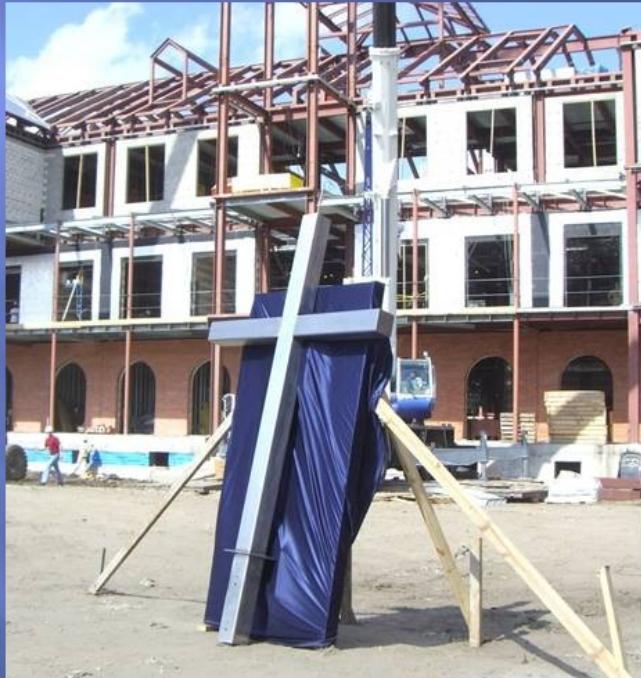


CRUX SPES UNICA



The Next Hundred Years

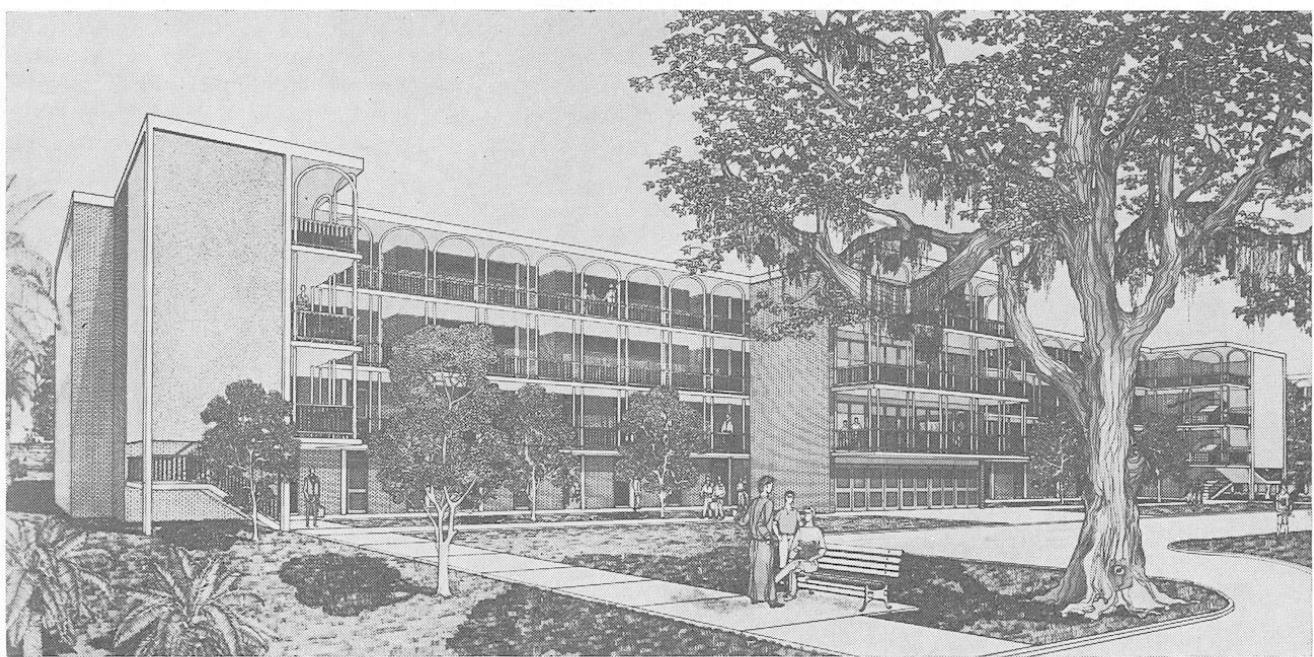
The Five-Day Boarder

By Ron Blitch '71

My connection to Holy Cross began in my early teen years. Our family was a Christian Brothers family at that time; my two older brothers went to Christian Brothers in City Park and then to De La Salle for high school. At that time, most Christian Brothers students went on to DeLaSalle High School, with Jesuit a distant second choice. I was a Christian Brothers student from 1963-1967 (5th-8th grade), and made the long, daily trek to City Park from Metairie where I grew up, pre-Interstate construction.

In 1961, my father, J. Buchanan Blitch, Sr., FAIA began to design the Brothers' Residence at Holy Cross, to house 30 brothers in a community setting overlooking the Mississippi River. As construction on the building began, I would accompany my father to the site and see how a building was put together and learned from my dad the whole design and construction process. I also met many of the brothers who were leading the campus then, including Br. Edward Lee CSC and Br. Lawrence Fitch CSC – who both led the fundraising efforts for Holy Cross. The campaign was called "The High School with a College Campus", which eventually

raised the funds for the Brothers' Residence, the boys' dormitory, a new central plant, and the renovation of the historic Administration Building.



The architect's drawing of the new \$545,000 Student Resident Hall at Holy Cross shows a fine blend of the "old and new" in the exterior style. J. Buchanan Blitch is the architect responsible for designing the completely air conditioned four floor building.

When it came time for me to go to high school, I knew so many of the brothers and the campus so well, that I chose Holy Cross instead of De La Salle, even though it was a 1½ - 2 hour drive from Metairie at that time. I was the ONLY graduate of Christian Brothers in 1967 that didn't go to De La Salle or Jesuit.

I lived in the new Boys' dorm as a 5-day boarder since commuting from Metairie was a real problem for Jefferson parish residents while the Interstate was being built. A good percentage of the dorm residents were 5-day boarders for the same reason

In 1967, there were over 30 brothers at Holy Cross – it was a great time to be a Tiger! The neighborhood was strong with lots of home ownership and pride in properties, and a very safe environment for Holy Cross to operate within. As dorm residents, we would go to the Knights of Columbus Hall after dinner a few blocks away for activities with no concern for our safety.

I graduated in 1971 and went to Notre Dame for my Architecture degree, a 5-year program, graduating in 1976 and returning to my dad's firm in New Orleans. I got involved with Holy Cross' administration and assisted with planning projects and facility issues over the years.

I was elected to the Board of Trustees and served as Chairman in 1990, during a very difficult financial time in the school's history. Hannan High had just opened in St. Bernard Parish, siphoning off many students, and the neighborhood was deteriorating quickly. A fence had

been erected around the entire campus to protect the students, and students were no longer allowed to walk to the St. Claude Avenue bus stops to go home in the evening.



Ron Blitch on the balcony of the dorm designed by his father . . . Forty years later, Ron would design the school at the Paris Avenue location.

basically indicating that they would not support that option to save the school, at that time.

In the late 1990's the middle school was growing and seen as the hope to "feed" students into the high school. We did some planning for a \$4 million facility between the old dorm and the Administration Building, which had been converted to the middle school years before when the need for the dorm evaporated (the Interstate had finally opened and the South American students who were a large part of the dorm population dwindled), but even that cost was beyond the school's reach.

A boiler went out in the central plant, and the \$50,000 replacement cost became a critical issue – the school had no reserves to cover the expense, so the Province in Austin had to step in and help with the cost. Holy Angels was in the process of shutting down soon after, and discussion about merging with Holy Angels resulted in "absolutely not" responses from the Board at that time. All new Catholic high schools were co-ed at that time, so it probably would have been a good thing for the school, but it wasn't in the cards.

Discussions about moving the campus to a new location were also held over the years, with the Province

The World Upended

Then August 29, 2005 happened: the world was upended for New Orleans and for Holy Cross. The damage that Hurricane Katrina did to the campus was catastrophic, and through heroic efforts the school relocated to Baton Rouge and then back to a modular campus on the Dauphine St. property.

Charles DiGange '64 was Headmaster at the time and led the efforts with the Board to determine Holy Cross' future. Finally, this was seen as an opportunity to move the campus away from its historic site and construct a new campus. With FEMA's funding opportunities, Holy Cross could have a campus and a location that would be competitive with Jesuit and Brother Martin.

The Holy Cross Province in Austin indicated a reversal of their position in the 1990's – their commitment was to the mission of Holy Cross in the New Orleans region – not to a specific location or set of buildings. That allowed the Board, with our firm's assistance, to scout out alternate locations for a new 20+ acre campus.

The preferred site initially was the campus of John F. Kennedy High School on Bayou St. John, which was not going to reopen. Legislation was actually passed in Baton Rouge to allow the Orleans Parish School Board to sell surplus properties. Holy Cross was interested in purchasing the JFK site, and Jesuit was going to purchase the Crossman School on Carrollton next to their campus for their own expansion needs.

Unfortunately, the OPSB elected not to sell these campuses to “Catholic Schools” and that option disappeared. At the same time, St. Francis Cabrini Church on Paris Avenue was slated for demolition by the Archdiocese of New Orleans, as the size of the parish was now too small to support the church. Additionally, the building was fraught with design and construction issues.

