A DESIGN FOR LIVING

A HISTORY OF THE SISTERS OF

ST. JOSEPH OF CARONDELET
IN THE NORTHWEST

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Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet
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NORTH CENTRAL PUBLISHING COMPANY
SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA
1973
Dedication

To the thousands of Sisters of St. Joseph in these United States, in Europe and throughout the world I dedicate this book. Their lives and varying works have brought inspiration and help to multitudes whom they have served in many areas.

To my beloved family and many dear friends I also dedicate this work. It is due to their encouragement and faith in me that really prompted me to revise and update my thesis written in partial fulfillment of a Master of Arts degree. Originally my thesis director at the University of Minnesota urged me to put into writing an account of the deeds of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Northwest.

To my prospective readers who may become recipients of the knowledge of the past and present story, I gratefully present the following piece of historical record.

This account I hope will reflect what has been the life work of dedicated persons. Their sincere efforts to assist those with whom they came in contact must have left numerous impacts. May our readers, too, benefit after going over the history of our Sisters both in past and in present events.

To my publisher, Alfred Muellerleile, whose confidence in me led me to make the final decision to write this work, I likewise dedicate this book.
In a changing world of the seventies all persons are confronted by conditions diversified by events and peoples. A religious community is no exception. Our pioneer sisters came to the Northwest over one hundred years ago. The purpose of the Sisters of St. Joseph then as now consisted and does at present exist to promote education, service in hospitals and social work where needed. As the Northwest grew especially in Minnesota and the Dakotas the developments became numerous as did our schools, hospitals and other institutions.

A general survey of our many activities will be recounted in the following pages. Until recent years much of our interests found a concentration in parochial grade schools and secondary schools. The latter consisted of a two-fold nature: private academies and parish or parochial high schools. Most of the latter were or are co-educational — the academies staffed mainly by the Sisters of St. Joseph are private schools for girls.

Another point of dissimilarity is evident. In our Academies or High Schools, the practice of co-education until the present years is followed in schools outside the Twin Cities. A new departure from this practice became evident in the decision to make The Academy of the Holy Angels co-educational in the fall of 1972.

To correctly present a picture of our educational development the author pursued several processes of research. A visit to the General Mother House located in St. Louis, the one time village of Carondelet from which we derived our complete title: The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet. At the time of my original study the archives were located there. Letters, journals, records of missions, memoirs of Sisters and former students are contained in a special vault and constitute the main source of documentation. However, much local history is to be found in secondary accounts and unpublished documents. In addition, catalogues, bulletins, brochures, and journals constitute valuable information. Most of these are at local missions or in parish records.
Preface

Other interesting but probably less reliable sources used were verbal accounts given by those long engaged in association with our Sisters. These include priests acting as pastors, sisters whose personal experiences reflect the atmosphere of the times. They add a thread of color to the fabric interwoven through the years of development and growth.

Newspaper items were checked out at the Minnesota Historical Society and the Missouri Historical Library, perhaps better identified as the Jefferson Memorial in St. Louis.

In several instances records were found missing due in most cases to destruction by fire. To fill the gap left by such losses fragmentary portions were gleaned from conversations and reminiscences to keep the narrative unbroken but as valid as possible.

Of interest were records from the National Archives in Washington, D.C. where verification of our dealings in Graceville, Minnesota were found. Because we had contracted with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to care for Indian girls at our Boarding School there, the copies of correspondence were verified there.

To portray adequately the contribution made in the St. Paul Province alone which began its work in 1851 would be impossible in such a limited space. Perhaps again a general statement is apropos here. The aim of our religious community is in the main to assist others: in this case the area of education includes pre-school and kindergarten through College, and the works of charity in our hospitals, orphanages and other homes for needy persons. No really detailed accounts can be given in this book.

Finally, the chief purpose of this re-evaluation is to make known the changing aspects of our apostolate. It is with hope of a better knowledge and wider appreciation of the works of the Sisters that this book is now being written; an evaluation since its foundation in 1650 to the 1970’s. Then as now there were also revolutionary aspects to the foundation and ‘beginnings’ that in the 17th century caught the striking contrast to religious life as then known in Europe. It is not strange that we repeat today a reflection of development and change in an ever-changing world. Because of the numerous parochial schools in the province, no detailed account is given here. They are however, the great feeders for our high schools and the basic ground work of our educational program. As mentioned earlier some of our institutions receive greater attention because of their impact upon the community at large. There is no intent to gloss over or omit to mention any one school, hospital or apostolic work.
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Let us turn back the pages of time and recall the situation in France in the 17th century. Then as now changes occurred that startled the conservatives in the Catholic Church. Father Jean Medaille, a Jesuit priest, realized the need for a religious body of women whose work would combine exterior acts of charity with interior prayer. Father Medaille succeeded in securing the interest and approval of Monsignor Henri de Maupas, Bishop of Le Puy. He gave ecclesiastical sanction to the founding of an Institute on March 10, 1651.

Until this time the Church had approved orders of religious who lived secluded from the public in convents known as cloistered-closed to most people. These nuns devoted their lives mainly to prayer and works within the cloisters.

It had been the dream of St. Francis de Sales to found an active congregation of religious women but he had to be satisfied with the decision of his superiors to establish the Visitation Sisters who even to this day are living at least in a semi-cloistered life.

With the consent of the Bishop of Le Puy the Congregation of the Sisters of St. Joseph became a society devoted to the service of their neighbor. The main areas were to be education and assistance to the sick in their corporal as well as spiritual needs. The sisters themselves pledged their lives likewise to acquire Christian virtue.

After serious prayer and study a set of rules was compiled to govern the new Institute. Basically the forms were drawn from those set down by St. Augustine and St. Ignatius. Included were the manner of life and work; the dress of the Sisters, the name of the Congregation whose patron St. Joseph well fulfills the role of a worker.

Then as now it was believed that the best work could be done at first by being inconspicuous. Therefore, the early dress adapted was that of the widows of the time. This way the Sister could mingle
with and win confidence of the ignorant and needy whom they hoped to serve.

Although the major work of the Sisters of St. Joseph then as now was to be education and care of the sick, the first assignment was the care of orphans in Le Puy. The Bishop successfully won the cooperation of a good and wealthy woman, Madam de Jaux. She offered her spacious home which became the first training school for the "Little Institute".

Both ecclesiastical and legal sanction were given to the expansion of the work of these devoted women. By 1693 there were groups working in ten or more dioceses in France. The Sisters engaged themselves in the care of the sick, the direction of orphanages and the instruction of young girls.

Because of the French Revolution many records were destroyed leaving the story of the further development in somewhat obscure status. We do know that prior to the Revolution Mother St. John Fontbonne was directing a large and successful community in the city of Monistrol in the diocese of Le Puy. The role of Mother St. John became one of great value since it was she who had to make decisions when the fury of the Reign of Terror broke loose. She firmly refused to support by oath the civil regulations to comply with the existing revolutionary authorities. It was because of threat to destruction of the property and even the lives of the Sisters that led Mother St. John to persuade the sisters to return to their families. She and two companions remained in the convent for a time but later took refuge in the Fontbonne home. Here they were followed by their persecutors who forced them to a prison in St. Didier. A year of physical and mental torture followed. This continued until the defeat of Robespierre in the fall of 1793.

As a result of the political change in France the Sisters made plans to resume their role as a religious community. In 1807 Mother St. John was asked to resume the role of leadership. She had been requested to do this by Cardinal Fesch of the diocese of Lyons, France. It was there that reorganization began. As Napoleon had restored religious worship to France by a Concordat in 1801, the second epoch of the Sisters of St. Joseph began with Lyons eventually becoming the general Mother House. We are reminded of the democratic spirit by the realization of the election of Mother St. John as Superior General. Here again we note that changes that reflect progress existed in the early 19th century. We tend to hold that the present generation are so much more vocal in their demands for freedom yet our second Founder as Mother St. John is often called was elected, too.
From 1807 when the resources of the Sisters of St. Joseph were re-activated foundations developed in practically every European country. The so-called "foreign missions" were established in Armenia, Egypt, Corsica, the Indies and Mexico. Last but not least the United States became in 1836 a "foreign mission" too. At present many groups are under diocesan rule but for the most part all stemmed from the original group which had its beginnings in St. Louis. Thus we find a two-fold governing set-up those under General or Papal rule and many groups under the rule of Bishops, who requested sisters from St. Louis, but desired to keep the government under what is known as diocesan regulation. However, the majority of the Sisters of St. Joseph who came originally from Lyons in France, or from St. Louis have the same objectives and with only minor variations the basic constitutions and customs of the parent foundation.
WHAT brought the Sisters of St. Joseph to America? Actually the new mission group was developed indirectly. At the request of Bishop Rosati, a pioneer of the St. Louis diocese, a plea for priests in his growing apostolate was made through the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. It so happened that the appeal was made to the Reverend Charles Cholleton then Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Lyons. Not only had Bishop Rosati asked for priests but also for money to assist his work.

One of the chief contributions to the Society for the Propagation of Faith was made by Madame de la Rochejaquelin, wife of a count. When she learned of the great poverty of the missionaries in the Mississippi Valley she offered to set up a fund to cover the expenses of a religious group, not only of priests but also of Sisters. Her contact in Lyons with the Sisters of St. Joseph led her to seek help from them. When Bishop Rosati was made aware of her generous offer he immediately accepted. Six sisters were to be sent to America but the Bishop asked for an additional two who would be prepared to instruct deaf mutes.

When Mother St. John was appealed to, she wisely presented the proposed project to her sisters. She urged them to think about the great need but also about the subsequent sacrifices. A large group responded as volunteers but only seven were selected, one of who together with a postulant, a sister in training, remained to study the language of deaf mutes.

From among the priest volunteers, one was Father James Fontbonne, a nephew of Mother St. John. Two seminarians were likewise chosen and departure date was settled for January 4, 1836. Embarkment was from the port of Havre. Here Mother St. John, now an aging woman travelled with the new missionaries among whom were two nieces.
From January 9 to January 17 the missionary group enjoyed the hospitality of Madame Dodard. Although the young group was eager to set sail, Mother St. John suffered the natural grief of impending separation plus the knowledge of the peril of such a voyage to a far distant country of which they had little knowledge then.

On the ship "Heidelberg" the forty-nine day voyage began. We can well imagine the dangers as well as the tedious days at sea. On March 8, 1836 the ship docked at New Orleans where Father Moni, the pastor of the Cathedral welcomed the new arrivals. He took the Sisters to the Ursuline Convent where they remained for two weeks as guests.

Bishop Rosati, eager to welcome to the United States his adopted daughters arrived in New Orleans the day following their arrival. He and his host, Bishop Blanc of New Orleans visited the Sisters and discussed their future work. It was to include two missions, one at Cahokia, the other at Carondelet.

On March 15 the trek northward by steamer began. Numerous people including many colored folk came to the river bank giving the sisters an opportunity to see some of their future neighbors.

The river-boat docked in St. Louis on the evening of March 25, 1836. A visit to the "old Cathedral" was made by this small nucleus of a congregation that was to become a flourishing community. After the visit to the Cathedral — a contrast indeed to the present-day modern edifice, the Sisters were taken to a hospital conducted by the Sisters of Charity. Here the Sisters of St. Joseph made their temporary home until taken to Cahokia, an Illinois village. It had been the intent of Bishop Rosati to establish the first mission at Carondelet. Three sisters were to remain at the hospital while three settled in Cahokia to instruct the French-Canadian farmers. They had thought their chief objective was to convert Indians but not so.

After six months of studying English at the hospital in St. Louis, Bishop Rosati had made arrangements for a residence in Carondelet. It was a crude log cabin similar to most of the surrounding homes. In spite of the frugal nature of their new home, the sisters settled themselves happily and hopefully. Here in this humble beginning their work was cut out for them — "everything included in the words charity, mercy and education."

