

**A BRIEF HISTORY OF
OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP SCHOOL
STERLING, OKLAHOMA**

July 31, 1942

Sister M. Sophia and Sister M. Theodora left Sacred Heart Academy, Wichita, Kansas to take up missionary work in Sterling. According to the original plan, the Sisters were to teach religion to the Catholic children in the public school. Each group, including all grades from the first to the twelfth grade was to receive a half hour of instructions. The Sisters came equipped with all the necessary instruction material. In the meantime, the superintendent of the public school with whom the pastor, Father Michael McNamee had made this agreement, resigned.

On August seventh, Father handed the Sisters a letter from the State Board of Education which stated that according to Oklahoma School Law No. 613, the teaching of religion in a public school building was forbidden. Immediately the pastor and parishioners decided definitely to open a parochial school on parish grounds. The week of the ninth to the sixteenth was a busy one with pastor and men from the parish working night and day so that the school could be opened by August seventeenth. Much equipment was still missing but the Sisters and parishioners pioneered their way through.

Because of Oklahoma certification requirements, Sister Alodia came to be the first principal and teacher of the upper grades. Sister Evarista came later to teach the lower grades.

August seventeenth was a red-letter day – the opening of a parochial school with Sisters in charge for the first time. School was begun in a most appropriate manner with a Votive Mass in honor of the Holy Ghost. Besides the celebrant, Rev. Michael McNamee, the following priests were present in the sanctuary; Rev. George Fangauer and his assistant Rev. Ferdinand Strasser from Duncan, Rev. Lieut. Col. Novak, army chaplain of Fort Sill and Rev. Ben Hulsof from Lawton, who delivered an inspiring sermon.

School closed from September 14 to October 26th for cotton harvest.

On April 7, 1943, the school received official notice that it had been granted Accredited Rating by the State Department of Education.

May 2, 1943, the following ten children received their First Holy Communion – Henry Bratzler, Joseph Conway, Leonard Schettler, Billy Duesman, Herbert Fehring, Bernard Fehring, Albert Lutonsky, William Fitts, David Conway and Pauline Duesman.

School closed May 14, 1943. The following eleven graduates will ever be remembered in history as the first eighth-grade graduates from Our Lady's School – Johnny Jacobi, Andrew Roediger, Charles Schettler, Charles Scheetz, Joseph Duesman, Alvin Conway, Alfred Weaver, Thomas Sanders, Jr., Marian Fehring, Lucille Fehring, and Juznity Conway. They were awarded their diplomas in church preceding Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

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August 12, 1943

Sisters M. Alodia, Evarista and Adrian arrived to begin another school year.

Father McNamee decided to add the first two years of high school. Because of additional carpenter work, the opening of school was delayed until October 4th. Sister Ambrosine arrived to be the first high school teacher. Thirteen freshmen and five sophomores enrolled in High School and fifty in the grades – 24 in the lower grades and 26 in the upper grades.

During the course of the year plans developed for building an additional classroom to provide for four years of high school. Funds were raised in various ways.

On May 14, 1944, Helen Marie Fehring received her First Holy Communion. School officially ended on May 19th with church services at 8 o'clock. The following eighth graders received their diplomas: Juliann Fehring, Rosa Lee Conway, Lucille Lutonsky, Mary Duesman and Pauline Jung.

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August 23, 1944

Sisters M. Alodia, Eugenia, Evarista, Modesta and Athanasia arrived at Chickasha on August 23, 1944. Sterling friends met them and gladly brought them to Sterling.

A new classroom was under construction so school did not open as soon as had been expected.

