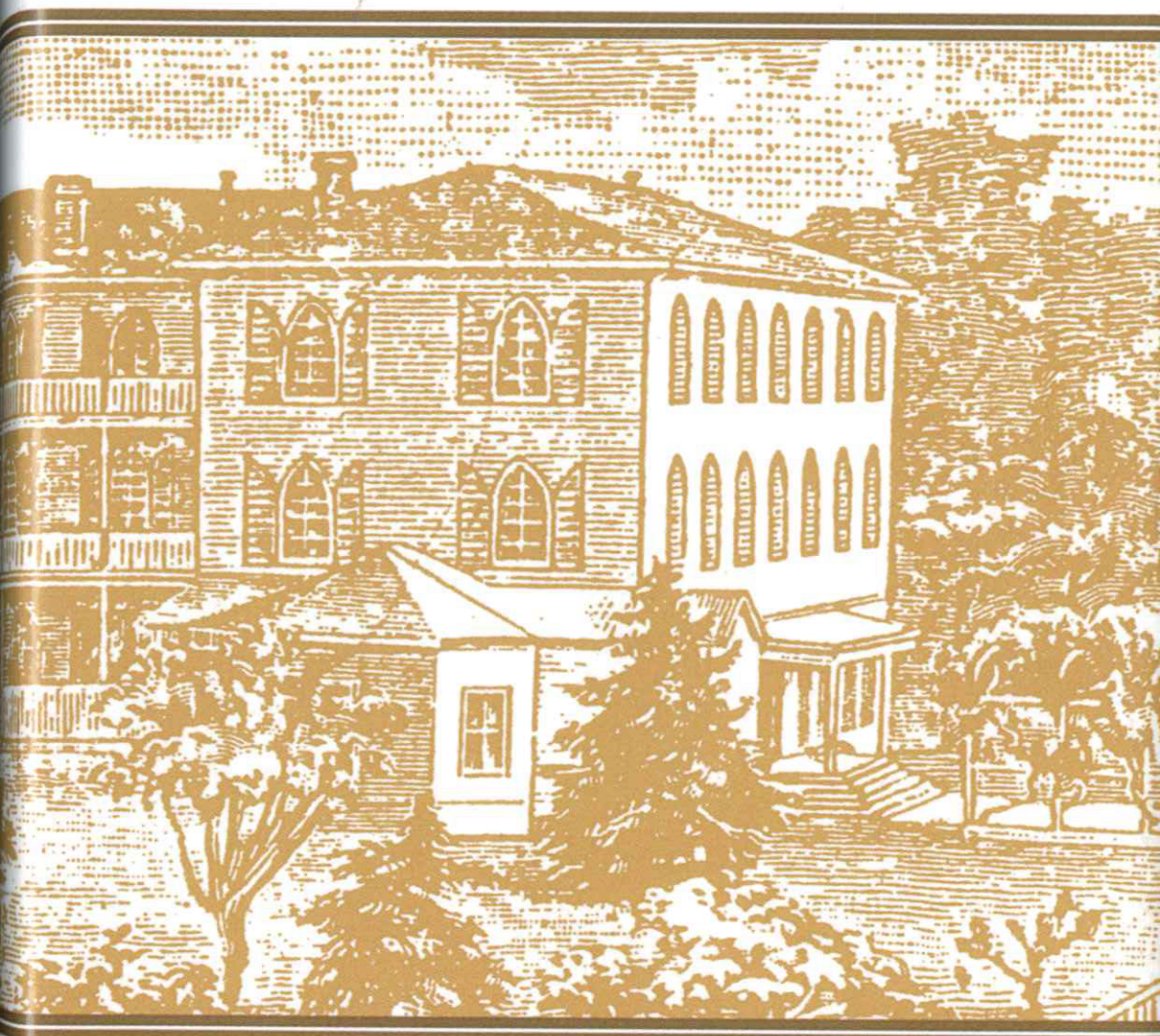


BEYOND THE CALL

The Legacy of the
Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Augustine, Florida



Sister Thomas Joseph McGoldrick, SSJ



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With a Foreword by His Excellency

the Most Reverend Victor B. Galeone

Bishop of Saint Augustine, Florida

2007

Chapter 8

Americanization

There is a period in American history known as the Americanization of European congregations of religious, and at this point in the history of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Saint Augustine, Florida—about thirty-five years after their arrival in the New World—one would consider that the congregation was Americanized. Not so! The foregoing chapters of this book supply information that most certainly lends to the progress toward Americanization, or toward the lack of it. Most other Congregations of the Sisters of Saint Joseph who had come to America from France in the nineteenth century found themselves in heavily populated areas of Catholics. Thus, the majority of their newer members were American born, resulting in rapid Americanization; it seemed to be almost overnight. As the French Sisters became a minority in these growing congregations, the influence of the French was quite dispersed before the beginning of the twentieth century. The French character was left only as a memory. Another factor that contributed to this rapid change was their independence from the motherhouse in France. It seems that when the Sisters of Saint Joseph left France in 1836 to work in Saint Louis, Missouri, they came with the knowledge that they would be under the jurisdiction of the bishop of that diocese. In keeping with canon law, they became a separate entity, a religious institute of diocesan right. Although this juridical situation existed, the French Sisters remained connected with France in mind and heart for a period of time. It is well to recall that it was the French Sisters of Saint Joseph along with other congregations of men and women, principally

from France, who led the growth of the Catholic Church in America as they forged into the frontiers with Catholic education, hospital work, and all the works of mercy! The Catholic school system, as it is known today in the United States, is patterned on the same parochial plan that was developed in France in the eighteenth century.

This rapid thrust toward Americanization was not the case with the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Saint Augustine, Florida, who came with the understanding that they would maintain their connection to the motherhouse in Le Puy. The foundresses of these Sisters were religious women from France who came to Saint Augustine at a time when the population of the city was barely two thousand, and only about one-tenth was Catholic! They did not find themselves surrounded by Catholics and quickly learned that the immediate area was not a fertile ground for new recruits to their congregation. In 1866, there were eight French Sisters from Le Puy who laid the Florida and Georgia foundations. The motherhouse in Le Puy, France, continued to govern these missions and to send Sisters to the foundations through 1897; they continued as a religious institute of pontifical right. Close to forty French Sisters in all came to the Saint Augustine community over a thirty-year period. Naturally, the customs and mores of these early French Sisters were deeply embedded in the new recruits to the congregation from 1866 forward. A fact that is both astounding and crucial to the growth of this particular group of religious women is that a genuine measure of what is Americanization was not realized in this group until well into the twentieth century, if then! More than eighty years elapsed before there was any semblance of an American congregation in Saint Augustine, Florida! An emphatic contribution to the delayed Americanization of this group was the fact that they not only maintained their connection with their motherhouse in Le Puy, but also continued to be governed by them until 1899!

Why was this so? Although Pedro Menéndez founded Saint Augustine in 1565 for Spain and the Catholic Church, circumstances and historical events over three

hundred years changed the area to one of a predominantly Protestant population. While other European groups of religious found themselves in "pockets" of Catholics with women entering their congregations who were—for the most part—"cradle Catholics" and Americans, the situation in Saint Augustine was quite different. Who became members of the congregation in Saint Augustine? As early as December 1866, there were five or six young women who came from Savannah to the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Saint Augustine, aspiring to become members of the congregation. The local census of the period indicates that two of the women were American while the others were first—or second-generation Irish. Following the separation of this congregation from Le Puy in 1899, the superiors of the congregation began to travel to Ireland in pursuit of women aspiring to become religious who would embrace the "mission" of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Florida.

This may not seem to be a phenomenon, but it is. As one looks at European religious congregations who came to America in the nineteenth century, one readily comprehends that they took on American characteristics almost overnight while the Sisters in Saint Augustine remained European with French and Irish members and practices for many years. What is visible in the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Saint Augustine is decidedly European built upon both French and Irish faith and action. If they are Americanized today, they still stand out as "different" with many "birth marks" of their ancestry (European). They remain decidedly European in the living out of religious life! Although there were many American vocations to this congregation, if it had not been for those recruited from Ireland, this congregation would not exist today! At one point in the history of the Saint Augustine Sisters, the Irish more than balanced the American members. All of this contributes to who these religious are and qualifies how they present themselves and how they live out the "mission" of the congregation.

In a short literary composition written in the 1960s by the archivist of this congregation, Sister Mary Albert Lussier, she clearly delineates the Irish-French characteristics:

The history of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Florida is woven from two dominant strands: one is French and the other Irish. In the design that has been forming for one hundred years and took form and structure in a Spanish colonial foundation, one can trace a balancing of strong contrasts, blending gradually into a useful, beautiful whole.

