

From the Principal



One hundred and twenty years ago, on 7 June 1878, Loreto School opened its doors to its first pupils. Mother Margaret Mary Jolivet, Mother Mary Joseph Colohan and Mother Teresa Colohan, the founding Sisters, had just arrived from Ireland, and, according to a newspaper article of that time, "were prepared to do their utmost in the noble cause of education, and also to suffer with cheerfulness any privations they may be called upon to make in the country of their adoption".

And hardships they certainly had: they had hardly established the school when two years later in December 1880 during the siege of Pretoria, the convent was occupied by about 600 British soldiers and the sisters were asked to give refuge to the women and children of Pretoria. In spite of difficult conditions which included overcrowding, disease and even the death of their leader, Mother Margaret Mary, the school remained open and the sisters continued their service to the community of Pretoria.

It is this enduring spirit of joyful and dedicated service to God that we are celebrating this year.

When reading up the records of those early years, we find that much has changed in the last 120 years: In the first few years, the school had about 200 mainly English speaking girls with names like Mary Napier and Bertha le Roux, who travelled to school by horse and carriage. Now, we have about 630 mainly Tswana speaking pupils, boys and girls, with names like Katlego Matlala and Lesego Malatji who travel to school by motor car, combi or taxi.

The teachers then were all Loreto sisters, with only one or two lay teachers. Subjects such as English, Arithmetic, Writing, Dutch, German, Theory of Music, Singing, Drawing, Oil Painting, Fancy Needlework, Plain Needlework, Bible History and Christian Doctrine were taught.

Now the teachers are all lay teachers, with only three sisters still teaching on a part time basis, and the subjects we offer include Accounting, Business Economics, History, Geography, Tswana, Guidance and Religious Education.

But much has remained unchanged: According to the newspaper reports of 1883, the school community had to raise funds to build adequate classrooms and a hall (now the Gr 1 and Gr 2 classrooms). We read about the bazaars, concerts and lotteries which helped fund the new buildings. This is reminiscent of our cake sales, boerewors roll sales, raffles and Family Fun Day where our teachers, parents and pupils have joined forces to raise funds for our beautiful new hall.

In December 1891 a short article was published in the newspaper which stated: "The Loreto Convent

School entertainment was repeated last Saturday evening before a very large audience, who testified their hearty approval of every item on the excellent programme. The entertainment was of the high order always associated with this first class education establishment, and the interpretation of various characters in "Blue Beard" was of so perfect a kind as to be simply astonishing, when the youth of the respective performers is considered. Many professional entertainers do not succeed nearly so well as did these amateurs, who are deserving of unqualified praise. The performance was a complete success."

If we were to take out the title of the play "Blue Beard" and replace it with the titles of our Junior Primary play "The Tokbird", the Senior Primary play, "Rainbow Express" and the High School revue, "The Loreto Journey", would these words not equally apply to what our school produced on 5 June this year?

And when a newspaper reporter wrote on 28 June 1890: "There is no gainsaying the fact that no little amount of pains and trouble is taken in the education of the pupils attending the Loreto Convent, and too much praise cannot be accorded to those entrusted with the mental welfare of the scholars for their zealous efforts and ardent zeal in bringing the standard of education of our girls in this country to such a height as must command the respect of the adjacent States and colonies of South Africa", does it not echo the word of Fr Emil Blaser, of the Southern African Bishops Conference, in a letter of congratulation written in May of this year, on the occasion of the 120th anniversary of our school: "In these times, as in times gone by, education is a great challenge and Loreto is a household word in many parts of the country but especially here in Pretoria. You have done and continue to offer a magnificent ministry to our community. I pray that Loreto will go from strength to strength and continue to leave its mark on the people of Pretoria and, indeed, of South Africa. Past pupils can look with pride on their years of education. You, your staff and the sisters can justly look back with pride and receive well-deserved praise and accolades of the community and Church of Pretoria".

Loreto Convent School has been going strong for 120 years; it has served under six different governments; at one time the school sang the "Volkslied", at another time "God Save The Queen", then later "Die Stem", and now we sing "Nkosi Sikelela iAfrika", but during all these times, with all these changes, it has remained steadfast in its joyful and dedicated service; it has continued to put its trust in God: "Cruci dum spiro fido" – While I breathe I trust in the Cross.

Mrs Renée d'Oliveira

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION REPORT

As in the past, regular meetings of the Senior and Junior School were held with the Principal, Mrs d'Oliveira, co-ordinator of the teaching of religion in the school. Although the main purpose of these meetings was to plan the programme, they also proved fruitful for sharing information and ideas.

Masses for the three Sections of the school were celebrated on First Fridays or on days that were convenient for planners. Having different leaders for these Masses meant a certain amount of creativity was introduced. This helped to bring the Liturgy alive.

Early in May Fr Sean and Fr Gerard of the Redemptorist Mission team gave a week of talks and spiritual exercises to the classes in the Senior School. Judging by the comments of Gr 10D in their evaluation the experience was appreciated by the girls. I quote from this evaluation:

1. **WHAT I LIKED:** "Everything we did was done in a fun way . . . we played games, did drawings, sang and prayed."

"It taught us how to look deeper into ourselves. To get to know our weaknesses and our strengths."

2. **WHAT I DIDN'T LIKE:** Many referred to the venue, the Parish Hall, which was undergoing renovations after seepage of petrol and water. This was unfortunate and we trust it will not happen again.

Some also thought the time too short. In the future at least two days!

3. **WHEN DID YOU FEEL CLOSEST TO GOD:** "I felt close to God when we prayed. Especially when I learnt that I can express my love for God in many ways, praying, talking to God, drawing, singing etc. We must not always be asking God for things . . . we must also be ready to give."

Immediately after the Matrics finished writing their trials they went to Sizanani for a day and a half of prayer and meditation under the guidance of Bernadette Chelley, a trained retreat leader. They found the environment and the exercises most inspiring.

Sr Shirley Kay

PARENT TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION REPORT

An anonymous poet tells the story of a Fund Raiser who arrived at the Pearly Gates of Heaven. After establishing the applicant's bona fides, St. Peter opened the Gates. "Come in and choose your harp", he sighed, "you've had your share of hell".

It is evident that St. Peter's Fund Raiser had an attitude problem. He should have been sent to Limbo. Had he been a member of our P T A he would have objected that fund raising is hell. He

would have pointed out to St. Peter that our Loreto Community actually welcomes the hard work involved in raising funds and that the money itself is of secondary importance. What really counts is the human factor. Fund raising, Loreto style, is about liberating our humanity by giving it a greater chance to express itself.

Let me explain. Whenever we have occasions such as Family Fun Day, Lorelympics, Concerts etc. we contribute in cash and kind and participate actively in preparations, selling and buying. But these are only the outward activities to bring in material empowerment. In the process – more significantly – we enlarge our lives by uniting with fellow human beings to achieve a common purpose. Therefore we promote harmony and appreciation of each other in all our diversity.

I find it appropriate now to extend a BIG THANK YOU to members of the Loreto community who make it possible for one and all to grow in our humanity. If I were St. Peter I would say, "Play your harp. You bring Heaven on earth."

Mr E A Ditsebe – Chairman of the P T A

HEADGIRL'S REPORT



Our 120th anniversary, 1998, has been a year of many celebrations and excitement. What an achievement to have reached 120 years!

This year saw the opening of our brand new long awaited school hall. It was Sister Shirley's dream to have a new school hall built, big enough to accommodate our fast growing numbers. Finally, after all the hard work spent fundraising, Sister Shirley realised her dream. The beautiful new hall came at the perfect time, just in time for our great big 120th birthday celebration, on 5 June. A lot of time and effort went into preparing the birthday celebration which included a birthday mass which was attended by a number of special guests and various productions on stage performed by the pupils. Our celebrations reflected our gratitude for all that the Loreto Sisters have done for us over the past 120 years. The High school production was called "The Loreto Journey". "The Loreto Journey" showed us how Loreto was founded and the journey of the Loreto Sisters who were inspired by their foundress Mary Ward. This production had a profound influence on many people associated with Loreto Convent, not only because of the many hours devoted to rehearsals, but also it was an opportunity for some to fully understand Mary Wards' vision. To all the teachers and pupils involved in organising the events on the school's birthday, well done, it was a huge success.

