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ST. MARY OF THE HOLY ROSARY CHURCH MINERTON, VINTON COUNTY, OHIO

St. Mary of the Holy Rosary was the full title of the church at Minerton, Vinton County, Ohio. The above sketch is of the second structure built by the congregation after the first was destroyed by fire in November, 1872. It was looked upon by the members of the parish as a beautiful and imposing church, especially after the tower was added by Father James J. McCann in 1893. A new bell in the tower added to the pride of the parishioners. The above church was in turn burned in 1921 and replaced by a broik one which also burned in October, 1978. (Sketch by Wally Toscano, Karlsberger & Associates, Architects, Columbus.)

THE HISTORY OF ST. MARY'S PARISH MINERTON, VINTON COUNTY, OHIO (Continued)

The early period of the history of St. Mary's, Minerton, from its beginning to 1875, is one of true missionary zeal, growth and development. Some facts of interest not found in present historical sketches of the parish, and gleaned from available records, should not be forgotten.

Mr. Keck in his excellent history of St. Mary's does not mention the pastorate of Father Anthony Durier, who was the second resident pastor. That Mr. Keck does not mention him is likely due to the shortness of his stay. But it is important to notice his being pastor at St. Mary's since he afterwards became the third bishop of Natchitoches (now the Diocese of Alexandria-Shreveport), Louisiana.

Father Durier was born in France, August 8, 1832 (1). He completed most of his studies for the priesthood in his native land, and came to the United States to serve in the Archdiocese of New Orleans. The seminary there having burned not long before, he was sent to the seminary in Cincinnati to complete his studies (2). He was ordained by Archbishop Purcell Oct. 27, 1856. Desirous of spending some time in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati in order to improve his knowledge of English, he was sent to assist at Temperanceville, Belmont County. After a few weeks there he was transferred to Chillicothe, Ross County, for another short stay. He was then placed in charge of the mission at Wilkesville (Minerton), where his pastorate was also of short duration. He was recalled by his Archbishop (3) in March, 1857. He was consecrated third bishop of Natchitoches March 19, 1885, and died Feb. 28, 1904.

Two letters written by Father Durier from Wilkesville to Archbishop Purcell give some interesting incidents of a priest's missionary life in the 1850's. The first letter, dated Feb. 16, 1857 (4), gives an account of his first trip through his mission area. "I just came from visiting my Mission which your Grace entrusted to my care. It extends far and wide.... Had I been an angel sent by Almighty God they would not have met me with a more cheering welcome. God bless the open hearted children of Ireland....When going from Hamden (5) to my place I lost my way at ten o'clock of evening. I was still riding in the woods quite out of track, shutting my eyes, saying my beads, trusting the Providence of God, and going on. Finally I took a glimpse of light forming. I rode....wright (sic!) there. It was a Protestant house. They received me kindly. On morning I told them they had received a Catholic priest, and I asked them what objection(s) they had against Catholicity. Well, says the head of the family, I never knew much about it only I read in a book that priests burn people. Well, my friend, I am a Catholic priest, and you may be sure that I never burnt anybody.... I hope soon to have a skool (sic!) at Wilkesville, and a church at Hamden (6)."

On March 20, 1857, Father Durier wrote (7) of his preparations for departure. "I just received your letter," he wrote to Archbishop Purcell. "My excellent Archbishop (8) calls me. All wright (sic!), the holy will of God be done. I was just going to start my house-keeping; my house-keeper came yesterday. She is just looking out to fetch nice, dainty things from all parts of the world in order to furnish what she calls our house. I did not as yet tell her anything about your letter. I look with respect at her gray hair, and

with a most secret and interior laugh at her busy importance.....I went round my whole mission. I was very pleased with my place and cherished the hope to have my tent pitched here for a long time. Confiteor quod hospes sum et peregrinus super terram (9). I get up and move my tent again. Since you allow me to stay a week more, I'll be here 'till the day after tomorrow to tell them at Mass the will of their Archbishop, and my own archbishop (10), too, so far. But Wednesday I'll receive a great many persons in the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin Mary, place the congregation in the hands of the Sweet Mother, and after I'll go to Jackson for Sunday, faithful to my word that I would never miss an appointment. Next day, Monday after Passion Sunday, I'll get to Cincinnati - and then as soon as possible I'll be on the father of waters, going down to New Orleans. There I'll stay, live, die and raise at the last day. All wright, all wright. Please to prepare for your humble and devoted servant your blest blessing. ANTHONY DURIER."

