Joseph Rudolf, the parish priest, was eager to have more information. We all take this opportunity to recognize and thank Monsignor Schaedel on Sunday, May 21—one day prior to the 166th anniversary of the Archdiocese of Indianapolis. Before long, the Sisters were teaching children and educating future teachers. These were the humble beginnings of what later became Marian University.

The program also provides opportunities for pre-service teachers to learn about teaching as a faith-based school teacher. Marian University education students complete an additional 10 hours of coursework in theology and philosophy. The coursework and practicum experiences of the education program prepare the student for living in the classroom.

Jesus Christ was a teacher who taught using practical methods of teaching and learning. He used parables, stories, and everyday experiences to teach the catechism of the Catholic Church, the majesty of God, and the message of the Catholic Church.

Marian University proudly claims Monsignor Joseph F. Schaedel, M. Div. ’70 among its alumni who have made an impact on their own lives and the lives of others. Monsignor Schaedel has served the people and Catholic Church of central and southern Indiana, teaching and inspiring them everywhere he has served.

Monsignor Joseph F. Schaedel is retired and lives in Oldenburg, Indiana, with his wife, Sister Patricia Marie. Monsignor Schaedel has served the people and Catholic Church of central and southern Indiana, teaching and inspiring them everywhere he has served.

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Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg

Celebrating 166 Years of Servant Leadership in Education, Ministry, and Social Justice

If you must, read the letter to the Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg, Indiana and then let them on their thing. Whether it’s 166 years as an order or 50 years as a university, these amazing women have been a force of commitment, inspiration, and adaptation from the very beginning.

From service and leadership to perseverance and perspiration, their actions and progress are evident and real. They’ve taken for granted. After all, women religious are expected to dedicate their entire lives to their communities and world. But most of us can’t have any idea just how hard they have worked.

They’ve studied and taught and cooked and cleaned. They’ve cared for others. They’ve traveled countless miles to heal, minister, and to earn advanced degrees. They’ve had to stand on full-size stilts in the hallway and even in the bathrooms in Allison Mansion. And they’ve prayed—countless hours beyond their required devotions—for all of us, and, let’s hope, for each other.

Join us as we celebrate these anniversaries. Look at these photos and facts and think not only of the accomplishments but of these women’s amazing women.

The Sisters’ continued story—one of Oldenburg is a profound message, which inspires all of us to not only keep it up, but also to project it even further in new and exciting ways. This prevailing sentiment happens with each new class, sports teams, initiatives, building, and initiatives to others to be generous and invest, and that invitation is always met with a generous response.

1850-1890

In 1850, Sr. Theresa Hackelmeier, 24, arrives in Oldenburg, Indiana, from Vienna, Austria, to teach German-speaking children as requested by Fr. Francis Joseph Rudolf of Vincennes. Within a year, the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis founds and establishes a boarding school for girls and a village school for boys. These neighborhood homes were asking for help with the schooling of their children. Under Mother Theresa’s leadership, the convent at Oldenburg becomes the motherhouse supporting the Sisters with the training and spiritual renewal needed to continue their educational mission.

The Sisters began caring for the children orphaned by the 1847 cholera epidemic and then New York’s convalescent Founding Hospital in 1856. A devastating fire destroys the facilities in Oldenburg in 1857. But the Sisters proved resilient, as well as establish schools in St. Louis, Cincinnati, and other places in Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, Kansas, and Indiana—five in Indianapolis. The Sisters Mary Clara and Mary Euphemia Dillhoff, OSF, take the lead in moving the Founding Hospital to the site of the former James A. Allison estate in Indianapolis to provide college education for lay women.

1890-1940

In 1904, the Sisters of St. Francis Normal School is accredited by the Indiana State Board of Education. As early as 1911, the Oldenburg community sends its Sisters to Marquette and other Catholic colleges for academic degrees.

1940-1990

In 1944, Marian College is accredited by the Indiana State Department of Education.

1990-2010

In 1994, Marian College becomes the first co-educational Catholic college in Indiana. The Marian University campus expands to include the estates of Carl Fisher and Frank Wheeler.

2010 -

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First 50 years

The Sisters of St. Francis inspiration, continued

Finally, the greatest inspiration the Sisters provide me and the rest of the University community and throughout the world.

Mother Mary Clara Dillhoff, OSF, is instrumental in founding Marian College and serves as its president until 1940.

In 1944, Marian College is accredited by the Indiana State Department of Education.

1970s - 1990s

In 1976, the University’s educational programs are formally listed by the Indiana Department of Education. In 1984, an undergraduate nursing program is approved.

1990s -

The Sisters provide me and the rest of the University community and in my service as president. Through the interaction of Saints Francis and Clare and our patroness, Mary the Mother of God, the Sisters qualify for teaching by passing the state’s education examination.

2000s

In 2001, Sr. Christa Franzer, OSF ’70, Sr. Jackie McCracken, OSF ’72, and Sr. Miriam Hresko, OSF ’79 lead a movement to transform the Sisters’ charism, their service to humanity, their commitment to education, and their love of people is timeless, inspiring, and ever present in the Marian University community and in my service as president. Through the interaction of Saints Francis and Clare and our patroness, Mary the Mother of God, I pray that the Sisters’ example always remains and flourishes in the Marian University community and throughout the world.

2010s

In 2011, President Richard R.傥 announced a new $150 million capital improvement plan for development “to double and strengthen the faculty and expanded facilities to accommodate 3,000 students by 2015.”

In 2017, President Daniel J. Elsner announced the goal of $275 million. Marian University will double the number of annual graduates to 1,500 men and women who are prepared to be transformational leaders in education, healthcare, business, ministry, and other professional fields.

On September 15, 1937, the Sisters open Marian College in Allison Mansion in Indianapolis with just 15 students.

St. Miriam Clare Heskamp, OSF teaches home economics in Allison Mansion in 1951.

The Sisters perform with St. Joseph’s Choir at the 2016 Reunion in Education Gala. 1,200 Marian University friends and family celebrated the announcement of The Educators College.

The very first faculty in 1937 included Sr. John Joseph, a medical doctor. Prology this foreworded Marian University’s destiny as a future medical school.

In 2017, Sr. Christina Fox, OSF ’79, Sr. Jackie McCracken, OSF ’79, and Sr. Miriam Hresko, OSF ’79 break ground for the new medical facility, the Michael A. Evans Center for Health Sciences, and on May 1, 2022, the Marian University College of Osteopathic Medicine graduated its first class of doctors.

The first 50 years

The Sisters of St. Francis, Oldenburg

Celebrating 166 Years of Servant Leadership in Education, Ministry, and Social Justice

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