This year a new program was to be tried in the high school – a rural life program according to Msgr. Liguittis' plan. Students were to study rural life problems and at the same time carry on actual farm work. Cooking and sewing classes were to be conducted and home improvements studied. Sisters M. Alodia and Eugenia were appointed to carry on this experimental program. Accordingly, on September 16th the two Sisters left for a trip to Iowa. Father McNamee had asked them to visit Monsignor Liguittis' school at

Granger, Iowa to learn just what would be a practical program to be followed in a rural school. The Sisters spent two days at the Office of the National Rural Life Conference, gathering much valuable information and literature in regard to rural education. From Des Moines, they went out to Granger, 17 miles north of Des Moines, saw Msgr. Liguittis' Homestead of national fame and visited the school to learn more about their rural program. Rev. Gorman, then in charge of Granger, and also seven Franciscan Sisters gave them all the information they possibly could in regard to rural life schools. Reverend Gorman took the Sisters to Madrid, Iowa to board the train to Manilla, Iowa where Father Duren of Westphalia, Iowa met them. Three days were spent here studying Father Duren's ideal rural parish set up and his cooperatives, which are known all over the United States. Father Duren took the Sisters to Council Bluffs, Iowa on September 25th. Here the Sisters boarded the train to return to Oklahoma.

The program was introduced on a small scale at Sterling. A little cooperative store was a favorite corner in the southeast high school room. The students became very active in 4-H Projects.

April 8, 1945 was First Communion Sunday. Children from different grades were in the group. George Seibold, Grade 2, Leonard Bolin, Grade 3, Paul Fehring, Grade 1, Patricia Markle, Grade 2, Mary Ann Schettler, Grade 2, and Lawrence Jung, becoming ill that morning, received First Communion the following morning.

May 19th, the 4-H members took part in the County Timely Topics and Demonstration Contests. Joseph Duesman was named Grand Champion in the Timely Topic division and was awarded a trip to Stillwater. Juliann Fehring, Grand Champion in the Health Contest also merited a trip to Stillwater.

School closed May 29th. Graduation Exercises were held in church. Reverend Monaghan delivered the address after which Father McNamee presented the diplomas. Bernard Fehring was the first high school graduate from Our Lady's. Paul Jung, Wilfred Scheetz, Lawrence Fehring, William Geiger, Edmond Jacobi and Julia Ellen Ballard received eighth-grade diplomas.

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1945-46

Because of a delay in the building of an addition to the new schoolhouse, the Sisters arrived late this year. Sisters Bernadine, Evarista, Modesta and Sophia arrived on October 5th.

Enrollment took place on October 19th. Forty-four enrolled in the grades and 19 in High School.

On All Saints' Day, Bishop Eugene McGuinness blessed our new school.

March 12, 13, -- 4-H Meat Identification Live Stock Show at Lawton was being held in which the 4-H Members of Our Lady's School participated.

May 24th--- Six eighth grade graduates had reasons for rejoicing for they received their diplomas. They were Barbara Ann Conway, Johnny Duesman, Mary Fehring, Joseph Jung, Charles Lutonsky and Myrtle Schettler. Gus Lutonsky received his High School diploma. Services were in Church at 8:00 p.m. Rev. J.T. Murray delivered the address.

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1946-47

On August 16th, Sisters M. Sophia, Alberta, Modesta and Lourdes arrived.

School began August 26th with an enrollment of 43 in grade school and 23 in High School. The cotton vacation break came on October 7-21.

On April 10th, the students of 4-H participated in the County Demonstration Contests. Rosalee Conway and Julia Ellen Ballard won Grand Championship on a cream separator demonstration. Juliann Fehring won Grand Championship on her timely topic entitled, "The Past, The Present, and The Future".

On April 11th, the high school students attended an electrical school at Lawton conducted by a teacher from Stillwater.

April 13th was the happy day for the First Communicants: Margaret Mae Conway, Evelyn Fehring, Mary Lou Scheetz, Mary Eugenia Gossett, Joseph Patrick Simms, Kenneth Schettler. Patricia Kolker and Homer Forsythe Jr., from Elgin, made their First Holy Communion with this group. Because of weather conditions, Lawrence Duesman made his on May 25th.

