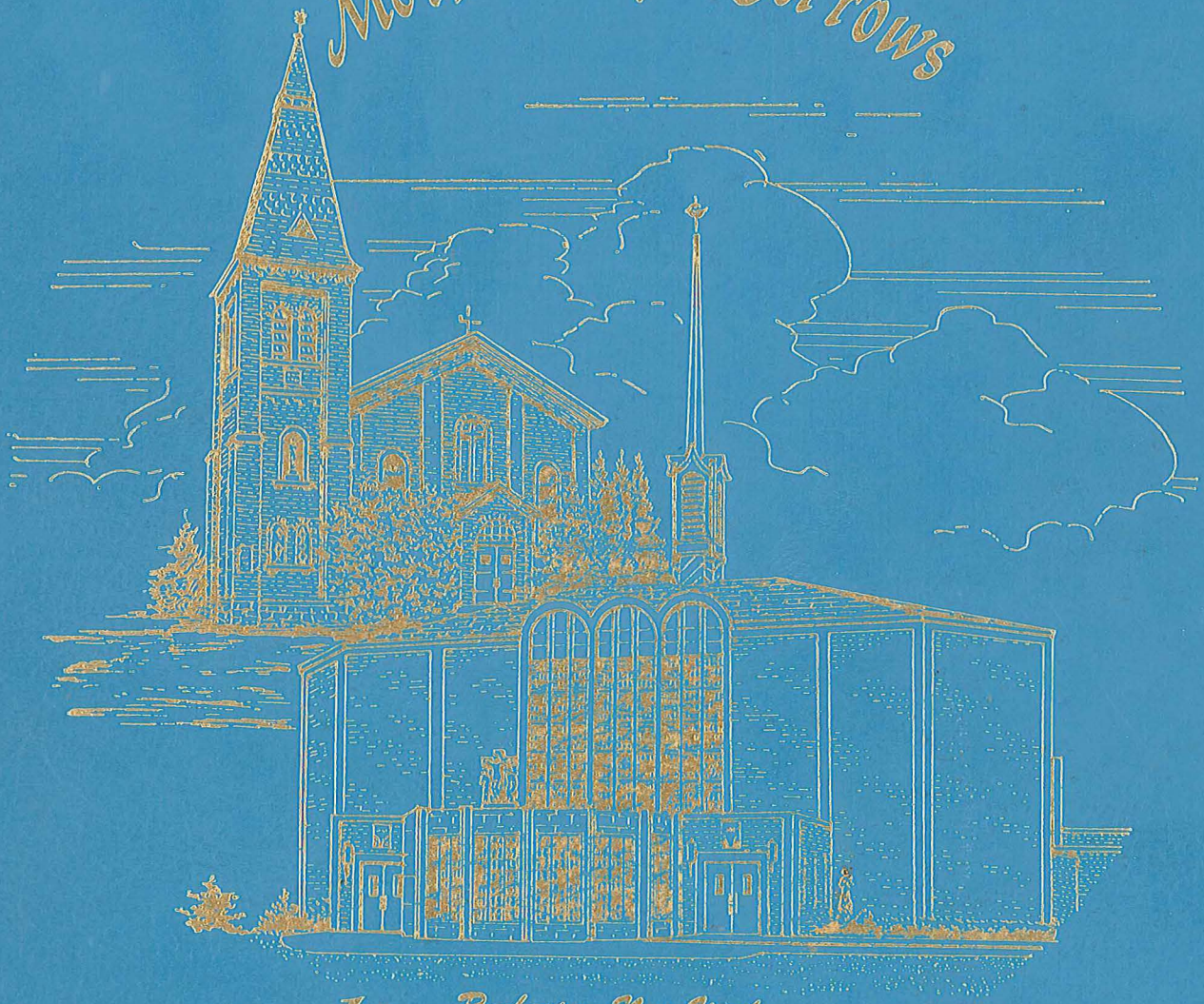
Mother of Sorrows



Rochester, New York

1829 1979

Mother of Sorrows
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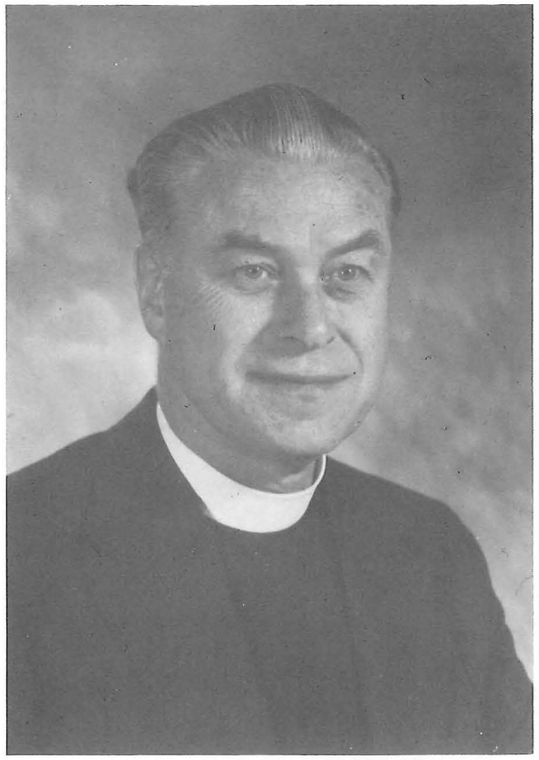

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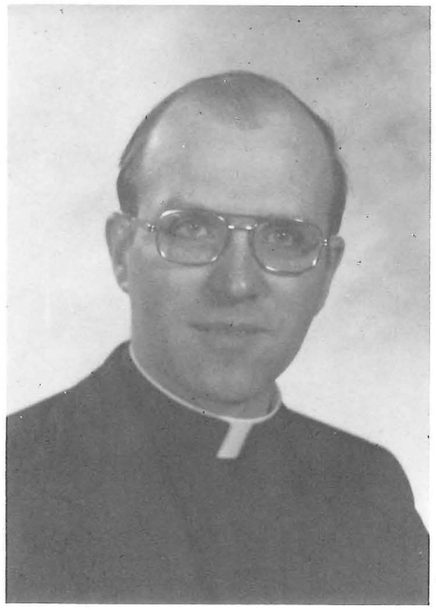

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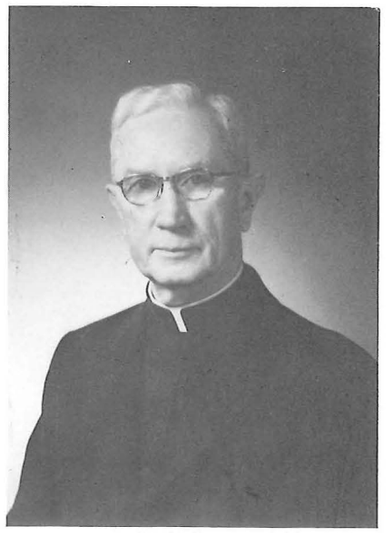

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150 Years of Tradition and Progress

Chapter One

During the War of 1812, Charlotte, the lakeport of Rochester, New York, was threatened four times by the British fleet which plied Lake Ontario under the command of "Commodore" Sir James Yeo. On May 14, 1814, Yeo appeared offshore of the mouth of the Genesee River with a strengthened fleet, poised, it seemed, for an attack. Fortunately, Captain Isaac Stone of the local militia was ready for them. He had called together all able-bodied men from Charlotte and the present Town of Greece, and instructed them to move around, putting in an appearance now at one spot on the shore, now on another. He wanted to give the British the impression that a large army of American soldiers was waiting for them.

The strategy worked. There was a brief interchange and a brief bombardment, but the Commodore didn't go any further.

Felix McGuire of McGuire Road, according to the traditions of Our Mother of Sorrows Parish, was one of the "minute men" that thwarted the British invasion. Felix (also called "Phelix," "Phelim," "Phalimy") was not the only leading Catholic layman of his day in the Rochester area; he was also a substantial figure in the present Town of Greece. He was eighty-five when he died in 1855, according to his cemetery marker; hence he was probably born in 1770. A native of County Fermanagh Province of Ulster, Ireland, he came to Greece (again according to the marker) in 1805—apparently by way of Canada. By 1810 he had already been elected one of the fifteen "path masters" of the township (then called the Town of Northampton). This was two years before "Rochesterville" was established some six miles upstream on the banks of the Genesee River.

Felix was the leader of what became the Irish colony around Paddy Hill, but he was not the only Irishman to settle there around the time of the War of 1812. Cornelius Farnan from County Wexford (1776-1849) is said to have arrived the same year as Felix. Other members of the McGuire family came, too. Felix received the deed to a farm of one-hundred acres in 1816. His brother John was deeded another nearby farm in 1818.

Despite these promising economic and civic beginnings, Felix and his family missed one thing very much: there was no Catholic church or priest west of Albany. A stalwart Catholic, Felix, according to parish tradition, went to Albany each year to make his "Easter duty." It was no easy journey in those days when not even the turnpikes had been opened, much less the Erie Canal.

The Catholic tradition in Rochester and in Greece is that Felix was the man who brought the first priest to the Rochester district to celebrate Mass. There is some obscurity about when this episode took place and where the Mass was offered. Here is what most likely happened. Father Michael O'Gorman came upstate in the summer of 1818 to celebrate Mass at Geneva and to visit Canandaigua. Hearing of this visitation, Felix McGuire apparently picked up the priest (perhaps at Canandaigua) and brought him to Rochester. The Mass was probably offered in Rochester, where there were already a few Catholic families, who were joined by the Catholics from Paddy Hill for this great occasion.

As the result of Father O'Gorman's missionary journey, the first Catholic parish west of Albany was organized at Utica in 1819. One of the three members of the organizing committee who came from western New York was Felix's brother, John McGuire. That same year Bishop John Connolly of New York named a Father John Farnan to head the new Utica church, St. John's. Father Farnan lost no time in moving west to make contact with Catholics in the northern tier of the Finger Lakes and Genesee River areas. When he was in Rochester on July 12, 1820, he gathered the area Catholics together and established the "Third Roman Catholic Church of the Western District." Of the six "managers" chosen to set up a Catholic parish in Rochester, three were from "McGuire country;" Felix, treasurer; his kinsman, Owen McGuire (1798?-1875), secretary; and James Flynn (1789?-1842). Flynn had married Catherine, one of the McGuire clan.

What the "managers" produced was St. Patrick's Church, Rochester. It was erected on the corner of the present Platt Street and Plymouth Avenue, North. The building was completed in 1824, but was probably in use by the end of 1823.

In 1898 Mrs. Mary Conway Murray, a parishioner of St. Patrick's in the 1820's, set down her recollections of early parish life. Clearly, the whole pioneer congregation held Felix McGuire in high esteem.

"Felix McGuire," said Mrs. Murray, "lived out in Greece, about nine miles from Rochester, and every Sunday came to church with an ox team over a corduroy road . . . The man in charge was at the oxen's heads and walked every step of the way; so you can see what a fine old Catholic Felix was.

"When the hour approached for Mass, the priest before robing advanced to the altar rail and inquired: 'Has Phalimy got here yet?' Perhaps he would be answered 'He's a mile down the road beyant,' or 'He's just turning the street corner, yer riverence.' But Felix, or Phalimy as he was called, was always waited for and on one occasion it was nearly twelve o'clock before he arrived. The congregation had to wait, and they did wait without demur, for Phalimy was a man of worth, as well as a trustee of the church. This same man took his two children to Albany to make their First Communion, before there was a church in Rochester."

Although he was a leader in the Rochester Catholic congregation, Phalimy would not be content until there was a Catholic church in his own rural neighborhood. His dream became ever more practicable because of the growth of its Irish farming community. Newcomers included James Flynn, already mentioned. He was a Lake Ontario skipper who took up farming around 1807, but went back to sailoring in the War of 1812, and was briefly held captive by the British. The close of that war, and the opening of the Erie Canal through Rochester in 1825, made Ontario lakeshore farming more attractive and accessible to immigrant agriculturists. Some may have been invited there by the McGuires, like James Beaty from Fermanagh, who arrived in 1818. On the other hand, Patrick and Ann Logan, who came in the same year, were from County Derry. Indeed, the Irish of Paddy Hill have always been of mixed geographical origins. What attracted them to move there was probably a combination of features: good land, an Irish community, kinsfolk, and the availability of a Catholic church.

It is difficult to identify all the Irish families that settled before 1829 in the Town of Greece (cut off in 1822 from the larger township of Northampton which had been re-named Gates in 1812). Matthew Hogan of Tipperary moved in in 1821, bringing with him a collection of religious books which he was happy to share with others. Nicholas Read of King's County arrived in 1825. In 1826, Keron Buckley and his father Patrick, King's County people who had settled in Rochester in 1818, moved out to Greece and bought a farm near Felix McGuire's farm. Others whose dates of arrival are harder to determine were: Lawrence Garrity (King's County); John Martin; Arthur Martin; Patrick Dorsey; and Adam Mulligan.

Upon the establishment of the County of Monroe in 1821 and of the Town of Greece in the following year, a new local public school board was set up, and District School No. 5 was opened on the west corner of the half-intersection of Latta Road and the present Mount Read Boulevard. Farmers in its vicinity began to envision this intersection as the nucleus of a future village. That is one reason why they desired a Catholic church of their own, and why they considered the corner opposite the new school the best spot for it.

Felix McGuire was again a leader in the project. Mass had already been celebrated off and on for the benefit of the Catholic Grecians in his little red house, located, apparently, at what is now 320 McGuire Road. This continued to be used as a chapel during the building of the new church. (Mrs. McGuire was honored to make the altar breads with her own hands). It was also at his little red house that the patriarchal Felix played host to John Dubois, New York's second bishop (1826-1842), on his visitations. When the Greece Catholics decided to build their own church, McGuire furnished the timber and superintended the construction.

Another prominent Greece Catholic who had a lot to do with the undertaking, and who succeeded Felix McGuire as the leader of the Irish community, was Nicholas Read (died 1864). A native of

Graduates receive diplomas in the old brick church in 1954, before renovations

King's County, Ireland, and well educated, he came to the United States in 1820. After a year in South Carolina and three years in Stillwater, New York (Saratoga County), he took up his residence in Greece in 1825, already a man of substance. He bought considerable farmlands on the crest and slopes of the rise of land now called after him, Mount Read. Maps labeled the intersection "Read's Corners." A civic as well as a religious leader, Nicholas served as justice of the peace for over twenty years, and for three years was one of the associate judges of the county. A member of the Democratic Party, he was named a customs official of the Port of the Genesee during one federal administration. Many called him "Judge" Read because of his judicial positions. He was probably more widely known as "Squire" Read. Both titles were an indication of the respect he enjoyed in the whole community.

Squire Read had donated the lot for District School No. 5. Now he and his wife Orpha gave the land across the street for the projected Catholic church and its graveyard. The church lot was wooded, so a clearing probably had to be made before the foundations could be laid. Construction of the little frame structure began, it is said, in 1829. Most of the work was apparently done by members of the parish. This took a long while, but the building was finally dedicated — on February 5, 1832!

The priest who performed the solemn rite (probably as a special delegate of the Bishop of New York) was Father Francis O'Donoghue, the head of the "Salina Mission," with St. John the Baptist Church, Salina (Syracuse), as his center of operations. Father O'Donoghue dedicated the new little church to St. Ambrose. Why the great Milanese Churchman was chosen as its patron saint is not clear.

At all events, St. Ambrose became the first Catholic rural church erected anywhere in New York State. From the very beginning it was romanticised. Patrick Bulger, a versifier whose brother, Father Richard Bulger, was a prominent Irish-American priest in New York City, apparently visited St. Ambrose soon after its completion. He was touched by the sight of this rustic chapel, so he wrote a poem about it which appeared in the November 15, 1832 issue of the **Truth Teller**, an Irish-American journal published in New York.

The Church in the Wood

I once saw the spot, 'twas with forest grown over,
In nature's wild robe it was drest;
The Fox lightly skulked from the ivy-clad cover,
The whip-poor-will mix'd his rude notes with the Plover;
And the Stag laid him fearless to rest.

The stillness of silence the Woodpecker broke,
As he busily tapped the dead tree;
The Eagle's wild scream — and the Raven's hoarse croak,
Was heard from the limbs of the light'ning struck oak,
Respond to the Wolf's angry bay.

Man had, if ever — but seldom been there,
A stranger he truly had been;
He was viewed without fear by the timorous Hare,
Did he to those animals seem.

'Till thousands of echoes were waken'd around,
As the Woodcutter's axe loudly rang;
The Birch and the Maple — were strewed on the ground.
The lord of the Forest — a conqueror found —
And the woods lay prostrate before man.

Now fields richly clad — where the forest once stood,
Excite the pleased Traveler's gaze:
And Greece proudly boasts — of the Church in the Wood,
Raised to the honor and glory of God!
Where man's voice is heard in his praise.

And the Emigrant drove from the cot of his sire,
To seek amongst strangers a home;
As soon as he looks — on the Cross-finished spire,
He prays for the welfare — of Read and Maguire —
And those who had helped the work on.

Patrick Bulger's little poem effectively conveys the "frontier" setting of St. Ambrose Church. This pioneer impression is further confirmed by the first entry made in his diary by parishioner William Connelly. Connelly diligently recorded the events of rural Greece from 1839 to the very day of his death, October 20, 1896:

> Dec. 5, 1839—I was united in marriage to Miss Nancy Beaty. The ceremony took place at the "church in the woods." Two Indians in tribal costumes attracted by the gathering stopped in their journey to look in upon the scene. Supper was served in Mullen's Cooper Shop.

The knowledge that Greece had its own Catholic church no doubt contributed to attracting additional Catholic settlers to Greece over the next decades. At least some of them were relatives or countrymen of Nicholas Read. Like him, the Rigneys

hailed from King's County. They took up residence in Rochester on their arrival, but in 1836 moved out to Greece. Thomas Whelehan and Mary Ryan Whelehan came to Greece from King's County in that same year. Mary was Squire Read's grandniece. They had several children, so according to family tradition, the Squire took in their son William and raised him in his own home on Latta Road. Eventually William inherited the Read farm, and his family inherited Judges's generosity toward their next-door neighbor, the Church in the Wood.

Other names of Irish parishioners that one meets on the tombstones or in the parish records include the Joseph Flemings, the Peter Flemings, the John Hadlocks, the William Connellys, the George Quinns, the Daniel Sharpes, the James Prestons, the William ("Spanish") Byrnes; also the Colgans, Clarks, Gallerys, Burnses, Nearys, Vances, Goodwins, Kellys, Currys, Sheridans, Desmonds, Ryans, Slaters, McManuses, McSheas, etc. etc. Add to these earlier settlers those who arrived from Ireland after the Civil War, like the Dobsons and Hugh Duffy, Jr. We can leave it to Greece genealogists to work out a complete list of this "Hibernian Association." They were so numerous in the north part of the township that for many years a long stretch of Latta Road on either side of Mount Read was flanked by an unbroken line of Irish Catholic farms. It is no surprise that the Mount came to be called "Paddy Hill." But the Grecian Irish deeply resented this nickname, for "Paddy" was an ethnic slur. Nevertheless, the Greece Irish almost formed a closed corporation centered around their church, and the tendency to intermarry made their society even more exclusive.

Although the economic situation of this settlement, which long predated the great wave of impoverished Irish who fled to America at midcentury, was generally good, farm life in a cold and cloudy climate was hard enough even where the soil was exceptionally fertile.

By 1815 the bounty of one shilling per serpent had terminated the plague of rattlesnakes that infested the streams of the township; but bad roads and late snows were plagues less easy to deal with. Nevertheless, the Hibernian farmers could raise enough vegetables and fruit on their small but productive estates to provide enough food for themselves and their large families.

Perhaps it is typical of a farmer to belittle his success. Visitors remained quite impressed by the relative prosperity of this rural Catholic population. For instance, Bishop John Hughes of New York inspected the area in 1841. He was pleased by the "neat and appropriate church" they had built. "The members of this congregation," he reported, "are for the most part agriculturists, some of them owning highly improved plantations and all the other possessing some portion at least of the soil on which they reside." What we have, therefore, is a group of Irish farmers who did not, like so many later Irish immigrants, turn away from the soil, but transferred their skills, frustrated in Ireland, to an American countryside where earth and social conditions encouraged agriculture.

Even though St. Ambrose Church may have attracted Irish Catholic immigrants, it was for a good while simply a mission church, without resident pastor. Only in 1841 were the missionary priests in charge finally able to offer Mass there every Sunday. Before that, Sunday services on Paddy Hill had been less frequent; and on off-Sundays the Grecian Catholics had been obliged to go to Rochester for Mass, whenever that was feasible.

The priests in charge of the Greece Mission were usually from St. Patrick's in Rochester, although Father Patrick Costello, who attended St. Ambrose 1836-1838, was attached to Rochester's St. Mary's Church. Best known of the St. Patrick's priests during the mission days was Father Bernard O'Reilly, who later became second Bishop of Hartford (1850-1856).

In 1838, Father Patrick Danaher was given custody of the churches of both Greece and Lockport, some fifty miles apart. When this arrangement was called off a year later, St. Ambrose again became a satellite of St. Patrick's, Rochester. On the occasion of Bishop Hughes' 1841 visit, the parishioners pleaded to be given a pastor of their own. Hearing their complaint, the Bishop sent them Father Dennis Kelly. Father Kelly was entrusted with St. Ambrose; probably with the mission of St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Scottsville; and (also probably) with a chapel at Brushville, close to Tuscarora and Mount Morris, which served the needs of Catholics working on the Genesee Valley Canal.

Father Kelly's successor on the Greece-Scottsville mission was an Irish Dominican priest, Father Charles Ffrench (1766?-1851). Members of a leading Protestant family of Galway, he and his brother Edmund became Catholics. Edmund subsequently was named bishop of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora (1824-1852), and Charles joined the Dominicans. After five years as a missionary in Canada (1812-1817), Father Charles entered the service of the Diocese of New York. On a brief visit to Claremont, Vermont, in 1818, he played a role in the group reception into the Catholic Church of several members of the family of a prominent Episcopalian minister, Dr. Samuel Barber. Ffrench later became a controversial figure in New York City trusteeist troubles, so he spent the years 1822-1826 back in Canada. From 1826 to his death in 1851, apart for one period, he did pioneer work in the diocese of Boston. During that one period of absence, 1842-1845, he was missionary pastor of St. Ambrose.

By all accounts, Father Ffrench, was a dedicated missionary. While in the Rochester area he took an active interest in local affairs. He was elected in 1843 to the board of managers of the newly established Rochester Catholic Orphan Asylum, and two years later to its board of trustees. On June 29, 1843, he sang in the high Mass at the dedication of St. Peter's (now SS. Peter and Paul's) German church in Rochester; and it must have been a beautiful Mass, for he had a fine voice. The Greece Catholics could only have been impressed by this Irishman "of imposing presence, tall, robust, strikingly handsome, witty, genial, a natural leader, an excellent speaker, a magnificent singer; unshakably devoted to the faith and to the vocation he had embraced . . ."

Upon the big Dominican's departure in 1846, the Grecians had once again to rely on the clergy of St. Patrick's, Rochester; although in 1848-1849 they were served by a French priest, Julian Delaune, the president of a preparatory school called the College of the Sacred Heart, which functioned in Rochester from 1848 to 1851.

Meanwhile, western New York had been cut away in 1847 from the Diocese of New York to form the Diocese of Buffalo, and John Timon, C.M., had been named its first bishop. In 1849, Bishop Timon gave to St. Ambrose its first full-fledged resident pastor, Father Joseph Biggio. The Bishop himself had trained Father Biggio, a man of Italian background. He had ordained him a priest only shortly before appointing him to Greece. Young though he was, Father Biggio was a "serious, even severe man," although one of evident faith and piety.

In the summer of 1855, Father Biggio left St. Ambrose. Subsequently he transferred from the Buffalo Diocese to the Diocese of Newark. When he died in 1866 he had been pastor of St. Mary's Church, Bordentown, New Jersey, for nine years.

The Greece parishioners had to wait from August, 1855, to December, 1855, before Bishop Timon was able to give them another full-time clergyman. Father William Carroll was finally assigned, and arrived on December 1, 1855. "He is a large man and very jolly," William Connelly noted in his journal. But Father Carroll left in August, 1856. The Greece Catholics were probably not surprised, for it was understood that he had an interim appointment.

A month after Father Carroll's departure, Bishop Timon sent to St. Ambrose a resident pastor who was far from "interim." This priest would stay on in Greece for thirty-nine years!

Chapter Two

On September 7, 1856, Bishop Timon appointed as pastor of St. Ambrose Church a French priest, Father John Maurice. Father Maurice celebrated Mass in Greece on the following day, which was not only a Sunday but the feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin. Thus began a pastorate that was to prove a happy one for all concerned.

How this native of France happened to end his career in Greece is a fascinating story.

Louis-Jean-Marie Maurice was born on August 28, 1812, in the little fishing village of Corsept, Brittany, France. The son of parents of moderate means and deep piety, Jean studied for the priesthood and was ordained on December 21, 1836. At ordination his status was that of a priest-member of the Brothers of Christian Instruction of Ploermel, a teaching order; but soon afterward he affiliated with his diocese of Nantes as a secular priest, and for the next four years he served in diocesan assignments.

Father Maurice was torn between the desire to be a parish priest and the desire to become a missionary. In 1842 he decided to try missionary life. A French priest who was a convert from Judaism, Father Paul-Francois Libermann, had lately established a missionary order, the Congregation of the Holy Heart of Mary, to carry the Gospel to the Blacks of Africa. Maurice decided to cast his lot with Father Libermann, and on August 15, 1843, he made his solemn act of consecration as a member of the new Congregation.

It was membership in this order that first brought Louis-Jean into contact with Americans. In 1841, the American bishops decided to send American missionaries to Liberia, Western Africa. A good many black slaves had lately been freed in the United States and repatriated to Africa. Some of these were Catholics, so the American hierarchy felt duty-bound to attend to their spiritual needs. Pope Gregory XVI appointed a Philadelphia priest, Father Edward Barron, to head the mission, and to minister not only to the Catholic repatriates but also the non-Christian Blacks of Liberia and Sierra Leone. He created Father Barron a bishop.

Bishop Barron had only two Americans who volunteered for the mission — a priest and a layman. He settled them at Cape Palmas, 200 miles south of Monrovia, in what is now the Republic of the Ivory Coast. Then he went to Europe to enlist more missionaries. In Paris, Father Libermann agreed to send down seven priests, including Father Maurice. They arrived at Cape Palmas in November, 1843, even before the return of the Bishop.

When Barron did get back to Cape Palmas on March 1, 1844, accompanied by two recruits he had engaged in Ireland, he faced an ominous situation. Father Kelly, the American priest, had returned to the United States in complete frustration; the American layman, Dennis Pindar, had died of sunstroke; and two of the French missionaries were on the point of death from tropical fever. Bishop Bar-

ron tried to reorganize his forces, but it was no use. By that fall nine of the missionaries were dead. They had come to equatorial Africa with all zeal, but completely unprepared to face the climate and society of the "White Man's Graveyard." Therefore the Bishop went to Rome and resigned his charge.

Father Maurice was one of the survivors. He, too, had been stricken with fever. Apparently he had also been stoned by the natives and left for dead. Father Libermann, not hearing from him, concluded that he had died. In later years, when Maurice visited the Order's headquarters in Paris, he was given a copy of the notice of his demise. He brought the obituary back to Greece, where it long hung over his desk.

In the meantime he had gone to Rome and petitioned release from his commitment to the Libermann Congregation so that he might enter the Jesuits. Permission was granted, and he was accepted as a novice by the French Jesuits, and, since he was already a priest, sent by them to spend his two-year novitiate as administrator of the French church of St. Jean Baptiste, in Amherstburg, Ontario (near the present Windsor). At the end of the novitiate, however, he decided against taking vows as a Jesuit. The Bishop of Toronto asked him to stay on at Amherstburg, which he did until 1850.

