

IHM Archives Notes

Volume 3, issue 8

February 2013

Marygrove's Early Interest in Urban Development and Leadership

In 1922, when IHM purchased the undeveloped land where Marygrove would be built, some argued that it was too far removed from the city and lacked water and electricity, transportation, and fire protection. IHM took the risk. Before the close of the year the northwest area, including the new property, was incorporated into the city. The total cost for the property, which included 80 acres for the campus and five acres located opposite the future main entrance of the college, was \$241,000.

The payment exhausted the building fund the congregation had saved to erect the college building in Monroe, the original plan. The cost of building and outfitting

Marygrove combined with the remaining debt for building the Academy and Motherhouse would leave IHM with a \$4 million debt.

Friends organized the "Marygrove Festival" in 1924 in Detroit and raised a little more than \$100,000. The responsibility for the remaining debt fell to the congregational treasurer and creative fundraiser Sister Miriam Raymo.

But generating income was not her only concern; developing a college and its campus as well as the neighborhood in which it would be situated offered another challenge. Some of the surrounding land was used to create a series of lots around the perimeter, and a real estate agent was hired to market the lots. IHM also built Tudor-style homes on some of the lots to set the style for the neighborhood. An appraisal of the lots was submitted by Charles Steiner and Charles McKenzie to Miriam on Oct. 12, 1936. Its purpose was to determine the fair market value of the lots, which would be used in connection with the refunding of present outstanding bonds of St. Mary College and

Academy, Inc. There were 52 lots in all: 12 on W. McNichols Road at Cherrylawn directly across from what became the entrance to the campus; six on the east side of Wyoming Avenue at Marygrove Drive; 16 on the south side of Marygrove Drive between Wyoming and Greenlawn; and 18 on the east side of Greenlawn between W. McNichols and Florence. The Wyoming



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and W. McNichols lots were for businesses; the Marygrove Drive lots were for single family residences; and, the Greenlawn lots were for duplexes with a single-residence appearance. The Greenlawn and Marygrove Drive lots faced the campus. All lots were in Northwest Detroit's "College Park District," where University of Detroit, University of Detroit High School, Detroit Country Day and Marygrove were located within a one mile radius.

IHM was looking at ways to pay off the debt and to contribute to the growth and development of the city of Detroit and its first college for women. The congregation succeeded both in building a college campus and helping to establish the surrounding neighborhood.



This Greenlawn duplex later served as the first convent for Immaculata High School

SOME SPECIAL FEATURES:

3-Bedroom Apartment on First Floor

6-Room, 2-Bedroom Apartment on Second Floor

Oil Burner

Incinerator

Electric Refrigeration

Colored Tile Sinks

Real Mahogany Doors and Interior Trim

Recreation Room in Basement

Separate Boiler Room

Separate Laundry Room

Brick Garage

The Ringing of the Bell



For many years IHMs followed a daily schedule called a horarium exactly; and the ringing of bells helped them to do that. Several examples of statements in the 1920 Constitutions suggest the seriousness of the obligation. “Every one should be careful to obey the first sound of the bell, leaving every occupation”; and, “To maintain order, the Sister charged with ringing the bell must be exact in giving the signal at the prescribed hours.” Novices learned that responding to the bell was responding to the voice of God. Understanding this explains the story of ringing the bell at St. Matthew Detroit.

A Rule Is a Rule

In the late 1950s St. Matthew School was a large grade school of about 1,000 students on Detroit’s east side. The principal and superior, Sister Ann Mary Schaden, very ably ran the school and convent. She was not without challenges, however. About half of the 14 sisters assigned to teach there were junior professed; although they had teaching certificates, they were still developing as classroom teachers. And, because St. Matthew’s was their first mission, they were also still learning the ropes of life in the convent.

Each sister was responsible for a “charge”—cleaning an area, ordering food, doing shopping and, of course, ringing bells. The latter was more complicated than it would first appear. Bells organized the day: rising, going to chapel for prayers, meals, recreation and end of recreation.

The IHMs were an apostolic community; they taught. They also had a contemplative spirit, only conversing at designated times. So, for example, the time after the noon meal was designated as “recreation.” It ended at 1:30 p.m. when a bell was rung twice in the convent. Of course, on school days the teaching sisters went back to school after they had eaten lunch; and, in convents like St. Matthew’s where everyone was relatively young, that meant everyone exited the convent. It was empty and quiet.

This, however, was a difficult reality for a brand new, young sister, only briefly out of formation programs at the Motherhouse, to grasp. If the rule called for a bell to be rung at 1:30 to end recreation, it had to be rung regardless of whether anyone was in the house. After all, a rule is a rule to a good sister.

The principal’s office was situated across from a short, narrow hallway that the sisters used to leave the school and go to the side door of the convent. She noticed that the bell ringer was going back over to the convent shortly before 1:30. At first, she thought that the sister had forgotten something or didn’t feel well; but, after the same thing occurred every day for several weeks, she stopped the sister and asked, “Why are you going over to the convent every day around this time?”

“Well, Mother, I have to ring the bell to end recreation at 1:30.”

Ann Mary knew there was no one to ring the bell for over in the convent, but she just said, “You won’t have to do that anymore.”



Ann Mary Schaden, IHM

1915 - 1989

Order of Ringing the Bell

Rising	9
Meditation	7
Holy Mass	7
Examen	7
End of Recreation	2
Spiritual Reading	7
End of Spiritual Reading	2
Visit to the	
Blessed Sacrament	7
Study	7
Office	3
Confession	5
Night Prayers	7
Last Signal	2

In Honor of
 Jesus and Mary
 Blessed Trinity
 Five Wounds
 Seven Dolors
 Nine Choirs of Angels



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