

School office plans to ‘Enflame Our Schools’

Each Child is a Masterpiece of God, created with precision for a specific purpose

After a hectic early Monday morning this past October, I settled into my seat on a Southwest Airlines flight to Washington D.C. I was headed to D.C. for the National Catholic Education Association Seton Gala honoring the Dunn family for their support of Archdiocesan schools. This event was also honoring a Seton Scholar award winner, Margarita Gonzalez, who currently attends Bishop Ward High School and previously attended Christ the King School in Kansas City. This proved to be a wonderful event. I left feeling very grateful for all those, like the Dunn family, who support Catholic education in our diocese. I also left overflowing with pride for Margarita and all of the students in the Archdiocese whom she represented.

The previous Thursday, Friday and Saturday, I was at the *Enflame Our Hearts* Convocation with about one thousand six hundred Catholics from throughout the Archdiocese. My heart was on fire after this wonderful experience. The focus of the convocation was on evangelization, specifically within our parishes. Although I was uplifted by the experience I had at the convocation, I hadn't thought about what it meant for me regarding evangelization. The Holy Spirit tends to help us with such things if we but wait and listen.

As I was on that flight to Washington D.C., I noticed a woman next to me reading intently from a tablet. The middle seat afforded me little to see. It did, however, place me in a less than comfortable proximity to both of my flight neighbors in that row. This closeness allowed me to see that the woman next to me was reading the Bible on her tablet. Perhaps this was an opportunity to evangelize. Never one to hesitate, I jumped right in to a conversation with her. The woman, Elizabeth, was not Catholic. She shared her thoughts on several topics, including the Eucharist, purgatory and the Communion of Saints. I said a silent prayer to the Holy Spirit to guide my words. It was a wonderful conversation that certainly made me even more confident in my Catholic beliefs. Perhaps the Holy Spirit spoke to Elizabeth that day too.

When I was leaving the convocation a few days prior to that flight, one of our school principals, Jodie Maddox, shared with me how uplifting the experience was for her. She made a comment about how wonderful it would be to provide a similar opportunity for our teachers and principals. Our Catholic schools are a wonderful place for us to evangelize and to share our faith. It is in this spirit that we are planning the *Enflame Our Schools* Convocation for school leaders. Please pray to the Holy Spirit for guidance as we continue our mission of evangelization to the faculty members, students and families within our schools.