The early days were a decided contrast in the mode of living for women reared in a French society and in a country long settled in European standard. Yet the sisters voiced no regrets, no complaints.
They received little encouragement as the Creoles in the vicinity failed to make use of the educational opportunities, and attendance that first year resulted in almost total failure. Lack of transportation added to the hardships of loneliness and frustration. Cahokia was nearby but the Carondelet sisters had little chance for visiting. Bishop Rosati and Father Fontbonne did manage to make infrequent visits — a source of great joy to the sisters. On one visit the Bishop brought warm cloaks for each sister.

Since resources were limited, Mother Celestine, the superior, applied to some ladies in St. Louis for sewing. Sister was skilled in fine needlework but was willing to accept any type of order — one being for "shot-bags". Later the income of the Sisters was increased by boarding orphans.

Before the close of the second year, word was received of the arrival of the two sisters who had remained in Lyons to study the deaf-mute language. Not only were the sisters welcomed with joy but a sum of money they brought enabled the building of a substantial brick structure completed in 1840.

An event heralding many more to come took place in 1838 when a ceremony took place — the giving of the religious habit of the Sisters of St. Joseph to the first American girl. She was Ann Eliza Dillon whose father, a wealthy merchant greatly opposed her entrance. Bishop Rosati and his assistant performed the ceremony. Eventful as it was, the contrast was great to those sisters who were accustomed to observing the function in Lyons where often one hundred or more novices made their profession of vows. Usually the number of postulants exceeded that number.

The newly received novice was given the name Sister Francis Joseph. She proved a great asset to the young Community. Not only did she speak French fluently but her ability to converse in excellent English enabled her to teach both Sisters and students. Much to the grief of the Sisters and her sorrow-stricken family Sister Francis Joseph died on October 30, 1842, a short four years later.

That same year, however, just two days before Christmas the Sisters received as a gift a block of ground next to the convent property. The land plus a loan enabled the Sisters to begin a building sufficiently large to accommodate the now growing numbers.

Ten years of slow but fruitful growth was marked in 1846 by an Academy at Carondelet with thirty boarders and eighty day pupils. Six deaf-mutes and nineteen orphan girls were also cared for in this
building. In St. Louis proper St. Vincent’s School and an orphanage for children were well on the way to permanent success.

Steadily the seed sown in American soil was growing. Calls from beyond the St. Louis diocese were answered as soon as possible. More recruits from France helped to meet the demands. However, America was soon to become independent of Lyons. In 1860 it was decided that greater efficiency would result if bonds of government were broken with France. Mutual interests continued the empathy between Lyons and the daughters of Carondelet who still looked with affection and pride to the Mother House at Lyons.

Carondelet became the center of government in the United States. Application for the new Constitutions went to Rome in 1863. After the petitions were presented to a papal audience in 1867, solemn confirmation was granted on July 31, 1877 by Pope Pius IX. Thus the American foundation became an independent Congregation — a Papal Institute, however.
Early Minnesota Missions
1851–1876

THE history of the diocese of St. Paul is closely related to the first missions of the Sisters of St. Joseph. On July 2, 1851 Bishop Cretin the first Bishop of the diocese took up residence to start his episcopal duties. It was he who invited the Sisters to come to St. Paul to build and staff schools and institutes of charity. He was no stranger to the Sisters having worked with them in Ferney, France from 1823–1824. The bishop a volunteer for American mission work started in St. Louis in 1838 and later went to Iowa under the direction of Bishop Loras. Here he remained until appointed to St. Paul to open a new diocese.

In answer to Bishop Cretin’s request for Sisters from Carondelet, four were sent on October 28, of 1851. They left St. Louis on the steamer “St. Paul”. Their arrival on November 2 is an event many times recounted in later history. The original group included Mother St. John Fournier, as superior and Sister Philomene Villaine, both natives of France. Sister Scholastica Vasques was a French-Spanish creole and the fourth member a native of Loretto, Pennsylvania. She was Sister Francis Joseph Tracy.

From the journal of Sister Francis Joseph we have an account of those early days. The first night was spent on the boat. On the day following, the Sisters escorted by a young priest went to the home of Madame Turpin who gave them a good dinner before they went to their future home. This was a frame shanty on a bluff overlooking the Mississippi River. It had been the residence of the Bishop. One and one-half stories high it consisted of two rooms on the first floor, a parlor and a refectory or dining room. The attic contained sleeping quarters. There was an annex that served as a kitchen.
Only a week after their arrival the Sisters opened a school dedicated to St. Joseph. It was located to the right of the convent and had been the first Cathedral of St. Paul. Father Galtier had built it in 1841 of Tamarack logs and roofed with bark-covered slabs brought from Stillwater. Here on November 10 the first Academy was opened and its development will be later recounted.

That first winter was one of hardship for the young community. Among the first pupils were two Protestant girls who boarded with the Sisters. Mary Fridley was the daughter of Major Fridley an Indian agent for the Chippewas. The second boarder was Martha Rice, a niece of Henry Rice, a prominent citizen of St. Paul. He fitted up an annex for the two girls in a style luxurious in contrast to the rude convent housing the Sisters.

In spite of the cold winter, the separation and isolation, the Sisters struggled on until the spring of 1852. Provisions and equipment were aboard the vessel "The City of St. Paul" which was the first one to arrive that year from St. Louis.

Since applications for more boarders were being made plus an increase in enrollment of day pupils a new building became a necessity. A two-story brick building was begun. It was planned to be used for teaching — with the second story to be used as sleeping quarters for boarders. Now the old log church became the Sisters' chapel. At present a marker, between Cedar and Minnesota Streets, known as the Galtier Memorial, commemorates the original Cathedral.

A second school in Minneapolis called St. Anthony, was opened in 1853 when the pastor, Father Denis Ledon, applied to Bishop Cretin for Sisters. He provided a combination convent and school — a frame building formerly used by fur traders. The early years at St. Anthony were ones of poverty and hardship, but everywhere a spirit of cheerful optimism prevailed. To aid in financing the pioneer school a piano was purchased and a music class opened. A new dwelling had been built in 1855 and through parish collections and donations, improvement began. For a brief period the school was closed but reopened after a new pastor, Father McDermott came to the parish. The Sisters were recalled and the enrollment grew as Minneapolis also developed. St. Anthony’s School continued to prosper and a new school across the river was opened. This was called the Immaculate Conception.

In St. Paul Bishop Grace in 1859 arranged for more suitable accommodations for St. Joseph’s Academy. The brick building and its annexes had become inadequate. Therefore the Academy was transferred to
the hospital quarters and the patients moved to the school buildings on Bench Street.

As the pioneer school for girls grew in numbers several interesting events took place. Among the resident pupils were two picturesque young ladies, daughters of a Sioux Chieftain, Hole-in-the-Day. Anxious moments and some alarm prevailed during the Sioux uprising in 1862 but in spite of local color the Academy was not subjected to any danger.

The first graduating class had the distinctive honor of having among its graduates Ellen Ireland, sister to the future archbishop of St. Paul. Ellen, whose family had migrated from Ireland in 1849, had lived in Burlington, Vermont, and in Chicago before coming to St. Paul. In the latter city Ellen attended a school taught by the Sisters of Mercy. Ellen entered the Novitiate of the Sisters of St. Joseph in the fall of 1858 just four months after graduation. She was sixteen years old.

By 1860 the St. Paul Province was established with Mother Seraphine Coughlin as its first Provincial Superior. The Province was subject, of course, to the new Generalate in St. Louis.

In the same year, 1860, a new site was purchased for St. Joseph's Academy on St. Anthony Hill, then on the outskirts of St. Paul. The new building was completed in 1861 and is still a part of the present structure on Marshall Avenue between Virginia Avenue and Iglehart Street. Adequate provision was planned in the yellow limestone building three and one-half stories high. It was to be the home of the Provincial and her Counsellors, the Novitiate for training prospective members as well as an Academy for girls. As these new developments progressed a severe loss to the Community was suffered in the death of Mother Seraphine Coughlin. She had worked zealously for eight years to build an education center as well as a hospital. Her death was a great loss. Her successor was Mother Stanislaus Saul whose experience as an administrator in Oswego, New York qualified her to ably carry on the work in St. Paul.

Acts of incorporation under the title “St. Joseph’s Female Academy of the City of St. Paul” were completed on June 14, 1869. The school had functioned as a boarding school essentially but by 1871 the numbers had so increased that a new wing was added to be used for the Sisters’ living quarters. Thus ended a quarter century of pioneer work by the Sisters of St. Joseph in the St. Paul-Minneapolis area.
Chapter 4

Expansion Period —
1876–1900

A quarter century of pioneering was over. By 1875 not only was St. Joseph's Academy in St. Paul and St. Anthony's High School in Minneapolis on a sound basis but other areas were being implemented. A few brief examples should fill in the picture. Hospital and health care work were developing; an Indian mission at Long Prairie was started; an orphan home for girls was in the planning stage. A third school on the secondary level was also begun.

Known as the "White Convent", it became officially Holy Angels Academy on January 29, 1877. There were two definite reasons for this new school. Overcrowded living quarters at St. Anthony and a growing demand for a boarding school for girls in Minneapolis furnished the main objectives. A series of homes on a temporary basis were used until the summer of 1882 when the Sisters purchased the Bassett property on Fourth Street and Sixth Avenue North. Here they built a large brick structure surrounded by beautiful grounds. A boarding-day school was planned with a curriculum suitable to the educational demands of the day. Mother St. John Ireland, the first superior must have sighed with relief when this permanent building was completed. Years of frustration with the ever present worries, financial and spiritual had preceded this event.

Now Holy Angels became next to St. Joseph's Academy in St. Paul, the largest Catholic boarding school in the Northwest. In addition to the regular pupils, those not in residence were offered courses in music and art. Many of the graduates became Sisters of St. Joseph — others active and enthusiastic alumnae.

In 1897 at the death of Mother St. John Ireland her successor became Mother Francis Clare Bardon. She had been directing the Academy
for several years and had become a leader in education fields. Her leadership lent further impetus to the ever-growing educational institute. Its first epoch came to a close after thirty years of growth. The High School and grade departments were separated with the consolidation of the High School now flourishing — St. Margaret's Academy. Its development will be described later.

During these years of expansion in Minneapolis the growth of St. Joseph's Academy in St. Paul continued. A well defined course of study was prescribed with emphasis on the classical subjects suitable for young ladies of the period. In addition courses in needlework including tapestry, making of artificial flowers and fruits, lace work and of course music and art. Scientific subjects were not offered until after the turn of the century as the demand for them was practically non-existent. Careful, even strict discipline, was required but on a seasonable basis; oral examinations were a dreaded ordeal but endured by the anxious victims.

After the Easter recess much attention was focused on the annual "Exhibition". This was an event held usually out-of-doors where a temporary theatre was erected. Efforts according to available records proved fruitful in the awards granted at the closing exercise of the year.

So well known was St. Joseph's Academy that boarders attended it from Wisconsin, the Dakotas, Iowa, Oregon, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Pennsylvania and New York.

During the years 1875-1900 the general tenor of prosperity in the Northwest was reflected in the growth not only at St. Joseph's Academy but in the St. Paul area. Street cars from the Union depot to St. Anthony Hill made access easier. Improvements such as steam-heated buildings, a change in curriculum, and the addition of another wing testified to the growing economy.

Recognition of the healthful locality and sanitary arrangements was made by Dr. Hand, President of the Board of Health. Satisfaction and pride in the achievement of goals set must have encouraged the work of the Sisters after years of struggling beginnings. With stability and economic security in the Twin Cities, the Sisters of St. Joseph now turned to try to meet increasing demands beyond.

