An Uncompromising Commitment to Mission: Mundelein College and the Advancement of Women's Higher Education 1930-1950

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AN UNCOMPROMISING COMMITMENT TO MISSION:
MUNDELEIN COLLEGE AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN'S
HIGHER EDUCATION 1930–1950

by
Pauline Margaret Abraham Tarvardian

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VITA

The author, Pauline Margaret Abraham Tarvardian, was born in Chicago on Christmas Day to Ephraim and Julia Abraham, nee Kasha Shimon Bahrami, of Chicago, Illinois, formerly of Rezaieh, Iran.

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A college or a university is the sum of human beings' determination to seek intellectual perfection through the traditions and the social and intellectual values embraced at the time of its formation. The heritage of institutions of higher learning established in the colonial and early national periods in America, as products of their times, evolved from transplanted forms and conventions. Though the proximate source of this heritage was seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth century Europe, it was the ancestry of higher education from Greece and Rome through the medieval universities which nourished the modern conceptions from which the first American colleges were organized. This paper, however, is not a comprehensive survey of higher education from its ancient beginnings, but a study of the development of an American Catholic women's college. Consistent with that goal, a brief examination of women's education since colonial times and the foundations upon which American higher schools were built is more germane.

Ironically, advocacy of higher education for women
dates from 1636, the year in which Harvard college, a male bastion, was founded. In a letter to John Winthrop, Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, a young woman named Lucy Downing lauded the plea of her female peers to create a woman's college in New England. She justified the desirability of creating a women's college to advance the good of the plantation in general and of men in particular. Her proposal for an educational arrangement for women, to "... build far off from men a college like a man's ... to teach them all that men are taught" so staggered the sensibilities of her Puritan age that two centuries would elapse before a movement to establish colleges especially for women arose. No institutions for women's college education were established during this dark interval, notwithstanding that some girls were prepared sufficiently to enter collegiate institutions. The contention which greeted Lucy Downing prevailed until the nineteenth century, nurtured by the belief that educated women would lose their femininity and forsake their infants for quadratic equations.

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY

During the seventeenth century, a college education was primarily a professional education. Women were not included in the small and privileged number who attended college because the major professions were closed to them. Though their education was not neglected, it did reflect
the prevailing aim of education which was to groom all young men and women for future social roles. Consequently, women were prepared for a domestic role and men were not. While the family, the Church and the apprentice system were the influential agencies of education for most of the early colonists, the education of women in the seventeenth century was patterned after the English example. Young women were prepared primarily for their roles as wives and mothers. The main agency of education was the home which consisted of the family, apprenticeships of both sexes and some relatives. In the English tradition, the master of the extended family was responsible for the education of all young people in his charge. Education consisted mainly of learning a trade, but reading ability was also expected. All heads of families in Massachusetts were required to teach their children to read and to understand the major laws of the colony and the tenets of the Puritan faith.

In 1837, 201 years after Harvard College was founded for the education of men, four women were admitted to Oberlin College to pursue studies toward a bachelor's degree. The great lag between establishment of institutions of higher learning for men and recognition of women's claims to such opportunities evolved from the original impetus for establishing colleges in America which was the desire for an educated clergy. Nine colleges still extant trace their descent to this pre-Revolutionary era,
prior to 1750, during which time most were established primarily for the education of clergy and when every college president appointed was a clergyman. Nonetheless, ends other than ministry education were recognized, for Harvard College from its founding included studies in law and teaching as professions for which it should prepare its students. Since a college education was primarily professional and since the professions, including teaching, were men’s occupations, there was no conspicuous need for women to participate in the small and privileged student bodies of the colleges.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

It was this emphasis upon the home and family as the major agencies responsible for education which set the stage for the development of women’s education. Town schools and evening schools became widespread but these institutions were not important for the development of women’s education as women were still largely excluded until the end of the eighteenth century. A different attitude developed toward education when the perceived role of the mother changed. Formerly expected only to nurture her children, women were now expected to educate them since male heads of families were too occupied with life outside the home. Therefore, to fulfill their roles as educators of the young, many advances were made in women’s education in the early decades of the nineteenth century.
A provincial culture had developed in the colonies during the eighteenth century. Schools were established for young women wherein girls were taught cultural accomplishments more appropriate to an English rather than an American society. The "dame school" was an institution on the British model that resembled a K-2 class in which reading was taught in the home of a local woman. After a year or two in this school, the secondary education of girls consisted mainly of writing composition, painting, drawing, French, dancing and sewing.  

Colonial girls were being educated for a domestic life in schools which aped English society rather than in schools which enabled them to educate their own sons and daughters. Their domestic role was also supported by the expectation that if women could read easily, they would neglect their household task. It was feared that women might forge their husband's signatures if they learned to write, so writing was also not regarded as fundamental for girls as for boys. Girls who lingered in the dame schools after their brothers had transferred to the master's schools were more likely to be taught sewing or some other household art rather than the basic curriculum being taught to boys. Exceptions did exist here and there, however. Where the dame school's education was competent and the girl eager, she not only mastered the subjects taught but also stayed to study arithmetic and even Latin.
In 1742, a boarding school was established in Germantown, Pennsylvania by Countess Benigna Zinzendorf. Relocated to Bethlehem, Pennsylvania in 1749, the school attracted students from the northeastern states, Nova Scotia and the West Indies. Until 1785, enrollment was restricted to Moravian brethren, at which time a boarding school was opened for boys at Nazareth Hall and a similar institution for girls at Bethlehem. Within a few years of its founding, the school was educating students from the northeastern states, Nova Scotia and the West Indies. Ancestor of the Moravian College for Women, the school educated more than 7000 students during its first century of operation.\textsuperscript{10}

The town schools of New England opened slowly to girls and the first documented record of girls attending a master's school with boys was in Ipswich in 1769.\textsuperscript{11} This pattern was not uniform however, since schools were a purely local affair. While more educational opportunities were available to girls in the Middle Colonies than in New England, the South offered greater access, but only to the rich. An accretion to the appearance of private girls' schools in the South was the appearance of the hired tutor. Because wealthy Southern families isolated on plantations often hired tutors for their sons, their daughters were apt to receive instruction as well.\textsuperscript{12} The distinction of establishing the first exclusively female seminary belongs
to the South where the Moravians founded a female academy at Salem, North Carolina in 1802.13

CAPABILITY VERSUS AVAILABILITY

Some girls profited as a consequence of the increasing education of their fathers and brothers. In 1783, at the age of twelve, Lucinda Foote was examined by the president of Yale who awarded her a certificate in Latin.14 Having studied with her brothers as they prepared for admission to college, Lucinda was judged qualified for Yale admission in every respect except gender. Almira Phelps, sister of Emma Willard, studied with her brother-in-law's nephew while he attended Middlebury College and sometimes the girl's father tutored them. Mary Lyon studied science in Professor Hitchcock's home in Amherst under his guidance and Elizabeth Cady Stanton studied Greek with the local minister to console her father because she was not born a son.15 While seemingly insignificant in the full advancement of women's education, these events proved that women were capable of learning at higher educational levels and that there would be women to lead as the movement for secondary education spread in the early nineteenth century.

Provision for secondary education of girls began as it had somewhat earlier for boys, with private schools. Most early girls' schools were designed to teach social graces rather than to prepare girls for college or even homemaking or teaching.16 However, in 1783 Dr. Benjamin Rush, a
physician and signer of the Declaration of Independence, avowed that women receive an authentic and tangible education. A leading intellectual figure of the new nation Rush proposed that women's education include history, English literature, moral philosophy and the sciences,\textsuperscript{17} arguing that American women had a great responsibility to educate their sons in "... the principles of liberty and government ..." which, he upheld, were the virtues most desirable for the citizens of a republic.\textsuperscript{18} Rush's proposal, which enjoined a classical education for women, provoked contention and was keenly debated.

Only isolated instances of private schools for "young ladies" were to be found at the close of the eighteenth century or in the years immediately following. In his definitive two volume study, \textit{A History of Women's Education in the United States}, Thomas Woody cites the incorporation of only six private schools for young ladies between 1790 and 1820. However, the succeeding three decades, 1820 to 1850, witnessed significant development, during which time Woody documents the founding of 104 private women's schools and the founding of 96 more in the decade preceding the Civil War.\textsuperscript{19}

\textbf{EARLY WOMEN'S COLLEGES}

In the United States, higher education for women had a tentative start during the first half of the nineteenth century. The advent of genuine women's colleges was
contingent upon more substantive preparation in the seminaries and the new academies. In addition, the proponents of college educations for women had to win the approbation of citizens of influence whose financial support was indispensable. To surmount these contingencies required time and a fifty year period of experimentation ensued.

Between 1825 and 1875, the college idea was championed by several leaders; many experimental attempts at its realization were made, albeit with varying degrees of success. The pioneer phase of American women's education in the early nineteenth century experienced its genesis in 1836 when Mary Lyon founded Mount Holyoke Female Seminary. Situated in South Hadley, Massachusetts and planned as a seminary for teachers, Mount Holyoke was accessible to all classes and to minimize costs, students managed domestic tasks. Lyon's intent was to establish a college level school that would attract the daughters of the well-to-do as well as young women of moderate means. Mount Holyoke's standards of admission and its curriculum, comparable to those of men's colleges, were patterned after Amherst College rather than female institutions. Lyon agreed with Willard and Beecher that secondary education for girls should offer a well taught core curriculum rather than the twenty to forty subjects listed in an academy's catalogs. As an exemplar, Mount Holyoke's curriculum was
more sophisticated than mere preparation for teaching or housewifery and included courses in mathematics and chemistry.\textsuperscript{23}

Oberlin College pioneered in collegiate coeducation by matriculating four young women into its regular freshman class in the fall of 1837. Four years later, in 1841, when three of them received the A.B. degree, the event became the first irrefutable instance of women in the United States receiving bachelor's degrees which were equal to those granted men.\textsuperscript{24} Ironically, coeducation was not established at Oberlin for the benefit of women but rather for the men at the college. It was believed that with this integration, men might embrace a more wholesome and pragmatic view of women than that held at all male enrolled schools. Notwithstanding this singularly chauvinistic attitude, coeducation was a boon to women.

In 1852 Horace Mann, an assertive exponent of coeducation, founded Antioch College which admitted women. Mann's concept was:

\begin{quote}
 to secure for the female sex equal opportunities of education with the male, and to extend those opportunities in the same studies, and classes, and by the same instructors, after the manner of many academic institutions in different parts of the country.\textsuperscript{25}
\end{quote}

By the mid 1860s, women were admitted to degree programs at Cornell University and universities in Iowa and Wisconsin and by the early 1870s to universities in Michigan and Maine. While other state universities and
land grant colleges opened their programs to women, the old universities of the East resisted the trend.

In Illinois, two early institutions promoted the idea of women's collegiate education. The Illinois Conference Females Academy, founded in 1847, was renamed a College in 1851. The Rockford Female Seminary, also founded in 1847, though not officially known as a college until 1892, offered a strong collegiate course in the 1854-5 academic year and continued to improve its curriculum consistently thereafter. 26

By 1855, the idea of a college education for young women, in institutions like those established for men, was being promoted in the southern, western and northern regions of the United States. Every institution founded during the decade of the 1860s and shortly thereafter proclaimed Lucy Downing's cry to be a "college like a man's." 27 Although feminists regarded the early female college as subordinate to colleges for men, this institution's public appeal endured because it upheld the separate female sphere. 28

The first exclusively women's colleges devoted to bona fide higher education arose in the East in the post-Civil War decades. Founded by religiously motivated individuals, the evolution of this group of colleges had significant impact on both coeducational and single sex institutions throughout the country. Vassar College, located in
Poughkeepsie, New York, and chartered in 1861, was the first of the four "sister" colleges to be founded. The college was named in honor of its benefactor, Matthew Vassar, an English immigrant. In his first address to the Trustees of Vassar College, 26 February 1861, Vassar stated that he founded the college because "It occurred to me that woman, having received from her creator the same intellectual constitution as man, has the same right as man to intellectual culture and development." Its enrollment numbered 353 students the first semester after opening. Vassar's endowment surpassed that of any contemporary women's college and provided all that could be desired including an excellent library, buildings and grounds, a broad course of studies and a large faculty of twenty-two women and eight men. Recognizing the deficiency of its students' previous training, Vassar used its preparatory department to raise the level of their education.

Unqualified students were accepted on the condition that they prepare for admission into the regular college program. Not wishing to train women in exactly the same manner as men, the Vassar curriculum was modified. In chemistry, for example, practical subjects such as the treatment of leather, culinary chemistry, toxicology were taught. Greek was not required for admission nor was it required for the A.B. degree.

The second of the "sister colleges," Wellesley
College, established in Wellesley, Massachusetts, was founded in 1875 by Henry Fowle Durant, businessman, lawyer and converted lay preacher who wanted the college to be another school "for the glory of God." Durant, in collaboration with his wife Pauline, endowed Wellesley to provide women with "opportunities for an education equivalent to those usually provided in colleges for young men." To do so, however, Wellesley like Vassar also had to use its affiliated preparatory department to raise the academic level of its students. The first college to have a woman president from its founding, Wellesley vaunted a faculty comprised entirely of women. Henry Durant, like Matthew Vassar, hired few or no men for his faculty, ostensibly to provide employment for qualified women scholars. The advantage was economic, since women instructors received lesser compensation than men.

Smith College, also founded in 1875, opened with only four students. Unlike Vassar and Wellesley, Smith's entrance requirements equalled those of Columbia or Amherst, considered the best of the men's colleges. The curriculum it offered was comparable. Sophie Smith, the spinster heiress who founded the college, believed higher education would ameliorate the inequities experienced by women:

It is my opinion that by the higher and more thoroughly Christian education of women, what are called their 'wrongs' will be redressed, their wages will be adjusted, their weight of influence in
reforming the evils of society will be greatly increased as teachers, as writers, as mothers, as members of society, their power for good will be incalculably enlarged.37

Smith's resonate defense of women's rights was not shared universally and opposition to higher education for women came, not only from academe itself, but also from the school she endowed. Unlike Wellesley, Smith appointed only male presidents for nearly a century after its founding and its mission was redefined. L. Clarke Seelye, Smith's president, stated:

"college is not intended to fit woman for any particular sphere or profession but to develop by the most carefully devised means all her intellectual capacities so that she may be a more perfect woman in any position."38

Bryn Mawr, the last of the four "sister" colleges, was founded in 1880 by Joseph Taylor, an orthodox Quaker doctor and businessman. He bequeathed his fortune to establish a college for women so that, when they became mothers, they would train the minds of infants and "give direction to character and make the home the center of interest and attraction."39 Martha Carey Thomas, Bryn Mawr's first president, was resolved to make the college the equal of the best of the men's colleges. To achieve her goal, she not only changed the curriculum's emphasis from moral discipline to one that was academically rigorous, but also offered graduate degrees by 1885.40
SURVEY OF ATTITUDES

Despite the strides women were making in education, Dr. Edward H. Clarke, the Harvard professor and author of a widely read book entitled Sex in Education published in 1873, denounced coeducation. He believed that higher education for American women would overtax them at a critical stage in their adolescent development and thereby destroy their childbearing ability. Clarke also defended his contention that higher education would strain women's intellects and cause physiological disabilities. Others who opposed higher education for women argued that they would be unsexed by too much education, that it was unfeminine and indeed, almost obscene for women to seek it. As a consequence of such bias, women often went to European universities. Martha Carey Thomas, later president of Bryn Mawr, earned her doctorate in Germany in 1879. The bigotry against women was so pervasive, that no reference to Thomas was ever made to her mother by family friends because, by earning a doctorate, she had disgraced her parents. As one who believed in women's education, Thomas wrote:

women, like men, are quickened and inspired by the same study of the great traditions of their race, by the same love of learning, the same love of science, the same love of abstract truth; that women, like men, are made vastly better mothers, as men are made vastly better fathers, by subordinating the distracting instincts of sex to the simple human fellowship of similar education and similar intellectual and social ideals.

Other women who opposed the prejudice against women
seeking higher education included Marion Talbot, a professor at the University of Chicago. In 1910, she published a study which ranked male and female doctoral candidates at the university. Her findings disclosed empirically that women were successful in both undergraduate and graduate studies. The author of Present Day Problems in the Education of Women published in 1897, Talbot recounted her experience upon entering Boston University. She recalled that she was "completely ostracized" by her friends and felt welcome nowhere except in the nation's capitol, where "women were kind to me for they did not know that I was a college graduate." 

Talbot's contemporary, poet Alice Duer Miller, combatted the skepticism which characterized women's ability to succeed in college and supported the superior scholarship of women. In her poem, "The Maiden's Vow" published in Are Women People?, Miller counsels:

I will avoid equation,  
And shun the naughty surd,  
I must beware the perfect square,  
Through it young girls have erred:  
And when men mention Rule of Three  
Pretend I have not heard.  

The most disputatious assertion regarding higher education for women, and against which no canon for the equality of women could be effective, alleged that women were intellectually inferior and simply could not do college work. Detractors predicated their reasoning on the premise that women did not have minds like those of men and
that the sex differences in mind were an insuperable barrier. Had this assertion proved valid, the women's college movement would have come to an early demise.

The Reverend John Todd, author of *The Daughter at School*, believed that the disciplines of memory, attention and reason were the most important ends of a woman's training. Todd exhorted preservation of the home for its social service, avowing that women's duty was as educators of their children. While Todd conceded that women had enough intelligence, he maintained that they could not be trained for a long intellectual course because "forcing the intellect of women beyond what her physical organization will possibly bear . . . she comes through the process of education enervated, feeble, without courage or vigor, elasticity or strength." In his book Todd asked: "Must we crown education upon our daughters, and, for the sake of having them 'intellectual,' make them puny, nervous, and their whole earthly existence a struggle between life and death?"

Seventy-five years earlier, Emma Willard led her young ladies to love higher mathematics and showed they could master it. How idiosyncratic, considering the immediate and very evident success of women in accomplishing college work, that the myth of their mental inferiority and physical weakness persisted the length of time it did. Dedication to the myth, though contravened by facts,
corroborated the social prejudice that opposed women's collegiate education.

Even though twenty-five years earlier a great dispute had arisen over the possibility of women mastering the subjects of a man's education, The Commissioner of Education's 1897 Report on education recognized the prejudice, "since that time, where girls and boys have been educated together, it has become an historical fact that women have made rapid strides and captured a greater number of honors in proportion to their number than men. . . . ."53 The women's college movement provided an advanced education to many women and a true higher education to a few. By 1891, though more than ten thousand women attended college, the U. S. Commissioner of Education's Report of 1895 identified only 16 of the 158 colleges for women as being equivalent to men's colleges.54 By 1907, though the number of women's colleges had declined to 110, the Commissioner considered that only thirty-five, or 32 percent, of these institutions were offering an authentic higher education.55

The movement advocating women's higher education arose from the need for secondary school teachers and the belief that education would raise women's status in society. Women's colleges, though imbued with the conventional view that women were equal but different from men, not only provided them an education equal to that of men's colleges but also contributed to higher status for women.56
In the United States, the availability of higher education for women is relatively recent, having evolved during the last 125 years. In the past, before coequal opportunities were offered to both sexes, a woman's sphere was considered to be the home and any influences disposed to abrogate her interest in the family fireside were promptly discouraged. Since the professions were closed to women, all instruction beyond the requirements of their domestic duties were considered unnecessary. The discipline demanded of higher studies was thought to be too severe for her intellectual powers as well as detrimental to the development of those virtues essential to a good wife and mother. As a consequence, the early settlers made no arrangements for the formal instruction of girls during the first century and a half in the new world.57

ROLE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN EDUCATION

To Catholics belongs the distinction of opening the first schools within the contiguous limits of the United States. As early as 1594, thirty-nine years before the founding of the first schools in any of the original thirteen colonies, Franciscan missionaries began their educational work among native children in Florida, and by 1629 were conducting many similar schools in New Mexico.58 These early schools were elementary in character with religion and the vocational arts comprising the backbone of the curriculum. Girls were admitted into these schools
from their inception and the classes they were offered were adapted to their needs. In New Orleans as early as 1727, a school for young girls was established by the Ursuline Sisters who came at the request of Governor Bienville. By 1803, with an enrollment of 170 boarding students and 11 teaching sisters, the school had become a center of education for girls in Louisiana and the surrounding territory. The Ursuline Convent school demonstrated beyond dispute the capacity of its pupils to study the three Rs, religion, sewing, and the art of fine needlework.

