

The Cathedral Of The Sacred Heart

Story of 30-year-old parish church's elevation to dignity of beautiful cathedral intimately linked with traditions of Bishop Kearney's career as Bishop of Rochester

By THOMAS H. O'CONNOR, Catholic Courier-Journal News Editor

My hope and ambition was to have a magnificent cathedral with a majestic statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the center over the members of the church and over the members of the Sacred Heart Church.

BISHOP JAMES KEARNEY, Bishop of Rochester, has been elevated to the rank of Cardinal by Pope Pius XII.

At the time of his elevation, he was the first such elevation in the United States since the elevation of Cardinal Ruffini in 1927 by Pope Pius XI.

His elevation is a fitting tribute to his long and distinguished career as a priest, bishop and administrator.

He was born in 1872 in the town of Canastota, N. Y., and spent his early years in the diocese of Albany.

He served as pastor of St. Ann's Church in Canastota for many years before being appointed to the diocese of Albany in 1912.

He was appointed Bishop of Rochester in 1927 and served in that capacity for 15 years.

His elevation to the rank of Cardinal is a recognition of his many contributions to the Church and to the people of Rochester.

He is a member of the Pontifical Council of the Laity and the Pontifical Council of the Culture.

He is also a member of the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Sick and the Pontifical Council of the Liturgy.

He is a member of the Pontifical Council of the Social Affairs and the Pontifical Council of the Economic Affairs.

He is a member of the Pontifical Council of the Inter-Religious Dialogue and the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Young People.

He is a member of the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Elderly and the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Families.

He is a member of the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Migrants and the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Refugees.

He is a member of the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Prisoners and the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Homeless.

He is a member of the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Disabled and the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Deaf and Dumb.

He is a member of the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Blind and the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Leprosy Sufferers.

He is a member of the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Tuberculosis Sufferers and the Pontifical Council of the Pastoral Care of the Cancer Sufferers.



Sacred Heart Cathedral

...power to donate the lumber for the installation of new fixtures and extensive repairs to the church organ which was formerly held in the old St. Patrick's Cathedral. This remodeling of the organ enhanced the choir loft and provided 80 seats and a new organ. The beautiful stained glass windows which adorns the interior of the cathedral were donated by the Flower City Club.

...the cathedral. The new Stations of the Cross, fashioned of red and gold marble, arrived from Italy in July. The new Stations were erected early in August and formally blessed in the last week of September. Featuring large figures, easily recognizable from a distance, the new Stations are a source of admiration to current visitors to the cathedral.

...Today Rochester's Cathedral of the Sacred Heart stands adorned with a new beauty the living fulfillment of the admonition of the poet, Gerard Manley Hopkins:

"Give beauty back, beauty, beauty, beauty, back to God, beauty's self and beauty's use."

...As Bishop Kearney returns today to the church where he began his career in Rochester twenty years ago, Bishop Casey and his devoted parishioners can say to him: "Bishop, now you have a real cathedral, the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart."

...This chapter, as Bishop Casey remarks, began last fall when the parishioners of Sacred Heart pledged the magnificent sum of \$143,265, payable in six months to build a new high altar, install new Stations

of the Cross, and to redecorate the church interior.

The last Mass on the historic St. Patrick's high altar was celebrated October 22, 1956. Work on the new \$70,000 red and white marble high altar began almost immediately. The platform and altar table were erected by Christmas. When the remainder of the marble arrived from Italy and Spain, work was resumed, and the new marble altar was ready for its solemn consecration by Bishop Casey on Tuesday, March 2nd of this year. Present in the sanctuary and presiding during these rites was Bishop Kearney, making his first appearance following his three months of illness.

THE BRONZE RELIEF representing the Sacred Heart, surmounted by two angels, arrived from Italy in the last week of March, and following its erection over the new altar was the scene of Friday, April 5th.

Completion of the work was particularly pleasing to Bishop Kearney, who hailed the altar and statue as the fulfillment of his hope and ambition to have a cathedral with a majestic statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus to extend His hands over the members of this parish and over the entire Diocese.

"I can never forget the zeal and devotion, and consecration of the pastor of this parish, Bishop Casey, in carrying out this work."

Designs for the new altar and statue were personally selected by Bishop Kearney and executed by the skilled craftsmen of the Daprato Studios of Chicago.

Rising 11 feet from the sanctuary floor, the altar of imported marble is crowned by a bronze canopy extending 11 feet from the rear wall of the cathedral.

This towering 6-foot structure of marble and bronze is supported by special pillars erected in the cathedral basement.

Redecoration work on the church, which had not been decorated since its completion in 1927, began on Tuesday, June 11th. This has been a slow and tedious process. All summer the church was cluttered with scaffolding, and the people attending daily and Sunday Masses showed remarkable patience.

Removal of the scaffolding, following completion of the redecoration in recent weeks, find all agreed that the Cathedral of the Sacred Heart is "now a real cathedral," and that thanks to the generosity and devotion of the Sacred Heart parishioners, who have contributed \$139,300 in the past five years to beautify the cathedral interior, the beauty was there all along, it merely needed to be brought out, and this, the recent impressive results have done.

COMPLEMENTING THE beautification of the sanctuary and the church as one final improvement, this is the new set of Stations of the Cross, fashioned of red and gold marble. Arriving from Italy in July, the new Stations were erected early in August and formally blessed in the last week of September. Featuring large figures, easily recognizable from a distance, the new Stations are a source of admiration to current visitors to the cathedral.

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