

1871 - 28 August - 1921
Pages in Commemoration of the Fiftieth Jubilee
Of
St. Joseph's Church
St. Joseph
Wisconsin
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Chapter I
The Settlement

On July 24, 1847 a hearty band of settlers arrived here from Johnsburg. They were seeking a home in the Wisconsin forest. They were not driven into this uncharted and unknown land by need or misery. Peter Wolf knew America quite well; he had already lived here three years before he returned to Germany to bring back the capable locksmith Ludwig Wolf and his family. Peter Wolf was a surveyor by profession and he brought along his always-present compass and several maps of America and Wisconsin. The state's forests and its productive soil were an ever-increasing attraction for the German immigrant. This inviting prospect also brought Ludwig to the New World, he being anxious to try his luck along with the others.

The journey across the prairie was made by an ox drawn wagon. Towards evening they reached the eighty-acre lake. The log cabin of Jacob Weber, the only one in the area, stood amidst the brushwood and prairie grass about one mile south from there. The forty acres eastward consisted of wet sludgy land which then rose southeasterly to the primeval forest made up of bushes, tall sugar maples and basswood. That is where the church stands today. This was the end of the journey, for the land had been assigned to them by the federal administration in Green Bay. Certainly there was not much to do that day. Gradually it became dark. The newcomers made for the cabin, receiving makeshift care in their new home that first night. Their state of mind was uneasy - alone in the bush miles from nowhere.

And what a surprise in the morning - During the night of July 27 a heavy frost covered the area; the potato dumplings were blackened, the wheat helms were frozen, the bushes and grass wilted. It was a rigorous test for the pioneers. The women and children sobbed and lamented loudly. Peter Wolf calmed them, telling them they must stay. "Such a thing," he said solemnly, "Can not happen in another fifty years."

A new fear along the lake - Twenty-six Indian wigwams appeared under the morning sun. Everything terrible they had heard about Indians now stood visibly before them. Quiet inaction was not called for. Peter Wolf, who already spoke English fairly well, decided to go to the chief immediately. He told him that for women's sake they should move away some distance from the lake. The Indians agreed to this request. The next day fifty ponies were packed with their belongings and they moved about one mile north of the lake.

Next the division of land was undertaken. Ludwig Wolf owned three eighty-acre parcels. He had one yoke of oxen, two milk cows, and four children, the oldest, Wilhelm, being age eight. He also had \$1000 worth of gold in bars. Peter Berg, a shoemaker, also from the Dueren district of the Rhine province Prussia and who accompanied Wolf in the journey across the ocean, brought along only one cow. He bought eighty acres adjacent to the church land at ten shillings per acre. Between him and Wolf there lay forty acres of spongy and fungus ridden land. The elderly Peter Braun later inherited this acreage being happy that it was not necessary to cut down trees on it. Ludwig Wolf settled south of the lake, building a small cabin there in which Hermann Steffes now lives.

Soon, however, the necessities of life became more difficult to acquire. There was a shortage of bread for a two-week period. Ludwig Wolf traveled for an entire day to Calumet. From there he left for Milwaukee. On the way he stopped at a mill and the miller agreed to help him, asking \$3.00 for a barrel, but he required Ludwig's assistance cleaning the wheat. At home they were baking buckwheat (thirty bushel) cakes. They obtained nourishment for life from corn and potatoes. The 16' x 20' log cabin consisted of a loft reached by ladder and a large living room. Time and again the pious pioneer priest Casper Rehrl stopped on his way to Marytown, refreshed himself with thick milk and with cream and bread, enough to sustain him for three days.

Gradually friendly neighbors arrived. In 1847, Mathias Konz, a wagon maker, settled east of Anton Enders and just afterwards John Roerig of Mullenbach, Trier diocese, arrived. Johann J. Michels, a self-sacrificing soul, bought the land where Stephan Morgan lives. In 1848 Jacob Steffes arrived from Laubach, Koblenz district, whose son Michael still lives in the old house. Slightly north of there Lawrence Forstner, his successor in 1850, cleaned up some stone acres for cultivation. Some stones so large that two teams of horses could not move them.

In 1852 Mathias Koenigs arrived from Tress, Prussia (today Joseph Mullenbach) and Mathias J. Caspers. John Kaufmann (Anton Mies), Bernard Petrie, Anton Rausch (today Mathias Lefeber) settled along the western boundaries of the congregation during the course of the next year. Southwest from there Peter and Barbara Ebertz and Johann Joseph Holzmann from Nachsein, Koblenz worked the land since 1856. Holzmann bought the land from his uncle, Mathias Koenigs. Freidrich Stephanie from Alflen, whose sister married Mathias Koenigs, arrived in 1856. He bought forty acres from Mathias Eis, who settled on the brushwood land east of the church. When he arrived he marked trees as a guide. At that time 40' trees were common, many were vigorous oaks with trunks 3' in diameter. The largest trees were burned with brush and dry leaves, the glowing hot ash carried around for further burning. Stephanie had a yoke of oxen, but no wagon for three years. He and a neighbor who had a wagon but no team traded labor for the use of each other's property.

