

125 Years for Scottsville Church

Scottsville — When the people of St. Mary's of the Assumption gather here next Tuesday, Aug. 15, to celebrate their church's patronal feast, they also will be observing the 125th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone for their church, by Bishop John Timon, on Aug. 15, 1853.

The event will be marked by a concelebrated Mass at 6 p.m. followed by a parish party at Mapledale Party House. Part of that celebration will be the publication of *For Everything There Is a Season*, an account, spanning 137 years, of the Catholic community in Scottsville, by Glenn J. Kist, an historian and a parishioner. Kist's book attempts to describe the development of the parish "in the context of both the secular and Church communities within which it existed and exists."

In manuscript form Kist's text runs to more than 100 pages, and is crammed with observations from many sources; yet, he laments that there are "some areas which are not touched, such as the assimilation of the Italian and Polish immigrants into the parish in the early twentieth century. There are other areas I would have liked to have treated more thoroughly, such as the parish school."

Kist places the start of the actual development of the parish community in late December or early January 1840-41, when the pastor of St. Patrick's Church, Father Bernard O'Reilly, became ill while on a sick call, and stopped in the Scottsville home of Patrick Rafferty, one of a group of Irish immigrants who settled in the area in the 1830s and 40s.

During his stay at the Rafferty home, Kist writes, Father O'Reilly (who was later to become a bishop), inquired whether a place was available in the area to celebrate Mass.

A few weeks later the priest returned to Scottsville to say that Mass in a room rented by Rafferty. Also at that time, an organizing meeting was held among the men of the parish, during which was discussed the feasibility of having Mass celebrated regularly. The Methodists and Presbyterians had, 20 years prior, begun regular religious observances in the area.

Father O'Reilly left the Scottsville Mass duties to his assistant, Father Mark Murphy. He was succeeded, in the fall of 1842 by one Father French, who was in turn succeeded by one Father Carroll.

On Father Carroll's departure, Kist writes, men of the parish requested Bishop John J. Hughes of New York to assign a permanent pastor, but the Bishop was unable to do so. Nevertheless, the men decided to purchase a tract of land, in 1843, which could be used as a site for a future church.

Four years later, Pope Pius IX created the Diocese of Buffalo, under whose jurisdiction Scottsville fell. The first bishop was John Timon.

The following year, Bishop Timon assigned Father E. O'Connor as the community's first resident pastor. But a few months later he was succeeded by Father Michael Walsh. During his pastorate he purchased land for what is now known as the "old cemetery."

Father James McGlew was named pastor in 1852, and his four-year tenure was "particularly significant for the development of the parish," Kist writes.

It was during this time that the bishop laid the cornerstone of the church, a building which took almost three years to make ready for the celebration of Mass.

Father McGlew was succeeded in 1856 by Father Richard Story, and in 1858 by Father Joseph V. O'Donohoe, who would serve 10 years.

It was during Father O'Donohoe's pastorate that the church was completed and dedicated.

Two days after the dedication, Abraham Lincoln was elected president, on Nov. 6, 1860, and between that day and the day of his inauguration, seven states in the deep south seceded from the Union. A call the following year to establish an Irish Company from the Scottsville area, embroiled the pastor in a controversy.

It seems that Capt. Joseph Deverell had asked Father O'Donohoe to use the church for a war meeting, and if that were not possible, for the priest to encourage volunteers from the pulpit at Sunday Mass. The latter request drew a sharp rebuke: "... as a Priest, I could not for a moment forget my sacred calling, and, instead of peace, preach war." The earlier request, to hold the war meeting at the church, however, was amenable to the pastor. Nevertheless, the rumor flew that the priest was obstructing enlistments. That rumor persisted for some time, even in the face of publicly printed accounts of the correspondence between Father O'Donohoe and Capt. Deverell.

In 1868, the Diocese of Rochester was founded, and Bishop Bernard J. McQuaid was named to head it. A few months later Father O'Donohoe was succeeded in the pastorate by Father M. J. Laughlin, who in turn was followed by Father Thomas A. Mahar. Two years later the parish was incorporated under the laws of the state, the corporation president being the bishop; the first lay trustees, James McPhillips and Peter Guinan.

Also, between the founding of the diocese and 1874, six priests held the pastorate. In addition to the two above named, were Fathers E. J. McDonald, Lewis I. Miller, J. J. Buckley and M. M. Meagher.

The remainder of the decade saw Fathers M. T. Madden, and Thomas L. Rossiter as pastor. Father Rossiter was able to slightly improve the financial condition of the parish, Kist writes.

But it remained for the seven-year pastorate of Father George J. Eisler to see major reductions in the parish's indebtedness. In addition to appearing as a splendid organizer and administrator, the priest, as one looks at the log of spiritual activities in the parish, seems also to have been a superior pastor as well.

Father Eisler was succeeded by Father Augustine M. O'Neill. During his year and a half stay, the debt on the church property was further reduced, to \$500.