Space will not permit the history of all the "missions" founded but one of the more interesting ones is that of Graceville, Minnesota. It was one of many colonizing projects begun by Bishop John Ireland. He succeeded in bringing many Catholic families to this farm land area from distant lands and overcrowded centers in Eastern United
Expansion Period — 1876-1900

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States. This rural settlement was one of many to be created. To assist in the educational program the Bishop asked for the cooperation of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

August, 1885 inaugurated the new venture. Four Sisters with Mother Jane Francis as superior settled in temporary quarters until the completion of the Sisters' residence in November. To accommodate pupils from the surrounding settlement, a boarding school was set up. The beginnings were small, enrollment-wise as the early settlers were suffering the usual hardships of migration.

The new school, Our Lady of the Lake, became the home of a group of Indian children, wards of the U.S. Government. Contracts were drawn up between the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions and the U.S. Commissions of Indian Affairs. The Sisters were to be paid for the education of girls from the Indian mission at Sisseton, South Dakota. At first only seven were enrolled but before the end of the first year twenty-five girls were admitted. In fact an addition to the building was required.

The interval between 1885 and 1896 when the Government withdrew the contract is interspersed with many interesting stories. Transportation was very primitive, travelling was tedious, modern facilities were at a minimum, yet these hardships were crowned with success.

After a fire in 1899, which destroyed much of the original buildings a plan was developed for two new buildings, a residence and a school. Temporary housing had been arranged until the new buildings were completed on Thanksgiving Day, 1900. The new school was now named St. Mary's Academy.

Minnesota was becoming a fruitful field for educational development. About the same time of the opening of the school in Graceville there was a request for the Sisters to open a school in Waverly, Minnesota. Although a parish had existed there since 1877 under the direction of Father Guilliot it was not until 1884 that conditions arose to enable Father to open a school. Diversity of national groups in this area caused some difficulty in the ministering of religious needs. The concept of a school to act as a unifying element with only one language, seemed at least a partial answer.

Classes were started but the children of these various ethnic groups found it difficult to master the English language. Reading then was offered in German and French in addition to English. Problems multiplied but the school continued to draw pupils from not only Waverly but from Delano, Montrose, and other nearby villages.

By 1893 a major issue had to be resolved. Was it necessary to
have a public school too, since the majority were Catholic. An agreement was made by which the Sisters would work in conjunction with the State Superintendent. Mr. Daly, then principal of the public school continued on but the following year Sister Eugenia was made principal. Thus began a ten year period of consolidation. Salaries were paid to the Sisters who used in addition to the public school three rooms of the convent school.

Difficulties of prejudice and religious differences hampered the smooth progress of the educational system since by contract religion could not be taught within the regular school day. Religion was taught after school hours but as the years progressed the dual system was abandoned by mutual consent. In 1904 the Sisters withdrew to manage without any interference the original purpose of a Catholic school. Yet for ten years this unique plan had existed in spite of some opposition.

While our rural schools were in the formative years the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Twin Cities were expanding not only in educational endeavors but in the area of health care. A hospital was opened in Minneapolis in 1887. It was named St. Mary’s and has continued to the present date to develop and progress.

Several parochial schools were added in St. Paul and Minneapolis between 1871 and 1897. During the same period the high schools were attracting more and more pupils.

It must be mentioned here that during the decade of the 1880’s a program of teacher training became an important aspect of educational planning. To provide a center of learning a temporary home for the teaching Sisters was opened in 1884. The growing community needed more space so St. Agatha’s Conservatory purchased property in 1886 on Exchange Street opposite the old State Capitol. Soon this became not only a home for the Sisters but a center of culture for an age group from kindergarten to adult education. Classes in music, both instrumental and vocal were added as well as art and dramatics.

Not only was St. Agatha’s Conservatory a means for promoting the arts but summer “Institutes” were organized at St. Joseph’s Academy. Specialists were engaged to give training to both elementary and secondary teachers. Some of these instructors were on the regular faculty during the school year. Those especially talented and trained Sisters also taught at summer sessions.
THE call to establish schools and hospitals in North Dakota came in 1890 from Bishop John Shanley. The Sisters of St. Joseph responded by opening the first Catholic educational institution in Jamestown. With the inspiration, encouragement and material aid of Bishop Shanley St. John’s Academy began its history: a boarding and day school was started in a remodeled barn.

The people of the Red River Valley both Catholics and Protestant rallied to the new foundation. Examples abound concerning the interest and generosity of the residents. Two will be mentioned here. An epidemic of diphtheria was raging in the area and several women volunteered their services in the event it struck St. John’s. Fortunately it did not. A second incident was the need for more pianos to meet the growing music classes. Two non-Catholics offered the use of theirs until the Sisters could purchase new ones.

Again the temporary buildings were inadequate and by 1900 a new Academy was completed — a proud day for all involved. Much credit is due to the direction of Mother Irenaeus who had succeeded Mother Catherine McDonald in 1892. Before the New Academy was built the Bishop’s residence was moved to Fargo, much to the regret of the Sisters and people of Jamestown. It was with great joy that Bishop Shanley and other interested clergy were welcomed to the dedication ceremony.

In addition to a grade school and St. John’s Academy, a hospital, Trinity Hospital had been built. Thus for over twenty-five years, the work of education and care of the sick progressed in Jamestown. So well known had the Sisters become that in 1900 St. John’s Hospital was built in Fargo and in 1907 St. Michael’s Hospital in Grand Forks. Additions had to be made to all three hospitals in the early 1920’s.

A new academy in Grand Forks had been built as well as two
parochial schools, St. Michael’s and St. Mary’s. By 1920 St. James Academy was accredited to the North Central Association of Secondary Schools.

One of the distinguished honors awarded to St. James was the Sweepstakes Cup in the field of journalism. In addition, music and dramatics won honors as units of the State and National Federation of Music Clubs. Pupils entered into contests and were in many instances successful.

Economic distress was felt in the school population during the years of depression. In particular the decrease in boarders lessened the income considerably. Yet in spite of the postponement of needed repair and remodeling the academic standing at St. James Academy in Grand Forks did not decline. The North Central Association recognized the situation and by 1938 improved agricultural conditions enabled the school to resume its role as a leader. Due to a re-financing system inaugurated by the Sisters of St. Joseph the financial standing improved.

A parallel situation prevailed in Jamestown at St. John’s Academy. Although the traditions extended over a longer period of time economic difficulties struck here too. Heroic sacrifices exemplified the efforts of the people and the faculty to keep the school solvent.

St. John’s had advanced to an enviable place in the educational ranks of the Northwest. In spite of crowded conditions and many inconveniences the school reached a peak as a boarding school in the year 1920–1921.

Improved means of transportation and the consolidation of rural public schools resulted in the decrease in the number of boarders but an increase in day students. Because Catholic boys, too, wanted to benefit by special instructions St. John’s became co-educational.

Long before it became a reality the need for a new school was evident. A generous donation of three hundred and twenty acres of improved farm land was made by Mr. John Reilly of Gladstone in 1919. With this new source of income plans for a new structure were drawn up. It was not, however until almost a decade later that the long dreamed of school was ready for occupancy.

The formal opening took place on December 27, 1928. A Solemn High Mass at 9:30 was followed by the blessing of the new building by Father Geraghty. In the evening a reception for parents and friends concluded the day’s celebration.

Equipment was carefully chosen and a well-blended color scheme made an attractive atmosphere. One of the unusual features was an
open fireplace at one end of the spacious library. With modern heating, lighting and ventilation systems as well as up-to-date laboratory facilities, St. John’s Academy became a fitting rival for any school of its standing in Dakota.

In extra curricular activities the areas of athletics and journalism rated high. An all American rating for The Gleanor the school magazine was achieved during 1924–1926.

Scholastically St. John’s rated well and became a member of the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges beginning in 1928. Financial trouble plagued the area during the drought season but the deep Catholic spirit of the people, the leadership of Father Geraghty and the Sisters of St. Joseph kept alive the hope of continuing success for the decades of the 1930’s, 1940 and 1950’s.

Yet another school system was undertaken by the Sisters in Watertown, South Dakota in 1911. At this date a parochial school was opened. Soon a high school department was added to the new elementary course and one class a year was admitted. By 1919 a four-year curriculum was in progress and the first graduating class made its debut in 1920. During the current year the State University accredited the new school — The Immaculate Conception High School.

The story of the development of the high school in Watertown is brief and divided into two parts. At the close of the school year in 1921 the high school was discontinued until the fall of 1925. In the interval the teaching staff remained to conduct a flourishing grade department.

When financial conditions gave promise of ability to re-open the secondary school, problems of re-organization taxed the energies of the new staff. The former pupils had enrolled in the public school but perseverance and determination kept the re-opened school solvent for six more years.

Again financial problems necessitated the closing of the high school in 1931. During the following year the Sisters of St. Joseph continued to maintain the grade and music department.

With deep regret especially on the part of the pastor Monsignor O’Meara and the people of the area a transfer was made. The Immaculate Conception grade school was staffed by the Franciscan Sisters. Thus ended again regretfully the services of the St. Joseph Sisters in Watertown, South Dakota in 1933.
Chapter 6

Rural Minnesota —
Hopes and Problems

To encourage Catholic education in the upper Mississippi Valley Archbishop Ireland sponsored the opening of parochial schools. The objective was to insure security for Catholics in their religious duties.

Thus in Bird Island and Marshall, Minnesota efforts were begun at the turn of the century to establish parish schools. In Bird Island, Father Kober petitioned Archbishop Ireland to send sisters there. The request was granted and on September 3, 1897, four Sisters of St. Joseph arrived. This marked the founding of St. Mary’s School. It became a day and boarding school. This beginning induced many farmers of the area to buy homes in Bird Island. So successful was the project that a substantial brick building was ready for use in 1898.

It is believed that the success of schools in Waverly, Graceville and Bird Island gave impetus to the establishment of parochial schools in other farming districts. Within five years the Sisters of St. Joseph opened schools in Marshall, Ghent and LeSueur.

Father Guilliot, later a Monsignor, had been instrumental in starting a Catholic school in Waverly in 1896. He was sent to Marshall in 1898 because of ill health. The church was heavily in debt and out of the forty-five families in the vicinity only eleven were Catholic. Yet Father Guilliot knew that a school would be an asset to increased settlement. There was some opposition from Swedish families. This was counteracted by some influential Catholic pensioned Civil War veterans as well as support from Archbishop Ireland.

As news spread about plans for a Catholic school and possibly a hospital there were mixed feelings. Some bitterly resented the idea,
others even prominent non-Catholic business and professional people welcomed the planned project. They recognized that a school would bring settlers and trade.

Negotiations began and on May 30, 1899 the Mayor of Marshall, Mr. Virgil Seward, received a reply to his request for sisters. Mother Seraphine made a personal visit to discuss the advisability of opening a school. The meeting resulted in agreement and Father Guilliot began the purchase of lots adjoining the old church property. An unexpected solution to money problems was resolved in September, 1899 when the Mahoney Mansion "the best house in Marshall" was put on the market. This building was modern in equipment, of attractive architecture and easily accessible to the business district and public buildings and churches.

After meeting with Archbishop Ireland and the citizens of Marshall it was agreed that the sale, at first listed at $5,000 would be reduced to $4,500. The sisters agreed to pay $2,500 and the citizens $2,000. Negotiations were completed in February, 1900, and the sisters arrived on March 1. Since regular classes could not start until September, the sisters opened up classes in art and music. In order to be self-sustaining it was necessary, also, for some of the sisters to do needlework. These were trying months, but like the pioneer sisters, the newly appointed sisters eked out a livelihood until September when the school opened.

So well did the parochial school progress that a high school department was added in 1902. Only the 9th grade was opened at first but each succeeding year another class began.

Rural Minnesota was well on its way to development of Catholic education. In Fulda, at St. Gabriel's, a school was soon opened and expanded to a high school department including commercial subjects. Academic courses were offered to prepare those wishing to go on to college.

St. Ann's School in Le Sueur was begun in 1902 with a grade school and commercial department. Demands for a full high school were met under the direction of Mother Matilda and approved by ecclesiastical support.