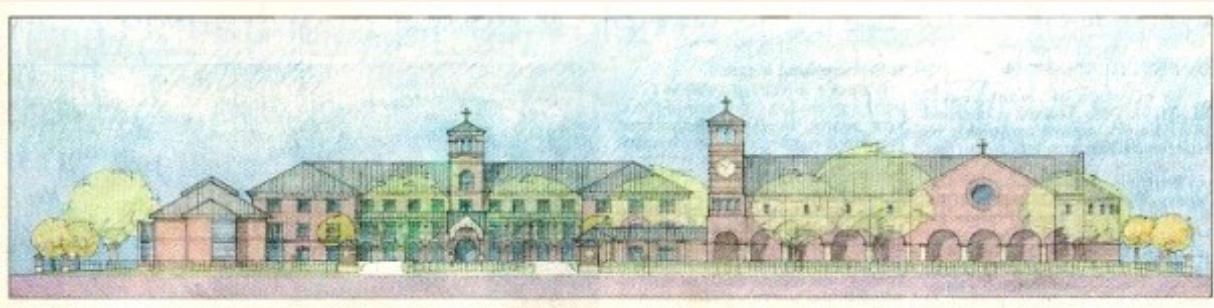
Cabrini parishioners OK Holy Cross talks

HOLY CROSS Headmaster Charles DiGange answers questions at a town hall meeting of St. Francis Cabrini parishioners July 23 at St. Pius X Church. Parishioners voted in favor of continuing talks on selling its Gentilly property so the 157-year-old school can relocate from the lower Ninth Ward. (photo by Peter Blaney via architectural drawings by Bresselmore Design Group and Batisch Removal Architects.)

The photograph shows a man in a suit, Charles DiGange, speaking to a large audience seated in rows of chairs in a large hall. The architectural site plan shows the proposed layout for the Holy Cross campus, including the High School, Middle School, 8th Grade Center, Rain Garden, and various sports fields and parking areas. The plan is labeled with streets like Carroll Avenue, Paris Avenue, and Gretna Street.

The church was a 20,000 square foot building with no roof insulation and terrazzo floors. In the summer when the AC was blasting under the concrete vaults, it basically “rained” in the church. Towels and mats were spread over the floors to prevent slips and falls. The church had outlived its useful life and the decision to demolish it by the Archdiocese was firm. The parish was consolidated with St. Pius Church on the Lakefront, and the Archdiocese offered to sell the campus to Holy Cross, together with the Holy Redeemer site to the west, a combined 20+ acres – exactly what Holy Cross needed.

We prepared a Master Plan for the Cabrini site with a central Administration building, 8th grade center and library, flanked by High School and Middle School buildings. The western part of the site was planned for sports facilities with a major Athletic Center including a basketball gym, wrestling, the Huddle, music department and a planned spot for a natatorium. The space between the Athletic complex and the Administration building would contain the cafeteria and a new chapel with 300 seats. The central focus of this part of the campus would be the relocated gazebo from 4950 Dauphine. The remaining site could accommodate a football practice field, baseball diamond and soccer field, all contiguous on one plot.



A rendering of the initial plan

A Master Plan was also planned for another 20-acre site in Kenner – near St. Jude Hospital, on a plot owned by the Jefferson Parish School Board. This plan could accommodate the exact same elements as the Cabrini site, and it would also have the same critical site issue: the need to elevate the buildings to a level of 7 feet to meet FEMA requirements. I attended a Jefferson Parish School Board meeting where the sale of the Kenner plot was up for discussion. The School Board was not overly enthused about giving up this land, but the meeting resulted in the possibility that this could happen.

After the Jefferson parish meeting, in a discussion just outside the meeting room, it was made clear to the Holy Cross Board that political strings would be attached to the deal. Jefferson Parish representatives would want to direct the selection of contractors and vendors. I think this shocked the Holy Cross team – but I explained that this is how Jefferson Parish works.

So, two options were now available for the new Holy Cross. The site options decision Holy Cross had to make now would determine the school's future for the next 100 years of its history.

A special Board meeting was called to hear presentations from both the City of New Orleans and the Parish of Jefferson, both of which desperately wanted to get Holy Cross into their parishes. I was a guest at the presentations by both in a warehouse district hotel.

Jefferson Parish was up first to present their case for Holy Cross to move to Kenner. Large, wrapped gift baskets were on every HC Board member's seat, with stuffed tigers and lots of goodies. The parish councilmen and representatives made their case that the population of

the parish needed another Catholic school, like Archbishop Rummel High School, to serve the needs of Jefferson and the River Parishes. Aaron Broussard, Parish President at the time, called in from a trip in Paris to personally “welcome” HC to Jefferson. It was a very professional and well-rehearsed presentation.

Next up was the City of New Orleans, which of course had been wiped out by Katrina. Only two people spoke for the city, City Council members Arnie Fielkow and Cynthia Hedge-Morrell. Fielkow spoke passionately about how the relocation of Holy Cross within the City would send a message of hope to the nation that New Orleans was not being abandoned, and that Holy Cross committing to the Gentilly site was a rare and positive milestone that New Orleans so desperately needed.

A Power Point the city had prepared malfunctioned, and so the presentation from that point was unrehearsed and basically “from the heart”. Councilwoman Hedge-Morrell, with tears in her eyes, explained that New Orleans needed Holy Cross, that Gentilly needed Holy Cross, and that the city would help where it could to facilitate the move. Finally, a resident of a recently restored home within the Holy Cross footprint spoke, also in tears, saying that she would gladly give up her newly renovated home for the sake of her neighborhood, and that Holy Cross would be the catalyst for rebirth within Gentilly.

It was a powerful moment.

At that point I left the meeting as a guest and the Board deliberated the choice of the two sites. I have heard that there was initially a tie vote, that the Kenner site made more sense in a business sense, as “that’s where the students were” and that New Orleans was dying – “hadn’t Holy Cross struggled enough with poor neighborhood issues”?

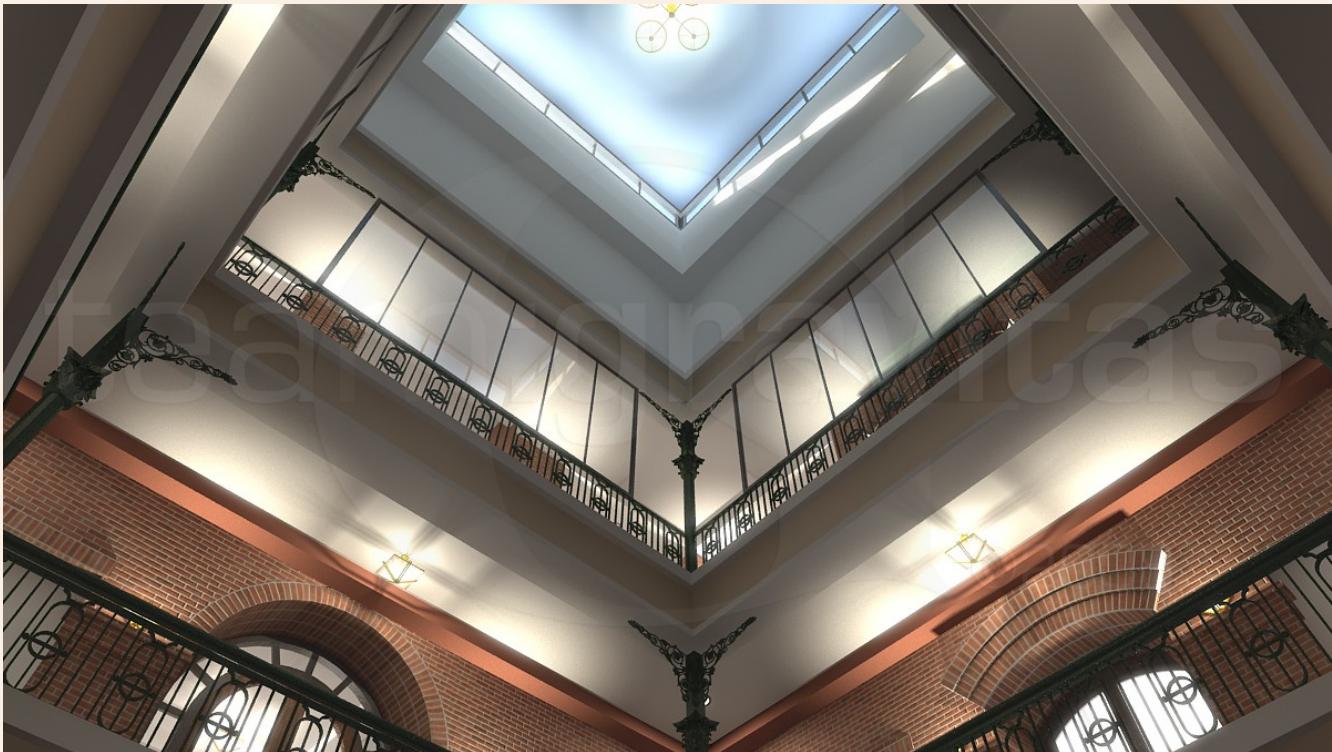
In the end, the Board chose the Gentilly site and we began to move ahead with the planning of the new campus.

The Plan Unfolds

We teamed up with architect Dean Duplantier ’74 of Broadmoor Design Group and Broadmoor Construction, led by Roy Mouledous ’70 to develop the project and get it into the construction phase.

Once the site had been chosen, planning began to redevelop the site on Paris Avenue. Soil investigations and site surveys were started, as well as cooperation with the City Planning Commission, including negotiating the closure of Perlita Street, which ran through the new campus from Crescent Drive to Prentiss Avenue. The historic stands of live oaks were surveyed and a plan to protect the trees was enacted.

Early in the planning process, after the plans for the site had been announced, preservationists and architects who were advocates for the Cabrini Church building raised questions about saving the building, which was already scheduled to be demolished by the Archdiocese, and incorporating it into the new Holy Cross.



