

# DIOCESAN NEWS

## Parishioners plan grand sesquicentennial events

By Kathleen Schwar  
Assistant editor

It's not easy to sing, but "Happy Sesquicentennial to us" is the phrase parishioners of St. Bridget's-St. Joseph's in East Bloomfield, Ontario County, plan to render June 17. That will come after they cut the hugest birthday cake ever seen by many — made by piecing together smaller cakes contributed by families.

Then the fireworks will begin. Seriously. "It just seemed like the best way to say, 'Here we are,'" remarked Deacon Claude Lester, pastoral associate.

The celebration, marking 150 years since 19 families came together to form St. Bridget's, is scheduled over two weekends, June 10-11 and 17-18.

Today St. Bridget-St. Joseph has not quite 300 registered families. St. Joseph's had been established six years after St. Bridget's, as a mission of its sister church. The two merged in 1990. By that time St. Joseph's building needed major repairs, and only 20-some households were said to be regularly supporting the parish. Activities had become centered more and more at St. Bridget's. In fact a single parish pastoral council was serving both parishes when it was decided to close St. Joseph's.

St. Joseph's Church became the site of the West Bloomfield Historical Society, which will help kick off the sesquicentennial celebration by hosting an open house "for nostalgia's sake," Deacon Lester noted. The open house will run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mass will be celebrated at St. Bridget's at 5 p.m., and a holy hour observed from 8-9 p.m.

On June 11 the Catholic Daughters will recognize graduating seniors and their families with a breakfast after the 8 a.m. Mass. After the 10:15 a.m. Mass, a quilt parishioners made to represent each family will be unveiled. And it wouldn't be a St. Bridget-St. Joseph gathering without homemade pies. They will be judged after Mass by "the most discriminating of pie-eaters in Bloomfield," according to parish information. Meanwhile parishioners will be able to view "The Last 150 Years" display in the hall.

From 4-5 p.m. on June 11, the Madrigalia chamber-singing group will present a

sacred music concert, preceding a farewell reception for Father Richard Beligotti, priest administrator, who is being reassigned.

Noting that June 11 will be Pentecost, "the coming of the Spirit," Father Beligotti said, he felt it especially appropriate for a special religious gathering. He arranged for the concert, explaining, "I wanted it to be an experience of faith, with hymns of faith, and experience of church music at its best, tradition at its best. ... The concert will be a potpourri of the liturgical year, the way we come to know God, the way we come to know our faith, live it and experience it."

The parish has celebrated the liturgical year 150 times through its history, he also noted, from its earliest days.

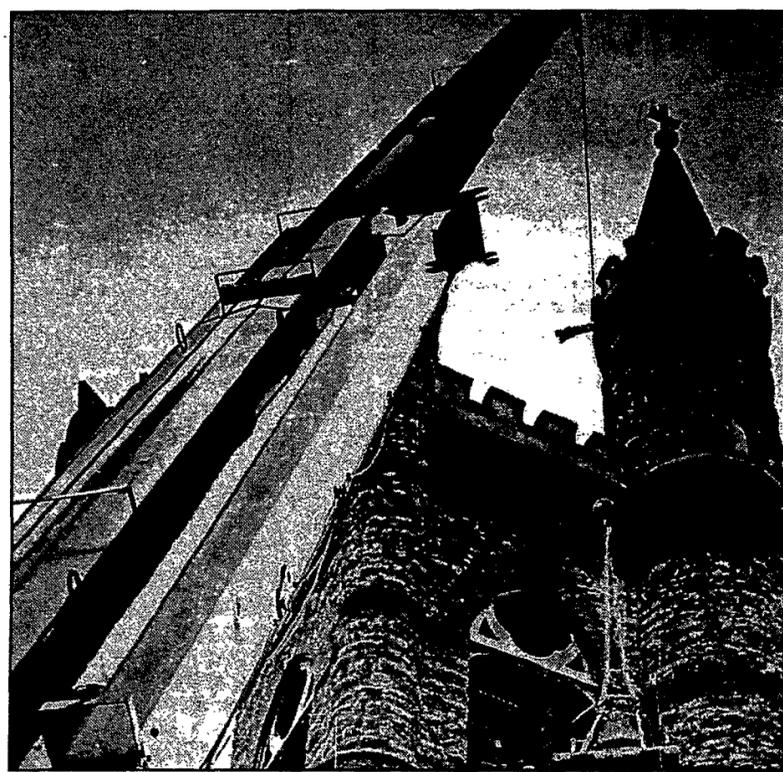
Among its early founders were thought to be Irish immigrants drawn to work in the 1840s on the "Peanut Line," a small railway once known as the Canandaigua and Niagara Falls Railroad and eventually absorbed by the New York Central system. In 1850 Father Edmund O'Connor of the newly established St. Mary's Parish to the east in Canandaigua organized St. Bridget's. The East Bloomfield parish's first church was opened in 1852, and a new church was dedicated in 1875.

Today's parishioners will begin "part two" of their sesquicentennial celebration June 17 with prayer in the cemetery at 9 a.m. and a breakfast. A teen singing group will lead the prayer. Then parishioners will take part in a community service project of landscaping a senior-citizen housing development in East Bloomfield. Mass will be celebrated at 5 p.m.

From there begins a parish party at 6 p.m. including a pig roast and other food, entertainment and children's games. The cake, of undetermined size at this point, will be served at 8 p.m., and fireworks will begin at 10 p.m.

