

St. Mary Parish

 **75th** 

Anniversary Celebration

ARCHDIOCESE OF MILWAUKEE
OFFICE OF THE ARCHBISHOP

July 16, 2004

The Reverend Michael T. Newman, Pastor
St. Mary Parish
7307 40th Avenue
Kenosha, WI 53142

Dear Father Newman and People of St. Mary Parish,

Congratulations on the seventy-fifth anniversary of St. Mary's Parish.

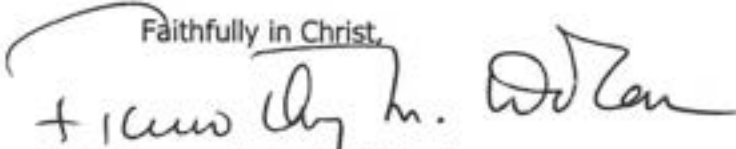
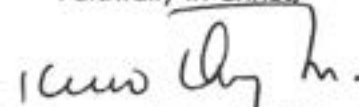
Since my predecessor, Archbishop Sebastian Messmer, appointed Father Raymond Bell to establish the parish in 1929, the Holy Spirit has been active in word, worship, sacraments, education, and service at St. Mary's Parish.

Today we thank God for the abundance of graces and blessing He has lavished upon you for three-quarters of a century, and we express gratitude to generations who have made the parish the celebrated one it is.

Through the powerful intercessions of your patron, St. Mary, the Holy Mother of God, may your future be as bright as your past!

With prayerful best wishes, I am,

Faithfully in Christ,


+   M. Dolan
Most Reverend Timothy M. Dolan
Archbishop of Milwaukee



ST. MARY CATHOLIC CHURCH

7307 40th Avenue Kenosha, WI 53142 (262) 694-6018 www.stmarycatholic.org

Summer, 2004

Dear Friends and Members of St. Mary's Parish,

What a delightful privilege it is to stand in the line of pastors who have ministered here at St. Mary's, beginning, of course, with the great Fr. Raymond Bell, the founding pastor. How daunting it must have been to be asked by the Archbishop to start a parish at the outset of the Great Depression in 1929! What sacrifices the Dominican Sisters made when they arrived to open the first schoolrooms and then lived in the school as so many others of their generation did! But Fr. Bell and the parish members persevered with their dream through the impact of the Second World War to eventually see the parish continue to add critically needed space for its people. What a marvelous piece of church architecture arose on the corner of 39th and 73rd! Of course, Fr. Raymond Leng, Fr. John Michael Murphy, Fr. Jerry Brittain and Fr. Howard Haase shepherded the parish through the new challenges of the Second Vatican Council and of greater cooperation both with our neighboring Catholic churches and congregations of other traditions.

With the merger with St. Thomas Aquinas Church still a living memory for so many of our members, we opened the 21st century with renewed faith and hope for the future. We recognize the influence of the new St. Anne's Parish to our west. Ever greater cooperation and planning will become part of our lives as a parish aiming at its next major anniversary.

We thank the Lord for the 75 years of Catholic faith celebrated, proclaimed and lived within and beyond these walls we know as St. Mary's. May the good Lord and the Blessed Mother Mary walk with us each step of the way, day by day!

