

A Chronicle of Women Religious in the
Diocese of Dallas
1874-2014

THEY CAME TO SERVE

BY SISTER MARY BRIAN BOLE, SSND

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Introduction

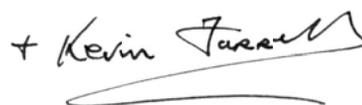
Too few people are aware of the courageous sisters who came to serve the Church in Texas in collaboration with the diocesan priests and religious priests and brothers. Many endured long religious voyages to reach the vineyard to which they had been called.

Many died to the dread epidemics of cholera and yellow fever that repeatedly swept over the republic and later the state. Others died protecting the orphans at St. Mary's Orphanage in Galveston in 1900.

Long before our diocese was established in 1890 Ursuline Nuns, Daughters of Charity, Holy Cross Sisters and Sisters of St. Mary Namur had established schools, hospitals and academies in what would become the Dallas diocese. They were but the vanguard of the thousands of women religious from 63 communities who came to serve and are still serving God in this corner of his vineyard.

Sister Mary Brian Bole, SSND, gives a glimpse of the labors of these brave consecrated women in this chronicle. Theirs is story that needed to be told and she has done it well.

January 1, 2016

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kevin Farrell" with a cross symbol to the left. The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

Most Rev. Kevin J. Farrell
Bishop of Dallas

The Author

School Sister of Notre Dame Mary Brian Bole, author of *They Came to Serve*, has held administrative and teaching positions at a number of educational institutions in Texas and Japan, including the University of Dallas, Kyoto Notre Dame University, Kyoto, Japan, Bishop Dunne School, Nolan Catholic High School, Fort Worth, the Highlands School, Irving and Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Dallas. Sister has also served on the staff of the Diocese of Dallas Pastoral Center. Sister Mary Brian holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from UD and a Master of Arts from Northern Illinois University. She has been awarded the Bishop's Award for Service to the Church for her personal volunteer time in composing this chronicle.

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HISTORY OF WOMEN RELIGIOUS IN THE DIOCESE OF DALLAS

Caveat: The length and detail of any depictions result from the amount of material on hand in the Archives of the Diocese of Dallas. Contact with congregational archivists was generally successful but scarcity of personnel plus storage of documents sometimes made difficult the acquisition of materials. Although correspondence with those archivists met with most generous responses, sometimes the opportunity for fuller information eluded us all. If any reader has corrections to make, information to offer, and/or pictures to share, please send that material to archives@cathdal.org, including the source of the information, where relevant.

History Prior To Establishment of Diocese of Dallas:

To set the scene of the Church in north Texas excerpts from the Directory of the City of Dallas 1875 may be enlightening (F.E. Butterfield and C.M. Rundlett, original printing by St. Louis Democrat Lithography and Printing Company; reprinted: Dallas: Stone-Inge Books, 1979).

- *1846 - Dallas [is] voted county seat over Cedar Springs and Hord's Ridge [Oak Cliff] (p. 4).*
- *1870 – Dallas [is] designated for intersecting railroads (E-W); (N – S); no ice would hamper east-west railroad from Atlanta to San Diego (p.10).*
- *Bois d'arc woods [are] plentiful along Trinity River [durable wood for building] (p. 11).*
- *“Probably [sic] no city in the States enjoys a more enviable reputation for morality....” (p. 12) N.B. This is an interesting statement in light of the comments made by the sisters in their chronicles.*
- *Unimproved lands are \$3-4 / acre (p.14).*
- *Indians [are] still present but government [is] now effectively crushing the last remaining power (p.15).*
- *Church directory includes “Catholic Church” with Mass times (p. 18).*
- *Ursuline Sisters' arrival [is] noted and lauded (p.20).*

No linear telling of these stories emerged; overlapping times, stories and contradictions are endemic. Archival material, contemporary letters with archivists, telephone calls, and emails were all utilized, but rarely did they add to clarity; rather, the layers of correlation, quirks and contradictions seem to have increased. Smooth segues from section to section are rare; instead, they are reminiscent of the sharp turns of the Red River which plays a part in this tale. Let us begin.

Time prior to the establishment of the Diocese of Dallas, the territory was under the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Galveston. During this period, significant contributions were made by religious congregations to the life of the Church in the north Texas area. This section of the history deals with the arrival of religious communities in the area which will become the Diocese of Dallas in 1890. Significant accomplishments, especially in education, mark this time. From an article in the Catholic press, we read the following remarks:

...thousands of sisters ...sent like laborers to the harvest helped build the church in America, staffing schools, hospitals and orphanages, starting ministries wherever need presented itself, in the cities teeming with new immigrants, on the frontiers where sisters arrived hauling harps and pianos to educate daughters of farmers, or on the battlefield of the Civil War, nursing the wounded on both sides... to earn a place of respect in an otherwise hostile, anti-Catholic America.
<http://ncronline.org/print/13442> (online 9/12/2014).



Mother St. Paul and Mother Evangelista are surrounded by student boarders at the Ursuline Academy, shortly after the establishment of the Diocese of Dallas. The Ursulines were the first Women Religious to serve in the City of Dallas



Sister Viola Brown, a member of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, greets a family at the opening of the Neuhoff Center for senior citizens in 1981. The Daughters of Charity founded St. Paul Sanitarium on Hall Street in Dallas in 1896.

Lest the reader think that the establishment of Catholic institutions was an orderly process, one need only look at the opening pages of the chronicles of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross for Marshall, Texas.

During the years 1878-1879 the Reverend Louis Granger, Pastor of St. Joseph's Church, Marshall, conducted a school in his little parlor. In all, he had eleven pupils, boys and girls. By some good fortune, Father Granger visited Clarksville, where the Sisters of the Holy Cross were conducting a school. The sisters had been in Corpus Christi and

Nacogdoches respectively. Through some misunderstanding on the part of the Bishop of Galveston, they had been told to leave and settle in Nacogdoches. From there they went to Clarksville.

*Upon her arrival in Clarksville in 1874, Sister M. Euphrosine, under the direction of Bishop [Claude Marie] Dubuis . . . attempted to found a different jurisdiction... to be known as the Sisters of the Agonizing Heart of Jesus .**** Their efforts met with initial success. But Clarksville ... declined rapidly after it was bypassed by the modern [railroad.] Sister Euphrosine... gave up the struggle and returned to Notre Dame..., after first disbanding the new community of the Agonizing Heart of Jesus. Those who joined the new congregation entered different communities in Texas. Other Sisters were sent from Notre Dame to Clarksville that same year to establish Sacred Heart Academy, a boarding school for girls, which was maintained with difficulty and closed after four years of futile effort. (Castañeda, Carlos. *The Church in Texas Since Independence 1836-1950. Volume VII. Austin, Texas: Von Boeckmann-Jones Company, 1958. p. 322-323).**

*Meanwhile, at the time of Father Granger's visit, Mother Angela Gillespie was making her official visit to Clarksville. It was here she met Father Granger, who asked for the Sisters.**** All this took place in April 1880. Then in June of the same year, a telegram came . . . from the Very Reverend Edward Sorin, Superior General [founder of the University of Notre Dame], telling them to go to Marshall and do whatever the pastor would tell them.*

Sisters Eudoxia and Assumption therefore came by wagon to Marshall. As they passed through the forest, the fear of tramps and the peril of the mud even to the wheel hub were disheartening. Still more so was the poor dismal two room shack and very poorly constructed shed which greeted them. There was no water, and for a bed the sisters used a bale of hay covered with sheets donated by some charitable people. (Archives of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, sent to the Archives of the Diocese of Dallas, May 8, 2014.)

This 109-mile trip from near the Red River (Oklahoma border) to Marshall takes two hours today; then it took at least four days. Sacred Heart Academy in Clarksville thus became the “mother” of St. Mary’s Academy (for girls) and St. Joseph’s School (for boys) in Marshall. For reasons unclear in the records, the academy was sold to the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in 1905 and remained theirs until 1954. No reason is given for the change in ownership. A high school was added but discontinued in 1949. The name of the school was changed several times between St. Mary’s and St. Joseph’s, so recordkeeping without dates is confusing. The Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross was withdrawn from Marshall in 1968. However, the congregation remained in St. Paul’s School in Richardson, Texas until the 1980s.

In the same corner of Texas, other events of the Church were taking place. In a paperback book with no title and no index pages, kept in the Diocese of Dallas, Archives, Father John O’Rourke wrote the history of the Catholic Church in Jefferson, Texas. From this source, note is made that the Catholics of Jefferson of that day were few and poor; the decimation of the Civil War was still apparent. In fact, it was the Catholics of France, through the Society of the Propagation of

the Faith, headquartered in Lyons, France, who would donate \$300,000 (French francs 1,500,000) to the Church of Texas. Of this, \$6,000 went to build a school in Jefferson, staffed by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, which school opened in 1869. The Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul were well-established in New Orleans in the early 1800s, with two hospitals: Charity Hospital for the general population and Hotel Dieu for slaves and seamen. As a slaveholding state, Texas would hold no political terrors for them, but the Paris-based congregation, leaving the French-based port of New Orleans, would find other challenges.

Just reaching Jefferson was arduous. Told it would take from six days to three weeks, the sisters had to wonder what they would find. Six sisters were crammed into two small staterooms with a total of four beds; the boat itself was crowded and the account states that none of the passengers was Catholic. The route was to take a steamboat up the Red River to Shreveport, Louisiana, continue by railroad to Marshall, Texas, and then by stage coach to Jefferson.

When the first Daughters of Charity arrived in Jefferson in 1869 many of the local citizens had never seen a nun much less one of “God’s Geese” with their great cornettes. The Daughters were the object of great curiosity. The painting is *Elegy* by Karol Tichy.



Is it a vision or a hallucination? The first Daughters of Charity arrive in Jefferson.

What the Daughters of Charity wore was an object of surprise. Derived from the common dress of the 17th century Bretons among whom they were founded, typically declining to bow to current fashion, 200 years later the “Geese of God” arrived in Texas to the astonishment of the locals: ‘who are they?’ The conductor hastened them on to the stage coach which also carried a lady; two children, with their nurse; and a gentleman on the inside: a total of 11 inside, plus three or four men on top with the driver. Thus, they traveled the last 18 miles over hill and dale in northeast Texas, arriving at 10 p.m. to discover their house was not ready and they would have to stay in the hotel. Sunday Mass was a blessing in itself, but the church was much more crude than the neo-Gothic edifices they had left in New Orleans.

Finally, on Monday, they walked to their two-story dwelling, with seven apartments but without one article of furniture to be seen; “no stove – nothing,” according to Father O’Rourke’s account. Through some misunderstanding on the part of the pastor, it was thought that they were to bring their own furniture. The prospects were dim: remain at the hotel or move into an empty house.

A kind lady borrowed bedsteads and other furniture, so that the Daughters could move into the house. Little else is noted of their deprivations except, “. . . [we] all went to work with a good will, mattresses were to be made, moss to be cleaned [to be used as filler for the mattresses], and School to be opened the next Monday [October 23].” Beginning with five students – three Protestants and two Catholics – the sisters were assured they would have 50 students by Christmas; this never happened. In fact, the Catholics were few in number and unable to get bread enough to eat, much less support the school.

Jefferson’s status as a major river port (connected by Big Cypress Bayou to Red River and New Orleans) was eclipsed by the coming of the railroads which chose a route through Marshall. The economics of the situation became impossible to sustain. In addition to the school, the Daughters had opened in Jefferson the first Catholic hospital in north Texas. The civil authorities, however, refused to pay for the indigent, and remuneration from paying patients was insufficient to maintain the hospital for more than 18 months. By 1875, the Daughters sold the property, bought in 1869 for \$6,000, for \$2,000 to the Jewish congregation which used it for their synagogue.

Additionally, the city’s population declined as railroads replaced the river traffic, so the sisters were withdrawn in 1895. That was the year they arrived in Dallas to take charge of St. Joseph’s Orphanage in Oak Cliff, which they then operated for 12 years. Their account is in a letter from Sister Theresa Healy, DC, dated December 6, 1894:

The Asylum [sic] is a two story frame building, quite roomy, and has about seven acres around it, a portion of which is planted with fruit trees. The property is paid for, and at present, the Treasurer, Miss Barry, has \$600.00 in hand. There are twenty-six children in the house, the boys largely in excess of the girls, but I do not remember the exact number. They seem very nice children and have been well cared for, in [a] way, but not exactly our way

Sister Stella Dempsey, DC, immediately located a suitable site for a hospital, and the hospital was operational by 1898 (<https://tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ixd03> online 10/26/2015).



Original St. Paul Hospital, 1898, at the corner of Bryan and Hall Streets.

While these efforts were proceeding at the behest of individual priests, working with congregations they had known or whom they fortuitously met, it is obvious there was no master plan for the growth of the Church in north Texas. “Accidental” is perhaps the most precise word to use for the following development.

From Belgium, through Lockport (near Buffalo), New York, came the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, who became the backbone of Catholic education in north Texas. Their arrival was fortunate, since it came after petitions from the Murphy family in south Texas to the Bishop of Galveston, as well as from Rev. Pierre DeSmet, SJ, who wanted them for St. Louis. However, these early overtures occurred during the Civil War, and communication was difficult and prolonged. Their arrival in north Texas is the subject of *A Little Good, The Sisters of St. Mary in Texas* by Sister St. John Begnaud, SSMN, (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, Publishers, 2011.) Relying on the late Sister St. John’s accounts, the following information has been gleaned.

Immigrants coming to Texas faced the border wars with Mexico, the Civil War, yellow fever, a cholera epidemic, tornadoes, Indian attacks, “scalding heat” and “brackish water” (p.43.) What would attract the sisters to Texas, a place the size of France? From their Belgian homeland, they were used to classical architecture, well-appointed schools and decent housing for convent living; in fact, the citadel in Namur dates from the time of Julius Caesar. But the New York base had already attracted 26 novices to Lockport, New York; perhaps the new territory would also be a source of vocations.

Complicating matters further, these foreigners came from north of the Mason-Dixon Line at the end of Reconstruction, appearing at the same time as the “carpetbaggers.” Add the Ku Klux Klan, which openly hated Catholics and Blacks, the arrival of the sisters in Waco coincided with lynchings, cattle drives [Waco is on a spur of the Chisolm Trail], and an abundance of saloons

and gaming houses (p.50). An inauspicious beginning, only eight people other than the sisters attended Sunday Mass. On the verge of returning to New York, the sisters were kept in Waco by an outbreak of yellow fever; a letter to Bishop Dubuis in Galveston expresses the consternation of the sisters:

The information we received from the Bishop, the priests of Waco, and other persons, does not correspond to the reality we find there. To our great disappointment, we learned upon our arrival that there are in Waco only 25 Catholic families, with six school-age children.... The small number of people, and hence the limited amount of good to be accomplished, seem not to balance the risk of the life of the sisters. [One of the sisters already had dengue fever.]

