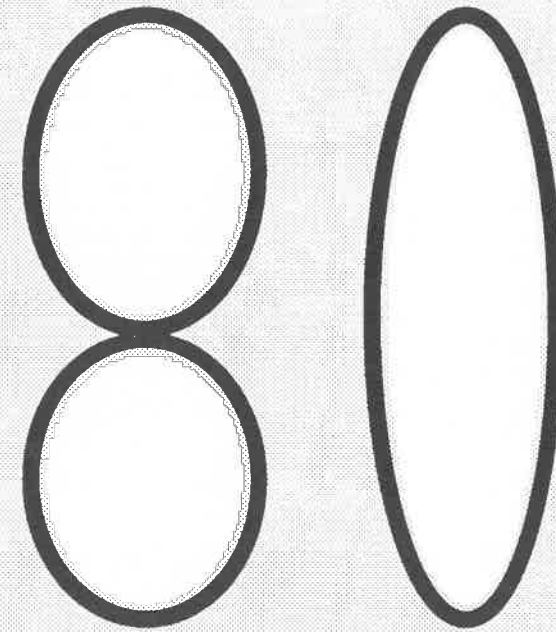


**FOR THOSE  
WHO ARE STRONG**

**A HISTORY OF ST. MARY'S SCHOOL  
IN LAWTON**

***BY SISTER ANGELINA MURPHY, CDP***





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**Dedication**

Of the 152 Sisters who have taught  
at St. Mary's from 1907-1987  
for a total of 583 working years,  
64 are still living. Of these,  
28 are in the  
Congregational Retirement Center  
in San Antonio,  
and the others are still on the  
missions.  
Proceeds from the sale of  
this book will go to the CDP  
Retirement Center.

St. Mary's School  
Lawton, Oklahoma  
1987

**80 For Those Who Are Strong**

**A History of St. Mary's School In Lawton**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

FOREWORD .....	I
PREFACE .....	II
CHAPTER 1...THE FIRST DECADE 1901 - 1910 .....	1
CHAPTER 2...THE SECOND DECADE 1910 - 1920 .....	9
CHAPTER 3...THE THIRD DECADE 1920 - 1930 .....	16
CHAPTER 4...THE FOURTH DECADE 1930 - 1940 .....	21
CHAPTER 5...THE FIFTH DECADE 1940 - 1950 .....	26
CHAPTER 6...THE SIXTH DECADE 1950 - 1960 .....	30
CHAPTER 7...THE SEVENTH DECADE 1960 - 1970 .....	34
CHAPTER 8...THE EIGHTH DECADE 1970 - 1980 .....	40
CHAPTER 9...THE NINTH DECADE 1980 - 1987.....	45
WORKS CITED .....	49
APPENDIX 1...VOCATIONS .....	50
APPENDIX 2...TEACHERS .....	52
APPENDIX 3...GRADUATES .....	57

## FOREWORD

Dear Present and Former Students, Teachers,  
Staff and Friends of St. Mary's School:

It is indeed a privilege for me to address these few words to you. I had the pleasure of teaching at St. Mary's High School for one year, 1964-1965, and it was one of my happiest years as a teacher. The school was deeply committed to quality education and the ideals that Jesus came to teach us. And, what I know about St. Mary's both prior to and since my year there confirms that it has always held and continues to hold and to promote those same Christian ideals.

In the name of the Sisters of Divine Providence, I thank Sister Angelina Murphy for this book, a work of love, scholarship and dedication. And, I thank all of those who have collaborated in the ministry of education so beautifully lived out at St. Mary's.

Gratefully in Divine Providence,  
Sister Jane Ann Slater  
Superior General  
Congregation of Divine Providence

## PREFACE

### *Seventy is the sum of our years or eighty for those who are strong. Ps. 90*

I believe Psalm 90 applies here. 1987 marks the eightieth anniversary of the establishment of St. Mary's School by Father W.P. Lamb and the Sisters of Divine Providence. Father Lamb is long gone, but his successors, along with the Sisters of Divine Providence, have continued to maintain the school.

Although the Congregation of Sisters had a number of schools in Oklahoma even before the one in Lawton, these have all been given up during the last 25 years or so except St. Mary's, whose parish council has debated the last few years whether to keep the school or not. Neither St. Mary's School nor Blessed Sacrament Parish has a printed history nor even a file of historical documents from which one can obtain historical information. If St. Mary's were to close tomorrow, the only memory of its existence would be in the minds of its former students and teachers (as long as they live) and some grade files. Few records or history would be there to commemorate it. This is my parish and school. I was born here, received the sacraments and my education here. I don't want it to be forgotten as though it had never been. There are many others who feel the same way.

Therefore I undertook the task of recording its history. With practically no records available I had to start at scratch, talking to the old parishioners, visiting the courthouse, city hall, and the Lawton Public Library. I talked to the retired and the still active Sisters who taught here, and examined the Congregational Archives.

I do not pretend that I have given the entire history. Even some of the oral history I have received may not be accurate. Though I have the school rosters from 1907-1960 (a great help), they did not all give me each year's graduates. While the student records were the greatest help in this effort to find the graduates, some of them are incomplete and some are missing. I have made heroic efforts to complete the list, but the first years are missing and

some of the last are lacking information.

In recounting the early local, state, and Church history, I consulted several books, which I have documented loosely. I have interviewed at least 100 persons for information and pictures (there are very few available). This has been an arduous task with a few rewards. I thank all those persons who have made my job easier in any way.

I am sure that the readers will find much that they never knew as well as much that they remember. They will also find many names of classmates and family members. They will see a few memorable pictures. The book is filled with names.

I want to thank J.C. Kennedy for lending me an electric typewriter and Charles Benke for lending me the initial payment when I was penniless. For taking the responsibility of financing the book, I thank St. Mary's Alumni under the leadership of Neal Goode, who is always ready to help. I also thank Suchart Poovarat for his photography. And I want especially to thank my friend, Gwen Fisher, for helping rescue my book when it floundered on the brink.

Since the history in this book ended May 3, 1987, I now need to add a short Epilogue because some things have changed since. The Epilogue will be found at the end of Chapter 9.

SPONSORS

The Haggar Foundation

Although not alumni of St. Mary's School, the J.M. Haggar family graduated from St. Joseph's High School in Dallas, where I formerly taught. Their Lawton Mfg. Co. here plus their interest in the Sisters' work with the refugee community prompted the Haggar Foundation trustees to help financially with the publication of this history.

Robert True

Geraldine and Gene Burke

June Cordes

Bob Fietz

Rose Murphy

Charley Wade Family

Eddie Cordes

Mary Louise Evans

Henrietta Stephens

Joe Richard

Max Seibold

Bill and Ann Sullivan

Neal and Dorothy Goode

Deasy Public Accountant

Jo Ann Stuever Dezelle

Bill and Louise Larson

Marvin Pittman

Genevieve and Harold Hickman

Theresia Carras

THE FIRST DECADE: 1901-1910

Lawton Is Opened to Settlers

The great day was approaching. It would happen sometime this fall. Oklahoma would be accepted as the 46th state in the Union. But for the majority of people in and around Lawton, this would not make much difference. The biggest time for them had already passed when lots had been drawn for the newly opened Comanche Indian Territory, whose county seat was Lawton, and August 6, 1901, was the opening day. Lawton was to be a "boom town, one of the greatest oil regions in the world." (Edwards)

Considered as surplus land that the government had given to the Indians, 2,033,483 acres had been purchased recently from the Indians for \$2,000,000 (less than \$1.00 per acre) to be used for white settlement. Each Indian had been given 160 acres of land, which he could choose, and the Big Pasture for their common use extended to the Red River. President William McKinley opened the white settlement August 1, 1901. (Powell)

Lots had been drawn previous to the opening. The lucky winners would be the first to select their property in the spots which they considered choicest. But all the area around the county, especially that bordering Lawton, was crowded with future settlers from far and near. Each came to make a fortune in this new rich land.

August 6, Lawton's birthday, was the greatest, most exciting, tensest day Lawton would ever know and its inhabitants would remember. Tent city sprang up that day, spread out, and never stopped.

September 5, 1901, the Rock Island train was loaded in every inch of its space with building material, furniture, machinery, and everything needed to build a city and a farming community. Gamblers' tents on GooGoo Avenue grew into houses, and boundaries were set for the city.

The west was 11th Street. The north was Grandview (so named because a perfect view of the Wichita Mountains could be obtained from there). It was later named Gore Blvd. And the south was what is now known as Lee Blvd. After five months, Lawton had a population of 10,000 with an extensive building program going on. The one railroad was not able to handle all the building equipment and material coming in, so

the people raised \$20,000 to lure a new railroad branch into Lawton. A mayor, Leslie Ross, was elected. (Edwards)

Rates at the Ragstand Hotel were \$1.00-\$1.25 a day, and the Galina Bar boldly advertised its "22-year-old whiskey" and its Anhauser beer. Within a year a system of waterworks, an electric streetcar, and a sewerage system would surely be built and in operation. City National Bank, Lawton's second, was established. Exall English's father was a pioneer banker, forerunner of Exall, who would later be president of Security National Bank and Trust (Exall enrolled in St. Mary's in 1907). There had been an Indian school near Lawton since 1871. Elementary schools were now being established in Lawton.

The Church Comes To Lawton

Rev. Isidore Recklin was the one resident priest in Comanche County in 1901. He offered Mass once a month at Ft. Sill in the Old Post Chapel. He was replaced in 1902 by Father Bader, who sometimes visited the tent dwellers in Lawton. Father Urban De Hasque, one of the early immigrant Belgian priests in Oklahoma Territory, also came to Lawton in 1902. He spent the night in a barn belonging to the Mullin family, for their house was under construction. As a representative of Bishop Theophile Meerschaert, he, a notary public, finalized the purchase from A.A. Mahaffey of lots 7 and 8 on Block 7 for the Catholic Church. This was on the corner of 7th and what is now Gore Blvd., but was still known as North Boundary or Grandview.

That year Father Zinon Stebler was assigned as first pastor of Lawton, but he remained only a short time and was replaced by Father William Hoffer in June 1902. Father Hoffer soon oversaw the building of a wooden church and a two-room rectory with an attic.

In 1905, Lawton had substituted houses for tents and begun to settle down. But the boom town gambling houses and saloons still had a prominent place among the newer business establishments, and a number of architectural wonders stood out among the more modest residences in the city.

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

### Father Lamb Becomes Permanent Pastor

It was into this milieu that Bishop Meerschaert sent the young Father Lamb as pastor in 1905. To be a Catholic in Oklahoma in the early years was no small matter. Though there were many evangelists in the vicinity and religious revivals were frequent, the Catholics were few in number and kept a low profile, for the Church of Rome was highly suspect. But Father Lamb was an extrovert, and a courageous one at that. He had been around. He came to the seminary from the prizefighting ring. Boxing in those days was not quite what it is today. While the Queensberry method of using gloves was the legal form of boxing, in many places the "bareknuckle" method was still employed among gamblers and was considered low-class because it was more violent and risky.

This is what Lamb came from. Although Father told his friends, the Wiests, he did not publicize the fact that this had been his favorite sport as it might have scandalized his critics. But he did not make any effort to conceal the fact that he was a motorcyclist, and his motorcycle excursions raised some eyebrows even among his parishioners. Another aberration that came to their attention as time went on was his love of the movies. But, as he explained to his friends, he had no wife to go home to. If he read either of the two newspapers, THE DAILY DEMOCRAT or THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION (and he probably read both), he learned a great deal about his locality. Moving pictures and illustrated songs could be enjoyed at the Nickle-Odeon for \$0.5. The Opera House was offering "Home, Sweet Home," a vaudeville act. And page one of the newspapers recounted almost daily conversions at one or another revival.



Bishop Meerschaert

### Lamb Proposes A Parish School

After Ignatius Jean, OSB, came as Prefect Apostolic of the Indian Territory in 1886, he said in his sermon prior to "the Run":

"Always remember ... God has in special abomination in this country three sins ... The first is trampling underfoot the sacred laws of matrimony. The second is the Godless education of children, preparing a generation of men without religion, without faith, without conscience; a generation of men entirely deprived of the first ideas of right, of justice, of virtue, and of honesty. Then the barbarous removal of the first inhabitants of this country."

Blessed Sacrament Parish, like most Oklahoma parishes, was new, small, and struggling. A school meant qualified, teaching Sisters, who would teach for \$25.00 a month, if that amount could be found. Father Lamb, however, did not intend that his parishioners would fall under the second sin the Prefect had mentioned: "the Godless education of children."

His parishioners supported his extraordinary project of opening a parish school. Seven Oklahoma pastors had discovered a rapidly growing and well-educated group of teaching Sisters in San Antonio, Texas. Since the network among the pastors and bishops in Oklahoma and Texas was active (Oklahoma was under the archdiocesan jurisdiction of San Antonio), word spread fast about how to obtain teachers. They were the Sisters of Divine Providence, whose superior, Mother Florence Walter, was not only mission-minded but was also extremely generous in helping finance the schools she staffed.

Just as is in Louisiana, where she had sent Sisters to teach the blacks, she thought of Oklahoma in terms of Indian children. Most of the schools she had already opened in Oklahoma had a heavy concentration of Indians. But Bishop Meerschaert, an indefatigable Belgian missionary, persuaded her that the white population was in as great need as the Indians. His Oklahoma diocese, as he found it, was six times as large as his native Belgium, with three diocesan priests and 23 Benedictine monks who had tried to minister to the entire population.

There were already eight schools staffed by the Sisters of Divine Providence in Oklahoma: Perry, 1900; Ponca City, 1901, Antlers, 1902; Tulsa, 1903; Vinita, 1903; Enid, 1904; Quapaw, 1904; El Reno, 1906. The pastors in

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

these places were very proud of their schools, where, it seemed, there was nothing the Sisters could not do. In Antlers and Quapaw, they could even take the Indian students and teach them to plant crops and tend livestock. Father Lamb, with the approval of the Bishop, rushed off a letter to Mother Florence in San Antonio in March 1907, asking for Sisters for the coming year. By March 28, he had his reply:

Rev. and dear Father:

Your kind letter of the 23rd instant was duly received. We are ready to believe that the work of conducting a purely parochial school would be more than you could conveniently do; and we are willing to take up the school on the same plan as that of the other schools in Oklahoma and Texas, namely: that the pupils be charged according to grade, and the collecting left entirely to the Sisters. It is my opinion that it will be several years before regular parochial schools can successfully be conducted in the South, for the reason that Catholic schools are attended as well by non-Catholics, who contribute widely to their support.

The only expense for you, Rev. Father, will be the putting up of a building and the furnishing of classrooms. The Congregation will furnish the private apartments of the Sisters, and also the piano. Five Sisters will be sent, three teachers, one music teacher, and one for the household.

Wishing you the joys and graces of this glorious Easter,

I remain,

Respectfully yours,

Mother Mary Florence

Meanwhile Bishop Meerschaert had purchased Lot 6 for the parish January 11, 1906, from Mr. and Mrs. James Johnson for \$1,200 and Lot 5 January 9, 1907, for \$900 from Mr. and Mrs. Charles Morrison. This gave the school plenty of playground space and possibilities for future expansion. Early students remember the large spacious playground. The entire block would one day be for the Church and school, some lots as a result of Urban Renewal and as late as 1973.

Mother Florence had definitely stated that three teaching sisters would come. There was no mention of high school or commercial classes. But Father Lamb visited the schools in



Father W.P. Lamb

Perry, El Reno, and Enid and saw high schools which included commercial classes and choral in progress. So, with this in mind for his school, he began his article for THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION and THE DAILY DEMOCRAT and he looked about for a schoolhouse. He found a long wooden structure consisting of three rooms, and a smaller one-room building, which he had moved to 7th and Grandview behind the Church. The single-room building faced Grandview. The long building was south of the first one, joining it by means of some carpenter work and a door, making it all one building. Both buildings were set on cement blocks. Because the north part of the ground was lower than the south, the front part sat on higher blocks while the south side was nearly ground-level. There was a wood or coal stove in each room. These failed to heat it adequately in the winter. This building has been sketched out by Ham, Gallie, and Juanita Wiest, who were there from the beginning.

Mother Florence had said that she would provide the residence for the Sisters, so Father did not bother about that. There had been a two-room house on the grounds, but he sold that to Joe and Minnie Gilsinger, who moved it a block and a half north on 7th Street. The Gilsingers, like many pioneers, came from unusual situations. Minnie's father was of royal blood. He was the son of Queen Victoria but was disinherited for marrying a commoner. He sought his livelihood and lifestyle in America, but he died young as a result of a tooth extraction because he was a hemophiliac. Father asked the Gilsingers whether the Sisters could stay with them until their residence was ready. Although they assented, they were to question the wisdom of their decision later, as the house building went on for weeks.

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

Father Lamb's carefully worded article appeared in the daily papers in August:

Among the good things that are coming to Lawton is another institution of learning. On the 22nd of this month five Sisters of the Order of the Divine Providence will leave San Antonio on their way to this city. These Sisters are coming to make Lawton their future field of labor and will be an addition to which all who are interested in education will be justly proud. The teaching corps is affiliated with the State University of Texas, which bespeaks their fitness for the great work they are about to begin in Lawton.

Sept. 2 will mark the opening of the parochial school, which will be the first of its kind conducted in this part of the country.

To Father Lamb, the pastor of the fast-growing congregation, is due the credit of this institution and its zealous and untiring efforts to have made it possible for Lawton to enjoy, at this time, a school of so thorough a course of study.

Everything conducive to the welfare of the people has been looked after, and when the school throws open its doors to the public, it will be one of the most modern institutions in the country.

The grounds are large and well-adapted for the amusement and recreation of the children.

Near the school building is a large new storm cave with concrete floor and solid brick walls ready to receive the pupils in time of danger.

The Sisters were wisely selected by the superior, and those who come here will be especially qualified for the work assigned them.

A further mark of the qualification of the Sisters who are to have charge of the teaching is that each has a diploma from the State Normal of Texas, which they received by passing the examination. The school will be open to non-Catholics as well as Catholics, and nothing will be absent.

Who could resist such a temptation for their children!

## Sisters Are Chosen To Come

Back in San Antonio at Our Lady of the Lake Convent, Mother Florence examined her roster of Sisters for the Lawton school. Sister Gertrude Ehrismann, who had come to America from Alsace in 1883, had, like the other young Sisters, already been stationed briefly in nine missions, the most traumatic of which had been Galveston, Texas, where she survived in 1900 the great flood where 6,000 people were drowned. She had not been in Oklahoma, but Mother Florence felt that she would be a good pioneer for the new school in a location somewhat prejudiced against Catholics. So the superior would be Sister Gertrude. She was 46 years old.

Sister Mary Paul, a native Texan, was 27 years old with three mission experiences, none in Oklahoma, to her credit. Sister was small, jolly of disposition, and energetic. She would complement Sister Gertrude very well.

The youngest of the group was Sister Armella Sutton, from County Carlow, Ireland. Although she had been briefly in five missions, four in Texas and one in Louisiana, she was only 25 years old and annually professed.

Although there was no residence yet for the Sisters and no music room, Mother sent the music teacher and the housekeeper anyway, knowing that they would be busy with the new building and the preparation and care of the school. Sister Henrietta could also help with the classes. Sister Stephen Wicke from Viegendorf, Schlesien, Germany, like the others, had some missionary experience in small Texas towns. She was 30 years old and a housekeeper. She was to stay in Lawton longer than any of the other four. Sister Henrietta Ostermann was from Windthorst, Texas. She had been on four missions, including Vinita, Oklahoma, and was 26 years old.

The five Sisters boarded the Rock Island train in San Antonio August 22, and arrived in Oklahoma City the next morning. There they switched to the Santa Fe and arrived in Lawton the same day. They had been fortified with house plans and an abundance of information on how to open the school and furnish their apartment. But they dreaded the coming weeks, for the operation of the entire school would be in their hands, and they had not experienced anything quite like this before. Mother Florence, they felt, had great trust in them and they must not fail. Father Lamb, with one of the parishioners, met them at the depot in Lawton and took them to the school

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

before depositing them at the Gilsingers' house, where their hosts were awed by the hooded figures, who were to live and eat there for several weeks, crowded into close quarters.

Father Lamb kept the ad in the paper all through September, for some pupils would still be coming to register after the cotton was picked in October or November. The ad ran thus:

Catholic parochial school conducted by the Sisters of Divine Providence of San Antonio, Texas, under the supervision of Rev. W.P. Lamb, will open Sept. 2, 1907. Kindergarten, primary, elementary, and high school courses will be taught, and in connection with them stenography, typewriting, and instrumental music. Terms: For tuition per month in advance, from \$1.00 in the primary grades to \$3.00 in the high school department. Applicants will be examined and graded thereby. Monthly and semi-annual examinations will determine advancement to higher grades.

## Lawton Has Grown by 1907

In the few days the Sisters had been able to get their bearings before school started, they took stock of their surroundings. Father brought them the newspapers. They learned that Thomas P. Gore was running for the U.S. Senate and would probably be ready to move in as soon as Oklahoma was declared a state. How a blind man could be a senator was a mystery to them, but they heard that his oratory was powerful and that he had already accomplished outstanding projects. Also headlines appearing in the pages stirred up patriotism in the people and pride in the Territory which was to be admitted to statehood very soon. But in many ways Lawton was still struggling with boom town tendencies as indicated by glaring headlines: "Cocaine Victim Dies In Cell, a Ready Student of Dope Habits." Already people did not know how to say "No" to drugs. Also "Lynching Party Overpowers Officers and Hangs Assassin" (black). But there were many conversion stories, too. Jobs were advertised for \$100 per month. This seemed to the Sisters to be a fabulous salary. Their income, squeezed out in minute particles, would come from tuition from their pupils, music lessons when the place was available to give them, and boarders who would soon come. From all this income they would run the school. This was an established pattern in the schools that the Sisters operated. Thomas Gore, in his attempt to

win friends and influence people, was rumored to "have gotten giddy on too much spring water," and the famous Geronimo was said to be attending a "stomp dance" in the locality. Schools were in progress of being constructed and staffed for the 3,000 schoolchildren in Comanche County.

The Baptists, very strong in Lawton as in all Oklahoma, were planning a Baptist University, which they would support. This proved to be an over-ambitious project which hardly got off the ground before it came to a close.

President Theodore Roosevelt from 1901-1909 taking a critical look at the obstreperous potential new state, apparently read the spicy articles in Lawton publications, and it was reported that "what he thinks of THE CONSTITUTION is not fit to print." In the meantime, "The Lawtonians" played their first ball game, and the cannons boomed away on the Old Post Range.

## School Finally Opens

School opened September 2 with some 60 pupils in attendance. Fortunately for the Sisters, there were no high school students the first year. If the small enrollment was a disappointment, at least it gave the Sisters the opportunity to offer individual attention and build up confidence in their system. Besides, the Sisters' residence was being put together just south of the school. The hauling, shouting, and hammering were constant disturbances to both students and teachers. But the Sisters were eager to have their own residence. Outdoor toilets had been constructed near the alley, as was done throughout Lawton, and water was hauled to the school in barrels. The early prediction of running water, sewerage disposal, and electric streetcars within a year, had not materialized and did not until Mayor Jones achieved this feat (minus the streetcar) in early 1908.

Lawton was an agricultural community, and cotton was king from the beginning. Since roads and transportation were slow and laborious, the pioneer farmers raised their own food, and the "factory was the home on the grass-covered prairie." In other words, they came to town only on rare occasions and were self-supporting. This affected both school and Church attendance.

School proceeded normally under the circumstances. Some parents came to inquire whether their daughters could board there as the



## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

distance was too great to attend school otherwise. The Sisters promised that when the house was ready, they could take boarders. In the city there was not much problem getting to school.

At first the Sisters were alarmed at frequent gunshots. But they soon learned that this was a false alarm. If a fire broke out, one shot was fired in the air. The first driver to reach the fire was given \$5.00. Barrels of water were left near the houses for just such emergencies. This was also true at the school.

Finally the Sisters' house was finished, at least, finished enough to move into. The first school and convent were variously described by different students who were in school the first years, so it is difficult to obtain an accurate picture. However, all agree that the front classroom - on cement blocks, with two steps leading into it - was the primary room. Behind it were two or three classrooms where the rest of the pupils were taught. Behind these rooms were the Sisters' quarters, which consisted of two or three rooms with one or two doors giving access to the classrooms. Here the five Sisters slept, did their cooking and class preparation and kept a few boarders. The piano was either in one of these rooms or in one of the classrooms, probably in the former. Here Sister Henrietta gave her music lessons during the school hours when she was not actually teaching in the classrooms. Usually each Sister taught the singing in her own classroom, unless Sister Henrietta was free. If there was a special occasion, the music teacher took all the pupils for singing.

