



Barquilla de la Santa Maria

BULLETIN of the Catholic Record Society -
Diocese of Columbus

Vol. XXXIII, No. 6

June 29: St. Peter

June, 2008

St. Mary Parish, Shawnee, Salt Lick Township, Perry County 1880-1992

(Concluded, from Vol. XXXIII, No. 5)

1943-1970

Pastors in this era were:

Rev. Hugh J. Gilbert, Sept. 1943-June 1950
Rev. Michael Wellnitz, June 1950-June 1956
Rev. Peter McEwan, June 14, 1956-
Rev. James P. Hanley, June 1963-June, 1966
Rev. Clarence Durbin, June 1966-
Rev. George J. Marzluf, June 1969- Aug. 1970

Father Marzluf was the last resident pastor for some years. Rev. Joseph Switalski was appointed assistant pastor at Shawnee, effective Feb. 5, 1955, with residence there; but his duty was to be administrator of the parish in New Straitsville, under Father Wellnitz's direction.

Following the Second World War, things brightened a little in Shawnee. In 1948 Father Gilbert, the pastor, was caring for 203 souls. He also tangentially mentioned that strip-mining of coal had provided jobs in the area, when he noted that the process had not damaged the property at the Old Stone Church. Still, things were tight. The diocese sent funds now and then to support the parish; and in 1952 Father Wellnitz, the pastor, regularly drove the school bus to take the children from Shawnee and vicinity to the school in New Straitsville.¹⁷

In 1951, under the leadership of Father Wellnitz, discussions were started concerning the possibility of reconstructing the Old Stone

Church. At that time one wall and part of the sanctuary remained. A letter from Father Wellnitz noted, "It is not right that this historic Church, which one warmed the hearts of pioneers with her Divine Faith during their lifetime, and then gathered their sacred bones to her bosom in death, should be left a prey to forgetfulness." The Holy Name Society of St. Mary's and the people of Shawnee wanted to restore the old church to its original state, as a shrine and a historical landmark. Bishop Ready gave his approval to the project. However, very little money was collected and the "cold realities of remoteness of the Church, plus the difficulty of constant and vigilant maintenance" ended the effort.

In the Marian Year of 1954, pilgrimages and devotions were held all year.

Bishop Ready in 1955 wrote to Mother M. Gonzaga at the Seminary of the Sacred Heart in Stella Niagara, to see whether she might send three Sisters to staff a school in Shawnee. He told her the area had about ninety children in the Catholic schools, including those from Shawnee, New Straitsville, Moxahala, and the countryside. He noted, "They are good people and the past years they have shown a great loyalty to the Church." The Sisters, he suggested, could live at St. Aloysius Academy if they did not want to live in Shawnee.¹⁸ This effort did not succeed and, after St. Augustine School closed in 1955, the

children of the parish still could attend St. Bernard's school in Corning.

The area still was declining in the late 1950s. At the end of 1958, Father McEwan noted that the best family of the parish had left Shawnee in September and the largest family was then making arrangements to leave. "Still the old folks hang on for dear life and come to Mass in all the snow and ice and with all their aches and pains!"¹⁹

The area was stricken with poverty, unemployment, and decay. Towns were dead and dying. Young people were forced to leave for employment elsewhere. Churches were empty. Bishop Issenmann, newly appointed to Columbus, came to visit Shawnee and was shown a new wall that the parishioners had put up between the rectory and the church. He thought "there should be a statue at the corner." Considering the "heart-rendering" sight of the Old Stone Church, Father McEwan suggested to the Bishop that a shrine to Our Lady could be built at the new wall. The idea was to use a dozen truckloads of stone from the old church (the standing walls would not be disturbed); the talents of a retired stone mason in the parish; and

other retired and unemployed men at \$10 per day, over a period of three or four weeks. The money collected for reconstruction of the Old Stone Church would be used for this shrine.