Approximately one hundred years intervened between the establishment of these early institutions and the extension of educational opportunities for girls under Catholic auspices. The paucity of the Catholic population, which numbered only twenty-seven thousand at the time of the Revolution, its scattered character and the opposition of fellow colonists, which frequently manifested itself in open and violent persecution, all contributed to restrict any attempt to open and conduct schools for either sex.

The position of the Church was radically modified as a result of the Revolutionary War during which the loyalty of Catholics to the country of their adoption was affirmed at Concord, Lexington and Bunker Hill. Catholics fought valiantly at the side of their Protestant neighbors. As a result, much of the animus bred of religious differences and intolerance was lost. The Church was free to organize
and to extend her work for the civil disabilities under which Catholics had labored previously were removed. The appointment of Father John Carroll to the See of Baltimore in 1789, tended to stabilize the Catholic position and to promote organized Catholic action. When the Fathers of the American church met in council in 1829, one of their more audacious pronouncements read: "We judge it absolutely necessary that schools should be established in which the young may be taught the principles of faith and morality while being instructed in letters." Significantly, their decree to establish schools made no distinction between the sexes, for both were believed to be entitled to the benefits of religious training combined with instruction in the sciences.

The decade of the 1840s unfurled a new epoch in the history of the Catholic Church in the United States. The tide of European immigrants who sought a better life in America also brought thousands of Catholics, and Catholic life took on a new dynamic. Numbering 663,000 in 1840, the Catholic population increased threefold within a single decade and by 1860 had attained the impressive total of 3,103,000. The dramatic increase in the number of Catholics necessitated dramatic changes in organization and, with the creation of new dioceses in the East and the West, episcopal direction was brought closer to the masses of the people. Not least among the changes occurring in
this era was an influx of additional religious communities. In the years preceding the waves of immigrants, thirteen religious orders had provided for the education of Catholic girls. In the interval between 1840 and 1866, their numbers were augmented by 19 new organizations. Many of these communities began their work in the newly created dioceses of the West, where the foundations of the diocesan systems of today were laid. While some religious communities were founded solely for the education of girls, essentially all made provisions for teaching.65 Although the number of academies increased from forty-seven in 1840 to 202 in 1860, not all of these schools were of equal merit. Some communities offered courses more advanced than those offered in ordinary academies or secondary schools of the day because of the training obtained by their members in European schools. Catholic education during the last half of the nineteenth century was characterized by building and expansion.66

This period also witnessed efforts to modify the entire character of female education and neither Catholic institutions nor secular could be immune to these changing tendencies. American women were seeking collegiate training in ever rising numbers during the last decades of the nineteenth century. In 1869, women's enrollment both in preparatory departments and in colleges totaled nearly eight thousand; by 1895, more than twenty thousand women
were registered as regular college students. The addition of new and more advanced subjects to the curriculum of the academies marked the first response to the growing demand for a better and more complete education. The first Catholic colleges for women were established during the last years of the century to provide young Catholic women with opportunities for a college education in which faith would not be endangered by false philosophical theories.

Catholic colleges for women have, for the most part, developed from educational facilities already in existence. Only in a few instances did the institutions of higher education spring into being full grown. In the majority of cases, the beginnings of collegiate education were to be found in the early academies established by different teaching orders. Gradually, through the addition of courses, increases in the staff, improvements in methods and the extension of resources, the various institutions were in a position to seek and to obtain that recognition which entitled them to be regarded as collegiate level. While this development was more rapid in the East, where Catholic education had been more firmly established, the mid 1840s witnessed the establishment of women's colleges in the Midwest, and more specifically, in the city of Chicago. Prior to World War I, an influx of students seeking higher education intensified the need for Catholic
colleges for women in the city of Chicago. Catholic authorities there began expressing concern for the higher education of women. They felt that primarily, a woman belonged in the home. However, if her own educational background was lacking, she would be unable to properly educate her sons.69

CATHOLIC EDUCATION IN CHICAGO

The beginnings of Catholic educational activities in Chicago are attributed to Right Reverend William J. Quarter, the first Bishop of the diocese. Arriving in Chicago on the fifth of May, 1844, he immediately undertook to open Catholic schools for the proper education of Catholic children. Less than a month after his arrival, he established the College of St. Mary, a Catholic school for boys. Later, the college became the University of St. Mary of the Lake, the first institution of higher learning in the city. A charter was granted 19 December 1844.70

After establishing a college and university for young men, Bishop Quarter turned his attention to young women. While cognizant of his obligation to educate Catholic young women, he understood that to accomplish this goal required nuns. In the fall of 1846, Quarter sought assistance from the Right Reverend Michael O'Connor, Bishop of Pittsburgh, for the services of the Sisters of Mercy who were already established in that city.71

In September 1846, Mother Francis Xavier Warde and
five Sisters arrived in Chicago from Pittsburgh. Shortly after their arrival and just two years after the building of the first public school in Chicago, they opened the first Catholic school in the vicinity of Wabash and Madison Streets, with ten boarders and forty day students. In addition, night school was conducted for those who could not attend day classes. This probably was the first night school for adults in the city of Chicago. According to its charter, originating in the Illinois General Assembly, St. Francis Xavier Academy had the "power to confer on such persons as may be considered worthy, such academic and honorary degrees conferred by similar institutions." St. Xavier College, founded by the Sisters of Mercy, was one of the first institutions of higher learning in the State of Illinois. Founded in 1846, and chartered in 1847, it was the first Mercy college in the world and one of the first in the Midwest to have the power to grant degrees to women.

In 1871, the enrollment had increased to forty-five boarders and eighty day students. Unfortunately, the great Chicago fire totally destroyed the school, along with a great part of the city. Undaunted, the sisters temporarily relocated the Academy to Thirty-fourth Street and Cottage Grove Avenue and continued operations. Within two years, a new St. Francis Xavier Academy was opened at Wabash Avenue and Twenty-ninth Street. The Sisters of
Mercy moved their school to Cottage Grove Avenue, at 49th Street in 1901. Here, on the far south side, was housed the St. Francis Xavier College and Academy for girls and young women, offering instruction in the Preparatory School, the Intermediate Department, the Academy and the College.\textsuperscript{77}

The superior, Mother Xavier Flanagan, realized the need for Catholic leadership among young women and the need to prepare for higher work. In 1911, sisters were sent to European institutions and the Catholic University of America to study for higher degrees.\textsuperscript{78} Although postgraduate students of the academy had been enrolled at different times, there was no undergraduate program prior to 1912 which terminated in a degree. The St. Francis Xavier College for Women was incorporated on 25 March 1912.\textsuperscript{79} The Sisters of Mercy opened a college "in response to an urgent demand for a Catholic institution for young women who desire to pursue advanced study permeated with Catholic principles and shaped in accordance with the Catholic ideals."\textsuperscript{80} There was a danger of secular schools undermining Catholic standards of faith and morals, thereby threatening the spiritual welfare of Catholic young women. The aim of the college was to impart "culture by broadening the student's aesthetic interests, and training her in the art of living a full Catholic life." Also, special attention was given to "refinement of manners, to mental
development and to discipline of conduct."\(^{81}\)

College classes opened on 7 September 1915. In the next four years, courses that were added to the curriculum were home economics, expression and public school music.\(^{82}\) Laboratory facilities in biology, physics and chemistry were provided in a newly obtained adjoining residence called the Rosslyn annex.\(^{83}\) Only eighteen students graduated from the college in its first eight years as the sisters deliberately kept it small.\(^{84}\) By 1929, the number of students enrolled in the college classes totaled over two hundred.\(^{85}\)

A change in the internal organization of the academy was made in September, 1934. The change provided for a six year secondary school and integration of grades eleven and twelve with the first two years of college. Though unorthodox, the latter change placed emphasis on achievement rather than on traditional grade levels,\(^{86}\) met with acceptance. The 1924 St. Francis Xavier catalogue Announcements stated:

The college is affiliated to the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C., and has the full recognition of the State Department of Public Instruction of Illinois. The Loyola University and the University of Chicago honor all certificates for courses satisfactorily completed in Saint Xavier College.\(^{87}\)

The Religious of the Sacred Heart first arrived in the United States in 1818. This order was founded at Paris in 1800 by St. Madeleine Sophie Barat. At the invitation of
Bishop Anthony O'Regan, Mother Galway and six sisters arrived in Chicago 24 August 1858, to open the Young Ladies' Seminary of the Sacred Heart and a free school on South Wabash Avenue. The young ladies were trained in elementary as well as higher branches of learning. French and German were taught along with the regular course which included "music, drawing, useful and ornamental needlework, domestic economy, and fancy work of every description." School opened on 13 September 1858, with two day students and five residents. During the year, an increase in the number of students necessitated the acquisition of larger accommodations, and a large frame house on Rush and Illinois streets was procured. Mother Galway also purchased one block of land on the West side, near the Church of the Holy Family. The frame house first occupied by the sisters was relocated to the parish and became the first parochial school conducted by the Religious of the Sacred Heart in Chicago.

On 23 August 1860, the sisters had transferred the Academy to Taylor Street, the site of their new convent. In addition to attractive classrooms, this convent school contained an extensive library and a museum and ranked high as an educational institution. Many daughters of influential families, Catholic and non-Catholic families alike, attended the school which was steeped in the traditions of French culture. The new academy opened in
September with an enrollment of thirty-six; enrollment in the parish school numbered three hundred. Both schools continued to flourish until the 1890s during which time there was a marked change in the West Side's demographics. The community became less desirable as many former residents sold their homes to different nationalities and moved to more desirable parts of the city. No longer able to maintain a residential school, the Religious of the Sacred Heart found it more appropriate to move their school elsewhere.91

Fifty-two wooded acres of land in the exclusive suburb of Lake Forest were purchased by the Society. The cornerstone of the new building was laid on 23 March 1903 and within a year, the school was operating with an enrollment of ninety girls. The Convent of the Sacred Heart in Lake Forest functioned as an academy and junior college until 1917. The course of studies was then reorganized to meet the requirements of higher education. By October 1918, the junior college was incorporated by the State of Illinois as Barat College and empowered to grant academic degrees.92

In the beginning, enrollment in the college was small and the original graduating class numbered three. In the years of the Great Depression, the number had grown to around one hundred fifty.93 Since Barat was too far outside the city of Chicago and too removed for the average Catholic girl to attend, the school remained small. As a
consequence, Chicago was still without a modern innovative, strong college for Catholic women.
Endnotes


2 Anne Firor Scott, "Where We Have Been and Where We Are Going," in *What is Happening to American Women* Anne Firor Scott, ed. (Atlanta, Georgia: Southern Newspaper Publishers Association Foundation, 1970), 6-7.


8 Rush, 87.


11 Woody, 137-138.

12 Newcomer, 7-8.


15 Newcomer, 8.


17 Button, 60-61.
18 Newcomer, 9.


22 Stock, 185-186.
23 Button, 138-139.
24 Cole, 161.
28 Ibid.
29 Newcomer, 1.
31 Ibid.
33 Solomon, 48.
34 Ibid.
35 Stock, 191.
36 Solomon, 48.
37 Ibid.


39 Solomon, 49.

41 Stock, 191.


50 Woody, Vol. 1, 112.


52 Ibid.


54 Stock, 192.

55 Stock, 191-192.

56 Stock, 193.


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60 Bowler, 8-9; Woody, Vol. 1, 329-330.

62. Ibid., 63.

63. Burns, 249.

64. Ibid., 134.


66. Ibid.


70. *One Hundred Years: the History of the Church of the Holy Name* (Chicago: The Cathedral of the Holy Name, 1949), unpaged.


72. Ibid.


College, Chicago, Illinois), 8.

78 Sister Mary Denis, R.S.M., Saint Xavier College, interviewed by author in Chicago 17 July, 1989.

79 Announcements of Saint Xavier College 1924-1925, 6.


82 Catalogue of Saint Francis Xavier College and Academy 1919-1920, 25.

83 Catalogue of Pupils of Saint Xavier Academy 1931, 7.

84 Sanders, 172.

85 Bowler, 55.


87 Announcements of Saint Xavier College for Women 1924-1925, 6.


89 One Hundred Years: The History of the Holy Name, unpaged.

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CHAPTER II

GEORGE CARDINAL MUNDELEIN
AND CATHOLIC EDUCATION

During the era of World War I, a generation of Roman trained American bishops were appointed to the largest urban dioceses in the United States. Perceiving the need for improved order and efficiency, these bishops of the first three decades of the twentieth century centralized and organized the diocesan administrative structure of the Catholic Church in the United States. Their efforts gained new respect for the American Catholic church in Rome where financial support was sent and in the United States where their business acumen and political influence promoted the church and their self images as well. The avowed intention of these bishops was to "put the church on the map" by overcoming a lack of self confidence in a church comprised of immigrant outsiders. As a consequence of the bishops' actions, the American Catholic Church gained self confidence and power at home and at the Vatican. George Cardinal Mundelein was one of those progressive bishops who helped shape the Catholic experience in twentieth century America. He succeeded Patrick Feehan (1880-1902) and James Michael Quigley (1903-
1915), Archbishops of Chicago during the era of mass immigration.

To satisfy the spiritual needs of their cosmopolitan flock, Feehan and Quigley established national parishes, recruited European missionaries to staff them and promoted the opening of parish schools. They decentralized the diocese into informally organized ethnic networks of German, Irish and Polish parishes in which the priests were encouraged to take the initiative in developing programs and institutions to serve their parishioners. Unlike other churchmen, neither Feehan nor Quigley aspired to be national leaders of American Catholics; they sought only to make their archdiocese a place in which their disparate flock could live and worship in harmony according to the traditions of their native lands.

Sociologist, Father Andrew M. Greeley, characterized James Quigley as:

One of the most sensitive, sophisticated and ingenious leaders American Catholicism has ever had. He was not tolerant of the ethnics but genuinely sympathetic of them. . . . Presiding over the nation's biggest diocese during the peak immigration years, Quigley's political skills, his intelligence, his respect for the ethnics and his pluralistic convictions made him one of the true geniuses of American Catholicism.  

Archbishop Quigley continued the educational program begun by his predecessor, and in the dozen years of Quigley's administration, the number of parochial schools in the archdiocese increased from 166 to 256 and the number of pupils increased from 67,321 to 109,162. Although this
growth reflected an increase in the city's population, it was also due in part to "the increased thoroughness of the teaching in the Catholic schools. As a consequence, the parochial system of the archdiocese won an enviable reputation." 6

Also during Quigley's episcopacy, the number of secondary schools, one and two year commercial departments, four year academies and high schools and the two previously established Catholic universities in Chicago also experienced significant growth. The first preparatory seminary in the archdiocese, the Cathedral College of the Sacred Heart, was opened in 1907. 7 The first university to be established, the Jesuit College of St. Ignatius, was founded on the near west side in 1870. Originally modeled on the European gymnasium, the St. Ignatius collegiate preparatory school attempted to train an elite in the basics of a classical liberal arts education. 8 Over the next three decades, St. Ignatius' college department developed into an entity separate from the high school and in 1906, the Society of Jesus announced plans to build a second school in Rogers Park. Renamed Loyola University of Chicago, the north shore branch had a law school by 1908 and was also in the process of establishing a medical school affiliated with the Illinois Medical College. By 1910, Loyola's enrollment numbered fifty law, eighty-three medical and sixty-seven collegiate department students in a
university which Chicago Catholics expected "to occupy a very foremost place among the great Catholic universities of America." By 1920, with a college of arts and sciences and departments of medicine, pharmacy, law, engineering and sociology, Loyola was well established.9

In addition to the Jesuits, a second great teaching order also established a college in Chicago. In December 1907, the Society of St. Vincent De Paul established St. Vincent's College on the north side. Chartered by the state legislature as De Paul University, this institution established a liberal arts program, a school of general science and a school of engineering. In 1915, De Paul opened a downtown campus convenient for students in every part of Chicago and, by 1920, had established colleges of arts and sciences, law, engineering, commerce, art and design and education.10

WOMEN'S HIGHER EDUCATION

Although the Catholic school system was experiencing growth, its continued existence was threatened. Rising educational standards in the first decade of the 1900s necessitated professionally trained teachers. Making provisions for women's education posed a challenge since those Catholic universities that did exist were exclusively male and the few Catholic girls' colleges conducted by religious sisters were generally weak and their resources limited. The Jesuits, albeit not authorized to teach
women, did not favor coeducation which was viewed as a threat to the Jesuit educational tradition. Despite its reluctance to teach women, Catholic University initiated correspondence courses for women in 1905 of which many took advantage. Marquette University in Milwaukee, a Jesuit school, and De Paul University, a Vincentian, opened an eight week summer school for women in 1911.11

The movement to establish a Catholic college for women in Chicago was growing, and a plan for a women's college to be affiliated with an established university evolved from discussions addressing the demand for women's higher education. Both De Paul and Marquette universities proposed that the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary establish colleges financed by the congregation, one of the most flourishing teaching communities in the central and western parts of the United States. Classes to be taught by the congregation's members and would be located in separate buildings: the cooperating university would share limited staff and library facilities, and confer the degree.12 Before such a plan could be consummated, however, the B.V.M community needed women degreed in English, language, science, philosophy and education.13 Where these women religious could be educated posed a significant problem because most bishops frowned on state universities, Catholic universities excluded women, and the existing women's colleges did not offer graduate degrees.14
Mother Cecilia, the Superior General of the B.V.M. congregation explained the problems of preparing sisters for higher degrees to Monsignor Shanahan of Catholic University. Mother Cecilia suggested that a branch of Catholic University, to be called the Sisters College, be established on the campus for the sisters and taught by the university faculty. After receiving and affirmative reply from Rome and the university trustees, Monsignor Shanahan gave his approval. With the admittance of sister students into Catholic University, the educational horizons of women religious in the United States were significantly broadened.  

On 29 June 1911, six B.V.M.s, Sisters Mary Crescentia, Antonia, Columba, Regina, Justitia and Evangela, boarded a train for the east and Catholic University to prepare themselves for college teaching. Some of the sisters took advantage of everything offered. They took the required courses for credit, audited others for which they had free time, took extras like French, and then, at year’s end, received credit for any course in which they could pass the exam. Sister Evangela, the youngest of the six, completed 180 hours of credit in five summers and two semesters.

On 26 June 1911, Archbishop Quigley wrote an encouraging letter to the Superior General of the B.V.M.s in Dubuque:
I have heard with satisfaction that the Sisters of Charity are preparing to establish a college for women in the City of Chicago. An institution of this kind is greatly needed in Chicago as there are many Catholic women following university courses with a view of obtaining degrees in non-Catholic colleges and universities. The work, therefore, has my entire sympathy and fullest approbation.

Much discussion about opening a college in Milwaukee and another in Chicago ensued. On 1 November 1911, All Saints Day, Mother Cecilia called on the new Archbishop of Dubuque, James J. Keane. As a consequence of her visit, the project to open colleges in Milwaukee and Chicago was dropped because the archbishop wished to see the schools in his own diocese strengthened.

The summer of 1912 found the sisters enrolled in sessions at De Paul and Marquette universities. At Marquette, the sisters could sit in class, but they were not permitted to recite. Because the Jesuits could not teach women, weekly papers and exams substituted for classroom participation.

