

St. Mary's Graduate Connor McCloskey Delivers CPHS Graduation Speech

Thursday June 10, 2021

St. Mary Catholic Community School graduate, Connor McCloskey, was chosen by the faculty at Crown Point High School to deliver a Suma Cum Laude speech at graduation last week. This was a huge honor! Connor attended Saint Mary's School from kindergarten until 8th grade graduation in June of 2017. Marian Weeks, director of Faith Formation at St. Mary said, "Connor has more than a brain, he has a heart too." Mrs. Weeks is proud of all of Connor's accomplishments, especially the balance that he has between his faith life and academics. Connor said about his time at Saint Mary's, "A Catholic education does not necessarily mean you have to be Catholic to benefit from it. Personally, I was not Catholic for eight of my nine years at St. Mary School and I never once felt out of place. It's about being a good person, showing kindness to others and giving back when we can."

When asked what was special about his St. Mary's School experience, Connor thought about it for a while and said, "... my friends. My best friends are all St. Mary's graduates and I believe this community tends to graduate some really special people." He went on to say, "my main friend group is actually four other St. Mary School guys. One I met in first grade, one in second, and the rest were met along the way. Outside of them, I still check in occasionally with a few of my other friends from St. Mary's School".

Connor has several favorite memories from his time at Saint Mary School. One of his favorites was going to Summer DNA Camp at The University of Notre Dame during the summer between 7th and 8th grade. He said, "Principal Ruiz recommended for me to go and I was able to really develop a passion for biology while there (and also a passion for Notre Dame!)" Connor also really enjoyed the school dances. He said, "while they were incredibly awkward memories (the dance moves hurt to think about), looking back, I believe they were a very fun experience and they helped break me out of my shell a little prior to going to high school". Connor also fondly remembers Father Pat converting him to Catholicism in his final year of junior high. Connor said of Father Pat, "he was incredibly influential in my religious life, and I cannot thank him enough for all he has done".

While at St. Mary's School, Connor's favorite teacher was Mrs. Wacker. He said, "I don't remember much from elementary school, but I definitely remember that she was my favorite teacher. She introduced me to a few of my favorite books in third grade and she always encouraged me to be the best I could be in school. I'd like to credit at least some of my achievements in school and in my life to her."

After St. Mary's, Connor attended Crown Point High School. He was the Vice President of the Key Club, and he was also involved in the National Honors Society, National Spanish Honors Society, Spanish Club, The Pulse, played golf and he was on the Science Team for Academic Superbowl. Since leaving St. Mary's, Connor has become involved in many faith-based activities. He is the kindergarten teacher for Faith Formation at St. Mary's School and is also a member of the Diocesan Youth Council. Outside of these two activities, he attended NCYC (the National Catholic Youth Conference) in Indianapolis as a representative of St. Mary's School in 2017 and 2019. Prior to becoming the Faith Formation Kindergarten teacher, he was the first grade teacher's assistant for four years.

Connor will be attending the University of Notre Dame to study Biology on the Pre-Med track, with possibly minors in either Spanish or Philosophy. He said, "I am heavily interested in medical pathology or neurology and would like to explore these topics (and more!) as I continue my educational career." Connor plans to live out his faith throughout his life. He said, "I hope to not only become a doctor, but one with the faith and leadership to be a light of God's love through the darkness of illness."

Connor said Saint Mary's School has had a great impact on who he is today. "A Catholic education was important in developing me as not only a good student, but a contributing member of my community as well. I am still heavily involved in service leadership at Crown Point High School and St. Mary's Church, and I believe that my 9 years at St. Mary's School had a lot to do with my desire to give back." Connor summed up his St. Mary experience by saying, "My St. Mary's education is something that I will never forget!"

By: Lisa Hughes







