

A HISTORY OF PRICE COLLEGE

BY

REVEREND RICHARD VAUGHAN

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of the College Department
of St. Meinrad Seminary in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for a Degree of
Bachelor of Arts

May 28, 1952

St. Meinrad, Indiana



OUTLINE

- I. Introduction.
- II. From the beginning until 1933.
 - A. A new diocese and a new Bishop.
 - B. A school for boys.
 - 1. Building plans
 - 2. St. George College
 - 3. Early days of the College in the "catacombs"
 - 4. Moving day
 - C. Mrs. Price writes.
 - D. Price Memorial College.
 - 1. Two new wings
 - 2. The Franciscan Sisters arrive
 - 3. Early difficulties and the priests
 - 4. Father John
- III. From 1933 to 1941
 - A. The second Bishop.
 - B. Price carries on.
 - 1. Looking for a new faculty
 - 2. Countess Price
 - 3. No more College
 - 4. The Brothers come
 - 5. Monsignor John
- IV. From 1941 to the Present
 - A. The third Bishop.
 - B. The work goes on.
 - 1. Another War
 - 2. The P.T.A.
 - 3. More building
 - a) A new laundry and boiler
 - b) St. Lucien's Chapel
 - c) The dormitory and its dedication
 - C. Price loses its benefactress
- V. Conclusion

" To many the name of Price Memorial College of Amarillo, Texas may sound new, because the institution has only three years of history to its credit. In age and prestige, therefore, it cannot rank with the famous Catholic institutions of learning in the State. There is probably no other College, however, that has met with such splendid success in the first years of its existence, as Price Memorial College. Not only did it rightfully boast of an attendance just under the one hundred mark during the past year, but it has already obtained recognition, the high school department has been accredited by the State." (1)

These words from an Amarillo newspaper give us a clear insight into the history of Price College from the very beginning. It met with success from its very foundation. However, its success was not due to an over abundance of financial help or the great number of its benefactors. It succeeded because its founders and those who worked with them made it succeed in spite of the many hardships and trials. The early pioneers of the school realized that the Christian education of youth was most important. Their high ideals for the foundation of their school are expressed in the College Catalogue of 1929:

" Price Memorial College is a diocesan institution conducted for the higher Christian Education of young men. Its aim is to develop in the student those higher ideals and habits of living so essential in the formation of character; to secure a perfect balance of moral, mental, and physical education which will prepare the student of his place in life and for the successful pursuit of higher studies. The special aim is to combine practice with theory so as to prepare the boy for practical manhood." (2)

The very special purpose of the school as expressed by its founder, Bishop Gerken was " to prepare our boys for the Holy Priesthood." (3)

The year 1927 was a memorable one for the Catholics of North Texas. On April 28th of that year the Most Reverend Rudolph A. Gerken was installed as the first Bishop of the newly created diocese of Amarillo in Texas. The new diocese covered 73,000 square miles with several hundred thousand souls. The new Bishop had worked in central Texas before and after his ordination. He was a native of Dyersville, Iowa. A man of great purpose and deep faith the new

Bishop set out immediately to develop his diocese and bring the Word of God to all within his jurisdiction.

Almost from the very beginning of his Episcopacy, Bishop Gerken desired to establish a school of higher learning for the young men who would come under his care. Having been a teacher himself the Bishop knew the great value of higher education especially education with a Christian foundation. Consequently, on June 14th of the following year, 1928, a forty acre tract of land Northeast of the city of Amarillo was purchased as the site for the boys school. On July 6, 1928 building operations began on the new school. Plans for the building were drawn up by Mr. Noftsgger of Oklahoma City. Contractors were A. H. Gau and L. J. Vogel. The diocese received a donation of \$50,000 from the American Board of Catholic Missions and the Catholic Church Extension Society, through Cardinal Mundelein and the Reverend William D. O'Brien of Chicago. The new school was to receive the name St. George's College in honor of George Cardinal Mundelein, Archbishop of Chicago.

September of 1928 began the school year for all the students who wished to enroll in the new College. Since the new building was far from being completed classes opened in the basement of the Sacred Heart Cathedral in Amarillo. Forty seven students made their way to the improvised school in the "Cathedral Catacombs." The school was advertised as a College with a curriculum comprised of Academic, Scientific and Commercial Courses, in accordance with the State requirements. It also had a Grammar School department consisting of the sixth and seventh grades. Boarders and day students were received in both departments. The teachers and faculty were "drafted" from the diocesan clergy.

