

New York Metropolitan Area

Saint Ann's Academy, New York City

Saint Ann's Academy was established in 1892 as the first Marist private school in the United States. Brother Zephiriny, its founder and capable organizer (1892-1901.), secured for the Institute the nucleus of its present American Provinces by his success in the institution. For sixty-five years this school prospered on the corner of Lexington Avenue and 76th Street in the Borough of Manhattan of New York City.

Strange as it may seem this very prominent school had its beginnings as a result of a surprising remark made by the Pastor of St. Jean Baptiste Church to his congregation. It was on the occasion of his public welcome to the brothers to the parish. After exhorting the people to send their children to his parochial school for a Catholic education he announced:

A private tuition class will be opened on the top floor of the new building and two classes for boys on the second floor.(1.)

What seemed to be a casual remark startled the small Marist community. The Pastor had in effect told the congregation that the brothers were starting a private school which was to provide special courses. Because this had not been planned, Brother Zephiriny, Director of the Marist community, tried to dissuade the Pastor from this one-sided commitment. His efforts proved futile and the tuition class was opened as planned by the Pastor. On learning of their situation the Superiors in France decided to take the initiative, and sent more brothers to help relieve the original St. Jean Baptiste community of their additional work-load.

When the decision from the Superiors arrived, Brother Zephiriny proceeded to attract boys to the "private floor" academy, which he named in honor of St. Ann. He foresaw the need of a large student body if this venture was to succeed, and began making plans to acquire property. Just at this time the Pastor of St. Jean Baptiste Parish was in the process of redeveloping the parish plant, and was willing to release property to the Marist brothers. The first building which the brothers acquired was a four story tenement building, purchased from the Pastor. As the enrollment increased, other neighboring properties and buildings were purchased in 1897, 1903, 1913, and again in 1931.(2.)

Almost a quarter of a million dollars went to insure the proper development of the Academy during its first twenty-five years.(3.) Resident students were accepted in 1894, and three years later a high school course was added at the request of the parents.(4.) The first graduates (1900) succeeded in passing the Columbia University (Schools of Applied Sciences) tests.(5.) As a result the schools reputation for scholarship attracted additional students.

In order to further insure the success of the schools the brother spent long hours in the classroom and in supervised study and recreation. The long school day lasted from eight A.M. to six P.M. every day. This investment in labor also earned for the brothers a very fine reputation. It was not surprising therefore that in 1905 the parents were willing to send their boys to a summer school vacation camp. What eventually became known as St. Ann's Camp (1908), at Isle LaMotte, Vermont, on Lake Champlain provided supervised study and recreation. The Academy conducted this camp until 1931s when it was dropped after the economic depression set in.

During the nineteen twenties and thirties there was a slight decrease in the enrollment of the Academy. In 1926 a group of resident students of the Academy were transferred to a new sister school, Mount Saint Michael Academy in the Borough of the Bronx, New York City. Following the economic panic of 1929 there was another drop in the enrollment of a hundred students.

Normal enrollment, however, was attained again in 1938.(6.) In the years that followed the student body increased gradually to 1,156 (1956).(7.) Every year a great number of applicants had to be turned away for lack

of accommodations. Although the crowded conditions proved to be an asset in the development of a strong school spirit, the Marist superiors decided that the time had come to sell the Academy (eight buildings) and to build a modern school with more suitable space and facilities.

Since property could not be located for this purpose in the Borough of Manhattan, the superiors decided to build the proposed new school in the Borough of Queens in the Diocese of Brooklyn. Archbishop Thomas E. Molloy, Bishop of Brooklyn (1956) suggested to Brother Linus William, Provincial, a site in Jamaica, Long Island. Brother Francis Xavier was then appointed to supervise the drawing up of plans for the new school and to hire architects and construction companies to build it.

In September 1957 the faculty and students of St. Ann's were transferred to what is now known as Archbishop Molloy High School. Here accommodations for seventeen hundred-fifty day students provide the best in modern facilities.

