

St. Joseph Catholic Church
“The First Hundred Years”

November 4, 1883

It was warm inside the new basement of the new Saint Joseph Parish schoolhouse. The boilers have been fired for the first time earlier that day; several hours before the crowd would gather for the first Mass celebrated at this new missionary parish. As the faithful settled in makeshift seating, the smell of fresh-cut wood and newly applied paint mixed with the incense lit for the use during the holy event.

This cold day, November 4, 1883 marked a special beginning in the hearts of and lives of hundreds of Irish immigrants who, for some time, had wanted a parish of their own in their neighborhood. Their dream became a reality due to the efforts of Father William Sidley, pastor of Saint Raphael Church. He had permitted them to construct a new, brick school building, three stories high, eighty-seven feet long and forty-three feet wide on land recently purchased for the newly formed parish.

Only the sounds of rustling crinoline, occasional coughing and the wind blowing through the bare tree limbs outside broke the silence as the Mass of dedication began.

“In nomine Patrie, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, Amen. Introibo ad altare Dei,” proclaimed Father T.H. Cusak of St. Joseph Parish, Dayton, and the service began. Nearly four hundred filled the basement at that first Mass. The new church had yet to be constructed but the joy felt by many of those attending was apparent nonetheless. Many had participated in a grand procession through the main streets of Springfield. According to the Catholic Telegraph, the parade included horses, carriages, a group known as the T.A.B. Society, Ancient Order of Hibernians, two divisions of the Knights of Saint George, the Friendly Sons of Saint Patrick, the Big Six Band, and Saint Raphael Band. With the procession was Most Reverend Archbishop William Henry Elder of Cincinnati, who was to dedicate the building, and Father Singleton and William Conway, the latter to become a pastor of the new parish.

The servers responded to Father Cusak, “Ad Deum qui laetificat juventutem meam”, and thus began a long standing tradition of Catholic faithfulness at Saint Joseph Parish that has affected the lives of its parishioners in each succeeding generation for one hundred years.

The potato famine of 1845 forced a great many Irish to seek new beginnings in America. Construction work on railroads and canals created employment for many of these Catholic immigrants and enabled them to move westward into Ohio. These early Catholics found a sense of community through Irish peddlers who, along with their itinerate methods of selling before shops were established on the frontier, would keep Catholics informed on the whereabouts of local priests and other Catholics living in the area.

A diocese was organized in Cincinnati in 1821, when the Catholic population in Ohio reached two thousand. Its boundaries extended from the Ohio River to Lake Erie. In 1847, a second diocese was established in the Cleveland area, a third in Columbus in 1868, a fourth in Toledo in 1910. Later a fifth diocese was added in Youngstown in 1943 and in Steubenville in 1944. Today there are approximately a half million Catholics in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati alone.

Catholics settled in Clark County starting in the 1830's, due to the National Road which was constructed through the burgeoning city of Springfield. The first Mass in Springfield was celebrated by Father Damien Junker of Dayton, in 1844, in the home of William Griblenhoffer, at the corner of Main and Water Streets.

By 1849, it became apparent that a parish was needed in the city and Saint Raphael's was organized. St. Raphael was to serve as the mother church for Saint Bernard in 1860 and again for Saint Joseph in 1882.

The success of Springfield's growing manufactures further bolstered the Catholic population of the city. The East Street Shops, manufacturing farm machinery, and Leffel's Water Turbine Works were only two of dozens of plants in the Springfield area that needed workers. By this time people of many nationalities were pouring into the city, many of them settling in the area known as Irish Hill, bounded by Limestone St, Selma Road, East St. and the Penn Central Railroad tracks.

From the Springfield Daily Republic,
Saturday Nov. 3, 1883
Copied as originally written

Description of the New Institution on Kenton Street Program for Dedicatory Ceremonies Tomorrow

The finishing touches are to-day being put upon the new St. Joseph's school building on Kenton, near East Street, in readiness for the dedicatory ceremonies tomorrow, in which His Grace, Archbishop Elder, of Cincinnati, will officiate in chief. A representative of this paper visited the premises and was shown through the building by Rev. Father Sidley, who was superintending personally the work within yet to be done. The house is of brick, very solidly and substantially constructed from plans by Kreider, who seems, as in the planning and construction of other buildings for similar purposes in the city to have kept well in view the great points of light and ventilation. It might also be added of ready means of ingress and egress (copyist's not: entrance and exit).

The building is 43 feet front by 87 in depth, three stories in height, the first or ground floor being a half basement. The exterior is plain but pleasing in appearance, the simple decorations being of cut stone. From the center of the main front rises a high square tower with belfry, surmounted by the cross. The doorways for the upper floors are on either side, midway, approached by high, stone steps. Let into the wall of the tower in front is a stone tablet with the inscription: "St. Joseph's School, 1883." Next, east of the building is a large two story frame belonging to the church, used as a residence by the Sisters who are to act as instructors in the school. To the westward, on the same lot is a large space on which eventually a new church building is to be erected. For the present, it will make an ample playground for the pupils of the school.

The first floor of the school building is fitted up as a church comfortably, even handsomely, and is that in which services will be held tomorrow, it is 40x85 feet and contains 94 pews capable of seating six hundred people. The new altar just put in, occupies the south end and is an elegant piece of work. The choir will be located to the left, and a fine cabinet organ has been procured to lead the voices. On either hand are

confessionals and robbing rooms for the priests. The wood work in this, as in all rooms, is ash, oak and white pine, finished in the natural wood, giving a bright and pleasing aspect to everything. In spaces to the right and left are Patric furnaces of large size for heating for the entire house. The second floor and third floors have four school rooms each 15x35 feet, furnished with single desks of the newest pattern. There are also blackboards and other convenience just as in the most modern public schools.

