

St. James Celebrates 100 Years

By JOY CHALONE

Trumansburg — St. James the Apostle Parish will officially celebrate its 100th year as a parish, Sunday, Oct. 15.

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan will be principal concelebrant for a 4 p.m. Mass and will deliver the homily. A reception for priests formerly stationed at St. James will be held at 3 p.m. and a dinner will follow the Mass at the Statler Club in Ithaca.

Acknowledgements go to Lilla Licht and Eileen VanDemark, parishioners, for compiling, researching and writing the history, from which this article in large part comes.

During the 1830s, Roman Catholics began to arrive from Ireland in the Finger Lakes area. By 1850, there were three Irish-Catholic families in the village of Trumansburg and another 22 families in the outlying area.

These families were dependent on traveling priests to say Mass in their homes. Father McBride of Waterloo held Mass in the Lawrence Birney home when he visited Trumansburg. At other times, families traveled by foot and horseback to Ithaca and Auburn for Mass.

By 1854, Bishop John Timon of the Buffalo Diocese instructed Father Michael Gleason to purchase a site for a church in Trumansburg. It so happened that the congregation of the Methodist Church needed a larger building and so Father Gleason purchased the old Methodist church.

On April 18, 1857, Bishop Timon dedicated the new St. James the Apostle Church. It was one of two mission churches of Immaculate Conception Church, Ithaca.

In 1872, Bishop Bernard J. McQuaid of the recently formed Rochester Diocese raised St. James from a mission church to a parish on its own. It then served about 85 families. Father Gilbert Nuonno was assigned as the first pastor. The Catholic Directory of 1868 lists him as Gilbert Nuonno, OSF, of St. Anthony of Padua Church, New York City. Apparently, Father Gilbert, who had been visiting and helping at the parish, had volunteered his services to Bishop McQuaid.

Two months after he became pastor, Father Gilbert organized all the men and sons over 18 into the "Father Matthew Temperance and Benevolent Society." A great deal of discussion is recorded in the minutes of the meetings on what conditions members could be readmitted who had violated the pledge. It was not uncommon for a member to be expelled one meeting and be readmitted the next. The society was also active in spiritual and charitable works.

In 1873, the annual income of the parish was \$3,537.56. The pastor's salary was \$600 a year. The organist, Miss F. O'Donnell was paid \$52 in 1876. Miss Anna Mason Young, who later is shown as Mrs. A.M.Y. Swartout appears to have been the housekeeper. Her salary was almost as much as the pastor's, \$570 a year.

The parish continued to grow during the 1870s and at the time of Father Gilbert's reassignment in 1877 there were 179 families in the parish.

Father Gilbert was succeeded by Father Angelo Lugero, who, in July 1881, was succeeded by Father Michael T. Madden.

Of all the pastors who guided the congregation of St. James in the 100 years of its history perhaps the most beloved pastor was Father Madden, pastor of St. James for 28 years. Once, Bishop McQuaid would have transferred him, but the parishioners sent a delegation to Rochester, to petition the bishop for their pastor. Bishop McQuaid yielded to the petition.

Courier-Journal

In 1885 the church building was moved from Main Street to its present site on Whig Street and was completely remodeled.

In 1909, Father Madden was transferred to Phelps, by Bishop Thomas F. Hickey. He was succeeded by Father Thomas J. Harrington.

Father Harrington is remembered as a large man with a tart sense of humor. Some likened his sermons to 'hell and brimstone'.

Religious classes were conducted by Father Harrington and children were expected to come prepared. When many were unprepared, Father Harrington would surprise them Sunday morning at Mass by calling them up before the congregation to recite their lessons.

The congregation seems to have shrunk during Father Harrington's time, to about 35 families. It was to stay this way until the 1940s.

Father Harrington is particularly remembered for his charity. Whenever he was aware of a person or family in need whether it be clothes, blankets or food, and regardless of whether they were Catholic or Protestant, he always provided for their needs, often using his own funds.

In November 1920, Father E. Joseph Esser succeeded Father Harrington as pastor.

Father Esser is described by those who remember him as a slender, dignified, learned person. Although not gregarious, like so many of his Irish congregation, the children and members who worked with him found him a very kind, thoughtful and warm person with a good sense of humor.

In 1922 Father Esser organized the Altar Society of St. James.

For the most part the Altar Society consisted of women who lived in the village as transportation was still limited. However, it is remembered that Mrs. Henry McLallen, who lived in the country, always made the meetings. It didn't matter that the men were out in the fields plowing, or immersed in some other farm chore, she would insist that one of the men take her into town for the Altar Society meetings. The men of her family never could refuse her.

On Feb. 1, 1935 Father Esser was transferred to Victor and Father G. Stuart Hogan took up residence at St. James.

Father Hogan is described as a man ahead of his time in ecumenical thought and practice. His various actions and deeds throughout the community endeared him to Trumansburg and one year he was approached by the mayor and asked to serve on the Village Board. The Bishop however, requested him to decline.