Heading farther east we find one of the oldest settlers, Heinrich Greuel, and also Joseph Werschem who arrived from Eiszenbach, Prussia ahead of Michael Berenz in 1855. Werschem built the original home there after buying 34 acres from Michael Horn. Several others followed: Barnabas Hehl (Joseph Fuhrmann), Herman Schiller (Albert Schmitz),

Thomas Gilles (Mathias Franzen) and M. Berenz. On the south side the following pioneers settled next to the already working farmer Mathias Koenigs: John Pulvermacher, Nicholas Richard, John J. Wagner, J Wicklein (Mathias Mullenbach) and farther south beyond the present parish border, Jacob Mertes.

These are our worthy pioneers. Honor their memory. As we look to our future we must not forget how courageously they carried their burdens. When an optimist among the settlers stated that a railroad would be within the area in ten years he was considered lame brained by most of them. But he was mostly correct. Ten years later one heard the roar of the steam engine to the south in an area where the cowherd and his flock still became lost and men went out to search for human and animal strays. This happened recently to a boy herder who was not found until the next day, lying on the ground exhausted.

Chapter II

How the Congregation Developed. 1860.

The solitary small log cabin on the wooded lakeshore was too small quite soon. Meanwhile Peter Wolf had moved on to Fond du Lac, but his brother, Ludwig, stayed in the lonely wilderness. He had some money and used it reasonably well. He began to deal in leather goods, tobacco, sugar, spices and the like, but especially in whiskey. The customers bought the alcohol sparingly. Sometimes several persons joined in emptying a jug; the person who took the last swig footed the bill.

Soon the place was given a specific name. They spoke of Mr. Wolf on the lake and soon it became Wolf's Lake. The necessity of a church was scarcely provided for. Many went to Calvary on foot where a church was functioning. The young Wilhelm Wolf was one of the first four members of Mt. Calvary. In June 1850 he was sent to Fond du Lac with the oxen to pick up Bishop Henni. He went on foot next to the oxen until he reached Peebles. The Bishop encouraged him to sit beside him in the ox cart. He didn't have to be told twice. He swung himself into the seat and slowly the cart traveled over the bumpy trail that had no bridges or gravel. When they finally reached Calvary the Bishop shouted happily, "Gloria in Excelsis Deo!"

Others moved to Johnsbury. Joseph Ott and his neighbors moved to Marytown. Ludwig Wolf who traveled to Milwaukee for retail supplies every two weeks was the first finally to buy a beautiful team of horses. He soon sold one of them to Fr. Bonaventura Frey. He used it to travel to his mission in Marytown. As the influence of the monastery in Calvary grew and as more settlers arrived the possibility for establishing a congregation became a reality. Wilhelm Wolf accompanied Fr. Bonaventura, an associate of the monastery's founders, on trips into the area. He was young and full of spirit and the physical strength of youth, slender and tall with a long black beard and a dense head of hair. He had a natural charm and attractive manners along with a surprisingly strong gift of speech. Even today anecdotes of his curious nature survive. He would sail his stiff stove pipe hat repeatedly into the corner of a room of a farmer's house while speaking passionately about the organization of a congregation for which not one red cent had been raised. He good-naturedly said, "If the wind sailed my hat into this countryside would I be lucky enough to escape paying the

damages to a farmer's crop?" Despite these efforts visits to the families were not very fruitful.

Adam Schoenberg who lived on the northwest corner of the church land volunteered one acre of land; so also Peter Berg and Peter Braun. About thirty families agreed to a mission church from Calvary. Quickly now the tiny *gravelkapelle*, as it was called, was being built. Michael Schiller and Michael Berenz were elected the first supervisors. The Braun brothers drew up the plans, building material was brought to the site and the foundation was dug: 10' wide and 30' long. It stood a little north of the present church and directly west of the school. The design was naturally very simple. Mathias Leiberg oversaw the construction. The oak logs were placed on secured wide stones. The frame was raised. The crevices daubed and filled with gravel and lime sludge. The young Fritz Eis, later the bishop of Marquette, helped mix the mortar. The outlay for the building approached \$200. On St. Joseph's day 1860 Fr. Franziskus consecrated the church, named it St. Joseph, and held the first mass. The altar was a table standing against the wall. A long primitive bench along the north wall of the sanctuary served the choir. The entrance consisted of two push doors and inside benches stood in irregular rows.

Simultaneously a district school was established. The wings of the doors were simply pushed together, the benches were put in orderly rows, and everything else was used as required. The first teacher was Joseph, who taught English and was the son of Adam Schoenberg who had donated land to the church. After one year Adam Runde, a very pious man who at first dressed very formally, succeeded him. The students took his solemn admonitions to heart. Even today they speak of him with deep reverence and still pray the three daily salutations to Mary, a sure sign of their being saved. He lodged at Peter Berg's house. Because he was an excellent carpenter he soon built a small living space for himself above the entrance door of the church; in this way the building served three purposes: it was a church, a school, and lodging for the school teacher.