### The Wiests Remember

Callie and Juanita Wiest, who entered the school in its very first year and remember, have given some details and described the school and Sisters as they remember them. Juanita remembers Sister Mary Paul as the teacher of the middle grades. She dearly loved the kind, cheerful young Sister, who was an inspiration to her at the time and whom she has continued to idolize. When she recalls the Sisters, it is always Sister Mary Paul she thinks of and holds in her mind as the perfect nun. But alas, Sister Mary Paul stayed in Lawton only two years, and her successor could never come up to her image. Juanita, Callie, and Harry all remember Sister Gertrude, who would tolerate no nonsense. Frank Wiest was in her room, but the room was not large enough for them both, so Frank went back to the public school where he had started. Sister Gertrude had a long strap which she held behind

her back when it was time for discipline. She operated the instrument from the front somehow so that it rose behind her like a tail, came over her head, and descended in the exact spot she had mapped out. This process was so fascinating to the boys that they provoked her purposely in order to rewitness the phenomenon.

The Landoll family moved to Lawton in time to enter the new St. Mary's School. Of this large family, Rupert and Leo had already entered the seminary to become priests of the Order of the Precious Blood and two girls, Eloise and Celestine, had entered the Congregation of the Precious Blood as Sisters. Urban would also enter the Precious Blood Order and become a priest after his graduation in 1917. Other members of the Landoll family kept attending school and graduating from it, and they have continued in St. Mary's to this very day.

By this time the school enrollment had inched up to 75 for the cotton was all picked. A few girls were brought by their parents to board with the Sisters. If the Sisters often wondered where they would get the money for coal for the stoves and kerosene for the lamps, they were not alone. The public schools had much the same problem. So it was a common practice for the schools to sell tickets for programs and speeches. The Sisters also had "special lunch days," candy sales, and anything which would bring in a few nickles.

### Oklahoma Becomes a 'Dry' State

September 17, 1907, was the day that Oklahoma and Indian Territory would be admitted as a state, if the people approved. While the admission to statehood would be an accomplishment, especially since President Theodore Roosevelt was not in favor of it, what would be far more important would be the decision of the people whether it would be admitted "Wet" or "Dry." There were very strong feelings on both sides. The Enabling Act had specified that liquor was not to be sold on Indian Territory. Now some wanted a divided law-



Mother Florence

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

dry for the Indian Territory and wet for the rest. But it was evident that that would not work, for the Territories would be admitted as one state.

The Women's Christian Temperance Movement and the Anti-Saloon League had been at work for years and had a tremendous following. William H. Murray had bargained with the League that if they would storm the White House with petitions for statehood, he would support prohibition. The petition for statehood was granted, and Murray did support prohibition. (Franklin) In his campaign for governor, Charles N. Haskell also pledged to support prohibition, and in his Inaugural Address November 16, he made dry hearts glad by concluding:

And I hope that tomorrow's sun rises and forever thereafter, as long as this law shall be the will of the people, that there will be no one within our borders disposed to violate (it), because that violation is bound to meet with punishment presented in our law.

By midnight, November 16, because the "wets" knew it was their last day of freedom, there were drunken mobs all over the state. However, as morning came, "pandemonium finally staggered to an end and it appeared there would be peace in the new state." (Franklin 20) Oklahoma was the only state in the Union that was accepted along with prohibition. But from the first day, prohibition was a problem, in fact, many problems. Whiskey stills were soon built out in the country, and probably in town, where bootleggers grew rich on tax-free booze. Periodically raids were made, equipment was destroyed, and vats emptied, but within a few days or weeks new stills were set up in new places. Whiskey was never so delicious and satisfying as that drunk during prohibition. And perhaps more men who grew up on bootleg whiskey grew up alcohol-addicted than in any other period in Oklahoma. Between 1908-1910, more than 9,000 cases of illicit sales of liquor in 15 counties, including Comanche, cost the counties \$231,000, and still the efforts were not effective. (Franklin)

At first there was no problem to obtain Mass wine. There was some on hand, but when the state made it illegal to import wine, it became very difficult. The government did have liquor dispensaries where wine could be purchased for certain purposes, but the Church was not willing to buy altar wine in this way, nor the government to sell it. Father Urban De



The Gilsinger House, 207 7th St., where the Sisters first stayed.

Hasque and other priests fought for the right to purchase altar wine from established altar wineries. After a "Bone Dry" period they finally won their appeal.

### The Sisters Rotate Missions

Sister Gertrude left Lawton after three years; Sister St. Stanislaus came as superior and stayed two years. Sisters Mary Paul and Armella stayed two years, and Sister Henrietta only one. Sisters Anselm, Virginia, Cornelia, and Stella (who is still fondly remembered) replaced them in 1909. Sister Stella was the longest living of the first Sisters in Lawton. She died in 1986 at the age of 97. By 1909, the enrollment was up to 118 and high school was fairly well begun, so well, in fact, that in the summer Father Lamb wrote to Mother Florence: "The school is doing fine. Please send us another Sister, or we will have to close the high school." In 1911, there were six Sisters, including Sister Amanda, the music teacher, who spent nine years at St. Mary's at three different times. The music department was growing rapidly.

Some of the family names which appeared



## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

on the St. Mary's roster during the first decade and continued for years to come are, in 1907, the Meis Family. Emil Meis was there again in 1921-23, and Ferdinand (Father Ferdinand later) moved away before he had a chance to enter. The Rohenkohls appeared early and lasted long. English, Sherry, Schram, Noret, LeBarre, Sagel, Hamon, Whaley, Gwinn, Grant, Grabb, besides the ones already mentioned, often appear on the rosters.

And thus the first decade closed out with a thriving city, an established Church, six adjoining lots of land to build on, a permanent pastor, a set of buildings which were poor but adequate, a solid congregation of teaching Sisters, a school well begun, and the respect of the city people. Life was hard, but the people were happy and optimistic about the future.

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

### CHAPTER 2

#### THE SECOND DECADE: 1910-1920

##### Why Have a Catholic School?

Why, the Lawton residents may have asked, did the Catholic Church go to so much trouble and expense to build and maintain its own school when there were public schools in Lawton? Did the Catholics want to set themselves apart? Show their superiority? Manifest disapproval of the public school system? How did this affect the relationships and job opportunities? Was it worth what it demanded in monetary and human efforts?

In 1884, the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, considering the overwhelmingly Protestant population of the nation, had a legitimate fear that the Catholic minority would not have opportunity to know their own faith. The laity at that time were not highly enough educated, as a rule, that they could teach their children the rather difficult and demanding doctrine of the Church, and they did not have time to do this anyway because they were hard-working immigrants, in great part. So the Church requested that each parish have a school, if possible, where the children could be taught their Catholic doctrine along with the regular subjects taught in all schools. The parochial schools were to, and did, teach not only dogma but practice as well. Here children had a chance to know others with whom they could communicate as complete persons about ideal, moral and spiritual values, and ethical behavior, as well as secular subjects and interests.

Lawton, like many Oklahoma localities, was bigoted; and it demanded intestinal fortitude to be and remain Catholic. It was not uncommon, especially in the rural areas where the Ku Klux Klan were very strongly oppressing Catholics and blacks and where even the ordinary people who were neighbors to Catholics and sometimes highly evangelistic in their own sects, physically harrassed the Catholic children. Children harrassing children might cause a strengthening of faith and an independence, but more often it can intimidate those who are the only "different" ones in the group. The Murphy family experienced this almost daily in their return home from school with a group of children. "Catlickers!" they heard shouted in derision. "Why can't you go to our Church?" "Do

you think you are better?" "Why do you call your minister 'Father' when the Bible says you should not call anybody but God 'father'?" "Why does your service not use English?" These questions indeed stimulated thought, and as a group the Murphys were able to stick together and cope. But occasionally there was rock-throwing and rougher language, which became very uncomfortable, if not actually dangerous.

The Catholic school was to teach prayer, meditation, charity, sacrifice, compassion, forgiveness, and understanding; and it was to give students opportunity to practice these virtues, for it is by practice, by doing, that one learns. So there were Sodalties, ransoming of pagan babies in China, religious processions, retreats, rosaries, and daily Mass. There were choirs and dramatic plays and other programs with moral themes. There were literary clubs, and compositions, and poetry writing. And there were science projects.

The Sisters of Divine Providence were a large, fast-growing order, who had begun in America with a few German Sisters in 1866 for the teaching of immigrants in the country places. But after a few years, young women from the southern part of the United States - Texas, Louisiana, and Oklahoma - joined them. Others continued to come from Europe and Ireland "to teach the natives." These Sisters soon organized an educational system whereby they could become certified to teach, and finally they built a college of their own in San Antonio, Texas. After the 1900s, they became known as highly educated and professionally trained in all school subjects and school administration, as well as their faith.

These Sisters were in great demand, not only by immigrant communities but even by the most progressive city parishes. People in general, the public, were beginning to change their attitudes about Catholics as being foreign-ruled by the Pope in Rome and therefore perhaps dangerous to America to being good Americans who were also healthy contributors to American life.

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

The Sisters of Divine Providence, dedicated to poverty, simplicity, charity, and abandonment, like other religious communities, were able to offer their services to needy parishes at almost no cost to the parish, as the Sisters in Lawton did. Very often it was the music lessons, very much in demand at that time, which actually kept them above subsistence level. When the parish could pay a salary, it was standard practice for many years to pay a Sister \$25 a month. And the salary has remained in many places in the same proportion to that of the laity up to our own day.

### There Is Prejudice

Francis Heinz, who enrolled with his sisters, Lucille and Kathleen, in 1911 and continued there until 1919, remembers Sisters Hyacinth, Stella, and Mark. He recalls the school presenting a Christmas program in the Opera House, which was on the second floor of what was later the A and B Drug Store. The next year the program was in the Metropolitan Theater, and all the children were in it. The toilets, as mentioned above, were outside. Concerning this subject, Heinz said, "One day everybody had to stay in late after school because somebody wrote on the walls. I don't think they ever found out the culprit."

The Heinzes experienced what so many Catholics of those days remember. Recently Heinz wrote in his autobiography that his family members came to school either in the milk wagon or some other conveyance arranged by his father. At one time they came with some Baptist drivers, who did not approve of their choice of a school, and they gave "facts" to back up their objections: The nuns were mistresses of the priests, and they had lime vats in the convent where they buried their babies. They told them, moreover, that Catholics worship Mary, and the Pope carries the mark of the beast.

Heinz told them that he had been in school a long time, as had his sisters, and they had been all through the Sisters' house and had never seen anything like lime vats or anything else they talked about. He also told them that he prayed at school, and nobody worshipped Mary. They respected her as Christ's mother and prayed to her as an intercessor who was close to Jesus. After he had obtained permission from his father, he became a member of the Catholic

Church and was duly baptised. His friends encouraged him to leave the Church. But this only spurred him on to do research and make a deeper study of the Church and her doctrine. His research has continued to this day, and so has his faith. His children later attended and graduated from St. Mary's High School.

### High School Has Competition

School progressed as usual. There were always a few high school students, who were kept to a strict academic schedule and did, perhaps, more independent study than is done in a large high school. It is true that some students, after having completed the eighth grade, switched to public school. They were often looking for larger classes, more activities, better equipment, and more subject variety. They sometimes found the subjects easier and the distractions more numerous there. Some said that they had already taken the more difficult subjects at St. Mary's and were bored with classes. But they were able to become more involved in athletics and social life. This practice of shifting to the public school kept the St. Mary's graduating class numerically at a minimum. Even the graduation class in the public school in 1910 was thirteen.

THE FAMILY CIRCULAR, the Sisters' Congregational newsletter, reported about Lawton in its issues during 1910-1914: (1910) "Visiting Dominican priests said the Sisters of Divine Providence are 'Pets of the Right Reverend Bishop'." It also announced that a school entertainment netted \$75.00, which paid for the coal for the winter, and the reporter added in one issue, "We enjoy the finest system of ventilation here. No need to open windows."

In 1914, THE FAMILY CIRCULAR gave the news that "An addition to the Academy consisting of two dining rooms (one for the boarders and one for the Sisters) and a kitchen were moved in behind the school near the alley. The former kitchen has been turned into a music room. Our cottage had been greatly improved, including the boarders' dormitory and the kitchen."

### Comfort Is Slight

When Sister Mark came to St. Mary's the first time in 1914, she described the high school thus:

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

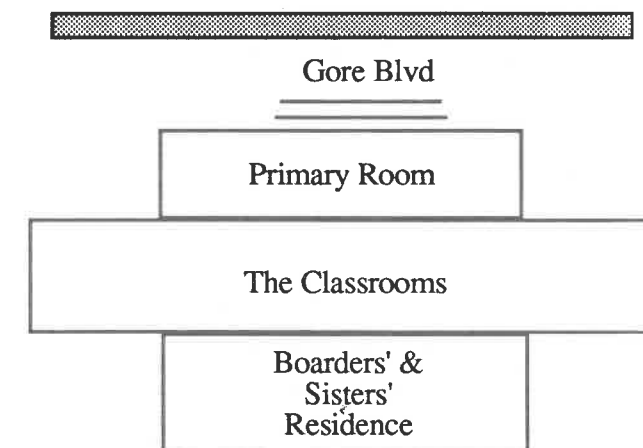
Our first high school room accommodated eight pupils. The door leading to the outside was made of cracker boxes equipped with leather hinges. The entire school was on the same style, very convenient with no steps to climb. Even the calves could enter at ease, as one really did, never stopping until it reached the teacher's desk. We were glad to count 80 pupils and seven music pupils in those days.

Sister Mark was mistaken in the enrollment. The roster listed 105 students for that year. Besides Sister Mark, superior, who was often ill, the other teachers were Sisters Incarnata, Hugo, Kostka, and Oliva, the music teacher. Sister Mark describes in her memoirs the Sisters' residence also:

We were protected from the rain by placing umbrellas over us while we were in bed. Many times during the winter we were snowbound. A heavy snowfall covering our blankets greeted us at 5:00 a.m. The next spring we became heirs to a beautiful building valued at \$1.00 but costing \$11.00 to move. This was placed by the alley, about 20 feet from the school and served as a kitchen and dining room for the Sisters and boarders. We called it "Paradise." During a scarcity of coal we were obliged to sit up at night, wrap ourselves in our coats and blankets and keep hot bricks under our feet. We dozed off to dream of better days. On awakening we found the bricks cold, the blankets had slipped off, and our dreams were shattered.

Perhaps the inconveniences and cold weather had something to do with Sister Mark's poor health, for she stayed only one year. She had, however, gotten along very well with Father Lamb, and she liked Lawton. She was to return to better days.

During this second decade some families enrolled in the school for the first time and continued to come even through several generations, as names on the roster show. Some of these were the Stuever line, the Seibolds, the



The first school and Sisters' Residence

Calaways, the Morrises, the Bertrams, the Feitzes, the Landers, the LeBarres, the Sherrys, the Barbers, the Andersons, the Pokorneys, the Ybarras, the McHenryrs, the Hixons, Dunns, Grosses, Jones, Timmons and Spences. Edward Clark entered in 1912 and graduated in 1921.

### Changes Continue

By 1914, a number of changes had been made in Lawton. North Boundary, or Grandview, was no longer either, as buildings had been erected as far out as Ferris Ave. Since Senator P.T. Gore had been making a name for himself and Oklahoma, as the daily paper proclaimed, the Lawton City Planning Board voted in April 1910, to rename the street "Gore Boulevard." Moreover, the city voted in 1914 to spend \$38,845 on a new sewer system, which would replace the storm sewer that ran from the Railroad to 11th Street along Gore Blvd. In the meantime, Mr. Shepler had bought up and consolidated the two Lawton papers and called the new paper, THE CONSTITUTION-DEMOCRAT, for a time.

Since many of the Sisters were German and had come from Germany, Mother Florence saw that there might be trouble with feelings arising against the Germans on account of the War. Therefore she strongly urged all the Sisters who did not have their American citizenship papers to proceed at the greatest possible speed to



## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

obtain them and to learn to speak English without an accent if possible. She continued this effort throughout the war, and many Sisters were silent about their nationality and their fatherland for several years.

### World War I Looms

It was now the beginning of World War I. With times looking serious for all countries, including America, the government improved the military bases. It invested one million dollars to build up and modernize the Old Post, which was renamed Ft. Sill. 11th Street was paved and became Ft. Sill Boulevard north from Gore. An artillery school was set up at Ft. Sill and Army personnel moved into the Post and into Lawton in large numbers, some enrolling their children at St. Mary's. From this time on there were always Army children at St. Mary's, and the school was wall-to-wall children, crowded with 125 elementary and high school students, with four classroom teachers and a music teacher, Sister Oliva.

From 1914 to 1918, all of America was concerned with the war in Europe. Lawton, more than the majority of U.S. cities, was close to the escalating preparations because of its proximity to Ft. Sill, where action was very obvious. The daily paper's front headlines kept people in the know: "Strong French Fortress Falls," "Nine Miles of Dead and Wounded," "Germans Blow Up Japs," "England Is Preparing," "Pigs Started European War," "Turks Fire on U.S. Flag," and "To Drag America Into the War, Says British Admiral." Much as President Wilson tried to keep the U.S. out of the war, it became inevitable.

Meanwhile there was also another war going on; the Revolution in Mexico, beginning in 1910, appeared daily in the newspaper headlines. In 1910, Francisco Madero led a revolt against Diaz and eventually overthrew him, but Madero was killed in 1913 by General Victoriano Huerta, who seized power. Venustiano Carranza, through U.S. support, occupied Mexico City, and Huerta fled. Carranza became powerful in Mexico. Headlines were shouting, "Huerta Expects To Fight U.S." "Carranza Takes Charge In Mexico."

In 1917, Germany invited Mexico to join in declaring war on the U.S. In return Germany promised that Mexico would get back all the land

lost in the Mexican War. This was one of the reasons that President Wilson declared war on Germany, April 6, 1917, saying, "The world must be made safe for democracy."

During this war the U.S. inducted 2,800,000 men, making the Army 4,800,000 strong, and many of these men were trained at the new artillery school at Ft. Sill. There were constant reminders of this training by the booming of cannons and occasional airplane flights overhead. Posters of Uncle Sam pointing ahead announced, "I want you", and everywhere America was urged to buy Savings Bonds.

### Life Goes on at Home

Sister Alexandrine had this to say in her memoirs in 1917:

The Sisters lived in a little white building which they called "The Cold Storage." It was an old building; I failed to understand how the people could send their children to such a room during cold winter. They came notwithstanding the inconvenience. We had a nice class and were happy as if living in a mansion.

Geraldine (Carlin) Gasser lived next to the school. There was no driveway east of the school as there is now until the Carlins sold their property to the Church in 1938. The only entrance was the one between the Church and the school. Besides Carlin's house, there were three other houses on the north side of the block, belonging to Brerton, Whalin, and Mitchell. Geraldine became the "Sisters' little girl," following them around, playing with the boarders, walking to town with the Sisters. The people often brought food and groceries for the Sisters. Geraldine recalls one or more times when someone brought chicken, ready to serve. Since there was no refrigeration, it had to be eaten immediately. But it was Friday, and Catholics did not eat meat on Friday. So the Sisters gave it to Geraldine to take home, as her parents were not Catholics. Moyer Carlin, who had been excluded from baptism on a technicality,

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

taunted Geraldine that he could eat her chicken because she could not eat any.

Clarence Scott, who was later County Superintendent for many years and is now retired, recalls how in his nomadic life he sometimes attended St. Mary's School, along with his brother Tom and his sister Loretta. The boys used to stay in Father Lamb's attic along with other boys who came in to prepare for First Communion or to attend school. Frank and Emma Milka also boarded for awhile, Emma with the Sisters and Frank in Father's attic. Scott has now been out of the superintendent's office for 17 years. He used to visit and report on 130 county schools. Now there are only nine. His wife taught at St. Mary's for several years.

Eunice (Clark) Coody, who boarded with the Sisters, gave a brief description of life as a boarder. The number of boarders was irregular because some children came only for a short period of time while they prepared for the sacraments and then went back to their country schools. If the dormitory became too crowded, some children would pull their mattresses into the adjoining classroom and sleep there. She recalls eating in the alley kitchen, "Paradise." She enjoyed boarding and attending St. Mary's school, but her education was far too short. She was later to serve the school in another capacity, cooking in the cafeteria.

### A New School Is Planned

Now Father Lamb knew that the little school would have to go, and a new modern red brick school, which would include a Sisters' residence, must be built. He had not spent much money to put up the school in the first place and none on the Sisters' house. The Sisters had done an unbelievable job with the little they had, and he felt guilty. Besides, the enrollment was getting out of hand. They simply could not take any more pupils, and when he looked at the school, he wondered why any parents would send their children there at all. So he consulted some of his parishioners who he believed could help him accomplish this miracle. He put John Kennedy in charge of getting the materials, and he asked Albert Landoll to make the plan for the school and obtain other help in building it. He approached his longtime friends for contributions to the \$20,000 project. Everything went well. Kennedy took his son,

J.C., in his search for materials. They went to Mangum, Oklahoma, to the Mangum Brick Company. Here J.C. says he was impressed at his father's presentation of the project. As a result, Mangum Brick Company donated all the bricks needed to build the school. Landoll, the best carpenter and cabinetmaker in Lawton, and L.D. Calaway agreed to build the school, using the help they needed, and donating much of it themselves. Sister Alexandrine described the activities of 1918 in her memoir:

In May 1918, the little white school was moved on rollers, room by room. It was quite exciting. As school had not closed yet, we resumed classes in our poor little Church. This was a novelty for the little tots, and they did not fail to make the most of it.

I used to take a class into the vestibule and close the swinging doors. On going back one day to get another class, I missed two little boys. On looking around, I found them crawling under the pews.

Father Lamb knew that Mother Florence was thoroughly committed to the school, and since it would also serve as a Sisters' residence, she would be more than willing to help financially. So he sent her a letter asking her to contribute to the new construction. Because of the war Mother was having a difficult time in the Congregation financially. So it is surprising that he received the following letter July 8, 1918:

Reverend and dear Father,

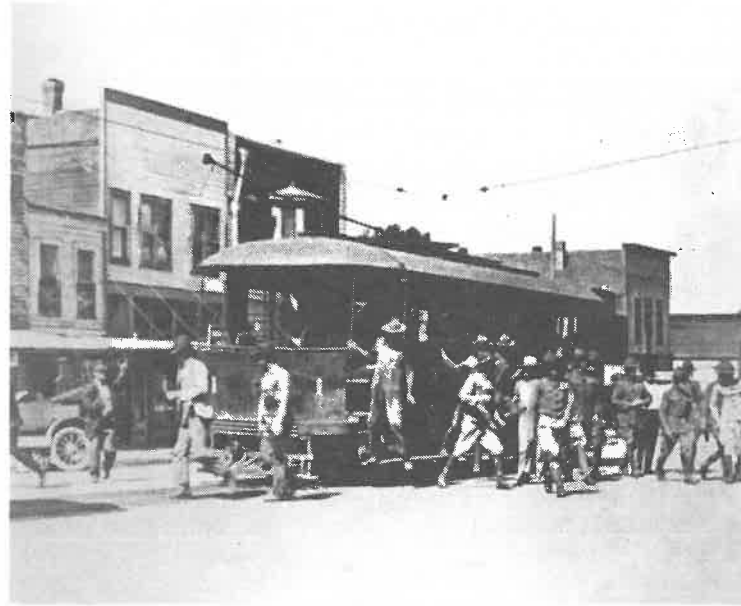
This letter acknowledges the receipt of your kind letter of the second instant in which you give me such agreeable news regarding your new school at Lawton. We were pleased to hear that you expect to be ready for the opening of school in the first week of September. If conditions demand it, I shall try to accommodate you with an additional teacher.

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

Evidently it is your intention to erect a good substantial building, since you expect it to cost \$20,000. We are sorry that on account of present financial stringency it will be impossible for us to help you to a greater extent than you request, however much we desire to do so. Of course you will understand that it is against our rules to make a donation pure and simple of such a large sum of money; hence we would require from you in the name of the parish a receipt for our contribution, which would allow us to claim this amount in case our Sisters were to withdraw from Lawton for any reason. If the above condition is satisfactory to you, our Council at its general meeting is willing to contribute \$1,500 toward the building of the school and \$500 for the furnishing of the dormitory, payment be made as follows: \$500 cash; two notes at six percent; the first in the sum of \$500, payable two months after date, the second, \$1,000, payable nine months after date. If we had any cash, we would gladly send it to you; but we know that it will be easy for you to discount these notes at the bank and get cash for them immediately. As soon as you send us the above mentioned guarantee, which will recognize our claim in case of withdrawal, signed by yourself as Parish Priest and by the trustees, we will send you the check and notes. Wishing you every success, and praying God to bless this undertaking, which is for His honor and glory,

I am respectfully yours,  
Mother Mary Florence.

