



■ (From left) Anthony Rein, Madison Wingerter, Bishop Felipe Estévez, Principal of Morning Star Jean Barnes and Ricardo Foster.

Morning Star High School's First Graduating Class

Morning Star's first three high school graduates received their diplomas at an inaugural commencement ceremony with Bishop Snyder High School graduates on Thursday, May 23 at the Thrasher-Horne Center.

The Class of 2019 includes Ricardo Foster, Madison Wingerter, and Anthony Rein. Ricardo hopes to attend the University of North Florida after graduation to become a special-needs teacher. Madison will attend Santa Fe College in Gainesville to study zoology, and Anthony will attend Florida State College at Jacksonville next year to become a geologist.

Morning Star is the only special education school in the Diocese of St. Augustine and one of three schools in

Jacksonville that have high school grades available for families with children with learning disabilities. Morning Star is the only one providing a Catholic education.

"The classrooms are very small, and that allows for more time with each student," said Ricardo.

Morning Star's high school program wouldn't be possible without the support from the "Building a Brighter Future" capital campaign. Now in its second year in the new Archbishop Joseph P. Hurley building, the high school is at capacity and with a wait list for next year.

"One of the things I love about Morning Star is that you never get judged, and no one makes fun of how you learn," said Madison.

Jean Barnes, principal of Morning Star School, said she is extremely proud of the graduates.

"There's almost no words to describe what it means to the faculty and staff to see these kids who have been at the school for so long finally be able to graduate from our high school," said Barnes, "We've come so far, and this is just the beginning." 🐦