On the 11th of October 1928 the corner stone of the new building was layed by Bishop Gerken. Within this stone is preserved the names of those who were associated with the school from the beginning. The document inserted in the corner-stone reads, in part, as follows:

" May these presents witness: The solemn corner-stone laying

of St. George's College on the eleventh day of October in the year of our Lord Nineteen Hundred and Twenty eight, it being during the administration of His Holiness Pope Pius XI, gloriously reigning Pontiff, Right Reverend R. A. Gerken, D.D., Bishop of Amarillo, Honorable Calvin Coolidge, President of these United States of America, Honorable Dan Moody, Governor of the State of Texas, and the Honorable Lee Bivens, Mayor of the city of Amarillo; with the Right Reverend R. A. Gerken in charge and assisted by the following, who constitute the faculty of St. George College for its opening year: Reverend F. X. Hillen, Reverend Gregory A. Boeckman, Reverend Raphael H. Kramer, Reverend Francis M. Kaminsky, Reverend Bartholomew O'Brien and Reverend Louis Thomas; and Mr. Clarence Koob, and the student body, fifty in number, attending." (4)

From the beginning of the first school year many difficulties had to be overcome. Crowded conditions, lack of funds and many other trials met the early pioneers. Such trials and troubles were to become second nature to those who would be concerned with the school. In spite of the many setbacks they kept their faith in the work and God rewarded their efforts.

The new building was blessed by Bishop Gerken on February 3, 1929. On the following day the teachers and students came out of the "catacombs" and took up residence in St. George's College.

Months before the migration of teachers and students from the old basement to the new school took place, a very providential correspondence was going on between Bishop Gerken and a certain Katherine E. Price which would greatly effect the future history of the school. Bishop Gerken received a letter dated November 20, 1928 which read as follows:

" To the Rt. Rev. R. A. Gerken, D.D.: I have been reading an article in the Milwaukee 'Catholic Herald' about the work you are doing in Texas and I am very interested as this is the location that I believe there is some pioneer work to be done. My late husband, L. B. Price has for many years had chain stores in Texas and I feel that we should use the money we have made in that vicinity to relieve suffering and help in a substantial and material way. Will you please give me further information as to the most urgent needs. Very sincerely yours, Katherine E. Price." (5)

No doubt Bishop Gerken had received many such letters offering to help. It surely was impossible for him to see the future results of his correspondence with Mrs. Price. In his reply he mentioned some of the immediate needs of the diocese such as the providing for the education of Mexican children.

Mrs. Price gave the Bishop some idea of her intention to do more than the ordinary in her following letter. She wrote that it was her desire " to build a memorial to my husband who was very interested in philanthropy and all betterment of humanity especially underprivileged boys." (6) Mrs. Price wrote of building a hospital, orphan's home or some other needed institution. Bishop Gerken explained his plans for a hospital at Slaton, Texas and also a proposed orphanage and small boys boarding school in Amarillo. Mrs. Price seemed interested in the hospital project but she did not make definite plans to finance the proposed hospital. She sent a check for \$5,000 to the diocese as her first gift.

Things were not definitely settled as to what project Mrs. Price would finance until March 7, 1929. At a meeting of Bishop Gerken, Mrs. Price and Msgr. O'Brien of the Catholic Church Extension Society in Chicago it was decided that Mrs. Price would finance the boys school known as St. George's College.

Plans were soon made to enlarge the school and to rededicate it to the memory of the late husband of Mrs. Price, Lucien B. Price. The addition of two new wings to the present building was approved by Mrs. Price and work began on May 27, 1929.

Announcements of the additions as well as the change of name to Price Memorial College were made on Sunday June 2, 1929. An article in the Amarillo paper told the story of the new school:

" The expenditure of more than \$125,000 through the erection of two new units to the main building, and the change of the name of St. George's College to the Price Memorial College, were announced yesterday by Bishop R. A. Gerken of the Catholic Church. The new buildings are made possible through a liberal gift by Mrs. Katherine E. Price, of Greenwich, Conn., as a memorial to her husband, the late Lucien B. Price, merchant prince, and at the time of his death in 1926 the owner of a number of chain stores in Texas." (7)

While the plans for the new buildings were being worked out St. George's College continued its school year. On April 5th the state school inspector arrived at the College unannounced. The inspector was very pleased with the progress of the school. Father Bartholomew O'Brien, the first history professor of the school recalls well the remarks of the inspector concerning the

school library. At that time the school library consisted of two sets of the Catholic Encyclopedia and a few western novels. After inspecting the library the inspector remarked, "Father, you have a nice collection of religious books." The school was affiliated and fully accredited in a very short time by the State of Texas.

