

# Catholic Faith Flourishes In Cayuga 300 Years After Jesuits Arrival

This is the last of a series of articles marking the tercentenary of the Catholic Faith in Cayuga County where 300 years ago the Jesuit missionaries came to offer Mass and preach to the Cayuga Indians. The author, Edwin M. Nolan is a member of the faculty of West High School in Auburn. A Field Mass, marking the 300th anniversary of Cayuga's First Mass, will be offered at 4 p. m., Sunday, August 19 at the John Gans Farm, Mapleton, 3 miles South of Auburn on Route 34B.

By EDWIN M. NOLAN

After the expulsion of the Jesuit missionaries from the Iroquois area, there is no record of Catholicism in Cayuga County until 1816 when the Rev. Michael O'Gorman was sent in answer to an appeal by John

O'Connor of Auburn. He had written Bishop John Connolly of 1834. The Rev. William Davis is New York City begging for a present pastor. The late Rev. Bernard Heffer offered to finance the traveling man, a native of Aurora whose expenses involved. The late Bishop Timon of Buffalo records the event and states that this was the first visit of a Catholic priest to Auburn.

Father O'Gorman offered the first Mass in Auburn in the O'Connor family home in Water Street. Bishop Timon also mentions Father O'Gorman's preaching a sermon in the Cayuga County Court House. The priest's visit was only a few days duration, as he had many similar visitations to make in the area.

The Auburn area was first under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Baltimore as a vicariate-apostolic from 1784 to 1789 and a regular canonical diocese from 1789-1808. From 1808 to 1847, Auburn was in the diocese of New York City, and in the diocese of Buffalo from 1847 to 1868. The Auburn area has been part of the Rochester Diocese since its establishment in 1868.

The first parish of which Auburn was a part was old St. Peter's in New York City. Subsequent years saw the following parochial subdivisions. St. Mary's in Albany, St. John's in Utica, (of which John O'Connor of Auburn was a trustee), St. Patrick's, Rochester, St. John the Baptist of Syracuse. Finally Holy Family

St. Aloysius Parish was the fourth to be formed in Auburn. The Rev. John J. McGrath was named in 1901 to organize the parish in the northwest section of the city. Father McGrath remained as pastor until 1925 when he was transferred to St. Mary's Church to succeed the late Rev. William Payne. The Rev. John B. Crowley is pastor emeritus, and his successor is the Rev. Edward J. Waters.

In 1905, the Polish members of St. Alphonsus Parish under direction of Bishop Hecker organized their own Parish of St. Hyacinth's with the Rev. Stanislaus J. Szupa as pastor. In 1926, Father Jerome Houbowicz and the Franciscan Fathers were placed in charge of the parish. Father Jerome recently observed his thirtieth anniversary as pastor.

The Ukrainian parish of SS. Peter and Paul was officially dedicated Oct. 20, 1901. The first resident priest was the Rev. Leo Girelsky. The first Mass in the Greek Ukrainian rite was offered by the Rev. E. Zalkinsky in the old St. Alphonsus Church in Water Street in 1900. The present pastor is the Rev. Basil Ostas, and the church is in the Ukrainian Diocese of Philadelphia.

The Italian parish of St. Francis of Assisi, was organized in 1907 by the Rev. J. Robotti, who was also the first pastor. The Rev. John Nacca is currently serving the parish.

The earliest records of the Cayuga County parishes outside of Auburn go back to 1841, when, according to Father Hefferman, Mass was offered in the McGor don family home in Aurora by Father Bradley of Auburn. The first resident pastor of Aurora was the Rev. William Quigley. The first church dedicated to St. Agnes, was an improvised house provided in 1855. On Oct. 11, 1874, the present Aurora church was dedicated by Bishop McQuinn.

Quinn, the pastor of the parish was thereafter known as St. Patrick's, Aurora. The present pastor is the Rev. Ralph Meyer.

The next date is 1851, when the First Mass was said in Scipio by the late Rev. William Quigley.

The earliest bishop to visit Auburn was Bishop Dubois, the third Bishop of New York, who came in Sept. 1828 and again in 1829. His last visit was in 1837. In August, 1841, Bishop Hughes, the fourth bishop of New York, came on his central and western New York visitations. When Buffalo was made a diocese its first ordinary, Bishop John Timon passed through Auburn on his way to his new see. He was accompanied by Bishop Hughes and Bishop McCloskey then bishop of Albany and later the first American Cardinal.