The plans, however, soon exploded. A road had to be built to get to the old church, and even the bulldozer got stuck in the mud as the road was built. The twelve loads of stone became 72 loads. The 3 or 4 weeks became eight. The money ran out. But, as Father McEwan wrote, "we have something that is both massive and monumental, yet at the same time so delicately exquisite as to be breath-taking. How it came to be so no one knows. There was no architect with blueprints for the men to follow. Just one of the many odd and strange things that have happened since we put the first stone of the Grotto in place. For example, is it just coincidence that at the very minute we were putting the famous old 'Thou art Peter...' stone in place, the million dollar water pipeline from Shawnee to Burr Oak Lake was begun; or that the local brick plant started full blast for the first time in 3 years? Is it coincidence that so many other strange things are happening here?"²⁰ The shrine to Our Lady of Lourdes, at



The shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes in Shawnee (2006).

the southeast corner of the church, was dedicated by Bishop Issenmann on October 11, 1959, before a throng of over 2,500 persons. Participating in the Pontifical Mass were Fathers Thomas Duffy, Robert Manning, Michael Wellnitz, Francis Yonkus, O.P., Julian Schaefer, James J. Carroll, Charles Foeller, and James McEwan.²¹

1971-1992

Pastors and their helpers in this era were:

- Rev. Brice A. Metzger, 1971-1972, assistant at New Lexington
- Rev. William D. Huber, 1972-1973, pastor at New Lexington
- Revs. Mario Serraglio and Homer Blubaugh, 1974-1977, pastor and assistant at New Lexington
- Rev. Richard H. Hoch who was named pastor of Shawnee and New Straitsville effective June 23, 1977. He lived at Shawnee until his retirement in July, 1984.
- Rev. Richard F. Dodd, 1984-1986 (of Junction City) He was delegated to administer the two parishes effective Sept. 5, 1984.
- Rev. Frank P. Lane, 1986-July 1988 (of Corning and then New Lexington)
- Rev. Mark Ghiloni, associate pastor of the consortium (see below) with residence at Corning, beginning in 1987; in September of 1988 he was appointed Administrator Pro Tem of the consortium and continued as such through March, 1989; in 1990 he was appointed pastor at Crooksville and continued as associate in the consortium.
- Rev. John J. Dreese, 1989-1992 (of New Lexington)

The rectory at Shawnee was used as a residence by two Sisters of Charity of Nazareth who ran a religious education program in southern Perry County beginning in the early summer of 1971. These two were replaced in August of 1973 by Sister Kathleen Cost, O.S.F., and Sister Rosemary Hartings, O.S.F.

During Father Huber's pastorate (1972-73) a fire seriously damaged the school building and it was razed.²² The old convent was rented out to a large family for only \$20 a month. In the summer of 1974 Fathers Serraglio and Blubaugh told Bishop Herrmann, "we feel ashamed to see people living in such a place since it belongs to the church," because it was in such poor condition.²³ They asked permission to sell it, but there is no record of any answer.

In the mid-1970s there were 150 Catholics in the parish territory. The October count for 1975 was just 81; there were fifty youths, of whom twenty attended religious education. Shawnee's downtown consisted of only a grocery store, a furniture store, a small post office, a tiny beauty shop, and a saloon. The other buildings stood vacant, dilapidated, or in ruins. Population was a little over 700. The brick plant, the primary local industry, had shut down in 1962 and only one industry remained, employing a few people. All the other residents were retired or on welfare or worked elsewhere.²⁴

On September 27, 1981 Bishop Herrmann came to Shawnee and celebrated the parish's centennial Mass.

Population decline and economic hardships hit all of the southern Perry County parishes in the late 1980s. In 1986 St. Augustine Parish in New Straitsville and St. Mary Parish in Shawnee, together with St. Bernard in Corning and St. Philip Neri in Murray City, were formed into the Perry County Consortium of Parishes, under the care of the priests living at Corning. New Lexington was added to the consortium in 1987.