When he later moved to Milwaukee the choir made use of the loft. The choir director was Thomas Sonntag. The members at the time were: Jacob and Anna Steffes, Mathias Berenz and his sisters, Elizabeth and Anna, Carolina and Gertrude Bergs, and Peter and Joseph Shoenberg. The Bergs family was at the center point of religious activity. They fed and quartered the priests continually until the Sisters of St. Agnes (1875) came on the scene. Their two devout daughters, Elizabeth and Ann, cleaned and decorated the church, provided for church functions and were generally good examples of piety. They later entered the School Sisters of Notre Dame. Elizabeth Stemper succeeded them and for thirteen years labored at the school until the Sisters of St. Agnes arrived.

The church services and the priestly functions ran a straight course. The distribution of church related books to all began in 1866. Fr. Fidelis Steinauer entered the first baptism in the church register on May 1. It was that of Johann Limburg, the son of Konrad and Minna Limburg. Fr. Daniel Scherer recorded the first death. It was a child of Peter and Barbara Ebertz who died an hour after birth the November 19, 1866. The death entrances speak clearly about desperate privations. The first doctor, Dr. Haas, did not stay long because of an absence of work. The monastery historian records an epidemic in the fall of 1867 -

dysentery, which took many lives. Adam Dreifuert lost two children in a matter of a few weeks. They were eight year old Daniel and two year old Catharina. Four months later seven year old Adrian Moersch, three year old Ludwig Konz, and two year old Bernard Moersch died. The following year a deadly nerve ailment arrived. On May 25 and 26 Servatius Mannebach lost eight year old Mathias and fourteen year old Joseph. Completely unexpected, Mrs. Mathias Konz died on July 11, and three weeks later the vigorous nineteen year old Bernard Moersch. During the following four weeks Edward Clodwig Waltier, age 44, and in November his 24 year-old daughter, Caelena, died, she dying two days after the birth of a son, Adolph, who also died. In the following year, 1869, there was a profusion of youthful deaths: Katharina Braun, ten weeks old; Rosa Petrie, age eleven; Gregor Wehner, age fourteen; Juliana Moersh, fifteen months; Nick Ebertz, 1 1/4 years old; Theodore Steffes, 12 3/4 years old; Elisabeth Berenz, ten years old - she was buried privately without a priest (diphtheria?); Johannes Hofmann from Bavaria, age 23; Michael Steffes, age six; Peter Steffes age 1 1/2; and finally at the end of the year, twelve year old Servatius Mannebach.

Such widespread affliction was all the more heartrending because the horrors of the Civil War (1861-1865) needed also to be overcome. Many young men left Wisconsin for the mines of Michigan out of fear of being called up for service. How fateful that decision was for a few of them; for example, Joseph Holzmann suffered severe eye injuries from a powder explosion. The price of grain rose sharply from 83 cents to \$2.95 within two years, and then following the Civil War it dropped to 60 cents within two months.

In addition, news of Indian raids on wheat fields caused anxiety. Father Leo of Marytown, the priest with the long red beard who sometimes said mass at St. Joseph's, was nearly a victim of the Indian Scare. One night when suspicious of individuals at the confession seat, the priest took flight and fled into the woods. There, in the dark, others who were lying in wait to attack the Indians attacked him!

Until that time the pastor's only duty at Joseph's was to say mass. There was a call for assistance to pioneers who lived far from Calvary and Marytown. After an official report from the chapter on February 19, 1865, two priests were released to serve the stations, one at Marytown and one at St. Anna. Fr. Solanus Feddermann was in charge of St. Joseph and Dotyville congregations. Thus the practice of irregular priestly service was overcome. He had a great love for children and put out great effort to see them at mass. He sang hymns to children constantly with the result that they soon knew them by heart. But Fr. Solanus was also required to do mission service, leaving the monastery on May 6 and returning after six weeks; on October 7 he gave up St. Joseph's to Fr. Pacificus because during his absence at the monastery Father Guardian was put in charge of the monastery. Fr. Pacificus was welcomed at Marytown because he was assigned there briefly in early 1866. St. Joseph became the station for the new priest, Fr. Fidelis Steinauer. Mr. Braun brought him there January 14. At High Mass, he said later, he almost broke out in song. The catechism instruction also went well. Peter Bersch gladly provided lodging. In the evening Mr. Gilles showed him around the area. Next time (Jan. 21) there was a snowstorm; the wind had piled snowdrifts so high that Mr. Kaufmann could hardly pass through with the horses, but the zealous minister met him on foot about halfway.

On January 28, basing it on the Lady's Society at Calvary, he organized one at his church. They were to be in charge of supplying the necessary things for the interior of the church. The first meeting occurred February 5. After the mass and communion, the society took steps to elect their supervisors. 42 women were present and soon the number increased to 51. The list of their names is interesting because it gives accurate information about the general church membership. Many had already donated 25 cents, which was the fee for every quarter year. The following members belonged to the society.

From St. Joseph

Pulvermacher, Cath.
Richard, Anna
Richter, Barbara
Schiller, Christ
Schmit, A. M.
Steffes, Anna
Steffes, Gertrude
Stephanie, A. M.
Wagner, A. M.
Weider, Maria A.
Werschem, Elizabeth
Wichlein, Margareth

Kaufmann, Catherina
Koenigs, Barbara
Lenarz, Barbara
Lenarz, Elizabeth
Mannebach, A. Cath.
Meier, Elizabeth
Mertes, A. M.
Mertes, Josepha
Michels, A. M.
Michels, Gertrude
Michels, Margareth
Petrie, Gertrude A.