The first Mass was said in Auburn in 1816 when John O'Connor of Auburn (above) appealed to Bishop John Connolly of New York City to send a priest. In response to O'Connor's plea, Father Michael O'Gorman came to offer the first Mass in Auburn at the O'Connor family home on Water Street.

Father Quigley, who, with Fathers Burns and Touhey, administered here until 1863, arrived. Father McCool organized the parish and erected the church dedicated to his patron, Saint Bernard. The first resident pastor was Father Archangelo Paganini.

In 1852, the first Mass was said in Genoa in the village's old red school house by Father Glennon. The present St. Hilary's parish, was incorporated April 8, 1911, during the pastorate of the Rev. John B. Dorman. The Rev. Leo E. Hastings is now serving that parish.

THE YEAR 1833 saw the beginnings of St. Joseph's Parish in Cayuga, under the direction of the Rev. John Touhey, who had said Mass previously at different locations in private homes called "Stations." In 1864, Father McCool was named pastor. He built the present church in 1870. Father John Neilligan, appointed in 1891, was the only pastor of St. Joseph's to reside in the village of Cayuga. In 1901, he moved to Aurora. Cayuga was annexed in 1904 to St. Aloysius, Auburn.

St. Joseph's, Weedsport, was organized in 1853. The first Mass was said in 1852 by the Rev. Thomas O'Brien of Clyde. The Rev. Daniel Moore was the first resident priest. The Rev. Leo Jones is the present pastor.

The year 1853 also saw the dedication of St. Michael's Church in Union Springs, at which time the Rev. Nicholas Byrne was pastor. The parish had been in existence some time before. The Rev. Ralph Meyer is now pastor.

In 1858, St. John's Church in Port Byron was organized, largely as a result of the requests of the Catholics of Montezuma. This parish was for many years served by the priests of Weedsport. The Rev. John Guy is currently pastor both here and in Montezuma, where St. Michael's Parish was organized in 1855 under the direction of the Rev. James Leddy.

In 1866, the parish of Our Lady of the Lake, King Ferry, or Northville, as it was formerly called, was organized, and the church was erected in 1868 under the supervision of Father Mc-



RECALLS EARLY JESUITS—Professor Walter K. Long, director of the Cayuga Museum of History and Art, holds a copy of a Finger Lakes area map drawn by Father Peter Rafflo, Jesuit missionary and one of the first white men to enter the area. On the large Ronance map of the Finger Lakes region, painted by Professor Long, he locates the site of the first house of Christian worship built by the Jesuits and Cayuga Indians in 1656 between Union Springs and Aurora. The Genesee County Federation of Historical Societies will mark the tercentennial of the Jesuits arrival in the Finger Lakes region on September 15 at the Cayuga Museum of History and Art.

Cool The present pastor is the pastor in Moravia, and the late Rev. Frederick Walz.

St. Patrick's Church, Moravia, was organized in 1878 with the Rev. Archangelo Paganini as the first pastor. The first Mass in Moravia had been said in 1852 by Father Byrne of Auburn, and the late Rev. William Quigley, Catholics there until the organization of the parish. The Rev. William J. O'Brien, a native of Auburn, has recently been named to the Moravia parish.

In Cato, the Rev. Joseph Alinger offered the first Mass. The church, dedicated to St. Patrick, was built in 1875 by the Rev. John C. Kenny. The Rev. William Tobin is now pastor of the parish, the third in the county to be dedicated to St. Patrick.

St. Ann's, Oneonta, was organized Sept. 8, 1911. The Rev. Cornelius Silke was the first pastor. The church, which is a mission of Moravia is under the guidance of Father O'Brien of Moravia.

The Chapel of St. Isaac Jogues in Fleming was dedicated in 1946 under the pastorate of the Rev. Francis Turner as a mission of Scipio. The chapel is under the jurisdiction of the Rev. Leo Hastings, but it is served by the Carmelite Fathers or Whitefriars Monastery, Auburn.

