

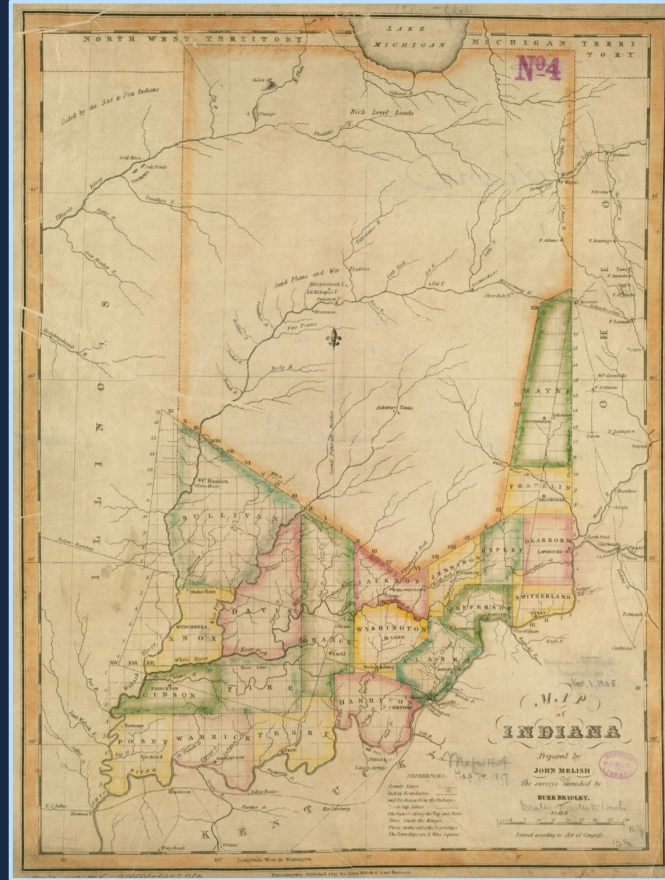
History of St. Anthony of Padua

*Part 1: Our First
Century in
Jeffersonville*

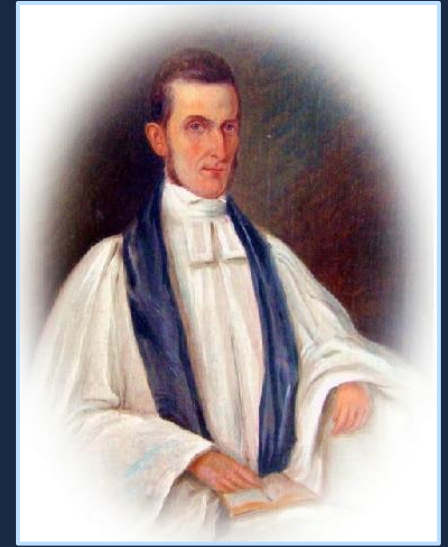


Early Indiana: A Missionary Church

The first Catholics in what would become Indiana were mostly French settlers from colonial times and Native American converts. In the early 1800s this frontier was mission territory...



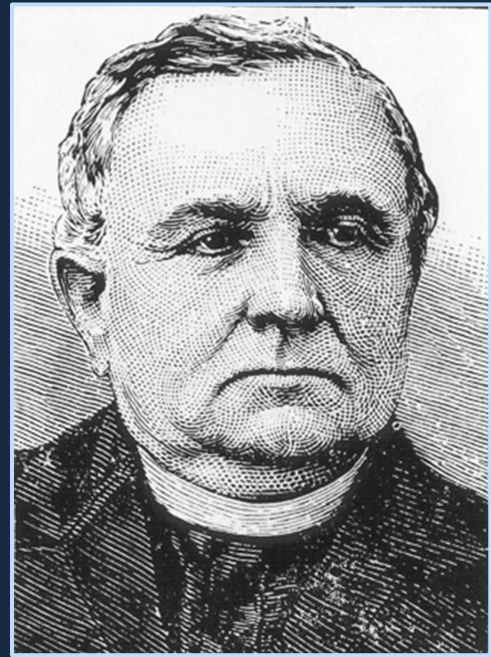
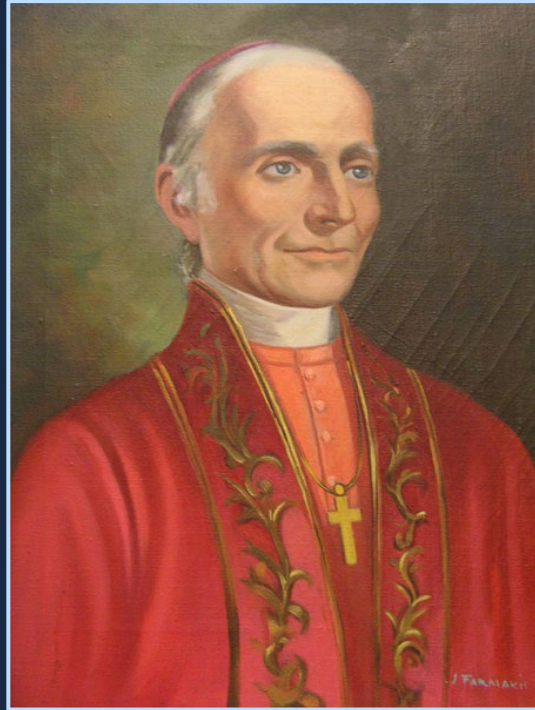
This map of Indiana from 1817 shows how little of the state was occupied by settlers in the early days of the church missions here, which were concentrated mostly in the southern part of the state. Native Americans, like the Potawatomi, still lived in the northern part of the state.



Fr. Benjamin Marie Petit (“Father Black Robe”) ministered to the Potawatomi and accompanied them on their removal from Indiana on the “Trail of Death” (Indiana’s “Trail of Tears”) in 1838.

Early Indiana: A Missionary Church

Right Rev. Simon Bruté, a missionary priest from France, served as the first bishop of Vincennes when it was separated from the Diocese of Bardstown, Kentucky, in 1834...



Bishop Bruté (left) traveled from America back to his native France for a visit in 1836 in order to build support for his work overseas. He recruited the French priest who would eventually become our first resident pastor, Fr. Augustine Bessonies (above).

Early Indiana: A Missionary Church

Bishop Bruté inspired Bessonies to trade his comfortable urban lifestyle for a harsh life on the frontier...

This image depicts a traveling priest during the missionary period in Kentucky.



In the late 1800s, Bessonies would become the Vicar General for the Indianapolis diocese. He wrote a memoir that included his missionary days traveling from town to town administering the sacraments in the 1840s

CHAPTER XXX.

REMINISCENCES OF A PIONEER PRIEST IN THE DIOCESE OF VINCENNES.*

WHEN Bishop Bruté visited France, in 1836, he inspired the greatest veneration in all that came in contact with him. In fact, he was looked upon as a saint. It was currently reported that he had performed many miracles, but his profound humility made him deny all such reports. He traveled through France, and experienced no difficulty in procuring laborers for his new diocese. He had secured many already when he came to the seminary of Issy, a preparatory school for the renowned seminary of St. Sulpice. The writer of this was then twenty-one years of age and was studying philosophy. He had resolved to join the Lazarists, or priests of the missions, and had been promised admission by the Superior-General, Father Nozot. But when he saw Bishop Bruté he was so strongly affected by the appearance of the saintly man that he experienced a strong desire to accompany him to America. He took the advice of his spiritual director, the learned and good Father Pinault, and, following his wise counsel,

* The V. Rev. Aug. Bessonies, V. G.

Catholicism in Jeffersonville before 1851: Visiting Priests

By the mid 1800s, many more people now lived all across Indiana and Catholic parishes began to be built. Fr. Bessonies himself became a pastor in Tell City, but other cities, such as Jeffersonville, continued to rely on visiting priests...

“The Rev. Daniel Maloney... was the first priest who visited Jeffersonville.... [He] remained only two or three days. His presence, however, aroused the faithful, who heretofore had to cross the river to go to Louisville to hear mass and receive the sacraments.” (Alerding, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Vincennes*)



When not being visited by traveling priests such as Fr. Maloney, Catholics in Jeffersonville would likely have crossed the river to receive sacraments at the original St. Boniface Church in Louisville.

Catholicism in Jeffersonville before 1851: First Mass

Jeffersonville's first Mass was in 1850...

“The first mass in Jeffersonville was said in a sort of hotel on the banks of the Ohio [R]iver, called the Hensley House, a three-story brick [building] on Front street, between Pearl and Mulberry streets.”

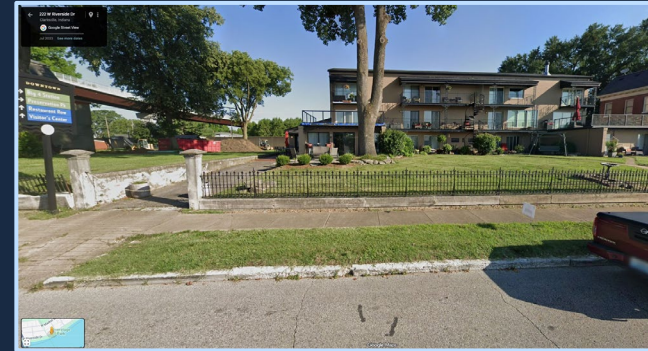
(Carr, *History of Catholicity in New Albany and Jeffersonville*)



The hotel location is shown on this map of Jeffersonville from 1855.



This is an image of Jeffersonville after the Civil War.



The building is long gone but this is the location today. (Front St. is now Riverside Dr.)

Founding of St. Anthony Church (1851)

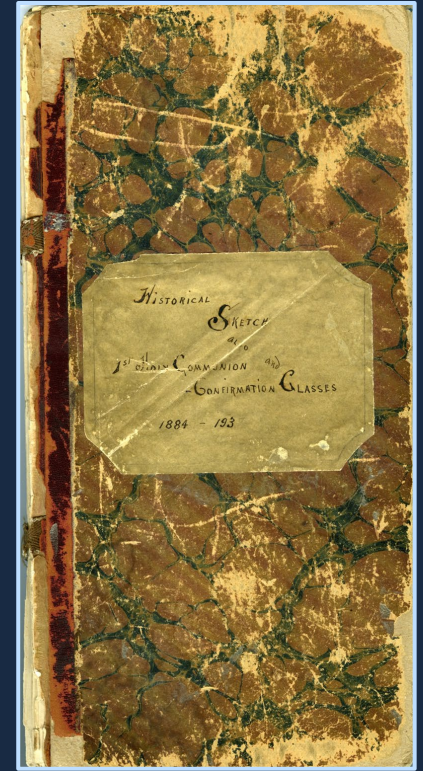
Local Catholics raised the money to start building the first Catholic church in Jeffersonville. Land was purchased in May 1851 and the cornerstone was laid on August 10 that year...



