

1901-1976

The
Church
of
the
Blessed
Sacrament

A Chronicle of the Years



Most Holy Father

The Rev. John P. Morris, Pastor and the Parishioners of the Church of Blessed Sacrament, on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee, Mass. on November 7, 1976, humbly beg a special Apostolic Blessing as a pledge of divine graces and favors.

Et cum Divina Benedictione Apostolica auctoritate Ex Audibus detur die 18-11-76

+ *Antonij W. Kwiatkowski, Archiepiscopus
Sacerdos S.P.*



A CHRONICLE OF THE SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS

of the

CHURCH OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
1901-1976

by

GRACE L. MURRAY

With the assistance of past and present parishioners.

Rochester, New York 1976

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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DEDICATION

To God and His people - Pastors, Assistants, Religious,
and the present and past parishioners.

John P. Norris

"Lord prosper the work of our hands."
Psalm 90





Diocese of Rochester

1150 BUFFALO ROAD * ROCHESTER, NEW YORK 14624

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OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

Fall, 1976

My dear People,

It is my personal privilege to join with the parishioners of Blessed Sacrament Church on Sunday, November 7, 1976 for the celebration of the Eucharist to mark the Diamond Jubilee of the parish. Seventy-five years of God's grace and abiding presence calls all of us to a fitting act of thanksgiving. The Eucharistic Liturgy is, above all, such a service of gratitude.

This year of celebration offers a challenge for all of us to remember its men and women who joined with Monsignor Connors, Monsignor McAniff and Father Norris in bringing the Church of the Blessed Sacrament to this day of gratitude and thanksgiving for the blessings that God has bestowed on your parish family.

We who live today to celebrate this Jubilee have inherited a rich legacy from the pioneers and the succeeding generations who kept alive the light of Faith in your neighborhood. May those who follow us be able to recall on a future day of celebration the memory of our Faith lived to its fullest dimension.

With gratitude and assurance of my abiding concern and constant blessing, I remain

Devotedly yours in Christ,

+Most Reverend Joseph L. Hogan, D.D.
Bishop of Rochester

JLH:amb

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RT. REV. THOMAS F. CONNORS

MOST REV. EDWARD J. McANIFF

REV. JOHN P. NORRIS

REV. DENNIS SHAW

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INTRODUCTION

The Bicentennial Year of our Country, the Diamond Jubilee of our parish, and the thirtieth anniversary of Reverend John P. Norris's Ordination - all in 1976 make it an appropriate time for consideration of our parish's past and present.

The aims of this history are manifold - to give a glimpse of the dreams and the dreamers who gave so much of themselves and their resources to bring those concepts to fruition and in so doing built a parish from humble beginnings into one of strength and stability; to record - before time erases it from our memories - a bit of the spirit, the joys, and the accomplishments of our people; to record some of the memories of those residing for a long time in the confines of the parish; to tell a little about the men and women - all of them extraordinary, who have made and are making it up; to strengthen the sense of tradition and continuity; and to encourage parishioners to even greater achievements. An added purpose in these years of rapid transition, especially those resulting from the Vatican Councils, is to view how these changes were received and implemented in Blessed Sacrament parish.

It is appropriate here to express gratitude to all who contributed some of their memories. Like a melody repeated with many variations in an overture, these messages reiterate a theme of long treasured friendships. There will be events and names which should have been included and are not. We are sorry for these omissions. They are not intentional. A few names were selected to represent all - those who remained in the parish to lend it their support from the early days and those who carried the traditions of Blessed Sacrament into a wider world. All who have been part of the parish, by their presence and their effort in building up this Christian and Catholic community, are far more accurately recorded in the Book of Life.

Whittier's words are apropos to our three celebration:

Our fathers' God! from our whose land
The centuries fall like grains of sand,
We meet today, united, free,
And loyal to our land and Thee,
To thank Thee for the era done
And trust Thee for the opening one.

CONCEPT AND COMMITMENT

Echoes from the seventy-five years of our parish speak to us today of dedication and of devotion, of glory and of dreams. The names of Pope Leo XIII, the reigning pontiff at the time our history began, of Bishop Bernard McQuaid, Rochester's first bishop, and of Reverend Thomas F. Connors, pastor, symbolize the greatness of that time, three quarters of a century ago, when the parish of the Blessed Sacrament was born. These "captains of the soul" had one great concept - to extend on earth the frontiers of the kingdom of God. And so, the first year of the twentieth century, a period of enormous changes, a parish was organized near the then sparsely settled southeastern border of the City.

Without delay, the cornerstone was laid for a combination church and school. One senses the vitality of the faith of the pioneers whose passion was to labor for the greater glory of God. The Holy Name and the Rosary Societies and the Young Ladies' Sodality were organized almost coincidentally with the parish; The Nocturnal Adoration Society and the Legion of Mary, somewhat later. Principally formed to give expression to their love of God and to intensify that love in the members, they flourished, becoming pillars of support to the pastor in his charitable, social, and fund-raising endeavors. The diocesan-wide Laymen's Retreat League, encouraged by Bishop Hickey, was vigorously supported by our men under the leadership of John Cornelly. Many of our people remember the joy they experienced as little children when in 1910, Pope Pius X granted them the privilege of early reception of the Eucharist, a devotion enthusiastically promoted by pastor and religious.

In spite of the fact that our Country was involved in four wars during the past three-quarters of this century, and that many of the parishioners participated in them, directly and in supporting roles for God and Country, these organizations and their members were deeply involved in Catholic Action, helping the pastor financially in the building and sociological programs and helping the bishops in their diocesan endeavors. There were some of our parishioners assisting Bishop Hickey in his catechetical Summer School for the children of Italian immigrants; representing Blessed Sacrament on the Diocesan Councils for Men and Women in the thirties; holding home study clubs to find out more about the Liturgy; learned articles about which were appearing in

in the Parish Weekly; becoming involved in the Catholic Worker Movement when it came to Rochester in 1934 by lending a hand at the Clarissa Summer School for black children, and attending Father George Vogt's meeting in the Columbus Civic Center which led to the opening of St. Joseph's House of Hospitality. When Bishop Kearney asked the I.F.C.A. to prepare the Todd house for the coming to our parish of the Sisters of the Cenacle, Helen Durnin - who for years had been an active member of that organization - led the group who opened the house. She has aided the Congregation from the beginning to the present time.

Paralleling this growth in Catholic Action was the involvement of the parishioners in a building program of church, school convent and rectory, which began in 1901, when Bishop McQuaid initiated our parish and thereby generated considerable excitement. Protests were heard from some of the residents when the church was proposed, the first site chosen was unavailable because of restrictions in the deed, and, as usual, money was scarce. The pastor visited home after home in the area to introduce himself, and to collect parishioners and funds. Most of the Catholics in the vicinity were Germans, attending St. Boniface's Church, or Irish, claiming St. Mary's. Attachment to these parishes was strong and many did not relish leaving them. Beginnings inspire enthusiasm, however, and soon bazaars, lawn socials, card parties, and other fund-raising functions were under way with unbounded enthusiasm and zest. The first lawn social at the corner of Monroe Avenue and Rutgers Street, the property recently purchased for the church, was held in 1901 by the Alumni Association of St. Mary's; the first bazaar, in 1902, was held in Fitzhugh Hall which was then opposite City Hall. It must have been an exciting event since the colossal sum of between five and six thousand dollars was raised.

The first building, colonial in style, of red brick with yellow pressed-stone trim had its lower part constructed of fine sandstone quarried in Medina, and transported from there to Rochester along the Erie Canal, to be unloaded near the corner of Monroe Avenue and Field Street. The Church, the nineteenth Catholic church in the City, had a seating capacity of 600 and was located on the second floor. The school occupied the first floor and an attractive meeting hall was in the basement. It was designed by W. Foster Kelly, and built by Kreckel and Davin. Before the year 1901 was ended, on November 4, 1901, the corner stone was laid and the following spring, on April 13, 1902, the building

was dedicated. Bishop McQuaid, who took an intensely personal interest in the undertaking (even supervising the construction during a period when the pastor was ill), officiated at both ceremonies and delivered the sermon at the Dedication.

The buying of the land and the building of the combined church and school were the beginning of what was to become a series of purchases and constructions. For three years the Sisters of St. Joseph who taught at the school, came and went by street car from their house on Jay Street - not enviable trips in Rochester's winter weather. In 1905, a frame house on Rutgers Street, opposite the present convent, was purchased for the sisters. In 1908, houses at 524 and 538 Oxford Street were added to the parish property. The sisters then moved into the latter residence and the former convent was sold at a profit. The second building was to be home for the Sisters for the next twenty years, during which time the school population was expanding. When this house and the rectory were to be demolished for the new school, property at 243 and 247 Rutgers Street was purchased. The number of school sisters had now reached eighteen, and in 1939, Leo J. Ribson, the architect, designed a chapel joining the two residences and faced the entire building with tapestry brick, thus making it harmonize with the other parish structures.

The pastor , too, required a location nearer the church than the rented residence at 6 Summer Park - a house that is still standing. In 1903, a lot on Oxford Street was purchased for \$1800 on which was built a temporary rectory. This was razed and in 1927 a house at 269 Rutgers Street housed the pastory and his assistants during the next twenty years until the present rectory was built in 1947.

Meanwhile in June 1911, ground was broken for the new church. The corner stone was laid September 19, 1911, and all was ready for the dedication on December 22, 1912. The old church was divided into classrooms to accomodate the large number of pupils. In the Parish Weekly of May 12, 1935, the pastor writes of this period of transition:

"Some if the children had to find accommodations in the school basement, and some in the old choir gallery..... The system of heating was not perfected. Consequently, in very severe weather more or less hardships, at times, had to be endured."

Since street cars on Monroe Avenue went only as far as Highland Avenue and many students had to plow on foot through the deep snows, reaching school numb with cold, they must have regarded the above quotation, when it appeared in the Parish Weekly, as an understatement.

Evelyn Cramer Forrest wrote from California about this converted structure:

"I can remember that old building so clearly. A big arched entrance covered the outside steps. Just inside, there were two wooden stairways going down to the basement hall, and two wide stairways on either side going up, with the class pictures along the walls. The first four grades and the principal's office and the split third and fourth grades were up a step, on what I suppose was the altar platform of the old church....."

The eastward expansion of the city and the growth of the parish resulted in a rapid increase in school enrollment. During 1927 and 1928, the present building of yellow tapestry brick was designed by J. Foster Warner and Leo J. Ribson, and build at the cost of \$225,000. It was dedicated on the 25th of March of 1928. (The complete history of the school requires its own detailed account, which cannot be included here and, indeed, remains to be compiled.) By 1932, the church property was valued at \$600,000. (The appraisal evaluation of the entire parish property in 1976 is \$3,083,000.) Two additional houses were purchased and razed for driveways and sidewalks, and later, in 1947, the residence north of the convent was acquired to protect the church property. Recently one house was sold to reduce the debt.

The Golden Jubilee of the parish was celebrated in 1951 with great joy and thanksgiving. Bishop James E. Kearney, who delivered the Jubilee sermon, stressed the spiritual graces given to thousands during the half century of the existence of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament. Father Walter J. Kohl and Father William J. Devereaux, representing the thirty-two priests who had been ordained from the parish, assisted at the Solemn High Mass which was celebrated by Rt. Reverend Thomas F. Connors, while Raymond J. Hasenauer directed the choir. Seven hundred parishioners and friends attended the Jubilee banquet.