By 1850 Maurice had found the Ontario climate so detrimental to his health that his doctor advised him to go elsewhere. The "elsewhere" he chose was Buffalo. Bishop Timon welcomed him and assigned him to St. Patrick's Church in Buffalo, where he made his first entry in the baptismal register on August 15, 1850.

For the next six years, John (as he now signed himself) held various posts in the Buffalo Diocese, including tasks where familiarity with French was required, and where missionary journeys were necessary. Father Maurice still considered himself a missionary; and in this spirit he got permission from the Bishop to establish the Society for the Propagation of the Faith in each of the Buffalo city parishes.

During one of his domestic missionary trips in 1852 Father John first made the acquaintance of a parishioner from St. Ambrose Church. Bishop Timon had sent the priest to minister to the Irish laborers who were engaged in building a canal aqueduct over Olean Creek in Cattaraugus County. Contractor and clerk-of-the-works was a Grecian, Joseph Fleming (1812-1899). Fleming, a native of Ireland, had married Elizabeth Rigney of Paddy Hill in 1837. He took a liking to the little French priest, who was the same age as himself. Parish tradition says that another Grecian was also on the Olean canal assignment—Peter Larkin (1814-1884)—and that both Peter and Joseph suggested that Father Maurice ask to be appointed to St. Ambrose, where the people were still hoping for a really permanent resident pastor.

Whether or not the French priest passed on the suggestion to his Bishop, he was not sent to Greece at that time. In 1855-1856 he went to France on a business trip. Upon his return, Bishop John Timon did ask him to take over the "Church in the Wood." "It is not a very pleasant place," the Bishop told him (thinking perhaps of its winter rigors), "but it is a good place to become a saint."

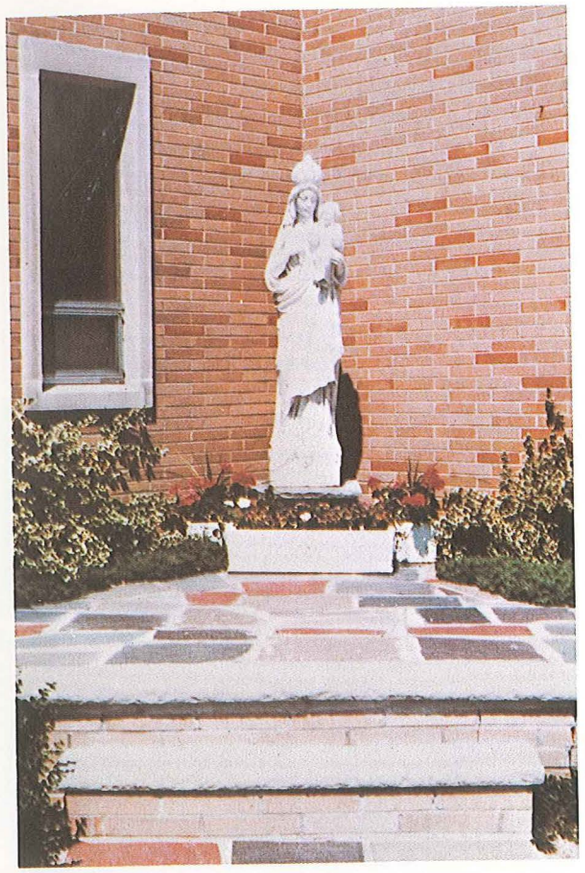
When Louis John Maurice put in his appearance at Mass that September 8th, Joseph Fleming introduced him to the parishioners. "He speaks with a queer accent," noted William Connelly in his journal, "but we understood his sermon without difficulty. It was about the Mother of God in Sorrow. He had all the children up about the altar, and examined them as to their knowledge of holy things."

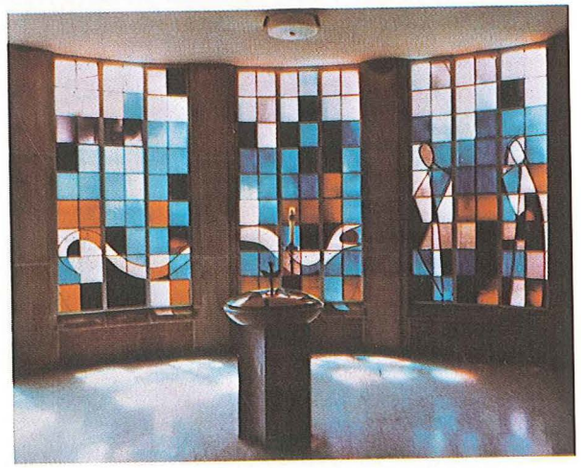
Some of the people were upset that the Bishop should have sent them a "foreigner," and they registered their complaint. Timon ignored the petition, however, convinced that once they got to know their knew pastor they would appreciate him. The ready response that the congregation gave three years later to Maurice's proposal to build a new church proved that Bishop Timon had been right.

There were two very good reasons for building a new church structure. In the first place, the population had now grown enough through immigration and abundant natural increase to warrant a larger building. In the second place, the thirty-year-old "Church in the Wood" had become dilapidated: the pipe of the iron stove ran out through the wall, the plaster was stained and dingy, and shingles replaced a number of broken windowpanes.

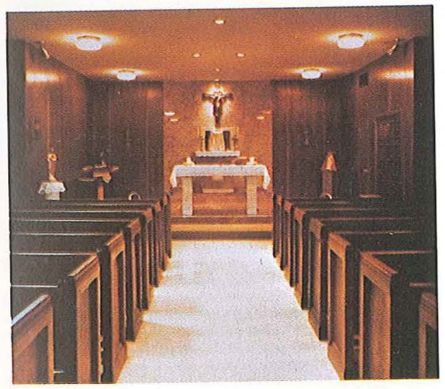
Maurice was determined to set up not just a church but a very attractive church. In 1859 he engaged the Rochester architect Edward Warner to draw up plans for a brick building measuring 44 by 76 feet (three times the size of the original frame structure). Francis Downing of Charlotte was hired as contractor. Squire Read donated additional property. (The new building was to be right on the corner, just north of the wooden church). Peter Larkin himself cut all the stone trim for the "Romanesque" structure, and he and Joseph Fleming personally supervised the builders. Costs were thus drastically cut, and the total expenditure was less than eight thousand dollars.

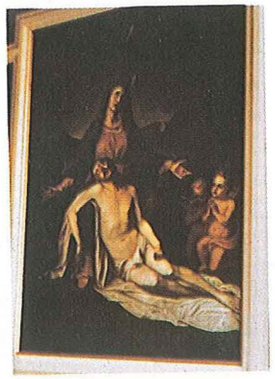
Bishop Timon came from Buffalo to lay the cornerstone on June 19, 1859. He delegated his vicar general, Father Michael O'Brien of Rochester, to dedicate the finished church on September 16, 1860, the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows. Father Maurice, very devoted to the Blessed Virgin, had asked the Bishop's permission to name the new building after her rather than St. Ambrose. So the

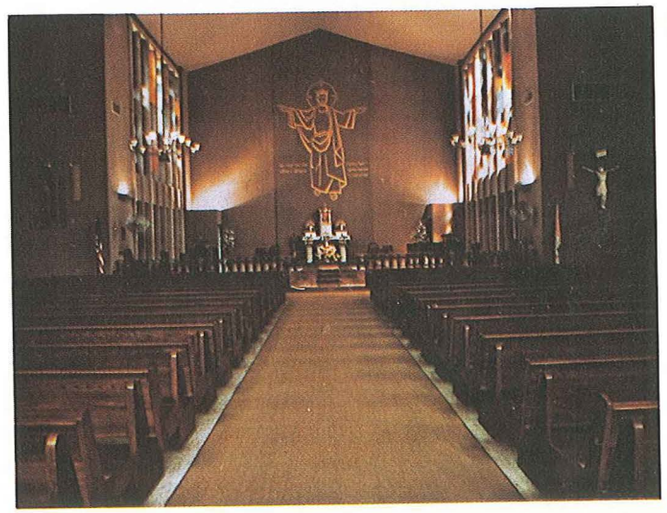




Stained-glass windows in the 1968 church depict abstract angelic figures. The baptistry windows depict the fall and redemption of man

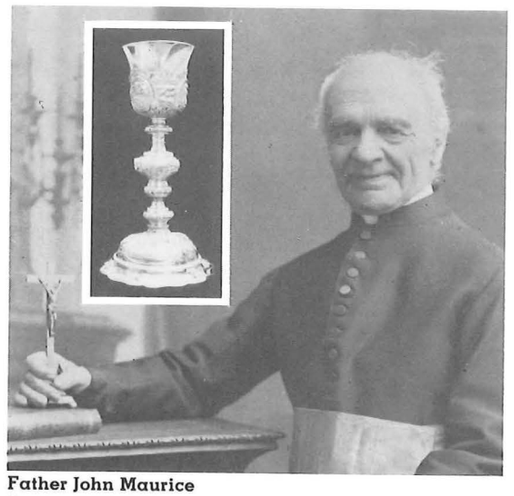






second sanctuary on Mount Read was given the title "Our Mother of Sorrows." Dedication day was all the more newsworthy because the pastor had engaged the Reverend Dr. Daniel W. Cahill, a brilliant scholar from Ireland, to preach the sermon. Father Cahill (1794-1864) happened to be lecturing in Rochester just then. The subject of his sermon, Mary's Immaculate Conception, was particulary timely, for Pope Pius IX had proclaimed the dogma of the Immaculate Conception only six years before. Dr. Cahill was as impressed by the Greece Catholics as they were by him. The following day he wrote a letter from Rochester which was published soon after in an Irish newspaper. He said of the Paddy Hill Catholics, "Their new church and the beloved French pastor make this parish a model section of the Americo-Irish Catholic Church."

The "beloved French pastor" continued for the next fifteen years to add the finishing touches of the new "Church in the Wood." In 1861, he asked Bishop Timon to install over the altar a handsome painting of the Pietá—Our Lady of Sorrows. He had obtained it from Rome through Cardinal Gaetano Bedini, the head of the Vatican's missionary agency, the Congregation De Propaganda Fide. In the following year the Pastor installed a cast-iron polychrome figure of Mary on the back outside wall of the building.



Father John Maurice
Pastor, 1856-1929, and his chalice

The next project was a bell-tower. On his death in 1864, Squire Read had left the parish five hundred dollars for a new church bell. In the early 1870's, Father Maurice saw to the organization of a committee to collect the $6,000 necessary for the steeple. Peter Larkin and Joseph Fleming were committee members and Francis Gallery was chairman. Land owning parishioners were asked to give fifty cents for each acre they possessed. Among the donors were: Peter Conway, who owned 360 acres; James Slater, 230; Patrick Rigney, 227; George Quinn, 197; Joseph Fleming, 190; Peter Larkin, 184; Rosanna McShea, 134; and the "Widow Goodwin" (Rosanna), 16 acres. Maurice himself, as usual, made a sizeable pledge.

The architect chosen to design the Mount Read bell tower was a Rochesterian who was just beginning to acquire a reputation in his field: Andrew Jackson Warner (1833-1910). Francis Downing of Charlotte was again engaged as contractor. When the structure was completed, young Thomas W. Fincucane, one of Downing's carpenters, requested the privilege of affixing the cross to the spire.

The Diocese of Rochester had been cut off from the Diocese of Buffalo in 1868. Father Maurice, therefore, turned to his new bishop, Bernard J. McQuaid, to perform the last ritual touches. On September 19, 1875 (again the feast of Our Lady of Sorrows), the Bishop consecrated Squire Read's twenty-five-hundred-pound bell, giving it the name "Mater Dolorosa" ("Sorrowful Mother"). On the same feast three years later he blessed the white marble statue of Our Lady set in a niche in the tower's facade. It was the work of John O'Brien, a Baltimore sculptor, and had been paid for by voluntary subscriptions. Thus the whole work was completed: Father Maurice's dream-church crowned the heights of Mount Read, visible for a mile or more in every direction. Its bell summoned the faithful to prayer, and tolled the knell not only of parishioners but of Greece Protestants whose dear ones requested the passing-bell.

Two other lesser features of the parish complex date from the days of John Maurice. The first was the parish rectory. This was the old church of St. Ambrose, moved south to the other end of the churchyard once the new building was completed, and rebuilt into a rectory that served for a hundred years. The second was a row of wooden horse-sheds built across the road from the new church and next to the little district school. The sheds were for the convenience of parishioners as a parking place for their horses and carriages while they were at church. Actually, these sheds, constructed later in the century and removed in 1935, were not a parochial but a group project. Twenty-two members of the parish had purchased the land and built the stalls for their private use. Hitching rails stood right in front of the cemetery for the rigs of the rest of the "carriage trade."

The pastor who had thus glorified Mount Read with a shrine to Mary even tried, in the 1870's, to change the familiar name of the spot, "Paddy Hill," to "Lady Hill." One of his motives was doubtless to get rid of the derogatory monicker and still distasteful to the Irish Grecians. But it takes more than one man's efforts to alter public custom. Today "Paddy Hill" remains a familiar alias of Mount Read; and even the parishioners use it not without affection.

Who were the parishioners during the four decades of John Maurice's pastorship? While the Irish were predominant in the northern part of Greece Town, Father Maurices's responsibility extended throughout the township, which included Charlotte, in the northeast, the Hanford Landing neighborhood in the southeast, and Greece P.O., at what is now Ridge Road West. Hibernian names are the most numerous in the parish records, but German and French (probably Canadian French) surnames also appear now and then. The Greece population remained basically rural and, therefore, sparse rather than dense, although growth accelerated somewhat after the Civil War. On January 1, 1869, Maurice reported to Bishop McQuaid that there were five hundred and seventy-seven souls in his flock: one hundred and twenty-two men, one hundred and twelve women, and three hundred and forty-three children. Five years later he said the total was up to six hundred and eight.

If the members of the congregation were ready to make sacrifices for the parish projects of major importance, they could not afford to be lavish in their regular support. In 1868 the parish income was only $1,279. As was customary in the old days, most of this was contributed in the form of pew rent—$799.50; the year's plate collection amounted to only one hundred dollars. In 1873—a depression year—the total income dropped from twelve hundred dollars to a mere eight hundred and sixty. That year, and in other years when the budget did not balance, the Pastor chipped in to pay the difference. When the parish could not afford to give him his annual salary of six hundred dollars, he cheerfully went without it. So long as he could discharge the major debts quickly, he was content. But the church was not equal to carrying property insurance.

From the outset, it seems, the Irish community of Greece was close-knit: ready to fulfill their civic duties and respectful towards their non-Catholic townsmen, but happiest in their own company. Because of the difficulties of transportation, the parishioners were not given to much travel. Peddlers brought them staples on weekly rounds. As for entertainment, they made their own, moving about from home to home. Round dances and square dances were popular diversions. Friday nights were set aside for the children, who gathered to roast apples or pull taffy. The long, snowy winters were ideal for sleigh-rides. Men-folk had their own favorite entertainments: poker and penny-ante; boxing and wrestling; cock-fighting; and greyhound races. Women-folk combined work with pleasure at their goosedown-plucking, quilting, and lace-looming bees.

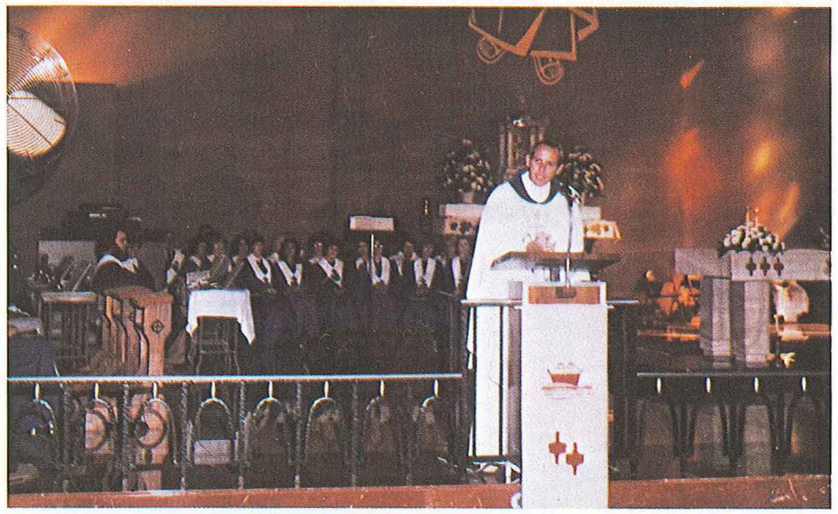
Much of the recreation centered around the church. Box socials were fun: the young blades would bid on a boxed lunch and win the privilege of sharing it with the damsel who had prepared it. Once a month there were monthly church parties for the whole family: songs, dialogues, plays, and a tureen supper. The dressiest affair of the cooler months was the annual banquet, which featured a prominent guest speaker. Summer was the time for the Sunday School children and the members of church societies to go on picnics and excursions.

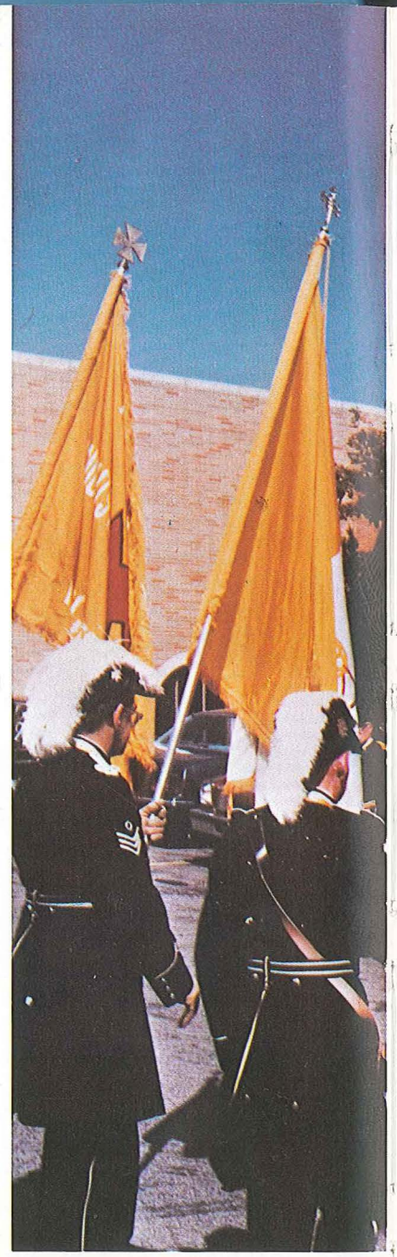
Because the parish community was so close-knit, it is not surprising that there was a good deal of intermarriage. Blood-ties thus bound parishioners together still more firmly, and Our Mother of Sorrows came near to being a "one-family" congregation.

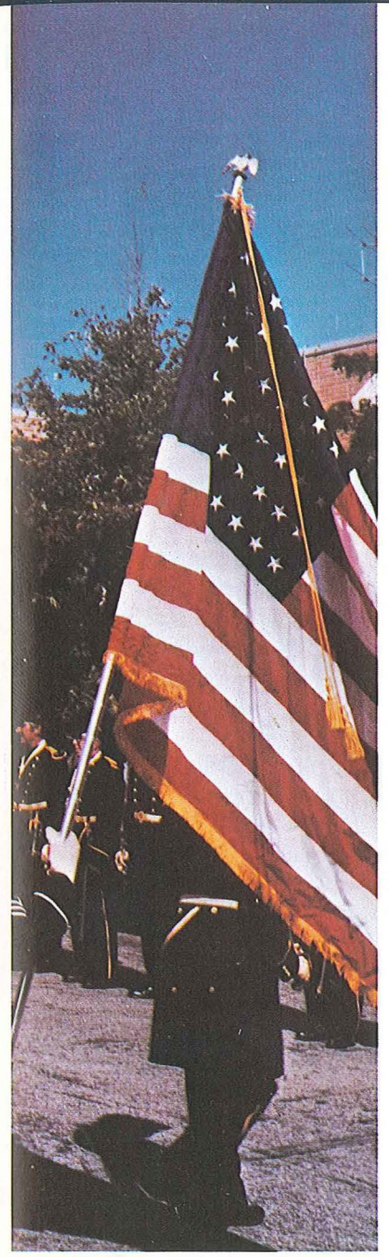
The Irish of Paddy Hill kept a nice balance between their sense of allegiance to the "Ould Sod" and to their adopted country.

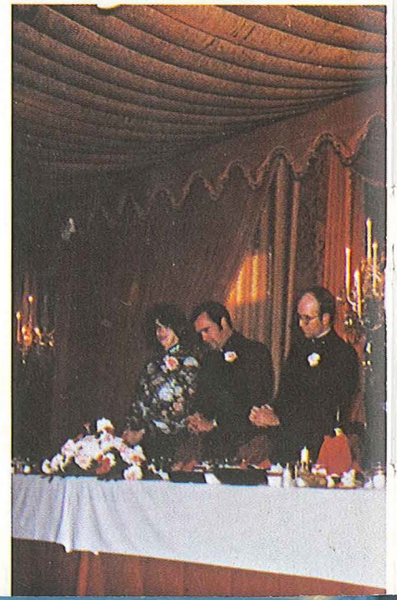
As Irishmen, they continued to be interested in their oppressed homeland, and to send money back to the victims of disasters in the Emerald Isle. The arrival of new immigrants from time to time—like Roger Farrell and Hugh Duffy, Jr.—kept green the Hibernian memories of the Grecian Irish. Roger Farrell had known Daniel O'Connell, the "Great Liberator," and constantly sang his praise. Hughie Duffy was a fiddler and teller of folk-tales, and held spooks in reverent awe. He even had an encounter with a crowd of leprechauns on the night of April 23, 1887, at the corner of Latta and Greenleaf Roads. The only thing that saved him from mistreatment at their hands was that he had with him an iron pot and pothooks. Iron, they say, is highly esteemed by leprechauns. (According to Seumas MacManus, a well-known Irish folklorist, this is the only instance on record of the "Little People" putting in an appearance outside of Ireland).

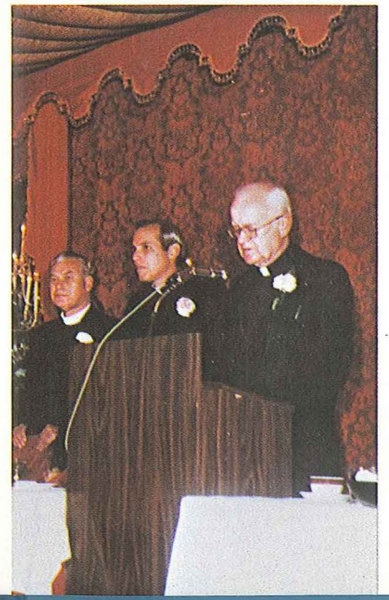
But the parishioners of Greece were also Americans. They exercised their right of suffrage. They were continuously represented among officials of the township. In April, 1861, when President Lincoln called for seventy-five hundred volunteers to defend the American Union, the young men gathered at Barney Dennis' smithy to talk things over. A war rally was held in the church on August 21, 1862. The main speaker, President Martin B. Anderson of the University of Rochester, urged enlistments. Although in wartime the government has always preferred to have farmers stay on the land because of their importance as national provisioners, a number of men of Mount Read did enter the armed services. There are six Civil War veterans buried in the graveyard of Our Mother of Sorrows. Most touching of the markers is that of Felix McGuire, Jr., son of the parish patriarch. He died on July 10, 1864, aged thirty-one, in the dreadful Confederate











150th Anniversary Celebration
September 16, 1979

prison camp at Andersonville, Georgia.

When John Maurice arrived in Greece, he found a congregation already firm in its faith. It was to his credit that, overlooking their particular foibles, he sought constantly to strengthen that faith. His piety, as it showed itself in his conversation as well as his sermons, was typically French, but appealingly popular. He established only one devotional society, the Confraternity of Our Mother of Sorrows; in his time, however, it counted three hundred members. The children were the object of his special affection, and he made of their First Holy Communions gala celebrations. The people of the parish were consistent in attending Sunday Mass, despite the sometimes heavy snows of a lakeside winter. Each year some three hundred received their Easter Communion—probably the vast majority of the adult members of the church.

By 1880, there were two hundred children of school age in the parish. Bishop McQuaid wanted every parish in his diocese to have a parochial school, and two hundred children was enough to populate one on Mount Read. Although normally deferential to the wishes of the bishop, Father Maurice refused to establish a school. He argued that his people were too poor to support one; and he was probably right. Meanwhile, he sought to make up for the absence of such a school by an active program of religious instruction. A gifted catechist (and himself the author of a catechism) he not only taught the children religion in Sunday School, but gave daily lessons in the faith to some thirty children in the classroom of a little district school across from the church. Apparently all the twenty or thirty youngsters who attended it in that period were Catholics, and the schoolteachers were members of Our Mother of Sorrows (one of them was a man, Robert J. Fleming). So although Paddy Hill had no parochial school, its children enjoyed many of the benefits that parish schools provide.

While his center of operations was in the northern part of Greece, the Pastor kept his eye on the growing clusters of Catholics elsewhere in the township. By 1862 there were over a score of families in the village of Charlotte, and he gave them religious instruction regularly in the home of Andrew Mulligan. On May 3, 1863, Bishop Timon dedicated a remodeled residence as Charlotte's first Catholic church. Maurice also taught religion to the Catholics who lived around Hanford's Landing, the docking area at the southeast corner of Greece Town. But a larger settlement sprang up at Greece Post Office on Ridge Road West. In 1865 he purchased the old Row Tavern there (built in 1810) and turned it into a chapel. Bishop Timon blessed this little church on May 6, 1865. Father Maurice contributed six hundred dollars of his own to the total purchase price of twenty-five hundred dollars. He had acquired that sum by selling his family property back in France. His devotion to Calvary was again evident in the names he chose for the two new churches: Holy Cross in Charlotte, and St. John the Evangelist on the Ridge. With Our Mother of Sorrows they formed a triptych of the Passion. In 1873, Bishop McQuaid turned these two mission chapels into independent parishes.

A slight man, John Maurice nevertheless enjoyed good health until 1884. Then, at the age of seventy-two, he fractured his thigh in a fall. After that, he became increasingly dependent on others. In 1886 he reached the golden jubilee of his priestly ordination, the first priest in western New York to do so. Bishop McQuaid saw to it that the event was properly celebrated, not only because it was historic but because he held Maurice in high regard. In connection with the Mass of Thanksgiving on November 17th, Robert Fleming, delivered a graceful tribute to the jubilarian and handed him a purse of seven hundred dollars in gold from the parishioners. In his response, Father Maurice took as his text, "Behold thy Mother": the phrase he had used in his first sermon preached in Greece in 1856. That afternoon, the Bishop hosted the pastor and the rest of the visiting clergy at a dinner in Rochester. The high point of the banquet was the reading of a special blessing from Pope Leo XIII.

The next nine years were for Father Maurice, years of decline. Becoming too incapacitated to do much parish work, he had to preach sitting, and his sermons were often tearful. Fortunately, his housekeeper, Miss Sarah Dorsey, gave him the best of care. A member of the parish, she had kept house for Father Biggio; and Maurice, on his arrival, had asked her to continue. When her brother Patrick lost his wife in 1883, the Pastor invited her to bring his three motherless children to live in the rectory. Unfortunately, Sarah herself died on June 3, 1895. Because there was nobody to replace her, Maurice had to move to Charlotte, where he was welcomed by Mrs. Rose Parks, Sarah's sister. He preached his farewell sermon at Our Mother of Sorrows on November 17, 1895.