The inception of this pattern occurred in 1866 when, in God's Providence, the Most Reverend Augustin Verot, Bishop of Savannah and Vicar Apostolic of Florida, sought recruits from his native France to educate the destitute Negro population under his jurisdiction.

A group of eight pioneer Sisters came to Saint Augustine on September 2, 1866, from the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Le Puy-en-Velay in the Haute Loire region of France. Women of 'solid virtue and of firm character' they were, as the good Bishop had specified, but strangers in a war-devastated and poorly developed land with a culture completely foreign to their own. To the expected handicaps of missionary conditions was added their ineptness in the use of the English language.

At this point in the pattern there enters the first providential contribution from Ireland. In Saint Augustine, already established and conducting a school for white girls which they had opened before the Civil War, were the Sisters of Mercy from Providence, R. I. Not only did these religious extend hospitality to the French Sisters, sharing with them meager supplies and giving guidance and friendship, but also on the withdrawal of the Sisters of Mercy from Saint Augustine in October of 1869, two of their members were transferred to the Sisters of Saint Joseph in compliance with the direction of Bishop Verot. They were lay Sisters and most helpful in facilitating the adjustment of the newcomers from France. Sister Mary Monica Nicholson labored generously until her

death in 1884 and Sister Mary Ann Hoare became the foundress of St. Mary's Home (Jacksonville) for orphaned children, leaving a memory resplendent for her great charity and humble goodness.

From an Irishman came important material assistance. It was on the property of Father Michael O'Reilly, a former pastor of the parish of Saint Augustine that the Sisters of Saint Joseph, under direction of Bishop Verot, opened the first free school for Negro children in 1866 and occupied for a time another coquina house on the same block. The O'Reilly lots were eventually deeded to the community and the convent that became the motherhouse was built there in 1874. That which was to become their permanent home was theirs through the generosity of an Irish priest who bequeathed it to them on March 1, 1803.

While the imprint of French culture and the character of the original traditions from the Motherhouse in Le Puy forged the inner structure and became the heart and spirit of the Florida community, Providence ordained that the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Florida would live and grow from Irish strength. During the first thirty-three years of its existence, the Congregation was a Province, and the administrative link with Le Puy remained intact until 1899.

During the formative period from 1866 to 1899, the infant Congregation was imprinted with the character of the 17th century religious foundation from which it stemmed. The administrative link with France determined its inner structure and direction. However, Providence made it possible for the Congregation to continue after the link with France was severed by ecclesiastical authority. Many young religious in the community were Irish born or first generation Irish descent; they had received their early formation from the French Sisters and were able to assume responsibility when the community became diocesan.

The frugality, affability, and skill of the French supported by the greathearted spontaneity, and long-suffering stamina of the Irish proved a winning combination. Thus, the foundation of the Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Augustine became rooted in Spanish colonial history of the city.

Was all of this not mystical? Was God not involved in this development? The odds were certainly not in favor of this foundation surviving after the separation in 1899.

At the time the above was written (1966), the following indicates the origin of eighty Sisters, born in Ireland, who were living members of the congregation at that time:

County of:	Cork	24	Tipperary	3
	Dublin	16	Queen's	1
	Clare	14	Louth	1
	Galway	7	Armagh	1
	Kerry	7	Kildare	1
	Mayo	5	Total =	80

If the leadership of the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Saint Augustine, Florida, is examined, one readily makes the observation that it was truly European in nature and design for more than the first eighty years of the 140 years of its existence in the New World! The following clearly delineates this interesting information by listing the general superiors, their nationality, and years of service as general superior in the congregation:

NAME	ORIGIN	SERVICE YEARS
1. Mother Marie Sidonie Rascle	France	1866-1869
2. Mother Stanislas Bertrand	France	1869-1878
3. Mother Marie Lazarus L'hostel	France	1878-1899

4. Mother Mary Eulalie Ryan	Brooklyn, New York (Irish)	1899-1901
5. Mother Mary Sidonie McCarthy	New Brunswick, Canada	1901-1907
6. Mother Mary Elizabeth Fitzsimmons	Brooklyn, New York (Irish)	1907-1910
7. Mother Mary Louise Hughes	Ireland-New York	1910-1925
8. Mother Mary James Sweeney	Ireland	1925-1937
9. Mother Theresa Joseph Brown	Scotland-Florida	1937-1946
10. Mother Anna Joseph Dignan*	Jacksonville, Florida	1946-1953
11. Mother Anna Maria Chauvin	DeLand, Florida	1953-1962
12. Mother Louis Edwin Dumm	Ohio	1962-1972
13. Sister Thomas Joseph McGoldrick	New York	1972-1978
14. Sister Mary Christine Zimorski	Orlando, Florida	1978-1986
15. Sister Elizabeth Ann McCormick Miami,	Florida	1986-1994
16. Sister Florence Bryan	Jacksonville, Florida	1994-2002
17. Sister Ann Kuhn	Jacksonville, Florida	2002-

* The first American-born superior of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Saint Augustine, Florida.

Clearly, the European origins of the first nine superiors of the congregation support the long-lasting characteristics of the group. These women, by nature, adhered to their cultures in living out and directing the congregation. There can be no doubt as to the delayed coming-of-age or Americanization of this group! Another contributing factor is the realization that many of the superiors in the local houses of this congregation were Irish-born naturalized American citizens. Their style of leadership, most certainly, sustained

the European culture throughout the congregation; and the isolation of the Sisters of Saint Joseph in Saint Augustine from their sister congregations, principally to the North, also assisted in the slow process of Americanization. The effects on the congregation of Jansenism that made its way throughout Western Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries cannot be overlooked. The Jansenistic leanings of rigorous French and Irish piety had to have had an influence on this congregation.

In addition to the foundations in Georgia, eleven separate houses were established in Florida during the first thirty-three-year period in which the motherhouse in Le Puy governed the Sisters. Over 140 religious either came from France or entered the Florida novitiates in Jacksonville and Saint Augustine in this period. The hardships of these pioneer times and the scourge of yellow fever took a heavy toll from this number of youthful religious; thirty-nine were called to their eternal reward before nineteen hundred! The distribution of these first Sisters of Saint Joseph (140) according to place of birth follows:

1866-1900:

France	25%	Florida	13%	Out of State	37%
Ireland	13%	Canada	12%	Total	100%

The following chart indicates the total number of Sisters in the congregation and the percentage of the total as to the origin in 1959 and 1965:

	1959		1965	
	SISTERS	% OF TOTAL	SISTERS	% OF TOTAL
Ireland	89	34%	80	25%
Florida	155	59%	182	57%
Out of State	<u>19</u>	<u>7%</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>18%</u>
Totals	263	100%	317	100%

What else is there to say concerning the Americanization of these Sisters? You decide. Pay them a visit; stay with

them for a while. Witness their faith journey, then you will discover who they are: their values, their spirituality, their mission, and their connectedness. You will notice how the "mystical" has been truly present in their lives and in the life of the congregation! Are they French? Are they Irish? They are American! They are different from most congregations of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. Is it their history? Is it their "mission"? Is it the South? Is it their membership? Is it their leadership? Undoubtedly, it is all of the above!



Mother Stanislas
Bertrand
1869-1878



Mother Sidonie
McCarthy
1901-1907



Mother Marie Sidone
Rascle
1866-1869



Mother Eulalia Ryan
1899-1901



Mother Lazarus
L'hostel
1878-1899



Mother Elizabeth
Fitzsmons
1907-1910



Mother Marie Louis
Hughs
1910-1925



Mother Mary James
Sweenen
1925-1937



Mother Theresa
Joseph Brown
1937-1946



Mother Anna Joseph
Dignan
1946-1953



Mother Anna Maria
Chauvin
1953-1962



Mother Louis Edwin
Dumm
1962-1972



Sister Thomas Joseph
McGoldrick
1972-1978



Sister Christine
Zimorski
1978-1986



Sister Elizabeth Ann
McCormick
1986-1994



Sister Florence
Bryan
1994-2002



Sister Ann
Kuhn
2002-

Chapter 9

Development and Growth 1900-1962

Following the separation from Le Puy in 1899, further expansion for the Sisters in Saint Augustine came to a standstill because of the loss of a number of the French Sisters who chose to return to France or to begin anew in Fall River, Massachusetts, maintaining their affiliation with Le Puy. None of the missions established prior to 1899 were closed. The French Sisters who remained in Florida, along with the other members of the congregation, "put their shoulders to the plough"; and their overall effort for the mission made it succeed. In truth, this was a period of re-founding since much of the framework of the congregation had been shaken and weakened, and members found it necessary to reorganize and start over again. Their success was truly another mystical experience in the life of this congregation as they stayed the course.