The fiftieth anniversary was close to the apex of growth and expansion of the parish. The number of parishioners was approximately 5,000, the school population 650, and the value of the parish property was estimated at one million dollars. The City, too, had been growing through these fifty years, reaching its greatest population of 334,488 in 1950 according to the census of that year. It had appeared that there would be no end to growth and prosperity. However, the City's growth declined steadily from that time, but the parish school attendance continued to rise through the fifties reaching 800 in 1960 at which time there were fifteen teaching sisters. The number of

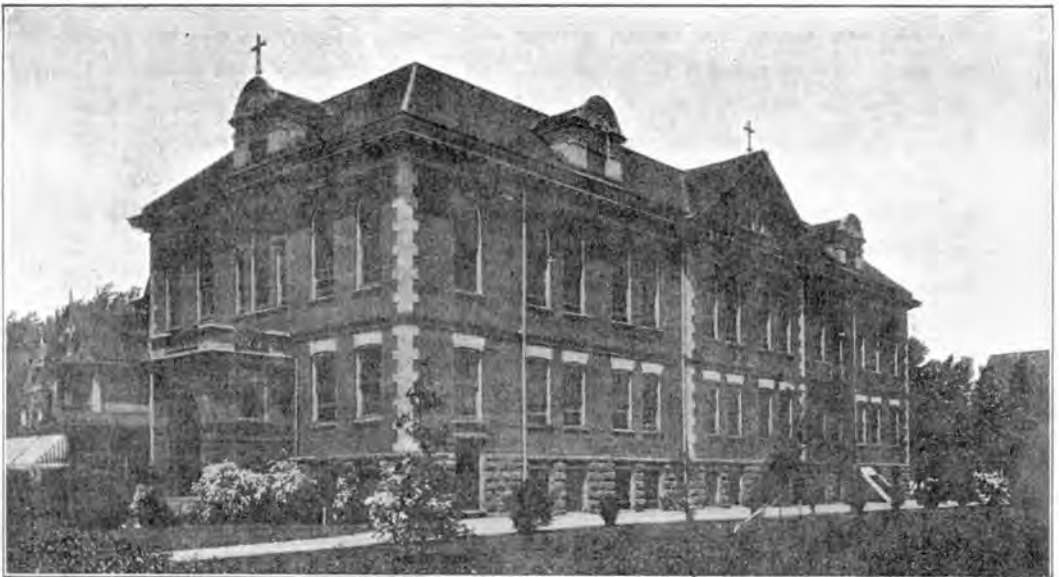
baptisms, too, had been increasing almost in a straight line except for the depression years in the 1930's, dropping below two hundred a year only twice from 1951 to 1962, while reaching just a shade under 300 (297) in 1959. Although that year saw a decline to 3,300 in the population, when Msgr. Connors had been made Pastor Emeritus in 1963, the Church of the Blessed Sacrament was one of the largest in the diocese.

The election of Pope John XXIII in 1958 and his calling of the Second Vatican Council began a period of enormous change in the Church, which was greeted with all kinds of responses from enthusiasm, to confusion, to opposition. The difficult task of carrying out these changes fell to the two pastors who succeeded Father Connors: Monsignor Edward J. McAniff in 1963 and Father John P. Norris in 1968. The most noticeable and rapid change happened in the liturgy; the English language, which had begun to be introduced in 1964, was soon thereafter used throughout the Eucharistic celebration. Folk Masses and Home Masses were introduced; the altar was arranged so that the celebrant faced the people; the altar servers began to wear blazers instead of cassocks and surplices; more was being heard about ecumenism, adult education and social mission (Human Development) and many other aspects of renewal. Under Father Norris' guidance, the Parish Council was established to accept many leadership roles in the parish. Its committees helped in organizing "Operation Rebuild", planning Sharing Suppers, and overseeing the Year of Cooperation between St. John the Evangelist Parish and our own. Mass, Eucharist, and the Sacrament of the Sick were brought to shut-ins. The church property even became a check-point for the "Hike for Hope", and the hall was open to civic groups. Under Father Norris, the parish reached out in new ways into the community.

A significant change was taking place in the late sixties and early seventies throughout the world in a growing awareness of Women's ability in leadership roles, and Blessed Sacrament did not ignore this development. On Mothers' Day, May 9, 1971, Mesdames Richard Quinn, Robert Geen, James Cotter, John McCrank and Bruce Carson read from the lecturn the scripture passages. In 1960, Mrs. Eric Smith and Misses Marie Doud and Marion Leaty were on the first Parish Council; by 1973, six women were in the "Stephen Program". In 1974, Miss Ruth Mathison became the first regular female lector, Sister Ruth Maier became a Pastoral Assistant, Mrs. Paul Manzler was elected trustee, Mesdames John Abbott, James Cotter and Donald Gillis co-chaired the census-taking and Mrs. Joseph Yatteau was elected to a place on the Council, later

to become Chairperson. The parish salutes these and all the courageous torch-bearers.

That our people were deeply committed in these and other religious activities was due largely to the exceptional leadership of our bishop, pastors, and the devoted and hard-working assistants and the religious were so fortunate to have the helm during three-quarters of this century. That the Church of the Blessed Sacrament is serving God and His people well is evidenced by the success of the parish through seventy-five years, and the extending into the outskirts the fervor and faith implanted in the parishioners, and the many sacraments administered.



FIRST PARISH CHURCH AND SCHOOL — 1902

THUS FARES THE LAND
Changes in the Parish and its Environs

In his "History of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament Thirtieth Anniversary", Father Connors gives us a picture of the conditions that existed when the parish was first proposed. The limits of the City reached only to Dartmouth Street, beyond which were few houses. (Just seven years before, Vick Park A and B were part of a race track, the shape of which is still retained.) Monroe Avenue Bridge spanned the Old Erie Canal, while Klondolf's Ice Pond occupied the area which is now part of Westminister Road and Barrington Streets. What is now Canterbury Road was then just a footpath leading to Culver Road. Many of the streets now residential were open fields. Quoting the publication directly:

"Red-painted houses dotted both sides of Monroe Avenue. These were occupied by the families of men who were employed at the Brick-yards. The Catholic people in this section were nearly all of Irish extraction, and were mainly communicants of St. Mary Church."

Father William E. Cowen, on his way from St. Bernard's to Blessed Sacrament to assist Father Connors on weekends, recalled passing two fields on Monroe Avenue where cows were grazing. There were magnificent homes on East Avenue, some of which have a place in our history. The Bausch home was later demolished to make room for the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences, a welcome addition to our parish area; the Ritter home built in 1905 and later sold to the Catholic diocese for the Episcopal Residence, was to become the abode of our well beloved parishioner, Bishop Kearney; the Henry Strong home, eventually sold to the Todd family who donated it to the diocese, was later to house our good friends, the Sisters of the Cenacle. Oxford Street, too, graced with some beautiful although less ostentatious dwellings.

Rochesterians were developing family businesses. A 1908 Parish Monthly contains advertisements for furniture, paper box, book, shoe, fur, grocery, tool and cutlery stores, pharmacies, photographic suppliers, coal companies and two of our well established department stores.

The area in and around the parish has been singularly blessed since early times. Some of our parishioners, in going to Church, follow the path taken long ago by the Jesuit Martyrs, Father Isaac Jogues and his companions. This path once crossed Alexander Street where Monroe High School now stands. During the seventy-five years of our parish history, St. Thereas, the Little Flower,

greatly beloved by the Carmelites, who were for several years our near neighbors, was canonized in 1925 to the joy of many of our parishioners. Pope Pius XII beatified Rose Phillipine Duchesne, foundress of the Sacred Heart Order, the convent of which was until very recently just outside the boundaries of our parish. Helen Durmin relates that on June 11, 1948, when Monsignor Connors celebrated the Fiftieth Anniversary of his Ordination to the priesthood, Bishop Kearney welcomed to Rochester the Religious of the Cenacle, and on November 4, 1951, the day of the Golden Jubilee of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, the foundress of the Order of the Religious of the Cenacle, Mother Therese Coudrec, was beatified by Pope Pius XII.

During the first fifty years of the parish, substantial homes were springing up, residential areas were developed and, before and after the depression of the early thirties, many residents were gaining wealth. The far off fields were becoming nearer because of the auto and residents were attracted away from the congestion of the City. This movement took on the aspect of an exodus in the sixties. Within the last few years, the Park Avenue Hospital, which had such friendly bonds with our parish, moved northward and left the future of its structure an exercise for neighborhood planners.

On two occasions, the size of the parish was diminished when part of its original area was cut off to form the parishes of St. John the Evangelist in 1914 and Our Lady of Lourdes in 1926. In that same year, Oak Hill Country Club transferred its property on the Genesee River to the University of Rochester and moved to its East Avenue location, which made it more convenient for our present pastor, on the rare sunny days of Rochester, to tear himself reluctantly from the rectory to send his ball as swift, sure and straight as his well directed thrusts in repartee. The Old Erie Canal bed had the distinction of becoming Rochester's only subway, a distinction soon lost when the area around Denning Place, Edmond and Richards Streets and Broadway joined it to become part of the Expressway, Route 490. Many homes were torn down in this project and many vacated when the State purchased properties on Clinton Avenue for the proposed Genesee Expressway.

The character of the City in general and of the neighborhood in particular was changing. The poorbox, because of thefts, was removed from the church. After a nearby synagogue and a Protestant church were destroyed by arsonists, our votive light stands were removed. The church doors, which had in early times remained open until nine o'clock in the evening, were later locked at six.

Concern for safety cut into the attendance at evening services and into the meetings of church societies.

The original owners of the mansions on East Avenue and the stately homes on Oxford and other streets near the church, have in the course of time, died or moved away, and the businesses of which they were entrepreneurs have closed or have been sold off to owners of conglomerates, their former dwellings torn down, broken up into apartments and rented rooms, or turned over to non-profit organizations. When the parish census was taken in 1975, only two residences on Oxford Street between Monroe and Park Avenue remained single family dwellings.

But many of the early residents in the vicinity, especially those of East Avenue and Oxford, had landscaped their streets and grounds with exotic and majestic trees which have grown lovelier through the last seventy-five years. This, and the recent efforts of neighborhood groups to upgrade and beautify the area, and the incessant rainfall of this spring and summer, have given a quality of parkland to the parish environment.

THE CHURCH OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

"Strength and beauty are in His Sanctuary." Psalm XCVI

A religious edifice famed for its beauty is the Church of the Blessed Sacrament. The structure is of a modified English Gothic Style, designed by the architectural firm of Edwin S. Gordon and William V. Madden, with Gorsline and Swan as mason contractors. The exterior of the building and the interior columns are of gray sandstone quarried at Amherst, Ohio, and capped with litholite. Supported by the tall gray columns is a Georgia pine ceiling faced with heavily stained oak.

The interior inspires contemplation. The early morning sun streams through the Nativity window above the main altar, lighting it in its radiant beauty, seeming to concentrate on the figure of the Infant, the Light of the World. It was this window that was selected by the Rochester Museum of Arts and Sciences' production, "The Star of Christmas". How beautiful it was during past Christmas Eve Masses, when a great outside floodlight illuminated the figure of the Christ Child! The window was designed by Frank Van Der Locken and Herman J. Butler. The latter designed all the other stained glass windows which were made by Pike Stained Window Glass Company, now Pike Stained Glass Studio.

The early parishioners rejoiced to have the Nativity window in place at the time of the Dedication of the church. When the other artistic stained glass windows with figures from the Old Testament in the clerestory, and those of the Eucharist, of the Blessed Virgin, and of the saints at a lower level, as well as that of the Crucifixion, were completed, they replaced the temporarily used ones of cathedral glass.

The sanctuary was designed by the firm of Ross and Company of East Cambridge, Massachusetts, and the wood carving was done by Isaac Kerchmayer, whose work is said to be second to none in this country. Polychrome of orange-red, blue-green, and gold decorated the carvings. The colors, now quite faded, can still be seen in the medallion in the center of the front of the altar. The carved oak reredos holds the figures of the twelve apostles, six on each side of the tabernacle facing the crucifix. On the sanctuary walls are placed statues of Saints Francis, Theresa, Ann, and Thomas. Mr. Kerchmayer also carved the statues for the Blessed Virgin's and St. Joseph's altars, those of the Sacred Heart, and of St. Anthony, as well as the pulpit and altar rail, which last was removed after Vatican II. Also of carved wood is the rood beam bearing the images of Christ crucified, Mary, His Mother, and St. John.