Despite the odds, however, the sisters remained in Waco and built Sacred Heart Academy in 1873. Let it be noted, that the sisters paid for their buildings themselves, through borrowing from other established Namur missions or signing loans from the bank, or both. Though there were some donations, the sisters did not wait for them before they built. The Waco school remained open until 1946 for both day students and boarders.



St. Francis Xavier Academy, Denison, built in 1876. One of the Academies built by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur in Texas.

Eventually other schools established by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur would follow; each institution has its own unique history, often fraught with obstacles to overcome, in addition to the funding of the building (each of these was built by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur and their benefactors; no diocesan funding was offered or received.) This record cannot possibly include details of each of these schools, not to mention the many elementary schools the SSMNs administered.

Simply note the extended area, from Waco in the south to Wichita Falls in the north, plus the numbers in the modern “metropolex” of Dallas-Fort Worth, and one realizes the impact that this single congregation had on education in north Texas. Some of the schools founded by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur are listed below:

Sacred Heart Academy, Waco, 1873
 Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Academy, Corsicana, 1874
 St. Francis Xavier Academy, Denison, 1876
 St. Joseph Academy, Sherman, 1877
 St. Ignatius Academy, Fort Worth, 1885
 Our Lady of Good Counsel Academy, Dallas, 1902
 Our Lady of the Rosary School, Ennis, 1904
 Academy of Mary Immaculate, Wichita Falls, 1905
 Holy Name School, Fort Worth, 1909
 Our Lady of Victory College and Academy, Fort Worth, 1910
 St. Edward Academy, Dallas, 1912

In the earliest days, the Sisters of St. Mary visited each other regularly; there was a particularly strong connection between the Corsicana and Sherman communities. Each new community had been helped by the previous one, and they all helped the next one, with furnishings for convent and school, as well as financial loans. The chronicles from these early foundations are full of Texiana, as well as the picturesque details of life which were so different from life in New York and/or Belgium. For instance, again from Sister St. John's book, we are told:

In Texas, civilization is not as advanced as in the north. Most of the wagons are drawn by oxen, and sometimes there are fourteen harnessed to the same vehicle. At the head of this procession is a man on horseback, who, like an army general, goes constantly from one side to the other to stimulate his horned soldiers. ...it is very comical. There are also in Texas immense prairies where cows and oxen browse at leisure; if you can catch one it is yours. Consequently, meat is very cheap here: 5 cents a pound.

One bridge, however, was not easily crossed: the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur are a Belgian foundation, thus French was the native language, even in New York. The chronicles were written in French, with an occasional English word; for example, "un serpent a tue une chicken!" (A snake ate the chicken.) Indeed, even a skunk was killed in the backyard, a definitely Texan experience. Learning English in New York is one thing; being in Texas was definitely another world.

On the other hand, one obstacle was never removed: the absence of daily Mass. In fact, Mass was not often celebrated in Corsicana, and eventually the sisters were removed from there because of this lack of spiritual support. Schools in Sherman and Denison were thriving, although one superior, Sister Anastasia, was responsible for both missions, shuttling between them at least once a week, a distance of 12 miles, covered by railroad (for which there appears to have been multiple passes available to the sisters.)



Sister Donna Marie Crochet, SSMN, teacher for 50 years; here she is shown at St. Cecelia School Dallas.



Sister Beneta Frances Curley, SSMN, Msgr. William Robinson, and students at St. Cecelia School Dallas

Life was not without other difficulties: the very priest who had asked the sisters to come to the area proved to be unstable and did not offer Mass regularly: “It is not possible to adhere to the school schedule when the sisters have not yet had breakfast at 8:00 a.m.” Indeed, the priest began to spend hours a day at the convent until the sisters eventually had to have him forcibly removed. After spending some time in Galveston (still the diocesan see), the priest returned, including coming to the convent for his meals, and bringing his priest friends. Since there was no compensation for this, the sisters had to stretch their meager resources even further.

Then, there were the losses: a child died from an illness; sisters, too, died, and were buried in this mission territory. What the Sisters of St. Mary paid for these foundations was not just money (remember: the sisters paid for their own schools), but energy, health and life itself. Although each foundation was separate, it is apparent that all foundations of the Sisters of St. Mary had a commonality: intersecting boards, exchanges of personnel, and loans of money point to the common enterprise of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur. Despite the difficulties, however, both Sherman and Denison flourished, and these were only part of the beginning of this community in north Texas.

In the mid-1880s, the Sisters of St. Mary were invited to come to Fort Worth, a dubious destination at best. Sister St. John quotes Oliver Knight, “Fort Worth had erupted into the wildest town in western Texas,” its population including “cowboys, professional gunmen, swaggering buffalo hunters, squint-eyed gamblers, and saucy dance-hall girls.” In addition, the sisters were not to be housed in the genteel “uptown” but rather at the south end of Main Street, known as “Hell’s Half Acre.” Stage coach and train robbers resisted law enforcement and, since businessmen saw cowboys as a source of revenue, they were content to allow ‘places of amusement’ to attract the miscreants. It would be another 10 years before they would be replaced by respectable homemakers. During this time, however, the Sisters of St. Mary did erect St. Ignatius Academy, an imposing structure.



St. Ignatius Academy, at the corner of Jennings and Twelfth, Fort Worth.

It was still a time of immigrants, and many Irish came to Texas after the Great Fire of Chicago; besides, the railroad work was heading to Texas. The French pastor Father Jean Marie Guyot expected to build himself “a little Chartres” but the Irish won out even over the Germans and the original church, St. Stanislaus, was renamed St. Patrick. Still, the Sisters of St. Mary spoke French, so the polyglot community made its way into the life of the Fort Worth community.

The Sisters of St. Mary of Namur pioneered Catholic education in north Texas. In 1885 the nuns established St. Ignatius Academy in downtown Fort Worth. In 1910 they opened Our Lady of Victory Academy and College, a day school and boarding school for girls that later became this area's first racially integrated school.

"One mother called and said, '...I'll have to send her to public school. But if she loses her soul because she didn't get a Catholic education, it's your fault.'"
"Let me explain," the parent was told. "Your daughter will not lose her soul because she didn't get a Catholic education. If you choose not to send her to a Catholic school, that's your choice. If we don't admit black girls, that's our choice - and that's sinful."

The sisters later co-founded Nolan Catholic High School and Cassata Learning Center, both in Fort Worth, as well as being the source of the foundation of the University of Dallas (<http://www.star-telegram.com/living/family/moms/article3825046.html> online 10/27/2015).

A name little known outside the “bubble” of early University of Dallas associates appears to be the major catalyst of this most important Catholic educational institution: Mother Theresa Weber, SSMN, Provincial Superior of the Western Province of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur. The congregation already had an academy and college in Fort Worth, Our Lady of Victory

(OLV), but it needed more space than the single building allowed. “We need a Catholic co-educational college in this area,’ [Sister Theresa Weber] declared. “Let’s get one started.”

The story of this University of Dallas has too many strands to enunciate here: one of the founders of the Congregation of the SSMNs had been a Cistercian priest, scattered into the Napoleonic diaspora that shook Europe in the early 1800s; after World War II, the Communists were forcing the dispersal of the Cistercians from Hungary; and Father George Ferenczy, O. Cist., met the Namurs at a music convention in Wichita Falls. The reunion of the Cistercians and the Namurs had a happy outcome. The Vincentians had once operated a University of Dallas on Oak Lawn, but the Depression and lack of Catholics forced its closing; the charter went to the Diocese of Dallas; OLV had faculty with doctorates; Cistercians had doctorates; and, crucially, Sister Theresa was aware that the Sisters of St. Mary had taught the children of two outstanding laymen, Ed Maher and Eugene Constantin, Jr., to whom she turned for fundraising. They would later be joined by Charles Schulze of Irving, but where would it go?

Sister Theresa’s vision had included land near St. Cecilia’s, a school they administered in the Oak Cliff section of Dallas; now the enterprise had exploded beyond her vision. The laymen were investing in 1,000 acres in northwest Dallas County land near Turkey Knob [Turkey Knob – lots of wild turkeys – is the highest point in Dallas County that travelers used to gauge their accuracy on their way to the California Crossing]; their enthusiasm was carrying forth the fundraising, and it can only be supposed that the Sisters’ reputation for excellent education supported those efforts. Although the Sisters were loath to give up on their dream, a visit from the Mother General crystallized the realization that the plans had grown beyond their scope. ...[T]he Namur Sisters were an essentially missionary teaching order [T]hey bravely go where they are needed.

Bishop T. K. Gorman described the crucial meeting with the sisters: Mother Eleanor and Sister Frances Marie came to see me and said,

Here, take it, the responsibility, the \$2,000,000-plus raised [approximately \$14 million in 2014 dollars], the thousand acres, the Our Lady of Victory accreditations, the President we hired [Dr. F. Kenneth Brasted, Ph.D., New York University], and our continued service. (University of Dallas 50 Years of Vision & Courage 1956 -2006, ed. Sybil Novinski. Irving, Texas: University of Dallas, 2006).



L to R: Eugene Constantin, Joseph Fleming, Sister Theresa Weber, SSMN, Dr. F. Kenneth Brasted and Edward R. Maher organizers of University of Dallas

Another congregation which undertook schools, hospitals and other unmet needs was the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio). Originally recruited from Lyons, France, their work spread throughout north Texas as the demands required. Sometimes their stay was brief, but at other times and places, they served for decades. In 1885 alone, they served the Missouri Pacific Railroad Hospital in Fort Worth for a year, the same year they opened St. Joseph's Infirmary, which they operated until 1991. Another hospital in Marshall, Texas, the Texas Pacific Hospital was also staffed by them from 1885 until 1957. Still, in the 1880s they operated a hospital in Palestine for 32 years, as well as a hospital in Tyler for 15 years.

During the same period, they staffed St. Mary's School in Weatherford, for two years; however, the St. Mary's School in Windthorst was staffed from 1897 until 1982. From 1885-1925, this congregation staffed five hospitals and six schools, often in the outer reaches of the diocese, and for varying numbers of years. (Archives of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio); April 22, 2014.)

At this juncture, there is a tale with a dubious beginning and an inconclusive end. Bishop Dubuis of the Diocese of Galveston, which was the whole of Texas, was ill and exhausted, so he returned to Europe, leaving Bishop Nicholas A. Gallagher as administrator (but not installed as canonical bishop). Since Bishop Dubuis did not resign, there was question about how far Bishop Gallagher's authority reached; confusion abounded. Bishop Gallagher wanted the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur in Fort Worth because a "community of four religious," headed by someone called Mother Theresa, was in Fort Worth; they had come without episcopal invitation and were without canonical status, according to Sister St. John Begnaud's account (p.95).

A separate source also indicates that there was a contingent of sisters referring to themselves as Sisters of Mercy, who had arrived to take over the orphanage, again with dubious origins. The Archives of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas had no record of this event (*per telephone*

conversation with Betsy Johnson, Archivist, Sisters of Mercy, on 9/24/14). Speculatively, it may be considered that the *name* of the Sisters of Mercy, the canonical congregation founded by the Irish Mother Mary McAuley, was accepted by the Irish immigrants who had fled Chicago after the fire, following the railroad to Fort Worth. Ironically, the women who took care of the orphans and other needed work were much loved by the local population. In addition, the dubious group ran a school and refused the bishop's request to leave, making the arrival of the Sisters of St. Mary very difficult. There is no record of the dispute being resolved. However, St. Ignatius Academy, with the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, eventually flourished.

Later examination by the Sisters of Mercy's archivist did reveal an unpublished account of a Mother Teresa Muldoon. In an unpublished monograph, *The Sisters of Mercy in Texas, 1875-1945* by Sister M. Aquinas Donohue, RSM, (1947), the following information about Mother Teresa Muldoon is given. Although the spelling of "Teresa" is different from other accounts ("Theresa"), the events and timeline seem to coincide and this may indeed be the same person who is mentioned by Sister St. John Begnaud. The lack of episcopal and/or canonical papers is not mentioned, but the original presiding prelate of the Diocese of Dallas, Bishop Brennan, seems to have recruited the Sisters of Mercy in El Paso and the niceties of paperwork were either never executed or were lost in transition, since the distance from El Paso to the diocesan see in Dallas is 670 miles by modern road; the railroad was not finished in the time frame given, and the actual distance by trail is undetermined.

From Sister M. Aquinas Donohue, RSM, we discover the following information about the work of the Mercy sisters in Texas. Originally working from Galveston,

. . . [T]hey even extended their activities to Palestine where four sisters conducted an academy with seventy-five pupils in attendance.... Mother Teresa and her community next settled in Fort Worth where the community remained until 1892. There, Mother Teresa's brother erected an academy for the sisters in the suburbs of the city. The location was admirable but at that time too far removed from the center of town. The convent was a long distance from the church and attendance at daily Mass presented a serious difficulty; so the sisters disposed of their property by sale and sought new fields elsewhere.

But Mother Teresa's Texas activities seemed doomed to failure. Her attempt at an orphanage in Oak Cliffs [sic], a suburb of Dallas, was a fiasco and her effort to establish the little community permanently at Henrietta [west of Fort Worth] met with scant success.

There is further mention of a Mother Teresa; note that Archives from the Sisters of Mercy always refer to her as Mother Teresa, whereas the difference in title (Mother/Sister) and spelling (Theresa/Teresa) is found in other accounts. It is doubtful, however, that there were two people from the Sisters of Mercy whose travels and travails were so similar; rather, the difference in spelling of the name 'T[h]eresa' is generally accepted in common parlance.

In the book *St. Patrick's: The First 100 Years*, it reads:

The Fort Worth City Directory of 1883-1884 lists St. Joseph, Convent, a boarding and day school for young ladies and St. Stanislaus Parochial School, a day school for boys and girls, both under the charge of the Sisters of Mercy, with Mother Theresa as the mother superior. Memories recorded later mention a school on Penn Street that remained active until 1887. Further explication of the work of The Sisters of Mercy is scant,

Earliest of the religious communities to arrive in north Texas was the Ursulines, who came in 1874. In a paper entitled *A History of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Dallas: 1874 -2001* by Cynthia Cummins (Diocese of Dallas, Archives), there is a concise record of the Ursuline sisters in Dallas. Further exploration will be found in the decade-by-decade account of the Diocese of Dallas, yet to be formed 12 years in the future, when the Order of Saint Ursula (OSU) arrived from the foundation in Galveston. In 1727, the first French Ursulines had arrived in New Orleans, a French colony, and established a school for girls. Both the school and vocations flourished, and the Ursuline Convent, located at 1100 Chartres, was soon an integral part of the city of New Orleans in the heart of what is now the French Quarter, but was then simply “the city.”