May 15th, Graduation night had a downpour of rain at Sterling. Graduates received diplomas by candlelight because the cyclonic storm had cut off all electricity. The following seniors received diplomas: Lucille Fehring, Marian Fehring, Mary Ellen Weaver, Johnny Jacobi and Joseph Duesman. The eighth grade graduates were Marvin Conway, Eugene Bratzler and Richard Fehring. Because of the previous high waters and

forecast of more rain, Marvin Conway's folks did not come for fear of a bridge might be washed out. The bridge did give that night while graduation exercises were taking place. This was the evening of Ascension Thursday. The next Sunday, Marvin made it into town by bicycle. His father had helped place a plank where the bridge was and so Marvin made sure of getting his diploma on that following Sunday.

It was the morning of May 15th during Holy Mass, Father McNamee announced officially that he was leaving the parish. Ill health forced him to do so. Words cannot express the grief experienced by all who know him and intensified by the memory of what he had done for this parish now that he was leaving Sterling.

On May 16th, Father Ferdinand Meis, the new appointed pastor, arrived.

On June 2nd-6th, Juliann Fehring and Rosa Lee Conway participated in the State 4-H Roundup at Stillwater.

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1947-48

August 20th – Sisters M. Sophia, Alberta, Helena, Modesta and Isidore arrived in Sterling.

August 21st – Enrollment day, 15 beginners (54 in the grades and 17 in high school).

September 22nd – Dismissed school for cotton vacation.

September 24th – Received word that Rosa Lee Conway and Julia Ellen Ballard had won first prize at the State Fair on the Quality Cream Demonstration – received a cash prize of \$75.00.

January 17th – Sister M. Petrona came to help index the library.

January 26th – Golden Wedding Anniversary of Mr. & Mrs. Ben Fehring – no school because school building was used by relatives and friends to celebrate the occasion.

February 5th – Sisters M. Alberta, Modesta and Isidore attended Bishop Kelley's funeral.

February 22nd – Golden Wedding Anniversary of Mr. & Mrs. Snyder.

May 2nd – First Holy Communion Day for Johnny Cremer, Mary Lou Forsythe, Eugene Kolker, Johnny Kolker – all from Elgin – and Dorothy Schettler, Dorothy Conway, Mary Ellen Fehring, Roberta Fitts, Marianna Geiger, Hildegard Geiger, Alfred Jung, Frankie Markle, Frankie Schettler, Geneva Simms and Dorothy Bratzler – all from Sterling.

May 11th – Red Letter Day – Dedication of new church at Elgin. Sterling high school students sang for the occasion. Besides being happy about their great privilege, the students were excused from morning classes.

May 12th – High school students sang Requiem High Mass for Richard Lodes funeral at Elgin.

May 16th – Junior-Senior Banquet – All in grand style, regardless of the small enrollment in high school.

May 21st – Graduation Day for James Conway, Herman Fehring, George Jung, Ernest Scheetz, the four famous “BIG FOUR” eighth grade class. Rosa Lee Conway, Mary Duesman, Julie Ann Fehring, and Charles Scheetz were the honored seniors to graduate in 1948.

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1948-49

August 23rd – Sisters M. Ermenhilda, Modesta (high school teachers) and Sisters M. Barbara and DeSales (grade school teachers) arrived at Sterling.

September 13th – Enrollment of about 70 pupils – 16 High School and the remainder grade school pupils.

November 14th – 20th – A Mission was given by Rev. D. J. Langton, C.Ss.R. from St. Louis, Missouri.

March 27, 1949 – Rev. Mathew Brown O.S.B., sang his first Solemn High Mass (native of Elgin).

May 31st – Graduation for three eighth grade boys, William Fitts, Bernard Fehring and Albert Lutonsky. Seniors receiving their diplomas were Julia Ellen Ballard, Patrick Conway, Wilfred Scheetz, Edmond Jacobi and Lawrence Fehring.

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1949-50

August 19th – Sisters M. Modesta, Dorothy and Floring arrived at Sterling.

August 23rd – Sisters M. Adella and Bertha made their appearance.

August 26th – Enrollment Day of 16 students in high school and 49 in the grades.

September 25th – October 20th – School was dismissed for the cotton harvesting.