Rev. Michael T. Newman



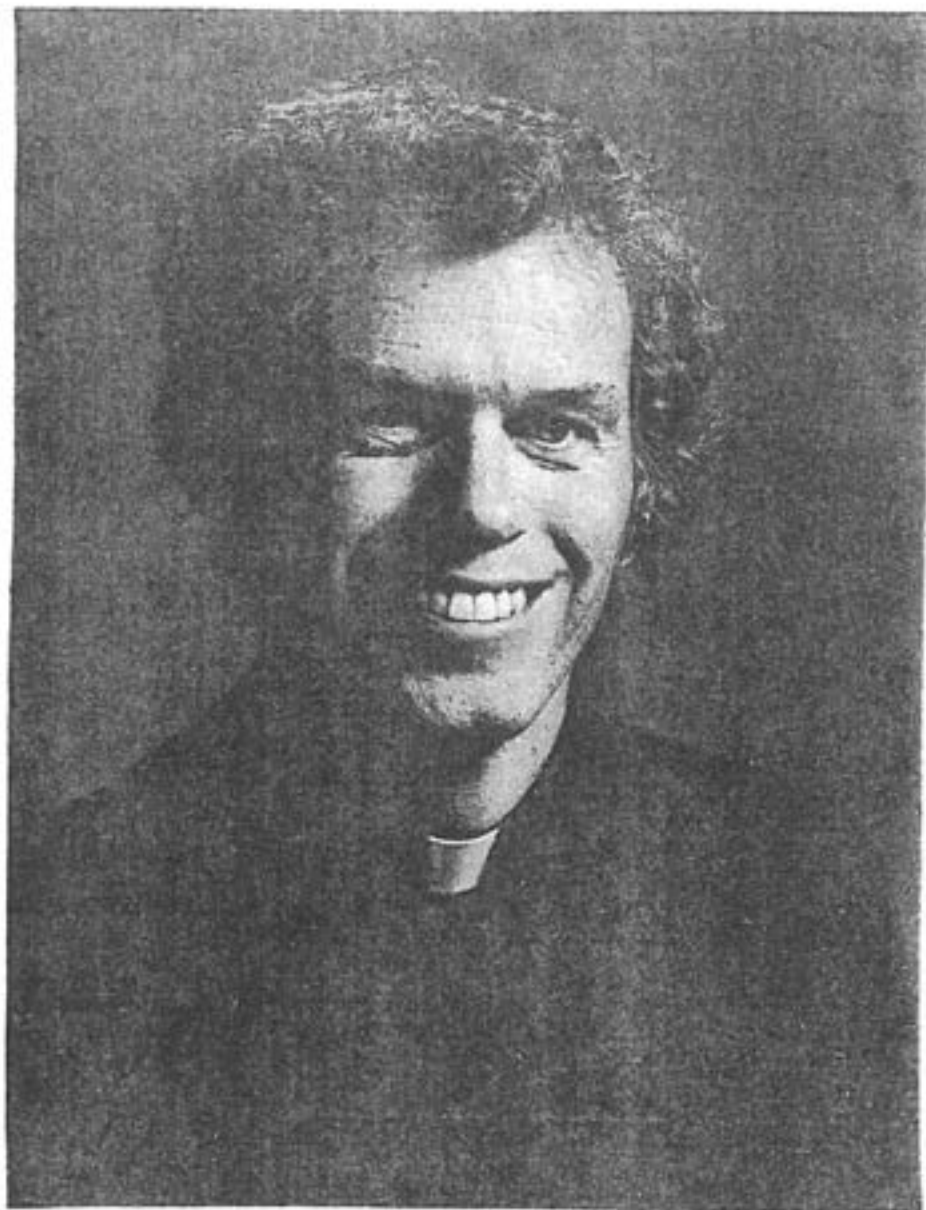
Rev. Raymond G. Leng (Pastor) (1956 – 1971)



Rev. William J. Effinger (1960 – 1972)



Rev. Richard Fredericks (1970 – 1971)

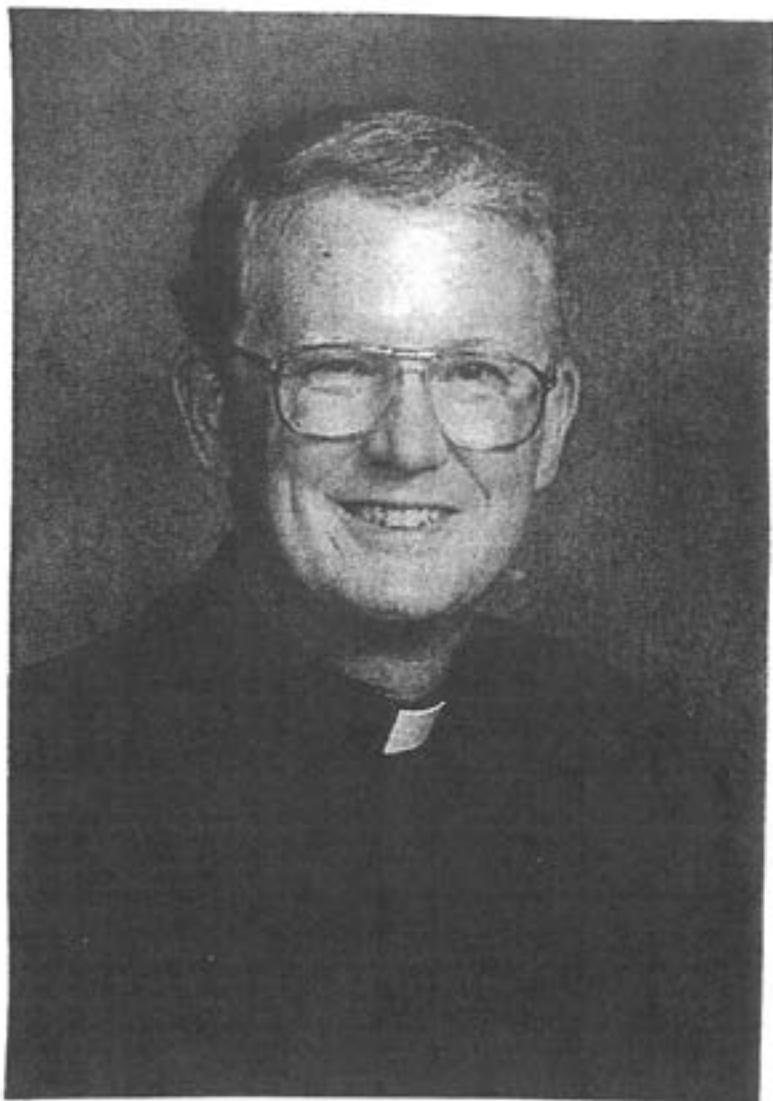


Rev. Gerald W. Brittain (1976 – 1983); Pastor (1983-1995)



Rev. Richard J. Stoffel (1984 – 1990)

Rev. Brian Szysko (1983-1989)



Rev. Michael Newman (Pastor) (2000 – Present)



Rev. Oriol Regales (2001 – 2003)



Rev. Mark Niehaus (2003 – Present)

St. Mary at 75 Years--Looking Back and Looking Forward

In 1929, as the city of Kenosha was growing, St. Mary became the ninth Catholic parish and church in the city. Archbishop Sebastian G. Messmer appointed Father Raymond C. Bell, an assistant pastor of St. Mary's Church in Racine and instructor of religion at St. Catherine's High School, to organize the new congregation. Father Bell was ordained in 1922 and served two parishes in Milwaukee before moving to Racine in 1926.