Archbishop Molly High School, Jamaica, Long Island

A great step forward in the development of the Province of the United States was this transfer of St. Ann's Academy. The major problem of lack of room for expansion, which had caused anxiety since the early nineteen thirties, was now solved.

Brother John Lawrence, Director of St. Ann's Academy, continued his term as Director in the new school. The student body with the exception of the lower grades were to continue their studies at the new building. The upper grades were gradually dropped one each year. The last of these (the original sixth grade) graduated in 1960.

The religious training, which had developed so many vocations to the priesthood, to the brotherhood, and to positions of leadership in parish life at St. Ann's Academy, was naturally continued at the new school. Every year a similar number of vocations (thirty) still apply for admission to the diocesan priesthood and to various congregations.

At the request of Monsignor Henry M. Hald, Diocesan Superintendent of Schools of Brooklyn, Archbishop Molloy High School extended its services to include a summer school. In July 1959, five hundred and fifty students from the Borough of queens registered for courses. During the past summer (1960) six hundred and fifty-six attended this summer school.

Since its foundation Archbishop Molloy High School has served as an educational center for the Province. Beginning in 1957j, the annual Marist Educational Conferences have been held here. In 1959 this school was included in the Esopus Province at the time of the division. It now plays host to brothers of both Provinces at these conferences.

Today the staff consists of forty-nine brothers and ten layteachers. It educates 1,756 students, an increase of six hundred over the former Academy's enrollment.(8.)

Saint Jean Baptiste School, New York City

The first Marist faculty to teach in New York City arrived at St. Jean Baptiste School on 76th Street, in August 1892. Brother Zephiriny, Superior, and four brothers had come at the request of the Pastor of the local parish, Father F. Tetreaut. This priest had traveled to France to see the Marist Superiors in order to request the services of the brothers in his Franco-American school. The Assistant General in charge of the North American missions, Brother Stratonique, showed great interest in the Pastors appeal. He thought it wise to send brothers to such a school as St. Jean Baptiste where the brothers could adapt themselves without too much difficulty to the American way of life. He believed that it Marist start in such a thriving city with a large Catholic population would eventually prove to be very advantageous to the development of the Institute in the United States. He

believed also that a community house in this port city would provide a temporary residence for the many brothers arriving in North America to begin their missionary work.(9.) As attested in the preceding chapters his predictions were quite correct.

The first community reported to the classrooms on September 15th. There were seventy-five students of French origin enrolled on that day. When the brothers began to teach, they were astounded. that the students knew and understood very little French. As a result the brothers had the additional task of mastering the English language in order to teach.(10.) Another surprise was the Pastors announcement of the opening of a private school by the brothers as stated previously.

Father Tetreautnegotiated the sale of property to the brothers for their academy. He assisted them for eight years. until his return to his native Canada in 1900. That year the jurisdiction of his parish was turned over to the Fathers of the Blessed Sacrament. It was through their initiative that a new Saint Jean Baptiste grammar school was built in 1925. The old school was then turned over to the brothers.

Nine years later, after forty-two years of service to this parish, the brothers were withdrawn. This was due to the economic effects of the depression on the parish budget.

Saint Vincent De Paul School, New York City

In 1897 the Fathers of Mercy, who conducted Saint Vincent de Paul" parish on 24th Street in New York City, invited the brothers to teach the higher grades in their small school. At the request of Father Wucher, the Pastor, three brothers in residence at St. Ann's Academy, traveled to this small Franco-American parish to teach.

The brothers however did not teach here long. Within ten years the more prosperous French families moved to the fashionable Morningside Heights section of the City. Here the Fathers opened Notre Dame. Church for them. Consequently the number of students at the school decreased considerably and the brothers were withdrawn in 1908.(11.)