The school was miraculously completed by September, and it was beyond anyone's dreams. First of all, it would be airy in the summer weather, with windows on all sides, and warm in the winter, with no cracks, leaky roofs, airholes, etc. It had a roomy basement, parts of which could be and were used for various purposes. The Sisters lived on the second floor, southwest corner. The boarders lived on



The street car was installed during the second decade. It ran from 7th and C east and out to Ft. Sill.

the second floor, northwest corner, and the rest were classrooms except for the music room and the library on the first floor. The kitchen and dining rooms were in the basement. It was spacious and everybody loved it. When Sister Mark returned in 1920 as superior, she had this to say about it:

Our early dreams were realized. The present St. Mary's Academy is a modern brick building having an enrollment of 183 pupils and 60 music pupils. There was also a well-organized orchestra.

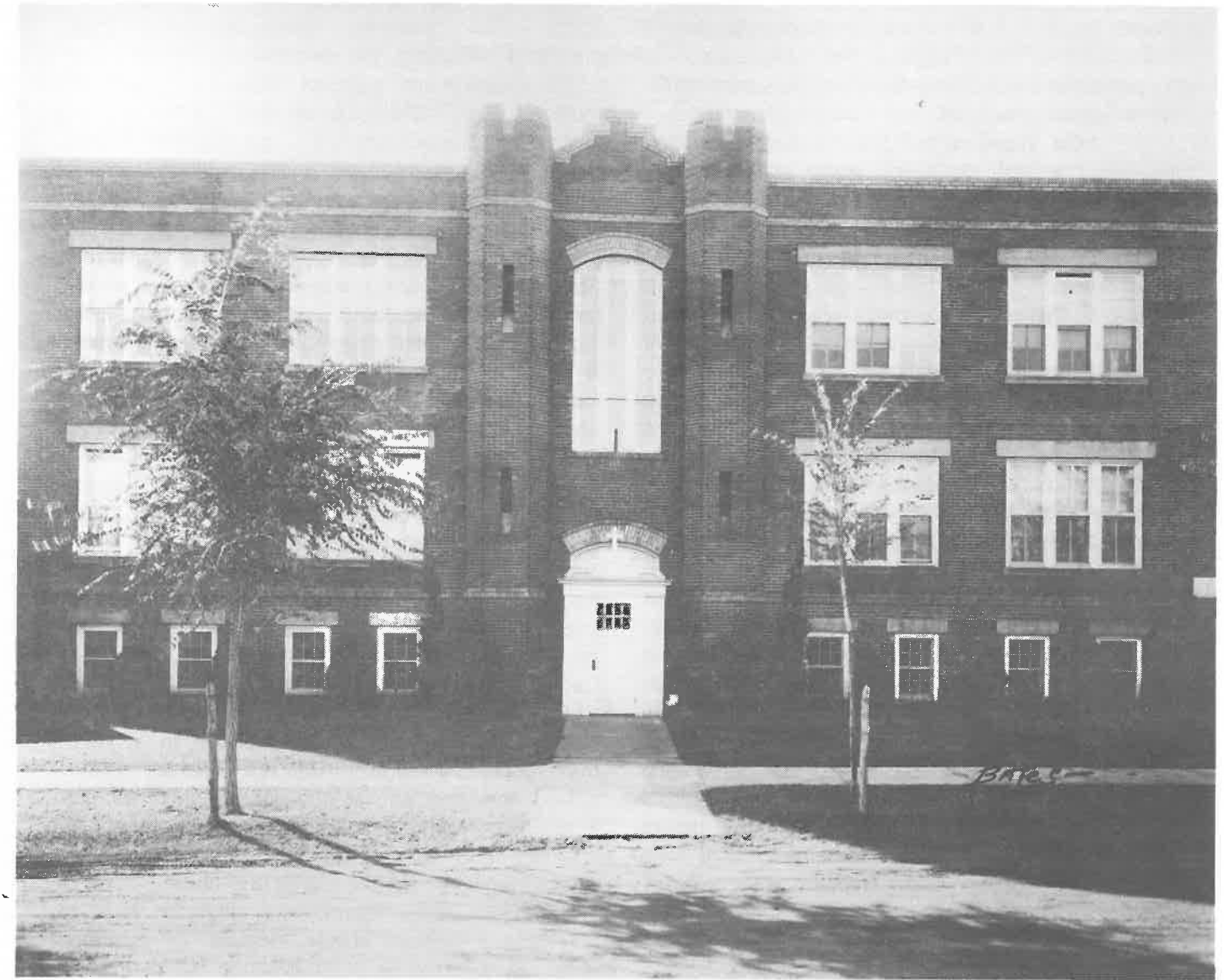
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## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

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And so the second decade came to a close with a new dream of a school and a bright future. The war was over, and there would be no more wars. Music was in. Everybody who could read a

note took music or wanted to. Although programs had always been presented and were well attended, the programs themselves were to multiply during the next decade; humor and self-expression were to flourish in more comfortable surroundings.



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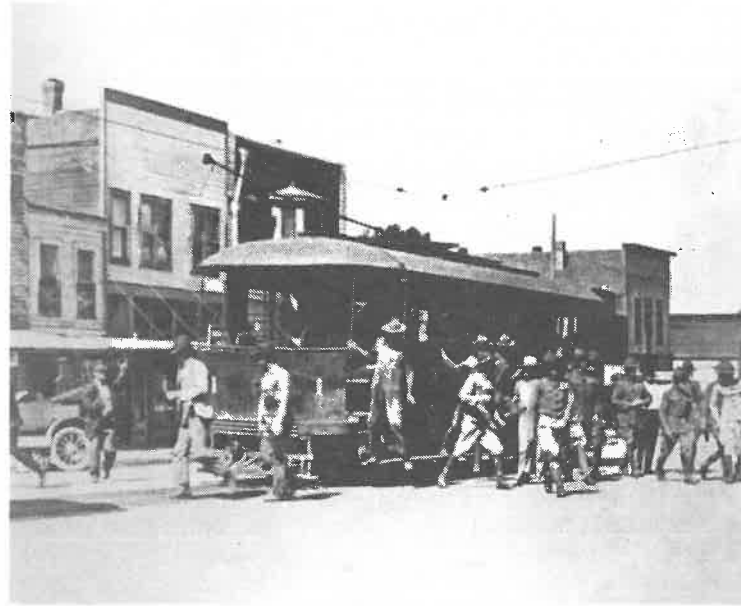


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CHAPTER 3

THE THIRD DECADE: 1920-1930

**New Spirit Is Shown  
In New School**

A glance at the newspapers of that time will prove that the country was back to normal: "Walk With God Is The Right Way," "Henry R. Warren Hits Fred Smith," "Dope Fiends Here; Where Is It Secure?" (People were not saying "No" yet), "The Negro, Ben Dickerson, is supposed to be hanging from a tree near Noble, on the Santa Fe Railroad."

After World War I the Ku Klux Klan and the anti-Catholic sentiment were stronger than before. According to Joseph Quinn, the editor of the diocesan newspaper, there were 70,000 KKKs plus a number of anti-Catholic newspapers. There was job discrimination against Catholics, and a move was afoot to force all Catholic children to attend public schools. At this time the two contenders for governor were Jack Walton and R.H. Wilson, a self-proclaimed Klansman. With organized efforts the Catholics voted against Wilson by voting for Walton, who won. THE DAILY OKLAHOMAN announced, "Catholic Vote Defeats Ku Klux Klan." From then on the Catholics were recognized as having clout, and prejudice began to decline.

The large Anderson family, who had started to St. Mary's in 1912 with Geraldine, was in the '20s down to AEileen, who entered school in 1921 and Eleanor who entered in 1923. AEileen recalls her first communion, solemn Communion, and Confirmation. She especially remembers the school plays, among which was "Everyman." Most of the family transferred to the public school before graduation, but AEileen remained until the senior year, when she entered the convent. Eleanor graduated at St. Mary's. AEileen had this to say about her school days:

I liked studying my lessons and working with the Sisters on the Christmas and Easter events and helping them in the classrooms. I did not like the morning exercises in the yard, and sometimes I thought the Sisters favored the "Army brats." Even though I swept classrooms for my eleven years tuition, I felt I did get a good education. I went to the convent at the end of my junior year.

**Here Comes Sister Mark**

When Sister Mark returned to St. Mary's in 1921, the school took on a new life. Sister Mark was good at organizing. This extended to school plays and programs and activities of all kinds. The students remember the large programs involving the entire school. Also the music department put on music recitals and musicals, and Sister Mark added her artistic touch for Sister Amanda's productions. These programs were held in the school basement, which had a small stage.

Sister Mark remained as superior for six years, the longest that any superior had stayed. She is the first superior to be vividly remembered by students, and some of them have much to say about those days. William Corrales is perhaps the most vocal. As in many classes there are those who are the planners and those who are the doers; William was the doer. What Robert Landers and David Morris planned, William did. "I was the one who gave George Barber the stink bomb to throw," he said. "Just as he was preparing to throw it, Sister Mark opened the door. George decided to throw it out the window rather than be caught red-handed. He threw it but it missed the window and hit the sill. Not only was the class made to suffer, but George received a resounding slap."

This was not his worst trick, if he can be believed. "We had a difficult problem to solve in math class. Although I was no whiz at math, I solved the problem at the board. Just at that time Sister Mark was called from the room. As she left, she warned us not to move from our places. As soon as she closed the door, I let fly a few erasers. Dave Morris was sitting in front of the door. I got an eraser, soaked up as much chalk as I could in it, and let it fly with great force at him. Just as I let go, Sister Mark opened the door and David ducked. I hit Sister Mark in the chest so hard that it knocked all the breath out of her and she sat down on the floor. As soon as she could get her breath, she got up and went to her desk. As usual I knew I would pay for it."

"Did you resent the punishments?" he was asked.

"No. Harsh as they were, they were never as harsh as we deserved."

And so go Corrales's stories: about holding bricks in one's outstretched hands, about the Thanksgiving cake that disappeared after the play, about his escape from the locked classroom. No doubt Sister Mark had a great sense of humor to be able to cope with such students.

**The Church Burns**

Then came the day long remembered by everyone. It was January 14, 1924, as Sister Cosmos, the housekeeper, jotted it down in her memoirs:

The last year I was there, the church burned down while we were eating breakfast. Nothing in school was damaged. Father Lamb got busy immediately building a new church.

Sister Alexandrine, back in Lawton for the third time, was more graphic. Her memoirs say:

In school the heat was so intense that the casings and window hangings were all scorched and ready to catch fire. The glass was all cracked and fell out piece by piece. With the assistance of some neighbors, we warded off the danger by pouring some buckets of water on the window casing from the inside. We removed the furniture to a safe distance. Thank God there were no boarders there anymore - not since 1922.

**Transportation Is Still Difficult**

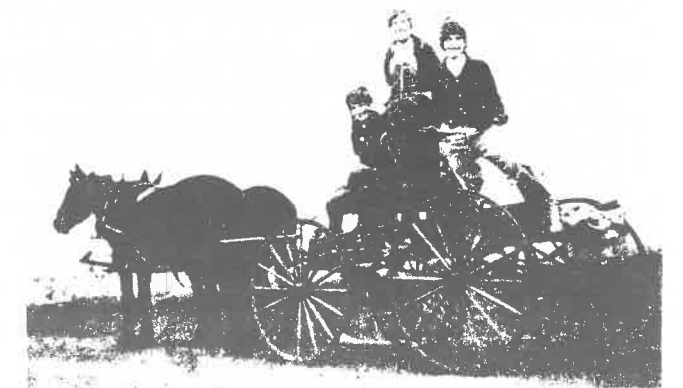
A search through the high school files reveals that only about one out of ten students who enrolled in high school graduated. Since many of the students were from Ft. Sill, their stay at St. Mary's was usually brief. As indicated previously, a large number transferred to the public school. In some cases high schools opened nearer to their homes than Lawton, and they went there. Some were drop-outs, especially in the early days when they had to help on the farms. The country students, up to about 1920-25, had to board in town if they wanted to complete their education. The oldest boy and girls of the James Murphy family, for example, were not able to attend high school because there was no transportation to carry

them the ten miles daily. They were the Catholics in the little country school, where they were sometimes given a hard time. Two girls, Mary and Rose, found families in town where they could stay and work for their room and board.

Rose went to work at Fort Sill in 1928. In 1940 she was selected to be the personal secretary of the Commanding General, and she held that position during the tenure of the next nine commanders. In 1954 she left Fort Sill to accept an assignment as secretary to the Commanding General, V Corps, in Frankfurt, Germany.

The three youngest Murphys - Frances, James, and Catherine - beginning in 1925, drove to school after the cotton was picked in October. But this was very often difficult as they had to drive on dirt roads all the way to Ft. Sill Blvd. Cache Road, then called Ozark Trail, was a two-lane dirt road with "prairie schooners" (covered wagons) still frequently seen, even up to 1929, when Frances and James graduated. Frances, now Sister Angelina, vividly recalls those early morning trips when James, who drove the Model-T Ford, with side curtains in winter and rainy weather, could spot an empty whiskey bottle tossed out the night before far enough ahead so that he was able to stop right beside it. Monday mornings especially fruitful so that the travelers had to start earlier than usual. James took his daily harvest at noon to a fence that he knew of and collected his spending money for the week.

Toward the end of their final year in St. Mary's, their father (or older brother) bought a Chevrolet touring car, which was especially



**Dorothy Pokorney, Rose Murphy, and Anna Marie Thomas go for a Sunday afternoon jaunt to Cache**



## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

precious. While they were on the highway going to the Junior-Senior banquet one May evening, one of the Heinz' cows dashed across the road as the car came down the hill. The cow apparently was not injured, but the car suffered front fender and headlight bruises, which were remedied with "whiskey bottle money" before the car returned home unnoticed the next day. Frances (Sister Angelina) attributes her writing gift to the fact that she was elected secretary to the school Literary Club, whose duty it was to send out accounts of the meetings to THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION. Seeing her articles in print was such a thrill that she never stopped writing and has published two biographies and other articles since.

Needless to say, butter and eggs, pork and beef, chicken and vegetables paid the tuition of many a farm child.

## A New Church Goes Up

Building the new Church, red brick like the school, was a major project. Albert Landoll was again pressed into service, and he had the privilege of selecting his co-workers. While this construction was in progress, a place had to be found for offering Mass. The school basement was the place selected. This required crowding furniture and school equipment together to make space. However, it did put a strain on school and community activities, for the Sisters had to set up and move chairs for Mass and then rearrange for school after Mass. Every inch of the school was used. It was, then, a true windfall when a hall was discovered and moved to the south of the school near the alley for numerous activities. Mass was offered there until the new Church was completed. But it was also used for other purposes, especially after the Church was finished.

In the meantime, as the Church construction went on, Father Lamb was very proud of this achievement. The school was doing extremely well with an excellent academic program and a music department that attracted so many students that a second music teacher was needed to accommodate them all. The programs and plays needed a larger space, for the school basement could no longer accommodate the crowd that came. When the Church would be finished, the basement could be used for almost every activity that the Church



**The wooden church burned down in 1923 and the new one was built almost immediately**

and the school would need, for it was one very large space with no obstructions except the pillars. And it had a large stage.

Father Lamb wrote to Mother Florence to be sure to arrange to come for the dedication of the Church when it would be completed. But Father Lamb was not to enjoy the dedication himself, for he was transferred just as the builders were about to add the finishing touches. Nor was Mother Florence the one who would make the decision about who would attend the function, for she was replaced by election of Mother Mary Philothea Thiry in the summer of 1925.

Geraldine (Carlin) Gasser remembers the farewell party that was held in honor of Father Lamb before he left. It was in the school basement, and a large crowd was present. Her father sent her over to tell him goodbye.

Father Charles Van Hulse arrived as the new pastor of Blessed Sacrament Parish December 31, 1925.

The wooden temporary hall remained on the grounds for some time after the Church was completed. It was a perfect place for the children to play on rainy and snowy days and in frigid weather. It was also perfect for school programs, as Lahoma (Bertram) Benke recalls a memorable play in which Bernadette Dawes was the heroine.

Initiating a system of permanent record keeping for all the students in both elementary and high school, one that was most helpful in gaining data on students and levels of study, along with grades and statements of completion of high school and graduation while making this study, was begun. The books are presently

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

falling apart and need to be reconstructed for permanence, but they are valuable. Sister Mark also initiated during her six years as principal a graduation ceremony, which was an innovation there. There was no longer any doubt about who was graduated and when, and the public was made aware of it. This is not all so clear today, however, and some students may have been omitted from the rosters at the end. After the 1926 school year Sister Mark was transferred to Norman, Oklahoma. With both Father Lamb and Sister Mark gone, there were bound to be more changes everywhere.

## Father Charles And Sister Raphael Come

Sister Raphael was a kind and loving person of much experience. Moreover, she had on her faculty Sister Mary of the Divine Heart, Sister Bertrand, Sisters Anna Marie, Alexandrine, and Seraphina. Sister Raphael loved the outdoors and the mountains. As she sat at the north window on Sunday afternoons, looking out toward the mountains, she could see the tennis court north of the school between the north and south lanes of the boulevard, where there were always students playing tennis.

Sister Raphael was a good Spanish and math teacher, whose patience gave the students confidence. She also had a sense of humor so that she and the students (all the high school still fit into one room) could often laugh together. Her religion classes and instructions are still remembered. She was happy to learn that Sister Seraphina liked to go on outings. So class trips were planned for climbing Mt. Scott, having breakfast cookouts in the mountains, going skating at the popular skating rink at Craterville Park about fifteen miles to the northwest.

Some of the students were now driving cars to school. This was a help to the Sisters, who had to walk a number of blocks for their groceries and other shopping. They could now ask the students to take them at noon or after school so that they would not have to carry the heavy bags home long distances.

In 1926, Sister Erasma replaced Sister Mary of the Divine Heart ("Sister Mary without-a-heart" she was sometimes called, for she was very strict). Sister Erasma complemented Sister Raphael in many ways. She was an excellent teacher and was completely devoted to the students. She also had a knack for writing

and drama. She organized a Literary Club with the students. She also began a series of high school plays. Liliith Pokorney and Sadie Mae Boggs had been taking expression for a number of years from Mrs. Charles King and were very good. They were usually given the leads in the plays, Liliith one time and Sadie the next.

During these years the school sometimes had a football or a basketball team which played other small schools either in the vicinity or as far away as Sacred Heart School, El Reno. To the teams, always small in number of players, winning or losing did not matter too much.

When Father Charles had had time to study the school situation, he made it his business to become personally acquainted with the students, especially the high school. It was his practice, everyone remembers, to go personally to each classroom each month and read out the report cards. All grades were read out loud, with the pupils concerned standing for all to see. When the grade fell into the 70's or below the student was usually humiliated. If Father had a special or personal message for anyone, he would call that person to his desk and speak in a lowered voice. Psychologists would probably object today about what this public humiliation could do to the child. But what it did in those days was to make the student determine to get a better grade next time. Parents who today recall this, and they all do, say that it would be good if this were still done.

During all the years that Father Charles was pastor to 1935 he continued to live in the little white rectory by the Church.

## Sister Luke Is A Favorite

One of the favorite Sisters for many years was Sister Luke. She taught the first grade. Each year the pastor would write to Mother Philothea, "Please send Sister Luke back." Even when she was finally changed, he continued to write, "Please send Sister Luke back." There were other Sisters, too, who were ardently requested to return.

Bishop Francis Clement Kelley was the first American-born bishop of Oklahoma. He served from 1924-46. By this time Oklahoma was no longer the missionary area it had been with Bishop Meerschaert. Bishop Kelley was an educated man and a writer. He was also a missionary, but in a different way. The Catholic

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

publication, THE CATHOLIC HOME, begun in 1922, was renamed THE SOUTHWEST COURIER. Today it is the SOONER CATHOLIC. Joseph Quinn edited the paper for 39 years, dedicated to the Church in Oklahoma. Until Bishop Kelley's time there had been much prejudice against Catholics, but Bishop Kelley opened the Church to the public. He spoke and talked about it in public and was friendly with non-Catholics. Until then a Catholic could hardly hold a public position or a government job. The Ku Klux Klan had terrified Catholics and Negroes throughout the country. Father Lamb had often attended KKK rallies and spoken up for the Church. Gradually the prejudice was lessening.

When Mother Florence had agreed to open the school in Lawton, she told Father Lamb that the parish was not able to maintain a parochial school and the Congregation of Divine Providence would assume the responsibility if he would furnish the building and equipment. St. Mary's was accepted on that premise. Twenty years later Father Charles, reviewing the accounts and the correspondence, wrote to Mother Philothea:

Dear Reverend Mother,

As you know, the Sisters have during all these past years received all

tuition fees paid by the school children. How much or how little this has amounted to it is impossible for me to know, as the running of the school had been entirely in the hands of the Sisters.

What I would like to know now is whether this arrangement is to be discontinued and a new one to be established. As far as I am concerned, the old order is perfectly satisfactory.

With best wishes for yourself and all the Sisters, I am

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Charles Van Hulse.

In 1929, St. Mary's graduated the largest class in its history so far. There were eleven graduates including Mayor Jones' two oldest children, Mary Frances and Richard. The graduation ceremony was impressive on the stage of the Church Auditorium, which was crowded to capacity.

Another decade had passed, and the future of the Church and school looked brighter than ever with an enrollment of 211.



Craterville Park (swimming pool and skate rink ) was a very popular place for school outings

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

### CHAPTER 4

#### THE FOURTH DECADE: 1930-1940

##### Parochial Status Changes

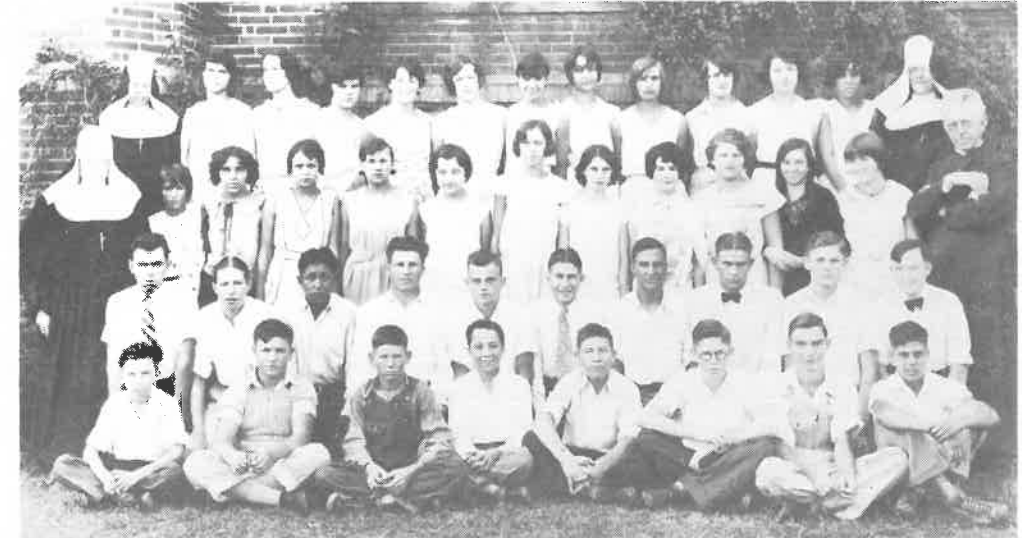
Apparently the letter of Father Van Hulse caused Mother Philothea, who was an astute business woman, to examine the financial record of the school in Lawton to know whether to continue as it had been doing. She came up with the following figures: Income from tuition, books and stationery, and sundries totaled \$3,863.43. Expenses including household provisions, teachers' extension work, doctors and medicine, extraordinary confessor, and normal school expenses amounted to \$4,631.21. There was a deficit of \$767.78. This was certainly a losing situation financially, and this might have been the point at which the decision was made to go parochial rather than have the Congregation take on the entire responsibility of the school. There is no record of this decision having been made, but it was made sometime within the decade. At least Father Van Hulse felt free to request the Sisters he wanted. "Please return Sisters Raphael, Erasma, Luke, and Terence."