For the next 82 years only three men occupied the position of pastor, Kist notes. They are Fathers Louis A. Lambert (1896-1910), Patrick J. McArdle (1910-1941), and Edward H. Hartmann (1941-1973).

Kist writes, "Without doubt, Father Lambert was the most famous of the pastors to serve St. Mary's. His reputation was virtually world-wide. In addition, he was probably one of the best loved pastors. Father Lambert's fame, or at times notoriety, came from two sources: his literary and journalistic work, and his enduring controversy with Bishop McQuaid."

That controversy started when Father Lambert, then pastor at Waterloo, wrote articles critical of the Bishop of Ogdensburg, and about the Rochester diocesan vicar general and the rector of the cathedral.

Father Lambert also began to publicly champion a diocesan priest the Bishop had disciplined. Coteries formed. In 1883 he tackled the bishop himself, calling him a "Tartuffe," a religious hypocrite.

The bishop took steps; he limited the pastor's priestly duties. Four times Father Lambert appealed to Rome; and, on the last appeal, a compromise was reached, a compromise which saw Father Lambert as pastor at St. Mary's. But that wasn't the end of it. When a vacancy appeared on the state Board of Regents, the bishop ran for the office. After some



Exterior of St. Mary's in photo taken before 1910.

political flustering, Father Lambert supported the bishop's opponent, who won the election. But the icing on the cake was delivered when Father Lambert publicly called Bishop McQuaid a stinking skunk. It was not until the bishop was on his death bed that the two were reconciled.

Father Lambert died less than two years later.

He was followed by Father Patrick J. McArdle, who found, in his own words, "the parish financially and spiritually dilapidated."

During his pastorate he strove to alleviate both conditions. He started holding missions and began a program of renovating, building, and beautifying the church and its properties. Two decades of such activity suddenly came to a halt with the Great Depression.

For the decade that followed, the pastor returned all or part of his yearly salary of \$1,500 to the parish. The priest died on Oct. 16, 1941.

On Nov. 4 of that year Father Edward H. Hartmann, now pastor emeritus, was named pastor. He came at a time when the economy was finally improving, Kist writes. Father Hartmann was thus able to substantially reduce the indebtedness of the parish and to begin needed repairs on the plant.

Over the years of his pastorate, Father Hartmann has seen a spurt in the growth of the community. The population, for the first half of the century had remained relatively stable. To accommodate the growing number of children that were attending the released time catechism classes, Kist notes, Father Hartmann began construction of a multi-purpose building which would serve as a catechetical center and as a parish hall. This past summer the building, which was completed in 1962, was dedicated in his name.

It also happened in Father Hartmann's tenure, that the winds of change began to sweep the Church. And, as changes were mandated, "Father Hartmann saw to it that they were quickly introduced at St. Mary's," Kist writes.

Father Hartmann retired in 1973. His was the longest pastorate in the history of the community. Father Hartmann continued to live among and work for the people he so loved until 1977, when illness demanded his hospitalization. He is now a resident at the Heritage, but visits St. Mary's for special occasions.

In the year of his retirement, Father Hartmann turned over a debt-free parish to Msgr. Gerard C. Krieg. Msgr. Krieg immediately began construction on an addition to the rectory to provide living-quarters for the pastor emeritus, office and library space and classrooms.

During Msgr. Krieg's pastorate the Parish Council has taken an active role in all parish matters.

All in the Family

By Sarah Child

It Is Summer

It is summer. I know it is not because of the temperature, the calendar or other conventional signs.

It is summer because at this moment there are three eight-year olds practicing disco dances in the living room in preparation for a backyard concert.

It is summer because the 13-year-old is on her way to the local ice cream emporium with four others of her sex.

It is summer because the 10-year-old has already been home twice from the school playground — the first time to tell me he hit four bullseyes in target practice and to have his second breakfast and the second time to borrow the bicycle pump and get in an emergency snack before lunchtime.

And if the above were not sufficient evidence that school is indeed out and

chaos is upon us then I offer the following:

—The dog taking her cue from the living room choreographers forgets herself and jumps up on the white couch in a burst of community participation.

—The head of the house, coffee cup in hand, makes his morning tour of the garden, disdainful of heavy dew, and coming back to report that the cukes are now one inch long and the neighboring zucchini a full foot each.


—Our neighbor with whom we've had a reciprocal food arrangement for the last five years borrows a cup of sugar (for Koolaid) and we retaliate with a request for

"enough peanut butter to make two sandwiches."

—The supermarkets take turns selling popular ice cream at 99 cents a half gallon and the kids throw the bread out of the freezer to make room for diverse, exotically labeled varieties.

—The particularly cantankerous blue jay that inhabits the patch of woods diverts himself by trying to knock the squirrel off the highwire — and almost makes it.

—And, the lady of the house who has thrived on noise for the past 13 years again discovers that just because the TV, the record player and a bunch of monopoly players are turned on at the same time, there's no reason to discontinue her mid-afternoon nap.



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

