

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Parish

1910 - 2010

No. 40 of a Series on Our Parish's First 100 Years



Presenting his plan to make the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women (MACCW) the medium to reach all women's organizations in the archdiocese, Archbishop Samuel A. Stritch opened the district meeting of the MACCW at St. Mary's high school auditorium on May 23, 1939. Catholic women from nineteen towns and cities in this district gathered for the day's sessions, which opened in the morning, included a luncheon meeting, and continued through the early afternoon hours. St. Charles' member, Mrs. Grace Rose, vice president of the council, was in charge of local arrangements and presided at the morning meeting. Rev. Edward J. Kersting welcomed the visitors.

After luncheon, the living rosary was recited by a group of women and St. Mary's high school girls, representing each prayer of the rosary. The girls in their blue school uniforms formed the cross and represented the "Our Father" between each decade. As the rosary was recited, a high school girl lighted a candle held by each of the women. Mrs. Florence Scheibe and Miss Jean Schiller, both of St. Charles, were in charge of the living rosary.

On the following Sunday, a class of young people received their first Holy Communion at a special Mass at St. Charles. Those in the class were:

Mary Alby	Gary Krug	Adriana Menheer	Ronald Schiller
Hildegard Block	Joseph Lackas	Rose Menheer	Jean Marie Thomas
Joseph Boyle	Joan Lois	Mary Ann Muller	Patricia Trimberger
Mary Ann Clausen	Roger Luetten	Shirley Nelson	Patricia Vos
Gloria Grossman	Robert Martin	Carol Pihringer	Wallace Warren
Dorothy Krueger	Mary McCarthy	Rita Reesman	Ruth Zwiebel

The annual graduation exercises for the eighth grade pupils were held in the church on Thursday evening, June 8. The graduation talk was given by Msgr. Reynold Hillenbrand, the director of Saint Mary of the Lake Seminary at Mundelein, Illinois. Msgr. Hillenbrand, a noted leader in the Catholic Action movement, was a nephew of St. Charles pastor, Rev. Frederick J. Hillenbrand. The graduates are shown in the following photo.



Class of 1939

Row 1 (l to r): Irene Angsten, Richard Alby, John Peterson, James Bennett, Joseph David, Louis Granger, and Catherine Zwiebel.

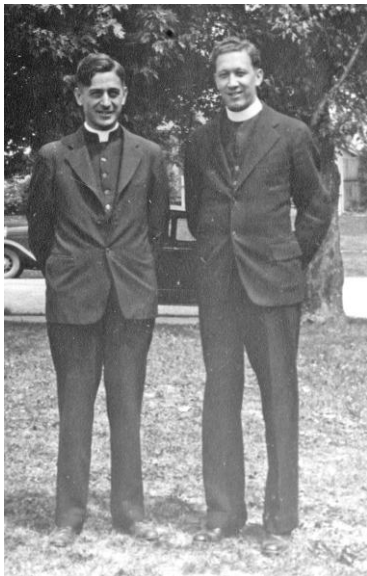
Row 2: Charles Wiechert, Viola Ketterhagen, Rev. Frederick J. Hillenbrand, Ramona Lohaus, Rev. Raymond C. Miller, Mary Leach, and Alfred Clausen.

Row 3: Frank Runzler, Arthur Zimmermann, Paul Spiegelhoff, Raymond Zwiebel, James Pihringer, Robert Klein, and Bernard Tenwinkel.

On June 11 the St. Charles priests and several St. Charles parishioners participated in or attended the first solemn high Mass of Rev. Mark Joseph Mueller, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Mueller, at St. Mary's church. The new priest had been ordained to the priesthood on June 3 by Archbishop Stritch at St. Anne's church in Milwaukee. Among those assisting in the celebration of Rev. Mueller's first solemn high Mass were St. Charles' graduates, Philip Peeters and Richard Pieters, who served as acolytes, and St. Charles' student, Mary McCarthy, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John E. McCarthy, who was the bride. Dressed in a miniature bridal dress and long veil fastened with a tiny coronet, Mary carried the burse, containing the chalice veil, corporal, and pall, which was presented to the newly ordained priest at the time of the Offertory. Former St. Charles pastor, the Rt. Rev. Msgr. Philipp Dreis, preached the sermon. One of St. Charles' priest-sons, Rev. Herbert Wagner, presided at the informal after-dinner program. Among those who responded to toasts at the dinner were Father Hillenbrand and St. Charles' assistant pastor, Rev. Raymond C. Miller.

