

ST. VINCENT'S ACADEMY TOUR

The tour begins with a large picture of St. Vincent's as you enter the library. Just inside you will see a picture with close to 90 of the Daughters of the Cross taken in the 1957 at a retreat. Each nun is given a number and a name that matches the numbers. Next you will see some of the altar rail (recently restored) from the old St. Vincent's chapel. Above it is large chapel picture. On the right, on the wall is an original oil painting of the old St. Vincent's Academy and Convent by Mrs. R. Gatti. Next to that is a light from the old chapel and beside it is a small piece of marble from the altar. You will see on the wall beside the light, a list of the music that was sung at the farewell Mass at St. John's in May 1988. You should be hearing that music sung as you look at the exhibit. Next – near the window, look at a piece of the altar rail as it looked before restoration. Also, you will see an old part of the top of one of the columns from the chapel. You will also see a couple of the chairs from the old St. Vincent's Academy auditorium

As you begin the tour, you should see a group of pictures starting with the founder of the Daughters of the Cross – Mother deVilleneuve. To the right of her you will also see Bishop Martin, the first bishop of Natchitoches, who had traveled to France to seek missionaries for Louisiana. You will also see Father Pierre, founder of Holy Trinity who was very instrumental in bringing the Daughters of the Cross to America. You will also see St. Francis de Sales and also St. Vincent de Paul, spiritual directors of Mother de Villeneuve. You will also see Father Roulleaux, chaplain for 35 years and benefactor, who was responsible for the building of the old school and convent.

Next you will see the superiors of the Daughters of the Cross starting with Mother Hyacinth who brought the first missionaries to America in 1855 and ending with the current superior, Sister Maria.

You will see documents relating to their early arrival in America – including one in French. Next you will notice a copy of an early valedictory speech as written and also later typed.

You will see the first St. Vincent's Academy in 1869 and also the 3 story boarders quarters built in the late 1800's. They both burned to the ground in 1906 and were replaced with the St. Vincent's that many of you will remember – the one at the entrance of the exhibit. You will see various pictures including one of the celebration following the ground breaking ceremony that took place around 1960. There is information about the alumnae association. There is a section honoring Sr. Dorothea, author and historian. Next you will see books of the 50th, and 75th and 100th anniversaries of St. Vincent's. You will also see a listing of graduates from the late 1800's thru the closing in 1988. Next to that you will find an alphabetized listing of SVA students.

Along the wall behind you, you will see yearbooks and some artwork by Sr. Joan. You will see 2 nun dolls dressed in habits made by Sr. Fidelis. You will see a couple of very old pictures from the early 1900's of many of the nuns who served. There are also some calligraphy pens used by the old French nuns to do their beautiful calligraphy. There is a shadow box of a class ring, a coat of arms and some medals that belonged to a 1930 graduate. She wore diamonds on her fingers along with her St. Vincent's ring that she wore so proudly. There is also an explanation of the meaning of the ring.

At the end of the table you will find numerous photograph albums with hundreds of pictures. Each album is labeled as to what it contains.

At this point you should turn toward the back of the library. On the left you will see a table with a uniform, pictures and numerous items displayed by a 4 generation student. On a small table you will see beautiful needlework done by 2 of the Daughters of the Cross. Next you will find a table with news articles and pictures. To the left and around the wall you will find large pictures of the old St. Vincent's drawn by many artists. In the middle is a tv where 3 dvd's are available for viewing. A list of what is available is near the tv. To the right you will see an old rocker from St. Vincent's and also a graduation dress from late 1800's. Next you will see a table that has china painted in 1925. There is also a Madonna that belonged to Sr. Agnes Ruth. Also, on the table is the childhood doll of Sr. Joan. Above the table is a large oil painting by Sr. Joan.

As you walk back toward the front of the library, look to the left for a work in progress. There is a table with the layout of every floor of the old St. Vincent's. Please pick up a pencil and fill in any areas that you may recall about where things were located.

Next you will see a display about Mrs. Walcott. Next are numerous pictures of the old SVA. Go around on the other side of this display and you will see some poetry inspired by the nuns and the school. There is a poem written in the late 1800's that expresses the same sentiments as one written by a graduate in the last class ---- the class of 1988.

Go around the table and you will be back near where the photo albums are located. The next table has numerous memory books of different class reunions over the years. Next you will find celebrations of the centennial among other special events. There is a history of the library and some photos of special thing. Next you will find the WHERE IS IT NOW section. It tells where some of the things are now that once were in the old St. Vincent's Academy.

Next is information about the closing of the school. Many of the documents of the old St. Vincent's and of the Daughters of the Cross were given to LSU – Noel library. There is a listing of the items that are located there. There is also a registry book. Please take time to sign the book and pick up a postcard of the old SVA.

PLEASE EMAIL YOUR MEMORIES OF YOUR DAYS AT ST. VINCENT'S ACADEMY TO svamemories@hotmail.com

We will compile these memories and have the in a book for future generations to ponder.