An announcement was placed in the Kenosha Evening News inviting residents of the neighborhood to attend an organizational meeting to be held on August 8, 1929, in an empty store at 3810 Roosevelt Road. About 50 people attended.

Father Anthony Weiler of St. John's Church of Racine attended that meeting and spoke of the need to build a school rather than a church as the first order of business. He introduced the new pastor. After preliminary remarks, officers were elected: Emmet Farrell and John Evans, directors; Herman P. Turinsky, secretary; and Benjamin Stahl, treasurer. The highlight of the meeting was the selection of the name "St. Mary" for the new parish.

Father Bell announced the parish boundaries to be 67th Street on the north, 30th Avenue on the east to Roosevelt Road, thence east on Roosevelt Road to the North Shore right-of-way, and all territory south and west of the above lines.

Thirty new people joined the original group at the second meeting held on Assumption Day. They heard the report drawn up by two of the Archbishop's representatives which recommended a site for the new church. This land consisted of twenty-six lots and a cottage for \$32,000.

Father Bell said the first Masses at 8:00 and 10:00 a.m. in the temporary church on September 8 with 183 people attending. The pastor described the church as "unique in its simplicity." It had an altar, statues of the Sacred Heart and the Blessed Virgin, a votive light stand, fifty card table chairs, and an old reed organ placed in the store show window. Helen Althoff directed the choir. On September 22, Father Bell moved into the cottage on the newly purchased land.

On October 15, 1929, the young parish suffered an economic hardship when the nation and the world looked on in horror at the stock market crash. The dauntless pioneers of St. Mary pushed ahead. The women of the parish organized the Altar Society on November 15. They performed their tasks in church and also planned socials to raise money. They sponsored weekly card parties and dinners. A Masquerade Dance at the Eagle's Hall raised \$800. During the next few years, they sponsored movies, dances, and bazaars, which drew the parishioners together in their common cause of church support.

Father Bell was not too keen on the parish-sponsored dances, but they did take place. On many Saturday nights the parishioners joined in the fun, but the dances gained very little money because the sponsors had to pay two city deputies \$4.00 each for their night's work. William Aarts and John Nichols solved the problem by persuading the Sheriff to deputize them for the nights' activities.

On March 7, 1930, Father Bell called for the election of a building committee. E. B. LaCroix of Milwaukee was selected as architect. The building contract was awarded to Peter Propsom Sr. The committee floated a bond issue for \$120,000 at a rate of 5 ½ % interest. This was a courageous move for the 130 families who made up St. Mary Parish in 1930.

On June 4, McQuestion Brothers broke ground and poured the concrete foundation walls. The cornerstone was laid on August 10 with many dignitaries attending. After several speakers, the Knights of Columbus band gave their rendition of "The Bells of St. Mary's." Archbishop Samuel A. Stritch offered a Solemn High Mass in the newly completed building in January of 1931. Father Bell now moved to three Masses on Sunday - 8:00, 9:30 and 11:30 a.m. services.

These ceremonies marked the end of the first construction phase. The building of American gothic design housed the church (now the gymnasium), which could seat up to 650 people, a large balcony, and two office rooms. The rest of the building included six classrooms, a rumpus room, a parish hall in the basement, and a kitchen. The cost of the building was \$110,579.

The congregation continued its growth in good works as well as in buildings. In July 1930 the men of the parish organized the St. Vincent De Paul Society and in their first two years brought about the rectifying of 18 marriages and provided partial support for 26 families. The Holy Name Society was organized and was active in fundraising as well as in spiritual growth of its members.

On August 27, 1931, Sisters of St. Dominic of Racine arrived, and two weeks later, school was underway. As there was no convent, the sisters resided in two of the classrooms. Sisters M. Ernestine, M. Laura, and M. Mella began teaching 69 children in first through fourth grades. The first graduation of 15 students took place on June 10, 1934.

Father Bell was easily recognized by his brisk walk and his derby hat. Some humorous things happened to the pastor. One Sunday a child brought an alarm clock to church unbeknown to his mother. When the alarm sounded, Father Bell wondered if someone was sleeping during Mass.

In 1940, Father Bell established the Parish-Saving Account in which the parishioners loaned almost \$163,000 to the parish at 3% interest. In 1944 a drive to liquidate the mortgage was undertaken and raised over \$20,000.

The new two-story brick rectory was constructed using the original cottage rectory as the nucleus for the new construction. Father Bell's mother and sister came to live at the rectory to keep house for the pastor.