John Maurice had always hoped and prayed that he might die on a great feast day of the Church. He got his wish. On December 25, 1895, William Connelly wrote in his journal, "The whole parish is in sorrow this Christmas Day. Our great, good priest, Father Maurice, has passed away."

Bishop McQuaid celebrated the funeral Mass at Mount Read on December 27th, and delivered a well-deserved eulogy. Parishioners jammed the church for what Connelly called "the saddest funeral ever held from the hill." Then they witnessed his interment in the adjacent graveyard. Maurice had already erected the marker: a stone cross that stood on the site of the original church. He had also composed the epitaph: "Hail, Holy Cross! Emblem of my salvation. My only hope. Here beneath thy shade I will sleep and I will rest until my Redeemer comes." The parishioners added the remainder: "Rev. J. M. Maurice, 1812-1895. Thirty-nine years our good pastor, May he rest in Peace."

The little Breton priest had sought his particular mission in three continents. He found it, and knew he had found it, on the shores of Lake Ontario among the Irish farmers of Paddy Hill.

Chapter Three

During the last illness of Father Maurice the priest in charge of the parish was his young and devoted friend, Reverend Andrew B. Meehan. Father Meehan (1867-1932) was the pioneer professor of moral theology at St. Bernard's Seminary when it opened in 1893, some five miles southeast of Mount Read. After Maurice's death he continued to administer the parish pending the appointment of a new pastor.

Bishop McQuaid named Father Maurice's successor in July, 1896, and he assumed his new duties on Independence Day. He was to last for thirty-three years—just six years less than that of his predecessor. Oddly enough, only scanty records remain of what happened in the parish during this long period.

There are two principal reasons for the lack of information. One is that in the period 1896-1929 the population of the congregation tended to diminish rather than increase. The other is that Father Quinn was the most unobtrusive of men.

John P. Quinn was born at Macedon, New York, on December 10, 1866, the son of Frank Quinn and Ellen Coniff Quinn. Frank, an immigrant from Ireland, had taken up farming. A bright and devout lad, John Quinn felt attracted to the priesthood and enrolled in the 1880's as a student of St. Andrew's, the preparatory seminary of the Diocese of Rochester. Because of his obvious talent, Bishop McQuaid sent him to Rome in 1884, where he pursued his priestly studies as a student of the North American College. Unfortunately, John became deathly ill in 1888. Although he recovered, the ailment left him constitutionally drained, so the Bishop instructed him to come home. He finished his theological course at St. Joseph's Provincial Seminary in Troy, New York, and was ordained a priest in Rochester on July 9, 1890.

Father Quinn was first assigned to teach rhetoric and English at St. Andrew's Seminary. He resided at St. Patrick's Cathedral and also served as chaplain to the Religious of the Sacred Heart, whose convent school was on Prince Street. Barely a year later, Bishop McQuaid appointed him to Holy Family Church in Auburn, where he had the double duty of assistant pastor and chaplain of the State Prison. On March 24, 1895, the Bishop transferred him to the assistant pastorate of St. Mary's Church, Auburn.

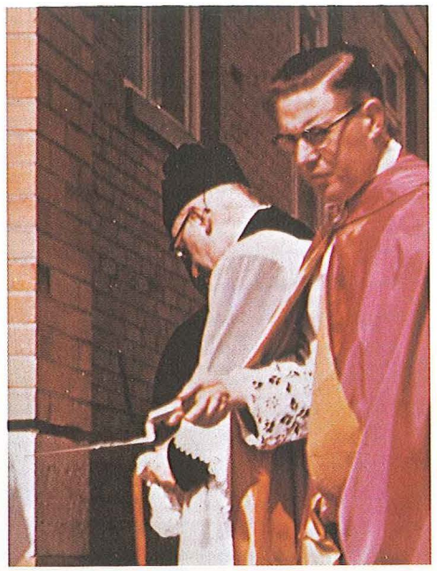
Our Mother of Sorrows was thus John Quinn's first pastorate, and proved to be his last. He enjoyed his years of service at Mount Read. A country boy, he loved the quiet of the rural setting, and the congregation was small enough for a man of his physical limitations to handle. Once he hung up his hat in the rectory, he was almost never away from it overnight, for he was not given to vacationing. He did not even have much incentive to visit Macedon, since his three sisters moved into the Rochester area. Mary (Minnie) Quinn married John McGreal, a Rochesterian. Matilda (Tillie) came to Greece, became the organist and choir director of Our Mother of Sorrows, and married John Whelehan, one of the choir. The Pastor's unmarried sister Margaret (Maggie)—tall, grayhaired, a fine cook, and as noiseless as her brother—served him as housekeeper.

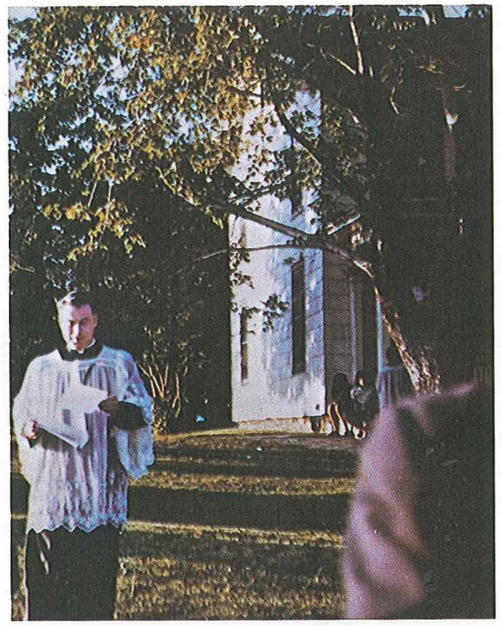
Reverend John P. Quinn
Pastor, 1896-1929

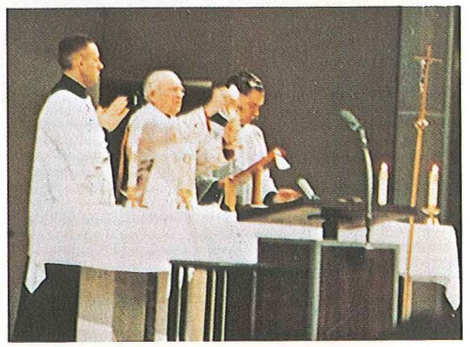
However unassuming Father Quinn may have been, he was very faithful to his parochial duties, and highly respected in the Town as "a priest through and through." He preached well at the Sunday Mass (there was still only one, at ten o'clock); and he saw to it that all the rites and ceremonies were performed correctly. He himself tolled the "Mater Dolorosa" when a local death occurred. On Friday afternoons he crossed the road to the district school and shepherded the Catholic children over to the church for religious instruction in the sacristy. (Some of the "lambs" might run off to greener pastures when their shepherd's back was turned. But they were fond of him, and he, in turn, was amused when they sang of him, "Little Father Quinn, he's thin as a pin!").

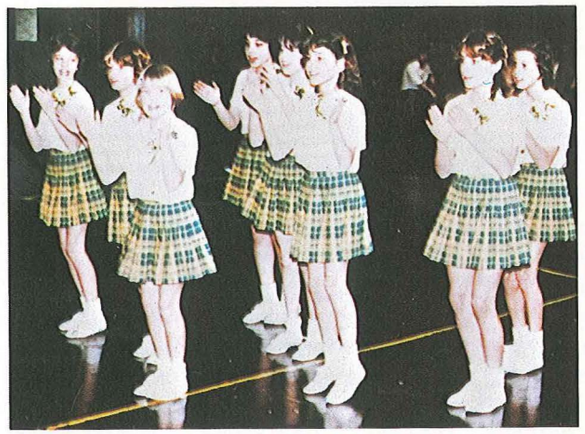
During his earlier years as pastor, John Quinn drove about the parish by horse and buggy. Eventually he graduated to a Model-T Flivver. Despite his stay-at-home preference and his shyness about meeting new people, he liked visiting the homes of his parishioners. His thorough knowledge of the batting averages of all the major-league baseball players helped him to engage in small-talk with the men and boys of the congregation. When there were family singalongs, he enjoyed joining the chorus, for he had a good ear and a good voice.

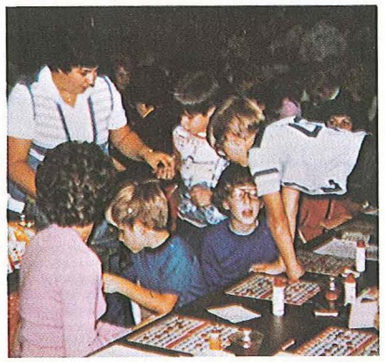
As we have indicated, there was a decline in parish population during the Quinn regime. The parish census for 1914 listed sixty-seven families and three hundred and twelve persons: one hundred

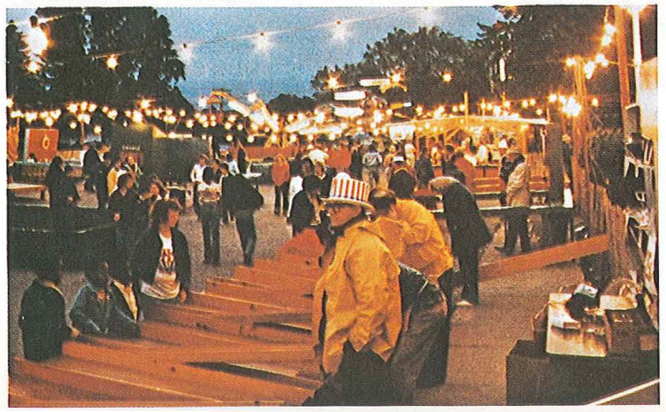


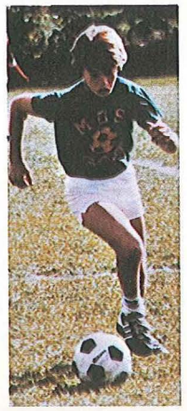


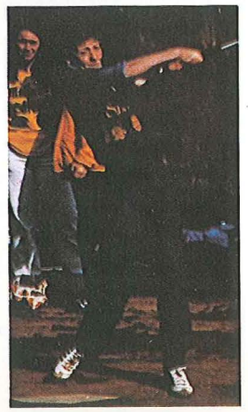












and ten men, one hundred and thirteen women, eighty-nine children. That year the total income was only $1,669.69. The census for 1916 listed seventy-one families and three hundred and thirty persons; and the 1916 income was $1,775.64. By 1919 there were only fifty-eight families (two hundred and seventy-two Catholics); although the 1919 income was up to $2,776.93. The report for 1924 noted a slight rise: sixty-five families, three hundred and two parishioners, $2,537.82 total income. But even in 1928, last full year of Father Quinn's pastorate, parish families still numbered only sixty-eight, and parish membership three hundred and eleven; although the income had risen to $4,194.58. Thus over sixty years the congregation had dropped from six hundred (more than half of them children) to three hundred (only eighty of them children.) The decline was no doubt due, in part, to the movement of some parishioners out of farming and into other occupations at other locations. The decrease in the number of children is also explicable, in part, to an interesting social phenomenon—the non-marriage of a number of the men and women who belonged to the old families of the parish. These familes had intermarried so extensively that many became interrelated within the degrees in which Church law forbade marriage. Rather than look for spouses in another town or parish, a number of the parishioners simply decided not to get married at all.

Small though the congregation had become in 1917, it was still ready to contribute to the armed manpower of the United States when we entered World War I. The chief hero of the parish was Macarius V. Kelly of Latta Road. As a soldier in the 30th Infantry, 3rd Battalion, he had been in the thick of the French campaign in the summer and fall of 1918. Twice wounded, he was cited for gallantry in action, and awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. The little contingent of parish warriors knew that they had the backing of the folks at home. The Greece farmers were raising crops to feed a nation at war in its armed forces. The Catholic women of Greece Town were busy with various home-front activities. (For instance, Mrs. Mary Dobson was a worker with the Red Cross. Her son Frank was New York State assemblyman for the Greece area throughout the war period, from 1915 to 1920). Futhermore, the parish corporation invested in two hundred dollars worth of Liberty Bonds.

In 1913 the Pastor had painted the outside of the rectory and redecorated the church interior. After the War he continued the church improvements. A new carpet was laid in the sanctuary, and a new furnace was installed, replacing the sacristy stove that had tried to warm the whole building. But the change that caused the most comment was the installation of electric lights in 1922. Before that, Our Mother of Sorrows had been illuminated by kerosene lamps, the total annual cost for lighting both church and rectory not exceeding fifteen dollars. It was not until around 1921 that power lines were extended out Latta Road. Once electricity was available, Father Quinn saw to it that the parish plant was wired. The outlay for wire and fixtures was $513.11. Funds for the electrification were raised by the the women of the parish, so it was not necessary to draw on the slim parish income, which the Pastor dispensed very frugally.

In 1920, "Little Father Quinn" had been seriously ill. On the doctor's prescription, he took his first real vacation, in a warmer climate. The prescription worked, and he returned to Mount Read with new vigor. However, he fell ill again in early 1929, when he was sixty-two. This breakdown affected his nerves, and aggravated his native tendency to worry. Too enervated now to discharge his parish duties, he resigned later that year, and went to live with his cousins the McGreals, on Chamberlain Street, Rochester. For months after his resignation he did not even feel equal to celebrating Mass. Eventually, however, Bishop John F. O'Hern (who had succeeded Rochester's second bishop, Thomas F. Hickey, as head of the Rochester Diocese in the spring of 1929), persuaded Father Quinn to serve as chaplain for the nuns of Our Lady of Charity at Holy Angels Home on Winton Road. Once he had struggled through his first Mass there he regained his confidence. With his old sense of priestly duty, the gentle, aging priest rode-and-walked to the convent daily, in all sorts of weather, from 1929 to 1937. The nuns and girls at Holy Angels felt a real loss when he died of pneumonia on June 11, 1937, after a brief illness. He was buried in the graveyard at Paddy Hill.

The priest who Bishop O'Hern named to succeed Father John Quinn at Mount Read was the complete opposite of his predecessor. Father Daniel O'Rourke was outgoing, enterprising, and sociable. His photographic memory enabled him to ornament his ready oratory with scriptural texts and sentimental poetry. He was almost a "professional" Irishman; but he had genuine appreciation of the saga of Paddy Hill, and all of us who have studied that story are indebted to him for having investigated and preserved so many of its historical sources.

Daniel O'Rourke, the son of Peter and Ellen Hogan O'Rourke was born at Scipio, Cayuga County, New York, on September 19, 1888. After attending school in Scipio Center and Auburn, he was graduated from St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's Seminaries in Rochester and ordained a priest by the second bishop of Rochester, Reverend Thomas F. Hickey. The Bishop gave him two assignments as assistant pastor (St. Augustine's, Rochester, 1915-

1919; and Sacred Heart, Rochester, 1919-1927). Then he made him triple pastor of St. Gregory's in Marion; Epiphany in Sodus; and St. Rose's at Sodus Point. Bishop O'Hern transferred him to Mount Read on October 31, 1929.

The new pastor at once set about making the acquaintance of his parishioners, and soon knew them by name. Delving without delay into the history of the parish, he learned that the year of his appointment was the hundredth anniversary of the "Church in the Wood." This was an opportunity not to be missed, so he began to lay plans for a commemorative celebration to be held in the following spring. A centennial commission was formed and subscription was launched to obtain twenty-six hundred dollars for the purchase of a church organ to be dedicated to the memory of the Paddy Hill pioneers. The next step was the inauguration of the **Mother of Sorrows Herald**, a little illustrated paper edited by the Pastor and published irregularly between 1930 and 1932—nine issues in all. It was in the pages of the **Herald** that the editor presented a short history of the parish, a couple of journals of old settlers, and several valuable biographical sketches of prominent parishioners.

As the plans developed for Centennial Day, June 8, 1930, they became more and more ambitious. Bishop O'Hern would, of course, offer the solemn Mass of Thanksgiving. For those who could not get into the church, Father William Thummel, C.SS.R. of St. Joseph's Church, Rochester, agreed to celebrate an outdoor Mass in the cemetery. Amplifiers were to be provided so that those who stood right outside the building might hear all that went on within the church.

A civic ceremony was also decided on, to be held in the open space behind Our Mother of Sorrows. Through the good offices of the leading political member of the parish, State Senator Fred J. Slater (1885-1943), Governor Franklin D. Roosevelt was prevailed upon to attend. On May 9th, Roosevelt wrote a personal note to Father O'Rourke from Warm Springs, Georgia, cordially accepting the invitation and announcing the time of his arrival. To balance off the presence of a Democratic governor, the Republican federal attorney for the Southern District of New York, the Honorable Charles H. Tuttle, was designated by President Herbert Hoover to represent him and invited to give the main address.

June 8th turned out to be a perfect day. Governor and Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt arrived in Rochester by the night train. Because of his crippled legs, Roosevelt was given a special chair close to the sanctuary of the church. Margaret Whelehan, a descendant of Nicholas Read, and Olive Slater, a sister of the Senator, were asked to accompany Mrs. Roosevelt. When Bishop O'Hern marched from the rectory to the church just before 10:30, he was preceded by three-hundred girls who wore white hats and dresses and carried daisy chains. Seating in the church was reserved for the older parish members and political guests. The total turnout was five thousand. Many were former Greece parishioners who had scattered to New York, New Jersey, Illinois, Iowa, Texas, and California.

The Mass of Thanksgiving lasted an hour. Afterward, Mrs. Alice Fleming Hogan served breakfast in the sacristy to the Bishop, the Governor, and Attorney Tuttle. Meanwhile, Mrs. Roosevelt was given an informal reception in the rectory. The waiting throng was entertained by the band of the First Regiment, Knights of St. John.

At 11:45, the speakers mounted the platform set up behind the church. Senator Slater (he and Thomas Whelehan and Raymond Rigney constituted the Centennial Committee) showed himself a skillful master of ceremonies. The Governor spoke first, rather briefly, praising the faith of the parish pioneers. "Some people have preached the strenuous life," he said, in a passage quoted next day in **The New York Times**. "I'm not sure I don't prefer the simple life. I mean the kind of life the pioneers knew, and the life the Church is founded on." Then followed the formal address by Attorney Tuttle, a non-Catholic, who spoke eloquently on the necessary link between religion and education. (Father O'Rourke admired the speech and often recited it afterwards by memory). Bishop O'Hern came next, dealing from a more strictly Catholic angle with the relation between religion and citizenship. Father Dan, the concluding speaker, outshone the rest in poetic eloquence. As one of the reporters

Centennial Celebration, June 8, 1930
While Mass was said in the church by Bishop O'Hern, a Mass was said in the cemetery for the overflow crowd. Attending the event were Governor Franklin Delano Roosevelt, his secretary Guersney T. Gross, Mrs. Roosevelt and State Senator Frederick J. Slater

commented, "Many an old resident of the church had use for a handkerchief at the conclusion of his brief speech."

Mount Read had never known a more glorious day since the dedication of the church in 1860. Its sentiment had engendered a deep sense of warmth and gratitude in the parishioners. Two or three, reminded by Patrick Bulger's old poem about the original "Church in the Wood," were inspired to commemorate the Centennial in verse. Their feelings are pretty well summarized in a stanza of a new "The Church in the Wood" written by Alice Fleming Hogan, who was the daughter of two old stalwarts of the church, Robert and Catherine Preston Fleming:

> We'll be true to the trust you left us,
> We'll work and we'll pray for its good.
> That our children may always be loyal
> To the little "Church in the Wood."

Between 1930 and Pearl Harbor there was a slow but steady increase in parish membership. In 1929, one hundred and ten families were registered (four hundred and fifty-eight individuals). The income in the same year was $4,081.00. Even in the depression years, the parish collection was higher than before because the new pastor installed an envelope system (not without some initial opposition) soon after he arrived. By 1935 the families were still given as one hundred and ten, but membership was up to four hundred and ninety-three. By December 7, 1941—the day of the bombing of Pearl Harbor—the total families were two hundred and four and the parishioners, six hundred and eighty-eight; and now that the Great Depression was over, the annual income was up to $9,441.36.

Small though the congregation still was, it sent seventy-two young people into the armed forced in World War II. One was a woman, who signed up with the WAVES. Of the seventy-one men, fifty-four were in the Army, eight in the Air Force, and nine in the Navy. Even little rural churches were often called upon to sacrifice their youth: Our Mother of Sorrows lost an infantryman, Leo Burnat, and two airmen, Louis Bemish and Walter Weaver.

When world peace finally returned in 1945, there was an explosion of resettlement in the United States. In most urban areas, this meant moving out of the center of the cities into suburbs old and new. The Town of Greece became particularly attractive to Rochesterians, so real estate developers began to buy up the farmlands in North Greece and lay out new residential developments.

By 1979 Allyndaire Farm, operated by F. Howard Whelehan, was the only farm on the eastern slope of Mount Read still under cultivation. The farmers could scarcely be blamed for selling or leasing their acreage at prices that far surpassed the income they had realized from agriculture. An interesting result of the conversion of the farmlands to residential developments was the disappearance forever of the Paddy Hill UFO's—the little dancing globes of light that had long been a nighttime phenomenon around Mount Read. In 1887, William Connelly's diary had referred to these strange yellow spheres as the "death light;" and they did appear, more than once, just before a death in the neighborhood.

By 1964 suburban growth had raised the parish population to one thousand three hundred and eighty-five families. Father O'Rourke had thus far made a practice of personally contacting each family that moved into his sheepfold. Now he had to admit that the task was beyond his powers. The chief complaint of the Catholic newcomers was that Our Mother of Sorrows had no parochial school. Even the little "semi-Catholic" district schoolhouse had been closed in 1929, and the building itself sold and moved east down Latta Road to be remodeled into a residence. If Father Maurice had declined to establish a church school, Father Dan knew that he himself would have to take action. In 1946 he found that there were some one hundred and twenty Catholic children of school age within the boundaries of Our Mother of Sorrows parish. Having reached an agreement with the Sisters of St. Joseph to provide a staff, he opened Our Mother of Sorrows School that fall in the Bemish-McKenzie house at 2151 Latta Road. In charge of the one hundred and seventeen children who finally matriculated were Sister Agnes Cecilia Troy, principal; Sister Joseph Gilmary Russell, and Sister Teresina Kern. The fourth teacher was a parishioner, Miss Margaret McShea. Because of the increase of potential enrollment in 1947, the Pastor set up a prefabricated aluminum schoolhouse south of the rectory. He had to add another room to this pre-fab school in 1948. It was neither a comfortable nor a beautiful building, but it was to serve the parish as school, hall, and chapel for twenty years. At the outset, Greece had no provision for busing students to the school, so Father O'Rourke had to make the rounds four times a day to transport his little scholars.

Finally the parish was able to build a proper school on Latta Road east of the church. Designed by Charles Pioch, to accommodate four hundred and thirty children, and built of buff brick, it was dedicated by Bishop James E. Kearney of Rochester, on October 11, 1953. The task was particularly happy for the Bishop, who had always disliked the makeshift appearance of the "Quonset School." When the new school building opened that fall, it had the largest number of students of any parish school in the Rochester Diocese.

The last project undertaken by the pastor was the building of a convent for the Sisters. When they

First schoolhouse at 2151 Latta Road, 1946

Father Daniel B. O'Rourke
Pastor, 1929-1961

opened the school in the Bemish house, they lived upstairs over the classrooms. On the completion of the Quonset schoolhouse, they moved into a house on Latta Road next to where the brick school now stands. The house and lot were purchased by the parish from Mrs. Leo Whelehan. Father O'Rourke planned to erect a modern brick convent on the back of this lot, and then to remove the Whelehan house.

Unfortunately, Father Dan was unable to carry out the convent project personally because of failing health. But the convent did rise, thanks to his assistant pastor, Father Raymond F. Moore, who was assigned to Our Mother of Sorrows on October 31, 1955. After a campaign for funds in 1956, Fathers O'Rourke and Moore broke ground on Thanksgiving Day, 1957, and the Sisters' splendid new home was ready in October, 1958.

Alice O'Rourke had died on June 2, 1956. The pastor's older sister, this wonderful little woman had been his housekeeper for years, and had edified all by her piety and industry. Another sister, Sister M. Victorine, S.S.J., passed away in the spring of 1958. Father Dan missed both of them very much. Some time afterward, the Pastor himself suffered an affliction. Crippled by a stroke, he was confined to a wheel chair. Eventually, because he could no longer fulfill his parochial responsibilities, he resigned the parish on June 27, 1961, and was named pastor emeritus.

Daniel O'Rourke had been a good shepherd to his flock for over three decades, and they would not soon forget him. A "soggarth aroon" ("dear priest") in the old Irish tradition, he was nonetheless a progressive leader, always eager to undertake things that nobody else had undertaken; and he successfully engineered the transition of their little rural parish into a metropolitan Catholic center. But he never lost his personal touch. Those who had lived through the transition recall especially the annual festival on Zweigle's lakeside lawn. In the days before Vatican II restored the Prayer of the Faithful, Father Dan was already practicing its equivalent when he asked his people to pray at Mass for certain intentions. One annual intention was for good weather on the great day of the festival. For three Sundays prior to that date he led them in reciting the Magnificat to our Mother of Sorrows. It seems that the prayer always worked.

What the parishioners remember most, however, was their pastor's great charity. One illustration was his yearly picnic for the children of St. Patrick's and St. Mary's orphanages. Also, at Christmas time he gave a toy to every child in the parish, distributing them from the altar. Needy individuals knew that this genuinely selfless priest would never turn them away when they called on him for help.

No epitaph was carved on Father O'Rourke's headstone when he was laid to rest in the Paddy Hill Cemetery; but the words of one of the women of the parish could have served as a good text.

"He gave away everything."

Chapter Four

As the congregation of Our Mother of Sorrows grew, it became necessary to add several more Sunday Masses to the schedule. In 1956, Father O'Rourke welcomed the weekend assistance of Father George Wood, the diocesan director of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith. When the Pastor resigned on June 27, 1961, Bishop Kearney did not have to look far for a logical successor. He chose Father Wood.

At the time of his appointment, the new pastor was forty-six. Born in Rochester on October 30, 1914, he was the son of Sydney and Ottilia Schmidt Wood. No "Paddy" he, to judge by the names of his parents. But the day of the "national" parish was over. Suburban Greece was now the home of people of many national and mixed strains. Furthermore, even the most Irish of the older families were aware that before the arrival of Father Quinn and Father O'Rourke, they had gotten along famously with an Italian shepherd, Father Biggio, and a wonderful French shepherd, Father Maurice. Like these two non-Irish predecessors, Father George Wood took readily to the "wearing of the green." In fact, he was already chaplain of the Ancient Order of Hibernians when he arrived, and he conducted several tours to the "Ould Sod."

George S. Wood brought many talents to his new assignment. After attending Aquinas Institute and St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's Seminaries, he was ordained by Bishop James E. Kearney on May 18, 1940. From 1940 to 1956 he was assistant pastor of Immaculate Conception Church, one of Rochester's older "Irish" parishes. During 1955-1956 he doubled as part-time associate director of the diocesan Society of the Propagation of the Faith; and in 1956 he became its full-time director.

Bishop Kearney must have been moved in large part to assign Father Wood to Greece by the executive ability he had shown while in charge of the Diocesan missions office. An earlier accomplishment had been his initiative in the establishment, in 1946, of the School of the Holy Childhood in one section of Immaculate Conception schoolhouse. This educational undertaking for the benefit of children with learning problems later moved into the old school of Our Lady of Victories Church on Andrews Street. Today it carries on its admirable work for exceptional children on the first floor of the diocesan Pastoral Center. Father Wood continues to support its efforts and serve as chaplain of its Parents' Group even today.