At yet another site, Morris, Minnesota, the Sisters of St. Joseph opened a school in 1911. The Assumption Church had served the Catholic families in Morris and the surrounding country since 1896. Records are vague concerning a school conducted by the Sisters of
A Design For Living

Mercy. When fire destroyed the Church in the early 1900's plans for a new building were made in 1906–1907. Because of the heavy debt incurred, the erection of a new school was postponed.

Realization that a school in any parish is a great asset, resulted in a meeting of the Board of Directors of the Assumption Church, June 20, 1910. It was decided unanimously to open a Sisters’ School in the basement of the new church. It was also agreed upon to buy "the Larson one-half block of property as a residence for a Sisters' house . . . ."

The purchase of the property was delegated to Michael Mahoney who had to go to South Dakota where the Larson family had moved. After some delay the property was bought and donated to the Sisters of St. Joseph as a bonus for going to Morris.

Arrangements were concluded with Bishop James Trobec of the St. Cloud Diocese concerning this new project. After ecclesiastical approval was granted a contract was drawn up. It was two-fold in nature: the property was deeded to the sisters upon their agreement to furnish competent teachers and guarantee to maintain the land donated for educational purpose.

Until 1914, the parochial school which opened in 1911 was expanded to a high school newly built in 1914. Great as the responsibility was from a financial standpoint, the parishioners realized that the successful future of the parish depended upon the school.

St. Mary's High School in Morris was linked harmoniously with the public school system of the city as well as the West Central School of Agriculture. The latter a branch of the State University cooperated well in the athletic, social, and educational activities of the "school town". The Sisters of St. Joseph were made to feel welcome and their gratitude to the community was well accepted. In a comparatively short time, St. Mary’s High School became accredited to the University of Minnesota. In spite of a rival public school with better facilities especially in the area of athletics the young people of Assumption parish remained loyal to their Catholic heritage.
As the rural schools were developing with success and at the same time, with some elements of hardship, changes were being made in the cities.

St. Joseph's Academy in St. Paul, St. Anthony's High School in Minneapolis, St. Margaret's Academy and the first Holy Angels Academy, also in Minneapolis were undergoing varying conditions.

At St. Joseph's Academy just before the turn of the century an all high enrollment for both boarding and day students was shown. There had been a brief period in the nineties, however, when the crop failures in the farm areas made some temporary impacts on the Academy. It was decided that some practical changes in the curriculum would be of assistance. A commercial course was introduced with stenography, typing and bookkeeping added to the college preparatory subjects. Without too great a shift in objectives the new courses attracted additional pupils. The main purpose continued, however, to be the education of young women to be prepared for whatever position in life they might aspire to attain. In reality the curriculum reads like a present day prospectus. "Current Topics", "How to Study", and "Psychology" were listed as early as 1900. Arts, sciences, music, both piano and violin as well as vocal lessons were taught. Well trained instructors were added to the Sisters' faculty, an example being Professor W. M. Cross of Leipsig, Berlin and Herr Emil Stroka, both of whom were skilled in piano and violin, respectively.

Since the University of Minnesota had accredited the school in 1899 the graduates of 1900 were admitted without entrance examinations to the University. Fifty years of achievement through hard work and continued effort had earned a coveted reward. From a small log cabin
in 1851, a modern, well equipped group of stone buildings now stood in the midst of a growing metropolis. The successors to those first four pioneer Sisters of St. Joseph had branched out in a half-century to include parochial schools, orphanages, high schools, academies and hospitals throughout the Northwest.

St. Anthony, the sister school to St. Joseph Academy had likewise progressed. Started in 1853 it continued to be a private school until 1885 when the parish took over and added a high school department. By 1890 under the direction of Father O'Reilly a new brick school was completed.

Lest impression be given that the history of some schools appear more detailed than others we pause to point up an important aspect — that of records. Under private auspices of the sisters, the Academies are owned, financed and administered by the sisters, independent of parochial jurisdiction. Where schools are developed under parish direction the sisters have endeavored to cooperate in all ways to insure good standards. Close adherence to local and state as well as ecclesiastical authorities whether private or parochial pointed up the understanding between the Sisters of St. Joseph and those with whom they worked.

Unfortunately however, records in some cases were not as closely kept in non-private schools as in those under the Community direction. The ideals of religious education throughout the first half-century were uppermost in the minds of those directing all our institutions.

Thus we come to the twentieth century beginnings. Because of congested living quarters at St. Joseph's Academy, St. Paul, a new site in the midway district had been a coveted "Promised Land" for years. As early as 1886 a college for Catholic women was in embryonic form. It was not until 1890 that property was purchased and plans drawn up to build a boarding and day school on the secondary level. This would be the setting to initiate an institution of high education.

"Academy Heights" was the newly purchased property. Between the interval of the actual acquisition of land and the building, this site became a favorite resort for many of the sisters. Since Mother Seraphine Ireland the Provincial Superior had initiated the idea of a college to-be, she was often a member of a group who went on excursions. The locality on what is now Randolph and Cleveland Avenues was accessible by street car to Grand and Cleveland. From there a sandy road led to Academy Heights. Along the route there were a few farm houses. On a particular day in August a group started out but forgot refreshments. The day was very warm, the walk from the
street car wearisome. A farm had been rented from the sisters and there two of the party went to purchase some supplies. Milk, bread and honey brought back by the "foraging" party became a sumptuous feast. Those awaiting had found a natural woodland opening surrounded by trees. Here they sat on large flat rocks and with borrowed cups and utensils enjoyed the welcome lunch. Toasts were suggested and Mother Seraphine, ever ready with appropriate words gave a charming eulogy to the "land flowing with milk and honey". Afterwards the gay little party explored the grounds of what was to be the future College of St. Catherine.

However, years of hard work and difficulties were to be encountered before the dreams materialized. In 1902 sufficient funds had been accumulated. These plus the generous monetary contribution of the Honorable Hugh Derham of Rosemount made possible the drawing up of contracts.

Once a decade earlier, the lots surrounding the property had been advertised. Academy Heights in one article reads: "The location is really beautiful commanding a splendid view of Minneapolis, Fort Snelling and Minnehaha Park." Buyers were urged to purchase land that would one day become a center of educational institutions. The prophecy came true. Already there existed the St. Paul Seminary on the banks of the Mississippi. Nearby the future College of St. Thomas as well as the College of St. Catherine, and other centers of learning developed.

Before the new group of buildings centered on the present campus of the College and named "Derham Hall" funds had to be made available. This was done under the real estate management of Mr. P. T. Kavanagh, John Kerwin and James King. Lots were sold mainly to friends of the sisters. Thus the money from the sale of land and the donation of Hugh Derham the building of the new Academy began in 1903.

Progress was slow due to the distance from the center of the city and the date set for the opening had to be postponed. On December 28, 1904 the sisters who were to conduct Derham Hall moved from St. Joseph's Academy. Most of the pupils were boarders transferred from the former school. They arrived on January 6, 1905 and the charter graduating class that year numbered fifteen. Here in this beautiful but remote setting the problems often mentioned earlier became the lot of this pioneer group. Transportation difficulties, lack of facilities in the "inner city" area plagued the early year.
With the closing of St. Joseph’s Academy as a boarding school, a new episode in its career began. Little change in curriculum followed but emphasis was now on a “day school” and reorganization of physical conditions became necessary.

Electricity, installation of a telephone system and improved street car accommodations were made known in announcing the fall opening of 1906.

The academic course of study was enriched by the addition of an Ethics Department directed by Monsignor Moynihan, then President of St. Thomas College. An addition to the History Department was the Reverend Francis Scaefe, Rector of the St. Paul Seminary. Cooperation with these two institutions became a continuous support to St. Joseph’s Academy.

Changes in the residential and business sections of Minneapolis during the first decade of the twentieth century brought about a significant alteration in educational institutions run by the Sisters of St. Joseph. The Academy of the Holy Angels started in 1876 had expanded beyond its capacity. It was decided after thirty years of service to young women of high school age to transfer the students to a new site. This newly bought property was thought to be in a more favorable locality. A square block facing 13th Street between Linden and Hawthorne Avenues was purchased in 1907. Archbishop Ireland had bought the land belonging to the A. L. Wilson family. It was originally to be used for the Pro-Cathedral but a more suitable site was found to be even better on Hennepin Avenue. Thus the Sisters of St. Joseph were able to obtain the Wilson property and the adjoining residence owned by Mr. Wilson’s brother-in-law, Mr. McNair.

These two very beautiful homes were remodeled to serve school purpose. The new school was called “St. Margaret’s Academy”. Since the boarding school and grade school was retained at Holy Angels the new school had to be incorporated under a new title. Later the alumnae members of Holy Angels were merged with the new school, so the graduates merely transferred their allegiance to St. Margaret’s. The boarders of high school age were moved to Derham Hall, the nucleus for the College of St. Catherine.

This new academy eventually consisted of three buildings grouped together conveniently and named St. Margaret’s Hall, St. Therese Hall and St. Cecelia’s. The latter was remodelled for use as a conservatory of music and drama. The main building, St. Margaret’s Hall, was a brown stone edifice with an interior of carved walnut, mahogany,
rosewood and oak finishings. Fourteen fireplaces of marble and tile added great charm to the building.

Under the direction of Sister Rosalia Hays, the first superior, assisted by Sister Anna Mary, the principal, plans went on to secure a qualified staff. So well did the opening years develop that in 1908 the University of Minnesota placed St. Margaret’s Academy on its accredited list. Within the next fifty years the progress of St. Margaret’s exceeded the capacity of the increasing enrollment. The grade department was dropped and plans were made to find a new locality. These plans, however, did not reach the objectives set until 1960 when a modern one-story complex was opened on the outskirts of Minneapolis near Highway 100.

As our College and Secondary Schools developed the need for the education of the Sisters became of vital concern. Sisters were sent not only to the University of Minnesota and North Dakota but to Columbia University, Chicago, Catholic University at Washington and to Colleges of Music and Dramatics in Chicago, New York and Boston.

These plans began in the early 1900’s. In anticipation of the needs at the College of St. Catherine, two of our Sisters, Sisters Hyacinth Werden and Sister Briget Bohan “gathered information abroad relative to higher education for women”. They travelled in France, Germany and Belgium. As early as 1908 three sisters talented in art were taken abroad by Mother Celestine, then superior at St. Agatha’s Conservatory of Music and Art in St. Paul. These sisters, namely, Sister Maria Teresa Mackey, Sister Anysia Keating, and Sister Sophia Keating, studied in Rome, Naples, Florence, Venice, Bologna, Milan, Munich, Paris, Lourdes and Versailles. They were privileged to copy from the originals of the Masters in Uffizi, Pitti, Louvre and other art galleries. The collection of some three hundred beautiful paintings were brought back. These were placed in halls, libraries and reception rooms of the Convent schools in the Northwest.

To aid in the training program for prospective Sisters, the Novitiate which until 1912 was at St. Joseph’s Academy, planned courses of study was the order of the day. In 1912 a new and separate Novitiate Building was completed on Randolph Avenue adjacent to the College of St. Catherine. Here a regular normal school was begun for those who would later teach in the elementary school area. Supplemental training was also attained by sending many teachers to State Normal Schools at Moorhead, Minnesota, and at Valley City, North Dakota.

In the 1920’s a Diocesan Teachers’ College was established at 240
Summit Avenue in St. Paul. The building, formerly the home of Mr. James J. Hill the railroad magnat had been willed to the diocese of St. Paul by Mrs. Hill. Here for many years, hundreds of our Sisters received training for Elementary Education. Later the College of St. Catherine took over the program in conjunction with our own Board of Studies.

This latter program had been initiated in 1938 as a more centralized means of deciding and allocating to the Sisters a plan of study for degrees on the college and post graduate level.

When the Sister Formation Program evolved our sisters became most actively engaged. One aspect adopted was that of the Juniorate. This enabled every prospective sister to continue her studies after first profession of vows until certification, a college degree, or a completed course in nursing or technician training was completed. Thus every sister after her Juniorate was qualified in her respective field.

