

Saint Bridget's Notes 100 Years for Church

East Bloomfield — While celebrating the 100th anniversary of their church dedication, parishioners of St. Bridget's noted that Catholicism in the area had begun three centuries earlier with the advent of dauntless French Jesuits.

The missionaries were Fathers Chaumonot and Fremin, who erected a chapel near here and preached to the Indians.

The centennial booklet published last week by the parish says "The roots of the history and heritage of our Catholic Faith are buried deep in the heroic efforts and sufferings of these early 17th Century missionaries. The second sowing of the seed of the Faith which marks the beginning proper of St. Bridget's Parish in 1852 owes, we may feel sure, some of its subsequent rich harvest to those early missionaries."

At the time of the "second

sowing" feelings of anti-Catholicism and nationalism ran high among many Americans. When Irish Catholic laborers moved into the area to work on the railroad, they set themselves up in a shanty town near the East Bloomfield community.

Fearful that the new comers would settle among them permanently, some among the townsfolk took it into their heads to burn down the shanty town, and drive the immigrants away.

Twice, mobs were dissuaded only with great difficulty and on a third occasion, the mob was actually bent on its mission only to be turned back at the last moment by one of their own number, Joe Steele, who, brandishing a shotgun, threatened to shoot anyone who would lay a torch to an Irish house.

By 1850, apparently 16 Catholic families had settled permanently in East Bloomfield. They had

been served for a few years previously by Fathers Bernard and William O'Reilly, brothers, and Father William Quigley.

In that year Father Edmund O'Connor of St. Mary's Church in Canandaigua visited the community several times and it was he who organized the parish building, by 1852, a small wood frame church on the present Michigan Street.

Father O'Connor served until 1856, when Bishop John Timon appointed Father Nicholas Byrne to the post of pastor. Father Byrne was also named to serve the communities of Victor, West Bloomfield, Honeoye Flats and East Mendon.

Father Byrne's one-year pastorate saw the enlargement of the church building.

Father Patrick Lee was pastor from 1857 to 1861, to be succeeded by Father William Hughes, whose pastorate extended over 30 years.

During his time, the Diocese of Rochester was formed and Bishop Bernard J. McQuaid was named its shepherd. Father Hughes purchased several acres for a parish cemetery and built a new church, the present structure, which was dedicated by Bishop McQuaid on June 13, 1875.

Father Hughes died at the age of 77 in 1891. He is buried in the cemetery with his parishioners.

For the next five years the parish was served by the pastor of St. Patrick's in Victor, Father James J. Donnelly.

Father Malachy J. Garvey, the first alumnus of St. Bernard's Seminary to be ordained a priest, was named pastor of the parish in 1896.

During his two years with the community, Father Garvey installed a steel ceiling in the church and built the rectory which stands today.

In 1898 Father Patrick Neville was appointed pastor, and his 33-year tenure is the longest of any. He was responsible for embellishing the walks and grounds of the church property, for constructing a barn, redecorating the church and installing a new heating system.

Father Neville retired from active duty in 1934, after serving for three years as pastor of St. Rose in Lima.

Named to succeed him was Father George W. Doud, under whose direction the church was redecorated, the rectory remodelled, and the grounds of the cemetery landscaped.

It also fell to Father Doud to prepare for the centenary of the foundation of the parish in 1950. He too is buried among his parishioners in the St. Bridget cemetery.

The present pastor is Father Elmer A. McNamara, for nearly 30 years a professor of Sacred Scripture and other subjects at St. Bernard's Seminary, prior to his appointment to the parish.

Since 1967 Father McNamara has overseen the installation of new cement walks, the resurfacing of the parking lot, the redecoration of the Church and the installation of new pews.

Father McNamara, in the centennial booklet singled out the volunteer services of Eugene Crowley for his special gratitude. Crowley's extensive work in the refurbishing program was done without remuneration.

Religious Education Workshops Planned

Two workshops will be offered in November by the Division of Religious Education as an in-service to those working in Religious Education.