When the French priest Father Joseph Martiniere found himself in the “wild west” of Dallas, Texas, in the Bible Belt stronghold of Protestantism, he sought help from the Ursulines in Galveston, a daughter house of the New Orleans foundation, a move aided and abetted by Bishop Dubuis. In 1874, the first contingent arrived, and in 1878, the Texas state legislature chartered the school under the title “The Ursuline Academy,” empowering the Ursulines with the right to confer degrees and diplomas. Enrollment in 1878 totaled 200 day students and 40 boarders. In June 1878, the Sisters paid \$2,000 for 10 acres bounded by Bryan, Haskell, Live Oak and St. Joseph streets in East Dallas; a new brick building was erected there. The boarding school transferred to the new location, and the day school remained in the Maston-Bryan building.

In 1942, the Ursuline sisters purchased 28 acres and an estate located at Walnut Hill and Inwood Road. The residence housed Merici High School (named after St. Angela Merici, foundress of the Ursulines) for eight years, while the elementary school remained on Bryan Street. The entire preK-12 school relocated to 4900 Walnut Hill Lane in 1950 and remains there still. After 102 years in operation, the elementary school closed in 1976 because of the increase in high school enrollment and need for more space for the high school.

This account simply outlines the physical properties as the work of the Ursulines spread. Their actual work within the diocese, called to many tasks besides education, will indicate how their presence was a stabilizing influence in chaotic times, as the Vicar General Father Martiniere continued to call on them to solve various dilemmas.

A continuing strand of commentary throughout the accounts of the work in Texas is the complication of distance and communication between a congregation’s motherhouse and the mission. The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes came from Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, to Sacred Heart Parish, Texarkana, Texas, to begin a school. “The first months were very difficult For a long time, bread and molasses were the mainstays of the sisters’ diet. [Mother Mary

Agnes] found the people so indifferent to religion that she felt as if she were living among infidels.” (*Ordinary Sisters*, p. 107, by Margaret Lorimer, CSA; 2007). In 1884, a second school was accepted in Jefferson, Texas. In both places the only ministry was elementary school teaching. However, the sisters were removed because of “an internal congregational conflict/irreconcilable difference and was mutually agreed upon...” by the congregation and the church authorities (Letter from Sister Jeremy Quinn, CSA, General Secretary, dated April 30, 2014; Diocese of Dallas, Archives.)

Apparently, some of the sisters wished to stay in Texas because of the warm weather and were willing to split from the motherhouse and form a new congregation under Bishop Gallagher of Galveston, who was willing to accept a diocesan community (over which he would have ultimate authority). However, Bishop Gallagher wanted a new community to be canonically secure, which was not possible under the circumstances; he advised Mother Agnes to recall all of the sisters from Texarkana and Jefferson to the Motherhouse, which she did. Four of the sisters refused and asked for a dispensation. The author of this account ends the paragraph with “Thank God for God!” (*With All Devotedness* by Sister M. Vera Naber, C.S.A., New York : P.J. Kenedy & Sons, 1959; p. 117.)

However, an account by Sister Amadea Wirtz, C.S.A., in *The Mystery of Texarkana*, 1986, published privately by CSA, continues the story: the sisters who remained in Texas reorganized as the Sisters of St. Rose, and they continued in the Texarkana school (p. 7). A larger framework for this story is found in the tumult of different nationalities of immigrants being in the same congregation; in this case, it was the German and Irish. The German sisters returned to the Motherhouse in Wisconsin, while the Irish sisters formed the new congregation. However, the account is inconclusive: no further mention is made about the Sisters of St. Rose, except a note in a letter from Rev. James M. Hayes (p.7) that they “disbanded with the permission of the Holy See” after 1908.

Establishment of the Diocese of Dallas

Pope Leo XIII established the Diocese of Dallas as a separate see in Texas on July 15, 1890, making it the third diocese in Texas, after Galveston (1847) and San Antonio (1874). The diocese covered 120,000 square miles, from the Louisiana border in the east to El Paso in the west; from the Panhandle in the north to south of Hillsboro. Most of the sacramental work was done by priests "riding circuit": covering vast amounts of territory and seeing some places as rarely as twice a year.

Bishop Thomas Brennan became bishop of Dallas in December, 1890, and he took up residence in 1891. According to Cummins (cf., *History of Catholic Schools*, p. 9),

He stirred up much discord among clergy, sisters, and laity with his arbitrary decisions. He created debt problems, and the Ursuline Sisters were forced to petition the Holy See in Rome for protection of Ursuline Academy when Bishop Brennan tried to put the property in his name. . . . after many complaints from other religious about him, Brennan was transferred to Newfoundland and never returned to Dallas. (cf., Havard, 2001; Tucek, 1990.)

According to the *Ursulines of the Central Province* (Crystal City, Missouri, 1983) (p. 219) ,
"One of the waves Brennan had set in motion swept away the Sisters of Mercy at the orphanage, which had rapidly turned under the irregular care of volunteers into a chaos."

Bishop Edward Joseph Dunne, who followed Brennan in the episcopate, conferred with Father Joseph Martiniere, Vicar General in Dallas, who, in turn, asked the Ursulines to take charge of the orphanage until he could secure some Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul to undertake the mission. In October, 1894, Sister Xavier, OSU, and companions set out for the orphanage; they were assisted for a weekend or a month by others who came from the Ursuline Academy Convent but Sister Xavier remained the entire time. Note should be made that orphanage work was not part of the Ursuline background; they simply responded to an unmet need.

At this time, El Paso was part of the Diocese of Dallas and was *de facto* under the administrative auspices of the Jesuit Father Carlos M. Pinto. His own order had been active in Colorado and Arizona, as well as west Texas, and he knew the Sisters of Loretto from his previous work. Thus, he called on them to help in the work of education. According to <http://www.loretto.org/history/sister-magdalen/> online 9/30/2014, Sister Magdalen became their superior... . [U]nder her guidance, the work of the Sisters expanded to Taos, Mora, Denver, Albuquerque, Las Vegas (NM), Las Cruces, Bernalillo, Socorro, and San Elizario. For all the Sisters, it was like being transplanted into what was a truly foreign atmosphere for them. They had to learn Spanish immediately since their prospective students did not speak English. Their home was the traditional adobe with dirt floors and stretched muslin "window panes." The same room served as dormitory, study room and dining room. Mother Magdalen wrote to her sister:

While I walked alone . . . I was deeply conscious of my utter loneliness in this strange land and of the great distance which separates me from every object which is dear to me in this world. (Light in Yucca Land, Sister Richard Marie Barbour, SL, p. 103.)

It was the foundation of a school in San Elizario, Texas, that led to the establishment first of St. Joseph Academy and then Loretto Academy in El Paso; it came about through a request from Rev. Peter Bourgade, pastor of the church there. In 1879, Mother Magdalen sent five Sisters to open St. Joseph Academy in San Elizario. Sister Mary Bernard Doyle described her arrival in 1884 in this way.

We were met [at Franklin, now El Paso] by two Sisters in a canvassed-top spring wagon. The driver looked like he had never known soap, water or a comb. Finally, we reached San Elizario after dark the same evening. When daylight dawned upon us, really my impressions were not very encouraging, as it seemed we had reached God's forsaken part of the world. Some of the rooms had mud floors and were swept with a bunch of broom straws tied together . . . the church had no pews, a mud floor, the highways were full of ruts and holes . . . Our boarding and day school began to increase, so I found myself very busy trying to teach music and classes. We were only five Sisters. We had twenty-five boarders which required a great deal of extra work. (Light in Yucca Land, p. 93)

By 1892, a decision was made to move the Sisters to El Paso. . . . The idea captured the imagination of the Sisters and soon five wagons of furniture, followed by a carry-all full of boarders, arrived at the building that was to become St. Joseph Academy, located in the downtown area.

It was not long until the Father Pinto, who was anxious to open a school in his parish, Sacred Heart, asked the Sisters to staff his school. It was the first of many parish schools that the Sisters would eventually administer in El Paso - St. Mary's, St. Patrick's, St. Joseph's, Guardian Angel, and Assumption. Once the Diocese of El Paso was established in 1914, the Diocese of Dallas no longer had the services of the Sisters of Loretto. However, Loretto Academy (which followed St. Joseph's Academy) has remained a beacon of education for the young ladies of the city of El Paso and the surrounding area.



Loretto Sisters, class picture c. 1888 at San Elizario
(predecessor of Loretto Academy)

The Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, as Father Martiniere had requested, arrived in May, 1895, to relieve the Ursulines of their work at the orphanage in Dallas. Note that all three entities had French foundations: the Ursulines (from New Orleans), the Daughters of Charity (originally from Brittany, France), and Father Martiniere; the French influence in Dallas is little remarked upon in the 21st century. The coat of arms of the Diocese of Dallas reflects the heritage with the use of three *fleurs de lis* to denote the Holy Trinity, as they float down the Trinity River.



Aerial view of Old St. Paul Hospital, left, 1898, Annex Building on right 1918

In 1896, when Bishop Dunne fell ill with typhoid, he was nursed back to health in Father Martiniere's house, since there was no Catholic hospital. (Parkland, the public hospital, had opened in 1894 in a wooden structure.) More Daughters of Charity arrived to establish a hospital, and they stayed with the Ursulines until their own accommodations were ready. Thus is the beginning of St. Paul Hospital in Dallas. Again, note the interconnections of the various religious communities as they aided and abetted the work of the Church, without regard to getting credit.



This cottage on Hall Street served as the first St. Paul Hospital when the Daughters of Charity arrived in 1896. It was both convent and hospital while the new building was being constructed on Bryan.



The St. Paul Medical Center that was opened in December 1963 in the Southwestern Medical Center, replaced the buildings on Bryan and Hall streets. The hospital was later acquired by the State of Texas and was replaced in 2015 by the Clements Memorial Hospital. The building at the left was demolished 2015.

According to the Archives of the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School, St. Paul's Sanitarium received state accreditation as a general hospital almost immediately (July 16, 1896), and the groundbreaking for a new hospital took place on November 13, 1896. By 1898, the 110-bed hospital had opened its doors. In 1900, the School of Nursing was established; the first free clinic in Dallas opened in 1906. From this beginning, the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul would become a major factor in health care in Dallas.



The Lions Club joins with the Daughters of Charity to outfit a young person with glasses she would otherwise not be able to have; with the glasses, she could be a more effective student.

In other ways, the Daughters of Charity affected the social climate of Dallas. When Dallas reached the midpoint of the 20th century, its citizens still lived in a rigidly segregated society characteristic of the Jim Crow South. Law and custom separated blacks and whites in just about every imaginable way. Not surprisingly, segregation extended into the city's medical care system. Major Dallas hospitals, such as Parkland, Baylor, and Methodist, did not extend privileges of any sort to black physicians. The only hospital for blacks with a staff of black doctors was the Pinkston Hospital on Thomas Street.

Dallas Morning News readers were probably startled at the June 24, 1954, front-page story that appeared under the headline "Negro MD's [sic] to Practice in St. Paul's." The story explained that the more than 300 white doctors at St. Paul's, a hospital established and operated by a Catholic religious order, the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, had voted unanimously to extend privileges to ...black physicians. . . . St. Paul's administrator Sister Mary Helen Neuhoff, DC, and Dr. John L. Goforth, medical chief of staff, gave the doctors a tour of the hospital, to which they could admit 32 black patients. There was one major restriction: They could practice at St. Paul's, but they could not become staff. Texas hospitals then required all staff members to

belong to the Texas Medical Association, and its constitution had a provision that members had to be white.

Though racism permeated Texas society in 1954, St. Paul's integration caused no furor. Dr. Frank Jordan's wife, Julia, later recalled being astounded at the lack of negative reaction. *"It was amazing," she said. "Nobody stood in their way. Nobody picketed."*

Dr. Emmett J. Conrad, an African-American surgeon who came to Dallas the next year, later said that *"Saint Paul opened its doors before the hospitals in Chicago, New York, San Francisco, and all the so-called bastions of liberty.... You know, it was done quietly, without fanfare."*

The change came when it did – just as the post-World War II civil rights movement began to build up steam—and in the way it did – because of the leaders involved and because of an approach to racial issues that would characterize Dallas throughout the ending of segregation. The change came first because there were black doctors who wanted equal treatment in the medical profession and sought to take advantage of any opportunity to get it. (<http://www.dallasnews.com/section-archives/125th-anniversary/headlines/20100712-black-physicians-broke-color-barrier-at-dallas-hospitals.ece> online 11/6/2015).

By 1980, Dr. Conrad was installed as head of the St. Paul medical staff. A native of Baton Rouge, a graduate of Southern University (Baton Rouge) and Meharry Medical College (Nashville), he served as chief resident at Homer Phillips Hospital (St. Louis) where he received his training in general surgery; he was also a research fellow at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda (MD). Let it be noted that the news article simply listed Dr. Conrad's background, experience, service and awards, without regard to his early days of breaking the color barrier at St. Paul's Hospital. The article does not mention that he is the first African-American to be named chief of staff at that hospital; by 1980, it was a moot point for the Daughters of Charity and St. Paul Hospital.

Meanwhile, as early as 1895, just six miles south of the Oklahoma border, the German community of Muenster marked the arrival of the Olivetan Benedictines from Jonesboro, Arkansas. The parish was staffed from the Benedictine Abbey in Subiaco, Arkansas, so the call to the Benedictine sisters was natural. Eventually the campus housed buildings for all grades, 1-12, as well as, the church, rectory and convent.



Sacred Heart, Muenster, rising from the farmland: l-r: rectory, school, church, convent (mostly hidden behind the church); some time before 1924.



Sacred Heart School, Muenster, 1962: Sister Frances and the fourth grade

The Olivetan Benedictines taught also in Rhineland, Texas, from 1908-1968; as their labors show, work was being done in the outskirts of the diocese: Rhineland is approximately 150 miles northwest of Dallas, and it is still an unincorporated area. Rhineland, another rural German community like Muenster, had the Sisters as the source of evangelization for generations of students in the area. Other communities known to have had Olivetan Benedictines are Henrietta, Nakoma and Montague (catechetical missions only), and Nazareth. For many years the Sisters taught summer school for Spanish-speaking children in Henrietta, Nocona and Montague (Castañeda, Vol. VII, p. 341).



Olivetian Benedictine teaching primary grades in Muenster

From 1894-1923, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio) taught in a school in Thurber, Texas, 75 miles west of Fort Worth. A coal-mining town, it was thought that it would grow, but there were never more than 168 students (1918), even when there were 6 - 11 sisters stationed there (*Official Catholic Directory, passim.*). Because the miners were of a lower class, more affluent people would not send their children to the school; the sisters remained with the minority. The railroad never went through there; the coal was shipped off a “spur” of the mainline, so the population did not increase. Today it is a ghost town, but the Catholic church, St. Barbara’s, and a miner’s cabin are maintained as historical artifacts in this “ghost town” as a project of Tarleton State University in nearby Stephenville.