Berenz, Maria Bersch, A.M. Bersch, Magdalena Braun, Gertrude Braun, Maria Caspers, Gertrude Feldner, Catherina Gilles, Catharina Greuel, A.M. Hartog, Agnes Horn, Elizabeth Juergen, Elizabeth

Joining later in the year

Watke, A. M.
Wolfe, Julia

Hehl, Catherina
Sonntag, Eva
Blum, Catherina
Ebertz, Barbara

From St. Cloud

Limburg, Minnie
Moersch, Barbara
Wehner, Margaretha
Wehner, Elizabeth
Dreifurst, Christina
Dreifurst, A.M.
Klinzing, Josepha
Klinzing, Lucretia
Limburg, Victoria

Achter, A.M.
Bittner, Theresia
Bleuel, M. Barbara
Diegelmann, Victoria
Dietz, Elizabeth

It was decided then that the society would meet regularly every two months and on the Monday after the first Sunday's regular mass.

There is also a report that the priests stayed overnight at St. Joseph's. Shortly before (Feb. 1st) he arrived at the school for a visit. He was well satisfied with the performance of the teacher and the children. He writes again on February 25 about the cold and also about being snowbound. He decided to break through the snowdrifts by himself. He succeeded after a strenuous two-hour effort. On March 4 he noted: "I was astounded when I was told of my assignment there that the people had raised \$105.00 for a pyx." This is a reference to a Romanesque monstrance. In this case it had a heavy base with a heavy silver medallion of a flower engraved on it. A worthy treasure for the church. "The lovely sacrificial spirit of my congregation makes everyone happy, and most of all," he continues on April 2, "when I arrive I find something made or something newly bought." On March 4 the beautiful red altar and altar mantel arrived from New York, a present of L. Petrie.

On April 8 Fr. Fidelis arrived in St. Joseph and passed the entire week there, teaching the children. He noted that every child without exception was able to answer questions concerning the sacraments. On April 15 was the children's communion, the first of its kind conducted by the priest. The church and altar looked their best; it ended with the glorious blessing. Everything went as planned. The church was full. The weather was fine. In the afternoon there was a brief talk about church accounts. Communion was given to the children after vespers. There were many happy surprises at this St. Joseph celebration. The church looked splendid. Fr. Ivo brought the new monstrance (pyx) along from Milwaukee. Fr. Pacificus, greatly admired by the congregation, delivered the feast day sermon and incense was used for the first time in St. Joseph's at High Mass. All this lifted the hearts of the congregation with joy.

But, even more startling was the feast of St. Joseph. This was April 22 and two days later the Father's name would occur again. He writes, "I was asked to preside at the catechism instruction for the young children because they had something for me. As I came down the hill they stood in a group and greeted me with a song. Then inside, a young girl standing on a chair recited a few verses. Six more girls did the same. Then it was the boys' turn. I found this very pleasant. Singing was interspersed with recitation. I thanked the children, the teacher, and the parents, but I felt ashamed. I said others had worked hard while I arrived only to hear the fruits of their labor. My dear Lord has prepared sweets for me as I enter my ministerial profession. Is all this to prepare me for bitter suffering? I promised them the best I could give them in prayer and holy blessing. They all knelt. Thereupon they gave me a tiny basket filled with presents: a crucifix, a small basin for holy water, two porcelain flower vases, and two spools of thread. The children brought all this together. How sweetly my slight but caring nature was rewarded." The young Berg drove me home to Calvary.

On May 20 the energetic priest announced a new project: the church graveyard should be brought into order. A few days later large boulders were dug up and dragged away by oxen; three stumps were dug out and the ground was leveled. Posts were set around the border and boards nailed to them. Then work began in the interior of the church. The logs at the entrance were to be torn away and used as interior ceiling beams. This activity aroused the

congregation and they set about to begin building a schoolhouse. Everyone was told to bring a log and a roof beam. By June 10 the logs were pegged in place. The building produced a collective cheerful mood in the people. The Reverend Father was most of all concerned with the decoration of the church. Thus he reports on August 14: "In order to see to its decoration I went to St. Joseph's already in the afternoons. Despite being busy with the harvest Mrs. Bergs and her daughter busied themselves in the church cleaning candelabras and sweeping the floors in preparation for the festival. The day after the Assumption the students of the order arrived at St. Joseph's. The adornment of the church impressed them. Mrs. Bergs had prepared a lovely table for the guests. There was milk, butter and bread and coffee after the meal. The students went on an excursion to the lake in the afternoon, returning to the monastery in the evening.

