Summer has come to an end, and these first few months of school have been full of changes – some of them unexpected. It’s inevitable: from one year to the next, things are bound to change.

Let’s face it: change can be scary. But it can also add excitement to our life – no one wants to live a humdrum life without surprises, no matter how scary they might be.

Just look at all of the changes here at Mercy. Some have been pretty disorienting. For the freshmen, the transition from their grammar school into high school – and an all-girls one at that – has been anything but ordinary. And for returning students, there’s been teachers who’ve left and new teachers who’ve come to Mercy this year. In addition, the location of the guidance office has changed, there are new Mac labs available for student use, and some clubs have also been changed. Even Olmanac is different - this year, instead of monthly issues, there will be quarterly ones, and the newspaper is becoming a full-out magazine. But changes don't define Mercy any more than they define our personal lives. Traditions at Mercy are what hold us all in place and keep us grounded through the changes. Senior Sister Day, one of the most personal traditions at Mercy, was a great success this year, especially with the added photo booth. One age-old tradition, Mercy Day, was once again celebrated with a beautiful Mass to honor the Sisters of Mercy. However, the most exciting fall tradition at Mercy is, of course, the Tower Run (*clap* *clap*). An effort to raise funds for both Mercy students and lung cancer research, and a dedication to a former Mercy teacher, Mary-Jo Lorello, the Tower Run is one of the best traditions Mercy has, and one of the most constant. However, even the Tower Run has gone through changes this year. For instance, this year Mercy had it’s first PLP – Parking Lot Party – to help kick-start fundraising for the Tower Run. Even though the PLP was a major change to Mercy, it turned out to be a great success.

Each new school year is an opportunity to change something – maybe it’s something about yourself, about your personality. Maybe it’s how you study and do your homework, or maybe it’s the opportunity to join a new club or team. Whatever it is, the arrival of each school year allows students to take this advantage and turn it into action. Changes can be difficult to get used to, but they usually end up being worthwhile. So make a change and embrace it!

-Jessica DiBugno ’14 and Lauriann Elise Kormylo ’14-

-Editors-in-Chief-
By: Coryn Carrion ‘14

The Constitution is more than your average law or essay. It is a document that was written 250 years ago and yet still applies to everyone, everyday. Sometimes the Constitution is taken for granted, and on other days, like 9/11, we come to realize just how lucky we are that our Founding Fathers had the insight and the daring to put such strikingly new-fangled ideas about rights and freedoms into the basis of the United States government. This document has been a model for other constitutions around the world, and it is especially important to women. Having an all-girls school like Mercy is impossible in other places around the world, and it is because of the Constitution that it exists here. Education of women is protected in the United States of America by the Constitution, but in other places, women are lucky to even leave the house without a male companion. One story of a woman who is fighting for the freedoms expressed in our Constitution is that of Malala Yousafzai.

Maulana Fazlullah, leader of the Taliban militants, has tried to ban TV, music, and the education of girls in Pakistan. Malala Yousafzai is a young activist for girl’s education, and because of this, she was a target to the Taliban. Reporters requested that Malala’s identity was revealed and she was awarded her first national peace prize. After all of the publicity, The Taliban took credit for the attack, and Pakistani Taliban spokesman Ehsanullah Ehsan said that if she survived, they would attack again. Malala did survive, and is continuing her activist work. She was recently honored at Harvard as Harvard’s 2013 Humanitarian of the Year. She wishes to return to her home region soon, despite the danger that awaits her there.

“I think of it often and imagine the scene clearly. Even if they come to kill me, I will tell them what they are trying to do is wrong, that education is our basic right.” - Malala Yousafzai

“I find it an ignoble part of our Constitution to use the word ‘equality’ when the freedom to be free is not equally distributed among all our people.” ~ Thomas Jefferson

By: Rebecca Fowler ‘14

Catherine McAuley was born in Dublin, Ireland, on September 29, 1778 to a prosperous Catholic family. Her father died when Catherine was five years old. His compassion for the poor, especially children and families who lived nearby, was a lifelong example for Catherine. Fifteen years after her father’s death, Catherine was orphaned in 1798 and chose to live with relatives. These relatives were not Catholic and had little tolerance for her Catholic practices. In 1809, Catherine went to live with William and Catherine Callaghan to be a companion of Mrs. Callahan. The Callaghans were childless, so when Mr. Callaghan died in 1822, Catherine inherited their fortune and their estate. In 1824, Catherine used her inheritance to lease property on Baggot Street, in Dublin, for the purpose of building a house for religious, educational, and social services for women and children. Other women were attracted to Catherine and began to join her preparations for the ministry.

