

ST. PATRICK

HISTORY OF ST. PATRICK'S PARISH

CEDAR LAKE TOWNSHIP, SCOTT COUNTY, MINNESOTA 1855 – 1979

124 years ago in the spring of 1855 the area now known as Cedar Lake Township was first settled by a Thomas O'Donnell and a Michael Flynn.

It appears that shortly afterwards Flynn moved on and Thomas O'Donnell stayed. They were soon followed by a number of other families with names which left no doubt as to the country of their origin – Pyne, Kiley, Clear, Phelan, McMinders, Cummings, Murphy, Timmons, Carrol, Camp, Hart, Ryan, Nash and Cavanaugh.

In 1859 or 1860 there were approximately 65 families in the area, most of who immigrated from Ireland during the Great Hunger. For several years the spiritual needs of these people had to depend on the missionary priests who made irregular visits to the community. The first Mass of record was celebrated in 1856 in the log cabin of Thomas Quill. The celebrant was Father Benedict Heindel, a Benedictine monk. Father Heindel returned to say Mass on several occasions and other priests came from Marystown, Shakopee and Mendota.

Sometime during 1857 the construction of a log church was begun on the site of the present structure. The site was well chosen as it has a commanding view of the area and according to the stories handed down from the first settlers, it was a sacred place of the Indians – a meeting place, burial grounds and was known as "Tepee Hill." The construction of the church was not finished until 1859.

In 1870 a sanctuary built of Jordan sandstone was built on the east end of the log church; this is the sanctuary now in use.

In 1873 construction of the main part of the church was completed. It too, was made of Jordan sandstone, hauled 13 miles mostly by yokes of oxen. There were no roads and the going was very slow and difficult. Much of the stone was hauled at night during the summer to avoid the heat of day.

It is interesting to note that old records show that it cost \$360.69 to build the sanctuary and \$5,399.67 to build the balance of the structure. Using a convenient yardstick, the same structure would cost about \$200,000 today.

St. Patrick's Church was dedicated on Sunday, October 11, 1874 by the Most Reverend Thos. L. Grace, Bishop of St. Paul. The corner stone was laid in November, 1873. The Pastor in charge of the construction of the present church was Father C.J. Knauff. He was the Pastor from 1872 through 1877 and from all available accounts, he was a well-loved shepherd of a small but growing flock.

No account of this nature would be complete without listing a few of the "Firsts."

- The first baptisms of record were those of Daniel McMahon, born December 25, 1856. Patrick Webb, born March 27, 1857. Johanna Kiley, born April 23, 1857. James Timmons, born June 9, 1857.
- The McMahon babe was baptized in the Fitzpatrick home, the other three infants were baptized in the Quill cabin.
- The first death was that of Michael Murphy, son of Edmund and Elizabeth Murphy. He died August 13, 1857.
- Michael Ryan and Bridget O'Keefe were the first couple to be married in the new church. Their wedding was solemnized on June 2, 1873.

The parish grew and became one of the better parishes in this section of Minnesota. It prospered until the period of World War I – many of the people left to take jobs in the cities and the parish suffered. About this time a new group of hard working, devout people began to move into the area; principally Czechs who together with a few German families brought new life to the Parish.

St. Patrick's Parish has a real vitality. Improvements are constantly being made.

Under Father Leon P. Bonin, an athletic field was laid out and is still in constant use.

In 1962, Father Otto Neudecker instituted a CCD Program to insure religious instruction for the children of the Parish. This vital program has grown and today we have twelve teachers and a number of helpers or substitute teachers who insure its continued growth.

Under the guidance of Father Clarence Zlotkowski, a new pastor's residence was completed and a school and community hall became a reality.

During the past year, the church was completely renovated and redecorated and an excellent little pipe organ was added.

More recently, the parking area in front of the school was blacktopped and the community hall was paneled and an acoustic ceiling added.

All of these improvements are physical evidence of the sincere devotion the members of St. Patrick's have for their parish and give assurance that it will continue to prosper.

This account would become unwieldy if were to attempt to mention in detail all the priests, both missionaries and regular pastors over the past hundred years. There were approximately six missionaries and twenty-nine pastors including the incumbent, Father Robert Kapoun.

MISSION PRIESTS

1857 – 1858	Rev. Benedict Heindel, O.S.B.
1858 – 1863	Rev. Cornelius Whitman, O.S.B.
1864 – 1866	Rev. Peter Maly
1866 – 1868	Rev. Alois Plut
1868 – 1871	Rev. Augustine Wirth, O.S.B.
1871 – 1872	Rev. John Staricha

PASTORS

1872 – 1877	Rev. C.J. Knauf
1877 – 1879	Rev. L.R. Kemel
1879 – 1880	Rev. B. Connally
1880 – 1883	Rev. W. Roy
1883 – 1885	Rev. P. Kiernan
1885 – 1890	Rev. Hugh McAvoy
1890 – 1892	Rev. Timothy O'Brien
1892 – 1898	Rev. Patrick McCaron
1898 – 1903	Rev. William Rhatigan
1903 – 1904	Rev. John Byrne
1905 – 1910	Rev. John Fahey
1910 – 1919	Rev. Alphonse Van den Bosch
1919 – 1921	Rev. O.F. Rice
1921 – 1930	Rev. Cyril J. Farrell
1930 – 1933	Rev. H.J. Jordan
1933 – 1934	Rev. Philip Casey
1934 – 1939	Rev. James Cronin
1939 – 1943	Rev. George Rogan
1944 – 1945	Rev. Michael Harrington
1945 – 1946	Rev. Edmund Coughlin

1946 – 1957	Rev. Leon P. Bonin
1957 – 1964	Rev. Otto Neudecker
1964 – 1966	Rev. Donald Salt
1966 – 1970	Rev. Clarence Zlotkowski
1970 – 1971	Rev. Eugene Clemens
1971 – 1975	Rev. Brian Keany
1975 – 1977	Rev. Clyde Eddy
1977 -	Rev. Robert Kapoun

ORIGINAL PARISHIONERS OF ST. PATRICK'S

Although it may not be complete or free from error, a list of the original parishioners is also included.

Thomas O'Donnell	Hugh James Johnson
Edward Campion	Thomas Hart
John D. Ryan	John Quain
Thomas Quill	Patrick Hyland
Martin Pyne	Richard Golden
Patrick Kiley	Thomas Cummings
James Clear	Andrew Walsh
Martin Phelan	John Connors
John Phelan	William Nash
Edward Murphy	John Lawler
Martin Timmons	Patrick Hurley
John Carrol	John Redding
James Garry	Charles Vaughan
Michael Flynn	Thomas Gallenaugh
William Quain	Patrick O'Flynn
Philip Voght	Robert Bradshaw
Cornelius O'Connor	Thomas Hickey
John Webb	Martin Delaney
John L. Ryan	Timothy Murphy
James Garvey	A.B. McMinders
Patrick Shaughnessy	John Powell
Patrick Law	George Porter
William Ryan	John Merriman
Mary Brody	Patrick O'Keefe
Jerry Connors	Thomas Doherty