January 15th – Confirmation at Sterling and Elgin.

April 11th – Joe Duesman won Grand Championship in 4-H Dress Revue.

April 26th – Johnny Duesman and Marvin Conway won a trip to Stillwater on their demonstration – “Making an Electric Motor Portable”.

May 7th – First Holy Communion Day for Clarice Schettler, John Conway, Arthur Simms, Anthony Jung, Larry Grulick, Sherman Grulick and two children from Elgin.

May 11th – Junior-Senior Play – “Always in Trouble” – great success, given in Sterling Friendship Theater.

May 21st – Junior-Senior Banquet. The pictures of all past High School Graduates were hung in the hall for this occasion.

May 25th – Graduation Exercises. A heavy rain to contend with. High School Graduates were: Johnny Duesman, Charles Lutonsky, Myrtle Schettler, Barbara Ann Conway and Mary Fehring. Eighth grade graduates were: Joseph Conway, Henry Bratzler, Leonard Boelen, Herbert Fehring and Pauline Duesman.

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1950-51

August 18th – Sisters M. Adella, Benigna and Henrietta arrived.

August 26th – Sisters M. Clothilda and Julia, the rest of religious family, pulled in.

September 5th – Opening of school, with Sisters M. Henrietta and Clothilda the grade school teachers and Sisters M. Adella and Benigna as the high school teachers.

October 23rd – Catholic Youth Rally in Oklahoma City.

May 6th – First Holy Communion Day for Jimmie Markle, Alice Marie Fehring, Carolyn Fitts, Joan Ghrulich, Elizabeth Ann Schulte and Juanita Forsyth.

May 20th – Junior-Senior Banquet.

May 25th – Graduation Exercises at 8:00 p.m. Father Ferdinand Meis still pastor.

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1951-52

August 18th – Arrival of the following teachers: Sisters Adella, Benigna, Columba, Clothilda and Henrietta.

August 21st – Opening of school. Enrollment of 48 in the grades and 18 in high school.

January 2nd – Ernest Scheetz, Senior, joined the Air Force, leaving 17 students in high school.

February 28th – The High School Students and the seventh and eighth grade students had a retreat, conducted by Father Ferdinand Strasser of Duncan. In the meantime, our pastor, Father Ferdinand Meis, was giving a retreat to the seminarians at Bethany, Oklahoma.

April 25th – Father Meis left Sterling for his appointment at Yukon, Oklahoma and that same night our new pastor, Father Leo Hardesty arrived.

May 6th & 7th – Youth Rally for High School students in Tulsa.

May 11th – First Holy Communion for five children from Sterling and two from Elgin.

May 18th – Junior-Senior Banquet. Alumni of Our Lady's also invited Father Michael McNamee who was the guest speaker.

May 23rd – Graduation Day at 8:00 a.m.

May 26th -31st – Sisters Clotilda and Henrietta taught Religious Vacation School at Elgin.

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1952-53

August 16th – Sisters arriving were: Sisters M. Victorine, Bonaventure, Orvella, Leonard and Eulalia.

August 18th – Registration: High School – 19 students and Grade School – 41 students.

September 22nd – October 14th – Cotton and Peanut Threshing-Harvesting Time so vacation time from school books.

November 9th – First rain since July 1st.

February 12th – Seven High School girls presented the play “A Southern Cinderella”.

May 3rd – First Holy Communion for the following children: Charles Jung, Mary Ellen Ryan, Teresa Seibold and Susan Williams.

May 21st – Graduation Exercises in Church. High School Graduates: Albert Lutonsky, Bernard Fehring, William Fitts. Eighth Grade Graduates: Mary Cecilia Conway, Joseph Sims, Kenneth Schettler and Leon Fitts. Father Meis now of Yukon delivered the address.

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1953-54

August 17th – Sisters arriving were Sisters Victorine, Ambrosine, Mildred and Ida.

August 18th – School opened with enrollment of 21 in High School and 42 in Grade School.

September 14th-October 5th – Cotton Vacation Time.

