

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Parish

No. 16 of a Series on Our Parish's First 100 Years

1910 - 2010



One of the highlights of 1912, St. Charles' second full year, was the first solemn high Mass of Rev. John Rittman-Heuel. John was born in Burlington on January 22, 1884, the sixth of six children of Henry J. and Mary T. (nee Werner) Rittman. His father, a teacher, died when John was only two years old. His mother, an accomplished musician, died a few months later. The Rittman children were split up, with John being adopted by his aunt and uncle, Mary (nee Rittman) and John C. Heuel.

The Heuels moved to Milwaukee where John graduated from Holy Trinity parochial school and Marquette high school. He then attended St. Francis Seminary. The Bishop of Dallas, Texas, invited John to join his diocese, and sent John to study at the North American College in Rome from 1906 to 1912. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 1, 1912, by Pietro Cardinal Respighi in the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the cathedral of the Bishop of Rome, who is also the Pope. Returning to his native city, John celebrated his first solemn high Mass at St. Charles on June 23, 1912, in the presence of his adopted parents, his brother and sisters, other relatives, and friends.

After spending several weeks in Burlington and Milwaukee, John became personal secretary to the Bishop of Dallas, assistant at the cathedral, and eventually chancellor of the diocese. John was offered a bishopric, but declined, and upon the death of

One of John Rittman's sisters, Frances, married Adolph Vos. They were the parents of eleven children, one of whom died soon after birth. The others were Clem, Alvin, Gil, Cecil, Carroll "Cak," Rollie, Mrs. Bernice Hoppe, Mrs. Evelyn Block, Mrs. Marcella Ruedebusch, and Mrs. Valieta Storm, all of whom attended St. Charles school and most of whom were adult members of St. Charles.



*Rev. Gilbert Heuel,
O. M. Cap.*

his adopted mother, he joined the Capuchin Friars in February 1925, taking the name Gilbert. After his novitiate, he was sent to the Capuchin's St. Anthony Seminary at Marathon, Wisconsin, where he taught English and homiletics (preaching) until 1929. He then served Capuchin missions until July 1934, when he was named director of Monte Alverno Retreat House at Appleton, which he was largely responsible for establishing. Remembered for his efforts in organizing and promoting the lay retreat movement, Friar Gilbert served at Monte Alverno as preacher and director until suffering a stroke, which left him incapacitated for the last five years of his life. He died at St. Anthony's Hospital in Milwaukee on January 15, 1953, aged 67, after having served over 40 years as a priest, including nearly 29 years as a Capuchin friar.

Earlier in June 1912, a class of forty-two boys and girls had received their First Communion at St. Charles. They were:

Cecelia Alby	Buford Harding	Eugene Martin	Robert Reinardy
Lauretta Alby	Dorothy Henningfield	Eleanor May	Mary Rewald
Viola Baumeister	Edward Hoelz	Alexander Meyer	John Smolensky
William Beller	Edward Isferding	Julia Parker	Otto Stradinger
Raymond Bushman	Anthony Itzin	Mary Parker	Michael Trimberger
Raymond Daniels	Joseph Jackle	Leonard Partee	Edward Warren
Loretta Ebbers	William Keough	Hildegard Prash	Ralph Wegge
Florence Eckert	Arthur Ketterhagen	Edward Prott	Madeline Willich
Edward Finke	Theresa Kortendick	Theresa Prott	Alexander Wilmer
Helen Forge	Gertrude Leber	Herbert Reesman	Marie Yambor
Carl Gerloff	Aloysius Maag		

Also in June, St. Charles grade school held its second commencement at which six graduates were awarded their diplomas. The graduates were Leo J. Warren, Cecil A. Hurtgen, Loretta A. Schierman (Sherman), Coletta M. Verhalen, Eleanor M. Reinardy, and Margaret M. Sweeney. The graduates selected "Build For Character, Not For Fame" as their motto, old rose and green as the class colors, and the pink rose as the class flower. Leo Warren won the class honors and delivered the valedictory address while Eleanor Reinardy was the salutatorian.

One member of the class, Colletta Verhalen, later became Sister Collette in the order of the Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul. Born on a farm just outside Burlington on November 27, 1897 Colletta was the daughter of Peter and Margaret, nee Weiler, Verhalen. She attended St. Mary's grade school before attending and graduating from St. Charles after it opened. She graduated from Burlington high school in 1916. After working for five years, she entered religious life in September 1921. She was professed in November 1922 and sent to St. Joseph's school in New Orleans. Other assignments included Keokuk, Iowa; Laboure high school, St. Louis; Cathedral high school, San Francisco; and St. Thomas school, Long Beach, California. She attended Loyola University in New Orleans, where she received a Bachelor of Philosophy degree in 1932. She also attended St. Louis University and the University of San Francisco. She died November 5, 1970.



