

Dedication and Blessing

Catherine McAuley Statue

November 6, 2019

“Spirit of Hospitality”

Donna Cerza '94
Director of Admissions
Mercy Associate

I have the honor and privilege of coming here every day where I witness and experience the Charisms of Mercy, Service, Justice, and Hospitality

To properly frame my thoughtsI want to reference some Irish Catholic history. History tells us of a time during the 18 century when Irish Catholics were forbidden to practice faith, attend mass or receive education. When it became illegal for priests to perform a mass, Irish families lit candles to attract the attention of priests who would come to their homes to offer sacraments and bless the family. In turn the family offered hospitality. By placing lit candles in windows the Irish people held true to their faith and culture in the face of British persecution against the Catholic Church in Ireland.

Faith enabled the Irish to triumph over persecutions.

As we reflect on Catherine's legacy today we witness that same faith. We recognize the enduring Spirit of our Beloved Sisters as they embarked on their mission here in Dallas, PA , to form the minds and spirits of young women so they too could face the world with confidence and commitment. The Sisters faced obstacles and knew prejudice was due to ignorance (of the Catholic faith) rather than hatred of the sisters. As quoted in “At the edge of Centuries, Cm 1913-1999” , We did everything in our power to make visitors comfortable.

It is in this spirit of Mercy Hospitality that candles will be permanently displayed in the windows of Admissions and the Founders Room in Mercy Hall . Ever reminding us to continue sharing the legacy of Catherine and our Religious Sisters of Mercy. Misericordia University is a place where all are welcome. One of my favorite Catherine McCauley quotes is “while we place all our confidence in God we must act as if all depended on ourselves”.