

Nazareth Academy - Sisters' Pioneer Venture

Girls' Academy started by St. Joseph Community in 1871
has current enrollment of 1,300 students, staff of 60 Sisters

NAZARETH ACADEMY, a familiar Rochester landmark, is the successful result of a pioneer venture, launched 84 years ago by the Sisters of St. Joseph, in the field of secondary education for girls.

Today, Nazareth Academy is housed in a modern school plant located on the beautiful heights of Lake Avenue and overlooks the approaches to Maplewood Park. Here a student body of more than 1,300 teenage girls are instructed by a faculty of 60 St. Joseph Sisters.

Nazareth Academy was not always located at its present Lake Avenue site. The Sisters opened their Academy in the last quarter of the last century in a building now referred to as the "old Nazareth Academy on Jay Street."

ON AUGUST 15, 1871, Nazareth Convent at 50 Jay Street, the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in the diocese of Rochester, was opened and blessed. Incorporation had been secured under the title, "The Nazareth Convent and Academy," and the day and boarding school for girls opened in the fall. Pupils were transferred to it from St. Patrick's Select School. Mother M. Stanislaus was the first directress and the program conformed to the program for young ladies in European convent academies. Religion, languages, music, art and needlework were stressed.

The first public examinations before Bishop McQuaid and priests from the Cathedral were held in June, 1873. On February 21, 1877, pupils were received into the Sodality of Our Lady and the first retreat for students was conducted in May. On June 21 of the same year the First Commencement was held, with Miss Jane Leary as the sole graduate.

In January, 1880, Sister Adelaide Carberry was appointed directress, with a faculty which included Sister Bernadina, Sister Marcella, Sister Boniface, Sister Bernadine and Sister Raphael. Latin, mathematics and science were now receiving greater attention.

In 1887, Mother Agnes Hines became second superior general of the Sisters of Saint Joseph and Sister Marcella became directress of Nazareth Academy.

THE ANNUAL Commencement exercises of 1888 were accompanied by an Art Exhibit, a department which was in high repute in the community and in the city of Rochester, under Sister Geraldine Cavanaugh.

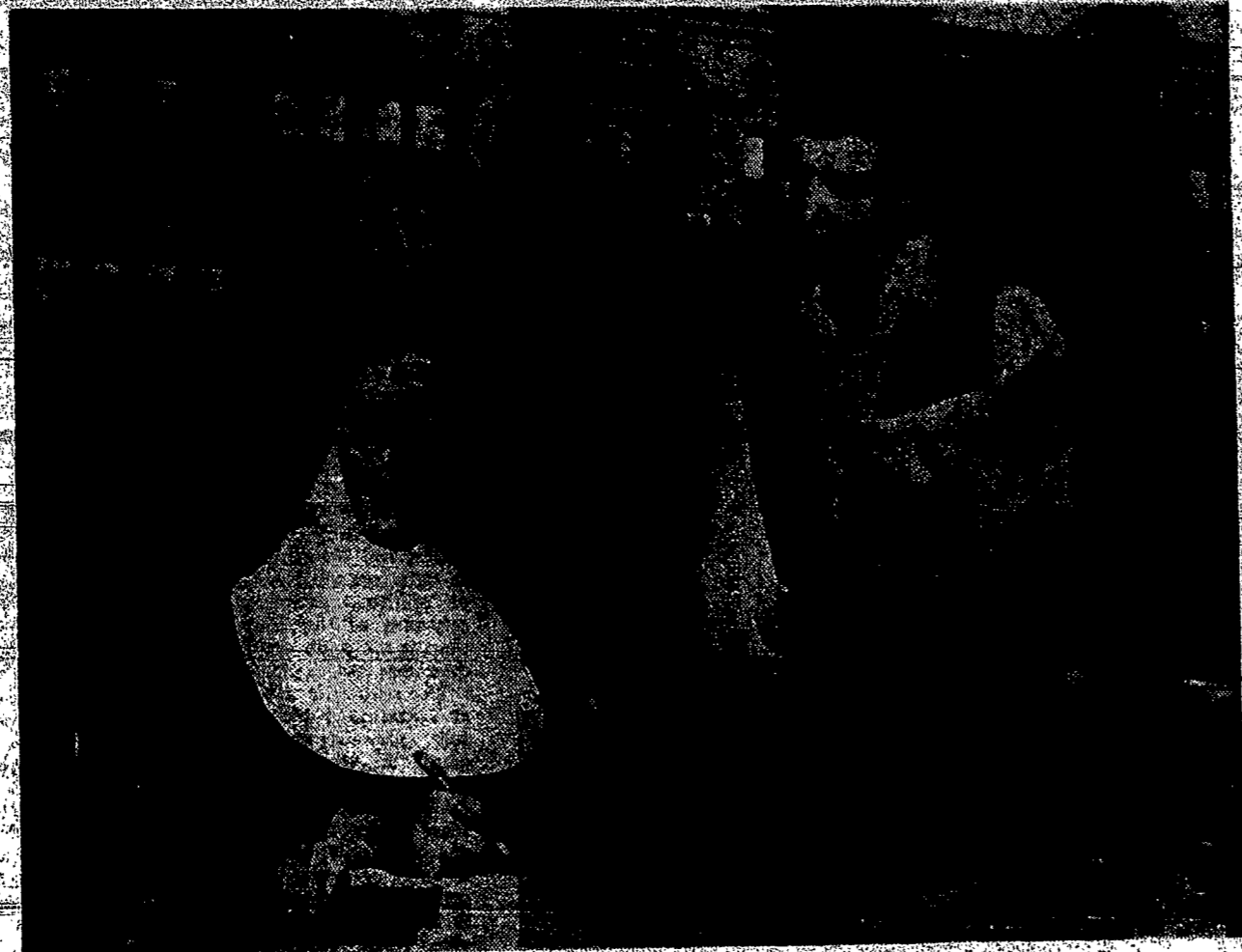
Growth in enrollment and curricula necessitated the building of a new wing in 1889. The next year Sister Adelaide returned as directress. The Academy was chartered by the University of the State of New York in 1891, and the first Regents Academic Diplomas were awarded in the year following. Operation of Nazareth Academy continually under the direction of the State Education Department has maintained high standards of scholarship, in which the administration and student body take a just pride.

