

Featuring Hall of the Divine Child, Monroe

Bishop John Foley asked the IHM Sisters to establish a boys' boarding school. The sisters responded, and ground was broken for the Hall of the Divine Child (HDC) in Monroe, Mich., in 1915.



World War I delayed opening of the new school until January 1918. On January 13 – “We are not superstitious,” notes the chronicler – five IHM Sisters welcomed the first 26 students. By September, 160 boys attended grades one through eight. Enrollment peaked at 350 (which included some day students) during the mid-1950s.

Originally, St. Mary Academy girls in grades one through six attended classes at HDC to provide more room for the older girls at the academy. This continued until 1932, when the new St. Mary Academy was built and could accommodate all the girls.

The Hall of the Divine Child also began offering high school classes in 1932. With a waiting list for the elementary grades though, high school was discontinued in 1941. The military training began in 1936. The regulation drill uniform was adopted in 1938; the complete uniform became a school requirement in 1941.



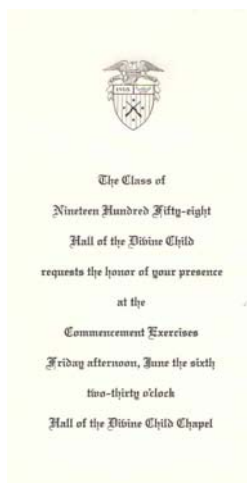
The sisters quickly taught new cadets a code of conduct based on respect, self-discipline and responsibility. “...the boys are trained in love, loyalty, and duty to God, Country, and self,” the cadet handbook explains.

Cadets woke to reveille at 6 a.m., dressed in their uniforms and marched in formation to Mass. Breakfast followed, then classes, lunch and a 30-minute recreation break. Classes continued until 3 p.m. After classes, cadets changed into play clothes and were encouraged to play outdoors until 5 p.m. They changed back into their uniforms for dinner, and at 7 p.m., they marched back to their classrooms for study hall until 8 p.m. After study hall, they marched to their dorms and got ready for bed. They could read in bed until lights-out at 9 p.m. It was the sisters' goal to address the development of the whole boy – body, mind and spirit.



The athletic teams were important to the life of the school. The football, basketball and baseball teams won many league and district championships. In 1956-57, the chronicler notes with

some dismay that, “For the first time in 11 years, the Hall lost the football championship.”



Luckily, the Class of 1958, our Featured Class Year, staged a comeback the next fall with “a very successful football season ending on Sunday, Nov. 18, at Roessler Field,” according to the chronicler. This was no small feat because a flu epidemic had closed the school for 10 days less than a month before. During the Mother's Day military demonstration (a tradition started in 1937), the eighth grade Company A won the Conduct Trophy.

During Class Day, **John Newton** received scholastic honors and **Herber Harper** received sportsmanship honors. Other awards went to **Donald Krot** (Christian manhood), **Charles Roelant** (religion), **Emery Rebresh** (music), **Robert Libbrecht** (craftsmanship) and **Gerald Schmenski** (cooperation). Graduation for the 39 boys was June 6, at 2:30 p.m.

Activities at Hall of the Divine Child remained fairly constant through the years. The cadets continued to march in the Monroe Memorial Day parade and continued their longstanding tradition of raising money to assist a seminarian with his educational expenses until ordination.

Gradually, though, enrollment declined and operational costs increased significantly. The IHM Sisters conducted a lengthy study of the options and concluded that, "In spite of the fact that the Hall of the Divine Child is the only school of its kind in Michigan, the demand for services as evidenced by the number of residents does not...indicate a need for this type of institution."

The school closed in 1980. The building was converted to an apartment complex for older adults and is known as "Norman Towers."

In 1958



The United States Supreme Court ruled unanimously that Little Rock, Ark., schools must integrate. U.S. President Dwight Eisenhower ordered Marines into Lebanon at the request of Lebanon's President Camille Chamoun. The first transatlantic jet passenger service was started by BOAC, with a New York to London route.

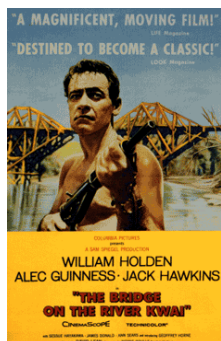
Egypt and Syria merged into United Arab Republic. Nikita Khrushchev became Premier of Soviet Union. Gen. Charles de Gaulle becomes French premier.



Ricky Nelson's "Poor Little Fool" boasted the first No. 1 record when *Billboard* initiated its "Hot 100" chart. Alvin Ailey established the American Dance Theatre; and Elvis Presley was inducted into the U.S. Army.

Vertigo, *Gigi*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Defiant Ones* were showing in America's movie theaters. The world met Holly Golightly when *Breakfast at Tiffany's* (Truman Capote) was published.

In a rematch of the 1957 World Series, the New York Yankees defeated the defending champion Milwaukee Braves in seven games. It was the Yankees' seventh championship in 10 years. The St. Louis Hawks beat the Boston Celtics in six games for the NBA Championship. For the third straight year, the Stanley Cup went to the Montreal Canadiens, who defeated the Boston Bruins in six games.



The Bridge on the River Kwai was named "Best Motion Picture" at the Oscars; "Best Actor" award went to Alec Guinness for his role in *The Bridge on the River Kwai*. Joanne Woodward received a "Best Actress" award for *The Three Faces of Eve*. At the Emmy Awards, *Guns Smoke* was named "Best Dramatic Series With Continuing Characters" and "Best Comedy Series" went to *The Phil Silvers Show*.