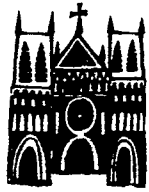


FEATURE

Three Steuben County churches are small, sturdy

Parish Profile

St. Catherine of Siena, Addison;
St. Joseph, Campbell
St. Stanislaus, Bradford



By Mike Latona
Staff writer

Three parishes in Steuben County are facing the possibility of a name change. Well, sort of.

Traditionally, Father Gerald T. O'Connor noted, the Catholic churches in Addison, Bradford and Campbell have been tagged the "ABC" churches.

However, he pointed out, these churches are currently served by priests named O'Connor and Kalafsky — so he prefers calling them the "OK" parishes.

Father Andrew J. Kalafsky, a retired diocesan priest, assists in serving the parishes.

Father O'Connor is in his 15th year as pastor at St. Joseph's Church in Campbell and St. Stanislaus Church in Bradford. He has also overseen St. Catherine of Siena Church in Addison for the past five years.

Based on his lengthy tenure in eastern Steuben County, Father O'Connor obviously finds something "OK" about serving these diminutive communities.

"As a small parish, everybody can get to know each other. All the parishioners I can call by name," Father O'Connor said.

The pastor also lauds each church for its constant willingness to pitch in when a priest is not available. For instance, he said, he rarely finds it necessary to prompt anyone to begin a maintenance project.

"The people have had to take over a lot of things the priest would have taken care of in years gone by," he said.

Parish membership totals 192 families at St. Stanislaus, 178 at St. Joseph's and 217 at St. Catherine's. With these statistics, Father O'Connor joked that his area probably isn't a target of the diocesan Synod's call to develop small Christian communities.

"I don't think that's necessary here, because we already have them," he remarked.

Though the churches are not considered a cluster, Father O'Connor is the only full-time priest serving the three parishes.

This system is nothing new at St. Joseph's and St. Stanislaus, which have shared common pastors since 1926. St. Joseph's was founded in 1871, and St. Stanislaus was established in 1923.

Campbell, set near the intersection of Routes 390 and 17, is conveniently located for St. Joseph's parishioners who com-



Matthew Scott/Staff photographer

From left, Myrna Brown and her daughter Pam choose from a table full of desserts as parishioners Alice Hargrave and Rose Bocek continue the distribution of pies at the Harvest Supper held at St. Stanislaus Church, Bradford, on Sept. 14.

SNAPSHOTS



St. Catherine of Siena Church
49 Maple Street,
Addison
607/359-2115
Ministerial staff:
Pastor: Father Gerald
T. O'Connor

Religious education coordinator:
Nancy McCarthy
Parish council chairperson:
Mary Hickey



St. Stanislaus Church
Main Street, Bradford
607/583-4920
Ministerial staff:
Pastor: Father Gerald
T. O'Connor
In residence: Father
Andrew J. Kalafsky



St. Joseph Church
Main Street,
Campbell
607/527-3239
Ministerial staff:
Pastor:
Father Gerald T.
O'Connor

Religious education coordinator:
Jan Lyons
Parish council chairperson:
Kathy Hagenbuch

Religious education coordinator:
Roseanne Murray
Parish council chairperson:
Michael Bocek

mute to jobs in nearby Corning. However, Rose Fox pointed out, the parish boundaries also include a large farming community.

"It's not unusual when the crops are being harvested that you'll see them on the back table of the church entrance, with signs saying 'Help yourself,'" remarked Fox, a 15-year parishioner at St. Joseph's.

Fox added that St. Joseph's gets a fair amount of new families each year — all of whom are quickly accepted by the parish community.

"Some people have been here many generations, but they make you feel very welcome," Fox said.

In Bradford, St. Stanislaus Church was founded by immigrants from eastern Europe who had purchased farms in the area. Michael Bocek, a St. Stanislaus parishioner for more than six decades, noted that most of the Masses were said in Polish during those early years.

Though the St. Stanislaus parish has retained most of its farming roots, Bocek said that church attendance is bolstered by part-time residents who own or rent nearby lakefront properties.

"We get a real bumper crop (at Masses) in the summer," said Bocek, who currently serves as parish council chairperson.

St. Catherine's in Addison owns the lengthiest history among the three churches. Established in 1854, the parish's founding families consisted of Irish immigrants. Today, St. Catherine's has a blend of parishioners similar to that of St. Joseph's in Campbell, due to Addison's proximity to major highways.

Five years ago, the parish began an adjustment process when it found itself without a full-time priest for the first time ever. The situation prompted a necessary increase in lay involvement, said religious-education coordinator Nancy McCarthy.

"Some are still fighting the change, but others are realizing that if we're going to have a church, we're going to have to do it ourselves. We're willing to take on these jobs because we want our church," stated McCarthy, whose husband, Bill, is a third-generation parishioner at St. Catherine's.

For the most part, Father O'Connor said, geographical factors inhibit joint efforts among the St. Joseph's, St. Stanislaus and St. Catherine's communities. St. Joseph's has the most central location, but is still more than a 10-mile drive from each of the other two churches.

"The three churches have their own identity and personality," Father O'Connor said.

However, the parishes will come together the weekend when Bishop Matthew H. Clark is scheduled to preside over a confirmation ceremony for youths from all three churches. The liturgy will take place Oct. 13 at St. Catherine's.

Father O'Connor remarked that each church has a solid enough support system to ensure long-term survival.

"The parishes are better off financially, probably, than most of the other parishes in the diocese," he stated.

Coming Attractions from the Catholic Courier



Religious Vocations

Publication Date: October 17th
Advertising Deadline: Oct. 3rd

This supplement will address aspects of vocations in today's church — from the motivations of men studying for the priesthood to the efforts of women religious mapping the future of religious life; from the dwindling vocations statistics in the United States to the numbers entering religious life abroad.

Each week the Catholic Courier is delivered to more than 50,000 homes throughout the 12-county Diocese of Rochester. When you advertise in the Courier, you will introduce your organization to more than 85,000 readers.

For more information or to place your ad, speak with an account executive by calling the Courier's advertising department at 716-328-4340.



Grief & Bereavement

Publication Date: November 7th
Advertising Deadline: Oct. 24th

Our Grief & Bereavement supplement will offer readers information on grief and the grieving process. Stories may address the traditions ethnic communities draw upon at times of loss; the role parishes play as comforter of the bereaved; church guidance on end-of-life choices; and the growth of hospice care.

Catholic Courier

Weekly newspaper of the Rochester Diocese
1150 Buffalo Road ■ Rochester, NY 14624
Phone 716-328-4340 ■ Fax: 716-328-8640



Best Wishes to St. Stanislaus,
St. Joseph, and St. Catherine of
Siena Parishes from the
following area businesses...

Flint Funeral Home
10 Wall Street • Addison
(607) 359-2286

Jamison's Texaco & Stonehouse Cafe
8488 Main Street • Campbell
(607) 527-3207