

St. James Catholic School in the 1970s

"Faith is the foundation, the keynote, the reason for the Catholic school. Faith remains essentially the same, but it has to be lived in the environment of the time." Fr. William DeBock

The much beloved Fr. William De Bock (later to be named a monsignor) provided strong leadership during the 70s to the school and parish which continued to undergo changes and challenges corresponding with societal changes and the decline of child-rearing families in the neighborhood.



The school's proximity to the University of Wisconsin campus continued to be an advantage. UW students volunteered and, along with Edgewood College students, some did their student teaching at the school. Fieldtrips to the campus and special programs were available to St. James students. The campus's proximity provided students lessons in civic engagement and social justice and the realities of war and not-so-friendly peace demonstrations. In the days following the bombing of Sterling Hall, just a few blocks from the school, students found pieces of debris from the building. Fortunately, teachers were able to help students process what was going on in the city as well as the country. Sister Lorraine, a 7th grade teacher during parts of the 60's and 70's, was especially remembered for her special gift of supporting and even challenging her students as they struggled with the civil unrest of the Viet Nam War and tragic deaths of President Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy.

St. James location to the University and local hospitals offered unique learning experiences for the students. On Sept. 9, 1975, what is now Meriter Hospital held an Emergency Drill to help their staff be prepared for disasters. They recruited students from St. James School that offered the students the opportunity to see first-hand the role that medical emergencies involve.



Some students were bandaged or covered with artificial blood, some splinted



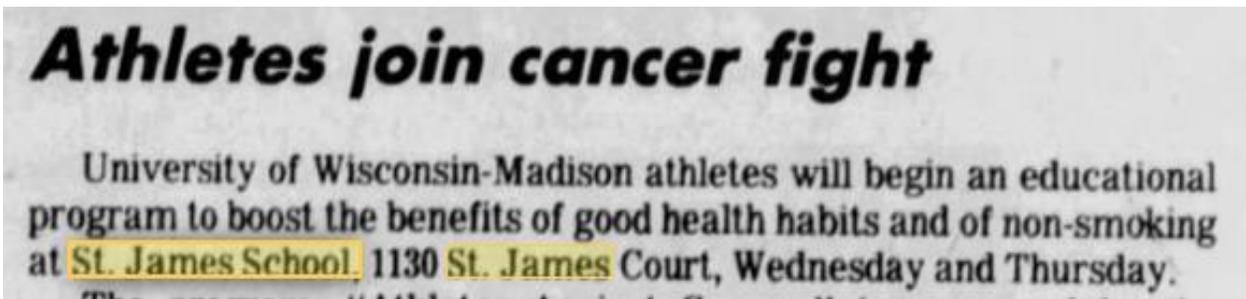
Gruesomely realistic, it's only makeup on Jerry Miller.

for broken arms and legs and others transported via stretchers and wheelchairs. It was a great learning experience for the St. James students.

This picture to the left may look gruesome but is simply St. James 8th grade student in 1975, Jerry Miller, covered with makeup.



Additionally, UW Athletes came to St. James School to promote good health.



School Staffing

Vatican II had a significant effect on the number of Religious who were available to teach in Catholic Schools. By the end of the 1970s no more Notre Dame sisters came to teach at St. James. From the picture from 1973-74, it is evident that there were only 4 religious Sisters on the staff of St. James School. Sr. Francis Clare taught 2nd Grade; Sr. Bernarde taught 4th Grade; Sr. Jean Arthur was the Music teacher as well as the organist and Parish Choir Director; and Sr. Marielda taught 6th Grade.



Top row: Sharon Barry, Phyllis Hamann, Gerry Pyrek, Sr. Francis Clare, Ann Nolan
 Middle row: Katherine Tormey, Sr. Bernarde, Sr. Jean Arthur, Trudy Baker
 Bottom row: Sr. Marielda, Jane Helminiak, Barbara Rubin, Mary Hubacker



Principal Phyllis Hamann

The school was able to hire sisters from other orders but never the numbers prior to the 1970s. Phyllis Hamann, the first layperson, was named principal in 1972 and served. In 1976 Frances Sauer, a former sister of Charity of Provident, became principal and served until 1985.

Earlier in the 70s, Sharon Barry began her fifty-year career at St. James. Gary Thornton, who continues as a physical education

teacher today, started sharing his time with Edgewood High School as the Track Coach and St. James in 1974. Fr. Tom Baxter, after being a deacon in the 1960's, joined Fr. DeBock as assistant in 1979.



Changes in Central Madison

Rumor of **St. James School** Closing Is Denied by Pastor

The Rev. William A. DeBock, pastor of St. James Catholic Church, Wednesday denied rumors that the school either will close this fall or drop one or more grades.

"We are definitely planning to open in the fall of 1971," Fr. DeBock said. "We are definitely not in a mood to close."

The demographics of central Madison were changing in the 60s and 70s. Rumors were circulating in 1971 that St. James School would be closing. St. Joseph School closed in June 1963 due to the

"Renewal" of the Greenbush area by the City of Madison that caused the move of St. Joseph Parish to the very south edge of the city of Madison. St. Raphael School closed at the end of the 1969-70 school year. Nearby Holy Redeemer had already closed its school. St. Patrick School closed after the 1976-77 school year. Longfellow School (Madison Public School) closed in 1980, leaving St. James as the only elementary school in the downtown and campus area of the city.

"Under the present basis, it would be almost impossible to continue next fall," said Msgr. Raymond E. Klaas, rector.