The Chapel of Our Lady Queen of Peace, located at Camp Columbus on the east shore of Oneonta Lake, was dedicated by Bishop Kearney on June 27, 1941. It is under the supervision of the priests of St. Alphonsus and serves the youths registered at the Camp, founded by Monsignor Straub, as well as the residents at the lake during the summer months. On the Camp property, there is a beautiful altar shrine, dedicated to Our Lady Queen of Peace.

In 1947, the first Auburn pastors to be made monsignori were named. They were the late Rt. Rev. Msgr. John A. Conway of Holy Family, Dean of the area; the late Rt. Rev. Msgr. Adolph Gabbant of St. Francis; and the present pastor of St. Mary's the Rt. Rev. Msgr. William E. Cowen, S.T.D. Two native Auburnians were similarly honored at the same time. They were the late Monsignor William F. Bergan and the late Monsignor Edward E. Byrne.

MONSIGNOR BERGAN had been made a domestic prelate when His Eminence, Edward Cardinal Mooney of Detroit was head of the Rochester diocese, but the 1947 honor named him as a protonotary apostolic, the highest Church honor next to that of bishop.

The late Monsignor Byrne was for many years professor of Sacred Scripture at St. Bernard's Seminary, where his brother, the late Rev. Andrew Byrne was, for a long period, spiritual director. The two priest brothers were both greatly interested in the study of the early Jesuits and their missions. Monsignor Byrne worked tirelessly in the tedious process of negotiating the naming of the Menard Bridge in honor of the first priest to visit this section.

Cayuga County also boasts of almost countless priests and sisters who have served the Church throughout the entire country and beyond in mission fields and in the far flung diocese of the Military Ordinariate, served by our country's chaplains.

Catholics of Cayuga County are also proud of those chapters of its history dealing with the four bishops, exclusive of the ordinaries, who have been associated with the area. The late Archbishop Hecker was once a

family property, was dedicated Sept. 14, 1911. The first Franciscan sisters arrived on Sept. 2, and the Hospital opened officially Oct. 15, 1911. The new modern Mercy Hospital was dedicated July 15, 1950, the cornerstone laid Nov. 3, 1930, and the first patients admitted Oct. 27, 1931.

With the erection of the new building, the old St. Edward's Church, located on the site of the Mercy Hospital grounds, was razed. The church, a mission of St. Mary's, had served the Catholics of southwest Auburn for many years from 1905 to April 25, 1929, when it was closed.

The Catholic Family Service, under the direction of the Rochester Catholic Charities, opened an Auburn Office at 16 William Street on March 1, 1955. This Service which is in charge of Victor Favasuli provides assistance in family problems and in the matter of adoptions. It is an important part of the Catholic life of the county.

DURING THIS tercentennial year, the chief observance planned to mark 300 years of Catholicism in Cayuga County will be an evening Field Mass on Sunday, August 19 at 4 p. m. on the John Gans Farm in Mapleton, where a Jesuit missionary first offered Mass for the Cayuga Indian tribe. The Field Mass is being sponsored by the Fourth Degree Assembly of the Auburn Knights of Columbus.

Among the note worthy events of this 300th Anniversary year of the Catholic Church in Cayuga is the first scholastic year of Mt. Carmel High School; the conferring on Father Straub the title of Right Rev. Monsignor; and on Father Dugan, chaplain of Auburn Prison, the title of Sacred Priesthood ever held in Cayuga. On June 16th of this year, the article of last summer, shortly after the publication of "Ambassador in Chains," the life story of Bishop Byrne.

BISHOP Thomas Hendrick, who was pastor of Aurora, Cayuga and Union Springs from 1877-1891, was named Bishop of Cebu in the Philippine Islands in 1903. He was loved by all who knew him, and everyone, even President Theodore Roosevelt, called him "Father Tom."

When he died, the Auburn Citizen Advertiser paid him this tribute: "Bishop Hendrick will long be remembered by the people of Cayuga County and the city of Auburn. He was a firm believer in all respects, he was lovable in the extreme and had hosts of friends, irrespective of church or creed or politics."