A knowing executive was just what Our Mother of Sorrows needed in 1961. Even though large chunks of the parish territory had been cut off recently to form the new parishes of Our Lady of Mercy (1957) and St. Lawrence (1959), and another division would soon follow (St. Mark, 1964), the Mount Read congregation still gave promise of expanding up into the 1980's. A new church building was the primary need, although this could scarcely be set up without providing better hall and rectory facilities. Father Dan had been working toward that goal since 1960. In 1964, when the parish population had reached fifty-two hundred and seventy-eight, it was necessary to schedule four Masses per Sunday in the church and six in the Quonset hall.

The congregation rolled up its sleeves and took on the big new project in September, 1964. A parish drive was undertaken, with a goal of a half million dollars. (As it turned out, the goal was not only fully pledged but fully paid). After searching for an architectural firm that was willing to accept the challenge of building a large complex on a sloping terrain, the committee engaged the Robert Stickle Associates of Cleveland, Ohio. They had recently designed Bishop Kearney and Cardinal Mooney high schools in Rochester.

The architects drew up plans for a large, almost square building that would accommodate, under the most crowded conditions, over thirteen hundred. A one-story baptistery thrust out from the front. At the back, and running out to the south, was a flat-topped wing that would provide office and rectory accommodations. A large hall was to occupy the basement. The structural material was to be buff and tan brick trimmed with limestone and decorated with sculptured limestone symbols. The steep hip roof of the church would be crowned by a delicate aluminum spire whose cross was designedly higher than the cross on the old brick church up on the hill.

Father Wood and Father O'Rourke turned the first earth on September 19, 1965—the retired pastor's birthday. The Werner Spitz Company, Rochester contractors, began the actual work on March 7, 1966. It was possible to set the spire in place as early as the feast of the Maternity of Our Lady, October 11, 1966. Father Wood himself laid the cornerstone on April 23rd of the following year.

The architects faced some problems in working our the interior design. Vatican II, in session when the plans were being drawn up, had issued its decree on the revision of the liturgy on December 3, 1963. This prescribed new arrangements for liturgical space. However, details of the new prescriptions came out only piecemeal, so church designers had to do some guessing here and there. They guessed wrong in some matters. However, in providing a separate Eucharistic side chapel for Our Mother of Sorrows, they proved to be in advance of the times. Winterich of Cleveland furnished the marble work for this chapel and the main sanctuary. Rambusch of New York designed the windows of the church (with angelic symbolism) and the

Groundbreaking for the new church was on September 19, 1965, retired pastor Father O'Rourke's birthday. On April 23, 1967 Father Wood conducted the cornerstone laying. Bishop Fulton J. Sheen dedicated the church on September 22, 1968

baptistery (which symbolize the Redemption). Rambusch also executed the colossal image of the "Commissioning Christ," a figure outlined in gold leaf on the wall behind the high altar.

The whole project was so well coordinated that until the new complex was finished, the rectory continued in undisturbed use and nothing interfered with the schedules of either the old church or the Quonset. After completion, the century-old rectory (the remodeled St. Ambrose Church) was demolished, and the Quonset, sold to the Town of Greece, was moved **whole** down the Hill to Dewey Avenue.

On St. Patrick's Day, 1968, the new church of Our Mother of Sorrows, completed at a cost of one and a quarter million dollars, was inaugurated with a Mass celebrated by Bishop James E. Kearney. He was now the retired bishop of Rochester. In keeping with new regulations issued after Vatican II, he had submitted his resignation to Pope Paul VI, for reasons of advanced age. At the same time as the Pope accepted the resignation, October 21, 1966, he named Kearney's successor the famous radio and television orator, Most Reverend Fulton J. Sheen. Bishop Sheen was installed in the Cathedral on the following December 15th.

It thus fell to the lot of the sixth bishop of Rochester to perform the solemn rite of dedicating the new church on September 22, 1968. Parishioners were especially happy to have Father O'Rourke on hand for the occasion, sitting up in front, proud as a peacock, in his electric wheelchair. Father Dan had continued to reside in the rectory after Father Wood's arrival in 1961; but because of increasing disability he had to enter St. Ann's Home in 1966. The dedication was his last great memory of the Paddy Hill parish. He died at St. Ann's less than two years later, on May 5, 1970.

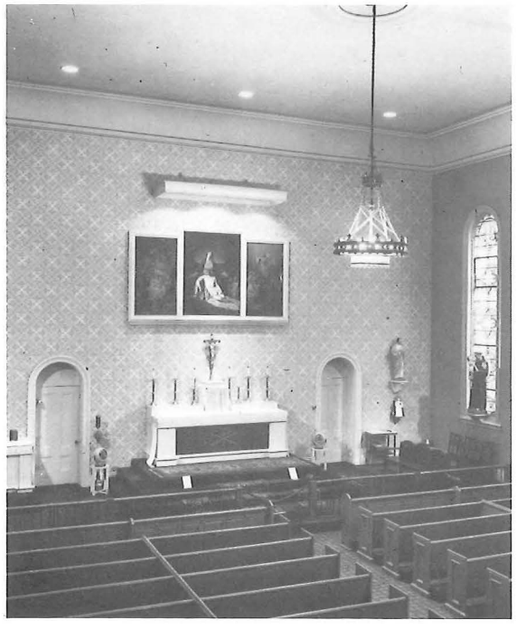
And what was now to become of the old brick church? Both Pastor and Grecians agreed that this outstanding landmark should be preserved. In 1968, the parish entered into a contract with the Town of Greece whereby the Town would take the building on lease for the next twenty years for use as a branch public library. The Town Board would renovate the interior radically for its new purposes; but the stained glass windows and the exterior would remain untouched. The new branch library opened in 1969. It has proved serviceable, to all appearances.

This old brick church had for many years hosted pigeons in its bell tower. When the new church was dedicated, the pigeons were not impressed. For them the old church was the only church, so they continued to frequent it like a flock of security guards. Whenever you drive by it now, day or night, you are likely to see a pigeon standing like a sentinel on the head of the marble statue of Our Lady. A few years ago an imaginative six-year-old boy whose family live in Greece but are not members of the parish, announced to his parents quite decisively that he knew the name of that protective pigeon. "It is Prinarius," he said.

It seems as though Prinarius Pigeon is on his way to becoming another feature in the folklore of Paddy Hill.

If North Greece had become an exuberant suburb after World War II, it did not escape the pessimism and frustration that came with the 1960's. Parishioners were called on to serve in the Korean War and in that most disillusioning of American conflicts, the Vietnam War. Greece in general experienced the tide of American chagrin that followed Watergate. Greece Catholics experienced the unintended and unexpected confusion that followed in the wake of the Second Vatican Council.

The brick church after redecoration of the sanctuary, 1963



Our Mother of Sorrows statue by John O'Brien of Baltimore, 1898, is located in front of the tower of the old church, now used as a library

But the parish itself is vigorous as it reaches its 150th birthday. Perhaps the best way to describe this sesquicentenarian institution is to cite the most recent statistics available on it. They are taken principally from the report for the year 1977-1978 that the pastor made to Bishop Joseph L. Hogan (who became seventh bishop of Rochester in 1969 and retired in 1978).

According to the parish records, in July, 1978 there were twenty-four hundred registered families in the congregation. (A very active Legion of Mary keeps this census constantly updated). The total population would therefore be somewhere around seventy-two hundred. Families that used envelopes weekly were nine hundred and eighty-nine. Families not registered or not using envelopes numbered around thirteen hundred. Sunday Mass attendance of adults and children averaged thirty-four hundred.

The staff of the parish comprised: Four priests (the Pastor, Father George S. Wood, Monsignor John M. Duffy, Father Joseph W. Dailey and Richard J. Shatzel): Mrs. Vincent Maio, Bookkeeper; Mrs. Edward McMahon, Secretary; Mrs. Frederick Rauner, Housekeeper and Sacristan; Mrs. Charles Stratton, Church organist and soloist; Mrs. John Effinger, Choir Director and Miss Rosalie Mugavero, Folk Group Director; Sister Virginia Steinwachs, Principal; Mrs. Larry Nichols, C.C.D. Coordinator; and Arthur and Eugene Taylor, Supervisors of Maintenance.

Senior member of this large staff is Monsignor Duffy. The post of "honorary associate pastor" he has held actively since 1968 is his third career. The first two careers were Diocesan Superintendent of Schools, and pastor of St. Augustine's Church. On June 9, 1979, Monsignor Duffy observed his eighty-sixth birthday and the fifty-sixth anniversary of his ordination.

The Pastor recorded one hundred and eighty-three baptisms for the year 1977-1978, seventeen of them converts to the Faith. Holy Communion distributed in church were one hundred and seventy-two thousand; Communion administered at home were four hundred and sixty-five. Of the eighty-nine marriages, fifty-seven had been of two Catholic parties, thirty-two of one Catholic party. The number of burials was forty-one.

Parish voluntary organizations were: the Men's Club (one hundred and fifty), the Rosary Society (two hundred and fifty), the Legion of Mary (forty-five), the Home School Association (two hundred), the school band (twelve), Scouting groups (one hundred and twenty-five), and the Ushers' Club (fifty-seven). Organizations required since the Second Vatican Council are: the Parish Council (seventeen), the Liturgy Committee (ten), the Human Development Commitee (seven), and the Finance Committee (eight).

In 1978 Our Mother of Sorrows School remained one of the largest and most flourishing in the Diocese, with close to five hundred registered in its kindergarten-to-eighth-grade. There were two hundred and seventy parish students enrolled in various Catholic high schools. A large Christian Doctrine program existed for the benefit of over twelve hundred children in the public schools, taught by eighty teachers. High-schoolers in this group numbered eighty-one.

Father Wood's financial report of July 1, 1978, noted the recent election of Mrs. James Noble and Mr. Bernard Swiatek as lay trustees of the parish corporation. Total parish receipts for the fiscal year were $616,273.53. (A century before, Father Maurice had reported total annual receipts as eleven hundred and twenty-five dollars!) Most of this income was produced by the weekly collections: two hundred and ninety-one thousand dollars. Bingo was the second largest source: forty-eight thousand dollars. General parish expenditures were given as one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. On the other hand, general educational expenses were two hundred and twenty thousand dollars: sixty-one hundred dollars for the two Sisters of St. Joseph; one hundred and thirty thousand dollars for the seventeen lay teachers; and the rest for teachers' benefits. The parish debt amounted to four hundred and seventy-seven thousand dollars, which was being reduced by thirty-thousand dollars each year.

From all these details this picture emerges of Mother of Sorrows 1979. It is a typical suburban parish of upper middle-class character, the parishioners in large part employees of Eastman Kodak, well-educated and often engaged in technical research. Younger couples who moved into the then new residential development of the 1940's and 1950's are now bidding farewell to their grown sons and daughters, who more often than not establish themselves outside the parish boundaries. However, the continued opening of other residential projects has thus far kept the district population of children relatively high.

Father Wood has shown himself open to the changes in the liturgy inaugurated by the Second Vatican Council, so long as they are in keeping with the

Church's specific regulations. The climate of Our Mother of Sorrows can therefore be characterized as neither "radical" nor "reactionary," but "straight-down-the-road." Sunday Mass attendance has maintained a greater constancy than in some other diocesan parishes. This may be due in part to the replacement by newcomers of those who move away. Our Mother of Sorrows School is also thriving at a time when many other schools in the Diocese are languishing. More children apply for entrance each year than the classrooms can accommodate.

The program of parish activities is very extensive. Even if these are not all income-producing, they are socially valuable in giving the various groups a sense of connection with their parish church. However, a high degree of organization also presents problems. Multiplication of committees and committee meetings, for instance, can make unreasonable demands on the time and mental energy of all involved: clergy, staff, and laity. In this matter, downward adjustments are decidedly in order.

Even though the Paddy Hill Parish has been spared several of the devotional and educational crises that have beset other diocesan congregations, it has not escaped entirely those by-products of an American Catholicism that has finally joined the American mainstream and unfortunately accepted in large part the attitudes of the American media rather than the attitudes of the Catholic Church. If Our Mother of Sorrows has been able thus far to handle its financial obligations despite a spiralling inflation, it must face in the future the far more basic threat of a falling-away from the practice of the Catholic Faith. Lessening use of confession, lessening attendance at Masses of obligation are symptomatic of that contemporary trend. That is why it is especially important to remind the parishioners, in this their 150th parochial year, of the great **active** faith of the early pioneers of Our Mother of Sorrows. Those forerunners valued the word of God and the sacraments so much that they would travel any distance to profit by them, and expend every effort to secure a priest to administer them in their own rural community.

When God in his own good time brings into fruition the real aim of Vatican II, "that we may be found increasingly faithful to the gospel of Christ," it will be largely through the efforts of a devoted laity. The parishioners of today will not have to look far for examples that devotion. They lie buried in the graveyard of the Church in the Wood.

Whatever hardships the people of the parish have experienced over the last fifteen decades, and whatever problems may face them today, there is no doubt that in the annals of Our Mother of Sorrows, the good things far exceed the bad. On its

Monsignor Duffy's eighty-fifth birthday and the fifty-fifth anniversary of his ordination were marked with a concelebrated Mass on June 6, 1978. Present were from left, Father John T. Reif, Father George Wood, Monsignor, Father Joseph W. Dailey, and Father John D. Malley

150th anniversary, therefore, the Church on Paddy Hill has every right to rejoice and be thankful.

Thankful to God for his rich blessings. Thankful to St. Ambrose, and even more to Our Mother of Sorrows, for their constant intercession through Christ. Thankful to the bishops, priests, and Sisters who have given of themselves to strengthen the Catholic of Greece in their ancestral faith. Thankful, most thankful, to the parishioners of a century-and-a-half who brought the Gospel to Mount Read and have borne constant witness to it ever since. Because all of these (to use the 1834 phrase of Patrick Bulger) have "helped the work on," they deserve to share in the prayers we offer for the pioneers.

And the Emigrant drove from the cot of his sire,
To seek amongst strangers a home;
As soon as he looks on the Cross-finished spire,
He prays for the welfare of Read and Maguire
And those who had helped the work on.

There are now two crosses that dominate Mount Read. They will continue to remind those who see them not only of the faithful who raised them up, but, even more, of Him who consecrated the cross as a symbol by His saving death. That was the lesson that Father Maurice caused to be carved into the stone shaft that still marks the site of the little frame church of 1829.

"Hail Holy Cross! Emblem of my salvation. My only hope."

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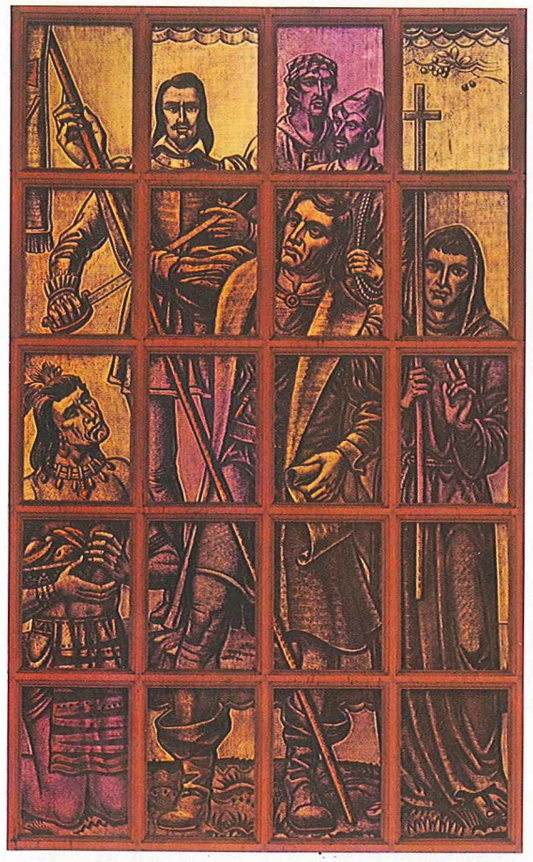
INTRODUCTION

This is a record of the milestones of our American Catholic Heritage during this Bicentennial Era. It tells where we came from, what our values and traditions are and who influenced our thoughts. It also gives us insight into the success of our institutions and people. In this age of computers and computerized knowledge there is apt to be a decline in wisdom, and while there has been a tremendous growth in knowledge there has not been a proportionate growth in wisdom. People feel significant only in terms of the area that produced them. • Wisdom is close to the hearth and to the altar as Cicero put it. The history of your parish and of your diocese contribute to our American Catholic Heritage. This is where history is made and history is felt. • If people perpetuate their history with pride and intelligence then the total Church is made strong.

John Cardinal Wright *Vatican City*



Detail from the Christopher Columbus window which commemorates the discovery of America. All the windows and black and white details shown are in Queen of Peace Church, North Arlington, New Jersey. They were designed and produced by the Rambusch Studios, of New York, N. Y. Copyright © 1975, 1977, All Rights Reserved, Custom Editorial Services, So. Hackensack, N. J.

A History of Catholic America

From Columbus to the Twentieth Century

A History of Catholic America

From Columbus to the Twentieth Century

"Jesus et Maria sint nobis in via."

The tall patriarchal figure with prematurely graying red hair, his piercing blue eyes stirred with the depth of his emotion, lifted his head from prayer in gratitude to his heavenly guardians. Every evening at sundown he had led the sailors of his ships in singing hymns of praise to the Blessed Virgin Mary, (Stella Maris) Star of the Sea. Each day, in a priestly manner he had cloistered himself in his cabin to read the Divine Office.

The voyage that immortalized his name was nearing its destination. True, America was not his intended goal, for he fervently believed that God destined him to discover a new route to the East Indies. But the devout Catholic explorer, guided by a relentless faith, found instead an entirely new world.

Regarding his own genius, Christopher Columbus was far from humble. His confidence in his divine mission caused him to persist even when he was repeatedly rejected by Portugal, Italy, England, and then Spain. Queen Isabella's change of heart and final acceptance of his scheme was prompted by the intercession of a Franciscan priest.

Courage Does Not Prevail

Another Italian, Giovanni Caboto, the Anglicized sea captain and geographer, John Cabot, explored our coast from its northern boundaries to the Carolinas. In 1497 he established England's claim to "this New World."

But the first attempts at colonization began with Juan Ponce de Leon, who discovered the "island of La Florida" during the first week of April, 1513. No priests accompanied this voyage, but as a Catholic layman, Ponce himself dedicated this land to God.

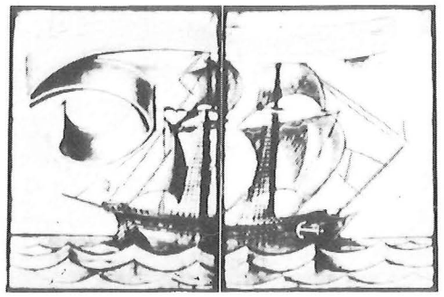
In September of 1513, Vasco Nunez de Balboa braved the hostilities of natives, swamps, jungle creatures, and polluted water to struggle from Panama to the Pacific Ocean. Only about half of the two hundred or so in his party survived.

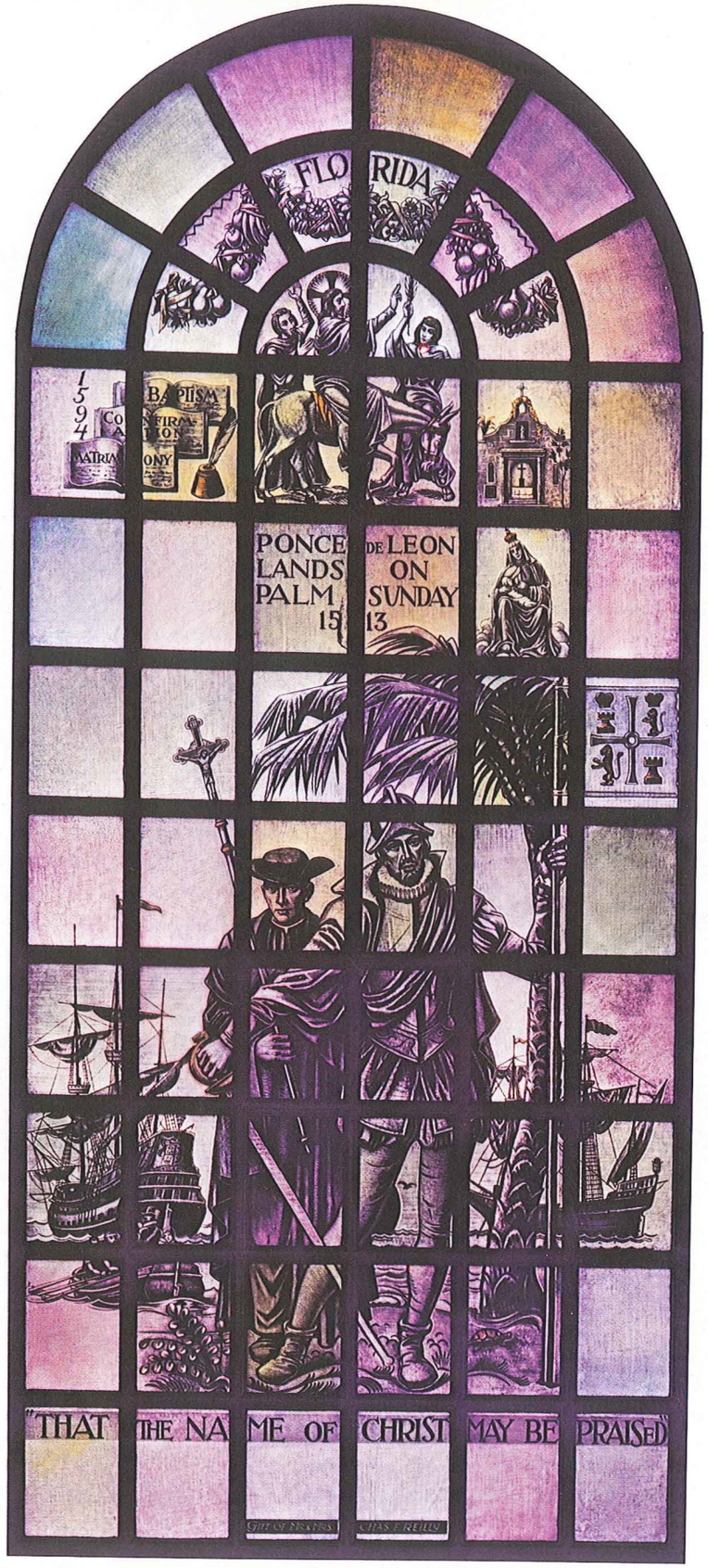
The first authenticated visit of priests to our shores occurred in 1521 when Ponce de Leon finally carried out a commission given him seven years earlier by King Ferdinand V. He was to secure possession of this new land and to bring priests to convert the Indians, who were to be treated well. Ships burdened with livestock, agricultural tools, and weapons sailed from Puerto Rico to the Gulf Coast. The passengers had barely disembarked when they were besieged by Indians. Narrowly escaping death, they set sail for Cuba, their mission aborted.

Just two years later, an Italian, Giovanni Verrazano, made France's first New World discoveries, exploring most of our eastern coast and becoming the first white man to enter what is now New York Harbor. His next trip to these strange lands proved fatal. Carib Indians in Brazil cannibalized him.

Subsequent colonization attempts were short-lived. Those not shipwrecked or felled by disease on the long ocean voyage found unendurable hardships where they hoped to find gold and silver. Illness, exposure, starvation, hostile savages, took their toll. The biographies of these amazing Christians—religious and laymen—relate stories of almost incomprehensible horrors.

One such ill-fated expedition came to a satisfactory conclusion in 1534, when the four remaining men of a party originally numbering four hundred plus eighty horses and four fully equipped ships, were sheltered by a friendly Indian tribe. Cabeza de Vaca and his companions, among them El Negro Esteban, an African Moor, the first Negro of record in our country, had wandered through the wilderness for six years, leaving behind the bodies of their fellow pioneers, scenes of bloody massacres, and the bones of horses they had eaten to forestall starvation. Where they encountered natives who befriended or enslaved them and were able to learn their dialects or to communicate through signs, Cabeza de Vaca would preach to them, pray over and aid their sick, even perform baptisms.





The fruits of Florida crown this window of Ponce de Leon who discovered Florida on Palm Sunday, 1513. Our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, and the first Blessed Virgin Mary Shrine in the United States are also shown.

And so it seems likely that the first person to preach our faith in this country was a layman.

The travels of Don Hernando de Soto during the 1540's left bodies of hundreds of the martyred faithful along river banks and wooded trails, but no permanent settlements.

America's first recognized martyr was a saintly Franciscan. Father Juan de Padilla, who had suffered with Francisco Vasquez de Coronado the miseries and disappointment of fortune-hunting journeys over our western states, stayed behind to do mission work among the Kansas redmen. He had great success in converting the Quivira Indians, but was unaware that when he moved on to Christianize others they would consider his association with their enemies as traitorous. In 1542, he was ambushed and murdered, the arrows of martyrdom repeatedly piercing his body as he knelt on the Kansas prairie, facing his assassins.

In 1549, Father Luis Cancer de Barbastro, convinced his missionary endeavors would prove fruitful if he could reach Indians not previously assailed by Spanish weapons, set out, accompanied by three other Dominicans, on an unarmed voyage from Vera Cruz, Mexico. Unfortunately, the ship's captain had paid little heed to his landing orders and brought the missionaries to the borders of a Floridian Indian village where hatred for the white man had seethed since former encounters with armed Spanish soldiers of fortune. A treacherous plot in which the natives feigned friendship led to the cruel deaths of Father Cancer and two of his priestly friends—another typical chapter in the story of the Spanish pilgrims.

It was the multiplicity of these devastating events that caused King Philip II, in 1561, to cease operations in exploring this part of the New World—a decision not easily made.

Christianizing The Indians

King Philip was forced to recant his decision when French forces threatened Spanish treasure fleets. In March of 1565 he commissioned Pedro Menendez de Aviles, Captain General of the Indies Fleet, to establish a Floridian fort incorporating a religious mission.

When Menendez finally located the French base in September and then established his own, he named the harbor "St. Augustine." The first pastor of the future United States, Father Francisco Lopez de Mendoza Grajales, offered there a Solemn Mass in honor of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, on this feast day, September 8th, bringing together Spaniards and Indians in the first communal Thanksgiving of our country's first permanent settlement. It also marked the inception of the Parish of St. Augustine.

Menendez, while awaiting additional Spanish Jesuits, traveled the Florida coasts erecting crosses and leaving behind lay instructors at many points, particularly those where military outposts were established.

When more Spanish Jesuits came to the New World, some attempted to establish Catholicism in the Chesapeake Bay area while traversing this region in 1570-72. The early Spanish explorers called the Chesapeake Bay La Bahia de la Madre de Dios, the Bay of the Mother of God. A number of them were murdered by supposedly friendly Indians; the rest were withdrawn.

It required two decades from the time of their initial arrival at Santa Elena, Florida, in 1577, before the Franciscan Fathers could mobilize a full-scale missionary effort. Often, the Governor would escort them to an Indian village and, in full view of the assemblage, kneel down to kiss the hands of the missionaries as a sign of sacred authority invested in these men of God.

An Indian uprising decimated Georgian Franciscans in 1597, but within the century the Friars Minor organized at least thirty thriving missions at which 26,000 Indians were instructed in European arts and crafts as well as Catholic catechism.

Our nation's second church was erected in 1598—in San Juan, later Saint Gabriel, New Mexico. In that same year, "Nuestra Senora de la Soledad" (Our Lady of Solitude), the first hospital, was built in Florida. It was followed within a decade by our country's first school building, situated in St. Augustine.

Many of the Indians, meanwhile, became loyal friends and devout converts. They displayed to delighted teachers their intelligence by learning to read, often in less than two months, the dictionaries and devotional books prepared in their own language by Father Francisco de Pareja, a missionary who was constantly impressed by their eager acceptance of the faith of Christ.

