'Electronic Teaching' Brings Good Results

By Mario Mamalakis

A progress report on use of "electronics" as a teaching device in 3 Lafayette Catholic schools reveals enthusiasm on the part of the teachers and pupils using the device as well as definite evidence of greater results in this method in the subjects it is used for over those classes not using it.

"We have definitely seen a great improvement in students' learning in the subjects where tapes are used as against those where they are not used," said Brother Hilary, who is in charge of tape-teaching at the Cathedral High School.

Sister Joan of Arc, 6th grade teacher at Our Lady of Fatima School, stated that achievement tests given in the various subjects and records kept indicate that students are making steady progress and show continuous improvement.

"ELECTRONIC TEACHING"

Brother B. Albert, F. S. C., of De La Salle Normal was high in his praise of results achieved with his type of teaching method. Students at all the schools voiced their enthusiasm for the new and dynamic method that results from "Electronic Teaching."

The system as used in the three local schools is necessarily a modification of that devised by Sister Mary Theresa Brentano, O. S. B., of St. Scholastica Academy at Covington, La., to teach the use of the new technique attracted educators from most of the United States, Latin America and several European countries. Brother Hilary and Brother Albert attended the six-weeks' course and it was during this workshop that they prepared the tapes now being used in their schools.

Sisters Joan of Arc and Marie Goretti of Our Lady of Fatima spent a week of indoctrination in the method at the Covington academy.

The system was introduced this fall in the 3 Lafayette Schools on a much more limited basis than it is hoped to have it eventually. It is being used here in the grammar grades as a review method in such subjects as geography, history and arithmetic.

The subjects have been worked up into scripts using all available new material to supplement the textbook and to bring in up-to-the-minute data. This material is put on tapes and may be presented either as panel discussions, as travelogues, as newscasts, as personal interviews, etc.

The teacher first introduces the

(Continued on Page 8, Col. 4)
ELECTRONIC CLASSROOM—A novel idea and a revolutionary teaching technique was introduced into 3 Catholic schools in Lafayette this fall when “tape-teaching” was provided in several grades and subjects. Sister Joan of Arc of Our Lady of Fatima School is shown above at the control panel which enables her to contact individual students who are at their desks with earphones plugged into a jack which enables them to listen to the tape recordings of their subject material as they correct worksheets. From left to right are Harold Chastant, son of Dr. and Mrs. Harold Chastant; Mark Judice, son of Mr. and Mrs. Mark Judice, Sr.; and Melanie DeBlanc, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bertrand DeBlanc.

TAPE RECORDS LESSON WHILE TEACHING—Brother B. Albert, F.S.C. of De La Salle, is shown here as he tapes the lesson he is teaching. Giles Pennington, Covington, La. student at De La Salle, is shown at the controls of the tape recorder. The tape may later be used for review purposes by students of the class.
In this study, given pupil notes, and conducts the class in the traditional manner with regular class discussion and explanations. This may take from three to four days. A form of a worksheet, which was prepared at the same time the script was worked up and taped, is given to the pupils. This worksheet, which covers the material of the script as thoroughly, is used in the class. Students exchange worksheets for checking errors. Those who did poorly on these tests are put on tapes with their worksheets before them so as to make corrections, as they listen to the tape. This allows them to fill in their gaps of knowledge while they correct the errors on their worksheets.

They thus get in about 15 minutes of a concentrated dose of the material previously presented during the three- to four-day class discussion. The more advanced students are usually given a broader knowledge of the subject through private research, while the slow learners are on tape. The teacher is free to work with the worse group.

Two classes at the Cathedral school have been supplied with equipment for “tape teaching.” The school has plans to provide for one or two more. The equipment at Cathedral High has been set up for purely functional use. The students may plug in to the length of wire at various points along its length. One end is plugged into the ox, which in turn is plugged into the tape recorder.

This equipment is movable from class to class. The equipment in Sister Joan of Arc’s classroom is permanent in the sense that plug-ins are in the floor by the pupils’ desks. In addition, there is added equipment. The teacher’s desk is equipped with a control panel, which enables her to plug in with the flip of a switch to an individual pupil’s desk and talk with him alone.

At De La Salle Brother Albert’s set up is similar to that at Fatima and in addition he may tape record a lesson as it is being taught and thus have the tape later for use as review material.

In the elementary grades of Fatima and Cathedral, the tapes are being used in history and geography. On the high school level at Cathedral and De La Salle, they are being used in French, Mathematics and Bookkeeping. De La Salle, in addition, uses the technique in World History, U.S. History, Speech, Remedial Reading and Remedial Mathematics.

The electronic technique has added a spark to the classroom that has set off a chain reaction of enthusiasm among those who have come into contact with it. They point out that a teacher must have his material well prepared and systematized; they contend that a student must, while the earphones are on and he is listening to the tape, concentrate; they say it has resolved disciplinary problems, since the slow learner is given...