

HISTORY OF ST. JOSEPH CATHOLIC CHURCH--ITS PAST AND ITS PRESENT

In writing up the history of St. Joseph's Church of Baton Rouge, La. one is tempted to use the hackneyed phrase, that its beginning is lost in the dim past. During the French and for several years after the Spanish regime, Catholics attended religious services in the fort, but in 1783 owing to the influx of English speaking people the Spanish Governor Galvez induced the home government to secure two priests from the Irish College at Madrid and in accordance with the request Father Patrick Brady and Father Carlos Burke were sent to Baton Rouge. It was in 1796 however that the church records, first make mention of a regular pastor and organization. On St. Patrick's Day, March 17th, 1820 the congregation was incorporated by an act of Legislature.

The earlier records of baptisms, marriages and funerals are all written in the Spanish language and are signed by Rev. Carlos Burke, curd de Baton Rouge. With the advent of a clergy whose names betray their French extraction comes in 1822 the fluent language of France, which was not superseded by the English tongue until after the Civil War had been fought and lost.

In December 1849, the Jesuit Fathers decided to build a college at Baton Rouge and assumed charge of the church parish. This college stood at the intersection of what is now St. Hypolite and North streets. Owing to various causes, chief among which were the ravages of yellow fever epidemics and the great distress caused by the Civil War this college was never the success that had been anticipated, so the Jesuit Fathers finally decided to leave Baton Rouge and to give back the parish to the diocesan clergy.

The present gothic church is the third erected by the Catholic congregation at Baton Rouge. A small frame church had been built here previous to 1810. Very little of this first Catholic church is known, except that it was erected on two lots of ground, at the corner of Church and Main streets, donated by Senor don Antonia Grass, a wealthy public spir-

ited Spaniard. It stood until the year 1830 when, entirely too small for the growing congregation, it was replaced by a brick edifice erected by Father H. Blanc, and dedicated by Bishop de Neckere and was considered an imposing edifice at that time. There are several persons still living who remember this second church and describe it as attractive and devotional. It stood where the Presbytery of St. Joseph's church is now located, face Church street and even boasted a clock in its steeple, which had been added in 1838. This second church (as most likely also the first church) was dedicated to Our Lady of Seven Sorrows.

In 1850, the congregation having outgrown Father Blanc's church, now too old and unstable to admit of repairs, the Board of Trustees, composed of Peter McKittrick, Anbroise Theriot, Augustin Deplantier, Antoine Pujol, William G. Pike and Josiah Klempeter, decided to build a new brick edifice. Father Cambrizo, a Jesuit priest, the same who had furnished the plans for the beautiful Moresque church of the Jesuits in New Orleans, was the architect. The dimensions were to be 100 by 60 feet but owing to lack of funds the plans had to be somewhat modified; \$3,000 was collected and \$7,000 borrowed and the building progressed. The cornerstone was laid in 1853. In 1873 the church was so heavily in debt (\$6,850) and the trustees not having the wherewithal to pay, it was seized and sold at sheriff's sale, and the pastor, Rev. Cyril Delacroix, found himself without a house of worship, being obliged to hold divine services in a frame building belonging to the Sisters of St. Joseph, corner Florida and Fifth streets.

The debt with principal, interest and costs of court ran up to \$12,000, an appalling sum for those reconstruction times and when Baton Rouge was scarcely one tenth of the size it is today. However, through the efforts of the trustees and generosity of the pastor and people, little by little all outstanding obligations were settled and on March 13, 1885 the church was bought back and on May 18th, 1889,

the joyous announcement was made that the church, for the first time since its existence was free of debt. For this all honor is due to the men who worked incessantly for this happy result and whose names should be held in grateful memory, since most of them have passed into the Great Beyond. They were Emile Droz, Leon Jastremski, J. E. Blouin, Joseph Gebelin, John Gars, John O'Connor, M. J. Williams, Joseph Brooks, Lambert J. Tom Duggan, Fred Heroman, T. A. Fourrier, John Schroeder, Jacob Kornmeyer, William McGuinness, Irenel Pujol and Rev. Cyril De la Croix.

From that time a new life seems to have been infused into the parish. In November, 1890 plans were submitted by Mr. Dicharry of St. James parish for the building of a church steeple. J. C. Brown, a local contractor, executed the work, under the supervision of Mr. Dicharry and the result was a beautiful steeple 177½ feet high. The cost was \$4000 and cash payments were made. During the incumbency of Father Wander Heyde 1895-99 the outer walls of the church were cemented at a cost of \$2,700, and a little later, the old rectory was demolished and replaced by the present commodious parochial residence. Also through Father Vander Heyde's efforts a clock was placed in the steeple, and a terra cotta statue of St. Joseph came to fill the empty niche in the facade of the church.

