

Bishop Massa, on behalf of the Marist Brothers, our USA Province and all gathered here at Molloy today, a sincere word of gratitude for your presence with us and for making this liturgy a most sacred and meaningful way to celebrate our 125 year history.

A word of thanks also to my fellow alums, who have returned home today for this special occasion and also to a number of parents of today's current Stanners, who have also joined us.

To you Parents, I also want to express sincere gratitude for the many sacrifices you make that allows your sons and daughters to be part of the Molloy Stanner Family. I can only promise you this, in years to come, you will look back and be incredibly grateful for the lifelong impact that this school will have on the life of your children, just as it has on the thousands of young people that graduated and still live our motto "Non Scholae, Sed Vitae", "Not for School, but for life"

This year marks a special time in the history of the Marist Brothers as well. 200 years ago, St. Marcellin Champagnat, a young French priest founded the Marist Brothers, in LaValla, a small rural village in France. At that time in France, there was little education available to young

people. Marcellin, who had little education himself, saw the great need to education all children, especially the most neglected. And so we, the Marist Brothers were born on the 2nd January 1817 when 2 young people had the courage to say Yes and join in Marcellin's Dream. Very quickly, other young people also answered that call and the dream became a reality and started to spread. 75 years after those first 2 recruits, Br. Zepharyny carried that same dream to Lexington Ave in Manhattan and opened the doors of St. Ann's Academy in 1892.

For the past 125 years, many Marist Brothers, Administrators, Teachers, coaches, councilors, campus ministers and many more have passed down an incredible heritage of tradition and spirit through each of the Molloy generations ensuring that the same STANNER DNA is as much alive and real today as it was when Br. Zephaphiny opened the doors of St. Ann's 125 years ago.

So what really is this 1-2-5 Stanner Legacy? Why celebrate 125 years of What Matters?

36 years ago, I sat here in this same gym as a freshman at Molloy. Looking back, I can easily tell you the things about Molloy that mattered then and continue to matter to me now. Unlike the

stanners of today, our current students, I wasn't a very good student. In fact at about this time of my freshman year, I got called to the guidance office on the 2nd floor by my freshman counselor, Br. Regis. Report cards were coming out and he pulled me in and asked me how things were going...I told him, everything was great and I loved Molloy....He chuckled and said well, do you realize you are failing 6 out of 7 classes...

I needed help and thanks to Br. Regis and Br Leo and the SMILE program, I got the help I needed to turn things around. The impact those brothers had on my life goes beyond words. From the first time I walked into their offices, they cared about me as a person and would do anything and everything to help me grow into the person I was meant to be. They defined for me the possibility of what being an influential mentor and a Marist Brothers could mean.

Also during my freshman year, I had the good fortune to become part of the Molloy Track team. When I entered Molloy, I came here as an only child, but pretty soon I gained teammates and brothers for life (we didn't have girls here in those days so I wasn't able to gain any sisters). Those teammates of mine continue to be my closest

friends in life and we have run with each other up and down every hill and valley of our lives. Lifelong relationships with true friends matter and Molloy has always fosters those type of relationships!

Another impact of my High School years that really mattered was it gave me the opportunity to discover another sacred place in my life, Esopus. For those of us that have been lucky enough to have gone to Esopus, it is a pretty magical and incredible place. it is a place where God becomes lived out in real meaningful ways. It is a place that changes everyone for the better and helps deepen our Faith. Living our Faith and Learning to live the Gospel in real ways has always been at the core of a Stanner education and that continues to Matter.

After graduating in '85, my journey eventually led me to join in the footsteps of Regis and Leo and becoming a Marist Brother. I was graced early on as a Brother to have the chance to come back here to work at Molloy for another 4 years.

During those years, I gained a much deeper perspective of just how much the faculty here live Marcellin Champanat's philosophy of education which states that if you want to educate young people, you must love them and love them all

equally....The love, dedication and incredible hard work of the Molloy Faculty through all these years has inspired, challenged and shaped countless lives.

Recently I spent 7 weeks in Colombia at the General chapter of the Marist Brothers. It is a meeting that takes place every 8 years that helps set the direction of where we as the Marist Brothers and as the Marist institute need to go. There were Brothers and lay people representing the 82 countries where the Marist dream lives today. One of the main outcomes of this meeting was that we as the Marists of today must continue to embrace the emerging realities of young people and in particular to look at ways how we as Marists can help so many in this world who are as Pope Francis says are on the peripheries.

While we were in Colombia, natural disasters devastated both Mexico and Puerto Rico. We were with Brothers from those 2 countries and saw pictures and heard stories of how these 2 disasters affected the lives of so many of our fellow Marists in those areas. Br. Patrick made a simple request to you here at Molloy and our other Marist schools in the U.S.A. to see what we

could do to help our suffering brothers and sisters. That little ask and the amazing generosity of our Marist schools raised well over \$60k for these efforts, so thank you!

Likewise, last March, we celebrated the Marist Bicentennial by asking you to join all Marist young people around the USA on the Marist National day of Service.... On that day not only were thousands of people in need helped on a local level by you and the other young people from our USA schools, but your efforts and voting impacted the larger Marist world by helping to fund numerous Marist projects such as our efforts with Refugees and abandoned and displaced children, The Molloy Family has always answered the call in times of need. It is part of who we have always been and it has mattered to so many people.

To you the Stanners of Today, I close by simply telling you that what we as a Stanner Family have done in the past may matter a little, but what you choose to say YES to in and with your lives will matter most. Our world, our church, our country and our Marist family needs you to live the gospel with your lives. 200 Years ago Champagnat answered this call and the Marist Dream began, 125 ago Br. Zephareny passed that same dream on

to the lives of all stanners and now it is up to you to keep the dream alive.

In the words of Br. Terrance Jones, God bless All Stanners...

And on behalf of the Marist Brothers and our Province team...Happy Thanksgiving and God Bless you all!