St. George College finished its first scholastic year on May 29 with the graduation of three students; John Slavik of Weimer, Texas; Paul Higginbotham of Ranger, Texas; Walter Lupton of Shallowater, Texas. Bishop Gerken offered the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass and addressed the faculty and students.

During the summer months the school was being advertised in the local papers and in Catholic periodicals. In the Amarillo paper the reader saw:

" With two new units added to the former St. George's College this institution will open September 10th as Price Memorial College. Ample space is provided to accommodate various new departments of study as well as a large increase in attendance. Boarding and day school for boys conducted by the Diocese of Amarillo with a teaching staff of priests and laymen. Rates most reasonable.

" Junior College, High School and Preparatory Departments. The Curriculum comprises Liberal Arts, Academic, Scientific, Agricultural and Commercial Courses in accordance with the requirements of the State Department of Education.

" Special features are the Science and Agricultural courses. For these purposes laboratories of large proportions fully equipped with the most modern apparatus for the teaching of Chemistry, Physics and Agriculture have been provided.

" The College Campus of 40 acres is admirably suited for the experimental work in agriculture cooperation of the Texas A. & M. College and the United States Department of Agriculture.

" In addition, the college owns and operates a farm of 640 acres which will be used for experiment, demonstration and the teaching of actual farm operations, thus giving the students practical as well as theoretical training.

" Athletics encouraged and under personal supervision." (8)

School reopened on September 10th. The new additions were dedicated on the Feast of Christ the King, October 27, 1929. A solemn pontifical Mass was celebrated by the Bishop of Amarillo at Sacred Heart Cathedral. After the Mass

the buildings were dedicated. Speakers at the ceremony were; Mayor Thompson of Amarillo; Mr. Ansley of the Amarillo newspaper the News-Globe; Dr. Masters, President of the Amarillo Junior College; John Hill, a business man; Mrs. Price and Bishop Gerken. On this occasion Mrs. Price thanked Bishop Gerken for having graciously presented the opportunity of which, to her fullest satisfaction, she had readily availed herself, and made known that in the development of Price Memorial College would be realised the desire of her heart, and the achievement of her ambition.

Bishop Gerken with the aid of his priests continued to work for the betterment of the College. The Bishop sought the aid of Mother M. Concordia of St. Louis in obtaining the help of Sisters to do the cooking at the school. In August of 1932 the Franciscan Sisters of Penance, whose motherhouse is in South America, came to Price College to do the cooking, laundry and the many other tasks that were asked of them.

The diocesan priests who taught at the school carried on the work in spite of the difficult times. The years of depression throughout the country greatly aggravated the situation. It was very difficult to keep the little school in operation during these trying years. Along with the depression and the hard times came the dust storms and the drought. As the old timers will say the barbed-wire fences between Texas and Canada were down. There was no protection from the high winds and dust that came from the North and West. For days at a time large clouds of dust rolled over the plains and made living very miserable. Many times the school had to be closed and the boys sent home during the storms. The Western drought also took its toll of lives and property. The national depression and the drought made the rich man poor and the poor man poorer. It was impossible for many students to pay the necessary tuition during these years.

Most of the work of operating and maintaining the College was done by the Bishop and priests. The priests not only did the work in their various parishes and missions, but they also had to do the manual labor, cleaning, plumbing and everything else at the school. It was not uncommon for priests to work almost the whole night repairing broken pipes, carrying water from a nearby well, or fixing other things and then teach the whole next day in the class room. On week ends they had to attend to the work of the diocese. The priests received no salary for their work.

During all these difficult days the generous benefactions of Mrs. Price continued. In 1930 she offered to build a home for the Bishop on the campus of the College. This project was completed the following year.

In a letter to the Right Reverend Monsignor A. F. Amirault, dated June 23, 1930, Bishop Gerken presented the list of the teachers at the College at that time. The Bishop himself was president and dean of studies. Msgr. Amirault was Vice-president; Rev. E. D. McFadden, Assistant dean of studies, three classes of English; Rev. B. O'Brien, history and civics; Rev. James Daly, coach, grade subjects; Rev. J. Steinlage, Spiritual director, latin and Greek; Mr. Francis Fleming, general science, physics, algebra and arithmetic; Mr. George Hartmann, latin, english, algebra and penmanship; Rev. C. Gutierrez, spanish.

