Academy Is ‘Historic Place’

The main building of the Academy of the Sacred Heart at Grand Coteau, begun in 1828, has been entered in the National Register of Historic Places. The Religious of the Sacred Heart have operated the Academy as a center of Christian education since 1832.

Of the more than 500 schools operated by the religious, Coteau has the longest continuous span of operation. It is an accredited college preparatory boarding and day school for girls in grades nine through twelve.

The story of the organization, protective and functioning of this particular Academy of the Sacred Heart dates back to earliest Louisiana, making the school one of the earliest pioneer educational efforts in the state. The Ursulines, who had arrived in Louisiana in 1720, had remained within New Orleans. Retirement homes and private education were the only hope of education for girls at the time.

In 1828, Mother Eugene Auld and Sister Mary Rayen arrived at Grand Coteau from Natchitoches, about 25 miles from St. Louis, Mo., the first American home of the community of members of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Mother Eugene Auld had arrived in America about three years before, from France.

A two-story frame building, 55 feet square surrounded by a veranda with two small adjoining, separate buildings to serve as a kitchen and a dining room respectively, had been donated by a Mrs. Charles Smith. The nuns arrived at the house of Mrs. Smith and within three weeks took possession of the buildings.

In the beginning of October five girls were received and committed to the care of the Ursuline Sisters. The first successful effort of the first convent was to teach girls of the present century.

In these past years, the Religious of the Sacred Heart, while maintaining the traditional disciplines of their Order, have at the same time been able to adapt to the needs of each country. Sister Nordmann said that the schools in this country have completed a document that makes new goals more specific.

In each school teachers, students, alumni, and Advisory Board have had opportunity to participate in drawing up objectives that the school will follow. They are a part of the searching and discovering educators who are engaged in the great task of Sacred Heart Schools will dedicate in this a task relevant in a standardized world, a deep respect for intellectual values, a social awareness which impels to action, the building of community as a Christian value, and personal growth in an atmosphere of open freedom.

Sister Nordmann added that the致力于教员和学生在教学中发挥重要作用。