

St. Mary's Academy Chronicles

1940-1952

1940 - "Peace Time Conscription"

January, 1940

This was a cold, cold month in our town. We had unusually deep snow and some very bright, clear cold days. The side roads were often so banked with snow that the pupils could not come to school. The cold weather did not hinder the progress of the basket ball team though. The boys played well and succeeded in bringing home another trophy, the second this year. Neither did the cold interrupt the regular schedule of January examinations and the free mid-term day. The boarders celebrated the close of the term by having a party in the social room. The sickness which was to take one in our dear community in death began during this month. Sister Constance and Sister Arthur both became seriously ill and suffered during the long months which followed. There was not a day from January on, that there was no sick Sister in the house. Msgr. McNamara remarked that the death rate in the parish was higher than it had been in many years. Among those who died were several great benefactors of St. Mary's.

Sister Edmund selected the Feast of the Presentations as her subject for Assembly. The class dramatized the ideas and explained the making of candles in a most interesting manner.

The Mission Bazaar was a huge success. Financially it was the best we ever had. The proceeds were divided so that each class contributed to its special Mission project and a sum was set aside to send to Reverend Mother if and when it can be sent.

February, 1940

The sickness that began in January, continued during February and jaundice which foreshadowed Sister Ursula's death began to show. Several Sisters were out of school on account of heavy colds.

The big project of a Lenten play was started during this month. It was intended that the play be one which would serve a religious purpose and at the same time serve as a means of getting financial aid. A program was planned. Each class paid for advertising space. The boarders were asked to solicit patrons. A ticket contest was conducted and prizes were given to the winners. The play was under the direction of Mrs. Kubbitchek who spent this month in hard work.

The students retreat was conducted by a Jesuit Father. The lectures were given in the assembly so that Father could use a blackboard. He made his tales most practical and interesting, and he did not spare himself in any way in helping the children. He was impressed by the fine type of children here and said that every one who spoke to him had a real problem to discuss. The pupils were in earnest about their religion.

On the last day of this month the grade school boys went to Stuart to play basketball. That was an exciting event both for the boys and for their parents. It is to be hoped that regular games can be scheduled for the grade boys as well as for the high school boys.

March, 1940

This month was full of events, both glad and sad. The ulcers in Sister Arthur's stomach finally got so bad that she had to give up and go to bed. She was out of school for several weeks.

Early in March came the Superiors' Retreat in Marycrest. That was a rare treat for those who were there and it is to be hoped that there will be many more such fine retreats in future years.

The Lenten play which was practiced so well was given during Holy Week. It made a great impression on the people and brought large crowds. The Sisters and pupils from neighboring towns attended and praised the acting, the costumes, and the music. It was the first religious play that had been put on for sometime, so we felt encouraged.

Dear good Sister Arnulfa, who had been taken to Alliance, underwent an operation for gallstones on Good Friday. We had hoped she would survive, but her age was against her and she was ready for heaven. Many, many long years Sister had worked both at St. Vincent's in Columbus and here at St. Mary's. How well we remember seeing her in the chapel in the evening's quietly praying and so kind she was when we asked for a favor! God rest her soul! She was hidden with God and we hope that she is now enjoying the reward of her life of unselfish devotion.

Easter looked to us more like Christmas than like Easter. We had deep snow and there were no Easter bonnets this year. On March 29th the pupils attended and took part in the Music Festival in Atkinson. Our ratings were satisfactory and the experience was good preparation for the district contest at Fullerton. The conduct of the children was excellent.

April, 1940

Jubilee bells began to ring April 5th for Sister Beontine. The students honored Sister with a program and with gifts. On the Jubilee day the boarders sang a High Mass for Sister and then the community took up the celebration and continued it throughout the day.

Our good Sister Cornelia left us to go to Minot, to St. Joseph's Hospital. We miss her cheerful presence in our community. God be with her in her new work. Sister Patrice and Sister Afra made the long trip by car from Minot. Sister Patrice enjoyed a short visit with her relatives and Sister Afra took Sister Cornelia's place in our community.

The District Music contest was held at Fullerton on April 19th. We had thirteen entries besides the band. Three of the pupils and the band rated Superior which gave them the right to enter the National Contest at Kansas City. We felt pleased because this was only our second year. We had many more entries than last year.

April did not pass without its toll of sickness. Sister Brigid was taken down with pneumonia and was very sick. Genevieve Biglin was called in to attend Sister during the serious days of the treatment. Thank God Sister recovered, but was unable to return to school for the rest of the term.

On April 25th dear Mother Erica arrived for visitation. These were blessed days for St. Mary's. It was twenty-five years since Mother was graduated from St. Mary's, so we celebrated the occasion by conferring "new degrees" on her. God bless her and her work among us.

April 30th Sister Fides presented her Assembly on the study of life; the members of her Biology class demonstrated with stereopticon slides, principles and factors from their study of science. They did well, and the program was enjoyed by all.

Sister Radugund conducted a typewritten lesson for the Assembly; thirty typists illustrated fascinating and that demanded skill and training which a credit to the teacher.

The State Inspector of Secondary Schools of Nebraska visited St. Mary's. He was particularly interested in the library; he seemed well satisfied with St. Mary's in general.

May, 1940

Dear Mother Erica left us on May the 4th, but she did not take our cross of sickness with her. Sister Brigid recovered slowly, but Sister Constance, who had been ailing since January, began to get worse. In spite of the fact that she felt so miserable, Sister worked very hard until the end of the month and then went to St. Joseph's, Alliance for treatment. It is surprising that Sister kept up and worked so hard under such a great strain. God reward her for it.

The pupils who had rated Superior in the Music Contest at Fullerton were eager to go to the National Contest at Kansas City. In order to meet the expenses the Academy and the Public School gave a joint musical program. The parents of the pupils held a bake sale and the proceeds of both projects was enough to take care of the expenses. The pupils had a most interesting trip. On their return, a general Assembly was held during which the contestants told of their experiences. Two of the pupils received medals at the National Contest.

Sickness again struck one of our dear Sisters. Good old Sister Catherine got up on the morning of May 8th, but she was unable to go downstairs. We moved her in the infirmary and at 8:00 in the evening she was anointed. The dear old soul was worn out with long years of faithful service. Her heart was very irregular. Her patience has been marvelous. There is no word of complaint from her. She had disposed of every little treasure that she had so that she may die absolutely poor. Even on her worst days she tries to struggle through the prayers. Her usual question is "what are the points of the meditation today?" She has been an example for all of us.

Mr. William Hammond, who has served St. Mary's so well, resigned his position as a member of the corporation. Mr. Hammond moved to California. He is a real loss to St. Mary's. His place was taken by Mr. Julius Cronin, who has long been a friend of the Academy. We feel that our legal affairs are safe with him.

May 19th brought First Communion Day for our children and also the opening of Forty Hours Adoration. Both devotions were solemn and beautiful.

The seniors presented their class play on May 23rd. The play was fine. It was well acted and satisfactory in every way. This was the first time we used the new auditorium in the Public School.

Interesting Field Day exercises were held for the grade school children on the afternoon of May 25th. Many amusing and laughable events that were not listed added to the fun. Prizes were awarded and "consumed" almost as soon as awarded.

We were surprised and embarrassed for a few minutes by the big crowd that assembled for the Alumnae reunion. We were ready for 125, thinking that would be more than enough. One hundred thirty were present. The speeches were not too long and the evening passed pleasantly.

The Junior-Senior banquet was especially pretty this year. The gym was decorated so as to represent a flower garden in beautiful colors. The work was so well done that the decorations lasted all summer and made the gym very attractive.

At the closing of the grade school pins were given for scholarship, improvement and for service. Very much importance was attached to these little awards and they served their purpose well.

Commencement for the thirty-two high school graduates was held in church on May 31. Father Conway took as his text: "I belong to God", and he preached an impressive sermon. After the exercises the boarders left for home and Sister Dolores and Sister Brigid left for Denver.

June, 1940

June was month of coming and going. Sister Constance left for Alliance to take medical treatment. She expected to return in a few days to continue her work at Ewing in the vacation school. God had other plans for her. The doctor found her condition to bad that Sister was obliged to remain in the hospital all summer. Sister Fides and Sister Cassilde, who had come from Denver, went to the vacation school in Ewing. Sister Fides had to leave early for Creighton, Omaha so Sister Dolores finished the week for her when she returned from Denver. Sister Celeste came from Alliance to help Sister Beontine in St. John, Clearwater. Sister Radigund and Sister Electa made the long trip every day by car to Amelia, and Sister Mildred and Sister Arthur took a shorter ride to Emmet every day. These were hard days for the tired teachers. The results have been gratifying and the priests and the people are most appreciative. Immediately after the close of school we started the cleaning of the building. We were eager to see the condition of the floors after a hard years wear and we were pleasantly surprised. The cleaning went so well that the hard work was finished before the really hot weather began.

A young girl arrived as a Summer boarder on June 9th. We were glad to have her because we needed money. A few music pupils continued their lessons and we were glad for that too.

A summer school was conducted for a number of Sisters who are finishing high school work. In spite of the heat the Sisters worked very hard and accomplished a great deal. We are always glad to have our Sisters with us and to be able to help them.

Sister Alexia and Sister Edward went to St. Francis Mission to retreat and then to Alliance for medical care. Sister Edward underwent an operation on June 17th. Sister George spent the Summer in Minot attending the Teachers' College. Sister Mildred studied at St. Benedict's in Minnesota.

Dear Sister Beontine had just returned from Summer vacation school when she got her traveling orders. She left us on June 27th for the Shrine in Columbus, Ohio to await further orders. Our good wishes go with Sister and we wish her God's blessing.

A big improvement was made in the appearance of the Middle Dormitory by placing congoleum runners in the aisles. Many of the children who visited during the summer were interested enough to run to the dormitory in order to see the new floor covering.

July, 1940

We took supper on the Fourth of July out in our north garden. After supper we, that is a few of the more courageous ones, shot off fireworks. Some of the more timid members, including Sister

Radigund, shielded themselves behind pillows and scarcely ventured to peek at the display. We had a good time at their expense.

The terrible heat wave which came in July nearly took dear old Sister Catherine away from us. We had to keep her cool with ice-packs and electric fans. She has not been able to leave the infirmary since.

The last day of July brought that dreaded letter containing the changes. Sister Radigund and Sister Arthur were assigned to St. Leo's, Minot; Sister Juventia to St. Francis Mission; Sister Afra to Holy Rosary Mission; and Sister Constance to St. Agnes, Alliance. God be with you dear Sisters, we shall miss you!

August, 1940

With the exception of the heat wave in July, the weather was very pleasant all summer. We had almost enough rain to insure a good crop. Good crops mean boarders for us, so we watch the weather.

On the eighth of August the "new comers" began to arrive. Sister Eustascia and Sister Ignatia came from Stella in the morning, and Sister Flores arrived in the afternoon. We are still expecting Sister. Xavier. Sister Antonella, Sister Mildred, and Sister Teresita. Then our family will number twenty-two and we shall begin a new school year for God's honor and glory.

As these lines are being written we are looking forward to the annual picnic which the Alumnae members give to the Sisters, and to the annual retreat which will be conducted by Rev. Owen O'Leary.

Our good Sister Catherine has probably spoken her last oral work. She had had a slight stroke and we are preparing for her entrance into a happy and blessed eternity.

September, 1940

After the usual routine of registration on September 3rd, we found that we had 300 pupils in school that first day. The boarders arrived the next day and numbered 42. The day pupils increased to 303, but the boarders remained the same. We have fewer boarders than last year and a greater number of day pupils. There were no afternoon classes this first week of school. The weather was quite hot for school.

In order to boost business and advertise the town "O'Neill Day" was celebrated on September 18th. Our pupils took part in the band music in the demonstrations on the floats, and in the games. The weather was not so pleasant, but that did not stop the fun for any one. The long parade passed by the Academy. All day long and for a great part of the night the people carried on the amusements. It was estimated that here were about 10,000 people in town.

An exchange of teachers took place soon after school opened. Sister George was called to Minot, North Dakota, and Sister Arthur took her place here.

Sunday, the 22nd was a big day for the parish. The Most Reverend Bishop Ryan of Omaha came for Confirmation of a class of 300 children and adults. The Bishop expressed great satisfaction with the spiritual life of the parish. He offered the Holy Sacrifice in our chapel.

During the afternoon of this same day, the Catholic Women's Club had a tea in our library. The women were trying to organize a chapter in O'Neill and asked to use our library and assembly for their

meetings. The senior girls attended the business meetings in order to hear the interesting reports read by the committee.

For the first time in the history of the school, the boys were organized into a six-man football team. The Alumnae assumed the debt of the suits and Jack Arbuthnot gave his services free again to the school. The season was a most successful one in every way. The boys won most of the games, they advertised the school, and they got a great deal of pleasure out of the game, and brought to the school two Catholic boys from the public school.

October, 1940

The feast of St. Francis came on First Friday this year. Since we have the privilege of Exposition, the day was an especially blessed feast day. We did not have free time but we enjoyed the day just the same. The boys played football at Stuart and won the game

The radio programs have been especially fine. Most of the children have had the advantage of listening and the teachers have made use of special programs for their classes. The little radios purchased last year are in good condition and the reception is good.

Dr. Finley, assisted by Genevieve Biglin, made the medical examination of the children. There were no serious defects found among them.

Sister Edmunda, Electa, Xavier and Antonella enjoyed a visit to Omaha in order to attend the convention of Catholic Librarians at Creighton College. Each teacher attended the lecture suited to her work and gave a report on it when she returned home. The Sisters found the whole convention interesting and inspiring. They gathered new ideas for their work and new enthusiasm.

At the end of the first six weeks we distributed cards to the pupils who had merited the reward by fulfilling the required conditions. The cards were of two kinds: one an Honor card and the other an Excellent card. The idea has brought about better attendance, fewer tardy marks and a greater effort in studies. The cards were distributed at a special assembly.

The State Teachers convention was held in Norfolk this year. The classes were dismissed so that all the teachers could have the opportunity of attending the sessions. The general sessions were very good. They opened with music specially prepared and very well rendered. Then there was a lecture by a noted speaker. After that the teachers separated and attended the sectional meetings. These meetings were conducted by experienced men and women and were devoted to particular phases of teaching. There were exhibits in different rooms and entertainments of various kinds for the visiting teachers. Each Sister felt that she derived a great deal of good from these meetings. We noted the modest dress and the conduct of the pupils from other schools; we were glad to hear that the teachers are striving to benefit the pupils rather than to win contests in dramatics, typing, music, etc. There was no hesitation in speaking of religion and we were treated with the greatest respect.

Our little classroom radios enabled us to hear the first peace time conscription in the history of the United States. Each class tuned in and heard the President announce the number and the copied that and other numbers, hoping that no one near and dear would be called.

As a close of the Tridium in honor of Christ the King, and as part of our Peace programs, the seventh and eighth grades presented a playlet having peace as the theme. The children handled their parts well and the entertainment was a fitting close to the Tridium.

In order to cultivate a taste for good music among the children, a group of musicians was invited to give a concert. After the program the musicians complimented us on the conduct of the children, on their intelligent interest and on their understanding of classical music.

November, 1940

The good people of O'Neill never forget us and our needs. This year again the men took up a collection for coal and gave us \$1000.00 It would be very hard to keep these buildings warm if we did not get this generous donation from the friends of the Academy.

The grade school teachers attended an institute for the county teachers on November 9th. The teachers thought that this institute was not as good as the one they attended last year. There was one speaker outstanding; the others were not so interesting.

The first big blizzard of the year started Sunday the tenth. No one was prepared for this storm and so much damage was done to cattle and farm products. The parade usually held on Armistice Day had to be omitted. The snow drifted so that it was impossible for some people to get through for several days. We had a sufficient supply of coal on hand and did not have any serious trouble with frozen pipes.

For the Fall plays two comedies were chosen: "Swept Clean Off Her Feet" and "Who Gets the Car Tonight". They were given in the public high school gym and were fairly successful as to acting, make-up and stage presence. We gained experience and became acquainted with some of the talent in the school.

The fifth and sixth grades used Thanksgiving as the theme of their assembly. They presented a playlet in a creditable manner. Both the children and their parents enjoyed the program.

Our "Cecelia" program was made up of songs of various lands. The songs of the Old World were sung in the native tongue and in costume; the songs of the New World were sung in English and also in costume. The band and the Physical Education classes added variation to the program. The little people were, as usual, the most attractive.

Sister Catherine had recovered sufficiently to be around after her bad spell in August, but her mind was slipping and it was evident that she could not last much longer. In early November she became worse. There was nothing the doctor could do for her. She was simply worn out and her poor old heart could not stand the strain any longer. At 4:15 on the morning of November 24 she died very quietly and peacefully. Hers was a most edifying life of selfforgetfulness and sacrifice.

She had been in this house for forty years; she had seen many Sisters come and go; she saw the town and school grow up; she went through many hard years. Through it all she kept her sunny disposition and even in her most forgetful moments there was no failure in charity. There was no word of complaint in any way. She loved the trees and flowers and often admired the beauty of the heavens. She was keenly interested in all that concerned the community; she took part in all that was going on; before she died she stripped herself of every little treasure so that she might die poor. She was a model for us. R.I.P.

December 1940

During this month the Alumnae Association conducted parties for the benefit of the Academy. Our mangle had become so warped that it was useless. Through the activities carried on by the Alumnae a new mangle was purchased and installed before Christmas. The next project undertaken is for the purpose of getting an organ for the chapel. It is hoped that the fund will be completed by February 1941.

On December eighth the beautiful ceremony of reception into the Sodality was held in our chapel. Fr. Parr gave a particularly fine sermon on this occasion, which showed that he is well acquainted with young people and their problems.

We were blessed this month with a great deal of snow. This made travel a little bad but the moisture is so much needed that everyone is grateful for the snow. The weather was mild for this time of the year. It was not necessary to burn so much coal.

The Christmas program was very beautiful. Colored lighting was used with pleasing effects. The orchestra made its first appearance and did well.

The vacation renovation of the house began as soon as school closed and was done up in a hurry. A big improvement was made in the kitchen by covering the walls and ceiling with metal and a coat of ivory paint.

Holy Innocent's was a very happy day for us. Each time we met there was some entertainment that caused hearty laughs. These lovely recreations together with long sleeps put new life into us, and the retreat on the last day renewed our spirits. Our Lord was very good to us with donations at Christmas time and so we enter the New Year with hearts full of gratitude for His blessings and full of zeal to work for His honor and glory. A.M.D.G.

1941 - "Old Rival Atkinson"

January

This was a busy active month at St. Mary's. Under the leadership of the alumnae officers a series of parties was held for the repairs so much needed in several places. First came the laundry. The old mangle was so badly warped that clothes couldn't go through it straight anymore. A fine new mangle of a newer type was purchased and put into immediate use. Second, was the organ in the chapel. The old organ was so worn out that it stopped completely. A new Estey was purchased and it will serve for many years. Third, was the repairs in the kitchen. We had to have metal put on the ceiling and walls and then the room had to be painted. It is now a place we are proud to show to visitors.

Our basketball boys brought home a trophy we wanted very much to win. Our old rival, Atkinson, really expected to win that trophy. It is not saying too much to say that there was perhaps a little more than just "natural satisfaction" when we won THAT trophy.

One Saturday afternoon in January Mother surprised us with desks in our study room. The teachers are truly grateful for this much needed improvement.

Late in January Sister Eustacia had to go to St. Joseph's Hospital in Alliance to undergo an operation for appendicitis; after two weeks Sister returned to us and was soon at her post, faithful and cheerful.

February

The Mission Bazaar, which has become an annual activity looked forward to by the classes of the high school and grades with zealous joy, was scheduled for February tenth. The booths for candy, fish pond, bingo, novelty, etc., were erected by members of the different classes and the competition was keen; the net total realized was \$203.00 all of which was used for home and foreign mission activities.

Vocation week at St. Mary's fell the week of February tenth. The main feature of the week was an afternoon devoted to symposium. Rt. Rev. Monsignor McNamara spoke on the call to the priesthood; Mother Virginia addressed the assembly on the religious life; Doctor Brown outlined the essential requisites of a good surgeon and a medical career; the county superintendent, Miss Elja McCullough, in her talk on the rural teacher emphasized the spirit necessary for success as a teacher in the rural districts of Nebraska; Mrs. Hugh Coyne spoke beautifully of the vocation of Catholic Mothers; the rancher attracted great attention and inspired the pupils by the enthusiasm with which he talked of his profession; Mrs. Frank Froelich explained briefly the work of a nurse.

The following week Rev, Father McDonald, S.J. conducted the retreat for the high school pupils. Father was well pleased with the attitude of the children and with the response to his suggestions.

...Her example and instructions gave us courage to go on striving for perfection, and working for God.

The seniors gave as their assembly program a rather difficult play "The Flame Leaps Up". It was well done considering the difficulties under which it had to be given.

March

Sister Mildred's class held an assembly the first week in March. They dramatized, the nursery rhymes; all enjoyed a period, with the second grade and their favorite Mother Goose selections. At half-past four the same little ones surprised us by singing the Latin hymns for Benediction in the convent chapel.

Sisters who have been stationed here will be able to recall the feud that has existed between the towns of O'Neill and Atkinson this entailed intense excitement this year when the basketball tournament scheduled St. Mary's against Atkinson Public School for the final district play. The game was played in the O'Neill Public School Auditorium where our boys do all their practicing and play all the home games. St. Mary's were the victors. The following week they were off to Lincoln for the State Tournament. The Alumnae Association made arrangements for the girls of the pep club to accompany the team. Father Parr, the director of the boy's athletics. Jack Arbuthnot, the coach and the chaperons of each car were responsible for the group. The experience gained and the pleasure of the trip more than satisfied for the sacrifices involved.

St. Patrick's Program this year was a marked success. The spirit of Ireland prevailed and the Joy and lilt of Irish dancing and song with impersonations filled the evening.

April

The spring musical contest at Atkinson was entered into with enthusiasm by the band members and the music students. This initial contest held each year prepares the children for participation in the district contest. Our pupils rated well, especially George Hammond who received great praise for his vocal ability.

The main activity for April was the Lenten Play; this year Father Lord's "Fantasy of the Passion" was selected. Sister Antonella prepared the actors; a rather gifted senior, Robert Parkins, had the lead; it

was staged in the public school auditorium and the results were gratifying in every way. The main objective of this annual Lenten Play each year is to instill a devotion to the passion of our Savior, and we have every hope that great good in this line was done this year.

St. Mary's Academy and O'Neill Public School were selected assenters for the State District Musical Contest. All the solos and the small chorus groups were scheduled at the academy; the band numbers and the large chorus numbers were accommodated in the public school. There were 1500 contestants in O'Neill that day besides the students of the two O'Neill high schools, St. Mary's pupils did well. The weather was most unfavorable especially in the afternoon. The storm prevented several schools from sending delegates and other schools had a bad time getting here. The officers and contestants were well pleased with the arrangements made for them, and the whole contest was a great satisfaction in spite of the weather.

May

During the month of May our dear Lord called the mothers of two of our Sisters to Himself. Sister Mildred was called home for her last visit and to the death of her dear mother on May 4th. She returned knowing that her dear mother had but a short time to live, the following week she received the telegram. Sister Antonella's mother had been dangerously ill for some months, and during her long illness, Sister being so near home, was allowed to visit her mother several times for an hour each time. It was a consolation to both, but hard for Sister to witness her dear ones suffering. Word came on May 16 that death had summoned her dear mother. Sister Jolenta came from the Mission and the two Sisters attended the funeral.

On May 12th the Juniors entertained the Seniors with a banquet; the banquet theme was patriotic and the decorations did service for the remaining activities for the grade and high school closing exercises. Father Ostiek visited the school on his inspection trip on the day of the banquet and expressed his pleasure and satisfaction with St. Mary's.

On Saturday morning May tenth, a meeting was held in the public school with reference to the contemplated change in the high school curriculum; representatives from the University of Nebraska, from Omaha, from the O'Neill Public School and from St. Mary's took part in the discussions. We found the attitudes and the suggestions of the different educators interesting and instructive.

The Knights of Columbus held Initiation in O'Neill on Sunday May 18th. At the close 169 members were served at a banquet in our gym.

On the same Sunday forty little children made their First Holy Communion. The services were simple and beautiful.

On May 20th the grade school held Field Day on the campus; each class took part in competitive games and awards were given. The band played and a good spirit of sportsmanship was exhibited. On the evening of May 20th, the Seniors staged their annual class play. The performance was well attended and gave satisfaction to all.

On May 21st, the beautiful May crowning exercises were held in our park; Mildred O'Malley, a Senior, was elected student queen with the privilege of placing a crown of flowers on the statue of our Lady. The seniors (girls) were dressed in their blue graduation dresses; the other girls in light or white

dresses; after the May exercises in the park the procession went to church where Benediction was given.

Class picnics were held this year on our own premises by the younger children; in the City Park, by the Elk Horn River, at Oakview and in different groves by the high school classes.

The grade school closing exercises took place on May 23rd. Each class was represented on the program; awards and merits were distributed by Rt. Rev. Monsignor McNamara who gave a very encouraging talk to the faculty and students.

The Alumnae reunion opened this year with High Mass on the morning of May 25th. Many of the former students returned to spend the day at the academy and with friends in O'Neill. The banquet was well attended in the evening.

The pupils who had Superior rating in the music contest were permitted to go to St. Paul, Minn, to take part in the National Contest. The people of O'Neill again financed the trip. The two schools gave a joint music program and the interested mothers gave a bake sale. The proceeds of these two activities together with a collection among the business men made an amount sufficient to send a delegation of twenty-five to the contest. Robert Parkins succeeded in winning a second rating in the trombone section.

Senior class night was scheduled for the evening of May 29th. Thirty-three Seniors took part in the exercises.

On the morning of May 30th graduation exercises took place in St. Patrick's Church; thirty—three high school graduates, eleven boys and twenty-two girls received high school diplomas; twenty-four eighth grade pupils received eighth grade diplomas. Rev. Peter Burke delivered the baccalaureate sermon. After the exercises the children left St. Mary's for the summer. It was evening before all the boarders had gone home and the quiet of vacation had settled on St. Mary's.

On May 31st. Sisters Maxine and Edward left us for St. Francis Mission to make their annual retreat.

The vacation schools started on Pentecost Sunday. Sisters Fides and Flores went to Ewing; Sisters Antonella and Serafica to Plainview; Sisters Xavier and Arthur to St. John's. On Monday Sisters Electa and Eustacia took the long drive to Amelia and Mother and Sister Dolores the shorter drive to Emmet. These two drives were a daily affair and the Amelia drive was especially long and hard. On Tuesday Mother Boniface and Sister Emily arrived from Denver to help us. We are more than grateful to them for making the long trip here after a hard school year. The vacation schools were successful in several ways: The pastors and the children were satisfied, and several souls were brought back to the church. There were many interesting incidents connected with each school and there is good natured rivalry among the Sisters in regard to the quality of each school. In fact, the work is very hard and it was especially hard this year because the weather was so cold and wet, and also because the accommodations are still primitive or lacking entirely. Trying to teach 80 children in a small church with both Sisters talking at the same time, the children sitting on the kneeling benches using the seats for desks, is no easy matter. We are still very much in the missionary stage.

Even before the close of vacation school, the teachers had to leave for college. Sisters Fides and Antonella went to Creighton, Sister Mildred to the State Teachers College in Minot, Sister Arthur, to

Davenport, Iowa, Sister Flores had hoped to go to Leavenworth, Kansas, but instead of that she had to undergo a gall bladder operation at Alliance,

On June 21st Sisters Edmunda and Christiana left for St. Paul, Minn. to attend the Eucharistic Congress. When they returned they told us how impressed they were by the kindness and hospitality of the Sisters with whom they stayed. The Congress itself was inspiring. Even hearing about it filled us with renewed zeal. The rain at the close of the congress seemed to be regarded by all as a real blessing.

During the summer months we had to make a few repairs, especially in the basement corridor. The walls were made white again and the wood work was painted a cream color, and a light colored linoleum was put on the floor. The old stairs called "Sister Catherine's stairs" is now the "golden stairs". She would enjoy them as much as we do if she were here. The west side of the gym had to have a new wall and the ceiling had to be made white. The social room also needed a new ceiling. But not all our work was put on walls and ceilings. The tables in the refectory lost a few coats or layers of varnish that had covered them and a new varnish was put on them. During the time the tables were being done over we "dined" out. Sister Electa entertained us in the library; Sister Maxine invited us to the studio, and Sister Dolores and Electa had a nice surprise for us in the social room. We even had lunch a few times in the little dining room when there were "beans" to do. We enjoyed our lunches on the extra occasions.

July

Our changes began in July. Sister Jeanette was the first one on the list. She intended to leave immediately for Stella, but instead she went to Sioux City to the hospital and had to stay there for three weeks. As soon as she was able to travel she went to Stella to take up her new work there. Next came Sisters Antonella and Edward. They were transferred to Minot, but stayed with us until after retreat. Our last change was Sister Elegia who was called to the hospital in Mino. Our good wishes go with our dear ones. May God love and bless them all.

August

On August 5th, Sister Laurissa arrived from summer school to join our high school faculty and on the 8th. Sister Goara came from Denver to be our new cook. Sister Anthony came after working at Marycrest and took over the Sisters sewing.

Among the very pleasant things this summer were the.... in the garden. We arranged tables that could be left out... gathered dishes from various places. We got a few strips of oil cloth for the tables and that completed our preparations. Each evening after spiritual reading we went to the kitchen, picked up the dishes and marched out to the garden. It was delightful out there in the cool shade. The food tasted much better too. We even had breakfast out there twice on grossers.

On August 10th, Father Sandoval, S.J. arrived from Denver to give our retreat. We had heard much about him and so we were especially eager to make his retreat. It was the best retreat many of us have ever made because it was so solid, so definite and so practical. Even the band on O'Neill Day could not distract us, and although as they passed the academy they played "Hail, Hail, The Gang's All Here". The retreat was far more attractive than the parade so we let the parade go by. We wish that every Sister may have a chance to make a retreat under Father Sandoval. Even the weather was ideal. It had been hot before retreat, but during that week it was delightfully cool.

Two of our St. Mary's graduates, Sisters Bartholomew and Carmen stopped to visit us on their way to Alliance. They brought us a little news from the east and from the normal. We are always glad to welcome company to St. Mary's.

The Alumnae furnished the means for our annual picnic again this year. We went to Shoemaker's to enjoy a day of rest and quiet under the old trees. Georgie and Sharlene entertained us royally with balls and wagons and likewise entertained themselves with a box of peppermints which we placed at their disposal. It was a lovely day.

September

Even though it was Labor Day, the day students had to come to register for the new term. It took a long time and a great deal of adjustment to get them all settled. As every administrator knows, it is not the regular students who cause all the work; it is the odd fellows, the ones who have come in from other schools, or who have missed subjects. These are the things which give a principal gray hair under their bonnets. When the last pupil had been dismissed, we Sisters decided to have a grand evening in the north garden. We built a little oven at which we could roast *wien* over the fire and have a regular outdoor picnic. Some Sisters who said they could not eat wieners roasted over the fire changed their minds as the savory aroma began to fill the air, and somehow two or three wieners disappeared gently. After supper we sat around the table in candle light and sang songs and talked. It was our last free evening and a lovely close to a grand summer.

The next morning the boarders began to arrive. The number grew to fifty and kept on increasing until good Sister Goara was getting desperate for food for so many at once. There was the usual lugging of suit cases, bundles and bedding; the ordinary amount of tears; the surreptitious scheming of the "old boarders" to get all the places of vantage for themselves, until night settled on our little world and put an end to the first big day.

Mass in honor of the Holy Ghost was offered at 8 o'clock on September 3rd. After Mass, Monsignor came over to promote the children, beginning with the first grade and on up to the last. Everyone knows that Monsignor does not like long ceremonies, and everyone knows that he is going to forget his glasses every year so that he cannot read the names, and still the same little formula is gone through each year, and no doubt, will be gone through as long as Monsignor is here. When the last class was settled Monsignor met the new pupils and school was over for the day.

God blessed St. Mary's with three postulants this year. Two others were held back by their parents and will have to wait a year or so. The postulants are always a curiosity to the students as soon as they are dressed as postulants. A crowd gathers to see them off; pictures are taken; and the girls ride off in their little blaze of glory. God grant them the grace to persevere.

Our commercial department continues to increase. In order to accommodate the classes this year it was necessary to begin teaching at 8:15 A.M. and continue until 5:40 P.M. O'Neill is not a large town and there would not seem to be positions enough for all who want commercial work; and yet the demand is there and we have to meet it,

God came to our aid in a wonderful way during this month. We had been negotiating for some time in regard to our big smoke stack. No one in town would take the Job. We tried in the surrounding towns and finally found a company that would do it for \$3100.00. We were sickened by the thought of that much money which we did not have and by the fact that the smoke stack had to be repaired. Finally we

got a builder from Omaha who would put the smoke stack in good condition for \$ 1500.00. We still did not have the money, so God sent a good non-Catholic man to us with a check for \$500.00. This man came from Lawrence, Mass. and was on a visit here. He was so impressed with the academy that he said he would send another \$500.00 when he got home. He did not wait until he got home. He gave it before he left. That made \$1000.00. Then a man in town here who had been wanting to give a donation to the academy, sent up a check for \$500.00! That settled the smoke stack question and shows that God takes care of worn out chimneys even on the Nebraskan prairies.

October

Ever since the park has been in existence we have wanted a statue of Our Lady placed in it. Of course we did not have the money to get the statue, so the pupils have been saving for three years in order to pay for it. This year we saw our way clear to get the statue and pay for it a little at a time. The statue arrived on the feast of our holy Father St. Francis, but could not be put up for a week because a cement foundation had to be put under it. The frost line is five feet deep in Nebraska. We had planned a nice celebration for the blessing of the statue and for the dedication of the park, but we had to postpone it until spring on account of inclement weather. The statue is beautiful. We are looking forward to many loving visits to Our Lady when we take our evening walks to the park.

At the end of the first six weeks it was evident that a few of the high school students would not be able to keep up their grades in certain subjects. In order to accommodate them and prevent their failing, a new class was opened in Economic Geography. The pupils seem to be able to grasp such material better than they can the abstract matter, and at the same time they are saved the feeling of inferiority. The class means more work, but we believe that it is worth it.

Sister Serafica has suffered many years from a pain in her back. She fell and broke a little bone but the break could never be located. This summer the pain got so bad that a specialist had to be consulted again. He found the break and operated to remove the bone from Sister's spine. It is an immense relief to Sister after all these years to be able to sit on a chair and to walk without pain. God blessed the operation with great success.

The teachers went to Norfolk again this year to attend the State Teachers' Convention. The speakers and entertainers were about as good as the ones last year; there were many more Sisters attending; and there was a Jesuit on the program. We did not hear much new in the discussions, but we met many people and many Sister who are working under greater difficulties than we are, We heard some very good music by the united bands of the district and the united glee clubs of the district. There were fine displays of book movie machines, and all kinds of school supplies. We got some ideas although we did not have money enough to buy all the attractive things on the tables. The weather was ideal and we thoroughly enjoyed the seventy-five mile ride.