In 1946, donations of parishioners provided the church with a new electric organ, and in 1947, a parishioner's donation paid for new linoleum for the church. That year the sisters of St. Mary's School moved into their new convent. The nineteen-room dwelling must have looked like a castle to them. They had waited sixteen years to enjoy their own chapel, community room, kitchen, dining room, music room, two reception rooms, a sickroom, and additional bedrooms on the second floor. The new convent cost \$50,172. Again the parishioners donated the furnishings for the new addition, from the chapel altar to the stained glass windows.

On May 15, 1942, Father Frederick N. Schmidt became the first assistant priest at St. Mary. He was ordained a priest on May 1, 1942, after studying at St. Lawrence Seminary, Mount Calvary, and St. Francis Seminary, St. Francis. He stayed at St. Mary until 1957 when he became a pastor at St. John parish, Byron, with care of St. James, Oakfield.

On January 26, 1947, 425 persons joined Father Bell to celebrate his 25th anniversary as a priest. After a Solemn High Mass, there was a banquet prepared by the Altar Society. Twenty-one priests, including Father Raymond Leng from a neighboring parish, attended. Toasts and greetings were followed by a musical program performed by the choir, led by one of the Sisters. The congregation closed the evening by presenting Father Bell with a purse of \$1,200.

Paul Becker was awarded a contract to add four new classrooms for \$60,000 in June, 1948. In 1950, Lindl and Schutte, architects, and Paul Becker, builder, were contracted to build a new church. The cost was not to exceed \$500,000, and the church was to seat at least 1000 persons. Each wage earner was asked to contribute \$100.00. The people of St. Mary gave generously.

On May 11, 1951, church officers participated in the laying of the cornerstone for the new church. Inside the cornerstone was a metal box containing lists of names of the parishioners, pupils of the school, students of the high school, officers of the parish and societies, and priests and sisters, as well as a collection of the day's coins and newspapers. About two years later construction was completed, and parishioners entered their new church on Christmas Eve of 1953. It was a brick church of modified colonial design with a clock and bell tower rising 125 feet. A stainless steel cross surmounted the spire, and a statue of St. Mary occupied a niche above the main entrance. A 1,000 pound bell tolled the hours of the day for all of Kenosha. The cost of the church was approximately \$459,000, exclusive of furnishings. St. Mary had grown from the original 32 families to about 950 by this time.

Father Bell realized his dream of a high school at St. Mary in September, 1949, with an addition of forty-two students in the ninth grade. Adding a grade a year, the

school offered all four years of high school starting in September of 1952. English, typing, shorthand, chemistry, general science, biology, algebra, geometry, business law, speech, world geography, economics and American history were taught. Latin and Spanish were added in later years. In the 1950's, students from all nine parishes and several from outside Kenosha attended our high school. Football and basketball were part of the athletic programs.

Father Edmund W. Olley became the second assistant on June 24, 1950. He came as a newly ordained priest, and his enthusiasm spread throughout the congregation, particularly in the school. He served the parish for about five years as a priest, teacher and assistant football coach. He left on August 5, 1955, to take an appointment at Ss. Cyril & Methodius Church in Sheboygan. Fifteen hundred parishioners attended a farewell in his honor. In June of 1956, Father Frederick Roensch replaced Father Olley.

A major event in 1952 was the ordination of Father Harold Ide, son of Edward and Margaret Ide, the first priest-son of St. Mary parish. Father Ide graduated from St. Mary School in 1942 and studied at St. Francis Minor and Major Seminaries. He was ordained on May 31, 1952, by the Most Reverend Moses E. Kiley at St. John the Evangelist in Milwaukee. He celebrated his first Solemn High Mass at St. Mary on June 1, 1952. Father Ide served as priest and pastor at several Wisconsin parishes and also served in several administrative positions. He retired from active ministry in June of 1996 and died several years later on May 15, 2003.

In August of 1954 the parish celebrated its 25th Anniversary. Father Bell wrote a parish history telling about the "pioneers" who made St. Mary what it had become. The spirit of the parish was evident in the many pages telling of the obstacles the congregation had overcome, the photos of the many priests, sisters, and laypeople who had worked to build up St. Mary, the photos of school children gathered for their class pictures, and the lists of donations for the many projects.

In the booklet another priest son was noted, The Most Reverend Alfred Gumbinger, O.F. M., Cap., S.T.D. He was the son of the Alfred Gumbingers, charter members of St. Mary. He became secretary to the General of his order and was an archbishop in Izmer, Turkey. He is buried at St. George cemetery in Kenosha.

In the early 1950's many people felt that St. Mary would not be able to handle the entire city's needs for Catholic secondary education. Archbishop Albert Meyer instructed the pastors and people of Kenosha to plan for a new high school. St. Joseph's was becoming a reality. Plans were drawn and solicitors began to organize campaign drives. St. Mary was campaign headquarters. A goal of \$210,000 over a three-year period was set. While Father Bell had dreamed that St. Mary would be Kenosha's permanent Catholic high school, he threw his entire energy behind the St. Joseph project.

