

1929: Marist Normal Training School

It became more and more important to be able to provide a good part of the education of our Marist Brothers right here on what is now the Marist campus. We had been giving the Brothers many of the basic courses during their Scholasticate training to ease some of the burden of them having to take most of their college courses while teaching in the classroom. Most Brothers started taking college courses after completing high school. Since this was usually done when they were teaching, it meant going to night school, taking weekend courses, and taking even more courses during the summer months to try to complete their degrees.

It was in 1929 that the Provincial Council decided to apply to the Education Department in Albany to seek approval as a junior college. Arrangements were carefully planned so that the Brothers would be able to take two years and three summers of courses here at St. Ann's Hermitage that would count toward their degrees, whether they were registered at Fordham University, St. John's University or Catholic University in Washington, D.C. All three centers had agreed to accept the courses given at our Scholasticate, as they already accepted the courses given in the various seminaries of other religious orders.

The Provincial named key men to teach at the Scholasticate who were active already and well-qualified, and many of the better qualified were also called upon for this same service during the summer months. The whole Province became conscious of meeting qualifications. We had had an inspection and were required to provide adequate laboratories for physics and chemistry as well as to provide an adequate library. In order to fulfill these demands, the Greystone building was completely renovated with a new college library on the top floor (presently the president's office), the center floor as the physics lab, and the bottom floor as the chemistry lab. On the south side of Greystone we also erected a small greenhouse to replace the old one by Waterworks Road (now the main entrance of the college).

The entire Province became conscious of the professional status of our training program. Bro. Emile Nestor was named superintendent of all our Marist schools and made regular inspections to raise the quality of our work by providing better qualifications for our teachers and more detailed and rigorous follow-up after graduation. We thus had a new library and new labs, and the statue of St. Joseph the good provider was placed opposite Greystone to keep an eye on our professionalism. After we felt ready, we applied and received authorization to be renamed the Marist Normal Training School with continued courses to be completed at New York's Fordham University, St. John's University or at Catholic University in Washington. So after much anticipation, the Marist Normal Training School became official in 1929.