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# The History of Holy Rosary Institute

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# **THE HISTORY OF HOLY ROSARY INSTITUTE**

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Louisiana State University and  
Agricultural and Mechanical College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of History

by

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....</b>	<b>.ii</b>
<b>TABLE OF CONTENTS .....</b>	<b>.iv</b>
<b>ABSTRACT .....</b>	<b>.vi</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>CHAPTER 1 .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>CHAPTER 2 .....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>CHAPTER 3 .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>CHAPTER 4 .....</b>	<b>89</b>
<b>CHAPTER 5 .....</b>	<b>113</b>
<b>CHAPTER 6 .....</b>	<b>147</b>
<b>CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>166</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>170</b>
<b>APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>177</b>
<b>VITA . .....</b>	<b>209</b>



*The Rosarite*  
*1960*  
*The Senior Class*  
*of*  
*Holy Rosary Institute*

*Sponsored by Lafayette, Louisiana*

## **ABSTRACT**

Holy Rosary Institute began as an industrial school for African American young women in Galveston, Texas, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1913 it moved to Lafayette, Louisiana, and in 1947 began admitting males as well as women. It closed in 1993. Through much of its history, this secondary school was staffed primarily by the Sisters of the Holy Family, the second oldest order of African American nuns in the United States, and the Divine Word Missionaries, one of the earliest groups of Catholic priests to accept African American candidates for the priesthood. In 1992, Gerard L. Frey, former bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette described its importance to the people of Louisiana. “Holy Rosary Institute in its many years as a vocational-technical school, as a normal school, and as a high school has served the entire area of southwest Louisiana by providing education which would not otherwise have been available to the black community.” Without the school’s influence, “the socio-economic condition of southwest Louisiana would have been vastly different. One shudders to imagine, what the conditions would have been had it not been for Holy Rosary and those valiant leaders who staffed it for all its years.” Once considered one of the outstanding secondary schools in the nation, Holy Rosary trained students who went on to become some of the country’s finest doctors, lawyers, educators, nurses, and many other highly rated professionals in various fields.

In 1974, due to a decline in enrollment and astronomical costs the boarding department was closed ending an era that had begun more than fifty years before. With the closing of the boarding department Holy Rosary began a period of decline. The financial difficulties caused by decreasing revenues caused the elimination and

restructure of many of the services provided by the school. The needs of the school prompted an all out effort on the part of the alumni and friends to “Keep Rosary Alive.”

Continuing its philosophy of superior educational development, the eighties saw a slight rise in enrollment and a serious recommitment to the vision of its founder.

However, after eighty years of service, finances and other socio-economic factors led to the closure of one of the finest college-preparatory schools in the South in 1993. This is its story.



## INTRODUCTION

Holy Rosary Institute began as an industrial school for African American young women in Galveston, Texas, during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. In 1913 it moved to Lafayette, Louisiana, and in 1947 began admitting males as well as women. It closed in 1993. Through much of its history, this secondary school was staffed primarily by the Sisters of the Holy Family, the second oldest order of African American nuns in the United States, and the Divine Word Missionaries, one of the earliest groups of Catholic priests to accept African American candidates for the priesthood. In 1992, Gerard L. Frey, former bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette described its importance to the people of Louisiana. "Holy Rosary Institute in its many years as a vocational-technical school, as a normal school, and as a high school has served the entire area of southwest Louisiana by providing education which would not otherwise have been available to the black community." Without the school's influence, "the socio-economic condition of southwest Louisiana would have been vastly different. One shudders to imagine, what the conditions would have been had it not been for Holy Rosary and those valiant leaders who staffed it for all its years." Once considered one of the outstanding secondary schools in the nation, Holy Rosary trained students who went on to become some of the country's finest doctors, lawyers, educators, nurses and many other highly rated professionals in various fields. Holy Rosary graduates returned to Lafayette and surrounding communities with their professional degrees and contributed significantly to a growing African American middle class. Doctors who received their high school diplomas from the school returned to Lafayette. They continue to provide medical services to a large percentage of its minority population. Many Rosary graduates

continue to serve the community as elected officials. A representative number returned to southwest Louisiana as teachers, principals and administrators. Their presence extended to a number of parishes around Lafayette, including St. Landry, Iberia, Acadia, St. Martin, St. Mary, Jefferson Davis and Calcasieu. Its story is intricately woven into Texas and Louisiana history. The school's presence is connected to specific needs dictated by the effects of European colonization.

In the Age of Empire France and Spain were led by Roman Catholic monarchs who sent their representatives forward in search of possessions under the shadow of the Christian symbol, the cross. As they claimed new territory in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, continual possession often resulted in the migration of a representative segment of their native populations. Maintaining and supporting the colonies also led to the capture and transfer of countless numbers of enslaved Africans to the Caribbean Basin and the Americas. Many of those persons found themselves in Texas and Louisiana. Most, if not all, had not been exposed to Christianity or the Roman Catholic Church.

In addition to gaining new colonial possessions, the Catholic monarchs of France and Spain ordered their representatives to attempt wholesale conversions of enslaved Africans and the indigenous populations of their colonial possessions. To carry out the mandate, the church dispatched men and women religious to the Americas in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Jesuit and Capuchin priests, together with the Ursuline nuns, pursued the Church's mission in Texas and the Louisiana Territory. They began to instruct Native Americans and in some instances enslaved Africans in the faith

hoping to develop candidates for baptism and conversion. Their ministrations were among the earliest attempts at formal education in the respective areas.

When they entered the Union, neither Louisiana nor Texas had public education systems, and therefore, instruction in the basics remained with several religious orders throughout the early decades of the nineteenth century. They focused on the education of the whites. Less time and attention was devoted to instructing enslaved Africans and free persons of color. Changing socio-economic circumstances however, contributed to changing educational conditions for both groups. First, free women of color whose parents could afford it, were educated in France or in New Orleans by the Ursulines. Second, Catholic missionaries from Holland and Germany began migrating to the United States. Both groups began work among Native and African Americans in Louisiana and Texas. It is through the efforts of German missionaries that Holy Rosary Industrial School for girls began in Galveston in the 1880's and in Lafayette in 1913. In Lafayette, the school's presence contributed to the growth of a mixed socio-economic neighborhood on its boundary. The Holy Rosary campus initially consisted of one hundred acres purchased by Father Philip L. Keller, its founder. Those acres would eventually become the subject of contentious negotiations between the Sisters of the Holy Family, an African America Order of Nuns who staffed the school for many years, and the Diocese of Lafayette.

Louisiana ranked at or near the bottom in educational achievement from 1877 through 1935. In 1909, there were only 87 high schools in Louisiana with an all white enrollment of about 3500 students.<sup>1</sup> Lafayette Parish had one public high school for

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<sup>1</sup> Kathryn Morse, "Education in Louisiana: 1877-1935," <http://www.Suite101.com/Article.cfm/Louisiana/151683>. p.1.

whites and six one room elementary schools for African Americans.<sup>2</sup> Only in 1919, after World War I, did Louisiana initiate a movement toward public secondary educational facilities for African Americans. In 1924, only four high schools were available to African Americans in Louisiana. They were in Baton Rouge, New Orleans and Shreveport.<sup>3</sup>

Until 1926, Holy Rosary Institute at Lafayette was the only diploma-granting secondary school for African American young women in southwest Louisiana. By 1930 the school began to adjust its curriculum to include classical learning for its young women. Ten years later its student body included young men, and its curriculum was again expanded to combine industrial education subjects and classical training. The school's enrollment steadily increased and for the first fifty years of its existence in Lafayette it had boarding students from around the United States and several foreign countries. Holy Rosary reached its peak during the 1960s with its enrollment reaching as high as four hundred seventy students."<sup>4</sup> When it celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1963, its enrollment was 461 with students representing twenty cities in Louisiana and twelve states.<sup>5</sup> Over its eighty year history, the faculty, administration and students experienced a transition from a training school for girls in domestic science to a secondary school stressing domestic science and teacher training.

It was, however, during the 1960s in Louisiana that public and parochial

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<sup>2</sup> Daily Advertiser, 29 December 1949, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ledell W. Neyland, "The Negro in Louisiana Since 1900: An Economic and Social Study." (Ph.d. Dissertation, New York University, 1958), p. 85.

<sup>4</sup> Trent Angus, Acadiana Profile, 21:2 (May/June 2001), 34.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

schools in south Louisiana were integrated. Holy Rosary nevertheless remained an all black school, and by the end of the decade its enrollment began to decline. Declining enrollment and increasing costs caused the closing of the boarding facilities in 1974. Eventually, the Sisters of the Holy Family, the second oldest order of African American nuns in the United States, and the Divine Word Missionaries, one of the earliest groups of Catholic priests to accept African American candidates for the priesthood, withdrew from the school and enrollment continued to decline. Together, the two groups provided quality educations for Holy Rosary students for over seventy years. Thereafter, Holy Rosary was administered by a lay principal and faculty.<sup>6</sup> It closed in 1993. “It is a shame that such a quality institute had to die. So many young men and women received a quality education there, and the results of that education are found wherever graduates of Holy Rosary have gone in the United States of America.”<sup>7</sup>

This project’s purpose is to accomplish four things: first, to provide a limited review of Louisiana’s early history and the lack of education for its people; second, to demonstrate the importance of Roman Catholic religious orders and Holy Rosary Institute in the education of African Americans in southwest Louisiana; third, to enhance the historiography of education in southwest Louisiana by including the story of a pioneer institution that educated many young African Americans; and finally, to examine the possible reasons for its closure in 1993. Much of the information contained in this manuscript was obtained from primary documents in possession of archives developed and controlled by the Roman Catholic Church in Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. Access to personal data on students and members of various religious societies is

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Father Jim Pawlicki, “The End of an Era,” Acadiana Catholic (August 1993): p.8.

limited by the repositories and rules of privacy. Several less exhaustive papers precede this manuscript. Valuable information is included from works by Orita B. Edwards and Myra E. Patrick. Much of the remaining documentation comes from the Archives of the Sisters of the Holy Family in New Orleans, and newspapers from throughout Southwest Louisiana.

Chapter one provides a limited review of France and Spain's presence in colonial Louisiana and the Roman Catholic Church's early attempts to educate Native and African American populations through the antebellum era. The focus in the second chapter shifts to social and political conditions in the state of Louisiana in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It tracks the formation of the Catholic religious groups responsible for the continued growth and development of Holy Rosary Industrial School in Galveston, Texas, and Holy Rosary Institute in Louisiana. It also documents Holy Rosary's first three decades in Lafayette as it shifted its focus from domestic science to a combined industrial and academic curriculum.

Chapter three opens with a search for new priestly leadership because of the retirement of its second director. It covers the school's greatest growth period, and it begins also, to expose some of the problems created by growth. It traces the changes in ownership of the acres purchased by the founder and its impact on the relationship between the Lafayette diocese and the Divine Word Missionaries and the Holy Family Sisters. It provides evidence of racial discrimination experienced by Holy Rosary students, faculty and religious as they attempted to practice their faith as Catholics, not black Catholics.

The fourth chapter documents the continued success of students and faculty as they celebrated Holy Rosary's fiftieth and seventy-fifth anniversary years. It shows how national civil rights and black power movements affected student and faculty life on the Rosary campus. Chapter five re-visits the conditions at Holy Rosary discussed in chapter three, and explores how those conditions and subsequent factors led to the eventual decline and closure of the school. It also shows the grit of the school's supporters and their valiant attempts to keep the school open.

The final chapter traces the post closing efforts of alumni, community groups and local government to convince the administrators of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lafayette that Holy Rosary can again contribute not only to "uplifting a race" but the entire Lafayette community.

## CHAPTER 1

Understanding education, its evolution in Louisiana and the founding and growth of Holy Rosary Institute at Lafayette, requires at least a brief review of Louisiana's early history. Holy Rosary is a Catholic institution. Its development relates directly to a significant French Catholic presence in Louisiana and the introduction of enslaved Africans into the state by the French and Spanish. It is, therefore, necessary to review political, social conditions, and public schools in Louisiana for the white population and the lack of facilities for blacks in the ante-bellum era, as well as changes that occurred. The Catholic Church's attempt to fill the void for blacks and whites is discussed as is the free people of color because from among came the Sisters of the Holy Family contributed mightily to Holy Rosary's success.

Louisiana became a French colony on April 9, 1682, when Rene' – Robert Cavalier Sieur de LaSalle held formal ceremonies somewhere in lower Plaquemines Parish, Louisiana, taking formal possession of all lands drained by the Mississippi River. LaSalle's claim on behalf of Louis XIV, King of France, was solemnized with the celebration of a Roman Catholic mass. France, however, did not establish a continual presence in the Territory of Louisiana until the arrival of the LeMoyne brothers, Sieur d'Iberville and Sieur de Bienville on March 2, 1699, Mardi Gras Day. Their arrival at the mouth of the Mississippi River was also memorialized by a Roman Catholic mass celebrated by priests in their small party.<sup>8</sup> Such was the introduction of Catholicism to the Territory of Louisiana, where as in France it was the established state religion.

French priests from the diocese and chapter houses of Canada, also a French possession,

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<sup>8</sup> Bennett H. Wall, Louisiana: A History, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Wheeling, Illinois: Harlan Davidson Inc., 2008), p. 34.



became the first clerics to settle in Louisiana.<sup>9</sup> Members of the Jesuit and Capuchin orders, their mission was to make catechumens and Catholics of the indigenous people of the Louisiana Territory. In the early eighteenth century their mission extended to enslaved Africans who entered the territory due to the scarcity of labor in the colony. Together with a group of French nuns, the Jesuits and Capuchins would plant the seeds of education among the colony's emerging populus.

The first decade of French presence in Louisiana proved extremely difficult. The colony amassed more expenses than it generated revenue. Louis XIV King of France sought other ways to rule his new colony. Aware of the success other European powers had with proprietary colonies,<sup>10</sup> Antoine Crozat a wealthy Frenchman, became the first proprietor of the Louisiana Colony. He had "full authority to import slaves to Louisiana, supervise the colony's relations with Native Americans, and exploit all the raw materials found there."<sup>11</sup> Crozat, in 1712, chose Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac to govern the colony. He enjoyed the title of Governor of Louisiana, and he found the solution to the labor problem in the colony by resorting to the importation of enslaved Africans.

By 1717, Crozat was weary of Louisiana as the colony had cost him a large sum of money. He surrendered his royal charter in August, 1717. Later that year the French government turned over the proprietorship of Louisiana to a joint stock company, the Company of the West. It did not enjoy a long tenure as proprietor of the colony. In 1718, the Company of the Indies, organized by Scotsman, John Law, assumed control of Louisiana. Law and the Company of the Indies chose Sieur de Bienville to govern

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<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 62.

<sup>10</sup> Territory granted by a monarch to an individual or group with full governing rights.

<sup>11</sup> Wall, *Louisiana : A History*, p. 40.

Louisiana. He decided to construct a city on the banks of the Mississippi River called New Orleans. As it grew, French priests sought to continue their mission of conversion to Catholicism. In order to accomplish their mission, the perspective communicants required at least a basic education.<sup>12</sup>

The fifty-third clause of the Letters Patent that established the Company of the West sheds light on the development of education in the colony. “As in the settlement of the countries granted to the said company by these present, we regard especially the glory of God by procuring the salvation of the inhabitants, Indians, savages, and negroes, whom we desire to be instructed in the true religion, the said company shall be obliged to build at its expense churches at the place where it forms settlements.”<sup>13</sup> Governor Sieur de Bienville, in 1724 added to the requirements of the Letters Patent by issuing the Code Noir. Among its provisions, “It stipulated Catholic instruction and baptism for all slaves.”<sup>14</sup>

During the early French period the responsibility for teaching the inhabitants was met by the religious orders in Louisiana. In 1725, Father Raphael a Capuchin priest founded the first formal school in the Louisiana colony. Aside from religious instruction, “they took no definite measures towards educating slaves on their own plantations or

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<sup>12</sup> Loretta M. Butler, “A History of Catholic Elementary Education for Negroes in the Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana,”(PhD dissertation, Catholic University of America, 1963), p. 9.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>14</sup> John G. Shea, The Catholic Church in Colonial Days: The Thirteen Colonies- the Ottawa and Illinois Country – Louisiana – Texas – New Mexico and Arizona, 1521 – 1763 (New York: John G. Shea, 1886), p. 82.

those of the surrounding country.”<sup>15</sup> The Jesuits, however, “besides giving the customary religious instruction early as 1738, also trained the slaves on their own plantation in manual and agricultural arts.”<sup>16</sup> The Company of the West subsequently negotiated a contract with an order of French women, the Ursuline Sisters, to begin work in New Orleans in 1727. Once established in New Orleans, the sisters directed a hospital, opened “an academy for the young ladies, a poor school, an orphan asylum, and catechism for Negroes, old and young.”<sup>17</sup> “The school for boys in charge of the Capuchins seems to have been continued right along and in the course of time other schools also were opened.”<sup>18</sup> The educational efforts of the early French period, however, were meager at best. There was a very limited amount of informal instruction of the slaves in catechism. A few African American girls were taught by the Ursuline nuns. There were no public schools for whites or blacks.

Faced with continuing problems in the Louisiana colony and growing tensions between France, Spain, and Great Britain, in the middle of the eighteenth century the inhabitants of the colony found themselves subjects of the King of Spain. The transfer was officially confirmed by the Treaty of Paris in 1763.”<sup>19</sup> Antonio de Ulloa, the first Spanish governor, arrived in the colony three years after it was ceded to Spain. The overwhelming French presence in New Orleans created problems for Ulloa, who was

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<sup>15</sup> Mother M. David Young, S.B.S., “A History of the Development of Catholic Education for the Negro in Louisiana,” (Master’s thesis, Louisiana State University, 1944), p. 16.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> J. A. Burns, The Growth and Development of the Catholic School System in the United States, (New York: Arno Press, 1969), pp. 79-80.

<sup>18</sup> Butler, p. 13.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., p. 14.

forced out of the colony by the local French leadership. Spain considered such an act treasonous and in 1769 sent General Alejandro O'Reilly to reestablish Spain's control over the colony. After squashing the insurrection of 1768, O'Reilly abolished all of the French colonial laws and replaced them with a new code based on the Spanish laws of the Indies. He ordered a census of Louisiana in 1769. It counted nearly 14,000 persons in Louisiana, "not including Native Americans, with approximately 3,500 of them resident in New Orleans."<sup>20</sup> O'Reilly handed over governance of the colony to Luis de Unzaga who attempted to establish a system of public schools in New Orleans in 1771, but little came of the effort.

During Spanish control of Louisiana, from 1766 to 1800, international events began impacting Louisiana. After the French Revolution of 1789 and the slave revolt in 1791 on Hispaniola, Louisiana experienced a significant rise in its population. Whites and blacks, slaves and free, fled to Louisiana. Spanish authorities, and to a limited extent, American authorities were concerned over this added French presence. Both groups were particularly concerned with the increased number of free persons of color, many of whom were educated. "They were in many instances persons of culture and affluence, and they brought with them customs and traditions peculiar to their former home."<sup>21</sup> They would contribute significantly to education in Louisiana.

By the advent of the nineteenth century, Louisiana's population also included Germans, Italians, Canary Islanders, Anglo-Americans, and Acadians. Spain had been much more successful than France in populating Louisiana. Spain however, only

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<sup>20</sup> Wall, Louisiana: A History, p. 67.

<sup>21</sup> Charles B. Rousseve, The Negro in Louisiana: Aspects of His History and His Literature. (New Orleans: Xavier University Press, 1937), p. 25.

maintained Louisiana as a colony from 1766 to 1800, when again Louisiana would be affected by international affairs.

In 1800, Napoleon Bonaparte forced Spain to return Louisiana to France in the secret Treaty of San Ildefonso. Three years after Spain ceded Louisiana to France, it was sold to the United States. In 1809, approximately eight thousand additional whites and blacks made their way to the Louisiana Territory. They were refugees from Hispaniola, a French colony. Their departure was precipitated in part by a war of extermination in the Republic of Haiti led by Christophe.<sup>22</sup> More than one-third of the refugees were free persons of color, and another third were enslaved Africans.

Opposition to new immigrants, who were free persons of color, arose among the Anglo-Americans in Louisiana, especially those from the Atlantic seaboard colonies. The territorial legislature in Louisiana, fearful of the growing presence of Africans and free people of color, in 1806 enacted legislation attempting to curtail immigration of free persons of color. Apparently they feared those coming from Hispaniola would bring with them seeds of revolution born in Haiti. The territorial governor, however, paid little attention to the legislation and initially did not enforce it. Two years later the territorial legislature passed the Brown-Lislet Digest enhancing the provisions of the Code Noir of the earlier French and Spanish periods. A “slave might be taught skills . . . for the well being of the plantation, but he was not to learn to read and write. Even free Negroes found themselves restricted in this respect.”<sup>23</sup> “Except for one in New Orleans operated

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<sup>22</sup> Christophe was a career officer and general in the army of L’Ouverture, and was instrumental in achieving independence for Haiti. After France deported L’Ouverture to France, Christophe created a separate nation on Northern Hispaniola and declared himself king. He committed suicide in 1820 to avoid a coup.

<sup>23</sup> Paul A. Funkel, “Modifications in Louisiana Negro Legal Status Under Louisiana Constitutions, 1812 – 1957,” Journal of Negro History, 44, 1 (1959); 6.

by the Ursuline Nuns, and a few private institutions, schools hardly existed in Louisiana at the time of the [Louisiana] purchase.”<sup>24</sup>

Some children of wealthy free persons of color, and other children of families who could afford it, attended schools in France. On occasion, selected enslaved persons surreptitiously received some formal training. Whites in Louisiana did not fare much better as the majority were illiterate. “In fact, the people of Louisiana would continue to hold education in low regard until long after the Civil War.”<sup>25</sup> The Catholic Church in Louisiana, however, held a different view regarding the need for at least a basic education for the people of Louisiana. The motive underlying Catholic support for education was the doctrinal attitude of the church on the “claims and rights of all people to share in the fruits of the redemption of Christ.” In order that they might be instructed in the doctrines of the faith it was incumbent on the church to provide some education for its catechumens.

Louisiana joined the Union as the eighteenth state in 1812, perhaps the most demographically diverse of all the United States; its several ethnic groups were mainly influenced by the Catholic religion. When Louisiana became a state not much changed for Africans, slave or free. Legal and social conditions in Louisiana during the ante-bellum period therefore made it difficult for the church to accomplish its purpose, particularly among enslaved Africans and free people of color. The Louisiana Supreme Court expressed the prevailing attitude during the ante-bellum period, saying “the African race are strangers to our constitution and are the subjects of special and exceptional

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<sup>24</sup> Wall, p. 117.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 117.

legislation.”<sup>26</sup> Africans, free or slave were not recognized as citizens, and as such, there was no need to provide for their welfare or education, according to the civil authorities.

Civil authorities notwithstanding, a number of Roman Catholic popes “uttered numerous pronouncements . . . and even did not hesitate to condemn those features of the institution [slavery] that stood out as abhorrent to the Christian conception of charity and justice.”<sup>27</sup> In 1838 Pope Gregory XVI issued his encyclical, In Supremo Apostolatus condemning slavery.<sup>28</sup> In response, some among the American Catholic clergy argued that the pope had not intended it to apply to the United States where slavery was of the domestic type and quite different from what the pope was condemning. Other members of the Catholic clergy simply ignored the encyclical all together. Still others, however, continued to educate people of all ethnic groups in Louisiana.<sup>29</sup> Harriett Thompson, a black woman from New York, perhaps best summarized the attitude of many Catholic clergy in a letter she wrote to Pope Pius IX:

I humbly write these lines to beseech your Holiness in the name of the saviour if you will provide for the salvation of the black race in the United States who is going astray from neglect on the part of those who have the care of souls. Now I would not dare to say anything disrespectful against the ministers of God but the reason of this neglect is, as it is well known to your Holiness, that most of the Bishops and priests in this country is either Irish or descended from Irish and not being accustomed to the black race in Ireland they can't think

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<sup>26</sup> African Methodist Episcopal Church vs. City of New Orleans, 15 Louisiana Reports, p. 443, (1860).

<sup>27</sup> Father Joseph Simon, S.V.D. “The African-American Apostolate and the Society of the Divine Word” A Speech delivered at Xavier University, New Orleans, 1995, Archives, Society of the Divine Word, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi.

<sup>28</sup> Butler, p. 7.

<sup>29</sup> Mother M. David Young, S.B.S., “A History of the Development of Catholic Education for the Negro in Louisiana,” (Master’s thesis, Louisiana State University, 1944), p. 16.

enough of them to take charge of our souls. Hence it is a great mistake to say that the church watched with equal care over every race and color, for how can it be said they teach all nations when they will not let the black race mix with the white... Yes, Holy Father, this is precisely the conditions of the colored Catholics in most of the United States....<sup>30</sup>

Later church councils in the United States reaffirmed Pope Gregory's encyclical and encouraged the church and its ministers to work on behalf of the enslaved populace and free persons of color. Thereafter, Catholic educational work among African Americans in Louisiana grew from the early ministrations of the Ursuline nuns "in the rudiments of learning necessary for an understanding of the doctrine of the Faith to the definite formal school system of today."<sup>31</sup> Free people of color took up the mission on behalf of African Americans, and New Orleans became the home of the second black religious order of women in the United States, the Sisters of the Holy Family.<sup>32</sup> The order was founded by Henriette Delille. She was born in 1813 the illegitimate daughter of Jean-Baptiste Delille-Sarpy and Pouponne Dias. As an adolescent, she made the acquaintance of a member of a French nursing order who had come out alone from France, Soeur Ste-Marthe Fortier. She engaged in social work among the black population of New Orleans, and Henriette began to work with her. They opened a school for young girls, daughters of the free people of color, who were educated by day, while slaves received religious instructions by night.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Cyprian Davis, O.S.B., The History of Black Catholics in the United States, (New York: Crossroad 1990), p. 94.

<sup>31</sup> Butler, p. 7.

<sup>32</sup> The first were the Oblate Sisters of Providence formed in Baltimore, Maryland in 1829.

<sup>33</sup> Davis, p. 105.



Soeur Ste-Marthe returned to France but in 1836 Henriette, her friend Juliette Gaudin, and a French woman, Marie Jeanne Aliquot, formed the Sisters of Presentation. They began work among the poor and enslaved Africans. Fearing personal repercussions and legal consequences, Abbe' Rousselon disbanded the Sisters of the Presentation. Henriette Delille, however, was determined to continue the work. She and her good friend Juliette Gaudin, who was born in 1808 in Cuba, the daughter of mulatto parents originally from Haiti, joined in the effort to form their own religious society.

Ironically, "it was the intervention Abbe' Rousselon, who finally helped Heneriette and Juliette's dream become a possibility. He supported the plans of Henriette and Juliette for a religious community because he realized that they could be of help in ministering to the poor blacks in the parish."<sup>34</sup> Bishop Antoine Blanc, Archbishop of New Orleans, acceded to the request of Abbe' Etienne Rousselon, vicar-General and pastor of St. Augustine Church in New Orleans, to direct them in their pursuit. He promised them fulfillment if they could prove the sincerity of their desire. They in turn expressed their apostolic intentions through caring for the sick, helping the poor, and teaching the uneducated of their people, free and slave, children, and adults, in the name of the church. On November 21, 1842 the Order of the Sisters of the Holy Family whose members would later serve at Holy Rosary Institute, was established in New Orleans by Henriette and Juliette under the auspices of Bishop Antoine Blanc. The next year, they were joined by Josephine Charles a member of a prominent New Orleans creole family. The trio wore a suitable garb and lived edifying lives. Henriette and Josephine spent one year of basic religious formation with the Religious of the Sacred Heart at Convent,

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<sup>34</sup> Stephen J. Ochs, A Black Patriot and a White Priest, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), p. 51.

Louisiana, then trained others so that they all pronounced their public vows on October 15, 1852.

In the formative years, the church tolerated them but made it known they were not to be treated as equals of white female religious orders. Henriette Delille's order felt firsthand the discrimination. It is part of the unwritten history of the community that when the sisters finally designed a religious habit that was approved and accepted, "Mother Josephine Charles sent a novice dressed in the new habit to see Archbishop Perche who initially thought the novice to be a religious from a white community; realizing she was a person of color, he ordered her to take off the habit with the words who do you think you are? You are proud, too proud!"<sup>35</sup> The Sisters were not discouraged and continued their work. They established America's first Catholic home for the elderly and opened a school in 1851 that developed into St. Mary's Academy with a student body of more than seven hundred. In 1881, it became the first secondary school for African American girls in New Orleans. When Henriette died in November, 1862, her leadership had borne the fruit that the two hundred thirty four living members seek to continue and enlarge.<sup>36</sup>

Discrimination by the church against the Sisters of the Holy Family continued, but they persevered. They remained a diocesan congregation, only recognized locally throughout the nineteenth century. "Only in 1949 did the Holy Family Sisters receive canonical recognition as a religious congregation of pontifical rite."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Davis, p. 108.

<sup>36</sup> "The Sisters of the Holy Family," File number A65H45100, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>37</sup> Davis, p. 108.

Two years after the founding of the Sisters of the Holy Family, civil authorities in Louisiana were moving to begin a public school system. Pursuant to the 1845 Louisiana Constitution, the legislature enacted a General School Act in 1847. According to T. H. Harris, Superintendent of Education, 1847 is usually referred to as the time when Louisiana adopted a public school system, both state and parish, committed to educating white children. Education for blacks would have contradicted the planter, slave owner mentality which rendered blacks inferior, incapable of learning, only usable as free labor. By 1850 the number of enslaved blacks in Louisiana was 244,809 and 17,462 free persons of color were among Louisiana's population.<sup>38</sup> The majority of the 262,271 received little if any formal education.

Louisiana was not alone in its failure to provide education for its people. The South lagged far behind other regions in the United States in literacy for blacks and poor whites. Horace Mann Bond summed up the state of education for blacks in the nation. In his words, "Negro formal education began with his freedom. Previous to the Civil War, education for the Negro was provided only in scattered schools in the North where 1.7 percent of the Negro population of school age attended schools."<sup>39</sup> He argued that it did not matter if education legislation were enacted. It generally did not extend to blacks. Development of black public education, he said, actually took shape during the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth century.

Harry Ashmore expressed the lack of interest in universal education throughout

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<sup>38</sup> T. L. Smith and H. L. Hill, The People of Louisiana, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press 1952), p. 33.

<sup>39</sup> Horace M. Bond, The Education of the Negro in the American Social Order, (New York: Octagon Books 1968), p. VIII.

the South in the ante-bellum period, contending

the South had little in the way of a public school system to which the Negro could have been admitted . . . . unlike the rest of the nation and despite the proddings of some Southern leaders . . . . the ante-bellum South had shown little interest in universal education. Well-born Southern whites were instructed by tutors or attended private academics; most others remained unlettered unless they pursued learning on their own.<sup>40</sup>

Louisiana, however, was showing some signs of progress for whites, but it was short lived. Political tension over the expansion of slavery in the nation in the 1850s caused programs aimed at providing public education for white children in Louisiana and the South to be drastically reduced or eliminated. Conditions for blacks were worse. According to Jane McAllister, “the first mention of public schools in Louisiana maintained for Negroes is just after the Civil War, during the Reconstruction period.”<sup>41</sup>

In New Orleans free people of color took up the cause and were responsible for opening the first “free school for colored children in the United States “Ecole Des Orphelins Indigents originally funded by proceeds from the will of a highly respected old Negro woman,”<sup>42</sup> Marie Justine Cinaire.<sup>43</sup> The school remained operational until the early twentieth century when in 1915 it was destroyed by fire; only to be rebuilt and

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<sup>40</sup> Harry S. Ashmore, The Negro and the Schools, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1954), pp. 6-7.

<sup>41</sup> Jane E. McAllister, The Training of Negro Teachers in Louisiana, (New York: Teachers College, Columbia University 1929), p. 40.

<sup>42</sup> Alice Dunbar-Nelson, “People of Color in Louisiana,” Journal of Negro History, 1 (Jan. 1917): 65.

<sup>43</sup> Butler, p. 31. Marie Justine Cinaire was born in Guinea. When she was about seven she was carried to San Domingo. She ended up in New Orleans where she married a free person of color, Bernard Convent, a very successful carpenter. He left his large estate to her which she used to fund education for Negro children.

reopened in 1915 through a generous donation from a young Philadelphia woman Katharine Drexel.<sup>44</sup> She and the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament would found many schools and contribute much to black education in Louisiana.<sup>45</sup>

Their mission was difficult because political tensions in Louisiana and the nation continued to rise. In the 1850s whites “began to look upon free people of color as a threat to slavery; their very existence belied the notion that all people of African origin should have slave status.”<sup>46</sup> Free people of color took exception causing alarm in the legislature.

Feelings against the free persons of color increased. The fear of slave rebellion was ever present, and the free Negro was, in the mind of the dominant but slightly outnumbered race, the most likely leader of such uprising. Thus between 1830 and 1860 social pressure and legislative action increased against emancipations, against immigration of free Negroes out of the state. Finally, in 1857 legislation was passed putting an end completely to manumissions in Louisiana.<sup>47</sup>

By 1861 Louisiana had joined the Confederacy and elected delegates to a constitutional convention. School machinery was not disturbed by the convention. It continued the policy of public schools for white children. “One of the first acts of the

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<sup>44</sup> Davis, pp. 135-136. Katharine Drexel was born in Philadelphia in 1858 into a banking family of Austrian and German origin. Her father was Francis A. Drexel, and her mother Hannah Longstroth. In 1885 her father died leaving \$14 million in trust to Katharine and her sisters from which they would receive an annual income. Katharine’s interest first lay with the Native Americans. She made her profession of faith in 1891 in Pittsburgh as the foundress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Colored people. She is the founder of Xavier Preparatory School and Xavier University of New Orleans.

<sup>45</sup> See Exhibit number 1 in the Appendix.

<sup>46</sup> Wall, p. 179.

<sup>47</sup> Rodolphe L. Desdunes, Our People and Our History: Fifty Creole Portraits. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2001), p. xii.

Confederate Legislature of 1862 was to appropriate nearly half a million dollars for the public schools. It is probable, however, that none of it was used, for during the same year, Admiral Farragut made his triumphal entry into New Orleans, and General B. F. Butler, of unsavory memory, took charge of the city and the adjoining parishes in the name of the Washington government.”<sup>48</sup>

T. H. Harris reports Butler appointed a school board, supplied it with funds and schools were provided for white and black children. “Whether or not both races were admitted to the same schools the writer is not in position to state. Probably they were, Butler’s geographical origin and warped character would so indicate.”<sup>49</sup> According to Harris, attendance during the period was confined largely to black children, “and the few white union sympathizers.”<sup>50</sup> During 1862, Butler’s successor, General Nathaniel P. Banks began a program in Louisiana intending to restore loyal government to the state. He “ordered the election of delegates to a constitutional convention, which wrote a new state constitution in 1864.”<sup>51</sup>

New Orleans dominated the convention because Union forces only held the southern part of Louisiana. The dominance of New Orleans convention delegates, however, did not reduce restrictions on free people of color and newly freed persons.

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<sup>48</sup> Thomas H. Harris, The History of Public Education in Louisiana. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1924), p. 16.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p. 18.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

<sup>51</sup> Wall, p. 211.

The “delegates adamantly opposed granting civil and political rights, including the right to vote, to African Americans.”<sup>52</sup> The presence of Confederate sympathizers among the delegates and voters continued the pre-war despair experienced by blacks.

The legislature sought to maintain white supremacy as it existed before the war by passing Black Codes designed to replace slave codes that restricted freedom of movement by people of color. Newly freed persons and free people of color feared the reestablishment of conditions in Louisiana that had existed before the Civil War. By 1866, however, they increased their efforts to gain the right to vote as a means to win offices in state government. Together with a group of Northern sympathizers they organized the Republican Party of Louisiana and “issued a call to reopen the constitutional convention of 1864 to consider suffrage for African Americans.”<sup>53</sup>

Prior to the commencement of the 1866 convention in New Orleans, a riot ensued resulting in death and injuries to blacks and whites. The riot coupled with other acts of white violence, led Congress to pass the Reconstruction Act of 1867, which among other things gave federal military officials the authority to register males, black and white, to vote. Former Confederates were disenfranchised and were therefore unable to participate in the constitutional convention in 1868.

Henry C. Warmouth, a former union officer was elected governor and Oscar J. Dunn, a free person of color from New Orleans became Louisiana’s only elected African American lieutenant governor. The participation of a representative number of African Americans in the 1868 convention resulted in a constitution that incorporated language

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<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 211.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 212.

from the Thirteenth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth Amendments of the United States Constitution. It “declare [d] all persons, without regard to race, color, or previous conditions, born or naturalized in the United States and subjected to the jurisdiction thereof, and resident of Louisiana for one year, citizens of the state who shall all enjoy the same civil, political and public rights and privileges”<sup>54</sup> as other citizens. It also addressed public education.

Article 99 of the 1868 Louisiana Constitution included the following language, “The General Assembly is required to establish at least one free public school in every parish, to which admission shall be granted to all children, without distinction of race, color or previous condition; and the state is expressly forbidden to establish separate schools or institutions of learning exclusively for one race.” The 1868 Constitution signaled the rebirth and growth of public education in Louisiana, though not smoothly,

Generally, white parents kept their children home from schools in parishes that had a majority of African American children, and parish schools that had mostly white students barred African American children from attending. Nevertheless, these schools established the principle of public education, and they continued after Reconstruction, although universal public education did not exist in any meaningful way in Louisiana until the twentieth century.<sup>55</sup>

With the end of the Civil War and the end of slavery a gradual change took place in Catholic Church policy towards blacks. Black priests were being ordained, religious communities among black women experienced growth in their memberships. They would be needed as Louisiana’s political and civic leaders resolved to restore social

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<sup>54</sup> The New York Times, March 20, 1868.

<sup>55</sup> Wall, p. 219.



conditions in the state to ante-bellum conditions; and a newly formed public education system suffered mightily due to reverses in the decade of the 1870's and after.

## CHAPTER 2

Louisiana was devastated by the Civil War. Many institutions that existed during the antebellum period in the state did not survive the conflict. Louisiana's public education system, authorized in the state's 1845 constitution was not well established. It provided little more than the basics for white children, when they attended. It was not intended to educate African Americans at all.

Religious organizations, Catholic and Protestant, entered the void. The Catholic bishops of the United States convened their Second Plenary Council at Baltimore, Maryland in 1866 and "made a detailed study of and charted a far-seeing plan of action for the improvement of the situation of the Negroes in this country: the desire to do something to alleviate the plight of the recently emancipated Negroes was one of the principal matters in calling the Council."<sup>56</sup> The seventh session of the Council "was given over to a discussion of the problems of the Negro. After amending enactments to fit them to the changed status of the Negro, the Council formulated an appeal directed to the bishops of Europe beseeching them to send to America young ecclesiastics to devote themselves to the care of Negroes."<sup>57</sup> The Council gave special attention to the matter of education for African Americans and urged religious communities of both sexes to open schools for them. In 1884, the Third Plenary Council met in Baltimore and concluded, "It is our will that bishops exert every effort to provide the Negro wherever possible, with churches, schools, orphanages and homes for the poor."<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Mother M. David Young, S.B.S., "A History of the Development of Catholic Education," p. 6.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 7

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

Catholics in Louisiana looked to the Archdiocese of New Orleans to provide an education for their children. The church in Louisiana, not unlike the secular community, focused on white Catholics and their children. African Americans were left to create their own schools in Louisiana into the twentieth century. Socio-political conditions in the state created an environment within which religious organizations conducted their work-- not always under pleasant circumstances. Racial attitudes within the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church had led to free women of color founding the Sisters of the Holy Family in Louisiana. They took up the cause of educating African Americans in Louisiana. In the 1880s they joined with a German immigrant priest in Galveston to teach at Holy Rosary Industrial School for Girls. In 1913, together they would leave Texas, and move to Lafayette, Louisiana, to continue their mission.

In Lafayette, Holy Rosary at first stressed a domestic science program, but evolved into a normal school providing teacher training until the forties decade. Along the way, Holy Rosary became an important entity in the assignment of the first African American priests to serve in Louisiana. Its founding resulted from the desire of a German immigrant who came to the United States hoping to become a missionary in Africa. His American journey took him from Kansas, to Texas, not long after Reconstruction, and finally to Lafayette, Louisiana.