In a postscript Father Durier wrote: "I guess there is too much Yankee about me. I reckon some days retreat at the most cherished Mount St. Mary's would do me some good. If my Archbishop knew in what need I am of some spiritual rejection(!), he would have no objection to my wish. But if..... you give me leave, I am sure, it will be all wright. Anyhow I am ready to do anything you want me to do."

Since the earliest sacramental records of St. Mary's, Minerton, begin in 1868, it is of interest to note that the first record of a First Communion class was on November 1 of that year. Father Michael Ahern, pastor, gave Holy Communion to 24 children. They were, boys: William Boyce, Francis Butt, Edward Butt, Joseph Cooney, Roger Doherty, John Duffy, Michael Dunn, Francis Lawler, Francis Dominic McKenzie, Nicholas O'Brien, Francis Rafferty, Patrick Ryan and Aloysius Stanton. Girls: Isabel Black, Mary Condron, Ellen Culver, Mary Ellen Fagan, Mary Gallagher, Ellen Lawler, Catharine Lawler, Rosanna McClory, Lydia Ann McKenzie, Agnes Cecily McKenzie and Mary O'Brien. The names surely prove the Irish element of the people who made up the parish.

One of the early classes confirmed by Bishop Rosecrans was at St. Mary's, Minerton, on May 11, 1869 (11). There were 68 in the class, 35 boys and 33 girls. It must have been a sight inspiring for the congregation to have such a large class to be confirmed. Many of them were members of the First Communion class of the previous November. The boys: Joseph Black, William Black, William Boyce, Francis Butt, Edward Butt, James Carey, Jeremiah Condron, John Condron, Joseph Cooney, Chauncey Culver, Roger Doherty, Andrew Douglas, Thomas Duffy, Martin Duffy, John Udffy, Michael Dunn, Thomas Gallagher, James Fagan, Francis Lawler, James McClory, Bernard McClory, Gabriel McKenzie, Thomas McKenzie, Francis Dominic McKenzie, Thomas Mahaffey, Jerome Mahaffey, Jerome Murphy, James O'Brien, John O'Brien, Francis Rafferty, William Ring, Patrick Ryan, John Stanton and Aloysius Stanton.

The girls: Mary Jane Black, Isabel Black, Sarah Buck (Butt?), Catharine Buck, Mary Ann Carpenter, Mary Condron, Bridget Cooney, Bridget Culver, Ellen Culver, Rosanna Doherty, Sarah Doherty, Martha Doherty, Catharine Doherty, Agnes Duffy, Rosanna Duffy, Elizabeth Jane Dunn, Mary Ann Dunn, Elizabeth Durbin, Margaret Fagan, Mary Ellen Fagan, Mary Gallagher, Katharine Lawler, Ellen Lawler, Margaret Leech, Theresa McClernan, Rosanna McClory, Lydia Ann McKenzie, Agnes Cecily McKenzie, Frances Agnes Moore, Sarah Catharine Moore, Mary O'Brien, Bridget Shelton and Mary Simmons. Father Michael Ahern was pastor.

Indicative of the fact that the pastor of St. Mary's took care of other missions is the recording in the sacramental records of the parish of a First

Communion Class of 29 at Washington Furnace, which was in Lawrence County. The names of those in the class again were predominantly Irish names. The date of the ceremony was August 14, 1871. It is peculiar to note that Washington Furnace, a mission with 40 Catholics, was attended from Lick Run, Scioto County, in 1868 (12). It was also taken care of from Lick Run in 1874 and 1875. From 1883 to 1890 it was a mission of Jackson (13).

The Second St. Mary's Church

Mr. Keck in his history of the Minerton parish states that Father D'Arcy became pastor in November, 1873, and that the church burned a week later. However, he began signing sacramental records at the parish on November 12, 1872. This would seem to indicate that the church burned in 1872. Be that as it may, Father William Thomas D'Arcy signed the first available census report (14) of the parish on January 3, 1874. His report credited the parish with 400 souls. During the year there were 20 Baptisms and 9 deaths; no marriages. The pew rent for the year (1973) totaled \$491.00. It must be remembered that "pew rent" was the regular means of parish income. Father D'Arcy also reported that he took care of a mission at Lincoln Furnace, 8 miles distant.