Originally the inscription on the beam was, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do". Some of the wits of the parish applied the words to the marriage ceremonies performed beneath it. It was thought best when the church was redecorated in the early sixties to choose another inscription, now wisely printed in Latin, "Christum Regem pro nobis in cruce exaltatum. Venite Adoremus", translated in the Bulletin as, "Let us adore Christ, the King, raised on the cross for us".

At the corners of the nave, angels with trumpets remind the faithful of their union with Christ after the last judgment. Along the side walls, constructed of plaster of paris and delicately colored and gilded, are the stations of the cross.

The original organ obtained from St. Michael's Church was used for twenty-seven years, and later was sold to the Alumnae of the Sacred Heart Convent for use in their chapel on Prince Street. We are fortunate now in having a Wurlitzer, which was shipped from the factory in North Tonawanda, New York, in March of 1929. It is a three-manual, nine-rank instrument having the same pipes used off Wurlitzer theater organs. When the Palace Theater, which used to be on North Clinton Avenue, was to be demolished, its organ was to be installed at the Auditorium Theater on Main Street. While this was being done, a process taking approximately a year, the new Blessed Sacrament organ was one of those used by the Rochester Theater Organ Society when artists were giving concerts under their auspices. In November of 1974, our instrument was again one of those selected for the tour of the RTOS's Recital and Organ Exhibit. The Organ Society considers ours as one of the two best organs in Western New York.

From time to time the church was redecorated. Major refurbishing was done by Herman J. Butler in 1936 and renewal was again in progress when Father Connors became Pastor Emeritus. The golden buff of the exterior was restored, the interior painted, the electrical system replaced, modern light fixtures substituted for those of the Gothic-style globes, and the dark stained-glass around the figures of the saints replaced by a more translucent stained glass, making the church brighter. Eventually, the suspended sanctuary lamp was replaced by one on a standard at the side of the altar. Representations of phrases from the Litany of the Blessed Virgin, with a crown to depict Her Queenship, and from the Litany of the Sacred Heart, with a flaming heart indicative of the love of Christ for His Father and for mankind, were painted along the nave.

Not only the beauty of the structures or the spiritual growth developed therein, but also the visitors welcomed to the parish add richness to our memories. Many leaders in religion and world affairs joined us in celebrating the Eucharist. To name but a few; there were Cardinal Mercier, working for the reconstruction of Belgium after that country was flooded in World War I, Eamon de Valera, leader of Dail Eirann in 1919 and first President of the Irish Republic in 1922, and Kurt von Schuschnigg, former Chancellor of Austria, who visited this Country after being released from a Nazi prison in 1945. He became a United States citizen in 1956.

The activities of our leaders and parishioners created the need for our buildings which are a symbol of our unity and a center from which God's work may be extended.

STATISTICS

BAPTISMS

First in the Old Church:

Grace Marion Herbert	April 13, 1902
Teresa Anna Sercu	April 13, 1902
(Date of the Dedication)	April 13, 1902

First in the New Church:

John James Simmons	December 22, 1912
Frances Olive Fitch	December 22, 1912
Georgia Margaret McTaggart	December 22, 1912
Arthur Hoag (adult)	December 22, 1912
(Date of the Dedication)	December 22, 1912

The 10,000 baptism was that of Tammy Theresa Rice.

Last baptism (before July 25, 1976, the closing date of this history):

Thomas Richard Jaeger	July 18, 1976
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Total number of baptisms at Blessed Sacrament Church from 1902 to July 25, 1976:	10,252
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MARRIAGES

First in the Old Church:

Arthur John O'Neil	
Mary Emily Keele	April 20, 1902

First in the New Church:

Simon R. Kennedy	
Marie E. Kelly	December 31, 1912

Last marriage recorded to July 25, 1976:

John C. Lynd	
Judith A. Simonet	July 24, 1976

Total number of marriages to July 25, 1976:	4,200
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OTHER STATISTICS

Number of First Eucharists:

May 10, 1903 - July 25, 1976	5,560
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Number of Confirmations:

Beginning - July 25, 1976	6,344
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Number of Graduates from the parish school:

Beginning - July 25, 1976	5,160
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Number of Funerals:

Beginning - July 25, 1976	3,867
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CHRISTIANITY AND COLD CASH

From any angle you want to look at it, the year 1901 must have had a good financial forecast. A prominent department store started that year (McCurdy's), a famous golf course was founded that year (Oak Hill), and a Catholic Church began its Christian apostolate in southeast Rochester (Blessed Sacrament). Over the years Blessed Sacrament has had the reputation of being the "richest parish" in the city of Rochester, but it took many years before the potential became the reality.

Early financial records are rather hard to come by and sketchy at best. There is a favorite diocesan tradition about an early Diocesan Superintendent of Schools who, according to the tradition, carried all the school records around in his hip pocket in those days. Perhaps we could appropriate the story and apply it to Msgr. Connors who must have kept the early financial records (especially on the income side) in his breast pocket - "close to the vest", as the Irish would say. We do have some facts and figures about purchases of property and building construction, which were obviously the main function of financing in those early years (labor was cheap, especially in ecclesiastical and religious circles). Property on Monroe and Rutgers and Oxford, forming the basis for the first Church and School combination, was purchased for a combined total of \$33,300.00 - an enormous sum at that time. Between then and 1927 the rest of the present property, most of it with houses on it, was purchased at different times at the total cost of over \$110,000.00. During that same period of time, the Church was build at the cost of \$175,000.00 (appraised today for 1.2 million) and the new school was built for \$225,000.00 - with improvements to the property costing over \$25,000.00. All of this capital cost for construction and property amounted to almost \$600,000.00 in the first quarter century of our parish existence. No wonder the potential of a "rich parish" had to be realized in short order. And it was under the financial acumen of Blessed Sacrament's first pastor.

Since the early building days, of course, the emphasis has changed a bit in church financing. More and more has been spent in providing programs - primarily of a religious education nature, secondarily of liturgical and worshipping nature. Because of the growth in the number of lay teachers and other factors affecting and increasingly sophisticated parochial school program,

costs dramatically increased in the 1963-73 decade. A renovation of the entire building plant in 1963-64 necessitated expenditures of over \$500,000.00 - some of which is still owing today, reflected in the present debt of \$140,000.00. The biggest change in emphasis, perhaps, has been the sharing of responsibility for financing. Previously, it has rested almost entirely on the shoulders of the pastor. Today, a Finance Committee, all Parish Committee heads, and Parish Council share this responsibility with the pastor.

One of the constants in the finance picture of Blessed Sacrament has been the outstanding generosity of parishioners, whether it was reflected in the \$300.00 - \$400.00 collection of early years or the \$3,000 - \$4,000.00 collections of today. Most noteworthy has always been the characteristic of Blessed Sacrament parishioners in contributing to causes outside the parish. Over \$90,000.00 was raised to build Aquinas Institute (twice the quota). The same happened for St. Andrew's Seminary - quota \$20,000.00 - pledged was \$40,000.00. This pattern continued through campaigns for St. John Fisher College and McQuaid, Kearney and Mooney High Schools. And to this day the records of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith show the parish to be among the top five in the Diocese on Mission Collections. It is this continuing spirit of generosity that makes even the statistical data of a financial statement just another reflection of the Christian spirit engendered in this parish.

FUN AND FROLIC

It is difficult to visualize life without radio or television. In fact in 1901 when the parish was in its infancy, these were unknown. For many years after that few people had automobiles. Few even had telephones. It was common to have completed formal schooling at the end of the ninth grade.

Since a diligent pastor was not content with encouraging his flock to attend Mass and receive the Sacraments frequently, the parish became a center of culture and social life. The Parish Monthlies and later the Parish Weeklies discussed recently published books, magazine articles, motion pictures, the activities of the Church throughout the world, and the Catholic view on current topics. Spelling bees and debates by members of the Church societies were popular especially with the pastor. An outstanding quality of Church music enriched the liturgy at the High Mass on Sundays.

The earliest functions were for the dual purpose of getting people acquainted and for raising funds. One of these was the first lawn social on September of 1901, held at the corner of Monroe Avenue and Rutgers Street where the church-school would soon be built. It netted between \$800 and \$900. This was followed the next year by the first bazaar, held in the Old Fitzhugh Hall opposite the City Hall. It was a really great affair bringing in some \$5,000 to \$6,000. The second bazaar, held a month before the dedication of the new church, was even more successful, adding to the building fund \$8,500. At that dedication, history records, the crowd of well wishers was exceedingly great. Just as the collection was to be taken up, the horse-driven red fire trucks, bells clanging, raced along Monroe Avenue, and off went the congregation rushing after them.

In 1917, the young folks of the parish put on a Grand Minstrel Show. Some five years later they produced "The White Headed Boy". This was repeated five years later.

In 1920 and again in 1922, the parishioners chartered the ferry, packed large basket lunches, and set out in force on the great excursion for the likes of which those who enjoyed it, still pine - the trip across the lake to Coburg, Canada, and back on the "Ontario" - price per person \$1.50. In 1927, the mystery play, "The Thirteenth Chair", was acted under the auspices of the Young Ladies Sodality.

That the thirties and early forties were serious times seems to be reflected in the choice of entertainment. "The Divine Reward", a religious drama of the life and apparition of the Blessed Virgin to Catherine Laboure, written by

Sister Barbara of St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, inspired the audiences in 1930. The Passion play, "Calvary", was given in our auditorium in 1933.

For the thirty-fifth anniversary, a social was planned to honor the first parishioners. Dressed in the finery of years of yore, party goers began the festivities with a Grand March led by the pastor, wearing a Prince Albert coat, tailored thirty-four years earlier, and carrying a silk hat purchased in 1900. The young people choirs presented "Kolyada" in 1960 and "The Wizard of Oz" in 1961. In July of 1963, the Rosary Society ably hosted Msgr. Connors and his parishioners, on the occasion of the pastor emeritus' ninety-third birthday and the sixty-fifth anniversary of his ordination.

Blessed Sacrament had and continues to have something for everyone. Annual Holy Name and Rosary Societies Banquets, all-parish dinners, tureen suppers, and weekly card parties. There were and are parish picnics for the entire family.

One of the enjoyable frolics of 1976 was the real old fashioned parish lawn party sponsored by the Parish Life Committee of the Parish Council and chaired by Mrs. Luke Parisi and Mrs. Donald Gillis. Nothing was lacking. There was food, music and dancing, with candles and moonlight lending their charm, while the wind wafted the sounds of our pastor's resonant voice, brilliantly rendering songs - some classic, some not so classic. Weren't you glad you were there?

We have had seventy-five years of fun together.

RIGHT REVEREND MONSIGNOR THOMAS F. CONNORS - A PRIEST OF MANY PARTS

It is timely in the year of the Diamond Jubilee of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament to think back on the career of Monsignor Connors, its founder, who seventy-five years ago was commissioned by Right Reverend Bernard J. McQuaid, D.D. to build a church in the southeastern area of the City. A Rochester native, born July 12, 1870, he was graduated from Immaculate Conception School in 1885 and the Rochester Free Academy, which until recently housed the offices of the Board of Education. After working for three years as a bookkeeper, he entered St. Andrew's and later St. Bernard's Seminaries and was ordained to the priesthood by Bishop McQuaid on June 11, 1898. For three years he was assistant pastor at St. Mary's Church after which time the young Father Connors began the work of starting a Church and school almost at the boundary of the City limits.

It was a time of rapid growth both of the City and of the parish, necessitating the purchase of several houses and parcels of land and overseeing extensive construction. Nevertheless, the pastor's greatest energy was spent in ministering to his flock and in developing and enriching its spirituality.

