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GUERIN PREP TO MARK GRADUATION CEREMONIES WITH OLD AND NEW TRADITIONS

Commencement exercises for the 141 members of the Class of 2008 of Guerin College Preparatory High School, River Grove, will be held Thursday, May 22, beginning at 7 p.m. in the Guerin Prep Auditorium.

This year's graduating class is the first class to spend all four years as students of Guerin Prep since the school went co-ed in 2004.

"This class has been special ever since they entered Guerin Prep as freshmen. None of them had ever known the experience of attending either Holy Cross or Mother Theodore Guerin high schools and yet they had to deal with three classes of students ahead of them who had," explained Mrs. Bonnie Brown, principal of Guerin Prep. "Their positive spirit and true care and concern for one another helped Guerin Prep recreate itself as a co-ed school. They have been wonderful role models for the classes behind them."

Also during commencement, Sister Nancy Nolan, who retired as president of Guerin Prep in March will be honored and will receive the title of *President Emeritus* from Terry John Malik, the new president of the school.

Commencement Exercises

Graduation ceremonies at Guerin Prep will continue to reflect the special history of the school with the graduation announcement recognizing Holy Cross and Mother Guerin high schools as Guerin Prep's foundation schools.

A new tradition will be celebrated for the fourth year at Guerin Prep. The graduation speakers will be two members of the Class of 2008 chosen expressly for this honor by Guerin Prep faculty and administration.

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Joshua Downen, formerly of Elmwood Park, and Aimee Forte of Elmwood Park were selected from among the students who auditioned.

Kathryn Koegler of Chicago and Katherine Nguyen of Bloomingdale are co-valedictorians for this year's class; Amy Boonjathai of Chicago is salutatorian.

Other Ceremonies

In addition to commencement exercises on May 22, Guerin Prep will celebrate a Baccalaureate Mass for the graduates that morning with the entire student body. The Reverend Bernard Kennedy, OFM, former Holy Cross and Guerin Prep Campus Minister, will preside at the liturgy.

At the end of the liturgy, the McManus and Davenport Awards will be presented to outstanding graduates of Mother Theodore Guerin High School and Holy Cross in honor of the founding principals of those schools.

Diana Notaro Czekalski '68 of Elmwood Park will receive the McManus Award; the Davenport Award will be given to Joseph Marchese '68 of Darien as the outstanding graduate of Holy Cross High School.

Both winners have distinguished themselves as educators.

Diana began as a physical education teacher in the Elmwood Park School District, after earning a B.A. from Northeastern Illinois University.

In addition to teaching, she served as girl scout leader, cheerleading coach, track coach, theater director and flag corps coach.

It didn't take her long to start a drug prevention program within the district called Snowball, which allowed students to learn about the dangers of drugs and ways to combat peer pressure.

In 1994, Diana received her master's degree in special education from Rosary College and moved into teaching special education where she finished the remaining years of her career before retiring.

In 1999, Diana won the middle school physical education teacher of the year award from the Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance.

Marchese recently retired after 35 years of service as a high school instructor and administrator. During that time he earned a master's degree in education and completed course work for an educational doctorate in instruction and supervision from Northern Illinois University.

Active in his community, Marchese was named "Lion of the Year," in 2005 and in that same year he received their highest award by being named a "Melvin Jones Fellow."

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Over the past 30 years he has served as president of the Home School Association. He has also found time to serve as lector in his church, basketball coach and local sports commissioner.

Alumni Induction & Senior Awards

The day before graduation, on May 21, the graduates will be inducted into the alumni association, followed by the Senior Awards Ceremony.

The highlight of the awards ceremony is the giving of the Mother Theodore Guerin Award to a senior girl and the Spirit of Holy Cross Award to a senior boy who have shown outstanding leadership and service. The winners are chosen by members of the senior class, the faculty and administration.

Nicole Marin of Chicago has been selected as the Mother Theodore award winner; Chad Kron, also of Chicago will receive the Spirit of Holy Cross Award. Both students are graduates of St. Robert Bellarmine Elementary School.

College-Bound Students

Of the 141 Guerin Prep graduates, approximately 96 percent of them will pursue a college education in a two- or four-year college.

To date, Guerin Prep seniors have been offered \$2.1 million in scholarship monies to finance their higher education.

Offers and acceptances to seniors have come from area universities and colleges like DePaul, Dominican, Lewis, Loyola, North Park, Northeastern, St. Francis and St. Xavier universities, and Carroll, Carthage, Columbia, Elmhurst, Kendall, Monmouth and Rockford colleges.