September 16th – Rev. Father Murray, newly appointed pastor of Our Lady’s arrived. Father Leo Hardesty became chaplain of Blackwell General Hospital (Felician Sisters in charge).

November 2nd – A church committee of four members were elected: Mr. John Fehring, Mr. Anton Jung, Mr. Joe Laux and Mr. John Seibold.

February 21st -28th – A Mission was preached by Rev. Preston Murphy C.M. (Vincentian priest).

May 16th – First Holy Communion – Lucy Conway, Ellen Williams, Robert Markle, and Robert Schulte from Sterling and Carolyn Pena, Jane Kolker, Gregory Cunningham and David Kolker from Elgin.

May 27th – Commencement at 7:30 p.m. in Church. Seniors: Pauline Duesman, Herbert Fehring, Joseph Conway, Henry Bratzler and Leonard Boelen. Eighth Grade Graduates: Lawrence Duesman, Evelyn Fehring and Margaret Conway.

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1954-55

August 11th – Sisters arriving were: Sisters Victorine, Majella and Mildred, followed by sisters Euphrasia and Ida on August 15th.

August 17th – Opening of School. High School: 17 students and Grade School: 43 students.

September 13th – September 27th – Cotton Vacation.

October 1st – Good rain – first since May.

January 2nd – Bishop McGuinness confirmed a class of 36 at 4:00 p.m., 31 children and 5 adults. This included members from Elgin.

March 17th – Junior-Senior Play, “Here Comes Charlie” – a great success! Proceeds were \$118.50.

April 17th – First Holy Communion of Sterling children: Garry Cotton, Joseph Williams, Nellie Duesman, Rose Etta High and Annitta Seibold. Elgin children were: Jo Ann Cremer, John Doyle, Michael Cunningham and Philip Cunningham.

April 19th – Father Murray took the Seniors on their trip to Carlsbad.

May 22nd – Graduation Exercises at 7:30 p.m. Eighth Grade: Dorothy Ann Bratzler, Dorothy Jean Conway, Emma Fehring, Mary Ellen Fehring, Roberta Fitts, Hildegard Geiger, Marianna Geiger, Dorothy Bratzler, Geneva Sims, Alfred Jung, Frank Markle, and Frank Schettler. High School: Leonard Schettler, Mary Ann Schettler, Helen Marie Fehring, Patricia Markle, George Seibold. Rev. Robert Westerman gave the commencement address.

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1955-56

August 10th – Sisters Ida and Columba arrived.

August 12th – Sister Euphrasia came to Sterling to join the faculty.

August 14th – Sisters M. Hilda and Mildred, also faculty members of the term, arrived at Sterling.

August 14th – Death of Sister M. Adella at Enid Hospital.

August 16th – School began with 21 High School Students and 30 in the Grade School.

October 8th – Diocesan Golden Jubilee at the Fair Grounds in Oklahoma City.

January 5th – Word came that Father Murray, our pastor, was transferred to Perry. He was succeeded by Father Bernard Collins.

May 6th – First Holy Communion Day for Rita Lutonsky and Mary Agnes Legako of Elgin, and Robert High and Leon Schettler of Sterling.

May 8th – Mr. and Mrs. John Schulte celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary.

May 20th – Graduation Day. Seniors to receive diplomas were Lawrence Jung, Wilbert Fehring, Clara Duesman, Christine Bratzler. Eighth Grade Graduates were Edwin Schettler, Catherine Fehring and Agnes Duesman.

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1956-57

August 8th – 14th – The following Sisters arrived: Sisters M. Ida, Mildred, Euphrasia and Hilda.

August 27th – Opening of school, with 16 in high school and 29 in grade school.

October 10th – Father Bernard Collins left for a Leave of Absence.

October 13th – Rev. Milton Paul Gans, a discharged Navy Chaplain was placed in charge of Sterling.

November 5th – Hot Lunch Program inaugurated. Twenty cents a meal. Original store room in Block House was renovated for this project.