The workshop will be held at Our Lady of Mercy High School, 1437 Blossom Road, Rochester, starting at 9:30 a.m. and ending with a Eucharistic Liturgy at 3 p.m. The date is Nov. 1 the cost will be \$5, lunch included.

Father James DiGiacomo, S.J., author of such books as, "We Weren't Never Their Age," and the Winston Press, "Conscious and Concern Series" will be keynote speaker at the Second Annual Theology Teachers In-service Day. The two main addresses will deal with the problems of teaching morality and content to today's high school youth.

The second workshop will deal with the area of family education. Many parishes have started

family education to complement their existing religious education programs.

Jean Marie Heisberger, consultant for Paulist Press will be in Victor, N.Y. at the St. Patrick's School of Religion, 200 High Street, on Sat., November 8, from 10 to 3 p.m. to explain the theory behind family education programs as well as techniques for using Paulist's material.

Complementing the program will be Mary Lu Walker, vocalist and composer.

The Division of Religious Education extends an open invitation to the people of the Diocese for both of these workshops. To register or for further information on either of those excellent opportunities for personal and professional growth please contact, Miss Mary Travaglini, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624, (716) 328-3210.


relieve, or even acknowledge, and the suffering it has brought into the world? Just to focus on the last half-century, where was the church when Fascism and Nazism were on the rise in Europe? Where was it when the Jews were being rounded up and shipped to oblivion in cattle-cars? Where was its response to the conscientious objector in America who invoked the very principles he had learned from the church in refusing to kill or serve the mission of killing? And what did it say to the impoverished nations of Latin America in their desperate need to limit the births of new millions into squalor, disease and a relentless struggle for simple survival?"

Another passage which prompted suppression of the book: "The rigidity of the church on sexual morality in general and on contraception, abortion and divorce in particular may have done more to discredit its moral authority than any other factor. Whatever the reason (possibly the bestial and brutal excesses of the late Roman Empire), the founders and formulators of the Christian moral code laid a heavy legacy, strangely and sadly skewed, on future Christian generations. Some of those generations took it less seriously than others, but the ideal and its rhetoric remained, and therefore the hypocrisy or repression imposed by them on untold millions. And the guilt and the shame. And the children, not wanted and not cared for."

And there are other incisive questions and comments. But you'll never have the chance to read them. The book is banned, suppressed, buried, killed.

Pope John, where are you now that we-so much need you?

TOWARD TOMORROW



Fr. Henry Atwell

One of the hopes born during the Vatican Council ten years ago was that of an open church. Pope John earlier had coined the phrase about "opening the windows." Few are still open.

One window recently slammed shut is a book suppressed by the American bishops because, they said, the book is "inimical" to their teachings.

The book titled "A Question of Values" was written by William Maher for the National Council of Catholic Laity, a rather ineffectual subdivision of the United States Catholic Conference headquartered in Washington.

Maher admits in the book's introduction that he has written "in a deliberately provocative style." The bishops, however, demanded that the Laity Council apologize for its publication and withdraw it from circulation. They denied the Laity Council even the chance to explain the book's purpose.


One passage which particularly irked the bishops was Maher's questions: "What about the suffering the church has failed to



'Noodle Priest' Honored

Msgr. John Romaniello, MM, a veteran Maryknoll missionary and a long-time official of Catholic Relief Services, has been given the first Dr. Paul Dudley White International Bicentennial Humanitarian Award for his work among the poor in Hong Kong and Mississippi. The award, named after the late heart specialist, was presented during the annual Dr. Paul Dudley White medical seminar in Boston. Msgr. Romaniello, who was born in Italy but reared from early childhood in New Rochelle, N.Y., became known as "The Noodle Priest" in Hong Kong during the 1950s and 60s when he set up noodle factories to produce a new food source to feed the thousands of Chinese refugees who poured into Hong Kong from across the Chinese border. During the early 1970s, Msgr. Romaniello lent his know-how in noodles to help provide a high protein feeding program for children in Bolivar County, Miss. (RNS)

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