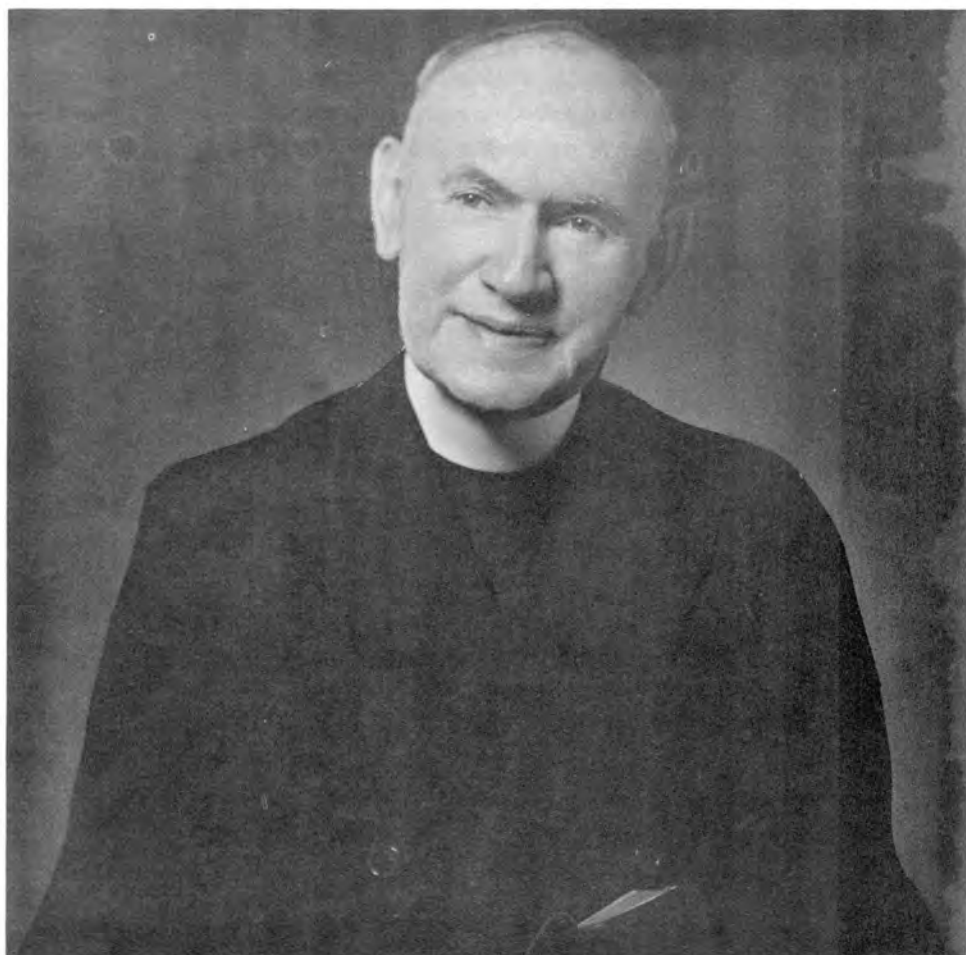
He was close to his parishioners, calling them by name, making daily visits to the sick particularly those in the Park Avenue Hospital, comforting the bereaved, administering the sacraments, baptizing the little ones (of the 1,970 baptisms up to 1924, Father Connors performed 1,816), marrying young couples, watching over the schooling of the children, giving courage and spiritual help to the dying. In the early days of the parish, transportation was more leisurely than now, and, when making his visitations riding on his bicycle or later in his old Dobbin-drawn carriage, he could stop, on seeing an acquaintance, to make a friendly inquiry. Close links were thus welded between pastor and flock.

Always solicitous for his people, he prepared a Parish Monthly and later a Parish Weekly, in which he discussed world affairs, reviewed contemporary literature, related the lives of the saints, explained Catholic viewpoints on controversial issues, and encouraged his readers in the practice of Christian virtues. He was gifted in the ability to make friends of people of many religious persuasions - friends who wanted to help him in his many projects.

When not celebrating Mass, the pastor took up the principal collection on Sundays. The early days of the parish were also the days of the great hats - flower, ribbon, feathers, and veil-bedecked. Occasionally, as the basket passed from pew to pew, it not only bore coins inside, but a hat on the outside as well.

Father Connors was given the ecclesiastical title of Right Reverend Monsignor in 1947 by Pope Pius XII, but by his wish and the habit of his friends, he was always "Father Connors". He became Pastor Emeritus in 1963, after serving God and his parishioners at the Church of the Blessed Sacrament for sixty-two years.

The Courier Journal said of him at the time of his death, July 12, 1966, "One of God's kindest yet most efficient gentlemen went home". In Father Connors, as in Saint Theresa, were combined the qualities of clear communication, business acumen, leadership, and sanctity.



MOST REVEREND MONSIGNOR EDWARD J. McANIFF

Monsignor McAniff, the second pastor of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, was ordained on December 18, 1943. Before his coming as pastor on June 25, 1963, he had been an assistant at Sacred Heart Cathedral for eleven and one-half years after which he was secretary to Bishop Kearney for eight years, residing for a while at the rectory and celebrating at Blessed Sacrament the early Mass. When he arrived here as pastor, he found himself the neighboring pastor to his brother, Rev. Msgr. James C. McAniff at St Mary's.

When the church was being redecorated in the early 1960's, it was found that many major repairs had to be undertaken. Among other things, a new roof was put on the church, the exterior was cleaned, and a stockade fence around the convent court was constructed under his direction.

Parishioners recall his ready cooperation with them in the formation of the Men's Club which had so many successful parish activities.

His was the task of directly following a pastor so highly revered, a task, no doubt made easier by his warm regard for Father Connors, whose name he always placed before his own in the Parish Weekly.

REVEREND JOHN P. NORRIS

When Father John P. Norris was appointed pastor of Blessed Sacrament he brought us a combination of talents particularly suited to an outer-city parish in the throes of the post-Vatican II changes.

Born in Glasgow, Scotland, Father Norris came to this country when he was seven years old. He attended St. Augustine's school, Aquinas Institute, St. Andrew's and St. Bernard's seminaries, and was ordained at Sacred Heart Cathedral in 1946. From 1946 until 1961 he served as assistant pastor at St. Mary's in Auburn, St. Charles Borromeo in Rochester, Holy Family in Auburn, and St. Boniface in Rochester. From 1961 until 1968, he was chaplain at the State Agricultural and Industrial School in Industry, New York. He became pastor of Blessed Sacrament parish in June of 1968.

Blessed Sacrament, more than many parishes, had substantially changed over the years. From the outset, Father Norris was sensitive to the traditions of the parish and to the feelings of its many life-long parishioners. At the same time he was eager to implement the recommendations of Vatican II. He has wisely moved the parish through the changes of the 60's and 70's.

He organized at Blessed Sacrament one of the first parish councils in the diocese which has served as a model for other parish councils.

Because of his concern for ecumenism, Blessed Sacrament became a charter member of the Southeast Ecumenical Ministry and one of the Catholic churches which has consistently supported it.

Under his leadership, and in response to the problems of maintaining parochial education, Blessed Sacrament pioneered in consolidating its school with St. John the Evangelist's school.

Even before the American bishops urged Catholics to involve themselves in political action, Father Norris concerned himself with the problems of our parish community - problems which many suburban parishes are spared. Concerned parishioners were gratified to hear him speak from the pulpit about the Genesee Expressway and the inequitable Pure Waters taxes which city people pay.

Not all of his innovations have been well received. They have, in fact, caused considerable furor on occasion. But for the most part, they have weathered the storm and gained majority consent in a parish which is more democratic than most. The "people of God" at Blessed Sacrament are usually given ample opportunity to voice their dissent - which they do, vociferously.

Whatever the subject of his Sunday homilies, Father Norris always gives us food for thought. He tells us, usually with humor, and always with reference

to the problems that Catholics face today, what our duties are to one another and to a God who loves all men.

Because he has strong views on certain subjects, there has evolved a pleasant after-Sunday-Mass pastime among parishioners of baiting him outside the church and playing the Devil's Advocate to his arguments - which he usually wins.

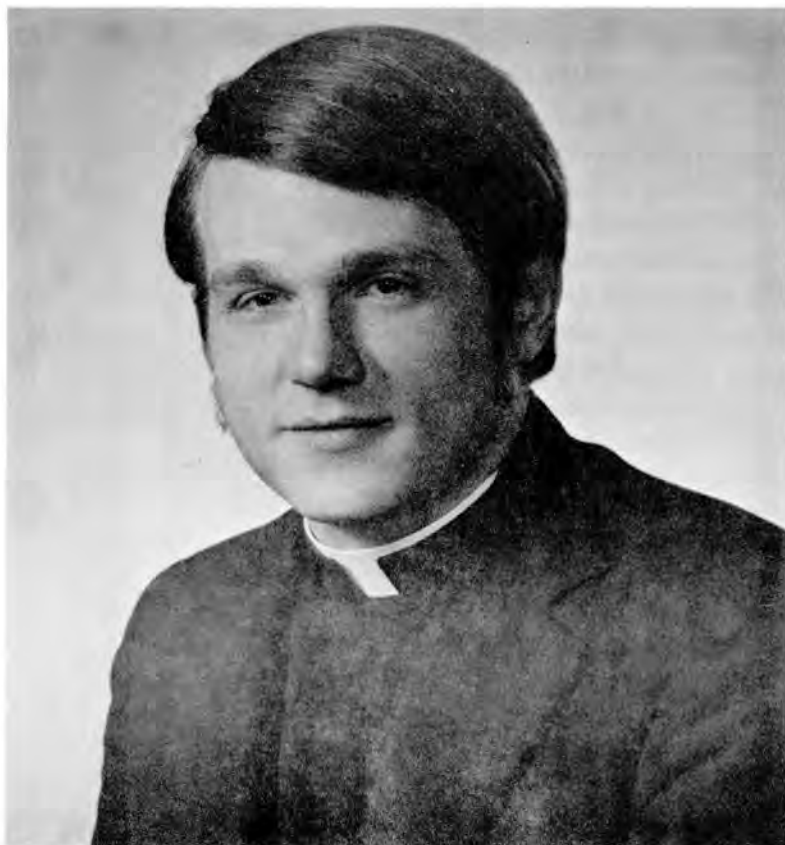
We hope to have Father Norris with us here at Blessed Sacrament for many years to come.



REVEREND DENNIS SHAW

Father Shaw came into this world as part of the Post-War Baby Boom. Fr. Dennis grew up in the Nineteenth Ward, a hotbed of athletic activity, where he attended Our Lady of Good Council School. In 1961, he entered St. Andrew's Seminary, and four years later, St. John Fisher College to be a pioneer in the newly founded Becket Hall. There he developed into a very strong, brilliant and vocal leader among the seminarians, actively interested in the problems of the poor. Both Becket Hall and Mr. Shaw survived each other so that in 1973, he found himself at St. Andrew's Church in Rochester, serving as a Deacon Intern. That the people of that parish loved him is indicated by the fact that over a thousand came to see him ordained on March 22, 1974.

Since June 26, 1974, Father Dennis Shaw, our Assistant Pastor, has been spending himself for the people here at Blessed Sacrament.



THE ASSISTANTS AT THE CHURCH OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Years have not quenched the fire the assistants of our parish have kindled. Memories of their great devotion when celebrating Mass, of the spiritual messages they gave from the pulpit or in the Parish Weeklies, of the clear and definite answers that proceeded from our questions, of the patience and inspiration they gave in the confessional, and of the enthusiastic leadership they brought to the group meetings added another dimension to our lives.

A number of priests helped in the growing parish from time to time in the early years on a part-time basis, some occasionally, others more extensively. Among the latter, Reverend John Petter assisted in 1902; Reverend William E. Cowan, D.D. from 1907 and for several years afterwards; Reverend Daniel P. Quigley, from 1911 through 1913; Reverend Dennis V. Lane, from 1914 through 1917; Reverend Leo A. Smith, from 1916 to 1918 and Reverend William Hayes, from 1919 to 1923. Reverend Thomas E. Duggan became the first full time assistant to Father Connors in 1924.

After Father Duggan's appointment, several other part-time assistants helped with the parish duties on weekends or for morning or evening services. Among these are Reverend Maynard A. Connell, Ph.D., a former pupil at Blessed Sacrament School, who assisted on Sundays and on other occasions for over fifteen years, starting shortly after graduation from St. Bernard's Seminary and Reverend Monsignor Richard K. Burns, likewise a pupil of the school and teacher at St. Bernard's.

