

## Cathedral Latin 52<sup>nd</sup> Communion Breakfast

Sunday May 4, 2003

Cleveland Marriott Downtown at Key Center - Cleveland, Ohio

Speech from 2003 Merit Award winner: Bishop A. Edward Pevec '43

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This morning we are extremely pleased to have with us so many Cathedral Latin alumni. Although it's been many years since that excellent school at 2056 East 107th Street closed its doors, old friends and classmates continue to meet and reminisce about the glorious days that once were. Once again we come into the presence of our God to thank him for the years we spent at Latin. When eyes were brighter and hair was fuller and limbs were more supple--when life's challenges were no greater than trying to pass one of Brother Jansen's chemistry tests--when manly Catholic ideals were presented for emulation by men like Father Yeske, Father Uht, Father Bedell, Brother Nurthen, Brother Zahn--when academic success was encouraged by such teachers as William Ternansky, Father Preisinger, Brother Deibel, Brother Sullivan--when Catholic values were taught and lived by Marianists such as Father McKay, Brother Trageser, Brother Rose, and many others, we were privileged to be known as Latin men whose school produced successful business men, devoted priests, heroic soldiers, outstanding athletes, exemplary family men, and fervent Catholics. The days of Squidgulums, Charity games, and the Latineer have long passed into history, and even the building that was home-away-from home for so many has disappeared, but the spirit of Cathedral Latin continues to be vibrant in the lives of men who are now well into their mature years, and we thank God for that. Once our cracking voices proudly sang, "...Our love for thee shall never cool, Cathedral Latin School. Because that love had never cooled, we are here this morning before our God who gave us so much in four years. We come to reminisce with friends and classmates who were so much a part of those years. We come to pray for Latin Alumni whom the Lord called to himself. We come to offer thanks for all that has been and for all that will be, thanks to the dedicated Marianists and lay teachers who were so instrumental in the formative years of adolescence and young adulthood.

The late diocesan historian, Msgr. Michael Hynes, wrote the following:

One of the greatest accomplishments of Bishop Farrelly (the fourth bishop of our diocese) was Cathedral Latin School, a diocesan high school for boys. Doctor Edward A. Mooney, later Cardinal Archbishop of Detroit, then a professor at the seminary, was chosen to head the institution. In September 1916, 160 young men in the first two years of high school began their classes in temporary quarters... Ground was broken for the new building on August 13, 1917; Bishop Farrelly laid the cornerstone on the following October 6, a day described by himself as the happiest after his arriva<sup>1</sup> in the city.

...The large tapestry brick building on East 107th Street near Euclid Avenue, was designed in the Renaissance style...In it were twenty-one classrooms, laboratories, a small chapel, a gymnasium, and a large auditorium.

The new school opened its doors to 387 boys in September 1918. ...The increased enrollment, 740, in the following September, made it necessary to divide the school day into two full sessions, morning and afternoon.

An interesting history, these beginnings, and many years were to follow. We all have our own memories, some more vivid than others.

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But we've taken more than memories from Cathedral Latin. This was one of the premier Catholic high schools in the diocese. "We were taught more than math, languages, and science. We were taught to be believers in a caring and redeeming God, and we were taught to have trust in that God and to love our fellow human beings. In la word, we were formed as good Catholics. Our presence here testifies to the validity of that purpose.

On this day of remembering, once again God's word touches our hearts. We heard how the saving work of Jesus continued through the ministry of his apostles. Having cured a cripple in the name of Jesus, Peter addressed the people who marveled over what he had just done. His words in our first reading clearly show the change that had taken place within a man who at one time denied that he even knew Jesus. Peter wanted his listeners to see that the God of their ancestors was still trying to reach them and he described Jesus as the author of life, the Holy and Righteous One whom they put to death out of ignorance. All this was part of God's plan but now, "Repent, therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be wiped away." Things have changed, Peter said, and so must you. And so must we. After all, Jesus is no longer dead. He has risen as he said.

Our Gospel reading today told us of the second resurrection appearance of Jesus in St. Luke. It follows immediately after the account of Jesus meeting the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. Those two had come to recognize him in the breaking of the bread and they had returned to Jerusalem to tell the others of their grand experience. These, however, had already heard that Jesus appeared to Simon, but they were still terrified when Jesus suddenly stood in their midst. Fear blinded them so much they thought they were seeing a ghost. They were trying to see Jesus in their own way, seeing him for whom they thought he was.

Gently Jesus invited them to touch his hands and his feet, and to assure them even more, he also ate a piece of baked fish, as if to say, "I'm eating, and you know that ghosts don't eat." And they were still afraid.

Imagine what it was like for the disciples. For three years I they had followed Jesus, and suddenly their world collapsed. Their dreams were shattered and their hopes died with Jesus on Good Friday.<sup>1</sup> As far as they were concerned, their lives were over. They wrapped themselves in shrouds of fear and buried themselves in that upper room. All that was left was to wait for the enemies of Jesus to find them and finish the job. No wonder they were terrified when he suddenly appeared to them.

But just as Jesus had done for Lazarus, he now did for them. He called them out of the tomb of despair and unwrapped their shrouds of fear. In place of darkness and death, he brought light to their minds and strength to their hearts. They were now free to speak the truth, to enlighten the whole world, to announce that the reign of death was over. Even if Jesus' enemies did find them, it would make no difference. They had been dead, but they were over it. They were alive forever in Christ, and such good news had to be shared.

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That same good news is too good for us Latin men to keep to ourselves. The world has to know that in the end good does overcome evil in spite of hatred and murders, in spite of brutality and crime, in spite of sin and corruption, in spite of drugs and alcohol, in spite of the fact that we don't always live according to what we believe. Each of us to spread the good news of Jesus. As St. Francis once told his followers, "Always preach the Gospel, and if necessary, use words."

So many of our teachers and so many of our peers on the other side of eternity now know fully the lessons that had been taught and learned in that marvelous school on East 107th. Together we can all testify today that to follow Jesus and to live for him is to die with him, and that is certainly worth it. Our reward is eternal and incredibly beautiful.

I would like to thank the Cathedral Latin Alumni Association for this wonderful honor bestowed upon me in this twilight time in my life. Truly I am very grateful, deeply honored, and so humbled. I believe I'm honest and wise enough to know that this award is not anything I've merited but something that has been given because the Association kindly and thoughtfully gave consideration to one whose name is perhaps heard more often than other names. In God's mysterious ways, I've been named and ordained a Bishop and that has put me into places and given me a recognition that I never thought would be mine.

Very easily I can find many--many--who are far more deserving of this award. They are a credit to our Church, to our communities, to their families, and to Cathedral Latin in ways far more significant than mine.

I think of many of my outstanding classmates from 1943 who do so much for so many--Tony, Paul, Jim, and so many more--but always in the shadow of anonymity. I accept this honor for all of them as we proudly observe the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our graduation.

I think of my own brother from the class of 1950 who gives of his time, treasure, and talent for so much good but who goes through life pretty much identified as the Bishop's brother. Today I want all of you to know that Bill Pevec's brother is proud to accept this in his name.

We all have fond memories, dim though they may be, of our high school days. We remember the outstanding teachers and motivators who graced Latin's halls and who shaped our lives, and in your name I thank them all, both the living and the dead.

Today I want to express my deepest gratitude to all of you Latin men who are here and all who aren't for once again making me so proud to be one of you. It's been like that since way back in 1939. Latin alumni are a dying breed but I'm just absolutely thrilled that this happened to me before I died. It's much more enjoyable.