During the first year in which the six sisters were released for study, Mother Cecilia came under sharp community criticism. There was no precedent for her action to authorize sisters to study, and the schools operated by the congregation suffered from a shortage of staff. The six thousand dollars budgeted for their education was equal to the salaries of thirty teaching sisters. Mother Cecilia never answered her detractors and there is no indication that she regretted the full expense of the sisters'
education. Time proved Mother Cecilia right because the community needed sisters with degrees. Despite the cost, other sisters, some of whom continued to get advanced degrees, were sent to study after the original six.20

The dream to have a Catholic college in Chicago was never dispelled, and as the years went by its image became clearer. Under Mother Isabella Kane, the dream would materialize on Sheridan Road as Mundelein College and its first president would be one of the original six, Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, A.B., Catholic University of America, 1912.

GEORGE CARDINAL MUNDELEIN’S ENTRANCE

George Cardinal Mundelein was one of the visionaries who helped shape the Catholic experience in twentieth century America. Mundelein’s agenda, very different from that of his predecessors, favored the administrative centralization of the archdiocese and the Americanization of immigrants which, the Cardinal believed, was the church’s role. To that end, Mundelein put a moratorium on Archbishop Quigley’s policy of establishing national parishes.21

In refusing to appoint a Polish auxiliary... Mundelein not only repealed the Quigley-Kruszka compromise, ... he provided a response. ... If you give them a bishop, everyone will want a bishop. Why a plurality of ethnic bishops would be bad for a polliwog and polychrome city like Chicago ... may escape the reader, unless he is aware that real trouble with an ethnic bishop is that he represents a power source in the archdiocese other than your own.
Mundelein could not abide even a symbolic threat to his power.22

Even though Cardinal Mundelein’s administration was controversial, his life read like a success story. Born in 1872 and raised in New York City, Mundelein rejected an appointment to the naval academy at Annapolis, choosing instead to study for the priesthood in the Brooklyn diocese. Following ordination in Rome in 1895, he returned to Brooklyn where he was named chancellor of the diocese just two years later. Mundelein was named a monsignor at the age of thirty-four, an auxiliary bishop at the age of thirty-seven, and the third archbishop of Chicago at the age of forty-three, with his appointment by Pope Pius X on 9 December 1915. The spiritual leader of one of the three largest dioceses in the country, he was also the youngest archbishop in the United States.23 Elevated to the College of Cardinals in 1924, Mundelein was the chief administrator of the Catholic Church in Chicago from 1916 until his death in 1939.24

Mundelein’s reputation is based on two major accomplishments of his episcopal leadership. First, as a consolidating bishop, he brought order, centralization and business efficiency to his previously chaotic diocese. Second, he provided highly visible leadership which gained new respect for American Catholics and raised their self-image.25 Mundelein was a collector of old manuscripts, famous autographs, rare stamps and coins and a connoisseur
of old wines. He clearly loved ceremony as much for its own sake as for the glory it brought to his church. Mundelein inferred that Americans loved a show so displays of Catholic self-confidence enhanced the American Catholic image. He dressed lavishly and enjoyed the attention and activity of his public appearances.26

A final and important factor which raised the Catholic Church’s self image in America was Cardinal Mundelein’s role as a presidential advisor. Political influence was a necessity for the leader of a major institution like the Catholic Church which had money interests to protect, a separate school system, tax privileges and the welfare of its largely immigrant membership. Known as the most liberal bishop in the American hierarchy, Mundelein developed close ties with President Franklin D. Roosevelt during the New Deal years. The publicity surrounding the bishops’ conference at the White House made Catholics feel more like insiders in America. Mundelein instilled self confidence in American Catholics, gained the attention and respect of Americans and "put the church on the map."27

Rev. Andrew Greeley’s sympathetic portrait of Archbishop Quigley stands in sharp contrast to his evaluation of his successor:

Quigley’s work is masked by the commanding figure of George William Mundelein who followed him and for a quarter of a century ruled as a Renaissance prince on the shores of Lake Michigan. There is little doubt that Mundelein was a brilliant administrator . . . but in his dealings with the ethnics he was arrogant
and insensitive, refusing to create national parishes or even to give the Poles an auxiliary of their own. Mundelein was an autocratic Americanizer who did not believe much in pluralism and believed even less in any power in Chicago other than his own. ... It is ironic but if it had not been for the careful foundation work that the forgotten Quigley had done with his now rejected policy of pluralism, Mundelein's imperious treatment of the ethnics might have torn Chicago apart. Indeed, if it had not been for the pluralism of Quigley, his successor's administrative reforms probably would have ended in disaster. 28

When Archbishop Mundelein came to Chicago he had 800 priests under his command; the bells of 350 churches announced the hour of his installation; 120,000 students in Catholic academies and parochial schools greeted him; and, 1,125,000 Catholics welcomed him in 25 languages. 29 The newly invested archbishop was the honored guest at three receptions. The first, attended by the Chicago clergy at noon of the inaugural day, was followed by a mass of the laity in the Auditorium Theatre. A civic reception, held at the University Club, nearly ended in disaster.

The event, attended by more than three hundred prominent business, academic and political leaders of the city, was arranged by Monsignor Francis Kelley of the Catholic Church Extension Society. 30 Shortly after the soup was served, guests began to show symptoms of ptomaine poisoning, vertigo, fainting, nausea and vomiting. More than one hundred of the stricken were taken to sleeping rooms in the club where medical treatment was administered.

The speaker's table, at which were seated His Grace, Governor Dunne, Roger C. Sullivan and other notables, was
spared and none was stricken. The Archbishop, a veteran of many formal banquets, always ate little and was unaffected since he had not tasted his soup nor eaten much of his dinner. Famous for his wit, Mundelein deflected the unfortunate event when he rose to speak. "While we have seen more than 100 or more of the great men here tonight falter and fall by the wayside, it is to be noted that the Church and the State remained serene. It augurs well for Illinois." When the Archbishop left the reception, a Tribune reporter asked if he had been affected by the bouillon. "Not at all, not at all. You know, it takes something stronger than soup to get me."32

Two days later, Dr. W. A. Evans, health editor of the Chicago Tribune, stated that there was no danger of an after effect in a little arsenic. Analysis of samples of the soup revealed that it contained 4.81 grams of arsenic to the pint and a trace of copper. Samples injected into guinea pigs did not cause death.33

An investigation into the incident identified a kitchen employee of the University Club as having poisoned the soup with arsenic in an attempt to strike a blow for anarchism by eliminating the city's elite. A major tragedy was averted when another cook, detecting an unpleasant odor, diluted the poisoned soup. Jean Crones, an Alsatian immigrant and the accused poisoner, was traced to New York City. Although alleged by the Chicago police to be
implicated in an anarchist conspiracy to poison American leaders and to bomb key institutions, Crones was never apprehended. Neither the existence nor extent of an anarchist plot was ever determined. 34

Four months after his installation, Archbishop Mundelein announced plans to build a memorial to his predecessor on a half block of land along Rush Street, between Pearson and Chestnut. Quigley Preparatory Seminary would replace the old secondary Cathedral College of the Sacred Heart. 35 Chicago had long been without either a major or minor seminary to train its diocesan priests, and candidates for the priesthood were sent to other cities.

Although Archbishop Quigley had started to remedy the situation when he founded Cathedral College preparatory seminary, he died before he could erect a major seminary. The new facility was to comprise three connected buildings partially enclosing a central courtyard. The seminary’s chapel was to be a replica of Sainte Chapelle in Paris. Upon its completion in the fall of 1918, Quigley Seminary was cited as one of the finest examples of French Gothic architecture ever erected on this continent. 36

During construction of the Quigley minor seminary, Mundelein unveiled plans for a major seminary, St. Mary of the Lake, to be built on a one thousand acre tract in Area, Illinois. Architecturally, the seminary complex was an adaptation of an American-colonial church which the
Archbishop admired in Lyme, Connecticut. Seeking to symbolize the union between all that was enduring and beautiful in American art and philosophy with the ageless art and philosophy of the Church, Mundelein observed, "here in our own America we have an art which may be considered as native and which at the same time is expressive of that nobility of thought which is naturally associated with an educational institution of the most profound character."  

In 1924 when the town of Area changed its name to Mundelein, the school became known as Mundelein Seminary. Gaining recognition as a pontifical faculty of theology, the seminary was accorded the privilege of conferring the doctorate in sacred theology. The $265,000 purse presented the archbishop by the diocese's priests on the occasion of his silver jubilee in April 1920 was used to start construction of the philosophy buildings. Two weeks later, the archbishop announced a $500,000 gift from Mr. and Mrs. Edward Hines, the largest donation ever made at one time to a Catholic institution in the United States. The Hines gift was presented as a memorial to Lieutenant Edward Hines, Jr., who had died of pneumonia in a French base hospital while serving with the American expeditionary forces. In a personal letter to Mr. Hines, the Archbishop wrote:

May I be permitted to offer as a mark of my own deep appreciation to erect a Chapel, the keynote and the most beautiful of the group of divinity buildings, as a lasting memorial to your son. For I feel that the
linking of Edward’s name with the seminary church, the memory of the manly spirit shown by this youthful officer, his boyish eagerness to answer his country’s call, his noble self-sacrifice in leaving his comfortable home and loving family, then his splendid fortitude in suffering and his cheerful resignation to God’s Holy Will when slowly dying in a strange land and far from those who love him best, cannot help but inspire these youthful clerics of Chicago who will there be in training to become officers in Christ’s own army. It will be a consolation to you and to his mother in your great loss to know that his name and the repose of his soul will live in the constant memory of Chicago’s future priesthood. 39

Two weeks after the solemn consecration of the chapel, the young man’s remains were interred at the seminary. The inscription on his tomb, beautiful in its simplicity, read: 
"He gave his life to his country on the fields of France in the cause of honor. He gave his fortune to this great institution in the cause of Christian charity. Let ye who pause here pray for the repose of his soul." 40

CARDINAL MUNDELEIN’S VIEWS ON CATHOLIC WOMEN’S HIGHER EDUCATION

For years, Chicago had had colleges and universities for young men but no such opportunities were available to Catholic women. The Jesuits operated Loyola University and the Vincentian Fathers conducted De Paul University, both conveniently located near public transportation. 41 Only two local women’s schools with any pretensions to higher education were located in the Chicago area. St. Xavier College, located on the southwest side, needed to expand if it were to serve as a regional college. Barat College, in
the far north shore suburb of Lake Forest, was too far removed from the city. Since neither school fulfilled Mundelein’s plans, he sought to secure women’s colleges for the west and north sides.42

Even though Catholics had done very little to educate women, Mundelein had definite ideas about their education. He realized that if the church did not provide higher education, Catholic women would find it in local secular universities where they would be surrounded by dangerous influences.43 In October 1916, Archbishop Mundelein announced his plan to open a Catholic day college for women where the best education was to be offered to the city’s girls. Mundelein considered the "schools the glory and boast of the Church in Chicago,"44 but he needed to complete the structure.

We need certainly one, perhaps two, first class Catholic day colleges for women in Chicago. . . . I have arranged for their establishment. Within a year, at most two, our Catholic women will obtain higher Catholic education right here at home, in the arts, in the sciences, in music, in domestic science. Moreover, it is my purpose to establish there a course of practical Christian philanthropy and social service, so as to equip our young Catholic women for practical charitable work here.45

Mundelein’s plans were ambitious. He proposed to establish a commuter college conveniently served by public transportation, taught and controlled by women and which was to be open by September 1917. The Vincentian Fathers who operated De Paul University in Chicago wanted to establish a separate college for women or else open De Paul
on a coeducational basis. Mundelein denied permission to do either.  

In February 1916, the Archbishop corresponded with Mother Cecilia, B.V.M. in regard to the establishment of a woman's college in Chicago. Two religious orders had asked his permission to open a college. He approved the Sisters of Mercy retaining the college they had already opened in 1915. Before responding to the second request, he wished to know the general opinion of the B.V.M. community on the subject. Mother Mary Cecilia, Sister Mary Isabella and Sister Mary Lambertina met with the new archbishop in the Chancery office on 22 February 1916.  

A copy of a report of the first interview was found in the Mundelein College archives.

Archbishop: Your reputation as teachers is well known in the East. I have heard that your work is most successful. You have a great many sisters teaching in Chicago have you not?

Sister: Yes, Your Grace, we have 340 sisters stationed in Chicago.

Archbishop: Then you are more numerous than any other community in the city.

Sister: I believe we are.

Archbishop: Well, there is work for all among the two million of Catholics. This is a wonderful city and I believe its many Catholic schools have added to its fame. What success have you in securing recruits for your order?

Sister: We succeed very well. We have now 102 novices and 20 postulants; but even with that number, we cannot supply all the schools we are asked to take.

Archbishop: How fortunate we would be if we could have
sisters enough to take all the places where sisters are so greatly needed. There is a bad situation in sectarian and public schools. To my knowledge an excellent young girl in this city attended the University of Chicago and her remarks after her course of study there were surprising. They showed the bad influence that training had on her character and in turning her away from religion; and yet she had Irish parents who were strong in their faith.

Sister: Yes, Your Grace, we found the same condition in some of our pupils who attended the University of Chicago.

Archbishop: It is my intention to prevent this trouble, if possible, and to have here a college for Catholic young women where they will be taught by religious. I understand that there is no such college in the city.

Sister: We too recognize that there is such a need, and to our high school pupils who go out from us such a college would be an incentive to remain with and possibly develop a vocation to the religious life. Many of those who attend the Normal school and afterwards teach in the public schools, find their remuneration as teachers more attractive than the self-denying religious life.

We think that by holding them for the college course, we shall not only safeguard their faith but will secure many recruits. Holding them in this way is not now so difficult, as many of our sisters have university degrees and others are studying for them.

Archbishop: Very good! Where did you propose to have this college?

Sister: We have two available pieces of property in Chicago. One on the lake shore. The intention was to have a house of studies for our sisters, a place where they could assemble for retreat and for summer study. To maintain this house of studies and make it self-supporting, we thought of using it for college purposes also, and possibly for having here such fourth year high school pupils as might find it convenient to attend and who would later enter college.

Archbishop: I would be very happy to help this project. . . . You may think that I am giving this decision hastily, but indeed I have thought of it long and seriously and I see the great need of such a
college. If you undertake this, you may rely upon me for my hearty cooperation and support. I shall be glad to send priests from the seminary to lecture for you. . . . How soon did you propose to undertake this matter?

Sister: No definite time has been decided upon. We must first dispose of a piece of property to get the necessary funds.

Archbishop: I shall visit the place on which you intend to build and shall speak of this matter at the next meeting of the Council. 48

A week later on 24 February, Mother Cecilia invited Bishop Keane of Dubuque to Mt. Carmel, the B.V.M. motherhouse, to discuss the advisability of building a college in Chicago. The bishop thought it a bad time to build because of the increasing possibility of American involvement in World War I. While the sisters still felt it desirable that they have a building suitable for a house for Retreats and for collegiate study, they accepted the bishop's advice and deferred building. The time was not ripe for such an expense. 49

In the spring of 1916, Mother Cecilia wrote to Archbishop Mundelein:

We regret to state that while we all desire to have a college in Chicago, the time is not opportune for our Congregation. We are not in a position to finance an undertaking which involves so great an outlay as does the building and the equipping of a college. 50

In his reply to Mother Cecilia, His Grace wrote:

I regret that you cannot take this step, and yet I recognize that it is prudence alone which dictates your decision. I would there were some generous benefactor who would clear this difficulty out of your way and enable you and your sisters to carry out this long cherished desire. 51
ESTABLISHMENT OF A WOMEN'S COLLEGE

The Archbishop was not easily dissuaded, however, and he continued to pursue his goal. In an interview for the *New World*, Mundelein stated:

The need of a Catholic college for women is patent to everyone and becomes more urgent every day. More and more are women taking the places formerly occupied by men, in the professions, in business, in literature, in the shaping of public opinion, even in science. The time has come when they are receiving the advantages and the responsibilities of equal suffrage with men. It stands to reason then that we must provide equal educational advantages for our Catholic girls if we expect them to take front rank with the women of the future.\(^5\)

Mundelein wanted to provide women with a practical education, available to as many as possible. His plans called for commuter colleges conveniently served by public transportation to three divisions of the city, north, south and west. In the spring of 1917, having heard of his desire for a woman's college, the Dominican Sisters contacted Mundelein with the possibility of moving their St. Clara College from isolated Sinsinawa, Wisconsin to Chicago. As Mundelein had already been turned down by the B.V.M.s in regard to the founding of a college, he accepted the Dominican's offer and began negotiating with Mother Samuel. Mundelein was in favor of a city location, already provided with a building that could be adapted to serve college purposes.

Mother Samuel did not favor this plan. She desired a peaceful, secluded spot in the suburbs, either on the north
shore or in an area west of Oak Park. In late June, Mundelein persuaded her to purchase a sixteen acre tract in Oak Park. He began to press her to start building, fearing she might change her mind. In October, he outlined his undertaking to the members of the Catholic Women’s League asking them to serve as friends, helpers, advertisers and patrons.\textsuperscript{53} To encourage the sisters, he donated five thousand dollars from his personal funds.\textsuperscript{54}

In December, Ralph Adams Cram was chosen as the architect by the sisters. A non-Catholic and probably the most distinguished architect of the Gothic Revival style, Mr. Cram had designed the graduate college of Princeton University and the Fourth Presbyterian Church on Michigan Avenue in Chicago.\textsuperscript{55} Mundelein realized that the sisters were going beyond his idea of a modest commuter college. Work was started on the architectural sketches but when the United States entered World War I in April 1917, the lawyer and architect both advised that the work be stopped.\textsuperscript{56}

Mother Samuel took advantage of the time to change plans. She sold the Oak Park property at a profit and purchased thirty acres in River Forest. The reaction of Mundelein is not recorded, but since other teaching orders were not willing to take the risk of building a women’s college in Chicago, he had to accept Mother Samuel on her terms. Although she had the upper hand, Mother Samuel needed Mundelein for fund raising.\textsuperscript{57}
The school incorporated as Rosary College opened its doors in the fall of 1922. The Dominican Sisters were competent teachers and their school was soon accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges. Notwithstanding the archbishop’s wishes, Rosary College functioned primarily as a residential school.58

CHOICE OF THE B.V.M.S TO FOUND A WOMEN’S COLLEGE

Despite having been outplayed by Mother Samuel, Archbishop Mundelein never abandoned his plans for establishing an easily accessible commuter college for women. Undefeated, he directed his energy toward securing such a college for the north side of the city. Mundelein required that this college be administered and taught by an able and ambitious women’s religious order. There was only one plausible congregation to provide the kind of school he wanted, the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

The members of this select religious community of women had been in the field of Catholic education for nearly one century. The congregation had grown from a community of five pioneer sisters into a religious order with more than two thousand members.59 The B.V.M. congregation operated schools from coast to coast, including a college, five academies, thirty parochial high schools, four community owned high schools and 109 parochial elementary schools. In Chicago, 16,780 students were under the guidance of the Sisters of Charity of the
Blessed Virgin Mary. In 1898, the B.V.M.s founded St. Mary’s regional high school to meet the need for a Catholic secondary school for girls. The first central women’s high school in the United States, St. Mary’s took no boarders and drew its student population from a wide geographical area and social strata. The school’s curriculum provided a practical education and properly trained many Irish girls to pass the state exams for public school teacher certification.

Mundelein viewed the regional high school as the best way to provide Catholic secondary education. He persuaded the B.V.M. order to open a second high school, The Immaculata, on the north side lakefront. At the school’s first commencement in 1925, the Archbishop remarked: "When I came here I found St. Mary’s High School, a school where girls of all classes meet on an equal footing, where the one aristocracy is the aristocracy of brains. The girls are prepared for active service in the school, in commercial life, and in the home." Mundelein directed his energy toward having the B.V.M.s open a college on the north side of the city. The order, a significant presence in the city with more than three hundred sisters working in the archdiocese, was unmatched by any other woman’s order.