According to sacramental records of the parish Father Ahern returned in September, 1875, to become resident pastor again. He remained until the end of March, 1878. He was succeeded in June by Father Louis Grimmer who remained for thirteen years. According to Mr. Keck, Father Grimmer made many needed improvements, including the plastering of the church, new pews and and altars were installed and a new organ obtained. "It has been said of this distinguished priest," wrote Mr. Keck, "that he was a splendid financier.... The people liked him, and were ready to give freely to any cause in which he was interested." The parish was free of debt when in left in July, 1891.

Records in the Columbus Diocese Archives include Minerton Parish census reports of Father Grimmer for 1880 and 1882, and for 1887. He submitted annual financial reports from 1886 to 1891.

It is of note that he gave the name of the parish as St. Mary of the Rosary in his parish census report of 1887. Father James J. McCann, who succeeded Father Grimmer, also gave the name of the parish as "St. Mary's of the Holy Rosary" in his reports of 1896 and 1897.

On October 15, 1882, Father Grimmer made a report of his parish covering two years, from September, 1880, to September, 1882. He reported 62 families with 375 souls. During the two years there were 25 deaths, 39 Baptisms, 40 First Communions and 72 were confirmed. There was no mention of marriages. There were 50 children being instructed in catechism classes. There was no baptismal font.

There was a sharp drop in the parish population according to Father Grimmer's report of 1887. There were then 50 families with 299 souls. However, there were 60 children attending religious instruction classes. He did state that ten families were not included because they were lax and need to be treated well to get them to attend church. The Rosary Altar Society had 40 members. That he attended other missions was indicated by his statement that there were "batpismal fonts in all churches."

According to Mr. Keck, Father Grimmer built a new and commodious parsonage at a cost of fifteen hundred dollars. This is reflected in his financial report of July 15, 1887. Whereas receipts in 1886 were \$384,50, in 1887 he could report receipts of \$2,188.25. This sum, he stated, included \$1,321.42 received by subscription for a new residence. The debt in 1887 was \$110.25.

Financial reports were made semi-annually. Receipts for 1888 were \$716.25; for 1889, \$809.45; for 1890, \$857.32, and for 1891, \$967.30. Each year there was a debt, salary due the pastor. Diocesan assessment in 1890 was \$49.75. A festival that year realized \$130.00. The cathedraticum in 1891 was \$15.00. In that year he sold the old rectory for \$25.00. His final report of July 1, 1891, stated that there were no debts.

Mr. Keck wrote that the most flourishing year at St. Mary's was in 1889 when there were 400 communicants and 75 families. When the iron furnace nearby went out of business there was a decided drop in the parish membership.

Father James J. McCann (17) became pastor in July, 1891, remaining until 1899. He also made substantial improvements, which included a beautiful tower added to the church at a cost of \$1200.00. A new bell whose beautiful sound could be heard for miles, was placed in the tower.

Father McCann's first parish report was made July 1, 1895. He listed 47 families, with 361 souls; 14 baptisms; 7 deaths; 20 First Communions; 40 Confirmations, and 20 children at catechism classes. He also wrote that there were 58 members in "The Living Rosary." The next two years he gave the name of the parish as "St. Mary's of the Holy Rosary." Other statistics were similar to those of 1895.

In his first financial report Father McCann gave receipts for 1892 as totalling \$1,050.67, including \$20.10 for the Infirm Priests' Fund. Festivals began to be a part of parish life. He reported festival receipts of \$272.23 on Jan. 1, 1893. In July of that year he noted festival receipts of \$99.60.

Financing the new church tower was reflected in his report of Jan. 1, 1894. Receipts totalled \$2,389.30, which included a festival's receipts of \$358.31, a subscription netting \$446.50, and borrowed, \$1,000.00. The debt was given as \$1,023.25, and property improvements as costing \$1,852.88.

(To be continued

^{1) &}lt;u>History of the Archdiocese of Cincinnati</u>, 1821-1921, by Rev. John H. Lamott, 1921, p. 353.