And so prosperity, fathered by wise and careful executive ability, came to stay in St. Joseph's parish until the present day when plans are under way for extensive improvements. A large building fund has been raised to meet this expense, which extension when completed will make St. Joseph's one of the most beautiful and modern churches in Louisiana.

This sketch would not be complete without the list of priests who served as pastors from 1796 till the present day: Rev. Carlos Burke (1796); Rev. Francisco Lennan (1800-1805); Rev. Tra Juan Brady (1805-1821); Rev. Desmolins (1822-1826); Rev. Anthony Blanc (1826-1832); Rev. del Hoste (1832); Rev. J. J. Brasseur (1833-1834); Rev. P. T. Beaupres (1834-1838); Rev. Joseph Evard (1838-1841); Rev. J. V. Brogard (1841-1846); Rev. Auguste Martin (1846-1849); Jesuit Fathers (1849-1865); Rev. Cyril de La Croix, (1865-1893); Rev. J. M. Laval (1893-1895); Rev. Adrian Van der Heyde (1896-1899); Rev. J. P. Malone (1899-1902); Rev. Cornelius Van de Ven (1902-1904); Rev. J. T. Solignac (1904-1910); Rev. Arthur Drossaerts (1910-1918); Rev. Francois Racine (1918-1921); and the present incumbent Monsignor Leo Gassler.

Five of these pastors were elevated to the Episcopal dignity. They were: Rev. Anthony Blanc, who in 1835 was consecrated Bishop of New Orleans and later became the first Arch Bishop of that Sec.; Rev. Auguste Martin, who became the first Bishop of

COFFEE

To Be Good

Must be fresh roasted.—We roast our Coffee fresh every day.

It has flavor and strength. Special blends for Hotels and Restaurants.

Purity Coffee & Tea Co.

North and Dufrocq Sts.

Phone 904.

Prompt Deliveries.

RANDOM ITEMS

Things That People Don't Know—Information Furnished by Our Reporter.

All signs point in the direction of a lively session of the Legislature as has ever been held in the old capitol and the Federation of Women's Clubs will be no weak factor in the fray. The members of that law making body, if they desire future political preferment, had better meet the demands of the newly created voters.

Locally the no-fence proposition is causing more discussion and it may truthfully be said more ill feeling than any subject before the public in many days. Well, as Woman's Enterprise is not interested in blooded, high grade stock or in tick infected cattle it will simply look on as an outsider and say like the old woman who saw her husband and a bear engaged in a fight, "Go it, old man, go it bear; I don't care which wins."

Considerable activity is noticeable in building operations at the present writing, chief among the many new structures and betterments is the enlargement and general renovation of what was formerly known as the Harney House now the Commercial Hotel which is being converted into an elegant and up to date hostelry and a credit to Baton Rouge. The changes being made will furnish this city with accommodation for many guests and we understand that the very latest equipment for comfort and convenience of patrons will be provided.

Several new up to date buildings also are rapidly approaching completion among which are to be noticed the large building at the corner of Lafayette and Convention, the new building of Esnard, the jeweler, on Third street, another nearly opposite and an unusually large brick one on North Boulevard at about square No. 13. Our reporter was unable to learn the name of the person or firm constructing it but understands it is to be a garage. If so it will be a hummer.

The State Pension Board was in session three days this week when an unusually large amount of business was attended to. The recent State Convention opened the doors of the Pension Board so wide that not only

every old person in the state thinks he or she is entitled to a pension law. A man who was but nine (9) years old when the Civil War was being fought was among the applicants.

It is generally understood that where pedestrians are spry and nimble footed and who keep a sharp look out while traveling along public roads so as to jump into the road side ditch upon seeing an approaching automobile, driving by persons who imagine the roads are their individual property, there will be slight chance of losing their lives. However, aged, and infirm persons should keep off the roads so that joy riders and the leisure class will not be compelled to slow up while out enjoying themselves. First keep cows penned up and then pen yourselves up, you who live in the country or city suburbs. The police jury is too busy instructing farmers on the cattle proposition to give protection. So my dear friends you must not impede the speed of pleasure seekers by occupying any portion of public roads if you value your lives.

As this reporter has but recently been engaged he knows not if what he has written above is in accordance with the policy of the Woman's Enterprise or whether it will meet with the approbation of the publisher but if not she can fire me as my reason for taking the job is to stand in with the female voters with an eye to future office holding. The compensation promised me for my laborious labor is not enough to pay my laundry bills to say nothing of my board.

Attention is called to a communication published elsewhere in this issue in which Tax Payer claims that the belief of those who voted bonds for the construction of Victory Park was that something about the place should point out to visitors that it was planned to honor those who responded to the call to arms during the World War rather than a place for the entertainment of a pleasure loving public. His idea is that dancing floors and swimming pools do not represent heroism to any great extent; that an arch or monument would be more expressive of the esteem in which our soldier, living and dead, are held by Baton Rougeans. Like Father Ryan, the poet priest of the South, he feels that "a land without monuments is a land without memories."