We were privileged to have several priests as residents of our rectory, who while with us, assisted with early Masses and took part in our parish life as far as time permitted. Those who were residents during this last year were Reverend James M. Moynihan, Reverend Robert L. Collins, and Reverend Lucas Tupper. Jesuits and other Order priests preached on many Sundays.

ASSISTANTS AT THE CHURCH OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

Rev. Thomas Duggan	1924-1928
Rev. William Killacky	1917-1926 Part-time at first;
Rev. William Ayers	1929-1934 later full-time
Rev. Francis Feeney	1933-1941
Rev. Thomas Curley	1934-1936
Rev. John Maloney	1936-1941
Rev. John Brill	1940-1942
Rev. John Morgan	1940-1951
Rev. Alphonse Crimmens	1942-1947
Rev. Francis Pegnam	1947-1953
Rev. Louis Hohman	1947-1953
Rev. Thomas Manley	1948-1954
Rev. Edwin Wedow	1953-1956
Rev. John Coonan	1953-1963
Rev. Robert Egan	1954-1959
Rev. Conrad Sundholm	1955-1960
Rev. John Philipps	1959-1966
Rev. Robert McFiggins	1960-1963
Rev. Paul Cloonan	1961-1963
Rev. Neil Goodman	1963-1964
Rev. Edward Golden	1964-1968
Rev. James Cosgrove	1966-1970
Rev. Charles Latus	1968-1974
Rev. James Lane	1970-1971
Rev. David Gaesser	1973
Rev. Ronald Antinarelli	1974-1975 Deacon Intern
Rev. Dennis Shaw	1975-Present Assistant Pastor
Rev. William Laird	1974-1975 Deacon Intern
Sr. Ruth Maier	1975-Present Pastoral Assist

AUDITORS

Charles J. Chism
G. Thomas Clark
James T. Connolly
John J. Curran
Joseph P. Doyle
John G. Elbs
J. Emil Esser
William Foley
John T. Hanefy
John E. Hayes
George J. Knapp, Jr.
Andrew W. Korts, Jr.
David F. Lawless
James M. Mangan
Thomas E. Murphy
William F. Shafer
Thomas Sharkey
Dr. Bernard Soner
Michael E. Sweeney
Robert Way
Frederick J. Wegman
Peter F. Weis
Frank E. Wolfe
Edward L. Zimmer

SENTINELS

Edward J. Madden

USHERS

First Ushers, 1902-1951

Judge Benjamin B. Cunningham
Richard T. Ford
Edward Madden
Thomas P. McCarrick
Charles McCarthy
Charles S. Rauber

TRUSTEES

William J. Biche[†]
John E. Carey
Charles J. Chism
James T. Connolly
William S. Conway, Jr.
Dr. Michael J. Crino
Agustus Cunningham
John J. Curran
Frank J. Erb
Dr. John J. Finegan
William Foley
George E. Geyer
John T. Hanefy
Raymond T. Healy
Robert Kalb
J. Adam Kreag
J. Arthur Knauf
David F. Lawless
Shirley Manzler
Lawrence O'Toole
William Shafer
Thomas F. Sharkey
Michael E. Sweeney
Frederick J. Wegman
Peter F. Weis
Frank E. Wolfe

Charles J. McCarthy

Head Ushers

Robert Benedict
George Hanlon
David Jensen
B. Leo McIntee
Edward Zimmer

ALTAR BOYS AND ALTAR SERVERS

The number of altar boys who assisted in the liturgy for seventy-five years in our parish is so vast that only the names of the first to serve will be mentioned. According to the booklet, "Forty Years Ago", the pioneers of 1902 were George Adwen, Bernard Brennan, Joseph Dempsey, Bernard Donnelly, Frank Esterheld, Delbert Geyer, John Hanefy, Roland McDonald, William Murray, Charles O'Leary, Ralph Weis, and Henry Weiland.

Looking over the assignments of some years back, one is struck by the fact that many of these boys developed into leaders in church and community. Of those listed in the Parish Weekly of October 11, 1943, four have since entered the priesthood, two became doctors, one a lawyer, and one a bank executive; while of those listed in that publication dated April 12, 1948, one is at present a City Councilman and one a City Court Judge, several are lawyers or executives and one is a TV personality. Keeping appointments and realizing that their work was one of responsibility which they alone could do, must have helped develop leadership at an early age. This was especially true of the Master of Ceremonies, a position given to the boy who served best, most faithfully, and for the longest period of time. With it went the task during a full year, of planning the servers' assignments, informing them of their schedule, training the neophytes, filling vacancies in emergencies, and seeing that as far as possible, there was no flaw in their service. They were the cross-bearers who headed a group of about twenty boys clad in red cassocks with white surplices who walked before the Celebrants at High Masses. In the year 1902, the Master of Ceremonies was Roland McDonald.

Recently a number of adults have volunteered for the earliest service, and since 1968, the altar boys have doffed cassocks and donned blazers. This was a trail-blazing first for Blessed Sacrament.

From the youths who donated their hours of sleep, thru those who took charge for a year, to those men who replaced the altar boys, all were proud to take part in the celebration of the Eucharistic Feast. We salute them for seventy-five years of faithful service.

THE PARISH COUNCIL

The Council of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament is an all-embracing organization directing parish activities, under the leadership of the Diocesan Council and our pastor. Through such groups, the Church aims to join the laity with the clergy in decision making. Since previously, the pastor, assistants, and religious planned the programs, it was necessary to prepare the congregation for the change by informative and persuasive articles in the Bulletin.

The idea of having a Council for our parish was proposed by Rev. John P. Norris in May of 1969. The first organizational group, chaired by Bruce Carson, met a month later, and a temporary constitution was accepted by the congregation in November. The pioneer Council which met for the first time on February 9, 1970, consisted of the Chairperson, John Abbott; Vice-chairperson, J. Arthur Knauf; Secretary, Marie Doud; and George Elkins, Marion Leaty, Patrick McCarthy, Paul O'Connell, Dominic Pellegrino, Robert Radell, Dr. Pieter Schram, Mrs. Eric Smith, Richard Weider. The ex-officio members were Pastor, Father John Norris; Assistant Pastor, Father Charles Latus; School Principal, Sister Eleanor Volpe; trustees, William Conway, Jr. and John Curran; President of the Rosary Society, Mrs. James Connor; and President of the Men's Club, Frank Ruh.

The chairpersons of the Council from its inception are: Dr. John Abbott, 1970-1971; J. Arthur Knauf, 1971-1972; William Biche', 1972-1973; Bruce Carson, 1973-1974; John Kennedy, 1974-1975; and Mrs. Joseph Yatteau, 1975-1976, who was re-elected for the term 1976-1977.

The Council members for the year 1976-1977 are as follows: Chairperson, Mrs. Joseph Yatteau; Vice-Chairperson, Mary Kate Driscoll; Secretary, Maire' Fox; and Patricia Conheady, Gerald Esterheld, David Jensen, Martin Kennedy, John McCrank, Lucille Ribson, and Trustees, Lawrence O'Toole and John Carey. The ex-officio members are Pastor, Father John Norris; Assistant Pastor, Father Dennis Shaw; School Principal, Sister Mary Bernadette Aselin; and Pastoral Assistant, Sister Ruth Maier.

The standing committees are six in number: (1) Finance, (2) Education, which is divided into three sub-committees: (a) Religious Education, (b) Christian Adult Enrichment, (c) The Catholic School Board; (3) Building Management, (4) Liturgy, (5) Parish Life and (6) Human Development.

Since its inception, the Council members have had a full schedule. "To lay up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come", (St. Paul to Timothy, Chapter VI, verse 12), they have attended a Goals

Weekend, Days and Evenings of Recollection and Reflection at the Cenacle Retreat House, and have held Masses in their homes.

Four catastrophes of the early seventies showed the value of having an organization capable of providing leadership. In June of 1972, a devastating flood partially or entirely destroyed homes, schools, factories and farms in Elmira and Corning. As the losses were great, some area churches attempted to mitigate to some extent the suffering by adopting the families most severely effected and least able to help themselves. Sisters from our convent, teenagers and adults with special building skills, whose efforts were coordinated by Thomas and Patricia Kowal, restored an Elmira home. Others shovelled mud from basements, while still others collected articles needed to replace those destroyed or carried away by the waters. Parishioners gave financial aid for this "Operation Rebuild" and also for the people of Honduras and Guatamala, who, too, had suffered from disasterous floods in 1974 as well as Africans who were victims of a ruinous drought.

A few other activities of the Council have been the sponsorship of a Vietnamese family, completion of the consolidation of Blessed Sacrament and St. John the Evangelist's Schools, formation of the program of Renewal and Reconciliation, preparation and distribution of a booklet describing services for the elderly, conduction of a Parish Census and a liturgy survey and numerous social functions.

The Council of the Church of the Blessed Sacrament, having had in the past a few ups and downs, is now said to be one of the most successful in the diocese. John Curran comparing the many parish societies of the past, each with programs independent of the others, with the now organized activities under the Council, makes this comment: "Now we are one".

MUSIC AT THE CHURCH OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

From the inception of the parish, the Blessed Sacrament Choir has provided ecclesiastical music for its many religious services. Among the earliest choir directors whose names could be recalled or have been recorded in the Parish publications are Mr. Dumont Stone and Mrs. John (Pearl) Keenan. On October 15, 1917, a Professor Dousek reorganized the choir, an event which seemed to recur frequently in the succeeding years.

When the old church was built, a pipe organ was purchased from St. Michael's Church. Clay Bestor, a former soloist gives us this account:

"How well the writer remembers that old organ! As a member of the Boy's Choir under the strict, but loving direction of Sister Marie Joseph, we sang once a month with the Adult Men's Choir which was directed by Professor Dousek. Our choir was vested with red cassocks, white surplices, stiff white Buster Brown-style collars, finished off by Sister with large white silky bow ties. At 10:55 a.m. on Sundays, we paraded up from the basement of the church to meet the celebrant and altar boys at the sacristy door. At the first peal of the organ, the choir would march to the front of the Church, down the center aisle singing the entrance hymn, the altar boys following, until the latter ascended the altar steps. At the end of Mass, the procedure was reversed. Through 1918 to 1920, Gertrude Keenan, a very kindly person, was organist. She encouraged us to come to morning services, letting us sit with her on the organ bench and sing with her as she played. One day this choir boy found out that the organist had ulterior motives. The organ had a long wooden pump handle to be operated mechanically if the electrical power failed as, at times, it did. If there was no electrical power, and no choir boy to pump the organ, there was no music.

In 1929, a new Wurlitzer theater organ was installed and the old one, after twenty-seven years of service, was sold to the Alumnae of the Sacred Heart Convent for their chapel on Prince Street. The new one was played for the first time on March 29, 1929. Mr. Tom Grierson, then organist at the beautiful Palace Theater, which was located on Clinton Avenue, played the instrument at High Mass and Mr. J. Ernest Mack performed at another Mass. Their playing brought out the full beauty of this fine instrument. When the organ was dedicated on April 14, 1929, with Mr. Tom Grierson as organist, the services were broadcast gratis by WHAM.

Mr. Edward J. Leinan, choir director, organized a mixed choir at first and a male choral group later. Since he was associated with many choruses around the City, he was able to attract some very good singers. Fidelis Hoff, Alexander Bayer, Anthony DeSurra, Pascal DeSurra, George Pelletier, Robert and Clay Bestor and Dorothy Crowley among others.

Gertrude Keenan continued as organist until Easter Sunday of 1936 when, while playing at Mass, she dropped dead. Miss Alice Connors, sister of the pastor, a very accomplished musician, succeeded her. Many can still remember how the pipes rang and the rafters snook when Alice played "All Praise to St. Patrick" on every March 17th."

Between 1937 and 1947, Miss Adelaide Biesenbach substituted for Miss Connors on Sundays, occasionally, at first, and later, more frequently, while Mr. Anthony DeSurra played for many of the funeral Masses. Mr. DeSurra succeeded Mr. Leinan as organist in the late thirties, and, to the male singers who were in Mr. Leinan's group were added: Mrs. Raymond (Marie) Brown, Mrs. Eugene (Mary) Langie, Mrs. Alice Harvey Siebold, Grace Murray, Connie and Sadie DeLettera, Mrs. Margaret Briggs VerHoeven, Gertrude Calihan, Helen Knope and Marie Murphy.