On September 24, 1827, the Feast of Our Lady of Mercy, the first residents came to live in the house they would call the House of Mercy in honor of the day; two years later the Chapel was dedicated. Between 1829 and 1830, Catherine and her associates agreed to found a new religious congregation. Catherine began founding a new religious congregation of women dedicated to serve the poor. Catherine and two of her associates entered the Convent of the Presentation Sisters in Dublin on September 8, 1830 and began to formalize the Sisters of Mercy. Fifteen months later, the three women pronounced vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience and to persevere until death in the “Congregation of the Sisters of Mercy.” Thus, the community was founded on December 12, 1831.

Catherine only lived ten years as a Sister of Mercy but in that time, she established nine additional autonomous foundations in Ireland and England, and two branch houses near Dublin. She died in 1841 and there were 190 Sisters of Mercy. Shortly afterward, small groups of sisters left Ireland at invitation of bishops of different countries including New Zealand, Newfoundland, the United States, Argentina and Australia. The Sisters of Mercy now serve in North, Central and South America, the Caribbean, Guam, and the Philippines, with more than 4000 sisters responding faithfully to the needs of the poor.

“Good works do not depend on anyone in particular, but on the continuance of God’s blessing.” - Catherine McAuley
Senior Sister Day 2013
A Freshman’s Point of View

By: Danielle Ferrandino-Schwartz ’17

This year, Senior Sister Day landed on September 27th. As I’m sure you all know, Senior Sister Day is a tradition here at Mercy. For Senior Sister Day, you are paired with a senior, and get to spend most of the afternoon with her. This year, we tie-dyed tee shirts, had lunch together, watched a preview of Sport’s Night, and were able to take funny photos together in the photo booth! For tie-dying tee shirts, there was a teacher going around giving out tips on how to best dye the shirt, and the different designs you could make. The preview of Sport’s Night was also very cool. It definitely clarified the confusion I had between what team encompassed what skills (ex: Drill, Dance, Cheer). I also really liked the photo booth! I thought it was a great idea, and it was a great memory of the day. On top of all this, having a table full of cookies and treats was just an extra bonus!

Mercy was very welcoming when I first came. It felt like home from the beginning. Being able to learn more about someone who I had already become close to in that month, was really amazing. Having a senior who has survived three years, and everything I’m worried about, and knowing you can come to them for anything, is such a great feeling. It really is like having a sister. You know they’ll always have your back. Senior Sister Day is something I’ll never forget. I’d like to really thank all those involved in making Senior Sister Day so memorable.

A Senior’s Point of View

By: Lauriann Elise Kormylo ’14

Senior Sister Day is a great tradition at Mercy. The purpose is help the freshman get acclimated to their new school and learn the in’s and out’s of everyday life here – to become part of the Mercy culture, if you will. Four years after my own Senior Sister Day as a freshman, the experience means just that much more to me.

When I was a freshman, I enjoyed Senior Sister Day for the reasons everyone else did – it was fun; I got to meet some new people, both freshman and senior; and, of course, I got candy from my Senior Sister. However, my Senior Sister and I were never really that close. We sort of lost track of each other by the end of the year. This made me realize how important it was that I be an awesome Senior Sister this year, that I don’t lose track of my Freshman Sister during the year and I make sure I’m there for her when she needs me.

I think I enjoyed Senior Sister Day more as a senior than as a freshman. I loved spending the day with my Freshman Sister, and it was a good feeling to see the smile on her face when she opened her gift of candy. I especially enjoyed the new part of Senior Sister Day, the photo booth. It was nice to have a part which was not as scheduled as the tie-dying and the Sports Night preview, because we got the chance to be spontaneous and silly. Overall, Senior Sister Day 2013 was definitely a success, and I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of being a Senior Sister.
Children of veterans have faced the fear of a parent in service but the strength and perseverance that has been the foundation of Americans since our establishment in 1776. Americans have led a powerful country with generations of children who’ve seen the effects of war first hand. Through the honor of a military parent and the hardships of their absence, each child has a story.

Sam Lawson, a junior here at Mercy, has a father who was a former major during the war in Iraq and Kosovo. I had the chance to discuss her perspective as the daughter of a war veteran:

**How did your father’s service affect your views on warfare?**

Well I saw its brutal affect on my family as well as other military families. I know what it’s like to not know if your dads coming home and to not have him there on Christmas and on birthdays. The worst part was seeing the pain it caused my mother. She was always so good at putting on a strong face but now that I’m looking back I truly feel for her. She was a single mother raising two kids all on her own. If that’s not a supermom I don’t know what is. I know what war does to families and I would never want that for anyone. My dads still the same man but after he came home he had a lot more stress, as does every soldier. War changes people… he’s seen a lot and only time will heal his inner wounds. One thing he always told me was: “the people that hate war the most are the people who have to fight in it.” And then I’d always think to myself “the people that hate it most are the ones who are the families.” For this reason I don’t take the concept of war lightly. I think it’s necessary to defend the country, but I don’t think soldiers should be sent out without a direct threat to the country. I feel like I get really defensive when the possibility of war is mentioned. No one understands the seriousness like I do.

