

THE ROAD TO 125

A Journey Through St Benedict's History 1901 - 2026

Educating Generations

Did you know? The original school was a two-story wooden structure built in 1907.



1907 St Benedict Church & School

The original school was a two-story, frame-wooden structure with two coal stoves for heat and lit by kerosene lamps. It housed nearly 100 students and was staffed by two teachers—originally local women from the parish—with religious instruction administered by Fr. Fridolin.



School Children 1918-1919

1907 (Original School): Driven by growing enrollment (which rose from 135 to 200 students), Fr. Basil Balko initiated construction on a new brick schoolhouse, completed by Fr. Macey in 1924. The new building featured four large classrooms (holding up to 50 pupils each) and a basement heating plant, that also provided heat to the Church through an underground system. The original 1907 wooden building was converted into an activity hall until its demolition in 1948.

Mid-20th Century Performance: During the 1930s and 1940s, every student passed the state eighth-grade examination given at Latrobe High School. This academic excellence continued as students transferred into the local school districts for middle and high school.

Closure & Later Use (1991–Present): St. Benedict School closed in 1991 due to declining enrollment. Afterwards, the building served as an activity center and meeting space for parish organizations before eventually being demolished; the site now houses the Parish Center.



1924 St Benedict School



1951 St Benedict Church & School

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Elizabeth Halula
Devoted Principal,
Teacher & Parish Leader

To generations of local children, **Elizabeth Halula** was simply "**Miss Halula**"—a warm, steady presence who devoted over six decades to education and faith in Marguerite. From her early days attending St. Francis of Assisi Academy to earning her Master's in Education at the University of Pittsburgh, Elizabeth carried a lifelong passion for learning. She poured that passion directly into her community, serving as principal and teacher at St. Benedict Elementary until 1991, and continuing to substitute in the Greater Latrobe and Westmoreland Intermediate school districts until age 83. Beyond the classroom, Elizabeth was the backbone of St. Benedict Catholic Church as sacristan, parish secretary, dedicated sodality leader and Rosary Altar Society. Her profoundly caring legacy came full circle when one of her former students, Rev. John F. Murtha, presented her with the St. Vincent College Presidential Medal of Honor.



**Miss Halula
and
Grades 6, 7 & 8
1950-1951**



Class in the Mid 1980's



School Class Reunion 2002