

Way We Were
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Cultivation of Mind and Heart
Mahala Ruddell, Research coordinator

In first couple of decades of Park City's history, the town's schooling system was limited. The first school was a one-room log building opened by the Ontario mine in 1875 for children of miners. In 1879, a free school was added, but it wasn't until 1882 that St. Mary's of the Assumption Academy, run by the Holy Cross sisters, offered a private alternative for young Parkites.

The Sisters of the Holy Cross are a Catholic religious order whose origins can be traced to France, where the Congregation of the Holy Cross was founded in the 1830s by Reverend Basil Anthony Moreau. The Congregation's US headquarters are located at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, a school the order was instrumental in founding.

Father Scanlan, a Holy Cross priest, was one of the first Catholics in Utah when he arrived in 1873. He served the miniscule population of Catholic families living in the midst of Mormon Zion. Father Scanlan and his associates traveled to Park City about once a month to say Mass for Catholic miners. By 1881, the Catholic population had grown enough to warrant the building of a church. Shortly after, Father Scanlan sent for Holy Cross sisters to help teach Park City's youngsters.

The sisters were well-educated women who taught both Catholic and non-Catholic children in subjects from math and geography, to languages, music, and drawing. On Fridays girls were taught fancy needlework and boys participated in athletics. Students helped with chores, such as sweeping out classrooms and tending the coal furnaces. Anecdotal evidence says the sisters were strict but kindly and kept a keen eye on their students. For children who showed minor behavioral problems, the sisters bolstered self-esteem and increased responsibilities to foster trust. For those who showed major behavioral problems (like Jack Green, who got into plenty of trouble as a child but eventually ended up serving as Park City mayor), the sisters complained of demonic possession and doled out punishments like time-outs in classroom corners or memorization of endless Shakespearean sonnets.

The Holy Cross order emphasized education and healthcare, and operated high schools, colleges, and hospitals throughout the country. The order's founder wrote in 1849 that "we shall always place education side by side with instruction. The mind shall not be cultivated at the expense of the heart." The sisters sent to serve Park City over the years were well-respected by the community in which they were heavily involved. And perhaps for young, impressionable Catholic girls, they served as important role models.

Park City schoolgirl Marie McDonough was certainly inspired. She walked to St. Mary's Academy every morning along King Road. After graduating, she became a teacher herself and eventually joined the Holy Cross order. She became Sister Marie Camille after taking final religious vows in 1926. She taught and served as principal in public and private schools throughout Indiana, California, Arizona, Washington, Idaho, and Utah for the rest of her life.

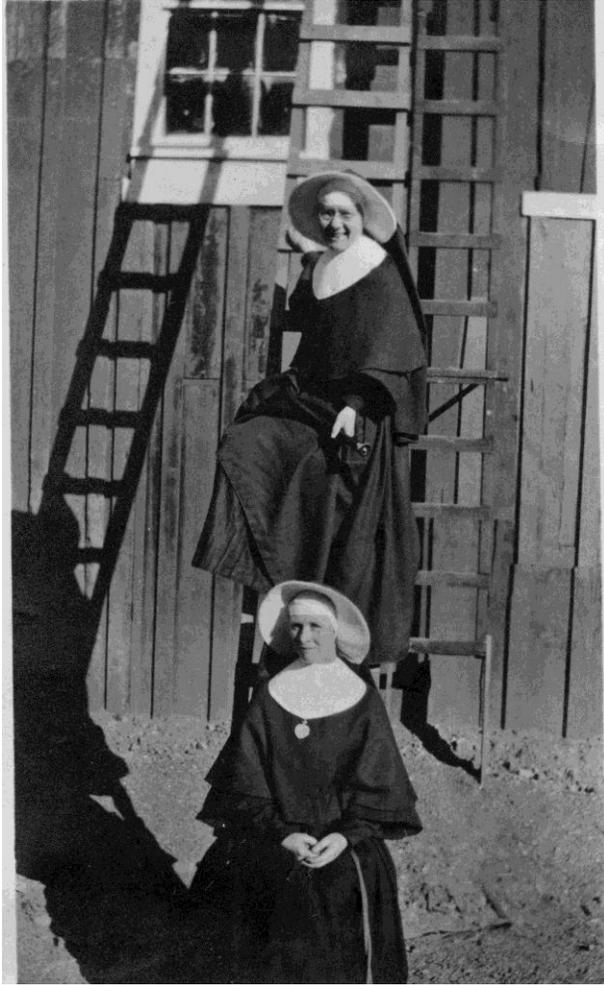


Image ID: 2003.23.33

Credit: Park City Historical Society and Museum

Caption: Written in a scrapbook next to this picture of Holy Cross sisters in the 1920s are words to live by: "Look onward; strive upward."

Sources:

Park Record, April 7, 1883; August 29 1891; February 9, 1917; May 20, 1976

Ringholz, Raye C. *The First Century: St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church*. Park City: published by St. Mary of the Assumption Catholic Church, 1997

"Congregation of the Holy Cross," by the University of Notre Dame, <https://www.nd.edu/faith-and-service/congregation-of-holy-cross/>, accessed January 2016