

Featuring St. Mark School – Cleveland



St. Mark School was the first IHM mission in Cleveland. Four IHM Sisters arrived in 1949 to begin the K-8 school for the 221 students.

The convent chronicler notes that, "For the first few Sundays of the school year we attempted congregational singing for the children's Mass. For several reasons, some beyond our control to remedy in a short time, we decided to discontinue it..."

Although the congregational singing was not successful, the sisters soon organized a girls' choir that first year. They formed a boys' choir two years later.



St. Mark's students were thoughtful children, bringing a fully prepared Thanksgiving dinner and entering whole-heartedly into school fundraising. The school was divided into two competitive moneymaking teams for paper drives and sales tax stamp drives. Through the years, the teams raised thousands of dollars to benefit their school.

The early 1950s saw tensions increase in the months leading up to the Korean War. St. Mark held its first air raid drill for the 353 students and seven IHMs in 1952. "All went well until some of the over-sized seventh graders tried to hide from view," says the chronicler. "Arms and legs just wouldn't fit..."

Enrollment at St. Mark grew slowly but steadily. By 1953, eight IHM Sisters taught 388 students. The first grade had two classes because of the number of children; the seventh and eighth grades had half-day sessions, as did the two fourth grade classes. It was the year the school musical event began, and every child had a role to play. The chronicler called it a huge success, which raised \$2,053 "used in the interests of the school and for the purchase of band instruments."

The kindergarten closed in 1955 because there was no room. By 1959, nine sisters taught 553 children in grades one through eight.



Like everywhere, St. Mark saw changes in the 1960s. "Boy commentators are chosen from grades 6-8 during the 8:15 Mass," the chronicler says in 1965. And in 1966, the parish boundaries were extended "due to losses caused by the freeway."

And in 1974, St. Mark received good news. "Private schools in Ohio were finally awarded the allocated funds held in escrow -- \$158.33 per child." The money went toward field trips, to purchase library books and update classrooms. The Parent Advisory Board started in 1974. In 1975, the Athletic Association was created for parish-wide athletic programs.

The school reinstated a kindergarten in 1983, our **Featured Class Year**. The latchkey program began in 1988. 1996 was a memorable year for St. Mark School. Students raised \$10,800 for the Technology/Life Skills Lab, and Sister Judy Weirick, IHM, retired after 20 years at the school, the last 17 as its principal. Students planted a tree in her honor. The last IHM Sister, Yvonne Spenoso, left St. Mark School in 2000. The school is still open and active.

In 1983



Ronald Reagan was president of the United States, which had a population of 233,791,994 people. Life expectancy was 74.6 years.

The United States admitted shielding former Nazi Gestapo chief Klaus Barbie, the "butcher of Lyon," wanted in France for war crimes; a terrorist explosion killed 237 Marines in Beirut; and the United States invaded Grenada.

Sally K. Ride became the first American woman astronaut in space as a crew member aboard the space shuttle *Challenger*.

The Washington Redskins defeated the Miami Dolphins 27-17 in Super Bowl XVII. The Baltimore Orioles won the World Series in five games with the Philadelphia Phillies. Philadelphia's 76ers were NBA champs, sweeping the series against the Los Angeles Lakers. The New York Islanders swept the series with the Edmonton Oilers for the Stanley Cup.



With the introduction of noise-free compact discs, the vinyl record began a steep decline.

Crack cocaine was developed in the Bahamas, and soon appeared in the United States.

Gandhi received a Best Picture Oscar. Emmy Awards went to *Hill Street Blues* for Best Drama and *Cheers* for Best Comedy. More than 125 million viewers tuned in to the last episode of *M*A*S*H*.



The FCC authorized Motorola to begin testing cellular phone service in Chicago.