Once all the excitement and distractions were over, it was time to get back into the routine of work, work, work! The pupils did just that and many

even took on the challenge of participating in the Maths, English and History Olympiads as well as a Bible quiz. As usual, our girls were true ambassadors for our school. Well done, we are proud of you.

This year, the emphasis was on ensuring that our pupils develop into well rounded, balanced pupils by encouraging participation in various clubs and sports. The clubs went very well with the teachers and the pupils enjoying their Wednesday afternoons together. One club I found particularly interesting was the matric social skills club. This club was offered to the matrics, the aim was to give us the opportunity to learn more about specific decisions which we will have to make when we leave school. Some of the topics which were discussed included the impediments of marriage, the legal side of marriage, rape prevention, self-defence and all about insurance policies.

On behalf of the matric class, I would like to thank Mrs d'Oliveira for organising this very enjoyable and informative club.

Mrs Gebhardt has definitely livened up our school this year by her wonderful dedication to the choir. The choir girls have done very well, they have taken part in a number of competitions which have really made Loreto famous for its outstanding singing. Not only do they sing beautifully, they look smart in their uniforms too. Keep up the good work girls and a big thank you to Mrs Gebhardt.

On 20 March, my fellow classmates and I had our matric dance. It was an unforgettable night. A sincere thank you to Mrs Hanekom and Mrs Truter who organised the whole event – you will always hold a special place in our hearts.

The 1998 prefect body was faced with many challenges and at times we felt tired and stressed, but we were a team, we worked hard together and we were determined to fulfill our tasks to the very end. To Anita the vice-headgirl – you were my right hand and to my fellow prefects, you were the best. I would like to wish next year's prefect body great success, remember you can accomplish more in one hour with God, than in one lifetime without him.

Being headgirl has been a great honour and a privilege. It has been a wonderful experience. There are so many people who made my task so much easier. Thank you to the pupils, you are all stars, thank you for always giving me a smile and brightening up my day. To Mrs d'Oliveira, our dear Loreto Sisters and teachers your constant support has been wonderful. To my parents thank you for always being there when I needed a shoulder to lean on, and last but not least to my dear matric class, thank you for believing in me and always encouraging me. I will miss you.

Loreto Convent is not only a school, it is a closely knit family in which the individual pupil's unique needs and talents are the centre of the schools endeavours. At Loreto, our religious values and spiritual development are of paramount importance.

These are just some of the reasons why I am so proud to be part of the Loreto family. The past twelve years have been happy ones. So, if I can leave a message to you all, it is to become a closer member of the Loreto family by your participation, and you will reap enormous benefits and blessings.

Diana Sousa

HIGH SCHOOL REPORT



Memory lights her lamp upon the threshold of the year – 1998 – bringing happy thoughts and recollections. No year is ever empty – unfortunately it is also true that no year can only be filled with the positive and pleasant. Therefore it is wonderful to be able to recall experiences which overshadow the rest.

One of the highlights of the year – the matric dance, took place in March at the Zoo Lake Restaurant. A month later the matric pupils had a further opportunity to show off their beautiful evening gowns at a Mother-Daughter Tea-party organised by the Gr 11 classes and Mrs Büttner and Mrs Truter – their class teachers.

Momentum Life Assurers have offered bursaries to the two best pupils in Gr 11. They have also donated three computers to the school, with the promise of more, and have addressed our Matric club on the topic of life insurance, savings, etc. We are fortunate to have such a well known company take an active interest in our school.

The school was greatly blessed by a retreat for the Gr 10, 11 and 12 pupils, conducted by two Redemptorist priests, Fr Sean from Wales and Fr Gerard from Scotland. Fr Gerard had an immediate bond with the girls as he could speak fluent Tswana.

A further blessing was the opportunity 20 pupils had to attend a weekend Life in the Spirit Seminar, held at Sizanani.

Pretoria Inner City Ministries, who work with the poor and the outcast of the inner city, have approached us for help with a number of girls off the street. We have started classes on a Saturday morning, in the school hall. Some Loreto sisters and teachers on the staff have joined forces with social workers of Pretoria to train and cultivate women and children in their care, as well as the street girls who seek shelter at Lerato House.

Clubs for all the pupils in the high school were started in 1997, and serve the purpose of developing a wide range of interests and skills among the girls. Pupils have a choice of Community Service, Computers, Choir, Drama, Entrepreneurship, International Forum, Journalism, Sewing and First Aid.

Our high school choir made their debut when they took part in the Rentmeester Music Festival at the State Theatre, on 3 August. They looked very

smart in their specially made choir outfits, and proudly came home with a trophy!

The Drama Club produced a play – specially written for the 120th birthday celebration of our school. It was based on the history and development of the school with highlights lifted out in dramatised acting – cleverly coached by Mrs Susan Robinson, our Drama teacher.

The Community Service Club, run by Mrs du Plessis, visited the disabled children at Sizanani, the Pretoria Academic Hospital and Tulela House, a place of safety for abused and abandoned children. They collected and distributed clothing, books and tinned food, and were touched by the grateful response of the cancer patients and old people. The most memorable visit was to 1 Mil. Hospital where new-born babies were observed.

Our own newspaper, Loreto Life, has seen the light, edited by Mrs Terre Blanche and her pupil editorial staff – here you can pick up the achievements, and gossip of Loreto girls.

In the Sewing Room, girls attending Mrs Kruger's Sewing Club, will very soon be able to dress up in their own fashionable creations.

The Culture Club members make an effort to go to the State Theatre at least once a term. Mrs du Plessis arranged attendances of opera, ballet and drama. It is wonderful to see how these girls have developed an appreciation for the arts. They are developing the skills and knowledge to evaluate productions objectively. The girls now consider themselves "connoisseurs of the Arts"!

The International Forum was a new venture this year. It arose out of the girls' need to know more about the world we live in. The school hosted exchange students from around the world during an international week. Girls from Chile, Belgium, Germany, Alaska, Canada and Switzerland stayed in the homes of Loreto pupils as guests for that week. The Forum also invited speakers from the Irish Embassy, United Nations and American Embassy.

Our school is also gaining in its reputation of offering an excellent education. We have no need to advertise in the media – satisfied parents spread the word. I'm sure everybody is aware of the fact that once again we obtained a 100% pass rate at the end of 1997! – and achieved 8 A's! (History, Typing and Business Economics.)

Congratulations to Mrs Helen Terre Blanche, our senior History teacher, and her four pupils who took part in the Young Historians competition. Three pupils got through to the semi-finals: Diakanyo Mokoka, Puleng Shuping and Yoco Khumalo. Puleng went on to win the Gr 11 section, while Yoco came second in the Gr 12 competition. Well done girls! Furthermore, a large group participated in the History Olympiad and Diakanyo Mokoka reached the final round. She was in the top 50 pupils of the first round.

The English Olympiad was held in the 1st term.

The eleven entrants attended discussion groups and workshops on the various forms of South African English. Their efforts were rewarded by a pass for everyone and bronze certificates for 5 pupils!

The Highveld Festival took place on 7 and 8 September and 50 Gr 11 pupils attended. Two enjoyable and informative days were spent attending workshops on music and drama, plays and dance and music productions.

Five girls also joined the Speakers Circle in the third term – a series of lectures and workshops which ended with a Gala evening.

The Gr 8 and 9 pupils had the opportunity to take part in an internal Maths Olympiad. 36 pupils qualified to take part out of which 10 finalists were chosen after the first round. The final round took place on 18 September from which 3 winners were chosen.

The Science Olympiad took place in May and 14 girls took part. Although none of them qualified for the second round, they all agreed that it was a worthwhile experience. Arrangements have been made by Dr Howden to take the Gr 11 pupils to the Expo for Young Scientists at the University of Pretoria.

The above activities and successes would not have been possible without a well disciplined school. The exercise of discipline is not only a demanding but also a complex task – requiring both flexibility and judgement. We urgently request the parents to assist us as teachers in the creation of a culture of discipline in our pupils. Unsatisfactory behaviour is unfortunately too often a matter of concern and is an area which requires co-operation from pupils, parents and staff.