^{2) &}lt;u>History of Mt. St. Mary's of the West</u>, by Michael J. Kelly and James M. Kirwin, 1894, p. 175.

³⁾ Archbishop Anthony Blanc, New Orleans.

⁴⁾ Archives of Notre Dame University.

⁵⁾ Hamden is still a small village in Clinton Township, Vinton County, and is about ten miles from the Minerton church.

⁶⁾ Father Durier's hopes for a school at Wilkesville and a church at Hamden were never realized.

Archives of Notre Dame University.

⁸⁾ Underlining in this letter was by Father Durier.

^{9) &}quot;I admit that I am a guest and a pilgrim on this earth."

- 10) See footnote no. 3 above.
- 11) St. Mary's Parish records.
- 12) Columbus Diocese Archives.
- 13) National Catholic Directory.
- 14) Columbus Diocese Archives.
- 15) Lincoln Furnace was in Milton Township, Jackson County.
- 16) Father Charles Louis Grimmer was born in Zimmern, Germany, June 10, 1844, He was ordained by Bishop Rosecrans in March, 1871. He served at Churchtown and Jackson before becoming pastor at Minerton. Afterwards he was pastor at Lowell, Zaleski and at Marges where he died in 1902.
- 17) Father James Joseph McCann was born in Cincinnati, Ohio, June 2, 1861. He was ordained at Niagara, N.Y., by Bishop Stephen V. Ryan, Bishop of Buffalo, June 4, 1887. Besides Minerton he served at Harriettsville, Shawnee, and Pine Grove. He died in Nashville, Tenn., Oct. 11, 1931.

MT. CALVARY CEMETERY, COLUMBUS, OHIO

BURIAL RECORDS

(Continued)

1874 (Cont.)

Ehret, Barbara, April 28 Gleich, Catharine, May 3 Frey, Joseph Heinrich, May 2 Knoblauch, Johan, May 9 Gehl, Elizabeth, June 1 Pfurr, Christoph, June 9 Stalder, Maria, June 18 Rodenfels, Margaretha, June 22 Spaan, Joseph, July 4 Strickfaden, Michael, July 8 Goetz, Anna, July 9 Hoellenthal, Barbara, July 15 Metz, Maria Anna, July 15 Zimmer, Wilhelm, July 21 Ims, Otto, July 25 Hinterschid, Katharina, Aug. 5 Moritz, Joseph, Aug. 10 Festner, Aloysius, Aug. 10 Hoermle, Karl, Aug. 13 Albert, Anton, Aug. 16 Lang, Barbara, Aug. 23 Lang, Johan, Aug. 31 Berger, M[aria], Sept. 10 Redel, John, Child of, Sept. 17 Scholl, Maria, Sept. 21 Deinlein, Adam, Sept. 20 Voll, Anna, Sept. 23 Strickfaden, Michael, Oct. 26 Saile, Magdalena, Nov. 6 Saile, Wendelin, Mother and Children from old cemetery, Nov. 4

Pfaar, Mrs. & Neumayer Children from old cemetery, Nov. 4 Baer, Mrs. Karl, from old cemetery, Dec. 5 Ohling, Jakob, Child of, Dec. 10 Zettler, Karl Friedrich, Dec. 22 Schiesser, Johan, Dec. 18 Matt, Joseph, Dec. 21

1875

Kiefer, Friedrich, Jan. 4 Witzigmann, Gertrude, Jan. 10 Selig, Katharina, Feb. 12 Ender, Johan, Feb. 5 Jury, Theresa, Feb. 19 Loch, Franz, Feb. 25 Kelle, Johan, Feb. 25 Eiermann, Rosa Marie, March 4 Loch, Edward, March 10 Fischer, Wilhelm, March 14 Woefle, Karl, Dau. of, March 28 Futerer, Friedrich, March 30 Trap, Casper Adam, April 5 Huck, Elizabeth, April 7 Ranft, Anna Barbara, April 9 Ims, Anna, April 9 Albert, Maria, April 12 Futerer, Louise, April 26 Futerer, Georg, April 26 Kessler, Carl, April 27 Matt, Mathilde, April 28 Schleret, Anna, May 10

1875 (Cont.)