This is the original cornerstone.



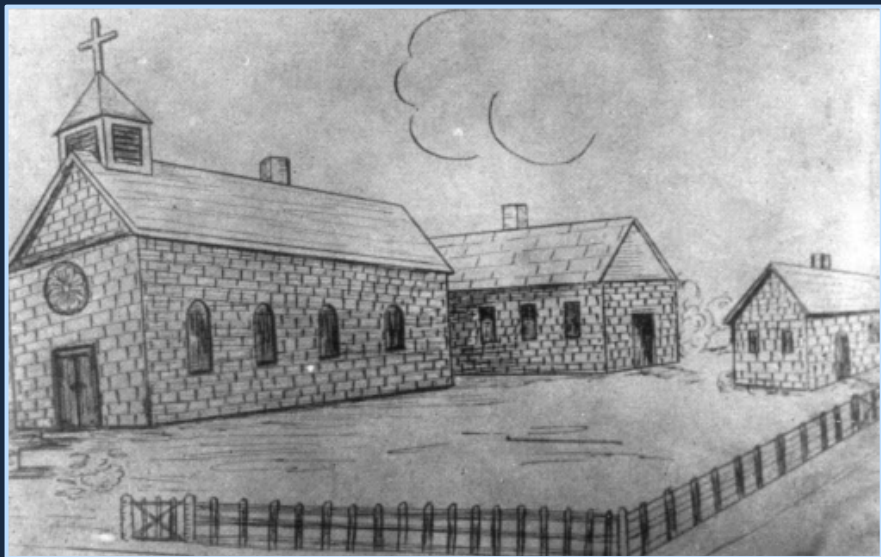
Louisville Bishop Martin John Spalding laid the cornerstone.



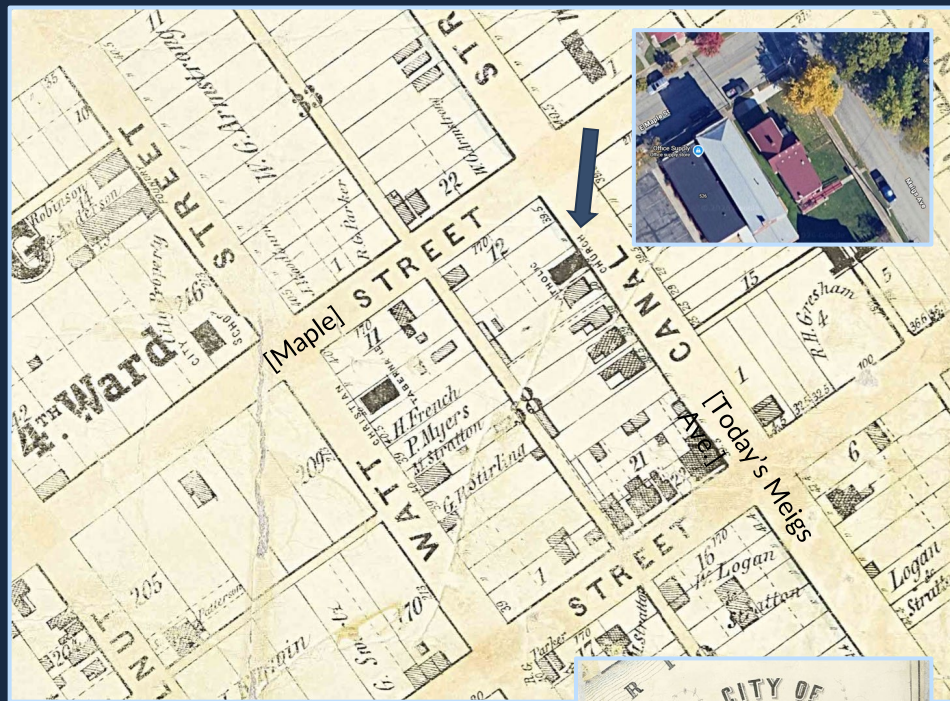
Many stories, such as the cornerstone laying, are told in our parish's "Historical Sketch."

Dedication of the Church

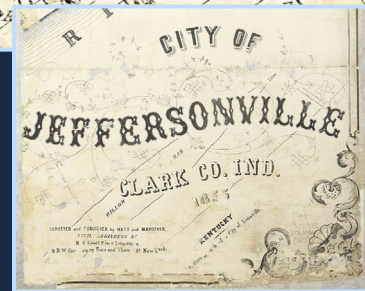
The Church was still incomplete when the church was dedicated to St. Anthony at the first mass on October 18, 1851...



The first church was described as “a mere chapel” of brick, 50 feet by 22 feet.

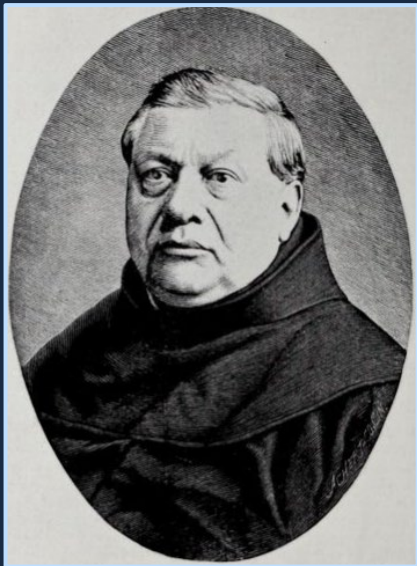


This 1855 map shows the church’s location at the southwest corner of Maple and Canal St. (today’s Meigs Ave.) The inset photo shows the property today.



Dedication of the Church

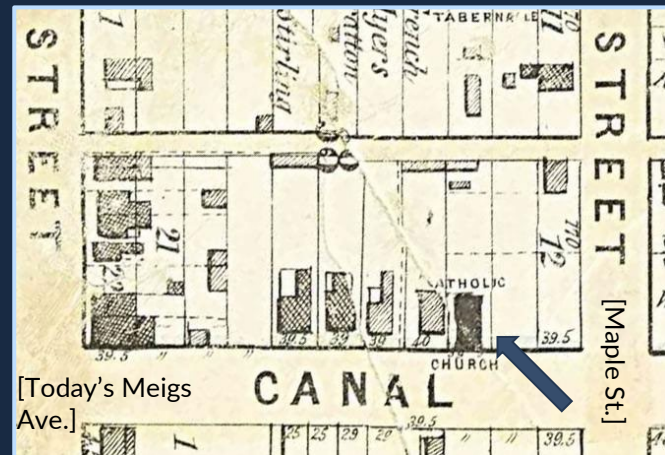
Upon opening, the parish did not have a resident



St. Boniface's Fr. Otto Jair, O.S.F. said the first mass. Members of the Order of Saint Francis friars are often called the "Brown Friars."

In 1851, on the occasion of the benediction and dedication of the church, in Canal street the Misses Elizabeth Manny, afterwards Mrs Henry Eagle, and Catarina Zapf took up the collection among the crowd who stood on the street; they collected \$110⁰⁰

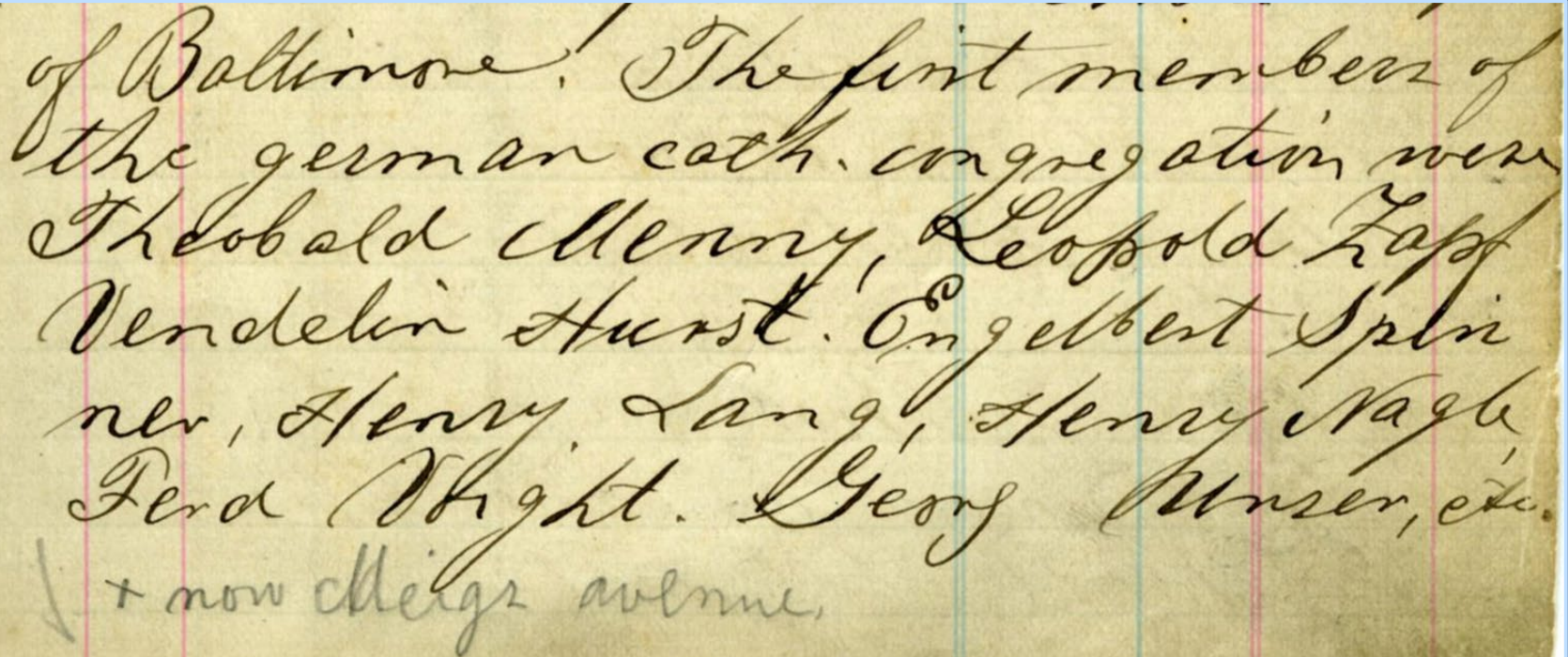
Ms. Elizabeth Manny and Ms. Catarina Zapf (wife of Leopold Zapf) stood in the street at the dedication and collected \$110 from those in attendance at the first Mass.