There are wide and ample halls on each floor and broad stairways. The rooms will accommodate 400 children in the several grades. A six hundred pound bell has been procured from the Buckeye foundry, Cincinnati, for the lofty belfry and the interesting ceremony of "blessing the bell" will be performed at three o'clock tomorrow afternoon.

The premises and institution will be in general charge of Rev. Father W. H. Sidley, of St. Raphael's, whose assistants will be with him in conducting it.

The program for dedication will be substantially as published two or three days ago. Archbishop Elder will arrive at 6:30 p.m. become a guest of St. Raphael parsonage. The procession made up of the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, three divisions of the A.O.H., Young Men's Hibernia, Knights of St. George Division A and B. Father Matthew T.A.B. Society and three German societies, all in regalia with banners and two bands, will form at 9:30 a.m. at St. Raphael's and march over the route already given. After the societies are seated in the church the general public will be admitted. Those, besides the Archbishop, assisting in the services will be Rev. Father Sidley, of St. Raphael's, Rev. Father Cusick of St. Joseph's, Dayton, Rev. Father Hickey, of St. Patrick's, Cincinnati, and others not definitely known as of yet.

Reuben Copenhafer has had general superintendence of the construction and did the carpenter work. John Suce was contractor for stone work, Pete Seward of brick work, M. McHugh of plastering, Wraight & Leggo varnishing and painting. The structure is one of the most conspicuous architectural features of the populous section of the city in which it stands.

From the Springfield Daily Republic, Mon. Nov. 5, 1883

Copied as originally written

Dedication of St. Joseph's School

The Republic of Saturday had a complete description of the new St. Joseph's school building on Kenton street, which was dedicated yesterday according to the program then outlined in advance by Archbishop Elder officiating in chief, assisted by home and visiting Fathers. After early mass at St. Raphael's, High Street, the city Catholic societies formed under Wm. Spangenberger and Joseph Bolan as marshals, and to the music of St. Raphael's and the Big Six bands, moved over the pre-arranged line of march to the new building, escorting His Grace, the Archbishop and clergy in carriages. An immense crowd had assembled on the ground. On arrival, Archbishop Elder in his robes of office, as were the assistants in the ceremonies, was received by Rev. Father W.H. Sidley and escorted to the west entrance where a short address was made to the great congregation. The procession of priests then made the circuit of the building, the Archbishop sprinkling the walls with holy water, the assistants chanting the "Miserere". In this order the room on the lower floor fitted up as a church, was entered and the same ceremonies gone

through with, when the place was declared appropriately dedicated to the worship of God and a benediction pronounced. The societies and as many of the people as could do so entered and Father Cusack, of St. Joseph's, Dayton, celebrated High Mass. Father Singleton acting as Deacon, with Father Hickey of St. Patrick's, Cincinnati, master of ceremonies. Rev. Father Kress, of St. Bernard's church, also assisted in this service. The music was by a well trained choir, led by Mr. P.E. Montanus. The services closed about noon with a sermon by the Archbishop, from Hebrews x, 7th, to which the closet attention was paid.

Vespers were celebrated in the afternoon, and the ceremony of "blessing the bell" then took place, the new bell being sprinkled with holy water. Archbishop Elder again spoke appropriately. In the ceremonies the assistants were Rev. Father Cunningham, of Yellow Springs, and Rev. Father Berding, of London.

The day was beautiful and well adapted for such services, and everything passed off pleasantly without the slightest hitch or deviation from the original program.

The faithful in this section of Springfield attended services regularly at Saint Raphael's, many on foot traveling up to a mile from their homes. This trip on Sunday was hardly a problem, they claimed, but their children had to walk the distance every day to school.

Several families presented their concerns to Father Sidley and he suggested that they erect a new school in their areas of town. He proposed the beginnings of a new parish, a mission of Saint Raphael, to serve both schoolchildren and Catholic adults in the Irish Hill section.

In the summer of 1882, three lots situated on the corner of Kenton and Central Avenue were purchased from Jeremiah Reardon. An additional lot was purchased from John Kelly and ground for the school was broken that summer with the foundation stone laid in October. The brickwork began in the early spring of 1883. By fall the building was ready for the opening of the school.

Elizabeth Ann Seton's Sisters of Charity came to Ohio in October, 1829, and established a motherhouse in Cincinnati. When teachers were needed for the new school at St. Joseph's, there was no hesitation for the nuns were already teaching at St. Raphael's and St. Bernard's. Sister Rosa Gonzaga was sent as the superior with Sisters Pancrata Breen, Mary Victor Lynch, Pauline Crane and Bertha Armstrong.

The school opened October 8, 1883, before the first Mass was celebrated. Two hundred and ninety-one students in grades one through twelve attended then, as compared to the school today with two hundred five children in grades kindergarten through eight. Only one Sister of Charity remains, Sister Theresina Ross, a daughter of the parish. Eight lay teachers now educate the parish youth in two buildings.

While Archbishop Elder's remarks related to "sacrifice" at the first Mass, some may have been anticipating the blessing of the bell later that day at 3:30. Glancing at the bell, they saw the words "Van Duzen and Tift Company, Cincinnati Buckeye Bell Foundry 1883".

