

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Parish

No. 17 of a Series on Our Parish's First 100 Years

1910 - 2010



As the calendar turned to 1915, the war continued in Europe. In January Pope Benedict XV issued a decree calling for the most extensive spiritual movement to restore peace among the warring nations that the Catholic church had undertaken since hostilities began. Two days were to be devoted by Catholic clergy and laity throughout the world to special services and prayers for the restoration of peace. On Sunday, February 7, services were to be held in every Catholic church in Europe, and on Sunday, March 21, churches in all other parts of the world were to hold special services. On the appointed Sunday, St. Charles joined with other Catholics in the non-European nations offering prayers to the Prince of Peace to intervene in the terrible conflict in which eleven nations were then involved and asking that He grant a cessation of the hostilities and a speedy restoration of peace.

During Lent Father Philipp Dreis not only conducted the regular services, including Stations of the Cross and Forty Hours devotions, at St. Charles, but also conducted Lenten services at St. Thomas Aquinas church at Waterford on Thursday evenings. He was pleasantly surprised one evening when a large delegation from the Burlington council of the Knights of Columbus marched into the Waterford church. The Knights had chartered a special car on the interurban electric line, with the intention of surprising Rev. Dreis and showing him that the Knights appreciated his membership and interest in their council.



The Knights of Columbus clubhouse stood on the corner of what is now Milwaukee Avenue and N. Kane Street where the First Banking Center is located. Building was razed in 1957.

Father Dreis was not only a charter member and spiritual director of the Burlington Knights, but was also one of the three incorporators in February 1915 of the Knights of Columbus Home association. The association was organized to take over the Anna C. Koller property on the corner of Geneva and Dyer Streets (now the corner of Milwaukee Avenue and N. Kane Street where the First Banking Center sits) that the Knights had purchased for their purposes. The other incorporators were Albert M. Brehm and John L. McCarthy. Miss Koller was a cousin of Rev. Theodore Jacobs and had been his housekeeper during his years at St. Mary's. She had acquired the property from Father Jacobs in 1911 and sold it to the Knights earlier in February 1915.

In April 1915 Archbishop S. G. Messmer of Milwaukee issued an edict that from then on marriages must not be solemnized on a Sunday nor in the evening, nor in private residences; funerals must not be held on Sundays; and dancing was not allowed on Saturday evenings nor on Sundays.

Sunday, May 30, was a never-to-be-forgotten day in the lives of sixty-eight Catholic young people in Burlington. At St. Charles a class of twenty, ten boys and ten girls, received their first Holy Communion, while at St. Mary's there were forty-eight, thirty-three boys and fifteen girls. Impressive ceremonies were conducted at the churches; and at the various homes throughout the area, family receptions were held in honor of the occasion. At St. Charles, where Father Dreis was assisted by Rev. James McCarthy, formerly of Burlington, the First Communion class included the following:

Marie Alby	Eleanore Eckert	Albert Kornhoff	Ralph Spiegelhoff
George Bauman	Rudolph Eckert	William Martin	Joseph Uhen
Hilda Bauman	Esther Finke	John E. McCarthy	Leona Wadsworth
Christian Beuthling	Caroline Huebner	Florence Meyer	Herbert Wagner
Evelyn Bushman	Esther Klein	Harold Reuschlein	Romana Weinman

The next day, Memorial Day, the school children of St. Charles and St. Mary's joined the members of the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR), the Spanish-American War veterans, and the Women's Relief Corps (WRC), along with the Burlington Harmony Band and Burlington Boy Scouts, as they marched - or, in the case of fourteen of the fifteen GAR members who were able to participate, rode - to St. Mary's Cemetery. At the cemetery the children sang several songs; 16-year-old Leo Reesman gave a fine oration paying full tribute to the members of the military, living and dead; and the graves of the departed veterans, including one Confederate soldier, Joseph Kies, were decorated. Ceremonies followed at the Fox River bridge on Jefferson Street in honor of the dead sailors. Then it was on to Burlington Cemetery where the veterans' graves were decorated. In the afternoon, a program was presented at the opera house.