Father Hogan showed himself an enthusiastic promoter of the Catholic press. Father Hogan also started a parish lending library in Trumansburg. This library managed to keep about 25 books in constant circulation.

For many years, the choir at St. James consisted of members of one family, Mr. and Mrs.

Henry McLallen and their son, Robert. Mrs. Margaret O'Hara Hollern was organist, and played for the church for over 50 years.

On July 7, 1935 the great flood of Trumansburg occurred. Two persons drowned including Miss Lillian Giroux, a parishioner.

In November 1945 Father Hogan was reassigned as pastor of St. Mary's Church, Geneseo, and Father Francis J. Pegnam came to serve as administrator.

He writes, "I remember a few things about my visit at St. James. I had a difficult time keeping warm for I had led a 'very sheltered life' and did not know too much about furnaces. On the plus side, we had one of the first ecumenical programs. We prepared a Midnight Mass and with the help of the Methodist Choir it was beautiful."

Father Leonard A. Kelly's appointment as pastor of St. James became effective in 1945. He arrived in time to celebrate the Midnight Mass of Christmas.

In 1947 the Altar Society was changed to the Catholic Women's Guild. A Men's Club was begun. The Women's Guild is still a vital part of the parish.

On Jan. 28, 1949, tragedy struck St. James Church. Fire completely destroyed the sanctuary and side walls and roof. Only the steeple and front facade remained. In October work began on the new St. James Church.

The parish congregation grew considerably during this time. On June 29, 1954, Father Kelly was appointed to the pastorate of the Church of the Assumption of Our Lady in Fairport, and Father Francis A. Marks became pastor. The women of the church found he was lacking vestments and thought it would be a worthwhile project to sew some for their new pastor. Many beautiful pieces were made.

On Nov. 3, 1957 Bishop Kearney celebrated the Sunday Mass and preached the sermon marking the centennial of the first church.

Father Marks was succeeded by Father Bernard Hanna in 1960.

Upon his arrival at St. James, even though there was a terrible snowstorm, 170 people managed their way through the drifts to welcome him.

Father Hanna was very fond of young people and under his direction a CYO was started.

Father Lawrence Sansom was pastor of St. James from January 1966 to July 1970. He is a very tall man, towering over six feet. His younger altar boys were always sure to keep one pace ahead of him when serving Holy Communion for fear of being stepped on. He is a very congenial man with a smile for everyone.

In 1967, under the directives of Vatican II, the Parish Council was formed.

Presidents who have served the Parish Council are Joseph Sladek, Thomas Cheney, William Hogan and Thomas Smith.

Gabriel Wertis formed a girl's

choir. Jane Snedeker, Joy Chalone and Carmen Smith were organists.

In June 1970 Father Sansom was appointed to St. Mary's of the Lake, Watkins Glen. He was succeeded by Father Albert V. Ryan.

Father Ryan came to St. James in June 1970. He was ordained in 1951. Mrs. Francis P. Walsh came as housekeeper. Under Father Ryan's direction the religious program was expanded with volunteers serving as principal, and lay helpers.

There are now 153 families in the parish.

St. James Parish has contributed several priests and nuns to

the diocese. These include Father Richard O'Connell, Father Gilbert MacDonald, Sister Mary Patricia Brown, Sister Mary Vincent O'Connell, Sister Nancy Langlois, Sister Margory Leboffe and William Neumann, who is presently studying for the priesthood.

FOR PERFECT
DIAPER SERVICE
Stork
BABY WASH
381-7340

XENO BASKETERIA
Rochester's Largest Basket Display
Cornucopia, Wall Mats, Miniature Baskets for Wall & Holiday Decorations, Straw Flowers, Wall Clocks.
402 WEST COMMERCIAL STREET
East Rochester 381-7200
DAILY 10 to 5 MON., TUES., 'til 9 P.M.

our circle of coverage
Surrounds you with insurance protection designed for your needs and your needs alone.
We'll not only provide you with just the right auto insurance coverage, we'll finance the car too.
Auto financing—another service of our circle of coverage.
JOHN CANEPA AGENCY
insurance
451 COOPER RD. 266-5225

Want A New Coat?
Remember My Tan Coat? Now It's a Lovely Blue
You could have had it dyed any color of my choice... Thanks to Seneca Dyers who did a professional dyeing. Saved my coat and my budget too!
Dyeing is a skill... don't take chances, take it to Seneca Dyers. Bring your suits & dresses also.
Another Specialty... Suede & Leather Garments Cleaned & Re-finished.
SENECA DYERS Inc.
1227 Maple St. at Mt. Read Blvd.
Easy Access From Rt. 490 West
DAILY 8-5, SAT. 8 'TIL 1 **328-1736**

PRODUCED AND BOTTLED BY
Boordy Vineyards
HAVE YOU TRIED THEM?
Premium Table Wines
Alcoholic Content 12% By Volume
Made and Bottled at Penn Yan, New York
Winemakers Exclusively Since 1945

Wednesday, October 11, 1972

Page 14