Father Sidley continued administering to the new mission parish. He even baptized the first child there, Charles Joseph Goody, son of Joseph and Brigid Walsh Goody, on November 18, 1883.

Saint Joseph became an independent parish January 1, 1884, with the arrival of its first permanent pastor, Father Clement Berding. The Catholic Telegraph reported, "Of the entire harmony and perfect confidence existing between Father Sidley and his people, the work which they have accomplished in the past year attests more eloquently than any word. Ground purchased, St. Joseph Chapel, School and Sisters residence built and tastefully furnished, with only now a trifling debt for the new congregation to assume is certainly a matter of justifiable pride."

Since there was no residence for Father Berding, he lived in the Nangle Homestead at the corner of Kenton and York Streets until a parsonage was built in 1885 located in the lot next to the present church.

One of his first acts as pastor was to establish a "Total Abstinence Society". This group began originally in Ireland, and members pledged never to drink alcoholic beverages. At the first meeting, between twenty-five and thirty persons took the pledge and were given badges to wear attesting to this. The next years were spent sponsoring parties, bazaars, fairs and raffles to liquidate the debt of the parish. This was accomplished by July 10, 1892, and a meeting was held on the advisability of constructing a church. The Church Committee for the construction of the present church consisted of Thomas Waters, John Dorley, John Sullivan, James Glenn, Ed Garrity, Sr., John Kearns, John O'Connor and Patrick Welch. It was unanimously decided to work on the structure in stages as money became available. Charles Creager was hired as the architect. A Springfield native, he also built the original city building and arcade. In August 1892, the contract for excavating went to Patrick Carlos.

In 1886 the Champion Reaper and the Whitley interest. Which employed many St. Joseph parishioners, looked as if they could do no wrong. In 1884, the "value of product" in Springfield was eight million dollars and the East Street Shops produced four million dollars of sales alone. In those days, as today, fortunes were made in the commodity futures market, E.L. Harper of Cincinnati and William Whitley had shared interest in coal and iron and had "signed each other's paper". Unfortunately, it made Whitley responsible for Harper's losses. Whitley was called the man who made and broke Springfield. During the same time, Springfield was fast losing its prominence in agricultural machinery. Five plants closed their doors between 1891 and 1900. On April 18, 1893, due to lay-offs and a poor fiscal environment in the city, work on the structure was halted for a time.

When the Whitley Harvester Manufacturing Company was forced into bankruptcy, hundreds were out of employment and many families moved to other sections of town. Fall was approaching and there was fear the new St. Joseph Church structure might not be under roof by winter. Work was postponed to the following spring. On May 13, 1894 the cornerstone was laid.

Worn out by his zeal, Father Berding's health began to fail. From 1892 to 1893, Father Michael F. Russell assisted him in the work of the parish. This was not enough and Father Berding was forced to resign, unable to complete the masterpiece to which he had set his hand.

When the thirty-eight year old Reverend Father William Conway arrived, the parish was in the confusion of construction. Undaunted, he set about directing its completion. Three years later, the church was ready for dedication. On October 17, 1897, Archbishop Elder, returned to Springfield to dedicate the new building. A parade took place in the

afternoon with fourteen hundred people marching, and dinner was later served in the Old East Street Shops.

The church was built of brick with stone trimmings at a cost of \$25,000. According to strict Gothic Revival style of architecture, the interior was designed by Durand of Philadelphia, one of the most celebrated ecclesiastical artists in his day. All furnishings and decorations correspond to the Gothic, with no exception of the high altar, which is semi-Gothic. The Sisters of Notre Dame Academy in Reading, Ohio, where Father Michael J. Loney was chaplain, donated St. Joseph's new altar. The piece, which originally graced the Academy Chapel, was carved by hand from wood by Joseph Shroeder of Cincinnati before the Civil War. The altar is a copy of an altar is one of the chapels of the sisters in Namur, Belgium. The altar steps and chancel rail were sawed oak and the floor of hard maple.

In the last months of his stay, Father Conway had the assistance of Father Hugh Mageveny. On May, 1, 1901, Father Conway was called to the pastorate of the Church of the Assumption in Cincinnati, Ohio.

Father Michael J. Loney succeeded Father Conway as pastor on June 14, 1901. A son of St. Raphael parish, he was born in Clark County on November 10, 1856, to Daniel and Margaret Foley Loney. Having followed the founding and growth of the parish, Father Loney set the year 1909, the year of the Silver Jubilee, as the goal to complete and beautify the still unfinished church. During these eight years the people lent every assistance to their pastor and the parish revenues rose to \$110,000.

New oak pews were placed in the church in 1902, constructed by the American Church Furnishing Company of Chicago and designed especially to suit the building's structure. The windows were installed in 1904.

In 1907 and 1908 the church was fitted with a divided pipe organ built by the Moeller Organ Company of Hagerstown, Maryland. It is one of only two in existence. Frescoed by the Card and Percy Company of Columbus, the church's predominant colors were cream, olive green and gold.

The sons of the parish who entered the priesthood led off the subscription drive to purchase Stations of the Cross. They were Father A. Varley, Timothy Bailey, John T. Gallagher and William C. Welch, followed by members of the congregation. These stations, still in the church, are of terra cotta material and were made in Tours, France. The color scheme corresponded to the fresco work and was Gothic in design.