November

The Alumnae Association under the leadership of Mrs. Julia Barrett (Sullivan) made plans to conduct a series of parties for the benefit of the Academy again this year. The activities started with a supper, bingo and dance on Sunday, November 9th, Mrs. Barrett certainly had everything well planned and organized. The whole evening went very smoothly. A big crowd attended and seemed well pleased with everything. It was remarked that people who probably never before set foot into the building come to the academy now. They do not seem to be afraid to come to a dinner or a party while they might

hesitate to come for something else. The Alumnae took charge of everything and they have been very generous in helping us pay our expenses.

On November 16th, the Knights of Columbus had their second initiation for this year. They asked us to serve the banquet in the Gym. We got everything organized but the MEN. We had no way of finding out how many there would be. We prepared for 160 thinking that would easily take care of the crowd. Imagine our feelings when 190 crowded into the hall and others had to be sent away. We finally got them all settled and for once they really cleaned up the plates. They must have liked the baked ham and we learned that O'Neill can draw a crowd.

The music department chose the operetta, "When the Moon Rises" for the Cecelia Program. The members of the cast were not the only ones waiting for the "moon" to rise. That operetta was what is called a "headache" until the very day it was put on. Somehow or other the children did not get the spirit until the very [end], but when they did, they really put on the operetta well. Those are the things which add more gray hairs under bonnets.

Monsignor said he felt ashamed that he had never done anything for the choir. He asked us to prepare a treat for the members of the choir and he and Father Parr came over to enjoy a delicious supper with them. Monsignor gave a talk expressing his admiration for St. Cecelia and his thanks to the choir, and gave each member a box of candy to finish the evening.

School closed at noon on Wednesday for Thanksgiving vacation. Besides our dinner, we enjoyed a long sleep and a little rest. The weather was most pleasant and the rest was really appreciated.

December

The huge task of spending a quarter for St. Nicholas had to be completed before December 1st, or the good Bishop would not have time to fill all the orders. Many recreations had to be spent thumbing catalogs and changing ideas, but St. Nicholas finally got everything settled and came as usual on December 6th with the little surprises dear to our Franciscan hearts.

We shall not forget Sunday December 7th for many years to come. We were preparing for Mother's feast day and for the Sodality reception when flashes of the war came in. A feeling of fear gripped us and up a cloud over our joy. Nevertheless, we went on with our celebrations. The refectory was beautifully done in a blue and white winter scene. The center was a shrine of Our Lady. In spite of the war we enjoyed the feast and did some extra praying for peace.

On December 8th the high school students assembled for reception of new members into the Sodality. The chapel was beautifully decorated with chrysanthemums. Father Parr gave a good talk on the obedience of the Blessed Virgin, and then received the candidates into the sodality. The girls in white dresses and veils and the boys in dark suits made a good impression. How we wish we could keep them innocent and pure as they are now! After the services the pupils enjoyed a treat as only healthy youngsters can. May God and our Blessed Lady keep them from harm.

The class rooms at St. Mary's assume a very different appearance as the Christmas time draws near. Desks are rearranged, walls are decorated, trees grow up overnight, names are drawn for the exchange of gifts, and a little air of mystery and whispering pops out everywhere. Then on the closing day, carols are sung, the gifts are distributed and the pupils go home feeling light-hearted and gay. Only one big girl was left with us this vacation so the Sisters were entirely free from surveillance

for two weeks. A little extra sleep with the extra recreations put everyone in a good condition for the New Year.

The best treat of the Christmas vacation was the day of retreat conducted by Rev. Father Sandoval, S. J., from Regis College, Denver. He conducted our annual retreat for us in August and he was so practical and so helpful that we asked and obtained permission for the last day of the year. We followed the order of the day used in the big retreat. It is to be feared that we shall not be satisfied with anything less after the wonderful treat of that day. In all we had six meditations.

During this month one of our boarder girls, Darla Davis whose religious training had been much neglected, made her first Communion. The sodality officers acted as little guards of honor for her, and after Mass the children offered gifts in the dining room in order to make the event as pleasant and as memorable as possible. Another pupil, Dorothy Lewis, was baptized and made her first Holy Communion in church.

And thus the year of 1941 drew to a close. God has been very, very good to us, and although we are under a cloud of war, we shall place our trust in Him – He has provided and He will continue to provide.

1942 - "Rations"

January

The Sisters of St. Mary's were blessed in having a Jesuit from Regis College, Denver, Reverend Father Sandoval, conduct the day of recollection closing the year 1941. He gave three meditations and a conference during the day which was also a day of adoration before the Blessed Sacrament exposed. It was, indeed, a unique day of blessings! Father remained for New Year's Day; he offered up the Holy Sacrifice for the Sisters in the convent chapel at seven o'clock; at nine o'clock he gave us another meditation which was followed by Benediction. A very heavy snow-storm accompanied by an intense blizzard stopped all traffic and transportation in Holt County on New Year's Day, so that Father was detained until early on January 2nd, and, then, he had to return to Denver by way of Omaha. We trust that the sacrifices entailed by the journey will not dishearten other priests in undertaking this spiritual project which was so much appreciated by the Sisters of St. Mary's. It is not always so for many bright, clear days followed in January.

On the afternoon of January 1st, Mother Virginia surprised the community with a "real movie" in our own assembly. "Scrooge" was enjoyed by the Sisters and appreciated more because it was the first community recreation that the Sisters of St. Mary's had of this type without any outsiders.

At our first Teachers' meeting of 1942 Sister Xavier gave a talk on "Methods in Teaching Reading". Sister has been especially successful in teaching reading, hence, we were interested in her talk.

January 4th closed a very pleasant vacation for the Sisters as many of the boarders returned that day for the opening of classes on the fifth.

The Three Kings must have had inside information about our community. There had been a great deal of community banter and teasing about chocolate cherries which were so popular as Christmas gifts from the children. The spirit of fun kept up until Mother "threatened" never to give us another chocolate covered cherry. However, the Three Kings were surely "Wise" men this year because they brought each of us a box of chocolate covered cherries.

It was on January 6th that we received word of the "death of" our good Mother Gerard", whose love had influenced all our lives. R. I. P. with sentiments of respectful, filial charity and sincerity we united in the Holy Sacrifices and in prayer for the soul of her whom we felt, according to the Franciscan evaluation of suffering, had met and earned her eternal reward.

Our Basketball team went through to the final game in the county tournament and then lost to the O'Neill Public School.

During the second teachers' meeting of the month, Sister Mildred explained to us an "Examination of Conscience" that she had used in her work with First Communion Classes. The talk led to a helpful discussion of confession in general among grade school children.

The class in Economic Geography had a series of educational films relating to their work. The films were sent by the University of Lincoln, Nebraska. Needless to say the class liked a "picture" period better than any other.

For the benefit of the Infantile Paralysis fund a joint dance was held with the pupils of the public school. The dance was not the financial success that the committee expected.

At the third teachers' meeting of the month Sister Dolores talked on "Fostering Vocations". The subject was timely because of the coming vocation week and the annual retreat for the students.

Examinations began on January 19th and closed January 21st. The afternoon of the 21st was free and was spent preparing for the Junior Senior banquet. By a majority vote the Junior class transferred the traditional banquet of Senior week in May to the end of the first semester. In keeping with the spirit of economy the elaborate and rather expensive decorations of the gym as a banquet hall were eliminated this year. Mother and the Sisters with a few older girls prepared the girls' dining room which was very artistically decorated with a minimum expense. The color scheme was blue and white. A very delicious banquet was served to sixty-five at six o'clock. In the Gym the Junior Prom and a very pleasing floor show followed the banquet. Fruit punch with cookies were served in a special booth during the dance. The dance closed at ten-thirty. This was the first year at St. Mary's that the girls did not wear "formals" at this annual school social; many of the High School students throughout the country cast a similar vote in their efforts to economize during the war time.

The following day, January 21st, the new semester began. On that day the mother of one of our Senior boys, and the mother of fifteen children, an old family in the parish, died. Mrs. Fernholz had sent several children to school at St. Mary's.

A phone call from Mother Erica, Denver, transferred Sister Mildred to St. Leo's Minot. Sister Lenore from Marycrest came to take her class.

On January 26th Sister Dolores left St. Mary's for Denver to attend a council meeting. In the afternoon of the same date the student body and the faculty were shown a two reel picture on the productions and utilities of the "Conoco Oil Company". It was very interesting and informative.

On January 28th the Faculty and Student body were entertained by two original skits prepared by Sister Laurissa with her Freshman boys and girls. Wit and humor battled with each other in the original composition and the audience enjoyed the performance to the utmost.

During the last teachers' meeting Sister Fides took her turn at speaking at the High School teachers' meeting; her topic was "Fostering Devotion to St. Francis."

FEBRUARY

This school month opened with the celebration of the Feast of the Purification; the following day Father Parr blessed the throats and we prayed that the great Saint Blaise would obtain the singular blessing of preservation from sickness especially among our children and sisters.

In a little town like O'Neill the Academy regulations on attendance of the students at only "Class A" pictures entails an obligation on the only theatre management in the town to procure good pictures. A matinee is given each week, but St. Mary's students, especially the boarders, attend only those matinees which are Class A pictures. The Sisters are in surveillance. "Smiling Through" in which Jeanette McDonald features in techni-color was enjoyed during the first week of February.

The Economic Geography Class continued to be the most popular class in the High School with its demonstrations in pictures of the more important projects.

Early on the morning of February 7th, Sister Dolores and Sister Laurissa with one representative from the High School went to Omaha to attend a National Conference of the Students Mission Crusade. The meeting was held on Saturday and they returned again on Saturday night. Such educational trips to Omaha during which the Sisters are usually up two nights are very strenuous, but they are very helpful to teachers and students as contacts are made that arouse interest and enthusiasm in the different educational activities. At this conference the emphasis was placed on the spiritual objectives of the Crusade's work.

On February the ninth the state of Nebraska complied with the President's "War Time Schedules". All clocks were set one hour in advance.

On the evening of February 10th, the St. Mary's Academy Corporation trustee members met in the Academy Library; Right Reverend Monsignor McNamara, Julius Cronin, Lawyer; Frank Biglin, Mother Virginia, and Sister Dolores. Several important questions were discussed for the betterment of St. Mary's.

The annual Students Mission Bazaar was held this year on February 16th. Bill Froelich, a generous benefactor of St. Mary's gave a Defense Bond to be raffled for the Missions, and the pupils of the Eighth Grade of which his son is a member were very enthusiastic over their lead in the proceeds for the Missions. We all rejoiced with Sister Arthur and her active missionaries as their quota did much to swell the total of \$200.06. This is the most that we have made at the Students Mission Bazaar which is held annually and all the proceeds of which are devoted to charity and the welfare of the Missions. St. Mary's report at the Mission Conference aroused quite a bit of interest; several letters of congratulations were received by Sister Dolores commending her on the Missionary spirit among the students.

On the day of the Mission Bazaar Sister Serafia and Sister Flores went to Sioux City to the Hospital for treatment. Sister Serafia returned on the next day, but Sister Flores remained for a week.

February the 18th opened the Holy Season of Lent this year. The usual liturgical ceremonies both at St. Mary's and at St. Patrick's were performed on Ash Wednesday morning. The Lenten Devotions were attended by the Sisters and Students at St. Patrick's.

On February 27th the students and Sisters prepared a celebration for Monsignor's forty-fifth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. A program was staged at eleven o'clock in the assembly to which the neighboring priests had been invited. After the program the priests took lunch with Monsignor at the Academy. A free afternoon was given the school children.

MARCH

On March the 2nd many of the Sisters and students viewed the eclipse of the moon. Early on the morning of the 2nd Sister Maxine went to Omaha to have a small growth removed from her eye. It proved a necessary, and a very beneficial remedy. We were all very happy over the outcome for had our artist been handicapped by further growth of this obstruction on the eye, aside from the sisterly love which prompted natural sympathy for our "good old Sister Maxine", we knew that none of us had been blessed by God with her special talent and ability. Who could replace her?

During the first week of March, the youngest child at St. Mary's, little Paul Johnson, became very ill. It took prayer and sacrifice on the part of the Sisters in charge before they were assured that all was done that was necessary to save the little one.

On March the 14th Sister Dolores and fifteen representatives went to Omaha to attend a Sodality Convention. Father Lord conducted the meetings which were interesting and enlightening.

Mother Erica arrived on the 16th for the annual visitation. Mother remained with us until the 27th. The heavy snow-storms detained her a day longer than she had planned.

The children's retreat opened on March the 30th. Reverend Father Henle, S. J. from St. Louis came to conduct the retreat; his lectures were forceful, interesting and inspiring. The children responded with serious attention and seem to have derived much spiritual good therefrom.

We attended the Holy Week services in St. Patrick's Church; the office of Holy Week was very solemnly chanted in the convent chapel. The children were dismissed at noon on Wednesday for the Easter vacation.

APRIL

Classes were resumed after the Easter vacation on Wednesday following Easter; preparations were made immediately for the District Music Contest which was held in O'Neill. There were twenty schools that participated in the contest which opened April 17th at 8 A. M. The numbers were all scheduled at intervals of eight, ten, and fifteen minutes. Each school was limited to twenty-four numbers. The whole was so well organized that every minute of the two days from eight in the morning until eleven at night was on schedule. The Academy and the Public School at O'Neill were used and all other classes were dismissed. The Judges, all music professors of high standing were considered fair in their judgments. We received 12 "Superior ratings" out of 20 entries. The Sisters, students, and friends of St. Mary's were all very happy and felt that the St. Mary's students had done exceptionally well. Sister Flores, vocal and instrumental teacher, and Mr. George, the band director both had the happy satisfaction of work well done and to them we tendered out congratulations.

On Friday April 24th the Nebraska State Music Teachers' Association met in Fremont; Mother Virginia and Sister Flores attended. The conference extended over two days and gave a wealth of

information and help in the line of teachers, demonstrations, lectures, etc., Mr. Dumnesil's analysis of different musical selections was especially beneficial.

MAY

The annual May devotions were held in the chapel, and the different classrooms. The sodalists were especially zealous to honor the Mother of God.

On May the 8th Mother Virginia and Sister Flores left for Omaha to attend the National Music Convention. This was the first year that the Sisters were able to attend the National Convention; this was due to the fact that it was held sufficiently near to O'Neill to guarantee the transportation and convention expenses. Only our smaller groups who had received a Superior rating in the district were allowed to go. This eliminated the Band and glee clubs of both schools though they were eligible, having received Superior in the district contest. At the National Convention our "Trio" received a "Superior" rating. The Sisters and students returned home on the 10th. This was the first National Superior ranking received not only in the Academy, but in O'Neill.

Word came from Mother Erica that Mother Virginia and Sister Laurissa should go to Leavenworth for the special pageant to open on May 12th and 13th.

On May 15th the Sisters and the student-body joined in the celebration of dear Sister Alexia's Golden Jubilee. The sacristan had decorated the church with great care for the occasion; a mixed choir of grade and high school children sang the High Mass, and Right Reverend Monsignor celebrated. A special prie-dieu was placed in the middle aisle for the Jubilarian; it was decorated in white and gold. The school children, both high school and grades, attended the Mass. At eleven o'clock the students gave a program of congratulations in the Assembly; after that the classes were dismissed for the day. The Jubilarian enjoyed the day with the Sisters.

On May the 17th our little boys and girls received Holy Communion for the first time. Sister Leonita prepared the First Communion Class; Monsignor was pleased at the examination. The services went off very smoothly in church, and we were all impressed with the fervor of the little ones and the appreciation of their good parents.

On the evening of the same day the Knights of Columbus Banquet was served to 135 Knights and their friends in our gymnasium. The meat and vegetable courses were cooked down town at the Bakery and then served from our kitchen. Sister Dolores with the Boarder girls set the places in the gym, and Mother with her group of Sisters managed the serving etc., All were pleased with the dinner and the service, and entertainment. Girls in uniform served.

On May the 19th the Senior Class Play, "Spring Fever" was staged in the Public School Auditorium. The play was under the direction of Sister Laurissa. The cast was well prepared, the stage setting suitable and attractive, and our only regret was that the date of presentation was a little too late in the year to draw the crowd worthy of the production.

May 22nd the annual "May Day Celebration" took place. This was the first time after the installation of the beautiful out-door statue of our Lady of Grace in the Academy park. The ceremony itself is very impressive; climaxed, as it is, with the crowning of our Blessed Lady's statue. The High School students vote on their favorite May Queen who crowns our Blessed Lady; this year the selection fell to Mary Helen Martin. The Seniors wore cap and gown for the first time. The procession closed in the

Parish Church, where Consignor gave a very impressive sermon on our Blessed Mother and this particular day. Solemn Benediction followed. At 8 P.M. the same day the Grade School Closing exercises took place in the Academy Gymnasium. The little ones were very pleased with the prizes given. Monsignor congratulated the Eighth Grade graduates and their teachers.

May the 24th, Pentecost Sunday was Alumni Day at St. Mary's. The members attended a special Holy Mass at St. Patrick's Church; a breakfast was served at the Hotel. In the evening at six-thirty a banquet was served at the Academy to one-hundred-twenty members.

Sister Xavier and Sister Leonita left on the 24th for the opening of the first religious vacation school of the summer of 1942. The High School Department held their examinations the following week. Senior week at St. Mary's. On May 28th the class held their class-day exercises. On May the 29th Graduation exercises took place in St. Patrick's Church. Twenty-three received their High School diplomas.

On Sunday May 31st four Sisters left for summer religious vacation schools; this year we had ten sisters teaching religion to the country school children and to the public school children in mission churches.

Sister Arthur left Sacred Heart Province on the 21st of May; she went to summer school at Seattle, Washington, and then to Cowlitz, Washington. On the following Saturday Sister Alexia, Archer, was transferred to the Eastern Province. She left St. Mary's enroute to St. Vincent's Columbus, Ohio. It is difficult to express our sentiments of deep appreciation to the Sisters to whom we so reluctantly bid farewell.

JUNE

On the first day of this month one of the heaviest rains of the season caused quite an amount of damage to roads, bridges, etc.,

Mother Erica sent Sister Cassilda from Denver, Sister Bartholomew and Sister Carmen from Alliance to help out with the vacation schools.

Father Parr who had been our Assistant at St. Patrick's church and chaplain at the Academy was transferred on June the 8th to Omaha. Father Brick arrived on June 12th to take his place.

Before the fifteenth of June the following teachers had left St. Mary's for summer courses: Sister Fides and Sister Laurissa to Creighton University, Omaha; Sister Xavier and Sister Flores to St. Mary's College, Leavenworth, Kansas; Sister Leonita to St. Ambrose, Davenport, Iowa. Sister Florence and Sister Marina came to St. Mary's to study for the summer to complete their High School. Classes began the same day. We had four other pupils, all young girls graduated from High School who wished to take civil service examination in commercial work.

Mother Virginia and Sister Ignatia started the house-cleaning in the Academy class-rooms; scrubbing, filling and waxing floors, washing and calcimining walls, etc., continued till the end of the month.

JULY

On July the 2nd Sister Laurita from Alliance came to teach in the High School next year. Sister Ignatia left St. Mary's for Marycrest to prepare for final profession.

On Wednesday, July 15th the men arrived from Omaha to start to repair the smoke-stack which has been in a rather threateningly dangerous condition for a year or two. It has also been a source of much worry. We had estimated that it would take about two weeks alone to build the scaffolding to the top of the smoke-stack. Those experts started their work and at the end of the day the scaffold was about finished, and within a week the bricks that were bad had been

removed, and others replaced them; then, the whole smoke stack stuccoed. The contractor also gave us a reduction on the work so that the bid for the repairing of \$5000 that had been submitted by one firm dwindled down to a little over one-fifth the amount. The economic conditions of our country have, much to do with the fluctuations of prices, but we realized that, in this case, it was far more plausible an outcome of dear Mother Virginia's visits to the Divine Contractor.

The new metal Tabernacle, a beautiful residence for our dear Lord, in comparison with the old wooden one which had to be replaced, arrived on the 16th. We all rejoiced while admiring it, in anticipation of it upon the new liturgical altar which the Alumni Association had pledged to buy. The treasurer, Bernadette Brennan, sent a check the same week to pay for the tabernacle. Mr. Kettler, the contractor, who has had years of experience in building churches and altars, looked at our old altar and said that it could be re-made into a liturgical altar. He began the work the next day and when it was completed, we were happy with it, and even more so than if we had been able to purchase one of the other on sale at the time; so well had the work been done. During those days we had to have Holy Mass in the sacristy. When all was completed the improvement was so pleasing that we felt it was well-worth any sacrifices that the transition entailed.

On July 25th Monsignor blessed the new Tabernacle and Benediction was given for the first time; on July 27th the first Holy Mass was said at the new altar.

During this week Mother Virginia and Sister Eustacia painted the walls and ceilings of the bath-room and lavatory in the old cloister. When the old-fashioned electrical fixture that had hung so threateningly from the ceiling for so many years had been replaced by a switch and button just inside the door, and all inside refinished, in the clean, inviting color-scheme of cream and water-green, we felt that our dear Mother and Sister were actable benefactors of the institution.

Another improvement was made which delighted Sister Serafica who has charge of the dormitory. The room between the East and West dormitories was remodeled into a rather modern dressing room for the older girls. A long dressing table the length of the wall was built in, and above this three long mirrors the length of the wall were installed. New draperies, dresser covers, cushions, etc., all made of a heavy silky, large-flowered attractive, colorful material. Mother Virginia and Sister Serafica working together did most of the work and the improvement was greatly appreciated by the girls when they returned.

AUGUST

During the first week of August the Sisters who had been away for summer schools returned. On August the 6th, dear Sister Dolores who had not been well all summer went to Sioux City to the Hospital for a general check-up. After three days the disheartening report came from the Doctors' diagnosis that Sister had a collapsed spine, there was a deficit of calcium in the bones; it would be necessary for Sister to wear a brace and that she would not be able to teach the first semester. This would, indeed, be a great loss to St. Mary's.

The first retreat opened on the evening of August the 9th; the retreat-master, Father Ziegelmeyer, S. J. came at four-thirty, from St. Louis. The weather was cool and all tended to a devotional retreat. Sister Maxine who had made her retreat at St. Francis Mission served the priest during retreat. Sister Goeara and Mrs. Kissinger did the cooking. During retreat on the evening of August the 15th, Sister Anthony and Sister Margaret renewed their vows before Benediction. The ceremony so fitting appealing to Franciscan hearts was appreciated by the Sisters as a beautiful setting for the closing of the Feast of our Lady's Feast day. Retreat closed on the morning of August 17th. Sister Teresa and Sister Ludgardis who had come from St. Francis Mission to make the retreat returned home the same day.

On the morning of August the 18th Mother Bertrand arrived from St. Francis Mission. To have a visiting Sister at St. Mary's is, indeed, a factor for community rejoicing and when that visitor happened to be good smiling Mother Bertrand with whom we all felt so much at home, we had cause for major rejoicing. Mother remained with us until the following evening when Mother Virginia and she left St. Mary's for the Superiors Retreat at Marycrest.

The last special gift that we rejoiced over in the vacation of 1942 was the beautiful wine colored, rich, velvet dorsal hung behind the new liturgical altar, and making a magnificent background for the highly polished mahogany crucifix with an appealing flesh-colored ivory corpus suspended from a heavy brass chain. The whole setting is very pleasing and significant of eager loving zeal to beautify the Sacramental residence of Our Eucharistic King.

On September 2nd, sixty-nine boarders registered for the school year. We missed Sister Dolores who for twenty-five years had taken entire charge of the registration and who was still in the hospital at Sioux City. Mother Virginia with the other members of the faculty enjoyed the activity and interest concomitant with the receiving of new pupils in a Boarding School on registration day.

On September 3rd school opened with an enrollment of three-hundred sixteen children. Right Reverend Monsignor McNamara celebrated Holy Mass in honor of the Holy Ghost and an hour later schedules were evolving in familiar regularity, we have more boarders in the high school department this year; a happy contented spirit reigns among them; they adapted themselves quickly to life at St. Mary's and they are easily satisfied.

On September 12th Mother Erica and Mother Virginia met at Sioux City with the intention of removing Sister Dolores to our own Hospital in Alliance. Sister was not strong enough to attempt the trip; hence, she had to remain at Sioux City.

September the 15th, the Feast of Our Lady of Sorrows, Sister Dolores' name day, the students sent a telegram feast-day greetings, ten dollars for Holy Masses and a Spiritual Bouquet to Sister.

On Tuesday evening of this week the first High School dance of the year, an initiation of the Freshmen was well attended by the student body.

September the 19th the first teachers' meeting of the school year was assembled; Mother Virginia placed before the Faculty the platform for the character training of the students for the school year. It was received with enthusiasm by the teachers. Punctuality, politeness, industry, and co-operation were the four objectives stressed; through these, principles are to be impressed upon the minds of the pupils that will enable them to lead virtuous lives.

Another change came in the schedule when Sister Spes arrived from Alliance to help with the High School classes during Sister Dolores' absence. Sister is "at home" with us now and we are very grateful for her cordial, helpful ways, and, of course, we appreciate Mother Erica's thoughtfulness.

September 24th Mother Virginia had an opportunity to visit Sister Dolores again. On account of the tire and gas restrictions in the Mid-west whether- real or anticipated we are not able to visit Sister as frequently as we wish. Unless there is an emergency, traveling by Bus or train are too expensive, hence, we must take advantage of any free rides in cars, that are offered.

September 27th—Forty Hours Devotion opened in the Parish Church today. The classes were each dismissed as on the First Friday of each month for adoration, we are happy to see that the Parishioners are more faithful this year in keeping sentinel before the Blessed Sacrament. Loneliness in the homes caused by the absence of sons in service, finds sympathy in Jesus, lonely in the Tabernacle.

October

During the first week of October the pupils of the seventh and eighth grades gave a program on the mysteries of the rosary in an assembly of the High School students and later they repeated the program for the grade pupils. Sister Adeltrude had the children well prepared and the numbers were devotional and informative.

The Sodality of the High School was organized early in October; traditional with this organization at St. Mary's three groups were formed, the Boarders, the day-pupil girls and the boys. The sodalists seem eager to co-operate and the officers and chairmen of the different committees in all three sodalities have worked up a friendly rivalry in collecting stamps for the missions, participating in ejaculation contests, checking here and there on spiritual laxity, etc.,

Our Football team did not do so well this year; the boys on the team are tall and apparently big boys, but they are young and lack the physical reserve to compete with teams of older boys.

The Basket Ball team will soon be organized for the year; our old benefactor Mr. William Froelich who has done so very much for St. Mary's has again come to the front with furnishing a new supply of sweat shirts and new basketball suits for the team.

An activity which is quite unique in a girls' boarding school took place this year. In co-operation with the public school we entered the scrap day project. A free day was given to both schools for collecting scrap to help with the war economy project. A city lot was set aside for the center collection point and the teachers of the public school managed the weighing and tabulating of all scrap brought in by the children. How the children worked! The boarders were divided into squads with a leader to each squad; the day was an ideal one and in keeping with the spirit of youth a great deal of fun accompanied the strenuous efforts to haul in the junk. We totaled over 115,000 pounds with an average of 500 pounds per capita in the High School. This entitled the High School to a flag offered by the World Herald of Omaha. The Senior class and the Eighth Grade had the highest class collection. They each received five dollars from the mayor. An appreciation program was held in the public school auditorium which was a credit to O'Neill and its schools. The united bands of the two schools which are under the same direction, Mr. Ira George, in uniforms, played while St. Mary's marched in from the west entrance, and the public school from the east entrance. The children from both schools were in fine order and in high spirits; cheers were given, the two schools united in chorus, awards were

announced, etc., it was a real gala day with the outcome of arousing a feeling of pride in O'Neill with its population of so many children, a blessing from God.

NOVEMBER

The shrill whistle of the Northwestern piercing the early morning air aroused a significant thrill in the hearts of the Sisters of St. Mary's on the morning of October 26th, for we knew that Mother Erica was scheduled to arrive for her annual visitation. We were happy to have Mother with us for a week which passed all too quickly. During Mother's stay on October 29th four Sisters had to attend the Nebraska Teachers State Convention for Secondary Schools held at Norfolk, Nebraska. As eager and appreciative as we are to benefit by attendance at these conventions, who wants to leave home during the annual visitation week? November the 3rd we regretted to have Mother leave us for Omaha enroute to Marycrest.

The week of November the 15th we were deprived of Holy Mass in our chapel. Father Brick, our chaplain who is not yet one year ordained, had to take the Theological Examinations in Omaha. Monsignor came over to distribute Holy Communion at seven o'clock each morning, but he celebrated Holy Mass in the Parish Church, at a time when it was impossible for the majority of the Sisters and children to attend.

One Saturday afternoon early in November three colorful linoleum rugs arrived to replace the large carpet ones which with so much wear and accumulation of dust were no longer appropriate in the Library.

On November the 18th Mr. J. B. Ryan, an old benefactor who the week before had placed a beef in the general refrigerator for the Sisters of St. Mary's, sent his stenographer to Mother Virginia with a donation of \$250.00. Last year this time he gave \$500 with the stipulation that it be spent for St. Mary's. May God reward those who do good unto us.

November 19th was the Feast of St. Elizabeth, and what we termed a "war-time" recreation day for there was a decided rationing on the opportunities to do an extra talking.

The pupils of the Music department presented the comic operetta, "Sunbonnet Sue" in the Public School Auditorium on the evening of November 22nd. The Friday afternoon preceding the Feast of Saint Cecilia the Operetta was staged for the pupils of the public school and St. Mary's. The teachers of the Public School sold tickets to their children and classes in both schools were dismissed for the Operetta. Three hundred public school children and about two-hundred fifty of St. Mary's attended. Sister Flores directed the operetta; we all rejoiced in the success of her work. St. Mary's Band under the direction of Mr. George kept the atmosphere attune before and between the stage settings.

November 25th Classes were dismissed at noon for the Thanksgiving vacation. We were all happy for a brief respite though it be only three days from the routine of school life as well as the regular boarding school surveillance.

Two fine turkeys came from Mr. Andy Clark, a nephew of Sister Alma's who never forgets the Sisters of St. Mary's at Thanksgiving or Christmas. A big fat goose also found its way to good Sister Ludgardis who with her usual dexterous ingenuity in her culinary art brought it before us dressed up fit for a king.

Thanksgiving evening Sister Fides and Sister Spes left St. Mary's for Omaha to receive medical care.

Another source of happiness came with dear Mother Virginia's expenditure for fifty new books, supplementary reading for the High School to be added to the Library. Where is the High School teacher that does not appreciate new books for the library?

During this semester we were made happy by the following report from the Office of Superintendent of schools after the inspection visit of Rev. P. E. Schneider, Diocesan Superintendent: "I wish to congratulate you on your fine school at O'Neill. The teachers showed a very fine spirit of co-operation with each other and with the school authorities. I probably forgot many commendable points. I think the following deserve credit: the fine discipline, not the strict, dictator type, instead it was free; the students were relaxed and ready to co-operate, the co-operation with the public school in regard to the band and agriculture classes; the drawings, pictures, charts, etc., in the rooms; and the student activity in the various classes; I noticed this especially in the Freshmen English class where the teacher had a minor part in the class discussion. There were other teachers who had similar activity in their classes. Several of the teachers compared the matter of class assignment with conditions in the life of the child, and thus made the subject matter vital to the life of the child." We had awaited the new superintendent's visit with some trepidation. We all rejoiced with Mother Virginia over this report and under her leadership we continue in our efforts to satisfy the Divine Master Superintendent of Franciscan Schools.

DECEMBER

The first week of December Sister Ludgardis, our cook and her little Sister, Sister Margaret, were kept busy canning over forty gallons of meat to be conserved until next summer when the income ceases and the food consumption continues.

December the sixth, that traditional Feast day of Franciscan simplicity and joy was an especially happy one this year. Sister Maxine's artistic ability with paint and brush happily surprised and pleased everyone with a colorful fourteen inch statuette of good St. Nicholas. His features smiling and portraying intrinsic satisfaction with the good deed of his life carried on into this year of 1942. Where he stood at each place in his rich bishopric regalia making the setting just what it should be for the feast day.

On December the 7th, the eve of the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, at two o'clock the entire High School Student body sang the Little Office of the Immaculate Conception; immediately following thirty three candidates were received into the Sodality. Rev. Father Brick delivered a very impressive sermon.

On the evening of December the ninth at 9 o'clock a practice black-out took place in O'Neill and the vicinity. This was for the purpose of informing the people of the essentials of a black out in preparatory for the black-out over the Middle-west on December the 14th,

Mrs. Riesely, the manager of the town theatre gave a free movie on the morning of December 17th for the Academy school children at ten o'clock. The Sisters had to be in surveillance with the children.

Friday morning, December 18th, at eleven o'clock the chamber of commerce in accordance with an old O'Neill custom prepares a Christmas celebration for the children. A very elaborate parade with reindeers, floats presenting different Christmas scenes in which the children selected from St. Mary's and from the public school in costume sang Christmas carols; the united bands from the two schools gave selections. The parade was climaxed in an assembly near a large Christmas tree in the center of

the town where the children all received a large apple to replace the sack of candy which had always been given in years of peace and plenty when there was no sugar rationings. At two o'clock the pupils of St. Mary's sang the traditional carols in the different classrooms, gifts were distributed and then classes were dismissed for the Christmas Holidays.

In one of our recreations early in December Mother and the Sisters made a schedule for the recreations general and particular of the Christmas vacation. The schedule was followed out with great Franciscan simplicity and joy; we enjoyed a movie in the assembly, two recreations in the library, bingo, Bunco games, a beautifully decorated Christmas tree, letter-writing to home-folks, greetings and letters from our own dear sisters in different houses, etc., not a factor that goes to make Christmas holidays so unique in our communities was missing. The chapel was beautifully decorated; benefactors were especially generous; Holy Mass and Holy Communion everyday in our chapel with all the morning services an hour later. Mother Virginia and each Sister seemed determined to do her utmost to create the true Christmas spirit of love and joy, and a unanimous appreciation of the many many blessings received.

On December the 31st, the last day of 1942, was a day of recollection. Mother Virginia had made efforts to get a Jesuit priest from Denver or Omaha to conduct this day of recollection as last year for the Sisters, but it was impossible. Rev. Father O'Brien, of Emmet consented to do this for us and God blessed this day with and for our dear Lord. The Blessed Sacrament was exposed; Father is a very good speaker and he was well prepared.

Thus closes the year of 1942, a year so rich in blessings for St. Mary's and for the Sisters. The following Sisters are now at St. Mary's Academy:

Mother Virginia, Sullivan

Sister Dolores, Disch

Sister Brigid, Butler

Sister Edmunda, Curran

Sister Maxine, v. Brixen

Sister Electa, Mackin

Sister Fides, Paull

Sister Loretta, Daugherty

Sister Spes, Paull

Sister Laurissa, Tierney

Sister Xavier, Kirscht

Sister Adeltrude, Fries

Sister Ursula, Bighouse

Sister Andrea, Fischer

Sister Serafica.Behm

Sister Flores, Marques

Sister Leonita, Eager

Sister Laurita, Archer

Sister Ludgardis, Schneider

Sister Anthony, Degenhart

Sister Margaret, Schneider

1943 - "Scrap Day"

January

Greetings to all our dear Sisters! After a rather mild December, January brought us some real winter weather. There was not much snow, but there was very low temperatures. We had frozen pipes almost before we realized how cold it was. The worst part of the cold was just at the time of the examinations.

The workmen continued work in the old cloister even on New Year's Day. We permitted it because it is so difficult to get help and because the government officials worked and urged others to work as a war measure.

We were happy to learn that Sister Dolores is so much improved that she will be permitted to teach a little while each day in St. Agnes Academy, Alliance. This was good news, and we hope that her recovery is permanent.

