

St. Charles Borromeo Catholic Parish

No. 69 of a Series on Our Parish's First 100 Years

1910 - 2010



During the summer of 1965, St. Charles renovated its old seventh and eighth grade classroom in the church building to accommodate the incoming group of children. The renovated room was to be used by Sister M. Ruthanne, one of the new teachers, for the education of a first and second grade class.

St. Charles also had a new principal, Sister M. Juliana, who succeeded Sister Wilma. With the shared time program starting, Sister Juliana was to teach both the seventh and eighth grades. In the shared time program the eighth graders were to go to the junior high in the morning and the seventh graders in the afternoon. Thus, Sister would teach seventh in the morning and eighth in the afternoon. The transportation to and from the junior high was furnished by St. Charles and the students were to eat their lunch at St. Charles. St. Charles pastor, Father William Huemmer, looked forward to the shared time program and said that the parents were very enthusiastic about it.

The other faculty members were Sister M. Brendan, Sister M. Hilda, Sister M. Jeanine, Sister M. Leo, Sister M. Charlotte (music), Mary Ellen Eppers, Patricia Fine, Mrs. Betty Kreuzer, and Mrs. Mary Ann Partee. Father Huemmer and his assistant, Father Harvey Brahm, were to teach religion.

The only change in curriculum was that the Sisters were to move around and teach a few classes in some of the rooms. This change was intended to bring all students in contact with the Sisters.

The new playground, which had been added the previous year, was blacktopped and a new storage area was added to the school to provide a place for the teachers to keep their audio-visual equipment and school supplies.

On November 5, an evening Mass for peace was offered at St. Charles. During the previous month, as United States involvement in the Vietnam War escalated under President Lyndon Johnson, the Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, had made a plea for peace in a message delivered at New York City's Yankee Stadium during his visit to the United Nations. In support of the Holy Father's plea for nations to lay down their arms and to seek peace through prayerful and peaceful means, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee had asked its people to pray for the success of the United Nations in establishing peace in a troubled world. In the Mass offered at St. Charles, a prayer for peace, composed by Francis Cardinal Spellman of New York, was said.

On Sunday, November 7, the St. Charles Booster Club held its Fall Festival in the parish hall. A chicken dinner was served from 12 noon to 6 p.m. and there were apron, country cupboard, and parcel post booths and games. The Festival raised about \$3,850 for the St. Charles Building Fund.

Nine seminary students, graduates of St. Charles school, were honored with their mothers at a mother and son Communion breakfast Sunday morning, November 28, in the parish hall. The breakfast, served by the men of the Holy Name Society and sponsored by the St. Ann's and Altar Society, was attended by about 200 persons.

St. Ann's president, Mrs. Norma Degen, welcomed guests and presented Mrs. Diane Boyle, program chairman, who introduced the young aspirants to the priesthood. Seven of the nine young seminarians were able to be present. They were Charles Tennesen, Robert

Kretschmer, Gary Elderbrook, Andrew Tennesen, Michael Ketterhagen, Thomas Schneider, and John Wagner. Unable to attend were Robert Elderbrook, who was studying at St. Joseph's Novitiate at Baileys Harbor, Wisconsin, and Lawrence Weis, who was at St. Paul Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. The seminarians' mothers in attendance were the Mmes. Eunice Tennesen, Veronica Kretschmer, Olive Elderbrook, Cecelia Ketterhagen, Rosemary Schneider, Elizabeth Wagner, and Mary Elizabeth "Betty" Weis.

A film, written, produced, and directed by students at St. Francis Major Seminary, was shown. The movie, titled "The Challenge," dealt with the

academic, spiritual, and recreational life of a seminarian, during which time he strives continually to become aware of the total consecration of his life to God and his fellow men. He learns that the love of Christ demands service, and that he must be strong, virile, manly, and Christ-like.

Father Huemmer concluded the program, including in his remarks a petition to pray for the seminarians. Advent wreaths, used as table centerpieces, were later presented as door prizes to several of the women attending.

