

**St. Mary Monroe
School of the Month – June 2013**



St. Mary School in Monroe has a rich history.

The parish school of St. Mary Church, it began Jan. 15, 1846, which makes it the second oldest school in continuous existence in the Northwest Territory (St. Anne of Detroit being the oldest). It was the IHM Sisters' first school – opened just two months after the congregation was founded.

The sisters taught the female students in their own house until a two-story wooden frame school was built the following year. The male students were taught in a brick building across from St. Mary Church. Both groups were under the guidance of the Redemptorist Fathers until they departed from Monroe in 1855.

The IHM Sisters remained and taught both boys and girls, the beginning of the St. Mary Parish School of today. There were 52 boys and 50 girls enrolled at this time.

In 1910 a four-room brick school was built for both the girls and boys; this school was named the Sacred Heart Institute. There were four teachers, 100 boys and 100 girls. It is unclear as to when the Sacred Heart Institute was renamed St. Mary's.

Enrollment continued to climb. By the end of 1947, the school had 436 students enrolled. Better bus service enabled children in rural areas to attend.

In 1953 St. Mary hired its first lay teacher – and the first of any parochial school in Monroe – Miss Margaret Harrington, who taught seventh grade. It was during this school year that four additional classrooms were added on to the school, plus a kitchen, lavatories and boiler room. In 1955, school uniforms were adopted. In 1958 a gymnasium and activities building were added on.



By 1969 there were more lay teachers than religious teachers teaching at St. Mary. The year 1987 was the final year for a sister as principal of St. Mary School. In September that year Ms. Mary Anne Lapinsky became the first lay principal.

In February 1945, a group of students from St. Mary School

joined with students from St. John and St. Joseph Schools to present a program of Balkan lullabies at the WJR radio station in Detroit. The children were part of the Youth and Music program presented weekly by the music education of the Catholic schools of the Detroit archdiocese.

A few years later St. Mary School educated a young man who would become a well-known radio broadcaster for WJR, Paul W. Smith. Each year Mr. Smith broadcasts his show in various cities in Michigan.



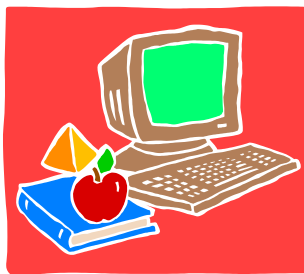
In 2012 he wrote for the *Monroe Evening News* of his warm welcoming in Monroe as he started his tour. He recalled each place on his journey of education – Jack and Jill Nursery, kindergarten at Christiancy, St. Mary for grade school, of which he commented, “I am thankful the IHM nuns bucked the trend and *didn't* try to convert me from being left-handed to right.” He continued his education journey to Monroe Catholic Central High School (now called St. Mary’s Catholic Central High School),

Monroe County Community College and University of Michigan.
(Photo used with permission of WJR)

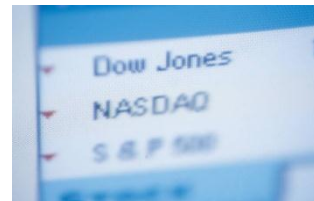
Featured class year

In 1977, our **Featured Class Year**, St. Mary had 365 students enrolled and 14 teachers. Six IHM Sisters taught there: Margaret Cutcher (principal and eighth grade) Margaret Mary Dowling, Mary Frances Hogan, Agnes Schulte, Eugenia Fournier and Carol Favor. A Spell Down was won by **Cheryl Masserant**, eighth grade; **Tom Laboe** won the county contest for the Michigan poster contest, receiving \$25; a school talent show was held May 25; the school picnic June 6 was spoiled by poor weather, but the Cedar Point trip for the eighth graders the next day turned out fine.

The year – 1977



Jimmy Carter was elected president of the United States.
The first Apple II computers went on sale.
The U.S. population reached 216 million.
The World Trade Center in New York City was completed.
New York City Blackout lasted 25 hours, resulting in looting and disorder.



The TV mini-series *Roots* was aired on ABC, winning top audience figures, nine Emmys and a Golden Globe.
Year-end close of Dow Jones Industrial Average was 831.
Interest rates were 7.75%.
Average cost of new house was \$49,300.
Average yearly income was \$15,000.
Average monthly rent was \$240.
Cost for a gallon of gas was 65 cents.



Mix and Match
Co-Ordinnates

Men's clothing: coats
\$31.99, slacks and vest
\$13.99 each



Ladies fleece robes, \$24



Colonial Styled
Swivel Rocker

Upholstered swivel rocker,
\$119.95

Some favorite movies this year were *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*; *Rocky*; *Smokey and the Bandit*; *A Star Is Born*; *Saturday Night Fever*. Popular musicians were Rod Stewart; Stevie Wonder, The Eagles and The Bee Gees. Born this year were Orlando Bloom, Shakira and Sarah Michelle Gellar.

Source: <http://www.thepeoplehistory.com/1977.html>