January 1957 – Joe Laux, a staunch supporter of the school and parish passed to his eternal reward. In less than a week, Oscar Jacobi also died. Father McNamee, the former pastor and Father Charles Schettler, a native of the parish, officiated at Mr. Laux's funeral and Father Murray and Father Schettler at Mr. Jacobi's.

May 5th – First Holy Communion Day for Judy Lee Jacobi, Clarice Ann Seibold, Billy Don Schettler and Joey Schulte.

May 19th – Graduation Exercises for Kenneth Schettler from High School and Clarice Ann Schettler and Stephen Calliote from the Grade School.

June 2nd – First Holy Communion at Elgin – Kenneth Etter, Jeanne Austin, Jo Ann Legako, Robert Lutonsky, Cathy Burden and Anthony Pena.

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1957-58

August 7th – 21st – The following Sisters made their arrival: Sisters M. Mildred, Ida, Hilda and Julia.

August 22nd – Classes began with Sister Hilda in High School and Sister Mildred in grades of 5-8. Freshman and Sophomore English and Science were taught by Sister Ida. During the time Sisters Mildred and Ida taught in High School, Sister Julia took over their classes in Grade School. Sister M. Ida taught Junior and Senior English and Grades 1-4.

September 3rd – Parish Carnival with profit of \$2700 was realized.

September 9th – Hot Lunch Program went into effect with Mrs. Eva Miller as cook.

December 27th – Our beloved Bishop Eugene McGuinness passed to his eternal reward.

December 30th – Word was received that Monsignor Victor Reed would be our next Bishop.

March 17th – Mrs. Laux was buried this morning. Mr. Will Hendricks dropped dead a few minutes after tolling the bell for Mrs. Laux's Funeral Mass.

May 3rd – Word was received that Evelyn Fehring, Senior, has received a \$40 cash award as first place winner in a Vocation Poster Contest sponsored by the Serra Club.

May 4th – First Holy Communion for Rose Ann Fehring, Charles Jacobi and Joseph High.

May 18th – Graduation Day. Margaret Conway and Evelyn Fehring had the distinction of being the last Graduates of Our Lady's High School. At the request of Mother Patricia, Bishop Victor Reed officially closed the High School because of the small enrollment. Elizabeth Ann Schulte and Alice Marie Fehring graduated from the eighth grade.

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1958-59

August 17th – Sisters arriving for this term were Sisters M. Mildred, Julia and Denissa.

August 25th – Enrollment Day brought 27 children from Sterling and 5 from Elgin.

August 27th – Official opening of school with Sister Denissa teaching Grades 1, 2, 3, and Sister Julia teaching Grades 4 & 5, and Sister Mildred, grades 6, 7, and 8.

May 10th – First Holy Communion for Mary Ruth Seibold, Alvin Jung, Linda Geiger, Allen Collins and Elizabeth Schettler.

May 24th – Graduation for the following eighth grade students: Linda Boelen, Joseph Fehring, Bernice Schettler, Anthony Jung and Barbara Schettler. Ten Seniors now attending Public High School received Holy Communion in a body along with the eighth grade graduates at the ten o'clock Mass.

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1959-60

August 18th – 28th – Sisters M. Mildred, Callista and Denissa made their arrivals at Sterling.

August 26th – The yearly parish carnival was held, with members of Elgin and Sterling parishes conducting the activities. Under the leadership of Rev. M.P. Gans, \$2400.00 was realized. This was the first time the Sisters did not help with the carnival.

August 30th – Registration Day. Ten students from Elgin enrolled, bring the total to 36, an increase of one over last year. All grade students.

December 29th – Sister M. Denissa entered St. Mary's Hospital as a patient.

December 30th – Mother Patricia called Enid to ask to have school at Sterling postponed for a week after the Christmas holidays because she had no teacher to send to Sterling.

Jan 8th – Sisters M. Callista and Denissa returned to Sterling.

January 9th – Sister M. Hilda came to Sterling to substitute for Sister M. Mildred, because Sister needed medical attention.

