

Pilgrimage Churches: Holy Trinity, Webster

By Father Robert F. McNamara

"Substitute" Holy Year church of pilgrimage for the Monroe County Northeast region is Holy Trinity, Webster.

Like so many churches of this area that served German-speaking immigrants, Holy Trinity was brought into being by the Redemptorist Fathers of St. Joseph's Church. A good many German Catholics had taken up farming in Webster, Penfield, Ontario and Walworth. Their parish church, St. Joseph's, in Rochester, was ten miles from Webster — an inconvenient distance. By 1855, after a period during which the Redemptorists had been able to provide Mass for them only four times a year, the local Germans started a movement to have a church of

their own. The movement fizzled at that time; but the Fathers of St. Joseph at least agreed to celebrate Mass in Webster more frequently. On May 22, 1859, the 45 families held a meeting at which they decided to construct a church.

The first Holy Trinity Church, a simple Greek Revival frame structure measuring 32 by 55 feet, was dedicated on August 5, 1861, by Father Lawrence Holzer, CSSR, acting in the name of Bishop John Timon of Buffalo (to which diocese Webster then belonged). A parish school was begun in the basement the same year, with one layman as the teaching staff. Up to 1867, Holy Trinity was an out-mission of St. Joseph's Rochester. In 1867 it was given its first resident pastor, Father Anthony Hechinger, a diocesan priest.

In 1877, an extension of 26 feet was built onto the church, to provide better for a growing parish population. In 1901, the original church was replaced by the present building, 44 by 100 feet, at a cost of \$19,000. Architect of the brick Romanesque structure was Joseph Oberlies of Rochester. Bishop Bernard J. McQuaid dedicated it.

After the construction of the church, the parish building program focused on other structures necessary for a growing congregation, particularly school and convent facilities. (By 1961, Holy Trinity, although reduced in territory by the foundation of St. Rita's Church, West Webster, in 1950 still reported 3,100 members, adults and children. Even then 50% of the parishioners were of German descent.)



Life, Liberty and Law



Nancy Murphy

Here's to the children who make this column both possible and necessary, our daughters. They have mastered many household chores, freeing me for research, study, writing and editing. I am grateful. For all the laundry folded. For the ironing. For the vacuuming and dusting and table setting. For feeding the cat and cleaning her box. For combing the dog, making the beds and doing the dishes. For filing reports, answering the phone, marching for life on that cold January afternoon, and working on the paper drive.

Here's to the playtime they have forfeited, the dozens of television programs they have missed. The hours of my time they have been unable to share. Here's to the fishing trips not made and the walks through the leaves not taken. To their amazing self-discipline so very rare in these days of polished egotism, their willingness to sacrifice for others and their gentle good humor and their inspiring emotional balance.

Here's to the girls. Though yet younger than twelve, they have learned through proximity to documentation and research papers some of the sadness and folly of life. They are involved. God bless them. Neither humble nor haughty, neither grown nor small, but somewhere in that healthy inbetween, unknowingly but willingly they have accepted their share of the monumental frustrations of Christ and we hope they have moved closer to Him because of it, and vice versa.

They have shown a natural ability to stand for what they see as right, whatever the cost; they have learned the glory of small victories and the giddiness of major ones. They have, unawares, gained the strength which comes from the loneliness of conviction unbowed. We have no fear for their direction.

Here's to the girls.

SWEET POTATO CANDY

1 or 2 sweet potatoes
(not yams)
Pinch of salt
2 1/2 lbs. powdered sugar
1 tsp. vanilla or rum extract
1 C flaked coconut
1 1/2 C ground nuts
Raisins
2 lbs. Dipping Chocolate

Boil the potatoes until tender. The number of potatoes will depend on size. Usually 2 small ones will do very well. Put through food mill. You will need 1 cup. While still hot, add the salt. Then add the first pound of sugar slowly. The mixture will liquefy at first and you will think you have done something stupid. You haven't. As you continue the mixture will firm. Add the vanilla or rum extract. Mix. Add the remaining sugar. You may need a bit less, or a bit more. The consistency should be such that you can roll small balls of it in your lightly buttered hands. Knead it.

You may if you wish divide the total into equal parts. Add the coconut to one, raisins to another and ground nuts to the third. Or leave the whole thing plain. It's up to you. Form small balls or squares or 'logs' or whatever you, one shape for each flavor. Set these on waxed paper and let them stand for a few hours. If you wish to leave them overnight, place a piece of waxed paper over them. We have made anywhere from 200 to 225 pieces of candy using this recipe. It makes for great and unique gifts.

Chip the chocolate into small pieces. Place them in the top of the double boiler. Don't let a drop of water mix with the chocolate. When melted, check the temperature. It will reach 120 degrees; let it cool to 70° for dipping. There are special tools for the procedure, but we have always used the fingers. Simply dip each piece, cover it thoroughly, and set it down on a piece of waxed paper. As you lift your fingers from the candy, move them circularly, forming a swirl on the top of the piece of candy.

(If the chocolate cools too much and becomes stubborn to handle, simply place it over the boiling water briefly to warm it.)

Let them set about 1/2 hour. They will be firm and delicious.

Candy tastes like the fine old fashioned creams. There is nary a child who doesn't gobble it up at every opportunity. But it will keep well if you put it in a tight box in a cool place. Do not refrigerate unless you wish to keep them several weeks. Then place in freezer. Let them thaw out at room temperature before opening.

Happy Thanksgiving.

OVER THE TOP

Apalachin — At the St. Margaret Mary Parish Council meeting Nov. 11, President Ronald Jones reported that the recent Hall Campaign raised \$96,000. The goal for the new structure was \$80,000. Father Elmer Schmidt, pastor, said, "This outstanding success will help absorb the rising building costs and furnish the hall and classrooms."

Apparently the only notable changes in the parish church were the installation in 1911 of electricity; and in 1949 of a Tellers pipe organ to replace the 90-year-old English-built organ bought third-hand in 1903. By the late 1960's, however, the capacity for the building (500) was inadequate to the demands of

suburban expansion. Father Raymond C. Heisel, the current pastor, carried through a program of enlargement completed in 1969. The architects, Ribson and Roberts of Rochester, added two wings to the original structure, at the same time accommodating the sanctuary to the revised liturgy.

Pilgrims to Holy Trinity will therefore be visiting an enlarged and updated church built in the first year of the twentieth century. It is, in a sense, a monument to the contribution made by sturdy German farmers to Monroe and Ontario Counties, as well as to Catholicism in the whole Diocese of Rochester.

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