In 1907, the same Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word took over the “asylum” in Dallas, an orphanage which had been begun by Sisters of Mercy (invited by Bishop Brennan but without canonical papers extended before Bishop Brennan left the diocese for Newfoundland, so the sisters’ presence was tenuous); then the Ursulines, urged by Father Martinieri, filled the gap for a year, followed by a stint by the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, until finally the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word took over in 1907 until 1980. The last half dozen years saw many changes and no clear mission, so the sisters withdrew. The congregation continued to serve in other cities of the diocese.

In 1898, the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family, founded in New Orleans, was one of two congregations of women whose members are Negro [sic] and its main purpose is the education of and the care of the needy among their own people. When they came to Texas they took over the school in Marshall, which had been shuffled through several congregations, with several name changes (St. Joseph’s, St. Mary’s.) The school remains in Marshall which is now part of the Diocese of Tyler. The area is now heavily Hispanic and the tone of the civic community has followed suit. The Holy Family Sisters withdrew in the 1980s.

Also, in the outer reaches of the Dallas diocese, the Sisters of Mercy continued attempts to establish themselves. In 1896, Mother Teresa and her band moved once more, to Paris [Texas], northeast of Dallas, where they taught school and conducted classes in music and art, using a rented building. According to Sister M. Aquinas Donohue, RSM, (p. 58),

Promising conditions seemed to justify the sisters' hopes for a permanent home in Paris.... Saint Patrick's Academy erected in 1900 at the cost of \$25,000 was the result. Although the project was financed by Mother Teresa's brother, the sisters were obliged to make many sacrifices before the building became a reality. So far as trials and difficulties were concerned Paris was no exception to the other foundations. It soon became evident that Mother Teresa's health was failing. In 1903 she suffered a stroke... and passed to her eternal reward.

Donohue's account continues with Bishop Dunne's request that the sisters transfer the deed of their property to the diocese in 1907. No reason is given. However, at some great expense, the sisters converted the academy into a small hospital, as requested by the bishop, but they were neither hospital administrators nor nurses, so they had to hire laypeople, incurring more debt. In 1912, they relinquished the hospital and terminated their stay in north Texas. It is to be noted that, although the diocese now held the deed to the property, the sisters still incurred the debt. No mention is made about how, when or if the debt was paid. Later, the Congregation of Divine Providence would move to Paris to administer the hospital until 1986; the hospital, after several changes in ownership, is now the Paris Regional Medical Center.

Apparently many religious congregations felt the call to Texas. Bishop Dunne was tireless in his pastoral work, establishing parishes and schools wherever he found the Catholic community large enough to sustain them. Because he had been taught by the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Chicago, in 1902, Bishop Dunne called on them to staff schools in Gainesville (St. Mary's) and Irish Ridge (St. Martin's) (*aka* Talty, now Forney). In 1924 the convent and academy were completely destroyed by fire, but immediately both structures were rebuilt. St. Martin's boarding facilities were arranged to include boys as well as girls, while already as early as 1919 the academic facilities were extended to include high school courses. In May, 1945, the boarding school closed because there were not enough children to warrant operation of the academy (cf., *History of St. Martin Church – Forney Texas* by Msgr. C. Glogowski; 1968; unpublished; Diocese of Dallas, Archives.)

Whereas single gender education was the norm in the eastern United States, such a luxury rarely existed in Texas; although they may have traditionally taught only girls, congregations, “responding to unmet needs,” undertook the education of all the children in the area. In the picture of the student body and faculty of St. Joseph's School, Dallas (then on Swiss Avenue), there are 223 students shown with the seven faculty members from the Congregation of Divine Providence. This ratio (223/7) was typical of the time, as was the practice of having several grades meeting simultaneously in one room.



St. Joseph's School (Swiss Avenue), Dallas, 1908, had an enrollment of 223, with seven faculty members from the Congregation of Divine Providence.

After the Civil War and Reconstruction, combined with available land and the coming of the railroad, many immigrants flocked to Texas, both from other states and from abroad. In 1905, Mary Jordan, an ex-slave (along with her husband, Valentine Jordan), observed the excellent instruction students receive from the Ursuline Nuns. Although non-Catholics, they agreed that it would be good to have a Catholic church and school in their Dallas community (known today as the State-Thomas area). Jordan met with Bishop Dunne and made her request. At that time, construction of Sacred Heart Cathedral was complete, so Bishop Dunne had the former pro-cathedral structure's bricks used to build St. Peter's at the corner of Allen and Cochran (today, Woodall Rodgers) streets. No mention is made about the ecumenism present in the very actions of Bishop Dunne, since only three of the prospective students were Catholic. Bishop Dunne continued to recruit women religious to his diocese.

By 1907, arrangements had been made with the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, who provided \$2,500, and Bishop Dunne for the erection of an industrial school for "colored people." This congregation was founded by heiress Katharine Drexel (later Saint Katharine Drexel) for the express purpose of educating African-American children. In 1908, the first Catholic school for black children in the Diocese of Dallas opened its doors. However, the congregation had no personnel to send to Dallas.

On September 4, 1910, the Sister Servants of the Holy Ghost and Mary Immaculate of San Antonio arrived in Dallas to teach at the school. The Sisters Institute, later renamed St. Peter's Academy, was staffed by Holy Ghost nuns plus Mary Catherine Muse, the first lay teacher of the school. Only three of the students were Catholic; later, a four-year high school program was added. Twenty-two years after initiating St. Peter School, Mary Jordan became a Catholic through baptism and profession of faith. In 1934 her foster son, Max Murphy, became the first African-American priest ordained from the Diocese of Dallas.

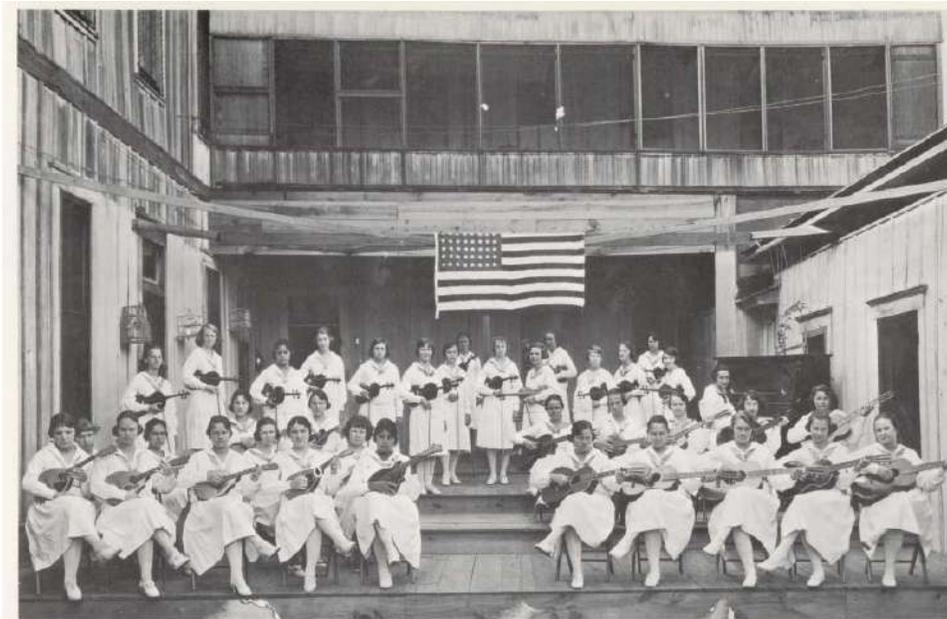
In 1939 St. Peter, now Academy, was accredited by the state of Texas. The original building, made from the used bricks of the old pro-cathedral, needed more than repairs, so the old structure of the school was demolished and a new building constructed in 1954. The dedication was led by Bishop Thomas Gorman on December 5. The Hoblitzelles' contribution of \$100,000, as well as the contributions of Tom Braniff and Ed Maher, made the completion possible.

However, in 1969, a new highway, Woodall Rodgers Freeway, was begun adjacent to St. Peter's site, causing a major displacement of the population, subsequently reducing the enrollment, although the Academy continued, staffed by the Sisters of the Holy Spirit (formerly Holy Ghost) until it was no longer financially feasible for the school to remain open. St. Peter School closed in May, 1987. In 1988, the school building was refurbished by the Notre Dame Special School, operated by the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and it is still utilized as a school for special needs children.

In 1909, at the invitation of Bishop Dunne, the Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Refuge arrived in Dallas. They are a part of the international union of Good Shepherd Sisters founded in Caen, France, by St. John Eudes in 1641. The Dallas foundation, originally on Page Street, was a safe haven for neglected or dependent girls awaiting action by the court system; girls or children placed there by their parents or guardians, in order to remove them from dangerous surroundings; girls declared delinquent by the courts; and girls taken into custody while waiting action of local or other authorities. In the commemorative calendar celebrating the 350th anniversary of the founding, the first page states:

On the outskirts of Dallas, in a collection of ramshackle buildings, little better than the temporary shelters of the crudest oil boom town, there has been going on quietly and unostentatiously. . . one of the noblest works of charity that could be conceived.

This is the work outlined above, and, let it be noted, that there was never any remuneration from the county or state authorities which made liberal use of this opportunity. The home operated on a non-sectarian basis, with no denominational lines ever drawn. Finally, in February, 1926, they moved to Mount St. Michael on West Davis, where beautiful campus buildings awaited them.



Mount St. Michael stringed instrument concert at the Page Street “ramshackle buildings”

In the new buildings on West Davis, the students entertained distinguished guests, including Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz. No reason is given for the Admiral’s presence there, although he was a native Texan (from Fredericksburg) and had a daughter who was a Dominican sister. In fact, the Admiral was baptized a Lutheran, but apparently did not actively practice any religion. However, he was extremely supportive of his daughter’s vocation; she was a professor of biology and an administrator at Dominican University in California for some years. The commemorative calendar shows Admiral Nimitz in several pictures, one in uniform and one in civilian clothes.



Girls and Sister Michael entertain naval officers on the West Davis campus. Fleet Admiral Nimitz is second from the left and next to Mother Clement.

As society and the legal system changed, there was less demand for the traditional services of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, and the residential program for troubled girls was phased out in 1980. The Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Refuge, however, sought out new endeavors. With their expansive campus, in 1974, the Sisters had offered space to the National Secretariat of the Cursillo Movement; one of the Sisters served as their secretary. In 1979, the Sisters collaborated with the Christian Community of God's Delight and enabled this charismatic group to launch the production of 'The Glory of God' television series; this was followed by Lumen 2000 – evangelization in Third World countries, and 'The Way Home' series, a ministry to strengthen families. In 1989, this community accepted the challenge of working with women suffering from post abortion syndrome; the 'Raphael' program restores dignity to victims of choice.

Although the community is diminished by age, they have generously provided space to other Catholic entities: Mt. St. Michael (private) Catholic School; the administration offices of the School Sisters of the Notre Dame; the Redemptoris Mater Seminary; the Focolare community; and the land for Santa Clara Parish and Academy.



A former student chose the Sisters' Christ the King Chapel for her wedding. Sister Pauline Mullen, OLC, was the harpist.

Bishop Joseph Patrick Lynch followed Bishop Dunne as the third bishop of Texas, serving for 43 years, during which time he built 108 churches plus 115 church-related structures (schools, hospitals, rectories and convents.) The second Texas institution opened by the Daughters of Charity was in El Paso, a frontier town of only a few thousand residents when three Daughters arrived on February 3, 1892. The interested citizens of El Paso requested the nursing sisters to establish a hospital similar to Charity Hospital in New Orleans. The hospital rented space until the construction of the permanent building of the Hotel Dieu, named and modeled after the great hospital in Paris. The Hotel Dieu of El Paso remains on the site. Realizing the need for professionally trained personnel to care for the sick, the sisters established a school of nursing connected with Hotel Dieu in 1898, and for the next 77 years the majority of the hospital's nurses were educated in this school. In 1973 the institution closed, but nursing education continued

through the auspices of the University of Texas System School of Nursing, which had established a baccalaureate program using Hotel Dieu's facilities in 1972.

In 1896 Sister Stella Dempsey, DC, located a suitable site in Dallas and made plans for a 110-bed hospital and clinic. St. Paul Hospital was opened on June 15, 1898, with a staff of nine sisters. The first surgery was performed on June 17, 1898. In 1918, when the influenza epidemic was rampant, 63 tents were placed on the St. Paul Hospital grounds to take care of the overflow of critically ill and convalescent patients.

Many important agencies, including hospitals, schools, a residential treatment center, and parish ministries, have been established by the Daughters of Charity in Texas since the turn of the century. A nursing school at St. Paul's Hospital was established in 1900. As was the custom at the time, hospitals conducted the curriculum and formation for nurses' diplomas; however, as the medical field became more complex, more nurses were required to have a university's bachelor degree in the science of nursing, so the nursing school at St. Paul graduated their last class in 1971.

In 1914, the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul were contracted to teach in the new Holy Trinity School, in a building purchased from the Highland Park School District but the increase in enrollment promoted the building of a new school at the corner of Oak Lawn and Gilbert streets. As the area became more commercial, the population changed from the predominantly middle and upper class families from Highland Park and Oak Lawn, so the school population soon reflected the Mexican and Cuban cultures of the parish (cf., Cummins, p.13). On the other hand, Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish was established expressly for Catholic Hispanics escaping persecution in Mexico after the Mexican Revolution. Again, the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul taught these children. As the residential area of the Mexican population spread, Bishop Lynch purchased land at Harwood and Harry Hines Boulevard (then Turney) for a school originally named Our Lady of Guadalupe, but renamed St. Ann's in honor of Mrs. Ann Kilgallen of Chicago who donated the bulk of the funds along with the Catholic Extension Society.

Because of the troubles in Mexico, many Mexican citizens escaped to Texas (in a time before border controls.) The Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul responded to their medical and social needs with the Marillac Clinic in "Little Mexico." As many as 20,000 people were rendered services at the clinic in the 1920s, a task aided by the support of Bishop Lynch for the victims of the Mexican Revolution (cf., Cummins, p.12.)

Currently, the Daughters of Charity have withdrawn from Dallas, and the original hospital and a new one completed in 1963 have both been demolished.

The Mexican Revolution broke out in 1910 when the decades-old rule of President Porfirio Díaz was challenged by Francisco I. Madero, a reformist writer and politician. When Díaz refused to allow clean elections, Madero's calls for revolution were answered by Emiliano Zapata in the south and Pascual Orozco and Pancho Villa in the north. Díaz was deposed in 1911, but the revolution was just beginning. By the time it was over, General Alvaro Obregón had risen to the presidency, primarily by outliving his main rivals. Most historians feel [sic] that this event marks the end of the revolution, although the violence continued well into the 1920s.