When the children returned after Christmas, they showed results of the measles epidemic. Those who returned were weak and listless. Several did not get back for a week or two. The disease seems to have been spread all through this section.

The girls had been asking a long time to be permitted to play basketball. A group was organized in January under the leadership of Alma Wallace and Jean Biglin. The girls play twice a week and enjoy themselves.

In the Holt County Tournament our team was "runner-up". The new suits looked very fine, but did not bring the championship. The Alumnae cheered the boys up by sponsoring a dance after the tournament.

As happened last year, so again this year, the Senior class was saddened by the death of a parent. This year it was Colonel Francis Brennan, the father of two of the Senior boys.

We were all made happy by a short visit of Sister George and Sister Agnesine. We kept Sister George busy visiting her old haunts and renewing acquaintances with her former pupils. We hope every Sister will make O'Neill a stopping place, no matter where she is going. We love company.

Rebecca Kane, who had been chosen president of the Senior Class, had to move with her parents to South Dakota. Rebecca has been a good president and we were sorry to lose her. John Hynes succeeded her in office.

The school office which for many years had been in the corridor was moved to the room at the head of the stairs. The furniture was moved and the room was ready for occupancy on January thirteenth.

All the activities in the Senior year had to be ahead this year on account of labor shortage. Therefore January found us measuring caps and gowns, ordering invitations, having pictures taken, and even rushing in the Junior-Senior banquet before the food rationing. The war touches even these things, and puts an unnaturalness about them.

On Thursday, January 14, the workmen finally finished the work in the old cloister and moved out. How happy we were to be back in our clean cells and to get the dirt and dust out of the cloister. Since July, we had been living in make-shift fashion. Not all the work is completed, but we can finish the woodwork in vacation. We are well satisfied with the repairs and the appearance of the cloister.

The Junior-Senior banquet was given in our dining room on January twentieth. Dona Gallagher, the toastmistress, took the theme of the "wind" and the "rain" and worked it into her introductory speeches. The pupils had a lovely banquet. After the toasts they went to the gym for an informal dance and later in the evening they were chaperoned to a theater party.

Near the end of January we noticed a disease among the children, which was called mumps at first, but it proved not to be mumps but swollen glands. The children were very sick. We learned later that this was also part of an epidemic passing over the country. It seems wars bring such things.

February

We had expected to have retreat for the high school at the close of the semester. However, Rev. Father Stroh, S.J., lost his voice and was a week late in coming to us. Our Blessed Mother probably wanted it that way, for retreat began on her feast, February second, and closed on the first Friday. It was a splendid retreat. The conduct of the children was unusually good. Father spoke clearly and simply. He fitted his stories and timed his jokes in a way that shows he knows how to handle young people. There is no doubt but that he did a great deal of good among the children. His Question Box in the evening was most interesting.

On the tenth of February the fourth grade entertained us with an assembly 'Too Many Flags'. The children showed the careful training Sr. Edmunda had given them and it is certain they know more about the flags of the colonies now than they did before.

The boarders celebrated Valentine's Day by a little party in the dining room and a dance in the upper corridor after supper. The corridor was decorated and each child received a valentine crown which Sr. Maxine had made for the occasion.

In the District Tournament held at Atkinson our team won in the first round but lost in the second which put us out of the tournament. Our team is composed chiefly of ninth grade boys and they lack endurance. They are gaining in experience and we hope they will be good players in a year or so.

March

Monsignor McNamara has a way of celebrating his birthday which is "different." He does not sit around waiting for presents. He comes over to the school and presents each child and each Sister with a pound box of candy. The children sing their good wishes to him and he thoroughly enjoys it. This year he added a free half day to his gift.

Gerry Greybiel who had been our athletic coach was called to the west coast, and on that account was obliged to leave us. The children of the school and especially the team wanted to show appreciation, so they invited him to the gym in order to present a gift and to give him a good cheer. The boys were sorry to see him go.

We could not have the usual kind of Mission Bazaar this year because of the difficulty in getting food and articles for the booths. We decided that a war bond would bring about as much money as we usually made for the Missions, so we conducted a raffle of a \$25 bond. The bond was won by a Junior girl and we made a good amount for the Missions.

The weather became exceedingly cold during the first days of March. On March 7 it was 24° below zero; bright clear weather, but very cold.

Sr. Maxine entered the drawing of Helen Adrian in the Art Contest conducted by the Scholastic magazine. Sister was eager to see the type of work sent in by other schools, so she was given permission to visit the display in Omaha. Our pupil won a citation and was awarded a certificate in the district. Her drawings were later sent to the National Contest in Pittsburg. The attendants at the Art display took Sister through room after room to see the different furnishings, china, and draperies, and explained that such a model room was frequently sold entirely to one person. The cost is in the thousands. The Art display and the whole trip was most instructive and encouraging.

Our St. Patrick's play was the "Wishing Well." The play was well done. The weather was a little milder, making it possible for a good crowd to attend. The stage setting was very pretty and the Fairy Dance was particularly good.

Sr. Flores and the music students attended the music clinic at Norfolk and found it helpful even though it was not just what we needed most. Our committee on music in this district seems to have felt the restrictions of rationing rather too keenly and they have thought that the matter of music would be more or less curtailed. Therefore the committee failed in organization and management and for that reason the clinic was not so good.

Representatives of the East and of the Midwest met in Chicago on March 23 for the Catholic Educational Convention. It was a great joy to meet our dear Sisters again, to hear news of the East and to exchange ideas. The speakers at the Convention urged the shortening of the grade school course to six years. Many agreed that this could be done; but when it came to changing the time of the high school and of the college, there was warm discussion. We shall probably continue our present set-up for some years. There were strong pleas for home making courses in our schools, and for retaining the classics. The subject of "Victory Corps" in the schools was viewed quite differently by different speakers. Dr. George Johnson seemed to disapprove.

April

April opened with a trip to Omaha to attend the Sodality Convention. The meetings were held in St. John's hall at Creighton. The subject was "Youth and Sacrifice". It did not take long for the

discussion to get started and portable microphones made it possible to hear the remarks clearly. The conduct of the children was excellent. Our group made the trip by riding two nights on the train and needless to say, sleep was the greatest need when we arrived back at the Academy.

Sr. Adeltrude picked up a germ somewhere and was very sick with erysipelas for a few days. Thanks to the sulfa drug, the germ was killed very soon, but Sister's face was in bad condition for some time.

During Vocation Week we had joint meetings of the three Sodalitys in order to discuss vocations. The discussions got lively and "out of many hearts, thoughts were revealed". It is a consolation to us as teachers to find out that our children know what is right and that our teaching has not been in vain. What the children do after they leave school is often disappointing, but at least we have taught them the truth.

Our committee in District III bungled again in its management of the Music Contest. The members of the committee were not interested in the contest and feared that on account of gas rationing there would not be schools enough taking part to warrant the expense.

The people of O'Neill, with Mr. George's help, had quite other thoughts. The people determined to have a festival, to invite schools in this district, and to raise funds for paying the judges by subscription if necessary. Twenty-three schools responded.

St. Mary's alone had 35 entries and succeeded in rating 15 superiors, 14 excellent and 6 goods. To everyone's satisfaction the members of the music committee were not re-elected so we have reason to think that the music activities will be better handled next year.

May

After her long illness, Sister Dolores finally gained strength enough to make the trip home and arrived here on May 2. We were all much surprised and very glad to see Sister looking so well. Her recovery seemed almost a miracle. She started to work in the office immediately, and enjoyed many a little visit with the pupils passing by.

The Seniors chose as their class play "Don't Take My Penny". It was given May 7. The pupils did very well, the crowd was large and we were well satisfied with the results both dramatically and financially.

On May 11 we had a snow storm. This has happened before in Nebraska, but it is unusual and it is not good for the crops. The snow was gone by May 13.

The girls of the music department gave a formal recital on May 13. The poor children were in agony and so were we, but the whole thing went well and it is good training for the children. The boys insisted on having a recital of their own. This one was agony for a few of the boys, but it was pure fun for most of the boys and for us. It was a rare treat to see the football players imitating the "Fairy Dance" of March 17. No fairies ever had such legs and such muscular arms as we saw that night!

From May 8 to May 28 the days whirled by in rapid succession, each filled with practicing, housecleaning, parties, picnics and of course school work. The Seniors were treated several times and entertained by the different classes. At the final assembly in the gym the music awards were distributed and then the children paid a farewell tribute to Sr. Dolores. They did not realize all that

Sister had meant to the school during all these years, but they tried to express their gratitude and appreciation in their own way. Immediately following this assembly we had our May Crowning and procession. The park forms an ideal setting for this beautiful ceremony, and this year the park was at its best. After the crowning the pupils marched in procession to Church for Benediction. We can always expect an especially good talk from Monsignor because he dearly loves our Blessed Mother.

The grade school closed on May 21. Monsignor thinks a great deal of the grade school and always enjoys the program and the distribution of the awards.

On Sunday, May 23 the Alumnae began the reunion by attending the 9:00 o'clock Mass and receiving Holy Communion. Breakfast was served at the Bakery and the Senior class was invited. There was no Alumnae banquet this year for obvious reasons. In the afternoon a lovely reception was given honoring St. Dolores. It was hard for Sister to go through this meeting, knowing that it would probably be the last time she would meet these girls for whom she had sacrificed her life. The Alumnae presented Sister with a beautiful watch.

On May 27 the Seniors met for the Class Night exercises. Outstanding in the program was the playing of Bert Brennan on the trombone and of Margaret Ryan on the clarinet. Both pupils had taken part in the Music Contest and their playing was excellent.

Graduation took place at 10:30 in the church. Afterwards there was the usual rush of picture-taking and packing and farewell until nearly six P.M. After that the house settled into the vacation calmness.

We were glad to welcome Sr. Bartholomew, who came to assist in the vacation school at Ewing. On Sunday evening the missionaries all left for Ewing, St. John's and Brunswick. In a way it is a vacation for the Sisters, but it is hard work and the conditions of living and teaching are far from ideal. We hope that eternity will show how much good has been done in these parishes.

June

The big work in June is to get the house cleaned. We had excellent help from the Sisters this year because not so many went out for vacation school. The music rooms and the corridor were fitted out with light colored new linoleum. The music rooms have been much easier to clean since the linoleum has been put down. The whole house was gone over quite thoroughly and that was a big job.

The departure for summer schools and for retreat came about the same time. Sisters Serafica and Ludgardis enjoyed a fine retreat at St. Francis Mission. Sisters Fides, Spes, Laurissa and Laurita went to Creighton. We had no end of difficulty getting rooms for them. Since the cadets have taken over Creighton there are no accommodations for Sisters there at all. Duchesne finally opened for Sisters and we were fortunate in getting room and board there. The Madams were grand to the Sisters, and the Sisters appreciated living in a convent with all its religious advantages.

Sister Adeltrude spent the summer in St. Benedicts; Sisters Flores and Xavier studied in Leavenworth, and Sister Leonita in Davenport.

During the summer there were only 12 of us at home. We changed the daily program to fit our small community and settled into a regular summer routine. Our recreations were most enjoyable because of the lovely stories we read during them. It was delightful to sit on the front steps after a hot day and listen to a good story. Sometimes we were joined by visitors who stopped to enjoy our nice cool

place. Sr. Eugene Biglin, O.S.B. spent a short restful vacation with us. We can all look back to last summer and recall most pleasant memories.

On June 15 Sisters Florence and Marina came for summer school work, and Sr. Agnesine came to join our community permanently. Both Sr. Florence and Sr. Marina did excellent work and by the end of the summer they had accomplished so much in Art and in Drawing that they were able to make a big display in the studio. Sister Maxine worked hard and enjoyed the progress they made.

On June 18 word came that Sr. Dolores and Sr. Ursula were to travel to the East. Sr. Dolores spent a few days in Sioux City for a final check up and was found to be in very good condition considering what she had been through. On June 29 Sr. Dolores and Sr. Ursula left for Stella. Sr. Dolores had completed twenty five years of teaching in St. Mary's; she had given the best years of her life to the school and there must be stored up in heaven a rich reward for her. Sr. Ursula had spent only a year at St. Mary's but that was long enough to show her generous heart and her hard working ability in school. The prayers and good wishes of all follow these Sisters into their new Province.

Our dining room had long needed repairs and this summer we succeeded in getting material such as we had used in the cloister. There was some difficulty in getting workmen but when they came it did not take long to finish the work. More light fixtures were installed, the woodwork was painted and new drapes were hung. The room is really most attractive now and is a great improvement.

A great storm arose on the evening of July 26. The lightening was exceedingly sharp and close. The tower of the Church was struck again by a flash that ripped off the slate and gave us all a thorough fright.

August

The month started out with very hot weather. The Sisters gradually returned from summer school making our refectory look natural again. But it was not for long.

On the second of August the changes came and our family began to scatter. Sisters Spes, Adeltrude and Serafica were all assigned to St. Francis Mission. Sr. Anthony was changed to Holy Rosary Mission. Their places were taken by Sisters Bruno, Libia, Jolenta and Teresa.

In the middle of this excitement we were surprised by a quick visit from Mother Elma, Sr. George and Sr. Mildred. Sr. Florence joined them when they left for Sioux City and also took part in the "back" inspection. We hope all the "backs" are much better and we hope, too, that many Sisters will have reason for stopping for a visit. We don't wish any "backs" on them, though.

Our retreat began on August 8 under the direction of Father J. G. O'Flaherty, S.J. It was his first retreat. He said he supposed we knew it. We did. For a few days Nebraska put on some of its very hottest weather to add to the penance of retreat. We lived through it and the retreat was good. Following the retreat rather suddenly we had weather almost cold enough for frost.

A little repair work was done during the closing days of August. The large sink had to be removed from the bathroom in the old cloister because it leaked and then the walls had to be painted again to cover the place where the sink had been.

An extra tray was needed in the children's dishwashing room, so that was put in; and finally the furniture in the social room was re-covered and "upholstered" with some of our old bedding. The room looks bright and cheerful again.

On August 29 the good news reached us that Mother Lidwina had been re-elected. We hastened to send our congratulations to her and the other members of the Council.

September

There was a great deal of canning done during this month. We had many "parties" of different kinds. At some we could "sample" and at others we did not want to. This was a hard month on the cooks. Everything came at once. God blessed us by sending some fine donations of fruit. The prices were so high we could not afford to buy so God took care.

Registration for the day pupils was held on September 6. There was not a noticeable decrease in the number of day pupils. The next day the boarders began to come in and we were swamped!

Many people had inquired about the school but had not said definitely that they were sending children. When all the children began to swarm in we did not know where to put them to sleep. We began to set up beds as fast as we could and finally made room for the twenty-one extra boarders. It was the girls' side that was so crowded. The dining room too was overflowing. We have had a number of applications since the opening of school but we cannot accommodate any more and we have begun to "brag" about our waiting list. The "Omaha" girls were outstanding for homesickness and long distance phone calls. It took about ten days to get some of the boarders into the spirit of school, and particularly of boarding school.

On September 10 Stella Mary Crowe left for Marycrest. Stella was graduated in May and is the representative of St. Mary's for 1943. Stella Wohlgemuth of New Mexico was already in Marycrest. She represents the class of 1942. May God give these girls the grace to persevere in His service. Our prayers are with them.

The first school dance was given on September 16. The purpose was to get acquainted and to initiate the Freshman class. The new ones took the initiation in a good spirit and had a lovely time at the dance.

The Sisters had been joking for some time about the "Vacant Chair" of the First Assistant. As one eye said to the other "There is something between us that smells". For a long time there had been no "smeller" on that chair. At length on September 17 word came that Sister Teresa was appointed First Assistant and since then she has been the "Smeller".

On September 23 we received a Red Cross letter from Mother Alphonse. The message has been sent to you and you have been as glad as we were to get work from "over there".

October

The events of this month centered around school activities. After clearing away all the reports to the State and to the County, we were ready for a change of work. The Juniors lead the change with a mock trial. One young lady had publicly and maliciously called another young lady a "Dumb-bell", whereupon the victim sued the aforesaid young lady for \$30,000 damage to health, social position, reputation, and scholastic standing. The trial was conducted in real form in the assembly in the

presence of pupils and friends. The arguments and the cross-examination brought out some rare fun. The accused finally was found guilty “whereupon” the students rush immediately to help the poor abused Junior to dispose of her \$30,000. Mr. Bill Froelich, who was present, thoroughly enjoyed the case and afterwards gave to the pupils his criticism on the conduct of the trial. The class asked him to tell them the “inside” story of the Al Capone trial, so he explained to them that Al Capone was caught in a “backward” charge. Capone had no bank account and no list of holdings for which he could be taxed, so the lawyers taxed him on the money he had spent. They could prove that he had spent the money, therefore he must have had it, and therefore he should have been paying income tax on it. Mr. Froelich said it was the first “backward” case in income tax history.

The second school dance in charge of the Juniors was a pleasant affair. Jim Golden, in one of his usual clown stunts, was the attraction of the evening.

October 13 was chosen as Scrap Day. After all the different drives that have been put on, there was not much left to gather up. The children hurried around with trucks and wagons, eager to do their part to end this terrible war. The day was windy and chilly. By evening a big pile of scrap had been gathered. As we did last year, the whole proceeds, about \$200, was given to the USO and to the Red Cross.

We were called upon to give an extra donation especially for our own boys in service, so we decided to charge a little more for the third school dance and donate the proceeds to this cause. The Sophomores took charge of this dance and gave a lovely evening to the whole school. No one complained of the extra charge since it was going to our own boys through the hands of Mr. Edward Gallagher.

In sports our team is still on the green, undeveloped side. The football showing was much better than last year in sensing the plays, team-work and endurance. We still need maturity and that can only come with time.

During October we had many chilly days which needed furnace heat to make the building warm enough for school. We hated to see the coal piles diminish because it is so hard to ship coal into this country. The strikes made us worry and wonder whether we would have to close school. Later in the month the weather warmed up and we were saved much expense.

November

The most important event this month was the visitation of dear Mother Erica. We were especially eager to see her this year after her trip to the East. We bombarded her with questions about this one and that one, about this place and that place until there was scarcely a person or a place left untalked about.

We could have used more recreations and could have asked many more questions if Mother had only stayed longer with us.

The Freshman class decided on formals for their pre-Advent social evening. There were thrills aplenty and excitement all over the house as the formals arrived and were admired. The Freshman class had a real orchestra and had garden decorations all around the gym. It was a lovely evening both in appearance and in entertainment.

Armistice Day was so unpleasant that we could not have our usual parade this year. A patriotic program was presented in the public school gym and then school was dismissed for the afternoon.

Our good workman, Frank Stutz, died on November 16. He had been ailing for some time and had gone to the hospital in September. He was ready to come home the afternoon he died. He had kidney trouble and got a sudden heart attack. He was dead within a few minutes. We miss him very much. He was a faithful worker, a good man, and an excellent gardener.

The Cecilia program was an operetta "Jeannie". The stage was really a picture; the acting was good, and the singing showed careful training. Since the audience is made up chiefly of fond parents and relatives, it was an appreciative audience. We were impressed by the whole hearted response of the public school faculty and students, which shows that the good feeling which existed under Mr. Grill is still continuing.

On the last day of November, Father Hallaron, S.J. of St. Louis opened the retreat for the students. Father was experienced in handling young people and gave them a good retreat. One point he made clear: high school pupils are not adults and should not attend A2 shows. We have had many arguments as to when students become adults. Father argued that the government does not consider high school children adults, and that the very purpose of the listing of plays is to protect youth of high school age. He stressed loyalty to the mind of the Church in such matters as attendance of A2 shows, going to shows during Advent, etc. He was strict, but well liked.

December

The retreat served as a splendid preparation of the Sodality reception which was held on December 7. There were thirty-two candidates. The whole student body assembled in the chapel for the singing of the Office of the Blessed Virgin. The candidate girls wore formals and veils; the boys wore their good suits. Father Brick gave an explanation of the beautiful feast and then received the candidates into the Sodality.

The ceremony was closed with Benediction and the singing of Holy God, after which the students gathered in the assembly for a treat. The reception was solemn and inspiring, simple yet beautiful. May Our Lady bless these young people and keep them pure.

In spite of colds, coughs, headaches and pains, Nicholas found us all able to partake in his fun. The good Saint had a great deal of trouble locating a few useful gifts for us because nearly everything we wanted was marked "not available". As usual, the middle table was the most attractive and when it drew near to the time for "grabbins" some of the "old" Sisters parked chairs right beside the table and sat and sat until the race began. Most of our community belongs to the "old Sisters" since even those at the "cat's table" are already wearing bi-focals. The next table up have bi-focals and false teeth; those at the head table have bi-focals, false teeth and stiff knees. It's great to be old!

As soon as possible after December 8, the students begin to decorate the classrooms for Christmas. There is a happy spirit of rivalry and much visiting to see what others are doing. We did not expect to have trees this year, but we have them. The windows have scenes painted on them; the blackboards are decorated; the gifts are being placed under the trees and there is a happy spirit throughout the school.

Looking back over the year we can think of many, many things for which to thank our good God. The people of O'Neill have been most generous to us with donations of money and food. It would really be hard at times to make ends meet but Our Lord has provided. We have been spared from serious sickness throughout the year; our enrollment among the boarders has increased almost beyond

capacity; God has blessed the farmers with crops and cattle so that children can be sent to school; our park has been a great source of beauty and joy for us; we have had many refreshing pleasant recreations spent in reading delightful stories; visiting priests have given us a chance to assist at many extra Masses; many children were instructed and prepared for their confession and their First Holy Communion; the interior of our old cloister has been made to look more monastic and it is much cleaner and warmer; the children have made progress in their studies, in Art, and in Music, so that our school has received public recognition in these different fields; our boys who have been called to service have stood well among the other students in the Army training classes; we have seen many a gorgeous sunset that only God could make; we have the night sky brilliant with stars, and the planets standing out in glory; and no where in the world is there so much sky as in Nebraska. Of course there is another side to our memories also, but you are all as well acquainted with that side as we are, and you don't like to dwell on that side either, so we shall close the pages of our memory book, both pleasant and unpleasant, and leave all in the hands of our good God Who will show us the worth of it all in eternity.

Santa Claus will come on December 17 with a treat for each child; there will be a free movie for all; the pupils will assemble in the classrooms on the 22nd to distribute gifts; there will be the Christmas operetta in the afternoon and evening and then we shall call it year. In the community we have planned a pleasant vacation of Franciscan joys. A few of us may have to be absent for "interior" repairs during these days, but we hope it won't take long. We are looking forward to these days of rest, letters, and our retreat on the last day. We have been able to secure the services of a priest for this day of grace and hope to bring the year to a peaceful close. We offer best wishes to dear Mother Erica and to each Sister for a peaceful Christmas and a blessed New year.

Sisters

Mother Virginia

Sister Teresa

Sister Brigid

Sister Edmunda

Sister Bruno

Sister Libia

Sister Maxine

Sister Electa

Sister Jolenta

Sister Fides

1944 - "Wim, Wigor, and Witality"

Instead of celebrating the beginning of the New Year in the usual fashion, Sister Laurissa took a different way. After suffering for a long time, she finally had an examination which revealed abdominal tumors. These were removed the day before New Year's, so that on the first, Sister was really not feeling very well. The operation was successful to such an extent that Sister was back in school just one month after the operation. It was an alarming way to begin the year, but Sister's splendid come-back gave us much to be grateful for.

On the second of January Mr. Hugh Birmingham called at the Academy to leave a check for one thousand dollars. He established the Birmingham Trust Fund to be used for the education of deserving pupils. The fund will be increased and is to be administered by St. Mary's Corporation. This fund should be of real benefit to some of the poorer children from this prairie land.

Classes re-opened on January third. We had thinned out the boarders by sending home three undesirables, but we found four new ones waiting to get in when school opened. Our classes are crowded and our dining room is crowded, and yet we do not like to refuse children who may never have another chance for religious instruction.

During January we received the good news that the State would allow full credit for Religion if it were taught full periods as any other subject is taught. This point was gained chiefly through the work of the Jesuit Fathers at Creighton. Realizing that the State Department has long been anti-Catholic, we hailed the news with no little joy.

The seventh and eighth grade pupils are so full of "wim, wigor, and witality" that it has to find an outlet. They had proposed several outlandish ways of entertainment but were finally persuaded to let out their energy on a food sale. And they really sold food! Much of it they bought for themselves and ate it immediately. At the end of the recess they had cleared over twenty seven dollars for the missions.

An old building is in constant need of repairs as everyone knows. This time it was the refectory, the scullery, and the corridor near the chapel that had to be done over. The walls have been covered with Nu-Wood planking in the shades of tan. The corridor and the rooms are far warmer, and are quieter since the walls are covered, and the corridor near the refectory looks much larger and wider. We had to make the best of the affairs in the study room while these repairs were being made, and it was a real joy to move back into what seemed a brand new refectory.

On January 22 we received word that Mother Erica had an appendectomy. That was a real shock. We prayed and offered Masses for her and were all happy to hear of her recovery.

FEBRUARY

In the Holt County Tournament our basketball team did not do so well. The boys are still young for a heavy schedule and in the finals they took third place. No one felt proud of that trophy and the boys got the "cold shoulder" from the whole school. That action on the part of the school had the desired effect. The boys worked harder than ever and put forth such a mighty effort that they won the District Tournament with glory.

"Tis an ill wind that blows no good." On February 9 we had a wind full to the brim with heavy snow and in the midst of the storm came Father Stroh, S. J. on his way home from Omaha. He was driving, and could not venture beyond O'Neill because all the roads were blocked with snow. That is the

reason we were blessed for two days with an extra Mass and even a conference, which is a real treat for us. The students were all glad to see Father again after the fine Retreat he had last year.

The Sodality conference in Omaha is a great event in the high school life of our students. This year fifteen Sodalists in care of Sister Teresa and Sister Electa made the trip on the "Galloping Goose" (Northwestern passenger train) to Omaha. The pupils spent the day at Creighton University except for the time they took out to do some Spring shopping. On the Monday following the conference our Sodalities had a joint meeting during which the highlights of the conference and of the trip were reviewed for the benefit of the whole school. One student declared emphatically that the "Galloping Goose" gives each passenger 276 free bounces between here and Omaha, and that a passenger travels almost as far up and down as he does forward in making the trip.

Many of our children have never seen a silent movie. We have a sixteen millimeter projector, so we rented some old time comedies and gave a show for the children. The laughing could be heard all over school. The pictures, that would otherwise have been considered old fashioned and no good, gave the children a real happy surprise.

MARCH

Monsignor's birthday has to be celebrated with a treat, rations or not rations. However he did it, Monsignor did not disappoint the children. On his birthday he came around with an extraordinary treat this year and enjoyed being "sung at". The children enjoyed the treat and the free afternoon.

A music convention was held in St. Louis on March 2 and 3, for the Catholic Music Educators of the United States. It was a first meeting of this new organization, and its purpose was to arouse anew the interest in CATHOLIC music. The speakers brought out the fact that in most schools there is a faculty and a music teacher; that the music teacher is often just someone who has at one time or another studied music, and therefore she is given charge not only of the music lessons, but also the school singing, the church singing, frequently the entertainments of the school, in addition to her regular school work! Much blame for poor church singing was placed on the fact that church singing is not taught well enough in the grade schools. During the convention some splendid demonstrations were given so that we could actually see how church singing and choral singing can be taught. In the old basilica of St. John, the pupils of the parish schools sang the Mass acapella. It was beautiful. The National Catholic Music Educators' convention was in session at the same time and in the same building as the National Music Educators' convention. The Catholic members had access to all the sessions of the National and this was a great advantage because the National is an old organization and it is financially able to hire the best talent for demonstrations. Everyone felt that the convention had to be well worthwhile.

For our Red Cross drive we took the idea of repeating some old fashioned movies that the children had liked earlier in the year. The children were ready to pay the price just to get out of school. We gathered fifty three dollars for the Red Cross, and had a good time doing it.

Our St. Patrick's play was given on the afternoon and evening of March 16. The seventeenth was free and since there was to be a music clinic on Monday, many of the boarders took advantage of the long weekend and spent the four days at home. The St. Patrick's play went off well in the hands of the grade school and gave a great deal of pleasure to the children and to their parents.

On Monday, March 20, a music clinic was held in O'Neill. Our auditorium was crowded from eight o'clock in the morning until eight o'clock at night. The public school was just as busy and the last band finished about ten o'clock. We felt that the criticisms were most fair and constructive and the children were encouraged for further effort in preparation for the music contest.

A strange thing happened on Thursday, March 23. Fr. Brick had been away for a few days and there had been no Mass in our chapel. When he returned he did not consecrate any hosts and for the first time in many years the Blessed Sacrament was not present in our convent. It was a strange, strange feeling and our Lord surely received a warm welcome at the consecration of the Mass the next day.

APRIL

The Senior class play had to be postponed on account of sickness among the seniors. By April 3 all were well enough to put on the play and it was given both afternoon and evening. In spite of sickness the children did well and the play was labeled a success in every way.

School closed Wednesday of Holy Week at 3:05. Only three girls remained here for the Easter vacation, and they were old enough to care for themselves. The Sisters were free from surveillance and could devote extra time to prayer and preparation for Easter.

Easter was not a nice spring day this year. It was rather cold and cloudy all day. We did not mind because there was Easter sunshine in the house and we were enjoying a very pleasant vacation.

School re-opened on Easter Tuesday. We were fearing measles and whooping cough, and worried that cold weather would spoil the Music Contest. The whole week was spent in putting the final touches on the music for the contest.

Friday, April 14, was a cold, rainy day. The weather certainly did not add to the spirit of the contest. A few of the pupils could not get here. We sure did not miss them because we were very crowded all day long, and the last number was not finished at the public school until about 9:30 p.m. Although we won more Superior ratings than any other school we did not feel satisfied with the results. The dissatisfaction was general among the schools because the judge seemed to be just a rather pessimistic type. In his criticisms he made the same suggestion for nearly every contestant, that is, that some other song or chorus be sung than the one chosen. He used such expressions as "hackneyed" over and over, and then suggested a song that was just as hackneyed as the one chosen. We have heard since that a request was sent to the Board that he not be appointed judge again, probably because he is too "hackneyed." Our Band played "On the Trail" which is the theme song of the Phillip Morris radio program. You have all seen pictures of "Johnny" and you have probably heard him "call for Phillip Morris." While our band was playing, Mr. George had Mary Ellen Froelich dressed as "Johnny" and during a certain part of the music she walked across the balcony while being spotted by the spot light and "called for Phillip Morris." It was an attractive "stunt" that took well with the audience.

While we were enjoying the music a terrible tragedy was taking place a few miles north of us. A mother was ironing with a gasoline iron. You know what happened next. The house burned to the ground; four of the children burned to death; the mother and two other children were horribly burned and cut in trying to save the four children. The mother's sister is a Franciscan nurse in the Mayo clinic. She came as soon as possible to help care for the family. The Red Cross helped get clothes and

reestablish the home. Sister Domaris made her headquarters here while the burned ones were in the hospital. The bones of the four children were put in one coffin and buried in one grave. It was a terrible accident.

In union with many schools of Nebraska we were called upon to work for the erection of the Children's Hospital. Our task was to sell tickets to a movie. We did not have any trouble since it meant time for our school.

On April 24, Mr. Kettler started work on the entrances. The old gray sheds had done their duty and needed to be replaced. The old sheds were torn down and were replaced by new brick entrances which add greatly to the appearance of the front of the building.

The students of the Norfolk Junior College entertained with a musical program in the public school gym. Everyone noted the modest, becoming clothes and the pleasing manners of this group of young people. At the close of the program a sigh of disappointment was heard throughout the audience. We rejoiced at this because, since the program consisted of classical music only, we felt that the musical training of our children really has cultivated their taste a bit, and the sigh was given because the program was not longer.

MAY

Our Lady's month opened with one of the most beautiful days imagined. "What is so rare as a day in June" except a perfect day in May! Everyone who could move a creaking joint moved it and went outside. Spring time in the Rockies can't be compared with spring time on the prairies. The air was like new wine to the veins.

During this month there were unusually heavy rains. The water came through between the brick of the north wall in the Academy. We can scarcely dare to complain when we heard how much others had to suffer on account of rain and floods. The tracks were washed out and for days there no trains. Mail got here by truck if it came at all. Bridges were washed away, dams broke, and roads were torn out. Usually there is a shortage of rain in Nebraska, but this year is exceptional. For days at a time we did not see the sun and the cold was such that we had to keep fire in the furnace all the time.

In spite of the rain we had the music recitals, the exhibit and all the other things that go with the close of school. The boys gave a "style" show as a diversion in their program. It was good.

The exhibit was put up in each class room this year instead of all in one room. There was fine work. The children were proud to bring their parents to the class rooms and show off their work. The special exhibit was put up in the Art room and attracted many visitors.

The May procession was beautiful. All the high school girls were in formals; the graduates wore their cap and gowns. Rose Mary Ryan had been chosen May Queen at the Spring Formal dance. The day of the procession was another of those rare May days. Our park is a perfect setting for this ceremony. It is our hope that the picture of this scene will be engraved on the souls of the children and that in future struggles the memory will be a source of strength to them.

The Juniors really out-classed any other group in the way they carried out the Junior-Senior Banquet. "May blossoms" was the theme. The gym was actually a bower of May blossoms (paper, of course) and it....lot of work and planning to decorated that large room so well. Our dining room is a lovely place for small banquets since it has been remodeled and it was beautiful for this banquet.

Just before the banquet and during the evening rain fell in torrents. We learned next morning that there was a big flood in Norfolk. The tracks were washed out and our train and mail service was disrupted for days. As much as we dislike the Galloping Goose we surely missed it when it stopped running.

On May 14 the children made their First Holy Communion. Although word had come the previous day, we did not tell Sister Leonita of the serious illness of her father until she was finished with the First Communion class. She left immediately for Minot and had the consolation of being with her father at his death.

A large number of the Alumnae members wanted a banquet this year in spite of the rationing and travel restrictions. They appointed May 21 as the day and turned out in a good sized crowd to celebrate. There were more at Communion and at the hotel for breakfast than usual. The banquet was a 6:00 in the gym. Bert Brennan and one soldier were the only boys present. Bert has since then received his appointment to West Point. Our Alumnae boys and girls are scattered over the globe, but everywhere not forgotten by the "home-front" on the occasion of the reunion. Masses are being offered for the living and for the deceased members of the Association.

The grade school had closing exercises on May 23. Monsignor always enjoys the program presented by the grade school children and gives them a nice talk. Class night for the high school graduates was on May 25. The next morning at 10:00 the Seniors received their diplomas in Church and then went through the "sacred" tradition of pulling the fire gong as many times as there are seniors in the class. By noon the house was practically empty.

The vacation schools opened on Monday, May 29. Sister Fides and Sister Agnesine went to Ewing for two weeks while Sister Jolenta and Sister Leonita took care of St. John's. Father Beyersdorfer did an unusual thing this year is closing his school on Corpus Christi, a Thursday, instead of a Sunday. The Sisters were glad for the extra day so badly needed in preparation for the departure for college.

Our summer students were scattered in six schools early in June. Sister Teresa went to Loras College, Dubuque; Sister Fides, Sister Laurissa, and Sister Laurita went to Creighton, Omaha; Sister Electa went to Denver University; Sister Xavier and Sister Flores went to Kansas; and Sister Agnesine went to Holy Rosary Mission. Sister Jolenta and Sister Leonita returned to Davenport, and soon after their departure, Sister Margaret went to Mary crest for final vows. That left us with nine Sisters at home whose "average" age was about sixty. We could observe the precept of Thomas a Kempis very well in not associating with young people!

