

St. Michael Church - Then

The Architect

Our architect, Mr. John L. Bartolomeo of the firm of Bartolomeo and Hansen, has expressed his thoughts on the philosophy of design of our church. We pass them along to you in their entirety.

"In trying to conceive an ideal design for a church with today's liturgy, it was felt that we should start with the focal point and the purpose of the church and that is the sacrifice of the Mass or the altar. From this point it was necessary to radiate people around this table of sacrifice as close as possible and yet giving everyone a feeling of participating in the sacrifice of the Mass. Thus was developed our fan shaped pew arrangement to encompass the altar. No person in the Nave of the church sits farther than 14 pews away from the periphery of the Sanctuary.

Other problems that prevailed were the placement of the ambo (pulpit). Liturgically it should be in a position equally as important as the table of sacrifice, which represents the food of God. So in our interpretation we felt that by placing it likewise on the center line of the church but behind the altar of sacrifice and high enough so that the Celebrant can be seen, that this solved the problem of position by importance as well as cleared the sanctuary area so that a complete view of the altar could be had. Also that the Celebrant's chair located in front of the ambo would be empty most of the time providing the Celebrant was giving the homily and therefore, we concluded that all three lined up gained equal importance on the center line from a physical positioning in the church.

In laying out the church, because this is a Suburban area, it was felt that a large 900 seat capacity church would be out of order physically to use every morning, not only because of attendance but because of the operation of larger equipment to service the heating and air conditioning requirements for the space, so therefore it was decided to place a Winter chapel. This Winter or daily chapel serves several functions during the daily mass. It is a more intimate space for people to participate in the sacrifice of the Mass and allows us to segregate the sacristy from the Nave placing the sacristies at the front of the church servicing the daily chapel and when the main church is to be put to use, the Priest can process from the rear of the church to the Sanctuary, giving it an honest impression of a procession to the Sanctuary. Likewise, after the mass is ended, the Celebrant can return to the rear of the church and while still partially vested, greet his people and create a more communicable atmosphere between priest and his flock. We feel that Architecturally this can be done.

Since music has become more significant, we felt that the ideal location for a full enjoyment both to the Celebrant and to the parishioners was to the rear of the Sanctuary enclosing the organ in a resonator chamber of hard materials to reflect the music throughout the church.

Now that is was felt we had an honest interpretation of the liturgy, a like consideration had to be given to the materials to be used to help employ this sincerity, so a philosophy of God-made materials began. – The natural clay in the brick for the floor and the walls, the cement plastered ceiling and stucco walls, the use of iron and wood in their natural state for the pews and furnishings and the material of our time – Corten steel bell tower left to patina in its natural state bringing forth the colors as it was found in the ground. It was decided that the stained glass should maintain close proximity to earth colors. They should be soft in interpretation and blend with the surrounding walls and yet add dignity to the structure with their soft brilliance. We felt that we should maintain a bit of the tradition of symbolism in the church and as a result we have our natural stone carved frieze with designs indicative of our times, of our social problems and peace problems of the World.”

Altars and Statues

Mr. Frank Hayden’s data sheet very forcefully argues his competence and skill in his design of our altars and statues. He received his education at Xavier University in New Orleans, Notre Dame, Iowa State, Munich Art Academy, the Royal Academy in Copenhagen and the Academy of Fine Arts in Stockholm. Among a dozen awards bestowed on Mr. Hayden are included two Fulbright Scholarships. Chosen one of the ten outstanding Catholics in America by Sign Magazine in 1961 and listed in the 1967 publication of “Outstanding Young Men in America,” Mr. Hayden has exhibited his works at 18 different art shows including ten one-man shows. His creative accomplishments were also displayed at the Vatican Pavilion of the 1965 World’s Fair in New York.

Here are some of his comments regarding his work for St. Michael’s.

“Art must always affirm and reinforce the spiritual mission of the church. Works must be made transparent to worship and meditation, inspiring and permitting a Christian occasion. The symbolic values of the forms are at the same time its scriptural value.

The form of the egg of the Madonna embracing mankind (in the Chapel of All People) has the same expressive value of life as in the Holy Family.

St. Joseph has the posture of strength and the symbol of work. This figure was inspired from the quotation ‘Work is love made manifest.’

St. Michael symbolizes the triumph of good over evil, the piercing of darkness with light.

Christ and the Apostles are the bold figures on the four panels of the main altar. The altar itself is a symbol of Christ. The massive laminates of birch have a natural and honest strength and appeal.”

Stained Glass Windows

The creator of our beautiful windows is Dolores Veth associated for the last five years with Jacoby Studios of St. Louis, one of the leading stained glass manufacturers in the country. Miss

Veth has designed windows for over 100 churches and other buildings in 19 states. Jacoby Studios, since 1896, has furnished over 10,000 churches in nearly all the states and several foreign countries.

The glass for St. Michael's windows is approximately one inch thick and came from France, Germany and West Virginia. Scored and chipped, it was then cast into Benesco Epoxy compound with a white marble aggregate from Utah on the exterior and cedar brown marble aggregate on the interior to blend with the walls.

Said Mr. Bartolomeo who telephoned Miss Veth several times upon presentation of the designs, "She read me perfectly."

Now that we see the finished product ... we agree.

The Stones Cry Out

The frieze across the west and east portion of the church depicts the virtues and qualities of God who is faithful and unchanging to his people. The first proclamation on the four corners of the church is that GOD IS ... HE IS EVERYWHERE. "Where can I hide from the face of God? If I climb the heights, He is there. If I plunge the depths, He is also there."

The other stories speak to us of what God is in Himself and what we are in Him ... Love, Pure, Peace, Joy, Truth, Just, Mercy, Good. On the east we are told what belief in this faithful God brings to our world, our mind and our spirit ... Hope, Knowledge, Freedom, Wisdom, One, Being, Harmony, Unity and Beauty. Without belief in God, it is the opposite.

The symbols along the north and south frieze tell us what God has wrought through His Christ; while proclaiming at the same time ... Christ is God.

AT FIRST

of course, there had to be the people. They had come to a new land to find, as they told their children, "a better life." They left their native Luxembourg-a country torn by political strife between France and the German states in the middle 1800's. In 1842 Luxembourg had come under the domination of Prussia and subsequently under the thumb of Bismarck, a monarchist, who had no sympathy with the ideals or problems of a democratic minded and proud people. Leaving their homes and the life of certain hardship they traveled for three months in crossing the ocean to make a new home in the United States-in Illinois-a hard life still, but indeed a better life, a life of promise. They came via New York and Canada-industrious people, honest people; a God-fearing people with strange and alien German customs and language. They came to Illinois where the land was fertile, the weather was temperate, and a man could rest after a full day's work and be pleased with what his toil had accomplished with the help of God. By 1868 there were 200,000 German and German speaking people in Illinois, many of them political exiles.