In summary, although the congregation had discussed
establishing a women's college in Chicago with Archbishop Quigley as early as 1911, the plan never came to fruition until 1930. Mundelein had discussed the need for a women's college with the B.V.M.s as early as 1916. Edward R. Kantowicz, in Corporation Sole: Cardinal Mundelein and Chicago Catholicism, states that Archbishop Mundelein's impatience with the sisters to begin must have frightened them. However, the refusal of Bishop Keane of Dubuque, Iowa, to approve the project made it impossible for the sisters to proceed with their house for collegiate study. Even after the opening of Rosary College in 1922, the Archbishop continued to badger the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary for six years, until they finally consented to his wishes.63

2 Kantowicz, 54.


5 Montay, 20.

6 New World (Chicago), 16, July 1915, 5.

7 Montay, 20-21.


9 Sanders, 170-172.

10 Ibid.


12 Coogan, 346.

13 Coogan, 358.

14 Sister Mary Irma Corcoran, B.V.M. of Chicago, interview by author, 26 April 1989, Chicago, tape recording, in possession of author, Chicago.

15 Coogan, 347.

16 Ibid.


18 Coogan, 349.

19 Sister Mary Ann Ida Gannon, B.V.M. of Chicago, interview by author, 11 February 1989, Chicago, notes in
possession of author, Chicago.

20 Coogan, 339.


22 Greeley, 32.

23 New World (Chicago), 19 August 1918, 4.


26 Kantowicz, Corporation Sole: Cardinal Mundelein and Chicago Catholicism, 3.

27 Kantowicz, 4-5.

28 Greeley, 32.

29 New World (Chicago), 3 December 1915, 2.

30 Kantowicz, Corporation Sole: Cardinal Mundelein and Chicago Catholicism, 11.

31 Chicago Tribune, 11 February 1916, 1.

32 Ibid.

33 Chicago Tribune, 13 February 1916, 1.


35 James J. Walsh, Our American Cardinals (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1926), 266.


37 Martin, 84.

38 New Catholic Encyclopedia, 71.

39 New World, (Chicago), 30 April 1920, 2.

40 Martin, 100.
41 Sanders, 170-171.
42 Ibid.
44 *New World* (Chicago), 13 October 1916, 1.
45 Ibid.
46 Sanders, 173.
47 Notes from Mother Cecilia's "Notebook of Visitations" from 30 September 1915 to 10 June 1919. (Superior General of The B.V.M. Congregation).
49 Notes from Mother Cecilia's "Notebook of Visitations."
50 Mother Cecilia, B.V.M. to Archbishop George W. Mundelein, 15 May 1916, Mother Cecilia's Papers, Mundelein College Archives, Chicago.
51 Archbishop George W. Mundelein to Mother Cecilia, B.V.M. 18 May 1916, Mundelein College Archives, Chicago.
52 *New World* (Chicago), 2 January 1920, 1.
53 *New World* (Chicago), 13 October 1916, 1.
54 Mc Carty, 200.
55 Mc Carty, 190-192.
56 Ibid.
57 Ibid.
58 *New World* (Chicago), 14 July 1922, 1.
59 Sister Mary Madelena, "Chronicles," Chicago: Mundelein College Archives, 1930-1936, 1. (Typewritten.)
60 Sister Mary Anna Rose Callan, B.V.M., "The Sisters of Charity of The Blessed Virgin Mary and Their Schools in Chicago, 1867-1940" (M.A. Thesis, Loyola University of Chicago, 1941), 138.

61 Coogan, 271-272.


63 Kantowicz, Corporation Sole: Cardinal Mundelein and Chicago Catholicism, 94-95.
CHAPTER III

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY:
FOUNDING OF THE COMMUNITY AND ITS ROLE IN EDUCATION

Finally responding to the request of George Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago, the college which would bear his name was founded in 1929 by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary who had been chosen because their educational tradition included almost a century of educational leadership in Chicago and the United States. Although founded at the urging of the Cardinal, the college received no financial support from him but was financed entirely by the B.V.M. congregation.

The history of the Sisters of Charity begins in the era of the repeal of the Penal Laws by the Irish Parliament in 1829 which exacerbated the plight of the ill, the orphaned, the ignorant and the impoverished. The social ramification of this action was the creation of an illiterate underclass for whom no educational provisions had been made. In response, new religious congregations dedicated to a life of service arose to meet the exigencies of this distressed population. As these congregations increased in number and membership, new churches were built
and new religious schools and academies were opened. It was in this milieu that the congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary had its beginnings, where in Dublin five young women inspired by their devotion to their Catholic faith sought a life of service.

Mary Frances Clarke, Rose O’Toole, Elizabeth Kelly and Margaret Mann were brought together in 1831 by a cholera epidemic in Dublin. Members of the same sodality, the women became friends as they worked among the plague’s victims. While ministering to the sick and dying, they learned that religious education was lacking among the Irish people. Dismayed at this discovery, they resolved, that when the epidemic had subsided, they would dedicate themselves to teaching. Without ecclesiastical sanction, guidance from clergy or experience in religious life, they determined to form a religious community. On 8 December 1831, in a small cottage rented on the outskirts of Dublin for their headquarters, these indomitable women joined together into a community to prepare themselves for their mission.

The Irish were craving education. The anti-Catholic Penal Laws enacted during the reign of William III which made Catholic education a criminal offense had been abolished in 1829. Irishmen, patently nationalistic, refused to educate their children in institutions which promoted the Anglican faith at the expense of Catholic
doctrine, Irish literature and language. As children thronged to the young women who gave instruction in elementary subjects, sewing, religion and singing of hymns, their vocation as educators began. Never idle, as The Annals of the B.V.M. congregation recount, the sisters "in the short intervals which their various duties permitted for rest, with exquisite skill their busy fingers embroidered many beautiful articles for church purposes."5

Education was the greatest need of the day and the inordinate demand to attend the sisters' school could not be met. Because the cottage in the suburbs became too small and unsuitable for their purpose, the struggling community relocated its school to a building in Dublin, in which, as their first order of business, they set up a small chapel. The school on North Ann Street was to become the fountainhead of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

FOUNDERS OF THE B.V.M. CONGREGATION

Mary Frances Clarke, born 2 March 1806, was the first child of Cornelius Clarke, a prosperous leather merchant, and Catherine Quartermas Clarke. Although Mary Frances' maternal ancestors were Quakers, both of her parents were devout Catholics who were extremely generous to the poor. Before their daughter's birth, the Clarkes decided that if their first child were a girl, she would be christened with her mother's name. Alas, in a prophetic dream, it was made
known to Mrs. Clarke that the child in her womb should be called Mary. The Franciscan priest who performed the baptism added the name Frances in honor of the patron of his order.

The Clarke children, Mary Frances, two younger daughters and one son, enjoyed excellent educational opportunities and were tutored by a Mr. Matherson. The quality of Mary Frances' training was demonstrated when her father was rendered an invalid after having suffered a paralytic stroke shortly after a fire destroyed his business. During his convalescence, Mary Frances not only served as her father's bookkeeper and secretary, but also succeeded in bringing prosperity back into the Clarke home. Mary Frances' sisters assumed her duties so she would have the freedom to respond to her vocation.

Margaret Mann, the daughter of John and Ann Thompson Mann, was born in Dublin on 7 March 1807. Margaret was the sole owner and operator of a millinery establishment in which she employed twenty-five young girls. When she decided to close her business to devote her life in God's service, she retained and paid all her employees until each found a new position. To the group, Margaret brought exceptional qualities for management, organization and business.

Elizabeth Kelly, the daughter of Michael and Mary Hyland Kelly, was born in Dublin on 6 April 1809.
Although Elizabeth enjoyed the privileges of wealth, her compassion for the uninstructed and the destitute compelled her to minister to their deprivations and to promote the educational needs of the community.\textsuperscript{11}

Rose O'Toole was one of the younger members of a large family. While little is known about her father, her mother operated a boarding house and grew strawberries for the local market. Although not as affluent as the Kellys, the O'Tooles were financially secure. Upon her mother's death, Rose brought a comfortable dowry to the struggling community after they had emigrated to Philadelphia. Of the original members of the fledgling congregation, Rose had only the most elementary education and the only record of her teaching was in helping little children learn their prayers.\textsuperscript{12} Despite her lack of formal education, "she proved to be a valuable assistant and a worthy subject for the life they had embraced, spending her time at the little hermitage, attending to it when the others were called elsewhere."\textsuperscript{13}

It was at the cottage that they first met Catherine Byrne, who came one evening on an errand regarding an order for vestments. Although this young girl (an orphan working in the pharmacy of the hospital in the city) perceived her vocation to the sister's way of life, she would not be able to join until the eve of their departure for America in 1833.\textsuperscript{14}
THE B.V.M.s' FIRST SCHOOL

Miss Clarke's School on North Ann Street, Dublin, opened on 19 March 1832, the feast of St. Joseph their patron and the teaching faculty consisted of Mary Frances Clarke, Margaret Mann, Rose O'Toole, Elizabeth Kelly and Catherine Byrne. From the school's founding, Mary Frances Clarke and her companions, who wore no decorative dress, and were called "the Nuns of North Ann Street" were so successful that the school's attendance exceeded their expectations. Their students came from predominantly middle class families who valued education but could not afford to send their children to convent schools and who were too proud to send them to the "poor schools."

Though the women were living as a religious community without benefit of a designated superior, The Annals note that Mary Frances Clarke's leadership was acknowledged: the community believed that her life was an exemplar of the highest sanctity and the doorplate on the school read, "Miss Clarke's School." Margaret Mann assisted in directing the school and managing the business aspects. In their North Ann Street home "closer attention to a well-prepared plan made them approach more nearly the religious life they loved. . . ." and it was during this time that the mission of the B.V.M. congregation evolved:

This was a time of prayer, study, labor; to the exercises of the contemplative life they added works of active charity, visits to the sick and the
afflicted, alms and benefactions to the friendless and infirm, teaching all with whom they came in contact to know and serve God.¹⁸

EMIGRATION TO THE UNITED STATES

The Reverend Patrick Costello, from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, who had returned to Ireland, was appointed their chaplain in Spring 1832. His account of the need for missionaries in the young republic were so compelling that Mary Frances Clarke and her companions sincerely considered accepting his invitation to provide for the spiritual needs of the children of Irish immigrants.¹⁹ Before deciding the issue of leaving their flourishing school in Ireland, they sought advice from their parents and they prayed to know God’s will. They considered that:

from a spiritual point of view, acceptance would be heroic; in any other light it would be a serious blunder. . . . Their ardent souls were fired with holy enthusiasm; their hearts were stirred with inspiration. Their favorite novena to the Blessed Virgin was made with all the fervor of their hearts, and to their good patron Saint Joseph their united petitions arose. At Holy Communion God spoke to their hearts. When they arose from prayer, their decision was made. They would go to America.²⁰

Once they determined to accept the invitation to America, it became easy to sacrifice the peace that had come with the school’s success, as well as the comforts of home.

Shortly before their departure, Father Costello preceded them to Philadelphia to prepare for their arrival. Those setting out for America were Mary Frances Clarke, Margaret Mann, Elizabeth Kelly and Catherine Byrne. Rose
O'Toole was detained in Dublin to settle her father's estate. On Thursday, 18 July 1833 the Cassandra sailed from Liverpool bearing the little band of Irish women who were answering God's call to the new world and a lifetime of service. A fire at Old St. Joseph's Prairie in 1849 destroyed details of the journey to America, but that the voyage was fraught with dangers may be assumed, for The Annals relate "dreadful storms, tropical heat and the shifting of the cargo which all but sank the ship." 21

Before leaving Ireland, they pooled their fortunes and gave the entire amount of gold coin to Elizabeth Kelly for safe keeping. As she was leaving the Cassandra, the latch on her purse caught on the rope ladder and "with sad, affrighted eyes the sisters beheld their money roll splashing down into the sea." 22 This calamity prepared them for the Holy Vow of Poverty which they believed was necessary to the success of their mission.

Reverend Patrick Costello, who had told them of the Philadelphia bishop's delight at their acceptance of his invitation to teach in his diocese, did not appear to meet them, although notified of their arrival. "Later, it was learned that his mind had become deranged and the sisters' remembrance of their dismay, as they waited in vain for his coming, became sincere pity for his great affliction." 23

Strangers in a strange land, they went to St. Joseph's Church in Willings Alley upon their arrival to pray.
They were about to leave the church when they met Mrs. Margaret McDonogh from Dublin. She saw their distress and aided them in procuring living quarters in Willings Alley, not far from the church. Mrs. McDonogh told her former pastor, the Very Reverend Terence James Donaghoe, about the "nuns" who though destitute, were unwilling to be assisted with anything not earned by their own labors. On Tuesday, 10 September 1833 he visited the "Irish nuns" and enlisted their services for his Sunday school. Father Donaghoe was impressed with their efficient work in the Sunday school. 

"Could he not with these auxiliaries organize a religious community and carry out his views for the training of the young?"24 Father Donaghoe sought permission to establish the new community from the Most Reverend Francis Patrick Kenrick, third Bishop of Philadelphia, who consented, naming the priest as its director. After much prayer and advice from his director, Father Francis Dzierozynski, S.J., Father Donaghoe confided to the sisters that he believed they were called by God to cooperate with him to establish a new order. It took little to persuade them for they recognized their vocation. The sisters, with Mary Frances Clarke as the superior, organized themselves into a community under the rule promulgated for them by Father Donaghoe. Father Donaghoe had received valuable assistance from the Jesuits at Georgetown. They had impressed upon him the necessity for inspiring in each member of the
community a profound regard for the authority of Rule. 25

On 1 November 1833, after pronouncement of their act of consecration, the sisters received their distinctive religious habit and the title Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary. With pronouncement of their vows, these young women became an organized body of religious whose lives were to be devoted exclusively to the education of youth. For a decade, they labored in Philadelphia conducting a parochial school in St. Michael's parish as well as an academy for boarders and day pupils at the corner of Second and Phoenix streets.

In April 1834 the four were joined by Rose O'Toole who arrived from Dublin. On 29 September 1838 they moved into a new convent built for them by Father Donaghoe. The convent became the congregation's first novitiate and Sister Mary Margaret Mann became the Mistress of Novices. During the period spent in Philadelphia, the community's membership increased from four to nineteen sisters. 26

Having heard of their hard work and their high teaching standards, the Most Reverend Matthias Loras, Bishop of Dubuque, petitioned Father Donaghoe for a few sisters to aid him in the missionary work of his vast diocese which he described as the poorest in the land. The sisters expressed interest; removing to the Dubuque diocese would ensure opportunities to share in Indian missionary activities similar to those of Pierre J. De Smet, S.J., the
renowned Jesuit missionary to the Indians of the Northwest territories. During his visit with them in the early autumn of 1842, their missionary fervor was kindled by the great Jesuit's enthusiasm. After extensive deliberation and much prayer, the sisters accepted the Bishop's invitation. Sister Mary Margaret Mann was appointed superior for the five chosen to open the new mission in Dubuque.

Departing Philadelphia on 5 June 1843, the sisters arrived in Dubuque on 23 June 1843. On 5 July 1843, St. Mary's Academy for day pupils was opened and enrolled girls from the best families around Dubuque. The academy kept the sisters busy, but their teaching did not prevent their extending care to the sick, the afflicted or the Indians who lived in the vicinity. Yet Bishop Loras was so pleased with his five new missionaries that he resolved to invite the entire community to Dubuque along with Father Donaghoe, to whom he offered the position of vicar-general. After prayful consideration, the group decided to close the school in Philadelphia and move to the prairies of the West.

Accompanied by the entire B.V.M. community, Father Donaghoe departed Philadelphia 12 September 1843 and arrived in Dubuque on 8 October 1843. On 15 August 1845 in St. Raphael's Cathedral the members of the community, then numbering nineteen, took the vows of poverty, chastity
and obedience. At the behest of Bishop Loras, the order's name was changed to the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. 29

It soon became apparent that the log cabin in which they lived in Dubuque was inadequate to withstand piercing wintry winds and the growing needs of the community. A motherhouse became an absolute necessity for the sisters inasmuch as the school was overcrowded and applications for admission to the novitiate were increasing. In March 1846 the novitiate and boarding school of the sisters were transferred to a new building at Old St. Joseph's Prairie, a tract of land procured by Father Donaghoe when he had first come to Dubuque in 1845 as a place for development of the community. 30

The Annals relate an interesting anecdote relative to acquisition of the tract. Since Mother Clarke and the sisters felt that the convent should be located at some distance from the city, Bishop Loras and Father Donaghoe rode their horses into the country west of Dubuque in search of land suitable for the Sisters' needs. As they rode, many desirable spots were seen but by noon, at which time they dismounted about ten miles southwest of Dubuque, no decision had been made. Suddenly, a swarm of bees alighted on Father Donaghoe's hat which he had thrown on the ground. The two clergymen noticed that although the Bishop's hat lay beside Father Donaghoe's, not a single bee
alighted there. As the insects flew in and out and around
the crown of the broad sombrero, Father Donaghoe said, "We
will build our convent here!"31

The community prospered during its early days at St.
Joseph’s Prairie and the community’s membership increased.
The reputation of the Sisters’ teaching spread and in 1844
the Right Reverend William J. Quarter, Bishop of Chicago,
requested the services of five sisters to establish a
community in the diocese of Chicago. This petition was
rejected by Bishop Loras. In the spring of 1845, Bishop
Quarter sent his brother, the Very Reverend Walter Quarter,
to Dubuque to make a second appeal. Again, Bishop Loras
demurred, stating that no sisters could be spared until the
Dubuque diocese was supplied with teachers.32

To accommodate the burgeoning enrollment, additional
facilities were constructed at St. Joseph’s Prairie. While
savoring their success, the sisters were struck by
disaster. On the night of 15 May 1849, the convent, the
academy and all the nearby buildings were destroyed by
fire. Undaunted by this tragedy, they initiated plans to
reconstruct immediately. Notwithstanding its loss, the
community prospered.33 By 1859, so many postulants had
applied for admission that it was determined to retain all
the buildings at St. Joseph’s Prairie for the exclusive use
of the community. The academy, which originated as St.
Mary’s Boarding School, was transferred from St. Joseph’s
Prairie to Dubuque in 1843. Presently the site of Loras College, the Academy was the foundation of Clarke College, the community's first college for women, which for many years was known as Mount Saint Joseph Academy and College. The motherhouse remained at St. Joseph's Prairie until 1893 when it was removed to its present site at Mt. Carmel in Dubuque. 34

REPUTATION IN EDUCATION

In the thirty-eight year interval between the order's founding and 1869, membership in the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary increased to 168 women who had opened and were operating twenty schools in the Dubuque diocese. 35 Meanwhile, while the apostolate of the BVMs as educators was expanding in the diocese of Dubuque, Father Arnold Damen, S. J. was beginning his apostolate in the Archdiocese of Chicago at the urging of the Right Reverend Anthony O'Regan, auxiliary bishop.

