

Our Lady of Good Counsel School - Detroit



In 1935, seven years after its founding, Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish saved enough money to build its school. Construction began in November and cost \$34,000. Classes for the 226 children in grades one through eight, taught by five IHM Sisters, began in September 1936; tuition was \$2 per family per month.

A Junior Students' Spiritual Council was established by October, and popular traditions, such as the school-wide Christmas program, music recital, the May procession, Field Day and the eighth-grade graduation, all began within Our Lady of Good Counsel School's first year.



Enrollment increased, and by 1938, the school building required an addition to accommodate all the students. The eighth-graders of 1943-44 were the first class to have completed all eight grades at Our Lady of Good Counsel.

After World War II, enrollment began to skyrocket. The parish built additional classrooms and converted the church to six more rooms. (Mass was celebrated in the new auditorium from 1949-1958, when the new church was built.) By 1950, there were so many first-graders, holding half-day sessions was the only way to accommodate them all, and triple grades were the norm for the primary school students.



OLGC students found many opportunities to grow

academically, spiritually and socially. They raised money for the missions, for Christmas Seals and for the Bishops' Relief Fund. They collected food and gifts for those less fortunate at Christmas; sang in the choir; helped each other as Service Squad Girls or Safety Patrol Boys. They participated in the Archdiocesan Development Fund Contest, the parish fair and

the Junior Great Books Program. They utilized the library and submitted entries for science and art fairs. With more than 1,200 students by the early 1960s, the 18 sisters and nine lay staff had their hands full! The school made an effort to reduce the class size (from 48 children per class to 40), and enrollment dropped to "only" 1,130 for 1967.



Although tuition remained reasonable (\$75 annually for a parish family; \$180 outside the parish), the 1969-70 school year saw enrollment fall by nearly 300 from its zenith. When Michigan's Proposal C eliminated state assistance for non-public schools, enrollment fell further. Nonetheless, students had elective classes such as sewing, art, drama and foreign languages. They formed a student council for grades five through eight; held a talent show; and enjoyed field trips that included venues such as the Detroit Symphony Orchestra, the Detroit Institute of Arts and Upland Hills Farm. Eighth-graders raised money for their class trips, and even as late as the mid-1970s, there was a wait-list for first-graders!

Our Lady of Good Counsel School remained open and active for a number of years, however, the ever-declining enrollment eventually meant the school had to close. The church closed in June 2011, when Our Lady of Good Counsel merged with St. Raymond.