It was during this happy time that Fr. Guardian declared to our astonished priest August 27 that he must go to Dotyville to relieve Fr. Daniel there, who would be coming to oversee St. Joseph's. This announcement seemed to be contrary to a promise made to our pastor, but he did not forget his beloved St. Joseph's. Many times on midweek afternoons he would visit the sick around St. Joseph's. He stated that even though St. Joseph's was dear to his heart he must fulfill his duties in Dotyville (St. Michael's) where the church building was now complete. Several times he conducted services at St. Joseph's while also singing high mass at St. Mary's, and over three day efforts he assisted Fr. Pacificus at his mission. At another time he noted gladly that St. Joseph's had donated ninety bushels of wheat from the fall harvest of 1867. The very capable pastor, Fr. Antonius Rottensteiner, succeeded Fr. Daniel, who had already been assigned to New York on May 6, 1867. He had just completed his novitiate. He also served part time as a professor to the clerics. He began his service on June 23, 1867 with the Corpus Christi mass; Fr. Edmund and Fr. Stack assisted. A chronicler at the time states that St. Joseph's had surpassed Mt. Calvary in regard to church ceremonies. He also celebrated the first 40-hour Triduum; three days of missionary preaching whose goal would be most beneficial to the faithful. Although he was credited with being especially effective in mission service, other pastors many times came to his aid as replacements. Many times Fr. Fidelis was a substitute as at Christmas time in 1868. We read with amazement that Fr. Fidelis many times after 1:00 am mass at the monastery would travel to St. Joseph's in the bitter cold. He read the 7:00am mass and immediately afterward, the second one, followed by the 10:30am High Mass. Confessions consumed the remaining time. Toward evening he heard children's confessions.

One day a call came to attend to a dying person. There was a report of a fire at the monastery. The road to the dying person brought him three miles nearer to the monastery. The possibilities were frightening to this priest professor. A fire in the students sleeping quarters would threaten lives. The case was that no one was harmed.

Chapter III

Building the Stone Church

1867-1870

Meanwhile the growth of the congregation continued in a quiet and positive way. The report of the bishop's chancery counted 450 individuals with seventy school children, the highest

number it ever reached. The baptismal register show 24 baptisms in 1868, falling to sixteen in 1869, rising to nineteen in 1870, and dropping to eight in 1871. These numbers reflected an unusual situation.

Death did not take heavily among the pioneers. From Mrs. Helena Konz and Clodwig Walteir we read that Ludwig Wolf died in Fond du Lac April 2, 1869 at age 57. Servatius Mannebach, age twelve, died December 27, 1869, followed by the upright Peter Bergs on April 5, 1870 at age 67. Mathias Konz died March 24, 1871 at age 82, and then in 1873 we read another familiar name: Nicholas Richard died on September 15 at age 52. In 1874 Anna Maria Steffes died on March 2 at age 84 and Maria Anna Lotz passed away March 23 at age 73.

The congregation now stood at a decisive moment. In time the church had become much too small, shabby and dilapidated. There was talk of a new stone church. Old man Peter Braun who had a saloon and store at the foot of the church hill promised \$300. A privately owned limestone quarry was located southwest of the church. There was no scarcity of building material; 3' of soil that covered the stone had to be removed. This was hard labor for Mathias Berenz and Nicholas Morgan who received no compensation for the work. That fall the foundation would be dug. Plans for the building and its location were agreed upon. Some thought that the church should be built some distance back from the road in the middle of the property. Others suggested that it should be placed even further back on the next hill where Joseph Muellenbach now lives because the railroad would pass near there. Nothing came of those plans because most church members who lived in the present borders of the congregation decided on the present location. No better spot could have been chosen. On the main road from St. Cloud to Calvary and to Fond du Lac, the massive structure stands clearly as a sign of the eternal and the immutable.

The size was wholeheartedly agreed upon. It would be 100' long x 36' wide and have an interior height of 30' -not only beautiful in proportion, especially in height, but in its entire mass, it has stood the test of a half-century. But, to be sure, no one thought of the necessity of a basement. The foundation was 6' deep and 4' wide. The foundation wall was not in place until early May of 1870. The cornerstone was consecrated and laid in place on May 15, 1870. Up to this point the building fund had grown substantially \$17.90 was transferred to the building fund from the church treasury on January 6. Donations began on March 2. The bachelor shoemaker Emerich Steffes was the first to contribute \$10; William Leisten, the brother-in-law of Ludwig Wolf gave \$25.88 to the building committee the same day. The widow Ludwig Wolf gave the first large donation, \$200. A committee of four collectors was formed: Casper Michels, Hubert Kasper, J.J. Michels, and Mathias Koenigs. Later Joseph J. Steffes, N. Mayer and J. Feldner joined them. But no more than \$464.70 was brought in by mid May and of that \$41.00 was collected by J.J. Michels alone. The Ladies Society, which had raised \$45.65 for mass vestments, brought in \$30. Altogether there was \$500. Costs of \$300 could already be deducted from that amount.

Unfortunately the early spirit of benevolence fell on hard times. At that time (1870) tax liabilities appeared in connection with the founding of St. Cloud. Two families who moved away from the congregation's boundaries declared that they had nothing valuable to tax. St.

Joseph's priest appeared before the court and heatedly testified that the church was not involved in the matter. Nothing further developed in the case.

The railway went farther south and in this way brought about the possibility of establishing a new congregation. As a matter of fact it was not common practice to mark out strict church boundaries at that time. Church attendance on Sunday was often influenced by demand, by relatives and friends and tended at first to be rather fluid from place to place. But this is certain: the separation of some from St. Joseph foreshadowed discontent and friction within the congregation.

