

The 1994
Otsego County Fair Premium Book
Is Dedicated To
St. Mary Cathedral
Schools



St. Mary opened in 1894 under the administration of Father Casimir Skory. There were fifty pupils and one lay teacher. Within ten years the number of students had increased to 120, making it necessary to add two more lay teachers.

Extracurricular activities such as drama and sports were also started. The first basketball teams, both boys and girls, were started in 1928. Both Monsignor Ponganis and his assistant Father Francis Kaminski took a great interest in the newly formed teams.

On June 12, 1929, the first high school class graduated, with six students receiving diplomas. Thus, with the high school in operation there was a need for more space. In 1929, four additional rooms were added. With the new high school program and the added space, St. Mary's received State accreditation in May of 1931. The following year the school also received accreditation from the University of Michigan. This meant that St. Mary's graduates could enter U of M without further testing.

On November 30, 1960, a fire destroyed the elementary school. There were no casualties, as the fire was discovered quickly and all 365 children were led to safety. The building, however, was a total loss.

Life resumed quite quickly. Area schools offered books, quipment, and supplies. Temporary class locations were set up in the high school and in August of 1961 work began on a 14 room building. The work progressed steadily and the building was ready for use by September of 1962.

High standards are prevalent today. In 1968 St. Mary Cathedral Elementary was one of 60 private schools, of which 34 were Catholic, honored in Washington D.C. from the US Department of Education. The award was based on how well schools used available resources to meet the needs of their students, with special emphasis placed on student achievement in reading and math and how well the schools overcame obstacles, and their sustaining progress.

St. Mary has been a vital part of the community for 100 years. Surviving in good times and bad with an undying spirit of quality, determination, and co-existence with other area schools. With community support it will continue to grow and prosper, educating the entire child, so that as adults, they can participate in mature, responsible decision making based on solid Christian Values.