In the aftermath of Reconstruction in Louisiana, blacks continued the struggle to provide educational opportunities for themselves. Black political participation waned in the state and the limited gains made by blacks in public education, mandated by Article 99 of the 1868 Louisiana Constitution, were all but wiped out.

Bourbon Democrats<sup>59</sup> ruled Louisiana from the end of Reconstruction well into the twentieth century. They continued to think in antebellum terms. They sought to maintain white supremacy and adhered to the belief that blacks were innately inferior. Their fiscal and tax policies led to reduced appropriations for public schools. The 1879 Louisiana Constitution drastically reduced already low property taxes which negated any benefit of a public school system for children of both races. Therefore, between 1890 and 1900, Louisiana was the only state to show a significant rise in the percentage of native whites who could neither read nor write and the only state in which black illiteracy continued at a rate greater than 70 percent.<sup>60</sup> Louisiana's public school system quickly became the worst in the nation.

With the return to a segregated educational system in 1877, blacks in Louisiana began to experience fears that had been developing since the early 1870s.<sup>61</sup> It was clear that if any black public schools survived the Reconstruction era they would not meet future needs. There appeared to be only one answer, blacks in Louisiana would have to build and maintain their own schools. The rollback of property taxes for public education in the state led blacks to seek help from the churches. For most blacks in Louisiana in the 1870's the black church was the community center. In them they expressed their own plans for improving their condition and out of them leaders emerged. The educational

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<sup>59</sup> Bourbon refers to the white oligarchs who regained power across the South, especially in Louisiana at the end of Reconstruction. They were the cotton and sugar planters who governed the state during the antebellum period.

<sup>60</sup> Wall, p. 243.

<sup>61</sup> Myrtle S. Eakin, "The Black Struggle for Education in Louisiana, 1877-1930," (Ph.D dissertation, The University of Southwestern Louisiana, now the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, 1980), p. 18.

movement also began and was sustained within the church environment, an environment that included Protestant and Catholic groups.

Some literate and not so literate Protestant ministers founded elementary schools. In some instances their wives taught in the schools, which came to be called academies or colleges. In fact, they only provided the very basics of an elementary education. National Protestant organizations contributed to the overall effort by establishing colleges, which initially were no more than high schools. The American Missionary Association established Straight University in New Orleans. The Northern Methodists set up the University of New Orleans, and the Northern Baptist founded Leland College. Straight and the University of New Orleans merged to form Dillard University in 1935.<sup>62</sup> These institutions trained the Protestant ministers who founded many of the elementary schools constructed and maintained by blacks in Louisiana.

The Catholic Church held to the universal ideal that there were only Catholics, not black or white Catholics. Yet paradoxically, throughout its early history in Louisiana, Catholic education was divided by race.<sup>63</sup> Blacks were allowed to worship and receive the sacraments but, “worshippers quickly separated on emerging from the cathedral, [in New Orleans] however, and racial mixing never extended to Catholic schools or to benevolent and religious societies associated with the church.”<sup>64</sup> As Catholic Church parishes developed in Louisiana parishioners and priests constructed churches, halls and

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<sup>62</sup> Wall, p. 219.

<sup>63</sup> John B. Alberts, “Origins of Black Catholic Parishes in the Archdiocese of New Orleans, 1718-1907” (Ph.D dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1998), p. 13.

<sup>64</sup> Caryn Cosse’ Bell, Revolution, Romanticism, and the Afro-Creole Protest Tradition in Louisiana, 1718 – 1868, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1997), pp. 70 – 71.

schools to educate children in the Catholic religion. The church however, followed local racial customs and the “universal ideal” was subsumed by those customs.

In the 1880s some white southern influential Catholics began to advocate for the creation of racial church parishes. Other black and white Catholics lamented movement toward segregated parishes. Most, however, continued to question the value of interracial churches and schools. Catholic clergy in Louisiana and the south sensed the will of all but a few parishioners; and segregated worship and education became the norm.<sup>65</sup> Unlike the Protestants, in the south Catholic churches and schools were headed by white priests. A problem of numbers arose. Separate church parishes and schools meant more priests were needed to serve dual parishes and schools. There were not enough white priests to lead those parishes. Still the Catholic Church was reluctant to ordain black men into the priesthood. In 1880 no more than four black men served as Catholic priests in the United States, all in the north. How would the church provide additional priests for any new segregated parishes and schools?

The church could hope for new ordinations, or seek volunteers from existing numbers to lead black parishes. A third possibility existed: attract priest from abroad to serve black parishes and schools. Perhaps in response to the second Plenary Council at Baltimore, the latter apparently became a reality. Several European seminarians began immigrating to the United States.

In 1884 Philip L. Keller, a native of Roxheim, Rhenish Bavaria arrived in the United States. From boyhood he had professed “a desire to devote his life to missionary

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<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.

work in Africa.”<sup>66</sup> He entered the seminary to study for the Catholic priesthood in Leavenworth, Kansas, where he met Reverend Francis M. Huhn. At the time, Father Huhn pastored a church for blacks and headed a school for young black men. Keller divided his time between his seminary studies and Huhn’s school.

In 1888 Father Huhn decided to relocate to the southern United States believing his work would be more rewarding and successful in the midst of a large black population. He expected several of the young priests and seminarians under his tutelage to accompany him. Only Keller agreed to go south. His fellow priests and seminarians “were concerned with reports of yellow fever and other dangers, they chose to attend other colleges and seminaries.”<sup>67</sup>

Keller went to the Diocese of Galveston, Texas, where Bishop Nicholas A. Gallagher, welcomed him and ordained him as a secular priest on December 21, 1889.<sup>68</sup> Immediately after his ordination, Father Keller was temporarily assigned to St. Joseph’s Parish, to replace a priest who became ill and died suddenly. The church trustees of St. Joseph prepared to ask the bishop to appoint Father Keller permanent pastor. He declined the appointment, advising the trustees and the bishop, “it was his mission to work among Negroes.”<sup>69</sup> Bishop Gallagher decided blacks should have their own parish and Holy Rosary began as a mission of the cathedral church, with Gallagher as pastor.

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<sup>66</sup> Herman Hayes, Holy Rosary Institute, 1913 – 1918, File Number B12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>67</sup> The Colored Man’s Friend, 31, 2 (April, 1928): File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>68</sup> A priest not belonging to a particular order or group of Catholic priests is referred to as a secular priest.

<sup>69</sup> Investiture of Monsignor Keller: Two Bishops, Four Monsignors and Sixty Priests Presents, The Colored Man’s Friend, 31, 2, (April, 1920), File Number, A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

He soon appointed the newly ordained Keller as full time pastor. Holy Rosary Parish was one of the first Catholic parishes for blacks in Texas. It had its beginnings in Holy Rosary Elementary School, which was established in 1886 by Bishop Nicholas A. Gallagher of Galveston and staffed by Dominican Sisters.

Father Keller, after being relieved of his temporary duties at St. Joseph's, began his work at Holy Rosary Industrial School, which was founded by Bishop Gallagher to provide a basic education and religious instruction to black girls. Beginning his work among the black residents of Galveston, he counted only forty or fifty black Catholics. The school had an enrollment of two hundred. He thought it should expand to become a boarding school for industrial education. He realized that the school hours were too short, that the instructions given in the school were being counteracted in the homes, and that the future of the race lay within the children, his only solution to the difficulty lay in opening an industrial school.<sup>70</sup> To add the industrial program he needed additional funds. In 1897 he began distributing the Colored Man's Friend, a quarterly publication printed in German and English. It contained news from the black Catholic missions in the United States.<sup>71</sup> Every summer he set off on fundraising trips to the North. On one trip, he learned of the foundress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, Katharine Drexel, and wrote to her for financial assistance. She made a substantial donation to the Galveston school.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> Holy Rosary Industrial School, 1898, Galveston, Texas , p. 2, Archives, Sister of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>71</sup> The Colored Man's Friend annual subscription rate was twenty five cents. It gained national circulation and an international reputation which continued until the start of World War I when the leading German subscribers were forced to discontinue their subscriptions

<sup>72</sup> "Holy Rosary Industrial School, 1898, Galveston, Texas," p. 2, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana .



With the hearty response to the new publication and Mother Katharine's donation, Keller believed his expansion project would succeed. He applied to the Sisters of the Holy Family in New Orleans for nuns to take charge of the institution. "According to his request for sisters, Mother Austin recalled Mother Sacred Heart from Donaldsonville [Louisiana] and appointed her with Sister Assumption Jacques, Sister Thomas Elliot and Sister Andrew Owen to Holy Rosary, Galveston."<sup>73</sup>

With the financial aid of Mother Drexel, "work was also begun on a building destined to serve both as a convent and as a dormitory for resident students. It was completed and dedicated in January 1899."<sup>74</sup> With the dormitory, the school offered an education from kindergarten through high school, combined with training in all branches of domestic science.<sup>75</sup> In 1899 forty four girls were in the boarding department, some of whom were orphans.<sup>76</sup> 1899 was a year of building and strengthening the curriculum. It was also Keller's tenth year anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. The Galveston News recorded the event on December 26, 1899. "Dinner was served to the clergy. After dinner the students entertained the visitors with music and recitations. Ms. Blanche Burton, presented on behalf of the day students an elegant silver pitcher inscribed, Rev. Philip L. Keller, from the pupils of Holy Rosary Industrial School,

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> "The Sisters of Holy Family," p.3, File Number A65H45100, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>75</sup> Father Keller shared the views of Booker T. Washington who thought the Negro should be trained to work with his hands at the same time he was learning to use his brains. See, Washington's speech September 18, 1895 at the Cotton States Exposition in Atlanta, Georgia. Also see, Booker T. Washington, Up From Slavery: An Autobiography (New York: Doubleday, 1901).

<sup>76</sup> Annual Record Book Holy Rosary School, Galveston, Texas, 1898, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, Motherhouse, New Orleans, Louisiana.

December 21, 1899.” As school closed in the spring, the Sisters retired to the Motherhouse in New Orleans for an annual retreat and rest. Only Mother Sacred Heart and Sister Thomas Elliot of the original group of sisters returned in August, 1900. Sisters Aloysius, Assissium, Dominica and Fabian were the new sisters assigned to the Galveston school.

At the beginning of the school term a devastating hurricane struck Galveston. According to the sisters, on the morning of September 8, 1900, winds were high in Galveston and it had rained earlier. At about 12:30 p.m. a wagon bearing Mrs. Reaves, her two sisters and five children arrived at the convent. Mrs. Reaves was the sister of Sister Dominica. All of the arrivals were drenched. They traveled to the convent from the east side of Galveston Island. Mrs. Reeves told the sisters, “their home had been blown away and they came seeking shelter from the approaching weather.” When learning of the situation Father Keller called the children into the church, he knelt with them to pray for protection during the storm. “While praying, a crash was heard. Three of the windows had been blown out, and the wind whistled through the sacred edifice.”<sup>77</sup>

Fearing for the safety of the children, Keller sent them back to the convent where the sisters were receiving refugees. The wind was rising, and the Gulf waters were beginning to flood the area around Holy Rosary. “The sisters and the children moved provisions from the first to the second floor of the convent. Sister Fabian who at the time, was serving as the housekeeper left the convent to rescue two cows tied near the building. As she left, the wind blew most of the roof from the convent where at least two hundred people had sought shelter. Sister Fabian was drenched, had no change of

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<sup>77</sup> *Golden Jubilee of Holy Rosary Parish, Galveston, Texas, 1888 – 1938.* (Galveston, Texas: Private Publisher, 1938). Archives, Sister of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

clothes, and became gravely ill. She developed a cold which resulted in tuberculosis and caused her death some time later.”<sup>78</sup>

Conditions continued to deteriorate. Gulf waters inundated the city causing the sisters to move provisions from the second to the third floor of the convent. According to Keller, at 11:00 p.m. “the wind changed its course. We are saved.” When the sun rose on September 9, the water receded and Keller observed the property destruction and corpses of drowned persons strewn over the landscape. Over six thousand people perished in the storm. Their bodies were buried at sea, but, according to Keller, waves washed many back onto the shore. They were then cremated. “In a few days a commissary was set up by the Welfare Committee which supplied food to the refugees. For six weeks the poor homeless people having nowhere to go remained in the school building until the city could make arrangements for housing them. Until their removal, no classes could be held therefore, Holy Rosary did not open its doors to the children until the end of October.”<sup>79</sup>

Damages to the school, church, and Keller’s residence totaled more than \$5,000.00. To raise money for needed repairs Keller made a trip to Germany. Money he collected together with the proceeds from the Colored Man’s Friend provided for the repairs.<sup>80</sup>

The next year, Holy Rosary school at Galveston opened with ninety two students. Enrollment was down from 113 in 1899, the year before the storm. Each year from 1902 through 1912 enrollment numbers were as follows:

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., p. 7

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Boys</u>	<u>Girls</u>
1902	37	44
1903	29	72
1904	33	82
1905	28	77
1906	19	89
1907	30	112
1908	23	88
1909	12	64
1910	50	118
1911	62	115
1912	28	91

The school “was well attended but did not have too large of a Catholic population from which to draw.”<sup>81</sup> Most of the students were Protestant. Some of the girls ‘with the consent of their parents objured their Protestant religion and became Catholics while at Holy Rosary. Others, denied the permission to embrace the Faith, entered the church when they became of age.’<sup>82</sup> Keller was concerned that not enough students converted to Catholicism and that a significant segment of the students were non-Catholic. Keller wanted to teach Catholic children.

After ten years in Galveston he began looking for a suitable geographic area with a large black Catholic population. His search ended in Lafayette, Louisiana. The Times-Democrat, a New Orleans newspaper, reported that of the 325,000 Catholics in the Archdiocese of New Orleans 15,000 were blacks. The archdiocese covered the state of Louisiana. It is likely that Keller was aware of claims by the New Orleans archdiocese that it was “a Catholic oasis in a sea of Protestantism.”<sup>83</sup> It is more likely the Sisters, who

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<sup>81</sup> Myra E. Patrick, “A Brief History of Holy Rosary Institute, 1913-1970” (Master’s thesis, University of Southwestern Louisiana, now University of Louisiana Lafayette, (1971), p. 6., File B12L23220 (01), Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>82</sup> “Holy Rosary Industrial School, 1898 Galveston, Texas” p. 8, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans.

<sup>83</sup> David Hepburn, “Negro Catholics in New Orleans” Our World, 5, 4 (April, 1950).

were from Louisiana, helped Keller to decide on Lafayette. Lafayette was a part of the New Orleans archdiocese, and it remained so until the Diocese of Lafayette was created in 1918.

Prior to the creation of the Lafayette diocese, and before Father Keller decided to relocate, black Catholic families in Lafayette were expressing their dissatisfaction with the lack of a Catholic education for their children. Three black families: the LeBlancs, Lemelles and Skinners, pooled their resources and opened a small Catholic school for their children. They were able “to obtain the use of St. Joseph’s Hall and also secured a home for use as a convent for four Holy Family Sisters. The Sisters named the school St. Joseph’s. It continued under private ownership until 1912 when St. Paul’s Roman Catholic Parish was established in Lafayette as an all black parish.”<sup>84</sup> The absence of black priests in the Archdiocese of New Orleans caused the archbishop “to name Father William Joseph Teurlings, the pastor of St. John’s Church in Lafayette, pastor of St. Paul’s.”<sup>85</sup>

Teurlings was born in Tilburg, Holland, June 27, 1872. His early education was at the Sisters’ School at Nijmegen, Holland. Later he attended the Brothers’ School. From there he went to Dominican College at Nijmegen. After completing his studies, he spent four years at the American College of Louvain, Belgium, where he studied philosophy and theology. He was ordained a priest after he was granted a dispensation by the Holy Father. To be ordained, young men had to have reached the age of twenty

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<sup>84</sup> Father Matthew Evanstock, ed. Saint Paul’s Roman Catholic Church, Lafayette, Louisiana: 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Jubilee (1912-1962), pp. 29-30, Archives of the University of Louisiana Lafayette.

<sup>85</sup> Dolores E. Labbe, Jim Crow Comes to Church (New York: Arno Press, 1978), p. 75.

three. Teurlings was only twenty two. He was ordained June 29, 1894, in Louvian, Belgium by Archbishop Francis Janssens of New Orleans for service in his diocese.

Teurlings arrived in New Orleans in January 1895 during one of the few raging snow storms Louisiana has ever known. His first assignment was as an assistant pastor in Abbeville, Louisiana. After six months, he was appointed pastor of a territory stretching along the Gulf of Mexico. The area included Cameron, Cheniere Au Tigre and Pecan Island. While there he worked tirelessly, became fatigued, and contracted malaria. After his recovery, he was transferred to Washington, Louisiana, where he was embraced by Catholics, Jews, Protestants, blacks and whites. Upon his arrival Teurling says he was approached by black Catholics who informed him they had no church in Washington. With no funds to build a chapel for them, Teurlings, with free volunteer labor, simply added another wing to the white people's church, and the two races attended the same services, though separated. They also sent their children to the same catechism classes. They made first communion together somewhat in contrast to the mixed race first communion he conducted before leaving Cameron. In Cameron, due to racial tension, Teurlings said he went to the ceremony at the church with a pistol in his pocket to prevent trouble.

Teurlings next appointment was in Lafayette as pastor of St. John's Church. He inherited an old frame church building and immediately began a campaign to construct a new church. Before work began on the new structure, Lafayette's black Catholics pleaded with him for a church of their own. A chapel, St. Paul's, was built for them and because the new St. John's was not completed until 1916 Teurlings conducted services at St. Paul's for two years. Archbishop Blenk of New Orleans blessed St. Paul's. At the

time the parish was considered the second largest black parish in the United States.<sup>86</sup>

Teurlings convinced the Sisters at St. Joseph's to discontinue their small private school began by the LeBlancs, Lemelles, and Skinners and join him in establishing a new parish elementary school at St. Paul's.

That same year, 1912, Keller was considering his options and was looking to leave Galveston. However, before notifying Bishop Gallagher of his intent to leave, he began speaking with James H. Blenk, Archbishop of the Archdiocese of New Orleans "about his desire to start an industrial school for colored girls in his archdiocese."<sup>87</sup>

Before agreeing to accept Keller, Blenk sought information from Gallagher who advised Blenk that Keller "requested my permission to leave this Diocese, to go to the archdiocese of New Orleans in order that he may continue to work for Negroes in some institution; he did not say in what institution. I have consented reluctantly, as I see no alternative."<sup>88</sup> He also said, Keller was a very dedicated priest who worked well among the Negroes.

By early summer 1913 Father Keller had sufficient funds to begin preparations to depart Galveston. July 9, 1913, he purchased one hundred arpents of land from Louis Domengeaux for \$16,000.00 just north of the city limits of Lafayette.<sup>89</sup> The land with its farmhouse and out buildings once was the property of the sister of the King of France.

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<sup>86</sup> Monsignor William Joseph Teurlings Diamond Sacredotal Jubilee Book, (29 April, 1954). Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>87</sup> Reverend James H. Blenk to Reverend Nicholas A. Gallagher, May 13, 1913, Gallagher Papers, Archives, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Houston, Texas.

<sup>88</sup> Reverend Nicholas A. Gallagher to Reverend James H. Blenk, (May 16, 1913), Gallagher Papers, Archives, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, Houston, Texas.

<sup>89</sup> An arpent is a former French unit of area equal to approximately one acre.

Keller also received a portion of the growing crops, a milk cow, twenty-five chickens, a buggy and a horse.<sup>90</sup> In August, Keller, Mother Sacred Heart, the Holy Family Sisters who served with them in Galveston, and fourteen girls arrived at the Lafayette farm.<sup>91</sup> The small farmhouse was only large enough for Keller. The sisters and the girls shared an out building which served as a dormitory and schoolhouse.<sup>92</sup>

Holy Rosary Institute opened its doors in Lafayette in September, 1913 as an industrial school stressing domestic science for girls. At the turn of the twentieth century, Booker T. Washington, founder of Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, promulgated an education and strategy for African Americans that along with his accommodation philosophy set the terms for the debate on African American programs for twenty years. The focus of his education program for African Americans was industrial and domestic science, encouraging members of the race to help themselves. His program “epitomized the Negro’s accommodation to the new order of white supremacy.”<sup>93</sup> At the Cotton States Exposition in 1895 Washington said, “cast down your bucket where you are, cast it down in agriculture, mechanics, in commerce, in domestic service, and in the professions.”<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Abstract No. 44845, Lafayette Parish Tax Record of Deed, (9 July, 1913). Clerk of Court, Lafayette Parish, Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>91</sup> The names of the girls follow: 1. Jamie Sleet, 2. Dora Milanes, 3. Gladys Milanes, 4. Veronica Mateo, 5. Laura Richard, 6. Louise Nidraed, 7. Boniface Boucherie, 8. Beatrice Firmberg, 9. Hilda Fruge, 10. Ella Richardson, 11. Mary Buchanan, 12. Elizabeth Wilson, 13. Alphonsine Wilturner, and 14. Maud Prade. Annual Record Book Holy Rosary School, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1913, p. 369.

<sup>92</sup> Herman J. Hayes, Jr., Holy Rosary Institute: 1913 – 1988, (Lafayette, Louisiana: Private Publisher, (1988), p. 11.

<sup>93</sup> August Meier, Elliot Rudwick and Francis Broderick. Editors. Black Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Indianapolis and New York: Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1965), p. 3.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid., p. 4.



The most influential dissent from Washington's policy came from W. E. B. Dubois, educated at Fisk and Harvard University. As a faculty member at Atlanta University, DuBois "devoted himself to training a generation of college educated Negroes as racial leaders. At first friendly with Washington he drifted away when Washington's emphasis on industrial education drew resources away from liberal arts colleges and when Washington's accommodation policies produced so little real gain for the race."<sup>95</sup>

In 1903, DuBois launched a full scale attack against Washington's industrial education program in The Souls of Black Folk, saying, "Mr. Washington represents in Negro thought the old attitude of adjustment and submission; and Mr. Washington's program practically accepts the alleged inferiority of the Negro races."<sup>96</sup> Washington, he said, asked black people to give up political power, insistence on civil rights and "higher education of Negro youths and concentrate all their energies on industrial education." He accused Washington of a triple paradox; encouraging self respect and thrift, while counseling a silent submission to civic inferiority. Washington, he said, advocated industrial training while depreciating institutions of higher learning, the same institutions preparing to provide industrial training to his students. According to DuBois, industrial education alone would not uplift a people, more was needed. He thought work inspired by the right ideals, guided by intelligence was the formula for successfully lifting a race.

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>96</sup> W. E. B. DuBois. The Souls of Black Folk, edited by B. H. Edwards. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 67.

Although Washington may not have voiced it openly, Robert J. Norrell in “Understanding the Wizard: Another Look at the Age of Booker T. Washington,”<sup>97</sup> contends Washington and Dubois understood in similar ways the downward trajectory of black prospects between 1900 and 1915. Norrell says, they agreed that intelligence among African Americans had to be manifest in order to overcome the race’s reputation for weakness and poor character, and they also believed that the development of a cadre of black leaders and achievers was necessary to accomplish that. To be sure Norrell argues they had somewhat different ideas of how to develop African American exemplars.<sup>98</sup>

Though admittedly sympathetic to Washington, Norrell admits Washington misled when he thought that economic uplift would ultimately bring the return of political rights. “In a hundred different ways he expressed his faith that a black person who acquired economic independence would command the respect of white neighbors and ultimately with it would come the full rights of citizenship.”<sup>99</sup> Norrell agrees, however, that Washington never seemed to have been able to acknowledge publicly or privately what was clear from the anti-industrial education argument that most whites objected fundamentally to the “rise in status represented by a black skilled worker, business proprietor, or landowner.” Instead Norrell contends, Washington took the position of any good public relations man and ignored the facts that did not fit his presentation of reality. Washington, according to Norrell, failed in his larger purpose of

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<sup>97</sup> W. F. Brundage, ed. Booker T. Washington and Black Progress: Up From Slavery 100 Years Later, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, (2003), p. 58.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

persuading whites that African Americans were progressing rather than degenerating. “His public relations campaign simply could not overcome the intense political and cultural authority of white supremacy that mounted in the 1890s and held sway into the early twentieth century.”<sup>100</sup>

Washington though continued to have faith in his approach and, Norrell acknowledges “to a certain extent, events after his death vindicated his faith.” Washington also maintained that Tuskegee Institute stands not only for bricks and mortar, but for education as well. “According to Washington, “the distinction involved in the words ‘education’ and ‘training’ is largely theoretical.” My experience convinces me that training to some productive trade, be it wagon-building or farming educates.”<sup>101</sup> He disputed the idea that a man who was unable to read or write could build wagons or operate a farm with continuous success. “To make a boy an efficient mechanic is good, for it enables him to earn a living and to add his mite to the productiveness of society; but a school must do more. It must create in him abiding interests in the intellectual achievements of mankind in art and literature, and must stimulate his spiritual nature.”<sup>102</sup> Washington believed that the practical usefulness of an “academic department lies in the aid which the study of physics, chemistry and mathematics and drawing offers to the blacksmith, carpenter, the nurse and the housewife an aid that does much to transform listlessness and drudgery into vivacity and gratifying efficiency.”<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Booker T. Washington. Working With the Hands. (New York: Doubleday, Page and Company, 1904), p. 82.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 84.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., p. 97.

Keller and Mother Sacred Heart, the first principal in Lafayette, adopted the Washington approach at Holy Rosary. The four sisters who accompanied her served as the first faculty. Father Keller worked hard devoting ten to twelve hours of actual daily work to support the institution. He received no compensation from the Archdiocese of New Orleans or a church parish in support of the school. He did not have means enough to draw a salary and had to use the stipends he received for saying mass in the area to help meet the school's expenses.<sup>104</sup> He expected the large black Catholic population in the area to support the school, but took nothing for granted. He continued his fund raising trips to the north and made two trips to his home country of Bavaria. He took "two Negro boys with him to Bavaria who proved to be a drawing card and his collections were appreciable. Sister Jules Johnson remembered Keller often told stories of his trips to Bavaria to the Holy Rosary students. One such story involved his family members who had never seen a Negro and could not resist examining the bed linens to see if any color had rubbed off."<sup>105</sup>

In addition to stipends and the proceeds from his trips, Keller again turned to Mother Katharine Drexel for financial assistance. She had contributed generously to his parish and school in Galveston and was "no doubt amazed that his successful work with black children in Galveston was virtually abandoned to start anew in an obscure little town in Louisiana."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Orita B. Edward, "Black Pearl on a Protective Island," (Master's thesis, Xavier University of Louisiana, July, 2006), p. 2, Archives, Sister of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>105</sup> Myra E. Patrick, "A Brief History of Holy Rosary Institute, (1913 – 1970)," (Master's thesis, University of Louisiana Lafayette, 1976), p. 7, File Box A12L2320, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>106</sup> Father Geraghty, L'Etager, (17 March 1982): 1, File Box A12L2320, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

Keller's first appeal to her met only silence. In desperation, he wrote again, not seeking funds, but to explain his reasons for moving to Lafayette.

I have explained my ideas and intention in a former letter to you, but I wish to repeat, that Galveston was not the best place for an institution like ours. Since the storm of 1900 many colored people were afraid to send their children there, although the institution was always filled with pupils. Furthermore, most of the children we received were not Catholics and after many years of experience, I came to the conclusion that little results would be obtained unless we were more in a Catholic center. This part of Louisiana has thousands of colored Catholics in every direction, and as there is no Catholic institution near, many of them sent their children to Protestant institutions, of which there are several in the State of Louisiana, and some of them in purely Catholic communities. Priests of this neighborhood consider a school like ours an absolute necessity, in order to keep Catholic children from Protestant schools and preserve them for our holy religion. The Colored Catholics themselves are delighted with our move and are anxiously waiting for the opening of the institution.<sup>107</sup>

Apparently Mother Katharine was still not convinced of the potential of Keller's Lafayette initiative. She requested additional information. She inquired about the title to the property, the number of students expected, and the chance of the school ever becoming self-sufficient.<sup>108</sup> She not only inherited her father's fortune and generosity, but also the Drexel business acumen. On January 29, 1914, Father Keller responded to some of her concerns. "I wish to state that the property has been transferred to the Sisters

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<sup>107</sup> Father Keller to Mother Katherine Drexel, August 6, 1913, Diocese of Lafayette Archives, File Box A12L23220. The original site at Twenty-fifth and I Streets was sold to the City of Galveston to construct a city hall. The buildings were moved to 30<sup>th</sup> and N Streets by the Josephite Fathers.

<sup>108</sup> Father Geraghty, L'Etager, p. 1.

of the Holy Family who will have charge of the institution.”<sup>109</sup> He thought the transfer necessary, because at the start of the Lafayette project he had the support of Archbishop Blenk. He was afraid however, a change in archbishops might not result in continual support. The Sisters of the Holy Family, a black religious order, he thought would carry the project through and continued to operate the school.

Mother Katharine relented and sent a most generous gift of \$10,500.00 in support of the Lafayette school. Even though her gift was vital to the early development of Holy Rosary Institute, Mother Katharine never claimed to be a foundress of the school. Nonetheless, as the school grew and educated young black girls, many of whom went on to teach in several rural schools founded by her Blessed Sacrament Sisters, she must have felt a deep sense of satisfaction.<sup>110</sup>

Mother Katharine’s substantial gift went toward the construction of a three story red brick building which became the centerpiece of the new campus. Her gift was not sufficient to obtain all the needed building materials and labor, so Father Keller turned to the large black Catholic population in the area for help. Volunteers stepped forward to assist in the construction. “With the exception of the heating, lighting, plants [the work] was done by colored mechanics, under the supervision of a colored contractor,”<sup>111</sup> who was not always paid for his work.

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<sup>109</sup> Abstract No. 45784, Lafayette Parish Tax Record of Deed, (January 29, 1914), Clerk of Court Lafayette Parish Courthouse.

<sup>110</sup> Blessed Sacrament Sisters founded Catholic elementary schools in Lake Charles, (1908), in New Iberia, Louisiana, (1925), in St. Martinville, Louisiana, (1930), in Eunice, Louisiana, (1939), and in Church Point, Louisiana, (1941). In Louisiana they founded forty-five schools, including two high schools and one college.

<sup>111</sup> The Colored Man’s Friend, 18, 2 (April, 1914): 6, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

Work on the structure commenced in October, 1913. Weather conditions were favorable all winter, and in March, 1914, Keller described the completed structure. “The first floor was used for kitchen, dining rooms, laundry etc. The second floor contains the chapel, classrooms and sewing rooms, whilst the third floor is divided into four large and two small dormitories.”<sup>112</sup> On April 26, 1914, the building was dedicated by the Most Reverend Archbishop Joseph Blenk of New Orleans. “Twenty-two priests, of Louisiana and Texas, and a large number of colored and white people assisted at the occasion. A long procession of children of St. Paul’s Parochial School of Lafayette, followed by the pupils and Sisters of our institution, and the clergy, escorted him from the priest’s house to the chapel in the new building; then followed the solemn blessing.”<sup>113</sup>

Following the blessing the archbishop addressed the assembly “in his usual animated manner. He laid great stress on the fact that education without religious instruction will benefit a child but little, if any at all.”<sup>114</sup> Closing “he appealed to the white people who were present, bespeaking consideration for the colored people, emphasizing that a man who grows up in ignorance will neither make a good Christian, nor a desirable citizen or workman, whoever, therefore, opposes the schooling and education of colored children, is against the common interest and welfare of this great country.”<sup>115</sup>

Ceremonials completed, Father Keller again wrote Mother Katharine appealing not to her generosity, but to her business acumen. He sought a loan guaranteed by a

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

mortgage on the Lafayette property. His salutation made clear he feared her beneficence might be at end. "Please pardon me for annoying you with these lines. I would ask another favor of you, that is if you ever enter into such negotiations."<sup>116</sup> Ten thousand dollars remained unpaid on the farm's purchase, payable at the rate of \$1,000.00 per year at eight percent interest. A balance on materials used in the construction of the building remained due at seven percent interest. He thought \$45,000.00 would be sufficient to cover all debts and provide for future operating expenses, and asked Mother Katharine to loan him the money to satisfy all creditors, leaving her as the sole debtor to be repaid at six percent interest. He promised to repay the loan in annual installments of \$1,000.00. He reminded her the property was deeded to the Holy Family Sisters in January of 1914, and was confident that the sisters would guarantee the loan by endorsing the mortgage in her favor. Thanking her for past favors he closed, "Sincerely yours in Christ." Mother Katharine apparently did not respond to his request for a loan, so Keller continued to write. Eventually, she sent a \$25.00 check. That no doubt told him Mother Katharine expected him to work out his own problems and not continue to depend on her generous gifts. Keller continued to seek funds and help locally.

In 1915, thirty boarders enrolled. Lilian Tinsely, at thirteen, arrived from San Francisco, California.<sup>117</sup> Lafayette families prevailed upon Father Keller to accept day students, and twenty-two day students were also enrolled. The students were under the

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<sup>116</sup> Father Keller to Mother Katherine Drexel, 22 July 1914, Box A12L2320, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>117</sup> Annual Record Book, Holy Rosary Institute, p. 371, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana, 1915.



constant direction of the Sisters of the Holy Family who were described as “able and pioneer religious workers among the colored people of the South.”<sup>118</sup>

Additional community help appeared just as enrollment was growing.

John and Caroline Chretien, both graduates of Tuskegee normal and Industrial High School, began their ministry as resident managers of Holy Rosary Institute . . . . Mr. Chretien, having earned a Tuskegee diploma in agriculture applied his agricultural and farming skills to manage the farm at Holy Rosary Institute. Once he accepted employment with the Southern Pacific Railroad, he continued to provide veterinary services to the community during evening hours. Mrs. Chretien, who earned a Tuskegee diploma in nursing and in plain sewing volunteered her time at the school and assisted the Sisters in teaching the students. Through the joint labor of the Chretiens, the students, the black community, the Sisters of the Holy Family, and Father Keller, Holy Rosary Institute’s campus became one of the most beautiful for miles around. It had fruit trees, a farm, and an extensive vegetable garden.<sup>119</sup>

The Chretiens met at Tuskegee, graduated in 1911 and married soon after graduation. They moved to Georgia because Tuskegee had secured teaching jobs for them. Upon arrival in Georgia they discovered the Ku Klux Klan and others had burned the school where they were to teach. They left Georgia and moved to St. Martinville, Louisiana, to live with Mr. Chretien’s family. Shortly after their arrival Father Keller invited the couple to live at Holy Rosary and to take care of the grounds and the farm as well as perform necessary maintenance. With the help of the Chretiens, the farm produced poultry, eggs, vegetables, fruits and beef for the Institute’s kitchen. Mrs.

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<sup>118</sup> The Morning Star, “Colored Industrial School,” New Orleans, 20 December 1915, p. 7.

<sup>119</sup> Orita B. Edwards, “Black Pearl on a Protective Island,” (Master’s thesis, Xavier University of Louisiana, New Orleans, July 2006), p. 3, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Chretien instructed the elementary girls in reading, arithmetic, history, geography and religion. The older girls studied Latin, algebra, English, sciences and other academic and domestic courses.<sup>120</sup>

Holy Rosary Institute celebrated its first graduation at Lafayette, in 1915. The ceremony showcased student talents.

The exercise opened with a fantastic “Storm at Sea,” by Miss V. Mateo, after which the salutatory was spoken by Miss L. Bibbens. “The May Queen,” a pretty playlet, was next presented by the junior girls, and proved delightfully entertaining while in “Music of the Night” the school showed its fine training in chorus work. Miss B. Firmbirg gave a musical recitation of the “Madonna of Palos,” and “The Ten Virgins - a drama – was most creditably rendered by the seniors, with the following excellent cast: The Wise Virgins – Obedience, Faith, Humility, Patience, and Love or Charity, were portrayed respectively by Miss L. Richard, E. Fruget, L. Prade, L. Wolfe, E. Lewis, while the Foolish Virgins – Wealth, Position, Beauty, Culture and Power were portrayed respectively by Misses V. Mateo, B. Firmbirg, B. Boucherie, L. Legras and A. Ned. The doorkeeper was Miss T. LeBlanc.

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The valedictory was admirably delivered by Miss V. Mateo, the subject of the paper being “Self Respect.” The presentation of diplomas and medals for having completed the academic course were conferred on Miss V. Mateo. The closing address was made by Rev. Father J. Schmodry, the zealous pastor of St. Paul’s Church of Lafayette. The medal and diplomas were presented by Rev. Father Ph. L. Keller.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Myra E. Patrick, “A Brief History of Holy Rosary Institute, 1913 – 1970.” (University of Southwestern Louisiana, now University of Louisiana Lafayette, January, 1971), p. 11, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>121</sup> Orita B. Edwards, “Black Pearl on a Protective Island,” (Xavier University of Louisiana, Jul 2006) , Quoting “Holy Rosary Institute,” The Morning Star, (26 June 1915), p. 5-8.

Miss V. Mateo is Veronica Mateo, the first graduate of Holy Rosary Institute. She was a native of Lafayette, Louisiana.<sup>122</sup> The Chretiens stayed on the Holy Rosary campus until their family out grew the little house on the campus. In 1920 they bought property on Eleventh Street near the campus and continued to contribute to Holy Rosary's growth. Enrollment was at ninety one in 1920. In 1922, two students -- Mathilda and Rose Carbo -- enrolled from Cuba.<sup>123</sup>

In 1926, seventy-three girls from Lafayette were admitted to the day school. "To attend Holy Rosary, girls had to be of a special breed: Catholic, morally acceptable and able to pay the tuition. It also helped to be adaptable to an austere life and rigorous program."<sup>124</sup> Eleanora Baquet from Crowley, Louisiana, enrolled in 1921. At the time her younger sister, Antonia, could not understand why their parents sent her sister to live with the sisters. She knew it was not her sister's choice. Later, she learned from her sister it was her choice to stay. Eleanora, according to Antonia, "seemed to revel in the spartan life and remained there until she graduated from high school with honors as valedictorian, on a balmy spring day in the mid-twenties. She was multi-talented and academically gifted."<sup>125</sup>

Antonia reminisced about Sunday visits she and her mom made to Holy Rosary to visit Eleanora.

Mr. Laporte came to Crowley to drive us to Lafayette

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<sup>122</sup> Annual Record Book Holy Rosary Institute Lafayette, 1913, p. 369, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>123</sup> Orita B. Edwards, "Black Pearl on a Protective Island," pp.23-24.

<sup>124</sup> Antonia Baquet, "Bread Upon the Waters: The Olden Times," p. 22 Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., pp. 23, 25.

to spend the day with Eleanora. Mama would pack a picnic basket of fried chicken, crawfish, ham, homemade bread and Eleanora's favorite, coconut cake. Once there, we would find a shady spot under the tall oak trees, spread our lunch and Eleanora would join us with some of her friends whose parents had not come to visit that Sunday. Around us, other families gathered in groups under the shady trees and, in the afternoon students, all dressed up in frothy white organdy dresses, gave concerts in the big band shell. I learned to love music there, as sounds of Beethoven and Bach rang through the towering trees.<sup>126</sup>

Eleanora, she said, had mama's curly black hair, and her long curls fell well below her tiny waist. For special occasions like concerts when she was a solo pianist, her curls were intertwined with ribbons; a beautiful girl; with an angelic and fragile look.

Graduation for Eleanora, as described by Antonia, was an opportunity for her to also display her domestic talents. On exhibit she had quilts, hats, lampshades, laces, shawls, suits and dresses, "all bearing the card, made by Eleanora Baquet." After graduation, Antonia welcomed Eleanora back to Crowley. "In rural Louisiana then, high school accreditation was sufficient to teach in parochial and some public schools. Since Eleanora had graduated from Holy Rosary Institute, she immediately secured a position at a Catholic two-room school in a dismal, rainy town between Lafayette and Crowley, aptly named Rayne."<sup>127</sup> It was one of the schools supported by Mother Katharine Drexel of the Blessed Sacrament Sisters.

Antonia described the school as being a shot-gun type frame house. She also talked about her sister's daily routine.