In a letter of October 23, 1930, Father Van Hulse told Mother Philothea that an old gentleman, J. O'Connor, who had been away from the Church for some time, received the last sacraments on his death bed, apparently because of the prayers of the school children. He continued in his letter:

In his will he left a sum of money (\$1,000) toward paying off part of the debt we still carry on the school building here. He was, it seems, under the impression that the building belongs to the Sisters, and his will was made accordingly. Hence it becomes necessary for you to sign the acknowledgement of the receipt of notice. Please do and mail the notice form to the Law Office of Edward Clark, 7246 American National Building, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Sincerely in Christ,  
Charles Van Hulse

As a rule, the Sisters attended the Teachers' Convention annually. In 1931, Sister Raphael and Sister Digna went to the meeting by train. Near Purcell there was a railroad accident and both Sister Raphael and Sister Digna were injured. They had to spend a few days in the hospital in Purcell. Fortunately Sister Erasma had decided to remain at home to prepare for an upcoming play. She had to run the high school by herself for a few days.



High School picture taken in 1931. Sisters on left are Sr Erasma above, Sr. Raphael is below. On the right are Sr. Digna and Father Charles.

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

Some families never ran out of children at St. Mary's. At the end of the second decade the Pittman clan first invaded the school in the person of Frances. She was followed closely by hordes of family during the next two generations. Mother Pittman started packing lunches for her nine children back in 1914, according to THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION. For 32 years this continued until in 1947 Alfred graduated. This well-spread-out family collected a variety of friends who enjoyed the special attractions on their farm east of Lawton. Their classmates came out on weekends and rode their horses. Frances recalls that on one trip, when Lilith Pokorney's horse went up a steep creek embankment, Lilith slid over the horse's rump like a roller coaster. The family has been very active in parish and school. Arthur Hampton was president of the Parish Council when his children were in school. Frances, besides rearing and educating her own children, has taken in a number of "orphans" whom she also sent to St. Mary's. Most other members of the family have also sent their children to St. Mary's, and many were outstanding students.

The Stuevers, too, who lived south at a great distance, owned a carriage in the early days which could transport the entire family (parents and eleven children) to Church every Sunday. Fritz was the first to enter St. Mary's, but there were Stuevers in St. Mary's down to the last graduating class in 1966. The last Stuever graduate was John. Fritz's two sons, George and Joseph, both finished college, George at O.U. and Joseph at Notre Dame, and have gone on from there.

Another was the Benke family, whose mother, Lahoma Bertram, entered school in the second decade. Through the years the Benke family has been in old St. Mary's, Kennedy Elementary, and the new high school. Of Lahoma's 42 grandchildren some are still in school, and probably more will be coming.

Recently Edwin Dunn was pictured in THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION with his art. Like all the Dunns, Edwin attended St. Mary's up until his graduation year. He has been chairman of the Art Division in Fairview, Virginia, but now lives in Elgin.

## Sister Raphael Moves On

Sister Raphael's term as superior was up in 1931, and she moved on; but she left behind Sister Digna and the excellent music teacher, Sister Alphonsa. Sister Elvira was the new superior. Sister Malachy, retired a few years but still eager to get back into the classroom, also came that year and remained three years. She recalls that the Sisters gave plays and lunches to increase their income. Dick Jones, the Mayor, was called in by the Sisters to discuss the candidates who were to be voted on in the city and state government. The Depression and the dust bowl years were worsening and times were getting harder. Some families, unable to pay tuition, took their children out of school. Butter and eggs ran out, and some farmers moved away when their farms went up in dust.

In 1933, there were nine Sisters. The living quarters were becoming tighter and tighter. The students needed the space in the school, for there were more than 200 pupils. Sister Corintha says the students were bright and easy to teach, but there were too many in a classroom. On Easter Monday, Mrs. Timmons invited the Sisters to go for a ride. Sisters Benigna, Casimir, and Clementine went. They met with an accident and were all hurt, Sister Clementine the worst. Although Sister Casimir did not mention the accident in her conversation for this history, she did say that she was very much impressed with the school spirit. She told of a little crippled girl who was not able to manage the steps. When there was a fire drill, the high school boys would come sweeping by and pick her up without breaking step. The children were very helpful to the teachers. But she remembered the crowded dormitory space where the Sisters slept. "There were nine Sisters and one bathroom, and I was the youngest at the end of the line. But we thought nothing of inconveniences." She said further concerning the school, "St. Mary's was the school! When the people from the

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

Base came to register, they always said they had heard of our school no matter where they were, so they wanted to send their children here for the best education even though they had a free school at Ft. Sill. Our school was considered the finest."

"We liked Sister Padua," said Yolanda and Rita Federico." She made you feel that you could do the best". Someone else added more about her: "She was like a Prussian General".

The great parish carnivals were something mentioned by June Journeycakø, who saw Father Charles at the end of his term as pastor and Father Ben as the new one. Father Charles was becoming ill, and he knew it. He spent some time at Mineral Wells for treatment. But this was the time of religious vacation schools and he wrote asking for Sisters to stay for a while in summer to teach the vacation school in Walters. All the small towns around Lawton, and everywhere else, were concentrating on these vacation schools. It was difficult for the Sisters because they had also taught religion classes for the public school children in the parish during the year wherever they were. Some Sisters in Lawton taught in the parish on the weekends and some taught at Ft. Sill. When vacation came, they wanted to go back to San Antonio for summer school to catch up on their own education, make retreats, and meet all the other Sisters. So teaching vacation school was a hardship. But there were always enough volunteers to fill the requests.

## Father Charles Retires

Father Charles had been in Lawton ten years, and, as a rule, the pastors are changed every ten years or so. Father Lamb had been at Blessed Sacrament twenty years, but that was because of the pioneer conditions of the place, the suitability of the man for the place, and the scarcity of priests, especially native ones. But times were different now. The economy was looking up after the Depression and the dust storms were gone. Before he retired, Father Charles had the school renovated and had decided that there had to be found a new home for the Sisters because the space was needed. He and the Parish Board began to look around for a site, and the Board said the logical thing to do was to purchase additional land by buying the Carlin place. Negotiations were begun to make this



The Sisters move into their new residence

purchase. He also asked the Bishop, since his health was failing, if he could remain in Lawton as a retired priest. Since the Bishop did not have a home for retired priests, and since Father Ben Hulsof was a good friend of Father Charles, he agreed. Father Ben Hulsof came as the new pastor.

One of the first matters of business for Father Ben was to enlarge the school and get a Sisters' residence. He finally came to an agreement with the Carlins on Lot 4, which the parish purchased for \$1,300 in 1938. A much needed driveway was constructed, along with some parking space. They had already purchased Lot 3 from H.N. Whalin, which included a large two-story house in fairly good condition, for \$4,500. So now it was time for the Sisters to move out of the school into their own house, renovated and furnished with modern conveniences. This was the most convenient residence the Sisters had ever had in Lawton, and in fact, would ever have. They had a Chapel, music room, kitchen, dining room, laundry, living room, etc., and basement storage room. There was also roomier bedroom space than they had had so far.

The Ladies' Clubs in Lawton and Ft. Sill and individual families donated furniture and carpets. The Sisters moved in October 2 and had open house for the public November 3. It was a jubilant day for the parish and the Sisters. At this time there was an enrollment of 280 pupils of whom



## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

62 were in high school, and Father Ben wrote that the Sisters were doing very good work. Sister Luke, at Father Ben's request, was back again even though her 70th birthday had come and gone a few years ago.

Virginia Jones, daughter of the former mayor of Lawton, Dick Jones, was the youngest of his children. Mary and Richard had graduated in 1929. She finished in 1936, after which she entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Indiana. Sister Kevin, as she is still known, is in the nursing profession.

### Sister Macaria Leaves

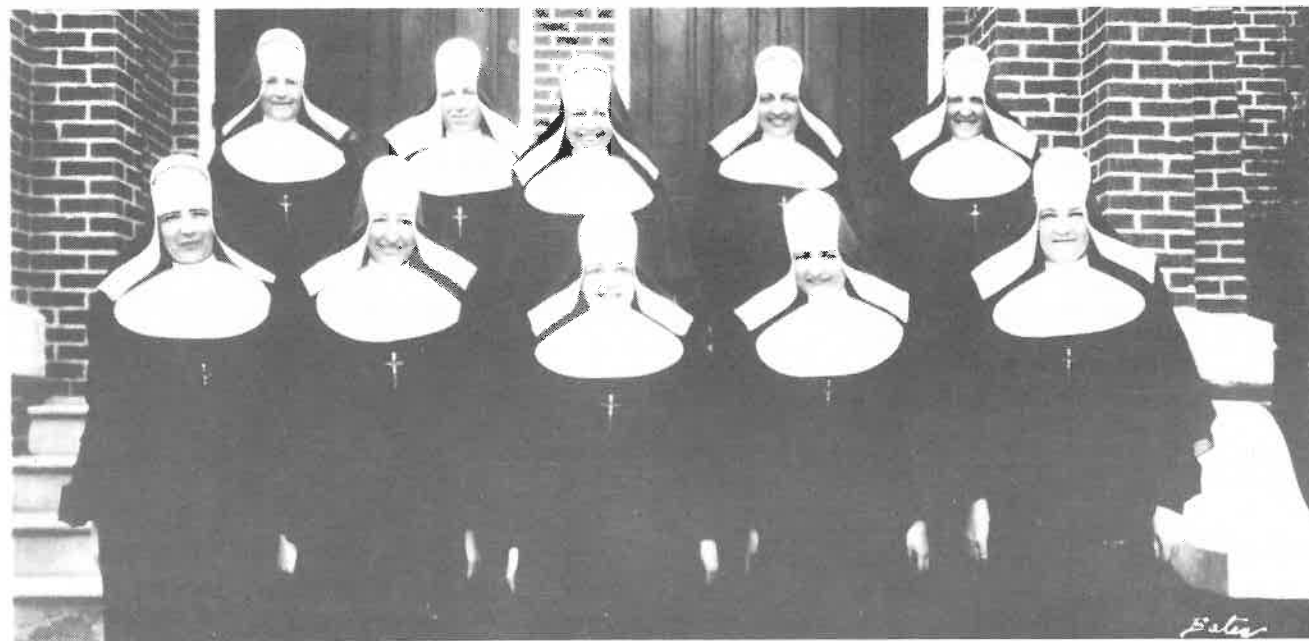
After Sister Macaria had finished her six years as superior, Sister Ildephonse came in 1939. The enrollment had grown to approximately 300 with two high school classrooms. When the 1940-50 graduates had a reunion in 1986, many stories floated about concerning Sister Ildephonse and her outstanding faculty. Sister Juliette was a real mother to the babies, whom she had taught for so many years that she knew all their requirements. She usually had little panties hanging around drying while a clean supply awaited a call for use. D.J. McEvoy had been coming faithfully to coach the basketball, football, and baseball teams, and they played some of the small schools. At this point it is appropriate to say that there had been many coaches and helpers throughout the years,

and the parish owes much to these loyal and faithful workers who usually volunteered their services. Their names have not been recorded, however, and the persons who received their services have not told their stories. The same is true for assistant priests and other religion teachers, who made a big contribution to the school, and to whom the parish owes much.

Memories recorded at the 1986 reunion mentioned a few activities of those days. "You were playing football with Art Corrales, Harry Shannahan, Tommy Stephens, Jackie Messal, Bill Corrales, Dude True, Billie Craig, Francis Halbison, Walter Carter. We played Emerson School and beat them 50-0."

In December 1939, St. Mary's School Glee Club sang on KSWO radio for the first time. Members were Yvonne Toy, Rosemary Ballew, Dorothy Calloway, Eleanor Pokorney, Betty Essner, and Chris Dodson. Sister Francisca was there at that time teaching general science and physics. She recalls an incident that took place:

There was a large tank on a wooden platform. Some boys pushed the watertank off and it hit a small Mexican boy. He was taken to the hospital. He was getting along all right when Father went to see him, but he wouldn't eat. Father asked him what he wanted. He said he wanted beans and cornbread.



The faculty in 1938 consisted of (top) Sr. Arcadius, Sr. Kevin, Sr. Regina, and Sr. Leonard. (Bottom) Sr. Hilda, Sr. Casimir, Sr. Gloriosa, Sr. Ruth, and Sr. Ann

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

Julian and Paul Niemczyck spent most of their school years at St. Mary's, and after all their world experiences are still loyal to their alma mater. Julian was appointed as Ambassador to Czechoslovakia in 1986 after having been Chief Executive Officer of People-to-People and being now a retired Air Force Colonel - with a triple by-pass. He is still as active as ever. Paul is a retired Army Captain. He says of Sister Padua, "Like a Prussian General, she had only to look at us. She reminded me of my father."

Father Ben wrote to Mother Philothea again, "The Sisters are doing great work for the school and parish."

The Sisters wore an enormous amount of linen about the face and neck at that time. It was no small chore to get it all starched and ironed for ten Sisters. Sister Majella was busy one day trying to get it all done before the teachers would come home from school. She had laid out on the window sills the guimpes (the part that is worn around the neck) to dry completely. Several small boys who often came to see Sister in hopes of getting a cookie knocked on the window. She called out, "I am too busy now. Just run along until some other time." But they called back, "Your necks just fell down and they're going to get broke."

One day when it was snowing very heavily and huge drifts had formed, Sister Ildephonse was coming home from school. She told the community in her typically colorful way that evening what had happened. "And the wind blew me out into the snow, and I fell down, and those two 'dygoffs' had me on my feet in no time. Sister Florentia was there at the time. She was small but forceful. Harold Glennon said something she didn't like, "... and do you know

what that little thing did? You wouldn't believe it. She rared up on her toes and slapped me." Ah, these are the things that stand out in high school!

### Pre-World War II Days Are Bright

Because 1939 ended the post-War I period and the Depression, and the U.S. was not ready for another war, it was a joyful, transitional time, marked by the World Fair in Chicago, theme of which was "The World of Tomorrow." In the world of tomorrow one could buy a pair of nylon hose (a new invention) for 39 cents, and refrigerators were replacing ice boxes. There was a great whirl of dancing, "The Wizard of Oz" in Hollywood, and the first air passenger flights to Europe.

But there was a mad man loose in Germany. Jews were being thrown into concentration camps if they could not escape. While the U.S. Army numbered 200,000, Germany was also working to construct an atom bomb. The isolationists accused Roosevelt of getting the U.S. into war. While Kate Smith sang "God Bless America," Germany was carrying on a blitzkrieg over Poland, and American artillery was still drawn by horses. America was unprepared for war.

Although the graduates of 1939 would be some of the first to go to war, they tried not to think of it; and if they did, it looked to some like a great adventure, since they had not fought in World War I and did not know the meaning of war. In fact, before the year was over, some had already enlisted. Perhaps that is one reason why the 1939 class at St. Mary's graduated only one boy that year.

CHAPTER 5

THE FIFTH DECADE: 1940-1950

War Is Coming Again

While war news continued to dominate the headlines in THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION for the next few years, it was not until 1941, December 8, that the U.S. entered the war after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, December 7 that year. The headlines indicated how worldwide this war had actually become by then: "Four More Ships Sunk by Subs," "Heroes of Bataan Overpowered," "Germans Get Setback in Russia," "U.S. Forces Stand Off Jap Attack," "Battle of Atlantic Enters Stage of Great Intensity," "U.S. Actions in Europe Awaited," "U.S. Forces Chase Jap Warships," and "Here is why you must do with less to help win the war."

The war ended September 2, 1945, less than a month after the atomic bomb was dropped on Japan.

Reunion Brings Back Memories

Although a few small attempts had been made to hold reunions and some classes did succeed in gathering their class members together, the most successful plan was made and carried out in 1986, spearheaded by Neal Goode, with the help of many people of his own class or classes near his. This will come up again later. However, to get some flavor of the students and the activities of that decade, the conversation at that time gives us a clue.

Sister Alexandrine Geinie, the music teacher who came to Lawton for the first time in 1940, had heard the Sisters speak of Scotty. She said at the reunion Scotty lived in the same block and he was retarded. He had lived there most of his life, and the Sisters had tried to teach him to speak and to do some things. He was now a full-grown man with the mind of a little boy. His brother had been killed by a train, and he had great fear of train whistles. Sister Juliette took him under her wing and let him stay around as much as he wanted to. He would sit quietly and listen to the Sisters' spiritual reading and prayers in community. This seemed to soothe him.

Some of the trivia which surfaced among

the students follows:

The Scatter-Brain Club was organized by Betty Halbison, Yvonne Toy, Rosemary Patton, and Dormalee O'Dell. It was the forerunner of a popular club today, the Ernest P. Worrell Club.

Betty Essner represented St. Mary's at the Christian Doctrine Contest in Chickasha on February 20, 1940.

The class of '42 remembers wearing raincoats to physics class when sulphuric acid was mentioned.

The class of '43 had to copy word for word part of a popular novel before they could graduate because they skipped school and went to the Dome Theater.

The class of '42 recalls the Postal Inspector coming to school after the Craterville picnic. During those picnics Harold Glennon was the only one who could ring the sledge hammer bell.

Sue Ramos tore the shirt off John Mahasky because he called her a name.

In 1945, the Church got a new pipe organ for Christmas. The choir members were Emma Picek, Lahoma Bertram, Yvonne Halbison, Eleanor Stephens, Rosemary Ballew, Joan Pokorney, Millard Bertram, and Leonard Landoll.

To add to these recollections of students, Sister Clarissa had a few memories:

Neal Goode was proud of his excellent scholarship. A list of words was written on the board with a prize for the person who could find a misspelled word. The word was *seperate*. Neal was not able to find it, but his mother who was visiting school that day saw it at a glance. Another recollection: Paul Anthony (Dr. Anthony's son) was a bright boy, but he never read a book. Sister learned that he was

interested in leprosy. So she found a story in which leprosy was important. When she gave the book to him, he lost track of time until he had finished it. From then on he became a reader.

It was probably Richard Shaw ('44) thinking back over his years at St. Mary's who came up with a few stories. "I lived near the Church when I was young. So Father Charles asked me to serve the early Mass every morning. I was always early, opening the door and lighting the gas burner. I had to know Latin. "Louder," Father would shout when I was unsure of my words. Father Ben was less strict. Tommy Shannahan was supposed to alternate with me. But he didn't come, so I came every day." He reflected on those years. "I got the ruler. They read our grades out loud and chewed us out if we didn't do well. We had good relationships. One of the main values I learned was an appreciation of Mass, and stability. Teachers in the public schools said of my sons, "I bet they came from a parochial school!"

"Father Ben was my ideal of a model priest," said Neal Goode. "And Paul Calaway was a great layman. He directed the boys in their sports program at school and was Scoutmaster. I was greatly influenced by both these outstanding men."

Max Seibold Sr., whose family began at St. Mary's in 1915, and whose grandchildren are still there, said, "The Sisters of Divine Providence made St. Mary's what it is as a school."

Bob Shaw and Anita Best took highest



An early May crowning group

honors in their senior class, as their classmates recalled. Bob was prefect of the Sodality and captain of the basketball team. He also had top billing in the senior play, "Here Comes Charlie." Bob died in the war.

George Stuever was in Korea at graduation time. His brother Joseph went on the stage and got his diploma for him. Jimmy McClusky went to West Point and finished with honors. He became a full-fledged colonel. He is now at NASA where he probably knows the details of the O rings on the Challenger.

Sister Candida shared the music class of 60-75 students with Sister Loretto in the later '40s. One day they took the choral students to Oklahoma City for a choral festival. "The festival was fine," she said, "but we spent the night in a hotel, and we had to patrol the halls all night. That was my last trip."

These Are the War Years

Not all concentration was on study after all, for there was a war going on. A local center for the military was established in Lawton, and a great deal of thought and effort were going into what the world was doing. Eight Oklahoma priests entered the military service, and 25 others served part-time as chaplains. One of these was Father Stephen A. Leven (later bishop), who was made chaplain of all the German POWs in Oklahoma, some 24,000 of whom 9,000 were Catholics. He did this admirably while carrying on his pastoral ministry in the diocese.

War was changing the whole world. Lawton was changing. While comments of former students at this distance are light in tone, these men were the ones who went into the Army, Navy, the Air Force, and the Marines. And the travels and experiences have left their marks.

New Bishop Comes To Oklahoma

Bishop Francis Clement Kelley was replaced by Bishop Eugene McGuinness. By this time and continuing throughout his episcopate the number of native priests increased dramatically. Institutionalism had also reached a high point and buildings and organizations increased through the '50s. The Sodality and all Catholic organizations were very active. Parades with floats were held in Oklahoma City,

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

and students took great pride in participation in these events.

After Sister Ildephonse came Sister Valerian, who was superior only two years at St. Mary's, 1945-47. The students did not come to know her very well apparently, because she did not figure in any of the stories told. But she was followed by Sister Anna Louise, who is remembered especially by the boys. "She liked the boys best," the "boys" told us. Sister Anna Louise herself was particularly economical in her comments on Lawton: "I liked the students, especially the boys. I enjoyed going out to the mountains and lakes." And she added that she liked the spirit among the parents, children, and Sisters.

### Sister Anna Louise Takes Over

One thing that was different about Sister Anna Louise was that she saw that the boys were going to smoke somewhere, so she told them to come to her office to smoke, and she kept their cigarettes so they would not smoke in the restrooms. Smoking decreased somewhat as a result in those days. Sister spoke of the "mousetrap joke." Whatever it was, "the boy who played the joke had to sit on a mousetrap in a circle of girls." The Sisters who were here at the same time were not so reserved on comments as Sister Anna Louise. Sister Antoinette Marie recalls that the Benke family gave the Living Crib in the Church basement, using all the members of the family as characters. She also commented on the Wade family. Charley Wade, his wife and two oldest boys were usually at daily Mass. The father with his two sons served the Mass in Latin. She was edified.

Sister Richard had been transferred to Lawton from New Mexico. She had some Indian students in class, who thought she must be Indian if she came from New Mexico. So they came to talk to her and were disappointed to learn she was from Ireland.

The USO was very strong at that time, and some of the Sisters' friends were able to borrow USO films for them to watch on Sunday afternoons. The school, it seemed to Sister Richard, was the hub of the parish. It was involved in everything and it brought people together. Students and teachers throughout the entire history of the school said it was a good school, recognized far and near as such, and

## The Sodality



**Sodality Officers**  
James Dawes, prefect; Colleen Stanton, vice-prefect; Joan Pokorney, secretary; and Robert Shaw, Chairman of Eucharistic Committee.

students were proud of their education there, which seemed to surpass what they found elsewhere.

Father Charles died after having been in Lawton 25 years. Sister Anna Louise loved and revered him and believed he was a very holy man. For this reason, she asked for and obtained his rosary, which she treasures. Bishop McGuinness offered the funeral Mass, with 60 priests from the diocese present, for Father Charles had been a hard-working and much-admired priest throughout the diocese for many years. High school students were pallbearers. Father was buried in Highland Cemetery in Lawton.

### Students Of The '40s Publish

At different times during the '40s, the students published school papers. One year it was VOX. In 1945, it was OUR LADY'S HERALD, and in 1948, it was the RECORDER. They also had a yearbook one or two years. Looking over the people at the 1986 reunion, one could imagine what it must have been like twenty or twenty-five years ago with all that young energy at work.

That reunion, which began as a '40s get-together, soon became widely known, and requests were sent in to broaden it to include other classes. So it was eventually opened up to the '50s and later to anyone who wished to attend. Some 200 showed up, and they had a glorious time. The excellent committee that assisted Neal Goode in planning and carrying out

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

the project consisted of Genevieve Schram, Betty Shaw, Francis Halbison, Yvonne Toy, Bill Corrales, Mary Louise Evans, Jo Ann Schneider, Anita Dawes, Ann Nix, and Richard Shaw (using all given names).

George Stuever, at this time, told how Sister Anna Louise had pressured him to succeed. "I went to the Army at 16 in spite of Sister's protestations. But I passed my GED, and she and Father Ben agreed to give me a St. Mary's diploma. My brother got it for me. The next year I was back with my class at Cameron. So I went on from there. I was the first Stuever to get a college degree. I have been a teacher 34 years, principal 21. I took my BA at Springfield and my MA at O.U. I have been on the State Textbook Committee. I really owe something to Sister Anna Louise."

At the reunion, Joy Butler had this message to be delivered to Sister Anna Louise, who is now in the Sisters' Retirement Center in San Antonio: "I love you dearly. You made a great impression on me. I have eight children now. I was an Army brat, and after my mother and father I loved you. Goodbye now. I wish I could see you again sometime."