Congratulations to Mrs Pinto and Mrs Van Loggerenberg on the birth of their baby boys – we are looking forward to having them back at school, but at the same time would like to thank Miss Nyirenda and Dr Kruger for the way they just stepped in and became part of the Loreto staff – offering their best and both doing more than their share!

We are all trying to build on the admirable Loreto tradition – I have been blessed to be part of a very special team of High School staff (teachers, secretaries and the Sisters) always dedicated, helpful, friendly and supportive – and I wish to thank all of them sincerely – I would not have been able to fulfil my task as HOD without this. Lastly I wish to express my sincerest appreciation to Mrs Büttner and Mrs d'Oliveira for their continuous support and guidance and for entrusting this task to me.

"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: The only ones among you who will really be happy are those who have sought and found how to serve." Albert Schweitzer

Mrs Jeanne Fouché

Mrs Fouché retires as HOD at the end of this year, but will continue to teach in the high school. We thank her for her hard work and unending patience.

SENIOR PRIMARY REPORT



Another very busy year is almost at its end and it is time to look back at what has passed, our successes and our failures and to reassess the direction in which we are going. To this end several changes have been made to the school day in order to streamline the running of the school and to offer the children more by way of activities. It is still in the experimental stages and we will adapt and modify the programme in the light of experience gained this year.

We, in the Senior Primary School, have had a moderately successful year. Staff wise Mrs Wöcke left us during the second term to have a baby and her position was ably filled by Mrs Gibbs. Miss Abdo joined the staff and now teaches Grade 4. Mr Rowe came on to the permanent staff and teaches Grade 5.

Sporting wise we have been severely hampered by not having a field to practise on and both our cricket and our soccer suffered. Hopefully next year we will have the use of the field and we can then offer both these sports.

Educational visits have again played an important part in the school curriculum. The Grade 4s have been to the Kruger Museum, Gold Reef City and African Window. The Grade 5s have spent an informative three days at Khabula, been to the African Window and are currently attending an ongoing course run by the conservation Department of the Pretoria Technikon. The Grade 6s will be doing a leadership course to enable us to pick our prefects for next year. The Grade 7s have been on a museum trip, a visit to the Pretoria University Science Laboratory and a two day Bible course at Hartebeespoort Dam.

The Senior Primary School has instituted a "War on Waste" by introducing bins for the recycling of tin cans, waste paper and plastics. At present it is early days but we do have high hopes that it will become a source of income for the School in the future.

The Catholic Schools Association has again been very active this year promoting a climate of family between the various Catholic Schools in the Pretoria area. They have managed to do this by encouraging the schools to hold various activities which would bring them together. There have been Public Speaking Festivals at St Paulus, Choir Festivals at Loreto Queenswood, an Inter Catholic Schools Quiz Competition at CBC, a Soccer Festival at Assumption Convent and a Grade 7 Day of worship and companionship at our school.

The entire Senior Primary School celebrated Assumption Day at Loreto Convent Queenswood where we attended Mass with refreshments served afterwards. It was good to renew our ties with our sister school.

The annual JAT (Junior Aptitude tests) were done and hopefully the results will give direction to the children and help them to make informed decisions as to subject choices when they reach High School.

The religious aspect of the childrens' education was taken care of by Sister Cecilia who arranges the Senior Primary Masses and the Retreats for the Grade 5, 6, 7s. We have a deep sense of gratitude and appreciation for what she has done.

At the beginning of June we celebrated our School's 120th birthday and the Senior Primary School took their full part in the festivities and their performance of the musical "The Rainbow Express" was most successful.

Once again may I request that parents maintain an interest in their childrens' education and a close association with the School? We teachers cannot be solely responsible for the education and discipline of your children. We need your support and I believe we should work together in a dynamic partnership to ensure that your children reach their true potential both in the classroom and on the sports field.

I would like to thank the staff for the support and dedication they have shown over the past year. I believe we are very fortunate to have teachers of such calibre educating our children.

May God Bless you all and grant you a peaceful Christmas with your families and a Prosperous Year in 1999.

Mr Ian Lockhart

Mr Lockhart retires as HOD this year. His dedication and wonderful sense of humour will be sorely missed.

JUNIOR PRIMARY REPORT



1998 was a momentous year in the history of Loreto Convent and we will remember this 120th year celebratory event for many years to come. I see God holding this school and us in the palm of His hand saying, "I have called you by name, you are Mine."

The highlight in the Junior Primary this year was definitely the opening of the new School Hall and the celebratory concert called "The Tokbird". This concert really created a sense of unity amongst the little ones as it portrayed the ethos of the school and contributed towards school spirit - all the learners had the opportunity of participating in different ways. Our concert was yet one more exercise designed to develop the children's talents on a different level.

Part of the total education of our children comprises Christian values, in which peaceful co-existence and a positive attitude to their natural and social environment, play a major role. The theme of

this year's concert was PEACE. If our children, who are tomorrow's leaders, learn the value of peace, society as a whole may with optimism look forward to the future.

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you." John 14:27

We, the teachers in the Junior Primary Phase dedicate ourselves to providing a well rounded education to all the little ones entrusted to our care. We aim to awaken and energise their sleeping minds and guide them to acquire the skill of learning. For this we need a lot of prayer and patience, especially to enable us to explain new concepts creatively, until they have understood them and made them their own.

Our motto is: If you struggle to succeed – try, try and try again!

As teachers we realise that there are many small highlights that make teaching worthwhile, like the day the whole class got full marks for a times-table test, or when they had all brought their sponsor money, not to mention the day one of the little ones looked up with a beaming face and said, *"Teacher, now I understand!"* We also share moments of fun and laughter, such as when a little Grade 1 in the middle of a Maths lesson jumped up and proudly announced, *"Teacher, Teacher, our puppy had chickens yesterday!"*

I sincerely thank the **Junior Primary Staff** for being the kind of teachers who make learning an adventure, for inspiring our little ones to achieve their full potential and to make them want to be the very best that they can be.

"But the temple built by a teacher can never decay. It was a human life that was built here – to last through eternity's day."

A special word of welcome to Mrs Ann Rogan, who with her ready smile and positive attitude, has joined our ranks. We have great respect for her remedial background and are making good use of her expertise. And of course, we simply LOVE her American accent!

Mrs Luterek, our Grade 0 teacher, has given birth to a gorgeous little baby girl called Sabina and we all share in her joy. She will be on accouchement leave until October.

Many thanks to all our parents for their co-operation and caring. We appreciate your involvement and together we will make your children winners. Without your active support our continued growth would be restricted.

Ke a le leboga lotlhe batsadi ka tirisano mmogo le tlhokomelo e le e bontshang ka metlha. Ke a le rata lotlhe. Ke rata go le raya ke re le botlhokwa thata mo sekolong sa rona.

Because our children need a change of pace during the day to avoid monotony and fatigue and to maintain a balance of different kinds of experiences, we have incorporated **Physical Training** into

our day. Thanks go to Mrs Haupt and her team for assisting the little ones to release some of their excess energy in an organized way and for emphasizing that *"A healthy body harbours a healthy mind."*

At Loreto we have a holistic approach and we aim to develop the whole person. We believe that for 120 years the learners at our school have received an education which benefits the learners, staff and community in an exemplary fashion. This gives us reason to have hope for the future as we highly value each individual learner. Therefore we take our little ones on **educational and stimulating outings** in order to encourage them to observe, judge, compare and reason through their senses. *"Nature extends an invitation to all children to explore and become intimate with the broad world of living things of which they are part."* Lillian de Lissa.

The whole Junior Primary saw the play "Jack and the Beanstalk" at the Piet van der Walt Theatre. Excitement was high and cries of *"Will there be a real giant?"* were heard throughout the throng of keen learners. We were ushered into a real theatre with "swing-up" chairs, but the highlight of the show was the huge beanstalk which reached to the ceiling while dancing to loud music. We did not get to see the giant as he was too shy to make an appearance, but his booming voice was enough to frighten the more faint-hearted in the audience.