**In what ways has your father’s service influenced your own life?**

My whole life, I was being told how great this country is so it’s given me a lot of patriotism. I hate it when people make negative comments about this country. Actions speak louder than words. If they’re going to complain, they should at least attempt to make a difference! My dad, along with many others, should not have fought in vain. Also, my father’s stories of the Iraq and Kosovo culture made me appreciate our own. The women aren’t allowed to leave their houses without being escorted by a male relative and to speak unless spoken to, and are prohibited from having an education. Seeing their lives has made me reflect upon the freedom of my own. It has truly made me feel grateful. I guess you can say that my dad’s service has made me realize that it doesn’t get much better than America.

**So having a veteran father has invoked a lot of patriotism within you?**

Yeah it definitely has. I grew up knowing my dad was away fighting for this country, so I definitely feel a lot of pride towards it...your dad doesn’t just go away for two years for no reason. I was raised by a man who loved this country enough to leave his wife and kids to go risk his life for it. So yes, the U.S. truly has a huge place in my heart. Bottom line, I definitely get more hyped about the American Revolution than the average kid during American history class.

Sam is among many other strong military children. They know what they’re parents have fought for, and stand by their patriotic principles. Of course war is necessary to protect our great country, but people must take into account, the harsh affect on military families. Every soldier, on both sides of the fighting lines, has a story. Each soldier is somebody’s son, daughter, husband, or wife. If we took the time to think about this before we pulled a trigger or threw a bomb, maybe violence would cease, and the world would succumb to peace.

The fate of each generation relies on the perspectives and means of action instituted within each person.

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**Families of Veterans**

Shelby Renjifo ’15

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**Veteran’s Day**

Lauriann Elise Kormylo ’14

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Our nation’s capital has some of the most poignant sites in the country: the Vietnam War Memorial, the Iwo Jima Memorial, Arlington National Cemetery, to name a few. At most memorials, monuments, and gravesites, the names of those honored by them is easily discoverable. One of the few completely anonymous memorials is the Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers, which honors an unidentified soldier from each major American war since WWI, except Vietnam.

Here are some fun facts about the Tomb of the Unknowns:

- The Tomb of the Unknowns can also be called The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, or anything else, as it has never been officially named.
- The East side of the tomb has 3 figures sculpted into it which represent Peace, Victory, and Valor.
- The North and South sides of the tomb have 3 wreaths each sculpted into them, representing the 6 major battles Americans fought in WWII.
- On the West side, facing the Memorial Amphitheater, these words are inscribed:
  HERE RESTS IN
  HONORED GLORY
  AN AMERICAN
  SOLDIER
  KNOWN BUT TO GOD

- The soldiers from WWI, WWII, Korea, and Vietnam were anonymously chosen by decorated American soldiers.
- The unknown soldier from Vietnam was identified as Air Force 1st Lieutenant Michael Joseph Blassie, and his remains were moved to St. Louis, near to his family.
- There is a documentary being made by 2 former soldiers, tentatively called The Unknowns, slated to be shown at film festivals this year.

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**The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier**
Varsity soccer claimed their fourth N.S.C.H.S.G.A.A. Championship title this October after their victory at OLMA against Holy Trinity, ending the game with a score of 3-0. For eight years in a row the team has been named Class A League Champions. JV soccer was awarded the League Sportsmanship Award after playing in the Semifinals against Molloy High School.

Varsity volleyball honored their seniors in their final home game here at Mercy. Seniors Gabriella Genua, Anna Petrucci and Tyla Swinton were recognized before the game.

Tennis A earned the N.S.C.H.S.G.A.A. A Championship title this season for the fifth time in a row after their victory over St. Anthony’s. Single’s players Cate Soccodato, Tori Courtney and Rica Coelho were victorious this season, not losing a game of the championship match. The doubles team Chrissy Falino and Izzy Lewis played a large role in the victory, winning both of their sets. Tennis B competed in the Semifinals at Nassau Country Club, finishing in third place.

The varsity swim team closed its season on November 10th with the Division Championship. Congratulations to an outstanding season and fifth place finish in the league.

The Cross Country team came to an incredible end with victories for both senior Charlotte Molloy and junior Tara Sweeney. Both girls qualified to compete in the NYSSCHSAA. Charlotte won the AA Intersectional Champion for the first time in the school’s history and Tara finished in second. Also, at the NSCHSGAA Tara Sweeney was named AA Intersectional Champion for the first time in the school’s history.

Varsity and junior varsity crew also took home numerous wins. They competed in regattas throughout the fall season. The first regatta in Kings Head was a victory of the Mercy crew team. At the Snowflake Regatta in Riverhead, varsity, junior varsity, and novice boats all placed in either first or second. Congratulations to all of the sports teams on an outstanding season for the Mustangs!