Unlike the Spanish—who often in their search for gold and silver enslaved Indians as manual laborers—the French in their missions of the Great Lakes area were fur-trappers and found it expedient to befriend the natives who served as guides and traders. Many Indian souls were won by the dedicated labors of pioneer missionaries in this region, despite the treacheries of the warlike Iroquois tribes. Of these, the Mohawks were the most bloodthirsty.

St. Isaac Jogues, who is a saint of the United States, survived incredible tortures at the hands of the Mohawks after refusing to leave behind some captive Huron Indian converts. His companion, Rene Goupil, was tortured and murdered. Father Jogues served the village as a slave to all—including the children—for almost a year before his escape. He returned to France with great honor, publicly revered by the Queen Mother and praised by Pope Urban VIII.

But Father Jogues went back to his mission field. He knew the language and the customs of the Mohawks and felt called to bring Christianity to them. In 1646, he returned to Ossernenon (now Auriesville, New York), the village where he had been held captive, and was fatally attacked by a tomahawk-wielding savage.

Contemporary Jesuit diaries describe in horrible detail the inhuman atrocities suffered by their brother priests on both sides of the Canadian border. But sometimes Indians unresponsive to the friendly overtures of missionaries were converted by the saintly examples of their prisoners.

Near the spot where others were martyred—including St. Isaac Jogues—two Mohawk women were sentenced to death because they refused to denounce Christianity. One of them, her body brutally tortured before being consumed by flames, was the daughter of an Iroquois chief. Another chief's daughter, Kateri Tekakwitha dedicated herself to Christ throughout the illnesses and hardships she suffered. She died at the age of twenty-three.

Another French Jesuit missionary to the Indians was Father Jacques Marquette, who ministered to many Algonquin tribes and established a number of Indian missions before joining Louis Jolliet to explore the Mississippi River region. One of Father Marquette's last accomplishments for the Illinois Indians was the founding of the Mission of the Immaculate Conception, where he celebrated Mass on Holy Thursday and Easter Sunday, 1675. Soon after this, only a month before his thirty-eighth birthday, Father Marquette died, a priestly servant who had truly given his all.

The Spanish Southeast discovered that civilizing the natives still did not provide the peace and safety they cherished. Spanish and Catholic Indian settlements in Georgia and Florida suffered from fierce raids by the bitterly anti-Catholic French Huguenots. Their hatred was fanned by memories of their persecution in Europe and their barbarities outdid even those of the Mohawks.

Later, it was the English who came down from Carolina to do battle, killing many and taking hundreds of Indians as captive slaves.

The English Colonies

Black slaves were already laboring on Virginia farms, the Pilgrims had colonized the coast of Massachusetts and were moving into Connecticut, New Amsterdam was the name chosen for Peter Minuit's incredible real estate purchase, when Cecilius Calvert, the second Lord Baltimore, established a Catholic-ruled colony in Maryland.

In the Spring of 1634, *The Ark* and *The Dove* brought these pioneers to their new home, St. Mary's, between the peaceful waters of the Potomac River and the Chesapeake Bay. A church building was erected almost immediately—this was the first religious toleration in the States—and within five years, at least four other parish centers were established, all spiritually cared for by Jesuits and some lay brothers. Many Indians—Patuxents and Piscataways—were converted and some gave large land-grants to the Jesuits.

Father Andrew White, "The Apostle to Maryland," had been a victim of religious persecution in his native England, where his proscribed spiritual ministrations had been discovered and led to his banishment. He helped Lord Baltimore in his efforts to colonize Maryland, where he was pastor of St. Mary's Parish until 1638. Cecilius Calvert insisted on religious tolerance and accepted all, including people of the Hebrew religion, into his Christian community. Protestants, who were in the majority, held their own services. No "state religion" was imposed on anyone.

St. Mary's was but ten years old when Richard Ingle, "Champion of the Protestant Cause," invaded the colony, seized Father White and the other Jesuits and deported them to England in chains for trial as criminals.

Leonard Calvert recaptured the settlement, but upon his death in 1648, a Protestant, William Stone, became Governor. Maryland's Toleration Act was signed in 1649. Designed to protect Catholics and others from rising Puritan hostilities, it was actually less comprehensive than the unwritten religious policy enjoyed under Lord Baltimore.

Then, a few years later, the Puritans captured Governor Stone, outlawed Roman Catholicism,

plundered Jesuit estates, forced all priests into exile, and executed several Catholics. Not until the re-establishment of Calvert rule in 1657 did normalcy return. Tobacco-growing and other farming, as well as some iron furnaces, then brought a certain level of prosperity.

The year 1674 saw the first documented ordination in this country. On a visit to St. Augustine, Bishop Gabriel Diaz Vara Calderon of Santiago, Cuba ordained seven young priests.

The English now controlled New Amsterdam, which they renamed New York. For years, religious and political turmoil was rampant both here and in the mother country. The once-popular Catholic Governor of New York, Thomas Dongan, and three Jesuit priests he had brought there, had to flee for their lives. The English colonies, including the once repression-free Maryland, were now to recognize none but the Anglican Church.

From the turn of the century until the Revolution, the Catholic Church was forced underground. A proliferation of abusive laws were effected in Maryland. In 1715 and in 1729, laws were enacted that allowed the government to seize an orphaned child (even if one parent was still living) and have him raised a Protestant. A 1718 law not only forbade Catholics to hold public office, but also completely disfranchised them. A 1756 law proclaimed that all priests' properties no longer belonged to them and that all Catholics were to be doubly-taxed.

But the priestly servants of Mother Church would not forsake their beloved Mass. In Maryland, for instance, a "Mister" Thomas Mansell, whose true identity—Father Mansell of the Society of Jesus—was known only to the faithful, began buying up land for a soon-thriving plantation. Negro slaves labored on its farmlands. Tenant farmers paid rent to Mr. Mansell. Small shops and mills

produced wares that were shipped from its river wharf.

Some noticeable differences in this plantation, however, began to arouse neighbors' suspicions. The proprietor was a bachelor and seemed to do a great deal of traveling. Other men lived there at times and they, too, came and went frequently. There was even a chapel in the house.

This establishment, which was named "St. Xavier," came to be known simply as "Bohemia" because of its location at the head of the Little Bohemia River. The academy organized there, under a cloak of secrecy, was a great bulwark of Catholic education, serving far more than the three states that met near its borders.

"Old Bohemia," the mother church of what is now the Diocese of Wilmington, is presently being restored as an historical site by a non-denominational organization, The Old Bohemia Historical Society.

Another illustrious priest who had to be secretive in his missionary wanderings was Father Ferdinand "Farmer" (an alias for his real name of Steinmeyer), a man who had given up the study of medicine in his native Germany to enter the Society of Jesus in 1743. Ordained in 1750 and originally assigned to the mission field of China, he was

sent to Lancaster, Pennsylvania, in 1752. Traveling constantly, he formed new congregations and ministered to existing ones.

In 1758, Father Farmer's permanent headquarters became old St. Joseph's Church in Philadelphia from which he continued his surreptitious visits to places as far afield as Delaware, New Jersey, and New York City. Several times he celebrated Mass in the home of a devout Catholic who lived on Wall Street, and after the Revolution this New York City congregation became an important nucleus for Catholic immigrants flocking to the city.

His priestly concern extended to enemies as well. During the Revolution, he ministered to Hessians occupying Philadelphia. He gained such popularity among these men of his native tongue that he was offered a chaplaincy by the British forces. His belief in the American cause dictated his refusal.

The brave Father Farmer, who at times actually risked death to serve his people, has been termed "the Father of the Church in New York and New Jersey."

The Colonies Expand

On March 3, 1699, the exploratory party of Pierre le Moyne d'Iberville, commissioned by King Louis XIV to found a colony in Louisiana, erected a cross at a site later to be named New Orleans.

The French were anxious to colonize their new possessions. When Antoine Crozat failed in New Orleans, a real "pro" stepped in. The charter granted to John Law and his Company of the Indies included these provisions:

> As in the settlement of the countries granted to the said Company by these Presents, we regard especially the glory of God by procuring the salvation of the inhabitants, Indians, savages, and Negroes, whom we desire to be instructed in the true religion, the said Company shall be obliged to build at its expense churches at the places where it forms settlements; as also to maintain there the necessary number of approved ecclesiastics; either with the rank of parish priests or such others as shall be suitable in order to preach the Holy Gospel there, perform divine service and administer the Sacraments; all under the authority of the Bishop of Quebec, the said colony remaining in his diocese, as heretofore, and the parish priests and other ecclesiastics which the said Company shall maintain there, shall be at its nomination and patronage.

John Law began his promotion in 1718—the year of New Orleans' official founding. He had promised to populate the new colony with six thousand settlers and three thousand Negro slaves. To the German farmers he was proselytizing he promised free land, fertile soil for four crops a year, fish and game of all kinds, mines of gold, silver, copper, and lead—even "friendly" savages.

When Bishop Maurice Schexnayder of Lafayette spoke at the 250th anniversary celebration of the Parish of St. Charles Borromeo, Destrehan, Louisiana, on June 3, 1973, he told of the tribulations that plagued the emigrants:

> Only a few of ten thousand Germans reached the shores of Louisiana. Miserable fare and lack of drinking water on the ships took a heavy toll. It is said that only forty of two hundred Germans in one ship landed in Louisiana and two hundred out of twelve hundred. At the time of the settling of the German pioneers in 1721, there were no levees and only too often when the spring floods came, caused by the simultaneous

melting of the snow in the vast region of the upper course of the Mississippi, not unknown even in our day, floods added to the already existing hardships. Besides, the whole country was a howling wilderness. Then came the great hurricane of September, 1721, plus the trouble with the Indians. The Germans needed assistance until they could help themselves, but Law had become bankrupt and a fugitive.

Incidentally, John Law became a Catholic before he died.

No one can describe or imagine the hardships the German pioneers in Louisiana suffered, even after they had survived the perils of the sea, the epidemics, and starvation.

Unlike many other individual immigrants who planned to make their fortunes and go back "home," the Germans did come in family units. Most were Catholics from eastern and southern Germany.

In 1722-23, a crude log chapel was erected by the first German Catholic settlers on the west river bank of the Mississippi, just thirty-eight miles above New Orleans. They called it "St. Jean des Allemands" (St. John of the Germans), here in this French colony where phonetic spelling of names by persons of differing languages would eventually obscure their origins. French Capuchin missionary priests cared for the tiny flock of faithful until a resident priest, Father Philippe de Luxembourg, arrived in 1728.

It was in 1727, when some Ursuline nuns came from Rouen, France, to begin their work in New Orleans, that our country's first convent, school, and later a hospital, were established. Thereafter, many religious orders of women would distinguish themselves in saintly service to the people and the Church of God.

The Western Frontier

To the North and West, frontier missions had been coping with "less civilized" situations. And new centers of Christianity were being established.

On July 26th of the same year that Antoine de la Mothe Cadillac founded Detroit—1701—the first Mass was celebrated there. It commemorated the Feast of St. Anne, and St. Anne's Church was to serve all of Michigan and Wisconsin until 1796 when a second parish was born.

The Spaniards came to Texas via Mexico, establishing Church-dominated missions that were far more than the chapels and pastoral residences that formed their nuclei. These were entirely self-sufficient communities, all under priestly supervision, serving as fortresses of the faith. There were schools, hospitals, irrigated farms, cattle ranches, granaries, textile shops, carpenters, tailors, and carefully planned sentry stands.

As the 17th Century rolled on into the 18th, a man who has been described as "the most picturesque missionary pioneer of all North America—explorer, astronomer, cartographer, mission builder, ranchman, cattle king, and defender of the frontier," proved also to be a most ubiquitous traveler. He covered thousands of miles each year in his missions to the Indians. This Jesuit, Father Eusebio Francisco Kino, who was born with the Austrian name of Kuehne, left us with an impressive legacy. Many present-day towns and cities sprang from his missions. And the still-active Parish of San Xavier, on an Arizona Indian reservation, worships in what is called by the National Register of Historic Places one of "the finest surviving Spanish Colonial churches in the United States." The intricately carved architecture of the Mission San Xavier del Bac was built circa 1700 and attributed by some to Father Kino.

The Franciscan missionary, Fra Junipero Serra, was a teacher of philosophy within his province of Majorca, Spain, even before his 1738 ordination. He gained distinction as a theologian and orator before giving up "the easy life" to join a band of Franciscans heading for the New World's southwestern mission field.

In 1767, the Franciscans replaced the banished Jesuits in Baja California and he was chosen mission president. The Dominicans were given the peninsula and Father Serra's band traveled northward with a military expedition, founding twenty-one coastal missions, starting with San Diego. Nine of these were started during the fifteen years of Father Serra's tenure. By the time of his death, thousands of Indians had been converted and great strides had been made in upgrading their material well-being. Lush farmlands and grazing pastures produced food and Franciscan-established workshops furnished other necessities. It is to one of Father Serra's missions, San Juan Capistrano, that the swallows return each year.

His thin, frail appearance belied the spiritual vigor which permitted the gentle Franciscan to keep firm the grip of Spain on the California mission lands. The Indians revered him as an ever-constant friend. Reading the names of his chain of cities along the Camino Real is like the recitation of a Spanish litany.

The Fight For Freedom

"I presume that your fellow citizens will not forget the patriotic part which you took in the accomplishment of their revolution and the establishment of their government, nor the important assistance which they have received from a

nation in which the Roman Catholic religion is professed."

Catholic hearts swelled with pride at these words from General George Washington at the close of a war that brought freedom to their chosen land. They had fought long and hard while distinguishing themselves on the field of battle. Men and women of all creeds had joined in a common cause, differences temporarily put aside, to struggle together as Americans.

A Catholic had helped to initiate this Revolution when he joined fifty-five other Americans in the signing of the Declaration of Independence. Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the richest man in the colonies, had the most to lose in the bloody battle that was certain to ensue. His grandfather, the first Charles Carroll, had been Attorney General of Maryland until losing his commission with the renewal of anti-Catholicism in 1688. Charles Carroll of Carrollton was a lawyer whose professional practice was proscribed in Maryland because of his religion. This idealistic citizen whose death in 1832 at the age of ninety-five made him the last signer to leave behind his earthly cares, was painfully familiar with man's need for political and religious freedom.

Most Catholics had been mistreated in their homelands; the Irish, particularly, resented the English, and looked forward to a country that promised religious toleration. The majority of American Catholics, no matter what their national origin, joined wholeheartedly in the Revolution. Very few were Tories.

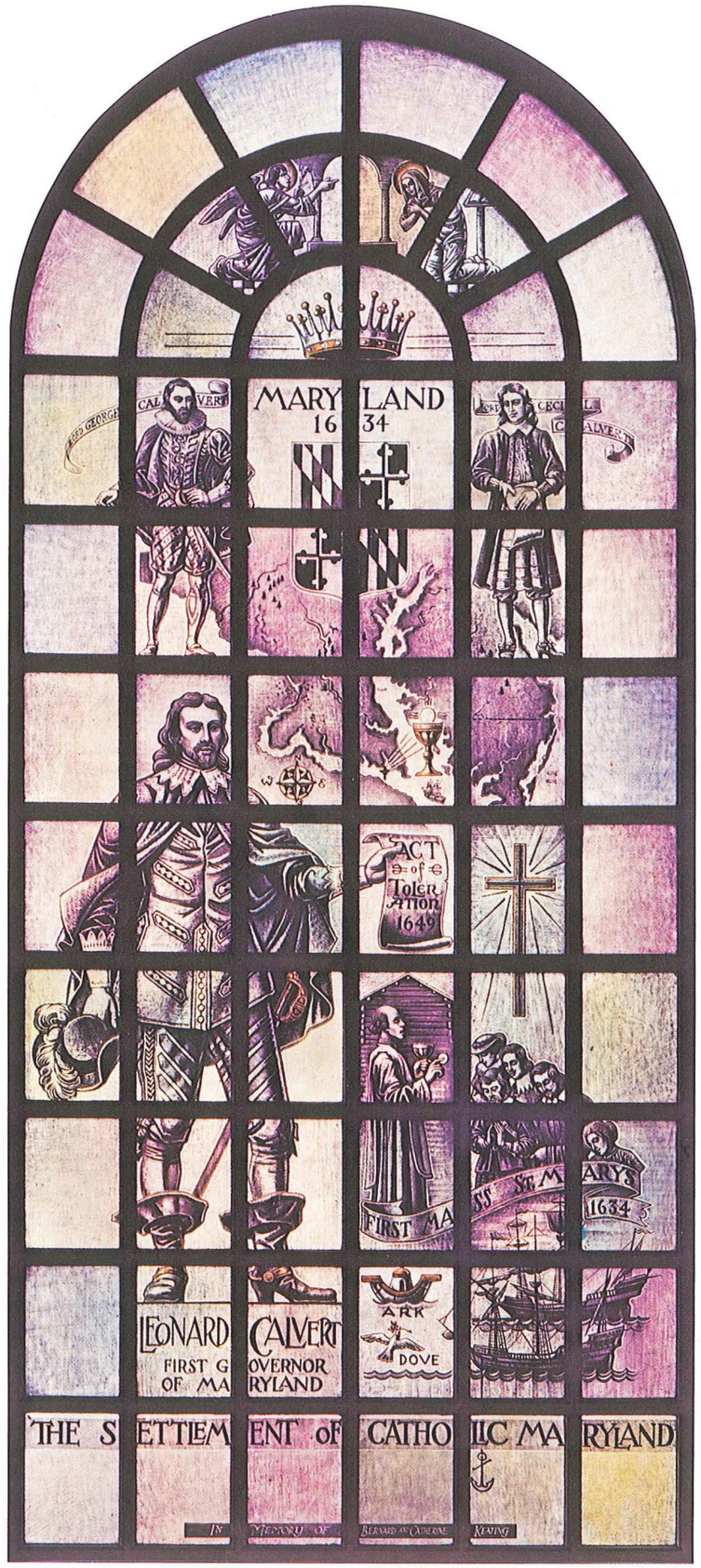
Exact numbers of Catholic soldiers have not been recorded, but we do know that thirty-eight percent of Washington's troops had Irish names. One brave warrior of another heritage who was known only as "Francesco the Italian" gave his own life as he protected General Washington from British bayonets at the Battle of Monmouth.

Other Catholics whose Revolutionary service was invaluable came from many backgrounds and served in many ways.

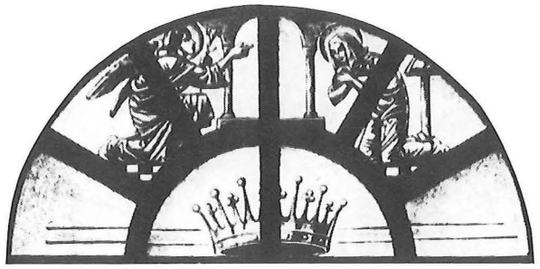
A Polish patriot and Revolutionary soldier, Casimir Pulaski, was highly recommended to General Washington when he sailed to this country from Paris in 1777. A year later, this fearless young man, who had organized America's first cavalry, lay dead on the battlefield of Savannah, at age thirty-one.

Another Pole, Tadeusz Kosciuszko, distinguished himself in the American cause almost from the day of his arrival here in 1776. Noted as the "father of the Artillery," in 1783 General Washington presented him with a Congressional vote of thanks, an award of American citizenship, a pension, and the rank of Brigadier General. Planning to retire, he returned to Poland, but later served in the Polish-Russian War and in the Polish Revolution of 1794. When he revisited the United States in 1797, Congress awarded him a land grant and an increased pension.

"The father of the American Navy" was the Irish-born John Barry. A brave sailor who began his sea-going career at the age of ten and settled in Philadelphia while still a teen-ager, Barry was given command of *The Lexington* at the outbreak



Founded in 1649 as a Catholic colony, Maryland was the only colony established under an act of Toleration. Leonard Calvert, Maryland's first governor, and the first Mass at St. Mary's, celebrated on the Feast of Annunciation-March 25th-are also represented.



of the War and had soon captured *The Edward,* the first ship ever taken by a commissioned officer of our Navy. He was later on a ship that was captured by the British but managed to escape.

John Barry commanded the Revolution's last Naval battle, on March 10, 1783, before going into his own merchant shipping business in Philadelphia. Eleven years later, however, he was recalled to duty as senior captain, then the top-ranked post of the newly established United States Navy. He was popularly known as "Commodore" Barry.

In 1778, the American-French Treaty of Alliance brought French soldiers to our shores. Each contingent brought its own priests. Now French names were added to the rolls of our freedom-fighters. The young Marquis de Lafayette, as well as Count Jean de Rochambeau and Count Francois de Grasse, are well-known to readers of our country's history. These men were at General Washington's side through some of the bloodiest of his battles.

When the British surrender became a fact with the victory at Yorktown, General Washington sent an Irish Catholic to the Congress in Philadelphia with this long-awaited announcement. The French Ambassador, who had mortgaged his private fortune to aid what he believed would be a certain triumph over evil, felt a need to rejoice in the time-honored manner of his faith. He immediately arranged for a religious service to be held at St. Mary's Church. The Continental Congress, the Supreme Executive Council, the Philadelphia Assembly—representatives of our entire country joined in this Mass of Thanksgiving and the singing of the Te Deum.

Despite this beautiful display of unity, the valiant service of a disproportionate share of Catholics in the battle, and the heartfelt words of General Washington, at the time the Revolutionary War ended there were still anti-Catholic laws on the books of seven of the thirteen original colonies.

Of Building and Brotherhood

But a great missionary endeavor was on the shoulders of the faithful of this country and no discriminatory laws could halt this effort.

The Loyalists—about 100,000 of them—had fled the country. The colonies and their citizens were no longer ruled by the political nor the religious hierarchy of England. On June 9, 1784, four years before George Washington was elected our first President and New York City became our first capital, the Reverend John Carroll, a cousin of Charles Carroll of Carrollton, was named Superior and Prefect Apostolic of the Thirteen States of America. But it was not until the end of 1789 that an actual See was constituted and the Most Reverend John Carroll became Bishop of Baltimore. His diocese, encompassing the entire United States, included some 25,000 Catholics.

Like Charles, John attended the secret school at Bohemia. Then, in 1748, he was sent to a school in Flanders administered by English Jesuits. Since his ordination in 1761 he had earned the respect of all and was considered an excellent choice for the new post.

Pope Clement XIV abolished the Society of Jesus in 1773. But Empress Catherine of Russia would not allow the decree of Jesuit suppression to be published in her country. Eventually, since the Society was still thriving there, the newly elected Pope Pius VII issued a bull recognizing and re-establishing the Russian congregation in 1801. Shortly thereafter, Bishop John Carroll and his co-adjutor, Bishop Leonard Neale, both former Jesuits, requested and were given permission to be reinstated in the order and to be associated with the Russian community, together with twelve other former members.

The Russian Superior told Bishop Carroll to appoint a Superior for the United States, which was accomplished in June of 1805. Many former members were welcomed back to the fold and some Russian Jesuits immigrated to help establish the fledgling novitiate.

Through the suppressed years, the Jesuits had remained a closely knit group and were able to retain their identity. They had, in fact, opened Georgetown University in September of 1789 through the efforts of Bishop Carroll.

When Bishop Carroll had visited England (where he was consecrated) and France in 1790, he had arranged for aid—in the form of priests, teachers, even some students, as well as financial support—from the Superior General of the Society of St. Sulpice in Paris. Within the year, these dedicated priests had sailed to Maryland and converted the "One Mile Tavern" on the outskirts of Baltimore into St. Mary's Seminary, which was the

first institution in this country for the training of American priests.

While the bishop was abroad, our country's second convent—that of the discalced Carmelite Sisters from Antwerp—was established in Maryland. (The Sisters were mainly American Sisters who had gone earlier to Europe to join the convent.)

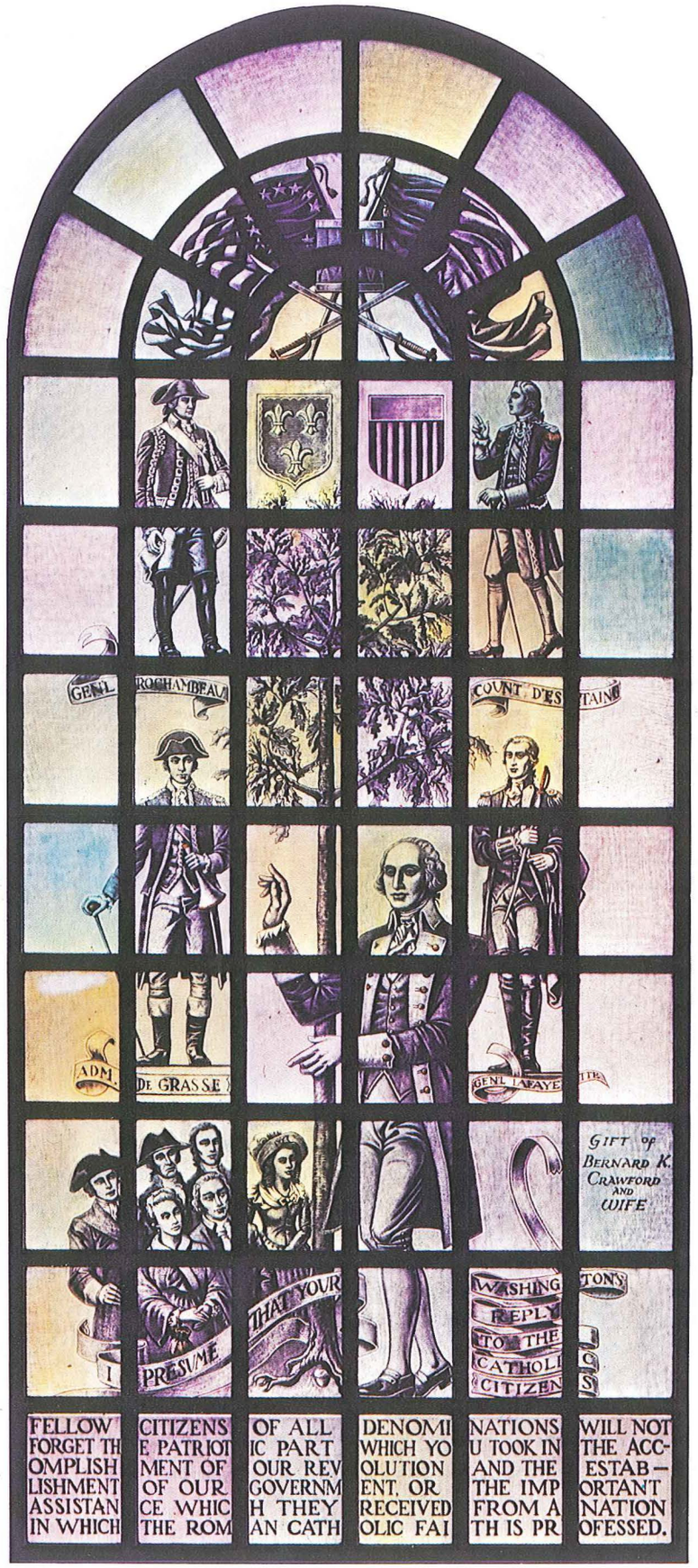
Socially, spiritually, financially, politically, exciting things were happening throughout the New World.

In 1787, two Catholics—Thomas FitzSimons and Daniel Carroll, older brother of the bishop—participated in the creation and signing of the Constitution. In 1800, the year after our first president's death at Mt. Vernon, our capital was moved from its decade-long residence in Philadelphia to Washington, D.C.

During that period, Demetrius Gallitzin (Father Augustine Smith), son of a Russian prince, left a life of privilege in Europe to minister to Christ's People in America. The Catholic settlement of Loretto grew out of his work in western Pennsylvania.