Each morning, Eleanora boarded the 6:30 bus for

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<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

Rayne. Sometimes “mama and I walked her to the bus stop on Hutchinson Highway and waited for the bus to arrive. When it did, she boarded, paid her fare, and slowly walked and swayed the distance to the back of the bus in the “colored” section. She taught children in grades four through eight reading, writing, civics, history, geography, arithmetic, home economics, and catechism. After school hours, she taught the children all the arts and crafts she learned at Holy Rosary. Many times she missed the last bus to Crowley and had to stay overnight with a child’s family. She only made fifty dollars a month.”<sup>128</sup>

As Eleanor graduated and began teaching, Holy Rosary was attracting students from as far away as Central America. Magdalene Zapata enrolled in 1927. She arrived from Storm Creek, British Honduras. By then, the school had evolved from one small “maison blanche” and two or three out buildings that featured domestic science on a one hundred acre site to a beautiful garden spot full of life, music, the arts and education towered over by its centerpiece at the end of an oak tree shaded avenue. “In 1928, it was accredited by the State of Louisiana and received a class A rating. Besides the regular high school and domestic science courses, additional training was offered in music and dramatic arts.”<sup>129</sup>

It, however, was not immune from the nation’s economic woes in the late 1920s. It was burdened with debt. Father Keller had difficulty providing even minimal compensation to the Sisters of the Holy Family in exchange for their services at Holy

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<sup>128</sup> Baquet, p. 27- 28.

<sup>129</sup> Mother M. David Young, S.B.S. “A History of the Development of Catholic Education,” p. 51.

Rosary.<sup>130</sup> His tenure coming to an end, he faced tough financial decisions. Would he ask the Sisters to remain or would he seek any other teaching staff? If the Sisters did not return, what would become of the Holy Rosary property which he transferred to the Sisters of the Holy Family January 14, 1914 for \$26,000.00. He decided to ask the Sisters to remain as he considered retirement.

In 1929, he informed Jules B. Jeanmard, Bishop of Lafayette, of his decision to resign his position at Holy Rosary. On his departure, the Institute would be without the services of a priest and director. The bishop and Keller knew of a religious order of Catholic priests possibly interested in assigning a member of the order to serve as director of Holy Rosary. The Society of the Divine Word<sup>131</sup> accepted “the invitation of the Right Reverend Bishop of Lafayette to take charge of Holy Rosary Institute.”<sup>132</sup> Keller offered to attempt a transfer of Holy Rosary property to the Society. The Society, however, declined the offer of transfer of the property. Keller knew any transfer of the property from the Sisters would cause problems. The bishop of the Lafayette diocese, however, would not authorize the Institute’s new director to borrow money to satisfy outstanding debt without the transfer of property to his diocese. Keller conveyed the bishop’s declaration to the Mother Superior of the Sisters of the Holy Family.<sup>133</sup> On September

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<sup>130</sup> Father Philip Keller to Mother Eusebia, January 28, 1929, Eusebia file, Archives, Sister of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>131</sup> Agreement between the Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana, and the Society of the Divine Word, 5 November, 1929, File number, D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>132</sup> The Society of the Divine Word originated as a European missionary society headquartered in Steyl, Holland responded to the need for black clergy by opening seminaries in Mississippi and New Jersey to educate black priests. Prior to accepting black candidates, most of their members were German. From 1929 to closure, Holy Rosary priests were member of the Society of the Divine Word. See, Stephen J. Ochs, Desegregating the Altar, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), p. 246.

<sup>133</sup> Philip Keller to Mother Elizabeth Bowie, Bowie file, 17 September 1930, 2<sup>nd</sup> administration, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

24, 1930, the Sisters donated approximately sixty four acres to the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lafayette.<sup>134</sup> Property and financial transactions completed, Keller left his post at the age of sixty-three. He became pastor of a small church parish in Rayne, Louisiana, and died in 1944.

The first member of the Society of the Divine word assigned to Holy Rosary under the new agreement was Reverend Herman Patzelt, who became the second director of the Institute. He also was a native of Germany. His task was to improve the finances of the Institute, expand the facilities, and continue encouraging black Catholic parents to send their girls to Holy Rosary.

In 1929, as he assumed his duties, “there were about eight resident students and one hundred day students.”<sup>135</sup> Imbued with the spirit that impelled the Institute’s founding, he directed his energy to the general advancement of the school. He improved the management of the farm and involved the students in its operation. It yielded vegetables, while the cows supplied milk, butter and cheese. Chickens, ducks and turkeys provided the meat products. All of the products found their way to the kitchen and to the table for the faculty and students.

Father Patzelt increased the faculty, engaged a special music instructor, and began a school band. He hired persons from the local community to support the efforts of the

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<sup>134</sup> Donation Inter Vivos, Abstract number 145068 of the Property Records, Lafayette Parish, Clerk of Court, Lafayette Parish Courthouse.

<sup>135</sup> Myra Enloe Patrick, “A Brief History of Holy Rosary Institute, 1913-1970,” (January, 1971), p. 14, Archives Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

Sisters to allow them added instruction time. Mary Heinkele was hired to prepare meals. Cosside Matthews was hired to manage the farm and the dairy.<sup>136</sup> Patzelt continued to make improvements to the campus. In 1933, a chapel equipped with a pipe organ was added to the three story building, and an entertainment pavilion was constructed near the oak tree shaded avenue.

As Father Patzelt continued his program of improvements at Holy Rosary he was assigned added duties by the bishop, duties he apparently did not relish. The additional duties stemmed from developing circumstances within the Roman Catholic Church. Specifically, matters of race, segregated church parishes and the church's position on the ordination of African-American priests were beginning to impact Lafayette and Holy Rosary.

African-American Catholics in Louisiana complained more often and loudly about ill treatment by white lay persons, and in some instances, by the clergy. They complained they were second class Catholics unable to participate fully in the ecclesiastical ceremonies of the church. In Lafayette, black Baptists empathized with them and invited them to join the Baptist church. Some did, causing concern for Catholic bishops and for Father Patzelt. Patzelt worried that parents leaving the church could mean decreased enrollment at Holy Rosary. His "1932 graduation class numbered eleven young women."<sup>137</sup> He wanted the numbers to grow rather than remain stagnant, but feared the changing attitudes towards the church among African Americans would hamper growth.

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<sup>136</sup> Herman T. Hayes, Jr., Holy Rosary Institute, 1913-1988, p. 12, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana, (1988).

<sup>137</sup> Hayes, Holy Rosary Institute, p. 12.



Instead of proclaiming its universality, the church had succumbed to the southern customs, practices and legal pronouncements and began developing segregated racial church parishes. That decision eventually led to Father Patzelt's added duties. African American Catholics responded by demanding African American priests to serve as pastors in the all black church parishes. Patzelt's priestly order responded. Only July 7, 1933, Joseph Grendel, the new superior general of the Society of the Divine Word's southern province announced the society would begin accepting black seminarians as full members. Patzelt supported the plan not knowing initially how he would be involved once black seminarians completed their studies and were ordained as priests.

The leaders of the Divine Word Society and the Louisiana bishops concluded newly ordained members should pastor in areas with large numbers of African American Catholics. In Louisiana that meant either the recently established Diocese of Lafayette or the historic Archdiocese of New Orleans. Father Bruno Hagspiel, the Provincial of the Society of Divine Word, devoted himself to finding an appropriate assignment for black seminarians after ordination and began delicate negotiations with several southern bishops. Hagspiel's "emissaries in the South, including Herman Patzelt, the chaplain of Holy Rosary Institute at Lafayette, explored various alternatives for placing the black priests. When Hagspiel's men initially approached Jeanmard, the soft-spoken Cajun bishop of Lafayette, he indicated his desire to allow the black priests into his diocese but claimed he could not do so. He feared he could not do justice to the black priests without offending the white clergy and laity in his diocese."<sup>138</sup> Jeanmard's hesitancy caused those involved to consider the Diocese of Alexandria under Bishop Daniel Desmond.

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<sup>138</sup> Stephen J. Ochs, Desegregating the Altar, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1990), p. 331.

According to Stephen Ochs, Hagspiel preferred Lafayette over Alexandria, and he maneuvered carefully to guarantee the black priests would end up in Lafayette. He led Jeanmard to believe that the apostolic delegate, Bishop Cicognani in Chicago, wanted to station two black priests in the Alexandria diocese and two in Lafayette.

Responding to Hagspiel, Jeanmard began preparations in the spring of 1934 to receive the black priests into his diocese as assistant pastors of Immaculate Heart of Mary, a second black parish which he formed by dividing St. Paul's parish in two sections. Jeanmard secured pledges of financial assistance to build the new church, school and community house for priests. He secured a promise of five thousand dollars for the church from Mother Katharine Drexel, and the American Board of Catholic Missions promised three thousand dollars per year for several years.<sup>139</sup>

On May 23, 1934, Bishop Richard Gerow of Natchez, Mississippi, ordained four black priests: Anthony Bourges, Maurice Rousseve, Vincent Smith, and Francis Wade. Bishop Desmond, still believing two of the four would serve under him, preached at the first masses of the four new priests, which were celebrated simultaneously.<sup>140</sup> Hagspiel never intended to split the four black priests between Alexandria and Lafayette.

In a blunt sharply worded letter, he "finally explained to Desmond the reasons why in good conscience he and his advisers had preferred Lafayette from the start, but that Jeanmard's initial refusal at an earlier meeting in Chicago had thwarted their original plans."<sup>141</sup> He reminded Desmond that he, Desmond, had not been completely honest

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<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 338.

<sup>141</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 339.

about racial feelings towards the placement of black priests in his diocese. He told Desmond, of a personal letter he had received from Lawrence Coco, a white Catholic from the Alexandria diocese who wrote, “We are rather prejudiced people here in Louisiana and have never accepted Negroes on an equal social standing which might be more or less expected as to priests.” Coco went on to tell Hagspiel, “It is the firm belief of every leading layman in the congregation that the bringing of Colored Priests to this community will degrade the Catholic religion, here as well as in the surrounding territory.” Embarrassed, Desmond told Hagspiel that he also had received expressions of concern among the white priests about having black priests in the diocese, but he intended to make the plan work.<sup>142</sup> Eventually, Desmond withdrew his request to receive two black priests for his diocese, although with some acrimony toward Hagspiel.

The dilemma resolved, Bishop Jeanmard announced at the graduation exercises of Holy Rosary Institute in 1934 that he would erect Immaculate Heart of Mary Church for four black priests who would arrive in Lafayette in the fall of 1934. Newspaper clippings among Jeanmard’s papers reported Lafayette’s black Catholics reacted to the news with unrestrained enthusiasm. Patzelt however, was not so excited. He now realized he was the white priest chosen to supervise the four black priests.

Fathers Bourges and Smith assumed their duties on September 20, 1934; Fathers Wade and Rousseve arrived in Lafayette on November 1, 1934. Together they served at Immaculate Heart as assistants to Father Patzelt, the nominal pastor and their white superior, who lived two miles away at Holy Rosary Institute. The presence in Lafayette of Holy Rosary, with its Divine Word chaplain, served as a guarantee that black and white priests would occupy separate residences, in compliance with local racial customs.

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<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 335.

In a July, 1983, interview Father Bourges, one of the black priests, told Stephen Ochs, “During the five years of his tenure as official pastor, he [Patzelt] never once celebrated mass at Immaculate Heart of Mary. He did take charge, however, of hiring all parish employees, handling parish funds, and even picking up the mail.” Bourges reported that, Patzelt insisted that black priests strictly observe the racial code of the Lafayette diocese, “including never offering a hand to shake on meeting white priests.” His insistence led to strained relations between him and the four black priests. Bourges said he listened attentively to Patzelt, but did what he thought was best for his parishioners and his parish.

Ochs says, Bourges told him of an incident between him and Patzelt in 1939, which involved a departure on Bourges’ part from southern racial codes. Bourges was invited to attend a memorial service at St. John Cathedral in Lafayette for the deceased Pope Pius XI. Black priests, according to Bourges, never attended functions at the cathedral. It was off limits to them. Bourges tried to get Father Wade to attend with him, but he declined. Bourges went alone, and upon arrival was greeted rather coldly by Monsignor I. F. Isenberg, rector of the cathedral. The next day Patzelt informed Bourges that Isenberg was very disturbed over his attendance at the memorial and wished to meet with him. At the meeting Bourges said he told Isenberg he was invited by Bishop Jeanmard. Isenberg’s response, according to Bourges, was due to Bourges light complexion. Jeanmard probably thought he was white, and therefore extended the invitation to him in error.

Relations between Patzelt and the black priests degenerated to a point that it required intervention of the Provincial of the Divine Word Society, Hugo Aubry.

Bourges said friction between Patzelt and Father Vincent Smith led to Smith's transfer in 1938. Aubry, he said, listened to their complaints about Patzelt's insistence they adhere to southern social conditions and recommended prudence on their part in dealing with southern racial etiquette. Later, Aubry replaced Patzelt with Bourges who became the first black pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish.

Despite their struggles with Patzelt and prevailing racial conditions, Bourges said he and his three fellow priests enjoyed considerable success in Lafayette. All four spoke English and French and enjoyed the respect and admiration of the Bishop and their parishioners. Wade, Bourges and Rouseve would later contribute to Holy Rosary's growth and success. They celebrated mass, catechism classes, taught in the parish school, and sent their graduates to St. Paul's High School and some to Holy Rosary. It is very likely eight of their young boys were sent to Holy Rosary as its first male students.

Shortly before Patzelt's arrival at Holy Rosary, Father Keller and his superior had discussed admitting young boys to the Institute as day students. Nearing the end of his tenure, Keller did not pursue the possibility. Patzelt's superior told him of the plans, and Patzelt decided to proceed with them. In 1938, eight boys' names are inscribed on the day student rolls of Holy Rosary Institute. Jimmy Frantes was listed as being four years old, Paul Felix five, Joseph Dominique seven, Alvin Mathew age not listed, John Nolan Boutte, seven, Leroy James, six, George McZeal, seven and John Devance, six.<sup>143</sup>

Patzelt began the program but was unable to follow it through. In 1940 Father Eckert, Superior of the Southern Province, Society of the Divine Word suggested a

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<sup>143</sup> Holy Rosary Institute: Annual Record Book, 1938, pp. 156-168, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

change in the management of the Institute to Bishop Jeanmard of the Lafayette diocese. Eckert thought the Sisters of the Holy Family more competent than the priests in school management and thought the change would eliminate “much of the trouble there.” Eckert’s audience with Jeanmard concluded with the bishop declining his suggestion, indicating his preference for the status quo. The Divine Word priests continued to manage the school, but Patzelt’s future there was in doubt.

Unsuccessful in his attempt to withdraw his priests from Holy Rosary, Eckert apparently had serious concerns regarding Patzelt’s ability to administer the school effectively. Patzelt’s displeasure with his former duties as supervisor of the four black priests may have caused him problems with the “Colored Sisters” at Holy Rosary. By 1941 Father Eckert convinced the Superior General of the Society of the Divine Word to transfer Father Patzelt to their Western Province. He considered the proposed transfer “a rather nice and important assignment” for Patzelt. Bishop Jeanmard, when advised by Eckert of the proposed transfer, apparently thought Patzelt might refuse to go. In a letter to Eckert he said, “I am leaving tomorrow to fulfill two engagements outside of the diocese. It is perhaps fortunate that this is so, as I will be saved the embarrassment of an appeal to me, should he want to use my influence, to have him retained here.”<sup>144</sup> His theory, however, was not tested. He did not have to issue a recommendation because Father Patzelt became seriously ill in 1941 and was forced into voluntary retirement at the St. Mary’s Mission House in Techny, Illinois. He died there September 21, 1948. New leadership was needed for Holy Rosary as it continued its transition to an institution focused primarily on academic courses, but still maintaining an industrial component.

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<sup>144</sup> Jules B. Jeanmard to Joseph F. Eckert, 20 January 1941, File Box A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.



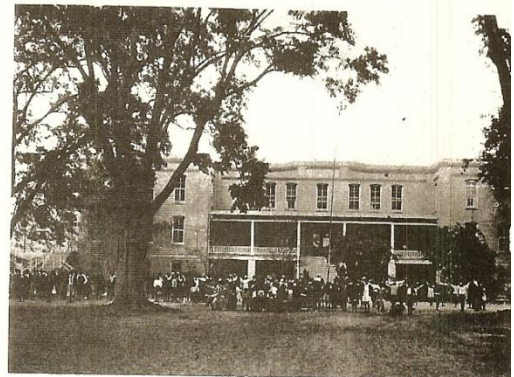
First Graduate — 1915  
Veronica Linden



1938-39 Session  
Boarders and Day Pupils



First Communion



Holy Rosary Institute



Maison Blanche



Mother Sacred Heart  
First Principal

### CHAPTER 3

Patzelt's departure meant new leadership. The leadership of the Divine Word Society began in earnest to seek a priest to replace him, as the school entered its greatest period of growth. The school's growth and subsequent success are documented and the factors that led to its growth are reviewed. The founder's intent to "lift the race" is highlighted as a young African American who received his early education in Lafayette at St. Paul's School was welcomed to Holy Rosary as its first African American priest and assistant director. As Holy Rosary continued to evolve Father Grendel, Eckert's superior general took a personal interest in its future. Grendel began to confer with Father Charles Windolph about the Holy Rosary position. Windolph was highly recommended, and all concerned thought if he were chosen he would do well as an administrator and improve working conditions between the "Colored Fathers and Colored Sisters." Jeanmard said to Eckert on January 20, 1941, "I have every confidence that Father Windolph, from what you say of him, will prove him a kind father and wise counselor to our good colored priests working in the diocese and to the Holy Family Sisters under his direction. He will be an efficient administrator of the temporalities at Holy Rosary."<sup>145</sup>

Father Charles H. Windolph was a native of Burgivalde, Germany. He entered the seminary in Steyle, Holland in 1910 and was ordained as a priest at St. Gabriel's Seminary, near Vienna, Austria in 1927. He was also a member of the Society of the Divine Word. Before moving to Holy Rosary, Father Windolph had several assignments as teacher, spiritual director, and administrator in Europe. Just prior to his assignment at

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<sup>145</sup> Jules B. Jeanmard to Father Eckert, January 29, 1941, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.



Holy Rosary, he served as the assistant pastor of Holy Ghost Church in Jackson, Mississippi.

When he arrived in Lafayette, Father Windolph took his time to review systems and conditions at Holy Rosary. He was a deliberate but meticulous administrator. In the spring of 1944, citing conditions at Holy Rosary he made an impassioned plea for help to Bishop Jeanmard. Windolph reminded the bishop that a year before his departure Father Patzelt had advised him that the main building was twenty-six years old, its roof had been repaired for several years and was now beyond repair. Patzelt had hoped to sell a portion of the Institute's land to the City of Lafayette in order to finance the roof replacement. No record of such a sale exists in the Conveyance Records of the Parish of Lafayette. Windolph reported, the main building was very old and was cracking, causing moisture to ruin the plaster and spoil the paint. It was the center of the boarding school. He cited the boarding school as being most important in maintaining the school's standard "in the eye of the government." He considered the school's resources sufficient to cover "the high cost of living in war-time," but due to the war he thought it was unwise to allocate those resources for the much needed repair work. For the same reason, he refused to raise student tuition "since the financial situations of their parents are poor due to the fact that many of them are still working for the same peace time wages."<sup>146</sup> In response, Jeanmard sent \$1,000 for repairs with instructions to invest the money in either War Bonds or government securities if the repairs could not be completed for \$1,000. Windolph began the repairs in anticipation of increased enrollment.

During his administration Holy Rosary experienced its greatest period of growth

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<sup>146</sup> Charles Windolph to Jules B. Jeanmard, March 24, 1944, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

due to several factors. In 1945, after considerable planning, Father Windolph petitioned the Bishop for permission to send day students in the higher elementary grades to Immaculate Heart of Mary School. Holy Rosary would retain only the twenty-five elementary boarding students. Space then became available for additional boarding students who would make the Institute self-supporting. The elementary graduates from Immaculate Heart would return to Holy Rosary for high school. The additional boarders would also feed the high school. He also anticipated added growth in the high school from other sources. With the acquisition of a bus the Catholic children from nearby Breaux Bridge, St. Martinville, and other neighboring communities could attend as day students. The little private school funded by the LeBlanc, Lemelle and Skinner families in 1903 grew into a Catholic elementary and high school in 1921 known as St. Paul's.<sup>147</sup> Its high school was discontinued in 1947, and Windolph anticipated many of its students attending Holy Rosary. To prepare for them he sought the assistance of a wealthy Lafayette entrepreneur, Maurice Heymann, who in turn made a generous monetary contribution to the Institute. His donation allowed Father Windolph to add another wing to the school. The new addition was named Heymann Hall. It also contained limited space for a small number of male boarders. On November 23, 1947, Heymann Hall was dedicated by his Eminence Cardinal Samuel Stritch. Louisiana Governor Jimmie H. Davis served as Master of Ceremonies.

St. Paul's closure in 1947 affected Holy Rosary's student population in another way. It was co-educational. As noted above, in 1938, Holy Rosary had admitted a

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<sup>147</sup> St. Paul's was the first Catholic high school for blacks in Lafayette parish. Holy Rosary Institute was primarily a boarding school for girls. St. Paul's High School received state approval in 1926. The approval included teachers' training and general high school courses. See, The History of St. Paul's Parish: 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Jubilee, 1971,p.34, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

number of boys to the lower grades as day students. St. Paul's closure meant more male students for Holy Rosary.

Regular enrollment of young men required additional supervision. In 1947, Stillfried Wahl, a Catholic brother and member of the Divine Word Society, arrived at Holy Rosary. He, like Patzelt and Windolph, was from Germany, a native of Duisburg. Windolph was a stern administrator, withdrawn and impersonal. Stillfried however, was very personable and a person of immense vision. Multi-talented, a builder, and motivator, he served as dean of the resident boys, sixteen in number when he arrived. He held dual positions, teacher and dean. His contributions were immense. He supervised the planning and construction of the industrial arts shop in 1948. It included facilities for instruction in automobile mechanics, basic electronics, plumbing, carpentry and woodworking. He developed programs in architectural and mechanical drafting, design and construction. He and his students designed and constructed several structures on the Holy Rosary campus.

Father Windolph, familiar with the demographics of the Lafayette area recognized the potential for continued growth of the student population at Holy Rosary. In order to maximize the Institute's potential, physical plant expansion was a necessity. Brother Stillfried and his students played a major role in the expansion. At the end of the second World War Windolph imagined the Institute might benefit from the war's abandoned property. In a proposal to Jeanmard, he asked the bishop to apply to the Deputy Regional Director of the United States War Assets Administration for buildings and equipment to use at Holy Rosary. Bishop Jeanmard made application for the buildings and Holy Rosary was allocated seven mess halls to be dismantled, moved and

rebuilt on the Lafayette site. The mess halls were located at the United States Army's Camp Claiborne.

In Bishop Jeanmard's application for the building he said, "it is the plan of the Institute to enlarge its training program by making it a vocational training center and by increasing the scope of its activity through vocational training in agricultural and industrial fields. The needs of such a school cannot, I think, be called into question."<sup>148</sup> The student population numbered 101 boarders and 50 day pupils. He noted that the schools in his diocese graduated, "colored boys" year after year, but offered them little opportunity to use their academic knowledge because "when they turn to the professions, they find all doors closed." He thought it better to train them in the agricultural and industrial areas. Such training, he thought, would keep them from migrating to the North, East or West. In his opinion, "the South needed the Negro more than the Negro needed the South." Although Jeanmard successfully employed a vocational, industrial rationale in applying for surplus war structures, apparently Father Windolph, Holy Rosary's director, intended to utilize additional space to continue the shift towards a classical education for the students, but with an industrial component similar to Washington's experiment at Tuskegee.

The Institute in 1947 had no additional space for new students. Over one hundred applications for the 1947 school year were turned down. The bishop noted that between 1918 and 1947 Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lafayette witnessed a growth in enrollment from 1,150 to 6,486 students. Holy Rosary's enrollment exceeded 200 students. The buildings acquired from Camp Claiborne helped to resolve the space issue

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<sup>148</sup> Jules B. Jeanmard to C. D. Clark, Deputy Regional Director, Real Property Disposal, January 20, 1947, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

created by growing enrollment. As the decade came to a close, Father Windolph's plan for growth was well under way. Holy Rosary in 1947 was on the way to its most successful years of its existence. Its program gradually changed from industrial domestic to a normal school for teacher training.<sup>149</sup> By the fifties and sixties his dual program was well established. Instead of instruction only in the industrial arts and domestic sciences the curriculum was being expanded to include music, art, business, French, Latin and Spanish. New buildings were added to the campus, and recruitment and enrollment of boys began. Holy Rosary's student profile was forever changed.

The industrial arts shop was completed in 1948 and led to the completion of a second major project, the gymnasium in 1949. Brother Stillfried's instruction and supervision of his male students in the industrial arts program paid immediate benefits to Holy Rosary. His students completed the majority of the construction work on the gymnasium. Father Windolph only needed to seek contracts for steel, concrete and roofing work. Stillfried's students gained hands on experience. Holy Rosary experienced significant monetary savings, and the gym, a first for blacks in the area, served as an added recruitment tool.

Enrollment spurred by the new projects caused Windolph to ask the Provincial of the Divine Word Missionaries for a young priest to assist with the supervision of the boys. He stressed that the candidate had to have a sincere interest in education. Father Bauer, Provincial of the Divine Word Missionaries, sought advice from other members of his society before deciding on a candidate. Father Bourges and others recommended

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<sup>149</sup> Christine A. Ogren. The American State Normal School. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2005). State Normal schools grew out of the common school revival of the early to middle nineteenth century. Responding to an increased need for trained teachers, education reformers adapted the German teacher seminary and the French 'ecole normale' to serve the growing system of American schools.

Father William Adams, a young white priest, who at the time served as second assistant to Father Rousseve at St. Martinville, Louisiana.

Bauer knew Adams from his seminary days and held him in high regard. He considered Adams, who was ordained in 1945, very religious and a reliable priest. Adhering to protocol, Bauer sought approval from Jules Jeanmard, Bishop of Lafayette before announcing Adams' assignment to Holy Rosary.<sup>150</sup> The bishop approved and in 1948 Father Adams began work as the school's assistant director and first athletic director. He also coached baseball, basketball, and track. Under his tutelage, the young men and women excelled. His teams competed in the Louisiana Interscholastic Athletic Literary Organization earning district and state titles.<sup>151</sup>

Athletics was not the only area in which Holy Rosary students were successful. Father Windolph urged his teachers to involve the students in other extra curricular activities. Holy Rosary's young men and women were also successful in the arts due to the expanded curriculum. Bernadine Jackson won first prize in district and state competition for her dramatic interpretation. Ursula Malveaux won first place for her solo piano performance of Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata. Elizabeth Chretien had her poem, "An Old Avenue" published in the anthology of the National High School Poetry Association. Willie Mae Journet's "Colonial Mansion" won second prize at the Southern

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<sup>150</sup> William E. Bauer to Jules B. Jeanmard, July 28, 1948, File Number A60D58100, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>151</sup> The Louisiana Interscholastic Athletic Literary Organization, (LIALO). It was established to promote interscholastic academics, athletic and cultural competition among African American high school students. It was also founded because in 1950 schools in Louisiana were racially segregated. State law prohibited persons from different racial and ethnic groups from competing with and against each other. The LIALO served as the primary forum for African-American high school students to demonstrate their individual and group accomplishments.

University State Rally, and a male student earned first place for his serious interpretation of a literary piece.<sup>152</sup>

An art club was formed in 1949. In its first year of existence the work of its best students was included in an exhibit at Maison Blanche in New Orleans. A piece by Elvina Mouton earned a scholastic award. In the same year, a group of Holy Rosary students published an anthology of seventeen poems.<sup>153</sup> Most were proud members of the 1950 graduating class of seven young men and twenty six young women.

Twelve Holy Rosary English students submitted their poetry to the National Association in Los Angeles, California. They were notified that their poems were found worthy of publication in the national anthology, Young America Sings. Seven of their poems received special mention awards: “Our Avenue” by Willie Mae Berard, “The Sun and the Moon” by Helen Potier, “Lord We Thank Thee” by Delores Berard, “Today” by M. Robernella Guillory, “Nightfall” by Oliver Porche and “In the Golden Sky” by Cornelious Polk. All twelve of the students received certificates from the National Association. Dorothy Jules submitted an essay to Quiz Kids in Chicago. She was notified the essay was one of the best submitted, and her teacher, Sister Mary Victoria was selected as one of America’s best teachers.<sup>154</sup> The success of the students was due in part to the expanded curriculum of music, art, English, science, business education, mathematics, social studies, French, Spanish and Latin.

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<sup>152</sup> Rosarite, 1949 Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>153</sup> “Holy Rosary Institute,” p. 2, File Number, A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>154</sup> Rosarite, 1949, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

In addition to their academic courses, male students studied mechanical drafting, carpentry and woodworking. They also gained basic instruction in electronics, electrical wiring and basic plumbing because of a new addition to the staff in 1949. The Superior General of the Society of the Divine Word assigned a second religious brother to Holy Rosary. Brother Lambert was German and a member of the Society. Coincidental with his assignment, Father Windolph began admitting boys to the boarding department. In order to accommodate them, a second dormitory was completed in 1950 by converting a structure previously obtained from the War Assets Administration. With the addition of boys to the boarding department enrollment rose in 1950 – 51 to three hundred and four students.<sup>155</sup>

The 1952 school year began with a change in administrative personnel. Father Adams' tenure ended because he was transferred by his superior to another church assignment. His departure left Father Windolph without the necessary help in the supervision of the Institute's young men and the students were left without an athletic coach. His departure also led to an important first for the Institute. A student of the former St. Paul's High School, Joseph A. Francis, joined the Institute's staff. He entered the novitiate of the Society of the Divine Word "as a Negro candidate for the Holy Priesthood."<sup>156</sup> He completed his undergraduate studies at St. Mary's Seminary, Techny, Illinois where he received his Bachelor of Arts Degree, and was ordained a priest October 7, 1950. He did graduate studies at Catholic University, Washington, D. C. and received a Master's Degree in Education Administration. His first assignment in 1951 was

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<sup>155</sup> Annual Report. Department of Education, State of Louisiana, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana), 1950.

<sup>156</sup> Father Hubert Posjena to Bishop Jules Jeanmard, date unknown, File Number A60D581F6, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.



instructor and Assistant Dean of Students in St. Louis, Missouri. In 1952 he was named assistant director at Holy Rosary Institute. He became the first African American priest to serve at the Institute. He assumed the duties previously handled by Father Adams.<sup>157</sup>

Shortly after Francis' arrival, Windolph faced an unexpected crisis of such magnitude that it threatened the future of a successfully expanding Holy Rosary Institute. The crisis arose because of dissatisfaction with the financial agreement between the Sisters of the Holy Family and Windolph. Mother Mary Philip, Superior of the Sisters of the Holy Family, in a letter to Bishop Jeanmard, advised him that unless an adjustment was made to the informal financial agreement between Holy Rosary and the Sisters of the Holy Family in place since 1930 for support of the Sisters, she would withdraw the Sisters from the Institute. When advised by the bishop of the letter's content, Windolph was devastated. The 1952 – 1953 school year marked his twelfth year as director of the Institute, and he feared for its future. He informed the bishop that the letter of the Mother Superior was a great shock to him. "The removal of the Sisters of the Holy Family from Holy Rosary would mean the end of the boarding school and very likely the end of the only Catholic High School for Colored children here in Lafayette."<sup>158</sup>

He considered it "almost impossible to find Sisters to continue work here at Holy Rosary. Many new parish schools are waiting for Sisters. No Sisters, would be willing to conduct a boarding school for Colored children because it is a hard job." He feared the discontinuance of a boarding department would cause the high school to be endangered financially. Boarding fees provided salaries, insurance, and monies for general repairs

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<sup>157</sup> Fredrick Higgins, Editor, (New Orleans, LA), The Claverite, 67, 2, ( Nov. 1986), 5.

<sup>158</sup> Charles Windolph, S.V.D., to Bishop Jules B. Jeanmard, January 18, 1953, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

and maintenance. He was concerned that without boarders dormitories and other areas on the campus would fall into disrepair and become useless. Continuing he said, “I am also afraid the Superior of the S.V.D. might remove the two priests and two brothers, resulting in the need to hire lay men teachers in the area of industrial arts and physical education.”<sup>159</sup> He also thought that the transfer of the administration of Holy Rosary to either Immaculate Heart of Mary or St. Paul’s Parish would simply lead to further conflicts and another financial burden to any parish assuming responsibility for the school. He was against management of the Institute by the Sisters because it would not help them financially “there is no profit in it – as a matter of fact it takes constant vigilance and planning to make ends meet.”<sup>160</sup> Windolph reminded the bishop of the impact of public opinion if the school closed saying, “removal of the Sisters would cause either resentment and limitless gossip, because someone has to take the blame in the eyes of the public which does not mince words.” He was aware of another development in education in Lafayette, although in the public sector, which brought significant pressure to the Lafayette Parish School Board. “In 1953 black children in Lafayette boycotted a newly opened high school [for blacks] because it failed to measure up to the facilities of the white high school over 90 percent of the students joined the protest.”<sup>161</sup>

Windolph wanted to avoid a similar upheaval in the Catholic community. He suggested negotiations between the bishop, the Sisters and himself. He sent the bishop a proposal that called for doubling the Institute’s financial contribution to the Sisters. He

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<sup>159</sup> Father Charles H. Windolph to Jules B. Jeanmard, January 18, 1953, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Adam Fairclough, Race and Democracy, The Civil Rights Struggle in Louisiana, 1915 – 1972, (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1995), p. 156.

proposed to “maintain the boarding allowance for 10 Sisters at \$3,000 for 10 months, while raising cash allowances for the 10 Sisters from \$1,000.00, or \$100.00 each, to \$300 each for a total cash outlay to the Sisters of \$3,000.00. Therefore, the Institute would become responsible for an annual total payment to the Sisters of \$6,000.00 credit and cash.”<sup>162</sup> He also offered to pay an additional \$450.00 for the Sisters expenses incurred at Lafayette, and to submit an annual cash payment to the mother house in New Orleans of \$2550.00.” In essence, his proposal offered an added \$4,000.00 to the Sisters of the Holy Family. He cautioned the bishop his proposal would “be very hard on the Institute since the boarders are the financial resources that run the financial engine of the Institute.” He knew from experience that enrollment fluctuated from year to year, and in any given year it might not support the added payments to the Sisters.

Jeanmard called upon Father Ignatius Martin, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, to mediate the dispute. Jeanmard planned to handle the matter personally, but fell ill, and therefore turned the problem over to Father Martin. In a letter to Mother Mary Philip, Superior of the Sisters of the Holy Family, Father Martin expressed the bishop’s concerns. He said, “Bishop Jeanmard was very much disturbed over Mother Philip’s letter. So unsettled was he over the possible withdrawal of the Holy Family Sisters from Holy Rosary, that he indicated he would be forced to close it if they left.” He asked Father Martin to stress to Mother Philip that closing Holy Rosary “would be most unfortunate for the Diocese considering the large number of children depending on the

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<sup>162</sup> Father Windolph to Jules B. Jeanmard, 18 January, 1953, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

Institute for Catholic high school training.”<sup>163</sup> Closure would end the vision of Father Keller, whose decision to move from Galveston to Lafayette was based primarily on the large number of black Catholics in the area.

Father Martin reviewed Father Windolph’s 1952 salary schedule, and his proposed upgrade for the 1953-54 school year. He compared both with the parochial school salary scale for the Lafayette diocese. He concluded Father Windolph’s proposal was below the diocese’s scale. The Sisters duties at Holy Rosary were greater than Sisters teaching at other parish schools because they had to care for and supervise boarding students. Concluding his review, Father Martin requested that Mother Philip prepare a proposal outlining what she thought would be reasonable compensation for the added burden of operating a boarding school. He volunteered to meet with her after receiving her proposal “to work out the final details.” He also communicated an additional wish of the bishop to Mother Philip. He said, “in order to avoid future misunderstandings, the Diocese should negotiate a contract with your community. This would be for your protection as well as for ours. In order to assist us in drawing up this contract will you kindly let us know the terms you would like included in such a contract.”<sup>164</sup>

Mother Philip responded to his request, but added another element to the discussion. She thought the Divine Word Fathers “would prefer to have their own Sisters there, [at Holy Rosary], and that they would try harder to make the Institute prosper if

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<sup>163</sup> Father Ignatius A. Martin to Mother Mary Philip, January 19, 1953, File Number , A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

they had their own way.”<sup>165</sup> Her concerns notwithstanding, she told Father Martin the Sisters of the Holy Family were not adverse to the idea of staying on at Holy Rosary. In fact, she said, “the institute is very dear to us, having been a part of it for fifty-five years.”

Additional comments by Mother Mary Philip suggest finances may not have been the sole cause leading up to a decision by the Sisters on whether to remain at Holy Rosary. She informed Father Martin of a need to “make some adjustments in the administration and policies” at the Institute. However, in keeping with her commitment to continue assigning Sisters to Holy Rosary, Mother Philip in a January 28, 1953, letter to Father Martin included a salary proposal for the Sisters. Father Martin acknowledged her proposal as reasonable and sought to allay her concerns regarding a desire on the part of Father Windolph and the Divine Word Missionaries to have Divine Word Sisters serve at Holy Rosary. He informed her that Father Windolph, had confided to him that no other group of nuns would agree to work at Holy Rosary because as a boarding institution the job was too difficult. He also told her “the Divine Word Sisters were having trouble staffing their own schools, and he [Windolph] is therefore certain that it would not be possible to get them for the Institute.”<sup>166</sup>

Father Martin settled the financial differences between the Holy Family Sisters and Father Windolph. The Sisters accepted Windolph’s proposal. Administrative and supervision matters also appeared resolved. It was agreed the Director of the Institute would be ex officio head of the school, but the principal would have general direction of

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<sup>165</sup> Mother Mary Philip to Father Ignatius Martin, January 26, 1953. Mother Mary Philip file, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, LA.

<sup>166</sup> Father Ignatius A. Martin to Mother M. Philip, February 11, 1953, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

studies, discipline, and work. Regarding admission or expulsion of students, the Director would have the final decision with final appeal to the Superintendent of Diocesan schools. In addition to their instructional duties the Sisters agreed to supervise study periods, residents, meal preparations and the laundry. Salaries for the Sisters were set at \$400.00 per year. The contractual term was five years.<sup>167</sup> Father Martin realized additional changes were needed in the Institute's administration and its policies. Therefore, he devoted much of his February 11<sup>th</sup> letter to those issues. Again, he asked Mother Philip to "present the changes you have in mind in the form of a contract." If problems arose, he offered to conduct a meeting with her and Father Windolph. They continued negotiations on policy and administration matters for five months. In August, 1953 Father Martin sent her a copy of the proposed contract incorporating "the conditions [Mother Philip], submitted in as far as possible without violating what is generally considered sound administrative school policy."<sup>168</sup> The imbroglio resolved, the Sisters agreed to remain.

Coincidental with the Sisters decision to remain at the Institute was a decision made by Father Bourges that impacted Holy Rosary. One of the first four black priests of the Lafayette Diocese, he served as pastor of Notre Dame Catholic Church in St. Martinville, Louisiana.<sup>169</sup> His church operated an elementary school, but no high school. In 1953 he contemplated opening a Catholic high school for black children in St.

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<sup>167</sup> Father Ignatius A. Martin to Mother Mary Philip, August 6, 1953, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>168</sup> Father Ignatius A. Martin to Mother Mary Philip, August 6, 1953, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>169</sup> St. Martinville is the civil parish center for the Parish of St. Martin. It is approximately twenty road miles from Lafayette. It is and has been a church parish of the Lafayette Diocese. Historically, it has maintained a large black catholic population.

