

1876-1958

**The New Era
Of
The Present Church
Which Flourished For
99 Years**



117 Years As

A Parish

THE ERA OF THE NEW CHURCH, 1876 to 1975

The new church is Gothic in style, 117 feet long and 52 feet wide. The tower is 130 feet high. The architect was Mr. Beebe of Buffalo, the mason work was done by Jacob Stahler, (who lived in the brick house that still stands at 110 Main St.), the carpenter work was done by John Kunzler; the pews and confessionals were built by Julius Mayer; the fresconing by G. Rosa of Pittsburg. The three bells weighing 2500, 1412 and 850 lbs. respectively, were donated by the Dotterweich family at a cost of \$1,750. The marble altar and Communion railing, the organ and the tower clock were donated by George Dotterweich. As nearly all of the work on the church was done by day labor, with everyone doing or donating something, it is hard to figure the exact cost of the new church. However, the figure of \$20,000 is not putting it too high. The debt on the church amounted to only \$5,000, certainly a good showing for the small congregation.

The old church, school and rectory were sold and removed from the premises. The church is now the residence of Henry Reding at the corner of Second St. and Beaver St. The old school stands at 88 E. Second St. Father Kolb had just begun the excavations for a new school when he was appointed pastor of St. Boniface Church in Buffalo in May, 1884, a charge which he still holds at this present writing in 1908. Father Kolb was succeeded by Rev. Andrew Frey, who was born on February 25th, 1856, in Cassel, Hessia, and ordained on June 7, 1879 at Louvain, Belgium. He was an assistant pastor at St. Boniface and St. Louis parishes in Buffalo before coming to Dunkirk. During his pastorate here, the present school and rectory were built at a cost of about \$18,000. To obtain room for the latter, a lot was purchased on Railroad Avenue, thus giving a frontage of 120 feet on that street. When the buildings were completed in 1885, there was a debt of \$12,000, and when Father Frey left in 1891, the debt remained the same. He became pastor in the Lancaster church, and later served in Hamburg and Lockport. He died on June 10, 1901.

After Father Frey came Rev. F. N. Sester, in 1891. He was 65 years old and one of the pioneer priests of the diocese. He was born in Alsace in 1826 and died here in 1896. Father Sester succeeded in reducing the parish debt to \$7,500 during his pastorate, and contributed at least \$2,000 of his own money to accomplish this result. It was during Father Sester's time that the beautiful Stations of the Cross were imported and erected. It was said that they won first prize at the recent Paris Exposition. They were donated by a friend of the parish, (Fr. Sester's housekeeper) at a cost of \$1,400.

Father Sester was succeeded by Rev. Joseph Thies on Sept. 8, 1896. He was born in Rochester, N. Y. on March 29, 1859. He

was ordained in June 1885 at Ratisbon, Bavaria. After his ordination, he was successively in charge of St. Vincent Church in Buffalo, then served as pastor in Boston, Wayland and Alden, N. Y. During his administration, the debt was liquidated in 1903, school money was abolished in 1902 and improvements and repairs made - amounting to \$15,000. The Groesch property was bought in 1907, giving a frontage of 120 feet on Ruggles St., making the property 120' X 200'. Another very notable achievement was the installation of the present beautiful stained glass windows in our church.

The Golden Anniversary of the parish (1858 - 1908) was about to be celebrated. The church records show that there were 300 families in the congregation, with over 200 children in our school, with five Sisters of St. Joseph in charge. The records also show that since its organization there have been 2300 Baptisms, 412 marriages, and 754 burials.

Elaborate plans were being made for the Golden Jubilee Celebration. All of the societies were taking an active part in making the arrangements for the festive event. A special Program was arranged for Sunday, April 26, 1908, when a Solemn Pontifical Mass was to be offered at 10 A.M. Father Thies had arranged for the presence of His Excellency, Rt. Rev. Charles H. Colton, for the Solemn occasion.

GOLDEN JUBILEE CELEBRATION

The Pontifical High Mass.