Rendering of the Atrium that FEMA rejected as being "too nice."

I received a call from a local architect who told me that I “had an obligation to save the Church”. I explained that we were the architects for the new campus, and that the terms of the new design were that the site would be cleared of all existing buildings, including Cabrini Church. I also explained that Holy Cross had already decided it could not use the 20,000 sf concrete structure in the middle of the site, a structure that leaked and sweated whenever it was humid or raining.

Litigation ensued and FEMA determined that a Section 106 review of historic structures would need to be conducted. That involved public hearings with FEMA and interested parties - no one from the neighborhood or Gentilly showed up - which resulted in a six-month delay. One professor from Tulane’s architecture school even offered his students extra credit to stand in the median on Paris Avenue to protest the project. Once that was made public, he was asked to leave Tulane and he ended up at Clemson University for a while and has now moved out of the US and is in Toronto.

FEMA finally concluded that a plaque noting the location of the original altar of Cabrini should be placed on the site, which is exactly where the new fountain rests in the center quad between the Main Building, High School Building, and Middle School Building.

It was also determined that, with FEMA’s assistance under the Stafford Act rules, the new school could replicate the 4950 Dauphine campus. That meant the Main Building would have the same exterior design and appearance as the 1847 structure. Custom bricks would be

fabricated by Acme Brick to match the original building. New buildings could have terrazzo flooring and glazed block walls like the old campus.

Cranes in the Sky

We researched and located Robinson Ironworks in Alabama that had made the original cast iron railings on the Main Building, and they agreed to remake them for the new Main Building. And from the study of historic photos, we decided to design the tower on the Main Building with its original 5 level height. The tower on the 4950 campus had been toppled in Hurricane Betsy in 1965 – this would restore the original appearance of the tower.

We also suggested a stately main entrance from Paris Avenue, using the Academy of the Sacred Heart on St. Charles Avenue as a model, so the three academic buildings were arranged with the fountain and the Cabrini memorial plaque in the center.

The rear of the Main Building would focus on student-life functions, the cafeteria, athletic center, and chapel buildings, all on axis with the Main Building with the historic gazebo from 4950 in the middle of this quad.



Cranes in the Sky

The gazebo from 4950 Dauphine was originally a trolley stop for the campus in the 1800's. When the new Brothers' Residence and Student Dormitory was built in the 1960's, it was relocated to the plaza between those buildings near the levee.

By this time, the modular campus for the school had relocated to the 9th ward campus, to bring students back from Baton Rouge. These modular classrooms were showing their age, and FEMA allowed the construction of a new modular campus on the new Paris Avenue site, where a playing field would be located in the Master Plan – at the corner of Paris Avenue and Prentiss Avenue. Relocated at last to their new, under-construction campus, students were able to see their new school rise from the site, and in fact, the first pilings driven were painted white, and the students were all able to sign the first pilings for the new school.

Working with FEMA is always a challenge and an opportunity. We saw FEMA as the savior for Holy Cross, but the realization of a new campus was not going to happen without a little pain and suffering. The leadership of Holy Cross – Charles DiGange '64, Bill Chauvin '70, Clancy Dubos '72, Stan Vignes and the Sulzer Group (HC's intermediary disaster management experts negotiating with FEMA) worked tirelessly to keep the project moving and keep the Holy Cross Province leaders in Austin apprised on everything that was happening.



Raised 7 feet above the ground

There were arguments over the atrium in the main building – FEMA contended that this was a luxury and could not be included. The original design had the atrium going through all three levels of the Main Building up to a clerestory at the top of the roof. We did exhaustive analyses proving that it was cheaper to have this atrium as opposed to building a slab on the second and third floors and adding lighting, air conditioning etc. A hole actually costs nothing in reality. FEMA finally said it was just “too nice” and wouldn’t “look right”, so the atrium was cut to just a space connecting the first and second floors, and the third-

floor library got a nice - and more expensive - reading room area.

When the Athletic Center was designed in the second phase of construction, Charles DiGange called the president of Jesuit High School and asked how many seats were in Jesuit's main gym, which had been designed by my Dad in early 70's. The answer was 2550 seats – Charlies' instructions were: make the new HC gym 2551 seats. It was good karma because in the inaugural home basketball game in the new Athletic Center gym – Holy Cross beat Jesuit!

The completion of the \$88 million campus and seeing the students at the dedication events leave the trailers and move into the new “High School with the College Campus” was extremely gratifying. The project has won numerous national design awards and, hopefully, the school's Board will finally have the physical facilities to enable the education of our students with the best infrastructure in the region.

This would not have been possible without dozens of dedicated alumni, staff, local, state and national leaders, students and neighborhood residents working hard to bring Holy Cross to life and accelerate Gentilly's rebirth.

The tears of Cynthia Hedge Morell and local residents indicating how important it was for Holy Cross to choose Gentilly over Kenner were repaid with the new Holy Cross School, hopefully safe and secure for the next century!

Once again, Holy Cross is “The High School with a College Campus!”

Ron Blitch

FAIA, FACHA

Construction Video: a look at the campus under construction
https://youtu.be/_Kq7PcCPXro

Flythrough Video: a virtual look at what the campus would look like after it was finish. This video was made prior to the start of construction.
<https://youtu.be/1WmGUafjegQ>

Montana Lights

photo by Bobby Wahl



Birthday Bash - Part 2

The Holy Cross Class of 1971's 71st Birthday Bash Part 2 will be held in the Sicilian Room of Rocky and Carlo's Restaurant and Bar (Ladies Invited), 613 W St Bernard Hwy, Chalmette, LA 70043 on **Saturday, 16 November 2024** from 4 PM until Tommy throws us out!

This event will be free, as have all of our events, thanks to generous donations and sponsors. Naturally, we will have a donation box out like always.



The Chapel

One item left on the school's Master Plan is to build a permanent 300 seat chapel between the cafeteria and the administration building. It will use the original 12 panels of stained glass from the brothers' chapel from Dauphine Street. These are preliminary sketches made in 2019.

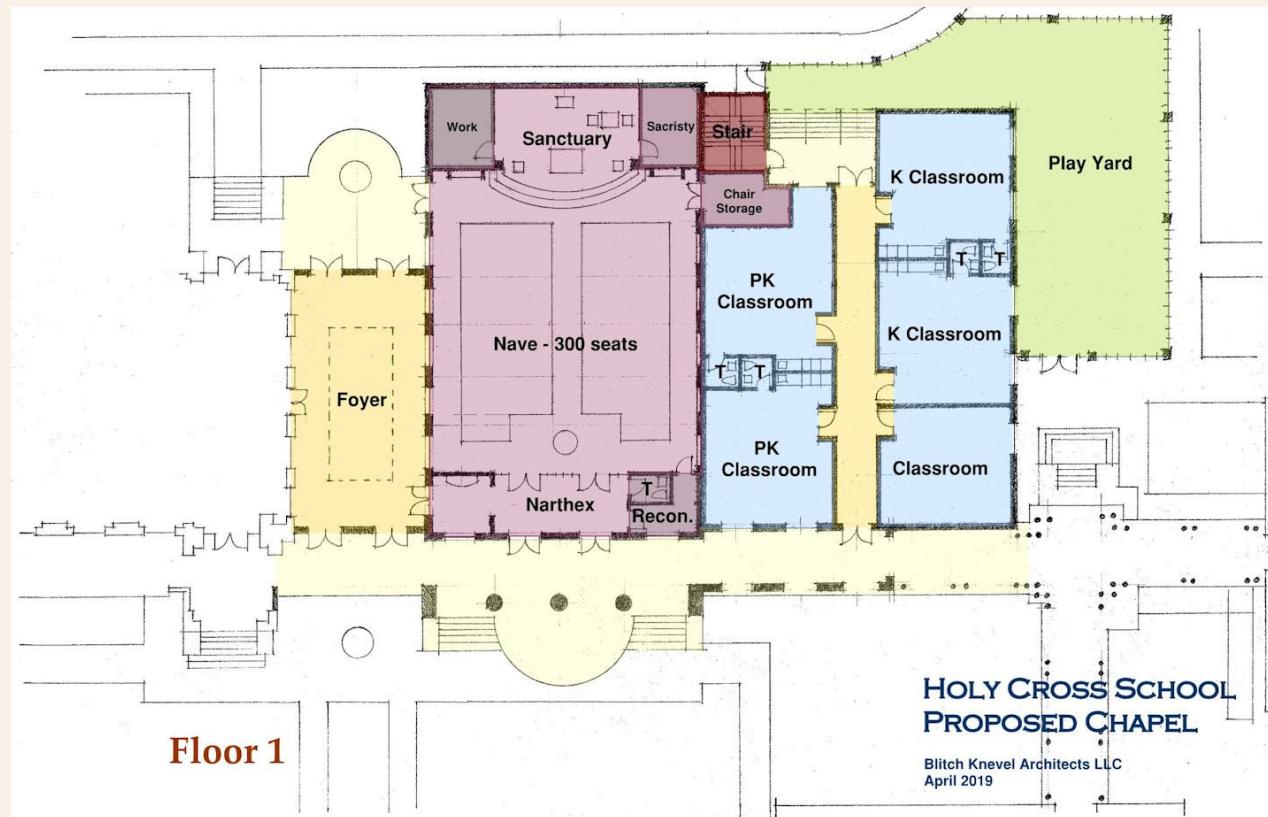
Holy Cross School



Memorial Chapel and Refectory

BlitchKnevel BROADMOOR

October 2009



The Victory Bell by John Kokemor '69

Demolition of the buildings of St. Mary's Orphanage did not commence until 1949. A demolition foreman noticed the bell and knew of the Brothers service at the orphanage made a call to Holy Cross and offered to save the bell. Brother Romuald Sahm and some students, probably serving detention, hurried over to retrieve the bell.

