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### **HIGHLANDS SCHOOL CHOIR TAKES FIRST IN STATE TAPPS COMPETITION**

(Irving, Texas.-May 1, 2009) – On April 17th, The Highlands School choir topped nineteen other choirs in Abilene at the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS) State Vocal and Instrumental Competition and ranked first in the state for division 3A. The competition, held at the Hardin-Simmons University, ended up being a nail-biting campaign against Ovilla Christian. THS went into the competition with a potential of 525 points, and

Ovilla with a potential of 360 points. In the end, THS scored 300 and Ovilla 250. Both scores were unprecedented in previous TAPPS competitions.

Highlands choir director Karen Ward says, “Our experience was bathed in prayer and scripture - not just this week but throughout the year. If you ask the students, they will tell you it was the scriptures that guided us. On Friday morning, Elizabeth Rudolph came to me and said, ‘Maybe we could pray a rosary on the way to Hardin Simmons....I mean, it might be a good idea...I’m just saying...you know it might help.’ She ended up leading the rosary.”

The students’ participation was divided into 11 solos, 3 pop ensembles, 5 small ensembles, 2 large ensembles, and 1 sight reading. The choir won third place in the 2008 contest.

Points were distributed as follows:

Solos:	10
Pop Ensemble - girls	40
Pop Ensemble - mixed	40
Large Ensemble - boys	50
Large Ensemble - girls	100
Small Ensemble - girls	20
Small Ensemble - girls	20
Small Ensemble - girls	20

The judging was administered by college professors and was painstaking; however, two soloists, Charlotte Ward and Mary Fougrousse, were given “superior” marks. Upon hearing Mary's angelic voice, her judge suggested she attend Hardin Simmons in the future and major in music. Sophomore, Kelly Ward, recalls, “The competition was very rigorous so at the end of the day when we received first place, we were grateful that our hard work paid off!”

### **About The Highlands School**

Established in 1986, The Highlands School is a Catholic college-preparatory school. Offering grades Pre-K through 12<sup>th</sup>, the mission of The Highlands School is to provide the highest quality education and integral formation of the student as a well-rounded mature youth of character and integrity. Personalized attention from faculty, staff, and religious provides each student with the maximum opportunity for growth.

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