

A History of the Parochial School



By Amy Mangram

In April 1846, a parochial school was established at St. Paul's—more than twenty years before Syracuse built its first high school in 1869. The effort was initiated by the rector, Rev. Henry Gregory, who wrote in a pastoral letter that he wished for a school where “ordinary” studies could be pursued in a natural and beautiful connection with religion, with both secular and spiritual learning practiced together. The parishioners agreed, and a two story school wing was added to the existing church building.

The school opened with 126 pupils. Tuition was \$3 per quarter for the primary department and \$4 for the higher department, with additional fees for subjects such as foreign languages, music, and certain sciences. The curriculum included a Monday morning recitation of a scripture lesson and a weekly Wednesday catechism lesson taught by the rector.

On July 7, 1846, the Syracuse Daily Star published a tribute from a visitor who had toured many of New England's finest seminaries. After visiting the school, then under the direction of the Misses Ludlow, he wrote that “this infant institution in the midst of the Empire State will suffer comparison with many older institutions.”

The school continued until 1883. When the parish moved into its third and current building, the parochial school was discontinued and replaced with a Sunday school program.

Fun fact, Our first mayor Harvey Baldwin sent his children to school here!