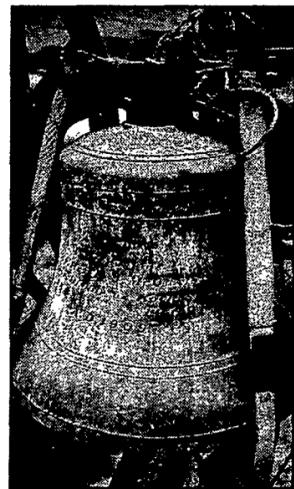
On June 18 the parish begins its new Mass schedule, with one Jubilee Mass at 9:30 a.m. Sunday. Father John Philipps, former pastor, was invited back from Fairport's St. John of Rochester to preside.

The celebration doesn't even end that day. Parishioners plan to put together a time capsule to bury later in the year, complete with an updated pictorial directory.



## 'McQuaid' bell relocated

A 1,200-pound bronze bell was moved from the old Chapel of the Divine Compassion at the State of New York Epileptic Asylum, Sonyea, to Holy Sepulchre Cemetery May 16 and installed in the tower. The diocese once owned the Sonyea chapel but had given it to the state. The bell had been installed around 1909. Bob Vogt, Holy Sepulchre's former director, arranged for the cemetery to pay to have the bell moved. The inscription reads "A.M.D.G. in memory of Rt. Rev. B. J. McQuaid, First Bishop of Rochester, 1868 - 1909." A.M.D.G. stands for the Latin equivalent of "To the Greater Glory of God." It was made by Meneely Bell Co., West Troy, N.Y.



Photos by Bob Vogt

## Ladies of Charity note 60th year

Bishop Matthew H. Clark was scheduled to preside at the 60th anniversary Mass for the Ladies of Charity of Chemung County, June 7 at St. Peter and Paul Church, Elmira.

The Chemung chapter is part of a national and international association founded in France by St. Vincent de Paul in 1617. According to Bernice Pesesky, president of the Chemung chapter, the Ladies of Charity are the oldest lay organization in the world and are "dedicated to helping the underserved."

Members of the Chemung chapter perform such volunteer services as staffing a community kitchen and helping at St. Joseph's Hospital, the Chemung County Nursing Facility, Elmira Correctional Facility and area churches. The Ladies of Charity also raise funds for the Samaritan Center, Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier, a housing coalition, mission efforts, African nuns studying in Rochester, and the Dominican Monastery in Elmira.

The organization is open to both Catholics and non-Catholics.

## Long pastorates diminish

While some longtime pastors are busy packing up for new assignments this month, others are staying put.

As this week's cover story points out, diocesan policy begun in 1986 permits a maximum of two 6-year terms. However, priests who were already in pastorates prior to that time were grandfathered in, having the option of staying beyond 12 years.

Although the number is dwindling, several diocesan priests began their current pastorates prior to 1986. They are:

**Father John Steger**, at St. Jude's, Gates, since 1968;

**Father Frederick Bush**, Holy Spirit, Penfield/Webster, 1971;

**Father John O'Connor**, Our Lady of Lourdes, Brighton, 1980;

**Father Gerald O'Connor**, St. Joseph's, Campbell/St. Stanislaus, Bradford, 1982;

**Father Thomas Wheeland**, Holy Cross, Rochester, 1982;

**Father William Gordinier**, St. Mary's, Geneseo, 1982;

**Father Gerald Appleby**, Church of the Transfiguration, Pittsford, 1983;

**Father Richard Brickler**, St. Boniface, Rochester, 1983;

**Father Frank Falletta**, St. Lawrence, Greece, 1984;

**Father Thomas Erdle**, St. Mark's, Greece, 1985;

**Father Robert Kreckel**, St. Mary of the Lake, Ontario, 1985;

**Father Neil Miller**, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Rochester, 1985;

**Father Raymond Fleming**, pastor, Emmanuel Church of the Deaf, Rochester, 1985.

In addition, all of this year's parish priest retirees have served lengthy pastorates:

**Father Joseph D'Aurizio**, 23 years, St. John the Evangelist, Greece;

**Father Walter Cushing**, 20 years, St. Cecilia's, Irondequoit;

**Father Thomas Statt**, 19 years, Our Mother of Sorrows, Greece;

**Father William Cosgrove**, 17 years, St. Dominic's, Shortsville;

**Father Bruce Ammering**, 17 years, Blessed Sacrament, Rochester;

**Father Paul Brennan**, 13 years, Sacred Heart, Auburn/St. Ann, Owasco

## Fund to honor religious siblings

A scholarship fund has been established at Rochester's Nazareth Schools in memory of Father Robert L. Collins and Sister Jean Collins, SSJ, who were brother and sister.

Their surviving siblings, Eileen Collins of Rochester and Joseph M. Collins of Rhode Island, set up the fund in memory of their deceased siblings' birthdays. Father Collins would have been 60 on June 29 and Sister Collins would have been 55 on Sept. 20. Both had a great interest in education, the family noted.

Father Collins died Feb. 18, 1998. Sister Collins died Dec. 3, 1990.

The scholarships will be given to children in financial need, especially those who require assistance with reading skills or who exhibit talent in math.

"Most of all, the scholarship would benefit those who have a desire to learn and need support and encouragement," Eileen Collins said. Father Collins "was always an educator and certainly a scholarly student

all his life," she added.

Sister Jean Collins was an educator in diocesan schools for 25 years and specialized in teaching reading.

The fund is called the Reverend Robert and Sister Jean Collins Scholarship Fund. Contributions may be made out to The Nazareth Schools and sent to the school at 1001 Lake Ave., Rochester, NY 14613. Attention: Joan Fama.

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