

Joliet's oldest parish marks 150 years

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JOLIET—A liturgy of "Praise and Thanksgiving" will be held Nov. 22 at 3 p.m. to commemorate the opening of the year-long sesquicentennial celebration for St. Patrick Church here.

A century and a half has passed since the first church was located on Broadway Street, where Joliet Catholic High School now stands.

The complex today at 710 W. Marion Street includes the church, eight classrooms, a convent, rectory and another eight-classroom school building at 110 Willow Avenue.

ST. PATRICK'S, traditionally regarded as an Irish parish, today serves more than a dozen other ethnic groups. The church traces its Irish roots to the first families' immigrant canal workers in the 1800s, most of whom were Irish Catholics.

Born in Ireland, Father John Francis Plunkett was the first pastor assigned to the parish in 1838. An energetic, newly ordained priest in his late 20s, Fr. Plunkett was responsible for raising the funds to build the original St. Patrick Church on Broadway Street. Fr. Plunkett was killed in 1840 before the stone structure was completed. He died instantly when he was thrown from his horse while touring his missions. He is buried in St. Patrick Cemetery, Joliet.



Sesquicentennially young!

St. Patrick, Joliet's oldest parish, celebrates the opening of its 150th anniversary Sunday at

3 p.m. with a Mass of Thanksgiving celebrated by Bishop Joseph L. Imesch. All are welcome to join the year-long festivities for this historic but 'young at heart' parish.

The present pastor, Father Vytas Memenas, came to St. Patrick's in 1978 and instituted a renovation of the entire parish complex. The church was rededicated Sept. 13, 1981. The mortgage was burned Sept. 19, 1982.

The Nov. 22 concelebrated liturgy of "Praise and

"Taste and See" by Moore, "Eat This Bread," from Taize, "Jesu Dulcis Memoria" by T.L. de Victoria and "Holy God, We Praise Thy Name" by Goemanne.

INVITATIONS HAVE been issued to a recognition dinner following the liturgy. Among the special

located on the corner of Hunter and Jefferson streets in Joliet.

It wasn't until three years after Fr. Plunkett's death that the church was completed, while Father Hippolyte DuPontavice was pastor.

In succession Fathers John Ingoldsby (1844-1850), George Hamilton (1850-1858), and Patrick Farrelly (1858-1869) became pastors.

THE PARISH flourished during Fr. Ingoldsby's administration. In 1848 a steeple was added to the church building, and in 1849 a bell was installed in the church tower. Fathers Hamilton and Farrelly added their bits of history by naming and renaming the parish. It was St. George in 1850 and renamed St. Patrick in 1858.

The priests' residence on Broadway Street was completed under the pastorate of Father Walter Power (1869-1886). It was considered the finest residence on the westside.

The next pastors were all Irishmen: Fathers Patrick Dunne, Peter O'Dwyer and Philip L. Kennedy.

Fr. Dunne, pastor for 25 years, was the celebrant of the golden jubilee of the church in 1889. Fr. Dwyer was appointed pastor in 1911 until his transfer to Chicago. Fr. Kennedy, the ninth pastor, came to Joliet in 1917 and served the parish for 43 years—the longest tenure for any pastor of St. Patrick Church. It was during Fr. Kennedy's pastorate that the church on West Marion Street was built, along with a school and a rectory. The first Mass in the new church was celebrated on March 2, 1919. In December of 1939, Fr. Kennedy was celebrant of the solemn High Mass commemorating the 100th anniversary of the church. He built an additional school at 110 Willow Avenue before his death as a monsignor in 1961.

TWO COMPLETE renovations mark the years and succession of pastorates to the present time. When Monsignor John W. Desmond succeeded Fr. Kennedy, he added new offices and new priests' quarters to the rectory. He was followed by Monsignor Peter Seidl in 1965, Auxiliary Bishop Raymond J. Vonesh in 1969, and Father Henry L. Wilkening in 1974.

"Thanksgiving" will be held at the church, 710 West Marion Street. Bishop Joseph L. Imesch will be the principal celebrant. Concelebrants will include Bishop Vonesh and Bishop Roger L. Kaffer, Fr. Memenas and former pastors Fr. Wilkening and Monsignor Seidl, and Benedictine Abbot Thomas Havlik. Sharing the role of master of ceremonies will be former associate pastors Fathers Damien J. Graziano and Timothy Navin. Homilist will be Carmelite Father John Comerford, a graduate of St. Patrick school.

A 50-voice anniversary choir has been organized by Sister Joan Tabat, associate director of the Office of Divine Worship in the Joliet Diocese. As guest conductor, her musical selections will include

guests will be: attending bishops and abbot, former pastors, former associates, clergy of the diocese, heads of parish organizations, the religious staff of the parish, and three city officials, former graduates of St. Patrick School, Joliet: Mayor Charles P. Connor, Chief of Police Frederick W. Breen, and Councilman Anthony Uremovic.

This event is the first in a series of activities planned to highlight the heritage of the church and its people during the sesquicentennial year (1987-1988).

To commemorate the event, Fr. Memenas has commissioned a book to be written, updating the history of St. Patrick Church. It will be made available to the public during the sesquicentennial year.

Annual Thanksgiving Clothing Drive next weekend

The Joliet Diocese, in coordination with a national network known as Quest for Peace, is once again sponsoring the Catholic Relief Services Annual Thanksgiving Clothing Drive.

Frank Termini, director of the Office of Social Concerns for the Joliet Diocese, and Father Mike White are working with the Illinois branch of Quest for Peace, Chicago Call to Action.

Call to Action is an independent Catholic organization of 1500 members promoting peace and justice.

"CRS INFORMED us a couple of weeks ago that they can't handle any clothing this year because of a \$1 million cutback in government help with shipping," Termini said. "The alternative we came up with is to try to meet the needs of the war victims in Nicaragua, through Quest for Peace, and with end-point distribution in parishes staffed by Maryknoll Sisters from the United States and Divine Word Fathers from South America."

Partners in the effort are Central America Medical Aid (CAMA) of Chicago and the Eighth Day Center for Justice.

The Illinois effort has amassed \$500,000 worth of humanitarian aid this year. A clothes rally Nov. 14 coincided with similar shipments from Los Angeles, Boston, Dayton, San Francisco and Washington.

In each city, local political, religious and community leaders will participate in the celebration. More than 150 cargo containers and contributed services of 1500 North Americans working in Nicaragua make up the \$100 million total contribution.

IN NICARAGUA, the aid is distributed through a primarily religious network under the auspices of the Institute of John XXIII.

"Light spring and summer clothing suitable for tropical climate is still most welcome, but will be sent through Quest for Peace for distribution by Catholic Church workers in areas of Nicaragua devastated by war," Termini said.

Other supplies needed include:

•**Medical supplies**—aspirin, antibiotics, vitamins, linens, dressing materials, tape and crutches.

•**SCHOOL SUPPLIES**—pencils, paper, pens, chalk, erasers, rulers, crayons, notebooks, globes,

(Please turn to page 6.)