It was put in storage on campus and forgotten until 1978-1979, the year of the Centennial celebration of the school founding. Brother Fisher Iwasko recommended the bell be hung at the front entrance of the Administration Building.

Br Robert Hampton rings the bell using a pole on the Dauphine St campus

The bell is rung for football victories, state championships and commencement. It now hangs at the rear entrance of the Holy Cross School Administration Building and is known as the Victory Bell. Except for commencement exercises, the Victory Bell the bell has no lanyard. The student selected for the honor reaches the bell by standing on the shoulders of a fellow student, symbolic of teamwork and the brotherhood of Holy Cross Men.



The Victory Bell rung be a baseball player hoisted up by team mates on the Paris Avenue campus

The Miracle on Paris Avenue



“Holy Cross gave me the confidence to be comfortable that I could do anything I put my heart to. I think one of the interesting things about being on a traditional campus, either the old Holy Cross or the new Holy Cross, is that traditional buildings, traditional planting techniques give you a sense of place and a sense that you're part of a bigger picture - a sense that you're part of a tradition - part of a history - and Holy Cross, of course, is more than a bunch of buildings.” - - - Ron Blitch '71

Ron Blitch '71

“It really is a miracle - things that have happened to us since Katrina - to actually have to leave a home that was our home since 1849, to find a new location, to be able almost to replicate our old campus with the oak trees and the acreage.”

“So the buildings got washed away, the philosophy of Holy Cross education did not get washed away. We're maintaining exactly what father Moreau wants us to do and we're educating people to make the world a better place. And even the old graduates that come by, a lot of them start to cry. They look at the old building and they say, “I thought it was gone, but it's right here.” And that's so meaningful, and to have it replicated like we have here is extremely important for this institution.” - - - Charlie DiGange '64



Charlie DiGange '64

“Hurricane Katrina was the crucible for Holy Cross. It's a time when we made the very painful, but I think very farsighted decision, to move from our old campus to this beautiful new campus. And we're seeing kids walk out now who have the benefit of this new campus.”



Clancy DuBos '72

“Tradition is very strong at Holy Cross, and these beautiful buildings evoke all the traditions that we have. The oak trees that are on the campus - that's all evocative of the old campus and the roots that we have here in New Orleans.”

“This campus, unbelievably, is even bigger than the old campus - and the old campus was the largest boys Catholic school in the metropolitan area, one of the largest ones in the south. So we now truly have a campus that is by all accounts one of the biggest in the

country for a boys Catholic High School. It's actually bigger than Loyola University's campus in uptown New Orleans. And it was all made possible by the faithfulness, and the hard work, and the dedication, and commitment of our parents, our alumni, our board.” - - - Clancy DuBos '72

“They came back in droves. And if it were not for those parents and those students that were so dedicated in the early days, and made sure that we had an institution that we could make our decisions about, we would not be here. When people ask me how were you able to do all the things that you did, I simply look back at what those children with those parents, and what that faculty and administration had to survive, and the tasks that were asked of us and asked of our board, were minuscule in comparison to the sacrifices that they had to make.” - - Bill Chauvin '70



Bill Chauvin '70

These quotes were excerpted from a video made by Kurt Coste. The complete video may be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PB-Ftm5X72A&t=4s>

"It was easy. . . . It was for Holy Cross."

With all the uncertainty, with all the aggravation, with all the battles with FEMA and special interest groups, the Paris Avenue campus stands as a monument to the perseverance of the architects, the contractors, the school's board, administrators, students, and alumni.

When asked how they were able to do it, Ron Blitch replied: "It was easy. . . . It was for Holy Cross."



James C Toomer, Sr. and Amelia H. Toomer Library



Administration Building Foyer



Watson Family Theater



Science Lab



Administration Building Atrium

Keeping Cool

photo by Dan McGovern



The Road to Paris Avenue

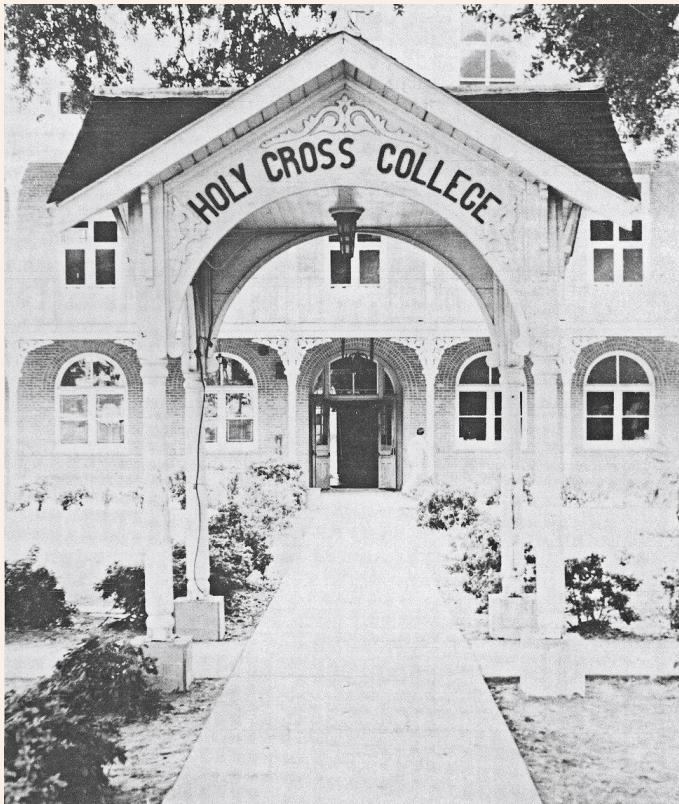
by John Kokemor '69

And how did you get to school?

The Holy Cross student body was asked that question and the results were posted in The Bulletin November, 1941. The enrollment was 615, 448 of whom were day students. 229 rode the NOPSI street cars and busses at seven cents each way. 102 pedaled a bike. 86 arrived in cars. There were 31 who walked. At the turn of the 19th century, two street car lines served the ninth ward: the St Claude and the Dauphine, Barracks, Slaughterhouse.

The Dauphine stop for Holy Cross College was at the campus gate just west of Reynes St. North Peters St ran along the base of the Mississippi River Levee from Canal St to the U.S.Barracks. The Congregation of Holy Cross sold a parcel of land along the levee in 1887 to the City of New Orleans. Later it was determined by the Mississippi and New Orleans Levee Board that the levee required fortification and elevation. The Ursuline Sisters sold a portion of their property between Dauphine and N. Peters to raise funds for a future move uptown. In October, 1903 Fr. Daniel J. Spillard C.S.C. appeared before the Streets and Landings Committee to oppose the extension of Chartres St from Jourdan Avenue through Holy Cross College Campus and continue east to the Jackson Barracks and the Slaughterhouse. It would have required expropriation of land along the levee. He prevailed and the street car line and route to the slaughterhouse remained unchanged.

During school year 1903-1904 Holy Cross Park was constructed. Baseball was played by Junior and Senior teams since the late 1800s. The inaugural game was played March 17,



The Gazebo - symbol of continuity

1912 the Sisters boarded a special street car to their new campus on State Street in the Broadmoor neighborhood of Uptown. In 1913 the Levee Board expropriated some land of the Ursuline Sisters and that of the property owners along N. Peters to the U.S. Barracks. The Brothers protested the expropriation of College land but did not prevail. In 1914 the State of Louisiana authorized the Port of New Orleans to build a canal from the Mississippi River to Lake Pontchartrain. It was named the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal, also known as the Industrial Canal.

In August 1917 the remaining property of the Ursulines, including 700 feet on the Mississippi River, was purchased by the Port of New Orleans. It was to be the site of the mouth of the canal. Construction of the canal began June 6, 1918. Therefore the Dauphine Barracks and Slaughterhouse streetcar line had to be abandoned. The St. Claude Avenue line became the sole route servicing the Lower Ninth Ward (below the canal). It bifurcated at Reynes St. One track turned south, stopped at Holy Cross, then continued east on Chartres to the U.S. Barracks, Slaughterhouse and Domino Sugar Refinery. The other track continued east to the St. Bernard Parish Line terminating at Lizardi Street. The Inner Harbor Navigation Canal was dedicated May 5, 1923. The levee improvements, industrialization of the riverfront and the construction of the Inner Harbor Navigational Canal resulted in the interruption N. Peters St at St. Ferdinand St. and does not resume east until Andry St. The Holy Cross College address which had been listed as corner N. Peters and Reynes was changed to 4950 Dauphine Street.

1904 versus Jesuit. Most spectators would have arrived on campus via one of the aforementioned street car lines. The automobile was a new invention and not yet a practical means of conveyance. Santa Claus surprised the students at the College Christmas Party in 1905 by arriving in an automobile.

There are no records documenting when or who built the gazebo but the legend is it was a neighbor who noted that students, park patrons and residents of the neighborhood had no shelter from the sun or rain as they awaited the Dauphine Barracks Slaughterhouse Streetcar. A gazebo was a common form of shelter, replete with an aesthetically pleasing ornamental design.

The Ursuline Sisters moved from the French Quarter to the Third District in 1823. The Sisters aided the Brothers and Marianites in the early days of their management of the St. Mary's Orphan Asylum. In September,

There is one picture of the park and gazebo with the gym in the background, published in the 1922-1923 Yearbook. It is not known if it is a contemporary photograph or one previously taken. It is also not known when the Holy Cross College Gazebo was moved to the base of the levee. There are no official records but one theory is 1917 and the other is post 1923. It is likely that whenever it was moved, it was still utilized as a shelter for students using the St. Claude Refinery Streetcar line to return home from school. At the time the campus grounds were from the Main Building to the river. The land was higher and considered to be of better quality. The land to the north was drained swamp and not felt suitable for heavy construction.