The Grade 0 and Bridging classes went on a **train trip** which coincided with the theme Transport. The children enjoyed pointing out familiar buildings. The tunnels caused great excitement and the children screamed with delight. They also visited the **Willows Riding Centre** where each child had a chance to ride on a horse, and even trotted around the ring. The horses in turn were rewarded for their patience with apples and carrots fed to them by our children.

A trip to the **Children's Farm** was most successful as the children were allowed to cuddle the rabbits and bottle-feed the calf. They also learnt to tell the difference between male and female tortoises.



Children from the pre-school getting to know horses at the Willows Riding School.



All aboard! The Gr O and Bridging classes on their train trip

The Grade 2's had a delightful day at the **Willem Prinsloo Agricultural Museum**. Some of the demonstrations included candle-making, milking and a donkey-driven water pump. The museum guide challenged the children with practical prob-



A hungry lamb at the Children's Farm is fed by the pre-school

lem solving skills and each child had the opportunity to participate.

We also aim at helping and guiding our children to develop a lively spiritual life, therefore we attend **Mass** regularly where the little ones really get actively involved and participate joyfully. Thanks go to Sr Cecilia for inspiring us all and for making Jesus come alive for the little ones.

Creating an awareness of others is a high priority for us and we think of the needy and poor by means of poor-money collections and different donations.

In order to enhance and instil moral values and good manners, we invite specialised groups and speakers to visit our school. During November N.E.T.S. (National Educational Theatre for Schools) will present a play "*What should you say?*" which will focus on the basics of behaviour regarding all situations. Subjects such as table manners, telephone techniques, respect for adults, as well as personal hygiene and a caring attitude towards those less fortunate will feature. Participation in songs reinforces the message.

The Drama Department of the Technikon will present a **story – and – rhyme programme** later in the year and it promises to be action-filled and a lot of fun!

We also invited Mrs Tessa Segal to educate our children with a talk on **Healthy Eating Habits**. We strongly urge all parents to work closely with us in promoting our endeavour to instil healthy eating habits in our children. As a follow up Sasko Sam the Breadman will involve the little ones in a programme educating them on general nutrition, whilst simultaneously bringing fun through games, song and dance. Remember: You are what you eat!

The **Junior Primary Choir** attended the Catholic Schools' Music Festival and they did our school proud. They really experienced the joy and pleasure that only music can bring and this made the day truly worthwhile for us all, and . . . God really smiled! This event proved once again that children can do wonderful things with the right guidance and for this we thank Mrs Gebhardt and Mrs Maritz. "*Life is a song, so let's sing it!*"

The Juniors celebrated **Arbor Day** with gusto. Mr and Mrs Geerlink of Multi Motors in Schubart Street became involved with the school and we were treated to sun hats and sweeties and the little ones promised to care for and love trees for life.

Our annual **Family Fun Day** (or as one of the little ones said "*Happily Fun Day*") was a day filled with fun, laughter and lots to eat. This day is also an opportunity for teachers and parents to mingle and to get to know one another on a social level. I think we all agree that it was a most enjoyable (and profitable) day!

In Proverbs 22:5 we read: "*Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.*"

This leads us to a topic that has become more and more important and urgent – **DISCIPLINE**. In order to have a disciplined child, we need the involvement of parents. The school together with the home must insist on the correct behaviour from the child. Principles of healthy discipline should be consistent. Discipline is not a power struggle nor an effort to break a child's spirit – it is insisting that the correct set of norms and values be honoured. Discipline will only be successful if the bond of love is not broken and the child's self esteem is not destroyed. The child's sense of love and belonging should NEVER be disturbed. Princess Diana "the peoples' princess" said: *"If we all make our children feel valued, the result will be enormous."*

A final thought by Gabriela Mistral:

We are guilty of many errors and many faults, but our worst crime is abandoning the children, neglecting the fountain of life. Many of the things we need can wait.

The child cannot.

Right now is the time his bones are being formed, his blood is being made and his senses are being developed.

To him we cannot answer: "Tomorrow".

His name is Today.

May God touch your lives and bring gladness to your hearts.

Mrs Maryna Clarke

OBITUARIES

Not such happy news is that three of the much loved members of our Province have gone to their eternal reward.

SR MECHTILDE GUERIN went to God on 1 December 1997. It was her 92nd birthday. She would have been well known to the past pupils of Skinner Str who were here during the 1940's and early 1950's when she was Mistress of Schools.

The following quotation comes from a letter written to Mechtilde by Jean Murphy, a past pupil of Loreto Sea Point and dated 30 November 1997. "Do you know I have known you for 45 years? It has been a long and happy association and I have much to be grateful to you for . . . your patience with me and the interest you took in me have made me the woman I am today . . . the values set for me at Loreto are always with me and have been the corner stone of my life". Unfortunately this letter arrived after Mechtilde had died.

Sr Mechtilde died at Skinner Str just ten days after leaving Loreto Strand where she had been since 1983.

SR PATRICK McLOONE died on May 29, 1998. She was nearing the completion of 60 years service in our Province. Most of these years were spent working in Hillcrest, Waterkloof and Queenswood. She moved to Skinner Str when the Convent part of Queenswood was closed in 1994.

Always cheerful, interested in life and people, her happy smile and ready wit endeared her to her family, her community, the pupils and their parents.

Patrick's life work has been described in terms of Ps 131, "Yahweh, my heart has no lofty ambitions, my eyes do not look high, I am not concerned with great affairs or marvels beyond my scope . . ."

Though in failing health for about a year, Patrick was in hospital for only a week before she died.

SR FRANCIS BEDINGFELD went to a well-deserved reward on 22 July 1998. She had suffered intensely from terminal cancer since the beginning of this year. Before that she was actively engaged in pastoral work in Blue Downs, in Cape Town, where a small Loreto Community was established just over two years ago. Francis was totally selfless and gave herself wholeheartedly to any task she tackled. She would be best known to Skinner Str LOGs who were at school during the 1950s when she was involved with games and the teaching of Biology.

When asked to comment on the life of Francis one of our sisters said the following. "When I think of Francis I can only compare her to the 'Valiant Woman' spoken about in the Book of Proverbs: 'She finds her labour well worth while; her lamp does not go out at night . . . she holds out her hand to the poor she opens her arms to the needy . . . she is clothed in strength and dignity . . . she can laugh at the days to come'".

We have been on the receiving end of Francis' generous service. A woman of deep faith and constant prayer, she never thought about herself and her comfort."

We also report the deaths of the following past pupils and extend our prayerful sympathy to their loved ones:

Martha Glenshaw (nee Pollak) Head Girl 1927

Jean Wood (nee Meldrum) Head Girl 1938

Leila Roper (nee Meldrum) Head Girl 1944

Sheila Marais (nee O'Grady) Loreto Lydenburg.

MAY THEY REST IN PEACE

Sr. Shirley Kay



As we come to the end of yet another year, we need to look back with gratitude for all the good things that have happened in our school community during 1998.

The current period in the field of education has been one of change

and of severe financial uncertainty.

In spite of this we remain committed to maintaining our high standard of acclaimed excellence and of preserving our school, with all its ideals, for the good of your children.

The joyous celebration of the opening of our school hall, in the year of our 120th anniversary, was a highlight of the year. It was truly a Loreto team effort and despite recessionary times, the creative fund raising of the Parent Teachers' Association plus

various donations afforded us a beautiful hall which is a testament to our progress and commitment for the next 120 years.

The sincere thanks of the Board go to the Sisters, Mrs d'Oliviera and the teaching staff for the love and interest they bring to their work, and to everyone who contributes to making our school a vibrant centre of learning.

We'd also like to thank the parents and families for their continuing support and for their loyalty and conviction about the educational values we stand for.

May all our efforts be, "To the Greater Glory of God".

We wish you all a peaceful and happy Christmas.

Dale Melass and the Board of Management

THE LORETO JOURNEY

An account of the birth of Loreto Convent, Skinner Street

"I have made you a light for the nations so that my salvation may reach the ends of the earth". Acts 13:47

Dr Nulty, Bishop of Meath, Ireland, reluctantly parted with three valuable workers from his diocese, when M.M. Margaret Mary, M.M. Joseph and M.M. Teresa who together with two postulants, Sisters Charles Eugenie Ansquer and Mary Garry left for South Africa on 1 March 1878.