Saint Paul School, New York City

At the turn of the century there were many Irish Catholic families living in what is now known as the Harlem section of New York City. Monsignor MoQuirk, the Pastor of St. Paul's Church en 118th Street in that district,invited the Marist 'Brothers to teach in a new parish school he had built in 1910. Three brothers, also in residence at St. Ann's Academy, were sent to teach at St. Paul's. The good work pursued by the brothers in the higher grades of this school was terminated in 1918 when a noticeable decline of male student registration forced the Pastor to make the school co-educational under the direction of the sisters already teaching in the lower grades. That year the brothers were therefore reassigned to other Marist schools in the Province.(12.)

Saint Ignatius Loyola School, New York City

In 1913 Reverend Havens Richard, S.J., Rector of Saint Ignatius Church, on Park Avenue and 84th Street requested two Marist brothers to teach the upper grades of the parochial school attached to the parish. Grateful Marist superiors did not hesitate to honor the request of the former spiritual advisor of the brothers in Poughkeepsie. Two brothers from St. Ann's Academy were assigned to the school. Four years later a third brother was added to the Marist contingent.(13.)

After eight years of service the brothers had to withdraw from this school in 1921 because of lack of personnel due to the departure of brothers forced to return to Europe to join the French armed services.

Saint Agnes High School, New York

The Marist Brothers were first asked to teach at St. Agnes Grammar School in 1903. Brother Felix Eugene, Provincial, arranged with the Pastor, Msgr. Henry Braun, to send the first group of three brothers to teach there. Because there was no parish residence for these brothers, they commuted every day to the school from St. Ann's Academy. During the next twenty years a full faculty of brothers taught the Grades there.

In 1923 a new pastor Monsignor John Chidwick, provided the brothers with a residence on 36th Street in the Borough of Manhattan, and encouraged them to begin a high school department, which became one of the most prominent in New York City. During the depression years many Catholic families moved from St. Agnes Parish because of construction of commercial buildings in the vicinity. As a result the enrollment in the grammar school suffered, and the brothers were withdrawn from the Grades in 1937. Students from outside the parish applied for admission to the high school, and consequently this department prospered. At present ten brothers and four lay teachers teach three hundred and sixty-one boys.(14.)

Students who have attended both the Grammar and the High School Departments have been strongly influenced by the religious spirit inculcated by the priests and brothers in this parish. Religious vocations to the priestly life and to the brotherhood have hence been numerous. The most illustrious of these is His Excellency Bishop Edward Dargin, Auxilliary Bishop of the Archdiocese of New York. The present director of the school, Brother Timothy Gerard, and the Provincial of the Poughkeepsie Province, Brother John Lawrence, also attended this school.

Since the division of the United States Province the personnel St. Agnes High School is furnished by the Poughkeepsie Province.

Mount St. Michael Academy, New York City

Mount St. Michael Academy was established as a sister-school to St. Ann's Academy in 1926. It was a farsighted decision that planned this school in the northeastern section of the Borough of the Bronx on a twentytwo acre property in 1920. Six years later the buildings were ready to open their doors to day and resident students.(15.)

Brother Leo, Provincial, appointed Brother Mary Florentius as the founding director. There were fourteen brothers and sixty-two students which composed the community and student body in September 1926. One year later the enrollment had increased to two hundred and thirty-nine.(16.)

The development of the school was very encouraging until the effects of the economic depression of the early thirties caused serious concern. Dedicated brothers, such as Brother Francis Xavier, who was appointed director in 1933, canvassed neighboring parishes for students. He sponsored various advertising programs to increase the enrollment. The success which he achieved was evident in the increase of students to seven hundred at the end of his term in 1939.(17.)

Prior to the depression, a four story dormitory building had been built in 1928, and a cottage near the Mount had been acquired to accommodate part of the staff. After the depression, and especially during the forties it became again imperative that additional facilities be acquired. Another cottage to serve as a second brothers' residence was therefore built in post war years. In 1948 a classroom-gymnasium building was begun, and dedicated in 1950 by His Eminence Francis Cardinal Spellman. Six years later two stories were added to the main residence of the brothers to provide rooms for fifty-five brothers. The complete structure was then called "Champagnat Hall." Throughout the years, smaller buildings had been constructed, to serve as field houses, garages, and utility buildings.(18.) One benefactor, Mr. Patrick McGovern, aided in the development of a regulation football field which was dedicated to his memory. The present facilities in sports are among the best the high schools of New York City can offer. The gymnasium is the largest high school gymnasium in New York City.(19.)