January 11th – School reopened. Sister Mildred returned to Sterling after an absence of five weeks.

January 22nd – First Semester ended. One pupil moved away, leaving a total enrollment of thirty-five.

February 26th – Notice came from Wichita that Sister M. Denissa was being transferred to All Saints Parish in Wichita to teach first grade. Sister Hilda replaced Sister Denissa teaching grades 1-4 and Sister Mildred resumed her task of teaching grades 5-8.

March 11th – Sister M. Hilda played and the upper grade students sang the Requiem High Mass at the funeral of Mr. Cunningham, the grandfather of Sister M. Geralda, Ad.PP.S. Mr. Cunningham was from Elgin.

March 16th – An electric organ was installed in Our Lady's Church at Sterling. The reed organ transferred to school.

April 12th – Another RED LETTER DAY! New metallic green chair desks arrived for all the pupils. The desks are the result of hard work on the part of the Civics Club members. This year's slogan was "Be a good citizen: Serve your school".

May 17th – School picnic – rained in the morning but cleared and dried up so the children could eat and play outdoors.

May 18th – Spent the afternoon in the storm cave with the school children. Had a rain and more hail.

May 22nd – May Crowning and eighth grade graduation at the 10 o'clock Mass. Theresa Seibold crowned the Blessed Virgin. Deborah Kolker was flower girl and Alvin Jung was diploma bearer. The five graduates were Mary Ellen Ryan, Susan Williams, Theresa Seibold, Charles Jung and Robert Kolker.

May 24th – June 3rd – Religious Summer School with an enrollment of thirty-eight students from Elgin. Rev. M.P. Gans took charge of the Junior High and High School group. Sister M. Mildred had grades 3-6 and Sister M. Hilda had pre-school and grades 1 and 2.

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1960-61

August 16th – Sisters M. Constance and Rita Mary arrived today at Rush Springs and were met by Mrs. Louis Smith and her son, Jackie.

August 18th – Parish Carnival tonight on the grounds. The Sisters did not attend, but several Divine Providence Sisters from Lawton came and also came over to the Sister's house to meet the Sisters.

August 21st – Enrollment Day. School Children met the Sisters in school hall after the 8:00 o'clock Mass on Sunday. Total enrollment was 26 students, only one first grade pupil from Elgin.

August 24th – 25th – People of the parish cleaned school and put new seal on the hardwood floor.

August 28th – School opened.

September 23rd – Sisters and students attended Fair Day in Oklahoma City -- therefore school was dismissed.

October 10th – Because of illness, Sister M. Constance was transferred and Sister Mary Alberta replaced Sister.

October 22nd – Our Lady's Sodality was begun with the permission of Father Gans. Sister Rita Mary acting as moderator. The Civics Club was integrated into the Sodality. Sodality officers are: Robert Schulte – prefect; Anita Seibold – vice-prefect; Eddie Jacobi – secretary; and Ellen Williams – treasurer.

October 28th – Because of Teacher's Meeting in the City, school was dismissed.

October 31st – The school children had an All Saint's Party today instead of a Halloween Party. It was sponsored by the Sodality. All the children came to the party in a Saint's costume and at a given time each one had to tell the life story of the Saint he or she represented. Sister M. Alberta represented Saint Barbara and Sister Rita Mary was the Veronica who wiped Our Lord's face on the Way of the Cross. Bobbing for apples, a treasure hunt and musical chairs were games which were the afternoon's entertainment. Of course, ice cream and drinks had to be the treats.

November 15th – Sister M. Alberta's nameday was celebrated this month with the school children bringing a spiritual bouquet and a little program during which those who participated gave Sister a piece of science equipment with a note of advice for her life with each article, for Saint Albert is the patron of scientists. Everybody had hearty laughs. It would be hard to tell who enjoyed it the most, the students or Sister Mary Alberta!

December 22nd – In the evening, a Christmas play, “The Carol of the Stars” was presented or the public. The scene was Christmas evening in London back in the 16th century during the time of persecution of Catholics by “Bloody Queen Bess”. A disguised priest was trying to sneak back into his country to say Midnight Mass for his people.