Holy Cross Park - gazebo can be seen on the right
school. At the time the campus grounds were from the Main Building to the river. The land was higher and considered to be of better quality. The land to the north was drained swamp and not felt suitable for heavy construction.

The gazebo was placed in line with the tower of the Main Building and between Holy Cross Hall and St. Joseph Hall, two of several buildings which were referred to as "slave quarters". The Reynes Manor House, just behind the gazebo, served as a residence for the Brothers. The buildings were included in the purchase of the former Reynes Plantation in 1859. Most were raised one story and enclosed when the Brothers moved there from St. Mary's in 1871. The Marianite Sisters assumed the care and education of all the girls and the boys under twelve. The Brothers were assigned the older boys. The facade of the gazebo with the iconic Holy Cross College sign faced the river. Surrounding the gazebo was a garden of rose bushes, orange trees, palm trees and oleanders. In 1928 the Reynes Manor House was demolished and the gazebo was no longer obstructed from view.

In 1903 twelve Sisters of the Presentation, who had been exiled from France, were accepted by the Congregation of Holy Cross and assigned to Holy Cross College New Orleans. They cooked for the Brothers and students, cleaned and mended the laundry and served in the infirmary. They were semi-cloistered nuns and usually when not working congregated on the porch of their residence. They watched ships passing on the river and enjoyed the breeze and pleasant aroma of the flowers.

Caernavon Crevasse

Late in the summer of 1926 heavy rains occurred in the Mississippi River valley followed by heavy snowfall that fall and winter. The river rose to 21 feet above the French Quarter. To save the city from catastrophe, a section of the levee at Caernavon, 14 miles downriver from Holy Cross College was dynamited to create a 1.25 mile crevasse. For three months the crevasse diverted some of the flow of the river into Breton Sound. Later the Bonne Carre spillway was constructed 12 miles west of New Orleans to divert some of the flow to Lake

Pontchartrain. It was one of several Mississippi River Flood Control Structures built to avoid or mitigate future flooding events.

The Spillway gates were first opened in 1937 and once opened twice in 2019. Residents of the Lower Ninth Ward have long held the belief that explosions were heard emanating from the direction of the Industrial Canal during Hurricane Betsy (1965) and Hurricane Katrina (2005). It was their belief that their neighborhoods were sacrificed to save the more affluent residents of New Orleans. There is a photo of Brother Isidore (Joseph Hurley Alderton) Prefect of Discipline in 1926-1927, standing on the top of the levee and the height of the water near the top. The Mississippi River levee improvements, which began in 1913 proved quite fortuitous, despite the loss of some land of the College.



The Crevasse

The campus layout from the Main Building to the levee underwent many changes as enrollment slowly increased from 1912-1936. In 1930 the Recreation Building, near Holy Cross Hall was moved just east of St. Joseph Hall and raised one story. The upper floor was converted to rooms for upper school boarders and the lower floor a recreation area which later was repurposed as The Huddle. The building was renamed St. Benedict Hall. In 1936 a statue of St. Joseph was purchased and placed in the south end of the quadrangle behind the gazebo. Additional palms and shrubs were added and the area named the Shrine of St. Joseph. Due to the purposeful recruiting efforts of Brother Titus Eppley, Band Director and Steward, the perception of the Holy Cross students and faculty had improved.



Br Isidore watching the Mississippi river rise

Families were sending their boys from surrounding Parishes, Mississippi and Central America. Enrollment increased from 350 to 600. Before school and during lunch, groups of students congregated in the quadrangle, around the oaks, behind the old gym and on the basketball courts behind St. Benedict Hall. The gazebo was a favorite place for students to just sit and talk. When it was announced that Navy Ships were

entering the Industrial Canal, students would congregate on the top of the levee to wave and yell goodbye to the sailors.

During the mid-1930s to the mid-1940s several young Brothers were assigned to Holy Cross College: Berchmans Gibbons 1935, Romuald Sahm 1937, Melchior Polowy 1939, Salvator Esposito 1939, Timothy Hickey 1942, Reinald Duran 1942 and Fisher Iwasko 1942. The era of the Great Depression was abruptly followed by the attack on Pearl Harbor and America joined the war.

Periodically cargo vessels and troop transports set off from the Port of Embarkation. Curious students and faculty trekked through the gazebo, climbed the levee and witnessed firsthand history in the making. Due to raw material diversion to the war, construction and renovation projects at Holy Cross College were stalled or halted. Holy Cross Park had sustained significant damage from a wind storm in 1939. It received only patchwork repairs. Following the end of the war, work began to relocate the park one block north.



Students from the 1970s atop the levee watching the USS Intrepid

Soon thereafter construction was stopped again due to material shortages of the post war construction boom. Schools with whom Holy Cross competed complained of an unfair advantage because of the school name - Holy Cross College. They were accommodated in 1946 with the adoption of the name Holy Cross School. Campus buildings sustained significant damage from the 1947 hurricane.

Extensive repairs to essential buildings were done first. Construction of the ballpark was delayed until 1948. The cinder block walls and grandstand of Holy Cross Park were finally completed in time for the 1949 baseball season. During the spring months of 1949, President Brother Alfonso Comeau welcomed three Brothers of Holy Cross, known as "the flying construction Brothers", who would add a three story addition to the rear of the gymnasium. One of the Brothers was Brother Mary Joseph Siok.

Lourdes Grotto

On January 1, 1949 the St. Claude Street Car lines ceased operation. The Lower Ninth ward was then serviced by NOPSI busses, some of which were electric powered like the streetcars. A line terminated at Lizardi Street and the other continued on to the Domino Sugar Refinery.

The campus and buildings were cramped for space. Brother Alfonso embarked on a master plan for campus expansion including a multipurpose classroom building, Brothers Residence and Gymnasium with Band Room.

Construction began on the multipurpose building in the Marian Year 1954 and placed in service in the spring of 1955. The building was known as the Upper School Building (Monroe Hall) and had classrooms, cafeteria, audio visual room and library. Simultaneously work began on the Lourdes Grotto behind the gazebo. It was a virtual exact replica of the grotto at the University of Notre Dame. The project was the idea of Brother Vincent DePaul Hujar. He designed and oversaw construction.



The Grotto with the Gazebo behind and to the left

The City of New Orleans donated broken concrete from street repairs. Brothers Mary Joe and Melchior helped with the labor. Students were allowed to serve their detentions on Saturdays to assist with the labor. Money was raised by students and donors for the statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Bernadette. A new statue of St. Joseph for the lobby of the Upper School Building was also commissioned. The three statues were carved in Italy from Carrara marble. Those statues are now part of the campus at 5500 Paris Avenue.

The statue of St. Joseph acquired in 1936 for the Shrine was moved to the lawn of the Upper School Building. The last of the Sisters of the Presentation were recalled from Holy Cross

School in September 1955. The dedication of the Upper School Building and Lourdes Grotto was held in October, 1955. Brother Reinald Duran was the new President. Archbishop Rummel performed the blessing. The Grotto became the site where the football team prayed before games, pep rallies were held and prayer offered especially before tests. It also dwarfed the gazebo. In 1962 the new Student Center (Brother Melchior) was completed. The second new building in the modernization of the campus.

I was admitted to Holy Cross school for eighth grade in 1964. Most mornings I carpooled to school with a friend that had started Holy Cross in seventh grade. The return trip to Gentilly first required a four block walk with a sack full of books. The bus stop was always crowded with students waiting to board the bus. Most days it was standing room only in the bus. Sometimes the St. Claude Drawbridge was up.

At the Nicholls High stop the driver could admit only a few students. However the aisles were crowded even more so and often resulted in a push, shove or elbow to the ribs. The next stop was the Academy of the Holy Angels which was frequently passed as the bus was too crowded to take on any more riders.

Some days a train at Press St. delayed the ride home. Our transfer point was Elysian Fields by Schwegmann's Supermarket or we would have to run to catch the bus at Marais Street. Only then could we sit and set down the heavy book sack. Then I would disembark at Sere St. and another two block walk home. It was a difficult trip twice daily whether to Gentilly, Lakeview, Metairie, Kenner, New Orleans East or the West Bank.

In October 1964 the new Brothers Residence was dedicated and in 1965 the Olympic size swimming pool. Holy Cross School was advertised as "The High School with the College Campus". At the time I don't recall being curious about the gazebo. But while watching an episode of the Alfred Hitchcock Show, he described a scene set in a gazebo. He pronounced it "the gaze bo" two syllables. I then realized that it was the structure we passed through to access the levee. It was many years later that I realized the correct pronunciation was in three syllables "ga ze bo".

On September 9, 1965 Hurricane Betsy struck south Louisiana. The Industrial Canal was breached and the minimal levee system overtopped flooding the lower ninth ward, St. Bernard Parish, Gentilly and New Orleans East. The buildings of Holy Cross School sustained serious damage. The top section of the Lourdes Grotto was toppled, the walls of the Holy Cross Park were blown down and the front of the Old Gym was crushed by the wind. The various former slave quarters buildings sustained roof damage as did the Upper School Building. The campus became an evacuation center for residents of the Lower Ninth Ward. The Student Center was ground zero and the floor sustained damage.

Brother James McDonnell led the recovery effort and school resumed in two weeks. The use of the venerable the old buildings were no longer practical. Decisions had to be made with the focus on the future of Holy Cross School. In the spring of 1966 demolition of the Lourdes

Grotto, the Old Gym and all slave quarters buildings began and it was announced that a new Student Residence Hall would be constructed. It would be close to the levee, where the basketball courts and grotto were located. It was described as a complete change in the layout to the "back of the campus". The Holy Cross College Gazebo was moved west between the east side of the new dormitory and the Brothers Residence. Also close by was a well from which Brother Romuald drew water for his garden.