Their days were filled. The animals had to be cared for. The homes had to be built-log cabins such as the original home of the Hostert family which still remains on the Frank

Hostert farm just west of 143rd and Wolf Road. Clearing and ploughing was done by strong arms and the help of horses. Stock animals, many of which were sheep, had to be brought to the Chicago Stockyards by horse and wagon or else via the Illinois Waterway which they entered at Lockport. Perhaps it was the women however, who worked the hardest. They cared for the cows, the chickens, the vegetable and fruit gardens and other hard outdoor work coming in after sundown to care for the work inside the cabin-the laundry, the house-cleaning, the sewing, the preserving, the bread making. It was not unusual to have to cook three big meals a day for twenty-eight people during harvest-good substantial sweet and sour German dishes, goose, spaetzle, rotkohl and schnitz.

BUT WHEN

the work eased there was time for "gemutlichkeit"; for picnics in Jungles' (which they pronounced "Yungles") woods near 143rd & Will Cook Road to which everyone came; for attending fortnightly dances in Yungles' farmhouse living room (we know it now as the area of Mr. & Mrs. William Rock's farm) where the only music was provided by an energetic fiddler who lacked the modern rock beat but who could make even the most stolid hausfrau tap out a spirited polka. The men would often get together for a game of cards in the center of town, Goodings Grove, at 143rd and Bell Road. Some say Goodings Grove got its nickname "Puckersville" from a distortion of the word "poker"-the favorite card game. Goodings Grove was "downtown" with its blacksmith shop, creamery and two stores.



Descendants of original families

When they had made their scratch in the earth, and clawed and scrambled and held on and burrowed in, because they were a religious people, because they lived close to God's creations, close to the wonders of nature with which He filled the land, they felt the need of a Kirche. Having organized in 1866 to accomplish this end, they finally established the parish of St. Michael of Goodings Grove, Homer Township on the Feast of St. Michael the Archangel on



Goodings Grove or "Puckersville" as it looks



St. Michael Church at 151st and Will

September 29, 1867. The first Mass is said to have been offered in a structure of sorts about 20' x 30' on land donated by Mathias Wagner on the northwest corner of 159th & Will Cook Road-land which is now St. Michael's Cemetery. Having no resident priest their needs were cared for by the Benedictine fathers of St. Joseph's Church, originally at Cass and North Avenue and now located at 1107 North Orleans, Chicago.

Shortly thereafter a large tract of land was donated by John Jungles (who died at the age of 90 years in the early 1920's) and a suitable frame church was built on the northeast corner of 151st and Will Cook Road facing on Will Cook. Because the priest had to travel from the near North Side of Chicago by horse and buggy-close to thirty miles-Mass was held infrequently, a fact which actually fostered the communal spirit of this Christian congregation. All the people came-all these Luxembourg Catholics-each in his horse and buggy which he tethered in the church yard. There wasn't much shade around this white frame church as it stood in the middle of cleared farmland-just two trees on the south side of the building and one to the west; but after Mass everyone gathered in the church yard, which was enclosed by a rail fence, in what little shade was offered by the trees for an hour or more exchanging news of family and crop, illness and birth, animals and weather. No one left because everyone knew each other and was concerned about each other. It was an anticipated social, as well as religious, gathering. The farmers would come for the unusual privilege of participating in the Mass following the custom of bringing their crop seed with them on Rogation days in the Spring to be blessed by the priest before planting. The Mass itself was in Latin but the sermon was in German, and the altar boy served many functions. It wasn't unusual for him to serve the Mass, pass the offertory basket and on the way back to the altar stoke up the wood burning stove.



DURING THE YEARS

to follow the spiritual needs of the parish were cared for alternately by the Benedictine fathers of Chicago and the diocesan priests from Lockport. Although the first acting pastor was the Rev. Suitbert Demarteau, O.S.B. from St. Joseph's in Chicago, an event had taken place in Lockport which was to affect St. Michael's. Since 1837, the church for all Catholics

in Lockport was the “Irish” church, St. Denis, which also was in charge of the missions at the Sag and Palos (later St. James of the Sag and Sacred Heart of Palos). In 1868, German families in Lockport, in the ethnic spirit of the times, petitioned the Bishop of Chicago for a German speaking priest so they could have a church of their own and services in their own language. His Excellency gladly consented and sent them the Rev. H. Yuetting (anglicized - J. H. Jutting). Since Father Jutting was closer to St. Michael’s (sharing his time between Lockport and St. Alphonsus in Lemont) than the Benedictine fathers in Chicago he now took care of his own parish and St. Michael’s. He was followed by the Rev. C. Hout and then by the Rev. Sixt, all diocesan priests from Lockport.

Whether because of the difficulties being experienced at St. Joseph’s in Lockport – frequent changing of priests, lack of money, few families – or the difficulties of caring for three parishes, or for some other reason the care of the parish went back into the hands of the Benedictines in 1888 where it remained until 1904. In 1904, another secular priest was given the care of St. Michael’s, the Rev. William H. Dettmer (later pastor of St. Benedict’s – German – in Chicago and St. Mary’s in Riverdale.) The Benedictine fathers had been caring for St. Benedict’s in Blue Island until 1904 when a secular priest was appointed whose first assistant was Father Dettmer. In this year Goodings Grove and Mokena were missions of St. Benedict’s. As the Rock Island train ran directly from Blue Island to Mokena but not to Goodings Grove it was highly inconvenient to get to St. Michael’s. Therefore, it was given over to the care of the Jesuits who were induced to come from St. Ignatius College (now a high school only) at 12th and May Street in Chicago. The first Jesuit to take charge of the parish was the Rev. John B. Goesse, S.J.

To us in 1969, accustomed to seven Masses on a Sunday, most of which are attended by more than 600 people, it seems unusual that these people considered themselves so fortunate to have a priest visit the parish but once a month and, as time went on, every fortnight. In the beginning days the priest would come the entire distance by horseback, and later, after the Wabash (now the Norfolk and Western Railway) tracks were laid through Orland, he would ride the train that far and then by horse to St. Michael’s. When the priest was to come from Lockport each family in turn would go in horse and buggy to get him and have him lodge with them for the weekend. On these fortnightly visits the priest would hear the catechism recitals of the children, giving them prizes for good work. Confessions were heard and marriages and baptisms performed. It is said that the priests who came from the city enjoyed their weekend in the farm country where they had an opportunity to indulge in the recreation of the young man of the farm – riding and hunting.

ABOUT THE SAME TIME

as the establishment of the church a two story, two room frame school building was erected next to the church. The school was conducted by a lay teacher who lived in the 2nd floor room above the school room. The maximum number of children at any one time was thirty; in fact, in 1905 there were 19 girls and 20 boys. The school was discontinued at various times because of unfavorable circumstances, but was in existence as late as October, 1916 when the ladies of the Altar and Rosary Society (one of the two parish societies, the other being the Association of Childhood for the children of the parish) purchased “curtains for the school - \$2.40.” Miss Yvonne Bremner was the last teacher to

preside and subsequently entered the religious life. Perhaps the effects of World War I had some influence, but the school was then discontinued not to be re-opened until 1949. When the school was not operating at the turn of the century the children walked, often many miles, to the public school one of which still stands on the northeast corner of 143rd and Wolf Road and is used for various temporary commercial purposes.