The State Department of Education in 1896 approved the course of study at Nazareth Academy to fulfill requirements for entrance to State Schools for training of teachers. As teaching was the chosen profession of the greater number of Nazareth graduates, this approval was welcomed by the faculty.

In 1907 one of the Academy teachers was taken from Nazareth to found St. Joseph's Hospital in Elmira. In later years many of the graduates have gone to Elmira for their course in nursing.

Growth in numbers and course offerings taxed the Jay Street building and the present Nazareth Academy on Lake Avenue was opened for students in 1916.

Progress in the new building, which represented the newest in high school construction, was halted by the years of World War I. Contribution to the war effort occupied all minds. Immediately after the Armistice on November 11, 1918, plans



Nazareth Academy is largest of St. Joseph Sisters' schools

were laid for future progress of the school. The Depression of 1929 brought difficulties to parents, pupils and administration, but Nazareth, somehow, was able to report even higher enrollments.

In 1938, an addition became imperative. This addition was completed in 1940 and dedicated by Bishop Kearney. The joy of the dedication was saddened by the weakness of Sister Marcella, whose years of selfless devotion were nearing the end. She was deservedly revered by Rochester as one of its most distinguished educators. She was

mourned and remembered by her girls wherever they were and by her large community of religious.

ON THE DEATH of Sister Marcella in 1940, Sister Hubertine Turner was appointed principal. As high school enrollments continued to increase, provision was made for expansion in the home-making, secretarial, music, art and physical education departments. Testing and career programs were adapted to the needs of high school graduates. Nazareth Academy was operating

around the clock on a full time schedule.

Sister Pauline Smyth took up the work in 1949 and carried out the reconstruction of the auditorium, the outfitting and training of the Fontbonne band, and the organization of a Parent-Teachers Association. In 1952 a second accreditation was earned from the central agency for secondary schools.

Sister Agnes Cecilia became principal in 1953. All the academic and extra-curricular activities of the 1,300 student school are under her supervision.

THE NEXT 100 YEARS

What will happen in the next century is pretty much conjectured. This much is certain: The solid contributions made by the Sisters of St. Joseph in the Diocese of Rochester during the past 100 years will surely play an important role in our continued spiritual growth and progress during the next 100 years. To the beloved Sisters go our most sincere best wishes for another Century of Grace.

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