Celebrant -----	Rt. Rev. Chas. H. Colton, D.D.
Assistant Priest -----	Rev. Francis T. Parr, C.S.S.R.
Deacons of Honor -----	Rev. August Ruffing, S.J.
	Rev. Christopher Schiesl, C.P.
Deacons of Mass -----	Rev. John A. Thies, C.S.S.R.
Sub-Deacon -----	Rev. Henry Scharp, C.S.S.R.
Master of Ceremonies -----	Rev. F. Sebastian, C.P.
	Rev. Joseph M. Thies
Sermon by -----	Rev. Ferdinand Kolb

Trustees for 1908 were:

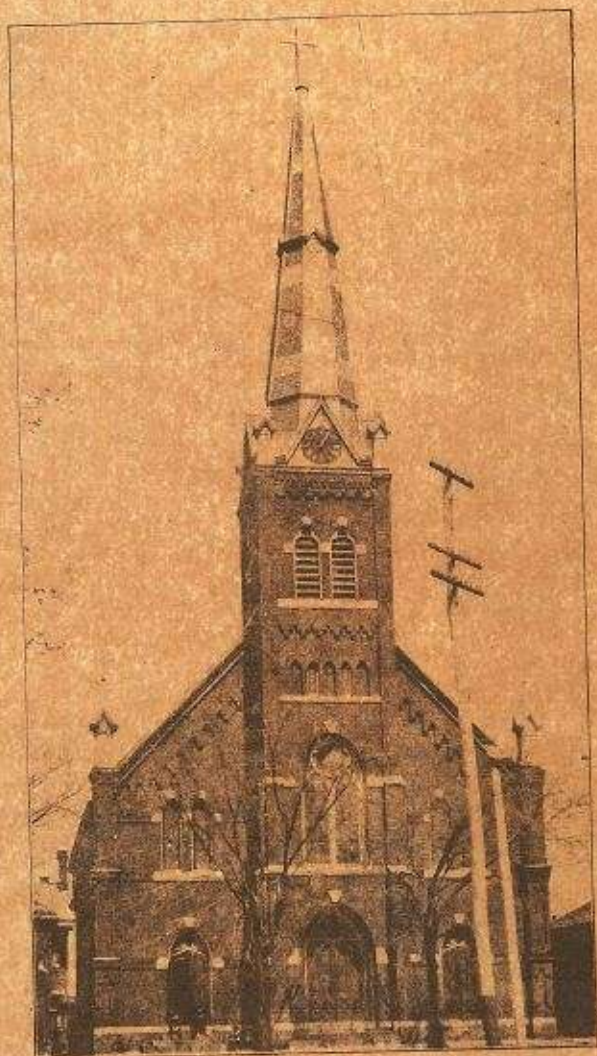
Rev. Joseph M. Thies, Adolph Ortlieb and Joseph Domst.

School Teachers were:

Sr. M. Appolonia, Principal; Srs. Luke, Alberta, Louise and Hortense

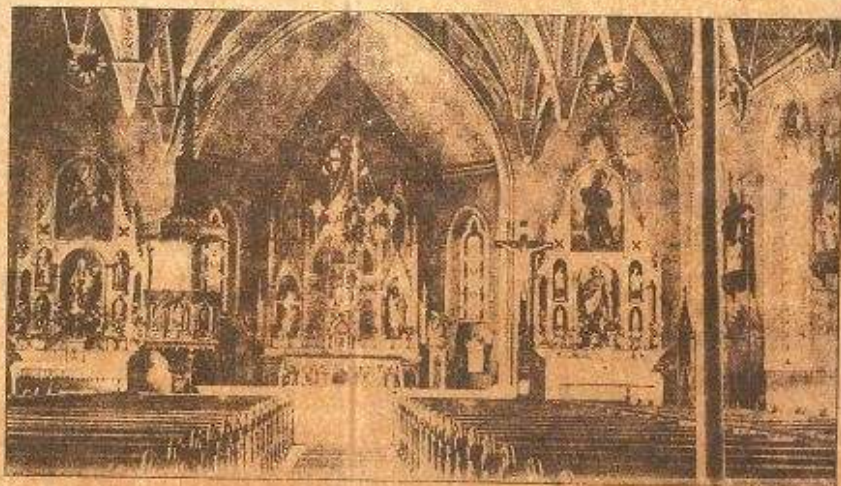
Organist: Miss Margaret Langenstein.

Ushers: Frank Schrantz Sr. and Mathias Schrantz.