Martinville. Faced with the high cost of such an endeavor, he considered another option. Perhaps his elementary graduates could attend Holy Rosary Institute in the neighboring community of Lafayette, but how would the students get to Lafayette? Father Windolph had a suggestion. He encouraged Father Bourges to invest in a bus to transport the students. Father Bourges visited Bishop Jeanmard seeking his counsel on the matter. The bishop approved the plan and communicated his consent to Father Windolph. The bishop considered the plan ideal. He thought it would give Holy Rosary greater prestige with the additional students in the high school. At the same time, it resulted in a savings to St. Martinville, by eliminating the necessity of adding high school courses to their present well attended school.<sup>170</sup>

The 1953-1954 school year opened with 75 students enrolled in the elementary grades and 293 enrolled in the high school department, including students from St. Martinville.<sup>171</sup> Sister Mary Gertrude served as principal. She directed the faculty from 1943 until 1955. When she began her tenure as principal the faculty consisted of only eight members. When she left the position at the end of the 1954-55 school year fourteen faculty members were under contract. The faculty consisted of eight Holy Family Sisters, three religious brothers, and three lay women teachers. The Divine Word Missionaries assigned a third brother, Brother Gerard to the faculty. Expansion of the faculty led to a more diverse curriculum. Courses included algebra, geometry, shop mathematics, biology, chemistry, general science, world history, civics, American

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<sup>170</sup> Jules B. Jeanmard, Bishop of Lafayette to Reverend C. H. Windolph, May 7, 1954, File Number, A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>171</sup> J. Berton Gremillion, Bulletin Number 729, (Baton Rouge, Louisiana State Department of Education, 1953), p. 110.

History, geography, English, French, vocal and instrumental music, home mechanics, mechanical drawing, cabinet making, clothing design, typewriting, and physical education.<sup>172</sup>

In 1955, Sister Benigna replaced Sister Gertrude as principal, although Sister Gertrude stayed on as a member of the faculty. Total enrollment at the end of Sister Benigna's first year was three hundred forty seven. Two hundred seventy eight were high school students, a number that exceeded that of the all black public high school in Lafayette<sup>173</sup> By the close of the 1956 school year Holy Rosary had become a central high school serving not only two parochial grade schools in Lafayette, but also those in St. Martinville, a distance of twenty miles, and Broussard, five miles away. Fifty per cent of the student body commuted. The following year Sister Benigna reported a total enrollment of three hundred fifty seven students, the second largest enrollment since the move to Lafayette in 1913. Between 1950 and 1956 high school, enrollment had more than doubled.<sup>174</sup>

A rapidly increasing high school population required the addition of a library, and in 1956 construction began on a library building. Its construction represented another opportunity for Holy Rosary students to apply their technical skills. The young men assisted in several aspects of construction including carpentry, electrical, plumbing, and painting. The building was spacious, designed to reduce electrical costs by utilizing natural light. It also contained additional classrooms. It was completed and occupied in

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<sup>172</sup> Rosarite, 1956, p. 6, Archives, Sister of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>173</sup> J. Berton Gremillion, Bulletin Number 812, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Department of Education, 1955), p. 146.

<sup>174</sup> J. Berton Gremillion, Bulletin Number 779, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Department of Education, 1954), p. 110.



1957. Stillfried's students gained hands on experience on the project. Windolph again saved money. The new building was sorely needed because enrollment for the 1957-58 school year was 346, growing to 408 students in 1959.<sup>175</sup>

Sister Benigna continued to serve as principal through 1958. Father Francis continued his work with the boys also guiding the school's successful athletic teams. As a priest he labored tirelessly to instill Catholic principles in his students. In addition to his administrative duties, and athletic coaching, he taught religion classes, stressing fairness and equality for all under God.

Three events in 1957 all related to matters of race, led him to pray for guidance. In the spring of 1957 Jules B. Jeanmard, Bishop of Lafayette died. Funeral services for him were conducted pursuant to local custom. He had requested that his body be brought to the all black St. Paul's church so that "his Negro friends could pay their last respects."<sup>176</sup> Holy Rosary students were among those in attendance. According to Francis, students raised concerns over the separate viewing by blacks at St. Paul's. They questioned why they were unable as Catholics to pay their respects at St. John's Cathedral. Neither Father Francis nor Brother Stillfried, who accompanied the boarding students, was able to provide an answer that satisfied student concerns.

Separate services for the deceased bishop were not unexpected. Catholic schools in Louisiana "were segregated by tradition, as were all other institutions except the churches."<sup>177</sup> In churches attended by blacks and whites, however, seating was separate.

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<sup>175</sup> J. Berton Gremillion, Bulletin Number 875, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana Department of Education, 1955), p. 130.

<sup>176</sup> "Last Homage to Negroes' Friend," Life Magazine, 42, 11, (March 18, 1957).

<sup>177</sup> Dolores E. Labbe', Jim Crow Comes to Church. (Lafayette: University of Southwestern Louisiana, Press, 1971), p. 19.

Blacks “were placed in the more undesirable pews, in the back, to one side, or in the balcony. In one church a petition was built around the black pews. Negroes who dared to approach the communion rail before the whites had finished receiving were eased aside or advised not to repeat the action.”<sup>178</sup> Such conditions had previously caused blacks to request separate church parishes; and in the early days of the twentieth century black Catholic parishes were formed. The practice continued “as late as 1961 when the Diocese of Lafayette formed two new segregated parishes.”<sup>179</sup> Even though the Diocese of Lafayette contained the largest concentration of black Catholics in the United States it did little to put an end to a long standing pattern of segregation. It was not until 1971 that the “Diocese of Lafayette formulated a definite policy against establishing any new segregated parishes.”<sup>180</sup> Therefore, in response to inquiries by their students regarding the bishop’s funeral, Francis and Stillfried only had to refer students to the historical treatment of blacks in the diocese.

In the fall of 1957, Father Francis took a group of fifty male Holy Rosary students to a church gathering in Carencro, Louisiana, a small community a few miles north of Lafayette. The occasion, was a Christ the King celebration. Upon arrival, the people in charge of the celebration escorted Father Francis and his students to an area reserved only for blacks. Father Francis protested such treatment. Unable to reverse the directives of those in charge, Father Francis and his charges “left the celebration in a body and returned home.” He and his students had suffered similar humiliations in the past but he

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<sup>178</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 71.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 85.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86.

responded differently this time. The Carencro incident prompted him to complain to his bishop. He wrote,

Your Excellency, this letter is a short protest, which I think should be brought to your attention. I took a group of fifty boys from Holy Rosary to the Christ the King celebration in Carencro and had the experience of being segregated with them. I feel that now is the time to say something about this. We had every reason to believe, Your Excellency that this time we would not be humiliated publicly as we have been so often in such celebrations. We are able to watch parades in company with the same people who were there, yet we cannot worship God outside with them. I am writing this to Your Excellency, who as our spiritual Father should know what his children are undergoing and what they feel. It becomes very difficult to explain to boys and girls that this is and can't be tolerated. I sincerely hope that Your Excellency does not feel that I am being oversensitive on this matter.<sup>181</sup>

A third incident led Father Francis to lodge another complaint with the bishop relating to his athletic coaching duties. His basketball teams were very successful, but they were only able to compete against other black parochial and public school teams. For several years the all white Catholic high schools in and around the diocese of Lafayette participated in a Catholic basketball tournament. Francis complained to the bishop saying, the tournament although “listed in the school calendar is not entirely Catholic.” He wanted his Holy Rosary team to participate.

Bishop Schexnayder responded by letter to Father Francis' complaint regarding the Carencro incident. His response referred to racial customs in Louisiana, was demeaning, and served as a rebuke of Francis. He said, “having lived in Louisiana all my life, there is frequently another side. Often enough, if our good colored people are not

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<sup>181</sup> Joseph A. Francis, SVD, to Reverend Maurice Schexnayder, Bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette, November 6, 1957, File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

told where to go, they hesitate to provide seats for themselves and are very much embarrassed.” I am sure, he said, you will agree, as unfortunate as it is, all of our communities are not as well disposed as they should be. “I do believe that as embarrassing as it was for yourself, you should have remained for the sake of the people. Your leaving the grounds deprived the youngsters of participating in a beautiful celebration in honor of Christ the King, and only impressed them all the more with the unhappy turn of events which some of them might not have noticed.”<sup>182</sup>

On the issue of the basketball tournament, Schexnayder referred Francis to Monsignor Martin saying, “He would be in a better position to explain.” Francis had previously advised the bishop that the problem of race “will plague the church in this section for many years to come. This is, he said, the problem that has hurt the church severely already.” No change in policy occurred and Holy Rosary students remained on campus away from segregated church events. The basketball team competed only against all black teams.

Francis’ tenure at Holy Rosary represented a marked change in matters of self-worth among students and raised expectations for successful careers. His was not the paternalistic approach of his predecessors who stressed the need to care for “the good colored flock.” Instead, his message was one of change and personal challenge which did not contain restrictions due to race. He remained at Holy Rosary through spring, 1960, a time when the school was on the brink of its greatest achievements. Unexpectedly, he was transferred by the bishop in August, 1960 and began work as the administrator of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in the pastor’s absence. His local connections and the

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<sup>182</sup> Maurice Schexnayder, Bishop of Lafayette, to Reverend Joseph A. Francis, November 11, 1957, File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

respect he enjoyed among other religious, the students and faculty at Holy Rosary made him ideal to lead the school through its peak years, the bishop however would not set aside the transfer.

Mother Marie Anselm, Superior of the Holy Family Sisters recognized Francis' importance to the school and so informed Bishop Schexnayder. She said, "Personally, I think the big mistake as far as Holy Rosary is concerned that he [Francis] was the right man in the right place. Holy Rosary has many problems and he would have been the man for the school."<sup>183</sup> In response, Schexnayder suggested it was not he but Francis' superior who was responsible for transferring Father Francis.' Schexnayder added that, Francis was "anxious for parish work."

Father Francis remained at Immaculate Heart of Mary only briefly. Upon leaving Immaculate Heart he spent the 1960-61 school year as administrator at Holy Cross in Austin, Texas. From there he went to be an instructor at Pius X High School. Departing Texas, he was transferred to Los Angeles, California, where he founded Verbum Dei High School, an all male four year college preparatory school located in the heart of Watts in southern Los Angeles. Its mission centers upon empowering its students to help themselves attain intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual maturation toward becoming gentlemen who serve with and for others. Since 2002, an innovative corporate work study program is the primary means of financial support for the school. The program requires all students to work five days per month as members of a four student team employed by local firms who pay the school for services rendered. The program helps to reduce tuition costs per student. The school normally graduates one hundred percent of

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<sup>183</sup> Mother Marie Anselm, to Reverend Maurice Schexnayder, Bishop of Lafayette, September 28, 1960, File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

its students and consistently sends over ninety five percent of its graduates on to higher education.<sup>184</sup> In 1967 he was appointed Provincial Superior of the Divine Word Fathers' Western Province, and in 1973 he was named Provincial Superior of the Divine Word Fathers' Southern Province. In May, 1976 Francis was appointed Titular Bishop of Valliposita and Auxilliary Bishop of Newark, New Jersey. His consecration as a bishop was celebrated June 26, 1976. As a bishop, Francis held several positions of importance. He served as Chairman, of the Archdiocese Commission of Justice and Peace, and Chairman, of the Ad Hoc Committee for Pastoral Racism.<sup>185</sup>

In 1979, twenty two years after Father Francis complained to Bishop Schexnayder about the disparate treatment afforded his students in rural Carencro, Louisiana, he addressed the issue of racism in the church. He was the principal author of a position paper on racism. He wrote,

Racism is an evil which endures in our society and in our church. Despite apparent advances and even significant changes in the last two decades, the reality of racism exist. In large part it is only internal appearances which have changed. In 1958 we spoke out against blatant forms of racism that divided people through discriminatory laws and forced segregation. We pointed out the moral evil that denied human persons their dignity as children of God and their God – given rights.

. . . .

Mindful of its duty to be advocate for those who hunger and thirst for justice's sake, the church cannot remain silent about the racial injustices in society and it's own structures.

. . . .

Each of us Catholics must acknowledge a share in the mistakes and sins of the past. Many of us have been prisoners of fear and prejudice. We have preached

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<sup>184</sup> <http://www.verbum.dei.us/general/facts>.

<sup>185</sup> (New Orleans, Louisiana), The Claverite, 67, 2, November, 1986, 5.

the Gospel while closing our eyes to the racism it condemns. We have allowed conformity to social pressures to replace compliance with social justice.

. . . .

Therefore, let the Church proclaim to all that the sin of racism defiles the image of God and degrades the sacred dignity of humankind which has been

revealed by the mystery of the Incarnation.<sup>186</sup>

Bishop Francis retired in 1995 for health reasons. He died September 1, 1997, having been only the third African American Catholic bishop in the United States. His legacy continues in the form of the Bishop Joseph A. Francis Scholarship Fund. Mother Marie Anselm's advice to Bishop Schexnayder on September 28, 1960 went unheeded. Francis, however was finally able to expand the level of his "short protest" from Carencro, Louisiana to the national stage without feeling that he was "over sensitive in the matter."

Windolph and Francis transformed Holy Rosary from a small institution dedicated to the education of African American girls to one whose mission was expanded to include the education of young men. They came as day and resident students. Their arrival coincided with curricula expansion, faculty growth and the arrival of the first African American priest as assistant director. Financial relations between the Holy Family sisters and the Society of the Divine Word were seemingly resolved as the Institute looked towards its 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary.

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<sup>186</sup> Joseph A. Francis, Auxilliary Bishop of Newark, New Jersey. "U. S. Catholic Bishops Pastoral Letter on Racism, 1979." <http://www.usccb.org/saac/bishopspastoral.shtml>.

## Directors



Msgr. Phillip Louis Keller  
First Director



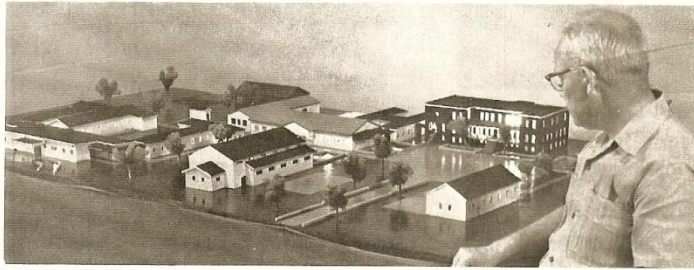
Rev. Herman Patzelt S.V.D.  
Second Director



Rev. Charles Windolph S.V.I.  
Third Director



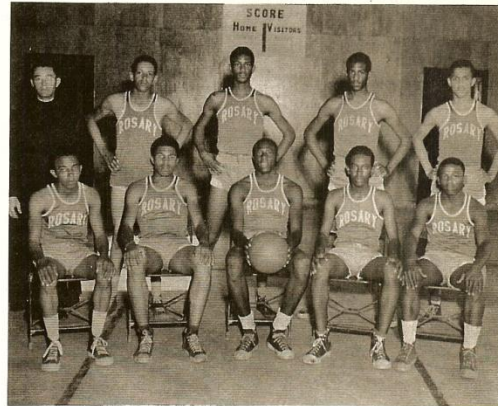
Rev. William Oliver S.V.D.  
Fourth Director



Br. Stillfried with  
model of school 1948



Girls' Basketball Team 1951



Fr. Adams with  
Boys' Basketball Team 1950



## CHAPTER 4

In 1960, Holy Rosary Institute began its forty seventh year in Lafayette, Louisiana. Its history from the late 1950's through the 1980's is mirrored in the images of its students and faculty and their accomplishments. It is also a time when the school celebrated its fiftieth and seventy-fifth anniversary years, and its main building achieved special recognition. This chapter explores those images and events. It begins with the arrival of a new assistant director.

On August 1, 1960, Bishop Maurice Schexnayder, successor to Bishop Jeanmard dispatched a letter to a young African American priest, William Oliver. Father Oliver, a native of New Orleans, Louisiana, was born August 27, 1928. His parents were Joseph and Iola Victorire Duvernay. He completed his elementary education in New Orleans and in 1943 entered the Divine Word Seminary, Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, where he completed his high school education. After high school he spent two years of spiritual training at Techny, Illinois, preparing for missionary life, and then two years of college at Epworth, Iowa. His final college years were spent at St. Augustine's Seminary in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi,, where he completed a program in theology. He took his religious vows September 8, 1957, and was ordained a priest May 1, 1958.<sup>187</sup> From Bishop Schexnayder's letter he learned that he would be the new assistant director at Holy Rosary. Circumstances would soon thrust him into the Institute's directorship. Under his leadership the school continued to gain recognition as noted by Bishop Schexnayder who hailed it as "one of the best schools of the Diocese of Lafayette."<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>187</sup> Rosarite, 1983, p. 6, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>188</sup> Maurice Schexnayder to Mother Marie Anselm, 26 September 1960, File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

Sister Francis Regis, Principal, in a 1960 recruitment circular, promoted Holy Rosary as a college preparatory school with small classes, where successful students enjoyed a home atmosphere while engaging in music, arts, dramatics, sports. The school, however, still maintained the industrial arts program. The Institute's student population in grades four through twelve totaled 392.<sup>189</sup> In the sixties enrollment averaged 400 students succeeding in all aspects of school and community life. The decade began with Rosary students achieving superior awards in speech, algebra, music, industrial and fine arts at Southern University and local district rallies. The social science panel received a superior award for its presentation at Southern. The junior science club was honored with a first place trophy by the Louisiana Junior Academy of Science.<sup>190</sup>

As if to reward them for their hard work, natural elements combined to excite the Rosary family. They awoke on February 13, 1960, to a beautiful white and green landscape. The trees and shrubbery were blanketed with a fresh white powder. For the first time in years it snowed in Lafayette, Louisiana. The Louisiana Office of State Climatology reported two and one-half inches of snow.<sup>191</sup> The next day, February 14, 1960, Valentine day, students, faculty and staff, many who had never seen snow, frolicked and dodged snowballs as the snow faded as rapidly as it had appeared. Father Windolph ventured out to witness the excitement. He was from Germany, and not nearly as excited over the white stuff. Mother Jane Francis, however, thoroughly enjoyed its brief presence as for a moment she tried to hide behind the shrubbery near Assumption

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<sup>189</sup> Shelly M. Jackson, Bulletin Number 899, (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Department of Education 1960), p. 136.

<sup>190</sup> Eaglette, (November, 1963), Lafayette, Louisiana). Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana. pp. 5 and 6.

<sup>191</sup> CLIMOD. Louisiana Office of State Climatology (Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge).

Hall to avoid being hit by snowballs.<sup>192</sup> For Father Windolph it was to be his last snow. He died July 11, 1962, leaving the Institute in the capable hands of Father William Oliver, who was appointed director.

From 1942 until his death Windolph had worked to “fulfill the wishes, dreams and visions of Father Keller.” His energy propelled the school from a student body of 151 in 1941 to an enrollment of 461 in 1962. At the time of his death, students came from twenty cities in Louisiana and several states including Alabama, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Mississippi, New York, North Carolina, Texas and the District of Columbia.<sup>193</sup> He transformed the physical campus, added the industrial art shop, two boys dormitories, a new dining hall for boys and a recreation room for girls. He obtained funds to add a gymnasium, a library and a new high school building, Assumption Hall, completed in 1954.<sup>194</sup>

One year after his death Holy Rosary celebrated its fiftieth anniversary. Among those returning to celebrate the golden jubilee were Father Joseph A. Francis, Mother Marie Anselm, Superior General of the Sisters of the Holy Family, and Kenneth Malveaux, an English teacher at Derham Junior High School, New Orleans, and former Peace Corps volunteer. Father Francis “preached at a solemn High Mass with Bishop Maurice Schexnayder presiding and hundreds of priests, religious parents, friends, and students of Holy Rosary present.”<sup>195</sup>

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<sup>192</sup> Rosarite, 1960. Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>193</sup> Herman Hayes, “Holy Rosary Institute, 1913 – 1918,” May 1988, p. 13, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>195</sup> “Youths Urged to Build on Past Achievements,” Southwest Louisiana Register, 10, No.3, (5 December, 1963), p. 1, Catholic School Papers, Archives, University of Louisiana Lafayette.

Directing his comments to the students Father Francis said, “You live in an age and in a country where great things are happening, great changes are taking place and most of these changes concern you directly. There was a time when the Negro was expected to be satisfied with mediocrity. But believe me things can never be the same . . . not after Birmingham and Medger Evers and the March on Washington, and now the tragic assassination of our President. Things can’t be the same. That is, of course, if you do not take all that has been done for granted.”<sup>196</sup> He urged the students to “build upon the achievements of the past 50 years.” He remembered Father Windolph having said, “these builders [students] will shine like the stars in heaven, ” because they are educated and will educate the young to follow. Concluding, he cited some of the outstanding graduates of Holy Rosary who were in the audience including Mother Marie Anselm, a seminarian soon to become a priest, numerous religious Sisters, doctors, lawyers, educators and parents. He challenged students to use their talents “in the classroom, on the playing field, in the chapel, at home, in your community to show that you are really and truly members of a new breed of “Rosarites.”

Father William Adams, former director of boys at Holy Rosary, celebrated the mass. A reception and ring ceremony was held later in the evening. Father Ignatius A. Martin, Superintendent of Catholic Schools, distributed rings to seventy-six Holy Rosary seniors saying, “Love is the melody that flows through all the teachings of Christ, we’ve got to live it.”

A special award for excellence was presented to Ethel L. Sampson Riggs a 1928 Holy Rosary graduate, and the oldest alumnus present. As a student Riggs played

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<sup>196</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

basketball, sang in the chorus and was awarded a gold medal by Father Philip Keller for her excellent character. In 1926, she received the Palmer Certificate for having completed the school's Business Education course. In 1928, she received the White College Certificate of Merit. She and her four sisters all attended Holy Rosary. Two of her sisters Lena and Effie Sampson entered the order of the Sisters of the Holy Family.<sup>197</sup>

They joined several other Holy Rosary graduates who became members of the Sisters of the Holy Family: Marvel M. Duffel (Mother Marie Anselm), Edolia Fruget (Mother Mary Geraldine), Mabel Johnson (Mother Mary Jules), Azalie Goodman (Sister Marie Louise), Clara Goodman (Mother Mary Philip), Enola-Joseph (Mother Mary Bartholomew), Eugenia Arceneaux (Mother Mary \_\_\_\_\_), Sister Marie Eustelle, Hazel Mouton (Mother Mary Clothelde), Mary Lawrence, (Sister Mary Celine), Mildred Vavasseur, (Mother Mary Victoria), Harriet Nichols (Sister Mary Pauline), Mary Broussard (Sister Mary Petronilla), Vivian Henry (Sister Marie George), Emelda Cormier (Sister Mary Romauld), Agnes Sampey (Sister Marie Yvonne), Willie Mae Sylvester (Sister Marie Antoinette), Sylvia Thibodeaux (Sister Nita Francis) and Frances Brown (Sister Marie des Agnes).<sup>198</sup> Two of the sisters, Marvel Duffel and Clara Goodman served as Holy Rosary principals and as superiors's general of the Sisters of the Holy Family.<sup>199</sup>

Their career choices and those of other Rosary graduates supported Father Keller's reason for founding the school. In Lafayette, he found an area with a large black

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<sup>197</sup> Eaglette, "Holy Rosary Commemorates 50<sup>th</sup> Jubilee Anniversary," (November, 1963), p. 5, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid., p. 7 – 8.

<sup>199</sup> Eaglette, 2, 1, (1 October, 1964): 1.

Catholic population from which he thought would come young black men and women who would choose careers in leadership positions. Well educated, they continued to “lift the race.” The ceremonies concluded with Father Robert C. Hunter, Provincial of the Society of the Divine Word, making closing remarks “congratulating all who helped to make the golden jubilee of Holy Rosary possible.”<sup>200</sup>

A year after the golden jubilee celebration, two more Holy Rosary young women, Gloria Mouton and Rita Daigle, chose to enter the novitiate of the Sisters of the Holy Family. Daigle was a 1961 graduate and Mouton a 1963 graduate.<sup>201</sup> As they entered the novitiate, Holy Rosary for the first time welcomed three young women students from Ghana. They were novices belonging to the Handmaids of the Divine founded in 1954 by Joseph O. Bowers, himself a member of the Society of the Divine Word. At the time, he served as the Bishop of the Diocese of Accra, Ghana.<sup>202</sup> Two of the young women, Sister Perpetua Kofie and Sister Consolata Agyapong hailed from Akim Swedru, Ghana. Sister Vincentia Mensah’s home was Accra, Ghana.<sup>203</sup>

Sister Perpetua did not begin school until she was eight, and says, she did not begin to like school until she entered upper primary school in 1949 at Akim Swedru, a section of Accra, Ghana. She was taught by the Clinic Sisters, a group of missionaries. After school she assisted them in caring for the sick and decided that she would become a nursing sister. Living with the sisters, she volunteered at their orphanage helping to care

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<sup>200</sup> Ibid., p. 2

<sup>201</sup> Eaglette, 2, 1, (11 October 1964), p. 1, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>202</sup> “Holy Family Sisters Educate Future Ghanian Leaders,” Louisiana Weekly, (3 October 1964), New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

for babies, and did well in her studies. In 1953 she passed the common entrance examination for St. Mary's Secondary School and entered the convent as an aspirant for sisterhood January, 1954. She professed her vows April 6, 1959, and became a sister of the Handmaids of the Divine. In 1960, she was put in charge of their boarding house until she left Ghana for Holy Rosary in August, 1964.<sup>204</sup>

Sister Mary Consolata was born August 30, 1942, in Akim Swedru, Ghana. She began kindergarten at age 6 at St. Agatha's Girls School. In preparing her story, which was to be used as an introduction to the Holy Family Sisters, she said, "I still remember when I carried my little mat and food along to school." She stayed in school and in middle school joined the Catholic Youth Organization and played the flute in the band. It was there that she was introduced to an older sister of a classmate who spoke on what it meant to be a sister. She was inspired and entered a boarding school operated by the Holy Ghost Sisters in 1957. The next year she entered the convent as an aspirant. She attended secondary school in Accra where she studied religion, English, math, health, science and Latin. While there she assisted the sisters at Christ the King International School until she entered the novitiate in 1962. She professed her vows and became a sister of the Handmaid of the Divine on April 6, 1964. She anticipated a return to her duties at Christ the King, but instead was sent to Lafayette in August, 1964 at age 22 to study.<sup>205</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> Sister M. Perpetua, "My Life History," July 1964, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>205</sup> Sister Mary Consolata, "My Life Story," July, 1964, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Sister Vincentia Mensah was born Lucia A. Mensah September 6, 1945 at Achimata which is part of Accra, Ghana. Her father worked as a cook for a European family. She entered St. Joseph's School at Adabraka at age six and remained there until she reached "Form Two," middle school. She professed a desire to become a nun at fourteen and entered the convent of Our Lady of Fatima at Agomanya, Ghana in 1960. She was tutored by Father George Wilson, an African American priest from New Orleans. As a novice she selected the name Vincentia. She professed her vows on April 6, 1964 and became a sister of the Handmaids of the Divine. She returned to Accra and was instructed by Bishop Bowers to prepare for study in the United States.<sup>206</sup>

At Holy Rosary the young sisters attended classes in religion, home economics, English, music, science and typing. "The objective of their stay in America [was] to gain a broader educational background by which they will be able to administer their own congregation along stabilized temporal and religious lines."<sup>207</sup> By 1969, all three had completed their Holy Rosary education. They returned to Ghana to teach. According to Sister Caroline Leslie, Sister Mary Consolata eventually became the Superior of the Sisters of Handmaid of the Divine. Father Keller was never able to personally fulfill his desired goal of "devoting his life to mission work in Africa," ironically the matriculation of three young African women to Holy Rosary obliquely contributed to his desired goal.

It was also during the sixties that Holy Rosary graduates began to return to the school as faculty members. Wilfred Sonnier, a 1956 graduate received his teaching credentials from St. Mary's College in Winona, Minnesota. In an interview with the

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<sup>206</sup> Sister Vincentia Mensah, "My Life History," Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.



editor of the school newspaper he said, “I’m very pleased to be a faculty member of Rosary’s young, enthusiastic staff.” His Rosary classmate, Alex Louis, Jr., a Southern University graduate returned to teach physical education and history.<sup>208</sup> Joining them on the faculty were newlywed Anglo-Americans married in August, 1964, Gerald Harold and Mary Jamieson Harold. Harold graduated from Boston College and taught English and biology. His wife was a graduate of St. Elizabeth’s College of New Jersey. She taught physics and chemistry at Holy Rosary. Harold was from New York, her husband hailed from Massachusetts.<sup>209</sup> In an interview with the editor of the Eaglette, Mrs. Harold said she and her husband were in Louisiana for the first time and came “South to contribute something to the cause of integration.” They were among a group of young white participants in the Civil Rights Movement whose social consciences led them to the South. Continuing, she explained, “we arrived at South Mission in Jennings, Louisiana and sought advice from Father Windt on where we might help. He sent us to Father Oliver at Holy Rosary.”

The editor of the yearbook said, “little did we realize how greatly our lives were to be affected by the new faculty members. Our lives have been tremendously influenced by this stalwart band. Our problems have been their problems; our hopes and ambitions theirs.”<sup>210</sup> Under the leadership of the new faculty members, students joined speech and drama classes, foreign language, library, science and 4-H clubs. Marie Savana Berard

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<sup>208</sup> Rosarite, 12, (1968), Father Francis protested the Lafayette Catholic Diocese policy of segregated sports competition. In 1968 his former player and student Alex Louis, Jr. coached HRI’s boys basketball team to the championship of the Diocesan tourney. Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>209</sup> Eaglette, “Holy Rosary Greets Instructors From Massachusetts and New York,” (11 October, 1964), 2, 1, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>210</sup> Rosarite, 9 (1965): 65, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

and Janet Marie Button were finalists in the National Achievement Scholarship Program. They formed a local chapter of the International Quill and Scroll, an organization dedicated to recognizing student achievement in journalistic publication. The Holy Rosary chapter had thirty-two members.<sup>211</sup> In 1965, the Quill and Scroll Society presented the Holy Rosary student newspaper, The Eaglette, with a first place award as a “Newspaper of Substantial Achievement” in the annual Quill and Scroll Newspaper Critical Service. Students also formed a chapter of the National Honor Society. As students competed and formed new organizations, Father Oliver added a new dimension to the school’s growth. He hired Coley Bellamy to start a marching band. In one year the membership rose to seventy-five students. Oliver also added classes in journalism, economics, and trigonometry.

Growth and success prevailed until climate and tragedy caused significant problems at the school. October 3, 1964 south Louisiana was struck by Hurricane Hilda with winds over one hundred miles per hour. The magnificent oaks and several structures on the campus were badly damaged. Repairs completed, normalcy returned until 1966 when a devastating fire of unknown origin destroyed the refectory and kitchen on the boys’ campus. They were replaced by a large new dining room with facilities for all resident students. The kitchen was equipped with all modern appliances. In order to erect the new building it was necessary to remove some of the large oaks on the avenue which suffered hurricane damage.

Before the Rosary community could completely recover from the damages caused by Hurricane Hilda and fire, the next year a second fire swept through two buildings at

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<sup>211</sup> Eaglette, 3, 1, (November, 1965): 2, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

the Institute. It destroyed a girls' recreation building and caused heavy damage to an adjacent structure; and caused approximately 150 boarding students had to evacuate their dormitory. Lafayette Fire Chief L. F. Babin unofficially placed the damage in the neighborhood of \$60,000.00.<sup>212</sup> Patrons, friends, families and students responded to calls for help and campus life again returned to normal.

Neither hurricanes nor fires could curtail Holy Rosary Institute student achievement. Elaine Robertson, a resident from Meridian, Mississippi, and Cedric Dauphin of Lafayette, now Dr. Cedric Dauphin, were named National Achievement Scholarship finalists. Elaine also received the National Educational Development Award. She subsequently enrolled at Tuskegee University in Alabama.<sup>213</sup> Elaine, Cedric and seventy-seven senior classmates departed Holy Rosary encouraged by the remarks of Rosary family members. Guest speakers for their Honor's Convocation and Commencement exercise were Dr. Ruth Bradford and Sister Mary DeSales of the Sisters of the Holy Family, school supervisor for the Archdiocese of New Orleans, and the sister of Father William Oliver. Dr. Ruth Bradford was the director of Project Upward Bound and Professor of Education and Psychology at Grambling College, and the mother of Donald Bradford, a 1965 Holy Rosary graduate, and Reginald, a member of the 1967 class.<sup>214</sup>

The year following the departure of Elaine and Cedric, seven Rosary students participated in the Regional Science Fair held at Southern University, Baton Rouge.

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<sup>212</sup> Jim Bradshaw, Daily Advertiser, Nov, 1967, p. B1.

<sup>213</sup> Eaglette, "Rosary Students Honored," 4, 1, (December, 1966). Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>214</sup> Eaglette, 4, 3, (May, 1967), p. 1.

Walter Zenon received first place for his chemistry project. He also received the Lincoln Library Award, the Louisiana Science Academy Medal, the Science Fair award and the Science Fair Plaque. “His project demonstrated an approach that may be used to determine the amount of silicon present in various soil samples.”<sup>215</sup> Science World, a national publication, cited Zenon as winner of a Future Scientists of America award noting he utilized “one of the latest techniques available to chemists of the nuclear age. It’s called neutron activation analysis.”<sup>216</sup> Patricia Lloyd, a senior first place winner, was awarded a medal and the Pickett Slide Rule for her project in “Mathematical Computer Science” which dealt with payroll calculation. Lonnie Arceneaux, Janella Carmouche, Alton Chaisson, Jean Broussard and Joyce Robertson all received certificates of merit. Sister Vincent Ferrer served as advisor and mentor to the group.

Walter Zenon was not the only Holy Rosary student to gain national acclaim. Also honored was his classmate Patrick A Roberson of Baltimore, Maryland. The son of Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Roberson, Patrick was the recipient of a National Achievement scholarship, one of “50 given by Shell Companies Foundation, Inc., to give recognition to good scholarship on the high school level and to provide financial assistance to young people planning science careers.”<sup>217</sup> Patrick’s Maryland congressman appointed him an alternate to attend West Point Military Academy where he would major in industrial engineering. At Holy Rosary, Patrick also found time to participate in the band, and

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<sup>215</sup> Sandra Hosely, Southwest Louisiana Register, (20 March, 1968), p. 2, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>216</sup> Science World, (15 September, 1969), p. 26, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>217</sup> Southwest Louisiana Register, (15 March, 1968), Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

chorus, worked as a photographer for the yearbook and the school newspaper. He won awards in industrial arts, was a member of the National Honor Society, and a member of a debate panel rated superior in district, zone and state competition.<sup>218</sup> Patrick was not the first Rosary student to be noticed by the Shell Foundation. Three years earlier, Diane St. Julien and Paulette Ozenne were also named finalists.<sup>219</sup>

Encouraged by Father Oliver, Holy Rosary students continued their pursuit of excellence. To them he said, “you represent every social background and your education has to be undertaken so that there can be produced not only men and women of refined talents, but those great souled persons who are so desperately required by our times, commit yourselves to the service of the human community.”<sup>220</sup> As an example, he cited the return of a former student, Brother Lucius Guillory of the Society of the Divine Word as a faculty member. Lucius graduated from the Rosary in 1962 and was a protégé of Brother Stillfried. He returned to the shop of his mentor to teach industrial arts. Herman Hayes, a 1961 Rosary graduate also joined the faculty after his college graduation and taught civics. Returning to Holy Rosary, they found students who were accepting of Father Oliver’s message. One student said, “Life for us is a feeling of winning a game, the sorrow of failing an exam, the joy of gaining a friend, or the grief of making a mistake. Most of all, we experience the pride of being a Rosarite, that pride is the backbone of our lives at Rosary.”<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Eaglette, 3, 1, (November, 1965), Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>220</sup> Rosarite, 12, (1968), Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>221</sup> Rosarite, (1970), p. 60, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

Hayes was joined on the faculty by other lay persons and their addition dredged up concerns expressed earlier by the third director, Father Windolph who said, “if the Sisters left the faculty the cost of replacing them with lay teachers would be prohibitive.” Hayes returned to a faculty of twenty-eight, but nearly forty percent of his colleagues were lay teachers like himself. The Sisters remained, but in smaller numbers.<sup>222</sup>

As a protégé of Father Francis, who served as assistant director until 1960, Hayes was excited to find Rosary students enmeshed in the movement for black pride. He witnessed a culture change at the Institute. The decade of the sixties in America was charged with racial violence, demonstrations for equal rights, assassination of national leaders and the formation of new organizations that challenged the existing social, economic and political conditions. Robert Allen in Black Awakening in Capitalist America: An Analytic History, referring to the period said, “Black America is an oppressed nation, a semicolony of the United States and the black revolt is emerging as a form of national liberation struggle.”

In the summer of 1966 two events occurred which had a momentous impact on the black liberation movement. “Superficially, they appeared unrelated, but both were responses to the oppression of black people in the United States.”<sup>223</sup> The first event occurred in Mississippi. James Meredith, the first black graduate of the University of Mississippi, was making a “March Against Fear” through Mississippi. He was joined by Stokely Carmichael, Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), founded in 1960. Carmichael and other members of SNCC were convinced

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

<sup>223</sup> Robert L. Allen. Black Awakening In Capitalist America: An Analytical History (Garden City, New Jersey: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1969), p. 18.

they had discovered “a solution to attack a monolithic exploitative edifice in the idea of black political power. Willie Ricks, a SNCC staffer on the march with Meredith reduced the concept to two words “Black Power.”<sup>224</sup> According to Allen, the national media pounced on the new slogan and treated it as a sensational item. They flashed the chant across the country much to the consternation of a nervous American public. Black people who heard the expression easily grasped its essence because it related directly to the black experience and their lack of power. “Black Power sought to transform the operative political paradigm of the black social body from a “woman” into a “revolutionary man,” a transformation necessitating arms, which is synonymous with justice, revolt, pride, balls and true blackness, power . . . . the new black nation, men and theoretically, women.”<sup>225</sup> Young blacks were electrified by the rhetoric of the movement and students on campuses around the nation became involved. Bobby Seale of the Black Panther Party said about them, “the only way that the world is ever going to be free is when the youth of this country move with every principle of human respect and with every spot we have in our hearts for human life.”<sup>226</sup>

Kwame Ture, formerly Stokely Carmichael, encouraged young blacks telling them, “Black people must redefine themselves and only they can do that.” Vast segments of the black community “is beginning to recognize the need to define itself and reclaim its history and virtue.” Black power, he said, speaks to the many problems and issues facing black people in America, and “It is a call to reject the racist institutions and values

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<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 19.

<sup>225</sup> Robert Carr. Black Nationalism In the New World: Reading the African-American and West Indian Experience, (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2002), p. 189.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 186.

of this society.”<sup>227</sup> The black power movement of the sixties gave hope to an oppressed community that responded to chants of “I’m black and I’m proud” made famous in a James Brown song.

Students at Holy Rosary responded to the call. The theme of the 1972 yearbook was “Young, Gifted and Black.” The following year’s theme was “Keep on Keeping on, the Destination, Black Pride.” Adopting the themes of the sixties and seventies Rosary students clenched their fists, and wore African clothing. Young women students wore shorter uniform skirts. Male students and faculty sported huge afro hairstyles. Brother Lucious and the new dean and athletic director, Father Raymond Jones were among them. Father Jones brought a new dimension to student life at the Rosary, a football team.<sup>228</sup> “Relate to Black Minds,” was the theme of the first football homecoming. The entire homecoming court was attired in African clothing.

Rosary students had concerns in addition to black pride and athletics. They shared the concerns of Americans throughout the country over the war in Vietnam. Its end coincided with Rosary’s sixtieth year in Lafayette. Holy Rosary Junior High students planned and participated in a mass in the campus chapel celebrating the end of the conflict and Rosary’s sixty years in Lafayette. Wanda Rylander summed up the experience in a short verse. “Sixty years ago marked our first start .... [on] a journey that seemed to some of us much too hard. But as the years swiftly rolled along we hipped ourselves to the fact that we must go on.” To her classmates she said, “get your black minds together. She and Jezelle Hebert, her co-editor, encouraged them to be aware of

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<sup>227</sup> Kwame Ture and Charles U. Hamilton. Black Power: The Politics of Liberation. (New York: Vintage Books, 1967), p. 44.