The annual commencement exercises were held at St. Charles church on Sunday evening, June 20, with a large audience of relatives and friends present for the occasion. The address of the evening was delivered by Rev. Maloney, a Paulist priest of Chicago, who pointed to the benefits of an education, especially one gained in a Catholic school. Father Dreis in a few well chosen remarks presented diplomas to the following nine 1915 graduates:

Helen Bauman	Loretta Ebbers	Anthony Itzin	Marie Meyer
Florence Mutchler	Leonard Partee	Louis Rewald	Marie Rewald
Edward Warren			

The annual exhibit of the work done by the pupils of St. Charles school was held in the basement of the church Sunday and Monday. The exhibits were attractively arranged on the walls and proved most interesting to those who viewed them. From the sewed cards and crayon drawings of the first grade to the essays and really good paintings of the eighth grade, the work showed the pride and interest of the scholars. The patriotic designs of the fourth and fifth grades and the pricked maps of the sixth grade were especially interesting, although penmanship and test papers, painted maps, poetry gems neatly arranged in booklets, and painted scenes attracted their share of attention.

On Tuesday, July 29, about fifty Burlington people, headed by Father Dreis, made a pilgrimage to Holy Hill and spent the day there. They took the 4:10 a.m. Soo Line train to Hubertus, returning on the 8 o'clock train in the evening.

On August 7, Rt. Rev. Edward Kozlowski, auxiliary bishop of Milwaukee, who was the first Polish bishop in the diocese and only the second Polish bishop in the United States, died after falling ill from blood poisoning. Bishop Kozlowski was known to many Catholics in Burlington, having visited here at different times, including taking part in the August 1914 funeral services of Rev. John A. Bertram, who died about 2 years after succeeding Rev. Theodore Jacobs as pastor of St. Mary's.



Auxiliary Bishop Edward Kozlowski was the first Polish bishop of the Milwaukee Archdiocese.

On August 23 the Catholic ladies of Burlington met to organize a circle of the National Daughters of Isabella, an organization that works in conjunction with the Knights of Columbus. The Queenship of Mary Circle No. 55 was organized in September with 20 charter members. Among the elected officers were several St. Charles' members, including the regent, Clara David; the vice regent, Elizabeth Christien; and the past regent, Katherine Reuschlein.

On All-Souls Day, an old German custom was revived when candles were placed on the graves at St. Mary's Cemetery and lighted soon after dusk. Hardly a grave in the cemetery was forgotten, and the flickering of hundreds of candles, the night being still, was indeed a pretty sight.

Christmas 1915 was observed with the usual three Masses. Rev. Dreis was assisted by Rev. Joseph Lederer, of St. Francis Seminary. Solemn high Mass was read at 5 a.m., followed by an English sermon; low Mass at 8 a.m.; and high Mass at 10 a.m., followed with a German sermon. Between these Masses, other low Masses were read. There was special music at all services, including the choir singing "Stille Nacht," with instrumental accompaniment, before each high Mass.

At the congregation's annual meeting in January 1916, it was pointed out that more school room would be needed within a few years to accommodate the expected increase in students. At that time, the Sisters were occupying one of the four school rooms. The need for this fourth room and the consequent need of a home for the Sisters brought about a discussion of building a new parsonage, with the existing parsonage becoming the Sisters' home. But when the U. S. entered the First World War the following year, further plans for expansion were postponed until 1922.

In addition to the usual Lenten and Easter services during the first part of 1916, a Catholic mission was conducted during Lent by Rev. P. Bregenzer, a Redemptorist Father of St. Louis.

On the first Sunday of June, forty-one children received their First Holy Communion at St. Charles. They were:

Ralph Bauman	Clara Gerloff	Russell O'Neill	Albert Stradinger
Alfred Baumeister	Wyota Harding	Catherine Prott	Bernadetta Vos
Helen Beuthling	Ralph Henningfield	Edward Reesman	Marie Wagner
Jay Brewer	Margaret Hoelz	Lorraine Reuschlein	Florence Wanasek
Edward Cook	Charles Kielty	Anthony Rewald	Robert Warren
John Cunningham	Eleanor Ketterhagen	Kenneth Riel	Myrtle Weiler
Arthur Ebbers	Agnes Koenen	Agnes Rossmiller	Irene Weyrough
Dorothy Eckert	Florence Kornhoff	Evelyn Schneider	Gladys Willich
Oliver Finke	Elizabeth Kortendick	Henry Sommers	James Willich
John C. Forge	James Mangold	Evelyn Spiegelhoff	Victor Woeste
Mamie Gawin			