In August of 1988 it was announced that the parishes of New Straitsville and Shawnee would be merged. This was canonically effective on October 22 and the new body was named the Parish of the Community of St. Peter, in honor of the Old Stone Church of Monday Creek. Mass was offered in St. Augustine Church on Saturday evening in October and November, but in December and January was moved to Shawnee to avoid the problem of getting up the hill in New

Straitsville in the snow. The parishioners had decided that the two parishes should be joined and the church that was in better condition be used as the place of worship and this was made the recommendation of the vicariate Pastoral Council to the Bishop.²⁵

In 1989 a joint meeting was held by the people of the merged parish community, including Fathers Ghiloni and Dodd and Sisters Mary Ann Creely, O.P., and Mary Margaret Fischer, S.N.D. de N. Among other items discussed, it was noted that the income of the two churches together barely met ordinary operating expenses of about \$20,000 and that to bring either one of the churches to a state of "good repair" would cost between \$75,000 and \$110,000.²⁶

St. Augustine Church in New Straitsville was closed in 1990 and Bishop Griffin said then that a decision regarding St. Mary's might be expected in two years. During those two years the parish was not able to meet its ordinary expenses and the buildings continued to deteriorate. Evaluation of ministry to the area continued until it was decided to close St. Mary's, in part because fewer priests were available. The parish was canonically suppressed as of January 30, 1992. The closing was announced by Bishop Griffin at Mass on Saturday, February 1, 1992. Later it was announced that the church would be razed soon after its closing. A movement was started to save the church, headed by Don Wohrle of Columbus, as the "St. Mary's Preservation Committee." The committee agreed to establish a legal fund to represent them in blocking the demolition but nothing came of this. It was a very painful time for all, including the Bishop.

The last Mass in St. Mary Church was offered by Bishop Griffin on June 6, 1992. He allowed the parishioners to decide which of the area parishes they would attend in the future, since he recognized that many had family ties or other associations with the various churches. The churches included St. Bernard in Corning, eight

miles to the east, and St. Rose in New Lexington, nine miles to the north. St. John in Logan is about fifteen miles distant, from which missionaries visited the Old Stone Church in the previous century. St. Mary Church was razed on July 10 and 11 that summer. The organ was sold to St. John's Lutheran Church in Chehalis, Washington. Whatever else could not be sold the people were allowed to take. By that time the former convent had already been sold. The rectory, in which Sister Mary Ann Creely had been living, was sold and she moved to New Lexington.

St. Mary Parish had been established when Shawnee was quite prosperous. That prosperity was very short-lived, but the set patterns of Church life, the pain involved with reducing or eliminating services, and especially the desire for the good of souls, kept the parish in operation long after it was viable in any human terms.

Among notable people who came from St. Mary's was Joseph Ferguson, long-time Auditor of State of Ohio. Also among the members were the Joyce family, who developed 7-UP and made it the basis of a multi-million dollar business.

NOTES

- 17) Cleveland *Plain Dealer*, October 19, 1952
- 18) March 29, 1955, Bishop Ready to Mother M. Gonzaga, Chancery file, St. Mary Parish
- 19) McEwan to Issenmann, Dec. 22, 1958, Chancery file, St. Mary Parish
- 20) Circular letter, Rev. Peter McEwan, August 20, 1959
- 21) *Catholic Times*, Oct. 9 and Oct. 16, 1959
- 22) Parish history attached to centennial program, Chancery file, Shawnee St. Mary
- 23) Dec. 14, 1873, Sr. Kathleen Cost, O.S.F. to Bishop Herrmann; July 26, 1974, Mario Serraglio and Homer Blubaugh to same; Chancery file, Shawnee St. Mary
- 24) *SC NEWS*, Vol. 5, No. 8, April, 1977, 6-8
- 25) Chancery file; and *Catholic Times*, Sept. 16, 2007
- 26) June 27, 1989 meeting notes, Chancery file, Shawnee-New Straitsville file

St. Peter Church, Monday Creek, Perry County
Baptismal Records, 1854-1878
(Concluded, from Vol. XXXIII, No. 5)

page 2, continued

[1870]

22 May 1870 Lucy Emily, daughter of John Dyke and wife Sarah Hoy; spon. Lawrence and Mary Bow. Emmanuel Thienpont

page 3

22 May Rebecca Helen, daughter of James Green and wife Dealon; spon. Patrick Moore and Mary Cotten. ET

page 4 is blank

page 18, continued

[1873]

12 Oct., 1873 Catherine Irene, daughter of Patrick Moore and Mary Dillon, born 13 Sept.; spon. John Moore and Julia Purcell. Joseph Laffan