About the time the organ was delivered, men of the parish organized a choir. Through the years music has been an important function of the liturgical worship and a tradition of the parish spanning three generations. Minnie Welch was the first organist. Around 1910 Frank White directed the men's choir. Later Mary Garrity Collins was the organist until 1918. Mary Collins is the mother of present soloist Frank Collins and grandmother to Denny and John Collins, also members of the choir.

At this point in time, five priests had celebrated their first Holy Mass at St. Joseph's Church. They were Fathers Hynes, Gallagher, Bailey, Welch, and Varley. Among the first to be ordained from the parish was Reverend Michael Stritch of the Society of Jesus. Six other young men were also pursuing their studies for the priesthood.

It was written in 1902 that "never in the history of nations was there such wealth found among the people." The agriculture of Clark County used the latest farming machinery which was described as a combination of "brain and brawn". The labor

movement in Springfield was growing; forty-one labor unions began between 1890 and 1900. Many businesses that had bad luck earlier recognized and merged, while labor unionized. This brought about a reduction in the hourly work week without loss of productivity. Also the increasing pay added to the comfort and satisfaction of the workers. Many Springfield produced goods were in demand world-wide, Springfield industry took a hard blow when the East Street Shops burned down in 1902. The heat from the fire was so intense that children in the nearby St. Joseph school could not touch the windows. In spite of this, the Springfield industrial aristocracy carried on and flourished.

As Springfield attracted more citizens to fill the needs of the factories, St. Joseph parish began to swell. Work for Father Loney increased to the degree that he petitioned for an assistant. Father James Fogarty, as son of St. Raphael Church and uncle to Organist Anne Clifford, came in 1905 and, during his two years, proved to be a most popular priest. He was succeeded by Father Martin Malloy, who remained until November 20, 1914. Father Malloy was greatly impressed in young people and gave a great deal of his time to the sodalities. He had a great love for music and the out-of-doors. In 1915, Father Francis A. Biendl was sent to assist Father Loney. Father Biendl was present for the completion of the present parsonage at the corner of Kenton and Central Ave, and its partial furnishing. He was the first to move into it, and, as he said later, always remembered the blizzard that greeted his moving day.

People began coming to Mass on Sunday in cars around 1913. The cars needed two people to start them. One to crank, outside in front and the second to turn the switch inside at the wheel. It was easy to tell during Mass who had these new cars because they often had broken arms. Many times when the car was cranked, it would lunge and the handle would hit the person, breaking his arm.

In the early 1900's, the Sisters of Charity were teaching four hundred and fifty pupils in the school. The Catholic Telegraph reported, "To the good Sisters of Charity is due much credit for the manner in which the school has developed. "The Conservatory of Music was built in 1905. "It was a red brick, two-story building, and located fifteen feet east of the church, and extended from twenty feet off the front sidewalk. It was sixty feet long and thirty-five feet wide." Frank Collins remembered. The school offered courses in violin, organ, piano and voice. St. Joseph High School opened a two-year commercial course of study and later a four-year classical course was added. The school was known for its high standards of achievement. A newspaper article at the time stated that many responsible positions in the city were filled by St. Joseph's graduates.

On Sunday, September 26, parishioners observed the twenty-five anniversary of the founding of the church as an independent parish. It was attended by Archbishop Henry Moeller of Cincinnati. A solemn High Mass was celebrated by Father P.J. Hynes, and a musical program was under the direction of Father Malloy with Professor H. Kester of Cincinnati at the organ. Van Bress' Mass was sung by a choir of male voices and Reverend William P. Clark delivered the sermon. In the afternoon a sermon was delivered by Father Bernard O'Reilly followed by benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. It closed with the singing of the "Te Deum" by a chorus of fifty boys. The services were attended by members of the Knights of Columbus, Knights of St. George, the Ancient Order of Hibernians, the Hibernian Rifles and the Catholic Order of Foresters.

The years during the World War were trying years for Father Loney. He often listened to the sorrowing stories of fathers and mothers whose boys were marching toward the trenches in France. Father Loney manifested the same strong love for his land as he had for his Church. Near the close of the World War, he had Father R. Marcellus Wagner as his assistant. Father Wagner was a classmate at the seminary of Father August Bernard who later became fifth resident pastor of St. Joseph. Father Wagner was later heard of Catholic Charities of Cincinnati. Each Friday afternoon during the war, the ladies of the parish sewed for the American Red Cross. The senior class of 1918 also reflected the national fervor in their activities. The class play, "A Call to the Colors", had a patriotic theme and their colors were red, white, and blue. Songs in the play included "Wrap Up Your Troubles" and "Over There".

With the fall of 1918 came a dreaded flu epidemic gathering its toll from the parishioners and adding a heavier burden to the pastor. The climax came with the death of one of the most beloved sons of the parish, Father John Gallagher. Father Loney was confined to good Samaritan Hospital in the winter of 1918 and 1919, and Father Walsh was sent to assist Father Wagner. With the departure of Father Wagner, Father Charles Spence became the new assistant on October 5, 1919. He was a convert and described as a man of culture who loved the rich heritage of the Catholic Church. When he left St. Joseph, he studied at Oxford, England, and later taught Father Elmer Smith and Father Tom Dorenbusch at St. Gregory Seminary. Father Raymond Brown succeeded Father Spence. Born of Irish immigrants, Father Brown was the first priest ordained from London, Ohio. According to Catherine Higgins' mother, "he (Father Brown) used to check the stove to see what was cooking and say he would be back for supper – and back he did come for he loved to eat. "Much of the spiritual care of the parishioners fell to the young and cheerful assistant. In spite of Father Loney's failing health, he was able to complete the St. Joseph High School.