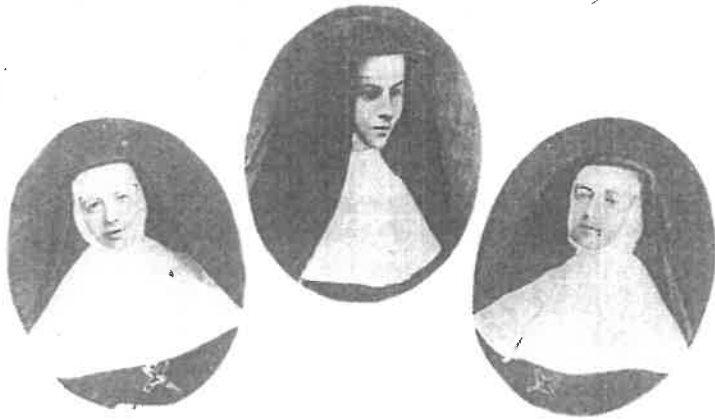
They sailed for Cape Town in the Warwick Castle. Then on to Durban in Sir Donald Curry's private yacht. They now faced the wearisome journey to Pretoria. The first lap was made from Durban to Pietermaritzburg by Post-cart. Here they spent two weeks in a cottage placed at their disposal by Mr and Mrs O'Meara. It was Holy week and the Bishop was indispensable for the ceremonies. It was not until 23 April that he was free to escort the nuns on the last and most fatiguing stage of their journey.

Twelve transport-wagons, brought the accessories of life to Pretoria and other towns dotted along the veld set out under the leadership of Mr Curry. Bishop Jolivet hired a passenger wagon from him and joined the "cavalcade".

Two days later brought the feast of Saint Mark which they celebrated in the spirit of the liturgy, complete with a procession and the singing of the litanies.

The first event of importance was the crossing of the Tugela River - no simple matter in those days when there were no bridges. The rivers in this country, when in flood, eat out their courses to great depths. The result is that in the "dry" season they run between precipitous banks. To get heavily laden transport wagons from one bank to the other was a major feat. On this occasion the Tugela was in flood. Even at the ford the water was well above the wheels of the wagon. The oxen had to swim as they were out of their depth.

There were many amusing anecdotes relating to this journey which have been handed down to us. One in particular throws light on the ignorance of the people of things Catholic. "On coming into towns the Bishop always made us sit well back from view." They will think you are my wives! "he said" so I must hide you". Some amusement was afforded the party when the Bishop was hearing confessions, while seated on the driver's box of the wagon. Just as Mother Margaret Mary was relating her story, who should stand up on the other side of her, but "Bush", who was collecting the provisions for the next meal! She herself was happily unconscious of the "eavesdropper", but the others did not fail to enlighten her later.



Three pioneer sisters

1 May, found the party starting the ascent of the wild and picturesque Drakensberg Mountains. It was weary work! Often one or other of the wagons stuck in a rut and a team from a more fortunate wagon had to come to the rescue. During the hotter hours of the day, progress was impossible. The cavalcade ground to a halt and the patient beasts were turned loose to graze and rest. The passengers and drivers whiled away the hours as best they could till temperatures cooled. Then once again the silent mountain echoed with the cries of the drivers as they collected the scattered teams of oxen. One ox was particularly recalcitrant. He invariably disappeared causing loss of time. To cure the delinquent beast, it was suggested that he be tied to one of the "good" animals at grazing time. The plan was adopted. "Now, I wonder," said the Bishop "will the good ox influence the bad ox or vice versa, I'm inclined to think we'll be looking for two oxen instead of one next time." He was right! At length the truants were found, inspanning accomplished and the steady climb upwards was continued until approximately 10 p.m. A few hours of sleep followed and then, long before sunrise, on again, on and up until altitudes of over 7000 ft were reached. The cold at night was intense.

On the crest of the mighty range, with the Transvaal stretching below them, the first Council Meeting of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary in South Africa, held.

Amid the wild grandeur of the scene, Mother Margaret Mary was appointed Superior, Mother Joseph Assistant and Mother Teresa Mistress of Schools.

That evening the newly organised little band of pioneers crossed the border of that vast territory known as the Transvaal.

Sunday morning! In the east the morning star hung low on the horizon, a "crumb of crystal" in the limpid blue of the dawn. Nature was still wrapped in slumber, but the humans in the camp were stirring. In a few minutes, six mattresses were piled on top of one another. With all reverence a rude altar was erected. Two sisters, each holding a lighted candle

made the setting for the Sacrifice of the Mass complete. The dawn brightened as the minutes passed and the sacred rite went on. The solemn stillness was broken by the tinkling of a bell and once again "all things being in quiet silence, the Almighty Word leapt down from His Royal Throne." (7) First, the God who despised not the manger descended to the lowly altar, thence into the hearts of those who awaited His coming with loving eagerness. The meeting between those who had "left all" and their Eucharistic Lord, as they knelt on the stony ground in the veld, can be better imagined than described. We do know they felt "it was good to be there".

But earth is not heaven, though there are moments when the two do seem to meet. Soon the party moved on to secure four or five hours of travel before the great heat of the day set in. The erstwhile silence was rudely shattered by a noisy duet between lively herd boys and leisurely oxen who protested loudly at being disturbed during their early morning feed. The "caravan" was on its way before the sun had leapt on the back of yonder kopje.

The next halt was timed for the morning meal. No elaborate dejeuner this! Fuel was hastily gathered for a fire and a pot was swung above it gipsy-wise. The party sat down to its prolonged picnic with hearty appetites and in the best of spirits. Excellent condiments for making the plainest fare palatable.

During the day they came across a Boer busily building on to his house. Surprised at seeing him thus engaged on the Sabbath, the Bishop asked him if he realised that it was Sunday. "No it's only Saturday" was his reply and he persisted in his delusion, thinking that the Bishop was joking. Cut off as he was from the world as completely as Robinson Crusoe was on his island, the worthy man had lost count of time, and was one day older than he realised.

So the days passed, trekking, outspanning, sleeping and eating. The Transvaal veld unfolded before them in seemingly endless vastness. At times the grass was as high as a man, at other times there was nothing green in sight. The desolate and uninhabited wastes gave little inkling of the rich gold deposits lying beneath the surface. The travellers, who had outspanned on the Witwatersrand, praying the Rosary as they paced the precincts of the camp, little realised that within ten years this silent wilderness would be humming with commercial life; thronged with the markets and merchants of that extraordinary mushroom city - Johannesburg.

At last early one morning, "Look" the Bishop exclaimed and, following the direction of his eyes, they saw a strange ball-like object on the summit of a prominent hill "Your future time regulator". Then as they emerged from the poort or gap in the hills through which they had been threading their way - "Your future home!". There below them, cupped in its encircling hills, lay Pretoria. It was FRIDAY MORN-



Early Pretoria (1876)

ON 17 MAY 1878, that the personnel of the Sacred Heart Mission arrived at the field of their labours.

Desolate enough it seemed that May morning as the travellers approached. A tiny house with gaping apertures where the windows should have been, just planted down on the open veld – it would seem, by mistake.

A party had gone out to welcome the sisters but had missed them. The sisters had a sinking feeling, until Father Walsh, the parish priest, came out of the unfinished building to greet them with open arms. "As he lifted me down from the Wagon", said Mother Joseph, years afterwards, 'my heart seemed to me suddenly, to be down in the tip of my little toe. I seemed to realise in a flash the full folly of the enterprise on which we had embarked and said to myself for the first time and, I may add the only time – "Am I mad"? The awful feeling of depression continued until, having descended from the wagon, Father Walsh conducted us into the little chapel. There, as soon as I found myself in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, a load seemed to fall from me and never since has it returned."

It certainly seemed to be one of the maddest missions that has ever been inaugurated since Eternal Wisdom sent forth twelve more or less illiterate men "to teach all nations!" Here they were, a handful of weak women, none of them particularly robust, all young and fresh from the gentle atmosphere of Ireland, known for the strength of its faith. They found themselves alone and unprotected in the heart of a strange and more or less hostile country, where the Catholic element was represented by exactly three families. There was no house ready for them and they planned to open a High School as soon as possible. Sublime folly of the Cross!