Founding Pastor of Holy Family parish on Chicago's south side, Father Damen envisaged a large and beautiful church along with a large school in which the children of his predominantly Irish parishioners would receive the education that they had previously been denied. Holy Family school, which opened in 1865, was built to accommodate two thousand students. Intended for the education of boys exclusively, the school was conducted by Jesuit brothers. Eventually, the first parochial school
founded exclusively for the education of girls was also opened in Holy Family parish. The girls' school was conducted by the Religious of the Sacred Heart who came to Chicago at the request of Bishop O'Regan. In 1864, the Sacred Heart congregation established an academy and boarding school called the Seminary of the Sacred Heart, the precursor of Barat College at Lake Forest, Illinois.36

As Chicago's Catholic population increased, Father Damen realized, that despite two schools in operation, Holy Family parish's educational facilities were inadequate; that added schools would be needed in the diocese; and that "some unfailing source of trained teachers must be sought that would meet and supply the continuously increasing demand for more teachers and hold the schools firmly up to a set standard of study."37

On a mission tour through Iowa, Father Damen observed the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Impressed with their work, he resolved to secure these sisters for his parish in Chicago. In a letter written to Father Donagho by Sister Mary Margaret Mann, dated 22 February 1867, she wrote:

Father Damen has been here. He wants our sisters, six or nine, to teach in a parochial school in Chicago. He will provide for them a house furnished, an oratory and daily Mass, will pay $250.00 a year to each Sister and if they teach music, embroidery or painting, the income will be their own. Father Damen will do all he can for them. He would be glad to get nine sisters, but is willing to take six for a beginning.38

Following this correspondence, the two priests began
to make arrangements for the entrance of the sisters into Chicago. In Dubuque, Father Donaghohe discussed the proposal with the Right Reverend John Hennessey, Bishop of Dubuque, from whom he secured approval, blessing and permission for the community's new enterprise.

Father Donaghohe's next task was to assemble the sisters who would establish the first Chicago community and to select their superior. Father Donaghohe wrote Reverend Philip Laurent, Pastor of St. Mathias in Muscatine, Iowa, to ask whether Sister Mary Agatha Hurley could be taken from the parish to become the first Sister superior in the new Chicago parish. Father Laurent responded:

Our sisters are called to fill a position which no order yet was intended for, and that is, teaching our parochial schools and popularizing Catholicity among the masses. I have watched them here for the last four years, governed very little, criticized everything but not sharply, rather like a kind Aristarchus, and I must render them the good justice that they made themselves felt here and did good not only among Catholics but also among Protestants, by the standard of the school. They will not depend any more on one diocese, and they will have the Jesuits to guide them, which is saying a good deal. Thus you will be able to say: "I planted, the Jesuits watered, God has given the increase." I think you could not have made a better choice than Sister Mary Agatha for that new place, and I feel assured that in a few years Chicago will speak for itself... 39

Sister Mary Agatha Hurley and Sister Mary Veronica Dunphy were the first sisters to go to Chicago. The mission for which Father Donaghohe engaged them proved a turning point in their history. In August 1867, the community extended its labors beyond the boundaries of the
Dubuque diocese and into the young and fast growing city of Chicago. There it established the first of nearly forty parish grade schools, a number of which would have high school departments. There would follow two large central high schools for girls and a thriving college. From these would come many of its members.40

CONSTITUTIONS AND MISSION

The first formal Constitutions of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, whose legal title was Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary of St. Joseph, Dubuque County, Iowa, were prepared for submission to Rome. The Constitutions were strongly influenced by the Rule of St. Ignatius Loyola because Father Donaghoe was assisted in their formative preparation by the Jesuits of Frederick, Maryland.

The Jesuit Fathers Van Goch, Garesche, Coosemans, Koopmans and Lambert lent their valuable assistance to the work. The Constitutions which had been matured by experience and tested by many trials were given to the Jesuit fathers who prepared them for examination by the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars. The task of preparing the Latin copy was assigned to Mr. A. A. Lambert, S. J., then a scholastic, and to him the Rector, Father Coosemans, gave the necessary permission to proceed with the work. Father Lambert entered into it heartily and spared neither time nor labor until it was accomplished. Fathers Koopmans, Damen and other members of the Society of Jesus furthered the important step by their assistance and advice.41

Following Father Donaghoe's death in 1869, Mother Mary Frances Clarke proceeded to effect his plan to apply to the Holy See for the sanction and formal approbation of the
Constitutions. The process to secure recognition was so deliberate and meticulous that to ensure success, every detail was transmitted to the sisters by the Very Reverend Andrew Travis, the Postulator who presented the Rules to the Sacred Congregation in Rome. The proceedings continued until 1877 when Mother Mary Frances Clarke was notified on 19 September of the approbation of the Holy See. She also received a formal deed elevating the community into a congregation.

Mother Clarke was informed in a letter from Reverend A. J. Schulte of the American College in Rome that final approbation had been secured on 27 March 1885:

At last your long cherished desires have been fulfilled. Your Institute has received final approbation. I sent you a cablegram to that effect last Monday. . . . Out of the seventeen religious orders of women who have applications to this same effect at the Propaganda, yours is one of the first to receive attention, though some of the others had sent in their application long before yours was received.

Growth of the community necessitated modifications in the Constitutions’ rules governing the election of officers. Following promulgation of the modifications, final approbation was received from the Holy See in 1928.

The Constitutions, which specified that education was the community’s primary apostolate, emphasized that training the will and establishing character were of greater importance than the mere acquisition of knowledge. Religion remained the axis around which all work in the schools revolved, for without religion, Catholic schools
had no reason for being. The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary's choice of ministry was consonant with the B.V.M. mission: being free to help others enjoy freedom in God's steadfast love. Compelled by the example and word of Mary Frances Clarke in her sensitive response to critical human situations, the B.V.M.s have striven to seek and to attend to those in need, whatever this required of them.46

This educational mission of the Sisters of Charity would be manifest in Mundelein College, an institution which would herald the B.V.M. commitment: to provide women intellectual challenges within a Catholic heritage; to effect social justice for women and the poor; to transform society and culture with values inspired by faith; and, to foster the mutual enrichment of faith.
ENDNOTES


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3 Coogan, Vol. 1, 19.


5 Doran, 6-7.


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8 Coogan, Vol. 1, 16.

9 Doran, 7.

10 Coogan, Vol. 1, 18-19.

11 Doran, 7.

12 Coogan, Vol. 1, 19.

13 Doran, 7-8.

14 Ibid.

15 Sister Mary Anna Rose Callan, B.V.M., "The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Their Schools in Chicago 1867-1940" (M.A. Thesis, Loyola University of Chicago, 1941), 3.

16 Doran, 9.


18 Doran, 9.


20 Doran, 10-11.
21 Ibid.
22 Doran, 17-18.
23 Ibid.
24 Doran, 29.
25 Doran, 52.
26 Doran, 35-36.
27 Coogan, Vol. 1, 245.
28 Doran, 75-83.
29 Doran, 32.
30 Doran, 120-121.
31 Ibid.
32 Doran, 125.
33 Coogan, Vol. 1, 245.
34 Doran, 136-137.
35 Callan, "The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Their Schools in Chicago 1867-1940," 22.
36 Callan, "The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Their Schools in Chicago 1867-1940," 27.
38 Doran, 200-204.
39 Ibid.
40 Coogan, Vol. 1, 372.
41 Callan, "The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Their Schools in Chicago 1867-1940," 22.
42 Doran, 209.
44 Doran, 345.

45 Ibid.

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CHAPTER IV

FOUNDING AND DEVELOPMENT OF MUNDELEIN COLLEGE

FOR WOMEN IN THE 1930s

The B.V.M. Congregation first discussed the idea of establishing a women’s college in Chicago with Archbishop Quigley as early as 1911. Though this idea never came to fruition, his successor, Archbishop Mundelein expressed the need for a women’s college with the B.V.M.s in 1916. Badgered by the archbishop for six years, the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary finally consented to his wishes. A copy of Mother Isabella Kane’s handwritten notes, dated 15 November 1929, stated, "Mundelein - 6 yr. agitating."\(^1\)

The first mention of the name Mundelein for a college appeared in the archives of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in a letter dated 14 December 1928. Writing to her Congregation regarding plans that had been under consideration for some months, Mother Isabella Kane, the seventh superior general of the order, said: "His Eminence [George Cardinal Mundelein] has requested us to open in Chicago a college for women . . . located near Loyola University . . . and called Mundelein College [at our request]. For the success of this undertaking, I make
earnest appeal for prayers . . . ."²

Since this momentous enterprise was being undertaken at the Cardinal's suggestion, it was felt to be just and fitting that the name of the college commemorate to future generations the great churchman who was its founder.³

The building of Mundelein College for Women was to be Mother Isabella Kane's major accomplishment. Born in County Clare, Ireland on 15 November 1855, Mary Kane was the youngest of six children and the family's only girl. At the age of ten, she came to this country with her widowed mother and brothers and the family settled in Chicago. Mary, who entered the congregation on 25 May 1870 at the age of fourteen, taught voice, piano, violin, organ and harp and conducted classes in art as well. Shortly after her election as superior general in November 1919, Mother Isabella chose as her first major enterprise to establish a central high school for girls. The Immaculata High School for Girls, on Chicago's north side, opened on 9 September 1921. Other projects completed during her tenure include Mary Frances Clarke residence hall at Clarke College; Holy Angels High School, Milwaukee; remodeling of St. Mary High School and additions to Mt. Carmel Academy, Wichita, Kansas and Mt. St. Gertrude Academy, Boulder, Colorado. She was also responsible for the artistic renovation of the motherhouse chapel in Dubuque. The congregation added twenty-one new missions in the course of
Mother Isabella’s twelve year superiorship and to meet the immediate educational needs of the large groups of women entering the congregation, Mother Isabella established a junior college at Mt. Carmel, Dubuque, in affiliation with Clarke College. Mother Isabella’s accomplishments were recognized by Loyola University which awarded her the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws on 7 June 1933, a signal honor for a woman at the time. In presenting the citation, Father Samuel K. Wilson, S.J., stated:

Eminently a builder and organizer, she has sponsored not merely a material development of well-planned schools but also the higher education of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The enviable position her sisters occupy in the educational world throughout the middle west and on the east and west coasts, is due in no small part to her vision and courage.

At the time the Cardinal had chosen the B.V.M. congregation to found a college, the sisters had completed nearly one hundred years of service in Catholic education in the United States and had firmly established their reputation in the city of Chicago. Since their foundation by Mother Mary Frances Clarke in Philadelphia in 1833, the order had grown from a community of five pioneer sisters to a congregation numbering more than two thousand in charge of 125 schools in the United States.

Cardinal Mundelein’s proposal to Mother Isabella asked that the congregation finance and staff a commuter liberal arts college in which Chicago’s young women could obtain higher education at moderate cost.
a college in Chicago would give additional prestige to the community and most importantly, enable young sisters to get an education. ⁸

Although Mother Isabella had been negotiating with Marquette University regarding the planned opening of a women's college in affiliation with the university at the time of the Cardinal's proposal, she undertook the audacious charge.⁹ Mundelein also proposed that the college should be located near Loyola University on the rapid transit lines and that little money was to be spent on landscaping the grounds or providing recreational facilities. Joseph W. Mc Carthy, the Cardinal's architect who had recently completed St. Mary of the Lake major seminary for the archdiocese was assigned to begin the preliminary plans for the building.¹⁰

Cardinal Mundelein felt that "in a great city like Chicago, with its dense population, its enormous distances and its widely scattered residential districts, it is necessary that educational facilities, to be available at all, should be numerous and judiciously located."¹¹ With establishment of Mundelein on the north, women's colleges would encompass a broad geographical area with St. Xavier's on the south, Rosary on the west.

Sister Madelena Thornton, B.V.M., pioneer professor of English and journalism at Mundelein College, chronicled the day-to-day happenings of the college from the years 1930 to
1957 in a journal. The "Chronicles," a compilation of the history of the college, are available in the Mundelein College archives. In them, Sister Madelena wrote:

On the feast of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, July 11, 1929, Mother Mary Isabella appointed Sister Mary Justitia, B.V.M. at that time Provincial Superior of Holy Family Province, and formerly the first Superior of The Immaculata High School, to take charge of the arrangements for the new college and to act as the representative of the Community in Chicago during the period of construction.

In March 1929, after serious deliberation and an extensive study of various sites within the city of Chicago, the sisters agreed with Cardinal Mundelein that two hundred fifty feet of prime lake front land along Sheridan Road at its junction with Devon Avenue, just south of Loyola University and just west of Lake Michigan, was ideally suited to their needs. An artist herself, and an executive skilled in the planning of beautiful, useful buildings, Mother Mary Isabella in consultation with her Council, . . . and her representative, Sister Mary Justitia, and guided by the advice of two distinguished architects, Joseph W. Mc Carthy K.S.G. of Chicago, and Nairne Fisher of St. Cloud, Minnesota, decided upon a skyscraper building, and delegated to the two architects the preparation of plans.12

The site selected for the college extended 266 feet north to the campus of Loyola University, "thereby readily giving the college the benefit of lectures and special courses by the professors of Loyola," declared Cardinal Mundelein. Notwithstanding the Cardinal's observation, and although Loyola University cooperated generously with the struggling venture, the B.V.M. community never intended any affiliation with Loyola University; Mundelein College was to be an independent foundation.13 The choice of skyscraper architecture appealed to the Cardinal who told
the sisters, "I heartily approve of it because there will be no waste of time in going to and from buildings scattered over acres of campus." On 8 September 1929, accompanied by four sisters, Sister Mary Justitia took up residence at 6367 Sheridan Road, in a house adjoining the property designated for the new college.

On 29 October 1929, the stock market crash plunged the United States into the greatest depression in history. Spreading alarm and financial cataclysm across the nation, employment, trade, prices, and consumer spending collapsed. Within two weeks of the cataclysm, securities listed on the New York Stock Exchange had depreciated to 60 percent of their former value and investors, unable to meet margin calls, were wiped out of the market. On paper, $26 billion had been lost.

Despite the stock market crash, plans for the new college continued and construction of the world's first skyscraper college for women began on 1 November 1929, the ninety-sixth anniversary of the founding of the B.V.M. Congregation. Even though the Cardinal thought the project could be completed for $500,000, the sisters sagely quintupled his estimate. The Great Depression made fund raising difficult and the entire congregation sacrificed to meet the burden of the $90,000 annual interest costs on the $2,375,000 cost of the college.

Financing and building a college during the Great
Depression, a formidable endeavor in less precarious times, created a sensation. When the Cardinal asked Pius XI to give the sisters his special blessing upon completion of the building, the Pontiff consented. After signing the formal document of benediction, he wrote at the bottom of the parchment, "Per libenter in Domino" meaning "Very gladly in the Lord I do this." An officer of the Illinois Trust and Savings Bank on La Salle Street had followed the project from inception to completion. He said to the sisters, "You ladies launch and carry through projects that would make a business man tremble!"  

Early in 1930, quietly and with brief ceremony, the oblong cornerstone of white limestone was laid. The simply carved block bears a cross on a roughened background, with the inscription "Anno Domino" above the cross and the date, MCMXXX, beneath it. Within the cornerstone are official documents from the city and state, a portrait of Cardinal Mundelein, a copy of the history of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and a box of precious medals of their various patrons. 

The Great Depression proved to have one advantage. Since labor was readily available, the building contractor worked night and day shifts and excavation went on under the supervision of Sister Mary Justitia. In a little less than a year, construction of the skyscraper was completed. Built of white Indiana limestone and rising to a height of
190 feet, its beauty lay in the absolute simplicity of its long, sweeping lines. Because the skyscraper was erected upon landfill, massive caissons were sunk to support the superstructure and to secure the foundation against damage from the lake. From the beginning of work on the building until its completion, the congregation prayed to St. Philomena to prevent accidents to the men employed in the construction; not a single serious injury was suffered.\(^{19}\) The structure is one of the few Art Deco buildings in Chicago that remains in its original condition and is an excellent example of architecture that combines both beauty and function.

An edifice was only one phase in the formation of a college. As the skyscraper rose, Sister Mary Justitia sought a well-qualified faculty of B.V.M.s and lay persons to accomplish the college’s intellectual foundation. Sisters with advanced degrees matriculated at America’s leading universities to pursue doctoral studies and new members of the congregation with bachelor degrees were assigned to pursue further studies. Future Mundelein College faculty members were studying at Catholic University of America, Columbia, Notre Dame, Creighton, Loyola, Marquette, the American Conservatory of Music and state universities in Illinois, Michigan, and Colorado.\(^{20}\)

In his article entitled, "Ivy and Rectangles," Father Edward J. Reynolds, S.J., described the college as "one of
the finest conceptions in the new manner of set-back rectangular surfaces of stone, the bearer of a strange new beauty that in time will pass into novel and unhazarded beauties of mass and line."21 Sister Mary Justitia, satisfied with the design, stated: "Certainly here, both in the architecture and in the curriculum and pedagogic methods, our effort has been to unite the best that tradition can offer and the best of the modern."22

THE SKYSCRAPER COLLEGE IN 1930

Articles from newspapers of the time described the skyscraper college, towering over the neighboring mansions, as a powerful monument to the dynamism and character of American womanhood. Situated in the Rogers Park community eight miles north of the loop, the college faced south on Sheridan Road and commanded a sweeping view of the city skyline to the west and south and the campus of Loyola University to the north. Two colossal stone figures, symbolic of the spirit and intellectual ideals of the college, stood guard at the imposing entrance. On the right was the archangel Uriel, the flame of God described by Milton in Book III of "Paradise Lost" as the "sharpest sighted Spirit of all in Heaven."23 The archangel who inspired Ezra to write "Ecclesiasticus" hold a book in his left hand. His right arm upraised toward the heavens, pointed to a cross 150 feet aloft. The tip of the pointing forefinger reached the fourth floor of the facade and the
cross the eleventh. To the left of the entrance stood the archangel Jophiel, also written Jehudiel, the guardian of the Tree of Knowledge in Eden. Known as the beauty of God and the Remunerator, Jophiel held a star-set earth surmounted by a cross in his right hand and with his left held high the torch of knowledge.

Austere from the front, the building was massive from the rear and from the broad terraces on the setbacks at the fourth, eighth and eleventh floors unfolded a vast panorama of Chicago and the lake. Beneath the simply lettered name of the college on the facade, three entrance doors ornamented with alleghany metal opened into a spacious vestibule which gave entrance into a marble corridor. Situated to the right of the entrance were luxurious reception rooms and to the left, administrative offices. A curved staircase rose to the right and left of a recessed shrine in which the escutcheon of George Cardinal Mundelein was emblazoned on the vaulted ceiling. Within the shrine was an exquisite illumined marble Madonna, a gift of Mother Isabella to Mundelein College.

Collegiate departments occupied eight of the fifteen floors. The basement housed a student lounge, book store, locker room, store rooms, laundry and the building's mechanical systems. In addition to the administrative offices, the first floor housed a tea room, swimming pool, 1300 seat auditorium and formal reception rooms. The
second floor accommodated the modern language department, gymnasium, formal social rooms and the Stella Maris Chapel, the serene beauty of which was dignified with walls of softly tinted mankato stone, stained glass windows, polished reredos, inset stations imported from England, walnut pews and imported Italian carved Botticino and Montalto marble altars and railing.

The English, history, and sociology departments shared the third floor. The fourth floor accommodated the home economics department's clothing and dietetics laboratories, a four room model apartment and the community room. With the addition of the new library building in September 1934, the area of the fourth floor [formerly occupied by the library, reading, reference and periodical rooms] was converted into a study hall. The north corridor on the fourth floor accessed an outdoor exercise roof, which though frequently furnished as a roof garden, had been used for regulation tennis.

The social science, classics, and mathematics departments and the commerce department, which featured a fully equipped model office, occupied the fifth floor. Chemistry, physics, zoology, botany, geology, astronomy, embryology and bacteriology laboratories and two science lecture halls comprised the sixth floor.27 The physics department possessed a Foucault pendulum which, suspended nine stories in an unoccupied elevator shaft, was the
longest of its kind in existence and the only one of its kind, so far as is known, to have its movement recorded by an electric spark. Besides recording the precession of the earth, the pendulum enables the physics department to maintain a permanent record of the value of the gravitational constant for the Chicago area.28

The soundproofed seventh floor accommodated the music department classrooms, twenty ample rehearsal rooms for orchestra and glee club and a spacious music library of eighteen hundred music shelves. Although the library afforded an impressive view of Lake Michigan, it was eclipsed by the terraced conservatory with its flowing marble fountain, singing birds, flowering plants and superb views east, west and overhead. This solarium also served as an informal laboratory for botany students.