During his last years as pastor, Father Loney suffered from arthritis in his hands, but continued to visit the sick and shoulder the spiritual and financial burdens of the parish. By 1932 his health had declined and he retired to a home on Dover Road which he shared with his sisters Margaret and Mary.

He was always interested in the spiritual welfare of the parish. Many recall the frequent missions, retreats for young and old, the May Crownings and many other activities that found their inspiration in the zeal of the pastor. One in particular was the Holy Name Society. The group composed of men whose purpose was to reverence Christ in the Blessed Sacrament. As early as the 1920's, men recall marching with their fathers in the yearly rally, with men of the other parishes, from St. Raphael to the football field behind St. Bernard Church. Many people at this did not receive Holy Communion each time they went to Mass. The men of the Holy Name, on the first Sunday of the month, sat together at Mass and received Holy Communion.

With the departure of Father Brown, the Reverend James Wade came to St. Joseph as vicarious adjutor. This title gave Father Wade the duties of the pastor since Father Loney, because of his illness, could not fulfill them. He not only was to shoulder the greater part of the spiritual care of the parish, but was able to take over some of the financial administration. Later Father John Dillon was appointed this task. He is remembered for being a dynamic speaker, especially at parish missions.

During these years Springfield created a diverse and self-sufficient order. By 1929, more than two hundred companies were making goods ranging from auto bumpers to rose cuttings. International Harvester and Crowell-Collier were the city's leading firms, and these companies needed workers. Immigrant men from Italy and Ireland came first, sending word back to their homelands of available jobs. Their sons and brothers followed, later sending for their wives and children to join them. Between 1900 and 1930, waves of Irish sprinkled with some Italians, settled in the area surrounding St. Joseph. The Irish were treated badly under England's rule and many Southern Irish of Catholic faith came first to Boston and New York, but decided to travel further west when signs read, "No Irish need apply," Many Italians arrived in Springfield at the Big Four railroad station, traveling by train from an immigration check point at Ellis Island. All of new immigrants found jobs.

American migration also moved northward. People from Kentucky, Tennessee and West Virginia were moving into the area since jobs were plentiful. Springfield Spring Company on Burt St, was one of such place that hired many St. Joseph people. It was later absorbed by International Harvester. The Shouvlins, members of St. Joseph, owned the Superior Engine, now known as Cooper Industries and many parishioners had jobs there.

As the parish continued to grow, so did the school. Since the enrollment had outgrown the building, something had to be done. Classes for grades one and four were held in a neighboring house, while grades two and three were in the basement of the school. Fourteen Sisters of Charity were teaching. A high school was built in 1925 on the corner of Kenton and East Streets to alleviate the overcrowding. In 1933 the high school students amalgamated in Catholic Central at St. Raphael. Former students of St. Joseph's recall being dismissed to the sounds of a Sousa march being played dismissed to the sound of a Sousa march being played by two piano students on two pianos at the same time. Mary Collins Crotty and Anne Fogarty Clifford played as a duo, as did Virginia McGrath (Sister Slyvia) and Margaret Burley. The two groups alternated playing four times each school day, at the beginning of school, before and after lunch and again at dismissal. Jack Yontz remember helping his grandfather, Albert F. Sirdevan, at 6:00 a.m. fire the boiler and shovel coal into the coal and coke furnace in the basement of the church. The heat was then piped into the school which was warm by the time the other students arrived.

The city became caught up in the Ku Klux Klan movement. Its motivating force was not white against black as much as it was old-stock Protestant against immigrant Roman Catholic. One day in particular, the Ku Klux Klan had planned a parade to march past the front of St. Raphael Church. When the parade arrived at the corner of Spring Street and High Streets, Monsignor Daniel Buckley stood in the street in front of his church and would not let them pass. There were a few tense moments before the parade turned around.

Father William A. Casey assumed the pastorate in September, 1932. He was born in Cincinnati on June 17, 1882, and was ordained on June 22, 1906. Father Casey was not in the best of health when he arrived at St. Joseph, and the change of pastorates seemed to aggravate his illness. In January, 1934, Father Charles McGurn was sent to be his assistant. Father Casey died in Cincinnati on May 2, 1934, while visiting his brother. Due to the great love he bore for St. Joseph, his body was brought to his parish for the

funeral services. After Father Casey's death, Father McGurn was placed in temporary charge until appointment of the next pastor. He remained until June 28, when he left to assume the duties of assistant pastor at St. Andre Church in Cincinnati.

During this time, music was a very important part of St. Joseph. Every class had to participate one hour, once a week, for the hymns that would be sung at the children's Mass on Sunday and during the months of May and October at the 7:45 daily Mass. The practice was held in the hallways of each classroom under the direction of Sister Basil, "the music nun", and accompanied by Nora White Jung and later by Anne Clifford. Young boys wishing to belong to the boys' choir auditioned for Sister Basil in the music room on the first floor of the music building, by singing several scales. Members of the boys' choir, on entering high school, were asked to join the men's choir. The men's choir sang Sunday Mass and special holidays, including St. Patrick's Day.