Recently several lay teachers have been employed to help the faculty of brothers to teach and educate 1,581 boys.(20.) Besides a reputation for scholarship and athletics and an active student body, the school enjoys the

loyal support of an enthusiastic group of parents and friends. The Men's Club and Mothers' Club, for instance have been instrumental in organizing a number of social functions to raise funds for school improvements, for financial assistance to the Marist houses of studies, for the Marist missions in the Philippines and Japan, and for various other major allied projects. The student body itself has vied with these groups in financing the Missions by generous contributions to the Propagation of the Faith Society.

The school has been outstanding in the leadership it has shown in its programming, in its interest in the professional advancement of the brothers, and in its student spiritual activities.(21.) It was here in 1954 a special Marian Year tribute to the Blessed Mother was held for all Marist students in the New York metropolitan area. In 1955 the Marist Educational Conferences were initiated here. Two hundred brothers gathered to initiate various projects to advance professional interest. It was also at this school that such organizations as the Marist Forensics League (1951), and the Marist Basketball Invitational Tournament were started (1954) and the Marist Sodality Conventions (1959).(22.)

The spiritual atmosphere of the school has also generated interest in the religious life. Numerous students have gone on to the priesthood and the brotherhood. Since the division of the United States Province the latter study at the houses of studies in the Poughkeepsie Province to which this school and its faculty belong.

Cardinal Hayes High School, New York City

Soon after Archbishop Spellman was installed as the Ordinary of the Archdiocese of New York he energetically sought to advance the construction of high schools. To this end he began a building program in various parts of the Archdiocese. The first of these schools was the Cardinal Hayes Memorial High School built in 1940. When the school opened its doors in September 1941, the Marist Brothers were in charge of the Mathematics and French Departments.

Brother John Lawrence was appointed as the director of the first Brothers' community, which consisted of thirteen brothers. Their residence was situated in mid-Manhattan on 79th Street, between Third and Lexington avenues in New York City. A forty-five minute subway trip was required to reach the school, which is situated on Grand Concourse at 153rd Street In the Borough of Bronx. Eight years later a permanent residence was acquired by the Archdiocese on 81st Street for a community of eighteen brothers. The subway ride (I.R.T.) is still a daily event.

From the start the brothers co-operated with the Principal, now Bishop Philip Furlong, with the priests and with brothers of other congregations in developing the school. At the present time there are 94 teachers ion the faculty who have in their care 2,433 boys.

The success achieved by the brothers was recognized in the requests of Cardinal Spellman for brothers to staff other diocesan high schools. Because of a lack of personnel however, the Marist brothers have provided for only two other faculties; in Bishop Dubois High School, New York City (1947); and in Our Lady of Lourdes High School, Poughkeepsie, New York (1958). These three schools are now staffed by the Poughkeepsie Province, whose provincial, Brother John Lawrence, was the first Director of the Cardinal Hayes Brothers' community.

Saint Helen High School, New York City

The Marist brothers were invited to teach at St. Helena Grammar School in the Borough of the Bronx in 1946. Monsignor Arthur J. Scanlan, the Pastor, who was inspired by a priestly zeal to provide a Catholic education for the children of his parish "from kindergarten to college" succeeded in obtaining three brothers in 1946.

This first faculty, headed by Brother Conan Vincent, lived at St. Ann's Academy during the first year of this school. One year later the brothers moved into what had been St. Joseph Institute for the Deaf and Dumb on Hutchison River Parkway, to set up living quarters, as well as classrooms.(23.) In the years that followed more appropriate residence quarters were provided for the brothers. The school building was renovated to take care of

the education of eleven hundred boys. Another building program is now under way to provide better facilities for the expanding brothers' community.