9 Nov. 1873 Patrick, son of Patrick Nealis and Bridget Moran, born Oct. 4; spon. Richard and Mary Barrett. Joseph Laffan

page 19

1874

8 [no month given] John, son of John Leonard and Bridget Bayles, born 22 Feb.; spon. John Crowe and Bridget Crowe. Joseph Laffan

pages 20-21 [tabular format]

1875

April 22 An. Catharine, born Jan. 31, 1875, of Thomas Allen and Alice Little; spon. Patrick Fahey and Mary Little. B. M. O'Boylan

Oct. 24 Cath. Cecilia, born Oct. 1, of John Powers and Mary O'Brien; spon. John Scanlon and Mrs. Scalon. BMO

Oct. 23 Clara, born June 14, 1873, of Thomas Radcliff and Bridget Gordon; spon. Lawrence Short and Mrs. Sh. BMO

Same day Thomas, born Feb. 5, 1875, of Thomas Radcliff and Bridget Gordon; spon. John Gordon & Mrs. BMO

A.D. 1876

January 23, Cath. Alice, born Dec. 23rd, of Patrick Powers & C. O'Brien; spon. Maurice O'Brien and Bd. Leonard BMO

Feb. 27 Patrick, born Feb. 22, of John Scanlon and Mary Ryan; spon. Jer. Cronen and Margaret Griffin. BMO Note added above: Patrick married Eleanor Mulhern Dec. 3, 1949 by Thomas H. Corrigan, St. Vincent's, Akron, Ohio.

March 19 John, born Jan. 31, of Michael Fadden and Catherine; spon. Ant. Fadden and Bridget. BMO Written above: John Francis Padden, of Michael Padden and Catherine Ellen Easley; spon. Anthony Padden and Bridget Padden.

same day John, born Feb. 29, of John Ryan and Bridget Cotter; spon. Peter Cleary and Mary Crow. BMO

same day Bridget, born Mar. 3, of John Crow and Mary O'Laughlin; spon. Peter Crow and Mary Joyce. BMO

April 30 John, born April 9, of John Welsh and Ellen Riordan; spon. Michael Kenny and Mary Curran. BMO

April 30 Martin, born April 3, of Bernard Hayes and Mary; spon. Martin Greely and Catherine Greely. BMO

April 30 Anne, born April 24, of Henry Riffle and Rebecca Weld; spon. John Riffle and — Riffle. BMO

April 30 Margaret, born Jan. 14, of John Devitt and Bridget Ca—; spon. Thomas McGinniss and Mary Radigan. BMO

April 30 Ellen, born June 20, 1864, of Martin Powers and Mary Cromlet; spon. Pat Powers and Mrs. Powers. BMO

May 21 Anne Cecilia, born March 8, 1876, of John Staley and Angeline Sabrey [written above: Saviour]; spon. John Lafferty and Mrs. Cayton. BMO

same day Mary Cath., born May 3, of John Meade and Mary Connors; spons. Wm. McClain and Mary Crow. BMO
 July 16 Pat. Thomas, born July 14, of Laurence Meade and Mary Reddy; spons. Laurence Meade and Mary Allen. BMO
 Sept. 10 Margaret, born Aug. 11, of Pat. Powers and Rachael Wilson; spons. William Clain and [blank]. [written above: McLain and Marg. Lang] BMO
 pages 22 and 23
 Sept. 10 Agnes, twin [of Margaret, above], born 11 Aug., of Pat. Powers and Rachael; spons. John Nugent and Kate Casey. BMO
 Oct. 8 Stephen, born Sept. 5, of Laurence Bowe and Mary McLean; spons. John S. Riffle and Juila Bowe. BMO [written above the child's name is Vincent Stephen Bow]