When St. Charles issued its 1965 annual report and parish directory following the start of the new year, it showed that there had been 55 baptisms, 79 first Communions, 11 marriages, and 19 deaths recorded during the year. School enrollment at that time was 325. The report also showed that Martin Itzin and James Pihringer had shared the parish treasurer duties during the year; that the St. Ann's and Altar Society had contributed \$3,000 to the St. Charles Building Fund; and that the Improvement Fund, instituted the previous year, had made it possible to paint the church, repair the roof, remodel the classroom, and blacktop the parking area.

At the annual parish meeting, William Howe was re-elected secretary and James Pihringer was elected treasurer. William Roberts was elected as a consultant to succeed James May, whose three year term had expired.

In a friendly, informal meeting at Burlington High School on January 6, representatives of the area's public and parochial schools exchanged information and discussed the needs of their respective schools for the near future. Present at the meeting were the boards of education and administrators of the Burlington High School and Grade School Districts, the St. Mary's and St. Charles Catholic School committees and clergy, St. John's Lutheran school's principal, and the Lyons State Graded School District board of education.



Father William Huemmer is shown with seven of the nine St. Charles seminarians who were honored, along with their mothers, at a mother-son Communion breakfast on November 28, 1965. From left to right, are Charles and Andrew Tennesen, Gary Elderbrook, Michael Ketterhagen, Father Huemmer, John Wagner, Thomas Schneider and Robert Kretschmer. Not able to be present were seminarians, Lawrence Weis and Robert Elderbrook.

In general, the parochial school officials reported that they expected enrollment figures to remain mostly static and that their physical facilities were adequate for the present and near future. Public school spokesmen, in contrast, reported that some of their facilities had already reached the "oversaturation point," and that enrollments were expected to increase.

Father Harvey Brahm, speaking for St. Charles, said that about 40 students would graduate from St. Charles in 1966 and, of those, 10 were expected to go to St. Mary's High School and 30 to Burlington High School. He said that this had been the ratio in the past. He cautioned that, while the growth of St. Charles School was expected to remain fairly constant, the influx of families due to new industries coming to the Burlington area could change the situation.

Representatives of both Catholic schools praised the shared time program. Father Brahm said that Burlington was "a showplace" in regard to the program. St. Mary's pastor, Msgr. Joseph Heim, stated that St. Mary's facilities were adequate on the condition that they could stay with the shared time program. He also mentioned the possibility of St. Mary's expansion and said that a letter was being prepared to be sent to the pastors of parishes in the area to invite them to a meeting for preliminary discussion of that topic.

A suggestion that members of parochial school committees be included in future meetings of the two public school boards, or in meetings of proposed public school additions, was unanimously favored by those at the meeting.

At a meeting in February, the Burlington elementary school board approved requests from Monsignor Heim of St. Mary's and Father Huemmer to continue the shared time program for seventh and eighth grade students for the 1966-67 school year.

"Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy division. Take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatsoever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one body and one spirit, and one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all . . ."

So read Father Leo Skalitzky of St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church of Waterford from the Anglican Book of Common Prayer when 14 clergymen of western Racine County, marking a "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" throughout world Christendom, attended a fellowship breakfast held at the English Settlement Methodist Church on January 18.

The attendees, in addition to Father Skalitzky, included four other Roman Catholic priests, Father Verne Schaefer of St. Thomas Aquinas, Father Gerald Schmitz of St. Mary's, Father Harvey Brahm of St. Charles, and Father Colman Majchrzak of the Franciscan Monastery. There were also three Lutheran ministers, three Methodist ministers, and a clergyman each from the Baptist, United Church of Christ, and Episcopal churches.

The clergymen reviewed a filmstrip created by the Dominican Sisters of Racine, entitled "A Foundation for Dialogue," designed to acquaint Roman Catholics with the doctrines of the major Protestant groups. At the conclusion, the clergymen representing the various denominations discussed in the filmstrip agreed that their particular faith had been presented in an accurate and positive manner. The clergymen unanimously agreed to meet again.

