



## 1899 BEQUEST SOCIETY

**A**s a young boy Monsignor Robert Gibbons '67 never had a conscious desire to go into the priesthood. Yes, he was always interested in God and the church, and he admired many of the priests and the scholastics that he knew growing up who taught him at Sacred Heart Academy and at Jesuit, but he never thought about becoming a priest. It wasn't until he had already graduated from the University of Florida Law School that he realized it.

"After graduating from law

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school and practicing law for some time, it became clear to me that it was not something that I wanted to do for the rest of my life," said Monsignor Gibbons. "So there began to ferment within me a questioning about my life's direction that I had never taken the time to do before."

And once that revelation was clear in his mind, there was no question as to what his path would be.

"I went to midnight Mass during Christmas in 1974, when I was 25 years old, and during the homily of the Mass I received my vocational call, very clearly," said Monsignor Gibbons. "The thought formed in my mind that I was called to be a priest, and in a certain way I felt like it came out of nowhere. But looking back on my life I realized it was the many influences that had been planted in me all along."

One certainty has always been Monsignor's plan of leaving a lasting gift to Jesuit High School. After giving so much of himself serving others during his life in the priesthood, he has recently named Jesuit as a beneficiary in his estate planning, becoming the newest member of the Jesuit High School 1899 Bequest Society to ensure other young men experience the same opportunities that he did.

"I am a very strong proponent of Catholic education," said Monsignor Gibbons. "I believe in it 100 percent. I think it gives to a young person a depth and an understanding of God, human nature and history that is incomparable. I treasure the years of Catholic education that I had at Jesuit. I think that they were the most formative times of my life and to a great extent made me into the person that I am. When I look around and see the impact that Jesuit has had in the lives of so many people, I want to do something to give back to Jesuit to make sure that the same opportunity is available for a young man in the future."

Like many other Jesuit graduates, Monsignor Gibbons cherishes the time he spent on Himes Ave.

"Jesuit influenced me in a lot of ways, not just spiritually," said

Monsignor. "It was a wonderful experience for me at Jesuit, and I had a great time there and made very good friends during my four years. I had a tremendous academic formation which prepared me well for college and for graduate studies. Spiritually, looking back on it, I don't think that I was fervently pious during high school, but certainly, the spiritual formation at Jesuit kept my focus on God and on my Catholic faith."

Jesuit High School is extremely grateful to Monsignor Gibbons for his generous commitment to future Tiger generations, and all those that have named Jesuit as a beneficiary in their will.

For more information on becoming a member of the Jesuit High School 1899 Bequest Society, please contact the Development Office at (813) 877-5344 Ext. 704 or scan the QR code using your smart device. 



## Monsignor Robert Gibbons '67: A Legacy Serving Others