Father Bell died August 17, 1956, at the age of 61. He had gone to bed at 10:15 p.m. on Saturday evening and apparently had a heart attack. He was found at 6:15 a.m.

Sunday morning. After his funeral Mass with Archbishop Albert Meyer as celebrant, Father Bell was buried at Immaculate Conception Cemetery in Saukville. He will always be remembered as the founder of St. Mary's Parish.

Father Raymond G. Leng became St. Mary's second pastor on September 5, 1956. He had served as pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Kenosha. The forty-five year old priest was born in Portage, Wisconsin. He had studied for the priesthood at St. Francis Seminary in Milwaukee and North American College in Rome. He did post-graduate work in education at Marquette University and was ordained on July 26, 1936, at St. Ignatius Church in Rome.

Father Leng had served as Chairman of the Priest Committee on the formation of St. Joseph High School. Construction on the new high school began on April 4, 1956, and the high school at St. Mary began to be phased out. St. Mary graduated its last senior class in June of 1957 and closed the following year.

Father Leng got busy with other building projects. In 1958 he added a chapel to the convent and a new south wing providing six new residential rooms, a community room, a kitchen, and dining facilities. Increasing enrollment demanded more school space. Ground was broken in September of 1958. The \$385,000 school addition was dedicated in July of 1960. It provided eight new classrooms, a cafeteria that would seat 300 people, meeting rooms, a nurse's room, a faculty room, and a modern kitchen. With the new addition, the school would house 825 students.

Money matters were constantly a problem. At one point \$30,000 was needed to pay church debts. Father Leng made a trip to the bank, but this time there was no loan. St. Mary was overextended and was not a good risk. Father Leng's only alternative was to turn to the parishioners and once again ask them to dig deep. He explained that he needed \$30 from 1000 people. At the first Sunday collection the parishioners came up with the needed funds. Father Leng was speechless.

There was a large turnover of associate priests in the late 1950's-1960's. Father Schmidt left shortly after Father Bell's death in 1956. Father William Toelle took his place for less than a year when Father David Sokelis replaced him for only a year. Father Don Daleke replaced him, but then Father Roensch had an opportunity to continue his studies in Rome, and he was replaced by Father Ralph Wagner. In July of 1960 Father Wagner left and Father William Effinger arrived. Father Effinger served for many years, but the third position had much turnover. Fathers Dan Jusiel, Pete Weber, Joseph Perse, Richard Fredericks, and James Hess came and went during the 1960's.

Vatican Council II made many changes in the Church. By 1965 the Mass was said in English with the priest now facing the congregation from behind the altar. Also in 1965, Father Leng pushed for the foundation of a Parish Council. This body dealt with issues such as a tuition payment plan for St. Joseph High School and the parish financial situation. With its education, liturgy and finance committees functioning smoothly, the church gained immensely from this lay participation.

Several heart attacks had left Father Leng bedridden for weeks at a time. He succumbed on Sunday morning at 2:15 a.m., December 19, 1971, at the age of 59. Archbishop William E. Cousins was the principal celebrant of his Concelebrated funeral Mass.

St. Mary had lost a fine priest who had served during the difficult times of national social upheaval as well as financial crises in the parish. He served in the difficult times of a transition period. Vatican II brought many changes, and he started St. Mary in the direction initiated by those Council documents.

Our third pastor, Father John Michael Murphy, received his appointment on February 29, 1972. He was born in Milwaukee on June 28, 1919. He attended St. Francis Seminary and was ordained in September of 1945. After nine months at St. Joseph Parish in Fond du Lac, he studied English literature at Marquette University. He received his master's degree and went on to study at Dominican House of Studies in River Forest, Illinois.

After his formal education was complete, Father Murphy taught high school English and college literature, and for five years prior to coming to St. Mary, he was Director of Formation at St. Francis School of Pastoral Ministry.

Father Murphy would have new priests to work with at St. Mary as Father James Hess departed for Neosho and Father Effinger left shortly afterwards for West Allis. The first of the new priests to arrive was Father Paul Lippert, whose early education was at St. Mary. He was ordained at St. Francis in 1961. After serving in several parishes in Wisconsin, he returned home to St. Mary in 1972.

Father Gene Oborny was born in Timkin, Kansas, and was educated in local schools and Kansas State University. He was ordained at St. Francis Seminary in June of 1973. His first assignment was at St. Mary's. He was involved in the charismatic movement.

Father Lippert accepted a pastorate at St. Thomas Aquinas in Milwaukee in November of 1975. In June of 1977, Father Gene also decided to leave St. Mary for a time of reflection.

Father Murphy's goal was to meet everyone in the parish. He and his assistants came close to meeting that goal. They visited the sick and the elderly, attended endless meetings of parish groups, and worked with the youth of the parish. If they did not talk personally with them, they touched the parishioners from the pulpit or through their good works.