<sup>228</sup> Rosarite, 1972, p. 70, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.



the cultural changes surrounding them which they referred to as the “Black Revolution.” They knew it meant greater opportunities for them and future Holy Rosary graduates who with determination and hard work would take their places in politics, law, religion, medicine, education and other professions. They were prophetic. Emery A. Menard, a 1980 graduate received his medical degree from Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee. Madonna Constantine, a 1981 graduate received her Ph.D. in Psychology; Karen Brown, 1976, became a captain in the United States Air Force; Kurt D. Jones, 1973, is a medical doctor; Edwina S. Mallery, 1977, went on to become the assistant manager of the Lafayette General Medical Center. George Brown became the assistant principal of Acadiana High School School in Lafayette. Jackie Edgar, 1980, is the only African American woman in Louisiana to own two automobile dealerships, one at Breaux Bridge, the other at Franklin. They were honored as Holy Rosary celebrated “75 Years of Doing It Right.”<sup>229</sup>

The seventy fifth anniversary celebration was a regal success. Over five hundred alumni attended with some traveling from as far away as California, Washington, Oregon, Nevada, Texas and New York. “Sister Mary Ann Sampson was the oldest Holy Rosary graduate in attendance. Sister Ann graduated on June 6, 1919. She came to Holy Rosary Institute in 1915 only two years after the school was founded. Sister Ann is a native of Avoyelles Parish, Louisiana.”<sup>230</sup>

The week began with a hospitality suite at the Lafayette Holidome. The following day, a picnic was held on the Holy Rosary campus reminiscent of earlier times.

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<sup>229</sup> Rosarite, 1988, p.17, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>230</sup> Holy Rosary Institute Alumni and Friends Association, Inc., 9, (December, 1988), p. 1, Lafayette, Louisiana.

A spirit filled mass was celebrated at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church on Sunday. Bishop Harry Flynn of the Diocese of Lafayette was the main celebrant. The mass was followed by a luncheon at the Holidome as the concluding activity. Attorney David Dennis served as Master of Ceremonies. Betty Brown, alumni president welcomed the gathering. Father William Oliver delivered a brief welcome from the Divine Word Missionaries, and Sister Mary de Chantal delivered a welcome home from the Sisters of the Holy Family. Herman T. Hayes followed, setting forth the challenge to all. He spoke of the need to reopen the boarding department and to increase public awareness of Holy Rosary Institute. He also introduced the “Foundation” and pledged the first \$1000.00 of \$12,500.00 pledged to the Holy Rosary Alumni Foundation.<sup>231</sup> The luncheon closed with the singing of the Alma Mater. Departing the participants reminisced about their days at Holy Rosary and were grateful for the exuberant persistence and foresight of Philip L. Keller, who built the school on a foundation of learning and leadership. In appreciation, the students dedicated an edition of the Rosarite to him “for his untiring love, his self giving and his vision.”<sup>232</sup>

Rosary students continued to succeed in the mold of “new Rosarites” as they were described above by Father Francis in his fiftieth anniversary address. Elizabeth James, Jezelle Sonnier, Jovita Chevalier, Linda Felix, Roxanne Brown, Madonna Constantine, Dwight Simon, Wendel Davis, and LeRue Phillips were all winners at the University of Southwestern Louisiana’s Literary Festival. Jezelle Sonnier also won first

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<sup>231</sup> Ibid., p. 1.

<sup>232</sup> Rosarite, 1981, p. 3, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

place at the Xavier University of New Orleans Math/Science Olympics in biology.<sup>233</sup> Samantha Arceneaux was awarded the Franz-Maxwell Scholarship by the University of Southwestern Louisiana. Jovita Chevalier was awarded a four year academic scholarship to Xavier University of New Orleans. Rayla Lee received the USL Distinguished Freshman Scholarship, and Lea Constantine was so rewarded by Dillard University of New Orleans.<sup>234</sup> Duane Brown a 1986 graduate was named Xavier University's outstanding freshman as an education major.<sup>235</sup>

Rosary students also responded to the needs of the Lafayette community. Under the supervision of faculty members, they planned and implemented a science fair to encourage careers in science.<sup>236</sup> When the local food bank called for assistance, they conducted a food drive. The local blood bank needed donors, and the seniors and Rosary parents donated blood.<sup>237</sup> Local non-profit groups needed assistance in raising funds for various causes. Rosary students responded and manned the telephones for the KJCB radiothon.<sup>238</sup> In 1985, the students and faculty opened the campus to local children and invited them and their families to enjoy what became an annual fall fair.<sup>239</sup> It was the school's seventy second year in Lafayette and Lafayette's mayor Dud Lastrapes acknowledged their community spirit by declaring "the week of September 23<sup>rd</sup> through

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<sup>233</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>234</sup> Rosarite, 1983, p. 86. Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>235</sup> Holy Rosary Institute Alumni and Friends Association, Inc., 5 (October 1986), Lafayette, Louisiana. Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana, p. 1.

<sup>236</sup> Rosarite, 1984, p. 98. Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>237</sup> Rosarite, 1985, p. 59. Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>238</sup> Rosarite, 1986, p. 59. Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>239</sup> Rosarite, 1985, p. 50. Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

29<sup>th</sup>, 1985 Holy Rosary Week.” He praised the school saying “the educational standards have been exceptional in the preparation of the youth of this community to become productive citizens.”<sup>240</sup> The following school year Rosary students and faculty invited the local community to celebrate the many accomplishments of Black Americans, especially those of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., by sponsoring a “Keep the Dream Alive” essay contest for local high school students.<sup>241</sup>

Rosary students dedicated the Rosarite to the troops who served in the 1990 Iraq War, with special honors to Rosary graduates: Sylvester Auzenne, Eazly Babineaux, Karen Brown, Milton Cormier, Tyrone Cormier, Melissa Francois, Kenneth Harps, Caldwell Joseph, Joseph Lee, Kenneth Lee, Jermaine Loston, Dion Mays, Vincent Minor, Reginald Mosely, Dwaine Mouton, Carl Randal, Gregory Sam, David St. Julien, Loomis St. Julien, Ignatius Williams, and Shelby Williams.<sup>242</sup> The board of the Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends Association also honored graduates who “made significant contributions to society in their respective fields.” Recognized at the “Graduates of Distinction” banquet were Dr. Curtis Dilworth, Carol Fran, Dr. Elizabeth C. Gray, Charles Guidry, Dr. Ernest Kinchen, Dr. Alfred R. Lewis, and Dr. Carol Zippert for serving their respective communities.<sup>243</sup>

Refer to them as the “glory years,” if you are so inclined, because in the sixties, seventies, and eighties Holy Rosary students as never before dedicated themselves to

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<sup>240</sup> Dud Lastrapes, “Proclamation,” (19 September, 1985), Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>241</sup> Rosarite, 1986, pp. 60, 66.

<sup>242</sup> Rosarite, 1991, p. 3, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>243</sup> The Advocate, 25 November 2008, p. 3b.

“lifting the race” academically, culturally, politically and socially. Unfortunately, as the following chapter demonstrates, the ghosts of problems past loomed continuously below the surface, and the dream formed in the mind of a young German immigrant appeared to fade, only to be restored through a historical first for the school. The earliest addition to the Holy Rosary campus, the first structure built under Keller, earned a place in history. Father James Pawlicki, while serving as pastor at Holy Rosary began an effort to have the central building on the campus listed on the National Register of Historic Places. He urged Gerard Frey, Bishop of Lafayette to petition the Louisiana Division of Archaeology and Historic Preservation seeking the placement. Frey agreed, and in his petition he summarized the school’s history saying, “in its inception Holy Rosary Institute provided vocational and technical education for black girls at a time in history when no such training was provided by the civil government.”<sup>244</sup> He noted the school’s close working relationship with Mother Katharine Drexel, foundress of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, and Xavier University in New Orleans who also established many rural schools for blacks and Native American children. Holy Rosary also benefitted from her association as Holy Rosary in the twenties and thirties enlarged its curriculum by training teachers to work in the rural schools she established in Louisiana for black children. Frey also noted the importance of the school’s affiliation with the Society of the Divine Word, one of the first Catholic religious organizations to train African American men for the Roman Catholic priesthood.

Encapsulating the school’s historical contribution Frey concluded his petition saying, “I submit that Holy Rosary Institute in its many years as a vocational – technical

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<sup>244</sup> Gerard L. Frey, Bishop of Lafayette to Division of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, 3 June, 1980, p. 1, File Number A13L23070, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana .

school, as a normal school, and as a high school has served the entire area of southwest Louisiana by providing education which would not otherwise have been available to the black community.”<sup>245</sup> Without the school’s influence Frey said, “the socio-economic condition of southwest Louisiana” would have been vastly different. One shudders to imagine, he said, what the condition would have been had it not been for Holy Rosary “and those valiant leaders who staffed it.”

W. Edwin Martin, Jr., of the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism responded to Frey’s petition. He advised the bishop that additional material would have to be submitted by Father Pawlicki before a decision could be made.<sup>246</sup> Pawlicki provided the material and on December 3, 1980, the three story brick structure built in 1914 on the Holy Rosary campus at Lafayette was officially entered on the National Register of Historic Places.<sup>247</sup>

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<sup>245</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>246</sup> W. Edward Martin, Jr., to Bishop Gerard L. Frey, 11 June, 1980, File Number A13L23020, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>247</sup> Robert B. DeBlieux, State Preservation Officer, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, to Diocese of Lafayette and Rev. James A. Pawlicki, 24 February, 1981, File Number A13L23070, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

## CAMPUS SCENES



The doors of the chapel are always open to her students, especially for the daily visit.



The Locker Hall



The Gym "inside"



The Campus Store

The Gym "outside"

The Auditorium





## CAMPUS SCENES

The Christmas Crib in  
front of the Boys' Building



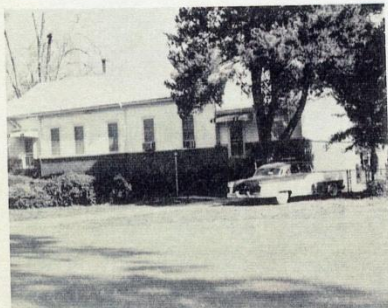
Assumption Hall



Side entrance to school building

The Director's House

A friendly smile awaits you.



The Girls' Building



## CHAPTER 5

What began as a noble attempt to “lift a race” by Keller in 1913 succumbed to its success. Many of Holy Rosary’s graduates became members of W. E. B. Dubois’ “talented tenth” as highly rated professionals in various fields. Their incubator, however, failed to keep pace with changing socio-economic conditions. Unable to sustain itself, it was closed by the Diocese of Lafayette in 1993. After eighty years, declining enrollment caused by school integration, loss of religious faculty, failure of Holy Rosary graduates to enroll their children, lack of support from the diocese, and changing economic conditions led to its closure.

When it opened at Lafayette in 1913, its founder, Father Keller thought the large African American Catholic population there would support the school. Prior to its opening, African American Catholics had lamented the absence of such an institution. In Lafayette in 1913, only one African American Catholic parish existed and only a small contingent of African American nuns worked and taught among its black population at St. Joseph’s school. Keller, ever the optimist, was determined the school would survive and grow.

From its inception, Holy Rosary lacked a succursal relationship necessary to meet its expenditures. As other Catholic schools opened in the Diocese of Lafayette, they were supported by church parishes and did not have to depend solely on tuition and fees. It was not until 1978 that an effort was made to create such a relationship for Holy Rosary with the development of an interparochial school board. This chapter provides an account of the major problems and conditions that ultimately led to Holy Rosary’s closure by the diocese.

Finances, specifically the lack of a diverse revenue stream were central to the school's problems. Therefore, it's appropriate to begin with a review of the decline in the area of finances. Although from its inception Holy Rosary functioned as an independent entity beginning in the decade of the forties and continuing into the seventies, it received minimal monetary contributions from the American Board of Catholic Missions and the Negro and Indian Missions. Declining revenue and added requests for support from those agencies caused them to discontinue support for Holy Rosary in the late seventies.

In 1930, when the Sisters of the Holy Family donated most of the remaining original Holy Rosary acreage to the Diocese of Lafayette, the diocese controlled all revenues generated through leases entered into with private commercial entities. In 1960, the diocese entered into "the lease of property on which a shopping center is built at the corner of Breaux Bridge Road and Louisiana Avenue."<sup>248</sup> Holy Rosary initially received a portion of the lease proceeds. Lack of access to diocesan financial records limits the ability to ascertain accurate amounts received or the number of instances the school's revenue was enhanced by revenues generated by the lease.

Holy Rosary in 1979 also received a one time payment of \$90,000.00, according to the bishop, from a perpetual lease of Holy Rosary property to a non-profit corporation that built and manages the Holy Family Apartments.<sup>249</sup> Thereafter, it has not shared in revenues produced by the lease. Annual teacher salaries alone at the school in the same

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<sup>248</sup> Bishop Gerard L. Frey to Mother M. Rose de Lima Hazeur, 12 November, 1975, Rose de Lima file, Archives, Sisters of The Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

year exceeded \$70,000.00<sup>250</sup> The one time payment was welcomed, but did not significantly impact annual expenses.

By the early eighties the school needed a significant cash infusion to upgrade systems and make needed structural repairs. Administrators were aware in 1982, of a new diocesan campaign underway through the Lafayette City Deanery Corporation, a diocesan entity. They sought assistance from the corporation because the objective of the campaign was to raise \$3,800,000.00 for the benefit of secondary Catholic education in the nineteen Catholic parishes of the Lafayette deanery. The majority of the money raised was used to construct a new high school, St. Thomas More, and the Bishop Jeanmard Center for Religious Formation.<sup>251</sup> Several African American Catholics led by Dr. R. Baranco, complained to the bishop that Holy Rosary did not benefit from the fund raising effort.<sup>252</sup> Their complaints failed to re-direct any of the funds to Holy Rosary. Other conditions also contributed to declining revenue.

In 1954, the United States Supreme Court issued its landmark opinion in the case of Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education<sup>253</sup> declaring the separate but equal doctrine of Plessy vs. Ferguson<sup>254</sup> unconstitutional. Its impact would affect Holy Rosary, though not immediately. Enrollment peaked during the 1960's with enrollment as high as 470 students. When it celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1963 Holy Rosary had 461 students representing 20 cities in Louisiana, 10 other states, and 3 foreign countries. "But

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<sup>250</sup> The Morning Star, 25 January, 1973, Lafayette, Louisiana, p. 11.

<sup>251</sup> Daily Advertiser, 17 January, 1982, Lafayette, Louisiana, p. 9.

<sup>252</sup> Interparochial School Board. "Meeting Minutes," (16 April, 1980), File Number A13L23020, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>253</sup> 347 U. S. 483 (1954).

<sup>254</sup> 163 U. S. 537 (1896).

it was also during the 1960's that public and parochial schools in south Louisiana were integrated,<sup>255</sup> as a result of Brown and subsequent court decisions.

Integration was a slow process in the South and in Lafayette. Ten years after the first Brown decision NAACP attorneys for Alfred Trahan and seventeen black students filed a motion in United States District Court at Lafayette “asking the federal court to order the Lafayette Parish School Board to submit a plan of desegregation. In August, 1965, A. P. Tureaud, a New Orleans attorney, went to court to ask for acceleration of integration in the parishes of Lafayette, Acadia, St. Landry, Evangeline, and Jeff Davis.”<sup>256</sup> The district court ordered Lafayette Parish to integrate its schools in the fall 1965. The response was slow, and the next year blacks returned to federal court in Lafayette pressing the parish school board to comply with the court's prior order.

The Lafayette Parish School Board responded by implementing a “freedom of choice” program allowing parents to decide on the schools their children would attend. In May, 1969, the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that freedom of choice plans in thirty seven Louisiana school systems were not achieving desegregation at a sufficient rate. Lafayette was among the thirty seven. Continued pressure from the plaintiffs and the federal courts forced the Lafayette Parish School Board to file a plan of desegregation with the United States Health Education and Welfare Department for public schools in Lafayette.

Rather than take the lead in southwest Louisiana, the Diocese of Lafayette, the bishop and church leaders sat on the sidelines as public school desegregation unfolded. The church's inactivity led to the filing of a second suit in United States District Court at

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<sup>255</sup> Trent Angers, Editor, Acadiana Profile, 24, 2. (May/June 2001 Lafayette, Louisiana), p. 34.

<sup>256</sup> Daily Advertiser, (2 December, 1974), pp 1, 6.

Lafayette by Danita Auzenne and others “asking the court to enjoin the schools in the Lafayette Catholic diocese from continuing their policy of operating a dual system of Catholic schools for blacks and whites.”<sup>257</sup> Responding to the complaint, Bishop Maurice Schexnayder of the Lafayette diocese ordered all Catholic schools in his diocese integrated by September, 1971, seventeen years after the United States Supreme Court decided Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education. His order would eventually affect enrollment at Holy Rosary.

It first led to the consideration by the bishop of plans to eliminate or merge Catholic schools segregated by race but in close geographical proximity to each other. Holy Rosary and Teurlings Catholic were in North Lafayette and subject for consideration. Black Catholics in the diocese quickly became leery of possible merger and elimination decisions because generally the end result meant the closure of successful African American schools or at least a reduced status for African American schools. For example, if the African American high school did not close it usually became the junior high school.

Father Oliver, director of Holy Rosary, a native of New Orleans, and a product of the segregated south, was aware of the trend. Maurice Schexnayder, Bishop of the Lafayette diocese, ordered meetings held between representatives of Holy Rosary, Teurlings, and a representative of the superintendent of Catholic schools. Father Oliver decided against attending the meeting to discuss the dual school situation. His failure to meet resulted in a warning from Mouton, the bishop’s representative, that “responsibility for the occurrence of the hardships which may ensue because of the delay must be

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<sup>257</sup> Times Picayune, 27 May, 1971, p. 5.

accepted by those who cause these delays.”<sup>258</sup> Apparently, he was suggesting to Oliver that his failure to cooperate would result in his having to accept the blame for Holy Rosary’s status thereafter. The issue of possible merger however, continued to exist only to eventually re-surface in community discussions regarding the protection of Holy Rosary’s African American identity.

In addition to finances and desegregation issues, other problems began surfacing at Holy Rosary. The Holy Family Sisters working at Holy Rosary sent a letter to their Mother Superior, Rose deLima Hazeur, saying, “It is after many prayers and long discussions that we have decided to write and talk with you again about the conditions here at Holy Rosary. Rosary’s problems are such that they will eventually cause its total destruction.”<sup>259</sup> Their concerns included, but were not limited to, confusion over the duties of the school principal assigned by the Mother Superior and the principal’s working relationship with the school’s director. Mother Rose deLima Hazeur’s impression was that “a general impasse was being created” at the school. She directed the letter to the attention of Sister Mary Boniface, Community School Supervisor. She ordered Sister Mary Boniface to visit the campus to obtain “private and on-the-spot information from staff members in individual interviews.”<sup>260</sup>

Sister Mary Boniface spent two days at Holy Rosary and spoke with teachers, staff and administrators. She recorded numerous complaints, including the lack of an expressed philosophy for the school. Students were being admitted by the director with

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<sup>258</sup> Reverend V. P. Mouton to Reverend William Oliver, 27 May, 1971, p. 5, File Number A13L23020, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>259</sup> Sister Thomas More Rochon, et al to Reverend Mother Rose de Lima Hazeur, SSF, Rose de Lima Hazeur File, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>260</sup> Sister Mary Boniface, “Report on a Visitation to Holy Rosary Institute,” 8, 9 March, 1973, p. 1, Rose de Lima file, Archives, Sisters of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana.

criminal records and emotional problems without the faculty's knowledge. Janitorial services were insufficient, and building repairs were being neglected. She was also told the director usurps the principal's responsibilities, that some lay teachers were strong black power advocates and were conducting an anti-Sisters movement. Curriculum revision was needed. Classes were too large. The student handbook was outdated. Religious education needed improvement. The hiring, dismissing and disciplining of teachers should have been the responsibility of the principal. The boys boarding department should have been closed and girl boarders limited to Catholic girls.<sup>261</sup> Sister Boniface noted that she was able to meet with the personnel she requested, but was unable to interview "one of the most important persons intended for an interview, Father Oliver, the director who was called [away] from the Institute during the whole time of the visit because of the illness of his mother."<sup>262</sup>

Sister Boniface also recorded recommendations for improvement. Sister Bertrand suggested the school should "have and follow a handbook of policies for (a) the boarding school, and (b) the regular [day] school." Sister Edward recommended, "as the only Black Catholic High School in Lafayette, the school should very wisely and positively express its views towards developing our boys and girls towards leadership whose focus is on building the present and the future through concrete achievement in the Christian and American society." Sister Mary Fortunata urged Father Oliver to improve the student screening process in an attempt "to eradicate dope peddlers and users." She also directed her comments to academic and industrial deficiencies. She called for restoration

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<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 2-9.

<sup>262</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

of “the various departments that are falling out of use, especially Industrial Arts, the foods and clothing courses; reduce class sizes and consider classes for the less gifted.”

Sister Boniface also interviewed Father Bunsell, who was serving a one year residency under Oliver at Holy Rosary while waiting to accept an assignment in Texas. He considered Father Oliver to be “a good man, but no means a good administrator. He is fine in finances; thus he would probably be a fine procurator for the Society.” He also reported that a “guidance and testing department is needed. Brother Lucius could take care of this.” Father Jones, a priest on staff, agreed with Bunsell’s comments on Father Oliver and suggested formation of a school board, which might solve some of the problems raised during Sister Boniface’s review.

Sister Boniface submitted her report to Mother Rose de Lima Hazeur. It supported the complaints of the nine sisters teaching and working at Holy Rosary. However, the report’s value as a tool for improvement was questionable because of the administrative history of Holy Rosary. From its inception in Lafayette, administrative authority was exercised by one person, a director. At no time was that person a member of the Sisters of the Holy Family. Indeed, from 1929 through 1979, all the directors were priests and members of the Society of the Divine Word. No matter the content of Sister Boniface’s report, Mother Rose de Lima Hazeur had no authority to implement any recommendations. Any plans for improvement required the cooperation of the director, Father Oliver. Therefore, if one accepts the comments of Father Bunsell, Jones and other interviewees regarding Oliver as valid, Oliver was viewed as a source of the “near impasse” at the Institute.



Perhaps Oliver should be blamed for the deteriorating conditions, but he assumed a position that for sixty years had been held by priests acting independently. It may have benefitted the Institute had he chosen to alter the management style of his predecessors. Based on the comments contained in the Boniface interviews he did not. Time did not allow because the next year, 1976, he retired as director,<sup>263</sup> but continued to teach English at Holy Rosary. He also became the pastor of St. Benedict the Moor Church and parish at Duson, Louisiana,<sup>264</sup> a neighboring Lafayette community. Eventually two of the recommendations contained in the Boniface report were implemented. A faculty and a student handbook were developed, according to Father Bunsell, and eventually Holy Rosary got a school board.<sup>265</sup>

Meanwhile, greater problems arose. In 1974, a year after Boniface's report was completed the school suffered a major loss. The boarding department closed, due to declining enrollment, ending an era that began more than fifty years earlier. With the closing of the boarding department Holy Rosary began a period of decline. Enrollment dropped from nearly five hundred in the late 1960's to below two hundred in the mid 1970s. "The financial difficulties caused by decreasing revenues saw the elimination of the football program and the restructure of many of the services provided by the school."<sup>266</sup> Thirty years earlier Father Windolph, the third director, forecast the detrimental effect losing the boarding department would have on the school's financial structure. He was prophetic.

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<sup>263</sup> Rosarite, 1977, p. 16

<sup>264</sup> Rosarite, 1983, p. 6.

<sup>265</sup> Rosarite, 1977, p. 17.

<sup>266</sup> Lafayette, Louisiana, The Voice, 2, 8, p. 9. (May, 2000).

In 1976, Father Elmer Powell, also a member of the Society of the Divine Word, became the new director.<sup>267</sup> In addition to the administrative and financial problems he faced, Father Powell accepted “the challenge of reviving the school’s physical facilities while trying to find ways to drum up financial support to keep it on its feet.”<sup>268</sup> Powell, according to Kathleen Thomas, staff writer for a Lafayette newspaper, was “an articulate, energetic man, concerned about the institution’s future who talks about the school with an intensity apparently charged with pent-up frustrations.” Thomas asked Powell if he thought Holy Rosary “had validity in the seventies.” Powell replied, “it has validity given the support of the community.” He reminded Thomas of Rosary’s sixty-five years of tradition, and its reputation for producing “gentlemen and ladies.” Throughout the country, he said, “there is a cry for a prepared black leadership and Holy Rosary is one of the few schools under Catholic auspices which can answer that cry.” In view of the need for black leaders, “he hoped to offer courses in black history in an attempt to instill an increased awareness and appreciation of blacks’ history and culture.”

Powell was a native of the Midwest and as such thought focusing on black history and culture was especially important in Lafayette where he observed “a particular phenomenon of segregation within the whole black context in Louisiana.” He was particularly concerned with blacks who were hesitant to claim their heritage because “their skin tones were light, they wanted nothing to do with blacks.” Not long in Lafayette, Powell recognized certain distinctions that were made among his parents and parishioners due to skin color. The distinctions were long standing and dated to the

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<sup>267</sup> Hayes, Holy Rosary Institute, 1913-1988, p. 14.

<sup>268</sup> Kathleen Thomas, The Sunday Advertiser, 25 June 1978 p. 1.

French period of the Louisiana colony.<sup>269</sup> Powell, Thomas said, was adamant about an open door policy at Holy Rosary regarding race. Holy Rosary, he said, welcomed all students light or dark, white or black. He thought the school's future transcended race and thought student numbers could be raised, without Holy Rosary losing its identity as a historically black institution. He expressed doubts, however, over the success of integration in Lafayette, telling Thomas, "You can never legislate integration. It is a spontaneous thing that comes from the heart."

Some of the enrollment problems at Holy Rosary he thought were church related. The Catholic Church, according to Powell, "has failed its mission to get the message of the Gospel of Christ over to the people, practically. It must be kept in mind that the backbone of Holy Rosary is not race, it's religion." He lamented the church's initial inaction on and subsequent slow implementation of a school integration plan. Dr. Kenneth Brown, a Lafayette obstetrician and a Holy Rosary graduate, shared Powell's thoughts on the church. He was a member of an Organization to Keep Holy Rosary Alive, "OKHRA." He said, the "Diocese of Lafayette is not doing enough to help Holy Rosary stay alive. I think there is a lack of concern. The Diocese of Lafayette does just enough to be able to say, we've done something."<sup>270</sup>

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<sup>269</sup> In the days of French rule in the Louisiana Colony in order to better segregate and separate communities of color and limit the potential for alliance and revolts, labels and definitions were instituted which identified people in any number of racial categories. The French used the terms griffes, buques, mulattoes, quadroons, and octoroons. Each term represented one degree's further transformation toward the caucasian standard of physical perfection. For further identification on the color distinctions among persons of African descent, See, Alice Dunbar-Nelson's article in the Journal of Negro History, Volume 1, October, 1916, p. 361, and Arnold R. Hirsch and Joseph Logsdon, Editors. Creole New Orleans: Race and Americanization, (Louisiana State University Press, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, 1992), pp. 181-182.

<sup>270</sup> The Daily Advertiser, 26 June 1978, pp. 1,4.

After one year at Holy Rosary Father Powell described for Bishop Frey of the Lafayette diocese the situation there. “Nearing the end of this academic year, I see pretty well the entire picture. Succinctly, it is one of clear impossibility unless monies are forthcoming from some source, diocesan or otherwise.”<sup>271</sup> Rather than waiting for help from the diocese, he took a proactive approach and launched several revenue generating efforts. He formed a Once-a-Month Club, mostly among his “personal friends throughout the States, whereby monthly offering is sent to us here at Holy Rosary for current expenses.” With the help of faculty and interested community members Powell reactivated the local alumni association hoping to develop a network of chapters throughout the country. It was his firm belief it would be at least twelve months before either the newly formed club and alumni chapter contributions would make a difference financially.

Powell also sought financial help for the school from private and public foundations. His enthusiasm was curtailed briefly upon learning that the Indian and Negro Mission’s \$6,000.00 annual contribution to the school had been reduced to \$3,000.00 per year. Powell complained to the bishop, “Where, pray, does the director get the money. Rosary has lived much too long in a dream world. Cards should have been put plainly on the table some years ago. It has reached crisis proportions. What a pity plans were not made years ago. They must be made now, they cannot be made realistically merely on faith without funds.”<sup>272</sup> Not one to be discouraged, he continued his proactive approach and addressed the African-American citizens of Lafayette in an

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<sup>271</sup> Reverend Elmer S. Powell to Bishop Gerard Frey, 4 May, 1977, File Number, A12L23220, Archives Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

open letter saying, “the community knows the tremendous contributions Holy Rosary Institute has made to all of Acadiana and to other parts of the country, especially in the long list of illustrious graduates and good citizens it has helped produce.”<sup>273</sup> Critical though he was of the Diocese of Lafayette, he said the bishop was committed to assist Holy Rosary in training youth of the area “in the style of excellence that is its hallmark.” But, he said, “now has come the auspicious moment in which to appeal to you, the black citizenry of the Lafayette area, which has been the recipient for the most part of what the Rosary has had to offer for sixty-five years.”<sup>274</sup> He challenged them to rededicate to the cause of Holy Rosary financially and morally calling it “a matter of race pride.” He said, “Holy Rosary has long since ceased to be a school of national importance. Whether it can continue its fine tradition depends largely on you and your support in tangible ways.” He not only issued a challenge, but joined the effort financially. He refused a salary as director. The seven Sisters of the Holy Family working at Holy Rosary also joined the effort. They agreed to divide \$1,400.00 among themselves each year to lower their expenses.<sup>275</sup> This was a far cry from the agreement the Sisters made earlier with Father Windolph. Powell also explored the possibility of selling a portion of Holy Rosary’s property as a means of raising revenue. The engineering firm of Carey Hodges Associates, Incorporated of Baton Rouge was retained to complete a land use analysis. Powell recognized that the past and present standards of the institution could not be maintained if the financial situation persisted indefinitely. He asked the firm “to determine if the overall problem might not at least be partially solved through the

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<sup>273</sup> Alfred McZeal, Editor, Southern Consumer Times, 2, 4, (May, 1978): 2.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

<sup>275</sup> The Daily Advertiser, 26 June 1978, p. 1.

conversion of presently idle and unneeded Institute properties into constructive and revenue producing utilizations, hopefully in a manner which would benefit the community as well as provide assistance to the Institute.”<sup>276</sup>

The firm began a study “to determine how much total property the Institute actually occupies, what portions of this the Institute needs for present and future continuation of the educational function for which it was founded, the physical size and shape of the remaining portion, and the highest and best income producing use for the remaining portion.”<sup>277</sup> After reviewing public records relative to real estate donations and sales, Carey Hodges concluded approximately fifty one acres were available for such use and recommended “a ground survey of the property after all now unresolved title matters have been property concluded.” It also recommended “that the Institute’s Board of Directors petition the Diocese of Lafayette to transfer title of the remaining subject property to the Institute after the survey has been effected.” It was the firm’s contention that the transfer was necessary to effectively and efficiently further “the overall specific purposes to which use of the land was initially dedicated.” In lieu of an actual transfer they suggested the Diocese of Lafayette consider a resolution authorizing the Institute’s board “to exercise at its own independent discretion, whatever means as may be required” to accomplish the purpose for which the land was initially dedicated.<sup>278</sup> Eventually, the

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<sup>276</sup> Carey Hodges, “Preliminary Report on a Land Use Analysis for Properties of Holy Rosary Institute Lafayette, Louisiana. Carey Hodges Associates, Inc., Consulting Engineers, (February, 1977), Baton Rouge, Louisiana, p. 2, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>277</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

<sup>278</sup> A search of Lafayette Parish Conveyance Records did not reveal any act of sale or donation inter vivos between the Diocese of Lafayette and the Board of Directors, Board of Trustees or Holy Rosary School Board after February, 1977 to December, 1993. Diocese of Lafayette records did not reveal the suggested resolution.

board was created, but no land transfer to it occurred.

Through Father Powell's efforts, aided by an advisory board consisting of alumni, supporters and benefactors, the troubled school was kept afloat. He engendered a period of restructure, but his efforts to gain private funding support failed to raise enough money. When he resigned in 1979, the administration of the school, in the past always in the hands of the director, became the shared responsibility of a School Board, a Board of Trustees, and the principal.<sup>279</sup> Together they committed to continuing the philosophy of superior education at Holy Rosary.<sup>280</sup> They were joined by Father James Pawlicki also a member of the Divine Word Society. His role was that of pastor, not director. Edward J. Sam was president of the Holy Rosary School Board. Correspondence to him from the bishop of Lafayette made Pawlicki and the board aware of the severity of the school's finances. They were also reminded that the Diocese of Lafayette had no Catholic schools funded by the diocese. "Every Catholic school, including Holy Rosary, is independently operated by its local Board with funds generated through local Board activity." He said, however, that Holy Rosary between the years 1974 and 1979 came close to being an exception to the policy because it presented to the Diocese unpaid bills amounting to \$120,000.00." He reminded Sam of a letter he wrote to Father Pawlicki in March, 1979, wherein he strongly encouraged "the Board of Trustees and the School Board to develop to the status of all other Catholic schools in the Diocese." He also reminded Sam that his board, the faculty and patrons of Holy Rosary "indicated in writing, and personally at meetings their intention to remain viably independent," and as such, he thought it

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<sup>279</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>280</sup> Documents creating the Board of Trustees in 1976, and the School Board in 1972 are in the Appendix.

imperative that as they planned future budgets the only diocesan money they would receive was the \$10,000.00 annual scholarship he promised.<sup>281</sup> He also issued a mandate to the Holy Rosary School Board, Board of Trustees, and administrators that from September 1979 through May, 1982 the school would operate financially under a new method of Catholic school accounting and budgeting with close monitoring for evidence “of Holy Rosary’s ability to continue financial independence beyond 1982.”

After sixty five-years of a one person directorship, the management of Holy Rosary changed dramatically. Father Powell’s departure coincided with the formation of the Board of Trustees and the Interparochial School Board. The principal functioned as the primary administrator assisted by a vice-principal and business manager.<sup>282</sup> The school’s constitution authorized the principal to perform the administrative and supervisory duties. Therefore, the principal was responsible for coordinating the entire school program in accordance with diocesan school board policies and those of the Holy Rosary Board. The business manager, an appointee of the bishop, took charge of the school’s finances. Since the school’s founding in Lafayette, the latter task was that of the director, who also intervened in administrative and supervision matters of the school. The change was instituted in part to address some of the problems delineated in the Boniface report mentioned above, and because of the bishop’s mandate.

The school board responded to the bishop’s mandate by receiving suggestions preliminary to formulating a rubric designed to assure financial stability. The business

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<sup>281</sup> Gerard L. Frey, Bishop of Lafayette to Mr. Edward J. Sam, (12, July, 1979, Lafayette, Louisiana) File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>282</sup> Constitution of the School Board Holy Rosary Institute, Article VI, (B), File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.



manager, Father Harry Quick, recommended “that the Board consider establishing a form of Endowment Plan as one means of future financial stability.”<sup>283</sup> He also suggested to the board “that a fair and four super bingos each year could help to raise the necessary funds needed for a school year.”<sup>284</sup> No board action was taken on Quick’s first recommendation. A committee headed by Eva Arceneaux was formed to implement his bingo suggestion. The city’s municipal auditorium was reserved as the site to conduct the events. Several were held but the committee’s goal to raise \$25,000.00 in 1981 was not achieved.<sup>285</sup>

Continuing its program, the board reviewed the management plans of other Catholic schools in the Diocese of Lafayette. Two options were considered. First, they discussed formation of a school district under a new corporation made up of the church parishes primarily involved with Holy Rosary. Second, they debated allowing the school board to manage the school’s property, and to function as a landlord with the ability to lease parcels of the school’s vacant acreage in exchange for the receipt of substantial rent. Father Pawlicki, the pastor, advised the board it could immediately benefit from the last option. He reported that the Diocese needed space to house a communications network “and recommended that the Board consider renting some areas of the old building to the

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<sup>283</sup> Ruby Randal, Secretary, Holy Rosary Institute Interparochial School Board, “Meeting Minutes,” 20 February, 1980, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>284</sup> Ruby Randal, Secretary, Holy Rosary Institute Interparochial School Board, “Meeting Minutes,” 16 April, 1980, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>285</sup> Rudy Randal, Secretary, Holy Rosary Interparochial School Board, “Meeting Minutes,” (17 December 1980), Lafayette, Louisiana, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

Diocese.”<sup>286</sup> The board members generally agreed with the concept of renting the space but could not because of needed repairs to the building.

The school board’s efforts were joined by those of the Board of Trustees and support groups from the African American community of Lafayette. The Trustees, in a February, 1981, meeting chaired by Charles Randal, heard a presentation by a team of staff members from the Southern Consumers Development Fund. The Fund “provides capital in the form of loans, providing some equity to low income cooperatives and community based organizations which have not been able to obtain capital from other sources.” The Fund representatives made the trustees aware that the Fund and its members were ready to assist the school in its efforts to develop and implement a plan for its future.

The board accepted the information, but reserved action. The two boards continued to meet, although separately, and to collect ideas. After two years of separate meetings and plans the attention of both boards was drawn to each board’s founding documents. Duplicitious language in each suggested the boards had overlapping responsibilities. The trusteeship “was established ... in order to seek ways and means of investing some of the eighty acres and the monies derived from such investments were to be used entirely for the support and benefit of Holy Rosary.”<sup>287</sup> The school board was established “to draw up and enact policies governing the ... financial affairs of Holy

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<sup>286</sup> Ruby Randal, Secretary, Holy Rosary Interparochial School Board, “Meeting Minutes,” (20 February, 1980), File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>287</sup> “Rules and Guidelines for the Trusteeship For the Investment of Holy Rosary Property,” File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

Rosary Institute.”<sup>288</sup>

Recognizing the overlapping duties caused the boards to question each entity’s effectiveness. Dr. R. A. Baranco, president of the school board, was invited to a meeting of the Board of Trustees to make a presentation on consolidation. Baranco noted “there was some discussion on making an effort to improve the communication between the School Board and the Board of Trustees.” He said, “obviously, misunderstandings had ensued from the lack of communication between the two groups.” It was his impression that the school “could benefit more from the resources of the community if those persons working could channel efforts through one larger organization.”<sup>289</sup> Baranco suggested the unified organization be called the Holy Rosary Foundation with committees utilized to perform functions of the trustees and school boards. There was discussion among the trustees present regarding whether there were problems with the parallel structures. The consensus “was that the idea of consolidation, or something short of full consolidation merited study. There were some problems articulated that a full consolidation may not be possible because the method of appointment was entirely different.”<sup>290</sup> Trustees were appointed by the bishop and school board members were elected from parishes. Of major concern was the possibility of losing the resources of the diocese if the Trusteeship was merged with the school board. No merger took place, and the two entities continued to operate independently.

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<sup>288</sup> Constitution of the School Board Holy Rosary Institute. Article V, Section 1, File Number A12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana. See the Appendix.

<sup>289</sup> JoAnn Nixon, Secretary, Board of Trustees, “Meeting Minutes,” 19 November, 1982. File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

In 1985 the Board of Trustees participated in a study authorized by Bishop Frey of the Lafayette Diocese and the Office of Catholic Schools. It primarily addressed concerns over the availability of a Catholic high school education on the north side of Lafayette. Holy Rosary had been a part of that community since 1913. Conducted by Father Frank Bredeweg, the study concluded that “the increasing Catholic population . . . [has] created a situation in which Catholic parents have few if any choices regarding the continuation of a Catholic education at the secondary level.” His conclusion was inaccurate. In addition to Holy Rosary, Teurlings Catholic High School was also in north Lafayette; the two schools were approximately two miles apart. “Teurlings and St. Genevieve Elementary function as one entity. There is one school board for both schools, and all financial considerations are computed jointly.”<sup>291</sup> Both Teurlings and St. Genevieve were predominately white as were four other Catholic elementary schools serving Teurlings as feeder schools.<sup>292</sup>

High school enrollment at Teurlings increased from 324 in 1982 to 448 in 1985. In 1987 enrollment capacity was estimated at 634. To accommodate additional students, capital improvements were planned that included “the addition of four temporary classrooms, a chapel, and the expansion of the cafeteria and the library.”<sup>293</sup> Holy Rosary had a chapel, large cafeteria, library and space for additional students. Its enrollment was declining, but with the necessary building repairs it could have housed the Teurlings overflow, thereby negating the need for temporary classrooms at Teurlings.