The remodeling of the lower corridor started on May 31. It was very difficult to get any help and the work dragged on. Everyone is glad to have the repairs made but the dragging on and the difficulty of getting help is hard. We did as much of the work as we could ourselves, but even then the work went slowly.

JUNE

We were shocked to hear of the big invasion of Europe on June 6. Many of our boys must have been there. We joined with everyone else in offering prayers for a speedy end of the fighting and a lasting peace for the world.

In the meantime much cleaning had been done in the house. This is an immense house to keep in order, but willing hearts and hands made all go well. A great part of the work was finished before the Sisters left for college. So of the cleaning had to be postponed until after the repairs were finished.

We had hoped and prayed that the covering for the Sanctuary floor would be put on before the feast of the Sacred Heart. The floods were so bad and help was so scarce that we almost have up hope. On the feast of St. Anthony the men came and worked until 10:00 that night and all the next day. By evening the floor was finished. It looks beautiful. Monsignor came over about 8:30 p.m. to see how it looked and he was much pleased. On the feast of the Sacred Heart we were glad to have Exposition in our lovely sanctuary.

One of our fervent prayers was answered when Bert Brennan received his appointment to West Point. Bert had been away at preparatory school in Washington all year studying hard to get ready for the final test. He passed the tests and the physical examinations for both the Navy and the Army. His heart was set on the Army because so many of his relatives on both sides of the family are West Point men. His Navy appointment came first and as the days slipped by there seemed to be less and less hope for West Point. Bert waited until almost the last day and then started for Chicago still hoping and praying that the West Point notice would come. He was in Chicago when at last the message came. I think there were no happier people in the United States than the Brennans. They phoned to Bert in Chicago and immediately he changed his course from Washington to New York. His letters are full of the great joy his having in the realization of his dream. It took many prayers and many a hard getting up for Mass to win his goal, but he is not sorry now. If he shows the same determination and prayerful attitude throughout life he should make a good soldier.

Mr. and Mrs. Hargarten, Father Hargarten, Mr. and Mrs. Schneider were welcome visitors to see the Sisters, Sister Agnesine, Sister Ludgardis and Sister Margaret.

Some of our Second and Third year boys went to work on the railroad during vacation. These boys were at first in Omaha in the stockyard district. At home these boys cannot even get their own mail and here they were cleaning dirty cattle cars for the railroad! Of course the idea is to work up strength for football and basketball. They were soon transferred from that dirty job to another job in Winnebago, Wisconsin. Here they were with a group of fifty high school boys. They said they had "swell eats" and slept in converted coaches. The work was hard but when the boys called on us they were looking fine; they were brown and clean and ready for more work. We should have a good time this year.

JULY

It was a good thing we had not planned any big festivity for the Fourth. There was rain all day. Since there was no celebration in town the men worked on the repairs all day. In the evening we enjoyed a little movie on our silent machine. The pictures are silent, but we are not. There is a running commentary all during the show.

The whole town was shocked to learn of the death of Peter Duffy. Pete had seemed such a part of the town that no one could realize he was gone. His funeral drew friends from as far as Norfolk and Valentine. He needed no close relatives to care for him. The whole county turned out to honor a man who had won the respect of all.

God blessed our little garden and gave us a fine crop of beans. We got far more than we expected. And we had very good cucumbers. There was a battle royal between us and the robins over the lettuce and the robins won out. We got very little lettuce from our garden. The grasshoppers were bad for a short time.

The workmen finally left the house and we got cleaned up at long last. We should be grateful that we got workers at all, but we are still more grateful that they are gone. The lower corridor and the entrances look lovely.

We wonder if it was cold everywhere as it was here during July. We needed blankets and would almost have enjoyed steam heat.

Mother Erica kindly sent us two baskets of lovely cherries, so we had a cherry recreation as well as bean recreations. Fruit is scarce here and we were most grateful for the cherries. If we were only near Marycrest!

At the end of July the sisters began arriving back from summer school. Our Retreat opened August 8 and it wasn't long after that, immediately after, came the changes. Many of us are reading the Chimes in new homes but they are God's homes and we are continuing our work for Him.

AUGUST

It was First Friday when the letter with the changes arrived. Sister Terese was assigned to Holy Rosary Mission, Sister Loretta to St. Francis; Sister Libia to Alliance.

Our Retreat began as scheduled with the addition of a high, hot south wind. The heat kept pace with the retreat and by the time we got to "hell" we were thoroughly hot. Sister Claire and Sister Perpetua came from the Alliance Hospital to make the Retreat with us, and Sister Annella came from St. Francis. Sister Elenius came from Sioux City after her operation and spent a month with us before returning to Holy Rosary Mission.

The Retreat left all in a spirit of resignation and sacrifice so that when the call came for Mother Virginia to leave St. Mary's, we were able to say a loving Fiat. Mother left devoted hearts behind her - those of her Sisters who will always hold her in grateful remembrance; those of the Alumnae and people of O'Neill who appreciate her ability and worth. The community was motherless only one day when Mother Elma arrived from Alliance to take up where Mother Virginia left off. Sister Antonella accompanied Mother Elma as is Principal at St. Mary's.

Getting acquainted was a simple matter because parties seemed the fashion for days on end. It was canning season, and there were peach parties, pear parties, apple parties, carrot parties, and even a rhubarb party.

School, however, was looming ahead, and there was other getting acquainted to do. Mr. Andersen, public school Superintendent, made a call. Mr. George reported for a handshake and instructions. And then came...

SEPTEMBER

The month opened with separate registration days for two high school divisions, and then for the boarders. September 5 was official opening date with regular classes. Hardly had studies been

resumed when salesmen made their calls. Within the first six weeks, orders had been completed for senior and junior class rings, announcements, diplomas, and caps and gowns.

The large boarder enrollment made it imperative to provide a study hall with accommodations for all. The hall between the assembly and the cloak room was removed, and desks were ordered. Painters could not be secured until later, but when all was in readiness, and fluorescent lights had been installed, we had an ideal study hall. Open shelves for reference books will complete the picture. The day pupil girls will have lockers installed in the short corridor between the senior and sophomore classrooms.

In the last week of September came Father P.E. Schneider, the diocesan superintendent of schools. He visited all the classes and held a conference with the teachers. He seemed pleased with the welcome he received and with the work the Sisters are doing.

The evening of that day was made memorable in the history of St. Mary's because it brought the news of Ann Harty's fatal injury and death. No carelessness, no guilt in this automobile accident, just a speedy call to Heaven of an innocent soul, well-loved in school, in her home, in the entire community. A deep impression was made upon the student body, and Ann's class, the juniors, look to her now as a model as well as a mediator.

A teen-age canteen project for the entertainment of mixed groups of young people met with the disapproval of Monsignor McNamara. The St. Mary's students, who had taken the lead in initiating the project, dropped it at once. They suffered some taunting from public school students, but they held their ground proudly. The idea is being realized only slowly now, and may even die but, because of the withdrawal of our students and the financial support of the parents.

The social life of St. Mary's students is taken care of under our own auspices and supervision. School socials are held at least once a month except during Advent and Lent. The boarders frequently attend A-1 movies. Sodality life has its social aspects. Music, dramatics, and athletics leave little leisure time for real students.

OCTOBER

This month marked the end of the first six weeks period; it brought us glory with a victorious football team; and it saw scholastic achievement.

The first of several large scale paper drives gave the grades an outlet for their patriotic energy.

Sister Marie took "time out" for a major operation at St. Vincent's in Sioux City. Her many substitutes were happy to see her back at her work in some three weeks time.

Early in the month there was a local teachers' institute which the St. Mary's elementary teachers attended. The high school teachers went to the Norfolk convention, as in previous years, and the boarders had a four day month end.

A new type of fire extinguisher, as simple to use as a hand grenade, was installed throughout the building.

Our dear Mother Erica made a stop-over visit on her way to St. Francis Mission. It was a welcome surprise, and we hope for more like them.

Sister Mildred and Sister Elenius paid us a hurried visit on their way to and from Sioux City. It is grand to have guests from our other houses. It makes the prairie seem less expansive and lonely.

The sale of tuberculosis seals brought in about a hundred dollars, half of which remains in the school to be used for health purposes.

Armistice Day came on a Saturday but our weekend population of boarders and day students took part in a parade and program sponsored by O'Neill's American Legion. The public school and both bands also participated.

The seventh and eighth grades sponsored a food sale for the Missions and they netted a substantial sum.

The music department put on an operetta entitled "Her Royal Highness, Miss Jones" on November 23. It was successful in every way.

While other people's interests were directed first here and then there, the boys concentrated on football. As a result they enjoyed an undefeated season and won rank in the first ten State teams. This was the first time that O'Neill enjoyed such and honor, and it was won by Richard Clark, grand nephew of Sister Alma of St. Francis Mission.

DECEMBER

School re-opened after a fifth Thursday Thanksgiving, on December 4. There was just time for a triduum in honor of our Immaculate Mother before the reception of candidates into the Sodality. Forty-seven new members were received on December 6.

On December 7, a musical group of ten students with Sisters Flores and Agnesine traveled to North Platte to the state music clinic. They appeared with groups of 400 or more in chorus work, directed by Noble Cain and others equally well known in music circles. The experience should have its effect in the further musical efforts of the pupils.

Basketball season opened with great promise- three victories including Sacred Heart, Norfolk, and Holy Trinity in Hartington. But the most important game in the first half of the season, that with St. Joseph, Atkinson, left us trailing with a 23 to 11 score. The boys accepted this defeat as a challenge and were willing to work harder than ever to attain success.

Several of these same boys were the male stars in the Junior class play given on December 20. This event was definitely a success. It was a student project, directed entirely by a class officer, William Froelich. The play was "An Old Fashioned Mother" and it took well with the public.

With a final week of activities such as a free movie, the coming of Santa Claus, and the classroom parties, school was dismissed for the holidays on December 22. On that day as well we heard from Mother Alphonse and from Reverend Mother, and all hearts were extra grateful during the blessed Christmas season for God's fruitful providence in caring for Mother Magdalen's daughters in the past year.

On December 23, the newly ordained Father Francis Price said his first private Mass in our chapel and gave us the priestly blessing. The first Solemn High Mass was sung in the parish church on December 28.

1945 - "Wartime Considerations"

The period closing the story of 1944 was a day of recollection conducted by the Reverend Francis Friedel from Trinity College in Sioux City. Father had asked for a biography of Mother Magdalen some days before his arrival, and as a result our year end was a renewal of Mother Magdalen's special type of Franciscan living. It struck the keynote of the New Year.

After a restful vacation, the convent quiet gave way to the echoes of children's voices, and school life was resumed. Father Price, who had spent the Christmas holidays and the first days of his priestly service with us, spoke to the seniors and juniors on the subject of religious vocations, recruiting as it were, before he took up his duties at St. Bridget's Parish in Omaha.

Midyear in most schools means examinations. It meant more to us. There came an epidemic of mumps and chicken pox, and the examination schedule had to bear adjustments. The students' retreat opened the new semester and few missed those golden days of spiritual renewal. One of the basketball fatalities hobbled about on crutches but he made the retreat. The exercises were conducted by the Reverend Pacificus Kennedy, OFM.

Basketball had its bright spots as well as its shadows though they were quite evenly balanced. If we might win two and lose one, the next series would find us losing two and winning one. Football stars are no basketball stars, we discovered. The elementary cagers won third place in the County Tournament, and helped to keep St. Mary's on the map.

February made itself remembered for the arrival of sixty desks and chairs for the new assembly study hall. This room is beautiful, and will accommodate the three upper classes during school hours, and the boarders in the evening. It eliminates the need of an extra classroom for boarders' study.

February 10 was a red letter day for Nebraska and Iowa Sodalists. A student convention was held in Omaha, with Father Lord piloting it. St. Mary's sent five delegates and the Sodality moderators, Sisters Electa and Antonella. The students reported their experiences and the benefits derived to the home sodality at a general meeting on the following Monday.

The Normal Trainers under the leadership of Sister Laurita sponsored a novel pre-Lenten social. It had a Valentine theme, featured our Lady as Queen of Hearts, but held an election for student king and queen of hearts. A week later, Mother Emma took over the citadel of St. Mary's and her reign continued for five short days. It was a real joy and was profitable while it lasted. We know now why such pleasant occasions are called visitations. Like too many of life's joys they are rare, and pass swiftly.

Sister Adeltrude of St. Francis came as a harbinger of spring; but she merely made the "pause that refreshes" on her journey to a Sioux City hospital. On her way back she had a longer wait, and we were glad to use her in classroom and study hall. If regulars must get sick, it is always well to do so when a visitor is waiting over, especially if the visitor is as capable as Sister Adeltrude is.

Springtime wrought changes other than the transformation of nature. It meant the end of visitation, the Superiors' retreat at Marycrest, the Chapter, and subsequent appointments. Then came the word that Mother Elma was to leave us after a short stay of eight months. It was an abrupt right about face for Mother to prepare for hospital administration, and a real sacrifice for the Sisters.

In the scholastic field events were moving with modern speed. Navy recruiters came from Norfolk to discuss the Naval training program with our seventeen year olds. These Navy men, all unknowingly, opened vocation week, a week of prayer and consideration. Prayer and study were not alone the occupation of that week. Good hard work, the finishing touches to the St. Patrick's Day program, went along for good measure. The program was predominantly grade work, and these young starlets shone brightly on March 16. The proceeds, also most satisfying, were used to purchase a Tabernacle for the new St. Mary's Hospital in Scottsbluff. This venture was only an appetizer in the delicious art of entertaining. Contest time was just around the corner, and musical eliminations were held before Easter. Visiting judges were invited, and both St. Mary's and O'Neill High received encouragement and commendation.

Red Cross needs made themselves felt, and before St. Mary's had time to consider a money raising project, Mr. Anderson, city superintendent of schools, made an offer. His teachers had been working on declamation with the hope of entering contestants in the District III Contest. The Contest was cancelled, and O'Neill High was staging a demonstration of the would-be contestants' work. Would St. Mary's student body attend, and offer the small scale box office receipts to the Red Cross as a joint contribution from both schools? It was generous on Mr. Anderson's part, and we attended one hundred percent.

April opened with farewells and welcomes. Mother Elma hurried to her new destination in Minot, with Sister Laurissa, who this time responded to the title of provincial travelers' aid, accompanying Mother as far as Omaha. Mother Immaculata arrived the next day to take over during the busiest season of the school year. Our welcome to her held just a little sympathy but Mother showed that it was superfluous, and she even seems to enjoy the busy activity of boarding school routine.

Lieutenant Madeline Ullon, of St. Mary's Alumnae, an army nurse with a thirty month internment in a Japanese prison camp in Manila to her record, was feted by her sister alumnae at St. Mary's on April 8. Later, Lieutenant Ullon visited the Sisters and boarders and spoke rather informally of her memorable, though not so pleasant, experiences at Santo Tomas. There was one point upon which Madeline was extremely reticent. When asked if the Japanese guards mistreated the internees, she always answered, "We do not speak about that." She fairly glowed with ardor when speaking of the work of the priests interned with them, the difficulties under which Holy Mass was celebrated, and the eagerness of the Catholic internees to receive Holy Communion under the form of the tiniest particles.

Because the Navy was beckoning to the senior boys and one of them actually received his call in April, the Junior-Senior banquet was held a few days after Easter. Everyone was there, but it was the last social gathering of the school year for some. The St. Mary's Alumnae gave the school athletes and their coaches a down town dinner the following week.

And then came the Music Contest. This is the greatest inter-scholastic event of the year. Representatives from fifteen to twenty schools in the district compete for placement, or rating. Judges came from large music schools, from Iowa, South Dakota, and Nebraska. They are specialists in their field of music either vocal or instrumental. Both O'Neill High and St. Mary's played host to hundreds of contestants, and of course, classes were suspended for the two days. The western conference held no music contest this year, so the St. Agnes group of twenty some came all the way from Alliance to feature in our contest, and to carry off honors. Mother Virginia and Sister Constance accompanied the contestants, and that made the St. Agnes representatives doubly welcome. The contacts thus established are stimulating, and it was remarkable (by some even unpleasantly remarked) that the two Catholic schools represented carried home more than a fair share of superior ratings.

During these colorful days, Mrs. Edward Johnson, of Omaha, had an opportunity to add to the festivity by visiting with two of her sisters at the same time, Sister Laurissa and Sister Constance.

May time brought activities faster almost than we were prepared to meet them. May third was the date set for the senior play, "Lady Spitfire," and that called for strenuous practice. A contest was staged in selling tickets. Sister Electa's and Sister Xavier's classes won the prizes.

First Communion was another big event, especially for the 20 little girls and 12 boys that called it the great day of their lives. It was held on the first Sunday in May.

Sister Edmunda's music pupils held a recital early in May and demonstrated their knowledge and skill to worshipping parents and to their friends. Sister takes special interest in beginners, and home cooperation is strongest with them. Sister Flores' pupils omitted the recital because they had had so many opportunities for display during the school year. They were satisfied with a special assembly at which Mr. George awarded the certificates won during the music contest.

V-E was celebrated by a school holy hour held in the parish church. Our chapel expands to a one hundred twenty capacity; but a school group of three hundred fifty must go elsewhere for corporate prayer. After the holy hour of thanksgiving, school was dismissed for the entire next day.

The faculty, in consideration of war time conditions, decided against school or class outings that required transportations conveniences. Instead, the children could choose between a picnic at home or a free day. All chose the free day, and decided on the day following Ascension Thursday. That gave everyone a long weekend, and even long distance boarders found it worthwhile to go home.

On May 20, the Alumnae held their annual business meeting and banquet. The new officers for the next two years are Mrs. Hugh Birmingham, president; Mrs. Thomas Green, secretary, and Mary Ann Janousek, treasurer. While St. Mary's Alumnae was enjoying this reunion, somewhere on the island of Leyte on that same day, one of our graduates was making the supreme sacrifice. When weeks later, the Harty's received the sad news of Michael's death, it was noted that his final battle was fought on May 20.

An important visitor during these final days was Mrs. Anton Hager, mother of Sister Leonita, who was here from Minot.

Monday, May 21, saw the O'Neill High School class night to which our group was invited. May 22 was the closing day for our own elementary school. This was held in the Academy Assembly this year, and though this event is of special significance to parents and many of them are in attendance, the assembly was large enough to accommodate them all. Senior class night took place on Wednesday night, and the final exercises of graduation the next morning in the parish church.

Without waiting for breath, almost, the following missionaries hurried off to vacation schools. Sister Jolenta and Leonita went to St. John's, Deloit; Sisters Fides, Florence and Agnesine went to Ewing. Ewing closed with First Holy Communion for eighteen privileged youngsters; St. John's had seven.

While these Sisters were doing their extra assignments for the Lord, a visitation came to us at home. On May 31, the Feast of Corpus Christi, a high wind struck O'Neill and the vicinity. Massive trees that had really been landmarks, were uprooted. Much damage was done in the neighborhood, but time

makes more evident daily how severe our own damage was. Three massive patches of slate shingle, probably twenty feet in diameter, in each case, were torn from the roof of the west wing. Daylight AND rain came pouring in through the attic. The water penetrated through two floors, wetting and loosening plaster as it came. The bucket brigade, usual in our schools at the end of the term, found new usefulness in stemming the floods, in mopping up floors, only to see them flooded again, and then repeating the procedure. The flat roof over the new cloister wing had been ripped off, and the task force had to divide its efforts. We had a western front and an eastern front. The eastern front declared an armistice first, because asphalt roofers are easier to reach. But slate had to be quarried, and the roofers would have been useless without the materials. In the meantime, and for several weeks of an unusually wet summer there were more buckets than desks in the sophomore classroom, which was the beachhead of the watery assault. The buckets, boilers, baking tins, and washtubs caught as much as fifteen gallons per hour during a rain, but nearly as much again missed the containers, and that is where the task force came in. The mopping procedure had to be repeated at least hourly, unless several persons would saty on the job steadily. At last, when the rain stopped for more than a few hours at a time, the local men put up some temporary roofing. The slaters don't expect to arrive until 1946! But we have learned what it means to thank God for a roof over our heads.

The chronicle for June is easily written. Rain! Mopping up water! More rain! And the process repeats itself. When the Feast of the Sacred Heart came, we considered seriously whether or not we could have exposition all day. The whole community was on the mopping force. Some Sisters who might have other urgent work to do had to pass through the corridors with their umbrellas open. Besides that the temperature in the house was as low as fifty degrees, and it was impossible to have a fire because the furnace pumps had been sent to Kansas City for repairs. It had rained steadily for the three days previous to the Feast. Under these circumstances, could we pledge ourselves to be like Mary for a whole day, and forget Martha's anxious occupation. We decided to do it, and to let the good Lord take care of the brigade's work. We enjoyed a profitable day of prayer, and there was not a drop of rain that whole day!

The brigade lost hands when many of the helpers went off to summer school. Higher education must go on, rain or shine! Sisters Jolenta and Leonita went to Marycrest, in Davenport, Iowa; Sister Electa left early for the University of Denver; Sister Agnesine went to Loras, in Dubuque; Sisters Xavier and Flores went to St. Mary Xavier, Kansas. Sisters Laurita, Fides, Laurissa, and Antonella stayed in the home state, but went to Omaha where it really rains. There, however the roofs were rainproof.

Missioners, bound for summer school or for a visit to St. Vincent Hospital in Sioux City, paid us a visit, sometimes short, sometimes longer. Those who honored us during the summer were Sisters Loretta, Adeltrude, Thoma, Rose, Anne, Emilia, Theresa, Alma, and Maryann. One whose arrival was eagerly anticipated was Sister Marciana, who took Sister Flores' place during the summer. Sister was parish organist, parish sacristan, and a most helpful asset to the dwindled community. Sister Loretta, too, was more than a visitor. St. Mary's had been without a seamstress all year. It is true that Sister Raineldis had answered our call for help shortly after Christmas and had tided us over. She had arrived at a crucial time, too, when four postulants had to be outfitted for their entrance at Marycrest in February. These favored little Sisters were Rita Rotherham from Father Burke's parish in Ewing, Mary Ellen Gran, Helen Zakrewski, and Clarice O'Bryan for our own student body. Now, however, our edges had become frayed and tattered once more. Besides those who had gone off to summer school expected to do a little repair work only when they should return. What was their surprise and joy upon their homecoming to find their habits mended, and their entire wardrobes freshened up. Sister Loretta had already returned to St. Francis Mission, and our thanks have to take the form of this public

acknowledgement. Another visitor, whose name the friends of St. Mary's would not care to have us omit, was Johnny Trout. He insisted that he is now a senior in high school, but those who know him believe that tale to be another of his tall stories.

Sister Brigid, seemingly tired of home life, took a trip to Sioux City in early summer. Her trip and the medical attention received improved Sister's health, and she will soon be young and spry again. Father Brick, the parish assistant, took a trip, too; but his was one way. Father, who had spent himself so generously for the boys' athletics and who had endeared himself to them, received a new appointment as assistant as assistant at St. Agnes parish in Omaha. Father Lisco from Omaha is Monsignor's new assistant.

As a strenuous summer was drawing to a close three of our Sisters were receiving the finishing touches to a long educational career. Those to bring home sheepskin trophies this summer were: Sister M. Electa, a Bachelor of Library Science; Sister Laurissa, a Master of Art; Sister Antonella, a Master of Arts.

When the scattered community had gathered itself together, preparation for the annual retreat went forward. The retreat, conducted by the Reverend John F. Casey, SJ, from Regis, Denver, opened on August 8 and closed on the morning of the Assumption. Retreat joy was doubled by the joyful announcement of peace. Even the quiet town of O'Neill bubbled over with sheer gratitude and joy. Their sentiments were expressed in the usual civic demonstration with dancing and bonfires, and a deep and chastened devotion at all the Masses on August 15.

Following retreat came the announcements: Our diocese had been erected into an archdiocese and our ordinary became the Most Reverend Archbishop James H. Ryan. His archdiocese would embrace the entire state of Nebraska, with Omaha as the seat of his archiepiscopal see. Secondly, Sister M. Xavier was to repair to a new field of labor in Denver; Sister M. Doloretta would replace her. Sister Florence, lent earlier in the summer to St. Joseph Hospital, in Alliance, would take a class at St. Elizabeth in Denver. Sister Agnesita would take her dormitory and dining room assignments here.

Sister Flores, suffering from an arm injury since way back when she had tried to reach church in ice skating weather, had to submit to bone surgery in Sioux City after the retreat. The convalescence was long and painful, and everyone knows in what a predicament and organist with a lame arm finds herself.

Though there were to be no boarder boys for the coming school year, the high school boarder enrollment kept mounting. Another classroom would have to be opened, and Sister Laurita would be home room teacher for the second division of sophomores. Mrs. George, wife of our bandmaster and city superintendent of schools, kindly agreed to teach four subjects. The new classroom is in the former social room, and the social room occupies the entire west side of the gymnasium. It is expected that this arrangement will only be temporary, and no permanent fixtures have been set up or removed. This will facilitate getting back to normal when times become normal.

Late in August, the Catholic men of O'Neill insisted upon getting something done about the damaged roofs. The temporary "fillings" would not hold up under the wear and tear of winter weather. Mr. Kettler, the contractor who acted as adviser in our difficulties, finally approved of our having a local contractor do the roof work. He had already been engaged by the public school, but the school board agreed that our work be done first because so much interior repairing was waiting. Then Mr. Kettler re-lined our wrecked dormitory with Nu-Wood. We postponed the opening of the high school, and when

the boarders did arrive on September 11, we were almost ready for them. One more week of camping out in dormitory aisles, in wardrobes, and in odd corners, and then came house warming, and a beautiful, newly finished dorm, with three tone walls and pale green bed curtains. The girls were delighted and chalked up the temporary necessity of crowding as one boarding school experience that not everybody can recount.

The grade school had opened on schedule, on September 4. It was an extremely hot week, and everybody breathed easier when the temperature dropped somewhat before the following Monday when high school classes opened for full day stretches. The boarder enrollment reached 87, and when 52 of these go home each week end, we feel as though vacation has begun again.

The usual weeks of adjustment kept everyone busy. Initiation ceremonies added color to these first weeks. The boys' equipment and shower rooms were in bad shape. The boys had the former plastered and the latter repaired. Then, because hired help was unavailable, the athletes themselves got busy and spent Saturdays and after school hours painting those rooms. That was adding color of another variety. They did the painting and they chose the color schemes. To say the least, and to do it most kindly, the results added a gay and cheerful note to the routine of football practice.

October is the month of Forty Hours and teachers' institutes. The former opened on Rosary Sunday, and gave us a profitable two days of prayer. Besides providing the musical setting for this occasion and for the Feast of St. Francis, Sister Flores found time to take a trip to the State House in Lincoln to take special music examinations. Having passed these tests with flying colors, Sister came home with a state certification permitting us to give full high school credit for all work done in the music department.

The elementary teachers' institute was held in O'Neill on the First Friday. The State Teachers' Convention was held, as usual, in Norfolk. High school classes were suspended and the teachers attended the convention. The St. Agnes football squad took advantage of the long week end by coming to O'Neill for a game. They seemed to like us and, of course, we liked them. The score was: St. Agnes—20, St. Mary's—31. Our boys are not too reluctant about conceding, however, that St. Agnes may claim a similar victory in basketball when the return game is played. According to schedule, that should be on January 3.

The installation of the Most Reverend Archbishop James H. Ryan took place in St. Cecilia Cathedral in Omaha, on October 10. Sisters Flores and Agnesine had the privilege of being present for the ceremonies. At the same time, Sister Agnesine called on her mother, Mrs. Hargarten, who was to undergo a spinal operation at St. Joseph Hospital in Omaha. Sister's mother did a splendid job of convalescing and walks without crutches much of the time.

On October 13, after waiting more than two years for a Victor 16 mm. sound picture machine, we purchased a DeVry demonstrator and began using it the next week. It had several worn parts and is not proving satisfactory. Therefore we ordered a new DeVry, to be delivered in 30 days, and in the meantime have the privilege of using the old one. The students and teachers are enjoying a visualized education program in several classes, and the student body had the advantage of a full feature show once a week. The projector is proving its value.

On October 19, the whole community of O'Neill was shocked by the sudden death of Conrad Loehr. Our good old "Con" had been troubled with diabetes and high blood pressure for some time. He was taking ordinary precaution, and was under the doctor's care. The doctor did want him to go to a hospital but Con refused. He seldom complained, but on Thursday he ate very little and told Sister that

he did not feel good. On Friday morning he was found dead in bed. The doctor said that he had slept away in a diabetic coma. There was no evidence of a struggle. He seemed to be sleeping. The remains were laid out in our Convent parlor, and the Knights of Columbus gathered here for the Rosary. The football boys were the pallbearers at the funeral, and the whole student body joined in the procession to the cemetery. He lies buried in the plot next to our Sisters. His wholesouled interest in St. Mary's seems to continue, for in less than six weeks time a new man applied for Con's place. He is elderly, wishes to make his home here, and seems capable and efficient.

The personnel of St. Mary's, aided by our boys and girls, has been able to do Waldorf-Astoria service for special occasion banquets. No chefs could outdo our little cooks, and our girls, trained by Sister Electa, make efficient waitresses. What the Sisters do behind the scenes their angels have been recording in gold. The first occasion, this year, for a display of this talent for entertaining was the initiation banquet of the Catholic Daughters of America held on November 4. The Knights of Columbus followed closely after with a request for 200 plates. Our patrons are too well satisfied to justify our hope that they soon find another suitable banquet hall.

November held out several pleasanter occasions than the aforementioned. November 9 marked the end of the first scholastic quarter, and most of the pupils could report satisfactory progress. November 12 was another red letter day. Mother Erica arrived for a week's stay with us. Her visit was a happy interlude between test week and the preparation for Christmas. While Mother was here we took time out to plan and staff a hospital for O'Neill, to erect new schools in the province, and to build whole cities of air castles. Like our dreams, these happy days ended too soon.

Saint Nicholas had extreme difficulty in fulfilling his plans this year, but when he arrived everyone was happy and pleased—surprised even that he had been thus far successful, when to most people much of what they need is unavailable.

The Sodality anticipated the Feast of the Immaculate Conception by holding the reception of candidates on the Friday preceding. At 2:30 on December 7, forty seven new sodalists pledged their undying fidelity to their Immaculate Queen. The ceremony closed with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

December 8 was a day of gaiety as well as of grace. Mother Immaculata celebrated her Feast day, and her Sisters rejoiced with her in a simple, homelike way.

Influenza has struck hard at our city and our school. Some days it seemed foolish to try to carry on when so many were missing from classes. But we held on doggedly, in spite of the fact that not one of the teachers escaped an attack. This epidemic is wearing on one's patience since it leaves, and then in a few days comes back again, a most unwelcome guest.

Because of the need of regular hospital care, Sister Marie changed her address to St. Joseph Hospital, Alliance. Sister Claire came by ambulance from Alliance on December 18, spent less than an hour with us, bundled Sister Marie into her deluxe taxi, and whisked away again. Sister Claire brought interesting accounts of the activities of our Sisters in the west end of the state and was a most welcome guest.

The basketball season opened inauspiciously for our boys. Two losses and an insignificant win marked the first week of play. Though the spirit and teamwork among the boys is splendid, their success is not evident. Better luck may attend them as the season progresses and there is more opportunity for practice. Granted that they are not making too good a showing in athletics, the boys are doing

splendidly in other lines. James Meriman, a senior, has presented a beautiful new standing sanctuary lamp to our chapel. Another of the older boys has donated a lovely Infant of Prague statue and wall bracket. It adorns the wall just outside the sanctuary on the gospel side of the altar. The boys' Sodality is making a drive to purchase a new cope for our chapel. Besides these gifts and donations, the boys gladly offer their services as handy men in any dilemma. They can lay linoleum, tinker with the plumbing, locate shorts in the wiring, repair anything from furniture to electrical appliances, and drive Con's truck to market. They are an invaluable aid around the house when paid help is unavailable. Now that we have a new resident janitor, the boys may even be of assistance in getting him orientated.

Instead of the traditional classroom carols this year, we had a carol fest in the Assembly. Monsignor McNamara, Mrs. George, and our Mother held the places of honor while the Glee Club sang the carols. The presentation of gifts was made in the presence of the whole student body, and then the students repaired to their home rooms for their Christmas tree celebrations. By Saturday, December 22, all the children had left us. The holidays promised to be quiet and restful, in spite of the fact that all the Sisters are either ill or convalescing. The latter take care of the ill, until the second round, when the roles are reversed. A two weeks' vacation "with pay" should cure all flu patients.

Visitors added to our Christmas cheer during the holidays. Mr. and Mrs. Hargarten and Father Joseph came to spend a few days with Sister Agnesine. During their stay the North Platte boys challenged our boys in a basketball game. The final score was: St. Mary's—24, North Platte—13. A party was held for both squads and our pep club in the Academy gym.

Father Stroh, SJ has agreed to conduct our day of recollection that will bring 1945 to a close. During those quiet hours of grace, as the old year fades into history, good wishes should sound tunefully and prayerfully from Station SMA to all our Mothers and Sisters all over the world.

Mother Immaculata, Sister Antonella, Sister Brigid, Sister Edmunda, Sister Bruno, Sister Maxine, Sister Electa, Sister Jolenta, Sister Fides, Sister Laurissa, Sister Andrea, Sister Flores, Sister Leonita, Sister Agnesine, Sister Agnesita, Sister Doloretta, Sister Laurita, Sister Ludgardis, and Sister Margaret.

1946 - "New Hospital Plans"

The Eve of the New Year was spent in a leisurely, quiet, meditative way under the direction of Father G. Stroh, S.J., from St. Francis Mission. The vitality injected into our spiritual lives gave us an auspicious beginning for 1946. The year was still in its infancy when the new born, or should one say the re-born, hospital project came into the limelight. The businessmen of O'Neill held a preliminary meeting for organizational purposes. They wished to launch the project correctly and plans had to be made. Mother Erica had met with the doctors and the businessmen in November and had agreed to staff and operate the hospital. The O'Neill citizens wished to erect it—or to do as much as they could financially to give it a start. Mr. William Froelich was elected general chairman, and committees for solicitation, building, publicity, and benefit were organized, each with its own chairman. The site of the new hospital will most likely be the small pasture land adjoining the Academy. The building should face south overlooking the beautiful Academy park.

Otherwise January passed in regular fashion, semester exams and all. The pilot for the children's mid-year flight along the skyways of prayer was the Reverend Joseph Blank, S.J., from St. Louis. Father was a strong promoter of religious vocations, and had a dozen or more who sought conferences with him on the subject. The results will show up in God's good time.

February held more committee meetings for deliberation and planning of the new hospital. Dr. Martin Aitken of Lincoln, personal friend of Mr. Froelich, was asked to draw up tentative plans for a 35 to 50 bed hospital, so that proper estimates for construction costs could be made. The lowest figure now, for the building unfurnished is 110,000 dollars.

On St. Valentine's Day, the Freshmen entertained with a formal party and dance. Figure dances were an interesting addition to the entertainment. At an election held earlier in the day, the school's most truly representative students were chosen as King and Queen. James Merriman and Sheila Taffe carried off the honors.

Mother Erica found it convenient to stop over for a few hours on her way to St. Francis. That short visit made February 22 memorable.

