Early in 1920, the Joliet Franciscan Sisters petitioned the Bishop of Chicago, Archbishop George Mundelein for a college department to be added to their educational efforts in the United States. The department was to be housed in the building on Taylor Street in Joliet at the site of St. Francis Academy.

The Archbishop of Chicago said "yes" and the State of Illinois issued a charter giving the school the right to become an institution of higher education. The background and story is of a little school that began in 1904 with kindergarten and moved to a full curriculum through high school by 1915. It grew into a Normal School—the "New College" by 1920, and on to become Assisi Junior College by 1925 and the College of St. Francis in 1930. The growing continued and it is not a surprise to the Joliet Community to realize and to applaud the 'little school that could..." on the occasion of its exciting growth, and meaningful crossroad—to university status in 1998. President Doppke announced in the summer of 1997, "Effective January 1, 1998, the College of St. Francis shall become the University of St. Francis." And, so it has.

The University of St. Francis shall continue to deepen its Franciscan character as it moves into the future, proud of its Catholic heritage and ready to meet its responsibility to inculcate its student for their tomorrows with challenges outlined in...