The German character of the people is seen throughout the records with the first English notation in the Altar and Rosary Record Book in 1902. At that time the society had a membership of 26 ladies (in 1968, the membership was 365). Even in English the German idiom was apparent in such income notations as "To candles sold – 76c", and expense items as "By Gospel Book - \$1.25" or "By mouse trap – 10c." In reading the entries one appreciates the simpler life of a people who bought many brooms and mouse traps and lamp oil; who paid "To expressage – 30c" and twice a year – at Easter and Christmas – paid "by organist - \$1.00". The total income of the group for 1902 was \$63.50 with expenses taking \$37.40.

Walking through the cemetery on a quiet Memorial Day in late Spring one sees the mainstay of every farmer's flower garden, planted so long ago and now grown to tremendous size. The prolific peony bushes spill in wild abandon into a careless kaleidoscope of pink and white and rose red – making this land of the long gone Mathias Wagner a scented memorial punctuated with a profusion of blended color. One reads the names on the grave stones as one would a litany of the founding families-Wagner, Jungels, (Jungles), Welter, Hostert, Homerding, Lucas, Weiler, Gerlach, Bremner, Cox, Ludwig, Wies, etc. The language of their youth is carved on some stones; "Geb." (Gebornen; Eng.-born) and "Ges." (Gestorben; Eng.-died). Here too, in a few words of a name, we read in the stones commemorating the deaths of babies and young children of the sorrow of a people and the tragedy of a time without modern medicines.

A GOLDEN JUBILEE

celebration was held with Father Kokenge officiating at a Solemn High Mass on September 29, 1917. A memorial card was issued at this time. On April 6, 1917 America had entered World War I and 15 boys from St. Michael's served the country their parents had adopted and which had given them refuge. On October 12, 1919 a Solemn High Mass was offered for the safe return of the 15 young men, some of whom had been as far from home as Siberia.

THE AMERICAN TOWN

surged in growth or dried up to a mummified kind of existence with the building of a railroad. So it was with Goodings Grove and Orland Park. In 1879 the Wabash, St. Louis and Pacific Railroad tracks were laid through Orland on the way to Decatur and St. Louis over the route that is presently Southwest Highway, passing to the southeast of McGinnis Slough. The railroad placed the station at approximately the southwest corner of 143rd and Southwest Highway as a midway accommodation to people coming from Orland Center (151st and 94th Avenue) and Goodings Grove (143rd and Bell). They named the station "Sedgewick." At the north end of the depot (Orland Hardware) was the milk platform where the farmers brought their milk can - although a creamery [143rd and Ravinia] was

built to handle some of the product. On the east side of the tracks were the animal pens where cattle and sheep were loaded to be brought to the Chicago stockyards. Midway in the block of 143rd and Beacon, on the west side of the street, was the slaughter house. (Later the slaughter house was the first site of the Orland State Bank which was started after World War I and then moved to the brick building at 14316 Beacon. Recently the bank moved to the Orland Park Plaza.) To the northeast of the depot (Davidson Redi-Mix and Beatty Lumber Company) were the railroad yards where a roundhouse housed one of the engines which laid up overnight at Orland. For a long time six passenger trains plus freight and through trains used the tracks. (Presently there is only one commuter train leaving Orland for Downtown Chicago.) Eventually the train tracks were straightened and moved slightly to the east to make a straight run to Worth, and the old right of way was used to build Southwest Highway.

In April, 1880, Colonel Fawcett Plum of Chicago laid out a plat of twenty acres under the name of Sedgwick which name was retained until 1881. Subsequently, State Senator John Humphrey who resided on a farm on 151st Street had an additional ten acres platted on which the first dwelling house was built by G. B. Zahn. The second house was built by Senator Humphrey who, in 1891, organized and incorporated the Village of Orland Park and was elected its first President.

In the summer of 1881 Henry Lawn erected a building across from the train depot which he occupied as a store and which is now the location of Loebe Brothers' Store. By 1894 there were two saloons, two general stores, a furniture store and a wagon and blacksmith shop. The population was considerably less than 200. Not too long afterwards a hotel was built north of Loebes' on Union Avenue (now Ji-Lyn Florist) and a bathhouse across the street. Wooden sidewalks were laid in 1892 and replaced by concrete in 1904.

In 1897 the Christ Lutheran Church was built at 143rd and West Avenue (the western edge of the town) and a small room attached to the south side of the church structure was used as a parochial Lutheran school. Later a larger school was built just to the south of that. In 1898 the Methodist Church was built on 144th and West Avenue with two distinctive towers. Due to wind destruction the east tower had to be cut down in size so that the west tower of the old church (the congregation has since built a brick structure) is now considerably higher. With the arrival of the automobile those who attended the Methodist Church in Orland Center found it as easy to attend the Methodist Church on West Avenue.

ENTERTAINMENT

was in the form of dances, parties, etc. on Middle Street in a building where now stands a Pizzeria. Later a life insurance group (Woodman) built Woodman's Hall on 1st Avenue and Grove which was the center of social life. Surrey rides to Orland Lake (McGinnis Slough) were another common form of diversion, particularly for the younger set.

At 143rd and 94th Avenue a large pond was scooped out and allowed to collect water which froze in winter and was cut for the town ice supply which was stored in an ice house on the east side of the pond. In the summer it is said the pond became a convenient swimming area.

Shortly after World War I a two year high school course was housed in the Village Hall. In 1922 it became apparent that the two room grade school (9771 West 143rd Street) was inadequate in housing four grades in each room so the new school was built at 143rd and West Avenue and the high school took its old quarters. (Presently, Carl Sandburg High School with an enrollment close to 2,000 is its "descendant".)

By 1914, Orland Park was the only village between Chicago and Joliet (originally named "Juliet" and changed in 1845 to Joliet) having all the facilities of village water, cement sidewalks, middle of the street gasoline lights and a policeman whose principal duties were to light the street lights, start and shut off the town water pump, and occasionally give a hobo a night's lodging in the local calaboose. Automobiles began to be seen around 1911. Where once ran the stagecoach, now ran the train; where once horses were tethered under sheds while their wagons protruded in the rain, now Overlands were parked; where wagon wheels once rutted stone roads and sank hub cap deep in mud, paved roads began to appear; even gasoline lighting soon became electric, and the friendly personal visit was replaced by the services of two independent telephone companies. And the ultimate replacement was that of the automobile hearse for the funeral hack that had always been at the ready in the furniture store.

So Orland Park on the shores of Orland Lake climbed out of the farmland on the back of the Wabash, St. Louis and Pacific Railway.