All the while that scholastic and social affairs were forging slowly and steadily forward, athletic events took no back seat. As always, these latter events stood out as significant, interesting and time consuming. The boys can always draw a large crowd for home games as well as for those out of town. Their victories this year balanced their defeats. But in both tournaments, district and county, their showing was poor. In the County meet, they came within sight of the semi-finals; in the district, they played two games. It was St. Mary's unflinching fortune to meet St. Joseph's of Atkinson in the earlier rounds. This latter quintet went to Lincoln and won the State championship.

March brought an epidemic of measles, especially inconvenient among the boarders. No serious consequences resulted, and in three weeks we thanked God for the end of the siege.

The "Bells of St. Mary's" came to O'Neill, and we chose the stormiest day of the month for a school showing. The blizzard prevented neighboring Sisters and priests from seeing the picture, as planned, but very few of our children failed to see it.

For the first time in history, St. Mary's entered students in the regional declamatory Contest. Three of the four entries won superior ratings at Wayne on March 23. On April 6, these three went to Lincoln for the State Speech Festival and won top honors again.

The first week end in April was Sodality Convention week in Omaha. Twenty-five Sodalists, accompanied by their teachers, made the trip by car or train, and came home renewed in zeal for the cause. The trip had its advantages in social training, and in its broadening effect on many of our children who otherwise see very little of city life.

Fire marshals from Lincoln can in mid-April to conduct a fire prevention campaign. The demonstration they staged for the school children was highly entertaining as well as educational. Any group of educators who go in so strongly for visual aids that they will not hesitate to carry along "Mrs. O'Leary's Cow" could not fail to be entertaining.

Easter time was an exceptionally busy time. The strains of the glorious Alleluias mingled with other joyful melodies. Father Joseph Hergarten, with his mother and father, came to visit Sister Agnesine. Sisters Electa and Leonite had the exceptionally good fortune of being able to attend the National Catholic Educational Association Convention held in St. Louis during Easter week. The people at home had the joy of welcoming Mother Virginia and Sister Constance, with their thirty some contestants for the Music Festival. Mrs. Edward Johnson, of Omaha, embraced the opportunity of visiting two Sisters at once, Sister Laurisse and Sister Constance, and St. Mary's was glad to have her

here for a few days. Then the whole institution turned musical; and Saturday morning, when the St. Agnes delegation left they carried with them many high honors. Our own children made a good showing also. Supporters of other schools were heard to comment wonderingly on the large number of superiors awarded to the two Catholic schools that participated.

In spite of all the preparations for a successful Music Week, the boys found time and readiness for their annual substantial athletic banquet. This year the pep club girls, who had given yeoman service in athletic events, were also invited to the party. This affair is always held down town and does not involve extra work for anyone at St. Mary's, except the coaches and managers.

April breezed out and May floated in with a succession of farewell parties for the Prefect of the Boys' Sodality, William Froelich, Jr., who was leaving for the Jesuit Novitiate on May 6. On May 13, Bill had received his cassock, and by the time his class was graduating, Bill had begun his noviceship in earnest.

Other than the visit of Sister Laurita's brother and family, school events took all our time and our concentrated attention during May. There were movies, this time scenes from Julius Caesar and Macbeth, class outings, and some few publicity stunts. Our musicians, both band and vocal students, traveled to Norfolk to broadcast their repertoire. Although the day was cloudy and there was too much static to insure good reception, the trip was both educational and entertaining. The amateur musicians had opportunity to display their merits at home also. Sister Edmunda's pupils gave their recital for mothers and friends on May 4. Sisters Flores and Laurita presented their pupils on May 13, and the recital took the form of a music contest with senior music students acting as judges.

The junior-senior banquet had been held on May 2, before Bill Froelich's departure; the Catholic Daughters had a corporate Communion breakfast on May 5; the annual Alumni reunion and banquet was held on May 19. Parenthetically, St. Mary's students learned to be expert caterers, and Sister Electa acquired the poise of a Waldorf-Astoria maitre d'hotel. The Alumni reunion this year was significant for the fact that the dinner program was directed and carried through by men only. On this occasion, and perhaps because of the splendid performance of our boys in fields at home and afar, the Association passed a resolution that at last St. Mary's Alumnae would bow to its masculine element and they declared themselves officially St. Mary's Alumni. A note to this effect was to be sent to our Omaha Chapter.

There was a State Library Convention held in our little city on May 14. Sister Electa was chosen to read a paper before the group. Sister found that her library science training in Denver served her adequately on this occasion. Having had little time for immediate preparation, she could repeat a similar performance at a Denver University. The librarians were pleased with her contribution and consulted her on further questions.

On May 15 the Seniors, under the direction of Sister Laurissa, produced their class play, "Almost Eighteen". This is a play with a message, and yet has a modern setting and is up to date. It is rather hard to produce but the results were most satisfying. Public approval was spontaneous.

In the last weeks things began happening fast. May 20 was the annual May crowning, held in our parish church this year because it rained. Besides a late frost had frozen all the spring flowers and the Academy park was rather barren looking. Many enthusiasts believed the church ceremony more effective.

May 21 was the Spring Formal—this year a Sodality project. The Freshmen had a fish pond as a side issue, and all the classes had preceded this affair with cake, ice cream, or wiener sales. The object was to raise funds to enable delegates to attend the Summer School of Catholic Action in Chicago. Nearly one hundred dollars was netted, and as later events proved, it was adequate.

On May 28 the seniors held their class night exercises in the public school auditorium. They paged through a life size photo album and the pictures came to life under the glow of colored lights. Their prophecy was a series of caricatures cast on the screen by an electric lantern.

May 29 was graduation day. Twenty one girls and ten boys were awarded diplomas in St. Patrick's Church. Father John O'Brien of Emmet was the speaker for the occasion and delivered a meaningful sermon on the obligation of lay Catholics in a changing world.

This year two St. Mary's students, Edward Hynes and Lou Ann Iler, were privileged to represent their school at Boys' State and Girls' State in Lincoln. They spent a week there taking over the State offices from Governor to prosecuting attorney. They were sponsored by the American Legion and other local fraternities.

Our own children were still with us when other children's voices call to us as to St. Patrick of old. These, too, wanted to hear the good tidings. They were the hundreds of young people in the surrounding country parishes. The grade teachers started vacation schools on May 26. Sisters Jolenta and Doloretta spent two weeks at St. John's at Deloit; Sisters Laurissa and Flores drove to Emmet every day for three weeks; Sister Marciana and Bernard came from the Mission to help us out at Chambers; Sisters Agnesine, Electa and Antonella enjoyed two weeks at St. Peter's in Ewing. Sister Leonita kept her own First Communion class until the first Sunday of June. Besides this activity, Confirmation classes at home continued until June 3, when the Most Reverend Bishop Hunkeler, D.D., of Grand Island, conferred the Sacrament of Confirmation on a large class of over 200 children.

While some were still away at their various mission fields, others began the summer school "trek." Sisters Fides and Laurita started the ball rolling by reporting for registration at Creighton University on June 10. Sisters Jolenta, Leonita and Doloretta registered for another summer at St. Ambrose, Davenport, Iowa; and Sister Agnesine spent her vacation cramming at Loras College in Dubuque. While these Sisters were still packing to go, Sisters Margaret and Agnesita were already at St. Francis Mission, South Dakota, in deep solitude. After their eight days of spiritual brushing up and polishing the came home to edify a rapidly diminishing community. Before their return things had been happening in rapid succession. Mother Immaculata had made a seemingly innocent call at the doctor's office to examine into a persistent eye infection. Dr. Finley referred her to a specialist in Norfolk, and this doctor, in turn, referred her to more skilled physicians. Mother, without even an extra handkerchief or a toothbrush, borrowed a clergy book from the Norfolk Sisters and left for Denver. Little did she dream then that she would not return to St. Mary's until August.

Everything goes wrong when Mother is away! Mr. Kettler, the Omaha contractor, who had begun the repair and redecorating of our building, had a special kind of difficulty. He could not obtain materials, he lacked skilled help, his unskilled labor made unreasonable demands; Mr. Kettler himself was called away for ten days at a time and then some of his men did take advantage and celebrate! It was a worry with all these men in the house. It was a discomfort, walking through debris whichever way one went. It was an annoyance breathing plaster dust and related odors instead of God's fresh air all summer. It was work cleaning up after the men. But it is a joy that the Academy is rejuvenated. Crumbling plaster is now solid walls that had felt no paint in thirty years are now things of beauty. There is a new

infirmary with bath for the children on the fourth floor, the Sodality chapel is planked with NuWood, the high school corridor and the gym have tile ceilings, the music department saw some remodeling and the entire Academy, classrooms, corridors and gym were repainted. All our difficulties were rewarded.

With piles of broken plaster, sand, paint buckets and scaffolding for a background, St. Mary's offered hospitality to many summer guests. Sister Doloretta's parents, the Miller's from Cody, Wyoming, spent some few pleasant days with Sister in early June. Father James Mackin, S.J., nephew of Sister Electa, came up from Creighton to spend a few treasured hours with Sister. Father had just finished his tertianship in Washington and was enroute to the eastern province.

Sister Dorothy, a Good Shepherd extern sister, comes out state from Omaha quite frequently soliciting help from our generous O'Neillers. She and her companion came in on us when there was full house in the guest quarters and only dormitories, in amid state of ruin and registering 106 degrees Fahrenheit were available. Sister is easy to please and she was made to feel at home in spite of everything.

At nine o'clock the same evening of Sister Dorothy's arrival, a cry went up that there was a broken water pipe somewhere. A miniature Niagara Falls and Yosemite combined was racing down the back stairs from dormitory to gym. What really happened was that our lay help had attempted to do their washing upstairs while the city pressure was low. There was no water, so they blissfully left the faucets open and went downtown to the show. They wouldn't be home until eleven thirty. We waded through three inches of water, shut off the faucets, then proceeded to scoop and mop up dormitory, wash room, stairs, classroom, and gym. It was nearly eleven when that was completed. Incidentally, Mr. Kettler assured us that the new plaster that had received a thorough soaking was not damaged. Before we had wrung the last mop, more company was announced. Four Schneider's from Orrin, North Dakota, were here to visit Sisters Ludgardis and Margaret. Now to find them a bed! With old curtains not yet sent to the laundry, with sheets and blankets gathered from everywhere, we proceeded to section off some more dormitory space for our guests. Before midnight we had our poor quarters ready, and our guests were happy to stay some four days.

June was a full month and its climax was worth every effort that had been made to "keep the fires burning" while Mother was away. Mother Erica permitted three Sisters, Sisters Laurissa, Electa and Antonella to attend the "six days you will never forget"—the Catholic Action School in Chicago. They left June 29. Traveling and hotel expenses were paid by Mr. William Froelich and the Sodality fund diminished by only thirty eight dollars as the result of the trip. Those six days, July 1 to July 7, were indeed unforgettable, and the results are being felt in the year's Sodality work. Friends that we made in Chicago have visited St. Mary's since, of course with Mr. Froelich as host. Mr. Kelly, brother of the former mayor of Chicago, was among them, and he left a substantial contribution toward our repair fund.

Hardly had we doffed our traveling attire when blue aprons and sleeves beckoned. All July was house cleaning month. Eight little girls who are eager to earn board or tuition for the ensuing school year helped scrape paint from woodwork and floors and then clean and wax each room as the painters finished. This work had not even begun properly when Sister Flores and Sister Agnesita were summoned to Denver, the former to take a needed rest and the latter to study the intricate skills of sewing under Sister Raineldis' direction. Sister Marciana, from St. Francis, gave generously of her time and patience, to substitute for both. She was organist, portress, seamstress, and general utility Sister for the entire summer. Sister is just another example of a big heart and ready hand, and St. Mary's needed her at this time as never before.

Sisters Rena and Bartholomew from Mother Virginia's community in Alliance spent the summer here studying art under Sister Maxine. Their exhibit at the end of the session proved that they had learned a great deal. Besides acquiring knowledge and skill they had also earned the gratitude of the Sisters for their willingness and generosity in offering a helping hand. Sister Rena took care of the chapel during Sister Doloretta's absence, and Sister Bartholomew filled in wherever emergency called.

In more ways than one, St. Mary's is quite "out of this world," so much so that when young Sisters enroute to Denver for profession or middle aged Sisters enroute to summer school make this their stop-over we are both surprised and happy. This summer's pauses were especially welcomed because our guest Sisters made it a three days' visit sometimes, and even spent occasional hours in the laundry. Guests are not always treated like that; in fact, we could promise to do differently in the future, except that the Sisters themselves made us feel that it was their privilege. Perhaps these young Sisters like us that way; we surely loved them for their helpfulness. They were friends in need.

August, 1946, will always be memorable. Mother Immaculata returned in time to keep Retreat with the Sisters. The retreat, from August 4 to August 11, was conducted by Rev. G. Stroh, S.J., from St. Francis, and was an inspiring and consoling one. A veteran in the field always has many helpful experiences to relate that edify and encourage his hearers. Father Stroh offered to remain two days longer to help celebrate Mother's silver Jubilee. Only the priests and Mother's immediate relatives had been informed about the Jubilee, for which reason the celebration was simple and homelike. Father Joseph Hargarten, visiting Sister Agnesine at the time, was as eager as Father Lisco to have a Solemn High Mass. So, for the first time in many years, our little chapel was the scene of this most solemn of all functions, with Father Stroh as celebrant. Monsignor McNamara gave Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament later in the day. The day was spent between cloister and chapel and proved to be perfect in every way. Sister Marie Helen, O.P., Mother's older Sister, could not be present, but she visited here for several days the following week.

Shortly after these festivities, while Jubilee bells still echoed in cloister halls, a celebration of another kind was staged. Sister Jolenta and Leonita had proudly borne home their hard earned sheepskins at the end of an unusually strenuous summer. Recognition came to them in the form of a Franciscan graduation party, guest speakers and all. Mother Immaculata conferred the usual decorations.

Farewells and welcomes are still to be recorded. They are constant reminders to be in readiness for any assignment. His appointments they are, and in this spirit we gave up Sister Agnesita and Sister Margaret, whose places were filled by Sister Serafica and a lay cook. Sister Ferdinand came to take grades three and four, so that Sister Edmunda could be released for music. Sister Casilda from Denver replaced Sister Doloretta, and Sister Emilia came from Holy Rosary to take Sister Laurissa's freshmen. Sister Laurissa went to St. Agnes, Alliance. Sister Serafica has taken over the sewing and portress work, besides her care of the Chapel and the sick. In this was Mother has been released from much additional work that she tried to do last year.

Registration for the new school year began on August 30 and 31. The boarders came in on September 1 and 2. When classes opened and we had time to compare notes, it was discovered that the grade school enrollment had remained the same as last year's, hovering around the 200 mark. The high school claims an increase of ten, having 169. Not being able to get Mrs. George this year to help is telling on our classes. Many groups number as high as 46 in one room. The diocesan superintendent of schools, Father P.E. Schneider of Omaha, made his biennial visit in that week of organization. He seemed pleased with his observation and was encouraging in his comments on our work.

School for many high school boys means athletics. Their teachers are grateful that there is such an outlet for their energy and pugnacity and they usually urge the boys on to great endeavor in this line. St. Mary's made an auspicious beginning by walking to an easy victory over the Alumni boys. Did this victory give them false assurance, or were there other elements combining against them? At any rate, the football season was only "middling" or fair. The boys had to chalk up as many defeats as victories, and every game resulted in broken ribs, arms or teeth. They had the fighting spirit but not the skill, it seems. The big event of the football season was a homecoming game against St. Mary's of Grand Island. The visitors won the game, but we took other honors. The band and pep club put on a spectacular exhibit, and the crowning of the football Queen at the evening party while the orchestra played "The Bells of St. Mary's" was a thrilling experience for the children. The following week, our boys won against the only undefeated Catholic school in the State, St. Patrick of North Platte. That's football!

The students had the opportunity during September to see Cronin's "Green Years" downtown. The progress of pictures shown in our own assembly continued the same as last year, though we were still using a projector, lent by the company until our own could be shipped.

The Feast of St. Francis came on Friday and taking a holiday meant a long week end for the boarders. Many of them went to their homes and we enjoyed a real Feast day, Friday and all.

Mid October witnessed the first of the annual series of banquets. Our student caterers served a hundred seventy plate banquet in their usual expert style. Clean up takes an hour after such occasions, and we are all set for the next one. The serving business has developed into a systemized routine now, and we are nearly ready to hang out our shingle!

November was Vocation month at St. Mary's. Bulletin boards, class room instructions, group discussions, and special prayer programs had for their object that the good Master "send laborers into His vineyard." Brother Fymard from the juniorate of the Holy Cross Brothers came in the second week of the month and gave an illustrated talk on the life of a Brother. Now is the time to follow the call, he urged. It should not be put off until next month or next year, but be followed as soon as possible, anywhere from eighth grade beyond high school. There are about sixteen junior boys. All of them want to be Holy Cross brothers. Brother Fymard certainly was a convincing speaker and his talk went directly to the heart. The soil is good, the seed has been planted; cultivation must continue, and then fruition! Incidentally, Brother Fymard put in a word for the Sisterhoods, and in particular for the Sisters who were teaching these children.

Grades 7 and 8, also with several boys as prospective Brothers, threw themselves whole heartedly into the need of the immediate present and sponsored a baby bazaar for the Missions. They netted more than seventy five dollars on their project. They feel quite competent about their ability.

The music department presented an operetta, "The Beauty Contest" early in the month and offered the proceeds to help pay for new parlor furniture. The parlors and guest rooms had been redecorated in late October and now they are almost "dreams" in their pastel shade walls and harmonizing furniture, Venetian blinds, and new drapes. At last the casual visitor will notice something different from what he had found for the past twenty years.

Just before Thanksgiving, several chosen vocal and instrumental students had the privilege of attending a State Music Clinic in Lincoln. The comments, appraisals, and criticisms earned there will be an advantage to these students and their teachers in preparing for the spring Music Contest.

December meant Retreat for the students. December 3, 4, and 5 were the grand days, and our vivacious hundred and sixty turned angelic for that many days. Father James Bartholomew of Trinity College, Sioux City, piloted these eager sky travelers in their exploration of the Heavens. He measured up to the expectations, and youth is keen and sometimes caustic in its evaluation and judgment. Father told us we had good children and that many of our girls are vocation minded. May God direct them aright!

The number of candidates for reception into Our Lady's Sodality had increased noticeably. It is no longer possible to have a beautiful reception ceremony with the whole Sodality present in our little Chapel. Monsignor was most gracious about permitting us to have the ceremony in Church. Here it was an imposing service; parents could be there to witness the reception; and the forty seven new Children of Mary felt singularly blessed on this occasion. Father Bartholomew waited over for the Reception and gave a beautiful sermon.

The little Freshmen planned a Mission project for December—two one-act plays staged for the benefit of the Missions. They were quite successful both financially and dramatically. Here is a splendid way to uncover latent abilities in dramatics and in leadership.

The following week, the day pupils' girls' Sodality, at the request of the Alumni officers, sponsored a cafeteria, cake sale, and bingo party for Alumni benefit. This group has been planning for a great day to come, our Monsignor's golden jubilee in March. Parish and school hope to make it a memorable day for their beloved pastor.

And finally the movie projector has arrived, latest DeVry and latest price! But operators, Sisters, and children are crowing over it as a child would over its first mechanical toy, and we hope to derive both pleasure and benefit from its use.

Then came the last week of school. The Christmas spirit abounded. On Monday the students attended the movie "The Old Curiosity Shop" in our gym. On Tuesday, Mrs. Rasley invited us to a free show down town. On Wednesday our basket ball team met last year's State Champions, St. Joseph's, of Atkinson, and held them down to a 40-10 victory. That was splendid, considering our inexperience and their skill. On Thursday, the boarders were served their traditional formal banquet by the Sisters. It is fun to be chefs, waitresses, and dishwashers, all at once for ONE evening in the year! On that same evening our athletes were being entertained and feasted by the Knights of Columbus in the KC hall.

One of the last Sodality meetings of the year was made memorable for the day pupils because of a talk on Theresa Newmann by Mrs. Carroll Stewart of O'Neill. This lady had been an army nurse and in that capacity had had the opportunity and privilege of visiting the home of the famed Stigmatist and of speaking personally with her. Mrs. Stewart gave both facts and impressions she gathered, and the girls seemed to derive inspiration from her talk.

School came to a close with the singing of carols for Monsignor and the Sisters and the distribution of gifts on Friday afternoon.

Christmas vacation is the most peaceful and homelike time of all the year, and tired workers in God's vineyard can pause at the half mile and rest a little. It is a time of extra prayer for friends, benefactors, and loved ones, and a time to wish all our companions in the field a beautiful, graceladen Christmas time and a blessed New Year.

The year comes to a close with a day of solitude and spiritual exercises, conducted this year by Father James Bartholomew, whom the children liked so well that he was invited back. Under his guidance we pray to draw nearer to Jesus and Mary, and may our prayers for our Sisters gather us all under Mary's blue mantle and keep us there the whole year through. May our labors spread her influence.

Mother Immaculata, Sisters Antonella, Brigid, Edmunda, Bruno, Maxine, Electa, Jolenta, Fides, Casilda, Andrea, Serafica, Emilia, Flores, Leonita, Agnesine, Laurita, Ferdinand, and Ludgardis.

1947 - "God's Country"

With re-awakened consciousness of the multiplied mercies of God during the past year, January 1, 1947, dawned upon us with promise of His continued Providence. For Sister Serafica, New Year's Day meant a trip to Denver for rest and medical attention. For the other members of St. Mary's community it meant a few more days of pleasant relaxation before the boarders returned on January 5. The usual organizing and brushing up of knowledge preceded the semester examinations. The Reverend Father Schneider, diocesan superintendent of schools, sent out examinations for the elementary grades in January. This was new. Previously, diocesan examinations came only in May. Now they are to be semi-annual.

At the end of the semester, the assistant pastor of St. Patrick's, who is also religion instructor in the high school and director of both high school and grade athletics, was transferred. He, the Reverend Father Raymond Lisco, went to Boys' Town to be assistant to Father Flanagan. Father Cyril Werner, former assistant at Holy Angels, Omaha, came to replace him. It was a critical time. Basketball was in mid season and all the preparations for Monsignor McNamara's golden jubilee had begun. Father Werner met all expectation, however, and went about very quietly and unobtrusively completing unfinished business.

The O'Neill people gave Father Lisco a purse in appreciation of his work among them; the students expressed their appreciation and said their farewells at the Freshman formal, held at the close of the semester. This formal dance was an otherwise gala affair. Colorful formals against a winter scene for a background gave a pleasing effect. Song and gifts and good wishes made the farewells less somber.

The boys closed a rather mediocre basketball season according to form. They were eliminated from the County Tournament after the first game. In the District Tourney, also, they met the powerful quintet from St. Joseph of Atkinson and dropped their first game. Prospects for next year's basketball team are only slightly better.

February must have rivaled the famous Nebraska winter of '88. It was a month of blizzards. Boarders from country homes near O'Neill were snowbound over the week—ends. They began to expect heavy snowstorms on every Wednesday or Thursday. Father Mullen from Maryknoll, was doing some recruiting out our way and reached O'Neill in time to be snowbound. We didn't mind because the children enjoyed his vocation talks and wanted to keep him longer. Mother Erica, enroute to St. Francis, stopped here between buses and found that it would be several days before traffic could be resumed on account of the storms. In this case, too, her loss was our gain.

In the extra-curricular schedule February offered the Junior Class play, "Our Judy", which displayed a great deal of talent and brought satisfactory financial returns. The play was novel in that it was student directed and was well done. The proceeds, nearly one hundred dollars, were used to install fluorescent lighting in the commercial rooms.

Then came a pre-Lenten dance, sponsored by the sophomores, who used a Valentine theme. Jerry Tomjack and Mary Devine Brennan were the traditional King and Queen of the evening, the central figures in a beautiful coronation ceremony.

March 4, 1947, will always be a red letter day in the annals of St. Patrick's Parish. St. Mary's, too will long remember it. That day was the fiftieth anniversary of our Monsignor McNamara's ordination. Preparations for a fitting celebration had been afoot since the first of the year. Monsignor sensed it and threatened to go to Canada, but nevertheless enjoyed the bustle of preparation which was supposed to be secret but somehow always reached him. Little ones were practicing dances and jubilee songs, grown-ups were concerned about printed souvenirs, the reception and a suitable gift.

The day was a perfect one, calm and almost spring like. His parishioners flocked to the Jubilee Mass, at which Father John O'Brien of Emmet preached. Officers of the Mass, besides Monsignor, were lifelong friends of his. All the priests of the deanery and many friends from Bloomfield were present at the Mass and at the dinner which followed. All of Monsignor's one time assistants were also present. The dinner was served for nearly sixty guests in the Academy dining room. At 2:00 o'clock, the children of St. Mary's presented a program to honor the respected Jubilarian. This was held in the public school auditorium, Monsignor appreciated his many gifts and tokens of reverence and affection, but he was especially touched by the spiritual bouquets presented by the children, the Alumni, the Sisters, and by the priests of the deanery.

Vocation Week this year was a week of prayer and daily visits. Vocations was the theme of Religion and English classes, where the "whiteness of the harvest" was emphasized. The Sodalities featured the ever popular question box.

Then, as though March had not offered enough variation from routine, along came the senior play, "My Dear Son", presented on the Feast of St. Patrick. Monsignor was highly pleased at our resuming an old tradition. He considers such an endeavor a fitting way to observe a Lenten holiday. The next week brought more histrionics when nearly fifteen seniors and juniors, and their sponsors, went to the district declamatory and one-act play contest in Atkinson. One superior and an excellent in declamatory rewarded our efforts. The one-act play, our first attempt, was rated good; excellent criticisms and pointers for continued endeavor were given.

The assembled Sodality was privileged in late March to hear a most interesting talk given by Mrs. Dodendorf of Columbus, Nebraska. Mrs. Dodendorf has a hobby of collecting rosaries. Her collection consists of nearly five hundred rosaries, each of which has an interesting background. The rosaries are labeled, but she knows them by sight and the stories are written only in her memory.

The climax of this busy month, Sister Emunda's music recital, was a star attraction, most of her pupils are grade children, little ones whose fond mamas and papas crowded into the school assembly to hear them play. Little ones are a wonderful drawing card. The assembly was filled to capacity and everyone enjoyed a pleasant evening with the little musicians.

A full month became heaped up and running over when forty of our Sodalists and their moderators spent two days in Omaha at the Eastern Nebraska Sodality Conference. Many boys attended this year, and they came home with the determination to learn more about their Sodality and its aims, so that it might become a working force in their lives.

April presented a dignified and solemn opening with the celebration of Holy Week and Easter. But even then music was in the air. April is Music Contest time. The contest itself was a two day affair with twenty some schools participating. Thousands of students visit our city those two days. The contest centers are like bazaars except in the auditoriums proper, where the judges require silence and quiet attention. St. Mary's fared well this year with more than fifteen superior ratings. There was a void this year, though. St. Agnes was not with us because contests have been revived in their part of the State.

A benefit dance, sponsored by O'Neill's business men, was held at Danceland. The proceeds went to the new hospital fund. Conservative O'Neill will not break ground for the hospital until materials are more easily available and labor is less costly. The contributions continue to come in slowly. Something over sixty thousand dollars is now on hand.

A colorful May time climaxed a year's activities. May Day was Russia Day for the Sodalists, Girls and boys united in a perpetual Rosary, pleading with our Lady for the conversion of Russia.

The superior musicians, voice and instrumental, were privileged to attend the National Music Contest in St. Joseph, Missouri, on May 10. Sisters Flores and Emilia accompanied them. In spite of the fact that other States sent only the contestants left after a state elimination contest, and Nebraska entered all its district winners, St. Mary's came home with a goodly number of high ratings. One student, Kathleen Flood, was rated highly superior and received congratulatory messages from important personages, among them the governor of the State.

May 16 saw a music recital for all the other music students who had not been entered in contests. They too, must learn poise and stage presence because responsibility will rest upon them later on.

On May 14, the annual Junior-Senior Banquet and Prom were held in the dining room and gymnasium. The Prom setting was a park scene in which wild plum blossoms in profusion lent beauty and fragrance. This proved to be the prettiest setting in years.

Early May also witnessed the appearance of St. Mary's first annual, a project upon which the students had worked since March. It was an inexpensive yet satisfying achievement and the twenty pages of pictures should be a lifetime treasure for the students.

Sister Leonita's First Communion class was the largest in the history of the parish. Forty-four little ones celebrated their Great Day on Mother's Day, May 11.

In order to keep our required 180 teaching days intact and still be able to close school on May 25, it was decided to hold class picnics on Ascension Day. The Juniors and Seniors went to Niobrara State Park; the sophomores to Lake Andes, in South Dakota; the Freshmen to Long Pine's Hidden Paradise. The weather was favorable and a kind Providence held His protecting hand over the children until had them safely back to their homes.

The Alumni Banquet was another of the closing events of the year. This is always held on the Sunday before graduation. This year's attendance was nearly one hundred and fifty. New officers were elected and the Alumni president for 1947-1949 is Mrs. Bessie McLeod Lohaus.

Graduation week was crammed with activities. Monday evening the entire school took part in the May crowning ceremonies. Betty Gallagher, student choice for the Queen, had the honor of crowning the statue of our Lady. The Sodalists closed the evening with their Spring formal. On Tuesday evening the boarders did their official packing. On Wednesday evening the elementary school held their closing

exercises. Thursday night was senior class night. Friday morning was graduation in the parish church. Thirty five seniors received their diplomas and left St. Mary's for good. On Saturday the teachers breathed a tiny sigh of relief, brushed up on their knowledge of theology, and packed for vacation schools. Sister Fides left on Monday for Creighton University to get the laboratory equipment "warmed up" for a busy summer. Other teachers went two by two, or three, to the towns and villages round about where the children eagerly awaited them. The first week of their absence was marked by a heavy snowfall and freezing weather that destroyed all prospects for fruit, and made the farmers start over with their planting. Sisters Agnesine, Electa, and Antonella went to Ewing where the enrollment amounted to eighty four. Sisters Jolenta and Casilda gave instructions at St. John's to nearly sixty children. Sisters Emilia and Flores drove to Emmet daily to instruct about thirty children. Sisters Leonita and Ferdinand let their light shine in Amelia among fourteen children. When the regular two weeks' sessions were over, Sisters Electa and Antonella trekked to Coleridge, over eighty miles away, for another week of instruction among forty some children. The total number of First Communicants, prepared by our vacation school teachers and the respective pastors, was 36.

Other Mission activities that were carried on day by day throughout a busy school year were numerous. The little ones brought their pennies and nickels daily for the ransom of pagan babies. Grades One and Two also purchased readers and First Communion books for the children of St. Francis Mission. The combined contributions of the school children to the Bishops' Relief Drive was over one hundred and twenty dollars. The seventh and eighth grade bazaar and paper sales brought in two hundred sixty five dollars for mission purposes. The freshmen, seeking an outlet for their zeal for the Missions and their interest in Catholic Action, held a bazaar which netted over a hundred dollars. This money, plus their daily sacrifice money, purchased vestments for a poor parish, and paid for supplies and postage for over one hundred relief packages for Europe. All the classes contributed used clothing and occasional other useful articles while the day student Sodality purchased ten beautiful, though slightly outmoded coats. These hundred packages do not include the parcels being packed by Mother and the Sisters at more or less regular intervals. These latter were financed for a long period by a benefit from the Junior Class, and are being continued from alms from the house.

New purchases made during the year include lockers for the day pupil girls in the upper classes, a set of maps for American History, swings, and playground equipment for the elementary grades, and Venetian blinds for the guest department and for the library.

After vacation schools close there is usually a day or two of rest. Those days are used for preparing for college. This year the teachers were taking turns in the kitchen because our efficient cook, Sister Ludgardis, had gone to Minot for retreat. Sister Laurita went to St. Joseph Hospital, Alliance, for rest and surgery. Sister Adeltrude, enroute from St. Francis, visited at St. Mary's for several days, after which she and Sister Agnesine left for Loras College, Dubuque. Sister Casilda joined the community at St. Elizabeth, Denver, while attending Loretto Heights. Sister Flores, accompanied by Kathleen Flood, went to St. Mary College, Xavier, Kansas. To replace Sister Flores at the organ during the summer, Sister Spes from Holy Rosary mission came to spend the summer with us.

All but two of the summer school students had reached their colleges before the spring floods struck Nebraska, many Nebraskans had never seen as much water in all their lives as they saw in one day of those hectic flood times, neighboring ranches and even villages were under water, roads, and bridges were washed out, railroad tracks and trestles had spread, Railroad transportation was held up for a week at a time while repairs were being made; bus traffic on all but the southern lines was resumed after three or four days. The cloudbursts were accompanied by violent winds, and in some areas, by

hail. This year Nebraskans have had enough moisture, but things can never be all rosy for them. They call this God's country, and He has His Own way with it. There were late frosts, floods, hail, and wind storms. Few and fortunate were the people who escaped all of these disturbances in the elements.

The one day for which all June, 1947, will be memorable, is June 22. On that day all of Catholic O'Neill joined in congratulating the Reverend Eugene Gallagher, SJ, who celebrated his First Solemn Mass in St. Patrick Church. Father Eugene is a graduate of St. Mary's; in fact the first thirteen years of his educational experience were spent here. The Alumni therefore, gave him an elaborate reception in the Academy gymnasium. The dinner, at which seventy guests were seated, was served in the dining room. With the Alumni helping on every side, nothing was left undone to make it a perfect day.

Much of the work of the bucket brigade had been done before the children left for their homes; the college Sisters had most of theirs done before they left; the other third was quickly disposed of when three girls came to help the stay-at-homes. That done, the Sisters at home could settle down to restful, though very useful vacation days. There were ripping and sewing parties that lasted for the greater part of the summer; there were rhubarb and bean parties on occasion; there were real parties, too, on the greater feast days, June gave promise of a pleasant vacation.

The garden flourished. The park looked luxuriant and well groomed what with the new caretaker and all. Mr. Peter Felde had gone to the beet fields at the end of May, and Mr. James Murphy came to replace him. Expert tree surgeons were hired to trim and treat the large trees in the front yard, and the trees will need two summers to recuperate.

July was a peaceful and unruffled month. There were weekly letters back and forth from the college Sisters. They were working hard, and the weather was not too sultry. Sisters Emilia and Leonita, at home, were turning out sleeves, pockets, caps, aprons, and even habits on assembly line scales. More and more nooks and corners were being put in order. Not that the quiet and calm caused any uneasiness, but there is nothing like being ready at all times for anything.

Sister Ferdinand, having dental work done at home, pursued an extension course in Physiology and Hygiene to qualify for a certificate. Sister Laurita came home after more than a month away, all rested and repaired, ready for another school year.

July 16 was the red letter day of this month. Our delegates to the General Chapter of the Congregation had flown to Holland in June. The elections on July 16 gave us a new Mother General in the person of Mother Ignace. We joined her whole Franciscan family that day in wishing her well and daily we shall invoke for her the guidance of a special Providence in her arduous task.

Early June had been wet and chilly; by contrast August was dry and hot. Blistering winds dried up the countryside. Worried farmers as well as the parched earth pleaded for rain. Crops and hay suffered; many feeders were forced to sell their stock.