As they came out of the little church, Father Walsh apologised for the unfinished state of the building. The outbreak of the Zulu war had not only hindered materials from being transported from the coast, but had also drawn the workers from the job. However, Major Ingham, the army Doctor and his wife were delighted to offer the nuns hospitality until their convent was ready.

The nuns were pleasantly surprised to discover that Mrs Ingham was a past pupil of Loreto Convent, Navan, their Alma Mater. They were also delighted to sit down to the first civilized meal for three weeks.

In the afternoon, the Catholics of Pretoria met at Major Ingham's house to give the Bishop and the sisters an official welcome. The Doctor, on behalf of those present, read and presented the following address to Bishop Jolivet.

**To the Right Reverend Charles Jolivet, D.D.
Bishop of Bellina and Vicar Apostolic of Natal.**

My Lord

We the members of your flock in this remote portion of your extensive diocese avail ourselves of this auspicious occasion to welcome your Lordship and the devoted ladies who have quitted their homes and country to come to Pretoria.

We feel deeply indebted to your Lordship for the great exertions you have made in the cause of education. It is no exaggeration to say that your Lordship is a great pioneer of education in the territories included in your extensive diocese. In Natal, your schools are the admiration of all classes and, quite lately, the imposing building erected in Bloemfontein proclaims that, where education is concerned neither expense, nor any other kind of

sacrifice has been spared. We have been witnesses to the many personal sacrifices you have cheerfully borne during your previous residence amongst us, and we trust God may one day reward you for all you have done for us.

We bid the ladies who have come to educate our children a hearty welcome and are happy to say that their arrival here will be pleasing to all denominations.

Wishing your Lordship and the sisters every happiness,
We beg to subscribe ourselves,
Your Lordship's obedient children,

Wm J. Ingham
J. Pereira.
P. Shannon.
J. Foley, etc.

In reply His Lordship expressed his satisfaction in having been able to procure high class teachers for Pretoria and guaranteed that, on the part of the nuns, the utmost would be done in the noble cause of education. He concluded by thanking all present, on the sisters' behalf and on his own, for the welcome accorded.

The final work on the convent was hurried on, as on all sides petitions were pouring in to open the school. The building consisted of a brick structure on the open veld. At the entrance were two small rooms about 10 feet square, on either side of the passage 3 feet wide. The front room was a community room by day and the Superior's room by night. Two similar rooms served as music room and classroom during the day and nuns' cells at night. The nuns' dining room was at the back. A larger room to the left served the dual purpose of class room during the week and Chapel on Sundays. Three arches in the northern wall opened on to the sanctuary. During



Susie Ingham

the week these were temporarily closed by screens. To the west of the sanctuary was a tiny nuns' choir - a match-box of a place, which had to serve as a classroom as well. The Sanctuary itself, 18 feet x 16 feet was the only really permanent building. It was in this house that, on Friday, 7th June 1878, the First Friday of the month of the Sacred Heart, Loreto Convent, Pretoria, first opened its doors to pupils. Just a year had elapsed since the first Mass had been said in Pretoria and since the Bishop had petitioned Sir Theophilus Shepstone for a site. The cost of the land on which the school premises now stood was approximately \$44.

On the first day, there were twenty pupils for the high School and six pupils for the Parochial school. The Sisters travelled backwards and forwards to Major Ingham's house until the building was ready to receive them. This arrangement continued until 20th June. Little Susie Ingham, aged 5, had grown so fond of the strangely clad visitors that she refused to be parted from them. Seated on a box she presided at the top of the table of the first meal the Sisters had in their new home. Chairs were not yet available so the community sat on bedsteads and other articles of furniture.

The numbers in the school soon increased. The small staff divided the burden of the work cheerfully. There was no opportunity to be a drone. The three "R's" painting, music and advanced needlework formed the curriculum. That the claim of Loreto to offer higher education was no empty boast, is sufficiently proved by the State report on Education for 1878. This appeared in the Transvaal Gazette of January 1879. It reads:

"Another school has been established (consisting of a higher and lower division) attached to the Catholic Church at Pretoria. This school is also succeeding, and, as the range of instruction in the Higher Department is of an advanced character, it is likely to be useful in supplying a want long felt in this town."

Whilst her religious sisters were busy at desk and piano and easel, Sister Mary the postulant, plied her tasks about the tiny house, or was getting through some of her purgatory, cooking out in the sun, or worse still, in the tin shanty at the back of the walled up sanctuary which served as a kitchen: Her assistants gloried in names such as 'Teapot' and 'Sixpence'.

Extract from: "Loreto in Africa 1878-1978" Written by Mother Consiglio Turnbull IBVM, 1923; edited by Sister Shirley Kay, IBVM, 1978".

The Loreto time line

1585	Birth of Mary Ward	1914-18	World War I. Travel makes it impossible to get help in the form of personnel from overseas but school life proceeds as usual
1611	Founding of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary and the opening of the first school at St Omer in Belgium	1922	New block built. (Present school offices and Grade 7)
1631	Suppression of the Institute by Pope Urban VIII	1923	Branch House opened at Hillcrest
1645	Death of May Ward. But her followers kept alive her vision and inspiration.	1924	Loreto Strand is opened
1688	Founding of the Bar Convent in York, England, by Mother Frances Bedingfeld a follower of Mary Ward. First Convent to be opened in England after the dissolution of Monasteries in 1536 by Henry VIII	1928	Loreto Skinner Str Celebrates its Golden Jubilee. Besides a drama production, the School's 35 piece Orchestra puts on a gala performance
1794	Birth of Frances Ball in Dublin, Ireland	1929-33	The Great Depression. Hard times for all and the number on the roll at Skinner Str drops
1821	Founding of the Irish Branch of the Institute of the Blessed Virgin Mary, known as Loreto sisters, by Mother Frances Teresa Ball, who had been educated and trained as a religious at the Bar Convent in York. Her first Convent became known as Loreto Abbey, Rathfarnham, Dublin.	1939-45	World War II. Once again school proceeds as usual but it is not possible for new recruits to staff the school to travel from overseas
1841	The first Loreto Mission founded outside Ireland began in Calcutta. Followed by:	1947	Smuts' immigration policy brings new pupils and new life to the school
1845	Mauritius	1950	The Provincial Government passes the Language Ordinance restricting the admission to the school to English speaking pupils. Archbishop Garner challenges the Ordinance in the law courts. He wins his case in Supreme Court but loses it when the Province appeals to the Appellate Division. A costly exercise.
1847	Toronto, Canada	1953	Roll of Loreto Skinner Str reaches the highest ever: 853! Where did we put them?
1851	Manchester, England	1963-65	Vatican II. Many changes in the Church and incidentally in Religious Life are introduced. These have far-reaching effects on Loreto Convent Skinner Str, especially on the composition of the school staff
1861	Death of Mother Teresa	1971	First non-white pupil admitted to Loreto Convent Hillcrest. The daughter of the Malawian Ambassador. Skinner Str follows suit but the number of pupils of other races is limited by a quota system.
1875	Ballarat, Australia	1978	Loreto Skinner Str celebrates its centenary. A week of celebrations included a Pageant of the History of Loreto and a Mass for many Friends, Past pupils, Parents and pupils. These events took place on the Hockey Field.
1878	Pretoria, South Africa. Mother Margaret Mary Jolivet, Mother Joseph Colahan and Mother Teresa Colahan opened the School at Loreto Convent Skinner Str on 7 June with 20 pupils in the high school and 6 in the parochial school	1980 +	The effects of Vatican II began to be felt as the apostolate of Schools for the Sisters was superseded by apostolates for the under privileged. This factor combined with the ageing process led to the Sisters being replaced by lay staff in our schools.
1880	Siege of Pretoria: Convent buildings were taken over by the military on 16 December. Mother Margaret Mary died during the siege 15.01.81		
1881	March 27. Siege ends and school life resumes as normally as possible		
1891	First Subsidy given to the school by Kruger Government on condition that Dutch was taught in the school		
1893	Opening of Loreto Lydenburg. Another journey by ox wagon!		
1899	Outbreak of the Anglo Boer War. School was temporarily closed. Mother Joseph and Mother Teresa went to Ireland to get help.		
1905	The two Transvaal Houses come under the jurisdiction of Loreto Abbey Rathfarnham		
1913	The Transvaal Houses are placed under the leadership of Mother Patrick		

