

St. Joseph Parish, Weedsport To Mark Centenary With Pontifical Mass

Celebration of one hundred years as a parish will be marked by the pastor and people of St. Joseph's Church, Weedsport, this Sunday, May 2, when His Excellency Auxiliary Bishop Lawrence B. Casey offers a Pontifical Mass of commemoration in the 95-year-old church.

The Rev. Leo A. Jones, pastor of St. Joseph's Church since 1942, has planned a centennial dinner following the Mass in the Grange Hall, Weedsport.

Records show that the first Mass offered in the Village of Weedsport was said by Father Thomas O'Brien, who came here from Clyde, N.Y. in 1852. Father Michael Walsh, also of Clyde, was another priest who ministered to the Catholics of Weedsport about this time.

In 1853 Father Jacob Kunze was appointed to the newly established parish of St. Alphonsus in Auburn. He was also charged with the care of the Catholics in Weedsport. At this time the Erie Canal was being improved, and Irish immigrants began to settle in this area in fair numbers.

Because of this Father Kunze suggested a church, since up to this time Mass had been said in the homes of Catholics. In accordance with this suggestion a lot on the south side of Green Street, near Willow Street, was secured from Eilhu Weed. On this lot a small, rough boarded structure was put up in the Spring of 1854, and was dedicated to St. Joseph. The exterior of this church was never painted, the interior finished off, and in consequence it became known as the "shanty church".

In this rude church the Catholics of Weedsport and vicinity worshipped until 1858-59 when the present church was constructed. In the original St. Joseph's Church Bishop John Timon of Buffalo administered the Sacrament of Confirmation, Weedsport at that time was in the Buffalo Diocese.

AMONG THE Catholics who lived here at the time the names of the following have been preserved:

James Bell, Nicholas Butcher, Michael Burke, John Cloonan, Joseph Cogan, Patrick Daly, John FitzPatrick, John Fitzmaurice, John Griffin, Patrick Hines, James Hoar, John McInerney, Mrs. Bridget Kearns, Margaret Krusz, Robert Moriarity, John and Richard O'Connor, John O'Donnell, and Patrick O'Neil. Some of these original families still have descendants living in the parish.

The first lay trustees of the parish were John McInerney and Patrick O'Neil. Fathers Dominic Geymer and Patrick J. Byrne, successors of Father Kunze, also said Mass in this church. In 1858 the little church was found to be too small for the expanding congregation, and need of a larger church was apparent. At this time St. Alphonsus Church, was without a resident pastor, and the task of building the larger church was committed to Father Michael Creedon of Holy Family Church, Auburn.

A SITE ON the northwest corner of South Seneca and Bell Streets was purchased in June, 1858. This site had formerly been occupied by the Presbyterian Church, which burned, and was rebuilt on a new site. Building on the new church began immediately after the purchase of the site, and before the end of the year was enclosed and roofed. Most likely, services were held in it that same year; although it was not completed until the following year under Father John Constant. In the Summer of 1859 Bishop Timon visited Weedsport again. This time he dedicated the new church and administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to a large class of children.

The Rev. Daniel Moore was appointed to St. Joseph's Church in the Spring of 1862 and was the first resident pastor. The parish records show he performed his first Baptism on April 27, 1862, the child being William Ryan, son of William and Mary Dwyer Ryan. In all Father Moore baptized 31 children and one adult in the six or seven months he was here. This would indicate a fairly large group of Catholics in the parish at that time.

FOLLOWING Father Moore was Father Joseph Albiner. He came in June of 1863. Father Albiner purchased a house on the corner of Bell and Horton Streets, the present Klump house, as a rectory. This served as the rectory until 1884 when the present one was built.

After Father Albiner came Father James H. Leddy, from the end of 1863 to the Fall of 1864. He was succeeded by Father C. Wensterski C.S.S.R. who remained about eight months. Father N. Byrne came next, and was pastor for about a year and a half. He in turn, was succeeded by Father Michael Burrell, who remained until the Fall of 1868. This was his second stay at St. Joseph's, having been there briefly in 1858, when the church was being built.