In 1950, the adult choir was dissolved and a children's choir under the direction of Sister Claudia sang the High Mass on Sunday, while a quartet made up of Mrs. Siebold, Mrs. Clare Louise Carey, Anthony DeSurra and Clay Bestor sang at the ten o'clock Mass. Mr. Robert Bestor, who had been organist and choir director in Brooklyn, after leaving the Blessed Sacrament choir, returned as organist and remained for about nine years. His rendition of the beautiful hymns from the St. Basil Hymnal, as well as more classical pieces, had a truly spiritual quality. Mrs. Jose' Echaniz directed a choir for slightly more than a year in 1963 and 1964.

With the coming of Mr. Herbert Heustis as director in 1965, the choir was again organized. Miss Helen Conway was organist the following year and remained until June of 1969, and was succeeded by Mr. Stephen Krause. In 1970, Mr. David Wedow directed a twenty-six member choir. Later, Miss Elsa McMahon directed the choir with Mr. Wedow at the organ. Since High Masses were no longer sung when Mr. Craig Westendorf came in June of 1974, he and his successor, Mr. James Buonemani (1975) were both organists and choir directors.

The Folk Group had in its eight years, several directors. The Folk Mass was sung at Blessed Sacrament for the first time on August 4, 1968, under the baton of Chris Mullen. Later the McCarthy brothers, Patrick and Brian, were the leaders. The Folk Group was reorganized in 1972 by Mr. Richard Mancini. Another leader, Mary Ellen Monroe, who left in 1974, was followed by Stephanie Schrader.

Besides the many beautiful programs at Christmas, Easter and other occasions when music had a most important part in the liturgy, many outstanding events were recalled by former choir members. When in 1929, Miss Mary Burns, a soloist, became Mrs. Eugene Langie, Mr. Samuel R. Rothafel, better known as Roxy, of the Roxy Theaters, sent on of the outstanding singers of his group, Mr. David Drolet, from New York, to represent him and to sing at the wedding. On the Fortieth Anniversary of the organization of the parish,

under the direction of Mr. Anthony DeSurra, the choir sang Theodore DuBois "The Seven Last Words of Christ" on Palm Sunday, April 6, 1941, in the Blessed Sacrament Auditorium. Three names well known at Blessed Sacrament were associated with the production: Father John Morgan, narrator, George Hanlon, head usher and Edward Lynd, business manager. The following Palm Sunday, the Blessed Sacrament choir, Pascall DeSurra, from the New York Opera Company, and selected singers from the various Catholic choirs, under the direction of Mr. Anthony DeSurra and with the full Philharmonic Orchestra accompaniment, repeated the Cantata in the Eastman Theater.

Several other choral groups assisted in our liturgy. On the Fiftieth Anniversary of Father Connor's ordination, June 6, 1948, Mr. Raymond J. Hasenauer directed the Knights of Columbus Choir at Blessed Sacrament. In 1964, the choir from Brighton Presbyterian Church sang at the 11:15 a.m. Sunday Mass and greatly furthered the cause of Ecumenism. And in 1969, St. Peter's College Glee Club of Jersey City, New Jersey, sang at the 9:45 a.m. Mass.

Like the Heavens, for seventy-five years, the chorus at Blessed Sacrament have been "telling the glory of God".

PRINCIPALS OF BLESSED SACRAMENT SCHOOL

Sister Columba	1902-1914
Sister Hilary	1914-1920
Sister Valerian	1920-1926
Sister Julia	1926-1932
Sister Adelaide Marie	1932-1934
Sister Frances Paula	1934-1939
Sister Aidan	1939-1945
Sister Laura	1945-1946
Sister Teresa Vincent	1946-1952
Sister Agnes Cecilia	1952-1953
Sister Edwardine	1953-1956
Sister Gertrude Marie	1956-1962
Sister Teresa Martin	1962-1968
Sister Marie Matthew	1968-1969
Sister Eleanor Volpe	1969-1974
Sister Mary Ellen Cragan	1974-1975
Sister Mary Bernadette Aselin	1975-

PARISHIONERS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE COMMUNITY

Moses was quoted in a recent Sunday Reading "Would that all the people of the Lord were prophets!" With similar sentiments we might say "Would that all of the parishioners of Blessed Sacrament be named and noted in this history!" Moses was lamenting a practical impossibility, so also we must acknowledge the same impossibility. We have attempted to include lists of people that by their very nature would be inclusive (e.g. pastors, religious, trustees, etc.). In branching out to the thousands of people who have identified with this parish over seventy-five years very obviously no list could be inclusive. Yet, as with all groups, some names stand out in memory for one reason or another. We look on those who are names here as highly representative of the thousands who are unnamed and yet were an equally vital part of this parish community.

One of the perennial characteristics of Blessed Sacrament parish has been their interest in the political life of our Community. At one time, for example, the County leaders of both major political parties were parishioners. A more specific look into the past reveals many interesting names and details along this line, thanks to memorabilia contributed by various persons. Mrs. Catherine deValera Wheelright, mother of a great Irish patriot and former President of the Republic of Ireland, lived on Brighton Street. Vincent Murphy served as a New York State Assemblyman (1921-24) - then was elected New York State Comptroller in 1924 with James O'Kane as his first assistant deputy comptroller. James Mangan served as New York State Tax Commissioner in the 1930's. Harry Crowley, Sr. served in the New York State Assembly - 1917-1921. Among those parishioners in political life on more local levels we find names such as: Donald Dailey, Public Safety Commissioner (1930-31), Rochester Postmaster (1941-53); Roy F. Bush, County Clerk (1934-40), also County Election Commissioner and Director of Monroe County Civil Service Commission; Margot Finigan, first woman elected as Supervisor in this County; Paul McNamara, Collector of the Port for Monroe County; Raymond Whitley, City Treasurer; J. Grover Conley, Deputy Commissioner of Welfare; George Conway, Undersheriff; Kenneth Power, Commissioner of Elections; John E. Keenan, President of Rochester City School Board (1950-57); Herbert Vanderbul, County Supervisor; Edward Thompson, Director of Civil Defense; Theodore Metzger, County Supervisor, William E. Kelly and Wilfred LaCour, Ward Constables; Robert Benedict, President of the Board of Visitors of Rochester Psychiatric Center for over twenty years; Dr. Michael Crino, Trustee of Monroe Community College;

Helen Power, fourth woman to serve on the New York State Board of Regents; Robert O'Brien, Democrat County Chairman in the 1960's.

The Courts, too, have been the scene, for the influence of several parishioners over the years: William Love became a Supreme Court Justice in 1930 and served in the Appellate Division until 1956; John C. Conway was elected County Judge in 1963, Justice of the Supreme Court in 1971; Daniel Macken, Justice of the Supreme Court (1960-1975); Benjamin Cunningham, Justice of the Supreme Court and Appellate Division (1930-1946); Thomas J. Meagher, Children's Court Judge (1949-1954).

This political tradition continues into the present generation of parishioners with such names appearing on the list as: Michael Consedine, Deputy County Attorney; Robert Zielinski, Director of Safety; Luke Parisi, City Councilman; Brenda Fraser, President of Rochester Board of Education.

A perennial focus for the apostolate of the universal Church has always been the field of education. Many Blessed Sacrament parishioners have entered into this field over the years. Among the names that can be recalled are: (some of whom are still active): Mary Ashe, Thomas Knapp, Sister Maurina, who taught three generations of Blessed Sacrament school children, Carolyn Vayo, former supervisor of Vocal Music in Rochester School System, Catherine Sullivan, former professor at the U. of R., Margaret and Ethel Caragher, Anne and Cecilia Carey, four members of the Harvey Fox Family, mother, dad, son and daughter, Elizabeth Fake, Dr. Mary T. Bush, Dr. James P. Walsh, Ann Bassett, Sister Mary Ranney, Sister Louis Whalen, first co-principal of Bishop Kearney High School.

With the presence of two hospitals in the parish and the U. of R. Medical Center not far away, many past and present parishioners have made their impact in the medical field. Among the names that readily come to mind here: Dr. Walter Calahan, Dr. Franklin Knope, Dr. Leo Simpson, Dr. Frederick Loder, Dr. Norman Pfaff, Dr. Robert Shanz, Dr. Henry Norton, Dr. Michael Crino, Dr. John Abbott, Dr. Benedict Duffy.

In a variety of fields the names of Blessed Sacrament parishioners have surfaced like a veritable "Who's Who" over the past 75 years. Marie Flanagan received the Grand Decal Order of the Oakes Wreath from the Grand Duchess of Luxemburg for outstanding service with the Ninth U.S. General Hospital. Philip Barry, author of "The Philadelphia Story" was once a resident parishioner. Jose Echaniz, whose wife and daughter are present parishioners

was an internationally famous concert pianist. John Pascal DeSurra was an artist in the New York Opera Company. Mrs. Eugene Langie, the former Mary Burns, had the lead female part in Shubert's production of "Student Prince" on Broadway. Harold Coleman was president of Will Corporation and founder of the Daily Mass League. J. Adam Kreag was active in the organization of Catholic Charities. Caesare Sconfiotti was consular agent for Italy. One of the early altar boys, William Murray became Mayor of Alameda, California and another, William Quinn became a Governor of Hawaii.

In local business and industrial circles there are many familiar names of past and present parishioners: Frank E. Wolfe, former treasurer of Timely Clothes; Eugene Langie, former president of Langie Coal Company; George Doyle, president of George B. Doyle, Inc.; Martin Moll, former president of Christopher Press; Edward Zimmer, former executive of Rochester Button Co.; Louis Whalen, president of Whalen Tobacco Co.; Martin Wahl, former president of J. Hungerford Smith Co.; John T. Hanefy, former vice-president of Valley Cadillac; Tom Walsh, former president of the Plumbers' Union; George Blickwede, executive of Rochester Corporation; William Madden, outstanding architect; Edward J. Lynd, Sr., renamed business man and very active in parish fund-raising activities, along with David Lawless of Lawless Paper Co.; and Richard Ford, owner of the Richford Hotel.

In long term service to the parish, alongside of the religious staff members, we can think of such names as Frank Gillespie, custodian of past years, and Sadie DeLettera, present parish secretary.

CLERGY FROM THE BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH INCLUDING THOSE BAPTIZED AT BLESSED SACRAMENT

Rev. William M. Barrett	Rev. Richard Miller, SJ.
Rev. Thomas Beldue	Rev. James M. Moynihan
Rev. Howard T. Bieber	Very Rev. Emmett J. Murphy
Rev. Edward A. Buckley	Rev. John A. Reddington
Rev. Msgr. Richard K. Burns	Rev. Thomas M. Reddington
Rev. Frederick W. Bush	Rev. Earl Ritz
Rev. John F. Cavanaugh	Rev. Raymond Schantz, C.SS.R.
Rev. John R. Cavanaugh	Rev. Msgr. Leo G. Schwab
Rev. Charles B. Connell	Rev. Msgr. Leo A. Smith
Rev. Msgr. Maynard A. Connell, Ph.D.	Rev. Francis J. Taylor
Rev. James P. Connolly, SJ.	Rev. Francis Thrasher, C.SS.R.
Rev. Thomas F. Corbett	Rev. Joseph O. Tierney, C.S.C.
Rev. Msgr. Michael T. Costigan	Rev. Eugene R. Weiss
Rev. Edward Dempsey	Rev. Gregory S. Weider
Rev. William J. Devereaux	Rev. Timothy Weider
Rev. Louis J. Doud, SJ.	Rev. Michael Wesley, CSB.
Rev. Joseph Esser, Ph.D.	Rev. John S. Whalen
Rev. George B. Fischer, CSC.	Rev. Thomas Wheelwright, C.SS.R.
Rev. Thomas R. Fitzpatrick, SJ.	Rev. John R. Whitley, CSB.
Rev. Thomas J. Florack	Rev. Edward B. Zenkel
Rev. Paul J. Freemesser	Rev. Edward A. Zimmer
Rev. George T. Freemesser, CSB.	Brothers
Rev. Paul A. Fursman, ST.	Delbert Geyer, FSO.
Rev. David N. Gramkee	Albert Kaseman, SM.
Rev. John W. Hannon	Students at St. Bernard's Seminary
Rev. Emmett J. Halloran	Mr. Timothy McCluskey
Rev. George Jones, SS.	Mr. Robert Schrader
Rev. Robert J. Kanka	
Rev. Walter J. Kohl, Ph.D.	
Rev. F. James Lawlor	
Rt. Rev. Msgr. Francis W. Luddy	
Rev. William Lyons	
Rev. Charles T. Manning	
Rev. Norman Margrett	
Rev. John McManus, CSB.	
Rev. Gervase McMillan, COFM.	