(<http://latinamericanhistory.about.com/od/thehistoryofmexico/a/mexicanrevo.htm>, online 11/6/2015).

Events in Mexico had a direct bearing on religious life in Dallas. None of the congregations of women religious who had foundations in the Diocese of Dallas were cloistered. In fact, all of them were “apostolic,” meaning that they worked in and with the community, principally through schools and hospitals. Cloistered religious dedicate themselves to God in prayer and silent work, often making altar cloths or vestments to support themselves. Their prayerful support for the entire church has always been part of the Catholic tradition, drawing its origin from the time of the prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel; secluded from the community physically, the cloistered community is present through their prayers and sacrifices. In this light it is especially poignant that the Discalced Carmelites spent 30 years seeking for a place to be.

Besides the general immigration, another ramification of the Mexican Revolution for the Diocese of Dallas was the arrival of the Discalced Carmelite Nuns. Advised by her cousin the Archbishop of Tulancingo to flee the country, Mother Teresa and her band left for Havana, Cuba. After six years, President Obregon came to power in Mexico with a more tolerant government, so the nuns returned to Mexico, where they lived in great financial poverty but received several women into the order. However, President Calles soon gained control of the government; a great persecutor of the Church, Calles forced the sisters to flee to the private homes of friends. In the end, through contact with the Carmelite Fathers in Dallas who themselves had had to flee the Mexican persecution, the nuns arrived in Dallas on March 13, 1928, where they began community life again. They first lived in a little house on Wichita Street near Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. Initially, the bishop of Dallas refused to recognize the cloistered lifestyle, insisting that the nuns could walk to the church for Mass. Instead, they relied on the priest to bring them Holy Communion, but he could not celebrate Mass in their “convent.” Twice more they moved, first to Page Street, then to Turtle Creek Boulevard, but the place was not desirable for the solitude and peace the cloistered life requires. In the end, Mrs. Mary R. Saner donated a piece of land in the suburbs and sought the help of other benefactors to build the present Monastery of the Infant Jesus of Prague & St. Joseph on Flowers Avenue in Arcadia Park, Oak Cliff. The Discalced Carmelite Nuns moved in on December 22, 1952; after more than 30 years of moving from place to place, the nuns have been on Flowers Avenue ever since.

Each ‘Carmel’ is a separate foundation and the second ‘Carmel’ in the area began in Fort Worth. The following account is from their own web page (with copy editing) (<http://www.carmelnuns.com/Pages/History/HistoryPage2.html> online 11/6/2015).

Many have contributed vitally toward the foundation of this Carmel.... Divine Providence made the first move, when a New York attorney sent a \$5,000 donation to the Oklahoma City Carmel with a letter requesting that this money be used to begin a new foundation of Carmel. This good man acted in response to a sermon he had heard on "Vocations to the Religious Life," and so the Spirit of God did indeed inspire the beginning of [this] Carmel.

Heading the foundation was Mother Mary Magdalene, later elected its first prioress; with her were four other nuns, including her blood sister,



Sister Margaret Mary. After trips to and fro looking for a site, a lovely old home was found in a residential nook downtown, perched on a steep bluff overlooking the Trinity River. Hence the name of the new foundation: Carmel of the Most Holy Trinity.

It was on October 2, 1958, that the Foundation of Carmel in Fort Worth was officially established. On that day, Msgr. Vincent J. Wolf, who was then rector of St. Patrick Co-Cathedral, came in to bless the new Carmel, to seal the enclosure, and to celebrate the First Mass in the tiny chapel of the now cloistered monastery.

By 1977 it was clear that the possibilities for further expansion of [the] small city lot were exhausted. Through the generosity of a longtime benefactor, a beautiful, wooded 56 acre tract of land was purchased in Arlington. It was ideal: secluded, yet central to [the] wide circle of friends and altar bread customers. In collaboration with the nuns, [the] architects designed a striking building, one that is most often described in terms of its beauty and simplicity and its unique blend of both the classic and traditional.

Before leaving Fort Worth, [the nuns] celebrated the Silver Jubilee of [the] Foundation in 1983. At that time [they] were in the process of building [the] new monastery in Arlington, and the community was happy to move in on November 28, 1984. The Dedication of [the] Chapel and Open House took place in May of 1985.

[The nuns] made altar breads and did ceramic work when [they] were in Fort Worth and during the first years after [their] move to Arlington. At present [they] are engaged in art and printing work, hand crafts, Newsletters and Novenas as a means of communication with our friends and benefactors, and other work necessary for the upkeep and care of [the] monastery and garden areas. The Arlington Carmel of the Most Holy Trinity continues in this location.

But not all neighborhoods were (are!) always so quiet. Dramas sometimes made big news. One headline on New Year's Day, 1937, read

**Bullet Fired as Woman
Thinks Midnight Here
Enters St. Joseph's
Academy, Hits Sister**

Lest one think that religious life is calm, or even boring, one needs to look beyond the surface. This particularly dramatic event was covered by the newspapers; the opening paragraph follows. (Although there is a photocopy of the actual article, the name of the newspaper is not found.)

The revelry attendant to the New Year was climaxed Thursday night by the accidental shooting of a nun, Sister Angelina Marie, 26, at St. Joseph's Academy, 2712 Swiss. Physicians at St. Paul's Hospital said she will live. The shot was fired by a . . . woman, who mistook the time, 8:30 p.m., for midnight and began her celebration by firing two shots from a .41 caliber pistol in the yard of her home, 2712 Floyd, across an alley from

the academy. ...The bullet struck the sister on the right temple, ripping through the conventional Catholic headdress and causing considerable loss of blood.



Although the Congregation of Divine Providence made many contributions to the Diocese of Dallas, shedding blood was not the norm. Sister Angelina Marie, CDP, survived and served for many more years.

[Click here to the story of Sister Angelina Marie and Sister Seraphina](#) by Steve Landregan.

From 1885 until they left the Diocese of Dallas in 1986, from St. Joseph's Hospital, Paris, the Congregation of Divine Providence served schools in Fort Worth (Mt. Carmel; St. Alice; Holy Family), as well as schools in Paris, Ranger, Scotland and Dallas. The Congregation of Divine Providence gave 653 years of service as a community (which surely would translate into thousands of years of aggregated service of individual sisters.)

Another congregation active in the diocese at this time is the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio).



Taken in 1940, this pictures former residents of St. Joseph's Orphanage visiting Sister Blase, CCVI-SA

The CCVIs-SA staffed the Memorial Home for Boys from 1917 until 1972. One account is that a Davis Street house sheltered orphan boys when Bishop Dunne was still alive; another version

suggests that the orphans arrived in 1917 when a brick addition doubled its size and it was officially named Dunne Memorial Home for Boys. (stevenspark.org/history – story by Jim Barnes; online October 8, 2014.) Bishop Dunne had died in 1910. [Click here History of Diocesan Orphanage from 1888 until 1993](#) by Steve Landregan, June 30, 2005.



This 1936 picture depicts 10 sisters of the Congregation of Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word with 55 boys and young adolescents (and a huge dog!) Picture is courtesy of the Incarnate Word Archives, 4707 Broadway, San Antonio, TX 78209.

The 1930 census indicates that many of the residents had siblings living there also. It was not uncommon at the time for children to be kept in “homes” because a single parent had to work and could not adequately care for them; on weekends and holidays, families would visit, or perhaps the child(ren) would go to the family house for the day. However, although common in other areas (e.g., Madonna Manor, Marrero, LA) this is speculation regarding the Dunne Memorial Home. On the other hand, in the 1930 census (http://www.censusdiggins.com/dunne_memorial_home_boys.html online 11/6/2015). Lawrence Lockett[sic] is listed and his story gives credence to the speculation: his mother Monica Lockett, a widow, earned her living as a private duty nurse and lived with the family/patient; during holidays Lawrence (Larry) stayed with his cousins, the Dennehy's, and his mother joined them when she was able. (cf., *conversations between Sister M. Clodovia Lockett, SSND, and Sister Mary Brian Bole, SSND, passim.*)

In the northeast corner of the diocese again, from the *Commentary on the History of Catholic Education from Pioneer Days to the Formation of the Diocese of Dallas in 1890 in Northeast Texas and Through its First 100 Years* by Sister Caroleen Hensgen, SSND, Superintendent of Schools in the Diocese of Dallas from 1967 until 1991 (Diocese of Dallas, Archives), she relates the unusual happenings in Marshall. In a very racially tense area, there were two schools in close proximity: Holy Spirit, conducted by the Sisters of the Holy Family, an order based in New Orleans and highly regarded there, was the African-American school; the Holy Cross Sisters conducted the all-white St. Joseph school. When the Holy Cross sisters notified the diocese that they would be withdrawing from the Marshall school, Bishop Gorman sent his emissaries to Marshall to explain the new plan. Holy Spirit School had recently been condemned by the fire department, so the two schools would merge and the students would all be taught by the Holy Family sisters. Msgr. Robert Rehkemper, former pastor of St. Joseph, and Sister Caroleen,

school superintendent, represented the bishop at the town hall meeting, but the racial divide could not be bridged. St. Joseph school closed, and the Holy Family sisters remained with their students in the dilapidated building. However, in that intervening year, Dr. Isidore Lamothe, an African-American physician, and Mr. Carlos Cacioppo, a white business man, led an initiative for the integration of the school; and they succeeded. After one dormant year, St. Joseph's school opened as an integrated school, with the Sisters of the Holy Family in administration and faculty positions, and with both white and black faculty members. The Civil Rights Act of 1967 was still very new, but the work of these laymen, and the willingness of the Sisters of the Holy Family to stand with their students, allowed this very segregated piece of Texas to see integration at work.

Files in the diocesan archives yield a correspondence in 1952-53 between Bishop Gorman and the Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart. It appears that a staff of only four sisters carried out the charism of teaching Christian doctrine. These four covered Paris (the center), Commerce, Sulphur Springs, Bonham, and Greenville, as well as private homes in Savoy and Detroit; 215 miles of driving per day was the norm. The correspondence dealt with the need for a proper convent, daily Mass and an ordinary confessor. A five bedroom house was bought in Greenville for \$15,000, and operations were expanded to cover an area from Waxahachie to Commerce to Greenville; nine parishes paid *pro rata* for these catechetical services. A second center was established at 4946 Swiss Avenue in Dallas, and a third center was set up in Mt Pleasant. An intense correspondence between Bishop Gorman himself and the Mother Superior handled all these issues, until an abrupt end in 1968. In 1970, the *Official Catholic Directory* lists only the Mt. Pleasant center and by 1972 there is no mention of the congregation in the Dallas diocese.

Throughout this time, the diocese continued to grow. In Fort Worth, St. Rita Catholic School was established in September 1954 as a parish school staffed by the Felician Franciscan Sisters (formal name: Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Felix of Cantalice). Originally from Wisconsin, this branch of the congregation was headquartered in Ponca City, Oklahoma until the state legislature threatened to tax their property. Rather than face that eventuality or the cost of contesting it in court, the Felician Franciscan Motherhouse relocated to Rio Rancho, NM (outside of Albuquerque.) (*Conversation between Sister Bertilia Hart, OSF, and Sister Mary Brian Bole, SSND, circa 1998.*)

Initially, St. Rita School housed seven grades in three classrooms. The growing enrollment resulted in an additional four rooms and a library constructed in 1966-67. This began a relationship between the sisters and the people of St. Rita which lasted from 1954 to 1991, when diminished resources, now a common situation in many religious congregations, necessitated the withdrawal of the Felician Franciscans from St. Rita School, Fort Worth. Sister of St. Mary of Namur Miriam NeSmith continues to serve as the social outreach coordinator at St. Rita's parish (2014).

About three miles away, in 1961, the Marianist Brothers joined with the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur to bring a new era of Catholic secondary education to Fort Worth. A new co-institutional school was opened on the Bridge Street campus. This new school would combine the existing Catholic girls' school, Our Lady of Victory, and the Catholic boys' school, Laneri High School; the school named after Monsignor Robert M. Nolan, was later changed to Nolan Catholic High

School, since many non-Catholics of Fort Worth had no idea what a “monsignor” is. Felician Franciscan Sisters also served the high school until 2001, by which time Nolan was part of the Diocese of Fort Worth. Sisters of St. Mary of Namur served at Nolan until 1999.

In the 1970s, Sister Josephine Stewart, SSMN, recognized the necessity of helping Catholics deal with the grief associated with death, separation or divorce. With Jo Lamia, Sister Josephine designed and instituted the Beginning Experience program “...based on the principle that grief doesn’t just go away. It must be gone through and dealt with.” (cf., Stewart, SSMN, Josephine. *Letting Go: The Way Into Abundance*, BookSurge Publishing, 2009). This program now is copyrighted (p.166) and has spread to three continents. Once again, the theme of serving unmet needs elicits the work of women religious.

In Fort Worth, there was an orphanage called St. Teresa’s Home. Msgr. Charles Mulholland, who held a Masters in Science in Social Work (MSSW) and was connected to Catholic Charities, after much travail, managed to secure the Sisters of the Sacred Side (Suore Missionaries del Sacro Costato e di Maria SS.Ma Addolorata) from Rome, Italy to administer and work in the orphanage. The Diocese of Dallas, Archives has a partial correspondence, some in (untranslated) Italian and some in English, but not much is learned from that. [N.B. Msgr. James I. Tucek apparently did the informal translating from the Italian.]

In 1966, visas were obtained with the political help of Lyndon B. Johnson (called “Vice President” but he was President of the United States in 1966.) Language problems abounded on both sides. Then there is the memo of July 20, 1966, reproduced here:

*To: Bishop Gorman
From: Father Hughes*

*One of the Sisters at St Teresa’s has decided to play the roll[sic] of a Religious fugitive. She took the house car and disappeared....
It is thought ... that Sister...has decided to visit her relatives in New York....
[T]he Mother General in Rome ... is on her way to Dallas now via Jet [sic].*

There is no more on this subject.

The following August, 1967, six sisters from St. Teresa’s Home signed a petition to be relieved of St. Teresa’s Home because of the interference of Mrs. X, a laywoman. They ask for another mission. Apparently, Msgr. Tucek, Fr. John Matzner (Catholic Charities) and Msgr. Gerald A. Hughes agreed it was untenable because of the visa restriction that they could only work within their qualified area. There is an abrupt end to the correspondence; their foundress died on January 7, 1968. No other information has been found.