After Father Burrell came Father James O'Connor, who was then appointed, and remained for about a year. It was Father O'Connor who encouraged the Catholics of Cato, who were then being served by the priests from Weedsport, to build a church of

was appointed by Bishop McQuaid to succeed Father O'Donohoe. Father Ruby's ministry continued until 1928.

THE YEARS OF Father Ruby's pastorate were busy years. He improved and repaired church property. The beautiful oil paintings which adorn the ceiling of the church were painted by his brother, Peter Ruby. A new electric reed organ, a thing of beauty in its day, comparable to a small pipe organ, was installed and dedicated with much ceremony in November of 1920.

He was concerned at all times with the care of his parish and parishioners, zealous in his care of the sick. Although he was beset with poor health during the later years of his pastorate he yet performed wonderful work in the service of God and his parish.

When severe illness finally caused Father Ruby to be away from his parish for some time, Father C. Irving Sullivan, a native of Auburn, came as administrator in the Fall of 1927. (Father Irving Sullivan is a brother of Father Daniel Sullivan who was later pastor here.) He remained here until the Autumn of 1928, when he was assigned to the faculty of Aquinas Institute in Rochester. Following Father Sullivan came Father Charles Bruton. It was during his administration that the Motherhouse dwelling was remodeled into a parish hall.

FATHER BRUTON, during his short stay here, was responsible for gathering the scattered baptismal and marriage records into larger indexed volumes. He also gathered together the material left by Father Ruby into a parish history. The facts recorded in this account up to this point are from his work.

Father Bruton left here to serve on the faculty of Aquinas Institute, Rochester, for a number of years. He is at present pastor of St. Margaret Mary's Church, Rochester.

In the Fall of 1928 Father Francis J. Walker came to Weedsport first as administrator, and subsequently as pastor. Father Walker was a man of vast energy for both the spiritual and material concerns of the parish. He was here during the depression years when the number of parishioners was small, and the income scant. Most of the material improvements of the church property in his day were the work of his own hands.

Father O'Donohoe had some of his predecessors, had charge of three parishes. The mother church at Weedsport, and the mission churches of St. John, Port Byron, and St. Michael, Montezuma, Port Byron, St. John's Parish was organized about 1855, and St. Michael's about 1865.

THESE PARISHES remained under the care of Weedsport until sometime near the end of Father O'Donohoe's pastorate. At the present time these former mission parishes are combined under the care of Father John A. Guy, who has his residence in Montezuma.

One of Father O'Donohoe's first concerns when he came to Weedsport was to provide for the Christian burial of his flock in consecrated ground. Up until this time Weedsport Catholics were buried either in Jordan or in Auburn. In 1883 Father O'Donohoe purchased a plot of ground on the Oakland Road for \$1200.00, and fitted it for a Catholic cemetery. It was ideally suited for this purpose. The ground slopes north from the road to a crest, and then down to the main line of the New York Central R.R.

Over the years St. Joseph's Cemetery has developed into something of which the Catholics of the area are proud. It is not a parish cemetery, having been started when the three parishes of Weedsport, Port Byron and Montezuma were united. It has an imposing entrance, and is dominated by a large granite cross erected on the crest of the hill in the center of the cemetery as a monument to Father O'Donohoe, who lies buried at its foot. The credit for its well kept appearance goes to Mr. Louis Stivers who has been its sexton for over 40 years.

IN 1884 Father O'Donohoe gave the contract for a new rectory to a Mr. Michael Gracie. The cost was \$1800.00. In 1888 the Motherhouse dwelling and lot, adjoining the church on the north, were acquired. This house was rented to tenants until 1928 when the interior was remodeled so that it could be used as a parish hall.