All these men worked untiringly to keep the school going. Their work at this time is the reason for the present success and growth of the school. Priests like Father B. O'Brien, present chaplain of St. Anthony's Hospital in Amarillo, are well remembered by the early students of the school. Another priest who surely deserves a great deal of credit along with Bishop Gerken for the success of the school is Father Steinlage. A priest from the Archdiocese of Dubuque, Iowa, Father John, as he always has been known, came to Amarillo in 1930 at the request of Bishop Gerken. He was the spiritual director and taught latin and greek. In 1933 he was appointed Rector of the College. Through his constant hard work and devotion to duty he drew down much blessing on the school. Often the students saw their Father Rector in

work clothes going about the College fixing this and repairing that. His devotion to the school and to its work has had a lasting effect upon all the young students and upon all who have come in contact with the school.

The Bishop was ever conscious of the great work his priests were doing and he tried many times to alleviate their hardships. The parish and mission work they were doing was surely enough for any able-bodied man. Consequently, the Bishop tried to obtain the help of some religious order of priests to take over the teaching at the school. In a letter to the Superior General of the Basilian Fathers Bishop Gerken writes:

" In the past the College has been staffed by secular priests. The mission needs of the diocese have therefore suffered and it is now of urgent importance that they should be relieved from a duty in the College so as to enable them to give their time to the vast mission territory of the diocese. The mission work is most difficult because three fourths of our Catholics are of the very poor Mexicans." (9)

Time and time again the Bishop failed to obtain help for his school. Those to whom he applied for aid could not spare the necessary men for a faculty.

On June 2, 1933 Price Memorial College lost its founder and president. On that day Bishop Gerken was elevated to Archbishop and placed in charge of the old Archdiocese of Santa Fe in New Mexico. Archbishop Gerken was succeeded in the See of Amarillo by Bishop Robert Emmett Lucey, a priest of the diocese of Los Angeles. Bishop Lucey was installed in Amarillo on May 16, 1934.

The new Bishop took up the work of the College where its founder had left off. A new convent for the Franciscan Sisters was erected East of the Bishop's house in 1934.

In a letter to Mrs. Price Bishop Lucey gives us an insight into the progress of the school at that time. He writes:

" We have eighty three boys at present, and that is a very good record. Incidentally, I sincerely believe that the College is now doing a good educational job, and I am glad to say that the discipline is fine. We have a fine crowd of boys in attendance this year. We have two football teams, the Varsity and the Pee Wees, and al-

though they are not winning any games, they are helping to give a little publicity to Price Memorial College." (10)

The new Bishop, like the founder of the school, realized that the diocesan priests were doing an heroic job of caring for the parish and mission needs and at the same time caring for the school. He, likewise, tried many times to obtain another faculty for the school. A correspondence was carried on with the Benedictine Fathers of Washington, Kansas and Oklahoma. The Augustinian Fathers sent a priest to teach in the college and to survey the possibility of sending priests to the school. However, these priests later found it impossible to staff the school because of other pressing work. Other religious congregations contacted were the Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, the Praemonstratentian Fathers, the Carmelites, the Brothers of Mary and the Holy Cross Brothers. From every corner came refusals because of lack of men.

While the Bishop was seeking a new faculty for the school plans were being made to bestow Papal honors on Mrs. Price. On March 17, 1936 the Holy Father, Pope Pius XI conferred on Mrs. Price the title of Papal Countess for her many benefactions to the Church.

In 1936 it became necessary to eliminate the College Department. In a letter to Mrs. Price Bishop Lucey offered the reasons for this:

" Thus far we have no students available for the second year of College for the coming year and Father John does not think we can expect more than two of the boys who graduate from the High School last year to continue their studies in College. One reason why it is difficult to get college students at this time is that the families are good people but are going through very serious financial crisis out here, and most of them will not send their boys to College unless they can pay for them. (11)

Consequently, at the end of the school year Bishop Lucey made his decision in a letter to Father John:

" I have decided to eliminate the Seventh Grade and the two Junior College Grades in the hope that we may be able to operate a High school in which our courses will be somewhat restricted... Price College, beginning September, 1936 will therefore be only a High School." (12)

Although the College department was dropped the name "Price College" re-

mains to this day even though the school only has the Eighth Grade and four years of High school.