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<sup>291</sup> Father Frank Bredeweg, “Discussion Paper on Secondary Education in Northern Lafayette,” (23 April, 1985), File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>292</sup> Ibid. p. 5.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

As Bredeweg was conducting his study, the Holy Rosary Board of Trustees continued to plan for the school's future. They developed a five year capital improvement plan together with a preliminary budget of about \$4,000,000. The focus of the plan was renovation of the buildings and the addition of a new gymnasium. Phase one of the project was completed in 1985.<sup>294</sup> In discussion with Rosary administrators and board members, they shared the Trustees plan with Bredeweg and the Institute's position regarding school admission. They said, "we wish to maintain our blackness in the sense of black ownership and administrative control in order to maintain an environment where black students are not lost in a minority situation." They made it clear as Father Powell had done earlier, that Holy Rosary had an open admission policy and welcomed white students. They also reminded Bredeweg that Holy Rosary had space for four hundred students, with a planned capacity of five hundred after renovations, and an additional twenty five acres for development.

Bredeweg also held discussions with administrators, clergy and board members of Holy Family Elementary School, (formerly St. Paul's) and those of Immaculate Heart of Mary. Several persons in attendance felt strongly that two points should be part of the discussion: "the present high school shortage on the north side is in no way caused by a shortage of space." Holy Rosary welcomes all students and has space for an additional 200. Because Holy Rosary is a high school on the north side of Lafayette, it should be part of any solution<sup>295</sup> without regard to race. They emphatically stated Holy Family, Immaculate Heart and Holy Rosary "all felt that their academic programs were equal of

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<sup>294</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

any other school in the area,” and white students were welcome to enroll in their elementary grades.

Concluding his investigation, Father Bredeweg listed several options for the future of Catholic high school education in north Lafayette. One option involved new construction located in Grand Coteau, several miles from Lafayette. Others included relocating existing buildings; developing another small high school; busing students to predominately white St. Thomas More on the south side; or focusing on and expanding Holy Rosary, establishing a black-white school after renovations. He said his investigation and discussion paper was “not intended to make value judgements or express preferences, but to begin the discussion” on the future of high school Catholic education in north Lafayette.

A copy of his discussion paper was forwarded to Mother Tekakwitha Vega of the Sisters of the Holy family who requested that Sister Mary de Sales, Holy Rosary’s principal, discuss the survey with Bredeweg. She spoke with him May 1, 1985, by telephone, but decided a face to face conference would be better. They met in Lafayette on May 9, 1985. In a report prepared for Mother Tekakwitha, Sister de Sales said she made the following points to Father Bredeweg:

First, “retaining blackness” did not mean whites would not be accepted on the Holy Rosary school board. Historically, in the Diocese of Lafayette, African American Catholic schools were governed by boards consisting entirely of African Americans. Whites chose not to send their children to those schools. However, if whites were to enroll their children in formerly all black schools, blacks intended to maintain programs culturally attractive to African American children, although they would be amenable to

multi-cultural programs as well. It also meant they wanted to maintain a cultural balance on the school board.

Second, the Sisters of the Holy Family would not be amenable to having their principal at Holy Rosary replaced by a white nun. The Sisters felt very capable of administering a school with a multi-cultural and multi-ethnic student body, but experience had taught them in almost every instance of school integration, black administrators were replaced by whites. Therefore, altering the administrative staffing if whites enrolled was not necessary. In addition, school district boundaries could be drawn to result in a balanced enrollment at each school.<sup>296</sup>

Third, the bishop could solve all the problems if first he helped to renovate Holy Rosary and second, if he made a statement letting it be known that he supported Catholic education for all, and that students on the northside wishing to obtain a Catholic education are to attend either Holy Rosary or Teurlings.

Bredeweg's survey and discussions brought to the surface at least two unmistakable realities. Lafayette Catholics had not advanced socially to a point where race and school attendance did not matter. Second, the various administrators, boards and clergy were not ready to proceed with sharing responsibility, finances and facilities for Catholic students in North Lafayette regardless of race. Therefore, Holy Rosary was not going to be the flagship for Catholic secondary education on the north side.

With those realizations, Holy Rosary's alumni and friends invited persons in the general community to commit themselves "to the future of quality education of our youth at Holy Rosary." They sought matching gift pledges from employees and employers.

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<sup>296</sup> Sister Mary de Sales, Memorandum to Mother M. Teakakwitha, June, 1985, Mary de Sales file, Archives, Sisters of Holy Family, New Orleans.

They solicited various items of needed equipment for the school. The pastors of the black Catholic elementary schools in Lafayette joined in the community effort to revive Holy Rosary. They represented St. Anthony's Parish, Our Lady Queen of Peace, St. Paul's and Immaculate Heart of Mary. They were asked to distribute questionnaires to their parishioners at Sunday mass prepared by a Holy Rosary subcommittee consisting of trustees, school board members and alumni. The questionnaire was designed to obtain information from parents on their opinions regarding Holy Rosary and the future selection of a high school for their children.<sup>297</sup> The respective pastors complied and the surveys were distributed, and completed and returned to Father Doerflein at St. Paul's. Dr. R. A. Baranco, Mary Goodie, Betty Brown and Fred Prejean tabulated the results for the committee.<sup>298</sup>

“Of the respondents to the survey, 47 percent had their children in public schools, 33 percent had children in Catholic schools and 20 percent had no children in school.”<sup>299</sup> Many of the parents who responded had children at Holy Family Elementary or Immaculate Heart of Mary Elementary, and 351 high school age children, but only 44, or approximately 12 percent, were actually attending Holy Rosary. The majority reported “that they felt Catholic religious education in high school was important.” Other factors, affecting enrollment were revealed in the survey. “Eighty-three percent reported they would pay the tuition at Holy Rosary if they could afford it.” The response implied they could not afford the tuition of \$1,100.00 per year. Fifty-one percent highly valued

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<sup>297</sup> Father Michael Doerflein, Chairperson, “Memorandum to the Pastor of St. Anthony, Our Lady Queen of Peace and Immaculate Heart of Mary,” File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> Father Michael Doerflein, “Summary of the Survey of the Catholic Parishioners Concerning Holy Rosary Institute,” 1985, File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.



modern buildings, sports and extra-curricular activities for their children. Their responses indicated Holy Rosary lacked acceptable facilities and programs. “Sixty-two percent or two-thirds felt that the quality of education and teachers at Holy Rosary were only average.” When asked what they thought necessary to improve the quality of education and facilities at Holy Rosary more than half said, “the church parish should contribute to the support of Holy Rosary ... sixty-eight percent strongly believed the diocese of Lafayette should also contribute financially to Holy Rosary.” Three factors appeared to stand out as inhibiting enrollment at Holy Rosary. “Black parents consider [ed] the quality of education at Holy Rosary only average. Buildings, sports and other extra-curricular activities contribute [d] but were not considered as significantly important.”<sup>300</sup> The survey also revealed most black parents equated a quality Catholic education with instruction by members of the various religious orders. Circumstances soon developed that squarely tested their concerns.

Two years after the survey, members of the Holy Rosary School Board received information that would add to the several factors threatening the school’s existence. The Sisters of the Holy Family had served at Holy Rosary for seventy five years, but became concerned that “most of our people in Lafayette are indifferent in regard to Holy Rosary, and despite the economy, more support could have been given to the Sisters by parents and students.” Therefore, “after prayerful and serious consideration our general council has decided to withdraw our Sisters from Holy Rosary at the close of the academic year

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<sup>300</sup> Ibid.

1988 – 1989.”<sup>301</sup> The survey results highlighted the importance of instruction by the sisters and their departure affected enrollment.

Despite the departure of the nuns the board and members of the community continued to try to keep Holy Rosary open. Initiatives by the school board resulted in added revenue for the school, and policy changes were implemented to improve administrative functions and financial stability. The trustees continued to engage in dialogue with the diocese soliciting additional financial support. Other individuals and several community groups began initiatives on behalf of the school.

The Lafayette Chamber of Commerce, under the guidance of its first black president, Phyllis Coleman Mouton, initiated an Adopt-A-School Program. “Under the program, one or more local enterprises adopt, or take on as a beneficiary, an area school of their choice.”<sup>302</sup> Holy Rosary was fortunate enough to be adopted by Ventress Catering of Lafayette. Pat Sonnier Ventress, co-owner of Ventress Catering was a 1967 Holy Rosary graduate. When asked why she chose to get involved in the effort to keep Holy Rosary from withering and dying she said, “the historical background of the school and the caliber of people who graduated from there were taken into consideration.” When asked how she planned to assist in the effort she said, “we planned to hold several fund raisers throughout the school year. We sent letters to area businesses asking them to make donations to the Annual Fall Fair.”<sup>303</sup> Although the initial adoption was supposed

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<sup>301</sup> Mother M. Rose de Lima Hazeur, to Mary Goody, and School Board Members, 12 September, 1988, File D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>302</sup> Holy Rosary Institute Alumni and Friends Association, Inc. Newsletter, 15, (October 1986): 3, File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., p. 3.

to last for one year, Ventress said she believed in the school and would likely remain in the program beyond the year.

Other alumni and friends initiated an annual alumni giving fund and raised funds to award scholarships to needy Rosary students. Holy Rosary alumni living in and around the Houston, Texas, metropolitan area formed an alumni chapter to, among other things, “find means by which our support of our dear alma mater can be acted upon.” Edward Broussard repaired and restored the girls’ auditorium in memory of his son Lyle, a Rosary graduate. He contributed over \$36,000.00 in funds, excluding labor to the effort.<sup>304</sup> Pearly Arceneaux, also a graduate, joined in the effort. Addressing the alumni in the October 1986 edition of the alumni newsletter she asked, “Do you remember the old 1960 saying, “I’m Black and I’m Proud?” And whatever happened to “Black is Beautiful?” What about “I am Somebody?” She wanted to know if those pronouncements still had meaning for Holy Rosary alumni and the African American community of Lafayette. Expressing serious doubt she said, “we’ve stopped caring, we’ve stopped being somebody and eventually we stop being.” Please, she pleaded, “don’t stop caring. Don’t let Holy Rosary be taken away. Band together as parents, teachers, community leaders. Let’s work together as one. Get involved somehow. Be black. Most of all be proud.” George Babineaux, president of the Holy Rosary Parent Teachers Association chimed in saying, “I pledge to do all I can to keep Holy Rosary alive, so that it will provide a good quality Catholic education for our students.”

Several new organizations formed to assist the school, among them, the Rosary Action Committee for Education (R.A.C.E.), a concerned community group composed of

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<sup>304</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

religious and lay persons, faculty and parents, Catholic and Protestant. They developed a proposal in an attempt “to clarify the dialogue between the different members of the community of Christ, and with the hope of defining the educational needs of the Lafayette Black Catholic Community as they pertain to Holy Rosary Institute.”<sup>305</sup>

In its attempt to aid Holy Rosary chart its special course, R.A.C.E. concerned itself with three main interests, “visibility of Rosary’s image in the community, availability to the community’s constituencies, and short and long-range planning.” The group also recommended immediate outreach to various local and national groups as possible revenue sources. It presented the diocese with a revised long range five year plan containing twelve points, including, but not limited to “reorganization and strengthening the Rosary’s community relations office, and the exchange of faculty and students among the Catholic schools of the Lafayette diocese.”<sup>306</sup> R.A.C.E. stressed as did other African-American groups in their dialogue with the Lafayette diocese, “that only with an autonomous Black institution can the needs of Black Catholics be met.” Quoting Pope Paul VI they encouraged the bishop to let their community “enrich the Catholic Church with [this] valuable and unique gift of Blackness which (the church) needs – especially at this moment in her history.” To R.A.C.E. the gifts of black Catholics were to be shared with everyone, and all Catholics shared the responsibility of maintaining Holy Rosary, an institution dedicated to the church with a treasured cultural heritage.

In 1987, in the midst of the many efforts to continue Holy Rosary as a successful institution the Office of Catholic Schools and Sister Henrietta Lazare, Principal of Holy

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<sup>305</sup> R.A.C.E. “Position Paper on Holy Rosary Institute, Lafayette, Louisiana,” File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid.

Rosary, requested the commissioning of an independent study on the school's future. Joseph E. Peychaud, Jr. was chosen to conduct the study. Over a four month period his undertaking included meetings, interviews, and data collection to culminate in a report with recommendations designed "to provide assistance and, hopefully, direction to the committee on the future of Holy Rosary as they pursue viable alternatives to resolve the problems of a continuing decline in enrollment and the related financial instability which accompanies such a drastic decline."<sup>307</sup> After evaluation of the report by the committee it was presented to the Diocese of Lafayette. The Diocese and the Office of Catholic Schools would then guide, assist and coordinate efforts where deemed appropriate. Peychaud would serve as the facilitator for the diocese.<sup>308</sup>

Peychaud's investigation included a review of the school operations from the 70's through March, 1987. He noted several factors that remained consistent over prior meetings, surveys, and reports. "The administration and supporters of Holy Rosary have maintained their position in regard to the "blackness" of the school. A 1979 study stressed the need to maintain an environment "in which black students would not lose their identity." Implicit in this philosophy, Peychaud suggested, was "that strong black role models be maintained and not lost as in other integrated school situations." In an analysis of relevant data he traced the school's declining enrollment beginning in 1982 and continuing through 1987. The data revealed a 1982 enrollment of three hundred students with an annual decline of between fifty and sixty students through 1987.

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<sup>307</sup> Joseph E. Peychaud, Jr. "Discussion Paper and Recommendations to the Committee on the Future of Holy Rosary Institute," 16 March, 1987, File D12L23220 Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>308</sup> Mary Goody, Secretary, School Status Committee, "Meeting Minutes," 19 November 1986, File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana.

Enrollment in the latter year sank to one hundred thirty students. Financial records showed the effect of declining enrollment on revenue and expenses. 1982 was the only year through 1986 Holy Rosary did not incur a loss. In 1983 expenses exceeded revenues by \$83,822.00, 1984 \$44,942.00 and 1985 by \$51,547.00<sup>309</sup> Not unlike his predecessors, Peychaud also described an environment in which Holy Rosary's image had declined.

He concluded his review with seven recommendations to the committee on the future of Holy Rosary. The first was not new, but necessary if the remainder was to be implemented. He recommended the formation of a corporation "including the parishes of St. Paul the Apostle, Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Anthony Queen of Peace, and the school communities Holy Rosary, Holy Family and Immaculate Heart of Mary."

Developing a corporation he intimated would provide an entity that could hold title to all Holy Rosary property for better utilization of its financial resources. Such action, he thought, would remove the diocese from the equation and place the responsibility for finances and facilities in a centralized corporate structure. As the structure was being developed Peychaud suggested "a short term fund drive as a means of providing the necessary funds to ensure Holy Rosary remains financially solvent." He also called for an immediate infusion of liquid capital from the Lafayette diocese as that "would provide for a greater sense of security... as all work toward the necessary planning and implementation." He suggested the five year capital improvement plan that had been developed earlier by the Board of Trustees be reactivated. He stressed serious consideration be given to the "formulation of a plan to restructure Holy Rosary for the addition of an eight grade" and its feeder schools restructured to encompass only grades pre-k through seventh. Implementation he suggested, "should be gradual over two years

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<sup>309</sup> Peychaud, "Discussion Paper and Recommendations," p. 2

and would result in an immediate enrollment boost.” Tied to enrollment, Peychaud recommended reinstating a transportation component which had begun under Father Windolph, but since discontinued. Holy Rosary would again become available to students from St. Martinville, Breaux Bridge, Grand Coteau, Mire and other sites. As a final means of spurring enrollment, Peychaud recommended, “a long range plan for the possible consolidation of Holy Rosary, Holy Family, and Immaculate Heart of Mary” be considered. With the exception of Peychaud’s consolidation suggestion his recommendations essentially parroted those of prior surveys and reports conducted for the school board, trustees and the diocese. None of the group or individual efforts produced the necessary cooperation and or activity to raise the level of enrollment and income.

Three years after the Peychaud study and recommendations Mary Goody, president of the school board, lamented that “the members of the Holy Rosary School Board have given serious thoughts to the survival of Holy Rosary. In doing so we have come to grips with some hard facts.”<sup>310</sup> As a board they concluded that in order for the school to continue a minimum of one hundred students had to enroll and pay full tuition. Even then the budget, according to Goody, would have been slightly out of balance. Committed, they continued “to solicit students through a telephone survey, letters, and various announcements in the community.”<sup>311</sup> At summers end in 1991 Goody said, “only forty seven students were completely registered, seven partially registered and twenty five scholarship requests, with no resources to comply.

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<sup>310</sup> Mary Goody, to Bishop Harry Flynn 30 July, 1991, Archives, Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends, Inc., 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

Goody and the board turned again to the diocese for assistance. In a final effort to keep the school open Harry Flynn, Bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette since 1989 responded by appointing a “Blue Ribbon” task force made up of distinguished alumni, parents, and community leaders to assist Holy Rosary generate community support, and increase its enrollment.”<sup>312</sup> As the task force did its work, Flynn wrote to communities of religious men and women throughout the United States to staff Holy Rosary. The board also sought the expertise of Coley Bellamy who served as Holy Rosary’s band director in the sixties. He spent thirty-two years in the public schools teaching music and as an administrator. The Holy Rosary School Board asked him to serve as principal. He accepted the challenge and joined the board in its attempt to attract additional students. He thought “the enrollment decline stemmed from the economy in the area. People, he said, who would send their children to Holy Rosary just didn’t have the money. Turnover among administrators plagued the school, and he thought “enrollment dropped because people thought the school was going to close.”<sup>313</sup> Enrollment rose by 12 percent in 1991 and Bellamy hoped for a bigger jump to 127 students in 1992, but that did not occur. Nevertheless, efforts to save the school continued, but some factors could not be overcome.

The importance of having members of religious communities providing instruction could not be resolved. Deteriorating facilities made what once was a school situated in a panoramic garden setting far less attractive. The financial structure of Holy Rosary at Lafayette was never stable and it grew less so as enrollment declined. Fear of

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<sup>312</sup> Harry Flynn, Bishop of Lafayette, “Summary of Events Leading to Closure of Holy Rosary,” 5 August, 1993, File Number D12L23220, Archives, Diocese of Lafayette.

<sup>313</sup> Bill Decker, “A Fight to Stay Alive,” The Daily Advertiser, 3 June, 1991, p. 131, Column 1.



losing its ethnic and cultural heritage resulted in a large segment of African American Catholics interested in preserving the school to assume a fixed defensive position that made compromise nearly impossible. The Diocese of Lafayette appeared to have contributed heavily financially to Holy Rosary but a substantial portion of the funds were generated through the use of property originally acquired by Father Keller in 1913, and were due the institution. None of the bishops of the Lafayette Diocese directly addressed the issue of race. They failed or refused to stress that Catholic education should not be based on race. There was never a coordinated plan to maintain and improve the school which efficiently utilized the tremendous energy and resources expended through the combined and singular efforts of individuals and community groups.

In the end, Bishop Flynn recognized the “many good people who struggled tirelessly to keep the school open by their financial support, but with no increase in enrollment in sight he once again called for an in-depth study of the viability of the school, and was led to the inevitable conclusion that it was no longer feasible to maintain the school as a viable institution of secondary education.”<sup>314</sup> By letter Flynn notified board members, trustees, parents and the community Holy Rosary would be closed at the end of the spring semester 1993. After closing the school Flynn also proposed that the Diocese of Lafayette provide apartment dwellings for the chronically mentally ill on Holy Rosary’s property. The funds obtained through a sale of the necessary property would be dedicated to a Holy Rosary Endowment for the benefit of African American Catholics.

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<sup>314</sup> Ibid.

His proposal died, “because of the protests of area residents.” The school closed, but the story does not end.

## CHAPTER 6

Eighty years of quality educational tradition does not vanish with the closure of institutions. Holy Rosary lives in the minds and hearts of the persons whose lives were enriched throughout its existence. It is to those persons we now turn as they continue to develop plans designed to keep Holy Rosary alive and functioning as a viable community institution. Their efforts, disappointments and hopes for Holy Rosary's future are highlighted.

Jenelle Chargois graduated from Holy Rosary in 1967. After college graduation, she worked as an administrator for a short period at the school. She is now manager of Lafayette radio station, KJCB. She believes "there is still a need for schools like Holy Rosary. Many young blacks do not perform well in the open environment of public education, but flourish in a more disciplined, structured Christian setting like Holy Rosary."<sup>315</sup> Chargois was also concerned that African American students enrolled in majority white Catholic schools were not allowed equal opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities. At schools like Holy Rosary, she said, students are provided "with an atmosphere to see who you are, to give you self-esteem."

Correspondence from Bishop Harry Flynn concerning the closure of Holy Rosary gave Chargois and others hope. Flynn wrote, "It is with great sorrow and the deepest regret that I must inform you that Holy Rosary Institute will be discontinued at the end of the school term, May 28, 1993,"<sup>316</sup> but he assured those concerned that his commitment to the cause of African American education in Lafayette remained firm. Flynn appointed

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<sup>315</sup> Richard Baudoin, Lafayette, Louisiana, The Times. 5 May 1993, p. 8.

<sup>316</sup> Harry J. Flynn, Bishop of Lafayette to Principal and Holy Rosary School Board Members. (7 April, 1993). Archives, Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends, Inc., 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

a committee of sixteen citizens, and asked the committee “to develop and recommend alternative plans for the benefit of the African American community.” He also committed the diocese to repair and maintain the structures on the Holy Rosary campus. Mary Goody, a former member of the Holy Rosary School Board, served on the ad hoc committee. In an interview, she complained that the committee met on several occasions “without much success and eventually became disenchanted with the process because we never got any real feedback from the diocese, nor did it maintain the campus structures.”<sup>317</sup>

Meanwhile, Chargois and others made several unsuccessful requests to meet with Flynn. They were assisted in their efforts by Reverend George Stallings who had worked with Flynn earlier in their careers at Mount St. Mary’s Seminary in Maryland. Stallings hoped their past relationship would help to establish a dialogue. Stallings was earlier excommunicated and defrocked by the Holy See in Rome because as a priest in Washington, D. C., he continuously complained of racial conditions in the Catholic Church and because of his decision to alter the order and cultural content of the liturgical mass. After leaving the Catholic Church, Stallings founded the African American Catholic Congress and conducted liturgical services at his Imani Temple in Washington. He established a branch in Lafayette in the early nineties. Some among his Lafayette following were former Catholics and members of the Holy Rosary community.

Stallings asked Flynn “to dialogue with us, treat us as equals, as blacks in the Roman Catholic Church who seek to take ownership and control over [our] own

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<sup>317</sup> Interview with Mary Goody, 20 October 2009, 421 Carmel Drive, Lafayette, Louisiana.

destiny.”<sup>318</sup> He said, “blacks in this diocese have been lied to, they have been deceived, they have been hoodwinked and bamboozled; been made to believe there is nothing they could possibly do to save Holy Rosary.” Stalling’s entreaties to Flynn got no response, but he promised Chargois and her group “we will be heard, we will march, protest and sit in until hell freezes over. Our presence at the bishop’s residence will be continual until pharaoh comes home.” Issues of race, he said, led black members of the Catholic Church to a crossroads of faith and blacks had to decide whether to allow theirs and the future of Holy Rosary “be controlled by a white male, racist, sexist and hierarchical church.”<sup>319</sup> His comments earned him additional followers for his Imani Temple.

Receiving no response from the bishop or his staff, Stallings took action. He and two male associates appeared at the headquarters of the Diocese of Lafayette intent on meeting with Flynn. Prior to their entry, Stallings said he was prepared to be arrested. After entering the building, he and his associates proceeded to the second floor administrative offices where Sister Joan Valoni, Chancellor of the diocese informed them Flynn was out of the city. Stallings says he pressed her for a meeting with Flynn as he and her associates sat down in front of the reception desk. She, according to Stallings, said she would summon the Lafayette police to remove them. Monsignor H. A. Larroque, an aide to the bishop appeared, and read a message from Flynn indicating “Flynn would meet with members of the organization hoping to reopen Holy Rosary and Flynn would ask a black lawmaker, State Senator Don Cravins, to coordinate the meeting.” Stallings and his associates remained seated until the offices closed. The police never arrived.

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<sup>318</sup> Dominick Cross, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, The Advocate, 29 July, 1993, p.36.

<sup>319</sup> Bill Decker, Lafayette, Louisiana, The Daily Advertiser, 7 July, 2001, 11.

On his return to the city, Flynn issued a statement which was read at Sunday masses in the diocese. In it, he acknowledged since his decision to close Holy Rosary became public much confusion over it existed in the community. He wanted “to make clear his commitment to serve the African American community as its bishop. The facilities at Holy Rosary will play a very important role in sustaining the intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development of our African American brothers and sisters as we plan for the future.”<sup>320</sup>

As promised in the message delivered by Larroque in early August, 1993, Stallings, Chargois, Donald Fuselier, Benjamin Burns, both local African American attorneys, Senator Cravins and others met with Flynn at the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Center in Lafayette. Flynn did not commit to reopen the school but committed to maintain a dialogue saying, “the school will continue to serve Lafayette’s African American community, although not necessarily as a high school.”<sup>321</sup> After the meeting, Flynn told the local press about two other Catholic schools in the diocese that closed only to reopen a few years later. He would not rule out the same occurring with Holy Rosary. He also said, he met with a African American psychologist prior to meeting with Rosary supporters “about starting a parenting program for the diocese at Holy Rosary.” He concluded the press conference reminding the faithful that Stallings had separated himself from the church and “discouraged blacks from leaving the Roman Catholic Church to join the African American Catholic Congregation founded by Stallings.”

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<sup>320</sup> The Lafayette Sunday Advertiser, 1 August, 1993, p. A1.

<sup>321</sup> Bill Decker, Lafayette, Louisiana, The Daily Advertiser, 3, August, 1993, Lafayette, Louisiana.

Flynn may have been well intentioned in his commitment to the African American Catholic community of Lafayette, but he was unable to keep his promises. He was transferred the next year to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Mary Goody is convinced his transfer was precipitated at least partly because of his decision to assist Holy Rosary. Holy Rosary supporters, she said, did not get the same level of openness or cooperation from his successors. Concerned members of the groups hoping to reopen the school continued to meet, Goody among them. She said, however, numbers declined and eventually the movement became dormant. But two years after closure, activity returned to the Rosary campus in the form a student referral center.

“In the 1991-92 academic year Louisiana recorded 128,000 school suspensions and it was estimated that forty percent of the 225,000 ninth graders would probably not complete high school.”<sup>322</sup> Student referral centers were being opened in each of eight Louisiana regions. The Diocese of Lafayette was “the only Catholic referral center in the state.” The purpose of the center was to “supplement what is being missed due to suspension. The center was designed to increase the number of students successfully completing high school, and to decrease the number of high school students who were teenage fathers or mothers, on drugs or committing crimes.”<sup>323</sup> It was a modest beginning for what was perceived as an answer to an acute community problem. The center was eventually relocated. Its removal resulted in the further deterioration of the buildings and grounds on the Rosary campus.

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<sup>322</sup> Barbara Gutierrez, “New Student Referral Center located at Holy Rosary Institute.” The Acadiana Catholic, March 1995, p. 5.

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

Gloria Linton is from Rayne, Louisiana. She was sent to Holy Rosary by her parents in 1945. She was not a resident student. She lived with relatives in Lafayette because her family could not afford boarding fees and tuition. In an interview, she said, she was only able to remain at Holy Rosary for the third, fourth and fifth grade. She returned to school in Rayne. As an adult, she and her family moved to Lafayette. After a domestic separation, in 1999, she purchased a house near the Holy Rosary campus. Passing the deteriorating campus daily, witnessing the conditions there, “was very painful, made her angry and caused her to engage others in conversations about the situation.” She is a member of C.R.E.O.L.E., Incorporated, a non-profit Lafayette organization formed in 1987. The purpose of the organization is to “identify, preserve and promote the numerous aspects of the Creole culture of Southwest Louisiana.”<sup>324</sup> Several other organization members are also Holy Rosary graduates. Together with Linton, they developed a renewed interest in reviving and preserving Holy Rosary. A second non-profit organization, Holy Rosary Institute Alumni and Friends Association, Inc. with Linton and Jerri Caillier as co-founders sprang from C.R.E.O.L.E., Incorporated. Formation of the new organization meant its entire focus and energy would be devoted to restoring the campus. It did not mean C.R.E.O.L.E., Inc., would abandon its own involvement in the revival.

Reverend Chester Arceneaux, Director of Black Catholic Ministries for the Diocese of Lafayette, and a Holy Rosary graduate began discussions with Creole about locating its headquarters on the Rosary campus. Two of the five campus buildings were being used. The old Heymann Hall was being renovated for a Headstart Center.

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<sup>324</sup> Lafayette Convention and Visitors Commission. “C.R.E.O.L.E., Inc.,” P. O. Box 52066, Lafayette, Louisiana, 70505.



Assumption Hall, the former high school building was being used by Volunteers of America, a national non-profit organization that helps at-risk youth, the elderly and abused citizens.<sup>325</sup> Creole did not immediately locate its headquarters in Windolph Hall, but the alumni group did and continues to maintain offices in the facility. Creole would eventually join them.

Late June, 2001 members of the newly formed alumni group met at the Immaculata Center and began discussions on “how should the school best be preserved and put to use.” The answer depended on “whether alumni and the Roman Catholic Diocese of Lafayette could put aside the politely expressed but lingering divisions dating to Bishop Harry J. Flynn’s decision to close the school.”<sup>326</sup> Reverend Arceneaux relayed a message of support from Bishop Edward O’Donnell, Flynn’s successor. But Arceneaux also said, O’Donnell wanted to be assured that the effort to preserve and develop Holy Rosary had “clear goals and leaders who are devoted to the community’s welfare.” Jerri Caillier, a former public school official and member of the alumni group responded to Arceneaux. “Is the bishop willing to work with us if we’re willing to work with him, I want to see a vision. I want to see organization and structure.” Other alumni expressed serious concerns that the new bishop might not commit himself to the project. One audience member suggested the lack of trust in the bishop demanding O’Donnell put his support in writing. Arceneaux attempted to reassure the group of O’Donnell’s support.

Uncertainty over the issue of support did not deter the group from its mission, how best to restore and use the school. They proposed renovating the three story building built in 1914 and “using it for apartments to be used by senior citizens or the

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<sup>325</sup> Sonja Sherree, “Group Pushes for Prosperity,” The Daily Advertiser, 14 May, 2001, p. A4.

<sup>326</sup> Bill Decker, “Alumni Seek A Vision,” The Daily Advertiser, 1 July, 2001, p. 11.

handicapped. The building would generate money to be used for more development work.<sup>327</sup> Glen Richard of Bank One's community reinvestment division was present and spoke to the group regarding the possible availability of reinvestment tax credits. He said, programs like the one discussed by the group sometimes draws the interest of private investors because of the potential tax credits.

After several organizational and planning meetings, the alumni group met again with Arceneaux. Items for discussion during the August, 2002, meeting included but were not limited to, authorizing the executive board to oversee the restoration project, possible annual funding from the Negro and Indian Missions, meeting with the bishop about transferring Holy Rosary property to a non-profit, renovation of space for social service and health care centers, cleaning and using the cafeteria and kitchen area at Rosary by Creole, Inc., and the alumni group; beginning an annual fund drive for Holy Rosary with participating church parishes in the Lafayette diocese; a start date for grant writing and fund raising and the possibility of conducting a multi-cultural family festival in 2003 on the Rosary campus.<sup>328</sup>

One month after meeting with Arceneaux, Caillier wrote to him inquiring about the issues discussed in the August, 2002 meeting. Specifically, she requested authority to commence and complete the cafeteria cleaning project.<sup>329</sup> She also inquired about the status of the approval of the multi-cultural festival. The former activity was approved because in a letter to Arceneaux, Caillier reported the success of the clean-up project

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<sup>327</sup> Ibid.

<sup>328</sup> Jerri Caillier, President, Holy Rosary Alumni, "Meeting Agenda," 7 August, 2002, Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends, Inc., Minute Book, 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>329</sup> Jerri Caillier to Father Chester Arceneaux. Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends, Inc., Records, 4 September, 2002, 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

completed September 28, 2002. She credited Chuck Domingue, owner of Advanced Chemical and Janitorial Supplies, Inc., brothers of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., alumni members and friends from Abbeville, New Iberia, St. Martinville, Lafayette and Natchitoches, Louisiana with providing materials and human power to complete the project.

Caillier, Goody, and Linton share membership in Creole, Inc. and Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends. As their organizations continued to seek approval and support from the diocese for Holy Rosary projects, individually they also sought assistance from other agencies. They sought and received help from representatives of the Smithsonian Museum and the Museum Division, Louisiana Department of Culture and Tourism. They envisioned locating a museum in the three story brick building using its listing on the National Register of Historic Places as support for possible funding. According to Linton, Charles Siler, a Southern University Fine Arts graduate, and curator on the staff of the Museum Division of the Louisiana Department of Culture and Tourism, joined their effort. According to Linton, representatives from the Smithsonian traveled to Lafayette and conducted a museum planning seminar for Creole and alumni members at the Immaculata Center. Due to the condition of the three story building, however, museum plans were placed on hold. Instead, Linton said, Creole and alumni members displayed many of the items chosen for the museum at the Lafayette Natural History Museum and Planetarium in 2003. The museum is still an option.

In keeping with plans discussed with Arceneaux in their original meeting, Linton, and Caillier continued to press him for approval of the proposed multi-cultural festival.

They also mentioned a new project, a walk-a-thon to be used as a fund raiser.<sup>330</sup> Hearing nothing from Arceneaux, Linton wrote a second letter stressing the urgency of a response.<sup>331</sup> The Walk-a-Thon was approved by the diocese and held March 15, 2003, with Bishop Michael Jarrell, O'Donnell's successor, as a participant. Linton said, "the Lord really smiled on us that day because it was as bright and sunny as the spirit within each of the participants." Never missing an opportunity to stress the association's commitment to restoring and preserving Holy Rosary, during the event Linton requested a meeting between Jarrell and "representatives of H.R.I., Inc. and C.R.E.O.L.E., Inc. to come to a finalization of the lease agreement for the cafeteria and office space, and other matters discussed with Arceneaux." Each day, Linton said, "we are feeling the urgency of this lease agreement to become effective because each day we are seeing "Grant Funding, Deadlines passing us by."<sup>332</sup>

With the help of Dr. Judy H. Armstrong, Director of Louisiana Region II Service Center at Southeastern Louisiana University in Hammond, Louisiana, Linton, Caillier and other group members obtained information on "approximately fifty grant sources" for which the groups were eligible. Linton claimed they could lose access to at least \$250,000.00 annually for five years from the State of Louisiana if the lease was not in place before April 5, 2003.

Group representatives also contacted faculty members of the University of Louisiana at Lafayette for project planning support. Greg Crandell of the Department of

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<sup>330</sup> Jerri Caillier and Gloria T. Linton to Reverend Chester Arceneaux. 16 December 2002, Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends, Records, 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>331</sup> Gloria T. Linton to Reverend Chester Arceneaux. 8 January 2003, Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends, Records, 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>332</sup> Gloria T. Linton to Most Reverend Bishop, Michael C. Jarrell. 21 March 2003, H. R. I., Inc., Records, 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

Business Administration and Nathan Thornton of the Micro Business Development Center were “ready and waiting to work with us in the area of grant writing and small business development” according to Linton. She also reported to Jarrell that Bernard DuMond of the Institute of School and Parish Development of New Orleans agreed to assist in capital campaign development and staff and volunteer training. Help was also promised by representatives of the Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce. The Holy Rosary project also benefitted from a celebration honoring Chanda Rubin, a Lafayette native who in 2003 was the eighth ranked woman professional tennis player in the world. More than three hundred people attended the event. “City-Parish Council member Chris Williams said he attended the event for two reasons: to honor Rubin and to help raise funds for Holy Rosary Institute, from which his father graduated.”<sup>333</sup>

Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends hosted a third fundraiser December 14, 2003, at Lafayette’s hotel Acadiana. They conducted a “silent auction and Christmas sales” event. Contemporary Expressions, and Wholesale Distributors donated items for the occasion.<sup>334</sup> Organization members from both groups were confident their plans and activities were sufficiently developed for Jarrell to recognize their commitment to the Holy Rosary project. In support of their continued efforts, Jarrell and Arceneaux received letters from an important source. Important because they came from Sister Monica Loughlin, President of the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament; the religious order founded by Saint Katharine Drexel. It was Drexel who much earlier made monetary

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<sup>333</sup> Brittain Quibodeaux. “Banquet Honors Lafayette Tennis Star,” The Advertiser, 24 November, 2003, p. 2C.

<sup>334</sup> “Silent Auction to Benefit Holy Rosary Institute,” Acadiana Catholic, 30 December, 2003, Lafayette, Louisiana, p. 30.

contributions to Father Keller's effort in Galveston and Lafayette. Loughlin assured the bishop of the prayers of her sisters as he "faced the pressure of trying to balance the cost of restoration with the sentimental and historical impact of a sight [site] such as Holy Rosary Institute."<sup>335</sup> She noted the importance of the presence of the laity in searching for creative solutions to the challenges facing the Holy Rosary community.

After ten years of meetings, task forces, proposals, delayed and inconsistent responses failed to convince Jarrell of their ability to lead the effort to restore and preserve Holy Rosary, Creole and the alumni group sought the assistance of the Lafayette Consolidated Government. Its Comprehensive Planning Division responded and produced a set of proposed concepts for the Rosary site. Stated objectives of the proposal were "to create a thriving educational atmosphere at the site of the historically relevant building of Holy Rosary Institute; and to restore Holy Rosary Institute to its former stately presence with money-generating operations."<sup>336</sup> Ideas for development in the proposal included a world studies institute, green training facilities, an earth share gardens partnership, a culinary school and an assisted living unit.

The mission statement of the World Studies Component mandated the creation of "a center of academic excellence that strengthens Lafayette's cultural assets, enhances quality of life, serves as a driver of economic development, generator of income, and economic opportunity for citizens"<sup>337</sup> The planners suggested start up costs be achieved through grants, donations and awards. The Green Training Component included training

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<sup>335</sup> Sister Monica Loughlin to Very Reverend Michael Jarrell. 27 February 2003, H. R. I., Inc. Records, 421 Carmel Drive, Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>336</sup> Lafayette Consolidated Government; Comprehensive Planning Division. Holy Rosary Institute Historic Preservation Endeavor, H. R. I., Records, 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid., p.5.

for vocational or trade level workers that would consist of “electricians who install solar panels, plumbers installing solar water heaters, construction workers building energy efficient green buildings and wind power farms.”<sup>338</sup> The Culinary Component included the renovation of the kitchen, dining hall, and a new café. Once completed, senior meal memberships, accreditation classes for serious culinary students, and rooms for private parties and events would generate income and defray renovation costs. It would support the assisted living component by providing healthy meals for seniors and walk-ins. To complete the project, the planners recommended the existing gym facilities be rented for tournaments, dance classes, auctions, job fairs, and family reunions to be catered by the culinary component. In essence, they created a project with interrelated components, designed to support each sector.

Since 1999, Creole, Inc., and Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends, Inc., have worked consistently to build alliances with many entities. They hoped that through the alliances the historic building would not only be restored but used by the entire Lafayette community. They also hoped hard feelings by some would be put to rest and because of their work, the diocese would relent, grant them possession of the Rosary property and the authority to implement their plans for restoration and preservation.

According to Linton, the diocese committed to restoring one of the out buildings of the school, the large Windolph Hall which served as the school’s cafeteria.<sup>339</sup> They wanted a larger commitment from the diocese, “Linton enlisted the assistance of Felton Prosper, project manager with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers’ Project Management

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<sup>338</sup> Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>339</sup> Beverly Corbell, “Holy Rosary Closed in ’93 Due to Low Enrollment,” The Daily Advertiser, 19 September, 2004, p. 1.

Division. Prosper said they partner with the Environmental Protection Agency to clean up historic sites.”<sup>340</sup> They were willing to consider Holy Rosary as a project site, but the diocese needed to authorize the work. No such authority was granted resulting in another missed opportunity for the diocese to demonstrate its sincerity to the African American Catholic community and to defray the cost of what it would ultimately become responsible for; demolition of all campus structures. Instead, the diocese in 2005, resorted to a practice utilized previously, the appointment of another sixteen member Holy Rosary Institute Task Force. Membership this time included nine priests, a deacon, two representatives from the Sisters of the Holy Family, and only four lay persons. Jerri Caillier of Creole, Inc., and the alumni association was one of the four lay members.