Sister Ildephonse

It was as if no time had passed as events and people were recalled and old friendships renewed. Future reunions are now in the planning.

### New High School Planned

No sooner were the Sisters in their new house and the students occupying all the space left in the old building than the space became too crowded again. Seeing that there would be more and not fewer students in the future, Father Ben looked to further expansion. Under the aegis of Father Ben, the Church acquired six lots across the alley from the Church and school, where a high school and a rectory could be built. As a matter of fact, there was a large white building on the corner of 7th and A that the students used to call "the haunted house." Father saw that with some remodeling, this building could be used as a rectory. With no loss of time, this was done and he soon moved in. Then he started plans for the new high school. It would be ready by September, he promised, as the fifth decade closed out and parents and students seemed to be standing in line to fill both the new and the old school.

## Our Lady's Herald

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Seventh Grade—Angela Durbin  
Sixth Grade—Mary Cecilia Krueger  
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CHAPTER 6

THE SIXTH DECADE: 1950-1960

New School Blessed

As Father Ben had promised, the new school was indeed ready for September 1950, at the cost of \$35,000. Father Ben proudly invited Bishop Eugene McGuinness to come and bless it. In his brief talk, the Bishop said, "Our concern is the formation of young Christian men and women." The 60 high school students plus some of the junior high moved in to begin school.

When the new high school was being built, the Knights of Columbus made an agreement with Father Ben that they would raise some money to help with the construction if one of the rooms could be used by the Knights for their meetings. Their room was to be the one on the northwest corner on the second floor. Meanwhile the Knights were meeting in the old rectory. Not long after school was established in the new building, it was decided by the school people that this room was needed for classes and the Knights should share it with the students. This proved to be unsatisfactory, according to Harry Wiest, and the Knights were asked to or decided to leave the school entirely. This all caused hard feelings between the parish and the Knights, who then moved to the building on Rogers Lane, where they still are.

The old rectory finally came down. Father Ben lived in the two-story white rectory on A Avenue as long as he remained in the parish.

Steps were taken immediately to make the new high school first class in every way, and it soon came up with top ratings in achievement. The parish carnival that year was particularly good, although carnivals had always been good. They cleared \$6,000. The audio and sound equipment along with the screens were added and a film library was started. Students entered the American Legion Contest.

In January 1951, V.J. Bonner from the accrediting agency of the Division of Secondary Education sent this report:

You are to be commended on your faculty, organization, attitude of

students, and the improvement made this year. Your new high school building is certainly a nice one and meets your needs for high school. You have improved the libraries and playground. You are overcrowded in the elementary and it is planned to build a new grade school and to add more teachers in the elementary grades. We saw good work being done in your school and enjoyed visiting and planning with you on further improvements there.

V.J. Bonner

Attractive buildings and especially new shiny equipment can be a temptation to those out for mischief. During the summer all the typewriters were stolen from the school. The culprit was traced and turned out to be one of the high school students, as related by Sister Reginald, the new music teacher. The music department continued to grow, keeping two music teachers busy. Everybody who was financially able gave their children at least a few years of music, and some of the music students became very proficient. All were culturally enriched, as their parents and teachers intended they should be.

"I was one of those teachers who had the crowded elementary classrooms," said Sister Anna Teresa. The supervisor was not pleased with the number, and neither was I. I had 38 pupils in the 7th grade. But I loved Lawton and was not happy to leave it."

Sister Macaria Comes

Sister Macaria was the next superior/principal to succeed Sister Anna Louise. The previous year there had been 476 students enrolled and 78 music pupils. In her first year as principal there were 524 students and 75 music pupils. There were now more than 400 in the elementary school. Two new classrooms were arranged in the basement of

the old school and 50 new desks purchased. In his annual Report of 1952, V.J. Bonner stated:

You are to be commended on your faculty and the improvement made this year.

1. Improved library and science department.
2. New playground equipment and fence around the playground.
3. New projector and film strips.
4. 50 new lockers for high school.
5. New filing cabinets and film strip cabinets.

You should have doors on the cabinets in the science room. I saw evidence of good work being done there. We enjoyed our visit there very much. If we can help you in any way, call on us.

V.J. Bonner

THE FAMILY CIRCULAR, the monthly newsletter issued by the Sisters of Divine Providence in San Antonio, told the entire Congregation what was going on in the various schools. Of St. Mary's it had this to say in 1956:

The school is filled to capacity. Billy Outenreath (senior) was killed returning home from a part-time job. Father Westerman is coaching the high school basketball and football teams. Some students paraded for "Ike." The Girl Scouts, the Boy Scouts, and the Sodality are very active. The annual carnival cleared \$11,000. David Paul Anderson, a gifted artist, decorated for the Carnival Ball. There are large music classes and a good choral club. They sing for Mass. The auditorium/gym is being built. There will be vacation school in July. Plans are to



Father Ben and some of his Knights of the Altar

rent McKinley Public School for part of the elementary. The newly-organized football team has been mostly victorious.

New Sisters On Board

Sister Ann Carmel came to Lawton in 1953 and remained five busy and active years of Science Fairs, contests, and Sodality. Records, news items, and activity programs indicate that she was the leader of youth. Sister Rosello came in 1957 with her boundless energy and enthusiasm and her artistic ability.

The Sodality, the religious organization always strong at St. Mary's, was perhaps the strongest during the '50s and early '60s. There was a movement to change the title and program to the "YCS" (Young Christian Students) during this time. St. Mary's seems to have kept the traditional Sodality, but whatever title, all the Catholic youth in Oklahoma were unified in this movement. They held statewide meetings for organizational and inspirational purposes at least once a year and they had a parade in Oklahoma City every year. The floats planned at home were completed in Oklahoma City at the fairgrounds, and the parade wound through Oklahoma City, with marching students singing the ever popular:

An army of youth flying the standard of truth,  
We're fighting for Christ, the Lord;  
Heads lifted high, Catholic action our cry,  
And the cross our only sword.

It was a great honor to be Sodality prefect and crown the statue of the Blessed Virgin Mary during the May coronation ceremony. When Charles Benke was prefect, the question arose, "Would it be all right for a boy to crown the Virgin, since the guidelines said the prefect was to do it?" Why not, even though the crowners up to this time had been girls? So Charles set a precedent. Other boys became prefects in following years and also crowned the Virgin.

Sister Rosello was responsible for putting on a number of plays, which brought in neat sums of money.

Science Fairs and contests were going strong all across the country. In 1959, Jim Lawson won first place in the Juvenile Delinquency Contest; Charles Benke was third in the Optimist Contest. Eighteen students went

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

to Norman for the Sodality meet. Sister Ann Carmel entered her students in the Science Fair, and Sister Theodore Mary helped plan the Sodality float, which was at first to be "Mary in the Modern Space Age," but was later changed to "Youth in the Modern Space Age."

Individuals continued to place in the Scholastic Meets, which were very popular and a great challenge. Some names that emerge at these meets in the '50s were Anne Powell, Charles Benke, Joe Naughton, Blake Wade, Do Nemetz, Jennifer Wehle, Anne Naughton.

In 1958, Charles Wade, the eldest of Charley Wade Sr's many sons, graduated. Recently (1987) he was elected to a three-year term on the Board of Governor of the Oklahoma Bar Association, according to THE LAWTON CONSTITUTION.

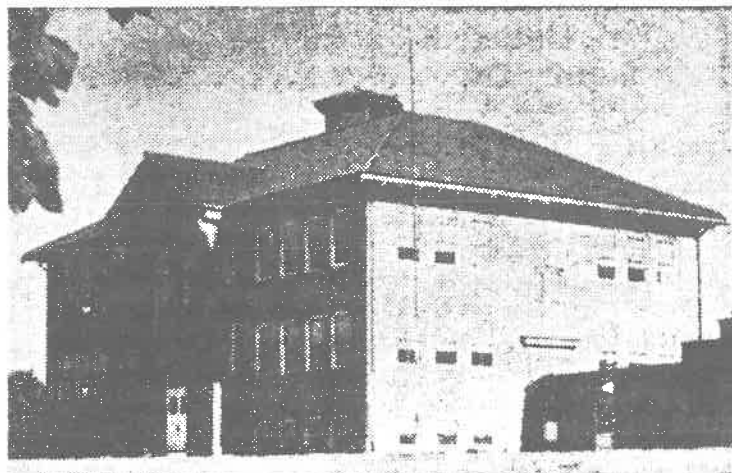
At the approach of Christmas 1959, four of St. Mary's boys went on the radio to discuss "How to prepare for a Christian Christmas."

### Progress Never Stops

The State Report continued to indicate more than anything else on hand what was being done in the school as far as physical facilities and equipment were concerned. Sixty-five new desks for the elementary school as well as new floors, new stairways, new playground equipment and newly painted walls in the classrooms. In the high school two new courses were introduced: bookkeeping and speech, sixty new desks, four new typewriters, and 200 chairs for the auditorium.

By this time requests to the general administration for additional Sisters were met with a reply such as, "You will have to hire lay teachers as they are doing in other schools. We do not have any extra Sisters." This Father began to do in spite of the fact that salaries shot up.

Sister Macaria closed out her term May 1959, with 568 pupils of whom 20 were graduates. The Sisters were also teaching CCD at Ft. Sill and at St. Mary's. Sometimes there were 300 pupils at Ft. Sill, and six Sisters were involved in the program. Reports were floating in from everywhere commenting on the excellence of St. Mary's educational program. As stated above, the Department of Education kept strict tab on what was going on and whether there was enough room, enough equipment,



**McKinley School, which was purchased and became St. Mary's Elementary School, and later was renamed John F. Kennedy School**

enough teachers who were qualified. They were usually very encouraging to everybody but the pastor who had to pay the bills.

### Sister Alma Comes As Principal

Sister Alma came in September 1959. She had a reputation for being very progressive. She was a music teacher, but she had her hand in everything. As soon as she entered a school office, she investigated how she could best bring out the gifts and talents of everybody surrounding her. She had a knack for ferreting out opportunities for both the Sisters and the students. The Sisters must stay abreast of the times, attending classes and conventions and cultural entertainment. The students must be pushed into doing what would add to their growth and development. To be around Sister Alma was to be on the move.

The science department had been given a great boost, not only with the new equipment but also with two enthusiastic teachers. Replacing Sister Ann Carmel, Sister Charles Ann appeared on the scene with tremendous initiative and the capacity of involving the students in creative projects. Sister Charles Ann, now Mrs. Lo Rayne Anderson, said that Father Ben let her design the science lab the way she wanted it. Having been recently updated in science by summer courses on the most modern methods, she set up a model department. Sister Alma, who had a reputation for encouraging not only the students but also the Sisters as well, telling them that they were "the best" and could do anything, spurred them on to

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

enter the Science Fairs in the local, state, and national competition where they won top prizes. Eddie Ben Cordes tells about going to Albuquerque, San Francisco, and St. Louis, where he placed. His sister Jean Ann, who was in Sister Rosello's class, also won contests.

The first year they entered at Cameron they won all the top contests and the sweepstakes. This was a shock to the public school system, which decided not to let this happen again.

The students and the Sisters never missed a game in the Catholic Sports Tournament, nor Sodality meetings nor conventions. The Ft. Sill students came to St. Mary's because it was "the best." Music and choral were also on top, as they had usually been, with large groups participating. Enrollment climbed to 661. The new teachers took some time to become accustomed to the booming of cannons, which they first took for thunder and rain. Sister Rosello recalls the outdoor crib and play, "The Blue Angel," in 1959.

In 1960, the Scholastic Meet was held in Weatherford, and more names than ever appeared among the top ranking students. Some of them were: Joan Marie Lane, Robert Soucy, Charles Benke, James Lawson, Ruth Norman,

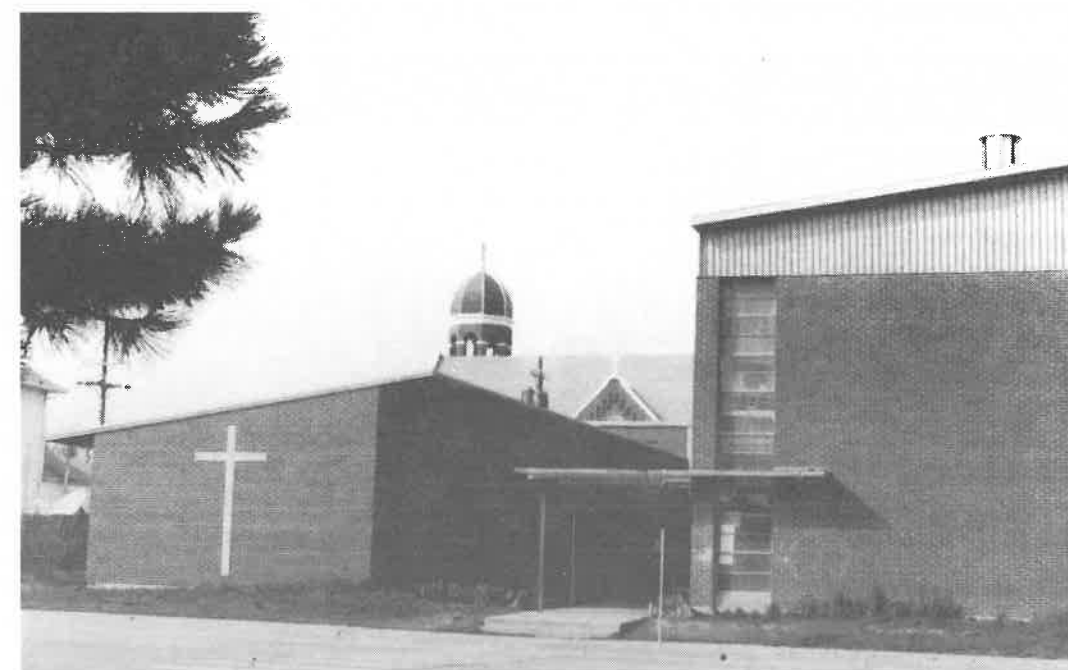
Rose Ann Attavich, Anne Powell, Joel Spear, Richard Prendergast.

That year the senior class staged the play "Stag Line," directed by Mike Niemczyk.

In 1959, V. J. Bonner and Clarence Scott (a former St. Mary's student) sent their annual report after their visit:

Mr. Scott and I enjoyed our visit at St. Mary's... you spent \$1,800 for new desks in the elementary school, \$350 for science equipment, \$350 for high school books, and \$1,000 for the elementary library. You purchased new lunch room equipment, five new typewriters, and twelve new typewriter tables and chairs. Your plans for future improvement are good. Some of your classrooms are really crowded, but you are trying to remedy that.

It seemed that no matter what the parish did to expand and find place for the elementary school, it was always overcrowded. There was and had been talk of renting additional space for some years, but Father Ben never came to the decision to do it. Enrollment was a tricky business, and who knew how the Army might fluctuate.



**The new St. Mary's High School which was built and dedicated at this time**

THE SEVENTH DECADE: 1960-1970

Death Takes a Sister

In 1960, a great tragedy occurred in the Sisters' Community. Sisters Serapia and Salette were out taking a bit of exercise one Sunday afternoon by walking along the alley near the school. They were struck by a car and immediately rushed to the hospital. Since the hospital staff did not find any identification on the Sisters, they did not know for sure they were from St. Mary's, and yet that was the only place that had Sisters, so they called the convent. Sister Alma was so taken by surprise that she told them they were not her Sisters. However, when she went to investigate, she found them missing, and she rushed to the hospital. Sister Serapia died from the accident, and Sister Salette was permanently injured. Sister Cecilia Marie, who was in the community at that time, says that the Lawton people were wonderful. They helped make all the arrangements and paid all the expenses. There was nothing they could do that they did not do. This was a difficult time for the Sisters, but the support of the parish and community will never be forgotten.

As school went on, so came the reports. This time the purchase of additional typewriters and science and math equipment were mentioned.

In 1960, the news came that there would be an elementary school at St. Barbara's Parish taught by the Ladies of the Grail, a group of dedicated lay women, who would live in Community and contribute part of their salary to the school. This caused some uncertainty in St. Mary's that perhaps many of the Ft. Sill children as well as other children living in that area would attend St. Barbara's and that would affect the enrollment at St. Mary's. However, it did not bring about a great change when it did happen.

In the meantime the excitement of participation and achievement in numerous activities continued in the high school. This was probably the year that Sister Charles Ann put the finishing touches on the science lab. The report says that this year a new science room and equipment had been added, demonstration table and desk, and science cabinets had been

added at a total cost of \$7,900.

Sister Mary Patrick Helps Her Parents

Sister Mary Patrick (AEileen) Anderson, whose mother and father were old and ill, came to Lawton to be near them in order to be of help. She remained in Lawton, being needed more and more by her parents. When her father, Isaac Clinton Anderson, died Christmas night, 1970, she was allowed by the Congregation to live with her mother, Agnes Foley Anderson, and to continue teaching sixth grade all day, as much as she was able to leave her 99-year-old mother. This became less and less until her mother died in February 1975. After that she returned to the Convent, from which she had been absent for four years and many summers.

In 1962, while Sister Alma was still superior and high school principal, Sister Eusebia was principal in the elementary school. The eighth grade girls were in the high school building taught by Mrs. Mary Schumann, and Sister Eusebia taught the eighth grade boys in the old building. In this new building there were ten classrooms.

McKinley School Is Purchased

In 1962 Father Wade Darnall was assigned to Blessed Sacrament Church. He immediately took some dramatic measures as far as the school was concerned. The first one was to purchase the vacated McKinley public school on Columbia. According to J.C. Kennedy, "This was the period when St. Mary's was booming. It had the biggest enrollment ever and it seemed that this trend would continue. The elementary was still in the old building, along with the music department, the library, etc. The Parish Board bid on McKinley School at an auction, and it was awarded to the parish for \$63,000."

Some \$12,000 worth of repairs were made on the school before it was in condition to use. In the fall of 1962, the first six grades moved to

the new school, which was called St. Mary's Elementary. The seventh and eighth grades remained in the old school. Sister Eusebia said of this school: "I believe it was the second year that our name was changed to 'John F. Kennedy'. It was before John F. Kennedy was assassinated because I remember that at our Teachers' Meeting in Oklahoma City in October, one salesman asked if I wasn't afraid to wear a name tag with 'J.F. Kennedy School,' I asked him why. He said, 'Where I come from (Dallas Book Store Depository) they're ready to kill him.' It really shook me because I thought everyone loved John. Then in November he was shot - in Dallas."

Sister was full-time principal at Kennedy for three years. The third year the seventh and eighth grades were moved to Kennedy also. This was Sister's last year there, for the next year she became principal at St. Pius School, Tulsa, for three years.

V.J. Bonner was finally satisfied that the crowded elementary had the space they needed, and he listed twelve items that had been improved, including the purchase and renovation costs of the building. His last item referred mainly to the high school, "Added physical education, physical science, and German to high school program this year. St. Mary's is certainly improving each year." Sister Alma continued to request and obtain new materials as long as she was principal. Among the items on the 1964 report were a number of improvements among which were listed: "Spent \$600 on new science equipment, started a National Honor Society, put in a professional

library for teachers, added part-time qualified (library science major) for library work."

At this time it seemed that the high school would continue to grow and be the academic and inspirational light that it had come to be. There were 27 graduates in 1963, the largest class so far. At the Scholastic Meets the school was spoken of as "the little school that wins all the prizes," Colonel Keester said. The future of the school looked very promising.

J.F. Kennedy School Also Thrives

J.F. Kennedy Elementary, too, was thriving. Mary Benke, who was a pupil in the long line of Benkes, says that a bus came for them, driven by a Cameron student, and took them to St. Mary's where they picked up the other students. There was no cafeteria at Kennedy. The students filed by the pick-up window at noon and took their trays to the classrooms, where they ate on their desks. Those who brought brown bag lunches from home also ate with them in the classrooms. There were large containers for trash, and everything was kept neat and clean. Every day the maintenance personnel buffed the floors, so the entire school was spotless. There were about 30 pupils in each classroom, and Mass was offered in the auditorium. Mary recalls that the auditorium floor was slanted for better view of performers during programs. But this made it hard for kneeling, as they knelt on a slant. There was a stage in the auditorium. Sister Raymonda played the organ for the singing at Mass. Mary enjoyed Kennedy, and besides, there was "Lucille's" across the street where they could get an ice cream cone for 2 cents or 3 cents while they waited for the school bus.

Not everybody was happy about Kennedy School. It was considered by some to be an unnecessary expenditure; it was inconvenient to take their children to two places; it was too far for the children to walk from one school to the other; and it was different from what it had always been. It was inconvenient for the Sisters to get back and forth also, especially for the principal, who was in charge of both places.

Sisters' Residence Is Enlarged

Father Darnall's second big step concerned the Sisters' residence. The Church had purchased Breton's Lot 2, November 22,



Crowded Classroom



## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

1961, for \$17,000. Sister Eusebia said of this project, "He had an architect draw up a plan for a new convent. However, those who had a say, especially Mr. Carl Benke, vetoed it. Thus the plain brick structure was begun before I left. This was to be an annex to the white house where we were living."

The reason for building the new Sisters' convent was that part of the white house they had been living in had been condemned. When the decision was made to build an annex instead of a complete new building, this would make it unnecessary to live in the condemned second floor and yet have private rooms in the annex. A red brick, two-story extension was built by B.H. Fehring, who contributed most of his labor. It was connected to the other building by halls and doors on the first and second floors so that there was easy access to the bedroom section and work space. The old building had a long porch in front, but the annex had only a front stoop. The annex contained seven bedrooms and multiple baths upstairs. Downstairs it had large and small workroom spaces, a toilet, and a front room. The Sisters were delighted to have the extra space and private rooms after having lived so many years in cramped conditions.

### New Principal Comes

In 1964, Sister Bernard Joseph came as high school principal, and Sister Eusebia remained as elementary principal. By this time everything was in place for two model schools, the high school and J.F. Kennedy. The enrollment had peaked at 699 in 1960 and leveled off for a few years. By 1964, it had dropped to the 450 range and it continued to drop, for some unaccountable reason.

Sister Bernard Joseph was truly impressed with all the activity: academics, sports, contests, Sodality. There was a beautiful family spirit and integration had been accepted for a long time. The school community really cared about one another, Sister observed.

Colonel J.F. Keester (retired) taught speech and drama. Jean Ann Cordes, who is an English teacher and head of the English Department at Eisenhower, looks back to these last years with nostalgia. "My education has been the best. What impressed me very much, too, was the fact that the Sisters did not just take the cream of the crop in this school which had advanced academic programs. It also took the



### The 1961 Team is geared up for action with Coach Ray Newman

'throwaways' from the public school and worked with them as human beings that needed special attention. Perhaps these pupils did not graduate, but they did enjoy some period of caring and personal attention in their chaotic lives. The Sisters also took in some students who could not pay any tuition." Sister Rosello was Jean Ann's science teacher when she won first place at the Science Fair and went to St. Louis. Eddie Ben Cordes had graduated "Magna Cum Laude" in 1963, taking many honors. He is grateful for this education and measures what he sees in education today by what he received.

When Charles Saffa was in junior high in 1965, the high school football team had a scarcity of players, as was usually the case. To appear stronger than they actually were in the presence of the opponent, the coach had several of the biggest junior boys suit out in the football uniforms and sit on the bench. Charles was delighted to be one of these "benchwarmers."

### Boys Will Be Boys

By this time the Sisters were living in the two houses, that is, the white house and its annex. They were in their new habit also. They no longer had a housekeeper as had always been the case, but took turns cooking their meals. Sister Marie Gubbels was director of the CCD. One night after Sister Marie had left the house, the Sisters thought they heard someone on the second floor at the door that opened between the

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

house and the annex. They called the police, who came immediately. They switched on the light above the stoop on the annex, which they seldom did because they used the other doors. After the police had searched the house and found nothing, they spoke to the Sisters briefly at the annex door before they left. "Do you have many guests?" one of them asked. "No, you are the first ones here," was the answer. "Why?" The police pointed up to the light, and for the first time they discovered it was red. They never doubted that changing the white light to the red was a prank of the Wade boys, who lived nearby.

Sister Eugenia Ann Stell was principal at J.F. Kennedy in the year 1965-66. It was this year that they decided to have a Memorial Service for President Kennedy and unveil a picture of the popular president that was furnished by J.C. Kennedy for the occasion. All the people who had anything to do with the school were there. It was a ceremony to be remembered, especially since only a few months away the decision would be made to move out and close the school. For this was its last year.

Blessed Sacrament Parish also gave the program "This Is Your Life" for Father Darnall's Silver Jubilee. Bishop Reed was there and the program was a great success.