The St. Helena Boys' High School Department was started in September 1949. Fifty students were enrolled. Students from outside the parish, including many from nearby Long Island, were later admitted to the school. By 1955 the growth of the high school enrollment was such that the brothers teaching the Grades had to be withdrawn from them in order to staff the High School.(24.) That year two lay teachers had to be employed. Three years later there were twenty-one helping the twenty-nine brothers conducting a double session service. (25.) Because the school did not have adequate accommodations to continue a double session, it was discontinued the following year.(26.)

One characteristic of the school is the active participation of students in spiritual organizations. The Sodality of the Blessed Virgin, for instance, has been singularly successful in preparing leaders in parish life. Religious vocations from this school have been especially numerous. At this time there are one hundred and thirty alumni studying for the priesthood, or the brotherhood.(27.) Since 1959 those studying for the latter have been assigned to the Esopus Province, which furnishes the faculty for this school.

Bishop Dubois High School, New York City

Cardinal Spellman established Bishop Dubois High School in 1947 as a sister school to Cardinal Hayes High School. Several priests and brothers from the Hayes faculty were assigned to organize the school. One year later a Marist community was formed to staff the Mathematics, Science and Language Departments. Brother Athanasius Norbert was appointed director of the first community of six brothers, whose residence was opened on West 70th Street in the Borough of Manhattan. The school itself is on West 155th Street.

Monsignor Michael Buckley a former Marist student of St. Agnes School in New York City, was appointed as the first Principal. At present there are five priests and nine brothers educating five hundred students in Bishop Dubois High School. These brothers belong to the Poughkeepsie Province.

Saint Mary's High School, Manhasset, New York

In 1950 the first Marist community of six brothers to be assigned to the (then) Brooklyn Diocese arrived at St. Mary's Parish at the request of the Pastor, Monsignor John K. Sharp. This far-sighted priest wished to provide the youth in the expanding community of Manhasset with a Catholic high school to be conducted by the Marist Brothers and the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. His plans included a modern school building for five hundred boys and girls.

Brother Nicholas Mary was appointed first director by Brother Thomas Austin, Provincial. The original community of six brothers increasea from year to year as the number of students became larger. Within seven years the school had to expand facilities for an enrollment that had doubled. In 1957 a four story building was erected as the boys' building. The original school was left to the girls. The brothers residence was transferred from a house across the street from the school. to the fourth floor of the new building. There are now twenty brothers and three lay teachers in charge of 693 boys.

One characteristic of this school, which is staffed by the brothers of the Esopus Province, is its special concern for Marist Missions— Since 1950 thousands of dollars have been collected to help support the Marist Philippine Missions. One Philippine foundation, Notre Dame of Dadiangas High School and College owes much to the special assistance given by the students and parents of St. Mary's School. Three brothers from the St. Mary's community left for Japan and the Philippines in 1956 and 1957. This enthusiasm for Mission work in Manhasset is attributable to the zeal and religious spirit which was first introduced by the late Brother Nicholas Mary, the first director.

Resurrection-Ascension School, Rego Park, New York

Resurrection-Ascension School in the Borough of Queens was the first Grammar School the Provincial Administration decided to staff in the New York area in twenty-eight years. Brother Linus William, Provincial, answered the request of the Pastor, Father David Lynch, by appointing Brother James Bernard director of the community of seven to teach the higher Grades.

In September 1954 these brothers were given charge of two hundred and forty boys. The number has remained substantially the same for the past six years. The rest of the student body was assigned to the classes of the Sisters of Charity of Halifax (Nova Scotia, Canada). Most of the graduates from the brothers' classes continue their education at nearby Catholic High Schools including the brothers' school, Archbishop Molloy High School in Jamaica, Long Island.