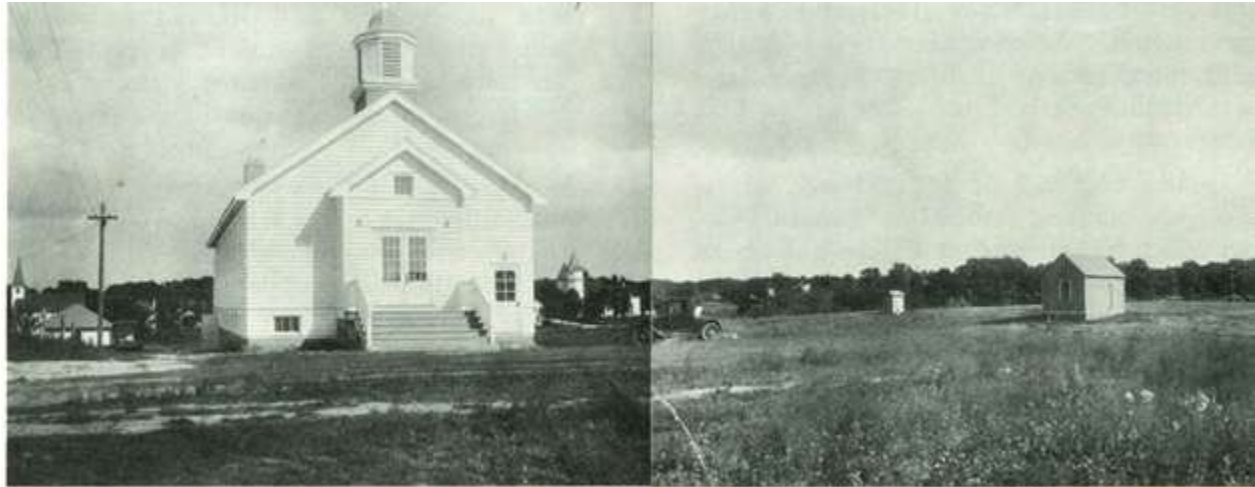
And Goodings Grove-remained Goodings Grove-in the heart of the farmland-an intersection of two streets.

A DECISION

had to be made; and, as with all decisions, some approved, and some did not. Whether the growth of Orland Park indicated the trend of population growth, or the fact that the frame church which was 70 years old and exposed to wind, rain, snow and frequent tornado in the open prairie might have needed drastic repair influenced the acting pastor and trustees the decision was nevertheless made to build a new church in the town of Orland Park. This decision was probably made in the time of Father Calhoun or Father Daley. Some were not happy at the change; for one thing, a new stove had just been purchased and this seemed a frightful waste to the frugal minded. Some were not pleased with having to travel so much farther into town to attend church. But the fact remains that on Palm Sunday, 1923, Catholic services were held in the Town Hall of Orland Park and subsequently in Woodman's Hall until the church was completed in 1924. Two acres of land were purchased by Father Daley on high land that was used for pasture west of town. The land had a creek crossing it, and the street was appropriately named "Highland." On May 15, 1924 ground was broken and the basement finished on June 14, 1924. On August 10, 1924 the congregation gathered in the church for the first time.

In 1926 and 1927 an additional 1 ½ acres were purchased at a cost of \$7,800 to be used as a playground. The church building itself was planned to be a temporary structure with future plans calling for a combination church and school to be built and the frame church to

be converted to an auditorium. Possibly the coming of the Depression in 1929 and World War II in 1941 postponed the parish's ability to carry out these plans until somewhat later.



St. Michael 1924

The church incorporated a new departure in heating using an oil burner in place of coal or wood. The interior walls had a wooden wainscoting and, in the beginning, no Stations of the Cross. There were roughly 150 "ice cream parlor" type chairs with cane seats and 1' x 4' wooden kneelers attached. Pews were added later. There was a heat register in the floor of the center aisle and an organ loft. Outside stairs led down from the front of the church, and



Interior St. Michael Church - 1924

the front doors were made of French-glass type panels. The stairs and banisters were wood which were later replaced by concrete stairs and iron banisters. The doors were later replaced by wood and finally by heavy metal. There was a bell tower and, for a while, a second bell tower was erected over the outside back stairway. The street was a grassy lane on the level of the front stairs. (At the time of the destruction of the church to make way for the building of the new edifice there was a second level of stairs which led down from the sidewalk to the street level.)

A small frame building used for the priest's house was erected to the east of the church. Although not originally built, a screen porch was added. As electricity had come to Orland Park in 1924, electric fixtures were installed; bridal wreaths, junipers and yews were planted as were several trees to the south and west. A flagpole stood in front of the church during the Second World War.

On July 5, 1926 the first resident pastor, Rev. William A. Gorey, was named to the parish by his Eminence, George Cardinal Mundelein. Father Gorey, who had been ordained on



Rectory built during tenure of Father Gorey

November 21, 1918, came to St. Michael's from St. Mary's in Lake Forest and with the dreams and energy of a young man he realized that a larger Rectory was indicated. During his tenure the brick Rectory was built to the south of the church, the small wooden structure back of the church being converted to a garage and later a storage room. It is said that some of the thrifty Luxembourg parishioners thought the size of the building far in excess of the need, but time has shown that its size was eventually inadequate.

AND SO



St. Michael Church at that time

St. Michael's entered into the community of Orland Park! Although neither a particularly large nor wealthy parish its communicants were regular and committed to involvement in the work of the church. It drew its financial support primarily from three annual functions which came to be acknowledged events in the community; the Fourth of July Picnic; the Fall Festival which was customarily held on the Feast of St. Michael; and the Poultry Bazaar, which was held just prior to the winter Holy Days.

Perhaps the Picnic was the most well known as buses would leave 63rd and Halsted Streets in Chicago to travel to the grove on the shores of Orland Lake where chicken dinners were served by the congregation. The chickens were all home grown and dressed fowl, and were prepared and served by all the women in the parish. For days before the Picnic the men too were busy erecting a wooden platform for a dance floor. And for days all the people prayed that it wouldn't rain!

Not everyone in Orland Park was happy to have the Catholics move into town. In a time when old world prejudices were still strong and the ecumenical movement nonexistent it is not surprising that shortly after moving to Orland Park a burning cross was erected across the street from the church in a grove of trees. Whether this was a Ku Klux Klan activity, or the work of one individual was never determined; but its obvious meaning saddened every

good man of every faith in the community. Under the winning personality of Father Daley no further overt incidents of this nature were reported.

In 1929, while Father Gorey was pastor St. Michael's, which had so long been a mission church itself, took on the care of the religious needs of a mission church, Sacred Heart (Palos) of St. James, Church of the Sag. The history of Sacred Heart is long and reaches back into the early history of the area involving St. Denis of Lockport, St. Patrick's and St. Alphonsus of Lemont, and St. James of the Sag. In 1836, Archer Road was laid in preparation for the building of the Illinois-Michigan Canal, as ordered by passage of a bill in the Illinois Assembly, and the Cal-Sag Feeder through the valley of the Sag which traversed Palos. Contractors advertised nationally for labor and added inducements such as available land at low cost were made. This brought an influx of Irish immigrants. By 1837, St. Denis in Lockport was begun with six mission churches under its care, including St. James of the Sag (variously Saganash and/or Saginaw) and Palos. The church at the Sag was set on an old Signal Post and one mile to the east was an Indian camp. At this time Indians were plentiful in the area. The people weathered severe hardships including cholera epidemics and severe winters during which numbers of buffalo died for lack of food and water (1836).

