

## St. Joseph Nuns Pioneer In Teacher Education

Normal School founded by Sisters  
now division of Nazareth College

**T**HE TRAINING of the religious teachers for the parochial schools of the Diocese of Rochester is one of the most urgent problems facing those responsible for meeting the growing ranks of elementary school children who each year seek enrollment in Catholic schools.

Parochial schools in the Diocese of Rochester owe their importance to the mutual efforts of the bishops, priests, religious and laity of yesterday and today.

As the Sisters of St. Joseph currently observe a centenary of service to the parochial schools of the Rochester Diocese, they recall the prophetic words of Bishop McQuaid at the first diocesan Teachers' Institute in July, 1896: "the battle of God's Church in this country has to be fought in the parochial schoolroom."

Only two years later in December, 1898, Nazareth Normal School directed by the Sisters of St. Joseph was formally opened as an institution of teacher education for religious in the Diocese of Rochester, establishing for itself a place among the pioneers of Catholic teacher education in the United States.

The actual beginnings of Nazareth Normal School were made possible by the foresight of Reverend Mother Agnes who had not only looked to the purchase of property for a normal school as early as 1884, but had



Anyone for tennis?

sent her Sisters abroad to the outstanding cultural centers of Europe in order that the challenge of the Christian education of youth might be the better fulfilled.

In its fifty six years of existence, Nazareth Normal School has much to record by way of professional progress. Lest any of the host of names associated with the foundation and continued maintenance of the tradition of teacher education at Nazareth suffer by omission, the story may be best recorded by recounting the major strides in which the Sisters of St. Joseph have achieved the recognition of authorities in the field of education.

**T**HE BUILDING now occupied by the Basilian Fathers on Augustine Street was the first formal residence of Nazareth Normal School and remained such until the opening of the Normal School wing at the new Sisters of St. Joseph Motherhouse at Pittsford, in August, 1928.

Within this span of years, the professional accomplishments of the early directresses Sister Pauline, Sister Angelina, Sister Saint Mark, and Sister Florentine provided a curricular program completely in accord with the requisites set up by the State of New York for Teacher Certification. By 1899, Nazareth Normal School had fulfilled the requirements for the right to grant the First Grade Certificate which conferred upon the recipient the privilege of teaching in any public school within the districts under the Commissioner's supervision.

As soon as a higher form of teacher certification was available in the "Life State Teacher's Certificate",

Nazareth Normal again fulfilled the necessary requirements for this credential which extended to candidates the opportunity to teach in any public school for life.

Shortly after the appointment of Sister Florentine, who assumed the direction of the School for the training of religious teachers in 1905, Nazareth Normal School was designated as one of the centers in New York State for examining candidates for the State Life Certificate. Under her skilled direction and administration, the Normal School continued to fulfill the diocesan needs for educated religious teachers while at the same time it kept pace with the improved standards established by the State Department in behalf of a more professional teacher education.

Between the years 1916 and 1948, the elementary teacher education program experienced its period of greatest expansion under the intrepid leadership of Sister Anna de Paul as Dean. Her powers of organization and execution were chiefly responsible for the rapid and consistent improvement in the program of teacher education. The period was marked by a series of continuous advances from the initial planning and approval of the Three-Year Normal Course to the present status of the program as a registered, Four-Year Curriculum leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Education which degree Nazareth College is empowered to grant in virtue of its own charter.

**A**NOTHER CROWNING accomplishment was effected in October of 1960 when the erstwhile Nazareth Normal School became officially listed

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Young Sisters enjoy recreation at Nazareth.



Time-out of Teachers' Summer School.

## CONGRATULATIONS

to the

### SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH

on your

## 100th ANNIVERSARY

We join the many boys and girls whom you have so ably guided and instructed over the past 100 years in saying, "Thank you". Your service to Rochester and its surrounding communities in educating young people has been of immeasurable value. Please keep up the good work for many years to come.

ALWAYS AT YOUR SERVICE  
ROCHESTER GAS RGE and ELECTRIC