

St. Charles Borromeo School – Detroit



When the first seven IHM Sisters arrived at St. Charles Borromeo School in Detroit in 1912, the school had been administered and taught by lay teachers for more than 20 years.

The Rev. F. W. Hewlett became pastor of St. Charles Parish in late 1911. He decided to build a new school and asked the IHMs to run it. The new school wasn't finished that first year, so the sisters used the old building to teach the 265 children in grades one through six. "About 75 other pupils were asked to go to the public school as they could not be

accommodated," the convent chronicler reports.



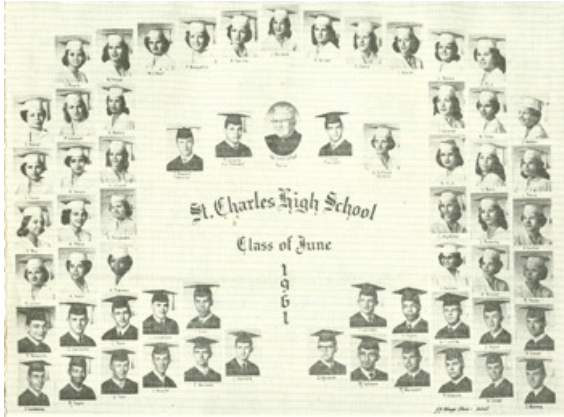
A new school opened for grades one through eight in 1913. High school classes were added in 1916 but because of the large number of children in the lower grades (700), they were short-lived. Beginning in 1920, high school students were sent to other schools. The parish reinstated the ninth grade in 1922; one grade was added over the next few years, and St. Charles had its first high school graduation in 1926.

Enrollment soared, with more than 900 by 1927. St. Charles School instituted a number of activities for its students. The debate team, Students' Spiritual Council, "playlets," May processions, election of class officers and the Class Day Banquet were all part of school life by the 1930s. A tradition that began early-on and continued for many years was the school's annual commemoration of Gabriel Richard at the local Richard Park.



By the late 1940s and '50s, school activities were in full swing. Football, baseball, basketball and track teams – nicknamed the "Dragons" – were all well established and the teams began winning championships. Students held their first foreign mission appeal, sorting, sizing, pressing and packing clothes donated to send to Puerto Rico. High school students had their classes shortened in December to enable them "to earn money for themselves and to relieve the Christmas work rush."

In 1961, our **Featured Class Year**, the girls wore uniforms for the first time, and all the boys wore ties. The chronicler dolefully notes that "Fr. Lynn, the new athletic director, was optimistic about the future. His dreams were NOT to be realized."



Sister Marie Leo Gleason, IHM, was the principal, and **Sister Mary Roderiick, IHM**, was the homeroom teacher for the 62 members of the senior class. The Dads' Club was formed that year, and the club purchased a bus, christened "Charlemagne," for the sports teams to use. The Junior/Senior Prom was held at Lovett Hall on May 15, and many of the attendees "brought their dates over to the convent before they went..." The seniors graduated June 11. Their class colors were gold and white, and their class flower was the yellow rose.

With declining enrollment throughout the Catholic schools in the area, the Archdiocese consolidated the four high schools on the east side of Detroit in 1967. St. Charles' students became part of East Side Catholic High School.

In 1970, the defeat of Proposal C, which would have provided state aid to parochial schools, meant that St. Charles School had to close.

In 1961

The United States broke diplomatic relations with Cuba. The first U.S. astronaut, Navy Cmdr. Alan B. Shepard Jr., rocketed 116.5 miles up in 302-mile trip. A first-class stamp cost four cents.



John F. Kennedy delivered the first live presidential news conference. He also established the Peace Corps that year.

The Vietnam War officially began, as the first American helicopters arrive in Saigon along with 400 U.S. personnel.



Baseball player Roger Maris of the New York Yankees hit his 61st home run in the last game of the season, against the Boston Red Sox, beating the 34-year-old record held by Babe Ruth.

The New York Yankees won the World Series in five games with the Cincinnati Reds. The Boston Celtics were NBA Champions when they beat the St. Louis Hawks in five games. The Stanley Cup went to the Chicago Black Hawks after they defeated the Detroit Red Wings in six games.

Raymond Burr won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Performance by an Actor in a Series (Lead) for his role in *Perry Mason*. Barbara Stanwyck, of the *Barbara Stanwyck Show*, received the Emmy for Outstanding Performance by an Actress in a Series (Lead). The Outstanding Program Achievement in the Field of Humor award went to the *Jack Benny Show*.



The Fantastic Four #1 debuted, launching the Marvel Universe and revolutionizing the American comic book industry.

"Barbie" got a boyfriend when the "Ken" doll was introduced

Joseph Heller's, *Catch—22*, Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* and J. D. Salinger's *Franny and Zooey* were published.