

## Featuring St. Philip School – Battle Creek



In 1884, three IHM Sisters traveled more than 100 miles from Monroe to open St. Philip School in Battle Creek, Mich., for the 57 students attending that first September.

Enrollment grew slowly but steadily and, by 1905, seven IHMs taught 200 children in grades one through eight. A ninth grade was added in 1917. The convent chronicler notes that in 1918, "School opened with a splendid enrollment – 11 for the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades." The school added the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades in

subsequent years. The first seniors graduated in 1921.

St. Philip Church burned down in March 1928. The parish responded quickly and generously, according to the chronicler. "Loss: \$150,000; insurance: \$90,000. Pledges given out on Palm Sunday...Pledges [collected] on Easter amounted to \$100,000." The first Mass in the new church was held on Easter Sunday just two years later.

St. Philip's athletic teams began to shine in the mid 1940s. In 1945, the chronicler's pride and joy were evident when she comments that the boys won the Southeast Michigan Conference Football Championship, "...when they trounced their old rivals, St. Augustine's of Kalamazoo..." It later



became a common practice for the school to be given free days when the football team won! The baseball team tied for first in 1946. The basketball team won its seventh straight district championship during the 1947-48 school year.

In 1961, enrollment topped 1,000 students and remained constant over the next few years. Our **Featured Class Year, 1965**, saw a total of 996 students, 418 of them in high school.

"Christmas in Song and Verse" was presented for the parents that year. On Jan. 7, the IHM Sisters held "An Evening with Senior Girls." The chronicler reports that, "We invited the entire class and had a tour of the convent for them. After the tour we had some 'nonsense' and refreshments."

The 107 members of the Class of 1965 graduated June 4, at 8 p.m. **Glenn Davis** received a scholarship to Purdue University from Kellogg's Co-Op Program. **Therese Ryan** received a scholarship to Borgess School of Nursing from the Calhoun County Medical Auxiliary.



As was the case in many schools throughout Michigan, enrollment dwindled in Catholic schools in Battle Creek. By the late 1960s, St. Philip High School became St. Philip Catholic Central High School, which is still open. Along with St. Joseph Elementary and Preschool and St. Joseph Catholic Middle School, it is part of the Battle Creek Area Catholic Schools (BCACS).

If this brings back memories of your own school days with the IHM Sisters, why not [share](#) them online? The sisters would love to hear from you!

## In 1965

United States President Lyndon Johnson signed the Social Security Act of 1965 into law, establishing Medicare and Medicaid.



The first American combat troops arrived in South Vietnam. Not long after they arrived, the first draft card burnings took place at the University of California, Berkeley, and a coffin was marched to the Berkeley Draft Board.

Malcolm X was assassinated on the first day of National Brotherhood Week, at the Audubon Ballroom in New York City.



Cosmonaut Aleksei Leonov left his spacecraft for 12 minutes, becoming the first person to walk in space. U.S. Astronaut Edward Higgins White walked in space a few months later.



Bob Dylan elicited controversy among folk purists by "going electric" at the Newport Folk Festival.

The Murder (Abolition of the Death Penalty) Act 1965 was given Royal Assent, formally abolishing the death penalty in the United Kingdom.



Marilyn Horne was named Most Promising New Recording Artist at the 1965 Grammy Awards. "Downtown," by Petula Clark, was named Best Rock and Roll Performance. It was a big year for Bill Cosby. His "I Started Out as a Child" won a Grammy for Best Comedy Performance, and he became the first African American to headline a television show, starring in *I Spy*.