

St. Joseph School – Dexter, Mich.



St. Joseph School in Dexter, Mich., opened in 1920 for 59 students in grades one through eight. The school's three IHM Sisters commuted from Ann Arbor for the first year because there was no convent.

Plans for a high school, with one grade added each year, got off to a good start. By 1926, the school served students in grades one through 12, but the first senior class was the only one to ever graduate from St. Joseph. The following year, "the 12th grade did not return," according to the convent chronicler. The 10th and 11th grades were discontinued the year after that. Eventually, the school dropped ninth grade as well.

The Great Depression closed St. Joseph School to close in June 1934, but it reopened in September 1936.



St. Joseph students were uncommonly active in their philanthropic efforts. They raised money for the school, overseas missions and Bishops' War Relief by hosting parties and special events, holding paper drives and selling Christmas cards and Christmas seals. They were also involved with the Sodality of Our Lady, student council, band, the 4-H Sewing Club and annual cemetery clean-ups.

By the late 1950s, enrollment had reached more than 200, and the parish built an addition to accommodate everyone. St. Joseph School began to follow the public school calendar

in 1960. "Spring vacation" replaced "Easter vacation."



In 1964, our **Featured Class Year**, Sister Mary Margaret (Harriet) Durack, IHM, became the school's new principal. More than 220 children were enrolled. As a special gift to their IHM teachers, students presented a program for IHM Founders' Day that year. The chronicler was a little concerned about following the public schools' calendar. The Dexter Community Schools "which scheduled the dismissal of school for June 5," caused a shortage of teaching days at St. Joseph, "but we could not do anything about it." For the first time ever, school was in session on Ascension Thursday. There were 26 eighth-grade graduates.

By 1967, the seventh- and eighth-graders were transferred to Wylie Intermediate School because St. Joseph was so crowded. The boys attended religion classes for an hour each Tuesday; the girls attended on Thursdays.

June 1968, "Father Renaud announced at all the Masses that the school would close at the end of this year's term." The school building had been condemned by the fire marshal, and the Archdiocese of Detroit ordered it to be closed "because the parish was not financially capable of supporting the school."

IHM Sisters continued to minister at St. Joseph Parish until 1982 when Sister Paraclita Schnebelt left as administrator of the catechetical program.

In 1964



United States Surgeon General Luther Leonidas Terry reported that smoking may be hazardous to one's health (the first such statement from the United States government).

A U.S. Air Force jet training plane that strayed into East Germany was shot down by Soviet fighters near Erfurt. All three crew members were killed.

In the first meeting between leaders of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches since the 15th century, Pope Paul VI and Patriarch Athenagoras I met in Jerusalem.



The Beatles shot to the #1 spot on the U.S. singles charts for the first time, with "I Want to Hold Your Hand."

In a nail-biting Stanley Cup series, the Toronto Maple Leafs defeated the Detroit Red Wings in the best-of-seven series. The World Series also needed seven games to determine the champion, but the St. Louis Cardinals beat the New York Yankees. In basketball, the Boston Celtics played five games against the San Francisco Warriors and were crowned champs.

The Dick Van Dyke Show won five Emmy Awards, including Outstanding Program Achievement in the Field of Comedy.



The government of Italy asked for help to keep the Leaning Tower of Pisa from toppling over.

Michelle Obama, Nicolas Cage, Russell Crowe and Sandra Bullock were born.

Herbert Hoover, Douglas MacArthur and Harpo Marx died