Task force minutes reveal that it did nothing more than had been accomplished by prior diocesan task forces or committees. In fact, the minutes indicate the discussions held re-stated issues left undecided by prior entities with little hope for resolution by the latest task force.<sup>341</sup> Some examples of the rehashed issues considered are, the seeking of in-kind services, contacting local political entities, holding town hall meetings, and the appointment of an advisory board. Each of the above had been considered previously only to have been re-visited over a twelve year period. Therefore, vacant, weather worn buildings continued to deteriorate. The roof of the three story building began to collapse causing severe damage to the interior and antique furnishings. The interior of the chapel had to be gutted.

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<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> Stephanie Bernard and Bernadette Derouen, Facilitators, “Minutes,” (31 May, 2005), Office of Black Catholic Ministries of Lafayette, Archives, Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends, Inc., 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.



It must have appeared to all who were working for restoration and preservation that the diocese hoped the passage of time together with its inaction would allow climatic conditions to decide the fate of the historic edifices at the site. It also appears the diocese underestimated the faith and determination of the worker bees from the alumni group and Creole, Inc. Linton described their resolve, “it’s a leap of faith, but I just can’t give up hope. I feel that this is my mission, that God wants me to do this.”<sup>342</sup>

Linton, the alumni association and CREOLE kept toiling realizing that the Catholic Diocese of Lafayette was not going to relinquish complete ownership of the Holy Rosary property and its revenue producing facilities to either Creole, Inc., the Holy Rosary Alumni Association Inc., or a new non-profit. The latter would have served to accept the property to restore, preserve and create additional revenue producing community entities. They decided to shift the focus away from continual pleas to the bishop for assistance and instead take their cause directly to the Lafayette community with a multi-cultural agenda.

The many meetings and the exchange of correspondence, however, among members of Creole, the alumni, and the diocese did result in an occasional positive response. For example, the diocese reversed a decision it made to demolish the gymnasium on the Holy Rosary campus. The gym was constructed under Brother Stillfried’s supervision. His male students were responsible for all but concrete, steel and the roof. Bernadette Derouen, President of the alumni association, presented Bishop Jarrell with the group’s objections to the planned demolition. The gym, according to Derouen, “served as an educational and recreational facility for African American youth

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<sup>342</sup> Beverly Corbell. “Holy Rosary Closed in ’93 Due to Low Enrollment,” The Daily Advertiser, 19 September, 2004.

since it was built in the 1950's." It was constructed, she said, "by a Christian brother from the S.V.D. congregation along with students who were then boarding from other states and localities in Louisiana."<sup>343</sup> She said the students were taught the value of hard work and quoted a former student who recalled his work on the building "as indelibly marked in his mentality and most vital to his development." Derouen recommended possible alternate uses for the building. Jarrell responded by placing the demolition on hold. The gym survived and according to Linton and Goody alternate plans are underway for its continued use, subject to major repairs.

The diocese also followed through on its commitment to renovate Windolph Hall. It was constructed in 1966, renovated and re-dedicated September 29, 2007 by Bishop Michael Jarrell. Alumni and Friends expressed regards to him "for his commitment to continue the work of his predecessors by focusing on the potential for contemporary evangelical initiatives at Holy Rosary Institute."<sup>344</sup> Their expression of appreciation was offered with the hope other projects that had been discussed for several years would be completed. In retrospect, it was the last opportunity for an expression of appreciation. Other than renovation of Windolph Hall and the retention of the gym, the alumni association received little positive assistance from the Diocese of Lafayette regarding the restoration of the Holy Rosary campus. Therefore, a decision was again made to promulgate their plans in the general community.

In October, 2008 the Alumni Association held the first in a series of community town hall meetings under the banner "Holy Rosary Renaissance." Those who were able

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<sup>343</sup> Bernadette Derouen to Reverend Michael Jarrell, Bishop, 13 June, 2007, Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends, Inc. Records. 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>344</sup> Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends Association, Inc., "Dedication Program," 29 September, 2007, Holy Rosary Alumni, 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana.

to attend “were excited, motivated and eager to share their dreams and visions for the project.”<sup>345</sup> They discussed “day care programs for infants and seniors; community health, information and referral services and a state of the art technology installation, among other programs.”<sup>346</sup>

In May, 2009, a second meeting was held as a Lafayette Parish town hall meeting on historic preservation. This time, the meeting was held in Windolph Hall on the Rosary campus. Mike Hollier, Planning Manager for the City and Parish of Lafayette coordinated the meeting. According to Linton, discussion of the preservation of the Holy Rosary main building dominated the meeting. The alumni group was made aware of the Community Foundation of Acadiana as a possible private funding source and were apprised of available public resources, federal, state and local. For eight years the alumni struggled to preserve the campus’ historic site. Hollier told those in attendance, “Now is the time, this site [Holy Rosary] is among the top ten endangered historic sites in the state.” He said, in 2010, “a preservation plan for the parish [of Lafayette] should be complete.” The plan, he said, “will include a revolving fund to offer public and private entities access to low interest loans and grants.”<sup>347</sup> Linton said, “the possibilities are many and will need to be discussed with the bishop.” Bernadette Derouen said, “any development on the site will need to be a merger of the secular and spiritual.” Hollier said, “We are here to facilitate.”<sup>348</sup>

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<sup>345</sup> Gloria Linton to Parish Life coordinator, Diocese of Lafayette, 20 October, 2008, Holy Rosary Alumni and Friends Association, Inc., 421 Carmel Drive, Lafayette, Louisiana.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid.

<sup>347</sup> Marsha Sills. “Historic School May be Saved,” The Advocate, p. 13.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid., p. 32.

September, 2009, the alumni association held its annual “Graduates of Distinction Banquet.” In addition to honoring Thomas E. Roque, Sr., Holy Rosary Class of 1968, Dr. Kenneth E. Brown, Class of 1964 and Thomas Nelson, Class of 1957; the association also used the opportunity to introduce its blue print for the future of Holy Rosary to the large audience. Thomas Roque, Sr., is the Assistant Superintendent of Natchitoches Parish Public Schools. He has a Master’s Degree and is currently working towards his Ed.D at Grambling State University in higher education administration.”<sup>349</sup> Kenneth Brown is a Dillard University graduate, received his medical education at Howard University and completed his residency at Louisiana State University hospitals. Dr. Brown “serves as a private provider in gynecology and obstetrics and has held numerous positions as a hospital administrator and community advocate for improved health care.”<sup>350</sup> Thomas Nelson “is an entrepreneur, politician and family oriented individual. He broke long standing racial barriers by becoming the first African American to hold the office of Vice-President and later President of the Police Jury in his beloved St. Martin Parish. He is now Mayor of St. Martinville, Louisiana.”<sup>351</sup>

In a continuing effort to gain support and new members the alumni association also began a membership drive with Anatole Garrett serving as chairperson. It is continuing, and has been helped along through Holy Rosary’s inclusion in a “Preservation Celebration” by the Louisiana Trust for Historic Preservation at Nottoway Plantation, White Castle, Louisiana. Holy Rosary’s inclusion on the list of endangered

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<sup>349</sup> Holy Rosary Institute Alumni and Friends Association, Inc., “Graduates of Distinction, 2009.” (6 September, 2009), 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana, p. 6.

<sup>350</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 7.

<sup>351</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

sites by the Trust has created state and national interest in its preservation. Linton, Goody, Derouen and their members are now beginning “to smell the sweet scent of success,” says Linton. The added state and national attention has also brought a new partnership that will likely lead to the formation of a new non-profit, Xavier University of New Orleans, established in 1925 by the Blessed Sacrament Sisters, and founded by St. Katharine Drexel is expected to be a partner. One major concern remains, however, whether the Diocese of Lafayette will be sufficiently convinced of the probable success of the new venture to honor the language in the donation by the Holy Family Sisters to the diocese in 1930 which said, “It is thereby expressly stipulated that said property shall be used for the purpose of conducting a school for the education in religious and secular knowledge for colored people, or if for any reason whatever it should be found necessary to dispose of the above described property, the proceeds derived from said sale shall be used for the purchase of another site and the construction and maintenance of a similar institution, or, if it is found impossible to further continue this school, work, then and in that event the proceeds derived from the sale of said property shall be used to carry on such other work for the colored people in the diocese of Lafayette as may be determined by the bishop.”<sup>352</sup> Whatever the bishop decides, Holy Rosary Institute continues to live in the hearts and minds of its alumni and friends. It will reappear, in what form and function is all that remains.

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<sup>352</sup> Act of Donation. Sisters of the Holy Family to the Diocese of Lafayette. (24 September, 1930), Accepted by the Diocese of Lafayette, (18 July, 1931), recorded, Clerk of Court, Parish of Lafayette, Conveyance Records, (9 June, 1939).

## CONCLUSION

Perhaps on rare occasions institutions simply develop because of a singular individual's desire to accomplish a specific purpose. More frequently that occurs in circumstances involving singular individuals who are credited with creating items or technological advancements that benefit the general populous. Holy Rosary Institute was founded and developed by an individual whose purpose it was to "lift a race." Circumstances in world history however set events in motion that coincided with its founding and benefited the general populous.

Colonialism, Roman Catholicism, slavery, and political economy gave rise to the realization that such schools were needed. Civil authorities in Louisiana made little if any effort to satisfy the need in Texas or Louisiana. Religious orders stepped forward in an attempt to fill the void. Jules B. Jeanmard, former bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette discussing the out migration of African Americans from the South in the early twentieth century and the agricultural labor needs of the southern United States said in his opinion, "the South needed the Negro more than the Negro the South." Therefore, some manner of formal education was needed, and African Americans too would have to benefit. Initially, the benefit was collateral in nature. In the early twentieth century those collateral benefits converted into self help initiatives and African American religious orders were founding and helping to found and develop their own institutions. Holy Rosary's growth, in part was due to their efforts. It grew from an industrial school for girls, to a normal school providing basic teacher training, to a college preparatory high school with combined academic and technical curricula.

Hundreds of young African Americans graduated from Holy Rosary, continued their education, and took their places among the world's most successful citizens. As Holy Rosary evolved, changing conditions gave rise to factors that ultimately led to the incubator's closing. Those factors, though perhaps not exclusive, were 1) the continual inability of the school's administrators to develop a stable revenue stream and financial base for the school; 2) eventually constitutional challenges to the "separate but equal doctrine" that had served as the basis for segregated schools and facilities in Louisiana, and other places affected the school's enrollment; 3) closure of the boarding department also greatly affected enrollment because it provided the bulk of the school's revenue; 4) failure on the part of the leaders of the Diocese of Lafayette to more forcefully demonstrate the need to eliminate race from its ecumenical services and schools; 5) the failure or refusal of leaders of the Lafayette diocese to abide by its commitment to dedicate any and all revenue obtained from Holy Rosary property to the school's needs; 6) the inability of the many group and individual supporters working to keep Holy Rosary open to develop and follow through on a comprehensive, realistic plan for its revival.<sup>353</sup>

Father Keller's founding intent was attained, the Sisters of Holy Family and members of the Society of the Divine Word provided an educational jewel that "lifted the race" only to realize

One day a hush will fall. The footsteps of us all  
will echo down the halls and disappear, but as we  
sadly start our journeys far apart, a part of every

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<sup>353</sup> It is important to consider that as Holy Rosary struggled financially, St. Thomas More High School and the Bishop Jules B. Jeanmard Center for Religious Learning were completed in the Diocese of Lafayette in 1982, at a total cost of \$8,294,000. More than one-fourth of the total cost, \$3,000,000 was raised through a development drive conducted in the church and school parishes of the Diocese of Lafayette. In the study by Father Frank Bredweg in the appendix, Holy Rosary, a part of the Diocese of Lafayette, requested unsuccessfully to share in the proceeds of the development drive. According to Bredweg, it would have only cost \$285,000 to satisfy the immediate capital improvement needs at Holy Rosary.

heart will linger here in the sacred halls of Rosary  
where we have lived and learned to know, that  
thru the years we'll see you in the sweet afterglow.<sup>354</sup>

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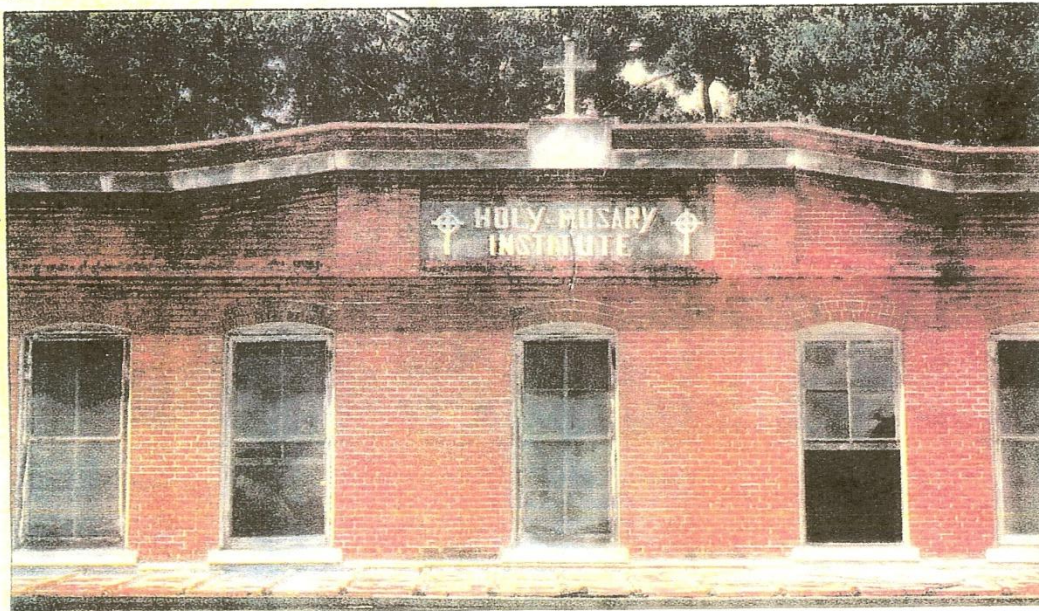
<sup>354</sup> Holy Rosary Institute, "Alma Mater."



# ENDANGERED

Lafayette landmark  
faces uncertain future

# heritage



Vandals have broken the windows of this building on the campus of the now-abandoned Holy Rosary Institute. The school that served the African-American community for more than 75 years has been named one of the 10 Most Endangered Sites in Louisiana by the Louisiana Preservation Alliance.

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Acadiana Profile, Lafayette, Louisiana

Advocate, Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Eaglette, Lafayette, Louisiana

Daily Advertiser, Lafayette, Louisiana

Golden Jubilee of Holy Rosary Parish, 1888-1938. Galveston, Texas

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Life Magazine

Monsignor William J. Teurlings Diamond Sacredotal Jubilee Book. Lafayette,

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Times, Lafayette Louisiana

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Louisiana Department of Education Annual Reports. Baton Rouge.

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### **INTERNET SITES**

<http://www.verbumdei.us/general/facts>.

<http://www.usccb.org/saac/bishopspagtoral.shtml>

### **INTERVIEWS**

Interview of Mary Goody, 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana

Interview of Gloria Linton, 421 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette, Louisiana

Interview of Sister Carolyn Leslie, Sister of the Holy Family, New Orleans, Louisiana

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## APPENDICES

### Constitutions of the School Board

Holy Rosary Institute

Lafayette, Louisiana

#### ARTICLE I

DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE  
ARCHIVES / RESEARCH & INFORMATION

##### General Statements

1. Holy Rosary Institute is an educational institution under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the Bishop of Lafayette.
2. Holy Rosary Institute is staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Family, Divine Word Missionary priests and Brothers and a lay faculty, for the express purpose of providing Catholic Education to the girls and boys of the Diocese of Lafayette.

#### ARTICLE II

##### Organization of the Board

##### A. Membership

1. The School Board of Holy Rosary Institute shall consist of:
  - a. Two elected lay members from each of those parishes comprising the largest percentage of students to the enrollment of Holy Rosary Institute. (All parents will be represented through the members of these key parishes.)
  - b. The pastor of each parish comprising the largest percentage of students to the enrollment of Holy Rosary Institute.
2. The pastor of Holy Rosary School Community and the principal shall be ex-officio, non-voting members of the Board.
3. The business manager, or the Bishop's appointee shall be ex-officio, a voting member of the Board.

##### B. Length of terms

1. Each member of the Board shall serve a two-year term except for the original elected members of which one-half of the members will serve a three-year term.
2. No voting member shall serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.
3. Each member of the Board has one (1) vote.
4. The pastor of Holy Rosary School Community reserves the right to veto any act of the Board judged by him to be contrary or in any way harmful to the practice of religion, the content of Faith and Morals or the laws of the Catholic Church.
5. In the event that a member of the Board has been absent from

three (3) consecutive meetings, the remaining members of the Board may, at their discretion, determine and declare that a vacancy exists. Upon such a declaration, such a member shall be deemed to have resigned. Whenever a vacancy occurs on the Board, the remaining members shall appoint a replacement to fill the vacancy until the next annual selection. The remaining unexpired term will determine the terms of the office for the selected replacement.

ARTICLE III

DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE  
ARCHIVES / RESEARCH & INFORMATION

Officers

1. The officers of the Board shall consist of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Secretary, all of whom shall be elected annually by the Board membership at the regularly scheduled June meeting.
2. No Board member may hold the same office for more than two (2) consecutive terms.

ARTICLE IV

Meetings

1. The Board shall meet regularly on the third Wednesday of each month of the calendar year, with the exception of July; or according to the discretion of the Board.
2. The principal, through the Chairman of the Board, or a majority of the Board may call a meeting of the Board at any time.
3. The rules of parliamentary practice contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the proceedings of the Board.
4. A majority of the whole number of the Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.
5. Meetings of the Board are open to parents of children in the school and all interested persons. Guests may address the Board only upon request by a member of the Board. The Board reserves the right of executive session.

ARTICLE V

Duties of the Board

1. In accordance with the Canon Law of the Catholic Church and the Synodal Law of the Diocese of Lafayette, as well as the Regulations and Policies of the Diocesan School Board and the Diocesan Department of Education, the School Board of Holy Rosary Institute is empowered to draw up and enact policies governing the administrative, academic and financial affairs of Holy Rosary Institute.

ARTICLE VI

Duties of the Pastor of the Holy Rosary School Community

Duties of the Principal

Rights of the Business Manager

DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE  
ARCHIVES / RESEARCH & INFORMATION

- A. The Pastor of Holy Rosary School Community will function in areas of pastoral care. He will minister to the spiritual needs of the Holy Rosary School Community.

His duties are further delineated in the official job description (Fall, 1978) of the Pastor of the Holy Rosary School Community.

B. The Principal

1. The principal of Holy Rosary Institute shall perform the administrative and supervisory duties. In general, the principal is responsible for coordinating the entire school program in accordance with the Diocesan School Board policies and those of the Holy Rosary School Board. The principal's duties are delineated in the Diocesan Administrators' Manual (cf. #1320).
2. The principal is recognized as head of the school in all matters of academic administration and has the responsibility of supervision and assignment of school personnel after proper consultation with the Board.

DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE  
ARCHIVES / RESEARCH & INFORMATION

C. The Pastor of the School Community

The Pastor of the School Community shall also function in the following manner:

1. The Pastor of the School Community shall be a non-voting, ex-officio member of the Board.
2. The Pastor of the School Community, along with the principal, shall represent the School at all functions at which there is need for public relations.

D. The Business Manager

The Business Manager or the Bishop's appointee shall be a voting ex-officio member of the Board.

ARTICLE VII

Amendments

These Constitutions may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the total membership of the Board. All members of the Board shall be presented with a written proposal of the amendment at least two (2) weeks prior to the meetings at which the voting will take place.

APPROVED:

+ *Herold L. Frey*

Bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette (La.)

DATE:

*August 11, 1978*

DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE  
ARCHIVES / RESEARCH & INFORMATION



**DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE**  
P. O. DRAWER 3387  
LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA 70502

October 9, 1986

Sister Henrietta Lazare, SSF  
Principal, Holy Rosary Institute  
421 Carmel Avenue  
Lafayette, LA 70501

Dear Sister Henrietta:


I was pleased to learn from Sister Myra Banquer of the initiative taken by the Holy Rosary School Board to study in conjunction with Holy Family School and Immaculate Heart of Mary School the feasibility of alternative plans to insure the future of Catholic education for Black Catholics in the Lafayette area.

I am encouraged that this initiative is coming from the grass root level. The strength of the recommendations will depend on the cooperation of the three (3) schools which will be involved in this study.

Because of the importance of this study, the Diocese will assist in its funding. I ask that you meet with Msgr. Larroque and Sister Myra to review the financing of the study. Please be assured of the support of my prayers in this endeavor.

With every best wish, I remain

Sincerely in our Divine Savior,

  
+Gerard L. Frey  
Bishop of Lafayette

tc

cc: Sister Francis Gonzales, Principal, Holy Family School  
Sister Eva Regina Martin, Principal, Immaculate Heart of Mary School  
Reverend Gerald Lewis, Pastor, Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish  
Reverend Michael Doerflein, OFM, Pastor, St. Paul Parish  
Reverend Kenneth Broussard, Pastor, Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish  
Reverend Dennis Flynn, SVD, Pastor, St. Anthony Parish



**DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE**

POST OFFICE DRAWER E LAFAYETTE, LOUISIANA 70502-8005 (318) 281-5531

The Office of  
Catholic Schools

TO: Mother M. Tekakwitha Vega, SSF

FROM: Sister Myra Banquer, MSC  
Superintendent of Schools *MB*

DATE: April 23, 1985

Enclosed please find the discussion paper on secondary education in Northern Lafayette prepared by Father Frank Bredeweg.

Father has requested a general meeting, which is scheduled for Monday, May 6, 7:00 p.m., in the dining hall of Immaculata Center, 1408 Carmel Avenue, Lafayette. I would like to invite you to attend if at all possible.

MB:eh  
Enclosure

DISCUSSION PAPER  
DIOCESE OF LAFAYETTE  
SECONDARY EDUCATION

Introduction

For the past eighteen months, several events and a great deal of correspondence have been concerned with the availability of a Catholic high school education on the north side of Lafayette. The increasing Catholic population and the growth of the Lafayette area have created a situation in which Catholic parents have few if any choices regarding the continuation of a Catholic education at the secondary level. The south side of Lafayette faced these problems a few years ago. The north side is facing them now.

At the request of Bishop Frey and the Office of Catholic Schools, a study is currently underway to evaluate the general situation, and to make whatever recommendations seem appropriate. This research aspect of the study will be completed by the end of May, and its findings submitted to the Task Force on Secondary Education in Northern Lafayette. The Task Force will later make its recommendations to Bishop Frey.

Purpose of this Document

This paper is the product of past data and correspondence, of week-long discussions in March with various concerned parties, and of additional data gathered during the past few weeks. The purpose of this document is not to evaluate anything or to make value judgments. If some are present, they are incidental and are not intended to influence any major issues.

This discussion paper is intended to assist interested parties and participants in a May general meeting. At this meeting, chief administrators and representatives of the schools, parishes, boards, and councils will be invited to discuss the situation in open forum and to express values and preferences.

Outline of this Document

This paper is organized in the following manner:

Introductory Comments...background, purpose, etc.

- I. St. Thomas More High School...recent history on north side
- II. Current Enrollment Trends...future high school needs
- III. The Present High Schools on the North Side
- IV. Some Options...sufficient to begin discussion

Additional Data

Diocesan Policy

It should be remembered that the Diocese of Lafayette does not fund the construction or the operation of Catholic elementary and secondary schools in the diocese. It is not financially able to do so. The administration and financing of schools is the responsibility of the parish, group of parishes, religious community, or civil entity establishing them.

## I. St. Thomas More: Growth on the South Side

Although there are many differences between the North and the South side of Lafayette, information about the St. Thomas More project may be of interest and value.

### Original Cost and Debt Structure

St. Thomas More High School and the Bishop Jules B. Jeanmard Center for Religious Learning were completed in 1982 at a total cost of \$ 8,294,000. Because the Religious Learning Center functions as the administrative and media headquarters for all religious education in the diocese, the Diocese pledged to pay \$ 50,000 annually for ten years to offset the additional cost of construction attributed to this Center. The original development drive raised about \$3,000,000. A reserve of about \$ 900,000 was established before debt obligations were contracted.

At the beginning of the 1984-85 school year, the debt on the building was \$ 5,774,000, payable in semi-annual installments of \$ 328,660 over twenty-five years. The 1983 Fall campaign of the eleven founding parishes raised the entire \$ 657,320 cash needed for debt retirement. The 1984 campaign raised about \$ 200,000 in cash and \$ 800,000 in pledges over the next nine years.

### Early Enrollment History

St. Thomas More has an enrollment capacity of 1,200 pupils. The actual and estimated enrollments are:

	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>Total</u>
1982-83 .....	206	177	180	206	769
83-84 .....	192	189	154	168	703
84-85 .....	222	187	182	141	732
85-86 .....	204	216	180	190	790 (est.)

Tuition for students of the eleven founding parishes is \$ 1,800 (+ \$10 registration) in 1984-85. In 1985-86, it will be \$ 2,000 (+ \$220).

About 127 of the 732 students this year were not from the eleven founding parishes. Most (83) of these "outsiders" were non-Catholic. About 32 pupils were from parishes on the north side of Lafayette.

### Operating Revenues and Expenses

The following is the 1984-85 budget for St. Thomas More:

<u>Revenue</u>	
Tuition .....	\$ 1,233,000
Registration Fees .....	142,000
Interest Income .....	48,700
Auxiliary Activities .....	87,300
Other Income .....	\$ 16,000
Total .....	<u>1,527,000</u>
<u>Expenses</u>	
Religious Salaries .....	\$ 122,800
Lay Salaries .....	892,000
Fringe Benefits .....	139,200
Departmental Expenses.....	69,200
Administrative Expenses .....	55,600
Plant & Maintenance .....	138,200
Athletic Expenses.....	60,000
Contingency .....	50,000
Total .....	<u>\$ 1,527,000</u>



II. CURRENT ENROLLMENT TRENDS

Recent and current enrollments are shown on page 4 for Sts. Leo-Seton, St. Bernard, Carencro Catholic, St. Ignatius, and for the St. Genevieve-Teurlings combination.

Individual Schools

Sts. Leo-Seton enrollments have increased from 371 in 1982-83 to 483 in 1985-86. The growth in kindergarten and the early grades is apparent.

St. Bernard will complete all grades in 1985-86, with an enrollment of about 375. Again it is clear that the early grades are larger than the later grades.

Carencro Catholic enrollment has increased from 137 in 1982-83 to 342 expected in 1985-86. Kindergarten and Grade 1 have double classes.

St. Ignatius has remained at the same enrollment, except for the addition of pre-kindergarten.

St. Genevieve remains at its capacity, about 477 in grades K-6. Grades 7-8 at Teurlings stay close to the 150 level. Teurlings grades 9-12 have increased from 324 in 1982-83 to an expected 448 in 1985-86.

It may be helpful here to state that at least three elementary school principals said that they could accept more students at the earlier grade levels than they do, if they had the space. They felt that the demand was clearly increasing on the early elementary level, and that this demand would show itself at the high school level in the years ahead.

Needs of Teurlings "Feeder Schools"

The above "feeder" schools are especially concerned about the ability of their graduates to attend Teurlings now and in the future. In early 1984, the St. Genevieve-Teurlings School Board distributed a survey prepared by one of its Board members, Sidney Crochet, to these four elementary schools and the parents involved, to estimate future applicants. For purposes of this discussion paper, the principals of these four schools were again asked to estimate the number of their graduates who would want to attend a Catholic high school in the immediate years ahead.

The following reflects the number of graduates by school, according to each estimate, who would attend a Catholic high school if one is available:

	Sts. Leo-S		Carencro		Ignatius		Bernard		Total	
	TCH	Prin	TCH	Prin	TCH	Prin	TCH	Prin	TCH	Prin
86-87 ...	17	18	12	15	7	16	9	10	45	59
87-88 ...	18	25	12	15	6	12	11	12	47	64
88-89 ...	23	25	12	18	10	15	9	12	54	70
89-90 ...	23	40	12	15	11	18	17	12	63	85
90-91 ...	32	50	12	15	13	15	27	12	84	92
91-92 ...	42	53	12	18	13	18	20	12	87	101
92-93 ...	40	55	24	18	14	20	18	20	96	113
93-94 ...	40	55	24	30	5	20	-	20	69	125

Using the estimates of the four school principals, from 59 to 125 elementary school graduates will be interested in attending a Catholic high school each year from 1986-87 to 1993-94.

	<u>Sts. Leo-Seton (Laf)</u>				<u>St. Bernard (Breaux Brdg)</u>			
	<u>82-83</u>	<u>83-84</u>	<u>84-85</u>	<u>85-86</u>	<u>82-83</u>	<u>83-84</u>	<u>84-85</u>	<u>85-86</u>
Kindergarten..	70	62	91	96	37	53	58	60
Grade 1 .....	63	87	65	78	39	47	55	57
2 .....	48	56	68	60	26	47	52	55
3 .....	35	49	60	60	16	30	42	52
4 .....	29	33	50	60	26	22	30	42
5 .....	34	35	31	52	24	26	26	30
6 .....	34	28	31	30	-	27	25	26
7 .....	31	34	25	25	-	-	28	25
8 .....	27	23	28	22	-	-	-	28
	<u>371</u>	<u>407</u>	<u>449</u>	<u>483</u>	<u>168</u>	<u>252</u>	<u>316</u>	<u>375</u>

	<u>Carencro Catholic School</u>				<u>St. Ignatius (Grand Cot)</u>			
	<u>82-83</u>	<u>83-84</u>	<u>84-85</u>	<u>85-86</u>	<u>82-83</u>	<u>83-84</u>	<u>84-85</u>	<u>85-86</u>
Pre-K .....	-	-	-	-	-	-	15	20
Kindergarten..	22	34	56	60	31	31	31	50
Grade 1 .....	11	22	33	60	31	30	33	31
2 .....	15	20	35	35	31	30	31	31
3 .....	17	10	27	35	31	31	28	27
4 .....	16	18	34	30	23	27	28	26
5 .....	16	19	35	35	29	18	25	23
6 .....	9	21	30	35	25	31	19	24
7 .....	18	11	29	30	31	27	26	25
8 .....	13	16	29	22	31	28	25	26
	<u>137</u>	<u>171</u>	<u>308</u>	<u>342</u>	<u>263</u>	<u>253</u>	<u>261</u>	<u>283</u>

St. Genevieve-Teurlings

	<u>82-83</u>	<u>83-84</u>	<u>84-85</u>	<u>85-86</u>
<u>St. Genevieve</u>				
Kindergarten .....	72	73	74	75
Grade 1 .....	69	71	70	70
2 .....	65	70	69	71
3 .....	64	64	70	62
4 .....	65	66	60	68
5 .....	65	62	67	64
6 .....	69	65	65	67
St. Genevieve....	<u>469</u>	<u>471</u>	<u>475</u>	<u>477</u>
<u>Teurlings</u>				
Grade 7 .....	70	72	70	67
8 .....	71	84	88	79
	<u>141</u>	<u>156</u>	<u>158</u>	<u>146</u>
Grade 9 .....	90	124	120	120
10 .....	89	93	122	120
11 .....	57	92	98	115
12 .....	88	61	87	93
	<u>324</u>	<u>370</u>	<u>427</u>	<u>448</u>
Total Teurlings..	465	526	585	594

## *Holy Rosary Institute*

Lafayette, Louisiana 70502

### TRUSTEESHIP FOR THE INVESTMENT OF HOLY ROSARY INSTITUTE PROPERTY

#### Rules and Guidelines

##### PURPOSE:

The Trusteeship For the Investment of Holy Rosary Institute Property was established by the Bishop of Lafayette in December, 1976, in order to seek ways and means of investing some of the eighty acres of property that belongs to Holy Rosary Institute and to implement the investing procedures. The monies derived from such investments will be used entirely for the support and benefit of Holy Rosary Institute in Lafayette, Louisiana.

##### ORGANIZATION:

1. The original Trusteeship was organized by the Rev. Msgr. Michael Benedict with the approval of the Bishop of Lafayette. The number of members on this board is ten.
  - a. Members of the Trusteeship shall serve a term of three consecutive years. They may be reappointed by proper authority.
  - b. Members of the Trusteeship shall be duly appointed by the Bishop of Lafayette or a diocesan official designated by the Bishop.
  - c. Members of the Trusteeship shall include knowledgeable laity, representative clergy from the fiscal department of the Diocese or otherwise, and the director and principal of Holy Rosary Institute, as ex-officio members with an active vote.
  - d. Officers of the Trusteeship shall include: chairman, vice-chairman, secretary-treasurer and other officers as the need arises.

##### DUTIES OF OFFICERS:

1. The chairman shall preside at all meetings of the Trusteeship and shall conduct the deliberations according to the norms found in Robert's Rule Book Of Order.
2. The vice-chairman shall act in the same capacity as the chairman, in the chairman's absence. Besides, he shall serve as an admonitor and helper to the chairman.
3. The secretary-treasurer shall take the minutes of all meetings and issue a clear copy of these minutes to each member of the Trusteeship before the next monthly meeting. This officer shall receive, bank and account for all monies derived from lease, sale

## Holy Rosary Institute

Lafayette, Louisiana 70502

etc. of any of said properties and be prepared to render such account to the Trusteeship and diocesan authority.

### MEETINGS:

1. Meetings of the Trusteeship shall take place on the second Monday of each month except August or except a month in which the Trustees see fit to cancel a meeting.
2. The chairman (or in his/her absence, the vice-chairman) may summon a special call meeting outside the regular monthly meetings and when the matter is urgent enough.
3. The monthly meetings shall last one hour, except a longer period is needed, according to the discretion and judgment of the chairman.
4. Ordinarily, the meetings shall be held at Holy Rosary Institute with lunch provided by the Institute.
5. Meetings shall be conducted according to a previously decided Agenda.

### OPERATIONS:

1. Voting and Quorum:  
A quorum for a regular meeting shall consist of at least 50% of the membership.  
In voting, a two-thirds majority is necessary for passage.
2. Property:
  - a. The available property should be duly and properly surveyed and appraised.
  - b. The property for lease (sale) shall be properly advertised by word of mouth, signs on property and elsewhere, and through the communications' media.
  - c. A committee from among the membership--experts in real estate, insurance, law, etc., shall be formed to handle possible real business transactions in the lease (sale) of any designated property.
  - d. Proceeds from lease or sale of any properties shall go entirely to Holy Rosary Institute, as previously laid down by the Bishop of the Diocese of Lafayette, and as is noted in the Purpose

### III. The Present High Schools on the North Side

Before discussing options, it is well to look at the two high schools currently serving the north side of Lafayette.

#### Teurlings Catholic High School

Teurlings high school and St. Genevieve elementary school function as one entity. There is one school board for both schools, and all financial considerations are computed jointly, i.e. the annual budgets combine both schools on a K-12 basis. The financial statements on page 6 reflect both schools. When discussing situations which may affect either school, it is important to understand that policies are developed jointly by St. Genevieve and Teurlings.

Teurlings admission policies reflect this partnership. The priority of admissions is: younger brothers/sisters already enrolled at St. Genevieve or Teurlings; children of alumni; children of St. Genevieve parish; children of other parishes; all others.

#### Capital Improvements and Expansion

As stated, grade 9-12 enrollment at Teurlings has increased from 324 in 1982-83 to an expected 448 in 1985-86. Current and planned capital improvements include the addition of four temporary classrooms, a chapel, renovations of bathrooms and a teacher workroom, and the expansion of the cafeteria and the library. By 1986-87, enrollment capacity is estimated at 634, about 480 of whom are grades 9-12.

It is difficult to estimate the total cost of these improvements, since parents and supporters donate time and materials. The St. Genevieve-Teurlings School Board has targeted \$ 312,600, however, as additional revenue needed to meet these costs from 1984-85 to 1989-90. The major source of this revenue would come from non-St. Genevieve students attending Teurlings, i.e. an additional \$200 tuition charge each year. The rationale is that these improvements are necessary because of the non-St. Genevieve students attending Teurlings.

Although it costs more to operate a high school than an elementary school, students at St. Genevieve pay the same tuition as students at Teurlings. This spreads the cost of Catholic education over the entire twelve years. Also shown on page 6 is the prorated subsidy plan for former St. Genevieve students who did not attend for the entire six years. This gives partial credit for the years attended.

#### Some General Comments

Discussions with various St. Genevieve-Teurlings administrators, board members, and advisors indicated that the following attitudes characterize their position and preferences:

- (1) they don't want to be too big...they like their present size, and do not want to become so large as to lose their present personal touch,
- (2) they don't want to be in debt...they manage their finances well, are in stable financial condition, and want to remain there,
- (3) the present issue is not whether Teurlings should become a multi-parish school...it already is a multi-parish school...data at the end of this paper shows enrollment by Church parish.

St. Genevieve-Teurlings Financial Information

<u>Revenue</u>	<u>1982-83</u>	<u>1983-84</u>	<u>1984-85</u>
Tuition .....	\$ 738,163	\$ 807,148	\$ 943,000
Registration Fees .....	85,927	94,479	116,600
Other Fees .....	77,071	88,096	110,000
Auxiliary Activities.....	24,396	33,096	32,700
Other Income.....	66,577	96,267	58,000
<u>Total Revenue .....</u>	<u>\$ 992,134</u>	<u>1,119,086</u>	<u>1,260,300</u>
<u>Expenses</u>			
Professional Staff.....	\$ 704,577	\$ 724,382	\$ 845,300
Other Salaries .....	51,921	59,220	66,500
Employee Benefits .....	93,657	105,818	165,000
Other Expenses.....	130,579	184,007	183,500
<u>Total Expenses.....</u>	<u>\$ 980,734</u>	<u>1,073,427</u>	<u>1,260,300</u>
<u>Net Revenue.....</u>	<u>\$ 11,400</u>	<u>\$ 45,659</u>	<u>-</u>

Revenue Raised for Capital Improvements

	<u>Non-StGen. Students</u>	<u>@\$200 Extra Tuition</u>	<u>Major Repairs</u>	<u>Total</u>
1984-85 .....	64/582	\$ 12,800	\$ 15,000	\$ 27,800
85-86 .....	191/611	38,200	15,000	53,200
86-87 .....	216/636	43,200	15,000	58,200
87-88 .....	214/634	42,800	15,000	57,800
88-89 .....	214/634	42,800	15,000	57,800
89-90 .....	214/634	42,800	15,000	57,800
		<u>\$ 222,600</u>	<u>\$ 90,000</u>	<u>\$ 312,600</u>

Prorated Subsidy Plan for Former St. Genevieve Students

<u>Full School Yrs. Completed at St. Genevieve</u>	<u>Percentage of Discount for Attendance</u>	<u>Annual Subsidy While Attending Teurlings HS</u>
6	100 %	None
5	83.3 (5/6)	\$ 33.40
4	66.6 (4/6)	\$ 66.80
3	50.0 (3/6)	\$ 100.00
2	33.3 (2/6)	\$ 133.40
1	16.6 (1/6)	\$ 166.80

### Holy Rosary Institute

The enrollment at Holy Rosary Institute has been declining in recent years. As the financial statements indicate on page A-3 in the supplemental data at the end of this paper, the Institute remains relatively stable financially. When reimbursements for Mandated Services are also included among the revenues, the budgets of 1983-84 and 1984-85 are close to balance.

Other financial information on page 8 describes various forms of diocesan assistance to Holy Rosary. The diocese pays the medical insurance premiums for the teachers. "Subsidies" reflects funds allocated directly to the school. Holy Rosary is exempted from the usual school tax which is paid by the diocese to the Office of Catholic Schools. The Msgr. Fusilier Fund grants scholarships to individual students. The shopping adjacent to the school is under lease from the diocese, and the proceeds from this lease go to Holy Rosary.

Capital improvement needs and plans are also described on page 8. A long-term development program aimed at raising over \$4,000,000 has begun. About \$ 71,000 has been expended for roof repairs and architect's plans. Some of the immediate high priorities are also listed.

Discussions with Holy Rosary administrators and board members clarified the position of the Institute in regard to school admission policies and objectives. Holy Rosary does wish to maintain its blackness in the sense of black ownership and administrative control, thereby creating an environment where black students are not lost in a minority situation. However, authorities made it clear that Holy Rosary has an open admission policy and welcomes white students.

Present capacity is about 400 students, and would be 500 with the renovations envisioned. The land available at Holy Rosary is estimated at 25 acres.