RELIGIOUS FROM BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISH OR SCHOOL

Alderman, Pauline	Kalb, Claire
Antisdale, Elizabeth	Kalb, Marie
Antisdale, Mary	Kalb, Rose
Aselin, Audrey	Kaseman, Kathleen
Aselin, Teresa	Keenan, Agnes Patricia
Ashe, Florence	Keenan, Dorothea
Barry, Agnes	Keating, Madeline
Barry, Elizabeth	Kennedy, Mary
Blanchard, Jacqueline	Kennedy, Mary
Brennan, Lillian	Kohl, Marion
Brodner, Leona	Kramer, Ella
Brown, Molly	Langie, Mary Jo
Cameron, Mary	L'Esperance, Mary Helen
Claus, Patricia	Lindner, Anna
Coleman, Mary	Ludlow, Jean
Conway, Grace	MacDonald, Patricia
Connolly, Margaret	Mahoney, Agnes
Cramer, Ella	Maloney, Anna
Dailor, Jane	Manion, Madeleine Sophie
Donoghue, Catherine	Marconi, Jessie
Doud, Ruth	Margrett, Laura
Drumm, Rhea	Marshall, Joan
Dupre, Ruth Ann	Maxwell, Teresa
Esterheld, Mary Elizabeth	McCarthy, Doris
Engert, Josephine	McGrath, Loretta
Ernis, Mary	McGrath, Martha
Farrell, Mary	McGrath, Catherine
Fehrenbach, Anne Marie	McGuire, Nellie
Ganley, Sally	McIntyre, Rose
Geary, Helen	Meisch, Helen
Geyer, Marie	Merkel, Mary
Gleason, Marion	Miles, Irene
Golway, Jerry	Murphy, Lucy
Gruber, Doris	Murphy, Carol Jean
Goodman, Clare	Norman, Elizabeth
Hardy, Rosemary	Norman, Edith
Hone, Ellen	O'Brien, Mary
Hone, Margaret Mary	O'Reilly, Mary Frances
Howe, Madeline	Ranney, Mary
Howe, Margaret	Ross, Jane

Ryan, Mary Anne
Ryan, Elaine
Schantz, Betty
Schantz, Dorothy
Schantz, Emma
Schifferli, Molly
Schutte, Martha
Sheppard, Ann Burke
Smith, Marie
Spillane, Alice
Sullivan, Florence
Sullivan, Mary
Swartz, Carol
Sweeney, Betty
Sweeney, Helen
Tierney, Mary Agnes
Tierney, Jane
Tschiederer, Margaret
Townsend, Pearl
Walsh, Sheila
Weis, Monica
Welch, Catherine
Welch, Dolores
Whalen, Catherine
Whalen, Molly
Whalen, Ruth
Whitley, Nancy
Wolfe, Mary Catherine
Yawman, Ruth
Zimmer, Ethel
Zimmer, Barbara
Wickes, Miss Mariette

THE PARISH SOCIETIES

Societies were active in the Church and in the parish for most of the first seventy-five years of this century. They were organized to develop spirituality and give the parishioner an opportunity to work with the pastor, for the growth and welfare of the church and community of which he was a leader. Generally the members received communion monthly in a body and also held monthly meetings of an educational or social nature. Although there were several groups, the largest parish societies were (with the year of the organization in this parish): the Rosary Society (1902), the Young Ladies' Sodality (1902), the Holy Name Society (1905), the Ladies' Aid Society (1932), the Legion of Mary (1950), the Joyce Kilmer Club (circa 1950), the Mother's Group (1951), and the Nocturnal Adoration Society (1952).

The Rosary Society. While Father Connors was Spiritual Director, the only officers of the Rosary Society were Ann Malone, Treasurer, and Mrs. Thomas S. Sloan, Secretary. The membership, reaching 1,000 in 1930, was divided into bands of ten persons, each with group leaders.

When the Assistant Priests were Spiritual Directors, the officers were elected yearly. The presidents from 1957 to 1972 were as follows: the Mesdames E. Donald Crevier, Bruce Gramkee, Eric P. Smith, Edward Wynne, Richard Weider, Herbert VanderBrul (who completed Mrs. Weider's second term), James Connolly, Helen McGill, Constance McIntee, John Doud, Mary Ann Connor, and Thomas Donnelly.

Among the outstanding social events of the Society, during the fifties and sixties, were two banquets, given in honor of Father Connors. One was held on May 28, 1957, to celebrate the Fifty-ninth Anniversary of Father's Ordination. Mrs. Ann Malone and Mrs. Thomas P. Sloan were honored at the same party. On the second, held on May 1, 1963, to commemorate the sixty-fifth Anniversary of Father's Ordination. This banquet was attended by 500 guests and was a fitting tribute to our former pastor. Mrs. Smith was Acting President of both festivities.

The Society, during the presidency of Mrs. Smith and with her inspiration, established the Monsignor Thomas F. Connors' Scholarship Fund, which was set up to award annually to a deserving graduate of Blessed Sacrament School, who entered a Catholic high school, the sum of \$100 a year for each of the four years.

At the invitation of the Parish Council, the Rosary Society became a branch of the Parish Life Committee in 1972, at which time an agreement was made that the committee would share with the Rosary Society financial responsibility for the continuation each year of the Monsignor Connors' Scholarship.

The Young Ladies' Sodality. In the early days, the Young Ladies' Sodality was a lively group. Debates and plays were held with the Holy Name men. Both groups sponsored "The Great Indoor Circus", several mystery plays, dinners and dances. The dramatic productions were directed by Mary Carragher. In addition, there were many spiritual activities, such as weekend retreats, corporate monthly communions, and charitable works. The members entertained the blind, procured toys, dressed dolls, and filled Christmas stockings for the little ones, and contributed to the various needs of the church, especially to the building fund. Boys were received into the Sodality, then called, "The Sodality of Our Lady" in 1949. There has been very little activity in this group in recent years.

The Holy Name Society. Whatever the parish needed, the men of the Holy Name Society were ready to step in to lend their virile assistance under the leadership of their presidents: J.A. Kreag, Charles T. Haggerty, Frank T. Hellen, Thomas F. Sharkey, in the first thirty years, and subsequently, Robert Benedict, George Blickwede, James Connolly, J. Arthur Knauf, Edward Lynd, Sr., Daniel Macke, Murtaugh Murphy, William Pflugler, Eric Smith, Frank Wolfe, and Edward Zimmer. Along with educational and spiritual programs similar to those of the other leading societies of the church, the men were involved in vigorous Catholic action. Especially, they aimed to spread respect for the name of God. In the 30's, they organized drives against indecent books and movies. They marched with the rest of the diocese in the annual Holy Name Rally at the Red Wing Stadium. This last was a most impressive ceremony, attended by the clergy in their clerical robes, and by the faithful, crowding the stadium to capacity. At one point in the services, all the stadium lights were extinguished, while the men, holding lighted candles, recited the Holy Name Pledge.

The Young Ladies' Society made contributions toward, and the Rosary and Holy Name Societies donated, some of the stained glass windows for the new church. The beautiful window of the Crucifixion over the front entrance of the church is one of those given by the Holy Name men.

The Ladies'Aid Society. In 1932, during the severe depression, the Ladies' Aid Society came into being, when the social services of the City were not well developed. With money donated, and, with sums raised in church activities, they strove to alleviate suffering of needy adults, find part-time work for the unemployed, provide food for the hungry, visit the ill, and see that the children in and out of school were properly fed and clothed. They continued

to be active until the depression was a thing of the past - raising several hundreds of dollars for works of charity.

The Legion of Mary. The Legion of Mary, founded by Mr. Frank Duff, on September 7, 1921 in Dublin, has since spread throughout the world. In 1950, the Praesidium of the Blessed Sacrament was established in our parish under the guidance of Monsignor Connors through the efforts of Alice McCarragher, who became the first president. She was followed by Anna Marie Herz, Irene Sullivan, Anita Lewis and Mrs. Elmer Stotz.

The group met weekly, recited the prescribed prayers, carried on parish activities assigned by the pastor - visiting the sick and shut-ins, transporting the elderly to and from Sunday services, and visiting mothers of newly-born babies. From the very beginning and for twenty-five years thereafter, they carried on the function of administering the nursery school on Sundays while the parents were assisting at Mass. Mrs. Amanda Warner and Elsie Killip were the first to serve in this capacity. By 1957, the Legion had a membership of twenty-five. During March of 1969, they held their one thousandth meeting.

Irene Sullivan recalled the inspiration that the pastor and assistants, Fathers Cloonan, Coonan, Cosgrove, Philipps, and Lane gave the group, and how great was the devotion of the members to Our Lady.

The eroding conditions of the neighborhood, making the attendance at meetings and the visiting of homes at night (the only time available to many of the members) unsafe, and the formation of the Council with the Parish Life group taking on most of the duties performed by the Legion, resulted in the lapse of the Praesidium at Blessed Sacrament.

The Mothers' Circle. In 1951, a small group of mothers of Blessed Sacrament children formed a Mothers' Circle. From this group originated the idea of a Parents Group. Its purpose was to help the school and the parents in many needed areas. One of the many accomplishments was the purchasing of school uniforms and helping to pay the book rental fees. To accomplish these projects, funds were raised through a merchandise club, parish suppers, fashion shows, card parties, Christmas tree sales and many other activities. These served not only to pay the bills of those less able, but also to form many friendships and to keep the spirit of the parishioners high. Father Edwin Wedow, a new assistant at Blessed Sacrament, with his many hours of work and his encouragement, helped strengthen the group and coordinate its endeavors.

The Joyce Kilmer Club. Father Francis Pegnam let us in on a secret. He writes:

" I often thought that people who were not actually in World War II suffered more than the combatants. There were many shortages and certainly for the girls, there was a shortage of men. One of the real needs after the war was for the girls to meet the boys, and so Father Connors wanted to form a club for people in the eighteen to thirty-five year range. (Boy, did that cause some hard feelings, especially with some of the girls who were close to the mark.) I was assigned the duty of gathering these people together and Father Connors called it the "Joyce Kilmer Club". I was never very fond of the name, but Joyce Kilmer was a soldier in World War I who wrote Catholic poetry.

The club flourished and at many of our meetings we had over 300 people. We used both halls - dinner in the church hall and music and dancing in the school hall. On rare occasions we took over the Sagamore Roof.

We had some very famous speakers: Father Daniel Lord, SJ., Father Lyons, SJ., Louis Boudenz, the ex-communist, Dorothy Day and Barones de Hueck.

It was always a job to keep a balance between boys and girls and very often just when we were getting the balance, about fifty girls from the St. Elizabeth Guild on the corner of Field Street and Monroe Avenue would make an entrance and there went our balance.

Besides the usual activities, we also put on shows: "The Red Mill", "Oklahoma", and "Show Boat" and I spent many an evening with the cast until after midnight. One production, "Show Boat", was a vast undertaking - written and produced, costumed and directed by members of our group. We practiced for three months and wrote letters of welcome to everyone in the parish, but few came. I felt badly for the group, who had worked so hard and the final night, when I came back to the old rectory about one o'clock in the morning, Father Connors' door opened (just a crack) and he quietly whispered to me; "Remember Father that Christ was a failure too".