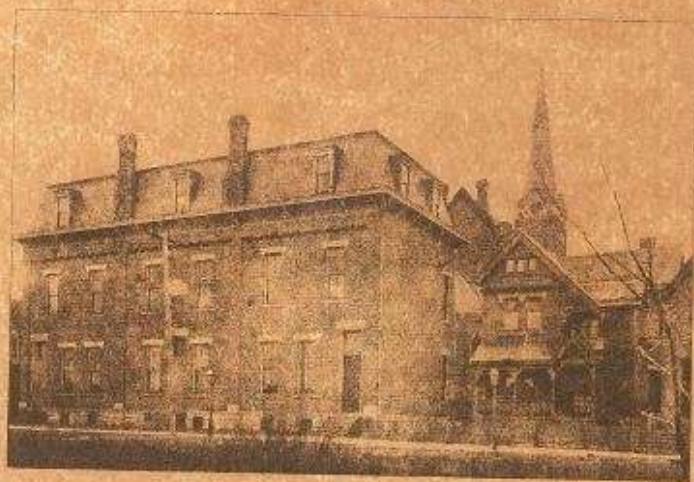
SACRED HEART CHURCH

1908



INTERIOR OF SACRED HEART CHURCH

1908



ST. GEORGE'S SCHOOL AND RECTORY.

1908

Janitor: John Weber.

Active Societies of the parish:

CHRISTIAN MOTHERS, Org. Sept. 12, 1897. Pres. Mrs. Clara Braun.

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION SODALITY, Org. Oct. 18, 1896.

Prefect. Mary Langenstein

CHILDREN OF MARY, Membership of 30.

ST. ALOYSIUS SOCIETY, Membership of 45 (Girls and Boys, 12 to 16 yrs.)

ST. JOSEPH SOCIETY, Org. Dec. 17, 1865. President, Nicholas Meyers.

C.M.B.A. Org. May 25, 1878, Chancellor, Jos. Domst, Pres. Peter Lugen.

KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN, Org. July 2, 1884. President, Dominick Schmatz.

L.C.B.A., Org. March 24, 1892. President Wilhelmina Meyer.

Father Thies labored in this parish for eighteen years to pay off the debts on the rectory and school. He was a model priest and only after his death on August 9, 1914, did the parishioners realize what they had lost by his passing away. Every year the Knights of St. John gather at the graves of Father Sester and Father Thies, who rest side by side in St. Mary's Cemetery, to pay their respects to our former pastors, and to conduct their prayer rituals on Memorial Day.

Father Thies was followed by Rev. Henry Laudenbach who served for two and one-half years as our pastor. During his time, he redecorated the church and remodeled the interior of the school. He was transferred to St. Louis Church in Buffalo in 1917.

Rev. Joseph Linsmeier was appointed as our pastor and arrived in Dunkirk in January of 1917. He remodeled the interior of the rectory, made minor improvements in the church and school. In 1920, a beautiful shrine of the Miraculous Picture of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was erected and dedicated by the Most Rev. William Turner, Bishop of Buffalo. Many favors have been granted at this shrine through her intercession. A Novena in her honor has been held in our church every Tuesday evening since 1920. At one time later on, the services were broadcast over our local radio station.

In 1927, the steeple of the church had become unsafe and, hence, had to be replaced. Jacob Lakas and Peter Lugen did most of the renovating. A steam heating system was installed in the church. Two new boilers were purchased, one for the church and one for the

school. In 1928, a new Tellers-Kent organ was installed. A new maple floor was laid throughout the church and many improvements were made in the Sanctuary and auditorium of the church in 1932. The entire interior of the church was redecorated, a true masterpiece, by a truly great artist, Mr. John Schober, one of our parishioners. To add to the beauty, new stained glass windows were installed in the Sanctuary, a gift of Father Linsmeier.

The lighting system was rewired for the sake of safety, and new Gothic lantern fixtures installed. Two new shrines, one to the Queen of Heaven, and the other to St. Theresa, the Little Flower, were erected. Beautiful new pews were made by the Neuwener Brothers, George and Otto, who were members of our parish, and were installed. Also, new confessionals were erected. The whole color scheme of the interior harmonized. In fact, our edifice is now considered to be the most beautiful in Dunkirk.