In review, there were eleven foundations of the Sisters in Florida with more than one mission organized at most of them prior to 1899. The following lists the communities, their inclusive dates, and the estimated value in 1899:

- | | | | |
|----|-------|-----------------|--|
| 1. | 1866- | Saint Augustine | Motherhouse-academy
and four free schools
(two for white children, two for black children) and
two public schools
\$60,000 |
|----|-------|-----------------|--|

- | | | | |
|-----|-----------|--------------|--|
| 2. | 1868- | Jacksonville | Saint Joseph Academy and two
free schools
(one for white children, one for black children)
\$45,000 |
| 3. | 1868- | Mandarin | Saint Joseph Academy and two
free schools
(one for white children, one for black children)
\$14,000 |
| 4. | 1871- | Fernandina | Saint Joseph Academy and two
free schools
(one for white children, one for black children)
\$19,000 |
| 5. | 1874-1884 | Mayport | Saint Joseph Convent
\$5,000 |
| 6. | 1876-1923 | Palatka | Saint Joseph Academy and one
free school for black children
\$11,000 |
| 7. | 1882-1949 | Elkton | Saint Joseph Academy
(Saint Ambrose)
\$6,500 |
| 8. | 1886-1852 | Jacksonville | Saint Mary's Home for children
relocation: Arlington 1952)
\$20,000 |
| 9. | 1887-1920 | Pablo Beach | Saint Joseph Convent
(Jacksonville Beach)
\$4,000 |
| 10. | 1888-1974 | Orlando | Saint Joseph Academy
(later became Saint James)
\$9,000 |
| 11. | 1891-1944 | Tampa | Ybor City-Saint Joseph Academy
(later became OLPH)
\$8,500 |

Due to a lack of personnel, new missions were not begun for several years after 1899. It is well to realize how thinly spread the Sisters were in servicing the missions they already had. According to *The Catholic Encyclopedia* (volume 3, 1910), "The Sisters now number about 105, in charge of 6 academies,

14 day-schools, and 1 orphanage." They have under their charge about 1,438 white and 240 coloured children, and about 35 orphans. It is obvious that there were not many Sisters to cover all the works listed above, and it would be fair to assume that some were elderly and others physically incapacitated, thus unable to assist in the active ministry; there must have been double duty for most members. But whatever it took, there is no mention of strain or difficulty in the records of the Sisters at that time. Recruitment in Ireland continued in order to expand the "mission" of the Sisters. In 1904, seventeen young women came from Ireland to the novitiate in Saint Augustine as aspirants to the congregation; and in 1907, nineteen more arrived.

The new Jacksonville Academy/Convent opened in February of 1900; but the Great Fire of 1901 destroyed it, the parish church (Immaculate Conception), and Saint Mary's Home.

The first new mission to be opened after the congregation was severed from the motherhouse in France was Saint Catherine's in Miami. The Jesuit Fathers had been requesting the Sisters to assist them in their Miami work; and Bishop William Kenny, the third bishop of Saint Augustine and the first native-born American to hold this position, approved the request. On March 23, 1905, Sisters Euphemia Sullivan, Aloysia Andreu, and Michael Lauthers arrived in Miami, opened the school on April 15 and continued through the summer months. In September of that year, Saint Catherine's Academy formally opened its doors to seventy pupils; and by Christmas, there were 130 students enrolled. That May, Annie Swansen finished the commercial course and received a diploma for bookkeeping and a gold medal. Eighth-grade diplomas were issued to M. Burr, Ludwilla Black, Jennie Harden, Frances Black, Thelma Yarborough, Earl Canova, and Joseph Reilly. By 1926, the school included all twelve grades and became known as Gesu School with around seven hundred students in attendance. In 1936, Gesu School affiliated with the Catholic University of America in Washington, DC, and was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. The first principal of this school, a native of Ireland, was Sister Mary Euphemia Sullivan.

The year, 1905, also saw the laying of the cornerstone on October 15 by Bishop Kenny for the new Saint Joseph Convent/Academy at Seventh and Market streets in Jacksonville.

In 1907, Mother Mary Elizabeth Fitzsimmons was elected to succeed Mother Sidonia McCarthy as superior general. Mother Elizabeth was both enterprising and progressive, and she realized the need for an academy building separate from the convent structure in Saint Augustine as the enrollment at the academy approached five hundred. Plans for the expansion of the academy began; contracts were signed on July 16, 1907, in the amount \$25,000 for the construction of a new building to house classrooms, an auditorium, and resident students. Ground was broken on November 11, and the first brick was laid on December 26 for the four-story facility erected on the northeast corner of Saint George and Cadiz streets, adjacent to the original convent building that had served both as residence for the Sisters and as an academy for both day and resident students. The new facility was ready in the fall of 1908, and the first graduation exercises took place in the new auditorium in June 1909. The Sisters mortgaged the new facility in that year in order to make payments on the building. Notes and interest were fully repaid by 1917. Insurance figures recorded in the archives of the Sisters for March 18, 1909, reveal the investment made by the Sisters to further education in northeast Florida:

TOTAL AMOUNT OF INSURANCE:

Convent Building	\$ 7,000	
Furniture	2,200	
Alexander House	4,000	(northeast corner of Bridge and Saint George streets)
Public School	1,000	
North City school	3,000	
Academy Building (new)	45,000	
Furniture of the Academy	<u>5,000</u>	
Total	\$ 67,200	

A genuine milestone for the Sisters took place in 1909 with the reception of twenty-one candidates into the congregation. Seventeen of the young women came from Ireland and four from the United States.

In 1910, Sister Marie Louise Hughes was elected superior of the congregation to succeed Mother Elizabeth who had seen the construction of the academy completed. Mother Marie Louise established the commercial department of the academy in Saint Augustine and was responsible for the construction of Saint Joseph Academy at Seventh and Market streets in Jacksonville. With advice and money from Bishop Michael Curley, she sent Sisters to the Catholic University in Washington, DC, and to the University of Florida in Gainesville during the summer months. Her administration also saw the building of a Saint Joseph academy and day school in Coral Gables, Florida.

Michael J. Curley was appointed fourth bishop of Saint Augustine on October 23, 1913, following Bishop Kenny's death. In the Providence of God, this brilliant prelate, the youngest bishop in the United States at that time, had to face a wave of bigotry that swept the south, climaxing in Florida with the election of Gov. Sidney J. Catts on a strong anti-Catholic platform. Curley answered frequent attacks by meeting every occurrence with a reasoned, eloquent public defense. Three Sisters were arrested in 1916 for teaching Negro children in Saint Augustine. (The Sisters had been teaching Negro children for fifty years when this indignity was committed.) Shortly after, the Florida legislature passed a Convent Inspection Act in 1917.

The *St. Augustine Evening Record* of Monday, April 24, 1916, published the following article on the front page:

**SISTERS OF ST. JOSEPH HAVE BEEN ARRESTED
On Charge of Teaching Negro Children-WERE ARRAIGNED
Appeared before Judge Jackson.**

Two released on own recognizance. One is a Prisoner.

Three of the Sisters of St Joseph's convent have been arrested. They are charged with violating the recently enacted state law, which prohibits white

persons from teaching in Negro schools. Two of the Sisters were released under their own recognizance, but one of the three refused to accept her liberty under this ruling and she is a prisoner, but is at the convent, having been placed in the custody of Reverend Father O'Brien, who is responsible for her appearance in court when the case comes up.

The arrest was made this morning by the Sheriff's office, acting under instructions from Governor Trammell. The Sisters arrested are Sister Mary Thomasine Herir, Sister Mary Scholastica Sullivan, and Sister Mary Benignus Cameron. Sister Mary Thomasine is held as a prisoner, the other two nuns being released on their own recognizance without having to give bond. They were brought before Judge Jackson and were represented by E. Noble Calhoun, Esq. The Sisters have been conducting a school for the education of colored children in their own private school building on west De Haven Street. When the law was enacted by the Florida legislature prohibiting white teachers from teaching Negroes, legal advice was secured from eminent lawyers as to the constitutionality of the law with the result that all expressed the opinion that the law is unconstitutional. The Sisters continued teaching the colored children and were not interfered with. A few weeks ago a petition, signed by some Negroes was sent to Governor Trammell, advising him that the law was being violated. The governor wrote to Sheriff Perry, instructing him to enforce the law, and the arrest this morning resulted.