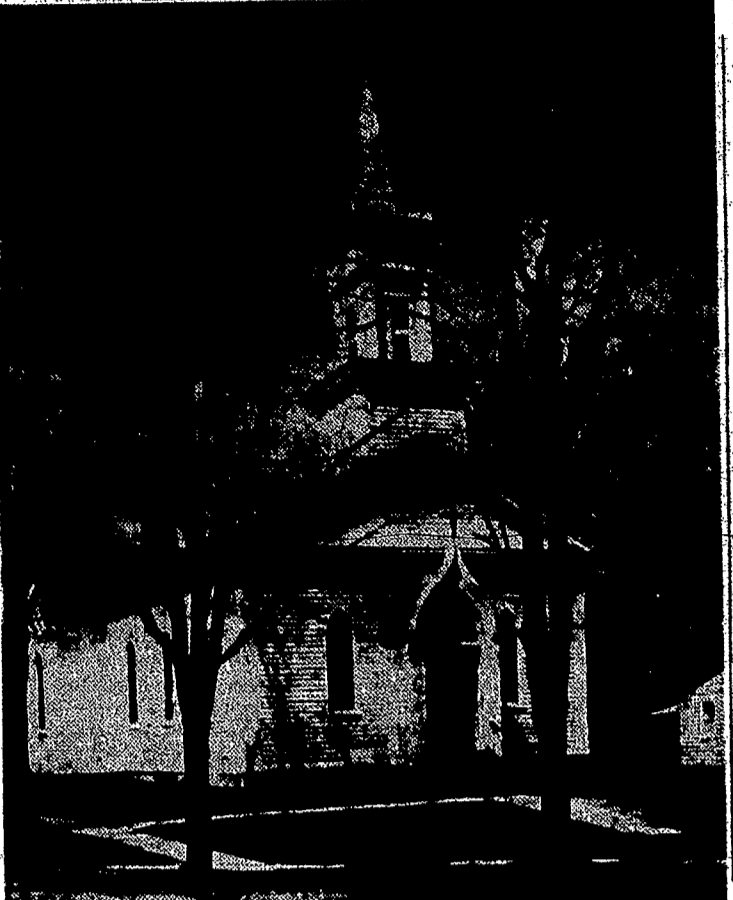
Father O'Donohoe died in February 1907. His death occasioned a very fine eulogy in the local paper—extolling his great culture and learning, his priestliness and his humanity; and regretting the loss to both St. Joseph's parish and the community.

Following Father O'Donohoe's death the parish was cared for briefly by the late Monsignor Edward Byrne, a native of Auburn, and professor of Sacred Scripture at St. Bernard's Seminary, Rochester, N.Y. In June of 1907 Father Joseph J. Ruby, pastor of Cato and Red Creek,

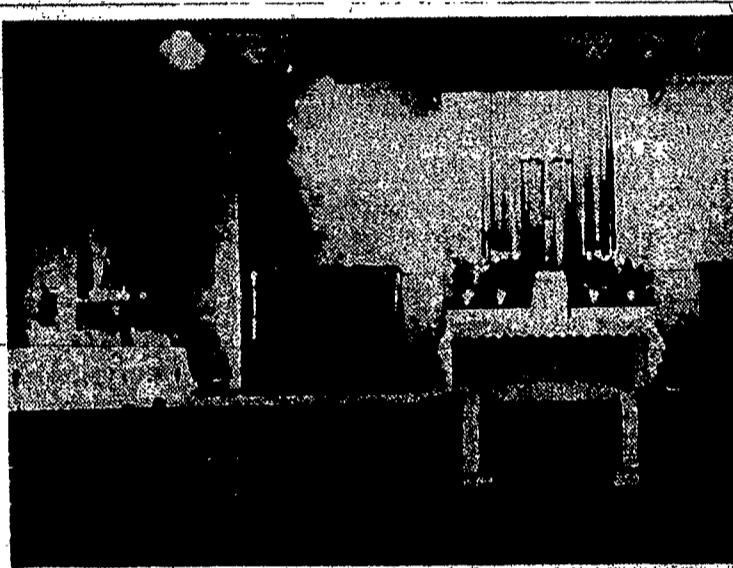
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ST. JOSEPH'S, ninetyfive year old church serving the parishioners of Weedsport, who this Sunday celebrate the centennial observance of their parish.



BEAUTIFUL INTERIOR of St. Joseph's Church Weedsport, where pontifical Mass will be celebrated this Sunday, May 2, by His Excellency Auxiliary Bishop Lawrence B. Casey.

an active and helpful organization in the Parish life, since that time. The Rosary Altar Society has been for years, and continues to be, strong and active in parish affairs.

THE PRESENT parish trustees are Thomas J. O'Connell, who has served for more than fifteen years, and Roy Halbert, who has served since 1947.