Father Gerald Brittain came to Kenosha in 1976 as assistant pastor after having grown up in Milwaukee. He studied for the priesthood at St. Francis Seminary and was ordained a priest in 1962, just as the Vatican Council began to make changes to

encourage more lay participation in the church. He served seven years at St. Mark Parish in Kenosha and seven years at St. Joseph in Racine before coming to St. Mary. He served at St. Mary for seven years as an associate pastor before serving as pastor for twelve years. In a profile in the Kenosha News in 1987, Father Jerry noted that he enjoyed his ministry, being connected with people's peak celebrations in their lives, preaching, and furthering the work of Christ in His church. Besides managing a large parish, Father noted that he liked to pray and read in the quiet of his "cave and cell" after the day's work was done. Father Jerry left St. Mary in 1995 to become the pastor of Holy Angels parish in West Bend, Wisconsin.

Father John Weaver joined the parish fresh out of St. Francis Seminary in 1977. He was born in Monroe, Wisconsin, on December 25, 1950, and later moved to Fond du Lac. He received his B.S. degree in psychology from the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh.

Father Murphy and his associates continued to implement the changes in the Mass that Vatican II had called for. The Parish Council had become a dynamic, policy-making board which helped Father Murphy with the burdens of running the church. Mass was no longer limited to organ music. Pianos, guitars, and other instruments enhanced the liturgy. The choir grew in size and sang near the altar. Lay men and women began to play a more active part in the Mass, serving as lectors and distributing the Eucharist under both species of bread and wine. Confession face to face was now an option. Altar servers included both boys and girls.

The Sisters of St. Dominic of Racine had served St. Mary's school since they arrived here in 1931. Eighty sisters served during the first 25 years of the school, and by 1983 the number had grown to 151. Father Steven Avella remarked in his 1983 essay on The Sisters, "There can be no adequate way to measure the contribution of the sisters to the life of the parish. It is, like human life itself, inestimable." He spoke for the parish when he remarked that their evangelical witness inspired students, teachers, lay volunteers, and priests. They added untold value through their commitment. At a special Mass and reception on June 26, 1983, the six remaining Dominicans, Sisters Philomena Schraufnagel, Annella Garland, Catherine Benigni, Audrey Affholder, Callista Shara, and Florence Shigo, said their farewells to St. Mary before leaving for other assignments.

Sister Philomena was a cook and housekeeper; Sister Annella had come in 1973 as administrator of the Mary/Mark Christian Formation program and did pastoral work as well; Sisters Catherine, Audrey, Callista, and Florence were teachers.

Loretta Albrecht was hired as the first lay principal of St. Mary School in 1976. She was replaced by Gerald Hubert, who served as principal from 1978 to 1997. Brad Norcross took the position from 1997 to 1999. Our present principal, Sandy Wiercinski, was hired in 1999.

The establishment of St. Mary's Christian Formation Ministries after the Council of Vatican II continued and strengthened the tradition of supporting and promoting life-

long education and faith formation of children, youth, and adults. Christian Formation has only flourished because of the many dedicated volunteer parishioners who have accepted their Baptismal call to share their diverse gifts in the various Faith Formation Ministries.

St. Mary had a number of sisters leading the new Christian Formation program, leading to the lay ministers of the present day. Sister Carla Mae Streeter, a Dominican Sister of Racine, was St. Mary's Director of Christian Formation from 1968-1979. She developed the system of lay volunteer coordinators for individual grade levels. This coordinator structure evolved into the present day volunteer coordinators who serve in the Christian Formation Ministries. During part of Sister Carla Mae's tenure in the mid to late seventies, a collaborative Christian Formation Program was held with St. Mark parish. In the Mary-Mark program, Sister Ruth Brings, S.S.S.F., directed the primary grades; Sister Dorothy Funk, S.S.S.F., directed the intermediate grades; and Sister Carla Mae directed the junior and senior high school programs.

Sister Mary Ann Ihm also served St. Mary's and the wider Kenosha community in city-wide Adult Education during the mid to late seventies. During the period from 1973-1983 Sister Annella Garland developed St. Mary's Special Instruction Program.

Sister Mary Lou Bishoff, S.H.C.J., served as Director of Christian Formation from 1979-1987. She directed Preschool through Grade 8 and Adult Education Programs. During Sister Mary Lou's tenure, a lay volunteer staff consisting of Mary Johnson, Katie Turco, Rosemary Hunkeler, Mary Lynn Broughman, and Jane Delfield assisted Sister Mary Lou in the various Christian Formation ministries.

Edith Padgett, our first youth minister, was hired in 1978. Edith proved to be an effective and popular leader for the youth of the parish, arranging for their religious instruction, recruiting and training volunteers, taking them on retreats, leading them in service projects, and organizing social activities. In the process, they enjoyed their connection with God and the Church. Edith retired from her position in June of 2004 after 27 years of service. Brian Magliocco was hired to serve as the new youth minister in a new collaborative program between St. Mary and St. Therese parishes starting in July of 2004.

Mary Johnson and Jane Delfield served as Co-Directors of Christian Formation from 1987-1989. They directed Pre-School through Grade 8 and Adult Education. Mary had worked as administrative assistant and catechist, and Jane had served as volunteer catechist, coordinator, and staff before they were asked by Father Jerry Brittain to be the Co-Directors.