District schools are being built in the secular world today which are independent from the church schools. They are noted for their instruction in the English language. The alienation between the two rose rather than diminished because the teachers at the church schools were thought of as inferior. Locally in the saloon across the road from the district school there was agitation against the Capuchins. This regrettable separation remained on the minds of many for sometime. This obstinacy motivated many that lived west of the church to move from St. Joseph to St. Cloud. Some moved away from the area and joined other churches. This dissatisfaction is noted in a letter by Mrs. Sonntag of Iowa (1873): "In Wisconsin there is nothing but stones, frogs, snakes, a long winter and a short summer." Others were gladly accepted into the congregation if they agreed to pay \$50 before joining. Beginning with the promised \$300 to Fr. Braun and under his leadership everything went backwards because parishioners did not think that he deserved support.

Church construction could not be delayed. The donations were rare. The same names and the same generosity were always evident. Some gave gladly despite their meager means. In small amounts from 1870 to 1873 the \$30 to \$50 donations reached slightly over \$300. Widow Bergs' donations illustrate the point: in 1870 she contributed \$30-\$50-\$50-\$30; in 1871 \$25-\$40, and in 1872 \$85-\$60 totaling \$320, a lovely sum. In addition her sons Arnold gave \$10, P. \$110, and Will \$50 - Altogether they gave \$490.

Other families donated the following: Heinrich Greuel - his own offering was \$276.25 plus collection of \$18, totaling \$294.25. Mathias Koenigs - a true friend of the church collected \$51.25 and his own contribution was \$276.93. J.J. Michels on his own gave \$130.40 and collected \$131.25, totaling \$261.65. Michael Berenz gave \$158 out of his own pocket and collected \$96.70, a total of \$254.70. J.J. Steffes with Casper Michels and John P. Feiner went as far as Oshkosh and Milwaukee raising over \$100 (\$101.85). Steffes' own addition was \$152 for a total of \$253.85. Casper Michels besides his own gift of \$97 brought in what he collected.

Hau, Wilhelm	65.00
Ott, Joseph	63.00
Wagner, John J.	55.00
Kraus, Peter	53.75
Werschem, J.	52.50
Horn, Michael	51.00
Hoan, Will	50.00

Mayer, Nick	50.00
Stemper, Elizabeth	44.00
Stephanie, Fred	33.00
Konz, Freidrich	\$107.10
Blum, Joseph	106.19
Steffes, Jacob	100.00
Feldner, J.P.	96.66
Konz, Johann	95.36
Schiller, Michael	92.91
Steffes, George	81.20
Diegelmann, August	80.00
Leisten, Wilhelm	74.19
Lenartz, M.	66.15

One should also include donations of building material. Fred Konz gave hardware worth \$42. C.C. Meyer gave 1000' of lumber at \$10, Hamilton and Finley \$30, Mathias Kommers nails at \$9 and the like. By June 1871 the outlay for the walls rose to \$3305.76. Architect Schellenberg alone received \$700 and Bernard Haug \$208.66. On June 15, 1871 the long narrow (20') church windows arrived, \$278. Benefactors soon came forward: the double windows were paid for by Jacob Steffes, the widow Bergs, Peter J. Miller, Carl Kempf and Joseph Blum. The others were paid for by John J. Michels, Mathias Koenigs, John P. Berg, John P. Feldner, Wilhelm Hau, and John Konz (\$13.19). The graceful white diamond cut clusters that surrounded the narrow openings in the windows gave the entire window shading in the sunlight. The walls were completed by May 1871. The estimates for plaster and oil were then recorded. The roof was set in place also at this time and on June 9, Fr. Fidelis witnessed the setting of the spire. The alert presence of Mathias Berenz prevented a great misfortune when some workers became anxious that scaffolding being raised might topple, he called out loudly that everything was in order. The frightened men had become disoriented at the height by moving clouds.

The decoration of the church's empty interior did not take much time. John J. Steffes ordered and paid for the high altar that stood raised on three steps against the wall without the tabernacle. On each side statues from the old church were to be placed. Six girls in procession carried the statue of Mary, the mother of God; Mathias Berenz carried the statue of St. Joseph. The arc of the sanctuary was lower than it is now and the communion rail extended from one wall to the other. The candleholders were turned out single handedly by J.J. Michels. The Ladies Society bought the altar cloths (\$8.00), candle lighters, and artfully made garlands of flowers (\$14.00) and also the carpet for the steps to the altar (\$8.00). These materials looked lovely and with the help of our patron and protector, St. Joseph, the settlement of accounts kept pace with the church construction. There was one picnic (May 29, 1871) in celebration of the successful venture of building and decoration. The Wolf family bought horse harnesses, \$47.50. The tickets for the event cost two shillings and

another two shillings for the meal. The event was outstanding; the net profit was nearly \$1000(\$945.65). Frank Bean closed his tavern that day.