The club had a purpose, and, about four years after the war, I disbanded it because its need was over. Many of the now happily married couples in Rochester met at our meetings. For years, we kept the purpose of the group a deep, dark secret - Catholic marriage, but really and honestly, (it can be told now) - that was the main reason for the Joyce Kilmer Club."

The Nocturnal Adoration Society.

The Nocturnal Adoration Society in the Diocese of Rochester with the approval of Bishop O'Hern was established in 1929 by a group of less than 100 laymen stemming from a laymen's retreat held at St. Bernard's Seminary. The prime mover at the time was William G. Wynne. Nocturnal Adoration had its beginning in Lady Chapel attached to St. Patrick's Cathedral on Frank Street and continued there until the church was subsequently demolished. When the parish was transferred to Cathedral Hall on Plymouth Avenue, which became St. Patrick's Church, the Nocturnal Adoration Society moved there for its monthly hours. Reverend Leo C. Mooney was pastor of the transplanted church and became Moderator for the Society. Over the years, there was small but steady growth in the number

attending. As time marched on, some of the leaders felt that many more men would be attracted to the Society if it was decentralized and established at various centers throughout the City. With Bishop Kearney, this occurred. It seemed appropriate that Blessed Sacrament parish should be selected as the first regional center, and, as Father Connors was highly receptive to the idea, a branch was begun here. New recruits were welcomed with the result, in the diocese, several thousand men were praying an hour a month during the night before the Blessed Sacrament. Unfortunately, age, economic conditions and other forces, have caused a severe dwindling of Nocturnal adorers.

Other groups. Space permits only the mention of other groups such as the Youth Group and Youth Council, the Men's Club, and the Mixed Bowling League. The Knights of Columbus were very active in the parish, as were the Knights of St. John and the Ladies' Auxillary of that organization. The Ladies Catholic Benevolent Association held their meetings in the school building.

These societies proved of value to the pastor and to the parishioner. The members were on hand when the pastor needed parish work done - sociological, social, fund-raising, or whatever the need might be. The activities brought out talents and contributed to the spiritual and social development of the parishioners. Membership gave the members a feeling of belonging, and the satisfaction of accomplishment. However, declining attendance at evening meetings, whether religious or otherwise, is a characteristic of our times and has resulted in the lessening influence of these societies in current parish life.

OUR CHANGING PARISH

As the horse and buggy days of the beginning of our parish are difficult for today's young people to picture adequately, just so mind boggling to the parishioners of the very early nineteen hundreds would be the conception of the tremendous transformation and advancement which was to take place in our country, city, parish, and especially in our Church.

Not the last of these was the change in the value of the dollar. The Courier Journal of November 2, 1951, records some of our first pastor's recollections of prices in 1901. Rents were considered high at twenty-five dollars a month. Beef steaks sold at ten cents a pound. Milk was three cents a pint or five cents a quart. Bread was three to five cents a loaf; butter was thirteen cents a pound; and the largest sized pies were never more than ten cents. Unfortunately, wages were also low, as women doing cooking or housework received from two to three dollars a week.

Many of the modern conveniences which we take for granted today, were unthought of in 1902. Streets in the neighborhood of Monroe Avenue and Oxford were dark at night, or when lighted, were done by lamplighter climbing upon the iron post and igniting the gas at each individual lamp. Homes, for the most part, used gas for lighting (made more luminous, thanks to fragile Welsbach mantles), and coal for cooking and heating. Some still were using kerosene lamps. There were no telephones, autos, radios, television sets, plastics, artificial air conditioners in the homes, no computers in the factories, and no loud speakers in the churches or halls. With the exception of the poor house, there were no State, County or City Welfare services. There were orphanages, one for boys and one for girls, under Catholic auspices, but no home for the aged. There was no Medicare, Medicaid or Social Security.

The first flight over Rochester by plane was a spectacular sight to Blessed Sacrament parishioners when John Frisbie, in 1911, flew over some of their homes from Cobbs Hill to the Central railroad tracks on Goodman Street - a far cry from a day's flights to and from Europe, the trip to the moon, or the visit to Mars of Mariners I and II.

But perhaps the most unsettling changes to most of our people were those that followed Vatican II and the theological studies that preceded it. "The most profound influence (before Vatican II) calculated to alter the life of the Church", wrote Father James Moynihan in an unpublished article, "was the revival of theology and renewed interest in the liturgy which had been underway since the beginning of the twentieth century."

The revival of theology required education of adults and since both Catholic and Protestant churchmen were engaged in these studies, both adult education and ecumenism became the order of the day. In the early times of our parish, education of the laity was accomplished largely through Church sponsored lectures and parish publications, especially the Parish Monthly. As early as 1936, it is true, study clubs were formed in the parish so that members would be more knowledgeable about the liturgy of the Mass. The Vatican Council, however, opened new vistas, and a shortage of priests and religious made it advisable to place much of the task of instruction in faith and morals on the shoulders of laymen. For this role, education was indispensable. By 1968, the Catholic High Schools were offering courses in Adult Theology, Contemporary Religious Theory, "Think Sessions", and Confraternity of Christian Doctrine training sessions. In September of 1972, our parish school of religion aimed to "assist parents in their responsibilities of leading children to God". Training sessions were instituted for parents whose children were to receive First Eucharist, First Penance, and Confirmation. Such programs as "Alive in Seventy-five", with Rev. Dennis Shaw as Coordinator, "Wrestling with the Word" with Mrs. Adie Menges as instructor, and the discussion groups on the new rite of Penance gave parishioners a chance to think and compare ideas concerning the changes in the Church.

The ten years since Vatican II, have brought many transformations in the liturgy, as celebrated at Blessed Sacrament. In 1953, permission was given our parish for afternoon and evening Masses on special occasions. Monthly Latin Missals were used for the first time in June of 1959 and with them the Dialogue Mass was begun, not without much effort on the part of the clergy as one can see from the numerous articles in the Parish Weekly urging the faithful to participate in the services. English was employed in some responses in 1964 when the new rite of the Mass was inaugurated, and shortly after, the entire Mass was said in English, with the celebrant facing the people at the new altar of sacrifice. In 1968, Masses were celebrated in several of our parish homes. On November 17 of that year, altar boys at Blessed Sacrament forsook the traditional cassock and surplice for blazers while adult servers replaced the boys at the earliest morning Masses. Two years later, on February 8, 1970, when Bishop Hogan granted the Saturday Mass Privilege to the diocese, the Saturday afternoon Mass became a well attended celebration.

Children began to take an active part in the liturgy, especially in Lent, giving Scripture readings and offering petitions. For the first time on the

afternoon before Christmas, 1971, what was to become an annual Family Christmas Mass was celebrated in our parish. In the year 1973, the Lector Program was initiated at Blessed Sacrament. Over sixty persons, since then, (Men and women) have read the Scripture passages and given announcements from our pulpit. Three years before, His Holiness Pope Paul VI granted an indult to the United States authorizing lay persons to distribute the Consecrated Host, and, as a consequence, Eucharistic Ministers were first commissioned in our parish on October, 1970. The "Stephen Program", in which lay persons bring Holy Communion to shut-ins, was inaugurated in October, 1974.

While these changes were being implemented, in fact, from the time the Missals were first used, congregational singing was being encouraged. On August 4, 1968, Folk Groups played the guitar and other instruments, not generally used at services in modern times, and sang Folk Music in our church for the first time.

The Sacraments as well as the Mass, underwent some modification, now well known to the parishioners. Parents take a much more active part in the baptism of infants. Since there is no longer any fast from water before reception of the Eucharist, gone are the days when, while the little first communicants, arrayed in white suits and dresses, prepared for their procession to the front pews of the church, the water fonts had to be covered so that no child would heedlessly take a drink of water. The Sacrament of the Sick which now is administered to the elderly as well as to the seriously ill, was first celebrated at a Mass held in the Blessed Sacrament Church on October 1, 1972.

While it was general practice for young men to be ordained in a body at the Cathedral, there were exceptions, occasionally, when a group from a parish was to be ordained. Then permission might be granted to have the ordination at the home church. This privilege was granted to Blessed Sacrament on June 13, 1947, when the Reverends Thomas Florack, Thomas Beldue, John Cavanaugh, and Edward Zimmer were ordained with Blessed Sacrament parishioners assisting at their reception of Holy Orders. Now it is customary for ordination to be administered individually in the church at which a young man has been an intern. Blessed Sacrament has been a participant in the Deacon and the Priest Intern Programs. Rev. Ronald Antinarelli, in 1973, and Rev. William Laird, in 1974, were Deacon Interns under the guidance of Father Norris and were ordained at our church at the termination of internship. Father Dennis Shaw is at present in his third year of Priest Internship.

Ecumenism started early in Blessed Sacrament Parish. The first contribution to the amount of \$100 for the new parish was made by Colonel Nathaniel P. Pond, a member of the Monroe Avenue Methodist Church. Later this same neighbor gave Father Connors \$1,000 for the education of a boy for the priesthood. Through the years, the Unity Octave has stressed a spirit of brotherhood with persons of various creeds. Other movements aimed to bring the leaders of the principal faiths together. After Vatican II, the movement gained impetus. In 1964, the year before the decree of Ecumenism was issued by the Vatican, the choir of Brighton Presbyterian Church sang at our 11:15 a.m. Mass. From 1969 and for a few years thereafter, the Churches of St. Paul's Episcopal and Blessed Sacrament joined Temple Beth El in an annual Brotherhood Dinner, and jointly collected funds for sending children to summer camp. On June 8, 1969, Blessed Sacrament parishioners participated with those of other southeastern churches in a Service of Dedication at the Lutheran Church of the Incarnate Word. Starting in the summer of 1972 and continuing every summer since, until taken over by S.E.M. (Southeast Ecumenical Ministry), a vacation Church-School jointly sponsored by Mt. Hor Presbyterian and Blessed Sacrament Churches, has been conducted for children from kindergarten through the sixth grade. During the Sunday included in the Octave for Christian Unity, pulpits have been exchanged with Protestant clergy. The Rev. Robert Gillespie of the Third Presbyterian Church and Rev. Canon George E. Stiegler, Pastor of Calvary-St. Andrew's parish, among others, have exchanged pulpits with our pastor, Rev. John P. Norris. In June of 1968, Rev. Charles Latus, who was very active in the entire movement while at Blessed Sacrament, left us to become Director of the Commission for Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Affairs.

Always an active parish, Blessed Sacrament has been a standard-bearer in implementation of the changes suggested by Vatican Council II in liturgy, adult education and ecumenism.

EPILOGUE

A story from the early days of the parish and the first automobile purchased by the first pastor is related by Father G. Stuart Hogan.

"In those days," said Father Hogan, "when you bought a car, you were entitled to three lessons on how to drive it. The first lesson consisted in learning how to crank the car and shift the gears. Not daunted by the fact that he only had one lesson, Father Connors decided that he would go for a ride. He invited Father Killacky, his assistant, to go with him and together they headed for Conesus Lake. On the way they stopped to pick up Officer Devereaux. Father Connors recalled that his first lesson had not included instructions on backing up or turning the car around. Eventually Father remembered that there was a road around Conesus Lake. If he could get on that road, they could travel around the lake and, presto, they would be on their way home again. This calculation did not take into consideration the fact that that road was one of the worst in the whole of New York State. However, the day was saved when, on arriving at Lakeville, Father saw a gas station owner whom he knew. He explained his problem to the man who graciously offered to turn the car around for the three travellers. They were able to return to the rectory the same day."

A symbolic tale! With God as our source, through the leadership of all our bishops from Bishop McQuaid to Bishop Hogan and under the guidance of all our pastors, their assistants and our sisters, the faith and works of our parish have been carried always forward whether in religious or in civic endeavors from the early days of construction to this present time of challenge. However rough the road, Father Norris, his congregation, and his army of volunteers, charge through the changes of the Vatican Council toward their promised bright vistas. Blessed Sacrament has never learned how to turn back.