In 1803, the Louisiana Purchase, at a cost of fifteen million dollars, doubled our country's land area. At three cents per acre, this 828,000 square mile real estate deal was the best investment since Manhattan Island.

When Mother Theresa Farjon, Superior of the Ursuline Convent in New Orleans, wrote to President Thomas Jefferson inquiring about the convent's



In this window George Washington recognizes the patriotism and important assistance of Catholics in the accomplishment of the Revolution and the establishment of our Government. Upper window shows original Stars and Stripes flag entwined with the Colonial flag, and the great tree grown from the acorn at the base.

status in light of the new acquisition, the man some historians have called anti-Catholic sent this reply:

> I have received, Holy Sisters, the letters you have written to me, wherein you express anxiety for the property vested in your institution by the former Government of Louisiana. The principles of the Constitution and Government of the United States are a sure guaranty to you that it will be preserved to you sacred and inviolate, and that your institution will be permitted to govern itself according to its own voluntary rules, without interference from the civil authority. Whatever diversity of shade may appear in the religious opinions of our fellow citizens, the charitable objects of your institution cannot be indifferent to any, and in its furtherance of the wholesome purposes of training up its young members in the way they should go, cannot fail to insure it the patronage of the government it is under. Be assured it will meet with all the protection my office can give it.
>
> I salute you, Holy Sisters, with friendship and respect.
>
> *Thomas Jefferson*

In 1805, a John Law-type boondoggle, this one promoted by land speculators, Joel Barlow and William Playfair (truly misnamed), coaxed five hundred Catholic Frenchmen to the Ohio River Valley. It was within this settlement that Ohio's first parish was born when Father Edward Fenwick, O.P., offered Mass for a group of pioneers who had not seen a priest for some twelve years.

Father Fenwick and other Dominican priests built the Church of St. Rose of Lima in Washington County, Kentucky, in 1806-07. They were also responsible for their order's first United States novitiate. In 1821, Father Fenwick was consecrated the first Bishop of Cincinnati.

A previously drafted law prohibiting the importation of new slaves became effective on January 1, 1808. In that same year, after becoming a member of the Sulpician community, Bishop John DuBois founded Mount St. Mary's College at Emmitsburg, Maryland, and soon after, Elizabeth Seton opened St. Joseph's Academy nearby. Much of her future work would be with Negroes—slaves and freemen.

When Baltimore was erected as a metropolitan See, also in 1808, Archbishop Carroll was given four suffragan Sees: Boston, Bardstown, New York, and Philadelphia. Within less than two decades, he had seen the fold of his American Church—its flock and its shepherds—expand tremendously. In 1790 he had been alone with a handful of ex-Jesuits. Now there existed eighty Catholic churches, seventy priests, and approximately seventy thousand faithful, excluding those of Louisiana.

The supply of priests was limited and nationally unbalanced in proportion to those clamoring for their services. Many immigrants, still barely familiar (if at all) with the new language and yearning for the familiar religious customs of their mother country, were determined to have a pastor with whom they could converse in their native tongue. The Irishmen would at times become impatient with a French or German priest's halting struggle to preach to them in English. This was a time of great stress for people who had left lifelong surroundings to brave a sometimes-hostile New World.

Over the years of his very productive episcopate, Bishop Carroll constantly had to cope with nationalistic turmoil within the Church.

At St. Mary's Parish in Philadelphia, the German-born Catholics were dissatisfied with the ministrations of the English-speaking priests. And so they organized the first "national" parish—legally incorporating themselves and engaging, without the

bishop's authority, a wandering German-born priest.

Although most Catholics viewed such internal strife with horror, similar happenings were not infrequent over the ensuing years as more immigrants flocked to our shores and population shifts occurred in great tides.

But The Church Kept Building

In the same year that British flames consumed our capital, 1814, three Sisters of Charity of Emmitsburg were engaged in the founding, in Philadelphia, of this country's first Catholic institution for homeless children, St. Joseph's Orphanage.

And the first free school for Negroes in the South was begun in Georgetown by Father John McElroy, S.J. in 1818. Father McElroy later founded Boston College. Each Sunday afternoon Negro children would be tutored in reading, writing, arithmetic, and Christian doctrine. A number of previous attempts, in other times and places, had been foiled by ardent racists. However, historian Carter G. Woodson states in *The Education Of The Negro Prior to 1861:*

> Most interest in the cause in Maryland was manifested near the cities of Georgetown and Baltimore. Long active in the cause of elevating the colored people, the influence of the revolutionary movement was hardly necessary to arouse the Catholics to discharge their duty of enlightening the blacks. Whenever they had the opportunity to give slaves religious instruction, they generally taught the unfortunates everything that would broaden their horizon and help them to understand life. The Abolitionists and Protestants were also in the field, but the work of the early Fathers in Georgetown made it, by the time of its incorporation into the District of Columbia, a center sending out teachers to carry on the instruction of Negroes. So liberal were the white people of this town that colored children were sent to school there with white boys and girls who raised no objection.

Right into the early 1820's, Long Island lacked a resident priest. Since only eight priests, under Bishop John Connolly, served the diocese—an area comprised of the entire state of New York plus part of New Jersey—it is understandable that the faithful of this out-mission seldom had a priestly visit and usually had to row across the river to attend Mass in the old St. Patrick's Cathedral on Mott Street or St. Peter's Church on Barclay Street.

On New Year's Day of 1822, the Catholics of Brooklyn held their first meeting at the home of Peter Turner to plan a church and the initiation of a building fund.

Much of the funding for the developing Church in America was to come from European missionary societies. The Ludwig Mission Society of Munich and the Leopoldine Foundation of Vienna provided for the German immigrant in particular. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, then based in Lyons and Paris, took a more general interest but occasionally displayed partiality toward dioceses with larger French populations or with French bishops. It is clear that the Church in America could never have come to prosperity without the critical aid of these mission-minded groups.

In April of 1825, Father John Farnan came from Utica, New York, where two years earlier he had been suspended from a pastorate, to serve as Brooklyn's first pastor. His reinstatement and subsequent assignment to St. James in Brooklyn came only after the death of Bishop Connolly, who had suspended him. He was an inspiring and hard-working priest with great charisma, but he got embroiled in politics and militant Irish freedom organizations and was even charged with "being drunk at vespers" before Bishop John DuBois suspended him in 1829.

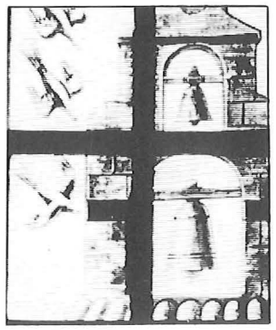
Father Farnan had become a popular hero by this time and within two years he rallied enough support to begin his own church building. The ensuing public battle brought headaches and embarrassment to the hierarchy, but the church was never quite finished by the Farnan faction. It was used only once—to bury the suspended priest's brother—and in the mid-thirties the mortgage holder foreclosed and began leasing the building to private businesses. In a sudden move, Bishop John Hughes bought the structure in 1840 and had it completed as Brooklyn's third Catholic church—The Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Catholic Sisters earned the gratitude of city officials in Philadelphia and Baltimore when their dedicated labors provided inestimable hours of free nursing care to the victims of cholera epidemics in 1832. Many a pious soul was felled at the side of her patient by the dread disease.

In 1833, the Village of Chicago was incorporated and its first parish—St. Mary's—was founded. At least half of the total population of two or three hundred was Catholic, being mainly of French and Jesuit-converted Indian origin. Only a few years earlier, Chicago had consisted of seven rustic cabins nestled in a wilderness on the border of Lake Michigan. Its inhabitants, trappers and traders, daily intermingled with Indian natives in the forests. By the time St. Mary's Parish was one year old, Chicago was placed in the jurisdiction of the new Diocese of Vincennes. That year, Bishop Simon Brute visited the city and was amazed at its swift expansion and delighted by its unexpected ecumenism:

> Of this place the growth has been surprising, even in the west, a wonder amidst its wonders. From a few scattered houses near the fort it is become, in two or three years, a place of great promise. Its settlers sanguinely hope to see it rank as the Cincinnati of the North. Here the Catholics have a neat little church.
>
> Americans, Irish, French, and Germans meet at a common altar, assembled from the most distant parts of this vast republic or come from the shores of Europe to those of our lakes. Reverend Mr. St. Cyr is their pastor. They already have their choir supported by some of the musicians of the garrison. Many of the officers and a number of the most respectable Protestants attend. The bishop on his arrival in the diocese had been invited by the Protestants as well as the Catholics of this place to fix his residence among them and felt his gratitude revived by the kind reception he now received.

At least at this point in time, a beautiful example of brotherhood prevailed in Chicago.



Of Poison Pens And Politics

"Not only do they assail us and our institutions in a style of vituperation and offense, misrepresent our tenets, vilify our practices, repeat the hundred-times-refuted calumnies of the days of angry and bitter contention in other lands, but they have even denounced you and us as enemies to the liberties of the republic, and have openly proclaimed the fancied necessity of obstructing our progress, and of using their best efforts to extirpate our religion."

In issuing this warning, in 1829, regarding the Protestant press, the Bishops of the First Provincial Council of Baltimore were not exaggerating. Unfortunately, Chicago's ecumenism was not typical of the nation and violence and bloodshed would soon erupt. In fact, the anti-Catholicism that already existed, spawned and nurtured on the English homesoil, was aggravated by some of this Council's decrees. In addition to their condemnation of the press, the bishops castigated the King James Bible and urged all parishes to organize parochial schools. To the Protestants, these were more proofs of the papists' "subjection to a foreign power." Even some highly respected luminaries, such as Samuel F.B. Morse, artist and inventor of the telegraph, espoused the belief that there was a papal plot to subvert our democracy. In 1834 he wrote *Foreign Conspiracy Against The Liberties of The United States,* a collection of his anonymous letters first published in *The New York Observer.*

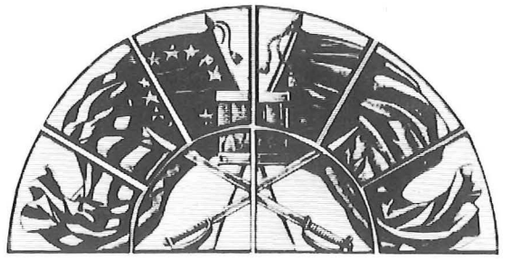
On August 11, 1834, the mounting tension between Yankees and Irish, Congregationalists and Catholics, in Charlestown, Massachusetts, fanned by the impassioned preaching of Reverend Lyman Beecher, climaxed in the mob-burning of an Ursuline convent and girls' school. The men who were later tried for arson were acquitted and even considered by many as local heroes.

And from the January, 1836, publication of Maria Monk's *Awful Disclosures Of The Hotel Dieu Nunnery of Montreal,* through the end of the decade, by which time the book was generally considered a lucrative hoax, hatred and bigotry were well-fueled.

Within the next two decades, a number of publications were founded, many by Protestant ministers, aligning Protestantism with Americanism. Public debates—a few ending in riots—kept both sides constantly informed and inflamed.

When ninety-four Protestant ministers organized the American Protestant Association in Philadelphia, the constitution included these declarations:

> The objects of its formation, and for the attainment of which its efforts shall be directed, are:
>
> The union and encouragement of Protestant ministers of the gospel, to give to their several congregations instruction on the differences between Protestantism and Popery.



> The circulation of books and tracts adapted to give information on the various errors of Popery in their history, tendency, and design.
>
> To awaken the attention of the community to the dangers which threaten the liberties, and the public and domestic institutions, of these United States from the assaults of Romanism.

Although many other factors had pitted Americans against "aliens" for several years, the A.P.A.-tainted sermons that rang from Philadelphia pulpits and friction over Protestant-oriented public schools contributed to the violence that tore apart "The City of Brotherly Love" in 1844.

The riots began in early May when a Nativist lost his life in a Kensington confrontation. Subsequently, two Catholic churches were burned to the ground by cheering mobs, as were dozens of Irish Catholic homes, and the city was placed under martial law. A week of murder and destruction left hundreds of homeless refugees and a scar that would take years to heal.

The wound was reopened with a Nativist 4th of July parade that ended with a cannon attack on men guarding St. Philip Neri Church and an invasion by the militia, five thousand strong, some of whom barged into crowds with their guns blazing. This time, thirteen lives were wasted and at least fifty were injured.

When New York anti-Catholics threatened similar action a few days later, Bishop John Hughes stationed fully-armed men around each of his churches, which proved a successful deterrent.

In that same year, the Native American party—whose name indicated its membership discrimination and its political allegiance—won the New York elections. The following year, the Nativists took control of the Boston legislature.

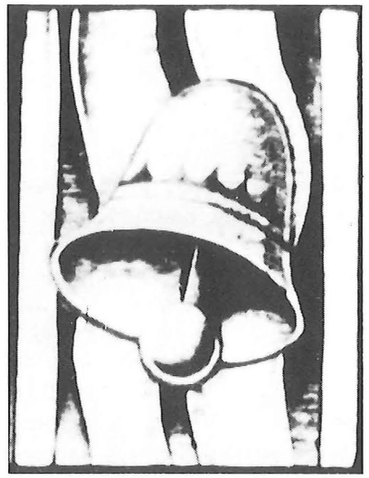
As Native American crimes grew, however, many members of the party, horrified at the violence, began to withdraw their support. By 1847, the Nativists had disappeared from the national scene.

The lull was short-lived. In 1849, the Order of the Star-Spangled Banner was founded in New York by Charles B. Allen. Within half a decade, this originally inconsequential group had been reorganized by James W. Barker, also of New York, and a local, district, state, and national framework was erected that was both elaborate and effective. When the "foreign vote" put Franklin Pierce in the White House, members of the Order vigorously renewed their vows:

> The object of this organization shall be to protect every American citizen in the legal and proper exercise of all his civil and religious rights and privileges; to resist the insidious policy of the Church of Rome, and all other foreign influence against our republican institutions in all lawful ways; to place in all offices of honor, trust, or profit, in the gift of the people, or by appointment, none but native-born Protestant citizens, and to protect, preserve and uphold the Union of these states and the Constitution of the same.

Members were pledged to secrecy about their meetings, rituals, and purposes. Their cover-up answers of "I don't know" led to their being dubbed the "Know-Nothings," though officially they became the American party.

By 1854 they were ready to launch a full-fledged surprise attack. In that year's elections, dumbfounded pollworkers found numerous vote-getters, many winning electoral seats, whose names were not even on the ballot. The greatest victory came in Massachusetts, where the governor, all state officers, and the entire state Senate were of the American party. The state House of Representatives was composed of one Whig, one Free-Soiler, and 376 Know-Nothings. In the next



year, these Nativists equalled, and in some areas topped, their previous victories.

In western regions, where populations were more scattered and the people were mostly hard-working farmers, they had become accustomed to the few "foreigners" in their midst and had no fears of a "papal invasion." But there were many reasons for the success of the American party in the more densely populated and immigrant-choked East.

The many years' long exodus from famine-stricken and politically pressured Ireland to the "welcoming" shores of America had caused a proliferation of "shanty-towns" in and around our coastal cities. Most of the Irish chose to remain where they landed, in the commuter communities rather than again risk the terrible disasters inflicted on them by the farmlands of their mother country. While on one hand they were filling the almshouses and costing the taxpayers money, those employed were willing to take less for their labors than the natives and so posed threats to their livelihoods.

By 1850, Roman Catholics—to date a maligned minority—had increased mainly through immigration to numbers exceeding that of any other denomination—1.75 million. Then, in the ensuing decade, that figure doubled. "Armies of the Vatican!"

Add to this Pope Pius IX's unfortunate timing in a move to quell trusteeism, an internal problem that the Know-Nothings also tried to turn to their advantage. Monsignor Gaetano Bedini was sent from Rome in 1853 as a papal representative to tour the country and help restore peace to troubled parishes. Everywhere he went, this symbol of "foreign intervention" sparked controversy and riots, actually contributing to the Nativists' cause.

The Know-Nothings felt confident of a presidential victory in 1856 and seemed to be imbued with political insanity as the hot and heavy campaigns built to a crescendo. On Election Day, 1855, in Louisville, Kentucky, they attacked and set ablaze Catholic residences. As families fled from their burning homes, they were shot. Various newspaper estimates counted twenty-five to one hundred dead.

The presidential contest evoked other fistfights and shootings, but the newly organized Republican party and the growing concerns of a new threat—the slavery issue—helped to divide and weaken the Nativists. The election of James Buchanan did not quell the struggle, but it soon would be eclipsed by the rumblings of secession threats.

Happily, these historical facts reflect the headlines of their day. Though the occurrences were typical of similar ones in other locations, they did not seriously impede the progress of Mother Church in the New World, and there were still communities where Protestants and Catholics lived in harmony.

Fighting The Good Fight

In addition to the onslaught of Irish, other nationalities contributed to the constant proliferation of American parishes. Most of Rhode Island's first Catholics were Irish immigrants who worked in the iron foundries and cotton mills. A Catholic priest had not even visited the tiny colony until several chaplains accompanied the French who landed at Newport during the Revolutionary War. As industry grew, however, French Canadians flocked over the border, swelling Rhode Island's Catholic population, which would remain in the care of the Bishop of Hartford, Connecticut, until the Diocese of Providence was erected in 1872.

In 1837, Reverend Mathias Loras was consecrated Bishop of Dubuque with jurisdiction over Iowa, Minnesota, and part of Dakota. In 1843, Minnesota and Wisconsin became dioceses and the State of Illinois was incorporated in the Diocese of Chicago.

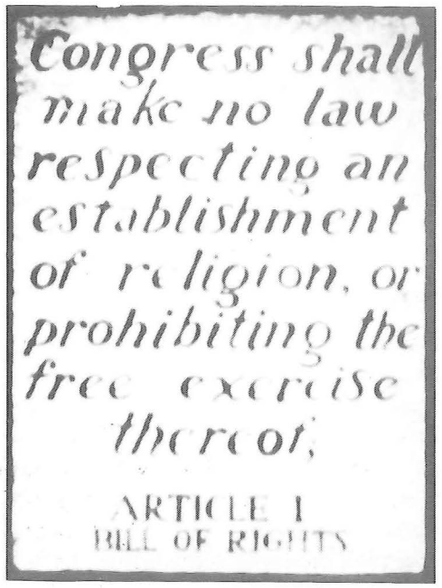
The Gold Rush of 1848 brought boom times to the west coast, and in 1853 the dioceses of Santa Fe and San Francisco were constituted, completing the trans-American span.

In 1855, the Reverend David W. Bacon, who had been first pastor of the Farnan-built and Hughes-adapted Church of the Assumption in Brooklyn, was appointed first bishop of the new See of Portland, Maine. His entire diocese—which included all of Maine and New Hampshire—held only eight churches with six priests. Here, and elsewhere, missionary priests were toiling amongst people who were poor, even destitute. The Redemptorists, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the Passionists, had joined the Jesuits, the Franciscans, the Dominicans, the Vincentians.

The hardships of parishioners took many forms. Until working hours were reduced, in 1835, to an average of ten hours daily, factory workers were forced to slave fourteen of each twenty-four hours, except Sunday, for a weekly paycheck of six dollars. Even women and children—many of them under the age of twelve—shared these hours. Yet there was still money to contribute to the building of houses of worship and learning for their families. And there was still time for many of the faithful to lend their physical aid to the erection of these edifices.

The missionaries, too (and secular priests were also missioners), set an example of pious devotion, traveling hundreds of miles, often on foot. One Jesuit priest of Maryland, whose biography could almost be termed typical of the times, was said to have "solved the high cost of living by reducing his annual personal expenses to twenty-six dollars by living on corn and bacon which he raised himself, his only indulgence being smoking tobacco which he also raised."

And so, when the First Plenary Council convened in Baltimore in 1852, it could review the past decades with gratitude and gird itself for the future. Inspired by the sight of this solemn procession into the cathedral of men who had struggled and were still working against various odds across the vast country, the American Catholic Church could look back with pride on a tremendous and unprecedented achievement. Each devoted member of the faithful—bishops, priests, brothers, sisters, laity—had been "fighting the good fight" within the confines of his own mission. Now, viewed as a whole, the enormity of the accomplishment could be appreciated—the blending of so many cultures



and languages into a rapidly expanding but united religion that was also united in its allegiance to a country that was a second home to many.

The outstanding missionary bishop of this era, John Nepomucene Neumann was born and educated in Bohemia, then emigrated to America to minister to the German immigrant. After several years of fruitful work, Neumann heeded the call to religious community and became the first novice of the Redemptorist Congregation in America. Father Neumann's holiness came to the attention of Francis Patrick Kenrick, Archbishop of Baltimore, who recommended him for the See of Philadelphia. Neumann did all in his power to avoid this honor but in 1852 he was appointed the fourth Bishop of Philadelphia under obedience and without appeal.

Although his years in Philadelphia were marked by the establishment of scores of churches and dozens of schools, his primary concern was the spiritual welfare of his flock. In this regard he promoted the Forty Hours Devotion and spent much time each year visiting far-flung missions. No place was too distant nor too crude for him if it meant confirming only one child. His devotion led him to master enough of the difficult Gaelic tongue to hear the confessions of newly arrived Irish immigrants, and to establish the pioneer all-Italian parish in America, St. Mary Magdalen de Pazzi.

Bishop Neumann's favorite missions were always the poorest and the most forgotten. Thinking their bishop too poor and too humble for their proud city, Philadelphians yearned for a more urbane, sophisticated shepherd. Even his critics, however, joined in mourning Bishop Neumann's untimely death in his forty-ninth year. He was indeed "a man all called holy."

Propagators Of The Faith

Reverend Louis William Valentine DuBourg, a French Sulpician, in addition to being a demanding mentor of the saintly Mother Elizabeth Seton and a principal figure in the establishment of her original school and convent, distinguished himself in priestly service as the administrator and then bishop of a battle-besieged New Orleans.

He was a constant organizer and promoter of educational institutions and it was his 1822 trip to Washington, D.C., that convinced the United States War Department to support Indian schooling. During that same visit he persuaded the Jesuits of Maryland, including Father Pierre Jean de Smet, to begin missionary work in Missouri. One of their accomplishments in that field was the establishment of the first school for Indian boys.

Mother Rose Philippine Duchesne of the Society of the Sacred Heart put to good use her years of teaching experience in a war-torn France when she and four companions came to New Orleans in May of 1818. Bishop DuBourg commissioned Mother Duchesne to open a school in St. Charles, Missouri. This was the first free school—open to Catholics and non-Catholics alike—west of the Mississippi River. Other convents, schools, and orphanages were to follow.

This pious servant of God was seventy-two years old and had been at her vocation for fifty-three years when she founded a mission school for Potawatomi Indian girls at Sugar Creek, Kansas. These youngsters called her "Quah-kah-ka-num-ad" (Woman who prays always).

Father Pierre Jean de Smet was a Jesuit who labored in the Indian mission fields along the Missouri River and in the Rocky Mountains, as well as throughout Oregon. He promoted and established many new missions, becoming a familiar friend to the Indians. His reputation as a trusted confidant of these people caused the United States government to seek his aid a number of times. He was, in fact, the only white man allowed into the camp of Sitting Bull in 1868 when negotiations for peace with the Sioux would have been impossible without his help.

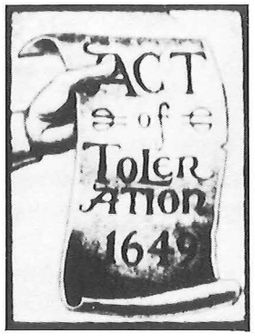
Sulpician Father Benedict Joseph Flaget was credited with transforming the spiritual life, as well as inspiring the material growth, of the French settlement of Fort Vincennes, Indiana, during his two-year stay there just before the turn of the century. His priestly works eventually led to his being chosen first Bishop of Bardstown.

Although Bishop Flaget had protested this appointment, here began the most illustrious years of his career. A true missionary, the prelate set out immediately after his June, 1811, installation to visit each of the widely scattered Catholic settlements in Kentucky. By 1815, Bishop Flaget's diocese held ten thousand Catholics, ten priests, nineteen churches, one monastery, and two convents. Covered in his years of missionary travel was an expanse of territory that later became more than thirty-five dioceses in Kentucky, Tennessee, Indiana, Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

Other distinguished French missionaries on the western frontier included Jean-Baptiste Lamy—the subject of Willa Cather's *Death Comes To The Archbishop*—who was named first bishop of the Indian-Spanish-Mexican-American Diocese of Santa Fe in 1853, and the Canadian, Father Albert Lacombe, who was one of the first to be sent to the Northwest Territories and who authored a grammar and dictionary of the Cree Indian language.

John England's priestly career began with twelve years of service in Ireland, after which his appointment as the first bishop of Charleston brought him to that community in December of 1820. Not only did his diocese consist of five thousand Catholics spread over 140,000 square miles of both Carolinas and Georgia, but for fifteen years of his tenure other administrators periodically asked him to "look after" Florida as well.

Soon after his arrival, Bishop England issued a pastoral letter to the faithful—the first such message in the history of the American Church. His



visits to congregations throughout the diocese convinced him of the great need for education, and he prepared a missal and a catechism which were printed and distributed, although some other American bishops objected to this.

He founded the first Catholic newspaper in the United States—*The United States Catholic Miscellany,* its main purpose being to combat attacks upon the Church by anti-Catholic factions of the press. Except for a few brief periods, it was published weekly from 1822 until 1861. Most of its material was compiled, written and edited by the bishop, who even helped tend the presses. The bishop's sister, Johanna, a woman of great talent, did much of the newspaper work. She wanted to join Mother Seton's Sisters but the bishop needed her more. A vital part of his writings concerned his people's duty to be model citizens of their adopted country. On visiting Washington D.C., in January, 1826, he was invited to address the Congress, the first Catholic clergyman to be accorded that honor.

Bishop England was considered a radical by some, but actually his progressive ideas on councils that would include lay representatives of parishes as well as priests helped to avert some of the serious trusteeism problems being experienced elsewhere. His aid to the poor, the orphans, and the ill, as well as his establishment of seminaries and convents, were lauded, but others of his concerns were not so popular. Slaveowners blocked his attempts to operate a school for Negroes.

But if it was unusual for the Irish bishop of a deep-southern diocese to be so broadminded at this early date, the Irish bishop of a northern diocese—New York—during a subsequent period was not less typical in his beliefs. They simply demonstrated the wide diversity of opinions of pre-Civil War Catholics on what was considered a non-religious issue.

Bishop John Joseph Hughes of New York, who was consecrated in 1838, the same year in which Bishop England died, felt that slaves would not be able to cope with sudden emancipation and that western colonization would lose some of the faithful because of a shortage of priests. He condemned Irish anti-slavery movements as an intrusion into politics of the United States and urged Catholic support of the American Constitution, which at that time proscribed the activities of the Abolitionists. Of course, the Abolitionists were also violently anti-Catholic. Before that time, many had been Nativists.

The Diocese of New York then included all of that state, plus half of New Jersey—about 5,500 square miles. The entire country was growing at a fantastic pace, but population growth in New York City was five times the national rate. City churches were heavily in debt and trusteeism problems arose intermittently. Bishop Hughes had inherited a monumental task.

Even before ascending to the episcopate, he had, as co-adjutor, toured a number of European cities soliciting aid. Then, in 1840, he led a campaign for public support of Catholic schools and thus encountered the opposition of the New York Public School Society which eventually brought the demise of this organization, the complete secularization of public education, and the promotion of parochial schools throughout the United States.

During this period more than two hundred Catholic elementary schools began operation. This marked the beginnings of the greatest private system of education in the world, an enterprise which would grow, by the early 1970's, to include an enrollment of 4.42 million students in 11,560 elementary and high schools, and 426,205 students in 213 colleges and universities.