At present there have been some changes. The Juniorate no longer exists but the training continues. A tentative plan of in-service study either at the College of St. Catherine or at other approved colleges and universities exists.

Government aid by application for and subsequent acceptance has greatly helped in the financing of Sisters desirous of advanced degrees or refresher courses in their respective fields of endeavors.

Another innovation is that of temporarily, at least, discontinuing the usual structured period of the Novitiate. In place of this a committee guides the applicants to our Community. These aspirants called affiliates and later associates may live at home, continue their college work or even engage in an occupation. They meet regularly, however, and receive religious direction. Some live in our convents, hospitals or in experimental houses.

Another aspect of our apostolate includes orphanages for both boys and girls. The sisters with the aid of lay associates directed and worked in an orphanage for boys in Minneapolis and one for girls in St. Paul. Countless children were saved from abandonment by this very special and intimate service. In recent years our work in orphanages has been taken over by the placement of orphaned or neglected children in foster homes. The Benedictine Sisters took over the Boys' Home in Minneapolis for a short period but that has now been converted into a center for guidance for emotionally disturbed children.

A unique service to the people of St. Paul began in a small way by an act of God. In 1933 while attending a convention in California
Sister Anna Marie Meyer met with an accident which resulted in paralysis of her lower limbs. Sister had been director of the Department of Speech and Dramatics at the College of St. Catherine. Sister was hospitalized and in great physical pain, yet she never gave way to despair or the idea that her active years in the community had ended.

As soon as her doctors permitted, Sister Anna Marie began in a small way a program of rehabilitation for children with speech handicaps. First in her hospital room and later in a room assigned to her Sister put her natural talents to work on small groups of children. She had a dream — later to be realized in the present structure — The Christ Child Center for Exceptional Children — in 1946.

In 1948 with the aid of Mr. R. C. Lilly, Chairman of the Christ Child Center the purchase of a house on Summit Avenue opposite St. Thomas College was bought. Enrollment in the rooms previously used in the Christ Child Center had become inadequate for the growing enrollment. Mr. Lilly gave the house to the school which was formally opened in August of 1948. There was need for renovation which followed. Aided by a staff of lay teachers, volunteer mothers of the handicapped and assisted by other Sisters of St. Joseph, availability for added pupils was provided.

An extension of the school was needed and again Mr. Lilly donated the lots adjacent to the original Center and plans for building a new structure began. Classes were begun in October 1955. As the speech therapy continued there were additions to the curriculum to meet the needs of older children too.

At present the program in the newly added structure provides assistance for young people up to twenty-one years of age. A well-equipped gym, home economics department and areas for self-expression in art, music, dancing and drama enrich the program usually found in a typical elementary school. Plans for industrial arts, typing and further self-help training for the future are being developed.

A Board of Directors, lay and religious, assist the Sisters of St. Joseph in this novel project. As chairman of the Board, Dr. Charles E. Rea was instrumental in planning the formal opening of the new Center in 1970.
Chapter 8

Period of Expansion

THREE quarters of a century and more have passed since the Sisters of St. Joseph faced the challenge of Catholic education in the Northwest. Great changes have swept the regions in which their field of labor exist. To measure progress is a difficult task; therefore, no attempt will be made to define the term “progress”. Let the annals of time record the accomplishments of years of steady and sincere work toward an ever hopeful goal—that of instilling Christian Education in America’s youth. What changes took place in the twenties and thirties?

In place of log dwellings and rudely constructed buildings with a scarcity of equipment, there developed well built brick and concrete convents, schools and hospitals. Modern styled libraries, laboratories, gymnasiums and auditoriums were the going thing.

Ever increasing demands by accrediting agencies made the higher standards a competitor with tax-supported public schools a threat to the privately owned Catholic schools.

It was in the rural areas that economic conditions of rising costs made imperative the closing of high schools in LeSueur, Fulda and Marshall, Minnesota. The latter is an example of how dedicated parents strove to keep a Catholic high school in operation. By 1912 a full academic program had been instituted. This school served not only Marshall but neighboring districts. By 1925 the ever rising costs because of correspondingly higher standards forced the closing of St. Joseph’s High School. We shall see later on, however, that popular demand resulted in the opening of a new school in 1950. In spite of the closing of the High School, the grade school and music classes continued.

In 1929 St. Ann’s High School in Le Sueur likewise was closed with the hope of a later building plan in the future. A challenge to the alumni of St. Ann’s to help develop a new school unfortunately, did not materialize.
Another rural high school did overcome financial obstacles. This was St. Mary’s High School in Morris, Minnesota. Although enrollment figures were relatively low, the well trained faculty and a suitably equipped school resulted in the accrediting of St. Mary’s in 1929. Prospects looked good and the school, a co-educational one had loyal pupils. The neighboring public school had more resources but the Catholic population continued its support through the 1930’s.

Another small but well planned high school, St. Mary’s in Graceville proudly celebrated its golden anniversary on June 20, 1935.

In Waverly, Minnesota, the first high school graduating class received diplomas in 1893. With increasing school enrollment the convent, a part of the school since 1885 was replaced by a new modernly equipped residence in 1926. Because of insufficient income a new high school and grade school were not built until 1957. Then a fine building including classrooms, library, gymnasium and every aspect of a new era made this small high school one which merited deserved praise. It was accredited to the University of Minnesota in 1959-60.

Some forty miles southwest of Waverly in the town of Bird Island, progress in Catholic education resulted in the opening of a department in 1915 with a small but growing enrollment. In 1927 St. Mary’s High School, also co-educational, was placed on the accredited list of schools affiliated with our State University. Besides a strong college preparatory course, practical subjects in Manual Training, Mechanical Drawing and Home Economics augmented the academic subjects.

In St. Paul, the growing population of St. Joseph’s Academy made it imperative to found a residence for the Provincial and her Council. Adjoining the Novitiate on Randolph Avenue a new Provincial House and Chapel were begun in August, 1925. Previously the residence had been at St. Joseph’s Academy. While the new building was being completed the Novitiate became a temporary residence.

To assist in raising funds for the new project many and varying expedients were thought up. Perhaps the most lucrative was a bazaar held in the Knights of Columbus Hall in October of 1925. With the cooperation of the Knights, our various Alumnae Associations, friends and pupils the bazaar was a great success.

During 1928, the Diamond Jubilee Year of the St. Paul Province, many celebrations took place. A few only are mentioned here. The late Archbishop Dowling on March 19 paid tribute to the pioneer sisters whose work had started in a primitive log building, the first Catholic school in Minnesota. “God bless the endeavors of these devoted mis-
sionaries, and today your order, ever-growing and flourishing, is spread throughout the broad Northwest.

At the College of St. Catherine a beautiful pageant was presented on the campus on June 9. This event commemorated in scenes, songs, and dances, the progress of the Sisters of St. Joseph during three quarters of a century.

In this Diamond Jubilee year the long anticipated new Provincial House was completed. The structure included a beautiful chapel and Residence Hall. The chapel connects the Novitiate building by means of cloisters on each floor.

In addition to the area set aside for the Provincial and her Assistant, provision was made for retired sisters whose long years of active work have earned a much needed rest. The teaching staffs of Nativity and St. James parochial schools were also housed in the new building.

Coincident to this Jubilee Year, three of our hospitals met the pressing needs of the times. New additions were added to St. John’s Hospital in Fargo, North Dakota, Trinity Hospital in Jamestown, North Dakota and in St. Paul, St. Joseph’s Hospital built a Nurses Home. All these additions gave evidence of growing demands by the people of these areas in the work of hospital expansion.

In 1928 a new St. John’s Academy, Jamestown, North Dakota was completed. Suitable ceremonies began with a Solemn High Mass at 9:30 a.m. followed by the blessing of the new building. Pride in the newly acquired project was duly shown by Father Geraghty, a long-time friend of the Sisters of St. Joseph.

From the date of membership in the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges in 1908, St. John’s met the challenges of an ever-growing high standards of scholastic achievement.

In making an assessment of our secondary schools within the Twin Cities as well as the outlying areas in Minnesota and North Dakota there is a strain of similarity present. That includes continuous elements of dedication, sacrifice and determination to succeed in the noble work of Catholic Education.

Despite depression years, a new school, the Academy of the Holy Angels, was built in 1930. Its location in the suburban area of Minneapolis on Nicollet Avenue and Sixty-six Street is the successor to the school of the same name which was opened in 1876. In 1907 its High School department was closed when the newly opened St. Margaret’s Academy was begun. The old Holy Angels continued, however, as a boarding and day school for grade pupils until 1928. No longer considered a suitable locality for a school the property was
Period of Expansion

put up for sale and the building was vacated. Plans were already shaping themselves for its successor. Expansion of Minneapolis toward the south end of the city warranted the building of a new Academy for the girls.

Encouraged by the late Archbishop Dowling, preliminary steps were taken to develop this new school on land previously purchased. Under the direction of Mother Clara Graham, the Provincial Superior, building activities began in 1930. As the months developed, so also did a beautiful structure in English Gothic architecture. Six buildings united by corridors became under one roof of the new Academy. Situated in a partially wooded acreage the thirty acre campus consisted of athletic fields, a miniature golf course, tennis courts and in front of the building terraced lawns.

The aims and objectives of Holy Angels became similar to its predecessor — religious, intellectual, physical, and social training for the new pupils. Every effort was made to suitably equip the building. When announcements were sent out that the school would open in September, 1931, a description of existing facilities accompanied the brochure. Among the newer features there were the following: a Univent system of ventilation, a radio-broad-casting plan with a central office, a switchboard to provide communications to all parts of the building. Laboratories and classroom equipment in addition to a professionally trained staff merited an early accreditation to the University of Minnesota in the early months of 1932. Thus the first graduates were able to enter any and all private and public colleges in the State of Minnesota without any special testing programs.

Even in the 1930's a pioneering spirit was evident in some activities of the Sisters. Temporary make-shifts when furniture did not arrive, a daily mile tramp to the parish church at Richfield were reminiscent of the 1850's. Chapel arrangements were incomplete for a few weeks but neighbors were alert to the needs of the new parishioners of Assumption Church. On the first Sunday of September, 1931, the school bus transported the sisters to Mass where Father Peter Schmitz made a welcoming speech.

In spite of troubled times financially and growing doubts of a successful opening the first enrollment was very gratifying. Over fifty boarding students and more than a hundred day pupils were enrolled in the new twelve grade school. Thirteen graduates received diplomas in June, 1933, presented by His Excellency, John Gregory Murray, Archbishop of St. Paul.

One of the major concerns of this new Academy was to work toward
A capacity enrollment. The fact that advertising plus good public relations had got this school started in a period of depression is a tribute to the Sisters of St. Joseph and their friends. Everything pointed toward prosperous years especially since accreditation was assured plus a very well qualified faculty and an excellent curriculum.

At about the same time that Holy Angels was being built, it became necessary to add on to our oldest high school, St. Joseph’s Academy in St. Paul. By 1930, the enrollment had far exceeded the accommodations. Two buildings were erected joined to the older buildings by cloisters. One building comprised the Chapel and the library with an entrance on Western Avenue. The other contained a four-story classrooms building, offices, laboratories, gymnasium, cafeteria and auditorium. The latter had a separate entrance on Virginia Avenue.

Many long-planned activities could now be realized. In 1927 under the direction of Sister Eva, the Academy had become a member of the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges. Records, handbooks, yearbooks and literary magazines indicate the enriched program of curricular and extracurricular activities with the addition of this memorable Academy. More than records, however, is the rich heritage enjoyed by thousands whose loyalties have been perpetuated by an Alumnae Association well known for its unity of spirit, loyalty, and generous service.

By 1940 the enrollment had reached a capacity in excess of six hundred students. This was to grow in the following decade, to a number beyond capacity.