This 1855 map of Jeffersonville is aligned to show the church's location as seen in the lower photo today.

Our Founders

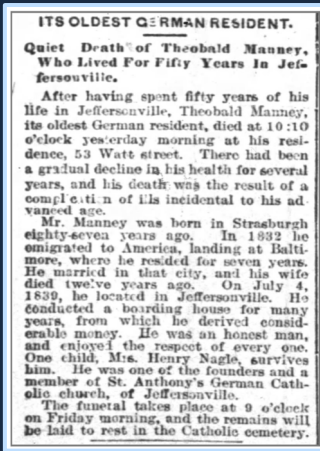
This excerpt from the parish's "Historical Sketch" notes those considered our parish's founders: Theobald Manny, Leopold Zapf, Wendelin Hurst, Engelbert Spinner, Henry Lang, Henry Nagle, Ferdinand Voight, and George Unser. The following slides tell more about



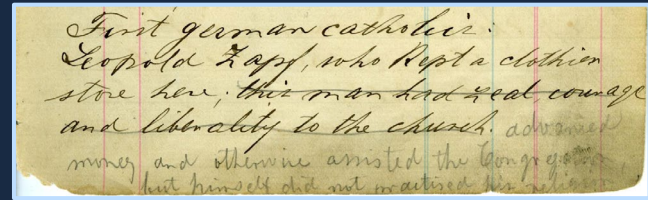
of Baltimore! The first members of the German cath. congregation were Theobald Manny, Leopold Zapf, Wendelin Hurst, Engelbert Spinner, Henry Lang, Henry Nagle, Ferd Voight, George Unser, etc.
+ now Chicago Avenue.

Our Founders

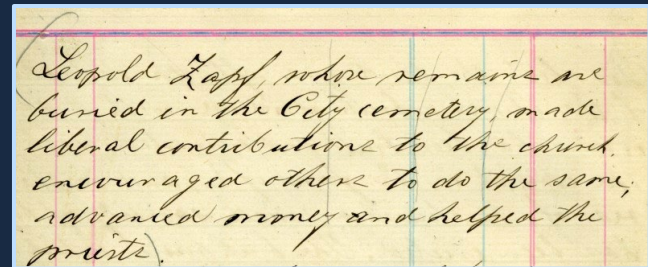
Theobald Manny, a German immigrant, ran a boarding house and was also a building contractor. He was the father of Elizabeth Manny, who married Henry Nagle. He died in 1891 and is buried in St. Anthony Cemetery.



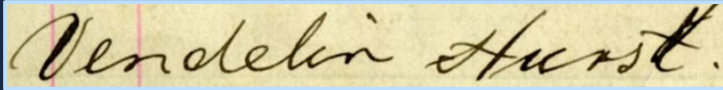
“Leopold Zapf, who kept a clothier store here; this man had real courage and liberality to the church. advanced money and otherwise assisted the Congregation but himself did not practice his religion. Leopold Zapf, whose remains are buried in the City cemetery, made liberal contributions to the church, encouraged others to do the same; advanced money and helped the priests.”
 (“Historical Sketch”)



Leopold Zapf was a tailor from Germany. He died in 1866 and was buried in the city cemetery of Jeffersonville, which no longer exists.



Our Founders



Wendelin Hurst was a German farmer in Jeffersonville. He may have moved to Jefferson County, Kentucky.

Engelbach Spinner, a laborer at the pork-house, took sick with pneumonia last Thursday, and died yesterday. The funeral of the deceased took place from the German Catholic church this morning.

Engelbert Spinner, was a German laborer in the local pork-house. He died in 1877 and is buried in St. Anthony Cemetery.



Henry Lang was a German brewer in Jeffersonville. He died in 1887 and is buried in St. Anthony Cemetery. At the church's founding he subscribed \$100, the equivalent of about \$4,200 today.

Death of Henry Lang.

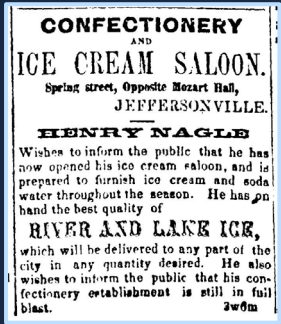
At 9 o'clock last night Henry Lang, one of the oldest citizens of German birth, died at his home on Upper Maple street, after a long continued suffering with dropsy. He was seventy-four years old and resided in this city for nearly forty years, having settled here in 1849. For many years he was engaged in the brewing business, in which he made a comfortable fortune, most of which was swept away in the panic of 1873.

He was a native of the Duchy of Baden and belonged to the Catholic faith. His third wife and seven children, Charles, Henry, Francis, Frank, Susan, Mary, and an infant survive him.

He was an upright, honorable man, in all his dealings and leaves many friends to join his family in mourning his death.

The funeral takes place tomorrow 10 a m from St. Anthony's Catholic church, interment at the Catholic cemetery.

Our Founders



Henry Nagle was born in Austria-Hungary in 1822 and immigrated to New Orleans as a young man. For years he ran an ice house and “ice cream saloon” in the summers and an oyster house in the winters. He died in 1902 in New Orleans and was buried in St. Anthony Cemetery.



FERDINAND VOIGT.

Ferdinand Voigt was born on a farm near Ehrfurt, Prussia, in 1822. He received a thorough education in the schools at his home, after which he assumed the management of a flouring mill owned and operated by his father. Arriving at the age when, under the compulsory military service laws of Prussia, he was required to enter the army, he enlisted in the cavalry service as a member of the Tenth Regiment Prussian Hussars. At the expiration of three years' service he emigrated to America, arriving in New York in 1845. From thence he went to Pittsburg, where he

FERDINAND VOIGT.

engaged in the furniture business. In 1852 he removed to Jeffersonville, and was for a number of years foreman of the passenger department of the J. M. & I. R. R. Co. In 1881 he engaged in the grocery business, and has continued in the same ever since. Mr. Voigt has raised a family of six sons and one daughter. Of the former three are druggists and manufacturing chemists, one a grocer, one a Catholic priest and one a lawyer. He has always taken a deep interest in matters that pertain to the welfare of Jeffersonville, and during his long residence here of almost half a century, has aided materially the success of many of its enterprises. He is kind hearted, possesses a cheerful disposition, and has a host of friends who are gratified at his success in life.



Ferdinand Voigt was born in Prussia in 1822 and eventually settled in Jeffersonville around the time of the church founding. He went into the grocery business. He died in 1904 and is buried in St. Anthony Cemetery.



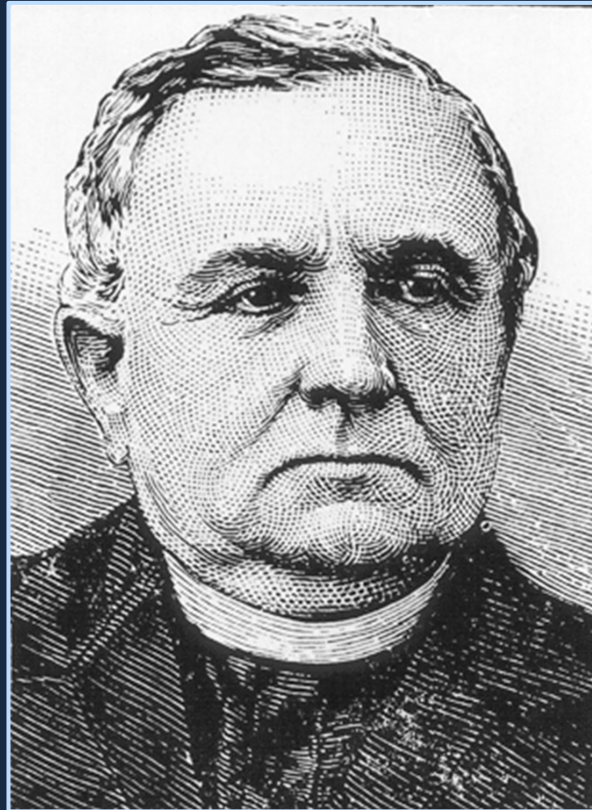
George Unser was a German immigrant who operated a pottery business. He died in 1881 and is buried in St. Anthony Cemetery.



First Resident Pastor: Rev. Bessonies

Our first resident pastor, Fr. Augustine Bessonies, arrived in 1854...

Various priests served St. Anthony from 1851 to 1854. In 1854 Vincennes Bishop Jacques-Maurice de Saint Palais appointed Fr. Augustine Bessonies to become pastor of the rapidly growing congregation in Jeffersonville.

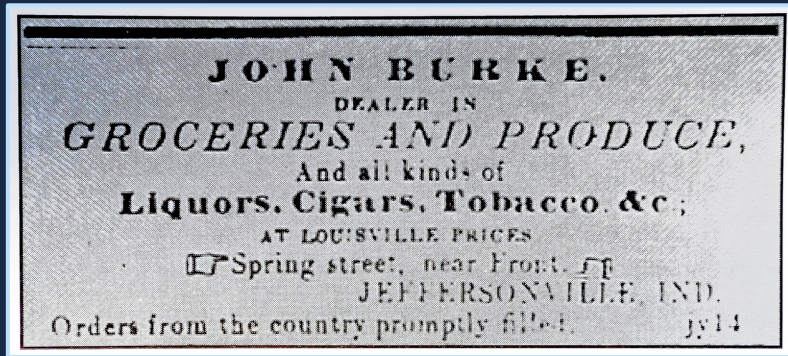


Bishop de Saint Palais accompanied Fr. Bessonies during his relocation to Jeffersonville in 1854.

Rev. Augustine Bessonies's Residence in Jeffersonville

John Burke, described as “a merchant and the leading Catholic in the city,” provided lodging for Fr. Bessonies in his own home for most of his three years at St. Anthony...

Mr. Burke lodged Fr. Bessonies at his property on Spring Street, north of Front Street (today's Riverside Drive). This 1855 map shows its location. The photo below shows its appearance today.



John Burke operated a store in Jeffersonville.

