Abbevillians Take Part In Teachers' Institute

Richard, Corliss Romaine, Phyllis Theriot, Frances Thomas, Sonny Trahan, Paul Villien, and Barbara Karl.

Sister Margaret Mary's address at the institute assembly was so well received that the Meridional has chosen to publish its entire text. The speech follows:

"One of the most dramatic changes in American education within the past five years has been the approach to the teaching of foreign languages. This growth, which received its impetus from the National Defense Education Act of 1958, has been due to a realization that our educational system was not keeping pace with our National needs for personnel in the modern world. While some of these articles deal with the problem of training of teachers, the importance of training of teachers is not a new one. The important thing is that the rules for playing a game are useful, but to develop skills there is no substitute for the actual performance.

"Teaching practice is another essential phase of language learning which needs to be continued indefinitely. It is often more important to comprehend what is said than to be able to speak well.

"In understanding the study of a foreign language, the pupil needs to realize that much time and effort is involved. Learning a language is a very complicated process, but since the student learned his native language without conscious effort, he does not always realize this. Although he speaks his own language automatically and with ease, he knows that he has not yet completed the task of mastering it.

"Looking at the study of a foreign language realistically, he will not expect to master it overnight. The important thing for him to keep in mind is the necessity for doing a small amount each day, since language skill, like any other skill, requires regular practice and consistent purpose. At no point in the acquisition of a skill can the experience be considered complete, or the skill perfect.

"At any point, however, the progress made in a language, when properly taught, will have laid a foundation upon which further progress can be built.

"The implication for us teachers is clear.

"(1) Since language is a medium through which the value systems of a culture are expressed, the acquisition of language and of cultural understanding should be a simultaneous endeavor.

"(2) The language itself should be taught, not just information about the language.

"(3) It should be taught in a cultural context.

"This is not a normal audio-lingual method, but the one I'd like to demonstrate briefly is called 'ALM'. It is a consistent audio-lingual approach which teaches the student the merits and high standards of most of our schools," the priest said. "One only has to look around this diocese to be aware of the outstanding work being done by schools under the Catholic system."

He ended his address by stating: "Each teacher must take the responsibility not to be complacent. Each one must assume a role of responsibility to the student, to society, and to himself."

A special highlight of the institute was a section called 'New Developments in the Teaching of Foreign Language,' during which Sister Margaret Mary, O. Carm., of Abbeville, was a speaker. The nun combined a lecture and demonstration technique to illustrate the value of the new language teaching approach. Several students from Abbeville's Mount Carmel assisted Sister Margaret Mary in the demonstration. They are Lexine Belaire, Faye Bourdeaux, Ginger Broussard, Glenn Dubon, Whitney Dubon, Tessa Hebert, Aureen Landry, Peter LeBlanc, Linda LeBlanc, Cheryl Lege, Phyllis Lene, Marcia Miller, Martha Minvielle, Mary Stacy Putnam, Marcelle...