

Monsignor Bloomer: 61 Glorious Years

Msgr. James J. Bloomer organized the St. Bonaventure Alumni Association and was its first president, according to the Elmira Sunday Telegram of Dec. 22, 1918.

He had plenty of time to grow attached to the college and seminary. After completing studies for the priesthood there, he stayed a year and a half waiting to be summoned for ordination.

According to the Telegram story, he was ready for the priesthood before Easter, 1867, "to the joy and satisfaction of the Franciscans."

A post-Easter date was set by Bishop John Timon of Buffalo, "but the saintly bishop was summoned to his Maker on the Monday of Holy Week." More than a year later, Stephen Vincent Ryan became second bishop of Buffalo, and on Dec. 19, 1868, he ordained Father Bloomer.

The Telegram story, marking the priest's golden jubilee, recorded that he had been born Oct. 2, 1841, in County Tyrone, Ireland, and brought up, from the age of four, in Philadelphia.

"It was early determined by his devoted mother," the Telegram writer went on, "that his boyhood had been such as to warrant the conviction that he was endowed by God and nature with the high moral qualities that justified the hope of a priestly vocation."

"That, too, was his own fond hope," and at the age of 21, he went to St. Bonaventure's to study "under the watchful care and pious example of the priests and brothers of the noble order of St. Francis..."

The art and science of fund raising had not been developed when Msgr. James J. Bloomer



Msgr. James J. Bloomer

faced his first deficit. He took the direct approach: levied a tax and dispatched collectors.

With a new school to pay for out of Sunday income, Msgr. Bloomer needed an additional

source of revenue for teachers' salaries. He taxed each wage-earner 25 cents a month and sent collectors every month to get the money. The amount needed was little indeed, by to-

day's standards: \$1,000, to pay five teachers.

Year in, year out, Catholic school administrators, parents and pastors feel the constricting effect of the so-called Blaine Amendment that channels tax money away from their schools. Ways of getting around this constitutional obstacle to state aid have been their pre-occupation, it would seem, forever.

Forever? There's always a first time, and St. Patrick's was one of the original losers. Msgr. James J. Bloomer had built a fine, big school for \$60,000 in reasonable expectation of help from the public treasury. By the time the school was finished, in 1894, the legislature had lowered the boom. The whole debt belonged to the parish.

Heartiest Congratulations to
St. Patrick's on your 100th
Birthday



PEPSI-COLA ELMIRA BOTTLING CO.
INC.

Two Funeral Homes For Your Convenience

CHARLES & SONS
FUNERAL *Hughes* HOMES
SINCE 1896
311 LAKE STREET INC 1880 DAVIS STREET
ELMIRA, NEW YORK

OUR FAMILY SERVING YOUR FAMILY SINCE 1896