with the residents. Melissa Kabat, of Murray Center, assures us that the dances are much more lively when Mater Dei brings a group of students!!

Saturday mornings at 8am is not an easy time for teenagers to get up and rolling. However, I have never been disappointed in the behavior, participation and caring nature of our students. Murray Center offers not only a chance for our students to spend time with those whose lives are so enriched by a simple conversation or coloring activity, but so much more. This activity gives students a confidence in their ability to live the gospel in life situations. We try to teach our students what Jesus expects of us, and the limitless gifts we have with which to serve. I believe Mater Dei students leave Murray Center knowing they have stepped out of their usual lives and brought Jesus to others, and, in return, felt very good about the experience.



2004 - M.D. students help residents with an art project.



1972 - M.D. students participate in Murray Center Volunteer Program.

## Catholic High School

Fr. Jerome Ratermann Named Principal	School Board Formed	Bob Klostermann, Principal	Joel Sheridan Named Principal	Curt Winter, Principal	Groundbreaking of Multi-Purpose Addition
Fr. Stanley Schlarman Named Principal	Tuition Charged for First Time - \$150	Fr. Francis Seyer, Superintendent	Sylvia Henken Named Principal	Curt Winter, President; Dennis Litteken, Principal	Dedication of New Addition
Jan. 23, 1964	June 1964	Aug. 1968	Aug. 1969	Aug. 1969	July 1970
Aug. 1982	Aug. 1984	Aug. 1990	Aug. 1991	June 2001	Sept. 2003
Sept. 2004					



## LIVING THE MISSION

"Mater Dei, a Catholic, diocesan regional high school, nurtures the spiritual, moral, intellectual, emotional, and social growth of young men and women. In a caring environment, respectful of individual differences, her comprehensive program educates, fosters faith and develops gospel values."

For fifty years the mission statement has been the guiding force for all we do at Mater Dei, both spiritually and academically. The precepts of the mission statement are the focus throughout the day, and throughout the entire curriculum, not just in religion classes.

The Church today is faced with many changes in our parishes and diocese. As the number of clergy and religious decline, we as

Catholics are called to participate in the sacramental life of the Church. Mater Dei is committed to laying the foundation for Catholic leadership and challenges our students to develop those skills through service and ministry.

Colette Kennett, Director of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Belleville, is a 1969 graduate of Mater Dei and is just one of many

alumni who continue to live the mission of Mater Dei. When at Mater Dei Colette says she learned a lot about herself. She recalls the times in her religion classes at M.D. when missionaries would come to speak

vocation as a single person and youth minister.

She also tells the students how important their mission collections are to the youth of Guatemala and shares photos of the mission recipients so that our students can see the faces of those they help.

At Mater Dei Colette also was a Murray Center volunteer and found the visits very rewarding. Through the Sodality she learned the significance of prayer and the importance of belonging to a faith community, especially during the Vietnam War. She had many opportunities for personal growth such as competing as a madrigal singer and, through a winning essay in one of her classes, earned a trip to Washington, D.C., where she met President Johnson.

In 2001 Colette was inducted into the Mater Dei Hall of Honor. She is proud to be included in that distinguished group because all the recipients understood the value of young people and the contributions young people can make in our society and Church.



2004 - I visited with a young adult from the parish in Guastatoya. This young lady was about 9 years old when we first met and she helped me learn some of my first words in Spanish. Upon my return visit, I discovered that as a young adult, she chose to be an English teacher and she teaches in the local school. I'm very proud of her. Her long term goal is to be a lawyer. Her name is Beatrice.

to the class and talk about different people and places. She loved to hear the stories of the missionaries. Now, through her position with the diocese, Colette has had several opportunities to visit Guatemala, Haiti, Africa, and Mexico to witness the work of the missionaries. She visits Mater Dei each year as part of Mrs. Goeke's Lifestyles religion class and talks to the students about her



In 1976, then principal of Mater Dei High School, Bob Klostermann, asked Sister M. Roselda, PHJC, to write down some of her thoughts and memories of the first years of the school known as

Mater Dei. We would like to share Sister Roselda's letter with you and hope you enjoy it as well. It may even bring back a few memories of your own!