Eleven years after New York became an Archdiocese, the Civil War broke out. Archbishop Hughes did not see its end. He died, in January of 1864, after a long illness.

Archbishop Martin John Spalding of Baltimore initiated the Second Plenary Council in the fall of 1866 to deal with the challenges facing the Church after the Civil War. He wanted the Council to be an exhibit of Catholic unity in a land recovering from tragic division. The urgent situation of four million emancipated Blacks was to be taken up. Tension was not completely absent from the deliberations, but much was accomplished in the areas of planning, church discipline, and service. President Andrew Johnson attended the solemn closing of the Council on October 21, 1866 at Baltimore's venerable Cathedral.

Missions In A Changing World

Abraham Lincoln was elected President and South Carolina seceded from the Union in 1860. The six other southernmost states followed suit in the next two months. The Great Emancipator, who had spoken out against anti-Catholicism some sixteen years earlier and was now determined to block the spread of slavery as well as to hold together the Union, was not as revered in his own day as he is now.

Every colony had some Negro slave labor, but the South depended on it for survival. And although most Northerners could afford to free the few workers they owned, some Yankee shipowners profited greatly from the slave trade—a practice generally more inhumane than slaveholding.

From the April 12, 1861, bombardment by southern forces of the federal government's Fort Sumter in Charleston until the bloodbath finally ended with the Texas surrender in May of 1865, a month after the president's assassination, religious differences were all but forgotten. Protestants, Catholics, and Jews joined forces according to their political beliefs and homestate allegiances. Well-known Catholic generals in the Civil War were General Pierre Beauregard and General William Rosecrans, brother of the Bishop of Cleveland.

The draft riots of 1863 caused heartache to New York's Catholics, since most of the demonstrators were poor Irish who had no political pull or financial means to avoid conscription. Much of their anger was heaped upon freed slaves who were becoming a threat to their hard-won jobs, in addition to representing a reason for the draft.

In that same year, the rebellion in Poland provided a spur for Polish immigration to "the land of the free and the home of the brave."

But on and off the battlefields, great missionary endeavors carried on. The first privately owned hospital in Washington, D.C., was founded in June

of 1861 by four Daughters of Charity from Emmitsburg. Providence Hospital cared for both civilian and military patients. Other nuns braved death as angels of mercy on the front lines. Records show that about eight hundred Catholic Sisters served as military nurses during these four years.

Despite the fact that new Know-Nothing-type forces in the form of the Ku Klux Klan were born in the year following President Lincoln's death, the Church continued and expanded its work among the Negro people. Catholic nuns, in many places, had been the first to tutor black children, but a post-Civil War endeavor, as described by John Gillard, S.J., in his book, *The Catholic Church And The American Negro,* was particularly significant:

> In 1877 a home for colored waifs was started by a colored woman in an alley of Baltimore. It grew and prospered until a large house was donated by a good Catholic lady. This was henceforth known as St. Elizabeth's Home. Once in the large house, the number of children outgrew the abilities of the colored matron, who urged the need of Sisters to take over the work. The response came from the Franciscan Sisters of Mill Hill, England, a community of Sisters founded by Cardinal Herbert Vaughan. Four Sisters arrived in Baltimore on St. Stephen's Day, 1881, the first white Sisters in America to devote themselves entirely to the welfare of the Negroes.

Of course, there had been black nuns for some years, beginning with those admitted by Reverend Charles Nerinckx to the Sisters of Loretto in Kentucky as early as May of 1824, followed a few years later by the founding of the Oblate Sisters of Providence in Baltimore.

While the South was slowly beginning its reconstruction efforts after years of destructive war, a swifter devastation visited Chicago. On October 8 and 9, 1871, the city that had sprung to maturity around first-generation immigrants, where former wilderness had become, almost overnight, a commercially thriving strip of business property

selling for one thousand dollars per front foot, was tragically decimated in a conflagration that left the heart of the diocese in a smouldering pile of ashes.

Bishop Thomas Foley, who was away at the time administering the sacrament of Confirmation in Champaign, Illinois, returned to a new frontier. Diocesan buildings alone would cost over a million dollars to replace.

In response to pleas for funds for the relief and re-building of the parish, contributions began to pour in generously from all over the country. And so, upon the skeleton of a burned-out Cass Street (now Wabash Avenue) home, on the corner of Chicago Avenue, new lumber was nailed into a long, low building that was immediately dubbed "the shanty Cathedral." It was packed from door to altar each Sunday with devout people who contributed sacrificially toward the construction of a new cathedral.

The work of diocesan reconstruction began—not only of churches, but convents and an orphan asylum—a sad necessity after the tragedy. Food, clothing, and money came from people in parishes throughout our continent to help restore human dignity to destitute souls.

In the meantime, the man who would become, in 1880, the first Archbishop of Chicago was doing his best to alleviate miseries in Tennessee. For the

fifteen years after the Civil War, Bishop Patrick Feehan distinguished himself in the reconstruction of the Diocese of Nashville after its total devastation in the Civil War and then through the catastrophe of a cholera and yellow fever epidemic that claimed the lives of additional hundreds.

And Sister Blandina Segale of the Cincinnati Sisters of Charity, a native of Italy, was braving Indians, outlaws, poverty, and political resistance in her energetic labors through Colorado and New Mexico. Her perils would make fiction-thrillers seem tame.

Walking With God

Missionary endeavors and reforming crusades spread throughout the country as the Church expanded and her people continued to grow in God's Word.

A well-known temperance crusader was Bishop (later Archbishop) John Ireland of St. Paul, who became a leader of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union and soon gained a nationwide reputation as a great orator.

Disturbed by the plight of immigrants crowded and jobless on the east coast, he organized, with the cooperation of the State government and the western railroads, the Irish Catholic Colonization Association of the United States, Inc., bringing more than four thousand Catholic families to over 400,000 acres of farmland in western Minnesota and just over the border of Nebraska. This organization began in 1879, despite the floundering of three previous colonization attempts in that region. Bishop John Spalding of Peoria was made president of the board of directors, which consisted of thirteen laymen and six bishops—a position he held through 1891.

At the time, Bishop Edward Fitzgerald of Little Rock, Arkansas, had several flourishing colonies and an association committee was formed there in 1881, but this area never attracted the numbers that flocked to Minnesota.

Bishop Ireland was an enthusiastic supporter of the American system at a time when some Catholics were operating as a separate entity within the physical boundaries of the United States. His aims were similar to those of James Cardinal Gibbons in many ways. He acted as an interpreter, through eloquent orations and prolific writings, of political and ecclesiastical policies. Neither Gibbons nor Ireland would support moves to further disgregate the American Church by forming foreign-speaking enclaves—a plan endorsed by some, especially the Germans, who felt that the hierarchy was too Irish-dominated and was pushing too hard to "Americanize" the immigrants.

In fact, in 1880 Father William Keegan was appointed Vicar General for the English-speaking Catholics of the Diocese of Brooklyn, while Monsignor Michael May was Vicar General for the German-speaking people. Bishop John Laughlin had devised this method to avoid clashes between the German and Irish immigrants, who were each intensely loyal to the religious customs and traditions of their homelands.

Bishop Ireland, a colorful character, worked with Bishop John Keane, a gentle soul, of Richmond in promoting the establishment of The Catholic University of America, for which the Holy See's approval was received on March 7, 1889. President Harrison attended the formal opening on November 13, 1889.

Bishop Ireland also founded, in his own diocese, the College of St. Thomas (1885) and the St. Paul Seminary (1894). On May 19, 1910, he acted as chief consecrator for six bishops in the chapel of St. Paul Seminary—an unprecedented event.

His reputation as a learned man of great insight led to his serving, on separate occasions, in negotiations with other countries, as official representative of both the United States Government and of the Church of Rome.

Father James Gibbons, at the age of thirty-two, was made titular bishop of the nearly fifty thousand square miles of North Carolina, where it was estimated only about seven hundred of the more than one million residents were Catholic. When he attended Rome's first Vatican Council (December, 1869 to July,1870) he was the youngest of more than seven hundred bishops from all over the world.

Bishop Gibbons attended the Council along with other American bishops including Bishop Fitzgerald of Little Rock. Then Bishop Fitzgerald made a place in history for himself by being one of the two bishops at Vatican Council I to vote against Papal infallibility. The other was a bishop from Sicily.

Just two years later, the additional burden of the bishopric of Richmond was added to Bishop Gibbons' North Carolina responsibility, but for the lustrum of his double-tenure great strides were made in both states, as he traveled and visited and inspired the faithful. His book *Faith Of Our Fathers,* published in 1876, is a simply and beautifully stated exposition of Catholic teachings, inspiring to Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

As Archbishop of Baltimore, to which position he was elevated in 1877, Gibbons became one of the guiding lights of the American Catholic Church. On June 30, 1886, in the Baltimore Cathedral, the red biretta of the cardinalate was conferred on him.

His role as an intermediary was an important one. He took steps to control the internal German-Irish conflicts by constantly stressing the oneness of their new nationality and of their faith. He also served to allay the fears of Protestants who believed that Catholics were under a "foreign jurisdiction," at the same time trying to keep Pope Leo XIII constantly aware of these American fears and the operations of this new "democracy"—a form of government not familiar to Europeans.

Cardinal Gibbons was a great patriot and his last published article included a statement that he was "more and more convinced that the Constitution of the United States is the greatest instrument of government that issued from the hand of man." He was also a great friend of the working man and defended the Knights of Labor, a secretive organization that grew out of the labor movement.

Father John Joseph Keane was a zealous worker who aided in the inauguration of the Catholic Total Abstinence Union of America (1872), the Catholic Young Man's National Union (1875), Carroll Institute (1873), and the Tabernacle Society in Washington.

His devoted service led to his appointment as fifth bishop of Richmond in 1878. His administration could be truly termed "catholic" for he spread his attention to all. Protestant tension was nullified when he lectured to many of its groups; he fought opposition to catechize Negroes, succeeding in winning a number of converts. He was instrumental, with Bishop Ireland, in gaining approval for the Catholic University and became its first rector upon its opening in November, 1889.

His liberal political views and splendid oratory helped quash the ecclesiastical disapproval of the Knights of Labor and aided in the Americanization of Catholic immigrants. His "Americanist" political views were considered a threat to Catholicism by many Europeans and finally his reputation caused the Pope to cancel his rectorship and give him a position in Rome. He continued to battle the attacks against him by Europeans, convincing Pope Leo of his honest and pious intentions.

When the governing board of the University requested his aid in 1899, he undertook, with papal approval, a tour of the United States soliciting funds from wealthy Americans. His modest success in this endeavor and his obviously genuine devotion earned his appointment to the archbishopric of Dubuque in July, 1900. Here he concentrated on the development of educational institutions and the campaign against alcoholism, organizing an Archdiocesan Total Abstinence Union in 1902.

In His Service

While the bishops were carrying on their national and international crusades, each parish—country-farmer or city-polyglot—had its own mission to fulfill.

As the century came to a close, there were not very many plush churches in this land. Far more common were little wooden cross-topped structures with coal or wood stoves and outhouses. Even in New York City, miles of streets were unpaved and it was not strange to see cowboys breaking horses on dirt roads that rambled through rolling farmlands. Each evening, the lamplighter toured the neighborhood, climbing his ladder and touching his torch to the gas lamp atop each post. The iceman's horse clopped slowly down the street, pulling his cart, as his master checked windows for signs propped up by housewives—"50 Lbs.," "75 Lbs."

Reminiscent of Chicago's "shanty Cathedral" was the location of the first Mass, in Wendell, Massachusetts, for one hundred and ten people on August 20, 1882, in a shack belonging to the Fitchburg Railway Company, which served as a home for itinerant railroad workers. But this, too, was typical of the times.

Maspeth, Long Island's first Sunday Masses were held in a storefront, beginning in 1869. The first Masses of St. Philip Neri Parish in the Bronx were offered in 1898 in the former clubhouse of the Jerome Park Race Track and later in a store until the church was built. Men of the parish were ex-

pected to aid in the excavation for the structure or to lend their horses and carts.

In the Spring of 1904, the mission parish of St. Francis de Sales in Washington, D.C., celebrated Mass in a private home and then in a chapel set up on the second floor of the Town Hall. Subsequently, the chapel was moved downstairs to a room especially redecorated by the building's owners. The altar used for Mass was on rollers. After Saturday night dances, parish men would clean up the hall, roll out the altar, and unfold chairs for Sunday morning worship. When parish men began construction of a church building, their chapel landlord took a horse-drawn wagon to the Carolinas seeking lower-priced lumber. Some of the interior appointments of the church they built were purchased secondhand.

Through the years and right into our own day, Masses have been celebrated wherever the faithful may gather. In September of 1914, St. Pascal's Parish of Chicago, Illinois, worshipped in "the Nickel Show." A parishioner recalls that "many of the children who attended Mass in the theater in the morning returned in the afternoon for the five cent movies. To the amusement of all, some would genuflect before taking their seats, completely forgetting that they were now attending a movie."

In May of 1921, when Ty Cobb was managing the Tigers and Henry Ford had initiated an assembly line that was producing thousands of "Tin Lizzies" a day, a weatherworn wooden tavern, vacated for two years by Prohibition, was converted to the "church" of St. Cecilia in the Grand River-Livernois section of Detroit. Its first Mass welcomed an overflow crowd of some 250 persons, many of whom had to stand on the building's long and narrow front porch.

Polish factory workers built their own Church of St. Stanislaus Kostka in New Brighton, Staten Island, New York, in 1923. Parishioners excavated the ground, pushed wheelbarrows, built the stone walls and the concrete stairs. Their first Masses were held under a tarpaulin in the sub-basement.

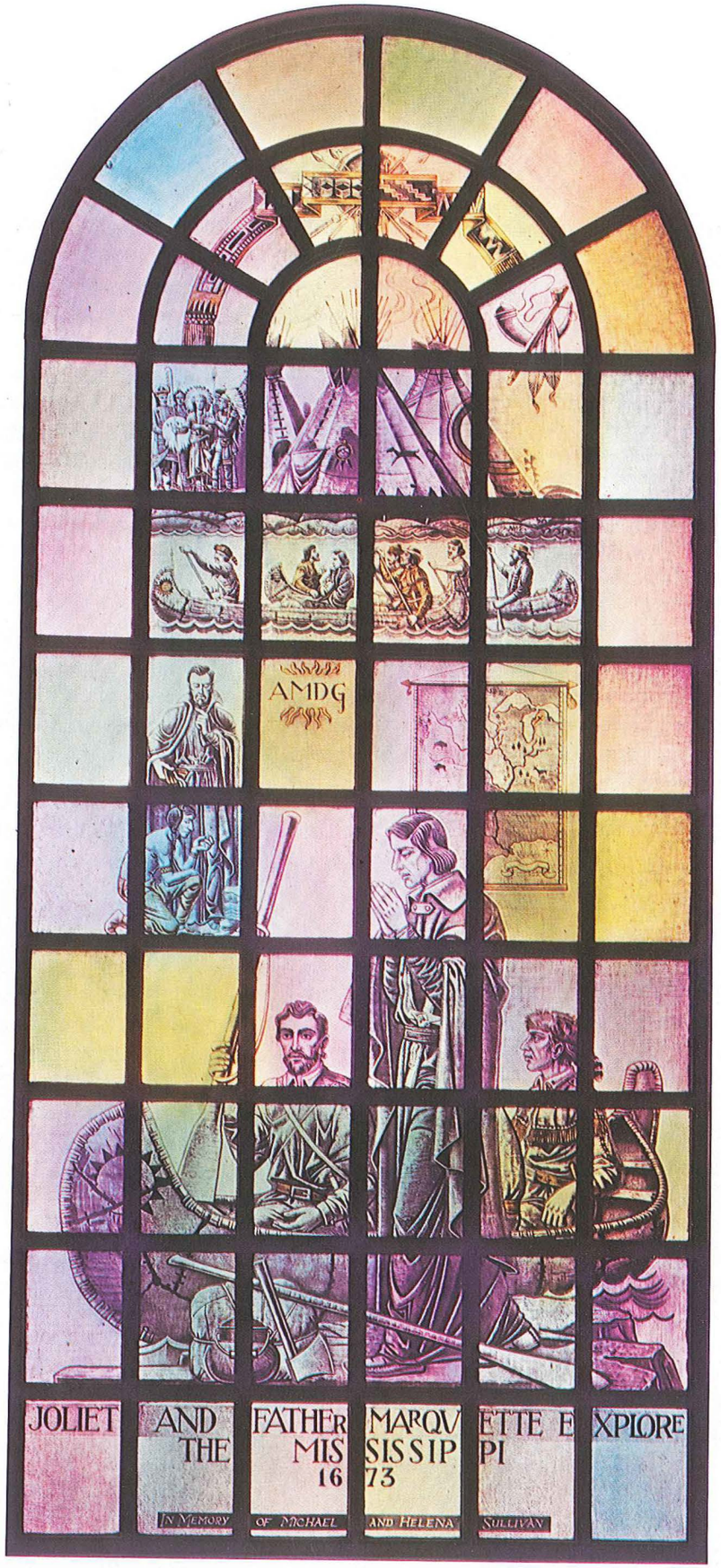
In 1924, the new Parish of St. Cyril of Alexandria, Pittsburgh, had no building, and all of its vestments and appointments were borrowed or donated. For its first twenty Sundays, four hundred people gathered for Mass in private homes—a different one each week.

And through four 20th Century wars, those at home received letters from sons, fathers, husbands, lovers, brothers, friends, telling of Masses in a tent on a battlefield, from the tailgate of a jeep on a hilltop, or in a dimly lit foxhole.

Bishop Alfred Curtis of Wilmington, Delaware, was a most unusual member of the hierarchy for his day. The people of his more remote missions, in the "wilderness" as he called it, were accustomed to seeing him arrive on a bicycle on Saturday evening, open the church, sweep the floor, kindle the fire, and then roll up his coat to use for a pillow on his floor-bed. In the morning he would be at the door to greet parishioners as they came for Mass. He recommended the use of bicycles to all his clergy, explaining they were much more economical than horses and they could be conveniently carried on the train.

The dedication demonstrated by Bishop Curtis in the 1890's was a story similar to so many others over the years. One priest in Maryland built a beautiful altar for his church. "Even the brass on the tabernacle door was hammered out by him, in which work he was assisted by a young man of the parish . . ."

And a letter written by Father John Basty to Archbishop John Shaw of New Orleans in September of 1919, which tells of how he managed to build a rectory for only $4200, using his personal stocks



This window features Father Marquette and Joliet exploring the Mississippi in 1673. Marquette died on his second voyage in what is now the city of Marquette, Michigan. Shown above are the Indian tepees and the wampum of friendship which the Indians gave to Father Marquette.

and bonds as mortgage collateral, suggests the need for a new church building:

> The old Red Church built in 1806 with rough boards, painted in deep red, is a relic of long ago it is true; but very much dilapidated, parts of which are nothing but dry rot. I have seen most of the parish churches of the diocese and none looks so bad as mine. The Red Church has to be repaired and somewhat enlarged for the time being. It holds twenty-two pews only with practically no sanctuary. The sacristy is a shed which is a haven of lizzards *(sic),* spiders, mud-diggers, and birds of all kinds. When you come up here which I hope will be soon, you will realize the truth of my statements. I may not be able to conjure snakes to appear in church when you are there, (I am not a St. Francis) still I can produce witnesses who will tell you that snakes come to hear Mass occasionally and of course produce great disturbance amongst the fair sex . . .

Sisters In Charity

Francesca Cabrini, born in Lombardy, Italy, and imbued with the missionary spirit since childhood, founded orphanages and seven missions of a new order—the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus—before being assigned by Pope Leo XIII to minister to Italian immigrants in America. The Mother Superior and six of her missionary Sisters, none of whom spoke English, sailed for New York, where they landed on March 31, 1889. They found destitute families who were arriving by the thousands each month to escape poverty in Italy, only to find discrimination, slave wages, and misery in their new home. Assuming their mission to aid these people the seven Sisters, led by God, began begging in the streets each day until they had amassed a sum sufficient to construct their first American school and orphanage. From this humble start, Mother Cabrini eventually established sixty-seven schools and orphanages.

"The Vagabond of God" covered the globe in her travels, always followed by her devoted missionary Sisters, some of whom she left behind to cultivate the seeds she had sown. At the time of her death in 1917, the original seven Sisters in the Order of the Sacred Heart of Jesus had added more than four thousand devout missionaries to their ranks.

The body of Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini is preserved in the chapel of Mother Cabrini High School in New York City. She was beatified on November 13, 1938, and canonized by Pope Pius XII on July 7, 1946, the first American-citizen saint.

In the year that Mother Cabrini first set foot on these shores, Katharine Drexel of Philadelphia entered the religious life. Well-educated and well-traveled, Katharine inherited a fortune upon her father's death in 1885. During a visit to Rome and an audience with Pope Leo XIII she offered to donate her fortune to the Church, but only if it were to be used to aid Indians and Negroes.

The Pope suggested that she should be their missionary herself and so, in 1889, she began her novitiate with the Sisters of Mercy in Pittsburgh. Two years later, she and a few of her devoted friends founded the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament for Indians and Negroes. Their convent had once been the Torresdale, Pennsylvania, summer home of the Drexels.

Mother Drexel's missions began with Negroes of the South and Indians of the Southwest, but soon became a proliferation of schools and convents scattered throughout the country. In 1915 she opened Xavier University in New Orleans. Its rapid growth led to a beautiful campus dedicated by Dennis Cardinal Dougherty in 1932. Before her death at the age of ninety-six, she had seen her vast stores of money and love grow to forty-nine foundations in the Northeast, Middle West, and Deep South.

In 1893, an American community of the St. Joseph Society of the Sacred Heart (Josephite Fathers), also dedicated to work among the Negroes, was founded. The Paulists and Glenmarys, and the Missionary Trinitarians, were also home missionaries.

And in 1908, Pope Pius X finally terminated the mission status of the American Church.

Of War And Peace

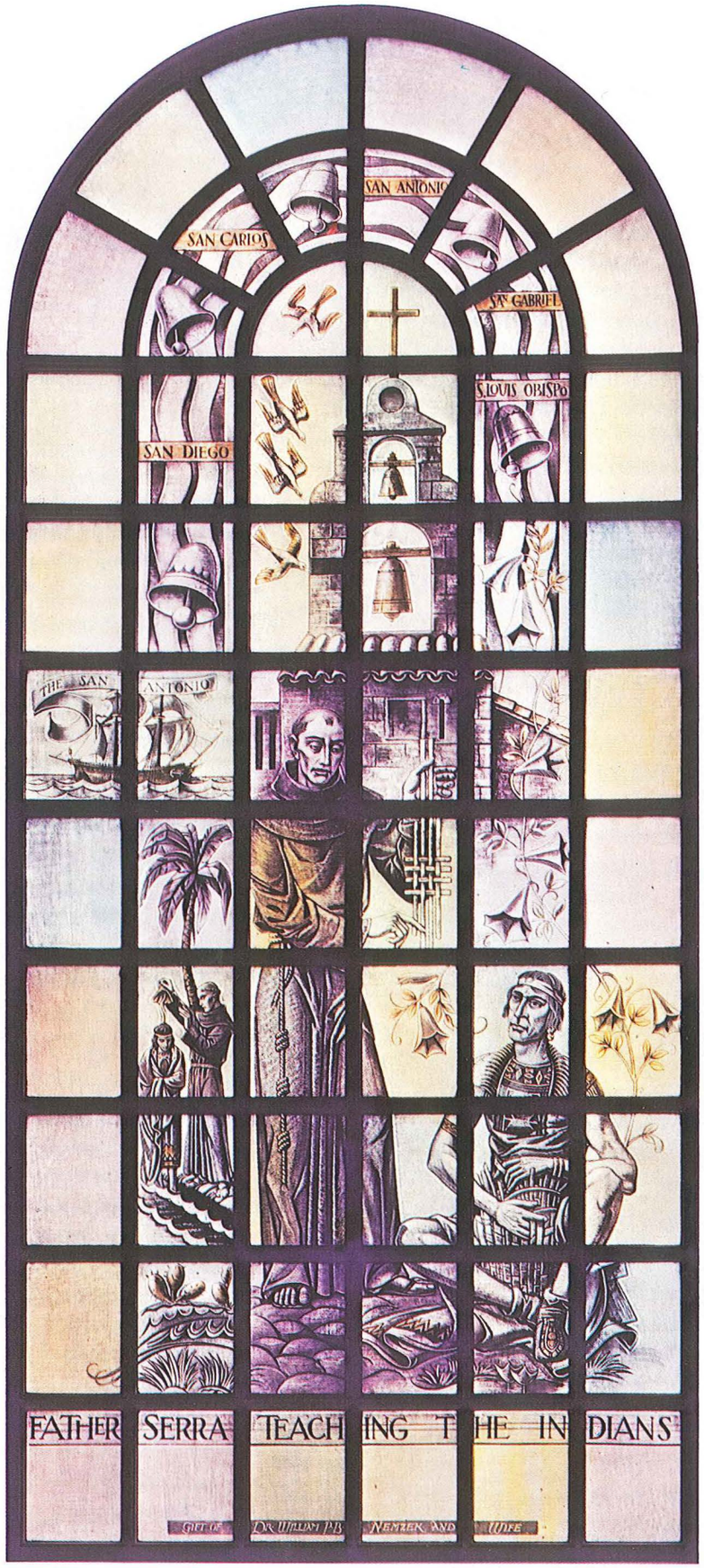
The American Church had already proved capable of caring for its own and then some. Generations of immigrants had been embraced by brothers in Christ, even when there was little to share. And newcomers continued to swell the ranks of our parishes.

In the first five years of the 20th Century, three-and-a-half million Italians came to our shores. By 1930, one-fourth of our country's Italian-American population lived in New York City, giving that city more Italians than Rome.

Polish immigrants came in only slightly fewer numbers, peaking just before World War I. Having suffered Russian-German repression for so many years, they formed closely knit groups to retain—and enjoy—their own cultural and lingual heritage, often establishing national parishes.

The Titanic disaster in 1912, the opening of the Panama Canal in 1914 with its subsequent boost to our productivity, the declaration of war in 1917, the all-out support at home of "our boys over there" and the spirit of brotherhood it kindled throughout the War To End All Wars—capped by the great joy of Armistice Day were turbulent and exciting years for our country.

Immigration legislation of the Twenties stemmed the flood that had always looked to the Church for aid. No longer would the care of immigrants be the Catholic Church's major concern in this country.



Father Serra, great founder and tireless worker of the California missions, is shown instructing art of basketry to an Indian. Symbols in upper window are the Mission Church and swallows of Capistrano. The ribbon represents the Via Riale – the road that now travels through the missions.

Now a great movement began for conversion; large numbers of Negroes, for instance, were converted in New York City. Very few blacks had been Catholic before, except in Louisiana and southern Maryland where there were a large number of Black Catholics since Colonial days—yet the conversion of Blacks was a nation-wide phenomenon that continued to grow until the late Fifties. Schools grew and many new classrooms served as convents for their teachers after school hours.

Alfred Emmanuel Smith of New York City, a "wet" Democrat, lost to Herbert Hoover in 1928's presidential race, but he surprised pollsters by gaining more than forty percent of the popular vote. In fact, he brought in more votes than the Democratic party had ever before received. During the campaign there was a revival of interest in the Ku Klux Klan, since he was popular with not only the "papists" but with the "foreigners" as well.

At least, his loss meant that he could not be blamed for October 29, 1929—the black day that led to miseries and a skyrocketing suicide rate for the next few years. Not only financial investors lost in those Great Depression years. People from every walk of life stood in breadlines. Many farmers lost their lands to mortgage-holders. St. Xavier Farm at old Bohemia Manor, deeded by the diocese to the Jesuits in 1898, had been used as loan collateral. It, too, was lost.