Marist High School, Bayonne, New York

The opening of Marist High School in Bayonne# New Jersey, was a significant step in the expansion of the Marist teaching apostolate in the United States. Previous to this, for sixty-two years in fact, various provincials had opened Marist communities especially in New York City. With the opening of a Marist school in New Jersey, a policy to meet the educational needs of the Archdiocese of Newark was begun.

This first Marist school was established in September 1954. Brother Linus William, Provincial, assigned Brother Leo Sylvius, Director, and four brothers to the arduous task of teaching and laboring to recondition old school buildings into a smooth running and efficient institution.

The school property was purchased by the Province from the Sisters of St. Joseph (Chestnut Hill, Philadelphia). For many years the sisters had conducted Holy Family Academy in three ancient three-story frame buildings on the corner of Hudson Boulevard and 8th Street in Bayonne. When the brothers acquired the property it was with the hope of using the buildings until such time as a more appropriate site could be found on which to build. Therefore they expected a two year alteration program.(28.)

Unfortunately proper developments for a new property were held up for six and a half years. From the first group of one hundred and forty-students in September 1954 the increasing numbers have overcrowded the old quarters. With the assistance of the local civil authorities and of St. Andrews Parish, a P.A.L. gymnasium was rented for the physical education classes, and the former St. Andrews Grammar School building was loaned to the brothers to house the freshman and sophomore classes.(29.)

Every year more brothers were assigned to Marist High, so that presently there are seventeen brothers and three lay teachers educating four hundred and fifteen boys.

In this school's short history it has earned a reputation for high scholastic achievement. The numerous scholarships obtained by the graduates certify to this. As a result, numerous pastors have asked for the brothers to teach in their respective parishes in nearby Jersey cities. ?n 1959 one brother from this community was assigned to help organize a high school in Roselle, New Jersey. Brothers from the Esopus Province now supply the personnel to both these schools.

Roselle Catholic High School, Roselle, New Jersey

The Marist Brothers established a community at Roselle Catholic High School in September 1960. The late Monsignor James J. Carberry (+1960), Pastor of St. Joseph the Carpenter Parish in Roselle, New Jersey, requested the service of the brothers to teach in a parish high school he planned. As mentioned previously, one brother, Brother Leo Francis, from Marist High School in Bayonne, New Jersey, helped to organize this high school during the 1959-1960 scholastic year. One of the parish priests and two lay teachers were also included in the faculty that initiated the first class of forty-two boys.

The high school was inaugurated in a three story frame building, formerly a sisters' convent. A brothers' residence was purchased by the parish. These buildings were regarded as temporary since the original plans called for the development of Roselle Catholic at the St. Walabarger's Orphanage nearby. The plans called for a Marist faculty to teach 500 boys.

Following the death of Monsignor Carberry, Archbishop Boland of Newark decided to include the late pastor's plans in his own diocesan campaign to construct seven regional high schools.(30.) As a result the character of the projected school has changed from a parochial to a diocesan school. The Archbishop drew up the final plans with Rev. Brother Paul Ambrose, Assistant General, on the latter's visitation in February 1961.(31.) These plans include the renovation of St. Walabarger's Orphanage, the beginning of the construction of a gymnasium-classroom wing, a brothers' residence adjacent to the school and expansive athletic outdoor facilities. The program calls for the future enrollment of one thousand students. At this writing (1961) there are 11.3 boys enrolled and an addition of two hundred registered for the fall semester.(32.)

Camp St. Joseph, Bellport, New York

In the spring of 1960 the Province of Esopus acquired a fortyfour acre camp at Bellport, New York, sixty-five miles from New York City. That summer Brother Athanasius Norbert, director of Archbishop Molloy High School, was appointed to supervise the reconditioning of the buildings. The facilities at the camp include: two houses, several large bungalows, and a swimming pool. Its proximity to Smith Point Beach on Fire Island provides ample accommodations for a successful camp.

As the population increases in this section of the Diocese of Rockville Center (Suffolk County) it is foreseen that a Catholic High school for boys will be needed. The superiors view this extensive property as an ideal location for providing this educational need and other Marist projects.