Bishop Henni consecrated the church on October 5, 1871. The highly esteemed Fr. Fidelis Steinauer celebrated the first High Mass. It is difficult to count the many blessings the members of the congregation received in the church. The total collection not including the yearly surplus: \$6315.27. Intake during the construction years: \$6295.48. Amount due: \$19.84. Only \$530 was borrowed and \$412.18 was due in notes.

Chapter IV

The Completion

From 1871 until the Present

The spirit of giving and its results continued unabated. Beginning in the fall of 1875 Fr. Daniel put the Sisters of St. Agnes Congregation in Fond du Lac in charge of the school. Sister Julia raised \$4495.82 for the nuns living quarters and for the school, which was enlarged in 1878. In the summer of 1881 the self-supporting altars of E. Brielmeier of Milwaukee were acquired and set up (\$210). In 1881 Fr. Fidelis built for himself a tiny priest's residence of pine \$325.97, so that he would not have to take the long series of steps up from the sacristy to his small isolated room which he lovingly called his prison. In 1894 H. Gaertner redesigned the church with an entrance structure on the west side in which two doors were later placed-north and south-in 1906. Other additions: storm windows, a furnace \$293, chairs for the interior at the occasion of the golden jubilee (1912); a tasteful sketch of the church by Will. Scheer; the acquisition of a pipe organ (\$1375.00) and finally the installation of electric lights in the church. All this proceeded stepwise, bringing the church to completion. There were always the usual outlays for the operation of the school and church aside from the huge cost of the new school (1914-\$9755.22). The enhancement of the church property included an iron fence, wooden shelters for vehicles, a dug well, a coal shed, etc. At a meeting of the congregation on December 26, 1920 an agreement was reached to hold a fair to raise funds for electric lighting. On January 22 at a meeting of the women, they decided to establish committees among themselves and divide territories to cover for fund raising. Appointed to the first district were Mrs. Mich. Steffes and Mrs. Math. Mauer; the 2nd district Mrs. Anton Gracz and Mrs. Casper Horn; the 3rd district Mrs. Schmitz and Mrs. Christ Fuhrmann Sr. They were to canvas their district in search of women who were able to crochet and embroider. In no time at all a fine list was established. At the request of Sister Josepha the firm of Daleiden of Chicago donated three standing crucifixes. They were to be set aside as prizes for the children. Immediately the contest between the boys and girls began; even the smallest of them arrived already with an account book the next Monday showing the number of pennies they had collected. By February 20 the boys had \$13.28 and the girls \$18.04. Mrs. Valentine Baus of St. Cloud presented a splendid wreath of roses to the child who raised the most money. Fr. Provincial Benedict O.F.M. Cap. donated a golden necklace, Benziger of Chicago and Diedrich Schaefer a prayer book and a wreath of roses. On February 13 the women of the districts presented their pieces of art craft. Mrs. M. Steffes, for example, had the following works: 44 aprons, 14 center pieces, 17 children's dresses, a dozen handkerchiefs, three night gowns, four petticoats, 49 needle cushions, 19

pillow cases, five quilts, five pairs of socks, 13 scarves, six bedspreads, 54 handkerchiefs, three tablecloths, 151 pieces for the fishpond and parcel post. Mrs. Christ. Fuhrmann, Jr. and Mrs. Henry Fuhrmann had already sold 100 tickets for a raffle of two sketches that were donated by Lauretta Petrie. Mrs. Anton Gross sold chances for a piano scarf that Sister Cosma C.S.A. had made and donated. Other women formed groups to make quilts. Sister Josepha volunteered her free time and gave up much sleep to make a quilt for the congregation. The pastor's name was in its center surrounded by the family names of the congregation and around these were the names of individuals and friends. The letters were read on a white square. The piece was splendid example of handiwork. At the 3rd fair meeting (March 13) Mrs. Henry Fuhrmann brought 28 packets for parcel post and \$25.20 in cash; Mrs. Mauer \$9.50; Mrs. Gross \$17; Mrs. Wm. Schmitz \$13.20; Mrs. Holzmann brought in a quilt which cost her \$20. Altogether the money amounted to \$122.25. On March 20 a committee of men headed by Christ Fuhrmann Sr., John Berenz and Henry Fuhrmann was elected. They were to do a survey and offer prizes to be won by a ticket raffle. Anton Enders donated a Holstein calf, Henry Fuhrmann a horse, Hubert Steffes a pig, Christ Fuhrmann two ducks, J. Krebsbach cigars "Gold Stickers", John Petrie pans and bowls. Later we received a copper wash basin (\$10) from Anton Dreifuerst of St. Cloud; a boy's wagon from Continental Clothing Store; a gray sweater from Royal Cloak Co., Fond du Lac; a sack of flour from Mrs. Wm. Wagner; a rocker and rug from Mrs. M Steffes; a vacuum cleaner from Mrs. M. Stephanie; a tea kettle from Mrs. Henry Gerhart of Marytown; a quilt from Mrs. Henry Fuhrmann and Mrs. P. Stephanie and another one from Mrs. J. Krebsbach and Mrs. M. Steffes for which they collected \$18 and \$15.45. The Beau family promised a wash table for which Mrs. Hubert Steffen collected \$19.50. Gregory Wagner received \$25 for a jacket he made; from Gruenheck of Fond du Lac Mrs. Frank Ott received \$14.85 for a children's scale; Mrs. John Steffes brought in \$7.35 and Mrs. Wm. Steffes \$1.35. The total reached \$421.22. With the success of this venture 1200 tickets at 5 cents each were printed for the following valuable prizes:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Holstein Bull Calf, \$25 | Anthony Enders |
| 2. Copper wash basin, \$10 | Anton Dreifuerst, St. Cloud |
| 3. Elegant tablecloth \$12 | Rev. Mother Marcella C.S.A., Fond du Lac |
| 4. New boys suit, \$10 | Continental Clothing House, Fond du Lac. |
| 5. Barrel of flour, "gold Mine", \$10 | Ben Baus |
| 6. Horse, \$25 | Henry Fuhrmann |

