Catholic Education Main Focus of Discussion on Campus

By Kate Kosmin

Students, faculty, clergy and the general community of DeSales University, gathered Wednesday evening to listen to a lecture given by Dr. John Staud on the importance of Catholic education in modern America.

The event took place at 7:30pm in the White Pavilion Room at the DeSales University Center. It was sponsored by the Salesian team at DeSales, whose mission is to address the growing need for Catholic education in a contemporary world.

Dr. Staud, Director of the Alliance for Catholic Education Program at the University of Notre Dame and chief author in the ending account of the Notre Dame Task Force on Catholic Education, came to DeSales to help educate its students, staff and surrounding public about the increasing need for Catholic education.

Catholic schools make up the largest private school systems in the United States, but in general, the amount of Catholic institutions has significantly decreased. In 1965, the amount of students enrolled at a Catholic institution was around 5 million. Since then it has dropped to about 2.5 million, Staud said.

Are Catholic schools doomed to fade out of contemporary society? Staud, presented four major ways we can help reverse the decrease and replenish the amount of Catholic school systems in the United States.

First, there is a need for Catholic Identity among the public. Second, finding, and forming strong leaders, in order to rally more Catholics. Third, showing academic excellences among students who are enrolled in Catholic schools. Finally, Catholic schools must become more financially accessible.

Staud added that the Catholic community needs to attract and empower its growing Latino and Hispanic population.

In conclusion, Staud stressed that Catholic Schools are a source of excellent education, and also strengthen and provide faith for their students and community. He ended his lecture by explaining that we as a community owe it to our future generations to learn about the Catholic faith, to come to together to make a change.