The Bishop continued his correspondence with religious groups and on June 11, 1938 he could report to Countess Price that the Brothers of the Christian Schools had agreed to take charge of Price College. This would leave the diocesan priests free to care for the many needs of the growing diocese.

When the school reopened in September of 1938 the Christian Brothers were on hand to take over the teaching assignment at the school. The first faculty consisted of the following: Brother Francis, Director; Brothers Pascal, Gontran Francis, Lawrence Paul, Leander Paul, Ignatius Basil and Conrad. Father John remained at the school as chaplain and procurator. Of the opening of school Bishop Lucey, writing to Countess Price, says:

" You will be happy to learn that Price College has started the Fall semester under very happy circumstances and we have eighty boys enrolled for the coming year. This is the largest enrollment that the High school department has ever had and it is about equally divided between boarders and day scholars." (13)

At the request of Countess Price the word " Memorial " was dropped from the name of the school. The school officially became known as Price College.

On January 19, 1939 Bishop Lucey announced the appointment of Father John as a Domestic Prelate, a much deserved honor for the man who had done so much for the school. Writing to Countess Price the Bishop said:

" You will be happy to know that the Holy Father has just appointed Father John Steinlage a Domestic Prelate with the title Right Reverend Monsignor." (14)

The school continued to grow and prosper under the guidance of the Brothers. A letter from the Deputy State School Superintendent to Brother Francis gives an indication of the school's progress. The Superintendent, W. T. Lofland writes:

" I had the pleasure of visiting your school twice during the present school year. Already I am looking forward to another visit at the first opportunity.

" It seemed to me that the boys had a fine attitude toward the instructors and toward the school in general. I, therefore, recommend additional affiliation for the school.

" You people are to be congratulated just now on getting a new gymnasium for next year. With these increased facilities, your institution will certainly render even larger services to its students than it has in the past." (15)

Countess Price was every ready to help the school in any way she could.

No sooner was the need for a new gymnasium made known to her than she gave the necessary funds for the building of an adequate place to house the sports for all the students. The new Auditorium-Gymnasium was dedicated on Sunday, October 29th 1939. In February of the following year the new library was dedicated.

Until this time the students attended religious services in a small chapel in the school building. It was necessary, because of the increase in numbers, to build a chapel independent of the school building which could care for the immediate and future needs of the students. A proposed chapel of St. Catherine was discussed. However, the Countess wished that the chapel be built in honor of her late husband. She desired that it be known as the Lucien B. Price Memorial Chapel. Consequently, the chapel would receive the name of St. Lucien. There was considerable discussion about the stain glass windows to be used in the chapel. This was settled at a meeting of Bishop Lucey and Countess Price. The first window was to be that of St. Lucian of Antioch. The others were of St. Catherine of Siena, the patroness of Countess Price; St. Robert Bellarmine, the patron of Bishop Lucey; St. John Baptist de la Salle, founder of the Christian Brothers; St. Thomas Aquinas, patron of Catholic schools and Pope Pius XII, the reigning Pontiff.

Before the new chapel was to be completed the diocese of Amarillo and the school were again to lose their Bishop and president. On January 22, 1941 Bishop Lucey was elevated to the Archiepiscopal See of San Antonio.

The new chapel of St. Lucien was dedicated on March 17, 1941. Shortly after

the dedication Archbishop Lucey took up his new office in San Antonio.

The new Bishop of Amarillo was not appointed until August 2, 1941. The work in the vast diocese of Amarillo was placed on the shoulders of the Most Reverend Laurence J. FitzSimon, a priest of the Archdiocese of San Antonio. Bishop FitzSimon was consecrated third Bishop of Amarillo on October 22, 1941 and was installed in his See on November 5th.

Price College reopened for another year with a record enrollment of 103. The school had a new Brother Director in the person of Brother Lawrence Paul. Brother Francis, the former Price director, became Director of De La Salle Institute in Chicago, Illinois.

Much of the beginning of school was devoted to the preparation for the installation of the new Bishop of Amarillo.

Hardly had the school year gotten underway when the United States entered the Second World War. During the next few years Price College was not only to show its patriotism by the help it would offer to the country but also by the large number of former students and present students who would fight and die in defense of the country. Before the war ended over 50 Price students were to answer the call to serve. Fourteen of these were to lay down their lives for the United States.