The Student Residence Hall - the dorm - under construction
administration began a bus service and a Middle School.

In 1957 Brother Vincent de Paul was transferred to another school. He returned to Holy Cross School in 1968. Although he had known that the Lourdes Grotto was demolished for progress, he was demoralized. Competition for students had increased as the Archdiocese had opened new schools in Metairie and Marrero and St. Aloysius merged with Cor Jesu on Elysian Fields and renamed Brother Martin High School. The post war baby boom had slowed and families were moving to the suburbs. In 1972 in an effort to sustain enrollment the

Also during the school year it was decided to end the boarding program. The Student Residence Hall was repurposed as the Holy Cross Middle School. In 1974 Brother Fisher Iwasko, author of the Holy Cross Man, became Principal of the Middle School. The gazebo was a convenient place for the young students to congregate. Homeroom academic and club photographs were taken by the gazebo more commonly than when it was concealed from view. A prayer garden with the statues of Mary and Bernadette was built near the Brothers Chapel. For Brother Vincent de Paul it was but a sad reminder of the loss of the Lourdes Grotto.

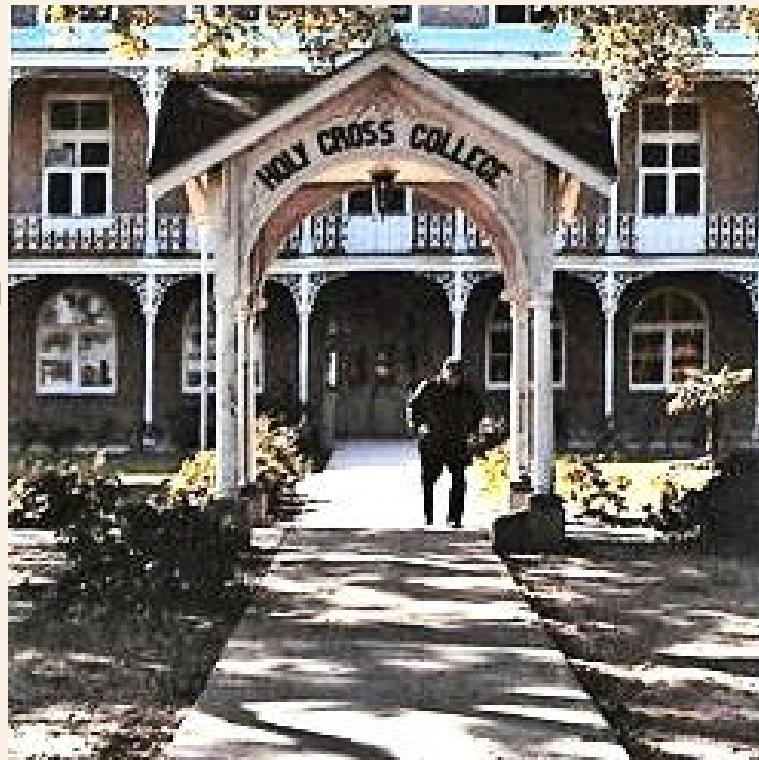
In the mid-1970s Brother Robert Hampton petitioned the city to close a part of Dauphine Street as it traversed the campus. His attempt was unsuccessful. In 1979 word leaked that the Army Corps of Engineers was studying a project to widen the Industrial Canal. Rumors circulated that Hoy Cross School would be moving to New Orleans East or Algiers. Morale was affected as well as student and athlete recruitment. Brother Robert called upon Mr. George Lehleitner to seek clarification from the Federal Government. Although the Corps of Engineers chose not proceed, the possibility of the school having to move in the future was a recurring topic. The Centennial of Holy Cross School was celebrated in 1978-1979.

The gazebo was chosen as the logo for all Holy Cross School publications memorializing the events. One was the hanging of a bell cast in 1860 from St. Mary's Orphan Asylum. In 1932 The Archdiocese of New Orleans assumed control of all Catholic Orphanages and opened Hope Haven and Madonna Manor in Marrero

Storm of Storms

Brother John McLaughlin began his term as President of Holy Cross School in 1980. At the beginning of the school year 1982, upon the suggestion of the Parents Club and the Board of Directors, the gazebo would be moved from the rear of the campus to the lawn of the front of the Administration Building. The prep work began immediately. Following football practice September 7, 1982, the team members escorted the truck on which the gazebo was mounted and lifted the historic structure into place at the intersection of the crosswalks north of the Administration Building. Frank Donze '72 wrote the news article for the Times Picayune and quoted the proud Brother John "it looks like this is where it was meant to be, I doubt it will be moved again".

There is a photo in the 1982 Tiger Yearbook of the gazebo without benches and with the 4950 numbers on the facade. The photographer found a stooped Brother Melchior standing in the center of the gazebo. Previously there were photos of him with his dogs patrolling the campus. He and the gazebo had aged gracefully but the beloved Brother's role had changed to one of presence and inspiration. He represented that effort, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment and humility were lifelong qualities required to be successful men. Along with other Holy Cross School traditions, the senior class procession from the Administration Building to the Student Center for the Baccalaureate Liturgy continued but passing through the gazebo.

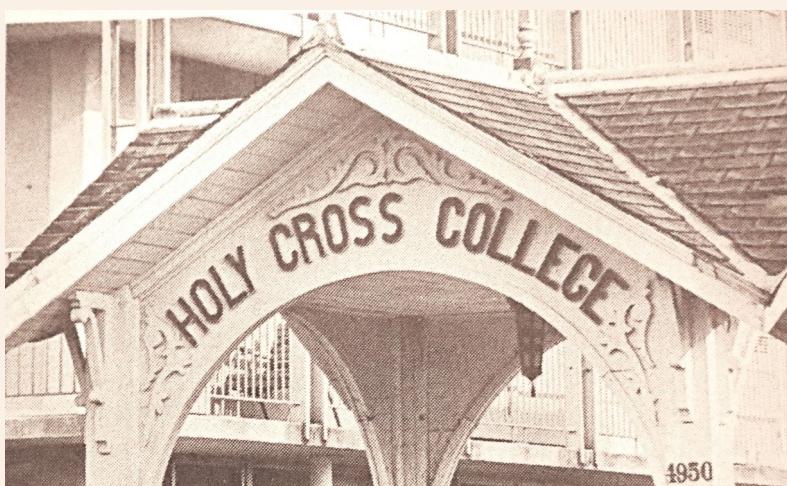


Br. Melchior passing through the gazebo

Charles DiGange '64 was named President of Holy Cross School in 2004, following fifteen years at Loyola. He was a member of the State Championship Football Team of 1963. DiGange was hired by Brother Robert Hampton as a teacher of mathematics and chemistry.

The 2005 school year had barely begun when Hurricane Katrina made landfall August 29th. The metropolitan area sustained heavy wind damage. The storm surge caused levee overtopping and failure of the walls of the outfall canals and Industrial Canal.

Every property in St.Bernard Parish was damaged due to extensive flooding. 4950 Dauphine was swamped by six feet of water. The levee breeches remained opened as Hurricane Rita made landfall September 24. The storm surge flooded the same areas of New Orleans as Hurricane Katrina had done three weeks earlier. Intense heat, standing water and high humidity caused a toxic environment in the buildings of Holy Cross School. Classes remained suspended as the administration made arrangements for enrolled students to platoon at other schools. On January 18, 2006 classes resumed in temporarily buildings erected in the former parking lot at 4950 Dauphine St. Baccalaureate ceremonies were held under the oaks. The Senior class procession from the Administration Building, the ringing of the Victory Bell and the passage through the gazebo was held in May, 2006.



"4950" can be seen in lower right corner. . . This was the ONLY structure on the campus that had "4950" on it

Some churches and schools of the Archdiocese of New Orleans sustained irreparable damage too, were forced to close and be demolished. The Administration and Board of Directors of Holy Cross School made the decision to relocate. One of the sites was 5500 Paris Ave the location of St. Francis Cabrini Church and Elementary School and Redeemer High School. It was offered to Holy Cross by the Archdiocese. After much debate, it was announced as the new location of Holy Cross School. Quonset huts were set up and classes resumed in August, 2007.

The leadership then began planning the new campus layout. Concurrently memorabilia and religious icons were removed from 4950 Dauphine and placed in storage, including the statue of St. Joseph that had stood on the lawn of Moreau Hall. Construction of the new buildings also began at the new campus. The gazebo though was in disrepair and required offsite restoration. A replica of the gazebo was built and placed where the restored gazebo would be installed, the walkways connecting the Administration Building, Cafeteria, Brother Melchior Student Center and the Lourdes Grotto. The Holy Cross School Campus was dedicated March 20, 2010 and the inaugural basketball game in the Brother Melchior Student Center was held January 14, 2011. The Tigers beat the Blue Jays 52-48.

The 145th Commencement of Holy Cross School was held May 18, 2024. The overnight rain ceased and the traditional step-off of the senior class from the Administration Building

proceeded sharply at 9:00 am. Led by Academic Senior Marshall and Senior Class Marshall Mr. Raymond Charboneau, designated seniors pulled a lanyard to ring the Victory Bell. The graduates passed the gazebo then on to the Brother Melchior Student Center. The Symphonic Band directed by Mr. Perry Forstall played Pomp and Circumstance. Notre Dame Coach Brian Kelly gave the Commencement Address. A key point was to stay in the present, build a strong foundation, not dwell on the past but seek improvement daily. At the conclusion of the ceremony the traditional tossing of the caps was held indoors and not around the flagpole. There were 97 graduates. The Class of 1974 attended as honored guests and later received their golden diplomas.