Up to this time, the Diocesan Catholic Charities Appeal, which was inaugurated in 1924, has been generously over-subscribed in the annual quota of over \$3,000.

Seventy-five years have now passed since our parish was organized, and preparations were being made for our Diamond Jubilee.

Among the Assistant Pastors who have served Sacred Heart Parish are:

Rev. Vincent Scheffels	Rev. Leonard Kuch
Rev. Patrick Rogers	Rev. Schwert
Rev. James Callry	Rev. Schwier
Rev. F. X. Kreutz	Rev. Howard Adolf
Rev. Maurice Die Kamp	Rev. Howard Schwartz
Rev. Leo Doetterl	Rev. Horne
Rev. Julius O. Noe	

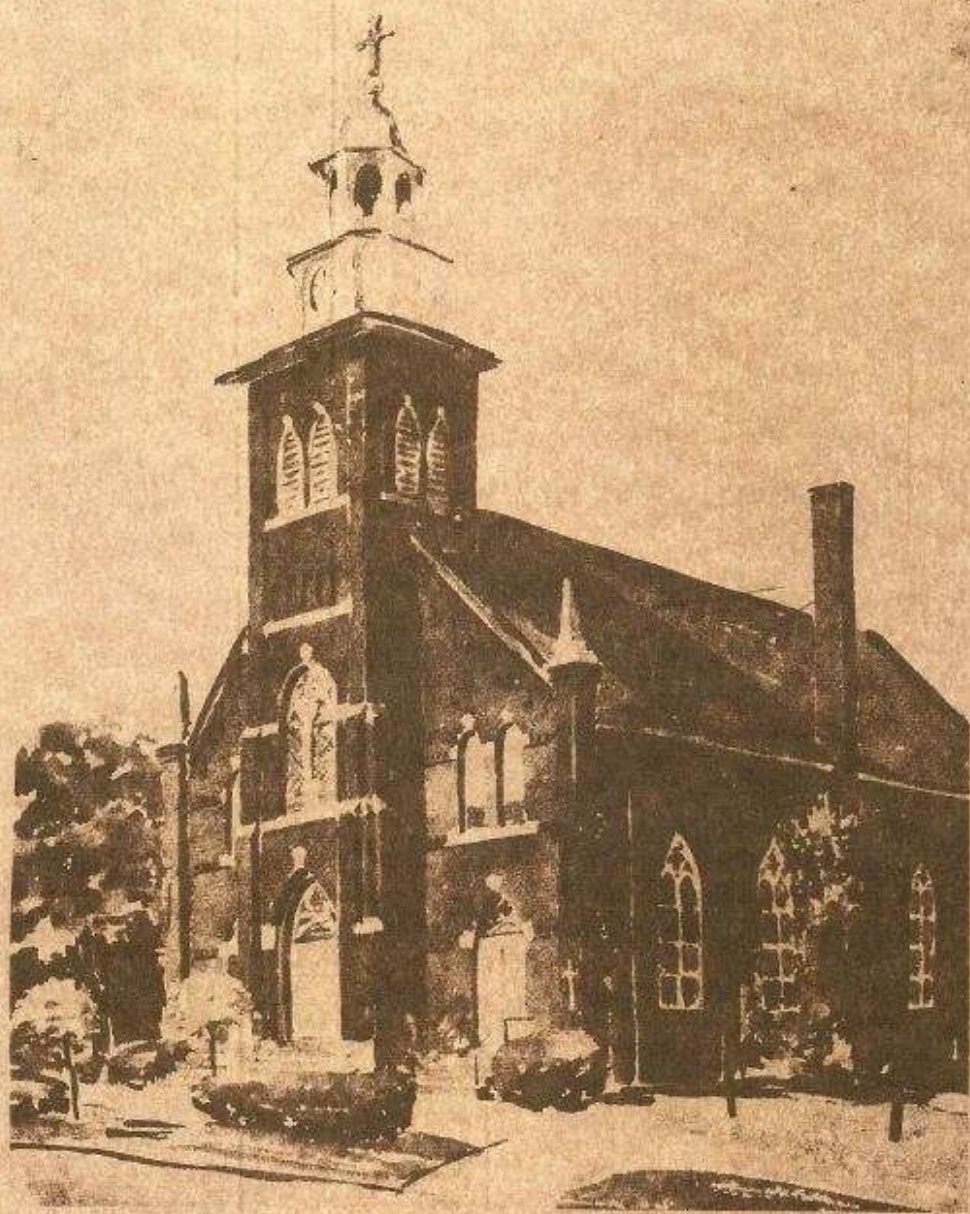
REV. ALFRED
HAGEHEIR

Boys of the parish who became priests:

