

Featuring St. Mary School, Mount Clemens



Three IHM Sisters traveled by canoe from Monroe to Mount Clemens, Michigan to open the St. Peter parish school. The school was named "St. Mary's" – the sisters' only stipulation for coming.

Tuition was free for the 80 students enrolled when the school opened in 1870. Bishop Caspar Henry Borgess blessed the school "and placed it under the protection of the Blessed Virgin," according to the convent chronicler.

The seven members of the Class of 1895 were the first graduates of the high school. By the mid-1920s, 19 sisters taught at the school to handle the increased enrollment in the 12 grades.

The Mount Clemens community was growing during this time as well. The chronicler reports that during the 1928-29 school year, "The new St. Louis School opened in Mount Clemens." As a result, only 16 Sisters returned to St. Mary instead of the usual 19. St. Mary School continued to blossom through the 1930s and 40s and, in September 1951, enrollment stood at more than 1,000.



In September 1957, a devastating fire destroyed St. Peter Church, and St. Mary Grade School suffered significant damage. Although school was in session at the time, no one was injured – "a testimony to the power of prayer." The community immediately rallied behind the parish. Neighboring churches, a theater and a grocery store offered space for Sunday Masses. The grade school classes moved to Dickerson School while repairs were underway, and they moved back to St. Mary at the end of November.

The Class of 1960, our Featured Class, enjoyed many activities during their senior year, including a trip to Greenfield Village and the senior play, *One Mad Night*. It was the year the St. Mary Choral Group won honors for the best mixed group during the Archdiocesan Choral Festival, held at Regina High School, and the year the first science fair was held for grades 7-12. Winners were **George Zenotti** (physical science), **Linda Knight** (biology) and **James Tesner** (general science). The year ended with the Junior-Senior Prom, held at the Hillcrest Country Club and, of course, graduation day in June at St. Peter Church.

In January 1970, the IHM provincial superior announced that the sisters would be withdrawn from St. Mary and three other schools because of enrolments less than 400 and an urgent need for sisters to minister elsewhere. The pastor decided to close the high school in 1970; this decision received overwhelming support from the parish council. The grade school remains open and is thriving.

In 1960



The president was Dwight Eisenhower, and Richard Nixon was vice president. The population of the U.S. was 180,671,158; life expectancy was 69.7 years. There were 900 United States military advisers in South Vietnam.

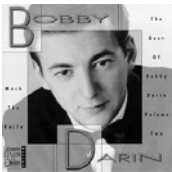


Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria, Madagascar and Zaire (Belgian Congo) gained independence.



Ninety percent of American homes had television sets; 70 million people watched the presidential debate between Sen. John F. Kennedy and Vice President Richard Nixon.

It took seven games, but the Pittsburgh Pirates defeated the New York Yankees to win the World Series. The NBA Championship also required seven games when the Boston Celtics beat the St. Louis Hawks. It was a battle of Canadian teams for the Stanley Cup, but Montreal Canadiens swept the series from the Toronto Maple Leafs in four games. It was Montreal's fifth straight championship.



Bobby Darin's "Mack the Knife" was named Record of the Year at the Grammy Awards. Album of the Year went to *Come Dance With Me* by Frank Sinatra, and Song of the Year was "The Battle of New Orleans," written by Jimmy Driftwood.

To Kill a Mockingbird (Harper Lee); *Set This House on Fire* (William Styron); and *Rabbit, Run* (John Updike) were all published in 1960.



Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho* terrified movie-goers and became one of the year's most successful films, as well as one of the most memorable psychological thrillers of all time. *Ben-Hur* received a "Best Picture" Oscar.