The members of the 1939 graduating class were inducted into the St. Charles Alumni Association at the annual banquet held Thursday, June 21, in the church hall following Benediction in the church. The hall was decorated with pink and white crepe paper streamers draped from the supporting posts which also bore the numerals of former graduating classes in the same colors. The streamers also were used in curtain effect at the windows. The stage behind the speakers' table was banked with mock orange blossoms and peonies.

Fred Pieters, outgoing president, presided at a brief business session at which John E. McCarthy was elected president for the ensuing year, along with Mrs. Ralph Bauman as vice president, Virginia Breidenbach as secretary, and Monica Eckert as treasurer. For the second successive year the class of '33 won the Sister Mary Hermana trophy for the largest percentage of attendance. More than 65 per cent of the class members were present.



Rev. Oswald C. Krusing of St. Joseph's (left), who spoke at the 1939 Alumni Association reunion, and Rev. Raymond C. Miller. (1936 photo)

Joan Kenney, class of '31, extended the welcome to the new alumni. James Bennett, in responding for the 1939 graduates, thanked the priests, parents, and Sisters on behalf of the class and declared that "We will ever strive to live up to our motto, 'Deeds, Not Words,' and let them speak for us." Rev. Oswald C. Krusing, pastor of St. Joseph's, Lyons, made the principal address. He urged the graduates to make the best of the opportunities and obligations of life.

Toastmaster LaVerne Hoffman, class of '25, introduced Father Hillenbrand, who was given a rising vote of thanks for his services to the parish. Father Miller, in greeting the new alumni, pointed out that he had been at St. Charles for eight years and that he had started his work with the graduating class when they were first graders. Msgr. Philipp Dreis of Sheboygan, who served St. Charles for 18 years previous to the 12 years service of Father Hillenbrand, was given an ovation when introduced. He said that he had missed only one annual banquet since leaving St. Charles and that he took intense pleasure in watching the association grow from a small beginning into the outstanding organization it had become.

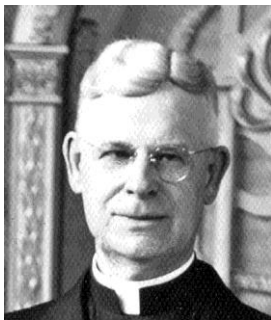
A song novelty, "The Three Little Fishes," sung by Don Ketterhagen, James Weiler, and Jack Bennett, pleased the audience. The banquet dinner was served by members of the St. Ann's Society which was given a vote of thanks by the association and, following custom, was voted \$25.

Sunday, June 25, marked the fortieth anniversary of Father Hillenbrand's ordination to the priesthood, which had taken place at St. Francis Seminary, June 18, 1899. In announcing the anniversary to the parish, he asked his congregation to offer prayers of thanksgiving with him. Rev. Hillenbrand had served parishes at St. George's in Kenosha, St. Joseph's at Lyons, and St. Mary's at Random Lake, before coming to St. Charles as pastor in 1927.

St. Charles church was crowded on Friday morning, August 25, by friends who gathered to pay their last respects at funeral services held for George Weiler, who had died suddenly the Monday previous. The Requiem Mass was read by his brother, Rev. Anthony Weiler, assisted by Rev. J. Russell Beix and Rev. Frederick Hillenbrand as deacons. Msgr. Dreis, former pastor of St. Charles, preached the sermon, paying high tribute to the untiring efforts of Mr. Weiler in behalf of his church and his community.

A high Mass was read Wednesday morning, September 6, to begin the school year at St. Charles. Total enrollment was 187, an increase of 12 over the starting enrollment of the previous year. The faculty was the same as the previous year with the exception of Sister Charita, who became the first and second grade teacher. Enrollment by grades was as follows: First grade, 21; second grade, 22; third grade, 28; fourth grade, 24; fifth grade, 30; sixth grade, 23; seventh grade, 18; and eighth grade, 30.

St. Charles joined in the special offering of prayers for peace conducted Sunday, September 10, in unison throughout the archdiocese under the spiritual leadership of Archbishop Stritch. Spiritual bouquets, offerings of prayers, and special spiritual acts were presented by members of the congregation to be forwarded to the Archbishop. Two peace demonstrations, in the form of a holy hour of prayer and meditation, were held, one at Marquette stadium in Milwaukee Sunday evening and the other in Washington bowl in Kenosha on Wednesday evening, both with Archbishop Stritch presiding.