In turn, Palos became a mission of St. Patrick's Lemont and St. James of the Sag. In 1872, a group of Alsatian and German families decided to have a parish of their own which would be German. However, they soon found it would be financially impossible, so an uneasy truce was made with the English speaking Irish in the area, with whom there existed some rivalry, and a new parish was begun that was bilingual. Compromises were worked out such as the blessing of a church bell by two priests on St. Patrick's Day, 1874, which was recorded, however, in German!

The original frame church at 92nd Avenue and 101st Street burned in 1904 (supposedly from a hunter's effort to flush a rabbit from under the building), and to prevent a major disruption in the parish over the selection of the site of the new church, Archbishop Quigley personally presided over a parish meeting where the majority voted to build a brick church on Sag Bluff Road (107th Street) one block west of Keane (92nd Avenue). It remained under the care of St. James until 1929 when it was placed under the care of St. Michael's, Orland Park. St. Michael's thus became responsible for the largest geographical parish area in the Archdiocese of Chicago.

On Sunday, October 4, 1929, St. Michael's celebrated its Diamond Jubilee which had appropriately fallen on St. Michael's Feast Day, September 29, 1929. A religious celebration took place in the morning followed by the justly famed Chicken Dinner from noon to 3 P.M. A supper was also served in the evening. All the present members participated and invitations were sent to former parishioners and members of surrounding parishes and the entire Orland community. At this time there were three active parish societies; the Altar and Rosary Society, the Holy Name Society, and the Ladies Sewing Circle. St. Michael's looked to a golden future.

Twenty-five days later was October 29, 1929.

THE STOCK MARKET

crash in 1929 and the resultant Great Depression may well have negatively influenced the building and growth plans of the parish for Father Gorey was transferred to Holy Family parish in North Chicago in December, 1935 (and later became pastor of St. Sabina's, Chicago) without any further major improvements. In May, 1936, a new pastor, Rev. J. L. Rooney from St. Dorothy's was appointed by Cardinal Mundelein and he first greeted the parish on Sunday, December 22, 1936. At this time there were two masses being said at both St. Michael's and Sacred Heart. The United States entered World War II in 1941, and again during Father Rooney's pastorate no major construction could be accomplished.

The end of World War II initiated a wave of civilian construction which had been postponed for years because of military priority. Among those long set aside plans were those of St. Michael's which was now under the pastorship of the Rev. Michael Kilbride who had succeeded Father Rooney in December, 1944. Construction of the long awaited grade school began. The school was supposed to be ready for classes in 1948, but delays caused its opening to be postponed for a year. Father Kilbride made arrangements with the pastor of St. Patrick's in Lemont to take the children from 3rd through 8th grades for one year. To take care of the children in 1st and 2nd grade he made arrangements with St. Coletta's



Father Kilbride

(Kennedy School) for the use of an unused and old farmhouse on the grounds. So eager were the parents to have their children attend a school under Catholic auspices that the parents of the seventeen children involved made seventeen small desks, hired the professional services of a lay teacher, Mrs. James Maney, a resident of the parish, and each child went to school every day carrying a little chair with him. Father Kilbride had secured the teaching services of the Sisters of St. Dominic of St. Catherine, Kentucky and on September 14, 1949 St. Michael School was opened with Sister Helen Marie as Superior-Principal, four other sisters and additional lay faculty.



Our New School

The school was a two story, red brick structure containing eight classrooms. Constructed south of the Rectory, the building had the convent built as a third floor on the rear portion of the structure. However, the school was barely opened when it became apparent that it was going to be too small. Classes went on double shift.

One of the post war phenomena was the tremendous exodus from the city to the suburbs. Returning veterans and families who had to wait to build during the war were seeking an

open air environment to raise their families. The Palos-Orland area was one of the last South side areas where one could approach country living with city conveniences. The area was surrounded by forests. People moving into the south area of Chicago from out of state found it a pleasant place to locate. Soon Palos-Orland was experiencing an urban migration and a population explosion and, along with it, St. Michael's parish.



Panorama of our parish in 1949.

Succeeding Father Kilbride, who was transferred in 1952, was the Rev. Francis (Frank) Coyle. The man was made for the situation. A superb administrator his Irish name belied his German traits of efficiency, organization and punctuality. Known throughout the area for his kindness to those sick, in sorrow or trouble, and for his generally unpublicized generosity to those in need, it fell upon him to cope with this burgeoning parish now made up of people from all ethnic backgrounds, of diverse financial means, occupations, education and interests. From this potpourri he was to forge a parish body.

A stop-gap addition was constructed on the east end of the little church in 1954 allowing a seating capacity of approximately 250. About the same time (1954-1955) four classrooms were added to the north end of the school plus additional convent space, and the Auditorium. Total cost of this construction, completely furnished, was \$25,000. The number of teaching religious in 1955 had risen to ten with Sister Antonia replacing Sister Helen Marie as Principal-Superior. In 1952 the priests from the Vincentian Seminary at Lemont were asked to assist for Sunday and weekday masses. Even with their help the everyday needs of the parish over such a vast area could not be handled by one resident priest and the first assistant resident curate was appointed in July, 1953, the Rev. Stanley Rudcki. With the added priests staying at the Rectory the building, which was thought too large when built by Father Gorey, was now hopelessly inadequate for dining and sleeping quarters. An addition on the south end of the Rectory was built in 1957.

The southeast section of the parish in Palos Heights had also experienced the growth phenomena and in 1959 this portion of St. Michael's was detached to form St. Alexander parish at 122nd and 71st Avenue. In the same year the north portion of Sacred Heart, and consequently of St. Michael's jurisdiction, was detached to form St. Patricia's at 91st and 87th Avenue in Hickory Hills.

But St. Michael's continued to expand and continued to be the largest parish, geographically, in the Archdiocese.

IT BECAME APPARENT

something had to be done about the school and the church. Children were on double shift in the school. The six masses in the church were literally overflowing with people standing in every available spot-in the aisles and on down the outside steps. The temporary church was too small; the twelve classroom school was too small; it was now time to expand with the community.



