



BECAUSE *we are* CATHOLIC

When Opportunity Knocks, This Hagerstown Man Answers

As one of seven kids growing up in an Irish-Catholic family in Bowie, Hugh Breslin had visions of being a priest. But after three years in the seminary, he decided to take a different path. The city of Hagerstown is better because of it.

"It was a great experience, I just realized that wasn't the life that I wanted to pursue," Breslin said. "It is really a calling. The folks who do that are amazingly dedicated. One of my older brothers got a masters in meteorology, joined the Air Force where he was briefing fighter pilots on weather conditions. When he was 35, he decided he didn't want that life. He is now a 68 year-old Franciscan priest and loves every minute of it."

Breslin graduated from the University of Maryland in 1977, took a job at WHAG-TV and has never left. The longtime parishioner at St. Mary's Church has been in charge of the day-to-day operations since 1986 as Vice President and General Manager at a station that launched the careers of WMAR-TV anchor Jamie Costello and WJZ-TV meteorologist Tim Williams. Last July, the station re-branded itself as WDVM-TV and expanded its operation from Western Maryland into the I-270 corridor, which includes Frederick and Montgomery Counties.

From 2013 until 2016, the station partnered with Fr. Collin Poston, who was the pastor at St. Mary's, in series called Inspire: Ask-the-Pastor. The parish used the station's digital platform to promote activities and WHAG produced monthly vignettes, featuring Poston on camera, on topics such as "What is Faith?" and "What is Mercy?"

"They were intended for a wide audience and they were really well done and well-received. I got a lot of great feedback," said Fr. Poston, now the pastor at St. Anthony Shrine and Our Lady of Mount Carmel parishes in Emmitsburg. "Because the videos were on topics of faith they are timeless and I still use

them on Twitter. People seem to be inspired by them."

"Fr. Collin saw the opportunity and was savvy and smart enough to take advantage of it as an outreach for the Church in a different way," Breslin explained. "It was a bold way to reach out and try to expand his parish and get the message out about the Catholic Church and what it means to us."

All four of Breslin's children went through St. Mary's Elementary School and three graduated from St. Maria Goretti High School. He and his wife, Alice, also hosted Derrick Davis, while he was a student at Goretti, as part of a program that tried to expand educational options for inner city students.

"Part of the arrangement was that I was treating him like a son, so he was doing chores and going to Mass," Breslin said. "He bought in. He earned a basketball scholarship to South Carolina State, got his degree and is now living in New Carrollton while raising five kids. I would not be so bold to think he thinks of us as his parents, because his parents are alive, but we hear from him on Mother's Day and Father's Day."

Breslin adheres to the Corporal Works of Mercy, a model for how to treat others and help those in need, and has served on numerous nonprofit boards during his 40 years in Hagerstown, including the Maryland Chapter of the Cystic



WHAG/WDVM-TV General Manager Hugh Breslin has made a favorable impression during his 40 years living in Hagerstown as a "good example of a Catholic man, a Catholic husband, a Catholic father."

Fibrosis Foundation, the Fletcher Foundation, Washington County's largest family foundation, and St. Maria Goretti, where he chaired the school's largest fundraiser.

"Hugh has made a big impression in the Hagerstown area," added Fr. Poston. "He is like St. Joseph with a quiet but strong faith. He is an inspiration to me. He is a very good example of a Catholic man, a Catholic husband, a Catholic father."

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MARYLAND SERVES AND ADVOCATES FOR THE POOR, VULNERABLE AND THOSE IN NEED NOT BECAUSE THEY ARE CATHOLIC, BUT BECAUSE WE ARE CATHOLIC.