Rev. Herman Zimmerman	Rev. Leo Kinn, S.J.
Rev. Augustine Ruffing, S.J.	Rev. Karl Benn
Rev. Bartholemew Dean, C.P.	Rev. Fred Rosing, O.S.B.
Rev. Rupert Langenstein, C.P.	
Rev. Herman Kollig, C.P.	Bro. Gabriel Cloos, S.V.D.

Girls who embraced the Religious Life:

Sr. Mary Alacouque, SSJ	Sr. Mary Jos. Agnes Schwinden, SC
Sr. Mary Bernadine Schweda, C.P.	Sr. Mary Flavian Schwinden, SC
Sr. Mary Grace Vincentia Ortlieb SC	Sr. Mary of Good Shepherd Hoefler
Sr. Mary Paula Lennertz, SSJ	Sr. Mary Pauline Freishels, SSJ
Sr. Mary Claudia Hoefler, SSJ	Sr. Mary Euprosinea Schwartz, OSF
Sr. Mary Rosalia Kirchner, SSJ	Sr. Mary Avelline Rusch, S.M.
Sr. Mary Augusta Ruffing, SSJ	Sr. Mary Walburga Frey, OSF
Sr. Mary Lidwina Kinn SSJ	Sr. Mary Pauline LeRoy, SSJ
Sr. Mary Evangelista Kinn, N.D.	Sr. Mary Fabian Menner, SSJ
Sr. Eliz. Pierre Schwinden, S.C.	



The Trustees serving the parish in 1933 were Henry Schilling, Sr. and Joseph Schmatz. Rev. Leonard Kuch was Assistant Pastor at this time.

SOLEMN DIAMOND JUBILEE SERVICES WERE ON SUNDAY NOV. 12, 1933

Solemn High Mass of Thanksgiving at 11:00 A.M.

Celebrant ----- Rev. Herman Zimmerman (A former Parishioner)
Deacon ----- Rev. Joseph Redig, C.S.S.R.
Sub-Deacon ----- Rev. Gerald Ryan, C.P.
Master of Ceremonies ---- Msgr. Edmund Britt
Ass't. Master of Cer.---- Rev. Leonard Kuch

His Excellency, The Most Rev. William Turner, presided at the Mass.

Deacons of Honor to the Bishop:

Rev. William Schreck
Rev. Francis X. Scherer

Assistant Priest ----- Rev. Joseph Linsmeier
Sermon by ----- Rev. Michael Anstett

The Sacred Heart Church Choir will sing the Tappert Mass, in honor of St. Rose of Lima.

Choir Members:

Gertrude Kaiser	Monica Shereck
Gertrude Dillenkofer	Otto Smith
Susan Keilen	Edward Frank
Mrs. George Lettier	Edward Hitzges
Helen Rusch	William Moldenhauer
Theresa Schober	Joseph Michaels
Frances Schober	Camille Montbrun, ORGANIST
Hildegarde Kinn	Elizabeth Yung, DIRECTOR

On October 25, 1939, one of the biggest and best parties ever held in Floral Hall, was the Harvest Festival sponsored by the Sacred Heart Church. It was without doubt, the one event that was never forgotten by the 1300 persons who jammed the large hall that night.

Tables were reserved for any number of people, and were so arranged to accommodate them. Young men of the parish acted as ushers and escorted the people to their reserved tables. A choice of food was offered for sale, and cold beer was sold "by the pitcher." Young ladies acted as waitresses, and you can believe that they were kept on the jump.

Oscar and His Little German Band from Buffalo provided the music for a varied program of entertainment. The One and Only, Mike Wuerstle, acted as master of ceremonies in his inimitable manner. One of the features was the playing of *The Beer Barrel Polka* by the Hose Co. No. 1 Clown Band, with "Professor" Kreutzmeier acting as Director.