IN 1951 the parish lost through death, its organist and choir director for over forty years, Mrs. Elizabeth St. John. She has been succeeded by Mrs. Eleanor Skvorak, a descendant of John Griffin, one of the original parishioners.

Louis Stivers has been sexton of the cemetery for over forty years, and since Father Ruby's time caretaker of the church property. In its century of existence St. Joseph's Parish has sent only two sons into the priesthood; although its former missions of Port Byron and Montezuma have been the birthplace of a number of priests.

The two priests from Weedsport are the late Father James Hickey, who, when he died was pastor of Holy Apostles Church in Rochester, and Father Francis Kanaley, a priest of the Buffalo diocese, and on his death, superintendent of parochial schools of the Buffalo diocese. They are both buried in our St. Joseph's Cemetery. At the present time there is one seminarian, John Skvorak.

THE FOLLOWING are the young women connected with our parish who have entered the convent:

Sister Marie Antoinette (deceased), Mary L. Lawler, daughter of John and Margaret Harmon Lawler. A graduate of Weedsport High School, professed in the Sisters of St. Joseph in St. Joseph's Motherhouse, Troy, N.Y. She was for six years, mistress of novices at the Motherhouse.

Sister Alfonso, Agnes G. Welch, daughter of John and Mary Quigley Welch. A graduate of Weedsport High School, professed in the Sisters of St. Joseph at Nazareth Motherhouse, Rochester. A former superior at Nazareth Academy in Rochester, she is at present superior at St. Joseph's Hospital, Elmira, N.Y.

Sister Esther, Elizabeth Wesley, daughter of James and Agnes Clossey Wesley, was born, baptized and lived her early years in Weedsport. Later she moved to Buffalo, and was professed in the Sisters of St. Joseph. She is at present of the faculty of Mt. St. Joseph's, Buffalo.

Sister Francis David, Frances Canada Beckman, daughter of Frank and Georgia Snyder Beckman. She was born in the neighboring Township of Cato. She was professed in the Sisters of St. Joseph at Nazareth Motherhouse, Rochester. She is at present teaching at St. Elizabeth's Mission in Selma, Alabama.

Nazareth College Faculty Members Attend Educational Conventions

Six members of the Nazareth College faculty devoted part of their Easter vacation to professional growth, attending conventions where they heard experts discuss the latest developments in their fields and ironed out common problems in union with fellow professors from all parts of the country.

Sister Saint Catherine, dean of studies at the women's college, attended the 51st annual convention of the National Catholic Educational Association in Chicago April 19-22. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen was keynote of the meeting, the theme of which was "Planning for Our Educational Needs." More than 12,000 attended.

Accompanying Sister Catherine were Sister Stella Regina, principal of Our Lady of Lourdes school, and Sister Grace Regina, of the Nazareth Academy faculty. Sister Saint Mark, principal of the School of the Holy Child, and Sister Pierre, principal of Corpus Christi school, attended the sessions on Special Education.

A HIGHLIGHT of the convention was a joint session with the American Catholic Philosophical Association.

Sister Margaret Teresa, professor of literature and book reviewer for the Courier Journal, attended the 11th annual meeting of the Catholic Renaissance Society at the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel.

Also attending were Sister Dominic, Nazareth College librarian, and Sister Mary Steven, librarian of St. Joseph's hospital, Elmira, both of whom waited over to attend the 30th annual conference of the Catholic Library Association at the same place April 20-23.

MISS JEAN STRACHAN, instructor in speech and drama, and seven Nazareth College students also attended the Renaissance Society sessions. They are Dorothy and Mary Smith, Grace Ziegler, Virginia Weis, Pauline Kosciuszko, Margaret Baumgartner and Frances Frazier. Theme of the convention was "Symbol and Myth in Creation and Criticism."

Among the speakers heard were H. Marshall McLuhan, St. Michael's College, Toronto, on "Eliot and the Manichean Myth"; Rudolf Allers, Georgetown University, on "The Philosophy and Psychology of Symbolization"; and Wallace Fowlie, Bennington College, on "The Symbolism of Claudel."

Theme of the Catholic Library Association conference was "Libraries in the Age of Mass." About 400 attended, according to Sister Dominic. Included were tours of college and high school libraries in the Philadelphia area.