Igel. Peter. May 10 Hoermann, Josephina, May 16 Weiss, Barbara, May 23 Dersam, Helena, May 28 Scholl, Maria, June 9 Fraas, Anna Barbara, July 2 Falkenbach, Clara Maria, July 4 Schlaereth, Mrs. Andreas, July 6 Hoellenthal, Anna, July 7 Morschausser, Ma. Katharina, July 9 Stocker, Gerhardus, July 16 Schraudt, Philimina, July 17 Schreiner, Maria, July 17 Meder, Johan, July 22 Beck, Aloisia, July 30 Osterreicher, Engelbert, Aug. 6 Schrenk, Johan, Aug. 8 Keil, Anna Maria, Aug. 12 Fritz, Karolina, Aug. 26 Stolz, Anna, Aug. 26 Baumann, Johan & August, Sept. 1 Winterfeld, Johan, Sept. 2 Koenig, Anna Maria, Sept. 4 Hirtler, Edward, Sept. 10 Hemersbach, Gertrud C., Sept. 12 Eiermann, Julia, Sept. 16 Getreu, Anna Maria, Sept. 24 Kessler, Ambros, Sept. 27 Wolf, Veronika, Sept. 28 Stump, Mrs., Child of, Sept. 22 Osterreicher, Anna, Oct. 4 Meder, Helena, Oct. 17 Saile, Joseph, 2 children of, from the old cemetery, Oct. 16 Thomas, Johan, Oct. 22 Volmer, Joseph, Oct. 31 Fleck, Edward, Nov. 7 Hellenthal, Clara, Nov. 7 Renner, Franziska, Nov. 7 Hoermle, Margaretha, Nov. 8 Lang, Walberga, Nov. 10 Krebs, Wilhelm, Nov. 13 Martin, Michael, Nov. 19 Renz, Maria, Nov. 20 Ruhs, Helena, Nov. 23 Jaeger, Wendelin, Nov. 24 Reil, Ulrich, Nov. 24 John, Magdalena, Nov. 25 Rohr, Henrietta & Amalia, Nov. 28 Oelgoetz, Karl, Dec. 1 Hoffmeister, Mrs., Dec. 10

Rohr, Johan, Dec. 3
Hamman, Joseph, Dec. 12
Widmayr, Dec. 13
Rohr, Georg, Dec. 3
Schub, Catharine, Dec. 16
Birkenbach, Franziska, Dec. 23
Russel, Johana, Dec. 27
Russel, Helena, Dec. 30

1876

Weisbaecker, Adam, Jan. 5 Bockmayr, Franz, Child of, Jan. 12 Traudmann, Klara, Jan. 23 Eigensee, Jakob, Jan. 23 Wagner, Margaretha, Jan. 25 Schreiner, Flora Maria, Jan. 25 Naegle, Katharina, Feb. 2 Birkle, Xaver, March 3 Bomm, Karl Nicklaus, March 9 Lukhaupt, Georg, March 10 Studer, Maria Franziska, April 3 Killian, Cecilia, April 7 Studer, Anna Regina, April 6 Mehltreter, Johan Georg, April 17 Baumann, Gustav Ferdinand, April 28 Ims, Edward Carl, May 4 Frech, Regina, May 12 Seilla, Benedick, May 15 Leitsch, Johannes, May 14 Muth, Catharina, May 15 Borger, Peter, May 19 Theado, Carl, May 28 Hagermann, Herman, June 4 Brockhonon, Georg Heinrich, June 6 Gassmann, Johan Georg, June 19 Frech, Heinrich Joseph, July 1 Deinhart, Rosa Elizabeth, July 6 Hartung, Franz, July 24 Zettler, Louis, Aug. 4 Hofstetter, Carolina, Aug. 15 Marmle, Anna Maria, Aug. 15 Reinhart, Alberta Maria, Aug. 17 Firm, Johanna, Aug. 29 Maerz, Anna Maria, Sept. 1 Zettler. Wilhelm. Sept. 5 Buechner, Theresia, Sept. 12 Richter, Lorenz, Sept. 22 Renner, Joseph, Sept. 27 Rittel, Margaretha, Oct. 6 Eiermann, Margaretha, Oct. 6 Kochendorfer, Catharina, Oct. 13 Deinlein, Maria, Oct. 15

1876 (Cont.)