Meanwhile, the work of the Sisters of the Congregation of the Holy Cross was to extend from Marshall to Richardson. As the increasing population of Dallas pushed northward, the need for parishes and schools was undisputed. August 1957 saw the opening of the new church dedicated to St. Paul, as well as a nine-classroom school building. The principal Sister Cyprian, CSC, was also the first grade teacher, a common practice in schools in which religious congregations were active and evening community meetings answered many school questions, as well the

commonality of religious training giving unanimity to the school endeavor. Other community members undertook many of the functions that lay administrators later had to hire out. By 1961, another four classrooms were added, indicating the dramatic growth of the area. By 1964, yet another four classrooms were added and the eighth-grade class of 40 students was the first to graduate with all eight years spent at St. Paul's School. When the Paulists withdrew, diocesan priests took over the parish administration. In addition to the Catholic school population, there were more than 1,500 students in the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, (CCD) program. The Holy Cross sisters remained at the school until 1982, giving 132 years of congregational service to this school. The administration of the school had already been given to a layperson, Mr. Charles Cooper, who served at St. Paul's and later St. Elizabeth of Hungary for almost 20 years. The movement to lay administrators in the Catholic schools indicated the diminishing numbers in religious congregations and the concomitant loss of religious administrators. On the other hand, religious life found nourishment from new quarters.

A long, generous letter from Sister Maria Martha Ruiz, HCG, dated May 22, 2014, presented the Diocese of Dallas Archives the following information about another congregation that came from Mexico.

In August, 1952, while Fort Worth was still part of the Diocese of Dallas-Fort Worth, the congregation known as the Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupanas, also known in the United States as the Guadalupanas Catechist Sisters, arrived in Fort Worth to tend to five different Hispanic communities, located within larger parishes but not necessarily evangelized adequately.

The sisters were given a home in San Jose Parish, which they served, as well as Hispanic communities within the parishes of St. Patrick (now the Cathedral), St. Thomas, Our Lady of Guadalupe, and St. Mary Parish, on the south side of Fort Worth. The original six sisters dedicated one day each week to each parish, Monday through Friday, year round. In the mornings, the sisters would visit the respective neighborhood, visiting each home, taking the parish census, and inviting the parents to send their children to catechism and to go to Mass. After school, catechism classes were held for the children and youth of that day's particular parish.

Father Aloysius Dot, CMF, pastor of San Jose Parish, who was responsible for bringing the sisters to Fort Worth, rented a small house in each neighborhood, since transportation to the parish church was an impediment for the many without automobiles. In the evenings, religion classes were held for the adults from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Father Dot told the sisters that the Diocese paid the rent for these homes. San Jose Parish was the only Hispanic Catholic Church in the city of Fort Worth in 1952. However, as the Hispanic population grew, the sisters concentrated on only three parishes: St. Patrick, Our Lady of Guadalupe and All Saints (San Jose had been a mission of All Saints but they merged in 1956).



Sister Amelia
Cardenas, HCG,
with a group of
children from Our
Lady of Guadalupe,
Fort Worth in 1955



Sister Beatriz Lopez, HCG, with children from the St. Patrick
neighborhood, Fort Worth, 1954-55.

Because of the increase in the Hispanic population, the new pastor, Fr. Richard Trevino, CMF, asked the sisters to begin a kindergarten for the children in the area. (Kindergarten was not mandatory at that time, but these children would need preparation for going into the local public schools, especially if the family did not speak English at home.) The two sisters in charge of the Kindergarten had classes in the morning, Monday through Friday until noon, and dedicated the afternoons after school to teaching catechism to the public school students. In the evenings, the sisters continued their classes for the adults. Sisters not teaching in the Kindergarten continued their schedule of home visitation, parish census and inviting families to attend Mass and to send their children to religion classes. Four more sisters were assigned to the catechetical ministry in 1963-64. (N.B. The Second Vatican Council was in session at this time and would issue documents calling for evangelization; in 1952, the Guadalapanas had simply responded to unmet needs.)

By 1968 [sic], when Fort Worth became its own diocese, there were 14 Guadalapanas working in that diocese, where they continue to this day. However, by training lay people to teach catechism, using the resources of the diocese, the demands on the sisters were less urgent and

some were re-assigned out of the diocese. (From a letter written by Sister Maria Martha Ruiz, HCG, to Sister Mary Brian Bole, SSND, dated May 23, 2014; Diocese of Dallas, Archives.)

In 1961, one of several congregations of the Dominican sisters arrived; this was apparently a newly formed group of women religious under the auspices of the venerable Dominican Order. (Order of Preachers (O.P.) founded by St. Dominic in the 12th century.) The Dominican Mission Sisters from Chicago were engaged originally to teach CCD and would live on Schulze Drive in Irving in what would be called St. Rose Mission House. Their first mission was to be at “Our Lady of Mt. Carmel” [sic] and any other Hispanic populations in need of evangelization. On February 19, 1961, Father Jordan Aumann, O.P., the superior of the order (it was not uncommon for ancient orders of women to have a member of the companion men’s order as superior), wrote to Father Fred Mosman, the pastor of Holy Cross Church and director of CCD:

I am pleased with the assurance that you will provide house, utilities and a monthly salary of \$90. We ... promise to add to the number of sisters from year to year.... (Letter in Dallas of Dallas, Archives)

Correspondence between Father Mosman and Father Aumann, augmented with telephone calls, detail the necessities of having the “Ordinary of the diocese,” i.e., Bishop T. K Gorman, give his written assent to the arrival of the Sisters. Then there had to be correspondence between Bishop Gorman and Chicago Cardinal Albert G. Meyer. This correspondence, begun in February, was still in progress in June, with the Sisters anticipated arrival in September. The diocesan director of CCD was changed from Father Mosman to Fr. William Hoover. In September, three Dominican Sisters arrived and began their work under the direction of Father Hoover. From the correspondence, the work seemed to be in West Dallas; could “Our Lady of Mt. Carmel” be the “St. Mary of Carmel” parish now in West Dallas? This correspondence never clarifies the matter. However, the Sisters did also serve at Our Lady of Lourdes and St. Theresa parishes in west Dallas.

Apparently, in 1963, there was an in-house scandal with the sisters. Father Aumann removed one sister and re-assigned another because her tenure was over. He did re-assign a total of three sisters to Dallas, but he thought a larger dwelling, allowing more members in the community, would alleviate the tensions; however, there was no larger dwelling available. On October 10, 1966, a letter from Bishop Gorman to the Secretary for Religious Matters of the Archdiocese of Chicago indicates that the Dominican Mission sisters are being withdrawn, but no reason is given; the action originated in Chicago. (All information from files in Diocese of Dallas, Archives)

Also, in 1961, the School Sisters of Notre Dame, an international order based in Rome, accepted the invitation of Bishop Gorman to establish the new South Central Province (a division of the St. Louis Province) on the University of Dallas campus. The SSNDs had been in the diocese since 1902, invited by Bishop Dunne to serve St. Mary’s, Gainesville (until 2000), and St. Martin’s, Irish Ridge (*aka* Forney) until 1945. The first mission in the city of Dallas was the Notre Dame Special School, opened in 1963 at the corner of Blackburn and Oak Lawn, to serve students with special educational needs; it was the first classroom in north Texas to serve these children. However, the School Sisters had been serving this special population in St. Louis since the early 1900s at St. Mary’s School, so the sisters who opened the school were experienced in this ministry.

Outgrowing the small dwelling almost immediately, the congregation bought the old St. Joseph school building on Swiss Avenue to be able to expand their services. Much of the training of the lay teachers had to be done on site, since this was as yet an unrecognized part of the university curriculum for educators. The school continued to grow as school districts contracted with Notre Dame School to teach their special needs students: the districts paid the tuition. By the mid-1970s, Notre Dame School moved again, this time to the campus of the Motherhouse where room for expansion was great. In addition, semi-retired sisters could volunteer as reading tutors and other aides for several hours a day, greatly enhancing the teacher/student ratio. However, it was during this same period that the state legislature mandated “mainstreaming” of the special needs students into the public school classrooms, resulting in a drop in enrollment because of the tuition costs formerly covered by the districts. The school, however, now with a board of directors, continued. During the time frame at the Motherhouse, Notre Dame School added an entire division of vocational training to the academic base, so that the graduates of the school could eventually be gainfully employed. This was the intent of the education: to present competent, independent adults. To this end, another development was necessary.

Recognizing the regression of some former students after graduation when they were living with their parents without the outside structure of the school, Sister Rose Rita Meyers, SSND, left the school administration and began AFIL, Association for Independent Living, with Sister Celestine DeLao, SSND. By investing in independent apartment and condo housing, training the residents in check-keeping and banking, grocery shopping, preparation of their own meals and other daily living matters, AFIL was the next logical step for the graduates who are gainfully employed. It is now governed by an independent board of directors.

When the SSND sold the Motherhouse in 1987, the school remained there for another year, moving to its present location in the former St. Peter’s School building on Allen Street in 1988. When the principal Sister Barbara Kraus, SSND, was called to province administration, the head of the Vocational School, Mrs. Theresa Francis, became the head of the entire school, from primary through the vocational level. The school continues at the Allen Street location; School Sisters of Notre Dame still serve as faculty or staff members. As an independent Catholic school, the board of directors includes two SSNDs appointed by the Provincial Council which is also the Board of Trustees.

In 1967, the Diocese of Dallas named the first woman Catholic school superintendent in the nation, Sister Caroleen Hensgen, SSND. Other diocesan administrative positions have been held by SSNDs, as well as faculty and staff positions at the University of Dallas. At various times, other ministries have included administration and/or faculty positions at St. Patrick, St. Elizabeth of Hungary, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Santa Clara, St. Augustine and, before the diocese split with Fort Worth, St. Peter School and St. Paul School (and the combined school they later became.) They have also served at Bishop Dunne Catholic School. Parish ministries have included St. Edward’s and the Cathedral, St Mark’s in Plano, as well as Corpus Christi, Ferris. Hospital chaplaincy is another ministry undertaken. Although their presence in the Diocese is limited because of diminished resources, the congregation continues to serve the Diocese of Dallas.

Not just SSNDs engaged in diocesan administration; the dearth of priestly vocations required Church officials to recognize the talent and education of many religious women who served in diocesan positions: Sisters of the Precious Blood (Dayton, Ohio) served the John Paul Institute; Sister Lois O'Bannon, OSU, was the diocesan archivist; Sister Nancy Sullivan, DC, directed the office of Peace and Justice; Sister Esther Guerrero, MCDP, was Director of Catechetical Services; Sister Helen Marie Rivas, CDP, directed the office of Hispanic Ministry; Sister Margaret Langsett, CSFN, was Associate Director of Vocations; and Sister Guadalupe Ramirez, MCDP, was Director of Catechetical Services. This is a short list, possibly because women religious were not available to fill positions or the positions were not open to them. Interestingly, several of these positions are now dormant.

Vatican Council II changed many things in religious life, including opening up ministries. Again, the call to seek out unmet needs propelled religious congregations into new fields. As the Catholic population in the Diocese of Dallas expanded, so did the number of parishes; however, the parishes were not always able to open schools at the same time. This was the case at St. Mark's in Plano, under Father Claude Smyth, because religious just were not available. Instead, he enlisted the aid of Sister M. Henrice Juengst, SSND, who had established an early catechetical program in Arizona. Sister Henrice arrived in 1977 and remained in service at St. Mark's until 1992, building the program as the parish and Plano grew.

A key development in the Hispanic population made it imperative for the Plano parish to have Spanish speaking sisters. Marlene Barrera, Director of Hispanic Ministry, was in need of major help at the time when she accidentally met the Order of Carmel, Discalced, sisters in Corpus Christi. Actually, these Carmelites were apostolic (not cloistered) as were the Sisters of the Sacred Heart from Mexico. In 1992, when the Catholic Counseling Services (an agency of Catholic Charities) was seeking a bilingual clinical psychologist, they approached the Carmelite Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Because of the sisters' constitution requiring no fewer than three sisters to live together in community, the Diocese of Dallas was enriched with the psychologist for the counseling services plus two bilingual sisters to work at St. Mark's Parish. One of the Carmelites took over the bilingual religious education program; 17 volunteer catechists worked with her in 1992. She also brought to life a Rite of Christian Initiation program for Hispanic adults, many of whom had children in the religious education program. The third member of the community worked directly with the youth (young adult) ministry, directed the Hispanic choir, and organized a youth leadership board to develop leadership skills in the Hispanic students. A large part of the sisters' work focused on the Organization of Latin Americans, a bilingual, bi-cultural nonprofit service agency (formed by Mrs. Barrera) to address the social needs of the families she encountered. No other social service agency in Collin County served this population at the time because there were no bilingual resources, and the people did not have the language skills to seek them elsewhere. What the sisters did was to make the Church the center for the Hispanic population, not just for religious education, but for English learning, job referral and vocational training. The Carmelite Sisters of the Sacred Heart (OCD-Mexico) indeed filled unmet needs. They served at St. Mark's Parish, until 2007, and they continue to serve in various places in the diocese. (Diocese of Dallas, Archives; *The Texas Catholic*, December 4, 1992)

Standing up for justice is a legacy imbedded in the religious who served in Dallas. In a letter addressed to the Archives of the Diocese of Dallas on June 16, 2014, from Glenmary Sister Rosemary Esterkamp (Home Mission Sisters of America), it is written:

Three Sisters began in Mt. Pleasant, Texas on August 31, 1974. Their objective was to take care of religious education for the parish, social services, interaction with Mexican families, and youth ministry. [One] story . . . was that our Sister Bernadette was helping Mexicans with their salary from a farmer who was cutting back on what he owed them. The farmer tried to run Sister off the road as she left the farm trying for fairness in salary. The attempt to run Sister off the road was not successful. A person riding with Sister was connected with one of the newspapers and word got out about what had happened. Later Sister was named Woman of the Year for the county.

This is the only account the Archives has of the actions of the Glenmary Sisters, but for three Sisters to have so many duties and to have such a hands-on approach, again dealing with an unmet need of social justice, may itself account for the paucity of records. Who has time to write about the actions when one is busy acting?

Missionaries of Charity, founded in 1950 by St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, India, came to Dallas in 1987. They occupied a house on St. James Church grounds, and they depended on the kindness of the local population to fulfill their ministry. Mother Teresa's sisters serve the poorest of the poor, both spiritually and financially. They provide essential foods to more than 400 families per month, all of whom have been carefully screened by the Sisters to ensure that they are truly in need. Each week, bags of rice, beans, flour, fresh fruits, vegetables and breads purchased with donations or brought by individuals and organizations are distributed.

The Sisters also maintain the Our Lady of Guadalupe Maternity Shelter for homeless pregnant women by providing a safe place to rest while protecting the lives of their unborn babies. After giving birth, the mothers are helped to start anew.