The new Bishop of Amarillo took up the work of the College where his two predecessors had left off. His great interest in the school is clearly shown in a letter to Countess Price:

" Ever since I have come to Amarillo, I have made the interests of Price College my very special personal concern and study." (16)

The Bishop had great plans for the College from the very beginning. He wished to see it grow into an outstanding institution. In June of 1943 he wrote:

" The future of the College is my great concern and this has been the object of much thought on my part. It is not only a case of keeping the College going, but to realise my ambition

to make it a successful and outstanding institution; not just a mere equal to hundreds of other schools of this type, but superior in all respects. It must be an institution that can hold its own in the field of learning and Christian education." (17)

In spite of the unrest in the Country because of the War the College continued to grow. Shortly after the beginning of the 1942 school year Monsignor John Steinlage was appointed pastor of Panhandle, Texas. Father Rupert Schindler was appointed chaplain at the school to succeed the Monsignor.

In September of 1942 six Brothers were on hand to conduct the school. Brother Lawrence was Director. Brother Ligouri was Sub-director. The other teachers were: Brothers I. Basil, Brendan, Mark and K. Basil.

Several new courses were added to the curriculum to keep up with the war times. Preflight training in aviation was introduced. A Victory Corps was organized with military drill as an important feature. A junior commando obstacle course was erected by the Parent-Teachers Association the following year. Besides these training courses the school helped the war effort in many other ways. A drive was started to collect scrap iron in compliance with the request of the national government and the Governor of Texas. The scrap drive was scarcely over when the Community Chest and War Fund drives began. Besides the material help, the students of Price offered help in the spiritual line. Along with the many prayers offered for those in battle the students took part in the Scapular Militia, that is, the collecting of money to pay for scapulars to be given to the many Catholics in the armed forces. Junior First Aid classes were also taught twice a week at the school. The school also helped the war effort in a small way by selling two typewriters to the Government.

Although the school took a very active part in the war effort and much of the students time was given to helping in every way possible, there was still enough time for all to take part in the various athletic activities of the school. The

football and basketball teams brought home many impressive victories as well as honorable defeats. Six man football was played because of the shortage of manpower. The Price team won the championship of the Plains in six man football. Social activities were sponsored occasionally to relieve the strain of the times.

The Countess never forgot her school and in the Summer of 1944 more financial aid was given to build a much needed garage to replace the old wooden structure which formerly housed the school bus and Brothers' station wagon.

In September of 1942 Father Schindler was transferred to the church of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Amarillo. He was replaced as chaplain by Father John Krukert. Father Krukert was followed by several young priests in the course of the next few years. Fathers Daugintis, Fitzgerald and Hancox held the chaplain's post from 1945 to 1949.

The contributions made to the school by the Parent-Teachers Association were very great. The notable service of this organization to the athletic department and elsewhere in the school deserves the highest praise. It would be most difficult to provide the necessary athletic facilities so that the school might engage successfully in outside competition. By providing the necessary equipment the Parent-Teachers Association has helped and is helping to make the school better known and appreciated.

With the end of the war the enrollment began to increase again. The athletics returned to normal. With an increase in numbers the boarding department became entirely inadequate to care for the enrollment. A new building became imperative. At first Bishop FitzSimon contemplated building a third story onto the present building. This third floor would serve as a dormitory and rooms for the Brothers. However, as time went on the need for a separate building was definitely decided upon.

While the new building was being considered the Bishop was working on plans for a new heating system and new laundry. In a letter to Countess Price he showed the need for both:

" We have had considerable trouble with the old boiler which was already secondhand when purchased, and the laundry equipment has deteriorated in such a fashion that it is imposing a heavy burden of labor on the part of the good Sisters of St. Francis who do this work. We have been able to install, because of limited funds, only some other secondhand equipment. We really need a new boiler and an up-to-date laundry; in order to have this, an extension will have to be made to the present building, both to accommodate a new and larger boiler and the laundry equipment that we would like to have." (18)

The 1947 school year opened with a new Brother Director in charge at Price. Brother Lawrence the former director for six years was sent to Rome. He was replaced by Brother Ignatius Basil. The new director had been among the first Brothers to come to Price in 1938 and he knew the school well. The school chaplain was Father Jerome Hancox.

A new heating system and laundry were built in the Summer of 1948. Both of these improvements were very badly needed at the school. The plans for a new dormitory were being drawn up and again the financial help of Countess Price would make the new building a reality.