MADISON school officials have been hearing rumors that St. James Catholic School also might close this spring, but the Rev. Dennis Domack, St. James associate pastor, said there are no plans to close.

If **St. Raphael School** should close, he added, many of its pupils might attend St. James. St. Raphael has a current enrollment of 196 pupils in first



MSGR. KLAAS

Fr. DeBock sent a letter to the pastors of these neighboring parishes telling them that if its school closed, its students would be welcome at St. James.

With the declining enrollments and fewer neighborhood families with children, the school was becoming less of a neighborhood school during this decade. By the spring of 1970, the idea of charging tuition for the students was proposed. Up until that time, the parish had supported the school. Now, new sources of revenue were needed.

In 1972, Fr. DeBock advised parishioners that non-Catholics would be welcome to St James School. Just four years later in June 1976, a proposal was made to close the school for financial reason, but that proposal was rejected. That fall, parishioners started paying tuition. Non-parishioners had been paying \$200 a year since the early 1970s. Fr. DeBock made arrangements with the Pastors at these schools to enable more of their students to come to St. James by asking the parish to pay the additional cost of non-parishioner tuition.

Free Bus Transportation for Private Schools

Busing for St. James students has been a valuable tool for both recruiting and maintaining student populations. In April 1967, the Wisconsin State Legislature passed the following enabling students at St. James to be bussed free to school.

Transportation of school children. *SECTION 23. [As created April 1967] Nothing in this constitution shall prohibit the legislature from providing for the safety and welfare of children by providing for the transportation of children to and from any parochial or private school or institution of learning. [1965 J.R. 46, 1967 J.R. 13, vote April 1967]*

We don't have an exact date when transportation began for St. James students, but we know that by the 70's bus transportation was available to students who lived more than 1.5 miles from school. During the 70's, the buses that transported St. James students also transported students to Edgewood Grade School. In the first years, there were two buses. Bus Route #8 traveled around to the southern edge of Madison north of the Beltline; Bus Route #25 travelled beyond the Beltline to Fitchburg. This bus transportation enabled many students who lived beyond the Beltline in Madison and Fitchburg to easily attend school.

Sports in the 70s

Sports along with academics, religion, and community continued to be prominent at St. James. In 1976, the girls were Softball champs coached by Carol Marshall, 1953 Alum, and Jan Lombardino. In 1978, the girls' volleyball team were champions of the parochial schools' league led again by

Carol Marshall and Jan Lombardino. Boys and girls excelled in sports with the strong support from parents and the athletic association which began in 1960's and continues until now.



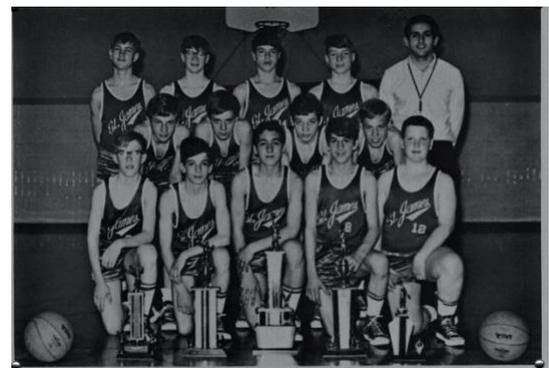
Haag leading scorer in Parochial League

Kevin Haag of **St. James School** captured the 1975-76 scoring title in Madison Parochial League basketball which concluded Tuesday night.

Haag ended the season with 228 points in 14 league games for an average of 16.2 points per game.

Success in sports also was a part of the Boys' Basketball. Kevin Haag, an 8th grader in 1975-76, had a

successful basketball season.



ST. JAMES SPARTANS
Madison, Wisconsin
1969-1970

LEAGUE CHAMPIONS	WON 9	LOST 0
SEASON RECORD	WON 26	LOST 4

Front Row: Gary Miller, Paul Fahey, Bob Schuchardt, Paul Mazzara, Mark Esch.
 Second Row: Greg Skolaski, Tim Martinelli, Jim Schneider, Mark Schultz.
 Third Row: John Tennison, Dave Vondra, Don Klinger, Mike Snell.

Coach: Bob Cerniglia
 Assistant Coach: John Schneider

Vatican II continued

In 1974, St. James Church was redecorated and with it, the changes in the sanctuary which brought the altar to enable the priest to face the congregation when saying Mass.



Prior to 1974 there was a temporary wooden altar in place. With the changes made in 1974, the tabernacle was moved to a side altar, a permanent altar was placed for the priest to face the congregation, the statues of the Holy Family were placed to the left of the sanctuary, the crucifixion of the Resurrection Jesus was placed to the right of the sanctuary above the tabernacle, new lighting and new wall coverings and gold gildings and lettering.

Special Event in February 1978

in February of 1978, St. James welcomed a special guest who spoke to the 4th, 5th and 6th Grade students. Richard Bull who played Nels Oleson in **Little House on the Prairie** visited St. James. His wife, Barbara Collentine, is a 1938 Alumna of St. James School.



Conclusion

By the end of 1979, enrollment was 156. That same year, Cathy Howe Doyle, a 1971 St. James graduate, returned to the school to teach the students until 1985. Citing fond memories of her St. James days, she said, "The thing that sticks out most in my mind is the example that my parents and my teachers at St. James set for me. The example was one of respect for others and sacrifice. . . . Being able to talk to my students about God and our relationship with Him and being able to pray and celebrate liturgies add the icing to the academic cake."