

*September 26, 2018
Madison Hotel, Convent Station, NJ*

“Whatever happens at Georgetown Prep, stays at Georgetown Prep.” By now, many have heard this hackneyed line used by the current Supreme Court nominee at a Catholic University Law School event and a similar sentiment he shared during his confirmation hearing. I couldn’t help but put this comment in Delbarton context and think about all of you loyal Reps. My reaction to this clumsy attempt at humor was “what an unfortunate message to send to Prep students, the larger community and your fellow alums.”

I don’t believe we want what happens at Delbarton to stay at Delbarton. We want to share everything we have learned with as many people as possible. This isn’t a brotherhood that meets in darkness. We don’t shun the outside. This is brotherhood that sheds light!

We give our time and money to ensure that all qualified boys can get a Delbarton education. We send our sons, nephews and grandsons to Delbarton. We tell our neighbors, friends and colleagues why their children should experience Delbarton. Our inspiration isn’t institutional protection of students and alums. We want the opposite for these boys. We want them to become empathetic men and their lessons of brotherhood to enrich every community they join.

The American people have become more focused on correcting broken and biased institutions over the last several years. This is a great thing! We are asking more critical questions about “why things are the way things are,” and the answers will lead to a stronger and more dynamic society. As an all-boys, Catholic institution, Delbarton has, and will continue to, answer questions about its role in improving the lives of many, not just the few.

I have never been more confident that Delbarton is up to that task based on the bedrock of alumni whose success can be measured not in terms of wealth or notoriety, but in terms of improving the lives of others. And I have never been more confident that Delbarton has the ability to respond to external changes and evolve. I am grateful to have Fr Michael here this evening. Father Michael’s fresh perspectives and focus on transparency across everything Delbarton does should excite all of us. Our job as Reps, to speak for the school at times and in places where the school cannot speak for itself, is not always easy. However, Fr Michael is going to give us every tool we need for success.

Several years ago, I was part of a group that debated changes to the alumni association mission. We believed the original was written by Fr Stephen and the school had changed dramatically since its founding. I now feel foolish having questioned the perpetual wisdom in these words. So let me take a moment to read Fr Stephen’s definition of this organization.

“The mission of the Delbarton Alumni Association is to advance the interest, influence and welfare of Delbarton School, to promote the moral, spiritual and intellectual ideals which the School teaches and inspires, while at the same time fostering loyalty, camaraderie and a sense of community amongst the alumni of the School.”

That second line ... promoting the moral, spiritual and intellectual ideals which the School teaches . . . it feels more relevant today than ever. Whatever happens at Delbarton will be shared with the world.

Tim Fitzsimmons, ‘95