In 1961 and 1962, at a cost of \$330,000, the new wing of the school was built adding twelve more classrooms, a library, a lay teachers' room and an administration office. In 1962 Sister Mary Louise assumed duties as Principal of the school. In 1966 the school reached its peak of assigned religious teachers-twelve-having at the same time thirteen lay teachers. In anticipation of building a new church the southeast corner lot on 143rd and Highland was purchased and later the frame house and lot to the east. (The frame house had been converted to serve as a residence by a private party many

years previously but had at one time served as a stable for horses.) As it was not economically feasible to incur the debt of building a church until the school debt had been retired, Sunday masses were now being offered in the Auditorium which could seat 600 on folding chairs. (For a short time mass was offered in unfinished classrooms in the new school wing.) The need to reduce the debt, the untimely death of his Eminence Albert Cardinal Meyer (which automatically halted all Archdiocesan construction) and the appointment of a new Archbishop, John Patrick Cody, tested the patience of the parishioners.



But at last, after six years of waiting, construction began and the first shovelful of dirt was turned in April, 1968. St. Michael's was to have its permanent church after 100 years of existence.

St. Michael's rejoiced with the parishioners of Sacred Heart who finally realized their long dream of having a parish of their own. In 1967 Sacred Heart de-annexed from St. Michael's and received recognition as a

separate parish with the first resident pastor, the Very Rev. Msgr. James V. Moscow.

On June 4, 1969 the new St. Michael Church was first used on the occasion of the graduation of the 8th Grade class of St. Michael's School. Prior to the Graduation exercises the first Mass to be offered from the altar of the church was celebrated by the pastor, Father Coyle and participated in by the graduates and their parents.

On June 15, 1969 the cornerstone of the church was laid entombing several artifacts of our time as well as a church bulletin and the history of the parish. On September 29, 1969, 102 years after its founding, St. Michael's formally dedicated its new church with his Eminence John Cardinal Cody in attendance.



Father Coyle assisted by Fathers Dunne (center) and McCaig (left) participate in the laying of the corner stone on June 15, 1969

Pastors of St. Michael Parish

1867-1869	Acting Pastor	Rev. Suitbert Demarteau, O.S.B.
1869-1873		Rev. J. H. Jutting (Lockport)
1873-1874		Various Benedictine Fathers
1874-1878		Rev. Charles Hout (Lockport)
1878-1888		Rev. F. Sixt (Lockport)
1888-1893		Various Benedictine Fathers
1893-1896		Rev. Rudesindus Schremb, O.S.B.
1896-1898		Various Benedictine Fathers
1898-1901		Rev. Suitbert Rickert, O.S.B.
1901-1904		Rev. Leonard Schlimm, O.S.B.
		Rev. Richard Kraus, O.S.B.
*1904-1905		Rev. William H. Dettmer (St. Benedict's Blue Island)
1905-1908		Rev. John Goesse, S.J. (St. Ignatius)
1908-1916		Rev. C.J.V. Bill, S.J. (St. Ignatius)
1916-1917		Rev. John Kokenge, S.J. (St. Ignatius)
1917-1919		Rev. G. Mahowald, S.J. (Loyola)
1919-1920		Rev. James Preuss, S.J. (Ignatius)

1920-1923	Rev. Edward C. Calhoun, S.J. (Ignatius)
1923-1924	Rev. J.C. Daley, S.J. (Ignatius)
1924-1926	Rev. E.J. Zurlinden, S.J. (Ignatius)
1926-1936	1 st Resident Pastor Rev. William A. Gorey
1936-1944	Rev. J.L. Rooney
1944-1952	Rev. Michael Kilbride
1952	Rev. Francis Coyle

Assistant Priests

1953-1957	Rev. Stanley Rudcki
1957-1964	Rev. Michael Broniec
*1964-1968	Rev. Victor Sivore
1965-1966	Rev. Joseph A. Kelly
1966-1966	Rev. Paul McArdle
1966-	Rev. John McCaig
1968-	Rev. Peter F. Dunne

*In 1968 Father Sivore was transferred to St. Benedict's in Blue Island, thus unwittingly repaying the 64 year old debt incurred when Father Dettmer came from St. Benedict's in 1904 from Blue Island to care for the people of St. Michael's.

Principals and Superiors of St. Michael School

1949-1955	Sister Helen Marie, O.P.	Principal and Superior
1955-1961	Sister Mary Antonia, O.P.	Principal and Superior
1961-1967	Sister Mary Louise, O.P.	Principal and Superior
1967-	Sister Mary Eunice, O.P.	Principal
1967-	Sister Ann Davette, O.P.	Superior

St. Michael Church – Now

A Parish Comes of Age ...

ST. MICHAEL'S TODAY

would be unbelievable to the Luxembourg farmer of 1867 who started it all. St. Michael's today is the largest parish, geographically, in the Archdiocese of Chicago. It is composed of 1283 families of which 706 are from Orland Park, 400 from Palos Park, 63 from Palos Heights, 59 from Tinley Park, 50 from Lockport and 5 from miscellaneous areas. There are undoubtedly many more families who have not registered with the church. The parish is under the guidance of the pastor, Rev. Frank Coyle, assisted by resident curates, Rev. Peter F. Dunne and Rev. John McCaig. Sunday masses are also said with the assistance of priests and deacons from St. Vincent's Seminary. There are six masses on Sunday mornings most of which are attended by over 600 people each, and one evening mass which, in the trend of the times, is frequently a Guitar Mass.

St. Michael's School has an enrollment of 929 students with nine religious and seventeen lay teachers working under the direction of Principal, Sister Mary Eunice, D.P. Sister Ann Davette assumes the responsibility of Superior of the convent. School policy is determined by a lay School Board which was established in the Fall of 1967. The Board has thirteen lay members, a representative from the faculty, pastor, Principal, School Chaplain and is under the chairmanship of Mr. George V. Gallagher. The school, which is air conditioned, has 24 classrooms, a library, a gym and Auditorium, closed circuit television in each of the rooms, as well as a television studio and video tape recorder. Commercial television, educational television and intra-school activities are used in the educational process. Audio-visual aids such as movie and slide projectors, hi-fi and phonograph units and overhead projectors are in frequent use. A Band (Senior and Junior), Junior Great Books Program, Home-School Association, "Football, Basketball and Baseball team, Cheerleaders, Girls' and Boys' Choir, Y.C.S. Discussion Groups, French Language Program, Ungraded Primary Division, Science Fair, Speech Contest, Art Competition, Spelling Bees, etc., all contribute to making it one of the finest Catholic schools in the Archdiocese ranking equal or above all local schools in academic achievement of its students in impartial testing and high school performance scores. Stress on ethical behavior permeates the school atmosphere with religious training a part of the daily schedule and special weekly instruction from the parish priests. In 1968-69 there were 188 First Communicants, 111 being children from St. Michael School who were parishioners of St. Michael and 77 being children enrolled in the public school and Confraternity of Christian Doctrine classes; and 270 members of the Confirmation Class which represents 179 children from St. Michael School and 91 children from the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Classes.

Catholic children who attend the public elementary school have the opportunity to attend Christian Doctrine classes which are conducted by religious and lay teachers for two hours every two weeks. There are presently 520 children enrolled. There is a Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Discussion Program for students attending public high schools conducted by specially trained lay teachers in which 120 children are presently enrolled. (This represents 1/4 of the Catholic children attending the local public high school.)