Heaven rained down dew in a spiritual manner, however, during the annual Retreat, conducted this year by Father James Bartholomew, from Trinity College, Sioux City. The six days were spent under Mary's own mantle and the result is an enthusiasm for the scapular, for Fatima, for any share in Mary's crusade for souls.

Sister Serafica's father, mother, and other relatives spent a few days with us and experienced the difference in temperature between Minot and O'Neill, though reports had it that even Canada had its 104 degrees in August.

Sister Leonita's mother and little Mary Ann visited for week. Mrs. Eager spent most of her visit at the sewing machine making dresses, play suits, and pajamas for our little ward, Patricia Morrison. Her visit was deeply appreciated by all of us.

Shortly after Retreat, the Hargarten's came, mother, father, and Father Joseph. It was a happy time for all, though the changes hovered in the air. And when Sister Leonita and our cook, Sister Ludgardis, were ready for their trip to Alliance where obedience was calling them, the Hargarten's packed them in and made it a family tour.

Mother Agnesine, newly appointed for Immaculate Conception school in Rushville, went to Marycrest first to assemble her community and her household furnishings and then on to her new home.

To replace these valued members of our community came Sister Edward from the hospital kitchen in Alliance, Sister Marianne for the second grade, and Sister Mary George for commercial.

In the last week of August while the teachers were at home ruling record books, arranging dormitories, and becoming re-acquainted with spellers, three of the high school teachers were privileged to attend Father Lord's "six days you will never forget" at the Morrison Hotel, in Chicago. An important phase of that splendid, soul stirring week was our meeting Sisters Angela and Dilecta from Columbus – and Rosary. About the Sodality Convention itself, it is impossible to give the highlights. Every class seemed as important as the next, whether it dealt with convert making, Sodality organization, youth leadership, visual instruction in religion, racial tolerance, or vocation clubs, each had its particular value. Even if the gleanings of knowledge and inspiration meant milling about in, and rubbing elbows with some 4000 other members of the Mystical Body it would have had priceless value for any religion teacher, in fact for anyone who makes any contacts with children.

The arrival at home on Sunday gave us a few hours respite before registration on Monday morning. Boarders came in on Tuesday, September 2, and the end of the week found us with 170 high school students fifty of which were Freshmen, and two hundred were elementary students. The boarders totaled 78 and many applications had been rejected for lack of classroom space as well as of teachers. We could easily employ two lay teachers if they were available.

The very first week of school witnessed a general meeting of the Sodality. The Office was sung by the entire student body on the First Friday. The convent chapel can no longer accommodate the group and the parish church has now become the regular meeting place.

The day pupils' Sodality sponsored a midday lunch on two different occasions and cleared enough money to install fluorescent lights in the junior and senior classrooms.

Mother Immaculata made a rapid trip to Denver at the end of September and was back for the Feast of St. Francis.

In the upper classes a study of Franciscan lore, end of Franciscan philosophy culminated in a series of papers written by the students for OUR SUNDAY VISITOR. These were especially requested by its editors. To celebrate the Feast of St. Francis, the students enjoyed a full length movie on the life of our Father and Founder. Though the dialogue was Spanish, the children found it easy to follow because of

the English captions. To them—and they have seen pictures like a repeat of the SULLIVANS and THE JOLSON STORY—St. Francis is still the picture of the year. When the experiment was repeated by showing THE VIRGIN OF GUADALUPE, it proved successful again, but ST. FRANCIS is still uppermost in their scale of values.

Mr. Ted Alexander, a rural entertainment promoter from Lincoln, in connection with our own County Agent, came in early October and taught our children square and circle dancing. That took their fancy to such an extent that they wanted to sacrifice their dinner hour to continue the fun. Mrs. Carroll Stewart, of the FRONTIER staff, takes time out every Friday afternoon to teach calisthenics to our girls.

Football holds the limelight for the boys. Father Werner did not feel capable of coaching the squad and confided the job to a city business man. This man, Mr. Al Sipes, was capable, but as his business increased he found less and less time to devote to the boys. Considering their handicap, the squad did fairly well—losing and winning an equal number of games.

The high school teachers attended the State Teachers' Convention in Norfolk on October 23 and 24. The inspiration derived was well worth the time spent. The boarders were grateful for a long weekend and only seven spent it here.

October brought us two banquets and all the trimmings. At one we seated 180 Catholic Daughters of America. Two weeks later we entertained 268 Knights of Columbus and their ladies. Sister Edward, alone at her post as chef, smilingly agrees that it is a good financial project and she dreams of financing a new stove. The twelve other Sisters and the forty some children who set up temporary tables, lay covers, serve, and wash dishes for these crowds agree to let her dream but pray that no nightmares may result.

The State inspector of secondary schools made us a flying visit in late October. He seemed highly pleased with his cursory inspection and gave us a satisfactory report. Our application to join the "charmed circle", the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges, though completed and acted upon, has not been definitely accepted. Perhaps another inspection is in order.

A series of skits by the Freshmen, who show decided dramatic ability, together with a two hour bazaar netted over a hundred dollars to be used for postage on European relief packages or for similar charity. Throughout the year, the elementary grades as well as the Freshmen are decidedly Mission minded. The upper classes are eager to share in the rewards, by sincere participation in all projects. The grades have already ransomed four pagan babies, the fifth and sixth grades have joined Colum's China Dima parade, and many appeals for money and clothing are being answered by the seventh and eighth grades.

An All State music clinic for vocal and instrumental students drew eight of our children and their teachers, Sister Flores and Mr. George, to Kearney on November 21. No ratings are given at such a meet, but nationally famous directors work with large groups and demonstrate what can be done. Both teachers and students derive help for their future efforts.

Three of the seniors took the preliminary Pepsicola Scholarship examinations on November 21, and all declared it was truly an elimination test. They had never seen anything so hard.

The Health Department of the State of Nebraska initiated a project of taking chest X-rays of every citizen over twelve years of age. It is a free service and is not compulsory. The X-ray unit is mobile,

and the office address is wherever the trailer parks. The unit visited O'Neill in November, and both schools cooperated one hundred percent. Thus far no active cases of tuberculosis have been reported among the children.

Mother Immaculate anticipated the celebration of her Nameday by some ten days. During the carefree interval of Thanksgiving vacation, the Sisters gave vent to their inclination to celebrate. From waffles to Bunco, it was a day of light, yet grateful hearts.

On November 25, the day on which the Archdiocese was to solemnize the Feast of St. Cecilia, its Patronal Feast, our Most Reverend Archbishop James Hugh Ryan, educator, writer, philosopher, passed to his eternal reward. The Right Reverend Monsignor Nicholas Wegner, chancellor of the archdiocese, was appointed administrator until the elevation by the Holy Father of a new Archbishop.

The strains of THE GYPSY TROUBADOUR opened the homiest of months. This operetta was presented on the public school stage on December 4, and on the evening of the fifth. Returns, both cultural and financial, were highly satisfactory. It will be possible to make partial payment on two pianos being ordered for the music department.

December 8, our Lady's Day, was the opening date of our basketball season. Our boys met the St. Joseph quintet from Atkinson, and Mary bowed to Joseph. The second game, more evenly matched, was with our O'Neill neighbors and we lost by a smaller margin. The next game was a victory and the season ahead looks hopeful.

Reception into the Blessed Mother Sodality took place in St. Patrick Church, at 7:30 on Tuesday evening, December 9. Fifty candidates, the largest class in memory, pledged their loyalty to their Queen and their Mother. An informal party in the Academy gymnasium followed the ceremony.

The boarders' formal Christmas banquet set the keynote of the last week of school before the holidays. Mrs. Rasley gave a free show, PINOCCHIO, for both schools. Mr. Downey came to take class and group pictures for souvenirs or for the school annual; the seniors had their graduation pictures taken; the seniors calling cards came; Santa Claus was in evidence everywhere.

Each elementary grade had its classroom program, and mothers and fathers were visiting school that week to see Johnny and Mary personifying the Holy Family or the shepherds and the angels. The age old story became new again, as the children's hearts were being prepared for another Christmas. On Thursday of that last week, the Freshmen, directed by Sister Emilia, presented Sister Ligouri's RACHEL THE LEPER MAID. It was colorful, clearly presented, and well received. The play put everyone, into the proper mood for the finale caroling for Monsignor, Father Werner, and the Sisters; the exchange of gifts; and the well wishes and leave takings.

The holidays, scheduled to last from December 19 to January 5, are restful, quiet, glad, and holy days. As there's nothing in the world like a Convent Christmas, so there are no days more deeply appreciated by the Sisters than are these holidays. The spiritual significance of the Season is climaxed by a day of real retreat on the last day of the year, conducted in 1947 by Father Malachias Kain, OFM, from St. Elizabeth, Denver, with such a farewell to an old and well filled year, our welcome on January 1 to a New Year is happy and trustful—though the undertones of the New Year bells sound only deepest gratitude for the past and humble confidence in the future.

Heartfelt greetings to all our Sisters, East, West, and everywhere, from

Mother M. Immaculata

Sister Electa

Sister Antonella

Sister Jolenta

Sister Brigid

Sister Fides

Sister Edmunda

Sister Casilda

Sister Bruno

Sister Andrea

Sister Maxine

Sister Serafica

1948 - "Prayers for Russia"

The hymns of gratitude for a grace-laden 1947 were still echoing thru the halls of St. Mary's and in every grateful heart which 1948 dawned upon us with God's pursuant blessing and omens of busy days to come. The students were back in their classrooms just three days when the glamour of the stage beckoned. The Juniors Thespians put on their annual play, GREEN MIDNIGHT, on January 8. Despite numerous obstacles and many unavoidable delays the play was a real success. Mrs. F.J. Kubitschek directed and staged the play and once again proved herself a friend in need.

Semester examinations came and went uneventfully for all except for the occasional laggard. Basketball was a give and take proposition all season- with our boys usually giving! The sport proves its worth more in the training and the physical outlet it provides the boys than in any scoreboard victory achieved. Otherwise the time and effort put into the activity might not be justified by our past three year record.

February is the month of important dates, none so important this year as the third, fourth, and fifth, the student Retreat days. The Reverend Thomas C. Donahue, SJ, an unusually good youth leader from St. Louis, was the "sky pilot" during those eventful days. The recording Angel alone can vouch for its lasting results.

The St. Valentine and pre-Lenten dances merged this year, and the Sophomores sponsored a colorful event, including the crowning ceremonies for the student elected King and Queen of Hearts. Daniel DeBacker and Eileen Stanton took the honors this year.

On Friday, February 13 – and Lent had just begun – Sister Edmunda was stricken with paralysis of the right side. The condition was serious, as Sister became completely helpless and need day and night nursing. On Wednesday following, Sister was conveyed by ambulance to St. Joseph Hospital, Alliance, where she could be given constant and competent attention. Mother Immaculata and Sister Fides accompanied Sister to the Hospital.

Someone had the god fortune to discover a not-too-busy carpenter in town, and before spring weather and building rush had set in, St. Mary's had added to her interior furnishings! A double amount of wardrobe space in the young ladies' dormitory, stools for each alcove, and vanity stools; a complete floor to ceiling arrangement of library shelves; a cupboard space for Sister Brigid's classroom, and a variety of other needed equipment. The wood was knotty and insufficiently aged, but the need had become too urgent to wait longer.

March is always welcomed by the children as the month of Monsignor's birthday. As usual, fine gifts of candy and fruit were provided for every child, time was called out of school, and Lenten abstinence was waived until those goodies had been disposed of.

On March 7, Father Lord and Father Bowdern held a Youth Rally in Sioux City and nearly forty St. Mary's students participated. Such inspiration brings dividends in Catholic Action, and in a desire to attend the Summer School of Catholic Action, if possible. Three students plan to be at the Denver Summer School in late August.

The Senior class play, THE MUMMY AND THE MUMPS? was produced on March 11. Financially it proved more successful than usual because this play has great popular appeal.

Mother Erica had arrived on March 11 for visitation, and had the opportunity to view our school at its busiest. Everybody found time or made it so that we could enjoy Mother's visit to the fullest extent. When the week was over our theme song became "Backward, turn backward!"

On March 17, the Feast of St. Patrick, O'Neill celebrated in a variety of ways. St. Mary's chose to make use of the spirit of festivity and the Lenten indulgence by projecting an "Irish Fair" – just an old fashioned bazaar and benefit, with Irish trimmings. The effort was successful and three hundred dollars was realized. This sum was added to our Chapel repair fund.

On the feast of St. Joseph the school attended nine o'clock Mass in a body. Three budding orators attended the District Declamatory Contest in Atkinson and won honors. In the evening, the one-act play rated two or excellent. All contestants were pleased with the outcomes because declamatory contests are fairly new endeavors.

On March 24 school recessed for Easter until March 31. This opening day was eventful too, because it marked the installation of our new Archbishop, the Most Reverend Gerald T. Bergan. Mother Immaculata and Sister Jolenta attended the installation ceremonies and Holy Mass at St. Cecilia Cathedral in Omaha that morning.

"There's music in the air" all through April, and weeks before. On Thursday and Friday, April 15 and 16, District Three holds its contest here, with St. Mary's and O'Neill High as host schools. St. Agnes, Alliance came again this year thirty-three strong and carried off their full quota of superior ratings. Several other Catholic schools participated this year and all were fairly successful. The crowds moving in and out during those two days number somewhere in the thousands, which is a record for O'Neill.

Then to climax these cultural activities the superiors in music and declamatory were invited to participate in the State Fine Arts Festival in Lincoln. Again a large percentage came through with flying colors. April came to a close with a dance sponsored by the Boys' Sodality.

The 16 mm. movie program continued throughout the second semester, with a picture every two weeks. For the high school this showing is always in the evening. Films for classroom showing, especially in Science and Geography, proved most interesting and instructive.

May 1 was First Saturday and the usual May Day prayers for Russia took on special significance. The day students' Sodality girls have adopted the First Saturday as their general Communion day and they follow up the devotions in honor of our Lady of Fatima.

May 2 was our First Holy Communion Day for the little ones of the School and parish. It was a happy day for 16 little boys and 17 little girls.

An unusual occasion was the Jubilee celebration for Sister Bruno and Sister Cassilda. The former was commemorating 50 years of consecrated life and the latter 25. The actual anniversaries come in August, but it was considered wise to celebrate while school was still in session, so that the children might learn from such a Feast the esteem in which a religious vocation is held. The High Mass in St. Patrick's Church, the procession of 50 little ones, and the tableaux and music later in the morning helped to instill the real meaning of Vow Day. The next day was the Feast of the Ascension, so we had a little breathing spell to enjoy a second Jubilee day.

On Sunday, May 9, the Catholic Daughters held a Communion breakfast in the Academy dining room. The boarders served about 60 guests.

On May 14, Sister Flores' little musicians gave a piano and vocal recital. The assembly room is always crowded with fond parents and relatives on such an occasion.

On May 19 the Junior-Senior Banquet and Prom was held with an early dinner in informal dinner clothes and the formal dance later in the evening. Johnny Mullen's orchestra played for the occasion. The theme followed throughout the evening was "At the End of the Rainbow."

May 19 the whole school participated in the beautiful May procession and the crowning of our Lady in St. Patrick's Church. Father Werner gave a short but inspiring talk and the service closed with Benediction.

The next day all the High School classes, except the freshmen, set out on their all-day picnics. The Sophomores went to Long Pine, the Juniors and Seniors to Niobrara State Park. The Freshmen who had spent a day at Long Pine on May 11, stayed home at school and incidentally did a little house cleaning during free periods. The upper grade children had also held outings but the younger children have an outdoor party on our grounds.

On Friday a little time had to be taken out of school to carry and arrange tables in the gymnasium for the Alumni Banquet. Sunday's gathering consisted of some one hundred eighty guests. Alumni members had been asked to bring husbands or wives and the suggestion was well accepted. It proved so popular that it was decided to make it traditional.

The art exhibit was open to the public on Sunday, May 23, and St. Mary's was open house all day. On Monday, May 24, grades one to seven displayed their vocal and dramatic abilities by staging an operetta "Spring is Here" as their closing exercises. Eighth grade graduation took place Tuesday, May 25.

Wednesday evening the Seniors gave their class night program in the public school auditorium, and Thursday morning, May 27, the graduation exercises were held in St. Patrick's Church. Reverend Daniel Twohig of Lynch was the guest speaker for the occasion.

Most of the housecleaning had been done by the students before they went home. The dormitory wardrobes had been re-finished, the window frames varnished, and the radiators silvered. Even the gymnasium was scrubbed and sealed by Sister Electa and her boys before school closed. Thus the sisters could go off to their vacation schools without the anxiety that those at home would be burdened by extra cleaning. Sisters Jolenta and Marianne went to St. John's to teach about sixty children; Sisters

Casilda and Emilia presided at Emmet over twenty children; Sisters Ferdinand, Electa, and Antonella taught at Ewing, where 82 children were enrolled. After these two week sessions, the college Sisters packed up for another type of school and Sisters Electa and Antonella taught a week's vacation school at Coleridge.

Before too many Sisters had departed for their summer assignments, St. Patrick's parish witnessed another First Mass. The Reverend Peter O. Price, SJ, another St. Mary's Alumnus, was ordained on June 16, and said his First Solemn High Mass in O'Neill on June 20. His brothers, Father Bartholomew Leahy preached the sermon and presided at the dinner which followed. The Sisters and students served dinner to 70 guests in the Academy dining room. The Alumni Association sponsored the reception held in our gym from two to five in the afternoon.

The festivities only half over, Sister Flores sped away to St. Mary College, Xavier, Kansas. Sisters Fides, George, and Laurita had already begun a strenuous summer at Creighton University. Sister Emilia became her traveling companion because she needed medical care. Sister Ferdinand returned to her college at St. Ambrose, Davenport, Iowa, and Sister Marianne accompanied a pioneer group to Briar Cliff College in Sioux City. This is a new venture and seems a satisfactory one; the courses are helpful and the traveling distance much shorter than usual.

Sister Andrea and Edward decided they needed a change of scenery and had the privilege of keeping their Retreat at Marycrest in Denver. With their halos shined and adjusted they were back in about ten days. One glimpse of Denver was insufficient for Sister Edward and in July she went back, this time for medical attention.

Sisters Hilga, Eileen, and Aloysius visited with us one day enroute to Briar Cliff. Sister Spes became a very useful summer visitor by presiding at the organ in the parish church for all weddings and Requiems. Besides serving in this official capacity, Sister was a grad help all summer. St. Mary's offers orchids to her and to the Holy Rosary community that lent her to us.

Early June had been extremely hot and dry. Pastors and people, even the vacation school groups, prayed fervently for moisture for the parched earth. The prayers rising humbly from many hearts were answered by an abundance of rainfall through two weeks of June and off and on at almost regular intervals through July. May God be praised, the crops are promising as never before.

Sister Bruno became a long suffering patient in early July. Painful carbuncles on her knee kept her completely inactive for many days. It was with new youth and vigor that she rejoined the Community after that experience.

Sister Serafica went to St. Catherine's Hospital, Omaha, on July 13, for surgery, and Sister Antonella left on July 19 for treatment of a stubborn case of Bell's palsy. The latter had an opportunity to visit the Creighton students in action, but returned in a few days for a rest.

Then before too many days, college examinations were over and the Sisters were welcomed back for a short respite before Retreat. Sister Spes remained long enough to welcome her Sister and to offer congratulations at our comic Community graduation exercises held for Sister M. Fides, MS. Sister Flores, in the meantime, kept Retreat in Denver and helped to solemnize the ceremonies of reception and profession at Marycrest.

Sister Carmen and Sister rose of St. Francis Mission, Sister Spes of Holy Rosary mission, and Sister Clotilda of St. Joseph Hospital, Minot, North Dakota, helped to swell our Retreat crowd. Fr. Malachy Kane, OFM, of St. Elizabeth, Denver, conducted the Sisters' Retreat and everyone was happy over the re-finishing he accomplished in our souls. A beautiful Holy Hour closed the eight day "treat". The Retreat prepared us for sacrifice, and sacrifice was asked of us. Our Mother Immaculata was transferred to St. Elizabeth, Denver. She was to be accompanied by Sister Maryanne. Sister Electa, whose roots had grown in the soil of "little Ireland" for twelve years, who had seen children come and go, who had toiled long and unselfishly for St. Mary's, was called to St. Agnes Academy. Sister Christiana of St. Agnes came to fill her place; Sister Rosalie of St. Francis came for Sister Maryanne, and Sister Rosemarie came as most welcome help as sacristan, portress, and dormitory Sister.

The day Retreat closed our Mother made plans to leave – but on second thought, remained to introduce our new superior, Mother M. Boniface of St. Francis Mission. With every wish for renewed health and vigor we bade farewell to Mother Immaculata. Her work in Denver is light and less strenuous and in comparison with her heavy responsibilities at St. Mary's, almost a vacation.

Sister Rose Held, enroute for Denver after her Retreat here, was accompanied by Sister Antonella. The latter, with Mother M. Agnesine, of Rushville, attended a six day Guidance Clinic at Loretto Heights, conducted by Father Gerald Kelly, SJ, of St. Mary's Kansas. The week of August 30 was Father Lord's famous Summer School of Catholic Action in Denver. Sisters Emilia and George attended from St. Mary's.

In the meantime, school had opened. Registration days were August 30 and 31. School began on September 1. Mrs. George had joined our faculty and five regular classes opened. The Commercial classes could not operate in the absence of Sister George. Miss Lou Birmingham helped in Sister Emilia's place. The boarder enrollment was unusually heavy – there were ninety five on September 1.

The roofing project, which meant replacement of all the slate on the Academy wing running north and south, and the part over the little girls' dormitory (the extreme east of the old building), had been started in July. The job was still incomplete, and work was being done in September. The falling slates were dangerous, but slateless roofs proved a worse hazard when the rains came. Late summer had been consistently dry and when rain surprised us in the middle of a September night, we had indoor floods! It was like a heavy downpour in the study hall. About 20 girls heard the shuffling of furniture and came to the rescue. The 60 desks were removed, the pianos covered, and the students and Sisters mopped and poured our water for hours. Noah had fewer worries that we. But finally the rains ceased, and the children changed from soaking pajamas to Sisters' nightgowns, and retired for a long sleep. The Sisters kept to schedule all next day and survived. When the roofers returned they were truly sorry and amended their lives as well as our roof. By October 15, the roof replacements were complete and the debris had been cleared away. Every penny we had managed to hide was also whisked away by roofing expenses. Our financial status became so low that when the laundry equipment broke down, our exchequer was empty. We had to call upon the Alumni Association for aid. As a result, Sister Andrea now has a new Bendix – a washer, rinser, and wringer combined.

Sister Edward, too, had made improvements in her department. A new walk-in cooler was eventually installed in the kitchen and the approaches from the back of the kitchen were closed. Now all traffic must come one way, and is under Sister's watchful eye. The old south cellar is transformed into a lunch room for the hot lunch children, since both other dining rooms are needed to accommodate the borders.

Repair seemed to be the order of the day. Mr. Sargent, a local carpenter, mended and painted all the screens for our 600 some windows. Architects, engineers, and insurance men may call this a more than million dollar establishment, but it is the poor daughters of Mother Magdalen who lean hard on their Lord to keep the house in a state of repair.

The State Inspectors, both in the academic and professional training fields, mad their scheduled visitations and fund all to their satisfaction, except the overcrowded classrooms. We, ourselves, are not too unhappy about that situation because we feel the need of working to our utmost capacity.

The Meisner players had a mishap on the way from Omaha and arrived too late to include our children in their audience. Those who could still go at 4:00 o'clock reported that THE IMAGINARY INVALID was done in their usual professional style. This was on November 2. On the same day Sister Emilia and the Freshmen gave a Mission benefit party. The children brought the refreshments from home, and all income was clear profit. It was a worthwhile enterprise.

The football season was more successful than last year's though the boys did nothing startling. Mr. Gene Wolf and John Baker helped with the coaching. To close the season the Alumni played our boys at a homecoming event on November 14. Our trained players nosed a victory by two points. Ila Carter was crowned by the football captain queen of the occasion. The day closed with a social evening in the gym.

On the following day, Brother Eymard of the Holy Cross teaching brothers, visited our school and gave a vocation talk.

On the same day the matinee for SUNBONNET SUE was held. Both the daytime and evening performances of the operetta were well received. The best musicians were selected for clinic work in the State festival held on November 19, in Omaha. A terrific blizzard, the worst since 1888 the settlers say, opened up on November 18. Stores were snowed under, cars were completely covered, roads were blocked, communication lines were down, electric power was off for several hours, our boarders were snow-bound over the week end – and the second day of the blizzard we had no school. Traces of that snow remained thru the winter. The musicians who had traveled to Omaha, as well as Father Werner, who took them in his car, were stranded away from home for days. Father had his Sunday Mass in Norfolk, while Monsignor had to say three Masses here. In spite of every difficulty people dug themselves out so rapidly that on the following Wednesday all the children could go home for the Thanksgiving holidays.

Immediately after the holidays, mother Boniface and Sister Antonella visited the Grand Island Federal Housing Project to examine and bid on an allotment of beds and dressers. Both are sorely needed in our large family of boarders. Our bid, though fairly high, was over-reached and we are still hoping for another chance.

The Juniors wanted to impress O'Neillers as well as their school mates by attempting a production of Thorton Wilder's classic drama, OUR TOWN. On December 13, they staged what has since been the talk of the town. It was splendidly done and financially it was also a success.

That barely over, the Christmas festivities began. Mrs. Rasley invited both schools to a free showing of a cartoon picture, a musical skit, and a long feature. That was on Tuesday, December 14. On December 16, the boarders had their annual formal Christmas party. There is variety here that all

enjoy. The girls are high class young ladies for an evening. Monsignor McNamara and Father Werner are guests, and the Sisters serve. It is memorable for the children.

The next week opened with the Freshmen staging two one-act Christmas plays for the Seniors, who they entertained at a Christmas party. On Wednesday evening, Sister Flores' music pupils have a two hour recital that doting parents enjoyed to the full. The next morning, the elementary school stages a group of Christmas numbers showing both talent and practice. In the afternoon the classes sang carols for their teachers, presented gifts to Monsignor, Father Werner, and to Mr. and Mrs. Ira George. The gift exchange took place in the classrooms, and in a threatening storm, the children set out for their homes and all arrived safely for a "white Christmas".

St. Mary's was snowed under both literally and figuratively. God's goodness overflowed upon us, people showered gifts upon us, and Christmas was the most generous ever. The heavy snows continued, and many country people were unable to be present at the Christmas Masses. The fierce winter gales made the coal collection more welcome than ever. It totaled over twelve hundred dollars and while our hearts were filling with gratitude for that help, Christmas gifts, both financial and spiritual kept pouring in. Father Eugene Gallagher, SJ, was able to spend Christmas at home. St. Mary's then, was privileged to have two Masses in our chapel. The Christmas spirit pervades the Season, and in an atmosphere of joy, and peace, and gratitude we enter the last day of 1948. This is a day of recollection conducted this year by Father Joachim, a Franciscan from Quincy, Illinois. The chord of gratitude for a year replete with blessing ends this piece, and strikes the keynote for 1949.

Mother M. Boniface

Sister M. Casilda

Sister M. Rosalie

Sister M. Brigid

Sister M. Emilia

Sister M. Serafica

Sister M. Bruno

Sister M. Jolenta

Sister M. Fides

Sister M. George

Sister M. Edward

Sister M. Laurita

Sister M. Rosemarie

1949 - "Blizzards"

The winter of 1948-49 will ever be memorable for its vast and utter whiteness, for its lonely, frightening hours, for its real suffering, and for the wide extent of the snow peril. The big blizzard of November 18 had paralyzed traffic for several days on the highways—for weeks in rural areas. From that date until early February many farmers were snowbound, and SNOWBOUND meant hardship to man and beast before the spell was finally broken. How the storms grew worse and worse, and how man and machines engaged in a vicious, heartbreaking struggle to loosen the icy grip of Nature, may someday become the Saga of the West.

The snowfall of November 18 was the heaviest in history. Fortunately the temperature had remained comparatively high and no lives were lost. Snow fighting equipment was slow getting into operation and there was so little of it. Barely had communications been revived, when new storms set in. The boarders had just reached their homes in safety for the Christmas holidays when the roads once more drifted and became impassable. On December 24, a calm day, the farmers fought desperately to clear the side roads. They hoped to take their families to Mass on Christmas Day. Christmas Eve was

blustery and the next morning all their work had been undone. The winds died down, and in late afternoon digging operations were renewed. Perhaps they could get to Mass the next day, Sunday. The next day, however, the drifts were higher than ever. Many gave up then trying to contact others. They saw the need of concentrating upon the work of getting water and provisions to their stock. That work became monotonous and wearying. Day after day, from daylight to dark, it was an unending struggle against wind and snow. To dig paths, to lead frightened stock to feed stacks, or to try to haul feed over mountains of snow gradually became too much for the most stouthearted.

Through the efforts of Andrew Clark, for Holt County, and others in like peril, the Governor of Nebraska declared an emergency and asked for Federal aid. General Lewis J. Pick and his Fifth army came with bulldozers, caterpillars and jeeps, to dig out the snow-imprisoned population. Before army operations could get into full swing, the Red Cross came with planes and supplies. Distress headquarters were set up in O'Neill. Sufferers were to leave signal marks in the snow, and planes would alight to the rescue. The planes arrived on skis with food, medicine, and fuel. Relatives in O'Neill sent rescue planes out to rural people whose telephones and radios no longer functioned—and who might not know the distress signals. Stories of dire distress came back. Families were living in single rooms to conserve fuel; fence posts and furniture were being used as fuel; some were out of food.

Patients were flown in to local hospitals for care; students and teachers came to O'Neill by plane. Schools had re-opened on January 10, but only the students resident in O'Neill and four boarders presented themselves the first three or four days. Gradually—by horseback, by old-fashioned sled or by plane, the out-of-town students arrived. Those from neighboring states arrived earlier than the others because they had resorted to plane rides immediately. Finally, when Ewing and Chambers students saw no other way out, they used private planes to fly to bus lines or directly to O'Neill.

Examinations were held according to schedule and only about ten out of one hundred and sixty-five students had to take tests later. Some of these ten arrived only after February first. The Retreat Master was able to get here by train; therefore Father Leopold Kitt, OFM, a Golden Jubilarian and a winning missionary, conducted a splendid three days renewal. It was with difficulty that he managed a way to Alliance, his next stop. Weather had interfered again; but Father smiled and called it God's weather. His bus followed the rotary snow plow to Grand Island. From there the highways were open.

Basketball games followed schedule rather consistently. Only occasionally was a game called off on account of bad roads. County, conference and district tournaments came in their scheduled weeks; although another blizzard called an interval between playoffs and finals in the district meet.

Annually the American Legion sponsors the participation of boys and girls in State government. In addition to this, Boys' state and Girls' State week, Nebraska now features Boys' County and Girls' County. After weeks of study and preparation, after conventions and elections have been held in the schools and ratified, the junior boys and girls who have been elected to County offices spend one full day in these offices. The County official is present and in charge, but he permits his eight or nine sides, depending on the number of schools participating, to examine his books and records, to help him take care of his day's business, while he explains the significance of his work. Holt County Participation Day, set for January 18, was postponed until late April. Weather again! The participants enjoyed the graphic, learn-to-do-by-doing Civics lesson.

In February, Sister Laurita got word of her father's serious illness. It was impossible to reach him by the ordinary means of transportation, so Sister was obliged to take a plane to Washington State. Her

father appreciated her being with him before and after his serious operation and he survived many weeks. He died in late June.

Blizzards continued through February and early March, but the high school boys delighted in shoveling walks. Clearing the paths of hard packed snow and ice required arduous and painstaking efforts. Sister Ferdinand and her fourth grade boys spend many hours of their free time chopping away this menace.

The Latin classes, under the direction of Sister Emilia, celebrated Latin week with a series of projects. There were Latin plays, among them SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS, Latin posters, Latin art and architecture, Latin puzzles, and Latin games. The program stirred up interest and enthusiasm for the study of a difficult subject.

Music Contest came before Easter this year. Passion Week came to a musical climax in those two days, April 8 and 9. St. Agnes girls from Alliance made this their contest headquarters again this year. They came, 35 strong, with Mother Virginia and Sister Constance as chaperones and accompanists. The piano numbers were excellent and vocal as usual, carried off many laurels, even though the judges seemed to be more demanding than ever before. St. Mary's students also rated well, though there were disappointments. Instrumental won honors, but St. Mary's band did not participate. Bad weather had interfered with rehearsals, and this year's group seems to lack native talent as well. Mother Erica and Sister Lenore came though O'Neill as they headed toward Denver. They were glad to give audition to the St. Mary's and St. Agnes musical numbers the evening before Contest. This way they could appreciate the tremendous amount of preparation necessary for such an enterprise.

Before the school year was over there was also a recital for all the music pupils not represented in the contest. The parents came in a capacity crowd and held their heads high because their little one could appear on the stage – perhaps for a piece of music from six to ten measures.

April was coming to a pleasant, spring-like close when a new Mercury Ford appeared on the scene. Mr. and Mrs. William J. Froelich had purchased and donated this new car to St. Mary's. Our intention was, of course, that it should be for the Motherhouse and our benefactors understood that. Wherefore, on April 30, Mr. Clarence Hicks, chauffeur for the Froelich's, Sister Bruno, Sister Rosemarie, and Mrs. Hicks started for Denver, via Alliance. Sister Bruno was to remain at St. Joseph Hospital, Alliance, for examination and care. Sister Rosemarie continued on to Marycrest, and then returned home by train and bus.

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The Senior play, THE BLACK TERROR, had most of its participants and the director nearly terrorized by its frequent postponements. First the leading man got tonsillitis; then the leading lady developed strep throat. It was staged finally on May 2.

First Communion highlighted the May time, coming on May 15. On that day, 14 boys and 21 girls became, as Monsignor McNamara contends, "adult members of their parish."

Junior-Senior banquet with its theme, the Forty Niners, gave the decorative and festive touch to the end of the year activities. May 12 was their big day. Then things followed each other in quick succession. May Crowning, more elaborate than ever, was held on My 19. Victoria Zakrzewski had the privilege of crowning the statue of Our Lady. May 20 was grade school closing—with an operetta, THE LAND OF DREAMS COME TRUE. The eighth grade graduates, six boys and fourteen girls, reached the climax of their elementary school days on the evening of May 23, when each one of this talented group had an opportunity to perform in some manner.

May 24 was Class Night for the high school graduates; May 25, forty one seniors, eight boys and thirty three girls received their high school diplomas. These exercises were held, as traditional, in the parish Church. Father Conrad Kaup from St. John's addressed the graduates and Monsignor distributed the honors.

The next day was Ascension Thursday; then came hurried preparations for two vacation schools, Coleridge and Emmet, which opened on Monday, May 30. Sisters Christiana and Rosalie traveled back and forth each day for two weeks; Sisters Antonella and Emilia spent only one week at Coleridge. The other schools at St. John's and Ewing were in session from June 6 to June 19. Sisters Jolenta and Serafica taught at St. John's; Sisters Flores, Casilda, and Ferdinand at Ewing.

The Summer School of Catholic Action beckoned four Sisters to Denver from June 20 to 24. Sisters Jolenta, Casilda, Emilia, and Antonella were privileged to attend it. Sister Casilda remained at Loretto Heights for summer college. Sister Emilia taught high school subjects at Marycrest. Sister Rosalie and Sister Andrea went to St. Joseph Hospital in Alliance for medical check-ups. This was about June 17. Sister Rosalie returned in a week; Sister Andrea has a serious lung condition that needs and extended rest and continued care.