Father August F. Bernard was born in Cincinnati on January 9, 1892. He was ordained to the priesthood on June 17, 1916. On June 10, 1934, he was installed as the fifth resident pastor by Monsignor Buckley. On June 29, 1934, Reverend John P. O'Connor arrived to assist Father Bernard. He was born in Springfield on November 22, 1898, and ordained on May 29, 1926. He later served as pastor at St. Bernard from 1957 to 1971.

By 1933 Springfield and the United States were in the midst of the Depression. In a city of 60,000 almost 7,000 lacked jobs and 15 million in the nation were out of work. Springfield businesses like American Radiator, Victor Rubber, Foos Gas Engine and Kelly-Springfield Truck and Bus all went under at this time. Many men at St. Joseph were out of work. To give them work to do and to help the parish, Father Bernard asked the men to paint the church. The money for paint and supplies was raised by a turkey raffle. There were four door prizes: a turkey, a sack of flour, a blanket and twenty-five pounds of sugar. Father Bernard provided the meal and drinks for the men. The women of the parish fed the school children a lunch consisting usually of soup and an apple. Everyone donated so the children would not be hungry.

The Golden Jubilee of the parish was celebrated on September 9, 1934. Father Timothy Bailey was celebrant of the Mass and Father William Welch was deacon. Father O'Connor, with the help of Father Bernard, wrote a fifty-year history of the parish. Anne Clifford played the Mass.

Father Bernard, an organist himself, brought a personal love of music and immediately became a "special" member of the choir. He introduced the idea of both the men and boys choir singing together. After he hired Thomas Murray, choir director of St. Cecilia's in Cincinnati, there were weekly practices year round for the first two years. The men and boy's choir expanded in numbers and greatly improved in the skills of presenting good music. On the occasion of Father Bernard's fiftieth anniversary, the choir presented him with a gold baton.

On July 29, 1935, Father Loney died and was buried from St. Joseph Church. Father Richard Kennedy arrived on July 2, 1936, as Assistant Pastor, replacing Father O'Connor. Father Kennedy currently serves as Pastor Emeritus at St. Peter and Paul in Cincinnati. Replacing Father Kennedy as assistant was the Reverend Robert Plagge Hilvert on July 28, 1943. The Reverend Robert Plagge was appointed assistant on January 6, 1944. He currently serves as pastor at St. Simon Church in Cincinnati.

Within ten years of Father Bernard's arrival, the \$10,000 debt left from the new high school on Kenton and East St was paid. This was quite a feat when most parishioners were out of work. Bingo was held every Sunday evening in the school basement, where a previous generation had attended Mass. Hugh Garrity was the caller in the smoke-filled room while several others sold cards for twenty-five cent and one dollar games. Several hundred people attended regularly, coming from as far away as Urbana and Yellow Springs.

Seaman First Class William Welch was on the USS Oklahoma at Pearl Harbor on the morning of December 7, 1941. Raised in St. Joseph's, he had enlisted in the Navy at age of seventeen the year before. He, along with Pete Rocco and other boys from St. Joseph, died for their country during World War II. The Rocco-Welch VFW Post of Leffel Lane was later named for two of the many heroes. One was no longer considered Irish or Italian, but American fighting side by side for freedom.

International Harvester towered over the war industry in Springfield. People lived with ration stamps and the scarcity of goods due to the war, but by 1945 the biggest problem was inflation. With Harvester paying \$8.00 an hour, Springfield was richer than it have ever been.

Some black families had settled and were living on Summer St. between East and York St. Black Catholics had a mission parish, St. Martin's Chapel, on the southwest corner of Center and Pleasant Streets. The chapel was on the corner and the pastor's house was built in the back of Pleasant St. It was originally begun in 1943 as a short-term mission church, since there were few Catholics among the black population. But the Catholic population grew and blacks were very happy to have their own church, full of their heritage and identity, and many new members joined. Many of the children from St. Martin's Parish attended St. Joseph school. In the early 1950's the parish was closed as lines drawn as far back as the Civil War dissolved. People from St. Martin's were incorporated into the other parishes. At that time, Pastor Father Bernard made home visits to each of the displaced Catholics in St. Joseph boundaries. Mrs. Phyllis Cole-Sylvester Ley in St. Martin, remembers Father Bernard welcoming her to St. Joseph Parish and telling her that his name meant "fox".

People were able to make many needed repairs to the church in 1945. The ornamentation on the side of the side altars was removed, the interior of the church was painted to look like stones, and angels on top of the main altar were also removed. Statues and stations were painted a solid white, the floor was retiled from one solid color to a light and dark brown tile, new drapes were put on the main altar, the boiler stoker was updated and the original pipe organ was rebuilt and electrified.

The 1950's were good times for the United States. The men were home from the war; people had plenty of money and were anxious to spend it for the "good life" for themselves and for their church. Three homes were acquired which added seventy-five foot frontage on Kenton St. The properties were converted to a school yard.

The people of St. Joseph were very active and Father Bernard was very instrumental in getting the people involved. He revived the Holy Name Society and was particularly proud of the fact that St. Joseph always had the most representatives at the yearly Holy Name rallies. During forty hours, he began night adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. He also personally paid the tuition of any child unable to afford a Catholic education.

His fatherly love spilled into the young men who soaked up his warmth and wit. One in particular was Father Thomas Higgins, a son of the parish who became a missionary priest in South America. Father Bernard and the parish family sent monies to him for the people of Bolivia. Monies were also sent to Sister Mary Ellen Mertens, a daughter of St. Joseph working as a Maryknoll nun in Hong Kong.