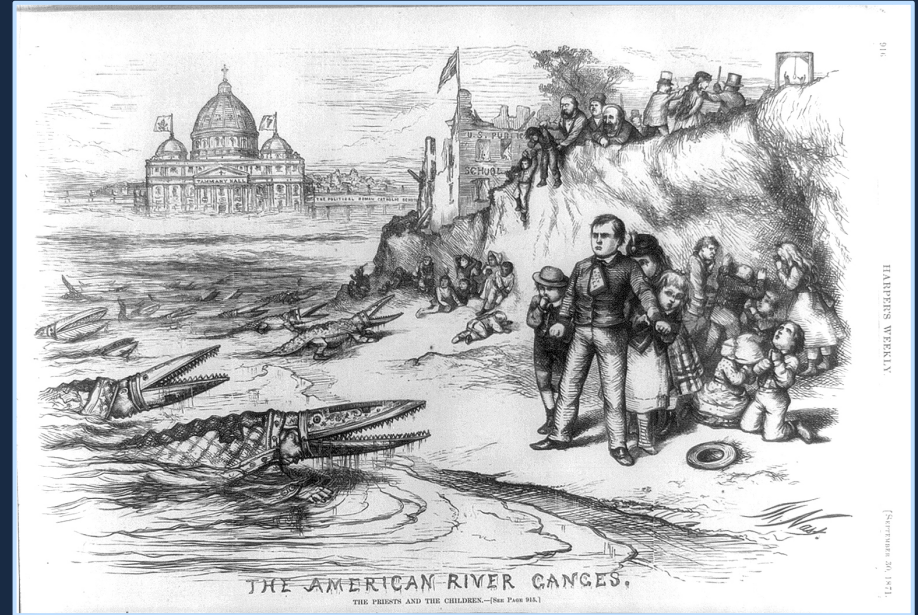


Nativist Violence toward Immigrants in 1854

The 1840s and '50s were a difficult time for immigrants, to America, especially Catholic ones....



This cartoon from about 1850 shows the hatred that nativists like the “Know-Nothings” had for Irish and German immigrants. They accused them of taking jobs and stealing elections away from native born Americans.



Nativists stirred up fears of a Catholic invasion. This image from about the time St. Anthony would open its first school showed how nativists were especially concerned about the “evil” of Catholic schools as symbolized by the invading “alligators.”

Nativist Violence toward Immigrants in 1854

Louisville and
Jeffersonville
Catholics
suffered bouts
of nativist
violence...



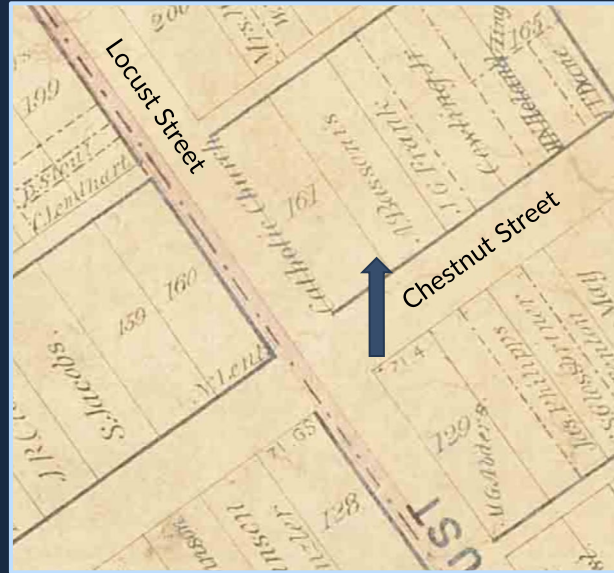
Louisville also experienced nativist violence. The “Bloody Monday” Nativist Riots took place on August 6, 1855.

“With its large Irish and German elements, Jeffersonville became a nativist hotbed, and the 1854 election campaign was a bitter one. On election day, October 10, riots erupted as nativists attempted to prevent Irish and German voters from voting. No serious injuries occurred, however, and within a short time a sense of calm returned to the city.” (Carl Kramer, *This Place We Call Home*)

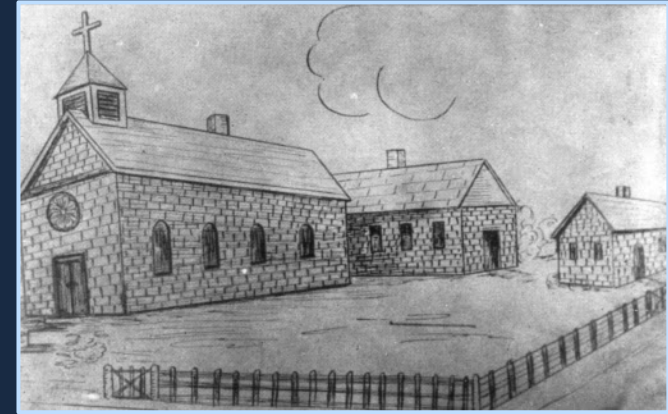
Progress under Fr. Bessonies, 1854 -1857

Despite anti-Catholic sentiments, the Catholic population in Jeffersonville continued to grow..

“Seeing the population growing larger here he wisely prepared for the future by purchasing with his own private funds two large lots at the corner of Chestnut and Locust streets, a far more eligible site than the small piece of ground occupied by the temporary church.” (Carr, *A History of Catholicity in New Albany and Jeffersonville*)



The plots purchased by Fr. Bessonies would be used for a new church for the congregation—what would become St. Augustine Church in 1868.



The parish added a small building to the rear of the existing church around 1855-1856 for a priest's residence and a small sacristy.

Short -Term Pastors, Late 1850s to Early 1860s

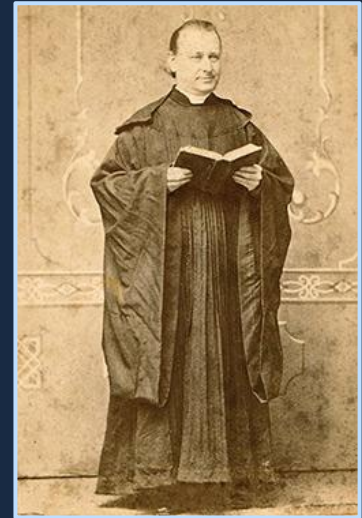
Several diocesan priests served St. Anthony over the next few years—most for a short term...

- Fr. William Doyle (served Nov. 1857 to March 1858)
- Fr. Philip Doyle (served March 1858 to late 1860)
- Fr. Schafroth (started in February 1861 and served a short time)
- Fr. Dionysius Abarth (served a short time in 1861)
- Fr. Gaspar H. Ostlangenberg (served December 1861 to November 1863)
- Fr. Philip Doyle (served a short time in 1864)

St. Anthony School opened in 1860 when Fr. Philip Doyle turned the two small rooms attached to the church (formerly used as the priest's residence) into classrooms.



Fr. Bede O'Connor, O.S.B. one of the founders of St. Meinrad Archabbey, gave a mission at St. Anthony in October 1863. So many attended (including some non-Catholics) that many people were “actually crowded out of the little chapel.”



The Civil War Era and Need for a New Church

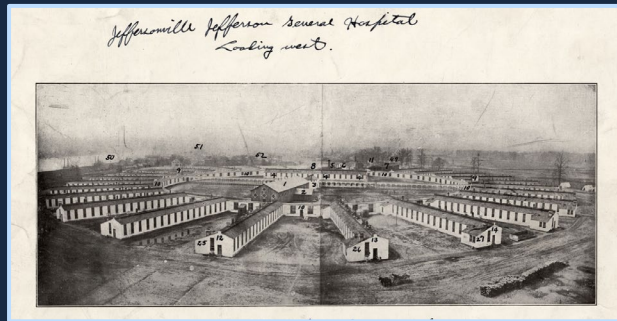
Catholics in military service joined with the many Catholic immigrants who had come to southern Indiana by the 1860s to strain the little church...



This military barracks above was located on the a lot at Maple and Wall Streets in 1865. About ten years later, St. Anthony would build its second church there.



Camp Joe Holt in today's Clarksville (top) and Jefferson General Hospital (right) were two major military installations in the area.



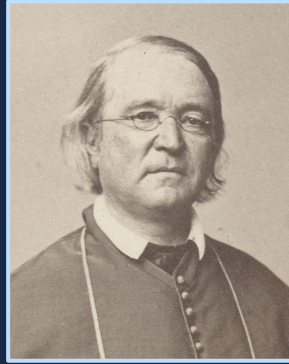
“At this time [early 1860s] vast numbers of Federal troops were quartered in Jeffersonville, and Catholic soldiers largely filled their muster roll. The little church, 20x50 feet, could no longer supply room for the flock.... The flock, not counting the number added by the troops, had largely increased during the year that passed, and even for local requirements their first church could no longer shelter the faithful.”

(Jeffersonville Daily News, January 25, 1887, p. 2)

New Church Construction (1863 - 1868)

Thanks to the foresight of Fr. Bessonies, the church had land waiting on Chestnut Street for a future church...

The cornerstone for the new church was laid on October 10, 1863, in the last days of Fr. Ostlangenberg's term at St. Anthony. Once again, Bishop Spalding of Louisville conducted the ceremony.



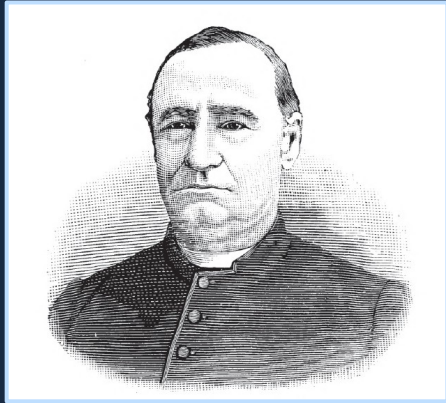
Rev. John Mouglin
1863 - 1881

While construction progressed on the new church after the Civil War, Fr. John Mouglin, pastor at Holy Trinity Church in New Albany, took over from Fr. Michael and ministered part-time to the congregation in Jeffersonville beginning in December 1866.