1985 | We celebrate the 4th centenary of the birth of Mary Ward

1986 | We receive the first Government subsidy for our schools since the days of Paul Kruger

1988 | The running of Loreto Skinner Str is handed to a Board of Government

1989 | The first lay Principal is appointed: Mrs Helen Addis

1994 | We celebrate the bi-centenary of the birth of Mother Teresa Ball

1996 | Mrs Renée d'Oliveira succeeds Mrs Addis as Principal, and two gentlemen teachers join the staff

1997 | October 7. Our long awaited new Hall is started

1998 | March 3, the keys of the New Hall are handed over at a special ceremony. June 1 Archbishop George Daniel blesses a commemorative plaque in our New Hall, followed on June 5 by the official opening, a Special Mass in the morning and a drama production by each section of the school in the afternoon and evening.

The "Loreto Journey" covering the above events, staged by the Senior Drama Club was a superb performance.

Compiled by: Sr. Shirley Kay

WHAT LORETO MEANS TO ME

To Loreto School



I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation for all the years that I have been employed by Loreto Convent School.

It has been a great pleasure for me to have worked here.

I started working on 15/5/1987, and by the help of God, I was never absent, or late for work. Every day I stayed behind to look after children until collected by their parents, and have always stayed until late at night to help if needed by any one, and also to keep an eye on the vehicles, and security when Board meetings were held.

In the execution of my work, I've always enjoyed being of service to the school.

I shall still be available if needed after my resignation in December.

In closing I would just like to say, thank you to all the teachers, vice-principal, and principal for what they have done and given to me.

I appreciate their kindness and friendship, and look forward to being of any further help in the future.

Thank you

J.A. Venter (Groundsman)

WHAT MAKES LORETO SO SPECIAL

I think what makes Loreto so special is the way people are treated and the way people respect one another.

But most important is the discipline and hard work of both the pupils and staff.

What I like most is the friendship between teachers and pupils. Our teachers are so caring and understanding. If you are feeling down or going through a difficult stage in your life the teachers are there for

you. They give you the support you need. Loreto is like a home for me.

I've learnt how to respect, communicate with others and be free to be me around my friends.

What impressed me most was my first day at Loreto Convent. I was so scared and shy I never thought that things would turn out the way they did. I was welcomed in the nicest way. There are so many things that I have learned here in Loreto, and I hope to learn more.

Loreto can make you realise how important education is.

Patricia Podi, Grade 11B

MY SPECIAL SCHOOL

This year Loreto Convent is turning 120 years. It is the oldest school in Pretoria. To celebrate the 120th birthday the Junior Primary made a concert called "The Tokbird." The concert was all about making peace. The paleface and redskin men were threatening war, until the Tokbird came. He told them that fighting won't help anything. Now there's peace with the redskins and palefaces.

Nthabiseng Moroane, Grade 3C

LORETO CONVENT, HERE TODAY AND HERE FOREVER

Education here is seeing, doing and having fun. The school motto is *Cruci dum spiro Fido* (through my life, I shall place my hope in the Cross).

As a Loreto girl I place my hope in the Education of Loreto Convent. Loreto is like a mountain, it's here today, and here forever.

The Loreto family is the heart of society.

Olivia Mokgatle, Grade 9B

LORETO TEACHERS REMEMBER

When people discover that we are past pupils of Loreto Convent they ask what it is like to teach at the school that you attended. Standing at the front of the class is vastly different to sitting behind a desk! Over the years there have been many changes to Loreto Convent.

There have been many changes to the structure of the school. Up until the end of 1982 the school was a boarding school. The grade 4S, grade 5R and grade 8 classes were dorms and the art room was a bathroom for the junior boarders. The boarders clothes were washed and ironed in the laundry which is now the grade 0 classroom.

Mrs Drake's office now takes the place of what was previously the main entrance to the school. There was a front parlour where a loving sister Rosina saw to the sick pupils of the school.

Many other classrooms have changed. The grade 9B classroom was the senior library, while the "pink room" of the staffroom was the library for the juniors. The biology room was not in existence until 1989. Previously it was a store room for costumes and props. The principals' office was opposite Mrs Wisselo's office. Only in 1989 was a lay principal

appointed, until then all principals had been religious sisters.

There were many more nuns in those days. If you speak to any past pupil they will speak with fondness about Sister Lucy and her yellow cane. She would stand at the black gate with her yellow cane in hand and the junior primary girls would curtsy as they walked past while the boys would give a bow. No one dared not do this for fear of the cane, although no one can remember it being used. She is remembered for her thoughtfulness and the many gifts that she gave to pupils.

The uniform was the same as today, except that hats were worn in public. We seemed to spend summer months with hot heads and a red mark on our foreheads. We were not allowed to wear jerseys in the streets, only blazers. To be caught with your hands in your pockets was a serious offence.

Although Loreto Convent has changed over the years, and will no doubt continue to do so, one thing will always remain the same and that is the love and care that is received here.

Mrs Wöcke and
Miss Abdo

120TH CELEBRATION AND OPENING OF NEW SCHOOL HALL

June 1 1998

Archbishop G. Daniel blessed the commemorative plaque in our New Hall, the culmination of a dream of many years. The background to this event involved long meetings, much deliberation, lots of setbacks and opposition and three trips back to the

drawing board! In fact the talking lasted 20 months and the building of the Hall took only 5 months. All of this contributed greatly to the sense of achievement and celebration that was to mark June 5 1998, the day that we rejoiced over 120 years of DEDICATED SERVICE TO CATHOLIC EDUCATION



Archbishop George Daniel, Mrs d'Oliveira, Mrs Büttner, Mrs Melass and the Loreto sisters at the blessing of the new school hall

IN PRETORIA and the OPENING OF OUR NEW SCHOOL HALL.

Much work and planning by the Birthday Committee preceded this event. The school buzzed with activity; finding a time to practise in the hall was a problem. The inevitable frayed nerves, grey hairs and sheer pressure made us all wonder if our plans would ever reach fruition. They did! Arranging 700 chairs in neat rows, was a thrill. This was a decided improvement on having the children sit on the floor as in the recent past.

The arrival of a grand piano, seemed to be the "cherry on the top".

Our birthday celebrations

We started the day with Mass in the Hall to implore God's blessing on our achievement.

This was a concelebrated Mass. Mgr Hill, (in the absence of the Archbishop), was assisted by Frs David Francis CSP, Fr Brunner and Fr Reynolds.

Sr Cecilia had put her very best into preparing a fitting liturgy for the day, a celebration of joy and thanksgiving.

A Pre-Liturgy consisted of the singing of AVE MARIA LORETO, by the school choir (in special uniform) with the Senior Primary pupils doing a rhythmic dance, holding strips of material all the colours of the rainbow.

The blessing of the Hall took place after the homily.

Representatives of 14 nationalities, chosen from past and present pupils and members of the staff carried lighted candles and placed them on stands around the perimeter of the Hall. They then made a solemn pledge "to make a difference" to the world in which we live. This was symbolised by carrying the Light of the Gospel to the nations.

The Mass was followed by refreshments served on the cloister for the specially invited guests.

The singing in English and the vernacular during the Mass was particularly beautiful.



Members of the cast of "The Tokbird"

The entertainment part of the Programme began at 15h30. This was the presentation of the "Tokbird" by the Junior Primary division. This was a most colourful performance involving the 200 plus pupils of this division. It was a delight to watch. LESANG TSHOKWE showed decided talent as the "petulant Tokbird". He was supported by an equally talented cast. The singing of "Give Peace a Chance" by the entire group at the end sent out a very clear message to all. "Out of the mouths of babes . . ."