The Countess paid a visit to Amarillo and to the school in April of 1948. This visit was to be her last. At a public reception held in her honor in the gymnasium many notables from the Church and City were present to honor the woman who had brought so much help to the Church and city of Amarillo.

Many of the plans for the new dormitory were completed and work was begun in the Summer of 1949. A gift of \$250,000 from the Countess was to make most of the building possible. Since the cost of building was very high and the proposed building would exceed the generous amount sent by the Countess Bishop FitzSimon sought financial help from the various parishes in the diocese. Father Thomas Drury, the chaplain at Price who succeeded Father Hancox, was sent to the various churches to preach and collect for the school. His efforts netted some \$16,000.

Work on the dormitory progressed rapidly and the building was completed by

the end of November, 1950. Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, graciously accepted the invitation of the Bishop of Amarillo to be present and dedicate the new building. Because of illness Countess Price could not be present for the dedication. The new dormitory was to be dedicated to the first Bishop of Amarillo, Rudolph A. Gerken, founder of the school.

A news release from the Amarillo Register before the dedication gave the program for the great event:

" Gerken Hall will be dedicated by His Eminence, Cardinal Francis Spellman of New York, who is expected to arrive by private plane in Amarillo Tuesday noon, December 12. The ceremony will be held at 4:30. Prior to that there will be a luncheon for the Cardinal in the Bishop's house on the campus of Price College and a press conference for photographers and newspaper reporters.

" After the dedication ceremony Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament will be held at an improvised altar in front of St. Lucien's chapel. An informal reception ceremony will then be held for the Cardinal.

" The day will come to a climax in the evening with a banquet to be held at 7 o'clock in the Crystal ballroom of the Herring hotel." (19)

At the dedication ceremonies besides Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop Lucey of San Antonio and the Bishop of Amarillo, there was one other Archbishop, six Bishops and many of the clergy and laity. The ceremony was broadcast over a local radio station.

The Amarillo Register gave the story of the dedication in the following report:

" More than 2000 people were on hand to witness the dedication of Gerken Hall and more than 400 crowded the Crystal ballroom of the Herring hotel to attend the banquet which brought the dedication ceremonies to a climax.

" Two Archbishops and six Bishops of Texas and the surrounding States were on hand to honor Cardinal Spellman in Amarillo. They included Archbishop Lucey of San Antonio, Archbishop Edwin V. Byrne of Sante Fe, ^{New Mexico}; and Bishops Sidney M. Metzger of El Paso, Joseph Patrick Lynch of Dallas, Laurence J. FitzSimon of Amarillo, the Cardinal's host; Bishop Eugene McGuinness of Oklahoma City, Bishop Wendelin Mold of Galveston and Auxiliary Bishop Augustin Danglermayr of Dallas.

" Civic dignitaries at the banquet included Senator Grady Hazlewood, Judge E. E. Jordan, Sheriff Paul Gaither, Chief of

Police Sidney Harper, Charles Rogers, city superintendent of schools; Eugenio Pesquera, Mexican Consul." (20)

During the ceremony the thoughts of many were on the gracious woman from Greenwich, Conn. who had made all this possible. In a letter to Countess Price shortly after the dedication Bishop FitzSimon expressed the sentiments of all:

" We had a wonderful day for the blessing of Gerken Hall at Price College and everything went off well. Cardinal Spellman made a great impression upon the people. There was a very large number attended the dedication services and the banquet in honor of yourself and His Eminence. We, of course, missed you very much and I purposely left your chair with place card vacant at the banquet since noone can take your place in our hearts." (21)

After the dedication everyone at Price settled down to enjoy the new facilities. Bishop FitzSimon expressed it well when he wrote:

" The boys seem to be enjoying it very much and the Brothers likewise are quite pleased over the new arrangements in the Boarding Department." (22)

When the school opened in September before the dedication of the new dormitory a new Brother Director was appointed. Brother Basil went to the De La Salle Institute in Chicago to become Director of that school. Brother Lawrence Paul returned to Price to be Director again.

Father Drury the chaplain at Price was recalled to the Air Forces just before the dedication. He was succeeded as Chaplain by Father Richard Vaughan.

The acquisition of the new room lead to a much larger enrollment for the next school year. September, 1951 found over seventy five boarders occupying the new building with over one hundred day students coming for daily classes and returning home after the 3 o'clock bell.

