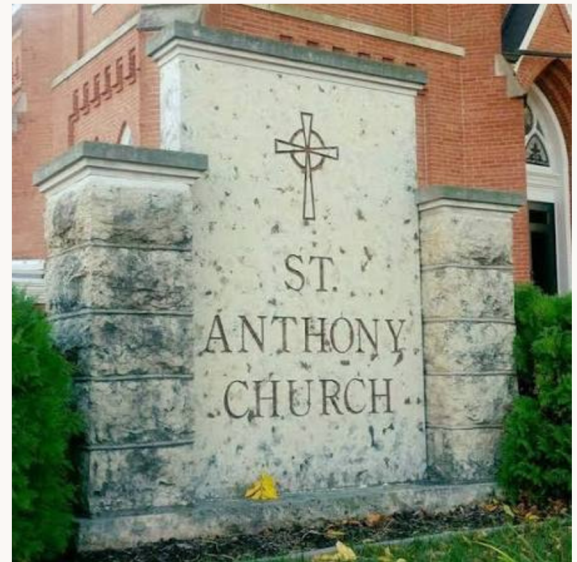


History of St Anthony

As we enter into this new territory of a Pastorate as a result of the Journey of Faith our diocese is undergoing, it is a good idea to recognize and understand a brief history of each of our member parishes.

We will begin with St. Anthony Parish.



St. Anthony parish uniquely started as a school with the church added later. In 1866 Bishop Hennessy directed that each parish must have a school, so a frame building on St. Ambrose and Seminary Streets became the first school. It also served as the church until 1881. The first mass was said on January 28, 1875. The parish name also changed several times. From 1876 – 1880 it was known as St. Malachi's, from 1880– 1883 the name changed to St. Aiden's and in 1883 to St. Ambrose. Finally in 1898 the parish was named for St. Anthony of Padua.

Lay teachers taught at the school until 1876 when the Presentation Sisters arrived. The Holy Ghost Sisters replaced them in 1899. They bought the old church and school property for a mother house and school in 1901. Both were destroyed by fire in 1914. In 1917 the Sisters of Charity BVM took over the school. A new school was built in 1927. In 1967 the enrollment of the school was 1,082 students. In 2007 the Our Lady of Guadalupe Immersion program moved to St. Anthony's. Due to declining enrollment, the school closed after the 2020–2021 school year.

The Rev. Peter O'Malley became pastor in 1888 and began the planning for a new church designed by Guido Beck in the Gothic style. Construction was completed in 1900. Stained glass windows are a dominant feature of Gothic churches. St. Anthony's beautiful windows tell the story of Christ's life and the establishment of the Catholic Church. In the 1930s Father O'Malley hired two Italian artists who lived with parishioners while completing paintings on canvases spread on the floor of the old school. Once completed they were mounted on the walls of the church. Father O'Malley remained at St. Anthony's until his death in 1952. The parish hall is named in his honor. Rev. George Stemm, the successor of Rev. O'Malley, recognized the population growth in the areas so purchased additional property for a ball field, parking lot and a new school building. The Church building was redecorated in 1982 and renovated in 1996 to be more accessible to all with a rededication on December 14, 1996. In 2000 the archdiocese awarded the parish the Archdiocesan Special Needs Award. The parish twinned with a parish in Haitai and assisted them after the 2010 earthquake.