Whereas in 1902, when the Altar and Rosary records show receipts of \$63.50 and expenses of \$37.40, total parish receipts for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1968 show receipts of \$357,827 and expenses of \$329,009. Receipts include contributions from parishioners, special collections, school tuition, parish society contributions, loans, etc. Disbursements include charitable disbursements, religious and lay teachers' salaries, payment on loans, rectory expense, building maintenance, etc.

From having two intra-parish organizations in 1867 we now participate in many parish, community and inter-faith activities. Among them are: Ministerial Association (an organization of priests and ministers of all faiths in the

community); four special adult Discussion Groups; Village Court (assistance and guidance in cases brought before the judiciary, particularly juvenile cases); Family Counseling Service (a non-sectarian community wide organization); Human Relations and Ecumenism Movement; Christian Family Movement; three adult Discussion Groups conducted by deacons from the seminary; Holy Name Society; Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women (formerly Altar and Rosary Society); Home and School Association; St. Vincent de Paul Society (extraordinary help to those in sorrow or need); Teen Club; Lay School Board; Ushers' Club; Commentators' Club; Lay Building Committee; Living Room Dialogues (inter-faith discussion groups); Junior Great Books Program; Boy and Girl Scout Troops; Coffee Klatschs (neighborhood lay social-discussion meetings attended by a priest and sister).

A PARISH IS PEOPLE

a church is people. No longer is ours a church of farm people. Today the creek is covered over and runs silently unseen. Where horses pastured is a parking lot overrun with cars. No longer does our parish list abound with the Luxembourg surname. Our occupations are different. Many are in the construction business; many are in sales or business occupations; some are in the legal, medical or educational professions. A very few are still in the business of farming.

Our wives no longer do the work of a farm wife, but quite a few work in business or education or as volunteers. Many of our people are of Polish or Slavic descent; some of German or Irish; some are Lithuanian; some are refugees of World War II or, more lately, from Communist controlled countries. Some have lived in Orland or Palos all their lives; some for fifteen years; many moved in recently. Some will die in Orland or Palos; some will move away this year.

From the first wonderful moment of life ...



To its golden twilight



Our parish priests minister to our spiritual needs

Some send their children to the Catholic school; some to the public school. Some will walk to church; some will drive five miles; some will let distance or ennui hinder regular attendance. We no longer hear the words of our Mass in Latin or our homily in German. No longer do we bring the crop seed to church to be blessed; nor do we stop in the shade of two trees after Mass to talk; in fact, we don't know each other very much at all. Where we used to be almost self-sufficient in satisfying our needs we are now, in fact, almost 90% dependent upon others for services necessary to our existence.

And few there are who have ever tasted rotkohl or spaetzle, but most enjoy pizza or hamburgers or milk shakes! But above all the divisive forces that take us away from each other during the week - some to the factory, some to the bank, some to the office, some to a building site, some to neighboring towns, some to downtown Chicago, some even to New York or California - that separate us by interests and occupations and backgrounds and education, there is one focal point to which we all gravitate and which belongs to all of us and in which we all share - the Presence in St. Michael's Church. And as we raise our eyes to the elevated Host we know the God-like essence that is in each of us is also in the person kneeling on either side of us and those all around us - all of us bound together in one cohesive unit-to each other and to Jesus Christ - to those people of 100 years ago - and to those unknown people of 100 years hence who will look back on us, long dead, with our different ways and lives, hopes and plans. Let them say of us that we too were a People of God.

And as we kneel adoring Him we will do so in a church that most appropriately, as in a time and place some 2,000 years ago, stands over a spot upon which once stood a stable for horses.



Rectory

History "Then and Now" by Gertrude M. Gallagher

ST. MICHAEL CATHOLIC CHURCH



DEDICATION and CENTENNIAL COMMEMORATION

*But at that time shall Michael rise up,
the great Prince, who standeth for the
children of Thy people; and a time shall
come such as never was from the time
that nations began even until that time.
And at that time shall Thy people be
saved, everyone that shall be found
written in the book.*