SPEAKERS WHO most impressed her, Sister Dominic said, were the Rev. Bartholomew F. Fair, librarian of St. Charles Borromeo Seminary, Overbrook, Pa., whose topic was "The History and Future of the American Catholic Historical Society Library"; and Eleanor Este Campion, who described the Philadelphia Bibliographical Center and Union Catalogue which she organized. The center, she said, handles more reference questions than the Library of Congress.

The Rev. Edward J. Lintz, professor of philosophy, attended the National Catholic Philosophical Association convention in Milwaukee, Wis., April 20-21. Theme was "Consideration of Freedom for the Existence of God." Among the speakers was Dr. Vincent Edward Smith, whose topic was "The Prime Mover in the Phil-

sophy of Nature and Metaphysics."

DR. WILLIAM E. GWINN, head of the history department, interrupted a vacation at his home in Bristol, Wis., to attend the convention of the Mississippi Valley Historical Association in Madison, Wis., April 22-24. Russell Kirk, author of "The Conservative Mind," was one of the principal speakers. "The American Conservative Character" was the theme of the meeting.

KC Auxiliary Of Dansville Lists Banquet

Dansville - The Ladies Auxiliary Knights of Columbus is completing plans for the annual Mother and Daughter Banquet to be held at the Moose Club on Monday evening, May 10, at 7 p.m.

The Rev. Louis J. Hohman, spiritual director of the Rochester Diocesan Council of the N.C.C.W., will be guest speaker. Mrs. Florence Beckwith, president, has named the following committee: arrangements, trustees Mrs. J. V. Muldoon, Mrs. Edward Morsch and Mrs. William Simon assisted by the program committee in charge of Mrs. Vincent Owen, chairman; publicity, Mrs. Justin Vogt.

A roast chicken dinner will be served to adults at \$1.75 and to children under 12 years at \$1.00. Reservations may be made by contacting Mrs. Muldoon, Phone 829, by May 8.

The Mother and Daughter Corporate Communion Sunday will be observed on Sunday, May 9, at 8 a.m.

Ham Supper Listed At St. Gregory's

Members of St. Gregory's Church, Marion, will sponsor a ham supper on Tuesday, May 4, in the church hall.

Cochairman Mrs. Joseph Nize and Mrs. William Sauer have announced the following committee: head: food - Mrs. Cyril Stevens; dining room - Mrs. John Murphy; tickets - Mrs. Nancy Kelly; publicity - Mrs. John Mason.

Editorial Position

Monroe County weekly newspaper has an opening for an Editorial Assistant. Experience preferred, but not essential. Excellent working conditions, good starting salary. Give all particulars, age, marital status, education, training, salary desired, etc., in writing to:

Box 17
Catholic Courier Journal
35 Scole St.
Rochester 4, N.Y.

Mercy Reading Laboratory Registration Set May 8th

Registration for the summer session of the Reading Laboratory conducted by the Sisters of Mercy will be held on May 8 and May 9 from nine to twelve o'clock on Saturday and from nine to five on Sunday at Our Lady of Mercy High School.

The twenty-day session opens on July 5 and closes on July 31, classes being conducted Monday through Friday. Following last summer's procedure, the Sisters will conduct the Reading Laboratory in four areas, three branches stemming from the Reading Laboratory Headquarters at the Motherhouse of the Sisters of Mercy. The two Rochester locations, registration for which will be held May 8 and 9 at Our Lady of Mercy High School are: Mercy High School and Holy Cross School.

In Elmira the clinical work will be conducted at St. Patrick's School, in Auburn at Holy Family School. Registration for these two schools will be announced locally at a later date.

Saturday Luncheon Set in Canandaigua

Geneva - First Saturday luncheon of the National Council of Catholic Women will be held May 1, at 1 p.m. in the Canandaigua Hotel.

Mrs. Louis J. Fowler is deanery chairman. The luncheon is being sponsored by the Shortsville and Manchester Altar and Rosary Society.

Mrs. Joseph McElroy and Mrs. Leo Knight are in charge of local reservations for the luncheon. Deadline for reservations is Wednesday night.

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