As this is a state law the local courts cannot dispose of it, so it will come before the circuit court at this term. It may be carried to the supreme court of the state, or the United States Supreme Court. The probable procedure will be to continue the case at this term of circuit court and test the constitutionality of the law.

Negro schools have been taught by the Sisters of Saint Joseph for generations in Saint Augustine. There is no motive in this work except the guiding of

the colored youth of the city along educational and religious paths and the only reward of the Sisters is the success of their work.

The April 28, 1916, issue of the *St. Augustine Meteor* carried the following item:

Arrest That Staggered Our People

Governor Trammell Orders Arrest At Behest of Six Negroes
What Next? Can it be Possible That the Vileness of Politics
Knows No Bounds?

"What are we coming to?" "What next?" and other inquisitive questions are being asked, one of another, by the citizens of Saint Augustine. "Is the Mother City of the nation to set the pace for sensationalism?"

Certain it is, that in the arrest, Easter Monday, of three Sisters of Saint Joseph, for training the little Negro child to read and write and to comprehend the importance of righteous living, through the medium of religious understanding, not only the city of Saint Augustine but the State of Florida at large will fall heir to a dint of most undesirable publicity.

The Sisters of Saint Joseph's Convent, for a great many years, have been tutoring colored children along educational and religious lines, in their own private school building on De Haven Street. Now, it seems that six Negroes petitioned Governor Trammell to have the Sheriff arrest the Sisters under the provisions of the law passed in 1911 to the effect that white persons should be prohibited from teaching Negroes, and the Governor commanded the officer of the law to proceed with the arrest, which he did.

The law under which the arrest was made passed, ostensibly for the purpose of changing the management of a Negro school, which was being conducted at Orange Park. At the time of its passage, it was understood that the law was unconstitutional, but it seems never to have been put to the test. However, to be on the safe side, the late Bishop Kenny took the matter up with learned

legal lights, to see if it would affect the Sisters in continuing the work which they had conducted for so many years, and was advised that the law was unconstitutional. But it has been reserved for this late date, after a lapse of three years, and at a time when our people were praying for a cessation of agitations which have so wrecked the peace if not happiness of our people, to spring a sensation and then, too, at the behest of six Negroes.

The following are copies of the court documents used in the lawsuit:

EXHIBIT 1
AFFIDAVIT

IN COURT OF COUNTY JUDGE
ST. JOHNS COUNTY
STATE OF FLORIDA

STATE OF FLORIDA
VS
SISTER MARY THOMASINE HERIR

Before me, Geo. Wm. Jackson, County Judge in and for said County, personally came C. J. Perry, Sheriff, who, being duly sworn, says that in the 6th day of April A. D. 1916, in the County aforesaid, one Sister Mary Thomasine, a white teacher did unlawfully teach negroes in a negro school, to wit; a school where negroes are taught, in the County and State aforesaid,—contrary to the statute in such case made and provided, and against the peace and dignity of the State of Florida.

(Signed) C. J. Perry
Sworn and subscribed before me
this 17th day of April A. D., 1916.
(Signed) Geo. Wm. Jackson
County Judge, St. Johns County

EXHIBIT 2
WARRANT

IN COURT OF COUNTY JUDGE
ST. JOHNS COUNTY
STATE OF FLORIDA

STATE OF FLORIDA
VS.
SISTER MARY THOMASINE HERIR

In the Name of the State of Florida, to all and singular the Sheriff's of the State of Florida:

WHEREAS, C. J. Perry, Sheriff has this day made oath before me that on the 6th day of April A. D. 1916, in the County aforesaid, one Sister Mary Thomasine, a white teacher did unlawfully teach negroes in a negro school, to wit: a school where negroes are taught, in the County and State aforesaid.

Contrary to the statute in such cases made and provided, and against the peace and dignity of the state of Florida:

These are, therefore, to command you to arrest instanter the said Sister Mary Thomasine and bring her before me to be dealt with according to law.

Given under my hand and seal this 17th day of April, A. D. 1916

(Signed) Geo. Wm. Jackson (Seal)
County Judge, St. Johns County
(seal)

EXHIBIT 3
COMMITMENT

IN THE COUNTY JUDGES COURT
ST. JOHNS COUNTY
STATE OF FLORIDA

STATE OF FLORIDA
VS.
SISTER MARY THOMASINE HERIR

In the name of the State of Florida, to the Sheriff or any Constable of said County:

Whereas in this court, Sister Mary Thomasine was upon the 24th day of April A. D. 1916, arraigned on the offence of, to wit: a white teacher teaching negroes in a negro school, and, whereas on the 24th day of April A. D. 1916, the said State of Florida did by its representative ask this Court for a continuance of the trial of said case to May 8th, A. D. 1916, which motion for continuance of the trial has on this day been granted, and a bond for her appearance on said date been fixed at \$25.00.

You are therefore commanded in default of the giving a good and sufficient bond as aforesaid, forthwith to convey the said Sister M. Thomasine to the County Jail of said County and deliver her to the keeper thereof, who is hereby required to receive the said Sister M. Thomasine into said jail and safely keep her until the day above set forth for the trial of said defendant, or until she be discharged by due course of law.

Given under my hand and seal this 24th day of April A. D. 1916.

(Signed) George W. Jackson
County Judge

EXHIBIT 4
HABEAS CORPUS
EX PARTE

SISTER MARY THOMASINE HERIR
VS.

C. J. PERRY AS SHERIFF OF ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA
PETITION FOR WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS
TO THE HONORABLE GEORGE COUPER GIBBS,
JUDGE OF SAID COURT:

The petition of your petitioner, Sister Mary Thomasine, of the County of St. Johns, State of Florida, respectfully complaining shows that she is now detained and imprisoned in the County Jail of St. Johns County, State of Florida, by C. J. Perry, Sheriff of said St. Johns County, State of Florida, on a charge of a white teacher unlawfully teaching negroes in a negro school, to-wit, a school where negroes are taught in the County of St. Johns, State of Florida, as is stated in the warrant and affidavit and commitment as follows: "Sister Mary Thomasine, a white teacher did unlawfully teach negroes in a negro school, to-wit; a school where negroes are taught, in the County and State aforesaid," and that said petitioner is detained and imprisoned by said Sheriff in said jail in the custody of said Sheriff, without lawful authority, unjustly and contrary to law.

Your petitioner further shows that an affidavit was made by C. J. Perry before George William Jackson, County Judge of St. Johns County, Florida, on the 17th day of April, A. D. 1916, charging that "on the 6th day of April, A. D. 1916, in the County aforesaid, one Sister Mary Thomasine, a white teacher did unlawfully teach negroes in a negro school to-wit; a school where negroes are taught, in the County and State aforesaid." A certified copy of said affidavit is hereto attached and marked as Exhibit 1 and made

a part of this petition. That upon said affidavit a warrant was issued by the said George William Jackson, County Judge of St. Johns County, Florida, against Sister Mary Thomasine, charging her with the following offense: "that on the 6th day of April, A. D. 1916, in the County aforesaid, one Sister Mary Thomasine a white teacher did unlawfully teach negroes in a negro school, to-wit; a school where negroes are taught, in the County and State aforesaid." A certified copy of said warrant is hereto attached and marked Exhibit 2 and is hereby made a part of this petition.

That your petitioner was arrested upon said warrant on Monday the 24th day of April, A. D. 1916, as will appear in return of Sheriff on the back of said warrant attached hereto and that the said defendant on the 24th day of April, A. D. 1916, was then and there arraigned on the charge aforesaid, and did then and there enter a plea of not guilty, and that said case, charge and trial were postponed and continued by the said County Judge of St. Johns County until the 8th day of May, A. D. 1916, and that the defendant was ordered by the Court into the custody of C. J. Perry, Sheriff of St. Johns County, Florida, in default of giving an appearance bail bond in the sum of twenty-five (\$25.00) dollars. And that the said George William Jackson, County Judge of St. Johns County, did issue a commitment on the 24th day of April, A. D. 1916, and did order that the said Sister Mary Thomasine be kept safely in the County Jail of St. Johns County, Florida, in default of finding security in the sum of Twenty-five (\$25.00) Dollars. A certified copy of said commitment is hereto attached and made a part of this petition and marked Exhibit 3, which said commitment was filed on the 24th day of April, A. D. 1916, by George

William Jackson, County Judge of St. Johns County, Florida.