Sister Eugenia Ann, JFK principal, presides at the unveiling of the John F. Kennedy picture. Father Darnall enjoys the humor, it seems.

## High School Closes

It is not the business of this book to probe the reason for closing the high school after so much money and effort had been spent in developing it and making it the best and most progressive high school in this part of the country. Likewise after having spent great sums of money to purchase and equip Kennedy School with the best and run an excellent program, they had to pluck up the student body and faculty and transport them back to their origin. But these things were done.

Sister Bernard was sorry to see the high school close, and so were the many, many students who would now transfer to other schools. Even as late as 1965, they had added a counseling program and a new counseling room for the students. They had also purchased 300 new steel lockers and installed new stage equipment, maps, and other teaching aids. It looked like a sudden decision. Mother Amata, the superior general at that time, was taking a critical look at the schools staffed by the members of the Congregation and discussing the future with pastors. She, too, was in favor of closing the high school as the enrollment was decreasing in both high school and elementary departments. The graduating class was down from 22 the previous year to 15 in 1966.

The high school closed with many tears. It had always been accredited with the state; students and parents were satisfied; the activities of the school had enhanced the Church and the Church services; and some musicians are still furnishing the liturgical music in the Churches today. But times were changing.

Even the Regional House of the Sisters of Divine Providence, which had been opened and renovated with so much care in Bethany, had no young people in formation. It, too, was soon to fold up and fade away. Likewise every school in Oklahoma which the Sisters had staffed since the earliest days was closing or had been closed already. The parishes were seeing parochial schools, especially if they were small, as superfluous when there were good public schools next door, financed by government funds when Catholic schools were financed by the blood, sweat, and tears of the parishioners, the priests, and the Sisters. CCD programs were to replace Catholic schools to teach the children their religion, with the help of parents who

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

were also getting involved in their faith and becoming active participants in the life and government of the Church.

### St. Mary's Becomes Elementary

The school did not close, however. The elementary grades, 6-9, moved into the high school building. Grades 1-5 were in the old school. Sister Angelene came as elementary principal in 1966. Everything was in turmoil. Sister Eugenia Ann had been assigned as Diocesan School Visitor, living in Bethany. All the school equipment had been returned to either the old school or the high school, packed in boxes and stacked in huge piles wherever there was a foot of space to store it. Sister Angelene thinks back with horror at what she found moving in. It seemed an insurmountable task to organize all this material and equipment to be ready for school in September. But with help from the faculty, students, parents, and other persons, she finally obtained some semblance of order. Once in order, what a paradise for a Junior High School!

### Thanks Go To Loyal Helpers

It is impossible at this time to mention all the people, men and women, who had assisted in the educational programs and social activities: the athletic coaches, the volunteers, chaperones, drivers, carnival workers, assistants, and part-time teachers, who had become a part of the cement which glued the high school and the elementary school together all these years. This had always been a pattern at St. Mary's and still is today. An era had ended and a new one was to begin.

The science department, which had been built up with such care and foresight, which had enabled high school students to perform extraordinary scientific experiments and won them innumerable prizes locally, regionally, and nationally, was still intact. The Junior High were the most fortunate, what with all the high school equipment in science, library, gym, and counseling space. The school still had two buses and Ft. Sill sent one bus load of students.

In spite of all this, there were only 110 in Junior High, and the state supervisor said to give up the ninth grade and have only an elementary school for the 1967-68 term. Sister Angelene worked hard organizing and

supervising the curriculum and the extra-curricular activities. But in spite of all that was in their favor, grades seven and eight were small in number, and the State Education Department recommended that they also be transferred to the public schools. This happened in 1968. The rest of the elementary, which had been in the old school since they moved from Kennedy, now were moved into the high school building, so that the complete elementary school from 1-6 was together again.

Sister Angelene remembers with gratitude the Bellers family, Frances and George Hampton, and the Benkes, who helped her through these unstable days. Sister Angelene loved the Lawton people and her stay in Lawton in spite of all the upsets.

The Ladies of the Grail were leaving St. Barbara's School at this time, and the Sisters of Divine Providence were invited to take that school. Father Darnall was in favor since Blessed Sacrament did not have many children left in the parish. But Mother Amata disagreed, for she thought that after having been there so long and perhaps being needed now more than ever, the Sisters should stay in St. Mary's.

### What Happened to J.F. Kennedy School?

With removal of the students from Kennedy School, the question naturally arose, what to do with the place? And what was done with it became a "Landmark Case." J.C. Kennedy, who is president of the governing body of Columbia Square, says this is what happened. After a great deal of consideration, a Columbia Square Corporation was formed with the purpose of purchasing the school property and building low income housing on it. At the time of the formation of this group and this plan and ever since, it was under the direction of the Archbishop of Oklahoma, who was then Bishop Victor Reed. The Archbishop appoints the members, who are changed from time to time. The Board appointed Githan Rhoads as attorney during the Columbia Square deal. When the property and building were purchased, the Board needed a permit from the city to build the housing.

When word got around about this project, there was a great deal of protest from people mainly within a forty-block area and some members of the parish, saying that there would be overcrowding, overuse of utilities, and

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

traffic. But the underlying, unpublicized objection was discrimination, as private calls and harrassment soon indicated.

The result of the protest was that the City Council failed to grant the permit, changing the property from a public facility to a multi-family residence, as was the rest of the neighborhood. The Corporation then filed suit in Federal Court to force the Council to issue the permit, and it won the suit. But the pressure on City Council continued, and they appealed the decision to the Circuit Court of Appeals, which also found in favor of the permit. The building permit was then issued.

This was a Landmark Case because although under certain stated conditions, it was a discrimination case. The forty-year mortgage is with HUD (Housing and Urban Development). The Columbia Square is a great success, looked upon now favorably by the City Council and the neighborhood. It is 100 percent occupied with approximately one-third blacks, one-third whites, and one-third refugees. There is no opposition now, and the City Council is very cooperative. Members of the board at present are J.C. Kennedy, president; Rev. Wade Darnall, secretary; Rev. Elmer Robnett; Rev. James Stafford; Frank Pondrom; Genevieve Jackson; and Polly Jung.

### Sisters Move Into Annex

In the beginning of 1968, the Sisters were living in the large white house, where the kitchen, music rooms, laundry, chapel, and living rooms were. Sister Patricia Ann recalls moving into the annex in 1969. In order to live there completely, a kitchen had to be equipped and a dining room provided. The narrow workroom on the north side had to be converted into a kitchen. Into this space were moved from the other building the refrigerator, deep-freeze, washer and dryer, and the stove. Cabinets were already there, as was a sink. All they needed now was the space to move between the equipment. The long room was twelve feet wide and this was taken up by cabinet space on both sides, leaving four feet in the widest space and twenty-seven inches in the narrowest. It was and is an acrobatic feat for more than one person to be in this space at one time. The dining room table was placed in the large community/work room south of the kitchen. The living room remained the same, and all the

bedrooms were upstairs. The hall space connecting the two buildings was removed and the entrances between the two buildings closed up. The white house remained empty for a year or so until the company that demolished the Kennedy School also razed the Convent. The Convent from this time stood and stands in an open space between what was the white house and Lot 1, which was purchased by two persons, of whom Carl Benke was one, during Urban Renewal. Benke donated his part of the Lot to the Church, and the rest was purchased, along with the rest of the Block, all of which now belongs to the parish.

### Father Darnall Leaves

Father Darnall was transferred in 1969. He had been a pastoral priest in the parish since 1962 and had supported the school and the faculty through all the changes that had occurred. He had been instrumental in purchasing the old McKinley School and facilitating its operation. He had later agreed, at the suggestion of the Education Department and Mother Amata, to close the high school and move the elementary children back into the high school building. He had built the annex to the Sisters' residence and helped in every way possible to make life for the Sisters comfortable and convenient. He was well-liked among the parishioners for his personal interest in them. He was transferred to Frederick, but he keeps in close contact with the Lawton Community and has remained on the Columbia Square Board of Directors.



One of the many floats built by the students over the years. This parade was in Lawton

CHAPTER 8

THE EIGHTH DECADE: 1970-1980

Father Elmer Schwartz Comes

To replace Father Darnall came Father Elmer Schwartz. He was a school man. He spent much of his time in the school teaching music appreciation, helping in the cafeteria, teaching science and religion in the school, and driving the school bus. He brought his guitar and taught singing to the children and modernized the children's liturgy. He raised the annual salary of the Sisters to \$2,100 and the next year to \$2,500.

Bishop Reed Dies

Bishop Reed died in 1971 after a period in which he tried to implement the recommendations of Vatican Council II. After the period of institutionalism in the 50s Bishop Reed was a progressive, who, in what appeared to be a laid-back manner, allowed the Church to go its way. For this he was criticized and his residence was often picketed by the more conservative Catholics. Of this period Father David Monahan wrote in the Centennial booklet of the diocese in 1975:

If the '50s were a time of undisturbed and numerically upward growth for the Catholic Church in Oklahoma, the '60s were the opposite. Institutional life in America discovered the decade of the '60s to be a wild-unprogrammed ride-destination unknown. That was very true of the Church in Oklahoma. The Catholic Church, after a 400-year pause, shifted gears; and the old Church jerked and sputtered in the process. The Church in Oklahoma proved to be a kind of bellwether of the whole Catholic Church in the U.S. For whatever reasons, the Church trends of the 1960s seemed to be found in Oklahoma well ahead of the general experience of most other dioceses. The transition was a necessary one, even if painful and often with ambiguous results (78).

With Bishop John Quinn in 1971 came a period of decisiveness and reorganization. After two years the diocese was divided, with Bishop Bernard Ganter in Tulsa and Archbishop Quinn in Oklahoma City. At the end of 100 years of Oklahoma Church, there was a fitting celebration in 1975.

Sister Helen Agnes Dies

In the spring of 1971, Sister Helen Agnes, who had been in St. Mary's four years, was preparing her music students for auditions to be held in a few weeks when she contracted pneumonia. The Sisters ministered to her in the Convent until the doctor advised them she was losing ground. Sister Patricia Ann had her placed in Community Hospital as there was no one at the Convent during the school day to take care of her. Parents of the children and members of the parish sat with her during the day and rotated with the Sisters during the night. After a week she died in the hospital on April 23.

The funeral was held in the Church on Sunday. Many Sisters came from the Oklahoma and the north Texas schools to attend the funeral. Early Monday morning the body was flown to San Antonio for burial. This tremendous shock to the little Community-Sister Patricia Ann, Sister Miriam Teresa, and Sister Louis-also left St. Mary's without a music teacher at a critical time when they were preparing for the auditions. Sister Benilde was borrowed from Ponca City to complete this program and to close out the music classes for the year.

The metal rocking chair on the Sisters' back porch, where Sister Helen Agnes used to sit and rock during her moments of relaxation, is still standing there. On windy days it rocks back and forth gently, and Sister Miriam Teresa says, "Sister Helen Agnes is out there meditating now."

Sister Eugenia Clare is New Principal

Sister Eugenia Clare came as principal in September 1971. During most of this time from then on the Community remained stable. Sister Miriam Teresa had come in 1967, and has been there ever since, teaching the first grade. Sister Francisca came back to Lawton for the second time in 1971 as librarian and reading teacher. She remained until she retired in 1985. Sister Rose Pousson was the last music teacher to be stationed at St. Mary's. She came in 1971 and left in 1978.

Sister Francisca, now living in the Congregational Retirement Center in San Antonio, recalls that Sister Eugenia Clare was a resourceful principal. The students had dancing, music, and a good P.E. program. There were usually good relations with the public school. There were school nurses and therapy for a dyslexic child. St. Barbara's brought their children to St. Mary's in their bus, but St. Mary's public school children were bused to St. Barbara's for religion classes. George Hampton drove the school bus and cleaned the school. He was also a great help in the school, as he and Mrs. Frances Hampton, who had been secretary to the principal since the time of Sister Angelene, also helped in the school cafeteria where Mrs. Robert Hernandez was in charge. Jerry Pierce also drove a school bus. Pierce tells of the speakers he installed in his bus during the seasons of Christmas and Easter so he could play seasonal music. "The kids brought tapes of Christmas carols and we had a lot of fun," he said.



By 1970, St. Mary's School was Elementary Grades 1-6. Sister Patricia Ann Sullivan was principal

Day-Care Center is Opened

A Day-Care Center had been opened at St. Mary's in 1968 and was still in operation until 1976, under the direction of Mrs. Madge Wade. There were two reasons for introducing the Center. Bishop Reed had encouraged the laity to take leadership roles in the Church and to become involved with non-Catholic Churches in the area in an effort of ecumenism. Mrs. Wade, who was already working on civic projects, was asked by Father Darnall to look into a much needed day-care center. The government inspectors had objected to the kind of care that was being given in some day-care centers in the area, and she knew that the Methodists were trying to establish a well-organized and operated center but they did not have the space. Mrs. Wade worked with the Methodists and Presbyterians to establish a joint center in the empty St. Mary's School.

With help from various civic clubs, they succeeded in getting the Center going. It worked very well and was filled during the entire period that it was in operation. Along with the Center came much classroom furniture, playground equipment in two areas, and a fence around the playground next to 6th Street. This helped to solve the Day Care Center problems in Lawton and made a great contribution to the City, and encouraged ecumenism.

When Father Robnett came in 1975, he had other plans for the building, so the program was discontinued.

Father Robnett Comes As Pastor

Father Elmer Robnett came as pastor to Blessed Sacrament Parish in 1975, and is still here at the time of this writing.

Almost simultaneous with his coming was begun a project by Dr. Robert Krebsbach, which was to change the face of the parish and the school in the years following. Dr. Krebsbach, who lived in the parish, had a family of his own and some adopted children. He sponsored the first Vietnamese family in Lawton and obtained housing for them, and he gave medical services to the refugees free.

When the first Vietnamese came to Lawton under Dr. Krebsbach's sponsorship, he



## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

When the first Vietnamese came to Lawton under Dr. Krebsbach's sponsorship, he had intended that they would go to the public school to learn English since St. Mary's had no facilities for undertaking this kind of teaching. But the Vietnamese had other ideas. They were Catholics and Blessed Sacrament was their base. So they came into the school, with Father Robnett's permission. Moreover the refugees began being channeled to Lawton in such great numbers that Father Robnett saw it was necessary to establish a resettlement program for them.

At first the program was run by Father Robnett, with the assistance of Katie Stofa in charge of housing and Mrs. Charles Beller helping with food. The staff eventually grew as other needs arose and the number continued to multiply. When Sister Madeleine Zimmerer came to St. Mary's, she was surprised to see and hear Father Robnett's dogs barking and whining under the classroom windows. She helped set up a primary library in an old dressing room for the little children so they could always find books on their level. "It was bright and cheerful," she said. "We acquired many books from St. Joseph's School in Enid when it closed. I was part-time school secretary and part-time teacher, with religion and reading classes. I coached the school volleyball team with Mrs. George (Lynette) Finger, who could not always be there after school. Our St. Mary's team won first place in the city tournament."

### Refugee ESL Classes Are Organized

When Sister Elizabeth Marie came in 1975 and saw the number of adult refugees who did not know a word of English, she determined to do something about it. At first she invited them to come twice a week at night to her classroom, and she tried to decide what would be the best way to go at this. Since she knew no Vietnamese and they knew no English, she was at a loss, but not for long; she went to the Red Cross. They gave her some simple texts with the Vietnamese language in them and some Vietnamese/English dictionaries. "Scott-Foresman gave me permission to copy some of their copyrighted material provided I did not sell it. The class enrollment rose from 25 at the beginning to 74 by Christmas. My volunteer helpers soon grew to four." She was changed at mid-term, just as she had everything under



Some of the buildings at Columbia Square today, which won the noted "Landmark Case"

control.

After this Father started an ESL class in the old school with the help of government aid.

After six years Sister Elizabeth Marie met and visited with some of her former students in Gulfport, Texas. They were having some difficulty with the officials for whom they were working. These supervisors asked Sister to tell them they must obey the rules for shrimping. "I told them that the Vietnamese understood everything that they told them. Up to then they made the officials believe that they did not understand the law. All this has improved now."

Housing was made available for the refugees in the vicinity of St. Mary's and Blessed Sacrament Church so that many families lived between C Avenue and Arlington, a block or so east and west of 7th Street. This put them practically on Church property, where they spent much of their time. And the area came to be known as "Little Saigon."

The children came to school even though there was not enough classroom space or available teachers, and they understood no English. Sister Miriam Teresa, who has been in Lawton since 1968, said, "We didn't know how to cope with them, and we had no help. We did what we could and they learned some English, but most of the little ones spent two years in the first grade. Sister Eugenia Clare, principal at the time, was very good with them. She took them out by themselves and worked with them. She loved them and was patient with them, and they came to love her." The Vietnamese were educated in Vietnam and were quite aggressive.

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

They learned fast, but the little ones did not get along with the American children. It was not long before the Ft. Sill parents began to take their children out of school. Some parish children also dropped out, Sister said.

Both Sister Eugenia Clare and Miriam Teresa said that the school maintained its standard and its affiliation - but with great difficulty on the part of the teachers. Achievement tests showed the students were at grade level, and this standard has continued through all these difficult years. "It is and was much harder to teach in this situation, and the teachers have to be flexible. Everything, especially in the beginning, was unpredictable," Sister Miriam Teresa said.

### Public School Provides Help

In the second year the public school provided help for the students, but it was to be given at Washington School, a few blocks north and west, and there was no transportation to and from the school for the children. They had to be guided over there and back between occasional rides. Soon it was thought that they could walk by themselves. However, this became very difficult in rainy and snowy weather. One snowy day they went on strike. "We no go!" they shouted. But in the end, they went. Sometimes the cafeteria food was not to their liking either. One day it came to a climax. "We no eat," they said firmly, standing at the cafeteria door. But when Father Robnett made his appearance with his belt off, they ate.

There had always been buses carrying the children - one or two from Ft. Sill and two or more from St. Mary's. After the high school and junior high closed, only one Ft. Sill bus came. Now it, too, was discontinued. St. Mary's had two buses after the high school left. Those also ceased to run, first one, then both.

"Being principal at St. Mary's was quite normal when I first came in 1971," Sister Eugenia Clare said, "but everything changed." They told the public school officials that they would have to send all the refugees to the public school unless some summer school help was given so they could learn some English before the new term started. Then it did offer some summer school courses. Finally the public school moved its special teachers over to the old school building and set up classrooms there so time and energy would not be wasted going back

and forth.

R.D. Twohatchet and Mike Bilvais have been very helpful and interested throughout these years. They come periodically to visit the school and teachers, are never absent from school activities, and are a great support to the teachers in the school.

With the old school empty in 1977, except for the offices on the ground floor, a nursery was opened for 3- and 4-year-olds, and a Headstart Program for sixty 4-year-olds was established first in the Church basement and then moved to the old school building. There were still CCD classes for the public school children taught on Saturday mornings. Sisters Francisca and Miriam Teresa taught there.

When Sister Eugenia Clare had completed her six-year term as principal, she resigned that position but continued in the school as a classroom teacher, where she still is today.

### First Lay Principal Is Hired

Maureen Sticco, an Army wife, was St. Mary's first lay principal. She accepted this position in 1977 and remained there for one year. She was followed in 1978 by Sister Antonine Maca, RSM, who brought with her boundless energy and enthusiasm and a heart full of love and compassion for the refugees. She gave of herself and her community resources completely. Besides being in school all day, she furnished clothing, food, and other necessities, which she took to their homes and showed the refugees how to use them. It was greatly through her efforts that the refugees learned how to use the plumbing and appliances in their American homes.

Sister Antonine provided summer school for the refugees, using her congregational resources and personnel. One summer the religious Community sent its novices to teach, and the second year the outgoing members of the General Administration spent part of the summer teaching in Lawton. When a refugee girl was raped, it was Sister Antonine who took care of her. Sister Antonine reactivated the kindergarten at St. Mary's.

When Sister Francisca Lott wrote for the CDP TIMES, the Congregational newsletter, in 1981, she summed up what went on in the early years with the refugees:

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

### Lawton Beams Missionary Welcome

By Sister Francisca Lott

An enrollment of 137 refugee children at St. Mary's School in Lawton is a far cry from 1975 when four little Vietnamese youngsters crossed the threshold of the school. For several days they looked at us and we stared back at them, wondering how we could communicate. Then came the breakthrough, and we realized they were like all children, eager and ready to learn. Helping them to learn English required that the teacher become an actor, dramatizing and illustrating each new word the learner encountered. It was a wonderful learning experience.

As time went on, scores of others, in native costume, joined the group and we became accustomed to the oriental atmosphere. Some of the local parents did not like what was happening and chose to withdraw their children and send them to the public school.

Since funds were lacking for hiring teachers at the time, the little newcomers joined regular classes. Mothers of the parish volunteered to tutor, and this, along with the willingness of many of the American children to help them and the efforts of devoted teachers, enabled them to communicate after a fashion before the close of the school year.

During the summer of 1975, the public school system set up a program for teaching conversational English. We were pleasantly surprised when they returned to us in September and were able to act as interpreters for many of the adults.

### How It All Began

This new phase of missionary work came into being when a local physician, the father of three boys and five adopted children, including two Anglos and three blacks, brought 47 Viets to Lawton and settled them in low-rent houses. These were mostly "boat people" who had earned their living by fishing. As soon as they were able to own an old car that would run, they were up and away to states with a waterfront where they could fish. They are now scattered across the country from California to New York, and from Minnesota to Texas and Mississippi. Only one family of five from the original group remains. Many of those who have left still keep in contact with Father, either by telephone or

short visits as they are passing through. Perhaps they feel a bit of nostalgia about Lawton since this was their first real home away from home.

### Viets Replaced By New Groups

As the Viets made their exodus, their places were taken by Lao H'Mongs and Cambodian refugees, most of whom are animists. Father Robnett finds them to be a prayerful people and very receptive to the teachings of the Catholic Church. More than 50 adults and children have received baptism. Father says there is a great need to follow up and further instruct them in their homes, hopefully by Sisters. Mass seems to be a real celebration for all, even the unbaptised who attend faithfully every Sunday. Many of the children find their way into the Church a few minutes after 7:30 every morning.

We are grateful for a principal, Sister Antonine, RSM, who keeps an ear attuned to the needs of these people in such areas as counseling and child care, dispensing non-prescriptive medicine for minor aches and pains. Sister also goes into the homes to teach ways of cleanliness and nutrition. Last year two more classrooms were added for refugee children for the first to fourth grades who knew no English. As they advance, they are placed in regular classes according to age. This arrangement eases somewhat the burden of classroom teachers trying to teach two separate groups.

Now when a refugee child succeeds with a problem or test, there is a clapping of hands and expression of praise. Both the cultures and the color gap are disappearing.

The Cambodians who replaced the Vietnamese in part are not so well educated as the Vietnamese were, and the adults find it very difficult, sometimes impossible, to learn any English, so that the children are the hope of their parents in America, wherever they may be. Non-English speaking people are able to obtain only the most menial work. There have also been Chinese, Rumanians, and Ethiopians here. Today there are fewer immigrants than at any time since they began to come. And many who came have gone. "The government still furnishes the Title I, II, and VI programs for the refugees, but there is no other outside help in the school except for volunteers," Father Robnett said.

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

### CHAPTER 9

#### THE NINTH DECADE: 1980-1987

### School Sees Dark Days

As the ninth decade opened, Sister Antonine, RSM, was still in command, but there was always a cloud floating over the horizon. "How much longer can the parish support this school?" And the school was apologetic for being a burden to the parish.

On October 6, 1981, Father Robnett sent a letter to the teachers, stating that he would no longer be able to pay the faculty. After some prayers, Sister Miriam Teresa sent the announcement to Ed Clark, who was himself a St. Mary's graduate and with whom she had had some conversation previously. Thereafter he sent a check for \$2,000 each month to pay the Sisters. This temporary help was a godsend for the year, but it was discontinued after that year.

In 1982, the once beautiful and highly equipped science room was divided to accommodate refugees in ESL classes and the kindergarten. The science tables, the equipment, and the utensils were disposed of or stolen. Some of the microscopes were put into the classrooms, but not many are found today.

After three years as principal, Sister Antonine left St. Mary's in 1982. The refugees felt the removal of her personal and congregational support. She was succeeded by Adrienne Wilson as principal.