*Ancilla Domini 2-21-76*

*Dear Bob,*

*I well remember the afternoon it was announced that we would unite with St. Dominic's, Breese, the coming September. Since we were to continue as before but as Mater Dei Unit II, it was not so bad, and we got used to the idea. Looking back now I can see that with so few students it was a duplication of faculty and lack of more opportunities that necessitated the consolidation.*

*During these two years there were meetings with the Bishop and the school directresses of both Communities: PHJC and SSND. Graduation of seniors was combined and we took turns going to the various parishes for this event. Even so, there was always a "cap and gown Mass" for our seniors at St. Mary's as well as at St. Dominic's.*

*When the new Mater Dei building was completed, the Bishop met with the faculty and begged us to have patience with one another, and especially with the students.*

*There were no supplies in school, no books, chalk, erasers, not anything except what we were able to bring from St. Mary's or St. Dominic's. Father Aydt was "Uncle Henry" and would have given us the shirt off his back, but he didn't have any! In 1955 he had us bussed over to Old St. Dominic's Hall and explained WHY we were merging and WHY he called it Mater Dei, thinking at the time there was no other school by that name.*

*Do you remember how HOT it was in the beginning? The sun made the blindless windows a magnifying glass! We burned, or moved the desks into packed corners to avoid direct sunlight. We were not allowed to open the windows "as the radiators would circulate enough air!" Nothing was permitted on the walls and so we had no decorations or map rails to hang maps.*

*Two doors made in and out passage of students very smooth, but the hall traffic! Moderators near the main corridor had to stand there and keep order and prevent cross-overs. The traffic was one long continuous line: IN SILENCE! One might leave the main corridor if one had a class in the wing to one's right; otherwise one had to complete the circuit until he came to the proper wing.*

*There was no playground equipment, only dirt to the north where the boys had to congregate. At noon, after eating their brought-from-home lunch in twenty minutes, the boys sat in the last northeast room of third wing and KEPT SILENCE! Father Cunningham kept the P.A. on to hear if they fought; Sister Lorraine and I had to stand in the doorway just in case! The girls had to stand out on the west side where fifth wing is now.*

*We conscientiously had air-raid drills. We dashed out the nearest entrance in less than a minute. The boys used to say, "Out to the cornfields! Spare the building, bomb the kids." Later on, we merely stood with our faces to the lockers. I still think our prayers averted the tornado that time. We were in 305, the boys and I, and I said, "There's a terrible storm coming, let's pray for those out in it." They stood reverently and we prayed the Hail Mary and Our Father (in Spanish!) when Maggie Bruemmer came hollering that the P.A. was off and to get out into the hall. The twister just curled around us, thanks be to God.*

*Assemblies were usually held in the bright red-orange cafeteria where the students stood.*

*After the gym was built, I had a huge study hall down under the stage. Often there were 110 boys there, really working quietly.*

*In spite of all the hardships of pioneering there were many joys. We had no chapel. Father Dobkowski and his men walked in silence by four's down the middle of Cherry Street, the rest of us by two's on the sidewalks, to St. Dominic's whenever we wanted a Mass, or during retreat conferences. There was more coming and going than time spent in Church! Of course we prayed the rosary along the way, and I'm sure glad God was watching and blessing our sacrifices.*

*After two years, things began to change. We had benches in chapel, had Mass more frequently, and our famed Mater Dei spirit began to jell. Formerly, when meeting anyone they'd say, "I'm from Breese, Trenton, Germantown, Carlyle and such." Then this became, "I'm from Mater Dei!" Much credit for this goes to the vigilance of Father Cunningham, the efforts of the various departments to mix the students in performances: Math Contests, Art Displays, Science Fairs, Music Recitals, Programs, Drama and of course, Athletics.*

*Sister Mary Bryan had Drama classes and the renowned plays. Her "King and I" was THE best performance for many years. The yearly question was after a good play: "Does it come up to the 'King and I'?" Sister Rose de Lima did a beautiful job in music. After several years, the Precious Blood Sisters came.*

*All monies collected by drives went for P.E. suits and equipment. The gym suits were washed by the Home Ec girls.*

*I trust you can make sense out of this material. The facts are correct. I've talked to Sister Xavier (now Mary Dolores) and Sister Lorraine about this. God bless you and your work, Bob.*

*Sister M. Roselda, PHJC*

# Dates to Remember

December 27, 28, 29, 30.....	Mater Dei Holiday Tournament
January 6, 2005.....	Parent Information Night
March 19 .....	Mothers and Friends Dinner Auction
May 27.....	Graduation
June 3, 4.....	Mater Dei Golf Tournament

Call Mater Dei for more information or visit our website at:

[www.materdeibreeseil.us/mdhs](http://www.materdeibreeseil.us/mdhs)

*"Glory on high, and peace to all on earth.  
Born this day your savior  
and your God. "*

**Mater Dei High School**  
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Breese, IL 62230

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