With the first quarter now over and the second quarter just starting it’s the perfect chance to revamp your study mode! Here are some helpful hints to help you manage your time and score high on tests.

Most importantly, make a study plan! Though it may seem silly, creating a layout of what you have to do and when you have to do it by is really helpful. When you are taking notes, it is not necessary to highlight every little word. If the entire page of notes is highlighted, it is too much. Furthermore, notes do not have to be an exact quote from your textbook. Just summarizing a page or a chapter will suffice. Also, never study the night before! Even if you think you are a pro at science, reviewing a few nights before hand will up your score even more. Finally, do not try to cram all of your subjects all at once. Take breaks – it can help strengthen your mind and help you retain what you learn.

Studying can be stressful. In order to successfully study, effective time management skills are necessary. These skills are incredibly important both in and out of high school. Here are some time management skills to aid in your studying and homework:

1. Stay organized. Write down all of your homework and keep all of the materials for each of your classes together.
2. Make a schedule and plan ahead. 3. Decide which assignments are most important and complete them first. For example, don’t write your entire history paper that’s due in two weeks before studying for your math quiz that is tomorrow.
4. Don’t procrastinate. Don’t try to write a paper the day before its due or cram for a test. Schedule time to do these assignments long before they are due and study over several days, not all in one night.
5. Be able to adjust. While planning out how you will do your homework, make sure you leave time at the end just in case an assignment takes longer than expected.
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Actress Amanda Bynes entered rehab in July after starting a fire in the yard of her Thousand Oaks, California neighbor. Miley Cyrus and her fiancé of over a year (and Hunger Games actor) Liam Hemsworth, broke off their engagement.

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Prince William and his wife Kate Middleton, the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge, welcomed their first child together. Their son, Prince George Alexander Louis of Cambridge, is third in line for the British throne. He was baptized into the Church of England on October 23rd at the Chapel Royal in St. James Palace. This location was chosen as a link to Prince William’s mother, Princess Diana, whose wake took place in the Chapel Royal after she passed away in 1997. Prince George has seven godparents.

The Mother Daughter Fashion Show, which took place on October 9th, was a huge success. With all of the beautiful clothes and tempting raffle baskets, it was impossible not to have a great time at this event! For the seniors, this was the last year they could attend the Fashion Show. Those who modeled had a lot to say:

“Modeling was so much fun, and it was a great experience for all of the seniors. I wish that we could do it again!”-Jessica DiBugno

“I had a great time modeling and bonding with my friends.”-Briedge Pilch

“I was so nervous to model at first, but once I got up there it was a lot of fun!”-Stefani Azzariti

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Alyssa Palumbo ’15

This Month's Celebrity Catch-Up

With Gabby Blazich ’14

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November 22, 2013 commemorated the 50th anniversary of President John Fitzgerald Kennedy’s assassination. Surprisingly, many people do not know what Kennedy actually did—only that he was Catholic, charismatic, and assassinated. But there was much more to his presidency than what one might initially think. For example, The Cold War was brewing when JFK was president. With the beginnings of the Vietnam War under way, the Korean War already fought, and events such as the Cuban Missile Crisis and the Bay of Pigs Invasion, the US was gearing up for a nuclear arms race against the Soviet Union. Although the beginnings of the Cold War would probably be attributed to Eisenhower, Kennedy’s presidency was important because it laid the groundwork for Lyndon B. Johnson’s fight with Vietnam and all of the civil rights bills passed.

On November 17, 2013, the Senior Class of 2014 visited Arlington cemetery where Kennedy, his wife, Jacqueline, and their two children who died at birth are buried. Millions of people visit the nation’s capital each year to visit this special gravesite. The eternal flame symbolizes JFK’s commitment to his presidency and how Americans commemorate his heroic actions each year. The seniors also visited the Newseum where there was a special tribute to Kennedy for the anniversary of his assassination. Numerous pictures of his family as well as stories about his life were informative in describing JFK’s personal life. JFK, the 35th President of the United States, will never be forgotten by Americans because of the enormous impact he left upon the country.

In the mid-1970s, Jackie campaigned to save Grand Central Station because she loved history.

Oleg Cassini was Jackie’s designer while her husband was president. She preferred French designers, but JFK insisted that she have an American one while he was president.

In her yearbook, Jackie wrote that her ambition was not to be a housewife. She went to an all-girls school.

Jackie was fluent in French, Spanish, and Italian.

The infamous pink suit that Jackie wore on the day that her husband was assassinated was worn by her at least six times previously. The suit has never been cleaned since and is kept in a secret location.

She smoked nearly three packs a day of cigarettes for nearly forty years.