

Holy Trinity celebrates 125 years of growth, change

By Richard A. Kiley

As all of America celebrates the 100th birthday of the Statue of Liberty, Webster residents are commemorating an even older edifice.

Holy Trinity Church, located at 1460 Ridge Road in Webster, is celebrating its 125th anniversary with year-long ceremonies and activities.

In 1861, when the cornerstone of the church was laid, the United States was about to become engrossed in the Civil War, and Abraham Lincoln was being inaugurated.

And although both the present church's structure and parishioners have changed tremendously, the church itself remains a focal point for the Webster community.

"Like the French say, 'the more things change, the more they stay the same.' For 125 years, the people here have demonstrated and lived the faith," said Father William M. Hart, pastor. "The people are essentially centered around the sacraments. The church is the center of life here."

Father Hart, who replaced Father Raymond Hejssel as pastor back in December, 1969, ranks participation among parishioners as Holy Trinity's most easily seen change in its 125 years.

"The participation is more structured now. We have parish councils now and different groups meeting within the parish," Father Hart said. "Participation was there before; it's just more structured now."

The parish was founded on May 22, 1859, when the first members of the congregation celebrated a Mass in the house of Ignatius Eichorn.

Webster area residents witnessed the construction of the current church structure in the latter half of 1901, and saw a two-story convent constructed in 1923. The convent was to become the living quarters of Sisters of St. Joseph of Rochester for 36 years.

More recently, the parish expanded the church with the addition of two wings. The structure now seats 750 people. Current plans include the construction of a shrine on the east side of the church.

The church's school, which has undergone a series of changes during the past 60 years, has kept up with the times by installing a computer system.

The church was quick to follow suit with a computer, allowing it to speed up the usually time-consuming jobs related to compiling the parish census and financial accounts.

"We hope now with the computer handling the census as well as bookkeeping, things will be better than before," Father Hart said.

Holy Trinity began its anniversary celebration back on May 25 with a Mass and a reception. Since then there has been a father son communion breakfast, a parish lawn social highlighted by a Mass celebrated by Bishop Matthew H. Clark, and a chicken barbecue.

Father Hart believes the anniversary celebration has opened the eyes of parishioners who have not been very involved in parish activities.

"I think people were surprised by the number of eucharistic ministers, deacons, deacons' wives, and a lot of people involved in different things when the processions came into the church on both occasions," Father Hart said. "I'd say there were about 35 to 40 people, each representing something different."



Elvira Miller, a Holy Trinity parishioner since 1899, greets Bishop Matthew H. Clark.

Jeff Goulding/Courier-Journal

On July 27, the parish will hold an old-fashioned ice cream social in the parish hall after the 12:15 p.m. Mass to which all past members of the Holy Trinity St. Monica's Society will be invited.

All parish catechists will be honored on September 21, and current catechists will renew their commissions at 8:30 a.m. Mass. A reception will follow. At 2 p.m., the traditional blessing of the graves ceremony will be held. All will gather outside the church and pray the rosary as they proceed to the graveyard.

A Living Rosary will be prayed in the church at 7:30 p.m., and the Legion of Mary plans a coffee hour immediately following the rosary on October 1.

A "Steak Roast" is scheduled for October 4, with a dance following the dinner. On October 5, immediately following the 12:15 p.m. Mass, Forty Hours of Devotion will begin.

An anointing of the sick will be held on November 2 in the church at 3 p.m.

Veteran's Day, November 9, will be commemorated at the 8:30 a.m. Mass, which will be followed by a ceremony at the flag pole in front of the parish school.

The next edition of the Holy Trinity parish cookbook should be available by November 25.


The annual Holy Trinity ham and turkey social is scheduled for December 5 at 7:30 p.m. in the parish hall.



Brendan and Kim Hanna comfort their seven-week-old daughter Maura during a Mass celebrating Holy Trinity Parish's 125th anniversary.

HOUSE OF GUITARS

We received 4 correct entries identifying Christopher Cross as the 1980's star who got his start as a roadie for the Doobie Brothers
The winner was Patty Melea from RIT



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This weeks question:
 Since 1974, this pop-rock duo has had a string of hits including "Sara Smile." Who are they?

A: _____

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 If yours is the winning entry, you will be mailed a coupon for a free album or tape of your choice redeemable at the House of Guitars, 645 Titus Ave.
 All entries must be received within seven days of this papers issue date. Winning names and answers will be printed the week following each drawing.


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