If you were there, you will no doubt recall the good time that you had.

After serving our parish for 25 years, Father Linsmeier was honored at a testimonial Banquet, attended by over 400 of his parishioners, in Holy Trinity Hall. (1942)

Rev. Julius O. Noe was Assistant Pastor at this time and received the appointment as Administrator of the parish on March 1, 1941. Father Linsmeier continued as our pastor until November 1945, when he retired after 28 years of service to our parish. He took up residence in Buffalo, where he died on Aug. 29, 1946.

On June 2, 1946, Father Noe was appointed as our new pastor. Within three years, successful lawn festivals liquidated our debt; new furnaces were installed in the church and school, changing the fuel from coal to gas at this time. The basement of the church was converted into a meeting hall, with all kitchen facilities, the church clock was electrified and news dials were installed so that it could be illuminated. The merchants of the city helped to defray the cost of modernizing the *Town Clock*. The interior of the church was decorated in 1947, new side altars erected and major repairs were made to the roof of the church. The residence next to our school was also purchased for \$5,500 in 1947.

Father Noe was called upon by the United States Military Ordinariate to act as Chaplain, and take care of the Spiritual needs of the German war prisoners who were quartered in the prison camp located at the County Fair Grounds in Dunkirk, during World War II. He also received the appointment as District Director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and of Radio, ~~from the Most Rev. John F. O'Hara, C.S.C., Bishop of Buffalo.~~

There is an interesting side-light to the events of World War II and how it affected our parish.

You no doubt have heard the expression, *Light One Little Candle, etc.* It can now be recalled how one lonely sailor-boy did *Light One Little Candle* without realizing it, and how that small act affected Sacred Heart Parish throughout the rest of the war.

One of our parishioners, a girl attending High School, selected the name of 'Seaman Paul Casher' at random as a 'pen pal,' during the early stages of World War II. They corresponded regularly, and among the items he sent her was a post card picture of the altar in his home town Catholic Church, that was converted into a "Patriotic Shrine at the start of the war. By coincidence, the altar was an exact duplicate of our own side altars. This similarity gave birth to an idea. The picture was shown to Father Noe, and he too noted the likeness to our altars, and was very enthused to duplicate the

shrine in our church.

The Knights of St. John became interested in the project and agreed to finance the undertaking. They provided the silk Papal and United States flags, and also arranged to have the frames made to hold the scrolls that would list the names of the servicemen who would be enrolled in the Novena services, held every Tuesday evening in honor of Our Mother of Perpetual Help. People were asked to submit the names of servicemen, and the good nuns who offered to enscribe the names on the scroll were soon swamped with work. Two more frames had to be provided to take care of the hundreds of names submitted. Many were from the other parishes of the city.

There was a solemn dedication of the shrine with the Knights of St. John attending in a body. The church was filled with relatives and friends of the enrolled servicemen. The Tuesday evening Novena services, from that time on were very well attended until the conclusion of the war. A picture of the shrine was taken and were offered to the relatives of the servicemen, so that they could be mailed to them, along with the regular Novena prayers, so that they too could join in regularly on Tuesday evenings, wherever they may be.

When the war was finally ended, the Knights of St. John again sponsored Solemn Thanksgiving Services which filled the church to capacity with grateful relatives and friends, and even a few early discharged servicemen.

However, there is one sad footnote to add to the story. The High School girl did not hear from her pen-pal for quite some time. Finally, she did receive a letter, this time from his mother. It contained a copy of the letter she received from the War Department stating, "We regret to inform you, that your son Seaman Paul Casher was lost at sea, etc." One must now wonder what eternal reward Seaman Paul Casher received for *Lighting One Little Candle* that gave so much consolation and hope to the many parishioners of our parish, during the agonizing and seemingly endless war. 7

The next big project to get underway was the remodeling of our school. A large addition was erected and the playground was black topped. Much of the material to complete the whole project was already purchased and on hand, including rubber tile flooring and steel window frames, all ready to complete the project during the next vacation period. However, for some unknown reason, permission from the Chancery was not forthcoming, and the plans for finishing the school had to be postponed. After waiting and waiting to go ahead, the opportunity came to use the rubber tile throughout the church. The steel frames were later sold at our church auction for \$1.00 each.