In 1961 Father Elmer Smith was assigned as assistant to Father Bernard. Born in Dayton on July 19, 1926, he was ordained on September 8, 1950. Father Smith is well remembered in the Springfield community for his active work in promoting a number of ecumenical programs. St. Joseph's became known as the "friendly parish" for the warm welcome given to friend and visitor alike. Father Smith called each person by name and spoke to each visitor after Mass. He promoted wide participation in church and school activities. Few will forget his striving for personal contact with each parish member. Father Smith is also remembered as never having office hours. Ruby Donohoue recalled, "Many times he would get a call and we would see him leave in the middle of the night to be with a dying parishioner in the hospital or to console a distressed family, arriving back in time to say morning Mass and begin another full day".

During the same time, the lay apostolate, through the Legion of Mary, was begun, due to the shortage of priests and the duty of the lay people to share in the mission of the church. Many new changes in the liturgy took place after the Second Vatican Council, called by Pope John XXIII. The Mass was now said in English rather than Latin and the congregation responded to the prayers of the Mass. Special altars were built to accommodate the liturgy facing the people. Later an evening Mass on Saturdays and the eve of the Holy Days were added to the Mass schedule. Following the directives of the Archbishop, a Parish Council was formed in 1966 with Mr. Donald Rizer, president and Miss Mary Maddux, secretary.

The Parish Council consisted of the pastor and a representative from each parish group and society to discuss and promote that which would be helpful to parish life. It continues today as the main advisory body of the parish.

The Christian Family Movement also was begun about this time. The work of this organization was three-fold. The first was to observe what was needed; the second was to judge what should be done and the third to act. The group conducted a tour of the church for neighboring churches and later attended services with these Protestant neighbors. In 1966m a Cana talk was given to two hundred couples in Springfield by Father Norbert Burns of the University of Dayton. From this, a Pre-Cana series for those contemplating marriage was begun with Father Smith as chaplain for the group. Many parishioners participated as speakers.

In March 1969, plans were begun to replace the grade school building built in 1883. Many had toiled nearly one hundred years ago to build the school, the education of their children being the most vital. Again, a suitable place for the education of the children meant the sacrifice of pledges over three years, but with men on the moon; education methods and equipment had to be updated. It was to be a parish center with four classrooms, two meeting rooms and a general purpose room for gym. Boris Mehoff was hired as the architect. The cornerstone was installed September 27, 1970, and the new parish center was dedicated by Archbishop Paul Liebold on October 11, 1970. When the old school was torn down, the bell was stored in the new school basement.

In the early 1970's lay people were given an even greater role in the spiritual realm of the church. A liturgy committee was formed to plan special prayers and music for the Masses. Lay people were also given the honor of distributing Holy Communion and reading the Sacred Scriptures at Mass.

The latest renovation to the church in 1976 saw the wiring replaced and the sanctuary enlarged to adapt it to the new liturgies. New pews were added, replacing the old ones installed in the early 1900's; the entire church was carpeted and some statues were removed to lessen the weight on the sanctuary floor.

Many groups in the parish flourished: the Boosters, a bowling league, Father Bernard Guild of Mercy Hospital, bingo and festivals, and the ladies Altar Rosary Sodality.

The Sisters of Charity had lived in a nineteen-room convent built in 1883 that stood next to the original school. The convent chapel was very beautiful inside and lent itself to devotion. Six bronze candlesticks with a crucifix to match were given in memory of Mrs. Mary Tuttle. The Stations of the Cross in the chapel were donated in memory of First Lieutenant Elden Hamilton who was missing in action in World War II. After the convent was demolished in 1970 for the building of the new parish center, the sisters moved into a house located at 829 Kenton St. that had been renovated for their use.

After 1974, there were no sisters living at the convent and the house was rented. Between 1963 and 1971 three Sisters taught from one hundred fifty to three hundred eighty-three children with the help of some lay teachers. From 1975 until 1977, when Sister Theresina arrived to teach, there were no Sisters of Charity at St. Joseph. In 1975, St. Joseph School had its first lay principal, Mr. David Getter, followed by Mr. William O'Neill in 1979. Mrs. Malinda Lileas began as principal in 1892. Fewer sisters at St. Joseph's reflect a national vocation problem as fewer are entering the religious life. Sister Mary Doeker, an Ursuline from the Brown County Community, served as the director of religious education from 1975 to 1981. In 1981, Mrs. Mary Tayloe began serving as director of religious education. Today Sister Christina Bartsch serves in that capacity.

In 1978, after the Vietnam War, many Vietnamese refugees came to America seeking, as had the Irish and later the Italians, not a land flowing with milk and honey, but a new world of promise and hope. Three Catholic Vietnamese sisters and their families eventually settled in St. Joseph Parish. The Do Family with six children, the seventh born here, remained the longest as the other two families moved closer to cousins in California. Father Smith donated the tuition for the children to attend St. Joseph School. Various people in the parish taught them the English language, American ways, and of course, how to celebrate St. Patrick's Day. St. Joseph, in turn, learned of their loving traditions and even how to make egg rolls.

In June 1975, Father Lauer arrived at St. Joseph as associate pastor. He served until February 1977.