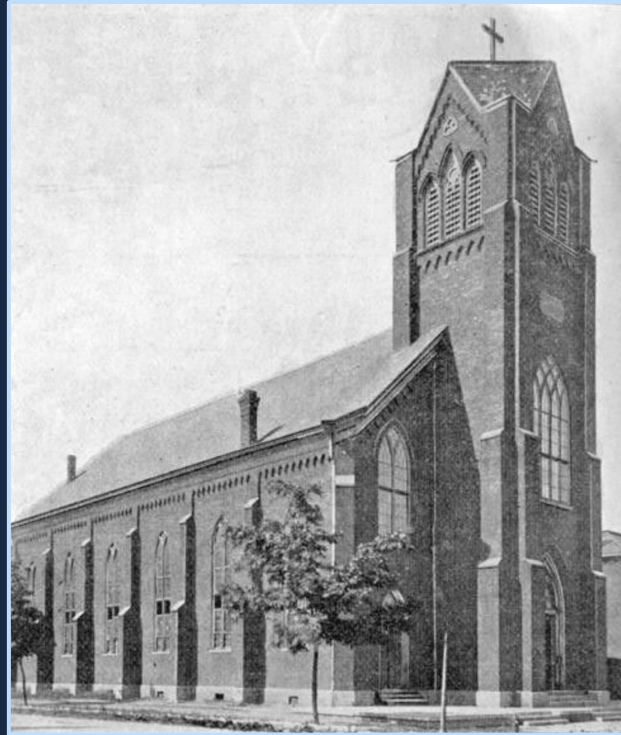
"The Rev. Andrew Michael was appointed pastor on April 16, 1864. He set to work at once and built the foundation of the new church, of which the corner-stone had been laid the year previous. This was during the war. Many soldiers having camped around Jeffersonville, and the small-pox breaking out, it became epidemic. Father Michael, untiring in his attendance upon the sick, contracted the disease. A sister of his, who acted as his housekeeper, died of the same." (Alerding 337)

The Congregation Splits (1868)

The new church opened on March 17, 1868, with a dedication Mass offered by Bishop de St. Palais. It would be called St. Augustine Church...



Rev. Ernest Audran became permanent resident pastor of the church at the end of 1868.



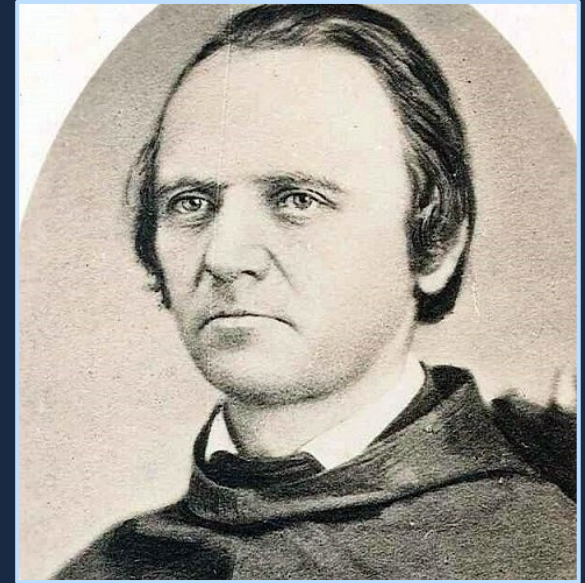
The new church had a roof but was considered “entirely unfinished” at the time of its opening. This is what it would look like upon completion. The congregation took the name “St. Augustine” in honor of its first resident pastor, Rev. Augustine Bessonies.

The Congregation Splits (1868)

The dedication of the new church on St. Patrick's Day offers a hint as to the split to come. The German minority in the parish sought to retain the old building for their own use. Meanwhile, the Conventual Franciscans, who continued to expand their presence in Louisville, offered their ministry across the river to what now became known as the "German church."...

"In all this the newly-formed German congregation was heartily encouraged by the people of St. Augustine's Church. The German congregation having had time to prepare, and beginning according to their numbers in a far more modest way, hardly found themselves encumbered at all when they moved into their new quarters." (Carr 48)

Fr. Bonaventure Keller, O.M.C.* , pastor of St. Peter's Church in Louisville since 1860, assumed care for the congregation that remained at the old church in 1868.



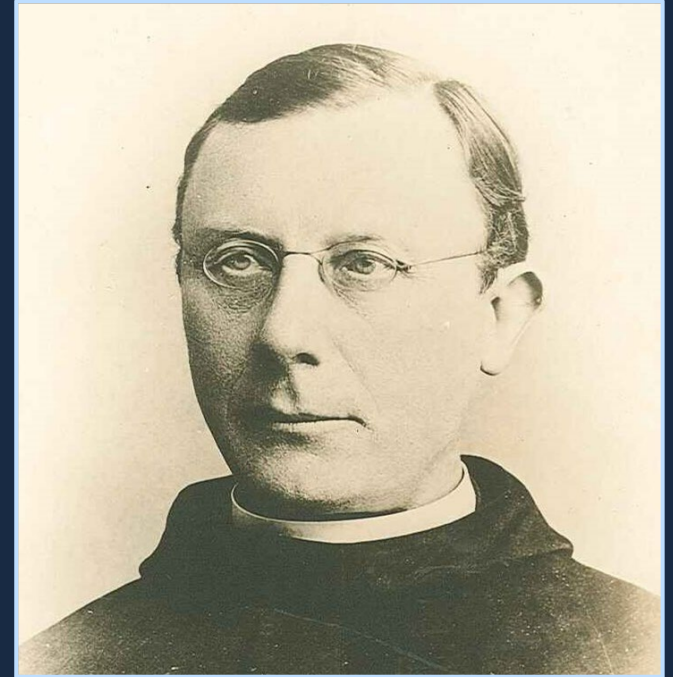
*The initials O.M.C. are the old abbreviation for the Conventual Franciscans. The initials were changed to O.F.M. Conv. in the 20th century.

Progress under Rev. Joseph Lesen

Despite lacking a resident pastor, the parish continued to advance at the end of the 1860s following the split...

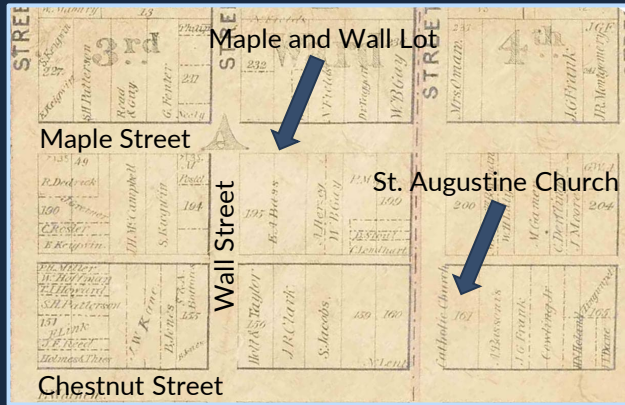
“In the year 1867 and 1868 a Mr. Shabon acted as teacher and organist. In 1868 came the present faithful and efficient organist of St. Anthony’s Church, Mr. Georg Nahstoll, who took charge of the boys class for \$50 monthly salary and furnished the church music.” (“Historical Sketch” pp. 8-9)

Fr. Joseph [Giuseppe] Lesen O.M.C., “an Italian who spoke some German,” was an associate of Fr. Keller. He “was invited to come occasionally on Sundays to say mass for the Germans in the old church.” He served from May 1868 to December 1870, residing in Louisville.

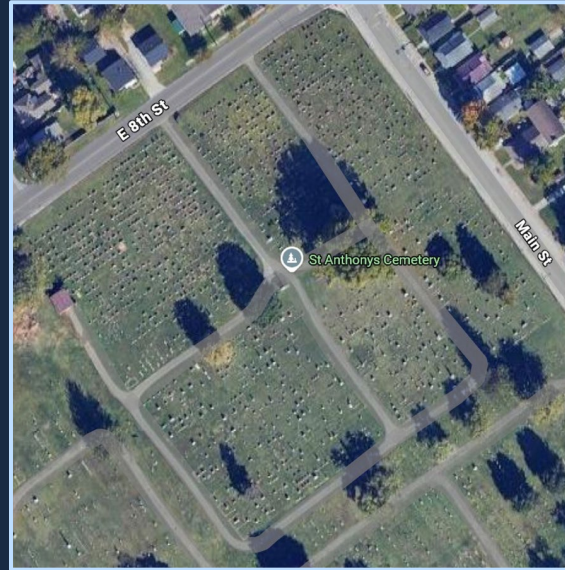


Progress under Rev. Joseph Lesen

Fr. Lesen also saw to the future needs of the parish by purchasing land for its growth...



Fr. Lesen purchased a lot at the corner of Maple and Wall Streets on which could be built a new church. The property was the site of a former military barracks pictured earlier.



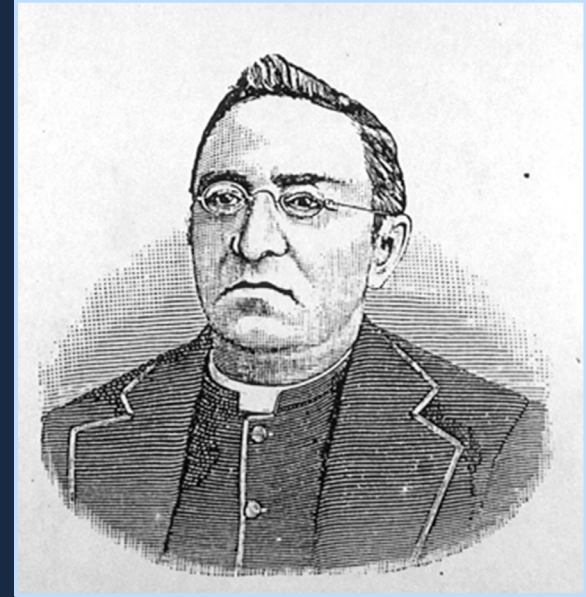
Fr. Lesen also purchased land for a parish cemetery. Parishioner Henry Nagel provided financial assistance.

Rev. Avelin Szabo, First Resident Pastor after the Split

The succession of temporary and non-resident pastors over the late 1850s and all of the 1860s came to an end with the appointment of Fr. Avelin Szabo...

“If Father Szabo has a special liking for anything outside of his sacred calling, it is the study of botany.... Going about inoffensively and quietly attending to the business of the congregation and his calling, one would not think that Father Szabo is also a linguist of note, speaking fluently not only German, French, Hungarian, Latin and English, but also Italian.” (Carr 63)

Fr. Avelin Szabo was highly educated, especially in Latin. He was appointed pastor in 1871 set the church on a solid financial footing.



The Pastorate of Rev. Szabo

Under Fr. Szabo, the parish invited the Ursuline sisters from Louisville to teach at the parish school. The school and parish also held fairs and other special events...