The art and drama departments occupied the eighth floor which also housed a compact little theater and a radio broadcasting studio. This floor also accessed roof gardens on the east and west elevations. Floors nine to fifteen were exclusive to the cloister.29

AIMS OF THE COLLEGE

Launched with incredible speed and built in less than a year, Mundelein College was audacious and much like Athena when she sprang into being. A structure under construction and completely unfurnished one month, was home to almost four hundred the next. A library, unshelved unclassified, and uncataloged one month, was in use by hundreds of students the next. A faculty created in
August of 1930, was conducting classes in September of 1930. The strain of birth was shared by all who shaped its creation. The burden of debt was terrific and countless challenges required attention: maintaining parity with established schools; winning students’ respect; instituting a standard of scholarship; and, challenging the faculty to meet ever increasing needs.30

On 15 November 1929 Mother Mary Isabella Kane, B.V.M. recorded her thoughts on the purpose of Mundelein college:

Commend to warm interest of all our Sisters our project, Mundelein College, which was undertaken for the sole purpose of promoting the glory of God by our work therein. The college is an effort to maintain and confirm the prestige of our Sisters in the educational field, and to secure for our loved Congregation promising recruits whom we might otherwise lose. I bespeak the earnest prayers of all our dear Sisters that God may bless the project and that in this, as in all things, we may do His holy will.31

Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M. was destined to guide the college through its charter years. Supported by her faculty, she directed all of her energies not only to establish a great college, but also to establish a great Catholic college. Mundelein’s first catalogue stated that the primary aims of the college were three:

- to uphold standards for sound scholarship, cultivated taste, and disciplined intelligence;
- to train in fundamentals of morality and religion;
- to equip successive generations of youth to live wholly and generously in the world of affairs and to give for the commonweal a service of loyalty, self-sacrifice, and patriotism.

To attain these goals, the curriculum includes the necessary philosophical, cultural, and vocational
courses, which if pursued with seriousness, should secure the formation of a sterling character, a broadened and enriched background and if necessary the power of economic independence.32

Sister Justitia stated:

The building of character is the essential part of education, and that cannot be attained without moral, without religious training. We think that a certain amount of discipline also is necessary for the modern college girl. She feels that she must be allowed a great measure of freedom, but we feel that she needs a greater amount of direction and guidance in college than in her high school years because of her enlarged desire to get away from home restraint, her social cravings, and her more frequent contacts with the outside world. . . . We have not favored co-education. The essence of the matter is that without co-education much greater attention can be given to study and far more time to the formation of sound character. But I am not in favor of a faculty of women exclusively for the teaching of women. We have a balanced faculty and Father Robert M. Kelley, S.J., President of Loyola University, has given to Mundelein the service of his best men.33

FACULTY AND CURRICULUM

George Cardinal Mundelein accepted the Chancellorship of the college and Sister Mary Justitia was appointed Superior of the Community and President of the college. Mother Mary Isabella designated Sister Mary Evangela, Dean; Sister Mary Christella, Registrar; Sister Mary Alfonso, Econome; and, Sister Mary Bartella, Bursar. Sister Mary Tertulla and Sister Mary Angelita were appointed Councillors to the President.34 The sisters on the faculty included Sisters Mary Augustina, Aluigi, St. Genevieve, Francis Xavier, Rafael, Cecile, Leola, Callista, Bernarda, Janet, St. Victor, Katrina, St. Remi, Vincentina,
Angelica, Consuelo, Donald, Birginelle, St. Leonard, Ethna, Robert Hugh, Lorraine, Sylvester, Francine, Columba, Irma, John Michael, Laurella, Anna Rose, Angeletta, Alisa, Madelina, and Gregoria.35

The college also employed professors from Loyola and other universities to teach classes. Included in this group were Reverend Claude J. Pernin, S.J., religion; Reverend Leonard H. Otting, S.J., philosophy; Reverend T. J. Bouscaren, S.J., psychology; Reverend Samuel Knox Wilson, S.J., American history; Reverend Eneas B. Goodwin, S.J., political science; Reverend David Bellemore, S.J., French conversation; Paul Kiniery, Ph.D., sociology; Reverend Raymond Bellock, S.J., student spiritual director; Francis Ryan, Ph.D., education; George M. Schmeing, M.S., chemistry; Maxine Gardner Nelson, A.M., English; Ethel Magnuson, B.S., swimming; Beatrice Marshall, A.B., physical education; Otto A. Singenberger, Glee Club and choral; H. J. Beringer, orchestra; William H. Conley, B.S.C., debate; and, Monica Reynolds, R.N., home hygiene.36

A charter granting Mundelein College the right to confer the usual collegiate degrees was granted by the legislature of the State of Illinois on 16 January 1930.37 In 1933 Mundelein College was admitted to the Catholic Educational Association and in 1934 was placed on the "A list of accredited colleges" by the University of Illinois board of inspectors.38
Mundelein College opened its doors on 29 September 1930 with an enrollment of 384 students, 250 of whom were freshmen. The original intention was to enroll only freshmen. Numerous petitions from priests moved the administration to accept a limited number of sophomores and juniors. Tuition was seventy-five dollars per semester. Students came from sixty-nine high schools and represented more than one dozen nationalities, including one student from China and another from Puerto Rico.39

The curriculum was based on that offered by the University of Illinois. The most popular subjects were English, history, home economics, drama, music, and sociology. In addition, courses were offered in art, astronomy, biology, chemistry, classics, education, French, geology, German, history, economics, journalism, library science, mathematics, philosophy, psychology, physical education, physics, political science, religion, Spanish, and speech.40 A course in Papal Encyclical, especially recommended by the Holy Father and introduced in 1932, was designed to carry out his wishes of "bringing to bear upon the most pressing problems of the day the full force of those principles of justice and charity in which alone they will find their solution."41

Extracurricular activities in the first semester included the Laetare Players, Orchestra, Cecilians, Glee Club, Classical Club, Chemistry Club, German Club, Home
Economics Club, Stylus Club and the Press Club. Students debated and wrote in those first years. Four literary publications were born and each won national prizes: The Skyscraper, the first Mundelein newspaper; Clepsydra, the college literary magazine, later renamed the Mundelein College Review; The Tower, the college yearbook; and, Quest, a poetry anthology.

THE CARDINAL'S GIFT

The Kilgen Liturgical organ, installed in the orchestra pit at the base of the stage, was the gift of Cardinal Mundelein to the college. It was heard for the first time on the occasion of the college's first public intercollegiate debate when Mundelein won a decision over Loyola University by defending the negative side of the question: "Resolved: That the Emergence of Women into Public Life is to be Deplored." Voiced expressly for the acoustics of the auditorium, the Kilgen is a Three Manual and Pedal Organ of thirty-seven Registers, divided as follows: Great Organ, ten; Swell Organ, eleven, Choir Organ, nine; Pedal Organ, seven.

The shield of the college is emblazoned above the proscenium arch of the auditorium. Its principal device is the phoenix, a mythical bird from Arabia and the symbol of immortality, said to rise from its ashes after immolating on a funeral pyre. The phoenix typifies Chicago rising from the plains after the fire in 1871 and the
church rising superior to persecution. The motto on the shield is St. John's "Via, Veritas, Vita."\(^46\)

On 17 October 1931 Cardinal Mundelein sent another gift to the college with his niece, Rita Eppig, a member of the charter class. In a letter to Sister Mary Justitia, he stated:

I am sending you with Rita a number of exhibits of autograph letters and manuscripts of celebrated people and of particular interest to the students of Mundelein College. Among this you will find a document signed by Ferdinand and Isabella who made possible the discovery of America by Columbus: a document in the handwriting and with the signature of George Washington, the father of our country: a letter of Daniel Carroll, who with his brothers, Archbishop John Carroll and Charles Carroll of Carrollton, all friends of Washington, whose letters you have constitute the outstanding Catholic family of Revolutionary times. In addition, there is the large autographed engraved portrait of Longfellow and the letters of ten other leading English and American authors and essayists and original musical scores of well known composers. I intend later to add others, including at least one canonized saint and one of the Sovereign Pontiffs. I am sending these original letters to the college that bears my name, not only because these exhibits have monetary value of their own, but because few other institutions have them and because they certainly do contribute to the interest and culture of the students, for, to me nothing is so proprietary and so reminiscent of a person as his own signature.\(^47\)

The first graduating class was comprised of twenty-three members who received their diplomas from the Cardinal on 3 June 1932. In 1933 Bishop Sheil conferred degrees on thirty graduates and in the following year, eighty-eight members of the charter class were graduated with the Cardinal officiating and thereby conferring the Bachelor of Arts degree on his niece, Rita Eppig.\(^48\)
In only four years, the college had outgrown its fifteen story skyscraper. Increasing enrollment made a larger library facility and a student residence necessary. Accommodations for a growing number of students from remote sections of the city were necessary.

LIBRARY AND RESIDENCE HALL

In December 1933 the sisters purchased a white Italian marble mansion fronting Sheridan Road for use as a library and a red brick mansion that stood between the college and the lakeside mansion as a residence hall. The residence of Italian marble was originally owned by Albert G. and Cassie Wheeler. The Eastern bred couple moved to Chicago in 1906 when Albert became the chief engineer of the planned Chicago Tunnel System. Cassie was given the opportunity to share in the design of their new home. Her husband built her design and the result was a magnificent seventeen room mansion. The Wheelers lived in their mansion for eight years but were forced to return East after a bill authorizing the building of the Chicago Tunnel System failed to pass the City Council. Mr. Wheeler died shortly thereafter.

Their dream house was sold to Albert M. Johnson, an insurance millionaire. According to pioneer faculty member, Sister Mary Irma Corcoran, B.V.M., when the red brick mansion between Mr. Johnson’s property and Mundelein was put up for sale, he outbid the college by $25,000. He
offered the house, rent free, to Paul Rader, a preacher of some renown who conducted revival meetings in the shadow of the now landlocked college. Not long after that, Mr. Johnson declared bankruptcy and both his property and the revival meeting house which later became Philomena Hall, were on the auction block for a fraction of what the college had hoped to pay for the adjacent property alone. Sister Mary Justitia, B.V.M., the President of the college, in a letter to the Mother General, wrote:

Mr. Johnson told me he lost fifteen million dollars in the past three years. . . . The more I think of the whole affair, the more I feel it is a miracle that we have come into possession of the white mansion and the red brick mansion. . . . Each day the whole event seems more and more marvelous to me.

Named for St. Philomena, martyred Grecian princess and a special patron of the B.V.M.s, the red brick residence hall marked the beginning of a permanent change in Mundelein's status as a strictly commuter college.

The beautiful Italian marble mansion on the shore of Lake Michigan opened as a 75,000 volume library in 1934. This library had two spacious reading rooms with mahogany wainscoted walls, massive fireplaces, broad window seats, an octagonal browsing room, and a walnut finished periodical room. A wide mahogany staircase which led to the stacks on the second and third floors was graced by an eight feet by ten feet Tiffany window.

The library housed some valuable books. The ten
thousand volume Rothensteiner Collection, part of which was assembled in the Rothensteiner Room on the second floor, was the gift in 1937 of the Most Reverend Monsignor John Rothensteiner, censor librorum of the archdiocese of St. Louis. Many of the volumes were rare early editions including manuscripts of Greek, Latin, Spanish, French, German and English classics. The collection was strong in priceless Aldines, Bodonis and Elzevirs and also contains the writings on mathematics of Nicholas Cardinal Cusa. There was no other copy of this book (Basle, 1565) in the United States and none in the Cardinal’s own see city of Basle. Several letters of Frederic Mistral, the Provencal poet, were notable items in the manuscript section of this collection.

The college also acquired by gift, the valuable collection of the late Bishop Muldoon’s Greek, Latin and French library of two thousand volumes. Included in this collection were vellum bound volumes of the writings of the early fathers of the church, and Bossuet, Pascal and Chateaubriand. The library also included three incunabula, two the gifts of Monsignor Rothensteiner and the third, a Latin Bible, the gift of George Cardinal Mundelein. Added gifts to the college included a marble reproduction of Michaelangelo’s "Pieta" presented to the college in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Doyle and their daughter, Elizabeth; the $7,000 dollar estate of Monsignor Farrell;
tapestries; and, a collection of Currier and Ives prints of early American life.\textsuperscript{55}

James O’Donnell Bennett, a Chicago Tribune feature writer presented the college with a twenty-four volume Thistle edition of Robert Louis Stevenson’s complete works. Cardinal Mundelein presented the original manuscript of Sabine Baring-Gould’s hymn, "Onward Christian Soldiers," written on the author’s personal stationary. He also gave a personal letter from Pope Pius XI, bearing the Pontiff’s signature. Mundelein’s gift of fifty-five historic documents, portraits, signatures and letters of forty-seven signatories of the Declaration of Independence was one of the rarest and most sought items for any autograph collection.\textsuperscript{56}

**ADMINISTRATION**

The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary comprised a congregation which knew how to establish schools, having built and staffed Clarke College in Dubuque, Iowa and many parish schools in Chicago. Founding Mundelein College was a unique enterprise. The college’s skyscraper design, commuter student body, major urban location and enormous debt service in the midst of a depression presented unparalleled challenges to its creation.

Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M., served as the first and third president of the college, from 1930 to 1936
and again from 1939 to 1945. Traditionally, the presidents of Clarke and Mundelein colleges served six year terms. While president, they were also the superior, and that role was limited to six years by Canon Law. They not only held the office of president, but also the position of religious superior whose responsibilities included the health, well-being, and religious life of the sisters at the college. Sister Mary Justitia had the responsibility not only to build a college and to plan for its faculty and students but also to preserve the health and well being of the religious. Sister Mary Justitia was a logical choice as she herself was somewhat of a pioneer. In a time when education for women was not universally accepted, she was one of the first sisters admitted to study and to receive a degree at Catholic University of America, and one of the first admitted to its graduate school. The "Chronicles" state:

The dauntless courage with which Sister Mary Justitia assumed the almost superhuman tasks which lay before her, the unwavering faith with which she moved heaven and earth, the park board and city officials were stupendous, unbelievable, and ultimately, funny. She loved ceremony as much as Cardinal Mundelein himself. Whenever His Eminence appeared for commencement exercises, Sister Justitia persuaded the Chicago police to block off Sheridan Road for four blocks and to provide a mounted police honor guard for the Cardinal. The Knights of St. Gregory, in plumes and swords, escorted the Cardinal
up the college steps to the flourish of silver trumpets. 59

In the spring of 1936, when the Public Works Commission (PWA) excavated the streets of the city and reinstalled electric cables under the pavement, sister persuaded the park board to plant trees before the college and to water every week. 60 By 1936, under the steadfast leadership of Sister Mary Justitia, Mundelein had become a well known institution. Business graduates were respected in famous corporations, dietitians were working in large city hospitals and the drama department had made the nation Mundelein conscious. NBC asked for rights to the Verse Speaking Choir and each Friday, a million listeners tuned in to the program.

With the accession of Sister Mary Consuela Martin in August, 1936 the first era of Mundelein history was ending. At the opening of the 1936-37 academic year, 520 students enrolled; 489 enrolled for the 1937-38 academic year; and at the beginning of the 1938-39 school year, enrollment numbered 492 students of whom 72 were not residents of Chicago. In November, Mundelein was admitted to membership in the Association of American Colleges and steps were taken toward membership in the North Central Association of Colleges and Universities and in the Association of American Universities. 61

In August 1939 Sister Mary Justitia returned to Mundelein College as president, and in September enrollment
numbered 535 students. Represented in the freshman class which numbered 260 students, of whom 91.6 percent were Catholic, were girls from three continents and five countries. During her second presidency, Sister Mary Justitia instituted corrective English classes for students with a deficiency in English rhetoric, case work in the sociology department, fencing and charm and personality. A course in Papal Encyclicals for sophomores, juniors and seniors was added to the curriculum. To meet local need, adult classes in home economics were instituted primarily for the benefit of young married women in the Rogers Park and Uptown neighborhoods.

On 2 October 1939, George Cardinal Mundelein, chancellor of the college, died in his sleep at his home in Mundelein, Illinois and the entire faculty and student body united in paying a last tribute to the churchman. They stood before the purple draped facade of the school as the funeral cortège moved up Sheridan Road on its way to St. Mary of the Lake Seminary.

CURRICULUM CHANGES

The secretarial department closed its one year course, while retaining the two year course and resolved to emphasize increasingly the value of a four year course with a major in economics. The encyclical course, originally introduced in 1932 and approved by the Holy Father in 1939,
was extended to the freshman class during the year 1939-40. The course in the use of the library given to freshmen as part of their orientation lectures was extended to include ten periods of instruction terminated by an examination on research techniques sponsored by the English department and the library.

During the summer of 1940, Reverend James Kush, St. Mary of the Lake Seminary, conducted a course in Gregorian chant in which seventy-five religious were enrolled. By vote of the faculty, students who received semester grades of "A" in subjects which they continued through a second semester were not bound by absence penalties in these subjects. Students exempted from absence regulations were required, nevertheless, to be present for all announced tests and to be responsible for all material covered during class periods.65

ACCREDITATION

After ten years of growth, Mundelein received the recognition it had sought since its opening. The college was accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. It was placed on the approved list of colleges and became a member of the Association.66

During the 1939-40 academic year, Mundelein College was admitted to membership in the American Council on Education. Previously accredited by the Illinois Department of Education, the University of Illinois, which
gave the college a "class A" rating, Mundelein was also admitted into membership in the Association of American Colleges, the National Catholic Education Association and the Federation of Illinois Colleges and Universities.

In fall, 1939, the New York Times announced that the Mundelein Review had placed first in a survey of college literary magazines conducted by the journalism department at Seton Hall College, New Jersey. A fitting conclusion to the college year occurred at commencement when Samuel A. Stritch, newly appointed Archbishop of Chicago conferred degrees on sixty-six graduates and was formally welcomed to the college as its second chancellor.

SUMMARY

To bring about the fulfillment of the aim of the college, to:

uphold standards for sound scholarship, cultivated taste and disciplined intelligence; to train in fundamentals of morality and religion; to equip successive generations of youth to live wholly and generously in the world of affairs and to give for the commonweal a service of loyalty, self-sacrifice and patriotism. . . .

required a strong foundation. To acquire the proper solidity for such an undertaking, the faculty and Mundelein student body began to establish a set of befitting traditions while the college was in its infancy. Among these which began almost with the school were: the official opening of the school year with the Mass of the Holy Ghost,
the candle lighting ceremonies at Christmas, musical programs scheduled throughout the year, an annual retreat, and programs provided by the Laetare Players. 69

Attendance at Mundelein had almost doubled since its first day in September 1930 and the college had graduated 598 girls to date. Faculty membership also increased, and comprised fifty-eight Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and twenty other professors. 70 As Mundelein's first full decade of educating women drew to a close, the college had become an institution with high academic standards and an impressive record of achievement in those beginning years. The future could only be bright.
1. Mother Mary Isabella Kane, B.V.M., Dubuque, Handwritten notes in folder, 15 November 1929, B.V.M. archives, Mr. Carmel, Dubuque, 10.


3. Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Mundelein College Faculty, "In Appreciation" to (Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago), TLS, undated, Mundelein College Archives, Mundelein College, Chicago.


5. Samuel K. Wilson, S.J., "Citation for Mother Isabella, 7 June 1933," Mundelein College Archives, Chicago, Illinois.


7. Kane, Handwritten Notes in Folder, 6.


13. Coogan, 55.


16 Kantowicz, 95-96.

17 Bennett, 1, 8.

18 Sister Mary Irma Corcoran, B.V.M. of Chicago, interview by author, 26 April 1989, Chicago, tape recording in possession of author, Chicago.


