

THE SISTERS OF CHARITY OF ST. LOUIS

Sister Joan Flaherty, S.C.S.L.

The Sisters of Charity of St. Louis arrived in Calgary on August 27, 1951. The three "foundresses" were: Sister Theresa of St. Louis - superior, Sister Augustine and Sister Mary Bertille. A house was purchased by the Sisters in St. John's Parish at 224 - 10A Street N.W. The new foundation was named St. John the Evangelist and was blessed by Father C. Lynett on September 27, 1951.

On September 4 of that same year, Sisters Theresa and Augustine began their teaching apostolate in Calgary at St. John's School, just a few blocks from home. Sister Theresa was the principal with thirty-eight pupils in Grades I and II; Sister Augustine registered twenty-six pupils in Grades II to IV. They also taught religion classes at St. John's Church on Sundays.



The First Convent as it appears now.

During the first year here, the upstairs rooms were converted into light-housekeeping rooms and rented to girls attending normal school in Calgary.

In August, 1952, two more Sisters were assigned to St. John's Sisters Theresa Marie and Margaret Stella. They both taught at St. Charles School in South Calgary. The following year, two Sisters began teaching catechism on Sundays at Currie Barracks - an apostolate they continued for several years. During summers, the Sisters also taught catechism in country areas, preparing children for the Sacraments of First Communion, Confession, and Confirmation.

In October, 1954, land was purchased by the Sisters to build a new and larger convent. In September four years later, they moved into 409 - 10A Street N.W., across the street from the rectory. His Excellency, Bishop Carroll, blessed the new convent on March 1, 1959. St. Peter's Home and School graciously served tea to some one hundred fifty guests.

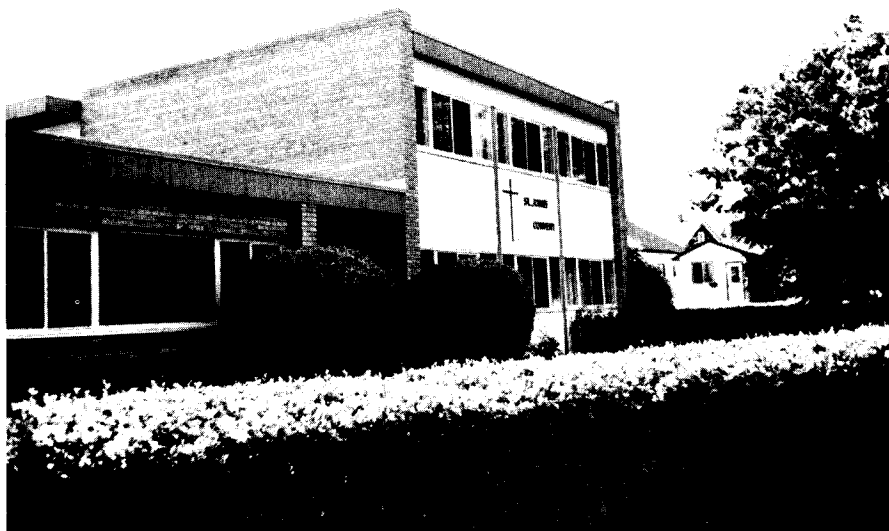
By now, the community had grown to seven, and like the disciples, the Sisters were sent out two by two to three different schools - St. John's, St. Peter's and Holy Trinity in Forest Lawn.

During the next few years, the community at St. John's continued to be a thriving, active, energetic one with all the Sisters branching out into various apostolates and participating in meetings, workshops and courses of many kinds. One apostolate which involved everyone was visiting - teachers visited parents of their pupils; university students visited orphanages and hospitals; others visited our Sisters' parents who lived in Calgary. And some even visited "the boys" at Spy Hill Jail. The chaplain, Father Arnaud, asked the Sisters to help with the liturgy for one of the Masses during a mission given there just before Christmas of 1966. It was a powerful experience for those involved.

Generous donations from St. John's Parish enabled the Sisters to organize activities for the underprivileged pupils in their schools. One year they took some four carloads of children on a Christmas-tree-cutting episode. It was a busy happy day for all.

Until 1965, all of the Sisters at St. John's were teaching at various schools, but since then our convent has served many different purposes. In the fall of 1965, it became a house of studies for seven of our newly professed Sisters. Joined with the Sisters in the teaching apostolate, there were seventeen in the community. The following year, our Provincial Administration moved here from Medicine Hat. So now there were three main apostolates among the Sisters - teaching, studying and administration.

In 1970, those of our retired Sisters who wished to, came to reside at St. John's. They combine their apostolate of prayer with the active apostolates of other members of the community, and in fact with all of our sisters in the West. The power of their prayer is felt by all.



The Present Convent.