And your petitioner further shows:

- 1st. That her detention and imprisonment under said commitment, aforesaid, is illegal in this, to-wit; that said commitment under your petitioner is held as illegal and void.
- 2nd. That said commitment was issued without authority of law.
- 3rd. That her detention and imprisonment under said affidavit and warrant, and commitment as aforesaid, is illegal in this, to-wit: that said Chapter 6490, Acts 1913, Laws of Florida, is a clear and unmistakable infringement upon the inherent right of life, liberty and property and is also in violation of Section 1 of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America and is therefore unconstitutional.
- 4th. That Chapter 6490, Acts 1913, laws of Florida, discriminates against this defendant and is a denial to her of the equal protection of the law.
- 5th. That said warrant and affidavit was issued without authority of law.
- 6th. That said warrant and affidavit under which your petitioner is held is illegal and void.
- 7th. That the affidavit and warrant and neither of them charge any violation of the laws of the State of Florida.
- 8th. That the Legislature under a guise of a police regulation cannot prevent a lawful exercise of personal and property rights declaring the exercise thereof to be a misdemeanor, which lawful exercise of

- personal and property rights are guaranteed by Section 1 of the 14th Amendment of the Federal Constitution, and therefore said Chapter 6490, Acts 1913, Laws of Florida, is unconstitutional.
- 9th. That said law is in violation of Section 1 of the 14th Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America, which denies any State the right to pass any law abridging the rights and privileges of citizens of the United States of America.
 - 10th. That said law is a denial to the petitioner due process of law as guaranteed by the 14th Amendment of the Constitution of the United States of America.
 - 11th. That said law gives to one class of citizens, to-wit: white citizens certain rights, privileges and immunities not granted to colored citizens.

To be relieved from which said detention and imprisonment your petitioner now applies praying that a Writ of Habeas Corpus, to be directed to C. J. Perry, Sheriff of St. Johns County, State of Florida, may be issued in this behalf pursuant to the Statues made and provided so that your petitioner may be forthwith brought before your Honor to do, submit to and receive what the law may require.

(Signed) Sister Mary Thomasine
Petitioner

(Signed) E. N. Calhoun
Attorney and of Counsel for Petitioner

The petition, habeas corpus, went through the usual court proceedings with the outcome as follows:

IN CIRCUIT COURT
ST. JOHNS COUNTY, FLORIDA

EX PARTE SISTER MARY THOMASINE HERIR
HABEAS CORPUS

Order

This cause coming on to be heard upon petition for writ of habeas corpus, said writs, the return of the Sheriff thereon, said Sheriff producing to the Court the original commitment, affidavit and warrant referred to therein, said petitioner being present, the Court having heard the evidence upon an agreed statement of the facts, and argument of counsel for the respective parties, it appearing to the Court that the petitioner was upon the date named in the affidavit a teacher of a private school in no manner supported or maintained by the public funds; that the prosecution of the petitioner is based upon Section 1, of Chapter 6490 Laws of Florida, 1913; that said section of said act of the legislature does not apply to private schools; and that said petitioner is illegally restrained of her liberty and should be discharged from custody; it is, therefore, Ordered, adjudged and decreed that said petitioner be and she is hereby discharged from custody.

It is further ordered that the costs, herein, to be assessed by the Clerk of this Court, be paid by the County of St. Johns. A written opinion accompanies this order. Done and ordered this 20th day of May, A. D. 1916.

(signed) George Couper Gibbs, Judge

Filed: May 22, A. D. 1916 and Recorded in Circuit
Court Minute Book: F on Page 267
Clerk Circuit Court: W. Wallace Show, By: E. J.
Forward, Deputy Clerk

This "order" is an exact copy of that on file in the courthouse at Saint Augustine, docket no. 3, page 97, law no. 778.

Following Gibb's order, there appears a lengthy explanation by the judge, citing various court cases supporting his order. It will suffice to quote here but one such case:

Beren College vs. COMMONWEALTH of
Kentucky, 211 U. S., 45:

The capacity to impart instruction to others is given by the Almighty for beneficent purposes, and its use may not be forbidden or interfered with by government—certainly not—unless such instruction is in its nature harmful to public morals or imperils the public's safety. The right to impart instruction, harmless in itself or beneficial to those who receive it, is a substantial right of property, especially where the services are rendered for a compensation. But even if such a right be not strictly a property right, it is, beyond question, part of one's liberty as guaranteed against hostile state action by the Constitution of the United States. This court has more than once said that the liberty guaranteed by the Fourteenth Amendment embraces the right of the citizen to be free in the enjoyment of all his faculties and to be free to use them in all lawful ways.

The final paragraph in the judge's opinion states:

IT APPEARS TO THE COURT, THEREFORE, THAT THE LAW IN QUESTION UPON WHICH THE PROSECUTION WAS BASED IN THIS CASE DOES NOT APPLY TO PRIVATE SCHOOLS, AND THAT THEREFORE, THE PETITIONER IS ILLEGALLY RESTRAINED OF HER LIBERTY, A FORMAL ORDER WILL BE MADE DISCHARGING THE PETITIONER FROM CUSTODY.

Signed: George Couper Gibbs
Judge

The arrest of the Sisters and the ordeal of Sister Mary Thomasine Herir received national attention in many newspapers throughout the United States. Under date of

June 3, 1916, THE MORNING STAR, A CATHOLIC JOURNAL OF THE ARCHDIOCESE OF NEW ORLEANS AND THE DIOCESE OF SAVANNAH, appeared the following on the front page:

FLORIDA OVERRUN WITH SOULLESS BIGOTS
WHO ARE OUT AFTER GRAFT AND BOODLE

And Seek to Gain their Nefarious Ends by Stirring Up Hatred of The Catholic Church and Bigotry and Race Prejudice Among the People of This Once Free and Happy State.

The article reads in part:

The Morning Star's Special Correspondent At St. Augustine, Seeks An Interview With The Right Rev. Michael J. Curley, D. D. The Scholarly, Apostolic And Heroic Bishop Of St. Augustine On The Present Deplorable Religious Situation In Florida, And The Causes Which Have Led Up To That State Acquiring Such A Bad Name And Reputation Throughout The Country. Bishop Curley Distressed To Hear Of The Awful Reputation That Bigots And Guardians Of Liberty Have Given To The State Which He Loves So Dearly. A Land Of Wonderful Possibilities, Great National Resources And Everything That Can Contribute Towards The Making Of A Great State, Except A United And Brother-Loving Citizenry. The Bishop Tells How Bigotry First Began To Rear Its Hydra-Head In Florida From The Infamous Attacks Made By An Ignorant Itinerant Preacher Upon The Saintly Sister Mary Ann, To Park Trammell's Defiance Of The American Constitution In The Recent Arrest Of The Sisters Of Saint Joseph, Who Are Now Spoken Of Everywhere As "Park Trammell's Convicts." There Is Wonderful Growth Of The Church Despite Persecution And Hatred. Twenty New Churches And Many Splendid Schools Erected

In The Last Two Years And Converts Pouring Into The Church Because Of The Persecution. The Best People Of Florida Are Opposed To This Warfare, Of Religious Hatred And Calumny. The Bishop Believes That Good Men Who Are In The Majority, Will Yet Rise And Put The Emphatic Stamp Of Condemnation Upon These Senseless Low Browed Bigots, Who Have Made Florida A Laughing Stock And Joke Among Her Sister States And The Nations Of The World.

The lengthy article makes the point that the actions taken against the Sisters were illegal because the laws used in the case were proven to be unconstitutional. This was yet another milestone in the journey of the Sisters of Saint Joseph. The prejudice and racial tension that had shadowed the work of the Sisters for so many years was finally confronted and made to appear ridiculous and certainly illegal.

Bishop Curley was farsighted in promoting the education of the Sisters beyond what they could attain in their own Teacher Training Institute in Saint Augustine. In June of 1915, Curley sent and subsidized six Sisters to study for educational degrees at the Catholic University in Washington, DC. The Sisters who attended that first year were Sisters M. Agatha Sweeting, Theresa Joseph Brown, M. Alberta Stark, M. Sylvester Carey, Rose de Lima Donoghue, and Sister Margaret Mary Hanlon. In October of that same year, Saint Joseph Academy in Saint Augustine and Saint Catherine's Academy in Miami affiliated with the Catholic University of America.