In Minneapolis, a record enrollment had also been reached at St. Anthony’s High School. One element of difference exists in that St. Anthony’s is a parochial rather than a private school. Its faculty, curriculum, objectives and standards are similar to St. Joseph’s Academy. Dating back to the 1850’s this school bears an enviable role in Catholic education in the area. Alumnae members actually engaged in social, business and religious life are a source of great pride to its Alma Mater.

In January, 1934, to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the school’s establishment the Alumnae Association sponsored a commemorative celebration. Former graduates returned to honor the Sisters and to enjoy and recall their days at St. Anthony. A feature of great interest was a room fixed up to resemble a historical museum. “Northeast Minneapolis” proudly recalls this event.

Closely interwoven with the College of St. Catherine is a smaller
high school on the campus — Derham Hall. Of necessity, its enrollment was limited since the College was growing so rapidly that space was at a premium. There was a distinct department with its own administrator, curriculum and activities. As a matter of record it was Derham Hall that was the nucleus of the later flourishing College.

The development of the College is a story in itself but we must note here that the growth of this splendid institution had its inspiration in the guidance of the late Archbishop Ireland. Great credit is due to the dauntless spirit of Sister Antonia McHugh whose great energy, foresight and effort molded a College whose enrollment grew to a status unsurpassed in Catholic education in the Northwest.
Chapter 9

The War Years and Post War Period

DIFFICULT years of the depression found many of our schools and hospitals throughout the province in some financial crises. By assisting one another the trying times emerged into more prosperous ones as World War II developed. Where enrollment in our high schools especially would have suffered, the National Youth Administration enabled many pupils to receive grants under the New Deal program.

After Pearl Harbor and ensuing demands for industrial growth for war purposes, many heads of families found good jobs which enabled the parents to meet their obligations at tuition high schools and academies. It was in the decades of the 1940's and 1950's that our enrollment reached an all-time high. Plans for expansion were made notably in St. Paul where a new Derham Hall high school was initiated and a new St. Margaret's Academy in Minneapolis. Both of these projected plans resulted in the building of new schools — Derham Hall was completed in 1963 and the pupils from the College campus were transferred to the site on Warwick Avenue.

St. Margaret's Academy was formally opened in September in 1960 at 252 Upton Avenue South in Minneapolis near Highway 100. It became the first of our schools built on a one-floor level. It is one of the most beautifully equipped schools of our Province with an Auditorium having a seating capacity of 1,200. Pupils who had attended the former St. Margaret's were transferred to the new area. Many new students applied for admission and the first years' enrollment totaled over 1,000. The first principal was Sister Elizabeth Marie Martens, followed by Sister Alissa Marie Scanlan. Under their direction high enrollment resulted.
In the first part of this book much space was given to the development of our Secondary Schools which reached a total of twelve. Besides five Academies for girls in the Twin Cities we had staffed High Schools in Jamestown, Grand Forks, North Dakota, in Graceville, Marshall, Bird Island, Morris and Waverly, Minnesota.

The tremendous work in our elementary schools demands much commendation. As early as 1863 with the opening of the Immaculate Conception School in Minneapolis parish after parish throughout Minnesota and the Dakotas asked for and received our Sisters wherever we could meet the requirements.

Mention has been made of the many elementary Schools in the rural areas of Minnesota and the Dakotas. We shall now give a brief account of the growing parochial schools in the Twin Cities and suburbs.

A counterpart to the Immaculate Conception School in Minneapolis was the Cathedral School in St. Paul. It was originally founded in 1858 and a new modern building completed in 1914. The staff of sisters lived at St. Agatha's Conservatory, later at St. Joseph's Academy and recently in its own convent. At present the Cathedral School is functioning on an experimental basis.

Before the turn of the century St. Mary's School, St. Louis and St. John's were opened. As there were no separate convents the sisters resided at St. Agatha's Conservatory until recent years when convents were built in St. Mary's and St. John's parishes. In Minneapolis, the Ascension School was opened in 1897.

During the early decades of the twentieth century the elementary schools continued to flourish. In St. Paul, St. Vincent's and St. Luke's were opened in 1902 and 1904 respectively and in Minneapolis Our Lady of Lourdes in 1916.

The year 1913 found three more schools added: St. James and St. Mark's in St. Paul and the Basilica of St. Mary in Minneapolis. As these parishes did not provide convents again the sisters staffing these schools took up resident either at the Novitiate, later, the Provincial House in the case of St. James and at St. Joseph's Academy for the sisters from St. Mark's. Subsequently convents were built for the sisters in conjunction with the schools. The teachers from the Basilica lived until very recent years at St. Margaret's Academy.

In 1915 St. Stephen's School was opened and continued to flourish in an area in Minneapolis well adapted to elementary aged pupils. More and more the demand for the Sisters of St. Joseph to continue the good work of elementary education in the Twin Cities. St. Stephen's
and Holy Name and St. Lawrence Schools were begun in Minneapolis while in St. Paul St. Columba’s, Nativity, and St. Ccecilia’s started their work. Temporary residence for the staff at Nativity was at the Provincial House until the completion of a beautiful convent.

In the 1920’s were also added St. Thomas the Apostle and St. Helena’s in Minneapolis.

About ten years elapsed until additional schools were opened. In 1937 Holy Spirit began in St. Paul, and Christ the King and St. Charles Borromeo in Minneapolis. Both of these schools soon had splendidly equipped convents for the sisters.

From 1946 until the present, St. Peter’s School adjacent to Holy Angels Academy found welcome living accommodation at the Academy. Sister Hubert Marie Weller, the presiding Principal has been most loyal and instrumental in encouraging pupils to attend our Academy.

In the 1940’s also were added in St. Paul, St. Leo’s and St. Therese and in St. Paul Park St. Thomas Aquinas School.

The 1950’s found our sisters at St. Pascal Baylon, St. Gregory’s and Transfiguration in St. Paul and the following schools in Minneapolis: Nativity of Mary and St. Kevin’s and St. Raphael’s in Crystal Village and St. John the Baptist at Excelsior. The sisters from St. Kevin’s and Nativity of Mary lived at Holy Angels Academy and commuted to their schools. At present the sisters teaching at Nativity of Mary still reside at the Academy which benefits from the wise direction of its Principal, Sister Mary Magdalene Swoboda. She has tried tirelessly to advise pupils to enter Holy Angels and has been very successful. In 1955 St. Pius X was opened in White Bear and in 1959, as mentioned earlier Good Shepherd School with grades five through eight started after a delay of several years because of lack of staff members.

Our most recent elementary school opening in the Twin Cities was St. Joseph’s School in Circle Pines, Minnesota. Heroic efforts in some instances have been exerted to keep these schools in excellent physical and intellectual condition. They are not only the bulwark of the educational development in this Archdiocese but feeder schools for the boys, girls and co-education High Schools in the Twin Cities area.

Some innovations have been in the way of consolidation of some schools. These seem to be progressing well. We regret the closing of some elementary schools due to financial conditions, loss of enrollment and decline in the number of sisters who formerly staffed these schools. Our prayer and hope is for a revival of the all-time high
enrollments, the increase of vocations and the continued cooperation of our Catholic laity for whom we are most grateful. Their sacrifices, and determination to keep our basic needs alive deserve our most sincere thanks. May God reward all who are working with us in this endeavor.

Statistics within the Twin City area alone tell of the confidence held by pastors in the work of the Sisters of St. Joseph. It was with deep regret that often we could not give sufficient Sisters to staff new schools especially in the ever-expanding suburban areas. A notable experience is the perseverance of Father Francis Hayes, pastor of Good Shepherd parish in Golden Valley. He built an excellent school, and convent and insisted that it be staffed by the Sisters of St. Joseph. Periodically Father Hayes reminded Mother Bertha of the readiness of the school and convent. Dogged determination won out and in the year 1959 on the Feast of the Good Shepherd, the announcement was made that in the fall the school would open. Grades five through eight have since been developed by the Sisters of St. Joseph and some lay teachers. A beautiful convent adjoins the school and its outlay and modern equipment should make any parish extremely proud of such an adequate plant.

With the growth in elementary schools as well as high schools and academies our hospitals and schools of higher education were likewise expanding.

Earlier we wrote about the founding of St. Mary's Hospital in 1887. Then five Sisters took over the operation of a twenty-bed hospital in a mansion purchased and later converted into a temporary hospital with a staff of ten doctors. Soon it was evident that a new building was a "must". In 1892 there was built a hundred-bed brick building designated at present as the "C" section of the present complex. A school for nursing trainees opened in 1900. A program initiated then has expanded greatly and in cooperation with the College of St. Catherine a four-year degree course was developed.

Although plans were in the making for an addition to St. Mary's as early as 1914 the "B" area was not a reality until 1918. Additional staff, modern equipment, increased bed space in the new six-story structure seemed at the time extremely adequate. But as time went on another addition was made in 1959 known as the "A" wing. This seven story structure increased the bed capacity to 505 exclusive of bassinettes. Several specialized laboratories were included.

The educational programs have also expanded to include a three-year diploma program. Medical internship and residencies, training in nurs-
ing, x-ray, medical technology and other health related programs have been a part of the progressive movement.

In 1964 the School of Nursing was separately incorporated and named St. Mary’s Junior College. Offerings of a two-year associate degree program in six health fields have augmented the original plan.

Resources and services have been made to all persons regardless of race, creed or color.

As our hospitals, grade schools, high schools and colleges expanded we were extending ourselves into the mission fields beyond Continental United States. As early as 1938 Reverend Mother Rose Columba sailed for Hawaii to receive first hand information about the island mission offered to the Sisters by the Vicar Apostolic of Hawaii. As a result of the visit we accepted the offer and by July of 1938 nine Sisters had been selected for the mission in Hawaii. In the beginning no Sisters from the St. Paul province were included but as the schools increased their enrollment, recruits from all provinces were accepted. Since Hawaii was still not a part of the United States all missionaries went on a volunteer basis.

As all remember well Hawaii was the focal point of attack in 1941 at Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. Our Sisters lived in the frightening war atmosphere until Japan’s surrender in 1945. In the meantime St. Paul province was sending volunteers as the missions expanded beyond the mainland. When in 1950 Hawaii was admitted as the fiftieth state of the Union, the status changed and since then Sisters have been assigned to areas similar to those on the continent. So extensive did the Hawaiian missions become that Hawaii ranks as a Vice-Province. In the area of educational progress the Sisters have made remarkable contributions. Catechetical instructions deserve marked comment as the work of an apostolic nature grew beyond the normal school year.

By 1966 there were forty-four Sisters of the Congregation in Hawaii and a good percentage of these came from the St. Paul Province.

By August of 1956 the mission field had been extended to Japan. Under the directives of our Superior General, Reverend Mother Eucharista Galvin initiated this movement. It came as a response to an invitation from the Maryknoll Fathers who had charge of the Kyoto diocese. The decision to send Sisters to Japan was resolved after a visit by Reverend Mother to Kyoto. Arrangements were made to set up a convent there. The Sisters who were our first missionaries to Japan included Sister Irmina Kelehan of St. Paul. The plans included a period of study of the intricate Japanese language. The Sisters were
aided by an interpreter, Catherine Kegami, a native of Japan who had studied at our college, Mount St. Mary in Los Angeles. She lived with the Sisters during their first year becoming an indispensable assistant in communications.

It was not enough, however, to have an interpreter. The Sisters needed to learn the language if their apostolate in education was to flourish. Consequently the Sisters enrolled at the Nagamima Language School. It was a gruelling experience but after two years of work at oral and written language there was hope of success. Yet the language problem continued as did the study hours.

During the early months in Japan the need to reconstruct the building chosen for the first convent was made evident. Thus the study of the new language was not the only complexity to face our Sisters. Added to these, the choice of a suitable site for the projected school became important. After much “haggling” and with the invaluable assistance of the former mayor of Tsu, a wooded tract of land in that city was decided upon, and on July 2, 1957 the transaction was completed of buying the land.