Ursuline Sisters took charge of the parish school in September 1871. Pictured is the motherhouse at the original Ursuline Academy on Chestnut St. in Louisville.

St. Anthony's German Catholic Picnic.

The members of this congregation have determined on holding a picnic at Paradise Garden, on the Fourth of July. Need we say that the ladies of St. Anthony's church are up to all the accomplishments necessary to get up a first-class picnic, where unrestrained and harmless jollity, fun and a good time in general shall prevail from dewy morn to dusky eve; yea, even unto the soft silvery hours of night? No, indeed; their reputation is already established. It is determined that this year's picnic shall excel any previous one yet given. An excellent string band has been engaged for the occasion to discourse enlivening strains that will move the flying feet of the terpsichorean artists and amateurs who may be present to celebrate Independence Day. Refreshments and all kinds of amusements will be on hand. Let the ladies of St. Anthony's be able to report that they have been abundantly patronized.

In 1872 the first picnic recorded in the local news was held.



The ladies of the church also began holding fairs to raise money for the church. In November 1873 a fair was held in Mozart Hall in Jeffersonville to help with the "liquidation of the church debt." Many church events would be held there over the years.

The Pastorate of Rev. Szabo

Fr. Szabo served as pastor until February 1874....

Father Aveline, the German Catholic priest of St. Anthony's Church, has got the small-pox. He contracted the disease from a person at whose bedside he administered the last offices of the church.

Fr. Szabo contracted smallpox in January 1873 while administering the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick to a parishioner.

The first mention of a school play dates to February 1874 when students put on a production of *Wilhelm Tell*.



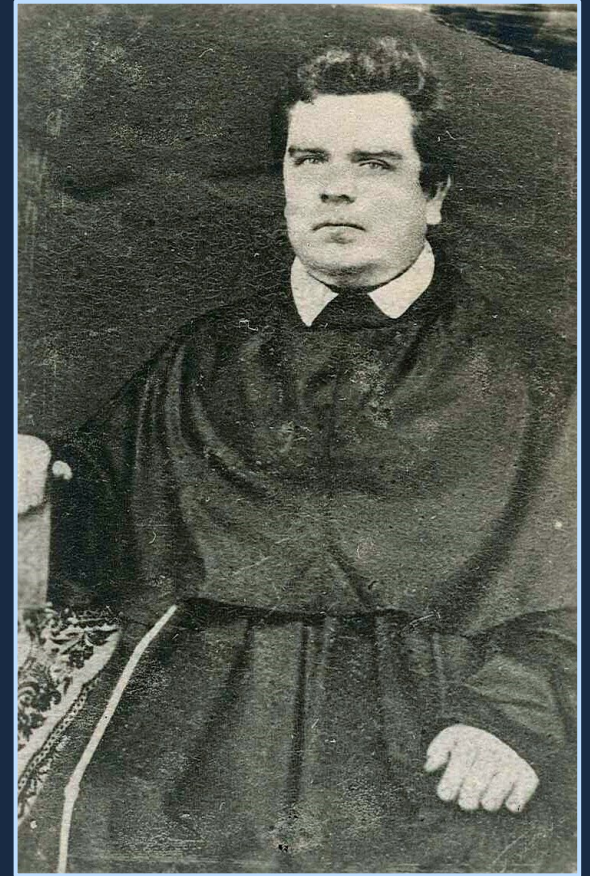
Prof. George Nahstol, formerly teacher of the German Catholic school, has returned to Jeffersonville to relocate at this place. He has been South where he had the small pox and cholera, and narrowly escaped the yellow fever at Memphis, from which place he has just arrived.

In October 1873 Mr. George Nahstol returned to the area. He had taught at St. Anthony School between 1868 and 1871. He left town for a couple of years and on his return served once again as the church organist.

The Rev. Leopold Moczygemba Years

After the departure of Rev. Szabo, Fr. Clement Luitz, O.M.C. served a short term from February to December 1974. Dramatic progress came, however, under his successor, Fr. Leopold Moczygemba, O.M.C....

Fr. Moczygemba was born in Poland and was one of the original five Conventual Franciscans who came to the U.S. in 1852 to launch the order here. Fr. Moczygemba became pastor in December 1874. He organized a church building committee to take up the mission of replacing the old church building which the German congregation had already outgrown.



Construction of the New Church

Construction on the new church foundation began in March 1876. This was complete by May 1876, allowing bricklaying on the upper structure to commence....

The old German Catholic Church on Canal street was torn down yesterday, and the articles deposited in the corner-stone years ago taken out.

The old church building was torn down in June 1876 and the cornerstone was reused for the new church.

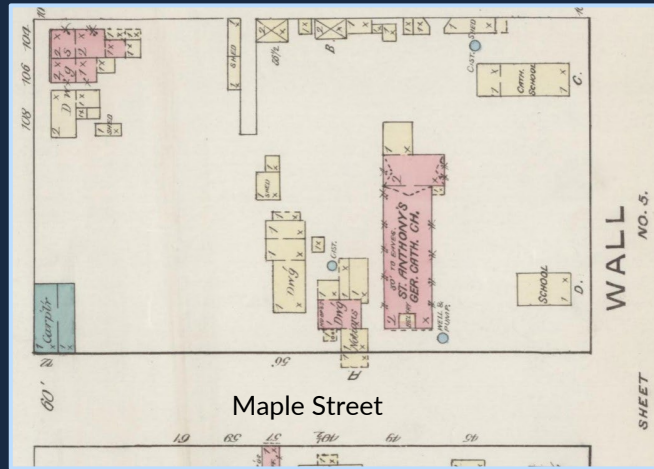


The church held a huge ceremony on Sunday, May 28, 1876 for the laying of the new church's cornerstone. Rev. Lucas Gottbehode O.S.F. of Louisville and Rev. Ernest Audran of St. Augustine laid the cornerstone. Rev. Bessonies was originally to have done so but the ceremony had been postponed by a week due to a rainstorm.

Construction of the New Church

The new church property represented a huge upgrade from the old facility...

Included in the buildings constructed between 1876 and 1878 were the new church, a pastoral residence, a school, and a convent. Total cost of construction was \$8,322.15 (about \$268,000 today).



At left is the church property on a map of Jeffersonville as it existed in 1886. At right is what this block looks like today.

Opening of the New Church

The new church was dedicated on October 1, 1876...

The dedication mass was celebrated by Rev. Lucas Gottbehode of St. Boniface in Louisville. Fr. Ernest Audran of St. Augustine served as master of ceremonies. Bishop de St. Palais was unable to make it, so Fr. Moczygamba performed the dedication ceremony.



The photo above shows St. Anthony School students, along with Fr. Moczygamba and a nun/teacher, outside the new church building.

St. Anthony in the First Decade of the New Church

Rev. Moczygemba's very productive term at St. Anthony came to an end in May 1877 and several pastors served St. Anthony over the following decade...

- Fr. Caspar Cucciarini, O.M.C. (1877-1878)
- Fr. Joseph Lesen, O.M.C. (1878-1879 in his second term)
- Fr. Pius Kotterer, O.M.C. (1879-1881)
- Fr. Anthony Gehring, O.M.C. (1881-1883)
- Fr. Bernard Effensperger, O.M.C. (1883-1887)

The German Catholic priest, Father Mozagamba, will leave here shortly to take charge of a church at another place. A young priest will relieve him. We hope he will have a more pronounceable name than his predecessor.

Organist and former St. Anthony School teacher George Nahstoll must have been very special to our parish. Fr. Pius Kotterer gave him the gift of a telescope in 1880.

When Rev. Moczygemba departed for his new assignment in New Jersey, a reporter observed, "We hope [the next priest] will have a more pronounceable name...."

A RARE GIFT.

Rev. Father Pius, of the German Catholic church, has made Prof. Nahstoll a birthday present of one of the finest telescopes made. It has a powerful lense through which can be seen minute objects miles away. The professor appreciates this valuable memento of friendship and esteem.

St. Anthony in the First Decade of the New Church



Within a decade of opening the new church experienced extensive damage from two floods in 1883 and 1884. High water marks may be seen on the front of Schimpff's.

SAD ACCIDENT.

A Woman Falls Between the Cars and is Ground to Death.

A sad and fatal accident occurred at Henryville at half-past seven o'clock this morning, in which Annie Schultz, aged thirty-six, was terribly mutilated and killed. The unfortunate woman was a relative of Martin Botts, at Pleasant Hill, two miles from Henryville, whom she had been visiting. She was brought to Henryville this morning and left at the depot. When the train came she was for some reason tardy in boarding it, and it is probable she forgot a bundle and returned to the depot to get it. At any rate she was seen running after the train when it was in full motion. She had several things in her arms, and attempted to board the train. Not having full control of her arms, she fell between the cars and was caught under the breaks. In this terrible predicament the poor woman caught and dragged along the track for at least fifty feet. Her injuries were necessarily fatal, and that she was not crushed into an unrecognizable matter is marvelous. The officers of the train had all retired from the platform and were not aware of the dreadful work progressing under the train. When the mangled woman was taken up and examined, her ankle was found to be fractured, the left leg was broken, an arm badly crushed, and the temporal bone fractured. She spoke a few words and died in about twenty minutes after the accident. Squire Kuy, of Henryville, held an inquest on the remains, and elicited the above facts, exonerating the company from all blame.

Annie Schultz, the deceased, lived in this city, and was a cook for Father Pius, of the German Catholic church. She was to have been married in two weeks to George Plummer, of Henryville. Mr. Plummer came to this city at noon to make the proper arrangements for the burial of his betrothed.

Annie Schultz, the parish's cook, was killed in a terrible accident in June 1880.

NAHSTOLL—KLEESPIES.

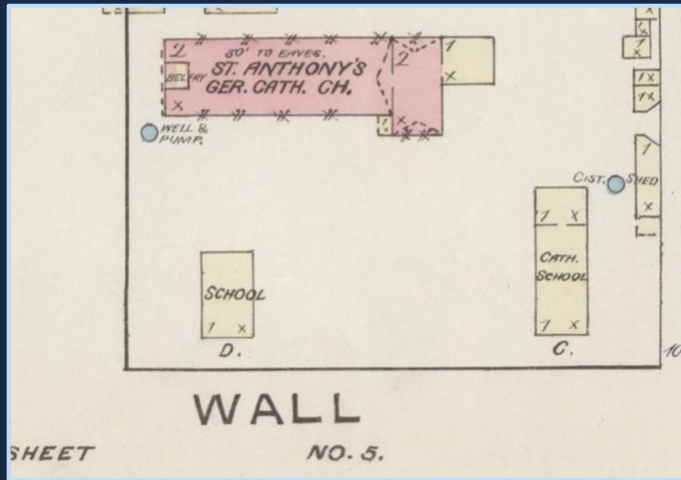
Marriage of an Elegant Couple at St. Anthony's.