In 1989, Jane Delfield was named Director of Christian Formation overseeing Pre-School through Grade 8. From 1990-1995, Sande Jensen served as Christian Formation Minister overseeing seventh and eighth grades and Adult Education programs.

From 1995 to the present day, Jane Delfield has served as Director of Christian Formation overseeing RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) and various Adult and Family programs. Jane, along with Wanda Jaraczewski, who had been hired as Evangelization Minister in 1992, began the implementation of the RCIA program in 1996. From 1995 to the present, Sandy Slivon has served as Associate Director of Christian Formation overseeing Pre-School through Grade 8. Previously, Sandy had been a Catholic school teacher in Milwaukee, but after six years of working with 10-year-olds, she was looking for a change. Her new position presented quite a challenge because the program was large and thriving, with approximately 1,000 students enrolled in the entire Christian Formation program, preschool through high school.

Secretaries who have served the Christian Formation program over the years are Albia Olson, who retired in 1986, and Jane Jurca, who has served from 1979 to the present day. Kathy Strom has served as secretary in the rectory office since 1982.

Over the past 75 years, St. Mary's has placed a high priority on good liturgy and a strong music ministry. From the first organist and choir director, Helen Althoff, through several Dominican Sisters from Racine, Sisters Mary Cecilia Olle, Carol Parr, Paula Willing, Carla May Streeter, and Pat Stadler, through lay musicians Peggy Hugunin (Hughes), Ann Marie Theriault (Yorgensen), Barbara Kopesky, and Mary Bakula, music has enhanced the prayer of St. Mary parishioners. Countless dedicated volunteers have generously given of their time and musical talents to help enhance the musical prayer at our liturgies throughout all these years.

Among the changes brought about by Vatican II was the expansion of choices in liturgical music. During his tenure as associate and then pastor during the years 1976-1995, Father Jerry Brittain was very instrumental in shaping the direction of the music ministry. Although not a musician himself, he had a passion for liturgy and music in the liturgy. He had a gift for discovering, encouraging, and mentoring people to use their musical gifts for the good of the parish.

Our present Pastoral Musician, Theresa Setter, was hired in 1982. She oversees and organizes the church's music program and directs the adult choir. She also has discovered and encouraged many talented singers and instrumentalists to use their talents to enhance the worship of St. Mary parishioners. Theresa believes, with St. Augustine, that one "who sings prays twice."

In connection with St. Mary's Golden Jubilee year, the church was remodeled in 1979. The communion rail and several rows of kneelers were removed, and the church was re-decorated. The anniversary celebration included a Mass concelebrated by Archbishop Rembert Weakland, retired Archbishop William Cousins, and Fathers

Murphy, Brittain, and Weaver. The following year, another milestone was reached on Christmas Eve, when Father Murphy presided over the burning of St. Mary's mortgage.

Another important change of post-Vatican II was the restoration of the order of the permanent diaconate. The role of the permanent deacon is to serve in a parish at the will of the bishop. Permanent deacons lead in seeking out and serving human needs, both spiritual and temporal, of their assigned parish and the wider community. They assist at Masses and preach homilies on occasion, and each weekend they compose the prayers of the faithful. They teach and they care for engaged couples, the elderly, the hungry, the homeless, and the imprisoned. They may receive faculties to officiate at marriages, baptism, and funerals.

Starting on June 16, 1979, St. Mary was fortunate to have the services of three permanent deacons. Ronald Lesjak was the first, followed by James Francois in 1983, and by Wilson Shierk in 1996.

Father Murphy asked Ron Lesjak to consider becoming a deacon. With his wife Gail's blessing, he entered the Diaconate Program in order to offer the church his dedication and commitment. Deacon Ron celebrated his Silver Jubilee as a deacon at St. Mary in June 2004.

Deacon Ron has baptized almost 700 children and witnessed 35 marriages. The greatest highlights of his diaconate have been witnessing the marriages of his three daughters here at St. Mary and baptizing four of his grandchildren.

In addition to his ministries at St. Mary, Deacon Ron also ministers at the Kenosha County jails and Hospitality Rehabilitation Center on a weekly basis. He is involved with the SHARE program and the National Association of Deacon Organizations (N.A.D.O.) as Executive Secretary.

Our second permanent deacon was Jim Francois. Jim was ordained in 1983 by Bishop Rembert Weakland in St. John's Cathedral. He received the faculties to preach and officiate at weddings in 1987. He signed a covenant with St. Mary after ordination and has served since that time.

Jim has done numerous baptisms over the years including all eleven, so far, of his grandchildren. He has also officiated at many weddings for parishioners, friends, and some of his children. He has also been honored and privileged to conduct vigil and funeral services for many members of St. Mary.

Like Deacon Ron Lesjak and Deacon Wilson Shierk, he preaches once a month at one or two Masses. He conducts Communion Services and helps with the school and religious education programs. Deacon Jim began giving instructions for adults in an Inquiry Class with Father Jerry Brittain over 22 years ago and currently conducts adult confirmation classes.