The practice of sending Sisters to the Catholic University for the summer program continued with as many as fourteen or fifteen attending at one time. In 1917, twelve Sisters attended the program at Catholic University with Sisters M. Gertrude Capo, M. Euphrasia Masters, and M. Placida Cooper specializing in music. In 1918, five Sisters studying music there. In 1921, the Sisters recognized the need to have teaching Sisters certified by the state in order to keep their schools abreast of the times. With the encouragement

of Bishop Curley, Sisters were sent to study at the University of Florida in Gainesville. Ten Sisters attended the summer of 1921 and worked on the state of Florida certification requirements along with planning their degree programs. This was the first time that any of the Sisters had attended a state university. A number of Sisters obtained state certification before the end of that year. When Curley was appointed archbishop of Baltimore in 1922, he retained a protective interest in the little congregation of the Sisters in Saint Augustine.

On April 30, 1916, the new Cathedral Parish School on South Saint George Street was blessed by Bishop Curley; and the following day, the children from the white free schools were transferred to the new building.

The next ten years, 1922 to 1932, encompassing the episcopate of Bishop Patrick Barry, there was phenomenal growth in Florida. Diocesan priests increased from twenty-nine to seventy-two, parishes from thirty-two to sixty, and schools from twenty-seven to thirty-seven.

In 1923, Bishop Barry secured a convenient site on Forbes and Acosta streets in the Riverside area of Jacksonville for a parochial school, church, and Sisters' residence. Mother Marie Louise Hughes (1910-1925) was requested to supply Sisters for this new Jacksonville school. Sisters Saint Andrew McLaughlin, Placida Cooper, Boniface Herir, Saint John Colee, and Berchmans O'Callaghan were sent in September 1923. Rev. Patrick Barry was pastor of Saint Paul's Church and school. The school opened to 120 students on September 15, 1923. Provisions were made for kindergarten through eighth grade; and each subsequent year, a class was added, culminating in 1927 with six graduates from the high school. Father Barry was succeeded by Father Dennis Lyons as pastor. The student population grew to 450 in 1936 with twenty-seven graduates. The school had been accredited by the Catholic University and the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1932. Originally, the church occupied the first floor of the school building. In 1940 a new church was completed, and the original church area was turned into classrooms and other school facilities.

Assumption Parish School (1923-1949) in South Jacksonville opened on September 15, 1923, simultaneously with Saint Paul's in Riverside across the Saint Johns River. The pastor, Father Bresnahan, had built this school; and a small cottage opposite the school was rented for the Sisters. Sisters Augustine Curry, Mary Charles Head, and a novice were sent to teach. Assumption did not add the high school classes due to lack of space, and the other Catholic high schools were accessible. In 1949, when a new facility was ready, there was a need for more Sisters to staff the school; and the school was transferred to the Adrian Dominican Sisters in Michigan.

The year 1925 saw the next big undertaking of the Sisters with the construction and establishment of Saint Joseph Academy in Coral Gables, Miami, on property adjacent to Saint Theresa's Catholic Church (Church of the Little Flower). Mother Marie Louise Hughes saw the project through. The original intent was to have the Sisters who taught at Saint Catherine's live in Coral Gables and travel the six miles into Miami each day. Thus, two schools under one community of Sisters. The plan did not work out as the transportation posed difficulties. Saint Joseph Academy in Coral Gables opened on September 15, 1925. The facility was to include a junior college. The Great Depression set in and created a financial dilemma for the Sisters that resulted in the school building being turned over to the parish as Saint Theresa School in 1933. This facility was both a grade school and a high school. The junior college classes were never realized at this facility. By 1935, the school was accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools as well as the Catholic University of America. In 1994, another group of religious took over Saint Theresa School.

In 1925, Mother Mary James Sweeney (1925-1937) was elected superior general of the Sisters in Florida. Under her administration, the Don Toledo House, near the southwest end of Aviles Street in Saint Augustine, was purchased; the convent chapel was refurbished with a new altar installed. Sisters were sent to summer school, and Sisters went to Tallahassee and Apopka to operate summer vacation

camp programs for children. In 1929, Mother Mary James appointed Sister Saint Andrew McLaughlin as director of the SSJ schools. This introduced a uniform system of testing and of the use of textbooks as well as syllabi to be followed for the courses of study for various levels in the schools. *History of the United States*, a two-volume work written by Sister Theophila Sullivan, was published and printed on the convent printing press. This copyrighted work was introduced in the grade schools of the Sisters at that time.

Immaculate Conception School in downtown Jacksonville came into existence after Saint Joseph Academy was destroyed in the 1891 fire. It continued as an extension of the academy until Father Meehan erected the commodious Immaculate Conception Parochial School, which opened on September 26, 1926. The teaching staff of seven Sisters was housed at Saint Joseph Academy in the Springfield area.

Bishop Barry died in 1940, and on October 6 of that same year, the Most Reverend Archbishop Joseph P. Hurley began his twenty-seven years of leadership as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Saint Augustine. The various capabilities, which characterized his brilliant diplomatic service for the Vatican and for the church in Japan and in representing the Holy See in Yugoslavia and the rest of the communist world, were also effectively used in administering the affairs of the church in Florida.

One of Hurley's greatest tools was the diocesan congregation of the SSJ, whose members he freely directed to expand their apostolate enormously; to pioneer foundations and relinquish them; to revise their constitutions (1956), transfer their novitiate (1951) and construct another; and to call upon the Sisters to send forth some of their Sisters to establish houses in Puerto Rico (1956 and 1957).

Sister Theresa Joseph Brown (1937-1946) succeeded Mother Mary James in 1937 as the general superior. One of her first works was to send Sisters to Palm Bay, Sarasota, and Winter Haven to open catechetical schools where there were no Catholic schools. In Saint Augustine, she had the

dormitories in the convent partitioned into private rooms and had hot and cold shower baths installed in the convent proper. She had the Don Toledo House renovated and used as an art studio. Mother Theresa Joseph had a two-story concrete building erected just south of the O'Reilly House, with the first floor housing a modern laundry and the second providing two classrooms for use by the academy. She opened the O'Reilly House as a museum and replaced the wooden porches around the academy and convent with concrete cloisters that joined the cloisters on the original construction of the convent. Under the direction of Archbishop Hurley, she sent Sisters to various institutions to be trained in the latest nursing methods because Bishop Hurley wanted the Sisters to take charge of Mercy Hospital, then under construction in Miami. Her foresight led her to purchase the Spear Mansion located across Saint George Street from the convent. She had the structure removed and installed fine tennis courts and a play area for the students of the academy. She also purchased the Villa Flora* property and the lots behind it just to the north of the tennis courts.

The parish of Saint Mary's in Little River, a suburb of Miami, had started the construction of a school when the pastor, Father Roche, asked Mother Theresa Joseph for Sisters to teach in the school. The mission was accepted, and Sister Anna Joseph Dignan and seven other Sisters were sent to staff the school in 1939. Since the convent was not ready, school did not open until October 2, 1939. This school started with eight grades and added the high school grades one by one. Over time, portable classrooms had to be added to accommodate the large enrollment of the school.

Saints Peter and Paul School in Miami opened with eight grades and 314 students in September of 1941, staffed by the SSJ with Sister Saint John Colee as principal and six other Sisters. By September of 1945, the high school grades

* Recorded in St. Johns County, Florida Deed Bk. 130. Pages 343-346 #86090 July 12, 1941.

were in place, and the school was accredited by the state's Department of Education and by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools in 1948.

While the demands of the archbishop were exacting, the need was also very great. From 1940 to 1958, the number of diocesan priests grew from 73 to 165, parishes from 61 to 110, Catholic schools from 42 to 115. Although the Sisters numbered twenty-seven houses and 235 Sisters in 1955 and increased to thirty-two houses and 266 Sisters by 1960, their growth was small in comparison to these other statistics. The total number of Catholics had trebled in Florida by August 1958 when the division of the diocese occurred. The Most Reverend Coleman F. Carroll was appointed bishop of the newly erected Diocese of Miami, and Archbishop Hurley continued as bishop of the Diocese of Saint Augustine. The state was just about equally divided with the northern counties in the Diocese of Saint Augustine and the southern in the Diocese of Miami.

Sacred Heart School in Lake Worth opened with fifty-six pupils on September 11, 1944. Sisters Mary Boniface Herir and Mary Isabel Carpentar arrived in Lake Worth a little more than two weeks later to open this parochial school. Sister Helen Marie Pellicer joined them a week later. A small house, one block from the church, had been prepared for them. There were only three classrooms, so only students through the sixth grade were accepted. Registration increased almost daily. More classroom space was provided, and the seventh grade was added in 1945. The school had 150 pupils within the first year of operation.

