

Notre Dame Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School, Redwood City, California, 1885-2003.

Short History

The Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur were invited by the pastor of the church in Menlo Park, CA to staff a mission school being established in nearby Redwood City in 1885. In two years, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel church and parish was established in Redwood City. The school flourished after some years of fluctuating enrollments. There was some questions about the viability of the school after 1906 earthquake. During the 1930s a new school and parish church were built. The sisters were active in the school until the mid-1980s. The school continues as a very active parish school.

Convent Records

Historical Background Records, 1880s-1980s .1 lin. Inch. R2 Unit 10 C Box 1

Arranged by filing plan.

These files were collected by the sisters to document the community of the parish that served. The type of documentation includes press clippings from the local newspapers, information on parish societies the early Italian families, various history pamphlets published by the parish and notes from other histories written by others. There is a short history written by an unknown sister giving details about the beginnings of their ministry including some details about turning this school over to another religious order.

Annals, 1885- 1966, 2 lin. Inches. R2 Unit 10 C Box 1

Arranged by filing plan thereunder chronologically by years of events.

These annals record the internal events of the convent as they occurred and/or summarized at the end of a year as a narrative. These records detail the ups and downs of early erratic student enrollment in some years to allow the children to help out harvesting in September and October, visitations by Ma Mere and the Superior/ Provincial, opening and closings of the school and sacrament ceremonies for the students. Other events noted in the annals are special priests visits, sisters' comings and goings, Other events noted are school plays, fund raising events, church construction progress and natural disaster events like earthquakes especially the 1906 event.

Journals, 1911-1967, 1.5 lin. Inches. R2 Unit 10 C Box 1

Arranged by filing plan and thereunder chronologically by date of entry.

Journals are almost daily or weekly entries of activities in the convent and were used to write the annals and infrequent Christmas letters. These records note the comings and goings of sisters for doctors' appointments, school meetings, banking visits, special recreations during the day and at meals, class reunions and professional meetings in the later years.

Community Council Meeting Minutes, 1925-1986. 2 lin. Inches. R2 Unit 10 C Boxes1-2

Arranged by filing plan and by date of the meeting.

From the 1920s to the 1960s, the council consisted of the convent superior, the treasure and an elected member of the community to verify the convent accounts and plan some events on an as needed basis. After the 1960s, the meetings were open to all community members to discuss various aspects of community life. The topics included convent and personal budgets, schedules for prayers, cooking and laundry, planning for convent, school, parish and congregation events, updated theological topics and opportunities for personal and professional growth.

Internal Convent Records, 1906 -1997. 2 lin. Inches. R2 Unit 10 C Box 2-3

Arranged by the filing plan.

These records are the internal business files of the convent. The topics covered are about earthquake damage from the 1906 earthquake, insurance policies, later school contracts, parish and school centennial celebrations and rules for boarders. Additional files document the stations of the cross and the Lamp report on evaluations of various teaching ministries. Also included within the folders of the celebrations are photographs and programs for these celebrations.

School Related Records, 1896-2003. 2.5 lin. Inches. R2 Unit 10 C Boxes 2-3.

Arranged by filing plan.

These records represent a collection of school related records that the sisters collected. They include early commencement programs, attendance registers, a timeline of the school history, lists of eighth grade students for two early years, a WASC self-evaluation of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School and alumni publications and newsletters. There is a folders of newspaper clippings that highlight school events in the local papers.

Photographs, 1910-2003. 96 items. R2 Unit 10 C Box 3

Arranged by filing plan.

This series contains many class photos with about half of them are identified, basketball and baseball teams from the 1950s, reunion group photos, school building photos and a few sacrament class photos. They range in size from 3" x 5" to 8" x 10" and most are black and white. Some groups of originals also contain copy negatives.