Hofstetter, Mathilde, Oct. 28 Hellenthal, Anna, Oct. 30 Eichenlaub, Carolina, Oct. 30 Will, Maria, Oct. 30 Gehrling, Franz, Nov. 1 Leitsch, Polycarp, Son of, Nov. 5 Hihs, Daniel, Nov. 9 Koch, Peter, Nov. 18 Klaus, Emma, Nov. 20 Otto, Elizabeth, Nov. 25 Wolls, Charlotte, Nov. 26 Hohn, Johann, Child of, Nov. 28 Falkenbach, Heinrich, Dec. 1 Jahn, Peter, Dec. 19 Baumeister, Anna Maria, Dec. 20 Jehling, Livia, Dec. 28

1877

Knoche, Regina, Jan. 2 Baumann, Theresa, Jan. 4 Woelfel, Johan, Jan. 4 Scholl, V. Maria, Feb. 8 Becherer, Johann, Feb. 18 Boelzer, Barbara, Feb. 20 Jakobi, Johan Peter, Feb. 22 Boehm, Paulus, Feb. 25 Goetz, Louis, Feb. 27 Trott, Maria, from old cemetery, Lang, Anton, from old cemetery, March 11 Koeller, Christina, March 17 Decker, Joseph, March 18 Woelfel, Cyrias, March 22 Woelfel, Maria, March 29 Frech, Rosina, March 29 Breidinger, Jakob, April 4 Pitton, Twins of Mr., April 7 Dersam, Margaret, April 8 Buchert, Michael, April 13 Wagner, Franz, April 17 Eiermann, Franz, April 30 Falkenbach, Johann, April 30 Engler, Johan Georg & Gerhart, from old cemetery, May 2 Stoner, Mathilde, May 10 Renner, Joseph, May 13 (Transfer) Brons, Maria A.L. Susanna, May 20 Reeb, Jakob, June 10 Schrauth, Franz, June 11 Muth, Johann, June 11

Ranft, Johann, June 15 Ossman, Maria Louise, June 20 Ohling, Maria, June 20 Deibel, Catharina, June 21 Stein, Franz Joseph, June 21 Thomas, Barbara, June 26 Ganter, Elizabeth, June 29 Thom, Wilhelm, July 5 Inns, Maria Mathilde, July 9 Beer, Lorenz, July 17 Seile (or Saille), Maria, July 21 Fischer, Georg, Feb. 27 Weiss, Jackob, July 6 Baltzle, Michael, July 29 Cornfelt, Elizabeth, Aug. 6 Thum, Ottilia, Aug. 9 Falkenbach, Henrietta, Aug. 14 Wehrlein, Jakob, Aug. 16 Dury, Johan, Aug. 19 Martin, Josephina, Sept. 8 Meinert, Johan Martin, Sept. 8 Meinert, Georg, Sept. 18 Scharf, Ludwig, Sept. 23 Rapp, Georg, Daughter of, Oct. 6 Nordmann, Johannes, Oct. 2 Winkels, Paul Friedrich, Oct. 17 Woelfl, Dorothea, Oct. 28 Rohr, Johann, Nov. 1 Siebert, Sylvia, Nov. 17 Renz, Johann, Nov. 26 Ernst, Katharina, Nov. 26 Kohlepp, August, Dec. 9 Sauer, Joseph, Son of, Dec. 22

1878

Vessner, Margaretha, Jan. 3 Woelfel, Ida, Jan. 10 Werner, Heinrich, Jan. 12 Altmaeier, Catharine, Jan. 17 Karpf, Anna Catharine, Jan. 20 Hermann, Maria Elizabeth, Feb. 23 Driffel, Kasper, March 10 Lahmen, Margaretha, Son of, March 10 Kaiser, Elizabeth, March 28 Boess, Catherine, April 6 Regner, Johan, Dec. 26, 1877 Baehr, Johan, April 11 Wenger, Maria Johanna, April 12 Trapp, Margaretha, April 17 Blossauer, Valentin, April 25 Henry, Elizabeth, May 1 Hermann, Blos, May 17 Bernhard, Carl Joseph, May 20

(To be continued)