WOMAN'S CLUB NOTES

It will be of interest to the members to hear that the board of managers just this week sold the pews and other church furniture acquired when the club house was bought. The proceeds of the sale will go into the fund for repairs and it is hoped that there will be a little left over so that the furnishings committee can begin its work.

The contractor has about completed the new platform, and has made considerable progress with the remodeling of the tower over main entrance.

The club house has been well patronized since the club was organized, but it will be used even more in the fall and winter. Many of the clubs holding membership disband for the summer, and resume regular meetings in September or October. The scheduled committee finds that after this month the club house will be used at least once every day, and frequently three times a day.

The club was very fortunate in the house committee for the first three months. It consisted of Mrs. M. H. Edwards, W. P. Craddock, Frank G. Clark, Morton Evans and W. H. Pipes, who established a record of efficiency and loyalty that will be hard for their successors to equal.

The weekly story telling hour for children has been placed in charge of Mrs. L. U. Babin as chairman. The practical wisdom of this action was proved by the splendid programs since the special committee took charge.

Mrs. A. F. Storm, president of the State Federation of Women's Clubs, has furnished the Illustrated News with a story on the Woman's Club, Inc., using material from the Woman's Enterprise.

The board of managers decided at the last meeting to have a formal opening of the club house as soon as practicable, and the president will shortly announce the special committee in charge.

Suggestions from the members will be welcomed by the officers and board members. It is impossible for a comparatively few managers to think of all the attractive ideas that all the members have, and the board members would be grateful for any suggestions that the members have to offer along any line whatever.

Electric Toasters

\$1.50 CASH

Balance \$1.50 Per Month

Prepare delicious, crisp, brown toast right on the breakfast table

Baton Rouge Electric Co.

Telephone Number 51

Lafayette & Laurel Sts.

A. E. Rabenhorst

Wood and Coal

Pine Kindling

Phone 92

COMPETITION---

The Life of Trade

Three banks in Baton Rouge today are each doing ten times the business done by one ten years ago.

All other branches of business have been built up similarly by reason of competition.

The buying public has benefited while the sellers have increased their business by reason of the new ideas brought about by competition.

The People's Building & Loan Association is a beginner in our midst, and necessarily will have a tendency to cause a loosening up in the line of business.

The officers of the People's Building & Loan Association are men whose successful business operations in the past is added assurance of the success to be expected for this organization.

Baton Rouge has outgrown the village stage, and is big enough for increased facilities in all branches of business, and especially big enough to maintain a business which has for its aim the helping of the small home owner.

Only a few months ago, it was impossible to secure money for home building on the installment plan. Conditions now seem to be changed.

Why not investigate the plan of the People's Building & Loan Association, and assist in bringing about easier living conditions?

OFFICERS

Eugene Cazedessus President
B. E. Perkins 1st Vice President
Dr. W. S. Cushman 2nd Vice President
Ernest T. Lagarde Secretary-Treasurer

LIST OF DIRECTORS

W. N. McFarland
W. L. Hause
L. V. Robbins
Harry T. Hebert
A. Grouchy, Jr.
Henry Cohn
V. A. Sachse
King H. Knox
S. Y. Watson
A. F. Cazedessus
Joseph Gebelin
W. C. Young
E. M. Smith
Kent D. Mix
Jos. M. Supple
V. L. Dixon
E. L. Gass
R. P. Swire
R. A. Stafford
H. B. Harelson
J. E. Thonsen

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Eugene Cazedessus
B. E. Perkins
Ernest T. Lagarde
A. F. Cazedessus
King H. Knox
S. Y. Watson
J. E. Thossen

APPRAISING COMMITTEE

B. E. Perkins
King H. Knox
A. F. Cazedessus
Attorney and Notary, R. G. Beale

Communicate with

ERNEST T. LAGARDE, Sec-Treas. Or MRS. FELIX GAUDET

210 Third St.

Phone 36

"The Stroube Drug Co. is your neighborhood store. As your neighborhood store we have more to offer you than just cold merchandise—our neighborhood service is a real, living thing, existing for you as a part of your neighborhood. As your neighborhood store we want you to feel at home in our place; we want you to call upon us for information; we want you to realize that our service is not limited to the sale of drugs, although that, of course, is our chief service and the one upon which we devote our most careful attention, employing only the most skilled pharmacists who are accurate in their work, skilled and experienced, and who follow exactly the instructions in your doctor's prescription."

201 Third Street

STROUBE DRUG COMPANY, Inc. "Particular Druggists"

Fone Forty