

## FEBRUARY 2007 REFLECTION

*“The Lord our God is Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and all your soul, and all your mind and all your strength.”*

These words from the Gospel of Mark remind me of the fundamental purpose of Catholic education and, thus, of OLA. This purpose is to challenge each student to a personal and active faith in God. We often stress the word active as we call our young women to live lives of service. However, I have been thinking a great deal about the fact that perhaps the most important activity we can teach our young women is reflection.

We speak often about the breakneck speed of our culture; it is truly a mad, mad, mad, mad world. Many of our parents talk about the many hats they have to juggle – parent, mentor, bread-winner, chauffeur, cook, financial manager, motivator, wisdom figure, etc. Nobody seems to have any time to just **be**. I wonder if we are communicating the values that we want to communicate to our young women. **Isn't what we really want from them is to be able to reflect on their experiences and change their behavior based on the result of that reflection?** I think imagination, creativity, insight, and wisdom come only after reflection. I think without reflection we miss some of the beauty, mystery and wonder of life. “Take time to smell the roses,” perhaps sums it up succinctly.

That leads me to the question: How do we, as parents and educators, teach reflection to our young women? I believe we teach it by modeling it in our own lives. We can't teach what we do not possess. And so the question is raised: Do I spend time regularly reflecting on my life, on God's plan for me, on the person I am and am becoming? Our young women will only take us seriously if they see us taking time from our busy schedules to reflect on life and its meaning, to listen more carefully to the faint whispers of God's will for each of us, whispers that can so easily be drowned out by activity.

Years ago, Thomas Kelly wrote: “Strained by the mad pace of life, we are further strained by an inward uneasiness because we have hints that there is a way of life vastly richer and deeper than this hurried existence.” Doesn't that statement ring true for you? It does for me.