The last Sunday of June saw the graduation of eleven St. Charles students. In exercises held in the church, Father Dreis was assisted by Rev. John P. Pierron, of Waterford, and by Burlington native, Rev. James McCarthy, of Oconomowoc. After the choir sang the "Veni Creator" and a sermon on education was preached, diplomas were conferred upon the following graduates:

Leon Bushman	Eleanor May	Hildegard Prasch	Adolph Woeste
Colista Elderbrook	Catherine McCarthy	Louise Stradinger	Joseph Woeste
Arthur Ketterhagen	Mary Parker	Edward Wisnefski	

In a June letter to the Catholic clergy of the Milwaukee diocese, Archbishop S. G. Messmer severely criticized the fashions that had been adopted by the women of that time and urged the priests to preach against extreme modes. The letter said, in part:

“Immodesty and indecency in the matter of dressing of women and girls is a most distressing and an ill-boding feature of modern society. It becomes the strict duty of the Catholic clergy to warn the faithful against this evil, which is a cause of so much sin and scandal. . . . Remind Catholic parents of their duty to restrain the natural vanity of their daughters and tell your people that Catholic women, young and old, who dare to approach the holy table while indecently attired will be refused holy communion. Let them cover their arms and shoulders, at least in church, as it behooves every Christian woman.”



St. Charles held its 1916 harvest festival on the lawn of the Alois Schmitt house on the corner of what is now State and N. Kane Streets.
(Howard Wood photo, c. 1912)

In August St. Charles held its annual harvest festival on the lawn of the Alois C. Schmitt home on the corner of Liberty and Dyer Streets (now State and N. Kane Streets). The festival was a success in every way and a neat sum was realized. In September school started with an enrollment of 170 pupils.

On September 24, Archbishop Messmer administered Confirmation to a class of sixty-eight children and adults. The celebrant of the Mass was Burlington native, Rev. John R. Heuel, of Dallas, Texas; the deacon and subdeacon were Rev. John Kessler, of Jefferson, and Rev. Kasel, of Milwaukee, respectively. Father Dreis was master of ceremonies

while the Archbishop assisted at the throne. After the Mass and a sermon by the Archbishop, the following were confirmed:

Loyola Alby	Mrs. Ida Gill	Albert Larsen	John Stradinger
Herbert Bauman	Lawrence Grossman	Evelyn Malcolm	Louisa Stradinger
Viola Baumeister	Mildred Grosstueck	Eugene Martin	Elisabeth Terhorst
Mary Bush	Buford Harding	Catherine McCarthy	George Trimberger
Thomas Bush	Charles I. Harding	Millicent McCarthy	Ottilia Trimberger
Leon Bushman	Florian Henningfeld	Emmett Merrick	Mrs. Isabella Ureck
Mary Cunningham	Leonard Henningfeld	Florence Meyers	Alvin Vos
Harold DeGrave	Roland Henningfeld	Warren O'Neil	Bernadetta (Bernice) Vos
Norman Dietrich	Marion Hoelz	Loretta Partee	Leona Wanasek
Albert Ebbers	Lucille Hurtgen	Edward Prott	Arthur Warren
Loretta Ebbers	Veronica Isferding	Fred Prott	Daniel Wegge
Callista Elderbrook	Anthony Itzin	Louis Rehberg	Ralph Wegge
Arthur Finke	Arthur Ketterhagen	James Reminger	Joseph Willich
Edward Finke	Leroy Ketterhagen	Margaret Reminger	Edward Wisnefski
Gladys Forge	Lawrence Kling	Myrtle L. Reminger	Frank Wisnefski
Mary Gawin	Henrietta Kortendick	Helen Rewald	Adolph Woeste
Maria Gerloff	Henry Lange	Maria Rewald	Mary Yambor

(to be continued)