Offers and acceptances have also come from St. Ambrose University (Iowa), Bradley University, Ball State University (Indiana), Clark Atlanta University (Georgia), Eastern Illinois University, Illinois Institute of Technology, Illinois State, Illinois Wesleyan, Indiana University, Iowa State University, Marion College (Indiana), Marquette University (Milwaukee), Northern Arizona University, Northern Illinois University, Ohio Dominican University, Olivet-Nazarene University, Purdue University (Indiana), Quincy University (Illinois), Ripon College (Wisconsin), Southern Illinois University, St. John's University (New York), Syracuse University (New York), St. Mary's University (Minnesota), St. Norbert (Wisconsin), University of Dayton (Ohio), University of Hawaii at Manoa, University of Illinois (Urbana), University of Iowa, University of Michigan, University of South Carolina, Vanderbilt University (Tenn.), Western Illinois University and Winona State University (Minnesota).

Background on the Valedictorians/Salutatorian

This year's co-valedictorians—Kathryn (Katie) Koegler and Katherine Nguyen—have earned a GPA of 4.85.

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A member of the National Honor Society, Katie was also named an Illinois State Scholar. She earned the American Math League Contest Award as well as receiving an award for outstanding achievement in English. She is one of the school's Word Master winners.

Katie has served the school as an ambassador and as a mentor to the freshman class.

She received the Ignatius Academic Achievement Scholarship from Marquette University and the University Honor Scholarship from Dominican University. She plans to attend Marquette in the fall.

Kathy Nguyen, the other valedictorian, plans to attend Loyola University. Loyola has awarded her the Rambler Award for Leadership and the Catholic Heritage Award.

While at Guerin, Kathy has excelled as a student and athlete. She was honored as a four-year athlete and has competed on both the soccer and track teams. She was named to the All-Academic Team for soccer.

Currently the president of the senior class, Kathy also served as a Kairos leader, an ambassador and a mentor to the freshman class.

She, too, was named an Illinois State Scholar. She is also a member of the Spanish Honor Society and the Tri-M Honor Society. Kathy has also received the Sister Jean Margaret Kaindl Science Award and a Perfect Attendance Award.

Amy Boonjathai is the salutatorian for Guerin Prep's class of 2008, with a GPA of 4.48. A member of the National Honor Society, Amy is also an Illinois State Scholar. Earlier this year, she was named one of the Triton Art Show Winner.

She has been named the Strobel Honors Accounting Scholar by DePaul University and will also receive the De Paul Scholars Award from DePaul where she will attend college in the fall.

Background on the Mother Theodore/Spirit of Holy Cross Award Winners

Nicole Marin, this year's Mother Theodore Guerin Award winner, also has the distinction of serving as the school's student council president. Her classmates voted her "most involved," and the list of activities in which she has been involved are expansive.

She has been a member of the Spanish Club the past four years, serving as vice-president in her junior year. She also has been inducted into the Spanish Honor Society.

Nicole has served as an ambassador and as a member of the Campus Ministry team for the past three years. Her campus ministry involvement has included roles as a peer minister, Eucharistic Minister and altar server. She was active in the Adopt-a-Kid program.

She is the co-vice president for the newly formed Geek Squad, serves as a mentor to a freshman advisory and has served as a Lead tutor.

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“My involvement shows the extent of my school spirit and how committed I have been to Guerin,” explained Nicole in the essay she submitted for the award. “I am proud of my education and achievements at Guerin and will always be indebted to Guerin for my education, friends, great teachers and the opportunities it has provided to me. I feel I will represent Guerin positively wherever I go and in whatever I do after graduation.”

Nicole plans to attend Dominican University after graduation. She received the Catholic Heritage Scholarship from the university.

Chad Kron, the Spirit of Holy Cross Award Winner, was also voted, “most involved,” by his classmates.

Chad has been active in three sports all four years during high school—football, wrestling and baseball— and was voted captain of both the football and wrestling teams. He has also been named to the All Academic Team for each of these sports, as well as All Conference in football.

In addition, Chad has served as the treasurer of the class for the past four years. He has been an ambassador the past three years and a mentor for freshmen the past two years. He has also played in the symphonic band the past three years.

His most recent achievement is earning the rank of Eagle Scout, and, in the process, he helped refurbish the playground at St. Paul Lutheran School, making it safer for children.

In his nomination essay for the Spirit of Holy Cross Award, Chad reflected on the fact that his dad and his brothers had attended Holy Cross. “I tested at Holy Cross to follow in my families footsteps. Even though Holy Cross closed I made the best of Guerin. I got involved in my class...I showed leadership. ...Guerin has become like a second home because I spend most of my time here with games, practices, concerts, or other activities that are going on in the school. I show the spirit of Holy Cross because I am very involved in the school and have pride in my school.”

Chad will attend St. Ambrose University next fall, where he received both academic and athletic scholarships. He also received the Comcast Leaders and Achievers’ Award. He hopes to major in accounting and finance.

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