### Holy Family and Immaculate Heart of Mary

Discussions were also held with administrators, clergy, and board members of Holy Family Elementary School and Immaculate Heart of Mary Elementary School. Although the enrollment statistics of the past few years might seem to indicate a lessening of demand, the decline was explained as reflecting a revision of class sizes to conform to recommendations of an evaluation.

Several of the persons attending this meeting felt strongly that at least two points should be part of the current discussion:

- (1) the present high school shortage on the north side is in no way caused by a shortage of space...Holy Rosary Institute welcomes all students and has space for an additional 200 ...since Holy Rosary is a high school on the north side of Lafayette, it should be part of any solution.
- (2) consistent with and related to this first point, these persons felt that it is time for the Catholic community of Lafayette to unite behind a "black-white" school.

Administrators at Holy Family, Immaculate Heart, and Holy Rosary all felt that their academic programs were the equal of any other school in the area.

Holy Rosary Institute

<u>Enrollment Trends</u>	<u>82-83</u>	<u>83-84</u>	<u>84-85</u>	<u>85-86</u>
Grade 9 .....	81	71	44	-
10 .....	71	70	58	-
11 .....	79	58	59	-
12 .....	69	66	56	-
	<u>300</u>	<u>265</u>	<u>217</u>	<u>217</u>

Diocesan Financial Aid

	<u>Teacher Health Ins</u>	<u>Subsidies</u>	<u>School Tax</u>	<u>Msgr Fusilier Scholarshps</u>	<u>Total</u>
1979-80 .....	\$ 2,499	\$ 18,000	\$ 976	\$ -	\$ 21,475
80-81 .....	2,775	10,000	1,255	-	14,030
81-82 .....	2,775	10,000	1,450	-	14,225
82-83 .....	4,500	15,667	1,455	294	21,916
83-84 .....	5,400	15,667	2,100	600	23,767
84-85 .....	<u>6,400</u>	<u>15,666</u>	<u>1,855</u>	<u>2,494</u>	<u>26,415</u>
	<u>\$ 24,349</u>	<u>\$ 85,000</u>	<u>\$ 9,091</u>	<u>\$ 3,388</u>	<u>\$ 121,828</u>
					Shopping Center Lease (1979-1983)..... 76,700
					<u>Total Financial Assistance..... \$ 198,528</u>

Capital Improvements Needed

The Holy Rosary Board of Trustees has conceived a five-year capital improvements plan with a preliminary budget of about \$4,000,000. The focus of this program is upon the renovation of present buildings and the addition of a new gymnasium. Phase I of this project has been completed at a cost of \$ 71,236, and included the renovation of the roof and the development of architectural designs for total renovations.

Top priority immediate needs include:

Renovation of Science Dept.	\$ 15,000
Re-establish Home Economics Dept.	65,400
Installation of air conditioning	128,000
Demolition of old buildings	<u>76,600</u>
	<u>\$ 285,000</u>

	<u>Holy Family Elementary</u>				<u>Immaculate Heart of Mary</u>			
	<u>82-83</u>	<u>83-84</u>	<u>84-85</u>	<u>85-86</u>	<u>82-83</u>	<u>83-84</u>	<u>84-85</u>	<u>85-86</u>
Kindergarten	28	17	20	-	34	26	22	30
Grade 1 .....	32	35	27	-	30	33	27	32
2 .....	31	30	29	-	32	24	34	33
3 .....	34	31	23	-	30	28	26	33
4 .....	30	27	27	-	29	35	29	33
5 .....	28	27	27	-	28	24	34	33
6 .....	35	30	21	-	33	29	27	33
7 .....	41	34	29	-	55	33	31	33
8 .....	35	35	28	-	33	51	31	33
	<u>204</u>	<u>266</u>	<u>231</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>304</u>	<u>283</u>	<u>261</u>	<u>293</u>



#### IV. Some Options

No preference is intended by the order in which these options are listed, nor have these possibilities been thoroughly researched. The purpose here is to identify common interests and preferences. The list is not exhaustive. Other options may be preferable, or combinations of the above.

- Option A: Build a new school for the north side...could be on land at Sts. Leo-Seton, on St. Charles land in Grand Coteau, or somewhere else...but it would be new construction.
- Option B: Seek to purchase a building already constructed and suitable as a high school...could be the St. Charles Spirituality Center or the Jesuit barn in Grand Coteau, assuming they are available, an available public school, or some other building.
- Option C: Expand Teurlings into a larger multi-parish school...perhaps retaining grades 7-8, but adding facilities capable of serving the applicants of the future.
- Option D: Discontinue grades 7-8 at Teurlings, thereby creating about 150 additional senior high seats...the grade 7-8 students would be served at the elementary school level, with the exception of St. Genevieve students who would presumably use other schools.
- Option E: focus upon and expand Holy Rosary Institute, establishing a black-white school on the north side of Lafayette... physical improvements and attitudinal adjustments would probably be necessary.
- Option F: Focus upon one school as a junior high school, e.g. Sts. Leo-Seton...the same 150 seats become available at Teurlings, and some space might be made on the elementary level if a school's grade 7-8 students attend elsewhere.
- Option G: Develop another small high school on the north side, e.g. Sts. Leo-Seton.
- Option H: Develop a transportation system to facilitate attendance at St. Thomas More High School.

#### Concluding Comments

This document hopes to facilitate discussion of the present high school situation on the north side of Lafayette. As stated, it is not intended to make value judgments or express preferences. Opinions, evaluations, and preferences are the objectives of the May meeting with representatives of the schools and parishes.

Some additional enrollment and financial data is provided in the next few pages. Some of the data is incomplete, but it is sufficient to begin the discussion.

Rev. Frank H. Bredeweg, CSB  
NCEA School Consultant  
April 18, 1985

Financial Information

	Actual 1982-83	Actual 1983-84	Budget 1984-85
<u>Holy Family Elementary</u>			
Tuition & Fees .....	\$ 184,550	\$ 200,724	\$ -
Fund Raising & Subsidies.....	27,409	13,826	-
Other Income .....	1,000	1,000	-
Total Revenue .....	\$ <u>212,959</u>	\$ <u>215,550</u>	\$ <u>-</u>
Salaries-Professional Staff...\$	131,387	\$ 128,982	\$ 146,000
Other Salaries .....	16,057	16,087	19,600
Employee Benefits.....	20,096	26,907	28,500
Other Expenses.....	26,109	39,946	58,300
Total Expenses.....\$	\$ <u>193,649</u>	\$ <u>211,922</u>	\$ <u>252,400</u>
Net Revenue .....	\$ 19,310	\$ 3,628	\$ -
<u>Immaculate Heart of Mary</u>			
Tuition & Fees .....	\$ 182,618	\$ 202,457	\$ 223,200
Fund Raising & Subsidies.....	68,272	26,767	46,000
Other Income .....	19,145	6,459	4,500
Total Revenue.....\$	\$ <u>270,035</u>	\$ <u>235,683</u>	\$ <u>273,700</u>
Salaries-Professional Staff...\$	134,075	\$ 145,399	\$ 166,000
Other Salaries.....	14,045	15,130	16,400
Employee Benefits.....	21,602	34,910	26,600
Other Expenses.....	89,351	34,911	30,500
Total Expenses.....\$	\$ <u>259,073</u>	\$ <u>230,350</u>	\$ <u>239,500</u>
Net Revenue.....\$	\$ 10,962	\$ 5,333	\$ 34,200

Holy Rosary Institute

	Actual 1982-83	Budget 1983-84	Budget 1984-85
<u>Revenue</u>			
Tuition .....	\$ 196,208	225,000	162,600
Registration Fees.....	7,493	9,600	7,200
Other Fees .....	9,421	24,900	21,900
Auxiliary Activities .....	10,540	54,700	50,700
Other Income .....	49,310	32,200	25,600
Total Revenue .....	\$ <u>272,972</u>	\$ <u>346,400</u>	\$ <u>268,000</u>
<u>Expenses</u>			
Salaries-Professional Staff..\$	155,531	\$ 162,300	\$ 133,400
Other Salaries .....	30,118	36,100	36,800
Employee Benefits.....	48,669	24,600	21,800
Other Expenses.....	122,476	110,200	108,500
Total Expenses.....\$	\$ <u>356,794</u>	\$ <u>333,200</u>	\$ <u>300,500</u>
<u>Net Revenue (Expense).....\$</u>	\$ (83,822)	13,200	( 32,500)

Comment: The above revenues do not include the State of Louisiana reimbursements for the Mandated Services expenses incurred.

Teurlings High School- by Church Parish

<u>Location</u>	<u>Parish</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>Total</u>
Laf	St.Genevieve .....	24	23	34	22	103
Laf	St.Elizabeth Seton.....	27	16	21	15	79
Laf	St.Leo Great .....	10	15	6	13	44
Grand Cot.	St.Charles Borromeo.....	9	13	8	7	37
Breaux Br.	St.Bernard .....	11	10	4	7	32
Carencro	St.Peter .....	12	5	8	6	31
Broussard	Sacred Heart .....	5	7	2	5	19
Laf	OL Queen of Peace .....	3	3	1	-	7
Laf	St. John Cathedral .....	2	1	2	-	5
Laf	OL Fatima .....	1	3	-	-	4
Laf	Immaculate Hrt of Mary...	1	1	1	-	3
Laf	St. Anthony .....	1	1	1	-	3
Laf	St. Pius X .....	-	1	-	1	2
Cankton	St. John Berchman.....	1	3	-	-	4
Scott	Sts Peter & Paul .....	1	-	-	1	2
Breaux Br.	St. Francis of Assisi....	-	2	-	1	3
	Other Church Parishes....	3	4	5	1	13
	Unknown .....	9	14	5	8	36
	<b>Total .....</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>427</b>

Holy Rosary Institute-by Church Parish

<u>Location</u>	<u>Parish</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>Total</u>
Laf	Immaculate Hrt of Mary...	-	-	-	-	77
Laf	St. Anthony .....	-	-	-	-	35
Laf	OL Queen of Peace .....	-	-	-	-	21
Laf	St. Paul .....	-	-	-	-	21
Breaux Br.	St. Francis of Assisi....	-	-	-	-	10
Martinville	Notre Dame .....	-	-	-	-	9
Grand Cot.	St. Charles Borromeo.....	-	-	-	-	8
Laf	St. Pius X .....	-	-	-	-	5
Laf	St. Genevieve .....	-	-	-	-	3
Mire	Assumption of B.V.....	-	-	-	-	4
Laf	St. Patrick .....	-	-	-	-	2
	Others .....	-	-	-	-	22
	<b>Total .....</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>217</b>

Elementary Schools-by Church Parish

<u>Parish</u>	<u>St.Gen.</u>	<u>Sts.Leo- Seton</u>	<u>Carencro Cath.</u>	<u>St. Ignatius</u>	<u>Immaculate Heart</u>
St.Genevieve.....	150	41	-	-	-
St. Bernard .....	71	5	-	-	-
St.Elizabeth Seton.	40	135	11	-	-
St. Leo Great.....	34	86	1	-	-
St.Peters.....	33	59	239	7	-
St.Charles Borromeo	6	5	4	238	-
Immac Hrt of Mary..	10	4	-	-	208
Sts. Peter & Paul..	19	12	18	-	-
St. Edmond .....	10	23	-	-	1
St. Jules .....	10	4	1	-	-
St. John Evangelist	9	5	3	-	-
St.Francis Assisi..	-	5	-	-	17
Queen of Peace.....	4	-	2	-	11
Assumption of B.V..	-	-	25	2	-
Other Parishes.....	79	65	4	14	24
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>449</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>261</b>

NOTE: 1984-85 enrollment data is used for the above analysis.

Financial Information

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Total Expenses.....\$	\$ <u>356,794</u>	\$ <u>333,200</u>	\$ <u>300,500</u>
Net Revenue (Expense).....\$	\$(83,822)	13,200	( 32,500)

Comment: The above revenues do not include the State of Louisiana reimbursements for the Mandated Services expenses incurred.

SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY  
6901 CHEF MENTEUR HIGHWAY  
NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70126

OFFICE OF  
COMMUNITY SCHOOL SUPERVISOR

To: Mother M. Tekakwitha and General Councillors

From: Sister Mary de Sales

Re: Report of Conference Relating to School Study in Lafayette

May 8, 1985

At the request of Mother Tekakwitha, a telephone conversation took place with Father Bredeweg, a priest employed by the Diocese of Lafayette to study the school situation on the Northside. Father Bredeweg stated that he needed clarification from the Mother General on the following questions:

- 1) Meaning of the phrase "retaining blackness",
- 2) Whether the Sisters of the Holy Family will continue to support Holy Rosary with people, and
- 3) The Community's position concerning integration.

Since it was decided that a face to face conference would be better, an appointment was made for the following day.

May 9, 1985

Armed with prepared answers after consulting with Mother together with information from the study compiled by Father Bredeweg, a meeting was held at the old Bishop's residence in Lafayette at 11:30 a.m. Needless to say the questions were loaded, especially # 2.

Information received from Father Bredeweg follows:

It seems that at an open meeting the statement, "Holy Rosary does wish to maintain its blackness in the sense of black ownership and administrative control" provoked questions. Persons wanted to know whether whites would be accepted on the school board and as part of the administration. Heated discussion ensued and the statement became a racial issue. It implied, so Father said, that Rosary did not want to open up to whites. He also stated that at this time there was an overplay of blackness, and that the Sisters representing our Community were divided.

To make matters worse, some members of our Community made derogatory statements regarding whites. This hurt because as one observer said, we are against the building of another high school to take care of the overflow of whites on the Northside but implied by our comments that whites were not welcomed at Holy Rosary.

Administrative Control- Since this seemed to be the problem, questions were addressed relating to this matter.

Concerning Mr. Dill's remarks, Father Bredeweg said that Mr. Dill didn't mean what he said regarding the appointment of an administrator.

That he didn't feel that the Diocese would want to be financially liable. That at this time centralization is not being considered.

To further clarify the matter, a telephone conversation was held with Sister Myra on May 14, 1985 with regard to the appointment of an administrator to Holy Rosary as well as the replacement of a Sister of the H.F.

Sister replied, no, to both questions. She said, "we would have to be out of our minds to suggest such a thing." Sister again reiterated, that at the meeting, in an attempt to get the principal of Holy Rosary to explain the statement, "retain administrative control and ownership", questions such as would the whites have a say so, and would the board and the administration be open to whites were asked. Sister Myra continued, if Holy Rosary is open to all then it follows that there would be representation on the board and in the administration. This of course would not be immediate.

Personal Opinion- The bottom line regardless of what is said has to do with shared administrative control. This is the real reason Father Bredeweg wanted to know if we would continue to supply sisters, and our position regarding integration.

The number of students that need to be housed is not a problem since Holy Rosary could take care of that number now. There would not be an overflow of whites. And unless the black enrollment would decrease drastically, the number of whites would not exceed the number of blacks.

The statistics in the study if properly examined should not have caused so much alarm. There was a lot of supposition by all concerned.

Statement- Prior to speaking with Father Bredeweg it was recommended that the statistics be studied, and that the statement be reworded so that it could not be used against us. That the open admissions policy be stressed.

A meeting was already scheduled for May 11, 1985. After much discussion, the statement was revised. (See attached copy)

Observations - At this meeting it was interesting to note the position held by some of the people present.

Concerning the administration, one person stated that we should not stress opposition to change in a normal evolutionary process. That color should not make a difference. That we will control the destiny of Holy Rosary by participating in the process rather than watching the process. That we usually watch what is done for us but do not take an active part.

Another person said that whites won't come if there is a black principal. He was in favor of the school being integrated yet wanted to keep the statement as written in spite of the controversy.

Most of the people present understood the danger of using "power words" and recognized the importance of stressing an open admissions policy in the statement. They also recognized that whites keep control and manage to keep only a ratio of blacks but that they do not make open statements. We have a tendency to talk too much, and do not work together.

It was felt that Father Bredeweg as well as those in the Diocesan Office of Education knew what was meant by the statement but made an issue either to please the whites or they had other ulterior motives.

The use of power words proved detrimental as well as the lack of unity demonstrated by the Sisters present. It is possible that if the three principals in the area were working together we could have counter acted any negativism that was read into the statement.

Summary- Father Bredeweg concluded that:

- time wise Teurling can take care of students this coming school year but in the next 3-4 years something will have to be done.
- there exist a racial issue. The whites see Holy Rosary as a black school, as physically unattractive, and as academically weak.
- one of two things will happen. Either Holy Rosary will be integrated. It will be a school run with representation from all components-multi parish with the administration open  
or  
Holy Rosary will be maintained as a black school.

Question- Teurling has a campus and Holy Rosary has a campus. No stipulation is being made for Teurling's administration. If black students want to attend the school they do so. Why should the policy for Rosary be different? We are not speaking of a merger of schools as in the case of Thomas More. Why must the administrative structure be changed because whites will attend Holy Rosary?

Personal Opinion- This may sound too simplistic but it is felt that the problem could be solved if the Bishop, 1st, helped to renovate Rosary, and 2nd, made a statement letting it be known that he supports Catholic education for all, and that students on the Northside wishing to obtain a Catholic education are to attend either Holy Rosary or Teurling.

This would be a splendid opportunity for the Bishop to help the people in Lafayette as well as himself to put away racial differences and truly live the Gospel message.

In the meantime, we Sisters of the Holy Family should recognize the crisis and unite. Our actions individually or corporately will have a lasting effect on our Apostolate in Southwest La.

We do not own Holy Rosary in the legal sense but we have been given a trust by Father Keller as well as by our Superiors who have gone on. They responded to a need in 1913 and in subsequent years. What will be our response now?

We must not become embittered by past mistakes regarding integration. Rather, we must profit by our mistakes and sensibly do all that we can

to preserve a school which was founded to educate blacks without ostracizing other races or nationalities who may wish to attend the school. We must maintain an open door policy in the true sense of the word or be accused of reverse segregation (discrimination).

Recommendations - At the present time it is recommended that a concerted effort be made to:

- increase enrollment
- improve the curriculum
- establish better public relations
- look into the overall management of finances
- help the people to help themselves
- work together as a Community

It should also be resolved that no public statement regarding the position of the Community be made without authorization from the General Administration.

Submitted: June, 1985.



Holy Rosary Institute's position regarding Catholic education can be summarized from the Pastoral Letter on Evangelization from the Black Bishops of the United States:

"To be catholic is to be universal. To be universal is not to be uniform. It does mean, however, that the gifts of individuals and of particular groups become the common heritage shared by all. Just as we lay claim to the gifts of Blackness so we share these gifts within the Black community at large and within the Church. This will be our part in the building up of the whole Church. This will also be our way of enriching ourselves. "For it is in giving that we receive." Finally, it is our way to witness to our brothers and sisters within the Black community that the Catholic Church is both one and also home to us all."

"There is a richness in our Black experience that we must share with the entire People of God. These are gifts that are part of an African past. For we have heard with Black ears and we have seen with Black eyes and we have understood with an African heart. We thank God for the gifts of our Catholic faith and we give thanks for the gifts of our Blackness. In all humility we turn to the whole Church that it might share our gifts so that "our joy may be complete." "

Our position is also supported by a Statement of the Louisiana Catholic Conference - A Pastoral on Social Ministry from the Bishops of Louisiana:

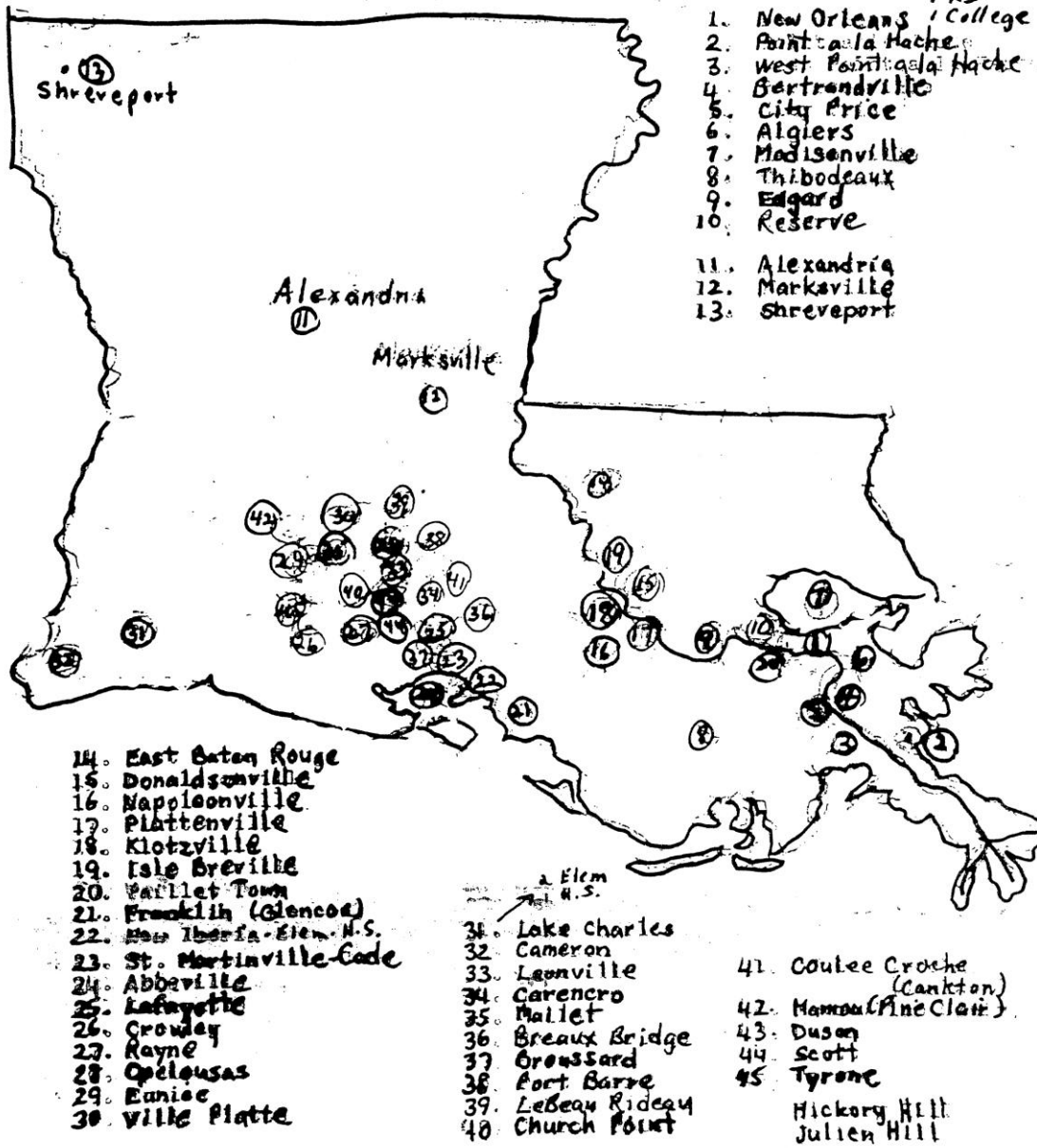
"We remain steadfast in our commitment to, and support of, quality Catholic school education, and we encourage creative ways that this choice can be made a reality for more people in our communities."

"Out of respect for Christ's body, we in the Church should encourage individual ethnic groups to preserve the rich cultural gifts that they bring to society."

In the light of these statements from our hierarchy, Holy Rosary has the unique position in the Diocese of Lafayette of providing a quality Catholic education for high school students, while sharing our unique cultural heritage with the whole church.

Holy Rosary continues, therefore, to:

- a - promote and share the richness of black culture - a gift to the whole church.
- b - provide a quality Catholic education.
- c - have an open admissions policy.



Sites Mother M. Katherine Drexel Supported in Louisiana

# Holy Rosary Institute

Recognized by the Department of Education of the State  
of Louisiana as a

## Teachers' Training School

Under the Direction of

THE SISTERS OF THE HOLY FAMILY

Lafayette, Louisiana

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This institution was opened in September, 1913.

Its object is to impart to girls and young ladies of the colored race a common and high school education, and to instruct them in the various branches of domestic science, such as cooking, housekeeping, dressmaking, washing, ironing, fine needlework, embroidery, etc.

Special attention is given to the moral training of the pupils.

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### RULES

#### Admission of Pupils

Pupils will be received at any time of the year, but parents are requested to enter their children at the beginning of the scholastic year, which is the second week in September.

Children under seven and over seventeen years of age will be received only in exceptional cases.

The institution reserves the right to demand satisfactory recommendation as to the character of applicants, their parents or guardians, in all cases where they are not personally known at the institution.

Having been expelled or dismissed from any institution, debar applicants from admission.

As this is an educational institution, and **not** a reform school or a house of correction, children who are giving their

parents serious trouble, or who are hard to manage, are not wanted as pupils.

If, by fraud, or mistake, any children of this kind are entered, they will be dismissed whenever this is found out, or they give signs of their undesirable conduct.

Parents who are known, not to lead a clean, respectable life, are advised not to apply for admission of any of their children.

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### CHARGES

The charge for board and tuition will be \$15.00 per month, but to pupils who agree to do their share of the regular work required for good housekeeping, etc., we will give a \$12.00 rate. Of course, this work will not interfere with the pupils' studies.

Extra charges for music, embroidery and millinery.

No charges will be made for sewing.

Charges for board, etc., should be paid in advance, either by the month, or for the session, if preferred; but in all cases settlement must be made before the closing of school.

No reduction will be made for the Christmas vacation.

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### BOARD

It is, of course, to the interest of the institution to provide its pupils with wholesome, nourishing food. Their menu is made up of different vegetables, soup, meat, sausage, fish, shrimp, crab, beans, peas, wheat and corn bread, grits, rice, corn flakes, syrup, jam, preserves, milk, butter, apples, bananas, cake and other delicacies on special occasions.

In view of the moderate charges, we hope that our patrons will be reasonable in their expectations along this line. A payment, for instance, of twelve dollars per month, means about 40 cents a day, or 10 cents a meal and 10 cents for bed, washing, etc., ten dollars a month would mean about 30 cents a day, for meals, etc. It can be readily seen that this amount is not sufficient to cover actual expense for the pupil's board. Any compensation for the work of the teachers and their care for the children is, therefore, altogether out of the question. It looks like a contradiction, when parents ask for and are granted a reduction of charg-

es, and then they keep their children supplied during the session with an abundance of spending money for useless things, edibles or anything else. No fault can be found with giving children something extra on special occasion but to claim not to be able to pay full charge, and then to furnish the children all the spending money they want shows a lack of principle.

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### VISITS

Pupils are not allowed to leave the institution except in company of their parents, or one of the teachers of the institution. Parents are requested not to ask for exception to this rule, and take their children out for visits only for weighty reasons, such as serious illness or death of some one in the family, and the like. Frequent visits, at home just to spend the day, are quite undesirable, in as much as they interfere a great deal with the children's studies, and the good order of the institution.

The regular days for visiting are Wednesday from 3 to 6 p. m., and any time on Saturday and Sunday, from 8 a. m. to 6 p. m. Calling on pupils on any day, during class hours that is, between 9 a. m. and 3 p. m. is altogether out of place and can not be sanctioned, as it interferes with the regular class work. Parents' and relatives' special attention is called to this rule.

No visits whatever must be made on examination days.

A short vacation is allowed at Christmas.

No vacation is given for Easter.

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### GENERAL RULES

All letters sent by pupils or received for them are subject to inspection by the Superioress.

The institution will incur no expense for clothing, traveling, etc., nor advance money to pupils for any purpose whatsoever.

Any articles sent to pupils by express or otherwise must be prepaid.

An amount sufficient to cover traveling expenses from Lafayette to the pupils' home should be deposited with the Superioress.

Pupils should not have any jewelry whilst at the institution. Any money they have should be given to the Superioress for safe keeping.

The use of the telephone is not allowed to pupils. Any message for them will be received by the Superioress.

The frequent sending of edibles is not to be encouraged. Children receiving them are liable to over-eat themselves and cause trouble to themselves and the teachers.

Papers, books, etc., may be read only with the approval of the Superioress.

School books may be purchased at the institution at the usual prices.

Expenses for Doctor and medicine must be paid by the parents or guardians of the pupils.

All pupils are required to be provided with the following articles when entering the institution:

A hair brush, tooth brush, finger nail brush, comb, tooth powder and soap, knife, fork, spoon, plate, cup and saucer, glass, napkin ring, 6 napkins, 6 towels, 6 pillow cases, 4 sheets, 2 blankets, or 1 quilt and 1 blanket, 6 changes of linens, 6 prs. of stockings, 3 night gowns, a sufficient number of dresses, 3 black aprons for school, an umbrella, a uniform consisting of an Academy cap, a dark blue serge skirt, a white waist or blouse and a blue middie tie. All articles must be marked with the pupil's name or initials before entering the institution.

For further information apply to

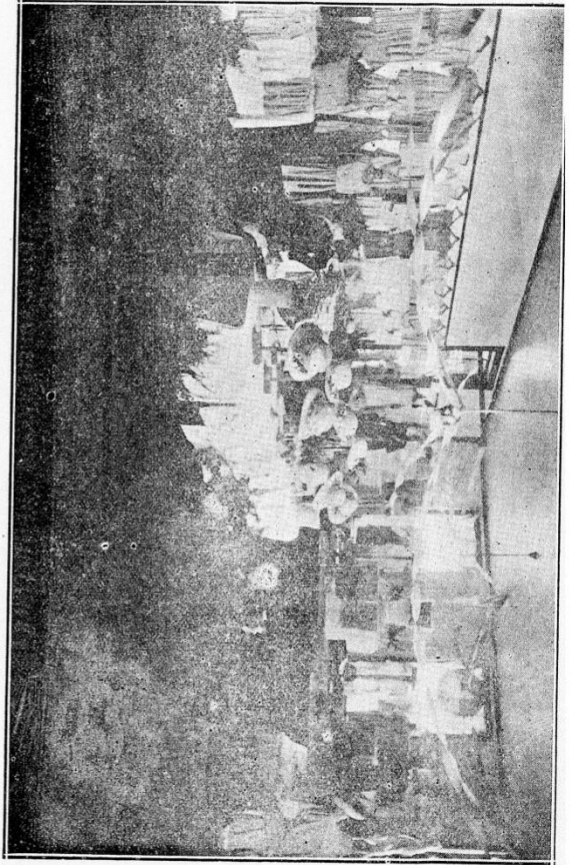
**SISTER SUPERIOR**

**Holy Rosary Institute**

**Lafayette, La.**



**EXHIBIT—DRESSMAKING AND MILLINERY**



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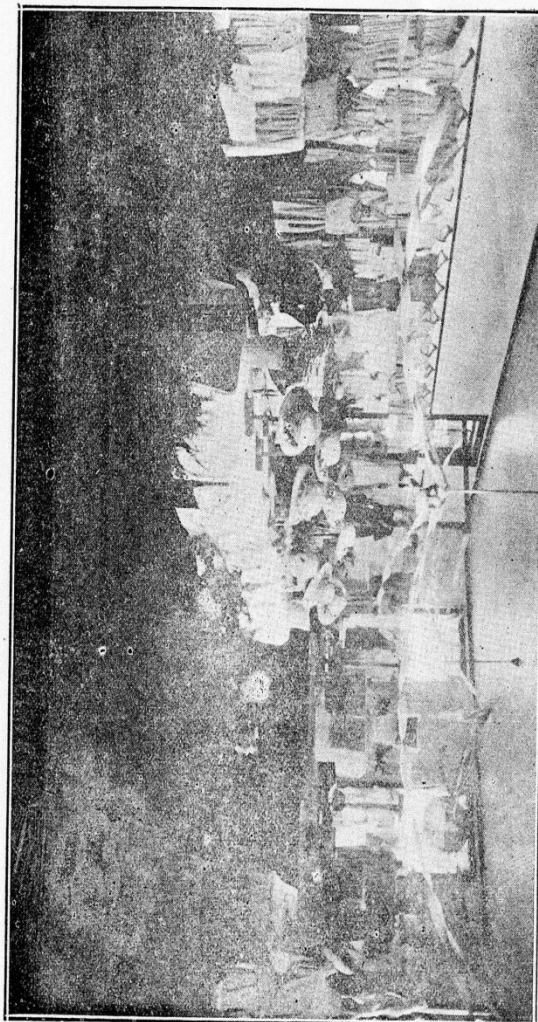
**SISTER SUPERIOR**

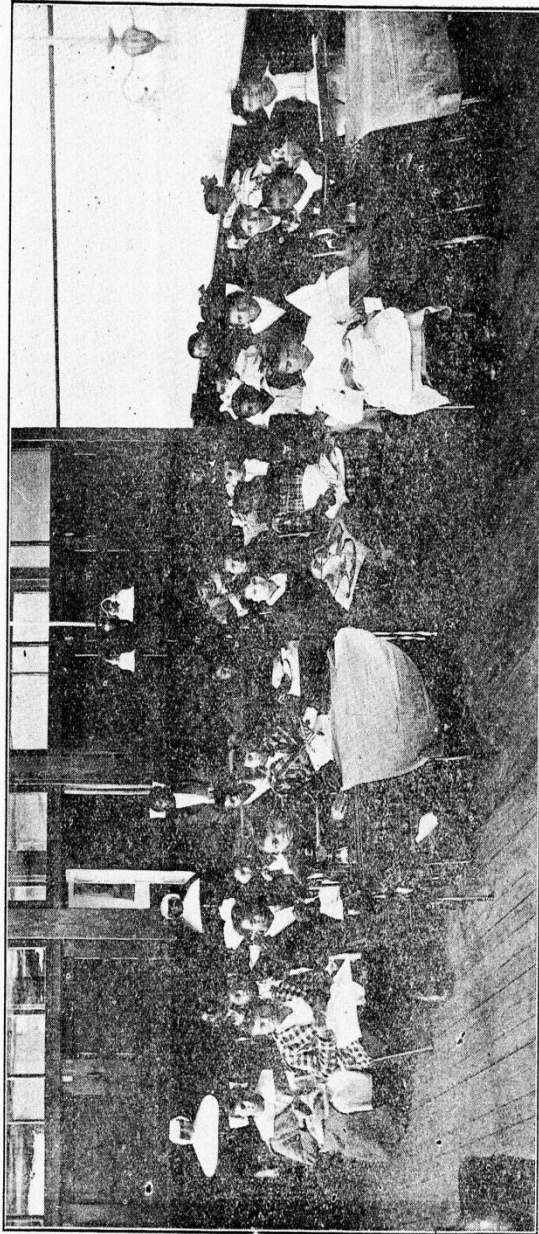
**Holy Rosary Institute**

**Lafayette, La.**



EXHIBIT—DRESSMAKING AND MILLINERY





SEWING CLASS

**BOARDERS**

Amos, Hazel.....	San Antonio, Te
Atkins, Ida Mae.....	Shreveport, L
Anderson, Florita.....	Galveston, Te
Babin, Margaret.....	Lafayette, L
Babin, Marjorie.....	Lafayette, L
Babin, Rita.....	Lafayette, L
Breaux, Marjorie.....	Orange, Te
Burrell, Dollie.....	Sicily Island, L
Breaux, Olga.....	Liberty, Te
Broussard, Mayola.....	Beaumont, Te
Batiste, Julia.....	Hahnville, L
Boudreaux, Ruby.....	Opelousas, L
Bernard, Hester.....	Carencro, L
Cochran, Ruby.....	Galveston, Te
Conant, Garnett.....	Natchitoches, L
Curtis, Lonie.....	Ft. Benning, G
Chappel, Josie Mae.....	La Porte, Te
Commerce, Bernice.....	Houston, Te
Cruzat, Margarita.....	Bachelor, L
DeLavallade, Helen.....	Marksville, L
Donato, Clara.....	Opelousas, L
Evans, Mae.....	New Orleans, L
Evans, Rose.....	New Orleans, L
Fontenot, Mae.....	Raywood, Te
Greenhouse, Ollie.....	Marksville, L
Girouard, Nathalie.....	Broussard, L
Hebert, Jeanette.....	Crowley, L
Joseph, Mary.....	St. Martinville, L
Joseph, Enola.....	Breaux Bridge, L
Jones, Helen Mae.....	Houston, Te
Kelso, Sylvia.....	Lafayette, L
Lawrence, Mary.....	Grand Coteau, L
Landry, Maude.....	Lafayette, L
Lewis, Alice.....	Grand Coteau, L
Martin, Antoinette.....	Carencro, L
Martin, Lucille.....	Lake Charles, L
Merrell, Velma.....	Houston, Te
Merrell, Laura.....	Houston, Te
Merrell, Elizabeth.....	Houston, Te
Means, Celeste.....	Meridian, Mis
Molless, Lola.....	Lake Charles, L

**BOARDERS (Continued)**

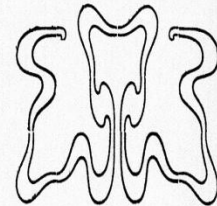
Meziere, Melanie.....	New Orleans, La.
McMillian, Lydia Maud.....	Shreveport, La.
McLaurin, Theresa.....	Meridian, Miss.
O'Zene, Germaine.....	Grand Coteau, La.
Peters, Marjorie.....	Houston, Tex.
Pradia, Elva.....	Liberty, Tex.
Powell, Carrie Mae.....	Shreveport, La.
Quarrells, Mary.....	Shreveport, La.
Quarrells, Memelle.....	Shreveport, La.
Romance, Veronica.....	New Orleans, La.
Roberson, Weaver.....	Port Arthur, Tex.
Ranker, Clara.....	Hahnville, La.
Reed, Dorris.....	Houston, Tex.
Richard, Lumina.....	Opelousas, La.
Sampson, Ethel.....	Mansura, La.
Sanders, Evelyn.....	Galveston, Tex.
Simon, Theresa.....	Houston, Tex.
Senegal, Justina.....	Ridge, La.
Stackhouse, Martha.....	New Orleans, La.
Stackhouse, Mathilda.....	New Orleans, La.
Straton, Thelma.....	Shreveport, La.
Toney, Georgia.....	San Antonio, Tex.
Williams, Hazel.....	Shreveport, La.
Waugh, Onnie.....	Tuscaloosa, Ala.

**DAY PUPILS**

Andrus, Sylvania	Johnson, Roberta
Andrus, Eve	Labbe, Doll
Andrus, Mary	Labbe, Magnolia
Augustine, Eve	Labbe, Della
Augustine, Julia	LeBlanc, Ollie
Alexandria, Louisiana	Matthews, Alzina
Alexandria, Anise	Marks, Antonia
Alexandria, Mathilda	Marks, Yvonne
Babin, Hazel	McCormick, Irene
Boutte, Elaine	Mouton, Myrtle
Boutte, Lee Ester	Mouton, Leola
Breaux, Lucille	Mouton, Olivia
Bernard, Bertha	Mouton, Florida
Broussard, Grace	Mouton, Iris

**DAY PUPILS (Continued)**

Castet, Mabel	Moore, Margaret
Castet, Geneva	Navarre, Parphina
Coco, Essie	Noel, Mary
Comeaux, Ruby	Prejean, Marie
Clark, Virgis	Prejean, Rose
Charcois, Mathilda	Prejean, Altese
Chretien, Margaret	Prejean, Esther
Davis, Mildred	Reynolds, Gustavia
Domingue, Esau	Sam, Melanie
Dorion, Letitia	Sam, Aspasie
Evans, Mary	Sinegal, Piola
Figaro, Eleanora	Silas, Cecilia
Figaro, Helen	St. Julien, Irene
Figaro, Margaret	Shay, Iola
Fischer, Alma	Sinegal, Nina
Cathe, Lucy	Sinegal, Sadie
Gathe, Irene	Trotter, Bernice
Granger, Mattie	Thomas, Eubere
Granger, Verda M.	Thomas, Venice
Griffins, Edna	Williams, Gussie
Holliere, Velva	Williams, Thelma
Jones, Eva	Williams, Beulah
Journet, Sebastian	Zeno, Selma
Journet, Birdie	





## VITA

Don J. Hernandez is an alumnus of Southern University at Baton Rouge, Louisiana with bachelor's and master's degrees in history. He received a Juris Doctorate from Thurgood Marshall School of Law, Houston, Texas, and is a member of the State Bar of Texas and the Louisiana State Bar Association. He has served as the Chief Deputy City Attorney for the City of New Orleans, Chief Public Defender for the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial District of Louisiana; and as a Judge on the 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial District Court of Louisiana. He teaches Louisiana History and Constitutional History at Southern University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.