20 Ibid.


22 Bennett, 1, 8.


24 Bennett, 1.

25 Ibid.

26 Thornton, 7-9.

27 Ibid.

28 Mundelein College Catalogue, 1939-40, 11.

29 Thornton, 7-9.

30 Ibid.

31 Kane, Handwritten Notes in Folder, 10.

32 Mundelein College Catalogue, 1934, 8.

33 Bennett, 1, 8.

34 Thornton, 13.

35 Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M., Chicago, Illinois, to (B.V.M. Board of Trustees, Dubuque, Iowa), TD, August 15, 1934, President's Papers, President's Year End Reports, 1930-1936, Mundelein College Archives, Mundelein College, Chicago.
36. Thornton, 14.
37. Mundelein College Catalogue, 1934, 8.
38. Mundelein College Catalogue, 1934, 8.
41. Sister Mary Anna Rose Callan, B.V.M., "The Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Their Schools in Chicago" (M.A. thesis, Loyola University, 1941), 132.
42. Mundelein College Catalogue, 1931-1932, 18.
43. Mundelein College Catalogue, 1931-1932, 56.
47. George Cardinal Mundelein, Chicago, Illinois, to (Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M., Chicago, Illinois) LS 17 October 1932, Mundelein College Archives, Mundelein College, Chicago.
48. Coffey, President’s Year End Reports, 1930-1936.
49. Thornton, "Chronicles," 83.
52. Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M., Chicago, Illinois, to [Mother Mary Gervase, B.V.M., Dubuque, Iowa], LS 18 January 1934, Mundelein College Archives, Mundelein College, Chicago.
54. Bennett, 1, 8,
55 Coffey, President's Year End Reports, 1939-1945, 9.
56 Ibid.


59 Kantowicz, 96.
60 Thornton, "Chronicles," 39.

61 Sister Mary Consuela Martin, B.V.M., Chicago, Illinois, to [B.V.M. Board of Trustees, Dubuque, Iowa], TD, 15 August 1939, President's Papers, President's Year-End Reports, 1936-1939, Mundelein College Archives, Mundelein College, Chicago.

62 Sister Mary Justititia Coffey, B.V.M., Chicago, Illinois, to [B.V.M. Board of Trustees, Dubuque, Iowa], TD, 15 August 1940, President's Papers, President's Year-End Reports, 1939-1945, Mundelein College Archives, Mundelein College, Chicago.

63 Thornton, Mundelein Now, 5-8.
64 Ibid.
65 Ibid.
66 Ibid.

67 Thornton, Mundelein Now, 5-8.

68 Mundelein College Catalogue, 1939-1940, 8-9.


70 The Skyscraper, 28 September 1940, 2.
CHAPTER V

GROWTH OF THE COLLEGE IN THE 1940s

With the advent of Mundelein's second decade, the college would reflect with satisfaction on the achievements of its first decade during which 662 degrees were conferred. Conceived as a progressive experiment in higher education for Catholic women, Mundelein College for Women owed its existence to the vision of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary who championed a new center of higher education which would enable young women to take their places in a modern society. From its inception, Mundelein's mission was to provide Catholic women with a sensible education grounded in the liberal arts; to prepare them to earn a living; and to enhance their personal growth through cultural and intellectual development.¹

In August 1941, to commemorate its first decade and to reaffirm its mission, the college published "Ten Years of Achievement: Mundelein College." The publication contained a survey of the first ten graduating classes "to discover what measure of the collegian is evident in the mature women; to what extent their training is an influence in the careers of Mundelein Alumnae."²

The profile of the Mundelein girl of the first decade
was of one not too seriously affected by the economic severity of her adolescence years. However, the legacy of the Great Depression, that every individual should be prepared for the eventuality of employment in the event of financial need, prompted her to enroll at Mundelein. She not only wanted to have a college education but also to become a vital part of the new world that was emerging around her. Schooled in professionalism, gentility and social graces, these young college graduates, confident of their capabilities as women, were prepared for leadership in their jobs and communities. During the college's first ten years, of the 662 degrees conferred, 55 were in fine arts, 79 in natural and applied sciences, 283 in social sciences and 245 in languages and literature. See table 5.1.
Table 5.1

Degrees Conferred by Discipline 1930-1940

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aesthetics</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Art</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biology</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chemistry</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathematics</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physics</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sciences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>12.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Education</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sociology</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>11.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Languages and Literature</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classics</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>21.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Science</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: "Ten Years of Achievement: Mundelein College" 4-7.
In 1941, the average Mundelein alumna was about twenty-five years of age, lived in Chicago, had been out of college for four years and had done some graduate work after leaving Mundelein. Having been active in campus affairs, she readily assumed roles of social and civic leadership. The average alumna was doing remarkably well both professionally and personally because her vocation was an extension of her Mundelein training. Career choices of alumnae from Mundelein’s first decade relate significantly with their academic training. See Table 5.2.
### Table 5.2

Career Choices of Mundelein Graduates, 1930-1950

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homemaker</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate student</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business woman</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>15.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social worker</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penwoman</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home economist</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scientist</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drama/radio artist</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Musician</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Librarian</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawyer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>662</td>
<td>112.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The percent total exceeds 100 because some respondents of the survey indicated that they were employed in two or more occupations.

Source: "Ten Years of Achievement: Mundelein College," 4-7.
In the brief span of ten years, 32 Mundelein graduates had taken advanced degrees; 35 were engaged in full time graduate or professional study; and, 131 others were combining graduate study with other careers. Ninety percent of Mundelein trained artists were commercial artists, teachers or were pursuing graduate degrees. Ann Lally, '35, went from teacher of art at Carl Schurz High School to art supervisor of thirty-two Chicago public schools. More than one hundred graduates were holding responsible positions as advertisers, buyers, statisticians, personnel workers, accountants and bank assistants. Nine of those who majored in drama taught drama; four were radio actresses and radio script writers. Mercedes McCambridge, '37, signed a five year contract with the National Broadcasting Company following an afternoon performance by the Mundelein Verse Speaking Choir in 1936. Home economist graduates were employed as nutritionists, teachers, dietitians, and demonstrators. Some music majors were teaching in their own studios; one was a concert cellist; others were choir directors and composers.5

In the years following Mundelein's first graduating class in 1932, twenty-six alumna had achieved notable success in creative and journalistic writing; science graduates were pursuing careers as laboratory technicians, research assistants and teachers; and liberal arts majors were making their contributions as social workers and
teachers. Many alumnae combined homemaking with another career and twenty-seven were called to lives consecrated to God. Although Mundelein shaped the career ambitions of numerous young women, many among the college’s gifted group of alumnae believed that the richest career was in the home. Mundelein also nourished this ambition, confident in the belief that our country needed cultured, intelligent, capable wives and mothers. 6

Mundelein’s students responded to the aspirations and labors of the administration and faculty and the college proved itself eminently capable of meeting their needs. Guided by the spirit of Mary Frances Clarke and the B.V.M. tradition honed during a century of service in the United States, the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary proved to be professionally aligned to the needs of Catholic youth.

NEW PROJECTS

The second decade found Mundelein College confidently charting a course of growth and expansion. The spirit of experimentation which marked its founding was succeeded by an interest in academic innovation as the keystone for the college’s eleventh year. Mundelein and twenty-seven cooperating member colleges were selected by the North Central Association of Schools and Colleges to participate in a two year program of innovation and educational studies. As part of the program, Mundelein adopted a five
hour plan which required that all freshmen take three basic subjects, each for five hours a week, in addition to religion and physical education. Although faculty dissatisfaction resulted in cancellation of the program at the conclusion of the 1940-41 academic year, adoption of the program typified the innovations for which Mundelein would become known. The college’s departure from orthodoxy was evident in its adoption of the Big Sister program for freshmen and which was promoted in the sophomore year. In addition, courses were added to the curriculum, including labor problems, euthenics, meteorology, the geography of South America, speech reeducation, Latin origins of English words and Greek origins of English words. 7

VICTORY PROGRAM

America’s post-depression economy was scarcely stabilized when England and France declared war on Germany following Germany’s invasion of Poland on 1 September 1939. America’s response to the events in Europe was swift. Dr. Hugh Studebaker, the National Director of Education, broadcast appeals to America’s educators to promote students’ patriotism, awareness of their national heritage, national defense and world affairs through forums and lectures. Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M., the college’s resourceful and flexible president, also recognizing that Mundelein’s students should be well
informed, inaugurated a series of programs which included: lectures on the war situation by Carroll Binder, foreign editor of the Chicago Daily News; lectures on chemistry in warfare by Lt. Col. A. M. Prentiss of the Sixth Corp Area; lectures on European affairs by Dr. Gerhardt Schacher, author and commentator; and, lectures on the fall of France by Dr. Yves Simon, of the University of Notre Dame.  

Concurrently, the college newspaper, The Skyscraper, presented a series of "American" editorials and a regular column of quizzes on North and South American history. Publication of the history quizzes coincided with the college's newly formed Pan-American forensics society's discussions of the question: "Resolved: That the Nations of the Western Hemisphere Should Form a Permanent Union." At the entreaty of the John Marshall Law School, two members of the forensics society broadcast informal discussions on "The College Student and Defense" over radio station WCFL. The discussions were so popular that Mundelein debaters were invited to participate during the 1941-42 school year. Mundelein's participation in the war effort also included radio programs, produced and performed by Radio Script and Radio Acting classes, on patriotic themes stressing national unity.  

1940-1945

In the fall of 1940 the Home Economics department entered the field of defense with the introduction of a
weekly series of menus which appeared in six neighborhood newspapers serving the area around the college. The Star Budget Menu Service was planned to assist homemakers of the average family of four in budgeting, buying, conserving, preparing and serving nutritious and appetizing meals. Foods on the menus were selected in conformity with the Bureau of Surplus marketing recommendations of currently available foods at local prices. The menus were retitled "War Nutrition" with the issue of 13 February 1942.\(^{10}\)

In the spring of 1941, the theme of the annual water carnival was the course of the Pan-American highway. Called "The Pan-American Way," its water ballets described the highway from Alaska to Cape Horn. The 1942 water carnival, devoted to an imaginary airplane flight to armed forces bases all over the country, described military, naval and marine corps activities from Iceland to the Pacific.\(^{11}\)

The Mundelein Armistice Day program was carried by NBC over station WMAQ on 12 November. Produced through the combined efforts of the radio script writing class, the radio acting class, the Glee Club and the Speech Choir, the program was a tribute to women's contributions to American civilization. On 2 June 1941 Archbishop Samuel Stritch gave the commencement address and presented degrees to sixty-five seniors. Later that month the summer session opened with 158 students.\(^{12}\)

Emphasis on defense activities and world affairs
continued during the next academic year and students were encouraged to volunteer for service with the Office of Civilian Defense and other organizations. When classes resumed on 22 September 1941, enrollment stood at 530 including 99 students who comprised the largest junior class in the college’s history.13

America’s war efforts changed dramatically at 7:55 A.M. on Sunday, 7 December 1941 when airplanes of the Imperial Empire of Japan attacked the United States naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. In the two hour attack, America suffered the loss of 8 battleships, 3 cruisers, 4 destroyers, 188 aircraft and numerous anti-aircraft batteries. Military and civilian dead numbered 3,435 of whom more than 1,700 died on the battleship Arizona.14 In response to the unprovoked attack upon the forces of the United States on "a day that will live in infamy," President Franklin Delano Roosevelt made a declaration of war against the Empire of Japan.

Mundelein College responded to the needs of a nation at war. Dedicating its resources to the national call to arms, plans were formulated for Mundelein’s contribution in the drive to victory. Upon the recommendations of the U.S. Office of Education Wartime Commission, Mundelein made plans to adjust its curriculum and activities to wartime needs. The federal government suggested that colleges for women could contribute most to the victory effort by
maintaining their present curricula and by introducing short, intensive defense courses. Accordingly, plans for the new semester were made and many courses were added to those indirectly contributing to the victory effort. Mundelein Red Cross classes in first aid, nutrition and home nursing were filled and intensive courses in stenography were opened. The physics department inaugurated a flight observers course to train students to prepare for emergency reporting from the air in case of attack or sabotage. The course included instruction in Morse code and signalling, map study, and meteorology.\(^{15}\)

Faculty and student committees were appointed to the Chicago division of the Office of Civilian Defense. When Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau Jr., wired the college requesting a campus defense stamp drive, proceeds of the junior prom were given to the drive. To make it possible for students to finish classes earlier to secure vital defense work for the summer, the dates for semester examinations and for the opening of the new semester were advanced. Students were permitted to accelerate their programs by attending three regular academic years and four summer sessions, provided they maintained grade point averages of B or above.\(^{16}\)

When Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M., college president, was appointed by Governor Dwight H. Green to serve on the Educator's Division of the Illinois State
Council of War, the cadet teacher program was expanded to all departments. Whereas, only art, drama, and music students had been eligible, fifteen students from various liberal arts departments became student teachers.\textsuperscript{17}

Resident students, under the direction of campus yardman William McVittie, planted a victory garden near the library and a group of students volunteered to assist in a U.S. Treasury Department program planned to train bond salesmen.\textsuperscript{18} Thirty-six students volunteered as war bond minute men to take pledges from neighborhood residents. Mundelein students also assisted as clerks in area public schools during the distribution of rationing books.\textsuperscript{19} Mundelein faculty and staff members who wished to join the war effort were granted leaves of absence to enter army or government service.

In April 1942 the art and history departments collaborated to present the course of the war to the student body. Their collaborative effort was an enormous map, four feet by eight feet, on which weekly changes on the various war fronts would be painted in oils by the art department. Territory of the allies was painted in shades of red; territory of the axis was shown in green and neutral countries were shown in yellow. Tabulation of the war news was the contribution of the history department which dictated which boundaries were to be changed from week to week. The map was hung in the main corridor where
passing students would study it. The academic year concluded with the eleventh annual commencement exercises on 1 June 1942 at which Archbishop Samuel Stritch gave the commencement address and conferred degrees on sixty-two seniors.

In September 1942, 595 students, including 252 freshmen, registered for the thirteenth academic year. As America’s first year at war drew to a close, the faculty of Mundelein College was convinced that college trained women were vital to the nation’s war effort and that the conservation and direction of womanpower was as grave a need as the conservation of manpower. Guided by their conviction, the faculty developed a program of guidance and training for specialized work related to the war effort in vital services, professions and industries.

A profile based on the results of each student’s aptitude, psychological and preference tests, plus her academic achievement was prepared for each student. Then, counselors and advisors conferred with the undergraduates about their potential abilities, and using these data, guided them in the selection of courses and assisted them to secure employment after graduation in the specific fields for which they were prepared. The most imperative need for college trained women seemed to be in five general fields for which the liberal arts course was a basis:

Education: teaching in kindergartens, nursery schools, recreation centers, rehabilitation clinics, elementary
and high schools, colleges;

Technical: technicians in science, radio physics, electronics, laboratories, chemical analysis, pre-nursing, pre-medical;

Home and health: professionals in home economics, dietetics, nutrition, nursing, child care;

Community service: professionals in foreign languages, sociology, English, civil service, recreational work and morale-building entertainment, occupational therapy, journalism, radio broadcasting; and

Business: professionals in office management, economics, statistics and accounting.²⁴

In addition to training students to assume strategic positions of service after graduation, the college believed that each student should be engaged in some activity which contributed to the war effort. Thereupon, credit "victory" courses were offered, including: arts and crafts, first aid, map study, nutrition, mechanical drawing, quantitative chemistry, introduction to personnel, cost accounting, air navigation, accident prevention, hygiene, photography and radio communication. The victory program also included a questionnaire to evaluate student participation in the war effort. Questionnaire returns revealed that 50 percent of Mundelein's students worked part time to help defray their educational expenses and that 50 percent were engaged in volunteer service connected with the war effort.²⁵

Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M., believed that the training of women for specialized fields was imperative. In a letter to Dr. Guy E. Snavely, Executive Director of the Association of American Colleges, dated 23 December
1942, she placed Mundelein’s facilities at the disposal of the government as a Chicago area training center for women:

Inspired by the magnificent patriotism of the armed forces of our country and of the thousands of young men who have volunteered for service, the faculty and students of Mundelein College, eager to contribute what they can to the defense of our great nation, are turning to you for information as to the most satisfactory way in which to place at the disposal of our national government the educational resources of Mundelein College.

As you know, Mundelein has no R.O.T.C., C.A.A., but was founded to train young women for intelligent living, for social and civic leadership and for service to church and state. In this national crisis, it is eager to extend the opportunities it affords in training as many women as possible in vital occupations. We are prepared to train dietitians, chemists, bacteriologists, laboratory technicians, mathematicians, accountants, social workers and teachers, and we should be happy to adjust our program to meet the needs of government agencies.26

The last Loyola-Mundelein tea dance was held 26 February just before the army air corps reserves were called into service on 2 March. The following week most of Loyola’s upper classmen left to serve with the armed forces. The junior prom on 20 February 1943 was the last formal Mundelein dance for the duration of the war.27

War related activities continued to be on the minds of the Mundelein community. Honore O’Brien ’37 made national headlines with her simple and inexpensive method of preserving food by dehydration in the oven of a gas range. Acclaimed by the vitamin bureau as the "finest contribution so far to the war effort in food preparation," her method was featured in newspapers across the country.28
The annual Mundelein card party and fashion revue was held at the Medinah Club and the proceeds were invested in war bonds. The Bond Queen contest raised more than $12,000 enough money to buy six jeeps and contribute to the U.S.S. Chicago cruiser fund. To promote thought and intelligent discussion, the home economics department sponsored a series of student forums to discuss topics as "rationing and food substitutes; recreation in war time; textile shortages; and, nutrition for victory." To aid in the national emergency, the home economics department volunteered its services in day nurseries to safeguard the health of young children whose parents were employed during the day. The physical science department forums included three lectures: "Astrology--why not?; Uncle Sam is using geologists in many ways; Japan, octopus of the Pacific." The academic year drew to a close. Archbishop Stritch gave the commencement address and conferred degrees on ninety members of the Class of 1943, the largest graduating class in the history of the college.

In concluding her Annual Report to the Board of Trustees, on 15 August 1943, Sister Mary Justitia, B.V.M., stated:

Cognizant of its sacred duty to the nation, both because of its religious objectives and because of its educational functions, the college has spared no effort and will spare no effort to promote the welfare of the community at home, to contribute generously to the well being of the forces in service, and to support the government, not only in wartime, but in the postwar period, the reconstruction of which may
indeed depend upon the courage, the fortitude, the intelligence, the education, the morality and the honor of the young women who are being trained at Mundelein College and at similar institutions in the United States and in other countries of the civilized world.  

When Mundelein opened its fourteenth academic year on 20 September 1943 enrollment had increased 26 percent, totaling 761 students, of whom 332 were freshmen. As a wartime measure, the federal government withdrew federal aid to students so the college extended its program of student aid and offered fifty-seven scholarships. The college announced a flexible, newly planned and faculty approved curriculum for the lower division. Arrangements were made for the opening of a Department of Occupational Therapy, with a curriculum meeting the requirements of the American Medical Association. The Education Department introduced courses to meet new certification requirements for high school teachers in Illinois. In cooperation with a nationwide campaign against accidents, Mundelein organized a college safety council, the first of its kind at a liberal arts college. The first midwestern college unit of the American Red Cross was begun in November and the chapter used the Mundelein unit as a model for similar organizations on other campuses. In recognition of the sale and purchase of $51,035.65 worth of bonds and stamps, the students were honored by a representative of the U. S. Treasury Department and citations were presented to the college and to the eight outstanding bond sellers and
purchasers. Three $15,000 training planes would bear the college name. 37

In 1944 the average Mundelein student read seventeen books apart from class texts during the academic year. General literature, including essays and travel books, were most frequently requested, with textual material and biography in second and third places. Fiction ranked fourth. 38 Archbishop Stritch conferred degrees on the ninety-two members of the class of 1944 on 5 June. 39

By the end of Mundelein's fourteenth academic year, three factors demonstrated that the college was firmly established academically: its expanding enrollment; its successful participation in the North Central Association committee on the improvements of teacher training; and, the success of its alumnae. Virginia Woods Callahan '35, a summa cum laude graduate with a Ph. D. in classics was named to the faculty at the Catholic University of America. Six members of the class of 1944 received scholarships or fellowships for graduate work in leading American universities. 40

Enrollment numbered 941 students in September 1944, the largest since the college opened. The 412 students in the freshmen class represented seventy-three high schools in ten states. 41 Academic distinction came to the college when fourteen descriptive references to academic progress at Mundelein appeared in Better Colleges—Better Teachers,
by Russell M. Cooper, and published by the North Central Association committee on the preparation of high school teachers in colleges of liberal arts. Students organized a college unit of the League of Women Voters and a flying club. The debate club won eight of sixteen possible decisions and was the highest rated team in a seven college tournament.

