



2024 History Essay Contest

School 5th Grade Winner

The Bishop of Baltimore

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Most people don't know that John Carroll was the first bishop in America. Because of John Carroll, we have other bishops, priests, and churches in America. Carroll was not only smart, but he started schools and educated masses of people. In his vocation, he guided the Roman Catholic Church to grow in followers. Archbishop John Carroll is significant because he helped multitudes of people to grow closer to Jesus and His Holy Church.

John Carroll was born on January 8, 1735, in Upper Marlboro, Maryland. He was the fourth of seven children and the son of a prominent Maryland family. When he was twelve years old, Carroll attended Jesuit Grammar School. At that time, he was beginning to have an interest in a vocation to the priesthood. However, he had a problem: there were no seminaries in the American colonies! Consequently, John Carroll had to travel to Europe to attend a seminary to become a priest. He journeyed to France to attend St. Omer's School, following in the footsteps of his older brother.

John Carroll joined the Society of Jesus and was ordained six years later, in Belgium in 1767. He took his final vows in 1771. During this time, Father John Carroll taught philosophy and theology at Jesuit colleges in Liege and Bruges, Belgium. However, the suppression of Jesuits by the papal brief of July 1773 moved him to seek refuge in England. Unfortunately, there was a disturbing relationship

between England and the American colonies. In response, Father Carroll returned to America in the spring of 1774. On November 6, 1789, he was appointed Bishop John Carroll, the first bishop of the United States.

Father John Carroll, who did not fight in the Revolutionary War, did help to reorganize American Roman Catholics who were no longer under the authority of the English church. In 1791, Bishop Carroll founded the Sulpician Seminary in Baltimore. He encouraged Roman Catholic Religious Orders to establish branches in the United States. With the aid of George Washington, he secured federal funds to send to missionaries for the Indians. In 1808, four new Catholic sees were started in Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Bardstown, Kentucky. Ultimately, he was made Archbishop John Carroll in 1811, and helped the Catholic Church to grow from 25,000 to 200,000 people. He went to his Eternal Rest in 1815.

During his early life and beyond, John Carroll grew in his faith and his vocation. He trusted God by building schools and helping the poor. Father Carroll increased the Catholic Church immensely. He taught many groups of people, bringing them to the Faith. He encouraged people in the United States to keep strong in their faith, and to become priests, religious, or lay followers of Christ. This is the reason why Archbishop John Carroll is one of the most important people in the history of Catholics and all Americans.

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