The Gazebo on the Paris Avenue campus . . . April, 2024

There is no street car line on Paris Avenue and no longer any Brothers of Holy Cross in residence at Holy Cross School. Holy Cross School is the second oldest establishment of the Congregation of Holy Cross in the United States. Father Moreau wrote "We shall always place education side by side with instruction; the mind will not be cultivated at the expense of the heart." The Holy Cross College Gazebo, once a shelter for patrons of a streetcar line then

for many years merely a curious decoration, is a venerable symbol of continuity from the halcyon days of the school to the current experience of students at Holy Cross School.

Ave Crux Spes Unica

John Kokemor '69

Source Material:

Douglas Degan '82 Archivist

The Bulletin November, 1941

Times Picayune Digital Files

Tiger Yearbooks

Boys to Men Brother by Brother George Klawitter, C.S.C. 1999

Brother Fisher Iwasko, C.S.C. Archivist

Brother Walter Davenport, C.S.C. Archivist

Brother Philip Smith C.S.C. Archivist Midwest Province

Crawfish Boil



The 71st Birthday Bash Part 1 was held in the Huddle on the Holy Cross Campus on Sunday, 21 April 2024. There were 93 in attendance.

Since the unofficial reunions began in 2017, we've had 94 different classmates participate in at least one event.

A video of the crawfish boil can be found at <https://youtu.be/sqsH7nxpxKY>

Grotto Returns

Nestled by the old Brother's Residence on the Dauphine St campus, the Grotto suffered severe damage during Hurricane Katrina. It lay in ruins until the helping hands of architect Ron Blitch – and others - returned the grotto to its proper place: in the grove of oaks on Holy Cross' Paris Avenue campus.

The Dauphine St grotto was built in the mid-50s and relocated post-Betsy to make room for the Student Dormitory. It was built from broken concrete from demolished structures in the city. Although the original shrine was based on the Grotto from Lourdes, space limitations required that the new version be smaller.

"The plan kept changing and getting scaled down," explains Blitch. "Originally there was going to be a concrete area around the grotto, but the size of the project kept being reduced to protect the oaks. Tree specialists were called in to address concerns about drainage around the roots of the trees since they sit on the lowest part of the campus."

The final plan came about as the result of a photo that Dick Watson found in the archives of Holy Cross San Antonio's Grotto.

"One of the plans called for using real rocks from Montana. The rocks cost practically nothing; it was the cost to transport them here that killed that idea," continued Blitch. "Instead we went with steel reinforcing cages and modeling the rocks from concrete, finishing them off with a stain. This technique is used by zoos and amusement parks to create their environments."



The Grotto on the Paris Avenue campus. . . April, 2024

Tree specialists were called in to address concerns about drainage around the roots of the trees since they sit on the lowest part of the campus."

He also noted that no corporate or school funding was involved in financing this restoration – it was done solely with alumni donations.

HC acquires land option

Lake Forest is selected as location

With the possible relocation of Holy Cross in the not-so-distant future, HC has signed an option to purchase 30 acres of land in the Lake Forest area.

"We obtained this property," said principal Br. Robert Hampton, "in case we are forced to re-

locate because of the widening of the Industrial Canal."

The Army Corps of Engineers is presently considering two sites for updating port transportation: a new canal in the Violet area of St. Bernard Parish and the widening of the present canal at the HC property.

The Holy Cross land is lo-

cated at the Bullard Road exit of Interstate 10 on the service road and the Jahncke Canal. According to alumni and development director Henry A. Gabb, Jr., the option's terms give Holy Cross the right to purchase the property at a set price for the next two years.

"We feel we've chosen the best possible location," said Gabb, "be-

Article from a 1974 Holy Cross Bulletin

Orphan, Foster Child, or in Detention

by John P. Hornung

(John Hornung was an Apollo-program rocket scientist who attended Holy Cross as a border in the sixth grade.)

One of the unsolved mysteries in my life came at the end of the summer of 1949 when I was to enter the sixth grade. I was eleven years old at the time. My parents decided, without any discussion with me, that I was to be sent to the Holy Cross School for Boys in New Orleans, my home town. I was to board at the school. This was extraordinary, for the cost for my boarding at Holy Cross would not have been subsidized by the parish church we belonged to. Extra funding would be required of my parents. Funds, by all evidence of our life style, the family didn't have.

Holy Cross was about a 15-minute drive from our home, and about a 40-minute ride on the city bus system. St. Leo, where I had been attending school in the fifth grade, was a 10-minute ride by bus. I was too young to grasp the change in the location of my schooling, much

less the reasoning behind having to go to a boarding school five miles from home. I don't remember being frightened about going to a boarding school. But, I was unsure of the changes it may have on my relationships with my siblings and friends. I did have the understanding I would be coming home each Friday afternoon and returning there on Sunday night or Monday morning. So, I guess I treated it as an adventure and the chance to meet additional friends.

I remember arriving at the front door of the school's main building. I had one suitcase containing clothes, shoes, and school supplies. After a short introduction to the Headmaster, a Holy Cross Brother, I stood and watched as my parents drove away. I don't remember being upset by the departure or by being taken under tow by my new "managers", the Brothers of Holy Cross.

Holy Cross School for Boys was, in today's vernacular, a middle school and a high school combined. That is, it covered grades six through eight, as well as a four-year high school. You could board at the school during grades six through eight only. Total enrollment in all seven grades was about 450 students. About 45 students boarded at the school.

The dormitory for the boarders was on the third floor. It was a very large, single room which spanned the center of the main building. It had large windows along each side and a tall ceiling. The beds were of plain metal construction with no headboards or footboards. Beds were aligned so the foot of the bed faced towards the windowed walls. They were arranged in four rows that ran parallel to the windowed walls. A main aisle ran down the center of the room separating two rows of beds on each side of the aisle. Large entry doors were at each end of the aisle. There was no privacy at all. After living in a small bedroom with three brothers, that was not a problem for me. Under each bed was a footlocker for storage.



During the very hot months of September, October, April, May and June, the high ceilings, tall windows, and large fans made living in the dorm bearable. The dorm was adequately heated during the cold months of winter. No more heating of my clothes and shoes over a furnace before putting them on in the morning, as we had done at home.

The typical day for a boarding student was what you would expect. We were awakened at 6:30 AM when lights were turned on, followed by a call to rise and shine. Often I was already up and dressed by then. The Brothers discovered two or three of us were altar boys. At six in

the morning, one of us would be chosen by a tap on the head to serve Mass in the Brothers' chapel.

After getting cleaned up and dressed and making our beds, we would head off to breakfast. After breakfast came classes until lunchtime. Lunch period was an hour long, a nice time for socializing and a good meal. After lunch we had another two hours of classes. At three o'clock, the day students departed en masse. Some were picked up by parents, while others headed for the bus stop a couple of blocks away on St. Claude Avenue.

Boarding students were required to spend time in the study-hall each evening. Each boarder had an assigned study-hall desk. These were fixed in place with wooden oak chairs. The desk had a four inch wide flat surface across the top which contained an opening for an ink well. It had a large slant top below the flat surface that was hinged, allowing it to be lifted from the front to store school supplies under the lid. A hall-master sat at a large traditional desk in front of the students. The hall-master's desk was elevated on a platform so he had an unobstructed view of each student. I spent many a quiet hour in that hall. It was good regimentation for providing a climate for learning.

Grounded

As my first Friday approached I was informed by the Headmaster I would not be allowed to go home on the weekends. This came as a complete surprise! When Friday afternoon came, all of the boarding students left for home with the exception of maybe nine of us. My parents visited me every four to five weeks and I didn't have general access to a telephone. This made me feel very isolated.

I soon learned the other weekend-bound students were from outside of New Orleans, notably from places like Honduras, and other countries in Central and South America. On weekends,



those few of us that remained on campus tried to make the best of it by filling large blocks of dead-time playing one on one games.

After a few weeks the barrier of differences in culture began to weaken between the Latin Americans and me. With some caution, I became their friend. The Latin Americans introduced me to two of their one-on-one knife games. One was called football which was played with a two bladed jack knife. The second game was called territory. It was played with a throwing knife having a blade three

inches or larger. I used my green, four-inch switchblade for this game. It had a button on its side which, when pressed, released an internal spring that flung its long blade out in a flash. At the end of one game my opponent was upset I had won and shot his switchblade right into my leather shoe. It went clean through and sunk into the sole of the shoe. When I pulled the knife out and took off my shoe, I found my toes intact without a drop of blood. The knife went right between my big toe and the one to the right of it. This was lucky for me but not my shoe. It was my only pair of leather shoes.

Thanksgiving

Early in the morning on Thanksgiving Day my parents arrived at Holy Cross and brought me home for a day visit, my first since September. I was happy to share a wonderful turkey meal with my family which was now expanded by one, our adopted brother Joe. Early that evening I was returned to Holy Cross. I was allowed the same day visit on Christmas Day.

In early spring I decided to join the glee club. We practiced two or three times a week. Attendance was mandatory. The songs we practiced were from Broadway musicals. One day, after six weeks of preparation for a show, I was five minutes late for practice due to a late dismissal from class. After practice, the choir master notified me I could no longer be in the glee club because of my late arrival. I think the dismissal happened because I was going through a spurt of maturity and having a voice change. Either way, the club and I departed amicably.

By the end of February, I had spent a considerable number of weekends with my new Latin American friends. International relations appeared to be good between us, so much so a couple of them began giving me foreign language lessons. I was being taught cuss words in Spanish. Many years later I proudly displayed my language skill to Spanish speaking friends. They weren't impressed. They did not recognize my speech as having any meaning. I must have learned this new language from a Latin American with Inca ancestry.