✓

Parish organist George Nahstol married Christina Kleespies at St. Anthony in January 1882.

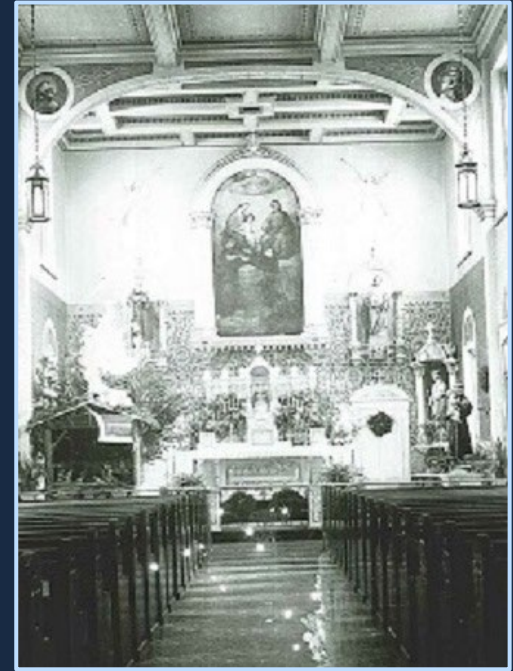
Second Term for Fr. Avelin Szabo

Fr. Avelin Szabo returned to the parish for a second term as pastor in 1887...



In 1890 the parish constructed a new schoolhouse.

In the spring and summer of 1888 the parish completed numerous improvements. The ceiling was revarnished and pictures repainted. Perhaps the round pictures of St. Francis and St. Anthony on display today date back to this time?

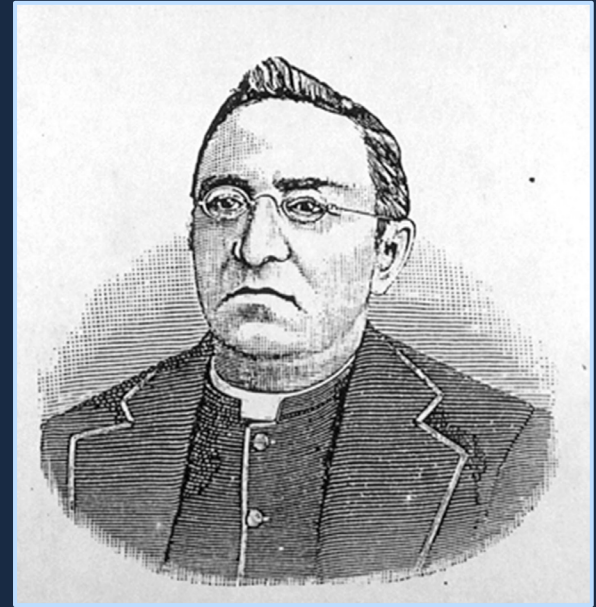


Second Term for Fr. Avelin Szabo

Fr. Szabo served until
February 1896...



Two sons of the parish who were taught by Fr. Szabo went on to become Conventual Franciscan priests, Fr. Fidelis Voight, O.M.C. (left) and Fr. Anthony “Otto” Recktenwald, O.M.C. (right)

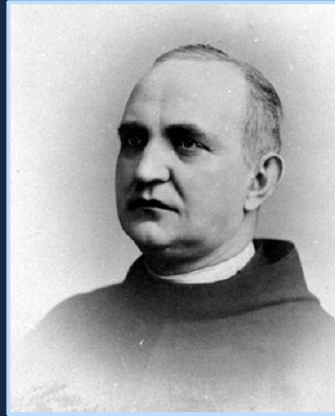


Fr. Szabo served until February 1896, making him one of the longest serving pastors in the parish until the 1920s. Upon his departure he was said to have “greatly endeared himself to his old congregation.”

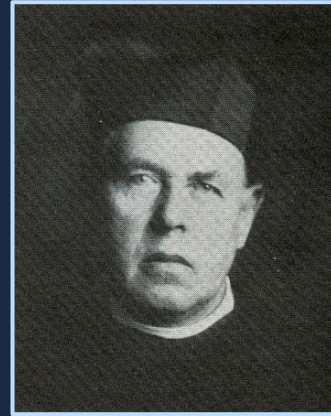
Pastors at the Turn of the Century

Several pastors served the church between the late 1800s and early 1900s...

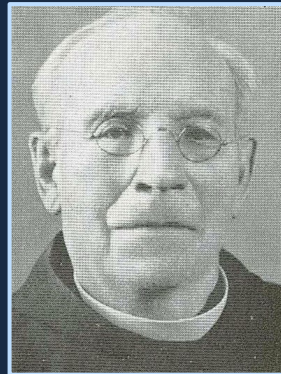
- Fr. Francis Neubauer, O.M.C. (1896)
- Fr. Lucius Matt, O.M.C. (first term, 1896-1900)
- Fr. Leonard Reich, O.M.C. (1900-1903)
- Fr. Camillus Eichenlaub, O.M.C. (1903-1905)
- Fr. Charles Oppenheim, O.M.C. (1905)
- Fr. Edmund Kaiser, O.M.C. (first term, 1905-1906)



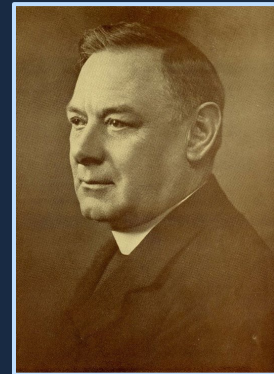
Fr. Francis Neubauer



Fr. Lucius Matt



Fr. Leonard Reich



Fr. Camillus Eichenlaub



Fr. Edmund Kaiser

Fr. Louis Hammer (1910 -1914)

The parish added a major new facility in 1911...

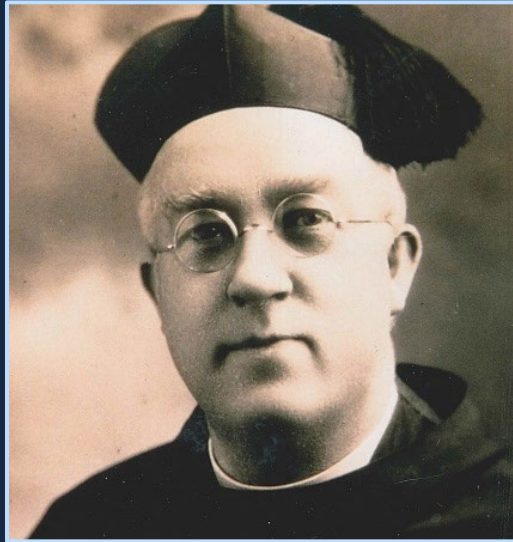
A new parish house was constructed at a cost of \$7,000. It was dedicated on April 22, 1911.



Fr. Oderic Auer (1914 -1929)

Fr. Oderic Auer, O.M.C. came to St. Anthony in 1914...

Fr. Oderic served 15 years as pastor, years that included World War I and its aftermath.



Fr. Oderic celebrated his silver anniversary as a priest on July 7, 1920. The photo above show the festive decorations for the special occasion.

The World War I Era

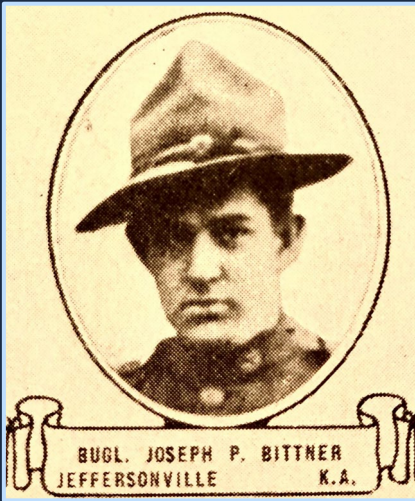
The summer of 1914 would be no ordinary time for the world...



On June 28, 1914, the heir to the throne of Austria-Hungary was assassinated in Sarajevo setting off a chain of events that would lead to the Great War. The parish held its annual picnic on July 27, 1914. The war began the next day...

The World War I Era

Two parishioners died in World War I...



Joseph Bittner was a bugler in the U.S. Army. He was killed in France in October 1918 at the age of 18. He is buried in St. Anthony Cemetery. The VFW Post in Clarksville is named for him.



[Link to WHAS 11 Story](#)

Rosa Rapp graduated from nursing school in Louisville in 1917 and joined the Army Nursing Corps in 1918. She deployed to France and died at the age of 23 of the Spanish flu two weeks after arriving. She was buried in France.

Fr. Oderic Auer (1914 - 1929)

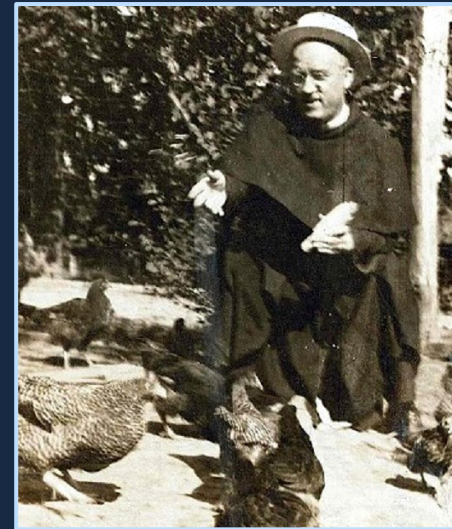
Fr. Auer served until September 1929...

By 1921 the parish was “financially and numerically...in a better position now than since its inception” according to the parish chronicle. The school, where the Ursulines had returned to teach in 1916, was at capacity and more teachers were needed. The good times would not last.



Martin Nahstoll, son of former organist George Nahstoll, was ordained a priest in May 1928. He said his first mass at St. Anthony in June.