In 1950, our parishioners financed a "Holy Year Pilgrimage" to Rome for Father Noe. Rev. Rupert Langenstein, C.P. took charge of our parish during his absence.

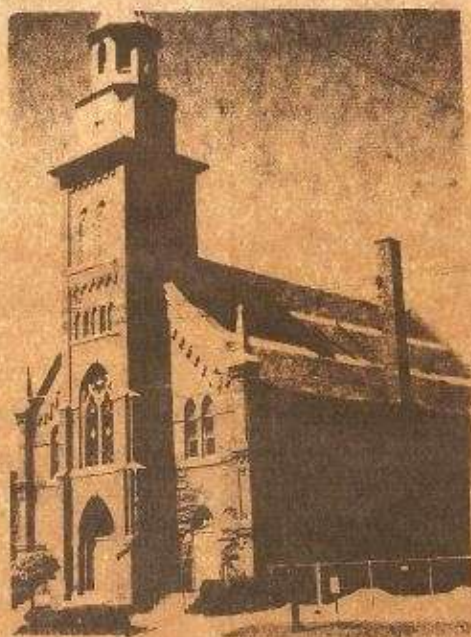
In 1956, the Rueckert property on Ruggles St. was purchased for \$6,000. Also in 1956, Father Noe celebrated the 25th Anniversary of his ordination. A solemn High Mass of Thanksgiving was offered on Sunday, May 20th, with the new uniformed rank of the Knights of St. John making their first public appearance.

A testimonial banquet was held in his honor on the same day with 500 of his friends and parishioners in attendance. The affair was held in Floral Hall. An auto was presented to Father Noe as a token of the esteem in which he was held by the members of his parish.

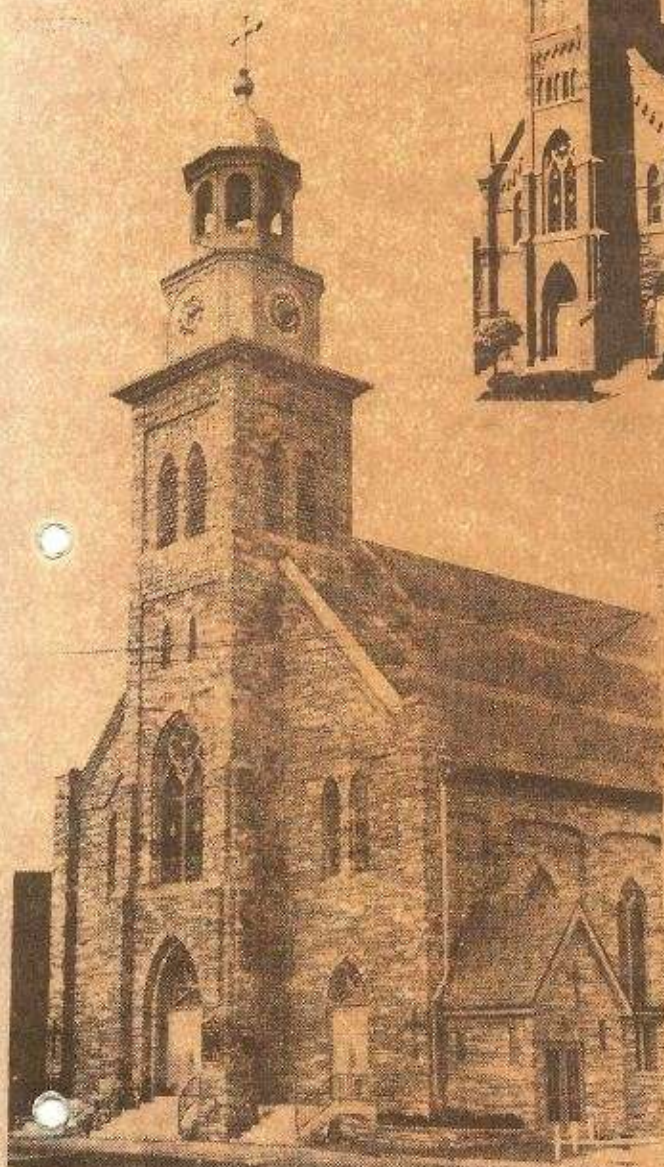
Our school was closed in 1957. St. Mary's School was made into a central grade school and renamed "Our Lady of the Lake" school. Pupils from St. Mary's, Sacred Heart and Holy Trinity parishes were in attendance. The experiment did not turn out satisfactorily, and our school was again reopened in September 1958, with four nuns and three lay teachers in charge. The registration was 184 pupils. The cost of maintaining our own school in addition to paying the yearly Mindszenty High School assessment, amounted to over \$1,000 per month. Since coming to Dunkirk, Father Noe's Summer Festivals realized about \$100,000, most of which was used for school purposes.

