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Jamie Carty can't hold back her tears as Gate of Heaven School's final graduation nears its end.



Graduate Maria Khoudary sings a hymn at Gate of Heaven Church during the school's last graduation ceremony.



Gate of Heaven graduate Jennifer Ringsdorf wipes a tear during Mass.



Maegan Wrubel participates in the graduation Mass at Gate of Heaven Church as school principal Abe Simon sings along.

A TEARFUL GOODBYE

By KATHRYN BARTIZEK
For The Dallas Post

Like hundreds of others in the past, this writer walked the halls of Gate of Heaven School, sat at the desks listening to the teachers and played in the asphalt playground before graduating. But this year, for the 15 young men and women of the 2011 graduating class, the occasion was bittersweet.

Although the students were about to embark on a new journey in their lives, the ceremony also signified the closing of the school. These young scholars, although disheartened to say goodbye to their alma mater, ex-

uded the confidence and capability their Catholic education had instilled in them.

During the traditional Catholic ceremony held in the school's church, Reverend James Paisley's homily exemplified the well-rounded education these students have received. He recalled the eighth-grade class production of "The Wizard of Oz" and the advice the Wizard had given Dorothy and her friends.

"The things they were seeking on their journey could not be found out there, but in their hearts," he said. "Walk wisely, lovingly and courageously into

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A wave of relief overcomes members of the Class of 2011 following commencement ceremonies at Mountaineer Stadium.



Jonathan Wallace sings the Dallas Alma Mater along with Barbara Weaver Smith, who wrote the song in 1962 for the then newly-formed Dallas School District.

Dallas graduates remember old, look toward new

By EILEEN GODIN
The Dallas Post Correspondent

Marking the end of an era, 205 graduating seniors walked across the stage to accept their diplomas during the final graduation ceremony of the old Dallas High School on Friday evening.

Earmarking the significance, alumni from the first graduating class, the Class of 1962, led the Class of 2011 onto the football field and played a role in the festivities.

"This commencement does

not mark the end but a new beginning," said Samantha Casto, president of the Class of 2011, during the June 3 graduation ceremony.

As the wind rippled through the light and dark blue graduation robes, Casto looked out among her classmates and those in the bleachers, viewing both the old high school and the newly-built one. Her comments reflected the class's future but also the fact that, this July, the old high school will be torn down.

She told classmates not to be afraid of failure.

"Failure is a detour on the way to success," Casto said. "Just like the leaking ceiling which rerouted us to class, and hall monitors who made us question our direction."

Her parting advice to her classmates was simple: "Listen to all sides of a situation and determine for yourself the outcome."

Superintendent Frank Galicki told members of the graduating class, "Transformation is always challenging," adding that Dallas School District has always been a top performing school and has never been con-

tent with maintaining the status quo but continues pushing for the next higher level.

Learning comes in many ways, he told students. It comes through work, relationships, sports and hobbies.

"You have tasted your first big success," he said. "There are more to come."

Salutatorian Pierce Donovan said the Class of 2011 was a record breaker.

"We scored 25 percent higher in math," he said. "We are ending a 50-year era with a bang."

Donovan noted that the

Class of 2011 will have students studying on both coasts to achieve goals such as becoming teachers, astronauts and writers.

Stating she was all choked up to leave the "Dallas Bubble" behind, valedictorian Meghan Anne Gallis said classmates have laughed and cried together but are ready to close this chapter and begin a new one.

Together, Christopher Clemson, class vice president, and Beverly Brown Atherholt, an alumni from 1962, shared the podium to bid farewell to the Class of 2011.

"This is not a farewell to Dallas," Clemson said. "Dallas will always be here."

He stated home is where you grow up wanting to leave, but grow old wanting to return.

Atherholt stated that, after

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