



BECAUSE *we are* CATHOLIC

Award-winning anchor, Archbishop Curley grad Byron Pitts: Catholic education was his mother's best investment

January 25-31 was National Catholic Schools Week, the annual celebration of Catholic education in the United States. Schools typically observe the week with Masses, open house and other activities for students, families and parishioners. Through these events, schools focus on the value Catholic education provides to young people.

Catholic schools have been creating educational opportunities for some of the most disadvantaged students for decades. **ABC News "Nightline" co-anchor Byron Pitts** is one high-profile example.

In his memoir, *Step Out On Nothing*, Pitts described how when he was 12 years old growing in East Baltimore, he had a debilitating stutter but he overcame illiteracy at St. Katharine School and Archbishop Curley High School to become an award-winning journalist.

"Nothing about my upbringing would suggest that I would be now where I am professionally if not for a wonderful and encouraging family led by my mother and the wonderful education I got at St. Katharine's and Archbishop Curley," Pitts told the Archdiocese of Baltimore in 2009. "My mother was a single parent, a social worker. Made a modest living. She had to borrow from friends and family, and there were times when other bills went unpaid so she could pay for my tuition. But I thank God that my mother had the courage of her convictions and knew the value of a Catholic education."

Pitts, who graduated from Curley in 1978, went on to earn a degree in journalism and speech communication from Ohio Wesleyan University and has been a mainstay on network television since 1998, first at CBS News where he served as chief

national correspondent for "The CBS Evening News" and a contributor to "60 Minutes", where he earned a national Emmy Award while covering the September 11 attacks.

"All that I had, all that that I am, all that I will become is due in great part to the lessons learned at St. Katharine's and at Archbishop Curley," added Pitts. "Teachers, administrators, the maintenance people at those two places.

Those men were like fathers to me. And this was from a kid who didn't have a father for most of my life. The Franciscan priests at Archbishop Curley and the maintenance men at St. Katherine's, those men were my fathers. I like to believe they did a very good job."

Pitts is currently a member of the Archdiocese of Baltimore School Board.

"It is a tough choice that parents have to make," said an emotional Pitts in a documentary produced by the Archdiocese of Baltimore. "But if my mother was sitting beside me, she would tell you it was the best investment she ever made. Sending her son to Catholic school because it changed my life and I have been able to change other people's lives because of the education I got. For my mother, her child was drowning and so the way she could rescue me was to send me to Catholic school!"

[Pitts appears at 4:02-4:50 and 5:25-7:20 in this video.](#)



Byron Pitts

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.