On 7 May 1945 the German forces surrendered unconditionally. The rejoicing of VE day in the United States was tempered only by the knowledge of the continuing war against Japan. Mundelein joined the nation in prayers of thanksgiving for the end to the long conflict. Students had invested $30,114 in war bonds and stamps; Members of the Red Cross unit had contributed 1,500 hours of service and Red Cross certificates were given for nutrition, home nursing, water safety and first aid. During the year, faculty, alumnae and students on the Program Bureau had presented forty-one programs including lectures, demonstrations, book reviews, concerts and recitals.

At the College Day assembly, Geraldine Stutz, president of the Student Activities Council, paid a moving tribute to Sister Mary Justitia, B.V.M., who was retiring as president of the college. In her remarks, Stutz acknowledged Sister Justitia's inspiration, leadership and unselfish devotion to the students of Mundelein College and
to the course of Catholic higher education. The academic year concluded on 4 June 1945 when Archbishop Stritch conferred degrees on one hundred seniors one of whom was the college's one thousandth graduate who received her Bachelor of Arts degree Summa Cum Laude. 46

The close of the fifteenth year and the end of the fourth war year found the college prepared both for the pressures of wartime and planning for the vast educational tasks peace and reconstruction would bring. The patriotic spirit of the faculty and students earned the college recognition by the United States Treasury Department for distinguished service in the sale of war bonds and stamps and by the American National Red Cross for service in the various war activities. 47

With the surrender of Japan on 14 August the war in the Pacific ended; on 15 August, in her last report as president to the Board of Trustees of Mundelein College Sister Mary Justitia stated:

Academically, one of the most stimulating activities of the past three years has been the participation of the college in the North Central study on the preparation of high school teachers in the liberal arts colleges. More than any other single factor, the work of the committee has awakened general faculty interest in general college problems; it has stimulated self-study, self-appraisal and self-improvement, professionally, in the light of the progress made in other liberal arts colleges and in terms of Mundelein's responsibility as a Catholic college to give to its students the finest type of intellectual, moral and religious training.

Recognizing the fact that the great achievement of any Catholic college is measured in terms of its success
in training intelligent, responsible and devoted citizens for temporal and eternal life, Mundelein has spared no effort, is sparing no effort to train its students for this two-fold citizenship, and to encourage them in every way possible to meet courageously the challenge of life and work in wartime; to plan to pray for the accomplishment of a just and enduring peace, and to give generously of their time and their talents to the service of God and country.  

FIFTEEN YEARS OF ACHIEVEMENT

Since its establishment in 1930, Mundelein had graduated one thousand women, of whom forty-four were members of the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Of Mundelein’s lay graduates, thirty-two served in the United States armed forces, seven had earned doctorates and several hundred had earned masters’ degrees. Of those Mundelein alumnae who were employed, business, social work and religious life were the most commonly pursued careers and approximately one of every three Mundelein graduates was married. Mundelein’s graduates increased the college’s renown by carrying its ideals and standards to university campuses, professional and business organizations, and the homes of America.

Within fifteen years of its founding, Mundelein reached capacity enrollment. As a consequence, rigid admissions standards predicated upon an applicant’s ability to succeed in college, were instituted. As recommended by the Association of American Universities, prospective freshman in the lower quarter of their graduating classes
were not accepted at Mundelein and recommendation of the high school principal was required before acceptance.49

1945-1950

On 16 July Sister Mary Josephine Malone, Provincial Superior in Sacred Heart Province, and a former dean at Clarke College succeeded Sister Mary Justitia as president of Mundelein College. The sixteenth academic year opened on 17 September with a record enrollment of 1,035 students; the freshman class numbered 406 young women who represented 102 high schools.50 Changes in the curriculum included addition of a new course on the United Nations Charter to prepare students for intelligent post-war citizenship and cancellation of the occupational therapy program due to inadequate space for equipment and difficulty in hiring professional directors.51 The highlight of the first semester’s social activity was the Skyscraper Ball, held at the Lake Shore Club. Although planned for the day after Christmas, the ball had to be held on two successive nights, 26 December and 27 December because it was so well attended.52

With the start of the second semester, Mundelein lost the services of the Jesuits from Loyola. Like Mundelein’s, Loyola’s post-war enrollment burgeoned. As a consequence, the university’s Jesuit professors could not teach at both institutions. Since the Jesuits had been an integral part of the Mundelein faculty from the college’s opening in
1930, their loss, both academically and spiritually, was notable. Receiving academic and departmental honors at the annual honors day program were 124 students, of whom thirteen seniors were nominated to Kappa Gamma Pi honor society. On 3 June Cardinal Stritch conferred degrees on 124 members of the class of 1946.

With prospects of even larger enrollment in the fall, Mundelein established revised standards for admission and scholarships. Henceforth, students competing for scholarships were required to rank in the upper quarter of their high school classes and have a health report signed by a physician was required prior to admission. When classes resumed on 9 September 1946, enrollment totaled 1,112 students, an increase of eight percent. The 418 freshmen represented eighty-eight high schools in nine states. To meet the need, fifteen instructors were added to the faculty.

In the fall of 1946, the quest for world peace was paramount. Mundelein led the nation's schools when it sponsored the first organized academic study of the United Nations. Mobilizing its intellectual resources, the college invited internationally known experts and enlisted faculty and students, all of whom cooperated in a five day institute for the study of the U. N. charter. Samuel Cardinal Stritch, the honorary chairman, gave the keynote address which was recorded by NBC and broadcast over its
local affiliate, WMAQ. Seminar topics ranged from the World Court and the World Bank to U. S. trade unions. Among the speakers were John Eppstein, British authority on international affairs; Charles P. O'Donnell, U. S. State Department; Catherine Schaefer, international relations secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference; and, J.P.S. Serrarens, Dutch parliament member and delegate to the International Labor Organization Conference. Pope Pius XII cabled congratulations. Eleanor Roosevelt saluted the institute in her column, "My Day." The Library of Congress requested a copy of the published papers and the New York Times and many other newspapers sent reporters. Before the end of the school year it was announced that effective in September, tuition would be raised from $75 to $100 a semester because of the increased cost of goods and services. At commencement, 162 degrees were conferred.

In September 1947 enrollment stood at 932, a decline of nearly 10 percent from the all time high just two years earlier. The freshman class numbered 308 of whom more than half ranked in the upper 25 percent of their high school classes. Thirteen new members joined the faculty and a full time admissions office was opened in room 205 of the skyscraper to handle the increasing number of inquiries about the college. To meet the needs of all students, a group guidance plan which provided for all students to meet with their counselors regularly, was inaugurated.
On 5 November 1947 Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M., founder and twice president of Mundelein College died at the college after a year long illness. Considered one of the foremost women educators in the country, she was an early advocate of higher education for women. Sister Justitia was one of the first nuns awarded a degree by Catholic University, an institution which previously had excluded women. Her body lay in state in the college, an honor guard of members of the senior class, in caps and gowns, stood at the plain black casket. Her funeral mass was attended by the entire student body and hundreds of alumnae. The Rev. Joseph Egan, S.J., rector of Loyola University was the celebrant and the Rev. Robert Kelley, S.J., former president of Loyola University, delivered the sermon.59

In the spring of 1948, Mundelein conferred the first Magnificat Medal which was to be awarded annually to women who have singularly exemplified Christian values by the character of their lives and their contributions to social, aesthetic, scientific, philanthropic or religious leadership. It was also hoped that presentation of the award would dispel the perception that women were not effective leaders because few held public office. The first recipient was Mrs. Henry Mannix of New York, a graduate of Manhattanville College and mother of nine, who as president of the National Council of Catholic Women, was
the leader of six million American women.  

The most coveted literary honor open to colleges and collegians came to Mundelein that June when the Atlantic Monthly short story contest awarded senior Patricia Kiely first place, nationwide fame, a fifty dollar prize and scholarships for herself and her writing professor, Sister Mary Irma Corcoran, B.V.M., to the Breadloaf School of Writing at Middlebury College, Vermont. At commencement, Samuel Cardinal Stritch conferred degrees on 177 seniors.

Enrollment in September 1948 stood at 912 and the freshmen class stood at 302. The Mundelein faculty and student body were actively pursuing new interests and embellishing the college's reputation. When West Point cadets came to Mundelein to debate, a tradition of meeting women's colleges in competition was established. The forensics team not only debated Cambridge University but also was the first Catholic women's college admitted to membership in Delta Sigma Rho, national honorary forensic society. The drama department was awarded membership in Alpha Psi Omega, national honorary dramatic fraternity. The student newspaper The Skyscraper and literary magazine The Review were awarded All American honors by the Associated Collegiate Press. Speech and drama were offered as separate majors. A modern public address system was installed and a radio control room was set up in room 804 to communicate with the Little Theatre which had become a
broadcasting studio. At the suggestion of Cardinal Stritch, a smoking room was opened in the solarium on the seventh floor. Although the college library was undergoing renovation during the spring and summer of 1948, the staff found time to sponsor a book drive for European libraries devastated by the war.

Mrs. Felix Lapeyre, graduate of Ursuline College, New Orleans, the mother of eight and governor of the Louisiana chapter of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae was awarded the Magnificat Medal from Samuel Cardinal Stritch. On 10 June, the Cardinal conferred degrees on 173 seniors.

The 1949-50 academic year began with 893 students of whom 303 were freshmen. On 29 November the faculty and student body gathered in the auditorium to confer the third Magnificat Medal on Mary Blake Finan, an alumna of Clarke College. A leader in Catholic, civic and social organizations and a field representative for Marillac House, Mary spent thirty years fighting juvenile delinquency as a case-worker for the Chicago Criminal Court.

Moved by the effects of the war, the administration provided scholarships for two displaced persons from war ravaged countries. The German Club had sent one and a half tons of donated clothing and supplies to German orphans. The results of the mathematics department student survey, conducted in the spring, were released. They revealed that
85 percent of the students lived within the city limits, of whom 56 percent lived on the north side, 25 percent on the west side and 19 percent on the south side. The survey also showed that 26 percent worked part time, averaging 8.3 hours per week.68

Cardinal Stritch presided at commencement on 7 June and conferred degrees on the 167 members of the class of 1950.69 As the second decade of Mundelein College's service to Catholic women drew to a close, the college's reputation for innovation began to emerge. Curriculum changes marked the beginning of a tradition of flexibility to keep pace with student needs.70 By the end of World War II, the college had become America's largest Catholic college for women, with a student body exceeding one thousand. The college's contributions to the war effort were extensive. Mundelein students worked in the college's victory garden, sold more than $100,000 in defense stamps and war bonds, distributed rationing books, and participated in Red Cross programs in first aid, nutrition and knitting. Students examined social injustices and the plight of the poor in required social science courses. The college established an accelerated program so that students could earn a degree in three years.

Mundelein had met the demands of each decade. Firmly established, rules and regulations drawn, educational policies established, traditions planted and prudent
decisions made, Mundelein College personified the mission of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary as envisioned by the immigrant girl from Ireland.
1"Ten Years of Achievement: Mundelein College," Chicago: Mundelein College Archives, 1941, 3.

2Ibid.

3"Ten Years of Achievement: Mundelein College," 4-7.

4Ibid.

5"Ten Years of Achievement: Mundelein College," 8-19.

6"Ten years of Achievement: Mundelein College," 20-34.

7Sister Mary Justitia Coffey, B.V.M., Chicago, Illinois, to [B.V.M. Board of Trustees, Dubuque, Iowa], TD, 15 August 1941, President’s Papers, President’s Year-End Reports, 1939-1945, Mundelein College Archives, Mundelein College, Chicago, 1.

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15Coffey, TD President’s Papers, 15 August 1942, 10-12.

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23Coffey, TD President’s Papers, 15 August 1943, 9.


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40 "Alumna Will Be Faculty Member of Catholic U.," *Skyscraper*, 31 March 1944, 1.

41 "412 Freshmen Represent 73 Schools, 10 States," *Skyscraper*, 6 October 1944, 1.


43 Ibid.

44 Freidel, 456.

45 "Invest $30,014 in Bonds and Stamps," *Skyscraper*, 31 May 1945, 3.

46 "100 Candidates, Largest Graduating Class," *Skyscraper*, 31 May 1945, 1.

47 Coffey, TD President’s Papers, 15 August 1945, 16-17.

48 Ibid.


50 "New President Challenges Classes at Convocation," *Skyscraper*, 8 October 1945, 1.

51 Sister Mary Josephine Malone, B.V.M., Chicago, Illinois to [B.V.M. Board of Trustees, Dubuque, Iowa] TD, 15 August 1946, President’s Papers, President’s Year-End Reports, 1945-1951, Mundelein College Archives, Mundelein College, Chicago, 12.

52 "This Is The Story of Two Starry Nights," *Skyscraper*, 10 December 1945, 1.

53 Malone, TD President’s Papers, 15 August 1946, 6.

55 Malone TD President’s Papers, 15 August 1947, 1.
56 Malone TD President’s Papers, 15 August 1947, 13-15.
57 Malone TD President’s Papers, 15 August 1947, 1.
58 Thornton, Mundelein Now, 5-8.
59 "Former College President Dies," Times, 6 November 1947, 54.
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70 Ibid.
EPILOGUE

For three score years, Mundelein has maintained its unique position as an urban women’s liberal arts college because it responded to a changing educational landscape with an intuitive sense of creativity. In summing up the history of the college as we approach the twenty-first century, Sister Mary Brennan Breslin, B.V.M., President of Mundelein College stated:

For six decades, Mundelein College has been at the forefront of a continuing historical movement that centers on providing women with a rigorous quality education. Mundelein has educated thousands of women leaders for the sciences, the professions, the corporate sector and public service, equipping them intellectually, morally and practically for a productive, value-oriented life. We are proud of Mundelein’s impact on Chicago and in the nation’s approach to higher education for women. We are determined to expand that role.

Mundelein College was founded in 1929 to meet the educational, spiritual and professional needs of Chicago’s women. In just sixty years, because of an uncompromising commitment to its mission, Mundelein has achieved an enviable reputation for excellence in women’s higher education, in Chicago, throughout the Midwest and beyond. Mundelein’s reputation stems from its academic strength, an excellent teaching faculty, a willingness to innovate, the legacy of the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and a commitment to educating women.

Mundelein’s long-range goal is to maintain its leadership position as a women’s liberal arts institution
and to use that distinctive foundation as a starting point for academic development during the 1990s.

WOMEN LEADERS

The achievements of Mundelein’s graduates denote the effectiveness of its academic programs. Recently, a national survey ranked Mundelein sixteenth among women’s colleges and second among all liberal arts institutions in Illinois in the number of women graduates who had obtained a Ph.D.\(^2\) Mundelein’s alumnae include a federal judge, a university president, an academy award winning actress, two aldermen of the city of Chicago, and many doctors, artists, attorneys, teachers, scientists, business women and homemakers. Its graduates continue to make important contributions to the well being of society.

CHANGING NEEDS

From the first day when Mundelein opened its doors in 1930 to the present, the college responded to women’s changing educational needs by developing innovative and challenging academic and professional programs. In the 1930s and 40s, when the Chicago Public School System ranked as one of the best in the nation, Mundelein graduates numbered significantly among the system’s teachers and social workers.

The college’s focus in the 1950s was on broadening and strengthening the curriculum and faculty. In the 60s,
Mundelein responded to the demand of many women with families who sought the higher education they had delayed with one of the first Continuing Education programs in the United States. In 1967 Mundelein answered the call of Catholic women for graduate level theological studies by initiating the Masters in Religious Studies program.

In the 70s, Mundelein again responded to the need for an innovative educational format, and opened the nation's first residential Weekend College specifically suited to adult learners whose work and family schedules restricted their access to weekday or evening class time. In 1980, with introduction of the Master of Liberal Studies program, Mundelein was the only college to offer a weekend graduate program in Chicago.

Moving into the 1990s, Mundelein once again is on the cutting edge of educational innovation. In addition to offering an accelerated evening program in Information and Communications Management, Mundelein is the only college in the nation selected to co-sponsor the intensive Business Administration Institute for Financial Women International. The college's continued commitment to women's higher education is also seen in the integration of women's studies across the curriculum, in the Women's Studies Minor, in extensive counseling services for women, and in the recently inaugurated Peace Studies Minor.
PROFILE

The profile of Mundelein's current student body reflects the college's continued commitment to innovation, today's changing society and the diversity of the Chicago metropolitan area. Approximately 30 percent of the students currently enrolled are Hispanic, Black, Asian or Oriental and nearly half of the students enrolled are in the weekend program. Mundelein attracts many students, particularly professional women, from all over the United States and the Weekend College and graduate programs welcome men as well as women students.4

PROVEN ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

In 1985 and again in 1987, Mundelein achieved national recognition as a quality liberal arts college. Twice, U. S. News and World Report named Mundelein one of the best small colleges in the country, citing in particular the merits of the college's individualized humanities program.5 Time magazine singled out Mundelein in an article on the success and effectiveness of women's colleges.6 In 1988 Mundelein was named one of fourteen schools and colleges nationally to receive a $3 million endowment from the Clare Boothe Luce Fund for science education.7 The college annually distributes approximately $700,000 from its own resources to provide need-based financial aid and scholarship funds among its undergraduate and graduate students.8
FACILITIES

Mundelein opened its doors sixty years ago confident that it was providing the best in liberal arts education in a setting that was completely modern, offering state-of-the-art equipment in the world's first self-contained skyscraper college for women. College facilities include the original campus skyscraper, a fifteen story modern art deco structure listed in the National Register of Historic Places and recognized for its architectural significance. The Learning Resource Center, built in 1969, overlooks Lake Michigan and offers one of the most beautiful settings for an undergraduate library in the country. The LRC also contains an academic computer center, tutoring center, audio-visual center and a 350 seat lecture hall. Other campus buildings include two residence halls and two historic mansions, one dating from the turn-of-the century and one completed in 1916.

CATHOLIC COMMITMENT

Mundelein College was founded in 1929 by the Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, a religious congregation with a distinguished history of dedication to Catholic education. The college is committed to the acquisition of knowledge in an atmosphere where Christian values are operative and the Catholic heritage is valued. As a Catholic college, Mundelein seeks to assist students to discover and realize their full intellectual, spiritual
and personal potential. The goal is to help students strive for an excellence and a goodness that serves society as well as the individual.

Mundelein is in the process of building a strong future. To meet the educational challenges of the future, Mundelein’s planning and development activities include improving its facilities, expanding its resources, updating and strengthening its curricula and providing its faculty with continued research and development opportunities. Committed to offering the best in liberal arts and pre-professional education and true to its mission of assisting women of all ages and backgrounds, Mundelein will remain at the forefront of liberal arts colleges in the Midwest.
ENDNOTES

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 APPROVAL SHEET

The dissertation submitted by Pauline Margaret Abraham Tarvardian has been read and approved by the following committee:

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The final copies have been examined by the director of the dissertation and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated and that the dissertation is now given final approval by the Committee with reference to content and form.

The dissertation is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

11 April 1990
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