Rev. Charles G. Myers

Later in September, Archbishop Stritch announced that Father Hillenbrand, pastor of St. Charles, was being assigned to St. George's parish in Kenosha, and that Rev. Charles G. Myers of St. Francis Borgia parish of Cedarburg would be taking Father Hillenbrand's place at St. Charles. The announcement of Father Hillenbrand's transfer was received with deep regret by his parishioners and fellow citizens of Burlington, where he had taken an important part in its spiritual and civic life since he assumed his pastoral duties in February 1927.

In bidding farewell to his parishioners at the Masses on Sunday, September 24, Father Hillenbrand expressed his appreciation of the co-operation given him by his parishioners during his pastorate. He directed



George Weiler (center) with Rev. Frederick Hillenbrand and Rev. Raymond Miller at 1937 St. Charles choir picnic.

words of thanks especially to the church societies, the school Sisters, the church trustees, the choir, and his assistant, Rev. Raymond C. Miller, of whom he said their relationship had been that of brotherly priests.

At Father Hillenbrand's request, no public farewell was tendered by his parishioners, but messages of farewell and of regret at his leaving poured into his home all week.

Father Hillenbrand's Legacy

A strong spiritual life in the parish of which he was head was the goal to which Rev. Frederick J. Hillenbrand directed his energies while in charge of St. Charles' church. Under his pastoral leadership, the St. Ann's Society became affiliated with the Confraternity of Christian Mothers; the St. Agnes Sodality was re-organized according to Father Daniel Lord's plan of national sodality activity; and the Confraternity of Mother of Perpetual Help was established at St. Charles.

Father Hillenbrand helped direct and gave encouragement to the work of the assistant pastors in organizing the summer Catholic youth athletic program and the CYO. The all-night vigil of Holy Thursday was instituted at St. Charles during his tenure. He had his parish school close to his heart and was unceasing in his efforts to bring it up to the highest standards of the archdiocesan educational plan.

In February 1929, St. Charles purchased twenty-five acres of land for a parish cemetery which was laid out and landscaped as a beautiful burial ground. The same year a plan for the perpetual care of graves was put into operation.

Father Hillenbrand was given the first resident assistant for St. Charles in March 1929. In 1935, a parish-wide celebration of St. Charles' silver jubilee was held which had the support of the pastor in all its phases. Always interested in the cultural growth of the city, Father Hillenbrand served as a member of the public board on the Memorial hospital board and as trustee of the Burlington Public Health association.

--From Standard Democrat, September 29, 1939

Father Myers assumed charge of his duties on Sunday morning, October 1, officiating at the 6 and 7:30 a.m. Masses. At all four Masses he gave the sermon, introducing himself to his parishioners and expressing his anticipation of his work in St. Charles parish. The congregation held a reception at the church hall Sunday afternoon, to welcome their new pastor. The hall was beautifully decorated with bouquets of flowers and with ferns for the occasion. A reception committee composed of the church trustees and heads of the various parish societies formally received the new pastor, who was introduced to the assembly by Father Miller. During the reception, Jane Wagner played a group of piano selections.

The St. Charles Alumni Association scored another big success on October 15 in their production of "Meet the Duchess" at the high school auditorium. The play, a comedy in three acts under the direction of Father Miller, told the Cinderella-like story of young Elsie Blake of Hogwash, Iowa, who won a popularity contest back home and then descended on Hollywood primed for conquest and glory. What happened to her there, her trials and tribulations, and her encounters with Hollywood characters resulted in a hilarious and delightful play.



Cast of 1939 St. Charles Alumni play "Meet the Duchess"
 Standing (l to r): Marjorie DeGrave, Walter Riel, Rosemary Beix, Richard Pieters, and Alois Partee. Sitting: Charles Wiemer, Jean Schiller, Virginia Breidenbach, Eileen David, Patricia Prash, and Patricia Partee.

The actors were Virginia Breidenbach, Jean Schiller, Marjorie DeGrave, Rosemary Beix, Walter Riel, Alois Partee, Eileen David, Patricia Prash, Patricia Partee, Richard Pieters, and Charles Wiemer. Specialties between acts included music by Jane Wagner; "I'll Never Play With You Again," by Elizabeth and James David,

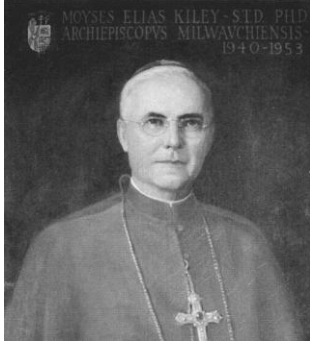
with James Bennett accompanying; "Indian Love Call," an acrobatic dance by Ruth Reynolds and Luella Schiller, with Mrs. Loretta Bauman, soloist; and "The Man With the Mandolin," a tap dance by Lois Reuschlein and Janice McCormack. The play was a pleasing one, the various parts were well taken, and the specialties between the acts all went to make a most enjoyable evening's entertainment.