As Rudy Vallee's melodious voice echoed *Life Is Just A Bowl Of Cherries* from American radios, the Lindbergh baby was kidnapped and murdered; Franklin Delano Roosevelt left the Governorship of New York and became President of a deeply troubled United States; Prohibition was repealed; the Morro Castle disaster killed 137 persons; Will Rogers and Wiley Post lost their lives in an Alaskan plane crash; a three-year drought turned the Great Plains into "the Dust Bowl."

The Church was a blessed solace and source of strength to the faithful in those hours of trial. *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*

Church affairs were the center of the Catholic family's life in the Twenties and Thirties as they enjoyed peace after war and then sought relief from Depression tribulations. Dramas, minstrels, and pageants were planned for all age groups. Strawberry festivals, bazaars, balls, concerts, lectures, card parties, interspersed with Masses, special devotions, society meetings, religious festivals and processions, filled the days and nights of good Catholics. "Five-dollars-a-month" pews were reserved for the more prosperous, but giving was a natural part of belonging and building.

Some new parishes—particularly, but not only, "national" parishes—had to prove a need for their existence by accumulating funds for a building before their establishment was approved. These fund-raising campaigns often included the "selling" of bricks for the church—usually at ten cents apiece. Sometimes Protestant friends, as well as neighboring parishes, joined in the crusade. Old-timers recollect, "our campaign lasted so long, each brick must have been bought at least twice!"

Active St. Vincent de Paul Societies, and other church-sponsored groups, visited jails, established homes for wayward and orphaned boys, and were missionaries to homeless and "downtrodden" men. They helped pay rents and brought foodstuffs to families suffering under the burdens of Depression days. Well-known during these times was Dorothy Day and *The Catholic Worker.*

Hard times had united our nation as never before. It was not long before that spirit of unity was to be tested again. While Shirley Temple and the dance team of Astaire and Rogers were captivating movie theater audiences in 1936, Germany was

rearming. In 1938, Walt Disney created Snow White and Orson Welles unwittingly created a panic with his radio broadcast War of the Worlds. "Knock-knock" jokes swept our country; Austria fell, and Czechoslovakia was dismembered. In September of 1939, World War II started with the invasion of Poland. Hitler's minions began a crazed dance across Europe's face that would leave devastation and the murder of more than eleven million innocent victims in their wake.

The bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941 brought America into the war and her young men were sailing off to foreign shores from which many would not return. Builders of homes were out of work, but jobs were plentiful in other trades. The automotive industry retooled to produce tanks and bombers and weapons, providing employment for hundreds of "Rosies-the-Riveter." Market lines grew longer as we waited for rationed butter, sugar, coffee. Gas rationing proved a boon to horse-traders—figuratively and literally. A preview of today's ecological movement, those years saw parishioners saving basements-full of paper and old clothes for "the rag man," coffee cans full of cooking fat to bring to the grocer, and flattened vegetable cans to be recycled for weapons. We had backyard Victory Gardens, Civil Defense air raid drills, and Kate Smith singing *God Bless America.* Many churches published special bulletins and newspapers for their parishioners in the armed services. School children and parish societies wrapped Christmas gifts for hospitalized veterans and knitted socks and afghans to send overseas. And Japanese-Americans of our Pacific Coast were held in detention camps—an action upheld by the Supreme Court.

The Medal of Honor, highest military decoration of the United States, was first awarded for Civil War Service, but it was not until World War II that a chaplain received this honor. Father Joseph O'Callahan, a Jesuit from Boston, survived the holocaust of a Japanese attack on his bomber carrier, *Franklin,* ministering to the dead and wounded, directing fire-fighting crews, and assuming responsibilities far beyond the call of his duties, in the midst of the siege.

The bloodshed and deprivation, the support and prayers of Americans everywhere finally led to the restoration of peace. Masses of Thanksgiving were joyously celebrated throughout the world on V-J Day in 1945, only four months after the death of President Roosevelt who had begun his fourth term in office. With the typical American elasticity and ingenuity, people picked up the pieces, tried their best to recapture a normal mode of life, and turned to the important task of post-war reconstruction.

Changing America

The 1950's brought back memories of other decades. We were again at war—except it was officially known as "a police action." Racial prejudice came under government fire, with President Truman's Executive Order, in 1948, ending segregation in the armed forces and then the outlawing of segregation in public schools in 1954—also the year in which "Under God" was added to the Pledge of Allegiance. Confraternities of Christian Doctrine and Decent Literature Committees assumed new importance. Parish-to-servicemen publications and holiday-gift-package programs were revived. And, in 1959, two new states joined the Union.

But the Sixties, for the Church, the country, the world, embraced an astonishing number of turning-points. When the decade opened with a Catholic of Irish heritage being nominated for the presidency, there were some KKK rumblings. But an era of total openness and instant communication was in full swing, and would be enforced and emphasized by the fresh, clear spirit of "Aggiornamento" provided by Pope John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council. The American people sought to be well-informed and, as historian Francis J. Lally states in *The Catholic Church In A Changing America:* "The characteristic fairness of Americans saw to it that in unfriendly areas where Catholics and the Catholic position seemed to be under attack, equal time and equal space were provided for Catholic rejoinders and for explanations of the true position of the Church on vexing questions. No one can estimate the direct fruits of this exposure in terms of votes, but one thing is sure: many ancient illusions were dispelled simply by the dissemination of authentic information on religious matters into areas formerly closed against it."

One of Pope John XXIII's first concerns when he ascended the Pontiff's throne in 1958 had been the convening of an Ecumenical Council. One of John Kennedy's first acts as President of the United States was the creation of the Peace Corps. The world was becoming ever closer to unity and brotherhood. Ecumenism was the upcoming byword.

The post-war building boom had started a population movement that carried over into the Sixties. A typical shift would see an inner-city parish, in the span of a decade, evolve from Irish step-dancing and feis celebrations to fiestas and soul food. As various ethnic groups fled city ghettoes and immigrants of other nationalities refilled them, as younger people married and moved up and out into new subdivisions, while their Social Security-supported parents remained rooted, as whole

parishes seemed to come and go, merge and separate, with the shifting sands of time and fortune, Catholic building and refurnishing programs alternately suffered and prospered. In some areas, Catholic schools—even modern, not-yet-paid-for facilities—closed down as teaching orders dwindled, costs rose, and enrollments dropped. But even now, other congregations are constructing institutions of learning for their sons and daughters. And some of the over-ambitious "white elephants" of the past are being adapted to new uses.

The entire world joined in mourning as the two Johns left this mortal life in 1963. The Pope was taken in June. An assassin's bullet claimed President Kennedy in November. Surely, John XXIII had spoken for both of them when he said earlier that year:

> "All human beings ought to reckon that what has been accomplished is but little in comparison to what remains to be done . . . Organs of production, trade unions, associations, professional organizations, insurance systems, political regimes, institutions for culture, health, recreation, or sporting purposes . . . must all be adjusted to the era of the atom, and of the conquest of space: An era which the human family has already entered, wherein it has commended its new advance toward the limitless horizons."

Here was a decade in which churches—their priests and their people—became actively involved in projects such as the building of community centers, work programs, urban renewal, participation in marches and picket lines, census-taking, interdenominational councils, summer day camps, vocational training, surveys, recreational programs, senior citizens' facilities and activities, Headstart and Montessori Schools, classes for the retarded and handicapped, Red Cross bloodmobile visits, sponsorship of sports programs for youngsters—programs available to those of all races and creeds.

This is not to say that the Catholic Church has not always been involved in missions to the community. In fact, the record of Archbishop James Quigley, who came to Chicago from Buffalo, New York, in 1903, is not unusual, even though impressive. He not only founded seventy-five new churches and ninety schools during his thirteen-year administration here, but he opened the Cathedral College in 1905 as the nucleus of the archdiocesan seminary, founded the Working Boys' Home on Jackson Boulevard, the Ephpheta School for the Deaf, St. Joseph's Home for the Friendless, and developed Archbishop Freehan's project, St. Mary's Training School. These were similar to the works of the Sixties, but with one important difference. Today's Church and her services are missions of parishioners. To be first in extending a helping hand is no longer the duty of the religious alone.

On January 11, 1964, Pope Paul VI said:

> "We must give the life of the Church new attitudes of mind, new standards of behavior; make it rediscover a spiritual beauty in all its aspects—in the sphere of thought and word, in prayer and methods of education, in art and canon law. A unanimous effort is needed in which all groups must offer their cooperation. May everyone hear the call which Christ is making to him through our voice."

And God's people responded. Even in the midst of murder and mayhem. And sometimes in answer to the murder and mayhem.

1964 was a year in which Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., conferred with Pope Paul, and Archbishop John Dearden, in the face of racial tensions, organized the Archbishop's Committee on Human Relations. But it was also a year of racial disturbances in Harlem.

In February of 1965, the United States bombed North Vietnam and Malcolm X was shot as he

addressed his Afro-American Unity organization in New York City. In August, the Watts riots cost thirty lives. Massive anti-war demonstrations rocked the Capitol and Hurricane Betsy devastated parts of our South. Then Pope Paul, on a mission of peace, visited New York—the first Supreme Pontiff to come to these shores.

On that one day—October 4, 1965—Pope Paul inspired a nation in person and through the miracle of television, as he conferred with President Johnson, spoke to representatives of the world in his message to the United Nations, attended an interfaith meeting at Holy Family Church, celebrated a Papal Mass for Peace at Yankee Stadium, and visited the Vatican Pavilion at the World's Fair. Those who heard were encouraged and enlightened for Pope Paul's words were echoes of the Ecumenical Council, bringing joy not only to those of the Catholic faith but to all the peace-loving peoples:

> "Peace must be built; it must be built up every day by works of peace. These works of peace are, first of all, social order; then, aid to the poor, who still make up an immense multitude of the world population, aid to the needy, the weak, the sick, the ignorant. Peace must be like a garden, in which public and private beneficence cultivates the choicest flowers of friendship, of solidarity, of charity and love."

But not all people listened. Not all hearts were opened.

On Sunday, July 23, 1967, six days of rioting began in Detroit. During those terror-filled hours, forty-one died, five thousand were rendered homeless, and property damage mounted to five hundred million dollars. The pale stone statue of Christ at Sacred Heart Seminary turned Negro—with the careful application of jet black paint to its face and hands. Other riots continued to erupt throughout the country—racial, anti-war, anti-draft. And in the following year, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and Robert Kennedy were victims of assassins' bullets.

But it was in 1969 that the man-made miracle of the century occurred as the world watched and waited. Neil Armstrong and Edwin Aldrin, Jr., took a giant step for mankind—onto the moon.

And Now The Seventies

In the years after the Second Vatican Council, the Synod of Bishops was convened as a new advisory board to the Pope. During this period, efforts were made by the Pope to expand the College of Cardinals to include more members from the United States and other countries. At this time, the Bishop of Pittsburgh, John J. Wright, became Cardinal along with John J. Carberry and Terence J. Cooke of New York. Shortly thereafter, in 1969, Cardinal Wright and the American Church were honored by his appointment to the Pope's Curia as Prefect of the Congregation of the Clergy. Cardinal Wright relocated to Rome to assume his new position at the Vatican. He has achieved the

highest rank attained by any American in the Church.

As the 1970's began their progression, Catholic parishes of America were still in the process of embracing the many changes now brought to their religious life. Parish Councils, English—rather than Latin—masses, "Jazz" and "Folk" masses, and in many cases Spanish masses, congregational singing, lay commentators, repositioning of the Altar, participation—rather than spectatorship—in the Mass. Priests and Protestant ministers visited each other's pulpits.

Though parish men seldom dug church foundations anymore, they did form work crews for painting, decorating, repairing, refurbishing, just as the ladies have always attended to the scrubbing, polishing, and beautifying through the actual labor as well as fund-raising. Masses held in private homes—now by choice rather than long-ago necessity—brought a special closeness to many.

Another special closeness—that of perfectly attuned married couples—was engendered by a movement called "Marriage Encounter." In a weekend of study and self-exploration, husband and wife learn a new way to "reach out and experience one another." The interlocked rings encircling a cross and crowned with a heart form a red and gold car-window insignia that elicits smiles and warm greetings from other Marriage Encounter families wherever they cross paths.

A phenomenon of the Seventies has been the emergence of the "new ethnicity," a resurgence of interest and pride in the diverse nationalities that form American Catholicism. A new emphasis on neighborhood, parish, and family by Poles, Italians, Slovaks, Lithuanians, Ukrainians, Croatians and others has served as an antidote for the rootlessness of the day.

Social concerns continue to occupy the Church and her people. In 1970, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops helped negotiate a settlement between striking farm workers and owners. Prolifers of all religions have joined the Catholic people in the Right To Life battle against abortion and "death with dignity" laws.

The Seventies brought such seemingly innovative concepts as the "team ministry" pastorate. In actuality, this is an extension of the work done by Christ and His apostles as they worked together among the people, serving individual needs. The priests within the group set an example for the greater team ministry of the faithful themselves in their responsibility to share in the mission of Jesus.

Lay ministries were established in many progressive programs spear-headed by young people as well as adults. And "the Charismatics" swept a refreshing new movement into Catholicism.

The June 16, 1973, issue of *America,* in describing the Charismatic Renewal Conference held at Notre Dame two weeks earlier, quipped, "the Holy Spirit is a ghost no longer in Roman Catholicism." The story explained: "The weekend was an experience of the unity and universality of the Church. Besides those from every state in the Union, there were charismatic Catholics from Australia, Israel, France, Mexico, India, Colombia, Korea, Haiti, Holland, and Germany. Even more striking than this geographical universality was the religious unity of liberal and conservative, old and young, black and white, rich and poor, the sophisticated and the simple."

Cardinal Leo Suenens, Archbishop of Malines-Brussels, Belgium, who was a speaker at the Notre Dame Conference, said later:

> . . .We are in a springtime of the church and we must be open to what is going on. Something is happening and we must approach it in a spirit of wisdom. . . The charismatic renewal today is for each of us a grace coming to our souls. It is a grace which vitalizes everything which in the ages past became too formalistic, too ritualistic. We are coming out of that formalism more and more. . .

On Christmas Eve, 1974, men and women of good faith throughout the world heard Pope Paul VI's designation of 1975 as a Roman Catholic Holy Year. A new year of grace, of spiritual renewal and reconciliation, prayer, penance and devotion, was declared.

The tradition has roots in God's commandment to Moses: "And ye shall hallow the fiftieth year, and proclaim liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof; it shall be a jubilee unto you. . ." (Leviticus 25:10). First at fifty-year intervals, then at quarter-centuries, the designation of the Holy Year has taken place since Pope Boniface VIII in 1300.

What made the Holy Year different in our time was the theme of "Reconciliation" proclaimed by Pope Paul; the reflection of changes in the contemporary world that have inspired the Church to more progressive social and political reform during the past twenty-five years than at any other time in its long existence.

Pope Paul, in keeping with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council, turned the direction of the Holy Year of 1975 toward spiritual inner renewal for each individual and reconciliation—of man with God, race with race, young with old, nation with nation, East with West . . . In his own words: "We have . . . been convinced that the celebration of the Holy Year not only can be consistently fitted in with the spiritual line adopted by the council itself—which it is our responsibility to develop faithfully—but also can very well be harmonized with, and contribute to, the tireless and loving effort being made by the church to meet the moral needs of our time, to interpret its deepest aspirations and to accept honestly certain forms of its preferred external manifestations . . ."

On Sunday, September 14, 1975, in one of the more important events of the Holy Year, and in the presence of tens of thousands of reverent spectators gathered in St. Peter's Square, Pope Paul VI celebrated the canonization of Blessed Mother Seton. An estimated 16,000 pilgrims from parishes throughout America were present at this momentous 20th Century event.

Elizabeth Ann Bayley Seton (1774-1821) is the first native American elevated to sainthood. An Episcopal socialite who converted to Roman Catholicism, her loving endeavors concentrated on the poor and the sick and led to the founding of the Sisters of Charity. She has also been immortalized throughout the world by the many schools and libraries named in her memory, including Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey; Seton Hall College, Greensburg, Pennsylvania; and

Elizabeth Seton College in Yonkers, New York.

Her challenges were far from purely spiritual. She dealt effectively with the problems of a neglectful father, a despondent husband, ne'er-do-well sons, high-handed clerics, feuding religious, and constant creditors. Her lot was never easy and seldom pleasant. Her salvation, in fact her sanctity, was worked out in the endless toil of an American wife and mother, widow and nun.

More than a century and a half ago, Mother Seton called her daughters together to bid them farewell. And she left her loved ones a final phrase that remains as part of her legacy to all: "be children of the Church."

Over one million pilgrims traveled to the historic city of Philadelphia in August, 1976, for the Forty-first Eucharistic Congress, a worldwide spiritual assembly that gave the faithful of all lands deeper understanding of the diversity of culture and the unity of the Holy Spirit.

Seven Congress-sponsored conferences and seminars collected the wisdom and experience of prelates and lay men and women outstanding in the causes of social justice.

During the week-long gathering, forty-five different liturgies featured national dress, customs, and languages of the multi-ethnic participants in the Congress.

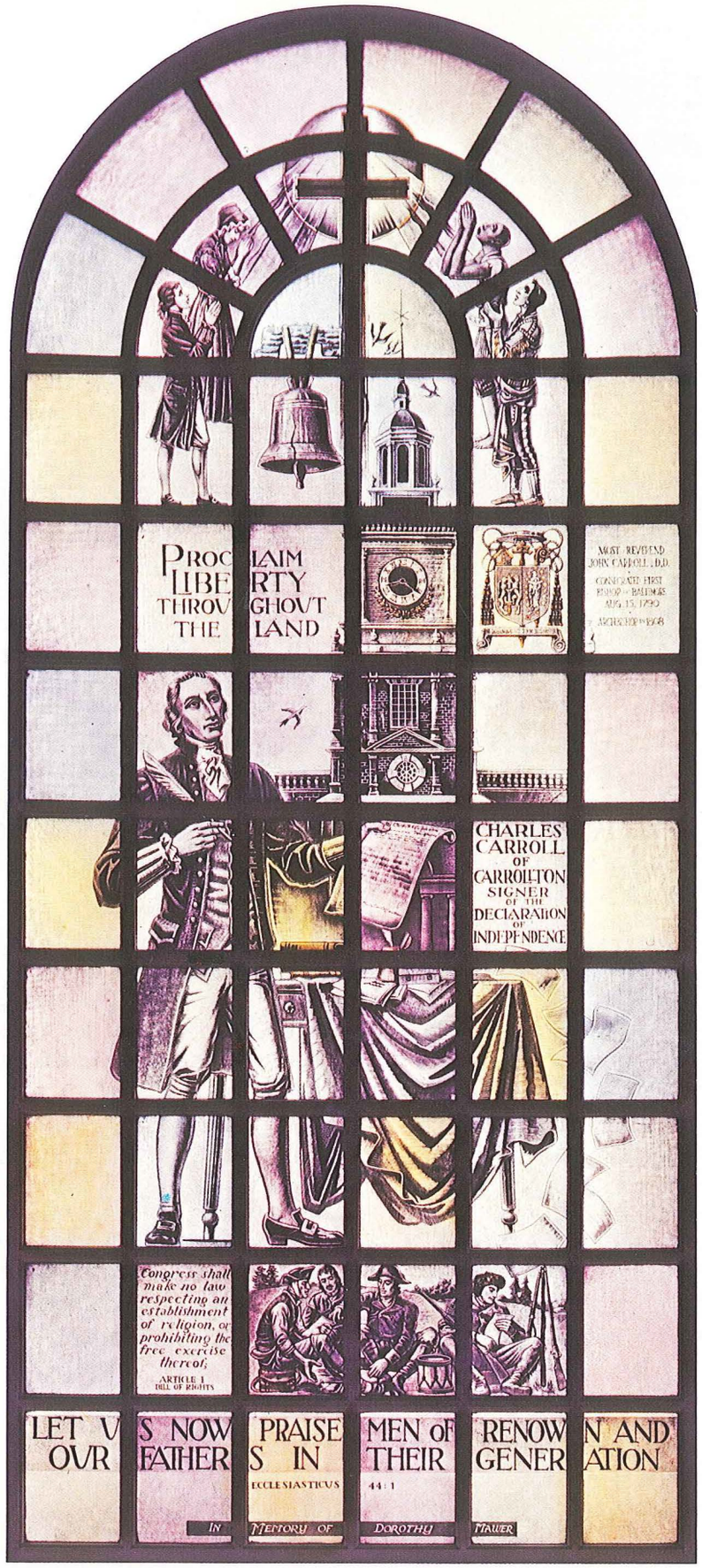
The planners of the Eucharistic Congress had instructed that no event was to have an air of "triumphalism" about it. Those who attended the Eucharistic Congress, and experienced the dedication of the great crowds, could sense a spiritual uplift and unity that far outshone any petty emotion.

Catholics observed America's Bicentennial Year, 1976, with liturgical celebration, studies in church history, and a nation-wide reflection on justice that culminated in 1977 in a five-year program of study and action to better realize social justice in our nation and world.

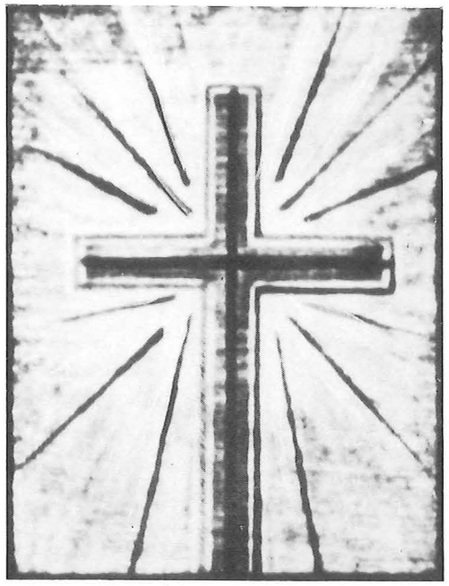
The broadest of consultations between bishops and laity ever undertaken in the American Church involved over 800,000 Catholics in parish, diocesan, and regional conferences during the 1975 Holy Year. In October, 1976, over thirteen hundred delegates carried to a national conference in Detroit, entitled *A Call To Action,* over 180 specific recommendations of Church policy in eight subject areas: justice in the Church, personhood, neighborhood, the family, work, nationhood, humankind, and ethnicity and race.

The recommendations offered new approaches to realizing social goals to which the Catholic Church has long been committed, such as the elimination of racial discrimination and poverty, the guaranteeing of rights to the unborn, the commitment of the parish church to its neighborhood, and the support of family life. Other recommendations reflect newer concerns, within and outside the Church, such as the expansion of women's ministries; the necessity of evaluating our entire economic system; the quality and morality of the public schools; and the need for more effective adult religious education programs.

Some of the recommendations remain untenable in the light of Church teaching, concluded the National Conference of Catholic Bishops in their response to *A Call To Action.* But



Emphasis here is on the signing of The Declaration of Independence by Charles Carroll, a Catholic signer, who as one of the richest men in the colonies would have lost the most by signing. The clock indicates time of Washington's death. At top, the Colonists, Negroes, and Indians, who profited by the Declaration.



as a result of the consultation, the Bishops now feel more acutely their responsibility to clearly and effectively express Church teaching. The pastoral agenda for the Church is unfolding and the proposals of *A Call To Action* have been heard and weighed. Some were accepted and others declined, but the voice that the consultation gave to the joys, hopes, and griefs of the people of our age stands out as a strong statement in support of the vitality with which shared responsibility infuses the Church.

America rejoiced at receiving its third saint on June 19, 1977, when John Neumann, immigrant, Redemptorist priest, and Bishop of Philadelphia, was canonized. This was truly a gift to our country from the Church, for John Neumann's quiet, steadfast virtue in everything that he did calls out for emulation to all who know his story. (See page 24.)

And Forever

Roman Catholicism came to America with great men of vision almost five hundred years ago—perhaps even earlier. Men of our Church helped to found the United States two hundred years ago and have contributed to every step of its incredibly swift growth.

The religious community has taken gigantic strides to keep pace ecumenically. The faith of our fathers remains constant with merely a shift of emphasis in the greater participation of the people in the duties formerly relegated to priests and religious alone.

Traditions and beautiful ceremonies of the past are still cherished. But new forms of worship have joined them. The image of the devout Catholic follower of Christ is still with us, but now our arms are outstretched in brotherhood as we walk in His footsteps.

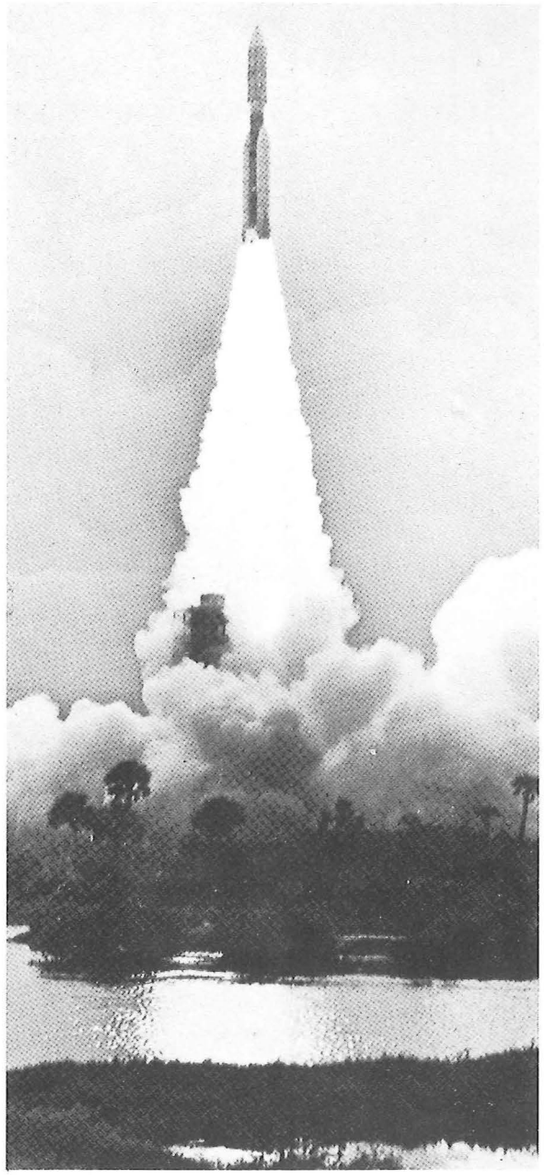
Each and every Christian is an apostle as well. Each shares in the responsibilities as well as the rewards of the Gospel. We rejoice in this knowledge as we greet the future with renewed dedication, despite the understanding that man has not the gift, nor the burden, of knowing what the future will be. This is the Lord's way. We affirm that nothing remains the same, and that some things are ever unchanged.

The world in chaos or the world at peace: both still experience the sun and the moon. A new day breaks; it is fresh and untried, yet joined to all others and therefore already part of history. Each day is flexible, but constant. And so it is with the Church.

"Jesus and Mary, be with us on our way."

This history of the Church in America highlights many of the important events that have shaped the Church of today. While our objective was to write a brief and easy-to-read story, it immediately became clear that it would be impossible to include all of the substantial amounts of interesting and important information. Thousands of volumes have been written on many aspects of the history of the Church and about the leaders who made such history. It is our sincere hope that this story will encourage readers who feel they have learned something of special interest to pursue the subject and learn more about Church history in America.

Written and Edited by
E. Phillips Mantz and Reverend Michael J. Roach



Beneath the United States seal and the words "To Defend the Right," stand the founders of the defense of our country: Commodore John Barry-American Navy; Count Casimir Pulaski-Cavalry; and Major General Thaddeus Kosciusko-Artillery. (Kosciusko carries the plan of West Point.)