December 25th – Midnight Mass was at Elgin this year. Miss Agnes Laux took the Sisters to Elgin to attend it. After the 8:00 a.m. High Mass at Sterling, the Sisters left by train for Wichita to spend the Christmas vacation at the Motherhouse.

January 20th – Inauguration of the first Catholic president, John F. Kennedy. The Sisters did not have the opportunity to see the ceremony on television. Everyone was going some place that Sterling was playing its last big football game. (*Had to be “basketball” game!*).

January 23rd – Mother M. Marciana, the provincial superior of the Sister Adorers of the Most Precious Blood, and Sister M. Anita, the community supervisor paid a short visit with the Sisters and visited the classrooms while school was in session.

March 11th – 12th – Sister M. Alberta and Sister Rita Mary, together with the officers of Our Lady’s Sodality – Robert Schulte, Anita Seibold, Eddie Jacobi, Ellen Williams and Robert Markle – attended a two-day Sodality Spring Workshop at Okarche, Oklahoma. In the evening of the 11th, a talent show was a feature for entertainment for more than 200 sodalists. Anybody could participate and were encouraged to do so. The Sterling group put on a skit in which they acted out the court scene of the Christmas Play of 1960. They won third prize.

March 19th – On this Sunday, Father Gans read Bishop Reed’s letter announcing his decision to close the Sterling Grade School because of few children and need for Sisters elsewhere, and to set up a catechetical center.

April 16th – First Holy Communion Day for Billy Geiger, Jackie Sigler, Cheryl Ann Jacobi, Debra Seibold, Marie Schulte and Lesa Ann High.

May 7th – May Day Ceremony this Sunday evening in honor of Our Blessed Mother. A vase was placed on the center of Communion railing and the children marched in, each carrying a flower which he or she placed in the vase. Then Ellen Williams placed the vase before Our Blessed Mother’s altar. A sermon and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament followed the precession.

May 10th – A Holy Communion Anniversary Dinner today in the lunch room prepared by Mrs. Rodgers, the hot lunch cook since December. Father Gans was toastmaster. Round white one-layer cakes represented the host and each child received a small glass of red

wine. The day began with Holy Mass and the renewal of the Baptismal vows by the children who held lighted candles.

May 14th – First Holy Communion Day for nine little Elgin children who had attended religious instructions on Saturday during the school year. They received their First Holy Communion in Saint Ann's Church at Elgin. The Sisters were present for the great occasion.

May 28th – Graduation Day for three happy eighth grade students – Ellen Williams, Robert Schulte, and Robert Markle. All three belong to Our Lady's Parish.

May 29th – June 9th – Religious Vacation School for all Catholic school children. The important event kept in mind during the religious instructions during these two weeks was that Confirmation Day would be on June 5th. Therefore a general overall review of the truths of our holy religion were studied and explained.

June 5th – Bishop Victor Reed administered the sacrament of Confirmation to 51 children and 6-8 adults. Father Charles Schettler and Monsignor Harkins from the City were present for the ceremonies. Also one of the assistants of Blessed Sacrament Parish of Lawton was with us. When the Bishop was speaking to people in church, he again thanked them for their great loyalty to their parish and school. He also reminded them since it was the only (or at least the best) thing to do now in closing the school, but in the coming fall he would have a catechetical center established at Sterling.

June 10th – The Sisters left Sterling with sad hearts, knowing that in the coming fall neither they or others would be coming back to teach the good children of Our Lady's Parish. The kind friends and benefactors of the Sisters will always be remembered in the prayers of the Sisters on each Thursday of the week, when a Holy Mass is said for all benefactors of our entire community.

The End

This history of Our Lady's School was taken from a typed journal left by the Sisters who taught at the school. It was found in the estate of Tony and Catherine Jung. I thought that there would be lots of you who would like to read it. I retyped it as exact as I could – I apologize for any misspelled names or any facts that I misinterpreted.

Barbara Jung