

**St. Mary's Holy Faith Secondary School Killester
Celebrates 50 years
1967 -2017**

Words from Evelyn McLoughlin (*Principal*)

Archbishop Martin, reverend fathers, Sisters of the Holy Faith, Representatives of the Le Chéile Schools Trust, Members of the board of Management, Parents Association, staff, students and the entire St. Mary's family.

I feel very privileged to be with you on this important occasion as Principal of St. Mary's Holy Faith Secondary School, Killester because a 50th Anniversary is indeed a very special occasion and a perfect time for all of us to gather together to celebrate the achievements of the school.

May I begin by thanking Arch Bishop Martin for being with us today? It is an honour that you took time out from your busy schedule to join with us to recognize 50 years of our school, a school that has not only provided an excellent education to generations of girls who came through its doors but also did this in an environment strongly rooted in the tradition and values of the Holy Faith Sisters. Fifty years on, society has indeed changed (as you pointed out so well) but in St. Mary's our characteristic spirit and tradition firmly remain our compass.

In reflecting on our Jubilee, I have been inspired and awestruck by the passion and leadership of our founders. Despite all the odds, the Holy Faith sisters pursued their vision of providing education for girls so that those girls would be empowered and their lives enriched. They developed schools like St. Mary's in Killester because they **believed** that education above anything had the potential to transform lives. It was the gateway to a better life –a more fulfilled life. And combined with the value they attributed to knowledge and learning – were the gospel values they espoused and lived out in the

hidden curriculum – respect, hope, truth, compassion, care, kindness and most of all love. We believe that those values have as much relevance in 2017 as they did in 1967 and we will continue to place great emphasis on the spiritual and holistic development of each girl by providing opportunities for our girls that will inspire them, empower them, challenge them, extend them and broaden their horizons.

Today, girls I ask that you continue to believe in the potential of education and what it can unlock for you – and I am asking you to go further – please continue to learn as part of your life long journey and use your life productively by returning the gift of education to others; Carry on the leadership that the founders of this school started out with... and believe that in doing so – you too can make a difference to others.

Our Jubilee garden is designed around a pathway demonstrating the journey of St. Mary's past and present. The garden plaque reads:

We are walking in the footsteps of those who went before us

We are laying down a pathway for those who come behind us

On this significant occasion of our Golden Jubilee, I am cognisant of all those who have laboured over the years with love for our students.

I congratulate the parents whose partnership and cooperation with the school has been outstanding. They have supported the school in all its efforts over the last five decades and are deserving of the best efforts that the school can make in providing for their daughters.

To the Boards of Management that have governed our school with exemplary commitment and generosity, we recognise your great work today.

To the teachers and school leaders past and present who have encouraged the students day in and day out to strive for excellence and to develop all their talents whatever they might be, we remember you with gratitude.

The students are the life blood of the school. Their uniqueness, energy and enthusiasm are our driver each and every day. They are at the centre of everything that we do, every decision that we make, every change that we embrace. St. Mary's above all is here for you and to serve your needs.

As we review the history of 50 years, we have every reason to be thankful for the blessings St. Mary's has received. Truly, much has been achieved and as always much remains to be done as new decades will bring different needs, new challenges and opportunities in abundance. We pray that God will strengthen and support us in the next leg of our journey as we continue to carry out with great dedication and commitment the good work that our founders began. Thanks to all of you who have taken the time to join with us at this special time and to all of those who prepared and participated in today's liturgy led by Ms Harrington – I think we all agree that it has been a beautiful occasion! I will finish by thanking once again, Arch Bishop Martin for his presence with us today and as a token of our appreciation, I would like to invite _____ and ____ to present the ArchBishop with a unique handcrafted work of art entitled **The Journey of Christ** created by two of our very talented teachers Ms Burke and Ms Ryan.