Sister Collette (left) and her sister, Sister Cyrilla (right)

Other notable events at St. Charles in 1912 included (1) a Knights of Columbus-sponsored week-long mission by a Paulist Father from Chicago to present to the non-Catholic public, without attempt at controversy and without bias, some of the most important doctrines of the Catholic church, (2) the school children's winning dustless brush equipment for the school by selling the most Christmas seals for the Wisconsin Anti-Tuberculosis association, and (3) the annual church fair at the opera house raising over \$3,000 for the building fund. In addition, the parish bought an additional 4 rod square lot on Conkey Street from Charles Arnold.

1913 opened with the installation of a new pipe organ in January. In April a class of twenty-three received First Communion. They were:

Thomas Busch	Leonard Henningfield	Lucile Hurtgen	Louise Stradinger
Leon Bushman	Florian Henningfield	Henrietta Kortendick	George Trimberger
Callista Elderbrook	Marian Hoelz	Katherine McCarthy	Esther Wadsworth
Arthur Finke	Albert Huebner	Loretta Partee	Adolph Westrich
Lawrence Grossman	Sophia Huebner	Louise Paulson	Edward Wisnefski
Mildred Grosstueck	William Huebner	Delia Schmidt	

Rev. Dreis was assisted in the First Communion services by Burlington native, Rev. James McCarthy, of Oconomowoc, and the church was filled with relatives and friends of the children.

Graduation exercises were held in the church hall on June 20, with Rev. Joseph Lederer of St. Francis Seminary handing out the diplomas in the absence of Father Dreis, who was on a four-month, well-earned vacation in Europe. The graduates were Henry Leon Litzler, Henry A. Wisnefsky, Raymond E. Daniels, John A. Kortendick, Sophia M. Huebner, and Marie D. Kleinkopf. The valedictory address was given by Henry Leon Litzler and the salutatory address by Henry A. Wisnefsky. The motto of the 1913 class was "Honor Waits at Labors' Gate," the class colors were green and white, and the red rose was the class flower. One of the pleasant surprises of the evening was a talk by Archbishop Sebastian G. Messmer, of Milwaukee, who attended the exercises.

Also, as part of the program, the Knights of Columbus awarded honor and scholarship medals to the following: eighth grade - Henry Wisnefsky; seventh - Julia Parker; sixth - Mary Meyers; fifth - Marie Yambor; fourth - Leona Wanasek; third - Millicent McCarthy; second - Romana Weinman; and first - Ralph Henningfield. There were several ties for honors in the grades and the medals were drawn for with the lucky ones mentioned above. Others who deserved mention were: fourth grade - Herbert Bauman; fifth - Joseph Jackle and Cecelia Alby.

In mid-August, the parish welcomed Father Dreis back from his European trip with a reception in the church hall, which was filled to capacity. Two months later, Father Dreis' brother, Rev. Henry Dreis, who at one time had been pastor at St. Alphonsus, New Munster, and who had accompanied Father Dreis on the European trip, died at Sacred Heart sanatorium in Milwaukee.

The parish celebrated its third anniversary and the feast of its patron saint on Sunday, November 2, with a solemn high Mass celebrated by Rev. Joseph Lederer of St. Francis Seminary, assisted by Rev. Bruehl, also of the Seminary, and Father Dreis.

On December 7, Archbishop Messmer made his second 1913 trip to St. Charles when he confirmed seventy-four candidates, including fifteen adults. They were:

Cecelia Alby	Sophie Huebner	Catherine Partee	Michael Trimberger
Joseph Alby	Cecil Hurtgen	James Pennefeather	Clarence Wagner
Loretta Alby	Edward Isferding	Leo Prasch	Edward Warren
Charles Arnold	Elmer Isferding	Theresa Prott	Leo Warren
Helen Bauman	Elsa Johann	Herbert Reesman	Hildegard Weinman
Henrietta Baumeister	Werner Ketterhagen	Eleanor Reinardy	Theodore Weyrough
Carl Beller	Caroline Klein	Robert Reinardy	Albert Wiechert
William Beller	Marie Kleinkopf	Louis Rewald	Madeline Willich
Raymond Bushman	John Kortendick	Francis Rose	George Wilmer
Dorothy Christien	Theresa Kortendick	Loretta Schierman	Anthony Wisnefsky
Raymond Daniels	Gertrude Leber	(Sherman)	Henry Wisnefsky
Florence Eckert	Henry Litzler	Emilia Shouldis	John Wisnefsky
Carl Gerlaff	Eleanor May	Mildred Stallman	Joseph Wisnefsky
Rose Grossman	Lawrence May	Frances Stang	Mary Wisnefsky
Clifford Hatch	Alexander Meyers	Ernest Stradinger	Peter Wisnefsky
Dorothy Henningfield	Marie Meyers	Otto Stradinger	Stephen Wisnefsky
Loraine Henningfield	Florence Mutchler	Pauline Tennessen	Joseph Woeste
Edward Hoelz	George Mutter	Frances Tenwinkel	Louis Zwiebel
Albert Huebner	Julia Parker	Cordelia Terhorst	