Then followed months of work in the construction of the school building until the fall of the year when the cornerstone was laid. During the months of building our Sisters received much information and advice from Sister Regina Marie, C.N.D. who stayed in the convent at Kyoto and explained the details of setting up a Japanese school according to the custom there.

The decision was made to begin with a high school and after much deliberation the name was selected as the Sisters wished St. Joseph’s Joshi Gakuen.

By 1958 four new missionaries joined the original one from each of the four provinces. Sister Ruth Bloom represented St. Paul province. The school opened in April 1959 with one hundred and thirty-three pupils. The school grew and by February 1962 the enrollment for the senior high was three hundred and sixty-five while the junior high had one hundred and six.

Not only was the school developing to the point of planning an addition but two postulants, five novices and two junior professed Japanese Sisters were in the Convent at Kyoto. Thus the first ten years in Japan saw the rewards of the zealous Sisters and the prayers of the entire community.

As the missions in Hawaii and Japan progressed, an invitation came for our Sisters to go to Peru. This request came from the papal nuncio
to that country and was answered by a visit from Reverend Mother Eucharista and her assistant, Mother M. Caroline. They visited in October, 1961, and by January of 1962 nine Sisters were assigned to educational work in Ica, Chimbote and Arequipa.

In addition to the work of education there came a request to send hospital personnel to Lima at the Hospital Militar Central. Among the first three Sisters going to Lima in August 1962, was Sister Jeanne Teresa Deiman of St. Paul. Later, in September, 1962, Sister Rita Clare Brennan of the St. Paul province arrived and by November the hospital group were ready to take on their respective duties. In spite of linguistic and cultural differences the cooperation and encouragement of the medical and nursing staffs made the difficulties less notable.

As in Japan, the Sisters working with the Peruvians had to master to some extent the Spanish language or work through interpreters. To offset the expenses of living and to give necessary aid to the poor, some Sisters in Arequipa taught at the University and they used some of the salary to assist the underprivileged. Many hardships, especially becoming acclimated to cultural and seasonal changes became a part of the life of our Sisters in Peru.

Each area was different. The teaching staff made Ica their first settlement by beginning work on November 5, 1962. Living quarters and furnishing of rooms for school had been completed when the Ica River overflowed it banks on March 8, 1963 forcing the Sisters to move to another place for a convent and school.

Since the diocesan seminary had closed because of lack of vocations, the Bishop graciously consented to the Sisters using it. The name of the new school was Colegio Christo Rey, and opened on April 15 with sixty-seven pupils in the lower grades and kindergarten. By 1965 the enrollment had increased thirty-five percent over the preceding year.

Arequipa was chosen to become the novitiate in Peru. In the meantime as mentioned above Sister Marie Esterre and Sister Marie Loyola began teaching at the Catholic University while planning a catechetical program for public school children.

In 1953 St. Joseph’s Hospital celebrated its centenary. From a crude log cabin church on Bench Street the one time residence of Bishop Cretin, the hospital was moved to Exchange Street in 1854, the first stone building in Minnesota, used as a hospital. By 1878 the West wing was added, in 1895 the Main building. Further changes were made in 1921, 1926 and 1940, so that by 1953 the picture of a hundred years of building and expanding give us some comparable figures.

There were in 1853 four doctors and four sisters. After one hundred
years the medical staff numbered 240 doctors. A total of 48 sisters plus 174 student nurses were serving the St. Paul Community. A capacity of beds exclusive of the 45 bassinets comprise 283 beds.

As additions developed in 1951 and 1958 some of the earlier wings were demolished to replace the new areas.

To mention all of the improvements would entail a long dissertation, but we must make note of some. In 1949 an out-patient department was officially opened. A research laboratory was completed in 1957 and the beautiful John Gregory Murray Unit in 1960. A service unique in this part of the U.S. was introduced in 1950, namely routine chest x-rays for all patients admitted to St. Joseph's Hospital. The most recent addition now nearing completion, the Carondelet Unit, has resulted in fulfilling the objectives of the administration, the staff and the interested advisory board. Much credit is due to Sister Marie de Paul, present administrator, and those she has had in consultation.

In addition to the professional services of doctors, nurses, technicians of many types, the hospital developed in conjunction with the College of St. Catherine, a four year nurses' training school.

To aid the above a volunteer group known as the Women's Auxiliary, has functioned for years. A coffee shop, a gift shop and portable carts to serve the bedridden with articles from the Gift Shop has been a popular adjunct. This latter service is also handled by a young efficient group of high school girls known as Candy Stripers.

As the population of Grand Forks increased, the needs of a new hospital became imminent. The hospital built in 1907 had served its purpose. It was decided to build a new nursing center in 1952. A $4,000,000 structure was planned and built under the supervision of Sister Rita Clare. Sister had trained at St. Michael's and did further study later at the College of St. Catherine, the Catholic University of Washington, D.C. and at St. Louis University. After serving as a floor supervisor and Director of Nurses, Sister Rita Clare was assigned to become administrator of St. Michael's in 1946. She had worked at St. Mary's Hospital as Director of Nurses and supervisor of obstetrics from 1939–1946. After her return to St. Michael's, plans for a new hospital were begun which culminated in the completion in 1952.

During the years preceding the erection of the new St. Michael's it has become a member in good standing of the Catholic Hospital Conference of North Dakota. The hospital was approved by the American College of Surgeons, the American Medical Association, the American Hospital Association as well as the Catholic Hospital Association.

Much has been written about the new hospital but a few facts should
be recounted about the forty-five years of service prior to 1952. Not only was the city of Grand Forks a recipient of service but also the areas surrounding that city whose population had doubled since 1909. Over 100,000 patients had benefited from the nursing services. Over 10,000 babies were born there and 428 nurses graduated from the School of Nursing. A note in contrast depicts the changing population. In 1908 there were 20 births while in 1951, 600 babies were born. The first x-rays reports dated in 1917 numbered about 20 while in 1951 there were 488 Roentgenographs. From a personnel of eight sisters in 1907, the number increased to 23 in 1951 plus 95 other employees.

The new six-story structure was completed in 1952 and the Dedication Ceremonies took place on October 5 of that year. Every modern device including Psychotherapy and Hydrotherapy made St. Michael’s the best equipped private hospital in North Dakota.

Careful planning and execution resulted in providing for every area from Administration, Medical, Surgical Units, Pediatrics to Central Purchasing and Laundry facilities.

In addition, provision was made for Nurses’ Rooms, Library, Recreation Center and a complete unit for Chaplains, Interns and Residents. The latter service was on the sixth floor of the hospital.

At the Dedication Ceremonies there were lay representatives from the University of North Dakota, business men, doctors and last but not least the Sisters of St. Joseph from the General Mother House in St. Louis, from the Provincial House in St. Paul and other sister guests including, of course, Sister Rita Clare who had been re-assigned to St. Mary’s Hospital in Minneapolis. Her successor, Sister Helen Rita was among those who were to address the public function. Members of the clergy from the Diocese of North Dakota and Fargo were present to offer congratulations for a work well done.

Bishop Mulloy, a native of North Dakota, currently bishop of Covington, Kentucky gave the dedicatory address.

In 1941 an Infirmary for chronically ill and for retired sisters was opened in the east wing of the Nurses’s Residency at St. Joseph’s Hospital. To accommodate the sisters who staffed the hospital the Capitol Annex was purchased adjacent to the hospital.

The Infirmary was equipped with all necessary rooms including a chapel and sacristy. Daily Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament became a privilege engaged in by all who could spend time in this devotion. Plans were in the making for a larger and more permanent residence. This became a reality in 1954 when the newly constructed Bethany
Convent next to the Provincial House was completed. Mother Bertha Poupore Provincial Superior and her assistant Sister Elizabeth Marie Martens were in reality the "architects" of this very beautiful and utilitarian complex. Its spacious grounds and excellent staff serve the therapeutic, spiritual and material needs of our aging sisters. Many patients have spent some weeks and even months in recuperating after dismissal from one of our hospitals. Their praise of the care given is beyond description. These sisters who have been only temporary residents have done much to "sell" the idea of permanent retirement for those who must relinquish sometimes unwillingly their one-time work-load in schools, convents, hospitals and other institutions.

We are blessed now not only with a nursing program but many additional services for the ambulatory patients. A plan for a Retirement Fund is in a sound stage of execution in the near future. Much of the resources for the establishment of this Fund came through a cash sale of St. Michael's Hospital in Grand Forks, North Dakota. With the able assistance of our present province director, Sister Miriam Joseph Cummings, and her council, investments have been made to insure adequate care of the sick and aged sisters at Bethany.
Experimentation and Innovation

During the mid-sixties our high schools were experiencing almost capacity enrollment. But toward the close of the decade with an upsurge of experimentation in life-style of community living and innovations in our schools a near crisis arose. Approval had been given by the Provincial chapters to permit a limited experimental program in small group living both in large convents and outside. Consequently there followed a change in dress approved originally and written into our directives. Approval was given to allow those sisters who chose to do so to wear secular-style dress, but with the distinct statement that the contemporary religious dress should be within the principles of good grooming avoiding "every appearance of luxury in both the quantity and quality" of dress, shoes, etc.

It was directed by the 1967 chapter that a veil be part of the religious dress and that it be worn except in the privacy of the bedroom area. A simple cross (pendant or pin) was to be worn until an appropriate design be devised and presented to the General Chapter in 1969.

Modifications in prayer life were recommended allowing much of the former structured time be dropped in favor of individual time allotments. However, Lauds and Vespers were to be said in common as well as group participation in the Eucharistic Liturgy. This change was made to better accommodate each sister in the choice of time and place for meditation, spiritual reading and private prayer.

Some changes were made in the government of our community in recent years. The elective process of choosing delegates has replaced the former appointive method. The purpose of government remains the same, namely, to provide a framework to coordinate the effort of all members who share in the welfare and responsibility of the whole community.
The general chapter is the highest authority in the Congregation when it is in session. At other times the superior general and her council is vested with that authority.

On the province level each of the four provinces, one vice-province and two mission provinces determines the plan of government in each of the above areas. Representation of the sisters is vested in the delegate assembly voted on by each sister to represent approximately every twenty members of the province.

In 1951 the centennial year of the founding of St. Joseph’s Academy was celebrated. One of the publications Academy for a Century was written by Sister Elizabeth Marie Martens, the principal of St. Joseph’s Academy. Pupils, parents, faculty and Alumnae members all combined to celebrate the hundred years of service by varying projects. The Alumnae Association concentrated in raising funds to contribute to the redecoration of the chapel. Special windows were donated by friends and alumnae. The main project was the erecting of a marble altar in the sanctuary. Side altars were donated by Miss Minnie Bell, a generous benefactor. The students contributed funds for an altar rail and all who worked benefited proudly by the beauty of the now completed chapel.

The graduating class of 200 students was the largest in the history of the Academy with two hundred receiving diplomas that year. The enrollment also reached an all high — close to eight hundred in all. This number over-taxed the capacity of the school but was a great tribute to the community that had recognized the values of an excellent school.

Relief came in the early 1950’s when a new high school in St. Luke’s parish was opened by the Sisters of Charity from Dubuque, Iowa. Many families in the vicinity of the new high school “Our Lady of Peace” began to transfer their daughters to that school much to the discomfiture of some of the Sisters of St. Joseph. To the administration this diversity was a blessing in disguise as the pressure of too crowded an institution became alleviated. Enrollment continued to remain well above 700 until the mid-1960’s when another high school was started in West St. Paul. A natural geographical situation made it encumbent on people in that area to send their daughters to schools nearer home. It was not however until the late 1960’s when financial costs plus a limited number of Sisters on the faculty caused this landmark of over one hundred years to close its doors in 1971.

At present The Academy has been taken over as a center for unmarried mothers by the Catholic Welfare. The new center is called
Seton Hall and serves the community in and around the Twin Cities. Plans are being made to enlarge the scope of welfare work at the Center.

