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Rivier dedicates plaza at global gathering

By *TINA FORBES*
Staff Writer

As Rivier University reaches another transformation milestone with the newly completed Heritage Plaza, school officials and visiting sisters from across the globe gathered Tuesday to celebrate the university.

"The dedication of Heritage Plaza marks a pivotal point in the University's history and provides a visual statement of purpose," said Sister Paula Marie Buley,

IHM, president.

Located in the heart of campus, Heritage Plaza features a larger-than-life bronze sculpture of Anne Marie Rivier, created by Mont Vernon artist Silvia Nicolas. Anne Marie Rivier founded the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary in the late 1700s, and the sisters founded Rivier College in 1933.

"Blessed Anne Marie Rivier's sculpture, now standing at the center of campus, will serve as an enduring symbol of faith, hope and Rivier's service to all seeking higher education," Buley said.

Heritage plaza is a circular terrace of personalized, donated brick pavers and steps leading down to the campus quad. As a new focal point on campus, the plaza is a gathering space as well as a clear path through campus from Madeleine Hall, which houses the admissions and welcome center, through to the Campus Quad and Dion Center.

"The Plaza's design and construction reflects both our Catholic heritage and commitment to continuous improvement and renewal," said Buley.

The new plaza is part of the Gateway Projects initiative, which began in 2013, and has included a series of renovations, landscaping and construction projects to expand and open up the campus.

Other Gateway Projects include the Learning Commons building, completed last year, renovations to the Resurrection Chapel, changes to the campus entrance, the Sunken Garden, Madeleine Hall and the Heritage Plaza.

Presiding over the dedication ceremony of Heritage Plaza, Bishop Francis Christian of Manchester blessed the statue of Rivier Tuesday evening.

"Every single person was important to (Rivier)," he said to the crowd of sisters, visitors and city officials. "If we're going to be faithful to her legacy, that has to be true of me and you

too."

"So we honor her, certainly, by dedicating this plaza," said Christian. "But if we're really going to honor her, put into practice what she did."

Representing 14 countries, members of the International Educational Congress of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary filled the plaza for the dedication, along with city officials including Mayor Donnalee Lozeau, a Rivier alumna, and Nashua Alderman-at- Large Jim Donchess.

The international community of sisters serves in 20 countries, providing Catholic education, ministry, spiritual guidance and retreat services.

International Sisters of the Presentation of Mary group was in Nashua for the third International Congress of Education, a weeklong gathering of Catholic educators. Visitors hailed from from Brazil, Cameroon, Canada, France, Gambia, Italy, Japan, Mozambique, Peru, the Philippines, Portugal, Senegal, Spain and the U.S.

Aside from the dedication ceremony, the event includes workshops, meetings with global speakers, visits to regional educational venues and prayer.

Speakers include former Secretary General of Catholic Education Paul Malartre of France; Superintendent of Schools in the Catholic Schools Office for the Diocese of Manchester Father John Fortin, President of the Vatican Observatory Foundation Brother Guy Consolmagno and Father Marc Montminy, a Manchester diocesan priest.

See more information about the Gateway Projects at Rivier online at www.Rivier.edu/Gateway.

Tina Forbes can be reached at 594- 6402, tforbes@nashuatelegraph.com or @Telegraph_TinaF.

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