In August of 1944, a catechetical school opened in Palm Bay, Florida, and included children from Melbourne.³ Sisters Winifred Eivers and Saint Margaret Zapf arrived on the scene on August 31. The pastor had arranged religious instruction for the children after school hours. The enrollment increased day to day with eighty-six in the first month. The different missions of this type attended

³ Catechetical: conforming to catechism questions and answers.

by the Sisters were founded in Palm Bay, Melbourne, Eau Gallie, and Rockledge. The combined number of students receiving instruction at this time was 240.

Sisters Agnita Snead and Imelda Michels opened the Sarasota catechetical school at Saint Martha's parish on October 10, 1944, to serve the needs of Bradenton and Venice as well as Sarasota. The high school students met for classes at Saint Martha's parish hall one hour after the grade school children. Fridays were given to Venice, and each Sunday, the Sisters were taken to Bradenton for religious instruction of the children there. This effort closed in 1949 when a beautiful new school was opened at Saint Martha's and was staffed by the Benedictine Sisters from Saint Leo, Florida.

Saint Joseph's Villa, located in northwest Miami, opened on November 21, 1945, as the Diocesan Receiving Home for Children in Miami. Sisters Regina Carlton and Imelda Michels staffed the children's home along with two nurses and a cook. The social workers from Catholic Charities in Miami frequented the Villa and brought children there on a regular basis. This program continued until 1962 when a new facility was constructed in Perrine.

After the fruitful years of Mother Theresa Joseph Brown as superior general of the congregation, Sister Anna Joseph Dignan (1946-1953) succeeded her as superior general. She was a native of Jacksonville, Florida and the first American-born superior of the congregation. It was 1946, eighty years after the first eight SSJ left France for Saint Augustine. She continued the beautification of the convent grounds, had the Fatima Shrine installed on the convent grounds that was illuminated at night, and had the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes turned to face Saint George Street and also illuminated it at night. It was during Mother Anna Joseph's watch that the Tristate Educational Committee was formed for Alabama, Georgia, and Florida (1949) to adopt a common course of studies for the Catholic elementary schools. The underlying purpose of this committee was to relate Catholic social teaching more closely to the subject matter taught in the classroom. In order to achieve

this clarity in all the Catholic Schools in Florida, teacher institutes were conducted at the end of the program, one at the convent in Saint Augustine and the other in Tampa at the convent of the Holy Name Sisters.

In 1950, Mercy Hospital in Miami, a Saint Augustine diocesan facility, was opened and staffed with SSJ serving as nurses and technicians. These Sisters had trained for hospital ministry in various institutions in the North for several years. Shortly after, in 1952, two new parish schools were opened by the Sisters: Saint Juliana's in West Palm Beach and Saint Joseph's in Saint Petersburg. In cooperation with Archbishop Hurley in his high school-construction plans, the Sisters closed eight parochial high schools and opened five new diocesan high schools between 1952 and 1959. The first of these Central Catholic High Schools was Bishop Kenny High School located on the south side of Jacksonville on the Saint Johns River. It was designed for five hundred students and opened its doors to 395 students in September of 1954. The school has grown and now has a student body of over 1,500.

When some of the Sisters were withdrawn from education and retrained for medical and social services, they founded:

Four hospitals

- Mercy, Miami (1950)
- Holy Cross, Fort Lauderdale (1955)
- Saint Cloud (1964)
- Mercy, Orlando (1965)
- (Also opened Auburndale Hospital, Auburndale, Florida)

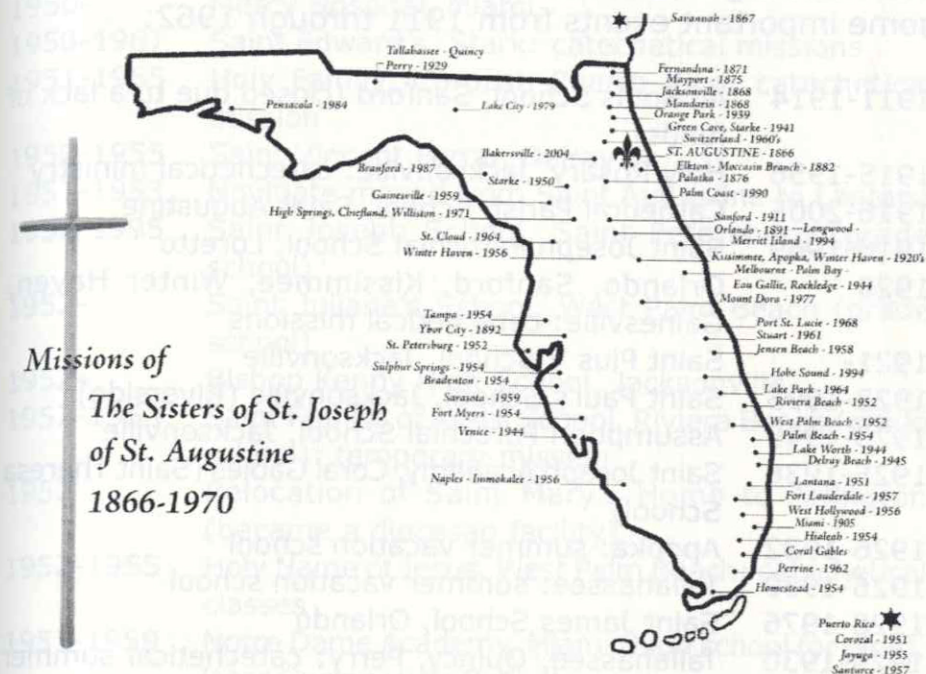
Four institutions

- All Saints Home for the Aged, Jacksonville (1955)
- Saint Vincent's Hall for Unwed Mothers, Miami (1960)
- Children's Homes, Miami and Tampa (1945 and 1964)

Five special ed centers for challenged children

- Morning Star schools (1956-1960)

3 medical catechetical centers for Spanish migrant families (1954-1962)



In 1953, Sister Anna Maria Chauvin (1953-1962) was elected superior general of the congregation. She came to office with a wealth of experience, both in the classroom and in the novitiate as the mistress of novices for twenty years. During her administration plans for construction of Lourdes Hall, a retirement/extended-care facility for the Sisters, was planned and brought to completion in the early 1960s. Archbishop Hurley blessed the facility on June 3, 1964. In 1960, the Congregation of the Sisters of Saint Augustine had a total membership of 289 Sisters and thirty-one foundations.

There was another surge of growth in Florida at this time, and many new parishes were founded under the leadership of Archbishop Hurley. Thus, there were many new challenges to be met in conjunction with the new parishes. As a

diocesan institute, the Sisters of Saint Joseph directed much of the activity in response to the leadership of their bishops. The following lists the foundations made by the Sisters and some important events from 1911 through 1962:

- 1911-1914 All Souls School, Sanford (closed due to a lack of funds)
- 1915-1956 Holy Rosary, Jacksonville: catechetical ministry
- 1916-2005 Cathedral Parish School, Saint Augustine
- 1916-1969 Saint Joseph Parochial School, Loretto
- 1920 Orlando, Sanford, Kissimmee, Winter Haven, Gainesville: catechetical missions
- 1921- Saint Pius V School, Jacksonville
- 1923-1995 Saint Paul's School, Jacksonville (Riverside)
- 1923-1949 Assumption Parochial School, Jacksonville
- 1925-1936 Saint Joseph Academy, Coral Gables (Saint Theresa School)
- 1926-1932 Apopka: summer vacation school
- 1926-1930 Tallahassee: summer vacation school
- 1928-1976 Saint James School, Orlando
- 1929-1930 Tallahassee, Quincy, Perry: catechetical summer programs
- 1930-1952 Orange Park Summer Home for Saint Mary's Home
- 1933-1994 Saint Theresa School, Coral Gables
- 1934-1944 Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Ybor City
- 1939- Saint Mary's School, Miami (now Cathedral Parish of the Archdiocese of Miami)
- 1941- Saints Peter and Paul School, Miami (grade and high school)
- 1944-2004 Sacred Heart School, Lake Worth (grade school)
- 1944-1957 Saint Joseph's, Palm Bay, Melbourne, Rockledge, Eau Gallie: catechetical mission
- 1944-1950 Saint Martha's Catechetical Mission, Sarasota
- 1945-1966 Saint Joseph Villa, Miami, resident childcare (moved to Perrine)
- 1945-1947 Saint Vincent Ferrar, Delray: catechism classes
- 1941-1951 Sacred Heart, Green Cove Springs: catechetical ministry