1914 marked the inauguration of the envelope system of raising money. To do away with the custom of holding annual church fairs to raise money, the matter of devising some way to secure a regular parish income sufficient to meet running expenses and the requirements for debt payments had been discussed at a meeting of the congregation in January 1913. During that year, Father Dreis and the trustees worked out a plan for using the envelope system, which was voted into action by the congregation in 1914. It was voted for a year's trial, and proved so successful that since that time it has been the chief source of parish income. It was not until December 1923, however, that the printed system of envelopes for every Sunday and holy day was voted upon and put into use. During the first nine months the new system was in effect, \$7,000 was raised for parish purposes.

A new set of the Stations of the Cross, which had been installed in the church, were blessed by Father Dreis on March 1. In addition to the Stations of the Cross and Forty Hours devotions during the 1914 Lenten season, Rev. John P. Pierron of St. Thomas Aquinas, Waterford, gave a series of lectures at St. Charles on Wednesday evenings on the seven principal vices.

Sunday, May 7, 1914, was an important day in the lives of twenty-eight young people, who received their First Communion. They were:

Loyola Alby	Mary Gerloff	Warren O'Neill	Elizabeth Terhorst
Herbert Bauman	Lester Harding	Dorothy Partee	Mathilda Trimberger
Mary Bush	Roland Henningfield	Elmer Prott	Leona Wanasek
Carol Bushman	Veronica Isferding	Helen Rewald	Arthur Warren
Margaret Cunningham	Leroy Ketterhagen	Philip Rose	Dan Wegge
Albert Ebbers	Francis Klein	Clara Rossmiller	Mark Wilmer
Gladys Forge	Millicent McCarthy	John Stradinger	Frank Wisnefski

The annual commencement exercises were held on June 21. Burlington native, Rev. Anthony Weiler, of Racine, spoke on "The Value of Education," pointing out the necessity of a religious training, as well as intellectual and moral training, and recognizing the fact that Catholics at great expense maintained parochial schools to give their children the benefit of all three. Following the address, Father Dreis presented diplomas to the fourteen graduates. They were:

Loretta C. Alby	Werner J. Ketterhagen	Robert S. Reinardy	Cordella W. Terhorst
William A. Beller	Clarence P. Knight	Francis O. Rose	Hildegard A. Weinman
Raymond F. Bushman	Gertrude C. Leber	Mildred M. Stallman	Louis H. Zwiebel
Dorothy L. Christien	Julia S. Parker		

The Knights of Columbus medals for deportment and scholarship, awarded to one pupil in each grade, were won by the following: first grade, Roman Eckert; second, Loraine Reuschlein; third, Ralph Spiegelhoff; fourth, Helen Rewald; fifth, Herbert Bauman; sixth, Loretta Partee; seventh, Edward Warren; and eighth, Loretta Alby.

On August 20, Pope Pius X died in Rome at age 79 of bronchial pneumonia, the onset of which some attributed to his grief over the European war which had broken out in July. He had been elected Pope in August 1903 succeeding Pope Leo XIII. He was beatified in June 1951 and canonized as St. Pius X by Pope Pius XII in May 1954.



St. Pius X



Pope Benedict XV

On September 3, Cardinal Giacomo Della Chiesa became Pope, succeeding Pius X. He took the name Benedict XV.

In line with President Woodrow Wilson's proclamation designating Sunday, October 4, as a day of prayer for peace, especially in the European conflict, Father Dreis called attention at Sunday Masses to the peace services to be held that evening. The services were largely attended and consisted of the praying in unison of the rosary and litany, the exposition of the Blessed Sacrament, Benediction, and a beautiful peace prayer by Father Dreis. Music fitting to the occasion was rendered by the choir.

(to be continued)