### Mrs. Wilson Comes As Principal

Mrs. Woodrow Wilson, who was a former student of St. Mary's from K-8 and whose brother Robert (1963) and sister Linda (1965) were St. Mary's graduates, graduated from Cameron in 1978. She then came for a few months as an intern teacher at St. Mary's. In 1979, Father Robnett hired her to teach kindergarten. The first year she taught in the basement of the old school, where the offices are now. Then the kindergarten was moved to the second floor recently-divided science room in the new school.

State inspectors soon warned that small children could not be taught upstairs, so they moved downstairs into what is now the kindergarten room. At first she kept the

children a whole day, but they became so numerous that she divided them, taking half in the morning and half in the afternoon. One class was mostly refugees. "I was also working at night in the adult ESL program," she said. "Then Father asked me to be principal in 1982. I was principal for two years, until Woody and I adopted Megan; then I decided I should stay home with her for awhile," she said.

"I enjoyed being principal, and I did some teaching, too. Sister Loretta, the diocesan supervisor, was very helpful to me, and my whole experience there was good." Adrienne enjoyed working with the Sisters again, for "I remember them so well from my school days."

### Cambodians Celebrate

The Cambodians celebrate their New Year, Tet, April 21, usually with a Chinese dinner and traditional dancing. In 1983, the invitation included the following statement:

This celebration is our way of saying thanks to all of you who have, through your help and your kindness, made us feel welcome when we were strangers in this new land. We wish you always health, happiness, and prosperity in this new year, and all of the years to come.

A special note to Father Robnett, accompanied with a money tree, said,

Thank you, Father Robnett, for letting us practice dancing in the gym for the last six weeks and for bringing us here, so that we have something to celebrate and the freedom with which to do it.

### Theology Classes Offered

In the meantime the entire Community had the opportunity to attend theology classes in an extension program from Newton College, Kansas, as obtained by Sister Loretta, the Archdiocesan Supervisor. These classes were given in St. Mary's in the old school building. Ten theology classes offered by a variety of

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

archdiocesan teachers were held during the next three years. About 40 adults, including some of the Sisters and priests, spent Saturday mornings in these classes. Father Darnall was one of them.

In 1985-86, the Title teachers from the public school were no longer allowed to teach in the parochial school building, according to government regulations. Twohatchet went to a great deal of trouble and expense to rent a mobile home and place it across from the school facing A Avenue. The City was also very cooperative in placing crossing signs between the school and this building; it has been very convenient for all concerned.

### Mrs. Oppenheimer Is New Principal

Finally came Mrs. Magdali Oppenheimer, who is still in charge at this time. She has an M.A. degree with qualifications in kindergarten and P.E. She is originally from Puerto Rico. Mrs. Oppenheimer came with the enthusiasm and boundless energy that Sister Antonine manifested on her arrival. Her energies from early morning until sometimes late at night are spent for the children and well-being of the school, in spite of lack of resources. She believes in giving the children a chance to participate in many learning activities. Computers are found in the classrooms; programs and singing bring to life the meaning of the various holidays and seasons of celebration. Costumes and parades enliven the celebrations. But that is not all. She attends all diocesan school meetings and brings back



Father Robnett with two of his friends

suggestions, projects, and recommendations for the teachers and pupils. She is concerned for the school and the children, whom she loves.

Mrs. Oppenheimer has built a large kindergarten class, and has trained the children in many arts and endeavors. But she has suffered many hardships in maintaining the school. If she were not so dedicated, she could not afford to remain as St. Mary's principal. Of this school, she has this to say: "I didn't really want to be principal when Father asked me. But I thought it over and went to look at the school. It was a great challenge for me, although I would have received a much better salary in other jobs that were offered to me. I took it. I had no secretary, no help. I worked from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. to get ready for school. Then I was committed." She was not sure what she was getting into or how it would turn out. But the following statement gives some clue as to why she stays:

"Something in St. Mary's you can only see if you are there. Once you are there, you belong - it's all inside the school: the buildings, the walls. There are some strong families that work for St. Mary's. Now I belong."

Thinking of the schedules and the teaching that goes on, she continued:

"There is caring in the teaching. The pupils know they are loved. It is in the atmosphere. Because of this, teaching and learning become easier. After a short time the kids can function in regular classes. Most become good students and good kids. They are the hope of the refugees."

This year, 1986-87, there is a larger enrollment; there are more Americans there. The Ft. Sill children keep coming back again in spite of the fact that all the playground equipment, except for a few old tires, was removed in 1986. "This school has been accredited for 80 years. We always get good reports from supervisors. I can feel God in this school," Mrs. Oppenheimer said.

### Why The Sisters Stay

"Why do I stay here?" Sister Miriam Teresa echoed the question put to her. "I love the people, and teaching the refugees is a challenge. Our Congregation counts as one of its major priorities its service to the materially poor. It is important to train the youth, to share our faith with them so that they can also share."

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

Sister Miriam also mentioned the fact that converts, as so many of the refugees have become, need pastoral parish life if they are to remain in the Church.

And Sister Eugenia Clare said, "I stayed in Lawton because I thought we were needed. I like teaching refugees. There is great satisfaction in seeing them learn." True, she said, it is more work and takes more planning, but there are no complaints from the parents. Also it is still the only Catholic education center south of Oklahoma City." Sister Francisca added, "It is a cultural influence, and with the refugees it makes a different kind of contribution."

Sister Andrea, who has been teaching at St. Mary's five years, had this to say: "Teaching in Lawton, especially working with the refugee children, has been one of the happiest and most rewarding experiences of my religious life. It is, I believe, the real reason why our founder, Father Moye, established us. He was himself a missionary to China for many years."

"Being a sponsor at Baptism for eleven of my Cambodian and Vietnamese pupils has been a great joy. In many ways I have learned from their cheerfulness in doing with so little, their simplicity of life, and their eagerness to learn."

### How Father Robnett Sees It

Father Robnett sees one of the purposes of the Catholic school as evangelization. As pastor, this has been one of his priorities, and he has had some success in this endeavor. Since his coming to Blessed Sacrament in 1975, he has had 1,630 converts, of whom 115 are children from 8-12. Many of these are refugees who have been instructed in the school and have requested baptism. No child is baptised without the parents' permission and support. In many of these cases the entire family has also been baptised, but some parents are confirmed Buddhists or other oriental religions. They, however, have consented to their children's instruction and baptism.

Jacque Suy, a Cambodian catechist, has also played an important role in this endeavor. While Jacque is an official translator for the Cambodian refugees in Lawton, he also teaches religion to them and follows up on them while they are in Lawton. He gives a short homily in Cambodian at the International Mass at 10:00



12 year old Dorop Leng from Cambodia won the state spelling bee for Catholic and private school in Oklahoma City in 1987. St. Mary's traditional winners are still prominent in many areas.

a.m. on Sundays and sings a Cambodian hymn at that Mass.

Serving the Vietnamese as well as the other Catholics in the parish is Father Joseph Lien Ngoc, who has been here one year.

### What Is The Future?

Father Robnett does not know what the future of the school is. "Unless families with children move into the parish and come to school, it can not survive. I don't know how many of the present enrollment are from the parish. There are 75 in the CCD classes."

Father thinks that if the seventh and eighth grades were here, that would help. "I can't pay adequate salaries to the teachers. Expenses increase every year in spite of enrollment. But, yes, we will try again next year."

Max Seibold Jr. is President of the Home and School Association, as his father was when his children were in school. Contrary to what some people believe, he says the future of St. Mary's is very bright. Today people are looking to such a school for the caring, thorough, Christian teaching such an education can give and does provide. I couldn't love my children more than the Sisters love them. I am speaking specifically of Sister Miriam Teresa, who has taught them all plus other of my relatives. This is important. I know that Sisters may not always be here, but with the precedent they have set, the school can thrive with enthusiastic support of the pastor. But this fact



## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

has to be communicated loud and strongly. Then the pupils and the support will come."

Will it survive? The Sisters of Divine Providence say "Providence will provide." All

their other schools in Oklahoma, except Tulsa, have closed or been taken over. "St. Mary's is the only one of our schools left. There must be a reason."

## EPILOGUE

The story of St. Mary's, recorded on the previous pages, ended May 31, 1987. It was to be distributed at the 80th birthday party of the school. But unfortunately this did not happen. Now we need to bring the history up to date because some changes have come about since that time.

Rev. James Stafford is the new pastor, having arrived in July. He had never been in a parish with a school before and was not sure how this added responsibility might turn out. But he is impressed by what he sees.

On October 17, the school celebrated its 80th birthday with a party at which students from 1907 to 1987 were present. Archbishop Charles Salatka celebrated the special Mass, with Father Wade Darnall as homilist. The eighteen Sisters present repeated their perpetual vows in common at that Mass. The alumni, under the leadership of Neal Goode, served a free meal in the gym to all present. Much reminiscing took place and the entire celebration was pronounced a success by the large number attending.

So what does Father Stafford think of the school and its shaky future? "I think the school is doing remarkably well. The principal, faculty, and staff are great. The children are learning and happy. Taken as a whole, the school personnel, the parish board, the parents, and the home and school association are a pleasure to work with."

Father laments the fact that the faculty are underpaid, and he wants to remedy that as soon as he can.

"The school, of course, is not self-supporting and must be subsidized by the parish. I would like to refurbish the building, but that will have to wait. I have a feeling that the 'voucher' law is coming soon, as the American people want a competitive educational system that they can afford for their children. President Reagan is in favor of it, and it would be a blessing all around." Father is very optimistic about the future of the school.

And so this takes us into 1988, a new year.



The Sisters' residence today  
606 Gore Blvd.

## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong



The first grade class of 1987. On the left is Mrs. Magdali Oppenheimer and on the right is the teacher, Mrs. Monica Allen

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Some Faculty Meeting Minutes

St. Mary's Gifts To The Church

One question that a parish and school asks itself is "How many persons and whom has it given to the Church as priests, Sisters, and brothers?" Although recent years have not been very fruitful, there are still active apostles from earlier days to be found.

The Meis family of eleven children moved to Lawton about 1907, where two of the older brothers opened a grocery store. Gregor, Henry, and Viola enrolled in St. Mary's in 1907 and went there a few years before the family moved on. Ferdinand, the youngest, was not yet in school. Later Ferdinand wanted to be a priest, but there was no money for education. When Viola became a nurse, she put Ferdinand through the seminary. When he was ordained in 1939, Viola entered the Congregation of Divine Providence. She (Sister Jane Frances) died in 1974 after a fruitful apostolate.

The Stecker family lived in Lawton, where Mr. Stecker was attached to the Indian School. Both Agnes and Winnie attended St. Mary's beginning in 1910 for a few years before they moved. They both entered the Convent in San Antonio later. Although Winnie left after a few years, Agnes (Sister Ernestine) lived out a long and very active life in many significant positions in the order before her death.

Urban Landoll, who graduated from St. Mary's School in 1917, entered the Congregation of the Precious Blood, where he had two brothers and two sisters in separate orders.

Anna Brown, although not from St. Mary's School nor even from Lawton itself but who lived nearby, entered the Convent in 1913, and became Sister Maura. She has been active until recently. Although she is in her '90s and deaf, she is still alert and lucid in the Congregation's Retirement Center.

Anna Sherry, with her twin sister Alice, attended St. Mary's from 1911. Anna entered the Convent and was a Sister for a number of years before she left the order and returned to Lawton. Here she married Robert Fietz and taught at St. Mary's for a few years. She was very active in parish and civic life before her death.

Three Doebel girls are Sisters of Divine Providence. Agnes (1926) entered the Convent immediately after graduation and became Sister Mary Grace. She is still working in Abilene, Texas, and living in community with her sister, Sister Pauline Mary, who graduated from Sterling, her hometown. Another Doebel girl, Christine (1932) (Sister Marie) who has recently been stationed in Lawton while ministering at Ft. Sill, is now in administration at the Congregation's Retreat Center in Castroville, Texas.

Frank Murphy (1927) entered the Order of St. Benedict in Shawnee and was ordained in 1936. He has spent his years since teaching at St. Gregory's College in Shawnee, and writing, especially the history of his order in Oklahoma. He was Abbot of his



St. Mary's graduates. Bottom, Agnes Doebel (1926) is now Sister Mary Grace; Christine Doebel (1932) is now Sister Marie; Top, Frances Murphy (1929) is now Sister Angelina; and AEileen Anderson (1933) is now Sister Mary Patrick.



Father Joseph Murphy OSB (Frank Murphy, 1927) entered the Benedictine Order after graduation.

order for a time, and is now semi-retired in California since his Golden Jubilee as a priest in 1986. He offered Sunday Masses at Ft. Sill for many years.

Frances Murphy (1929) entered the Convent after a year at Cameron Junior College. She, Sister Angelina, has been teaching and writing in various places and in different fields ever since. She is now teaching English at Cameron University and Ft. Sill.

AEileen Anderson (Sister Mary Patrick) entered the Convent as a senior in high school and has served in many capacities in Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana, and Mexico. At present she is stationed at Our Lady of the Lake in San Antonio, where she is in internal ministry.

Virginia Jones, daughter of the former mayor Dick Jones, graduated in 1937 and entered the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in 1943. Her ministry has always been in Health Care. After her sister's (Mary Mullaney) husband died in 1976, Sister Kevin received an assignment to study in Rome for two years. Mary lived in an apartment near her school in Rome during that time. In 1983, Sister received permission from her order to go back to Lawton with Mary to care for her. They lived in Mary's home for two years until Mary died in 1985. Sister Kevin is again working in the Health Care outreach program of St. John's Hospital in Anderson, Indiana.

Two other graduates entered the Convent: Carlene Benke (1957) and Sherry Pittman (1959). Both left the Convent after a few years to enter other lifestyles. Carlene has since entered another religious order, Sisters of the House of the Lord, in Memphis, where she has recently become professed and is now in retreat and counseling work. She is the last permanent vocation to the religious life from Lawton as far as I know.

Sherry Pittman, daughter of the late Mr. Lee Pittman, after taking numerous honors at her graduation in 1959, entered the Congregation of Divine Providence where she was active in the Civil Rights Movement in the '60s in Louisiana. She left shortly after that to give herself more intensely to this movement in Houston.

Two other St. Mary's students, Margaret Landoll, and Ruth Landoll entered the Franciscan Order temporarily.

Two parish members who have been ordained Deacons and play a very important role in parish life at Blessed Sacrament Church are Charley Wade and Bill Adamson. Wade had been active in the parish for many years; his children attended St. Mary's and graduated there as long as the high school remained. As seen in "The Eighth Decade," Mrs. Wade headed the Day-Care Center at St. Mary's from 1968-1976.

Adamson is a convert, but his wife, Catherine Gerik, attended St. Mary's High School up to her graduation year, when it closed in 1966.

It is possible that there are other priests, Sisters, and brothers from Lawton at this time, or have been at one time. Inquiries have failed to turn up any further information.

One may reflect that if the needs of the local Church were dependent on native local clergy to carry on the ministry here, it would be sparsely served. On the other hand, if the local Sisters were concentrated in Lawton, the present number would be increased slightly although not by Sisters in the prime of life.



Virignia Jones (1937) entered the Congregation of the Holy Cross, where she still serves today as Sister Kevin



Carlene Benke (1957) joined the Sisters of the House of the Lord in Memphis, where she is in retreat work

Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

APPENDIX 2

St. Mary's Teachers For 80 Years

For many years only Sisters taught in St. Mary's. Later on priests helped teach religion, assistants helped with the physical education program, and eventually dedicated lay persons helped more and more in various areas of the school. Unfortunately, records cannot be found of many of these peoples' efforts in helping out the school. I would like to include them all, but I cannot do so.

<b>1907-8</b> Sr. Gertrude Sr. Paul Sr. Armella Sr. Stephen Sr. Henrietta	<b>1908-9</b> Sr. Gertrude Sr. Armella Sr. Paul Sr. Stephen Sr. Cornelia	<b>1909-10</b> Sr. St. Stanislaus Sr. Virginia Sr. Stephen Sr. Stella Sr. Cornelia	<b>1910-11</b> Sr. John Martin Sr. Virginia Sr. Cornelia Sr. Stephen Sr. Stella
<b>1911-12</b> Sr. John Martin Sr. Hyacinth Sr. Amanda Sr. Cornelia Sr. Stephen	<b>1912-13</b> Sr. John Martin Sr. Angela Sr. Kostka Sr. Hugo Sr. Oliva	<b>1913-14</b> Sr. John Martin Sr. Angela Sr. Kostka Sr. Hugo Sr. Olympia	<b>1914-15</b> Sr. Mark Sr. Incarnata Sr. Kostka Sr. Hugo Sr. Olympia
<b>1915-16</b> Sr. St. Theresa Sr. Incarnata Sr. Kostka Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Oliva	<b>1916-17</b> Sr. Chrysostom Sr. Kostka Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Amanda Sr. Incarnata	<b>1917-18</b> Sr. Ingatius Sr. Kostka Sr. Amanda Sr. Praxedes Sr. Alexandrine	<b>1918-19</b> Sr. Ingatius Sr. Avitus Sr. Caroline Sr. Kostka Sr. Natalie
<b>1919-20</b> Sr. Ignatius Sr. Avitus Sr. Caroline Sr. Kostka Sr. Theodore Sr. Cosmos	<b>1920-22</b> Sr. Mark Sr. Incarnata Sr. Hugo Sr. Narcissa Sr. Amanda Sr. Cosmos	<b>1922-23</b> Sr. Mark Sr. Divine Heart Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Evangelista Sr. Anna Louise Sr. Amanda	<b>1923-24</b> Sr. Mark Sr. Divine Heart Sr. Evangelista Sr. Anna Louise Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Ethelreda Sr. Cosmos
<b>1924-25</b> Sr. Mark Sr. Divine Heart Sr. Evangelista Sr. Anna Louise Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Ethelreda Sr. Cosmos	<b>1925-26</b> Sr. Mark Sr. Divine Heart Sr. Bertrand Sr. Anna Marie Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Seraphina Sr. Cosmos	<b>1926-27</b> Sr. Raphael Sr. Erasma Sr. Seraphina Sr. Bertrand Sr. Anna Marie Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Borgia	<b>1927-28</b> Sr. Raphael Sr. Erasma Sr. Blanche Sr. Bertrand Sr. Anna Marie Sr. Luke Sr. Seraphina Sr. Borgia
<b>1928-29</b> Sr. Raphael Sr. Erasma Sr. Seraphina Sr. Bertrand Sr. Alacoque Sr. Anna Marie	<b>1929-30</b> Sr. Raphael Sr. Erasma Sr. Alphonsa Sr. Digna Sr. Malachy Sr. Alacoque	<b>1930-31</b> Sr. Raphael Sr. Alphonsa Sr. Digna Sr. Erasma Sr. Luke Sr. Alacoque	<b>1931-32</b> Sr. Raphael Sr. Erasma Sr. Digna Sr. Alphonsa Sr. Luke Sr. Malachy

Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

Sr. Luke Sr. Borgia	Sr. Anna Marie Sr. Luke Sr. Terrance	Sr. Anna Marie Sr. Pacifica Sr. Malachy	Sr. Leonissa Sr. Eusebia Sr. Pacifica
<b>1932-33</b> Sr. Elvira Sr. Digna Sr. Luke Sr. Leocadia Sr. Alphonsa Sr. Malachy Sr. Eusebia Sr. Clementine	<b>1933-34</b> Sr. Elvira Sr. Alphonsa Sr. Luke Sr. Corintha Sr. Padua Sr. Malachy Sr. Casimir Sr. Clementine	<b>1934-35</b> Sr. Elvira Sr. Luke Sr. Padua Sr. Casimir Sr. Gloriosa Sr. Romuold Sr. Benigna Sr. Malachy Sr. Leonard	<b>1935-36</b> Sr. Elvira Sr. Luke Sr. Benigna Sr. Leonard Sr. Casimir Sr. Alban Sr. St. Anne Sr. Rolanda Sr. Romuold Sr. Gloriosa
<b>1936-37</b> Sr. Elvira Sr. Alban Sr. Benigna Sr. Leonard Sr. Rosemary Sr. St. Anne Sr. Ruth Sr. Casimir Sr. Arcadius Sr. Gloriosa Sr. Kevin	<b>1937-38</b> Sr. Elvira Sr. Fausta Sr. Hilda Sr. Leonard Sr. Rosanna Sr. Juliette Sr. St. Anne Sr. Casimir Sr. Arcadius Sr. Gloriosa Sr. Kevin	<b>1938-39</b> Sr. Ildephonse Sr. Thecla Sr. Hilda Sr. Rosanna Sr. Juliette Sr. St. Anne Sr. Casimir Sr. Arcadius Sr. Gloriosa Sr. Leonard Sr. Majella	<b>1939-40</b> Sr. Ildephonse Sr. Francisca Sr. Hilda Sr. Rosanna Sr. Juliette Sr. Anne Sr. Casimir Sr. Catherine Marie Sr. Gertrude Marie Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Majella
<b>1940-41</b> Sr. Ildephonse Sr. Francisca Sr. St. Anne Sr. Florentia Sr. Catherine Marie Sr. Juliette Sr. Stephen Sr. Gertrude Marie Sr. Alexandrine	<b>1941-42</b> Sr. Ildephonse Sr. Francisca Sr. St. Anne Sr. Florentia Sr. Catherine Marie Sr. Juliette Sr. Stephen Sr. Gertrude Marie Sr. Alexandrine	<b>1942-43</b> Sr. Ildephonse Sr. Clarissa Sr. Maureen Sr. Gertrude Marie Sr. Baptista Sr. Evelyn Sr. Catherine Marie Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Majella	<b>1943-44</b> Sr. Ildephonse Sr. Clarissa Sr. Ella Virginia Sr. Richard Sr. Maureen Sr. Gertrude Marie Sr. Alexandrine Sr. Consolata Sr. Majella
<b>1944-45</b> Sr. Valerian Sr. Evelyn Sr. Baptista Sr. Candida Sr. Raymond Sr. Maureen Sr. Edmunda Sr. Loretto Sr. Majella Sr. Richard	<b>1945-46</b> Sr. Valerian Sr. Raymond Sr. Consolata Sr. Loretto Sr. Baptista Sr. Evelyn Sr. Robert Sr. Candida Sr. Majella	<b>1946-47</b> Sr. Anna Louise Sr. Ignatia Sr. Consolata Sr. Rose Marie Sr. Walburga Sr. Evelyn Sr. Loretto Sr. Candida Sr. Edna	<b>1947-48</b> Sr. Anna Louise Sr. Ignatia Sr. Consolata Sr. Rose Marie Sr. Walburg Sr. Evelyn Sr. Loretto Sr. Candida Sr. Edna
<b>1948-49</b> Sr. Anna Louise Sr. Ignatia Sr. Loretto Sr. Marian Frances Sr. Rose Marie	<b>1949-50</b> Sr. Anna Louise Sr. Ignatia Sr. Loretto Sr. Marian Frances Sr. Rose Marie	<b>1950-51</b> Sr. Anna Louise Sr. Ignatia Sr. Loretto Sr. Rose of Lima Sr. Walburga	<b>1951-52</b> Sr. Anna Louise Sr. Ignatia Sr. Christiana Sr. Loretto Sr. Walburga



## Eighty For Those Who Are Strong

Sr. Walburga  
Sr. Antoinette Marie  
Sr. Evelyn  
Sr. Edna

Sr. Walburga  
Sr. Evelyn  
Sr. Edna

Sr. Barbara Louise  
Sr. Norberta  
Sr. Evelyn  
Sr. Edna

Sr. Pauline Marie  
Sr. Baptista  
Sr. Evelyn  
Sr. Edna

### 1952-53

Sr. Macaria  
Sr. Christiana  
Sr. Ignatia  
Sr. Loretto  
Sr. Cecilia Marie  
Sr. Albina  
Sr. Baptista  
Sr. Evelyn  
Mrs. M. Wilken  
Mrs. Mary Kleyps

### 1953-54

Sr. Macaria  
Sr. Ann Carmel  
Sr. Christiana  
Sr. Reginald  
Sr. Ignatia  
Sr. Loretto  
Sr. Baptista  
Sr. Charles Teresa  
Sr. St. Michael  
Sr. Edna  
Mrs. Horn  
Mrs. J.M. Kaszyniski  
Mrs. Harmel  
Mrs. D. A. Paeneck

### 1954-55

Sr. Macaria  
Sr. Christiana  
Sr. Ann Carmel  
Sr. Helen Agnes  
Sr. St. Michael  
Sr. Charles Teresa  
Sr. Avitus  
Sr. Juliette  
Sr. Reginald  
Sr. Candida  
Sr. Edna  
Mrs. B. Boyd  
Mrs. Harmel  
Mrs. J. McClurg  
Mrs. M. Cool