The Missionaries of Charity teach catechism classes and summer programs at St. James Parish and help children prepare for school by obtaining supplies for them, as well new shoes. In turn, it is not unusual to see many of the students helping the sisters with the work of serving the many in need. They also provide for the Thanksgiving turkeys and the children's Christmas parties and gifts for entire families. Sister Drita, who is head of the local convent, says that the sisters count on Divine Providence to bring them the things they need (Letter from Sr. M. Annaleah, MC, Regional Superior, Mid-West Region, St. Louis; dated May 24, 2014; Diocese of Dallas Archives).



A Missionary of Charity Sister and residents of Our Lady of Guadalupe Maternity Home look at baby pictures.

Historian Carlos Castañeda, in his multi-volume history of Catholicism in Texas, mentions other religious communities, but without much detail. Popularly called “the Victory Noll Sisters” because of their Motherhouse at Victory Noll, Huntingdon, Indiana, the formal name is the Society of Missionary Catechists of Our Blessed Lady of Victory. Founded to reach the scattered people of the southwestern United States, in 1951, they did serve in the Diocese of Dallas teaching catechism; conducting choirs; organizing sodalities; engaging in social work; taking the parish census; distributing food and clothes to the poor; working to validate marriages: anything the Catholic community needed from them in the scattered hamlets in the vast prairies of the diocese. The work in the Diocese of Dallas was concluded in 1961.

Although “Millennials” may consider the turn of the millennium a movement into a new age, the reality is that Texas is still mission country, and for the same reason it has always been: the immigrants arrive and need immersion into the culture, but also the continuation of their religious lives and traditions. That has surely been true of the Vietnamese population in north Texas. Founded in 1953 in the Diocese of Bui-Chu, Vietnam, the Congregation of Mary Queen (full name in English: Congregation of the Missionary Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Queen of the World) came to north Texas in 2002, settling in the convent at St. Luke Parish, Irving, where they still serve in the school and parish. In the Diocese of Dallas, they have also served at St. Peter’s Parish, Bishop Dunne Catholic School, Immaculate Conception (Grand Prairie), and Mother of Perpetual Help (Garland). In addition, they have also served the Diocese of Fort Worth and remain at Nolan Catholic High School in Fort Worth. The large Vietnamese population in north Texas has called forth the Sisters to engage in many ministries.



Sisters and Postulants of the Congregation of Mary, Queen take part in Religious Freedom march, March 23, 2012. Here they are pictured with an unknown gentleman in front of Dallas City Hall.



Sister Janie Tran, CMR, and part of the youth group of Mother of Perpetual Help Parish, Garland; February, 2013



Sister Teresita Au, CMR, and her class at St. Luke's School

Also from the Far East came the Korean sisters, the Sisters of the Blessed Korean Martyrs, who arrived in Dallas in 1982. The Catholic Korean community had already formed, using the old St. Joseph church on Swiss Avenue as their first church, re-dedicating it to St. Andrew Kim. But the community found itself gathering in the Farmers Branch area, a suburb of Dallas, and there they erected a new church named St. Andrew Kim. (The one on Swiss Avenue was de-commissioned as a church.) Here two sisters work within the parish, serving whatever needs arise, but concentrating on sacramental preparation. Because Catholicism is often seen as antithetical to the filial piety of the traditional Korean culture, it is important that the distinctions be made clearly; the Sisters are uniquely qualified to explain this in the native language, since English does not always have the necessary vocabulary. The parish is also a source of cultural unity; even the parish web page is in Korean (although Mass times are also in English.) The two sisters are assigned for a period of three years and are then rotated back to Korea.



Sister Ann Yoo,
SBKM, and Sister
Gemma Kim, SBKM,
in front of statue of
St. Andrew Kim
Korean Church

Some congregations serve the diocese in ever-changing ways; this is especially true in the area of catechetical formation: as the format used by the early parishes in Fort Worth changed because of the substantial increase in the Hispanic population, so did the work of the sister-catechists. Ironically, the paradigm is familiar: sisters from Mexico came to the diocese to evangelize the

Mexican immigrants. As the immigrant population moved within the area, the sisters worked with them, visiting their homes, teaching catechism after school, encouraging church attendance. The Missionary Catechists of the Poor from Monterrey, Mexico is one of those communities. They serve as catechists in parishes which have Hispanic populations but no Spanish resources for teaching them. They are not to be confused with the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence, which was formed from the Congregation of the Divine Providence (San Antonio.)

In an interesting approach to a situation they found in Houston, the Congregation of Divine Providence initiated work among the Hispanic community, many of whom had fled the Mexican Revolution. Children were not being schooled (because of the language barrier), poverty was rampant, and religious education was non-existent. Sister Benitia came upon this situation and worked to solve the problems. As the Congregation of Divine Providence continued their major work, the Hispanic ministry called forth sisters interested in this particular work; eventually, because at the time catechetical work among Hispanics was still rare, this group became its own entity: the Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence became a “daughter” foundation of the Congregation of the Divine Providence, with full canonical approval and support of the “mother” province. Both have ministered in the Diocese of Dallas.

From Bogota, Colombia in 1954, came the Bethlemitas: internationally, the Sisters teach; perform parish and social work; work with the aged, the deaf and mute, disabled children, and children of patients with Hansen’s disease; and serve in mission territories. For them, Dallas is mission territory; here they are the administrators and major caretakers of St. Joseph’s Residence in Oak Cliff. Their web page states succinctly, “The mission of St. Joseph’s Residence, Inc. is to provide care to the elderly who can no longer live alone and to help those in the final stage of their lives draw closer to God.” (<http://www.stjr.org/history-of-the-bethlemite-sisters/> online 11/6/2015).



Sisters and residents of St. Joseph’s Residence enjoy the outdoors on a cool spring day – notice the jackets and flowering crape myrtle. And, yes, that is a miniature pony, a residence pet. Seated on the far right in a red baseball cap is Bishop Thomas Tschoepe who spent his last years at St. Joseph.

Another factor that affects identifying the women religious of the Diocese of Dallas is the work of Bishops Jean Marie Oden and Claude Dubuis of the original Texas diocese, founded in Galveston. Each time he needed help with a ministry any place in Texas, he would return to Lyons, France and the motherhouse of the Congregation Caritatis Verbi Incarnati [CCVI] (loosely translated, ‘Congregation of (Sisters of) Charity of the Incarnate Word (and Blessed

Sacrament.’) However, although they were all from the same foundation in France, when they came to Texas, the Bishops established them as separate foundations: transportation and communication were too difficult to keep them closely connected in San Antonio, Victoria, Corpus Christi, and Galveston-Houston. Three different schools in the present Dallas Diocese were served by the Sisters of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament of Victoria: Holy Cross 1960-1967, Mary Immaculate 1971-1980, and St. Patrick 1971-2010. These different “cousins” have different designations: several have kept CCVI or CVI while another has adopted IWBS (Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament.) Most often, they are simply referred to as “Incarnate Word” which becomes confusing in the tracking which foundation did which work. Attempts have been made to clarify the situation by identifying the congregation with the school or ministry/parish in which they were/are engaged but not all has been made clear.

Whereas Texas was “civilized” by many religious women coming from many places, often foreign lands, the time would come when Texas communities, in their turn, would go forth to foreign lands. That they had originally come from Europe was as much an impetus for going further as anything else. Most notably the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur had ministered in Africa from Belgium in the Belgian Congo, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. From there they moved to other African countries, and the Texas foundations were part of that work in Africa. In her book, Sister St. John Begnaud presents an especially poignant event from her own time in Rwanda. An educator who had once headed the sisters’ House of Studies at the University of Dallas and taught English literature on the faculty, and later served as educational consultant at Holy Trinity Seminary, she also answered the call to serve wherever she was needed. This scholarly white-haired woman contracted hepatitis while living in the Congo and spent her 70th birthday in Rwanda after the 1994 genocide, when machete-wielding Hutu militia slaughtered 800,000 Tutsis. More than a third of the victims were children. The nun can't forget one small boy's account: "Mommy told me 'Go hide.' I went and hid. When I came out, nobody was moving."

(<http://www.star-telegram.com/living/family/moms/article3825046.html> online October 29, 2015).

The Sisters of St. Mary of Namur first went to minister in the Congo in 1923 and have expanded their work to Cameroon and Rwanda. The New York-based province and the Fort Worth-based sisters are conjoined in this endeavor.

Heading to Africa much later were the School Sisters of Notre Dame, who accepted an invitation from a Ghanaian bishop to begin a school there. When they arrived in 1975, however, the greatest need was for organization and work in an orthopedic clinic, about five hours up-country from the capital of Accra. Knowing nothing about that field, but being good organizers – and learners – the first band of five SSNDs began their work in Africa in the orthopedic clinic, which they continue today. However, later work in Ghana did include schools, and there was an expansion into other west African nations, as well as Kenya in the east. The instability of some governments led to civil wars which suppressed some religious houses, but the SSNDs remain a presence in Africa where they have established a novitiate for native vocations.

It is not unusual for a woman religious to arrive in the diocese to do a certain task, although she is the only member of her congregation engaged in the work. Generally the sister lives with

another community while she pursues her mission. The Diocese of Dallas has had several sisters serve in this way.

Sister Mary Agnes Christine Mullen, CPPS, a member of the Sisters of the Precious Blood of Dayton, Ohio, originally came to care for elderly family members, but she also held several ministry positions in the diocese:

1977-1983 St. Pius X Catechetical & John Paul Institute as Secretary and Bookkeeper
 1983-1991 John Paul Institute; Office of Religious Education; Chancery Office in the Diocese of Dallas as Registrar/Treasurer (part-time)
 1991-1999 Propagation of the Faith Office as Director (part-time)
 (E-mail from Sister Noreen Jutte, CPPS, May 7, 2014; Diocese of Dallas, Archives.)



Sister Mary Agnes Christine Mullen, CPPS, was the only member of her congregation to minister in the Diocese of Dallas, while she simultaneously cared for aged family members.

Although ‘the Dominican sisters’ have longed served in the diocese, there are several branches of them. Most prominent are the Sinsinawa Dominicans who served at Bishop Lynch High School, but Dominicans from other foundations also served in the diocese. Sister Dorothy Jonaitis, OP, is from the Grand Rapids foundation and came to serve as a theology instructor at the University of Dallas, School of Ministry from 2003-2011.

(E-mail from Sister Michael Ellen Carling, OP, April 25, 2014)

The third group of Dominicans, the Dominican Sisters of Houston, were invited to serve in the diocese, but did not have personnel available with the exception of Sister Marietta Fletcher, OP, a certified reading specialist who worked for six years (1981-1987) out of the diocesan offices to serve schools which qualified for her federally-funded services. Her failing health made her relinquish her classroom work and she returned to Houston.

(Letter and materials from Sister Mary Magdalen Hanel, OP, April 22, 2014; Diocese of Dallas, Archives.)

Sinsinawa Dominicans responded to the request of Bishop Gorman to serve at one of the three new diocesan co-institutional high schools he was building. The Sisters of St. Mary and the Brothers of Mary (SM) would staff Nolan Catholic High School in Fort Worth; the Sisters of St. Mary and the Brothers of the Sacred Heart took over Bishop Dunne Catholic School in Oak Cliff, Dallas; but who would join the Dominican priests at Bishop Lynch High School? Several different branches of the Dominican sisters were approached before the Sinsinawa (Wisconsin)

Dominicans agreed. Eventually all three schools moved from co-institutional to co-educational, and the Sinsinawa Dominicans serve in the diocese still.

A fourth group of Dominicans, Sister Theresa Nguyen, and the Dominican Sisters of Tam Hiep, were invited in 2008 by her order to the Diocese of Dallas to assist in serving the Vietnamese Catholic population. At that time, Sister Theresa along with four other sisters started a home-based childcare service for working parents. The sisters have also been involved at Mother of Perpetual Help Vietnamese Parish in Garland. (Diocese of Dallas, Archives, *The Texas Catholic Newspaper*, March 2, 2010)

A Maryknoll Sister of St. Dominic, Sister Celine Marie Werner, came to Dallas and taught at Bishop College in 1970. She overcame racial differences in order to work at a predominately Black Christian College. Later she served as professor in the English Department of Bishop College, until May of 1985, when she returned to their New York motherhouse because of illness.

Another Maryknoll, Sister Grace Kreiger, was invited to Dallas to help as a consultant at John XXIII Regional School, as the school transitioned from the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur serving as administrators to lay-led administration. She came to the Diocese of Dallas in March 1977, and served here until June 1980. In an article in *The Texas Catholic*, December 23, 1977, Sr. Krieger was presented with a certificate of recognition by Sr. Caroleen Hensgen, SSND, Superintendent of Schools and the Diocesan School Board for “helping to develop the school board at John XXIII School into a viable force working in harmony with the principal and the teachers.” These religious women brought the spirit of Mission and Maryknoll into the Diocese of Dallas from 1977-1985. (Email from Sister Patricia Ridgley, SSMN, dated 3-18-2015)

Another sister who came to serve in the diocese was from the Sisters of the Most Holy Sacrament in Lafayette, Louisiana. Sister Valerie Bruce, MHS, was invited to Dallas by a Daughter of Charity. She served at St. Cecilia School for four years (1984-1988), then became the librarian for Bishop Dunne Catholic School from 1988-1989, at which time she was recalled to Louisiana. (Letter from Sister Diana Dornan, MHS, Superior General, Sisters of the Most Holy Sacrament; no date given; *circa Spring 2014*; Diocese of Dallas, Archives.)

The Sisters of Holy Family of Nazareth, a congregation founded in Rome in 1875 by Mother Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd, Frances Siedliska. During her lifetime, Mother Siedliska crossed the Atlantic Ocean three times to visit the convents she established and administered until her death in Rome, November 21, 1902. Her attachment to America is testified by the fact that she became a naturalized citizen of the United States on July 16, 1897. The venerable Mary of Jesus the Good Shepherd was proclaimed blessed by Pope John Paul II at St. Peter's, Rome on April 23, 1989. Mother Siedliska chose ministry to the family as the goal of the congregation and this has been carried out throughout the world. (Archives of Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, Grand Prairie, TX, 1990)

In 1885, the order was invited to serve in the United States and in 1928 came to Texas and established hospitals in Mineral Wells, Wichita Falls, Tyler and Vernon. Beginning in 1950s this congregation has served in administrating and staffing schools in Irving, Dallas, Fort Worth and

Grand Prairie. Due to the distance from the Chicago Province in 1962 a Vice-Province was established with temporary residence in Wichita Falls, TX. In 1974 they dedicated a Vice Provincialate House in Grand Prairie which serves the retired and infirm sisters and offers space for retreats and other gatherings. In 1992 the Vice-Province in Texas had been raised to the status of a Province, and would be known as Blessed Frances Siedliska Province. In 2006 all five provinces in USA joined together as one Holy Family Province with the main office in Des Plaines, IL. In 2007 the convent in Grand Prairie became one among many convents in the USA. (Email Sr. Marietta, CSFN, Archivist Sisters of Holy Family of Nazareth, to Archives November 24, 2015)

Bernardine Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis dates back to the last half 15th century when the Franciscan Order was undergoing spiritual refinement due in a large measure to St. Bernardine of Siena's reforms. Five sisters from the Bernardine Community first made their appearance in America in 1894 to teach school and to carry on catechetical activities. Then the first Bernardine Sisters came from Chicago to serve the Dallas area at St. Monica School from 1955-1987, Christ the King School from 1958-1991 and St. Rita's School from 1964-1990. (Email Sister Maria Korick, OSF, Archivist, Bernardine Sisters to Archives April 24, 2014) In the winter 2014-2015 *Footnotes Newsletter*, tells of one of the sisters," a native Texan of Mexican American descent, Sister Therese San Miguel, was inspired to become a Bernardine Franciscan Sister when she was only 13 years old. Sister feels deeply blessed ... and is grateful for all that she has been able to accomplish during her 52 years as a woman religious. Sister San Miguel dedicated the first 25 years of her religious life to teaching both in Michigan and Texas. As the Director of Religious Education in the Diocese of Dallas, she was instrumental in establishing programs that included children with special needs."