The fall of 1939 was a fairly active period for the young people of the parish.

- At its October meeting, the St. Charles CYO boys' club decided to sponsor a basketball team to be coached by John Weiler. The team, managed by Father Miller, joined a new city basketball league composed of five teams. Each team was to play eight games.
- A group of young people of St. Charles met in November to organize a drama club. The name chosen for the new club was "The Thespian Players." Elected to head the organization were Alois Partee, president; Eleanor Eckert, vice president; Virginia Breidenbach, secretary; and Evelyn Luetten, librarian.
- Toward the end of November, Charles Wiemer, Joseph Weiler, Hugh Dardis, Lucille Luetten, Mary Epping, Mary Keough, and Rosemary Beix of Burlington, Margaret and Rita Kerkman of New Munster, and Loretta Vanderwerff and Leona Daniels of Brighton represented their respective parishes at a meeting of sodality, Holy Name, and CYO members in Milwaukee. Archbishop Stritch preached the sermon at the opening Mass and officiated at the concluding Benediction service. At the meeting, the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Youth Council, with the Archbishop as spiritual director, was organized to co-ordinate Catholic youth activities. Rosemary Beix of St. Charles was elected treasurer of the council.

In December, Father Myers announced that Loretta Uhen (shown at right in 1935), who had served as organist and director of St. Charles' choir for nineteen years, had resigned her position and entered St. Joseph's Convent in Milwaukee. In June 1942, she professed her vows, becoming Sister Mary Miriam, O.S.F.





Moses Elias Kiley
Sixth Archbishop of
Milwaukee

On December 27, Archbishop Stritch was appointed by Pope Pius XII as Archbishop of Chicago. Moses Elias Kiley, who was born in Nova Scotia and had been the Bishop of Trenton, New Jersey, was named in January 1940 to succeed Archbishop Stritch as Archbishop of Milwaukee.

A civic farewell reception in honor of Archbishop Stritch was held on March 3, 1940, at the Auditorium in Milwaukee. Mrs. Grace Rose, of St. Charles, represented the Milwaukee Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women in a group of members of lay organizations and religious that formed a formal escort for the Archbishop. Other people from St. Charles and St. Mary's parishes who attended the reception included Rev. Joseph Niglis, Harold and Joseph Weiler, William A. Rose, Mrs. Laura O'Neill, Mrs. Regina Bernert, Mrs. Herbert Ahler, and the Misses Mayme Cunningham, Elizabeth Kersting, and Hildegard Ahler. Archbishop Kiley was installed as the sixth Archbishop of Milwaukee on March 28.

On Sunday afternoon, March 10, five groups of students from St. Mary's high school competed in a divisional CYO one-act play elimination contest at St. Mary's auditorium. One of the groups, made up of St. Charles CYO members, chose to present "The Last Curtain," a play set during the April 14, 1865, performance of "Our American Cousin" at the old Ford theatre in Washington, D.C. The cast included Charles Barta, Jean Schiller, Eileen David, Rosemary Rueter, Philip Peeters, and Richard Pieters. The director and stage manager was Betty Jo Block, with Leonard Koenen in charge of properties, Eileen David, costumes, and Isabelle Hennig, make-up. The St. Charles' group won first place, entitling the group to compete in the archdiocesan CYO play contest finals.

The finals, held at St. Mary's auditorium on Sunday, March 31, featured nine plays that had won divisional contests. St. Bernard's group from Madison won first place, St. Patrick's of Milwaukee second place, and St. Charles third place. Trophies were presented to each of the winning groups.

The vital necessity for conserving some of the wealth of our forests, lakes, and rivers for those who will follow was graphically driven home by a conservation exhibit at St. Charles grade school in April. Sponsored by the Burlington Woman's Club and carried out through the cooperation of teachers and pupils, the exhibit attracted much comment and attention. Prize works of each grade bore first, second, or third place ribbons. The St. Charles exhibit, located in the basement of the school, was replete with original drawings, sketches, paintings, and posters urging the conservation of natural and wild life.

On May 26 twelve children of St. Charles made their first Communion at the 7:30 a.m. Mass. They were:

Rita Bauman	Josephine Hetzel	Shirley Overson	Mary Jane Tenwinkel
Roman Block	Wanda Kolodziej	Donald Prasch	Catherine Trimberger
Richard Degen	Mary Lou Martin	Gerald Richter	Kenneth Warren

(to be continued)