- 1946-2000 Florida School for the Deaf and Blind, Saint Augustine: catechetical ministry
- 1947-1949 Saint Ambrose Mission, Elkton
- 1950- Mercy Hospital, Miami
- 1950-1967 Saint Edward's, Stark: catechetical missions
- 1951-1955 Holy Family, Corozal, Puerto Rico: catechetical mission
- 1950-1955 Saint Vincent Ferrar, Delray
- 1951-1953 Novitiate moved from Saint Augustine to Lantana
- 1952-1995 Saint Joseph School, Saint Petersburg (grade school)
- 1952- Saint Juliana's School, West Palm Beach (grade school)
- 1952- Bishop Kenny High School, Jacksonville
- 1952-1953 Saint Francis of Assisi School, Riviera Beach (grade school): temporary mission
- 1952 Relocation of Saint Mary's Home to Arlington (became a diocesan facility)
- 1952-1955 Holy Name of Jesus, West Palm Beach: catechetical classes
- 1953-1959 Notre Dame Academy, Miami (high school for girls), later Curley High School
- 1953-1958 Saint John Vianney, Pine Castle: parish ministry
- 1953-1972 Novitiate moved to Jensen Beach
- 1954-1956 Immaculate Conception, Hialeah: catechism classes
- 1954-1955 Saint Joseph School, Bradenton (grade school): temporary mission
- 1954-1982 Most Holy Redeemer School, Tampa (grade school)
- 1954-1964 Saint Joseph Mission, Palm Beach (for Spanish-speaking migrants)
- 1954-1964 Saint Joseph Mission, Homestead
- 1954-1964 Saint Joseph Mission, Fort Myers
- 1954-1978 Bishop Moore High School, Orlando
- 1954-2000 Saint Charles, Orlando (grade school)
- 1954-1972 Holy Redeemer, Kissimmee: catechetical ministry
- 1955-1976 Christ the King School, Arlington, Jacksonville (grade school)
- 1955-1985 All Saints Home for the Aged, Jacksonville

- 1955-1959 Saint Mary's, Longwood: catechetical mission
 1955-1959 Holy Cross Hospital, Fort Lauderdale
 1955- Jayuga, Puerto Rico (summer catechetical school)
 1955 Camp Matecumbe, West Kendall, summer youth camp
 1956-1977 Holy Family School, Corozal
 1956 Saint Joseph Academy, Seventh and Market streets, Jacksonville, closed
 1956-1965 Holy Rosary School, Jacksonville (replaced old SJA at Seventh and Market streets)
 1956-1966 Established Saint Mary's Convent, Jacksonville (old Saint Mary's Home)
 1956-1959 Saint Ann's School, Naples
 1956-1963 Good Shepherd School, Orlando (grade school)
 1956-1969 Saint Joseph School, Winter Haven (grade school): temporary mission
 1956- Saint Stephen's School, Miramar (grade school)
 1956-1975 Saint Joseph's Parish School, Loretto
 1956-1959 Saint Augustine School, Miami (grade school for blacks)
 1956-1961 Morning Star School, Lantana
 1957- Our Lady of Carmel School, Santurce, Puerto Rico (grade school)
 1957-1959 Our Lady Queen of Martyrs School, Fort Lauderdale (temporary mission)
 1957 Saint Joseph Academy Building, Jacksonville (sold)
 1958- Morning Star Schools, Jacksonville and Tampa
 1958 Diocese of Miami erected*
 1958-1964 Saint Joseph Academy, Jensen Beach
 1958-1972 Saint Joseph College, Jensen Beach (junior college)
 1958-1988 Immaculata High School, Miami
 1958-1959 Morning Star School, Miami
 1959-1992 Saint Patrick School, Gainesville (grade school)
 1959-1972 Cardinal Mooney High School, Sarasota

* *The Florida Catholic*. Vol. XIX, No.41, St. Augustine, Florida. August 15, 1958. P. 1.

- 1960-1990 Camp Saint John, Switzerland (assisting in the programs over the years)
 1960-1966 Saint Vincent's Hall, Miami (for unwed mothers)
 1960- Morning Star School, Orlando
 1961-1978 Saint Joseph School, Stuart (grade school)
 1961-1965 Morning Star, Saint Julianna School, West Palm Beach
 1961-1971 Saint Michael's Parochial School, Fernandina
 1961- Saint Pius V (new church and school on Blue Street in Jacksonville)
 1961-1968 McCoy Air Force base, Orlando (religious education program)
 1962-1966 Spanish Migrant Mission, Perrine
 1962-1970 Catholic Home for Children, Perrine

Considering the number of missions started by the Sisters and relinquished by them when there were others to take over, one sees verification of the maxim of Jean Pierre Medaille, SJ, cofounder and spiritual director of the first Sisters in Le Puy in 1650:

Advance good works until near their completion and then, if it can be done easily, let others finish them and gain all the credit.

The erection of the Diocese of Miami in 1958 resulted in approximately half the members of the Sisters' congregation being missioned in houses located in the new diocese. The novitiate had been moved temporarily to Lantana, Florida, in 1951 and was permanently located in Jensen Beach, Florida, in 1953. A modern and extensive building had been constructed for the novitiate. Thus, the novitiate was located in the Diocese of Miami and the motherhouse in the Diocese of Saint Augustine. Both local ordinaries, Bishops Joseph P. Hurley and Coleman F. Carroll, wished the congregation to divide; but the Sisters met in Saint Augustine, discussed the proposal, and voted to remain united as one congregation.

Under the date of March 29, 1959, Rev. Mother Anna Maria Chauvin, superior general (1953-1962) of the Sisters

wrote to Rt. Rev. Msgr. James. F. Enright, vicar of religious for the Diocese of Miami, in response to the question of the congregation dividing between the Saint Augustine and Miami dioceses. The letter reads in part:

A General Chapter of the Sisters of Saint Joseph of Saint Augustine was convened March 28, 1959. After discussing the question of division of the Congregation, the members of the Chapter were asked to vote. Of the 152 perpetually professed Sisters who were present, 149 were of the opinion that the Congregation should remain united; 3 were in favor of division. In a poll of opinion concerning possible changes in our status as a diocesan institute, 151 Sisters were in favor of inaugurating, in time, the process necessary for becoming a pontifical institute; one Sister was not in favor of the proposal. A Resolution was drawn up and passed by the Chapter relative to the question of division of the Congregation. I am enclosing a copy of this Resolution for your information.

A charter for Saint Joseph College was granted in 1958 and gave, for the first time, a separate corporate identity to a venerable institution of higher learning, which had served the Sisters for nearly a century. The first canonical authorization for the college was publicly proclaimed at the laying of the cornerstone for a new convent and novitiate in Saint Augustine, Florida, on January 15, 1874. Augustin Verot, first bishop of Saint Augustine, directed that it was to become a normal institute for the training of teachers. On November 13, 1880, Bishop John Moore approved the teaching staff appointed for the novitiate and the teacher-training program. Teachers' certificates were granted during the nineteenth century through examinations under control of the Board of Public Instruction of Saint Johns County and later as prescribed by the laws of the State of Florida in Section 7, Chapter 4192. Lay students also attended the institute.

After 1915, credits from Saint Joseph Teacher Training Institute were accepted by the Catholic University of America and by the University of Florida after 1921. Reorganization of the institute in 1939 resulted in affiliation with the Catholic University of America in 1942. A junior college program, consisting of two years of academic credits transferable to senior colleges and universities, was then inaugurated. The summer education institutes with demonstration classes were attended by members of other religious communities. In 1949 to 1951, Archbishop Joseph P. Hurley delegated to Saint Joseph College the sponsorship of the Tristate Educational Committee. The work of the committee resulted in the adoption of a uniform course of studies for the elementary grades in the parochial schools of Alabama, Georgia, and Florida. The bishop of the Diocese of Saint Augustine further sanctioned the college by appointing properly qualified priests to conduct the classes in theology and philosophy.

At the direction of Archbishop Hurley, the novitiate was moved temporarily to Lantana, Florida, in 1951 and permanently to Jensen Beach, Florida, in 1953. The college program was continued with classes on two campuses while proper facilities were being constructed by the Sisters on their Indian River property in Jensen Beach. The transfer of the administrative offices to Jensen Beach in August 1963 completed the relocation of Saint Joseph College to one large campus.

The information found in this chapter concludes the years prior to the Second Vatican Council.



Students of Saint Benedict's School,
Saint Augustine, Florida, 1916



Saint Benedict the Moor School,
Saint Augustine, Florida, 1918



Mercy Hospital, Miami, Florida, 1950



Mercy Hospital, Miami, Florida, 2002