Mrs Clarke and her team of dedicated and talented teachers are to be highly praised for this production. How did they manage to have so many small children on the stage at the same time?

The evening programme began at 18h30. This time the bill of fare offered a rich variety.

It began with two items by Miss Myburgh's ballet troupe. The snatches of up-beat modern dancing gave us a taste of what youngsters enjoy.

Following immediately, the 90 plus Grade 8 (Std 6) choir put on their version of "Casey Jones."

This involved voice, piano and Orff instruments. Once again the logistics of manoeuvring such a crowd was something to marvel at.

It was now the turn of Senior Primary to show their mettle. "The Rainbow Express", a musical about God's promise to Noah and us, added another dimension to the variety of talent in the school. Sisekelo Mahlangu excelled himself as Noah, supported as he was by his sons and numerous Angels and Animals. Mr Lockhart, Principal of the Senior Primary took the part of God. His voice booming out from the gallery was most effective.

The climax to a day of joyful celebration came with the presentation of "The Loreto Journey" brilliantly produced by our Drama Teacher Mrs Susan Robinson who also wrote the script.

This consisted of snippets of Loreto's history interspersed with events outside. South African History and World History at times intruded on what was happening at Loreto Skinner Str.

In this way we were taken along the ox-wagon route right up to present day South Africa, aptly illustrated by the music of Sarafina.

This was achieved by making effective use of music and other sound effects. Each scene captured the atmosphere of the moment, quite remarkably.

Mother Margaret Mary Jolivet receiving her mission to come to Pretoria was done to the background of a Gregorian Chant.

The opening of the school on 7 June 1878 was portrayed by 6 demure children dressed in the victorian style with highly decorated hats singing "My Grandfather's Clock" and "Boys and Girls come out to play".

The siege of Pretoria 1880-1881 followed. British soldiers marched onto the stage to strains of "Rule Britannia". The Boers responded, ready to defend the "Vaderland". The atmosphere of the day was perfectly captured.



OUR BIRTHDAY YEAR ART COMPETITION

Dr Pillay and his assistant from the Gauteng Department of Education choosing the best posters in our birthday year poster competition

THE SCHOOL'S 120 YEAR BIRTHDAY CONCERT



Stray animals and insects waiting to play their part in "The Tokbird" production



Mrs Smit and a Technikon student painting the concert backdrop



Excited Gr 8s on the night of the concert

Other highlights to follow were World war II with Nazi soldiers aggressively giving the "Heil Hitler" salute, whilst Churchill proclaimed Britain's readiness "to fight them on our beaches etc".

Then came Vatican II and with it the changes in the Church and incidentally in religious life. Off came the old habits of the sisters.

The last scenes dealt with the school taking in non-white students; the unrest in the country vividly portraying the student riots of 1976. The school children stormed the stage and demanded a better education.

The Sofiatown Shebeen, the freedom songs and political talk gave the necessary local culture which went down well with the audience.

The play ended with the singing of "I'll follow Him" from Sister Act" and a very touching "Thank you" to LORETO SISTERS.

Sr. Shirley Kay

OUR BIRTHDAY CONCERT

It was a great day for the whole school – especially for the sisters. Loreto Convent Skinner was turning 120 years old. It is the oldest school in Pretoria.

The concert was all about how the school started and included South African History (e.g. World War II, Apartheid and Soweto in 1976). It was a great privilege for me to take part in the play because I learned more about the history of our school and South Africa. It was a great day because it was also the opening of our new hall.

Magdeline Mabena, Grade 10F

OUR BIRTHDAY CONCERT



Buffaloes preparing to boogie!

I was a buffalo in the concert. We all had to practise very hard. Our wigs were tickling me very much .

On the night of the concert Natali and Lillian and Jabu and me were dancing like crazy. We were made up. Then it was time to go – I said bye to my teacher and I went home.

Mandisa Mbele, Grade 3M

Letters of congratulations on the opening of the School Hall

From Sr. Marian Moriarty, Provincial of the IBVM in South Africa

Dear Mrs d'Oliveira, Staff and Pupils

I want to express my sincere congratulations to you all for a truly memorable day on Friday 5 June. I felt so grateful and proud of you all. There was a quality of excellence about all you did. I hope you have had a good restful weekend to begin to reclaim your energies!

The spirit of the whole day was wonderful, beginning with that very touching Liturgy and your commitment to continue to make the world a better place. Throughout all the events of the day it was evident that you can make a difference. We enjoyed the fruits of a wealth and variety of gifts and talents among staff and pupils. I knew we can honestly say that Mary Ward and Margaret Mary Jolivet would have been proud of you. Thank you all for sharing your gifts and bringing much joy to so many on Friday.

I want to wish you every blessing for the remaining weeks of the term. Those who are writing examinations will be very much in our prayers.

With gratitude, love and best wishes

Sr Marian Moriarty, IBVM

From Sr. Celine Dempsey who taught for many years at Loreto Convent School

I send sincere congratulations to Mrs d'Oliveira and to her predecessor, Mrs Addis, to the Staff, children, parents and friends on the opening of the new Concert Hall.

It is a wonderful achievement, and mirrors the pursuit of excellence, which has been the spirit of the school since its foundation.

The new Hall is a necessary amenity for the smooth running of the school. For the Principal it will mean less worry about organisation, for the Staff less worry about sharing, for the children the joy of having adequate accommodation, for their parents the opportunity to enjoy the various functions.

Perhaps it will be appreciated most by those who held assembly outside in all weathers and those who prepared Concerts where the Junior classes of their division performed in the old concert hall and the top classes in a public hall down town. Some will still remember the stress of commuting on foot between the two for rehearsals and performances!

You will understand and approve, if I send a special word of congratulation to Sr. Shirley. It originated in her dream – a dream she pursued with dedication, tenacity, hard work and refusal to give up even when the outlook seemed hopeless and there

was often lack of encouragement and even opposition. No doubt at these times she was supported by the words from Acts "If this enterprise does in fact come from God . . ." She knew the Spirit was leading her. Well done Shirley, and thank you. It was worth it all.

How I would love to be there for the opening ceremony, for I left my heart in Skinner Street. I am with you in spirit.

All good wishes from Sister Celine Dempsey,
Loreto Abbey, Rathfarnham

STAFF

Senior primary HOD to retire

Mr Lockhart, the present H.O.D. of the Senior Primary School, will be leaving Loreto Convent School at the end of this year. His loyalty and kindness, sense of humour and ability to make light of difficulties has endeared him to all the staff. We wish him all the best in his continuing service to education.

Deputy Head to retire



Mrs Linda Büttner, our hard-working Deputy Head who will retire from this position to become a part-time teacher next year.

High school HOD to retire

Mrs Jeanne Fouché retires at the end of this year as HOD. Her dedication and patience have been much appreciated. Mrs Fouché will continue to teach in the high school.

NEW TEACHERS



My name is Susan Robinson. I joined the staff at Loreto Convent in July 1997. I studied Drama at the University of Pretoria. After graduating I did freelance acting for Pact and PACOFS. I took part in various stage productions,

television series and advertisements. I have given private drama lessons at various schools in Gauteng and the Cape. I am deeply committed to teaching young people, especially teenagers. I am married to Herbert Robinson and have two children – Ophelia our golden labrador and Sylvester our cat.

My favourite pastimes are dancing, shopping at weird funky places, hiking and romantic evenings on the beach with my husband.

Susan Robinson



I was born in the United States and was a teacher there in Chicago, California and Montana. I have two children, Michael aged 22 and Allyson aged 20. I have lived in South Africa now for two years and lived here before for seven years. I am very happy to be back.

Ann Rogan



I matriculated from Loreto Convent in 1989 after spending my entire school career here.

I studied for a B.A. at the University of Pretoria and I also completed my H.E.D. there.

I could not get enough of Loreto Convent and after qualifying I was back here teaching Std 6 Prep for two years.

In February 1996 I left for London where I taught for two years. It was the greatest experience of my life. Teaching in London is very challenging. There were some "okay" schools and some awful schools but at the end of it all I learnt so much and I was able to travel to so many different places.

I arrived back from the U.K. in December 1997 and I am, once again, back at Loreto Convent.

Carmel Abdo