... Daniel 10:13

ST. JOSEPH THE WORKER



A PERMANENT CHURCH



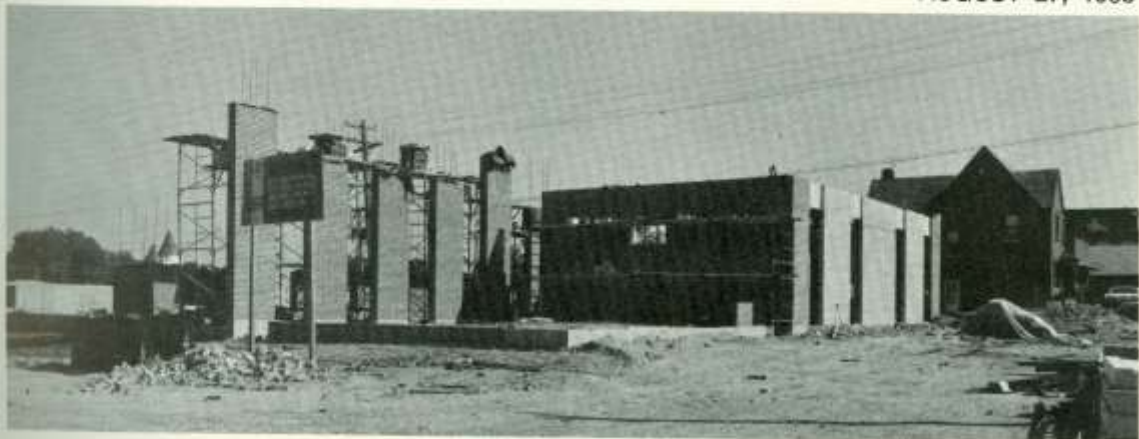
BECOMES
A REALITY

DEMOLITION ...
AND THEN
CONSTRUCTION

JULY 30, 1968



AUGUST 27, 1968



September 20, 1968



October 14, 1968



November 11, 1968



December 3, 1968



January 3, 1969



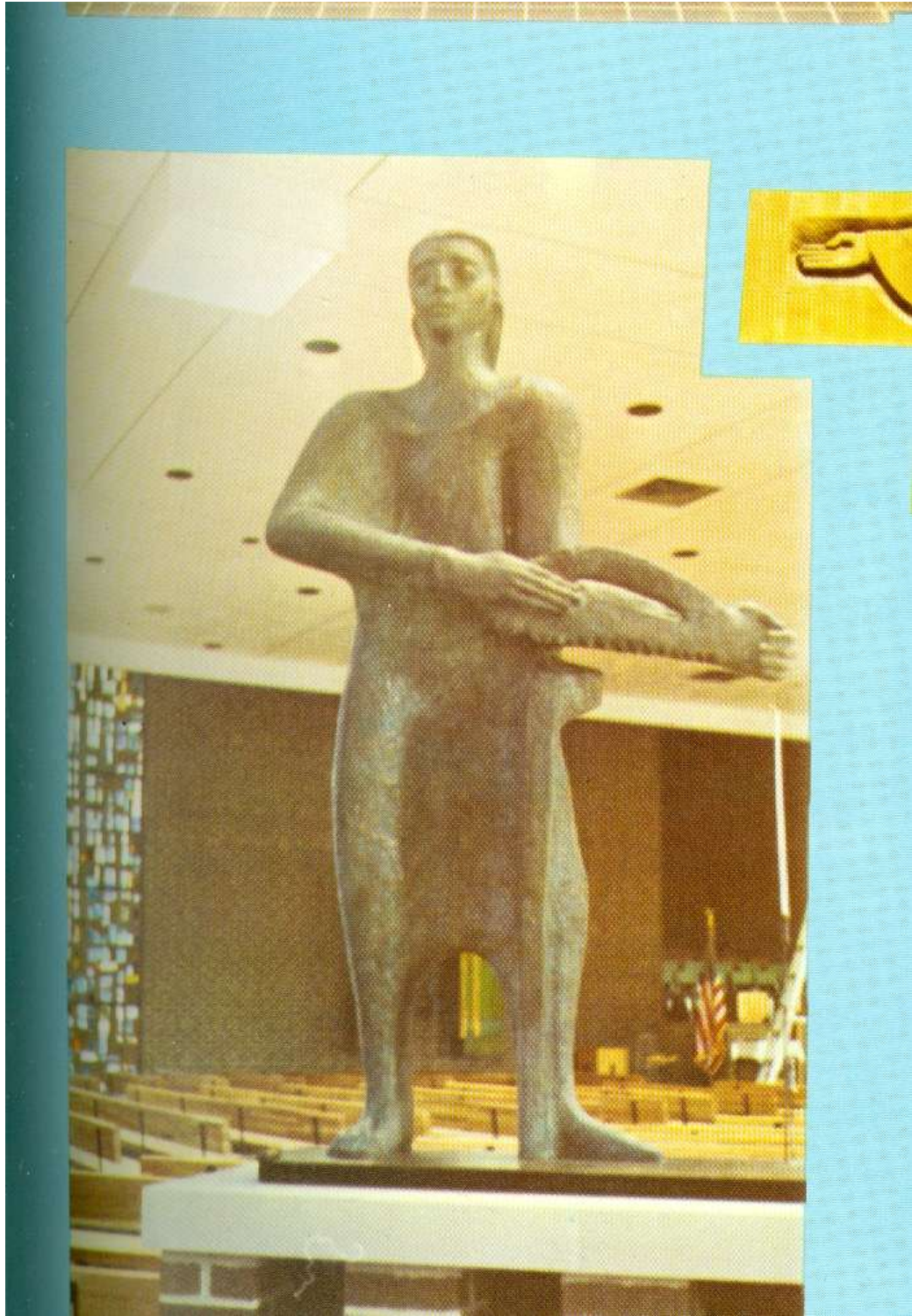
March 5, 1969

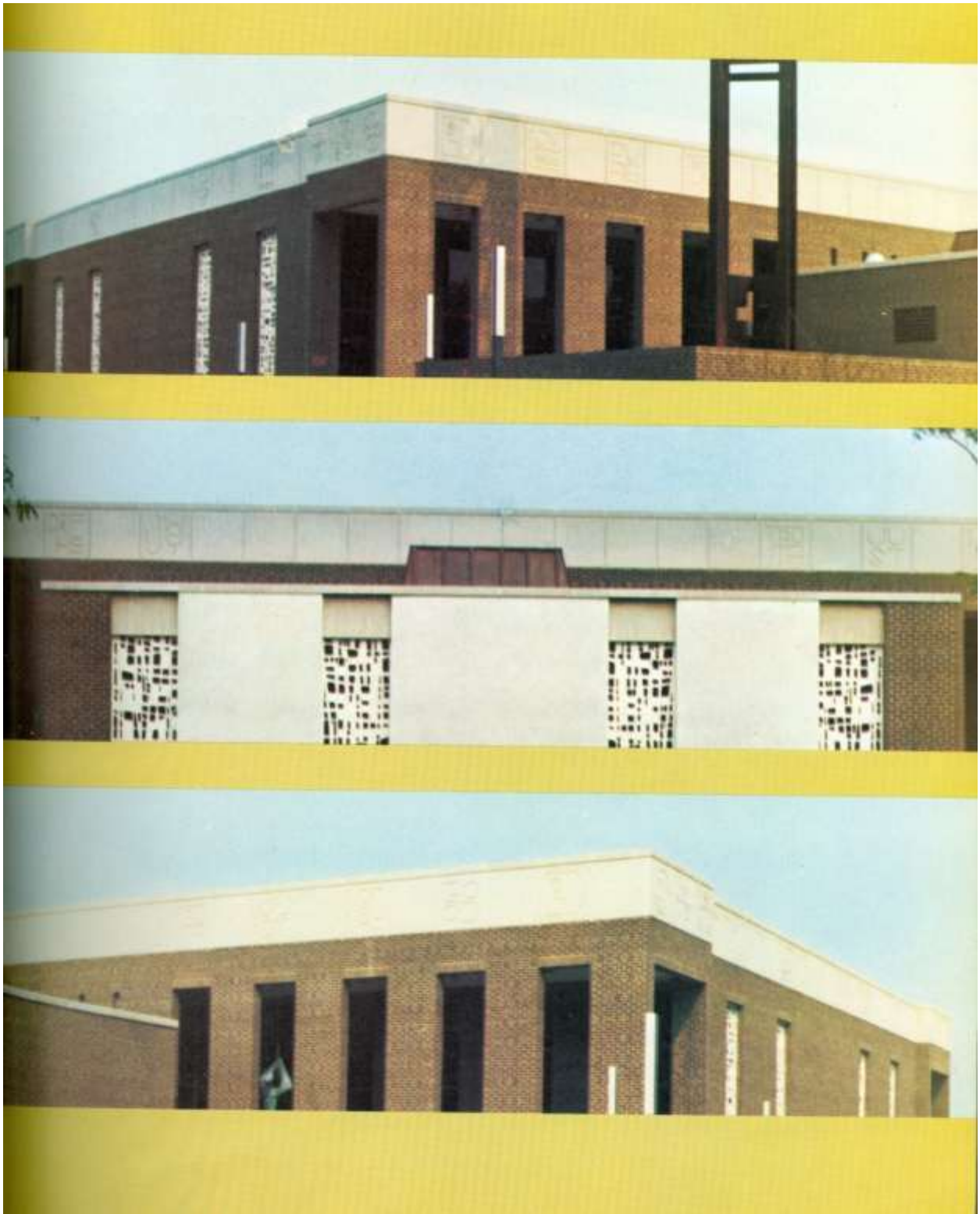












MARY MOTHER OF ALL PEOPLE

