



Volume Eight: April 1, 2024

1975-2000: Approaching the New Millennium

Continuing the Mission and Legacy of the Founder

Years of Decision at the Academy

The latter years of the 1970's saw changes in building use along with strengthening and diversification of the curriculum and activities at Holy Angels. An area of the Holy Angels Congregational Offices/Convent, originally the Novitiate building, was converted into the Fine Arts building. This provided space for the art department and a home economics program. A change that many regretted was the transformation of the beautiful and much-loved chapel into the high school library. Yet it was considered a good use for badly needed space. Many considered the transformation of the AHA Chapel as practical, creative, and beautiful. With the change, the Sisters' community room became the school chapel.

In 1980 the Academy celebrated the 125th year of its service to the New Orleans community. The first home of the Academy, built in 1855 at Gallier and Rampart Streets, now stood beautifully renovated and converted into additional classrooms, amid a campus alive with activity. In the 80's Holy Angels students described their school as "a magnificently diverse community with well-defined goals in culture, education and Christianity." It was obvious that the Marianites of Holy Cross still gave value to the new experiences enjoyed by the students and continued in them in the Academy.

The second half of the 80's was a difficult period in the history of Catholic education in New Orleans and at Holy Angels. Many factors entered into the feasibility of the Academy's continuing to operate. The high cost of private Catholic education, salaries for lay teachers due to the need to replace the diminishing number of Sisters, economic problems in the metropolitan area, and the aging of the buildings all posed the question: should the Academy continue as a high school for girls?

Sister Joyce Michel replaced Sister Marie Noel as principal in September of 1991. The Provincial Administration gave Sister Michel the challenge of planning for the future viability of the Academy. Despite her many efforts, it became more and more certain that the most drastic measures should be taken. In January 1992, it was the sad duty of the Provincial Superior, Sister Suellen Tennyson, to announce to the Marianites of Holy Cross and to the City of New Orleans that the Academy of the Holy Angels would close its doors at the end of the scholastic year in 1992.

In the spirit of Father Basile Moreau, the Congregational Superior, Sister Verda Frederick, sent a letter to Sister Joyce on June 8, 1992:

Transitions, however difficult, have always proved to be moments of greatness... Our beloved Founder wrote on November 9, 1847, "It is quite true that Eternal Wisdom has arranged all things with strength and mildness...like a tender mother who even while pressing to the lips of her loving child a cup of bitter medicine, hastens to take away the bad taste with sweets..." May his words assist you today! The Academy and all that it has been these past 140 years, has been a gift of God's gentle Providence. Now is the time when we must let Providence rule again in a manner that balances joy and pain.

School Leadership 1975-2000

Holy Angels Principals

Sister Joyce Michel
Sister Bernadine Hill
Sister Marie Noel
Sister Joyce Michel

Holy Cross Headmasters

Brother Robert Hampton
Brother John McLaughlin
Brother Edwin Reggio
Brother Lawrence Sandstrom
Brother Stephen Walsh

Our Lady of Holy Cross College Presidents

Sister Enda Eileen Byrne
Sister Madeline Sophie Hebert
Walter S. Maestri III, PhD
Sister Mary Charles Clement
Rev. Thomas E. Chambers. CSC

Our Lady of Holy Cross College Growing in Size and Depth

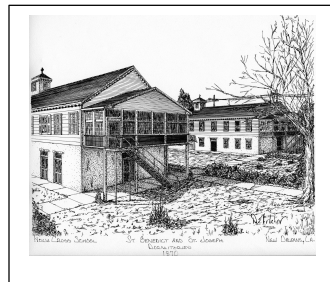
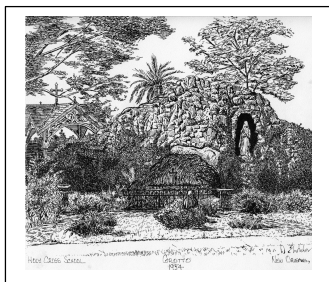
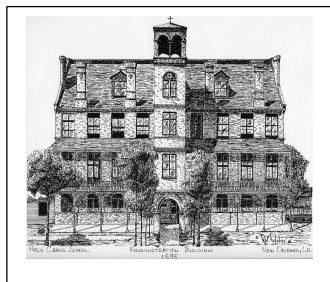
In the spring of 1971, the first status report was submitted and approved by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; the College received accreditation for a ten-year period.

Between 1971 and 1980, the College grew in student numbers and added many new academic and professional programs, such as Accounting, to the initial Teacher Education curriculum. In 1975, Our Lady of Holy Cross awarded its first honorary degree, and in 1991 the College celebrated its 75th anniversary.

The first third of the 1980's saw two new steps taken by the College. In September 1983, the Louisiana State Board of Nursing approved a four-year baccalaureate degree program, which was initiated in the spring of 1984. In the fall of 1984, a Master in Education program was initiated. A concentration in Counseling was offered through the Master of Education program until 1998 when a Master of Arts in Counseling was offered. The Thomas E. Chambers Counseling and Training Center was dedicated in 1998.

Holy Cross School Celebrates Centennial, Attendance Boom, and New Governance

The decade of the 70's saw a growing Middle School, growing transportation service and a year of celebrating the school's Centennial. The celebration spanned the entire school year with a special logo on school stationary, student uniforms, and many specialty items. While the Centennial was celebrated right through the 1979 Commencement, the culmination was at a special event at the New Orleans Hilton including a Liturgy with music from a special choir of students, faculty and staff created by Mr. Richard Crosby. The event included an address by Earl Nightingale who was a nationally renowned celebrity at the time. The set of "Centennial Prints" drawn by student/graduate David Ehrlicher became a treasured collector's item.



Holy Cross began its second century on a high note. With a growing middle school, a transportation system reaching into five civil parishes of the metro area, strengthening and diversifying academics and admissions along with the resulting successes in the athletic and extracurricular programs, the school reached its zenith in enrollment. By the mid-80's the grade 5-12 enrollment was near 1400 students including over 400 middle school students. As was the experience of Holy Angels, the second half of the eighties began a difficult period in the history of Catholic education in New Orleans and at Holy Cross.

In the spirit of the Founder, the Brothers of Holy Cross proactively looked ahead regarding their schools recognizing necessary change. Two concerns were addressed: the reality of limited number of religious available to staff and lead the schools, and the complexities of operating schools with concern for growing cost and changing demographics. During the 1980's the Brothers were transitioning from operating schools to "sponsoring" schools through a partnership with lay governance and leadership. In the 1970's two faculty/staff elected members were added to join the Brothers serving on the Board of Directors. During the 1980's there was a move to create a "lay" Board of Directors with the inclusion some appointments to the membership by the Brothers.

In the mid-80's the Brothers also incorporated a dual means of school leadership known as the "President-Principal model." The Headmaster (president) continued to function as the chief administrative officer with focus on the institutional leadership... finances, physical plant, fundraising, alumni affairs, as well as marketing and public relations of the school. Under the Headmaster's supervision, a Principal was added to focus on the academic and student day-to-day operations.

save the date



Sunday, April 28, 2024

11:00 am Mass • St. Louis Cathedral • New Orleans