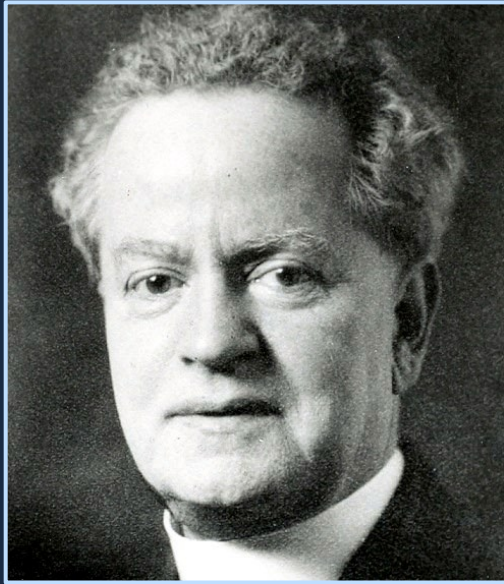
In the last years of Fr. Auer’s pastorate the parish had “deteriorated in every way” according to the parish chronicle. He was transferred to Chicago in September 1929.



Fr. Edmund Kaiser, 1929 - 1939

Fr. Kaiser returned to St. Anthony for a second, much longer term...

Fr. Edmund Kaiser, O.M.C. had a difficult job ahead of him due to the state of the parish. The Great Depression began a month after his arrival and made his job even more arduous.



According to the parish chronicle Fr. Edmund called a meeting and created a program to bring the church to health despite the economic conditions.

The Great Flood of 1937

The Flood of 1937 caused enormous devastation to Jeffersonville and wiped out most of the hard work the parish had accomplished in the previous ten years...

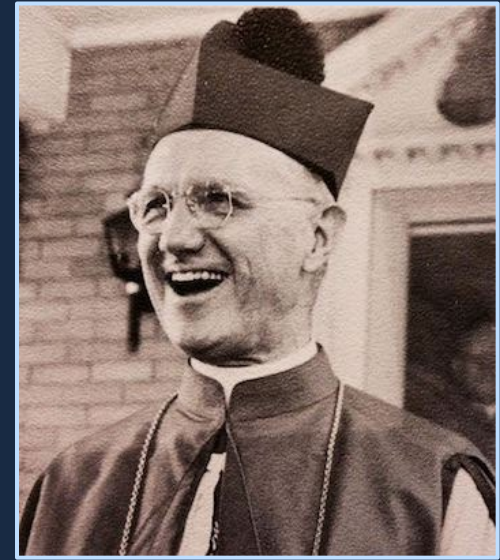
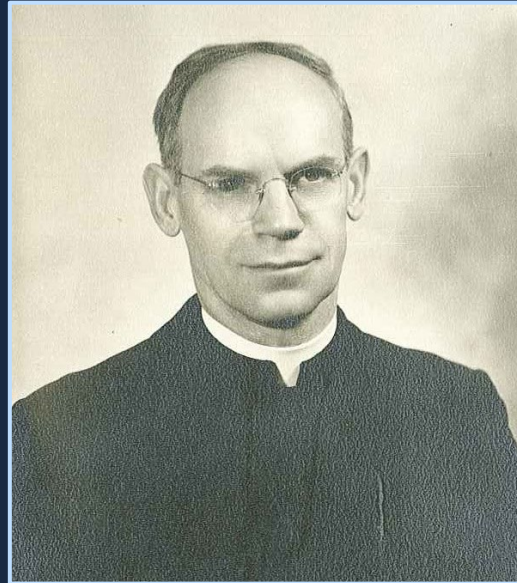


The water crested at sixteen feet inside the church as shown by the line in the above photo. Parishioners as well as priests and seminarians from Mt. St. Francis worked to clean up the campus.

Fr. Matthias (1939 - 1951)

Fr. Edmund was exhausted at the end of his ten difficult years in the parish. A dynamic pastor would replace him...

Fr. Matthias Schnieders, O.M.C. served twelve years as pastor and helped the parish recover fully from the flood. He also led St. Anthony through the dark days of World War II and the brighter days after the war when the parish prepared for its biggest leap forward yet, the building of a new campus in Clarksville.



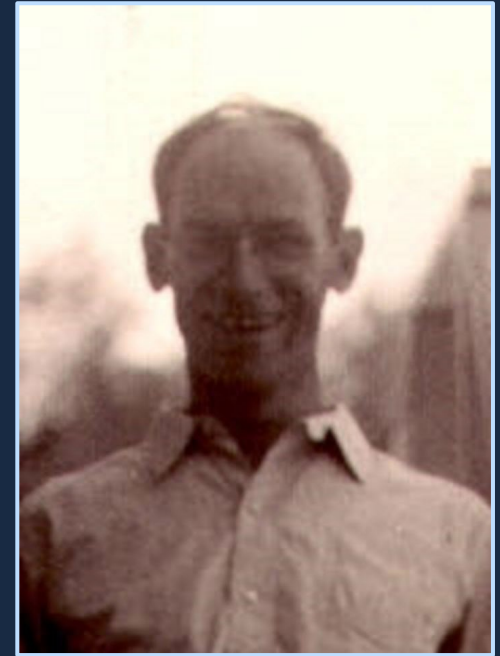
Fr. Matthias personally interceded to Bishop Ritter (seen above) to be allowed to reopen the school. Ritter wrote to Fr. Matthias in January 1940 that he would agree to the request. The school reopened in the fall of 1940 under the Benedictine sisters from Ferdinand.

The World War II Era

The U.S. entered World War II. A long list of parishioners served in the military during World War II. Six parishioners gave their lives in the war. Fr. Mathias was a well-loved pastor to his people...



Fr. Mathias points to the honor roll of parishioners serving in World War II, reminding everyone to remember those in service at Christmas time. (Photo: McDonough Family)



Parishioners remember Fr. Mathias a pastor who really cared for his flock, especially the children.

Parish Members Who Died in World War II

Six
parishioners
gave their
lives in the
war....



Pvt. Joseph Irvin Hickey

- Served in 22nd Infantry Reg., U.S. Army
- Killed in action on Feb. 4, 1945, in Germany, at age 24
- Buried in an American cemetery in Belgium



Pvt. John Herbert Ofer

- Served in 34th Infantry Reg., U.S. Army
- Killed in action (died in a German P.O.W. camp) on May 1, 1945, in Germany, at age 25
- Buried in an American cemetery in the Netherlands



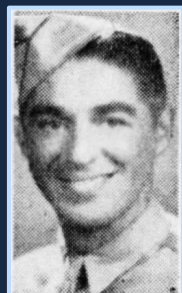
Tec5 Charles Milton Hochadel

- Served in 81st Medical Battalion, U.S. Army
- Died of either illness or accident on June 21, 1945, in Europe, at age 25
- Buried in an American cemetery in France (cenotaph in St. Anthony Cemetery)



Tech. Sgt. Leonard A. Turner

- Served in 427th Bomb Squadron
- Killed in action; while manning the top turret on a bombing mission, his B-17 Flying Fortress was shot down on Sept. 9, 1944, over Germany
- Buried in an American cemetery in France



Master Sgt. John J. Hunckler

- Served in U.S. Army Air Corps
- Lost at sea in a plane crash on Oct. 12, 1945, in Pacific Ocean, at age 29
- Memorialized at Honolulu Memorial (a.k.a. Courts of the Missing)



Cpl. Albert F. "Frank" Williams

- Served in 751st Tank Battalion, U.S. Army
- Killed in action in North Africa
- Buried in an American cemetery in Tunisia

Last Days in Jeffersonville

World War II came to an end in 1945 and with the the population boom that followed in southern Indiana the church would once again need larger facilities...



This is a rare color photograph from inside the Jeffersonville church. It was taken at Christmas 1945.

The St. Anthony Women's Group poses for a photo with Fr. Mathias not long after the end of World War II.

Last Days in Jeffersonville

Fr. Mathias looked for land for a potential new church campus and found seven acres of farmland in Clarksville. The Jeffersonville days were drawing to a close...

'Bumper Crop' Of First Graders Enter Awesome Portals Of Learning

The first grade class of 1945-1946 poses by the entrance to the school yard.



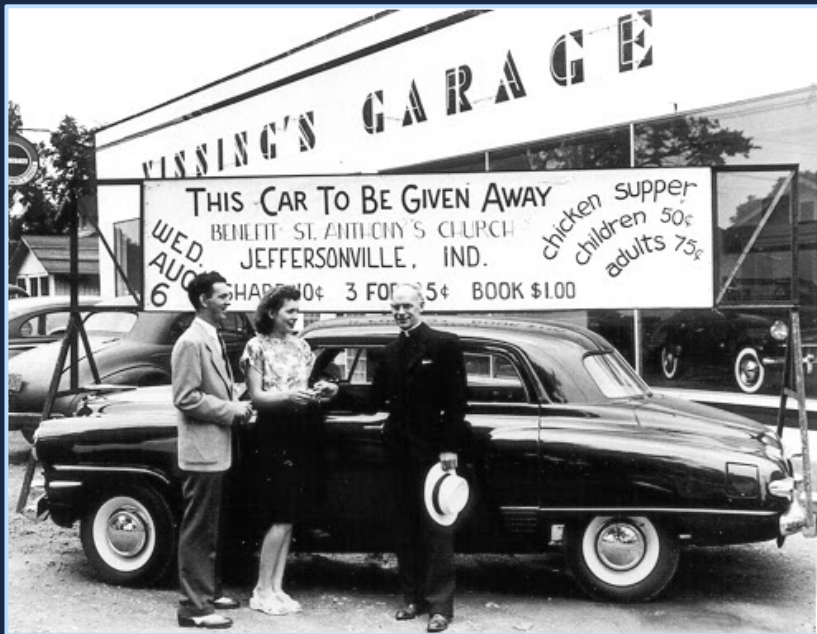
At St. Anthony Parochial School, it was stated by the Rev. Fr. Mathias Schnieders, pastor of the church, that approximately twenty applicants had to be sent to St. Augustine, due to the limited St. Anthony accommodations. 143 enrolled for the season's starter, which was one more than the 142 registered at the beginning of last year.



This photo shows the church brightly lit and decorated for parishioners Robert and Mary Rose Jennings's wedding in 1946.

Last Days in Jeffersonville

Construction on the new facility began in April 1949. Meanwhile, parishioners were celebrating the last few months of the sacraments after nearly one hundred years in their home in Jeffersonville...



The parish worked hard to raise money for the new church property. Here Fr. Mathias hands the keys to the winners of a car raffle in 1947.



Pictured here is the last First Communion class at the church when it was in Jeffersonville. Fr. Mathias stands at the top of the steps.

We hope you
enjoyed this!
Come back in the
Fall for Part 2!

*Help us tell our
history with your own
stories and photos.*

