



# Brother Martin High School

October 27, 2011

Brother Martin High School announces the addition of the new James B. Branton Chapel to its campus. Construction will be completed in November. Completion of the chapel is the culmination of Phase II of Brother Martin's Master Plan.

The chapel honors the memory of James Brian Branton, a member of the Brother Martin High School Class of 1974. Jim died suddenly on April 5, 1974, and was awarded a posthumous diploma with his classmates on May 23<sup>rd</sup> of that year. Through the generous gift of the H.T. Branton family, the chapel was made possible so that future generations of Crusaders will know of Jim and better appreciate the life given to them by God. The James B. Branton Award, donated by the Class of 1974, is given each year at commencement to a graduate judged as an unheralded influence for good on the Brother Martin community. The James B. Branton Memorial Fund provides financial aid scholarships for students annually.

Phase II of the Capital Campaign raised \$14.1 million and resulted in the completion of E.A. Farley Field (2004) and the Roland H. and Macy Paton Meyer Science and Mathematics Building (2007). Phase I raised \$6.5 million and was completed with the construction of the Thomas F. and Elaine P. Ridgley Fine Arts and Athletic Center and the renovation of the Robert Conlin Gymnasium (1999).

Waggonner and Ball Architects, along with Ryan Gootee General Contractors, designed and constructed the chapel to recognize the traditions of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart and to complement the educational philosophy of Brother Martin High School. The chapel is framed by the courtyard in front of the Meyer Building and is raised on a three foot tablet signifying its importance on campus as a place of worship. The chapel is 5,500 square feet and includes two offices and narthex space which will be used for small gatherings. The chapel also features seating for 236.

One design element of special interest in the chapel is the stained glass (circa 1853) preserved from the Brothers' chapel in Paradis, located in Le Puy, France, near where the Brothers of the Sacred Heart order was founded. The stained glass pieces, depicting the Sacred Heart, have been carefully hand restored by Lizano Glass Haus in Metairie and mounted in a custom glass enclosure. Sunlight captured in the narthex of the chapel will highlight the unique and historical beauty of these pieces. The chapel's exterior cross, designed and fabricated by metal artist John Perilloux of Robert, Louisiana, is reminiscent of the mission crosses erected by the founder of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart, Father André Coindre, throughout south central France following the French Revolution. The design will incorporate centuries-old traditional blacksmith wrought iron artistry.

Our chapel will be a teaching chapel. We want its very design and its features to teach our students about the Catholic faith. At the chapel's entrance, cast in stone, are the names of the three Brothers' chapels located in Lyon, France: Our Lady of Fouvriere, Saint Bruno, and Saint Nizier. The chapel features exterior walls of French grey stone. Sculptor Deborah Luke's *Teaching Jesus* and *Holy Family* statues, along with her 14 Stations of the Cross, will also be featured in the chapel. The altar is designed and fabricated by woodworker Patrick Ricard of Baton Rouge. The marble Ametur Cor Jesu (ACJ), originally commissioned by Brother Martin Hernandez's family and donated to the Brothers, was first located at St. Aloysius College and later moved to the Brothers' chapel in their residence on Elysian Fields Avenue. The marble is now incorporated into the wall above the main interior entrance. Ricard and Perilloux also designed and fabricated the ambo and tabernacle. The pews by Covenant Church Furniture are fashioned from solid mahogany.

Brother Martin High School has always made a prayer space available to students, faculty, and staff. *Educational Mission and Ministry* states that, "We hope that prayer suited to the needs of adolescents will permeate our school in a natural way by becoming a regular part of the classroom, of extracurricular activities, of school celebrations, and especially of the religion class." When the Brothers' residence and chapel were demolished to make way for the Meyer Building, temporary prayer space was designated on the second floor of the main classroom building. The dedication of the James B. Branton Chapel will fill the need for a permanent prayer space for the school.

Today, Brother Martin students enjoy a campus that encompasses four distinct buildings, over 200,000 square feet of classroom, lab, and athletic space, and over 10 acres of green space. We are also proud to offer our students "smart" classrooms and labs equipped with projection systems, digital visual presenters and interactive tablets. Ample computer access and a school-wide wireless network facilitate student learning. Art, band, and chorus rooms, a spacious multi-purpose room, library, auditorium, two gyms, and training room facilities for athletics and physical education classes complete our student-centered campus.