A record attendance of 121 persons, including 56 guests, heard Archbishop William E. Cousins of Milwaukee talk on the "Ecumenical Council" at a Rotary Club luncheon at Dunkel's White Oaks Restaurant on February 14. This was the first time that a high-ranking dignitary of the Catholic Church had appeared before a Rotary group in this area in an unofficial capacity.

Arrangements for the Archbishop's appearance had been made by Rotary member, Father Harvey Brahm of St. Charles.

Archbishop Cousins told the group that the ecumenical council, known as Vatican II, had been intended for the updating of the Catholic Church and that, at its conclusion, it was something that everyone relied upon for guidelines. He said that he believed that the ecumenical



First graders of St. Charles School presented Archbishop William E. Cousins with a Valentine as he paid a brief visit there prior to speaking at a Burlington Rotary Club luncheon at Dunkel's White Oaks Restaurant on February 14, 1966. Sister Ruthanne, left, and Father William Huemmer (foreground right) were part of the welcoming committee.

council had sharpened a religious belief with full respect for the other man's convictions. "It's a time of feeling our way," said Archbishop Cousins, "and we're going to find that no matter what our religion, our conduct is going to be guided by our beliefs." "The council," continued the Archbishop, "by its very nature has seized upon the imagination of the world and has opened up religion as a potent source of God for all men. Whatever your religion," he said, "your belief is a commitment to that religion."

Prior to addressing Rotary, the Archbishop stopped at St. Mary's, where he gave a brief talk at a student

assembly held in his honor. He also visited St. Charles, where the school children welcomed him with a song and a group of first graders presented him with a Valentine.

A parish mission conducted by Redemptorist Fathers Peter Sattler, C.S.S.R., and Edward Nugent, C.S.S.R, was held at St. Charles from Sunday, March 20, through Sunday, April 3. During the first week, women and high school girls attended the mission. The second week was for men and high school boys.

A large audience was in attendance at the Burlington Woman's Club's annual Helen Mears art contest award night held in the junior high school auditorium on Wednesday evening, March 30. The 250 pictures on display were unusually interesting inasmuch as the subjects were chosen by the students, showing a wide range of originality.

Among the eighth grade award winners, whose works were selected to be sent to the first district federation of women's clubs' convention were those of Patty Vondrachek and Kathleen Thums of St. Charles. Patty Vondrachek also received a special award for best draftsmanship. Another eighth grade award winner from St. Charles was Annette Vande Sand, whose work received an honorable mention.

The judges were Frederick Malloy of Lake Geneva, Mrs. Earl Paynter of Waterford, and Robert Ohm of Burlington. Guest speaker for the evening was George Pollard, staff artist at Lowe Publishing Company, Kenosha, who gave an illustrated talk on "Commercial Art and Portraits." Pollard, who died April 16, 2008, was known for painting portraits of famous people.

His commissions led him to sketch or paint portraits of six U.S. Presidents, four Governors, film stars, and sports personalities. Perhaps the most distinguished of Pollard's portraits was that of Pope John Paul II (shown at right).



A total of 62 children received their first Holy Communion at St. Charles in 1966; 61 on April 24 at the 8 a.m. Mass, and one on May 1. The communicants were:

David Albrecht	Mark Gonyo	Jane Kretschmer	David Schiller
Patricia Bartsch	George Grenier	Jerome Linneman	Mary Schiller
Steven Bendevert	Timothy Hefty	Lawrence Linneman	Stephen Schneider
Robert Bent	Gary Heitkemper	Paula Martin	Douglas Schwochert
Randy Boulden	Jeffrey Hewitt	Debra Meyers	Timothy Smith
Gregory Block	Mary Sue Hintz	Steven Murphy	Nanette Southey
Ann Brook	Gregory Hoover	Ann Pankratz	David Spiegelhoff
Lu Ann Busch	Christine Howe	Joseph Pervisky	Kay Uhen
Mark Busch	Gy Isferding	Scott Peterson	Kristine Wanat
Madonna Carr	Deanna Itzenheiser	Thomas Rausch	Cindy Warner
Marjorie Carroll	Theresa Jira	Susan Reda	Lorrie Warren
Brian Conner	Russell Joyce	Jeffrey Richter	Ellen Weidert
David Clark	Gary Karczewski	Brenda Severson	Joseph Wilke
Judy Clark	Theresa Karczewski	William Scherrer	David Wolf
Susan Eaton	Sharon Kirkman	Chris Scheunert	Thomas Zabler
Gail Gierhan	David Koenen		