After thirty years of dedicated service by the Sisters of Charity of Incarnate Word of Houston who had staffed James L. Collins School since its beginning in 1955, the Sisters of St. Francis of Sylvania, Ohio, took over serving the Immaculate Conception Parish, Corsicana, for 15 years from 1985-2000. Sister Patricia Gardner, OSF, was honored by being named Distinguished Principal of the Year by the Diocese of Dallas Department of Education in 1992. (Email from Sr. Marie Chorzempa, OSF, Archivist for Sisters of St. Francis to Archives dated 9/4/2014)



Farewell to Sr. Patricia Gardner,
OSF, Principal, Jim L. Collins
Catholic School, with two students

Another Carmelite Order, Carmelitas del Sagrado Corazón, (Carmelites of the Sacred Heart,) Sisters Paula Aramburo, CSC, and Yolanda Perez, CSC, works with Hispanic parishioners at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Dallas, and St. Michael, McKinney. Their foundress, Mother Maria Luisa Josefa of the Most Blessed Sacrament, became a light in the darkness during the 1920's revolution and religious persecution in Mexico. She established schools, hospitals, and orphanages. She taught her daughters to cling to God in mind and heart, while associating themselves with the work of Redemption and spreading the Kingdom of God. (Email from Sr. Elsy Thomas, CSC, to Archives dated May 30, 2014)



Daughters of the Sacred Heart Left to Right: Sr. Ubagara Mercy,
Sr. Suni Varghese, Sr. Elsy Thomas and Sr. Moly Kurian

The Daughters of the Sacred Heart, originated in the island of Malta, one of the aims was to impact education to children based on love and truth. They came to Dallas on July 14, 2004, and today there are four sisters in the Diocese of Dallas. The order has been involved in the youth religious education classes of the sacraments, acts as Eucharistic ministers and sacristans, instrumental in being chaperones for after school activities and volunteering to tutor students for Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, OLPH, and School.

One of the sisters, Sister Elsy Thomas, SDH, describes her experience with the OLPH fifth grade class at The Pines Catholic Camp Grounds. “The atmosphere is so calm and nature peaceful, with pine trees around, and cool breezes refreshing your soul. In the evening, you can see the sun setting calmly in the distance. There is singing, and roasting marshmallows on a stick, making s’mores! The children would exclaim how happy they were to be free from school and in the woods together!” (Email from Sr. Elsy Thomas, SDH, to Archives, dated July 3, 2014)

ADDENDUM Interesting items that do not really fit the flow of this narrative but ought to be known:

- School children in Muenster sat on benches laid across (empty?) beer kegs.
- In the late 1920s, Libby Lockett, the Charleston Queen of Dallas, lost to Virginia McMath, the Charleston Queen of Fort Worth. Virginia McMath became Ginger Rogers and danced with Fred Astaire. Libby Lockett became Sister M. Clodovia, SSND, Ph.D. (St. Louis University), Minnie Piper Stevens Scholar of Texas, and the pre-med advisor of about 600 future doctors in her 29 years at the University of Dallas. She also served on the National Science Foundation, after receiving a number of research grants from NSF. It is NOT true she entered the convent because she lost the dance contest.
- A Sister of St. Mary was Rodeo Queen and rode in the 1951 Houston Fatstock Show and Rodeo Parade with Roy Rogers and Dale Evans; Camella Menotti was raised on the family ranch near Dickinson, Texas, where she refined her skills of roping, breaking horses and barrel racing. Even after becoming a Sister of St. Mary of Namur, Camella would continue to ride, although mounting (and dismounting!) was a challenge in her religious habit. After retiring from active ministry, she worked with disabled children in an equestrian program, in which the children learned that they could ride and control a horse. (O'Donnell, Kay. "Spotlight on the Sisters of St. Mary." *Sacred Heart Spartan Alumni Newsletter*. Fall 2008.)



Sister Camilla Menotto, SSMN, was nominated for the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame in Fort Worth. (Sisters of St. Mary, Archives)

- Camaldolese hermit-priests from a monastery in Big Sur, CA, hoped to expand to Texas and wanted an associated cloistered convent of Camaldolese Nuns of the Order of St. Benedict. Sister Superior Emanuella Lucci and her companion Sister Maddalena Balsamo arrived from Italy in 1969 and lived in Bethany House, the convent in parish. Their spiritual director Rev. Clemente Roggi from Big Sur lived at the rectory with the pastor Father Timothy Gollob. However, Fr. Roggi fell ill and returned to Big Sur where he died. The sisters had been supporting themselves by baking Christmas cakes and selling them through the Black Forest (retail) Bakery, but the effort was unsustainable,

and they returned to Italy in 1972. (From a conversation between Father Timothy Gollob and Sister Mary Brian Bole, SSND, on November 18, 2014.)

- Mrs. Margaret Mary Healy Murphy, convert, widow and mother, was a sibling of Sister Mary Angela Healy, SSMN. Mrs. Murphy petitioned Sister Mary Angela for personnel for the “neglected Negro children of Texas” (cf. Margaret – Trailblazer for the Poor by Anne Finnerty, SHSp. Private publication. 1989.) Sister-sister Mary Angela advised her to found a religious congregation for that purpose, so Sister Margaret Mary established the Sisters of the Holy Ghost, which congregation established 30 schools in Texas.

Contrasting Statistics from the Official Catholic Directories

1965 Diocese of Dallas-Fort Worth

2013 Diocese of Dallas

Total Sisters serving	742.....	104
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As the numbers make obvious, the availability of women religious continues to decline. However, consecrated virgins with both the Focolare Movement and the Regnum Christi Movement are active in the diocese, leading retreats or teaching or meeting other needs.

Not all congregations have found a place in this report, either because they have merged with another congregation and the site of the present organization is unknown; because they have been canonically disbanded and no report has been found in the diocesan archives; or for some other reason. We regret these gaps in our recitation and would appreciate information about them or any other congregation active (or once active) in the Diocese of Dallas in the last 125 years, since some of our information is rather sparse. If you can help, please send it to archives@cathdal.org or mail it to

**Archives
Diocese of Dallas
P.O. Box 190507
Dallas, TX 75219**

APPENDIX 1

Women Religious Who Have Served in Diocese of Dallas

1869	Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul
1873	Sisters of St. Mary of Namur
1872	Sisters of the Agonizing Heart of Jesus
1874	Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross
1874	Ursulines (Nuns)
1879	Sisters of Mercy
1880	Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes
1885	Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio, Tex.)
1885	Congregation of Divine Providence, San Antonio
1892	School Sisters of Notre Dame
1902	Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word
1892	Sisters of St. Rose of Lima
1892	Sisters of Loretto
1893	Franciscan Sisters *
1894	Sisters of St. Benedict *
1895	Olivetian Benedictine Sisters
1900	Sisters of St. Joseph *
1906	Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indian and Colored People
1909	Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Refuge (Good Shepherd Sisters)
1910	Sister Servants of the Holy Ghost and Mary Immaculate
1918	Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement *
1928	Discalced Carmelite Nuns
1928	Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth
1945	Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family
1946	Sister Auxiliaries of the Apostolate *
1947	Benedictines
1951	Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart
1951	Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters
1952	Catechist Sisters of Our Lady of Guadalupe (Guadalupe Catequistas) *
1953	Discalced Carmelite Terciaries (Terciaris Carmelitas Descalzas) *
1952	Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupe (Cat. Sisters of Our Lady of Guadalupe)
1953	Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence
1954	Bethlemitas (Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus)
1954	Felician Franciscan Sisters (Congregation of the Sisters of St. Felix of Cantalice)
1955	Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (Houston, Tex.)
1955	Bernardine Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis
1957	Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament (Victoria, Tex.)
1958	Madres Carmelitas de la Corded *
1958	Madres Violetas *
1960	Missionary Catechists of the Poor
1961	Dominican Mission Sisters or the Congregation of Our Lady of the Rosary (Chicago)
1964	Missionaries of the Sacred Side and Sorrowful Mother

1963	Dominican Sisters of Congregation of the Most Holy Rosary (Sinsinawa, Wis.)
1966	Sisters of the Immaculate *
1966	Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament (Corpus Christi)
1969	Camaldolese Nuns of the Order of St. Benedict
1969	Carmelite Missionaries of St. Theresa *
1970	Maryknoll Sisters of St. Dominic
1970	Sisters of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament
1971	Congregation of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament (San Antonio)
1972	Home Mission Sisters of America (Glenmary)
1977	Sisters of the Precious Blood (Dayton, Ohio)
1982	Sisters of the Blessed Korean Martyrs
1984	Sisters of the Most Holy Sacrament
1985	Sisters of St. Francis (Sylvania, Ohio)
1982	Sisters of the Blessed Korean Martyrs
1987	Missionaries of Charity
1991	Religious of Jesus and Mary *
1996	Institute of Divine Mercy (cloistered) *
2002	Congregation of Mary Queen
2004	Daughters of the Sacred Heart
2003	Dominican Sisters Grand Rapids
2006	Carmelite Sisters of the Sacred Heart
2008	Dominican Sisters of Tam Hiep
2013	Carmelitas del Sagrado Corazón

***Congregations not discussed in the this report.**

INDEX

Communities of Women Religious Index

B

Benedictine, 21
 Benedictines, 22, 54
 Bernardine, 49, 55
 Bethlehemites, 45

C

Camaldolese Nuns, 52, 55
 Carmelitas del Sagrado Corazón, 50, 56
 Carmelite Sisters of the Sacred Heart, 40, 56
 Catechist Sisters of Our Lady of Guadalupe, 54
 Congregation of Divine Providence, 24, 25, 32, 33, 45, 54
 Congregation of Mary Queen, 42, 43, 55
 Congregation of the Sisters of St. Agnes, 16, 54
 Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross, 3, 4, 54
 Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family, 23, 33, 54

D

Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, 5, 17, 19, 20,
 21, 28, 29, 54
 Discalced Carmelite Nuns, 30, 54
 Discalced Carmelite Tertiaries, 55
 Dominican Mission Sisters, 38, 55
 Dominican sister, 27
 Dominican Sisters
 Dominican Sister, 38, 47, 48, 55, 56
 Dominican Sisters of Houston, 47
 Dominican Sisters of Tam Hiep, 48, 56

F

Felician Franciscan Sisters, 34, 35, 55
 Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement, 54

G

Glenmary, 41, 55
 Good Shepherd Sisters, 26, 54
 Grand Rapids Dominicans, 47

H

Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupanas, 36, 55

I

Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, 46, 55
 Institute of Divine Mercy, 55

L

Lady of Victory, 9, 11, 12, 35, 42, 54

M

Madres Carmelitas de la Corded, 55
 Madres Violetas, 55
 Maryknoll, 48, 55
 Mission Helpers of the Sacred Heart, 34, 54
 Missionaries of Charity, 41, 55
 Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence, 45, 55
 Missionary Catechists of the Poor, 45, 55

O

Olivetian Benedictine, 54
 Olivetan Benedictine Sisters, 21

R

Religious of Jesus and Mary, 55

S

Sacred Side, 35, 55
 School Sisters of Notre Dame, 24, 26, 38, 39, 46, 54
 Sinsinawa Dominicans, 47
 Sister Auxiliaries of the Apostolate, 54
 Sister Servants of the Holy Ghost and Mary Immaculate,
 25, 54
 Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Refuge, 26, 28, 54
 Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (Houston, Tex.),
 55
 Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio), 13,
 23
 Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (San Antonio,
 Tex.), 54
 Sisters of Loretto, 17, 18, 54
 Sisters of Mercy, 14, 15, 17, 23, 24, 54
 Sisters of St. Benedict, 54
 Sisters of St. Francis, 50, 55
 Sisters of St. Joseph, 54

Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 34, 46,
48, 54
Sisters of St. Rose, 16, 54
Sisters of the Agonizing Heart of Jesus, 4, 54
Sisters of the Blessed Korean Martyrs, 44, 55
Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, 25, 54
Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, 49, 54
Sisters of the Immaculate, 55
Sisters of the Most Holy Sacrament, 48, 55
Sisters of the Precious Blood, 40, 47, 55

U

Ursulines, 3, 15, 17, 19, 23, 25, 54

V

Victory Noll Sisters, 42

Photo Credits

Page 3	Diocese of Dallas Archives
Page 5	<i>Elegy</i> by Karol Tichy
Page 7	Daughters of Charity Archives
Page 8	Diocese of Dallas Archives
Page 10	Sisters of St. Mary of Namur Archives
Page 11	Diocese of Dallas Archives
Page 13	University of Dallas Archives
Page 18	Sisters of Loretta Archives
Page 19	Diocese of Dallas Archives
Page 20	Diocese of Dallas Archives
Page 22	Olivetian Benedictines Archives
Page 23	Diocese of Dallas Archives
Page 25	Sisters of Divine Providence Archives
Pages 27-28	Sisters of Charity of Our Lady of Refuge Archives
Page 30	Discalced Carmelite Nuns Archives
Page 32	Diocese of Dallas Archives
Page 33	Congregation of Sisters of Charity of Incarnate Word Archives
Page 37	Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupanas Archives
Page 42	Diocese of Dallas Archives
Pages 43-44	Congregation of Mary Queen Archives
Page 44	Diocese of Dallas Archives
Page 45	Institute of the Bethlemeites Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Archives
Page 47	Sisters of the Precious Blood of Dayton Archives
Page 50	Sisters of St. Francis Archives
Page 51	Daughters of the Sacred Heart of Malta Archives
Page 52	Sisters of St. Mary of Namur Archives