The new dormitory did not end the building and improvements at the school. The athletic field received a shot in the arm with the addition of lights for night games donated by the Price Parent-Teachers Association and a loud speaking system donated by the class of '52. New furniture was also procured for the recreation room in the new building.

On November 23rd a telegram was received by the Bishop that truly saddened his heart and the hearts of all interested in Price College. The telegram read:

" Mrs Price passed away at one o'clock this afternoon." (23)

Price College and all its friends lost the great benefactress who had done so very much to make the school what it is materially. Countess Price had given over a million dollars to the school and to the diocese of Amarillo. Ever since her first letter to Bishop Gerken offering financial help she had not only done great things for the diocese financially but also her great spirit of generosity and kindness was a constant inspiration to all.

Countess Price was buried the following Tuesday from St. Mary's Church, Greenwich, Conn. Since the Bishop was away and could not be present at the funeral, Brother Lawrence, the Director at Price traveled to Connecticut for the funeral.

As Price College prepares to celebrate its silver jubilee we are reminded of the words of St. Paul, "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God has given the growth." (24) All the work of the pioneers and those who followed them would have been in vain if they did not work for the glory of God with the right ideals. Because they did God gave them the growth. Since the opening of the school in 1928 the students who have gone forth have made well in their respective callings. Fifteen have entered the religious life as priests or Brothers. Several are now in preparatory seminaries. Many have continued higher studies at Notre Dame University, St. Louis University, St. Mary's University in Minnesota and other schools of higher learning. Many of these students have scholastic ratings second to none.

Price College will continue to grow in the next twenty five years as it has done in the first quarter century if its directors continue to uphold the high standards and ideals of the founders.

The whole history of the school is well summed up by Bishop FitzSimon in his

letter for the school Year Book, 1952:

" The Diocese of Amarillo, after the first quarter of a century of existence, may take pride in many great achievements as evidenced in the growth of its parishes and in the erection of many fine parochial buildings. Well identified with the history of the Diocese during this period is Price College founded by the Most Rev. R. A. Gerken during the first years of his career as Bishop of Amarillo. After passings through an era of many difficulties, our fine diocesan institution has made steady progress making a valuable contribution to the cause of Christian education. For its development credit should be given to the priests who formed the faculty during its early years and to the Christian Brothers who succeeded them in the meritorious work of educating youth. For the various buildings which have been erected from time to time, we are indebted principally to the favors of Countess Katherine B. Price. and of the foundation established by her late husband, Lucien B. Price. We now mourn the passing of Countess Price, but Price College of Amarillo will always be a monument to her generosity." (25)

FOOTNOTES

1. Amarillo Globe News, August 20, 1931.
2. Price College Catalogue, 1929, p. 11.
3. Letter of Bishop Gerken, to Rev. Mother M. Concordia, March 23, 1929.
4. Copy of document inserted in corner stone, preserved in Price College files at Catholic Chancery Office, Amarillo, Texas.
5. Letter of Mrs. Price, to Bishop Gerken, November 20, 1928.
6. Idem, December 11, 1928.
7. Amarillo Sunday News-Globe, June 2, 1929.
8. Amarillo Globe-News, July 28, 1929.
9. Letter of Bishop Gerken, to the Superior General of the Basilian Fathers, July 8, 1931.
10. Letter of Bishop Lucey, to Mrs. Price, October 29, 1934.
11. Idem, August 5, 1936.
12. Letter of Bishop Lucey, to Father John Steinlage, May 23, 1936.
13. Letter of Bishop Lucey, to Countess Price, September 10, 1938.
14. Idem, January 19, 1939.
15. Letter of Deputy State Superintendent W. T. Lofland, to Brother Francis, May 19, 1939.
16. Letter of Bishop FitzSimon, to Countess Price, June 8, 1943.
17. Idem, June 8, 1943.
18. Idem, May 27, 1947.
19. Amarillo Register, December 15, 1950.
20. Idem, December 22, 1950.
21. Letter of Bishop FitzSimon, to Countess Price, December 20, 1950.
22. Idem, January 17, 1951.
23. Western Union Telegram, November 23, 1951.
24. I Cor, III, 6.
25. The Cardinal, Price College Year Book, 1952.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Since this particular subject has never been treated before there is no available bibliography. In writing the thesis we have used the material found in the Price College files kept in the Catholic Chancery Office in Amarillo, Texas.

ARCHABBEY LIBRARY



3 0764 1003 1749 9