### 1955-56

Sr. Macaria  
Sr. Christiana  
Sr. Ann Carmel  
Sr. St. Michael  
Sr. Charles Theresa  
Sr. Avitus  
Sr. Juliette  
Sr. Reginald  
Sr. Helen Agnes  
Sr. Edna  
Mrs. M. Rogers  
Mrs. V. Bedner  
Mrs. B. Frederick  
Mrs. G. Roth

### 1956-57

Sr. Macaria  
Sr. Ann Carmel  
Sr. Wilhelmina  
Sr. Reginald  
Sr. St. Michael  
Sr. Juliette  
Sr. Avitus  
Sr. Mary Ellen  
Sr. Edna  
Mrs. A. Kersletter  
Mrs. Burnett  
Mrs. Harrison  
Mrs. M. Rogers  
Mrs. G. Roth  
Mrs. C. Scott

### 1957-58

Sr. Macaria  
Sr. Rosello  
Sr. Avitus  
Sr. Alban  
Sr. Juliette  
Sr. St. Michael  
Sr. Illuminata  
Sr. Ann Carmel  
Sr. Reginald  
Sr. Edna  
Mrs. M. Priest  
Mrs. Vadetsky  
Mrs. A. Kerstetter  
Mrs. Ruskin  
Mrs. Horn  
Mrs. Ellor

### 1958-59

Sr. Alma  
Sr. Theodore Mary  
Sr. Ann Carmel  
Sr. Candida  
Sr. Rosello  
Sr. Edna  
Sr. Alban  
Sr. St. Michael  
Sr. Anna Teresa  
Sr. Janice  
Sr. Thadine

### 1959-60

Sr. Alma  
Sr. Theodore Mary  
Sr. Charles Ann  
Sr. Candida  
Sr. Muriel  
Sr. St. Michael  
Sr. Carmel  
Sr. Rosello  
Sr. Benilde  
Sr. Serapia  
Mrs. Anna Fietz  
Mrs. C. Scott  
Mrs. G. Pritach  
Mrs. R. Bender  
Mrs. P. Staats  
Mrs. C. Allen

### 1960-61

Sr. Alma  
Sr. Theodore Mary  
Sr. Charles Ann  
Sr. Rosello  
Sr. Alban  
Sr. Carmel  
Sr. Vivian  
Sr. Cecilia Marie  
Sr. Serapia  
Mrs. Beryl  
Mrs. S. Laine  
Mrs. C. Scott  
Mrs. A. Whitehead  
Mrs. C. Hightower  
Mrs. R. H. Schumann  
Mrs. Jeanne Webb  
Mrs. J. Rigler

### 1961-62

Sr. Alma  
Sr. M. Patrick  
Sr. Charles Ann  
Sr. Rosello  
Sr. Damienne  
Sr. Florence Clare  
Sr. Eusebia  
Sr. Vivan  
Sr. Eulalia  
Mrs. L. Yoakim  
Mrs. M. Horn  
Mrs. Berry  
Mrs. Fogarty  
Mrs. Bielmer  
Sr. Raymond  
Mrs. Hayden  
Mrs. Hanrahan

### 1962-63

Sr. Alma  
Sr. Charles Ann  
Sr. Rosello  
Sr. Vivian  
Sr. Florence Clare  
Sr. Theophane  
Sr. Eusebia  
Col. Keester  
Mrs. David Seddon  
Mrs. Hayden  
Mrs. Turnbull  
Mrs. Bulmer  
Mrs. Berry  
Mrs. Fogarty  
Sr. Raymonda  
Mrs. L. Yoakim  
Mrs. Schuman

### 1963-64

Sister Bernard Joseph  
Sr. Vivian  
Sr. Raymonda  
Sr. Charles Ann  
Sr. Rosello  
Col. Keester  
Mrs. Carter  
Mrs. Brainard  
Mrs. Jackson  
Mrs. R. Maxwell  
Mrs. L. Yoakim  
Mrs. Grubb  
Sr. Blanda  
Sr. Kevin  
Mrs. Fietz  
Sr. Leonita  
Rev. Lawrence Faye

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Mrs. Geraldine Gasser

Col. J. Keester

Sr. Theophane

### 1964-65

Sr. Bernard Joseph  
Sr. Vivian  
Sr. Raymonda  
Sr. Blanda  
Sr. Theophane  
Sr. Eusebia  
Sr. Rosello  
Sr. Jane Ann  
Sr. Florence Clare  
Col. Keester  
Mrs. Parham

### 1965-66

Sr. Bernard Joseph  
Sr. Mary Anna  
Sr. Rose Stephanie  
Sr. Caroline  
Sr. Janet  
Sr. Bertran Grace  
Sr. Vivian  
Sr. Eugenia Ann  
Col. Keester  
Mrs. Parham  
Mrs. Jackson  
Mrs. Graham  
Mrs. Brainard  
Mrs. Carter  
Rev. Lawrence Faye

### 1966-67

Sr. Archangela  
Sr. Helen Agnes  
Sr. Frances Helen  
Sr. Miriam Fidelis  
Sr. Florence Clare  
Mrs. G. Gasser  
Mrs. Rosalie Self  
Mrs. Dunavan  
Mrs. B. Platko  
Mrs. E. Butts  
Mrs. R. Flores

### 1967-68

Sr. Angelene  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Louis  
Sr. Miriam Fidelis  
Sr. Pulcheria  
Mrs. B. Gasser  
Mrs. J. Dunavan  
Mrs. R. Forbes  
Mrs. G. Shumate

### 1968-69

Sr. Patricia Ann  
Sr. Helen Agnes  
Sr. Pulcheria  
Sr. Louis  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Mrs. L. Scott  
Mrs. R. Forbes

### 1969-70

Sr. Patricia Ann  
Sr. Helen Agnes  
Sr. Louis  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Patricia Ann Reiger  
Mrs. C. Scott  
Mrs. Forbes  
Mrs. C. Reder  
Mrs. J. Phillips

### 1970-71

Sr. Patricia Ann  
Sr. Helen Agnes  
Sr. Louis  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Mrs. Scott  
Mrs. Forbes  
Mrs. Reder

### 1971-73

Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. M. Patrick  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Francisca  
Sr. Rose  
Mrs. L. Nabors  
Mrs. P. Burke  
Mrs. P. Bauer

### 1973-74

Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. M. Patrick  
Sr. Francisca  
Sr. Rose  
Mrs. P. Rea  
Mrs. P. Bauer  
Mrs. M. Wilson  
Mrs. A. Sloan

### 1974-75

Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. M. Patrick  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Francisca  
Sr. Rose  
Sr. Madelene  
Mrs. B. Priest  
Mrs. N. Powell  
Mrs. M. Wilkinson  
Mrs. S. Genski  
Mrs. W.E. Berg

### 1975-76

Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Francisca  
Sr. Elizabeth Marie  
Sr. Rose  
Sr. Madeleine  
Mrs. N. Powell  
Mrs. M. Allinder  
Mrs. R. Poore  
Mrs. D. Heelen  
Mrs. Cynthia Cain

### 1976-77

Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Rose  
Sr. Elizabeth Marie  
Sr. Francisca  
Miss Maureen Sticco

Incomplete List

### 1977-78

Mrs. Maureen Sticco  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Hilda  
Sr. Francisca  
Sr. Rose  
Incomplete List

### 1978-79

Sr. Antonine Maca  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Hilda Kelly  
Sr. Francisca  
Sr. Rose  
Mrs. C. Youngster  
Mrs. P. Casto  
Mrs. B. Hackenberg  
Mrs. Elizabeth Tate  
Mrs. Hardwick

### 1979-80

Sr. Antonine  
Ms. A. Hernandez  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Hilda  
Sr. Francisca  
Mrs. E. James  
Mrs. V. Hauck  
Mrs. J. Forbes  
Mrs. Gay Buboy  
Mrs. T. Bancroft  
Mrs. N. Williams

### 1980-81

Sr. Antonine  
Ms. Adrienne Hernandez  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Francisca  
Mrs. A. Byrd  
Mrs. M. Schumaker  
Mrs. P. Arnatt  
Mrs. L. Hurst  
Mrs. B. Odem  
Mrs. Terry Martin

**Eighty For Those Who Are Strong**

Mrs. S. Odem  
Mrs. A. Morales  
Ms. Adrienne Hernandez

Mrs. B. Odem

Mrs. Janice Jones  
Mrs. G. Dabov  
Mrs. K. Irwin

**1981-82**

Mrs. Adrienne Wilson  
Sr. Miram Teresa  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Francisca  
Mrs. L. Hurst  
Mrs. P. Baker  
Mrs. K. Strange  
Mrs. Tracy Stanley  
Mrs. Ann Kai  
Mrs. Joan Blake  
Miss R. Woolridge  
Mrs. B. Odem

**1982-83**

Mrs. Adrienne Wilson  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Francisca  
Sr. Andrea  
Mrs. V. Grover  
Mrs. W. Reese  
Miss Rose Woolridge  
Mrs. T. Stanley  
Mrs. B. Odem  
Mrs. C. Cludzinski

**1983-84**

Mrs. Adrienne Wilson  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Francisca  
Sr. Andrea  
Mrs. Rogers  
Mrs. P. Mose  
Mrs. R. McDonald  
Mrs. J.P. Pendley  
Mrs. B. Odem  
Mrs. C. Ewing  
Mrs. Susan Fulmer  
Mrs. Doris Brown  
Mrs. B. Harris

**1984-85**

Mrs. Magdali Oppenheimer  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Andrea  
Sr. Antoinette Marie  
Mrs. L. Murray  
John Colombo  
Mrs. Leslie Bouna  
Mrs. Jerry Pendley  
Mrs. S. Holmes  
Sr. Francisca  
Mrs. B. Odem  
Mrs. Susan Fulmer

**1985-86**

Mrs. Magdali Oppenheimer  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Antoinette Marie  
Sr. Andrea  
Ms. Arlene Cudd  
Mrs. Laura Leither  
Mrs. Betty Trimble  
Mrs. Susan Fulmer  
Mrs. Barbara Harris  
Mrs. Doris Benson  
Ms. Sue Perkins  
Mrs. Barbara Odem

**1986-87**

Mrs. Magdali Oppenheimer  
Sr. Miriam Teresa  
Sr. Eugenia Clare  
Sr. Antoinette Marie  
Sr. Andrea  
Mrs. D. Munoz  
Mrs. Monica Allen  
Ms. Arlene Cudd  
Mrs. Arlene Folkes  
Mrs. Betty Trimble  
Mrs. Susan Fulmer  
Mrs. Barbara Harris  
Mrs. Doris Benson  
Ms. Sue Perkins  
Mrs. Barbara Odem



**Sr. Francisca**



**Top: Barbara Odem, Patricia McCormick.  
Middle: Monica Allen, Sue Perkins, Betty Tremble, Mrs. Gonzalez,  
Mrs. Oppenheimer, Principal.  
Front Line: Arlene Cudd, Sister Miriam Teresa, Sister Eugenia Clare,  
Sister Andrea.**

**Eighty For Those Who Are Strong**

**APPENDIX 3**

**Graduates Of St. Mary's High School**

**1917**

Urban Landoll

**1919**

Phillip Landoll

**1922**

Edward Clark  
Edward Morris

**1923**

Lela Gibbons

**1924**

Bernadette Dawes  
Charles McHenry  
Donald Greer  
Mary Murphy  
Barbara Stuever  
John F. Thomas

**1925**

Anita Dawes  
Clement Gaster  
Nena Gibbons  
Helen Hixon  
Helen Jackson  
Marcella Landoll  
Rose Murphy  
Francis Ryan

**1926**

Jodie Whaley  
Helen Cunningham  
Agnes Doebel  
Josephine Weisel

**1927**

Frank Murphy  
Anna Marie Thomas  
Irene Weisel

**1928**

Alice Babek  
Irma Stuever  
Frank Stuever  
Thurman  
Boetner

**1929**

Doris Boggs  
Paul Calaway  
Geraldine Carlin  
John Conboy  
Cyrilla Gaster  
Mary Frances Jones  
Robert Landers  
Frances Murphy  
James Murphy  
Richard Jones  
Dorothy Pokorney

**1930**

David Morris  
Tim Calaway  
Peggy Hixon  
Delia McHenry  
Emma Picek  
Henrietta Picek  
Frances Pittman

**1931**

George Barber  
Alvin Conboy  
Charles Picek  
Lee Pittman  
Lilith Pokorney  
Francis Schwarte

**1932**

James Agnew  
Christine Doebel  
Jake Hackett  
Lucille Kenney  
Margaret Landers  
John Larkins  
Jesse Pittman  
Carl Stuever  
Carolyn Shaw

**1933**

Lahoma Bertram  
Francis Cramer  
Rita Federico  
Leo Pokorney  
Irene Hartman

**1934**

Mozelle Bezniska  
Bernice Brown  
John Cease  
Eleanor Anderson  
Mary Frances Calaway  
Kathryn Pokorney  
Margaret Stanton  
Arthur Cavanaugh  
Edwin Dunn  
Irene Glennon  
Mary Francis Porkus  
Rosemary Thomas

**1935**

John Feitz  
Virginia B. Lee  
Yolanda Federico  
Catherine McHenry  
Paul Niemczyk  
Catherine Willis  
Cecilia Pokorney  
Raymond Schram  
Susie Ann Snell  
Victor Vanis

**1936**

Millard Bertram  
Catherine Calaway  
Eugene Gaster  
R.P. Johnson  
Virginia Jones  
Agnes Margaret  
Nelson  
Leota Pokorney  
Helen Scherler  
Agnes Laurent  
Mary O'Hagan  
Bernadette Siebold  
Alberta Stuever  
Charles Morkosky

**1937**

Maurine Johnson  
Teresa Dodson  
Mary Sue Lewis  
Rose McHenry  
James Arthur Thomas  
John Calaway  
Julian Niemczyk  
Marvin Pittman  
Alfred Schram

**1938**

Jack Glennon  
John Markosky  
Elva Pittman  
Susie Ramos  
John Allen Willis  
Dorothy Patton

**1939**

Mary Louise Faubert  
Lois Kolker  
Jane McHenry  
Romilda O'Dell  
Jeanne Owens  
Henry G. Picek

**Eighty For Those Who Are Strong**

**1940**

Dorothy Calaway  
Betty Essner  
Arden Mietchen  
Irma Musgrove  
R.C. Stanley  
Cale Thomas  
Maurice Griffith

**1941**

Leonard Aleman  
Pauline Craig  
Margie Renschen  
Robert Schneider

**1942**

Anita Berry  
Cecilia Calaway  
Robert Fietz  
Robert Kolker  
Rose Ann Landoll  
Harold Glennon  
Teresa Landoll  
Anne Lee Morris  
Peggy Nebling  
Eleanor Pokorney  
Betty Lou Shaw  
Lames J. Shaw  
Raymond Stanton

**1943**

Chris Dodson  
Francis Halbison  
Henry Nebling  
Cleo Ramos  
Max Seibold  
Thomas Lowry  
Dorothy  
Pittman

**1944**

Art Corrales  
Marion Deasy  
Neal Goode  
Betty Halbison  
Alice Larve Harper  
Lorraine LeBarre  
Catherine Lowry  
Dormalee O'Dell  
Pauline Trompeter  
Henry Renschen  
Yvonne Toy  
Richard Shaw  
Gene Stevenson  
Robert True  
Emanuel Schneider  
Leonard Landoll

**1945**

Bill Corrales  
Robert Louis Dawes  
Frankie Durbin  
June Journeycake  
Frances LeBarre  
Rosemary Patton  
Ellen Scott  
Clarice Stuever  
John Timmons

**1946**

Wallace Berry  
Jimmy Dawes  
Mary Louise Evans  
Lorraine Goode  
Mary Frances Heinz  
Lucile Kolker  
Marcy Landoll  
William V. Lowry  
Colleen Morris  
Colleen Stanton  
Joan Pokorney  
J.B. Nix  
J.D. Stanton  
James Piper  
Mary Jo Toy

**1947**

Anita Best  
Francis Fowler  
Dwight Marcotte  
Alfred Pittman  
George Stuever  
Nellie Shaw  
Jo Ann Stuever  
Bob Shaw  
John Craig

**1948**

Dorothy Benke  
Carol Best  
Anita Dawes  
Ernest Ebish  
Mark Landoll  
Jimmy McClusky  
Damien Stanton  
A.B. Stanton

**1949**

Joy Butler  
Joe Glennon  
Richard Glennon  
Raymond Henry  
George Landoll  
Mary Lou Michalsky  
Don Murphy  
Bobby Nebling  
Ann Nix  
Beverly Saffa  
Joan Stuever

**1950**

Doris Benke  
Francis DeSio  
Richard Hopkins  
Pong Laisure  
Oleta Miller  
Glen Morris  
John Naughton  
Barbara Skaggs  
Bernard Sztatowski  
Joseph Stuever  
Wiliam Magner  
Juanita Olson  
Jo Ann Ramsey  
Matthew Reed

**1951**

Geraldine Benke  
John Campos  
Anna Marie Glennon  
Flora Landoll  
Allen Ray Lehman  
Jim Naughton  
Margaret Outenreath  
Michael True  
Orilla Rohenkohl  
Billye Jo Mills  
Betty Reinhardt

**Eighty For Those Who Are Strong**

**1952**

Earl Barton  
Carolyn Ann Conley  
Margaret J. Cook  
Mary Cecilia Krueger  
Clara Ruth Landoll  
Catherine Skoroszewski  
Henry D. Sonier  
Patricia Olsen  
Delores Letzo  
John Butler  
Lou Ann Stratagier

**1953**

Jerry Butler  
Martha Joan Chandler  
Gloria Gonzalez  
Perry Leon McMillan  
Mary Jean Stump  
Donald Sturgis  
Frances Musgrove  
Mary Ann Pittman  
Shirley Wiedermann  
Carol Zito

**1954**

Paul Carter  
Reva Jo Glennon  
Donald Greer  
Virginia P. Johnson  
Donald Kolker  
William Krueger  
Teresa Simon  
Esther Valdez  
Dick Lacey  
Mary Jo Landoll

**1955**

Mary Lucille Clark  
Billie Corrales  
Elona Laisure  
John Michael Larkins  
Thomas Nebling  
Mary Jo Zito  
Regina Saffa  
Bobby Jean Seely  
Nancy Norman

**1956**

Phillip Roberts  
June Johnson  
Harry Harper  
Judy Gremolini  
Barbara Sims  
Marjorie Shepler  
Virginia Simon  
Patricia Nugent  
Elmer McMillan  
Dean Hertzog  
Ronald Petty  
Marius Deasy  
Leon Fitts

**1957**

Carlina Benke  
Martha Blanchentere  
Kenneth Campbell  
Donald Griggs  
Joe Krueger  
Sherry Logston  
James Landoll  
James Mathis  
Victor McCarthy  
Barbara Mileham  
Beatrice Negroni  
Deborah Shelton  
Edward Shelton  
Donald L. Pittman  
Barbara Petty  
Dale Washinberger  
George Wong

**1958**

Sandra Banta  
Dolores Brooks  
Bill Burch  
Lee Deasy  
Van Glennon  
John Hannigan  
Loretta Landoll  
Sharon Darlene Miller  
Peggy McClusky  
Patty McClusky  
Donna Shepler  
Margaret Ann Soper  
Spence Stanley  
Jean Stuever  
Charles Wade  
Dana Parnell  
Ann Rogers  
Mary Lou Sheetz  
Connie Keough  
Kenneth Campbell  
Robert Goerge  
Ann Glennon

**1959**

Paul Anderson  
Beverly Burlison  
Geri Ann Charipar  
Dorothy Jean Conway  
Nita Sue Cooper  
Daniel Gonzalez  
Mary Jean Hannigan  
Thomas E. Haverin  
Ronald Kolker  
Donald I. Martin  
Joseph Mitchell  
Michael Wade  
Sherry Pittman  
Frank J. Robinson  
Robert W. Robinson  
Nancy Brenda Wright  
Sarah Jane Morris

**1960**

Carol Jean Ambron  
Louis E. Chandler  
John Alton French  
Gerald Hampton  
Mary M. Johnson  
Richard Killian  
Joan Marie Lane  
Linda Lee Maddox  
James C. Outenreath  
John W. Simmons  
Stephanie Specht  
Herbert A. Strachan  
Richard V. Stuever  
Carolyn F. Taranto  
Judy Wallingford  
Cecilia Marie Ybarra  
Anna Bishop Powell

**1961**

Rose Ann Allavich  
Charles A. Benke  
Jackie Dean Davis  
Juliette DeSio  
John W. Glennon  
Arthur Hampton  
Herbert Husband  
Larry Larson  
Blake Wade  
Robert Valliant  
Mary A. Pinkstone  
Richard Prendergast  
Louiane Chateau  
Geraldine McPherson  
Emma Salas  
Ronnie Wiggins  
Frank Dunbar

**1962**

James Cooper  
Fay Salazar  
Jerry Spivey  
Nancy Bertram  
Charlotte Specht  
Cheryl Pokorney  
Susan Banta  
John Conway  
Judy Bell  
Verne Suess  
Elizabeth Wallack  
Robert Yeats  
Nixie Landers  
Virginia Chandler

**1963**

Bonnie Angus  
Lydia Cass  
Bernard Conway  
James Corrales  
Eddie Ben Cordes  
Norma Fisher  
Karen George  
John Gorsky  
Robert Hernandez  
Terry Kitchens  
Frances Irving  
Delores Laurion  
Connie Newman  
John Outenreath  
Margaret L. Sully  
Barbara White  
Barbara Valliant



**Eighty For Those Who Are Strong**

Rita Ann Salas  
James Wolf  
James E. Lawson  
Manuel Ybarra  
Phillip C. Pittman  
Ruth Ann Norman  
Joyce Ann French

Donna Nelson  
Pat Abraham  
Joseph Shalvey  
Joe Wade  
Glenda Rosser  
Jerry Davis  
Leon Brown

Carolyn Pittman  
Pamela Price  
Barbara Richard  
Margaret Richard  
Michael Roberts  
Lynn Ann Schoenberg  
Gloria Benke  
Bob Shelvey  
Frank Lawrence  
Delores Ybarra

**1964**

Jo Ann Biondo  
Marjorie Bruckner  
Catherine Chandler  
Charlotte Cooper  
Michael Esko  
Thomas Terrell  
Nancy Francour  
Patricia McBride  
Frances Shugert  
Catherine L. Sohl  
Joseph P. Stuever  
John Thanes  
Steve Pittman  
Janice Pittman  
Erlinda Reyes

**1965**

Donna Benke  
Mark Brenner  
Patricia Ann Dawes  
Norma L. Demary  
Mary Jolene Flores  
Annette Glossley  
Nike S. Husband  
Linda Lee Hernandez  
Barbara Lawrence  
William Wade  
Christine Wolly  
Karen Ann Wright  
Magdalena Yoakim  
Kay Frances Pittman  
Larry Gaetaradtke

**1965 cont.**

Mary Radka  
Joseph P. Richard  
Nelson I. Santiago  
Barbara Sue Scott  
Linda Rath Seay  
Nancy Lynn Jernigan  
Sarah Marie Banta

**1966**

Ann Strachan  
John Stuever  
Timothy Tiddark  
Nancy Ann Taylor  
Kenneth Watts  
Charlene Picek  
Anna Marie Robinson  
Sarah Santiago  
Gloria Jean Baker  
Regina Ann Hankins  
Dennis Kolker  
Mary Reinhardt  
Malcolm French  
Larry Clarke  
Sonny Werqueyah

**Eighty For Those Who Are Strong**

**Sister Angelina Murphy, CDP.**

Sister Angelina Murphy, CDP, is a native Lawtonian and a graduate of St. Mary's High School. She attended Cameron University in her first year of college but took her B.A. degree from Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio, where she entered the Congregation of Divine Providence (CDP).

Sister Angelina has taught in elementary schools, high schools, and colleges in Oklahoma, Texas, and Louisiana, and was high school principal for ten years. In the meantime she took her M.A. degree at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. Sister Angelina has been writing all these years on a variety of subjects and in a number of genres, including feature writing for the diocesan newspaper in San Antonio. In addition, she has recently published two books, MOTHER FLORENCE and GREEN FROM THE FIELDS, besides editing and publishing the autobiography of Bishop Stephen A. Leven (posthumously) under the title GO TELL IT IN THE STREETS. Sister now teaches English at Cameron University and Ft. Sill.



When the former students held their Reunion in 1986, they posed for this picture. Not all are in the picture but the majority of those present for the occasion did appear. No attempt is made to name them.



**Sister Angelina Murphy CDP**