1877

Feb. 11 Joseph Dan., born Dec. 9, 1876, of Daniel Spires and Regina Baugh; spons. Jacob Tucker and Rachael Cecilia Tucker. BMO
 April 6 Cecilia, born Nov. 14, 1876, of John Flemming and Elizabeth Weldon; spons. Thomas Hughey and Mrs. Barret. BMO
 May 20 Theodore Groff, born protestant January 7th 1867. BMO
 May 20 Catherine, born March 19, of John McEntire and Charity Anne Clarke; spons. Michael McDonough and Ell. Barret. BMO
 May 20 Catherine Agnes, born April 6, of Thomas McGuinness and Mary Radigan; spons. John Cochlin and Mary Scott. BMO
 same day Albert, born April 26, of Dan Groff and Mary Seals; spons. Adam Seals and Nancy Daugherty. BMO
 June 10 Bridget, born June 5, of John Leonard and Bridget Boyles; spons. James Leonard and Mary Crow. BMO
 July 15 Ellen, born April 13, of William Lauch and Mary Kealty; spons. Ellen Keelty and James L. Lauch. BMO

Aug. 15 Clara, born Aug. 3, of James McClean and Ann Bowe; spons. John Riffle and Julia Bowe
 Sept. 30 Joseph, born July 30, of Henry Riffle and Rebecca Walsh; spons. Wm. McClean and Martha Riffle. BMO
 Oct. 28 Thomas, born Oct. 8, of John King and Bridget Monehan; spons. Thomas King and Anne Dougherty. BMO
 same day Alice Ann, born 21 Sept., of Maurice Fishpaw and Ellen McEvir; spons. Denis McEntire and Lizzy Huet. BMO
 same day John, born Oct. 17, of Laurence Meade and Mary Ree; spons. Thomas Meade and Mary Quinn. BMO
 same day Denis, born Aug. 24, of Hugh F. McEvir and Lizzy Huet; spons. Maurice Fishpaw and Ellen McEvir. BMO

1878

April 28 Mary, born June 28, 1877, of Thomas Sweeney and Sarah Huit; spons. Martin Greeley and Brigid Hickey. S. Weisinger
 same day Wm. Pat., born Mar. 17, of Dan Creeden and Alice Creeden [written above: Curran]; spons. John McLoughlin and F. Crow [written above: Phoebe Curran]. Simon Weisinger
 same day Margaret, born May 11, 1877, of Thomas Sweeney and Eliz. McLoughlin; spons. Dan Creedan and Alice Creedan. SW
 same day John, born April 14, of John Crow and Marg. O'Loughlin; spons. John Holleran and Mary Holleran. SW
 pages 24 and 25
 April 28 Christina, born Feb. 10, of Joseph Weinfeldner and Eliz. Kleinschmidt; spons. Dan. Gormley and Julia Purcel. S. Weisinger
 same day Mary Cath., born April 2, of John Staley and Angeline Sabery; spons. Pat. Purcel and Mary Purcel. SW
 same day Mathilda [overwritten Amelda], born Mar. 16, of Pat. Moore and Marg. McLean; spons. Wm. McLean and Sarah

McLean. SW
 June 2 Charles Leo, born May 19, of Pat. Gallagher and Rose McLean; spon. Chas. McLean and Marg. Riffle. SW
 same day Bridget, born April 29, of Edw. Powers and Ann Carey; spon. Pat. Powers and Ha. Salmons. SW
 Aug. 4 Thomas, born July 21, of Pat Powers and Cath. O'Brien; spon. Edw. Powers and Anie Carey. SW

same day Richard Thomas, born May 21, of John O'Neil and Eliz. Whitehead; spon. Thomas Hughes and Rose Hughes. SW
 Oct. 5, 1878 Charles Francis, born Sept. 22, of James McLean and Anna Bowes; spon. Geo. E. Moore and Julia Purcel. SW

The next record, dated Nov. 22, 1880, is the first made by Father J. S. Hannan, first resident pastor of St. Mary Parish in Shawnee.

Abstracts from the *Catholic Telegraph*

(Continued, from Vol. XXXIII, No. 3)

December 22, 1855
 Collections for Seminary and Orphans.
 St. Vincent of Paul, Mount Vernon \$ 66 70
 St. Luke's, Danville 20 00
 St. Michael's 2 00

The above transmitted by Rev. Julius Brent. The Mount Vernon congregation is entitled to much credit for its liberality, especially as it has local wants to meet also, being now engaged in erecting a residence for its esteemed pastor.

Fourth Quarter Subscribers (name, post office, date of issue):
 James Barrett, Ironton, Dec. 15
 James Boulger, Chillicothe, Dec. 1
 H. Brennan, Marietta, Oct. 27
 Michael Creighton, Barnesville, Dec. 1
 Frederick Creter, Canal Dover, Oct. 20
 Roger Cull, Chillicothe, Nov. 24
 Simeon Dorr, Miltonsburg, Dec. 8
 William M. Edwards, Chauncey, Dec. 22
 Rev. R. Gilmour, Portsmouth, Oct. 13
 R. J. J. Harkins, Duncan's Falls, Dec. 8
 John Keenan, Wilkesville, Dec. 8
 George Laubargher, Malvern, Dec. 15
 John McNamee, Columbus, Oct. 6
 Rev. James Monahan, Sunday Creek, Oct. 6
 Anthony O'Flaherty, Marion, Dec. 8
 Philip Patton, Canal Dover, Dec. 22
 S. D. Workman, Chauncey, Dec. 22

January 12, 1856
 Donations to St. Peter's Asylum [for Orphans, in Cincinnati] for 1855 include:
 Rev. Mr. Brent, Mt. Vernon congregation, \$42
 Mr. M. White, Mt. Vernon, \$5

Corrections to data appearing in this year's Almanac:
 Rev. Mr. Jacquet, and not Rev. Mr. Brummer, attends Washington, Guernsey co.
 Rev. Michael Kennedy has since been attached to this diocese. He will receive letters and papers addressed to him at Carlisle, Monroe county, Ohio.
 Rev. J. Goet[z]'s address, for the present, is Canal Dover, Tuscarawas county, Ohio.

—
 Akin to the foregoing [report of pickpockets at the cathedral], but of an infinitely more heinous nature, is the sacreligious robbery of the ciborium containing the Holy Sacrament from the church of St. Vincent, in Mount Vernon, on the night of the 20th December. We again and again implore the reverend clergy not to leave the Blessed Sacrament in a church at night, except in a secure iron safe, whenever there is the slightest danger of such impious profanation. To render this warning more impressive, if possible, we subjoin the letter written on this most melancholy occasion by Rev. Mr. Brent:

MT. VERNON, KNOX CO., O., Dec. 28, 1855.

MOST REV. FATHER:— When you read this your heart, like mine, will be sad indeed. A very great misfortune has befallen us. One day last week, Wednesday, or Thursday night, perhaps, some one opened the north-east window of the church, found the key of the Tabernacle, opened it, and carried off the Ciborium, Blessed Eucharist, and all! When I came up from Danville, Sunday evening, I saw the key in the tabernacle, which astonished me; and when I went to take it out I found the door was a little open; I opened it, and what a pang struck me when I saw there was nothing there! I did not speak of this on Christmas day, but I told it to a few of my own people, and pious souls who might weep with me at this sacrilege offered to our dear Lord. It appears that several robberies and attempts to rob were made on other places in town during those same nights, but no one was caught. You will, of course, know best whether to make this publicly known or not. Had it not been for this most sad affair, we should have spent a happy day, indeed, with our Infant Jesus, as my people had made the church look extremely well on the Saturday before with evergreens, pictures, lights, etc., and Mr. Lawton had taken

more than usual pains with his choir, that they might do well on that great day. How great the love of our Saviour, who exposes himself to such outrages for our sakes!

With the best wishes of the season to you and yours, I remain, in sorrow, your affectionate son in God,

J. BRENT

January 19 and Feb. 16, 1856

Parish Statistics for 1855:

Holy Cross, Columbus, 201 baptisms, 40 marriages, 19 deaths

St. Thomas', Zanesville, 106 baptisms, 15 marriages, 48 deaths

St. Peter's, Steubenville, baptisms 10, marriages 23, adult deaths 8, children deaths 14

February 23, 1856

Rev. F. J. Goetz is now living and residing at Marges, Carroll county; and all letters and newspapers must be sent for the future to Waynesburg, Stark county, Ohio. He is an assistant priest to Rev. D. M. Winands, Canal Dover, and Pastor of Marges and Lody.

(To be continued)