

Catholic Week

October 22, 2004

Nation's top 50 Catholic high schools named *Montgomery Catholic Preparatory School joins honorees*

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN – The Catholic High School Honor Roll today announced the selection of the best 50 secondary schools in America. The first annual Honor Roll, which will serve as an invaluable resource for students, parents and benefactors, recognizes the nation's top 50 high schools based on their demonstrated commitment to academic excellence, Catholic identity, and civic education.

Honor Roll schools ranged from the 10-student St. Therese Academy in Irving, Texas, to St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, a school with 2,100 students. The state of Illinois, with seven schools selected, led the way, followed by Texas (5) and New York and Ohio (4 each). In all, schools from 25 states made the Honor Roll. To see a complete list of the schools, please the Catholic High School Honor Roll Web site at www.chshonor.org

Montgomery Catholic Preparatory School in Montgomery was named to the Honor Roll. Archbishop Oscar H. Lipscomb said, "All in the Archdiocese of Mobile are gratified that Montgomery Catholic Preparatory School, successor to more than 136 years of Catholic education in Alabama's capitol city, has been recognized by the Catholic High School Honor Roll. It is an honor that is well deserved and an index of the excellence and support for that school on the part of administrators, faculty, staff, students, parents and benefactors who collaborate to make Montgomery Catholic Preparatory School such a resounding success in difficult times."

Advisory board member Gerard Bradley, Professor of Law at the University of Notre Dame, said the Honor Roll will serve as a benchmark for all who are seeking an education informed by faith. "It draws attention to schools that are contributing in extraordinary ways to the moral and intellectual formation of young people," he said.

The primary goal of the Honor Roll is to encourage schools to educate their students as effectively as possible, in a way that integrates Catholic faith and prepares students for active engagement with the world. In addition to the Top 50 list, the Honor Roll also published the top 20 finalists in three categories that are important to overall excellence: academics, Catholic identity, and civic education.

Strength in each of the three areas was key to placing on the Honor Roll, according to the project's director, Dr. Kevin Schmiesing. "There are Jesuit, Dominican, diocesan, and independent schools on this list," he said. "It reflects the diversity of Catholicism in the United States. What is common to all of the schools is outstanding commitment to the educational mission of the Church."

The Catholic High School Honor Roll is an independent project of the Acton Institute for the Study of Religion & Liberty, an international research and educational organization based in Grand Rapids, Mich. The Honor Roll was produced in consultation with a national advisory board comprised of Catholic college presidents and noted Catholic scholars. For more on Acton, go to www.acton.org