

Hello everyone,

My name is Michael Matthews and I am now a student in my junior year at Immaculate High School in Danbury. I graduated from St. Mary School in 2007, and I can say with confidence that my years here prepared me extremely well for my high school experience. At Immaculate High School, they work to develop the entire student, intellectually, socially, and spiritually, and St. Mary School has been able to achieve that same goal.

As a catholic school, St. Mary naturally has a strong religious education program, with religion classes taught five days a week. Most of my fellow students at Immaculate came from catholic schools, but few, if any, had the same strong foundation in the catholic faith that I did. My years at St. Mary helped me reach the top of my religion class at Immaculate, where I still am three years later.

Of course, religion is not the only class I excel in. St. Mary helped to prepare me in all subjects. The academic foundation I received at St. Mary School has helped me to reach and maintain a Grade Point Average of 4.6. I am currently enrolled in three honors classes and two AP classes at Immaculate, and I have the opportunity to take up to four more AP classes next year. Also thanks to my education at St. Mary, I was placed in advanced math and Spanish classes all three years.

The final aspect that both St. Mary School and Immaculate share is its social environment. Now, I can't pretend that Immaculate is as small a school as St. Mary is – my graduating class would probably fit in my homeroom – but the general social dynamic is the same. With such a small student body, the faculty is able to pay more personal attention to each individual student. Equally important, if not more so, is the fact that students form a much stronger bond with one another. With a little effort, I could probably assign a name to any given face in my junior class at Immaculate. However, I can still recite the names of everyone in my graduating class here at St. Mary from memory.

St Mary also helped me to develop my own personal interests. When I was in third grade, we held our first theatrical production, Aladdin. In a different school, I might not have auditioned; perhaps I would have been too shy, or assumed I wouldn't get a part. As it was, I did try out, and now, so many years later, I am one of the leading members in Immaculate's Drama Club.

My parents and I are certain that we made the right decision in enrolling at St. Mary School, and given the chance, we would do it all over again. It is my hope that all of you here today, whether it be two years from now, four years from now, or even nine years from now, find yourselves saying the same thing.