FEATURE

Schools celebrate 200 years

Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer
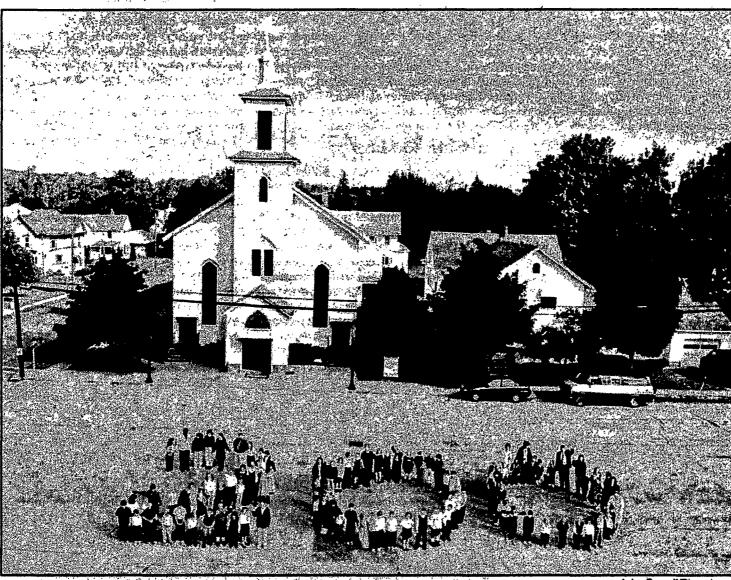
First-graders (from left) Shelby Wyffels, Briana Rozwadowski and Patrick Stearns play "Pass the Hoop," a game children played in the 1800s, at St. Mary's School in Canandaigua Sept. 22.

Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Kaitlyn Dorofy, 7, blows bubbles with the rest of the school Sept. 22 at Our Mother of Sorrows School in Greece.

John Powell/Photo intern

The students of St. Joseph's School in Wayland make a "200" in the parking lot to celebrate the 200th anniversary of New York's Catholic schools, on Sept. 22.

On Sept. 22, diocesan Catholic schools joined Catholic schools across the state in celebrating the 200th anniversary of the first Catholic school to open in New York state. The first Catholic school in New York was St. Peter's School in Lower Manhattan of New York City, which opened in September 1800. It had 100 students. The state also was only one diocese at the time of St. Peter's opening, and was called the Diocese of New York.

Today 304,000 students attend 853 Catholic schools in the state. In the Diocese of Rochester, more than 13,000 students attend 54 Catholic elementary and junior high schools. In addition, 3,500 students attend Catholic high schools in the diocese.

Schools across the diocese held individual "birthday parties" in honor of the 200th celebration. The celebration at St. Mary's School in Canandaigua concluded with ice cream cones, said to have been invented 200 years ago.

John Powell/Photo intern

Timothy McGowan, 6, and Ashley Helman, 6, both first-graders, run through the Virginia Reel at St. Joseph School in Wayland Sept. 22. The dance was part of the Catholic schools' 200th anniversary celebration. Students and their parents shared cake and ice cream as well.

Andrea Dixon/Staff photographer

Students at Our Mother of Sorrows in Greece blow bubbles in the early morning of Sept. 22 to kick off their celebration.