Late in 1957, preparations were being made for our Centennial which was to be celebrated in 1958. It was decided to make major changes in the church and rectory, and then have both buildings Permastoned. In order to keep the construction costs within the means of the parish, the building committee decided to draw their own plans for the renovations, and also supervise the construction work to be done by the Meister Contracting Co. A drive for funds to finance the project was started with an original goal of \$65,000. This was over-subscribed by \$15,000.

The plans called for additions to be built on the church to provide a side entrance from our parking lot, two built-in confessionals, a baptistry and toilet facilities. Major changes to the front of the church were also planned, including new platform stone steps with attached planters for shrubbery. New sidewalks were also to be provided for the entire front of the church, and a new driveway to the parking area. The rectory was also to be remodeled. The ceilings were to be lowered, two new bathrooms installed and also an entirely new heating system. Much work was also planned for the interior of the church. The side altars were to be lowered, new rubber tile installed throughout the entire building, entrance doors to be rebuilt and the entire interior redecorated. Much of the work was done by the men of the parish who volunteered their services. While this work was going on, both the church and rectory were being Permastoned. The cost of the completed project was about \$82,000. The Hawk Building was purchased about this time for the sum of \$13,000 and converted into a Bingo Hall.



BEFORE



SACRED HEART CHURCH

1958

AFTER
PERMASTONING

There is an interesting story behind the use of Permastone. When Father Noe asked the Chancery for permission to proceed with the renovation project, they gave approval to the plans as presented, but withheld permission to use Permastone. A committee consisting of Trustees Harold Stumpf and Henry Stroelein, several members of the building committee and the Permastone contractor, received permission to call at the Chancery to discuss the matter. The delegation got no further than the desk of Msgr. William Grant, who was in charge of Diocesan construction. He argued that nothing 'synthetic' should be used on a House of God. He suggested that either natural stone or brick be used to veneer the buildings, or tear down the church and build a new one. He also stated that the Permastone would be swept up after the first winter. Seeing that we were getting nowhere talking with Msgr. Grant, we asked for permission to talk to Bishop Smith, who was sitting at a nearby desk. "It won't do any good, but I'll ask him," he replied. He did ask the Bishop, and he came back with the answer that he wouldn't have time to talk to us.

The committee already had received estimates on covering the Church with natural stone and also brick, and found them to be far beyond the means of our parish. The committee also visited various churches in the area that have used Permastone, and talked to the pastors. They all had high praise for the material and especially for the reliability of the contractor who installed it. After this assurance, the committee felt that they had the right answer to our problem, and decided to make another try to get the necessary approval. A letter was sent to His Excellency, Bishop Burke, stating our problem and asking him to take a special interest in our project, as our Centennial was coming up shortly, and we had hoped to have the project completed for this very special occasion. The Bishop did agree to look into the matter and send his personal representative, Mr. Balling, a noted construction contractor who did much of the work in the Diocese, to come to Dunkirk and look the project over and report back to him. Mr. Balling did come and met with the committee who escorted him around the church and rectory, checking the foundations and general construction of the buildings. He gave the committee much encouragement when he said that he too used Permastone on several of his projects. On his return to Buffalo, Mr. Balling gave the Bishop a glowing report on the soundness of the structures and advised him to give Father Noe permission to go ahead with the project. It wasn't long before Bishop Burke gave the permission the committee was waiting for.

After the project was completed, the committee felt that they really did make the right decision by using Permastone. They were well satisfied with the results, and were very much pleased that the parishioners felt the same way. The church was now one of the most beautiful structures in the City of Dunkirk.

The parish was now ready for the Centennial celebration.