Each of the seven Auburn parishes has a parochial school. Holy Family with 393 pupils is staffed by the Sisters of Mercy; the sisters of St. Joseph have three schools: St. Alphonsus with 890 pupils, St. Mary's with 357, and St. Aloysius with 178. St. Hyacinth's has 368 pupils taught by the Franciscan Sisters; St. Francis with 569, has the Religious of Jesus and Mary, and SS. Peter and Paul's school, staffed by the Sisters of St. Basil, numbers 124 registrants.

The Holy Family High School, staffed by the Sisters of Mercy is scheduled to close in June of 1957 after twenty-four years of existence. Father Davie has been principal during most of that period. The new Mt. Carmel High School, staffed by the Carmelite Fathers and the Sisters of St. Joseph for the girls will open in September for its second school year with the first three years of high school. There are no parochial schools in Cayuga County outside of Auburn.

The Catholics of Auburn Prison are served by the Very Rev. Msgr. Gregory Dugan, who resides at Mercy Hospital. He is the third full time Catholic prison chaplain, his predecessors being the late Msgr. William Bergan and Father Leo Jones. Previously, the prison was served by the priests from Holy Family parish. The first Mass said in the prison was offered by the Rev. John Neilligan on Sept. 14, 1884.

In 1948, the Carmelite Fathers established their Whitefriars Monastery in the old Case mansion on South Street. The first prior was the Rev. Patrick Russell, and the provincial was the Rev. Killian Lynch, now World General of the order. The Philosophy students of the province are housed in Auburn, at Whitefriars, and the Mt. Carmel faculty occupy the adjoining house, formerly the Fred L. Emerson residence. The present prior is the Rev. Francis Donohue, and the Rev. Brendan Hourihan is principal of Mt. Carmel High School.

An important contribution of Catholicism to Auburn and Cayuga County is Mercy Hospital, which was largely realized through the tireless efforts of the late Father Payne and the late Dr. Louis F. O'Neil. The old building, formerly the Thorntons

## Church Building At All-Time High

Washington, D.C.—(RNS)—Church construction totaled \$66,000,000 in July, matching the all-time record for that month, the Departments of Commerce and Labor reported.

The July figure was \$4,900,000 higher than that for June and \$10,000,000 above May. It brought religious construction for the first seven months of this year to \$405,000,000—breaking the record of \$401,000,000 established in 1955.

Building by non-public schools and colleges reached \$48,000,000 last month, a gain of \$1,000,000 over July, 1955. This made the total for the first seven months \$296,000,000—a 16 per cent gain over last year's record.

Construction by private hospitals and institutions, most of which are church-related, increased to \$26,000,000, but this was \$5,000,000 less than a year ago.

Other highlights of this Tercentennial year include: 1) the completion of the first scholastic year of Mt. Carmel High School; the conferring on Father Straub the title of Right Rev. Monsignor; and on Father Dugan, chaplain of Auburn Prison, the title of Sacred Priesthood ever held in Cayuga. On June 16th of this year, the article of last summer, shortly after the publication of "Ambassador in Chains," the life story of Bishop Byrne.

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anniversary of Father Hastings of Scipio; the thirtieth anniversary of Father Jerome as pastor of St. Hyacinth's; the new organ at St. Aloysius Church.

TWO OTHER facts should be noted during this Tercentennial year of Catholic life in Cayuga County. One is the ordination of the Rev. Paul McQuinney on February 2 of this eventful year for the diocese of Greenberg, Pennsylvania. Father McQuinney's mother, who died a few years ago, was born and raised in Mapleton, the little hamlet sanctified by the early Mission of St. Joseph.

THE SECOND fact is the ordination to the priesthood of the fourth native Auburnian to receive Holy Orders during this tercentennial year. He is the Rev. Avery Dulles, S.J., son of the Secretary of State, and Mrs. John Foster Dulles, both natives of Auburn, where the Secretary's father, the late Rev. Allen Macy Dulles was once pastor of the Second Presbyterian Church and a member of the faculty of the old Auburn Theological Seminary.

Father Dulles' Auburn background is almost totally Protestant, yet his ordination in this Tercentennial Year as a Catholic priest of the Society of Jesus is noteworthy. He and the late Rev. Terence J. Boyle, S.J., who died in November, 1952, are the only known natives of Auburn to be ordained Jesuits.

The ordination of Father Dulles fittingly completes the tercentennial cycle begun in Cayuga County by his fellow followers of Christ and Ignatius in 1656.

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