Throughout my exile from home, my parents neither appeared to know how much loneliness I was dealing with nor did they seem to care. I realized I was more and more on my own.

When the school year ended, I looked back on it and tallied the benefit from the adventure. I had learned two new knife games, believed I could cuss in Spanish, met Brother Melchior, lost my budding career in the glee club, passed the sixth grade, and I was allowed to come home. I did enjoy: dining in the



cafeteria three times a day, the lack of having to do dishes and cleaning chores, and not having to iron my clothes and mow the lawn.

The reason for this venture away from home was quite a puzzle to me. Was it a special gift toward my education? Was I orphaned for nine months? Or, was I given the experience of a foster child, or put in detention? Since I was allowed to return home, I would have to say I was a foster child on loan to the Holy Cross Brothers. For 58 years, since my boarding school experience, the mystery as to the reason why I became a "foster child" was still unresolved.

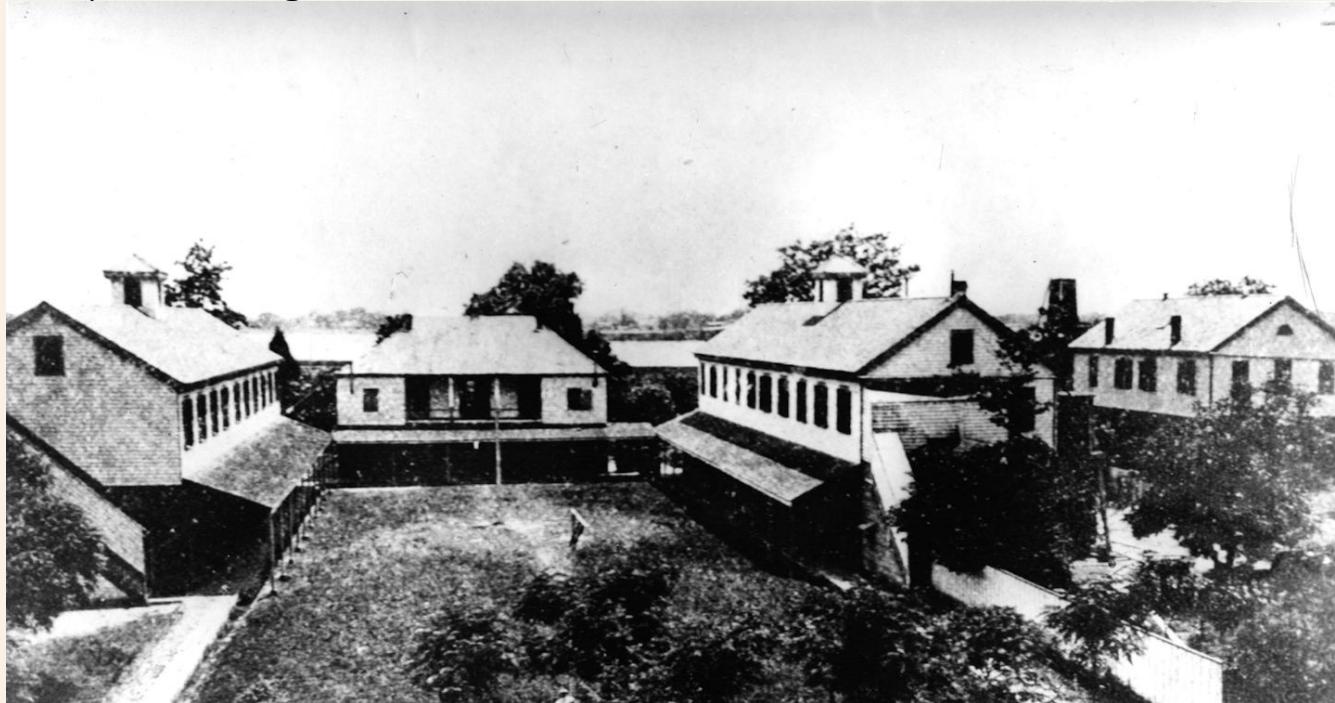
This passage has been excerpted from Entering the Race to the Moon - Autobiography of an Apollo Rocket Scientist. It is the autobiography of a rocket scientist during the early years of NASA's Apollo Mission to the moon. This writing describes four chapters of his life. Three were significant in U.S. history; early school integration in the deep south, a period of brutality in the Marine Corps, and the race to land a man on the moon. A fourth chapter includes short stories of his Sea Scout adventures. His book is available for free on Smashwords at <https://www.smashwords.com/books/view/556160>

Cardinal

photo by Charles Pennison



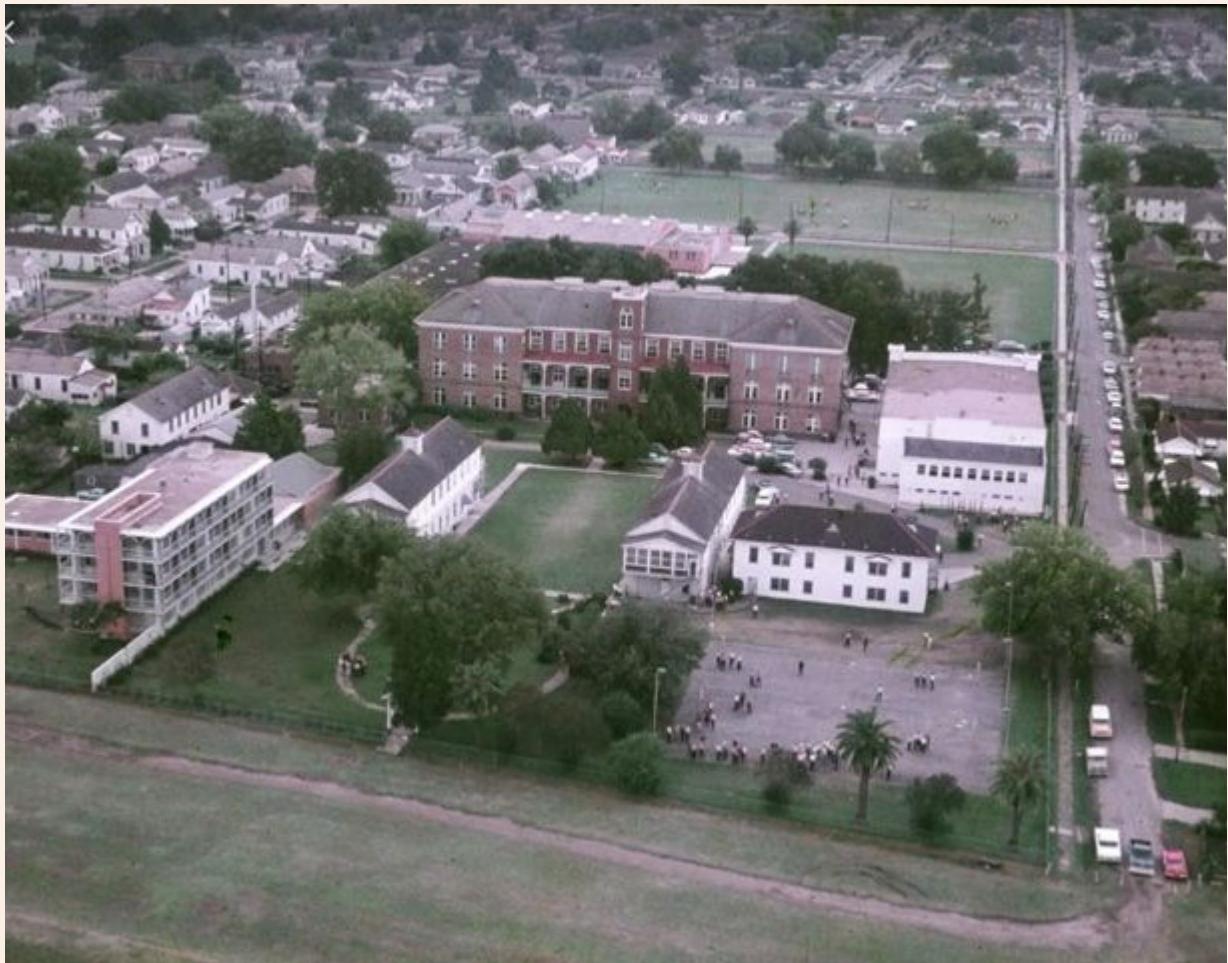
Campus Through the Years



The caption on this photo read: "The former slave quarter buildings, St Joseph Hall and Holy Cross Hall, as they appeared in 1895 – then nearly a century old. The building at the river end of the quadrangle was the main plantation building and was taken down in the late 1920s. The structure to the extreme right is the site of the new Brother's Residence."



This is a 1962 artist rendition of what the development committee thought the campus could look like if their plan was implemented



And this is what the Dauphine St campus looked like in 1965

Then, and Now

If you noticed that there are remarkable similarities between 4950 and the Paris Ave campus, you would be correct.

It was intentional to recreate, as close as possible, the original campus.



Dauphine st.



Paris Avenue



Video recap:

[Crawfish Boil](#)

[Paris Avenue pre-construction](#)

[Paris Avenue campus under construction](#)

[The Miracle on Paris Avenue](#)

Contact Info:

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Social Media:

Yearbooks: All four years of our high school days can be found on Dan McGovern Google Drive:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PUVYGIJ4R0xyzNHjaXqOSqG9Nkt2mevE>



5500 Paris Avenue April, 2024

Holy Cross Bulletins on google drive:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1Ysn_Z77exN9gZn-x_7QdcTf_NR0HE8B0

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