Other summer appointments were: Sister Fides, office work at St. Mary Hosital, Scottsbluff; Sister Christiana, college studies at Loras; Sister Serafica underwent major surgery on July 8 at St. Catherine Hospital in Omaha; Sister Flores, college at Mary, Xavier; Sisters George and Laurita to finish their graduate studies at Creighton; Sister Ferdinand, college at St. Ambrose, Davenport.

The rest of the community enjoyed a strenuous summer of housecleaning, renovating, and re-decorating at home. The Chapel was painted, the refectory and scullery now have sanded floors and white woodwork and furnishings; floors in the refectory corridor and in the sacristy were sanded, sealed, and waxed. The corridor in front of the chapel has new linoleum floor covering and the ceiling was painted. The damaged walls in Sister Fides' store and in Sister Flores' music room were re-plastered. To insure protection to the inside "new look", all the brick work in the convent wing had to be caulked. This extensive job, plus the new roofing covering about two thirds of the convent and the whole front wing of the Academy kept two crews of men busy most of the summer.

By August 5, all the summer school students had returned except Sister Flores who went to Marycrest to help solemnize the Reception and Profession ceremonies on August 17. Jubilee bells rang out at St. Mary's on August 8 for Sister Rosalie whose twenty-fifth anniversary fell on August 31. Her father, sister and two nieces from Denver were able to be present to enjoy a lovely, glad, triumphal day with sister. The Community had grown to help in the celebration. Mother Agnesine and Sister Bartholomew were staying for the Annual Retreat; Sister Carmen was enjoying a stop-over, as she also was to remain for retreat. Sister Anthony, assigned to St. Mary's for the year, had arrived before retreat too.

The retreat, conducted by Father Paul J. Wagner, Marianist from Dayton, was more than usually conducive to spiritual renewal, growth and encouragement. Father made every effort to catch and help us grow in the spirit of Mather Magdalen's Franciscanism. He succeeded in giving us a new appreciation of our special vocation.

After retreat, we had to see our visitors leave for their new spheres of activity. Sister Spes, who by her untiring, self-sacrificing work during the summer at altar and organ, as well as around the house, had made herself nearly indispensable, left us August 18 and created a void not easily filled.

The appointments, announced before retreat were for Sister Emilia to go to Marycrest to help the young Sisters in their studies; and Sister Rosalie to teach little ones at St. Elizabeth in Denver. Sister Emilia was not replaced. Sister Helenita came on August 20 to take Sister Rosalie's place.

Sister Ferdinand's mother, ailing for some months past, died in July. Sister had already made her visits home, so she mourned and sympathized with her dear ones from a great distance.

Worthy of record is the fact that Sister George and Sister Laurita received their Master's degrees at the end of the summer's work. St. Mary's already recognized at the State Department for the high quality of its teachers' preparation, is able to put another feather in its hat.

To complete the staff ready to begin operations in September, Mrs. Ira George agreed to return as English teacher. Mrs. Kubitschek was to teach dancing classes and to aid in the music department. Mrs. Dicknite, from Neligh, came to stay here and to take over Sister Andrea's work in the laundry.

Though roof repair continued, the community changed from blue to black aprons and opened classes on September 6. Three days of registration had preceded and the figures indicated a slight decrease in the high school enrollment but a noted increase in the grades. The fifth and sixth grades number 59, and Mrs. James Cronk has offered her services for an hour a day to teach History, spelling, and reading to the sixth grade. This lift gives Sister Casilda a chance to work extra hard with her fifth grade with is a group with varied abilities. School was in full swing after the Initiation party held for the freshmen on September 8.

Our Franciscan hearts were gladdened when two capable graduates of 1948 became postulants at Marycrest. Both Catherine Murphy and Gloria Slaight had been successful rural school teachers the past year. Mother Boniface accompanied them to Denver and was present at the Entrance ceremony.

Football season looked promising and eager fans planned to see the boys in action against Cathedral in Lincoln. A bus load of Pep Club members and their chaperones accompanied the boys on September 23 and cheered them on to victory. The remainder of the football season was spectacular. The boys met and took all competition and emerged as undefeated champions. Arlen Miles chosen star back on the mythical All State team.

On September 30, O'Neill celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding. Schools were closed, the largest parade in O'Neill's history was staged and the whole day was a festal one. St. Mary's float, representing the golden jubilee bells of St. Mar's being rung by little angels, won a first prize. The float was constructed and decorated by the Friends of St. Mary's with aid and ideas from Sister Maxine. The Anthony Hospital float won honorable mention.

The hospital drive which had undergone concentrated stimulation during the summer, reached its climax on October 3 at a civic banquet. Tickets sold for five dollars per plate and quite a substantial sum was realized. After the banquet, the Academy barn and chicken coop were auctioned. These proceeds, however, were to be given to St. Mary's.

Father Paul Schneider, superintendent of schools, made his biannual visit on October 18. His time was limited and he was unable to get to all the classes. He met the Sisters, though, and gave suggestions and answered their questions. On October 21, Mr. Nicholas Behm, father of Sister M. Serafica, died in Minot.

The red letter day of the season was that of the arrival of reverend Mother Ignace and Mother Clarissa. Because they came at 12:30, the school children were not present to welcome them. The Sisters had the Mothers all to themselves until about 1:30, when the assembled school sang out their greetings from stairways and corridors. The seven days passed all too quickly, and the wonderful recreations that united us: East, West, North and South, God's workers in four continents, became loved memories all too soon. The grade school children demonstrated their joy in Reverend Mother's presence by staging a variety program. Many of their parents were there and Reverend Mother had occasion to address them and to visit with them. The high school presented Father Francis Gliebe's MY LADY POVERTY in honor of Reverend Mother. On October 27, Mr. James Corkle of O'Neill drove to Scottsbluff with our two honored guest and our own Mother Boniface, leaving us with a feeling of loneliness but with sentiments of gratitude that the guidance of Mother Magdalen's children was in such wise and holy care.

On the day before Reverend Mother was to leave, Mr. Elvin Hall, an expert roofer, lost his footing and fell the thirty eight feet to the concrete walk in front of the high school entrance. Sisters and children keenly and earnest prayers pleaded for his life. Mr. Hall was taken to St. Vincent Hospital in Sioux City, where he underwent bone surgery at spaced intervals. The outcome promises to be complete recovery, and we hope, the Faith. Mr. Hall is a college graduate and a practical pagan.

Reverend Mother and Mother Clarissa were unable to visit with our Right Reverend Monsignor McNamara because he was quite ill at Sacred Heart Hospital in Lynch. Just a week after the Mothers left, Monsignor had two successive strokes and died on All Souls' Day. His parish was shocked at the announcement of his death because, although aging, Monsignor had given no indication of serious illness. He had gone to the hospital merely to rest. On Monday, November 7, Monsignor's obsequies were held with great ceremony. The most Reverend Archbishop Gerald T. Bergan officiated at the solemn Requiem, and nearly a hundred priests were present. Dinner was served in the Academy dining rooms for the priests, the Sisters, and Monsignor's relatives. At one o'clock the funeral procession left O'Neill for Wisner where Monsignor's boy was interred. The school children preceded the hearse to the center of town and then separated and stood at reverent attention until the procession passed.

On November 8, Mr. Leroy Ortgiesen, state inspector of secondary school, visited our classroom. He seemed pleased with what he found and later wrote a most appreciative letter.

On November 9, the Juniors staged their class play, SMILING THROUGH. Mrs. George had directed it, and the play was successful in every way. The next day, our boys played the last of a series of successful football games and ended the season with a Homecoming celebration. The York boys, our opposition of the evening, were also invited to the party. At this event, Helen Ann Lee, president of the Pep Club, was crowned Football Queen. Arlen Miles, high point football player, shared the royal honors.

On November 20, a Sunday afternoon, the Sisters and children enjoyed the movie, COME TO THE STABLE. It was inspirational as well as entertaining.

St. Mary's Juniors, along with representatives of the other eight high schools in the County, enjoyed participation in County Government again this year. Before Thanksgiving, they filed for office and held primary elections. After the holiday, general elections were held and the fourteen elected officers assumed their duties for a day on November 30.

Basketball season opened inauspiciously on December 2. The boys lost to Ainsworth. Their next two games were victories...one over O'Neill. Their career is not all roses, but they have high hopes for the tournaments.

On December 8, at 7:30 p.m. thirty-six new members were received into the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A party in the gymnasium followed the beautiful ceremony and another eventful day was jotted down in many memory books.

On December 12 the talented children of grades and high school, put on a sort of amateur program consisting of the light and the humorous. It was real home – spun; many parents attended and enjoyed it and it brought in a small nest egg for our jubilee annual.

The beautiful Christmas playlet, MADONNA's CHOICE, together with special features by the elementary grades, put everyone into the real Christmas spirit. Representatives of the entire school appeared on the state. A record crowd attended and this occasion was used to welcome to our school and parish, our new pastor, the Very Revered Timothy O'Sullivan. The parish planed a formal reception earl in January.

The elementary Sodality organized last year under the title of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, held a reception for twenty-eight new members on December 21. Father O'Sullivan officiated.

On the evening of that day, three of our students who had been taking a special course of instruction were baptized and received into the Church. The next morning, these three and another high School student made their First holy Communion. They were Jean Ann Fahrenholz, her brother Gerald Fahrenholz, Albert Brandl and Patricia Boyle.

After our Christmas tree parties and distribution of gifts, the children left for their homes on December 22. The proverbial generosity of the O'Neill people evidenced in the coal collection as well as in the many useful gifts of money and food leaves us with a feeling of humble dependence upon God, Who provides so lovingly for His own and a gratitude that grows and grows. Convent Christmases are real, deep and spiritual. Convent Christmas in O'Neill had all the reality, depth and spirituality possible. Sometimes we think more than enough of the trimmings, besides.

With prayerful wishes for a spiritually rich New Year, this history closes.

Mother Boniface

Sister Jolenta

Sister Serafica

Sister Antonella

Sister Fides

Sister Helenita

Sister Brigid

Sister Christiana

Sister Flores

Sister Anthony

1949 - "Blizzards"

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Blizzards continued through February and early March, but the high school boys delighted in shoveling walks. Clearing the paths of hard packed snow and ice required arduous and painstaking efforts. Sister Ferdinand and her fourth grade boys spend many hours of their free time chopping away this menace.

The Latin classes, under the direction of Sister Emilia, celebrated Latin week with a series of projects. There were Latin plays, among them SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS, Latin posters, Latin art and architecture, Latin puzzles, and Latin games. The program stirred up interest and enthusiasm for the study of a difficult subject.

Music Contest came before Easter this year. Passion Week came to a musical climax in those two days, April 8 and 9. St. Agnes girls from Alliance made this their contest headquarters again this year. They came, 35 strong, with Mother Virginia and Sister Constance as chaperones and accompanists. The piano numbers were excellent and vocal as usual, carried off many laurels, even though the judges seemed to be more demanding than ever before. St. Mary's students also rated well, though there were disappointments. Instrumental won honors, but St. Mary's band did not participate. Bad weather had interfered with rehearsals, and this year's group seems to lack native talent as well. Mother Erica and Sister Lenore came though O'Neill as they headed toward Denver. They were glad to give audition to the St. Mary's and St. Agnes musical numbers the evening before Contest. This way they could appreciate the tremendous amount of preparation necessary for such an enterprise.

Before the school year was over there was also a recital for all the music pupils not represented in the contest. The parents came in a capacity crowd and held their heads high because their little one could appear on the stage – perhaps for a piece of music from six to ten measures.

April was coming to a pleasant, spring-like close when a new Mercury Ford appeared on the scene. Mr. and Mrs. William J. Froelich had purchased and donated this new car to St. Mary's. Our intention was, of course, that it should be for the Motherhouse and our benefactors understood that. Wherefore, on April 30, Mr. Clarence Hicks, chauffeur for the Froelich's, Sister Bruno, Sister Rosemarie, and Mrs. Hicks started for Denver, via Alliance. Sister Bruno was to remain at St. Joseph Hospital, Alliance, for examination and care. Sister Rosemarie continued on to Marycrest, and then returned home by train and bus.

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The Senior play, THE BLACK TERROR, had most of its participants and the director nearly terrorized by its frequent postponements. First the leading man got tonsillitis; then the leading lady developed strep throat. It was staged finally on May 2.

First Communion highlighted the May time, coming on May 15. On that day, 14 boys and 21 girls became, as Monsignor McNamara contends, "adult members of their parish."

Junior-Senior banquet with its theme, the Forty Niners, gave the decorative and festive touch to the end of the year activities. May 12 was their big day. Then things followed each other in quick succession. May Crowning, more elaborate than ever, was held on My 19. Victoria Zakrzewski had the privilege of crowning the statue of Our Lady. May 20 was grade school closing—with an operetta, THE LAND OF DREAMS COME TRUE. The eighth grade graduates, six boys and fourteen girls, reached the climax of their elementary school days on the evening of May 23, when each one of this talented group had an opportunity to perform in some manner.

May 24 was Class Night for the high school graduates; May 25, forty one seniors, eight boys and thirty three girls received their high school diplomas. These exercises were held, as traditional, in the parish Church. Father Conrad Kaup from St. John's addressed the graduates and Monsignor distributed the honors.

The next day was Ascension Thursday; then came hurried preparations for two vacation schools, Coleridge and Emmet, which opened on Monday, May 30. Sisters Christiana and Rosalie traveled back and forth each day for two weeks; Sisters Antonella and Emilia spent only one week at Coleridge. The other schools at St. John's and Ewing were in session from June 6 to June 19. Sisters Jolenta and Serafica taught at St. John's; Sisters Flores, Casilda, and Ferdinand at Ewing.

The Summer School of Catholic Action beckoned four Sisters to Denver from June 20 to 24. Sisters Jolenta, Casilda, Emilia, and Antonella were privileged to attend it. Sister Casilda remained at Loretto Heights for summer college. Sister Emilia taught high school subjects at Marycrest. Sister Rosalie and Sister Andrea went to St. Joseph Hospital in Alliance for medical check-ups. This was about June 17. Sister Rosalie returned in a week; Sister Andrea has a serious lung condition that needs and extended rest and continued care.

Other summer appointments were: Sister Fides, office work at St. Mary Hosital, Scottsbluff; Sister Christiana, college studies at Loras; Sister Serafica underwent major surgery on July 8 at St. Catherine

Hospital in Omaha; Sister Flores, college at Mary, Xavier; Sisters George and Laurita to finish their graduate studies at Creighton; Sister Ferdinand, college at St. Ambrose, Davenport.

The rest of the community enjoyed a strenuous summer of housecleaning, renovating, and re-decorating at home. The Chapel was painted, the refectory and scullery now have sanded floors and white woodwork and furnishings; floors in the refectory corridor and in the sacristy were sanded, sealed, and waxed. The corridor in front of the chapel has new linoleum floor covering and the ceiling was painted. The damaged walls in Sister Fides' store and in Sister Flores' music room were re-plastered. To insure protection to the inside "new look", all the brick work in the convent wing had to be caulked. This extensive job, plus the new roofing covering about two thirds of the convent and the whole front wing of the Academy kept two crews of men busy most of the summer.

By August 5, all the summer school students had returned except Sister Flores who went to Marycrest to help solemnize the Reception and Profession ceremonies on August 17. Jubilee bells rang out at St. Mary's on August 8 for Sister Rosalie whose twenty-fifth anniversary fell on August 31. Her father, sister and two nieces from Denver were able to be present to enjoy a lovely, glad, triumphal day with sister. The Community had grown to help in the celebration. Mother Agnesine and Sister Bartholomew were staying for the Annual Retreat; Sister Carmen was enjoying a stop-over, as she also was to remain for retreat. Sister Anthony, assigned to St. Mary's for the year, had arrived before retreat too.

The retreat, conducted by Father Paul J. Wagner, Marianist from Dayton, was more than usually conducive to spiritual renewal, growth and encouragement. Father made every effort to catch and help us grow in the spirit of Mather Magdalen's Franciscanism. He succeeded in giving us a new appreciation of our special vocation.

After retreat, we had to see our visitors leave for their new spheres of activity. Sister Spes, who by her untiring, self-sacrificing work during the summer at altar and organ, as well as around the house, had made herself nearly indispensable, left us August 18 and created a void not easily filled.

The appointments, announced before retreat were for Sister Emilia to go to Marycrest to help the young Sisters in their studies; and Sister Rosalie to teach little ones at St. Elizabeth in Denver. Sister Emilia was not replaced. Sister Helenita came on August 20 to take Sister Rosalie's place.

Sister Ferdinand's mother, ailing for some months past, died in July. Sister had already made her visits home, so she mourned and sympathized with her dear ones from a great distance.

Worthy of record is the fact that Sister George and Sister Laurita received their Master's degrees at the end of the summer's work. St. Mary's already recognized at the State Department for the high quality of its teachers' preparation, is able to put another feather in its hat.

To complete the staff ready to begin operations in September, Mrs. Ira George agreed to return as English teacher. Mrs. Kubitschek was to teach dancing classes and to aid in the music department. Mrs. Dicknite, from Neligh, came to stay here and to take over Sister Andrea's work in the laundry.

Though roof repair continued, the community changed from blue to black aprons and opened classes on September 6. Three days of registration had preceded and the figures indicated a slight decrease in the high school enrollment but a noted increase in the grades. The fifth and sixth grades number 59,

and Mrs. James Cronk has offered her services for an hour a day to teach History, spelling, and reading to the sixth grade. This lift gives Sister Casilda a chance to work extra hard with her fifth grade with is a group with varied abilities. School was in full swing after the Initiation party held for the freshmen on September 8.

Our Franciscan hearts were gladdened when two capable graduates of 1948 became postulants at Marycrest. Both Catherine Murphy and Gloria Slaight had been successful rural school teachers the past year. Mother Boniface accompanied them to Denver and was present at the Entrance ceremony.

Football season looked promising and eager fans planned to see the boys in action against Cathedral in Lincoln. A bus load of Pep Club members and their chaperones accompanied the boys on September 23 and cheered them on to victory. The remainder of the football season was spectacular. The boys met and took all competition and emerged as undefeated champions. Arlen Miles chosen star back on the mythical All State team.

On September 30, O'Neill celebrated the seventy-fifth anniversary of its founding. Schools were closed, the largest parade in O'Neill's history was staged and the whole day was a festal one. St. Mary's float, representing the golden jubilee bells of St. Mar's being rung by little angels, won a first prize. The float was constructed and decorated by the Friends of St. Mary's with aid and ideas from Sister Maxine. The Anthony Hospital float won honorable mention.

The hospital drive which had undergone concentrated stimulation during the summer, reached its climax on October 3 at a civic banquet. Tickets sold for five dollars per plate and quite a substantial sum was realized. After the banquet, the Academy barn and chicken coop were auctioned. These proceeds, however, were to be given to St. Mary's.

Father Paul Schneider, superintendent of schools, made his biannual visit ton October 18. His time was limited and he was unable to get to all the classes. He met the Sisters, though, and gave suggestions and answered their questions. On October 21, Mr. Nicholas Behm, father of Sister M. Serafica, died in Minot.

The red letter day of the season was that of the arrival of reverend Mother Ignace and Mother Clarissa. Because they came at 12:30, the school children were not present to welcome them. The Sisters had the Mothers all to themselves until about 1:30, when the assembled school sang out their greetings from stairways and corridors. The seven days passed all too quickly, and the wonderful recreations that united us: East, West, North and South, God's workers in four continents, became loved memories all too soon. The grade school children demonstrated their joy in Reverend Mother's presence by staging a variety program. Many of their parents were there and Reverend Mother had occasion to address them and to visit with them. The high school presented Father Francis Gliebe's MY LADY POVERTY in honor of Reverend Mother. On October 27, Mr. James Corkle of O'Neill drove to Scottsbluff with our two honored guest and our own Mother Boniface, leaving us with a feeling of loneliness but with sentiments of gratitude that the guidance of Mother Magdalen's children was in such wise and holy care.

On the day before Reverend Mother was to leave, Mr. Elvin Hall, an expert roofer, lost his footing and fell the thirty eight feet to the concrete walk in front of the high school entrance. Sisters and children keenly and earnest prayers pleaded for his life. Mr. Hall was taken to St. Vincent Hospital in Sioux City, where he underwent bone surgery at spaced intervals. The outcome promises to be complete recovery, and we hope, the Faith. Mr. Hall is a college graduate and a practical pagan.

Reverend Mother and Mother Clarissa were unable to visit with our Right Reverend Monsignor McNamara because he was quite ill at Sacred Heart Hospital in Lynch. Just a week after the Mothers left, Monsignor had two successive strokes and died on All Souls' Day. His parish was shocked at the announcement of his death because, although aging, Monsignor had given no indication of serious illness. He had gone to the hospital merely to rest. On Monday, November 7, Monsignor's obsequies were held with great ceremony. The most Reverend Archbishop Gerald T. Bergan officiated at the solemn Requiem, and nearly a hundred priests were present. Dinner was served in the Academy dining rooms for the priests, the Sisters, and Monsignor's relatives. At one o'clock the funeral procession left O'Neill for Wisner where Monsignor's boy was interred. The school children preceded the hearse to the center of town and then separated and stood at reverent attention until the procession passed.

On November 8, Mr. Leroy Ortgiesen, state inspector of secondary school, visited our classroom. He seemed pleased with what he found and later wrote a most appreciative letter.

On November 9, the Juniors staged their class play, SMILING THROUGH. Mrs. George had directed it, and the play was successful in every way. The next day, our boys played the last of a series of successful football games and ended the season with a Homecoming celebration. The York boys, our opposition of the evening, were also invited to the party. At this event, Helen Ann Lee, president of the Pep Club, was crowned Football Queen. Arlen Miles, high point football player, shared the royal honors.

On November 20, a Sunday afternoon, the Sisters and children enjoyed the movie, COME TO THE STABLE. It was inspirational as well as entertaining.

St. Mary's Juniors, along with representatives of the other eight high schools in the County, enjoyed participation in County Government again this year. Before Thanksgiving, they filed for office and held primary elections. After the holiday, general elections were held and the fourteen elected officers assumed their duties for a day on November 30.

Basketball season opened inauspiciously on December 2. The boys lost to Ainsworth. Their next two games were victories...one over O'Neill. Their career is not all roses, but they have high hopes for the tournaments.

On December 8, at 7:30 p.m. thirty-six new members were received into the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary. A party in the gymnasium followed the beautiful ceremony and another eventful day was jotted down in many memory books.

On December 12 the talented children of grades and high school, put on a sort of amateur program consisting of the light and the humorous. It was real home – spun; many parents attended and enjoyed it and it brought in a small nest egg for our jubilee annual.

The beautiful Christmas playlet, MADONNA'S CHOICE, together with special features by the elementary grades, put everyone into the real Christmas spirit. Representatives of the entire school appeared on the state. A record crowd attended and this occasion was used to welcome to our school and parish, our new pastor, the Very Reverend Timothy O'Sullivan. The parish planned a formal reception early in January.

The elementary Sodality organized last year under the title of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, held a reception for twenty-eight new members on December 21. Father O'Sullivan officiated.

On the evening of that day, three of our students who had been taking a special course of instruction were baptized and received into the Church. The next morning, these three and another high School student made their First holy Communion. They were Jean Ann Fahrenholz, her brother Gerald Fahrenholz, Albert Brandl and Patricia Boyle.

After our Christmas tree parties and distribution of gifts, the children left for their homes on December 22. The proverbial generosity of the O'Neill people evidenced in the coal collection as well as in the many useful gifts of money and food leaves us with a feeling of humble dependence upon God, Who provides so lovingly for His own and a gratitude that grows and grows. Convent Christmases are real, deep and spiritual. Convent Christmas in O'Neill had all the reality, depth and spirituality possible. Sometimes we think more than enough of the trimmings, besides.

With prayerful wishes for a spiritually rich New Year, this history closes.

Mother Boniface	Sister Jolenta	Sister Serafica
Sister Antonella	Sister Fides	Sister Helenita
Sister Brigid	Sister Christiana	Sister Flores
Sister Maxine	Sister Casilda	Sister George
Sister Anthony		

1950 - "Golden Jubilee"

Jan.1 '50

The late months of the dying year, 1949, had marked the end of fifty four glorious, priestly years of Right Rev. Monsignor J. S. McNamara. The New Year and installation ceremonies penned with flourish the opening of Father Timothy O'Sullivan's apostolate at St. Patrick's. He had been in the parish since December 19 and had parishioners, young and old, by his kindly, benign, fatherly interest. Father O'Sullivan came to O'Neill from Jackson, Nebraska.

Jan. 10 '50

The past year brought to an abrupt close to the earthly career of several other loved and valued personages. Mr. Russell Shoemaker, 41, the father of six, was stricken with polio, and on January 10 began his career of glory, reward of an exemplary Christian life. His sudden death struck sorrow into the hearts of the entire community. His sister, Sister M. George, felt his loss keenly. All, however, recognize that Russell had in a short space fulfilled a long time.

Jan. 17, '50

Midyear examinations took their usual toll of sweat and tears, but a beautiful three day Retreat ironed out all the wrinkles. Left in the dispositions of the students. Father James Preuss, S.J., of St. Francis Mission, conducted the retreat.

Jan.21, '50

Another period just as effective ended the work of Father Cyril J. Werner in O'Neill. He was transferred to St. Francis Parish in Omaha. The capital this time opens the term of Father Alex Omak's work as assistant at St. Patrick's and religion teacher and chaplain at St. Mary's.

March 7, '50

The record of a cold but open winter was erased by a sudden, unheralded blizzard that paralyzed school, business, parish, and social activities for days before people recovered their equilibrium. This blizzard brought as much snow in one storm as a series of them did in the previous winter's record breaking history.

Mar. 10, '50

Months of practice and drill preceded the school activities contests. In athletics there were two exclamation points. The boys won the Holy County championship, and a few weeks later, won second place in the District Tournament. In speech work there were honors, too. (Mar. 19, '50) St. Mary's students were awarded first place in oratory, first in dramatic reading, and superior in their one-act play.

Apr. 13, '50

Then came the Music Contest, St. Agnes Academy arrived, forty strong, with Mother Virginia and Sister Constance. Their students carried home a high percentage of honors. St. Mary's, too, won her share of honors and kept in the tradition of past years.

Apr. 15, '50

A series of card parties, beginning in January and cover a period of about six weeks, afforded social and charitable outlets for the friends of St. Mary's. This group, similar to Parent-Teacher associations, but more inclusive, was proud to be able to give the Sisters over a thousand dollars. The money was used for two French horns, new basketball suits, and twenty new beds for the little girls' dormitory. The beds were from a Federal Housing Project and were, therefore, not entirely new. The Friends of St. Mary's closed a successful first year of activities on April 15, when new officers were elected for the following year: President, Mrs. Max Golden; Vice President, Mrs. Loretta Hynes; Secretary, Mrs. Edward Vergal; and Treasurer, Mrs. L.G. Becker.

More commas in the routine of school life were the social affairs that give pause to the daily grind. The Valentine Party was a thing of beauty, sponsored as usual by Sister M. Christiana and sophomores. Patrick Hickey was elected King of Heart's and Jacqueline Lee, Queen of Hearts. The freshman party piloted by Sister M. George was a well planned, interesting party in early spring. The Junior-Senior banquet and prom came early, too, and took a Jubilee beautiful, lovely, unforgettable. Sisters Fides and Maxine guided the entertainers and decorators, and should share the credit for a memorable evening. The Golden Jubilee, soon to follow, used the same decorations.

Apr. 23, '50

Jubilee days are never to be forgotten. Events had come tumbling fifty years old; the ordinary course of daily living must be interrupted to give everyone time for retrospect, for revival or memories, for gratitude, and for jubilation. Periods, exclamation points, even question marks, punctuated these days. Sisters from every house in the Province, our dear Provincial herself, religious Alumnae from four

other Orders, Sisters Antoinette, Geralda, and Cleopha from the East, and all but one of our boys in the priesthood, were here for the great day. April 23 began conspicuously with Solemn High Mass of Thanksgiving in St. Patrick's Church at 9:00 o'clock. Everyone in the sanctuary, from celebrant to master of ceremonies, was a St. Mary's boy: Father J. Clement Ryan was celebrants, assisted by Father Gene Gallagher, also a Jesuit, and Father Francis Price. Father Peter Price, S.J., preached the sermon for the occasion. Mr. Basil Price, S.J. and Bill Frachich, S.J. were masters of ceremonies.

After Mass, the alumni had breakfast at the M and M Café, downtown. St. Mary's held open house for alumni and friends all through the day. As 2:00 P.M., the seniors and juniors, with representatives from every grade in the school, staged a pageant depicting the history of St. Mary's for the past fifty years. Solemn Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament followed the pageant. Then a picture of all the guest was to be taken in front of the school. However, the planks used in the bleachers were faulty, one of them broke, several people were injured slightly, and the project was abandoned. Mrs. Bernard Matthews (Winifred Murray) received a serious injury to her arch and ankle, and was taken by ambulance to Lincoln. What with good doctors and the prayers of her fellow alumni and former teachers, it is hoped that she may be able to walk as well as ever.

At 6:00 o'clock, four hundred Alumni and guests were seated at banquet tables in the gymnasium, the second grade classroom, and in the two dining rooms. Dinner over, all assembled in the gym for a most interesting program. The speakers included Father Timothy O Sullivan, Father Eugene Gallagher, S.J. , and Sister M. Antoniette. Snatches of these speeches, as well as parts of the other interesting features of the day's celebration, were broadcast over WCOM, Sioux City. A style show, depicting changes in women's clothes through the past fifty years, was an interesting addition to the after dinner program. It was a tired but still jubilant and grateful group of faculty members, guests, and children that locked doors and turned out lights that night.

A lovely, one hundred page memory book, containing pictures from 1903 to 1950, memorialized the fifty years that Mother Magdalen's daughters have worked in this part of God's own country.

Two additional causes for gratitude and joy are the financial gift received this year, and the recognition of our educational efforts by the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges. The former came in the form of a bequest from Mrs. Molly Kelly, a sister of Sister M. Cleopha Harrington. Mrs. Kelly had willed us a form in Illinois. This bequest enabled us to pay out roofing repair bill and other outstanding debts. The alumni also gave a substantial purse toward the purchase of the new pews for the Chapel. One troop of O'Neill's Girl Scouts had given money toward re-decorating the Sanctuary. As a result, a beautiful Gothic arch in sepia and gold plus natural oak adorns the wall directly behind the altar and harmonizes with the design of windows and doors in the Chapel. It is a satisfying improvement.

April 30, '50

A great benefactor of St. Mary's, Mr. J.B. Ryan, father of the Reverent J. Clement Ryan, S.J., felt the hand of God, the Master Penman, put a period to his fruitful career. No one double but that the period became an exclamation point of ecstatic joy upon the realization of what was stored up for him as his eternal Commencement.

May 6 '50

On May 6, the Catholic Daughters held their annual Communion breakfast in the Academy dining room. The boarders served the breakfast.

May 8, '50

Sister M. Casilda Terney, all unwillingly put a period to her school year by developing a serious cold, which became virus pneumonia, and caused much anxiety and alarm before the danger was over. Sister had gone to Alliance to be with Sister Constance for the celebration of the latter's Silver Jubilee. The doctors recognized the seriousness of her trouble and ordered complete rest. The prayers of the children back home helped to put her on the road to recovery. Mother Boniface and Mrs. Thelma Riley Cronk substituted for Sister until the end of the school year. Sister Rosemarie took over the care of the Altars in the parish church, a charge that Sister Casilda had performed faithfully for several years.

May 10, '50

On May 10 came the long awaited beginning of more frequent visits to our church and school by the Most Reverend Archbishop Gerald T. Bergan. This visit had the purpose of confirming 214 students and adults of St. Patrick's Parish. After his circuit of the deanery, the Most Reverend Archbishop returned to St. Mary's to say Mass for the Sisters and have breakfast here. He is kindly disposed marvels as the extents of the work being done by the Sisters, and gives promise of moral and spiritual support.

May 18, '50

On May 18, Ascension Day, the little ones of Grade Two made their First Holy Communion. This group, plus the country children who came for two weeks of instruction, numbered 56. Their teacher, Sister M. Helenita, could feel as happy as they on their Great Day, for their hearts were ready because of her zeal and hard work.

On the same day, all the classes except Grade Two, held their picnics on outings. The different groups went different distances – all too nearly resorts or ranches. Not to establish a precedent but in appreciation for their cooperation in the Jubilee plans, the seniors were permitted to spend the week end in the Black Hills. It was a memorable trip. That it was a safe one, on highways easily the poorest in 48 States, was due to our Lady's own protection. Her hand has warded off many dangers from the children of St. Mary's, and we count on her continued and, spiritually and materially, in the years to come.

May 22, '50

May 22 was the climax of Sodality activities for the year. After a colorful procession through park and Church, Nancy Beha crowned the statue of the Blessed Mother, arranged in a prominent place in the Sanctuary.

May 23, '50

On the next evening, the eighth grade closed their elementary careers to become high school freshmen. Twenty four boys and girls received their certificates from Father Timothy O'Sullivan. Sister Jolenta could well be proud of another fast admirably accomplished.

May 24, '50

May 24 was Class Night. Twenty eight seniors, seven boys and 21 girls, played and acted for the last time on the high school stage. The next day, at 10:30 a.m., solemn graduation exercises were held in the parish church. The Very Reverend Father O' Sullivan chose to be speaker and gave a touching and appropriate sermon. Solemn Benediction closed the service and put the final period to the Golden Jubilee school year.

June, 1950

Turning the key in the locks of highly polished classrooms at home, and bidding farewell to the new little friends in vacation schools, we filed away for future reference a Jubilee year-full of memories and started upon new guests. The records of the vacation schools read thus: Ewing's total enrollment was 91; First Communicants, 12. Emmet gathered its 32 children for instruction, but there was no one for First Holy Communion. The every Sunday classes held at St. Mary's for country children boasted an enrollment of 73, twenty of whom joined the regular First Communicants in May. The total out-of-the-parish classes in which the Sisters gave instructions provided 168 souls. These, plus the 73 of the Sunday School classes, totals 241 children not enrolled at St. Mary's, who receive the benefit of instruction.

In early June the Sisters reversed the teacher-pupil relationship and became students again, six at standard colleges, the other eleven in the schools of nature or experience. Sister Casilda had, since her earlier illness in May, been undergoing the not so pleasant experience, at St. Joseph Hospital in Alliance, of wrestling courageously with a series of attacks of rheumatic fever. The classes in this school of suffering have not adjourned. Sister Helenita and Ferdinand went to St. Ambrose, Davenport; Sister Floree to St. Mary, Xavier; Sister Chistiana brought home library credits from Loras; Sisters Fides and Anotnella went to Creighton for education with a capital "E". Their real need was the renewal of Nebraska certificate. Sister Maxine devoted herself to the outdoors. The other stay-at-home majored in the domestic arts, helping among other things in the transformation of the dormitories in the fifty year old wing of the academy. These sleeping rooms are now places to dream as well as to dream in. The little girls' dormitory is finished in pastel shades of pink and blue, with white ceiling. The week-enders dormitory known as the Middle Dorm, is decorated in green and gold. The old, water-soaked plaster had been replaced by plaster board before the painters began their work. The hundred and one little extras that accompanied this venture offered only one area of endeavor for the "eager beavers" at home. Besides these, classroom desks were sanded and varnished, and a new classroom was literally built into, on out of, the old trunk room.

