

Our Lady of the Assumption School – Albuquerque, N.M.



In 1954, Our Lady of the Assumption (OLA) School opened in Albuquerque, N.M., for 160 children in grades one through six. While the convent was under construction, the four IHM Sisters who came to staff the school lived with the Franciscan Sisters at St. Anthony Home for Boys.

The archbishop of Albuquerque visited OLA the following year and realized the school needed to add a seventh grade, which it did in 1956.

When the school added an eighth grade in 1957, the convent chronicler noted that "Half of what was formerly the cafeteria and hall was used as a classroom...Pending the opening of the cafeteria in the new Social Hall after Christmas, the children ate in their classrooms."



Activities at OLA were becoming traditions by this time. The "Country Fair," 40 Hours' Devotion, May procession and music festival were all established by the time the parish drive began in 1960. Families pledged 2.5 percent of their gross income "to begin building classrooms, a church and to pay on the parish debt." The long-awaited classrooms were completed by late January 1962.

By then the school had grown to more than 500 students. In addition to their academic work, the children raised money "for the Mission priests of New Mexico;" participated in a city-wide arts and craft exhibit and enjoyed a Knights of Columbus annual field day track meet.

OLA created a student council in 1964, and the group organized the Pep Club and school newspaper. The children raised money for the IHM mission in Recife, Brazil; the new church was completed and the boys' basketball and baseball teams won championships.

In 1966, our **Featured Class Year**, the eighth grade raised \$200 for the school by putting on a carnival; the money went toward the purchase of an overhead projector and a Polaroid camera. The basketball and baseball teams were undefeated.

Annette Martin crowned the statue of the Blessed Mother; the Student Council Talent Show winners were **Janice Mansfield** and **Judy Holpp**. The Student Council also sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt for grades one through three and a bicycle rodeo. The 61 eighth-graders graduated on Pentecost Sunday at the 8 a.m. Mass. They enjoyed breakfast at the Sundowner Motel afterward.



The athletic program continued to shine into the 1970s, with multiple championships for the basketball, track, football and baseball teams. A bilingual program began in 1972, and by 1977, Spanish was taught in all grades.

In October 1981, the parish announced that the convent would be converted to parish office in June. The IHM Sisters left at the end of the school year. OLA remains open, with a junior kindergarten and classes for K-eight.

In 1966

The Dow Jones Industrial Average finished the year at 785. The average income per year was \$6,900. The average cost of a new car was \$2,650. Gas was 32 cents per gallon. Medicare began.

Pope Paul VI and Arthur Michael Ramsey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, met in Rome - the first official meeting for 400 years between the Roman Catholic and Anglican Churches.

It was a bad year for Los Angeles sports fans. The Dodgers lost the World Series when they were swept by the Baltimore Orioles. The Lakers fared only slightly better - they took the NBA Championship to six games before losing to the Boston Celtics. The Montreal Canadiens won the Stanley Cup in six games with the Detroit Red Wings.

"I'm a Believer" (the Monkees), "Good Vibrations" (the Beach Boys) and "Wild Thing" (the Troggs) were playing on the radio. Grammy awards went to Herb Alpert and the Tijuana Brass for "A Taste of Honey" (Record of the Year) and Frank Sinatra for *September of My Years* (Album of the Year).

Popular films included *Dr. Zhivago*, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* and *A Man for All Seasons*.

The first *Star Trek* episode, "The Man Trap," was broadcast. CBS backed out of plans to broadcast *Psycho*, deeming the movie too violent for at-home viewing.

Walt Disney, Elizabeth Arden, Buster Keaton and Sophie Tucker died. Keifer Sutherland, Sinead O'Conner, Troy Aikman and Halle Berry were born.