St. Joseph parishioners also opened their doors and hearts to the young seminarians and deacons who came as practicum students to gain field experience. Fathers Bernard and Smith were very anxious to have the students come to St. Joseph, and the students enjoyed the parish, many asking specifically for placement here to learn from the two priests. With the seminarians, three generations were in the rectory; the humble Father Bernard, the kind Father Smith, and the young seminarian. Each learned from the other and jointly served the parish. William Kramer was the first to arrive in 1972. Later came

Deacon Tom Meyer, who enjoyed working with the youth of the parish. He was followed by Deacon Dave Miller. Deacon Paul Hurst was at St. Joseph during 1976 and 1977 when the church was being redecorated. In addition to his many activities, he, with the help of the youth, washed all the Stations of the Cross. Seminarian Mark Brugger arrived next and Deacon Rich Unwin followed. Charles Karst was a seminarian in 1979 and later returned to 1980 to serve as pastoral associate until his move to Dayton in mid-1983. Russ Maue served as deacon in 1979.

Heart trouble plagued Father Bernard and in 1970 Archbishop Leibold placed Father Smith as administrator of the parish. In 1974, Father Bernard successfully campaigned to the archbishop to name Father Elmer Smith to succeed him as pastor. Father Bernard stayed on as pastor emeritus and continued in the spiritual care of the parish. He said, "The parish is like home to me and the people are like my people." Many remember Father Bernard as a firm, strong, grandfatherly pastor. In 1979 Mt. St. Mary's of the West Seminary granted the first honorary degree in its one hundred fifty year history to Father Bernard. They said he symbolized the highest aspirations of the faculty. In the final weeks of his illness, parishioners kept vigil with the "Old Padre", as he called himself. One nurse at the hospital remembered Father Bernard as having bought her first pair of shoes. Beth Robey recalled sitting with Father in the hospital and the nervousness she felt when first entering his hospital room, expecting to sit and stare out the window. But Father was very coherent, a young mind in a decaying body. Bedridden, he was still warm and witty. Beth and the other volunteers thought they would, in some way, help the man who had given them so much, but instead, he gave to them. "By seeing to his personal needs, helping to do what he couldn't do for himself. I learned humility", remembers Beth. From this humble and gracious man, people learned that gentle wit and humor are just as appropriate in sickness as in health. During his sixty-four years as priest, he had always been a giver; he gave in return for whatever he received. He died July 20, 1980, after serving St. Joseph Parish for forty-six years. Archbishop Joseph L. Bernardin was principal celebrant for the Mass of Christian Burial.

Father Bernard often expressed his wish to hear the church bell ring before he died. The bell was rung just before Father's funeral Mass on July 23. With the help of many willing workers, the bell was moved from the basement to temporary location in front of the Parish Center. It was later hung in the church steeple and rang for the first time in its present location Easter Sunday, 1981.

On February 15, 1981, Father T. Edward Hopping arrived to assist Father Smith. Father Hopping was born in Springfield on August 9, 1912, and ordained May 18, 1940. At about the same time, Father Smith received word of his appointment to St. Cecilia Parish in Cincinnati. There was great sadness when Father Smith left, the parish having lost two beloved pastors in one year. A brick and glass enclosed sign stating the sermon topic and Mass schedule was erected in front of the church with labor donated by parishioners. It was dedicated to Father Smith for twenty years of service to the people of St. Joseph.

The Reverend Thomas Dorenbusch arrived on August 18, 1981, as seventh resident pastor of St. Joseph Church. "Father Tom", as he is affectionately called, was born in Hamilton, Ohio, on July 6, 1932, and raised in Middletown, Ohio. He was ordained July 21, 1957.

The early eighties brought home the fifty-two Americans held hostage in Iran. It brought the United States double digit inflation and double digit unemployment, the worst since the Depression. In Springfield, International Harvester, whose predecessor, the Whitley Harvester Manufacturing Company, rocked on the brink of bankruptcy on hundred years ago, is today fighting to stay solvent, laying off hundreds of employees. Many of them are St. Joseph parishioners. Many others are out of work due to businesses relocating in the Sun Belt. The population of Springfield has declined by nearly 10,000 in the last ten years.

St. Joseph withstood hard times. A new group, the Parish Family Organization, combines several men's and women's groups into one. Encouraging members to join as a family, the purpose is threefold. One is to offer support to the bereaved, the second is visitation to the ill and the third is social in nature. Approximately twenty other groups are active. One such group, the faithful ushers, now have the third generation continuing this important service to the church.

The men and boys' choir continue their tradition that has been uninterrupted since approximately 1902. They have sung Gregorian Chant and the works of Palestrina and Bach along with the more recent works of Galineau and Deiss. The choir has performed in Cincinnati and Dayton. The highlight of the year is the traditional Midnight Christmas Mass. The encouragements of the pastor, the dedication of the men and boys and the loyalty of the parents have helped the choir continue. However, the choir is Anne Clifford, who has given fifty-seven years of service. She has played two daily Masses a day for approximately forty years, accompanied choir rehearsals and directed hundreds of programs for special events. Her work and support has made it into a great choir.

The church, built in 1897, was entered into the National Register of Historic Places on March 15, 1982, for its architectural significance. In June 1983, Father Hopping retired from active ministry at St. Joseph. Father Bill Cole of the Society of Mary is expected to arrive in the fall, to assume the duties of associate pastor.

Parishioners anticipate the celebration of the centennial anniversary of the first Mass on Saturday, November 5, at 5:00 P.M. with the Most Reverend Archbishop Daniel E. Pilarczyk of Cincinnati. The history and tradition of the church will continue into the second century, beginning this time, with the vernacular words of the Mass: "In the name of the Father, the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen."