

Preface



A hundred years in the life of a man or woman is a long time. In the existence of institutions, especially the Church, a hundred years is as yesterday. But it is good to mark the passing of time, such as a hundred years, and occasionally to look back and assess the events that have occurred, the people who have lived, and the things that have been accomplished.

A history of a parish needs be a chronicle of events to a large extent. Judgment on those events is not always possible or necessary and perhaps not even wise. The important thing is that the events and the facts of the past hundred years be recorded as clearly and precisely as possible so that someday someone may wish to have them and use them. *Colligite fragmenta ne pereant* (Collect the fragments lest they be lost).

An old Latin adage says *Nemo est iudex in causa sua* (No one is a judge in his own case). With that in mind, I freely submit that the events chronicled here from 1969 to the present have passed through the judgment of the author, who is the pastor whose time of tenure is being described. I have tried to give a fair picture. Another writer can make the judgment if he so chooses.

Monsignor Richard J. Schuler

Chapter 1

EUROPE IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

Europe in the second half of the nineteenth century was still living under the effects of the French Revolution, the wars of Napoleon and the rise of liberalism. The unification of Germany and the *Risorgimento* in Italy had caused grave problems for the Church, and the power and the prestige of the papacy had suffered from these political events. Agnosticism was the popular position of intellectuals and belief in Christian revelation was under attack.

In Central Europe the great expanse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire was ruled as it had been for centuries by the imperial Habsburg family. In what was one of the longest reigns in history, Franz Joseph exercised his divine right as emperor from his seat in Vienna, extending his power over the peoples of a vast number of political divisions in what today would be Austria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Romania and Italy. He was archduke of Austria, king of Hungary, king of Bohemia, count of Tirol,

duke of Milan, duke of Styria, Carinthia and Slovenia, and over all else, the Holy Roman Emperor. It was the German language and Habsburg family that held this largest nation in Europe together until the First World War destroyed it.

The people who inhabited these beautiful and fertile lands of Central Europe, the lands of the *Donaumonarchie*, so-called since nearly all of its vast expanse was watered by that great river, were of Teutonic, Slavic, Magyar and Romance stock. The German-speaking people in the empire lived in Upper and Lower Austria, Salzburg, Styria, Carinthia, and Tirol. The Slavic peoples were found in the dukedom of Krain, the kingdom of Bohemia, Mähren, Dalmatia, Galicia and Bukowina. The Italians lived in the south Tirol and Romanians in Romania. It was a federation of peoples and languages, a real league of nations. Within dominantly Slavic regions there were German enclaves, especially in the areas occupied by the *Donauschwaben*, who lived in Banat which today straddles Hungary, Yugoslavia and Romania; the *Sudetenland Deutsch*, who dwelt in the lands close to Bohemia; and the Burgenlanders, whose lands on the eastern shore of Europe's greatest lake, the Neusiedler See, were sometimes in Hungary and sometimes a part of Austria as they are today. The mixture found within the entire monarchy was 25% German, 17% Hungarian, 13% Bohemian, 11% Serbo-Croatian, 9% Polish, 8% Ruthenian, 7% Romanian, 4% Slovakian, 3% Slovenian, 2% Italian, and 1% others. From this federation of peoples a great number of emigrants found their way to Saint Paul and to Saint Agnes Parish, especially those who came from the Böhmerwald, the Burgenland and the Donauschwaben from Banat. It was their Catholic faith and the German language that they had in common.

The German peoples north of the Danube had long lived in separate political divisions each subject to its local ruler, some ecclesiastical and some princely. In 1871 the north Germans federated and set up the German Empire with the Hohenzollern family as the reigning dynasty ruling from Berlin. Because the seat of power was in Berlin, the whole country was often called Prussia, and many Catholic immigrants from the Rhineland called themselves Prussians. Some sections of the new empire were inhabited by Catholic people, but the power was in the hands of a Protestant group under the domination of Count Otto von Bismarck who directed the *Kulturkampf* against the Church, a policy that led to a great emigration of Catholics to the United States. They came from Bavaria, the Palatinate, the Rhineland, Schwabia, Luxemburg and the Black Forest. To escape military service and the economic problems of the times, they sought a new world. The nineteenth century was a time of revolution and war, and neither the Habsburg monarchy nor the new German empire were spared.

In the Austrian empire, many ethnic groups agitated for independence based on a nationalism, a result achieved only in the treaties that closed the First World War which spelled the end of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. While the northern Germans had to suffer persecution for their faith, those in the south enjoyed the protection of the Catholic rule of the Habsburgs and life in an almost totally Catholic land. Both, however, were victims of the poverty that was found among the rural and peasant classes of nearly all European countries.

The north Germans suffered under the militaristic policies of the new empire as directed by Bismarck. There was a war with Austria (the Seven Weeks' War) in 1866 and another conflict with France (the Franco-Prussian War) in 1870. These resulted in a universal military conscription and a greater burden of taxation. Many people could not find work. Most of the population was made up of small landholders, farm laborers, small businessmen, day laborers domestic help. The new government began a program of industrialization which pushed aside the small shops and forced more and more into factory work. Emigration was the means of escaping the new slavery of a militaristic regime. In addition, Bismarck attacked the Church, beginning with the Falk Laws of May, 1873, which curtailed the jurisdiction of the Holy See in Germany, suppressed religious orders and attacked the bishops' authority in matters of education and ecclesiastical appointments. Opposition was organized in the Catholic sections of the country, but the atmosphere was not kind toward those who practiced the Roman Catholic faith.

Life in the Austro-Hungarian empire in the nineteenth century was largely rural with a few cities that had some modest industry. Many worked as farm hands or domestic servants for very little wages. The opportunity to earn more and live a better life prompted many to set out for America, reports of which had come from those who had gone earlier. There was no religious persecution under the Habsburgs, and the militarism of Bismarck was not to be found in the south German lands. But the poverty of all but a few who held the land or were nobility began the movement that swelled to enormous proportions by the turn of the century. They left the Alpine villages of Tirol, the fertile farm communities of the Danube valley, the larger and smaller cities, all seeking a new life in new world. Many priests and religious came with them, some fleeing persecution, others inspired by a missionary zeal to establish the faith in a new land.

It was to escape the political, religious and economic woes and the taxes that afflicted their lives in Austria-Hungary and in northern Germany that the great migration of the nineteenth century brought millions of German-speaking people to the United States, especially after the conclusion of the Civil War. Beginning in the 1860's, the flood grew until the First World War interrupted it for awhile, and then it continued somewhat lessened during the 1920's. This chart shows the volume of immigrants. (Coleman J. Barry, *The Catholic Church and German Americans*, p. 6.)

	<i>Austria-Hungary</i>	<i>Germany</i>	<i>Switzerland</i>
1860	244,887	13,989	
1870	31,000	210,000	9,000
1880	46,000	175,000	8,800
1890	134,000	400,000	10,500

1900	232,000	105,000	10,000
1910	553,000	36,500	10,000
1920	239,000	10,000	7,000
Totals	1,215,000	1,181,387	67,989

Catholics made up an average of 35% of the total German-speaking immigration into the United States during those years. Generally they settled in the same regions that earlier German immigrants had chosen. For the most part they sought out good agricultural lands and settled in the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers, in the Mohawk Valley of upper New York state, in Pennsylvania and along the shores of the Great Lakes. The so-called German belt formed a triangle with Cincinnati, Saint Louis and Milwaukee as the key points. Not all were farmers, however, and the cities of New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Cleveland, Buffalo, San Francisco and Baltimore were also heavily German, as well as Detroit, Newark, Pittsburgh, Rochester, Saint Paul and others.

Life in the rural areas of nineteenth century Europe was calm and peaceful but without the conveniences and amusements that the twentieth century has come to expect. There was no electricity, radio or television. There were no automobiles and very little travel beyond one's own village. A pride in work and an orderly life was usual. The Church regulated the lives of the people with its feast days and seasons. The center of the village was the parish church, usually a dominating structure with the cemetery near at hand. The church bells marked the hours of the day and announced the joys and sorrows of the community. Christmas, Easter, *Kirmes* (the parish festival), All Souls' Day and Corpus Christi with its procession through the fields were special occasions. Most towns had a music band and many places had their shooting clubs. Music played a significant part in life, and the parish choir was important. Flags and banners in beautiful needle work were treasured and used only for the great processions. Weddings and funerals, harvest festivals and school events made up the activity of the villages. Life was peaceful and lived under the hope of eternity promised by the Catholic faith that had been the possession of these peoples for a thousand years.

Father Coleman Barry, O.S.B., in his work, *The Catholic Church and the German Americans*, (p. 8-9) describes the outlook of these people that they brought with them from the world that they left:

Catholic German immigrants were concerned in great part not only with their material well-being in the new world, but primarily with their spiritual life. This may be deduced from the fact that among their first interests was the erection of a church and a school. Fresh from Germany and feeling isolated because of their

language differences, the German Catholics in the United States from the outset insisted that separate churches were an absolute necessity for themselves. The German Catholics settled together in colonies whenever possible, often by their own choice, more often under the direction of a zealous German priest or missionary. They desired to have churches of their own in which their traditional religious observances, and customs would be carried out, where they could hear sermons in their mother tongue, go to confession as they had learned to confess from early childhood, and take an active part in parish life through their beloved societies. They wanted the order and discipline of parish life as they had known it before coming to United States.

How did they come? It was a long and an arduous journey, first on foot to the railroad, then to one of the ports, usually on the Baltic Sea. They carried with them as many of their possessions as they could handle, and they had to make provision for food and bedding for the crossing of the North Atlantic which was often three or four weeks in duration. Families and friends gathered together, helping with the children and with those who became sick, preparing the meals in the common kitchens on the ships. The problems of language, the unfamiliar details of travel, the new experiences of railroads and seafaring vessels, together with the sadness of leaving home and relatives, friends and family, not just for awhile but forever, were emotional and physical traumas that demanded heroic courage. Financing the journey in itself was staggering, demanding the spending of the meager savings that long hard labor had put together. In so many instances, it was their Catholic faith that saw them through all the difficulties. Many found the journey beyond their endurance and never reached the shores of the new land, being buried at sea.

The Catholic Church was very concerned about the condition of the emigrants, and German Catholics, in particular, undertook to help them in their departure from home, on the long journey, and in the new land to find a settlement that would preserve their faith and allow them to move into the new kind of life that would be demanded of them. This was carried out chiefly by the St. Raphael Society (*Der Raphaelsverein zum Schutze katholischer deutscher Auswanderer*), with Peter Paul Cahensly as the man who did the most to organize and maintain agents in all major ports of Europe and America. They saw to the spiritual and temporal welfare of the emigrants as they left and as they arrived. In this country they assisted them with the English language, saw that they passed through the immigration formalities, provided them with lodging and got them on the trains for their ultimate destinations where friends and relatives or at least those who spoke their language awaited them. There were agents also in the major railroad transfer points to see that they were able to find the transportation for the last leg of the long journey. Many who finally got to Saint Paul spent some long hours in Chicago before getting the train for Minnesota. The Raphaelsverein took up the legal fights of those who suffered abuse on board ship and who could not defend themselves even in courts because of differences between German and American law, and the ever present problem of language. Leaving their own lands and not yet having become citizens of the new land, they were almost men without a country. But Cahensly and his society defended and protected them even in the face of great opposition, abuse and misunderstanding for his charitable work.

Father Barry (p. 33-34) describes some of the problems that confronted the St. Raphael Society in its work for the emigrants:

The suspicion, prejudice and chicanery of emigrant agents, lodging proprietors, local police, unscrupulous ticket agents and money changers, as well as representatives of some ship lines against the St. Raphaelsverein agents were incredible. Only gradually did the unselfishness and obvious religious character of the agents make headway against this concerted opposition and win for the St. Raphaelsverein a respected position on the water fronts. The construction of chapels, lodging houses, and express agencies; the creation of a banking and deposit service; the mailing, letter writing, and message distribution; the counselor facilities; and, most important of all, the thousands of religious services, Masses, sacraments, and spiritual solace that were offered to the departing emigrant in his mother tongue--these were but the high lights of a program the effects of which can never be adequately evaluated.

And yet despite all these efforts many lost their faith in coming to the new world. Statistics show that of the nearly fourteen million who left the old country, only seven million kept the faith according to comparisons made of the records in Europe and in America. But of those who preserved their Catholic faith, most were helped by the St. Raphaelsverein.

The arrival at Ellis Island in New York's harbor must have been a soul-stirring experience for the travelers who had spent so many long days and nights on the sea, tired and sick, anxious and yet fearful of what was to come. The sight of the Statue of Liberty and the bustling activity of the great port introduced the immigrant from rural Europe to the new world of America. Many are the tales handed down about those first experiences, and most families have such stories from those who came. One that always amuses but still exemplifies the bewilderment of the traveler in a foreign land relates how the sight of all the fruits and vegetables on sale in Castle Garden attracted the attention of someone who had seen little fresh produce during the long sea voyage. Particularly appealing were the beautifully red apples, much redder and much bigger than any that had ever grown in the Tirol; for a nickel one was purchased with great anticipation of the sweet taste; and how great was the disappointment when the first bite filled the mouth with an acid taste and hundreds of seeds. The apple was a tomato! The moral learned was that in this new world one must never be misled by appearances; the external beauty may well hide an inner corruption.

Chapter Two

Minnesota In The Nineteenth Century

Arch-Bishop Ireland



German Catholic immigration into Minnesota began in the 1850's and grew steadily, reaching its high point in the years following the Civil War until the turn of the century when it began to level off, coming to a halt with the First World War. Two subsequent waves of much less proportion occurred after the conclusion of both the First and the Second World Wars when refugees from the economic and political turmoil in Europe sought a new life in this country.

Minnesota in the decade preceding the Civil War was on the western frontier of the American nation. Statehood was achieved in 1858. The Diocese of Saint Paul was established in 1850, stretching from the Iowa border to Canada, from the Saint Croix to the Missouri River. Several treaties with the Indians had only recently opened the lands west of the Mississippi to colonization, and the valley of the Minnesota River was beginning to be settled. The Sioux Indians still were living along the valley, and only after the uprising of 1862 did the presence of the Indians dwindle. Settlers were coming into the territory chiefly by steamboat from the south; over one hundred steamboats docked in Saint Paul in 1855, and two years later nearly three hundred arrived. The railroad from Chicago reached the Mississippi at Rock Island, Illinois, in 1854, and from there the river boats brought the settlers to Minnesota, leaving them at Winona, Red Wing, Wabasha, Hastings and Saint Paul for their further journey to the lands that lay to the west. In the earlier decades it was the Mississippi that carried the burden of immigration, but after the rise of railroading, the bulk of new settlers came over the various lines that came into Saint Paul, making it the center of transportation for the opening of the northwest.

Saint Paul in the 1850's was the capital of the Territory of Minnesota. Its Catholic population was chiefly French Canadian, and its cathedral a very modest brick building on Sixth and Wabasha Streets, an improvement over the log chapel that Bishop Joseph Cretin first took possession of as his cathedral in 1851. The buildings in the settlement were mainly unpainted, log cabins set on narrow, winding, unpaved and unlighted streets. But German immigrants were increasing and they wanted their own church and the use of their own language. In 1853, Bishop Cretin commissioned Father Michael Wurtzfeld to organize a parish for them. The cornerstone of the first Assumption Church was blessed on August 15, 1855, a beautiful stone building for the first German parish in the city. The Assumption Church remained the center of German Catholic life for decades, even after

several daughter parishes were split off from it: Sacred Heart in 1881, Saint Francis de Sales in 1884, Saint Matthew in 1886, Saint Agnes in 1887 and Saint Bernard in 1890.

Catholic life was fostered in those years of intense growth in the number of immigrants by the establishment of the Catholic Aid Association for the help of those who in death lost their breadwinner in an alien land. Nearly every German parish throughout the state had its fraternal benevolent society. Through federation in 1878 of these parochial societies on a statewide and eventually nationwide basis, financial security was achieved for those newly arrived families on whom disaster fell.

It was at the Assumption that the German Catholic newspaper, *Der Wanderer*, was founded in 1867, which continues today as *The Wanderer*, a national Catholic paper edited by laymen, long famous for its strong position in defense of the Holy Father. During the days that it was published in the German language, it was a strong influence in teaching and directing the immigrant in the practice of his Catholic faith as well as his loyalty to his new country.

The *Katholiken-Tag* was an important event in German Catholic life. Modeled after similar meetings in Germany, it brought together great numbers of people from all parts of the state, speakers on important issues in the political and moral sphere, elaborate celebrations of Mass and always a great parade, an event very dear to the hearts of the participants.

In the 1880's the City of Saint Paul was growing to the west and the north. Settlement was beginning beyond Western Avenue, which was for many years the city limits. The organization of the Great Northern Railway and its extension to the west coast provided jobs for many of the immigrants arriving in Saint Paul, and with the opening of the Dale Street shops along the railroad's right-of-way the area known as Frogtown began to be settled by those who worked in the shops. Polish, Irish and German-speaking immigrants were the chief settlers, and each group organized its own parish, Saint Adalbert's for the Polish, Saint Vincent de Paul for the Irish, and Saint Agnes for the German-speaking people.

Origin of the designation, Frogtown, has often been misunderstood to indicate a French beginning, especially since a farmer named Lafond, after whom the present street is called, did live in the area. However, the true reason for the nickname comes from the high water table in the marshy section lying between the high ground of Calvary Cemetery and Saint Anthony Hill to the south. The meadow was alive with frogs who croaked loudly and who gave their name to the place. The Germans called it *Froschburg* and often in writing to relatives in Europe referred to their new homes in "Frogtown." Ultimately, it was because of the high water table that so many steps were built up to Saint Agnes Church, since the basement had been set at a level to escape water, and the upper structure was designed above the basement. Even today sump pumps operate to keep the sub-basement levels of Saint Agnes School free of water that an underground river would quickly pour into the boilerroom if the pumps should fail. The new houses built in Frogtown were small frame dwellings of a few rooms, often one story, but

capable of additions in the rear. The lots were narrow and the space between the dwellings was minimal. Sidewalks, when they existed, were often made of wood, and the streets were not paved. After heavy rains puddles were usual in the marshy district. Life in Frogtown was almost self-sufficient. Vegetable gardens and fruit trees were found in most yards. Each block or two had its bakery, grocery and meat market and a saloon. Even today the two-story commercial buildings that still mark the corner lots recall the time when these were thriving businesses in the service of their neighbors. Bread and rolls were delivered to the homes each morning; milk was peddled to those who had no cow; only beer had to be obtained by a visit to the *Wirtschaft* with a pail since the only refrigeration for that beverage was the cellar of the saloon in which the kegs were kept. Most clothes were homemade, and shoes could be bought and repaired along Dale Street which was the *Hauptstrasse* for the neighborhood. Recreation in the form of dancing, singing, weddings or other occasions often centered around Dietsch's hall on Western and Thomas. Saloons were numerous and on paydays they cashed the hard-earned checks. Children had few places to play, but the area that today is West Minnehaha Playground was then a swamp and dump and a favorite place for many escapades. Children usually were kept busy with chores, and peddling the newspapers or watering the graves in Calvary Cemetery earned a few pennies that were deemed a fortune in those days. On Sunday afternoons the pennies were sometimes spent after great consideration at one of the grocery stores with a glass candy counter full of goodies. Frogtown was a community of its own, and the distance to downtown Saint Paul on foot was enough to make such a visit rather rare. That was true for those who on Sunday had to walk the long distance to the Assumption Church.

And so in 1887, the need for a new German parish in Frogtown became apparent, and Bishop John Ireland appointed Father James Trobec, then pastor of Saint Felix Church in Wabasha, Minnesota, to organize the German-speaking people living north of Marshall Avenue and west of Rice Street into a new parish. The exact eastern boundary was described as a line beginning at Marshall and Western and running north along Western to Fuller Street, east on Fuller to Marion Street and then north on Marion to Como Avenue. The western and northern boundaries were not determined, and thus the new parish included many farmers in the northern and western sections of Ramsey County. The parish was incorporated as the Church of Saint Agnes of Saint Paul, Minnesota, on October 26, 1887. Father Trobec had wasted no time in beginning his spiritual work, for on October 9, he baptized the first child, George Schuhmacher, born on September 8, 1887, to Frederick Schuhmacher and Catharine Selinger. Officers of the new corporation were Bishop John Ireland, Monsignor Augustin Ravoux, the vicar general, Father James Trobec, the pastor, and Karl Schultz and Jacob Louis as treasurer and secretary. The first action was to obtain land and to erect a building to serve as church, school and convent.

Chapter Three

FATHER JAMES TROBEC (1887-1897)



James Trobec was born on July 10, 1838, in Billichgratz in the Diocese of Laibach in the province of Carniola (Krain), Austria. He studied in the parish school, and in 1855 he entered the gymnasium in Laibach. In 1863, he began his theological studies in Laibach and with the encouragement of Father Franz Pierz he emigrated to the United States and studied for the priesthood at Saint Vincent's Abbey in Latrobe, Pennsylvania. He was ordained on September 8, 1865, at the cathedral in Saint Paul by Bishop Thomas L. Grace. He offered his first Mass at the cathedral, and Father John Ireland preached the sermon. One of many young men from Carniola who came to Minnesota attracted by the work of Bishop Frederick Baraga and Father Pierz with the Indians, Father Trobec was a Slovenian. In the group who came with Trobec were men who later became well-known in Minnesota and the Midwest as pastors and bishops. Among them are numbered Archbishop Frederic X. Katzer of

Milwaukee, Father Alexander Berghold of New Ulm, Father Alois Plut of Shakopee, Father John Tomazevic of Stillwater, and Monsignor Joseph F. Buh, vicar general of the Diocese of Duluth. Their trip was financed by the Leopoldine Society of Vienna and the Ludwig Mission Society of Munich, both of which did so much to establish the Church in Minnesota. While German was not Trobec's *Muttersprache*, he was fluent in that language as well as his native Slavic tongue, along with Polish and Bohemian.

Archbishop Ireland, in his dispute with the German priests of the diocese over the question of parochial schools, found in the Slovenians an opportunity to provide care for the German-speaking people without appointing German priests. For many years after the Faribault School Plan controversy not any of the German-speaking parishes in the City of Saint Paul had pastors who were German. Rather, the Archbishop provided for the needs of the people by appointing German-speaking Slovenians. Father Trobec served at Belle Prairie for a few months in 1865 and then became pastor of Saint Felix parish in Wabasha, Minnesota, from October 1866 until he was appointed to organize the new parish of Saint Agnes in Saint Paul. On September 21, 1897, he was consecrated the third Bishop of Saint Cloud, where he served until his resignation on April 15, 1914. He died on December 14, 1921, and is buried in the parish cemetery at St. Stephen in Stearns County among his countrymen, the Krainers, as the Slovenians were called in German.

From the beginning the pastor of Saint Agnes was actively and regularly assisted by the members of the parish, especially those appointed as trustees and advisors. The minutes

of the meetings of the parish board, kept in English from the very beginning, indicate the many details necessary to set up a parish with its church, school, convent and rectory. The first meeting of the board was held on November 4, 1887, and the first action was to empower Father Trobec to obtain the necessary books to record the administration of the sacraments in the new parish. An expenditure of \$16.10 was required. The meeting on November 7 records that the collection the previous Sunday brought in \$111.82, but it also showed that the parishioners were paying their pledges of nearly \$5,000, because the sum of \$985 paid on them is also recorded. In order to proceed with the obligations necessary, a loan was secured from William Knell of Wabasha, probably a friend of Father Trobec, for \$1,200 at 7% interest. The parish spent \$25 to buy wood to heat the Polish church on Sundays since the Saint Agnes people worshipped at Saint Adalbert's from November 1887 until their new building was ready on August 15, 1888.

Almost immediately, the societies so important to life in the German parishes were begun. The Young Ladies Sodality was founded in 1888 with forty-six members. The Altar Society was organized in August of 1888 with 106 members. The Saint Anthony Benevolent Society began the same year, and the Saint Vincent de Paul Conference started in 1889.

A board of consultors was appointed, made up of Joseph Fischer of 611 Edmund, Charles Ubel of 551 Blair, August Seiber of 533 Como, Peter Redlinger of 619 Edmund, Frank Bergman who lived at Van Buren and Arundel, Philip Anfang of 434 Martin Street, P. Loskiel of 317 Carroll, John Brandl of 438 Aurora, Joseph Dusel of 466 Martin Street, and Hubert Mollers, M. Langer and Joseph Kohler, all of Rosetown.

In a characteristically German manner, on December 26, 1887, the trustees appointed two ushers "to show the people their seats in the Polish church and to maintain order at the door and on the gallery." In another action, also in a German tradition, in April of 1888, sixteen dollars were spent to buy music books for the choir.

The ladies of the parish were already busy collecting money to care for the needs of the pastor, and it was voted to buy the furniture necessary to furnish Father Trobec's modest house, a building which still stands today on the lot at 538 Blair, and to provide for the requirements of the altar and the liturgy. The first purchase of ground included three lots on the southeast corner of Lafond and Kent. \$1,666.67 was paid in cash, and a mortgage for the balance of \$3,333.34 was put against the land for two notes bearing 8% interest, payable in a year. It soon became apparent that the new building being planned would require more space, and so two additional lots to the east were acquired for \$2,300, and a mortgage was placed on them for a three year note given to Hubert Mollers at 7% interest. A small frame house stood on the corner lot, and this became the first rectory where Father Trobec offered daily Mass during the week. A barn was also on the property and was later razed. In October of 1888, the Mother General of the School Sisters of Notre Dame donated \$200 toward purchase of another lot east of the new building for \$1,200. The new structure would be a combination church and school with the Sisters' convent also included. Plans were drawn by George Bergman, an architect who was a member of the parish. Herman Terlinde, also a member of the parish, received

the contract for the foundation which was begun in November and finished for the sum of \$1,845. The cornerstone was laid on November 15, 1887.

Winter prevented further construction, but work began again on March 1, 1888, and on April 2, the contract for the superstructure was given to Philip Anfang. The work was completed by July 1, 1888, for the sum of \$8,744. It was built of lumber with iron reinforcement and brick veneer. Archbishop Ireland blessed the new building on September 23, 1888. It faced Lafond Street on the property now occupied by the rectory. Father Trobec at first lived with Archbishop Ireland in the bishop's residence but then he moved into the small frame house on the corner of Lafond and Kent where the church stands today.

Saint Agnes School, housed in the same structure as the church, opened its doors on September 5, 1888, under the direction of the School Sisters of Notre Dame who came from their motherhouse in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. There were 160 pupils registered, and four Sisters began the work: Sister M. Reingardis Adams, superior, Novice Enhildis Ufheil, Novice Marcellina Geier and Candidate Maria Mueller who was housekeeper. Students continued to apply, so another classroom was opened under Candidate Mary Louisa Steinbrener who was sent for. The chronicle of Saint Agnes Convent, kept by Sister Reingardis, described the new school:

The children were in the greater number, quite ignorant but not wicked, so that the teachers soon became very much attached to them. . . Our school did not stop growing, however, for in the beginning of April our school rooms could no longer contain the great number of attending pupils. Sister Mary Piata came from the motherhouse on April 4 to take charge of the fifth classroom opened in the basement of the building.

There were 350 in attendance in 1888 and 532 in 1889, and the enrollment continued to increase.

Many of the appurtenances for the new church were special gifts of the parishioners. The stations of the cross were given by Paul Reichelt, a Protestant, and were blessed on September 9, 1888. A statue of Saint Agnes was given by Mr. Hahn and a 1600 pound bell by John Schellinger, both members of the Assumption parish. The bell was blessed by Father Alois Plut on the same day. Karl Pusch donated vestments for Mass and Hubert Wallraff gave a statue of the Blessed Virgin along with a monetary gift.

The spiritual life of the parishioners was, of course, the chief concern of the pastor, and so a mission was arranged for Lent of 1889, preached by Jesuit priests. The children received their first holy communion on July 14, 1889, and just before the high Mass began, a fire broke out in the sacristy which caused minimal damage but Father Trobec burned his hands in trying to extinguish it. In August of 1889, the archbishop assigned Father Charles Mikula as assistant priest, and the trustees voted to add an additional room to the small rectory on the corner of Lafond and Kent. This may be the small dwelling that today is at the rear of the lot at 538 Blair Avenue.

Life in those years was never far removed from death, and sorrow struck the new community often. The first to die after the establishment of the parish was a young girl, only fifteen years old, Mina Pfeifer, who had typhoid fever. Many died of tuberculosis, pneumonia and the usual childhood diseases. Sixty-one people died in 1888, and of those, forty-four were children under two years of age who died of what was called "summer complaint." One of the trustees of the parish, Charles Schultz, also died in 1888, and Nicholas Pothen was elected to succeed him on the parish board. Father Trobec conducted all the funerals. Burials were in Calvary Cemetery. He himself wrote the records in the book of interments, as he indeed kept all the record books, including the minutes of the meetings of the board of trustees, which were written in English in a clear, somewhat flamboyant hand.

But there were occasions of joy also. The first marriage celebrated in the new parish was between Hermann Auer and Louise Schaubschlaeger on November 21, 1887. Both came from the Boehmerwald. There were forty-one marriages performed in 1888. The register includes many names that are still to be found among today's parishioners. Interestingly, a study of the marriage register for the first few years of the parish, 1887-1900, shows that nearly all those married were born in Europe. After 1900, nearly all who are listed are American born. The countries from which they came indicate that a vast majority were from various sections of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. 163 persons came from the Boehmerwald; 85 were from Burgenland; 67 came from the Rheinland; 30 from various sections of the German Empire; and 28 from such Austrian provinces as Silesien, Steiermark and Tirol.

At the end of its first year of existence, in December of 1888, the parish found itself with a new building that served as church, school and convent, a little frame house for the clergy, a debt of \$11,054.58, and six city lots along Lafond Street. The year had seen expenditures of \$20,005.61 and ended with a balance on hand of \$18. Among the things acquired for the new building were furniture for the Sisters, an iron fence for the front yard, side walks, storm windows and furniture for the church sanctuary. Wood and coal, insurance premiums, wine, candles and choirbooks took small sums according to present standards. Money was collected for the seminary fund, and \$30 was contributed to the missions. Money was sent to those suffering in Dakota and to victims of the Johnstown tragedy.

Growth of the parish and the school continued through 1890. During the summer, an addition was put on to the east side of the school, costing \$969, and by December of the same year an addition had to be made to that for another \$300. The enrollment was 532 pupils taught by eight Sisters. On September 8, Father Trobec celebrated the silver jubilee of his ordination to the priesthood with the archbishop and thirty-seven priests at Saint Agnes for the occasion. On October 5, Archbishop Ireland confirmed 103 children. The rapid growth in the area brought about the establishment of the sixth German-speaking parish in Saint Paul, when Saint Bernard's was founded for the district north and east of Saint Agnes.

Father Trobec had a great interest in music, and he himself directed the choir. Bishop Joseph Busch of Saint Cloud is said to have commented about the pastor of Saint Agnes: "When I was Archbishop Ireland's secretary, Father Trobec did not leave me in peace until I consented to chant the high Mass at Saint Agnes every Sunday. He would play the organ, direct the choir, and preach." New choir music was regularly on the list of expenditures, and in 1890 a new organ was acquired for about \$450. Love of music and singing was characteristic of the Slovenian priests, a fact demonstrated by the work of such men as Father John C. Gruden and Father Francis A. Missia, both of whom often sang and directed music throughout the diocese. The large size of the choirloft in the present church indicates Father Solnce's interest in music and the choir. Father Trobec's hand can be seen in a resolution adapted by the parish board on April 4, 1892, to give a supper to the choir and pay for it out of the church treasury.

New parishioners joined the ranks of the board of consultation in 1890 and 1891. The minutes show the presence at meetings of George Thill, Joseph Schaaf, William Esch, Alois Poferrl, M. Melchoir, Hermann Terlinde, John B. Wallraff, Michael Holonitsch and Nicholas Hermes. Jacob Louis and Nicholas Pothén continued as secretary and treasurer. In the post-Vatican II period the election of parish councils by the entire congregation has been thought to be very innovative, but the minutes of the board of trustees of Saint Agnes for April 4, 1892, contain this resolution:

Resolved to elect officers by proposing six members of the congregation for secretary and six for treasurer and allow the congregation to vote their choice, viz., one for the secretary and one for the treasurer. The gentlemen thus elected or chosen will be proposed to the proper authority to elect them legally into the board and to the respective offices.

Those "considered worthy of the trust" for secretary were George Lendway, Philip Anfang, Peter Redlinger, Jordan Ullman, Frank Bergman and Charles Ubel. For treasurer are listed Hermann Terlinde, Nicholas Pothén, John B. Wallraff, Michael Hollonitsch, Mathias Olsem and Mathias Wolkerstorfer. Results of the election retained all the old members and added George Mitsch. Philip Anfang became secretary and Nicholas Pothén continued as treasurer.

Building of a new parish house was considered at the May 16, 1892, meeting of the trustees. The constantly increasing enrollment in the school had taxed the facilities so that one class was forced to meet in the basement, an unfortunate situation. It was proposed to take over the rectory, convert it into two classrooms and build a new house for the priests on land on the north side of Lafond. A lot was bought for \$ 1,100 directly across from the present driveway between the grade school and the rectory. Discussions of the material for the house finally were resolved by a decision to build a frame building costing from \$2,500 to \$3,000. George Bergman drew the plans and the contract was let to George N. Gerlach for \$2,848. Work was completed by October 1892, and the building served as the rectory until it was incorporated into a new convent erected on the north side of Lafond in 1902, called Kloster Maria Hilf. That convent building was demolished in 1953 when the present convent on Thomas Avenue was finished.

The school continued to grow in enrollment even after the separation of Saint Bernard's area from Saint Agnes. In 1892, there were 661 students under the direction of twelve Sisters, and by 1895 there were 738 pupils with fifteen Sisters. There was need for more school rooms, so in 1894 another small building, one story high, 24 by 32 feet, was erected at the cost of \$400 along Kent Street south of Father Trobec's first house. It was called the girls' baby room, and the former rectory on the corner became the boys' baby room. An addition was made to the Sisters' house by adding a room above the kitchen.

A great tragedy occurred for the school and for the Sisters in 1894, when Sister M. Reingardis, superior of the convent and principal of the school, died of blood poisoning on August 17, 1894. She was only thirty-four years old and as first principal of the school did much to bring it into existence and guide it in its phenomenal growth in its first six years. As she was preparing to go to Hokah, Minnesota, for a spiritual retreat, she became ill. The doctors diagnosed a poison coming from a large carbuncle at the back of her neck. She died a very holy death with the Sisters surrounding her. It was a large funeral at which Archbishop Ireland preached the English sermon and Father Trobec spoke in German. She was buried in Calvary Cemetery.

While many members of the parish were employed in the Dale Street shops of the Great Northern Railway and in other industries in the area, many others were in business for themselves in various shops and stores in the neighborhood. The booklet prepared for the first parish fair, August 25-31, 1901, entitled *Andenken an die erste deutsche Kirmess*, has many advertisements of local stores as well as many from the downtown area and other parts of the city. Nicholas Weiler sold wine and cigars at 622 University; Lorenz Gerten provided horseshoes and repaired wagons and buggies at 618 University; Nicholas Gillen had a barbershop on Dale and University; and the Convenient Drug Store was on the same corner. George Adam sold furniture, framed pictures and was an undertaker at Edmund and Kent; F. M. Pothen ran his plumbing business at 585 Sherburne; Bussjaeger had a greenhouse on Dale and Charles; and A. J. Ries operated a grocery on Edmund and St. Albans. Frank Petschl dealt in fresh and salted meats and homemade sausage at 585 Dale Street; W. Weiss operated The Beer Cave at 365 Western Avenue; Nicholas Olsem had his pretzel and chip factory at 532 Sherburne; and Albert Radmann cleaned and repaired clothing at 611 University. Henry Juergensen operated the St. Louis Market at 558 Edmund; Hoppe Brothers offered choice meats and canned goods at 740 Edmund; Gustav Herrmann sold fresh and salt meats at 674 Blair; M. F. Gardner made and sold cigars at 619 Kent; H. Wesenberg sold groceries and also shoes at 564 Blair; William Rothbauer had a sample room on the corner of Kent and Charles for fine wine, liquors, beer and cigars. John Dornseiff's shoe store was at 559 University; J. Kieffer made sausages at 316 Rice Street; Reinhart Brandl contracted for plastering at 667 Edmund; John Winkler had a *Deutsche Wirthschaft* with beer (always fresh) and a pool-room at 673 Blair; and Andreas Mair was competition with his *Tiroler Gastwirthschaft* at 501 Blair, advertised as headquarters for the Tiroler Alpine-singing clubs. His ad promises *North Star Bier, Musikalische Unterhaltungen, Schnadahüpfel und Zitherspiel, Hier wohnt die Gemüthlichkeit*. In the tradition of Tirol, Spassvogel Yodeler Club performed there. And still another *Wirthschaft* was run by Johann Waldoch at 601 Western. M. Salzer's meat market was at 441 Lafond, and Miss Mary Tasadil

operated a dry good store at 619 Blair. Michetschlaeger's *Wirtschaft* was at 615 Lafond, and Charles Plebuch had his at 436 Lafond. Nicholas Hermes sold insurance from his residence at 567 Thomas; Christ. Weiden sold boots and shoes at 429 University; Schwalen Co. had wood, coal, flour and feed at 591 Dale Street; and Andrew Rangitsch had his grocery at 561 Charles; Kohler Brothers were in business handling meat and provisions at the corner of Dale and Edmund. John Brandl contracted for stone and brick work at 499 Grotto; A. J. Albachten had Yoerg's and Pabst's beer on sale in his sample room at 599 Dale Street; Schleh Brothers had wood and coal for sale at 522 Thomas; and Charles Peisert ran a meat market on the corner of Thomas and Mackubin. There was another *Deutsche Wirtschaft* run by John Piringer at 736 Edmund near Grotto; Frank and Mathias Hafner operated their grocery at 659 Dale Street; D. N. Wagner had a store for men's wares and tobacco on Western and Charles; and G. A. Wolfrum was druggist at 372 Kent Street. George Ries and A. J. Ries had their office at 918 Thomas where they offered to build churches, schools and rectories; John J. Schaff sold tombstones on Front Street near Calvary Cemetery; Edward Jungbauer was agent for Germania fire insurance at 474 Carroll Street; George Michel operated a grocery at 391 Rice Street. *Der Wanderer* cost two dollars for subscription, and Joseph Matt, who lived at 675 Charles, and William Baumgaertner worked to produce it. With such a variety of business enterprises within walking distance, the inhabitants of Frogtown had little need to go beyond the confines of their neighborhood.

Close neighbors to Saint Agnes were the Sisters of the Good Shepherd who established their convent on Blair Street on a twenty-seven acres plot and in 1883 dedicated their new building with a large chapel under a dome that dominated the area. The Sisters supported themselves and their apostolate by their laundry which serviced the Pullman cars that came into Saint Paul, which was an important railroad center. Residents of Frogtown remember the wagons that hauled the linens to and from the convent laundry. Saint Agnes boys served Mass in the Sisters' chapel. The convent remained a holy place secure on its hill above the city until the Sisters moved to Shoreview and the property was taken over by the Wilder Foundation.

1897 was a year of great activity for the parish. Continued growth of the school demanded more and more space for classrooms. The need for a church of sufficient size for the ever increasing number of families with many children was pressing. The first requirement was to secure land for the new building. At first some property was considered on the southeast corner of Thomas and Kent, but the proposed building would have faced west and the main door would be exposed to cold west winds. Legal difficulties with title to the lots also appeared, and so the parish trustees voted to buy three lots on the northeast corner of Kent and Thomas for a total of \$3,350 including a house on one lot. It was also noted that a better foundation could be made on that property than across the street. It was further decided not to let the new structure out to a contractor, but the trustees themselves would do the contracting. The minutes of their meetings for the summer of 1897 are filled with bids for stone, wood, plaster and labor costs. They agreed to pay the market wage. A stonemason received \$1.75 per day, and the foreman of the carpentry work got \$2.50 a day. Excavation began on April 20, and various buildings on the property were moved elsewhere. The house on the third lot east

of Kent on Thomas was moved to a lot east of the school on Lafond; the long school house (Father Trobec's original rectory) was moved to a new lot west of the priests' house on the north side of Lafond; and the little school house (the girls' baby room) was pushed 20 feet farther north along Kent.

Plans by two architects were submitted for the building. One was the work of Herman Kretz which was the one preferred by Archbishop Ireland; the other was a plan by George Ries, who wanted less money and who got the approval but without a guarantee that his plan would be used for the superstructure when it would be undertaken. The new building would be 116 feet from the main door to the altar, 68 feet wide inside, and 80 feet across at the transept. The sanctuary area would be 25 by 25 feet. Kettle River stone was purchased for \$690, and George Thill got the contract for the plastering for \$430. It was agreed to extend gas lines into the new building and install nine double and twenty single gas lights as well as to put gas lights into the rectory and the convent. In September, when the new basement church was ready, the area on the second floor of the original brick school-church structure on Lafond until then used as a church (sometimes called Saint Agnes Chapel) was converted into school rooms. Ten years after its founding, Saint Agnes now had a new church (for the time only a basement), sufficient school space, and a new rectory, but still lacking was an adequate convent for the Sisters.

However, the great news of 1897 was not the new basement church or any of the physical changes in the parish buildings. On July 28, about five-thirty in the afternoon, Archbishop Ireland came to Saint Agnes to inform Father Trobec that he had been appointed Bishop of Saint Cloud to replace Bishop Martin Marty, who died there less than two years after he was transferred to Saint Cloud from Sioux Falls, S. D. A farewell reception was held for the new bishop in the new basement structure on September 8. The place was beautifully decorated. It was the 32nd anniversary of Bishop Trobec's ordination to the priesthood. The parishioners gave him a handsome purse. On September 21 he was consecrated a bishop by Archbishop Ireland in the Saint Paul Cathedral on Sixth and St. Peter Streets, and on September 26 he blessed the new basement church at Saint Agnes and sang pontifical high Mass. Bishop Trobec was a frequent visitor at Saint Agnes while he was bishop, and many important events in the parish and in the archdiocese found him present, including the historic consecration of six bishops at one time on May 19, 1910, in Saint Mary's Chapel at the Saint Paul Seminary. Bishop Trobec was one of the co-consecrators.

Bishop Trobec was beloved of his people while he was pastor of Saint Agnes and while he was Bishop of Saint Cloud. He was a mild-mannered man, full of charity and the love of the poor. His flock, as he himself, were immigrants, and he never ceased to labor for them in their new land. He was with them in the sorrows of death and sickness, in the trials of poverty and the learning of new customs and laws. He comforted the afflicted and counselled the doubting and ignorant. He knew the necessity of education for the young and the value of prayer for everyone. He was loyal to the Church, kind in his relations with everyone, and above all dedicated to his vocation as a priest. Truly Saint Agnes can be proud of its founder.

Chapter Four

FATHER JOHN M. SOLNCE (1897-1912)



John M. Solnce was born on June 7, 1861, at Smiednik (Flödnig) in the Duchy of Krain (Carniola) in Austria. He was baptized the same day, and on May 31, 1868, he was confirmed at the cathedral in Laibach by Bishop Bartholomew Widmer. He studied in Laibach and on September 19, 1880, he emigrated to the United States, coming to this country with Father James Trobec who was seeking candidates for the priesthood in his native Carniola. He continued his studies at Saint Francis Seminary in Milwaukee, where his grades were excellent. Among his studies were French and Polish. One of his professors was Otto Zardetti who later became the Bishop of Saint Cloud. On June 24, 1884, Archbishop Michael Heiss of Milwaukee ordained him a priest in the chapel of Saint Francis Seminary. He celebrated his first Mass at St. Felix Church in Wabasha, where Father Trobec was then pastor. His first assignment was to New Ulm from May to September, 1885, when he became pastor at Hokah and then at Sacred Heart in Owatonna until October 1889. He served at Saint Matthew's in Saint Paul from 1889 until 1897 when he was assigned to Saint Agnes to replace Father Trobec who had been appointed Bishop of Saint Cloud. In 1912, he was transferred to the Assumption Church, and on November 15, 1915, he died, a victim of diabetes. The funeral Mass at the Assumption Church was celebrated by Bishop Trobec who had invited Father Solnce to come to the United States years before. Also among the ministers of the Mass were Father Ogulin and Father Rant, both to become pastors of Saint Agnes. Archbishop Ireland preached. Burial was in the priests' plot in Calvary Cemetery in Saint Paul.

On September 10, 1897, Archbishop Ireland wrote to Father Solnce appointing him to Saint Agnes and instructing him to finish up matters at Saint Matthew's the next Sunday and to provide for Mass on Sundays there until a new pastor was appointed. The new pastor assumed his spiritual duties at Saint Agnes, and for the first few years little out of the ordinary occurred. In May of 1898 it was decided to build the pastor a new stable for his horse for the sum of \$140. But on May 1, 1900, a letter from Archbishop Ireland began some great activity at Saint Agnes. The Archbishop wrote to Father Solnce:

Reverend dear Father:

I visited yesterday your schools and the residence of the Sisters. Permit me to say that I was simply horrified by what I saw of the miserable accommodations afforded to the Sisters. Not only are those accommodations such that they give no room for comfort, or provision for health, but even that they set aside the common rules of decency.

The distribution of the rooms in the basement, divided as they are between apartments set aside for kitchen and dining room of the Sisters, and apartments used as toilet rooms by the school children, cannot be any longer tolerated.

Yourself and your trustees will, I am sure, after a moment's reflection, understand that the Sisters must be treated with that care and courtesy to which ladies and members of a religious community are entitled. Their life at best is one of great hardship, confined as they are for eight or nine hours in dusty, ill-ventilated school rooms. It were cruelty to submit them, when they depart from the school room to such privations as the accommodations they have been condemned to.

Let me entreat you to call together the members of your committee, to read this letter of mine to them and ask them in my name to come at once to some conclusion that will remedy this distressful state of things.

In my own opinion, what should be done is to build a separate convent edifice, large enough to give all required accommodations to the Sisters, and so separated from the schoolhouse as to give them the privacy to which they are entitled.

I shall be glad to hear from yourself and a delegation of your committee what conclusions you intend to come to.

I may say to you at once, I am determined, even if I have to close the schools, not to allow the Sisters to live any longer in the manner in which I found them yesterday.

Sincerely,
John
Ireland

The letter was placed on file and the minutes record none of the observations that it must have called forth from the trustees. Nothing further was recorded about the problem of providing the Sisters with adequate living accommodations until the meeting of February 7, 1901, nearly ten months later, when Father Solnce opened the discussion of the matter with a proposal to acquire land for a new convent. It is interesting to speculate about the Archbishop's letter and his visit to Saint Agnes. It seems unlikely that the Archbishop

would have paid a visit to the Sisters without having received a previous invitation, which may have come from the Sisters themselves or from their motherhouse in Milwaukee, or perhaps from the pastor, who may have been anxious to improve the Sisters' living conditions, but might have had some opposition from the trustees. His position would have been improved by an order from the Archbishop, and the letter was exactly that and in rather severe language. Adding to that possibility is the second letter of the Archbishop to Father Solnce, revising the board of consultors and trustees, who may have been giving the pastor some opposition in his plan to build a new convent for the Sisters. These are only surmises, but the two letters coming so close and the very tone of them indicates that there may have been some friction between the pastor and the board, and that the Archbishop was called upon to support the pastor's initiative.

Another letter from Archbishop Ireland, seemingly in response to an inquiry from Father Solnce, indicates a degree of controversy on the board of trustees and consultors, or perhaps some questioning by the pastor of the role they were called upon to exercise according to the canon law of the Church. Archbishop Ireland wrote under the date of
June 12, 1900:

Reverend dear Father:

You wish to know what the rules and customs are in the Diocese of St. Paul for the selection of Directors and Consultors. I beg leave to say in reply that as to the number of Directors or Trustees, it is by the Articles of Incorporation limited to the Archbishop, the Vicar General, the Pastor and two lay directors. All business of the Church, if a legal effect is desired, must be transacted by these five members. The lay directors, according to the letter of the law, are chosen by three ecclesiastical members, but the custom allows that a member of the congregation at large be heard in this matter, and where their wishes are to be consulted, as I think they ought to be in your congregation, the members of the parish may choose six names out of which the ecclesiastical directors will choose two.

The consultors are named by the five directors. I think you have had entirely too many. Four would quite suffice. Too many only entangle matters and make the transaction of business difficult.

Of course, No. 8 of the new by-laws is to be and must be constructed literally. All debts contracted in violation of the by-laws are null and void. They are not debts of the parish but debts of the individual men who contract them.

Sincerely,
John
Ireland

It was moved at the meeting on July 26, 1900, of the board of trustees and consultors to place the Archbishop's letter on file. No indication of any discussions of it or how it was received or what difference it caused in the constitution of the board of directors and consultors was recorded in the minutes of their meetings. One might surmise that perhaps there was a connection between the two letters from the Archbishop. Perhaps also the building of a new convent caused some disagreement between the pastor and the board, resulting in the visit of Archbishop Ireland to the Sisters and his subsequent demand for adequate housing for them. A further connection may exist between Father Solnce's request of the Archbishop of a decision on the authority, jurisdiction and number of the laymen associated with the board either as trustees or as consultors. The minutes indicate that there was considerably less activity and responsibility on the part of the members of the board under the administration of Father Solnce than there was under Father Trobec. Usually they met each quarter for a report on the financial condition of the parish. Occasionally more frequent meetings were required during building projects and they were called by the pastor. During the first six months of 1902 no meetings were called because of the sickness of the pastor.

On March 21, another proposal was submitted to solve the problem of the Sisters' living quarters. It was suggested to buy the house at 547 Thomas Street as a residence for the priests, and build a convent on Lafond Street on the lots occupied by the priests' house and the parish hall. An adjoining lot could be bought for \$700. Remodeling of the house at 547 Thomas was ordered, and plans to put all the children into one school house, doing away with all the temporary frame buildings, required an addition to the school and a renovation of the former Sisters' quarters into school rooms. By August, the plans drawn by George Ries were approved for the new Kloster Maria Hilf. It incorporated the priests' house and built a connecting structure toward the west. The cost of the new convent was \$18,799, and the purchase price of the priests' house at 547 Thomas was \$4,000. With the cost of the lots, the parish spent \$28,444 for the improvements of 1901-1902. Not long after they moved into the new convent, the Sisters suffered the loss of their superior, Sister Angela Merici Domitio, who died of cancer on February 3, 1906. The archbishop attended the funeral and preached, and Bishop Trobec celebrated the Requiem Mass. Nearly the whole parish attended the funeral rites.

The problem of the function and make-up of the board of trustees and consultors was finally solved by the adoption of new bylaws on December 1, 1903. The board of directors or trustees would consist of five members: the Archbishop as president; the pastor as vice-president; the vicar general of the archdiocese; and two laymen, members of the parish and chosen by the three ecclesiastical members of the board. In addition, the board may choose two or more responsible men capable of assisting the trustees, to be called the advisory council. They have no legal vote in the transaction of the business of the corporation. Essentially these bylaws were those used in the other parishes of the archdiocese, and Father Solnce, probably at Archbishop Ireland's initiative, intended to bring the Saint Agnes procedures into line with the rest of the diocese. That may have caused some unhappiness for some who had previously exercised a more authoritative and extensive role.

In 1901, Saint Agnes held a great fair from August 25 to 31. It was advertised as *Die erste deutsche Kirmess, verbunden mit Vogelschiessern und Völkerfest*. A memorial booklet was published with pictures of the archbishop, the priests of the parish, the trustees and the parish buildings. It contained an abundance of advertisements along with prayers and devotions, and the schedule of services in the church. The record showed that the fair netted the great sum of over \$3,000. It was, no doubt, a great community event and a social success with a wonderful variety of activities.

In September of 1901, the Catholics of Saint Paul who came from the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg had the special privilege of entertaining the Bishop of Luxemburg, who was in the city from September 20 to 24. Bishop Joseph Johann Koppes celebrated Mass at Saint Agnes on September 20.

In 1903, Father Solnce made a visit to the Holy Land and on his return spoke to the parishioners of his journey. That same year another step into the modern world occurred when a telephone was installed in the rectory by the Twin Cities Telephone Co.

By 1906, the parish had completed ten years in the basement church and the thinking was growing that it was time "to come out of the catacombs." At a meeting of the trustees and consultors on March 5, 1906, a long discussion took place on the subject of a new church. Finally it was moved by Frank Hafner and seconded by Nicholas Hermes that the pastor should have a sketch drawn of a new church, and then call a mass meeting of the parishioners to ask their sentiments about completing the superstructure of the church. Nothing further was done until October 18, 1908, when Father Solnce again brought up the subject of the new church, and it was agreed to call a meeting of all the parishioners. It was set for Sunday, January 10, 1909, in the basement church after high Mass. Father Solnce said he wanted to get the sentiment of the parish about a new church. Emil Tesch asked about the present debt, and the treasurer, Nicholas Hermes, said it was \$20,000. Joseph Wolkerstorfer asked about what would be done with the present basement church, and Father Solnce explained that it would be used for various society functions. Peter Gillen suggested that if the parish would continue to do financially in the next thirty or forty years as it has done in the past twenty, a debt of \$ 100,000 could be assumed. George Gerlach expressed the opinion that the parish needed a church which would cost at least \$150,000 and that it would be an easy task to raise such funds. Frank Vogel thought the people should first be asked how much they would contribute toward the project. Joseph Matt said that it should be decided now if the new church would be built, and he thought it would be an easy matter to finance it. John J. Schaff urged the building of a new and splendid church

Then John Collett moved and Frank Hafner seconded a motion to build a new church over the basement for a sum of about \$ 150,000. A standing unanimous vote approved the action, and Father Solnce thanked the parishioners and assured them that the new church would be worthy of Saint Agnes. An executive board was appointed to carry out the work; it was made up of the members of the board of trustees, the advisory council, and several others, including George N. Gerlach, Peter Gillen, Peter Frey, Joseph Matt, Frank Hafner and John Diederich. This body would function under the by-laws of the

corporation to oversee the building of the church. On March 18, 1909, George Ries was engaged as architect, and he presented a sketch of the entrance to the new church on Lafond Street, which extended the structure about thirty-two feet longer than the original basement. He was instructed to draw plans for the building. On April 29, he reported to the board that the building would be in the baroque style and constructed of Bedford sandstone. Bids were to be asked, and opened on July 1. Since it was impossible to complete more than the basement in the current year, it was decided to reject all bids on the entire building and ask for bids only on the basement. John Fischer was awarded the contract for \$25,500 on July 17, 1909. Work began on July 22.

The cornerstone was laid on October 17, 1909, by Archbishop Ireland in the presence of a great gathering including Bishop Trobec and seventy priests of the archdiocese. It was a double occasion, because Father Solnce was celebrating his silver jubilee of ordination at the same time. The mayor of Saint Paul, D. W. Lawler, gave an address, and the parishioners presented Father Solnce with a purse of \$2,500 on the occasion. The stone was laid at the corner on Lafond and Kent where a stand was erected at the level of the water table, which was as far as the construction had gone. Carved into the stone were the words: *Christus vincit. Christus regnat. Christus imperat.*

The decision to continue the building of the new church was reached at a meeting attended by 182 parishioners on December 26, 1909, when it was decided to complete the work from the water table to the roof, but not the inside plastering or flooring. It was also decided to build a central heating plant for all the parish buildings. On January 10, 1910, the following contractors were invited to bid on the church: Lauer Brothers, John Brandl, John Fischer, P. J. Dailey, John Hoffmann, George Grant and Butler Brothers. When the bids were opened on March 9, Lauer Brothers were the lowest at \$112,581, which would bring the building under roof, finish the basement but leave off the tower roof. Provisions were made for the central heating plant to be installed by the Healy Heating and Plumbing Co. for approximately \$11,000. A loan for \$60,000 was arranged from the German Roman Catholic Aid Association, and at the motion of Joseph Matt, it was agreed to finish the building of the entire tower, the work being given to Lauer Brothers at the bid price of \$4,000. By September, \$83,000 in pledges had been collected according to Father Anthony Losleben, but additional borrowing was necessary and in March 1911 the Catholic Aid Association lent the parish an additional \$40,000, bringing their loan to Saint Agnes for the new church construction to \$100,000.

The building committee had moved very cautiously, ordering work little by little, first the basement, then the stone work and finally the plastering of the interior and the flooring. Loans were arranged, always with the knowledge that the payment of interest fees would thereby increase. Finally, in April of 1911, John R. Schmit was given the contract to plaster the interior and to install scagliola for stairways, aisles and the sanctuary. Georgia pine was to be laid for the floor under the pews. His bid was a little over \$27,000.

As the building neared completion thoughts turned to its furnishing, and a contract was let on February 3, 1912, for pews to be built of white oak. Approximately 2,200 linear feet were necessary, and the contract for \$4,795 was given to Minnesota School and

Office Furniture. The subject of bells for the tower was deferred until a later time. The great day for the solemn dedication of the new church was June 9, 1912. *Der Wanderer* described the occasion:

A more beautiful day than last Sunday could not have been chosen by Saint Agnes Parish of Saint Paul for the blessing and dedication of its church.

Preparations for this festival lasted until late Saturday night. For days, members of the Young Ladies Sodality had been making wreaths and garlands under the direction of the dear Sisters; on Saturday the interior of the church was decorated with flowers, green plants, and evergreen wreaths; the men were busy with preparation of the church yard for the solemnities.

A holiday atmosphere existed in church and the surroundings. The American and Papal flags fluttered from high poles, wound about with garlands. Wreaths of oak leaves and garland covered the outer walls of the church.

Crowds of faithful gathered near the church long before the ceremonies opened. Just before ten o'clock, the men's societies arrived and stood at attention from the rectory to the church.

Then the approach of the majestic procession of the clergy began. The cross in front was followed by a long line of seminarians and altar boys. His Grace, Archbishop Ireland, and His Excellency, Bishop James Trobec, followed, surrounded by members of the secular and regular clergy. The Austro-Hungarian consul, Herr Prochnik and Councilor Reuter, both in uniform, joined the procession. Then followed Consul Hans E. Grunow and Councilor Richard Lorenz of the German Consulate, Judge Willis, Judge Hanft, Otto Bremer, members of the Cathedral Building Committee, the Board of Directors of the Minnesota German Catholic Aid Association, the Staats Verband, and delegations from various other societies. Sisters of Notre Dame and representatives of other sisterhoods were seated on the raised platform. The beautiful prayers began at the main portal. Thereupon, the procession made its way around the church, while the faithful waited outside.

Just before eleven o'clock, the doors were thrown open and in a few minutes the faithful occupied the 1600 seats, as well as the aisles and side chapels.

Holy Mass began and from the choir loft resounded festive voices with orchestral accompaniment.

The pontifical high Mass was celebrated by the Most Reverend James Trobec, Bishop of Saint Cloud. His Grace, the Archbishop, was seated in the sanctuary.

We note here the names of those who took an active part in the ceremonies. Chaplains of His Grace, the Archbishop, were Verv Reverend Francis Schaefer.

rector of the Saint Paul Seminary, and Father Patrick O'Neill, pastor of Saint Michael's parish. Presbyter assistant was Father Anthony Ogulin, pastor of Saint Bernard's Church. Deacon and subdeacon were Fathers Gustave E. Plank and A. J. Losleben. Masters of ceremonies were Father A. Ziskowsky of the Saint Paul Seminary and Father Peter F. Remskar.

The music was in charge of Father Francis A. Missia of the Saint Paul Seminary.

Bishop James Trobec officiated at solemn pontifical vespers in the afternoon. Other members of the clergy present were Father A. Kotouc, presbyter assistant, Father G. E. Plank, deacon, Father A. J. Losleben, subdeacon, and Father A. Ziskowsky, master of ceremonies.

In making the announcements, Father Solnce addressed a few words to the parish, thanking God that not one accident had occurred during the building of the church. The sermon was preached by His Grace, the Archbishop. He addressed words of appreciation and encouragement to the parish.

"This is a day of which we may be justly proud, the day on which this beautiful edifice is dedicated to God. It is a building worthy of the high purpose which it serves. I congratulate you heartily on its completion.

"You have contributed your gifts to this work, gifts great and small. You have given your whole strength to accomplish this work. Looking up the sublime walls of this Holy Place, you are able to say: I am happy to have had a part in this great undertaking.

"And what you have done in the past you shall also do in the future as long as necessary."

"You will not rest until in a few years you shall have sufficient means in order that this beautiful House of God may be dedicated to the Almighty by solemn consecration."

"You can be proud of your church, next to the Cathedral, the grandest church in Saint Paul."

"Few parishes will have the courage to do that which you have done. I congratulate the whole diocese, the whole Northwest, that there is a parish among us which dares to undertake something so great, which shows confidence in the future, and I hope that your example will be followed by others."

After the pontifical Mass, Bishop James Trobec, the founder of the parish, delivered a German sermon. In cordial words he congratulated the parish and his successor, Father Solnce, who unselfishly devoted himself to the work and had inspired the artistic plan of the church and the beautiful celebration of its

dedication to divine service. He also spoke in a touching manner of the Catholic Church as the dwelling place of the Eucharistic God.

In conclusion, the whole parish sang *Holy God*. The clergy assembled at a banquet in the convent, Maria Hilf, and a banquet was served for the parishioners and their guests in one of the basement halls of the church.

On Sunday, June 16, the Most Reverend John J. Lawler, Auxiliary Bishop of Saint Paul, administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 603 children, the largest number since the founding of the parish. The monumental parish church of Saint Agnes was complete and dedicated, truly a tribute to the faith and courage of the pastor, the board members and the parishioners themselves. As Archbishop Ireland said, it was the grandest church in Saint Paul next to the cathedral itself. The very dimensions of the structure with its sweeping approach, its soaring onion-tower and its distinctive red tile roof make it one of the most significant buildings in the state.

G. DIMENSIONS OF THE CHURCH OF SAINT AGNES

Length, including stairway 264 feet, 5 inches
Length of building 200 feet, 7 inches
Width 72 feet, 10 inches
Width of transept 86 feet, 5 inches
Sanctuary area 34' X 32' 6"
Height of main dome 60 feet
Height of lesser domes 50 feet
Height of aisles 44 feet
Height of tower above grade 205 feet, 2 inches
Height of roof 80 feet
Height of tower cross 14 feet
Incline of nave floor 3 feet

The baroque style chosen was familiar to the immigrants from Austria-Hungary. Indeed Saint Agnes could stand in Graz, Innsbruck, Laibach, Vienna or Salzburg and be an attraction for tourists. It would fit into the architecture of any city or town of southern Germany, Austria or Yugoslavia today and be a jewel in the crown of baroque churches that sprinkle that area. The architect in consultation with Father Solnce and the board chose as his model for Saint Agnes a monastery church in Upper Austria, Kloster Schlägl, a Premonstratensian abbey, located near the town of Aigen in Mühlviertel. The area is beautiful, rugged with granite hills and forests. It lies just south of the Bohemian (Czechoslovakia) border, east of Passau, and not far away from the district where many Saint Agnes people had emigrated from, the Böhmerwald. Monsignor Schuler tells a story about two young seminary students from Kloster Schlägl he met in Rome at the international study house of the Premonstratensian priests. He asked them if they would like to see a picture of his parish church, and he showed them a picture of Saint Agnes. They immediately on seeing the photograph said that the picture was of their abbey church in Upper Austria and not of an American parish church. Notable about Saint

Agnes is the grace of the tower with its *Zwiebelturm* or onion tower, so characteristic of the south German baroque style. While nearly every church in the *Süd deutsche Raum* (the German-speaking lands south of the Danube) has an onion tower, travellers will look in vain for one that has the soaring grace of Saint Agnes. Just as classic is the facade with its statues of Saint Agnes, Saint Peter and Saint Paul and the elaborate carving in stone that emphasizes the three doors and the windows. The inscription above the main entrance, *Porta Coeli*, truly characterizes the grandeur of the edifice. It is the door of heaven.

One of the gems adorning both the exterior and the interior of the church is the Maria Hilf chapel, to the left of the main entrance. Dedicated to Mary, Help of Christians, it has a replica of a painting that hangs in the Mariahilfkirche on the Mariahilferstrasse in Vienna. Father Solnce had a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin under the title of Maria Hilf, and so a Viennese artist, Joseph Kastner, was asked to paint the picture.

While the stone exterior was completed in all its elegance, the work of finishing the interior with the elaborate decorations in plaster and paint which mark the baroque churches of Europe was never completed. The church was painted and some decoration added with paintings and plaster, but the interior was never brought to the artistic heights that had been reached on the exterior construction. Many reasons can be found, not least among them the enormous costs that had already been incurred in erecting the building. And another reason lies in the departure of Father Solnce whose dream the building had been. And, not least, the First World War.

In November of 1912, Archbishop Ireland announced a series of changes for the clergy in the German parishes of Saint Paul. The Benedictines from Saint John's would leave the Assumption Church which they had served since 1858 and assume the pastorate of Saint Bernard's Church. Father Anthony Ogulin would leave Saint Bernard's and come to Saint Agnes. Father Solnce would become the pastor of the Church of the Assumption. The Archbishop indicated that Father Solnce's deteriorating health made a less demanding assignment imperative. On November 3, he preached his farewell sermon in the new church which he had built. He stood silent for a long time and then said in German, *Ein sterbender Priester geht in eine sterbende Gemeinde!* (A dying priest is going to a dying parish!)

No written portrayal of Father Solnce's qualities exists. His monument stands in stone at Lafond and Kent. What he accomplished in the building of the great church of Saint Agnes lives on. He must have been a man of great sensitivity, artistic in his tastes, educated in the beauty that the Church has always used in praise of God. He loved music and his inherited appreciation for the treasures of art and architecture that he knew from his homeland never left him. As God's plan evolved, he was chosen at the right moment to be the instrument that directed the building of the new parish church at Saint Agnes. God had raised up Father Trobec to found the congregation and establish its organization. Father Solnce came at the decisive moment when the path into the future for a century or more was about to be set. He left the beauty of Saint Agnes to the thousands who have come and will come after him. His choices have set the crown of a glorious church on the

foundations of the immigrant parish, marking the greatness from which the immigrants had come and enabling them and their children to continue the glory of the Catholic Church in this country as they had known it in the various lands which they had left. The German language has faded, but the art of those German-speaking lands has been preserved in stone, thanks to Father Solnce. It took the entire archdiocese to erect the magnificent Cathedral of Saint Paul, but the parish of Saint Agnes alone built another cathedral, which the Archbishop called the "grandest church in Saint Paul next to the Cathedral." On November 6, the parish had a farewell celebration for their pastor, and on November 7, after a Mass of thanksgiving, he left Saint Agnes for the Assumption with Father Losleben. Just three years later, he died on November 15, 1915.

Chapter Five

MONSIGNOR ANTHONY OGULIN (1912-1933)



Anthony Ogulin was born in February 1862, at Semic in the Duchy of Krain in Austria. He did his classical studies at Rudolfswerth in his native land and came to the United States in 1880 and entered Saint Francis Seminary in Milwaukee. Archbishop Michael Heiss ordained him a deacon in the seminary chapel in Milwaukee, March 13, 1884, and on September 19, 1884, he was ordained a priest by Archbishop Ireland, who appointed him pastor at Heron Lake, Minnesota, where he remained for four years. The records at the Chancery in Saint Paul show that a dispensation had to be obtained for the young cleric, since he was eighteen months too young for the canonical age required for ordination to the priesthood. It was granted by Pope Leo XIII through the Sacred Congregation of the Propagation of the Faith, dated July 22, 1884. This may account for the fact that Father Solnce and Father Ogulin were not ordained together on the same day in June. From 1888 until 1890 he was pastor at Saint Peter, Minnesota, from whence he came to Saint Paul to begin the new parish of Saint Bernard, which was cut off of Saint Agnes on the north and east. He remained at Saint Bernard's for twenty-two years. On November 12, 1912, he came to Saint Agnes. He was made a domestic prelate in 1924 under Archbishop Dowling. He died on August 21, 1933, and is buried in the priests' plot of Calvary Cemetery.

In 1912, when Saint Agnes welcomed its new pastor, it was hailed as the largest German-speaking parish in the state. It was extremely proud of its new and splendid church, its very large school and the quality of its other parochial buildings. Its parish societies were flourishing, and the German culture and the Catholic faith to which they were dedicated was strong. Life in Frogtown was good and the standard of living had markedly risen since the early days of the pioneers. Work, frugal living and careful saving along with good education had brought many to a comfortable level of life. In 1912, the world looked secure and prosperous, and most people thought that things would go on in the same manner for a long time to come. But then came the events of August 1914, which changed the world and Saint Agnes too. World War I began.

The debt on the new church was staggeringly huge even by present standards. Father Ogulin's chief task during his pastorate would be to reduce the parish indebtedness. He began by asking the parishioners to lend money to the parish corporation so that the outstanding loans made during the period of construction might be retired. The minutes of the meetings of the board of trustees show the generosity of the people in responding

to his request. Usually the interest paid on the notes was 3%. If one adjusts the figures of 1912 so that the inflation of the past seventy years is reflected, the true costs of the building of the church and the subsequent indebtedness of the parish can be seen in modern figures. What was an undertaking in 1910 that cost \$225,000 in today's adjusted figures would cost \$2,475,000, the formula for arriving at the figure being that furnished by the Bureau of Labor Statistics which indicated the difference in the dollar from 1910 to 1985 is a decrease in value of 110%.

Many finishing details remained to be done on the church. A communion rail was purchased from the Deprato Co. of Chicago, and the pulpit was installed. New hand railings were added to the east and west entrances, and cement sidewalks were laid. On May 18, 1913, one of the great occasions in the history of the parish was the blessing and raising of the three church bells into the steeple. Cast in Baltimore by the McShane Bell Foundry, they were solemnly washed with holy water and anointed with holy oil according to the Roman pontifical by Bishop Trobec, the founding pastor. Father John Seliskar of the Saint Paul Seminary preached the sermon. The bells were named Saint Anthony, Saint Agnes and Saint John, each weighing respectively 3,300 lbs., 2,332 lbs., and 1,683 lbs. They sound the tones D, E and F#. On the same day the statue of Saint Agnes, in cast iron, was blessed and placed in the niche on the facade. The Saint Anthony Benevolent Society was the chief donor of the bells with a gift to the parish of \$1,400. Total cost of the bells was \$2,087.60. The records list the following sponsors:

Mrs. Louis Keller, Mrs. J. B. Arend, Mrs. T. Keeker, Mrs. George Adam, Mrs. Val Renz, Mrs. John R. Schmidt, Mrs. Henry Steinkamp, Mrs. C. Stieger, Mrs. J. B. Wallraff and Mrs. J. M. Frenzel, as well as Nicholas Hermes, Joseph Matt, George Ries, Joseph Frey, Nicholas Schmidt, Nicholas Herges, Joseph Wolkerstorfer, George Lendway and Carl Guldin. The account in the *Volkszeitung* recorded that three thousand people attended the event, including the pastor of Saint Adalbert's, Father Peter M. Roy, Father Solnce, Father F. X. Bajec, Father John C. Gruden, Father Francis Missia along with Father Ogulin and his assistants, Father Gustav Plank, Father Peter Remskar and Father E. Rickert.

As the church was used, various needs developed. Father Ogulin noted that there was not sufficient light for evening services. So lights were installed in the dome and the sanctuary for \$238. The pulpit cost \$600, and the confessionals the same. \$800 was paid for the communion rail. In the spring of 1915, Father Ogulin purchased chandeliers for the church at the price of \$300; they were the gift of George N. Gerlach and George Ries. By 1916 it was noticed that water dripping from the roof and freezing made the side stairways to the church very dangerous, so it was decided to put a roof over both stairways. In 1916 the interior of the church was decorated for the sum of \$3,500 by Mr. Lalande. A big improvement was the installation of electric lights in the rectory, in the church hall and on the front steps in 1917. The same year saw the purchase of the pipe organ from the Strand Theater for \$750, which was offset by the sale for \$250 of the old organ that Father Trobec had acquired. And with all the improvements, the debt on the

parish was reduced to \$131,433 by the end of 1917, as Father Ogulin, the trustees and the parishioners continued to whittle away at the staggering burden.

Saint Agnes was the showplace of the German people of Minnesota. In 1914, it was new and just opened for worship. The church bells had been installed. The pastor and the parishioners were intensely proud of their church. It was fitting that the first celebration of Saint Boniface Day be held at Saint Agnes. So on June 7, 1914, German-speaking Catholics from all the parishes of the state assembled at Saint Agnes with a great procession from the state capitol to the church. It was a stifflingly hot day, but two thousand people took part. In less than two months, with the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand, war began in Europe. With an anti-German sentiment growing in this country, the Saint Boniface Day celebrations were doomed, as indeed were many other elements of the German culture and language that the national German parishes had been organized to preserve as a fundament upon which the Catholic faith would rest for each succeeding generation. Saint Agnes parish, however, never suffered the traumatic experiences of some German communities such as New Ulm, where enforcement of the draft laws compelled first generation naturalized Americans to take up arms against their very brothers and relatives, who had been forced into the military forces of the other side. When they resisted the draft, many German communities were accused of being un-American and non-patriotic. Efforts to emphasize a love of their adopted country and to minimize the prospect of fighting against one's own flesh and blood were successful in the Frogtown community. There was no question of the American loyalty of Saint Agnes. The flag flew from the tower of the church and a flagpole was erected in the school yard. The parishioners bought the victory bonds, even if rather reluctantly, when they were automatically extracted from their pay checks. It was these bonds that at Father Ogulin's suggestion many parishioners donated to the church to reduce the parish debt when they matured for collection. Many gave them in thanksgiving for the peace that the war's end brought. The plan was successful, because by the April 10, 1919, meeting of the trustees, Father Ogulin was able to suggest that the loan from the German Roman Catholic Aid Association should be paid, since he had the necessary cash on hand from the gift of the victory bonds.

Possibly connected with an anti-German spirit was an event that could have become a major tragedy. At 4 A.M., on Sunday morning, November 4, 1917, a bomb was thrown into the rectory at 547 Thomas Street, while everyone was asleep, wrecking the house and causing great damage. The three priests narrowly escaped death or injury. The fiftieth jubilee book describes what happened:

Heavy oak doors were torn off and hurled across the rooms. One struck Father Ogulin, hurling him on his bed. Large bookcases, chairs, tables, dishes, carpets, statuary, and other articles flew through the air and crashed in fragments to the floor. Plaster from nearly all the walls and ceilings in the front of the house fell and covered the floor with a three-inch layer of dust. The stair railing was torn off.

A great gaping hole was left in the two-inch oak floor where the bomb struck. A scantling, two by ten inches, directly underneath, was ripped out from the joists.

Splinters and parts of the floor were driven through a pile of newspapers and magazines two feet by the force of the explosion.

The office, Father Ogulin's study, and a bedroom, the hall, and the dining room were damaged most seriously. There was scarcely a bit of plaster left on the walls or ceiling of any of these rooms. Furniture was demolished. Books were scattered everywhere with parts of chairs and carpets, bits of linoleum and other wreckage covering them. China closets and cupboards in the dining room were shattered, and their contents smashed to fragments on the floor.

Father Ogulin's escape was almost miraculous, since his room was so close to the place of the explosion. It was estimated that the force was such that it would have required twenty half-pound sticks of dynamite to do such damage. The police discounted the theory that the bomb was thrown by an anti-German fanatic. They inclined rather to think that it was a religious fanatic and put other Catholic churches and rectories under guard, including the residence of Archbishop Ireland on Portland Avenue. No one could find a motive for the action and it was generally conceded that the bomb was not directed at Father Ogulin personally. When the criminal was apprehended he admitted that his deed was prompted by a hatred for all German priests, and that he had no special grudge against Father Ogulin or the other priests at Saint Agnes, Father Rickert and Father Freisleben. After being apprehended near Minnehaha and St. Albans, John W. Hitchler, who had lived for some time at 623 Mackubin Street, was judged to be insane and was committed to the state hospital in Saint Peter, Minnesota. He had thought himself victimized by a German priest in Wisconsin during a marital difficulty that led to his divorce, and thus turned on all German priests. The board of trustees met to consider what to do about repairing the building. John R. Schmidt said that a new building would cost between \$16,000 and \$20,000, so it was decided to make repairs which would cost about \$3,000. In the meanwhile, the priests lived with the parishioners.

The technology of the modern world kept coming into Frogtown as it invaded the nation. Saint Agnes now had telephone service and electric lights among its conveniences. In 1918, Father Freisleben petitioned the trustees to give him an allowance for the operation of his new "machine," Father Ogulin explaining that the automobile would be used for the good of the parish. They gave him ten dollars a month. A few months later, the rectory was equipped with an electric washing machine! But the Sisters had to wait until 1922 for electric lights in the convent and until 1926 for the school.

The years after the end of the war saw collections taken up in church to help those suffering in Europe as a result of the war. And a new wave of immigration began, especially from the eastern parts of the old Austro-Hungarian Empire which the peace treaties had dismantled by erecting many new nations out of the territory formerly ruled by the Habsburg family. At home too, the end of the war marked the beginning of a new era. The very reason for the German-speaking national parishes was lost as the German customs and language were set aside in the excessive efforts to prove an American loyalty. The societies began to wane. Such institutions as the *Deutsches Haus* on Rice Street, organized as a place for families to enjoy the German way of life, fell on hard

times and finally ceased to function. With the passing of the eighteenth amendment to the constitution of the United States which introduced prohibition, the old *Wirtschaften* that marked so many corners in Frogtown closed down in a strange effort of the federal government to regulate what each person might drink. Saint Agnes School no longer had its classes in German and the German sermons disappeared from most of the Sunday services. A new era had dawned and demanded a great adjustment which the coming generation quickly adapted itself to.

Archbishop Ireland died on September 25, 1918, just before the war came to an end. On March 25, 1919, Archbishop Austin Dowling was installed as the second Archbishop of Saint Paul. Among the first things the new archbishop undertook was a census of the diocese, which required each parish to survey its members and make an accurate file of information on each. For Saint Agnes, as a national parish, this became a major project, since the people often lived quite a distance from the parish church. The area was divided into thirty-three sections and men were appointed to take up the work which was to be finished by November 25, 1921. With an accurate count of the parishioners and information about them, it became possible to carry out the archbishop's request for funds for the Archbishop Ireland Educational Fund, which in time erected Nazareth Hall Preparatory Seminary at Lake Johanna and built a new facility for Cretin High School on Randolph and Hamline Avenues. The other effect of the census was the introduction in 1922 of the Sunday envelope system for the support of the parish. In 1924, while he was in Rome, Archbishop Dowling requested the honor of domestic prelate for the consultors of the archdiocese. On February 5, Father Ogulin was among seven priests given the title of monsignor. Archbishop Dowling came to Saint Agnes for the investiture of the pastor in the purple robes of his office. In 1926, Monsignor Ogulin traveled in Europe during the summer months, visiting the land of his birth.

The children in Saint Agnes School always celebrated the Monsignor's patronal feast day of Saint Anthony, January 17. There were programs presented in the hall in the basement of the church, and each child received a bag of candy as a treat. But the big thrill was Monsignor's announcement that the remainder of the day would be free and all could leave school for a holiday.

The parish, the school, and especially the Sisters were saddened with the news that Sister Mary Frances Solana Grellner died on March 31, 1927, shortly after finishing her term as superior at Saint Agnes Convent in May of 1926. She had been principal of the grade school. She was the third superior at Saint Agnes to die in office or just shortly afterwards. Sister Mary Reingardis Adams and Sister Angela Merici Domitio had preceded her. Sister Mary Joseph Eister followed them in 1932.

At the meeting of the trustees in January of 1927, Monsignor Ogulin announced that the parish was free of debt, all that was owed on the building of the church having been paid. This was a blessing for the parish, especially with the financial depression of 1929 not far in the future, when many parishes with large debts found great difficulty in continuing. It was decided to set up a special building fund, and plans to install a new marble altar costing about \$20,000 were initiated. The altar and the new stained glass windows were

put into the church in 1930 and as part of the project the church was redecorated and the galleries above the sanctuary were closed up, saving considerable heat. In 1931, a microphone was installed to help with the preaching.

The stained glass in Saint Agnes is a classic example of the Munich school of glass. It is the work of F. Mayer Co. of Munich. The iconography depicts the life of the Blessed Virgin Mary in the windows of the west wall, and the life of Christ in those in the east wall. The choir loft has windows with pictures of Saint Cecilia, Saint Gregory, King David and the angelic choirs. In other parts of the church smaller windows are decorated with various symbols. The detail of the painted figures often goes without notice because of the distance from the viewer, but one should observe the fineness of the garments and the decoration of the rooms in which the various scenes are portrayed. Colored photography reveals the true treasure that they are.

The marble altar was installed by Drake Marble Co. of Saint Paul, having been fabricated in Italy. The mosaic, depicting the crucifixion of Christ with the Blessed Virgin and Saint John, as well as the portrayal of Saint Agnes with her lamb and palm branch, are the work of the Vatican mosaic studio. The detail of the inlaid marbles and the delicately carved angels, both those with their trumpets at the top and those kneeling in adoration on each side, make the altar a truly significant artistic treasure. The carving of the Lamb of God over the Book of the Seven Seals and the Alpha and Omega adorn the front, and the six columns of polished Siena marble carry the baldachin with its decorated marble tassels. An interesting detail might be noticed by the astute observer. If one compares the two marble vases at the top near the windows, it can be seen that they are not exactly centered, because the sanctuary itself is a little smaller on one side than on the other. Originally the church was to have faced Thomas Street, but because the trolley cars were routed on that street, the church was turned to face Lafond Street. The foundations for the tower had already been placed, and it had to remain. In planning the sanctuary area, some of the space was occupied by the tower, and thus it was somewhat reduced on the west side. Only when the altar was installed could this be noticed. The artist was wise. He erected the cross at dead center, but the vases do not each have the same relationship with the windows. One protrudes slightly farther toward the window than the other.

The decade of the twenties was a period of prosperity. The parish finished paying for its magnificent church. The interior of the building was finished and a new altar and windows completed the furnishings. The parish paid its assessment of \$20,000 for the building of the new Cretin High School. But the Great Depression of the thirties was on the horizon, and the nation settled down to ride out the bad years. Unemployment, low wages, foreclosed mortgages and loss of lifetime savings were the order of the day. But a faith in the country and its promise of freedom and ultimate prosperity saw the immigrants and the rising second generation through. Saint Agnes weathered the storm.

In 1933, Monsignor Ogulin grew ill. He was then seventy-one years old, and dropsy afflicted him. A document in the Chancery in Saint Paul, dated January 25, 1933, appointing him to a position on the diocesan tribunal, has his signature, but it is in a very uncertain hand. He continued his work during the summer months, until he took to his

bed. He died on August 21, 1933, in the rectory on Thomas Street. Monsignor Walter H. Peters, in the booklet prepared for the dedication of the new convent in 1953, wrote these words:

When Monsignor Ogulin was in his seventy-second year, the angel of death gave him warning that it would not be long before the final summons would be issued. Yet he did not spare himself. Morning after morning he could be seen with one hand clasping the burse with the Blessed Sacrament at his heart, with the other carrying his sick-call bag. With the greatest difficulty would he mount the narrow old-fashioned stairs in the houses of the sick while his drowsed limbs scarcely obeyed his will. Reluctantly he took to his bed for the last time.

We shall never forget good Sister Maximine's vivid account of Monsignor Ogulin's death. When the word came that he was in his last hour, the Sisters came to the old rectory and knelt, beginning at the threshold of his small, cramped bedroom. Two by two they knelt through the dining room, kitchen, and on the stoop which served as a back porch. The reader will not appreciate the pathos of this scene if he does not remember the labyrinthine patchwork of that house. In unison these nuns recited the prayers of the dying, invoking God the Father to receive His servant Anthony, God the Son to accompany him, God the Holy Ghost to sanctify his going.

Gratefully the tired Monsignor folded his hardworking hands over the crucifix, pressed his lips to it, blessed everyone, and closed his eyes in death.

Monsignor James C. Byrne, pastor of the Church of Saint Luke and vicar general of the archdiocese, celebrated the funeral Mass with Father Joseph Trobec of Elk River and Father Anthony Miks of Saint Michael, Minnesota, as deacons. Monsignor Humphrey Moynihan of the Church of the Incarnation in Minneapolis preached in English, and Father Francis S. Rant, pastor of Saint Mary's Church in Sleepy Eye, gave the German sermon. Father Francis A. Missia directed the music, and Father A. Ziskovsky was master of ceremonies. It was a sad occasion for Saint Agnes parishioners as they mourned their dead pastor.

Monsignor Ogulin had the longest pastorate of any of the priests who served Saint Agnes. He was not the founding pastor, nor did he build a great monument to his memory as Father Solnce had done in erecting the wonderful church. But Monsignor Ogulin brought the parish to a level of stability, financially, spiritually and in its great educational work with the school. The anti-German spirit of the World War times was overcome and a new direction for a national parish was chartered. There was a pride in the second generation as there had been a courage in the original pioneers. Saint Agnes was one of the great parishes of the city and the state, and it was identified with its pastor who was so beloved by his parishioners. Monsignor Ogulin was a handsome man as a young priest, and he grew old with a dignity that became him. Many still remember him and his dog, a red chow, who carefully guarded the passageway between the church and the rectory. His

long residence in Frogtown made him a familiar figure in the neighborhood. He was a humble man, and above all he was a servant of God, chosen by Him to bring salvation to the people under his charge. Of all the pastors of Saint Agnes, he is the one most often remembered and most dearly beloved.

Chapter Six

FATHER FRANCIS S. RANT (1933-1937)



Francis S. Rant was born in Cesnica in the province of Krain (Carniola) in Austria-Hungary, January 20, 1875. He did his classical studies at Laibach and his philosophical and theological studies at the Saint Paul Seminary. He was ordained by Archbishop Ireland on June 9, 1900, and he celebrated his first solemn Mass at Saint Agnes on June 10. Until June, 1901, he remained at Saint Agnes, when he was sent to Holy Trinity in New Ulm. He made a visit to his native land in 1901 and brought back with him to Saint Paul five young men who entered the Saint Paul Seminary. Included in the group were Valentin Schiffrer and John E. Schiffrer. In September, 1903, he was moved to Sleepy Eye as a substitute pastor, until August 30, 1904, when he became pastor at Arlington. In December 1915, he was named pastor of Saint Raphael's Church in Springfield, Minnesota, a position he held until 1928, when he returned to Sleepy Eye as pastor of Saint Mary, Help of Christians. On September 16, 1933, Archbishop Murray appointed him to Saint Agnes. Thirty-two years after he left his first assignment in the diocese, he returned to what would be his last assignment.

The thirties are remembered as the decade of the Great Depression when money was scarce and jobs failed. The people of Frogtown, while they had never known affluence, experienced the pinch of those years and the suffering that came from poverty, especially when getting a job was an impossibility. Relatives and neighbors stood together and the hard times passed. Those were years in which many blessings existed, when families found their joy and support in each other, when the smallest of pleasures was appreciated and remembered. Those who lived in those years knew what a treat a movie at the Faust Theater was, or how an ice cream cone or a visit to the state fair would be an event. Sundays were family days, spent listening to Father Charles Coughlin on the radio or visiting with relatives or friends, playing a ballgame at what is now West Minnehaha park. Sunday afternoon services at Saint Agnes were well attended, and events at the parish were the center of the social calendar. In reality, it was in the poverty of those years that people found great riches, a wealth of human values and a love centered on the family.

Saint Agnes school teams played at what is now Minnehaha Playground and at Como when they competed with Saint Bernard's and Saint Andrew's. It was largely through the

efforts of Father Francis Benz that the area between the Good Shepherd Convent and Calvary Cemetery along the right of way of the Great Northern Railway was made into a playground. It had been a dump, always burning and smoking, but filled with excitement for the young scavengers who found it an interesting place to play and dig among the loads of trash hauled there from all parts of the city.

The girls earned a few pennies watering the flowers on the graves in Calvary Cemetery. Fifty cents paid for a large sprinkling can once a day for the whole month, and twenty-five cents brought a smaller one. A bonus for the cemetery "workers" were the ribbons from the floral wreaths that made good hair bows.

Many remember Father Rant for his great head of hair, and others recall that he had a German shepherd dog. He was known as a good preacher, and during the years of the depression especially he was a great friend of the poor and of the laboring man. During his tenure at Saint Agnes, the parish celebrated its golden jubilee, but because of his illness Father Rant was unable to take part in the festivities. The book prepared for the event has photographs of the many parish societies, and Father Rant is pictured on nearly every one of them. During his pastorate, he founded the Saint Agnes Drum and Bugle Corps of 83 members, and the group took part in many civic and religious events in the city. Father Louis A. Gales and Father Nicholas P. Schmitt were his assistants, and the three priests made many friends among the people of Saint Agnes. Father Rant made preliminary plans for a new school building but his early death prevented his completing the project. In all his assignments he had built an addition to the parish plant, and had he lived Saint Agnes would have been no exception.

On a visit to friends in Sleepy Eye, Father Rant was taken ill and brought to Loretto Hospital in New Ulm, where he died on November 27, 1937. He had been suffering from ulcers and apparently had an attack. A blood clot developed which was fatal and caused his unexpected death.

Archbishop Murray celebrated the funeral Mass at Saint Agnes on November 30, with two hundred priests in attendance along with representatives from the thirty-five parish organizations. Father John Goergen of Saint Mary's Church in New Ulm and Father John Dunphy of Ascension Church in Minneapolis were deacons of the Mass. Father John Trobec was assistant priest, and Father Martin I. J. Griffen of Saint Vincent's Church and Father Henry J. Scherer of Holy Trinity Church in New Ulm were deacons of honor to the archbishop. Father Francis J. Schenk of the Saint Paul Seminary preached. Father Francis A. Missia directed the choir of priests, and Father George Ziskovsky was master of ceremonies. On Monday, a Mass was celebrated for the German-speaking people of the parish. Father F. J. Plaschko, pastor of the Church of the Japanese Martyrs in Leavenworth, Minnesota, was celebrant, and Father Louis A. Gales and Father Nicholas P. Schmitt, both of Saint Agnes, were deacons. Father John C. Gruden preached in German, and on Tuesday morning he celebrated Mass for the school children. Father Mathias Sava of Saint Mark's Church in Shakopee conducted the services at Calvary Cemetery.

Father Rant was pastor for only four years, hardly long enough to become known by his parishioners. They were years of economic depression with unemployment and poverty the order of the day. He was concerned for those who were hurt and suffering, but his poor health kept him from doing all that he wished. Had he lived longer and been stronger, he would have left his mark on the parish. As it was, God called him before many really came to know and love him.

Chapter Seven

FATHER JOHN C. GRUDEN (1937- 1955)



John Capistran Gruden was born in Idria in the province of Krain (Carniola), October 21, 1884. He studied the classics in Laibach and philosophy and theology at the Saint Paul Seminary. One of many Slovenian students who were attracted to service in Minnesota, he had a gift for languages, being proficient in the Slavic tongues as well as German and Latin. He was ordained on June 12, 1907, in the chapel of the seminary by Bishop McGolrick of Duluth, and sang his first solemn Mass at the Church of Saint Francis de Sales where Father F. X. Bajec, who helped him come to the United States, was pastor. The Archbishop appointed him assistant at Saint Agnes until September, 1908, when he went to Washington, D.C., to do graduate studies at the Catholic University of America. In June, 1910, he returned to Saint Paul and was appointed assistant at Saint Matthew's until September when he became professor of theology at the Saint Paul Seminary, a position he held until he was named pastor of Saint Agnes, December 1, 1937. He published a definitive book on ecclesiology, entitled *The Mystical Christ*, in 1936. Father John Buchanan, who as a student at the Saint Paul Seminary worked very closely with Father Gruden in the publication of *The Mystical Christ*, has written about him:

He was perhaps the shiest man I have ever known. He hid his shyness behind large and heavy lenses out of which peered equally large brown eyes, the reason, no doubt, why generations of seminarians called him "Baby" Gruden. His unique contribution to the theological history of the Saint Paul Archdiocese was his acquaintance with a number of what might be called "Eastern" scholars and theologians: Grivec of Yugoslavia, the Polish author Piatkiewicz, and the Czechoslovakian theologian, Pospisil. I have always thought his vision of the Church was closer to the Orthodox than to the Latin view. Father Gruden's understanding of the supernatural nature of the Church contributed greatly to the zeal and efficiency which he brought to his pastoral work at Saint Agnes.

Saint Agnes was Father Gruden's only pastorate and he brought to it the years of experience as a teacher and a theologian. He was master of the theoretical and the practical. The depth of his understanding of the nature of the Church was the basis for his ministry and activity as a pastor. He truly understood the Church in its visible and its invisible aspects. He described this in the introduction to *The Mystical Christ*.

The Catholic Church, the mystical Christ, like every living reality, has its external and its internal side, a visible hierarchical framework and an invisible organic structure and life. Both alike belong to the very essence of the social organism which was eternally predestined to be the medium of man's union with God. It was on this conviction that Father Gruden built the exercise of his priesthood. It was this Catholic concept of the Church that moved him in his pastoral work. These were the teachings that he instilled in the students at the Saint Paul Seminary for twenty-seven years, and which he now brought to Saint Agnes to put into practical application. The parish for him was the basic unit of the Mystical Christ, and Saint Agnes was his parish.

Father Gruden was no stranger to Saint Agnes when he was appointed to succeed Father Rant who died unexpectedly in November 1937. He had been assistant at Saint Agnes when he was first ordained, and he was a close friend of many of the Slovenian priests who served in the parish. He came to the parish knowing what he wanted to accomplish. He had his program clearly in mind and he set out to implement it. Two areas were uppermost in his plan: the liturgy and the school. He was both priest and teacher.

One of the first innovations that Father Gruden began at Saint Agnes was the weekly parish bulletin. The first one, mimeographed on white paper, is dated December 19, 1937. It is said that this was the first parish bulletin issued weekly in Saint Paul. It became an important means not only for spreading information about parish events, but it was for many people in those days of the Depression the only piece of Catholic literature that they would have in their homes. Father Gruden used it to teach about the liturgy, to explain the position of the Church in social matters and to urge people to use the Catholic schools for their children, especially in times when the faith was under attack so violently. The bulletin records all parish events and most of the activities of the archdiocese in which Saint Agnes people took part. It forms a chronicle of parish life for a half-century.

A new school was clearly demanded. Almost from the beginning, the structure erected in 1888 was inadequate. Additions were constructed and small wooden buildings were pressed into service to hold the ever-increasing number of students. Extra space was found by moving the Sisters to a new convent on the north side of Lafond Street. Further, by 1937, the original brick building was already fifty years old and was ready for replacement. Father Gruden arrived at Saint Agnes as pastor on December 1, 1937. By May, 1938, plans were ready for the new school to be erected on Lafond east of the old building. Edmund J. Prondzinski of Minneapolis was chosen as architect, and Fishbein and Jones, engineers. The cost was not to exceed \$300,000, not a small sum for the depression years.

An historic event occurred at the meeting of the board of trustees and consultors on November 17, 1938, when it was agreed to petition the Archbishop for permission to open a high school as part of the new school project. Since 1911, Saint Agnes had maintained a two-year commercial department, which in 1934 had been converted into a two-year high school program with some eighty-nine students enrolled. Father Gruden's

plan, with the cooperation of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, was to establish a fully accredited four-year high school.

At the meeting on April 24, 1939, Father Gruden reported that the Archbishop had been satisfied with the plans for the school which have his whole-hearted approval with his permission to proceed. McGough Brothers were selected as general contractors, and financing of the project was arranged through Keenan and Clarey of Minneapolis. Father Gruden broke ground for the new structure on May 2, and on June 11, 1938, an auction was held for the houses east of the old school to make way for the new building. The laying of the cornerstone took place on Sunday, June 11, 1939, with Archbishop John G. Murray presiding. The order of events included a great bingo game on Saturday evening, a solemn Mass on Sunday morning, an ice cream social in the early afternoon, the laying and blessing of the cornerstone at four o'clock, followed by dinner and an entertainment in the evening.

On Easter Sunday, 1940, the new building was open for inspection, and after the Easter recess, the students moved into their new home. The day of the solemn dedication and blessing was June 2, 1940. An account in *The Wanderer* recalls the event:

Several thousand men, women and children were present at the dedication of the new grade and high school of St. Agnes Parish. Many German Catholics were also present for the annual St. Boniface celebration, which, though usually held at the Cathedral, was held at St. Agnes. These German Catholics came from many communities; martially they kept step to the tempo of the St. Agnes Drum and Bugle Corps, organized and promoted by the assistant pastor, Father Nicholas Schmitt. The Most Reverend Archbishop, visiting pastors from parishes throughout the city, and civic officials heard Reverend Lambert Hoffman deliver the sermon for the occasion. After the Archbishop had blessed the school and had hung the first crucifix in one of the classrooms, the group moved into the dining hall in the new school. Mr. Michael Ettel, the toastmaster, introduced the speakers at the banquet: the Most Reverend Archbishop Murray, Father Gruden, Mayor McDonough, and Mr. Joseph Matt.

The Saint Boniface Day celebrations had traditionally been held at the Saint Paul Cathedral, but because of the importance of the new school at Saint Agnes, the event in 1940 was scheduled as part of the dedication ceremonies. The procession began at Saint Vincent's Church, the parish bulletin giving the instructions concerning the stepping-off moment signaled by the ringing of the Saint Agnes bells. The Archbishop was present along with visitors from all the German parishes of the diocese and beyond. Dinner was served to all and the evening had a special *Wiener Prater* party in the best Austrian tradition.

A most effective way of helping finance the building program was the installation of bowling alleys in the new building, a program already in operation at other parishes in the Twin Cities, including Sacred Heart. They were ready for use, under the direction of an athletic committee, by August 1940. Mathias Geretschlaeger, Charles Pohl and Michael

Schneider constituted the committee. The grand opening took place on August 17, with Leo J. Tibesar as manager. That the alleys were a real source of income is seen in the report for the first quarter of 1941, when the receipts were \$19,665, before expenses. Generally, over the years the alleys made about \$6,000 a year for the parish. In 1947, they were given over to the Men's Club for operation, and continued as a center of social life until they were closed in 1954 in order to use the space for school purposes.

The new school was hardly opened when its fine new auditorium was put to use by the dramatic club called the St. Agnes Little Theater. Under the guidance of Father Walter H. Peters, the group presented *Murdered Alive*, on April 14 and 15, 1940. In the cast were Dolores Ettel, Carmella Wolkerstorfer, Marcella Schneider, Genevieve Geyer, John Twomey, Angeline and Frances Dominguez, Edward Jungwirth, Robert Reif, Herb Lentsch, Celestine McGlynn and Lorry Klein.

Always of interest, especially to the school children, was the publication of the honor roll. The bulletin for June 19, 1938, had these names. For the tenth grade: Lucille Augustine, Phyllis Gardner, June Hensel, Marcella Pitzl, Dolores Rachner and Ester Thommes. For the ninth grade: Louise Achartz, Mary Catty, Margaret Congdon, Frances Gaery, Florence Hafner, Dorothy Kirchhammer, Mary Ann Kiegler, Robert Kunesch, William Merth, Lucille Tschida and Mary Meko. For the eighth grade: Catherine Janssen, Dorothy Koubik, Virginia Stevens, Charles Young, James Kneissel, Lorraine Adam, Mary Alice Brunner, Cecilia Gerlach, Jeanne Wolkerstorfer, Mariorie Kight, Lillian Seiler and Jacqueline Studiner.

The various societies active in the parish all did their part to promote the new school building. Among those listed regularly in the bulletin for their activities and events were the St. Rose Sodality, the Young Ladies Sodality, the Catholic Order of Foresters, the St. Anthony Benevolent Society, Maria Hilf, the St. Aloysius Sodality, the Committee for Decent Literature, the St. Agnes Credit Union, the Holy Name Society, the Promoters of the Sacred Heart, the Boy Scouts, the St. Vincent de Paul Conference and the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine. There was also the St. Agnes Choral Club which was directed by Father Francis A. Missia, and the German choir which sang at the seven o'clock Mass as well as the "big" choir. For such annual celebrations as Saint Agnes Day, the patronal feast of the parish, all cooperated. Often there was a special preacher for the solemn Mass of the day, as in 1940, when Father Joseph Ettel gave the sermon, or in 1941 when Father Albert Heer preached, or in 1943 when Father Missia was invited.

A new rectory to occupy the area on which the old school formerly stood was begun in 1940 while construction of the school was still underway. It was completed in the summer of 1941, McGough Brothers being contractors. It was designed to house a compliment of priests who would not only serve the parish but staff the high school. The question of a new convent was discussed early in 1944, but the war made immediate action impossible. Ground along Thomas Street was purchased and when materials again became available after the war, construction of a building to house fifty Sisters would be started. By 1947, it was voted to spend \$200,000 on a new convent, but conditions for construction were not favorable for some time. It was thought to put it on Lafond, and

additional lots were purchased to the east of the Maria Hilf Kloster, but by 1950 it was agreed to use the Thomas Avenue property adjacent to the school for a convent and an addition to the school. With the economical expansion of the country in the years following the war, the cost of building also increased, so that the price of the convent and the school addition by 1951 had risen to \$700,000. A loan for \$400,000 from Commercial State Bank at 3 1/2% interest was needed for the work which finally got underway in the Fall of 1951.

During the years of the war which began in Europe in 1939 the people of Saint Agnes continued their regular parish routine, celebrating the great feasts of the Church along with larger events that took place on a city-wide or archdiocesan basis. On April 12, 1942, Archbishop Murray administered the Sacrament of Confirmation to 222 children and adults in Saint Agnes Church. Two new statues were blessed for the corridors of the new school, one of Saint Agnes which was dedicated on January 26, 1941, and one of Christ the King, which was blessed on October 19, 1941. Saint Agnes people went to the Holy Name rallies at the Fair Grounds, the rally in the auditorium against the Nazi government in Germany at which Archbishop Murray and Joseph Matt spoke on January 16, 1937, and not least the Ninth National Eucharistic Congress held in Saint Paul, June 22-26, 1941, on the very eve of the American entry into the war.

Preparations for the congress began early when Archbishop Murray asked for prayers for its success in every parish with perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Sale of congress medallions and arm bands, efforts to provide hospitality to visitors to the city, the Masses and meetings at which Saint Agnes parishioners took part in the singing and the discussions culminated in the great procession on the final day, an event that lives in the memory of everyone who got caught in the great downpour of rain.

The Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, spoke over radio to the thousands assembled at the Fair Grounds for the congress, alluding to the forces of evil unleashed in Europe, comparing them to the mighty flood of the Mississippi River. Archbishop Murray said that "war is at our very door, and nothing but divine intervention can avert it."

And the war came in December 1941 with Pearl Harbor. It changed the life of every American. More than six hundred young men and women from the parish were enlisted in the American armed forces. The first to die in the service of his country was Joseph Paul Szenay, and thirteen more followed him before the end of the tragic conflict. Each week the bulletin listed new names of those inducted, and a book of their names was prepared and placed on the altar in the shrine of Maria Hilf at the rear of the church. Among those who left for war was Father Harold Hesse on August 23, 1942. The safety of those at war and the deep yearning for peace was in every prayer said in Saint Agnes for all those years until August 1945 when the war in Asia was finally over.

With the end of the war thoughts turned to helping the refugees and victims, especially in Europe, and great efforts were made to send food and clothing to relatives, friends and others. In 1946, Conrad Cardinal von Preysing, Bishop of Berlin, toured the United States to thank the American people for their charity toward the German people in their sorrow

and want. He spoke at the Saint Paul Auditorium as the guest of Archbishop Murray, and many Saint Agnes people attended. Shortly after the close of the war displaced persons from eastern Europe began to arrive in the United States and many settled in Saint Paul and in Saint Agnes parish, some with relatives and others quite alone, victims of the Communist takeover of their homelands. Help for them was forthcoming, especially from Archbishop Murray who was very concerned for these people who had lost everything in the scourge of war and the subsequent spread of Communism.

In January 1946, Father Gruden outlined his plan to remodel the church basement so that a chapel for 250 persons, a parish hall, several meeting rooms and a kitchen might be made available. The need for such a chapel was clear, especially for the older people who found the great number of steps into the church to be excessive. The cost would be \$75,000, plus an equal amount to reenforce the superstructure. On June 6, 1948, the first Mass was celebrated in the new chapel, beautifully decorated and adorned with carved wood statues of Saint Agnes and Saint Peter, the gift of Mrs. Michael Schneider, and a crucifix also carved in wood. Stained glass and a marble altar, confessionals and stations made the new facility worthy of divine worship and most convenient for those who found the stairs too difficult.

The Holy Father, Pope Pius XII, declared 1950 to be a Holy Year. The School Sisters of Notre Dame observed it as a special year, the centenary of their coming to the United States, when Mother Caroline established a convent in Milwaukee. The Holy Year was extended to the entire world for 1951, and Saint Agnes people visited the churches assigned by the Archbishop to gain the indulgences. During Holy Week, Father Robert Merth trained the high school boys to sing *Tenebrae*, reviving an old tradition for Holy Thursday evening.

On September 16, 1951, Father Gruden turned the first shovel of earth to begin the construction of the school addition and the new convent. The excavation hit peat and so had to go far deeper than was anticipated. A shortage of steel caused by the Korean War delayed progress and it was not until the summer of 1952 that construction began. Some criticism had been directed toward Father Gruden for having built a new rectory in 1940 before arranging for a new residence for the Sisters. He explained that the canon law of the Church requires certain specifications that the old family home used as a rectory did not meet. He said also that the old rectory on Thomas Avenue served as a temporary dwelling for the high school Sisters, and as soon as conditions following the Second World War allowed, the convent was first on the list of priorities.

The last Mass in the old Kloster Maria Hilf on Lafond Street was said by Father Gruden on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, June 12, 1953. It was sixty-five years since Father Trobec had welcomed the Sisters to Saint Agnes. After Mass the Blessed Sacrament was removed, the altar stripped of its linens and the altar stone taken out. The Sisters moved to 525 Thomas Avenue. Kloster Maria Hilf was razed and the old rectory at 527 Thomas Avenue, used for ten years by the high school Sisters, was also torn down, both areas becoming parking lots as a new era continued its way. Exciting news came to the Sisters about the same time they were moving into the new convent, when Mother Bernardia,

superior and principal of the grade school, was elected Mother Provincial of the Mankato Province and left Saint Agnes for her new duties in Mankato. The convent was blessed solemnly by Bishop James J. Byrne on Sunday, October 25, the feast of Christ the King, and on December 8, 1953, the Sisters and the whole parish began the observance of the Marian Year in honor of Our Lady announced by Pope Pius XII.

From the first year that he was at Saint Agnes, Father Gruden regularly invited preachers and lecturers to the parish. Many of his colleagues from the Saint Paul Seminary and the College of Saint Thomas came for the great occasions. Among them were Monsignor William Busch, Father F. T. Burns, Bishop Francis Schenk, Archbishop William O. Brady, Bishop James L. Connolly, Monsignor Rudolph G. Bandas, Monsignor Francis Gilligan, Father Oscar Winzerling and Father Joseph Schabert. Some came for Forty Hours Devotions; others were Lenten preachers; others conducted study and discussion classes.

But the school continued to expand and more space was needed. By 1954, Mr. Prondzinski was called upon to design a cafeteria, two classrooms and a small assembly room in the basement area of the school formerly occupied by the bowling alley. He also planned two additional garages to the south of the rectory. About \$80,000 was expended for these improvements, and the debt on the parish stood at \$360,000 at the beginning of 1955.

For some years the health of Father Gruden was failing, and the burden of the extensive construction and the resulting tensions of finance and expansion of the obligations of the pastor began to show on him. On October 25, 1955, Father Gruden resigned the position of pastor at Saint Agnes because of ill health. Dr. John Lepak diagnosed his failing condition as diabetes, asthmatic bronchitis, cardiac infarction and resulting hypertension. It was recommended that he seek a warmer climate, and so he moved to Fremont, California, where he lived until 1959, when he went to Orlando, Florida, because he had contracted hay fever. He wanted to return to Minnesota, but doctors at the Mayo Clinic advised against it. In a letter to Archbishop Brady, dated July 29, 1959, he wrote: "Even though I am advanced in years, I find lack of pastoral work rather boring and I cannot help but regret that I resigned as pastor of Saint Agnes. The wish to re-enter the ranks of pastors seems to be uppermost in my mind." He helped the pastor at Saint James Church in Orlando, and in February, 1962, he was given the privilege of offering Mass in his own home. In the summer of that year, Father Walter H. Peters, who had served at Saint Agnes under Father Gruden for four and a half years, visited him in Florida. In a letter to Archbishop Binz, Father Peters gives his observations about Father Gruden:

He lives in a very nice house but is quite unhappy. He stoops, his hair has become quite white, he is much thinner, and walks very slowly, often with the use of a cane. He had another heart attack about a month ago. His diabetes rules out some of the things that might be good for his heart. It is pathetic to see him re-arrange the plates and silverware, place chairs at right angles to other objects of furniture, as he once presided over the sacristy and sanctuary at Saint Agnes. Suffering has rendered him very sweet. He is now seventy-eight.

Father Gruden offered Mass for the last time the day before he died. God called him on the feast of Christ the King, October 28, 1962. His funeral was at Saint Agnes on November 2. Because Archbishop Binz was in Rome for the Second Vatican Council, Monsignor John J. Cullinan, vicar general of the archdiocese, was celebrant of the solemn Mass. Father Harold Hesse was deacon and Father Benedict Peichel was subdeacon. Father Peters preached the sermon. Monsignor Rudolph G. Bandas, as pastor of Saint Agnes, accompanied the body to Resurrection Cemetery for burial.

Of all the pastors of Saint Agnes no one made a greater impact on the life and fabric of the parish than did Father Gruden. Many did not understand him, and most of the parishioners never truly knew him, because he was so shy. The exterior was seemingly forbidding and cold, but it masked a heart so warm that he would give and do all for anyone who asked, but he knew he could not. He was truly a learned man, still known in theological circles for his scholarship in the field of ecclesiology, and yet he was practical beyond comparison with his contemporaries in other parishes. Saint Agnes, in this year of its centenary, is what it is because of Father Gruden. He rebuilt it from the bottom. In spite of the great church, the parish was sorely in need of every other facility: school, convent and rectory. He provided all of these in magnificent dimension. It was he who founded the high school and in so doing set the path for the future, making Saint Agnes almost unique among the parishes of the archdiocese in its dedication to Catholic education. A great church only lives and breathes when it is filled with the praise of God. Without the liturgy it is an empty temple, a bare museum. For Father Gruden, the careful and exact presentation of the Roman rite was an imperative. With the beauty and spaciousness of Saint Agnes Church, he insisted always on the precise execution of the rubrics and the full ceremony called for by the Church as he had known it for so many years in the seminary. Had his health permitted, there were many things he intended to do, not last among them, the full decoration of the interior of the church so that in its splendor the sanctity and beauty of the Mass and the other services might be carried out to the edification of the people who are members of the Mystical Christ and who sing the praises of the Holy Trinity in our earthly liturgy which remains only a shadow of the liturgy of heaven.

Chapter Eight

MONSIGNOR ALPHONSE J.SCHLADWEILER (1955-1957)



Alphonse J. Schladweiler was born on July 18, 1902, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, the third child of Mathias Schladweiler and Gertrude Schneider, both descendants of German immigrants from the area of Trier and the Eifel region of Germany. After a brief stay in Milwaukee, the family migrated to South Dakota and eventually to Madison, Minnesota, where Alphonse attended the Catholic school. He studied at the Franciscan minor seminary in Teutopolis, Illinois, and at the Saint Paul Seminary. He was ordained by Archbishop Dowling on June 9, 1929, at the seminary, and he celebrated his first solemn Mass at St. Michael's Church in Madison, Minnesota, on June 13, 1929. His first assignment was to the Church of the Nativity in Saint Paul, and later he served in Holy Trinity Church in New Ulm, which later in his life would be his cathedral. He was pastor at Montevideo, Morgan and North Mankato before being sent to Saint Agnes on December 5, 1955, after the unexpected resignation of Father Gruden. He was made a domestic prelate with the title of Monsignor in July 1957, and on November 24, 1957, he was appointed the first bishop of the newly founded Diocese of New Ulm. He established the operation of the diocese and labored in western Minnesota until his retirement in 1976. He continues to be a frequent visitor at Saint Agnes, often celebrating Pontifical High Mass for the great feasts.

Father Alphonse J. Schladweiler, pastor of Holy Rosary Church in North Mankato, was appointed pastor of Saint Agnes on December 6, 1955, by Archbishop Murray, to succeed Father Gruden who resigned on November 29, for reasons of ill health. Although his tenure was short, less than three years, it was a period of great activity and publicity for the parish. On June 10, 1956, Saint Agnes had the largest delegation of all the parishes of the archdiocese participating in the annual Holy Name Societies rally at the State Fair Grounds. The summer months were filled with music in Frogtown as the Saint Agnes Band played an outside concert each week on the parking lot under the direction of Frank Asenbrenner. The schools were prospering with 927 enrolled in the grade school and a capacity student body of 500 boys and girls from many different parishes in the high school for the opening of the academic year of 1956-57.

Archbishop Murray died in October 1956 and Archbishop William O. Brady became the new Archbishop of Saint Paul. On May 19, 1957, he ordered the recitation at each Mass in all the parish churches of a prayer he composed for the increase of religious vocations, a practice that still continues at Saint Agnes and a prayer that God has answered many times with the large number of young men from the parish who have become priests. On October 13, 1957, Archbishop Brady presided at a ceremony at the Saint Paul Cathedral

in which twenty-eight priests of the archdiocese, including Father Schladweiler, were elevated to the honor of domestic prelates of the Holy Father with the title "Monsignor." It was a great honor for Saint Agnes, but only the first, because within the year, its pastor would be named a bishop.

Father Schladweiler was always interested in music and enjoyed singing. One of the first things he undertook to do at Saint Agnes was to replace the old pipe organ which had been bought forty-five years before from the Garrick Theater on Fifth and St. Peter Streets. With the help of Father Richard J. Schuler of the College of Saint Thomas, a Wicks pipe organ of fourteen ranks was selected and installed in 1957. The two went to Saint Louis, Missouri, on September 27 and made the arrangements. The dedicatory recital was played by Father Schuler on the new instrument on Sunday afternoon, December 15. During November, the electrification of the church bells was completed and a system of ringing of the three bells was established automatically. The long ropes to the belfry disappeared. Other improvements that Monsignor Schladweiler accomplished were the installation of a new stained glass window over the main entrance, necessary because the new pipe organ made the window visible from within the church, and a new baptismal font of Brescia aurora marble dedicated to the memory of Alfred C. Schwab.

The morning hours of December 4, 1957, brought exciting news to the people of the archdiocese and especially Saint Agnes parish. The Holy See had established a new diocese in western Minnesota with New Ulm as the see city. The pastor of Saint Agnes, Monsignor Schladweiler, was appointed to be the first bishop of the new bishopric, and Holy Trinity Church would be his cathedral. Where he had once been an assistant, he would now be bishop. This was the second time that the Holy Spirit had taken a pastor from Saint Agnes to be a bishop in one of the suffragan dioceses of the state. Bishop Trobec, the founding pastor, had been made Bishop of Saint Cloud in 1897. Saint Agnes was greatly honored with such a distinction being given its pastor, and the joy of the people, the Sisters and the priests was great in spite of the fact that they regreted that he would no longer be in their midst. The consecration ceremonies were on January 29, 1958, at the Saint Paul Cathedral, and the installation at the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity in New Ulm took place the next day. The parish presented the new bishop with a beautiful crosier, the shepherd's staff, which is solemnly given to the new bishop as part of the ceremony of taking over the new diocese. Through an oversight, it was forgotten at Saint Agnes, and after a frantic telephone call it was taken to Flying Cloud Airport near Shakopee and flown to New Ulm, arriving just in time. The gift of the Saint Agnes people came to be known as the "flying crosier." On February 5, a farewell program was arranged at Saint Agnes and the Bishop returned to Saint Paul for the festive event.

Bishop Schladweiler was the second pastor of Saint Agnes to become a bishop, and that summons to found the Diocese of New Ulm cut short his stay at Saint Agnes. In a brief two years the parishioners had only begun to know their pastor before he left for New Ulm. In fact, he has become a much more familiar figure at Saint Agnes since his retirement from the governing of his diocese than he was during his short tenure as pastor. His frequent visits have endeared him to the great numbers who wait to greet him

after Masses that he celebrates or receptions that he attends. A very gentle and mild man, his great love of people characterized his whole priesthood, his years as bishop, and his retirement. The family unit and its activity remained the center of life for him, and he worked always to demonstrate its importance in Christian living. A biography of the bishop was written by Father Richard M. Hogan and published on the occasion of his golden jubilee of ordination. It is entitled *A Minnesota Shepherd*.

Chapter 9

MONSIGNOR RUDOLPH G. BANDAS (1957-1969)



Rudolph George Bandas was born in Biscay near Silver Lake, Minnesota, April 18, 1896. He received his early education in the public school in Glencoe, Minnesota. He studied the classics at the University of Minnesota and at the College of Saint Thomas before entering the Saint Paul Seminary. He was ordained a priest by Archbishop Dowling, June 19, 1921. He did further studies at Cambridge and Oxford universities in England and in 1924 he was awarded the doctorate in philosophy at the Angelicum University in Rome. He studied at the University of Louvain in Belgium where he earned the degrees of S.T.D. et M. in 1925, before returning to Saint Paul to teach in the seminary as professor of dogmatic theology and catechetics. His theological specialty was Saint Paul's teaching on the Redemption which was contained chiefly in his book, *The Master Idea of Saint Paul's Epistles*. During his years as professor theology he organized the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine throughout the archdiocese and founded the Catholic Youth Centers in Saint Paul and Minneapolis. His published works include *Contemporary Philosophy and Thomistic Principles* in 1932, *Biblical Questions* in 1943, and *Modern Questions* in 1953. In 1945, he became rector of the seminary, a post he filled until his appointment to Saint Agnes in 1957. He was named a domestic prelate by Pope Pius XII, January 15, 1955. Internationally famous for his studies and publications in catechetics, his writings were translated into several European and oriental languages. His textbooks for the teaching of religion in grade and high schools, *Faith of Our Fathers*, published in 1968, were widely used. Monsignor Bandas was a member of two commissions during the Second Vatican Council, one on dogma and the other on seminaries. He was a member of the Pontifical Roman Academy and a consultor of the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries and Universities. He attended every session of the Second Vatican Council. He died on June 26, 1969.

With the appointment of Bishop Schladweiler to New Ulm, the parish of Saint Agnes was open. Archbishop Brady assumed the position of rector of the Saint Paul Seminary, an office he had held before he became the bishop of Sioux Falls. He transferred Monsignor Bandas, who was rector of the seminary, to Saint Agnes to succeed Bishop Schladweiler on February 11, 1958. A reception was held to welcome the new pastor on March 16. He began immediately to assess the needs of the parish, and on Easter Sunday he announced that the church needed a new roof, the interior had to be decorated, and three or four new classrooms were needed to accommodate the increased enrollment in the high school. It was estimated that a total of \$80,000 was necessary to complete the three projects, but

when all was completed it cost \$26,500 to repair the roof, \$23,500 to decorate the interior, and \$78,000 to add four classrooms above the gym.

On May 12, 1958, Monsignor Bandas appointed a lay advisory board to assist him in administering the parish. Its first task would be to take up a census and then face the financial problems of a debt of \$225,000 and the need for another \$100,000 to carry out the repairs on the church and the addition of new classrooms above the gymnasium. Members of the board were: Roman Adam, Raymond Blacik, George Jungbauer, Gregory Keller, John O'Neill, John Pohl, William Saiko, Charles Schuman, Richard Seeger, Lawrence Steiner, Bernard Troje, Robert Ullman, Lelan Wheeler and Anthony Winkel.

Work on the church roof began on June 9 and continued until October. A new fence had been installed around the playground by the Parents and Faculty Organization, and a party on the new facility was held on May 25 to dedicate it. Outside band concerts, square-dancing in the gym and bingo were part of the summer events.

But June 1958 also saw the departure of Father Eugene Hackert who had been assistant for several years. He joined Bishop Schladweiler in the new Diocese of New Ulm on June 8. A month later the news of the sudden and tragic death of Father Joseph Warnemunde left the parishioners stunned. He had been on vacation in the East with two priest friends when he experienced weakness and a difficulty in breathing. He died on July 10, 1958, at Misericordia Hospital in Philadelphia. Archbishop Brady celebrated the funeral Mass at Saint Agnes, and burial was in Kilkenny, Minnesota, his home. Scaffolding filled the church for the funeral and all during the summer as the work of painting and decorating the church continued.

Two new assistants arrived that summer, Father Eugene Roden, who came from Saint Stephen's in Minneapolis, and Father Patrick J. Ryan, who had just been ordained after studies at the University of Louvain in Belgium. They entered into the life of the parish with calls on the parishioners, bringing communion to the homebound, teaching in the schools and meeting with the parish societies.

In the Fall, on October 5, the great Rosary Crusade brought together the largest assembly of people ever gathered for any event in the history of the State of Minnesota with the ceremonies on the capitol approach. Saint Agnes had a large delegation to hear Father Patrick Peyton preach and lead the Rosary. That same week Pope Pius XIII, whom many Saint Agnes people remembered for his visit to Saint Paul in 1936 as Cardinal Pacelli, died in Rome. Prayers and Masses were offered for him, and the parish began to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the selection of a new pontiff. The election of Pope John XXIII was received with great joy around the world.

In April of 1959, Monsignor Bandas went to Rome to take part in meetings of the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries of which he was a member. A frequent visitor to Rome, as rector of the Saint Paul Seminary he had many responsible positions in the government of the universal Church which led in time to his appointment to commissions of the Second

Vatican Council. Always concerned about vocations to the priesthood, he encouraged the people of Saint Agnes to support energetically Archbishop Brady's campaign for the major seminary and Nazareth Hall called *Opus Sancti Petri*, and he undertook to help poor seminarians in Europe by sending clothes and money to the Holy See for distribution in Italian seminaries.

On June 9, 1958, recitation of the Rosary before the Tuesday evening novena service began, with the parish societies assuming the leadership. The students of the high school took first place in hockey, basketball and debate that year, and the grade school students won the annual school police award in competition with all other parochial and public schools in the city. The decoration of the church was completed and a new red rug was laid in the sanctuary. Three wrought iron chairs with red upholstery were added to the sanctuary furniture, especially for use at pontifical Masses.

Sunday afternoon, December 13, was a day of celebration at which the parish honored its pastor and its week-end assistant, Father Walter H. Peters, with a tea in the church hall. Monsignor Bandas had been notified of his appointment as "non-resident professor" at the Lateran University in Rome, and Father Peters had recently published a full-length biography of Pope Benedict XV, released by Bruce Publishing Co. of Milwaukee. Long familiar with Saint Agnes, Father Peters had been assistant here from 1939 until 1944 when he was assigned to the staff of Nazareth Hall. He continued as a week-end assistant under Father Gruden, Bishop Schladweiler and Monsignor Bandas, both while he was at Nazareth Hall and later at the College of Saint Thomas. His *Life of Benedict XV* was very successful and went into a second printing. Many people had their copies autographed at the tea.

Another priest who became a familiar sight at Saint Agnes for several years was Monsignor Vincent Strelevics, a refugee from Communist tyranny in Latvia, who frequently preached in German at the eight o'clock Masses and took care of the Latvian people at special services in the chapel. He stayed at Saint Agnes for awhile and then at the Saint Paul Seminary before finding a residence on Churchill Street near Saint Andrew's. He died May 27, 1983, at the age of 94, and was buried from Saint Agnes.

1960 closed the decade of the 50's, a period of great growth for the Church, the country and the parish, years of optimism and pride in being a Catholic and an American. Many things were accomplished at Saint Agnes during the fifties, and life appeared to be calm and moving forward to even greater achievements. Little did anyone know of the difficulties in store for the Church and the country in the decades ahead. 1960 was a year for a mission at Saint Agnes, given by two Redemptorists priests, Father Francis Novak and Father Edward Nugent. The School Sisters of Notre Dame assigned a new principal to the grade school, Sister M. Irmina, and a new high school principal, Sister M. Rudolphia. The Men's Club celebrated its twenty-fifth jubilee with a banquet at which Bishop Schladweiler was the speaker and guest of honor. In November, Monsignor Bandas went to Rome to begin preparatory work on the forthcoming Second Vatican Council in the area of seminaries. While he was there, he was photographed with the Holy Father, Pope John XXIII, and on his return he gave each family a copy of the

picture as a Christmas gift. That Christmas, through the generosity of the Altar and Rosary Society, a new set of figures for the Christmas crib was placed in the baptistry at the rear of the church. Connections between Saint Agnes and Rome continued as Monsignor Bandas returned to the Eternal City for more work on the forthcoming council, and Archbishop Pietro C. van Lierde, vicar general for Vatican City, came to Saint Agnes for a visit during which he celebrated pontifical Mass with great ceremony. Father Richard J. Schuler of the College of Saint Thomas directed the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale and instrumentalists in Ernst Tittel's *Muttergottes Mass* for the occasion. Also in Rome for the council preparations, Archbishop Brady was stricken and died there. His funeral was held at the Cathedral in Saint Paul on October 9, 1961, with the Archbishop of Dubuque, Leo Binz, as the celebrant. On February 28, 1962, Archbishop Binz became the new Archbishop of Saint Paul.

Several improvements were accomplished in 1962. New stained glass windows were installed in the Sisters' chapel. Seven in number, depicting thirty-five symbols of the Holy Eucharist, they were designed by Herman Widinoser and fabricated by the Tiroler Glasmalerei in Innsbruck, Austria, for the cost of \$4,400. A new stained glass window was also put into the facade of the church, showing the Good Shepherd. It too was made in Innsbruck. New confessionals at the rear of the church, new vestibule doors, new furniture for the ushers and new paintings hung in the vestibule depicting Isaias and John the Baptist continued the work of beautifying the church.

The on-going discussion of a major expansion program for the high school raised many problems concerning where to put the new structure which would include a high school gymnasium. Some proposed that it be erected between the church and the convent on Thomas Avenue; others thought it should be east of the existing school, along Lafond; others thought a location on Mackubin Street would be good. The question of finance as well as the absence of Monsignor Bandas in Rome for so many months during the ecumenical council delayed decisions on beginning the project. The need was clearly recognized, since nearly 1500 students in two separate schools were taxing the existing facilities and even endangering the accreditation of the high school. By the end of 1962, the pastor was able to announce the complete liquidation of the parish indebtedness, and so the opportunity to begin building it grew as collections for the building fund began.

Father Peter's celebrated his silver jubilee of ordination with a Mass and a reception on May 13, 1962. Bishop Leonard Cowley preached the sermon. In June, Father Patrick Ryan was assigned by Archbishop Binz to Rome for further studies, and he was succeeded at Saint Agnes by Father John Iacono. Father Gruden, who had left Saint Agnes for retirement in California and Florida, died and was buried from Saint Agnes on November 2, 1962. The archbishop and the pastor were both in Rome for the council, so Monsignor John Cullinan, vicar general of the archdiocese, celebrated the Mass. As the council began its work, word was received from Rome that Monsignor Bandas had been appointed to two important commissions of the council, the one for seminaries, universities and education, and the other on bishops and the government of dioceses. The parish was highly honored in the recognition given its pastor in the greatest ecclesiastical gathering of this century.

Saint Agnes Convent has always been one of the largest communities of the School Sisters of Notre Dame, and the sight of the Sisters in their distinctive habit with its great veil was long familiar to the people of Frogtown. On March 25, 1963, on the feast of Our Lady's Annunciation, the Sisters of Notre Dame in all parts of the world adopted a new religious habit, considerably simplified at the request of the Holy See and specially designed for them. At a prearranged moment, all the Sisters put on the new habit which was widely acclaimed.

In May, 1963, the Saint Anthony Benevolent Society celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary. A campaign for expansion of the Academy of Our Lady of Good Counsel in Mankato was launched, and Saint Agnes parishioners contributed \$86,000 to the project. In June, Pope John XXIII died and was succeeded by Pope Paul VI, who continued the sessions of the Second Vatican Council, summoning the second session for September. Monsignor Bandas was present in Rome for all the meetings until December.

The schools continued to be the major activity and the greatest problem for the parish, as plans were studied to invite an order of teaching Brothers to assume the instruction of the high school boys while the School Sisters of Notre Dame continued to teach the girls. For many reasons, no success was achieved in inviting either the Marist Brothers or the Brothers of the Christian Schools. Beginning a trend that would continue for at least two decades, the enrollment in the grade school began to decline. In September of 1963, it dropped by one hundred.

Efforts to implement the wishes of the Second Vatican Council in matters of the liturgy brought a vigorous effort to encourage more active participation in the Mass. Monsignor Bandas, who knew the wishes of the conciliar fathers by first-hand experience, was among the first pastors in the nation to put into effect the new liturgical changes. By 1964, the constitution on the sacred liturgy, issued at the close of the first session of the council, was already being studied and implemented at Saint Agnes. The active spiritual life of the parish was further encouraged by a mission conducted by the Franciscan Fathers during March 1964.

On April 17, 1964, the parish celebrated the diamond jubilee of its founding. Archbishop Binz pontificated, and Bishop Pietro C. van Lierde, vicar general of Vatican City, preached. Present for the occasion were Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler, Monsignor Walter H. Peters, Fathers Benedict Peichel, Henry Geisenkoetter, Eugene Hackert, Monsignor Joseph Ettel, Monsignor George Ziskovsky, and Fathers Robert Merth and Wallace Hermes. Father James M. Lavin was master of ceremonies, and Father Richard J. Schuler directed the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale. Three Masses were celebrated for the jubilee, and many other social events were scheduled as well.

On June 16, the Archbishop assigned Father John Iacono to Saint Timothy's parish in Blaine. He was replaced by Father Raymond Zweber who came from Holy Trinity Parish in South Saint Paul. On June 21, 1964, Monsignor Bandas began a series of articles both in the parish bulletin and in the *Wanderer* commenting on the blindness of the Catholic press in this country concerning the developments at the Second Vatican Council. He had

been accused of having a "Roman mentality!" This was the beginning of a continuing campaign against him by those who wished to have their own ideas rather than those of the council implemented in this country. Monsignor Bandas was present at every session of the council, and thus he knew clearly what the council decreed. In his writings and in his direction of the reforms introduced at Saint Agnes, he clearly called for the letter of the conciliar decrees, rather than the so-called "spirit of the council" which was so far removed from the actual wishes of the conciliar fathers. On the first Sunday of Advent, English was introduced into the celebration of Mass, and the office of Rector was likewise begun. In September, Monsignor Bandas returned to Rome for the third session of the council, returning to Saint Paul in time for Christmas to hear the new chimes sounding from the steeple, a gift of Anthony Podgorski.

The problem of a new school continued to be debated. The board of trustees decided in August, 1964, to build a new grade school, and Eugene Schaefer was engaged as architect. His plan projected a building that would cost \$1,200,000. It would be erected to the east of the building now known as Gruden Hall, with the portion on Lafond Avenue to be completed first. Eight houses along Lafond and Mackubin were purchased and demolished at the cost of \$131,800, but with Monsignor Bandas having to travel to Rome for the fourth and last session of the council, nothing was done on the building project for some time and eventually the plan to erect a new grade school was abandoned. A big event of 1965 was the purchase of a car for the Sisters in June, surely a reform long called for.

In August, Father Eugene Roden was transferred to Holy Cross Church in Minneapolis, and Father Martin Siebenaler came to Saint Agnes from the Church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Minneapolis. On August 19, 1965, Archbishop Binz pontificated in the cathedral to ask the guidance of the Holy Spirit on the last session of the Second Vatican Council soon to open in Rome. Monsignor Bandas preached the sermon during which he remarked that while Pope John XXIII had opened the windows of the Church through the calling of the council, unfortunately many strange birds had flown in through those windows, a reference to some of the false notions of the conciliar decrees that were already becoming widespread in the country through the ultra-liberal Catholic press. Shortly afterward, the archbishop, the auxiliary bishops and Monsignor Bandas left for Rome.

In October, Pope Paul VI visited the United States and celebrated Mass in Yankee Stadium in New York City, an event that stirred America because it was the first time a reigning pontiff had set foot on American soil. On June 30, 1966, the world celebrated the anniversary of the Holy Father's coronation, and the archdiocese celebrated its patronal feast the same day. 1966 saw the end of the obligatory abstinence from meat on Fridays for the Catholics of the United States, when the American bishops voted to dispense this country from the law of the universal Church which forbids the eating of meat on Fridays in memory of the death of Jesus Christ.

The parish bulletin continued to give the various changes introduced by the Second Vatican Council, and at the same time Monsignor Bandas continued to point out the

errors and false interpretations of the council that were spreading through the country. Liturgical abuses and false moral concepts are noted and corrected. The truth about the requirements for the position of the altar, the use of statues, the practice of general absolution, kneeling for Holy Communion, frequent confession and fitting church music are all explained in the various issues of the bulletin during 1967.

The parish bulletin for August 20, 1967, has, this commentary by Monsignor Bandas:

As you know, the Catholic Church is passing through difficult times. Had we abided by the decisions and teachings of the II Vatican Council, we would today be in the golden age of "renewal." Instead, "crackpot" theologians and phony "experts" have taken over, and, speaking and acting in the name of a spurious "spirit of the Council," are throwing everything into chaos and confusion. And the end is not yet.

I have warned about this, predicted evil consequences. I was labeled as "old-fashioned," "behind the times," "a voice from the past," "reactionary," etc. I have not changed my mind. After two years of experimentation, I have only one more sentence to add: "By their fruits you shall know them." And what are some of these "fruits" today?

1) According to the reports of our American bishops, the number of converts to the Catholic Church in our country in 1966 was the lowest in fifteen years. Please note: the American bishops said this.

2) The liturgy in some of our churches is celebrated in such a noisy, irreverent, vulgar, hootenanny manner so as to be no longer worthy of the name "liturgy." Pope Paul calls it a "desanctification" of the liturgy. As a result, in some parishes many Catholics are abandoning the Sunday Mass and the reception of the sacraments.

3) Vocations to the religious and priestly life have fallen off to an all-time low. It is reliably reported that a large monastery in Minnesota has one candidate this fall for its order, whereas formerly, it would have 20 to 30. A large sisterhood reports four candidates this fall, whereas formerly it had 30 to 40. In former years Nazareth Hall used to receive over 100 boys into first year high school, whereas this year the number of registrants is 31. Certainly no one needs to know "higher math" to figure out what is going to happen in a few years if this trend continues.

4) But this is not all. Every religious order is losing a large number of professed nuns; Sisters are foolishly asking to be dispensed from their vows and are returning to the world. One order reports 30 such cases this summer, another 20, another 50. At this rate how long will it take

for the whole order to disappear?

5) Does this mean that parishes will not be affected? Listen to this: Next year the neighboring diocese of St. Cloud is closing the higher grades in all parochial schools outside the city of St. Cloud for lack of Sisters and teachers. Already there is talk of beginning to close the lower grades. And elsewhere there is talk of closing some parishes for lack of priests.

In June 1968, Father Zweber moved to Saint John Vianney Parish in South Saint Paul as pastor, and Father Frederick Meyer came to Saint Agnes from Saint Vincent's. That same month, NBC produced a TV program on the changes in the Catholic Church stemming from the Vatican Council. Entitled "The New American Catholic," the hour-long program featured Monsignor Bandas, Cardinal McIntyre of Los Angeles and others with Bishop James P. Shannon as master of ceremonies. Very controversial in its viewpoint, it stirred up considerable reaction as the lines between the conservatives and the progressivists became more clearly drawn. The defection of Bishop Shannon followed later, and many have thought it was closely connected with this TV production. Part of the show was filmed in Saint Agnes rectory with Monsignor Bandas stating clearly what is meant by the "spirit of the council," but the editing of the film for showing made him appear to be a reactionary and an old man ignorant of the wave of the future. The parish bulletin for June 30, 1968, has Monsignor Bandas' analysis of the controversy:

A "spirit of the council" is genuine when it flows organically from, or is intrinsically connected with, a council decree or an official interpretation of the decree by the Holy See. A "spirit of the council" is spurious when it is opposed to a council decree or in no wise derives from it or is based upon it.

Here are a few practices now being introduced into parishes which have no basis in the council decrees and in some instances are in opposition to them. The council nowhere says:

- 1) That infant baptism is to be abolished;
- 2) That children's confessions are to be omitted before first Holy Communion and postponed several years beyond the age of reason;
- 3) That general confessions and general absolutions are to replace private individual confessions; Vatican II urges the frequent reception of the sacrament, points out the great value of the Sacrament of Penance for the religious life, urges priests to make themselves easily available for confessions, and orders pastors to call in outside priests who can hear confessions in the language of the people;
- 4) That preaching should be concerned exclusively with social problems and the brotherhood of man: on the contrarv. bishops and

priests should "point out the divinely revealed way to give glory to God and thereby to attain to eternal happiness;"

- 5) That main altars are to be dismantled or removed; the pastor is only the administrator, not the owner, of parish property;
- 6) That the altar railing and pulpit are to be removed from churches;
- 7) That statues and the Stations of the Cross are to be eliminated;
- 8) That daily Mass is to be abolished and replaced by a bible service;
- 9) That a plain table is to replace the main altar;
- 10) That the laity may recite the whole canon of the Mass with the celebrant; this was forbidden by the commission on the liturgy in April 1968;
- 11) That provisional, temporary, movable altars, facing the people, are to be set up in front of the main altar; on January 25, 1966, the commission on the liturgy ordered these removed;
- 12) That the Latin Mass, high Mass, and choirs have been abolished;
- 13) That the laity may crowd around the altar inside the sanctuary; the directions for the participated Mass presupposed that the lay people are in the body of the church;
- 14) That the priest may say Mass without the prescribed vestments, or without candles and a crucifix;
- 15) That selections from secular writing may be read at Mass;
- 16) That the celebrant is to leave the altar after the "Lamb of God" and shake hands with the people;
- 17) That women may assist at the divine services without a head covering;
- 18) That all Canon Law has been temporarily suspended;
- 19) That a priest may leave out or change or add any word to tell Mass prayers;
- 20) That a priest may smile while saying Mass and consecrating; that communicants may smile at the priest before receiving Holy

Communion; that the celebrant may add the first name of the communicant to the communion formula;

21) That we *must* receive Holy Communion standing; we may receive kneeling or standing, but if we receive standing we must come in procession and make a "reverence" to the Blessed Sacrament before receiving the Eucharist;

22) That the celebrant may place the Sacred Host in the hands of the communicant who then communicates himself;

23) That Holy Communion may be given to non-Catholics;

24) That the celebrant may give the chalice at Holy Communion to whomever he wishes;

25) That in the Latin rite the celebrant may consecrate a whole loaf of bread or a bun;

26) That you may have hootenanny and rock rebellion Masses;

27) That priests and ministers may exchange places during divine services;

28) That we should stop making converts;

29) That devotion to Our Lady should be downgraded and de-emphasized;

30) That the Mass is a mere "meal;"

32) That Holy Communion is merely "holy Food;"

33) That Sisters and women may act as Rectors;

34) That private devotions, especially the Rosary, Holy Hour, Benediction and 40 Hours Devotion are no longer to be fostered;

35) That at the end of Mass the priest may say: "The Mass goes on forever; carry it with you into the world."

With a clear understanding of the conciliar reforms, Monsignor Bandas implemented them at Saint Agnes, always careful to observe the directives as they were given by the Holy See in the gradual work of fulfilling the wishes of the council. As a result, the difficulties encountered in many parishes with an erroneous concept of the conciliar

changes were avoided at Saint Agnes. Under the direction of their pastor, the people gladly accepted the decrees of the council, the post-conciliar commissions and the Holy Father. All the conciliar decrees were implemented, but none of the changes introduced so widely as a part of the "spirit of the council" found their way into the liturgical life of Saint Agnes. Credit for this must be given to Monsignor Bandas, his clear knowledge of the council and his foresight which was far beyond that of many other pastors.

By July 1968, the decision on an addition to the school had been reduced to erecting a new gym with a few classrooms for band, chorus and the commercial department. It was determined to raise \$100,000 and to borrow an additional \$250,000 from the Catholic Aid Association, supplementing the \$300,000 already in the building fund. The archdiocesan plan for high schools complicated the matter, since in supporting its own high school, Saint Agnes requested to be free from assessments for the diocesan schools, a request that the archbishop was not willing to grant. Two bids for the gym were submitted: Steenberg Construction of Saint Paul for \$635,000, and Keller Construction of Hudson, Wisconsin, for \$709,000. Later changes in the plans were ordered by the city architect who demanded the installation of a sprinkler system and additional exits, raising the costs by \$20,000. Construction on the corner of Lafond and Mackubin continued through 1968 and into 1969. Costs continued to rise as the country was experiencing a period of inflation. In order to hold down additional costs, many things were eliminated from the original plans and construction slowed down. The building seemed to show little progress during the winter months. By spring of 1969, it was far from complete.

Meanwhile, Monsignor Bandas continued to be disturbed by the direction the implementation of the Vatican Council was taking across the country. He told Saint Agnes people that if they came upon Masses filled with abuses of the liturgy they should leave. In the bulletin for May 18, 1969, he complained bitterly about the high school students in his religion classes and their lack of docility in accepting the teachings of the Church, an echo of the general unrest among college and university students during the sixties and the seventies. It was a time of rebellion and its influences would be felt at Saint Agnes for a decade.

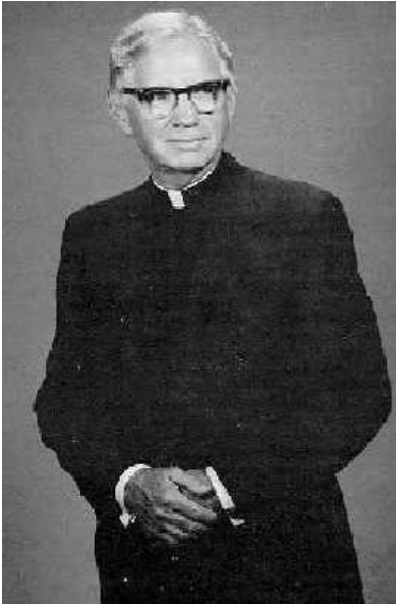
Monsignor Bandas died on June 26, 1969, after a few months' bout with cancer. He remained relatively active up until his death with occasional periods of hospitalization. His columns in the *Wanderer* were published up until his death, and on the very day he died, the E. M. Lohmann Co. released the last of his catechetical publications. The archbishop appointed Father Frederick Meyer to be administrator of the parish until a new pastor would be appointed. A procession of over one hundred bishops and priests entered the church for the funeral Mass which was concelebrated in English by Archbishop Leo Binz at the high altar. Concelebrants were Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler of New Ulm, Monsignor George Ziskovsky, pastor of the Assumption parish, Father F. J. Poplawski of Delano, Father William Murphy of Cleveland, Minnesota, and Father Frederick Meyer of Saint Agnes. According to Monsignor Bandas' request, no sermon was preached but Archbishop Leo Byrne praised his long years of service to the archdiocese. He was buried in the cemetery at Silver Lake, Minnesota.

Saint Agnes has been blessed with pastors who have been nationally and internationally recognized in many fields of ecclesiastical knowledge. Surely not the least of them was Monsignor Bandas whose theological and catechetical writing were known around the world and translated into many languages, both western and oriental. His work in the Vatican Council and in the Congregation for Seminaries testifies to his ability. And yet, while he was so active in working for the Church universal, he was able to accomplish so much at Saint Agnes. The physical accomplishments and the various organizational achievements with the parish societies and the schools have all been noted. But the most significant contribution that Monsignor Bandas made to Saint Agnes was his guiding of the parish through the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. He knew what they were, having been at every session of the council himself, and when he returned he put into operation at Saint Agnes all that was decreed. He did not fall for the erroneous "spirit of the council" that brought about the disasters that the Church in the United States has experienced for the past twenty years since the closing of the council. For that reason there was little of the controversy at Saint Agnes that many parishes experienced. Aside from the criticisms that came from non-parishioners who may have been associated with the high school, the changes were introduced at Saint Agnes with relative ease and acceptance by all. Many parishes were split into factions, but the traditional unity that Saint Agnes long knew was maintained under the prudent direction of its pastor. A very kindly man, Monsignor Bandas loved children and especially the young people in the grade and high schools. His entire priestly life was spent in work for Catholic education. He was above all else a teacher, but primarily he was a priest, whether he was serving the great High Priest as professor, seminary rector, or pastor of Saint Agnes.

Chapter Ten

MONSIGNOR RICHARD J. SCHULER

(1969-)



Richard Joseph Schuler was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, December 30, 1920. His parents, Otto H. Schuler and Wilhelmine M. Hauk, were American-born children of immigrants from Tirol in Austria and the Black Forest of southern Germany. He was baptized in the Ascension Church and attended the parochial school, DeLaSalle High School and the College of Saint Thomas before entering the Saint Paul Seminary. He was ordained a priest on August 18, 1945, by Archbishop Murray at the Saint Paul Cathedral, and he celebrated his first solemn Mass the following day at the Ascension Church. He was assigned to Nazareth Hall Preparatory Seminary to teach Latin and music. He earned the M.A. degree from the Eastman School of Music of the University of Rochester, N. Y., in 1950, and in 1954 he spent a year of study of renaissance music manuscripts at the Vatican Library on a Fulbright scholarship from the United States government.

On return from Europe he was assigned to the College of Saint Thomas where he taught music and theology for fifteen years. He earned the Ph.D. degree from the University of Minnesota in musicology in 1963, and in 1969 he succeeded Monsignor Bandas as pastor of Saint Agnes. He was appointed an honorary prelate of the Holy Father on September 15, 1970. He is president of the Church Music Association of America, editor of the quarterly journal, *Sacred Music*, and for ten years was vice president of the international papal sacred music federation, the Consociatio Internationalis Musicae Sacrae. He founded the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale which has sung orchestral Masses of the Viennese school at Saint Agnes for nearly fifteen years.

Two months after the death of Monsignor Bandas, the announcement of the new pastor was eagerly anticipated. Father Richard J. Schuler, who had been serving as week-end assistant at Saint Agnes for some time, announced to the people from the pulpit that a new pastor had been named by the archbishop, and he was that priest. He took up his duties as the eighth pastor of Saint Agnes on August 26, 1969, coming from the College of Saint Thomas where he had taught for the previous fifteen years.

In the bulletin of August 31, Father Schuler told the parishioners that "all of us stand upon the shoulders of those who have gone before us, and I only hope that all of us, working together, can carry forward the great work established by the sacrifices of our forebearers at Saint Agnes." He added: "The chief duty of a priest is to teach the Word of God and to be a channel of God's saving grace through the Mass and the sacraments. It will be the prime concern of my pastorate that I work to strengthen within you the Faith

of our Fathers, and through that Faith to be a means for your growing in grace, God's divine life within us."

Starting immediately, the new pastor and his two assistants, Father Siebenaler and Father Meyer, began a door to door census survey of the parish with the intention of meeting the people and bringing the parish records up to date. On November 30, the first Sunday of Advent, the *Leaflet Missal* was introduced to help participation in the Mass through responses to the prayers and the singing of hymns. The cooperation of the Ushers' Club made distribution of the booklets at each Mass possible.

Work on the new high school addition, slowed by financial problems and the death of Monsignor Bandas, began again in the early Fall. Father Schuler asked the parishioners to make loans of \$1,000 or more to the parish at 6% interest. Further financing was obtained through loans from other parishes, particularly through the kindness of Monsignor Joseph Ettel of New Ulm, and the work of finishing the building continued. Many essential items that had been eliminated to cut costs were restored, and the building was ready for the second semester. Father Schuler announced that the new structure would be called Bandas Hall and the existing building would be known as Gruden Hall, both named after the pastors who supervised their construction. Bandas Hall was solemnly dedicated by Archbishop Leo C. Byrne on Sunday, January 25, 1970. A bronze crucifix was erected in the foyer on Mackubin Street and plaques with the names of significant donors to the project were placed in position a little later. Nearly sixty priests attended the blessing and the open house that followed.

During Lent of 1970, Father Joseph Pohl, CSsR, preached a parish mission, and on Wednesday evening of Holy Week, the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale with an orchestra of thirty-five instrumentalists presented Antonin Dvorak's *Stabat Mater* under the direction of Father Schuler in the church. The ceremonies of Holy Week were carried out in great detail according to the newly introduced reforms following the Vatican Council, and Corpus Christi was observed in the spring with an outdoor procession of the Blessed Sacrament. From the very beginning of his pastorate, Father Schuler was concerned to celebrate the liturgy with all the splendor and care that had long been the tradition of Saint Agnes. The first anniversary of Monsignor Bandas' death was observed with pontifical Mass celebrated by Archbishop James J. Byrne of Dubuque, Iowa, as part of the annual Wanderer Forum, a national meeting sponsored by the *Wanderer*. Bishop Peter Bartholome of Saint Cloud and Bishop Albert L. Fletcher of Little Rock, Arkansas, were present.

With the close of the Second Vatican Council the work of implementing the decrees that it issued began around the world. In many places forces were at work to promote ideas as coming from the council that were indeed totally contrary to what the council ordered. Monsignor Bandas, who had attended all the sessions of the council, had been quick to note these dangers. They appeared at first in the liturgy and then in the areas of Catholic schools and catechetical instruction. The virus spread through the religious communities and into the parochial schools. Much of the promotion of these false ideas came from the central bureaucracy of the American bishops in Washington. Monsignor Bandas had

stood against these dangerous innovations, and Father Schuler continued the policy of guarding against the errors of the heresy called Modernism which threatened Saint Agnes schools, indeed all parochial schools. An effort to implement an experimental program in the archdiocese according to a plan given in a book entitled *Voice of the Community, the Board Movement in Catholic Education*, published by the National Catholic Education Association in 1967, proposed to remove the parochial schools from the direct control of the pastor and the people of the parish and transfer authority to a board and a diocesan bureaucracy. It was called the "total plan" and attempted to move from local control of parochial schools to central administration of a diocesan system, taking responsibility and authority away from the local pastor. A group of priests of the archdiocese met at Saint Agnes to oppose this policy and published their determination to "strengthen the role of the archbishop and the pastors in preserving sound Catholic teaching in the schools." Several laymen calling themselves Laymen for Parish Rights also organized in June of 1970 to support the efforts of the pastors. A meeting in the new Bandas Hall gym of people from all parts of the Twin Cities filled the hall. The action received national notice in the Catholic press, and was successful in preserving the role of the pastor as teacher and spiritual leader of the parochial school. But many battles were yet on the horizon before the forces of Modernism would be defeated at Saint Agnes.

An unexpected event occurred at the end of June 1970 that began a long process of improvements on the church. From high up on the tower, a stone fell to the ground on the corner of Thomas and Kent. No one was injured, but the police cordoned off the area, and inspection of the stonework in the tower indicated that freezing and thawing had loosened the fabric and repair was necessary. The tower was cleaned and tuckpointed, and over the next four years the entire church was also sandblasted, removing the soot and grime that sixty years of city pollution and railroad smoke had deposited on the white limestone. Once again the church was bright and clean.

On Sunday, September 20, 1970, Father Schuler celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood with a solemn Mass at three o'clock in the afternoon at which Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler gave the sermon. The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale, joined by the Dallas Catholic Choir of Dallas, Texas, made a choir of eighty singers under the direction of Father Ralph S. March, singing Anton Bruckner's *Mass in E Minor*: At the Mass, Bishop Schladweiler announced that the Holy Father had named Father Schuler an honorary prelate with the title of monsignor. A reception was held in Bandas Hall after the Mass. A special blessing from the Holy Father was brought to Saint Paul by Monsignor Johannes Overath of Cologne, Germany, president of the papal international church music federation. The text read: "The Holy Father sends to the jubilarian on the occasion of his silver jubilee, to his relatives and friends and to all the people of Saint Agnes Parish, the Apostolic Blessing." It was signed by Cardinal Villot, papal secretary of state.

Many visitors from all parts of the world found their way to Saint Agnes, and celebrated solemn Masses for special occasions. Father George Eischens, a native son of the parish and pastor of Saint Francis de Sales parish, sang the Requiem Mass for All Souls' Day and preached the sermon. Dr. Jean-Pierre Schmit of Luxemburg, internationally known as

a church musician, celebrated the Mass for the feast of Christ the King, and the choir sang a Mass composed by him. Monsignor Johannes Overath of Cologne celebrated Mass and preached in German. On the occasion of the annual Wanderer Forum many bishops came to Saint Agnes. Cardinal O'Boyle of Washington, D. C., was the first prince of the Church to visit the parish, when he assisted at a pontifical Mass celebrated by Bishop Peter Bartholome of Saint Cloud on June 19, 1971. Archbishop Robert Dwyer of Portland, Oregon, and Bishop Hilary B. Hacker of Bismarck, North Dakota, were guests of the Forum for solemn Mass on June 30, 1973, and on June 15, 1974, Bishop David M. Maloney of Wichita, Kansas, came to Saint Agnes. In May of 1975, three bishops were at the parish: Bishop Armando Trinitade of Lahore, Pakistan, came for an appeal for his missionary diocese; Archbishop Dwyer was in Saint Paul for the Wanderer Forum; and Bishop Schladweiler celebrated the Feast of Corpus Christi with pontifical Mass and procession. Cardinal Carberry, Archbishop of Saint Louis, Missouri, preached at the Wanderer Mass in 1976, and Bishop Joseph Sullivan of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, celebrated Corpus Christi. Bishop Paul Dudley, Monsignor Athanasius d'Cruz of Bombay, India, Monsignor Ralph A. Aschoff of Saint Cloud, Abbot John A. Eidenschink of Saint John's Abbey and Archbishop John R. Roach were among the prelates of the Church who visited the parish and celebrated Mass.

A simplification of the Sunday envelope system was inaugurated with 1971. The Sunday envelope became the all-important means of parish support, and all extra collections were eliminated. The old seat offering was discontinued. Only the collection for fuel, light and water and a monthly "debt reduction" envelope were continued. The increase in donations was quickly noted and the bookkeeping process made considerably easier. With the closing and sale of Nazareth Hall Preparatory Seminary in May of 1971, Saint Agnes acquired some new furniture for the sanctuary, new chairs and kneeling benches, as well as several sets of very beautiful vestments for solemn Mass. Carved wood crucifixes made in Italy were placed in many classrooms in the high school. A new lectern in the same wood as the new furniture was given by an anonymous friend. Other vestments came in gifts from parishes that mistakenly thought that new styles prompted by the liturgical changes had made such vestments outdated. In an article on the ecclesiastical art treasures in Saint Paul, published in the *Saint Paul Dispatch*, Saint Agnes was mentioned for its sacred vestments.

Students in the high school, in addition to their academic work and their athletic victories, continued to bring fame to the school with its musical productions. During the 1970's they staged these musicals: *Brigadoor*, (1971); *Hello Dolly* (1972); *Sound of Music* (1974); *Carousel* (1975); *Music Man* (1976); *Gondoliers* (1977). In 1979, the grade school students gave *Snow White* and *Hansel and Gretel*.

But all was not harmonious in Saint Agnes schools in the early years of the 1970's. The enrollment was high in 1973: 658 students in the high school, and 640 in the grade school, but problems, particularly in the teaching of religion, were causing friction between the pastor on the one hand and the archdiocesan educational bureau on the other. Most of the teaching Sisters agreed with the pastor in his concern for maintaining Catholic truth, but the administration of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Mankato

sided against the pastor and with the bureau. The basic issue of conflict involved four areas: the textbooks promoted by the diocesan bureau; workshops arranged by the diocesan bureau of education for teachers; retreats recommended for high school students; and certain teaching methods urged for use in religion classes in all schools. Monsignor Schuler pointed out that the pastor of a parish is strictly responsible for the teaching of religion in the parochial schools, and is further bound by an oath taken upon becoming pastor to oppose vigorously all errors, particularly those identified by the name of Modernism, a heresy condemned by Pope Pius X. A booklet, issued by the Catholic Education Center of the archdiocese, entitled *The Five P's*, contained the lists of books, reference texts, resource persons, programs, films and other publications expected to be used in the high schools of the archdiocese in the teaching of religion. In rejecting it, Monsignor Schuler found himself in opposition to the Catholic Educational Center, which in turn used two levers to enforce its program: the assignment of the teaching Sisters and the distribution of diocesan funds for support of the schools through tuition grants to the students. The danger of withdrawal of the Sisters and withholding of the grants were clearly a threat to the continuation of the school.

Already in 1972, a retreat for the students was the occasion for an attempt to introduce various unacceptable liturgical innovations into the parish, and Monsignor Schuler terminated the retreat early. The Viet Nam war had caused unrest among university students across the land, and much of that spirit had found its way into high school life also. A strike of the student body was short-lived, but in addressing the students and faculty, Monsignor Schuler insisted that the policies of Saint Agnes High School were clear and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church were fundamental to it. Those among faculty or student body who did not intend to observe them could leave. No one accepted the offer, and the unrest and ferment continued. During the early months of 1973, the problem surfaced again in the high school. A new principal had been appointed by the superiors in Mankato to replace Sister Assumpta Bachman, with the mission of bringing the school into line with the demands of the archdiocesan education office. Three or four faculty members were active in promoting opposition to the pastor's position, especially in the liturgy and in the religion classes, and they had complained both to the education office and to the superiors in Mankato.

Discussions with the diocesan authorities, including Bishop Raymond Lucker, Father John Gilbert, who was diocesan superintendent of schools, and Archbishop Leo C. Byrne, continued. Other consultations were made with the provincial team of the School Sisters of Notre Dame in Mankato. On March 10, 1973, the Board of Trustees of Saint Agnes directed a memorandum to the Archbishop, requesting the removal of Sister Jean Marie as principal of Saint Agnes High School, "because of her disruptive influence in the parish and in the school." They asked for a layman to succeed her whose "ideas and ideals would be conformative to the policies of the administration of the parish." It was clear that the pressure of the Catholic Education Center was being brought to bear on Saint Agnes through the provincial authorities of the School Sisters of Notre Dame by way of the principal of the high school. With her removal, the circuit would be broken and the pressure from the education office eliminated.

On March 21, 1973, Sister M. Eunice Silkey, provincial coordinator of the Sisters, wrote to Monsignor Schuler in support of Sister Jean Marie. She stated that "we cannot continue to be party to an educational operation in which the chief administrator stands in opposition to the philosophy and psychology of education inherent in the organizational structures provided by the diocese as an aid to our educational institutions as well as inherent in the constitution and directories of our community." She ordered the continuation of Sister Jean Marie as principal and permitted the withdrawal of those Sisters who wished to leave Saint Agnes.

On April 4, 1973, Monsignor Schuler summarized the situation in a letter to Archbishop Leo C. Byrne, pointing out that he had no conflict with the School Sisters of Notre Dame, but that the problem was based in theological concepts that had to do with the teaching of religion. The letter gave a detailed analysis of the books, workshops and programs listed in the booklet, *The Five P's*, including questions about the nature of Jesus Christ, pre-marital sexual morality, abortion, the purpose of marriage, and various teaching techniques based in sensitivity methods and a relativism that denies the absolute truth of Christian revelation. Monsignor Schuler presented his case to the Archbishop, and questioned how the Catholic Education Center could be of any service to a pastor and his schools if such theories and errors constituted the recommended materials to be used. He pointed out that if the Catholic Education Center was truly a service organization, as it claimed to be, then its services could be accepted or rejected by the parish schools without pressure coming from a threat of removal of the teaching Sisters.

On June 8, 1973, the *Saint Paul Dispatch* carried a headline: "Principal loses Saint Agnes post over dispute." The *Catholic Bulletin* of the same date read: "St. Agnes nuns end high school commitment," and the *Minneapolis Star* of June 9, 1973, said, "Philosophy dispute prompts nuns to break ties with school." No previous notice had been given to the administration at Saint Agnes of this development before it was released to the press. Bishop Lucker stated in the *Catholic Bulletin* article that the problem was a complex set of factors involving "Monsignor Schuler's objections to the philosophy and psychology of the bureau of education." He said that the dispute "is very much related to the question of the 'new theology' and the teaching of religion." He summarized the situation using a syllogism: "As pastor, Monsignor Schuler feels a strong responsibility to fight Modernism; but he believes the Catholic Education Center has been affected by this Modernism; therefore, he cannot accept or work with the Catholic Education Center." He said further that he disagreed with that position and felt that the bureau and its staff were "doing a great job."

The *Wanderer* for June 28, 1973, published an interview with Monsignor Schuler prepared by the editor, Alphonse J. Matt, Jr. In it, Monsignor Schuler said that the policy he was following at Saint Agnes was not his alone, but what had been the direction of the school for many years, supported by the Board of Trustees, the majority of the Sisters and the parents of the students. He said he had made an effort not to carry the controversy into the public forum, but with the publication in the *Catholic Bulletin* of a decision made by the provincial administration of the Sisters of Notre Dame, the matter became public. He said further that the charges that he had made against the Catholic Education Center

had never been answered either publicly or in a private response to his letter to the Archbishop. He said that he was not creating controversy for its own sake; but rather he was trying to protect the faith of the people entrusted to his care and save the schools at Saint Agnes.

In the Fall of 1973, William Peper became the first lay principal of Saint Agnes High School. Most of the Sisters remained as faculty members, although three or four chose to leave. The air had been cleared, and a period of peace and progress began for the high school. The conflict had never concerned the grade school, although efforts of the Catholic Education Center to assume control had been made earlier, particularly by evaluations of the policies of the school, the religion curriculum and the cooperation of the pastor. It had been announced that assignment of teaching Sisters would be determined by the rating given by the evaluation teams from the Catholic Education Center. With the decision about the high school, further pressure ceased on the grade school as well.

In April, 1972, after seven years at Saint Agnes, Father Martin Siebenaler was assigned as pastor in Loretto, Minnesota, and in August, Father Frederick Meyer was transferred to Saint Anne's in Minneapolis. With the increasing shortage of priests in the archdiocese, Saint Agnes was reduced to one assistant. Father A. Michael Sauber came in August, 1972, and a year later Father Cecilio Baraibar of the Diocese of San Cristobal de las Casas in Mexico took up residence at Saint Agnes for two years while he was a student at the College of Saint Thomas. In November, 1973, Monsignor Joseph A. Ettl, a native son of the parish, retired from the rectorship of Holy Trinity Cathedral in New Ulm, and lived at Saint Agnes until his sudden death on March 12, 1974. Monsignor Vincent Strelevics was another familiar figure. Formerly vicar general of the Diocese of Riva in Latvia, he had fled the communist takeover of his country, and served the Latvian community in Saint Paul which met in the chapel of Saint Agnes. On May 26, 1974, Archbishop Leo C. Byrne came to Saint Agnes to install Monsignor Strelevics as a pronotary apostolic on the occasion of his sixtieth jubilee of ordination. He lived until 1983 and the age of 94.

Many famous personages found their way to Saint Agnes. Among them was Otto von Habsburg, son of the last reigning Austrian emperor, Karl VI. He visited the parish during a lecture tour to the College of Saint Thomas, on March 8, 1974. Had not the events following the First World War led to the abdication of the Austrian monarch, Otto would today be ruler of the various sections of eastern Europe from which the early pioneers to Frogtown had come. On December 27, 1973, many church musicians from the United States and Europe gathered at Saint Agnes to mark the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the American Society of Saint Cecilia. Archbishop Leo Binz celebrated pontifical Mass at which the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale sang. Monsignor Johannes Overath of Cologne, Germany, represented the Federated Caecilian Societies of the German-speaking countries, and presented Monsignor Schuler with the gold Lassus medal for his work in church music. The following summer, the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale travelled to Europe on a musical pilgrimage, singing for Mass each day in the abbeys, cathedrals and churches from Cologne, Germany, along the Rhein to

Austria and Italy. They sang in Rome and at the Sixth International Church Music Congress in Salzburg. Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler accompanied the choir and their friends, the group numbering 180 people. On return, the Chorale began to sing orchestral, Viennese Masses with the cooperation of members of the Minnesota Orchestra on Sundays at Saint Agnes.

The careful celebration of the liturgical rites is an old tradition at Saint Agnes. The beauty and spaciousness of the church, the concern of the various pastors, the presence of many well-trained altar boys, had all been the cause of a fine liturgical tradition. Monsignor Schuler enhanced this, bringing the reputation of the liturgy at Saint Agnes to national recognition. In December, 1973, the *National Catholic Reporter* of Kansas City, Missouri, published an article on Saint Agnes solemn liturgy. On March 15, 1985, Archbishop Binz formally erected the Archconfraternity of Saint Stephen for Altar Servers, affiliating it with the first confraternity at Westminster Cathedral in London. Broadcast of the Sunday Masses on Minnesota Public Radio, Station KSJN-FM, began in 1976 and continued for several years. Several articles appeared in the *Saint Paul Dispatch* by Gary Hiebert lauding the liturgy and music at Saint Agnes. In October, a new organist, David Bevan, came to serve the parish from London and remained for four years.

Improvements in the church enhanced the beauty of the ceremonies. The red rug was removed from the sanctuary in 1976 after eighteen years of service and the original floor was partially restored. New lighting was installed in 1975 in the main church, and the historic chandeliers were refurbished and equipt with ornamental candles, adding to the baroque elegance of the building. 1974 was a holy year by order of the Holy Father. Saint Agnes observed the event with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament in the chapel on each First Friday, a practice that still continues. In 1975, exposition of the Blessed Sacrament each Saturday afternoon before the anticipated Sunday Mass was begun, giving many people an opportunity for a holy hour in preparation for Mass. The same year saw the introduction of Sunday Vespers in accord with the decrees of the Second Vatican Council. From ten to fifteen young men continue to sing the official afternoon prayer of the Church, and have kept the practice without exception for over twelve years. Under the direction of Paul W. LeVoir they also constitute the choir for the liturgical hours of Holy Week, including the ancient office at *Tenebrae*.

Devotion to the Blessed Virgin has always been a part of the Catholic life of the parish. In July 15, 1975, special devotion to Our Lady of Fatima was inaugurated with visits of the pilgrim statue to the homes of the parish. Under the care of the Ushers' Club, an honor guard of twelve men carried the statue on Saturday morning from one home to the next host. The rosary was recited in each place, and the home was dedicated to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. James Lachowitzer and Andrew Licha organized and carried out the pilgrimages each week for a period of five years. Every year, on the feast of the Assumption, the statue was returned to the church for a week of special devotions. In May 1975, the Legion of Mary was erected in the parish with a praesidium named for Our Lady of Martyrs. Mary Bresnahan was the first president with Lucille Schneider as secretary.

Father Sauber was transferred to Saint Joseph's Church in West Saint Paul in June of 1976, and the Archbishop assigned Father Michael W. Ince to Saint Agnes. He came from Holy Spirit Parish, but he had formerly served also in Columbia Heights and in Bloomington. A native of Shakopee, he has been particularly active in work with young adults, being archdiocesan director of the Dominic Clubs. Many people came to know Father Ince through his commentaries at the school Masses broadcast on Station WWTC for several years.

The parish societies continued to function despite the difficulties brought on by a changing world, television programs and the shrinking of the world through air and automotive travel. The Rosary Society is dedicated to prayer and service of the parish through a variety of activities. The Rosary Auxiliary is made of senior ladies who meet monthly for prayer and social activity. The Men's Club celebrated its fiftieth jubilee in 1985. The Saint Anthony and the Maria Hilf Societies are affiliates of the Catholic Aid Association, serving the parish with many fraternal activities. The high school parents are organized in the Home and School Association, and the grade school parents have their Parent Faculty Organization. The St. Vincent de Paul Conference carries out the temporal works of mercy for the needy of the parish, and the Legion of Mary is dedicated to the spiritual works of mercy. The Ushers' Club provides for the care of the worshippers in church and hospitality for visitors. Graduates of the high school, the commercial school and the grade school are members of the Saint Agnes Alumni Association. The Saint Agnes Boosters promote the athletic programs in the schools. Boy and girl scout groups and numerous athletic teams for both boys and girls function daily. The altar boys are organized into the Archconfraternity of Saint Stephen for Altar Servers under the direction of Deacon Harold Hughesdon and Sister Joannette. A schola of young men sings for vespers and the Gregorian chant Masses under the direction of Paul LeVoir.

In 1977, Sister Nicolette Welter retired as principal of the grade school after having spent nearly thirty years at Saint Agnes. She was replaced by Robert Ercolani, the first layman to serve as grade school principal, a post he held for eight years when he was replaced by John Boone. As in all schools, both public and private, the enrollment continued to decline for several reasons, including the changes in the neighborhood surrounding Saint Agnes and the propaganda against large families unleashed by such groups as Planned Parenthood. The immoral decision of the United States Supreme Court allowing for abortion and a contraceptive mentality that was widely accepted even among Catholics likewise contributed to the closing of many elementary schools in the city. Pro life activities were carried out by the parish societies and prayers for the victims of abortion were offered frequently in church. Statewide notice was taken of an open letter from Monsignor Schuler to Peggy Byrne, representative from the district in the Minnesota House of Representatives, published in the parish bulletin for April 1, 1979. The pastor criticized a speech made by Miss Byrne in which she advocated the distribution of contraceptives to teenagers as means of preventing abortions. He pointed out that one evil cannot be promoted to avoid another evil; both actions are contrary to God's law and the dignity of man. The most important moral issue as well as a civil rights problem continues to be the respect for human life in every phase of its existence, and even within

the Church and within the religious orders some have not followed the clear position of the *Magisterium* of the Holy Father and the bishops.

1978 was the "year of the three popes." Pope Paul VI died in August, and Pope John Paul I in September. Saint Agnes prayed for both Holy Fathers with a solemn Mass of Requiem on the occasion of each death, with the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale singing Mozart's famous *Requiem Mass*. On October 22, after vespers, a *Te Deum* was sung at the election of Pope John Paul II. Another jubilee was observed in 1978, as the Catholic Aid Association celebrated its one hundredth anniversary at the Saint Paul Cathedral with the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale singing Mozart's *Coronation Mass* along with congregational singing in both English and German. Monsignor Schuler is spiritual director for the Catholic Aid, and Saint Agnes continues to play an important role in the society.

The war in Viet Nam brought tragedy to that nation and its effects reached Saint Paul as many refugee families came into the community. Saint Agnes had long known the Vietnamese people through Father Vincent Lu who had served as assistant while studying at the University of Minnesota. With his help, the parish sponsored a refugee family of ten, providing them with a house on St. Albans Street and other needs to establish themselves. A considerable community of Vietnamese people used Saint Agnes chapel for their worship until they established their own parochial organization with a priest assigned to them. Later, an even larger influx of Laotian people, called the Hmong, came into Ramsey County, and many of them settled near Saint Agnes where classes in Catholic teachings were arranged for them until they received their own priest. The sorrows of these refugees touched the heart of the parishioners who offered charity and remembered that three generations ago their ancestors were also fleeing persecution and hardship in eastern Europe.

Monsignor Schuler continued his determination that Saint Agnes church not be violated by unnecessary and inartistic renovation which for so many churches had simply become a destruction of the architectural beauty of the building. The marble altar continued to be used, and the statues and shrines remained intact. The confessionals at the front of the church, beautifully ornate with carved wood, were remodeled into niches for the statues of the Sacred Heart and Saint Anthony in 1981. In the chapel, through the kind gift of the Sisters of the Cross, new wood-carvings of the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Virgin Mary were installed on either side of the altar. The statues were made in Münster in Germany in 1946, and when the Sisters left their convent on Blair Street for a new home on Hodgson Road they found the statues too large for their new chapel and offered them to Saint Agnes. Later, Mrs. Mary Kluck gave the parish the wood carvings of the meeting of Jesus and His Mother on the way to Calvary which hang on the rear wall of the chapel. The liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council in no way were intended to promote the destruction of art, and at Saint Agnes, through a careful implementation of the decrees of the council and the orders from Rome that followed on the council, the liturgy was made to conform to the laws of the Church. The building, the ceremonies, the music and the atmosphere in general were both sacred and artistic. Notice was taken of Saint Agnes

in the national press with a report by the Associated Press on the Sunday ten o'clock high Mass which appeared in 1978 and was printed throughout the Middle West.

Visitors to Saint Agnes in 1979 included the abbot of Saint John's, Father John A. Eidenschink, and Bishop Schladweiler who celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of his ordination with pontifical high Mass on Pentecost Sunday. A booklet, entitled *A Minnesota Shepherd*, was prepared by Father Richard M. Hogan on the bishop's life, including his years at Saint Agnes. Bishop Joseph Sullivan of Baton Rouge visited Saint Agnes during the Wanderer Forum, and the same Fall many Saint Agnes people traveled to Des Moines, Iowa, to see Pope John Paul II who visited the United States from October 1- 7.

On Easter Sunday, 1979, Monsignor Schuler announced the establishment of a "centennial fund," intended to improve the church in preparation for the observance of the one hundredth anniversary of the parish in 1987. Included in the projects to be undertaken with the money collected would be a new heating system, a new ceramic tile floor, rebuilding of the front steps and the east stairway, both of which were deteriorating, an elevator to bring people up the twenty-seven steps that were proving so difficult for so many parishioners, and finally the decoration of the interior of the church. The new heating system with area thermometers and the rebuilding of the front steps were accomplished in 1980, and the new tile floor was in place by the end of the summer of 1981. Further work was done on the platform at the main entrance and the roof and gutters were refurbished. The old iron pipes under the pews were removed and were taken by the Knights of Columbus to Fort St. Charles on the Northwest Angle to mark the site of the early fort established there by the French traders, now in charge of the Knights. Improvements in the school buildings were also undertaken in 1980 with a grant from the federal government and the State of Minnesota of \$67,610, which was used to provide new windows and other means of preserving energy. Rebuilding of the east stairway and the installation of the elevator began in November of 1985 and the project was completed by October 1986 at the cost of \$500,000, bringing the total spent on the church in the past fifteen years to nearly a million dollars.

Despite a great decline across the country in the number of vocations to the priesthood and the religious life, Saint Agnes continued to celebrate almost yearly ordinations of its young men. The prayer for vocations, said each Sunday at every Mass for the past thirty years, is undoubtedly a factor in this grace of God. On May 30, 1981, Father John M. LeVoir and Father Richard M. Hogan were ordained at the Cathedral. Father Hogan celebrated his First Solemn Mass at Saint Agnes on May 31, and Father LeVoir on June 7. On July 12, Father Jeffrey Wood, who lived in Roseville and studied in Rome for the Norbertine Order, came to Saint Agnes to celebrate a solemn Mass. In 1982, Bishop Schladweiler ordained Father John M. Burns at Saint Agnes on June 26, the first time that sacrament was given in our parish church. Father Thomas W. Dufner was ordained on May 28, 1983, and celebrated his First Solemn Mass on May 29. He was followed by Father Jeffrey Zwack on May 6, 1984. Father Paul Sirba was ordained on May 31, 1986, with his First Mass June 1, the feast of Corpus Christi. Two men from the parish have

been ordained permanent deacons, Jerome Bilderon June 9, 1979, and Harold Hughesdon on September 26, 1981; both were assigned to serve Saint Agnes parish.

A big event, widely welcomed and filled with great preparatory efforts, was the reunion of all alumni of Saint Agnes Schools. Scheduled for July 9, 1983, it brought together men and women from nearly every class. Mass, visits to the school buildings, dinner and dance at the Prom ballroom on University Avenue near Lexington, and various exhibits of photos and memorabilia occupied the weekend. Mrs. James Lachowitz coordinated the entire program which gave new life to the alumni organization and marked the beginning of the *Aggie Archives*, a quarterly newsletter for all the alumni. The annual giving campaign, sponsored by the schools to provide for the overgrowing needs of maintaining first class instruction, originated in the reunion of 1983.

Present for the reunion were many of the School Sisters of Notre Dame who over the past years taught at Saint Agnes. Among those who celebrated various jubilees at Saint Agnes were Sister Nicolette Welter, Sister Adelia Breimhorst, Sister Pacifica Bauler, Sister Rosalie Siebenaler, Sister Celine Koktan, Sister Alcantara Franke, Sister Dora Kuhn, Sister Leona Betzen, Sister Sheila McCall, Sister Leanore Stanton, Sister Felicitas Blaeser, Sister Albina Olheiser and Sister Alma Soler.

Pope John Paul II declared 1983 to be a holy year to mark the anniversary of the Redemption wrought by the Passion, Death and Resurrection of Christ. Celebration of the event in the archdiocese was marked by visits to assigned churches. Saint Agnes and the other parishes of the Como district organized a pilgrimage to the Saint Paul Cathedral on Sunday afternoon, August 14. Over 1500 people marched from the State Capitol to the Cathedral, reciting the Rosary. In the great church, the organ sounded the hymns and all sang. Father Richard M. Hogan preached, and Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament followed the recitation of the prayers of the Holy Year. It was the largest single parish observance of the Holy Year in the archdiocese. To keep the entire year by some special observances, the parishioners were asked to fill out a form indicating how they would observe the Holy Father's request for prayer and penance, beginning March 25, 1983, and ending with Easter *Sunday, 1984. The form used at Saint Agnes was published in the Wanderer* for use in other parishes.

Visitors to Saint Agnes in 1983 included Bishop Fremiot Torres of Ponce, Puerto Rico, and Bishop Lucilo Quiambao of the Philippine Islands, and Father Paul Marx, international leader in the pro-life movement. Bishop Robert J. Carlson, newly appointed auxiliary bishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, celebrated pontifical Mass on Saint Agnes Day in 1984, shortly after his consecration as bishop, just as Bishop Richard Ham had celebrated the patronal feast day shortly after he came to the diocese in 1980. In October, 1984, the solemn Mass from Saint Agnes was broadcast over 160 public radio stations across the country. Station WFMT of Chicago arranged the program which included an interview with Monsignor Schuler on the subject of church music, along with the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale and members of the Minnesota Orchestra singing Beethoven's *Mass in C*.

The autumn of 1984 also saw the departure of Father Vincent Lu, O.P., who had become a familiar figure around Saint Agnes as well as on the lakes of the area where his reputation as a fisherman was hailed. He accepted the position of superior of the Vietnamese Dominican Fathers with headquarters in Calgary, Alberta, Canada. He was at Saint Agnes for nine years while he made studies at the University of Minnesota.

The technology of 1985 arrived at Saint Agnes with the installation of an IBM computer which provided for the parish records, records of income and all accounts payable. The unit had terminals in the high school, the development office, the parish house and the commercial department of the high school. Thomas Kemp, a deacon, programmed the system and instructed the personnel in its use. Simplification of distribution of collection envelopes, mailings, billings and records provided great saving of time and increased efficiency in the administration of the parish as well as in preparing the students in the commercial department of the high school with the most modern equipment available.

Mrs. John Kampa, appointed parish secretary by Monsignor Bandas in 1965, continued in that position, keeping the parish records, publishing the weekly bulletin and keeping the financial accounts and payroll which in the decade of the nineteen-eighties had reached a million and half dollars annually. Her pleasant voice as telephone receptionist became identified with Saint Agnes in the minds of the hundreds of callers. The smooth running of the rectory office rested largely on her.

Monsignor Schuler celebrated the fortieth anniversary of his ordination to the Holy Priesthood with a solemn Mass on Sunday September 15, 1985, followed by a reception in the church hall. The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale sang Joseph Haydn's *Pauken Mass*, and Father Richard M. Hogan, a nephew of Monsignor Schuler, preached the sermon. A purse of nearly \$25,000 was presented to the jubilarian which he turned over to the fund being collected to enclose the east stairway of the church and install an elevator. Father Ince supervised the arrangements which brought friends from all parts of the state to attend the event. Later in the spring, the Minnesota Chapter of the Catholic League presented Monsignor Schuler with its award as Minnesota Catholic of 1985. The priests of the archdiocese voted him an award for having encouraged so many young men toward the priesthood. In November, Monsignor Schuler travelled to Rome to attend the VIII International Church Music Congress as well as the ceremonies of the beatification of Mother Theresa Gerhardinger, foundress of the School Sisters of Notre Dame. The event took place in the Basilica of Saint Peter with Pope John Paul II presiding. The parish observed the great privilege given to the Sisters with a solemn Mass on December 8, 1985.

Work on the rebuilding of the east stairway to the church, which began in November of 1985, was completed in October of 1986. MacDonald and Mack of Minneapolis were architects, and Joseph Johnson was engaged as general contractor. Beside resetting the stone stairway which had pulled away from the building, it was decided to enclose the stairway which was long a problem because of the thawing and freezing in the winter and also to install an elevator to afford access to the upper church as well as the chapel for those for whom the twenty-seven steps to the upper church were too much. The cost of

the project was \$500,000. Every effort was made to harmonize the new addition with the architecture of the church, and the matching of the stone and the tile was very successful. As early as 1914, the difficulty with snow and ice on the east stairway was noted in the minutes of the trustees' meetings, but the problem was only solved seventy years later with the enclosing of the stairs.

In January 1986, Bishop Hilary B. Hacker of Bismarck, North Dakota, celebrated the patronal feast with Pontifical Mass and preached. The same week Bishop William Bullock, auxiliary bishop of Saint Paul and Minneapolis, confirmed a class of 82, and Bishop Alphonse J. Schladweiler, retired bishop of New Ulm, visited the parish during the same period.

In September 1986, the parish arranged to borrow a half-million dollars from the Catholic Aid Association to cover the improvement of the parking lots on Thomas and on Lafond Avenues, to purchase new IBM computers for the commercial department of the high school costing over \$50,000, and to decorate the church in preparation for the centenary of the parish.

The original stone foundation of Kettle River limestone put in place in 1897 as foundation for a church planned by Bishop Trobec came to light when excavations for the elevator were made. The rock had to be removed at considerable effort and expense. When plans for building the present church were made, the old foundation had been abandoned and forgotten, only to be re-discovered in 1986. The rock that was removed from the foundation was used to build a wall around the rectory garden.

The Catholic Aid Association held its annual convention in Saint Paul in September 1986 with the opening Mass at Saint Agnes with Bishop Paul Dudley of Sioux Falls, South Dakota, as celebrant and homilist. The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale and members of the Minnesota Orchestra performed Haydn's *Pauken Messe*. At a banquet following at the Prom Ballroom, the association honored Monsignor Schuler, who is their spiritual director, on his forty years of priesthood.

Preparations for the one hundredth anniversary of the founding of the parish continued throughout 1986. The Rosary Society arranged for a commemorative plate depicting the spire of the church. A pictorial directory of all the parishioners was prepared during the summer months when everyone came to have his picture taken at studios set up in the church basement. The firm of Olan Mills worked under the direction of Mrs. Frances Wistrill who organized the program. The Twin Cities Catholic Chorale made three cassette tapes, recording the solemn Masses of Christmas, Easter and Pentecost. Entitled "Saint Agnes, Sunday Morning," all the Gregorian chant, the orchestral and choral music, the readings, sermons, organ music and the ringing of the church bells are preserved for a record of how the liturgy was celebrated at Saint Agnes. The project was financed and organized by the Leaflet Missal Co.

A committee made up of the officers of all the parish societies together with the administration of both the high school and the grade school and the School Sisters of

Notre Dame met under the chairmanship of Lawrence Manthe. Plans for solemn Masses, a pilgrimage to Calvary Cemetery, a banquet, a dance and many other activities were discussed to mark the hundredth anniversary of the parish during 1987- 88.

Decoration of the church interior was begun in the Spring of 1987. It was thirty years since it had last been painted, and candle smoke and incense had left soot and grime on the walls. Cracks in the plaster caused by shifting of the structure were in need of repair. Plans were drawn to emphasize the baroque character of the building and utilize the decorative style found in south German churches. Installation of marble on the pillars added to the richness of the interior. Marblization of the columns restored them to the original painting as done seventy years before.

The Conrad Schmidt Studios of New Berlin, Wisconsin, undertook the project which cost in excess of half a million dollars. Decorative plaster work on the ceiling and a sunburst over the main altar made the interior as elaborate as the exterior and very much in the style of the baroque churches of Austria and south Germany. The work was completed by the opening of the centennial year of the founding of the parish in October 1987.

For thirty years the parish has been praying for religious vocations. 1987 witnessed three first solemn Masses by newly ordained priests on three successive Sundays. Father Frank Poncelet celebrated Mass on May 31; Father David Belland on June 7; and Father Joseph Sirba on June 14. Since 1981, there have been eleven men ordained from Saint Agnes. Despite the scaffolding filling the church, the occasions were very festive, followed by receptions arranged by the Rosary Society in the church hall.

Chapter Eleven

RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT



Saint Agnes is one of the truly great parishes of the archdiocese. The past one hundred years have seen it distinguished by a number of developments and initiatives begun by its priests and parishioners that have brought the parish national and even international recognition. Not least among its achievements has been the dedication of the parish to the cause of Catholic education. It was (and continues) to be committed to the support of schools for the education of its youth and the youth from many other parishes in the city. From the very beginning, the parochial school was essential. Father Trobec, with the cooperation of the parishioners and the School Sisters of Notre Dame, opened the elementary school during the first year of the parish's existence. The first building to be erected was the school. Father Gruden founded the high school to provide for the secondary education of the youth of the parish and others from surrounding areas. Saint Agnes High School remains as one of only two parochial high schools in the archdiocese, and the support of education on the secondary level is the greatest expense of the parish. Two-thirds of the students presently enrolled come from outside the parish and are subsidized by the contributions of Saint Agnes parishioners. The facilities found in both Gruden Hall and Bandas Hall are the finest. The faculties of both institutions are excellent.

The care and reverence with which the liturgy is carried out at Saint Agnes is historic. The Sunday solemn Masses have been broadcast across the country, and descriptions of the liturgy have appeared in many journals. The altar boys are trained and are knowledgeable of their duties. The music provided by the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale attracts visitors from all parts of the state and the nation. In every way, what is done at Saint Agnes is in perfect accord with the directives of the Holy See and the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. Liturgy at Saint Agnes is not a home-made activity. Rather it is the action of the Church, which is the Mystical Christ; and therefore, the liturgy is the very action of the Redeemer Himself. Only the Church, the Mystical Christ, can determine what that is to be. It remains for the priest and the people to carry it out as the Church prescribes it with as much care, reverence and solemnity as possible. From the beginning of the parish this was the intention of the pastors, and nothing was spared to make the Eucharistic Sacrifice noble and beautiful, fully in accord with the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church.

The religious life and the priesthood have flourished among the parishioners of Saint Agnes. Nearly one hundred young women have embraced the consecrated life of poverty, chastity and obedience in several communities. Their apostolic work has spread the influence of this parish across the Midwest. The number of vocations to the priesthood

has likewise been great, with nearly forty newly ordained priests celebrating their first solemn Masses at Saint Agnes in the past one hundred years. Concern for vocations to the priesthood and the religious life has found expression in prayer. For the past thirty years, at every Mass on every Sunday, a prayer for vocations has been said. God has heard the prayer and blessed this parish.

Saint Agnes has always been in the vanguard of new life and activity in the Church, locally and on a wider scope. The influence of its priests and laymen has extended far beyond the boundaries of the parish. Its pastors have been nationally and internationally known in a variety of areas of ecclesiastical sciences and art. Its laymen have founded and directed many activities in the lay apostolate and fields of social action.

Two of its pastors became bishops: Bishop Trobec governed the Diocese of Saint Cloud for seventeen years, and Bishop Schladweiler founded the Diocese of New Ulm and governed it for eighteen years. While he was assistant at Saint Agnes, Father Louis Gales established the Catechetical Guild which distributed materials for the teaching of religion all over the world. He organized and directed a radio program for the teaching of the faith to the young people of the state, and his Tower of Truth became a household word.

Father Francis Benz organized the Knights of the Altar, a society for Mass servers that spread across the country and is still flourishing in many parishes. It was promoted by the magazine, *The Catholic Boy*, with which he was associated for several years, and which later was published by the University of Notre Dame.

The Catholic Digest came into existence in Saint Agnes rectory with Father Louis Gales and his associates preparing and distributing the first issues while he was assistant at Saint Agnes. It grew to have the largest circulation of any Catholic magazine in the country, and at one time it appeared in several foreign language editions as well.

Among the many ideas of Father Gales and his friends was the *Leaflet Missal*. Long before the reforms of the Vatican Council introduced the handout prayer book for Sunday Mass, a small booklet with the texts of the Sunday liturgy was made available to people who had no hand missal or prayer book with them at church. The present Leaflet Missal Co. on Minnehaha Avenue near Saint Agnes is a continuation of the original organization begun at Saint Agnes in the 1930's, and it is fitting that it has returned to a close proximity of its beginnings.

The Matt Family for three generations has been associated with Saint Agnes. The *Wanderer*, now in its 120th year of publication, remains in that family. As the foremost journal of a conservative expression in this country, it serves the Church with a loyalty to the Holy See. With a deep analysis of developments within the Church, its weekly issue is read around the world and exerts considerable influence in clerical and lay circles. Joseph Matt was member of Saint Agnes, and the present editor, his grandson, Alphonse J. Matt, Jr., is also a member of the parish. For several years the annual Wanderer Forum, a national convention dedicated to the study of various social, theological and

ecclesiastical questions, was held at Saint Agnes, bringing many distinguished lecturers to the parish.

Another journal has been published from Saint Agnes for the past ten years. *Sacred Music*, now in its 114th year of publication has a worldwide readership among church musicians. Monsignor Schuler is its editor. Begun in Milwaukee in 1874 as an organ for the Cecilian movement in sacred music, it is the journal of the Church Music Association of America.

Sacred Music, along with the Twin Cities Catholic Chorale, has carried the reputation of Saint Agnes as a center of liturgical music to all parts of the country. The Chorale, founded by Monsignor Schuler in 1955, is made up of singers from all parts of the Twin Cities area. The Sunday Masses at Saint Agnes, enhanced with the orchestral repertory of the Viennese School of composers, have become widely known, especially through broadcasts over national public radio stations and recordings.

The priests of Saint Agnes through the years have been known for their publications. Father Gruden's book on the theology of the Church, *The Mystical Christ*, had a wide circulation, and it remains a classic in its field, especially in light of the present Holy Father's teachings on the nature of the Church. Monsignor Bandas' many writings continue to be read and quoted. His catechetical works were translated into many languages, both European and Oriental. His reputation as a teacher, theologian and author carried the name of Saint Agnes parish around the world. Monsignor Peters' *Life of Benedict XV* likewise redounded to the scholarship of the clergy of Saint Agnes. As theologians, catechists, church musicians, authors, publishers or editors, the pastors of Saint Agnes have brought credit and honor on themselves and on their parish.

But what of the future? Who can know it? God in His mercy keeps it from us. But one cannot help wondering. We have looked backwards through a hundred years, years of greatness and success, sacrifice and achievement, joy and sorrow, life and death. Surely those same human events will continue and characterize the next one hundred years. But how?

A hundred years from now, the land north and west of the downtown will still be here. With God's grace, Saint Agnes will be. The great church with its baroque onion tower and red tile roof will stand. With greater and greater sacrifices demanded, the schools will continue, since the education of the youth will always remain the most important work of any generation. Will the parish societies flourish? Will the School Sisters of Notre Dame and Saint Agnes Convent survive the years? Will the technology of the next one hundred years exceed the phenomenal developments of the past one hundred? Who will be living in Saint Paul, Minnesota, in 2087? Only God knows, and we should thank Him that He alone does. Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof. "For tomorrow and its needs, I do not pray. Keep me, Lord, from stain of sin, just for today."