

Foundation Mass Shared Reflection – Wednesday, September 30, 2015

Good morning.

This summer, I, along with nine other students from Brother Martin, attended the first ever Brothers of the Sacred Heart Summer Assembly at St. Stanislaus in Bay St. Louis. We were joined by students from nine other Brothers of the Sacred Heart Schools in the Province of the United States, from New Hampshire to New York, from Rhode Island to Louisiana. In the five days I spent with the other schools, we shared how the charism of Father Andre Coindre reached so many schools through the actions of the Brothers and their lay partners.

Last year, the ten of us were called over the loudspeaker to report to Mr. Rando's office. I spent the entire walk down to his office figuring out what bad thing I had done to be called in.

In his office, with the school administration present, he gave us a personal invitation to represent Brother Martin at St. Stanislaus for this first ever assembly. I was shocked, but in a good way. Mr. Rando and the school trusted me and nine of my fellow Crusaders to spend the week with students from all over the country to understand more fully the mission of all of the Brothers' schools. I felt so honored to be chosen, but also responsible to return to school in August willing to share what I'd learned.

While on the assembly, I discussed with other schools how the charism is alive in our schools. Almost every person shared how he or she felt Brothers and teachers exceed what is expected of them by offering individual attention to their students. Personal attention--the faculty and the staff knowing us and caring for us to be our best--was easily the most common shared experience we discussed in our meetings.

I can best describe my experiences of receiving personal attention by sharing an experience that came in the beginning of my sophomore year. At that time, I was struggling in my Algebra II class, and after failing multiple tests, I decided to go see my freshman Geometry teacher, Mr. Lewis. Even though he was no longer my teacher, I remembered his caring when he did teach me and thought he might be able to help me. When I asked him for help, there was no doubt he was willing to sacrifice his time for me.

So in the mornings leading up to a big test, I practiced with him in his classroom while he worked with his geometry students. Because of his help at that

time and throughout that year, my grades improved significantly. This seemingly insignificant interaction actually meant a lot to me, and I now see, because of what I learned this summer, that Mr. Lewis was living out the charism of the Brothers of the Sacred Heart and their teachings through his actions. He didn't need to help me. After all, he had an entirely new group of geometry students he was personally responsible for. But he did and did so positively and generously.

I am sure that if you reflect on your time here at Brother Martin that *you* could think of at least one moment--if not many more-- in which a *teacher* or *brother* reached out to you in a special way in order to teach or help you when you needed it.

Was this personal attention on the practice field? In the band room or on the auditorium stage? In the formation center or library?

In these moments that we have all shared with a teacher or a brother, we know what it feels like to be needed, for that adult to say to us, "You are important enough for me to give my time and my energy to." If we know how good this individualized attention feels, we should understand the power of sharing it with others. In other words, as receivers of the Brothers' charism, we can be providers of this charism.

Through involvement with academic organizations, extracurriculars, and athletics, *WE* can be those people who exceed the expectations set for us, and *WE* can be those people who are willing to be positive examples and continue to live out the Charism in every aspect of our lives.

As Crusaders, may we all walk in the footsteps of those first Brothers who made their vows in a small chapel in Lyon on September 30th in 1821. May the love and care we feel from others be the same love and care we give others. This is the charism, the grace from God, that we are called to share.

Thank you.