Everything pointed to a successful bazaar. A complete report of what we took in came only at the end of the bazaar.

*St. Joseph's blessed from heaven's throne
Priests and parish altogether rewarded.*

Capuchin priests who ministered at St. Joseph

Fr. Solanus	January 1865-October 1865
F. Fidelis Steinauer	January 1866-August 1866
Fr. Daniel Scherer	September 1866-April 1867, September 1874-March 1875, September 1875-February 1876.
Fr. Antonius Rottensteiner	July 1867-September 1869
Fr. Laurentius (Henn)	October 1869-March 1871
Fr. Carl Brandstaetter	April 1871-June 1872; October 1873-August 1874
Fr. Kilian Haas	July 1872-September 1873
Fr. Augustine Limperich	March 1875-September 1875
Fr. Peter Ernsdorff	January 1876-October 1876
Fr. Angelus Jele	October 1876-July 1878
Fr. Andreas Hoechenberger	August 1878-September 1881.
Fr. Camillus Gnad	September 1881-July 1882
Fr. Titus Repp	September 1882-October 1883
Fr. Fidelis von der Thannen	October 7, 1883-November 2, 1899
Fr. Fidelis Reiser	November 2-June 1904
Fr. Pacificus Raith	July 1904-July 1905; December 20, 1918-April 1919
Fr. Albert Locher	August 1905-August 1906
Fr. Philip Spies	September 1906-November 20, 1906
Fr. Maurus Ascherl	December 1906-June 1909
Fr. Lucas Rasch	July 1909-July 1910
Fr. Josaphat Muesig	July 1910-July 1912
Fr. Rogerius Gans	July 1912-October 1914
Fr. Bonifatius Goldhausen	October 1914-July 1915
Fr. Leo Steinberg	July 1915-July 1918
Fr. Clemens Neubauer	July 1918-December 1918
Fr. Corbinian Bieracker	April 27, 1919-July 17, 1921
Fr. Thomas Gilg	July 23, 1921

Sisters of St. Agnes who were employed at the Church School

Sr. Julia, 1875
Sr. Alonsia, 1878
Sr. Benedicta, 1879
Sr. De Sales, 1881
Sr. Evangelista, 1883
Sr. Raymunda, 1884
Sr. Barbara, 1886
Sr. Dominica, 1890-1901
Srs. Chrysostoma and Sibylla, 1899
Srs. Felicita and Pertildis, 1901
Srs. Agatha, Lydia, Lemina, Josepha, 1905
Srs. Aurelia and Athanasia, 1907

Srs. Anna, Romana and Sylvia, 1910
Srs. Rosalia and Aleria, 1917
Srs. Josepha and Quinata, 1918
Srs. Bernadette and Aquinata, 1921

Index of families at St. Joseph, 1921

Elected Trustees: Anton Schmitz, secretary; Jacob Krebsbach, treasurer

First District

Joseph Mueller
Mich. Mueller
Ben Klinzing
Nicholas Lefeber
Mrs. Anton Lefeber
Jacob Pickart
John Mies
Mich. Mies
Ludwig Holzmann
Johann Ebertz
Christ. J. Fuhrmann Jr.
Henry Fuhrmann
Wm. J. Wagner
Peter S. Wagner
Joseph Lefeber
Bernard Wirth
Anton Enders
George Juergenmeier
William Steffes
Albert Locher
Anton Mies
Mathias Mauer
Carl Halfmann
Herman Steffes
John Petrie
Herman Dreifuert
John Roerig
Stephan Morgen

Second District

Albert Schmitz
John Berenz

Caspar Horn
John D. Schmitz
Mathias Pitzen
Anton Gross
Henry Schmitz
Mrs. Anna C. Schmitz
Alvin Kleinhans
Frank Schramm Sr.
Joseph Schramm
John Schramm
Mathias Franzen
Anton Steffes
Henry Steffes
John Steffes
Jacob Pitzen
Joseph Forstner
Stephan Lefeber
Joseph Lisowe

Third District

Frank Ott
Mathias Muellenbach
Frank Muellenbach
Joseph Muellenbach
Henry Blonigen

Arnold Greuel
Joseph Fuhrmann
Peter Stephanie
Hubert Steffen
Stephan Goeser
Peter Goeser

William Schmitz
Christ Fuhrmann Sr.
Nicholas Wehner
George Berenz
Joseph Berenz
Mathias Diederich

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