Approximately 300 persons, a capacity crowd, attended the annual mother and daughter breakfast held at the parish hall on May 8, following the 8 a.m. Mass. The breakfast was sponsored by the St. Ann's and Altar Society, with Mrs. Diane Boyle as program chairman. Breakfast was served by members of the Holy Name Society.

Father Francis Vajda, pastor of St. Lucy's Catholic Church, Racine, was the featured speaker. With his collection of antique coins which dated back to the days before Christ and the time of the apostles, Father Vajda correlated these with parables and stories from the Bible which related to the history of the time.

Mrs. Hugh Smith, accompanied by Ellen Tennesen, sang two selections during the program. Mrs. Luella Hancock gave a welcome to the daughters and the response was given by her daughter, Beth.

Geranium plants were awarded to the youngest mother present, Mrs. Margery Kitkowski; the oldest mother, Mrs. Clara Rein; the mother with the most living children (13), Mrs. Marie Nelson; and the daughter who had traveled the greatest distance, Mrs. Margaret Agnew, Lawrence, Kansas. A plant was also presented to Mrs. Norma Degen, retiring president of the St. Ann's Society.

At a Marian Day celebration at the Franciscan Monastery on May 14, 27 Girl Scouts from the Racine Council received awards from Archbishop William E. Cousins at the conclusion of the Mass. Those receiving the coveted Marian award included Barbara Pihringer, Mary Macklin, Debra Johann, and Barbara Zusan. Mrs. Mary Frisbie and Mrs. Helen Tenwinkel were members of the planning committee.

At a special meeting held in St. Joseph's parish hall at Lyons on May 19, the decision was made to discontinue the seventh and eighth grades of St. Joseph's School after the current school year. In September, the children who would have been in these two grades would join the other children in the Lyons district in attending the junior high school in Burlington. Grades one through six would continue to be taught at St. Joseph's by two teaching nuns and one lay teacher, using three classrooms.

Father Cyril W. Spiegelhoff, pastor of Mother of Perpetual Help parish in Milwaukee, a St. Charles priest-son, and a veteran chaplain of World War II, died May 30 in Milwaukee after a long illness. He was 58 years old. His death occurred on the thirty-second anniversary of his first solemn High Mass in his home parish, St. Charles. Funeral services were held in his pastoral church in Milwaukee with Archbishop Cousins celebrating the Requiem High Mass. Father Spiegelhoff's remains were interred in the family burial plot in St. Charles Cemetery.

Graduation ceremonies for 33 St. Charles eighth graders were held in the parish hall following a 7:30 p.m. Mass on June 3. Father Huemmer addressed the group and awarded the diplomas. The graduates are shown in the following photo.



CLASS OF 1966

Sitting (l to r): Barbara Zusan, Patricia Pankratz, Delaine Moe, Mary Zwiebel, Mary Hefty, Kathleen Skelly, Rosalie Brooks, Margaret "Peggy" Elderbrook, Patricia Vondrachek, Kristine Busch, Mary Trost, and Margaret "Meg" Regner.

Middle row: Elizabeth "Beth" Hancock, Debra Johann, LuAnn Weis, Michael Middlecamp, Gregory Lois, Rev. William Huemmer, Joseph Helgert, Jerome Bauman, Annette Vande Sand, and Kathleen Thums.

Back row: Charles Lavin, James Schott, Robert Anderson, Michael Weidert, Michael Solofra, John Clausen, John Linneman, Jack Rochelle, Michael Douglas, Robert Schmaling, Wade Clausen, and Gregory Howe.

(to be continued)