August 8, 1950

To harmonize with the material face-lifting in our surroundings, souls had to take on a new look too. For the annual renewal process Father Jordan Schell, O.F.M., came from Chicago for the eight day retreat. It closed on August 15.

August 23, 1950

A week later, on the Feast of The Immaculate Heart of Mary, we were permitted to have both day and night Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. It was a soul-satisfying experience, and many people of the parish, both men and women, took their turns in prayer in the evening or at night.

September 2, 1950

The enrollment in September was normal or a little below; one hundred and forty seven registered for high school, fifty seven of whom were boarders; two hundred and ten kept the elementary teachers busy- thirteen of these were boarders. An initiation party and several football games have given the children something to write home about; though, what makes the Sisters happier, is the entrance into the Minor Seminary of a senior, Allin Bosn.

Those who have been saddened by the weather beaten appearance of the once beautiful and impressive Sacred Heart statue in front of the Academy will be happy to learn that a new Deprato statue will be erected in its place in October. The unveiling of the statue and the consecration of the school to Christ the King will take place at the same time.

October 4, 1950

Earth dons her jeweled brown robes in October to do honor to the brown robed Seraph of Asisi, present address Heaven. Tranciscanism sparkles all over the world. St. Mary's reviewed the life of God's Troubadour by seeing his movie. Though done in Spanish and carrying the English Translations, this film is inspiring and makes St. Francis vivid and real to the students.

October 7, 1950

On the Feast of the Holy Rosary the children, under the direction of Sister George, formed a living rosary in Church during evening devotions. It was a new experience of the children, formed a pretty picture, and pleased the parents too. Daily rosary time for all students kept us "tuned in" to Mary's own station all during October. Several weeks later, our Blessed Mother granted us a unique privilege. The famous Pilgrim Virgin statue, blessed at Fatima, came to O'Neill.

November 24, 1950

The statue was enshrined in St. Mary's chapel from the time of the public veneration in Church until Time for mass the following morning. People kept coming in and out all through the night. Both the public services and the all night veneration did credit to complacent little O'Neill. The devotion of the people was apparent, and has continued. Many miracles of grace are on record in the rectory as well as in the sacred archives of Heaven. Since that visit, black rosaries are flourishing in both town and country. Holy Hour and public rosary devotion in honor of Mary, Queen of Peace, are being held at the request of the people. The parish is expiring a spriritual renewal.

November 1, 1950

November 1, too, was marked by special devotion in honor of Mary's lastest Triumph, the declaration of the dogma of her Assumption.

October 22, 1950

Eucharistic devotion did not take second place. The Eucharistic committee of the Sodality coached by Sister M. Christiana, held a very enlightning discusion on the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the home. Then followed the Forty Hours devotion in the parish church, and the next week the blessing of the new lawn statue of the Sacred Heart. This statue is a memorial to Mr. J.B. Ryan, benefactor through many years, whose death has been noted, and who left to St. Mary's a bequest of five thousand dollars.

October 26, 1950

An outdoor Enthronement ceremony for the entire school was held at that time. The Feast of Christ the King, with all day adoration, was an appropriate climax to these events.

October 1950

Important guests during October were Mother M. Erica and Sister M. Lenore, here on hospital business, and Brother Amady, of his southwestern province, seeking candidates for the Christian Brothers.

A series of monthly card parties, begun in October by the Friends of St. Mary's succeed in raising the total amount due on sixty five new desks purchased for senior and freshmen classrooms. This total was over nine hundred dollars.

The fathers of grade and high school students purchased a Viewflex Filmstrip projectors as well as a tape recorder for classroom use. Beginning in October with a movie of St. Francis, the religious and classical value of good films has been emphasized.

November 9 & 16, 1950

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Sister M. Serafica Behm	Sister M. Anthony Deginhart
	Sister M. Lucy King

1951 - "Married within a Month"

Jan.1 '50

The late months of the dying year, 1949, had marked the end of fifty four glorious, priestly years of Right Rev. Monsignor J. S. McNamara. The New Year and installation ceremonies penned with flourish the opening of Father Timothy O'Sullivan's apostolate at St. Patrick's. He had been in the parish since December 19 and had parishioners, young and old, by his kindly, benign, fatherly interest. Father O'Sullivan came to O'Neill from Jackson, Nebraska.

Jan. 10 '50

The past year brought to an abrupt close to the earthly career of several other loved and valued personages. Mr. Russell Shoemaker, 41, the father of six, was stricken with polio, and on January 10 began his career of glory, reward of an exemplary Christian life. His sudden death struck sorrow into the hearts of the entire community. His sister, Sister M. George, felt his loss keenly. All, however, recognize that Russell had in a short space fulfilled a long time.

Jan. 17, '50

Midyear examinations took their usual toll of sweat and tears, but a beautiful three day Retreat ironed out all the wrinkles. Left in the dispositions of the students. Father James Preuss, S.J., of St. Francis Mission, conducted the retreat.

Jan.21, '50

Another period just as effective ended the work of Father Cyril J. Werner in O'Neill. He was transferred to St. Francis Parish in Omaha. The capital this time opens the term of Father Alex Omak's work as assistant at St. Patrick's and religion teacher and chaplain at St. Mary's.

March 7, '50

The record of a cold but open winter was erased by a sudden, unheralded blizzard that paralyzed school, business, parish, and social activities for days before people recovered their equilibrium. This blizzard brought as much snow in one storm as a series of then did in the previous winter's record breaking history.

Mar. 10, '50

Months of practice and drill preceded the school activities contests. In athletics there were two exclamation points. The boys won the Holy County championship, and a few weeks later, won second place in the District Tournament. In speech work there were honors, too. (Mar.19, '50) St. Mary's students were awarded first place in oratory, first in dramatic reading, and superior in their one-act play.

Apr. 13, '50

Then came the Music Contest, St. Agnes Academy arrived, forty strong, with Mother Virginia and Sister Constance. Their students carried home a high percentage of honors. St. Mary's, too, won her share of honors and kept in the tradition of past years.

Apr. 15, '50

A series of card parties, beginning in January and cover a period of about six weeks, afforded social and charitable outlets for the friends of St. Mary's. This group, similar to Parent-Teacher associations, but more inclusive, was proud to be able to give the Sisters over a thousand dollars. The money was used for two French horns, new basketball suits, and twenty new beds for the little girls' dormitory. The beds were from a Federal Housing Project and were, therefore, not entirely new. The Friends of St. Mary's closed a successful first year of activities on April 15, when new officers were elected for the following year: President, Mrs. Max Golden; Vice President, Mrs. Loretta Hynes; Secretary, Mrs. Edward Vergal; and Treasurer, Mrs. L.G. Becker.

More commas in the routine of school life were the social affairs that give pause to the daily grind. The Valentine Party was a thing of beauty, sponsored as usual by Sister M. Christiana and sophomores. Patrick Hickey was elected King of Heart's and Jacqueline Lee, Queen of Hearts. The freshman party piloted by Sister M. George was a well planned, interesting party in early spring. The Junior-Senior banquet and prom came early, too, and took a Jubilee beautiful, lovely, unforgettable. Sisters Fides and

Maxine guided the entertainers and decorators, and should share the credit for a memorable evening. The Golden Jubilee, soon to follow, used the same decorations.

Apr. 23, '50

Jubilee days are never to be forgotten. Events had come tumbling fifty years old; the ordinary course of daily living must be interrupted to give everyone time for retrospect, for revival or memories, for gratitude, and for jubilation. Periods, exclamation points, even question marks, punctuated these days. Sisters from every house in the Province, our dear Provincial herself, religious Alumnae from four other Orders, Sisters Antoinette, Geralda, and Cleopha from the East, and all but one of our boys in the priesthood, were here for the great day. April 23 began conspicuously with Solemn High Mass of Thanksgiving in St. Patrick's Church at 9:00 o'clock. Everyone in the sanctuary, from celebrant to master of ceremonies, was a St. Mary's boy: Father J. Clement Ryan was celebrants, assisted by Father Gene Gallagher, also a Jesuit, and Father Francis Price. Father Peter Price, S.J., preached the sermon for the occasion. Mr. Basil Price, S.J. and Bill Frachich, S.J. were masters of ceremonies.

After Mass, the alumni had breakfast at the M and M Café, downtown. St. Mary's held open house for alumni and friends all through the day. As 2:00 P.M., the seniors and juniors, with representatives from every grade in the school, staged a pageant depicting the history of St. Mary's for the past fifty years. Solemn Benediction with the Blessed Sacrament followed the pageant. Then a picture of all the guest was to be taken in front of the school. However, the planks used in the bleachers were faulty, one of them broke, several people were injured slightly, and the project was abandoned. Mrs. Bernard Matthews (Winifred Murray) received a serious injury to her arch and ankle, and was taken by ambulance to Lincoln. What with good doctors and the prayers of her fellow alumni and former teachers, it is hoped that she may be able to walk as well as ever.

At 6:00 o'clock, four hundred Alumni and guests were seated at banquet tables in the gymnasium, the second grade classroom, and in the two dining rooms. Dinner over, all assembled in the gym for a most interesting program. The speakers included Father Timothy O Sullivan, Father Eugene Gallagher, S.J., and Sister M. Antoniette. Snatches of these speeches, as well as parts of the other interesting features of the day's celebration, were broadcast over WCOM, Sioux City. A style show, depicting changes in women's clothes through the past fifty years, was an interesting addition to the after dinner program. It was a tired but still jubilant and grateful group of faculty members, guests, and children that locked doors and turned out lights that night.

A lovely, one hundred page memory book, containing pictures from 1903 to 1950, memorialized the fifty years that Mother Magdalen's daughters have worked in this part of God's own country.

Two additional causes for gratitude and joy are the financial gift received this year, and the recognition of our educational efforts by the North Central Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges. The former came in the form of a bequest from Mrs. Molly Kelly, a sister of Sister M. Cleopha Harrington. Mrs. Kelly had willed us a form in Illinois. This bequest enabled us to pay out roofing repair bill and other outstanding debts. The alumni also gave a substantial purse toward the purchase of the new pews for the Chapel. One troop of O'Neill's Girl Scouts had given money toward re-decorating the Sanctuary. As a result, a beautiful Gothic arch in sepia and gold plus natural oak adorns the wall directly behind the altar and harmonizes with the design of windows and doors in the Chapel. It is a satisfying improvement.

April 30, '50

A great benefactor of St. Mary's, Mr. J.B. Ryan, father of the Reverent J. Clement Ryan, S.J., felt the hand of God, the Master Penman, put a period to his fruitful career. No one doubt but that the period became an exclamation point of ecstatic joy upon the realization of what was stored up for him as his eternal Commencement.

May 6 '50

On May 6, the Catholic Daughters held their annual Communion breakfast in the Academy dining room. The boarders served the breakfast.

May 8, '50

Sister M. Casilda Terney, all unwillingly put a period to her school year by developing a serious cold, which became virus pneumonia, and caused much anxiety and alarm before the danger was over. Sister had gone to Alliance to be with Sister Constance for the celebration of the latter's Silver Jubilee. The doctors recognized the seriousness of her trouble and ordered complete rest. The prayers of the children back home helped to put her on the road to recovery. Mother Boniface and Mrs. Thelma Riley Cronk substituted for Sister until the end of the school year. Sister Rosemarie took over the care of the Altars in the parish church, a charge that Sister Casilda had performed faithfully for several years.

May 10, '50

On May 10 came the long awaited beginning of more frequent visits to our church and school by the Most Reverend Archbishop Gerald T. Bergan. This visit had the purpose of confirming 214 students and adults of St. Patrick's Parish. After his circuit of the deanery, the Most Reverend Archbishop returned to St. Mary's to say Mass for the Sisters and have breakfast here. He is kindly disposed marvels as the extents of the work being done by the Sisters, and gives promise of moral and spiritual support.

May 18, '50

On May 18, Ascension Day, the little ones of Grade Two made their First Holy Communion. This group, plus the country children who came for two weeks of instruction, numbered 56. Their teacher, Sister M. Helenita, could feel as happy as they on their Great Day, for their hearts were ready because of her zeal and hard work.

On the same day, all the classes except Grade Two, held their picnics on outings. The different groups went different distances – all too nearly resorts or ranches. Not to establish a precedent but in appreciation for their cooperation in the Jubilee plans, the seniors were permitted to spend the week end in the Black Hills. It was a memorable trip. That it was a safe one, on highways easily the poorest in 48 States, was due to our Lady's own protection. Her hand has warded off many dangers from the children of St. Mary's, and we count on her continued and, spiritually and materially, in the years to come.

May 22, '50

May 22 was the climax of Sodality activities for the year. After a colorful procession through park and Church, Nancy Beha crowned the statue of the Blessed Mother, arranged in a prominent place in the Sanctuary.

May 23, '50

On the next evening, the eighth grade closed their elementary careers to become high school freshmen. Twenty four boys and girls received their certificates from Father Timothy O'Sullivan. Sister Jolenta could well be proud of another fast admirably accomplished.

May 24, '50

May 24 was Class Night. Twenty eight seniors, seven boys and 21 girls, played and acted for the last time on the high school stage. The next day, at 10:30 a.m., solemn graduation exercises were held in the parish church. The Very Reverend Father O' Sullivan chose to be speaker and gave a touching and appropriate sermon. Solemn Benediction closed the service and put the final period to the Golden Jubilee school year.

June, 1950

Turning the key in the locks of highly polished classrooms at home, and bidding farewell to the new little friends in vacation schools, we filed away for future reference a Jubilee year-full of memories and started upon new guests. The records of the vacation schools read thus: Ewing's total enrollment was 91; First Communicants, 12. Emmet gathered its 32 children for instruction, but there was no one for First Holy Communion. The every Sunday classes held at St. Mary's for country children boasted an enrollment of 73, twenty of whom joined the regular First Communicants in May. The total out-of-the-parish classes in which the Sisters gave instructions provided 168 souls. These, plus the 73 of the Sunday School classes, totals 241 children not enrolled at St. Mary's, who receive the benefit of instruction.

In early June the Sisters reversed the teacher-pupil relationship and became students again, six at standard colleges, the other eleven in the schools of nature or experience. Sister Casilda had, since her earlier illness in May, been undergoing the not so pleasant experience, at St. Joseph Hospital in Alliance, of wrestling courageously with a series of attacks of rheumatic fever. The classes in this school of suffering have not adjourned. Sister Helenita and Ferdinand went to St. Ambrose, Davenport; Sister Floree to St. Mary, Xavier; Sister Chistiana brought home library credits from Loras; Sisters Fides and Anotnella went to Creighton for education with a capital "E". Their real need was the renewal of Nebraska certificate. Sister Maxine devoted herself to the outdoors. The other stay-at-home majored in the domestic arts, helping among other things in the transformation of the dormitories in the fifty year old wing of the academy. These sleeping rooms are now places to dream as well as to dream in. The little girls' dormitory is finished in pastel shades of pink and blue, with white ceiling. The week-enders dormitory known as the Middle Dorm, is decorated in green and gold. The old, water-soaked plaster had been replaced by plaster board before the painters began their work. The hundred and one little extras that accompanied this venture offered only one area of endeavor for the "eager beavers" at home. Besides these, classroom desks were sanded and varnished, and a new classroom was literally built into, on out of, the old trunk room.

August 8, 1950

To harmonize with the material face-lifting in our surroundings, souls had to take on a new look too. For the annual renewal process Father Jordan Schell, O.F.M., came from Chicago for the eight day retreat. It closed on August 15.

August 23, 1950

A week later, on the Feast of The Immaculate Heart of Mary, we were permitted to have both day and night Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. It was a soul-satisfying experience, and many people of the parish, both men and women, took their turns in prayer in the evening or at night.

September 2, 1950

The enrollment in September was normal or a little below; one hundred and forty seven registered for high school, fifty seven of whom were boarders; two hundred and ten kept the elementary teachers busy- thirteen of these were boarders. An initiation party and several football games have given the children something to write home about; though, what makes the Sisters happier, is the entrance into the Minor Seminary of a senior, Allin Bosn.

Those who have been saddened by the weather beaten appearance of the once beautiful and impressive Sacred Heart statue in front of the Academy will be happy to learn that a new Deprato statue will be erected in its place in October. The unveiling of the statue and the consecration of the school to Christ the King will take place at the same time.

October 4, 1950

Earth dons her jeweled brown robes in October to do honor to the brown robed Seraph of Asisi, present address Heaven. Tranciscanism sparkles all over the world. St. Mary's reviewed the life of God's Troubadour by seeing his movie. Though done in Spanish and carrying the English Translations, this film is inspiring and makes St. Francis vivid and real to the students.

October 7, 1950

On the Feast of the Holy Rosary the children, under the direction of Sister George, formed a living rosary in Church during evening devotions. It was a new experience of the children, formed a pretty picture, and pleased the parents too. Daily rosary time for all students kept us "tuned in" to Mary's own station all during October. Several weeks later, our Blessed Mother granted us a unique privilege. The famous Pilgrim Virgin statue, blessed at Fatima, came to O'Neill.

November 24, 1950

The statue was enshrined in St. Mary's chapel from the time of the public veneration in Church until Time for mass the following morning. People kept coming in and out all through the night. Both the public services and the all night veneration did credit to complacent little O'Neill. The devotion of the people was apparent, and has continued. Many miracles of grace are on record in the rectory as well as in the sacred archives of Heaven. Since that visit, black rosaries are flourishing in both town and country. Holy Hour and public rosary devotion in honor of Mary, Queen of Peace, are being held at the request of the people. The parish is expiring a spriritual renewal.

November 1, 1950

November 1, too, was marked by special devotion in honor of Mary's lastest Triumph, the declaration of the dogma of her Assumption.

October 22, 1950

Eucharistic devotion did not take second place. The Eucharistic committee of the Sodality coached by Sister M. Christiana, held a very enlightening discussion on the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart in the home. Then followed the Forty Hours devotion in the parish church, and the next week the blessing of the new lawn statue of the Sacred Heart. This statue is a memorial to Mr. J.B. Ryan, benefactor through many years, whose death has been noted, and who left to St. Mary's a bequest of five thousand dollars.

October 26, 1950

An outdoor Enthronement ceremony for the entire school was held at that time. The Feast of Christ the King, with all day adoration, was an appropriate climax to these events.

October 1950

Important guests during October were Mother M. Erica and Sister M. Lenore, here on hospital business, and Brother Amady, of his southwestern province, seeking candidates for the Christian Brothers.

A series of monthly card parties, begun in October by the Friends of St. Mary's succeed in raising the total amount due on sixty five new desks purchased for senior and freshmen classrooms. This total was over nine hundred dollars.

The fathers of grade and high school students purchased a Viewflex Filmstrip projectors as well as a tape recorder for classroom use. Beginning in October with a movie of St. Francis, the religious and classical value of good films has been emphasized.

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1952 - "Hospital Dreams"

January 12, 1952

Following shortly the re-opening of school after the holidays, came New Year joys in visible form. Several conversions, touching St. Mary's rather closely, went on record: Mr. Price, father of two Jesuits and a diocesan priest, all graduates of our school, was baptized on January 12. Mr. Stetter of Valentine, father of an alumna, was received into the Church. One of the seniors, Joann Smith of Dubois, Wyoming, was baptized on the fourteenth...

January 14, '52

...of January and made her solemn First Holy Communion on the fifteenth, in St. Mary's Chapel. Joann's godmother by proxy, is Lucille McCulley, a former St. Marian and also a convert, now studying in France. Shirley Leaky, Sodality prefect, took Lucille's place at the font. Another senior girl, Sharon Wagnon, under instruction at this time, was received into the Church some weeks later.

January 20, '52

Mother Erica, enroute to Denver for the regular Council meeting, was accompanied by Sister Maxine, who consulted an eye specialist and was fitted with glasses. Blizzard conditions kept them in Denver several days beyond schedule.

January 26, '52

The basketball quintet made a fair name for itself, even succeeding in winning one of two games with St. Francis Mission. The blizzard which halted all activities including school for one day, postponed the opening of the Holt County Tournament. The extra snow did not affect the size or spirit of the crowds at the tournament games. St. Mary's kept in the lead until the finals—then ended in second place.

February 8, '52

With the opening of the second semester, the Sodality had inaugurated a "Sacrifice Corner," as Sister Rufina called the project for the conversion of sinners. Probably because our first three sinners needed just a little boost to hoist them directly into the arms of the Good Shepherd, results were immediate and visible. Enthusiasm for sacrifice ran high. Even struggling candidates for religious life were confided to the care of Mary, Refuge of Sinners. Then on February 10, two of our girls, Arleen Borszich and Shirley Steele left for Marycrest to become postulants. Sister Emilia went to Denver with them.

This date also marks the completion of the new school office. The old, windowless, dark office had become part of a corridor connecting the Academy directly with the Chapel. The route leads through the former office, a part of the old cloister, then to the front door of the chapel. A bar, or sort of cashier's window, separates this former office from the new one next to it, which was formerly a cell. This is blessed with daylight and a new fluorescent light. The records now have the required privacy and the whole appearance is quite official. New office furniture lend beauty and elegance. Fluorescent lights have also been installed in all the classrooms.

February 26, '52

The shadow of anxiety hanging over us since Jubilee Day, in April of 1950, was at last dispelled on February 26. On that day the case filed against Downey's by Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Matthews was to be tried in a Lincoln court. Sister Antonella was to appear in court as witness for the defense. Because of the obvious pain and embarrassment the situation was causing the Sisters, Downey's generously agreed to settle out of court. Thus the picture taking episode cost the photographer thirteen thousand dollars and costs plus Mrs. Matthews' hospitalization and surgery up that time.

February 29, '52

The basketball team carried off District Tournament honors. Later they were eliminated from State competition, but enjoyed the trip to Lincoln just the same.

March 7, '52

The community was shocked by the violent death of Mr. Chet Calkins; O'Neill's loved night watchman for years, and a kind friend to the Sisters. Mr. Calkins always met the night trains and was most solicitous about Sister travelers. May he now enjoy the reward of his many acts of kindness.

March 22, '52

The Archdiocesan Sodality Union scheduled its convention for March 22 in Omaha. A free busload of St. Mary's Sodalists planned an eventful day, but Heaven sent another blizzard. No traffic on the thickly drifted highway, so 35 disappointed sodalists tried hard to say their first gracefully.

March 30, '52

This date marked the close of Vocation week activities, and the staging of the senior class play, Thank You, Mr. Parker.

April 1, '52

Sister Agnesmarie Slaight, called home by the tragic death of her mother, spent some little time with us. Her courage in accepting this cross, as well as her father's admirable fortitude, are worthy of note and imitation.

April 16, '52

This Franciscan feast meant only music to some thousand music students who gathered here for the annual Music Festival. The event, this year, went back to contest technique, except that ratings were not published until several days after the musicians had returned to their homes. Thus they were not so likely to compare ratings of one school against another. Thus, also, one of the bad features of contests was eliminated.

April 24, '52

In the first really warm days of spring the juniors held their festivities. The high point in the year for them is Banquet and Prom Night. Father Carl helped the juniors to decorate, and the result was effective and different. The gym had become a Spanish patio with well simulated brick and stucco arches Spanish pottery, and Spanish flowers. The Prom, the first in many years without benefit of orchestra, was as enjoyable and elegant as ever. The following day, juniors and seniors took their traditional day of rest in lieu of a class picnic.

April also saw the erection of a merry-go-round and a new set of teeters on the playground. Within the year, another and larger set of swings and three larger teeters were erected. This addition to the playground was made possible by the efforts of the Friends of St. Mary's.

April 29, '52

A pleasant and stimulating experience was the visit of Father Zuercher, S.J., and his St. Francis speech students. They competed with and outclassed our speakers, but gave us a chance to display some of our musical talent. The Sisters enjoyed having Mother Cecilia and Sister Spes as guests for those few hours.

May 1, '52

Our Lady's month opened with a simple reception ceremony for our converts Joann Smith and Sharon Wagon, who became sodalists on May 1.

The spring operetta presented by the Music Department was the old favorite, The Wishing Well. The singing was up to standard, but attendance at this affair was disappointing. Financial proceeds, however, were satisfactory.

May 11, '52

First Communion day for 21 little boys and 25 little girls, most of whom were in the first grade. Our impression of six year olds at the Communion rail is that they hardly realize what they are doing.

May 12, '52

Picnic day for the freshmen and sophomores. They, too, chose a free day, in preference to an outing. The following day the grade children had their picnics—on our own grounds or at nearby farm homes. All reported a most enjoyable day.

May 14, '52

The juniors, with their hands full just at this time of the year, managed to put on a class play, Strike Three, with creditable success. It had some coaching by both Father Carl and Sister M. George.

May 18, '52

The alumni banquet this year was prepared for 195 guests. Eight more covers had to be laid. This total is, with the exception of the Jubilee Year, the all time high. From an Alumni Association that has reached the thousand mark, that is still a good representation, especially since their occupations take them into many states and even foreign countries. Two came from Chicago to spend the day with us.

This day is also Mother Erica's nameday, but the celebration had been anticipated on May 11, because of the rush of activities through the latter part of the month.

May 18, '52

The music students not featured in the Spring Festival, gave a recital for parents and friends in our Assembly. Some of the beginners played for just one minute, so that a program of nearly 30 members lasted only an hour and a half. Doting parents never heard the like.

May 20, '52

The Fathers and several groups of parents accompanied the Altar Boys to a picnic, all their own, at Long Pine. This, too, promises to become an annual affair.

May 21, '52

The traditionally beautiful May procession, in white dresses for the little ones and formals for the young ladies, was held on a lovely May evening. Shirley Leaky had the honor of crowning Our Lady's statue, proclaiming Mary as Queen of our school.

May 25, '52

A trio of Jubilee bells sent out their glad message on May 25. Sisters Serafica, Emilia, and Flores were noting 25 years in the service of God. They voiced their gratitude through means of a Solemn High Mass of Thanksgiving in the parish church. Father Reilly, a cousin of Sister Serafica, had offered an early Mass in the convent chapel, during which the Sisters renewed their holy vows. At the solemn High Mass, Father Reilly preached a touching sermon on the vocation to the religious life. A dinner at noon for Jubilee guests was followed by a beautiful pageant on the spiritual glamour surrounding the life of a Bride of Christ.

May 27, '52

Grade school closing was climaxed by the eighth grade graduation exercises. The graduates dramatized the story Sleeping Beauty as symbolic of their entering a new phase of their education.

May 28, '52

Senior class night exercises were held in the public school auditorium, and on May 29, ten young men and 25 young ladies received their diplomas from the hands of the Very Reverend Timothy O'Sullivan in St. Patrick's church. This marked the end of another school year.

June 1, '52

The only vacation schools requiring our services this year were St. John's, Clearwater and St. Peter's in Ewing. Both had two weeks of catechizing, and Sister Jolenta came from Denver to help with this work. Sister Emilia and Sister Ferdinand had one to St. Francis Mission to keep the early summer Retreat, and several of the other teachers had to get early starts at their various summer colleges. This same week Mr. and Mrs. King arrived from Minot, North Dakota, to spend several days with Sister Lucy.

June 9, '52

Beginning on June 9, summer sessions opened at Creighton University for Sister Lucy, and at St. Mary, Xavier, for Sister Flores. Other Sisters attending colleges were Sister Anne at Davenport, Iowa; Sister Mildred at Marquette; and later in the month, Sisters Christiana and Antonella at Loyola in Chicago for a three-week workshop in English.

July 4, '52

Mrs. Anna Paull, mother of Sisters Caritas, Spes, and Fides, died on July 4 at St. Joseph Hospital, Alliance. A second funeral Mass and burial services were held at Creighton, Nebraska, the family home. Mother Erica and Sisters from St. Mary's were present to pay tribute to a generous mother.

July 14, '52

Sisters Emilia, George, and Laurita accompanied a group of St. Mary's sodalists to the Summer School of Catholic Action in Omaha from July 14 to July 20. The spark caught by the girls at this summer school brightens all their sodality work through the year. After that week of training they are intelligent Catholics working toward a definite goal. Incidentally, one of our delegates, Rosemary Corkle, took part in the S.S.C.A. talent night program and won first place honors for her performance on the piano.

July 22, '52

On the Feast of Mother Magdalen the Sister personnel for St. Anthony's Hospital arrived in O'Neill. We saw them only at meals and prayer time, for their "dream of a hospital" occupied them through all their working hours.

July 25, '52

On July 25, Marian Richer, talented niece of Sister Laurita and a student nurse just ready for graduation, was stricken with the severest type of polio. She is still completely paralyzed and can be out of the iron lung for only ten minutes at a time.

August 3, '52

Summer school Sisters returned after a strenuous summer and prepared for the big Retreat. Retreat this year was conducted by Father Raphael McCarthy, S.J., and had a great appeal for all his listeners. Father's wealth of experience and his brilliant mind combined with the simplicity of his presentation made him a splendid Retreat master. The retreat closed on August 13.

August 8, '52

Mother Erica joined other representatives of the Province at the convention for Religious held at Notre Dame. From there, Mother went directly to Denver to attend Reception and Profession ceremonies and to help transact other business for the Province.

Only a slight shake-up in personal came this summer. Sister Anne was transferred to St. Elizabeth's, Denver, and Sister Maureen Murphy came to us from the Novitiate. Sister Bonaventure, from Scottsbluff, is another welcome addition to the community.

September 1, '52

The first days of September always loom inevitably and threateningly ahead. Always, too, they resent a challenge and this year, more than ever, these days took measure of our stamina. Enrollment was irregular only in the large size of freshman and kindergarten classes. The total enrollment for the grades is 219, for the high school, 158. July weather, with hot dry, Sahara—like winds greeted us day after day. Respite came in the third week and our equanimity was restored. Some of the mechanical details of school routine run more smoothly than in previous years. Classes move from room to room in a quieter and more orderly fashion, because both the type room and the freshman home room are on the same floor with the other high school classes. There is no shift between floors. This improvement came about by the conversion of the Assembly into type room and classroom. The new Assembly will occupy, on the main floor, a position similar to its old one on third. Both students and parents will benefit by a more centrally located auditorium. Another factor contributing to smoother operation is the presence of a capable, dignified lay teacher in the Social Studies department—Mr. Joseph George. His influence upon the boys is palpable and uplifting. Mr. George also coaches football and basketball.

Other lay help required for the new scholastic year includes Mrs. F.J. Kubitschek for private piano lessons, Miss Barbara Birmingham for the fourth grade, Mrs. Les Gokie for fifth grade, Mrs. Stanley Holly and Mrs. Gordon Harper in the laundry, Mrs. Suchy and Mrs. Catherine Craig in the kitchen, Mrs. Tomlinson and Mrs. Ross for housework and our old reliable maintenance man, Mr. Ignace Heumesser.

September 15, '52

The Friends of St. Mary's inaugurated their new year of service with a business meeting on September 15. The new officers are: Mrs. W.J. Froelick, President, Mrs. J.J. Berigan, Vice-President; Mrs. James Rooney, secretary; and Mrs. Tom Green, treasurer. Present plans are to concentrate all their efforts toward the purchase of a new concert piano. On this same day, our classes took turns going through the new hospital building almost in readiness for Dedication. The following day, the public school classes were conducted through the building. On September 18 the hospital Sisters invited us over for housewarming. After seeing all the rooms in their new drapes and furnishings, we had a little Franciscan party in the nurses' dining room.

September 24, '52

The big day for St. Anthony's had arrived. Both schools dismissed classes in the afternoon to assist with the program, catering and ushering for the various activities connected with the Dedication. It was a unique experience for the schools.

October 4, '52

The great Feast passed in quiet festivity—a real treat that it fell on Saturday and we had no classes.

October 9, 10, '52

The inter-diocesan school convention was held in Omaha on October 9 and 10. Mother Erica and Sister Antonella were able to go the first day while our school remained in session. On Friday classes were dismissed and five more Sisters from high school and grades attended.

October 20, '52

The juniors enjoyed participation in County Government and found it a real learning experience.

November 6, '52

Mother Elma came for Visitation. These happy days passed all too quickly but had a satisfying aftermath. Mother could take back to Denver with her two postulants, Agnes Langan and Anna Marie Schulte, both boarders. Rita Simons made application and, God willing, will enter Marycrest in January. One of the February postulants had not persevered and this threefold replacement is matter for heartfelt gratitude.

November 9, '52

The football game with Elgin ended in our favor; homecoming festivities clinched that happy feeling. Florence Lee was queen of the occasion; Wayne Donohoe, king.

November 18, '52

The juniors wanted to get their turn at entertaining before Advent. So they chose the harvest theme, and gave us a most pleasant evening. The Harvest royalty was led by Sophie Murphy and Gerald Fahrenholz.

November 28, '52

Sister Maureen, for reasons of health, was transferred to Denver and Sister Anne came back to us for second and third grades.

December 2, '52

The students' annual Retreat opened in this first week of Advent. Father Eugene Gallagher, S.J., an alumnus of St. Mary's, conducted those grace-filled exercises. The children found him both interesting and inspirational.

December 5, '52

Although St. Nicholas had made a precious appointment, several teachers had to leave their regrets in order to supervise the first basketball game with O'Neill. Prospects for a successful season are only middling—that is, if one is too concerned about the scoreboard. Other values are being stressed and, in spite of appearances, it will be a good season.

December 10, '52

Mrs. Rasley gave her usual theatre party for the children of both schools. This year it was *The Christmas Carol*, and was a real treat, even for the teachers.

Sister Mildred had submitted to sinus surgery in Omaha on December 10, and missed several days of school. The operation was successful and sister has had relief. Sister Anthony underwent minor surgery at St. Anthony's Hospital and recovered in a few days.

December 15, '52

The Royal Theatre gave a special children's matinee of *The Miracle of Fatima*. Teachers feel well repaid for the loss of school time devoted to such an artistic portrayal of this great event.

December 16, '52

The Music Department gave a Christmas operetta composed by two senior music students and directed by Sister Flores. Considering that it was presented in the gym upon a makeshift stage, without curtain, it was a real success.

December 18, '52

The boarders' Christmas banquet on the eve of vacation time put the finishing touch to the lovely pre-Christmas days.

December 25, '52

The beautiful day was commemorated by Midnight Mass and all the solemnities of the occasion—candlelight procession, vested sanctuary boys, mixed high school and adult choir, and even a life size representation of the Holy Pair with the Infant outdoors on the church lawn. This latter had been prepared by Father Carl and the older boys of the sodality.

December 31, '52

Grateful hearts spend this day close to God in a real Franciscan retreat. Gratitude wells up especially when we think of our generous benefactors, the donors toward the coal collection which totals nearly fourteen hundred dollars, the largest in the history of St. Mary's; Mr. William Froelick, who gave two thousand dollars; Mr. J.D. Cronin, whose Christmas gift was two hundred and fifty dollars; Father O'Sullivan, who made a substantial money gift, and best of all, offered the Christmas Midnight Mass for all the Sisters. Though these and all our benefactors will be rewarded a hundredfold where rewards are everlasting, yet we feel bound to make every effort to win special blessings for them by our work, our work, our prayer, our very lives.

The community at St. Mary's consists of the following Sisters:

Mother M. Erica Hughes	Sister
Sister M. Antonella Troshynski	S
Sister M. Brigid Butler	
Sister M. Maxine von Brixon	
Sister M. Christiana Keber	S
Sister M. Serafica Behm	Sister M.
Sister M. Anne Hays	S
Sister M. Mildred Vogel	S
Sister M. Flores Marquez	