Our fifth Pastor, Rev. Howard G. Haase, was appointed to St. Mary in June of 1995. Father Howard was raised on a farm in northwest Dodge County. He was one of five children. After attending a local grade school, he went through Seminary High School, college and graduate school. Father Howard was ordained in 1983. His first assignment was St. Edward in Racine. He came to St. Mary from Holy Name Parish in Wilmot, Wisconsin.

Father Mark Danczyk was appointed assistant in June of 1995 and six years later moved on to be pastor at St. Louis Parish in Caledonia, Wisconsin. Father Mark is remembered for his compassionate nature and his work with ministries such as the Circle of Friends, which collected and distributed Christmas gifts to the less fortunate. Father David Meinholz came to us from Fond du Lac in 1995 and left in 1996 on medical leave.

Deacon Wilson Shierk was ordained as our third permanent deacon on June 1, 1996, and assisted at his first Mass at St. Mary on Sunday, June 2. Since his ordination, he has been assigned to St. Mary Parish, where he and his wife Sylvia had already been members for many years. He has been involved in a number of ministries: RCIA Program-helping to bring new adults into our faith; jail ministry-reaching out to inmates to bring them Bible study and Eucharist; nursing home prayer service; wake and funeral services as requested; marriage preparation as assigned by the pastor; marriage ceremonies as requested by family and friends; adult education committee; chair of the Human Concerns Committee; helping to administer the emergency fund to the needy; preaching one weekend each month; presiding at baptisms; representing St. Mary Parish as a member of Shalom Center Board; and serving on the CUSH (Congregations United to Serve Humanity) Board.

Further improvements were made to the church. In 1996, an elevator was installed on the southwest corner of the Church at a cost of \$128,000. Construction was started in June and completed in late fall, making the church handicap accessible. The monumental staircase at the front of the Church was replaced in 1999. New roofs were installed on the school, gym and garages. The new security system for fire and burglary protection was installed in August of 1999.

St. Mary's 70th Anniversary was celebrated September 12, 1999, the weekend of the Parish Festival. Father Howard G. Haase celebrated the Eucharist under a tent in the parking lot, and a reception was held after the Mass. A committee describing themselves as "humble volunteers" put together a booklet which included a timeline of the parish history, a list of the priests who served the parish, and the songs of the celebration.

On March 26, 2000 an announcement was made that with the pending merger of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish and St. Mary, the name would remain St. Mary. The Parish Councils of the two parishes became a common council, one weekly bulletin contained the news of both parishes, and staffing decisions were made. Father Thomas LeMieux of St. Thomas was often seen at St. Mary's offering the Mass. Then on July 9, 2000, at the 11:00 a.m. Mass, the official merging of St. Mary and St. Thomas took place. Father

Party & Style Show. Cookie sales at Christmas time were popular. Besides raising funds for the Christian Women's service to the church, the events contributed to the social life of the parish. For the spiritual side, Mornings of Reflection were given four times each year, starting in 1977, first at St. Mary, then in collaboration with St. Mark, where each parish held the Mornings twice a year. Evenings of Reflection also were given. With the Christian Formation Ministry established, the Christian Women's group disbanded. Another group that contributed much was the Mission Society, which met in the Convent to sew articles for the missions.

The Pacers, a group of men of the parish, met socially and also served the parish, putting out a bi-weekly newsletter and working on a picture directory of St. Mary's in the 1970s. Many other groups that served St. Mary's throughout the last 75 years are in the cherished memories of parishioners.

Others groups continue and flourish. The Renew movement of the 1980's brought about the many small faith groups that still meet today. The Ashes to Fire program of 2002 strengthened the faith of many and drew new participants to the Charismatic group. Youth groups have added programs of service and spiritual growth, among them the workcamps and retreats. The collaboration of five groups, St. Mary, St. Mark, St. Anne, St. Therese, and St. Joseph Senior and Junior High Schools, to promote Christian Formation, has begun. CUSH, Congregations United to Serve Humanity, an interfaith movement to aid the poor and disadvantaged, is active. The parish contributes to the Shalom Center, the St. Vincent de Paul Society, and to several other charities each year. The Elizabeth Ministry and the Ministry of Hope serve people in time of need. The exchange of pulpits once a year leads to better understanding among Christian denominations. Ushers, lectors, altar servers, Eucharistic ministers, greeters are among the many who enrich the life of the parish. The Festival keeps volunteers busy almost year around and promotes a spirit of fun.

With gratitude for God's blessings and for all God's people who have contributed to His work at St. Mary in the past 75 years, we look forward to the future with faith and hope, confident of God's continued blessing upon the people and the mission of St. Mary's Parish.

We are grateful for permission from Dr. John W. Bailey to quote extensively from his work, *A Fifty Year Portrait: St. Mary's Catholic Church, Kenosha, Wisconsin*, published in 1979 for St. Mary's 50th Anniversary. The text of the first fifty years of this new booklet is taken largely from Dr. Bailey's work as well as from earlier St. Mary histories by Father Bell and by the 70th anniversary committee. Dr. Bailey, retired since 2000 and spending much of his time in Door County and Florida, was Professor of History for 35 years at Carthage College and Head of the History Department there for a number of years.