To perpetuate the memory of St. Joseph’s Academy the Alumnae Association retains offices at Seton Hall and continues to function actively in religious and social events there.

Following are brief excerpts on developments in recent years in our high schools and hospitals.

In 1962, ten years after the new St. Michael’s in Grand Forks was dedicated, another milestone was reached when the annual report showed an increase in services to include a School for x-ray Technicians, a School for Nurse anesthetists and an internship for Laboratory Technologists. The occupancy rate had increased by 8% within the decade and patients cared for had doubled. It must have been very gratifying for the Sisters as well as the medical staff of doctors to watch this outstanding growth.

Another aspect of development was the School of Nursing directed by the Sisters of St. Joseph which included students from St. John’s, Trinity and the State Hospital. During 1962 the school after being duly examined by state authorities granted accreditation for a six year period.

As the years of growth pointed up excellent results in all areas of development the discussion of a new Community hospital corporation to assume operation of St. Michael’s and Deaconess hospital was received with little enthusiasm by the governing board and lay advisory board. To abandon St. Michael’s after sixty-two years of involvement was most distasteful.

After many meetings the Community was called upon to resolve the Medical Program of the Community Health Planning Committee whose objective was to formulate an adequate community health plan.

This projected plan was concluded in 1969. By 1970 St. Michael’s Hospital realized that the Community plan would eventually end up in a merger and therefore decided to negotiate for the sale of St. Michael’s. Proceeds from the sale have been invested and constitute a Retirement Fund.

Not only have there been changes in the structure of our government but innovations in our high schools, particularly, and in the life style of the sisters.

As originally planned a period of experimentation in dress as well as in modes of living was approved. To some extent it appears that
more adaptations resulted than had been anticipated. A limited number of experimental houses had been specified but more and more individuals and groups chose to move out of the regularly established community houses and convents into apartments and rented dwellings. A move away from assigned teaching jobs and hospital appointments gave way to the seeking of employment outside community commitments.

The effect of the above had a real impact on our schools and hospitals since the number of sisters on staffs decreased. This led to the need of hiring more personnel and the subsequent increase in salaries for lay people. Coupled with this change has been the loss of many sisters who left the community and again added to the reduction of needed teachers in particular. Our high schools seem to have suffered the greatest attrition. Earlier the closing of St. Joseph’s Academy was mentioned. In addition St. Anthony’s High School in Minneapolis, our high schools in Marshall, and recently St. Mary’s in Bird Island have been forced to close down because of lack of sister-teachers and income to hire more lay people.

Those high schools still functioning have become innovative by the new method of curriculum planning known as modular scheduling. This practice is in effect at Derham Hall in St. Paul and at the Academy of the Holy Angels and St. Margaret’s in Minneapolis. Since this is still in the early stages of development an accurate evaluation of the merits or drawbacks is still unknown.

With the closing of St. Anthony’s High School a number of our sisters became members of the faculty at De La Salle High School, formerly an all-boys school which became co-educational in the fall of 1971.

After considerable planning and discussion it has been decided to make Holy Angels Academy a co-educational school beginning in 1972.

Derham Hall’s new complex, a million dollar project, was formally dedicated with a Mass at 10:30 a.m. in the school auditorium on January 28, 1963. Archbishop Leo Binz presided.

Although the enrollment at the time of the completion of the new building was 263 pupils the projected 10 year plan of additional building could serve an enrollment up to 1,200. Expansion of the present structure on a 17 acre campus provides three separate buildings for auditorium, library and music. At present the capacity planning is for 600 pupils. The freshmen class will be increased yearly until the maximum is reached.

As expected the structure of the new Derham Hall has many unique
features including maintenance economy plans with sliding aluminum windows and built in storms and screens. The purpose is designed to cut heating costs.

Another aspect of the planning include three ground level entrances and an elevator providing accommodations for handicapped students. It is one of few Catholic High Schools in the Twin Cities to provide such a facility.

Although the usual plan of any modern high school has been executed, special thought was given to color schemes and practical aspects of equipment especially in the science department.

A service not common in private high schools is a modern dental clinic. It was staffed by two dental hygienists, Mrs. George Beedle and Mrs. A. M. Freische of St. Paul, and a highly qualified dentist, also of St. Paul, who comes in three days a week. It is operated by the St. Paul public health department and serves Catholic grade and high schools in the area. In cooperation with the health department Derham Hall provides rent-free space plus light, water and heat. The objective of the clinic is to provide care for families who cannot afford private care.

Much credit for the planning and execution of Derham Hall goes to Mother Antonine, provincial superior and to Sister Isabella, the first principal at the new school.

During the years intervening between the early operation of St. Mary’s Hospital in 1887 to the present great progress has been achieved. The objectives remain the same namely, patient care, education and research in the apostolate of “serving the neighbor”. Prayer and service are dominant factors.

Exciting developments in fulfilling the above objectives include new approaches to medical surgical care. Areas of recent development include advance studies in the Intensive Care Unit, Coronary Care Unit, Pediatric Care as well as Maternity, Psychiatric and Out-patient service.

In order to realize a major objective much thought has been given to the spiritual welfare of patients of all faiths. For the Catholic patient provision for daily Masses, the Eucharist and other sacraments are a major concern of the hospital. Patients are encouraged to see their own ministers, priests or rabbis. The hospital has a resident chaplain on call day and night. To assist the chaplain there are Sisters called Patient Visitors who act as aids in the comfort and guidance of the patient.
One aspect of the increasing momentum of activity at St. Mary's Hospital in recent years is its training center at St. Mary's Junior College. Here students may live on campus, at home, or in off-campus housing units. Efforts have been made to increase financial aid through loans, grants, scholarships or employment. Often a combination of these enable student nurses to achieve the goal for which they are determined.

Student activities are an encouraging aspect of the program which include social, professional and religious elements. Close proximity to the many cultural, educational and recreational advantages provide impetus to the young aspirants. A few examples are: the Tyrone Guthrie Theatre, Minneapolis Art Institute, the University of Minnesota and the Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra.

Information is readily accessible at St. Mary's Junior College for any interested participant. Just being involved in a "going" institution serves as an incentive to become a member not only of St. Mary's Hospital but the greater expansion into other areas provided by the hospital.

Among the growing facilities at St. Mary's is the affiliated Extended Care Center adjacent to the hospital. It is now completed and called the Extended Care Unit. The land on which this building was erected was donated by St. Mary's. The purpose of the Unit is to provide for a large number of citizens, young and old who will live in an environment different from a hospital. Although medically supervised, the purpose is primarily active rehabilitation service. Guests of the Extended Care Unit are treated as residents, following in many instances their own way of life. Referral by one's physician serves as the chief means of admission to this new development.

Because of its unique growth and service to the Community of the Sisters of St. Joseph, a separate monograph would be needed to adequately describe its development of the College of St. Catherine.

Tribute to Archbishop Ireland, to his sister, Mother Seraphine Ireland, and to Sister Antonia McHugh must be paid. These people were initially responsible for the idea of a college for the purchase of land and for the realization of dreams which came true.

From a one building structure on a beautifully wooded campus to the present time is a long story. Along the way, the fact of being recognized by the North Central Association of Colleges in 1916 was a great milestone. Then continued the training of leaders, the planning of curriculum, the increase in buildings and the courage to go out
to the public to solicit support. Not only has the College received money from the U.S. Government but gifts from organizations such as the General Education Board of New York, the Elizabeth Quinlan Foundation and the Ford Foundation. Annual gifts were likewise received from the Minnesota College Fund Association and from the Hill Family Foundation of St. Paul.

The College of St. Catherine began and has continued as a Catholic Liberal Arts College. Its primary purpose is to help its students to gain a knowledge of truth — in many fields of learning, intellectual, social, political and practical studies. Among the latter is the recognition of a well qualified Library School and a Department of Occupational Therapy. Professional training for nursing, teaching, technicians and for the areas of music, art and science are all part of an integrated program of studies.

In recent years the association not only with activities at the near-by College of St. Thomas, but likewise those of Macalester College and Hamline University have become coordinated so that subjects may be taken and credit given for students enrolled in each of the four colleges.

One of the finest additions is O'Shaughnessy Auditorium for the purpose of serving the public in the arts of music, drama and choral. The generous donor, Mr. I. A. O'Shaughnessy is a benefactor of great reputation. We are most grateful to him.

To facilitate the many needs of the province in a practical sense, a new building was planned, built and is now functioning as the Administrative Center. It is located on Randolph Avenue almost directly in front of the Provincial House.

In this very modern and well planned and furnished establishment, there are offices, conference rooms, facilities for receptionists and a switch-board set-up.

Sister Miriam Joseph Cummings, Province Director and Sister Constance Marie DeFoe, Assistant Province Director, have offices at the Center. The Provincial Treasurer, Secretary and directors of Business and Planning also conduct their work from offices in the Center. In addition are the Personnel Director, Sister Mary Kessler and Communications Director, Sister Catherine Hare.

Access to the Administration Center has been more available for other officers of the Community. Small group meetings are held there especially regularly scheduled ones with the Provincial Counsellors. They are Sister Dolores Oakes, Sister Marie de Paul Rochester, Sister
Patricia Angvik and Sister Peggy O'Connell. These sisters also serve in other major capacities but are on call for general province business.

At the Center are many other diligent workers, too numerous to name. It is interesting however to mention that although the closing of St. Joseph's Academy took place in the fall of 1971, the records of the former graduates are kept at the Center and are zealously guarded and worked on by Sister Mary John Ryan, one-time Principal of The Academy.

The summer of 1972 was a landmark in our history for it was in June that the delegates from all the Provinces met to elect a new Superior General and her Council. Not only were elected delegates present but observers from throughout the United States were permitted to be present. These sisters were not eligible to vote but could participate in an event which occurs only every six years in accord with our present Constitutions. The meeting was held in Latham, New York.

After days of prayer and discussions and hard thinking, the following were elected:

Sister Mary Kevin Ford, Superior General, Sister Ida Robertine Berresheim, Assistant Superior General. These two major officers reside at the Generalate in St. Louis, Missouri. From each province a representative was chosen as follows:

Sister Annabelle Raiche from St. Paul, Minnesota; Sister Joan Marie Gleason of St. Louis, Missouri; Sister Margaret Collins from Lathan, New York and Sister Thomas Bernard MacConnell from the Los Angeles, California province. These four sisters are called by the name of Councilors General. They reside in their respective provinces but are subject to meetings or engagements called by the Superior General.

In addition to the elections, a revised Constitution was written. These were made available to all the sisters and contain the directives which should be a guide and safe-guard for our individual life as consecrated religious women.

In retrospect we now recall our early foundations in LePuy and Lyons, France, the first missionary Sisters of St. Joseph to the United States and the early Minnesota and Dakota beginnings.

As our Sisters spread across Continental United States we accepted the call to Hawaii, an island possession but now one of the fifty states. After Hawaii we moved into Japan and later Peru. The challenge then today is to maintain the various apostolates of education, of mercy, and of the social services. If we are to truly imitate our worthy founders, our pioneer sisters in the areas now developed we must be not only
true daughters of St. Joseph but valiant women living in a critical period of Church History.

Can we accept the modern day changes, the trials and temptations of a growing secularization without losing the spirit so courageously passed down to us? The answer is a Community as well as an individual response. Leadership is most important but in reality the manner in which each Sister of St. Joseph stands as a witness of Christ in today's complex society is a test of courage, of self-sacrifice and of love.

There have been many problems in the past as well as in the present. The solution must be in deep Faith, in profound Hope, and in untiring Love. Guided by the Holy Spirit, devotion to our Blessed Lady and under the patronage of our dear St. Joseph we can survive the obstacles, some of our own making, if we stay close to the ideals of "The Little Design" begun hundreds of years ago in LePuy. Let us determine to go forward, to persevere and to look ahead to the great reward that has been promised to those who seek first the Kingdom of Heaven above all else.